

had been assumed by the UK Antarctic Place-names Committee that the 'cape' was named in honour of Knud Rasmussen (1879–1933), the distinguished Danish explorer and ethnologist whose name figures prominently on maps of Greenland (G. Hattersley-Smith, personal communication). The name was accepted formally by the UK in 1955. When in 1956–57 an aerial survey showed that there is no readily definable cape on the north side of Waddington Bay, the name was transferred to a small island lying close to the north shore.

That the Belgians in fact named the 'cape' after the Danish explorer seems out of the question. At the time of its discovery Knud Rasmussen was no more than 18½ years old and had not yet left on his first expedition or begun to establish his reputation. Neither the written accounts of the expedition nor the archives (held by the de Gerlache family, whom I have contacted personally) indicate whom the feature was named after. Frederick Cook (1900), who was the expedition doctor, mentions only that the officers were 'given the privilege of bestowing some names' and that many features were named after Belgian friends of the expedition, as well as prominent non-Belgians who had helped. He uses the name 'Cape Rasmussen' but says nothing of its origin. Several of the ship's company were Norwegian (including the mate Roald Amundsen); none was Danish or had any known connexion with Knud Rasmussen. However, in recognition of Danish support for the expedition, Dannebrog Islands to the north of the 'cape' were named after the Danish national flag. Hovgaard Island and 'Wandel Island' (now Booth Island from an earlier naming) were named after Danish naval officers who had been personally involved, and 'Lund' Island (now Petermann Island) and Vedel Island received Danish-sounding names.

Who then was the Rasmussen of Rasmussen Island? In my view the most likely candidate is the Danish marine artist Jens Erik Carl Rasmussen (1841–93), whose paintings of ships and seascapes—including polar scenes—were internationally well known in the last decade of the 19th century. Jens Rasmussen visited Greenland in 1870 and painted several pictures of everyday life there. Between 1872 and 1878 he travelled to many European countries including Belgium, and his paintings were exhibited in Paris (1878) and Chicago (1893). Visiting Greenland again in 1893, he was lost overboard on the journey back to Denmark. Carl Rasmussen's art is likely to have been known to many of *Belgica's* crew and expedition members; Frederick Cook may have been reminded of his work during his own visit to Greenland in 1894, only a few months after the artist's death. It would therefore have been entirely appropriate for a prominent coastal feature close to the newly-named Dannebrog Islands to receive the name of a prominent, recently-deceased Danish marine and polar artist.

The explorer Knud Rasmussen is remembered in Antarctica by Rasmussen Peninsula (68°53'S, 67°13'W) on the Fallières Coast of Graham Land. This lies close to Mikkelsen Bay (68°43'S, 67°10'W), named after Kaptajn Ejnar Mikkelsen (1880–1971), another celebrated Danish explorer of Greenland.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE MAGNETOGRAPH HUT: 1912–13 AUSTRALASIAN ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION

[The following extracts from letters refer to a note published in *Polar Record* in 1979. The first letter is from Mr Eric Webb, one of the few surviving members of Mawson's 1912–13 Australasian Antarctic Expedition; the second is a reply by R. B. Ledingham, author of the note.]

I have read, with the keen interest of a living participant, the above article [1978 expedition to renovate the 1912–13 Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AEE) base hut, R. B. Ledingham, *Polar Record* 19 (122): 485–88, (1979)]. This is a welcome description of my one-time 'stamping ground' brought up-to-date and I regret the more profoundly having to point out several errors.

On p 486, lines 9–13 state that 'The magnetic huts lie in hollows on the eastern ridge and are well protected from the elements'. This is not true and flatly contradicts the statement in my scientific report on 'Terrestrial magnetism' (*AEE 1911–14, Scientific Reports, Series B, 1*) which states that the absolute hut was at the top of the ridge, and the magnetograph hut beyond the toe of the ridge on a flat area suggestive of an old ocean platform.

The absolute hut, roughly a 6 ft [1.8 m] cube, was built into a gap in the country rock which offered some small protection and, more particularly, prevented it from being blown away.

My memory of the locality was refreshed vividly in December 1977 when, flying in at a low altitude from the east, sitting in the pilot's cockpit I was able to spot Cape Denison and to identify it by my magnetograph hut standing out on the level platform well clear from the toe of the ridge. Published photographs of the 1911–14 era and subsequently serve to confirm this.

Because the magnetograph hut is a little west of the axis of the adjacent ridge and the almost constant wind direction was a few degrees east of south, the hut was slightly in the lee of the ridge. However, the only appreciable lessening of the wind force came from 'drag' on the rugged rock surface of the ridge. After daily excursions to and from the huts by day and night, full light to pitch darkness and nil visibility due to drift snow, one learned to sense and assess wind velocities with surprising accuracy and thus to know the windiest places.

Also on p 486, line 3 describes 'the cliffs of Commonwealth Bay extending 30 km NNW and NNE to form a shallow indentation.' In fact, two such directions would produce a gulf rather than a wide shallow bay. The writer appears to have confused the points of the compass and intends WNW and ENE.

In his reply Mr Ledingham writes:

The absolute hut lies in a hollow or gap in the country rock. On the ridge—I agree, and Eric would be a better authority than I to tell whether it was well sheltered or not. The magnetic hut was at the seaward end of the ridge on the flat, and was protected mainly by the rocks which the expedition members had piled against the windward wall. I agree that the directions NNW and NNE are incorrect; they should be as he says WNW and ENE.

WATKINS'S COMPANIONS

Sir,

On page 394 of the January 1983 *Polar Record*, the Executive Director of the British Schools Exploration Society states that Cozens and Stephenson were on the 1932 Expedition when Watkins lost his life. This is not true. Watkins's three companions at that time were Rymill, Chapman and Riley, all of whom are now dead. They as well as Cozens, Stephenson and others were on the 1930–31 British Arctic Air Route Expedition.

Yours truly,
ANDREW CROFT
18 February 1983

Reviews

ROSS IN THE ANTARTIC

[Review by H. G. R. King* of M. J. Ross's *Ross in the Antarctic; the voyage of James Clark Ross in Her Majesty's ships Erebus & Terror 1839–1843*. Whitby, Caedmon of Whitby, 1982, 276 p, £12.50.]

Epitomized by no less an authority than Roald Amundsen as 'the man whose name will ever be remembered as one of the most intrepid polar explorers and one of the most capable seamen the world has ever produced', Sir James Clark Ross has received surprisingly little attention from historians who,

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