

## Book Reviews

**FOOTSTEPS ON THE ICE: THE ANTARCTIC DIARIES OF STUART D. PAINE, SECOND BYRD EXPEDITION.** M.L. Paine (Editor). 2007. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press. xxxii + 368 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN: 978-0-8262-1741-7. \$US34.95. doi:10.1017/S0032247407007231

In all ways but one, historians and scientists alike must consider the Second Byrd Antarctic Expedition (1933–1935) as one of the most successful of the five associated with Richard E. Byrd. It had 15 more participants on the ice (not counting the three dairy cows or the dogs) than his first in 1928–1930. Its success in using motorised carriers, airplanes (even an early helicopter), and radio for communication of field parties to base heralded more clearly than BAE I the coming of the mechanised era of polar exploration. As a whole, Byrd's men and equipment succeeded in adding much to the scientific knowledge of Antarctica. For the first time, seismic equipment succeeded in measuring the thickness of ice of the Ross Ice Shelf and on the Rockefeller Plateau. Lichens discovered and collected by the field parties in Marie Byrd Land and notably on Scott Glacier proved to be the first form of life so far south. Among the geographical discoveries were that no strait existed between the Ross and Weddell seas, and new peaks of the Queen Maud Mountains, the Rockefeller Mountains, and the Rockefeller Plateau. Geologists on motorised expeditions garnered evidence that the Ford Ranges had geological ties to the mountains of the Antarctic Peninsula. Finally, the story of Admiral Byrd's wintering by himself in a hut in the interior of Antarctica — published as *Alone* in 1938 — still stands as one of the most thrilling accounts of polar adventure.

The sole disappointment, until now, was that none of the 56 men published any diaries. Of course, Byrd compiled *Discovery* as the official history of the expedition. Others such as Joe Hill and Thomas Poulter added to the literature. Stuart Paine also wrote, with Jane Walden, *The long whip: the story of a great husky*, but this was a children's account that focused on Paine's lead dog. Diaries as firsthand accounts written during the event and unfiltered by others are valuable as historical records. Thus, *Footsteps on the ice* fills a significant gap in the literature about BAE II and about the history of Antarctic exploration.

Stuart D. Paine experienced BAE II as a dog driver and expedition navigator, a humble foot soldier in Byrd's campaign of exploration and scientific investigation. The son of a journalist and author, Paine graduated from Yale and took a position in advertising. Tiring of office work

and looking for adventure, he eagerly joined his former roommate at Yale, Kennett Rawson, who was already a member of the expedition. During the expedition, Paine's principal accomplishments were navigating the fall sledging party far inland from the Ross Sea in order to lay supply depots for the following field season, and then, during the summer season, guiding the expedition's geological party into the Queen Maud Mountains, up the massive and previously unexplored Scott Glacier, and to within 207 statute miles of the South Pole, a journey of more than 1410 miles skied in just 88 days.

However demanding the task, Paine excelled in both undertaking the work and writing about it in his diary. Charles Murphy, a professional writer and Byrd's publicist on the expedition, recognised Paine's literary talent and had Paine write stories for broadcast when Murphy was ill. Passages in the diary itself provide evidence of the power that Paine had in using words to describe what he saw and experienced in Antarctica:

The icebergs have been magnificent and truly one of the scenic wonders of the world. All day we have been cruising among these huge tabular bergs, most of them over a hundred feet high, some large a mile long, some mere fragments. The brilliance of this bluish whiteness is dazzling. I have never seen such purity of color. It is the color virginity would be if it had a color. (page 46)

As a private and personal account, Paine freely expressed his feelings about other members of the expedition and the leadership. His sometimes negative comments about others — especially those who appeared to shirk their work or seemed unreliable — also reflected the real pressures of a man living stressfully in uncomfortable and confined spaces that deprived all of comfort and privacy. At one point, Paine even speculated that some of the men in the expedition might have been social misfits who saw the expedition as an escape from conventional society. Near the end of the diary, he admitted: 'I have changed the last year and a half. I know I have grown cynical. Contrary to what I express, I have had great disappointments, not in opportunities but in personalities. I expect too much I know and not one lived up to expectations. Never again will I idealize men' (page 256).

Although Paine maintained good relations with Byrd during and after the venture, in the diary he recorded his doubts about both Byrd and the expedition. He thought that Byrd's decision to winter alone, away from the base at Little America, was wrong. As Paine saw it, the Admiral's departure caused morale to plummet, and the camp suffered from personality conflicts, drunkenness, and split leadership. At one despondent moment, Paine

even doubted that the expedition was anything more than a publicity stunt: 'As far as I can see, our whole trip was futile and in vain. We are merely tools for the Admiral's ambitions' (page 109).

As eloquent as Stuart Paine the writer was, the reader will also value the additions and explications of the editor, Merlyn Paine, his daughter. She contributes footnotes that link her father's diary with other accounts, including *Discovery*, and provides historical context for the entries. In addition, the footnotes explain many details of training dogs, preparations for fieldwork, navigating, and traveling on the ice. Another contribution of the editor is an appendix that contains selections from *The Barrier Bull*, a newspaper that Paine began during the expedition and of which only a few copies, for the members of the expedition itself, were printed. Noteworthy, too, is that the book contains many photographs from the personal collection of Stuart Paine, which have never been previously published.

After the expedition, Paine never returned to Antarctica. Like many polar adventurers, life's ordinary responsibilities — marriage, a family, service in World War II, running a business — took priority. Finally, cancer ended his life in 1960, at the age of 50. Nevertheless, Antarctica left a deep impression on him. In the final chapter of the book, the editor added words from an essay that Paine wrote after returning from Antarctica: 'Let me go back to . . . where I contributed to the knowledge of the earth, where my work is of lasting value to science, to the only place where I enjoyed complete happiness and inward contentment. Even should I never do this, still I shall live, happy to a certain extent that I had done my part, as small as it was, to further the knowledge of mankind' (page 278). (Raimund E. Goerler, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210, USA.)

### **SOCIAL LIFE IN NORTHWEST ALASKA: THE STRUCTURE OF INUPIAQ ESKIMO NATIONS.**

Ernest S. Burch, Jr. 2006. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press. 478 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 978-1-88963-78-5. \$US65.00.

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This volume is the third and last volume in a trilogy devoted to the ethnohistory of the Inupiaq nations of northwestern Alaska. Like the other two volumes (Burch 1998; 2005), this is a rich, expertly referenced, overview of 'early-contact' Inupiaq nations (1800–1848) based on primarily English-language published and archival records and the author's own interviews during a lifetime of fieldwork in the region. It is a fundamental resource on these people and this region.

The theme of this volume, social life, refers to a functionalist framework that is used to organise the author's ethnological material. The framework is immediately visible in the table of contents, which is divided into separate chapters on roles, solidarity, economy, politics,

and a concluding chapter on 'the integration process.' Burch often references two books by sociologist Marion Levy, Jr. when describing his approach. Fortunately this Parsonian scheme is applied lightly to the material, and it is still possible to read agency, intuition, and innovation into Burch's descriptions of subsistence practice and kinship. The author's intention, as he states clearly at the outset of the book, is to provide a sort of user's instruction manual to Inupiaq nations (as if they were a machine), which describes how all the various component parts fit together and relate to one another.

The book is designed to work at a number of levels. The author takes great pains to make the bilateral kinship society of Inupiaqs clear to US-based students reading the text. The chapter on 'solidarity' gently describes the fundamental terms of kinship analysis and explains the implications of conjugal and regional forms of solidarity for individuals living in this social system. The chapters also contribute to known controversies in the ethnographic literature. Thus, the same chapter of solidarity also speaks to the way that complex kinship forms are represented in local architecture and therefore interprets texts by explorers or archaeologists who may have counted one structure where the author argues that a composite structure existed. Thus what might otherwise be a crude systemic link between a conjugal family and a 'nation' is mediated by rich ethnographies of forms of partnership, vernacular architecture, and the design of settlements illustrating how kinship was an integral part of social life. The illustrations of various types of kinship relationships, or household forms, are richly documented unobtrusively with endnotes to the published literature.

It is noteworthy that the book also strives to represent the intellectual discipline of Inupiat oral history by referencing, where possible, the exact person who provided an observation about Inupiat society, even if that person was paraphrased by an author of a specific publication. Thus this book gives a clearer impression of Inupiaqs speaking for themselves rather than a representation of texts on Inupiaqs.

One should mention that some English-language terms — such as nation — are used loosely in this book, as in Burch's other work. Burch uses 'nation' to represent the dense form of kinship solidarity experienced by regional Inupiaq groups almost to spite sociological theorists who usually would look for nationhood among large groups of people. I agree wholeheartedly that it is necessary to find a literary device to indicate to readers that social life in demographically small settings is nonetheless tangible and real. However, the term 'nation' is almost always used to represent a type of solidarity that ironically arises when people do not know each other, which is certainly not the case in this study. It is likely that Inupiaq experience a form of anonymous national solidarity when one considers their cosmology of how souls move through time, but that type of cosmological argument is not discussed in this book.

There is a potential mismatch between cosmology and representation in other chapters. For example, the book