

In recent years there has been a resurgence of sympathy for him among younger explorers and students of the Arctic. For instance, in *Arctic*, December 1964, John Euller offered arguments in his support and declared: "The case for Cook is strong and should be reviewed by fair-minded men." And in 1965, on the 100th anniversary of Cook's birth, Dr. Walter A. Wood, then president of the American Geographical Society, was quoted: "Cook's claims regarding his polar journey should be re-examined."

Whether Dr. Cook ever saw the North Pole or not, his sledge journey among the Queen Elizabeth Islands stands by itself as one of the most remarkable of its kind in the annals of exploration.

Dealing compassionately with Cook, *The Big Nail* sets out relentlessly to topple Peary from his pedestal. It portrays him as a jealous, ruthless, arrogant, vainglorious egocentric; as an explorer who found new lands that either didn't exist or that he inaccurately located or delineated; as an inefficient navigator who did not always know quite where he was or in which direction he was going; as a sledge traveller whose speeds became superhuman when he had no witnesses who were likely to contest them; and, on his climactic polar dash, as an aging "iron" man, his feet crippled by frostbite, dependent on the loyal, skilful and vigorous Matthew Henson, his poorly-rewarded assistant (whom he referred to as his "colored body-servant"), and four Eskimos with their dogs, to carry him on a sled most of the way to and from his farthest north — which he was too proud to admit.

As Wright acknowledges, carefully crediting his sources, various critics at one time or another have brought out all of these points and elaborated on them. He has simply marshalled and presented them anew in entertaining fashion, here and there adding his own interpretations and theories, some few of which may be open to question. He has done an admirable job of research, leaving hardly a stone unturned to accomplish his purpose.

Summing up, he says: "Whatever may be the verdict of historians with respect to Cook, the conclusion as to Peary's claim is inescapable. . . . The perpetuation of the myth that Peary discovered the North Pole has no possible justification in fact or tradition."

Richard Finnie

Ryerson Press, 1970. 7½ x 10½ inches, 152 pages, 61 plates. \$12.50.

To many readers of arcticana, Mr. Bruemmer is a talented writer-photographer whose past specialities have included, more especially, animal photography and illustrated accounts of the life style of those Canadian Eskimos who continue to live with a high degree of self-sufficiency and dignity in the more remote parts of the North.

"The Long Hunt" is Mr. Bruemmer's first book and should provide enjoyable and informative reading to specialist and general reader alike. There is little attempt at analysis, which is perhaps fortunate as the theoretical perspectives which are introduced, namely those of Toynbee on Eskimo culture and Lorenz on culture contact, are likely to find little support from anthropologists who will view them as either dated or trite. Among other impressions the book serves to reinforce the generally-held, if over-simplified, public image of the Eskimo hunter. Of greater value is the more or less detailed daily narrative of a specific polar bear hunt covering 1,200 miles in the Jones Sound, Lancaster Sound and Barrow Strait regions of the arctic archipelago undertaken by two Grise Fiord hunters, their two young sons, the author and twenty-nine sled dogs.

Polar bear hunting for most Eskimo groups has never been a systematic or pronounced phase of the annual round of production. However, in recent years, with increasing cash value of polar bear skins, Eskimo hunters in many localities have come to place more emphasis on this activity. At Grise Fiord the polar bear has always been especially sought, though for largely non-financial reasons until very recently. The degree of involvement in bear hunting was such that the more serious hunters strengthened their dog teams as winter progressed in preparation for the long and demanding hunts that commenced early in April. This book was written just in time; with justifiable concern for the future of the species, polar bear hunting is now subject to strict control by government fiat, a measure that will certainly marshall in the end of these long spring hunts. In combination a small individual quota (amounting to about 1.25 bears per hunter at Grise Fiord), and the now widespread use of skidoos for hunting, further diminishes the likelihood that such journeys will occur in the future. One can only speculate on the effect these new hunting practices, including sport-hunting by tourists, may have on the polar bear stocks in the arctic archipelago. Mr. Bruemmer's narrative indicates that despite the tremen-

THE LONG HUNT. BY FRED BRUEMMER.  
Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver: The

dous competence of the Eskimo hunters he accompanied, the odds were not overwhelmingly stacked against the bear: two-thirds of those seen were not molested, and the success rate during actual hunts was about fifty per cent. Only one of the eight bears shot was not recovered, and this occurred under somewhat unusual circumstances.

Despite its focus on polar bear hunting, "The Long Hunt" introduces several other cameos of northern living; about a third of the book in fact describes the author's experiences during a series of quick side trips made during this particular visit to the archipelago: to Craig Harbour to hunt seal and walrus, to Cape Sparbo to photograph musk-ox and Dr. Cook's elusive den, and attempts to locate musk-ox near Resolute Bay. Throughout the book Mr. Bruemmer's sense of history transforms otherwise barren locations and strange place-names into people and events long past but nevertheless hauntingly present to the knowing traveller.

There are a few reservations to be made regarding this book, though the few factual errors are of minor importance: for example, Canadian Eskimos do not use the term *savssat* to describe an opening in the winter sea-ice with trapped whales, nor could the behaviour of whales so-trapped near Grise Fiord be accurately described as either frantic or frightful. Although for the most part the prose style is easy and even, the sudden lapses to colloquial idiom or obfuscatory description tended, for this reader at least, to break the smooth rhythm of the author's pen. More disconcerting however, was the typography and printing on high gloss paper, an effect that combined somehow to detract from the pleasure of both text and the truly excellent photographs. The most unfortunate aspect of this book is the price. Many people who would want to own this handsome portfolio might be deterred by the cost, which is all the more regrettable because Mr. Bruemmer has succeeded in presenting a warm and, for the most part, faithful portrait of an important and poorly documented aspect of Eskimo culture: hunting as an art, and the hunter as a person.

Milton M. R. Freeman

PERMAFROST IN CANADA. BY R. J. E. BROWN. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970. 7 x 10 inches, 234 pages. \$12.50.

The phenomenon and problems associated with the existence of permafrost in Canada are considered in clear detail by the author,

and are of particular interest to practising engineers, geographers, geologists and others involved in the development of the northern regions. The book is well written and is developed along systematic lines of consideration. In view of the present interest in northern development, the appearance of this book is most timely and valuable. The author has clearly outlined the nature of permafrost, the distribution of both continuous and discontinuous permafrost, and the major problems with regard to buildings, services, transportation and agriculture.

In Chapter One, the nature of permafrost is very well presented. Of particular value is the distribution and occurrence of permafrost in Canada. Such factors as drainage, vegetation, relief, climate etc. on the development of permafrost are considered. The addition of a section on the physiographic regions is most valuable.

Engineering considerations involving permafrost are examined in Chapter Two. An outline of the various methods for field investigation is given, and a very brief discussion of building construction is considered. The discussion on buildings is continued in Chapter Four where again outlines of initial design and types are given. The observation of performance of some representative foundations in different areas is most valuable in view of the lack of proper design and building techniques. The difficulties in generalization for design and construction make it hard to provide a detailed specification and listing of exact engineering problems. The author raises several pertinent questions with regard to the problem of construction in the North.

Services and transportation are considered in Chapters Five and Six. They provide a good review of available methods at present in use together with the performance and feasibility of both services and transport systems. The latter consists primarily of highways, and the detailed treatment of the performance history is most pertinent.

The effect of the presence of permafrost on overall mining activities in northern Canada is considered in Chapter Seven. After considering the problems of agriculture in the Canadian North in Chapter Eight, the author concludes that in the permafrost region, agriculture is only marginal and improvements in the future appear to be minimal. The physical handicaps preclude major development in agriculture.

In Chapter Nine, the author provides a summary of the book itself, highlighting the major problems. The book is well-written and is highly recommended.

Raymond N. Yong