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From the Deep of the Sea

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more speculative and less technically informed than many readers would prefer, it is still a solid contribution to the literature.

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Smith, Charles E. *From the Deep of the Sea*. Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1977. 288pp.

Little has remained the same in the century and a half since Cunningham wrote:

The hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

What one hopes has not changed is the spirit of the men who can claim that heritage and can include in it the experiences of a surgeon in a 355-ton whaling ship that sailed from Hull on 19 February 1866 and returned 14 months later with what was left of a ragged, scurvy-ridden, starving crew.

The whaling done by *Diana* and indeed all of the ships of Hull was not the 2 or 3-year voyages as the Americans made to the South Seas but was a seasonal trek to the Greenland Seas, the first weeks devoted to sealing and then up through Davis Strait and into Baffin Bay for the whales. Stores were taken for a voyage of about 8 months.

Ship's Surgeon Smith, whose diary this book is, was making his first trip to sea and he recorded everything that interested him—the ship, the sea, the sailors, fish, seals, flowers, birds, literally everything, even sea stories that seemed pertinent to his activities.

By mid-July *Diana* had caught two whales, no seals, and was near the mouth of Ponds Bay in Baffin Bay's upper reaches. Where fishing should have been best, *Diana* (and other ships in the area) found nothing but gales and ice. Toward the first of August the season, such as it was, was obviously over and it was time for "haim to my ain countrie." August was spent trying to find a way out through the rapidly

increasing ice. Baffin Land to the West, ice to the south, and contrary winds forced the ship to make her way north and east to Melville Bay on the north-west coast of Greenland and to try to make her southing from there. But conditions were worse so she returned to the west water. Several times *Diana* was pinched in the ice and only by putting sailors with hawsers on the ice (and overfiring the boiler of her 30hp engine) did she warp herself free and often that was into a hole of water from which there was no exit. Another whaler, *Intrepid*, fell in with *Diana* and for a few days they searched together for a way out. *Intrepid*, with 60hp and 90 tons of coal, promised not to forsake *Diana* but on 1 September *Intrepid* managed to force her way into clear water and, perhaps thinking *Diana* would be able to follow, sailed out of sight.

For three weeks *Diana* sailed among the gathering floes, seeking the open ocean, but on 21 September the captain determined that his only course was to drive the ship into the icepack, from which it might be liberated in April, and drift with it into the Atlantic. The ship had already been on short rations for a month, could continue that rate of consumption for 2 months, but could expect to be in the ice for 6 months with no hope of adding fish, fowl, or animal to the larder.

The impressionable reader should read the rest of the diary in the heat of August when well fed and well rested. Fuel ran out and pieces of the ship not necessary for shelter or for ultimate safe navigation were burned. Finally, only a small fire to boil tea and thaw food was allowable. Ice formed on the cabin bulkheads, in the men's clothing and bedding; the whale-oil lamps had to be warmed before they would light; the clock refused to operate; and pumps that had to be operated continually to keep the ship afloat (ice pressure had opened many of her seams) had to be

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dismantled several times each day to clear them of ice. Breakfasts were half a biscuit spread with cook's fat (which Smith described as brown axle grease), dinners the same with the addition of an ounce or so of boiled meat or oatmeal or suet. By late February, everyone on board looked forward to the twice-a-week banquet of soup made of biscuit dust and table scraps that the cook had providentially saved early in the voyage with a view to selling it as pig's food on return to Hull. The captain died the day after Christmas of cold and fatigue. Scurvy was first detected in early January (with only three gallons of inferior—later frozen—lime juice on board) and the first scurvy death occurred in mid-February.

Some breakup of the ice began in early March and after 2 weeks of struggle *Diana* was free of the ice and homeward bound on 17 March, arriving in the Shetlands on 2 April. Two of the 13 men who died (of a crew of 51) did so within sight of home.

The diary teaches no strategic, tactical, nor even seamanship lessons. It is inconceivable that any seaman of today could find himself in similar circumstances. But some men continue to be called on to cope with conditions seemingly unendurable. And some of them find something to draw on, to sustain them and that they did and do so and how they did and do it are worthy of our attention, if not to instruct us then to inspire us.

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Sobel, Lester A., ed. *Political Terrorism, Volume 2: 1974-78*. New York: Facts on File, 1978. 279pp.

Sobel, Lester A., *Palestinian Impasse: Arab Guerrillas & International Terror*. New York: Facts on File, 1977. 282pp.

The public is constantly blitzed with "barometers," "indicators" and

"indexes" that purport to measure everything from the economy to morale in the military. While there is no precise index for the effect of contemporary political terrorism on our collective consciousness, there can be no doubt that the terrorism phenomena would rate very highly on any such scale. Consider for example that one standard library reference lists over 40 nonfiction books "in print" on the subject of terrorism and that this represents a doubling over a 2-year period. Or consider the hundreds of novels (ranging from literature to thrillers to pulps) that feature casts of terrorists whose aspirations range from survival to controlling the world.

Unfortunately, most works on terrorism—whether fiction or nonfiction, and sometimes a single book will be a blend of each—present a point of view that is by definition colored by the prejudices of its author. It is simply difficult to get the facts without an accompanying sermon on the depravity (or virtuousness) of terrorism by sub-national groups (or governments). Thus, it is very refreshing to find sources for factual accounts that allow the reader to draw his own conclusions.

Both *Palestinian Impasse* and *Political Terrorism* are straightforward presentations of facts, and do allow the reader to draw his own conclusions. Published by the Facts on File Corporation, renowned for its standard library reference of the same name, each book represents a compilation of the significant news and developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the problem of terrorism respectively.

Palestinian Impasse treats the developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict since the 1967 war up to the middle of 1977, while *Political Terrorism, Volume 2* provides coverage from 1974 to May 1978 (the cutoff seems to have been the murder of Aldo Moro). The terrorism volume is organized geographically, with very strong sections of the Middle East and Latin America, while the other