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**THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PRESS AND THE  
SENSATIONALIZATION OF THE ARCTIC  
1855-1910**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis entitled *The Anglo-American Press and the Sensationalization of the Arctic 1855-1910* is my own original work and that all other works referred to in this thesis have been acknowledged. This thesis is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification to any other university. I further declare that this thesis does not exceed the prescribed length allowed me by the Faculty of Earth Sciences and Geography.

I want you gentlemen to remember that I am the only person you need to please. If I want *The Herald* to be turned upside down, it must be turned upside down. And whatever I say will be news, will indeed be news. If I want black beetles to be the news of the day, then black beetles will be the news of the day. That is what *The Herald* will consider important, and it is what our readers will consider important.

James Gordon Bennett Jr.

## SUMMARY

By investigating the relationship between the Anglo-American press and Arctic exploration, the study seeks both to re-examine some common theories about newspaper sensationalism and to understand the reasons for the wide-spread interest in the Arctic and its exploration in the United States and England.

The study makes a systematic examination of the role of the press in Arctic exploration, and finds that newspapers and their proprietors were much more influential in increasing knowledge about and interest in the far north than has traditionally been acknowledged. Not only did newspapers—most notably *The New York Herald* of James Gordon Bennett—sponsor numerous expeditions, the press also encouraged exploration by paying large sums for exclusive accounts from the explorers. In addition, the amount and style of the press coverage helped create an underlying interest among the public concerning the Arctic, its exploration, and its explorers.

The study also presents information indicating that a new explanation and interpretation of the history of sensationalism in the English and American press is both appropriate and desirable. The conventional view of journalism history suggests that sensationalism as a journalistic technique died out in the United States during the Civil War and did not reappear until Joseph Pulitzer took control of *The World* in New York in the 1880s. Likewise, the conventional view of the English press holds that sensationalism was introduced in the 1880s by W.T. Stead but not popularized until the successes of Alfred Harmsworth in the 1890s. The evidence presented here shows that sensationalism was present in daily and weekly newspapers throughout the late 1860s and 1870s. The press accounts of the exploration of the Arctic fulfill all of the definitions of sensational journalism. The study also indicates that the Arctic coverage by some of the newspapers usually classified as belonging to the "quality" press was as sensational as that of the newspapers traditionally classified as "sensational."

To Maxie

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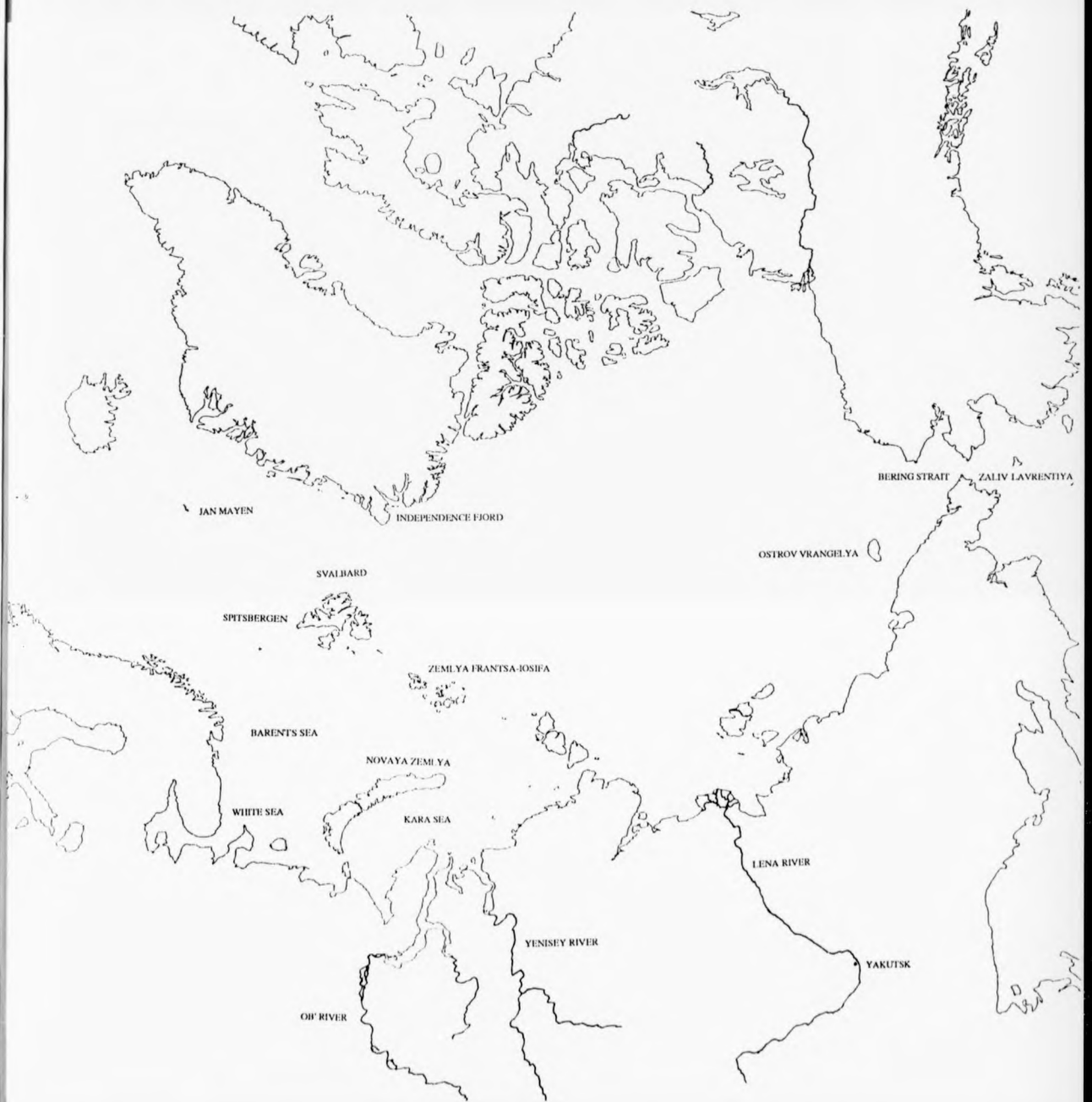
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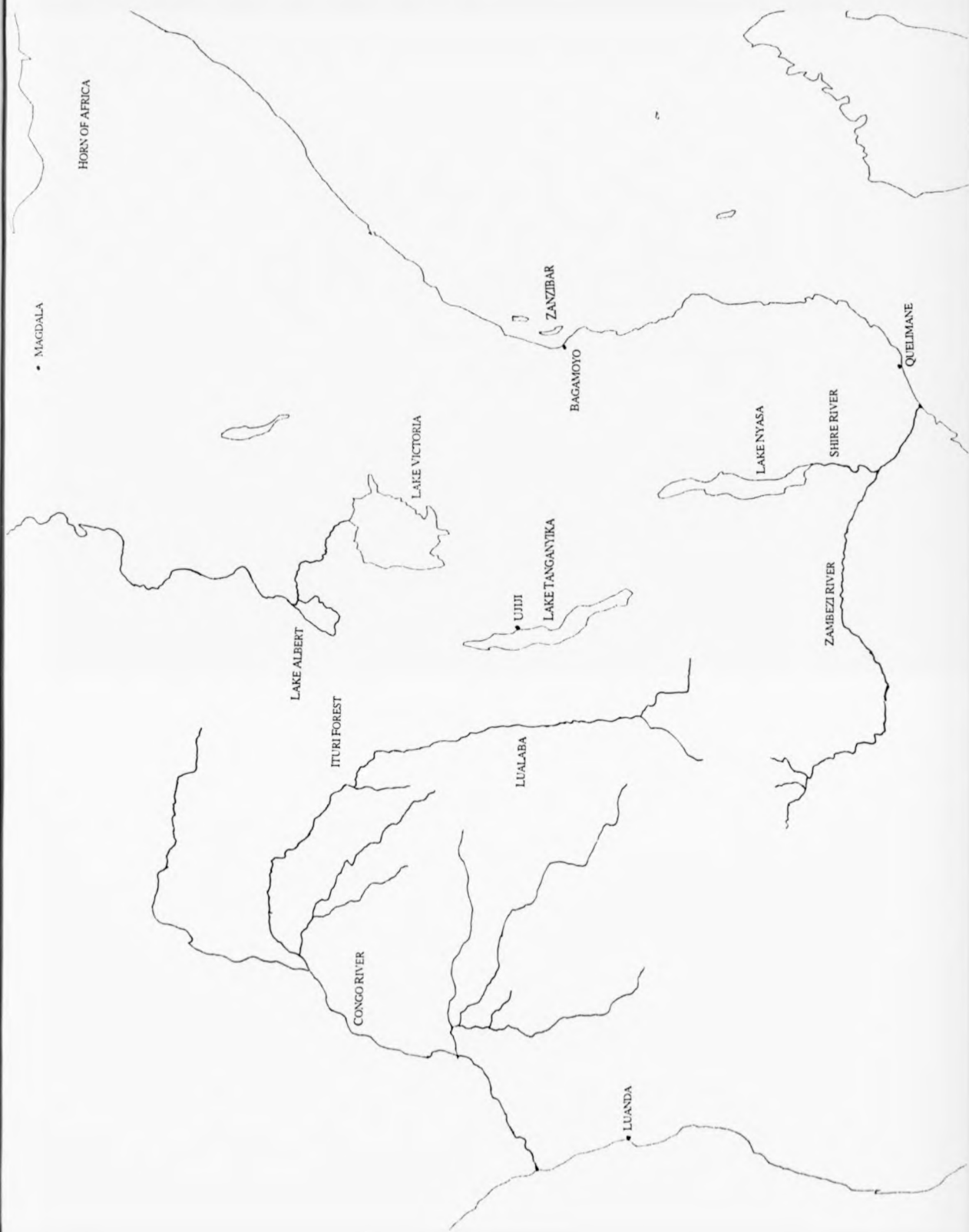
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The Canadian Arctic



The Arctic Regions



Central Africa

## PART 1

### THE ARCTIC SUBLIME

I try in vain to be persuaded that the pole is the seat of frost and desolation; it ever presents itself to my imagination as the region of beauty and delight. There...the sun is for ever visible; its broad disk just skirting the horizon, and diffusing a perpetual splendour...there snow and frost are banished; and, sailing over a calm sea, we may be wafted to a land surpassing in wonders and in beauty every region hitherto discovered on the habitable globe.

Mary Shelley  
*Frankenstein, or the  
Modern Prometheus*

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

More than three quarters of a century has passed since the first week of September in 1909 when two men thrilled both the international scientific community and the public of the Western world by claiming virtually simultaneously to have attained what was considered the earth's most alluring geographical goal, the North Pole. For months the furor surrounding Dr. Frederick A. Cook, Robert E. Peary, and which, if either, explorer first reached the Pole received unprecedented coverage in the world press. The issue remains a topic of debate even today (*The Washington Post* 20 April 1989; Herbert 1989; Davies 1989; 1990).

Why was there such commotion over an achievement lacking every attribute except personal priority? The gaining of the North Pole achieved no great scientific aim, it resulted in no commercial coup, it lacked any essential benefit to mankind. Yet it was considered one of the most significant triumphs of its time (*The New York Herald* 2 September 1909; *The New York Times* 7 September 1909). Part of the reason is that the claiming of the Pole was the culmination of centuries of exploring exertions. By the time it was reached, Arctic exploration was an integral part of the Western mentality.

Equally important was that the claims of Cook and Peary, and their rivalry, were turned into the media event of the day, particularly by two of the most important newspapers in the United States, *The New York Herald* and *The New York Times*. In fact, the North Pole controversy was as much a competition between these newspapers as it was a feud between the rival explorers.

The interest of the press in Cook and Peary was not unique. Since the 1850s, explorers and newspapermen had cultivated close ties with each other. This thesis is a short history of the encounter of the popular press with the Arctic before 1910—an examination both of the British and American fascination with the far north and of the sensationalization of it by the press.

Sensationalism is a journalistic term that "critics, whether plain folk or professors, have applied...with more frequency and fervor than precision" (Francke 1978: 70). This is in part because it has been a changing attribute of the press. Sensational journalism has always been an "emphasis on emotion for its own sake" (Emery and Emery 1988: 115), something "which answers to fundamental and primitive human desires" (Mott 1962: 442). But it has been perceived at different times as pejorative (Arnold 1887: 638-639), neutral (Startt 1988: 278), and positive (Riis 1901: 160-165).



In the context of this study, sensationalism has no derogatory connotations. It refers to a full range of journalistic techniques used to interest, excite, or emotionally grip a vast readership that for one reason or another is more concerned with being entertained than educated with potentially dry, lifeless topics such as events in government or business. The basic methods of attracting an audience by appealing to its interests are widely accepted normative goals adopted by journalists who emphasize sinful pandering as well as those concerned with intellectual idealism.

By investigating the relationship between the press and Arctic exploration, this study seeks to re-examine some common theories about newspaper sensationalism.<sup>1</sup> For example, despite a consensus that in the 1880s there was a "new wave of sensational journalism" (Lee 1973: 191) following a period that had been barren of such techniques, this study considers whether the Anglo-American press sensationalized Arctic exploration throughout the 1870s. It also investigates whether the "quality" newspapers engaged in the sensationalism usually attributed to the "popular" press, and whether the English and American press differed substantially in their use of sensationalism to report about the Arctic.

The period studied is 1855 to 1910. The former date corresponds with the beginning of new patterns of Arctic exploration, the birth of the popular press in Britain, and the first expedition accounts written specifically to enthrall the public. The latter date is when, with the North Pole reputedly conquered, the press' interest in exploration shifted to other geographic regions, particularly the Antarctic.

The study is limited to the United States and England. Although it might have been desirable to have included the other countries of the United Kingdom, there were cogent reasons for not doing so. The peculiar political structure of Ireland made it *sui generis* as far as the press was concerned. It was also an overwhelmingly agrarian country, with a scattered population that had a relatively low level of literacy (Mitchell and Deane 1962). Only in Dublin and Belfast did Irish newspapers match the major English provincial press, and there was nothing to equal the newspapers of London. Further, the Irish press neither focused on exploration, nor regularly obtained major expedition accounts from London, despite sharing news agencies and telegraphs with the English.

If Ireland was too different to merit inclusion, then Scotland was too similar. In Scotland, the economic conditions were closer to those of England, the social links stronger, and the political obstacles fewer. The press was larger than in Ireland and played its part on the United Kingdom's stage along with the best of the English newspapers. A country long better-educated than England, it also supplied a disproportionate number of British journalists. Scotland was actively involved in the

Arctic, particularly in whaling, and although this was an argument for including the Scottish press, a pilot study found little original or substantive material pertaining to the high Arctic in Scottish newspapers. Even when ships returning from the far north stopped in Scotland before returning to Portsmouth, Southampton, or London, the reports in the Scottish press did not equal those of the London papers, which quickly sent reporters north for more extensive coverage and also benefitted from being on-hand when the officers submitted their reports upon arriving home.<sup>2</sup>

Wales was economically poorly developed, had a comparatively low level of literacy, and was for the most part sparsely populated, thus proving a far less fruitful source of journalistic talent and interest than either Ireland or Scotland. Few papers of importance took root even in the larger urban areas, and although a Welsh-language press flourished in parts of the country, by its very nature it tended to be limited and introverted (Jones 1988).

## 1.2 DEFINITIONS

A comparison of previous attempts by lexicographers and historians of journalism to define sensationalism shows that most have focused on one of three areas: intent and effect, categories of news, or methods and treatment. This study has attempted to combine these areas.

Typical of the "intent and effect" definitions are those that state that sensationalism is "intended to arouse strong curiosity, interest, or reaction, especially by exaggerated or lurid details" (*American heritage dictionary* 1980); is used to produce "startling effects, strong reaction, intense interest...by exaggerated, superficial, or lurid elements" (*Random House dictionary* 1978); or is "the production of violent emotion (e.g. of terror, hope, curiosity, etc.) as an aim in works of literature or art" (*Oxford English dictionary* 1989). The problem with these definitions is the use of pejorative terms such as lurid or violent. Sensational journalism attempts to arouse, startle, or even stimulate, but it may be inspired by noble motives, such as when it was used by W.T. Stead to improve social conditions for children (Schults 1972).

Attempting to confine sensationalism to specific categories of news (Kingsbury *et al.* 1933-1934; Mott 1962: 442) overlooks that few classifications—even war or crime—are necessarily sensational, and that all sensationalism depends to a certain extent on treatment (Murphy 1934). However, the sensational press does have a different standard in determining what articles to print, concentrating on those with wide appeal, such as "human-interest" stories, gossip, and features about crime, tragedy, adventure, or notable personalities (Juergens 1966: viii-ix).

More important as a contributing factor to sensationalism is the treatment of news, which includes both the literary content and the style of display—the use of artwork or photography, the selection of headlines and typefaces, and the techniques of layout and make-up. Juergens (1966: ix) indicated that sensational newspapers have both a specific prose style—"slangy, colloquial, and personal"—and a different way of determining the relative importance of stories, giving dominant placement, large headlines, and abundant photographs to articles that quality newspapers might relegate to modest back-page status.

Throughout the study, technical newspaper terms that might not be familiar to those outside the field have been used. These are briefly defined in the glossary that forms Appendix 1.

The place names used in this study comply with the usage of the British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names and of the American Board of Geographical Names, whereby the version of the name officially used within the country concerned is recognized as the correct form. Names of seas, straits, etc., that are international waters are rendered in English.

The most common definition of the Arctic is the area north of the Arctic Circle, at 66° 33' north latitude, the line above which the sun does not rise on the winter solstice nor set on the summer solstice (Diubaldo 1984: 187). However, conditions above and below that latitude vary to such a degree that many scientific definitions have been put forward in attempts to give more precision. For example, Dansereau (1957), Hustich (1960), and Hamet-Ahti (1981) offered biotic limits; Tuhkanen (1980; 1984) discussed climatic parameters; and Harris (1986) suggested a periglacial definition.

The definition of the Arctic adopted here is strictly geographical. The Arctic refers to that area north of both the Arctic Circle and the North American, European, or Asian mainland. With the exception of central and eastern Siberia above the Arctic Circle, the mainlands of those three continents are not included, nor are those islands south of the Arctic Circle, such as Southampton Island or Iceland. All of Greenland is considered Arctic, although the adjacent Davis Strait south of the island of Disko is not. Although this definition is essentially that of the late-nineteenth-century Anglo-American press, it should be remembered that the region meant by "the Arctic" changed with time, constantly retreating northward. Thus, it did not mean the same to William Edward Parry (1790-1855) as it did to Robert E. Peary (1856-1920).

Although due to national, regional, and dialectic differences, there are many distinct self-appellations for the peoples who inhabit the far north (Armstrong and Brody 1978), the use of different terms would be confusing. Eskimo (or Esquimaux) has not only long been an English word—first used by Richard Hakluyt in 1584 (Taylor 1935:

269)—it was virtually the only term used for these peoples by the press of the nineteenth century. Therefore, Eskimo has been employed here.

America could be used to describe any region in the New World, but for this study it is synonymous with the United States, and thus an American refers to an individual from that country.

As Western man's knowledge of the world has improved, his terminology for various areas of study has been altered. In science the language and even the names of the disciplines have changed in the past two centuries. Here, science is defined as the observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena. Subsumed in the realm of science are topics that were of great interest in the nineteenth century, including natural history, hydrography, meteorology, magnetism, geology, and botany. Alternatively, geography refers strictly to the physical outlines and features of a region. Thus, explorers were engaged in geographic study if they undertook even the most basic mapping or recording of the features and forms. However, scientific study required active collection of specimens, observation of natural phenomena, or testing and analysis of various data.

The term "image" has become common in the humanities and social sciences, but it has a wide diversity of meanings in its specific academic contexts, most of which are of little relevance to this study. Geographers generally use image in the same way as do historians: as people's concept of a place, region, or event that they have not experienced directly and that can be expressed in words, pictures, or maps (Tuan 1975: 205; Jakle 1977). This definition is adopted here.

### **1.3 THE CONVENTIONAL VIEW OF JOURNALISM**

To understand this study's objectives, it is helpful to be familiar with the areas of research that have—and have not—been examined in the history of the Arctic and the history of journalism.

Although a great deal has been written about polar exploration, most British and American historians have dealt either with the high-latitude searches for the Northwest Passage or John Franklin, lasting roughly from 1818 to 1859, or with the attainment of the Poles in the first dozen years of the twentieth century. Considerably less research has been conducted on the intervening period. What investigations there have been have concentrated on expeditions, giving little attention to the public of the time and its knowledge of the polar regions or their explorers. Newspapers have rarely been used to any great effect in the area of Arctic studies. And although much Arctic literature alludes briefly to a relationship between explorers and the press, there has not been a

systematic analysis of the press to establish either what the relationship was or what information was printed about the Arctic.

"The study of journalism history remains somewhat of an embarrassment," one scholar has observed (Carey 1974: 3). This is because it has been neglected in academic research, superseded to a great extent by studies of what can be labeled "media or communication theory." There has been even less examination of sensationalism in the press, and, for the most part, it has been confined to the birth of the American penny press in the 1830s, the "New Journalism" of the 1880s, and the "yellow journalism" of the 1890s.<sup>3</sup>

This restricted view of newspaper sensationalism is apparent in the textbooks used for university courses on journalism history. A survey of nine top journalism and communications departments in the United States indicated that few scholarly histories of the American press were in common use.<sup>4</sup> One, *The press and America* (Emery and Emery 1988), was employed by most of the departments questioned and recognized as "the most widely used text in journalism history courses" (Altschull 1984: 310); the other departments favored either *Power of the press* (Leonard 1986) or *Voices of a nation* (Folkerts and Teeter 1989). A consensus of instructors in the history of journalism at these universities also produced five other books considered the outstanding standard references for the subject (Payne 1920; Bleyer 1927; Mott 1962; Lee 1973; Hughes 1981).

These eight histories of journalism were examined with particular reference to sensationalism in the nineteenth century. Seven made much the same case for its development, forming what can be termed the "conventional view." The eighth (Leonard 1986) concentrated on political reporting, and did not discuss sensationalism to the same extent. However, its overview of the history of journalism did mention sensationalism as a prelude to "muckraking,"<sup>5</sup> and its interpretations corresponded with those of the others.

The conventional view of sensationalism is rooted in the whig interpretation of history. This was the dominant historiography of the early twentieth century, when journalism was beginning to flourish as an academic discipline (Altschull 1984: 116). Whig history studies the past with direct, perpetual reference to the present. According to Butterfield (1931: 9-46), the basic fault of this system is that it oversimplifies historical events because it sees changes relating to a purpose achieved, and views history as the continuous unfolding of progress to a present that represents the desirable state of the world. Because the whig historian finds it:

easy to say that he has seen the present in the past, he will imagine that he has discovered a 'root' or 'anticipation' of the 20th century, when in

reality...he has merely tumbled upon what could be shown to be a misleading analogy. Working upon the same system the whig historian can draw lines through certain events...and forget that this line is merely a mental trick of his; he comes to imagine that it represents something like a line of causation. The total result of this method is to impose a certain form upon the whole historical story, and to produce a scheme of general history which is bound to converge beautifully upon the present. (Butterfield 1931: 12-13)

In journalism, this simplistic interpretation has led the conventional view to assume that the growth of newspapers and the increasing power of journalists have been key factors in the development of the Western democracies of today, and to exaggerate the beneficent role played by the press while ignoring any possibility of its negative influences (Altschull 1978). This vision has been attacked as a "simple-minded theory of unilinear progress" (Gutman 1981), but no one has yet advanced a new synthesis of ideas that has replaced the whig interpretation, so this perception of the development of the press still predominates.

Perhaps one reason for this whig emphasis is that few authors of journalism texts have considered issues of historiography—such books traditionally have been written by journalists with little historical training rather than by historians. For example, Payne, Bleyer, Mott, Leonard, Folkerts, Teeter, and both Emerys have all been either professional journalists or members of journalism departments, as have authors of accounts written for the general public rather than students (Rutland 1973; Tebbel 1976). Undoubtedly, many of these individuals would agree with Altschull—"It is not my intention to condemn journalism or the institution of the press....As practitioner, academic, and critic, I have carried on a lifelong love affair with the press..." (1984: xi)—and would never consider questioning the role of the press.

In few areas of journalism history is the whig interpretation more apparent than in its emphasis on great men:

Through this system of immediate reference to the present-day, historical personages can easily and irresistibly be classed into the men who furthered progress and the men who tried to hinder it; so that a handy rule of thumb exists by which the historian can select and reject, and can make his points of emphasis. (Butterfield 1931: 11-12)

The conventional view of sensationalism follows Butterfield's argument closely, including focusing on the personalities of the American press. Most histories indicate that the popular press, led by Benjamin Day of *The Sun* of New York and James Gordon Bennett Sr. of *The New York Herald*, was born in the United States in the 1830s, and characterized by a wave of sensationalism.<sup>6</sup> Within several decades, the conventional view continues, the "sensationalism that had marked the first cheap papers...had been considerably tempered by their success. None of the outstanding papers in the decade following the Civil War could be characterized as sensational"

(Bleyer 1927: 322). Sensationalism did not reappear until the mid-1880s, when Joseph Pulitzer moved to New York to run *The World*: "The papers, which, in the early thirties, had been founded for the purpose of catering to the laboring classes had grown staid and conservative...the Pulitzer journalism was, therefore, not so much the inauguration of a new system as the re-birth of an old one" (Payne 1920: 363). During the next decade, sensationalism reached new heights after William Randolph Hearst purchased the *New York Morning Journal* in 1895, leading to the era of yellow journalism.<sup>7</sup>

Equally as important as the conventional view's emphasis on individuals such as Pulitzer and Hearst, is its rejection of others, including James Gordon Bennett Jr., who took over full control of *The Herald* in 1867, when it already had achieved the largest circulation in the United States. In the next 50 years, Bennett Jr. squandered more than \$30 million on a life of luxury (Seitz 1928: 377), contributing to the severe financial deficit of *The Herald* after his death in 1918. The whig interpretation is clear in the common journalistic contention that because of his profligate ways and managerial fickleness, the "younger Bennett brought the *New York Herald* to its downfall" (Emery and Emery 1984: 347), which occurred in the 1920s when it merged first with *The Sun* and then with the *New-York Tribune* (Tebbel 1976: 355). Because Bennett contributed to the collapse of *The Herald*—and because he is therefore not seen as a positive, progressive force—he has been vilified or ignored by whig historians of journalism.<sup>8</sup>

This dichotomy between the assessment of Bennett Jr. and that of Pulitzer or Hearst—when combined with the fact that it was Bennett Jr. who was the leader in the use of sensational journalism in the 1870s and early 1880s—helps explain the conventional view's inability to perceive sensationalism in the period before the mid-1880s.

The conventional view also assumes that sensationalism was most frequent in the popular press, such as *The Sun* and *The Herald* before the Civil War and the newspapers of Pulitzer and Hearst in the final decades of the nineteenth century. These are seen in most textbooks as papers that strove to gain circulation, and therefore to entertain rather than to inform or to lift the reader to new intellectual or moral heights (Leonard 1986: 145-151).<sup>9</sup> At the opposite end of the spectrum were the quality newspapers, such as *The New York Times*, which "was certainly not sensational" (Lee 1973: 272), but sold news "dispassionately and with the guarantee that it was reliable and unspoiled and not deviously inspired" (Talese 1971).

The history of the press is not taught at the university-level in Britain to the extent that it is in the United States, and thus "the most prolific literary form of the nineteenth century, and the precursor to modern journalism has largely been ignored by scholars and students in higher education" (Brake *et al.* 1990: xii). There are a number of

universities and polytechnics that offer either media studies or communications studies at the graduate and undergraduate levels, but their curricula deal very little with actual journalism and not at all with journalism history (Cookson 1988). A survey of instructors at these programs indicated a general lack of knowledge of any histories of British journalism.<sup>10</sup>

There are even fewer degrees offered specifically in journalism, with only three recognized graduate programs (Hughes 1990) and a handful of undergraduate majors in all of Britain (National Union of Journalists 1988). None of these departments offers a course in journalism history.<sup>11</sup> A combined survey of the heads of these departments and of the British participants in the 1986 conference on New Journalism held at the City University of New York (Wiener 1988a),<sup>12</sup> indicated that three texts on the history of British journalism were widely favored (Herd 1952; Brendon 1982; Williams 1984). However, these books must be viewed with the caveat expressed in one of them: "There is no book which covers the British press in a way that is both scholarly and readable: Francis Williams's *Dangerous estate* is jejune beside Edwin Emery's (admittedly somewhat textbookish) *The press and America*" (Brendon 1982: 258).

Like their American counterparts, these books—and their nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century predecessors<sup>13</sup>—were not only written by professional journalists ("and they may, perhaps, be forgiven for having been less than critical, and for having taken a rather narrow perspective"), but use the whig interpretation of history to form a consensus on the development of sensationalism (Lee 1978b: 40). According to this "British conventional view," sensationalism—or New Journalism—entered mainstream British journalism in *The Pall Mall Gazette* under the editorship of W.T. Stead (1883-1889), who simply adopted techniques of layout, writing, and investigative reporting from the sensational newspapers in the United States (Herd 1952: 224-231; Brendon 1982: 72-86; Williams 1984: 126-127, 152-156). *The Pall Mall Gazette*, however, remained a newspaper for the socially and politically elite. The first paper aimed at mass readership to adopt the New Journalism was *The Star*, which was founded in 1888 under the editorship of T.P. O'Connor.

The success of American-style sensationalism was not completely achieved in Britain, however, until the 1890s, when Alfred Harmsworth (later Lord Northcliffe) purchased *The Evening News* and founded the *Daily Mail*, the latter the first successful morning half-penny newspaper in London. Northcliffe was dramatically influenced by the success of both Pulitzer and Hearst, whom he emulated both in style and content (Herd 1952: 234-249, 262-270; Brendon 1982: 108-125; Williams 1984: 129-150).



As in the United States, the British conventional view perceives sensationalism in the popular rather than the quality press. *The Echo*, *The Star*, and the *Daily Mail* fall into the former category, and *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian* into the latter.

Despite the logic in looking at sensationalism in American and English newspapers as two aspects of the same phenomenon, few attempts have been made to analyze this transatlantic relationship. However, there is little dispute that English journalists, particularly Stead, O'Connor, and Northcliffe, borrowed heavily from Charles A. Dana and Pulitzer, while, in return, Northcliffe influenced many twentieth-century American newspapers (Pierce 1975; Marzoff 1984).

#### 1.4 NEWSPAPER SOURCES

This study does not pretend to cover the thousands of publications from the period under consideration. Rather, it is based on an intense survey of 22 daily and eight weekly newspapers, supplemented by the frequent, although less complete, use of several dozen other periodicals. A list of the 30 primary papers used, together with descriptions of their general characteristics, type of readership, and coverage of the Arctic, is in Appendices 2 and 3.<sup>14</sup> These papers include not only all those that helped establish the standard patterns for writing about the Arctic, but most of the large-circulation publications of the time. The selection is not a random one, but specially designed to embrace differing social and educational classes and political views.

The selection of newspapers contains what might initially seem to be a disproportionately high number from New York and London. Large papers across the United States frequently based their coverage of major national news stories on the information gained first hand by their own reporters. However, the New York newspapers boasted the largest circulations, produced editions for other parts of the country, and their prestige "was a strong and determining influence on hundreds of editors throughout the country" (Swanberg 1961: 117), a fact especially true both for international news such as Arctic exploration and for policies such as the use of sensationalism (Altschull 1984: 312). The same case can be made in Britain, where the London newspapers generally were the direct source of all national or international news (Simonis 1917; Lee 1976: 75).

## CHAPTER 2

### A STEREOTYPED IMAGE OF THE ARCTIC

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The emphasis of this study is the sensationalization of the Arctic and those who explored it between 1855 and 1910. However, a knowledge of the exploration of the Arctic prior to 1855 and an understanding of the Anglo-American public's stereotyped view of the far north—a view based on the aesthetics of the picturesque and the sublime—are necessary to comprehend the significance of the changes wrought by the popular press. It is also essential to examine the background of the press—its social and technological foundations, its birth, and its adoption of sensational techniques—to understand its later actions.

#### 2.2 THE BEGINNING OF ARCTIC AWARENESS

The most powerful image-makers prior to the nineteenth century were not the press, but books, both non-fiction (such as expedition accounts and geographical treatises) and fiction (including novels, plays, and epic poems). These were rarely read by vast numbers of people—the quantity available was even more limited than the relatively small literate population—but what they reported gained acceptance far beyond the reading public.

References to the Arctic reach as far back in Western literature as classical Greece. Pytheas of Masillia, a navigator of the fourth century B.C. who searched for a land he called Thule, was probably the first southern European to pass the Arctic Circle (Victor 1963: 26) or to give a description of the midnight sun (Whitaker 1982: 157, 163). Later Greek geographers doubted Pytheas' account of his voyage (Strabo 1967: I, 233, 519), but his claims have more recently been accepted, although accompanied by debate over the location of Thule: Iceland (Burton 1875: I, 1-32; Stefansson 1942: 9-79), Norway (Nansen 1911: I, 58-62; Markham 1921: 26-29), or the Shetlands (Bunbury 1879: I, 598-600). The importance of the Greek accounts to this study is not so much their description as their disbelief. Pytheas' voyage was questioned because the Arctic was imagined to be such an inhospitable place that no one could visit, much less live, there. This belief influenced European perceptions until the present century.

More than a thousand years later, the Norse began to investigate the Arctic. They discovered and colonized southwest Greenland, explored north to Melville Bay and west to Newfoundland, and sailed into the White Sea, but for all the impact they had on

the English-speaking world of the time, they might have never existed (Nansen 1911: II, 380-381).

Rather, it was the French humanist Francois Rabelais (1494-1553) who helped bring the Arctic into the consciousness of non-northern Europeans by his widely translated novel *Gargantua and Pantagruel*. The fourth book, which is a record of Pantagruel's maritime voyages, begins with his completion of the Northwest Passage (Rabelais 1900: III, 55-58) and includes descriptions of his sojourn among the people of the far north (Rabelais 1900: III, 77-80) and his stay on the edge of the frozen sea (Rabelais 1900: III, 202-204).

An analysis of the geographical background of the time (Lefranc 1905) suggested Jacques Cartier was Rabelais' main inspiration, but that he also was influenced by John Cabot. Cabot's first voyage created a sensation in England with tales of Newfoundland cold, fog, mosquitoes, and fish (Morison 1971: 189-190), but neither he nor Cartier ever reached high Arctic latitudes. Barbeau (1984) suggested Rabelais knew Cartier and used his accounts to create incidents on Pantagruel's voyages, but that the vision of the New World's north accepted at the court of Francois I (and, therefore, by the public) came from Rabelais' tales of danger and wonder in an area like the high Arctic rather than from Cartier's descriptions of the sub-Arctic.

High-latitude searches for the Northwest and Northeast Passages did not start in earnest until the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603). The stories of expeditions under Hugh Willoughby, Richard Chancellor, and Martin Frobisher provided the early English images of the Arctic as more beautiful, more vast, yet more mysterious, than anywhere else on earth. For example, in his account of the last voyage of the Dutch navigator Willem Barents (1596-1597), Gerrit de Veer wrote:

And when the sunne was about south south-east, wee saw a strange sight in the element for on each side of the sunne there was another sunne and two rainebowes that past cleane through the three sunnes, and then two rainebowes more, the one compassing round about the sunnes, and the other crosse through the great rundle.... (de Veer 1854: 72)

Voyages to the area that Claudio in *Measure for measure* called the "thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice" (Shakespeare 1952: II, 188; first performed 1604) continued in the early seventeenth century under Henry Hudson, William Baffin, Luke Foxe, and Thomas James. The literate British public was presented with a picture of the Arctic as a place of extremes. Nothing exemplified this like the ice cliffs, strikingly beautiful, with colors that amazed: aqua, alabaster white, coral pink, or emerald green. The awe of the Arctic and its features is evident in the writings of James: "In this Course, we were much tormented, pestered and beaten with the Ice and many Pieces being higher

than our Top-mast-Head....The Weather for the most Part, a stinking Fog, and the Sea very black..." (1973: 4-5).

None of the descriptions of the Arctic was more fanciful, nor more popular, than that of Pierre Martin Bruzen de la Martiniere, a French surgeon who served on the Danish exploring expedition of 1653, which sailed to the Barents Sea and Novaya Zemlya. Martiniere's book owed as much to fantasy as fact, both the narrative of strange fauna and native peoples, and the accompanying map, which was remarkably unrepresentative not only of the known geography of the time but of that of the present day. Nevertheless, his account was widely circulated in six languages and at least 16 editions, and had much influence on European perceptions of the Arctic for many years (Holland in preparation).

After James' expedition (1631-1632), there was a slackening of interest in the far north because of the succession of geographical and financial failures (Williams 1962: xvi). Not until after the Restoration did another English ship—*Nonsuch*—enter sub-Arctic Canada. In 1670 the 18 men who had supported that voyage were granted a charter under the name of the "Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay." The new Hudson's Bay Company held exclusive trading, mineral, and fishing rights for Rupert's Land, an area defined as the drainage basin of Hudson Bay, but that came to be equated with a much larger region (Cooke and Holland 1978: 32-33).

The Hudson's Bay Company was devoted to developing the fur trade and initially made few attempts to explore either inland Canada or its coast (Williams 1962: xvi). Moreover, to protect its trading monopoly, the Company prohibited publication of information about Rupert's Land (Williams 1970: 151-152; Moodie 1972).<sup>1</sup> Thus, during the next century, the popular material about the far north came from critics of the Hudson's Bay Company (Dobbs 1744; Ellis 1748; Robson 1752), pro-exploration activists like Daines Barrington and Alexander Dalrymple (Barrington 1775-1776; Dalrymple 1789), or expeditions seeking to navigate the Northwest Passage.

Such searches were infrequent in the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century, although they were encouraged by Parliament, which in 1745 offered a reward of £20,000 for anyone discovering a Northwest Passage through Hudson Strait (Cyriax 1939: 3). But the very failure of voyages such as those led by Christopher Middleton (1741-1742) and William Moor (1746-1747), and the secrecy of the Hudson's Bay Company made the Arctic more fascinating: that so little was known about it after centuries of exploration added to its power in the imaginations of the public (Ruggles 1971). It seemed that nature was manifested not only at its harshest but its most inscrutable in the unknown reaches of the polar world.

References to the Arctic were also infrequent in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century literature, and those that did appear, although using it as a source of mystery, coldness, and vastness, were wooden and conventional (Loomis 1977: 97). Most writers were ignorant of the Arctic; in their works, it became a mere trope, a convenient source of stock phrases about "icy grandeur." Mountains played a greater part in the English mentality, and the intense public interest that later developed in the Arctic was overshadowed until late in the eighteenth century by images of alpine scenery (Nicholson 1959: 30-47). Yet this fascination with alpine areas included the same stereotypes as the Arctic. They shared "an asymmetry that violated all classical canons of regularity" (Nicholson 1959: 32), a feature known as the "sublime."

### **2.3 THE ARCTIC SUBLIME**

Although the high Arctic had been scantily explored by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the English-speaking public had specific ideas about it. "The geography of any place," Watson (1969: 10) argued, "results from how we see it as much as what may be seen." Northern exploration entailed just such a process of identification, combining expectation, illusion, and empirical reality.

The constructs developed out of these combinations were not just distorted imaginings. Like the scientific views we now know to be erroneous, they were in effect truths of their time. In any period, reality is little more than a consensus that can be strikingly ephemeral (Kuhn 1962). Thus what was agreed upon in the past was just as real to its inhabitants as are the "actualities" of today. This is clearly demonstrated in the Anglo-American perceptions of the world at the start of the nineteenth century (McManis 1975; Ruggles 1988).

#### **2.3.1 The Picturesque and the Sublime**

It has been suggested that the visual world can be represented only by widely held schemata (Gombrich 1960). For British explorers of the Arctic in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, the known schemata for representing nature in prose and pictures were the picturesque and the sublime. They permitted him to produce aesthetic charts much as the Linnaean system for botanical identification did for the naturalists among the explorers and as the astronomical computations of latitude and longitude did for the astronomers among them. All such systems are essentially metaphors that, because of the authority vested in them, become accepted as measurements of the external world (MacLaren 1985b: 89-90).

The picturesque was the "habit of viewing and criticizing nature as if it were an infinite series of more or less well composed subjects for painting" (Hussey 1927: 1). As an art form, the picturesque was conventional, formulaic, and oversimplified:

A prospect...usually set on a moderate rise, looked out over a foreground, a lower middle ground through which a river meandered, and an enclosing background of bluish hills or mountains....at the side of the view, trees in clumps or rows would...'frame' the scene and encourage the single perspective. (MacLaren 1985b: 90)

Although great variety of elevation, vegetation, and light intensity could be used in such artwork, the overall sense of harmony was never to be sacrificed (Barrell 1972). The key to the picturesque in nature was that its seeker was meant to discover the quintessential harmony that operated in the relations between man and his world (Lowenthal and Prince 1964; 1965).

The sublime referred to the geography of vastness—enormous open spaces whose dimensions defied definition or even imagination. Open stretches of ocean or prairie, perilous mountain peaks or abysses, thunderstorms or tornadoes—in other words, nature at its extreme, beyond human control and inspiring fear and wonder—were regarded as sublime qualities of the natural world.

In 1756 Edmund Burke disseminated the notion of the sublime to British readers (Burke 1958). It had been a concept understood by travelers to the Alps since the sixteenth century, but Burke's treatise made comprehension of it indispensable to all who viewed nature (Boulton, in Burke 1958). The keystone to Burke's theory of sublimity was the emotion of terror, most notably displayed in the confrontation with the unknown (Monk 1960: 84-100). Burke classified the seven concepts he considered sublime and justified each: obscurity, where darkness and uncertainty arouse dread and terror; power, where the mind is impelled to fear because of superior force; privations, such as darkness and silence, because they are terrible; vastness in length, height, or depth; infinity, where an object seems infinite due to its size; magnificence; and difficulty, where an object owes its existence to a vast expenditure of effort (Burke 1958). Based upon Burke's classifications, no area on earth was more terrible or sublime than the Arctic.

Burke also noted that his classifications were closely related to the sensational, and that an aesthetic governed by passions acknowledged the power not only of nature but of those who could artificially produce emotion (Monk 1960: 84-100). And he further suggested that other effects of the sublime were the admiration, reverence, and respect accorded to the Creator.

Thus, the picturesque and the sublime were parts of the perceptual baggage of British explorers of the time. A focus of both aesthetics—belief in harmony between

man and nature—promised blindness to the threat posed by an environment unguided by the beneficent hand of the Deity. Continuing to find these, particularly the picturesque, where they did not exist opened a dangerous gulf between illusion and nature and imperiled one who could not understand what adaptations were demanded (MacLaren 1985a; 1985b: 101).<sup>2</sup> As McDougall (1857: 278-279) indicated, fanciful pictures of the Arctic produce graves. Or, as John Ross (1835: 600-603) noted, snow and ice in a Dutch landscape painting are not the same snow and ice that beset scurvy-ridden sailors trapped in the high Arctic.

### 2.3.2 The Arctic in the Late Eighteenth Century

In the late eighteenth century, when books on travel and exploration were outsold only by those on theology (Kirwan 1959: 47), viewing the Arctic by means of the sublime became increasingly employed by explorers, authors of fiction, and their audiences.

This emphasis was encouraged by changes in Arctic exploration. In 1776, an Act of Parliament stipulated as a condition of the reward for discovering the Northwest Passage that it should be found north of the fifty-second parallel, rather than through Hudson Strait (Cook and King 1784: I, xxxvi-xxxvii; Cyriax 1939: 3).<sup>3</sup> This helped move the search from the relatively cramped confines of the Bay to the vast, uncharted waters of the Pacific (Williams 1962). The most noted northern Pacific voyage of the time (1776-1780) was led by James Cook. The publication of the account of Cook's previous voyage (Cook 1777), during which his ships had become the first to cross the Antarctic Circle, brought polar works to new heights of popularity in England (Beaglehole 1961). Cook was killed on Hawaii before he could write an account of the far north, but his journals delighted an eager public (Cook and King 1784; Beaglehole 1974: 691).

Cook's contemporaries also built upon the stereotyped vision of the Arctic. Daines Barrington claimed that exploration had been carried out by whalers almost as far north as the Pole itself (Barrington 1775-1776). His concept of a mysterious open polar sea was doubted by many, but it reinforced the sublime idea of a natural order beyond man's understanding. Barrington helped organize a North Pole expedition in 1773, led by Constantine Phipps (Savours 1984). Phipps' account was very popular, although its images, like most of those of the period, were conventional, lifeless, and strained:

The black mountains, white snow, and beautiful colour of the ice make a very romantick and uncommon picture. Large pieces frequently break off from the Icebergs and fall with great noise into the water; we observed one piece which had floated out into the bay, and grounded in twenty-four fathom; it was fifty feet high above the surface of the water. (Phipps 1775: 70)

Other Arctic travels added to the notion of the sublime because of their failure to illuminate the mysteries of the far north. Fearing competition, British whalers in the Davis Strait were loath to give descriptions of areas rich in marine life (Holland 1988a). Even expeditions of discovery, such as those by Samuel Hearne of the Hudson's Bay Company to the mouth of the Coppermine River in 1771, and by Alexander Mackenzie of the North West Company down the Mackenzie River to its mouth in 1789, added only small points in a vast, unexplored map. The mystery also increased because it was not until 1795, more than two decades after Hearne's expedition, that the Hudson's Bay Company allowed the publication of his expedition narrative (Hearne 1795; Williams 1970: 169).<sup>4</sup> Mackenzie's account also took more than a decade from when he began his travels to reach the readers (Mackenzie 1801). Actually, the tone of both Hearne's and Mackenzie's accounts was influenced by the picturesque (Stacey 1988: 165-167). But their reports were incompatible with a common geographical assumption that similar climates occurred at similar latitudes (Moodie 1976: 298), therefore making the Canadian high Arctic (by latitudinal comparison to Europe) an area that needed description by the sublime.

Even George Vancouver's meticulous exploration of the west coast of North America (1791-1795) drew the Arctic to public attention, because by killing the hope for a Northwest Passage through temperate America, he had pointed the way to the unexplored north (Lamb 1984: I, 245).

In 1798, the year that Vancouver's account appeared, *The rime of the ancient mariner*, the era's most influential vision of the polar world, was published. Loomis (1977: 98) has suggested that Samuel Taylor Coleridge's epic poem remained popular throughout the nineteenth century because of the questions it provoked. However, its popularity might have come rather from its imagery. Coleridge had never crossed the English Channel, much less experienced the polar regions, but he was an avid reader of Arctic literature (Lowe 1951: 135), and this is perhaps why he was able to capture the northern voyages in a manner "as true to fact as an Admiralty report" (Gardiner, in Coleridge 1965: 41).<sup>5</sup>

By the early nineteenth century, the Arctic was regarded as an exotic background for adventure stories, closer to fiction than to the norm. However, if the expressions of awe, admiration, and wonder were based on actual experience, so much the better, which accounted for the popularity of many travel accounts, such as one that described a summer's night in Hudson Bay:

In the middle of the night, the prospect from the ship was one of the most awful and sublime that I ever remember having witnessed, during a life spent entirely upon the ocean: and I regret that no language of mine can give an adequate idea of the grandeur of the scene....the whole forming a



midnight prospect which I would have gone any distance to see; but having once beheld, never wish to witness again. (Chappell 1817: 123-125)

During this time, explorers continued to wander over the unmapped spaces of the far north. But the great mysteries remained unsolved. When Europe became engaged in the Napoleonic wars, a great silence again closed over the Arctic. Clearly this could not last. It could only be a short time before the aggressive curiosity of Britain and America was drawn irresistably toward opening the Arctic to the world.

### 2.3.3 The Search for the Northwest Passage, 1818-1845

It is one of the coincidences of Arctic exploration that 1818 marked not only the revival of the British search for the Northwest Passage and the North Pole but the appearance of a novel that used the Arctic as effectively as any ever written. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* was prophetic: the changes it traced in the character Walton anticipated those that the Victorian audience underwent during the next half century. Initially Walton's dream was of a tropical paradise surrounding the Pole, and his belief in the Arctic's sublime power was highlighted by his meeting Frankenstein, of whom he wrote: "The starry sky, the sea, and every sight afforded by these wonderful regions, seems still to have the power of elevating his soul from earth" (Shelley 1818: I, 34). Each of the two men in his own way—Frankenstein in his laboratory and Walton in his explorations—sought "to penetrate ground that seems unredeemably dead, searching for a core of vital warmth unseen before" (Griffin 1979: 59). It was only by exposure to Frankenstein's tale that Walton learned of the more ominous aspects of the sublime. Thus, by the end of the novel he was able to recognize the terror of his own expedition: "I am surrounded by mountains of ice, which admit of no escape, and threaten every moment to crush my vessel. The brave fellows, whom I have persuaded to be my companions, look towards me for aid; but I have none to bestow. There is something terribly appalling in our situation" (Shelley 1818: III, 163-164).

Despite the success of *Frankenstein*, it was the only significant work of fiction about the Arctic in the first half of the nineteenth century (although Edgar Allan Poe's *The narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* was a tale of Antarctic exploration). This is partly because there was no need for creating stories—in an era that focused on exploration, there were plenty of expedition accounts available.

The moving spirit behind the new British expeditions was the Second Secretary of the Admiralty, John Barrow. A man called the "Father of Arctic Exploration," Barrow viewed exploration as a means of occupying the Royal Navy, which was beginning to stagnate after Napoleon's defeat (Holland 1988b). There was also a possibility of commercial profit in exploration, but more compelling reasons were national pride and the quest for scientific knowledge (Barrow 1847).

The first expedition for which Barrow was responsible was sent in 1816 to explore the Congo River under the command of James Kingston Tuckey. A memorandum of 7 February 1816 from Barrow to Tuckey stated:

That a river of such magnitude as the Zaire...should not be known with any degree of certainty...is incompatible with the present advanced state of geographical science, and little creditable to those Europeans, who, for three centuries nearly, have occupied various parts of the coast, near to which it empties itself into the sea.... (Tuckey 1818: xxxi)

This memorandum captured the essence of Barrow's interest in exploration, but it was not the fetid jungles of Africa that caught his fancy; it was the Arctic. Barrow pressured the Royal Society to persuade Parliament to amend the Act of 1776, offering prize money for the completion of parts or all of the Northwest Passage or the journey to the North Pole (Cyriax 1939: 3-4). He convinced the Admiralty that national honor was at stake in the Arctic, writing about Russia: "It would be somewhat mortifying if a naval power but of yesterday should complete a discovery in the nineteenth century, which was so happily commenced by Englishmen in the sixteenth" (quoted in Berton 1988: 21).

In 1818 Barrow's machinations led to two expeditions to the north. One, under the command of David Buchan, was to attempt to reach the Pole in *Dorothea* and *Trent*, the former just back from having served as Tuckey's transport ship (Lloyd 1970: 121). The other, under John Ross, was to renew the search for the Northwest Passage in *Isabella* and *Alexander*. Both expeditions failed in their objectives—Buchan was stopped west of Spitsbergen, and Ross barely penetrated Lancaster Sound before turning back—but they initiated one of the most determined periods in the history of the exploration of the Arctic.

During the next 25 years, the British mounted a series of overland and maritime expeditions that added many pieces to the jigsaw puzzle of the Canadian archipelago. Throughout this time, the emphasis was on the completion of the Northwest Passage. Everything else—the mapping of the continental coastline, the collection of botanical and geological specimens, the taking of magnetic and hydrographic measurements—was secondary. It was the Passage itself that fired the imagination of the Admiralty, the explorers, the press, and the public. And it was the explorers who attempted to complete the Passage, endured dreadful ordeals but persisted in the face of adversity, and demonstrated British hardihood and courage even in failure, who became national heroes: men such as William Edward Parry, John Franklin, James Clark Ross, and George Back.

These Royal Navy officers stood at the head of a long line of British exploring heroes that included Robert McClure, Francis Leopold McClintock, David Livingstone,

Richard Burton, Ernest Shackleton, and Robert Falcon Scott. They were folk figures, larger than life, and their failings, flaws, and human frailties were ignored by the press and public, which saw in them everything grand and honorable. One of the first was Parry, whose exploits so impressed young Emily Brontë that she regularly used his name as a figure in her games. Later, she adopted it as a pseudonym (Gerin 1971: 12-14). Her sister Anne had a similar devotion for John Ross (Gerin 1971: 15).

The new explorers also wrote books about their travels and the strange world of the far north:

It was a sight altogether novel to me: I had seen nothing in the Old World at all resembling it. There was not the stern beauty of Alpine scenery, and still less the fair variety of hill and dale, forest and glade, which makes the charm of an European landscape. There was nothing to catch or detain the lingering eye, which wandered on, without a check, over endless lines of round-backed rocks, whose sides were rent into indescribably eccentric forms. It was like a stormy ocean suddenly petrified. Except for a few tawny and pale green lichens, there was nothing to relieve the horror of the scene...." (Back 1836: 178)

One of the earliest and most popular of these accounts was Parry's *Journal of a voyage for the discovery of a North-West Passage* (1821). Viewed from a later perspective, Parry's text seems subdued, devoting many pages to the mundane details of daily life aboard ship. But such details were not mundane at the time. Wintering in the Arctic was new in 1820, and it was something that thrilled the British public. Thus, as unromantic as the book seems, it created a very romantic image. Even Parry's understatement and logic in describing the unusual—his unwillingness to indulge in raptures—emphasized the strangeness and vastness of the Arctic. When, for example, he commented on the dreariness of the long, dark winter, he evoked sublimity:

Not an object was to be seen on which the eye could long rest with pleasure, unless when directed to the spot where the ships lay, and where our little colony was planted. The sound of voices...served now and then to break the silence that reigned round us, a silence far different from that peaceable composure which characterizes the landscape of a cultivated country; it was the deathlike stillness of the most dreary desolation, and the total absence of animated existence. (Parry 1821: 125)

The winter was only one aspect of this extraordinary world; at times, the Arctic was so dazzling that it blinded, at others so murky with fog a hand could not be seen in front of one's face. It was a world of phenomena that created weird visual effects: the parhelia (or "mock suns"), the aurora borealis, and the "loomings" created by refraction. And it was a world of eerie sounds, particularly those of the ice. "There was such a frightful rumbling, and cracking of the ice as if many cannons had been fired at once, and then ensued a violent noise, like the roaring of a cascade" (Crantz 1820: I, 20). Above all, it was a world made constantly unstable by the ice pack that

could trap or crush the strongest ship, and against which even the new steam engines of the industrial age were helpless. The public thus gained knowledge of the Arctic that was a compound of fact and fantasy, and that was dictated by the power of the sublime.

Few explorers made more of an impression on the public than John Franklin, a Royal Navy officer who, after serving under Buchan in 1818, led two overland expeditions to explore the north coast of British North America (1819-1822 and 1825-1827). On the first, 11 of Franklin's company died from starvation, exhaustion, and murder. But Franklin, who survived these horrors and became known as "the man who had eaten his shoes," emerged a folk hero. On his return from his second expedition, he was knighted and Oxford University awarded him an honorary degree.

It was certainly not Franklin's ability as a writer that gained him prominence. His books were plodding, tedious, and formal:

Moose-Deer Island is about a mile in diameter, and rises towards the centre about three hundred feet above the lake. Its soil is in general sandy, in some parts swampy. The varieties of the northern berries grow abundantly on it. The North-West Company's fort is in latitude 61° 11' 8" N.; longitude 113° 51' 37" W., being two hundred and sixty statute miles distant from Fort Chipewyan, by the river course. The variation of the compass is 25° 40' 47" E. The houses of the two Companies are small, and have a bleak northern aspect. (Franklin 1823: 199)

Even when Franklin attempted to describe the Canadian scenery in terms of the picturesque, the result was not evocative:

Steel River presents much beautiful scenery; it winds through a narrow, but well-wooded, valley, which at every turn disclosed to us an agreeable variety of prospect, rendered more picturesque by the effect of the season on the foliage, now ready to drop from the trees. The light yellow of the fading poplars formed a fine contrast to the dark evergreen of the spruce, whilst the willows, of an intermediate hue, served to shade the two principal masses of colour into each other. (Franklin 1823: 29-30)

Instead, the public delighted in Franklin's account of suffering, murder, and cannibalism, all of which fit the prevailing taste for gothic tales (Hodgson 1985: 5). Simultaneously, his books included an unintentional use of the sublime: the very lands that reduced his company to such desperate conditions must have been powerful, vast, brooding, obscure, and terrible.

But why Franklin's personal popularity? There had been earlier accounts of hardship and death. Yet the attention that he received had not been previously forthcoming (Wallace 1980: 13). An answer is hard to provide—perhaps it was because the public could sense his noble character; perhaps because he, unlike his predecessors on land expeditions, was a Royal Navy officer; perhaps the public approved of the scientific investigations by John Richardson, who accompanied Franklin; or perhaps Franklin's expedition was such an overwhelming disaster that the very idea that he

could come back alive from so unsurvivable a place captured the public's imagination. For whatever reason, Franklin had laid the groundwork for both his and later explorers' roles as tragic heroes, the kind the English preferred.

It was a situation that led Dr. John Rae, a Hudson's Bay Company surveyor, to write, "The way to get into credit...is to plan some...scheme...and after having signally failed, return with a lot of...reasons—sufficiently good to gull John Bull—for your failure" (Rae to George Simpson, 19 November 1852, in Rae 1953: 233).

Thus the stage was set for the greatest concentration ever on Arctic exploration. It was also the period for the serious entry of newspapers onto the Arctic scene.

## 2.4 THE ROOTS OF THE POPULAR PRESS

"Newspapers are the only things that people will ever read, and that they desire to read," reported the Select Committee on Newspaper Stamps in 1851. "All the information they get is through that means and conversation, all of which originates in the newspapers" (Great Britain 1851: 93-94).

This assessment was made at a time when the popular press was in its infancy in the United States and had not yet developed in England. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the press was to become exponentially larger, more powerful, and more ubiquitous.

The English-language popular press was born in the United States, several decades before it reached England. An important reason was that from its beginning the new country afforded protections for the press that existed nowhere else (Rutland 1955; Summers 1969). The working-class man also became a significant political and economic force (therefore of importance to the press) earlier in America than in Britain.<sup>6</sup> The enfranchisement of the common man in America was virtually completed in the 1820s (MacDonald 1906; Fish 1927), whereas in Britain the Reform Bill of 1832 admitted only the "respectable" class—one man in six—to the vote (Young 1932: II, 436). It was only in 1867, when the inclusion of all ratepayers almost doubled the electorate, that the common man gained a significant political voice (Read 1979: 150-152; Cole and Postgate 1949: 390-391).

The three great requisites of a mass reading public—literacy, leisure time, and spending money—were also generally available in America before they were in England. By the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the United States had achieved a literacy rate of 91 percent of the white population (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1975: 364-365, 382).<sup>7</sup> By contrast, the literacy rate in England was 50 to 60 percent (Webb 1955: 21-23), with a considerably lower rate not long before (Stone 1969; Sanderson 1972). It was only with the increased emphasis on education in the

second half of the century (most notable in the passage of W.E. Forster's Education Act of 1870) that England's literacy rate approached that of the United States (Porter 1912: 132-149).<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the official English literacy figures for the first half of the century were suspiciously high, because the method used to compile them was flawed (Altick 1957: 141-172).<sup>9</sup>

The availability of leisure time in which to read increased throughout the nineteenth century for the middle and working classes of both countries. There are indications that the American middle class had more leisure time than the English (Mitchell and Deane 1962; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1975: 151-155, 169-173), but the prominent place of the evening reading circle in Victorian middle-class family life suggests that the English middle class spent more time reading than its American counterpart (Altick 1957: 85-86; Thompson 1977). American workers undoubtedly had more time to read than those in England, many of whom worked 14-hour days in the early 1800s and had 60-hour weeks in the 1890s (Brown and Browne 1968: 173-174; Gregg 1973).

The standard of living rose in both countries (Deane and Cole 1962; Brown and Browne 1968: 110-113; Mathias 1969: 213-223, 375-381), but average earnings in the United States were higher than those in England during most of the nineteenth century (Brown and Browne 1968: 67-71). The real income of the average English middle-class or working-class family increased by 70 to 80 percent between 1850 and 1880 (Levi 1885: 48-53; Cole 1948: 266-267), a rate similar to that in America (Brown and Browne 1968: 157-173; Rossiter 1971: 148-149).

Another prerequisite of the mass press was the technology enabling the production and distribution of large quantities of periodicals. These developments continued into the twentieth century, but dramatic strides were made in the early and middle decades of the nineteenth. The printing press had changed little in 350 years. To the simple platen press had been added a metal screw (1550), a sliding bed and an anti-twist device (1620), and a cast-iron frame (1800). Worked by strong men, these hand presses could produce 200 to 300 impressions an hour (Isaacs 1931: 10-13).

Major breakthroughs were initiated by Friedrich Koenig. Between 1811 and 1816, he patented the world's first steam-driven press, built a two-cylinder press, and invented a perfecting press capable of printing on both sides of the paper in one operation. In 1814, *The Times* became the first newspaper to use one of Koenig's perfectors, which could print approximately 1,100 impressions per hour (Howe 1943: 2-3; Woods and Bishop 1983). Design improvements, first by William Cowper and Augustus Applegarth and then by David Napier, made it possible to print 3,000 sheets per hour, but that was still not fast enough to keep up with rapidly increasing circulation. The problem was that a bed weighing more than a half ton had to be moved

76 inches, brought to a dead stop, and started again in the other direction; this meant a tremendous waste of power and an impression of inconsistent quality (Lee 1976: 55).

The solution to this dilemma came in 1846 when the American Richard Hoe combined the concept of rotary motion with locking movable type onto a horizontal cylinder. Hoe sold his first type-revolver to *La Patrie* in Paris, and another to the *Public Ledger* of Philadelphia (Musson 1958: 416). In 1849, *The New York Herald* installed a Hoe six-cylinder press capable of printing 12,000 impressions an hour. Five years later, *The Herald* became the first newspaper to change from turtles (the segmental chases in which movable type was locked in columns) to stereotypes—curved, solid plates of type. Stereotypes, which allowed the duplication of pages so that several presses could print simultaneously, were introduced to the English press in 1858 by *The Times* (Berry 1958: 694-701).

The effect of technological developments on the speed and scale of newspaper production was not confined to printing. Distribution and news-gathering were accomplished at a pace previously unimaginable. Railways so expedited the delivery of newspapers that by the 1840s areas outside the home counties were able to obtain same-day London papers, and by the 1870s Bristol, Norwich, and Birmingham received the London morning dailies before business hours (Hitchman 1880: 506; Redivivus 1899). In the early 1840s, *The New York Herald* also established a regular system of carriers so that subscribers in Newark, Albany, and Philadelphia could read their papers at the breakfast table (Hudson 1873: 438).

The most important step in the rapid transmission of news was the invention of the telegraph. On 21 May 1844, the same day that Samuel Morse sent the first telegraphic message, he also inaccurately wired the results of a vote in the House of Representatives to the *Baltimore Patriot & Commercial Gazette* (Cray et al. 1990: 38). A year later, the first message transmitted by telegraph to an English newspaper was sent from Portsmouth to *The Morning Chronicle* of London (Lee 1976: 60). Newspapers all over America and Britain were quick to exploit the wire. Similar speed was achieved internationally when the first submarine cable was laid between Dover and Calais in 1851.

When the technology for a mass press combined with the overt emphasis of the Jacksonian era on the common man, the development of newspapers for the masses was a logical result.

## 2.5 THE BIRTH OF THE AMERICAN PENNY PRESS

If one date were to be selected for the birth of the modern American press, it undoubtedly would be 3 September 1833, when Benjamin H. Day first published his four-page New York newspaper, *The Sun*.

Before Day's entry into journalism, American metropolitan dailies served primarily as mouthpieces for political parties, while also attracting a small audience interested in business news. The price of the papers—six cents per copy or \$10 per year—was prohibitive for most people, who had little interest in partisan editorials or detailed mercantile listings. The bulk of the remaining space was filled with mundane features clipped from other newspapers, few of which would meet modern standards of quality or interest. The mercantile papers were almost without exception dull and heavy in appearance and tone, and their very names—for example, *The New-York Mercantile Advertiser* and the *Journal of Commerce*—bespoke of products that would gain small circulations; in fact, the largest was about 4,000 (Crouthamel 1964; Francke 1974).

Day's *Sun* cost only a penny, and it revolutionized circulation methods in the United States by ignoring the usual subscription requirements and introducing the "London plan" of distribution, in which newsboys hawked papers in the streets.<sup>10</sup> Day realized that the key to popular journalism "lay in appealing to the emotions of the masses rather than to their intellects" (Bleyer 1927: 164), so he filled his paper with interesting but trivial local news, humorous "human-interest" stories,<sup>11</sup> and features about topics such as animals and children, all written in an eminently readable manner. *The Sun* also began a trend toward sensationalism, covering murder, suicide, and duels, while deliberately ignoring economic and political news (O'Brien 1918: 31-63). The result of these innovations was that within two years *The Sun* had the highest daily circulation in the world, more than 15,000 (O'Brien 1918: 78). It remained a journalistic power for the next three-quarters of a century.

Within four years of the start of *The Sun*, four imitators had come and gone from the New York scene (Coggeshall 1856: 148), but one proved even more successful than Day's paper—*The New York Herald* of James Gordon Bennett, founded in 1835.<sup>12</sup> The subject matter and style of *The Herald* were initially similar to those of *The Sun*, but Bennett, who had a seemingly unerring news sense, soon expanded his coverage to include hitherto neglected areas as well as economic and political news. In this way, he challenged both the penny and mercantile papers by not only doing what they were, but by doing it better and by doing more. Bennett appealed to the business class by developing the best financial section in the country. He devoted space to society news, religion, and sport, none of which had yet been prominently featured in the press. And he showed that a paper could flourish without the backing of politicians (Fermer 1986: 13-30).<sup>13</sup>

In a short period of time, *The Herald* began to outdo *The Sun* in its sensational reports of crime and scandal, delighting in describing itself as "saucy" and "spicy." "I



have seen human depravity to the core," trumpeted Bennett, "I proclaim each morning...the deep guilt that is encrusting over society" (*The Herald* 19 August 1836).

*The Herald's* readers were fed a steady diet of murder, suicide, seduction, and rape. Bennett calculated that his audience was "more ready to seek six columns of the details of a brutal murder, or of testimony in a divorce case, or the trial of a divine for improprieties of conduct, than the same amount of words poured forth by the genius of the noblest author of the times" (Pray 1855: 225).

The story that above all others assured *The Herald's* success was the Jewett-Robinson murder case of 1836 (Villard 1923).<sup>14</sup> Bennett's energetic reporting of this brothel killing—during which he is credited with originating the interview<sup>15</sup>—and his imaginative exploitation of the investigation not only boosted *Herald* sales enormously but made Bennett himself an item of news, something that he never let change for the next three decades. When he was not announcing his plans—such as his upcoming wedding, which received front-page coverage (*The Morning Herald* 1 June 1840)—he was touting his success: "I know and I feel I shall succeed. Nothing can prevent... success but God Almighty, and he happens to be entirely on my side" (*The Herald* 20 July 1836).

Bennett's sensational coverage was not limited to local violence or crime. The death of Aaron Burr (16, 18, 19 September 1836), the arrest and trial of Alexander McLeod,<sup>16</sup> and Joseph Smith and his Mormon followers (8, 10 July 1844) all received extended treatment. Anything new or different could be sensationalized: the discovery of the ruins of Mayan civilization (10 May, 25 June, 22 July 1841), the capture of a giraffe (14 August 1838), or Millerite meetings predicting the impending end of the world and Christ's second coming (4, 6, 12, 13, 14, 16 November 1842). Bennett also realized that unusual places had appeal. This was one reason *The Herald* was so comprehensive in its coverage of the Mexican War, to which it was the only New York paper to send a full-time correspondent (Hudson 1873: 476-477).

Bennett also was a great believer in the effect of sensational illustrations. Perhaps having learned from the success of a woodcut accompanying a bogus story in *The Sun* in 1835,<sup>17</sup> in the same year he used one to supplement an account of a fire in New York's business district (21 December 1835). A decade later, *The Herald* ran the first full-page illustration on page one—of "The Grand Funeral Procession in Memory of Andrew Jackson" (*The New York Herald* 28 June 1845; Hughes 1981: 221). Although such illustrations were rare in American journalism until the founding of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* in 1855, *The Herald* printed about 20 a year by the 1840s (Crouthamel 1973: 313), including six in September 1839 alone.

Bennett's innovations had their desired effects. Despite a price increase to two cents in 1836—whereas *The Sun* remained a penny until 1864—*The Herald* outsold all its rivals, and in 1860 boasted a circulation of 77,000, the largest of any daily in the United States (Seitz 1928; Fermer 1986: 323-324).

The next two decades saw the beginning of countless penny papers, the two most important of which were the *New-York Tribune* of Horace Greeley (1841) and the *New-York Daily Times* of Henry J. Raymond, George Jones, and E.B. Wesley (which was founded in 1851, but dropped the "Daily" from its name in 1857, becoming *The New-York Times*). Greeley was one of the greatest editorial writers in American newspaper history and a champion of the press as a democratic forum. He had more credibility with the people of the United States than perhaps any other journalist in history. In general, Greeley eschewed sensationalism, and although the *Tribune* had brief flashes of it, neither Greeley nor his successors ever truly adopted the sensational practices of their chief rivals (Van Deusen 1953; Lunde 1981).

Similarly, Raymond, the editor of the *Daily Times*, was determined that it should be decent, reliable, fair, and complete, even at the risk of some dullness (Brendon 1982: 59-61). Under Raymond's leadership, the *Daily Times* soon established a reputation for supreme objectivity (Maverick 1870; Brown 1951). Although Raymond did not believe in the eccentric idealism of Greeley,<sup>18</sup> he loathed the sensationalism of *The Sun* and *The Herald*, which he called "cheap, filthy, false and extravagant" (*The New-York Times* 26 August 1859). At the same time, he acknowledged Bennett's ability to understand what his readership demanded, commenting that he would pay the Devil one million dollars to whisper to him each evening "as he does Bennett, what the people of New York would like to read about the next morning" (quoted in Carlson 1942: xi).<sup>19</sup>

Despite the presence of three nationally important rivals in New York City, from the early 1850s (when it surpassed *The Sun*) to the mid-1880s *The Herald* remained not only the nation's leader in circulation, but also in the creation of images from around the world. There were three reasons for this success other than those already cited. First, *The Herald* gained an enormous following because of the publicity it received during the "moral war" waged against both Bennett and his newspaper by the New York competition in the early 1840—a war supposedly launched because of the outrageous language and defiance of convention by *The Herald*, but in reality the first circulation war, aimed at *The Herald* because of its very success (Three Lookers-on 1840; Mott 1952: 51). Second, *The Herald* was the only New York newspaper other than the *Tribune* to issue successful editions for both the midwest and California (Emery and Emery 1988: 143). Such attempts by most eastern papers died out because

of the growth of western papers, as in the case of *The New-York Times* (Davis 1921: 24). And third, as Parton (1866) indicated, Bennett was the undisputed master of the crucial point of journalistic competition—news-gathering. Parton was appalled by the sensationalism of *The Herald*, but he admitted, "it is impossible any longer to deny that the chief newspaper of that busy city is *The New York Herald*. No matter how much we may regret this fact, or be ashamed of it, no journalist can deny it" (1866: 379).

Bennett's innate understanding of what news to obtain was equalled only by his ability to procure it. He led the way in gathering news from distant places, quickly adopting the steamship, railroad, and telegraph when they superseded sailing ships, ponies, and pigeons (Rosewater 1930: 27-29; Giddings 1958; Fermer 1986: 33-39). *The Herald* was the most frequent user of the telegraph in the 1840s (Rosewater 1930: 41-42). Bennett was also the first American publisher to set up a regular team of European correspondents (Pray 1855: 249-251; Wikoff 1880: I, 464-496).

Bennett was also at the front in collection of national and local news. He was one of the first Washington correspondents and his inquiring methods helped *The Herald* establish a reputation for political coverage that made it the most widely read American paper in Britain (*Foreign Quarterly Review* 1843; McCullagh 1929). He asserted the right of his reporters to go into physical areas and spheres of society previously regarded as private. Congressmen, businessmen, and socialites were affronted by this intrusion, but, knowing that to snub a *Herald* reporter could mean a cruel lampooning, they had to accept it (Nevins 1936: 289-290, 464-465; Fermer 1986: 21).

Being the best at news-gathering necessarily put *The Herald* in first place in the collection of sensational material. Crouthamel indicated that sensational stories were missed by the other papers, but nothing escaped the attention of *The Herald* unless it was dull and uninteresting (1973: 315-316).

## 2.6 THE BEGINNING OF ENGLISH SENSATIONALISM

By the late-1840s, *Herald*-style sensationalism was wide-spread in American journalism, but across the Atlantic, such sensationalism had been flatly rejected by the English dailies, which by comparison were conventional, staid, and—until 1855—still a luxury of the upper classes (Wadsworth 1955: 2).

An underlying difference between the English and American press was the existence in Britain of "taxes on knowledge" that did not allow newspapers to reach the general public. The ruling class' boldest attempt to terminate popular newspapers was made in 1819, when the Newspaper Stamp Act defined as a newspaper (and thus subject to a four-pence tax) every periodical containing news or comments on the news that was published more frequently than every 26 days, was printed on two sheets or

less, and was priced at less than six pence exclusive of tax (Rose 1897; Wickwar 1928). The result of the Stamp Act was that a mass press could not legally or viably exist, due to the prohibitive prices charged for a newspaper (Collet 1899).

The first major steps towards the creation of cheap newspapers were taken the same year the penny press was born in America. In 1833 the advertisement tax was cut from 3s.6d. to 1s.6d. per ad. Three years later, the newspaper tax was lowered to a penny per issue, and the paper duty was slightly reduced (Aspinall 1949).<sup>20</sup> But more than two decades were to pass before the struggle for a popular press was won. In 1853 the advertising duty was repealed; two years later, the newspaper tax was abolished; and in 1861 the duty on paper was removed. For the first time since the reign of Queen Anne (1702-1714), the English press was completely free of fiscal restrictions (Collet 1899; Aspinall 1949).

In the meantime, however, daily newspapers were remarkably uniform. In 1833 *The Times* adopted a six-column, eight-page format that most other English newspapers imitated for the next half century (Hutt 1973: 44). This basic new look included small type; run-on text; and single-column, titling headlines of minimal size. With the exception of *The Times*, throughout the 1830s and 1840s the circulation of these dailies was also minimal. Although by 1846, *The Times* had achieved a circulation of 28,600, its three largest competitors—*The Morning Herald*, *The Morning Advertiser*, and *The Morning Chronicle*—combined for daily sales of less than 15,000.

The largest circulations belonged rather to the representatives of that peculiarly British institution—the separate Sunday paper. By the early 1850s three weeklies, *The Illustrated London News*, *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, and *The News of the World*, had circulations of more than 100,000, while two, *The Weekly Times* and *Reynolds's Newspaper*, also outsold even *The Times* (Wadsworth 1955; Perkin 1981: 53).

The Sunday papers traditionally were considered to have been the stronghold of the radical press (Escott 1911; Ellegard 1957), but it has been indicated more recently (Lee 1974: 51-52; Berridge 1978: 254-264) that the keynote of those that were the most successful by the mid-nineteenth century was rather their emphasis on commercialism. The fact that the papers were under the control of middle-class businessmen instead of artisans or radical politicians, and the very way in which they were run—with an emphasis on sales, marketing, and business techniques—suggest that their origin lay not in a natural outgrowth of working-class concerns but in a shrewd assessment of the possibilities of an expanding working-class market.

This drive toward commercialization led to the same result as when the American newspapers began to attract a new, wider audience: the relationship between the newspapers and their readers became based not so much on a mutuality of political

interest as on sensational and salacious stories. The Sunday papers presented a basic political analysis to their relatively unsophisticated readership, but the formula that gave them such great success was that of Bennett and Day. As a street-vendor commented: "I read *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* on a Sunday, and what murders and robberies there is now! What will there be when the Great Exhibition opens!" (Mayhew 1861-1862: I, 269).

By the late 1850s, more than a third of the material in *Lloyd's* could be classified as sensational, only slightly more than in *The Weekly Times* or *Reynolds's Newspaper* (Berridge 1976: 184-189). Approximately three-quarters of this sensational writing covered murder, other crimes, and scandal (Berridge 1978: 255), but special coverage also was extended to unusual events, such as the completion of the Northwest Passage or McClintock's discovery of the remains of the Franklin expedition. The human-interest story was also a popular feature of the weeklies. The diminishing interest in politics and the corresponding emphasis on sensationalism made the Sunday papers a direct progenitor (along with the American penny press) of the English popular press of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Despite the beginning of sensationalism in the newspapers of both England and the United States, the press had not yet discovered Arctic exploration as a topic suitable for sensationalization. In both countries, the dominant view of the far north was that of the sublime, not the sensational. The ascendancy of the latter had to await the death of the former.

## 2.7 THE FRANKLIN SEARCH

On 19 May 1845, the largest and most well-equipped expedition ever to seek the Northwest Passage left London under the command of Sir John Franklin. Consisting of two ships, *Erebus* and *Terror*, and 129 men, the Franklin expedition was intended to be the final step in the completion of the Passage, and the Royal Navy felt so assured of success that it made no contingency plans for search and rescue (Berton 1988: 144-145). Arctic experts, the public, and the press were equally optimistic about the outcome of the expedition, and one journal lectured the few skeptics: "The evident design of Providence in placing difficulties before man is, to sharpen his faculties for their mastery....[and] an expedition is at present on foot which will probably complete the outline of the American continent towards the Pole" (*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 1847: 516).

England had a considerable material investment in the Franklin expedition. The ships were fitted with screws powered by high-pressure steam engines; their keels were extended in order to obtain a more advantageous vertical alignment and to protect their

interiors; and their sterns were redesigned to allow the raising and lowering of the new propellers (Smith 1938: 124; Wallace 1980: 55-57). The expedition supposedly had every other possible benefit as well: the latest technology in food preservation and canning (Morris 1958: 39-42), the most recent advances in Arctic land travel (*The Observer* 15 May 1845), crews that were the cream of the Royal Navy (*The Times* 20 May 1845), and a leader described by Joseph Conrad (1926: 15) as "the dominating figure among the seamen explorers of the first half of the nineteenth century."

Britain also had a huge emotional investment in the expedition. It not only involved national pride, but represented man's capacity to conquer nature at its most mysterious and intimidating. Its members were seen as idealists "whose aims were certainly as pure as the air of those high latitudes where not a few of them laid down their lives for the advancement of geography" (Conrad 1926: 16).

However, Franklin's expedition took place during one of the least favorable climatic periods within the last thousand years (Alt *et al.* 1985: 91), and this, together with other problems for which the expedition was unprepared, resulted in a disaster of unequalled proportions in the history of Arctic exploration (Neatby 1970).

The shock came gradually to a nation that for several years was not seriously alarmed that no news had been received. Only in 1848 did it begin to occur to the English public that Franklin, his two ships, and all of his men had utterly disappeared into that strange, cold world of the north. That year searches for Franklin were initiated on three fronts: from the west through Lancaster Sound (under Sir James Clark Ross), the east through Bering Strait (under Thomas Moore), and the south down Mackenzie River and along the Arctic coastline (under Sir John Richardson and John Rae). Despite the potential horrors of the findings, the public attitude about the expedition still was supremely relaxed. When Richardson left England, *The Times* commented: "We do not ourselves feel any unnecessary anxiety as to the fate of the ships....We place great hope in the *matériel* as well as the *personnel* of the expedition, for ships better adapted for the service, better equipped in all respects, or better officered and manned, never left the shores of England" (16 March 1848; emphasis *The Times*).

The searchers as well could not yet break free from their complacency. Richardson wrote in the same terms he had almost three decades before: "Here only, of all the countries I have seen, can I understand the deep blue shades of the ancient Italian masters....The depth of shade which marks out low snowy waves of the lake when the sun is low would surprise a painter" (quoted in McIlraith 1868: 236-237).

Although Richardson's aesthetic was the picturesque, more searchers than not wrote in terms of the sublime. Robert Goodsir, a member of a search led by William

Penny, was intrigued by the silence, which seemed to him to make an ominous statement about the silence that surrounded Franklin.

By this time we scarcely knew whether it was night or day....But there was a *stillness* about the air that must have struck everyone as peculiar to the dead hour of the night....It was now so calm that a feather dropped from the hand fell plumb into the sea. But it was the dead stillness of the air which was so peculiar. No hum of insects, none of the other pleasant sounds which betoken it is day, and that nature is awake, can be expected here even at midday in the height of summer, twenty miles from land, and that land far within the Arctic Circle, where, if one may say so, a third of the year is one long continuous day. Yet there is a perceptible difference...a sort of *silent music* heard during the day which is dumb at night. Is it not strange that the deep stillness of the dead hour at night should be as peculiar to the solitude of the icy seas as to the centre of the vast city? (Goodsir 1850: 86-88)

Most English newspapers contained little in the way of such description (perhaps because the characteristics of the Arctic seemed so well known), their cliché-filled writing concentrating on the toughness or nobility of the explorers in terrible places:

The return of Sir James Ross from his voyage in search of Sir John Franklin recalls our attention from the ordinary topics of discussion to those distant and desolate regions of eternal ice from which man and his interests seem for ever banished. That where there is danger men should be found to brave it, is not a matter of surprise. There will always be forthcoming adventurous spirits...ready to grapple with peril for peril's sake....To men of such stern, unyielding stuff, the human race has been greatly indebted. (*The Weekly Times* 25 November 1849)

It was not only description that English newspapers generally avoided, but lively portrayals in general. They maintained an understated, phlegmatic tone throughout stories that were much longer than they would be later. (On 1 October 1850, *The Times* ran 78 column inches quoting the dispatches of John Ross, Penny, and Erasmus Ommanney, and on 11 May 1853, *The Morning Herald* printed 94 column inches from a testimonial for the French volunteer for the Franklin searches, Joseph-René Bellot.)<sup>21</sup> But most of the time, the accounts were not even written by journalists. The majority of articles about the Arctic fell into one of six categories, none of which made for scintillating reading. First, official dispatches from the expedition commanders to the Admiralty, frequently printed word for word. Second, pre-expedition sailing orders from the Admiralty to the ship captains. Third, letters received from expedition members. Fourth, reports of lectures, also generally recorded verbatim. Fifth, and most frequent, letters to the editor, most unsigned and many from obvious novices in Arctic affairs. And last, editorials.

In these forms, the English newspapers—particularly *The Times*, *The Weekly Times*, and *The Morning Herald*—gave far more coverage to the Franklin search than they had earlier Northwest Passage expeditions. Similarly, newspapers in the United

States gave greater coverage to the Arctic after the first American Franklin search (1850-1851), sponsored by Henry Grinnell and led by Edwin Jesse De Haven.

Stories in American newspapers were written in a more personal way than those in England. For example, after the return of *Advance*, one of the two ships Grinnell had sent out, *The New York Herald* printed an article that discussed the crew's interactions with the Eskimos, the curiosities they had brought home, and the methods of measuring distance and height when frozen in the ice (2 October 1851). While not truly sensational, the American stories printed personal details that would never have been allowed in the stuffy English press:

The majority of the crews, as if relieved from a heavy responsibility, and it seemed by common consent, a sympathetic, upheaving, sickening consent—rushed almost to a man for the bulwarks of the vessel, and then and there gave full flow to their "pent-up" feelings without a murmur or reproach from anyone. (*New-York Daily Times* 3 October 1851)

The American articles showed efforts at sublimity while discussing conditions that were far less familiar to readers in the United States than in England:

During this period the disruptions of the ice were constant and exceedingly violent. Fires could not be kept. The noise of the disruptions sounded sometimes like thunder and at others like the crushing of vast masses together. The thermometer fell eleven degrees below zero, and ice formed in the *bedding* of the officers and crew. (*New-York Daily Times* 1 October 1851; emphasis *New-York Daily Times*)

For seven years, expedition after expedition sailed into the Canadian archipelago and returned with only scraps of information about what had happened to Franklin. These fruitless efforts influenced not only the press, but popular writers. Herman Melville's greatest novel, *Moby Dick* (1851), had a polar setting. And both Henry David Thoreau's journal (Torrey and Allen 1962) and his book *Walden* were replete with references to the Franklin search arguing that all exploration other than that of one's self was futile:

Are these the problems which most concern mankind? Is Franklin the only man who is lost, that his wife should be so earnest to find him? Does Mr. Grinnell know where he himself is? Be rather the Mungo Park, the Lewis and Clark and Frobisher of your own streams and oceans; explore your own higher latitudes.... (Thoreau 1854)

The author who made the period's most significant contribution to the images of the Arctic was Charles Dickens, who helped keep the English public in a frenzy over Franklin throughout the search, and even after. Dickens did not feature the Arctic in his novels, but he did in his magazine *Household Words*:

Think of Christmas in the tremendous wastes of ice and snow, that lie in the remotest regions of the earth! Yet it has been kept in those awful solitudes, cheerfully, by Englishmen. Where crashing mountains of ice, heaped up



together, have made a chaos round their ships, which in a moment might have ground them to dust; where hair has frozen on the face; where blankets have stiffened upon the bodies of men lying asleep, closely housed by huge fires, and plasters have turned to ice upon the wounds of others accidentally hurt; where the ships have been undistinguishable from the environing ice, and have resembled themselves far less than the surrounding masses have resembled monstrous piles of architecture which could not possibly be there, or anywhere.... (McCormick and Dickens 1850: 306-307)

Dickens' image of the Arctic sublime endured as long as the Admiralty was interested in the Franklin search and as the lucrative rewards for the settling of the fate of Franklin and the completion of the Northwest Passage remained unclaimed. However, in October 1853, word arrived that Robert McClure, who had sailed from England in 1850 in *Investigator*, had completed the Passage (Osborn 1856). In their dull, stolid manner, the English dailies gave the story unrivalled attention: on 21 October, *The Morning Herald* ran 94 column inches about it, followed in its next two issues by 91 inches and 104 inches.

McClure's completion of the Northwest Passage also occasioned one of the last classic representations of the sublime in *The Illustrated London News*, which recalled age-old images of the ice:

The ice was floating in broken detached masses, with frosted summits, beautifully brilliant beneath a bright sun and azure sky, assuming the most extraordinary and grotesque appearances—from ships under full sail to whole squadrons of gun-boats, spires of churches....towers, domes, and pinnacles, which lent a strange charm to these lonely regions. (22 October 1853)

Three months later, on 20 January 1854, the Admiralty announced that if nothing concrete were heard by 31 March the officers and crews of *Erebus* and *Terror* would "be considered as having died in Her Majesty's service" (*London Gazette* 12 January 1854). Despite Jane Franklin's fervent request for a continuation of the search because "where Esquimaux can live, there also Englishmen can live" (Great Britain 1854: 10), the Admiralty had lost interest in pursuing an interminable, unrewarding, and expensive task. Any hopes for further Franklin searches were crushed when, four days before the deadline, the Crimean War broke out. The navy needed its ships, officers, and men to battle with Russians instead of icebergs.

It is a coincidence of Arctic history that virtually as soon as the Royal Navy abandoned the Franklin search, the first definite evidence about the crews of *Erebus* and *Terror* was uncovered. In autumn of 1854, John Rae, the consummate Arctic traveler of his time (Rich, in Rae 1953: xcvi-xcix), reported to the Admiralty the fate of the Franklin party, and in so doing, he ended the Arctic sublime and opened the way for the sensational reporting that was to follow.

## CHAPTER 3

### A DECADE OF CHANGE: 1855-1865

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The decade between 1855 and 1865 was remarkable from the standpoint of change. The Anglo-American public's traditional way of perceiving the Arctic—through the aesthetic of the sublime—disappeared because it was no longer consistent with the horrible realities exposed by the discovery of the fate of the Franklin expedition. The sublime view of the Arctic gradually began to be replaced by a vision based on new concepts of man's continuing struggle against nature.

On a less philosophical level, political, technological, and scientific changes influenced both national and personal participation in Arctic exploration. Meanwhile, for the first time, large numbers of scientists, explorers, and adventurers began to become interested in the far north for its own sake. These new travelers presented fresh, exciting images of the Arctic, which, together with changes in the press in Britain and the United States, set the stage for the subsequent sensationalization of Arctic exploration.

#### 3.2 THE DEATH OF THE ARCTIC SUBLIME

Edmund Burke argued in his *Philosophical enquiry* (1958) that natural sublimity had to be kept at a distance for it to enthrall the spectator. Once the sublime approached too near (whether through familiarity or geographical proximity), the accompanying terror erased any appreciation of it. In the autumn of 1854, this is exactly what happened to the British nation.

For six years, the Anglo-American public's fascination with the Franklin search was undiminished by a growing concern that nothing would ever be discovered. On 23 October 1854, when *The Times* published a report that John Rae had sent to the Admiralty on 29 July, the English public finally received some clarification about what had happened, but it was not the type of information for which it had hoped. Rae stated that, while surveying on Boothia Peninsula, he had received from a group of Eskimos what he considered incontestable evidence that the bodies of many white men—almost certainly members of Franklin's expedition—had been found along the shores of King William Island. Rae's conclusion—that Franklin's men had died of starvation and scurvy while heading south toward Back's Great Fish River—was bad enough, but the report contained a further statement that shocked the Western world:

Some of the bodies had been buried (probably those of the first victims of the famine); some were in a tent or tents; others under the boat, which had been turned over to form a shelter; and several lay scattered about in different directions....From the mutilated state of many of the corpses and the contents of the kettles, it is evident that our wretched countrymen had been driven to the last resource—cannibalism—as a means of prolonging existence.... (*The Times* 23 October 1854)

There was an immediate outcry of horror and skepticism from the public, which assumed that the Eskimos had murdered Franklin's men (*The Times* 26 October 1854). Rae was excoriated in the press (*The Morning Herald* 27 October 1854; *The Times* 30 October 1854), particularly when he insisted that he believed the Eskimos (*The Times* 31 October, 3, 7 November 1854). Then, into the fray entered the formidable figure of Charles Dickens (Stone 1987), who, in *Household Words*, voiced the outrage and disbelief of many: "It is in the highest degree improbable that such men as the officers and crews of the two lost ships would, or could, in any extremity of hunger, alleviate the pains of starvation by this horrible means" (Dickens 1854a: 361). Although Rae continued to assert his position (Rae 1854a; 1854b), *Household Words* continued to protest that the pride of English manhood could not stoop to the level implied (Dickens 1854b; Anonymous 1856; Morley 1857a; 1857b). Even when Rae's full account was printed in the magazine, it was accompanied by an editorial questioning his accuracy (Rae 1855). Ultimately, Dickens became so involved in the issue that he joined with Wilkie Collins to produce a play, *The frozen deep*, which dramatized the nobility of British explorers faced with a plight similar to that of Franklin's men (Brannan 1966).

Despite Dickens' reaction, Britain as a whole considered the topic something better left unaddressed. After a burst of indignation, the press turned its attention to the grim struggle in the Crimea, and ignored Rae's findings: "Our work amid the ice is now limited to certain investigations which may throw light upon the matter in which FRANKLIN and his friends came by their end" (*The Times* 8 November 1854). Rae himself was also ignored, an early example of the Arctic explorers who were shunned for presenting facts with which the public or the press did not concur. Unlike almost every other major contemporary British explorer of the Arctic—Parry, both Rosses, Franklin, Back, Richardson, McClure, and McClintock—Rae was neither knighted nor accepted into the circle of national heroes (Richards 1985: 178).

But the damage had been done to the British psyche. The press and public alike tried to disregard Rae's findings, but the suspicion that they were accurate crept slowly into the public consciousness, beginning to change the image of the north. For centuries, the English had imagined the Arctic as a place of terror, but one that God had created for its wonder, beauty, and fascination. Knowing that the Franklin expedition had disappeared forever was terrible, yet it was also sublime. But knowing that the

men of the expedition had died slowly of scurvy and starvation was different—bleeding gums, swollen limbs, and loose teeth are not sublime. As Burke had theorized, the reality and proximity of the horror had eliminated the sublimity:

No; there are no more sunny continents—no more islands of the blest—hidden under the far horizons, tempting the dreamer over the undiscovered seas; nothing but those weird and tragic shores, those cliffs of everlasting ice and mainlands of frozen snow, which have never produced anything to us but a late and sad discovery of the depths of human heroism, patience, and bravery, such as imagination could scarcely dream of. (*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 1855: 589)

Thus, it was almost anticlimactic when, four years after Rae's report was published, Francis Leopold McClintock and William Hobson, in an expedition sent by Jane Franklin, searched King William Island and found relics, bodies, and a note in a cairn, which combined to confirm what had happened to the expedition: after being beset in the ice of Franklin Strait, Franklin had died on *Erebus* in 1847; under the command of Francis Crozier, the men had left the ships in April 1848; and they had died as they walked to the Canadian mainland, the last of them reaching Starvation Cove on Adelaide Peninsula.

The English press reports gradually accepted the disaster and were able to salvage something positive by stressing the courage and self-sacrifice of the expedition members. *The Standard* and *The Morning Star* emphasized this when they printed 63 and 91 column inches, respectively, about McClintock's presentation at the Royal Geographical Society (15 November 1859; McClintock 1861). *The Illustrated London News* was typical of most English newspapers when it commented:

Who shall tell how they struggled, how they hoped against hope, how the fainting few who reached Cape Herschel threw themselves on their knees and thanked their God that, if it so pleased Him that England and home should never be reached! He had granted them the glory of securing to their dear country the honour they had sought for her—the discovery of the North-West Passage. (*The Illustrated London News* 15 October 1859)

No more was the Arctic romantic or sublime. And, for a few, no more was the north wanted as the backdrop for heroic adventure:

...at last the mystery of FRANKLIN'S fate is solved. We know where he died, we know the very day of his death....Alas! There can be no longer those sad wailings from an imaginary Tintagel to persuade the credulous than an ARTHUR still lives....We must learn that there are yet powers in nature too strong for man to overcome. The dauntless soul dies out amid frost and snow; the spirit is never quenched though the body may perish....We retire now from the contest with honour, if with grief, and we leave the name of FRANKLIN engraved on the furthest pillars which the energy of mankind had dared to erect as the landmark of its research in the dull and lifeless region that guards the axis of the world. (*The Times* 23 September 1859)

### 3.3 THE CONQUEST OF THE WORLD

Even as *The Times* rejected future Arctic exploration, many individuals began to develop interests in unexplored areas, including the far north. This was due to the spread throughout Western civilization of a new perception of man's relationship to the world, of his "mission of dominion over nature" (Wolfe 1938; Powell 1977: 107). In the first half of the nineteenth century, man's power in nature was thought to be either negligible or benign (Merz 1896-1914: III, IV). But around 1860 there was a resurgence in the Biblical notion of man as God's terrestrial steward, a force above nature given powers to subdue the Earth (Marsh 1864: 34-38; Merz 1896-1914: III).

The basic reason for this perceptual metamorphosis was the intellectual growth and triumph of the "desire for the conquest of the world" (Commager 1950; Cohen 1984). The inspiration for this concept, which dominated the Western mentality in the latter half of the nineteenth century, was the Industrial Revolution, the technological innovations of which gave man a new power over nature (Merz 1896-1914: I, II; Seaman 1973). This ability to harness nature was an important adjunct to the teachings of major Anglo-American churches, which stressed man's right to do with the natural world as he saw fit (Gilbert 1976).

The conquest of the world did not fully dominate Western thought until the ability to exploit nature was united with the duty to do so. This coupling began to reach the general public in 1859 when Charles Darwin's *On the origin of species by means of natural selection* was published. It was strengthened five years later with the publication of George P. Marsh's *Man and nature*.

The initial popularization of Darwin's theories resulted in a crisis in religious thought (Chadwick 1970: II, 1-23; Young 1970). Concurrently, Darwin's writings, although not regarded as radical by the entire scientific community,<sup>1</sup> first spread to the public the theories establishing the belief that it was both man's destiny and obligation to be master of the Earth. Ellegard (1958) and Caudill (1986; 1987) have shown that because there was an ongoing debate regarding Darwinian theory in both the popular press and the intellectual journals (a debate actually as much religious as scientific), by the mid-1860s the name of Darwin and the terms "evolution" and "natural selection" were firmly established in the public mind. However, even among educated readers there was little true comprehension of Darwin's concepts (Ellegard 1958: 43-59; Caudill 1986), which nevertheless did not prevent his theories from being used as the foundation for a wide variety of radical ideologies (Hofstadter 1945; Himmelfarb 1959: 340-356; Forrest 1974: 245-288).

Similarly, the writings of Marsh (who has been called the father of environmentalism) were widely misunderstood. *Man and nature* was a diatribe about man's

interaction with nature, but not a jeremiad: Marsh argued that man could control the environment for good as well as for ill—he could not only spoil nature, he could mend her (Marsh 1864; Wolfe 1938). However, the popular interpretation of Marsh was rather that there was nothing sacred about nature; man needed to rebel against her demands and to subjugate her, for "wherever he fails to make himself her master, he can but be her slave" (Marsh 1860: 34; Leighly 1958).

The conquest of the world emerged from the popularized bond between the theories of Darwin and Marsh—not only was the principle of the survival of the fittest accepted, it was extended to include man's obligation to preserve his species at the expense of all else, leading to the ultimate goal of the total conquest of nature (Merz 1896-1914: III, IV). Mack (1941) has shown that this struggle was a persistent theme during the late nineteenth century, that it was perceived that character was built by the challenge, and that from an early age boys were prepared for man's competition with nature.

Man's role as conqueror of the world found expression in numerous facets of European and American life. In technology, he developed new machines to increase output and reduce manpower; in medicine, he began to identify and eradicate age-old diseases; and in science, he uncovered secrets in geology, chemistry, and physics. In geography, the combination of views attained a unique expression, because the desire for knowledge, and the confidence that not only could everything be known but that it should be, made it both a sufficient and honorable reason to go somewhere merely because no one had been there before (Forbath 1978: 149).

Exploration is a western phenomenon born in the time of Aristotle (Huntford 1988), but Columbus had inaugurated a new era of geographic inquiry marked by a fascination with the blank spaces on the map, areas where white men had never set foot (De Madariaga 1939). In the nineteenth century—the last great age of terrestrial discovery—these areas were of more than interest; they were at first paradoxes, then insults, and finally unacceptable (Barrow 1847; Forbath 1978: 146). By the 1850s filling them in had become the aim of numerous organizations, including the Royal Geographical Society, the African Association, and the American Geographical Society (Wright 1952; Moorehead 1962: 151-161; Cameron 1980: 13-17). In an address in 1852, Sir Roderick Murchison told the Royal Geographical Society:

there is no exploration...to which greater value would be attached than an ascent of [Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya] from the east coast, possibly from near Mombasa. The adventurous travellers who shall first lay down the true position of these equatorial snowy mountains...and who shall satisfy us that they not only throw off the waters of the White Nile...will be justly considered among the greatest benefactors of this age.... (Murchison 1852: cxxiii-cxxiv)

But it was not just the learned societies that wanted to complete the map; the public was obsessed with the idea of a struggle against the wilderness (Moorehead 1963: 200). "Let any man," wrote the explorer Charles Sturt, "lay the map of Australia before him, and regard the blank upon its surface, and then let me ask him if it would not be an honourable achievement to be the first to place foot in its centre" (quoted in Cameron 1980: 51-52). Perhaps the American explorer Anthony Fiala best summed up the thinking of the time when he wrote:

Beyond the geographical and scientific value of the discovery of the North Pole, and the solving of questions of popular curiosity, another reason exists to explain the ceaseless effort to reach that mystic point: The Spirit of the Age will never be satisfied until the command given to Adam in the beginning—the command to subdue the earth—has been obeyed, and the ends of the earth have revealed their secrets to...man. (Fiala 1907: 4)

The conquest of the world was also an important element in nationalism—itsself a driving force in Arctic exploration. That the public's preoccupation with exploration had nationalist overtones is apparent from the newspapers of the day, while some sponsors of polar expeditions—notably the Peary Arctic Club and the Royal Geographical Society—were blatantly nationalist (Holland 1986; Herbert 1989: 131). Nationalism was also a significant motivation for the explorers (Huntford 1988) such as Fridtjof Nansen, who saw success in the Arctic regions as an important tool in the struggle for Norwegian independence (Huntford 1990). Nansen understood that characteristics such as physical courage, stamina, scientific expertise, and ingenuity not only identified the individual as one of heroic stature, but became synonymous with national traits, thereby adding to the prestige of his country (Wechter 1941: 1-16).

### 3.4 CHANGES IN ARCTIC EXPLORATION

The destruction of the sublime and the new way of viewing man's role in nature were necessary prerequisites for the sensationalization of the Arctic, but several other more concrete factors also helped set the stage for new images of the north. Among these were major changes both in the participants in Arctic exploration and in the techniques of travel and survival they used.

Before the end of the Franklin search, the Arctic explorers who made the most significant impact on the English and American public were members of the Royal Navy or were on expeditions associated with those sent by the Admiralty. This was altered by Britain's decision in 1854 to withdraw from the Arctic, where the Royal Navy was not to reappear in strength for another two decades (Kirwan 1959: 177-205).

The 1860s also saw the beginning of Arctic exploration by countries without major previous involvement. Alaska was purchased by the United States in 1867, the same

year that the British North America Act provided for the Confederation of Canada. Within a decade, both the United States and Canada had initiated systematic exploration of the far north. The Geological Survey of Canada greatly expanded its duties in 1869 when Alfred R.C. Selwyn became director (Zaslow 1971: 9-10, 80-86), and the next year the final transfer to Canada of Rupert's Land extended the new nation far into the Arctic. In 1880, Britain ceded Canada the known Arctic islands (Diubaldo 1984: 187-188). Although the U.S. Geological Survey did not enter Alaska until 1898, the U.S. Army started the exploration of its interior before Congress had even concluded the purchase from Russia (Holland in preparation). Simultaneously, the Danish Kommissionen for Ledelsen af de geologiske Undersogelser i Grønland began research in Greenland on geology, topography, and glaciology (Holland in preparation).

This change in participation affected ideas about the travel, clothing, and food used in the north. Whereas the British continued the man-hauled sledging "perfected" by McClintock and James Clark Ross, regardless that it "was about the hardest work to which free men have been put in modern times" (Mackinnon 1985: 133),<sup>2</sup> Scandinavians began to change polar travel. The first ski club was established in Norway in 1861 (the year of Nansen's birth), leading directly to the expansion of Scandinavian polar exploration in the 1880s (Huntford 1990). Similarly, whereas Royal Navy expeditions had neglected to adapt their clothing to the cold (Victor 1963: 115), in the 1860s American explorers began to learn from the Eskimos to dress so as to be warm in the coldest climates and yet not to be too hot when doing heavy work (Hall 1865; Nourse 1879).

At the same time, many European and American explorers effectively defeated scurvy by learning to live off the land, with a vitamin C-rich diet that included large amounts of fresh meat. Although several private British expeditions were scurvy-free (notably that led by Benjamin Leigh Smith in 1881-1882 and the Jackson-Harmsworth expedition of 1894-1897), almost every long-term polar expedition led by Royal Navy officers in the six decades after the Franklin search was affected (Jackson 1899; Credland 1980; Carpenter 1986: 133-157).

These developments had different effects on the American and English press' presentation of the north. The newspapers in the United States presented more exciting accounts as Americans moved to the fore. The British built images based on overcoming appalling conditions that were to a great extent of their own making.

### **3.5 THE GROWTH OF ARCTIC SCIENCE**

The entry of new countries into Arctic exploration meant an influx of many individuals who not only initiated change but inspired fresh visions of the north. These were not



commonly politicians, military heroes, or men of wide international power; they were people with concerns and interests specific to the Arctic.

Of the many developments in polar exploration during the mid-Victorian era, none was more significant than the growth of interest in the Arctic for its own sake. This was not a new phenomenon, but it was prevalent after 1855, whereas before it had been sporadic. Traditionally, the Arctic had been seen as an unfortunate reality: an inescapable obstruction on the way to the markets of the Orient or Siberia and to the efforts of the whaling or sealing industries; a maze of mysteries hiding knowledge about missing expeditions behind thousands of miles of uncharted ice and rock; a hostile region holding secret deposits of wealth within areas dominated by tundra, enormous lakes, and aimlessly wandering rivers.

Although British naval officers had eagerly volunteered for Arctic duty during the search for the Northwest Passage, this was generally not due to any strong personal interest in the area. Rather it was a path to promotion—it gave an individual a chance both for distinction and to separate himself from the mass of officers left over from the Napoleonic wars.<sup>3</sup> It was also a way to avoid either stagnating on half-pay in an English seaport or being stationed in a colonial backwater (Mackinnon 1984: 12-13). Once having served in the Arctic, officers frequently chose to return there, and many of the junior officers of one generation became the leaders of the next, such as McClintock, James Clark Ross, and George S. Nares.

The same was true of the lower ranks. Mackinnon (1984: 13) pointed out that weavers, like other seamen, were keen to receive double pay for Arctic duty in the post-Napoleonic depression, and that sailors found the north more appealing when it became common knowledge that the death rate was lower than in the tropics. He also noted "when new trips were in the offing, it was a simple device of taking the address of the best men on their being paid off from the last expedition."

Certainly there were notable British exceptions in the first half of the century. These men were not scientists in the modern—and much more specific—sense of the word; rather they were versatile natural historians with absorbing curiosity about everything strange and new. John Richardson wrote the botanical appendices to Franklin's account of his first expedition; included observations about physical geography, currents, flora and fauna, ichthyology, magnetism, and meteorology in both of Franklin's books; and wrote the most comprehensive work of North American Arctic zoology of his time, *Fauna boreali-americana* (Franklin 1823; 1828; Richardson 1831; Curvey and Johnson 1969; Johnson 1976). John Rae made glaciological and anthropological studies as well as recording local flora and fauna. His publications considered subjects as diverse as the formation of icebergs, the movements of boulders by

ice, the native peoples of the American north, the birds of the Arctic coast, and the frozen remains of mammoths (Rae 1850; Wallace 1954; Richards 1985). William Scoresby Jr. was a natural historian and geographer of note. He made what remained for a century the definitive survey of the east Greenland coast, he studied the "baffling lights" of the Arctic sky, and his drawings of snow crystals were not surpassed until the mid-twentieth century, with the development of the photographic microscope (Scoresby 1820; Stamp and Stamp 1975; Martin 1988).

There was even interest from scientists who never personally went to the Arctic. Sir William Jackson Hooker and his son Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, the first two directors of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, wrote up the botanic findings of a great number of British expeditions, including Edward Sabine's voyage of 1823 in *Griper*, William Edward Parry's second and third Northwest Passage voyages (1821-1823 and 1824-1825), Parry's attempt to reach the North Pole via Spitsbergen (1827), Frederick William Beechey's voyage in *Blossom* to the Bering Sea (1825-1828), and George Back's overland expedition (1833-1835), which was sent to search for John Ross (Clavering 1830; Beechey 1831; Back 1836; Huxley 1918; Parry 1963; Allan 1967).

Scientists from other European nations also showed interest in the study of the Arctic. The German Karl Ludwig Giesecke pioneered the geological study of Greenland during his seven-year expedition under the Danish flag (1806-1813). Zoologist Sven Lovén was the leader of the first Swedish scientific expedition to the Arctic—to Spitsbergen in 1837 (Nathorst et al. 1909: 4; Kish 1973: 37)—the year before a French expedition under Paul Gaimard made a wide range of Arctic observations, including the first scientific study of Spitsbergen's glaciers, by C.F. Martins (Holland in preparation). And from 1848 to 1851, Hinrich Johannes Rink, a Danish administrator, made detailed studies of the geology, mineralogy, and social conditions of Greenland, as well as of the formation of the ice sheet and the calving of glaciers (Holland in preparation).

But there was still a basic difference between many of these individuals—especially the British—and those who were active in the Arctic after 1855. Most of the British engaged in scientific research in the Arctic in the first half of the century had other reasons for being there. Richardson was a surgeon in the Royal Navy, Rae worked for the Hudson's Bay Company, and Scoresby was a whaling captain. The same was true of some of the European scientists: Giesecke remained in Greenland so long only because he was stranded by the Napoleonic wars, and Rink was in Greenland primarily as an administrator.

Similarly, even though many British naval officers added to the scientific knowledge of the Arctic regions, it was not their principal aim. On naval voyages, the

Arctic itself was usually investigated by individuals in addition to their prescribed duties, above and beyond the primary aims of the expedition. A memorandum from the Admiralty relative to the compilation of a manual of scientific enquiry stated:

Their Lordships do not consider it necessary that this Manual should be one of very deep and abstruse research. Its directions should not require the use of nice apparatus and instruments: they should be generally plain, so that men merely of good intelligence and fair acquirement may be able to act upon them....The several heads of inquiry are as follows: Astronomy, Botany, Geography and Hydrography, Geology, Mineralogy, Magnetism, Meteorology, Statistics, Tides, Zoology. (Herschel 1871: iii-iv)

The man who reversed this trend, who proposed scientific study of the Arctic as a goal and not just as an addendum to commercial or geographical investigations, was the Swedish glaciologist Otto Torell (Nathorst 1900). In 1850, at the age of only 22, Torell completed his first significant field work when he accompanied Lovén on a zoological trip to Bohuslän in Sweden and the Kristiania Fjord in Norway. In 1857 he visited Iceland to study its glaciers and maritime fauna. The next year, at his own expense, he led an expedition to the west coast of Spitsbergen, for the collection of geological, zoological, and botanical information. This trip was significant because it provided the first major Arctic experience for Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld.

In 1861, Torell was the driving force behind the Swedish Arctic Expedition to Spitsbergen, which included nine scientists, among them Nordenskiöld and the geodesist Karl Chydenius. The expedition embraced two objectives: a comprehensive scientific investigation of Spitsbergen and its coast, and a geographical excursion to the north and north-east. The plan, unique both in its emphasis on science and in the careful distinction of its scientific and geographical aims, was designed so that the first goal of the expedition (the scientific studies) could be accomplished even if the geographical survey proved impossible. The foresight shown in this planning was recognized by Swedish, British, Danish, and German scholars (Leslie 1879: 47-103; Nathorst 1900: 457). Ultimately, despite the failure of the geographical survey, the scientific program exceeded all expectations and resulted in a wealth of geological, glaciological, zoological, botanical, magnetic, meteorological, and hydrographic data. As Nathorst commented, "With Torell's expedition of 1861 scientific polar research had been founded. The radical influence which this research had on the various areas of research in the natural sciences can only be hinted at..." (Nathorst 1900: 458).

Although this was Torell's last expedition to the Arctic, his pattern of comprehensive investigation was taken up by Nordenskiöld and eventually became a model for other European and American scientific expeditions. In 1864 Nordenskiöld led a Swedish Arctic expedition to Svalbard, where he carried out zoological, botanical, and meteorological work. But Nordenskiöld also crossed over to areas of interest to

the common man; he was a leader both in the exploration and commercialization of the Arctic. Thus, more than Torell, Nordenskiöld began to generate public interest—and to show other scientists how to do the same—in the far north.

### 3.6 THE LURE OF THE ARCTIC

It was not only scientists who became fascinated with the Arctic in the second half of the nineteenth century. There was another breed of man who viewed the north in a new way, and some of these, unlike many scientists, had the interest and ability to communicate not just with other academics but with the public. The advent of the private, independent explorer, which was a distinguishing characteristic of the period (Kirwan 1959: 178), brought with it a growing number of men who initially went to the Arctic with specific missions—resolving geographical problems, finding Franklin relics, lifting the natives from savagery, or opening up commerce—but returned to the north, or at least attempted to, rather because they were captivated by its lure. These men were so smitten with the beauty and perceived purity of the Arctic, with its challenge to their intellect and manhood, or with their capacity to become free and nomadic in its undeveloped environs that they were prepared to face anything to return, even the prospect of death itself.<sup>4</sup> Anthony Fiala, who participated in two North Polar expeditions, described this phenomenon in his book *Fighting the polar ice*:

It was odd how quickly the Arctic lost its terrors after the return to civilisation. During the long, dark winter...we would huddle together for warmth around a tiny stove in the cabin of the *America* and talk of warmer countries. Two of the men avowed their intention of going on an expedition to the island of Borneo as soon as the *America* returned to Norway; two others stated that they were going to Mexico; another expressed a wish to explore Africa, and one of the doctors of the party said he meant to go to the equator and never travel farther than five degrees north or south of it the rest of his days. Yet on the eve of another expedition these men applied to go north once more. (Fiala 1907: 11-12)

Such explorers were not above using the Arctic for their personal gain. Like their predecessors in the Royal Navy, many adventurers saw service in the Arctic as a way to fame and fortune. Yet, there was one significant difference between these travelers and the Royal Navy officers of earlier eras: these men had several options in the way they pursued their fame, but they chose the Arctic. The earlier explorers proceeded in a more-or-less straight course on their journeys, and when they were done their desire was to return home. Many of the new explorers lived for the Arctic and traveled in circles, with their true mission beginning and ending in the north.

There are perhaps no better examples of the lure of the Arctic than two American explorers, Elisha Kent Kane and Charles Francis Hall. Kane, a restless naval surgeon and inveterate wanderer who had already traveled to Brazil, Ceylon, China, the

Philippines, and Egypt, volunteered for the first American Franklin search expedition (1850-1851) out of a romantic desire for heroic adventure (Corner 1972: 70). The expedition's year in the Arctic included experiences Kane considered exciting, such as meeting the almost legendary Sir John Ross, killing a polar bear, and discovering the Grinnell Peninsula on Devon Island. But it also included rampant scurvy, terribly cold conditions with virtually no heating, and being frozen in and drifting with the ice from Wellington Channel through Lancaster Sound and into Baffin Bay before finally being released (Kane 1854).

Nevertheless, Kane was caught by the Arctic as tightly as had been his ship, *Advance*. Immediately upon arriving in the United States, he started working toward returning north. When ultimately he led a second American Franklin search expedition (1853-1855), his official purpose was to sail to the most northerly penetrable point in Baffin Bay, and from there to search for Franklin and to carry out scientific investigations relating to magnetism, meteorology, and the existence of an open polar sea (Kane 1856). Whether by this time Kane had any honest belief in the possibility of finding Franklin or reaching an open polar sea is debatable (Corner 1972: 107). It is more likely that he had discovered that honorable motives were needed to obtain the financing to return to the Arctic. And his real goal was simply that—to get back to the Arctic, where he could simultaneously achieve contentment and fame.

Like Kane, Hall, a printer and journalist in Cincinnati, began his Arctic involvement with noble goals. According to his book, *Life with the Esquimaux*, he turned to the Arctic because, "It seemed to me as if I had been called, if I may so speak, to try and do the work" (Hall 1865: I, 3). Hall apparently believed that God had chosen him to solve the mystery of Franklin's fate (Loomis 1972: 45). There was another motive seemingly just as important: Hall wanted to escape from the community life of Ohio to the Arctic wilderness because "in his ignorance he idealized the world that lay in the Canadian north" (Loomis 1972: 46). The term "escape" can be misleading, because it frequently tends to condemn the non-conformist, while also implying that what is being escaped to is more desirable, more romantic, or more heroic than what is being escaped from. On his first expedition to the Arctic (1860-1862), when he spent two winters living with the Eskimos of Baffin Island, Hall found that it was not a land of romance or storybook tales. It was a simpler life than the one he had led in the United States, but vastly harsher. Yet it was also more alluring, and Hall, like Kane, started planning his return almost immediately.

Hall's next expedition to find Franklin relics, again virtually on his own, occupied him in northern Canada for five winters, 1864-1869 (Nourse 1879). Before he returned to the United States he was already planning another undertaking—to the

North Pole—and his powers of persuasion were such that he received U.S. government backing for his scheme. The joint resolution presented before the House of Representatives stated that he "desires in the interest of science and for the material advantage of his country to make a voyage of exploration and discovery under the authority and for the benefit of the United States" (quoted in Loomis 1972: 235). Whether Hall truly believed he could reach the Pole, and whether he actually cared about scientific objectives, are unanswerable questions. Certainly the Arctic had become an essential part of his existence: he lived for the north, and it is only when this is understood that one can find some purpose in his seemingly aimless wanderings, which continued long after his stated goals had been attained or thwarted. In the Arctic, Hall found both honor from the outside world and personal contentment. He explained this in a speech to the American Geographical and Statistical Society in 1871:

Many who have written to me, or who have appeared to me personally, think that I am an adventurous spirit and of bold heart to attempt to go to the North Pole. Not so. It does not require that heart which they suppose I have got. The Arctic Region is my home. I love it dearly; its storms, its winds, its glaciers, its icebergs; and when I am there among them, it seems as if I were in an earthly heaven or a heavenly earth. (Hall 1873: 406)

Although Hall appeared eccentric, he was not alone in preferring wild and unexplored areas to day-to-day life in the cities of Europe or North America. Henry Morton Stanley contrasted life in England with his toils in Africa when he wrote: "One brings me an inordinate amount of secret pain, the other sapped my strength but left my mind expanded and was purifying" (quoted in McLynn 1989: 226).

Unlike many contemporary Arctic scientists, the explorers of Hall's breed usually were not from Scandinavia or central Europe, but from the United States or Britain. This played no small part in the fact that it was these adventurers, and the men who funded them, who helped to change the old images of the Arctic that had been passed down from the British naval expeditions.

Few individuals were more important in encouraging independent Arctic explorers than Henry Grinnell, a wealthy New York merchant called by Hall the "father of American Arctic exploration" (Cruwys 1991). Grinnell became actively interested in the Arctic after Jane Franklin's appeal to U.S. President Zachary Taylor for aid in the search for her husband's expedition. With Grinnell's financing, four United States Franklin search expeditions were sent out. The first two (known as the First and Second Grinnell expeditions) were led by Edwin J. De Haven (1850-1851) and Kane, respectively, and the others were Hall's first two expeditions. Grinnell also backed two U.S. North Polar expeditions, one (1860-1861) led by Isaac Israel Hayes and the other (1871-1873) beginning under Hall (Cruwys 1991).

Perhaps Grinnell's most important contributions to polar exploration were his efforts to promote interest in and influence opinion about the Arctic among both the American government and the public. Grinnell's efforts (backed by those of his brother Joseph, a Congressman) introduced the United States Navy to the Franklin search (Grinnell: MS248/414/5, 6, 7; Cruwys 1990b: 212-213). His constant campaigning also helped maintain the involvement of the government in later polar expeditions, and encouraged other wealthy individuals to support Arctic projects (Grinnell: MS248/414/33; Corner 1972: 107).

One reason Grinnell could wield such influence was his ability to read the American public. Whenever public interest in the Arctic seemed to be declining, or opinion was becoming negative, Grinnell encouraged the popular press to whip up support for his projects. He wrote letters to newspapers calculated to stir up public interest in the Arctic (Grinnell: MS248/414/29), expressed his belief that America had a humanitarian duty to join the Franklin search, which would "do honor to the country" (Grinnell: MS248/414/30), published the letters of Jane Franklin and the captains who commanded the expeditions she sponsored (Grinnell: MS248/414/30, 55), and even sided with Lady Franklin in the controversy over whether her husband or McClure had discovered the Northwest Passage (Grinnell: MS248/414/37, 40, 41).

The explorers whom Grinnell sponsored were among the first caught by the lure of the Arctic. If on the surface their expeditions had goals similar to those of the earlier British voyages, they attempted to attain those goals in an original and North American way. For example, the two Grinnell expeditions were fitted out with ships and crews much smaller than the large and extensively manned vessels traditionally used by the Royal Navy (Corner 1972: 263). On the second of these expeditions, Kane established a pattern of exploration that included cooperation with the Eskimos, the adoption of some of their ways of life, and the use of dogs to haul sledges (Kane 1856).

Hall adopted Eskimo life-style almost entirely (Hall 1865; Nourse 1879). He wrote in his journal: "The fact is, to effect the purpose I have at heart—to carry out successfully what I have undertaken to perform...I *must learn to live as Esquimaux do!*" (quoted in Loomis 1972: 88; emphasis Hall's). This method differed considerably from that of most British expeditions (although it greatly resembled the techniques of Rae), but it was subsequently followed in part or in whole by many of Hall's North American successors, as was his perception of the Arctic.

### 3.7 NEW EXPEDITION ACCOUNTS

As American explorers learned how to operate more successfully in the Arctic environment, they developed new concepts of the places to which they traveled and of

the peoples living there. These new perceptions were presented to the public in the 1850s and 1860s when the explorers began to write books notable for their exciting images. Not that even when their fascination with the Arctic impelled them to return again and again, their presentation was always pleasant. Invariably, they showed a love-hate relationship, railing against the north and its inhabitants, seeing the Eskimos as ugly, scheming, debauched, and hopeless, and the Arctic itself as seldom touched by beauty or grandeur, but rather hostile, incomplete, and in need of the order imposed by civilization.

As opposed to the earlier stolid accounts frequently transcribed directly from private journals or official logs of British naval expeditions (such as Franklin 1823; Sutherland 1852; Armstrong 1857), this kind of book presented a new genre, one, as Moorehead wrote, that

tended to be intensely personal and were propaganda of a kind. The author pleaded his special cause, often with a note of religious and passionate conviction; he reached out...to his reader...stirring up his sympathy and indignation. And since these appeals were interlarded with themes of bravery and high adventure the response was enormous. There was always the chance that the explorer might be dead before his book came out; he might even then be lost in the wilderness or...be preparing to go out and meet his fate once more. This gave an air of actuality to his work, one suffered and lived with him. (Moorehead 1960: 62)<sup>5</sup>

But these gripping narratives of adventure were not written solely because the explorers had seen the Arctic in a new light. The writers were also serving their own ends in two ways. First, the more thrilling and dangerous the Arctic was seen to be, the more the explorer would captivate a public anxious for heroes. So the Arctic became the setting for the daring voyages and heroic exploits of bold explorers, imprisoned by snow and ice and struggling against overwhelming natural forces.

Second, large amounts of money were needed to return to the Arctic, so the private explorers, invariably impoverished, constantly had to solicit patronage, both from wealthy benefactors and from the public. So they not only had to show that they were doing important work (be it looking for Franklin relics or making scientific investigations), they had to thrill the public with stories that would ensure book sales. Fame and wealth were interrelated: fame enhanced the chances of achieving wealth, while obtaining the financing to return to the Arctic was the first step to gaining fame.

Therefore, the Arctic travelers of the mid-Victorian era (and later) became explorers first, but, virtually as important, they became writers as well. And they began to tour the lecture circuit, both before and after expeditions (Corner 1972: 102-103; Loomis 1972: 149-155). In fact, they began to do anything to create the image of a cold, cruel Arctic that not only needed to be conquered, but needed them to conquer it (Stacey



1988: 159). In time, fund-raising became what was frequently the most gruelling aspect of a hazardous occupation, a part of it about which Hall railed, "lecturing is the curse of my soul" (quoted in Berton 1988: 383). Roald Amundsen later insisted that no one except an explorer could appreciate the agony fund-raising involved, and that despite his justly deserved fame, the burden of constantly having to seek financial support almost broke his constitution (Hunt 1986: 16).

The entire process became such an integral part of Arctic exploration that Clements R. Markham, the president of the Royal Geographical Society, once assured the Danish explorer Ejnar Mikkelsen that he would eventually become accustomed to pleading for funds. Mikkelsen should feel less like a beggar and more like a benefactor of mankind, Markham said, because "it isn't for ourselves we do it, but for the cause" (Mikkelsen 1955: 14).

One of the early self-promoters in the "cause" was Kane, whose lectures were frequently sold out and whose books were world-wide best-sellers (Loomis 1972: 40). Together, his efforts produced a wonder-world of enormous icebergs, towering cliffs, and tiny brigs battered by gales and running a gauntlet between crushing rocks and ice. They showed him to be a figure of heroic stature, a bold explorer and a brilliant leader able not only to overcome the elements of nature but to master the contrary behavior of weak and wicked men. Kane won enormous praise not only in the United States but in England, where his second book received the praise: "We cannot but feel proud that the English language should be the mother tongue of the hero of such a tale. Looked at merely from a literary point of view, the book is a very remarkable one" (*Saturday Review* 1856: 661). *Arctic explorations* not only was acclaimed by Washington Irving and Henry David Thoreau, it inspired a two-volume novel of Arctic adventure by Jules Verne, *The adventures of Captain Hatteras* (Verne 1874b; 1876; Kirwan 1959: 180; Comer 1972: 270).<sup>6</sup>

Kane's efforts were a remarkable example of the power of the pen. The praise that was lavished upon him by both the public and the press was to a certain extent misguided, because nowhere were they able to gain insights into what Berton (1988: 303) described as "his flawed leadership, his mercurial temperament, his erratic personality, or his towering ego." Kane was actually a far better writer than he was an explorer, and that ability not only made his reputation, it fired the imagination of the American public to an extent to which prior Arctic exploration had never been able. Among others, his books influenced Peary and Amundsen (Berton 1988: 175-176).

After Kane died at the age of 37 in 1857, his former medical officer, Isaac Israel Hayes, led the next major American Arctic expedition. Hayes quickly discovered the

difficulty of initiating an expedition. His first struggle came not in the ice of Baffin Bay but before he even left for the north in 1860:

There were indeed many circumstances of discouragement, not the least of which was an impression which then had possession of the public judgment, that any further efforts toward the North Pole must be fruitless....[but] when the spring of 1858 opened, we had the satisfaction to perceive that we had dispelled some of the popular illusions.... (Hayes 1867:3-4)

American explorers were not the only ones to cater to the public with the new-style accounts of the Arctic. In 1859, McClintock's *The voyage of the 'Fox' in the Arctic seas* became one of the best-selling books of its time. Seven thousand copies of McClintock's tale of unraveling the Franklin mystery were ordered before publication (Hodgson 1985: 10), and the inventory of Mudie's Subscription Library, arguably the best index to the tastes of the English middle-class reading public at that time, included 3,000 copies of it, more than any other book of the year, including Tennyson's *Idylls of the king*, Darwin's *Origin of species*, Dickens' *A tale of two cities*, and Hughes' *Tom Brown at Oxford* (Altick 1959: 216-221; Griest 1970: 21).

Inevitably, McClintock's tale had different origins from many of its American counterparts. It had been in preparation for 15 years, and the reasons McClintock undertook the journey were his friendship with Jane Franklin and his desire for a successful conclusion to the Franklin search rather than a driving interest in fame or promotion (McClintock 1859; Markham 1909). But there was more to the popularity of *The voyage of the 'Fox'* than the story it told. It was the first English narrative of the Arctic to rival the adventure and excitement of Kane. McClintock gave the public what it wanted much more than did his contemporaries William Parker Snow, Sherard Osborn, Sir Edward Belcher, and Alexander Armstrong (Snow 1851; Osborn 1852; 1856; Belcher 1855; Armstrong 1857; Hodgson 1985: 7).

At the same time that Kane and McClintock were entertaining the public, a new genre of expedition literature began to appear, written by a new breed of explorer, one who was wealthy; who had no connection with the government, the Church, or scientific societies; who was under nobody's instructions; and who was out simply to please himself by pursuing various forms of sport. The first account popularizing tourism of the Arctic was Lord Dufferin and Ava's *Letters from high latitudes*, which, written in 1856 in the form of 13 letters, told of his voyage in the yacht *Foam* to Iceland, Jan Mayen, and Spitsbergen in the same pleasant, intimate, privileged way as if he were simply on a jaunt to Brighton. That the letters almost certainly were not authentic in the form presented mattered little. As R.C. Macon pointed out in the introduction to a 1910 edition:

It is, indeed not quite easy to believe that these Letters were ever franked through any State post office to their nominal address, and least of all in the form they display in print. Each of the thirteen bears marks of literary redaction, as well by omission as by addition....The experiences recorded are genuine, but they have been transfigured; elements of fact and fancy are here indissolubly combined; life is humourously presented; the result is another masterly blend of...poetic truth. (Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood 1910: xx-xxi)

Dufferin's writings stimulated other wealthy adventurers to follow him: artists, sportsmen out for big game, casual tourists, and reporters. The best known of these was James Lamont, who, sensing that even on a private journey he needed to pay his respects to science, dedicated his first book, *Seasons with the sea-horses*, to geologist Charles Lyell, with the note, "I shall esteem myself fortunate if any of the observations contained in it shall be the means of rivetting or strengthening a link in the beautiful chain of evidence by which you have...demonstrated the perfect adequacy of present causes to remodel the surface of the earth" (Lamont 1861: v). Lamont was also honest enough to admit that he wrote that book and a later one to recoup his expenses (Lamont 1876: 6).

Lamont was first and foremost a hunter, and he wrote in great detail about his slaughter in the vicinity of Svalbard and Novaya Zemlya of virtually every animal he could kill with gun or harpoon. He concluded *Seasons with the sea-horses* with a list of more than 200 animals bagged, including walruses, seals, polar bears, reindeer, and a whale. Lamont's books were enormously popular, even though they seem by today's standards to show a lack of concern with life, whether animal or human. At one point, Lamont bemoaned that the mate of *Ginevra* had fallen from the crow's-nest and broken the last telescope. That the fall had killed the mate was acknowledged virtually as an afterthought (Lamont 1861: 25-26).

Lamont's popularity is not surprising considering that the culture of Victorian times considered big-game hunting a manly sport, and that British hunters were active in Africa, India, and the Americas.<sup>7</sup> That huge animals might not be difficult to kill was of little importance to many Victorians because the image of the "great white hunter" was as important as the hunt itself.

Dufferin and Lamont both described an Arctic existence that was a combination of ease and excitement. Their depictions differed dramatically from most expedition accounts, which featured hardship, constant struggle with the environment, and, occasionally, death. Nevertheless, the Anglo-American public seems to have avoided cognitive dissonance about the far north. The major reason for this lack of conflict was that the public (and certainly the book reviewers) did not perceive works such as those by Dufferin and Lamont—which they classified much like mountaineering or other travel books—as dealing with the same areas and themes as other expedition accounts.

When the public wanted to read about the Arctic, it wanted a book set in an arena in which imported talents and courage could be tested against a hard, cold, unyielding foe. Conversely, if the book presented a different image, it simply was not an Arctic book. Vilhjalmur Stefansson was aware of this concept when he wrote:

Doubtless the average man turns to polar narratives, when he turns to them at all, with the desire and expectation of reading about suffering, heroic perseverance against formidable odds, and tragedy either actual or narrowly averted. Perhaps then, it is partly the law of supply and demand that accounts for the general tenor of arctic books. (Stefansson 1943: 278)

### 3.8 THE BIRTH OF THE ENGLISH PENNY PRESS

At the same time that Arctic travelers began to write books and give lectures aimed at stimulating their audiences, English dailies began to adopt some of the same techniques and to make their accounts more exciting. The press' use of this style was not derived from the success of Arctic accounts, but its subsequent adoption of the Arctic as a topic to be sensationalized was most likely influenced by the wide-spread popularity of the subject.

The birth of the English popular press coincided with technological developments in news-gathering, printing, and distribution.<sup>8</sup> In fact, one of the reasons for the repeal of the paper duty was the development of a replacement for rags in the production of newsprint: esparto, a North African grass (Plant 1939: 334-340). By the 1860s newsprint could be made from wood pulp, which reduced the price so much that popular papers were able to make considerably higher profits (Ellis 1960: Appendix, 10-17).

In the mid 1850s, these technological changes combined with the elimination of the taxes on knowledge to cause a proliferation of English newspapers representing virtually every class and political orientation. The most popular of these were three penny dailies—*The Daily Telegraph*, which was founded (as *Daily Telegraph & Courier*) in 1855; *The Manchester Guardian*, which changed from bi-weekly status the same year; and *The Standard*, which changed from an evening to a morning audience in 1857. Within five years *The Daily Telegraph* had surpassed *The Times*, which still cost four pence, as the most-widely circulated daily in Britain. By 1870 *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Standard* had become the two largest dailies in the world, and *The Daily News*, which dropped to a penny in 1869, had also surpassed the circulation of *The Times*, which was still three pence.

Although the penny dailies diverged from *The Times* in most areas, including their appearances, their initial similarities encouraged Fox Bourne to indicate that the 1860s was the period of the "highest level of real value" of the English press. He noted that not only could well-printed reasonably priced newspapers supplying up-to-date

information from all over the world be easily distributed, but that the competition was keen enough to encourage rival papers to "use all their wits in seeking and winning public favour, but not yet so keen as to drive them to often unworthy ways of attracting and amusing readers" (Fox Bourne 1887: II, 284).

The aspects of the press of which Fox Bourne so approved did not remain long. It has been commonplace to accept that English newspaper proprietors prior to about 1880 believed the duty of the press was to uphold the classic liberal vision of the world (Lytton Bulwer 1833; Siebert et al. 1969). However, recent research suggests that many proprietors were in the newspaper business simply to make profits (Lee 1976: 49; Berridge 1978: 250-264).

It was the English daily press' following of this pattern of commercialism and sensationalism set by the Sunday and the American press that led to the shift that social philosopher L.T. Hobhouse described as, "from being the organ of democracy...[to] the sounding-board for whatever ideas commend themselves to the great material interests" (Hobhouse 1910: 365). Or, as the liberal historian G.M. Trevelyan proposed rather more vitriolically:

The Philistines have captured the Ark of Covenant [the printing press] and have learnt to work their own miracles through its power. 'The pen,' as our grandfathers optimistically observed, 'is mightier than the sword.' Mightier indeed, but, as we now have learnt, no whit more likely to be in good hands. (Trevelyan 1901: 1047)

### 3.9 THE PRESS AND THE ARCTIC IN A DECADE OF CHANGE

Although the basis had been established for its sensationalization, the English daily press did not immediately accede. There are few indications of sensational writing in the first decade of the penny press, and even fewer about Arctic exploration, which, other than McClintock's expedition, received considerably less attention than it had previous to Rae's report. This was not just due to the new horrors surrounding the Arctic, but was foremost a result of the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, events that dominated newspaper coverage for the rest of the 1850s. This lack of attention to individual heroic efforts was mentioned by Isabel Burton in the preface of the memorial edition to her husband's *First footsteps in east Africa*: "This was one of his most splendid and dangerous expeditions, and the least known, partly because his pilgrimage to Meccah was in every man's mouth, and partly because the excitement aroused by the Crimean War had to a large extent deadened the interest in all personal adventure" (Burton 1894: xii).

Even the Sunday newspapers decreased their coverage of the Arctic. When H.M.S. *Resolute*, which had been abandoned near Bathurst Island at the order of Sir

Edward Belcher in 1854, was found a year later floating unmanned in Davis Strait, *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* gave the story only eight column inches and *The Weekly Times* only five (20 January 1856). That was still considerable compared to *The Times*, which stated only:

Her Majesty's Arctic discovery ship *Resolute*, which was abandoned, has been towed into the port of New London by the American whaling ship *George Henry*. When found, she had drifted 1,000 miles from the place where she was abandoned. Her sails, rigging, and all her appointments were in good order. (*The Times* 9 January 1856)

By contrast, *The New York Herald* ran successive articles of 46 column inches, 36 inches, and 90 inches about *Resolute*, each of which included a headline with six decks (27, 29, 31 December 1855). It was not that the American newspapers were more sensational with their Arctic treatment; they were just more complete.

The closest thing to sensationalism came with Kane's return from the Second Grinnell expedition in August 1855. In New York, every newspaper, even the *Tribune*, gave extensive coverage to what had been essentially a disaster. The *New-York Daily Times* gave over its entire first page to Kane's self-serving story (12 August 1855), and *The Sun* printed stories about the expedition for five successive days (12-16 August 1855). Meanwhile, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* proclaimed Kane one of the greatest explorers since Columbus (21 August 1855). And a new weekly, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, made the expedition the cover subject of its first issue (15 December 1855).

After Kane's death, no explorer so fired the American press until Robert E. Peary. Neither Hayes nor Hall received nearly the same adulation from the press as Kane. However, they both did receive inordinate coverage in terms of actual space. For example, on 24 August 1862, the announcement in *The New York Herald* of Hall's imminent return from the Arctic was accompanied by a banner headline and a larger map than was given to the Civil War battles of Antietam or Shiloh, both fought that year. Bennett Sr. also showed his belief in the public's interest in distant places and demonstrated his intention to cultivate it by *The Herald's* inclusion of the following statement in the story about Hall:

Fondness for adventure will lead men, so long as the world lasts, to seek new sources of excitement, and Arctic explorers will never be found wanting; consequently we had better be familiar with the localities they have a fondness for, that we may be able to follow their movements without the necessity of constant reference to a cumbersome atlas.... (24 August 1862)

Several weeks later, *The Herald* devoted three-and-one-half columns to Hall's return, including 11 decks. The space was extraordinary considering that the day's main feature was the battle of Antietam; in fact, Hall's expedition was given more

column inches in *The Herald* than any feature of the autumn that was not directly related to the Civil War. The story concentrated upon Hall having found remains of Martin Frobisher's expeditions of the 1570s:

Mr. Hall went to Countess of Warwick Sound, and after much difficulty succeeded in discovering the place where Frobisher attempted to plant a colony. A considerable time was spent here in obtaining relics of that ill-fated colony. At nearly every place of their debarkation relics were found consisting of pieces of coal, brick, wood, and a portion of cannon shot....  
(*The New York Herald* 15 September 1862)

Despite the space given to Hall's journey, the story was written without sensationalism. In fact, there were not to be any truly sensational stories of Arctic exploration in the major American press throughout the rest of the 1860s. This is true of exploration in general, but it does not prove that the conventional view—that sensationalism did not exist at this time—is accurate for all topics. However, there are indications that in the period immediately following the Civil War sensationalism had been tempered if it had not been eliminated. This is particularly true of the New York City press.

There are two reasons given by the conventional view for this decrease in sensationalism. The first is that the newspaper coverage of the Civil War was so sensational and graphic (not because of the techniques of presentation but due to the very subject matter and the thoroughness with which it was covered) that Americans had not only tired of but become horrified by the use of sensational stories. The second is the theory of the normal course of newspaper improvement. This suggests that sensationalism attracted readers and advertisers, generating a revenue that in turn financed advances in news-gathering, transmission, reporting, and technology. With these improvements, sensational papers began to attract wider audiences that demanded a better product. So while on one level they competed with each other, on another level the sensational newspapers began to compete with the more conservative penny press such as *The New-York Times*. By the 1860s, the best of the sensational papers had eliminated much of their invective, their salaciousness, and their sensationalism. Instead, they had become recognized as being among the most-informative, best-written, and most-influential papers in the world. It was perhaps with this in mind that both Weisberger (1950) and Van Deusen (1953: 194-201) indicated that in the press coverage of the Kansas troubles of 1855-1856 (when the territory became a battleground between free soil and pro-slavery settlers) even Greeley's *Tribune* was more sensational than Bennett's *Herald*.<sup>9</sup>

Despite this decrease in sensationalism in the daily press, the technique was maintained in the weekly market. In 1855, Frank Leslie, who had been an engraver for *The Illustrated London News*, started the first successful illustrated news weekly in

America, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. Like its model, Leslie's 16-page, 10-cent cross between a magazine and a newspaper carried only semi-fresh information, but demonstrated the demand for news pictures. The key to its success, as opposed to its American predecessors, was the number and size of its illustrations (which due to printing restrictions it always ran on half of its pages) and its emphasis on sensational current events rather than on literature (Huntzicker 1989). Two years later, the Harper's Publishing Company, which since 1850 had published *Harper's Monthly* (America's outstanding literary magazine), began to produce *Harper's Weekly*, a rival to Leslie's newspaper. In 1858, Leslie, whose motto was "never shoot over the heads of the people," dropped the price of the *Illustrated Newspaper* to six cents, and its circulation rocketed to 140,000 (Everett 1983).

Thus, at the end of the Civil War, the English and American press had an important similarity pertaining to sensationalism. In both cases, the weekly or Sunday papers were more sensational than the dailies, which had not yet adopted sensationalism in England and had to a certain extent "reformed" in the United States. But sensationalism was about to take an entirely new turn.



## PART 2

# THE ARCTIC SENSATIONAL

What were they seeking in the ice and cold? The Norseman who wrote the "King's Mirror" gave the answer six hundred years ago: "If you wish to know what men seek in this land, or why men journey thither in so great danger of their lives, then it is the threefold nature of man which draws him thither. One part of him is emulation and desire for fame, for it is man's nature to go where there is likelihood of great danger, and to make himself famous thereby. Another part is the desire of knowledge, for it is man's nature to wish to know and see those parts of which he has heard, and to find out whether they are as it was told to him or not. The third part is the desire of gain, seeing that men seek after riches in every place where they learn that profit is to be had, even though there be great danger in it."

Fridtjof Nansen  
*In Northern Mists*

## CHAPTER 4

### JAMES GORDON BENNETT DISCOVERS THE ARCTIC

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Between 1865 and 1883 sensationalism was reintroduced (or in some cases introduced) to the press in both the United States and England. The man most responsible for the popularization of sensational journalism in America at this time was James Gordon Bennett Jr. of *The New York Herald*, although his competitor at *The Sun*, Charles A. Dana, developed a widely popular sensational style of his own. In England, one feature of American-style sensationalism—investigative reporting (which the British press considered more a part of sensational journalism than what articles actually said or how they were presented)—was adopted by Frederick Greenwood of *The Pall Mall Gazette*.

Bennett also was one of the most successful journalists ever at the business of creating news, and in no area did he spend more time or money creating news—or did he receive greater rewards for it—than in exploration, both of Africa and the Arctic. Papers in the United States soon imitated Bennett in giving extensive coverage to exploration. And in England, *The Daily Telegraph* closely followed Bennett's example by sponsoring an expedition by his most noted correspondent, Henry M. Stanley. However, nowhere was Bennett's success at linking sensationalism with exploration equalled; his stable of correspondents, including Stanley, J.A. MacGahan, and William Henry Gilder, kept *The Herald* far ahead of its competitors.

#### 4.2 THE PRESS BEGINS TO CHANGE

Were one to scan the most popular English and American daily newspapers in the years immediately following the American Civil War, it would become apparent that they had certain important traits in common. The most obvious similarity was the unrelieved grayness of the pages, which featured small-sized type and showed little consideration for enlivening the format. In the United States, the headlines were smaller than during the Civil War, and there were far fewer illustrations. In England, crossheads to break up the long columns were not yet respectable, nor had paragraphing been introduced for the main story.<sup>1</sup> Although *The Daily Telegraph* had for a brief while broken with typographical orthodoxy—occasionally using up to five decks during the Crimean War—it had returned to the accepted style because it was "a prime dogma of journalists that for a morning paper to be a morning paper it must look like a morning paper" (Morison 1932: 270).

Another similarity between the newspapers of the two countries was their conservative nature. In England, papers were published with several underlying assumptions. These were that the typical newspaper reader was male, privately educated, property-owning, and the possessor of enough income to support servants. It was also assumed that he was interested primarily if not solely in political news, speeches, and assessment, and that he would be prepared to set aside at least two hours per day to read a compilation of closely argued, elegantly phrased essays on contemporary affairs, sprinkled liberally with erudite Oxbridge jokes in Latin. Further, he would deplore any typographical device to aid reading, and he could be relied upon to enjoy the most abstruse classical allusion while regarding the finest illustration as vulgar (Boston 1976: 16-17). The result of these assumptions was that the major newspapers—even those of the penny press—were written for the upper or middle classes, with the conservative middle-class public being served by *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Standard*, the liberal middle-class public by *The Daily News* or *The Manchester Guardian*, and the upper classes by *The Times* or *The Pall Mall Gazette*.

The conservative nature of the major dailies in the United States was also brought about by an attempt to appeal to a middle-class audience. The American trade periodical *The Journalist*—in a statement that would have been even more accurate in the 1860s than when it was made in the 1880s—indicated that the very success of the great New York papers in improving both their quality and the class of their readership seemed to have bred timidity and dullness into them:

No more conspicuous evidence of the fact exists than the *New York Herald*, with which the elder Bennett started to fight the whole world. On that principle he made his fortune. But when it was made he toned down to conservatism. For many years the *Herald* has ceased to be outspoken on any subject.... There is a list of two hundred and fifty or three hundred people at the *Herald* office who must never be spoken of disparagingly, no matter what happens. These are personal and business friends of Mr. Bennett....

Here is Mr. Dana, in the sere and yellow leaf of manhood, with a son whom he wants to see well started in life before he himself passes away. And so he becomes conservative, easy and inoffensive in spite of his natural tendencies.... The sharp, personal, incisive and sometimes abusive *Sun*... exists no longer.

Like Paul Dana, Whitelaw Reid has society aspirations which clog the wheels of his presses so that they turn out not a virile, strong, decided sheet as the paper used to be under Horace Greeley, but a molasses and water style of journalism that reads like the compositions written by pupils from an academy of young ladies. (*The Journalist* 17 May 1884)<sup>2</sup>

However, many features of the press—both in the United States and England—were about to change. One reason for this was the technological developments in the newspaper business. In 1863 William Bullock constructed the web-offset perfecter

press, which printed both sides of a continuous roll of paper instead of requiring individually fed sheets. Modifications to the web-rotary meant that by the end of the century the machines could print, cut, insert sheets, and fold for shipment (Berry 1958: 694-701). By 1904, *Lloyd's Weekly News* was using seven Hoe double-octuplets, each producing 55,000 32-page papers an hour (Lee 1976: 56).

The mass communication of news was also facilitated by the improvement or greater accessibility of time-saving machines: the first viable typewriter was developed in 1873; the linotype and intertype were adopted in the 1880s; and the straight-line press was developed in 1889 (Berry 1958: 683-714).

The speed of international news-gathering was vastly improved when a transatlantic cable was laid between Europe and the United States in 1866 and another cable between Europe and India in 1870 (Rich 1977: 11).<sup>3</sup> Both *The New York Herald* and the *New-York Tribune* claimed to have sent the first message via the transatlantic cable on 28 June 1866, the day it was completed (Seitz 1928: 203). The next step was the use of the telephone by the press, which reputedly occurred for the first time in February 1887, when a reporter for *The Boston Daily Globe* reported a speech by Alexander Graham Bell in Salem, Massachusetts (Kern 1983: 115).<sup>4</sup>

Changes were also forthcoming in the United States because a new generation of journalists entered the business. Within a five-year span, the leadership of all the major New York newspapers changed. On 22 April 1867 a new era at *The Herald* was introduced when James Gordon Bennett Jr. became the paper's manager. In January 1868 *The Sun* was purchased by the financial backers of Charles A. Dana, who became the new editor. On 18 June 1869 Henry Raymond died at the age of 49, following which *The New-York Times* was run by George Jones. On 1 June 1872 James Gordon Bennett Sr. died, and on 29 November of the same year, his arch-rival, Horace Greeley, also died, and the *New-York Tribune* was taken over by one of its senior editors, Whitelaw Reid.

Each change was important in its own way. Reid, who had made his fame as a war correspondent for the *Cincinnati Gazette*, gave new vigor to the austere *Tribune*, the import and popularity of which had declined after the Civil War as Greeley had concentrated on running for President rather than running his newspaper. Reid believed implicitly in the Republican party, and his paper became one that appealed to scholarly, conservative, middle- and upper-class readers. Reid hated sensationalism even more than had Greeley, and rather than adapt to using its techniques, he maintained the *Tribune* on talent and ability, although its circulation never challenged those of *The Herald* or *The Sun* (Duncan 1975).

Meanwhile, Jones and his new editor at *The New-York Times*, Louis J. Jennings, were among the first to show how powerful a role the newspaper could play on behalf of the public. In 1871 Jones and Jennings exposed the corrupt dealings of New York mayor William Marcy Tweed, "one of the most accomplished plunderers of a city which...had suffered from corrupt city governments almost since its founding" (Tebbel 1976: 279-280). Faced with efforts by Tweed to take over *The Times*, threats of physical violence, and bribes of \$5 million, Jones persevered and revealed Tweed and dozens of members of his political hierarchy to have defrauded New York of more than \$200 million (Myers 1901: 252-298; Davis 1921: 81-116). Although *The Times* did not gain much circulation as a result of these revelations, it once again established itself as a champion of quality journalism, offering "eight pages daily of sober, solid reporting for people themselves sober and solid" (Juergens 1966: 8).

The top two New York newspapers in terms of circulation were still *The Herald* and *The Sun*. Immediately after the end of the Civil War, *The Sun's* circulation had plummeted, reaching a low of 43,000 at the beginning of 1868. But Dana (who, with the *Tribune* from 1849 to 1862, had been the first American journalist to hold the title of managing editor of a newspaper) turned the paper's fortunes around, and its circulation increased to 103,000 in 1870 and 132,000 by 1875 (see Appendix 5).

There were several reasons for Dana's success. First, despite being only four pages, his *Sun* was extremely versatile, and attempted to include "all the news, foreign domestic, political, social, literary, scientific, and commercial" (*The Sun* 27 January 1868). Dana stated that news was everything "which is of sufficient interest to arrest and absorb the attention of the public or of any considerable part of it...I have always felt that whatever the Divine Providence permitted to occur I was not too proud to report" (quoted in Hynes 1983: 79).

With this broad definition, Dana by necessity had to make *The Sun* a model of brevity and clarity. He was able to do so because he had that "indefinable newspaper instinct that knows when a tomcat on the steps of the City Hall is more important than a crisis in the Balkans" (O'Brien 1918: 231).

Dana's success was also attributable to the style that he gave *The Sun*. He believed that "a newspaper should not merely be entertaining and comprehensive; he held that it should also be vivaciously written, and filled from beginning to end with human interest. Under his editorship *The Sun* [became]...a breezy, witty, somewhat sensational, and vividly alert journal" (Nevins 1969: II, 301-302).

Dana's commentary could be vindictive, acerbic, and cynical, but he also added polished writing and editing to his paper, while making the human-interest story an essential feature of news writing to a greater degree than had his predecessors (Stone

1938; Fenton 1941). He also helped lead the way back to sensationalism by seeking new ways to integrate emotional appeal with his stories (Wilson 1907).

The final reason for *The Sun's* success was Dana's ability to recognize journalistic talent. *The Sun* was long regarded as the first "school of journalism" for young newspapermen, and it was Dana who hired most of these promising writers and editors (Emery and Emery 1988: 280). The long list of journalists to work under Dana features many of the greatest editors and writers in American history, including Arthur Brisbane, Richard Harding Davis, Will Irwin, Julian Ralph, Jacob Riis, Carr Van Anda, and even Joseph Pulitzer (Steele 1986).

Like Dana, Bennett Jr. had an extraordinary eye for journalistic talent. At various times, *The Herald* employed Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Charles Nordhoff, Charles Edward Russell, and perhaps the greatest staff of foreign correspondents ever assembled (Coleman 1924-1925).

Bennett also displayed an unusual combination of hard work and originality. After only a few months as manager of *The Herald* (and only two years after first joining the staff of the newspaper), he started an afternoon edition, which he called *The Evening Telegram*. He filled his new product—which sold for a penny and was printed on pink paper—with coarse, sensational stories rejected by *The Herald*. At the same time, he initiated *The Herald's* gradual return to his father's early journalistic characteristics. He made *The Herald* appeal to a mass audience by aggressive marketing; better make-up; use of larger, bolder, and more attention-grabbing headlines; innovative use of illustrations; and a popularization of its contents—that is, like Dana, giving space to small, interesting events rather than dull ones of greater consequence, and making the primary function not just presenting the news, but doing it in a lively, even sensational, manner (Coleman 1924-1925; Seitz 1928).

In his history of English journalism, James Grant referred specifically to Bennett when he wrote: "New York Editors lay themselves especially out for sensational matter; and where it does not exist in fact, they either invent it, or give sensational colouring to accidents which in themselves have nothing of the sensational quality about them" (Grant 1871: II, 431).

Bennett's direction helped *The Herald* maintain the largest circulation in America for most of the two decades after he took charge (see Appendix 5). However, it was not long after Dana took over *The Sun* that the two newspapers fought a lively circulation war. One method that both used to get ahead was to publish the most exciting, gripping stories they could find, spurring Reid to comment, "There is not an editor in New York who does not know the fortune that awaits the man who is willing to make a daily as disreputable and vile as a hundred and fifty thousand readers would be willing

to buy" (quoted in Dicken-Garcia 1983: 299). To Bennett, this strategy meant the frequent publication of features about a subject that truly fascinated him—exploration (Crockett 1926).

During this period, *The Herald* and *The Sun* were, more than any other newspapers, the basis of American opinion and thought (Fenton 1941; Seitz 1928). Not only did they have the largest circulations, what they printed and advocated was reprinted and discussed in other newspapers across the country, in weekly and monthly magazines, and in pulpits and other public platforms (Stone 1938).<sup>5</sup> This is significant because as *The Herald* carried more and more stories about exploration, and particularly about the Arctic, the interest in these topics carried far beyond New York City.

#### 4.3 NORDENSKIÖLD AND ARCTIC SCIENCE

When Bennett Jr. started giving major coverage to exploration, he was in some ways going into an area as uncharted as the far north itself. Arctic exploration had received very little attention in the American press since the beginning of the Civil War, with the exception of the return of Charles Francis Hall in 1862. When Hall came back from his second expedition in 1869, it was to negligible interest, and even *The Herald* ran only a small note under the head ARCTIC DISCOVERIES on page seven (*The New York Herald* 27 September 1869). The most complete coverage of Hall's expedition was given by the *Tribune*, which included the entire text of a letter from Hall to Henry Grinnell (*New-York Tribune* 27, 29, 30 September 1869).

In Britain, Arctic exploration had more public and press appeal, but the main focus of geographical study was Africa.<sup>6</sup> This was to a great extent because the exploration of the "Dark Continent" was being carried out primarily by British subjects, whereas most of the journeys to the north were by central Europeans and Scandinavians, particularly Norwegians experienced in hunting for seal and walrus in Svalbard waters.

The first Scandinavian to become a figure of importance to the English and American publics for his work in the Arctic was Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld, who first led a scientific expedition to Svalbard in 1864. By 1868, Nordenskiöld had recognized an important new development in Arctic exploration: to obtain funding it was becoming desirable to produce more than scientific results. Certainly, the new emphasis on science validated expeditions in the public mind,<sup>7</sup> but discovery or the potential for commercial gain brought the necessary financial backing. Nordenskiöld's 1864 expedition had been backed by the Swedish government and the Swedish Academy of Sciences, but four years later the government was losing interest in the study of the north and had begun to dry up as a source of funding (Nathorst *et al.* 1909; Kish 1973).

Nordenskiöld's plans were saved by the intervention of a wealthy Göteborg businessman and philanthropist, Oscar Dickson. Many people who backed expeditions did so for reasons of nationalism or commercialism. Although Dickson might also have been motivated by such interests, they were not the origin of his generosity. Dickson was an avid sportsman, and his passion for hunting aroused his interest for research into nature and all of its phenomena, especially in the Arctic (Nathorst 1897). Dickson made a major financial contribution to Nordenskiöld's 1868 Arctic expedition, the goal of which was to penetrate as far as possible in the ocean north of Svalbard and to carry out scientific programs on the way. The expedition both marked the beginning of their long association and elevated Nordenskiöld to the status of an international celebrity. Not only was there great interest in the new farthest north reached by Nordenskiöld's ship *Sofia*, 81° 42' (*The Standard* 6 October 1868; *The Daily News* 6 October 1868), his scientific work also appealed to a public fascinated by all the exciting aspects of the newly defined branches of science. Thus *The Daily Telegraph*, in an article primarily about James Lamont's impending hunting trip to the Barents Sea and Svalbard, recalled Nordenskiöld's recent scientific work: "It will be remembered that the Swedes made a great discovery last year. They ascertained that Spitzbergen was connected with Scandinavia by a submarine bank, with a maximum depth of 500 fathoms, whereas the sea to the west of that bank deepened to 2,600 fathoms" (*The Daily Telegraph* 3 April 1869).<sup>8</sup>

Nordenskiöld made two more Arctic expeditions (1870 and 1872-1873) emphasizing both geographical exploration and science (the second actually with the aim of reaching the North Pole), before adding a more commercial element to his ventures (Leslie 1879). In 1875 and 1876, again with the sponsorship of Dickson and in the latter year with additional funds from Aleksandr Sibiryakov, a Russian merchant, he made expeditions to the Yenisey River to demonstrate the feasibility of a trading route between Sweden and Siberia via the Kara Sea (Leslie 1879). Then in 1878-1880, sponsored by in part by Dickson, Sibiryakov, and King Oscar II of Sweden and Norway, Nordenskiöld led an expedition that was the first to navigate the entire Northeast Passage. Although the voyage of *Vega* had an important commercial component, and certainly was a symbolic act of conquest, the enormous amount of scientific data collected indicated that Nordenskiöld's primary interest remained scientific (Nordenskiöld 1881; Kish 1973).

Nevertheless, despite the great success of Nordenskiöld's work over a long period, he did little that made a major impact on the British and American audience, especially before the voyage of *Vega*. Nordenskiöld and his primary sponsors, Dickson and Sibiryakov, were not interested in planning or participating in heroic tales.



Nordenskiöld and Dickson both wanted to understand the Arctic—how it was formed, what lived there, what secrets of science it could explain. Sibiryakov was dedicated to opening up Siberia, where he had grown up as the son of a miner (Hesselman 1933: 447). Therefore, although Nordenskiöld published many articles detailing the scientific results of his work, he did not write an account for the general public until after his navigation of the Northeast Passage (some 20 years after he first entered the Arctic). Even then, it was not a story of adventure, but a history of the regions he passed through and "a description of the voyage itself, of the nature of the northern coast of Siberia, of the animal and plant life there in existence, and of the tribes with which we met during the voyage" (Nordenskiöld 1885: 267).

Nordenskiöld's *The voyage of the Vega* was widely acclaimed, and his prudent and patient management of the expedition was noted with admiration (*Century Illustrated Magazine* 1882: 304). However, the typically Scandinavian thoroughness and accuracy in planning that allowed the voyage to be completed so quickly and successfully—as well as the book's seriousness of tone and ponderous attention to detail—meant that the account itself did not captivate the masses to the same degree as others that were presented in sensational fashion. In fact, the greatest interest in Nordenskiöld was generated in America by fanciful stories in *The New York Herald* expressing concern over his supposed disappearance during his voyage (6 February, 16 March 1879).

Nordenskiöld's success in the differing arenas of Arctic exploration coincided with a widespread dispute in Britain and the United States about the purpose and costs of polar exploration (and in Britain of African exploration as well). As various expeditions, or individuals on them, met with tragic ends, it became common to question whether the gains of discovery were commensurate with the costs in suffering, lives, and money. The dispute featured three camps: that which insisted that no efforts in the far north were worth such high costs; that which backed scientific research as the only worthy undertaking in the Arctic; and that which believed geographical discovery and adventurous travel were worth any cost.

In Britain, the leaders of the first camp were, surprisingly, the press.<sup>9</sup> Since the beginning of the Franklin search, *The Times* had opposed any more money, men, or effort being poured into Arctic exploration. "We do not think the geographical importance of these expeditions commensurable with the cost or exposure of a single sloop's crew," it had stated. "It signifies supremely little whether Boothia Felix is a peninsula, an island, or a gulf" (*The Times* 4 October 1851). Nor had it changed its attitude 14 years later when a new British polar expedition was proposed: "We must protest in the name of common sense and humanity....We trust that not a single life

may be adventured in another attempt to reach the North Pole" (*The Times* 25 January 1865).<sup>10</sup>

Despite its popularity, even the cause of science did not sway some of the journals in their struggle against efforts in the north:

There is something frightful, inexorable, inhuman in prosecuting researches, which are mere researches, after such a costly fashion. When a brave man dies for the benefit of his fellows, or in the direct services of his maker, we do not grudge the blood, but we demand a sufficient reason for its expenditure; and when we hear of the martyrs of science, whether they perish among the arctic snow or on the sands of the desert, we begin to think of science herself as...a Moloch with benevolent pretensions... throwing away with all the calmness of an abstract and impersonal principle, those generous lives...which might have saved a kingdom or helped a world. (*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 1855: 589)

Science did have its supporters, however. Not only the scientists themselves, but many members of scientific or geographical societies and much of the public believed in the necessity of scientific investigation on expeditions to new places, including the polar regions. One of the leaders of this view was the anthropologist Franz Boas, who, discussing the object of Arctic expeditions, wrote:

It is the thorough exploration of the Arctic region and of all its phenomena. The problems will not be solved by pushing north and gaining the pole....Though the reaching of the pole may be desirable, it is not so urgent as to demand the sacrifice of noble lives in hazardous and adventurous enterprises which might be accomplished with relative safety at a later time. If the problems awaiting their solution in the Arctic were as pressing as those of ethnography, any attempt to reach the pole would be justified. Physical phenomena, however, are not so subject to change as those of ethnography....Therefore, we can not see any reason why polar expeditions should be sent out only in order to reach the pole. (Boas 1885: 78-79)

But the view undoubtedly the most popular was the last, that even geographical discovery—and its attendant adventure—was worth any cost. Certainly the public, like the Arctic scientists, was interested in the advancement of science. However, an interest in scientific accomplishment did not mean a corresponding interest in scientific data. Rather, the public craved tales of adventure, suffering, and physical hardship. So exciting narratives were desired, rather than charts of information.

To a great extent, this was because to many Victorians, action itself had an essential moral purpose. Certainly action usually had a stated practical objective—in the case of exploration, the expansion of scientific or geographical knowledge—but this was often merely a rationalization invented to justify the activities. The true importance of the action was not its end result but the process of action itself (Sandison 1967: viii). McClintock summed up this philosophy and its relation to exploration when he said: "The less the means, the more arduous I felt was the achievement...the more glorious

would be the success, the more honourable defeat, even if defeat awaits us" (quoted in Berton 1988: 316-317).

With this attitude dominant, it is not surprising that although Nordenskiöld's Arctic achievements were enormous, his emphasis on science and his careful planning made his impact on the British and American public relatively small. And despite their influence in the international scientific community, other Arctic scientists (such as Torell and Rink) received even less public acclaim. This was in part because most scientists lectured or published in narrow forums, in part because of their straightforward—and usually rather dull—method of presentation, and in part because they did not present the exciting tales the British and American public wanted to read. In addition, compiling and writing scientific results were so tedious, and books or articles dealing with the scientific aspects of expeditions so rarely were widely distributed or read, that some of the explorers who claimed to be investigating scientific theories gladly ignored those aspects of their expeditions when the time came to write an account.

Isaac Israel Hayes was not unusual in this regard. In the preface to *The open polar sea*, his account of the United States North Polar expedition of 1860-1861, Hayes wrote, "True, the purpose of the voyage was purely a scientific one..." (Hayes 1867: vi). But on the next page he discussed how, after he had placed his scientific observations at the disposal of the Smithsonian Institute, he had been told that the Institute now considered itself to have the exclusive right of publication. The claim was outrageous, but Hayes saw his chance to escape from dealing with the scientific results. So his response was, "To a proposition so eminently reasonable I readily assented... and considering myself thus absolved from any further responsibility to the scientific world...I accordingly abandoned the idea" (Hayes 1867: vii). Hayes' book ultimately became an account in the style in vogue, "little more than a personal narrative, endeavoring to select from my abundant notes such scenes and incidents of adventure..." (Hayes 1867: v). The presentation to the public of what had supposedly been a scientific expedition had thus been reduced to the status of a thriller.

#### 4.4 BENNETT CREATES THE NEWS

If thrillers were what the public wanted, the man who could—and would—produce them was James Gordon Bennett Jr. Bennett did not himself initiate the mating of the popular press and explorers, but he did take full advantage of it. This mating, which occurred in the United States before it did in England, was the final step in the process that began when explorers realized there were advantages to writing thrilling narratives rather than scientific papers or books taken directly from expedition journals. From the



JAMES GORDON BENNETT JR.

standpoint of the explorers, both fame and wealth could be obtained from working directly with the newspapers. In addition, the exposure gained would increase other sources of income, such as lecture audiences, book sales, and independent contributions. As the British Antarctic explorer Ernest Shackleton later explained the concept to the Canadian anthropologist Vilhjalmur Stefansson, lectures sold books, books sold lectures, and newspapers sold both, "particularly when you come home from an expedition with a big hurrah" (quoted in Hunt 1986: 146).<sup>11</sup> The other side of the coin was that the newspapers stood to benefit greatly from increased sales due to the reports from expeditions, especially if those accounts were exclusive.

The relationship between newspapers and explorers required more than ever that the new lands be portrayed as tests for daring souls willing to risk their lives to make gains for science, the flag, or mankind. Therefore, in the 1860s and 1870s:

The spirit of the runner of marathons and the scaler of mountain peaks...slipped in. It suddenly became important to make the longest sledge journey or the longest ocean voyage. Perhaps this change of emphasis was in response to popular demand....what the public now wanted from explorers was a record they could admire for perseverance in the face of difficulties, courage in the face of danger. Triumph over obstacles was the goal—which made it desirable that their difficulties should be many and the dangers great. (Hunt 1986: 216)

Thus, to a certain extent, the purpose of exploration for those linked to the newspapers changed from a quest for knowledge or a passion for the Arctic (or Africa) to a quest for fame and a passion for profit. As the American adventurer Anthony Fiala commented, "The polar explorer needs money. Money before an expedition, money during an expedition, and money after an expedition. There must be money, because it is the true reason for the expedition" (*The World* 13 March 1906). So there was no motive for emphasizing any favorable features about new areas, but rather only the extreme dangers that made the challenge seem to the public to be harder and therefore more attractive.

One of the first polar explorers to seek the sponsorship of the popular press was Hall, who, before he entered the Arctic arena, had himself started two newspapers, *The Cincinnati Occasional* and the *Cincinnati Daily Press* (Loomis 1972: 34-37). Before his first expedition, Hall met with Horace Greeley and received assurances that he would be paid for any stories sent home (Loomis 1972: 61). From this beginning, the connection grew so that, by the 1880s, many explorers, especially Americans, attempted to establish links with major newspapers.

Although a variety of British and American newspapers paid returning explorers for their stories, no newspaper in the world gave more coverage to exploration, particularly that of the north, than *The New York Herald*. The force behind this participation by

*The Herald* was Bennett Jr. Shortly after assuming day-to-day control of *The Herald*, he demonstrated what his unique contribution to the newspaper business was going to be: whereas his father had shown the world how to obtain the news, Bennett Jr. proved to be a genius at creating it. He had carefully taken note of the benefits when his father had sent *Herald* correspondents around the United States to cover the Civil War. He believed that the descriptions of the areas from which the stories emanated were as important to the readers as anything that might be happening there. He therefore began to send reporters to cover not only events in strange places but the places themselves.<sup>12</sup> Bennett also quickly realized the value of exclusive news, so it was a logical progression for him to send correspondents as members of expeditions and then to organize and send the expeditions himself. In that way, he could first create the popular desire for information and then satisfy it with exclusive reports (Riffenburgh 1991a).

Bennett made his first great attempt to create news in 1869 when he assigned one of his roving reporters, Henry Morton Stanley, to find the Scottish missionary David Livingstone in central Africa.<sup>13</sup> Stanley was the perfect reporter for Bennett—a man who always wanted to be where the action was, and preferably in areas little known to the New York audience. Stanley first came to Bennett's notice two years previously when, as a free-lance journalist writing primarily for *The Missouri Democrat* of St. Louis but also as a stringer for three New York papers (*The Herald*, *The Times*, and the *Tribune*), he had "the very large commission to inform the public regarding all matters of general interest affecting the Indians and the great Western plains" (Stanley 1895: I, v).

In December 1867 Stanley presented himself to Bennett in New York and proposed accompanying the British punitive expedition against Emperor Theodore of Abyssinia, who had taken a number of British subjects hostage in his mountain fortress of Magdala. Bennett refused to send Stanley at *The Herald's* expense, but agreed to pay him a high rate for exclusive reports (Stanley 1909: 228). Stanley immediately sailed to Suez, where he bribed the telegraph operator to ensure that his copy would be forwarded to Bennett's offices in London before rival accounts would be sent to the London papers. He then sped to the Horn of Africa, where the British commander, Sir Robert Napier, was assembling his forces. On 10 April 1868, Napier's troops scored a spectacular victory, Magdala was taken and burned, and Theodore committed suicide. Stanley traveled much of the way back to Suez alone in order to beat the other journalists, and on 6 June he sent off his story (Stanley 1874).

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for six days. Stanley's story was not only the first detailed news of the action at Magdala, it was the only source for a week. The other papers howled in indignation, and actually went so far as to accuse *The Herald* of fabricating the results of the expedition—all of which made *The Herald's* triumph so much the greater when the other accounts did finally arrive.<sup>14</sup> Bennett was so pleased that he put Stanley on *The Herald's* regular payroll.

It was shortly after this that Bennett decided to have Stanley interview Livingstone. As a biographer of Livingstone assessed Bennett's motives:

There was nothing doing in the world. Europe was taking breath between two wars. Asia seemed more than usually lethargic except for some civil strife in Japan. And from Africa...came nothing new, nothing at any rate on the Abyssinian scale, nothing but a rumour that the lost Livingstone had found the source of the Nile and was on his way down the river. Something, perhaps, might be made of that. Livingstone was certainly "good copy" in America as well as in England. (Coupland 1945: 137-138)

So, in October 1868 Stanley left for north Africa, where he hoped Livingstone would appear. By February it had become apparent that Stanley could wait forever, and he returned to London, from where he was sent to report on other stories (McLynn 1989: 80-84). Bennett was not put off the search, however. Throughout the year he followed the agonized correspondence of *The Times* on the whereabouts of the "lost Dr. Livingstone."<sup>15</sup> Then, on 27 October 1869 he met again with Stanley and handed out one of the most famous journalistic assignments of all time, ordering Stanley to make several stops in Asia and then to proceed to Zanzibar, where he would organize an expedition to the interior to find Livingstone (Stanley 1872: xvii-xviii).<sup>16</sup>

In November 1871 at Ujiji on the shore of Lake Tanganyika, Stanley did find Livingstone, and his exclusive stories relayed back to *The Herald* made him an international hero, resulted in an increase in the paper's circulation (Tebbel 1976: 233), and convinced Bennett that he had indeed discovered the most effective way to create news and grab an audience (Riffenburgh 1991a). Bennett followed this success by sending out another expedition under Alvan S. Southworth to "find" Samuel Baker in the Sudan (*The New York Herald* 19, 30 January 1872, 26 March 1873; Southworth 1875). *The Herald* also started giving major coverage to other African explorations (for example, 7 April 1874, 11 July 1879). And in 1874 Bennett partially financed Stanley's next expedition to Africa.

But Stanley was hardly back from his trek to find Livingstone before Bennett had shifted his attention to new correspondents and had turned from looking south towards Africa to looking north towards the Arctic.



#### 4.5 BENNETT AND THE ARCTIC

Having discovered the financial rewards of creating news,<sup>17</sup> Bennett surrounded himself with investigative reporters who could make exciting stories out his wealth of ideas. One such reporter was Januarius Aloysius MacGahan, who has been described as America's first great foreign correspondent (Tebbel 1976: 234). MacGahan initially made a reputation filing reports from the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) and the Paris Commune.<sup>18</sup> He received his first exposure to the Arctic when Bennett sent him to Geneva for the sitting of the Alabama Claims Arbitration Commission, at which the United States was awarded damages from Great Britain, which was ruled to have breached its neutrality in the American Civil War by allowing confederate naval vessels to be built and equipped on British territory. One of these ships, *Shenandoah*, had looted and burned American Arctic whaling vessels in the north Pacific fishery in 1865 (Bockstoce 1986: 103-128).

Bennett's own fascination with the north and what were known as the "Arctic questions"—the navigation of the Northwest passage and the attainment of the North Pole—convinced him that such topics also could be made subjects of great interest to the public. One of his earliest attempts at creating news in the Arctic was to send reporters with the United States relief expedition searching for the members of Hall's North Pole expedition (1871-1873) in *Polaris*. A reporter accompanied each of the two relief ships, Martin T. Maher on *Juniata* and Frank Y. Commagere on *Tigress*. In August 1873 Maher served under George Washington De Long in the steam-launch *Little Juniata*, which searched the treacherous reaches of Melville Bay for traces of *Polaris*. Maher's report back to *The Herald* was perhaps the first Arctic account ever written specifically for immediate publication in a newspaper. His thrilling tale established the pattern later press reports followed:

There was a terrible sea running and the spray danced into the air to a great height and could be seen overleaping icebergs of one hundred feet high, and the waves, lashed to fury by the hurricane, burst against those mountains of ice, breaking off ponderous-looking, solid masses which fell into the sea with a rushing, deafening sound. The destruction of the boat and all on board, now seemed imminent. (*The New York Herald* 11 September 1873)

After continuing the search for 36 hours under these conditions, De Long turned back, but his determination under stress gained him the praise of Maher, who wrote in the same story: "Our expedition was well managed, proving that the commander was a skilful and courageous officer, and worthy of honorable mention on the record of Arctic heroes."

*Tigress* unsuccessfully continued trying to locate *Polaris* even after *Juniata* had returned to New York. Although Commagere did not have such hair-raising

experiences, he did create an impression on his shipmates. When the story of the expedition was told in *Arctic experiences*, it was written, "Mr. Commagere was one of those energetic correspondents of the *New York Herald* who are ever ready to do and dare in any field where reportorial honors are to be won" (Blake 1874: 347).

The stories by Maher and Commagere demonstrated the completion of the change of the presentation of the Arctic from the sublime to the sensational. Although this change was significant, it was actually quite subtle for two reasons. First, as Burke had pointed out, the sublime was closely related to the sensational. His aesthetic had acknowledged not only the sublime power of nature but the power of individuals who could artificially produce emotion, whether it be terror or awe (Monk 1960: 84-100). The sensational journalists of the nineteenth century could do just that.

The change was also subtle because it did not involve a major adjustment of the cognitive element in the physical image of the north; rather, it influenced the affective element, that is, the interpretation of that physical image. According to Boulding (1956), images incorporate three related features—the cognitive, affective, and behavioral characteristics—that influence responses to objects and situations. The cognitive element comprises awareness, knowledge, and information; the affective component embodies feelings about and interpretations of the cognitive element. Thus, although the wordings of many descriptions of the Arctic beginning in the 1860s were not significantly different from those written earlier, the overall image of the Arctic transmitted became decidedly different: whereas before it has been perceived as a place of mystery and sublimity, it now became an area of excitement and tension, an adversary that had to be conquered.

With Bennett seemingly able to read the public's growing interest in the Arctic, it is somewhat surprising that the next year he turned down the chance to have a correspondent accompany a voyage into the Russian north. In 1874, sailing captain Joseph Wiggins began to revive the centuries-old British interest in the commercial viability of the Northeast Passage. He chartered Lamont's steamship *Diana* in an attempt to become the first man since the sixteenth century to reach the mouth of the Ob' from western Europe via the Kara Sea. A few days before he left, Wiggins invited Stanley to join him. As Wiggins later related the incident:

I said to him: "Stanley, if you ascend these rivers and go over Asia home, you will be the first man to do it, after the fashion of what you did in Africa." Stanley said: "You have the right track; if Bennett will let me go, I will go with you." I said: "I am nearly ready to sail. I will give you a week." He replied: "Three days will do. I'll telegraph." He cabled Bennett, and Bennett replied with the monosyllable: "No." (Johnson 1907: 24)

Despite Bennett's lack of foresight on this occasion, Wiggins made a successful voyage that inspired Nordenskiöld's first expedition to the same area the following year (Johnson 1907: 22-53). Financed in part by Sibiryakov, Wiggins did more in the next two decades to open up the Kara Sea route than even Nordenskiöld's completion of the Northeast Passage (Holland 1988c). However, even Wiggins was not ultimately successful in making this a viable trading route.

In 1875, Bennett was again involved in the north. He joined Allen Young, Lady Franklin, and Frederick Innes-Lillingston to finance Young's expedition in the barque *Pandora*. The primary object of the journey was to navigate the Northwest Passage in one season, but it had as subsidiary goals the exploration of King William Island for relics of John Franklin's expedition, the gathering of news about the British Arctic Expedition (1875-1876) under George S. Nares, and, from Bennett's standpoint, the selling of newspapers featuring the first-hand accounts of MacGahan, whose adventurous disposition and facility as a vivid descriptive writer with an eye for drama made him the perfect reporter for Bennett's "Arctic beat." Perhaps more than any of his predecessors, MacGahan emphasized not just the thrill of the expedition, but the feel of the Arctic. His descriptions were credited with increasing the *Herald's* sales (Tebbel 1976: 234), while enhancing the image of the Arctic as desolate and horrible:

For hundreds of miles in every direction it is the same. The whole north coast of America, from Behring's Straits to Hudson's Bay, with the great Archipelago north of it, is nothing but stone and rock and ice, not only without a tree or shrub, or blade of grass, but without even a handful of earth to hide its savage nakedness. The water is ice, the land is rock; the sea a frozen corpse, the earth a bare, grinning skeleton, that meets you everywhere, that seizes you by its bony clasp, and will not let you go; the skeleton of a dead world. (MacGahan 1876: 226)

*Pandora* was plagued by heavy ice almost from the beginning of its passage through Lancaster Sound, and although the expedition continued down Peel Sound, the ice in Franklin Strait proved impassible, so Young did an about-face. Even the return was full of tension and danger, and MacGahan's story was used throughout England with the permission of Bennett:

The race through and out of Peel Strait in a heavy gale, with snow and sleet, proved to be a slow one. Ice following from the south and also coming down from the north next day we were nearly jammed between them. Just off Cape Rennel the fog lifted one morning, and we found a high rocky coast on the starboard two or three lengths off, while the pack on the port beam scarcely allowed room to put the ship about. We succeeded and were driven back into Peel Strait. Ice was rapidly closing the outlet, and young ice was forming on the waves like oil, and rising and falling without breaking. At last we found a 'lead,' closed at the further end by a broadneck of ice. This we charged and got through, and finally made our escape.... (*The Times* 18 October 1875)

Within a year of the voyage, MacGahan's account of the expedition, *Under the northern lights*, was published in England. The book not only brought McGahan's Arctic directly to the English public, it helped him establish such a reputation that he was hired as a correspondent for *The Daily News* after he left *The Herald* due to a disagreement with Bennett (Bullard 1933: 46).<sup>19</sup>

In 1878 Bennett continued his use of the Arctic to gain readership. At the beginning of the year, a report appeared indicating that he had finally decided to allow Stanley to head north: "I am assured by a journalist who ought to know that Mr. Stanley has really declared his readiness to undertake the discovery of the North Pole. If he has, there will be an end of that old secret; if the problem is within the compass of mortal man to unravel it" (*The New-York Times* 22 February 1878). However, Bennett's jealousy of Stanley and his unwillingness to commit the financial resources the free-spending Stanley felt he needed for such an expedition led not only to the termination of the project but to Stanley's resignation from Bennett's employment (McLynn 1991: 16).

But Bennett just found another correspondent who could excite the readers of *The Herald*—William Henry Gilder. Bennett's plan was to send out a party to search for the records and journals from the Franklin expedition. Although ultimately the American Geographical Society sponsored the search (1878-1880), which was led by Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka of the U.S. Army, Gilder was the second-in-command.

After being landed near Daly Bay on the northwest shore of Hudson Bay, the party of five men spent a winter learning the lifestyle and traveling techniques of the local Eskimos. In the spring of 1879 they sledged to King William Island, where they found skeletal remains and relics that had not been discovered by McClintock in 1859, and that made sensational material for Gilder: "...there is little doubt that they were in desperate condition; in fact, as we subsequently learned from other witnesses, there were almost unmistakable evidences of their being compelled to resort to cannibalism until at last they absolutely starved to death at this point" (*The New York Herald* 25 September 1880).

The party then sledged back to Camp Daly in the midst of the winter of 1879-1880, only to find that the expected provisions had not been left for them. They proceeded to Marble Island, where they boarded a ship back to the United States. This sledge journey, which measured 3,251 statute miles, was the longest by any white men at that time, and was accomplished without any deaths or serious illnesses. But Gilder made it out to be even more than that. As he stated in his book *Schwatka's search* (which was taken directly from his accounts to *The Herald*): "It was the first expedition which relied for its own subsistence and for the subsistence of its dogs on the game which it

found in the locality. It was the first expedition in which the white men of the party voluntarily assumed the same diet as the natives" (Gilder 1881: xi).

It is true that Gilder's claims about the "firsts" of the Schwatka expedition ignored the earlier achievements of John Rae and Charles Francis Hall, among others. However, no previous Arctic adventurer had communicated at such great length and in such detail with the newspaper readership of either England or America. Immediately after the return of the expedition, Gilder's accounts appeared in *The Herald*, frequently taking an entire page or more of the 12-to-16-page paper, and running each day from 23 September to 6 October 1880.<sup>20</sup> In fact, the expedition was given considerably more coverage than the election of James Garfield as President of the United States later the same month or even than Garfield's assassination the next year.

Much of Gilder's account was wrapped in sensationalism, especially the headlines and subheads. On 27 September one of the subheads read "Eight Days Between Meals." It was only well into the story that the reader learned that it was the dogs that had to go that length of time without eating. However, on the same day another subhead was not an exaggeration: "One Hundred and One Degrees Below Freezing Point" referred to the party's traveling in the midst of winter during the lowest temperature recorded in the Canadian Arctic to that time.

Gilder's account emphasizing the excitement and danger of exploration thrilled the New York reading public, helped him become a journalistic celebrity, and, once again, was credited with boosting sales of *The Herald* (Guttridge 1986: 285). But at the same time, he gave a more enlightening account of Arctic travel than had virtually any of his predecessors.<sup>21</sup> Of course Gilder mentioned the desperate conditions the party found itself in: "Sometimes we would sink to our waists and then our legs would be dangling in slush and water without finding bottom. The sled would often sink so that the dogs could not pull it out" (*The New York Herald* 25 September 1880). But he also discussed not-so-simple day-to-day life and distresses:

It is one of the great discomforts of Arctic travel that the exercise of walking wets one's fur stockings with perspiration. At night they freeze, and it is anything but an agreeable sensation to put bare feet into stockings filled with ice, which is a daily experience in winter traveling. But it is astonishing how soon one gets accustomed to that sort of thing and how little he minds it after a while. The warmth of the feet soon thaws the ice and then a wet stocking is nearly as warm as a dry one except in the wind. (*The New York Herald* 24 September 1880)

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#### 4.6. PRESS VERSUS EXPLORERS: THE *JEANNETTE* EXPEDITION

Bennett's last great attempt to create exclusive news in the Arctic was also the press' most obvious—and most disastrous—meddling in polar exploration. Sponsored by Bennett and following the theories of geographer August Petermann,<sup>22</sup> the *Jeannette* expedition (1879-1881) under George Washington De Long initially aimed to reach the North Pole via Bering Strait. There was confusion from the start, because the expedition was funded by Bennett (who purchased Allen Young's *Pandora*, which was renamed *Jeannette* after Bennett's sister) but placed under the auspices of the U.S. Department of the Navy. Yet Bennett could still count on his whimsical orders being followed by Richard Thompson, the malleable Secretary of the Navy (Riffenburgh 1991a).

Before the expedition even left San Francisco, Bennett changed its directives, envisaging a sequel to Stanley's African adventure, with De Long playing the part of Stanley, and Livingstone being portrayed by Nordenskiöld, who was currently wintering north of Siberia during his navigation of the Northeast Passage. Although Nordenskiöld did not require assistance, Bennett decided he needed rescuing, and attempted to involve the American public by running stories in *The Herald* about the importance of the voyage of *Vega* and the dangers the expedition faced (for example, *The New York Herald* 6 February, 16 March 1879).<sup>23</sup> When *Jeannette* sailed on 8 July 1879, De Long's orders were to give relief to Nordenskiöld before attempting to reach the Pole. In anticipation of one, and possibly two, major series of stories, Bennett assigned Jerome Collins, a *Herald* writer, to the ship's company.

In fact, *Jeannette* never came close to finding *Vega*, and De Long proceeded north. After being beset by ice in September, *Jeannette* drifted north of Siberia for almost two years before she was crushed. The crew lived for several months on the ice, then headed for the Lena delta in three open boats. One of the three boats, under Lieutenant Charles W. Chipp, was never seen again; one, under Engineer George W. Melville, reached the delta safely on 16 September 1881, and the crew made its way up river to Yakutsk; and the third, under De Long, reached the delta on 17 September, but all except two of the members died before help could reach them (Guttridge 1986: 215-258). In early 1882 Melville—who had first earned a reputation in the Arctic in 1873 while searching for Hall as an officer on *Tigress*—returned north from Yakutsk, found and buried the bodies of De Long and his party, and sent messages about his searches to the Secretary of the Navy (Melville 1885: 283-366).

In June 1881, the same month that *Jeannette* was crushed, a relief expedition, partly sponsored by Bennett and including Gilder as the representative of *The Herald*, had been sent out under Lieutenant Robert M. Berry. However, the ship, the U.S.S.

*Rodgers*, caught fire in Zaliv Lavrentiya (St. Lawrence Bay) in eastern Siberia. Berry ordered Gilder to sledge approximately 2,500 statute miles across northeast Siberia and make his way to Irkutsk to telegraph news of the loss of *Rodgers* and the desperate condition of its survivors. The trip not only illustrated that Gilder was one of the most accomplished of Arctic travelers, but provided unique commentary for readers of *The Herald*. For example, in one dispatch, Gilder wrote about travel difficulties in Siberia, discussing what the Russians call *rasputitsa* (literally, the season of bad roads, a term that focuses on the total elimination of travel):

"Like the breaking up of a hard winter" is an expression frequently used, but I doubt if any one knows what "the breaking up of a hard winter" really is like unless he has had the misfortune to travel in Northern Siberia during the spring time. I thought I had seen hard winters and pretty hard breakings up in the northern portion of North America, but they were nothing like the affair in this country. To get the real thing in all its force and significance you must be near one of the great north flowing rivers of Siberia about the time of the spring floods, when whole districts are covered with water and swift moving ice, and no land is to be seen for miles in any direction, but occasional forests apparently growing right up out of the water. To travel over roads where for hundreds of yards your sled is entirely under water and you only maintain a position upon it by half standing up and clinging to the side pieces until the whole concern is dumped into an unexpected hole—this is what you must expect. (*The New York Herald* April 1882)

In Verkhoyansk, Gilder learned about the loss of *Jeannette* and about Melville's search. He then intercepted the courier carrying Melville's dispatches. Gilder obtained the messages from the courier and used them as the basis for his report to *The Herald* about the *Jeannette* disaster. He returned the documents with his own copy—so that *The Herald* would receive the news as quickly as would the Department of the Navy—and took off to find Melville, who had continued his search in the hope of finding Chipp (Gilder 1883: 198-216).

Meanwhile, as soon as he heard of Melville's arrival in Yakutsk, Bennett dispatched *Herald* correspondent John P. Jackson to Siberia, not only to get the story of *Jeannette*, but to send back regular travel articles (for example 17, 27 April 1882). In late February and March 1882 Jackson interviewed John Danenhower, one of the survivors, who, on his way back to the United States, had reached Irkutsk. The glimpses Danenhower volunteered of the incompetence, intransigence, and infighting, involving not only De Long and the officers but the crew, eventually created an uproar in the United States (Guttridge 1986: 271-273).<sup>24</sup>

*The Herald* featured Danenhower's account of the expedition for more than a week (26 April to 5 May 1882), including a report on the sinking of *Jeannette*:

Thus the ship lay for two hours and a half, the pressure of the ice relaxing at times and the ship almost righting. Then again she would be hove over to



twenty-three degrees, and we felt sure there was no longer any hope for her, for she would not lift....Each officer kept his knapsack in his room, and most of us thought it was time to have them on deck; but we would not make the move until ordered for fear of attracting the attention of the crew, who were at work on provisions and boats....Feeling that the moment had arrived I went for mine, and at the head of the ladder on my return, the Doctor said to me:—'Dan the order is to get the knapsacks.' It seems that he had stepped below and found water in the wardroom, which he then reported to the captain, and the order was then given to abandon the ship. The national emblem was hoisted at the mizzen....The ship in this condition was like a broken basket, and only kept from sinking by the pressure of the ice, which at any moment might relax and let her go to the bottom. (*The New York Herald* 2 May 1882)

The next day *The Herald's* readers learned of the crew's attempts to reach the Lena delta, of the gale that separated the three boats, and of the arrival on land of Melville's party:

The gale was now at its full force, and the seas were running high and spiteful. Leach was steering admirably, but we had to keep four balers going all the time to prevent the boat from filling and sinking....

So we stood up stream and were fortunate enough to make a landing....We had been 108 hours in the boat....We had a cup of tea and a morsel of pemmican, having been on quarter rations since we separated. We went to sleep with our feet toward the fire, and several of the men passed the night in agony, as if millions of needles were piercing their limbs. (*The New York Herald* 3 May 1882)

After concluding his interviews with Danenhower, Jackson went north, first finding Melville, and then traveling to where De Long and his comrades had been buried. Jackson and his men exhumed the bodies in order to sketch pictures of them and to discover whether letters to Bennett were present on Collins' corpse (*The Illustrated London News* 7 October 1882; see Illustration 2).

Although the articles by Gilder and Jackson made sensational reading, they were the source of bitter charges and debates. Melville objected strenuously to Gilder having opened his dispatches, and he was even more critical of Jackson's violation of the mass grave (Melville 1885: 370). The entire situation highlighted the conflict between the interests of the press and the interests of the expedition members. Melville wanted to keep many aspects of the expedition and search secret, at least until the Department of the Navy and other governmental agencies were made aware of them. But Gilder and Jackson quickly made public everything they learned, and Gilder had, in fact, been even more critical of Melville's search efforts than the engineer had been of him.<sup>25</sup> As it turned out, both the navy and, to a certain extent, the public thought Jackson had overstepped the bounds of good taste in exhuming the bodies of De Long and his party.

At the same time, Gilder and Jackson contributed to the American public's awareness of the Arctic. Gilder was not only a reporter but an accomplished Arctic traveler and knew intimately the harsh conditions about which he wrote. His



RETREATING ALONG THE RIVER BANK.

DIGGING OUT THE BODIES.

CAMPING.



FINDING THE BODIES OF CAPT. DELONG, DR. AMBLER AND AR. SAM.

The grave of the members of the *Jeannette* expedition; from *The Illustrated London News*, 14 October 1882

newspaper features and books alike accurately portrayed life in the Arctic. Gilder could also write with more understanding than most of his contemporaries about sledge travel, dogs, native populations and their customs, and living off meager Arctic resources. Although at times Gilder's accounts could incline toward the sensational, his writing was remarkably accurate, especially that about the environment:

The Lena, for the thousand miles or so down which I passed, was monotonous in the extreme, and monotony ten times monotonous after all the dangerous places had been passed in safety. High, sloping, wooded mountains on either side that irritate you by their sameness and continual presence, that seem to look sullenly at you as you sink down under your wraps for the night, and as sullenly at you in the morning when you awake before the sunshine has dissipated the chill and the gray sadness of everything. And whenever you look ahead, morning, noon, or night, the road seems to be barred by a big, frowning mountain, that never seems to change in the outline. (*The New York Herald* 19 June 1882)<sup>26</sup>

#### 4.7 THE GROWTH OF THE SENSATIONAL PRESS

Although *The New York Herald* was the first paper to sponsor exploration and for several decades featured the most thorough coverage of polar events in the English-speaking world, even in the 1870s it was not the only newspaper either to turn to sensationalism or to show an interest in exploration. Papers in both the United States and Britain began to engage in the occasional use of sensational techniques.

##### 4.7.1 The Spread of Sensationalism in America

The only New York paper that could compete with *The Herald* on sensational terms was *The Sun*. However, *The Sun* did not have either the interest or the expertise of *The Herald* in the field of exploration. Nor at four pages did it have the space to print the lengthy stories that Bennett loved. But Charles A. Dana was a brilliant salesman as well as journalist, and he had not so forgotten Day's example that he allowed *The Sun* to ignore stories of obvious powerful interest. When the people of New York wanted to read about one of Bennett's creations, Dana would give it to them.

By the 1880s, *The Herald* served as a model for a number of other papers on the east coast, although many of them had not yet fully adopted Bennett's sensationalism. These papers included *The World* of New York, *The Boston Daily Globe*, and *The Washington Post*.

Perhaps the most powerful newspaper in what was considered the west of the United States in the 1860s and 1870s was *The Chicago Daily Tribune*. First issued on 10 June 1847 by James Kelly, John E. Wheeler, and Joseph K.C. Forrest (who named it after the *New-York Tribune*), it was taken over by Joseph Medill and five partners in

1855 and became a cornerstone for the Republican Party (for which Medill suggested the name) and particularly for Abraham Lincoln, a native of Illinois (Kinsley 1943-1946; Wendt 1979: 173-174). *The Daily Tribune* (which went through at least eight name changes by 1890) could be quite sensational, especially when exposing local corruption (Wendt 1979: 200). It also showed a strong interest in new places, particularly the American west and the Arctic. Like most papers, *The Daily Tribune* did not have a large foreign staff and had to pick up much of its material from elsewhere (Kinsley 1943-1946). In *The Daily Tribune's* case, this seems to have caused an uncommonly high number of inaccurate stories, such as one, under the headline THE NORTHEAST PASSAGE, reporting Nordenskiöld's completion of the Passage—four years before it actually occurred:

A navigable Polar route between Europe and the heart of Asia is the latest and greatest achievement of geographical exploration. This work, far surpassing anything in interest and practical value that STANLEY has accomplished, the world owes to Prof. VORDENSKILD [*sic*]. Prof. VORDENSKILD [*sic*] had a theory that the Gulf Stream, after striking the coast of Europe, passed around the north of Scandinavia, and opened a way with its warm currents through the Polar Sea, north of Russia and Asia, to the Pacific. The Professor sailed from Sweden in August, and has already...proved his theory true, and made a geographical discovery that will change the course of trade between Europe and Asia and powerfully affect the destinies of millions of human beings for all time to come....A northeast passage we know now....The commercial results of the new route are obvious...commerical intercourse between Europe and Asia will soon begin to use the new northeast passage. The shortness of the route will add correspondingly to the comforts of mankind. New communities, new cities, perhaps, will be founded on the fertile banks of the Yenisei. (*The Chicago Daily Tribune* 28 October 1876)

In the following years, another paper that showed interest in Nordenskiöld, although not exploration in general, was the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, which, during the navigation of the Northeast Passage, printed brief, but accurate, accounts of the expedition (for example, 3 June, 19, 22 October 1879, 17 May 1880).

However, it was not for its Arctic coverage that the *Post-Dispatch* became known. Rather, it was because the paper was the proving ground for one of the great journalists of the nineteenth century, Joseph Pulitzer. In 1864 the Hungarian-born Pulitzer came to the United States to fight in the Union army at the age of 17. After the Civil War, he moved to St. Louis and began his career in journalism as a reporter for the German-language daily *Westliche Post*. He later served as a reporter for Dana's *Sun*. On 9 December 1878 Pulitzer purchased *The St. Louis Dispatch*, and three days later his new paper merged with the *St. Louis Evening Post*.

In the next five years, Pulitzer and his managing editor, John Cockerill, experimented with the techniques that they would perfect after moving to New York

when Pulitzer purchased *The World*. Pulitzer initiated the kind of urban and moral crusading that he would make famous in New York, although in St. Louis he appealed to—and crusaded for—a middle-class audience rather than one composed of immigrants and the labor force (Rammelkamp 1967: 207-283).

It was also in St. Louis that Pulitzer and Cockerill first developed their sensational style of journalism. As had Bennett Sr., Pulitzer and Cockerill exploited not only murder, sex, and public hangings, but social scandal and gossip-mongering. The paper's editorial page was equally sensational, attacking politicians and society figures with a seeming disregard for the consequences (Rammelkamp 1967: 163-206).<sup>27</sup>

The story that showed the *Post-Dispatch* at its most sensational was the murder in April 1882 of Jesse James, a famous outlaw whose gang had worked in western Missouri for years and who had emerged with a personal reputation as a kind of Robin Hood. For more than two weeks, the *Post-Dispatch* ran articles about James; his brother Frank; James' killer, Bob Ford; Ford's trial for murder; and Missouri Governor Crittenden's "complicity" (for offering a reward for James, dead or alive). As the first article on the murder recounted the events:

Even in that motion, quick as thought, there was something which did not escape the acute ears of the hunted man. He made a motion as if to turn his head to ascertain the cause of that suspicious sound, but too late. A nervous pressure on the trigger, a quick flash, a sharp report, and the well-directed ball crashed through the outlaw's skull. (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch* 5 April 1882)

The controversy over the killing of James increased the circulation of the *Post-Dispatch* more than thirty percent (Rammelkamp 1967: 178) and provided a stimulus for the man who would later try to "out-Bennett Bennett" (Ferner 1986: 312).

#### 4.7.2 A New Sensationalism in the English Press

Changes were also occurring in the English press, although not as rapidly as in the United States. Certainly the look of the daily morning papers, dominated by that of *The Times*, remained sober. They printed news and headlines in a uniform fashion dictated by typographical convention, and even when extraordinary news did make its way into print, it was merged with the rest of the text so that in general it seemed quite restrained (Morison 1932: 279-281).

Yet the dailies had learned enough from their Sunday complements that they would not omit any sensational material that became available to them. For although they constantly claimed to deplore American journalistic and commercial sensationalism, they were infected with a strong native strain of the same malady. What actually distinguished the English sensations from their American counterparts was not that the

English were opposed to unrestrained and graphic accounts of daily occurrences such as murder or mayhem (which even *The Times* exploited), but that they did not approve of the manner in which American papers actively hunted for sensational stories.

The English acceptance of sensationalism was demonstrated by the news selection of *The Daily Telegraph*, which was aware that even its "respectable" audience was fascinated by the continuing saga of "the Northumberland Street affair," a love triangle that had exploded in attempted murder. *The Telegraph* reported about the death of one of the men involved, stating:

...a mutilated creature, whose head was a mass of blood-stained pulp, one of whose eyes was mere lump of purulent jelly, who, living and gasping in what seemed the death agony, lay yesterday before us in the hospital ward, with his weeping wife by his side and a police officer at the bed's foot....ere these lines were committed to print...rendered up his soul to the Almighty. (19 July 1861)

The case kept the London press occupied throughout July 1861 and produced such stirring writing that *The Daily News*, seemingly oblivious that such coverage was not uncommon, commented, "All these incidents read marvellously like a column of graphic description from an American newspaper" (29 July 1861).

The Sunday papers were even more vividly written, so much so that it has been commented that "there began in England in the 1860s a sensation mania" (Altick 1987: 3-4). By the mid-1870s, there was more than twice as much sensational news in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* and *The Weekly Times* as there was either serious home or foreign news and editorial comment (Berridge 1978: 256-258).

Yet, the major changes in what was considered sensation at the time came in neither of these areas of the press, but in the evening papers. Most evening papers, such as *The Courier* and *The Globe*, traditionally had been produced in the same spirit and with the same contents and typographical style as the morning papers. But 1865 marked the founding of the first notable breakaway from this mid-Victorian journalism: *The Pall Mall Gazette*. Edited by Frederick Greenwood, *The Pall Mall Gazette* was very different than its predecessors: its leaders contained paragraph breaks, it had witty causerie, and it had a distinct typographical look, including featuring only three columns per page (Scott 1950). It also included stories that were shorter and on more diverse subjects, and editorials that were briefer and less serious. Designed to be read at the end of the day, when the reader presumably had more leisure for reflection, it was the first of the evening journals to take on the aspects of a daily review (Schults 1972: xv).

These features did not seem to help, however, because within 11 months of its founding, *The Pall Mall Gazette* was on the verge of insolvency. Greenwood told the

publisher, George Murray Smith, "that it is like a captive balloon, ready to soar, and restive against the rope that held it down. Could we but cut the rope..." (quoted in Diamond 1988: 27). What Greenwood used to cut the rope was a series of sensational exposés by his brother James, writing under the byline "The Amateur Casual."<sup>28</sup> The first of these series, "A night in a workhouse," appeared in four installments, 12-15 January 1866, and exposed the conditions found by Greenwood and a friend when they stayed overnight in a Lambeth workhouse (Diamond and Baylen 1984: 34-43). Even then the story was not splashed across page one as it would have been two decades later, but was quietly placed on page nine. Nevertheless, it helped guarantee the paper's success: "The circulation of the paper doubled in three days; and although that was comparatively small, seeing that the circulation then was under two thousand a day, an article which doubles even a very small circulation must be placed among the most remarkable of journalistic successes" (Stead 1893: 144).

Greenwood would never have used the term sensational for the articles appearing in *The Pall Mall Gazette*. Nevertheless, it was Greenwood's combination of typographical innovations and investigative exposure that made his paper seem sensational to his contemporaries. Consciously going out, looking for, and finding information to satisfy the appetite for sensation was a novel and not entirely acceptable step for a newspaper in Britain.

All in all, Greenwood combined the elements of sensationalism, social commitment, and business sense, all characteristics generally ascribed to the New Journalism, as none of his predecessors in Britain had done (Diamond 1988: 41). Although it is common to credit W.T. Stead with the "Americanization" of British journalism, Greenwood was in essence the English precursor of the New Journalism (Lucy 1921: 190).

*The Pall Mall Gazette* was not the only evening paper to break with the style of the morning dailies. December 1868 saw the founding of *The Echo*, which sold for the sensational price of one-half penny. Yet in its substance, *The Echo* was not sensational in the American style. Its success was based on providing evening reading matter for intelligent business folk unable to spend the time or money reading the morning press (Morison 1932: 273). For the next seven years, *The Echo* was the best-selling evening paper in London (Boston 1976: 19).

Yet, in part because of their greater size and in part because they concentrated more on hard news and less on commentary and review (Fox Bourne 1887: II), the foremost English dailies in the presentation of foreign and travel writing of the kind featured in *The New York Herald* were the morning papers, particularly *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Standard*, and *The Daily News*. Although *The Daily News* was noted for the best

foreign coverage in the 1860s, each of the major papers made important contributions during the next decade.

In 1870, *The Times* published what is considered the first formal interview in a British newspaper (*The Times* 22 October 1870).<sup>29</sup> The same year, *The Daily News* began a contract that called for a regular exchange of foreign dispatches with the *New-York Tribune* (Hatton 1882: 56). In 1871-1872 *The Standard's* reporters Frederick Boyle and G.A. Henty were considered to have topped the field in reporting the Ashanti War. And during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, a deal was made whereby reports from McGahan, Archibald Forbes, and various other reporters would go to both *The Daily News* and *The New York Herald* (Hohenberg 1964: 119-120).

But the greatest coup of the decade in the field of foreign reporting was made by *The Daily Telegraph* in 1874. Shortly after the state funeral of David Livingstone, Edwin Arnold, the editor of *The Telegraph*, persuaded his proprietor, Edward Levy-Lawson, to put up £6,000 for an expedition that not only would resolve the questions about Lake Victoria and its relation to the sources of the Nile, but that would follow the mysterious Lualaba River to its mouth, thus determining whether it flowed into the Nile, the Congo, or the Niger. As leader of the expedition, Arnold had already recruited Stanley (Arnold 1942: 74). The editor of *The Telegraph* invited Bennett to match the offer, making it an Anglo-American venture. Bennett did not want to advance Stanley's career, but to refuse would have meant to lose the story, which probably would have been offered to *The Sun*. He therefore tersely agreed (Stanley 1909: 297-298). However, when Stanley visited Bennett in New York prior to departing for Africa, the proprietor snubbed him and turned him over to an editor who conveyed the deep unhappiness at *The Herald* about the "enforced" collaboration with *The Daily Telegraph* (McLynn 1989: 243-244).

Stanley's expedition marked more than just the initial sponsorship of exploration by the English press. More important was the style of the reports he filed: "the roving correspondents of the *Daily Telegraph*—[William] Beatty Kingston and H.M. Stanley, to mention only two—brought...the New Journalism to the coverage of foreign news" (Palmer 1977: 20). Sensational coverage of exploration had entered the English press.

#### 4.8. NEW NATIONAL EXPEDITIONS

In contrast to *The Daily Telegraph's* involvement with Stanley's crossing of Africa, English newspapers of the time were not directly associated with the Arctic. The English press did not begin to sponsor polar expeditions until the 1890s. Even taking the lack of sponsorship into consideration, press coverage of the Arctic was light in Britain in the 1860s and 1870s, perhaps because of the paucity of British expeditions at



the time, and perhaps because most of those that did take place were minor affairs carried on for sport or scientific research. Many of the press accounts of the more adventurous foreign expeditions—European as well as American—appear to have been taken directly from American newspapers.

The exception to this lack of coverage was the British Arctic Expedition of 1875-1876, the first British national polar expedition since the Royal Navy had withdrawn from the Arctic at the start of the Crimean War.

In the mid-1860s a movement to re-enter the Arctic gained momentum, and in 1865 Sherard Osborn read an exhaustive paper to the Royal Geographical Society in which he advocated a renewal of Arctic exploration by the Smith Sound route. Osborn pointed out the gains that had been made in geographic, hydrographic, meteorological, and magnetic research in the Arctic, and discussed the continuing scientific work to be done (Osborn 1865: 43, 54-58). He also harkened back to John Barrow's arguments when he stated: "The Navy needs some action to wake it up from the sloth of routine, and save it from the canker of prolonged peace. Arctic exploration is more wholesome for it, in a moral as well as a sanitary point of view, than any more Ashantee or Japanese wars" (Osborn 1865: 52). But his most dubious argument was when he virtually dismissed the dangers associated with Arctic exploration:

During those thirty-six years of glorious enterprise by ship, by boat, and by sledge, England only fairly lost one expedition....The fact is, more sailors have been thrown to the sharks from the diseases incident to service in China and the coast of Africa, within the last four years, than ever fell in thirty years of Arctic service....And, after all, the dangers of exploration in the north are those common to like undertakings in all unknown regions—Speke and Grant seeking for the sources of the Nile, Burton at Harar, Freemont [*sic*] in the Sierra Nevada, Livingstone on the Zambezi, or Burke and Wills in the hungry wilds of Central Australia, have all moments of as great peril as Kane ever endured in Smith Sound. (Osborn 1865: 43-44)

Despite strong opposition, notably from *The Times* (24, 26, 28 January 1865), Osborn's proposal appeared likely to be accepted until two letters from August Petermann—in which he argued that the Smith Sound route was not practicable and that such exploration should take place via Spitsbergen—created enough dissension to cause the entire project to collapse (Markham 1874: 85).

For almost another decade, Osborn and Clements R. Markham, then the secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, kept working for the renewal of Arctic exploration. In 1873 Markham published *The threshold of the unknown region*, a best-seller that ran to four editions, in which he stated "in the light of former experience, there is no undue danger in Arctic service; provided that the expedition is under naval discipline and Government control" (Markham 1873: 282). He also dismissed scurvy as a problem of the past.<sup>30</sup> But when the British Arctic Expedition actually was approved by the

government, it was not as much because of the pressure from Osborn and Markham as because William Ewart Gladstone had been succeeded as Prime Minister by Benjamin Disraeli, an imperialist expansionist (Williamson 1967: 183-187). Initially, Disraeli declared that the expedition had been sanctioned because of "the scientific advantages to be derived from it, its chances of success, as well as the importance of encouraging that spirit of maritime enterprise which has ever distinguished the English people..." (quoted in *Nature* 1874a: 55). Interpreted, this meant that it was an enterprise for joint commercial and naval benefit and to enhance the reputation of the nation. In other words, it was not unlike the British naval expeditions of the 1820s.

Ostensibly, the scientific role of the expedition was to be important. George S. Nares, the commanding officer, was recalled by the Admiralty from the command of H.M.S. *Challenger*, a ship then being used as a floating laboratory by a group of civilian scientists in the Antarctic (Nares 1878). In addition, the officers were widely publicized as having been "selected for their scientific qualifications" (*Nature* 1874b: 62). In reality, however, the expedition "was planned as a voyage of geographical exploration, with scientific work taking second place" (Deacon and Savours 1976: 135). This was demonstrated both by the decision that most of the scientific personnel were to be naval officers with limited scientific backgrounds, rather than civilian scientists, and by the relegation of scientific matters to paragraph 26 of the Admiralty's sailing orders (Berton 1988: 414).

Behind the government's scientific rhetoric, there were three real motives for the Arctic expedition, none pertaining to science. First, the government wanted to help the British whaling industry—which was in serious difficulty due to competition from American whalers (Kirwan 1959: 184)—by emphasizing the British presence in and rights to the rich fisheries of northern Baffin Bay. Second, the Royal Navy was beginning to lose the polar expertise that had been gained in the decades of the search for the Northwest Passage and the Franklin expedition, and realized that the only way to maintain it was to re-enter the Arctic. Third, Britain was beginning to lose prestige by maintaining a low profile in the Arctic. The success of the Austro-Hungarian exploring expedition of 1872-1874 had been an embarrassment to the country that formerly had dominated Arctic exploration. When the British Arctic Expedition was announced, it was written, "Her Majesty's advisers...have certainly waited for 'the fulness of the time,' which, for the lay mind, may be said only to have been accomplished with the return of the Payer-Weyprecht expedition" (*Nature* 1874b: 61). The British Arctic Expedition—in reality an effort to plant the Union Jack beyond the farthest north achieved by the United States—would serve all three of these purposes.

Unlike its lack of attention to previous polar events, the English press seemingly could not write enough about the British Arctic Expedition. Even *The Times* did a turn-around and wrote energetically and optimistically about the expedition's chances of reaching the North Pole. With the exception of *The Daily Telegraph* (which gave enormous coverage to Stanley's trans-African expedition), no major London newspaper gave as much coverage to any other foreign topic during 1875. *The Illustrated London News* and the journal *The Navy* in particular oversold both the importance of the expedition and its chances of success.

Thus, there was enormous disappointment in October 1876 when, due a great extent to widespread scurvy, the expedition returned home a year early. Although a sledge party under Albert H. Markham had indeed established a new record for the farthest north (83° 20'), the expedition generally was a failure, and its scientific and commercial values were nominal (Hattersley-Smith 1976). The English press was merciless. *The Navy* (1876: 441) declared, "Verily the expedition of 1875-76 has but little of which to boast. It went out like a rocket, and has come back like the stick."

To put the best face possible on the entire fiasco, *The Daily Telegraph* used the kind of praise common in the days of Franklin, emphasizing that it was not the achievement that counted, but the struggle and the pride of British endurance:

...one and all displayed the same courageous pluck, and, in spite of their general collapse, remained faithful to their duty, resolutely struggling onwards, determined to hold to each other to the last, their ardour in no way checked as the difficulties of their journey increased, and their manful determination increasing as greater sacrifices were demanded. (*The Daily Telegraph* 30 October 1876)

In direct contrast to the British Arctic Expedition was that of the Austrian Empire. Like the *Jeannette* expedition, this effort was in part prompted by Petermann's theories. It was personally financed by Graf von Wilczek, who was motivated by his devotion to polar science and by a keen interest in the area itself (Barr 1987: xxix). Despite claims that the purpose of the expedition was to navigate the Northeast Passage or to reach the North Pole (Nordenskiöld 1881; Barr 1987: xxix), the stated goal was to examine as large an area as possible of the unknown region in the vicinity of Novaya Zemlya (Payer 1876: I, 114-116). In this, the expedition, sailing in the ship *Tegetthoff*, was an unqualified success, and it not only carried out scientific investigations, it discovered and partially explored and mapped Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa (Franz Joseph Land).

Perhaps the most impressive quality of the expedition, however, was the work produced by its co-commanders after its return. Few if any other expeditions could claim both the literary achievement of Julius Payer's *New lands within the Arctic circle* and the scientific accomplishments of Karl Weyprecht. Payer's account was hailed as a

masterpiece, even in translation (whereas *The voyage of the Vega* was considered to have been hurt by a poor translation [*Century Illustrated Magazine* 1882]). It was an enormous success in both England and America, at least partly because of the attendant publicity. The expedition's return precipitated Nares' Expedition, and the book's publication coincided with his return. But it was also successful in its own rights.

Perhaps the strongest appeal of Payer's narrative was its simplicity; at no point did Payer bombard the reader with scientific accomplishments or heroic efforts. Rather, he explained the incentives for participating in such an expedition more clearly than perhaps had any other Arctic writer:

The motives of an undertaking so long and so laborious cannot be found in the mere love of distinction or adventure. Next to the wish to serve the interests of science by going beyond the footsteps of our predecessors, we were influenced by the duty of confirming and fulfilling the hopes which we ourselves had excited. (Payer 1876: I, 116)

Even explained in calm, simple terms without any embellishment, the saga of *Tegetthoff* was spellbinding. And Payer's account brought to the Anglo-American public its first real exposure to the Arctic efforts of other Europeans, who had been all but ignored in both the English and American press. This was significant because it showed that expeditions from other nations could be both exciting and productive, and to some extent it opened the minds of the Anglo-American audience to the efforts of "foreign" explorers, setting the stage for the later popularity of Fridtjof Nansen.

Weyprecht also indirectly—and unintentionally—helped sensationalize the Arctic. After the Austro-Hungarian exploring expedition returned, he concluded that the era of independent expeditions aimed primarily at geographical exploration and with little interest in science was over. In a speech to the Royal Geographical Society in 1875, Weyprecht stated:

The key to the many secrets of nature...is certainly to be sought for near the Poles. But as long as Polar Expeditions are looked upon merely as a sort of international steeple-chase, which is primarily to confer honour on this flag or the other, and their main object is to exceed by a few miles the latitude reached by a predecessor, these mysteries will remain unsolved. (quoted in Baker 1982: 276)

Weyprecht proposed that a coordinated, international program of intensive scientific investigation be established, one that would benefit not only specific nations, but mankind as a whole. The ultimate realization of his ideas was the First International Polar Year, 1882-1883, for which 14 scientific stations were planned with the goal of making simultaneous scientific observations, using comparable means and methods, and with the desired result of discovering fundamental laws and principles of nature (Barr 1985: 2-5).

However, although the First International Polar Year expeditions were to be for the exclusive purpose of science, one of them was to make Arctic exploration a favorite topic of the sensational press throughout England and America.

## CHAPTER 5

### *THE HERALD* LEADS IN SENSATIONALISM

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

It is possible from the previous chapter to see that at least some of the press in both the United States and England engaged in varying levels of sensationalism between 1865 and 1883. It is also true that no daily newspaper in either country was more sensational than *The New York Herald*. But of what exactly did this sensationalism consist? How did the press make a sensational story of the Arctic? There were two basic parts of any such story, whether it was about the Arctic or not—the headline and the article itself. (Artwork would not begin to play a major role in daily newspapers until the mid-1880s.) During this era, both the English and the American newspapers printed articles that were more sensational—both in topic selection and writing style—than those of previous years. However, the headlines in England—even those for major stories—remained small and sedate. Headlines were a considerably larger part of the sensational package in the United States, and, again, it was *The Herald* in particular that introduced many of the techniques of headline writing, techniques that later became standard practice throughout the American newspaper business.

One of the methods by which newspapers—particularly those in the United States—had long competed for readership was to attack, or make fun of, the political positions their competitors supported or the mistakes they made. Concurrent with the expanded coverage of and interest in expeditions to Africa and the Arctic was the initial use of exploration as a tool for such competition. Newspapers and their reporters alike were lambasted for what they published and how they obtained it. No paper was a target more frequently than *The Herald*, the success of which produced wide-spread jealousy and envy. At the same time, some of the coverage of exploration was beginning to be recognized as of such questionable accuracy that it raised the issue of the honesty of the correspondents or their newspapers.

#### 5.2 AMERICAN SENSATIONALIZATION OF THE ARCTIC

There is little doubt that *The New York Herald* and *The Sun* were engaged in sensational journalism in the 1860s and 1870s. If sensationalism is broken down into its three component parts (see pages 3-4), this becomes even more clear.

First, there certainly was the requisite intent. Bennett's efforts to create news were based on his attempt to arouse or stimulate an interest in the Arctic or Africa and then to fulfill the public's desire for information about these places and the men exploring them

(Riffenburgh 1991a). Second, although most scientific expeditions were proof that the Arctic was not in itself sensational as a category of news, the sensational newspapers did indeed concentrate on stories of tragedy, adventure, and notable personalities (albeit that sometimes they were only notable because these papers made them so). Third, the treatment of Arctic exploration by papers such as *The Herald* and *The Sun* was sensational, not only by comparison with most of the rest of the press, but with the treatment of other subjects in those papers themselves. Exploration received special coverage, with larger and bolder headlines, more-prominent placement of stories, greater length of articles, and higher frequency of appearance than most other topics.

A comparison of copies of *The New York Herald* for 1870 and 1875 testifies to Bennett's exploitation of exploration. In October 1870 no story on any topic received as much as a half-page on the first news page of *The Herald*.<sup>1</sup> This page was usually devoted to sections titled WASHINGTON, POLITICAL, NEW YORK CITY, or NEWS FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD. Each section was from one to two columns (out of six on the page) in length. By comparison, in October and November 1875 Stanley's trans-Africa expedition received at least the entire first news page on four occasions (11, 12, 13 October, 29 November) and at least one-third of a page twice more (10, 15 November). Reports about Allen Young's expedition in *Pandora* received virtually the entire first news page twice (31 October, 6 November) and more than one-third of a page six times (17 October, 4, 5, 9, 15, 18 November).

By the time of the *Jeannette* expedition, the Arctic had become one of the main staples of *The Herald*. Apart from the reports sent back by Gilder and Jackson, the paper printed articles about Russia, Siberia, or exploration in Asia; "expert commentary" and other speculation on the missing ship and crew members; and official reports. This continued even after the saga of the search for the missing crew had ended. Throughout October, November, and December 1882, the *Jeannette* Board of Inquiry met almost daily. The hearings were given a full column or more each day in *The Herald*, as well as receiving a great deal of attention in *The Sun* and *The New-York Times*. The coverage by *The Times* indicated that even if the reputedly quality press was not as sensational as *The Herald*, it was interested in some of the same topics.

### 5.2.1 Headlines

Perhaps the most important parts of a newspaper are the headlines, because not only do they have the highest readership (Mårdh 1980: 11), but in conjunction with the lead paragraph of a story, they give the reader an average of 76 percent of the information contained in stories about foreign places and events (Haskins 1966).

In actual form, during the period from 1865 to the mid-1880s, neither *The Herald* nor the other major newspapers made significant departures from established headline typography. Rather than using streamer or banner heads to report items of special interest—as had been common during the Civil War—papers simply added more decks to a headline (see Illustration 3). Thus, *The Herald's* story about the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln was accompanied by a headline with 25 decks (16 April 1865), Stanley's meeting with Livingstone had 20 decks (10 August 1872), Melville finding the bodies of De Long's party had 16 (6 May 1882), and the death of Vice President Henry Wilson had 10 (23 November 1875).

In its wording of headlines, *The Herald* was not so conventional. Throughout the 1870s Bennett and *The Herald* introduced headline techniques that other papers later borrowed. Some of these were adopted quickly and wholeheartedly, others only slowly and guardedly, but the transition to sensational headlines was certainly complete by the mid-1890s, when Bennett's innovations had become the press' conventions.

One aspect of headline writing that *The Herald* was the first to concentrate upon was the emphasis on adventure in far-off places. Decks such as "Voyage upon Victoria Niyanza," "The Lake One Great Inland Sea," (18 October 1875), or "Discovers New Islands Above the Arctic Circle" (2 May 1882) proudly proclaimed the successes of the Bennett-backed ventures.

But *The Herald* did not just concentrate on the expeditions sponsored by its proprietor; it gave special attention to a wide range of foreign news and features. Thus, it was not unusual to see a headline such as: RUSSIA IN CENTRAL ASIA, with the accompanying decks "How the Valley of the Oxus is To Be Made Populous" and "A Water Way to Afghanistan" (14 July 1879), or the headline UNKNOWN ICELAND, with decks reading "The Terrible Hrafra Gja" and "The Dreary Desolation of the Lava Lands" (7 September 1874).

Bennett appreciated that the recalling of historical tragedy could stir emotions, so *The Herald* referred to such events at every opportunity. Thus, an account of the *Pandora* expedition featured the deck "Remains of the Franklin Expedition" (31 October 1875), even though *Pandora* did not actually reach King William Island. And one of Gilder's features about the Schwatka expedition included the deck "Last Survivors of the Erebus and Terror" (24 September 1880).

Specific words also excited the public, so in its decks *The Herald* frequently used "buzzwords" such as death, battle, or escape: "The Lesson of his Death" for a feature about De Long (8 May 1882); "Explorers and Eskimaux in Line of Battle" with Gilder's tale of meeting a hostile party of Eskimos (24 September 1880); and "Narrow





Escape from an Iceberg which Capsizes in the Night" with MacGahan's account of the return of *Pandora* (31 October 1875).

*The Herald* also developed techniques to lend color to headlines that might otherwise have been rather dull. One method was to select an aspect of the article that meant nothing by itself—nor indeed did it have to relate a great deal to the main thrust of the article—but was irresistible to the reader. In October 1880, for instance, after more than a week of articles by Gilder about the Schwatka expedition, *The Herald* printed a feature about the expedition members' adoption of the Eskimo life-style. Concerned that the story would not interest the audience because of oversaturation of the subject, the editor gave it the headline THE ARCTIC COW (*The New York Herald* 2 October 1880). Clearly, *The Herald* played a devious game, taking advantage of a colorful and unusual phrase to intrigue its readers, despite being able to relate only one sentence of the article to the headline: "The seal was our beef and the walrus our mutton in this long journey."

The headlines in *The Herald* jumped from being virtually unrelated to the feature to emphasizing its most grisly details. Thus, it announced: PAYNE'S BRUTALITY, with a subhead "Battering a Fellow Workman to Death to Please His Wife" (12 July 1879), and HER LIFE BLOOD FLOWING, with a subhead "A Woman Afflicted with Melancholia Opens Her Veins in a Bathroom" (2 July 1884).

Other newspapers followed the lead of *The Herald* in the use of sensational headlines. One of the masters of the technique—Joseph Pulitzer—was already refining his skills at the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Pulitzer imitated Bennett's coverage of foreign news, carrying the story of the British bombardment of Alexandria under the headline: IN FLAMES, with decks "The City of Alexandria Given Over to Pillage," "Fire Devastating the Egyptian Port—The Bedouins Looting," "A Night of Horror and a Fight for Life," and "Massacre of Europeans by the Alexandrians" (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch* 13 July 1882).

But Pulitzer's major efforts in sensationalism at the *Post-Dispatch* were more of the kind that Bennett Sr. had specialized in. He attracted his audience by pandering to gossip and salacious tastes. Rammelkamp (1967: 167) has pointed out that in the period from 25 June to 4 July 1883 the main headlines on page one of the *Post-Dispatch* included: LOVED THE COOK, A RIOT IN CHURCH, A WILY WIDOW, KISSING IN CHURCH, AN ADVENTURESS, DEACONS' DISAGREE, and MY DAUGHTER.

The concept of what was important to the press—sensational or otherwise—can perhaps best be determined by comparing a sample of headlines from two papers among the more sensational—*The New York Herald* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*—

and two among those reputedly less so—*The New-York Times* and the *New-York Tribune*. Consider, for example, what each newspaper ran as its main daily story during the week in July 1879 when *Jeannette* left for the Arctic:

Monday, 7 July

THE NEW YORK HERALD  
LIBERIA'S FUTURE.

The Fate that Awaits a Colony  
Established by the People of  
This Country.  
How the British Browbeat  
the Negroes.

THE NEW-YORK TIMES  
WHAT ONE MAN HAS DONE.

The Life and Reminiscences of  
Peter Cooper.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH  
HE SHOT TO KILL.

Wm. C. Reeves Puts Five Bullets  
Through His Wife,  
And Then Tries to Blow Out  
His Own Brains.

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE

MR. SEYMOUR BURIED.  
His Murderer Undiscovered.  
Theories and Conjectures of the  
Police and Others.

Tuesday, 8 July

THE NEW YORK HERALD  
A MEXICAN HANGED.

How the Honest Farmer Was  
Overhauled and Slain.  
Texas Rangers Capture the  
Assassins Across the Border.

THE NEW-YORK TIMES  
DEMOCRATS FOR GOVERNOR

Robinson or Dorsheimer to  
be the Candidate.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH  
AN INSANE ACT.

The Deadly Assault of Reeves  
on His Young Wife.  
A Rambling Interview With  
the Prisoner.

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE  
THE SEYMOUR HOMOCIDE.

The Work of the Police.  
The Officers Still Undecided as  
to Whether the Shooting Was  
Accidental or with Murderous  
Intent.

Wednesday, 9 July

THE NEW YORK HERALD  
OFF TO THE POLE.

Departure of the Steamer  
*Jeannette* from San Francisco.  
Ten Thousand People Cheer  
the Gallant Explorers.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH  
THE DEATH DROP.

Frank Davidson Hanged at  
Warrensburg, Mo.  
Ten Thousand People Witness  
the Execution.  
The Doomed Man Meets His  
Fate Calmly.

THE NEW-YORK TIMES  
REJECTING ALL REPORTS.  
The Aldermen and the Rapid  
Transit Commissioners.

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE  
VANDERBILT CHECKMATED.  
Rapid Transit Scheme Defeated.

Thursday, 10 July

THE NEW YORK HERALD  
THE JEANNETTE'S MISSION.  
Scientists Deeply Interested in  
the Hazardous Enterprise.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH  
FLEEING FOR LIFE.  
The Citizens of Memphis  
Stampeded by Yellow Fever.  
Trains Crowded With Panic-  
Stricken People Trying to  
Get Away.

THE NEW-YORK TIMES  
RACES ON LAKE SARATOGA.  
The First Day of the Regatta.

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE  
STEAM ON FOURTH AVENUE.  
Signs of Life in the Scheme.

Friday, 11 July

THE NEW YORK HERALD  
ACROSS AFRICA.  
A Story of Dangers and  
Hair-breadth Escapes.  
African Problems Solved.  
A Race of White Africans.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH  
DASHED TO DEATH.  
Eight Persons Blown Into  
Eternity at Bodie, Cal.  
And Forty Others More or Less  
Seriously Injured.

THE NEW-YORK TIMES  
YELLOW FEVER IN MEMPHIS.  
A Panic Caused by a Few Cases.

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE  
BEACONSFIELD'S EXPLOITS.  
Defying Parliament Again.

Saturday, 12 July

THE NEW YORK HERALD  
COLORED CULPRITS.  
How Williams Murdered the  
Young Telegraph Operator.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH  
A MONK'S DISGRACE.  
Sentenced to the Penitentiary for  
Five Years for Forgery.  
He Asks to be Let Loose in Order  
that He May Become a Hermit.

THE NEW-YORK TIMES  
EX-GOVERNOR ALLEN DEAD.  
Dying Suddenly at His Home  
in Chillicothe.

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE  
THE YELLOW FEVER ALARM.  
No New Cases in Memphis.

The headlines show that the four papers had different concepts of the important news of the day, or at least of what would sell a newspaper. Yet there was a certain amount of agreement. *The Times*, the *Tribune*, and the *Post-Dispatch* each made the

outbreak of yellow fever in Memphis the lead story once, and each printed other features about it, as did *The Herald*.

The same was true for foreign news. Although *The Herald* gave greater emphasis to foreign events, on the same day that its lead was a feature on Major de Serpa-Pinto's African expedition from Angola to the Transvaal, *The New-York Times* published one and one-half columns on page two (picked up directly from *The Standard*) about the same expedition. The headline was similar to that of *The Herald*: ADVENTURES IN AFRICA (*The New-York Times* 11 July 1879).

The emphasis on foreign or national news also had nothing to do with whether a paper was sensational or not. Pulitzer could hardly be labelled a provincial, but his experience had taught him that the curiosity of his readers did not extend much beyond the borders of Missouri. He later elaborated on the point: "*The Herald* makes a great show of special cable news...but we doubt whether...[they] would suffer in circulation if they curtailed their foreign departments and gave more space to home news" (quoted in Juergens 1966: 66). Horace Greeley offered a similar comment to a friend who was about to start a newspaper: "Begin with a clear conception that the subject of deepest interest to an average human being is himself. Next to that, he is most concerned about his neighbors. Asia and the Tongo Islands stand a long way after these in his regard" (quoted in Park 1925: 84). Coincidentally, after the death of Greeley, his successor at the *Tribune*, Whitelaw Reid, closely followed Bennett's concentration on foreign affairs—especially wars—although he did not use a sensational style.

### 5.2.2 Article Content

Dividing the press of the 1860s and 1870s into strict categories based on sensationalism is misleading. The writing styles of the sensational or quality papers were not mutually exclusive. The range of variation within these groups was so great that there was a distinct overlap among the groups; for example, some papers considered sensational were in fact closer to the style and content of the quality papers than to that of the most sensational ones.

In fact, a difference in the style of writing was one of the prime demarcations between the two great sensational papers. Dana's *Sun* was only four pages, so it emphasized a quick, clever, biting prose. In contrast, the 12-to-16-page *Herald* frequently used a leisurely, plodding style; this was inordinately effective for exclusive and lengthy reports on new areas and experiences. An example of *The Herald's* treatment was a feature on the midnight sun and snowblindness written by Gilder after his return from the Schwatka expedition, but before he left on *Rodgers*:

It might be supposed that in the utter barrenness of the Arctic landscape flowers never grow there. This would be a great mistake. The dweller in that desolate region after passing a long, weary winter, with nothing for the eye to rest upon but the vast expanse of snow and ice, is in a condition to appreciate beyond the ability of an inhabitant of warmer climes the little flowerets that peep up almost through the snow when the spring sunlight begins to exercise its power upon the white mantle of the earth. In little patches here and there, where the dark-colored moss absorbs the warm rays of the sun and the snow is melted from its surface, the most delicate flowers spring up at once to gladden the eye of the weary traveller....Thoughts of home, in a warmer and more hospitable climate, fill his heart with joy and longing as meadows filled with daisies and buttercups spread out before him while he stands upon the crest of a granite hill that knows no footstep other than the tread of the stately musk ox or the antlered reindeer, as they pass single file upon their migratory journeys....He is a boy again, and involuntarily plucks the feathery dandelion and seeks the time of the fair one, who is dearer to him than ever in this hour of separation, by picking the leaves from the yellow hearted daisy. Tiny little violets, set in a background of black or dark green moss, adorn the hillsides, and many flowers unknown to warmer zones come bravely forth to flourish for a few weeks only and wither in the August winds. (*The New York Herald* 17 May 1881)

The article went on and on at the same pace, taking several paragraphs before it finally got around to its basic point—how to avoid snowblindness when traveling in the Arctic. But the very success of such an article, like that of *The Sun's* human-interest stories, was based on the author's ability to see the most minute detail and to convey the feelings that the average man would have felt. One of the reasons Gilder remained perhaps the most effective writer about the Arctic was that despite his professionalism he never lost his innocence, his fresh vision, his inquiring attitude.<sup>2</sup>

This type of article also built a comfortable relationship between the writer and his audience, so that when the writer produced a shocking or sensational feature, its power was enhanced. This device was used in *The Herald* when Gilder copied a letter from William Nindemann, one of the two survivors from De Long's party, which was run as part of Gilder's account about the death of De Long:

[The party] remained a few days on the seacoast on account of some of the mens [*sic*] feet being badly frost bitten, leaving behind the ship's log and other articles, not being able to carry them, started to travel south with five days [*sic*] provisions. Erickson, walking on crutches a few days after made a sled to drag him, came to a hut on the 5th of October. On the morning of the 6th the Dockter [*sic*] cut off all his toes, the Captain asked me if I had strength to go to one of the settlements with one of the men to get assistance, as he was gowing [*sic*] to stay by Erickson. While talking about it Erickson died. (*The New York Herald* 6 May 1882; emphasis Nindemann's)

It has been shown that a sensational style of writing produces greater interest from the reader than a non-sensational style (Sasser 1967). No such research had been conducted in the nineteenth century, but the fact was apparent to astute journalists.

Therefore, even the supposedly sedate *New-York Times* could approve of sensational writing, as it did when it forecast what Hall and his comrades could expect while wintering on *Polaris*:

The voyager will undergo almost incredible suffering in his first long Winter, or prolonged night, confined in the narrow, dank atmosphere of a ship's fore-castle or cabin. Damp blankets, fetid woollens, odoriferous furs, filthy Esquimaux, and myriads of unpleasant insects, who seem to have a particular affinity for the Polar Indians, and who will swarm the ship night and day, are among the number of unpleasant experiences with which his Arctic life will be marked. Weeks before the long night has passed the ennui will be almost unbearable. Inside he will see his companions, a group of unhealthily fattened faces, pale and dejected, worn out with long confinement, if not by the dread destroyer, scurvy. Outside, he will be met by the repulsive features of the Esquimaux, their still more repulsive and disgusting modes of life, and the never-ending line of ice and snow—vistas of dazzling whiteness—whose monotony alone becomes truly insupportable. If the voyager wanders far from the vessel he is liable at any moment to encounter a sudden northerly gale, or arctic sirocco which sweeps with the most impetuous fury across the vast expanse of snow and ice, and if not accompanied with a trusty guide he inevitably perishes with cold, or falls a victim to prowling bears and ravenous wolves. Most of these, indeed, are among the least of the perils which Capt. HALL and his fellow voyagers will be called upon to undergo.... (*The New-York Times* 7 May 1871)

It is evident that based on their actual articles, rather than on their reputations alone, some of the quality papers were a great deal closer to the sensational papers than is usually acknowledged.

### 5.3 ENGLISH SENSATIONALISM

In contrast to the traditional view that sensationalism did not exist in the British press in the 1860s and 1870s, there recently has been a growing acceptance that this was actually a period of changeover to the New Journalism, in which various English newspapers began to dabble in sensational techniques (Brake 1988; Diamond 1988). These papers did not immediately engage in the sensationalism of Pulitzer or Bennett, nor did they equal the amount of Arctic coverage by *The New York Herald*, but the seeds had been sown for them to follow *The Herald* in both style and content.

#### 5.3.1 Headlines and Content

The English daily press certainly did not follow the lead of the American papers in headlines. *The Daily Telegraph* initially broke from the British conventions of headline writing, but as it grew both in page-size and circulation, it became like the other London dailies, lapsing into the passive announcement, rather than the dramatization, of news. With rare exception—such as when *The Telegraph* used 10 decks with its

first report of the Battle of Sedan in the Franco-Prussian War (6 September 1870)—few advances were made in news-display until the late 1880s (Morison 1932: 269).

Few examples demonstrate the lack of sensation in English headlines as well as the coverage of one of the most publicized stories of the early 1860s, the "Vidil affair," in which the French Baron de Vidil attempted to murder his step-son in London (Altick 1987). On 13 July 1861 *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Morning Chronicle* each ran the same headline for the story: EXTRAORDINARY ATTEMPT AT MURDER BY A FOREIGN NOBLEMAN. *The Times* was not even as evocative as that, stating simply: THE CHARGE AGAINST BARON DE VIDIL.

Meanwhile, although the Sunday press did make minor advances in layout, particularly in the use of crossheads and sideheads, the short-lived *London Halfpenny Newspaper* of 1861 was the last of the mid-Victorian weeklies to attempt to use large, bold headlines (Morison 1932: 261-262). The task of developing the clearly visible headline was left for the evening press of the 1880s.

The actual stories were a different matter. As has been shown, stories of crime and lust were a staple of the weekly press, while even the dailies reported the more graphic incidents. And the evening papers, most notably *The Pall Mall Gazette* of Greenwood, began to focus on investigative reporting (something long done in the United States).

Nevertheless, sensational topics did not necessarily make for sensational articles. To today's reader, most of the writing in English newspapers of the 1860s and 1870s might seem long, tedious, mandarin, even oblique. It used conditional clauses excessively, a rambling story line, and a general air of complacency, as shown by an excerpt from a story on the lurid Vidil affair:

He has been represented as the most fascinating and accomplished of men. A member of the select and exclusive Jockey Club of Paris, and a foreign and honorary member of our own fashionable Travellers' Club here, he was at first represented as one of the elite of society—the observed of all observers—the pick of fashion and the mould of form—"a gentlemanly-looking man of fifty-five," who did not merely drive a gig and graduate in respectability in such a middle-class way, but was an honoured guest in the saloons of exiled princes, and having easy access to the tables of the noblest of our countrymen, he appeared to live upon a social eminence which might have provoked jealousy, but which freed him from any suspicion of heinous criminality. On the other hand he has been represented, with perhaps equal exaggeration, to have been certainly a *parvenu*, and perhaps a bore. He is said to have been the son of a glove-maker, and to have had, in his own person, some mysterious commercial connection with button-making, and to have either acquired his title by the purchase of a small Italian estate which conferred that empty distinction upon him, or else to have been the last plebeian metamorphosed into an aristocrat by the will and pleasure of Louis Philippe. (*The Morning Chronicle* 22 July 1861)



But writing that seems complex today did not necessarily seem so in the 1860s and 1870s. At that time there was no recognition of the news function as the primary purpose of a newspaper, and many people considered simple, colloquial language to be vulgar. Thus, by comparison to the normal English style of the day (rather than to that of the American papers), some of the exploration accounts in the London press seem quite enthralling. For example, when *The Times* reported about the months-long drift on the sea ice by the crew of *Polaris*, it wrote:

Unluckily, in this month, their ice floe showed signs of breaking up, and the waves used constantly to break over it. They, therefore, found themselves compelled to trust for safety to their solitary boat, and as she was already deeper in the water than was safe for 19 persons, and constructed of very flimsy material, they reluctantly saw themselves obliged to abandon a great quantity of seal food. From this moment they entered upon a series of more terrible privations from cold and hunger than anything they had yet endured. (*The Times* 2 June 1873)

Although this passage still seems far different than many of those in the American press, in it can be seen the beginning of a writing style not unlike that from across the Atlantic. As an impartial observer from Auckland, New Zealand, commented: "The example of the *New York Herald* is now being largely followed by the chief London journals, and the great strides of modern journalism is one of the astonishing progressive features of a progressive age" (*The Daily Southern Cross* 10 June 1875).

### 5.3.2 Similarities and Differences

So just how similar were the English and American press? Judging by their coverage of exploration—that is, in terms of events covered rather than the style of coverage—remarkably so. And they became more similar yet in the 1880s.

One common feature was that neither the English nor the American press was greatly interested in exploration conducted by other Europeans. Despite the broad popularity of Payer's expedition account, the Austro-Hungarian exploring expedition received very little detailed coverage in the newspapers of either England or the United States. Although most of the major papers carried a number of short notes about the return of the expedition in September 1874, nothing significant was printed for three weeks. *The Daily Telegraph* was typical: it printed one and one-half inches on 5 September, three inches on 8 September, one and one-half inches on 24 September, and two inches on 25 September. The most-extensive coverage came from *The Times*, a surprising fact because it was still engaged in its fight against British participation in polar ventures. Although most papers did not mention the expedition again once its members arrived in Austria, *The Times* devoted several columns to its findings and

experiences on both 29 and 30 September, including an electrifying account of *Tegetthoff's* time imprisoned in ice:

The ice-fields drove and pushed against each other, passing one under the other, bursting the upper field, and forming quite mountains of ice....The ship was in hourly danger of being crushed, and probably only escaped this fate by being raised by the masses of ice which had got under the keel. This precarious state lasted for five months. (*The Times* 30 September 1874)

By comparison, *The Daily News* gave more coverage to the missing French balloonist Michel Durouf, who had been blown north from Calais when trying to cross the English Channel, than to the Austro-Hungarian exploring expedition. And *The New York Herald* printed one and one-half columns on a trip to Iceland by Isaac Israel Hayes (7 September 1874), the same month it virtually ignored *Tegetthoff*.

The British and American press generally did pay more attention to each other's explorers, however. Although the American press did not come close to rivaling the coverage of the English newspapers about the British Arctic Expedition, Nares and company did receive attention in most of the major dailies. *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, for example, wrote extensively about the expedition, including an account of the conditions of Albert Markham's sledge party:

The floating masses of thick polar ice had in meeting pressed up quantities of intermediate ice into blocks frequently a mile in diameter, and varying in height from ten to fifty feet. Obstacles of this kind DESTROYED ALL HOPE OF REACHING THE POLE by sledges before the attempt was made. The sledge party was obliged to make a road with pickaxes nearly half the distance it traveled....The sufferings of the sledge parties from scurvy were frightening. The expedition under Markham and Parr, which endeavored to reach the Pole, consisted of seventeen persons. Nine became utterly helpless and had to be carried on sledges. Three could barely walk, and were unable to render assistance. (*The Chicago Daily Tribune* 30 October 1876)

The only major American paper in which coverage was lacking compared to its normal interest was *The New York Herald*; this can be attributed to Bennett's hostility to both the British people and its government.

Conversely, although the papers in the United States outstripped British coverage of American expeditions, there was still a great deal of comment in the English press. For example, the searches for *Polaris* were written about regularly in *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Standard*, although *The Daily News* hardly mentioned it because of unprecedented coverage of the trials of the Tichborne Claimant.<sup>3</sup> However, Arctic exploration had begun to generate enough public interest that on 8 July 1873 *The Daily Telegraph* printed a longer article about the *Polaris* search than it did about Samuel Baker's claim to have discovered that the Albert Nyanza and Lake Tanganyika were one and the same (an assertion later proven inaccurate).

But just because the English papers began to follow their American counterparts' interest in exploration did not mean they approved of or respected American journalism, especially that of Bennett, his newspaper, and his correspondents.

#### 5.4 THE WAR AGAINST BENNETT

Just as the success of Bennett Sr. had brought upon *The Herald* the "Moral War" of the 1830s, the success of Bennett Jr. in sponsoring and reporting exploration was the cause for a considerable animosity from newspapers that were neither as innovative nor as willing to spend large sums of money to create news. Although this antagonism later spread to the coverage of Arctic events, it started with an English attack on *The Herald* because of its invasion of an area the British considered to be within their realm of expertise—Africa.

In 1872, the English press became indignant that an American correspondent, especially one from "that detestable newspaper" (*Saturday Review* 1872: 527) had upstaged the Royal Geographical Society and its British explorers in locating Livingstone.<sup>4</sup> The immediate response to Stanley's dispatches published in *The Herald* was the same as when he had reported about the Abyssinian campaign: disbelief of the accomplishment and an assessment that Stanley and Bennett were rogues out to capture a reputation even at the cost of honesty.

Stanley in particular became the target of a sustained attack. *The Standard* declared that his claims would have to be proven by "African experts" and stated that it was obvious the letters purporting to be from Livingstone to Bennett had been forged by Stanley. It questioned why Livingstone had not returned with Stanley, why the doctor had not communicated with anyone but *The New York Herald*, and how Livingstone could have such an extensive knowledge of American literature as the letters indicated (*The Standard* 3, 6, 8 August 1872). *The Echo* entered the war when it commented that perhaps Livingstone's letters to *The Herald* had been written with the help of a spiritual medium (*The Echo* 4 August 1872). Such taunts were widespread, as almost every London paper took aim at Stanley.

But it was *The Herald* with which the English newspapers were at war, and they never missed a chance to attack it directly. *The Saturday Review* captured the essence of the English position when it commented, "The *New York Herald* has a world-wide reputation, but its reputation is not exactly for literal and prosaic accuracy of statement....daring romances are the staple of the *Herald's* news" (*Saturday Review* 1872: 527).

One of the few defenders Stanley or his proprietor had in England was *The Pall Mall Gazette*, which published Winwood Reade's withering critique of the vicious and

inaccurate ways in which Stanley had been attacked (29 August 1872). Yet even Greenwood's paper did not remain open-minded on the subject for long. By the time of Stanley's return from his next expedition, it was among the most vociferous of those calling for his scalp (22, 30 January, 11 February 1878).

Even when the newspapers were not directly antagonistic to Bennett or his star reporter, they were invariably willing to join the affray. Sir Henry Rawlinson, the President of the Royal Geographical Society, delighted the London press with his cynical appraisal of *The Herald*: "He [Stanley] had been sent out by our Transatlantic cousins, among whom the science of advertising has reached a far higher stage of development than in this benighted country" (Rawlinson 1872: 370). But it was Rawlinson's clear attempt to demean Stanley's achievement which received the most attention from the London papers:

There is one point on which a little *éclaircissement* is desirable, because a belief seems to prevail that Mr. Stanley had discovered and relieved Dr. Livingstone; whereas, without any disparagement to Mr. Stanley's energy, activity, and loyalty, if there has been any discovery and relief it is Dr. Livingstone who had discovered and relieved Mr. Stanley. Dr. Livingstone, indeed, is in clover while Mr. Stanley is near destitute....It is only proper that the relative position of the parties be correctly stated. (*The Echo* 26 July 1872; *The Standard* 27 July 1872; *The Times* 27 July 1872)

Of course, the sniping was not unilateral. Stanley and *The Herald* were well able to take care of themselves. Stanley took his vengeance on one of his tormentors, Clements R. Markham, by releasing to *The Daily News* a copy of one of Markham's supercilious letters together with a running commentary mocking Markham's remarks (*The Daily News* 10 September 1872). He also attacked Rawlinson and the Royal Geographical Society through the papers, accusing the former of drawing maps of Africa to suit his own prejudices, and stating that most of the members of the latter,

despite being in London, and never having been within two thousand miles of the spot, declare positively that Livingstone has not discovered the source of the Nile, whereas Livingstone who has devoted thirty-five years to Africa only says he thinks he has discovered it. I think if a man goes there and says "I have seen the source of the river", the man sitting in his easy chair or lying in bed cannot dispute this fact on any grounds of theory. (*The Times* 17 August 1872)

Bennett, sensing in the wake of the Alabama Claims dispute an anti-British sentiment almost as strong as his own, also took the offensive. Before Stanley's expedition had even been concluded, he claimed that his objective in sending Stanley was not a sensational story but the promotion of civilization, science, and humanity, and the enhancement of the prestige of the "fourth estate," that is, the press (*The New York Herald* 23 December 1871). He advanced the argument that in sending Stanley he had shown more of an interest in Livingstone's fate than the British government itself

(*The New York Herald* 13 February 1872). And he viciously attacked the Royal Geographical Society and the British press, stressing their ingratitude, their xenophobia, and their curmudgeonly refusal to give Stanley his due (*The New York Herald* 4, 5, 10, 16, 18, 19, 23, 27 August 1872).

Despite having no liking for Stanley, Bennett sustained his attack on the British press, which he detested even more. Stanley's trans-Africa expedition gave *The Herald* new chances to abuse "the howling dervishes of civilization...safe in their beds in London" (for example, 19 August, 7, 25, 29 November 1876, 1 January, 15 March 1877). When Stanley, having followed the Congo River to its mouth, reached the coast of the Atlantic Ocean in August 1877, *The Herald* unleashed its wrath against the English press that had condemned the killing of the Bumbire tribesmen:

This will greatly depress the philanthropists of London....[whose] impractical view it is that a leader in such a position should permit his men to be slaughtered by the natives and should be slaughtered himself and let discovery go to the dogs, but should never pull a trigger against this species of human vermin that put its uncompromising savagery in the way of all progress and all increase of knowledge. (*The New York Herald* 17 September 1877)

Thus it was that exploration provided one of the first forums for the competition between the American and British press. The two could easily attack each other through explorers such as Stanley while acting as if they were only discussing a third party. Yet the third party could perhaps see the entire situation more clearly than anyone else. Stanley acknowledged in his journal that American editors might be bullies, but that their "English contemporary is in my mind more like an old shrew with his venom-laden pen and his effeminate malice...their propensity to nagging at a man marks the unmanliness to which their excess of laws have [*sic*] reduced them" (quoted in McLynn 1989: 225).

But it was not only the British that attacked *The Herald* and its correspondent. On 24 August 1872 Dana released his thunderbolt. Under the headline HENRY M. STANLEY, VILLAIN, FORGER AND PIRATE, *The Sun* printed a long letter from Lewis Noe, one of Stanley's former associates. Noe detailed several episodes from the 1860s, when Stanley had broken the laws of various countries in which he had traveled, and gave numerous examples of his cruel and unscrupulous behavior. Four days later, *The Sun* was back on the offensive, with a story headlined IS THE ALLEGED DISCOVERY OF DR. LIVINGSTONE BY HENRY STANLEY ANYTHING BUT AN ENORMOUS FRAUD? The story vehemently declared: "No one can compare the LIVINGSTONE letters of the *Herald* with STANLEY'S letters to NOE without being impressed with the opinion that every word and every line of these are the work of the same hand, and that this hand is STANLEY'S own." It further

stated that Stanley's claims were the "most gigantic hoax ever attempted upon the credulity of mankind" (*The Sun* 28 August 1872). The next day *The Sun* printed an interview with Noe, in which he enlarged on some of the details of his letter (*The Sun* 29 August 1872). During the following days, *The Sun* contained further editorials and other information against the character of Stanley and about the likelihood that the reports printed about his meeting with Livingstone in *The Herald* were dishonest.

*The Herald* quickly defended Stanley and itself, printing a response on 29 August. It then published an interview with Edward J. Morris, who had been the Minister to Turkey from 1861 to 1870, and from whom, according to Noe, Stanley had borrowed £150 that he never repaid. Morris, not wanting to risk attack by *The Herald*, concocted a story about a repayment (*The New York Herald* 7 September 1872). However, skillful questioning by a reporter for *The Sun* showed beyond doubt that Morris really had been swindled. The charges and denials continued for a number of weeks (for example, *The New York Herald* 26 September 1872; *The Sun* 9 October 1872), before eventually dying out.

*The Sun* was not the only American newspaper to attack *The Herald*. Following the official inquest into the *Polaris* expedition, *The New-York Times* condemned the manner in which *The Herald* had covered the events, commenting: "In Capt. Tyson's testimony there is material out of which the sensational reports that have been circulated might easily have grown by repetition and some imaginative treatment, but it does not in any way sustain the stronger of the sensational reports, from somewhat dubious sources" (*The New-York Times* 20 June 1873).

Four years later, Stanley was again a target, when *The New-York Times* jibed him publicly over his failed relationship with Alice Pike, whom he had expected to marry upon returning from his trans-Africa expedition (*The New-York Times* 4 November 1877). Being successful made few friends for either Stanley or Bennett.

## 5.5 ACCURACY AND HONESTY

Despite many attempts, the English press could never prove that Stanley and Bennett distorted the facts about the expedition to find Livingstone. However, even though the reports of that expedition were accurate, *The Herald* was not always so pure. Then again, neither were the accounts from all the other papers or explorers.

Certainly much of what had been written in the English newspapers in the 1850s regarding Robert McClure and his completion of the Northwest Passage had been based on his self-serving reports and statements that were designed to overlook how close his expedition on *Investigator* had come to being a disaster after he had ignored the advice of Henry Kellett. And McClure made sure little was known of the efforts of

Bedford Pim, who probably saved the lives of most of the crew of *Investigator* (Neatby 1960; 1970: 159-219).

In the United States, there were continuing questions about what exactly happened during the *Jeannette* expedition, because the accounts of Danenhower and Melville were so remarkably different in places. And there could have been questions about the validity and honesty of press reports, especially when *The New-York Times* made statements such as that the blundering, incompetent martinet De Long was, "selected for the command of the *Jeannette* expedition on account of his rare fitness for such a work. A man of magnificent physique, iron will and perfect knowledge of the problems to be solved by the successful issue of such a journey, he was fitted in all ways for such a task" (*The New-York Times* 21 December 1881).

However, the task of sorting inaccuracy from dishonesty is one that can be done with little certainty. There were definitely times when the press—whether the editors or the correspondents—shamelessly deviated from the obvious truth. In the case of the editors, *The Herald* constantly claimed credit for Sir Henry Bartle Frere's mission to Zanzibar to negotiate a treaty with the sultan for the suppression of the slave trade—an expedition actually sent by the British Foreign Office (*The New York Herald* 13 August, 5 November 1872, 2 January, 18 June 1873). And in the case of the reporters, Stanley once filed a story with *The Herald* detailing how he had landed on the coast of Crete, joined a guerrilla force struggling for independence, and fought in a battle against a Turkish column (*The New York Herald* 8 November 1868). It has been shown that the entire story was fiction, because Stanley was in Athens on the days he claimed he was accompanying the guerrillas (McLynn 1989: 77-78).

But there were numerous other discrepancies in the accuracy of the newspaper accounts (although not nearly as many as there would be in the following decades) that were not as flagrant. Many explorers were simply guilty of embellishment or understatement.<sup>5</sup> And sometimes they just made honest errors. For example, according to the calculations of a couple who later followed Stanley's route to find Livingstone, he reported the village of Simbamwenni some miles north of where it apparently was (Stanley 1872; Jackson 1962: 62-72). This was not necessarily surprising considering:

Anyone, who has ever walked along a winding forest path or across a featureless plain, can appreciate how difficult it is for an amateur, even with proper instruments, to record his direction when his view is obscured by trees and rain blots out the sun. Added to this, magnetic variation, which is high in this part of Africa...may well have thrown out his calculations. (Jackson 1962: 65)

Thus, it is hard to fault some of Stanley's sloppy reporting. Yet, did there have to be mistakes at all? Other than his statements favorably comparing the accomplishments

of Schwatka's expedition with those of others, Gilder was virtually never guilty of inaccuracies. For example, later explorations confirmed almost to the word what Gilder said about the lands passed through in the Schwatka party's outbound sledge journey of 1879. This was despite Gilder not having to worry about contradiction because Schwatka's preliminary excursions:

had determined him upon taking that route though across land entirely unknown either to previous explorers or to any native with whom we had come in contact. Whether we would find practicable water courses, such as rivers and lakes, or whether mountain ranges would oppose their granite walls to further progress, was yet to be ascertained. (*The New York Herald* 24 September 1880)

But Gilder was more the exception than the rule. The quantity of exaggeration in the reporting about the Arctic repelled Lieutenant G.C. Doane, who had sailed on *Gulnare* as the military commander of Henry Howgate's luckless expedition to establish a permanent post at Lady Franklin Bay (*The New York Herald* 10, 22 June 1880; *The New-York Times* 6, 10, 22 June 1880). In response, Doane wrote a taunting official report on his return, which was printed in *The Chicago Times*:

We did but little, but left a great many things undone requiring some moral courage to refrain from doing. We did not change the names of all the localities visited, as is customary, nor give them new latitudes....We did not hunt up nameless islands and promontories to tag them with the surnames of plethoric merchants and wildly enthusiastic females who had given up plug tobacco and button-hole bouquets. We did not even erect cenotaphs....We received no flags, converted no natives, killed no one....

The primary geographical iceberg, which in perspective towers above first-class ships in the foreground, and has a contemplative bear gazing seaward from the loftiest pinnacle, oblivious of the herd of fat seals on its beach, is not produced any more....The present ones are not so high by several hundred feet, and instead of being in a freezing condition were rapidly thawing whenever afloat. The rocks and bluffs of the Arctic are not at all clouded with water-fowl, as pictured, nor is it dangerous to run a whale-boat lest it should be ground on a sleeping whale, be pierced through by the horn of a narwhal, or captured by an angry herd of walrus. (*The Chicago Times* 6 April 1881)

In the long run, however, the exaggeration in Arctic reporting would grow rather than diminish, and would lead to the initial claims of the attainment of the North Pole. The problem, according to Stanley, was that being an accurate journalist and setting down the facts was a mistake. The public wanted action, adventure, and homiletic parables to disguise its own inability to act, to dare, to make decisions, to do anything but read (McLynn 1991: 49). What the public did not want, he claimed, was the truth.



## CHAPTER 6

### THE NEW JOURNALISM AND THE ARCTIC

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

Between 1883 and 1895 sensationalism spread dramatically throughout the press of both the United States and England. In America, the sensationalism of James Gordon Bennett Jr. and *The New York Herald* was equalled and in some ways exceeded by that of Joseph Pulitzer and *The World*. Other papers across the country also adopted sensationalism, and used its techniques to help gain large audiences. In England, American-style sensationalism, derogatorily called the New Journalism by its critics, was popularized in the evening press by W.T. Stead of *The Pall Mall Gazette* and T.P. O'Connor of *The Star*.

During the same period, American and English newspapers became more involved than ever before in the sponsorship of exploration. This linking helped create the greatest polar sensation of the nineteenth century, the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition and its aftermath. It also encouraged a new type of Arctic traveler—the professional explorer, such as Frederick Schwatka—and it helped make the first international polar hero of the age of the popular press—Fridtjof Nansen of Norway.

#### 6.2 A NEW MAN IN TOWN—JOSEPH PULITZER

When, in May 1883, Joseph Pulitzer purchased *The New-York World* from financier Jay Gould, most people had never heard of the owner of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Nor did many of them care much about his new newspaper, which appeared to be in its death throes.

Pulitzer's acquisition had been founded in June 1860 as *The World*, a penny daily with an emphasis on religion, full of church notices and messages to uplift its audience. Despite a price increase to two cents, heavy losses forced the sale of *The World*, which was run successfully for a number of years by Manton Marble, who made it an organ of the Democratic Party, and then by Gould, who changed the name to *The New-York World*. Under Gould, it lost about \$40,000 per year, and by 1883 it had a daily circulation of under 15,000.

Pulitzer wasted no time in making alterations. In his first edition he changed the name back to *The World*. He eliminated the news summaries that occupied the left-hand column of the front page. In his own words, his paper was to be "not only cheap but bright, not only bright but large, not only large but truly Democratic—dedicated to the cause of the people" (*The World* 11 May 1883).

Making *The World* inexpensive was no problem. It continued at two cents for eight pages. By comparison, *The Herald* cost three cents for 12 to 16 pages, *The Sun* was two cents for four pages, and the *Tribune* and *The Times* each were four cents for eight pages.

To help make *The World* bright, Pulitzer filled the blank space around the nameplate with "ears," boxes for self-advertisement, such as the announcement of circulation increases or exclusive stories. The ears initially proclaimed "Only 8-page Newspaper in the United States sold for 2 cents," but they later featured such slogans as "Spicy, Pithy, Pictorial."<sup>1</sup>

Pulitzer also changed the position of the lead story. On the assumption that the eyes of the readers moved across the page from left to right, American editors had traditionally run the main feature in the first column of page one, with the second-most-important story in the right-hand column. Pulitzer suspected that when readers quickly glanced at a newspaper, they started on the right, so he switched the positions of the top stories, leading to the format most papers follow today (Juergens 1966: 28-29).

Making *The World* large and Democratic were factors closely related in Pulitzer's formula. He was aware that four out of five New York City residents were either immigrants or children of immigrants, and that few of them had any effective spokesman (Swanberg 1967). This is exactly what he became. Within a week of taking over *The World*, Pulitzer published a 10-point program for which his paper campaigned: tax luxuries, tax inheritances, tax large incomes, tax monopolies, tax the privileged corporations, institute a tariff for revenue, reform the civil service, punish corrupt office-holders, punish vote buying, and punish employers who coerce their employees in elections (*The World* 17 May 1883). Pulitzer thus made his new paper a high-minded crusader and public defender, much like the *Post-Dispatch* was in St. Louis, except that *The World* represented the poorer classes rather than the middle class (Seitz 1924a; Rammelkamp 1967).

A mass circulation was needed for the success of *The World's* liberal ideology. "If a newspaper is to be of real service to the public," Pulitzer told his secretary, "it must have a big circulation, first because its news and its comments must reach the largest possible number of people, second, because circulation means advertising, and advertising means money, and money means independence" (Ireland 1938: 98).

The fact that he wished to publish a newspaper for the masses,<sup>2</sup> including a huge audience that was near the lowest level of literacy, meant that, like Day and Bennett Sr. before him, Pulitzer would create a sensational journal. Yet it was a new blend of sensationalism and idealism. On page one, *The World* adopted a combination of sex, scandal, and corruption. But the editorial page comprised well-written expressions of

Pulitzer's intellectual idealism. Though unusual, this combination is not difficult to comprehend: Pulitzer understood that sensationalism sold newspapers, and that to succeed he had to challenge Bennett Jr. and Dana on their own ground.

To achieve his goals, Pulitzer quickly revamped *The World's* staff, bringing in a number of his better writers and editors from the *Post-Dispatch*. The most important of these was John Cockerill, who was expendable in St. Louis because of a scandal over his having fatally shot a lawyer who had objected to the treatment he was receiving in the *Post-Dispatch* (Rammelkamp 1967). The handsome, dynamic Cockerill was one of the most capable journalists in the United States, a fact he had proven earlier as the managing editor of John McLean's *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*—where he had earned such a reputation that the jealous McLean replaced him (King 1965)—of *The Washington Post*, and of the *Post-Dispatch*. Cockerill became responsible for much of the day-to-day control of *The World*, because Pulitzer not only was slowly going blind but suffered from an increasingly severe nervous affliction that compelled him to retire from on-the-spot management in 1887.<sup>3</sup> As managing editor of *The World*, Cockerill made substantial contributions to the area for which Pulitzer gained his greatest fame—the emphasis on sensationalism.

#### 6.2.1 The Sensationalism of *The World*

The sensationalism of Pulitzer and Cockerill at *The World* was unlike that of their predecessors. Certainly there were a number of similarities to Bennett Sr., but the technological advances in the interim meant that *The World* could obtain more information, present it in a more sensational manner, and distribute it more widely than had been possible in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Pulitzer's sensationalism was also different in that its goal was to achieve more than just financial success. The sensations on page one were to attract readers so that the editorials on page four could educate, uplift, and crusade for them. If crime and scandal were needed to bring them to the editorial page, then crime and scandal they would receive. "Of course newspapers are 'made to sell,'" Pulitzer responded when attacked about *The World's* news selection. "In that respect they resemble the highest works of art and intellect as well as sermons" (*The World* 6 May 1884).

Pulitzer stated many times that the sensational press was the most important agency in the moral betterment of the nation: "the newspaper, whether printed on Sunday or on week days, is a great aid to the preservation of peace and order. Sinners do not shrink from vice, but they are awfully afraid of exposure in the newspapers. No pulpit orator can reach the evil-doer like a Sunday newspaper with a quarter of a million readers" (*The World* 27 May 1884).

Sensational or not, Pulitzer believed the press should obey the dictates of good taste (Juergens 1966: 73). He once lashed out at the respectable *New-York Tribune* for printing on its front page a report of how a six-year-old girl was molested: "The same matter in the *World* office was pitched into the waste-basket" (*The World* 4 November 1883). Rather than compare his paper to the scandal sheets of the day, he saw it more akin to that symbol of sobriety and high moral tone, *The Evening Post* of E.L. Godkin. Pulitzer simply argued for a broader definition of good taste than did Godkin:

Now about this matter of sensationalism: a newspaper should be scrupulously accurate, it should be clean, it should avoid everything salacious or suggestive, everything that could offend good taste or lower the moral tone of its readers; but within these limits it is the duty of a newspaper to print the news. When I speak of good taste and of good moral tone I do not mean the kind of good taste which is offended by every reference to the unpleasant things of life, I do not mean the kind of morality which refuses to recognize the existence of immorality—that type of moral hypocrite has done more to check the moral progress of humanity than all the immoral people put together. What I mean is the kind of good taste which demands that frankness should be linked with decency, the kind of moral tone which is braced and not relaxed when it is brought face to face with vice. (Ireland 1938: 96-97)

Pulitzer and Godkin also agreed that the press had a responsibility to serve the public. Again, the major difference was not in basic doctrine, but in the response to it. Pulitzer believed sensational articles helped fulfill his responsibility to report the news:

Some people try to make you believe that a newspaper should not devote its space to long and dramatic accounts of murders, railroad wrecks, fires, lynchings, political corruption, embezzlements, frauds, graft, divorces, what you will. I tell you they are wrong, and I believe that if they thought the thing out they would see that they are wrong.

We are a democracy, and there is only one way to get a democracy on its feet in the matter of its individual, its social, its municipal, its State, its National conduct, and that is by keeping the public informed about what is going on. There is not a crime, there is not a dodge, there is not a trick, there is not a swindle, there is not a vice which does not live by secrecy. Get these things out in the open, describe them, attack them, ridicule them in the press, and sooner or later public opinion will sweep them away. (Ireland 1938: 97-98).

A corollary to Pulitzer's view of sensationalism was his lack of respect for those who used it solely to appeal to the base instincts of readers and neither to help nor educate them. He made this abundantly clear when the *New York Extra* and *Truth* both went out of business within the space of a month:

Two daily newspapers have just gone out of existence...Is not the cause of their failure to be traced to the fact that neither of them represented any principle or definite purpose with which all decent people are in sympathy? That they appealed to the low and vulgar rather than the better instincts of man? That the one was given over to vile sensationalism...and the other...excluded the higher aims and purposes of true journalism? In this

country it is the highest evidence of the improved taste, the general intelligence and virtue of the people that personal organs and claptrap, sensational journalism no longer can live, and that to be a great and permanent success a modern newspaper must have honest convictions for its guide and the public good for its aim. (*The World* 13 January 1885)

So of what, then, did *The World's* sensationalism consist? It was an unusual, yet an understandable, mélange brought about because Pulitzer was not only innovative but willing to learn from his predecessors and competitors. The influence of Day and Bennett Sr. was shown by an abundance of stories about crime and scandal. From Bennett Sr., George Jones, and Frank Leslie, *The World* inherited a tradition of investigative journalism. Human-interest stories were attributable to the teachings of Dana. And from Bennett Jr., *The World* learned another of its specialties—stunts.

As he had in St. Louis, Pulitzer showed a decided preference for local news, but this did not mean he did not understand Bennett Jr.'s success. His point was not indiscriminately to play down every item of foreign intelligence, but to use discretion in deciding which ones would appeal to the audience of *The World*:

With all its vast foreign bureaus and its cable facilities the *Herald* shows as poor judgement in gleaning European news as it does in picking up—or rather gliding by—home news....while the *Herald* was keeping its cable eye on the Hovas of Madagascar the other day the *World* was showing up the divorce suit of Lord Colin Campbell. (*The World* 2 April 1884)<sup>4</sup>

Pulitzer's assessment of what his audience wanted was reflected in his efforts to create news. In these, he was no Bennett, and he had no Stanley or Gilder. But then he did not want to be just an imitator of *The Herald*. His stunts—whether local or originating from the homelands of his immigrant readers—aimed simply at generating excitement rather than doing so specifically through true exploration and discovery.

The best-known of *The World's* special correspondents was Nellie Bly, whose real name was Elizabeth Cochrane, and who first impressed Cockerill when she barged into his office and demanded she be given an assignment. Her first assignment—which was based on her own proposal—was to feign insanity so that she could write an inside account of the asylum on Blackwell's Island in New York (Cochrane 1887). She later reported on poor working conditions in factories, mistreatment of female prisoners, and unfair labor practices (Rittenhouse 1956). But her most ambitious effort was traveling around the world in an attempt to beat Phileas Fogg's record set in Jules Verne's novel *Around the world in eighty days* (1874a). Her trip of 72 days, 6 hours, 10 minutes, and 11 seconds (14 November 1889 to 25 January 1890) by steamship, sailboat, train, horseback, and foot—during which she quickly detoured to France to interview Verne—fascinated the audience of *The World*, as did the contest to predict her exact

time of completion (Rittenhouse 1956; Swanberg 1967: 157-158). However, the entire stunt was totally ignored by *The Herald*, *The Sun*, *The Times*, and the *Tribune*.

Another of *The World's* special correspondents was Thomas Stevens, who initially earned a reputation from a 31-part series of stories in *Outing* magazine based on his experiences while trying to ride a bicycle around the world (Stevens 1887). He was later sent by Cockerill to ride horseback 1,100 miles from Moscow to the Black Sea and to report back on the conditions, manners, and customs of the people of European Russia (Stevens 1891), a travel assignment that appealed to those readers of *The World* who were from eastern Europe.

### 6.2.2 Pulitzer's Use of Illustration

Pulitzer's efforts to attract readership also led to his use of illustration. *The World* was not the first newspaper to use pictures: illustration dated back at least to 20 December 1638, when the *Weekly News* in England printed a full-page engraving of "the places where the fire burst out" after a volcanic upheaval on Saõ Miguel in the Azores (Jackson 1885: 42-43). Illustration took on a much more important role when Herbert Ingram founded *The Illustrated London News* in 1842. Ingram's concept was of a newspaper with pictures that would assist in the understanding of news and reveal information difficult to place in verbal context (Schuneman 1965: 44-45).

The first daily newspaper to make frequent use of illustration was *The New York Herald*. Bennett Sr. printed pictures of murder victims, crime scenes, and other sensational topics. During the Civil War, maps were regularly featured, and drawings of battle scenes were not uncommon. Bennett Jr. frequently used maps and drawings of unusual scenes to go along with his travel or exploration accounts. *The Herald* did not have exclusive use of illustration, however. On 31 March 1860 *The Press and Tribune* of Chicago printed its first map—of the Pike's Peak gold regions. The first illustrations in *The New-York Times*—two caricatures of Bennett Sr.—were printed in 1861.

However, it was not a daily that most directly influenced Pulitzer's use of illustration, but a weekly, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. *Leslie's* was not only one of the earliest American newspapers with a fighting social conscience—the most famous of its picture crusades was the "swill milk campaign" of 1858-1859—it set forth the editorial methods for dealing with pictures that were followed by most American editors for the rest of the nineteenth century (Schuneman 1965: 45; Huntzicker 1989).

Yet it is *The World* more than any of these other newspapers that is associated with the development of illustration in the news. This is because Pulitzer and Cockerill carried illustration so far forward as almost to develop something new. The guiding minds of *The World* did not view illustration simply as a technique to be admired for its

own sake—as did the *New York Daily Graphic*, the first of the so-called picture dailies<sup>5</sup>—nor as the occasional fillip for an otherwise dull page—as did most other dailies—but as a great, unexploited medium of sales. As Pulitzer himself commented:

They call me the father of illustrated journalism. What folly! I never thought of any such thing. I had a small paper which had been dead for years, and I was trying in every way I could think of to build up its circulation. I wanted to put into each issue something that would arouse curiosity and make people want to buy the paper. What could I use for bait? A picture, of course.... (quoted in Barrett 1941: 81-82)

Actually, it was Cockerill, even more than Pulitzer, who was the force behind the continued use of illustration:

When Joseph Pulitzer went to Europe he was a little undecided about the woodcuts. He left orders to gradually get rid of them, as he thought it tended to lower the dignity of the paper, and he was not satisfied that the cuts helped it in its circulation. After Pulitzer was on the Atlantic, Col. Cockerill...found, however, that the circulation of the paper went with the cuts, and, like the good newspaper general that he was, he instantly changed his tactics. (*The Journalist* 22 August 1885)

From that point on, *The World* printed far more pictures to illustrate current news than any other daily had ever considered.<sup>6</sup> Although some of these were on a grand scale—such as the famous six-column political cartoon entitled "The Royal Feast of Belshazzar Blaine and the Money Kings" aimed at James Blaine, the Republican candidate for President (*The World* 30 October 1884)—most were halfsticks of local people. Just as Pulitzer assumed that local features meant more to his readers, he determined that they would be more interested in pictures of people or places with which they were familiar than in drawings of famous strangers or faraway, unknown areas, such as were printed in *The Herald*.

As he did with sensationalism, Pulitzer argued that illustrations served a high moral purpose, as well as selling newspapers. His greatest proof of this came in 1884 when two criminals were arrested in Canada on the strength of portraits run in *The World*. "While some of our esteemed, aesthetic contemporaries assume to censure the frequent illustrations in the *World* as sensational," Pulitzer crowed, "we are subserving the cause of public justice by presenting faithful portraits which enable the officers of the law, here and abroad, to arrest criminals" (*The World* 11 December 1884).

The true significance of Pulitzer's adoption of illustration is what it caused to happen to the press as a whole. Pulitzer's success quickly attracted the attention of his rivals, and in a short period of time not only the New York press but papers throughout the country were printing more pictures in a day than they previously had in months. *Harper's Weekly* recognized this revolution when it noted, "the question of 'cuts' in the columns of the daily newspapers, if not exactly a burning one, excites more animated

comment than many of more importance. It has been settled in favor of their use now by every considerable morning paper" (*Harper's Weekly* 22 April 1893: 367).

### 6.2.3 *The World's* Victory

When Pulitzer first arrived in New York in 1883, none of his major rivals gave him much consideration, dismissing him as a brash, publicity-seeking Jew (Juergens 1966: 331; Swanberg 1967). But within several months, they realized that this liberal spokesman and his newspaper were serious competition.

*The World* steadily gained readers—many at the expense of other newspapers—until those papers took steps to protect themselves. In September 1883 the *Tribune*, *The Times*, and even *The Herald* cut their prices, the first to three cents, the latter two to two cents. The day after *The Times* dropped its price, Pulitzer proclaimed it needed to go further than that to challenge *The World*: "If our neighbor will imitate us in style and tone, now, it may hope to amount to something" (*The World* 19 September 1883).

Pulitzer was even more satisfied with Bennett's price-cut, which was promptly followed by the unprecedented act of *The Herald* taking out full-page ads in *The World* for a week to announce it (*The World* 27 September to 3 October 1883). Pulitzer pointed out to his readers that Bennett thereby conceded not only *The World's* increase in circulation, but its effectiveness as an advertising organ: "To-day we surrender our fifth page to Brother Bennett, who, though far away across the ocean, understands the value of advertising in a newspaper with a large and growing circulation" (*The World* 27 September 1883).

Pulitzer frequently claimed that Bennett's move indicated *The Herald* had lost its position as the dominant newspaper in the United States. It was easy thereafter to treat it in the same cavalier manner that he did the rest of the press. For example, when Bennett's paper followed some of *The World's* leads in illustration, Cockerill boasted: "There is no flattery so sincere as imitation, and the *World* feels a sense of pride in noting the care with which the *Herald* follows in its wake....But until the *Herald* equips itself with sound principles, a few bright ideas and a collection of fresh brains, we shall not regard it as a formidable journalistic adversary" (*The World* 2 May 1884).

By May 1884, one year after Pulitzer had purchased *The World*, its circulation had grown four-fold to almost 60,000. Although *The Herald* and *The Sun* still dominated the field, with circulations of around 190,000 and 150,000, respectively, that too was about to change.

In 1884, Dana grew disenchanted with the New York governor Grover Cleveland, the leading Democratic candidate for President. By backing Benjamin Butler, the candidate of the National (or Greenback) Party, Dana left *The World* as the only major



New York paper supporting the Democrats and drove thousands of his subscribers into the arms of Pulitzer, with the result that *The Sun* lost some 40 percent of its readers, most of which it never recovered (Rosebault 1931: 228; Swanberg 1967: 94). Readership losses of *The Sun* were closely matched by the gains of *The World* (Juergens 1966: 331). By May 1885, when *The Sun* had fallen to a circulation of about 90,000, *The World* had risen to more than 150,000. Soon only *The Herald*, which boasted the largest staff of any newspaper in the world (Grant 1871: II, 425), could compete with Pulitzer's daily, which became even more powerful when *The Evening World* was founded in 1887 to challenge Bennett's *Evening Telegram*. By 1890, despite a price increase back to three cents on 29 November 1887, *The Herald's* circulation had grown to about 212,000. But *The World* had attained the largest readership in the United States—246,000.

### 6.3 THE TRIUMPH OF SENSATIONALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

New York was not the only city in the United States that saw the ascendancy of sensational newspapers. Rather, they sprang up across the nation.

*The Philadelphia Record* began modestly in 1870, but exploded in popularity seven years later when it was purchased by William M. Singerly, a railroad builder. Under Singerly, its price was cut to a penny, its makeup and writing were brightened, it engaged in Pulitzer-like local crusades, and it became sensational in its coverage. By the 1880s, it had become Pennsylvania's most successful paper (Emery and Emery 1988: 688).

*The Boston Daily Globe*, founded in 1872, had a rocky start, even after Charles H. Taylor became its managing editor in 1873. But in 1877 a reorganization put Taylor entirely in charge, and he immediately made major changes. He turned what had been a morning paper into a multiple-edition one: the new evening edition ran the same editorials, features, and advertisements as the morning edition, with only the news columns changing. He changed *The Daily Globe's* politics from Republican to Democrat. And he adopted a number of the same policies that would make *The World* so successful.

Taylor's news formula was simple: what was interesting to the readers was important, and what was not was not. Thus he made crime and trials a mainstay, even running a front-page column entitled TERRIBLE CRIMES. He emphasized sensational details whenever he could, concentrating on stories such as the six-month trial of Henry Ward Beecher, the most famous preacher in America, for adultery. And he made the most of local features; when told that *The Boston Herald* had sent a reporter to Europe, he replied that in that case *The Daily Globe* would put another man in south

Boston (Lyons 1971). In fact, Taylor believed so strongly in the power of using local information and names that *The Daily Globe* printed more names of local people than any previous paper (Mott 1952: 90). The result of these efforts were that *The Daily Globe* increased from a circulation of 8,000 in 1878 to 30,000 three years later. By 1890, the combined morning and evening editions had a circulation of 150,000.

The nation's capital also received its first sensational paper—*The Washington Post*. From its start in December 1877, *The Post* followed more the pattern of Bennett than Pulitzer, ably covering foreign affairs while emphasizing the thrilling events of unknown lands. It later became blatantly sensational after being purchased by John R. McLean, who slavishly followed William Randolph Hearst's methods (Roberts 1977).

More successful than any of these eastern dailies was the first major penny evening paper in the west, *The Chicago Daily News*, founded in December 1875 by Melville Stone. Stone believed that his first responsibility was to print accurate news, his second responsibility was to guide public opinion, and his third to provide entertainment (Abramoske 1963). He wrote that the four-page *Daily News* would publish "no so-called sensational and exaggerated or scandalous material for the purpose of making sales" (Stone 1922), and it did not emphasize common crime, sex, or human-interest stories. Nevertheless, *The Daily News* quickly developed its own style of sensationalism, what Stone called "detective journalism."

Initially, *The Daily News* had a difficult struggle, and by July 1876 it was foundering. Stone was saved by a young financier, Victor F. Lawson, who purchased two-thirds of the stock and became the paper's business manager. The combination of Stone and Lawson was immediately successful. In 1878 *The Daily News* purchased *The Post and Mail*, obtaining its right to use the *Associated Press* wire; in 1881 a morning edition, *The Chicago Morning News*, was started; and in 1885 the combined morning and evening circulation passed 100,000. By the time Stone sold his interest to Lawson in May 1888 the combined circulation trailed only *The World* and *The Herald*; by 1894 the evening edition had reached 200,000, making it the largest evening paper in America (Abramoske 1963).

Despite becoming both the publisher and editor after buying out Stone, Lawson continued most of his former partner's policies. Lawson was even more concerned than Stone with fulfilling what he saw as his obligation to the public interest. Because he considered it a public service, he emphasized foreign news as Stone never had (Dennis 1935). This included some of the most complete coverage of exploration by an American newspaper (Dennis 1935; Tree 1959), and the sponsorship of two North Polar expeditions under the leadership of Walter Wellman in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Meanwhile, almost unnoticed in the national picture were the developments at *The Examiner* of San Francisco. Founded in June 1865 as *The Evening Examiner*, the paper was acquired in 1880 by George Hearst, who changed it to a morning edition and used it to further his own political career, turning it into an organ of the Democratic Party (Carlson and Bates 1936; Winkler 1928: 48-49). Seven years later, in March 1887, Hearst turned the paper over to his 24-year-old son William Randolph, who had closely studied the sensational techniques of both *The Boston Daily Globe* and *The World* (Winkler 1928: 59-63; Swanberg 1961: 36).

Even Pulitzer's sensationalism was exceeded the next decade by Hearst, who also was interested in increasing circulation, not as a means of serving the people, but to gain money and power (Lundberg 1936). Hearst admired Pulitzer's methods of running a newspaper, and he particularly approved of *The World's* front page. But Hearst was neither an intellectual nor a social reformer, so the editorial page meant little to him. Under Hearst's direction, *The Examiner* grew flamboyant and sensational, but there was little evidence of any idealism (Tebbel 1952: 78-82). Hearst was the heir to a huge fortune, and he spent lavishly to build his paper into a power of western journalism. Among those he hired were managing editor Sam S. Chamberlain, who had worked for both Bennett and Pulitzer and who in February 1884 would start the Paris newspaper *Le Matin*; the gifted essayist and short-story writer Ambrose Bierce; and the tempestuous city editor Arthur McEwen (Swanberg 1961: 41-76). By the end of Hearst's first year, *The Examiner* had doubled its circulation to 30,000. Five years later it had increased to 72,000, surpassing the long-time west-coast leader, *The San Francisco Chronicle*.

As the dailies became more sensational, some of the monthly magazines followed suit. *Scribner's Monthly*, the great American middle-class magazine of the day, which prided itself on a literary quality almost as high as *Harper's New Monthly*, broke away from Scribner's book-publishing company in 1881. It was renamed *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, and Josiah G. Holland was succeeded as editor by Richard Watson Gilder. Throughout the 28 years of Gilder's editorship, *Century Illustrated* remained one of America's most-respected and thought-provoking publications, although the focus widened from literature to include wars, travel, and exploration—events similar to those Gilder's brother, William Henry Gilder, publicized for Bennett in *The New York Herald* (Cairns 1931; Mott 1930-1968: III, 457-480).

Five years after the name change, Scribner's book-publishing company re-entered the magazine business, and *Scribner's Magazine* was born with a format not unlike that of *Century Illustrated*. The new magazine had more interest in Africa than its

predecessors, and featured travel articles by both H.M. Stanley and Theodore Roosevelt (Mott 1930-1968: IV, 717-732).

Conversely, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, which had long been the weekly leader in scandal, thrills, and adventure—featuring accounts of expeditions such as Kane's to the Arctic, Livingstone's to Africa, and Matthew Perry's to Japan—lost its sensational qualities and most of its wide-spread appeal after Leslie's widow sold it in 1889 to a group that made it virtually a mouthpiece for the Republican Party (Mott 1930-1968: II, 452-465; Huntzicker 1983). *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* (founded in 1876) also suffered a large drop in circulation after it changed its format and stopped concentrating on tales of adventure (Mott 1930-1968: III, 510-512).<sup>7</sup>

American-style sensationalism also spread to Europe. On 4 October 1887 Bennett published the first number of the Paris edition of *The New York Herald*. Although this new paper was never very successful financially under his guidance, by its centennial year—under the name *International Herald Tribune*—it had developed a circulation of 160,000 in 164 nations (Robertson 1987: 439-440). Shortly after starting the Paris edition of *The Herald*, Bennett also began one in London. It was less successful, lasting only from 2 February 1889 to 17 January 1892.

## 6.4 THE NEW JOURNALISM IN ENGLAND

Even before Bennett made his entry into the English market, his influence, and that of Pulitzer, Dana, and the other proponents of sensationalism, had begun to be felt there. What the great radical editor H.W. Massingham later referred to as "the Americanization of the press" was beginning in England (Massingham 1892: 182-185).

### 6.4.1 W.T. Stead and *The Pall Mall Gazette*

In 1883, the year that Pulitzer took control of *The World*, an event of equal significance occurred in British journalism: W.T. Stead became the editor of *The Pall Mall Gazette*.

Despite the efforts of Frederick Greenwood, *The Pall Mall Gazette* had never been an economic success, and in 1880 George Murray Smith, distressed by his editor's growing conservatism, Gladstone's triumph in the elections, and continued financial losses, passed the paper to his son-in-law, Henry Yates Thompson. The new owner wished to change the paper to a Liberal viewpoint, which led Greenwood to resign in May 1880 and almost immediately to establish a competing evening paper, *The St. James's Gazette* (Scott 1952: 4). One of the first moves his successor, John Morley, made was to hire Stead, the editor of the *Northern Echo* of Darlington, as his assistant.<sup>8</sup>

Stead was a liberal firebrand, a man who believed the press was "the greatest agency for influencing public opinion in the world...the only true lever by which Thrones and Governments could be shaken and the masses raised..." (quoted in Baylen 1972: 369). He made the *Northern Echo*—which in 1870 had become the first successful halfpenny morning daily in England—the noisiest advocate of social reform in the provinces, supporting the Liberal Party, compulsory universal education, equal opportunities for women, women's suffrage, collective bargaining, and Irish home rule, while inveighing passionately against gambling, immorality, the Poor Law, and trade union discrimination (Schults 1972: 1-28). Gladstone was so impressed by Stead that when he became Prime Minister he urged Morley to hire the young crusader (Scott 1952: 72). Three years later, Morley became a Member of Parliament, and in August 1883 Stead was made the editor of *The Pall Mall Gazette*.

For the next seven years, the personality and the message of Stead and his newspaper were virtually indistinguishable. *The Pall Mall Gazette* reflected Stead's convictions that a revitalized press could shape and voice the desires and opinions of the newly enlarged and literate British electorate, and that public opinion could be utilized by the press to determine government policy and to compel the government to abandon unpopular policies (Gardiner 1920).

Before Stead could fulfill his mission, however, he needed to keep his paper alive. Despite Morley's having attempted to increase sales by reducing the price from two pence to one in 1882, *The Pall Mall Gazette* still had a circulation of only about 8,000. So Stead set about on a "revolutionary programme" to make it "vigorously alive" (Stead 1893: 152-153). First, he gave it a face lift, introducing bold headlines, multi-line heads, crossheads, maps, and diagrams, all relatively new additions to the British press and all designed to enhance the clarity of the printed page and to make reading more pleasant (Schalck 1988: 79). Stead also experimented with illustrations and political cartoons. And later he changed the paper from a 16-page half-size (14 1/2" x 10") to an eight-page broadsheet (19 1/2" x 14").

In addition, the content changed. Eschewing traditional anonymous journalism, Stead developed the signed leader (the British equivalent of the American editorial), featuring famous individuals such as Oscar Wilde, Cardinal Newman, and John Ruskin; he commissioned specialists to communicate their knowledge; and he brought the personality sketch to prominence (Baylen 1979: 49). He also began printing interviews, the first a discussion with W.E. Forster about the condition of the Ottoman Empire (*The Pall Mall Gazette* 31 October 1883). Ignoring those who scoffed at this technique, Stead printed 137 interviews the next year (Schults 1972: 61), and ultimately featured both the Prince of Wales and Tsar Alexander III of Russia.<sup>9</sup>

The most significant of Stead's interviews was with General Charles George "Chinese" Gordon (*The Pall Mall Gazette* 9 January 1884). Gordon had first become a popular hero in 1863 when he had suppressed the Taiping Rebellion in China (Allen 1933). He had later served the khedive of Egypt as governor-general first of Equatoria and then of the Sudan (1877-1879), where he had curbed the slave trade and had introduced reforms into a brutal, corruption-riddled government (Allen 1931). However, he had not had an active commission for several years when in January 1884 he came to England to resign from the army so that he could join Stanley in working for King Leopold II of Belgium laying the foundations for the Congo Free State.

Gordon's timing was fortuitous, but it would change his life and British policy about Egypt and the Sudan. In 1881 a general unrest in the Sudan had begun to crystallize around Mohammed Ahmd Ibn el-Sayyid Abdullah, a mysterious man known as the Mahdi, who called for a Jihad to rid the Sudan of its Egyptian masters. In the next two years, the Mahdi followed the true tradition of the warrior-priests of Islam, appearing like a sandstorm in the desert, reanimating the faith of his followers, and generating an ever-increasing power. In August 1882—the same month a British force landed at the Suez Canal because of political unrest in northern Egypt—the Mahdists laid siege to El Obeid, a town of 100,000 people protected by a strong Egyptian garrison. The city fell in January 1883 and virtually all of the inhabitants were massacred. Later that year, an Egyptian army under the command of an English officer, Colonel William Hicks—and accompanied by representatives of *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Graphic*—headed south to find and destroy the Mahdi. But on 5 November, while wandering in the depths of a dry forest 30 miles south of El Obeid, the column was descended upon and slaughtered by 50,000 Arab warriors (Wingate 1891). It was weeks before the news of the disaster filtered through to Khartoum, the outside world, and W.T. Stead.

The day after Stead interviewed Gordon, the headline of *The Pall Mall Gazette* blared out: CHINESE GORDON FOR THE SOUDAN. Stead insisted that Gordon should immediately be appointed governor-general with full power to relieve the besieged Egyptian garrisons in the Sudan and to crush the Mahdist uprising. With the backing of Reginald Brett (later Viscount Esher), an imperialist cabal in the War Office, the African explorer Sir Samuel Baker, and Gordon himself, Stead followed his initial interview with almost daily commentary (Baylen 1988: 110-115). Soon every London newspaper, except *The Echo*, had started demanding the government avail itself of Gordon's services before he left for the Congo (Schults 1972: 74). At the end of January, under intense pressure, Gladstone dispatched Gordon to Khartoum.

But Stead's involvement in the events in the Sudan did not end there. Throughout 1884, with the encouragement of Brett, members of the War Office, and Gordon's family, he carried on a campaign that compelled the reluctant Gladstone first to endure Gordon's erratic conduct and then to dispatch a relief expedition to save him (Blunt 1911). When the expedition arrived at Khartoum to find that two days earlier it had fallen to the Mahdists and Gordon had been killed, Stead excoriated Gladstone for doing too little, too late (*The Pall Mall Gazette* 5, 7, 9, 11, 19 February 1885).

On the domestic front, Stead's investigative stories attempted to open the eyes of the British nation to moral, political, and economic injustices and inequalities. Unlike Greenwood's investigations, Stead's emphasized his new sensational techniques, leading his assistant editor Alfred Milner to call him "a compound of Don Quixote and P.T. Barnum" (quoted in Mills 1921: 60).

The first of these, known as the "Bitter Cry" campaign, attacked the filth, immorality, and brutality of the London slums. Previously, none of the respectable dailies would have dreamed of calling the upper classes to task for the benefit of the poor. Stead not only exposed the conditions in which the poor lived, he scolded the establishment for neglecting its responsibilities. From 16 October to 7 November 1883, *The Pall Mall Gazette* included at least one "Bitter Cry" article every day. Stead continued this barrage until the formation of a Royal Commission to investigate slum housing in February 1884 (Schults 1972: 48-52).

Stead's most famous crusade, known as "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon," was an attempt to compel an indifferent Parliament to enact the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, raising the legal age of consent for girls from 13 to 16. Stead undertook a personal investigation of child prostitution in London and published his results in a sensational series of articles (*The Pall Mall Gazette* 6-10 July 1885). He shocked his readers with revelations of the sale, purchase and violation of children; the procurement of virgins; the entrapping and ruining of women; the international slave trade in girls; and atrocities and unnatural crimes perpetrated on girls. The uproar that occurred culminated in August with the passage of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill (Whyte 1925: II, 159-186; Schults 1972: 128-168), and proved that *The Pall Mall Gazette* "had an influence out of all proportion to the number of copies sold" (Scott 1950: 3).

Despite being influential because it was read by the wealthy and governing classes, *The Pall Mall Gazette* actually only realized a continued circulation increase from 8,360 to 12,250 due to the "Maiden Tribute" features—although the circulation had rocketed to more than 100,000 during the week the features actually appeared (Wadsworth 1955). And within a short time of the crusade, a number of advertisers left the paper,

going, Greenwood claimed, to *The St. James's Gazette* (Schults 1972: 191). Moreover, the series meant a three-month prison term for Stead, who had purchased a 13-year-old girl from her mother, simply to prove that it could be done. He had never touched the child and had turned her over directly to representatives of the Salvation Army, but he had still broken the law, and, after his sensations, the authorities were not inclined to look favorably upon him.

Stead actually viewed his term in Holloway Gaol as a martyr's triumph (Stead 1913). While there, he expounded more clearly than ever his theories about the power and importance of the press, writing, in an article entitled "Government by journalism":

the editorial pen is a sceptre of power, compared with which the sceptre of many a monarch is but a gilded lath....In a democratic age, in the midst of a population which is able to read, no position is comparable for permanent influence and far-reaching power to that of an editor....In him are vested almost all the attributes of real sovereignty. (Stead 1886a: 661)

In November, an even bolder sequel appeared, in which Stead made claims about the future of the press:

Parliament has attained its utmost development. There is need of a new representative method, not to supersede but to supplement that which exists—a system which will be more elastic, more simple, more direct, and more closely in contact with the mind of the people....the groundwork of which is already supplied by the Press.... (Stead 1886b: 678)

#### 6.4.2 Matthew Arnold Attacks the New Journalism

As they had been when developed in the United States, Stead's typographical innovations, investigative reporting, and interviews were the cause of much sniping about sensationalism within the journalistic community. However, his subsequent assertions in the two articles in *The Contemporary Review* made Stead a target of attacks from a much wider base (Boston 1988: 91-92). What had been a small-time gentlemanly discussion turned into a mud-slinging contest when the scholar-poet Matthew Arnold vented his feelings in *The Nineteenth Century*, at the same time coining the term "New Journalism":

We have had opportunities of observing a new journalism which a clever and energetic man has lately invented. It has much to recommend it; it is full of ability, novelty, variety, sensation, sympathy, generous instincts; its one great fault is that it is *feather-brained*. It throws out assertions at a venture because it wishes them true; does not correct either them or itself, if they are false; and to get at the state of things as they truly are seems to feel no concern whatever. (Arnold 1887: 638; emphasis Arnold's)

Following Arnold's lead, critics of the New Journalism abounded, arguing that Stead's campaigns were disturbing the fabric of Victorian society by promising the lower classes more than was constitutionally possible. They insisted Stead's crusades



were conducted in a sensationally vulgar, morally offensive manner that concentrated solely on commercialism. They charged that the New Journalism catered to the emotions, to triviality, and to public whim, while lacking persuasive political commentary. These ideas were summed up in George Gissing's influential novel *New Grub Street*, in which one character launched a bitter invective on journalism:

The truth is, I have been collecting ideas, and ideas that are convertible into coin of the realm, my boy; I have the special faculty of an extempore writer. Never in my life shall I do anything of solid literary value; I shall always despise the people I write for. But my path will be that of success....I'm sure of it. (Gissing 1891: 65)

Actually, Stead's motives were humanitarian rather than commercial. His journalism was not injurious to the working class, it was uplifting. It was read not because it was sensational but because it was "radiant, radical and rebellious" (Tillet 1931: 92); it was capable of ennobling as well as entertaining. And it talked about democracy like nobody had since William Cobbett or Tom Paine (Boston 1988: 92).

George Bernard Shaw, who was by no means the only master of letters to overlook Stead's sensationalism in appreciation of his ability to draw public attention to great moral purposes, encouraged the editor to persist in his efforts:

Your paper enjoys a peculiar opportunity—that of leader of the Press in the march to meet the coming twentieth century. Your rivals are too blind, too deaf, too dumb and too full of notions of literary propriety—which are misplaced frivolities. The P.M.G. owes its unique position wholly to its memorable resolution to attack social abuses with the terrible weapon of truth-telling....I venture to predict that the future is with journals like the *Gazette*, which will dare to tell polite society that it lives by the robbery and murder of the poor.... (quoted in Whyte 1925: I, 241-242)

Despite such views, *The Pall Mall Gazette* was damned by most critics if for no other reason than because its New Journalism resembled that of the United States, and was thus considered an insidious import destructive of British life and tradition, one "fit only for the servants' hall...raw, crude and sensation-mongering" (Arnold 1888: 690).

*The Times* reflected this distaste when it declared: "It is strange that a moralist, when moved to speak stern truths, should stoop to...the arts of fourth-rate Transatlantic journalism. In the unnatural alliance of true philanthropy and sensational journalism, the former is apt to suffer..." (*The Times* 9 November 1885).

On the other side of the argument, Stead berated those unable to see the crusading aspect of his New Journalism, commenting: "Sensationalism in journalism is justifiable up to the point that it is necessary to arrest the eye of the public and compel them to admit the necessity of action" (Stead 1886a: 653). He also acknowledged his debt to American journalism, deeming the interview a highly effective device for obtaining useful information (Baylen 1965: 201). Although Stead felt no admiration

for the Bennetts, whom he saw as exploiters of the American public, he consciously emulated Greeley (Stead in *Northern Echo* 5 December 1872; Whyte 1925: II, 75).

Yet the American journalist to whom Stead was undoubtedly most similar—with his emphasis on detail, accuracy, and crusading—was Pulitzer. Stead's former mentor, Morley, commented: "After seeing how...the *World* worked we are...struck with the wonderful way in which you have assimilated all the features of American journalism, and taught them to those who had ears..." (quoted in Baylen 1972: 370).

In fact, Pulitzer was one of Stead's strongest supporters, and one of the most vocal opponents of the criticisms of Arnold, pointing out on more than one occasion the hypocrisy of the British press, which consistently decried American newspapers, only to follow slavishly in their tracks:

Matthew Arnold tells the Chicago reporters that our newspapers contain too much about the woman who married the skeleton and the woman who turned out to be a man and all that sort of thing, you know, with racy headlines. Still he says he laughs at the racy way in which these sensational and trivial things are written about. Like everybody else, Matthew buys and reads the newspapers that are racy. (*The World* 25 January 1888)

#### 6.4.3 T.P. O'Connor and *The Star*

The very week that Pulitzer wrote about racy newspapers, the raciest yet—*The Star*—was founded in London. From the beginning, editor T.P. O'Connor made it clear that in style he was inspired by Stead's break with tradition.<sup>10</sup> In the first issue of his four-page, half-penny evening paper he vowed:

We shall find no place for the verbose and prolix articles to which most of our contemporaries still adhere. We shall have daily but one article of any length....The other items of the day will be dealt with in notes, terse, pointed and plain-spoken....In our reporting columns we shall do away with the hackneyed style of obsolete journalism.... (*The Star* 17 January 1888)

O'Connor made it a point for *The Star* to narrate the events of the day in a "story line" fashion to its readers. His aim, he commented, was to strike the readers "right between the eyes" by creating a situation in which "everything that can be talked about can also be written about" (O'Connor 1889: 430, 434). So he was the first Victorian journalist to make gossip an integral part of a daily. He also followed Stead's lead in investigative reporting, and *The Star* reported about conditions in sweatshops and the failure to enforce factory legislation (Goodbody 1985: 21).

The appearance of *The Star* also screamed of the New Journalism. It immediately began experimenting with illustration. It introduced a "Stop Press" section. And it was the first British paper to extend its headlines across two columns, to vary the position

of its subheads rather than centering them, and to use lower-case type for its crossheads and subheads (Morison 1932: 289-291).

But O'Connor was not content to follow completely in the steps of *The Pall Mall Gazette*, declaring: "We have been brought into existence by the disgust, contempt, and hate which the malignant and treacherous desertion of the Liberal cause by so-called Liberal papers has created among all true Radicals" (*The Star* 17 January 1888). Rather, he proclaimed:

The STAR will be a Radical journal. It will judge all policy—domestic, foreign, social—from the Radical standpoint. This, in other words, means that a policy will be esteemed by us good or bad as it influences for good or evil the lot of the masses of the people....The charwoman that lives in St. Giles, the seamstress that is sweated in Whitechapel, the labourer that stands begging for work outside the dockyard in St. George's in-the-East, these are the persons by whose conditions we shall judge the policy of different political parties. (*The Star* 17 January 1888)

With this political slant, *The Star* could be—and was—aimed at a mass readership, which it quickly attained. The first day of publication brought 142,600 readers, and the first fortnight averaged more than 125,000 (Goodbody 1988: 147-148). Within a short time, it regularly proclaimed on the first page: "Largest Circulation of Any Evening Paper in the Kingdom." By 1893, its circulation had climbed to more than 300,000 (Fyfe 1934: 172-173).

Paradoxically, *The Star* never gained considerable political influence, in part because, despite its rhetoric, it was hesitant to promote unpopular causes because of the danger of alienating the readers, as Dana had in 1884 (Goodbody 1985: 24). Rather, the success of *The Star* was built on its price, its blatant use of the New Journalism, and its adoption of American-style crime coverage. In fact, despite its remarkable initial circulation, *The Star* was not guaranteed success until the autumn of 1888, when its sensational coverage of the "Jack the Ripper" murders—which even O'Connor admitted involved some questionable journalistic practices—temporarily increased its circulation to 360,600 (O'Connor 1929: II, 257).<sup>11</sup>

Another reason for the success of *The Star* was its staff of remarkable journalists. H.W. Massingham (later the editor of *The Daily Chronicle* and the *Nation*) was the assistant editor; Richard Le Gallienne the book reviewer; George Bernard Shaw the music critic; and the staff included Thomas Marlow (the managing editor of the *Daily Mail* from 1899 to 1926), W.J. Evans (the editor of *The Evening News* from 1894 to 1918), and Ernest Parke (the editor of *The Star* from 1891 to 1908). Yet talent did not make harmony. The Liberal owners of *The Star* became perturbed both because O'Connor—who was a Member of Parliament—had conflicting time commitments and because he had made his charge a Radical journal. At the same time, O'Connor became

displeased because he was not allowed to concentrate as much as he wanted on the issue nearest his heart--Irish Home Rule (O'Connor 1929: I, 254). In 1890 he resigned, to be replaced by Massingham. But within several months Massingham had also left.

Meanwhile, Thompson had become disenchanted with Stead due to the ridicule and loss of advertising suffered by *The Pall Mall Gazette* following the "Maiden Tribute." Even though none of Stead's later crusades produced such results, the tension between the two men never disappeared. In 1888 the atmosphere further degenerated both because of a loss of circulation due to the success of *The Star* and because of a clash between Stead and his top assistant, E.T. Cook (Schults 1972: 233-249). On 1 January 1890, Stead left *The Pall Mall Gazette* to become the editor of George Newnes' new monthly *Review of Reviews*. Within three months he had bought out Newnes, and the magazine remained his primary work for more than two decades.

Stead's career—and life—came to a sudden halt in a manner in which many of his contemporaries felt he would have approved. On 15 April 1912, Stead went out with the biggest story of the year—as a passenger on *Titanic*.

But by 1890, Stead and O'Connor had changed the look of British journalism forever. *The Pall Mall Gazette* had introduced the New Journalism, and *The Star* had shown that it could pay on a day-to-day basis. It only remained for Alfred Harmsworth to demonstrate that even greater triumphs could be achieved by the morning papers.

#### 6.4.4 The Spread of the New Journalism

The success of *The Star* pushed many of the other English papers—both morning and evening—more or less reluctantly into the practices of the New Journalism. The Sunday papers did not need any encouragement. By the mid-1880s more than 51 percent of the content of *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* dealt with murder, sex, and other sensational events. Such stories received a full 10 times as much space as foreign news and editorials, while in *Reynolds's Newspaper* sensational items received six times as much space as foreign material (Berridge 1978: 256-258).

The daily that most quickly followed *The Pall Mall Gazette* and *The Star* was the halfpenny, four-page *Evening News*, which had been founded in 1881, printed on eye-catching blue paper. It later was released on yellow or green paper, but there was more to its sensationalism than its color. *The Evening News* ignored politics for gossip, crime, and sex. As Frank Harris, its editor in the early 1880s, commented: "Kissing and fighting...were the only things I cared for at thirteen or fourteen, and those are the themes the English public desires and enjoys today" (quoted in Wiener 1988b: 54). *The Evening News* also was one of the first dailies to concentrate on sports and became

the first London paper to introduce a Saturday sports edition. By 1890, having merged with *The Evening Post* to become *The Evening News & Post*, it was a direct challenger to *The Star*, and even claimed on its front page, that it "Has, Beyond All Question, the LARGEST SALE of any Evening Paper in London."<sup>12</sup>

Adventurous practices also began to filter into the morning press. In 1892 *The Morning* became the first London daily to print news regularly on its front page in place of the smalls, or advertisements. Although this had only been done previously by the Sunday papers, this step was no accident, for the founder and editor of *The Morning* was Chester Ives, a former editor for the Paris edition of *The New York Herald* (Morison 1932: 295).<sup>13</sup>

The typographical formats of most morning dailies underwent few changes in the 1880s (Morison 1932: 270), but even *The Times* began to adopt some of the practices of the New Journalism, and by 1891 it was regularly using the interview (Schalck 1988: 80). Nevertheless, the mainstream morning papers were still distinguishable from their American counterparts, as Pulitzer noted to his English secretary:

You mustn't think that because you've written articles for the London *Times* you are competent to write for *The World*. It's a very different matter. The American people want something terse, forcible, picturesque, striking, something that will arrest their attention, enlist their sympathy, arouse their indignation, stimulate their imagination, convince their reason, awaken their conscience....*The World* isn't like your *Times*, with its forty or fifty thousand educated readers. It's read by, well, say a million people a day.... (Ireland 1938: 55-56)

One year after he took control of *The World*, Pulitzer was given the virtually perfect story with which to elicit all of these responses from his readers. For in 1884, the American public was exposed to the most sensationalized Arctic account yet.

## 6.5 A.W. GREELY AND THE LADY FRANKLIN BAY EXPEDITION

When Karl Weyprecht initially proposed the ideas that led to the First International Polar Year (1882-1883), he planned to strip the glamour and romance from polar exploration and to concentrate exclusively on scientific matters (Barr 1985: 2-5). Thus it is one of the inconsistencies between design and result so often observed in history that of the 14 expeditions ensuing from Weyprecht's concepts the sole one about which the Anglo-American public received much information was that marked by the greatest hardship, adventure, and tragedy.

### 6.5.1 The Expedition

The most remote of the Arctic stations set up for the First International Polar Year was that at Fort Conger on the north coast of Lady Franklin Bay on north Ellesmere Island,

near where Nares' *Discovery* had wintered in 1875-1876. Here a U.S. Army party of 25 men under the command of Lieutenant Adolphus W. Greely was to spend two years making scientific observations. The expedition left in June 1881 so that its outpost could be fully operational by the time measurements were to be started in 1882.

From the beginning, it should have been obvious that science was not the only purpose for the Lady Franklin Bay expedition. Although half of Greely's command were officers or non-commissioned officers—an indication that the U.S. Army placed a great deal of importance on the expedition—none had any expert scientific training. Even the scientific leader and doctor of the expedition, Octave Pavy, was less interested in science than in the possibility of reaching the North Pole (Berton 1988: 440-441).

Greely was by no means immune to a similar ambition. At the very least, he wanted one of his sledge parties to pass the farthest north set by Albert H. Markham in 1876. This goal was achieved in May 1882, when a party consisting of Lieutenant James B. Lockwood, Sergeant David Brainard, and the Eskimo dog driver Fred Christiansen reached 83° 24' North, besting Markham's record by nearly four minutes (Greely 1886: I, 295-350).

Despite such accomplishments, what little harmony there was on the 25-man expedition did not last long. Greely, a humorless, aloof puritan, was constantly at odds both with Lieutenant Frederick Kislingbury, who resigned his commission after a brief time at the post and then refused to work or cooperate, and with the ambitious, condescending, and jealous Pavy (Greely 1888: I, 7-8, 112-114). One winter together was bad enough, but when the supply ship that had been expected in the summer of 1882—bringing provisions, news, and personnel to replace various members of the expedition—did not arrive, the disharmonious company had to spend another gloomy winter cut off from civilization.

In 1883 sledge parties charted the interior of Ellesmere Island and discovered the vast Agassiz Glacier, but the accomplishments were overshadowed because the party sent north did not come close to the latitude of the previous year (Greely 1886: II, 16-42). Moreover, once again the supply ship did not arrive, and on 9 August, in two open boats and a steam launch, the expedition set off south through the ice pack of Kennedy Channel and Kane Basin.

The orders Greely had received were remarkably vague other than to direct him to leave Fort Conger if the relief ship failed to appear. Although he did not know what was being done to relieve his command, he assumed that supplies had been left for him at specific points, including Cape Sabine on south Ellesmere, and Littleton Island, off of Greenland. It was an unfortunate assumption.

In 1882 the relief expedition in *Neptune*—which was placed under the command of William M. Beebe (the secretary to the head of the Signal Corps, General William B. Hazen), despite his only being a private—was hopelessly bungled. Faced by heavy ice, Beebe had returned south after depositing only two small food caches. The next year, two ships—*Proteus* and her escort vessel *Yantic*—sailed north. However, flawed planning, contradictory orders, and the inexperience of the commanding officer, Lieutenant Ernest A. Garlington, were the recipe for another calamity. *Proteus* stopped at Cape Sabine where a substantial cache was to be left. But nothing was deposited before Garlington demanded the ship steam north, where he thought he saw a lead of open water. Within hours, *Proteus* was caught in the ice, was crushed, and sank. Garlington and his crew retreated south in open boats to meet *Yantic*, which unknowingly passed them in the fog. At Littleton Island, Frank Wildes, the commander of *Yantic*, learned that Garlington's party had turned south. Without depositing any supplies, he followed them, but the two parties narrowly missed each other at a series of rendezvous points before being reunited a month later at Upernavik, from where they returned to the United States (Schley and Soley 1885 :35-94).

Meanwhile, the Greely party slowly moved south, augmented by the supplies from a cache that had been left by Nares at Cape Hawkes in 1875. They were at the mercy of the ice, which trapped them and then carried them alternately south and back north again (Greely 1886: II, 107-150). Finally, on 29 September they reached land, only to find that Cape Sabine, which was supposed to be a peninsula, was in fact an island (Schley and Soley 1885: 9). Here, on Pim Island, they used their waning resources of energy to build a three-foot-high hut with stone walls and a roof of the whaleboat and oars. The food was almost gone, so Greely cut the rations first to 14 ounces per man per day and then to 10. The party began to fall apart: the ravenous men, cramped into the small hut, grew quarrelsome; Joseph Elison was so badly frostbitten that his feet and hands had to be amputated; and Greely realized that Pavy and Private Charles Henry were stealing food. However, there was little he could do.

The lack of food was compounded by a brutally cold winter, and in January Sergeant William Cross died of starvation and scurvy. A similar fate for the rest of the party was only averted by the bagging of a small bear, a remarkable feat because that area of Ellesmere was virtually devoid of animal life. With the return of the sun in March, Sergeant George Rice started fishing for shrimp. They were no bigger than a grain of wheat, with three quarters of their bulk hard shell, and 700 were needed to produce an ounce of meat. But they were a God-send to the starving men. In April five men, including Lockwood and Rice, died within a week. The others were sustained only by the improbable capture of a seal.

The party continued to dwindle, existing on shreds of saxifrage, shrimp, and sealskin boots and coats. When Private Jacob Bender saw a caterpillar, he swallowed it whole, exclaiming, "This is too much meat to lose" (Berton 1988: 474). Brainard, who had taken over the shrimping, was the only man able to work regularly, until Pavy, in a surprising burst of energy, began to go to the lake to chop ice for water.

In May the 14 survivors had to abandon the hut when melt water made it uninhabitable, and they moved into a tent meant for no more than five men. At the beginning of June, Henry, who had been caught stealing food time and again, was executed (Greely 1888: 90). The other thieves, Bender and Pavy, died shortly thereafter, Pavy from an overdose of ergot, which he apparently believed to be iron. Then, on 22 June 1884, the horror ended. The seven remaining men were discovered by a relief expedition under the command of W.S. Schley. When Greely was found under the collapsed tent, he left no doubt about the relative importance of the scientific research: "Here we are—dying—like men," he gasped. "Did what I came to do—beat the record" (Powell 1961: 298). Although Elison died shortly thereafter, the other six, including Greely and Brainard, returned home as heroes.

#### 6.5.2 The Sensation

The American newspapers had paid little attention to the departure of Greely in 1881 or to the failure of Beebe the next year. Garlington's failure caused great concern, however, and as Schley's expedition was readied in 1884, it received a similar amount of coverage as the sending of Gordon to Khartoum. Then in July 1884, when the first message was received from Schley, all hell broke loose in the American press.

On 18 July all of the major American papers led with the saving of Greely's party. *The New-York Times*, *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, and *The Washington Post* each devoted the entire first page (except for advertising columns in the last two) and at least two columns of page two to the Lady Franklin Bay expedition, but even that fell short of *The Herald*, which gave it three full pages. *The New-York Tribune* gave half of the first page and two-thirds of page two to the story, a similar amount as in *The World*. The stories were virtually as long the next two days, with reports from correspondents who accompanied the relief expedition and comments by "knowledgeable" Arctic sources, such as George Kennan, Danenhower, and Nares. Certainly no paper had an exclusive on thrilling writing or presentation. *The New-York Tribune*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Daily News*, and *The Chicago Daily Tribune* each carried part of the same story word-for-word:

The story told by Connell from his recollection of their starving experience is heartrending: how they burned the hair off their sealskin boots and coats,



cut them into strips, boiled them into a stew and ate voraciously of them till the stomach rebelled, and nausea and weakness ensued in several cases. Nature gave no call for twelve, fifteen, and even eighteen days, and then hemorrhage and consequent weakness ensued, prostrating the victims for several days. The difficulty of keeping heat in the body was great. The rule of the camp was to permit no one to sleep longer than two hours. He was awakened roughly and called upon to shake himself, beat his hands, and pound his feet and restore circulation. This was found absolutely necessary to prevent torpor and possible death, the usual accompaniments of intense cold. (19 July 1884)

During the next several weeks, the expedition was reviewed intensely by the press, and prominent coverage was even given to the homecomings and the funerals of its members. *The Washington Post* was typical:

Amid the strains of mournful music and followed by sorrowing relatives and thousands of sympathizing friends the mortal remains of Sergt. William H. Cross, one of the noblest of the unfortunate victims of the Greely Arctic expedition, were yesterday borne to their final resting place in the city of his nativity....The floral tributes were many and beautiful, the largest and handsomest offering being a huge white pillow resting at the foot of the casket of white flowers, the gift of the Signal Corps, of which the deceased was a member. In the center of the pillow was the floral representation of two crossed signal flags with purple outlines and white grounds, each inclosing a small square of red. Above the flags were the letters and figures in purple, "Arctic '81-84," and below them the letters "S.C."...Among the floral offerings was the floral design of a heart composed of white flowers, on which was the touchingly suggestive word "Papa," the tribute of little Charlie, a youth of thirteen, the only child of the deceased. (11 August 1884)

The early accounts of the Greely expedition included virtually everything the American public craved: hardship, scurvy, a farthest north, a desperate retreat by boat and sledge, three winter ordeals, suicide, insanity, and death. Then *The New-York Times* broke a story with even more sensational aspects: execution and cannibalism.

For a number of days, reporters for *The New-York Times* had prowled around the docks where the rescue vessels *Thetis* and *Bear* were stationed. The resultant story appeared under the headline HORRORS OF CAPE SABINE, and not only first drew attention to the execution of Henry but stated:

It has been published that after the game gave out early in February they lived primarily on sealskins, lichens, and shrimps. As a matter of fact, they were kept alive on human flesh....The bodies were dug from their graves in the little hill, just back of the permanent camp....Most of the blankets contained nothing but heaps of white bones, many of them picked clean....It is reported that the only men who escaped the knife were three or four who died of scurvy. The amputated limbs of men who afterward perished were eagerly devoured as food. (12 August 1884)

*The Times* followed up with even more graphic accounts, based on gossip and innuendo, and garbled and exaggerated in the telling. The response to the tale by *The Times* was varied. *The Tribune*, *The Boston Daily Globe*, *The Washington Post*, *The*

*Chicago Daily News*, and *The Herald* gave front-page coverage to the story, but tried to play down its sensationalism and questioned its accuracy. *The Washington Post*, under the headline THE CANNIBAL CANARD, ran extensive denials by Schley and the other officers as well as by Dr. Ames, the surgeon on *Bear* (13 August 1884). *The Herald* commented, "It has been discovered that there is a basis for the charges, though the circumstances of the case are by no means so horrible or so sensational as the published story indicates" (14 August 1884).

Alternatively, the normally conservative *Chicago Daily Tribune* directly picked up the report of *The Times*, inaccurately stating, "Yet of Private Henry, who died only sixteen days before the relief party arrived, there was nothing left but skin and bones. The head had...been thrown into the sea to prevent identification" (14 August 1884).

But no paper was as extreme as *The World*, which, under the headline EATING DEAD COMRADES, commented about an unidentified survivor:

He would give years from his life to forget it, but, he said, that first taste, the sensation of having between his teeth the flesh of one who had been once his friend, was with him always. Waking or sleeping, he seemed to feel his lips pressing the smooth, flabby meat that must be choked down somehow if he would live. And then the inhuman, savage way of getting it! Each feeder upon such food must cut off his own shreds of flesh. No friend could be found to perform the horrible office. Every man, if he would eat, must of necessity be his own butcher. And these cannibalistic orgies, these midnight feasts, were secret. The little beaten path, worn smooth between the graveyard and the wretches' tent, told its own tale....Body after body was stripped of flesh, but none of those that trod that little path dared speak of this. No man asked a question at the too common sight of a starving wretch, creeping up to the only fire at midnight, carrying in his hand a strip of flesh. As he thrusts this into the flame on the end of a pointed stick, no one of his companions says a word. And when tearing the smoking flesh with his teeth, he lies down and another of the would-be sleepers rises up and goes silently down that mysterious path, knife in hand, it is easy to guess his horrid purpose. (15 August 1884)

Predictably, the English coverage of both the rescue and the subsequent charges of cannibalism was considerably less sensational. Certainly the initial story was first-page news, and although *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Daily News* featured only short notes on 18 and 19 July, *The Times* and *The Standard* gave it considerable attention. *The Times*, in fact, gave details missing even in some of the American papers:

Lieutenant Greely was just able to support himself on his hands and knees. He was dressed in fur, with a red knitted hood, which added to his haggard appearance. His long hair and beard, his wasted form and deep, sunken eyes, which shone through his glasses with increased brilliancy, and his feeble voice, which he strove to control, but which revealed his overwhelming feelings, brought moisture to the eyes of the strongest of the relief party. (19 July 1884)

As they previously had with their own countrymen, most of the English papers concentrated on the noble efforts of the explorers:

From all of this it is evident that besides carrying out their strictly scientific work, the geographical explorations of the Greely Expedition have been very extensive, considerably more extensive than those of our own expedition under Sir George Nares....One thing is certain—that Lieutenant Greely and his men, dead and alive, will, like our own Arctic heroes of the Erebus and Terror, who perished in the pursuit of knowledge, nearly 40 years ago, have now and ever the admiration of all noble-minded men, the tender pity of every woman, and the worship of every boy. (*The Times* 21 July 1884)

The charges of cannibalism caused as wide a division in the English papers as there was in the United States. *The Manchester Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Illustrated London News*, and *The Daily News* dismissed the charges, with the first commenting, "A doctor who handled the bodies declares they bore no appearance of mutilation, and there was nothing to suggest that flesh had been eaten" (14 August 1884), and the last stating, "The testimony fortunately is dubious and disputable. The ravings of a delirious man are certainly not evidence" (14 August 1884).

The Sunday papers were much more sensational than the dailies. *The Sunday Times*, which picked up the story directly from *The New-York Times*, commented, "It is inferred that the earlier cannibalism was more frightful than it is possible to describe....The body of Lieutenant Kislingbury has been exhumed, and it was found that the flesh had been cleanly stripped off" (17 August 1884).

Eventually the furor died down. Despite several exhumations, which showed that at least some of the flesh on some of the bodies had been stripped away, the people of the United States—reminiscent of their English counterparts 30 years previously—seemed to want to believe that Greely, Schley, Hazen, and the living members of the party knew nothing about cannibalism.<sup>14</sup>

### 6.5.3 The Controversy

One result of the tragedy surrounding the Lady Franklin Bay expedition was a renewal of protests against what *The Philadelphia Inquirer* called "the monstrous and murderous folly of so-called Arctic exploration" (15 August 1884). In an editorial reminiscent of the post-Franklin attitude in Britain, *The Washington Post* pleaded:

And now let us, in the name of decency and humanity, have no more investigations of Arctic voyages. Let us pay all honor to the living and the dead, to the rescued and their rescuers, but may the country be spared the affliction of such investigations as we have had in the case of more than one disastrous Arctic expedition. (18 July 1884)

A week later *The Illustrated London News* spoke for most English newspapers when it stated:

Why then should any more Arctic expeditions be sent out, either from England or America? They only result is much suffering, terrible loss of life, and the amendment of maps and charts which are of no general utility. Apollyons are too many and Greathearts too few for us to regard with equanimity this waste of men, money, and energy among the icebergs. (26 July 1884)

After the cannibalism story, the opposition to exploration grew stronger. While accepting that the survivors had engaged in cannibalism, *The World* suggested that not only the expeditions, but the discussion of them be terminated:

The whole country is convinced that the poor wretches constituting the Greely party were compelled to eat each other in order to subsist, and there is no further need of breaking open tombs. It is not proposed to prosecute the survivors, and no sensible people condemn the cannibalism under the circumstances. We have had enough of these sickening revelations to make Arctic exploration rather unpopular for some years. So let the matter drop. (20 August 1884)

But the matter did not drop. The explorers would not dream of abandoning the Arctic. "I shall be ready to try to carry the Union Jack further north than the Stars and Stripes whenever I am wanted," stated Sir George Nares. "I regret as deeply as any can the loss of the gallant men who went with Greely...but battling with northern ice is like any other warfare, and some must fall" (*The Standard* 19 July 1884).

Another man who intended to continue his explorations was Frederick Schwatka, who favored privately sponsored expeditions over those of the government:

I think polar expeditions by our Government should be stopped. Disaster is inherent in all of them. After a lot of preliminary gush by politicians and boards of this and that, an expedition is sent out under a totally inexperienced man, who is bound by instructions of a rigid character, so that he has scarcely any option in the whole affair. If military and naval men are sent they should go out under the patronage of private individuals or societies. Then an expedition commander feels that there is some flexibility in his instructions. I think, too, that a private individual has more pride in the result of an expedition than a Government can have, and will consequently take more pains with the preparations. (*The New-York Times* 17 August 1884)

To prove his belief in the private sector, Schwatka tendered his resignation to the U.S. Army, effective 31 January 1885, and set his eyes on the north.

## 6.6 THE SPREAD OF ARCTIC SPONSORSHIP

Within a year of the return of the Greely expedition, Schwatka had joined with the first newspaper to rebut the call for an end to Arctic exploration—*The New-York Times*—to show that the Arctic could still be an area of active participation for the press. The

notion caught on almost immediately. As one important journalism study has pointed out: "With advertisers frowning on forced circulations and with competition in routine news coverage minimized, dailies worked out a combination between stunting and news with which to create an impression of aggressive newsgathering....Sponsoring [adventurous] trips became the order of the day" (Lee 1973: 284).

Schwatka was a natural for such expeditions. He had first made a reputation as the leader of the American Geographical Society's Franklin search (1878-1880). In 1883 he was sent by the War Department on a military reconnaissance of Alaska (Schwatka 1885b). Traveling through an area that was hardly charted, he crossed the Chilkoot Pass to a lake that he named "for James Gordon Bennett, a well-known patron of American geographical research" (Schwatka 1885a: 100). He also discovered Marsh Lake before reaching the headwaters of the Yukon in Canada. Here Schwatka's group built a large raft and commenced a voyage of 1,829 statute miles to the mouth of the Yukon, following their overland journey of more than 2,800 miles (Schwatka 1885b).

When Schwatka left the U.S. Army, he immediately turned to writing and that year published three books, two of them on his Yukon journey (1885a; 1885b) and one general travel account of the Arctic (1885c). He also started writing for *The New-York Times*, which, between May and November, published a dozen articles under his byline. These dealt with various aspects of the Arctic, including the 71-degree-below-zero temperatures encountered in the Franklin search (25 May 1885), facts about the Eskimos and their lifestyle (13 July, 3, 10 August 1885), the northern lights (31 August 1885), and the planning of expeditions (8, 15 November 1885). They also showed Schwatka to be, like Gilder, not only a talented writer but a keen observer:

One of the worst features of walking in this country was the disposition of the small clay stones, reduced oftentimes to the thinnest and razor-edged slates, and these were again and again turned on end over areas many acres in extent. Our sealskin boots were wet nearly all the time, and when they were in this condition these sharp-edged rocks left a feeling in the foot as if there was only a piece of mosquito net between the foot and the burning stones beneath. Add 60 to 75 pounds on a person's back, just enough to make them hesitate about attempting to avoid these stoney places by long detours, and some of the miseries of Summer foot marching in the Arctic, or at least this part of it, can be imagined. (23 August 1885)

The series also served as a prelude for the first expedition ever sponsored by *The New-York Times* (Berger 1951: 167-168), in which Schwatka was sent to Alaska to climb Mount Saint Elias, the fourth-highest peak in North America. In the tradition of *The Herald*, from June to November 1886 *The Times* gave continuing front-page coverage to Schwatka's reports on what it called "THE TIMES expedition to Alaska."

On 20 September 1886, *The Times* proudly announced that Schwatka had discovered a "second Mississippi," a river "not thought to be rivaled by any Alaskan

River" and named after the proprietor of *The Times*, George Jones, "in compliment to a gentleman whose relations to the expedition justly entitle him to the distinction." The next day, *The Times* indicated just how in favor it had become of Arctic exploration:

These considerations furnish a complete answer to the suggestion that such explorations as THE TIMES has sent out under the command of Lieut. SCHWATKA are of no "practical value." This might as well have been said of the voyage of COLUMBUS. It is not until regions as remote as Alaska have been brought to the notice of the public...that the commercial "prospector" is stimulated to see what can be done toward developing the resources....The expedition has done more to realize the expectations of Mr. Seward than anyone else has. (21 September 1886)

Throughout October and November, *The Times* published article after article by Schwatka, most of them more than one-half page long. The features virtually ignored that Schwatka and his companions never reached the top of Mount Saint Elias,<sup>15</sup> but they did reveal his ability to captivate an audience with sensational stories:

When one, in the deep recesses of a dark forest, suddenly hears a terrible roar right before him that lowers the temperature of his blood about a dozen degrees, a crashing of underbrush that sounds like the breaking up of his own bones, and has a paw measuring 8 by 14 inches dropped thoughtlessly on his shoulder accompanied by a huge open mouth bristling with huge spikes of ivory that closes over the head, the sorrowing friends...are fully justified in attributing any amount of ferocity to such an animal. (*The New-York Times* 5 October 1886)

The series also helped establish Schwatka as one of the first mercenaries of exploration, a man who would travel anywhere, if he had sufficient financial incentive. The next year, *The World* sponsored Schwatka's attempt at the first winter crossing of Yellowstone National Park (Johnson *et al.* 1984: 12). In 1888-1889, *The Chicago American* sponsored an expedition by Schwatka to the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico (Schwatka 1893). And in 1891 a consortium of more than 50 newspapers sent Schwatka back to Alaska to explore the valley of the White River and the route of the Copper River (Hayes 1892).

By this time Schwatka had become such a well-known figure that his sudden death received a full column on the front page of *The New-York Times* under the headline LIEUT. SCHWATKA IS DEAD (3 November 1892). The morning before, in Salem, Oregon, Schwatka accidentally had taken an overdose of laudanum, which he had been prescribed to relieve acute gastric pain.

The same year that Schwatka made his attempt on Mount Saint Elias, his old companion, William Henry Gilder, started another expedition to the Arctic under the sponsorship of Bennett. Gilder's plan to travel to Greenland on whaling ships, to recruit Eskimo dog drivers, and thence to dash north was spelled out in an interview the night before he was due to leave New York:

Lockwood could have easily gone 100 miles further, so Greely states, if he had had better sleds and good drivers. But he was directed to return as soon as his supplies were exhausted and to run no risk. I shall be hampered by no instructions, and I have experience in this kind of work, too, and I have full confidence of being able to reach a much higher latitude....I would be able to add to the maps of the land to the immediate northwest [of Greenland] which is believed to exist but has never been seen....I shall try to reach the Pole. (*The New York Herald* 12 July 1886)

The enterprise was a fiasco from the beginning. Due to legal complications, Gilder missed his ship. But he simply adjusted his plans and decided to sledge to the North Pole from a different starting point—Winnipeg, 2,300 statute miles south of the Pole. The expedition struggled from the outset and in January 1887, four months after leaving Winnipeg, was still bogged down just north of York Factory. Gilder finally turned south so he could regroup in New York, but once he was back in the United States, he never returned to the Arctic (Barr 1988).<sup>16</sup> Yet the expedition was not a total loss. As in his other northern journeys, Gilder wrote with great insight about travel conditions, the life of the local people, and the beauty and danger of nature.

In the ensuing years, the direct role of the press in exploration and adventure continued to grow. In 1887, with money donated by (among others) *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Daily News*, *The Standard*, *The Manchester Guardian*, and *The Scotsman* (Vizetelly 1901: 448), Stanley was sent on a trans-Africa expedition beginning in the Congo to rescue Emin Pasha, a former assistant of Gordon, who, as governor-general of Equatoria, was believed to have been trapped near Lake Albert by the continuing Mahdist uprising (Stanley 1890). Two years later, both Bennett and Pulitzer sent out correspondents to "find" Stanley, who had not been heard from since disappearing into the previously unexplored Ituri Forest of the northern Congo. In late November 1889, just a few miles from the coast of east Africa, both correspondents, Edward Vizetelly of *The Herald* and Thomas Stevens of *The World*, found Stanley and Emin comfortably enjoying glasses of champagne. Stevens obtained the first interview (Stevens 1890: 267-271), but Vizetelly scooped his rival by offering Stanley £2,000 for the first *published* interview, and by spending \$3,500 to cable his 1,400-word story to New York (*The New York Herald* 5 December 1889; Vizetelly 1901: 445-453).<sup>17</sup>

The press was even more active in the Arctic. In 1890-1891 *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* sent a five-man party—three of whom were reporters or artists—to explore the upper Yukon River. *Leslie's* did not need lessons to know how to present the story in an exciting manner. "It is not unlikely that the result will be second only to that of Stanley's explorations in Africa," it stated on 5 April 1890. To try to insure such success, it sent as executive officer and expedition artist E.J. Glave, who had worked under Stanley setting up trading stations in the Congo (Stanley 1885).

Glave and one companion soon parted from the other members of the expedition and discovered the Alsek River, which they descended to the Pacific. Glave's report was published in nine parts (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* 15, 22, 29 November, 6, 13, 20, 27 December 1890, 3, 10 January 1891), and the explorations of the entire expedition were reported in 44 issues. Although the geographical and scientific results of the expedition were limited, the regular coverage by *Leslie's* did much to stimulate public interest in Alaska (Sherwood 1965: 142).

The *Leslie's* expedition also stimulated further interest from publishers. In 1892, the relief ship sent to give assistance to Peary's north Greenland expedition included editors and artists for three different newspapers or magazines, as well as Angelo Heilprin, a member of the sponsoring Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, commissioned to write an article for *Scribner's Magazine* (Heilprin 1893). And in 1894, Walter Wellman, a Washington correspondent for *The Chicago Herald*, led an expedition to reach the North Pole from Svalbard (Klemin 1936). This was the first of five unsuccessful attempts on the North Pole for Wellman, who had come to the public's attention in 1891, when he claimed to have located the exact place where Columbus had first landed in San Salvador (*The Chicago Herald* 4 July 1891).

Wellman's expedition actually did not receive a great deal of attention in the American newspapers. However, it was much maligned in the English press after news was received that the expedition's ship, *Ragnvald Jarl*, had been crushed by the ice near Waldenøya. The contempt of the English for Wellman is accentuated by comparing two articles from *The Standard* of 24 July 1894. One on Wellman commented, "that such a hair-brained expedition, based entirely on the placid theories of a Chicago newsman, without the least Arctic experience, should come to grief can surprise no one." The other noted with high hopes: "Mr. Pinkert, the inventor of a land and water tricycle, left Cape Grisnez yesterday morning to cross the English Channel on his machine."

## 6.7 THE CROSSING OF GREENLAND

While the English newspapers were reproaching Wellman for his inadequacies, they were showing considerable concern for the plight of another explorer. This man, who was the first European explorer to capture British hearts in nearly half a century—indeed, since Joseph René Bellot—was a Norwegian, Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930).

The Nansen story had begun more than a decade before. In August 1883, the same month that Greely abandoned Fort Conger, a Swedish Arctic expedition in northwest Greenland, admitting defeat, turned for home. Sponsored by Oscar Dickson and the Swedish government, it had been sent to conduct scientific studies, seek traces of





FRIDTJOF NANSEN

Norse settlements on the east coast, and determine whether the ice cap covered all of inland Greenland. Under the leadership of Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld, the expedition accomplished its scientific goals, but was unable to cross the ice cap.

After a quarter of a century of exploration, the expedition was Nordenskiöld's last in the Arctic. But just as Sven Lovén had inspired Otto Torell, who was in turn the mentor of Nordenskiöld, when the conqueror of the Northeast Passage wrote of his attempt to cross Greenland, it helped persuade Nansen, who the year before had gone to eastern Greenland for his first Arctic experience, to attempt a similar venture (Kish 1973: 256).

It was 1888 before Nansen was ready for his assault on the Greenland ice cap. In the interim, he had made himself thoroughly familiar with every aspect of Arctic travel and living, he had become the curator of the oceanographic museum at Bergen, and he had submitted his doctoral thesis, one of the pioneering studies about the neuron theory (Nansen 1887; Huntford 1990). Many explorers had attempted to cross Greenland, including Nordenskiöld, the English mountaineer Edward Whymper, and, only two years previously, a young American civil engineer on his first polar journey, Robert E. Peary. Because they all had failed, Nansen did not receive much support, and his plan was ridiculed in the press (Nansen 1890: I, 12-14). However, Augustin Gamél, a Danish philanthropist, provided the necessary funding (Nansen 1890: I, 5-7).

Nansen's plan was in itself remarkably innovative. Instead of starting from the inhabited west coast, as had previous expeditions, his six-man party was dropped near the sparsely populated east coast of Greenland. This not only meant that it had to cross the ice cap but once, but that there was no turning back: salvation in the form of additional supplies was only to be reached by the successful completion of the journey. Nansen's party left the sealer *Jason* by boat on 17 July 1888, and, after drifting with the ice, landed 12 days later. They made their way north to Umivak, from where they set out on 15 August. They reached the west coast on 26 September, built a small boat from wood and canvas, and two of them (Nansen and Otto Sverdrup) rowed to Nuuk (Godthåb), arriving on 3 October. Because the captain of the last ship back to Europe—coincidentally *Fox*, which, after McClintock's voyage had become a transport vessel for kryolite—would not sail north to pick up Nansen's companions before departing, the entire party wintered there (Nansen 1890).

Nansen's success marked the beginning of the domination of polar exploration by the Norwegians, who, during the next quarter of a century, virtually turned polar travel into an art. The essence of their success was an understanding of the Arctic and a willingness to adapt to it, to attain a oneness with the environment. Nansen and his fellow Norwegians started a step ahead of the British, Dutch, Austrian, and American

explorers because, as Ludvig Schmelck wrote in an article in the Christiania (Oslo) newspaper *Morgenbladet*: "Norway lies closer to the Polar Regions than any other country....If a Norwegian North Pole expedition were to be organised, we could provide an elite corps of experienced and tough men, used to travel in ice and snow, on ski or snowshoes" (*Morgenbladet* 12 December 1888). But the Norwegians had more of an advantage than just their vast experiences in Arctic travel and living. They were not limited in outlook by the nationalist superiority of Britain or the United States. From their very entrance into the Arctic, the Norwegians respected the native peoples of the north. The Lapps, the Greenlanders, the Chukchi, and the North American Eskimos all had superior knowledge and experience in Arctic travel, and the Norwegian explorers were willing to learn from them.<sup>18</sup> This was different than the traditional attitude in Britain or the United States, where men like Rae or Hall or Schwatka—who were willing to accept what the native peoples had to teach—were exceptions.

Thus, the Norwegians "long had the people specially fitted to participate in such an expedition, but what we have lacked until very recently is the man with the qualifications to be the leader. Now, however, I believe, we have such a man: he who has had his Arctic baptism with an enterprise which has aroused attention all over the civilized world" (*Morgenbladet* 12 December 1888).

That man was Nansen, whose crossing of Greenland galvanized the Norwegian school of exploration. Nansen's most conspicuous achievement was the application of skis to polar exploration. Nordenskiöld had already introduced skis on Arctic expeditions, but, when crossing Greenland, Nansen gave the first proof that they would function at the altitude and under the conditions of the Greenland ice cap. Moreover, he improved on Nordenskiöld's techniques by using waxless telemark skis, innovative steel edges, advanced bindings with a heel grip rather than just a toe hold, and a new type of skiing that since has become known as the telemark style (Huntford 1988; Huntford 1990). Nansen also broke new ground elsewhere. He replaced the traditional, heavy, narrow-runner sledge with a prototype of the modern one—lighter, flexible, and running on skis. He personally designed special clothing, tents, sleeping bags, and cooking equipment, including the "Nansen cooker," a saucepan that conserved heat and fuel. He was one of the first people (along with Nordenskiöld) to apply scientific principles to the calculation of the dietary needs of expedition members. He popularized what came to be called the "sportsman's method" of Arctic exploration: whereas most previous expeditions had featured a large number of participants working in a clumsy and frequently inefficient manner, Nansen selected a small, trained, paid party able to achieve the greatest possible degree of physical stamina and to keep pace with each other (Huntford 1980: 24-26). Nansen also was the first polar explorer to

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recognize the psychological implications of groups, and he attempted to select a group that was mentally and emotionally compatible (Huntford 1990).

When Nansen returned to Europe in 1889, he found that he had become a celebrity. The news of his success, sent in a letter with the captain of *Fox*, made him a figure of enormous proportion, even in England. *The Pall Mall Gazette* was particularly partial to Nansen, giving front-page coverage to his expedition on 10 November 1888, the same day that the major story—covering virtually the first two and one-half pages of the paper—was the eighth of the "Jack the Ripper" murders.<sup>19</sup> Two days later, Stead's paper described Nansen in tones one would expect to hear applied to a beauty contest:

Dr. Nansen, who has just crossed Greeland in snow shoes, is about twenty-seven years of age, and considerably over six feet in height. He is a "hardy Norseman" every inch of him. He has a magnificent breadth of chest, and a well-proportioned figure, which shows to advantage in his tight-fitting blue woollen suit. His face is long, his brow broad; his eyes are blue, and his moustache and closely cropped hair fair in colour. (12 November 1888)

One might accuse *The Pall Mall Gazette* of sycophancy were it not for the fact that most of the major newspapers were equally enraptured with the young explorer: "Throughout the length and breadth of his country, Dr. Nansen has long been recognized as a man of singular strength, daring, intellect, and grace. Now he has added achievement to that already impressive list" (*The Standard* 14 November 1888). "His tall and well built figure, with the Norse head and fair hair, was easily discernible in the midst of any crowd" (*The Manchester Guardian*. 26 May 1889). "Dr. Nansen and his companions have, in short, performed a feat which renders them worthy descendants of their Viking forefathers" (*The Times* 25 May 1889).

Unlike in Britain and Europe, Nansen did not receive such praise in the United States. This was in part because his achievements coincided with the making of a great American hero—Robert E. Peary. Peary had first come to national attention in 1887 and 1888 when *The New-York Times* and *The New York Herald* had followed his progress as second-in-command—that is, sub-chief engineer—of the project responsible for the survey of the course of the proposed canal to be cut through Nicaragua.

It was two years previously, however, that Peary had first turned his attention to the north: "My interest in Arctic work dates back to 1885, when as a young man my imagination was stirred by reading accounts of explorations by Nordenskjold [*sic*] in the interior of Greenland" (Peary 1910: 25). In 1886, Peary had attempted to cross Greenland, reaching a point some 100 statute miles inland (Peary 1898). His lack of success had been accompanied by a lack of interest from potential future sponsors, and he had taken the position in Nicaragua. But in 1888, with the irrational feeling that Nansen had stolen both his route and his glory, he decided to return to the north: "This

forestalling of my work was a serious blow to me...and I could only fall back upon the other northern route" (Peary 1898: I, xxxvii).

That northern route across Greenland, and the exploration of the northwestern parts of the island, occupied Peary for the next decade, before his explorations turned even farther north. In 1891-1892, sponsored primarily by the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences and the American Geographical Society, but also with financing from *The New York Herald* (which sent along reporter A.C. Kenealy for the first part of the expedition), Peary and a party of seven—including his wife Jo, the first notable American woman to travel to the high Arctic—overwintered in northern Greenland (Peary 1893). Between May and August 1892, Peary and Eivind Astrup crossed to the previously unexplored northeast coast of Greenland and discovered Independence Fjord. The journey made Peary's reputation, despite the fact that one member of the expedition, John Verhoeff, disappeared while on a geological survey. The papers were effusive in their praise of the new hero and quite willing to overlook the tragedy accompanying the expedition:

Rarely has so distinguished a success in poleward exploration been accomplished with so little cost in money, exertion, and suffering, so that the skillful explorer may well try once more the method of arctic travel, of which he has become the most conspicuous master....The fate of young VERHOEFF, whatever it may be, is really not chargeable to the expedition. (*The New-York Times* 26 September 1892)

Once again, it was *The Herald* that made the most of the story, including publishing Mrs. Peary's exclusive accounts (13-16 September 1892). *The Herald* also ran other accounts of the expedition, one of which commented: "Lieutenant Peary has done in a magnificent manner what he proposed to do and has made the most remarkable journey on the inland ice, far excelling the work of Nansen and his predecessors in that direction" (13 September 1892).

Two months later, even *The Herald*, which had steadfastly ignored Nansen for four years, carried a news item about him. He had presented to the Royal Geographical Society an audacious and controversial enterprise—a drift across the polar basin. The idea had first occurred to Nansen eight years before, when he read that wreckage from *Jeannette* had been found near Qaqortoq (Julianehåb) on the southwest coast of Greenland, where it had apparently drifted with a polar current.<sup>20</sup> Nansen immediately saw the possibility of using the current to carry him to—or at least near—the North Pole, and he carefully explained to both the international polar community and the general public his intention to build a ship designed so that it could not be crushed by the ice and then intentionally to enter the ice-pack for a ride north (Nansen 1893a, 1893b).

A number of Arctic experts were immediately skeptical of Nansen's ideas (Greely 1894; Nansen 1897: I, 41-53), but most of the English press sprang to his defense.<sup>21</sup> *The Times* not only commented, "Of all the Arctic explorers of our day, none has shown greater daring and originality than this young Norwegian, who views and methods have always been his own" (15 November 1892), but flatly took his side against the argument of Nares that the primary dictates of Arctic exploration were to keep as close to civilization as possible and to insure a line of retreat:

DR. NANSEN would probably answer that those axioms are inconsistent with the only method that, in his belief, can be followed with any prospect of success. So he treats the Polar regions as STANLEY and LIVINGSTONE treated the Dark Continent; he means to plunge in...and trust to PROVIDENCE and pluck to bring him through. Twenty years ago the dangers and uncertainties of traversing Africa were thought to be as great as those which DR. NANSEN is now about to encounter; we trust that he may live to see a time when a trip down the Polar currents will be thought as ordinary an achievement as we now think a journey along the shores of the Zambesi. (15 November 1892)

Not only did most of the English papers that had not previously been pro-Nansen support his new plan (*The Echo* 15 November 1892), even the American press wrote admiringly (*The New-York Times* 13 November 1892; *The Sun* 15 November 1892).

But, as usual, the strongest support came from *The Pall Mall Gazette*, now under the editorship of E.T. Cook. A story entitled A CHAT WITH DR. NANSEN and covering much of pages one and two, showed Nansen as both romantic and realist. When asked what was most vivid when he thought about the Arctic, Nansen replied:

I think of the Arctic summer rain. I think of the sunshine, reflected from mountains of snow and ice, shining upon little lakes of clear, rippling water, where hundreds of seals playfully splash the water into glistening sprays of rainbow hues. What is the charm of the Arctic? Health, glorious health! Your muscles twitch with a desire for action. You eat like a horse, and sleep twelve or fourteen hours without a dream. Before you is the vast unknown: all around you is silence and solitude....In winter the scene is almost as beautiful as in summer. The nights are clear, the moon and stars shine brightly upon the sea of soft white snow. (17 November 1892)

But when asked how long he would be away, Nansen replied: "I really cannot say. Perhaps six years, perhaps only two years. We ram ourselves into the ice, and there we stay and drift with the current at the rate of about two miles in every twenty-four hours, until we reach the open sea."

"But, Doctor," the reporter asked, "suppose you find it impossible to proceed?"

"Then, sir, we shall stay."

## CHAPTER 7

### THE ARCTIC AS A WEAPON OF THE PRESS

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

The period between 1883 and 1895 witnessed not only the proliferation of those newspapers traditionally considered sensational, it marked the stage at which many newspapers before and since considered as part of the quality press—such as *The New-York Times*—began unreservedly to engage in sensational journalism. Many of these supposedly quality papers outdid their competitors in the sensationalism of their headlines, their writing style, and their illustration.

Accompanying this surge in the New Journalism were a desire for increased circulation by most its followers, and a distrust of the sensational press by those journals that still refused to engage in its techniques. These two extremely different strategies encouraged one similar result—for the press openly to challenge rival newspapers (both at home and abroad), attacking at different times their style, reporting techniques, sponsorship, and, most importantly, accuracy. Unlike the previous decades, the newspapers involved—both on the offensive and the defensive—included those reputedly part of the quality press as well as those definitely sensational.

#### 7.2 ASPECTS OF SENSATIONALISM

One of the most significant contributions to the growth of sensationalism in both the United States and England was the success of rapid transit systems in large cities. The adoption of these systems in the 1880s and 1890s over the older methods of travel helped determine that people would read their papers while being jostled and jarred in commuter trains rather than in the comfort of their own homes (Juergens 1966: 39). Many newspapers responded by developing a smaller format because, as *The Journalist* explained: "We, as a people, read largely in horse cars, the elevated railroads and the omnibuses. We do not want a paper which requires a whole conveyance in which to turn its pages" (5 November 1887).

The new transportation also encouraged the metropolitan newspapers to emphasize shorter, livelier stories with bolder headlines and larger type (although in England this was reflected primarily in the evening press). Readers who bought their papers from a news agent five or six days per week were more likely than subscribers to be attracted to a front page that was startling or shocking, and editors competed to catch the eyes of these readers in the split second it took to make a decision about which paper to purchase. As Hughes (1981: 31) has pointed out: "The front page would probably



never have evolved from the first page were it not for the fact that purchase by annual subscription was largely replaced by single sales."

### 7.2.1 Headlines

Throughout most of the 1880s basic American headline typography was even more conservative than it had been in the preceding years. Although *The Herald* continued to use multiple-deck headlines, with each deck being one or at most two lines, the majority of newspapers—including *The World*, the *New-York Tribune*, *The New-York Times*, and *The Washington Post*--limited themselves to main—or display—headlines with two subheads, the second of which was three to five lines finishing with hanging indentation. It was not until 1889 that the first double-column headline appeared in *The World* (Juergens 1966: 27), and most of the other newspapers did not adopt the technique until well into the 1890s.

The typographical look of the English evening press slowly followed that of the United States. In 1888, *The Star* adopted an entirely new method (for Britain) of displaying its heads, using upper- and lower-case letters, not engaging in centering, and adopting lengthy subheads with hanging indentations (Morison 1932: 291). In 1892 these Americanizations were brought to the morning press by *The Morning*, which sported a "cheap look as well as a cheap price" (Jones 1919: 124). However, *The Morning* failed because, as Kennedy Jones indicated, "what was wrong with Chester Ives's venture was its appearance. It did not look like a morning paper" (Jones 1919: 124).

Throughout the decades prior to the turn of the century, the content of the English headlines about exploration remained uninspired. Evening heads such as CAPTAIN LUGARD'S JOURNEY (*The Echo* 4 November 1892), ACROSS GREENLAND ON SNOW SHOES (*The Pall Mall Gazette* 10 November 1892), and NORTHWARD HO! (*The Evening News and Post* 4 July 1894) were thrilling only by comparison to their morning counterparts: THE GREELY EXPEDITION (*The Manchester Guardian*. 14 August 1884), DR. FRIDTJOF NANSEN'S JOURNEY (*The Times* 25 May 1889), and THE WELLMAN EXPEDITION (*The Standard* 6 August 1894).

Alternately, in America, the content of the headlines screamed of sensationalism. Editors built on the headline techniques that Bennett had developed in his early years at *The Herald*. Words or concepts with distinct emotive power were used as frequently as possible: FROM THE JAWS OF DEATH (*The Chicago Daily Tribune* 18 July 1884); PROOF FROM THE GRAVE (*The New-York Times* 20 August 1884); and FROZEN AND STARVED (*The Chicago Daily News* 18 July 1884).

Another technique that Bennett popularized was the question headline. For example, in responding to *The New-York Times'* charges of cannibalism, *The Herald* asked IS

IT TRUE? (13 August 1884) and WERE THEY CANNIBALS? (14 August 1884). The same technique was used in *The World's* account of the exhumation of Kislingbury: DID HE EAT OF THE DEAD? (16 August 1884); in *The Sun's* coverage of the Wellman expedition: IS EXPLORER WELLMAN ALIVE? (26 July 1894); and by at least two newspapers reporting that the commanding officer of Stanley's "Rear Column" in the Congo—Major Edmund Barttelot—had been killed by natives: WAS BARTTELOT BETRAYED? (*The Boston Daily Globe* 16 September 1888) and IS STANLEY DEAD? (*New York Morning Journal* 19 September 1888).

One convention first used prominently by *The New-York Times* in the late 1860s was the alliterative headline. *The Times* still used it 20 years later—BARTTELOT'S FATE FORESEEN FROM AFAR (19 September 1888)—as did many other papers, including *The Washington Post* (13 August 1884): THE CANNIBAL CANNARD; and *The Chicago Daily Tribune* (16 September 1888): TIPPOO TIB'S TREACHERY. But no paper featured as much alliteration as *The World*, with efforts such as BEN BREWSTER'S BAD BABY; MANGLED BY MONGRELS; and FACT, FANCY, FUSS, FUN AND PHILOSOPHY FOR THE FAIR SEX (Juergens 1966: 40).<sup>1</sup>

With most of the American newspapers using the same conventions for their headlines, they resembled each other more than the traditional labels of sensational and quality would indicate. This is apparent when comparing a sample of headlines from three papers generally considered as part of the quality press—*The New-York Times*, the *New-York Tribune*, and *The Chicago Daily Tribune*—with those from three supposedly quite sensational ones—*The New York Herald*, *The World*, and *The Washington Post*. Consider what each ran as its main story during the four days in August 1884 when the charges of cannibalism were first leveled at the Greely party:

Tuesday, 12 August

THE NEW-YORK TIMES

HORRORS OF CAPE SABINE  
Terrible Story of Greely's Dreary  
Camp  
Brave Men, Crazy By Starvation  
and Bitter Cold, Feeding on the  
Dead Bodies of Their Comrades  
—How Private Charles Henry  
Died—The Awful Results of an  
Official blunder

THE NEW YORK HERALD

THE EARTHQUAKE  
What Made It?—Where Did It  
Come From? Will It Come  
Back?  
Views of Scientists  
Cooling the Earth's Interior  
Contracts the Earth's Crust

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE  
THE WALL-ST. BANK CLOSED  
A Cashier Who Speculated  
John P. Dickinson Missing—The  
Deficiency Perhaps \$500,000

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE  
ANOTHER BANK CRASH  
Wall Street Bank of New York  
Closed Its Doors Yesterday  
Cashier John Dickinson Charged  
With Irregularities—Speedy  
Resumption Probable

THE WORLD  
CASHIER DICKINSON'S TURN  
The Wall Street Bank Forced to  
Suspend on His Account  
His Stock Speculations Cause a  
Deficiency of Between  
\$200,000 and \$300,000—He  
Departs From His Summer  
Residence and "Goes to the  
Mountains"—Promises that  
Only the Directors will Suffer

THE WASHINGTON POST  
OVER A CENTURY OLD  
Chloe Ashby Dies in this City at  
the Age of 116 Years  
An Aged Virginian Cook Whose  
Dinners Were Enjoyed by Gen.  
Washington—Her Interesting  
History—All Her Faculties  
Preserved to Day of Death

Wednesday, 13 August

THE NEW-YORK TIMES  
THE SHAME OF THE NATION  
Dreadful Sufferings in the Camp  
at Cape Sabine  
Further Facts about the Ghastly  
Prison in the Arctic Seas—The  
Seamen of the Relief Party  
Awestricken by What They Saw  
and Heard—How Did Dr. Pavy  
Die?—Talk on the Ship's Decks  
Yesterday

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE  
DICKINSON'S DEFALCATION  
The Amount Said to be Under  
\$300,000  
Will the Stockholders Save  
Anything?—Nothing Known of  
the Fugitive Cashier

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE  
ARCTIC HORRORS  
Officers of the Greely Relief  
Squadron Extremely Guarded in  
Their Language  
Hints from the Seamen As to the  
Nature of the Horrible Secret

THE NEW YORK HERALD  
IS IT TRUE?  
Official Utterances on the Latest  
Greely Story  
Secretary Chandler, General  
Hazen and Others Do Not Deny  
the Charges

THE WORLD  
GREELY'S STARVING BAND  
Hunger Said to Have Driven the  
Men to Cannibalism  
The Bodies of the Dead Said to  
Have Been Mutilated by Men  
Made Insane by Want—The  
Tragic Death of Henry—  
Commander Schley's Denial

THE WASHINGTON POST  
THE CANNIBAL CANARD  
Something New and Sensational  
in the Line of Arctic Horrors  
A Report that the Greely Survivors  
Subsisted Upon the Flesh of  
their Dead Comrades

Thursday, August 14

THE NEW-YORK TIMES

THE VICTIMS OF A BLUNDER

More Light on the Dreadful Story  
of Greely's Camp  
Henry's Coffin Filled by What is  
Scarcely More than a Dummy—  
What Became of the Doctor's  
Body—The Story of the German  
Soldier's Crime and Death Told  
by Lieut. Greely

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE

RUINED FOR HIS SON'S SAKE

A Manufacturer's Failure and  
Flight  
Henry Hall, Sr., Believed to be  
Insane—The Liabilities Between  
\$100,000 and \$150,000

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

ARCTIC SECRETS

Private Charles B. Henry Shot by  
Order of Lieut. Greely for  
Stealing Food  
Seamen of the Relief Fleet  
Anxious to Tell All They Know  
but Dare Not

THE NEW YORK HERALD

WERE THEY CANNIBALS?

Lieutenant Greely's and General  
Hazen's Statements  
An Exaggerated Story  
Private Henry Shot for Stealing  
His Comrades' Provisions

THE WORLD

CLAMORING FOR HIS BLOOD

Henry Shot in the Arctic for  
Stealing the Last of the Food  
Greely Twice Saves His Life from  
the Men Whose Lives He was  
Throwing Away--The Brave  
Commander's Tragic Story of  
the Execution by Two of the  
Imperilled Men—Henry Never  
Seen Again

THE WASHINGTON POST

THE HENRY EXECUTION

Lieut. Greely's Statement of the  
Causes that Necessitated It  
A Case Where the Most Rigid  
Military Discipline was  
Necessary—The Manner of the  
Man's Death—All Reports of  
Cannibalism Indignantly Denied

Friday, 15 August

THE NEW-YORK TIMES

CRAZED BY STARVATION

Another Chapter in the Awful  
Story of Cape Sabine  
A Ghastly Scene in the Chapel of  
Mount Hope Cemetary in  
Rochester—The Remains Weigh  
"About 50 Pounds"—The Skin  
and Most of the Flesh Removed  
From the Gallant Officer's  
Frame—His Friends Agitated  
and Angry with the Authorities  
Who Tried to Conceal the Truth

THE NEW YORK HERALD

DISTRESSING REVELATIONS

Lieutenant Kislingbury's Body  
Found to Have Been Mutilated  
Testimony From the Tomb  
Official Report of the Execution  
of Private Henry

NEW-YORK TRIBUNE  
GEN. LOGAN TO SOLDIERS  
Addressing Grand Army Posts  
An Enthusiastic Gathering at  
Watertown—Recollections of  
the War

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE  
MR. BLAINE'S REPLY  
To the Abominable Slanders  
Circulated by the Bourbons  
Regarding Him  
A Suit for Heavy Damages  
Brought Against the  
Indianapolis "Sentinel"

THE WORLD  
EATING DEAD COMRADES  
The Flesh of Lieut. Kislingbury's  
Body Hacked Off With Knives  
Ghastly Story Told by the Naked  
Bones—The Body Taken From  
Its Grave and Examined by  
Physicians—The Terrible Sight  
Revealed to the Dead Soldier's  
Brothers—Were the Weak  
Starved and Slain by the Strong?

THE WASHINGTON POST  
GREELY'S WELCOME HOME  
An Ovation Extended to Him by  
His Fellow-Citizens at  
Newburyport  
Further Revelations from the Dead  
—An Examination that Discloses  
a Ghastly Proof of the Charges  
of Cannibalism

With the exception of those from the distinctly different *New-York Tribune*, one cannot determine from these headlines which newspapers were considered sensational and which quality. The headlines in *The New-York Times* testify to an exploitation of the sensational aspects of the story far more than do those of either *The Herald* or *The Washington Post*, both of which initially presented the report as unsubstantiated. At the same time, it is apparent that *The World* printed the most sensational headlines, proving that even Pulitzer concentrated on events in remote places if they promised to sell his newspaper.

### 7.2.2 Content and Illustration

Comparisons of article content and illustration likewise indicate that there was not a well-defined distinction between much of the sensational and quality press. *The New-York Times* not only challenged *The Herald* in sponsorship of expeditions, it also did so in its desire for exciting writing. This is shown by the stories about the rescue of Greely's party. *The New-York Times* correspondent with Schley's expedition wrote:

The wind had increased to well-nigh a hurricane. It tore over the hills in furious blasts, driving the water in sheets before it, and heeling the ship....Some one was seen on the ice signalling with flags...: "Send doctor with stretchers and Harlow with photograph machine; seven alive." When it came to the last two words I made him repeat them. With what careful interest I watched them no one can recognize. It might be D-E-A-D, but no; A-L-I-V-E waved plainly through the air....Passing a small fire on which pots of milk were warming we came to the tent, under which lay four of the

poor fellows. Two lay outside, one with his face so swollen that he could barely show by his eyes the wild excitement that filled his being....Pushing aside the flags of the tent we saw a sight the like of which we trust never to see again. Crowded together in the little of the tent that was left standing lay Greely and three of his men in their sleeping bags, their faces black with dirt. Their hollow cheeks and their gleaming eyes made a picture that we will never forget and that told a story that has but few rivals in the histories of miserable sufferings. The short glance revealed four men with the hand of death laid upon them.... (19 July 1884)

Conversely, the correspondent for *The Herald* simply stated, "The scene at the camp beggars description. It is sufficient to say that they were starving, and but for the timely relief afforded, some of them would have died during the night" (18 July 1884).

A similar situation existed in the English press. On the issue of cannibalism, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Manchester Guardian*. each ran only short—and somewhat skeptical—articles picked up from Reuter's. *The Daily News* boldly disputed the possibility of cannibalism from the beginning, stating "Despite the lack of evidence and the certain inaccuracies of the testimony, such charges fill the public mind with unspeakable sorrow" (14 August 1884). However, the coverage of *The Times* was more sensational than not only the evening press, but the weeklies as well. On 16 August 1884, *The Times* commented:

The cannibalism was more frightful than it is possible to describe....The body of Lieutenant Kislingbury has been exhumed, and it was found that the flesh had been cleanly stripped off the bones, the remains weighing only 50 pounds. How many members of the party engaged in such behaviour has not been determined, but the practice must have been known about by all because the amount of flesh missing would have taken a considerable period of time to consume.

Alternatively, *The Weekly Times* would only allow that, "The charges of cannibalism against the expedition seem to have been confirmed by an exhumation of the body of Lieutenant Kislingbury, which has just been buried at Rochester, New York. However, further evidence will be needed to make the findings indisputable" (17 August 1884). *Reynolds's Newspaper* and *The Illustrated London News* were even more incredulous, with the latter stating: "The rumours of their having eaten the flesh off the dead bodies of their comrades are indignantly denied, and there seems to be no evidence in support of this horrible assertion" (23 August 1884).

Although illustration was not used enough in the British daily press of the 1880s to allow for such a comparison, in the United States its use again blurred the differences between the sensational and the quality press. For example, although Pulitzer initially used more illustrations than did his competitors—and was the first publisher regularly to put them above the fold on the front page (Juergens 1966: 30)—his illustrations were no more sensational in content than those of other newspapers. In an inspection of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century dailies, Schuneman (1966) found that only 3.7

percent of the picture content was of subjects traditionally considered sensational, whereas almost half of the total illustrations were half-sticks or single-column "mug shots." *The New-York Times*, *The Sun*, and *The Herald* all had a higher percentage of large photographs dealing with general news than did *The World*. An indication by Swanson (1955) that large pictorial and graphic presentations add to the attention-grabbing potential of newspapers more than smaller illustrations, raises the question of whether *The World*—with more but smaller pictures—was more or less sensational in this respect than its rivals.

### 7.3 THE PRESS AGAINST THE PRESS

The spread of sensational journalism—and, even more directly, the condemnation of the press engaged in it—led to a situation where more newspapers than ever before were willing to attack their rivals. Although these diatribes were often cloaked in anti-sensational garb, they more and more became weapons in the continuing war for circulation.

As the most successful paper in the United States, *The World* received a large share of the abuse. One aspect of Pulitzer's newspaper that was easy to criticize was its frequently clumsy prose style (Juergens 1966: 36). Dana, who was an admitted purist in grammatical usage, was particularly fond of taunting his former employee's less-than-perfect literary style. Pulitzer responded defiantly whenever the point arose:

The *World* does not attribute a particle of its great success to its knowledge of grammar. Its syntax is entirely satisfactory to itself and a large number of American citizens who manage to get along tolerably well without pedantry, hyper-criticism or snobbish affectation of grammatical knowledge. (*The World* 4 December 1884)<sup>2</sup>

A more common—and vicious—method of attack was that which had been used in the 1870s against Stanley and *The Herald*—sniping at a paper's correspondents, whether about their accuracy, their effectiveness, or their personal lives. Throughout the 1880s, Bennett's paper remained a prime target for such assaults. One of the most scathing came from *The New-York Times* and focused on Gilder's North Pole attempt.

The day after Gilder had been scheduled to leave New York for Cumberland Sound, *The Times* gleefully announced that he had missed his ship because he had been arrested. Dollie Adams, a professional swimmer, had claimed that Gilder had stolen a \$1,000 bond that she had entrusted to him in 1883. The explorer had been taken to the city jail the day he was due to depart, and he had been unable to post bail until several hours after the ship sailed (*The New-York Times* 14 July 1886). The case actually never went to court, and it was later suggested that Adams had been romantically involved with Gilder and that her intent had been to keep him from a perilous journey

(Barr 1988: 35). But this did not make any difference to the way *The Times* continued to treat the unfortunate Gilder. On 3 March 1887 under the headline HE DID NOT REACH THE NORTH POLE, it ridiculed his decision to return south. Then, upon his arrival in New York, it derided him in its most sarcastic and biting tones:

W.H. Gilder, who started in a white flannel suit on a ramble to the north pole in August last, returned to this city day before yesterday, having changed his ramble into a mere stroll of a thousand-mile dash and repeat. Mr. Gilder's stay is only for a day or so, as he is busily occupied with preparations for an immediate return. He has traveled some 2,000 miles, but as the pole is still there and is yet without the Gilder monogram carved upon its pedestal, the adventurous explorer looks upon his present achievement as nothing. The absence of grocery stores beyond the arctic circle, and the inability of the polar bears to speak English as she is spoke, was partly the cause of his return, the other part being certain business arrangements, a hitch in which demanded his presence here.

The walking in Greenland is not all that it might be at present, the cracks in the sidewalk sometimes expanding to the distance of several miles. The ice is also reported as quite cold and the water unusually wet. Later on, however, the adventurous gentleman may confidently be expected to sit astride of an iceberg fishing for gamy walrus in Symme's Hole, with a fishing pole consisting of the centre of things in general, rigged with a silk line and fly hooks. (28 April 1887)<sup>3</sup>

*The New-York Times* received as well as made such attacks. Two days after *The Times* proudly announced Schwatka's discoveries—including the Jones River—*The Sun* commented that the same river had been shown on W.H. Dall's map of 1870 (22 September 1886). The next day *The Times* declared:

It is clear that Jones River had never been explored by white men previous to the visit of Lieut. SCHWATKA and his party. And the great point is that, whatever guesses may have been made about Jones River, Lieut. SCHWATKA was the first to describe it and give it a name. This honor cannot be stolen from him by any such method as the *Sun* has adopted. For it cannot be said that a man who merely guessed at a river and inserted it upon his map was its discoverer, any more than it can be said that a newspaper which supported Gen. BUTLER took part in the last Presidential election. (23 September 1886)

The same day *The Sun* printed two small maps with the intention of showing that Lake Castina had not been discovered by Schwatka. It also declared that *The Times* had purposely falsified its map. A response brought yet another charge, in which *The Sun* claimed that the expedition charts of Jean-François Galaup, Comte de la Pérouse (1785-1788) and George Vancouver (1791-1795) proved *The Times* was wrong (25 September 1886). Another rebuttal from *The Times* commented:

[*The Sun*] ransacks the libraries of the geographical and historical societies, scrutinizes every guesswork map of Alaska that can be made to serve its purpose, willfully distorts geography, and...gives free play to the talents of all its most skillful falsifiers....And all this expenditure of malevolent



energy is prompted by the *Sun's* jealousy of enterprise on the part of THE TIMES. (26 September 1886)

The debate continued, with both the *Tribune* and *The World* also having laughs at the expense of the *The Times*.<sup>4</sup> The issue fizzled out three weeks later, long after *The Times* had demanded: "Will the editor of the *Sun* retract his misstatements concerning Lieut. SCHWATKA'S work and apologize to him and to THE TIMES, or does he prefer...to have these lies crammed down his throat by THE TIMES?" (3 October 1886).

The strongest and broadest attack on an explorer concentrated on the long-time whipping boy of so many newspapers—H.M. Stanley. When the story surfaced that Stanley had left behind a "Rear Column" in the Congo while he continued his trek to Lake Albert and Emin Pasha—a move that because of Stanley's conflicting orders ultimately was a contributing factor in the murder of Bartelot and the deaths of dozens of porters—Stanley was vilified by both the American and English press. In New York, so was Bennett, despite the fact that he had contributed no money to the expedition. *The Sun* (28, 29, 31 October 1890), *The New-York Times* (31 October, 2 November 1890), and *The World* (2 November 1890) all took free shots at the owner of *The Herald*, based on his long relationship with the explorer.

The English did not need Stanley as an excuse to demean American newspapers. They felt that the reasons for doing so were self-evident. Matthew Arnold was a spokesman for a remarkably wide range of English individuals when he stated:

I should say that if one were searching for the best means to efface and kill in a nation the discipline of respect, the feeling for what is elevated, one could not do better than take the American newspapers. The absence of truth and soberness in them, the poverty in serious interest, the personality and sensation-mongering are beyond belief. (Arnold 1888: 490)<sup>5</sup>

There must have been some trepidation among those of this frame of mind when rumors surfaced that Pulitzer himself was considering entering the daily market in England:

Speculation as to the proprietorship and editorship of the *Pall Mall Gazette* continues rife. Mr. Stead's former organ is said to have become the property of Mr. Joseph Pulitzer of the *New York World*. Mr. Pulitzer's success in American journalism has been unparalleled....Unlike Mr. James Gordon Bennett...Mr. Pulitzer keeps in close personal touch with his organ, and at one time devoted himself so assiduously to supervision of contributed matter as to become almost blind. Since the collapse of the London edition of the *New York Herald* he has been quietly prospecting for a newspaper property here. (*The Evening News & Post* 15 November 1892)

Although there was no truth to the rumor, *The Pall Mall Gazette* might have been appropriate for Pulitzer. Under Stead, it had been among the first papers in England regularly to comment on its rivals (for example, mocking *The Times* on 3 October 1884

and lecturing *The Standard* a week later). And a number of its features had been widely popular in the United States; in fact, for six consecutive days in July 1885, *The Sun* had used more than half of its front page to print the "Maiden Tribute" feature.

But Pulitzer was more concerned with defending American newspapers against charges such as those by Arnold than with entering English journalism. As he commented to his secretary:

The criticisms you hear about the American press are founded on a dislike for our headlines and for the prominence we give to crime, to corruption in office, and to sensational topics generally; the charge of inaccuracy is just thrown in to make it look worse. I do not believe that one person in a thousand who attacks the American press for being inaccurate has ever taken the trouble to investigate the facts (Ireland 1938: 96).

#### 7.4 INACCURACY OR DISHONESTY?

The facts—and their accuracy—were all-important to Pulitzer. The novelist Theodore Dreiser touched on Pulitzer's consuming passion for accuracy when he wrote of how he first secured a job at *The World*. While waiting to talk to the city editor, Dreiser looked around the huge office of the city desk. The only wall decorations were placards proclaiming: "Accuracy, Accuracy, Accuracy!" "Who? What? Where? When? How?" and "The Facts—The Color—The Facts!" (Dreiser 1922: 465-467).

Pulitzer not only believed in accuracy, he assumed that the American press as a whole did also:

I think that almost every paper in America tries to be accurate. I will go further than that. There is not a paper of any importance published in French, German or English, whether it is printed in Europe or in America, which I have not studied...and I will tell you...that the press of America as a whole has a higher standard of accuracy than the European press as a whole. I will go further than that. I will say that line for line the American newspapers actually *attain* a higher standard of news accuracy than the European newspapers. (Ireland 1938: 94-95; emphasis Pulitzer's)

Unfortunately, Pulitzer's assessment was not totally correct; much of the American press was willing to stretch a point in order for a story to look more important or more exciting than it might otherwise have done. For example, upon the return of Peary's north Greenland expedition (1891-1892), *The New-York Times* printed the story under the subhead "Our Flag Planted Nearer Than Any Other to the North Pole" and the headline of *The New York Herald* was PEARY TAKES THE FLAG MUCH FURTHER NORTH (13 September 1892). The reality was that Peary had reached a point farther north than had previously been attained north of the *east* coast of Greenland. However, it was still well short of Lockwood's farthest north on the west

coast of Greenland. Although this point was clarified in the story, neither newspaper felt any compunction about printing misleading headlines.

There were numerous other discrepancies, some the fault of the papers and some of the reporters. For example, *The New-York Times* stated that Mount Saint Elias was the highest summit in North America (6 July 1886), whereas it is actually the fourth-highest. Schwatka himself also described the vicinity in perhaps overly generous terms when he wrote: "Here...is a group of Alpine peaks that will rival all of those of Switzerland put together over and over and over again" (*The New-York Times* 14 September 1886). And the Jones River, of which Schwatka was so proud—and which today carries the name "Yahtse River"—was later proven not actually to be a river of any major significance (Sherwood 1965: 77-79).

But where was the line drawn between unfortunate inaccuracy and actual dishonesty? It is difficult to say, because one not only has to try to judge what the explorers saw, but what they thought they saw. Alan Moorehead noted this problem when he wrote about the difficulties of perspective encountered by the expedition of Burke and Wills through the center of Australia:

One sees and hears and smells far more, of course, when one is on foot, but the mechanical monotony of this tremendous walk is something not easily to be understood by a twentieth-century mind; hour after hour, mile after mile and always the same plain ahead; never to arrive at anywhere really significant; always to get up in the morning with the prospect of doing the same thing all over again. The world narrows in these conditions; one's boots have the disembodied fascination of a clockwork pendulum, weariness is subdued by the dull compulsion of the rhythm, and ground is not ground but simply distance to be put behind one. In this apathy of movement, this concentration merely upon keeping going, this coma of walking, any intrusion is resented, and any call upon the mind is an effort. (Moorehead 1963: 71)

Despite the problems of accurate observation caused by such conditions, there are notable examples of reports that under no circumstances could be anything but, politely put, "expedient exaggerations." One of the most obvious of these was that of Hugh Lowther, the Fifth Earl of Lonsdale, who made an Arctic crossing of Canada and Alaska (1888-1889) and brought back to the British Museum an impressive historic and ethnographic collection (Krech 1989). Lowther had initially attracted the attention of both the British and American press for his scandalous love affair with Violet Cameron, a beautiful, but married, American actress. In February 1888, having been chastized by Queen Victoria for his behavior, Lonsdale decided to go to the Arctic (Krech 1989: 12-13). Fifteen months later he returned to London, but what exactly he had done was uncertain. Stories abounded, but clarifications or denials did not.

Lonsdale's most-frequently stated motive for going to the Arctic was that he had been sent to obtain specimens for the Scottish Naturalist Society. Yet not only has no evidence of such an organization been found, he regularly gave other, conflicting reasons. *The Daily News* stated that he was traveling "as far north as possible for the purpose of shooting white bears and other wild animals" (24 February 1888); *The St. James's Gazette* stated he had left in search of the North Pole (7 September 1888); and Lonsdale later claimed to his biographer that he had gone at the invitation of Bennett and with the financial assistance of *The Herald* (Dawson 1946: 60-61).

The stories about what he did in the Arctic were just as varied. He claimed to have headed toward the North Pole with "a realistic chance of arriving there" (*The Pall Mall Gazette* 1, 4 January 1889); to have made a "long and tedious journey of four thousand miles overland from Banks Land, in latitude 75 degrees north" (*The New York Herald* 6 April 1889); to have found a race of giant Eskimos in the Mackenzie Delta (*San Francisco Daily Reporter* 23 April 1889); and to have followed a path across Amundsen Gulf, through Prince of Wales Strait, across McClure Strait to Melville Island, across Melville Island to its north shore, through Fitzwilliam and Kellett Straits, back across McClure Strait, and along the west side of Banks Island (*The Examiner* 24 April 1889). He also later claimed the first definite confirmation of gold in the Klondike (Dawson 1946: 82) and wrote about an Arctic journey that matched any for its difficulties and triumphs:

It was one of the worst parts of the journey, the temperature being sixty-four degrees below zero. I started at six that morning, and crossed over the highest point, which was 5,200 feet....When I got across I had only seven dogs left out of sixty-nine, and there were seven Indians and five sleds missing. I set off back to find the missing men. Eventually I brought them down safe and sound, they being frozen only about the hands and feet. (quoted in Sutherland 1965: 86)

It may be that Lonsdale realized after a brief while that the different fabrications he had reported would, collectively, prove his dishonesty. Perhaps that is why he did not long pursue his role as media hero, and why, despite at one point contemplating writing an expedition account with the assistance of Gilder, he never did (Krech 1989: 92).

Lonsdale's success—based almost totally on carefully misleading hints, innuendo, and inaccurate representations—was diametrically opposed to the concepts espoused by Pulitzer:

It is not enough to refrain from publishing fake news, it is not enough to take ordinary care to avoid the mistakes which arise from the ignorance, the carelessness, the stupidity of one or more of the many men who handle the news before it gets into print; you have got to do much more than that; you have got to make everyone connected with your paper—your editors, your reporters, your correspondents, your re-write men, your proof-readers—

believe that accuracy is to a newspaper what virtue is to a woman. (quoted in Ireland 1938: 94)

In one small Arctic expedition, one insignificant footnote to the history of the north, Lonsdale had shown that for all of Pulitzer's concern and for all of the efforts of honest journalists, the press was helpless in the hands of unscrupulous story-tellers. At the same time, Lonsdale could not help but to have encouraged later explorers to exaggerate their claims. And these men—such as Frederick Cook and Robert E. Peary—would not be simply footnotes in history. Their claimed accomplishments would raise the specter of dishonesty in the reporting about the Arctic as those of their predecessors never had.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE ARCTIC AND COMMERCIAL JOURNALISM

#### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

The period beginning in the mid-1890s saw a fundamental change in journalism, both in the United States and Britain. For the first time there was a virtually complete concentration on the commercial aspects of what had previously been considered a method of political expression, an agency to enlighten the public, or a form of public service. Certainly proprietors such as Bennett Sr. had intended to make money, but they also cared about informing their publics, and men such as Pulitzer and Stead believed the primary purpose of the press was to enlighten and crusade for the people. But with the arrival of William Randolph Hearst and Alfred Harmsworth, the editor and champion gave way to the businessman. As the American journalist Will Irwin noted: "We are here to supply a commodity—news....we will give the public exactly what it wants, without bothering to elevate the commonwealth. If we find that people prefer murders, then murders they shall have" (Irwin 1911c: 18).

One frequent result of the worship of commercialism—that is, the goal to increase sales by whatever method was necessary—was an even greater emphasis on sensationalism. This was reflected in many areas of coverage, not the least of which was that of Arctic exploration.

This period of commercial journalism coincided with the ascendancy of the Norwegian school of polar exploration, which was initiated by Fridtjof Nansen, the first—and to a great extent the only—Scandinavian to receive the adulation that the Anglo-American press had previously reserved for British or American heroes. Nansen's Norwegian successors were among the most accomplished of all Arctic explorers, but because sales had become more important to many newspaper proprietors than accuracy or attainment of success, as a rule the American and British explorers—who appealed to the nationalist preferences of the Anglo-American readership—received a great deal more emphasis than the Scandinavians, many of whom were ignored by the English and American press.

#### 8.2 THE NORWEGIAN ASCENDANCY: FRIDTJOF NANSEN

In the history of Arctic exploration, one man remains supreme in creativity, daring, intellect, and international stature: Fridtjof Nansen. A better example of a Renaissance man is difficult to imagine: Nansen excelled at virtually everything he undertook, whether it was the study of zoology or oceanography; the improvement or development

of travel technology; the art of political statesmanship; or the helping of individuals affected by war or famine.<sup>1</sup> Nansen's mind was always moving ahead, wandering to another challenge. As a young man, a whirlwind of imagination and excitement carried him off to Greenland, and instead of a scholar in a cap and gown, he became for a while a nomad dressed in the skins and boots of the Arctic explorer.

In the tundra and ice of the far north, Nansen was methodical, painstaking, and logical, just as in his academic research. He was, as it were, a pedagogue of exploration, a purist of the wilderness, a man who would put up with any hardship to satisfy his curiosity. Nansen's intellectual and philosophical fascination with one aspect of the Arctic came through clearly when he wrote:

But the northern lights, with their eternally shifting loveliness, flame over the heavens each day and each night. Look at them; drink oblivion and drink hope from them: they are even as the aspiring soul of man. Restless as it, they will wreath the whole vault of heaven with their glittering, fleeting light, surpassing all else in their wild loveliness, fairer than even the blush of dawn....Oh, thou mysterious radiance, what art thou, and whence comest thou? Yet why ask?...What would it profit even if we could say that it is an electric discharge or currents of electricity through the upper regions of air, and were able to describe in minutest detail how it all came to be? It would be mere words....We, with all our views and theories, are not in the last analysis a hair's-breadth nearer the truth.... (Nansen 1897: I, 497-498).

When Nansen's intellectual restlessness led him to propose his polar drift, he received financial support from the Norwegian government, King Oscar II of Sweden and Norway, and many generous Norwegian and British politicians, merchants, and societies, including Nordenskiöld's patron, Oscar Dickson (Nansen 1897: I, 54-57).

Such benefaction allowed Nansen to continue his innovations on a new front—the development of the most-famous polar ship ever. Under the direction of the noted ship-builder Colin Archer, the small, rounded *Fram* was designed and constructed to withstand the pressure of the ice. The sides of *Fram* sloped sufficiently to prevent the ice, when it pressed together, from getting a firm hold on the hull; thus, rather than nipping her, the ice simply raised her out of the water. In addition, *Fram* not only was equipped with but the third marine diesel engine ever installed in a ship, she was also furnished with electric lights, the dynamo for which could be driven by the engine, by the wind, or by hand power. In June 1893 Nansen and the 12 other members of the expedition set out, disappearing into the mysterious regions north of central Siberia.

In February 1895, acknowledging that *Fram* was not going to drift directly over the top of the world, Nansen made a dash for the North Pole with a single companion—Hjalmar Johansen—sledges, dogs, and skis. They reached 86° 14', 170 miles farther north than anyone had ever been before. Even then, the excitement was just beginning:

what caught the imagination of the public was what then happened. Their retreat over the drifting pack ice not only became one of the classic journeys of Polar exploration, it also happened to be a tale for the times. It was 500 miles of difficulty but never, somehow, despair. It ended with a Robinson Crusoe winter alone in a makeshift hut on an Arctic desert island among the forlorn archipelagos of Franz Josef Land and a miraculous encounter with the Jackson-Harmsworth expedition. *Windward*, the expedition's relief ship, brought Nansen and Johansen back to civilization. Exactly one week after they landed, *Fram* returned to Norway. She had drifted across the Polar basin as Nansen had foreseen....Unlike almost every other Arctic expedition, not a man had been lost. It was drama; tension; trial without tragedy, and a happy ending. Best of all, Nansen had routed all the experts, the pontificators, the Arctic authorities who had prophesied disaster....it was the way to the public heart. (Huntford 1980: 54)

To most of the world, Nansen's reappearance was like that of a man returning from the dead. The impact far exceeded that of his crossing of Greenland, not only because the achievement was greater, but because the medium of presentation was broader. Before, Nansen had been a European figure. Now he became the darling of the international popular press—in the New World as well as the Old. For example, *The Pall Mall Gazette* described Nansen as "the most eminent explorer ever known" (24 August 1896). The same adulation was shown by *The Washington Post*, which, on the day after Nansen's return to Norway, wrote not only about his plans, voyage, and adventures, but about his early life, his studies, and even his wife (14 August 1896).

Nansen was ideal for his role as media hero. Tall, fair-haired, and photogenic, with a long Nordic face that was at once intense, melancholy, and almost fierce, he was called "a true Viking, a descendant of those hardy Norsemen" by McClintock (Nansen 1893a: 22). He seemed the embodiment of the conquest of the world, a man who gave the press and the public everything they could want in one hero. In Nansen, the press could present a man of unequalled accomplishments but with the right combination of modesty and vanity; an individual of unsurpassed dignity and reserve, but one still comprehensible to the average man; a scientist engaged in important research but at the same time a writer and artist; an exemplar of the forces of nationalism—a patriot ever bringing honor to his country; and a gambling adventurer willing to risk everything on one throw of the dice.

Some of these views of Nansen were entirely accurate. His scientific, writing, and artistic skills were outstanding. His reserve was legendary: he shared a sleeping bag with Johansen on *Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa*, yet maintained the formal mode of address, including the use of surnames—no one dared call Nansen "Fridtjof" (Huntford 1980: 74-75). And he certainly was a partisan of Norway's separation from Sweden. His desire to champion his country's independence by proving the success and abilities of her people was echoed in the words of the Australian explorer of the Antarctic, Sir Douglas Mawson: "It seemed to me that here was an opportunity to prove that the



young men of a young country could rise to those traditions that have made the history of British Polar Exploration one of triumphant endeavor" (Mawson 1915: xiv).<sup>2</sup>

Yet the presentation of Nansen as a man who willingly took unnecessary risks reveals that the Anglo-American press understood neither him nor the Norwegian approach to exploration. It has been suggested in a well-known sociological study of Norway that most Norwegians, as well as other Scandinavians, believe that an individual life is of the utmost value and that nothing—even reaching the most inaccessible point on the globe—is so important as to place that life at risk (Castberg 1954: 20-22). This belief found expression in Nordenskiöld's careful management during the voyage of *Vega*. It also had an effect on Nansen, whose startling new concepts—deliberately cutting off his line of retreat by beginning his crossing of Greenland on the desolate east coast, and intentionally entering the pack-ice in *Fram*—were not symptomatic of madness or bravado, as they appeared to be in England and the United States, but were meticulously calculated to improve his chances of success.<sup>3</sup>

In general, Nansen was daring, but not reckless or impetuous. He was coldly professional, and, although he admired the Anglo-American explorers for their determination, he did not relish their notion of heroism, which "in the corrupt sense of the age almost by definition, meant wanton self-sacrifice and bungling" (Huntford 1980: 71). Rather he trusted in careful preparation, and believed that the narrow escapes often perceived as an unavoidable part of Arctic exploration were simply signs of poor planning or judgment (Huntford 1988).

Of course, even Nansen was not totally infallible, and he once was carried beyond logic by the thought of reaching the North Pole. He took an ill-advised gamble when he and Johansen left *Fram* on skis. As A.H. Markham later commented, "They could not expect to reach the *Fram* again. She would probably have drifted a good deal in their absence, so that it was a case of 'burning their boats,' as Nansen did before when he crossed Greenland" (*The Daily Telegraph* 15 August 1896). Nansen was fortunate that the move was not disastrous. When he met Jackson, the equipment he used to determine his latitude and longitude was no longer functional, so he was not sure if he were on Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa or the eastern islands of Svalbard. He was faced with braving a long journey from a point he could not definitely identify (and therefore could not use to plan exactly in which direction to head) in a leaking kayak, with no assurance that he would meet anyone at the end of his next journey. But, as was the case most of Nansen's life, when a rare occasion arose in which his skill did not suffice, his luck did. Possessing both skill and luck, Nansen was supremely confident, something he stressed when he wrote in his diary on 13 June 1894:

But the *Fram* will not be crushed, and nobody believes in the possibility of such an event. We are like the kayak-rower, who knows well enough that one faulty stroke of his paddle is enough to capsize him and send him into eternity; but none the less he goes on his way serenely, for he knows that he will not make a faulty stroke. This is absolutely the most comfortable way of undertaking a polar expedition; what possible journey, indeed, could be more comfortable? Not even a railway journey, for then you have the bother of changing carriages. (quoted in Nansen 1897: I, 400)

The passage also illucidates a common Scandinavian belief—that nothing is worth doing unless it is enjoyable (Castberg 1954: 2-18). Unlike most British and American explorers, who had fought against the Arctic, Nansen was convinced that it was not necessary to subdue nature to survive in the north. He accepted the Arctic and enjoyed it for what it was, a thing unlike his home only in degree; in fact, he perceived the crossing of Greenland simply as an extended ski tour (Huntford 1988; 1990).

Despite Nansen's almost mythic stature, the very efficiency that allowed him such unprecedented success in the Arctic did not allow him to fulfill all of the Anglo-American public's desires for heroism, triumph, and excitement. Both he and his achievements received adulation, but his accomplishments seemed almost too easy. The expeditions of less competent men—such as the American explorers Evelyn B. Baldwin and Anthony Fiala—were in some senses more thrilling than Nansen's exploits, because they involved constant struggle, disaster, death, and uncertainty of outcome. On a purely business level for the newspapers, these were better stories, not only because the participants were American, but because the press in the United States and England was becoming, even more than before, a monster fed on sensational writing and gripping headlines.

### 8.3 THE ERA OF YELLOW JOURNALISM

Nansen's return from the polar drift of *Fram* coincided with the most blatant circulation war in the history of American journalism. As had earlier struggles for readership, this one used sensationalism as a primary weapon, and this time the technique was carried to its extreme.

This struggle for circulation began with the invasion of the New York press by the western impresario William Randolph Hearst, who, in September 1895, purchased the *New York Morning Journal*. Coincidentally, the *Morning Journal* had been established by Albert Pulitzer in November 1882, six months before his older brother Joseph came to New York.<sup>4</sup> As a penny daily, it enjoyed considerable popularity, with guidelines altogether different than those of *The World*. Albert Pulitzer defined what he wanted his paper to be when he visited England in 1884:

I think that what mankind most desires is to laugh, to cheer the life of the average man, to lighten by a pleasant smile the sombre round of his daily

toil, to cast a gleam of sunlight, however transient it may be, into the darkness and dullness of a careworn existence. The rules that I laid down for myself with my new journal were, that it must be personal, local, good-tempered, gay, but first of all scrupulously pure and inoffensive. To the last I attached the very greatest importance. It is a common superstition among many journals that success...can only be attained by trenching upon doubtful ground; indulging in dubious innuendoes; and, in short, wrapping up in tolerably decent English intolerable suggestions. That I believe is an utter delusion. (*The Illustrated London News* 19 July 1884)

This strategy was successful until Pulitzer raised the price of the *Morning Journal* to two cents in 1894. A sharp decline in circulation followed—from 135,000 to 30,000 within a year (Older 1936: 30)—and Pulitzer sold the paper to John R. McLean, the ambitious owner of *The Cincinnati Enquirer* (and the eventual proprietor of *The Washington Post*), for \$1 million. Even McLean's sensationalism could not revive the *Morning Journal*, however, and in 1895 Hearst bought it for only \$180,000.

For more than a month after he purchased the *Morning Journal*, Hearst quietly developed a new format and a new approach for his paper, while not yet publicly acknowledging his ownership. On 7 November 1895 the first issue in Hearst's style was printed. It was everything that one could have expected from the proprietor of *The Examiner*, engaging in the same kind of sensations, self-promotions, stunts, crusades, scandals, and fakes. It proved beyond a doubt that Hearst was serious when he wrote: "The modern editor...does not care for facts. The editor wants novelty. The editor has no objection to facts if they are also novel. But he would prefer a novelty that is not a fact to a fact that is not a novelty" (quoted in Brendon 1982: 134). Indeed, in a single issue of the *Journal* there were garishly illustrated stories about travels among headhunters, the wife of a French criminal successfully encouraging her husband's suicide, the downfall and illicit career of a young woman following her answer to a personal advertisement in Bennett's *Herald*, the torture of Siberian prisoners, an operation to remove Queen Victoria's cataracts (with an illustration of a scalpel slicing through one of her eyes), and the murder of a black rapist in Georgia by one of his intended white victims (Brendon 1982: 136).

Hearst quickly shortened the name of his scandal sheet to *The Journal* (which he changed eight months later to the *New York Journal*), cut the price to one cent, increased the size from 8 to 12 pages, started an evening edition called the *New York Evening Journal*, and began pouring more money into the two publications than had ever been spent on renovating newspapers in such a short time before—more than \$1 million the first year. The expenditure gained for the *Journal* a staff that was equalled by none. Within a year Hearst hired, among others, Julian Ralph, who had been with *The Sun* since 1875 and was later called "the greatest newspaper reporter who ever lived" (Barry 1924); the renowned foreign correspondent James Creelman, who Hearst hired

away from *The World*; America's greatest war correspondent, Richard Harding Davis; the publisher of *The World*, S.S. Carvalho; and the man who had built the Sunday edition of *The World* into the largest single edition in the nation, Morrill Goddard.<sup>5</sup>

By February 1896, only three months after Hearst's acknowledged ownership of *The Journal*, its sales had increased from 77,000 to 150,000. That month, in an effort to cripple his new competitor, Pulitzer cut the price of *The World* to a penny. Although it immediately increased the circulation of *The World*, it had little effect on the *Journal*; it was *The Herald* that lost the greatest circulation, while smaller papers such as the *Morning Advertiser*, the *New York Mercury*, *The New York Press*, and *The Recorder* were virtually destroyed (Hughes 1981: 219). At the same time, the move conceded the new power of the *Journal*, just as similar cuts in 1883 by *The Herald*, *The Times*, and the *Tribune* had acknowledged Pulitzer. And like Pulitzer in a similar position before him, Hearst was too effective a businessman not to make the competition pay for such a move, continually pointing out that *The World* was now challenging him, not vice-versa (Winkler 1928: 97-98). Pulitzer later recognized his error: "When I came to New York Mr. Bennett reduced the price of his paper and raised the advertising rates—all to my advantage. When Mr. Hearst came to New York I did the same. I wonder why, in view of my experience?" (quoted in Seitz 1924b).

The hiring of Goddard by Hearst ultimately led to the term "yellow journalism." As editor of the Sunday edition of *The World*, Goddard started the country's first regular comic section in 1889; it became the first comic section to be printed in color on 18 November 1894. Goddard also hired the artist Richard F. Outcault, whose "Shantytown" and "Hogan's Alley" comics depicted life in the tenements. Hogan's Alley had as one of its main characters the "Yellow Kid," a hairless street urchin who had one tooth sticking out of a constantly grinning mouth, and whose flowing robes were always yellow. The popular Yellow Kid soon outgrew Hogan's Alley, and became a comic strip in his own right. When Goddard became the editor of the *Sunday Journal* in 1896, he brought Outcault and his comics with him (Lundberg 1936).

Pulitzer responded by giving complete control of the Sunday edition of *The World* to Arthur Brisbane, who had been the paper's managing editor. Brisbane first equalled and then surpassed Hearst's sensationalism, clearly going well beyond anything in which Pulitzer had yet engaged. In 1895 Goddard had used the first banner headline in *The World*, but in the next several years Brisbane made it a regular occurrence (Carlson 1937). Brisbane justified his use of these huge headlines by likening them to department-store windows:

Perhaps headlines do take up too much space. The display windows of the big stores take up too much space also. But in a busy nation the first

necessity is to attract attention. The big store window, wasting space, and the big type, apparently wasting space, are necessary features of quick development. (quoted in Winkler 1928: 119)

Brisbane justified his entire program of sensationalism by pointing to the circulation of the Sunday edition of *The World*, which rose from 450,000 under Goddard to more than 600,000 a year later. Meanwhile, Brisbane used George B. Luks to continue Outcault's original cartoon, and soon both newspapers were featuring the Yellow Kid in their advertising. To many, both journalists and their readers, the cartoons seemed symbolic of the negative aspects of the unprecedented use of sensationalism by *The World* and the *Journal*; the phrase "yellow journalism" soon began to be applied to any sensational publication.

Throughout 1896, *The World* and the *Journal* fought an ever-increasing battle. The results were astounding. *The World* soared to a daily circulation of 370,000. But between February and October the *Journal's* circulation jumped from 150,000 to 322,000. In November it surpassed *The World* when it jumped more than 100,000 to 438,000 per day. And both papers continued to grow. At the same time, *The Herald's* circulation dropped to under 150,000 before rising again. Meanwhile, the *Sunday Journal's* circulation rose to 380,000, and within a year it had caught the Sunday edition of *The World* at 600,000 (Tebbel 1952).

Hearst's next move was to lure Brisbane away from Pulitzer. In 1897, Brisbane was obtained as editor of the *Evening Journal* by an offer of a \$100 a month raise for every thousand added to the circulation figures (Irwin 1911a: 16). He soon became the highest-paid employee in the history of journalism. Brisbane expanded all of the techniques he had begun to use at *The World*. Within several months of his arrival, the *Evening Journal* used its first two-line banner headline: SHERMAN FOR WAR WITH SPAIN FOR MURDERING AMERICANS (20 February 1898). He invented the job-type head—half the front page devoted to two or three sensational words. And he developed trick headlines in which the first and third lines, in immense type, proclaimed a sensation, while the middle line, in very small type, reduced the head to a commonplace meaning: for example, WAR Will Probably be DECLARED (Irwin 1911a: 17).

The *Evening Journal* was also the first large-circulation newspaper to regularly publish photographic halftones. After much controversy, in 1897 the *New-York Tribune* printed the first halftone from a photograph in a mass-circulation newspaper (Taft 1938: 446).<sup>6</sup> It did not take long for Brisbane to follow this success with many sensational halftones. The content of the *Journal* followed the style, distinguished "by the attention given to crime, sports, divorces, and the tragic aspects of life in general....by the constant appeal to the emotions," and by giving sensational coverage

to such "long-time favorites as science, invention, and exploration" (Commander 1905: 150, 152).

In the midst of this craze for sensation, on 14 February 1898, the United States Navy ship *Maine* was blown up in Havana Harbor. There followed six months of rumors of war, preparation for war, and, finally, the four-month Spanish-American War. Hearst and Brisbane made the most of it, with Pulitzer not far behind. With deliberate falsifications presented as important facts, violent scareheads, raving editorials on the front page, and huge photographs and illustrations, the era marked the height of sensationalism in the history of the American press. The situation prompted the famed journalist E.L. Godkin to write:

Nothing so disgraceful as the behavior of two of these newspapers in the past week has ever been known in the history of American journalism. Gross misrepresentation of the facts, deliberate invention of tales calculated to excite the public, and unwanton recklessness in the construction of headlines which outdid even these inventions....It is a crying shame that men should work such mischief simply in order to sell more papers. (*The Nation* 24 February 1898: 139)

Godkin's comment was published only 10 days after the destruction of *Maine*, and before much of the press had followed the pattern established by Hearst and Pulitzer. Within a short time, many of the large papers in the United States—including *The Sun* and *The Herald* in New York and virtually all of those in Chicago, San Francisco, Denver, Detroit, and Washington—had "turned yellow" (Irwin 1911b: 18). The press mentality of the time, with its desire for sensationalism at all costs, is perhaps best shown by an incident later mentioned by James Creelman, who along with the renowned artist Frederic Remington, was sent to Cuba by Hearst to cover the oncoming war. When Remington cabled his employer that there would be no war and that he was coming home, Hearst reputedly cabled back: "Remington, Havana. Please remain. You furnish the pictures, and I'll furnish the war. W.R. Hearst" (quoted in Creelman 1901: 178).

The result of this mentality and its accompanying sensationalism was that during the Spanish-American War, Hearst's morning paper (which had purchased the *Morning Advertiser* and become the *New York Journal and Advertiser*) achieved an almost-unbelievable daily circulation of 1,320,000, while *The World* also had more than one million readers.

After the war, Pulitzer and Hearst took distinctly different routes. By 1899, Pulitzer had dropped yellow journalism, the product of a brief period that he always regretted and considered an aberration (Juergens 1966: 45). He did not want a stodgy newspaper, as he emphasized to *The World's* managing editor, Charles M. Lincoln:

Concentrate your brain upon...what is original, distinctive, dramatic, romantic, thrilling, unique, curious, quaint, humorous, odd, apt to be talked about, without shocking good taste or lowering the general tone...and above all without impairing the confidence of the people in the truth of the stories or the character of the paper for reliability and scrupulous cleanness. (quoted in Seitz 1924b: 416-417)

Pulitzer was no longer willing to play Hearst's games with the truth, and his sensations reverted to their form of the 1880s.

Conversely, the *Journal and Advertiser*, which had proclaimed in its front-page ears, "How do you like the *Journal's* war?" (*New York Journal and Advertiser* 9, 10 May 1898), engaged in even more furious yellow journalism. Two years after the Spanish-American War, it went so far as to print a poem seemingly advocating the assassination of President William McKinley (4 February 1900). When months later, on 6 September 1901, McKinley was indeed fatally shot, and—some rival papers said—the assassin, Leon Czolgosz, was found with a copy of the *Journal and Advertiser* in his pocket, Hearst was accused of prompting the event (for example, *New-York Tribune* 16 September 1900). In turn, Hearst attempted to show his patriotism by changing the name of his paper to the *New York American*.<sup>7</sup>

In the following decades, Hearst expanded his publishing empire into Chicago, Boston, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and Detroit.<sup>8</sup> At one point he owned 26 daily newspapers with 17 Sunday editions, accounting, respectively, for 13.6 percent and 21.4 percent of the national circulations for those categories (Lee 1973). Meanwhile, about one-third of the metropolitan dailies followed Hearst's lead, and it was not until around the time of World War I that the wave of sensationalism subsided (Emery and Emery 1988: 241).

At the same time that Hearst began to build the *Journal* into an enormous and lucrative paper, another New York daily was on the verge of disappearing. George Jones had died in 1891, and without his guiding influence, *The New-York Times* had faltered badly. By 1896 it had the smallest circulation of any of the New York dailies—9,000 (Berger 1951: 569). In August of that year, however, control of *The Times* passed to 38-year-old Adolph Ochs, the owner of the *Chattanooga Times*, a successful paper for Tennessee, but one of small circulation and influence by major metropolitan standards. Ochs did not have the capital to buy *The New-York Times* outright, but an arrangement was made whereby he would gain ownership of the paper if he succeeded in revitalizing it within four years (Johnson 1946).

Despite the commercial emphasis of this agreement, Ochs' basic plan was just as concerned with insuring the quality of the paper as with making money by any means possible. Just as Henry Raymond decided to publish a quality paper despite the trend of sensationalism set by Bennett Sr. and Day, Ochs ignored the methods of Hearst and

Pulitzer and determined to make a high-standard newspaper, clean, dignified, and trustworthy. In the first issue released after he took control, Ochs outlined plans for *The Times* that would have made Raymond and Jones proud:

It will be my earnest aim that THE NEW-YORK TIMES give the news, all the news, in concise and attractive form, in language that is parliamentary in good society, and give it as early, if not earlier, than it can be learned through any other reliable medium; to give the news impartially, without fear or favor, regardless of any party, sect, or interests involved; to make the columns of THE NEW-YORK TIMES a forum for the consideration of all questions of public importance, and to that end to invite intelligent discussion from all shades of opinion. (*The New-York Times* 19 August 1896)

But Ochs was not an editor; he was a businessman. So he also did what was necessary to make *The Times* commercially viable. Instead of letting the advertisers come to him, he personally solicited business for his paper, something his huge competitors would never have considered. Brisbane later condescendingly recalled having "seen him many times, sitting with his stove-pipe hat in his hands, outside the office of some advertiser" (quoted in Brendon 1982: 194). Ochs also engaged in promotions, including one to select a new slogan for the front-page ears (Talese 1971: 163). What was initially "It Does Not Soil the Breakfast Cloth," became the famous—and still current—"All the News That's Fit to Print." Shortly after taking over, on 1 December 1896, Ochs also dropped the hyphen from "New-York" in his paper's name.

Ochs hired a fine staff of writers and editors, and in the next two years *The Times* established a reputation based on hard work and factual reporting rather than sensationalism. However, a large readership did not accompany his efforts, and in September 1898 *The Times* still had a circulation of only 25,726. That month Ochs dropped the price from three cents to a penny. The results were almost immediate; in the next year, circulation increased to 76,260, and by 1901 it had reached 102,472 (Berger 1951: 569).

In 1904 Ochs hired a new managing editor, Carr Van Anda. In the next 25 years Van Anda established himself as one of the top American editors of the twentieth century, simultaneously building *The Times* into the foremost news agency in the United States. Van Anda's most notable editorial achievements were his handling of the Battle of the Sea of Japan in the Russo-Japanese War (29 May-3 June 1905), *The Times'* unsurpassed information on the sinking of *Titanic* (15-18 April 1912), and the long-term quality coverage of World War I (Fine 1933). But Van Anda also pushed *The Times* towards expanded coverage of one of his personal interests—the quests of polar exploration (Talese 1971: 35). In so doing, he helped involve what was



becoming America's foremost quality newspaper in one of its most sensational episodes ever.

#### 8.4 THE TRIUMPH OF COMMERCIAL JOURNALISM IN ENGLAND

As in the United States, in the last decades of the nineteenth century there was a continued commercialization of the press in Britain. Between 1885 and 1910, the number of individuals purchasing newspapers on a daily basis almost quadrupled (Williams 1961: 204). Concurrently, a shift occurred from newspapers owned as small, family or personal businesses to those owned by large companies (Wiener 1988b: 56-57). For example, in the late 1890s, the *Daily Mail* became the first British newspaper to become a public company inviting investment in its shares as a commercial proposition. Even more than in the United States, proprietorship in Britain had formerly been viewed as a type of public service and a journalist as a kind of public philosopher. In the 1890s proprietors became businessmen and journalism a trade (Lee 1978a: 118). As Moberly Bell, the managing editor of *The Times* commented, "the ideal of modern journalism" had merged with the "ideal of modern business" (quoted in Simonis 1917: 19). Or, as Kennedy Jones of *The Evening News* put it, he and Alfred Harmsworth had "found journalism a profession and left it a branch of commerce" (Jones 1919: 202).

Working journalists did not condemn this commercialization as much as they did the changes in content, typography, and make-up.<sup>9</sup> This was at least partly because along with it went more opportunities for journalists. Thousands entered what had once been a relatively small profession,<sup>10</sup> and salaries rose dramatically (Fyfe 1949: 51-54). The once-unbridgeable gulf between leader writers and ordinary reporters also disappeared, as a university education no longer was a requisite for the former. Yet at the same time that differences among journalists lessened, a significant divide opened between them and the owners (Lee 1978a: 127). With the concentration on the financial side of the operation, writing editors such as Stead or Massingham became scarcer, replaced by men with expertise in managerial skills, such as Edward Levy-Lawson of *The Daily Telegraph* or Thomas Marlowe of the *Daily Mail*.

Despite the emphasis on the business of journalism, the sales of newspapers, particularly those costing a halfpenny, could not cover production costs. For substantial profits, the owners needed not just huge sales, but advertising incomes. Previously, advertising revenue had been a valuable prop to newspaper sales, but in the 1890s it became the keystone to the business. The rapidly developing mass market for consumer goods meant that the greatest profits were to be made in selling space to advertisers, particularly large commercial advertisers who would go on taking space

day after day, year after year. To the new breed of proprietors, the newspaper's importance was not as a vehicle for ideas, but in its ability to put advertisers in touch with the mass of consumers.

#### 8.4.1 The Innovations of George Newnes

George Newnes, the man who first recognized this new mass market of working-class millions—the reading skills of which had been assured by the Forster Education Act of 1870—did not start as a journalist, but as the Manchester representative of a mercantile firm's fancy-goods department. Newnes had a taste for snippets of information and odd facts about people, and decided there was a market for a publication full of such items. In order to gain the capital for his venture, he exploited another craze of the time, opening a vegetarian restaurant (Friederichs 1911: 61-64).

On 22 October 1881 Newnes published the first issue of *Tit-Bits From All the Most Interesting Books Periodicals and Newspapers in the World*, a halfpenny weekly that had 16 pages, paid absolutely no attention to politics, and consisted of articles culled from dailies, weeklies, and any other sources Newnes could find. Its formula was simple: short words, short sentences, short paragraphs, and short articles. *Tit-Bits* (as it was known) was an immediate success, and within three months Newnes had moved the operation from Manchester to London. Not only did Newnes give his readers exactly what they wanted—fast, easily assimilated information—he brought his new publication to wide notice by a series of exciting promotions, such as giving a life-insurance policy to anyone killed in a train accident while carrying a copy of *Tit-Bits*; holding a contest for the best short story submitted, with the prize being a seven-room house; and burying tubes of gold sovereigns worth £500 for discovery by those clever enough to spot the clues hidden in a serial story (Friederichs 1911: 84-97). The sales and the advertising both soared, and within a brief time the circulation of *Tit-Bits* reached 900,000, almost three times that of *The Daily Telegraph*.

Newnes amassed a fortune, with which he launched a number of different publishing enterprises. In 1890, he started *Review of Reviews*, for which he hired Stead as editor. Within three months he sold the magazine to the editor. When he did so, he clearly differentiated between their goals:

There is one kind of journalism which directs the affairs of nations; it makes and unmakes Cabinets; it upsets Governments, builds up Navies and does many other great things. It is magnificent. This is your ambition. There is another kind of journalism which has no great ambitions. It is content to plod on, year after year, giving wholesome and harmless entertainment to crowds of hard-working people, craving for a little fun and amusement. It is quite humble and unpretentious. That is my journalism. (quoted in Friederichs 1911: 116-117).

The next year, Newnes founded the most successful of his new ventures, *The Strand Magazine*, a serious illustrated monthly directed towards middle-class households. For the next half century, *The Strand Magazine* "Confirming their [the middle class] preference for mental as well as physical comfort...faithfully mirrored their tastes, prejudices, and intellectual limitations" (Pound 1966: 7).

Through *The Strand Magazine*, Newnes became one of the first British publishers directly involved in the world of polar exploration. In 1898-1900, he spent £40,000 to finance an Antarctic expedition sailing under the British flag but led by Carsten Borchgrevink, a Norwegian. In 1899-1900, the expedition was the first to winter on the Antarctic Continent (Bernacchi 1901; Borchgrevink 1901).

Newnes next entered daily journalism. In September 1892 Yates Thompson sold *The Pall Mall Gazette* to William Astor, a member of the Conservative Party who hoped to further his own political career by its purchase (Lee 1976: 166). When Astor changed the politics of his new paper, E.T. Cook and much of his staff resigned. The following January, Cook and many of his associates were reunited when Newnes financed *The Westminster Gazette*, which, for the better preservation of the readers' sight (according to the commonly held belief of the time), was printed on green paper. *The Westminster Gazette* continued the journalistic traditions of Cook at *The Pall Mall Gazette*. Although it cost Newnes £40,000 in its first two years, it gained him a knighthood for services to the Liberal Party. In 1896, Cook left for *The Daily News* and was succeeded by J.A. Spender, one of the great editors of British newspaper history.

Newnes' last major venture was the founding of *The Daily Courier*, a halfpenny morning paper. Unlike most of his other efforts, this was not successful. It lasted only from 23 April 1896 to 15 August of the same year.

#### 8.4.2 Harmsworth Conquers English Journalism

Despite his own success, perhaps the most important contribution made by Newnes was his influence on the greatest English press baron, Alfred Harmsworth (later Lord Northcliffe). As a young man Harmsworth contributed articles to *Tit-Bits*, was a staff writer for *Wheel Life*, a cycling paper, and then became the editor of *Bicycling News*.

On 2 June 1888 the 22-year-old Harmsworth launched *Answers to Correspondents on Every Subject Under the Sun* (shortened on 28 December 1889 to *Answers*), a halfpenny weekly that followed Newnes' formula of jokes, puzzles, curiosities, and odd facts, while adding to it an invitation to the readers to ask their own questions. This gave *Answers* a constant supply of editorial material, with questions such as "Can Fish Speak?" "Why Don't Jews Ride Bicycles?" "Do Dogs Commit Murder?" and

"Can a Clergyman Marry Himself?" (quoted in Brendon 1982: 112). Nevertheless, the success of Harmsworth's publication was not assured until it ran a competition offering one pound per week for life to the person who made the nearest guess to the amount of cash in the banking department of the Bank of England on a specific day. There were 718,000 responses, and the circulation of *Answers* rose to more than 200,000 (Clarke 1950: 66).

Unlike Newnes, who turned to a more-highly educated readership after his initial success, Harmsworth stayed with a similar audience. He had long disliked the "penny dreadfuls," the periodicals that appealed to a youthful audience with lurid tales of violence, crime, sex, and mystery. Harmsworth felt that boys would not leave these magazines for solemn and pretentious weeklies, but that they might be attracted to comic papers containing good, clean farce and plenty of drawings (Clarke 1950: 70). The result of this belief was *Comic Cuts*, a halfpenny magazine for boys, the slogan of which was "Amusing Without Being Vulgar."<sup>11</sup> Its first issue—17 May 1890—sold 118,000 copies, and it continued with such success that 10 weeks later Harmsworth started a similar journal, *Illustrated Chips*, soon shortened to *Chips*.

By 1893, Harmsworth and his brother Harold (a brilliant businessman who had the sound financial background and understanding that the creative Alfred never had) owned six journals, with a total circulation of 1,473,000. In the next two years, they started seven more, and by mid-1894, the Harmsworth empire included at least seven weeklies with circulations of more than 100,000—*Comic Cuts* (438,000), *Answers* (356,000), *Chips* (283,000), *The Marvel* (153,000), *Forget-Me-Not* (145,000), *Union Jack* (140,000), and *Home Chat* (116,000)—as well as a number of other magazines (Pound and Harmsworth 1959: 171).

Harmsworth next followed Newnes into the evening newspaper market. But whereas Newnes had established a quality, politically aware journal, Harmsworth chose the sensational route. In 1894, with help from Kennedy Jones (who first obtained the option to buy), he purchased the foundering halfpenny *Evening News and Post*. Within a brief period of time, Harmsworth shortened the name to *The Evening News*; changed its typography and make-up; cut down on the length of the leaders and the amount of political coverage; added a daily short story; and established a column for women, which soon was expanded to the "Women's World" page. Within a year, the circulation had doubled to 160,000, and *The Evening News* was on its way to becoming the largest evening paper in Britain.

Two years later Harmsworth entered the morning market, and, after some 80 unpublished test issues, printed the first edition of the halfpenny *Daily Mail* on 4 May 1896. From that day on, the *Daily Mail* was the vanguard of the New Journalism in

Britain. Not that it screamed of sensationalism like some of the American newspapers. The *Daily Mail* looked very much like the quality morning journals: it was eight standard-size pages, with advertisements on page one; the Royal Arms were featured in the middle of the title; its headlines were in the dignified morning-paper style and were of modest size; and the make-up was extremely traditional (Morison 1932: 296).

The differences of the *Daily Mail* were in its content and news selection. The leaders were short and lively, as were the news stories. Although it carried political, foreign, and financial news, it also had reports on fashion, travel, sport, and society. Like *The Evening News* it carried an installment of a serial story and a number of features for women. And interspersed with its leading articles were ones about notable people, adventure, and aviation, the last a development in which Harmsworth was particularly interested. In other words, the content (although not the length of the features) was not unlike that of *The New York Herald*.<sup>12</sup>

The *Daily Mail* had another major difference from the other morning dailies: it was aimed not at the upper class or even the middle class, but at the white-collar, lower-middle class, the members of which Harmsworth defined as "tomorrow's £1,000 a year man, so he hopes and thinks....He likes reading news about people who have succeeded. He sees himself as one of them eventually and he's flattered" (Clarke 1950: 165). It was Harmsworth's understanding of this class that made the *Daily Mail* so successful. As Philip Gibbs, one of its reporters who later earned an international reputation for his investigations about the initial claims of Frederick A. Cook to have reached the North Pole, recalled:

He had only one test of what was good to print, "Does this interest Me?" As he was interested with all the passionate curiosity of a small boy who asks continually "How?" and "Why?" in all the elementary aspects of life, in its romances and discoveries, its new toys and new fads, its tragedies and comedies of the more obvious kind, its melodrama and amusements and personalities, that test was not narrow or one-eyed. It was not what the public wanted that was his guiding rule. It was what he wanted. His luck and genius lay in the combination of qualities which made him typical, in a supreme degree, of the average man." (Gibbs 1923: 84)

As with his magazines, Harmsworth's success in his new field was immediate. The first number of the *Daily Mail* sold 397,215 copies, more than had ever been sold by any British newspaper in one day before (Pound and Harmsworth 1959: 199). Within two years its circulation reached about 500,000 copies, and during the Boer War, it increased to just short of a million, settling at about 800,000 after the war. In 1900 it became the first paper able to achieve early morning distribution throughout England when it started printing in Manchester as well as London.

What has been termed the "Northcliffe Revolution" (Wiener 1988b: 50) did not stop with the success of the *Daily Mail*. On 2 November 1903, the first edition of the *Daily Mirror*, promoted as a "newspaper written by gentlewomen for gentlewomen," was published. When, after several weeks of enormous losses, Harmsworth decided "that women can't write and don't want to read" (quoted in Fyfe 1949: 115), he changed it to the first illustrated morning daily in Britain, a tabloid with, according to Harmsworth, "pictures stuck in anyhow and hardly any words at all" (quoted in Gardiner 1926: 290). The *Daily Mirror* became the first major daily aimed at the lower class, and it thus gained a huge audience. In 1911 it became the first British daily to reach and maintain a circulation of more than one million.<sup>13</sup>

In 1905, the same year Harmsworth was granted a peerage—becoming Lord Northcliffe—he purchased *The Observer*, the oldest Sunday paper in Britain. *The Observer* had a different kind of readership than any to which Northcliffe had been previously exposed: small in numbers but big in prestige. However, the Northcliffe style did appeal to this audience, and small sales forced Northcliffe to sell the paper in 1911. Before he did so, he hired J.L. Garvin as editor, a position in which he remained for 34 years (1908-1942), making *The Observer* perhaps the best weekly combination of political passion and journalistic skill in Britain during the twentieth century (Ayerst 1985).

Northcliffe's last great purchase (although he continued to build his empire with weeklies and provincial papers) occurred in 1908, when he took over *The Times*, the circulation of which, due to infighting between its minority owners and a resultant editorial lethargy, had dropped to only 38,000. In the 14 years before his death, Northcliffe never truly made *The Times* a paper in his own image, partly because of opposition from virtually the entire staff of the paper and partly because he was forced to admit that to change the character of *The Times* would have eliminated its prestige and ended its position as Britain's most influential paper. However, he did turn it "from a bankrupt nineteenth-century relic into a flourishing twentieth-century property" (*The Times* 1935-1984: III). And, due both to dropping the price from three pence to a penny and to making it a more middle-class organ, he raised its circulation to 318,000 during World War I (*The Times* 1935-1984: IV).

#### 8.4.3 Harmsworth's American Connection

Despite his excursions into "quality" newspapers, Northcliffe remained primarily a force in the popular press. This was acknowledged by a number of his contemporaries, who frequently insisted that his journalism consisted of sensationalism, sham

heroics, and opportunism. Stead went so far as to call Harmsworth the British newspaper proprietor who least lived up to his public duties (Stead 1904: 603-604).

Harmsworth had defenders as well, however. *The News* of Toronto commented: "The *Daily Mail* is as sober, moderate and responsible as the *Daily Chronicle* or the *Daily News*, the chief Liberal journals of London, but apparently it has a criminally larger circulation" (*The News* 2 February 1910). Later, Harmsworth's role as an innovator in England was described as:

...roughly equivalent to those of Dana, Pulitzer, Hearst, and Ochs together in the U.S. But this very eclecticism inevitably led to the result that he was lesser in the things that each of the others did best. He had less finesse at dealing in human interest than Dana, less acuteness as an editorial thinker than Pulitzer, less skill at technical improvement than Hearst, and less patience in institution-building than Ochs. (Pierce 1977: 31)

At least in part because he launched into newspaper journalism only shortly before the worst excesses of Hearst, Harmsworth has frequently been compared to the proprietor of the *Journal* and has been accused of bringing yellow journalism to England. However, although Harmsworth admired American journalism, he did not believe that the English audience would care for it (Fyfe 1930: 67). Therefore, he never engaged in the style or level of sensationalism that Hearst and Pulitzer attained. Unlike his American contemporaries, he had an aversion to newspaper illustration (Pierce 1975: 9), and he also did not like breezy writing, once scolding an editor:

Above all, do not use any Americanisms....Somebody should stand by with a coke-hammer and smash every American and other foreign word that tries to get into the building. Our own language is quite good enough. American is very amusing to talk, but it should not be allowed to be printed in *The Times*. (quoted in Pierce 1975: 25)

Something of which Harmsworth *could* be accused was bringing in a continuing supply of American journalists. He stole Richard Harding Davis from Bennett and Ochs, who had joined together to take him away from Hearst. (He then paid Davis the signal honor of sending him to replace the widely admired G.W. Steevens as the *Daily Mail's* correspondent in the Boer War, after Steevens' death at the front.) He lured Julian Ralph away from the *New York Journal*. And from Bennett, he stole R.D. Blumenfeld, who had edited *The Evening Telegraph* and worked as *The Herald's* correspondent in London; A.C. Kenealy, who had covered one of the Peary relief expeditions; and W.L. Warden, who became editor of the *Daily Mail's* continental edition, set up in Paris because Harmsworth was irked by Bennett's monopoly of English-speaking readers on the European continent (Marzoff 1984: 534-535).

Harmsworth also made one important contribution to the American press: he helped establish guidelines for a successful tabloid newspaper. Harmsworth did not

invent the tabloid—the *New York Daily Graphic* had been a tabloid, as had Frank A. Munsey's short-lived *Daily Continent*<sup>14</sup> and Newnes' *Daily Courier*—but he popularized it in Britain with the *Daily Mirror*. He also produced one edition of his style of tabloid for the New York readership. One of Pulitzer's stunts was to invite notable English editors to run *The World* for a day. Harmsworth produced the paper for 1 January 1901, turning out a four-column tabloid with 24 pages. No story was allowed to run more than 250 words, and there were no pictures. It was, according to Harmsworth, "the newspaper of the Twentieth Century" (*The World* 1 January 1901). His confidence proved well-founded. Although *The World* went back to its normal look the next day, a tabloid reappeared in New York shortly after World War I. The *Daily News*, founded in New York by Joseph Medill Paterson and Robert R. McCormick—and based on the sensationalism of Hearst and Northcliffe's format—soon achieved the largest circulation in the United States, and ultimately became the first American paper to surpass a circulation of two million (Hughes 1981: 222-224).

Hearst later credited Northcliffe with being the originator of tabloid journalism, although he reserved for Dana the title of originator of "the intelligently condensed newspaper," and noted that Northcliffe had admitted that he had modeled the *Daily Mail* on Dana's ideas (Hearst 1948: 308).

But Harmsworth's approach to journalism affected more than just the look of the periodicals. It also influenced the perceptions of events, places, and individuals. One of the places particularly affected was the Arctic, which intrigued Harmsworth, as much as it did many of his publishing contemporaries (Montefiore 1895: 504).

### 8.5 THE GOALS OF THE POLE: CIRCULATION AND FAME

The origin of Harmsworth's interest in the Arctic was not particularly different from that of most other publishing proprietors of the time. In fact, the motives of the press had not changed, but rather had become more blatant since Bennett first became involved in the Arctic: exciting stories still sold newspapers and magazines. They also sold books, and the publishers of expedition accounts followed the press in demanding melodrama. "Don't blame me for being great, seeing that 'greatness' had been 'thrust upon me' in my absence, behind my back, as it were," Vilhjalmur Stefansson wrote to a friend. It was to the financial advantage of his publishers, he explained, if "they can hoodwink the public. You and I know it is rot—we both know the great explorer too intimately—but you and I will both profit if Macmillan's can get away with it" (quoted in Hunt 1986: 111).

But Harmsworth was too much a man of action to be content with just "getting away with" the advantages that exciting stories about Arctic expeditions would bring



his publications. He decided to follow the lead of the American press and send his own expedition north, hoping to accrue the same kind of profits that *The Herald*, *The New-York Times*, and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* had made from the expeditions they sponsored.

In 1894, familiar with Wellman's plans for reaching the North Pole from Svalbard, and believing that a similar British effort should be made (Pound and Harmsworth 1959: 162), Harmsworth agreed to finance the Jackson-Harmsworth Expedition, which was to explore Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa and, it was hoped, find a route to the Pole. The leader of the expedition—and the man who originally planned it—was Frederick George Jackson, who the previous winter (1893-1894) had sledged through the Russian Arctic to test his clothing, equipment, and food and to draw attention to—and hopefully gain financing for—his proposed trip to the far north (Jackson 1895).

Harmsworth maintained that his sponsorship was not a ploy to gain readers, writing: "The expedition is in no way connected with *Answers*. So far as I am concerned, it is a personal hobby" (quoted in Pound and Harmsworth 1959: 162). However, his publications certainly took full advantage of his connection with the expedition. On the voyage from England to Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa, the expedition members were accompanied by two men who had been commissioned to write articles for the Harmsworth magazines, Cutcliffe Hyne and Herbert Ward, the latter of whom had initially come to attention as a member of the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition (Ward 1891). But it was *The Evening News and Post*, purchased the same year that the expedition began, that benefited most, running prominently placed accounts whenever they became available (as did the early editions of the *Daily Mail*).

Even before Jackson left England, Harmsworth's new evening paper had regularly promoted the expedition, as well as its leader and sponsor; for example:

Mr. Frederick G. Jackson is the plucky not-so-young man who is determined to hang up his hat on the North Pole....Mr. Alfred C. Harmsworth, whom the world best knows as the editor of *Answers*, is the equally enterprising young man who has lent his aid and countenance, to say nothing of his counting-house, to the scheme....Mr. Jackson feels as sanguine as one can feel about a Polar trip...[although] in the Arctic regions nothing is so likely to happen as the unforeseen. All sorts of difficulties arise, and in this sort of enterprise it is far better, as the Yankees say, not to prophesy till you know. (*The Evening News and Post* 5 July 1894)

The other English papers also followed the preparations of the expedition with interest. As the departure date approached, more and more features of the expedition received attention, including the supply ship *Windward*, to which *The Standard* devoted an entire story (10 July 1894); the use of aluminum boats, a collapsible boat, condensed food, Siberian ponies, and brandy (the last as an anti-scorbutic), upon

which *The Daily News* focused (7 July 1894); and the abilities of the leader, "a modern Ulysses, to whom scarcely any region of the earth is unfamiliar" (*The Times* 10 July 1894). Several of the papers also published a letter from Clements Markham (by then the President of the Royal Geographical Society), which stated:

I cannot let you leave England without wishing you all possible success in the glorious, but most arduous enterprise which you have undertaken....In your hands, for the time, is the Arctic fame. Your country and I feel sure that you will rise to the high level of your great undertaking and worthily uphold British credit and reknown. (*The Times, The Daily Telegraph, The Evening News and Post* 11 July 1894)

Despite such high hopes for the attainment of the North Pole, Jackson and his party did not come close to it. They spent three years meticulously exploring and mapping Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa, proving in the process that it was an archipelago rather than a larger land mass, as some Arctic experts had supposed (Jackson 1899). But the most memorable moment of the expedition—and certainly one of the most famous encounters in Arctic history—came on 17 June 1896, when Jackson unexpectedly met Nansen, who had just wintered in an ice-hut after his departure from *Fram*. Six weeks later, *Windward* delivered supplies and then sailed to Norway with Nansen on board (Nansen 1897: II, 456-499; Jackson 1899: II, 61-104).

Suddenly, the Jackson-Harmsworth Expedition repaid its sponsor handsomely. On 15 August 1896, the day after Nansen's return was announced, newspapers around the world carried the story about the meeting of Jackson and Nansen, and paid glowing tributes to both Jackson and Harmsworth (for example, *The Times, The Scotsman, the New-York Tribune, The Chicago Daily News, The Daily News-Advertiser of Vancouver, The Auckland Star, and The Daily Telegraph* of Sydney). But even more important, the subsequent publications of letters from Jackson and Nansen to Harmsworth helped increase the circulations of *The Evening News* and the new *Daily Mail* (*Daily Mail* 12 September 1896).

The burst of enthusiasm accompanying Nansen's return eventually proved deleterious to Jackson, however, because in England enormous hopes were raised for his attainment of a new farthest north. An interview with Harmsworth was typical of such expectations:

Mr. Jackson...has the field to himself, and I know him well enough to be convinced that he will strain every nerve to push forward....the opportunity of reaching the highest known latitude ever attained will obviously not be allowed to pass....I do not care to talk about so problematical a matter as the future of any Arctic expedition, but I may say that every effort will be made to recover for England the record previously held by Admiral Markham. (*Daily Mail* 18 August 1896)

When Jackson returned to England in September 1897 without having sledged beyond the northern limits of Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa, the disappointment among both the polar community and the press was demonstrated by the lack of attention he received compared to the previous year. Even when he was mentioned, it was generally with a focus on his failure to reach the North Pole rather than on his accomplishments. About the most any paper said in his behalf was that if he had stayed another year, he might have made a more successful attempt on the Pole (*The Times* 4 September 1897).

One reason for the criticism Jackson received was that his absence in the Arctic coincided with an admission by both the press and many explorers that it was the attainment of the North Pole, or at least a farthest north, that had become the true work in the Arctic. *The New York Times* stated this view clearly when it commented:

The euphemism "an expedition to take scientific observations in the far North, with perhaps an incidental dash toward the furthest" has lived out its very active life, and that is well, for the phrase made hypocrites of explorers without actually deceiving any but the unthinking. Every arctic adventurer knew in his heart that what was incidental in his plan was the observations, not the "dash"...with the safe return of all the recent expeditions and with the brilliant achievement of Nansen, adventures of the pole appear to be once more established in that good repute they held before the disasters to De Long and Greely. (24 July 1897)

Actually, not all travelers to the north agreed with this assessment. In the last decade of the nineteenth century there were numerous nationally funded Arctic expeditions dedicated to geological, glaciological, zoological, and other scientific studies. There were also wealthy individuals who sponsored similar efforts aimed at the extension of scientific knowledge. Between 1898 and 1909 Albert I, the Prince of Monaco, financed six multi-national voyages to the Svalbard area to conduct oceanographic, meteorological, and botanical work. Five of the expeditions included the Scots oceanographer W.S. Bruce (Brown and Murdoch 1923). During the same period, Louis Phillipe Robert, the Duc d'Orléans, financed three voyages for scientific study, visiting the Greenland, Kara, and Barents Seas, Svalbard, and Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa (Holland in preparation). Two of the Duc d'Orléans' expeditions were led by Adrien de Gerlache de Gomery in *Belgica*, the same commander and ship that had accomplished the first wintering within the Antarctic Circle in 1898-1899 (Cook 1900).

Social-science studies in the Arctic also increased in earnest near the turn of the century. Franz Boas conducted his pioneering work on the physical anthropology, linguistics, and folklore of the Canadian Eskimo (Herskovits 1953). Ludvig Mylius-Erichsen led the Danish literary expedition to northwest Greenland in 1902-1904 (Freuchen 1958: 48-55). And Knud Rasmussen presaged his Thule expeditions with

the Danish ethnographic expedition to northeast Greenland in 1905-1908 (Cruwys 1990a: 31).

But the Anglo-American public was not wildly excited by such ventures. And although some sponsors continued to cover adventurous expeditions with a scientific veneer,<sup>15</sup> the goal—both actual and stated—was more and more the attainment of the North Pole, what *Harper's Weekly* called the "symbol of man's final physical conquest of the globe" (26 April 1904). Nansen addressed this desire for the conquest of the world—not only by the explorers, but by the press and the readers—in the introduction to Amundsen's *The South Pole*:

People stop again and look up. *High above them shines a deed, a man.* A wave of joy runs through the souls of men; their eyes are bright as the flags that wave about them.

Why? On account of the great geographical discoveries, the important scientific results? Oh no; *that* will come later for the few specialists. This something *all* can understand. A victory of human mind and human strength over the dominion and powers of Nature. (Amundsen 1912: I, xxix; emphasis Nansen's)

At the turn of the century, the increasing number of expeditions with the goal of attaining the North Pole was indicative of this desire for a victory over nature. It was also a sign of a personal lust for fame (just as it had been for Elisha Kent Kane 60 years before), a fame it was assumed would accompany such a conquest. Few showed this obsession more clearly than Peary, whose mother told him: "If fame is dearer to you than anything else, what am I to say. I think if you should look at the matter calmly and dispassionately you would be less enthusiastic—such fame is dearly bought" (quoted in Herbert 1989: 65).<sup>16</sup>

Jackson was another revealing example of the private goals of Arctic exploration. Despite Harmsworth's statements to the contrary, Jackson was not a scientist, and the expedition did not produce a wealth of scientific results (Jones 1977: 53). Jackson's greatest pleasure was hunting, and he devoted an entire chapter of his book to a list of game bagged (Jackson 1899: I, 399-429). But his strongest motivation for traveling to the Arctic was that he wanted fame, which he thought he had secured when he assisted Nansen. Initially, he was enormously pleased about the meeting, writing:

You will understand how greatly this meeting affected me. My interest in Nansen dates so far back, and what I saw of him before he left had made me think continually of him as a colleague and a friend. I am all the more pleased, therefore, that this extraordinary chance has thrown it in my way to render him this service, and restore him to his friends in Norway. (*Daily Mail* 15 August 1896)

But in subsequent years, Jackson became embittered about the adulation given to Nansen, because at the same time Jackson, who thought of himself as Nansen's savior, received only fleeting publicity (Jackson 1935: 170-172).

Jackson was proof that, regardless of the press' backing, men did not achieve lasting recognition simply by venturing into the Arctic. The fate of two of his contemporaries illustrated this even more clearly. Evelyn B. Baldwin became prominent only as a result of the furor over the munificent funding provided by William Ziegler for Baldwin's attempt on the North Pole (1901-1902). Ziegler had made millions as the founder and owner of the Royal Chemical Company, which specialized in producing baking powder, at the time a new commodity (Harlow 1936). With his generous support, Baldwin left for Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa proclaiming: "I...emphasize the fact that the Baldwin-Ziegler Expedition was organized *to reach the Pole*. Neither scientific research, nor even a record of 'Farthest North,' will suffice; only the attainment of that much-sought-for spot where one can point only to the south can satisfy our purpose" (Baldwin 1901: 422; emphasis Baldwin's). Baldwin returned to the United States the next year having achieved nothing. In fact, according to Joseph Knowles Hare, the artist of the expedition, the foremost accomplishment of the expedition was cruising around the south of Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa looking for a passage north that did not exist, while at the same time using up the coal supply. "After we landed," Hare reported, "Baldwin started a sledging expedition, and succeeded in losing more than 300 dogs and 30,000 pounds of pemmican" (*The New York Times* 16 September 1902). Ziegler removed Baldwin from command of the expedition, and the explorer faded into obscurity.

Anthony Fiala, the photographer under Baldwin, similarly flirted with fame when he commanded Ziegler's second North Polar expedition (1903-1905). Despite spending two years on Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa, Fiala and his party failed miserably in their three attempts on the Pole (Fiala 1907). William C. Champ, the secretary to Ziegler, and the man who commanded the relief expedition for Fiala in *Terra Nova*, made a succinct assessment of the contributions of Baldwin and Fiala when he commented: "The scientific results of Mr. Ziegler's lavish outlay of money in the past four years have been practically next to nothing. The expeditions could not even start on the 'dash for the pole.' They found nothing new, made no collections, and added not a mile of coast line to the maps" (*The New York Times* 27 August 1905). And fame certainly eluded Fiala. After the expedition, he returned to New York and a job in a sporting goods store (Hunt 1986: 56).

Even if a man could receive continuing sponsorship from newspapers or magazines, neither his success nor his long-term fame were assured. Walter

Wellman's second expedition (1898-1899), sponsored by the National Geographic Society, aimed to reach the Pole via Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa. However, it was a catastrophe, as *The New York Times* indicated in an article headlined WELLMAN BACK, A CRIPPLE:

By the middle of March all hands were confident of reaching latitude 87 or 88, if not the pole itself. Then began a series of disasters. Mr. Wellman...fell into a snow-covered crevasse, seriously injuring one of his legs and compelling a retreat....Two days later the party was roused at midnight by an icequake under them, due to pressure. In a few moments many dogs were crushed and sledges destroyed. The members of the expedition narrowly escaped with their lives....Mr. Wellman still can not walk, and it is not certain if he will ever regain complete use of his legs. (18 August 1899)

But Wellman made the most of his experience, and built a reputation by writing articles not only for his newspaper, but for *The National Geographic Magazine* (1899), *Pearson's Magazine* (1900), and *McClure's Magazine* (1901a; 1901b; 1901c).<sup>17</sup> And in the long run, his injuries healed well enough to allow him to make three more attempts on the North Pole—in 1906, 1907, and 1909—all by dirigible. The first two were sponsored by *The Chicago Record-Herald* and its editor, Frank B. Noyes, who told Wellman: "Build an airship, go find the north pole, and report by wireless telegraphy and submarine cable the progress of your efforts" (*The Chicago Record-Herald* 31 December 1905). Each of the attempts was a ridiculous failure, once never getting the dirigible unpacked and twice crashing a short distance from where he started.<sup>18</sup>

It was not only the explorers who hoped to achieve fame through their association with the Arctic. Men whose finances were greater than their courage, drive, or physical prowess attempted to gain a reputation by sponsoring expeditions. They hoped both to bask in the glow of the press attention and to be immortalized by having geographical features named after them. There is perhaps no better example of this than Ziegler, whose motives were captured by William C. Champ in the preface to Fiala's account of the second Ziegler expedition:

The crowning desire of the late Mr. William Ziegler was to link his name with some scientific achievement which would be considered great when compared with others of the 20th Century, and he thought there was no mystery, the solution of which would be so heartily welcomed by the world at large as the exact location of the North Pole and accurate information as to the conditions existing there. (Fiala 1907: ix)

If wealthy individuals such as Ziegler did not seek out explorers to whom to donate money, they were actively recruited, not only by the explorers themselves, but by newspapers. Whitelaw Reid, the owner of the *New-York Tribune*, appealed to many potential contributors on behalf of Peary. Not only did Reid describe in glowing terms Peary's personality, ability, and goals, he stated that "to the individual of means, as a

business proposition, the financing of such an expedition means an instant and worldwide reputation of the highest character." He also indicated that if Peary reached the Pole, his contributors would be famous long after Carnegie and Rockefeller were forgotten. Thus, Reid suggested that supporting Arctic exploration was a way to achieve lasting honor and glory (Fogelson 1985: 134).

### 8.6 THE SCANDINAVIAN SUCCESSORS TO NANSEN

Perhaps one reason that the Norwegian school of polar exploration initiated by Nansen was so successful was that most of the Norwegians—and, actually, the Scandinavians as a whole—were not involved with the Arctic, as were so many British and American explorers, simply because it was an effective path to fame and fortune.

To a certain extent, the Scandinavian motives for exploration were anachronistic in the Anglo-American experience. Some explorers, such as A.G. Nathorst, reflected the interests of Nansen in the entire Arctic, its answers to the questions of science, its unexplored regions, and its unusual peoples. Some, like Otto Sverdrup, were primarily drawn by the lure of the north, showing a mentality by then passé in the United States. And some, like Roald Amundsen, quested for a fame that would result from accomplishing a personal goal, rather than setting out to accomplish something—anything—in order to gain fame.

But none of them dealt with the Anglo-American public—and press—in a way that would make them famous with the English-reading public. They presented the Arctic as they saw it, not as the readership in England and the United States had come to perceive it, and certainly not as the press wanted to publicize it. Thus, many Scandinavian explorers were unable to equal the reputations of their British or American contemporaries who had sold themselves to the press. Among those rarely receiving international note was Nathorst, who led several Swedish expeditions, one of which, in 1898, explored the northeastern part of Svalbard, including Kvitøya, which had never been visited or mapped. The financing of Nathorst's expedition was the last contribution to Swedish Arctic study by Oscar Dickson, who died the year before the expedition left (Nathorst 1897). Another man who did not receive great recognition in England or the United States was Ludvig Mylius-Erichsen, the commander of a Danish exploring and scientific expedition (1906-1908); he explored an unknown stretch of coast in northeast Greenland but died before the expedition returned to Denmark with a wealth of data (Amdrup 1913).

The first Scandinavian other than Nansen to receive the press coverage regularly given to American and British explorers was Salomon August Andrée, a social reformer who saw in technology the method whereby science could properly be applied

for the betterment and ease of mankind. Andrée's interest in technology led him to propose the use of a hydrogen-filled balloon for the exploration of the Arctic Ocean north of Svalbard and the attainment of the North Pole (Kirwan 1959: 210-213). Andrée's novel method of travel, combined with his charm, good looks, and ease with the English language and people, made him almost the equal of Nansen as a favorite of the English press. From the standpoint of publicity, his visit to London following his initial proposal was a huge success: "The young explorer, with his engaging manners and designs, at once plucky and novel, is the lion of the season's fag end, and has far more invitations than he knows what to do with....He looked decidedly well groomed, and might have passed current anywhere as a typical varsity man" (*The Westminster Gazette* 26 August 1895).

Yet Andrée was no equal to Nansen in the groundwork he lay or in his anticipation of what might occur. And his overwhelming confidence was no substitute for the preparations that he ignored:

I don't see that there will be any dangers at all. I have every confidence in the success of my enterprise, and am sure that before long I shall find any amount of imitators. I do not care a snap of the fingers what my critics say, for I have got the money, and nothing can prevent me from starting....As for food, I am not yet sure what we shall take....Mr. Ekholm, my companion, will calculate just what we should have. Then I will say to him, "Well, my friend, you know what we want. I leave it to you to decide." I will not trouble about matters which others perfectly know. (*The New-York Times* 1 September 1895)

In 1896, partially funded by Dickson, Andrée traveled to Svalbard, but his plans were foiled by contrary winds. The experience did not deter either Andrée or his admirers. As A.H. Markham commented, "I think he may get to the Pole. He is an enthusiast, like Nansen, with a great belief in himself and the courage of his convictions....he knows too much about navigating the balloon to drop himself into the Atlantic" (*The Daily Telegraph* 15 August 1896).

Unfortunately, Markham's confidence was wrongly placed. The next year, despite conflicting opinions about the winds, Andrée and two companions departed in the balloon *Örnen*, never to be seen alive again. The expedition did not get near the Pole; the balloon, which was virtually uncontrollable because of an accident on take-off, was abandoned on the ice 200 miles northeast of Svalbard; and the three men died on Kvitøya, where their remains and diaries were found 33 years later (Andrée *et al.* 1931). Despite his negligible achievements, Andrée's pre-expedition publicity, combined with his disappearance, gave him posthumous celebrity status in England and the United States. Accounts speculating about his fate or reporting the discovery of parts of his equipment appeared regularly in newspapers and magazines during the next



several years (for example, *The New York Times* 6 April 1898, 3 October 1899, 20 July 1900; *The Standard* 29 November 1898, 20 September 1899, 1 September 1900; Wellman 1898). The *Daily Mail* even published an interview with a man who predicted where Andrée was, based on the explorer's horoscope (3 September 1897).

In contrast to Andrée, Sverdrup accomplished much as Nansen's successor—arguably more than all of his contemporaries combined—but received little credit from the English or American press. Sverdrup was with Nansen on the first crossing of Greenland, and then was the ship's captain on the drift of *Fram*. Following his return to Norway, he was given command of *Fram* for an expedition to explore the north coast of Greenland. Sverdrup and his party could not pass the ice of Smith Sound, so they spent four years (1898-1902) charting the west coast of Ellesmere Island and the Sverdrup Islands, adding approximately 130,000 square miles to the map, including discovering Axel Heiberg Island, Amund Ringnes Island, and Ellef Ringnes Island (Sverdrup 1904).

An achievement equal to the discovery of new lands was Sverdrup's developments in polar travel. Like Nansen, he constantly worked to improve both his equipment and his techniques. As he commented in his book *New Land*:

There was hardly a thing in connection with the equipment of the sledge expeditions that I did not find could be made just a little better than it was before; and yet my sledge equipment, when we left home, was considered to be on par with that of any previous expedition. One learns as long as one lives, it is said, and certainly it is a saying which cannot be used with greater truth than with reference to sledging expeditions. (Sverdrup 1904: I, 291-292)

Sverdrup's greatest contribution was demonstrating that skis could be used on most kinds of snow and sea ice. He initiated the creative interplay between skis and dogs, proving that skis could be used to keep up with dogs, and that dogs could be driven by men skiing instead of riding on sledges, so that bigger loads could be carried. He also showed that Europeans could drive dogs as effectively as Eskimos, while indicating that Eskimo dogs from Greenland were more able to stand the constant rigors of long Arctic field trips than the Siberian breeds (Huntford 1988). Sverdrup was perhaps the first European explorer to understand dogs. He showed that "the Eskimo dog only reacted to a sympathetic mind. The relation between dog and driver had to be that between equals: a dog was not a horse, he was a partner, not a beast of burden" (Huntford 1980: 81). Sverdrup also understood men; he was a natural leader, who was admired by most of those who served under him. This was an important quality that neither Nordenskiöld nor Nansen possessed to nearly the same degree (Huntford 1988).

So why, despite his achievements, did Sverdrup not become a popular figure with the English and American press or readership? The answer is threefold. First, he received negative publicity from Peary's supporters, who believed that, by going near Smith Sound, Sverdrup had invaded an area that Peary had the exclusive right to explore; in other words, "Sverdrup was thus guilty of poaching" (Weems 1967: 175).

This attitude was widely accepted by the American newspapers. In fact, the only major articles in the United States press about Sverdrup's expedition—stories widely published on 10 November 1900, after an Associated Press interview with the scientist Leopold Kann—emphasized Sverdrup's "trespass." Under headlines such as FELL OUT WITH PEARY (*The Washington Post*), Kann, who had gone to Ellesmere with Peary, recalled the unexpected meeting with Sverdrup's party: "From conversations I elicited that some feelings had been engendered between Lieut. Peary and Sverdrup, the former rather resenting what he considered the latter's intrusion into ground which, for exploring purposes, the American was inclined to regard as his own."

Alternatively, the English were not disturbed by Peary's ludicrous notions of exclusivity. *The Times* published a three-column account by Sverdrup describing the adventures and accomplishments of his expedition (22 September 1902). And a widely printed letter by Clements Markham declared Sverdrup's expedition the most successful ever undertaken in the Arctic for the exploration of land, and the most productive since the time of John Franklin (*The Times* 25 September 1902; *The Daily Telegraph* 25 September 1902).

But once the facts had been published about Sverdrup's expedition, the British press and public forgot about it. The reason—the second for why Sverdrup did not become a media figure—was the same as had been the case before the time of Nansen: he was a foreigner and, even worse, a non-English native speaker. The British and Americans had their own heroes, and although they would accept those of each other, there still was a tendency to ignore European explorers regardless of their accomplishments.<sup>19</sup>

The third reason was that, like other Scandinavians, Sverdrup made the same "mistakes" as Nansen, without having Nansen's appeal. Sverdrup was enamored of the Arctic and viewed it as an enjoyable habitat rather than as a frighteningly dangerous environment. Nansen had expressed that point of view in *Farthest North*: "I am almost ashamed of the life we lead, with none of those darkly painted sufferings of the long winter night which are indispensable to a properly exciting Arctic expedition" (Nansen 1897: I, 232). But Nansen had attained age-old goals, the thrill of which was obvious. Sverdrup discovered and charted almost as much new Arctic land as had been mapped in the whole of the previous half century (Huntford 1980: 81), but he seemed to have

no adventures. His account made his four years seem too easy, and gave visions of men in comfortable settings, well-fed, and able to enjoy their leisure time reading, smoking, or conversing. That was neither what the public wanted to hear nor what the press wanted to publish. So he was ignored by both.

Neither the press nor the public could totally ignore Amundsen, the man who succeeded Sverdrup as the dominant Norwegian polar explorer. He would not let them; his achievements were too overwhelming. Amundsen was the second mate on *Belgica* when she became the first ship to winter south of the Antarctic Circle (Cook 1900). He led the expedition that was the first to complete the Northwest Passage by sea (Amundsen 1908). He was the first man to reach the South Pole (Amundsen 1912). And he commanded the dirigible *Norge* when it became the first airship to fly across the Arctic, including the North Pole, making him the first man to reach both Poles (Amundsen and Ellsworth 1927).

But a simple list of achievements does not do justice to Amundsen. He was a new kind of man in the Arctic, a modern man who at the same time had many attributes of the *condottiere* in Renaissance Italy. He was not impelled by a belief in empire, in trade, or in bringing enlightenment to native peoples. He had no overwhelming interest in anthropology, botany, or geology. He was rather out to accomplish personal goals and desires, and to make a name for himself while doing it. He was in some ways a businessman-explorer, not in the sense of his wanting to go to the Arctic for commercial reasons, but in the extremely logical, sensible, and efficient way in which he set up expeditions and got them to their journey's end. He may have been ruthless, but he was remarkably successful.

Part of this success was brought about because Amundsen fused and perfected the three major elements of the Norwegian school: the technical advances, the interplay of dogs and skis, and the feeling of oneness with the environment (Huntford 1988). Like Sverdrup, he constantly strived to improve both his equipment and his technique. For his expedition to the South Pole (1910-1912), he constructed a non-magnetic sledge in order not to affect the compass; he had cans for parafin made on board *Fram* (which Nansen allowed him to take to the Antarctic) and used silver solder because the commercially made products allowed loss of parafin through "creeping"; and for his land navigation, which was based on dead reckoning, he developed snow-proof sledge meters (Huntford 1980: 306-307).

Amundsen also was a dedicated student of travel who, perhaps more than even his fellow Norwegian explorers, was willing to learn from anyone: his immediate predecessors, such as Nansen and Sverdrup; his distant forerunners, such as John Rae and Hall; and those who had the greatest experience, the native peoples of the north.

These reasons behind Amundsen's amazing achievements were summed up by Nansen in the introduction to *The South Pole*:

For the victory is not due to the great inventions of the present day and the many new appliances of every kind. The means used are of immense antiquity, the same as were known to the nomad thousands of years ago....But everything, great and small, was thoroughly thought out, and the plan was splendidly executed....Like everything great, it all looks so plain and simple....Apart from the discoveries and experiences of earlier explorers—which, of course, were a necessary condition of success—both the plan and its execution are the ripe fruit of Norwegian life and experience in ancient and modern times. The Norwegians' daily winter life in snow and frost, our peasants' constant use of ski and ski-sledge in forest and mountain, our sailors' yearly whaling and sealing life in the Polar Sea, our explorers' journeys in the Arctic regions—it was all this, with the dog as a draught animal borrowed from the primitive races, that formed the foundation of the plan and rendered its execution possible—when the man appeared. (Amundsen 1912: xxx)

Amundsen's willingness to learn extended beyond polar travel, and into relations with the press. Before his Northwest Passage expedition (1903-1906), Amundsen had avoided members of the press. But Fritz Zapffe, an energetic freelance newspaper correspondent, hunted down the elusive young explorer, who stated, "I don't want to say anything before I have accomplished something. I wish to leave with the least possible attention. I want to have done something before letting anything appear in the press" (quoted in Huntford 1980: 79). However, Amundsen was not having great success at gaining financial backing, which he described as "running the gauntlet in a fashion I would not willingly repeat" (Amundsen 1908: I, 6). So Zapffe suggested how publicity might persuade various philanthropists to support him. Although the thought had not occurred to him, Amundsen needed no further prompting; he allowed Zapffe to interview him, and he ultimately became a master of fund-raising. In fact, he became, according to Vilhjalmur Stefansson, "the most unblushed advertiser of the lot" with "deliberately laid plans that out-Herod Herod" (quoted in Diubaldo 1978: 45). And yet Amundsen never attempted to focus attention upon himself in the same way as Peary or even Nansen. Amundsen had an artist's attitude: he said, in his fashion, "look not at me, but at my achievements" (Huntford 1990). But in doing so, he misread the English and American press and reading public, who wanted not just great deeds, but great men to accomplish them.

Strangely, the coverage of Amundsen's deeds was never as lustrous as the deeds themselves; there was always something that seemed to obscure his triumphs. From 1903 to 1906, Amundsen's expedition in *Gjøa* not only brought to an end the 300-year-old quest for the Northwest Passage, it discovered the exact location of the Magnetic

North Pole, proving that it indeed migrated (Amundsen 1908). This was a combination of adventure and scientific discovery that had rarely been equalled.<sup>20</sup>

Yet the way the story was released stole considerable glory from Amundsen's achievement. Nansen had negotiated on Amundsen's behalf for a lucrative international syndication of his Northwest Passage story. Late in 1905, while *Gjøa* was wintering at King Point on the Yukon Coast, Amundsen telegraphed his story to Nansen. But the message was first held up, and then leaked to the press in Seattle. The story made its way around the world not by Amundsen's telegraph message, but from paper to paper (Huntford 1980). Amundsen lost a significant payment, but even more important, he lost much of the credit for the completion of the Northwest Passage. Because he had not yet sailed through the Bering Strait when he sent his message, many papers did not credit him with completing the Passage (although the difficult part was behind him, and all that remained was a voyage in open ocean once the ice broke). Rather, the majority of coverage attributed to him success only at locating the Magnetic North Pole, an achievement of much less interest to the public (for example, *The Times* 14 November 1905; *The Standard* 24, 27 November 1905). Yet by the time Amundsen arrived in San Francisco on 19 October 1906, the completion of the Northwest Passage was yesterday's news—everyone knew about it (even if not in great detail), and not much of the press wanted to rehash the story.

Similarly, Amundsen's greatest achievement, the attainment of the South Pole, was not only overshadowed in the long run by the death of the British explorer Robert Falcon Scott, it was resented by much of the Anglo-American press and public, which believed that Amundsen had stolen the South Pole from Scott as surely as Sverdrup had interfered with Peary.

But it was not just fate that conspired to keep Amundsen from being the same kind of international hero as Nansen; his own inadequacies played a part. Like Sverdrup, Amundsen was neither a compelling speaker nor an outstanding writer. In fact, William Heinemann, the London publisher, wrote to Nansen about Amundsen's *The South Pole*: "I am...disappointed with the want of imagination he displays...in even so thrilling a thing as his achievement....I cannot help feeling that however great Amundsen's feat is, he is not likely to write a good book" (quoted in Huntford 1980: 552). Ultimately, despite understanding the advantages of good publicity, Amundsen never gave the British and American readers what they wanted. Not only did he not create exciting images in his books, when he wrote for newspapers or was interviewed for them, he was possibly the one polar explorer who actually toned down what he had recorded in his journals (Huntford, personal communication).

Thus, Amundsen made the same error of judgment in dealing with the press as had Nordenskiöld and Sverdrup. None of them learned that it was not achievements that were the key to journalistic success, but struggle and excitement. This difference of emphasis was noted by the Christiania newspaper *Morgenbladet*, which, when it published the story of Scott's Antarctic journey, observed that Scott gave:

the impression that terrain and weather were much worse [than] Amundsen's. This can hardly be the case. From Amundsen's account, one can see, for example, that he was forced to lie still for four days in a snow storm. But he considers it as something that belongs to such a journey—it's "all in the day's work," and he doesn't make a fuss about it. (quoted in Huntford 1980: 549)

There is a great deal of truth to the assessment that making a fuss was what the English and American press wanted. And the biggest fuss in the history of Arctic exploration occurred at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. This dispute drew from the members of both the reputedly sensational and quality press more sensational coverage than they had ever previously given the Arctic. It also marked the zenith of the press in determining the public's images of and beliefs about Arctic explorers and exploration.

## CHAPTER 9

### PEARY, COOK, THE NORTH POLE, AND THE PRESS

#### 9.1 INTRODUCTION

At the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the most-publicized and longest-lasting controversy in Arctic history—who first reached the North Pole—exploded onto the front pages of newspapers around the Western world. Beginning in September 1909 and continuing regularly for several months (and sporadically through 1911), the Anglo-American press, particularly that of the United States, gave extensive coverage to the debate over the competing claims of Robert E. Peary and Frederick A. Cook to have been the first to attain the Pole.

Ever since the contentious official resolution of the dispute by the Congress of the United States in 1911, there has been a regular rehashing of events, claims, counter-claims, and theories relating to the Cook-Peary controversy. The entire situation has generally been viewed by historians as a struggle for the recognition of having attained priority in reaching the North Pole, although the interpretations have differed as to whether the affair was a result of the efforts of Peary to protect his long-sought-after and deserved accomplishment from the lies of Cook; of a successful attack on the rightful discoverer of the Pole by a cabal of Peary's powerful and deceitful backers; or of a struggle between two equally dishonest charlatans.

Just as important as the conflict over the claims of the explorers—although comparatively overlooked—the controversy was also a struggle dictated by the commercial interests of two New York newspapers, *The Herald* and *The Times*. These two papers each strongly supported one of the two explorers (*The Herald* for Cook and *The Times* for Peary) in the hope that the acknowledgement of his success would increase the sales and reputation of his sponsoring newspaper. During the controversy, *The Herald*, *The Times*, and other newspapers and magazines showed that the press had reached new heights (or depths) in the sensationalization of Arctic events. And although publishing reports of questionable accuracy or honesty and assailing competitors through vicious attacks on explorers sponsored by those competitors were practices previously "acceptable" within certain limits, the press now went beyond even these boundaries.

Ultimately the controversy between Cook and Peary showed beyond question that the reputedly incorruptible *New York Times* was willing to engage not only in sensationalism but in practices considerably more aggressive than those of *The Herald* (which generally played a more defensive role in the controversy) in order to improve

the status of Peary and to damage the reputation of Cook (and thereby his supporting newspaper). *The Times* since has also been charged with engaging in practices of questionable integrity, such as vilifying Cook with information not directly related to the North Pole issue, offering to pay individuals for dubious testimony, and not being concerned with accuracy if the story helped form a negative public opinion about Cook.

Regardless of the methods used by the two papers, the most important impact of the controversy in the field of journalism was that the dismissal of Cook as a fraud seriously injured the credibility of *The Herald*, at the same time that the recognition of Peary as the discoverer of the North Pole helped re-establish *The Times* as a journalistic power that would ultimately be recognized as America's "newspaper of record."

## 9.2 ROBERT E. PEARY, AMERICAN HERO

There is little doubt that today the most noted and revered of all American Arctic heroes is Robert E. Peary. His is the one name related to the polar regions that school children in the United States will almost certainly learn, and he is still widely considered among the American public to be the man who first reached the North Pole. He is also remembered as a great patriot: a man who explored for the glory of the United States, who named his ship after President Theodore Roosevelt, and who proclaimed the attainment of 90° north with the message, "Stars and Stripes nailed to North Pole" (*The New York Times* 7 September 1909).

But to a considerable number of specialists in Arctic affairs, there is another side of Peary, and many would argue that a comprehension of these other facets of the man is necessary to understand the events of late 1909, when Peary was thrust with his arch-adversary before the eyes of the western world. This side of Peary is considerably less pleasant than that which is presented in school books. As one Arctic historian wrote:

No other explorer in Arctic history was ever as single-minded in the pursuit of his goal as Robert Edwin Peary, no other as paranoid in his suspicion and even hatred of those he considered rivals and interlopers, no other as ruthless, as arrogant, as insensitive, or as self-serving. Of all the bizarre and eccentric human creatures who sought the Arctic Grail, Peary is the least lovable. He toadied to his superiors and rode roughshod over those beneath him. (Berton 1988: 512)

These aspects of Peary found their origin in his burning obsession for fame, which he himself acknowledged as early as 1887 in a letter to his mother: "I *must* have fame, and I cannot reconcile myself to years of commonplace drudgery and a name late in life when I see an opportunity to gain it now and sip the delicious draughts while yet I have youth and strength and capacity to enjoy it to the utmost....I want my fame *now*" (quoted in Herbert 1989: 65; emphases Peary's).



Yet these very qualities, which can so easily be perceived in a negative light, might well have been the keys to Peary's success. He was ~~in~~nerverted by his insatiable hunger for fame. When others might have turned back, Peary's ambition drove him relentlessly until he had traveled more miles through the Arctic than any other explorer of his era (Green 1926).

Not that Peary had a deep emotional attachment to the Arctic; it was simply a setting in which fame and fortune could be gained.<sup>1</sup> Peary believed this long before he ever went north. In 1884, his first sight of San Salvador prompted him to write:

Birthplace of the New World, land which first gladdened the eyes of Columbus, purple against the yellow sunset as it was nearly four hundred years ago when it smiled a welcome to the man whose fame can be equaled only by him who shall one day stand with 360 degrees of longitude beneath his motionless foot, and for whom East and West shall have vanished; the discoverer of the North Pole. (quoted in Weems 1967: 65)

As has been indicated (see pages 142-143), Peary's road turned to the far north in 1886, when he first went to Greenland. In the next decade, his two major expeditions to northern Greenland (1891-1892 and 1893-1895, the latter partially sponsored by both *The Herald* and *The Sun*) earned him an international reputation. By 1898, when he abandoned his explorations of Greenland for the lure of the North Pole, he was widely recognized as America's greatest explorer, and was even inaccurately presented to the American public as a sort of father of Arctic exploration: "He was the pioneer who inspired the present wide interest in polar research, his first expedition on the then untrodden ice-cap of Greenland, made more than fifteen years ago (in 1886), having encouraged Nansen to embark on polar work" (Rand 1902: 355).

Peary also had gained many wealthy and influential friends, and he received extensive backing from the National Geographic Society, the Explorers' Club, and the newly formed Peary Arctic Club, an exclusive band of nationalistic millionaires led by Morris K. Jesup—one of the founders of the American Museum of Natural History and the president of the American Geographical Society—to make sure that Peary placed the flag of the United States at the North Pole before anyone else reached it. Peary's patrons included Jesup; George Crocker, a director of the Southern Pacific Railroad; Henry W. Cannon, the president of the Chase National Bank; James J. Hill, who built the Great Northern Railroad; and Herbert L. Bridgman, the publisher of the *Brooklyn Standard-Union*. Before leaving for the north in 1898, Peary was even given the whaler *Windward* by Alfred Harmsworth after Frederick Jackson's return from Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa (Peary 1899: 425; 1907: 296).

Peary's reaction to his encounter with Sverdrup on Ellesmere Island on 6 October 1898 was indicative of both the American's obsessive drive and his equally powerful

paranoia. Despite the fact that Sverdrup made it clear before and after his expedition that he had no intention of trying to reach the North Pole (*Geographical Journal* 1898; Sverdrup 1904: I, 1), when Peary found that the Norwegian was in the north, he became frantic to reach Fort Conger, Greely's old headquarters on Lady Franklin Bay, which Peary intended to use as a base for his route to the Pole. In late December, he left for Fort Conger, traveling in only the light of the winter moon, with temperatures below -50° Celsius. Peary, his black assistant Matt Henson, Dr. Thomas Dedrick, and four Eskimos reached Fort Conger on 7 January 1899. Shortly after arriving, Peary's feet began to bother him, and, as Henson's biographer tells the story:

[Henson] ripped the boots from both feet and gently removed the rabbitskin undershoes. Both legs were a bloodless white up to the knee, and as Matt ripped off the undershoes two or three toes from each foot clung to the hide and snapped off at the first joint.

"My god, Lieutenant! Why didn't you tell me your feet were frozen?" Matt cried.

"There's no time to pamper sick men on the trail," Peary replied tersely.... "Besides, a few toes aren't much to give to achieve the Pole." (Robinson 1948: 135-136)

But Peary went no closer to the Pole for the time being. Dedrick was forced to amputate all but two of the explorer's remaining toes, and, after being immobile for a month, Peary was taken back to *Windward* on a sledge.

Nevertheless, after a year of relative inaction in northern Greenland, Peary was back on the ice, and in May 1900, hobbling on his mangled feet or riding in a sledge (and accompanied by Henson and one Eskimo), he surpassed the American farthest north set by Lockwood and Brainard 18 years before. He also reached the top of Greenland—which he immediately assumed was the most northerly point of land in the world (Peary and Bridgman 1901)—and which he named Cape Morris Jesup.<sup>2</sup> Two years later, on 21 April 1902, Peary and Henson bested their own mark, reaching 84° 17' (Henson 1912: 11).

Despite his achievements at such a high personal cost, Peary did not receive the acclaim he so desired. The expectations in the United States for his success had been incredibly high—in part because he had helped make them so himself—and they were equaled by the subsequent disappointment. Peary's accomplishments especially paled when compared to those of Sverdrup, who arrived in Norway eight days before Peary's return from the north, or to those of the Duke of Abruzzi, whose expedition surpassed Nansen's record when Peary had not. *The New York Times* summed up the general feeling with the headline of its first story about Peary's expedition: PEARY FAILED TO REACH THE POLE (19 September 1902).<sup>3</sup> To save face, in an interview with *The World*, Peary declared:

The gain to the scientific world by the results of my work in the Arctic regions are of far more actual value than if I had discovered the North Pole. The discovery of the North Pole is merely a more or less spectacular fact....The departments of science which will be benefited by my sojourn in the north are geology, meteorology, anthropology, and natural history. The full result of my labors cannot be fully ascertained or even imagined until the observations I have taken have been worked out by scientists....the work I have done, I am vain enough to think, is great. (*The World* 20 September 1902)

That a man who never learned the Eskimo languages or did any ethnographic or archaeological studies claimed important anthropological success was absurd (Berton 1988: 517-518). And Peary's stated emphasis on science was hypocritical; it came from a man who several months later wrote to a prospective sponsor: "You and I are no longer chickens, and we both know that no man would give a few facts of so-called scientific information the slightest weight, if balanced against the Pole" (quoted in Green 1926: 239).

Despite the fact that many people considered Peary to have failed, he still had several important backers. In September 1903, at the order of President Theodore Roosevelt, Peary was granted another three years paid leave from active naval duty to pursue his goal of reaching the North Pole (Hobbs 1936). And with the support of Jesup and another backer, Captain Charles Dix, he managed to raise enough money to build his ship *Roosevelt*, which borrowed some design principles from *Fram*, and would, it was hoped, be able to force its way through the narrow, ice-locked channels between Greenland and Ellesmere Island and deposit Peary and his party on the very edge of the frozen Arctic Ocean.

Peary also changed his strategy for what he assumed to be his last polar push. He introduced what he called the "Peary System," a method of reaching the Pole consisting of 14 parts (Peary 1910: 201-212). Essentially, his system called for three platoons: a pioneer party to break the trail and build igloos for overnighing; support groups to shuttle caches of supplies forward; and the polar party, which would bring up the rear so that, rested and lightly equipped, it could make the final dash to the Pole (Peary 1910: 204-208; Herbert 1989: 161). Actually, it is questionable if any of the 14 parts of the Peary System were really his own (Hayes 1929: 206-207). Much of what he claimed credit for was universally known and practiced among Arctic explorers, and the specifics of the progressive parties had first been introduced by Fedor Wrangel' (Ferdinand von Wrangel) in the 1820s (Wrangel' 1844) and subsequently used by McClintock in the 1850s (McDougall 1857; McClintock and Haughton 1856-1857) and the Duke of Abruzzi when Cagni achieved his farthest north in 1902 (Savoia 1903).<sup>4</sup>

One result of Peary's new plans and, as important, his improved ship and equipment, was that he was able to claim that on 21 April 1906 he, Henson, and

several Eskimos achieved a farthest north of 87° 6'. Yet the announcement of this feat created little elation in the press and ultimately received only slightly more attention than had his previous journeys. In New York City, the story was lost in the various newspapers' efforts to defeat William Randolph Hearst's campaign for governor of that state. Even *The New York Herald*, which had helped sponsor Peary, gave the initial story only two columns and five decks. Certainly, it was proud that, "By an American route, in an American vessel, an American, Robert E. Peary, has beaten all records and, in what he announced on his departure as his 'last' dash for the North Pole, has reached...about thirty-five miles nearer the long coveted prize than his nearest rival, the Duke of Abruzzi" (*The New York Herald* 3 November 1906). But the expectations for success were higher than ever—again due in part to Peary's promises (for example, Peary 1905)—and the resulting disappointment of failure was equally strong. The words of Jesup upon hearing the news must have placed devastating pressure upon Peary: "It would be useless to deny that I am disappointed that Commander Peary failed to reach the Pole" (*The Washington Post* 3 November 1906).

To Jesup, to the Arctic Club, and—most of all—to Peary, the farthest north was still a failure. With all the funding and time invested, nothing short of the North Pole could be considered a success. Thus Peary decided to make yet one more effort. And, despite the death of Jesup in 1908, he managed to obtain the funds for his ultimate "final attempt" on the Pole. By now there was virtually unremitting pressure on Peary: would he have a magnificent triumph or a last, humiliating defeat? Not only those intent on the Pole, but everyone seeking fame of any kind had become a competitor to Peary, as was shown by a comment that his departure for the north in July 1908:

will mark the beginning of an international race between the American explorer and Lieut. Ernest H. Shackleton, R.N., [*sic*] who is trying to accomplish in the south pole regions what Peary is in the north. Despite the fact that Lieut. Shackleton has a year's start, Peary, nevertheless, expects to get further north than the British explorer does south, and to let the world know the results of his expedition before Shackleton reports his results. (*The New York Times* 14 July 1908)

However, it was not the departure of Shackleton in 1907 that should have concerned Peary, but that of another polar explorer the same year, a man who actually was a rival to Peary—Dr. Frederick Cook.

### 9.3 IN THE SHADOW OF THE GIANT

Dr. Cook was nine years younger than and altogether a different type of man from Peary. Rather than being hard-driven, obsessed, and intolerant, he was courteous, charming, and remarkably impulsive. Cook had settled into an unproductive medical practice in Brooklyn when he saw an advertisement in the *Brooklyn Standard-Union*

asking for volunteers to join Peary's 1891 north Greenland expedition. He responded to it and was accepted as expedition physician. Cook was immediately captivated by the Arctic. And Peary was quite pleased with Cook, as he related in *Northward over the great ice*:

To Dr. Cook's care may be attributed the almost complete exemption of the party from even the mildest indispositions, and personally I owe much to his professional skill, and unruffled patience and coolness in an emergency. In addition to his work in his special ethnological field, in which he has obtained a large mass of most valuable material concerning a practically unstudied tribe, he was always helpful and an indefatigable worker. (Peary 1898: I, 423-424)

Upon their return, Cook agreed to accompany Peary north again as his second-in-command in 1893. But before they left, the two men had a disagreement. Cook asked that he be allowed to publish an article on the medical and ethnological studies he had made in the north, but Peary refused. Peary always required that everyone who accompanied him sign a contract stating that they would refrain from publishing or lecturing on the subject of the expedition, which was a safeguard preventing competition to Peary's own money-making efforts. Cook felt that because his article would appear in a medical journal and could not possibly affect the sales of any book Peary might write, he should be released from this agreement. When Peary refused to budge, Cook resigned from the expedition (Herbert 1989: 92-94).

In the following years, Cook slowly built a polar reputation for himself. In 1893, he led a small expedition to west Greenland, which was financed by the Yale University professor James H. Hoppin to enable his son Benjamin to spend a summer in the Arctic (Freeman 1961: 36-37). The next year, he organized another expedition to west Greenland, one that was to feature a combination of sports-hunting and science. Or, in the assessment of *The New-York Times*: "There is no specific object in the trip, each member of the party being allowed to pursue his own inclinations regarding arctic investigations" (23 April 1894). The expedition was a fiasco, however, as the ship, *Miranda*, first struck an iceberg, and then, after repairs had been made, ran into a submerged rock and had to be abandoned (Holland in preparation).

In 1898-1899, Cook served as the physician on *Belgica*, participating in the first Antarctic wintering. There was, according to Herbert (1989: 208): "no question that Cook's optimism and quietly persuasive manner held that expedition together. Presented with the prospect of scurvy among the crew, he had insisted, over the protests of his companions, that they should eat fresh meat—seal and penguin." Later, *Belgica's* escape from the ice was, according to Amundsen, the second mate of the expedition, "due first and foremost to the skill, energy, and persistence of Dr. Cook" (*New York American* 19 September 1909). The *Belgica* expedition made Cook an

internationally known traveler. He was knighted in Belgium, and articles about his experiences appeared in *McClure's Magazine* (1899a), *Scribner's Magazine* (1899b), *Pearson's Magazine* (1900a), and *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* (1900b).

Cook again became involved with Peary in 1901, when Herbert L. Bridgman, the secretary of the Peary Arctic Club, requested he go north on the relief ship *Erik* in case Peary needed a doctor other than Dedrick. Cook examined Peary in Greenland and found him to be exhibiting the early symptoms of pernicious anemia. He told the older man to eat raw meat and liver, to which Peary responded, "I would rather die" (Eames 1973: 25). "You are through as a traveler on snow on foot," Cook said, "for without toes and a painful stub you can never wear snowshoes or ski" (Eames 1973: 25). Peary ignored Cook and, if he had not already, turned against the doctor.

Five years later, when Peary returned from his farthest north, he was confronted by Cook again. Cook had just claimed the first ascent of North America's highest mountain, Mount McKinley, and the triumphant honors that Peary had expected to receive were shared with the younger man (for example, *The New York Herald* 16 December 1906; *The World* 16 December 1906). Then, to Peary's further dismay, Cook's book about the ascent, *To the top of the continent* (1908), became a best-seller, while Peary's account of his farthest north was a dismal failure, selling only 2,230 copies its first year (Berton 1988: 566).

But these exasperations were only a prelude for what was to come. In July 1907, Cook sailed for the north with the wealthy sportsman John R. Bradley. The trip was reputedly planned as a big-game hunt, but Cook took along the supplies he said he would need for an assault on the North Pole. Although he attempted to do this quietly, rumors reached Peary and other members of the Arctic community that Cook might try for the Pole. Despite Cook's obvious abilities and achievements, virtually no one with serious knowledge of the Arctic considered him the equal of Peary as an explorer able to accomplish such a task. So the rumors were generally ignored, including by Peary.

However, finding what he described as "auspicious weather" (Cook 1911: 68), Cook decided to remain in northwest Greenland. From Etah, he wrote a letter to Bridgman, which he sent back south with Bradley. When received, it shocked virtually all of those associated with Arctic exploration:

I have hit upon a new route to the north pole and will stay to try it. By way of Buchanan Bay and Ellesmere and northward through Nansen Strait over the Polar Sea seems to me to be a very good route. There will be game to the 82d degree, and here are natives and dogs for the task. So here is for the pole. (*The Washington Post* 2 September 1909).

Peary was outraged. He felt that Cook was not only stealing the territory he had pioneered, but *his* Eskimos and *his* dogs. Cook was also stating that he would try to

succeed by using the methods with which Peary had so long failed and a route that Peary somehow had not found in all his years in the north. As far as Peary was concerned, Cook was unethical, insulting, and a fool (Herbert 1989: 211-212).

The older explorer was still incensed when, on 6 July 1908, *Roosevelt* left New York for Peary's last attempt on the Pole. He had not departed without a crescendo of attacks on Cook, however, including stating that the doctor should have to show "proper proofs" if on his return he claimed to have reached the Pole (Freeman 1961: 99). Peary also insisted that his rival should be shunned by all reputable geographical societies, because "Dr. Cook's action in going north...for the admitted purpose of forestalling me [is] one of which no man possessing a sense of honor would be guilty" (*The New York Times* 28 May 1908).

#### 9.4 THE POLE ATTAINED OR ONLY CLAIMED ?

On 2 September 1909, while Peary was still in the far north, his nightmare came true. That morning, papers around the world prominently featured the news that Cook had claimed to have reached the North Pole.

The story originated in Lerwick, on the Shetland Islands, from where Cook—a passenger on the steamship *Hans Egede*, traveling between Upernavik and Copenhagen—had sent messages to his wife and to the Brussels Observatory announcing his attainment of the Pole. He also sent a cable about his success to James Gordon Bennett, stating, "Message left in care of Danish consul, 2,000 words. For it \$3,000 expected. If you want it, send for it" (Cook 1911b: 465). Bennett pounced on such an opportunity, and the next day *The Herald*, both in New York and Paris, published five full pages about Cook's expedition, including more than an entire page in the explorer's own words (2 September 1909).

According to his story, Cook had left Anoritoq (Annoatok) on 19 February 1908, accompanied by Rudolph Francke—the former steward on Bradley's yacht, who had remained behind in Greenland with Cook—and nine Eskimos. The party crossed Smith Sound to Cape Sabine on Ellesmere Island. Fighting record-low temperatures of -86° Celsius, they then crossed Ellesmere to Cape Stallworthy, the northernmost point of Axel Heiberg Island. From there, Cook and four Eskimos headed northward. Three days later, two of them turned back, leaving Cook with two young Eskimos to accompany him to the Pole.

Cook's article told of the usual trials encountered by those attempting to reach the North Pole: back-breaking efforts to hack through enormous pressure ridges; desperate advances despite Arctic storms that would have stopped most travelers for days; gaping leads a mile or more across; and crucial shortages of food and fuel. Nevertheless, he

claimed that on 21 April 1908 he and his companions reached the Pole. The return was even more dramatic, as the three missed their depot on Axel Heiberg Island and continued south to Devon Island, where they wintered at Cape Sparbo in an underground den, living on musk-oxen killed with lances made from the men's sledges (Cook 1951). The next spring, they returned to Anoritoq, from where Cook sledged south to catch *Hans Egede*.

Although Cook's story went directly to Bennett, it did not end up being an exclusive for *The Herald*. It received unprecedented coverage (for a story of exploration) throughout Europe and the United States, where virtually every paper announced the claim with prominent headlines, comments from noted polar explorers, and notes on Cook's cables. In the United States, many of the larger papers published Cook's personal account on 2 September, the same day it appeared copyrighted in *The Herald*, some having paid for permission, and some (such as *The New York Times*) having stolen the copy from the Paris edition (with its nine-hour-earlier release time). All of the major New York papers ran Cook's story no later than the next day.

Cook's claim received sensational treatment throughout the major press of the United States. *The Herald*, *The Sun*, the *American*, *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, and *The Examiner* of San Francisco all gave the story banner headlines, while *The Times*, the *Tribune*, *The World*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Daily Globe*, *The Chicago Daily News*, and *The Kansas City Star* featured it with at least two-column heads (see Illustration 5). Most of the papers gave two or more full pages of coverage to the story its first day, frequently with highly eulogistic editorials, such as the one in the *New York American* that called 1909 the "year of wonders" and Cook's attainment of the Pole "an epoch of marvels."

Although most of the more conservative English morning dailies did not break with their standard single-column headline typography, they did use more than four decks, the maximum number that was common at the time (Hutt 1973: 82). Thus, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Standard*, and *The Daily News* ran their initial accounts of Cook's claim under five decks, while the *Daily Mail* used six. The papers also gave considerable space to the articles, particularly the *Daily Mail*, which published six columns about Cook on 3 September despite a recent decision by Northcliffe that "adventure" stories were not to receive the kind of prominent play that he felt should be reserved for important national topics (Startt 1988: 279).

The coverage actually increased in the following days, as more information was obtained and more individuals were interviewed for their reactions. But just because the newspapers realized that Cook's claim was too important a story not to cover, did not mean that they all immediately accepted his statements. From the beginning, *The*



THE NORTH POLE IS DISCOVERED BY DR. FREDERICK A. COOK, WHO CABLES TO THE HERALD AN EXCLUSIVE ACCOUNT OF HOW HE SET THE AMERICAN FLAG ON THE WORLD'S TOP



Fighting Famine and Ice, the Courageous Explorer Reaches the Great Goal

...s a New Highway, an Interesting Strip of Animated Nature, Big Game Haunts and a Triangle of Land of 30,000 Square Miles

...COMPANIED BY ONLY TWO ESKIMOS AND TWENTY-SIX DOGS IN LAST STAGE

...After Obstacle Is Overcome Until at Last the Triumph Comes and the Stars and Stripes Are Set Waving on the Summit of the Earth.

...ANGER TORTURES ON THE HOMEWARD JOURNEY

...Explains in His Own Story of His Great Exploit, Tells of the Heroism Liked by Him and His Companions Until They Reached Civilization's Outpost.

NOTICE TO PUBLISHERS.

REPRODUCTION in whole or in part of Dr. Cook's story of the Pole...



DR. COOK AS HE APPEARED JUST BEFORE SAILING.

...and then we pushed out into the polar wasteland almost unendurable in the daily routine from the southern point of Herberg Island.

...The crossing of the circumpolar park was begun three days later. The other Eskimos forming the rear supporting party remained. The trails had been reduced by the weight of the stores.

...The first day presented long marches and with corresponding progress. The big load which weighed the heaviest on the trail was made up of little sleds.

...Low temperatures and persistent winds made life a torture, but we pushed on, eating dried seal and blubber and drinking hot tea, while our comrades were miserably in bed.

...The observations gave our position latitude 84 deg. 17 min., longitude 94 deg. 30 min.

...The drift ice was driving eastward with wind force to six or seven miles daily.

...We were now about 200 miles from the Pole and the sled loads were reduced.

...Beyond Where Life Is. Neither the footprints of bears nor the howl of seals were detected.

The Herald Gets First Story of Finding of North Pole

The first news of Dr. Cook's discovery of the North Pole reached America...

The North Pole the Most Cheerless Spot That Can Be Imagined, Says Dr. Cook

When the Discoverer Stood at Last on the One Point That Has Stirred the Ambitions of Centuries His One Feeling Was Intense Loneliness.

NO NORTH, NO EAST AND NO WEST THERE; ALL SOUTH, NO MATTER WHICH DIRECTION

HOW THE NORTH POLE LOOKS

That a cheerless spot to have proved the existence of one for so many years...

From the eighteenth to the eighteenth, much to our surprise was the indication of land ice.

For two days we traveled over the which resembled a glacial surface. The usual sea ice lines of demarcation were absent and there were no hummocks or deep crevices.

The ice spread on the narrow apex of open water so rapidly that little delay was caused in crossing from one field to another.

In the enforced effort every human strand was strained, and at camping time there was no longer sufficient energy to erect a snow shelter, though the temperature was still very low.

The all test was proceed late in the day and the change proved agreeable. It encouraged a more cheerful attitude of the crew.

It seemed that something must come the horizon to mark the important area into which we were pushing.

The ice steadily improved, but still there was a depressing monotony of scene and life had no pleasure, no spiritual recreation.

But there came an end to this as to all things. On April 21 the first corrected altitude of the sea gate 90 deg. 30 min. 00 sec. The peak, therefore, was in sight.

Banner headline about Frederick Cook's attainment of the North Pole; from The New York Herald, 2 September 1909

*New York Times* (which held the exclusive rights to Peary's accounts) was dubious, and its managing editor, Carr Van Anda, wrote an editorial under the cautious headline HAS MAN REACHED THE POLE? (2 September 1909). Likewise, the *New-York Tribune* (the owner of which—Whitelaw Reid—had long been an admirer of Peary) did not proclaim Cook's discovery a fact, but headlined its initial story NORTH POLE REPORTED FOUND BY DR. COOK (2 September 1909).

This skepticism was also initially shown by the public at large, according to *The Daily Telegraph*, which stated:

Keen business men on their way to their offices, who paused to read the announcement, usually smiled incredulously, and passed along without comment. It is not denied that Dr. Cook may have reached the North Pole, and there is no patriotic American who does not wish most fervently that the New York physician may have achieved this dream of ages, the goal for which so many heroes of all nations have vainly struggled and died, but, to speak frankly, the average American has become so entirely accustomed to the announcement of wonderful discoveries in the American newspaper Press, which subsequent events have failed to justify, that he pauses by instinct, and, before accepting the announcement literally, he naturally demands abundant proof. (3 September 1909)

There certainly were doubts from members of both the polar and scientific communities. Admiral George W. Melville, a hero of the *Jeannette* expedition and search, immediately stated, "Without backing, money, outfit or equipment, I don't see how Dr. Cook could have reached the pole, let alone lived through the return journey....I can't conceive that Mr. Cook has done it on 'his nerve,' so to speak" (*The New York Herald* 2 September 1909). The explorer Evelyn Baldwin was even more doubtful, proclaiming, "This cannot be substantiated....It is perfectly easy for a man to go to a certain point and then to say that he has reached the Pole....I cannot accept this statement...unless far better evidence is offered" (*New York American* 2 September 1909). The day after these statements, Melville made yet a stronger condemnation: "After reading the dispatches to-day I am more convinced than ever that the reported discovery of the north pole is a fake" (*The New York Times* 3 September 1909). Even some members of the Explorers' Club, of which Cook was one of the founders and had succeeded Greely as the President, were quoted as expressing concern with the original story, and not understanding why, if Cook had reached the Pole in only 35 days, it had taken him more than 16 months to return to civilization (*The World* 2 September 1909).

Meanwhile, scientific doubts were expressed by the noted British geographer and meteorologist Hugh Robert Mill (*The World* 4 September 1909); Louis C. Bernacchi, a physicist who had been a member of two Antarctic expeditions (*The Daily News* 3 September 1909); and Harvard astronomer Percival Lowell, who added, "scientifically

the discovery of the North Pole is of just the same significance as a new record in the 100 yard dash" (*The Boston Daily Globe* 3 September 1909).

Despite the doubters, most members of the polar and scientific communities, and most newspaper reports, were overwhelmingly favorable to Cook. On 2 September, *The Herald* announced that Cook had received the congratulations of many explorers, including Amos Bonsall, the last living member of Kane's expedition; General Adolphus W. Greely, who called Cook's journey "the most extraordinary feat in polar exploration" (and who had been antagonistic toward Peary ever since 1902, when the latter had decried "Greely's folly" for abandoning Fort Conger to head south); Anthony Fiala, who for many years had been a close friend of Cook's and had even recommended him for the position Fiala received as leader of the second Ziegler North Polar expedition; Robert Falcon Scott, who had obtained a farthest south in 1902 as the leader of the British National Antarctic Expedition (1901-1904); Ernest Shackleton, the Anglo-Irish explorer who had broken Scott's farthest south by reaching only 97 miles from the South Pole in January 1909; and Roald Amundsen, who was quoted as saying that it must have been "the most brilliant sledge trip in the history of polar exploration."

The belief in Cook's veracity took a quantum leap on 4 September, when he arrived in Copenhagen, where he was met by the Danish crown prince, the United States minister to Denmark, and tens of thousands of cheering well-wishers (Egan 1910). He was immediately swept away in a current of impassioned hero-worship and feted almost continuously for his proclaimed achievements. He was also deluged with so many reporters, that it seemed "Fleet Street had moved to Copenhagen" (Cook 1911b: 465). In a triumphant press conference attended by more than 80 journalists, Cook disarmed his critics by stating that he had proofs of his exploit and that he would soon produce them for the proper scientific organizations. His incredible story, along with his apparent naiveté, honesty, and sincerity, kept the reporters spellbound and won them to his cause (Gibbs 1923: 45). W.T. Stead, as doyen of the press (and representing not only *Review of Reviews* but the Hearst newspapers), asked most of the questions, and, at the end of the session, spoke for the assembly when he paid a tribute of admiration and homage to the discoverer of the North Pole.

Literally overnight, Cook became the media darling of the Western world.<sup>5</sup> Stead's assessment of the explorer was typical of those of the next several days: "Everything a clever rogue would do instinctively if he wished to hoax the public Dr. Cook did not do" (Stead 1909: 328). Stead's initial trust of Cook meant a great deal to the reading public, because Stead was not enough a believer in the innate goodness of man to be easily fooled by a simple fraud. Afterwards he was even more positive about the explorer: "Dr. Cook leaves the impression on those whom he met at Copenhagen that

the discovery of the North Pole is of just the same significance as a new record in the 100 yard dash" (*The Boston Daily Globe* 3 September 1909).

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he is the furthest possible remove from the type of man who would set out to befool the public on a matter of such universal interest. He seemed to us all an honest man at first acquaintance, and those who saw most of him believed in him most" (Stead 1909: 329).

Yet one reporter continued to hold out against the beliefs of the majority. Philip Gibbs, who was later knighted for his outstanding correspondence from the front during World War I, was the first English journalist to contact Cook, managing an interview while the explorer was still on board *Hans Egede*. When Gibbs asked to see Cook's diaries, journal, or observations, the American exploded at him, "I bring the same proofs as every other explorer. I bring my story. Do you doubt that? When Shackleton and Peary came home you believed what they told you. Why, then, should you disbelieve me?" (*The Daily Chronicle* 7 September 1909). However, the comment served only to make Gibbs suspicious: "I had believed him. But at that strange, excited protest and some uneasy, almost guilty look about the man, I thought, 'Hullo! What's wrong? This man protests too much.' From that moment I had grave doubts about him" (Gibbs 1923: 43).

Disturbed not only by Cook's aggressive behavior and evasiveness, but by the inaccuracies and lack of cohesion in his story, Gibbs reported his suspicions in *The Daily Chronicle*, beginning with a front-page feature with the two-column headline DOUBTS ABOUT DR. COOK'S STORY (6 September 1909). For the next week, Gibbs continued to attack Cook's story. He pointed out that Cook had already changed his claim of temperatures from Celsius to Fahrenheit, that Cook's claims to have averaged 15 miles a day were greater than any expert thought probable, and that his measurements of longitude and latitude were too accurate to be realistic:

All Arctic explorers...are agreed that at the time of the year when Dr. Cook claims to have reached the Pole, it would have been impossible to fix its position within minutes to say nothing of seconds. It is not necessary to dispute Dr. Cook's contention that he got an observation of 89deg. 59min. 46sec.—that is quite possible, but no trained observer would have drawn the conclusion that he must necessarily be within 14sec. of the Pole. (*The Daily Chronicle* 7 September 1909)

Gibbs also expressed disbelief that a man who had no white companions accompany him to the Pole would have been willing to part with his proofs that he had accomplished the deed. Yet, he pointed out, Cook had done exactly that. Or had he? In fact, Gibbs said, Cook had changed his story about his proofs a number of times, telling the *Daily Mail* that they were with Harry Whitney in Etah; telling *The Evening News* that his observations and notebooks were with him in Copenhagen, telling *The Daily News* that part of his original observations had been sent to America and part kept in hand; and telling Gibbs that all of his material had gone on to the United States (*The*

*Daily Chronicle* 8 September 1909). "This explorer," Gibbs said, "is a man who says one thing to one man and a different thing to another man, and how to build a bridge over these contradictions is beyond my imagination" (*The Daily Chronicle* 7 September 1909).

But Gibbs' reports generally fell on deaf ears. Cook was the man of the hour, admired the world over and in Denmark caught in a whirl of banquets, presentations, royal congratulations, and honorary degrees. So even when Gibbs and the Danish explorer Peter Freuchen analyzed Cook's statements about distances traveled, sledge weights, the amount of food drawn by the dogs, and the time-tables, and showed they were not only contradictory but downright absurd, the public was on Cook's side (Gibbs 1923: 46; Freuchen 1953: 90-93). Gibbs found himself vilified in the Danish and English press and even challenged to a duel (Gibbs 1923: 51). And Freuchen's editor refused to publish his stories about Cook, commenting: "We cannot wine and dine a man one day and call him a fraud the next" (quoted in Freuchen 1953: 92).

It was at just one of these occasions—in fact, a farewell banquet in Copenhagen for the journalists who had been covering Cook's return—that the entire complexion of the North Pole story changed. The Danish host received a message that so surprised him he handed it to Stead to read out. The man who had done more than anyone else to bring the New Journalism to England made the most sensational announcement of his career: "In a wire from Indian Harbor, Labrador, dated September 6, 1909, Peary says, 'Stars and Stripes nailed to the Pole'" (*New York Evening Journal* 6 September 1909).

### 9.5 "THE POLE AT LAST!"

On 7 September 1909 Peary's claim to have reached the North Pole was splashed throughout the papers of the United States and Europe. And no paper gave the story more coverage than *The New York Times*, which had first become involved with Peary the previous spring, shortly before he left for the north. For a number of years, Peary had sold his exclusive accounts to *The New York Herald*, but in 1908 Bennett's executives did not express much interest in what they viewed as likely yet another fruitless expedition toward the Pole. Peary's accounts had made less and less of an impact on the paper's sales, and its executives assumed that another such story would not bring with it anything more than had Peary's farthest north of 1906.

However, one editor who did believe in Peary was William Reick, who in 1908 moved from *The Herald* to *The Times*. Reick persuaded his superiors to pay Peary \$4,000 for his story of the attainment of the North Pole, with a clause in the contract stating that Peary would repay the money if he did not reach 90° north. Thus, when Peary returned, his messages went directly to *The Times* (Bartlett 1931: 218-220).

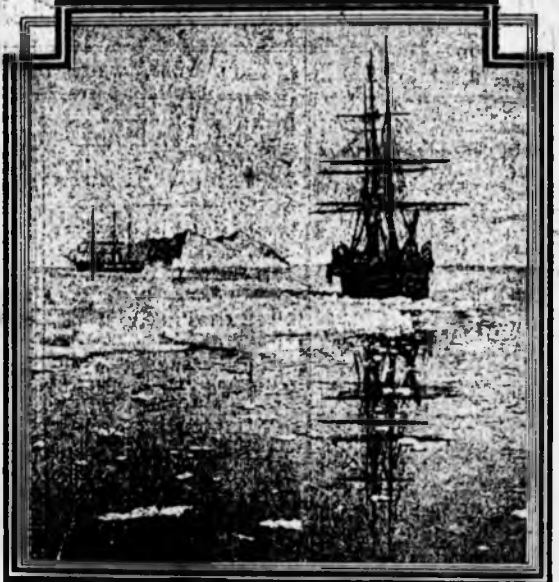
Actually, Peary's full story—which ran to some 7,300 words—came in only slowly, due first to weather problems slowing the progress of *Roosevelt* and then to the fact that it was being transmitted from Indian Harbor, a small station on the coast of Labrador. The story was not published until 10 and 11 September, and then appeared again in one piece in the Sunday supplement of 12 September. It told how throughout March 1908 the forward parties had methodically moved supplies closer and closer to the the North Pole. One by one the supporting parties had turned back, until only Peary, Henson, Bob Bartlett (the captain of *Roosevelt*), and a number of Eskimos remained. On 31 March, the expedition had reached a latitude of 87° 47', the farthest north ever recorded. The next day, Peary selected Henson and four Eskimos to accompany him to the Pole and sent Bartlett and the remaining Eskimos back.<sup>6</sup>

Peary and his party had been averaging fewer than 12 miles per day before Bartlett's return, but suddenly their speed increased dramatically—as Peary claimed the interfering leads and pressure ridges disappeared—and the 150-mile final dash took them only five days. On 6 April 1909, almost one year after the date Cook claimed to have been at the Pole, Peary also reportedly reached it, marking his achievement, according to his book *The North Pole*, with the entry into his diary: "The Pole at last! The prize of three centuries. My dream and ambition for twenty years. Mine at last. I cannot bring myself to realize it. It all seems so simple and commonplace" (Peary 1910: 288).

Peary's trip back to his last camp was even more impressive than his outward journey, taking only three days. He then returned directly to his main base at Cape Columbia, reaching it only five days after Bartlett,

Peary's announcement received even more attention than had Cook's. *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, the latter to which *The Times* had sold the rights to Peary's story—as it also had done to *The Times* of London—had massive coverage, with the New York paper giving the news five full pages and the Chicago journal four pages. Both papers also published numerous photographs of Peary and the members of his expedition (see Illustration 6). But the other major newspapers were not outdone. *The New York Herald* gave the story five pages; the *New-York Tribune* gave it four and one-third pages; and *The World*, *The Sun*, and *The Washington Post* printed four pages; all of them printed photographs of Peary and his company. As they had with Cook, *The Herald* and the *American* both ran their initial stories under three-line banner heads, and within two days, even the headlines of *The New York Times* had expanded to four columns: COMMANDER PEARY'S PRELIMINARY ACCOUNT OF HIS SUCCESSFUL VOYAGE TO THE NORTH POLE.

# Peary, His Ship and the Men of His Crew



PEARY ON BOARD THE ROOSEVELT IN THE ARCTIC

THE ROOSEVELT (LEFT) DEPARTING FROM THE PEARY SHIP ALBATROSS AT NARLAND, GREENLAND, APRIL 2, 1897

PEARY'S COMPANY AND CREW ABOARD THE ROOSEVELT

...written out by the Secretary, and was given to Mr. Briggman to deliver to Peary.

**THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.**

...to the letter were the names of the members attending the meeting, including Messrs. Carpenter Whitney, J. P. Morgan, Anthony Flata, W. C. Calkins and Henry H. Walsh.

**All Credit to Peary.**

...Secretary of the Board of Directors, who has been in the habit of being believed that Peary had reached the pole and that he could not be so easily deceived.

...the event asked, "Is it a small matter, let us await his documents, his observations can be controlled easily by those of Commander Peary, and either confirmed or refuted."

**Evening Press Aspects Tenable.**

...The evening newspapers of Paris published long accounts of Commander Peary, his previous adventures, and his announcement that he had reached the north pole.

...In these accounts Peary is depicted as a man of great energy and determination, who has achieved a feat that has long been considered impossible.

**Public Eagerly Discuss Arctic.**

...there is practically no doubt of Commander Peary's exploit, some scientists are undecided about Dr. Cook's claims.

**Prof. Wilhelm Eschsch, Director of the Berlin University Geographical Institute, said today:**

"It is too early to form a judgment regarding Peary's success from the brief telegrams published, but assuming that he really reached the pole, it will tend to put an end to the doubts about Dr. Cook's success. I cannot deny, however, that I am still sceptical of Dr. Cook's personality and just the same in his favor he has a reputation free from all empty boasting, and certainly possesses tenacity and energy enough to reach the pole."

...Dr. Helman, Director of the Meteorological Institute of Berlin, said: "Several fortunate circumstances, but especially the favorable condition of the polar ice, having been encountered at the same time, has made possible the discovery of the north pole by two daring and tried polar explorers, each operating during the same year, but quite independent of each other. To both Dr. Cook and to Commander Peary one can say, 'Well done.' I hope the success of both these travelers will cause polar research to live anew, and it is to be wished that the polar cap now be conquered by all the civilized nations of the world."

**Believe Cook Was There.**

...public opinion probably will support Commander Peary.

**The Hamburg Fremdenblatt says:** "The duplication of the discovery of the pole is so singular that now doubts necessarily arise."

**The Nachrichten says:** "Those who considered Dr. Cook's success due to unusually favorable weather conditions were right. Doubt can no longer exist that two Americans almost simultaneously discovered the pole."

**The Deutsche Tagesblätter are divided in their opinions.** The Neussche Nachrichten predicts that a heated contest over the question of priority in reaching the pole. It says that doubtless Dr. Cook speaks the truth and found the pole before Peary. The other paper, however, has been any doubt, adds the paper, if the high-strung first arrival would had not made the people sceptical.

**BELONGS TO AMERICA.**

**Swiss Professor Says Any Territory at the Pole is Ours.**

**Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES, GENEVA, Sept. 7.—Prof. Berget of Geneva University, one of the greatest authorities in Europe on certain phases of international law, said today that if a claim of the United States to north pole territory had rested on its reported discovery by Dr. Cook, that country would have had great difficulty in establishing its rights in the eyes of the world, for Cook's expedition was a private one, and any land he discovered would belong to him, of course he might have waived his claim and presented the newly discovered territory to the Nation. In regard to the Peary case, he said it was different, as Peary is an officer of the United States Navy, and Prof. Berget believed the expedition to have been subsidized by the United States Government.**

...and enterprise is regarded as such that he should not be considered as a factor without the fullest grant.

**GREENLY LOOKS TO ANTARCTIC.**

**Declares That the Discoveries of Wilkes Should Not Be Neglected.**

**CENTRE CONWAY, N. H., Sept. 7.—Major Gen. A. W. Greely, U. S. A. (retired) who has participated in polar expeditions, said today of the discovery of the north pole:**

...Peary's magnificent polar work has earned the admiration of the world, and although the honors of the farthest north were awarded from him, it was by another American whose record Peary has equaled. Peary's property gives distinctive honor to Dr. Cook, but of greater importance and higher value in the spirit of heroic endeavor and unswerving devotion to the accomplishment of a feat that centers credit on the Nation by which such men were animated.

**"CAPTAIN BOB" SENDS WORD. Commander of Roosevelt Now Writes "It is Accomplished"**

Photographs of Robert E. Peary and Roosevelt, from The New York Times, 8 September 1909



Again, the English newspapers gave the story neither the total space nor the headline size of the American papers. But the amount was staggering compared to normal articles. For example, *The Daily Telegraph* proclaimed Peary's feat with six decks and eight columns of copy running onto two pages.<sup>7</sup>

But it was not just Peary's claimed achievement that received the attention. Even more dramatic were his attacks on Cook. Before Peary's full story had even been received, he had denounced Cook as a liar, had stated that no trace of him had been found at the Pole, and had claimed to "have him nailed" (*The New York Times* 8 September 1909). When Peary's story of his journey to the Pole was run in *The New York Times*, beside it ran a statement from Peary which said:

Do not trouble about Cook's story or attempt to explain any discrepancies in his statements. The affair will settle itself.

He has not been at the Pole on April 21st, 1908, or at any other time. He has simply handed the public a gold brick.

These statements are made advisedly, and I have proof of them. When he makes a full statement of his journey over his signature to some geographical society or other reputable body, if that statement contains the claim that he has reached the pole, I shall be in a position to furnish material that may prove distinctly interesting reading for the public. (11 September 1909)

With the influx of Peary's messages, *The New York Times* quickly perceived a sensation that could increase its circulation like that of *The World* or the *New York Journal* a decade earlier.<sup>8</sup> Even better, it hoped that its gains could be made at the expense of *The Herald*, which not only was a more reasonable target than the papers of Pulitzer or Hearst, but was the strongest supporter of Cook. So Peary and *The Times*, which staked its entire reputation on the older explorer and his claims, began an aggressive, unrelenting campaign against Cook, one that would last for months.

Peary was not, of course, the first person to attack Cook's veracity. In the days immediately following Cook's announcement, Peary's followers had condemned Cook for using the senior explorer's route (even though Cook was many miles to the west of Peary) and his Eskimos and dogs (even though Peary did not, of course, own these people or their animals). The extensive—and biased—coverage of this issue by *The Times* led the *Tribune*, which was partial to Peary but still open-minded, to comment about the real reason for the reportive zeal of *The Times* on these issues:

The controversy between Commander Peary's backers and Dr. Cook respecting the employment of Eskimaus and the use of dogs is not likely to make an impression in England, although Sir George Nares has prematurely discussed the matter. Jealousy of "The Herald's" journalistic enterprise is not felt in London, as it is in New York. (5 September 1909)

The reports of Philip Gibbs also continued after Peary's announcements, and, after speaking to Cook following a lecture in Copenhagen, Gibbs reported that the doctor

"flushed and perspired under the stabbing queries," and that his answers "prove conclusively that his claims to have reached the North Pole belong to the realm of fairy tales" (*The Daily Chronicle* 10 September 1909). At that stage, *The New York Times* began to reproduce *The Daily Chronicle's* articles at great length.

Managing editor Carr Van Anda also began to emphasize *The Times'* success in other ways. Next to Peary's first account was a front-page box giving notice to other publishers that Peary's story had been copyrighted and that any reproduction of it, without permission, was illegal and would be prosecuted. It was a typical Van Anda action. He predicted shrewdly that it would serve to drive home to the reading public the fact that *The Times* was first with great stories (Berger 1951: 176).

However, a number of competing newspapers—including *The World* and *The Sun* and, in Chicago, *The Daily Inter Ocean*, *The Chicago Record-Herald*, and Hearst's *Chicago American*—tried to surmount the copyright problem by having their London correspondents cable the story to them as run in *The Times* of that city. *The New York Times* quickly obtained an injunction against these papers, although it was ultimately overturned by the famous judge Learned Hand (*The Daily Telegraph* 13 September 1909). Van Anda later admitted that the point of the exercise was not to protect Peary's financial position, as had been stated, but to make the public believe that *The Times* had to protect its own hard work from the grasping and unscrupulous efforts of its competitors (Fine 1933).

Meanwhile, Bennett had paid Cook \$25,000 for the rights to four exclusive installments to be used in *The Herald's* Sunday supplements, accounts that Bennett serialized in September and October and then sold to a number of other papers for a profit.<sup>9</sup> These papers, and particularly *The Herald*, felt compelled in their own interests to advocate Cook's claims for as long as practical and either to believe the doctor's story or at least to pretend to believe it. Although this was later perceived by some as an unfortunate lapse from impartiality (Davis 1921: 293; Berger 1951: 176-177), it was no more so than that of *The Times*, and must be considered natural, since at the time, Cook actually had more supporters than Peary.

Thus, while most of the press saw the Cook-Peary controversy as an exciting event that would help sell newspapers, to *The Times* and *The Herald* it became a war, and the two immediately lined up behind their respective candidates (Freeman 1961: 172). *The Times* became more aggressive and negative about Cook, while *The Herald*, which had initially been profoundly positive towards Peary—running the headline ROBERT E. PEARY, AFTER 23 YEARS SEIGE, REACHES NORTH POLE: ADDS "THE BIG NAIL" TO NEW YORK YACHT CLUB'S TROPHIES (7 September 1909)—and

had carried Cook's congratulatory comments to the other explorer,<sup>10</sup> was put in a defensive position and slowly began to try to protect Cook and itself.

During this period, *The Herald's* campaign was not nearly as negative as that of *The Times*. Rather than attack its opponent, it concentrated mainly on positives about Cook, under such headlines as MEDAL PRESENTED TO DR. COOK AS THE DISCOVERER OF THE POLE (8 September 1909), THRONGS CHEER DR. COOK AS HE LEAVES COPENHAGEN ON HOMEWARD VOYAGE (11 September 1909), and GERMAN PRESS LEANS TOWARD DR. COOK (13 September 1909). At the same time, it tried to offset some of the accusations about Cook using Peary's territory and men by discussing the seizure of Cook's supplies at Etah by Peary (13 September 1909) and telling how Peary had been willing to leave white men behind in the Arctic if they did not do as he bid (14 September 1909). However, perhaps the most subtle dig at Peary was that *The Herald* constantly avoided calling him "Commander," rather using the term "Mr."<sup>11</sup>

*The Herald* received some help in its fight from an unexpected source—Peary. His announcement of reaching the Pole had found immediate believers among many of those who had already doubted Cook. For example, Melville stated, "Good for Peary. I am not surprised that a message has been received from him announcing his success" (*The New York Herald* 7 September 1909). And Nares, who had been one of Cook's most vocal English skeptics, sent a message that read: "Owing to your well known veracity, all will accept your statement that you have reached the north pole" (*The New York Times* 8 September 1909).

But Peary's personal and brutal accusations quickly had a far different effect on the majority of people than he had intended. Between 11 and 13 September, a large number of statements from the press throughout both the United States and England showed that Peary's aggressiveness was losing him more support than it was gaining. "Our correspondent adds that quite a number of new supporters of Dr. Cook have come out in the last twenty-four hours, some of them bluntly stating that they do so because Commander Peary has been over-hasty in denouncing his rival" (*The Daily News* 11 September 1909). "It is not putting it too strongly to say that Washington, which was predisposed to be friendly to Robert E. Peary, this being his home, has become disgusted with his savage attacks on Dr. Cook's claim to discovery of the great prize of exploration" (*The New York Herald* 12 September 1909). "The Germans tend to believe that both Peary's friends as well as himself have shown too bitter a feeling toward Dr. Cook, a feeling which, they say, is neither sportsmanlike, scientific nor ethical" (*New-York Tribune* 12 September 1909).

Many members of the polar community also began publicly to back Cook over Peary. Explorers had traditionally kept their bickerings and bad feelings out of the public eye because, as Amundsen once put it, "It is a pleasant and proper trait...to try to forget these things when success has crowned one's efforts, and to bury them in the agreeable oblivion of mutual felicitation" (Amundsen 1927: 130). Peary's attacks had violated this dictum, with a result that Evelyn Baldwin, one of Cook's most severe critics, now came to the doctor's defense against Peary, while Sverdrup, never a fan of the man who had once been so haughty to him, stated: "Dr. Cook is amply prepared to demolish Commander Peary at the proper time. He has scientific ammunition with which he can riddle every accusation that Peary, in his disappointment at not being the first to reach the Pole, may make" (*The World* 9 September 1909).

Suddenly Peary's negativity and hostility, with his demands for Cook to produce proofs, began to be deflected back at himself: "A change has set in. Feeling in favor of Dr. Cook is on the increase. If Peary is to prevent further damage to his reputation, he must prove his assertions at once. If he has any evidence the world is entitled to hear it without further delay" (*The Boston Daily Globe* 14 September 1909).

Indeed, the proofs demanded by Peary from Cook were just as dangerous to his own claim as to that of his younger rival, as was shown in the days while Cook was at sea between Copenhagen and New York (12 to 20 September). There had been considerable eyebrow-raising by both the scientific community and Peary's supporters when they heard that Cook had averaged 14 to 15 miles per day, and even Shackleton, who was kindly disposed to Cook, had stated that "no other expedition has been able to do anything near this" (*Daily Mail* 3 September 1909). But when Peary's pace of 30 miles per day to the pole and closer to 50 on the way back was announced, the carping ended. Moreover, even Peary's supporters "express keen disappointment that their hero was not accompanied to the Pole by anyone except a negro and four Eskimos. On all sides it is now conceded that the controversy is one of one white man's word against another's, and the witnesses for Dr. Cook are as good as those for Commander Peary" (*The Daily News* 11 September 1909).

Despite, or possibly because of, Peary's attacks, Cook, and not Peary, remained the man of the hour. A series of newspaper polls showed that Cook was the heavy favorite of the reading public as the one of the two who had reached the North Pole. For example, in a poll in the *Toledo Blade*, 550 readers responded that they believed Cook, while only 10 believed Peary (Berton 1988: 605). And out of more than 76,000 votes cast in a similar poll taken by *The Pittsburgh Press*, an amazing 96 percent responded that Cook had reached the North Pole first, while more than 76 percent did not believe that Peary had attained it at all. Remarkably, not one voter challenged the

claims of both men, with all assuming that at least one of them had reached his goal (Herbert 1989: 294).

As both men approached the United States, Cook due to arrive in New York on 21 September on the Danish steamer *Oscar II*, and Peary due a few days later from the north, the New York papers—particularly *The Times* and *The Herald*—were thick with charges and countercharges. The next few weeks, if not months, promised to be unpleasant for the two explorers, but blissfully sensational for the press. As Anthony Fiala, then a firm partisan of Cook, summed up the situation for *The Daily Telegraph*: "All things considered, the controversy has now become more mystifying than ever; and the signal has been given for a mud-slinging contest, which promises to furnish ample scope for fanatics on either side" (16 September 1909).

#### 9.6. A TRIUMPH FOR PEARY AND *THE TIMES*

By 21 September, when Cook arrived in New York, the polar controversy was no longer the top story for most newspapers in either the United States or Britain. Certainly it received attention, but it was only those papers that had sold their souls to either Cook or Peary, that continued to make it the lead story of the day. The two most notable of these—*The Herald* and *The Times*—seemed to have settled down into a long-term war; on the part of *The Herald* it was a war of sniping and attrition, while to *The Times* the strategy was one of carpet bombing.

Cook was met by a huge cheering crowd probably numbering somewhere between the 50,000 claimed by *The Times* and the "hundreds of thousands" mentioned by *The Herald*. But before he even disembarked, Cook lashed out for the first time at his antagonist, raising a point that would ultimately help lead to an inquiry as unwelcome to Peary as the current one was to Cook:

Commander Peary has yet given to the world no proof of his own case. My claim has been fully recognized by Denmark and the King of Sweden; the President of the United States has wired me his confidence....Why should Peary be allowed to make himself a self-appointed dictator of my affairs? In justice to himself, in justice to the world and to guard the honor of national prestige, he should be compelled to prove his own case. (*The New York Times* 20 September 1909)

But in addition to making this one valid point, Cook almost immediately, as had been his tendency throughout the month, made several rash statements, answering the demands of Peary's followers by claiming that he had "brought irrefutable proof of my right to the title of discoverer of the North Pole" (*The World* 21 September 1909), stating that he had originals or duplicates of all of his records with him (*The New York Times* 21 September 1909), and insisting that "the Danish Government and the University of Copenhagen as well as the Danish Geographical Society, have...taken over the

virtual guarantee for the sincerity and authenticity of my records. They have stood up for them, so to speak, before the world" (*The New York Herald* 21 September 1909).

Actually, the Danes had not "stood up" for Cook, but had simply accepted his word, in the long tradition of polar exploration. And after his assertions, Cook produced no proofs whatsoever. Instead, he stated that all of his proofs would have to go back to the University of Copenhagen to be examined. Then, on 24 September, he launched a national lecture tour. Shortly afterwards, he announced that it would be at least three months before his proofs were ready to be submitted. This drew a severe reproach from the most high-minded of all New York papers, *The Evening Post*:

Now this might be allowed, perhaps, to pass without comment, were it not for the fact that Dr. Cook has been utilizing this period of suspended judgment on the part of competent critics to transmute into very handsome profits the uncritical enthusiasm of the multitude, and that there is no indication that he means to do otherwise with any additional time that may be gained by further postponement of a decisive test...Dr. Cook has finished the publication of his serial newspaper story; he has given a number of lectures in various parts of the country, at high admission price, to great audiences; now let him address himself to the task of establishing his case to the satisfaction of competent and impartial inquirers. (9 October 1909)

Meanwhile, the attacks on and evidence against Cook were mounting. Bridgman's paper, the *Brooklyn Standard-Union*, revealed that two of the photographs published with Cook's story in *The Herald* were actually seven years old. Upon Peary's return (which *The Times* called "triumphal" and *The Herald* "cheerless"), the older explorer, despite efforts from the members of the Peary Arctic Club to get him to stop, continued his attacks on his rival. And George Kennan, the respected Siberian traveler, took a lead from Gibbs and Freuchen and published three articles analyzing Cook's food consumption on his Arctic journey (Kennan 1909a; 1909b; 1909c). "No man and no dog has ever lived and worked for twelve weeks, under polar conditions, on eight ounces of pemmican, or its equivalent, per day," Kennan wrote, commenting that if he had been restricted to the same diet in Siberia, "I should have expected to perish on the ice in less than thirty days" (Kennan 1909b: 341).

But the most devastating blow came from an unexpected place—Alaska. Before Cook had ever left on his North Pole journey, rumors had surfaced that his ascent of Mount McKinley in 1906 had been faked. After the initial expedition had broken up, Cook had suddenly returned inland with one horsepacker, Ed Barrille. They reappeared several weeks later, with Cook claiming to have conquered the mountain. Belmore Browne, the artist on the expedition later described the aftermath:

At this time we heard the rumor that Dr. Cook and Barrille had reached the top of Mount McKinley. We knew the character of the country that

guarded the southern face of the big mountain, we had traveled in that country, and we knew the time that Dr. Cook had been absent was too short to allow of his even reaching the mountain. We therefore denied the rumor. At last the Doctor and Barrille joined us and to my surprise Dr. Cook confirmed the rumor....As soon as we were alone I turned to him [Barrille] and asked him what he knew about Mount McKinley, and after a moment's hesitation he answered: "I can tell you all about the big peaks just south of the mountain, but if you want to know about Mount McKinley go and ask Cook." I had felt all along that Barrille would tell me the truth, and after his statement I kept the knowledge to myself.

I now found myself in an embarrassing position. I knew that Dr. Cook had not climbed Mount McKinley. Barrille had told me so and in addition I knew it in the same way that any New Yorker would know that no man could walk from the Brooklyn Bridge to Grant's tomb in ten minutes.

This knowledge, however, did not constitute proof, and I knew that before I could make the public believe the truth I should have to collect some facts. I wrote immediately on my return to Professor [Herschel] Parker telling him my opinions and knowledge concerning the climb, and I received a reply from him saying that he believed me implicitly and that the climb, under the existing conditions, was impossible. (Browne 1913: 70-71)

In 1907 Browne and Parker stated to the members of the American Geographical Society and the Explorers' Club that they were convinced Cook had faked his climb of Mount McKinley. But such talk was stopped both by Cook's threat of a libel suit and then by his sudden disappearance to the Arctic.

The topic resurfaced shortly after Cook's arrival in Denmark. On 5 September *The Sun* commented: "A previous achievement of Dr. Cook, the ascent of Mount McKinley, in Alaska, was effected under conditions which were not dissimilar to those incidental to his latest feat, that is to say, he ascended the mountain unaccompanied by geographers and men of science had been disinclined to credit him with the performance." The same story followed with a statement by Fred Printz, one of the guides who had accompanied the initial expedition before returning with Browne and Parker: "I am just as sure as I am living that Cook never saw the North Pole. Any man who made the representations he did of his alleged ascent of Mount McKinley is capable of making the statements credited to him in the press today."

Although the subject was largely ignored by the hero-worshipping public, it did not go away entirely. On 9 September Parker's doubts about Cook appeared in *The Washington Post*, the *New-York Tribune*, *The Examiner*, and dozens of other papers across the United States. And three weeks later, with Cook at the height of his lecture tour, Bridgman leaked to *The New York Times* a letter from the Cornell University professor of geography and geology Ralph Stockman Tarr, who had just returned from Alaska where he found that it was "the almost unanimous verdict of Alaskans knowing that country that the feat was impossible" (*The New York Times* 29 September 1909). Tarr also stated:

I...shall gladly do what little I can to further the inquiry regarding Cook's claim to have climbed Mt. McKinley....I was informed by a number of people that the prospector, Ed Burrill [Barrille], now living in Hamilton, Mont., admitted to his friends that they never got up above 5,000 feet and that he jokes about the way in which the public has been fooled. (*The New York Times* 29 September 1909)

Cook denied all of the charges, but the National Geographic Society (making it unequivocally clear that it was not the impartial observer that it claimed to be) hired the Pinkerton Detective Agency to delve into the Mount McKinley affair. The crushing blow came on 14 October, when the *New York Globe*, owned by General Thomas H. Hubbard, the new president of the Peary Arctic Club, published Barrille's signed affidavit, which stated that at no time had he and Cook been nearer than 14 miles in an air line from the top of Mount McKinley; that the photograph of the summit published in *To the top of the continent* was a peak no more than 8,000 feet high and at least 20 miles in an air line from the top of McKinley; and that Barrille had kept a diary in which Cook had forced him to fill in certain false entries about the days in question.

This report set off a full-fledged controversy of its own, and affidavits and counter-affidavits appeared in the press in rapid succession. *The Herald* sent its reporter Roscoe C. Mitchell to Missoula, Montana, where he obtained an affidavit from Barrille stating that he had been offered \$5,000 for his previous affidavit (*The New York Herald* 20 October 1909). *The Herald* also noted that, prior to his denunciation of Cook, Printz had written to the explorer offering his support in return for an all-expenses-paid trip to New York (20 October 1909). When Cook did not reply, Printz made the statement that had appeared in *The Sun*. Bennett's paper then published an account of the activities of Barrille, showing that he had come to New York at the request and expense of the Peary Arctic Club and that he had maintained frequent contact with Hubbard and Bridgman. The same story also hinted that Barrille's testimony was totally false and had simply been bought by Peary's backers, including *The Times* (*The New York Herald* 22 October 1909). *The Herald* restated its case after Cook and Barrille confronted each other in Hamilton, Montana, quoting Cook's statement that his former traveling companion had lied for "more than thirty pieces of silver" (29 October 1909).

Despite the efforts of *The Herald* in Cook's behalf, Barrille's initial statement and the ensuing field day that *The New York Times* had with the destruction of Cook's Mount McKinley claim turned public opinion from the side of Cook to that of Peary. The public now made the disjointed and curious inversion of logic that if Cook had not reached the top of Mount McKinley, he had not reached the North Pole, and that if he had not reached the North Pole, then Peary must have.



But the change in public opinion did not dampen the vigor with which *The Times* continued to attack Cook, seeing in his demise both the triumph of Peary and the discrediting of *The Herald* (Wright 1970: 244). One of *The Times*' most sensational denunciations of Cook was that he had hired two men, George Dunkle and August Loose, to compile a fake set of observations that could be used to support his claim with the commission at the University of Copenhagen. The story, which ran on 9 and 10 December 1909, filled fully 17 columns, and the subsequent allusions to it ignored the fact that Cook's secretary, Walter Lonsdale, had explained to the *New York American* that the two men had been employed, "for the purpose, not of fabricating records, but merely checking observations by the doctor....Loose, however, did not inspire confidence and was told by Dr. Cook that he did not want his services or figures" (10 December 1909). Despite such indications that Cook had not used these men to help him defraud the public, *The Times* continued to emphasize these charges, particularly when Cook actually sent his materials to the University of Copenhagen.

The Dunkle and Loose scandal, on top of all the other charges, was enough for *The Herald* and the other papers that had supported Cook. He was all but abandoned, as the stories about him grew slimmer and less frequent; he was not forgotten, however, as *The Times* continued its vicious attacks whenever possible.

Any slender hopes that Cook might have had for a return to public favor were further injured in December when the committee in Copenhagen to which he had sent his reports utterly rejected them. Under the headline COOK'S CLAIM TO DISCOVERY OF THE NORTH POLE REJECTED; OUTRAGED DENMARK CALLS HIM A DELIBERATE SWINDLER, *The New York Times* quoted the commission's conclusion:

The data in the documents submitted to us are of such an unsatisfactory character that it is not possible to declare with certainty that the astronomical observations referred to were actually made; there is likewise lacking details in practical matters—such as sledge journeys—which could furnish some control. The Commission is therefore of the opinion that the material transmitted for examination contains no proof whatsoever that Dr. Cook reached the North Pole. (21 December 1909)

An even stronger statement was made the next day by the Danish explorer Knud Rasmussen, who initially had been a strong supporter of Cook: "The papers Cook sent...are almost impudent. No schoolboy could make such calculations. It is a most childish attempt at cheating. Cook has killed himself by his own foolish acts" (*The New York Times* 22 December 1909).

He had indeed. Two days later, even the man who had been perhaps Cook's strongest supporter, Anthony Fiala, had had enough. On Christmas Eve 1909 Fiala signed his name to the decision that Cook should be dropped from the Explorers' Club.

As Cook's reputation tumbled, Peary's soared. With the accusations about Mount McKinley and Dunkle and Loose, Peary again became a national favorite. His popularity increased even more after his meeting on 1 November with the committee selected by the National Geographic Society to examine his proofs. Not that the results of this meeting were ever in doubt. The three members of the committee—Henry Gannett, the Society's vice president; Rear Admiral Colby M. Chester; and O.H. Tittmann, the Superintendent of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey—were all long-time admirers of Peary, and the first two were his close friends. All three had voted in favor of awarding Peary the Society's Gold Medal in 1906, had supported giving a grant to the very expedition they were now investigating, and had stated in advance that they were confident Peary had attained the Pole (Herbert 1989: 299-300).<sup>12</sup> Their "examination," which was cursory at best, took but several hours, during which time, as Gannett later testified to the House Naval Affairs Committee, "We simply sat down with him and read his journal from his original records" (quoted in Hall 1917: 221). Yet what—and how much—they read was uncertain, especially since Tittman later admitted he hardly looked at the material because he "was very much occupied with other matters" (quoted in Hall 1917: 219). Gannett, meanwhile, was so badly informed about what he was reviewing that he later had to be prompted in an interview by the Society's editor Gilbert Grosvenor. And when Peary's instruments were examined, it was after dusk, at a time that even Peary later admitted, "I should imagine that it would not be possible to make tests" (quoted in Wright 1970: 263).

Despite such flawed investigations, the National Geographic Society immediately acknowledged Peary's claims, and the explorer later withstood all pressure to release his observations and notes to any other American organizations, including the U.S. Navy, which had paid his salary, or even the House Naval Affairs Committee. The only official organization that received any of his documents was Britain's Royal Geographical Society, which was sent a copy of his journal and a limited number of observations. When his submission was considered for approval (which was only *after* he had received the Society's gold medal), only 17 of the 35 members of the committee appointed to study his claims were present. Eight voted for Peary, seven against, and two abstained, thus passing Peary's proofs with less than 23 percent of the examining committee in favor (Rawlins 1973: 237).

Peary was even more successful with the general public. Cook, who seemed friendly and agreeable, had been more easily able to please an audience as a speaker than the cold, superior Peary. But Peary was the winner, and people flocked to hear him. He soon was charging a minimum of \$1,000 per lecture, and occasionally receiving as much as \$7,500 (Herbert 1989: 323). Even more important was the fact

that more people could be influenced by newspapers and magazines than by personal appearances. And, perhaps more than any other explorer of his day, Peary understood the way the print medium generated images, its ability to assure fame and support, and, most importantly, how to use it. So he exploited the press and the publishers as the journalists usually exploited explorers. He demanded huge fees for the rights to different, although hardly exclusive, articles about the same adventures. He wrote editorials that said virtually the same thing as his accounts, and sold them to different newspapers. He frequently employed ghost-writers, with the dramatist A.E. Thomas writing 80 percent of his book *The North Pole* (Herbert 1989: 238).<sup>13</sup> And, at one time or another, he gave supposedly exclusive accounts to *The Boston Herald*, *The New York Herald*, *The New York Times*, *The Sun*, *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, *Harper's New Monthly*, *Hampton's Magazine*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *McClure's Magazine*, *Nash's Magazine*, and *The National Geographic Magazine*.

For his book, Peary received an advance of \$15,000, but he was paid even more by *Hampton's Magazine* and *Nash's Magazine*. The former paid him \$40,000 for a nine-part series of articles that appeared between January and September 1910 (Peary 1910b), a series actually written by Elsa Barker, a poet and romance novelist (Gibbons 1976: 12). The latter, which had initially offered Cook \$100,000 to write his account, then paid Peary \$50,000 for an eight-part series (Peary 1910c) that it billed as "the last of the great earth-stories for which the world has waited nearly four hundred years—and it will go down to all ages" (Peary 1910c). Although it is virtually certain that this story was also scripted for Peary, the actual identity of the author remains uncertain.

With the support of *The New York Times* and other press companies, the National Geographic Society, a number of influential politicians, and a professional lobbyist, Peary began a powerful push for the promotion he felt he deserved. In February 1910 the United States Senate passed without opposition and referred to the House of Representatives a bill that would retire Peary with the honors and pension of a rear admiral. Things were not so easy in the House, however. The hearings of the House Naval Affairs Committee began in March 1910, and then were adjourned until January 1911 because Peary refused to produce his original records—the same kind of proofs that he had required of Cook. However, by the time the hearings were resumed, the polar controversy seemed a thing of the distant past: Peary had published a best-selling book, had been credited with two lengthy and successful magazine series,<sup>14</sup> and had solidified his position as an American hero. Cook, meanwhile, had continued to be disparaged by *The Times*, and his reputation had continued to suffer.<sup>15</sup> So, despite several members of the Committee who were "prepared to let loose their curiosity and logic on the explorer" (Rawlins 1973: 214) and who, disbelieving his testimony and

data, steadfastly opposed him, Peary received the approval of the Committee and, subsequently, of the entire House. He was retired with the pension of a rear admiral, a title that Civil Engineer Peary proudly used the rest of his life (Hobbs 1936).

Meanwhile, the press had one last role to play in the Cook-Peary controversy. In October 1910, a month after *Hampton's* had concluded its series of articles by Peary, one of its editors, T. Everett Harré, invited Cook to give an exposé of how he actually had not reached the North Pole. Cook declined such an article, but *Hampton's* still purchased his four-part story in which he defended himself. It also received his signature on a contract that stated, in the small print, that the magazine was making "no editorial guarantees whatsoever" (Eames 1973: 263). With this legal safeguard, Cook's story was then rewritten—reputedly by associate editor O.O. McIntyre—and published as if it were his confession both of not reaching the Pole and of being so mentally confused that he did not know if he *could* have reached the Pole or not (Cook 1911a; Eames 1973: 262-267).

As if that were not bad enough, shortly before the release of the first issue, *Hampton's* held a press conference in which it emphasized Cook's mental confusion. The following day, *The New York Times* feasted on its old enemy, commenting that: "in these articles Dr. Cook will admit frankly that he doesn't know whether he reached the north pole. He now says that his privations during his travels toward the pole put him in a 'mental condition,' which the American public has not been able to understand" (2 December 1910).

Regardless of what fraud he had or had not attempted to perpetrate on the public, Cook scarcely deserved such treatment, nor indeed the headlines that appeared all over the United States, such as DR. COOK ADMITS FAKE! and DR. COOK MAKES PLEA OF INSANITY! (quoted in Cook 1911b: 555). Yet when Cook's book appeared in 1911 giving his version of the story, *The Times* taunted his "retraction" bitterly, under the headline DR. COOK CONFESSES HE DIDN'T CONFESS (*The New York Times* 3 September 1911). Four more years passed before an employee at *Hampton's* (which had been renamed *The Columbian* in 1912) admitted that the magazine had purposely changed everything Cook had written.<sup>16</sup> In the meantime, according to McIntyre's biographer, "the whole world was led to believe that Dr. Cook had confessed that he had perpetrated a fraud and that he had never reached the Pole at all. Dr. Cook had done no such thing, but his name and reputation were ruined forever.... it was the most dastardly deed in the history of journalism" (Driscoll 1938: 221-222).

That the press had (and since has) never done anything worse than change Cook's story is dubious, but the incident did destroy his last vestiges of hope to gain any type

of public acceptance for his claim of having reached the North Pole. The publication of the altered feature led to an enormous jump in the magazine's circulation (Driscoll 1938: 223-224), at the same time as which *Hampton's* actions clearly showed the depths to which the print medium had plunged, becoming what perhaps has best been described by Charles Reich (writing of the modern corporate state) as "an immensely powerful machine, ordered, legalistic, rational, yet utterly out of human control, wholly and perfectly indifferent to any human values" (Reich 1972).

## 9.7 HISTORICAL POSTSCRIPT

So Cook had lost and Peary had won. Or is that exactly true? Certainly Cook never restored his reputation. And, in fact, his troubles continued. In 1910, two expeditions to Alaska apparently proved that he had faked his ascent of Mount McKinley. One, which included Belmore Browne and Herschel Parker, located the small peak on which Cook reputedly had taken the pictures he claimed showed the summit of McKinley (Browne 1913: 113-123). The other, which had been partly sponsored by *The New York Herald* and was sent to vindicate Cook's route to the summit, returned a failure. This party eventually reached a place where, it was stated, Cook's map "abruptly departs from reasonable accuracy into complete fantasy" (Moore 1967: 83). The leader of the expedition, C.E. Rusk, later commented:

Dr. Cook had many admirers who would have rejoiced to see his claims vindicated, and I too would have been glad to add my mite in clearing his name....But as we gazed upon the forbidding crags of the great mountain from far up the Ruth Glacier at the point of Cook's and Barrille's farthest advance [we] realized how utterly impossible and absurd was the story of this man. (quoted in Moore 1967: 85)<sup>17</sup>

Things went from bad to worse for Cook. In 1923 he was convicted of selling worthless stocks in Fort Worth, Texas, and was sentenced to almost 15 years in prison, despite the fact that the options he sold turned out later to be far more valuable than he had stated. He was released in 1930, and died a decade later, still claiming to have reached the North Pole.

Ultimately, Cook's reputation has taken little more of a beating than Peary's. The backlash against Peary's high-handed and evasive politicking for his recognition and pension began even before his death in 1920. In 1915 a resolution supporting Cook's claim was introduced in the House of Representatives (although it died in committee). The same year, a resolution was introduced for the correction of U.S. Hydrographic Office maps containing certain fictional places of which Peary had claimed to be the discoverer, such as the Peary Channel in north Greenland and the island Crocker Land (Rawlins 1973: 247-248). In 1916, Henry Helgesen, a U.S. Representative from

North Dakota, located a copy of the already-scarce report of the House Naval Affairs Committee and read the most devastating portions—those proving the lack of evidence required to affirm Peary's claim—into the *Congressional Record*, so that they would be preserved for posterity. Helgesen then introduced a bill before Congress to repeal the 1911 act that had recognized Peary's accomplishment and recommended his pension because Peary's "claims to discoveries in the Arctic regions have been proven to rest on fiction and not on geographical facts" and because "Robert E. Peary never reached, discovered, nor was approximately near to...the North Pole" (quoted in Rawlins 1973: 248). Had there been a hearing for Helgesen's bill, it is likely that Peary's proofs would have been closely examined by an official agency for the first time, but the matter was dropped when Helgesen died in April 1917.

But that was not the end of the question of Peary's attainment of the Pole. The year Helgesen died, Thomas F. Hall brought to light the dubious nature of Peary's speeds in his final days near the Pole; he indicated the lack of necessary observations Peary had taken; he pointed out the National Geographic Society's slipshod examination of Peary's proofs; and he suggested Peary had not attained a farthest north in 1906 (Hall 1917). Several years later, Sir Clements Markham, formerly a friend and admirer of Peary, expressed his disbelief in Peary's success at reaching the Pole without the aid of regular observations (Markham 1921: 357). And eight years after that, the respected geographer J. Gordon Hayes pointed out the mistakes that Peary had made in his calculations in his earlier expeditions, made an even more in-depth—and even more devastating—appraisal of the explorer's claimed speeds, and reiterated arguments by both Greely and the distinguished Arctic scientist Albert I, the Prince of Monaco, against Peary's claims (Hayes 1929). In the mid-1930s, Henshaw Ward argued for a new appraisal of Peary by the public, stating: "Peary's claim of reaching the North Pole in 1909 is so highly improbable that our acceptance of it is absurd. Our unwillingness to listen to the evidence against his claim is a scandal" (Ward 1934: 41).

The evidence continued to mount against Peary. In 1973, Dennis Rawlins, a professor of physics and astronomy at Johns Hopkins University, made the harshest condemnation yet of Peary, more closely examining the points already made by his predecessors, and also questioning Peary's movement of his fictional Jesup Land (supposedly discovered on his 1898-1902 expedition) to conform to Sverdrup's Axel Heiberg Island (1973: 49-52) and his "discovery" of yet another non-existent area—Crocker Land—in 1906 (1973: 72-75). Rawlins concluded that Peary demonstrated a long-term pattern of lying in order to attain the glory he wished, a pattern undoubtedly continued on his final expedition (Rawlins 1973).

Finally, in 1989 the noted Arctic traveler Wally Herbert became the first man allowed to study all of Peary's remaining personal papers, diaries, and observations (many have mysteriously disappeared through the years). Herbert, through scientific calculations, Peary's papers, the assessments (pro and con) of his predecessors, and, perhaps most important, his own years of Arctic travel, arrived at the conclusion that Peary most likely did not get closer than 100 miles to the North Pole (Herbert 1989).

Although Peary has been vigorously defended each time one of these works has appeared, the least that can be said is that his claim to have been the first man to reach the North Pole is now—and undoubtedly will continue to be—in doubt.

And what of Peary's great supporter, *The New York Times*? There is little doubt of that newspaper's success. With the help of the Cook-Peary controversy, its circulation rocketed (Berger 1951: 177), and then progressed even further during World War I. Until Ochs died in 1935, his paper continued to show an interest in polar exploration. Shortly after Peary's return, it purchased the American copyright to the South Pole stories of both Amundsen and Scott (Davis 1921: 294). In 1926 it sent a correspondent—Fredrick Ramm—on *Norge* when Amundsen first flew across the Arctic Ocean and the North Pole (Berger 1951: 280-285).<sup>18</sup> And it received exclusive rights to the South Polar flight of Richard E. Byrd in 1929, when Russell Owen of *The Times* was also the official expedition historian (Berger 1951: 331-337). In fact, Byrd named a glacier and several lakes after Ochs and his family (Talese 1971: 160). Today *The Times* cannot claim to be a specialist in polar affairs, but it is regarded by many as the "paper of record" in the United States.

The end was not so pleasant for the paper that had backed the loser in the North Pole débâcle. After its support of Cook, *The Herald* never entered the Arctic arena again. And after the man who had done so much to start the fascination with the north, James Gordon Bennett Jr., died in 1918, his paper was purchased by Frank Munsey, who in 1920 merged it with its old rival, *The Sun*. In 1924 Munsey sold *The Herald* to the family of Whitelaw Reid (who had died in 1912), which merged it with their paper, marking the beginning of the *New York Herald Tribune*. The *New York* edition of the *Herald Tribune* ceased publication in April 1966, although its Paris edition, today known as the *International Herald Tribune*, still is successfully operated by *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, which own it equally.

The Arctic also was never again a focus for *The World*, which lost much of its originality as well as its crusading spirit after Pulitzer died in 1911. Coincidentally, in 1931 the morning paper that had been the first to challenge the supremacy of *The Herald* disappeared in a merger with another former Bennett paper, *The Evening Telegram*, forming the *New York World-Telegram*. In the center of the United States,

the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* remains a successful paper today, still under the control of the Pulitzer family.

Both Hearst and Northcliffe maintained somewhat of an interest in the polar regions. Hearst and his *New York American* were major sponsors for several of Sir Hubert Wilkins' Antarctic expeditions as well as for his attempt to be the first man to take a submarine under the North Pole (Thomas 1961-1962). Northcliffe contributed £5,000 to the first Antarctic expedition led by Scott (Scott 1905: 30), but eventually changed the focus of his attention to new developments in aviation. He died in 1922, but the remnants of his publishing empire are still alive, and *The Times*, the *Daily Mail*, and the *Daily Mirror* are among the most successful newspapers in Britain today.

Alternatively, although many parts of Hearst's empire still exist today—40 years after his death in 1951—his centerpiece, the *New York Journal-American* (which was formed when he merged his morning and evening editions in 1937), outlived him by only 16 years. In 1966 it and two other papers in severe financial difficulty—the *New York Herald Tribune* and the *New York World-Telegram and Sun*—decided to merge to form one healthy paper. The three papers ceased individual publication in April 1966, but due to union difficulties the first edition of the new paper, the *World Journal Tribune*, did not appear until September of that year. When that paper died due to financial pressures in May 1967, it marked the end of the last traces in New York of the heritage of Day, Dana, Greeley, Reid, Pulitzer, Hearst, and the Bennetts.

Conversely, Arctic exploration itself has never truly died out, although, after the Cook-Peary controversy had run its course in the newspapers, the far north began to recede in the public consciousness. First the Antarctic exploits of Amundsen, Scott, and Shackleton received the majority of polar coverage. Then, only five years after Cook and Peary arrived back from the north, the outbreak of World War I virtually eliminated the accounts of exploration in the newspapers. And during the next four years, the process of risking one's life in polar exploration lost some of its special meaning to a world numbed by the deaths of millions. As Hemingway commented in *A farewell to arms*: "abstract words such as glory, honor, or courage were obscene besides the concrete names of villages...the numbers of regiments and the dates" (Hemingway 1929).

Yet the last vestiges of the excitement of the north were not totally dead. During and after World War I, science, exploration, and plain adventure continued in the far north. The Arctic remained a working place and a playground, not only for those contemporaries of Peary and Cook, such as the Canadian-born Vilhjalmur Stefansson and the Danish anthropologist Knud Rasmussen, but for professionals and joy-seekers all the way into the 1990s.



In 1989, when Robert Swann's "Icewalk" to the North Pole—which was little closer to true exploration than would be a jaunt in the Devon countryside—received front-page coverage in *The Times* of London, it showed that the press' and the public's fascination with the Arctic was still alive and healthy. And when Rupert Summerson, the field leader of Swann's expedition, commented in a personal communication that Swann's reports filed to *The Times* bore little resemblance to the sequence of events actually occurring in the far north, it helped to show that—despite the passing of Bennett, of Gilder, of Schwatka, and of all the others—to the press and the public, the Arctic sensational still lives on.

## CHAPTER 10

### CONCLUSIONS

The many and varied contributions of Joseph Pulitzer, Fridtjof Nansen, and Henry Morton Stanley have been acknowledged by historians, journalists, and scientists throughout the twentieth century. But the widely diverse professional spheres in which these men existed have tended to play down the fact that they were each a part of a peculiar, yet significant, connection. By investigating the relationship between the Anglo-American press and the exploration of unknown lands in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this study has sought to show that individuals such as Pulitzer, Nansen, and Stanley—that is, newspapermen, scientists, and explorers—had close and powerful associations with each other that fundamentally affected not only developments in the press but the sponsorship of and interest in exploration, particularly that of the Arctic.

It has been noted many times that both the study of the history of the press and the use of newspapers as sources for historical research have been neglected (for example, Carey 1974: 3; Berridge 1986: 201). A goal of this research has been to make inroads in both of these areas, by using the history of Arctic exploration to elucidate press developments, at the same time as using press accounts to investigate the history of Arctic expeditions. More specifically, the study has sought both to re-examine some common theories about newspaper sensationalism and to understand the reasons for the widespread interest about the Arctic and its exploration in the United States and England.

After noting that "the newspaper is an institution that is not yet fully understood," the American sociologist Robert Park added, "To understand it we must see it in its historical perspective" (Park 1925: 83). This latter statement also applies to the studies both of Arctic exploration and of the association between the press and the explorers. The images transmitted in the Anglo-American press about the far north and its explorers cannot be easily disassociated from their historical era. Thus, the series of relationships that ultimately grew between the press and Arctic explorers was based not just on the technological advances in exploration and the production of newspapers, but also on intellectual changes in western thought.

The two most important of these intellectual developments, which affected the way the Arctic was perceived for the rest of the century, took place between about 1855 and 1865. The first of these was the death of the Arctic sublime, the aesthetic that for a

century had dictated how the Anglo-American public viewed the far north. The second was its replacement by a new vision of man's relationship to the world, of his "mission of dominion over nature" (Powell 1977: 107). Man's role as conqueror of the world found expression in many facets of life, including technology, medicine, science, and, most important to this study, geographical exploration.

The western fascination with the conquest of the geographical world was of enormous import in the linking of the press and Arctic exploration. The origin of this coupling lay in the realization by one remarkably astute individual—James Gordon Bennett Jr. of *The New York Herald*—that the public could be intoxicated by exciting reports about heroic struggles to master nature, particularly in what were perceived as her most dangerous environments, Africa and the Arctic. Had Bennett been interested in staid, tediously factual articles that emphasized the success of scientific endeavors in the far north or that stressed the similarities of the Arctic with the world familiar to the New York readership, *The Herald* could have published them. Instead, his paper stressed the sensational aspects of the exploration of blank spaces on the map, presented stories about these expeditions using sensational journalistic techniques, and, in so doing, established the role of the press in the creation of the modern image of the Arctic, changing it from the sublime to the sensational.

By observing the sensational methods by which first *The Herald* and then other major American and English newspapers presented the Arctic to the reading public, it has been possible to arrive at several conclusions about press sensationalism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Perhaps the most important of these is that, despite commonly accepted theory that sensationalism did not exist in the American press from the end of the Civil War until Joseph Pulitzer's appearance in New York in the mid-1880s, sensationalism actually was present throughout the 1870s and early 1880s in exploration accounts, particularly in *The Herald* and *The Sun*.

Similarly, the English press sensationalized accounts of exploration of the north—particularly the British Arctic Expedition under George S. Nares (1875-1876)—well before the period in which W.T. Stead is commonly credited with the introduction of sensational techniques to Britain. And *The Daily Telegraph* even followed the lead of *The Herald* in sponsoring African exploration in order to obtain exclusive sensational accounts.

A second finding was that throughout the period studied, the American press tended to be more sensational in its coverage of exploration than did the English press. This was reflected not only in the amount and style of the writing itself, but in its presentation. In the United States, headlines played an important role in sensationalization, by not only their size (which continued to expand throughout the

period, first in number of single-column decks and later in number of columns as well as depth), but their content. In England, headlines generally remained single-column throughout the period—even for the more sensational evening and weekly press—and the number of decks used never approached the amount common in the United States. Similarly, the use first of illustration and then of photography was a significant tool in the press' sensationalization of exploration in the United States. But these tools were less important in English reporting of the Arctic simply because they were not widely adopted as regular practices until the very end of the period considered.

A third finding was that the newspapers involved in the sensationalization of exploration were not necessarily those that would have been so predicted by the conventional view of journalism. In the United States, the coverage of the Arctic by some of the newspapers long accepted as members of the "quality" press, such as *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, was equally or more sensational than that by some of the papers generally considered as part of the "sensational" press, such as *The Sun*, *The World*, or the *New York American*. This was particularly true of the coverage of the Cook-Peary controversy, in which *The New York Times* was the most sensational major newspaper in America.

The case was similar in England. Although as a rule *The Daily Telegraph* gave the most extensive coverage of exploration in England, it was not necessarily the most sensational. During certain periods, *The Standard* and even *The Times* were more sensational than *The Daily Telegraph*. And all three occasionally were more so than the reputedly sensational morning press—such as the *Daily Mail*—and even than the evening or weekly papers, widely acknowledged to be much more sensational than their morning counterparts.

By showing that sensational journalism played an important role in the major newspapers of the United States and England at a time when it has normally not been acknowledged to have existed, this study and its findings suggest that a widespread reappraisal and re-interpretation of the conventional view of sensationalism in the Anglo-American press is both appropriate and desirable. The findings also indicate areas of potential future research. The sensationalization of the Arctic might have been accompanied by similar treatment in other fields. Investigations into different categories of journalistic coverage might reveal even more examples of sensationalism during this period, which has traditionally been considered barren of such treatment.

The study also indicates that there is the need for a journalistic reappraisal of Bennett, Jr., who has for so long remained in the shadow of men such as his father, Pulitzer, and Charles A. Dana. Journalism history is an academic discipline, and as such, despite its earlier biases, it should recognize and acknowledge the massive

contributions of Bennett Jr. The owner of *The Herald* was uniquely skilled in the various technical arts involved in gathering and disseminating news. He was able to recognize stories that were appropriate for a mass-circulation journal, to embellish them so that their potential was not lost on the reader, and to entertain his readership with subjects of universal interest—and in some cases they were interesting because they were provocative—without crossing the line separating good taste from bad. But even more important, Bennett recognized that when the appropriate stories did not appear on their own, he could create them, thus becoming a founder of the concept that news is not simply whatever occurs, but is what the press wants to make news.

A similar common acknowledgement should be made of the significant role of Bennett—and, indeed, of the press in general—in Arctic exploration. By making a systematic examination of this subject, the study has found that newspapers and their proprietors were much more influential in increasing knowledge about and interest in the far north than has traditionally been noted. Not only did newspapers—particularly *The Herald*—sponsor numerous expeditions, the press also encouraged exploration by paying large sums for exclusive accounts from the explorers. In addition, the amount and style of the press coverage helped create an underlying interest among the public about the Arctic, its exploration, and its explorers.

Several other conclusions about the press' coverage of the Arctic were also readily apparent from the study. First, the Anglo-American press did not give a great deal of coverage to explorers or expeditions from countries other than the United States and Britain. Although such explorers and expeditions were mentioned—and, indeed, Nansen was an exception, becoming a great media hero—they rarely received the amount of coverage that British and American expeditions did. For example, Amundsen's brilliant completion of the Northwest Passage did not receive nearly the coverage that Baldwin's North Polar fiasco did.

This conclusion led inextricably to another: that there was not a positive correlation between the success of an expedition and the amount of coverage it received or the level of sensationalism with which it was presented. For example, Sverdrup's discovery and exploration of the lands west of Ellesmere Island did not attain nearly the quantity of coverage given to Andrée's unfortunate and unsuccessful journey. In fact, among the expeditions that tended to receive the highest amount of coverage—as well as the most sensational coverage—were those whose results were the most disastrous, especially if they included a great (and particularly a gruesome) loss of life. Thus, the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition under Greely was not only one of the most sensational stories ever about Arctic exploration, but one of the most intensely covered.

The study also showed that throughout the period an increasingly popular method of attempting to discredit rival newspapers was to attack the success, the reporting accuracy, and even the personal characteristics of explorers who were selling exclusive accounts to those competitors. This process built to a crescendo with the attacks of *The New York Times* on Frederick A. Cook during and after the Cook-Peary controversy.

Although there were notable exceptions, the accuracy of Arctic reporting improved dramatically during the period investigated. Prior to this time, many writers tended to exaggerate either the sublime or picturesque aspects of the far north, frequently resorting to old clichés and demonstrating little factual accuracy in their comments. These errors were perpetuated by journalists who had little experience with the remote areas about which they wrote.<sup>1</sup> But many Arctic travelers who wrote for newspapers in the 1870s and after were genuinely concerned with the accuracy of their articles. J.A. MacGahan, William Henry Gilder, and Frederick Schwatka were examples of traveler-writers who, while presenting sensational accounts of their experiences, nevertheless gave detailed and sensitive descriptions of the far north, which still enjoy the status of universally accredited truths.

Yet in the final assessment, it is perhaps a little sad that during the nineteenth century it was not the accuracy in the reporting of these men that was of the utmost importance to the press, nor was it the accomplishments of men such as Rae or Amundsen, nor the scientific endeavors of Torell or Nordenskiöld, nor even the fascination with the Arctic expressed by Hall or Nansen. What counted was the controversy and the tragedy. Had Cook and Peary each accepted the other's claim, or had Greely (or Scott in the Antarctic) been saved without loss of life, there would have been much less interest in them. Without the terrible winter at Cape Sabine, Greely would have remained a rather minor character on the Arctic stage. But by being enwrapped in a shroud of tragedy—the suffering, the deaths, and the rumors of cannibalism—he became an important figure, lifted to a higher plane of importance. And certainly for the vast majority of the newspapers in the United States and England, this kind of ennoblement (or, in the case of Cook, fall from grace)—and, most important, its consequent sensationalized story—was far more important than a scientific result or the conquest of some unknown land.

## APPENDIX 1

### GLOSSARY OF NEWSPAPER TERMINOLOGY

- Banner:** a main headline across the full width of the page.
- Box:** an item ruled off on all four sides, usually with heavy rule or border.
- Broadsheet:** a page the full size of a rotary press plate.
- Crosshead:** a centered sub-heading in the text.
- Deck:** a separate portion or section of a headline, usually applied to the subsidiary sections following the main headline, when there are three or more of these sections.
- Ear:** the advertising space beside the front-page title-line.
- Half-stick:** a small portrait measuring half a column.
- Halftone:** the process by which continuous tone is simulated by a pattern of dots of varying size; a photographic print in a newspaper made by this process.
- Intertype:** composing machine similar to the Linotype.
- Lead:** the main news story in the paper or the opening paragraph of any news story.
- Leader:** the British equivalent to the American editorial, in which the author, usually a member of the newspaper's staff or a well-known public figure, expresses his—or the paper's—viewpoint on a recent or impending event or political decision.
- Linotype:** the first keyboard-operated composing machine to employ the principle of the circulating matrix and to cast type in solid lines or slugs. Invented by the German-American engineer Ottmar Mergenthaler and first used in 1886.
- Make-up:** the sheet indicating the placing of the various items on a page; the process of actual assembly of the page.
- Perfector:** a press that prints both sides of the paper at a single pass. All letterpress rotaries and web-offset machines are perfectors.
- Point:** the standard unit of type size, 0.01383 inches or approximately 72 to the inch.
- Rotary:** a reel- or web-fed newspaper press perfecting from a cylindrical printing surface. Papers are delivered folded and counted, ready for dispatch.
- Run:** the period of printing an edition; the number of copies of an edition.
- Run-on:** where matter is not to be broken into paragraphs.
- Scarehead:** a headline intentionally worded in such a way as to frighten or excite the readership.
- Sidehead:** a sub-heading in text set flush left.
- Smalls:** the run-on classified advertisements in a newspaper, usually set in 6-point or smaller.

**Streamer:** a multi-column headline leading a page, but not necessarily across its full width.

**Subhead:** a separate portion or section of a headline, usually applied to the subsidiary section or sections following the main headline, when there are only one or two of these sections.

**Tabloid:** a page half the size of a broadsheet.

**Titling:** a headline type available in capitals only.

**Turtle:** the segmental chase in which movable type was locked up in columns for printing on a type-revolver.

**Type-revolver:** the mid-nineteenth-century newspaper presses, devised by Hoe in New York and Applegarth in London, which were the first rotaries, that is, printing from a rotating drum on which the columns of type were locked. They were sheet-fed, however, and were not perfectors.

**Web-offset:** an offset press working from the web or reel of paper, delivering papers folded and complete, like the letterpress rotary.

**Woodcut:** an early form of newspaper illustration, using a wooden engraving made by hand.



## APPENDIX 2

### PRIMARY ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS IN THESIS<sup>1</sup>

#### MORNING DAILIES

1. *The Times*  
First issue 1 January 1785 as *The Daily Universal Register*; became *The Times or Daily Universal Register* 1 January 1788; became *The Times* 18 March 1788; not published 30 November 1978 to 13 November 1979. Officially independent, but basically conservative; appealed to middle to upper classes with medium to high levels of education. Prior to the removal of the newspaper stamp tax, *The Times* dominated the British press in both power and circulation. It was surpassed in circulation in the 1860s, but retained its status as the national newspaper throughout most of the nineteenth century. A long, slow decline in both circulation and editorial quality began after the retirement of editor J.T. Delane in 1877 and was not turned around until after the paper's purchase by Northcliffe in 1908. *The Times* was Peary's strongest supporter in England during the North Pole controversy, perhaps because it had purchased Peary's story from *The New York Times*.
2. *The Manchester Guardian*.  
First issue 5 May 1821 as *The Manchester Guardian*.; merged with *British Volunteer* to become *The Manchester Guardian*; and *British Volunteer*. 3 December 1825; became *The Manchester Guardian*. 8 March 1828 (when the paper increased its page size); became *The Manchester Guardian* 8 September 1930; became *Manchester Guardian* 29 September 1952; became *The Guardian* 24 August 1959. Liberal to radical; appealed to lower-middle to upper-middle classes with medium level of education. Founded as a weekly, *The Manchester Guardian*. became a bi-weekly 15 September 1836 (with the reduction in the newspaper stamp tax) and a daily 2 July 1855 (with the elimination of the newspaper stamp tax). It was the sole provincial journal consistently regarded as a national organ—up to 60 percent of its sales came from outside the Manchester area. It established one of the top reputations in England for foreign correspondence.
3. *The Standard*  
First issue 21 May 1827 as an evening paper; became a morning paper 29 June 1857; last issue 16 March 1916. First issue of *The Evening Standard* 11 June 1860; merged with *The St. James's Gazette* to become *The Evening Standard and St. James's Gazette* 14 March 1905; became *Evening Standard* 24 October 1916; merged with *Evening News* to become *The New Standard* 3 November 1980; became *The Standard* 3 August 1981; became *The London Standard* 29 April 1985; became *The London Evening Standard* 4 December 1986; became *Evening Standard* 24 November 1987. Conservative; appealed to lower-middle to upper-middle classes with medium level of education, and especially to businessmen in the City. *The Standard* was the second-most-popular daily after *The Daily Telegraph* for most of the 1870s and 1880s, actually surpassing it on occasions. It featured expert coverage of wars and other foreign topics, and was described in *Sell's dictionary of the world's press* as giving the "most trustworthy information on all important events occurring in every part of the globe." *The Standard* also gave more complete coverage of Arctic exploration than most other papers.
4. *The Daily News*  
First issue 21 January 1846 as *The Daily News*; merged with *The Morning Leader*

to become *Daily News & Leader* 13 May 1912; became *Daily News* 15 April 1918; merged with *The Westminster Gazette* to become *Daily News and Westminster Gazette* 1 February 1928; merged with *The Daily Chronicle* to become *News Chronicle* 2 June 1930; merged with *Daily Dispatch* to become *News Chronicle and Daily Dispatch* 22 November 1955; amalgamated with *Daily Mail* to become *Daily Mail/Incorporating the News Chronicle* 18 October 1960. Liberal; appealed to middle to upper-middle classes with medium level of education. The first editor of *The Daily News* was Charles Dickens, who only remained with the paper several months. It attained a high reputation for foreign and war correspondence. *The Daily News* made the first regular linking with an American newspaper when it contracted with the *New-York Tribune* to exchange reports from the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871). It made the same deal with *The New York Herald* during the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878). Its circulation increased enormously when it became a half-penny paper in 1904.

5. *The Daily Telegraph*

First issue 29 June 1855 as *Daily Telegraph & Courier*; became *The Daily Telegraph* 20 August 1855; merged with *The Morning Post* to become *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post* 1 October 1937; became *The Daily Telegraph* 21 October 1969. Conservative 1855-1879, unionist 1879-1914; appealed to lower-middle to upper-middle classes with medium level of education. *The Daily Telegraph* had the largest circulation in the world throughout most of the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s. It was one of the first English dailies to cover sensational topics. *The Daily Telegraph* was the first English paper to attempt to create news when it co-sponsored Stanley's trans-Africa expedition (1874-1877). For much of the last two decades of the nineteenth century, it maintained a relationship in which it exchanged reports with *The New York Herald*.

6. *Daily Mail*

First issue 4 May 1896 as *Daily Mail*; merged with *News Chronicle and Daily Dispatch* to become *Daily Mail/Incorporating the News Chronicle* 18 October 1960; became *Daily Mail/News Chronicle* 4 December 1960; became *Daily Mail* 20 November 1968. Conservative; appealed to lower-middle to middle classes with low to medium levels of education. *The Daily Mail* was established by Alfred and Harold Harmsworth, and immediately became the vanguard of the New Journalism in England. It was the first truly successful London morning half-penny paper. *The Daily Mail* had the top daily circulation in Britain from its first issue until it was surpassed by the *Daily Mirror* in 1904. Its circulation passed a million at times during the Boer War and averaged more than three-quarters of a million in the first decade of the twentieth century. It was the first daily to get breakfast-table distribution throughout England, when it started to print in Manchester as well as London (1900). It gave exceptional coverage to the Jackson-Harmsworth Expedition and to Nansen's rescue by Jackson.

## EVENING DAILIES

1. *The Pall Mall Gazette*

First issue 7 February 1865 as *The Pall Mall Gazette/An Evening Newspaper and Review*; became *Pall Mall Gazette/An Evening Newspaper and Review* 1 January 1889 (with an increase in its page size); became *The Pall Mall Gazette* 18 February 1889; merged with *The Globe* to become *The Pall Mall and Globe* 7 February 1921; became *The Pall Mall Gazette and Globe* 1 December 1921; became *Pall Mall and Globe* 10 July 1922; incorporated into *Evening Standard* 28 October 1923. Conservative 1865-1880, liberal 1880-1892, conservative 1892-1923; appealed to upper-middle to upper classes with medium to high levels of education. *The Pall*

*Mall Gazette* originally was an organ of the aristocracy ("written by gentlemen for gentlemen"). As its editor (1865-1880), Frederick Greenwood helped introduce investigative and sensational journalism to the English press. Editor W.T. Stead (1883-1889) is generally credited with the "Americanization" of the British press, or the founding of the New Journalism. *The Pall Mall Gazette* gave more coverage to Nansen and his achievements than any other Anglo-American newspaper.

2. *The Echo*  
First issue 8 December 1868; last issue 31 July 1905. Liberal to radical; appealed to lower to middle classes with low to medium levels of education. *The Echo* was the first successful metropolitan half-penny evening daily in England. It had the largest evening circulation in London from 1868 to 1875. It was essentially a City paper, devoting the vast majority of its editorial to City matters. *The Echo* showed less interest in the Arctic than most of the other major London papers, but followed developments in Africa.
3. *The Evening News*  
First issue 26 July 1881 as *The Evening News*; merged with *The Evening Post* to become *The Evening News & Post* 13 May 1889; became *The Evening News and Post* 12 August 1893; became *The Evening News* 17 September 1894; became *The Evening News and Evening Mail* 26 August 1901; became *The Evening News* 14 March 1905; merged with *The Star* to become *The Evening News Incorporating The Star* 18 October 1960; became *The Evening News The Star* 28 October 1960; became *The Evening News & The Star* 31 October 1960; became *The Evening News & Star* 13 December 1961; became *The Evening News and Star* 9 September 1963; became *Evening News* 16 September 1968; amalgamated with *Evening Standard* to become *The New Standard* 3 November 1980. Conservative; appealed to lower to middle classes with low to medium levels of education. From 1882 to 1886, *The Evening News* was edited by Frank Harris. It was acquired by Alfred and Harold Harmsworth and Kennedy Jones in 1894 and became a leader in the techniques of the New Journalism. It gave exceptional coverage to the Jackson-Harmsworth Expedition.
4. *The Star*  
First issue 17 January 1888 as *The Star*; merged with *The Echo and London Evening Chronicle* to become *The Star and Echo* 4 May 1915; became *The Star* 4 August 1915; amalgamated with *The Evening News* to become *The Evening News Incorporating The Star* 18 October 1960. Liberal to radical; appealed to lower to middle classes with low to medium levels of education. Under its first editor, T.P. O'Connor, *The Star* was the first mass-circulation daily to engage fully in the New Journalism. It was the first London half-penny paper to be a major financial success. It concentrated on national politics, somewhat to the exclusion of international events, such as Arctic exploration.

## WEEKLIES

1. *The Observer*  
First issue 4 December 1791. Initially Whig/liberal, later conservative; appealed to upper-middle to upper classes with medium to high levels of education. *The Observer* had a small circulation, but it was large in importance because it was read by the policy makers of the British Empire. It was the best editorial product of the high-priced weeklies. It was purchased by Northcliffe in 1905, but he sold it in 1911. Between 1908 and 1942 *The Observer* was edited by J.L. Garvin. It had excellent international coverage, although it did not give extensive space to exploration.

2. *The Sunday Times*  
 First issue 18 February 1821 as *The New Observer*; became *The Independent Observer* 1 April 1821; became *The Sunday Times* 20 October 1822; became *Sunday Times* 10 July 1825; merged with *The Sunday Special* to become *Sunday Times and Sunday Special* 31 January 1904; became *Sunday Times* 11 January 1931; became *The Sunday Times* 7 December 1952. Conservative; appealed to middle to upper classes with medium level of education. Like *The Observer*, *The Sunday Times* had a small circulation, but was read by the policy makers of the British Empire. And, also like *The Observer*, it had superior international coverage, but not extensive attention to Arctic exploration.
  
3. *The Illustrated London News*  
 First issue 14 May 1842; became a monthly May 1971; became a quarterly after January 1989 issue. Conservative/liberal; appealed to middle to upper classes with medium level of education. *The Illustrated London News* was the only illustrated weekly in London until 1861, and remained the most-widely circulated illustrated newspaper in the world throughout most of the nineteenth century. Its emphasis first on fine artwork and later on photography made it one of the most important creators of images of far-away places. It sent artists to cover a number of Arctic stories, most notably the search for survivors of *Jeannette*.
  
4. *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*  
 First issue 27 November 1842 as *Lloyd's Illustrated London Newspaper*; became *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper* 15 January 1843; became *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* 14 January 1849; became *Lloyd's Weekly News* 30 November 1902; became *Lloyd's Sunday News* 2 June 1918; became *The Sunday News* 7 October 1923; became *Sunday News* 16 March 1930; incorporated into *The Sunday Graphic* 16 August 1931. Liberal to radical; appealed to lower to lower-middle classes with low to medium levels of education. *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* was the most-widely circulated British journal throughout most of the second half of the nineteenth century. It had a circulation of more than 100,000 even during the period of the newspaper stamp tax, and later was the first periodical to reach a regular circulation of one million (1896). It showed a great deal of interest in Arctic exploration.
  
5. *The Weekly Times*  
 First issue 24 January 1847 as *The Weekly Times*; merged with *The Weekly Echo* to become *The Weekly Times & Echo* 4 October 1885; incorporated into *Reynolds's Newspaper* 5 January 1913. Liberal; appealed to lower to lower-middle classes with low to medium levels of education. *The Weekly Times* did not have exceptional coverage of international events, but it showed unusual interest in Arctic exploration, and gave extensive coverage to the Royal Navy expeditions to find the Northwest Passage and Franklin's crew.
  
6. *Reynolds's Newspaper*  
 First issue 5 May 1850 as *Reynolds's Weekly Newspaper*; became *Reynolds's Newspaper* 16 February 1851; became *Reynolds's News* 4 March 1923; became *Reynolds's Illustrated News* 21 September 1924; became *Reynolds News* 1 March 1936; became *Reynolds News and Sunday Citizen* 20 August 1944; became *Sunday Citizen and Reynolds News* 23 September 1962; became *Sunday Citizen Incorporating Reynolds News* 21 February 1965; last issue 18 June 1967. Radical; appealed to lower to lower-middle classes with low to medium levels of education. *Reynolds's Newspaper* was the most radical major English journal of the second half of the nineteenth century. Although it concentrated upon politics, rather than general news, when it did cover non-political topics, it was a leader in sensational, American-style coverage.

## APPENDIX 3

### PRIMARY AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS IN THESIS<sup>1</sup>

#### MORNING DAILIES

1. *The Sun* (New York)

First issue 3 September 1833 as *The Sun*; became *The New York Sun* 13 April 1840; became *The Sun* 29 September 1840; merged with *The New York Press* to become *The Sun and New York Press* 4 July 1916; amalgamated with *The New York Herald* to become *The Sun and The New York Herald* 1 February 1920; became *The New York Herald* 1 October 1920. Edited and controlled by Benjamin H. Day 3 September 1833 to 27 June 1838; controlled by Beach family 28 June 1838 to 26 January 1868; edited and controlled by Charles A. Dana 27 January 1868 to 17 October 1897; controlled by Paul Dana 18 October 1897 to 21 February 1902; purchased by Frank Munsey 1 July 1916. Independent 1833-1868, basically Republican with some flip-flopping 1868-1920; appealed to the working class with low to medium levels of education into the 1860s, but appealed to all classes with medium to high levels of education under Dana. *The Sun* was the first successful American penny daily, and one of the early American leaders in sensationalism. It achieved the highest circulation in the world in the 1830s. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, *The Sun* rivaled *The New York Herald* for the circulation lead in the United States. Under Dana, it not only was one of the most clearly and concisely edited newspapers in the country, it was a leader in the popularization of the human-interest story. Although *The Sun* did not itself sponsor Arctic exploration, it remained very interested in the subject and gave coverage to many expeditions. It was a leader in attacking explorers as a method of discrediting their sponsoring newspapers.

2. *The New York Herald*

First issue 6 May 1835 as *The Morning Herald*; became *The Herald* 31 August 1835; became *The Morning Herald* 22 May 1837; became *The New York Herald* 21 September 1840; merged with *The Sun* to become *The Sun and The New York Herald* 1 February 1920; became *The New York Herald* 1 October 1920; merged with *New York Tribune* to become *The New York Herald, New York Tribune* 19 March 1924; became *New York Herald Tribune* 31 May 1926; not published 9 December 1962 to 1 April 1963, and 16 September 1965 to 15 October 1965; last issue 24 April 1966; merged with *New York World-Telegram and Sun* and *New York Journal-American* to become *World Journal Tribune*, first issue of which 12 September 1966; last issue 5 May 1967. Edited and controlled by James Gordon Bennett Sr. 6 May 1835 to 21 April 1867; controlled by James Gordon Bennett Jr. 22 April 1867 to 14 May 1918; controlled by Frank Munsey 1 February 1920 to 18 March 1924; controlled by the Reid family 19 March 1924 to 1958; controlled by John Hay Whitney 1958 to 1966. Officially independent, but usually conservative; appealed to all classes with all levels of education. *The New York Herald* was a national leader in all types of news gathering, in sensationalism, and in the creation of news. It had the largest circulation in the United States much of the time from the 1850s through the 1880s, and also was the most popular American newspaper with the British audience. *The Herald* gave the most complete coverage of exploration by any newspaper in the world, particularly that of the Arctic. Bennett Jr. sponsored numerous African and Arctic expeditions, including those of Stanley, the *Jeannette*, the *Rodgers*, and Gilder. In 1909 he paid Cook for his exclusive report of reaching the North Pole.

3. *New-York Tribune*

First issue 10 April 1841 as *New-York Tribune*, became *New-York Daily Tribune* 22 April 1842, became *New-York Tribune* 10 April 1866; became *New York Tribune* 16 April 1914; merged with *The New York Herald* to become *The New York Herald, New York Tribune* 19 March 1924; became *New York Herald Tribune* 31 May 1926; not published 9 December 1962 to 1 April 1963, and 16 September 1965 to 15 October 1965; last issue 24 April 1966; merged with *New York World-Telegram and Sun* and *New York Journal-American* to become *World Journal Tribune*, first issue of which 12 September 1966; last issue 5 May 1967. Edited and controlled by Horace Greeley 10 April 1841 to 29 November 1872; controlled by Whitelaw Reid 30 November 1872 to 15 December 1912; controlled by Reid family 15 December 1912 to 1958; controlled by John Hay Whitney 1958 to 1966. Whig/liberal 1841-1856, Republican after 1856; had wide class appeal for all educational levels under Greeley, but appealed to middle to upper classes with medium to high levels of education under Whitelaw Reid. Although not comparable to *The Sun* or *The Herald* in circulation, the *New-York Tribune* was of enormous influence because of the popularity of Greeley, who was arguably the most powerful editorial writer in the history of American journalism. Later, Reid—who like Greeley detested sensationalism—proved a newspaper could succeed on talent and ability while shunning sensationalism. Greeley once paid Charles Francis Hall for Arctic reports, while Reid was an avid supporter of Peary.

4. *The New-York Times*

First issue 18 September 1851 as *New-York Daily Times*; became *The New-York Times* 12 September 1857; became *The New York Times* 1 December 1896; New York edition not published 9 December 1962 to 31 March 1963, and 17 September 1965 to 11 October 1965. Edited and controlled by Henry J. Raymond 18 September 1851 to 18 June 1869; controlled by George Jones 19 June 1869 to 12 August 1891; controlled by Adolph Ochs 18 August 1896 to 8 April 1935. Whig/Republican 1851-1884, increasingly liberal after 1884; appealed to middle to upper classes with medium level of education. *The New York Times* was noted for supreme objectivity and honesty in reporting. Despite a reputation for a lack of sensationalism, *The Times* demonstrated sensational coverage in a number of instances. It sponsored one of Schwatka's expeditions and in 1909 was the major backer of Peary in the North Pole controversy.

5. *The World* (New York)

First issue 14 June 1860 as *The World*, a religious daily; became *The World and Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer* 1 July 1861; became *The World* 17 October 1863; became *The New-York World* 20 August 1881; became *The World* 11 May 1883; first issue of *The Evening World* 10 October 1887; both amalgamated with *The Evening Telegram* to become *New York World-Telegram* 28 February 1931; merged with *The Sun* to become *New York World-Telegram and Sun* 5 January 1950; not published 9 December 1962 to 31 March 1963, and 17 September 1965 to 11 October 1965; last issue 23 April 1966; merged with *New York Herald Tribune* and *New York Journal-American* to become *World Journal Tribune*, first issue of which 12 September 1966; last issue 5 May 1967. Founded by Alexander Cummings; controlled by four more individuals or groups before being purchased by Joseph Pulitzer; edited and controlled by Pulitzer 11 May 1883 to 29 October 1911; edited by Frank I. Cobb 30 October 1911 to 21 December 1923. Democratic/liberal; under Pulitzer appealed to working to middle classes with all levels of education. *The World* was both one of the great crusading newspapers and one of the leaders in the use of sensationalism. Under Pulitzer, it achieved the largest circulation in the United States from the mid-1880s to the mid-1890s. Pulitzer's circulation war with Hearst led to the development of "yellow

journalism." *The World* gave outstanding coverage of the Arctic, as well as sponsoring one of Schwatka's expeditions.

6. *New York Journal*

First issue 19 November 1882 as *Morning Journal*; became *New York Morning Journal* 27 May 1888; became *The Journal* 7 November 1895; became *New York Journal* 19 July 1896; merged with *Morning Advertiser* to become *New York Journal and Advertiser* 2 April 1897; became *New York Journal and American* 11 November 1901; became *New York American and Journal* 10 March 1902; became *New York American* 2 March 1903; amalgamated with *New York Journal* to become *New York Journal and American* 24 June 1937. First issue *New York Evening Journal* 28 September 1896; became *New York Journal and American* 11 November 1901; became *New York American and Journal* 10 March 1902; became *New York Journal* 2 March 1903; became *New York Evening Journal* 21 June 1913; merged with *New York American* to become *New York Journal and American* 24 June 1937; became *New York Journal-American* 1 January 1950; not published 9 December 1962 to 31 March 1963, and 17 September 1965 to 10 October 1965; last issue 24 April 1966; merged with *New York Herald Tribune* and *New York World-Telegram and Sun* to become *World Journal Tribune*, first issue of which 12 September 1966; last issue 5 May 1967. Controlled by Albert Pulitzer 19 November 1882 to 1894; controlled by William Randolph Hearst 25 September 1895 to 13 August 1951, although first edition officially under his control 7 November 1895; controlled by William Randolph Hearst Jr. 14 August 1951 to 11 September 1966. Generally Democratic with occasional changes; appealed to the working classes with low to medium levels of education. The *New York Journal* was a leader in extreme sensationalization or "yellow journalism." Using unprecedented sensational techniques, it gained the largest circulation in the United States shortly after Hearst's takeover, and later became the first American daily to surpass a circulation of one million. It remained the circulation leader in the United States until after World War I. It gave above-average coverage of the Arctic, although its role as a sponsor did not materialize until later in the twentieth century, when Hearst contributed large sums to the Wilkes expeditions.

7. *The Chicago Daily Tribune*

First issue 10 June 1847 as *Chicago Daily Tribune*; merged with *Chicago Daily Press* to become *Chicago Daily Press and Tribune* 1 July 1858; became *The Press and Tribune* 17 March 1859; became *Chicago Daily Tribune* 25 October 1860; became *Chicago Tribune* 21 August 1864; became *The Chicago Tribune* 15 September 1867; became *The Chicago Daily Tribune* 9 October 1872; became *The Chicago Tribune* 18 March 1886; became *The Chicago Daily Tribune* 19 July 1890; became *Chicago Daily Tribune* 28 February 1920; became *Chicago Tribune* 17 February 1963. Founded by James Kelly, John Wheeler, and Joseph Forrest; controlled by Joseph Medill 1855 to 16 March 1899; controlled and edited by Robert W. Patterson 17 March 1899 to April 1910; controlled and edited by Robert R. McCormick and Joseph M. Patterson April 1910 to 1925; controlled by McCormick 1925 to 1 April 1955. Staunchly Republican; appealed to middle to upper classes with medium level of education. *The Chicago Daily Tribune* was arguably the leading morning daily in the western half of United States. It was one of great crusading newspapers and a leader in community service. However, it also could be quite sensational. It gave an exceptional amount of coverage to Arctic exploration, and at different times purchased stories about exploration from both *The World* and *The New York Times*.

8. *The Examiner* (San Francisco)

First issue 12 June 1865 as *The Evening Examiner*; became a morning paper as *The Examiner* 4 October 1880. Founded by William Moss; controlled by a number of

individuals before its purchase by George Hearst, who controlled it from 2 October 1880 to 3 March 1887; controlled by William Randolph Hearst 4 March 1887 to 13 August 1951; controlled by Hearst family 14 August 1951 to present. Generally Democratic with occasional changes; appealed to lower to middle classes with low to medium levels of education. *The Examiner* was the newspaper on which Hearst practiced his sensational techniques before moving to New York. By 1893 it was the top-selling newspaper on the west coast. It had excellent Arctic coverage, produced in an exceptionally sensational manner.

9. *The Washington Post*

First issue 6 December 1877 as *The Washington Post*; merged with *Washington Times-Herald* to become *The Washington Post and Times Herald* 17 March 1954; became *The Washington Post/Times Herald* 28 August 1959; became *The Washington Post* 1 January 1974. Founded by Stilson Hutchins; first managing editor John Cockerill; controlled by John R. McLean 2 October 1905 to 9 June 1916; controlled by Edward B. McLean 9 June 1916 to 31 May 1933; controlled by Eugene Meyer 1 June 1933 to 17 July 1959; controlled by Meyer's family 17 July 1959 to present. Democratic; appealed to middle class with medium level of education. *The Washington Post* was not only one of the most complete newspapers in the United States in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, it was one that regularly engaged in sensationalism. It had outstanding coverage of Arctic exploration and gave great support to Peary during the 1909 North Pole controversy.

## EVENING DAILIES

1. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

First issue as *St. Louis Union* 1862; became *The St. Louis Dispatch* 1864; first issue of *St. Louis Evening Post* 10 January 1878; merged into *St. Louis Post and Dispatch* 12 December 1878; became *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* 10 March 1879 not published 16 August 1945 to 31 August 1945. *Dispatch* founded and controlled by Francis P. Blair 1862-1864; controlled by seven more individuals or groups before being purchased by Joseph Pulitzer 9 December 1878; *Evening Post* founded and controlled by John A. Dillon before merger with *Dispatch*; joint paper controlled by Pulitzer 12 December 1878 to 29 October 1911; edited and published by Joseph Pulitzer Jr. 30 October 1911 to 30 March 1955; controlled by Joseph Pulitzer III 31 March 1955 to present. Liberal; appealed to middle class with medium level of education. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* was one of the great crusading newspapers, and also one of the leaders in the use of sensationalism. Although tending to be rather parochial and ignoring international topics, it gave highly accurate information about Arctic exploration when something of major importance did occur.

2. *The Boston Daily Globe*

First issue 4 March 1872 as *The Boston Daily Globe*; became *The Boston Globe* 26 April 1960. Founded and controlled by Maturin Ballou and others 4 March 1872 to 1877; controlled by Charles H. Taylor 1877 to 22 June 1921; controlled by Taylor family 22 June 1921 to present. Republican 1872 to 1877, Democratic 1877 to present; appealed to lower-middle to upper-middle classes with medium level of education. *The Boston Daily Globe* was the most-widely circulated paper in New England by 1888. It was also a leader in the use of sensational journalism. In 1909 it was a staunch supporter of Peary.



3. *The Chicago Daily News*  
First issue 23 December 1875; last issue 4 March 1978. Founded and controlled by Melville E. Stone 23 December 1875 to 31 July 1876; edited by Stone and published by Victor F. Lawson 1 August 1876 to 16 May 1888; edited and controlled by Lawson 17 May 1888 to 19 August 1925. Liberal; appealed to all classes with all levels of education. *The Chicago Daily News* was the most-widely circulated evening newspaper in the western United States. It was one of the top American newspapers in foreign coverage. Although it did not reject sensationalism, it gave a priority to news. *The Daily News* featured outstanding Arctic coverage, as did its morning edition (which went through 11 names between its first issue on 21 March 1881 and its last on 13 September 1874), which sponsored two of Wellman's expeditions.

## WEEKLIES

1. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*  
First issue 15 December 1855 as *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*; became *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly* 1891; became *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly* 1894; became *Leslie's Weekly* 1895; became *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly* 1907; became *Leslie's, the People's Weekly* March 1912; became *Leslie's* November 1912; became *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper* 1914; last issue 24 June 1922. Controlled by Frank Leslie 15 December 1855 to 10 January 1880; controlled by Miriam Florence Follin Squier Leslie (Frank Leslie) 11 January 1880 to 1889; controlled by W.J. Arkell 1889 to 1898; controlled by John Schleicher 1898 to 1922. Independent; appealed to working classes with low to medium levels of education. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* was the first successful American illustrated news weekly, and clearly demonstrated the demand for news pictures. It gave a great deal of attention to Arctic exploration and sponsored an expedition to Alaska (1890).
2. *Harper's Weekly*  
First issue 3 January 1857 as *Harper's Weekly: A Journal of Civilization*; incorporated into *The Independent* 20 May 1916. Democratic; appealed to all classes with medium to high levels of education. *Harper's Weekly* was the most-widely circulated illustrated weekly for 25 years after the Civil War. It gave a great deal of attention to Arctic exploration.

## APPENDIX 4

### THE CIRCULATION OF THE ENGLISH PRESS<sup>1</sup>

#### ENGLISH DAILIES UNDER THE STAMP TAX

<u>Periodical</u>	<u>Circulation (in 1,000s)</u>						
	<u>1801</u>	<u>1821</u>	<u>1837</u>	<u>1840</u>	<u>1845</u>	<u>1850</u>	<u>1854</u>
<i>The Times</i>	2.8	7.0	9.8	16.2	26.1	38.1	51.2
<i>The Manchester Guardian.</i>		1.9	4.7	5.9	9.3	9.0	10.3
<i>The Morning Advertiser</i>	2.5	2.9	4.4	4.9	4.6	5.0	7.7
<i>The Morning Herald</i>	2.3	2.8	6.2	6.3	6.5	3.6	3.7
<i>The Morning Chronicle</i>	1.8	3.1	6.2	6.7	5.0	2.9	2.8

#### THE ENGLISH POPULAR PRESS

<u>Periodical</u>	<u>Circulation (in 1,000s)</u>							
	<u>1855</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1865</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>1880</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1910</u>
<i>The Times</i>	61	65	65	63	58	40.6	38.1	44.9
<i>The Manchester Guardian.</i> <sup>2</sup>	9.1	22	25	30	37	40.5	46.0	39.2
<i>The Standard</i> <sup>3</sup>	1.3	40	102	140	208	224	88	44
<i>The Daily News</i> <sup>4</sup>	5.5	5.4	5.9	90	91	93.2	46.0	169
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i> <sup>5</sup>		141.7	149	191	252	308	262	205
<i>Daily Mail</i> <sup>6</sup>							989.3	720.3
<i>The Pall Mall Gazette</i>			2.1	7.8	9.1	12.6	18.4	24.2
<i>The Echo</i>				80	105	162	124	102
<i>The Evening News</i>						115	420	355
<i>The Star</i>						195	246	150
<i>The Observer</i>	8.2	6	3.1	3.7	4.6	5.1	12.1	50.4
<i>The Sunday Times</i>	6.3	5.1	20	31	28	26.7	25.1	30.2
<i>The Illustrated London News</i>	130	105	82	74	71	82	74	74
<i>Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper</i>	102	152	506	525	612	913	1,123	959
<i>The Weekly Times</i>	76.5	75	101	155	265	278	176	122
<i>Reynolds's Newspaper</i>	62	164	251	242	355	345	269	212

## SOURCES

Altick 1958; Aspinall 1949; Ayerst 1971; Berridge 1976; Collet 1899; Cunningham 1981; Ellegard 1957; Fox Bourne 1887; Goodbody 1985; Grant 1871; Howe 1943; Lawson 1955; Lee 1976; Massingham 1892; May 1873-1889; Mitchell 1855-1910; Pound and Harmsworth 1959; Rose 1897; Schults 1972; Sell 1881-1910; *The Times* 1935-1984; Wadsworth 1955; Webb 1955; Wiener 1969; Wiener 1978; Williams 1961; Willing 1890-1910.

## APPENDIX 5

### THE CIRCULATION OF THE NEW YORK PRESS<sup>1</sup>

(In 1,000s)

<u>Year</u>	<u>The Sun</u>	<u>The Herald Tribune</u>	<u>The Times</u>	<u>The World</u>	<u>Journal</u>	
1833	8					
1835	15	7				
1840	33	22	( <sup>2</sup> )			
1845	39	17	21			
1850	41	39	19	( <sup>3</sup> )		
1855	50	62	29	42		
1860	64	77	34	48	6	
1865	94	110	54	74	19	
1870	103	115	49	63	22	
1875	132	148	38	43	16	
1880	148	177	34	39	14	
1885	90	191	41	46	153	36
1890	80	212	58	22	246	48
1895	71	242	72	9	275	77
1896	71	212	76	9	370	385 <sup>4</sup>
1900	61	267	58	82	846	915
1905	66	198	61	116	824	1,112
1910	64	167	68	179	768	1,234

#### SOURCES

Ayer 1868-1910; Baehr 1936; Barrett 1941; Berger 1951; Bleyer 1927; Carlson 1942; Carlson and Bates 1936; Coggeshall 1856; Davis 1921; Ducan 1975; Emery and Emery 1988; Fenton 1941; Fermer 1986; Hudson 1873; Hughes 1981; Juergens 1966; Mott 1962; Noone 1986; O'Brien 1918; Payne 1920; Seitz 1924b; Seitz 1928; Steele 1986; Swanberg 1961; Swanberg 1967; Tebbel 1952; Tebbel 1976; Winkler 1928.

## NOTES

### CHAPTER 1

1. There are precedents for such revision. In doctoral dissertations, Francke (1974), Sloan (1981), and Whitby (1984) challenged aspects of the accepted theory of journalism history.
2. Five important Scottish newspapers were examined and compared with several of the English newspapers selected for the study. The Scottish newspapers included three dailies, *The Scotsman* of Edinburgh, *The Dundee Courier & Argus*, and the *Glasgow Herald*; a semi-weekly, *The Aberdeen Free Press, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, and Buchan News*, and *North of Scotland Advertiser*; and a weekly, *The Buchan Observer, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, & General Advertiser*. An example of the different coverage is the return of *North Star* from a voyage to re-supply James Clark Ross' expedition of 1848-1849. *The Dundee Courier & Argus* and *The Buchan Observer, Peterhead, Fraserburgh & General Advertiser* each printed about six column inches about *North Star*, while *The Weekly Times* of London ran a 40-inch story after the ship's arrival at Spitshead.
3. New Journalism is a difficult term because it has different meanings in the United States and Britain. In the United States, it generally refers to the period of sensationalism following Joseph Pulitzer's purchase of *The World* of New York. In Britain, it roughly corresponds to sensationalism as a whole. In this study, New Journalism refers to sensationalism after 1883, a period that includes both Pulitzer's contributions and the era traditionally encompassing sensationalism's "invasion" of and triumph in the English press.  
Yellow journalism refers to the new excesses of sensationalism reached in the circulation war between Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst after the latter purchased the *New York Morning Journal* in 1895. As did New Journalism, yellow journalism adopted and refined the sensationalism that had been developed in the 1830s. However, each of these later types of journalism also built on technological advances to modernize sensational techniques (Irwin 1911a; 1911b).
4. The nine universities surveyed were the University of California at Berkeley, Columbia University, the University of Maryland, the University of Minnesota, the University of Missouri, Northwestern University, the University of Southern California, Syracuse University, and the University of Texas.
5. In the era of muckraking in the United States (1900 to World War I), a number of magazines developed a crusading literature of investigative exposure that Theodore Roosevelt called the "work of muckrakers." The term initially was used in a derogatory sense, comparing the more sensational writers to the Man with the Muckrake in *Pilgrim's Progress*, who did not look up to see the celestial crown but continued to rake the filth. However, it came to be viewed as a badge of honor (Emery and Emery 1988: 260-261). Francke (1974) demonstrated that muckraking was a direct descendant of sensationalism, and indicated that any view of investigative reporting should emphasize the continuous flow of ideas and practices rather than the interrupted process generally presented.
6. Each of the eight texts representing the conventional view concur with this point. The references are: Payne 1920: 240-268; Bleyer 1927: 154-184; Mott 1962: 220-

244; Lee 1973: 261-262, 274-275; Hughes 1981: 7-15; Leonard 1986: 145-153; Emery and Emery 1988: 115-123; and Folkerts and Teeter 1989: 129-149.

7. The references for the conventional view about the rise of sensationalism and the era of Pulitzer and Hearst are: Payne 1920: 370; Bleyer 1927: 339-388; Mott 1962: 430-445, 519-545; Lee 1973: 283-284; Hughes 1981: 17-24, 217-220; Leonard 1986: 170-179; Emery and Emery 1988: 205-243; and Folkerts and Teeter 1989: 255-285. Two studies of the era that give an illuminating discussion of sensationalism are Juergens (1966) and Rammelkamp (1967).
8. Payne (1920: 341-342) calls Bennett Jr. vain and narrow. Bleyer (1927) mentions him only twice: for taking over *The Herald* (207) and for his death (414). Lee (1973: 401) simply notes the 1911 founding of the Sunday edition of Bennett's *The Evening Telegram*. Mott (1962: 419), Hughes (1981: 204-205) and Emery and Emery (1988: 278-279) grant him a degree of importance only for assigning Henry Morton Stanley to find David Livingstone. Leonard (1986) and Folkerts and Teeter (1989) do not mention him at all.
9. There is some debate about the intellectual value of the sensational press. Emery and Emery (1988:115) broke from the conventional view by stating that sensationalism was only a developmental stage, which helped improve the literary skills of the common people, who, in turn, demanded a better product, leading to the improvement of the newspapers. Park (1925: 81), however, suggested that the readers simply moved on to better newspapers when the sensational press began to become wearisome, and that those newspapers did not necessarily change but rather gained a new body of subscribers, again with less literary sophistication.
10. The 11 programs surveyed were Birmingham Polytechnic, Coventry Polytechnic, Glasgow College of Technology, Queen Margaret College, Sheffield City Polytechnic, Sunderland Polytechnic, Trent Polytechnic, the University of Leeds, the University of Leicester, the University of York, and Wales Polytechnic.  
As with many of their American counterparts, these programs concentrate on subjects such as communications theory; cultural and social institutions; group, organizational, and interpersonal communications; perception; linguistics; and sociology. The stated interests of the departments included topics such as what ways political and social attitudes are affected by television, whether violence on television makes people more violent, and how media views of what is happening interact with the attitudes of viewers. None of the lecturers spoken to in these departments had taught, taken, or even was aware of a course in journalism history.
11. The three graduate programs officially recognized by the National Union of Journalists are those at the University of Wales, College of Cardiff (the oldest program, founded in 1970); The City University; and the London College of Printing. Each also has an undergraduate program, as do Harlow College, Highbury College of Technology, Lancashire Polytechnic, and Richmond College of Further Education.

No graduate students in these departments are currently working on subjects related to journalism history. The areas of research interest mentioned by the faculty included the press coverage of Islam, a comparison of the Arab and British press, linguistic interpretations of journalism, comparative newsgathering of newspapers and satellites, and the role of photojournalism in modern newspapers.

12. The most important and versatile study of sensationalism in British journalism is the compilation of essays presented at this conference in a work entitled *Papers for the millions*, edited by Joel Wiener. The volume includes essays about the birth of the New Journalism, its innovations, and its content.
13. One difficulty with the investigation of sensationalism in English journalism is that many of the best studies of the press (such as Andrews 1859; Grant 1871; Hatton 1882; and Fox Bourne 1887) were written in the nineteenth century, when sensational techniques were relatively new to Britain. Thus, they lack complete information on the topic as well as a perspective that comes only with time.
14. As is indicated in Appendices 2 and 3, a number of the 30 papers used in the study changed names during the period. When cited for a specific date, a paper is referred to by its name of the moment. However, when a mention of a paper does not include a specific reference to date, it is called by the name most commonly used during the period of the thesis, which is also the name it is listed under in the Appendices.

## CHAPTER 2

1. For example, in the 1741 edition of *The British empire in America*, John Oldmixon declared that he could write nothing of the Company's activities since 1713, "Notwithstanding the pressing Instance I made to the concerned in the *Hudson's Bay Trade* for Information to continue the account of it down to this time." Oldmixon, therefore, had to content himself "with adding only that the Company's Factories and Fortifications, which the *French* had taken, were restored to them by the Peace of Utrecht" (Tyrrell 1931: 409; emphases Oldmixon's).
2. An example of this occurred on John Franklin's first overland expedition (1819-1822). In the autumn of 1820, Fort Enterprise was erected on a hill chosen partly for aesthetic reasons (MacLaren 1984). John Richardson commented on this in a letter to his mother: "We could not have selected a more convenient or beautiful spot. The surrounding country is finely varied by hill and dale and interspersed with numerous lakes connected by small streams" (McIlraith 1868: 63). Yet that prized site, so picturesque by English aesthetic standards, lacked the food, water, fuel, and wind shelter that were to be found down the hill by the lake. After their grueling journey the next year, when Franklin, Richardson, and company arrived back at Fort Enterprise, they did not have the strength to walk down the hill to the lake to catch the fish that would have forestalled their starvation (Franklin 1823). Without the assistance of the Indians, their aesthetics would have precluded them from saving themselves.
3. One reason for the Royal Navy's persistence in searching for a low-latitude Northwest Passage was a series of apocryphal, but well-publicized, voyages. In 1588, Lorenzo Ferrer Maldonado claimed that he had navigated the Northwest Passage, sailing from Davis Strait to the Pacific Ocean. Several years later, Juan de Fuca claimed that while sailing north from California, he had entered a broad inlet between latitude 47° and 48°N, which had taken him to the Arctic Ocean. In 1708, a London magazine published an account of the discovery of the Passage in 1640 by Batholomew de Fonte, who reputedly entered it at latitude 53°N from the west coast of America. Several expeditions were sent out in the eighteenth century to find de Fonte's passage, which is now generally credited to the imagination of the magazine's editor, James Petiver (Cooke and Holland 1978: 25-30).

4. Although neither Hearne nor the Hudson's Bay Company released his reports to the public, the story of his expedition became known before the release of his book. When Cook's last voyage was in preparation, the Company—after great consideration—divulged Hearne's findings to the Admiralty. When the history of Cook's final voyage was published in 1784, the editor, Dr. Douglas, discussed Hearne's expedition in the introduction (Cook and King 1784: I, xlvi-li; Beaglehole 1967: I, xlii). Eleven years later, Douglas also edited Hearne's much-delayed account (Hearne 1795).
5. Although most knowledge about the polar regions came from voyages to the Arctic, *The rime of the ancient mariner* was set in the Antarctic. However, the perceived differences between the two areas were negligible—ice cliffs were ice cliffs and frozen waters in dark winters were the same whether in austral or boreal regions. If anything, the Antarctic was considered more remote and more likely to be lifeless (Loomis 1977: 98).
6. Historians disagree over what took place in the "Jacksonian revolution," and particularly about its role in the development of journalism. The conventional school follows the viewpoint that was imposed upon the public by the Jacksonians themselves—that Jackson began an era of "political reform, expanded economic opportunity, better schools, a growing literature, and a popular press" (Emery and Emery 1984: 130-131). One classic work on the period (Schlesinger 1945) idealized Jackson, but perceived him as the leader of a radical movement among urban workers and artisans, rather than as a "coonskin Democrat." However, it maintained that several of Jackson's cronies were heroic journalists fighting for the "little man." Both this view and the traditional one have been challenged by later historians (Hofstadter 1948; Morris 1949; Benson 1961). Altschull (1984: 38-41, 312) recently suggested that the earlier positions should not be fully endorsed, because Jackson supported the press primarily so that he could manipulate it.
7. Noone (1986) was among the first to apply the chicken-and-the-egg question to literacy and the popular press, arguing that there was a transition from an elite literacy grounded in the printed book to a mass literacy grounded in the mass-circulation newspaper.
8. The Forster Act is frequently referred to as a landmark in education. However, its importance can easily be exaggerated because it neither created an entirely new working-class reading public (as had soon come to be believed), nor even significantly hastened the acquisition of literacy, which had increased by 11.3 percent during the preceding 20 years and by 13 percent during the succeeding 20. What it apparently did do was ensure that the rate at which literacy had increased in the period 1851-1871 would be maintained. Had the state not intervened, it is likely that the progress of literacy would have slowed in the last quarter of the century, because by that time illiteracy was concentrated in the slums and remote rural regions that were hardest to provide for. In short, the Forster Act raised the overall standard of literacy, while ensuring that even the last very poor children were taught to read (Webb 1950: 349; Altick 1957: 166-172; Sutherland 1971).
9. Throughout the period, the test of literacy used by the British census bureau was the ability to sign a marriage register. The reasoning of the Registrar General in 1861 that "the signing of one's name is roughly equivalent to being able to read fluently" (quoted in Lee 1976: 31) was highly supposititious. The method's major limitation was that it did not recognize that there were men and women who



could sign their names, although they could write nothing else. It also failed to take into account the development or decline of literacy after marriage, the literacy rate of the unmarried, or the practice of a literate person signing with an "x" in order not to embarrass the spouse who could not write.

10. Prior to the appearance of the penny press in the United States, taverns supplied newspapers to their customers—usually the poorer classes—for reading on the premises. At the other end of the social scale, reading rooms made late news dispatches as well as newspapers available to business and professional men. In 1851 Horace Greeley asserted that public houses no longer attracted patrons by offering a place to read (Great Britain 1851: 395).
11. Day's use of the human-interest story was a prelude to when *The Sun* under Charles A. Dana would specialize in this kind of article. The human-interest story was interesting not from the significance of the person or event reported, but because it was amusing or pathetic or meaningful as a bit of texture of universal human life (Park 1925: 84).
12. Bennett's paper began life 6 May 1835 as *The Morning Herald*. A fire put it out of business on 31 August of that year, and it resumed on 31 August simply as *The Herald*. In 1837 it reverted to *The Morning Herald*, and only upon the enlargement of its page-size on 21 September 1840 did it become *The New York Herald*.
13. Papers like *The Herald* addressed issues every day, and fought for them with as much vehemence as the partisan press. But that was not their purpose, as it had been when newspapers simply reflected parties. Emery and Emery (1988: 686) indicated that these changes in the avoidance of partisanship should be measured relatively.
14. Bennett's sensational treatment of the case was sharply attacked in an anonymous 1844 pamphlet, *The life and writings of James Gordon Bennett, editor of the New York Herald* (pages 12-22). The pamphlet was almost certainly subsidized by Bennett's rivals and sought to expose him as a scoundrel by reprinting a series of spicy stories from *The Herald*.
15. There is much debate about who introduced the interview as a journalistic technique. Stories based more or less on interviews have been common ever since there were journalists, and Mott (1962: 386) pointed out that *The Boston News-Letter's* story of the death of Blackbeard the pirate (2 March 1719) was apparently based on an interview with a ship captain. Turnbull (1936) argued that the first formal interview with a famous man was Horace Greeley's talk with Brigham Young, published in the *New-York Daily Tribune* on 20 August 1859. Recently the consensus is to credit Bennett for his interview with Rosina Townsend—the brothel keeper who ran the house the Jewett-Robinson murder was committed in—published in *The Herald* on 16 April 1836 (Eberhard 1970; Nilsson 1971; Francke 1974: 44).
16. Bennett sent a special correspondent to cover the McLeod case. *The Herald* also printed many dispatches from reporters in Montreal discussing Canadian affairs, including seven in December 1842, 13 in January 1843, and seven in February 1843.
17. On 14 September 1835, *The Sun* ran a two-column woodcut captioned "Herschel's Forty-Foot Telescope." The illustration was part of one of the great hoaxes in the history of American journalism. A series of seven articles

purported to describe discoveries made by the English astronomer John Herschel, including strange amphibious creatures and "man-bats" that inhabited the moon. *The Sun's* circulation rocketed, and even after the series was exposed as deception, *The Sun* retained much of its new readership (O'Brien 1918: 64-102).

18. Raymond once wrote about Greeley's fascination with Fourierism, an early brand of socialism: "Some delectable asses here (among whom I am sorry to say is Greeley) have started a plan for reorganizing society—elevating the social condition of universal dogdom and allowing puppies to hold their proper rank in the scale of being" (quoted in Maverick 1951: 39).
19. There is an example of when the Devil apparently did just that, which proves that Raymond was not above using a sensational story if he could get it first. On the night of 10 October 1854 the night editor of the *Daily Times* was on his way home when he ran into a drunk mumbling about the steamer *Arctic*, which had sunk in the north Atlantic with the loss of several hundred lives, a story that had been rumored for several weeks. All the editor could get from the drunk was that the story had been given to *The Herald*. The editor went back to the *Daily Times*, had the presses stopped, and sent a man to steal a copy of the next day's *Herald* from that paper's press room. *The Herald*, having a major exclusive, had determined to hold its papers until an hour after those of its competitors were in the readers' hands, when the release of the story would be even more impressive. The editor of the *Daily Times* quickly had his front page reset and ran the entire story from *The Herald*—obtained from George H. Burns, the first returning survivor. The *Daily Times* city edition was circulated at the regular time, beating out *The Herald* by an hour (Davis 1921: 34-36).

20. The duties on newspapers are shown in the following chart:

	<u>Newspaper Stamp</u>	<u>Advertisement Duty</u>	<u>Paper Duty</u>
1789-97	2d.	2s. 6d.	
1797-1815	3.5d.	3s	1803-36 3d.
1815-36	4d.	1815-33 3s. 6d.	
1836-55	1d.	1833-53 1s. 6d.	1836-61 1.5d.
1855	Abolished	1853 Abolished	1861 Abolished

The effect of the duties on newspapers can be seen by the changes in the cost of *The Times*: 1785—2.5d.; 1789—4d.; 1794—4.5d.; 1797—6d.; 1809—6.5d.; 1815—7d.; 1836—5d.; 1855—4d.; 1861—3d. (Wadsworth 1955: 3).

21. In contrast to the huge amount of copy, the headlines were small, one-column, and unoriginal. A majority of the features, reports, editorials, or letters about the Franklin search between 1848 and 1853 appeared under one of three headlines: "The Arctic Searching Expedition," "The Arctic Expedition," or "The Franklin Search."

### CHAPTER 3

1. Darwin's original contributions in *Origin of species* are widely misunderstood even today (Ellegard 1958; Halliday 1971): he did not actually provide much new information of the variation that occurs within species, nor on its frequency, extent, inheritance, or causes (Darwin 1859). In fact, he acknowledged that many of those questions remained unsolved. But in *Origin of species* he was not particularly concerned with such details; his main object was to establish a solution to the species problem that would render superfluous any reference to

supernatural causes. Complete ejection of supernaturalism from its stronghold in biology was necessary to ensure a rational discussion of the fundamental problems of science. Darwin's theory of natural selection, the revolutionary and radically new element in his doctrine, achieved this (Himmelfarb 1959: 256-276).

2. A description of man-hauling that reveals all of its horrors is to be found in J.H. Nelson's journal of the voyage of *Investigator*. The sailors were "harnessed as it were by a broad canvas belt, to a sledge laden with necessaries, for a long journey, weighing from 12 to 14 hundred-weight and compelled for 12 hours out of 24 to drag the aforesaid sledge o'er icy hills and dales—then to pitch the tent—at times becoming nearly frozen in the operation, and with the aid of a spirit apparatus provided for the purpose, warm if possible, for it is by no means certain, the allowance of food allotted for each meal, this accomplished, to kick your way into a huge blanket bag, and taking your napsack for a pillow, endeavor to obtain an hour's sleep" (Nelson 1850-1854: I, 91-92).
3. Most of the able seaman in the Royal Navy were discharged after the defeat of Napoleon; their number fell from 140,000 to 19,000. The officers, however, were kept on, leading to the ridiculous proportion of one officer to every three men (Berton 1988: 19).
4. The aspect of loving the unexplored parts of the globe simply because of the freedom it gave perhaps was best expressed by Joseph Thomson, the young Scottish explorer who was the first to cross Kenya to the great lakes. Just before he died he wrote: "I am doomed to be a wanderer. I am not an empire-builder. I am not a missionary. I am not truly a scientist. I merely want to return to Africa to continue my wanderings" (quoted in Moorehead 1960: 121). This same nomadic ideal was an important part of the nature of many Arctic as well as African explorers.
5. Moorehead was specifically addressing accounts about African exploration. The books about African and Arctic expeditions had basically the same appeal, however, and the public's imagination was captured by the writings of African explorers such as Livingstone (1857; 1865), Burton (1860; 1894), Speke (1863; 1864), Grant (1864), and Baker (1866) in the same way it was by the best writers of Arctic exploration.
6. Verne actually wrote 11 novels either polar in general or in part. His topics included the attainment of both the North and South Poles, the circumnavigation of the North Pole, the establishment of a fur-trading post in northern Canada, a journey through Siberia, an attempt to reach coal deposits under the North Pole, and a submarine voyage under the South Pole. An avid reader of Arctic literature, Verne went to great lengths to make his descriptions as realistic as possible. He was directly influenced not only by Kane, but by Hayes, Nordenskiöld, Bellot, and Emile de Bray. One of his books was clearly based on the life and efforts of Jane Franklin. The central character of a short story was the mythical grandson of James Gordon Bennett Jr.; although this book did not have any polar aspect, Bennett's power and whimsy were shown carried to their logical extremes (Riffenburgh 1991b).
7. Even when hunters made an obeisance to pitying the animals, they usually revealed their true feelings at other times. For example, upon his return from the expedition to find David Livingstone, Stanley wrote: "When I started from the coast I remember how ardently I pursued the game; how I dived into the tall, wet grass; how I lost myself in the jungles; how I trudged over the open plains in search of vert and venison. And what did it all amount to? Killing a few

inoffensive animals the meat of which was not worth the trouble. And shall I waste my strength and energies in chasing game? No, and the man who would do so at such a crisis as the present is a \_\_\_\_\_" (*The New York Herald* 9 August 1872).

But later the same year, Stanley wrote of shooting basking hippopotami simply to test the difference between his .44 caliber Winchester rifle and a No. 12 smooth-bore. As he admitted, this was purely for sport, because his party neither needed nor collected the meat (Stanley 1872: 80-82). In fact, McLynn (1989: 139) has observed that Stanley often wounded animals, and the sole disappointment he recorded in his journal was that they nevertheless escaped.

8. The effect of the combination of technological developments and the expanding freedom of the English press can easily be seen in figures for *The Manchester Guardian*. In 1821, *The Guardian* was founded as a weekly selling for seven pence, and as such reached a high circulation of 3,000. In 1836, with the decrease in the stamp tax, *The Guardian* became a bi-weekly selling for four pence, and at the beginning of 1855 had achieved a circulation of approximately 10,000. In 1855, *The Guardian* became a daily selling for two pence, a price that was reduced to a penny in 1857. By the mid-1880s, sales had risen to about 40,000 (Musson 1958: 411; Ayerst 1971).
9. Certainly the *Tribune* could not normally be called sensational, and by 1865, it had not changed greatly from before the Civil War (Baehr 1936: 40). One editor at least proved to be a master of understatement the day after President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. Because of press deadlines, the account barely made it into the paper, and only appeared on page four. The headline simply stated: "HIGHLY IMPORTANT" (Baehr 1936: 37-38).

#### CHAPTER 4

1. *The Times* was the most typographically conservative of all of the major papers. For most of the nineteenth century there were no large heads or crossheads because the owners—the Walter family—"took it for granted that the paper was read from beginning to end as a matter of course" (Morison 1932: 211). *The Times* did not use its first crosshead until 21 April 1890.
2. Bennett's list of names was not as uncommon as it might seem. William Randolph Hearst later forbade his employees to write anything negative about certain of his friends or political cronies (Carlson and Bates 1936). Late in his career, Reid was slavishly devoted to President Theodore Roosevelt and would brook no negative comments about him in the *Tribune* (Baehr 1936: 265-286). And Greeley had a lengthy index of forbidden words, the use of which was punishable by suspension without pay for a week or even immediate discharge (Chambers 1922: 15).
3. The search for a proper route for a submarine telegraph cable linking Britain and the United States was one of the first contacts the modern press had with Arctic explorers. In 1860, there were two expeditions sponsored by the Atlantic Telegraph Company to make deep-sea soundings and land surveys on a route via Scotland, the Faeroes, Iceland, Greenland, and Labrador. One expedition was led by McClintock, the other by Rae and Allen Young (Holland in preparation). Five years later, the Western Union Telegraph Company sponsored an expedition to survey a route for a telegraph line via Alaska, the Bering Strait, and Siberia. One of the members of the expedition was T.W. Knox, a reporter for *The New York Herald* (Neering 1989), who later wrote for *Frank Leslie's Illustrated*

*Newspaper*, where he earned a reputation as one of the foremost travel writers of the time (Mott 1930-1968: II, 462).

4. The new technologies affected more than just the speed with which reports were received. Carey (1983) argued that the telegraph created the wire services and introduced the standardization of news, which, in turn, gave the news function of the newspaper preeminence over the editorial function. The need for clarity and simplicity also shaped a new telegraphic style of journalism. Because economy of expression saved money, "sentences were compressed into phrases, single words were created to do the work of several...it became a sort of art-form in itself. A correspondent in China with the praiseworthy intention of saving money by doing his journey on a horse cabled: PROPOSE MONGOLIANWARDS PONYWISE, to which came the terse reply: CONSIDER PONYWISE POUND FOOLISH STAY PUT" (James Cameron in introduction to Waugh 1982: 11-12). The telegraph also encouraged the use of unambiguous words, and the language of journalism came to be more uniform as certain words came into more frequent use. Writers used the simplest syntax: reports were written with a minimum of punctuation, and adverbial phrases at the beginning of sentences were avoided, because they might erroneously be attached to the preceding sentence. In 1904, one essayist concluded, "The delicacy, intricacy, nuance of language is endangered by the wires" (quoted in Kern 1983: 115).
5. There has been some debate over whether the discussion of current issues by pre-radio-and-television orators actually clarified or confused the news and opinions reported in the press. The great journalist and wit H.L. Mencken made the pessimistic assessment that the average man did not understand more than two-thirds of what "comes from the lips of the average political orator or clergyman" (quoted in Park 1925: 91).
6. Conversely, the American people, unlike the British, had very little interest in Africa, despite the explorations of Henry Morton Stanley, an American citizen (*Sunday Mercury* 8 December 1872). Stanley's planned series of lectures in New York about locating David Livingstone was cancelled after the second one because of poor attendance (*The Sun* 7 December 1872).
7. Historically, science had consisted of broad, general disciplines. But around the middle of the nineteenth century this changed, as science moved towards the modern pattern of specialized research. Although on the surface science figured to become more fragmented and disconnected than ever, it actually became comprehensive, as scientists achieved the synthesis of natural science by the integration of its various branches (Binkley 1935: 3-10). At the same time as science became comprehensive, it also became comprehensible. The concepts with which scientists were working—the history of the earth and of life, and the processes of time and change—were far more understandable to the reading man than those of earlier eras, and many of the mid-Victorian scientists—including Darwin, Joseph Lister, and Gideon Mantell—were talented amateurs who could communicate with the public partly because they were "regular people" (Wilson 1976: 99-100). These changes led to a mass interest in science, partly because to the Victorians science conjured up "the romance of a man making discoveries and taming Nature" (Annan 1959: 31), that is, achieving the conquest of the world.
8. At the same time as praising Nordenskiöld, *The Daily Telegraph* could not help but give similar support to Lamont, although the two expeditions were in reality as far different as was imaginable: "We cannot, indeed, say that the sole, or even the main, object of this new expedition is to win its way to the North Pole. It will be in reality a sportsman's adventure; but the sportsman will take care to seize

every opportunity of adding to our stock of knowledge of the natural sciences....If there should be an opening in the ice leading towards the Pole, Mr. Lamont is not the man to miss the chance of seeing whither such an opening might lead." (*The Daily Telegraph* 3 April 1869)

9. By contrast, the press in the United States was rarely openly against exploration. At the other extreme *The New York Herald* rabidly defended, promoted, and even sponsored exploration—both in the Arctic and Africa. But even those journals uninvolved in exploration did not actively fight against it and rarely made any value judgments on its benefits or disadvantages.
10. It was not just the lives of the explorers that concerned those who supported this point of view. There was widespread outrage in Britain when it was learned that H.M. Stanley had gone out of his way to attack the natives of the Bumbire tribe on Lake Victoria for having earlier opposed his passage. Forty-two tribesmen were slain and more than 100 wounded as Stanley's men fired on them with elephant rifles loaded with exploding bullets, which had been forbidden in "civilized warfare" (*The Daily Telegraph* 10 August 1876; *The New York Herald* 10 August 1876; Stanley 1878: II, 218-223). In February 1878, when Stanley was honored by the Royal Geographical Society, not only did a number of members resign over this issue (McLynn 1991: 10-15), the press went into a frenzy (for example, Galton 1878; *Saturday Review* 1878). *The Pall Mall Gazette* and *The Standard* published numerous articles on the controversy (*The Pall Mall Gazette* 30 January, 9, 11 February 1878; *The Standard* 9, 11, 13 February 1878), one of which commented: "It cannot be seriously contended that in judging an explorer's achievements in geographical discovery no account should be taken of his acts from a moral point of view. If a traveller were to secure a free passage through Central Asia by poisoning whole tribes of Turkomans by prussic acid, he would hardly expect a welcome in England" (*The Standard* 9 February 1878).
11. The increasing popularity of the travel lecture in the United States beginning in the 1850s was closely related to the growth of interest in science. Just as the scientific lecturer was presented as an explorer seeking out the mysteries of nature and the universe, the travel lecturer appeared as an explorer of human nature and the world. The travel lecture was less a modern travelogue than a kind of comparative ethnography. "Portraits of the authentic Arab or Eskimo were designed not only to expand his audience's understanding by broadening their view of the range of human character and custom in the world, they were also intended to foster through contrast a fuller appreciation of the nature and distinctiveness of American character" (Scott 1980: 803-804). The demand for such lectures was so high that Kane turned down more than 100 requests in 1856 alone (Scott 1980: 802).
12. Bennett's interest in foreign places and events was not just based on his assessment of the American public; it was also the product of his mother having taken him to France at a young age in order to avoid the antagonism towards his father that was rampant in New York during the "Moral War" against *The Herald* (O'Connor 1962). Within a decade of taking over *The Herald*, Bennett moved back to France, where he ran his paper *in absentia*. His love of France and things European explains several aspects of his life, including his founding of a Paris edition of *The Herald* (now the *International Herald Tribune*), his lifelong dislike of the British, and (compounded with his service in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War) his devotion to foreign and maritime news, both of which *The Herald* covered better than any other paper in the United States (Robertson 1987: 1-21; Riffenburgh 1991a).

13. Livingstone was one of the living legends of Britain, a man who first went to South Africa in 1840 as a missionary and had become not only one of the greatest explorers of Africa but the most powerful European propagandist for the "civilizing" of the Dark Continent and the struggle against the slave trade. He had discovered the Zambezi River in 1851; had crossed Africa from Luanda (in modern Angola) to Quelimane (in modern Mozambique) in 1854-1856, during which time he had discovered Victoria Falls; and had led an expedition up the Shire River to Lake Nyasa in 1858-1864 (Livingstone 1857; 1865; Jeal 1973). In 1865 he was asked by the Royal Geographical Society to settle the dispute over the true sources of the Nile that had led to the controversy between Richard Burton and John Hanning Speke, at the same time as to define the watershed of the Nile, Congo, and Zambezi Rivers. He left Zanzibar in March 1866 for the interior of Africa and had not been seen since by the time Bennett sent Stanley to find him (Coupland 1945).
14. This was one of the early examples of the feud that Bennett and the English papers carried on for 50 years. The British attitude was that Bennett and his protégé Stanley were charlatans who invented stories. On the other side, so great was Bennett's pleasure at the discomfort of his English rivals that he printed Stanley's dispatches without cuts and taunted the other papers with *The Herald's* superiority: "Our readers will not fail to perceive the vast superiority in style of writing, minuteness of detail and graphic portrayal of events which *The Herald* correspondence possesses over the written accounts of the same matter in the London journals" (*The New York Herald* 26 June 1869).
15. Throughout 1869 *The Times* kept Livingstone's name in front of the British public. Articles were published about him on 20 January, 19 and 20 April, 16 July, 6, 7, and 15 September, and 1 October.
16. Actually, Bennett had wanted to give the assignment to another reporter, Rudolph Keim, but could not contact him immediately in the United States and was too impatient to wait for him to cross the Atlantic (Hall 1974: 381). Keim later tread in Stanley's footsteps in the American west (Keim 1870).
17. Despite the financial gains Bennett and *The Herald* made out of Stanley's reports, Bennett was never partial to his star correspondent. Bennett simply was jealous that one of his employees, a nobody whom he had created by sending him on an errand for his paper, received so much credit rather than *The Herald* or Bennett himself. Bennett was particularly annoyed by Stanley's reception by Queen Victoria at Dunrobin Castle, which made Stanley the toast of Britain, even though Bennett had conceived the idea for the expedition and had then financed it (Seitz 1928: 298-302). Bennett slowly took his revenge. After the first of Stanley's lectures in New York in December 1872, *The Herald* pounced on its own man, claiming Stanley was "intolerably dull...his elocution is bad...[and] his anecdotes were spoiled in the telling." It went on to state that "Mr. Stanley still betrays some of the vices...of the tyro. He speaks too fast in his eagerness not to bore his hearers, the consequence is that they sometimes fail to understand...what he has said...the subject matter was a trifle abstruse for his audience" (*The New York Herald* 4 December 1872). When *The Herald* admitted its own employee was a flop, there was little reason for anyone to attend, and the lecture series was quickly cancelled (McLynn 1989: 234). Bennett continued to hold his grudge for years. In 1891 he sent one of his correspondents, Aubrey Stanhope, to Stanley's Swiss retreat to ask the explorer if his one-year-old marriage was on the rocks because he beat his wife (Stanhope 1914: 150-155).

18. It was primarily the efforts of MacGahan during the Franco-Prussian War that reconfirmed *The Herald's* position as the nation's top source of foreign news despite determined efforts by its opponents to surpass it. At the very beginning of the war, Whitelaw Reid, then the managing editor of the *Tribune*, wrote to his European correspondents: "The first battle will doubtless be the occasion for the sharpest competition....If we can give a complete account of the first battle in advance of everybody else we shall make the *Tribune* the recognized authority on foreign news. But with the *Herald* lies our greatest danger. If they see a chance to get ahead they will willingly spend \$50,000 in doing it" (quoted in Cortissoz 1921: I, 170-171). MacGahan's reports about the Battle of Sedan (1 September 1870) were widely considered the best in either England or the United States (Bullard 1914: 115-154).
19. MacGahan first made a major impression on the British public in 1873. In April of that year, against the orders of the Tsarist government, he followed a Russian military expedition to Turkestan, sent to conquer the khanate of Khiva, the last stronghold of Moslem power on the Oxus. MacGahan left with only an interpreter and a servant and caught up with the army outside of Khiva on 1 June, having traveled more than 700 miles. His stories for *The Herald* about the capture of Khiva and subsequent campaign against the Turkomans were picked up *verbatim* by *The Daily Telegraph*, and were the only major accounts in western Europe or the United States (MacGahan 1874). In July 1876 *The Daily News* sent MacGahan to the Balkans to investigate reports that the Turks had killed up to 15,000 Bulgarians while brutally suppressing their efforts for independence; his dispatches ran regularly in *The Daily News* between 28 July and 16 August 1876. According to the British correspondent Archibald Forbes: "It is, indeed, no exaggeration to aver that, for better or worse, MacGahan was the virtual author of the Russo-Turkish War [1877-1878]. His pen pictures of the atrocities so excited the fury of the Slav population of Russia that their passionate demand for retribution on the 'unspeakable Turk' virtually compelled Alexander II to undertake the war" (Forbes 1895: 16). While reporting from the front of this war, MacGahan caught typhus and died at the age of 33 (Bullard 1914: 115-154; Hohenberg 1964: 115-120).
20. Juergens (1966: 53) has stressed that a story that takes several days, or weeks, to reach a climax is more exciting, and sells more newspapers, than one that can be reported in a single issue. And Hughes (1981: 62) has indicated that newspapermen think that the longer the outcome is in doubt, the bigger is the news. Bennett might not have been the first to realize this, but he certainly understood it. The bulk of Stanley's reports about his expedition to find Livingstone were spread out between 15 July and 15 August 1872, while accounts from other expeditions were released slowly over several weeks.
21. Two of the other four members of the expedition also made astute observations of life and travel in the far north. But although Schwatka kept extensive journals that were eventually edited into a book (Stackpole 1965), and the expedition's artist and anthropologist, Heinrich Klutschak, published a book in Germany (Klutschak 1881; Barr 1987), neither reached the Anglo-American public for more than 80 years. Klutschak's book especially was a detailed anthropological study of enormous value. He made such keen observations that Franz Boas, widely regarded as the pioneer ethnographer to work among the Eskimo of the Canadian Arctic, relied heavily on them when discussing the various Eskimo groups of the area (Boas 1888).
22. One of the most-highly respected geographers of the nineteenth century, August Petermann (1822-1878) was the editor of *Mittheilungen aus Justus Perthes'*



*Geographischer Anstalt über wichtige neue Erforschungen auf dem Gesamtgebiet der Geographischen Wissenschaft von Dr. A. Petermann* from 1855 until his death. Known as the "Sage of Gotha," Petermann had an influence on Arctic exploration out of all proportion to his actual practical experience, which included not only having never traveled to the Arctic, but having never even left Europe until late in life. This influence was clearly demonstrated by Lamont, who wrote: "I had enunciated most strongly the opinion that it would for ever prove impossible to approach the Pole of the earth in *ships*; but...from much conversation with those learned theorists who, without ever having left their own firesides, stoutly maintain that there is 'no difficulty whatever in sailing to the North Pole,' I was induced to consider whether my own opinion—however practically formed—might not have been too hastily adopted after all" (Lamont 1876: 4; emphasis Lamont's).

Petermann was the last great advocate of the theory of an ice-free polar sea. Scientific theories about an open polar sea around the North Pole long had been popular, and John Barrow certainly had believed in the existence of such an entity (Barrow 1846: 19; Wright 1953). Later expeditions by Hayes and Hall had been partly based on similar theories (Hayes 1867; Loomis 1972: 40-44). Petermann initially argued that conditions indicated the best route to the North Pole was not through Smith Sound, where most expeditions had started, but rather between Spitsbergen and Novaya Zemlya (Petermann 1852; Markham 1874). After the Austro-Hungarian exploring expedition (1872-1874), Petermann revised his theories by deciding the way to get to the open polar sea was to start even farther east. Incorporating the theories of American oceanographers Silas Bent and Matthew Fontaine Maury into his own, Petermann speculated that if one followed the Kuro Siwo (the "Black Steam of Japan") through the Bering Strait, one would come to the hole that powerful thermal current would cut in the paleocrystic sea, a great ring of pack ice that he envisaged around the warm polar basin (which he speculated was caused by the meeting of the Kuro Siwo and the Gulf Stream). He also indicated that there well might be a stretch of land running continuously from Greenland to Ostrov Vrangelya (Wrangel Island) directly through the open polar sea (Maury 1859; Hübsch 1978; Riffenburgh in press).

23. Fanning the flames of interest in a subject *The Herald* was going to cover in the near future was something at which Bennett was expert. While Stanley was first awaiting Livingstone in north Africa, *The Herald* started running stories about the accomplishments of and fears for Livingstone (for example, *The New York Herald* 9, 23 April 1868). Similarly, Bennett was known to change a dateline (for example, from Aden to Zanzibar; *The New York Herald* 2 July 1872) or to hold back the release of news (McLynn 1989: 203-204) in order for a story to have a bigger impact on the readership. Conversely, *The Herald* could turn on an individual it had recently been praising as soon as Bennett had lost interest. Thus, after reaching the Lena delta, John P. Jackson wrote: "Professor Nordenskiöld got quite enough of fame out of his great voyage around Asia and Europe; and then all he did was to accomplish in two years a journey most of which had been done hundreds of times before his day by the adventurous Cossacks in their rude ships. The sea route from the Lena to the Pacific can never be of any value to anybody at least for some hundred years of so, if then, for the simple reason that the entire government of Yakutsk does not contain population enough worth troubling about" (*The New York Herald* 19 June 1882).
24. Jackson's interviews with Danenhower began a furor at both the public and the official levels. An official naval court of inquiry into the *Jeannette* expedition was followed by a Congressional investigation. Both, fearing a scandal that would have negative effects on the U.S. Department of the Navy, whitewashed the affair and issued findings indicating that the expedition had been efficiently

planned, provisioned, and conducted (U.S. Congress 1883; Guttridge 1986). At the same time, the debate was carried on in the newspapers. Although *The New York Graphic* had its supporters when it commented, "Is it not time to end this Arctic exploration business? It costs so much and results in so little" (*The New York Graphic* 19 April 1882), the majority of newspapers and, apparently, readers still supported Arctic exploration.

25. On 6 May 1882, the day after the last interview with Danenhower, *The Herald* published the news that they had just received from Gilder—that De Long and his party had been found dead. The paper ran heavy black lines between the columns, just as it had for two weeks following the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln (and as it had following the death of Bennett Sr.). Included in the story from Gilder was a commentary about Melville that stated: "He had, so far as I can learn, succeeded in finding the route taken by the party—was, indeed, in their very footsteps—yet he turned back, alleging that the natives refused to go any further, and that the snow drifts were at that time forty feet deep in places. This last assertion we must refuse to believe at present, but must await patiently his own explanation of his search. There does not appear to have been the slightest necessity for his leaving Bulun, giving the natives charge of the search, while he went to Yakutsk in order to send dispatches home" (*The New York Herald* 6 May 1882).
26. Like Gilder, MacGahan also emphasized the details of far-away places that Bennett appreciated so much. MacGahan was an expert at accurately describing the areas to which he traveled and the people whom he met. As he stated in the preface to his book *Campaigning on the Oxus*: "I have done my best to give completeness to my narrative by describing not merely the military operations against Khiva, but also the physical features, the social life, and the political condition of the country itself" (MacGahan 1874: iii).
27. Cockerill, who ran the day-to-day operation first of the *Post-Dispatch* and then of *The World* for Pulitzer, totally defended the papers' use of sensational material. Once he received a letter from a minister who objected to a slightly irreverent drawing in *The World*. Cockerill's reply read: "My dear Sir, Will you kindly go to hell? John A. Cockerill" (McDougall 1926: 138).
28. It was one of the inconsistencies of late-nineteenth-century journalism in Britain that some editors and writers achieved considerable notoriety despite the formal anonymity of their actual writings. There were virtually no bylines in any British newspaper much before 1900 (Boston 1976: 18). Conversely, American newspapermen prided themselves on their number of bylines, and Bennett's policy requiring stories to be published without bylines helped drive off more than one of his star reporters hungry for fame (Nathan 1909: 691). The great English journalist H.W. Massingham commented that because of the chance for the average writer to receive more credit in the United States "the American reporter not only works a great deal harder for his money than his English brother but he puts more observation, surface cleverness and literary knack into his work. The result of the opposite course pursued by the greater part of the English press has been to banish dash, force and even verisimilitude from the English newspaper. You get from it not a picture of men and women but a dry clatter of words, words, words" (Massingham 1892).
29. The interview was considered such a journalistic vulgarity that this one, conducted by William Howard Russell, was placed on pages 10 and 11 despite the fact that it was with Otto von Bismarck and that the Prussians were in the midst of war with France (Bird 1979). Neither *The Times* nor any other morning

daily continued the practice for almost two decades. When W.T. Stead printed interviews in *The Pall Mall Gazette* in the mid-1880s, *The Times* was one of the first papers to criticize him.

30. In response to Markham's book, *The Times* again took the offensive. In an editorial of 25 May 1873, it wrote: "The world has reaped little manifest advantage from the Expeditions which for three centuries have vainly essayed to penetrate the secret of the Polar Seas....the substantial gains of each succeeding enterprise have dwindled, until in our own time the expenditure of devotion, public service, public money, and priceless lives has brought no return....If we ask why Arctic Exploration should be prolonged and pushed forward, we find a difficulty in obtaining an intelligible answer."

## CHAPTER 5

1. For most of Bennett's reign over *The Herald*, at least the first two pages of his newspaper—and sometimes up to the first four—were devoted to classified ads. Therefore, the first news page was usually page three but sometimes pages four or five.
2. Although the experience of a journalist who "has seen it all" is an advantage in writing straight news stories that require facts be set down accurately and succinctly, it can be a disadvantage for the writer who is trying to draw tears or gasps from an audience. The great editor Lincoln Steffens recognized this when he moved from *The Evening Post* to the *New York Commercial Advertiser*, where he warned his staff about jaded, wordly-wise minds: "When a reporter no longer saw red at a fire, when he was so used to police news that a murder was not a human tragedy but only a crime, he could not write police news for us. We preferred the fresh starting eyes to the informed mind and the blunted pencil. To express this, if not to enforce it, I used to warn my staff that whenever a reporter became a good all-around newspaper man, he would be fired" (Steffens 1931: 314-315).
3. The trials of the Tichborne Claimant captured the imagination of the British public from 1871 through 1874. Arthur "Bullocky" Orton was a butcher originally from Wapping, England. In 1866 Orton, then living in Wagga Wagga, Queensland, Australia, and going by the name Thomas Castro, put forward in the civil courts a claim to be the long-missing Roger Tichborne, son of Sir J.F. Doughty-Tichborne, who had died in 1862 leaving a vast fortune. Although Roger Tichborne had been declared dead after the ship he was on was lost at sea in 1854, his mother fervently hoped he was alive, and upon hearing Orton's claim, immediately backed it and "recognized" him, although her son had been slim, with sharp features and straight black hair, and Orton was enormously fat, and had wavy, light-brown hair. With the assistance of Roger Tichborne's diaries, which Lady Tichborne "returned" to Orton, the claimant successfully answered every question put to him in the civil action, which began on 11 May 1871 and continued until March 1872. However, his claim was eventually denied due to the efforts of various other members of the Tichborne family. Orton was then charged with perjury and brought to trial in 1873. The trial lasted 188 days during which Orton showed a remarkable understanding of the intricacies of the law and an astonishing ability to drag out the legal proceedings. Ultimately, Orton was found guilty and sentenced to 14 years of penal servitude.
4. Although born in Denbigh, Wales, as John Rowlands, at this stage of his career Stanley was claiming to be an American. It was not until several decades later

that he reclaimed his British citizenship, in great part so that he would be eligible for the knighthood he did indeed receive in 1899, five years before his death.

While Stanley was still in the interior of Africa in 1872, the Royal Geographical Society organized an expedition—headed by Lieutenant L.S. Dawson and including Oswell, Livingstone's youngest son—to find the missionary. Stanley met the expedition just as it was starting out at Bagamoyo, and Dawson, upon discovering that Livingstone was alive and healthy, at once officially terminated the expedition (Stanley 1872: 652-675).

5. A classic example of exaggeration and understatement at the same time was the description by James Bruce of the Tisisat Falls near Lake Tana in the northern highlands of Ethiopia, close to the source of the Blue Nile. In his expedition account, Bruce declared, "The cataract itself was the most magnificent sight that I ever beheld. The height has been rather exaggerated...[and] is nearer to forty feet than any other measure....It was one of the most magnificent, stupendous sights in the creation" (Bruce 1790). Alan Moorehead pointed out in *The Blue Nile*: "One cannot altogether blame him for exalting the scene before him—after all, most of the explorers were guilty of exaggeration....But such phrases as 'one of the most magnificent, stupendous sights in the creation,' are perhaps a little too much; they smack of the story-teller and the supernatural. Then when he gets down to facts he makes the Falls much wider than they really are, but less than a third of their true height; the actual drop is not forty feet but a hundred and fifty" (Moorehead 1962: 31).

## CHAPTER 6

1. The first edition with ears appeared on Sunday, 10 June 1883. For the next two weeks, Pulitzer used them on and off, but they returned permanently on 25 June. Although they were originally circular, the ears were made square on 16 August 1883. In today's papers, ears are frequently used for such things as capsule weather reports or slogans such as, in the case of *The New York Times*, "All the News That's Fit to Print."
2. Pulitzer did not use the term "masses" in a derogatory manner. In a letter of 30 July 1910 to Charles M. Lincoln, then the managing editor of *The World*, he stated: "Always remember the difference between a paper made for the million, for the masses, and a paper made for the classes. In using the word masses I do not exclude anybody. I should make a paper that the judges of the Supreme Court of the United States would read with enjoyment...but I would not make a paper that only the judges of the Supreme Court and their class can read" (quoted in Seitz 1924b: 416-417).
3. Although he is frequently overlooked, much of the credit for *The World's* achievements should go to Cockerill, whose imaginative handling of the news complemented Pulitzer's innovative policies and ideas. In fact, his biographer contends that he was a superior newsman even to Pulitzer (King 1965).
4. Pulitzer did ultimately become more interested in foreign news. In fact, in 1894 James Creelman's coverage of the Sino-Japanese war for *The World* marked the first time *The Herald* had been bettered in war correspondence (Marmarelli 1983: 61). This achievement was due to the hiring earlier that year of Creelman, who had not only been one of *The Herald's* but one of the profession's top foreign correspondents from 1878 to 1889, and then had served as editor of, in succession, the London edition of *The Herald*, the Paris edition of *The Herald*, and *The Evening Telegram*. In 1893, Creelman had left Bennett's employ

because, like many of his associates, he was unhappy with Bennett's policy of not allowing bylines (Marmarelli 1983: 60).

Despite increasing his foreign coverage, Pulitzer never really warmed to Arctic exploration. According to Don Carlos Seitz, "He once advised me I could do anything on behalf of the paper except hunt for the North Pole" (Seitz 1924a: 296).

5. The *New York Daily Graphic* was founded 1 March 1873 by two Canadians, William A. Leggo and Joseph Desbauts. Although it was the first daily to devote extensive space to pictures, its attention to current news was minimal. It appealed to those individuals more interested in popular art or political cartoons (Rhode and McCall 1961: 21). The *Graphic* used photo-engraved line illustrations from its inception, and on 4 March 1880 became the first newspaper to use the halftone process to transform a photograph—entitled "A Scene in Shantytown"—into print. Despite the fact that this picture has been referred to as "the practical beginning of photojournalism" (Butterfield 1962: 48), so few passable results were obtained from this primitive form of halftone, called "granulated photographs," that the process was abandoned (Ives 1928: 49). It was only in 1886 that Frederic Ives perfected the halftone process and not until the 1890s that Stephen H. Horgan perfected a method to print halftones on high-speed rotary presses (Schuneman 1966). The *Daily Graphic* went out of business in 1889.
6. The achievement of printing current illustrations before the development of the halftone is all the more remarkable when one considers the laborious steps involved in running a picture off high-speed presses. As Juergens (1966: 97) describes the process: "Artists would transfer their initial sketches into pen and ink drawings, using thick, coarse lines so that the presses did not have to be continually stopped to eliminate ink smears. The drawings were next sent downstairs to be photographed on zinc. Engravers set to work immediately on the zinc cuts, painfully etching in by hand with acid the space between the lines. As soon as the job had been completed, a messenger rushed the cuts to the pressroom where they were put on blocks, and in later years stereotyped with the rest of the page and prepared for printing. Each step required skill and extreme care, but the work had to be done under the pressure of a deadline to have the cuts ready for the early morning run."
7. Frank Leslie's death in 1880 did not have a negative effect on the *Newspaper* or the other publications named for him. Leslie's widow, Miriam Florence Follin Squier Leslie, legally changed her name to Frank Leslie and continued to run the publications as she felt her husband would have wanted. She proved to be both a better editor and a better business manager than her husband had been. She stopped the presses immediately when the news reached her of the assassination of United States President James Garfield, and she remade the entire paper. The result was a \$50,000 profit on that single issue. Although she successfully continued marketing *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* for almost a decade and the other publications even longer, she was no more interested in true journalism than her husband had been, and in the time under her control, its emphasis changed from art (as under her husband) to literature (Mott 1930-1968: II, 452-465; Everett 1983).

In 1895, six years after the new Frank Leslie sold the *Newspaper*, she leased the *Monthly*, which continued to feature her name. In 1898, she returned to edit the *Monthly*, and that same year the *Newspaper* was purchased by John A. Schleicher, who combined politics, social comment, reviews, and artwork so successfully that it reached a circulation of almost 400,000 in the first years of World War I. However, it declined rapidly and died in the Depression (Mott 1930-1968: III, 510-512).

8. Although Stead and Greenwood were rivals both professionally and in their political views, Stead nevertheless had great respect for his predecessor at *The Pall Mall Gazette*. On the even of his move to London as Morley's assistant, Stead declared that Greenwood had "few rivals and no superiors in the Metropolitan Press," and that although "There is no journalist from whose views we more widely differed...there were few whose writings we found more useful" (*Northern Echo* 4 May 1880).
9. One of the strengths of interviews printed in *The Pall Mall Gazette* was that many of them were actually conducted by Stead himself. It was during his interviews that the full force of his genius, as well as his eccentricity, appeared. He constantly tried to keep his subjects off guard both by his appearance and his questions. Thus, he interviewed Alexander III in a sealskin cap, which he did not remove during the session. One friend who closely observed his interviewing techniques later recalled: "His yellowish-brown tweed suit [was] ill-cut, ill-fitting, and untidy...the cap gave the wearer the air of a dog stealer....When he smiled he might have been a poacher, who saw an opportunity to snare a pheasant, for all that was craftily mischievous in his character came out in the countenance....But when he sat down and warmed up in conversation one saw a man of great and fine originality, even genius" (Crawford 1912: 1029-1030).
10. O'Connor undoubtedly was also influenced by Bennett. For 18 months O'Connor worked for the London office of *The New York Herald*. He initially came to Bennett's personal attention for his handling of the first letter received from Stanley after the explorer left Zanzibar in search of Livingstone. O'Connor, wanting to save money, promptly mailed the letter to New York, much to the disgust of Bennett, who had wanted it cabled, regardless of cost (Fyfe 1934: 64).
11. The great journalist H.W. Massingham later recalled that all of the London papers, even *The Times*, were equally obsessed with the Ripper murders. He commented that at the height of the murders, the presses of *The Star*, as well as those of *The Echo* and *The Evening News*, kept running around the clock (Massingham 1892: 182).
12. The claim of the largest sales of any evening newspaper in London was made by virtually all the major papers. In *Sell's dictionary of the world's press* for 1890, *The Star*, *The Echo*, *The Evening News & Post*, and *The Evening Standard* all made the claim in their advertising sections.
13. Although *The New York Herald* was one of the last major American newspapers to put news on the front page in place of advertising, Bennett's Paris and London editions both did so virtually from the beginning. No explanation by Bennett has been found for this inconsistency.  
 When he was still in Paris, Ives also founded the *American Register and Morning News*, which was not particularly successful under his control. After he sold the paper, it was divided in two, with the *American Register* continuing as an English-language paper. The *Morning News* was even more successful, becoming a French-language paper under the new name *Le Matin* (Jones 1919: 122).
14. Recent assessments leave little doubt that there was at least some cannibalism. It was pointed out in *The New-York Times* that the flesh had been removed "by a hand skilled in dissection" (13 August 1884), and that flaps of skin had been used to conceal the neatly cut and systematic wounds. It also was later recalled that Dr. Pavy, who was normally uninspired to work, had frequently gone to the lake near

Cemetery Ridge to chop ice for fresh water. Those facts, in conjunction with Greely's assessment that Pavy appeared to be in better condition than the others (Greely 1888: I, 85), have led scholars to assume that at least Pavy was engaged in cannibalism (Berton 1988: 484-485). But whether anyone else was involved is unknown.

15. It has never been explained whether the party's lack of success in completing the climb, on which it reached 7,200 feet before being stopped by difficult glacial ice and Schwatka's fever, was the reason Schwatka never wrote a book about the journey. Other than Schwatka's features in *The New-York Times* and one article in *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* (1891), for information about the expedition one must turn to the account by one of Schwatka's party, the English traveler and climber Heywood W. Seton-Karr (1887), or to the account in the *Scottish Geographical Magazine* (1886).
16. Gilder's later assignments for *The New York Herald* frequently took him to Asia. He first explored the then-mysterious island of Borneo and later reported back from China when the French entered Cochin (what today is the southernmost region of Vietnam). Still, he never lost interest in the Arctic, and continued to publish articles about the north (for example, Gilder 1887). In 1892, the *Scottish Geographical Magazine* first mentioned Gilder's plans for an expedition to ascertain the exact position of the Magnetic North Pole, something that had not been done since James Clark Ross first did so in 1831 (*Scottish Geographical Magazine* 1892: 445). A year later, Gilder wrote about his aims in great detail in *McClure's Magazine* (Gilder 1893). The proposed expedition never got off the ground, however, and Gilder did not go farther north than Canada. As did most of Bennett's correspondents, Gilder tired of his cantankerous owner; he left *The Herald* to become the editor of the *Sunday Standard* of Newark, New Jersey. When that journal expired, he joined the *Sunday Times* of Trenton, New Jersey. Shortly before his death in 1900, he joined Hearst's *New York Journal and Advertiser* (*The New York Times* 6 February 1900; *The New York Herald* 6 February 1900).
17. *The Herald* followed this coup with another. On his return from Africa, Stanley's first stop in Europe was in Brindisi, Italy. While there, he gave an exclusive interview to James Creelman, the editor of the London edition of *The Herald*. Although Stanley had turned down more than two dozen other interview requests, Creelman did not consider himself lucky. His mind was back in Rome, formulating questions to ask Pope Leo XIII, whom he interviewed three days later (Creelman 1901: 15-16).
18. One example of this occurred during the winter in Godthåb following the crossing of Greenland. Nansen and Sverdrup spent their time learning the techniques of Eskimo travel and living (Nansen 1890: II, 239-424; 1894). Although the Eskimos did not use skis and dogs in conjunction, it was at this time that Nansen first realized that a man skiing at the correct pace goes the same speed as dogs pulling a sledge. The technique of driving a sledge while skiing next to it was later first used by Nansen and then improved upon by Sverdrup (Nansen 1897; Sverdrup 1904; Huntford 1990).
19. Sensationalism is perhaps not a strong enough term to describe the gruesome detail with which the London evening newspapers—turned scaremongers—seemed to try to petrify their readers. The day the story of Nansen's success broke (10 November 1888), *The Pall Mall Gazette* not only ran a large story on the eighth Ripper murder, it also gleefully predicted that "more murders are on the way." Under the headline THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS, with a subhead

"Eight in Twelve Months and More to Follow," page two was a grisly account of each of the first eight murders, with subheads reading:

- No. 1 — Impaled with an Iron Stake
- No. 2 — Outraged to Death
- No. 3 — Stabbed, with Thirty-Nine Wounds
- No. 4 — The First Disembowelled
- No. 5 — The First with a Missing Portion
- No. 6 and 7 — Two in One Night
- No. 8 — The Latest and Worst.

Despite such headlines, *The Pall Mall Gazette* was not as sensational as some of the other papers. In fact, Stead felt that many of his rivals were guilty of giving excessive attention to blood-thirsty details and of deliberately prolonging the story. He called for a "court of conscience" to provide guidance against this (*The Pall Mall Gazette* 9 October 1888).

20. The story of finding items from *Jeannette* first appeared at the height of the controversy over the charges of cannibalism among the Greely party. On 15 and 16 August 1884, a number of American newspapers initially carried the story, many of them in juxtaposition to articles about the Lady Franklin Bay expedition. *The Washington Post* even made the story its lead for 16 August, writing that a tent, a cask marked "Jeannette," pantaloons bearing the name of crew member Louis Noros, and a document signed by De Long had been found. The German doctor Emil Bessels—who had studied the course of the Gulf Stream and had made extensive oceanographic observations on an expedition in 1869, and then had been the doctor on Hall's *Polaris*—told *The Post* that the story was probably inaccurate but that if it were true, "it certainly forms an interesting and important contribution to the unknown currents in the interior of the Arctic basin....it does show that the ice north of Greenland is not a solid mass....[and] that the ice in the center of the Arctic basin is not stationary as was supposed by the English Arctic expedition but constantly drifts in an equatorial direction" (16 August 1884).
21. Surprisingly, the one English paper that seemed truly negative about Nansen's proposal was *The Standard*, which had been one of his early supporters. In a leader of 26 June 1893, *The Standard* commented: "Yet it is idle to pretend that Dr. Nansen has adduced substantial reasons for holding that a great current sweeps right across the Polar Basin....This current is hypothetical, notwithstanding the fact that everything depends upon it."

## CHAPTER 7

1. Pulitzer took excessive delight in alliteration, even though his selection of stories with which to use it was often considered in poor taste. *The World* had no patent on such usage, however, and as alliteration became commonplace through the 1870s and 1880s, there were many unfortunate results. Perhaps the most well-known alliterative headline accompanied a story in *The Chicago Times* (7 December 1876) about a fire in a Brooklyn theatre that claimed the lives of 350 people: BROOKLYN'S BAKE (Mahin 1924: 101).
2. Certainly part of the literary style with which Pulitzer endowed *The World* was attributable to his desire to appeal to an audience with little education, rather than just to one more able to appreciate the nuances of language (Juergens 1966: 58). To do this, the writing in *The World* had to be clear and simple. Pulitzer emphasized this to his writers and editors, commenting: "The first object of any word in any article at any time must be perfect clarity. I hate all rare, unusual, non-understandable words. Avoid the vanity of foreign words or phrases or



unfamiliar terms....What is the use of writing over the heads of the readers? Go over that testimony, analyze it, summarize it, condense it, so that a child can understand it" (Dilliard 1947: 9).

3. John Cleves Symmes (1780-1829) gained a reputation throughout the United States in the 1820s for propagating a notion—formally called the "theory of concentric spheres and polar voids"—that the earth was hollow, with a hole running between the North and South Poles. According to Symmes, this entire interior part of the planet was habitable, and for almost a decade he continued to try to raise the funds to outfit an expedition to explore the hole in the pole and the center of the earth (Hunt 1984).
4. Both the *New-York Tribune* and *The World* found the temptation to poke fun at the name "Jones River" irresistible. *The World* was particularly light-hearted about it, rewording the lyrics for the southern tune "Swanee River" (5 October 1886):

Way up upon de Geojones Ribber  
Far, far away,  
Dere's where de mud am running ebber,  
Into de Icy Bay.

All de mouth am wide and muddy,  
Eb'rywhere am stones;  
Oh darkies how we smile at Schwatka,  
An dat funny ribber Jones.

5. The people who agreed with Arnold ranged from Queen Victoria to Stanley himself, who was making an attempt to become a British citizen once again. As one of Pulitzer's reporters approached the Queen at a churchyard in Crathie, Scotland, she remarked, "He is as audacious as the rest of his nation" (*The World* 17 June 1883). Stanley, while on tour in the United States lecturing about the Ermin Pasha Relief Expedition, recorded in his diary: "The newspapers are still the same sensational crime-loving journals I knew long ago, ugly dirty-looking, preposterously coarse in language, slangy and licentious" (quoted in McLynn 1991: 337). Despite Stanley's nationalistic turnabout, he continued for years to be a target of British criticism, which attributed his exaggerations to an American willingness simply to tell the audience what it wanted to read. For example, Frederick Jackson later wrote about Stanley: "Where he excelled the other great African explorers was as a journalist, a professional journalist, trained in the forceful 'take no denial' school of American journalism, with a studied insight into the psychology of his readers" (Jackson 1930: 143).

## CHAPTER 8

1. Nansen's triumphs as a polar explorer were followed by equally successful careers in academics, statesmanship, and international affairs. He helped found the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, and in 1908 he was made professor of oceanography at the University of Christiania. His contributions to oceanography included the improvement and design of maritime instruments, the explanation of the wind-driven currents of the oceans, and an elucidation of the manner in which deep- and bottom-water is formed.

When the union between Norway and Sweden was dissolved, Nansen was named Norway's first Minister to the Court of St. James (1906-1908). His

reputation and popularity in London helped Norway achieve recognition as an independent and neutral state (Høyer 1957: 140-158).

In 1920, Nansen was appointed the head of the Norwegian delegation to the new League of Nations. In turn, the League appointed him high commissioner responsible for the repatriation from Russia of more than one-half million prisoners of war from the German and Austro-Hungarian armies. The government of the Soviet Union did not recognize the League of Nations, but Nansen had such stature that it did negotiate directly with him. At the League council meeting in September 1922, Nansen announced that 427,886 former prisoners had been repatriated. In 1921 Nansen was asked by the International Committee of the Red Cross to direct an effort to bring relief to the famine-stricken Soviet Union. Shortly thereafter, he was appointed high commissioner for this task at an international meeting of 13 nations and 48 Red Cross organizations. Although the League of Nations would not fund the relief efforts, Nansen obtained financial aid from private sources and brought great assistance to the people of the Soviet Union. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1922, and he used the financial part of the award to further his relief program (Reynolds 1932: 205-265).

2. Everyone did not entirely approve of Nansen's nationalism, however. In a leader on 26 June 1893, *The Standard* commented: "The truth is, that the inception of this Expedition was largely due to political motives. It arose out of the national jealousies which are threatening to cause serious troubles between Norway and Sweden....the Nansen Expedition was to be for the glory of Norway alone, and the head of it is one of those extremely pronounced patriots...." *The Standard's* displeasure with Nansen's nationalism was perhaps motivated by the fact that the paper was a strong supporter of a continued union with Ireland. In Nansen's patriotism and desire for an independent Norway, it saw a danger to the policies it supported—if Norway gained its independence, it would only increase the determination of those in favor of Irish home rule. However, *The Standard* carried its argument well beyond this issue and made it a personal attack on Nansen and even his former accomplishments, commenting: "When the Curator of Bergen Museum, who had returned from a trip to Greeland—the importance of which, it is not known, has been greatly exaggerated...."
3. One reason that this aspect of Nansen's plan might have been misunderstood by the Anglo-American press and public was that it was viewed as similar to steps taken by Stanley. Nansen's two major expeditions were preceded by the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition, for which Stanley also used a novel approach. Stanley indicated that if he marched directly to Lake Albert from Zanzibar, his porters would desert him, whereas if he landed them on the west coast they would realize their only hope of survival was to remain with him until he reached the Indian Ocean, and, at the same time, they would quicken their pace in order to get home (Stanley 1890: I, 34-35). The disasters of the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition were to a great extent attributable to this route, which might have made the public skeptical of Nansen's judgment.

Coincidentally, Nansen's ascent to the status of world-wide hero occurred simultaneously with Stanley's decline in international popularity. Only two days after Nansen's return from the expedition on *Fram*, *The Washington Post* commented: "Stanley's slump into social oblivion was a pathetic instance of the passing of a tin god, a deity of the moment, who struck the path of glory...and whom society feasted and applauded—and dropped....A curious compound, this Stanley, with his cheek, tenacity, imperturbability, self-esteem, and an ambition that recalls...the time of [Francisco] Pizarro" (16 August 1896).

4. Albert and Joseph Pulitzer were not usually on friendly terms, and Juergens (1966: 9) has indicated that their rivalry as newspaper proprietors was the cause of considerable bitterness. Albert initially tried to convince Joseph not to enter the New York market. Later, Joseph made repeated raids on the *Morning Journal*, poaching some of the best writers and editors on his brother's staff.
5. Unlike in Britain, many newspapers in the United States were published seven days per week. The Sunday editions were just another day of the week as far as the news went, and they used the same news staff as any other day. However, a number of large papers, such as *The World* and *The Herald*, had found that the inclusion of Sunday magazines or supplements greatly increased their sales. As a result of the race for circulation, the larger papers appointed editors and managing editors just for the Sunday editions. These men were responsible not only for the news part of the paper for one day, but for putting together the magazine or supplement during the week.
6. Although there had been use of halftones in magazines and, occasionally, even newspapers since the early 1880s, several problems had prevented their use in large-circulation publications. The first was the need to develop a method to print halftones on high-speed rotary presses, something that was accomplished in the early 1890s by Stephen H. Horgan. However, even when such printing was perfected, the newspapers lagged behind the technology because of attitudes in the publishing industry. The engraving and printing unions were very strong, and the members of them opposed the use of photographic halftones, which would put engravers out of work (Schuneman 1965). Many editors also opposed the use of photographs because they considered them crude when compared to fine illustrations (Kahan 1965). For example, in 1899, 14 years after *The Century Illustrated* ran its first photograph, its editor, Richard Watson Gilder, still believed that photographs would not replace illustrations: "I think there is to be a great reaction soon in public taste—that people will tire of photographic reproduction, and those magazines will find most favor which lead in original art" (Gilder 1899: 320).
7. Hearst first changed the name of both his morning and evening papers to the *New York Journal and American* and soon thereafter made them the *New York American and Journal*. However, in March 1903 he made the morning paper the *New York American* and the evening paper the *New York Journal*. Oddly, when he merged the two papers on 24 June 1937, they again became the *New York Journal and American*, before eventually being renamed the *New York Journal-American*.
8. Although Hearst did not establish overseas newspapers, as did Bennett, he did have foreign offices. His first major attempt to establish a permanent foreign desk was in 1905, when he paid W.T. Stead £1,000 to act as London correspondent for the *New York American* (Gardiner 1913: 307).
9. It was not just journalists who disapproved of the changes from the traditional typography, however. Much of the public did not like the new styles, as was shown by one of fiction's most avid newspaper readers, Sherlock Holmes. While working on the mystery of the hound of the Baskervilles, Holmes commented, "There is as much difference to my eyes between the leaded bourgeois type of a *Times* article and the slovenly print of an evening halfpenny paper as there could be between your negro and your Eskimaux" (Doyle 1902).
10. Many journalists of the era later remembered that they had entered the profession at just the right time. For example, one acknowledged that "My success was due,

not so much to my own merits, which were feeble enough, as to sheer luck. The moment I started in new papers began to flood the market" (Blathwayt 1917: 157). Another recollected that "Anybody who could write at all might find an opening" (Watson 1925: 203). To counter this trend, the newly established Institute of Journalists set itself the hopeless task of establishing an examination for journalists to keep out "the Toms, Dicks and Harrys who answer advertisements" (Bainbridge 1984: 54).

11. Although they were considerably less sensational than the penny dreadfuls, Harmsworth's new papers were not admired by everyone. The poet A.A. Milne observed: "It was Lord Northcliffe who killed the penny dreadful; by the simple process of producing a halfpenny dreadfuler" (quoted in Clarke 1950: 73). Other works of considerably higher quality were also attacked by associating them with the penny dreadfuls. In 1897 *Punch* commented on the volumes in Stead's Masterpiece Library, known as "Penny Classics for the People," calling them the "Penny Steadfuls."
12. Not only was the *Daily Mail* similar in many respects to *The New York Herald*, a number of Harmsworth's less pleasant traits also resembled those of Bennett Jr. Although both developed outstanding staffs by paying salaries vastly higher than those of other papers, the loss in dignity the staff could suffer was often even greater. Both proprietors kept men who had served them responsibly for years uneasy with warnings that they were "on trial" and subject at any moment to being sacked. Both kept spies in their offices to report the doings of others. Both could grant sudden enormous rewards to those who came into favor—such as the time Bennett named the only reporter who met him at the harbor as the new city editor—or could insult and demote those who suddenly fell from grace (Crockett 1926; Pound and Harmsworth 1959). There are numerous examples of the irrationality of their acts. Once Bennett became angry because the managing editor in New York refused to allow an assistant editor he (the managing editor) considered indispensable to come to Paris on Bennett's whim. Bennett asked for a list of all indispensable men on the staff of *The Herald*, and when it was sent to him, he fired them all, stating no one should be indispensable (O'Connor 1962). Northcliffe discharged men just as summarily. He asked one employee if he was happy in his work and, on receiving an affirmative answer, responded, "Then you are not the man for me. I don't want any member of my staff to be happy and contented on five pounds a week" (Dilnot 1913: 223-224).
13. The first English newspaper regularly to reach a circulation of one million was *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, which attained that level in 1896. Although the *Daily Mail* surpassed one million sales on specific days during the Boer War, it did not regularly reach that mark (Lee 1978b: 123).
14. The *Daily Continent* actually started life in 1868 as the *New York Star*, but in 1891 Munsey purchased it, renamed it, and made it a tabloid. After four months, Munsey realized that his paper would not make money, so he sold it, and it became the *Morning Advertiser*. Six years later, once again foundering, it was purchased by Hearst and merged with the *New York Journal*.
15. Harmsworth could not make up his mind whether to claim that the goal of the Jackson-Harmsworth Expedition was to reach the North Pole or to advance the cause of science. In various interviews he flopped back and forth on this issue. He once stated: "We may rest assured that just as the records of Lockwood and Markham have been lowered by Nansen, so will Nansen's farthest north be beaten....The fact that Mr. Jackson and his party are remaining in that strange home of theirs, in what is, in fact, probably the most desolate country in the

world, points to the conclusion that he is alive to the splendid possibilities of his position. May we wish him good luck in reaching the Pole" (*Daily Mail* 15 August 1896). On the other hand, he also wrote: "If Mr. Jackson plants the Union Jack nearer the Pole than the Stars and Stripes, I shall be glad, but if he came back, having found the Pole but minus the work of the scientists, of which our expedition consists, I should regard the venture as a failure" (quoted in Jackson 1935: 97). One might well be skeptical of the second comment, coming as it did from the man who took sensational journalism to new heights in England.

16. Like Peary and so many other explorers, Stanley had hoped and prayed for fame. But when he found it, it did little to comfort him. In 1890 Stanley commented on the huge number of newspaper clippings he had compiled about himself: "I would willingly give them all for a day of that boyhood when I was blissfully obscure. I once thought that a press notice of me was 'Immortality', but alas, I have found that that kind of 'Immortality' means only abject slavery" (quoted in McLynn 1989: 226-227).
17. As both the sensational and quality newspapers became more interested in Arctic exploration, so did the monthly magazines. The leader in such coverage was *The National Geographic Magazine*, which was founded in 1888 and began regular monthly publication in 1895. One of the initial vice presidents of the National Geographic Society was A.W. Greely, by then the chief of the Signal Service Corps. The magazine featured articles by many polar explorers, including Greely, Wellman, Peary, and Frederick Cook from the United States; Vilhjalmur Stefansson from Canada; Ernest Shackleton from Britain; and Roald Amundsen from Norway.

The two American monthlies with the largest circulations at the turn of the century—*Munsey's Magazine* and *McClure's Magazine*—also featured an abundance of articles on exploration. Greely, Wellman, Peary, Cook, and Nansen all furnished material for these magazines (Mott 1930-1968: IV, 589-618).
18. Despite his lack of success, Wellman was a master at attaining sponsorship. In 1910, he made an attempt to cross the Atlantic in the dirigible *America II*. He was sponsored in part by *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, the *Public Ledger* of Philadelphia, and *The Chicago Record-Herald*. For their \$35,000 investments, these newspapers each received only one short dispatch about Wellman's journey (Lee 1973: 284-285). They did not miss a great deal—Wellman did succeed in flying about 1,000 miles, but it was not in a straight line, as a northeast wind caught his dirigible off of Nantucket and drove it south to the latitude of Hatteras, where he and his companions were rescued by a steamer (Davis 1921: 290).
19. The success of European expeditions had little to do with the amount of interest they attracted in Britain and the United States. Thus, like Sverdrup's, the expedition of Luigi Amedeo di Savoia, the Duke of Abruzzi, received only brief mention in the English or American press. The expedition (1899-1900) was a private venture to try to reach the North Pole via Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa. Although it did not succeed in this aim, on 24 April 1900 a party under the command of Captain Umberto Cagni did achieve a farthest north of 86° 34', surpassing the record set by Nansen (Savoia 1903).
20. It was not that Amundsen himself cared equally about adventure and science. As Huntford (1980: 105) commented: "he did not enjoy the tedious and repetitive attendance upon scientific instruments. He never pretended that science for him was anything more than a necessary evil which others saw as a justification for

Polar travel. For him the act of travel was justification in itself. His heart was in perfecting his technique." However, Amundsen did know how to cover his expeditions in scientific trappings. In the introduction to *The North West Passage*, he mentioned his time on *Belgica*, writing: "It was during this voyage that my plan matured: I proposed to combine the dream of my boyhood as to the North West Passage with an aim, in itself of far greater scientific importance, *that of locating the present situation of the Magnetic North Pole*" (Amundsen 1908: 5; emphasis Amundsen's).

## CHAPTER 9

1. The jottings of Peary in his diary in the final weeks before his supposed attainment of the North Pole in 1909 give ample proof that he was not concentrating purely nor even primarily on either scientific observations or geographical discovery, but that he was meticulously considering the benefits that reaching the Pole would bring him: fame, social standing, and wealth. He indicated his intention to patent and sell a wide variety of objects, including "Peary North Pole sledges"; "Peary North Pole snowshoes"; and North Pole coats, suits, tents, and cookers. He noted that Kane had received \$75,000 in book royalties and Nansen \$50,000, so that he should be able to obtain \$100,000 from Harper's for his books, magazine articles, pictures, and stories. He figured that he should be promoted, because the United States had made Melville and Schley (who had rescued Greely) admirals and Greely a general due primarily to their Arctic work. And he planned the picture of himself that he wanted distributed, writing: "Have Borup take a 5" x 7" 3 1/2 to 4 ft. focus portrait of me in deer or sheep coat (face unshaven) with bear roll, & keep on till satisfactory one obtained. Have Foster color a special print of this to bring out the gray eyes, the red sun burned skin, the bleached eyebrows and beard, frosted eyebrows, eyelashes, beard" (quoted in Herbert 1989: 239). These marginal notations reveal more about Peary's goals than do several of the sycophantic biographies of him in their entirety.
2. Peary had worried that Cape Washington, which had been sighted in the distance by Lockwood and Brainard, was the most northerly point of land on the globe. To his immense relief, when he reached Cape Washington, he saw that to the north was another headland surrounded by twin glaciers. In *Nearest the Pole*, Peary employed one of his most misleading and overused words when he wrote, "It would have been a great disappointment to me, after coming so far, to find that another's eyes had forestalled mine in looking first upon the coveted northern point" (Peary 1907: 324). Peary's regular use of "forestall," with its suggestion of underhanded tactics and unfair invasion of his personal rights and goals, was also used about Nansen's crossing of Greenland (Peary 1898: I, xxxvii), Sverdrup's explorations on Ellesmere Island, and Frederick Cook's claim to having reached the North Pole (*The New York Times* 21 September 1909).
3. The period of his return in September 1902 was a very difficult one for Peary; he had never previously been exposed to the kinds of barbs he then received from a wide variety of newspapers. For the first time, it was not just his achievements that were in question, but his assumptions as well. For example, Peary apparently was a believer in the wilderness cure, a form of medical treatment that enjoyed considerable popularity in the United States and Europe in the late-nineteenth century. This procedure involved an open-air sojourn in wild country and was based on the principle that wild areas exerted curative influences on sick persons, especially consumptives. The cure's effectiveness was supposed to derive from influences of climate, vegetation, and style of living as well as

spiritual influences related to aesthetics (Nash 1963; Thompson 1976). When Peary commented that the consumptive members of his 1898-1902 expedition had been restored to health in the Arctic, he was ridiculed in the press. "That the Arctic air is splendidly bracing there can be no doubt, and when properly provided with anti-scorbutics the members of various expeditions have generally enjoyed rude health in their task," commented an English editorial. But the article then added that, according to Peary, the Arctic would shortly become recognized as a retreat for convalescents, concluding with the comment, "We see in fancy a chain of sanatoria from Siberia to Greenland" (*The Daily Express* 4 October 1902).

4. Peary later went so far as to write a book almost entirely devoted to an expansion of the system of Arctic exploration that he claimed to have developed (Peary 1917). Similarly, he frequently claimed credit for originating the adoption of Eskimo clothing, methods of travel, and living techniques among Anglo-European explorers. These were no more his developments than the Peary System, having been used by Rae, Hall, Schwakta, Gilder, and others before Peary ever considered going north. Peary admitted in his diaries that he had been influenced by Schwakta in this regard (Herbert 1989: 53).
5. Little shows the heights to which Cook's reputation soared more clearly than the immediate popularity of the Dr. Cook hat and Dr. Cook toys. By the day after Cook's arrival in Copenhagen, the hat was the rage of women's fashion in both London and New York: "The Dr. Cook hat is suggestive of the polar region. It seems as high as the cartoonist's picture of the pole, although in reality it is only two feet tall. It is constructed of brown fur, fuzzy and expensive. It is just such a hat as the explorer might have drawn over his head when the wind blew cold, and it looks massive and solid enough to supply a good soup stock in case of Arctic exigency. Further heightening its chilly effect is a snowlike spray of aigrette high up on the left side" (*New-York Tribune* 5 September 1909). Dr. Cook toys were huge sellers for several months, and included both large dolls that looked like Cook and were dressed in white furs, and small, fur-clad Cook figures on sledges.
6. Peary told Bartlett to return to the ship despite the fact that Bartlett had agreed to skipper *Roosevelt* on Peary's final two expeditions only if Peary promised that he might accompany the explorer all the way to the Pole. Peary's reasoning was explained to the House Naval Affairs Committee in 1911: "The Pole was something to which I had devoted my whole life. I did not feel that under these circumstances I was called upon to divide with a man who, no matter how able and deserving he might be, was a young man and had put in only a few years of that kind of work, and who had frankly, as I believed, not the right to it that I had" (quoted in Wright 1970: 183). It has since been speculated that Peary did not object to Henson accompanying him because Peary could still claim to be the first white man to the Pole.
7. Even though the English newspapers gave extensive coverage to the controversy between the explorers, it never seemed a matter almost as serious as life or death, as it sometimes did in America. Thus, early in the dispute, G.K. Chesterton, the English poet and novelist perhaps best known for his "Father Brown" detective series, made light of the entire situation when he wrote in *The Illustrated London News*: "The finding of the North Pole is a really suitable subject for a column such as this, because it cannot possibly matter a rap to any reasonable human being whether it has been discovered or not....Certainly people have killed themselves trying to find the North Pole; but that does not make the matter particularly serious; they have killed themselves trying to find a fox. A fox is a

much more solemn and sacred affair than the Pole; it is alive, and runs about, while the Pole (I think) keeps still; but I am not a scientist. What the people in question were really hunting was neither the Pole nor the fox, but a philosophical abstraction. I do not sneer at Polar explorers; I admire them as I do all romantic lunatics. But it is really funny to hear men of science gibe at those superstitions which hold sacred the words of a prophet or the blood of a martyr, and then talk quite seriously about killing whole shiploads of human beings in order to find an object which isn't there when you get to it, and which is already in the maps in the only place where it could ever be useful" (11 September 1909).

8. When the Peary story first broke, Adolph Ochs was on vacation, but he immediately returned to the offices of *The New York Times*, where he was brought up to date on the situation. The publisher then scribbled a hasty, exultant letter to his wife, which stated in part: "I find...the office in the greatest excitement about our marvelous and overwhelming good luck in regard to the Peary story....Every newspaper in New York is in a panic about our tremendous scoop, and they are moving heaven and earth and offering all kinds of money to us and to our employees to get hold of it. Nothing in American journalism equals this achievement of the *The New York Times*....There is little doubt now that Cook is a faker" (quoted in Berger 1951: 175-176). It is easy to see how quickly the owner of *The Times* made the change from wanting to see Cook's proofs to acknowledging he was a fraud when it appeared that it would prove useful to his newspaper.
9. Cook later used the fact that he sold his story to Bennett for \$25,000 as an argument that he was innocent of the charges of creating his entire North Pole story. "Were I the calculating monster of cupidity which some believe me, I suppose I should have been more circumspect in making my financial arrangements," he wrote in *My attainment of the Pole*. "I should hardly, for instance, have sold my narrative story to Mr. James Gordon Bennett for \$25,000 when there were single offers of \$50,000, \$75,000, \$100,000, and more, for it. While I was in Copenhagen, and before the *Herald* offer was accepted, Mr. W.T. Stead had come with a message from W.R. Hearst with instructions to double any other offer presented for my narrative. Had I accepted Mr. Hearst's bid he would have paid \$400,000 for what I sold for \$25,000. Here is a sacrifice of \$375,000. Does that look as if I tried to hoax the world for sordid gain, as my enemies would like the public to believe?" (Cook 1911b: 491-492). Yet Cook never did explain why he made such a financially absurd transaction, making it appear that perhaps he had already committed his story to Bennett before he received any other offers. Stead attributed many of Cook's actions to his naiveté: "I think that almost all of us who went to Copenhagen would agree...that he does not strike us as a man, but rather as a child—a naive, inexperienced child, who sorely needed someone to look after him....his inability to protect his own interests, even in matters of pounds, shillings and pence, it was almost pitiful" (Stead 1909: 326).
10. Cook had impressed many reporters with his flowery tributes to his rival, which were totally unlike Peary's vicious attacks. Upon the announcement at the banquet in Copenhagen that Peary had reached the Pole, Cook had graciously stated: "I am proud that a fellow American has reached the pole. As Rear Admiral Schley said at Santiago, 'There is glory enough for us all.' He is a brave man, and I am confident that if the reports are true his observations will confirm mine and set at rest all doubts" (*The New York Herald* 8 September 1909).
11. Throughout his career in the United States Navy, Peary maintained the rank of Civil Engineer. Although early on he called himself "Lieutenant," then later



"Commander," and, finally, "Rear Admiral," he never actually received one of these line ranks. A common misconception is that he was retired by vote of Congress as a Rear Admiral, whereas in fact he was retired as a Civil Engineer with a pension of a Rear Admiral. Throughout his life, Peary remained sensitive about his naval rank, something reinforced by the fact that many officers, jealous that he had attained fame and success without going through the normal channels, never let him forget what that rank actually was (Herbert 1989: 52-53).

12. A less objective judge than Gannett can hardly be imagined. On 7 September, when the announcement was made that Peary had reached the North Pole, Gannett was quoted in *The World* as saying: "There is no doubt concerning...the reported achievements...of Commander Peary. [His] long experience in the work of exploration and the accuracy of observations made on many previous expeditions furnish sufficient ground for the belief of every one that Peary has accomplished whatever he says he has accomplished. Likewise he is a man of unquestioned integrity, on whose word there never has been cast the slightest doubt. Scientists the world over will take Peary's statement exactly at its face value. There will be no question of the truth of his statement."
13. Actually ghost-writers were not uncommon. Part of Kane's first book, about the First Grinnell Expedition, was written by his father after Kane had returned to the Arctic in charge of the Second Grinnell Expedition (Corner 1972: 121). W.P. Snow wrote part of Hall's account of his first expedition; how much of the book is Snow's work is uncertain, because Snow apparently did not write as much as he said he would, nor as much as he later claimed (Loomis 1972: 155-157). And Edward Saunders wrote much of Ernest Shackleton's two accounts of his Antarctic expeditions, *The heart of the Antarctic* (1909) and *South* (1919). Saunders, who took extensive notes and quotes while Shackleton roamed about the room talking, played a role somewhere between stenographer and author. Exactly how much of the books were his and how much Shackleton's is uncertain (Huntford 1985: 318-319, 643-644).
14. It is remarkable how many similarities there were in the original accounts by Cook and Peary. Eames has compared the initial newspaper reports written before either returned to the United States and has shown that the comments made by Peary were so similar to those of Cook to be almost repetitive (Eames 1973: 165-170). Another study has indicated that descriptions coming from their later expedition accounts were again consistent regarding details such as drift of the ice, reporting of new lands, sighting of ice islands, and description of the area near the North Pole (Euller 1964). One of the earliest comparisons was by Anthony Fiala, one of many people intrigued by the parallelism of the accounts. Fiala observed that: "The most distinct impression I get from Peary's cabled account...is that it tends largely to corroborate, and in no way to discredit Dr. Cook's first story. In fact, the two really substantiate each other on the vital points of the speed of Arctic sledging in winter and the conditions near the Pole" (*The World* 11 September 1909).
15. A number of attacks by *The New York Times* on Cook actually had nothing to do with Arctic exploration or the North Pole. One of the most savage of these assaults was the charge that Cook had plagiarized material from the Reverend Thomas Bridges, who had spent some 30 years among the Yahgan Indians of Tierra del Fuego. Cook had written a short article based on observations made during the weeks that *Belgica* was in port in Punta Arenas. Under the headline COOK TRIED TO STEAL PARSON'S LIFE WORK (20 May 1910), *The Times* implied that Cook had tried to pass off as his work the grammar and vocabulary of these Patagonian natives that Bridges had compiled.

Although the incident had no intrinsic importance to the polar controversy—and occurred seven months after Peary's proofs had been accepted by the National Geographic Society—it was yet another example of the determination of *The Times* to hound *The Herald* by discrediting Cook. Despite the fact that Bennett's paper had abandoned Cook's cause months before, *The Times* regularly linked *The Herald* and Cook in this, as well as other, stories.

16. The full account of the way *Hampton's* changed Cook's series was first told in 1915 to a Congressional subcommittee by Lilian Kiel, who had been a copyreader at *Hampton's* in 1910-1911. Ms. Kiel told the subcommittee: "We cut through the galley proofs and inserted what has been known to the world as Dr. Cook's confession of mental unbalancement. The 'confession' was dictated to me by a sub-editor. Dr. Cook was on the ocean to Europe to get his wife and children. I then thoroughly believed the confession was authorized by Dr. Cook. I was horrified later to find that he knew absolutely nothing about it" (quoted in Wright 1970: 247).
17. Cook's defenders have later pointed to "proofs" that showed the findings of both of these expeditions to be inaccurate. In 1914, Ernest C. Rost indicated a close study revealed that Browne's peak differed from Cook's in at least eight respects. E.S. Balch, a noted geographer, later agreed with Rost's claim and also pointed out that Cook's descriptions of the northeast ridge of McKinley—about which nothing had previously been known—had been so closely corroborated by those who had since climbed the peak as to make it virtually certain that the explorer had indeed reached the top (Balch 1914; Wright 1970: 240, 274).
18. Just because *The New York Times* felt that it could get a good story from Amundsen's flight did not mean that it would allow even the great Norwegian explorer to defend his old friend Cook. While on a lecture tour in the United States shortly before his successful flight on *Norge*, Amundsen visited Cook in Leavenworth Penitentiary in Kansas, and afterward, in an interview, commented: "No matter what he may or may not have done in business, he deserves the respect of the American people for his intrepid explorations. Dr. Cook may not have discovered the North Pole, but Commander Robert E. Peary also may not have, and the former has as good a claim as the latter" (*The New York Times* 24 January 1926). The American polar establishment immediately howled with an indignation expressed by *The Times* in an editorial the next day: "It was bad enough for him to seek to rehabilitate Cook, but it was worse and almost unforgivable for him in the same breath to discredit Peary" (25 January 1926). Thus, even six years after the death of Peary, *The Times* was still willing to attack any who challenged its chosen explorer.

## CHAPTER 10

1. In defense of the writers of the time, it must be remembered, as Moodie (1976: 308-309) has pointed out, that any region is but a mental construct, an idea in the minds of men. Prior to the advent of the popular press in the mid-nineteenth century, the aesthetics of the sublime and the picturesque were underlying truths of the time. Since truth, like reality, depends upon presupposition, it cannot be defined absolutely. Therefore, the vision of the far north that accompanied these aesthetics was, even if perceived as inaccurate today, a reality of its time.

## APPENDIX 2

1. Four words used to describe the newspaper histories and name changes require definitions. "Became" indicates simply a name change for the newspaper. "Merged" and "amalgamated" refer to when two newspapers became one, nominally maintaining part of the title and at least some of the features of both (in order to keep both readerships), although in reality one paper usually continued with its policies, and simply gained the staff and assets of the other, which, in most respects, ceased to exist. "Merged" is used when the newspapers actually joined together on equal terms or when the newspaper under discussion was the dominant one in the arrangement. "Amalgamated" is used when the newspaper under discussion was the one taken over by the other. "Incorporated" indicates the staff, production capabilities, and assets of one paper were completely taken over by another, with the former officially disappearing.

## APPENDIX 3

1. See note 1 for Appendix 2.

## APPENDIX 4

1. Nineteenth-century circulations are elusive figures. They are frequently immune to the probings of even the most diligent researchers and are much more easily rendered in the abstract than in the concrete. Many of these figures are estimates and rely on the publishers' claims, a notoriously unreliable source for accurate information.
2. *The Manchester Guardian* made a quick jump in circulation when it dropped its price from two pence to a penny in 1857. In 1856, it averaged 7,100 sales per day, while the next year it averaged 22,400.
3. *The Standard's* circulation increased dramatically after it changed in 1857 from a four-pence evening paper to a two-pence morning paper. In 1858, after its price dropped to a penny, its circulation increased to 28,000. It peaked at 255,000 in 1889. Its circulation suffered more than that of any other paper due to the success of the *Daily Mail*.
4. The circulation of *The Daily News* rocketed in 1869, when its price dropped from two pence to a penny. That year, it increased to an average of 52,000. It reached a circulation of about 150,000 in 1871 because of its outstanding coverage of the Franco-Prussian War, then settled in around 90,000. A drop-off in its sales beginning in the mid 1890s was turned around when the price was cut to a halfpenny in 1904; by the next year, circulation had risen to 135,000.
5. *The Daily Telegraph* achieved a circulation of 27,000 in its first year and rose steadily after that. It reached its high point in 1888, with a circulation of 320,000, and was still more than 300,000 in 1896. It had big circulation losses after the founding of the *Daily Mail*, losing 55,000 readers by 1897.
6. The *Daily Mail* had an average circulation of 202,100 its first year (1896) and rose in remarkable increments thereafter: 1897—299,800; 1898—429,500; 1899—610,300. After reaching an average of almost a million during parts of the Boer War, it dropped off to about three-quarters of a million during the next decade.

## APPENDIX 5

1. See note 1 for Appendix 4.
2. The *Tribune* was founded in 1841, and reached a circulation of 11,000 after seven weeks.
3. *The Times* was founded in 1851, and reached a circulation of 10,000 in 10 days and 20,000 in three months.
4. The circulation of the *Journal* was 150,000 in February 1896; it reached 322,000 in October 1896; it jumped to 438,000 in November 1896.

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