

**A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF TRISTAN DA CUNHA.** P.J. Helyer and M.K. Swales. 1998. Oswestry: Nelson. 175 p, soft cover. ISBN 0-904614-62. £25.00.

Patrick Helyer was clergyman on Tristan da Cunha in the late 1970s, and he has been collecting references to his beloved island ever since. He still sends Christmas cards to his flock, named his house in England 'Tristan,' and a picture of Tristan's church features in his letterhead. He probably never would have completed the work, as new references continuously kept piling up, had Michael Swales not stepped in. Swales joined the Gough Island Scientific Survey in 1956, and his life too has been linked to Tristan since (Tristan da Cunha does that to people). He became a schoolmaster at Denstone College, where he also brought Tristanian children to be educated. He went back to Tristan several times and was honorary secretary and treasurer for the Tristan da Cunha Association for many years.

Swales failed to bring order into chaos (a task that may have proven hopeless), but at least he managed to get the thing published. I feel embarrassed to criticise the work of people so devoted, but there are too many flaws to ignore. The book is divided into topical sections, but allocation of titles is far from consequent. There is a large ornithology section, but articles on birds can be found in many other parts — even under botany or zoology — other than ornithology. Botanical titles can be found under ornithology, and so on. Reports of expeditions or ships calling could be anywhere. The same reference may be repeated up to four times within the same section because of variations in typography, or with different publication years for different editions of the same work. Titles of book chapters may be listed under the author's name, the editor's name, or both. Authors with composite names may be listed under any part of their names. Different misspellings of the same author's name also lead to repetitions. Misspellings are very common; the spelling in non-English titles is often appalling.

The biggest problem is that Helyer's selection criterion simply is the occurrence of the word Tristan da Cunha, even if it is only once. In the ornithology section, he tried to include all works that mention a species that occurs on Tristan da Cunha. This includes all American, African, and European bird books, simply because Tristan's greater shearwater migrates all over the Atlantic. Scientific papers on the ecology of New Zealand species in New Zealand are included, if these species happen to occur on Tristan too. One can never hope to be complete in this way (the size of the volume might easily have been tenfold); on the other hand, the good information, which is all there, gets swamped by trivial references, with no clue for the reader how to make the distinction.

Helyer's selection criterion also embraces all newspaper articles ever mentioning Tristan. These are listed at the end of various sections, beyond Z, in no apparent particular order. Fortunately, the authors generally limited their search to the British press. The whole work is biased

towards British sources (which are, of course, the most numerous anyway), and, of works translated into English, the original title is often not given.

In spite of all this, this bibliography is the only source where one can find the way to everything one could possibly want to know about Tristan. The book is a curiosity in itself, and, as such, it is an absolute must for the great many Tristanomaniacs, like myself, all over the world. (Albert Beintema, DLO–Institute for Forestry and Nature Research, PO Box 23, 6700 AA Wageningen, The Netherlands.)

**THE LAWS OF THE AUSTRALIAN ANTARCTIC TERRITORY.** Stuart B. Kaye, Donald R. Rothwell, and Susan Dando. 1999. Hobart: University of Tasmania Law Press (Antarctic and Southern Ocean Law and Policy Occasional Paper 8). 140 p, soft cover. ISBN 0-85901-862-8.

Who owns Antarctica? In particular, who owns the sector between 160 and 45°E, south of 60°S? These questions are still guaranteed to elicit a wide range of answers, even if, according to the Australian government, the central actor in this book, the sector defined above — excluding the French enclave of Terre Adélie between 136 and 142°E south of 60°S — constitutes the Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT), Australia's largest and most southerly territory. Despite formal recognition by France, New Zealand, Norway, and the UK, the Australian claim lacks general acceptance; for example, the United States, reserving its legal rights, refuses to recognise any Antarctic claims. Of course, the ingenious legal accommodation embodied in the 1959 Antarctic Treaty placed the sovereignty dispute on the backburner, but failed to prevent a range of alternate legal viewpoints, most notably the principle of the common heritage of mankind, being articulated in the regular UN discussions held on the 'Question of Antarctica' after 1983.

Australian certainties about ownership to the AAT have been reflected in long-standing efforts to demonstrate the effectiveness of its occupation over a vast territory lacking permanent inhabitants through the exercise of government, the conduct of scientific research, and the operation of base stations. Against this background, this paper, drawing upon legal expertise from the universities of Sydney and Tasmania, reminds readers about the crucial role of the law in Australia's exercise of sovereignty over AAT, including the fact that the Australian constitution assumes that anything applicable thereto is legally valid. As mentioned above, few other governments would accept this line.

A brief and perhaps over-selective historical background leads into the paper's central objective, that is, the identification of the laws of the AAT. Having conceded the 'difficult' (page 17) nature of the task, the authors conclude that 'its laws are a curious amalgam of Commonwealth [that is, of Australia] statutes and delegated legislation, ACT [that is, Australian Capital Territory] statutes

and ordinances, received New South Wales law from prior to 1910, and ACT criminal law as it existed prior to self-government' (page 17). Their confused and unwieldy nature, alongside the obvious problem of applying laws under polar conditions, prompts the authors to press the need for reform, even if they remain pessimistic about the prospects for rapid change. From this perspective, the publication represents an invaluable reference work; thus, 18 pages of text preface 122 pages listing the individual laws applicable to the AAT insofar as Kaye, Rothwell, and Dando have determined. Frequently, some 12 individual laws are listed on each page! More importantly, although focused on the AAT, this paper will also illuminate studies of law and politics in Antarctica in general. (Peter J. Beck, School of Humanities, Kingston University, Kingston upon Thames KT1 2EE.)

### BRIEF REVIEWS

**ANCIENT CULTURES BOUNTIFUL SEAS: THE STORY OF PORT AU CHOIX.** M.A.P. Renouf. St John's: Historic Sites of Newfoundland and Labrador. 64 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-919735-05-3.

The Historic Sites Association is an organisation that aims to preserve and promote knowledge of important archaeological and historic sites in Newfoundland and Labrador. Priscilla Renouf's account of the archaeological excavations underway at Port au Choix, a Dorset site on the west coast of Newfoundland's Great Northern Peninsula, is one publication in this series. It can be purchased at the new Parks Canada visitor centre at the site itself, or in the Association's own bookshops.

The soft-cover 11 x 8.6-inch book (landscape style and with French flaps) is aimed at the general public. It comprises fairly short blocks of text, attractively arranged around photographs; neat and informative maps; and easy-to-read tables with large print. There is neither a list of contents nor an index, although there is a glossary and a further-reading list. Readers begin with the acknowledgements, where Renouf reflects on the long history of excavation at the Port au Choix sites, then move to the foreword, which is really an introduction. After a concise look at the site's history and hunter-gatherer societies, Renouf continues with a more detailed examination of maritime archaic Indians, the Groswater palaeo-Eskimos, Dorset culture, recent Indians, and Europeans. Many of the subheadings are in the form of questions ('Who are the Inuit?' and 'So why leave?').

*Ancient cultures bountiful seas* has no pretensions to being an academic book, although Renouf has more than proved her skills as a first-class archaeologist in other publications. It is, however, an imaginatively compiled information pack for those who travel to the relatively inaccessible excavations at Port au Choix. It will appeal to children as well as adults, and will be an intriguing addition to the collections of most laymen with an interest in Canadian maritime palaeo-archaeology.

**BEFORE THE HEROES CAME: ANTARCTICA IN THE 1890s.** T.H. Baughman. 1999. Lincoln, NE, and London: University of Nebraska Press. xii + 160 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-8032-6163-2. £7.95; US\$12.00.

This is the paperback edition of Tim Baughman's outstanding history of the events surrounding the exploration of Antarctica in the decade before 1901, when the author states that the 'Heroic Age' began with the sailing of Robert Falcon Scott's British National Antarctic Expedition on *Discovery*, as well as Erich von Drygalski's German expedition on *Gauss* and Otto Nordenskjöld's Swedish expedition on *Antarctic*.

After a brief introduction on the early history of exploration of the far south, the book concentrates on the oft-conflicting struggles in the 1890s of two totally different men: Carsten E. Borchgrevink, the leader of the *Southern Cross* expedition, which was the first to winter on the Antarctic continent, and Sir Clements Markham, the man who, more than any other, pushed Britain back into Antarctic exploration and was the spiritual father of Scott's two expeditions.

Markham is seen as the committee man *par excellence* in a time when the British official approach is characterised as 'exploration by committee.' His efforts to launch an expedition under the command of the Royal Navy are carefully detailed, including his ceaseless work to gain official approval, to secure financing, and to have significant organisations ignore any potential expeditions that would interfere with those he had decided to support.

In contrast to Markham is Borchgrevink, who gained recognition after claiming to have been the first person to have set foot on the Antarctic continent: an inaccurate claim (by more than 70 years), but one that gained him great notoriety. Borchgrevink's continuing efforts to lead an expedition back to the Antarctic were rewarded when he received the sponsorship of Sir George Newnes, the spectacularly successful publisher of *Tit-Bits*, *The Strand Magazine*, and *The Westminster Gazette*. Newnes ultimately funded Borchgrevink's *Southern Cross* expedition (1898–1900), which wintered at Cape Adare. The latter part of the book is concerned with the expedition itself, which was marked by constant tension and ill-will between Borchgrevink and his staff of scientists. It then points out how, soon after the return of *Southern Cross*, the major national expeditions went south, and Borchgrevink and his expedition were relegated to relative obscurity.

Baughman also mentions the other expeditions, or proposed expeditions, of the 1890s. One complaint would be that he does give rather short shrift to the *Belgica* expedition, which was every bit as significant as Borchgrevink's, but this is only relevant if one is somewhat misled by the title. Nevertheless, the detailed archival research of the author — who is arguably the foremost Antarctic historian in the United States — clearly shows. And, perhaps most importantly, the book offers that unusual combination: being scholarly and entertaining.