

Review

GAZETTEER OF THE ANTARCTIC

[Review by G. Hattersley-Smith* of *Geographic names of the Antarctic*, compiled and edited by Fred G. Alberts on behalf of the United States Board on Geographic Names (USBGN). Washington National Science Foundation, 1981, xxii, 959 p. Hardcover US \$16.25.]

This important work is a revised and greatly enlarged edition of *Geographic names of Antarctica* (USBGN Gazetteer No 14, 1956). The minor change in title correctly reflects the fact that both editions cover 'features in Antarctica and the area northward to the Antarctic Convergence'. Whereas the earlier edition listed about 3 400 names approved by USBGN, the present edition lists about 12 000, which is a measure of the tremendous progress in exploration and mapping that started in the International Geophysical Year, 1957–58. In addition to the approved names, about 3 000 'unapproved variant names' (synonyms) in various languages, but mainly in English and Spanish, are listed in italics and cross-referenced to the relevant approved names. The synonyms listed—a small proportion of the total extant—include those considered by USBGN to be of historical interest, those in a foreign language of important features, and rejected English forms.

The first part of the gazetteer provides a useful summary of the problems facing the Antarctic toponymist. There was a need to resolve many uncertainties over the application and derivation of names originating from the early expeditions, in the light of subsequent mapping and charting. In cases where more than one name existed for the same feature, it was necessary to establish priority of naming as the first criterion in making a choice. Consideration of these and other problems led USBGN to establish a policy on Antarctic place-names. This policy, which has remained unchanged since 1947, relates three orders of natural features to a corresponding hierarchy of categories of persons connected with the Antarctic who might be considered for commemoration, and provides guidance on the application of 'nonpersonal names' and on 'criteria of appropriateness'.

Since the United States recognizes no territorial claims in Antarctica, USBGN 'is in a position to consider each name on its merits in relation to the unfolding knowledge of Antarctica'. It follows also that the United States recognizes no linguistic constraints¹, so that approved names in the gazetteer are in English form, foreign language descriptive names and generic parts of names being translated, save for a few long-established Norwegian names in South Georgia, the name Bouvetøya and a few others. In acknowledging the informal cooperation of Antarctic place-names committees in other countries, USBGN attaches importance to 'agreement on specific names, terminology and policies bearing on the approval of names'. The other committees would certainly reciprocate acknowledgement of USBGN's Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names (ACAN) for its cooperation. The British Antarctic Territory and Falkland Islands Dependencies are examples of areas where informal consultation, in this case between ACAN and APC, has led to a wide measure of agreement on place-names in English. In 1957 the late Dr Brian Roberts² found an 89 per cent consensus in these areas, and since that time differences have been further reduced.

The format and printing of this volume are pleasing. Entries for approved names include location and description of the feature, and brief details on discovery and naming. There are few names for which the origin and derivation are not recorded. In a work of this size and scope, however, it was not found possible to cite published references to the first use of names, and in many cases neither the date of origin of a name nor the date of its acceptance by USBGN is evident. References to publications are limited to a list of foreign gazetteers and an index of United States Geological Survey Antarctic maps. Again, presumable for reasons of space, main entries do not include synonyms of place-names, which can be gleaned only from the cross-references. While there is a good deal of inevitable repetition of

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¹ *Polar Record*, Vol 20, No 124, 1980, p 72.

² *Polar Record*, Vol 8, No 56, 1957, p 460.

detail for features in the same area or discovered by the same expedition, some repetition could have been avoided by cross-references, as for example in presenting biographical details of individuals with more than one feature named after them. But these are minor points in a work displaying formidable industry and scholarship by its compiler and editor, who was also secretary of the Advisory Committee on Antarctic names from 1949 to 1980.

After an interval of 25 years Antarctic specialists and others are once again greatly indebted to USBGN and ACAN for updating the only gazetteer to cover the whole Antarctic. It can be assured of a long and useful life.

SOCIAL LIFE IN SITKA, 1870

[Review by Dorothy Middleton* of *Lady Franklin visits Sitka, Alaska 1870; the journal of Sophia Cracroft, Sir John Franklin's niece*, edited by R. N. DeArmond, Anchorage, Alaska, Alaska Historical Society, 1981, xxviii, 134 p, illus. Hardcover.]

Lady Franklin was the first of only five women to receive a Gold Medal from the Royal Geographical Society. In 1860 she was presented with the Founder's Medal for her 'self-sacrificing perseverance in sending out expeditions to ascertain the fate of her husband.' The Patron's Medal for the same year went to Leopold McClintock who had commanded her ship the *Fox*, pursuing the Franklin Search in 1855.

Jane Griffin was Sir John's second wife, an energetic and ambitious woman, who went everywhere with her husband, encouraged him in his profession and was enthusiastically behind his appointment to command the ill-fated Arctic expedition of 1845. She was a great traveller, and during her long widowhood visited India and Japan, Singapore and Hawaii, and was more than once in America. Sophia Cracroft, Sir John's niece, was her constant companion and it is her journal which has now been published by the Alaska Historical Society. Lady Franklin and Sophia went to Sitka in 1870 to follow up a rumour that some of Franklin's papers might have found their way to Alaska. Miss Cracroft, however, barely mentions this quest; her diary is more concerned with social life in Sitka soon after the purchase of Alaska by the Americans from Russia. The result is a very slight, but nevertheless amusing account of an 'expatriate' society bent on maintaining social distinctions and the customs of the homeland. In this sometimes losing battle the locals were backed up by the visitors, doubtful whether their landlady should be allowed to 'visit', and whether indeed she was a 'lady'. Lady Franklin and Sophia also made a distinction between themselves and their hosts, being highly critical of American ways and forms of speech. Overheated rooms and the American 'twang' come in for much censure.

The journal, the original manuscript of which is part of the Jessie Lefroy bequest in the Scott Polar Research Institute, is edited by R. N. DeArmond whose wide knowledge of Alaskan history gives Sophia's jottings a dimension they would otherwise lack. The text is embellished by the author's own sketches and a map of Sitka in 1867. Two appendices are included, an inventory of buildings in the town in 1867 and the Sitka census of 1870. *Lady Franklin visits Sitka* . . . will appeal more, perhaps, to those interested in Alaska's past than to Polar historians, but it provides a homely footnote to the sometimes heroic life of Jane Franklin.

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SLEDGING INTO HISTORY

[Review by Bernard Stonehouse* of D. L. Harrowfield's *Sledging into history*. Auckland, Macmillan Company of New Zealand, 1981, 119 p, illus. Hardcover NZ\$29.50.]

The author is the curator of New Zealand's National Antarctic Centre in Christchurch. He writes lovingly and with first-hand knowledge of the historic polar huts in McMurdo Sound—those put up by the *Discovery*, *Nimrod* and *Terra Nova* expeditions, and since cherished by the New Zealand Antarctic Society, with strong backing from New Zealand's Antarctic Division. The author's aim is 'to present a

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