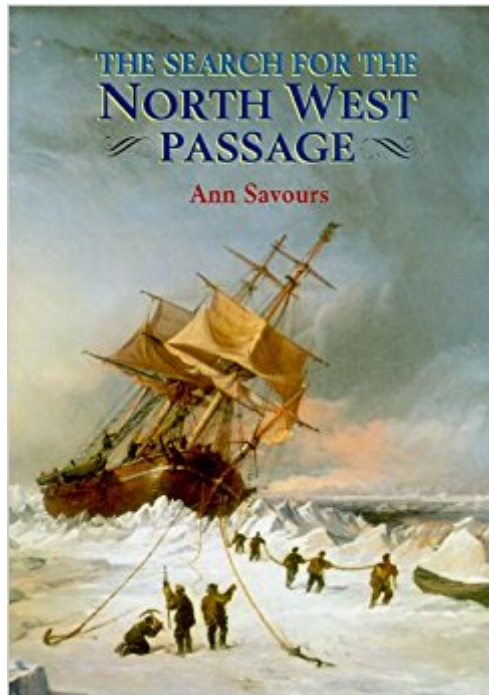




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The Search For The North West Passage



Synopsis

The search for the North West Passage to the Far East was the main driving force behind British arctic exploration from the sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, culminating in the famous and ill-fated Franklin expedition, the disappearance of which and the resulting search for the missing crews is one of the great tragic stories of the history of exploration. This book covers the early history of this great quest, including the voyages of Frobisher, Hudson and Captain Cook, and all of Franklin's expeditions. After the disappearance of his ships Erebus and Terror, his wife galvanised the Government into mounting a search for her husband and his men and these expeditions are also vividly described. It examines the British encounters with the Esquimaux and their vital help in charting the Arctic archipelago, the way the variations in the ice from year to year affected the results of each expedition, and the ships, boats, diet and clothing of the early explorers. This book will be compulsive reading for all those interested in the saga of arctic exploration and for those who enjoy the recounting of stories of human endeavour in the face of terrible odds. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Hardcover: 342 pages

Publisher: St. Martin's Press; y First edition edition (October 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0312223722

ISBN-13: 978-0312223724

Product Dimensions: 9.5 x 6.8 x 1 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #1,460,140 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in [Books > History > Americas > Canada > Exploration](#) #411 in [Books > History > Arctic & Antarctica](#) #1084 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > History > Ships](#)

Customer Reviews

After Columbus sailed the ocean blue in search of a trading route to China but found his way blocked by North and South America, Britain and Europe's other colonial powers scrambled to find alternate paths to the Far East. Avoiding the south, dominated by Spain and Portugal after the Pope's 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas, the English and the Dutch searched for both a North East Passage, north of Eurasia, and a North West Passage, through the Arctic ice of what is now North

America. Although such a passage was to become commercially unimportant (and unviable, thanks to climate), the successful transit of the North West Passage became a Holy Grail and deadly siren for countless exploration teams, and it eluded explorers for nearly 400 years. Ann Savours, one of Britain's leading authorities on this tenacious pursuit, describes in a lively and sprawling account the extraordinary adventures of these courageous expeditions. Drawing heavily on primary sources, including diaries, letters to home, and sketches, Savours's *Search* makes for engrossing reading: from the Frobisher team's 1570s descriptions of the "countrey people" (later the "Esquimaux") "clad in coates made of the skinnes of beastes" and "sharp-witted, readie to conceive our meaning by signes, and to make answere" to accounts of Sir John Franklin's ultimately successful but completely decimated mission, Savours puts you on the heaving decks of the icebreakers and in the minds of these brave explorers. Excellent illustrations, end notes, and appendices round out the work. --Paul Hughes

Once sixteenth-century geographers realized the Americas were a New World, the undying hope for a short water route to the riches of Asia fostered the search for a Northwest passage through the North American land-mass and into the Pacific. Savours is one of Britain's leading experts on the history of polar explorations. In this engrossing and often exciting narrative, she provides in-depth examinations of most of the prominent expeditions that sought the elusive passage. With the skill of a novelist, Savours portrays the steely courage and determination of men who frequently endured great suffering in a frozen, unforgiving environment. She makes effective use of firsthand accounts by the explorers, and the striking illustrations enrich the text. This is a superb rendering of a series of real-life adventures. Jay Freeman

I would recommend a good detailed map of the artic at hand when reading this book. Ann Savours assumes the reader is intimately familiar with artic geography. Once you get a hand on the geography it is a very good read for the non-fiction addict.

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