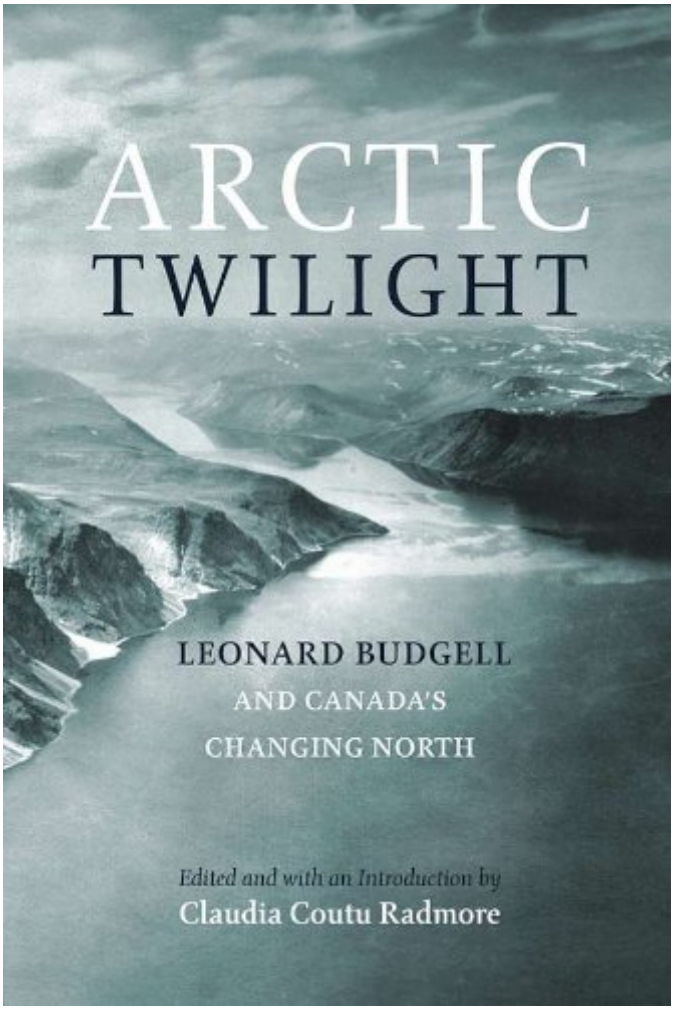
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Arctic Twilight: Leonard Budgell And Canada's Changing North



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Synopsis

Leonard Budgell saw the Canadian North like nobody else. He put his observations into words as few others ever could.As a "Servant of the Bay" Budgell ran HudsonÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Bay Company trading posts for decades in isolated communities up the Labrador coast and across the Arctic. Living among aboriginal Canadians he witnessed episodes and heard stories that would never again be repeated - except he wrote them down. His pen memorably portrays everything from dancing northern lights and hunting practices of birds to astonishing human adventures and predicaments.Northern ways intact for centuries changed with rifles and motorboats, radios and electric generators, new foods and different medicines. Most often, it was Budgell who bridged the aboriginal and southern cultures, building and operating remote radio stations at places like Hebron, taking an RCMP officer into a settlement where a choice had to be made between two different codes of law and behaviour in a murder case. In Arctic Twilight, Budgell chronicles, in an outpouring of letters to a much younger female friend, a traditional way of life that was changing forever.Claudia Coutu Radmore, a teacher, writer, and artist, first met Len Budgell in Winnipeg when she was a fine arts student and he had retired from the Company. Their friendship grew stronger when he began writing remarkable letters after she returned to QueenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s University. Now edited and organized by her, this unique memoir is available to the public for the first time.

Book Information

File Size: 6377 KB

Print Length: 504 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0978160010

Publisher: Blue Butterfly (January 27, 2009)

Publication Date: March 26, 2012

Sold by:Ã Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B005XBLQJU

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Not Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Not Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,786,627 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #61

inÃ Â Books > History > Americas > Canada > Exploration #455 inÃ Â Books > History > Americas > Canada > Pre-Confederation #1066 inÃ Â Books > History > Arctic & Antarctica

Customer Reviews

Pretty good historical information

Claudia Coutou Radmore has done a wonderful service for her fellow Canadians in preserving the letters of Len Budgell, lifelong Hudson's Bay Company employee. In these, the native Newfoundlander, describes so many ways of life, both for the whites, the Inuit and the native Indians, that have now passed. Here is a treasure trove of information on the wildlife and sea life that seem about to vanish in times of Global Warming. Here are tales of native peoples forced by the government from their subsistence life and into cities, where they languish and suffer perils and problems previously unknown on the tundra. Here also is told tales of the lives of countless dedicated "servants" of the great Canadian Hudson's Bay Corporation and its tiny isolated outposts in the Arctic...a way of life now vanished.Budgell, who befriended Radmore, writes humorously about his native Newfoundlanders, telling of his upbringing in what others would esteem as poverty. In later life, as a skilled short-wave radio operator in the frozen Arctic, he played a great role in keeping the HBC stations connected with the outer world. A lover of sea craft, Budgell also pays homage to the great supply ships, but also the smaller fishing craft and crews which he knew so well. Again, so many are gone for good now.As a US citizen, I was fortunate to gain some knowledge that most Americans south of the border never suspect was or is there. It has been a primer for my study of maritime Canada, some of which I hope to include in a future book. Claudia, thanks for your wonderful editing job on Len's letters, making them "memories" for us all.

Leonard Budgell - traveller, radio and naval expert, fur trader, story teller, Hudson's Bay man, dear friend - comes to glorious reality under the editorship of Claudia Coutu Radmore. With diligence and dignity, Radmore has sifted through hundreds of letters to make a life shine. These chronicles of a traditional way of Northern life should be required reading for high school students throughout this country; anyone with a heart for adventure will love this book.

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