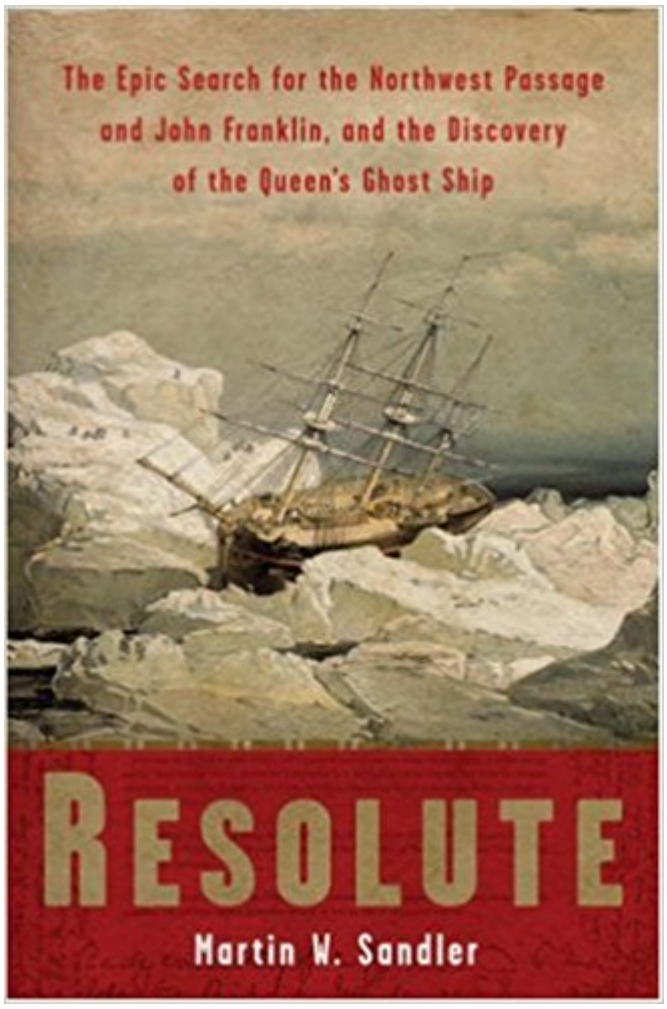
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Resolute: The Epic Search For The Northwest Passage And John Franklin, And The Discovery Of The Queen's Ghost Ship



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Synopsis

Almost everyone knows the photo of John F. Kennedy, Jr., as a young boy, peering out from under his fatherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s desk in the Oval Office. But few realize that the desk itself plays a part in one of the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s most extraordinary mysteries—a dramatic tale that has never before been told in its full scope. Acclaimed historian Martin Sandler, a two-time Pulitzer Prize nominee, winner of seven EmmyÃ Â® Awards, and author of more than 50 books, finally brings the entire story to light. This amazing high-seas adventure encompasses the search for the Northwest Passage in the early 1800s; a renowned explorer and his crew of 128 men who vanish during an 1845 expedition; 39 incredible, heroic attempted rescue missions; a ghost ship that drifts for more than 1,200 miles; a queenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s gratitude; and that famous desk. Fascinating rare photographs, paintings, engravings, and maps illustrate the book throughout.It all began when, in one of the biggest news stories of the 19th century, Sir John Franklin and his ships the Erebus and the Terror disappeared while attempting to locate the fabled Northwest Passage. At the request of FranklinÃ¢â ¬â„¢s wife, Lady Jane, the first mission set out from England in hopes of finding him; many others followed in its wake, none successful. Among these was the Resolute, the finest vessel in Queen VictoriaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Navy. But in 1854 it became locked in Arctic ice and was abandoned by its captain. A year later, a Connecticut whaler discovered it 1,200 miles away drifting and deserted, a 600-ton ghost ship. He and his small crew boarded the Resolute, and steered it through a ferocious hurricane back to New London, Connecticut. The United States government then reoutfitted the ship and returned it to the thankful Queen. In 1879, when the Resolute was finally retired, she had the best timbers made into a desk for then-President Rutherford B. Hayes. It is still used by U.S. presidents today...one of the most celebrated pieces of furniture in the White House.

Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Sterling (April 1, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1402758618

ISBN-13: 978-1402758614

Product Dimensions: 9 x 6 x 0.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 18 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #680,229 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #9 inÃ Â Books > History >

Americas > Canada > Exploration #166 inÃ Â Books > History > Arctic & Antarctica #443 inÃ Â Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > History > Ships

Customer Reviews

When Captain John Buddington of New London, Conn., set out on a whaling expedition in September 1855, he discovered the HMS Resolute, a British navy ship without a soul on board. How the Resolute made it from its British home port to Arctic Sea whaling territory to a central place in the White House's Oval Office makes up the core of this gripping historical adventure. Describing the explorers who set out to conquer the Arctic "Otherworld" as the "astronauts of their day," Pulitzer nominee Sandler creates a taut, absorbing story and a multi-faceted portrait of heroism that encompasses the overwhelming missteps, hardships and almost irrational tenacity that sprung from British naval secretary John Barrow's decision that Britain would discover the fabled Northwest Passage around the new world-a task he believed would take no longer than "a single season." That decision would be followed by 40 years of failed search-and-rescue missions-of which the Resolute was just one-after the initial 1845 voyage, led by Captain John Franklin, disappeared. The discovery of the Resolute represented both a vital clue in Franklin's disappearance and a haunting symbol of its nation's inexhaustible determination to make navigating the passage a uniquely British triumph. Sandler eloquently illustrates how the expedition became a new quest for the Holy Grail and provides an adventure story worthy of that tradition. 20 photos, 30 b/w illustrations.Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Though there are plenty of detailed works about specific Arctic expeditions, a general history suffices for some readers. Sandler surveys the famous quest for the Northwest Passage, which the British navy actively pursued from 1818 to the early 1850s, when Robert McClure and crew made the first complete passage. But his renown was then and has ever since been eclipsed by the man he and several other commanders were dispatched to find: Sir John Franklin, whose disastrous fate is relayed in Ice Blink, by Scott Cookman (2000). Among the many stories Sandler tells, the strangest concerns a ship, the Resolute, which was abandoned by another of Franklin's would-be rescuers. Somehow, the Resolute drifted back to civilization, was discovered by an American whaling ship, and was returned to an appreciative Britain obsessed with any trace of Franklin. Later, Queen Victoria had a desk hewn from the Resolute and given to President Rutherford Hayes; it today occupies the Oval Office. Endowed with dozens of images, Sandler's enticement to a popular

topic in exploration history is well suited to library requirements. Gilbert TaylorCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

very interesting readingÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â|.. about the lost ships of the turn of the century.

My husband was an arctic explorer while serving in the army and he enjoyed this book. Personally I haven’t read it

"Resolute" by Martin W. Sandler begins as a very intriguing story of a ghost ship discovered by the whaling ship "George Henry" in 1855. Items were laid out on the HMS "Resolute" as if the crew of the British ship had just stepped out. But, as a previous reviewer has pointed out, the "Resolute" is not the main subject of this work; in fact, there turns out to be not a lot to her story. Her abandonment was not mysterious and her future after being found not as significant as one might gather from the first chapter. Later in the book, it is described how, through the daring and expert command of Captain James Buddington, the "Resolute" was brought to port in New London, Connecticut. From there, the "Resolute" became more a symbol of U.S./English relations, but, ultimately, not in the form of a ship. She would be scrapped and made into desks.The book is mainly about the search for the Northwest Passage and the missing Franklin Expedition. These subjects definitely make the book worthwhile, particularly the latter. "The longest and most expensive search and rescue mission ever undertaken" lasted twelve years, involved scores of ships and thousands of officers and men and saw its share of the good (Lady Franklin and Capt. Henry Kellet), the bad (Sir Edward Belcher), and the ugly (Lt. Robert McClure) along the way. McClure is painted in "Resolute" as possibly a worse villain than Stephan Goldner, the man who provided tainted canned goods to the Franklin crew, is in the book "Ice Blink" by Scott Cookman.The findings of John Rae, Charles Francis Hall, and Frederick Schwatka, all of whom lived among and interviewed the Inuit about the fate of the Franklin Expedition, are described indepth. This reviewer recently watched the NOVA documentary "Arctic Passage: Prisoners of the Ice." "Arctic Passage" documented the interviews with the natives by John Rae; however, this reviewer does not recall Schwatka being mentioned. Perhaps stories discovered by Hall were attributed to Rae in the film. Sandler definitely used the documentary in his work as, towards the end, he used direct quotes from expert analysts from "Arctic Passage."The most important part of this book for this reviewer is the examination of the search expeditions that set out to find Franklin.

"Resolute" is to the Franklin Expedition as "The Lost Men" by Kelly Tyler-Lewis is to the story of the "Endurance." It is further reading on an already fascinating subject. The work is well-researched with an epilogue on the fates of some of the principal players, Timeline of events, illustration of the plans for the "HMS Resolute," instructions given to Sir John Franklin, 23 pages of chapter notes, and illustrations throughout along with two sections of glossy photos (some in color). One point which puzzled this reviewer, but was not elaborated upon by the author, is the evidence of cannibalism found by Owen Beattie and John Geiger (the latter name misspelled once on page 226) on Beechey Island. Why would cannibalism have occurred so early in the expedition when food was plentiful? A date error was found on page 148 where Elisha Kane was noted as returning from his search expedition on October 11, 1845 (obviously incorrect, should have been 1855). The story of the search expeditions, though, is full of intrigue and the character development is such that this reviewer acquired strong likes and even stronger dislikes of some of the people involved. "Resolute" is highly recommended to readers interested in maritime history in general and the Franklin Expedition in particular.

This book is readable; I appreciate that. The age of Arctic exploration interests me, and this book is worth a read. Sandler does a good job with the maps and the names of the ships and their rews; the information does get bogged down a little when there are so many rescue missions underway in the early 1850’s.Great storytelling about the recovery of Resolute, her repairs and triumphal return to Britain, and her reincarnation as the Resolute desk for U.S. Presidents.So much of the saga grew out of the arrogance of the British Navy refusing to consult with Arctic fishing experts or the native population.Interesting read -- quite un-put-down-able through the second half. I recommend it.

"Resolute" is interesting, it kept me reading, no doubt about it. It speaks of some artic exploration prior to the Franklin Expedition and much past it. It is amazing to see how many ships were sent out to find this lost explorer and his crews. I recommended it, with some reservations. There are not enough maps, or perhaps the maps that are printed would do if they had been more detailed. Too many times Mr. Sandler mentioned places, I went to the maps and found no trace of the areas he was spending much time describing. Also, each chapter had 1, usually page-long note at the back of the book. And while you can skip them if you like you will be missing valueable information. I don’t see why the author didn’t include them as part of the text or at least put them as footnotes on the same page.Still there is a lot of history in this book. And so I recommend "Resolute" to anyone interested in 18th century artic exploration. It has many surprizes and is exciting.

It is exceptionally rare for a work of non-fiction to transport the reader to a landscape so alien that it defies the imagination, to meet characters whose particular combination of courage, determination, ingenuity, and vision drive them to feats beyond all experience. Resolute is such a story and were it not for Martin Sandler's scholarly writing, his copious end notes, appendices, and biographic epilogue, the reader might be forgiven for thinking it just so much fiction. But the images of skeletons languishing in open boats, of message cairns against bleak snowswept horizons, and the thought of hundreds of men cowering in the cold and dark for month after mind-numbing month awaiting the spring to break up the ice seizing their ships, cannot help but shock the modern reader. Sandler's scholarly history of the search for (and discovery of) the Northwest Passage, and of the search for the men who disappeared there both thrills and haunts us. It is extraordinary how much treasure, planning, and hope went into England's quest for a commercially viable route over the northern boundary of North America, but it is equally remarkable how large a role was played by wanton ignorance. The gentlemen (nearly all were eventually knighted), who took this stage, very rarely consulted the people who knew most about the geography and the terrain, that is, the whalers and the Inuit natives. And the disregard for fundamental science is startling. How could Second Secretary of the Admiralty, John Barrow, whose orders sent so many men into those icy seas, ever have imagined that the ice that blocked the sea at lower latitudes would somehow vanish as the pole was approached? And sending those men out with what amounted to experimental food canning technology amounted to negligent homicide.Resolute is a book of history, of adventure, of biography, and to be perfectly truthful, it is also a book of horror. Read it for any of these reasons, but be prepared to be shaken up a little in the process.

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