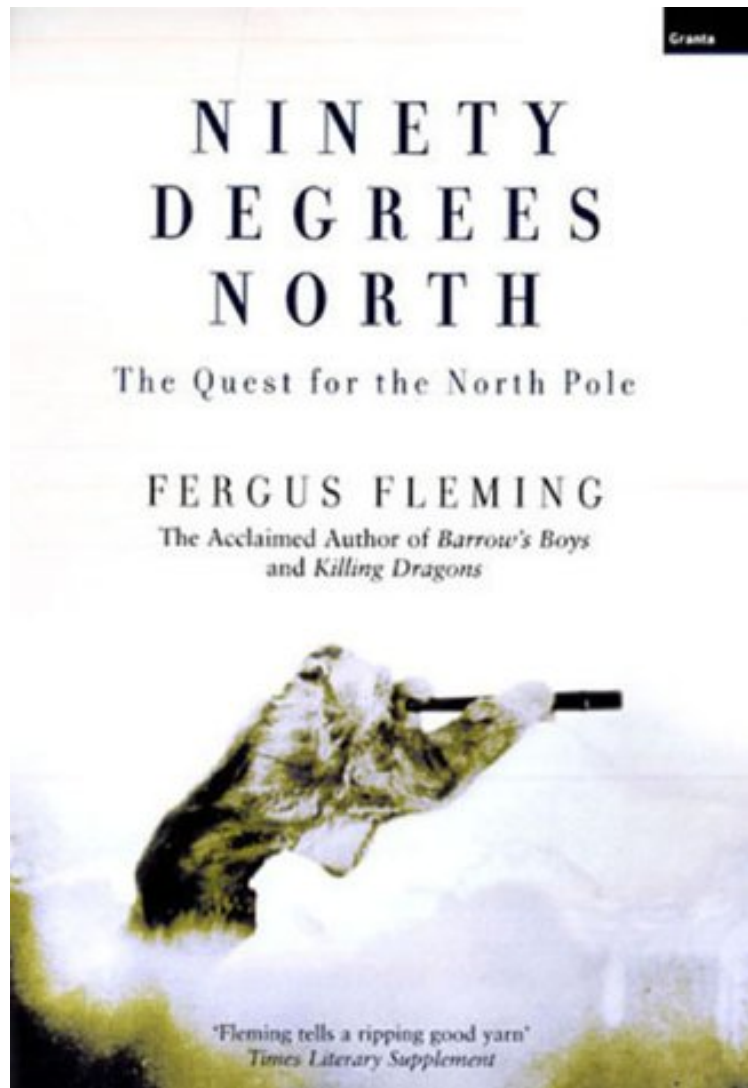


(Ebook free) Ninety degrees north: the quest for the North Pole

Ninety degrees north: the quest for the North Pole

Fergus FLEMING

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Fergus FLEMING : Ninety degrees north: the quest for the North Pole before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ninety degrees north: the quest for the North Pole:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Another winner from Fergie Fleming.By Frank J. O'ConnorFleming has made this territory (arctic exploration) his own. He writes fluently, shrewdly and often wittily. While he celebrates the heroism of these men, he is not afraid to view their motivations with a jaundiced eye and delights in the politics and controversies as much as in the gripping stories of the harrowing treks that mostly stopped short of the North Pole.He is wonderful on the characters and personalites of the many larger than life characters that made the effort and

is especially good in his portrayal of the titan Peary. This is the third book of Fleming's I have devoured ravenously; he is an old fashioned master of narrative story-telling. I am ready to suit up and travel hopefully to whatever destination his next opus takes us. Bravo!(And note the photo of Dr. Cook--a ringer for Rasputin if I'm not mistaken.)³ of 3 people found the following review helpful. First to the Pole By Brian D. Rubendall British author Fergus Fleming follows up his extraordinarily entertaining "Barrow's Boys" (about the early 19th century golden age of British exploration) with "Ninety Degrees North," another fascinating portrayal of men driven to go where no one had previously gone before. The narrative of Fleming's book covers the quest to stand literally on top of the world that began in earnest in the wake of the disappearance of British explorer Sir John Franklin while searching for the fabled Northwest Passage in 1845. Fleming recounts each expedition individually and chronologically, retelling the compelling horrors that befell men such as the hapless George DeLong and Charles Francis Hall. He describes in vivid detail what it was like to exist in a climate where the temperatures sometimes reached 100 degrees below zero. Men watched helplessly as their ships became trapped and slowly crushed by the polar ice pack and faced sledging journeys of hundred of miles with little food or shelter. Fleming recounts the numerous mistakes that were made both theoretical (the persistent belief that the pole was covered by open water) and practical (the fact that scurvy continued to haunt the explorers even after they figured out how to stop it). Slowly but surely, as each expedition added to knowledge about the perils of Arctic travel and technology slowly improved, men penetrated farther north until finally Robert Edwin Peary claimed the ultimate prize in 1909. Fleming is a gifted writer and storyteller and his book makes for terrific reading in front of a fireplace with a mug of hot chocolate on a cold winter night.⁴ of 4 people found the following review helpful. To the North Pole! By Frank J. Konopka I have read Mr. Fleming's other two published works and enjoyed them, so I was looking forward to this new book, since I have always had a fascination with explorations both to the North and South Poles. Happily, this book lived up to my high expectations, and reading it was very interesting and enlightening. Some of the stories in this book I had known from reading other works, but the author presented them very well, so I was not bored with going over something I knew. He has a light touch and it makes the reading go well and the pages turn fairly swiftly. He covers the Peary-Cook controversy quite well, without a lot of nonessential detail, and concludes (rightly, as I feel) that neither man actually made it to the Pole. This is a good book to read before a roaring fire during a snowstorm in winter, and then the reader should go outside for a few minutes into a howling wind and feel, if only for a few frozen seconds, what these hardy men must have endured for months on end. Their accomplishments must astonish us, in a much more sedentary age, and this book helps us to acknowledge their tremendous achievements.

Fergus Fleming's captivating histories have taken us to the Alps, to the high seas, and to the heights of human endeavor. Now the acclaimed author of *Barrow's Boys* and *Killing Dragons* -- a *New York Times* Notable Book -- relates the epic story of the men who stopped at nothing to unravel the mysteries of the North Pole. In the nineteenth century, theories about the North Pole ran rampant. Was it an open sea? Was it a portal to new worlds within the globe? Or was it just a wilderness of ice? When Sir John Franklin disappeared in the Arctic in 1845, explorers decided it was time to find out. In scintillating detail, *Ninety Degrees North* tells of the vying governments (including America, Britain, Germany, and Austria-Hungary) and fantastic eccentrics (from Swedish balloonists to Italian aristocrats) who, despite their heroic failures, often achieved massive celebrity as they battled shipwreck, starvation, and sickness to reach the top of the world. Drawing on unpublished archives, and with pages of photographs and drawings, and long-forgotten journals, Fleming tells this story with consummate craftsmanship and wit. *Ninety Degrees North* is a riveting saga of humankind's search for the ultimate goal. "This is the sort of book you want to read in front of a blazing fire. It is immensely enjoyable." -- *Daily Telegraph* "A vivid, witty history ... We are in the hands of a born storyteller." -- Bookseller "

From *Publishers Weekly* Whether it was believed to be surrounded by a vast, temperate sea that would facilitate speedy trade between the West and the Orient or, by one fanciful account, the gateway to a subterranean universe of wonder, there is no doubt that the North Pole exercised a powerful pull on the 19th-century imagination. Fleming (*Barrow's Boys*; *Killing Dragons*), whose first book outlined the ambitious program of British exploration set in motion by John Barrow, begins this exceptional account roughly where that one left off, recounting the major expeditions sent in search of the top of the world from 1845 to 1909. The book is fascinating for how Fleming renders the haughty, post-Enlightenment brio of the principal adventurers and the extreme, often fatal ends toward which it pushed them. Fleming beautifully weaves together intriguing journal excerpts and exhaustive expedition details to form an unforgettable impression of both the characters involved and the hardships they faced. And the hardships here are gruesome. Scarcely one of the many glory seekers from Britain, the U.S., Germany, Russia, Italy and elsewhere return from their quests wholly intact, either physically or mentally. They ate their dogs, they ate moss and, sometimes, they ate each other, but even when it became clear that nothing but a wasteland awaited them at the pole, they pressed on. Stories like this make for a captivating look at the best and worst possibilities of the human spirit, told by an author who has established himself as one of the best adventure writers today. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information,

Inc. From Library Journal It was once believed that the North Pole was surrounded by an open polar sea. Some of the attempts to prove this theory and to reach the pole itself once the theory was abandoned are the subject of this book. Fleming, author of the critically acclaimed *Barrow's Boys*, provides an entertaining history of the many failed attempts to reach the North Pole, from the hardship of the Kane expedition of 1853 through the Amundsen-Ellsworth North Pole sighting via airship in 1926. Though not all polar attempts in this time period are covered, many of the major attempts are recounted and analyzed, providing a story that is both awe-inspiring and humorous. Drawing on research from published and unpublished accounts, Fleming tells the stories of the failed land/sea attempts by such polar adventurers as Edward Nares, Fridtjof Nansen, Charles Francis Hall, August Petermann, and George Washington de Long, as well as the fatal attempt by Sweden's Salomon August Andre by balloon. The controversial topic of who first stood at 90-degrees North is not answered here; only through the investigation of Frederick Cook's and Robert Peary's expeditions does the reader learn that neither can conclusively claim this achievement. Suitable for both public and academic library collections. Sheila Kasperek, Mansfield Univ., PA Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

From Booklist This is Fleming's second volume on the history of British exploration to the North Pole. The first volume, *Barrow's Boys* (1998), covered the first half of the nineteenth century, and this new book chronicles the failed attempts, from the 1850s to the 1920s, to reach the Pole. Drawing on journals and other archival records, Fleming recounts such explorations as Elisha Kent Kane's journey (1853-1855), in which Kane survived mutiny and the loss of his ship; and George Nares' attempt (1875-1876), which was crippled by scurvy. In other voyages a ship sinks, men die, resort to cannibalism, and lose their way. An appendix contains a paper on scurvy written in 1877 ("the unfortunate patient indulges in the gloomiest of ideas, the fetor of the breath is now intolerable"). At times Fleming takes a less than serious tone in writing about these explorers, considering the improbable chances of their success. Yet he portrays them as heroic and obsessed adventurers. The book, which includes 24 pages of black-and-white photographs, is adventure storytelling at its best. George Cohen Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved