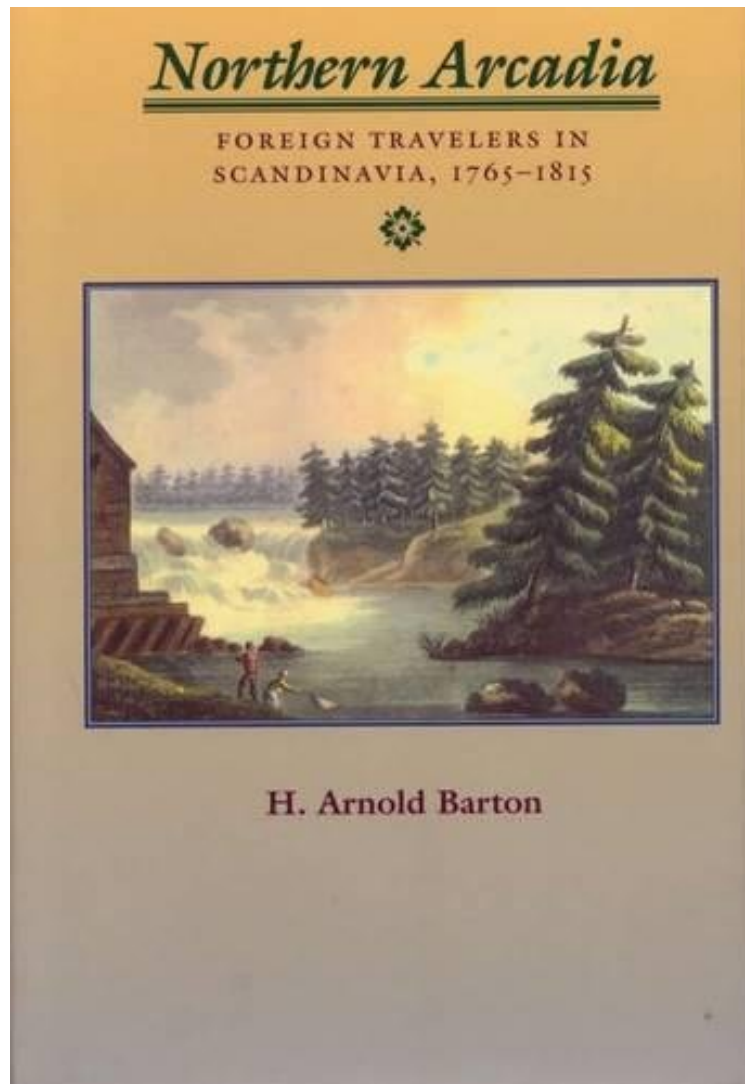


Northern Arcadia: Foreign Travelers in Scandinavia, 1765 - 1815

Professor Emeritus H. Arnold Barton Ph.D. B.A.
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Professor Emeritus H. Arnold Barton Ph.D. B.A. : Northern Arcadia: Foreign Travelers in Scandinavia, 1765 - 1815 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Northern Arcadia: Foreign Travelers in Scandinavia, 1765 - 1815:

Northern Arcadia is a comparative study of the accounts of foreign visitors to the Nordic lands during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Before the late eighteenth century, few foreigners ventured as far as Scandinavia. The region seemed a cold hyperborean wilderness and a voyage there a daring adventure. From the mid-

1760s on, however, foreigners arrived in the Nordic lands in increasing numbers, leaving numerous accounts that became increasingly popular, satisfying a growing curiosity about regions beyond the traditional grand tour. The pre-Romantic mood of the period with its predilection for untamed nature and for peoples uncorrupted by overrefined civilization further stimulated fascination with the North. European literati discovered the Nordic sagas, finding them exhilarating, passionate, imaginative, and original. The French Revolution and the ensuing European wars effectively closed off much of the Continent to foreign travel, turning attention to the still neutral northern kingdoms. Travel literature about Scandinavia thus illuminates the shift in the European intellectual climate from the enlightened rationalism and utilitarianism of the earlier travelers in this period to the pre-Romantic sensibility of those who followed them. In a Europe torn by war and revolution, sensitive souls could find their new Arcadia in the North at least until the Scandinavian kingdoms themselves became engulfed by the Napoleonic wars after 1805.

About the Author H. Arnold Barton is a professor emeritus of history at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. His earlier publications on the period covered by this book include *Count Hans Axel von Fersen: Aristocrat in an Age of Revolution and Scandinavia in the Revolutionary Era, 1760-1815*. He is also the author of *The Search for Ancestors: A Swedish-American Family Saga* and *A Folk Divided: Homeland Swedes and Swedish Americans, 1840-1940*.