

and ordinances, received New South Wales law from prior to 1910, and ACT criminal law as it existed prior to self-government' (page 17). Their confused and unwieldy nature, alongside the obvious problem of applying laws under polar conditions, prompts the authors to press the need for reform, even if they remain pessimistic about the prospects for rapid change. From this perspective, the publication represents an invaluable reference work; thus, 18 pages of text preface 122 pages listing the individual laws applicable to the AAT insofar as Kaye, Rothwell, and Dando have determined. Frequently, some 12 individual laws are listed on each page! More importantly, although focused on the AAT, this paper will also illuminate studies of law and politics in Antarctica in general. (Peter J. Beck, School of Humanities, Kingston University, Kingston upon Thames KT1 2EE.)

BRIEF REVIEWS

ANCIENT CULTURES BOUNTIFUL SEAS: THE STORY OF PORT AU CHOIX. M.A.P. Renouf. St John's: Historic Sites of Newfoundland and Labrador. 64 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-919735-05-3.

The Historic Sites Association is an organisation that aims to preserve and promote knowledge of important archaeological and historic sites in Newfoundland and Labrador. Priscilla Renouf's account of the archaeological excavations underway at Port au Choix, a Dorset site on the west coast of Newfoundland's Great Northern Peninsula, is one publication in this series. It can be purchased at the new Parks Canada visitor centre at the site itself, or in the Association's own bookshops.

The soft-cover 11 x 8.6-inch book (landscape style and with French flaps) is aimed at the general public. It comprises fairly short blocks of text, attractively arranged around photographs; neat and informative maps; and easy-to-read tables with large print. There is neither a list of contents nor an index, although there is a glossary and a further-reading list. Readers begin with the acknowledgements, where Renouf reflects on the long history of excavation at the Port au Choix sites, then move to the foreword, which is really an introduction. After a concise look at the site's history and hunter-gatherer societies, Renouf continues with a more detailed examination of maritime archaic Indians, the Groswater palaeo-Eskimos, Dorset culture, recent Indians, and Europeans. Many of the subheadings are in the form of questions ('Who are the Inuit?' and 'So why leave?').

Ancient cultures bountiful seas has no pretensions to being an academic book, although Renouf has more than proved her skills as a first-class archaeologist in other publications. It is, however, an imaginatively compiled information pack for those who travel to the relatively inaccessible excavations at Port au Choix. It will appeal to children as well as adults, and will be an intriguing addition to the collections of most laymen with an interest in Canadian maritime palaeo-archaeology.

BEFORE THE HEROES CAME: ANTARCTICA IN THE 1890s. T.H. Baughman. 1999. Lincoln, NE, and London: University of Nebraska Press. xii + 160 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-8032-6163-2. £7.95; US\$12.00.

This is the paperback edition of Tim Baughman's outstanding history of the events surrounding the exploration of Antarctica in the decade before 1901, when the author states that the 'Heroic Age' began with the sailing of Robert Falcon Scott's British National Antarctic Expedition on *Discovery*, as well as Erich von Drygalski's German expedition on *Gauss* and Otto Nordenskjöld's Swedish expedition on *Antarctic*.

After a brief introduction on the early history of exploration of the far south, the book concentrates on the oft-conflicting struggles in the 1890s of two totally different men: Carsten E. Borchgrevink, the leader of the *Southern Cross* expedition, which was the first to winter on the Antarctic continent, and Sir Clements Markham, the man who, more than any other, pushed Britain back into Antarctic exploration and was the spiritual father of Scott's two expeditions.

Markham is seen as the committee man *par excellence* in a time when the British official approach is characterised as 'exploration by committee.' His efforts to launch an expedition under the command of the Royal Navy are carefully detailed, including his ceaseless work to gain official approval, to secure financing, and to have significant organisations ignore any potential expeditions that would interfere with those he had decided to support.

In contrast to Markham is Borchgrevink, who gained recognition after claiming to have been the first person to have set foot on the Antarctic continent: an inaccurate claim (by more than 70 years), but one that gained him great notoriety. Borchgrevink's continuing efforts to lead an expedition back to the Antarctic were rewarded when he received the sponsorship of Sir George Newnes, the spectacularly successful publisher of *Tit-Bits*, *The Strand Magazine*, and *The Westminster Gazette*. Newnes ultimately funded Borchgrevink's *Southern Cross* expedition (1898–1900), which wintered at Cape Adare. The latter part of the book is concerned with the expedition itself, which was marked by constant tension and ill-will between Borchgrevink and his staff of scientists. It then points out how, soon after the return of *Southern Cross*, the major national expeditions went south, and Borchgrevink and his expedition were relegated to relative obscurity.

Baughman also mentions the other expeditions, or proposed expeditions, of the 1890s. One complaint would be that he does give rather short shrift to the *Belgica* expedition, which was every bit as significant as Borchgrevink's, but this is only relevant if one is somewhat misled by the title. Nevertheless, the detailed archival research of the author — who is arguably the foremost Antarctic historian in the United States — clearly shows. And, perhaps most importantly, the book offers that unusual combination: being scholarly and entertaining.