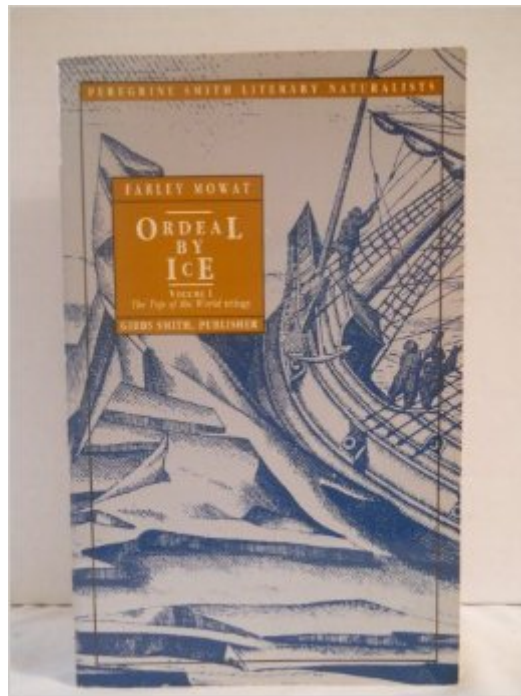


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Ordeal By Ice: The Search For The Northwest Passage (Top Of The World Trilogy, Vol 1)



Synopsis

Ordeal by Ice is the thrilling account of the great Northern explorers: men who struggled, starved, and finally conquered the capricious forces of the bitter Northern winter in a centuries-long search for the Northwest Passage. The stories, compiled by award-winning author Farley Mowat and presented in gripping, firsthand narratives, capture both the stark drama of the struggle for survival and the breathtaking panorama of virgin Arctic lands. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Farley Mowat first went to Arctic climes as a boy during the 1930s. After the war he returned to the North, and began a career as an author which has continued for half a century. At the same time, he developed a deep attachment to the Canadian wilderness which has led him on a long and extraordinary voyage of personal discovery. In the late fifties, after a decade of Arctic activity, Mowat conceived the idea of writing a history of the major explorations which had taken place there. His purpose was twofold: firstly, there was no other complete history available, although a great deal of excellent material lay hidden away in out-of-print books and the dusty corners of libraries. Secondly, he wanted to pay a tribute to the men who first went into those sometimes inhospitable lands and as he says, "...demonstrate the magnitude and grandeur of human endeavour in that hard environment." "Ordeal by Ice" is the first of the three books in the "Top of the World" series. It tells of a number of early expeditions to the frozen north, starting with Henry Hudson's early 17th century

voyage, which ended in tragedy and mystery. Indeed, tragedy of the most appalling kind awaited many of those who attempted to make their way through the "Icicle Seas," and it is the attempt to progress against the fantastic odds of the northern winter which makes the stories Mowat has collected so compelling. This is invigorating history, of a kind which Mowat has made his own (see also "Sea of Slaughter," "People of the Deer," "The Desperate People" etc.). Not only has he done us a great service by bringing it out of its mothballs, so to speak, but he has also created a vital and highly readable saga of northern exploration that can be read for its own sake.

I have long been fascinated by the stories of the exploration of the Arctic and the search for the Northwest Passage. I have read many accounts and have been enthralled by them all. This account, though, is different. Instead of being a narrative of the acts of others, it is a reprint of original letters and journals from the explorers themselves. This provided a new and valuable insight into the brave men who made these journeys. Farley Mowat introduces each example with a bit of background but then lets the words of the explorers speak for themselves. He usually finishes with a bit of summary. The choices are not always the most famous or the best known and they are all the more valuable for that. It is well worth reading. I personally found the narratives written by other writers to be more engrossing and interesting in their presentations but reading from the originals has been valuable.

Excellent read if you are interested in voyages into the Arctic. Most of the voyages were looking for the Northwest Passage.

Incredible book! Been searching for it for 30 years minimum. This book has stories of the last men to die on ships searching for the Northwest Passage. Words taken directly out of the ships' logs.

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