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0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Comprehensive Survey of Arctic Exploration 1527-1993 By C. Trew
This work begins with the first recorded proposal for Arctic exploration by Robert Thorne of London in 1527. He proposed to King Henry VIII a new shipping route to the Orient via an as yet uncharted northern route. It concludes with the Russian nuclear icebreaker "Yamal" making the first successful boat trip directly to the Pole in 1993. In between the reader follows various explorers from Europe (and eventually the US and Canada) for several centuries as they brave the harsh Arctic environment to reach the North Pole. While the earliest attempts were for economic pursuits, eventually hardy adventurers became the norm. The tales are incredible, especially considering the lack of advanced equipment and back-up procedures the explorers used through the early 20th century. No surprise that many perished or were never heard from again. One particularly interesting aspect of this work is the extensive use of first hand accounts by the explorers themselves. Most of the explorers kept logs and diaries of their travels (something to do during the long, cold days and nights that stretched into months and even years on the journeys). Some of the writings are quite dramatic and poignant, such as those of Commander George Washington DeLong (1844-1881). His writings were found along with his body and those of his companions after they had frozen to death. A very well produced work that spans over 400 years of man's quest for the North Pole.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A comprehensive history of Arctic exploration By A Customer
Overall this is an excellent book. It is a comprehensive history with enough detail to be very interesting. It is written as a chapter by chapter summary of all important Arctic explorers with extensive use of diary extracts where available. There are some fascinating well-known and not-so-well-known tales of extraordinary feats of survival. Also the controversies surrounding "first at the pole" are covered. A very good book, highly recommended and well worth reading.

A few toes aren't much to give to achieve the Pole, observed Robert Peary, but as Clive Holland's gripping history of traveling across the polar ice cap shows, much more was at risk for the men who went as far north as possible. In addition to Peary's crowning triumph at the North Pole, there is the fourteen-year-old Horatio Nelson battling polar bears, the sinking of the Jeannette on De Long's push farthest north, Fridtjof Nansen's astonishing survival for two years in the Arctic, and the ill-fated dirigible expedition of the Italia. These stories and others are told in the explorers' own words, in all their direct and moving plainness, as they endure extremes of physical hardship and contend with each other in grim competition to reach the Pole first. Noted Arctic expert Clive Holland compiles and blends together the narratives of the famous explorers Nansen, Peary, Franklin, De Long, Nordenskjold, and many others into one unfolding historical drama. Farthest North is an enthralling story spanning four hundred years and embracing many different motives, many different modes of travel, and many remarkable men - all risking their lives for a geographic point 500 miles from the nearest land. "Spellbinding . . . interested readers will find this book hard to put down." - Publishers Weekly

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