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HENRY WEMYSS FEILDEN (1838–1921)
NATURALIST ON NARES'S SHIP
H.M.S. ALERT

EDITORIAL

HISTORY OF POLAR EXPLORATION AND GEOLOGY

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I remember it well. Five years ago Ellis Yochelson came from Washington, D.C. to far-away Saskatoon. The opening of a new Geology Building and Museum was the occasion. It was celebrated with a symposium on the history of geology and Ellis had been invited to present a paper. He is still waiting to see it published in a commemorative volume. Those of us interested in both geology and history are accustomed to see time go by.

Ellis came with a gift, but it had a price. The honour he bestowed on me was the Presidency of HESS, then a fledgling looking for an understanding, perhaps guiding, parent. The price became clear after the ceremonies were over and we relaxed with a scotch (no bourbon up here). Would it not be a good idea to help *Earth Sciences History* along with a Special Issue on the Arctic? What else could I do but commit myself?

Soon I found out that extracting commitments from authors is a time-consuming task. Thus it took a few years to make contacts, cajole people, read, edit, and then repeat this procedure several times. Now I can only say that for me it was a worthwhile exercise. I hope that readers of *Earth Sciences History* will agree.

The papers in the present volume were written by geologists with an interest in history and by historians interested in geology. These two groups of people do not always see eye to eye. There are methods cherished by scientists that have no particular meaning to historiographers. The reverse applies when students taking a history class are told that geologists are easily trapped into a "whiggish" approach to events of the past or that they only present anecdotes without a proper analysis.

But so be it. Several stories here told are just that—stories. To the general reader, however, they may reveal happenings unfamiliar to them. That in itself is enough reason to include them—at least to this editor.

When reading the variety of papers brought together here one cannot be but struck by a commonality of places and persons. Time and again the reader will meet the same Arctic explorers but in different settings. It makes for a strong bond between the authors that cannot escape the attention of the readers.

Whether a particular submission to the Special Arctic Volume will appear in the present or a future issue of *Earth Sciences History* is a matter to be decided by the Editor-in-Chief, Gerald Friedman. Too many pages of manuscript have been submitted to be put into one single issue. Rather than rejecting papers solely on the criterion of length, preference was given to delay the publication of some contributions.

Earth Sciences History is still evolving. One direction of this movement is toward an international audience served by contributors from many countries. As much as possible the flavour of the originally submitted manuscripts has been preserved. I used the word "flavour" [sic] intentionally because it is an example of a spelling variant used by those writers who received their education in the Queen's English.

Thank you, Ellis Yochelson for suggesting this project. You have helped *Earth Sciences History* on a new road. Measure that in miles or kilometres [the way we do it in Canada], whatever; it is just great.