Excavations being conducted at Kuyait site, Frobisher Bay, in July 1991 at one of the houses occupied by Inuit shortly after their contact with the Frobisher party. Frobisher-period ceramics, coal, and European woods were recovered from Kuyait houses, indicating that Inuit people continued to "mine" the Kodlunarn Island sites for years—even centuries—after the English voyagers departed. [William Fitzhugh]

historical and archeological studies of Frobisher documents and artifacts, making use both of materials deposited in the Smithsonian Institution by Hall and of studies conducted on Kodlunarn Island in 1981, 1990, and 1991. In it 13 authors from institutions in the United States and Canada, in a generally accessible style, recount the history of the Frobisher voyages (first told by George Best in 1578) as seen both by Europeans and by Inuit and describe the Kodlunarn Island sites as they currently stand. Generally of a more technical nature, there are five chapters devoted to the ores and iron blooms from Kodlunarn Island, a principal question being whether they represent activities of the Frobisher expedition or of Inuit, Norse, or others. There are also a chapter each on pottery and on wood and charcoal remains. There have been many questions about the Frobisher material; many have been answered, but sometimes the new data simply raise new ones. The identity and the fate of lost men and ships are still uncertain.

An extension of the efforts that produced the Smithsonian volume is the Meta Incognita (unknown shores or boundaries) Project, a collaborative venture of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Smithsonian Institution, and others. Its first publication is a set of 10 "Contributions to Field Studies" based on investigations conducted on Kodlunarn Island in 1991. The authorship of the work overlaps that of the Smithsonian Press volume, and it adds more basic data to those presented there, similarly covering a range of topics from Inuit oral history to metallurgical activities. Among the contributions is a preliminary report of excavations of Kuyait, a winter village of sod structures discovered in 1990 and containing Frobisher artifacts apparently utilized by later occupants. A second work from the project, *Martin Frobisher's Northwest Venture, 1576–1581: Mines, Minerals, and Metallurgy* by D. D. Hogarth, P. W. Boreham, and J. G. Mitchell, which considers the fate of Frobisher's booty from the British side, has recently appeared as number 7 in the Canadian Museum's Mercury Series (C$21.95), and a third is in press.

An iron bloom deposited in the Smithsonian Institution by Charles Francis Hall. "Attempts to date the bloom . . . led to the current interest in the Frobisher voyages and the Meta Incognita Program." Diameter, about 18 centimeters at base. [From *Archeology of the Frobisher Voyages*]

Frobisher failed in his effort to find gold ore in the bay that became known by his name; though he learned a lot about living in the Arctic, his knowledge was not passed on to others for many years. From Frobisher and his men the Inuit received new materials to utilize and new knowledge about an alien culture that had different goals and different ways to accomplish them. They passed on both acquisitions to their kin for many years and the knowledge to other members of that alien culture centuries later. The Smithsonian Press and Canadian Museum volumes represent the gold that Frobisher never found and that Hall only glimpsed.

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Ventures Southward

Before the Heroes Came. Antarctica in the 1890s. T. H. BAUGHMAN. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1993. xii, 160 pp., illus. $22.

After the big expeditions by the United States, French, and British navies in the 1840s there was a lull in Antarctic exploration before the "heroic age" at the beginning of the 20th century. The exploits of Scott, Shackleton, Amundsen, and Mawson in this later phase of revived interest overshadowed the achievements not only of other important contemporary expeditions but of their forerunners in the preceding decade. This book gives a long overdue appreciation of these pioneering ventures in the far south.

It begins with a general account of the early history—the unrewarded efforts of Matthew F. Maury and Georg von Neumayer in the second half of the 19th century to extend observations in meteorology and physical science into southern latitudes and the fruitful but short incursion of the *Challenger* inside the Antarctic Circle. Interest then began to rekindle, particularly in Australia, Britain, and Germany. While establishment scientists set up committees, passed resolutions, and lobbied for funds, those with commercial interest, the whalers who were finding their prey getting scarcer in the north, and dedicated individualists content to do things on a shoestring were quicker to take operative action. A private venture unconnected with whaling was that of Adrien de Gerlache, sailing in 1897 in the *Belgica* and getting trapped in the ice

over an Antarctic winter. This expedition was the most productive scientifically in this period, producing the first appreciation of the geology of the Antarctic Peninsula and the discovery of the first Antarctic insect. Nevertheless, probably because the Peninsula did not provide a highway to the Pole, it, together with other expeditions to this area, has never been accorded star billing. The whalers did not find the right sort of whales and, with the exception of C. A. Larsen, who made important finds of fossils, were largely indifferent to geographical discovery and hostile to science.

It was a whaling expedition, however, on which Carsten Borchgrevink, a Norwegian-English settler in Australia, sailed to the Ross Sea as a seaman, having failed to be taken on as a scientist. According to his own account he was the first to set foot on the Antarctic continent. He returned determined to lead his own expedition and, seeking support for this in Britain, found himself at odds with Sir Clements Markham, the powerful protagonist for a British expedition to the Antarctic and the second principal character in this book. Borchgrevink managed to obtain funds that Markham thought should rightly have come to him and sailed again for the Ross Sea in 1898—three years before the British expedition under Scott that Markham organized. It took a long time for the establishment to forgive him. To some extent Borchgrevink had himself to blame for this; he had enthusiasm, determination, and experience but was brash, inept in handling his staff, and careless in scientific matters. His great and undeniable achievement was to show that it was possible to overwinter on the continent. He had approached this practically, following the ideas of Frederick A. Cook of the *Belgica* expedition, in taking with him two Lapps hardened in the Arctic and successfully using dog-sledges, skis, and kayaks for transport. No notice of this was taken by the British, who under Markham's influence continued to follow the traditions of British naval expeditions in the Arctic and put their faith in manhauling. Kayaks were not used again in the Antarctic until 1984, when a successful circumnavigation of Brabant Island was achieved by their means by a British expedition. Baughman sums up by saying that Borchgrevink's venture "presaged the Antarctic forays of the twentieth century—small, efficient, and led by a single man fired by a vision to explore the unknown"—which one can agree was largely their character until the time of the International Geophysical Year.

A few mistakes occur—Halley's vessel was *H.M.S. Paramore*, not *Pink*, "pink" being a generic term for ships of her kind, and surely sledges have runners but not rudders. But these are minor blemishes in a well-researched book that gives a fresh picture of the personalities and influences behind exploration in the late 19th century and leaves one wondering how different things might have been if Borchgrevink had not turned down an invitation to dinner with Sir Clements.

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American Bogpersons

Archaeology of Precolumbian Florida. JERALD T. MILANICH. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, 1994. xxii, 476 pp., illus. $49.95; paper, $24.95.

A wide array of scientific questions can be addressed by examining preserved soft tissue of ancient humans. The mutation rate of human mitochondrial DNA, for example, is central to the debate about when and where *Homo sapiens* evolved. Currently this rate is estimated from the assumed divergence dates of contemporary populations rather than being measured by comparing mtDNA samples from tissues of different ages. Preserved tissue would also be valuable in studies of the evolution of nuclear DNA, the evolution of human diseases, and the health and nutritional status of specific past populations. These issues have all been cited as reasons for the excitement over the remarkably preserved body of the

"The original of this wooden tablet with a woodpecker painted on it was excavated from Key Marco by Frank Hamilton Cushing. This painting was done by Wells Sawyer, a member of the expedition. Cushing found it 'perhaps the most significant object of a sacred or ceremonial nature . . . a thin board of a yellowish wood, a little more than sixteen inches in length.' " [From *Archaeology of Precolumbian Florida*; Cushing, 1897; courtesy Smithsonian Institution]

"A federal relief program archaeological field crew in 1937 or early 1938 at Thomas Mound on the Little Manatee River in Hillsborough County." [From *Archaeology of Precolumbian Florida*; photograph by Clarence Simpson, courtesy Florida Museum of Natural History]