



The Man Who Mapped the Arctic: The Intrepid Life of George Back, Franklin's Lieutenant

Peter Steele

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In the mid-1800s, George Back went on three Arctic expeditions with Sir John Franklin across the barren lands of the Canadian north. But unlike Franklin, Back lived to tell his tales in journals, drawings, watercolors, and maps. Noted writer Peter Steele drew on these sources, along with contemporary accounts, to craft this gripping tale of resilience in the face of incredible odds.

The book thrillingly recounts the near-impossible circumstances of these expeditions — the fights with the Hudson Bay Company, rations that failed to get through, even cannibalism. Back survived these horrors to lead an exploration of the Great Fish River, now named Back River in his honor. His return upstream, hauling his handmade boat up 83 sets of rapids, is one of the greatest-ever feats of heroism and endurance.

A gifted artist and mapmaker, Back was a brave explorer forgotten by history. Steele does him belated justice with this fascinating account.

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