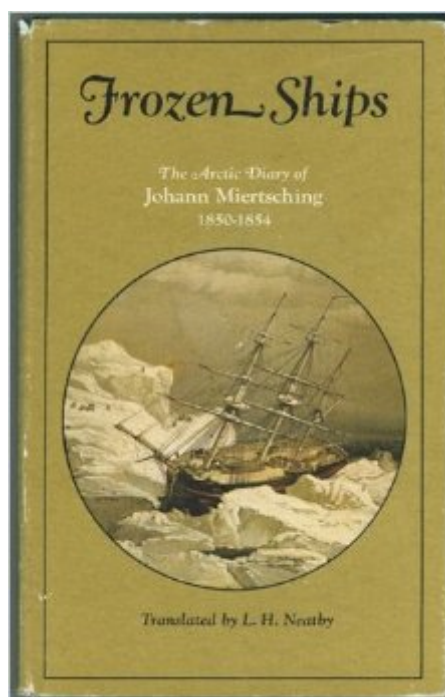


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Frozen Ships: The Arctic Diary Of Johann Miertsching, 1850-1854



Synopsis

254 pages

Book Information

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Publisher: Macmillan of Canada; 1st edition (1967)

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Customer Reviews

I'm surprised this excellent volume doesn't get cited more often among enthusiasts of the history of polar exploration. The personal journals left to us by Royal Navy officers such as William Parry, Alexander Armstrong, Sherard Osborn and others are great for stiff-upper-lip descriptions of their efforts to sail through the ice, but because the officers in question often expected the journals to be published, their tone was formal or flowery, and they rarely divulged their innermost emotions.

Miertsching, however, was not a Royal Navy man; he wasn't even British (he was German). Sailing as an interpreter, he ended up on Robert McClure's Investigator expedition (1850-55) almost by accident. His account of the disastrous voyage is fascinating for all its unadorned personal observations: his horror at the thuggish non-Christian behaviour of the seamen, his dismay at the bickering between captain and officers, his misery when ill in his freezing cabin. His diary contains much of the stuff the officers would never reveal.

A great little book. I'm taking my 10 year old son fishing next summer in the artic and wanted him get a picture of what explorers in the 1800's went through.

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