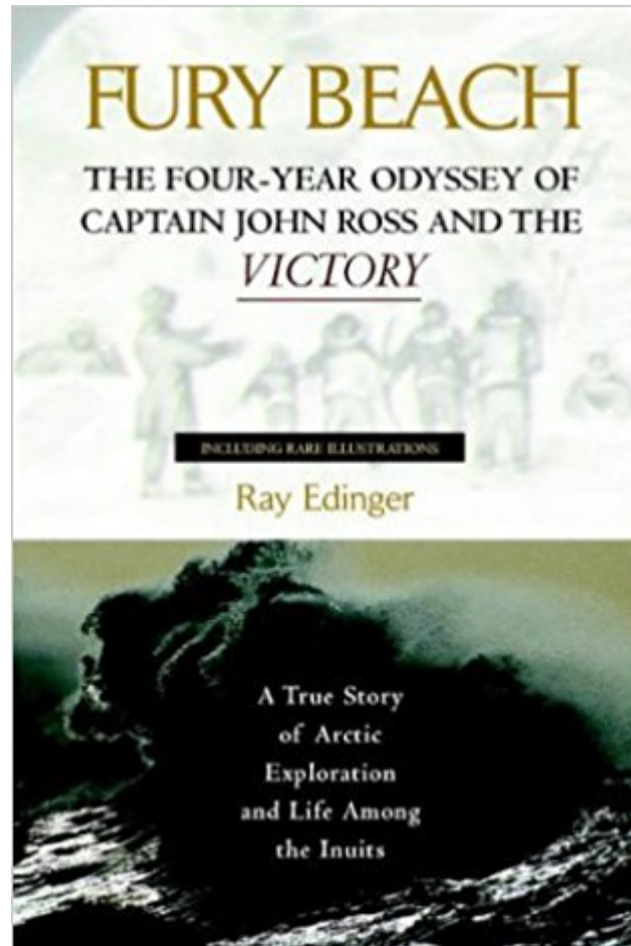




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Fury Beach



Synopsis

In May 1829, after eleven years of being denied command of a ship, Captain John Ross set sail on Victory, the first steamer to brave the Arctic waters. His goal: to prove that the Northwest Passage did indeed exist. Thus began four years spent ice-bound in the Canadian Arctic. Trapped by the shifting floes, brutal storms, and extreme temperatures, the expeditioners changed their goal to mere survival. With the help of the Inuits of Boothia Peninsula, Ross and his crew would attempt to conquer this hostile, barren environment-and make it home to tell the tale. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

First-timer Edinger has rediscovered and skillfully retold a forgotten but absorbing epic of early Arctic exploration. In 1829, Captain John Ross of the British Royal Navy set out for the Arctic in a converted Channel steamer, the Victory, the first steam vessel to travel in those waters. He was trying to save his reputation, which was under venomous attack by the Admiralty bureaucrat Sir John Barrow, who accused Ross of possessing an "impenetrably dull or intentionally perverse" mind. Ross succeeded in refuting Barrow's accusations, but only after a four-year ordeal in which his ship was icebound in Arctic waters and survival depended on aid from a friendly Inuit and supplies left from the wreck of an earlier exploration ship, Fury. In the course of those four years, Ross and crew maintained their health and morale-with no help from a steam engine quickly discarded as dead weight-managing to stave off scurvy until near the end of their expedition. Most of the crew survived, a party under the captain's nephew John Clark Ross (later a famous Antarctic explorer) reached the North Magnetic Pole, and altogether Ross and his Victory expedition lost less and achieved more than most of the better-known expeditions that sailed in search of the Northwest

Passage. An engaging narrative for most any reader, Edinger's account will be especially gripping for maritime or Arctic exploration fans. One map. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Edinger chronicles a feat of polar exploration and survival to rank with Shackleton's storied Endurance expedition of 1914-16. In 1829, while under a professional cloud, Captain John Ross of the Royal Navy launched a privately financed expedition to discover the Northwest Passage. He took north the first steamship ever seen in the Arctic, the converted packet Victory, and ended up spending four winters there. Despite a useless engine, Ross' good crew, ample supplies, and the help of friendly Inuit, whose friendship Ross and crew quite remarkably returned, helped make the first three years relatively easy as well as productive; in fact, a foot party led by Ross' nephew, James Clark Ross, who developed into a notable polar explorer himself, even reached the North Magnetic Pole. The fourth year was a grim ordeal, but most of the party survived to return safely to England. Captain Ross emerges as an irresistibly likeable as well as gallant figure in these pages of a book that is definitely a labor of love. Roland GreenCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

John Ross could hardly have hoped for a finer biographer. The Old Salt is presented with fairness and clarity, warts and all. Not only is the 1829 - 1833 expedition presented in highly readable prose, but vital context is provided by references to other Arctic explorations. This exemplary work lost a star because: 1) The single map, although clear and helpful, is not adequate for readers seeking more detail. A larger-scale map focused on Prince Regent Inlet, Boothia Peninsula, and King William Island would have been much appreciated. 2) In an epilogue, the author discusses the unfortunate Franklin expedition of 1845. By asserting that Franklin's fate was unknown until 1858, Edinger slights the work of Dr. John Rae. Although McClintock returned to England in 1858 with written evidence of Franklin's death, four years earlier John Rae had obtained from Inuit (a) personal articles of Franklin and his crew, (b) multiple accounts of sailors fleeing their crushed ships and dying along the way, and details of where the crew had perished. Rae's findings clearly predated the reports of McClintock, and in 1855 Rae received the 10,000 pound Admiralty award for determining the fate of the Franklin expedition.

I found it very fascinating. Having read many other Arctic books, I remember the others as I read more. What caught my eye was Sir John Ross' description of how hard it was to dig into the ground,

even a shallow grave, in January. A two foot grave. Now, remembering how the three graves on Beechy Island contains Sir John Franklin's men. When Beattie exhumed the graves, it took a lot of work to dig down the six feet to the coffins. Now, two of those men died in January 1846 - but nowhere does it say when the graves were dug. Considering that Ross' men could only dig a two foot grave in January, how could Franklin's men dig a six foot grave in January in a place further north than Ross was? I would argue that the three graves on Beechy were dug after the third crewman died in April 1846.

I really enjoyed this book, hearing about the dynamics between the Ross family and Barrow was quite interesting. Being an avid reader of Arctic/Antarctic expeditions I was surprised to learn a few things through out this story. For instance, I had never considered that there might be a moisture problem aboard these ships and it was interesting to hear about how they dealt with it. Also, this winching process they used when stuck in the ice was news to me, I don't recall reading about others using this procedure. Very well written story, sort of makes you feel bad for Captain Ross and his lack of support through out his life despite his achievements. I particularly liked the epilogue which told of the future lives of the crew.

John Ross, who had earlier failed to find the Northwest passage and had created a mirage of 'Lancaster sound' in 1818 returned in 1828 to lead an expedition by steam to seek out the Northwest passage and map the arctic. He ended up stranded for almost four years. His men survived on meager rations while learning from the natives. A small party led by his Nephew James Ross also discovered the Magnetic North Pole. This is an amazing account of the ordeal of this harrowing journey into the arctic wasteland. Well written, its greatest downfall is that it includes only one map. This book will be enjoyed by anyone interested in the arctic, seafaring, adventure or survival stories. For further reading 'Barrows Boys' by Fleming, 'Into Thin Air', and 'Sea of Glory' by Philbrick will be of great interest.

Fury Beach by Ray Edinger combines thorough research with a rousing good story. The lengthy bibliography and index suggest the extensive research that went into producing this book. Well written, it is actually two stories for the price of one: a tale of an Arctic voyage of discovery and scientific research and the heart-warming story of the interaction of two cultures, an Inuit tribe and Englishmen, meeting for the first time and things actually go right. People treat each other with kindness and respect. Friendships result. I particularly liked the short snippets of biographies at the

close of the book that explained what happened to the participants after the adventure ended. There are many illustrations, all charming.

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