

BOOK REVIEW

***The Woman Who Mapped Labrador: the Life and Expedition Diary of Mina Hubbard.* Roberta Buchanan, Anne Hart, Bryan Greene, co-authors/editors. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005; maps and photographs; xxi + 440 pages; ISBN 0-7735-2924-1; \$49.95 (cloth).**

The Woman Who Mapped Labrador is about the rediscovery of a female explorer, the mapping of a geographically and politically marginal place, and the ways that ordinary people whose names are often lost to history do important things. While the book is a valuable addition to a variety of literatures, it is likely to be of more interest to specialists than to general readers.

The woman who mapped Labrador is Mina Hubbard, who undertook a mapping expedition in the Ungava Peninsula of Labrador in the summer of 1905. This book consists of a substantial introduction by Roberta Buchanan and Bryan Greene, a biography of Mina Hubbard by Anne Hart, and Hubbard's diaries of her expedition (edited by Buchanan, with annotations by Hart and Greene). The book includes 57 photographs, many by taken by Hubbard during her expedition, and 19 maps.

Mina Hubbard was motivated to undertake her exploration less by intellectual curiosity than by her devotion to her dead husband and her distrust of Dillon Wallace, his colleague in a failed 1903 expedition that left Mr. Hubbard dead of starvation and Mr. Wallace telling the tale. Mina Hubbard thus falls more into the tradition of Mrs. Robert Falcon Scott than that of Gertrude Bell. Like Mrs. Scott, Mina Hubbard married an explorer who died young as a result (at least in part) of his lack of competence; like Mrs. Scott, she was determined to make her dead husband into a hero. Unlike Mrs. Scott, however, Mina Hubbard decided to complete her husband's work and write her own stories, not just of her husband's expedition, but of the "unknown" landscapes he had sought to map.

Buchanan and Greene argue that Mina Hubbard's position as an outsider enabled her to be more successful at completing the Labrador expedition than her rival, Dillon Wallace, who repeated (and completed) his Labrador mapping expedition at the same time that she undertook her own expedition. Where Wallace chose educated white males as companions, Mina Hubbard hired Aboriginal men, some of whom knew the region (both the Hubbards and Wallace were "discovering" areas well known to original inhabitants for hundreds of years). The authors argue that Mina Hubbard's freedom from the constraints of colonial masculinity enabled her to travel more efficiently and make more meaningful observations than did members of the Dillon expedition. Yet her diaries show her as isolated in the midst of her traveling companions and also how gender conventions barred

her from important elements of the experience and made her dependent on her male employees. Similarly, Hart's biography shows Mina Hubbard as a woman only partially transformed by the 1905 expedition, wanting both the standard woman's life of wife and mother and the more exciting public life of the Lady Explorer. In the end, Hubbard is more a liminal figure than a full-fledged rebel - and thus a very real, flawed, and interesting woman.

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