

a touch of romanticism in Taylor's frequent references to punishment and floggings, although he rarely goes into any more detail than the particulars of punishments doled out, the number of lashes sentenced, and for which crime. This despite several of the sailors describing their feelings and impressions of flogging.

The final chapter itself appears more motivated by a sense of romanticism than a natural conclusion to the story. It focuses on the Preventative Squadron, which in the decades following the abolition of the slave trade (1807) and slavery itself within the British Empire (1833) worked to suppress the illegal trade in enslaved Africans. Unlike previous chapters, this one features none of the characters whose accounts formed the backbone of the book, and indeed, very little of it is based on primary research involving Jack Tars at all. Taylor correctly acknowledges that these men did not participate out of an anti-slavery ideology, and correctly describes the hardship and losses suffered by British sailors on anti-slavery missions—1,000 men died between 1825 and 1840. The Jack Tars' involvement in the evil of the slave trade, however, which flourished under the protection of the Royal Navy up until the end of the long eighteenth century, is not considered in great detail in the earlier chapters of the book. This disconnect makes the final chapter feel like a one-sided, romantic analysis unsupported by primary statements from the Jack Tars themselves, and thus, runs contrary to the stated aim of the book.

The curious last chapter aside, Taylor's work is illuminating and innovative. It tells the oft-neglected stories of common sailors in the British world during the long eighteenth century. It demonstrates the potential of serious historical research relying on the words of ordinary seamen instead of their officers, and it highlights the ways in which

these sailors' accounts can contribute to traditional naval history. This book is a must-have addition to any collection on the Age of Sail.

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Christopher Wright. *Of Penguins and Polar Bears. A History of Cold Water Cruising*. Glos, UK: The History Press, [www.thehistorypress.co.uk](http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk), 2020. 224 pp., illustrations, tables, appendices, notes, bibliography, indices. UK £20.00, CDN \$46.95, paper: ISBN 978-0-7509-9057-8.

Prior to the (hopefully) temporary shutdown of cruises to the polar regions due to the COVID 19 pandemic, expedition cruises to the Arctic and Antarctica have been one of the fastest growing sectors in the global cruise industry. Little known is the fact that cruises to the icy fringes of the globe started a relatively short time after the exploration of these regions and shipboard tourists have been travelling to these regions for more than a century. Until recently, historians of Arctic and Antarctic exploration have more or less completely neglected the subject of polar tourism, making Christopher Wright's book a welcome addition to the existing literature. Although the book is not the ultimate scholarly analysis of cold water cruising that the academic reader might hope for, it is nonetheless a well written introduction to Arctic and Antarctic cruising and its history. It will appeal to the armchair traveler as well as future visitors to the polar regions. In addition, it is a useful compendium providing detailed descriptions of ships, operators and destinations.

The actual historical narrative of cold water cruising only constitutes about one quarter of the book and is largely descriptive, containing little

beyond what is already known to most specialized polar historians. The subsequent descriptions of today's cruising fleet and operators along with destinations comprise the largest section of the book and, while by no means analytical, they provide a good overview that might even come in handy as a compendium for everybody involved in the industry. A quick discussion of cruise ship incidents in the polar regions basically illustrates that Arctic and Antarctic cruising has been very safe, especially considering the extreme hostile waters these ships are sailing. On the other hand, a more nuanced and detailed discussion of the development of standards as well as a discussion of the more numerous small incidents, would have helped to provide a better picture of the overall development of the industry and what distinguishes it from cruising in other parts of the globe. One of the strongest sections of the book is the short, but very comprehensive, discussion of the regulatory system of polar cruises. This helps explain the complex system of international and national law, but also industry regulations and standards governing every operation of a cruise ship in the polar regions. The book's six appendices, covering lists of ships employed in the polar cruise industry, passenger numbers at major destinations, ships that have carried tourists to the North Pole, ships that navigated the Northwest Passage, the cost of polar cruises over time and known cruise ship incidents in polar waters might not be the most readable section of the book, but without any doubt they are among the most useful sections for the professional historian, strengthening the character of the book as a compendium.

One of the few topics that many readers might miss is a discussion of the people involved in the industry, whether as crewmembers or passengers, since

polar cruises have always attracted people very different from those found aboard other cruise ships. In particular, the author could have mentioned the development of educational/academic programs aboard these ships, since they are probably the single most important difference between polar cruises and others. For decades, it was the industry-standard to hire the most renowned Arctic/Antarctic academic specialists to inform and educate their passengers. Today, many of these subject experts have been replaced by activity experts, like mountaineering guides. This means that the once-exclusive character of polar cruise ships as floating quasi-academic adult education centres is being gradually transformed into sports and activity hubs catering to a public that aims to complete a bucket-list of accomplishing a particular activity on all continents. Wright's clear aim of writing a history rather than the entire history of cold water cruising means that there are several topics not covered. Rather than being a serious criticism of the book, the previous comment refers to what is left for the consideration of future writers on the subject.

For the armchair traveler who has never had the opportunity to visit the polar regions, the more than one hundred illustrations and photographs are probably one of the most attractive features of the book. They provide a real preview of what might be encountered and experienced when traveling to these most extreme regions of the continent. For readers who have been lucky enough to have had this opportunity, the illustrations will bring back fond memories of a trip that might have been the trip of a lifetime. As a professional researcher who has traveled these waters on a regular base, I find the photos sometimes look as if they have been taken directly from a glossy

marketing brochure. While this is not a major flaw, some of the captions are incorrect. Even as a historian who travels these waters on a regular base, I can easily recognize various species of seals or penguins that are wrongly identified.

This book can easily be commended to every potential cruise-traveler to the polar regions. It would be ideal reading while saving up for one of the most expensive (and exclusive) cruises on the globe. For the maritime or tourism historian, it can also be recommended as an overview and compendium of the historical development and current state of a niche industry within the wider cruise and tourism sector with a very different history from traditional cruise travel. I would also recommend it to anyone working on board today's polar region cruise ships. It will provide them with a quick insight to their industry and how it has developed over time, as well as useful details about that industry. The few historians who specialize in polar regions research and know the cold-water cruising industry on an intimate basis, might quibble over the superficial level of analysis in a purely descriptive history. But even for this small and highly specialized group, it will be a welcome quick reference. It would certainly serve as a quick pre-read for someone landing on an icy shore prior to a lecture on the history of polar cruising. This particular reviewer found Wright's book a welcome read during the first season in over a decade when I was prevented from traveling to Antarctica due to COVID 19. It will remain a helpful compendium whenever travelling to the Arctic and Antarctica resumes and I need to look up some details on a ship, an operator or a destination.

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