

GRANT, Shelagh D., 2002, *Arctic justice: On trial for murder, Pond Inlet, 1923*, Montréal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 342 pages, maps, photographs.

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2002 *Arctic justice: On trial for murder, Pond Inlet, 1923*, Montréal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 342 pages, maps, photographs.

Shelagh Grant's meticulous examination of the "murder" of Newfoundland trader, Robert Janes by an Inuk called Nuqallaq, on 15 March 1920, offers the reader a story in riveting detail — the result of careful archival research combined with Inuit recollections and opinions of the murder and its aftermath. This is a text well endowed with many photographs. Like any play, paraded in front of critics, and even befuddled viewers, Grant's text leaves us holding the possibility of multiple scripts.

Janes was a nasty guy. Or was he merely a man made nasty by choices with consequences beyond his comprehension, among people he didn't — or didn't care to — understand, inside a moment of history, following an awfully bloody war, where any possibility of escape (especially the discovery of a pot of gold) would be prized? And failure to take the prize would be a worm, eating its way into a personal history, rotting reason and relations with others in the process. Janes deserves a biography in his own right.

Grant gives us the classic "flashback" to get started. We have a popular and graphic glimpse of the murder in all its grisly detail. This scene on the ice of Prince Regent Inlet, just off Cape Crauford (also spelt "Crawford" in the text), on the northern tip of Baffin Island, introduces the reader to characters, circumstances and conditions embodied in Janes' corpse.

Or was it murder? Janes first went north with Joseph Bernier aboard the *CGS Arctic* in 1910. This, and a previous trip Bernier made in 1906, had the "expressed purpose of affirming sovereignty over the Arctic Archipelago" (p. 31). Like so many telltale personal tragedies in Canadian history, this one has men moiling for gold, coal, furs and anything else of value, in a corner of the continent previously exploited only by American and Scottish whalers. Even the affable Arctic pilot, Joseph Bernier, gets caught up in these exploits, with the purchase of land around the Igarjuaq whaling station in Eclipse Sound, and visions of a thriving fur trade. By 1916, Janes had returned to the Pond Inlet area from Newfoundland and joined a nondescript number of rogues looking for gold nuggets, spurred on by spurious stories originating with

Scottish whalers. Not unlike many northern traders, Janes soon took on a "country wife," an Inuk woman (Kalluk) who lived with both Janes and her husband.

Grant does a credible job serving the reader intricacies that may have contributed to Janes' death: jealousies involving Kalluk, Janes' failure as a trader, his debt, failure to depart for the south when given the opportunity in the summer of 1919, and his unsuccessful attempt to leave the Arctic by making an incredible trip south through Admiralty Inlet to Igloodik and eventually Fort Churchill. Ultimately, we are left with the picture of a belligerent and temperamental man using threats of physical violence to express himself; behaviour, that ultimately leads to Janes' demise.

Grant is entirely sympathetic with those Inuit camped on the sea ice the night of 15 March 1920, principle among them being Nuqallaq. She raises the issue of whether or not an act, decided by the Inuit community camped on the ice and who decided to dispatch Janes for the sake of their own safety and survival — in accord with Inuit practice under such circumstances — constitutes murder. The question arises from a detailed recount of the trial, including the reproduction of transcripts and interviews with Inuit recalling the event and stories surrounding it. These are note-worthy compliments to the text. For anyone watching the play in international courts, Grant's scholarship reminds us of contemporary problems with the cross-cultural administration of justice in a globalized world.

Grant has done a fine job of cutting a line between a popular (and readable) text, and a scholarly work. The chapters setting up the context, explaining why the trial took place aboard the *CGS Arctic*, three years later, and the conclusion that finds Nuqallaq and his accomplice, Ululijarnaat, guilty of manslaughter, serve their purpose well. Nuqallaq winds up in Stony Mountain Penitentiary where he reportedly contracts tuberculosis, while Ululijarnaat serves out his lighter sentence in and around the RCMP post at Pond Inlet.

The script comes apart somewhat, as Grant ventures into territory that ties the murder and trial to other events and the ongoing history of the region. Nuqallaq is returned to Eclipse Sound (3 September 1925), before completing his sentence. He dies, likely of complications related to tuberculosis, on 5 December of the same year. Grant describes various illnesses occurring among Inuit on northern Baffin Island following Nuqallaq's return, suggesting that; "Nuqallaq had infected those Inuit who had gathered at Pond Inlet to meet the *CGS Arctic*" (p. 211). This leads to suggestions that Qallunaat officials "conspired" to infect the Inuit population by remaining silent about his condition when he arrived, and by allowing him "to return home to live in the close confines of damp tents and igloos" (p. 212). Grant is also condemning of the failure to provide medical attention to Inuit once police on northern Baffin Island had identified an outbreak of disease. She discusses the work of Livingstone and Stuart, physicians based in Pangnirtung and serving the entire population of Baffin Island. She notes their failure to recognize or deal with "the spread of tuberculosis."

However, there are reasons to be sceptical of this interpretation of the record. Grant suggests that officials erred in permitting Nuqallaq's return. While one can agree

that sending him south in the first place was cruel and unjust punishment, it can easily be argued that preventing him from returning north to serve out his sentence would have been equally cruel. In fact, elsewhere in the text Grant has noted that at the time he was sent back, officials believed his tuberculosis was in remission. Consistent with the "best practices" of the day, they reasoned that clean fresh air and Arctic sunshine would be the best cure. It is likely that Nuqallaq was relegated to sleeping on the deck of the *CGS Arctic* precisely because conditions below deck were damp and mouldy (even more so than the shelter afforded on deck) and not likely to contribute positively to his health. The same could be said of any accommodation (other than traditional tents and igloos) that might have been provided in Pond Inlet. Finally, the fact that Inuit at the trial did not test positive for tuberculosis and that Dr. Leslie Livingstone did not report finding the disease on his trip to the region in 1925, is not evidence that there was no TB in the region prior to Nuqallaq's return. The record suggests that TB was widespread among Inuit well before Nuqallaq's return, with origins related to the presence of whalers in the eastern Arctic as far back as the 1850s². Nuqallaq's return did not likely usher in anything unusual by way of the ongoing and recurring epidemics of disease that had affected Inuit for decades. The medical profession and public officials had only started to pay any significant attention to TB in southern Canada following the First World War, and their failure to address the problem among Inuit doesn't necessarily suggest that Inuit were being meted out a special and perverse level of neglect.

As the diaries of Dr. Jan Bildfell, writing from Pangnirtung in the early 1930s reveal, Inuit at the time had little use for western medicine, doubted its effectiveness, and still relied on shamans and traditional healers. Others contradicted Bildfell's observations on how widespread the disease was. In the late 1930s, Dr. Thomas Orford (1938: 6) reported from Pangnirtung that while the disease was widespread, most cases appeared to be arrested or in a quiescent stage. These contradictory reports appeared throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and it is perhaps no surprise that public officials decided to take seriously, the least demanding accounts. In southern Canada, epidemics of chickenpox, measles and whooping cough killed thousands of people — especially children — in the twenty-year period following WWI. The medical profession was relatively impotent at addressing the problem in the south, and other than isolation — something virtually impossible to achieve without the most draconian of measures — prior to the introduction of vaccines, there is not likely much of any significance that could have been done to arrest these epidemics in the eastern Arctic.

Grant also deals with the practices of the Hudson's Bay Company at the time and does a quick turn around the 1930 Supreme Court decision dealing with Inuit status. The chapter "Arctic Justice Revisited" revisits much of what has previously been said, and the Epilogue takes us to children being removed from residential schools, and the death of an RCMP constable in Cape Dorset in 2001. Their connection to Janes' murder is opaque.

² See Marc Stevenson (1997) who takes note of observations by Mathias Warmow, a Moravian missionary in 1857 that suggest the presence of tuberculosis among Inuit in Cumberland Sound (p. 76). It is highly unlikely that populations on northern Baffin Island escaped transmission of this and other diseases by whalers.

Mixed in with this material are pieces interesting to the case. However, some material found in the last chapter and epilogue is tangential, speculative, and cannot be dealt with in enough detail to do it justice. It subsequently detracts from the focus. At the same time, it suggests a myriad of possibilities for the next offering from a Canadian historian whose pursuit of the historical record is, otherwise, tenacious. The result is a worthy addition to the shelves of those of us still looking for new ways to read Arctic history.

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HAMELIN, Louis-Edmond
2002 *Le Québec par des mots. L'hiver et le Nord*, avec la participation de Marie-
Claude Lavallée, projet supervisé par Hélène Cajolet-Laganière et Pierre
Martel, Sherbrooke, Fondation de l'Université de Sherbrooke, vi + 723
pages, notes, bibliographie, annexes.

Cet ouvrage est le deuxième d'une série de trois consacrés au vocabulaire de langue française propre à certaines réalités québécoises. Le premier portait sur *Le Rang des campagnes* et le troisième sera consacré aux Laurentides. Même si le format général du volume l'apparente à un dictionnaire (mots et expressions classés par ordre alphabétique), il s'agit plutôt d'un "répertoire de fiches lexicologiques [qui] rassemble plus de mille quatre cents mots ou sens relevés et décrits" (p. i). Chaque inscription comprend une définition du mot ou de l'expression en rubrique, accompagnée, en autant que possible, d'une ou deux citations — tirées de livres, de rapports de recherche ou d'articles de périodiques — venant appuyer son usage, et/ou de références bibliographiques portant sur le terme en question. L'inscription comprend également des remarques lexicologiques, géographiques ou autres venant expliciter le mot ou l'expression définis et, le cas échéant, une courte liste de variantes et de renvois à d'autres inscriptions.

Le répertoire lui-même est précédé d'une "Présentation générale" d'une quarantaine de pages dans laquelle l'auteur discute surtout de néologie, en donnant la