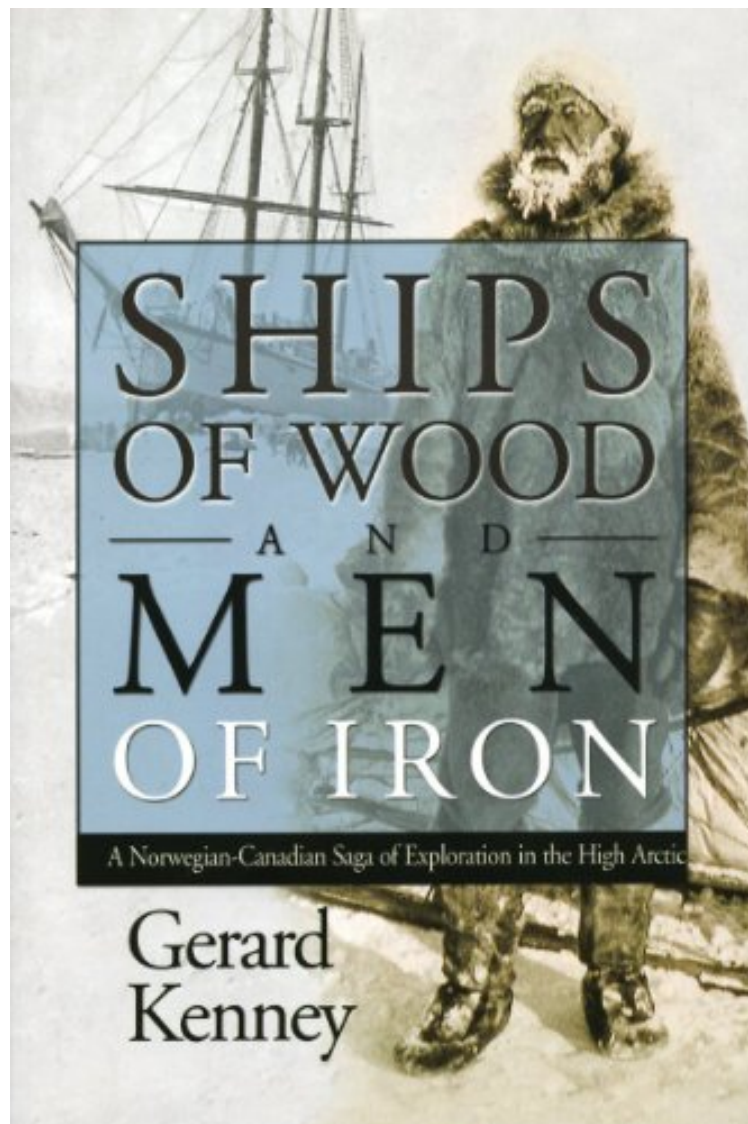


(Library ebook) Ships of Wood and Men of Iron: A Norewegian-Canadian Saga of Exploration in the High Arctic

## **Ships of Wood and Men of Iron: A Norewegian-Canadian Saga of Exploration in the High Arctic**

*Gerard Kenney*

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**Gerard Kenney : Ships of Wood and Men of Iron: A Norewegian-Canadian Saga of Exploration in the High Arctic** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ships of Wood and Men of Iron: A Norewegian-Canadian Saga of Exploration in the High Arctic:

In the barren lands of Canada far north of the Arctic circle, summers are quick and cool, mere short interruptions in the true business of the polar regions, winter. Winters there can be dangerous with temperatures that plunge to awesome depths during the long, lonely hours of Arctic darkness. Powerful blizzards shriek across the land for days at a time, causing all animal life to seek shelter from the cutting blast, essentially putting a temporary end to normal activities of life, such as travelling and eating. It is an unforgiving land that does not easily suffer fools. Over 100 years ago, in June 1898, Captain Otto Sverdrup and 15 crewmen put out to sea aboard the schooner Fram from the Norwegian city today known as Oslo. When they returned to Norway four years later, they came back with a record of geographic and scientific discovery, the richness of which is unparalleled in the annals of Arctic exploration. The first section of this book is the story of those four heroic years spent in the High Arctic and their impact on Canada's subsequent efforts to ensure Canadian sovereignty in the area of the Norwegian discoveries. The second section of the book deals with the Canadian Arctic expeditions between 1903 and 1948, led by intrepid men such as A.P. Low, Joseph E. Bernier, Vilhjalmur Stefansson and Henry Larsen. "For anyone interested in the recent history of the Canadian North and why we even call it the Canadian North Ships of Wood and Men of Iron is a must read. Kenney persuasively nominates a shortlist of new national heroes for a country badly in need of them." - Randy Boswell, CanWest News Service "In my view, this book will be an important document about Canada-Norway relations in the North, especially considering the increased international emphasis now on circumpolar relations in the North." - Shirley Wolff Serafini, Canadian Ambassador to Norway "This book is a well deserved recognition of one of Norway's most famous polar explorers and his invaluable contributions to the exploration and development of science in the Canadian Arctic. Gerard Kenney's book also sheds an interesting new light on the history of the final settlement of Norway's territorial claim of the Sverdrup Islands." - Ingvard Havnen, former Norwegian Ambassador to Canada

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From the Inside Flap

A history of explorations of the Arctic in Canada, beginning with Otto Sverdrup's 1898-1902 Norwegian expedition. About the Author Gerard Kenney, his friends call him Gerry, was born in St. Remi d'Amherst not far from Mont Tremblant, Quebec, in 1931. Though a Canadian, he spent the first sixteen years of his life in New York City except for the months of July and August, which he enjoyed in the small French-Canadian village of his birth. In 1948, he returned to his native Canada and has lived there ever since. Gerry's work as a telecommunications engineer has taken him to many countries of the world as well as to the northern reaches of his native land. Working for Bell Canada in the 1960s and '70s, Gerry was responsible for the engineering aspects of the telephone system based on short wave radio that served the eastern half of the Northwest Territories, Labrador and Nouveau Quebec. In the late '60s, while he was travelling on Ellesmere Island, an RCMP officer in Grise Fiord showed him the horizontal member of a wooden burial cross which had been found nearby. It was in memory of a Norwegian sailor, Ove Braskerud, who had left his bones in the frigid waters of nearby Harbour Fiord in 1899. Braskerud had been a member of the 1898-1902 Sverdrup expedition aboard the Norwegian ship Fram which discovered and explored high Arctic islands lying north of the Canadian mainland. That chance encounter with Braskerud's cross eventually led to his books. Gerry has published three books about the Arctic: Arctic Smoke Mirrors, published in 1994, Ships of Wood and Men of Iron (Natural Heritage, 2005) and Dangerous Passage (Natural Heritage, 2006). Gerry is now retired, which gives him more time to pursue his interest in writing about, and exploring, things northern. In 1999, he and a friend canoed a part of the path of the fatal 1903 Hubbard and Wallace expedition in Labrador. Gerry lives in Ottawa and has two daughters, Amanda

in Montreal and Jessica, accompanied by young Cara, in Ottawa.