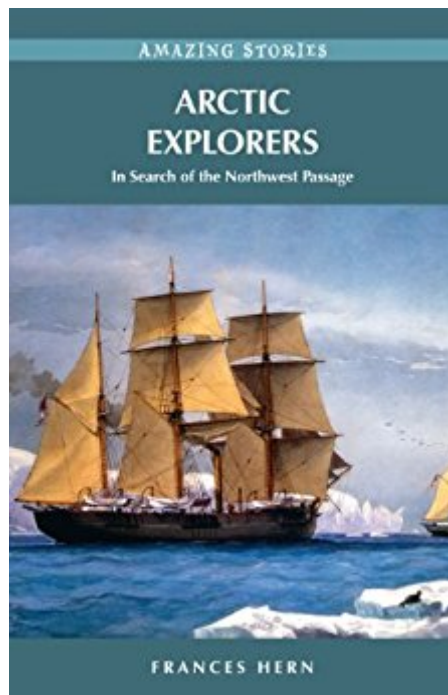




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There is no saga in Canadian history as full of hardship, catastrophe and mystery as the search for the Northwest Passage. Since the 15th century, the ice-choked Arctic waterway has been sought and travelled by daring men seeking profit, glory or a chance to test themselves against the merciless North. Frances Hern takes us aboard ships with the explorers whose names are memorialized on modern maps of northern Canada: Martin Frobisher, daring privateer in the service of Elizabeth I; Henry Hudson, a navigator who may have driven his crew to mutiny; John Franklin, whose last voyage became an enduring northern mystery; the talented Orkneyman John Rae, a surgeon and surveyor on the trail of Franklin. Also vividly recounted are the gruelling overland treks of Samuel Hearne; the heroic exploits of Roald Amundsen, leader of the first expedition to traverse the passage; and the incredible voyages of Henry Larsen, captain of the RCMP vessel St. Roch.

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