

## The News at the Ends of the Earth

*Polar Periodicals*

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A newspaper . . . always represents an association, the members of which are its regular readers. That association can be more or less well-defined, more or less restricted, and more or less numerous, but the seed of it, at least, must exist in people's minds, as evidenced by nothing more than the fact that the newspaper does not die.

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol. 2, Part II, Chapter 6

The mutually constitutive relationship between an association and its newspaper, as Tocqueville describes it in *Democracy in America*,<sup>1</sup> takes many forms throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, perhaps most influentially in the imagined community of the nation theorized by Benedict Anderson. Tocqueville's claims are derived from the smaller, voluntary associations he observed in the U.S. in the 1830s, what Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, identified in the previous century as forms of "private society,"<sup>2</sup> an oxymoron whose axes of meaning have subsequently converged. The elements Anderson stipulates as essential to the literary genre of the national newspaper are also found in smaller collectives on a local or private scale—for instance, the assembly of seemingly unrelated parts into a fictive whole conjoined only by their "calendrical coincidence," their temporal or spatial proximity.<sup>3</sup> For Anderson the newspaper and the book are necessarily "mass-produced industrial commodit[ies]" that can reach a large and dispersed population seemingly simultaneously; he finds "community

in anonymity.”<sup>4</sup> Shaftesbury’s coterie, on the other hand, along with Tocqueville’s voluntary associations, are characterized instead by their intimacy, their ephemerality, rather than by their vast scale or their facelessness.<sup>5</sup> To what extent, then, can the national and the anonymous attributes of the newspaper themselves be imagined, even when the circulation of the newspaper is restricted? I am interested, in other words, in how the genre of the newspaper is itself imagined by communities.

This essay emerges from a place of paradox within these discourses of newspaper, print culture, community, and nation by studying tiny bodies of shared interest that in and of themselves constitute the mass totality of a culture. I take as my subject polar periodicals: the perhaps surprising fact of the existence of newspaper production and circulation in the Arctic by Anglo-American polar expedition members, who collectively wrote, published, read, and critically reacted to a series of gazettes and newspapers produced in extremity and directed at a restricted readership of fellow crew members. But rather than the coterie or associations mentioned above, which were contained within a broader world of sociability and print, the polar literary communities were completely isolated from any possibility of communication with other polities or individuals—even as their missions represented a nation’s interest. The newspapers that Arctic expeditions produced, then, were at once mass-market commodities and privately circulated bits of ephemera. Rather than focusing on the attributes of the genre alone, I am interested in exploring a literary collective that occupies the medium itself, that takes a form of print culture associated with the nation, and locates it in a different world.

In what follows, I delineate a literary exchange whose circuits are both familiar and outlandish: the transmission of literary periodicals written and, perhaps surprisingly, *published* (largely on table-top presses) within a few degrees of the poles by expedition members for their private consumption. The newspapers were part of a full literary and artistic life aboard polar ships during the sunless winter months, in which ice-immobilized ships formed the stage for plays, literary readings, “pops” (light classical music), and lecture series. But while the journals and other voyage narratives written by expedition members were published upon their return home—and, in the case of British ventures, only after the Admiralty had approved their contents—shipboard

newspapers were printed and circulated for intended consumption by the polar community aboard individual ships alone. This bifurcated model of literary exchange, at once the most quotidian in the world and the most eccentric, emerges from the dynamic of limit-excess that has been brought to bear on the polar regions, in the sense that their blankness and barrenness both exceed the kinds of traffic we think of as part of global or intranational exchange, and also stand as its limit.<sup>6</sup>

More particularly, as I detail in the second half of this essay, the existence and function of polar newspapers raises questions about the nature of collectivity in closed, isolated, literary communities representing national interests—however remote from the polity. In the first North American Arctic newspaper, the *North Georgia Gazette, and Winter Chronicle* (1819–20) of William Edward Parry’s first Arctic expedition, the question of community was quite explicitly debated within the paper itself, as contributors arranged themselves rhetorically against the “N.C.s” or “non-contributors” to the paper.<sup>7</sup> But as we will see, the register in which the expedition’s officers (who constituted the paper’s stringers) understood their playful attacks on journalistic non-contribution had no resonance when replayed within national borders. Articles that suggested that the mission’s collectivity was fragile or threatened, however humorous, were suppressed upon the voyage’s return to Britain. The economies of literary circulation—of the barely public sphere of the polar mission—constitute this essay’s focus. Aboard the *Hecla* and the *Griper*, Parry’s ships, this literary economy was defined by the officer corps, by and for whom the paper was created. And yet the terms of their literary output did not compute among the “men” or non-officers of the mission (who outnumbered officers by four to one). Nor, as I will discuss below, were those terms trusted to signify in the non-polar Anglo-American literary world.

The geophysical and imaginative remoteness of the North and South Poles has drawn interest in the regions from the perspective of science, exploration, and poetic and artistic imagination. The poles have captivated popular attention in Europe and the U.S. ever since the earliest attempts to find a Northwest Passage, and the voyages south that followed in the wake of James Cook’s circumnavigation of Antarctica. Science has been a primary organizing force for polar exploration during the past 250 years, even as scientific expeditions were organized by

states who took a nationalist interest in the results. Unfolding on an oceanic surface of different states of matter, from liquid to solid, polar missions were staffed by scientists and a somewhat more elite class of sailors than the usual maritime crews, given the international visibility and promotion of the expeditions. After sailing as far north or south as possible during the brief polar summers, expeditions would plan to “winter over” in a harbor with relatively stable ice, ships encased by the frozen ocean and yet still jostled by shifting bergs. The men lived aboard ship during the dark winter months and prepared for overland/ice sledging operations (either dog-, pony-, or man-hauled) in early spring, for the purposes of hydrography, scientific experimentation, or a sprint to the poles. Most expeditions launched with great fanfare, and the published voyage narratives they later generated in turn enjoyed wide circulation among a general readership, and continue to fuel public interest in bestselling popular histories today.<sup>8</sup>

Yet while the familiar narratives of adventurous voyage (and their fictional counterparts<sup>9</sup>) have been the most visible forms of literary production generated by Arctic and Antarctic exploration, the existence of printing and other forms of publishing in the polar regions themselves has been largely unremarked upon.<sup>10</sup> After 1850 many expeditions brought a nonstandard piece of nautical equipment aboard ship: a printing press. With such presses, polar-voyaging sailors wrote and printed newspapers, broadsides, plays, and other reading matter beyond the Arctic and Antarctic Circles. These publications were produced almost exclusively for a reading audience comprised of the mission’s crew members. Their status as private, coterie literature has remained fixed in literary history; in the popular histories of Arctic and Antarctic exploration the existence of polar printing and expedition newspapers warrants barely a line or two of recognition. And yet shipboard newspapers, written and circulated among expedition members, provide an alternative account of the experiential conditions of polar exploration. Furthermore, as I argue, they also constitute an important economy in themselves: they became an alternative medium through which expedition members established terms of shared value, community, and association. While polar print culture shares many characteristics with other coterie publishing circles, whether in the eighteenth century or those identified with the elite private presses and salons of the modern

era, I am interested in the collective, confined literary culture of late-nineteenth-century working men at the scene of their labor. And not just their labor: they are in a totalizing environment, one in which polar conditions determine work and leisure, interior and exterior, alike. Like all sailors, polar crew members were always on their job site; their leisure time was neither spatially separate nor guaranteed.<sup>11</sup> This economy of shipboard literary production is consistent with other economies—at once fiscal, manufacturing, and cultural. And also like other economies, as we will see in what follows, not every partner in the exchange contributed equally. The Arctic and Antarctic regions have long presented imaginative and strategic impediments to stable possession, given the geophysical challenges of sustaining human life. But when faced with the natural antagonism of the extremity of polar conditions, nineteenth-century expedition members did not draw blanks; they printed gazettes.

### Extreme Printing

The existence of shipboard literary culture was not in and of itself unusual over the course of the nineteenth century. Many long-voyaging ships were provided with libraries; sailors read histories, novels, and periodicals, intensively reading (and sharing among themselves) the small stock of reading material at hand. And polar voyages, which could plan on enforced periods of relative inactivity during the winter, had larger libraries than most ships; Sir John Franklin's *Erebus* and *Terror* ships had 3,000 volumes between them (a copy of *The Vicar of Wakefield* was found among the few artifacts recovered from the lost ships). Some sailors kept personal journals, while officers contributed to shipboard textual production in the form of logbooks, ship accounts, progress diaries, or—on more official, grander expeditions—narratives of their voyages and discoveries, which often became strong sellers. This was enabled in part by the unusual rates of literacy among seamen, estimated at 75–90% by the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup> As a laboring class their literacy was encouraged by onboard schools (focused on mathematics and navigation as well as letters, all necessary for nautical advancement) and a maritime culture in which leisure time was often spent in storytelling or in theatricals, a particular mainstay of British naval practice adopted at times aboard U.S. ships.

Newspapers, however, were much rarer among the literary circles of mariners. While Jason Rudy's work on the shipboard poetical practices of Victorian passengers aboard ships bound for Australia and South Africa has revealed a practice of periodical production by which men and women entertained themselves on long passages, relatively few newspapers were produced by sailors, for sailors, on open-water journeys.<sup>13</sup> On polar expeditions, however, shipboard newspapers became a frequent activity—even an expectation—during the several months of polar darkness in which expeditions wintered over, their ships bound by ice and their crews relatively stilled (and looking for ways to mark the time, as David and Deirdre Stam have argued<sup>14</sup>). In proportion to non-polar nautical missions, the percentage of newspapers aboard polar-voyaging expeditions in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was exceptionally high. The first polar newspaper, which will be the subject of much of this essay's discussion, was the *North* [originally *New*] *Georgia Gazette, and Winter Chronicle* (1819–20), a manuscript newspaper produced by the officers of William Edward Parry's British Northwest Passage Expedition.

Beginning in 1850, however, most polar newspapers were actually printed on presses whose initial presence on the ships' catalogue of supplies was not intended for literary recreational use. The first printing presses in the Arctic had been brought to assist in the broad dispersal of messages via balloons as an ultimately futile tool in the search for the missing Northwest Passage explorer Sir John Franklin. The red-silk-printed balloon messages were printed by the thousand and distributed across the ice in eight-foot fire balloons, in vain (fig. 1). But once tabletop printing presses found their way aboard ship, expedition members found ways to adapt the press to their literary and theatrical ends. When winter storms made fire-balloon messaging impractical, the presses were recruited into more creative outfits, however ephemeral. In addition to newspapers such presses printed broadsides and playbills for shipboard theatricals (fig. 2), menus for holiday dinners, captains' orders, and songs and occasional poems composed by mission members. Sailors even carved their own large-font type in some instances. In all cases these imprints have been treated as ephemera both by expedition sponsors and members, and by print cultural history. They constitute a small and dispersed archive (Elaine Hoag estimates the number

of imprints produced in the Arctic at around one hundred; she doesn't treat Antarctica),<sup>15</sup> found in the miscellaneous folders, perhaps, of those expedition members whose papers have been collected, those who kept samples of polar printing as souvenirs.

The literary periodicals generated near the poles include the *Illustrated Arctic News* (fig. 3) and the *Aurora Borealis*, newspapers printed in the Arctic by two sister ships engaged in the search for the lost Franklin expedition (1850–51); the *Port Foulke Weekly News* (fig. 4), written aboard Isaac Israel Hayes's Arctic voyage in the *United States*;<sup>16</sup> the *Arctic Moon*, a newspaper written by members of the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition (1881–82); the *Midnight Sun*, a single issue produced by the Baldwin-Ziegler Polar Expedition (1901); the *Arctic Eagle*, a gazette printed by the men on the Ziegler Polar Expedition (1903–5); the *South Polar Times*, a lavish, extensive magazine published by Scott's National Antarctic Expedition (1902–3) (that same mission had an offshoot, comic newspaper, *The Blizzard*, for pieces deemed unsuitable for *South Polar Times* inclusion); and the first book published in Antarctica, *Aurora Australis* (fig. 5). This last consists of 120 pages of mixed-genre material written by members of Shackleton's 1907–9 British Expedition, who bound copies with whatever materials were at hand, from orange crates to horse halters to boxes that once contained stewed kidneys. Newspapers were not confined to Anglo-American ventures; Norwegian Fridtjof Nansen's *Fram* expedition (1893–96) produced the manuscript newspaper *Framsjaa*, and the German Arctic Expedition led by Carl Koldewey aboard the *Hansa* (1869–70) published the *Ostgrönlandische zeitung*. Polar gazettes were generally comical, focused primarily on interpersonal affairs and cool wit rather than on the sober proceedings of the expedition proper.

Of all the ways that a polar expedition might find to pass the tedium of long, dark winters trapped in or on ice, why would crew members feel an imperative not just to write stories, poems, or travelogues, but to publish or print them? And in doing so, in what manner did they inhabit and reflect upon the genre of their literary production? I am interested in what this drive toward what we might call "extreme printing" tells us about the state of print culture and coterie publication in the nineteenth-century Anglo-American world.<sup>17</sup> The nearly simultaneous and necessarily limited production and consumption of these

texts by polar voyagers represent an unusual print circuit—intensified but not exceptional—that emerges from the intersection of the scientific and nationalist aims of expeditions, the manual labor performed by polar voyagers, and the developing technologies of print and literary culture.

The travel accounts that were written for an interested domestic readership—that is, those in the genre of the book-length narrative of voyages and travels—had a very different orientation than the ephemera produced by the expedition members for their private consumption. Indeed, when several of the polar periodicals were later reprinted for select non-expedition members, they expurgated materials from the originals. We might think of polar periodicals as farcical locked-room mysteries, whose narrative of a given expedition is perfectly contained, yet inaccessible to the wider world. And like locked-room mysteries, polar periodicals are rigged—the key is linked to the broader readerly economy of the ship, in its situational jokes, its cant, and its circuit of referentiality. While polar expeditions might have had nationalist aims, the gazettes produced on such missions kept their focus on the local and intimate, unlike the newspapers that Benedict Anderson has argued are coextensive with nationalist projects.<sup>18</sup> Yet like the periodicals of Anderson’s focus, polar gazettes sought to realize their function in creating community (not always successfully, as we will see).<sup>19</sup> The difference lies in scale and spatiotemporality: Anderson presumes the simultaneity of newspaper reading among far-flung individuals,<sup>20</sup> although Trish Loughran has recently made a persuasive argument that in the early U.S. such presumptions are not historically accurate. Rather than a networked national print culture, Loughran describes localized, fragmented communities of print that are more akin to what we see aboard polar ships; as she writes, “if the newspaper denies, in its casual columnar form, the scatteredness of the spaces from which it collects its information, it nevertheless bears . . . the telltale traces of that scatteredness.”<sup>21</sup> That is, if for Anderson newspapers allowed a broadly dispersed population a sense of belonging to the imagined community of the nation, then the polar newspapers, in an alternative move, enabled a close-knit local community—one flung far from the geophysical place of the nation—to establish an imagined community apart from it. Contrary to the “silent privacy” of newspaper reading “in the lair of the



skull” that Anderson describes, polar newspapers were read aloud and in common to the collective.<sup>22</sup> The polar community both constitutes and is constituted by the newspaper’s production.

Polar voyages were confined within both the ship and the ice that made transit impossible for much of a given year. As such, we can observe a tension between the global ambitions of such voyages and the remarkably circumscribed conditions of their practice. At a terrific remove from the usual spheres of literary circulation, communities of expedition members produced new works for exchange, debate, and provocation. Polar printing emerged from the intersection of the scientific and nationalist aims of expeditions, their need to sustain morale, the manual labor performed by polar voyagers, and the developing technologies of print and literary culture. The remarkable fact of these printed works reveals, for one, the sustaining power of collective reading practices to generate forms of communal sociability, understanding, and sustenance. The employment of polar publishing, furthermore, highlights in suggestive ways the classes of people who—apart from those credited as professional authors—were writing creatively and forming coteries through the medium of the newspaper.

Expedition members, I maintain, were quite aware of these questions in crafting their papers. We see this, for example, in the *Aurora Borealis*, an Arctic newspaper from 1851<sup>23</sup> (the rival to the *Illustrated Arctic News*, both of Horatio Austin’s Franklin search mission). In an article entitled “The Rise and Progress of Printing in the Arctic Searching Expeditions”—itself, I will note, only the second instance of printing in the Arctic, so quickly does it rise and progress—the *Aurora’s* editor writes that in the Arctic “we find, in a manner little to have been expecting, printing forwarding, even here, the great cause of humanity.”<sup>24</sup> The invocation of the “great cause of humanity” is mock-grandiose, certainly, but elsewhere in writing about the *Aurora* an officer of the expedition cites controversies and suppressions of the press that had been taking place on the European continent as part of the mid-nineteenth-century revolutions. In an argument that directly anticipates Benedict Anderson, the *Aurora Borealis* contributor writes, “A great paper like the ‘Times’ no longer addresses itself to one empire or to a single people. The telegraph and the railroad have destroyed space, and a truth now uttered in London in a few minutes later vibrates through the heart

of France, or is heard on the shores of the Adriatic.”<sup>25</sup> The point of this officer is not, however, to claim a relationship to this scattered empire, but to establish the paper’s bona fides in worldmaking on its own terms. He continues: “The ‘Aurora Borealis’ was the public organ of the little world on board Captain Austin’s squadron in the Arctic Seas, and its pages are a reflection of the harmony and good-fellowship, the order and the Christian union, which prevailed in the Expedition.”<sup>26</sup> This is the sense of humanity meant in the paper’s account of the rise of Arctic printing: creating little worlds through shared experience of literary circles.

### The News in the *United States*

The *Aurora* officer quoted above observes the annihilation of “space” in the print culture of the newspaper. Lloyd Pratt has similarly challenged the belief that a national print culture in the early U.S. would serve the function of “homogenizing time,” as “national literature, national newspapers, and other nation-based print media would function as the nation’s temporal infrastructure.”<sup>27</sup> The periodicity of polar newspapers, indeed, was wildly irregular, as David and Deirdre Stam have shown, due to “lack of paper and ink or other supplies, the inability of men to work together, novelty worn thin, and hurt feelings from jokes gone bad,” in addition to “growing lassitude.”<sup>28</sup> Intended in part to mark time through the obscurity of the polar winter, the newspapers registered the futility in doing so at the same time that they established the terms for what constituted news at the ends of the earth. In polar papers the coexistence of the everyday and the exceptional in the very existence of polar newspapers is quite consciously framed. Here I turn to the manuscript newspaper produced in the winter quarters of Isaac Israel Hayes’s privately-funded North Pole mission aboard the ship *United States* (1860–1). Hayes had been the surgeon aboard fellow Philadelphian Elisha Kent Kane’s closely followed Second Grinnell Expedition (1853–5), which was searching for the fate of the Franklin expedition (and which produced its own newspaper, the *Ice-Blink*). In addition to their ambitions for the North Pole or Franklinia recovery, both Kane and Hayes sought the imagined Open Polar Sea beyond the ice.<sup>29</sup> In the aftermath of that mission’s new record for a “Farthest North”—even

though it failed to produce new information about the Franklin catastrophe—Hayes ventured anew, and again participated in the publication of a polar newspaper.<sup>30</sup> Like many mid-century U.S. polar missions, Hayes’s expedition was not federally sponsored, but supported by private patrons and the revenue from lecture tours.

In launching the newspaper, the *Port Foulke Weekly News* (fig. 4), Hayes declared, “The free press follows the flag all over the world, and the North Pole rejoices in ‘The Port Foulke Weekly News.’”<sup>31</sup> The crew had issued handbills and posters to advertise the periodical—this, for an expedition totaling only fourteen men. The expedition members had intended to print the paper (there was in fact a press aboard) but as the editors explain in the opening number: “we hurried our paper through the press, without using our new font of type, and as it came through so well, we will probably reserve the type to make either balls of, for the purposes of sending dispatches to, and dispatching any troublesome neighbors.”<sup>32</sup> The gesture to “troublesome neighbors” likely refers to polar bears, often shot at by venturers to the Arctic; the comic tone is consistent with most polar newspapers’ imagination of the extra-expedition communities of animal life. This lighthearted balance of the voyagers’ material demands and speculative fancies can also be seen in the establishment of the paper itself. As Hayes reports in his narrative, *The Open Polar Sea*, “All the details of its getting-up have been conducted with a most farcical adherence to the customs prevailing at home. There is a regular corps of editors and reporters, and office for ‘general news,’ and ‘editorial department,’ and a ‘telegraph station,’ where information is supposed to be received from all quarters of the world, and the relations existing between the sun, moon, and stars are duly reported by ‘reliable correspondents,’ and pictorial representations of extraordinary occurrences are also received from ‘our artist on the spot.’”<sup>33</sup> The *Port Foulke Weekly News* was not alone in its “farcical” inhabitation of the expected beats for a newspaper; Hayes’s description of its contents can stand for a general one: “There is a fair sprinkling of ‘enigmas,’ ‘original jokes,’ ‘items of domestic and foreign intelligence,’ ‘personals,’ ‘advertisements,’ &c., &c., among a larger allowance of more pretentious effusions.”<sup>34</sup> In the “private society” described by Shaftesbury, shared wit was the basis of community building.

But even as this newspaper was intended for “the private family circle” of the expedition—as all polar periodicals were, explicitly—it had a

clear idea of how its very existence reoriented the expedition's perspective on the world.<sup>35</sup> We see this in the following excerpt from the speech made by the paper's editor, George Knorr, upon its inauguration: "we have, at the cost of much time, labor, and means, supplied a want which has been too long been felt by the people of Port Foulke. We are, fellow-citizens, no longer without that inalienable birthright of every American citizen,—a Free Press and an Exponent of Public Opinion." After reiterating how very remote their location is from their nonetheless "wide-spread country," Knorr takes a larger view:

Have we not left that vague border of the national domain far behind us? Yes, fellow-citizens! and it now devolves upon us to bring the vexed question of national boundaries, which has been opened by our enterprise, to a point—to a point, sir! We must carry it to the very Pole itself!—and there, sir, we will nail the Stars and Stripes, and our flag-staff will become the spindle of the world, and the Universal Yankee Nation will go whirling round it like a top. Fellow-citizens and friends:—In conclusion, allow me to propose a sentiment befitting the occasion,—A Free Press and the Universal Yankee Nation: May the former continue in times to come, as in times gone by, the handmaiden of Liberty and the emblem of Progress; and may the latter absorb all Creation and become the grand Celestial Whirligig.<sup>36</sup>

Knorr's reference to the "vexed question" of the "vague border" of the nation functions in several ways. Most immediately, he gestures to mid-century expansionist policies as well as to the sectional conflicts in the U.S. that would erupt into war while the ship *United States* was far above the Arctic Circle, surprising the crew upon its return. Furthermore, the invocation of nationalist terms in which to cast "Liberty" and the "Free Press" was common to the period, in which many newspapers (especially British and European) were still subject to stamp taxes and governmental censorship. But Knorr's lack of clarity about the limits of the "national domain" also serves to raise the question of what relationship polar missions had to colonialist voyages. Although expeditions to the Arctic regions were not generally designed for territorial claiming (other than the imperialist imposition of place names), this passage records a cheeky awareness that behind the interests of science and

hydrographic discovery lies a grander imperial ambition. This is especially seen in the use of the phrase “Universal Yankee Nation,” which originated in the 1820s as a counterpoint to the South’s “Virginia race.” By mid-century, though, the Universal Yankee Nation was used more sardonically to describe a certain kind of New England ingenuity and proprietary expansiveness. Knorr’s toast, then, becomes an acknowledgment of the forces of acquisitional control operating behind polar expeditions, while claiming a space for parodic worldmaking within the “vague” territory of the newspaper.

I see more than the tired metaphors of colonialism here, however playfully or parodically offered. Knorr invites us to reorient our critical perception, taking a proprioceptive stance—by which I mean one mindful of the place and conditions from which it originates—that looks to planetary spaces not from a position rooted in an already-established national space, but from a new *point*, a new perspectival pole, a reorientation of our map of the world (fig. 6). Polar periodical coteries, I am arguing, are aware of the nationalizing and generalizing aspects of the genre of the newspaper, too; the *Port Foulke Weekly News* recognizes such moves as part of the demands of a newspaper. The notion of planetary spaces (as opposed to global ones), in the terms offered by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Wai Chee Dimock, allow us to imagine a world organized not by relations between globalized nation-states, but a world comprised of extranational resources on a planetary scale. This point, like the “grand Celestial Whirligig” imagined by the *Port Foulke Weekly News*, sets us a-spin, and allows us to imagine Anglo-American literary studies at the ends of the earth.

### Discontent in the *Winter Chronicle*

For the balance of this essay I turn to the news at the ends of the earth by way of the first newspaper written in the polar regions: the *North Georgia Gazette, and Winter Chronicle* (1819–1820) (fig. 7).<sup>37</sup> The *Winter Chronicle*, as it was called within its own pages, was a manuscript expedition newspaper written in the Arctic by the officers of William Edward Parry’s British Northwest Passage Expedition, which consisted of just over one hundred men, about twenty of whom were officers. The widely praised expedition achieved records of latitude, which earned

them a parliamentary prize. Parry also pioneered the tactic of deliberately spending the winter on the ice: whereas previous Arctic missions had foundered when unable to return to open water before the cold season set in, Parry embraced the prospect of a long, frozen sojourn above the Arctic Circle. He arranged for shipboard theatricals (a mainstay of British naval recreational practice) and, “In order still further to promote good-humour among ourselves, as well as to furnish amusing occupation, during the hours of constant darkness,” Parry determined that the ship would “set on foot a weekly newspaper.” He named Captain Edward Sabine (who helmed the expedition’s sister ship) as editor, and hoped the gazette would serve the purpose of “diverting the mind from the gloomy prospect which would sometimes obtrude itself on the stoutest heart.”<sup>38</sup>

As we shall see, however, the newspaper’s charge to bring recreation and pleasure to its intimate sphere of circulation found a more electric transference than Parry had anticipated. The newspaper’s sense of fun and play began to rest over the course of its issues on a staged feud between the contributors and the non-contributors (or “N.C.s”) to the paper—all of whom were officers. But when the expedition’s success and popularity resulted in London republication of the *North Georgia Gazette, and Winter Chronicle*, Parry suppressed many of the most barbed articles on the N.C.s. The wit that had circulated among their coterie was prevented from circulation in the literary sphere outside of the ship’s own economy. In other words, the expedition’s officers’ presumptions of private, intimate, collaborative mutuality were compromised in and altered by publication, thus calling into question the very premises of joint endeavor and mutuality undergirding the expedition itself. Tracing the breakdown in the *Chronicle* gives us an opportunity to rethink the kinds of community associations formed outside of the imagined communities we have thought of as constituting both the nation and national print culture.

The initial number of the *Chronicle* proposed to circulate the paper “amongst the Officers of the Expedition,” whom were presumably to provide the content, too, as editor Sabine claimed that he was “wholly dependent on the Gentleman of the Expedition” for the success of the paper.<sup>39</sup> A letter of approbation from “Philo Comus” (a pseudonym of Parry’s, indicating a love of revels and play) was published in the first

number, expressing hope that the *Chronicle* would “serve to relieve the *tedium* of our one hundred days of darkness”—the three-month-plus portion of the polar winter in which the sun would never appear (I:1, emphases in original unless otherwise noted). The contributions were delivered anonymously and published pseudonymously (a manuscript copy of the *New Georgia Gazette, and Winter Chronicle* held at the Scott Polar Research Institute identifies the contributors to the newspaper).<sup>40</sup> The tone of the contributions to the *Chronicle* responds to this desire to keep the expedition members pleasantly occupied: the articles are largely witty and playful, and include reviews of shipboard theatricals in addition to the lyrics of expedition-themed songs written and performed at the ship’s winter quarters. Other genres featured in the paper are riddles and enigmas, mock advertisements and notices, and analyses of the social habits of the expedition’s dogs. One “Nauticus” tried to submit a mathematical problem, but it was rejected for its simplicity—it failed to “exercise the ingenuity” of the crew (I:15). These categories were not necessarily trifling. The genre of the riddle, as David Shields has written, presumes an audience “something more than witless”; as such, riddles “could be considered the citizenship exam for membership in the republic of letters.”<sup>41</sup>

Even though the paper’s editor, Captain Sabine, later wrote that “at the time [the issues] were composed, not the remotest idea was entertained of their fulfilling any other purpose than that of relieving the tedium of an Arctic Winter, and perhaps of afterwards affording amusement to a few private friends at home,” the *Chronicle* was in fact printed in London a year after the expedition’s return, in response to “the interest which the Public took in all that had passed during the voyage.” The interest was so high, in fact, that sources were leaking information to the press in advance of the British Admiralty’s approval of the publication of Parry’s official voyage narratives. As a review of the reprint of the *Chronicle* explains, “By the rules of the Admiralty, every person employed in public Expeditions, is bound, on returning home, to give up his Journals and other memoranda at a certain latitude, and not to publish or cause them to be made known until Government has sanctioned their publication” (“A Journal of a Voyage”). In the prefatory note to the printed edition of the paper, Sabine trusts that the contributors “may be allowed to claim from the general reader the same indulgence,

which they would have received, had the perusal of the *Chronicle* been confined to the partial circle to which they originally intended it should have been limited” (*North Georgia Gazette v.*)<sup>42</sup> The implied reader of the *Winter Chronicle*, ideally, remains Arctic-bound, even as Sabine’s language evokes the conventions of first-person narrative writing: an apology for deficiencies of circumstance, which we are told have been uncorrected upon publication.

Yet despite Sabine’s promise that “no alteration has been attempted in the respective papers, in preparing them for the press,” the printed edition nevertheless excises a good number of articles and letters from the manuscript version. The decision about what pieces to cut seems to have been made by expedition leader Parry himself, judging from a manuscript edition of the newspaper that he had given to his sister, which is preserved at the Scott Polar Research Institute. Parry’s copy was written in ink, but has been corrected with penciled annotations. Although there are a number of grammatical or minor stylistic emendations, the most visible editorial marks indicate the excision of a good number of letters, articles, and other pieces for the newspaper. In some examples individual paragraphs are crossed out; in most, the penciled hand—almost certainly Parry’s—strikes through whole contributions. In several instances the word “omit” has been written at the head of an entry. In all cases but one (mentioned below), the omissions proposed in the manuscript paper were indeed left out of the printed version.

One might expect that the excisions made for the sake of public circulation of the gazette would be of material that was racy, crude, or nonsensical. This is not, however, the case: Parry’s censorship focuses largely on articles that concern a supposed feud among the officers over the question of whom is adequately contributing to the expedition’s mission. Strikingly, the majority of the excised pieces consist of an ongoing series of editorials, letters, and fictional stories proposing outlandishly violent reprisals against what the gazette calls the “N.C.s,” or the “non-contributors,” to the *Winter Chronicle* (the N.C.s are singled out for not contributing specifically to the paper, I will stress; there is no indication otherwise that their contributions to the broader polar mission are deficient). This is not to say that concerns about the non-contributors did not make it into the print version—in fact, the contents of the late issues in the twenty-one-number run of the *Chronicle*



were increasingly dominated by articles on the N.C.s. At their most mild, the articles wonder whether the non-contributors lack the wit to contribute; at their most heated, the contributors threaten to multiply behead the “many-headed monster, the *Encea Borealis*, vulgarly called N.C.”; or to brand their counterparts “with a red-hotte ironne, fashioned after the letters N.C.” The latter, in fact, is drawn from the one piece Parry identified for omission that for an unknown reason made its way into the paper: an example of the genre of fiction in which a narrator finds a superannuated manuscript account, which he in turn presents to the reader. In this instance the manuscript describes an expedition to the Arctic in which certain members refuse to participate in “merrie-making”; the Captain withholds their rations in punishment, for “those which do not benefitte the Communitie, the Communitie is not bounded to benefittee *them*.”<sup>43</sup> I make the assumption that these tensions were largely rhetorical not just because of the amusing extremity of its language, but because Parry’s identification of the pseudonymous contributors shows that the fight was pitched between and among the top-ranking officers writing variously as N.C.s and as contributors.

But even though the tone of both the printed and excised articles is satirical, the rhetorical playfulness of the attacks on the non-contributors cannot disguise a very serious concern: that not all expedition members are fairly sharing in the mission’s labors and in its rewards. The suppressed pieces, in particular, reveal an escalating distress and mock anger over the differences between the contributing and non-contributing members of the expedition. Sabine’s notion of a “partial circle” of readers is key, I am arguing. And as a reflexive gesture to the severely limited circulation of the paper, it is also disingenuous, like all such gestures within such genres of coterie writing. The articles in the *North Georgia Gazette*, and *Winter Chronicle*—and indeed, that of other polar newspapers as well—are finely tuned to their intimate sphere of circulation, given all the inside jokes and event- and place-specific references. In the *Winter Chronicle* this attention is most keenly felt in terms of the paper’s role in fostering and reflecting collaborative labor. The paper’s existence was wholly reliant on full participation in its production, the editorial statements said repeatedly. In just the second issue of the paper, Sabine was sounding the alarm to those who had not yet contributed: “I would also remind those who are yet silent,” he wrote, “that *now*

is the time when support is most needed; when, if every person will put his shoulder to the wheel in earnest, (and each individual may command his own exertions,) there can be no doubt that your Paper will go on with spirit” (II:15). Sabine’s metaphor of self-directed manual labor aside, this call for writerly work was issued to a coterie within a coterie: the twenty-odd officers sharing exceptionally tight quarters with nearly eighty “men,” the seamen not holding officer status. On polar expeditions, it should be noted, extreme conditions and small crews necessarily required that officers would do a far more balanced share of the mission’s manual work than on open-water ventures; there was far less difference in onboard functions between officer and “man” than on other naval or merchant ships.

We see this worry about the failure of collectivity in a poem directed to the N.C.s by one of the expedition’s lieutenants, writing as “Timothy Tickle’em.” In the poem—which was one of the ones Parry struck from appearance in print—we learn of the contributors’ plan “To tear their characters to bits” upon the expedition’s return home:

The Churls, I vow, who *cannot* write  
Aught to be hang’d, or shot outright,  
As useless Vermin who destroy  
The food we should alone enjoy  
But wherefore spend our words in vain,  
When all our hints inflict no pain?  
We’ll roar it out to all the world,  
When once again our sails are furl’d: . . .  
Thus, my dear friends, we’ll serve each knave,  
Who does not chuse to send his stave,  
And if we can’t excite their shame,  
At home, at last, we’ll brand their name.<sup>44</sup>

This poem excited “considerable foment” among the N.C.s, we learn from a suppressed letter to the editor, written by Parry himself. The vow, when back in England, to “shame” or “brand” the name of those who did not contribute is seen in other contributions, such as the punishment mentioned above of branding the letters *N.C.* on an offender’s cheeks. This, we are told, is done so that “our friends in old Englande

might aske and know theyre historie” (MS *Chronicle* No. 9). What is notable is that these threats to expose the non-contributors to the broader social and professional world—however humorously intended in the manuscript or coterie newspaper—are nevertheless censored from the public record of the printed newspaper. Parry wished to keep the rhetorical exercise of non-contribution within the world of the expedition only.

Even though threats of beating or hanging non-contributors are not meant to be taken literally, one presumes, a response from a supposed N.C.-sympathizer (identified as Lieutenant Hoppner, a very frequent contributor) in the form of a letter to the editor (likewise censored from the print version) seems to take the larger social and professional threat more seriously. The poem by Timothy Tickle'em, the correspondent writes, “seemed to express a degree of malice that I imagined never would have been permitted to creep into [the *Chronicle*’s] columns, which I always fancied, were originally intended to afford amusement to *our own little circle*.” The writer’s stress here on the “*little circle*” of this coterie newspaper’s audience is significant; the frequency of the attacks on those not writing for the paper means the non-contributors had legitimate reasons to fear losing face in the social and professional spheres back home. What is more, the N.C.s’ concerns seem to have been ongoing, as the letter continues: “The spiteful pleasure which your Correspondent anticipates in pointing out the Non-Contributors to those who have no concern in the affair will, I fear, give just grounds for strengthening the apprehensions that many entertained before, of similar intentions” (MS *Chronicle* No. 15). The fear on behalf of the N.C.s of the possibility of a “stain on their characters” seems to hit a nerve; as the letter from the defender of the non-contributors concludes, “although the N.C.’s may be wrong, still they do not deserve . . . that stain upon their Characters which this, and some other Articles are likely to impress on the minds of readers who are unacquainted with circumstances” (MS *Chronicle* No. 15). This remark, made by a pseudonymous contributor, shows a presumption of an audience outside the orbit of their polar sphere. The social tension staged is palpable here, and the paper’s editor, Captain Sabine, appended a judicious note to the letter of protest, which said that Sabine would have questioned the letter writer had he known who he were. The “lines in question did not

strike us as written with any such ill-design,” Sabine explains, but allows that although “we may . . . have been mistaken, but we really do not perceive what occasion any individual among amongst us can have for a ‘malicious feeling’ toward the persons who have not written for the *Winter Chronicle*” (MS *Chronicle* No. 15). This measured justification stands in contrast to the bombastic affectation of the newspaper’s previously published threats against the bodies and reputations of the non-contributors.

A follow-up letter from the author of the threatening poem, Timothy Tickle’em (again, one omitted from the London publication of the paper) asks facetiously what the N.C.s fear—that the “Admiralty will seek out the names of those two or three individuals out of 20, who have never written for the *Winter Chronicle*?” No, the contributor argues; “the N.C.’s must know, that the knowledge even of the *existence* of a paper among us must necessarily be confined to a very limited circle; & that whatever stigma is brought upon them on this account, is one of their own seeking.” The presumption of intimacy, of a private society outside of state relations, is key to this contributor’s position, as he continues: “If the contributions to the *Winter Chronicle* were to be regulated by law, like the Income-tax, according to each man’s *ability* to contribute, it is evident how woefully the N.C.’s would be in arrears!” (MS *Chronicle* No. 16). This letter relocates the social threat of non-contribution to the immediate coterie of the expedition itself, rather than the broader English professional world.

As it turns out, Parry’s manuscript edition of the *Chronicle* reveals that the proportion of contributors was far less than the 85%-plus from the letter quoted above (that is, the claim that only “two or three individuals out of 20” were N.C.s). Parry’s copy identifies virtually all the authors of the pseudonymous contributions, and we find there were a total of ten contributors. Three of the ten, however, contributed only one or two pieces to the paper. The seven frequent contributors include Parry, Captain Sabine, several other lieutenants, and the ship’s clerk and purser. The three who made only a few contributions, however, were all midshipmen, the lowest class of officers. And among these midshipmen we find John Bushnan, whom Parry identifies as the author of the letters from “N.C.”—his only contribution to the *Chronicle*. Midshipmen, who had just begun their professional naval careers, would have the

most to fear from threats to their reputation. This would be especially true in the case of the *Chronicle*, in which the spats and disputes are all staged among high-ranking officers writing pseudonymously.

But officers, of course, were not the only members of the expedition. None of the “men” aboard ship—the able seamen, boatswain’s and carpenter’s mates, eighty-odd all told—seem to have contributed to the paper. Nor is it clear that they necessarily read it, although the men serving at the officers’ mess table would have the occasion to overhear the reading aloud of the *Chronicle* over a meal, and perhaps spread its contents among the common seamen.<sup>45</sup> Perhaps a seaman might have been passed one of the manuscript copies of the paper, but it would likely have been something acquired under the table. This sense is reinforced by another unprinted letter to the editor. This short note is signed by “Timothy Hint,” and expresses pointedly the stresses of keeping labor expectations in balance. Here is the note, in full: “It is a well-known fact in the Natural History of Bees, that a certain part of the year, the working Bees confederate to turn the *Drones* out of the Hive; perhaps some one of your Correspondents may know at what part of the year this circumstance usually takes place, and whether it differs in different climates” (MS *Chronicle*, 14). The worker bees do virtually all of the labor in the beehive, including catering to the drones, whose only function is to be available to impregnate the queen bee—at which point the drone dies. (Also relevant, given the Arctic setting, is the fact that the turning out of the drones from the hive usually happens in early winter, when the *Winter Chronicle* was launched.) The letter, written by second-in-command (and *Chronicle* editor) Sabine, could indicate a coded fear, however wry, that the workers (that is, the common seamen of the voyage) might feel collectively mutinous against the drones (the officers).

The potential for insurrection would be no laughing matter at sea, of course, where mutinous sailors potentially faced death. Less than two months before the *North Georgia Gazette*, and *Winter Chronicle* shut down production, a letter from a correspondent named “Peter Plainway”—Parry himself—asserted a resurgence of collective work and good will. Notably, this letter appears in the fourteenth volume of the London version—where it was printed in place of the provocative Timothy Tickleem poem, which had opened that particular issue in the manuscript version of the *Chronicle*. Parry claims that it “is evident, that the number of [the

paper's] Correspondents is weekly increasing. . . . The N.C.s!—but alas the very name is now almost extinct” (XIV: 53). “Extinct” in the printed *North Georgia Gazette*, perhaps—but alive and kicking in the manuscript version, and therefore among the officers during the expedition.

Parry had intended for the newspaper to “emplo[y] the mind” and “divert the leisure hours”; he had anticipated no “unpleasant consequences” of giving his men a literary outlet for their opinions.<sup>46</sup> Yet the expedition's surgeon, Alexander Fisher, reveals in his own narrative of the voyage that there was reason to worry about the consequences of giving the men license to free expression. Fisher's narrative is taken from the journal he kept during the voyage; the following concerns about the *Winter Chronicle* were presumably recorded before its first numbers appeared:

I have no doubt but it will answer its end, that is, of diverting the men; but . . . I am not quite so certain of its answering its purpose so well, for I have seen one or two instances, and have heard of many more, where newspapers on board of ship, instead of affording general amusement, and promoting friendship and a good understanding amongst officers, tended in a short time to destroy both: . . . until at length the paper, instead of being the source of amusement and instruction, becomes the vehicle of sarcasms and bitter reflections. (Fisher, *Journal of a Voyage* 152)

I need hardly add that Fisher was himself a non-contributor. Provocatively, even though Fisher is not recorded as a contributor to the newspaper, he did hustle his *Journal* through the press so quickly that the Admiralty investigated to see if he had kept a private copy of his letters, which would have been in violation of the Admiralty's early-nineteenth-century practice of collecting all written material from an expedition. As a review of his journal put it, he was “unjustly suspected of having kept a duplicate of his Journal, in order to forestall Capt. Parry's promised work” (“A Journal of a Voyage of Discovery”).<sup>47</sup>

Yet a contemporary review of the *Chronicle* (not familiar with the unexpurgated version of the gazette) points out that injunctions against wounding the feelings of members of the group serve only to weaken the junto's literary output: forbidding hurt feelings is “a law as destructive to mirth and quizzery, as that of political libel would be to free

opinion. . . . It seems absolutely to have assisted the climate to freeze up the spirit of *fun* altogether.”<sup>48</sup> Another review noted what seemed to be Parry’s proprietary—or censorious—practices. In introducing its review of the *Chronicle*, the *Literary Gazette* explains, at length:

soon after the expedition returned, we had a file of these Gazettes lent to us, with permission to extract such articles as we thought would afford pleasure to the readers of the Literary Gazette. In a fit of extra politeness, we thought it would be a compliment to Captain Parry to mention our purpose to him, and to obtain his sanction. To this we received the annexed letter,\* and as we had committed ourselves by the request, we could not, as gentlemen, proceed any further. We accordingly cancelled what was printed for our forthcoming Number; and the readers of the polar newspaper must consequently exhibit their half-guinea for what in our pages would not have cost them half-a-crown.

\* Captain Parry presents his compliments to the Editor of the Literary Gazette, and begs to acquaint him, in reply to his letter of yesterday, that the officers who contributed to the paper in question, have some time ago consented to have the *whole* to be printed in one volume, to be at the disposal of the publisher, after a certain number of copies have been given to each of the contributors, and that they are now in the press. Captain P., therefore, cannot but express a hope, in his own name, and that of the officers, that no extracts from it may be published in any other shape. (“North Georgia Gazette, and Winter Chronicle” 325)

We see here Parry’s desire to control, above and beyond even the Admiralty’s own regulation, how the Anglo-American literary world encountered the productions of the Arctic literary sphere. Even though Parry commanded several further hugely successful Arctic expeditions, his crews never again produced a newspaper. What is more, future polar papers on other missions did not confine their contributor list to the officer corps.

Joking about non-contribution by high-ranking officers was all very well when it was an internal matter, a private manuscript newspaper. But as the more incendiary pieces in the *Chronicle*—actually written by major officers—were withheld from the printed version for the public, the actual attribution of the suppressed articles says something all the

more powerful about how they imagined the non-transmissibility of their experience to the broader world, how they imagined their literary collectivity as something apart from their professional collectivity. While these can seem like the kind of debates that take place in a boarding school newspaper, or in the amateur journalism produced by American teenagers in the late nineteenth century, it is important to keep in mind the totality of their lives that sailors devoted to the oceanic world. As one officer wrote in a private letter about the *Chronicle*, “when it is considered at what an early period the officers of the navy are sent to sea generally at eleven or twelve years of age and that the education which they receive on board can scarcely be supposed to be on the best or most enlarged plan it will we think be admitted that many of the papers in the North Georgia Gazette are far superior to what might reasonably be expected and such as would not discredit the more regular scholar and practised writer.”<sup>49</sup>

In the sharp-witted and somewhat poisonous debates about the non-contributors in the *Chronicle*, we see a concern about how hierarchies were maintained in an environment demanding collective labor. The contributors’ periodical assaults on the non-contributors reveal, I argue, that in brutal conditions in which none had comfort or leisure, the force of distinction came down to the literary. Given the generic self-reflexivity of polar periodicals, a change in the circumference of a paper’s sphere of reception alters fundamentally the nature of the genre itself. The reason that non-contribution was so very threatening, ultimately, has to do with the very nature of polar periodicals as cultural and social markers. If an Arctic newspaper exists functionally and materially on board in its textual circulation, but not imaginatively in the space it occupies in service to the ship’s “humanity,” then non-contribution breaks the fantasy that the polar expedition is still connected to the world. Not necessarily the settled world, or what we might think of it as the “inside” world to the polar regions’ “outside”—but the expedition’s own world, constituted by the ship, the crew, its materials, and the literary imagination that populates it. The news at the ends of the earth, then, circulates both at the poles and in the fictive elsewhere that functions, for expedition members, as the world itself. If this mode of exchange is not globalist in the sense of current rhetorics of transnational criticism, it is nonetheless planetary in its imagination of literature produced in extremity as both remarkable and as inevitable as the daily paper.



Figure 1. National Maritime Museum AAA3970.

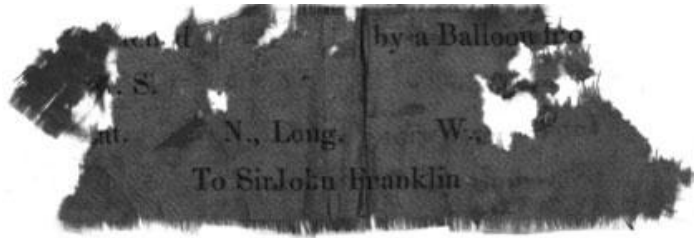


Figure 2. Personal collection belonging to Edward N Harrison, clerk in charge HMS ASSISTANCE, National Maritime Museum MSS/75/061.

**ROYAL**  
**ARCTIC THEATRE.**  
*Ich Dien.*  
**H.M.S. ASSISTANCE**  
 Manager, . . . Capt. Omminey.

---

Patronised by Capt. Harriot Austin C. B.  
 GRAND ANTI-BALLOON for the New Year!

---

On Thursday the 9th. of January 1851,  
 the Favourite Actors of the Stage Companies  
 present will perform the truly laughable  
**FARCE OF THE**  
**TURNED HEAD!**

---

To be Followed by the Grand Farceful,  
 Tragic, Melo-Dramatic, Serio-Comic  
 PLAY OF  
**BOMBASTES**  
**FURIOSO!!!**

Which will be produced by the Officers of  
 the Squadron. The only Lady in this piece,  
 has been engaged in an Eminent Sacrifice;  
 in being her first appearance on any Stage!!

---

The whole to Conclude with the entirely  
 NEW PANTOMIME OF  
**ZERO!**  
 OR HARLEQUIN LIGHT!

Written expressly for the occasion by  
 a talented member of the expedition.  
 In which the celebrated Clowns will intro-  
 duce some of their favorite airs.

---

Doors open at 6 o'clock. Commence at 6-30

---

Griffith's Island Printing Office.

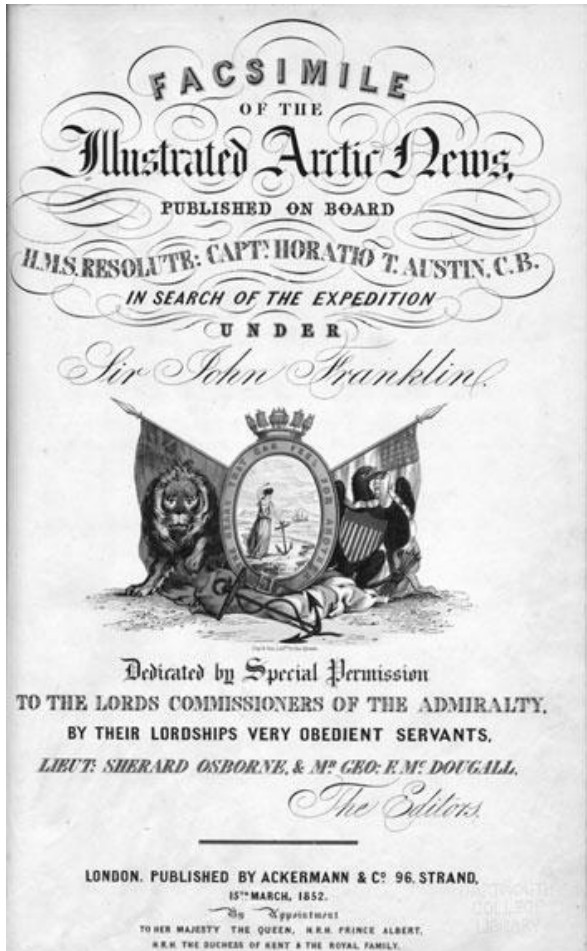


Figure 3. Facsimile of the *Illustrated Arctic News*, printed aboard HMS *Resolute*, 1850–51. Stefansson Collection, Dartmouth College.

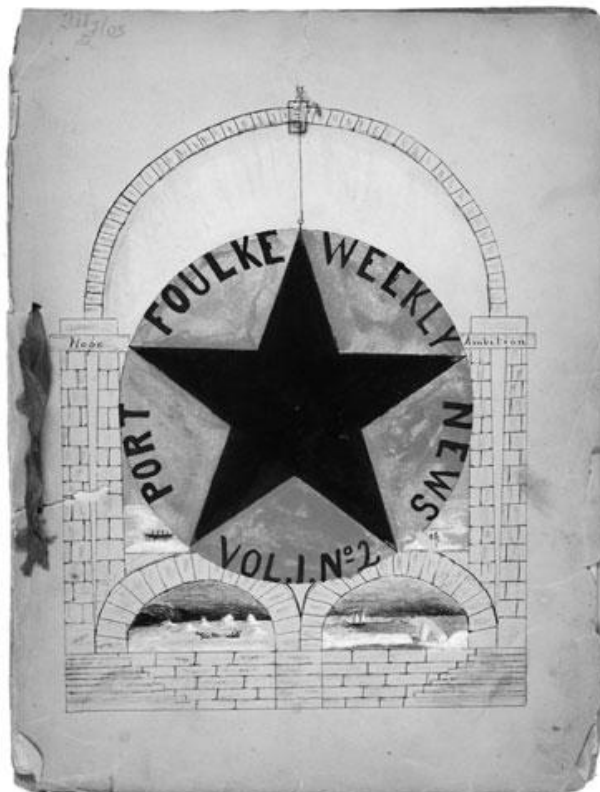


Figure 4. *Port Foulke Weekly News*, MS newspaper aboard *United States*, Isaac Israel Hayes's Arctic Expedition, 1860–61. New-York Historical Society.

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Figure 5. Title page of *Aurora Australis*, printed at the Sign of “the Penguins” by Joyce and Wild, 1908–9. Image courtesy State Library of South Australia.



Figure 6. *The Arctic Region, Showing Exploration toward the North Pole.* Library Company of Philadelphia.



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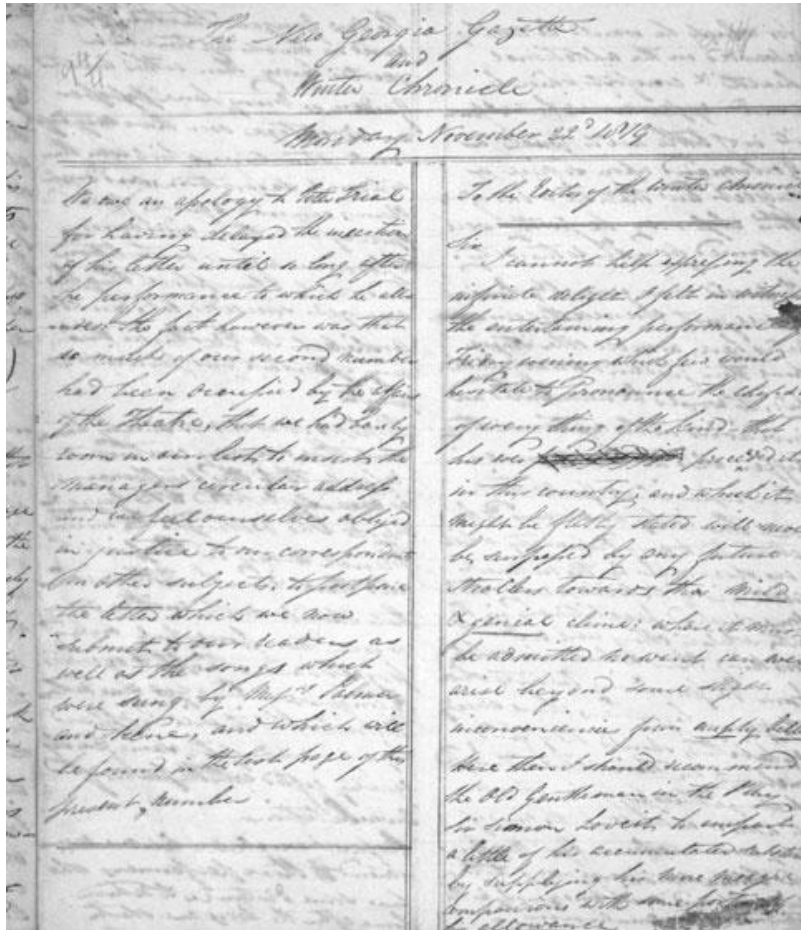


Figure 7. Copy of New Georgia Gazette given to Sir John Franklin. Pasted in to Sir John Franklin, *The Discoverer of the North West Passage, Original Letters Written During his Arctic Expeditions*, National Maritime Museum FRN/1.

#### NOTES

1. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Library of America, 2004).
2. Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour*. . . (London: 1709), 1.
3. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 33.
4. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 34, 36.
5. Scholars of print culture—I am thinking particularly of Trish Loughran and Meredith McGill—have described how paying closer attention to the operations of transnational and local spheres of circulation dismantles some elements of Anderson's model and shores up others.
6. For a discussion of presumed nonproductiveness of polar spaces, see Hester Blum, "John Cleves Symmes and the Planetary Reach of Polar Exploration," *American Literature* 84: 2 (2012): 243–71.
7. *North Georgia Gazette and Winter Chronicle*, in William Edward Parry, *Journal of a Voyage for the Discovery of a North-West Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific*:

- Performed in the Years, 1819–20, in His Majesty's Ships Hecla and Griper under the Orders of William Edward Parry* (Philadelphia: Abraham Small, 1821).
8. On the early-nineteenth-century publications emerging from Arctic missions, see the work of Janice Cavell in *Tracing the Connected Narrative: Arctic Exploration in British Print Culture, 1818–1860* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008) and Adriana Craciun in “Writing the Disaster: Franklin and Frankenstein,” *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 65:4 (2011): 433–80. See also Russell Potter’s *Arctic Spectacles: The Frozen North in Visual Culture, 1818–1875* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007) and Michael Robinson’s *The Coldest Crucible: Arctic Exploration and American Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
  9. On Arctic-inspired nineteenth-century fiction, Jen Hill is particularly sharp; see her *White Horizon: The Arctic in the Nineteenth-Century British Imagination* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009).
  10. The exception has been the excellent bibliographic work done by David and Deidre Stam and by Elaine Hoag, cited below in notes 14 and 15.
  11. As Cesare Casarino notes, maritime labor in the nineteenth century was “altogether resistant to the increasingly parcelized and mechanic rhythms of an industrial environment such as the factory” (*Modernity at Sea: Melville, Marx, Conrad in Crisis* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002], 54). For more on sailors’ labor and leisure conditions, see also Hester Blum, *View from the Masthead: Maritime Imagination and Antebellum American Sea Narratives* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).
  12. For more on sailors’ literacy and literary culture, see Blum, *The View from the Masthead*.
  13. See Jason R. Rudy, “Floating Worlds: Émigré Poetry and British Culture,” *ELH* 81: 1 (2014): 325–50. In my research I have seen a handful of manuscript newspapers aboard British ships in the India trades; six of these are located at the National Maritime Museum archives in Greenwich, England. Even fewer American seamen’s journals mention the presence of a shipboard newspaper. The Kemble Maritime Collection at the Huntington Library, which largely covers cruise ships from the late nineteenth through the late twentieth century, holds ship newspapers for under thirty vessels out of nine hundred collected; but most of those thirty-odd newspapers were aggregations of wire reports from the electronic ages of communication, rather than content produced aboard ship.
  14. David H. Stam and Deirdre C. Stam, “Bending Time: The Function of Periodicals in Nineteenth-Century Polar Naval Expeditions,” *Victorian Periodicals Review* 41, no. 4 (Winter 2008).
  15. Elaine Hoag, “Caxtons of the North,” *Book History* 4 (2001): 81–114.
  16. *Port Foulke Weekly News*. MS in New-York Historical Society. 1860–61.
  17. In coining this phrase I register the echo of Anderson’s description of the newspaper as “an ‘extreme form’ of the book, a book sold on a colossal scale, but of

ephemeral popularity,” mindful of “the obsolescence of the newspaper on the morrow of its printing” (*Imagined Communities*, 34–35).

18. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*
21. Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770–1870* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 11.
22. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 35.
23. *Arctic Miscellanies: A Souvenir of the Late Polar Search*. [Horatio Austin.] (London: Colburn and Co., 1852).
24. *Ibid.*, 246.
25. *Ibid.*, xxiii.
26. *Ibid.*, xxiv.
27. Lloyd Pratt, *Archives of American Time: Literature and Modernity in the Nineteenth-Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 4.
28. Stam and Stam, “Bending Time.”
29. Isaac Israel Hayes, *The Open Polar Sea: A Narrative of a Voyage of Discovery Towards the North Pole, in the Schooner “United States”* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1867).
30. Hayes would continue to support newspapers in unexpected places. As the surgeon in charge of Satterlee Hospital in Philadelphia during the Civil War, Hayes promoted the formation of a hospital newspaper, the *West Philadelphia Hospital Register* (1863). Hayes wrote in the *Register*: “For the information of those who may feel an interest in the success of our ‘little sheet,’ we would say that it is printed and published, within the walls of the Hospital.—The type is set up, and the press-work performed by Soldiers, whose names are given below.—convalescent patients, partially disabled by service in the field” (I:ii:7).
31. Hayes, *The Open Polar Sea*, 176.
32. *Port Foulke Weekly News*, 11 Nov. 1860, 1:1.
33. Hayes, *The Open Polar Sea*, 177.
34. *Ibid.*, 181.
35. *Port Foulke Weekly News*, 11 Nov. 1860, 1:1
36. Hayes, *The Open Polar Sea*, 179–80.
37. The original manuscript version was entitled *New Georgia Gazette and Winter Chronicle*, after the land that Parry named “New Georgia.” Upon the expedition’s return, however, Parry discovered that there already was a New Georgia, so the name of the land and of the gazette was changed in future iterations to “North Georgia.” Henceforth all references to the paper were to the *North Georgia Gazette, and Winter Chronicle*.

A note on sources: the *North Georgia Gazette* was printed as an appendix to Parry’s journal of the voyage. When I quote from the printed version, I will refer to the pagination in Parry’s journal as well as the periodical’s number.

Elsewhere in this essay I cite the manuscript version of the *New Georgia Gazette*, which contains material that is not printed in the North Georgia version in Parry's journal; when I refer to the manuscript version, I will cite the newspaper's number, as there is no pagination in the manuscript version.

38. *Journal*, 99.
39. *North Georgia Gazette*, vi.
40. *New Georgia Gazette, and Winter Chronicle*, Scott Polar Research Institute, MS 438/12.
41. David S. Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 162.
42. The few reviewers who commented upon the *North Georgia Gazette* accepted this cue, noting that standard critical energies would be inappropriate. As one review put it, "though the volume before us has a claim beyond that of most, if not of all others, that we have every perused, to be excepted from the severities, and even the justice of criticism; we may be permitted equally to admire and eulogize those compositions, which sprang into existence amidst the regions of eternal frost" (*European Magazine*, 541). The only complaint of most reviewers was the high half-guinea price for the volume.
43. *North Georgia Gazette*, MS No. 9.
44. *Ibid.*, MS No. 14.
45. This degree of rank-based exclusivity would be significantly smaller in the polar publications in the decades to come.
46. "A Journal of a Voyage of Discovery to the Arctic Regions, in his Majesty's Ship Hecla and Griper, in the years 1819 and 1820," *Gentleman's Magazine* (May 1821): 99.
47. "Journal of a Voyage," 442-43.
48. *Examiner*, 3 June 1821: 348.
49. *Letters Written During the Late Voyage of Discovery in the Western Arctic Sea, by an Officer of the Expedition* (London: Printed for Sir Richard Phillips, 1821), 59.