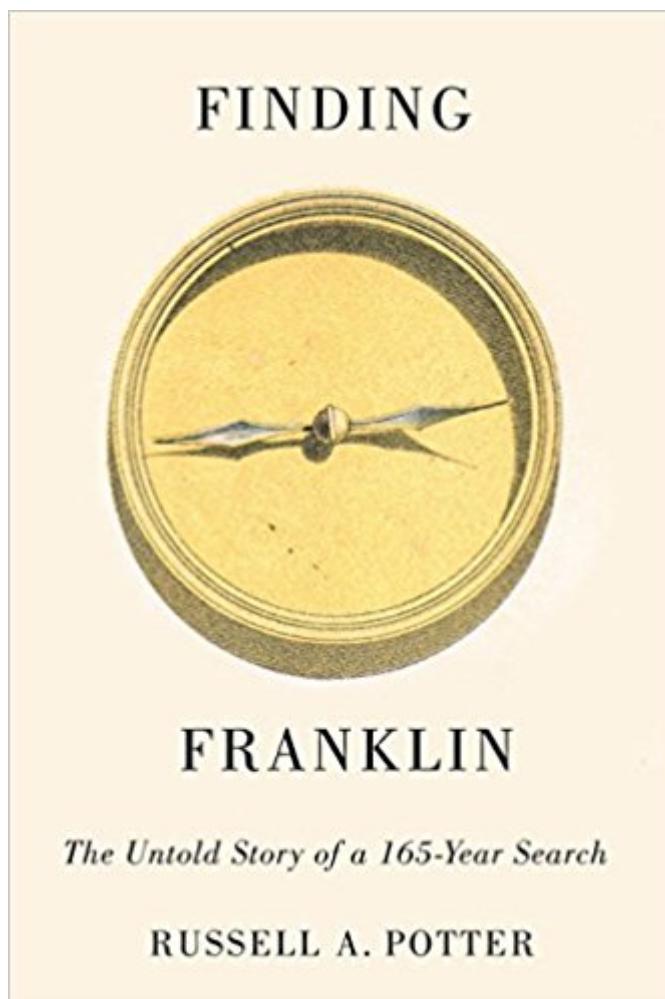


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Finding Franklin: The Untold Story Of A 165-Year Search



Synopsis

In 2014 media around the world buzzed with news that an archaeological team from Parks Canada had located and identified the wreck of HMS Erebus, the flagship of Sir John Franklin's lost expedition to find the Northwest Passage. Finding Franklin outlines the larger story and the cast of detectives from every walk of life that led to the discovery, solving one of the Arctic's greatest mysteries. In compelling and accessible prose, Russell Potter details his decades of work alongside key figures in the era of modern searches for the expedition and elucidates how shared research and ideas have led to a fuller understanding of the Franklin crew's final months. Illustrated with numerous images and maps from the last two centuries, Finding Franklin recounts the more than fifty searches for traces of his ships and crew, and the dedicated, often obsessive, men and women who embarked on them. Potter discusses the crucial role that Inuit oral accounts, often cited but rarely understood, played in all of these searches, and continue to play to this day, and offers historical and cultural context to the contemporary debates over the significance of Franklin's achievement. While examination of HMS Erebus will undoubtedly reveal further details of this mystery, Finding Franklin assembles the stories behind the myth and illuminates what is ultimately a remarkable decades-long discovery.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Finding Franklin is a compelling book. Potter is one of the most respected Franklin scholars in the world and this volume shows us why. He has an intimate familiarity with the vast material on the search and understands - better than anyone else - its place within the cultural imagination."

Michael F. Robinson, University of Hartford "With ambitious scope and profound depth, Potter (Arctic Spectacles) deftly demonstrates that truth can indeed be stranger and more fascinating than fiction." This seamless blend of research and captivating storytelling showcases the curiosity, frailty, and endurance of the human spirit." • Publisher's Weekly

Russell A. Potter is professor of English at Rhode Island College and the author of *Arctic Spectacles: The Frozen North in Visual Culture, 1818-1875*.

Excellent review of the Franklin search over the past 170 years. Brought together much information and written by an expert on these matters in a very readable story.

Very good summary of search for Franklin, touching on many of the lesser known explorers and investigators of the fate of the lost ships. The recent discovery of HMS Erebus has reignited interest in the mystery of the worst disaster in Arctic exploration history. Much remains unknown, but Mr. Potter puts the history of the search for Franklin in an informative and entertaining fashion.

Loved this book. Very readable but packed with up-to-date (almost) info from my favorite subject, arctic history.

I knew some things about Franklin, but next to nothing about the efforts to determine the fates of him and the crews of the 2 ships. This book covers those efforts with enthusiastic eloquence.

An excellent narrative of the greatest and longest search ever. A very good read if you are a "Franklin fanatic" or if you are new to the story

Over the years, I've read a number of books in which the Franklin mystery is discussed. However, none of them were as detailed and as meticulous as this one. Writing in a style that is clear, friendly, lively, accessible and quite captivating, the author recounts the various expeditions that were launched to search for information (at least) as to what happened to the Franklin expedition. A large amount of space is devoted to expeditions that took place in the latter half of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, culminating with the discovery of one of Franklin's ships, the Erebus. The fact that I was not familiar with most of these later explorations made reading this book very much worthwhile for me. As a bonus,

the author has been involved in some of these searches and personally knows several of these more recent key individuals. This is a book that can be enjoyed by anyone, but especially by those with anything from a mild interest in to an insatiable passion for the Franklin mystery.

This is an OK book. The problem is sloppy editing. The author shows that he is an amateur when he puts the caption under several illustrations "collection of the author". Theoretically this means that the author has the only copy of something. However, in this context it means "either I don't know where this came from or I could not be bothered to find out and tell you". The painting by Landseer on page 23 is an example. You can find out where this painting is by reading the text, but not by the caption. Similar examples are in the book. Also, saying that an illustration is courtesy of someone else as on page xiv and page 82 is the same. Maps with small writing and no legend (examples are on pages 64 and 66-67) are not helpful. A modern map showing where the Franklin expedition went, and artifacts found, would be nice. The illustration on page 105 also a problem. Is there a painting that this was based on? Or is this from the engraving that the Library of Congress has copy of? The author does not say. The statement "restoration by Adam Cuerden" suggests that there was, or is, a painting.

Great history of a lost expedition. Makes you aware of the harsh artic environment

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