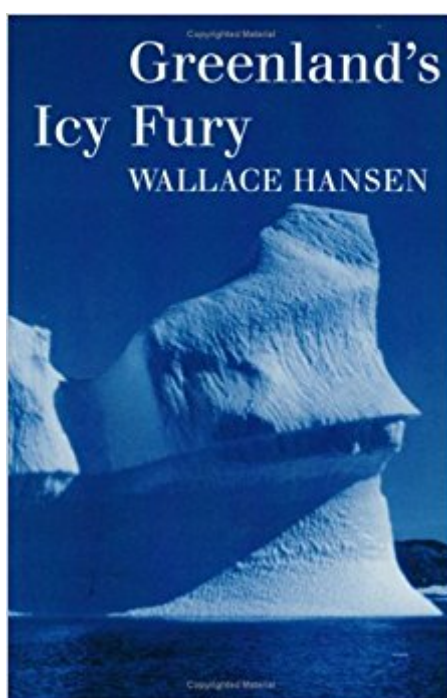


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Greenland's Icy Fury (Williams-Ford Texas A&M University Military History Series)



Synopsis

Stationed at a lonely wind-pounded outpost in an isolated backwater of World War II, the nineteen men of the Greenland Ice Cap Detachment were charged with erecting a weather/rescue station on the ten-thousand-foot-high Ice Cap to serve the Polar aircraft-ferrying route to Europe and to provide vital weather data for the expanding war effort. Greenland's Icy Fury is a lighthearted accounting of one of the least accessible and least known but most stunning parts of the globe--southeast Greenland--and its natural history, geography, geology, glaciers, and foremost, its savage weather and awesome climate. The Polar route to Europe afforded stepping stones for then-short-range aircraft, even though the landing fields were mere pinpoints in the wilderness, but hazardous flying conditions took a heavy toll of planes and airmen. Hitler's Nazis as well as the Allies knew that Greenland's white expanse was a virtual weather factory that played a key role in the day-to-day weather of the North Atlantic shipping lanes and the battlefields of western Europe. Ironically, few people today even realize that American troops were stationed in Greenland during World War II or what obscure role these troops played. A member of the all-volunteer Ice Cap Detachment, and a graduate geologist before the war, the author found time to look at the rocks, fjords, glaciers, and wildlife of southeast Greenland and to set down the framework for this book. Greenland's Icy Fury is aimed at inquisitive readers who appreciate the outdoors, are curious about their world, and would enjoy decidedly offbeat bits of WWII nostalgia.

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Customer Reviews

Stationed at a lonely wind-pounded outpost in an isolated backwater of World War II, the nineteen men of the Greenland Ice Cap Detachment were charged with erecting a weather/rescue station on the ten-thousand-foot-high Ice Cap to serve the Polar aircraft-ferrying route to Europe and to provide vital weather data for the expanding war effort. Greenland's Icy Fury is a lighthearted accounting of one of the least accessible and least known but most stunning parts of the globe - southeast Greenland - and its natural history, geography, geology, glaciers, and foremost, its savage weather and awesome climate. The Polar route to Europe afforded stepping stones for then-short-range aircraft, even though the landing fields were mere pinpoints in the wilderness, but hazardous flying conditions took a heavy toll of planes and airmen. Hitler's Nazis as well as the Allies knew that Greenland's white expanse was a virtual weather factory that played a key role in the day-to-day weather of the North Atlantic shipping lanes and the battlefields of western Europe. Ironically, few people today even realize that American troops were stationed in Greenland during World War II or what obscure role these troops played. A member of the all-volunteer Ice Cap Detachment, and a graduate geologist before the war, Wallace Hansen found time to look at the rocks, fjords, glaciers, and wildlife of southeast Greenland and to set down the framework for this book. Greenland's Icy Fury is aimed at inquisitive readers who appreciate the outdoors, are curious about their world, and would enjoy decidedly offbeat bits of WWII nostalgia.

Wallace Hansen was a research geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey for forty years until his retirement in 1985.

This book is an absorbing account of the key role that Greenland played during World War II. As a military outpost, a group of men provided critical weather data to guide allied forces in their aerial assaults against the encroaching German military in northern Europe. The book is also an admirably-told natural history and geology of the earth's largest icy island. The author, a highly respected geologist, waxes poetic about the incredible Greenland geology but also provides both a humorous and harrowing account of two years of a young man's life in a frozen dramatic world. The stories include transportation via dog sleds and skiing amidst deep frozen crevasses, the interaction with the Inuit Eskimos, the intense blizzards that filled a room through a key hole, as well as a glimpse at the pre-global warming world of Greenland. Fascinating! Highly recommended.

This is a fascinating account of a little known aspect of world war II - tracking and predicting the weather that could make or break a military campaign in Europe, and the daily life of the men who

spent a portion of the war in an isolated outpost in Greenland where some of those predictions were made. The author paints wonderful images of his time spent as part of this eclectic group of soldiers, each picked for a special skill that was needed for the group as a whole to live, work, and survive in the Greenland environment for over a year. Photographs also complement the descriptions. My only minor "complaint" about the book is that sometimes the author got a little too descriptive on the science of geology and weather, and from reading a book for it's historical perspective, wading through scientific detail detracted from the portion of the account I was most interested in.

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