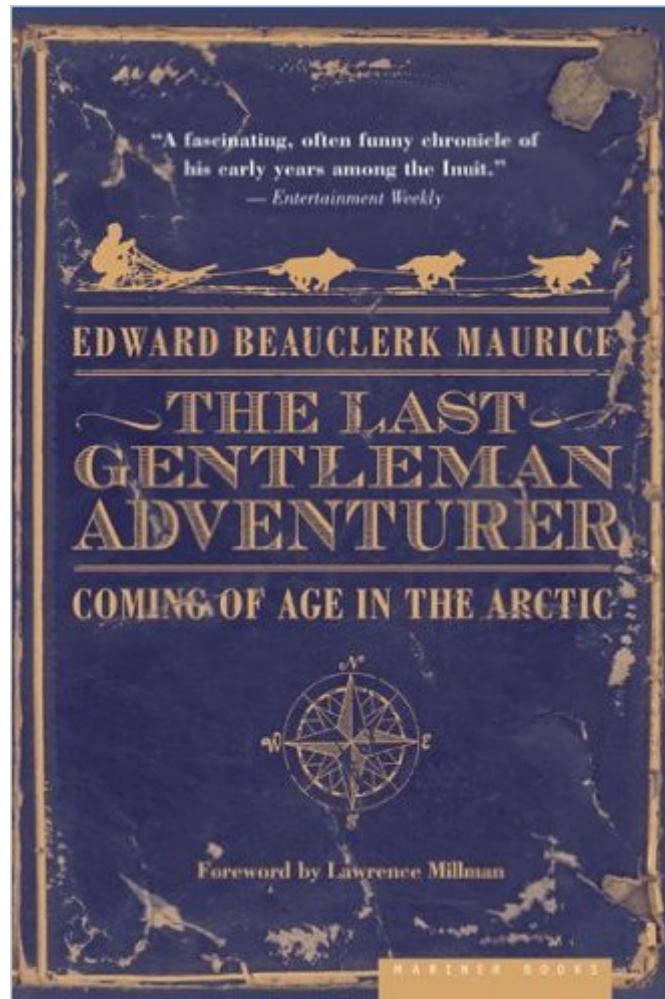


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The Last Gentleman Adventurer: Coming Of Age In The Arctic



Synopsis

At sixteen, Edward Beauclerk Maurice impulsively signed up with the Hudson's Bay Company -- the company of Gentleman Adventurers -- and ended up at an isolated trading post in the Canadian Arctic, where there was no communication with the outside world and only one ship arrived each year. But he was not alone. The Inuit people who traded there taught him how to track polar bears, build igloos, and survive ferocious winter storms. He learned their language and became completely immersed in their culture, earning the name Issumatak, meaning *the one who thinks*. In *The Last Gentleman Adventurer*, Edward Beauclerk Maurice relates his story of coming of age in the Arctic and transports the reader to a time and a way of life now lost forever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In June 1930 16-year-old Maurice stood on a London train platform bound for a five-year apprenticeship in the arctic hinterlands of Canada. A cerebral, sheltered, not very practical boy, Maurice had been inspired mostly by what he did not want. His family - widowed mother and siblings - had decided to immigrate to New Zealand to farm. Rather than share that agrarian fate, Maurice answered a Hudson Bay recruiting ad. A few months later he was on that train platform under a sign reading: "BOAT TRAIN, DUCHESS OF BEDFORD LIVERPOOL. HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY PARTY." The other travellers hurrying to and fro across the concourse, impelled to haste by the alarming pantings, snufflings and whistlings coming from the impatient engines, hardly spared us a glance, despite the flavour of distant adventure in that simple notice. For in those days, London was still the centre of a great empire and it was commonplace for parties to be seen

gathering at railway stations, or at other places of departure, to begin their long journeys to far-away places."But his was one of the last such departures, as the world was about to plunge into the Depression, which would be followed by WWII.Maurice's memoir of his arctic years (which ended forever when he went off to war in 1939), is one of those captivating books that begins charmingly, develops depth and atmosphere as it goes along, and engages all the senses throughout. It's a page-turning adventure and a portrait of a bygone era when Britannia ruled, the Inuit were called Eskimos and their resourceful, delicately balanced lives were just beginning to lean on Western technology. During its course a boy becomes a man, and a fine one, too.

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