

the story highly accessible to a young adult readership. The short, episodic nature of the journal entries and the rapid-fire sequence of events enhance the book's appeal, especially for reluctant readers. Although this edition substantially abridges the original, the story still maintains a smooth flow. Disappointing, though, is the omission of the large map which shows at a glance the entire span of the journey.

Safari also transports readers to exotic locales, this time to the wilds of Africa. A photographic survey of the wildlife of Kenya, this book had its origins in an intensive two-week safari undertaken by Dave Taylor, a writer and photographer with a special interest in natural history. *Safari* is a spectacular photographic record of that trip, supplemented by a brief written commentary.

Although *Safari* lacks the personal drama of *Paddle to the Amazon*, readers with an interest in the natural world will find themselves spellbound. The book's particular appeal to children lies in its remarkable illustrations. Colourful, sharply-defined, and composed with care, the photographs document vividly the fabulous array of Kenyan wildlife. There is, however, the odd disappointment. The unusual physiognomy of the mousebird, for example, is not discernible in the tiny photograph.

Children will find the text less accessible than the illustrations. While Taylor is an admirably impartial observer, refusing to lapse into diatribe in discussions of such controversial issues as the environment, his vocabulary and sentence structure are more suited to an adult readership. Still, as a book for young browsers, *Safari* is a visual delight.

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SECOND BIOGRAPHY BEST USED AS APPENDIX TO FIRST

From the land of the shadows: The making of Grey Owl. Donald B. Smith. Western Producer Prairie Books, 1990. 218 pp., \$24.95. ISBN 0-88833-309-9.

Donald Smith's *From the land of the shadows* is the second full biography of that fine writer, extraordinary conservationist and ingenious impersonator, Archibald Stansfeld Belaney (1888-1938), alias Grey Owl. Surprisingly, Smith's biography does not supplant the first full biography of Grey Owl, Lovat Dickson's *Wilderness man*, published in 1973. On the contrary, the second is best used as an appendix to the first.

The differences in the authors' backgrounds only partly explain the differences in the biographies. Dickson was Belaney's publisher and promoter.

Smith is a professor of history at the University of Calgary.

Predictably, Smith's *From the land of the shadows* is massively documented with eighty-six pages of footnotes and bibliography, compared to Dickson's no footnotes and scanty, four-page bibliography. Smith has supplied more details about some periods of Belaney's life and has corrected Dickson's errors. For example, Smith identifies the young man in a First World War army uniform, labelled "Archie Belaney" in Dickson's book, as Archie's younger brother, Hugh. But while Smith's facts may be numerous and useful, his analysis is strangely flawed.

Smith's hypothesis, that Belaney had serious emotional problems caused by his having been deserted by his parents at a very young age, is neither wrong nor new, just overworked. In *Wilderness man*, Dickson says the same thing, only he says it better, and he says other things as well.

In *From the land of the shadows*, over and over again, frequently in paragraphs exhibiting poor coherence and inevitably at the end of a chapter to create suspense, Smith restates his hypothesis obsessively. Here is an example: "Grey Owl could not completely escape from his past. The key to his creativity and his genius lies in his childhood in England. A combination of circumstances led him to enter into a fantasy world of his own making, one which would totally devour him."

With such simplistic analysis, Smith cannot do justice to Belaney's civilized complexity, as does Dickson. Furthermore, Smith's evidence becomes distorted. Other people, also surely fallible, even mere chance witnesses like one "Stan Cuthand" interviewed by telephone fifty years after an event, are unfairly given more credence and respect than Belaney, if their views match Smith's. Finally, non-psychological factors like economics, politics, and the exigencies of literary creation are generally ignored. According to Smith, for example, the only possible reason for Belaney joining the army during World War I is his emotional turmoil.

Perhaps, seeking a popular audience, academic historian Smith succumbed to the temptations of pop psychology and the cheap exposé.

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A VOICE FOR SHLEMIEL

Doctor Dwarf and other poems for children. A.M. Klein. Ed., Mary Alice Downey and Barbara Robertson. Illus. Gail Geltner. Quarry Press, 1990. Unpag., \$12.95 \$7.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 0-919627-41-2, 0-919627-43-9; **Noodle, Nitwit, Numskull.** Meguido Zola. Illus. Jillian Hulme Gilliland. Quarry Press, 1990. Unpag., \$12.95 \$7.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 0-919627-87-0, 0-919627-89-7.