



The Land of Feast and Famine

Helge Ingstad

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The young Norwegian was Helge Ingstad, now famous for his discovery in 1960 of a Viking village at L'Anse aux Meadows (on the northern tip of Newfoundland) -- the oldest known European settlement in North America. Ingstad recorded his adventures in the Canadian North in *The Land of Feast and Famine*, originally published in Norwegian in 1931 and first released in English two years later. Now, after being out of print in English for more than forty years, *The Land of Feast and Famine* is once again available, with its description of youthful adventure and its vivid portrayal of the people and ways of the Northwest Territories in the last days of the fur trading era. After making his way into the Canadian Arctic interior, Ingstad spent one winter with a fellow trapper in a log cabin they built themselves, and another living and hunting with a tribe of Inuit known as the Caribou-Eaters. During his final winter in the North, Ingstad lived in a tent in an area called the Barren Lands, hunting caribou and wolves, alone with his five dogs. In 1937, a small river in the Barren Lands was renamed Ingstad Creek. The life Ingstad describes is harsh and full of danger. He recounts many close calls of his own as well as the fates of those far less fortunate. On his way out of the North, Ingstad learned that the colourful adventurer John Hornby and two of his companions starved to death while on a expedition to the Barren Lands -- one of them outliving the others by months. But Ingstad's life in the Canadian Arctic was also full of heart-warming experiences. He describes the native companions and fellow trappers with whom he shared adventures and relates stories of numerous hunts and how he learned first hand about beaver, caribou, wolf, and other wildlife. He also provides a remarkable body of knowledge about native medicine. The arrival of the age of aviation opened up the North and, as Ingstad prophetically observed in 1931, the way of life of the native people, who were "still pursuing the free nomadic existence of their forefathers," would be irrevocably changed. At a time when the ways of life of Canada's native and Inuit people are more threatened than ever before, *The Land of Feast and Famine* provides a fascinating glimpse at a time already far in the past.

The Land of Feast and Famine Details

Date : Published April 24th 1992 by McGill-Queen's University Press (first published 1931)

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Åsmund says

I 1926 solgte Helge Ingstad advokatspraksisen sin og reiset til Canada for å bli pelsjeger. Han var 27 år gammel og Canada hadde flere store hvite flekker på kartet over terreng som ikke var kartlagt. Veldig eventyrlig og nesten fantastisk av en etablert mann å gjøre slik. For en fantastisk historie, for ett liv!

Men dette er ikke en påfunnet roman om du skulle tro det. Dette er en virkelig histore. En dokumentar. Hvis man har det i bakhodet blir denne boka en fantastisk lesning. Bare i respekt for det må jeg jo gi 5 stjerner.

Å leve av å være pelsjeger høres kanskje romantisk ut, men du verden for et slit det må ha vært. Bare det å overleve vinteren var en kamp. 4 år var Helge Ingstad pelsjeger i Canada. 1 år levde han sammen med en indianerstamme som han kaller "Villreinerne".

Han beskriver indianernes liv inngående, naturen, dyrene og livet som pelsjeger saklig og med få utbroderinger. Men alltid med respekt. Det er tydelig at han er svært engasjert i natur og miljøvern og ville sikkert hatt det som sin topp prioritet om han levde i dag.

Han forteller om ulvehyl, hvordan hundene behandles, sult og kampen for mat, hvordan man syr mokasiner, hvordan myggen plager og hvordan kulda biter.

Her er det så mye å gripe fatt i at dette kunne blitt mange bøker. Men i sin fortellerstil dveler Ingstad ikke lenge ved personer eller skjebner han treffer på. Forteller kort og saklig, med kanskje en og annen undertone om noe humoristisk som skinner igjennom av og til.

Denne boka er kanskje det nærmeste du kommer en skikkelig naturopplevelse fra sofakroken? Aldri kjedelig aldri og virkelig spennende. Men du verden for en fin opplevelse.

Anbefales på det sterkeste!

Eva Kristin says

Denne boka spiller på mange strengar samstundes.

Fyrst og fremst er det ei forteljing om ei eventyrlig tid som pelsjegar i Kanada. Ingstad fortel nøkternt og detaljert om dei ulike sidene ved livet til både kvite og innfødde som kjemper for å overleve i skogen og på tundraen omkring Store Slavesjø. Og kjempe gjer dei. Den udramatiske forteljarstilen til Ingstad gjer slett ikkje sogene mindre spanande.

Samstundes er det ei verdfull skildring av livet til chipewyan-indianarane på slutten av 1920-talet. Kulturen deira er i endring, men framleis lev det eldre som kan hugse tida før dei kvite gjorde seg gjeldande der nord. Omgjevnadane er og i endring. Bytet frå pil og boge til gevær gjer jegeren mykje meir effektiv, og overbelastninga av villreinstamma har alt byrja å vise seg som eit problem. Eg er imponert over Ingstad si evne til å skildre ein framand kultur på ein ærleg og respektfull måte.

Naturskildringane til Ingstad er nydelege, og hans eiga tydelege nyting av å vere i naturen er det lett å late seg rive med av.

Noko uventa var den tørre humoren som dukkar opp fleire stader i boka. Særleg skildringane hans av det fyrste møte han hadde med tømmerfløytinga sine gleder, var fornøyelege!

Rebecka says

Another nice memoir about someone living in the wilderness! By now I've read quite a lot of books about people who live with Inuits, but this is my first book about someone living with Native Americans. He repeatedly mentions the tribe's fear of the Inuits, which I find fascinating, but then doesn't explain it any further! I want to know why they are so afraid of them. The Native Americans don't at all come across as friendly and caring as the Inuits always do in these books, so I really wonder about what happened between them.

Another interesting thing is how all these western men who live among the natives are so afraid of their not-so-very-shy women :D

Heather Clitheroe says

Quite a lovely book, though it was hard to get my hands on it. It's the story of Ingstad's time in the Canadian Arctic, where he spends several years hunting and trapping. The story is often a bit dry: accounts of the hunting itself, of the traveling back and forth to different places, of the kinds of animals he's hunting. But there are some lovely, dry-witted accounts of mishaps and accidents, of dog teams that don't behave as they ought to, of life with aboriginal communities, and descriptions of the other hunters and trappers 'up there.'

I quite enjoyed it.

Ole says

This book is great

That is all

There is no more to say about this book

Everything else is redundat

Go away

Stop reading

.....

I give in - i will continue.

To me, there are four great norwegians

Hamsun - the writer, the genius

Nansen - the scientist, the diplomat

Amundsen - the discoverer, the leader

And then there is Helge Ingstad.

He too was great, but in another way. He was the nature man. He wanted to live of the land, too hunt, fish - and experience life, on natures terms. This makes for great literature.

And what a ride.

A must read for any who likes outdoor, hiking, mountains, hunting and the like. I admire this man - for traveling.

A good book. Well worth the read

torque says

A view into how life was for a trapper in Northern Canada in the 1920's. A fascinating account written in a very lively language, that takes you right there. Although, the hardships were guaranteed harder than the impression you get reading this book. I will certainly be on the lookout for more of Ingstad's book. 4½ stars

Thomas Haaland says

Obligatorisk lesning for alle med en eventyrer i magen. Fascinerende, velskrevet og inspirerende!

Marie Østvold says

This is a great documentary about the natives of Canada, and norwegian exploration. Still very relevant.

Hans says

Interesting to read how a Norwegian experienced the Canadian wilderness and living with first nation

representatives almost a century ago.
