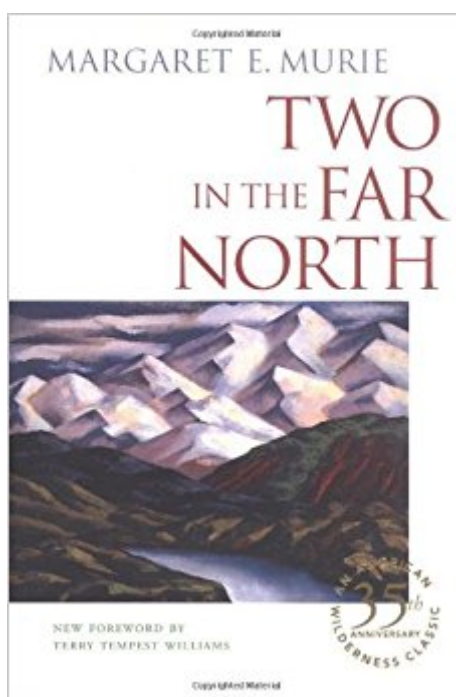


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Two In The Far North



Synopsis

This enduring story of life, adventure, and love in Alaska was written by a woman who embraced the remote Alaskan wilderness and became one of its strongest advocates. In this moving testimonial to the preservation of the Arctic wilderness, Mardy Murie writes from her heart about growing up in Fairbanks, becoming the first woman graduate of the University of Alaska, and marrying noted biologist Olaus J. Murie. So begins her lifelong journey in Alaska and on to Jackson Hole, Wyoming where along with her husband and others, they founded The Wilderness Society. Mardy's work as one of the earliest female voices for the wilderness movement earned her the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Mardy Murie is often referred to as "The Grandmother of American Conservation" and "The Grand Dame of the American Conservation movement, but somehow after reading her story, these titles barely seem adequate to describe such an incredible and personal woman. While we may liken Murie to women like Rachel Carson or Anna Botsford Comstock, Murie's journey is singular. We follow her from her childhood in Wyoming to graduation at the University of Alaska, through love, into the far reaches of the Alaskan North. Murie successfully bridges the personal and the political, her own life and her life's work, her love for one man and her love for their work together. You will laugh with her, you will cry with her, feel scared for her, and come to love her. She will become your hero. We must recognize Murie as an American treasure, but we must also recognize that Murie's inspiration is perhaps more important now than it ever was. The most obvious reason for this

statement is the continuing struggle to preserve the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from growing oil interests. We must also recognize, however, that Murie could be the inspiration for the young generation of leaders in conservation-- a group of leaders that undoubtedly must include women. That there are very so few women leaders in conservation has caused the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women to recognize the struggle of women in their efforts to achieve leadership positions in the conservation movement. Other organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund, the Sierra Club, and the National Wildlife Federation have launched campaigns to attract more women into leadership roles. The lack of women in environmental leadership reflects America's view of rugged individualism in our collective imagination...

Margaret (Mardy) Murie (née Thomas) was a truly extraordinary person who lived for 101 years. This book is not really an autobiography although it is autobiographical, recounting her adventures in Alaska before she met Olaus, mainly with him, and then visits after his death. Anyone who has been to Alaska, is going to go, or has an interest in wilderness should read this book. Murie was a talented writer, leaving us an enjoyable legacy of vivid descriptions and, at the end, thoughtful reflections. Hang in there: this is a long review because the book is so worthy. The Murie and Thomas families represent a one-two punch that must be highly unusual if not truly unique. Both Olaus and Mardy had sibs ten years their junior, brother Adolph Murie marrying sister Louise (Wheezy) Thomas, born 1912 and still living last I heard. Both wives were devoted outdoor enthusiasts who accompanied their eventually famous, field biologist husbands into the wilds of Alaska and elsewhere. There are four major parts to Mardy's book, the first being when she came to Fairbanks at age nine. (At least one web site claims she was five, but that's not what she herself says.) Even today, one can get a sense of the town she describes for 1911. The streets are the same, the city having resisted tearing up downtown and instead forcing the shopping centers and other sprawl north of the Cheny River or south of the old town. Yes, there are now large hotels and an incredibly beautiful and absorbing visitor's center, but by and large the buildings remain modest. Some of the old cabins have been moved downtown and are occupied (with modern conveniences to be sure). The Masonic Lodge is still as Murie mentioned it, if a bit decrepit.

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