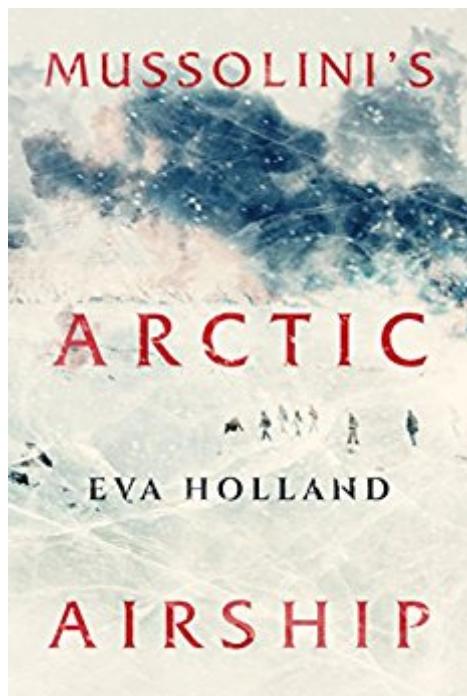


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Mussolini's Arctic Airship (Kindle Single)



Synopsis

On May 24, 1928, the airship Italia successfully reached the North Pole—proof that the Italians, too, were part of the waning golden age of polar exploration. But on its return journey to Norway, the airship plunged from the sky and smashed into the Arctic pack ice. General Umberto Nobile and eight other survivors were stranded on an ice floe nearly two hundred miles from land. Nobile's bitter rival, legendary Norwegian polar explorer Roald Amundsen—the first man to sail the Northwest Passage and the first to reach the South Pole—announced his willingness to come to the general's rescue. But Mussolini couldn't bear the humiliation of his general being saved by an enemy, so Amundsen set off on an unauthorized recovery mission of his own. Journalist Eva Holland delivers a glittering portrayal of the ill-fated voyage of the airship Italia and the rescue missions it precipitated, set against the backdrop of rising nationalism in Europe. *Mussolini's Arctic Airship* explores how the changing politics of interwar Europe shaped the lives and deaths of men—even in the farthest frozen reaches of the planet. Cover design by Pepe NYMI.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An intriguing account of an exciting arctic adventure. The story is concise, evocative, captivating and worth the read. I recommend it

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This short book by Eva Holland captures a peculiar episode in the history of Arctic exploration: a time when a decorated but financially despondent Norwegian explorer found his fate caught up with an Italian military fascist and the turmoil of nationalist politics. The story contains all the ingredients we expect from polar exploration—suffering and scurvy, triumph and heroism, polar bears and pack ice—but this isn't a simple recounting of adventures in the frozen north. Holland also seeks to explore the motivations and emotions that drove Norwegian Roald Amundsen and Italian Umberto Nobile. The famed explorer Amundsen is portrayed as the hero, and the tale could easily have been reduced to a simple dichotomy: hero versus villain; a valiant explorer pitted against an ego-driven disciple of Mussolini. But Holland portrays both men with equal humanity. In one memorable scene, for instance, after his plane crashes on the ice and his body is broken, Nobile snuggles his small dog into his sleeping bag for comfort. Mining historical documents and her own experience in the region, Holland's story is buoyed by specific details and gorgeous writing, like the sea ice that resembles not a flat plain but “a frozen, deadly jungle gym.” This tale will captivate anyone who likes polar exploration, aviation and military history, or simply a well-told story about a forgotten moment in time.

How many people know the Arctic was explored by blimp? I sure didn't. This is an exciting journey into the perils and rivalries of Arctic exploration post WWI. It chronicles the time when explorers were abandoning polar travel by dog sled in favor of newer aviation technology—and the disastrous results. This book excels at bringing the hardship and details of 1920s Arctic exploration to life, along with valuable historical context. It will be delightful for adventure junkies, and history or aviation buffs alike. If you read it on an airplane you'll feel grateful that you're in a 777 and not a dirigible!

This is a short and fascinating read about a surprising and forgotten chapter in the annals of arctic exploration. The Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen has historically been maligned for the supposedly sneaky way he became the first to conquer the South Pole with his fast-and-light team of sled dogs while Robert Falcon Scott would end up dying on the ice. It's an unfair charge, of course,

and this episode proves that Amundsen was more than just a great explorer. He was also a man of great honor. When he hears that an Italian rival has crashed an airship in the Arctic, he immediately volunteers to rescue him and ends up making the ultimate sacrifice. (Apparently, Mussolini wasn't keen on this idea, but Amundsen goes anyway.) There are multiple accounts about exactly what happened, but the author of this Single has woven them into a seamless, cinematic read.

If you want to learn a little history, this is a great way. History in a story. Good adventure in a short story.

A beautifully crafted and gripping narrative of Arctic exploration by a leading Arctic exploration nerd/all around fabulous writer. If you follow this stuff at all, Eva Holland's latest missive is a must-read. And if you don't, this gem may just make you into an Arctic exploration nerd yourself. Also, blimps + polar bears + pack ice + Viglieri's Very Large Shoes + Roald Amundsen = Pure awesome.

A fascinating, compulsive read about Arctic exploration. Vivid and memorable.

This brief book is an account of the closing of the age of Polar exploration, with all the heroism, rivalry and danger that implies. Well worth the time.

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