

CAL
EA980
C17
Feb. 1974
DOCS c.1

CANADA

TODAY / D'AUJOURD'HUI

LIBRARY DEPT. OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES

LIBRARY E A / BIBLIOTHÈQUE A E
3 5036 01031428 7

Pingoes and The Northwest Passage

[THE HISTORIC DISCOVERIES OF THE SCIENTIFIC SHIP HUDSON]

A pingo is a cone of antediluvian ice, coated with frozen muck, a thousand feet at the base, one to two hundred feet high, sticking up like a dirty knife from the bottom of the arctic sea to within forty feet of the surface. It could pierce and rip the bottom of an unsuspecting deep-draft ship the way a kitchen knife can gut a fish. In one dramatic half hour on a summer morning in 1970, the Canadian scientific ship *Hudson*, plotting the shape of the Beaufort Sea's basin with a side-scan

sonar, found seven pingoes in a row. A few days later, the sonar watchers found a picket line of them stretched across the Northwest Passage.

The discovery meant that the long-sought passage around the top of North America was at that time a dead end for supertankers and that the *Manhattan*, which had pioneered the route less than a year before, could be the last as well as the first to make the run.

The *Hudson* is a floating oceanographic labora-

