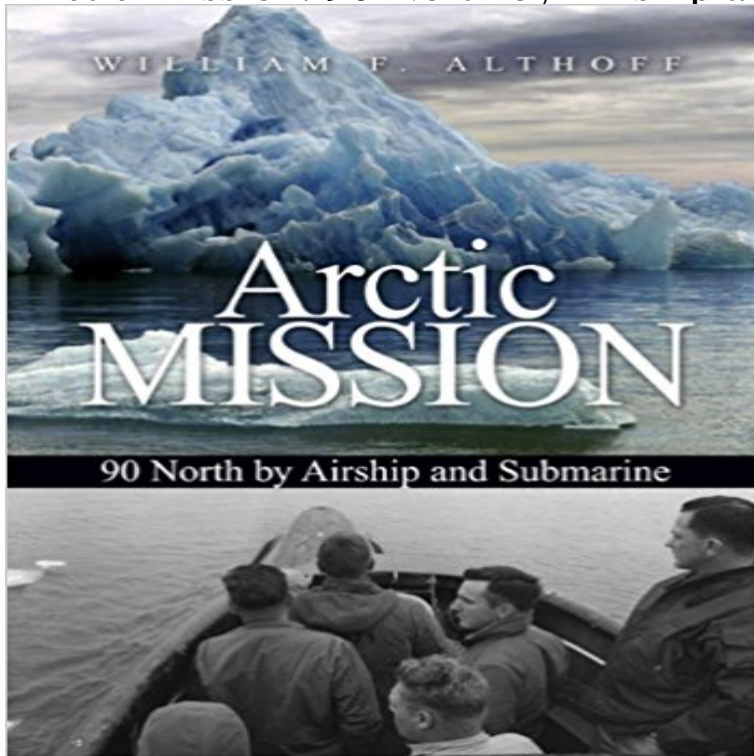


## Arctic Mission: 90 North by Airship and Submarine



Arctic Mission recounts two concurrent Navy Department penetrations of the Arctic, in 1958: one an unclassified project, the other absolutely secret. The Cold War posed alarm and threat; amid its urgencies, the International Geophysical Year of 1957-58 was underway. Sputnik had opened the Space Age—for Americans, a national humiliation. The White House needed a success. Sailing under the direct orders of the Commander in Chief, the nuclear submarine Nautilus (SSN-571) would—if successful—reaffirm U.S. technological prowess with a stupendous demonstration: an under-ice transit of the Arctic Basin via the North Pole. The airships unclassified mission was an Office of Naval Research project. Objective: to assess the suitability of non-rigid airships (blimps) for support of field parties deployed throughout the North, ashore and afloat. That IGY August, BUNO 126719 crossed the Arctic Circle—the sole military airship ever to do so—en route to rendezvous with a U.S. Air Force ice-rafted camp (drifting station) in the Arctic Ocean. As 719 (delayed) pressed north, Nautilus pierced the geographic pole then without changing course logged the first-ever transit of the deep-ocean Arctic, Pacific to Atlantic. Based on interviews and correspondence with dozens of participants, and on Navy Department reports, the work presents first-hand material throughout—a distinct contribution to the naval literature. Indeed, Arctic Mission may be the first in-depth (non-popular) account of the boats epic cruise to 90 N. Further, the ONR expedition across Arctic Canada to IGY BRAVO (ice island T-3) is a singular unknown—even to naval aviators.

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