The Great Copernicus Chase And Other Adventures In Astronomical History

Owen Gingerich

Although a great deal of this book rambles between many odd stories, these stories demonstrate the way that science comes alive through the relationships and studies and investigations of human beings who remain human even when they happen to be really great scientists. The author too shows himself to be a person of great interest in a wide variety of subjects and manages to come off as humane and delightfully quirky. In its odd wandering and its tale about historians and philosophers and scientists, this is a book that is an odd book for odd people. The Book Nobody Read, then, serves as a history of not only Copernicus' research but the history of the book itself. But all you get is a story about the authors chasing first and second editions around the world. The Great Copernicus Chase is an anthology of 36 incidents drawn from the history of astronomy. The chapters range from Stonehenge and ancient Egypt, to the Great Comet of 1965, and to Albert Einstein. In this series of articles, arranged roughly chronologically, Professor Gingerich covers all the important periods and developments in astronomy. Some of the many adventures that have befallen him in this quest feature in the book. The majority of the chapters originally appeared in Sky and Telescope, the monthly astronomy magazine published by Sky Publishing Corporation of Cambridge, Massachusetts.