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National Antarctic Expedition

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## NATIONAL ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION.

THE following letter has been forwarded to Captain Scott through the Admiralty:—

1, Savile Row, W., October 9, 1903.

DEAR CAPTAIN SCOTT,

1. *Receipt of Letters.*—We, the President and Council of the Royal Geographical Society, have received your letters dated January 9, 1902, written off Cape Adare; January 22, 1902, off Cape Crozier; February 22, 1903, describing the position of the *Discovery* in winter quarters; and February 23, 1903, being your summary of proceedings during the winter and travelling season until the arrival of the *Morning*, with its enclosures containing short accounts of some of the sledge journeys; also your letter to the secretary of the expedition dated February 26, with five enclosures. We have endeavoured to give effect to your wishes and requests conveyed to us in your letters and their enclosures to the extent of our power and abilities.

2. *General Approval.*—We are impressed with the value of the work accomplished by your expedition, with the skill and sound judgment evinced in your conduct of the exploring work and in all your arrangements, and by the admirable way in which you have been supported by the officers and men under your command.

3. *Voyage of 1902.*—The exploratory voyage of the *Discovery* within the antarctic circle during the navigable season of 1902 secured all the objects for which we hoped and which are alluded to in your instructions. To a careful examination of the ice-barrier, including hydrographic and other scientific observations, you have added a balloon ascent of considerable interest, and the discovery of a continental land which you have appropriately named after His Majesty the King. It was fortunate that you were able to swing the ship successfully off Cape Crozier, to ascertain the disturbing effects of the iron on the instruments mounted in the magnetic observatory.

4. *Selection of Winter Quarters.*—Your selection of safe winter quarters under Mount Erebus, in so very high a latitude, has been fortunate both as regards the scientific observations and collections, and as a position whence important discoveries have been made. Your description, illustrated by the accompanying tracing, has given us a very clear idea of the position of the *Discovery* in her winter quarters.

5. *Autumn Travelling.*—Autumn travelling has always been the most severe kind of polar work, and the experiences of your officers and men were quite exceptional with regard to the perils and hardships they so manfully encountered. As you have observed, these experiences gained in the autumn were invaluable in the organization of the spring travelling. The men behaved admirably, but their knowledge was dearly bought by the loss of their comrade, poor George Vince, in the performance of an arduous duty. He had no near relations but his cousin, who has been communicated with. We hope a monument has been erected to his memory. We deeply regret that this sad accident should have cast a gloom on an expedition which, in all other respects, has been so prosperous.

6. *Work in the Winter.*—The steadfast and resolute way in which your staff conducted the scientific work during the winter under your superintendence and with your encouragement, has our warmest approval. Great praise is due to Lieut. Royds for his meteorological labours, to Mr. Bernacchi for the magnetic records obtained with the Eschenhagen instruments, and to Mr. Hodgson for his

indefatigable biological work, entailing frequent exposure for lengthened periods. We notice, also, the exceedingly valuable collection made by Dr. Wilson, and the botanical and geological researches of Dr. Koettlitz and Mr. Ferrar. We are also much pleased to know that the scientific staff always received all possible assistance, most zealously given, from their comrades, both officers and men.

7. *Winter Arrangements.*—You and your gallant companions have now passed through the rigours of two Antarctic winters. We realize the great trial to mind and body which such periods of hardship and exposure entail, and the necessity for healthy mental as well as bodily support in order to enable men to pass through it while preserving their health and spirits. Your care and that of your medical and executive officers has secured the great end as regards the first winter by attention to diet, ventilation, and exercise, and by those entertainments and intellectual amusements which drive away despondency and make the time pass pleasantly.

8. "*South Polar Times.*"—The *South Polar Times* does great credit to its editor, Mr. Shackleton, for it contains several really valuable and interesting articles, besides excellent humorous contributions. It is very satisfactory to find that the men joined with the officers in supporting the first Antarctic periodical, and that Mr. Dailey, Kennar, Quartly, and Wild were among the contributors. We trust that Mr. Shackleton, with the assistance of Dr. Keltie, will be successful in making arrangements for its publication, with the really beautiful illustrations by Dr. Wilson.

9. *Scurvy.*—The appearance of symptoms of scurvy in the spring must have been a source of great anxiety, but the prompt and efficient measures adopted by you with the advice of your medical officers seem to have been quite efficacious. Your belief that there will not be any recurrence of those symptoms will, we also believe and earnestly trust, have been borne out by the result.

*Supply of Bad Provisions.*—We do not propose to take any steps with regard to the supply of bad provisions until your return; but evidence has been taken from Mr. Spadaccini, and all the papers have been put together ready for any action in the matter that may be deemed advisable.

10. *Spring Travelling.*—We can only write in terms of the highest praise and admiration of the achievements of the expedition during the spring travelling, whether we consider the difficulties faced and overcome or the value of the discoveries. Your own memorable journey with your two companions, Shackleton and Wilson, when all the special and peculiar obstacles are considered, takes its place in the first rank of polar achievements. We await your full narrative with great interest, and we anticipate that the careful drawings of such an accomplished artist as Dr. Wilson will give additional value and interest to your results. The inland journey of Mr. Armitage, accompanied by Mr. Skelton, is unique of its kind, as it combines the hardships of polar travelling with the methods and appliances of Alpine climbing. The former experience of Mr. Armitage proved useful, and both officers merit high commendation for their remarkable journey, the scientific results of which cannot fail to be valuable. The discovery of the insularity of Mounts Erebus and Terror, and of the smaller volcanic islands, is due to the labours of Lieuts. Royds and Skelton, and to the various journeys of Dr. Koettlitz with other members of the scientific staff. Lieut. Barne's severe experience during the autumn fitted him to command the two important journeys in the spring, in the last of which he reached a latitude only second to your own. His care of the men forming his sledge cruise deserves the commendation you have given it.

11. *Conduct of Men.*—We particularly desire to express our approval of the

zeal and fine conduct of the men under your command. They have maintained the noble tradition of the navy whenever it has been employed on voyages of discovery. In all polar expeditions, since the return of that under Sir George Nares, travelling has been effected by means of dogs. Your gallant fellows have achieved their excellent results mainly without the aid of dogs; by sheer hard work, by a strong sense of duty, and by that indomitable pluck which has ever characterized the British sailor. Nor would we forget the sister service, so well represented by Lance-Corporal Blisset and by that resourceful young soldier, Gilbert Scott. We desire that you will tell the men how highly we appreciate their loyalty to you and to their officers, and their splendid zeal and endurance to which the success of the expedition is so largely due.

12. *Details yet to come.*—We quite understand that time only allowed you to give us the barest outline of the results of the expedition in your reports and letters now under reply, and we look forward with great interest to the receipt of your complete results and conclusions after your return.

13. *Recommendations to the Admiralty.*—On receipt of your letter with recommendations respecting the men under your command, we sent a copy to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, earnestly requesting that their service prospects may in no manner suffer from their prolonged absence. We received sympathetic replies, of which copies are enclosed, together with our forwarding letter. You will observe that all your recommendations have been complied with.

14. *Mr. Armitage and the P. & O. Company.*—The directors of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company were addressed with reference to the valuable services and prolonged absence of Lieut. Armitage, and a cordial reply was received.

15. *Arrangements for the Second Relief Voyage.*—On the arrival of the *Morning* at Lyttelton on March 26, 1903, orders were at once given to Captain Colbeck to attend to her repairs, to supply defects, and make other necessary arrangements. The stores contained in the list you transmitted were ordered, and their supply was placed under the superintendence of Mr. Shackleton. With regard to your indent for gun cotton and blasting gear, an application was made to the Admiralty for these stores to be supplied from Sydney. This has been done, and they will be taken to you by Captain Colbeck. The two large ice-saws were ordered at Dundee.

16. *Financial Position.*—The balance of the *Discovery* fund is only sufficient to pay the salaries and wages until October, 1904. It is necessary, therefore, that you should exercise all possible economy with regard to further expenditure.

*Dr. Wilson and Mr. Hodgson: Increase of Salary.*—You have, however, considerably reduced the wages bill, and we have great pleasure in complying with your request that the salaries of Dr. Wilson and Mr. Hodgson be increased by £50 each from the date of your letter.

17. *Application to Government.*—We have been obliged to apply to the Government for assistance for the present Relief Expedition, and for the needs of the *Discovery*. On June 20, the Secretary to the Treasury announced that the Government would undertake the Relief Expedition on condition that the ownership of the *Morning* was transferred to the Admiralty, her value being required as a set-off to the expenses of the Government. The vessel has been handed over to the Admiralty, who have undertaken all expenses and responsibility in connection with the present Relief Expedition.

18. *Relief Ships.*—Captain Colbeck has been retained in command, receiving his instructions from the Admiralty, and another vessel, we understand, has been added, the whaler *Terra Nova*. Both, we were informed, will be under Captain

Colteck's orders on the outward voyage. We trust that the two ships will arrive in time to afford you active assistance in the work of breaking out of the ice. It is understood that, on the arrival of the relief ships, you will receive instructions respecting them from the Admiralty.

19. *Breaking out of the Ice*.—We have read your descriptions of the position of the *Discovery*, and your views respecting the ultimate prospect of the ship being freed. You are acquainted with all the former experiences relating to the extrication of ships from all quarters in the Arctic regions. You are possessed of the knowledge of the use of explosives; and you are supported by a chosen band of officers and men. If human forethought, skill, energy, and perseverance can free the *Discovery* from her icy prison, we are convinced that this great object will be achieved. If not, she will remain a monument of a memorable expedition. She will, we hope, not be derelict, but that you may be able to leave her securely moored in harbour.

20. *Return to Lyttelton*.—If the *Discovery* is released, she is to proceed to Lyttelton for the comparison of magnetic instruments and for repairs. If you have to return in the relief ship, you are to proceed to the same port.

21. *Return to Lyttelton. Further Arrangements*.—Be assured that, under any circumstances, on your return to Lyttelton proper arrangements will be made for furnishing you with the necessary credit to enable you to refit your ship at Lyttelton and bring her home. You will find a letter from us awaiting your arrival at Lyttelton, containing further instructions and an announcement of the arrangements we have been able to make. You are at once to telegraph your needs and wishes, and they will be supplied and complied with to the extent of our abilities. Details will be left entirely to your discretion.

22. *Return Home*.—We sincerely trust that you and your gallant companions will have passed through the second winter without injury to health, and that within another year your country will cordially welcome your return to home and friends with the fruitful results of your labours.

(Signed) CLEMENTS R. MARKHAM,  
President R.G.S.

## REVIEWS.

### AFRICA.

#### THE TAWAREK.

'A Search for the Masked Tawareks.' By W. J. Harding King.  
London: Smith, Elder. 1903.

To the *Journal* for November, 1902, Mr. Harding King communicated a short account of an excursion which he made in the spring of 1900 to the southern parts of the French Sahara, with the twofold purpose of studying the physical features of that region, and of interviewing a band of Hoggar (Ahaggar) Tuaregs, said to have just then pitched their tents in the neighbourhood of Tugurr. Permanent form is now given to that communication in the book under notice, which, however, contains a considerable amount of fresh matter, either collected at first hand by the author, or drawn from such recognized French authorities as MM. Duveyrier, Hanoteau, Mercier, and Bissnel. The author has a good eye for natural scenery, and is a shrewd observer of human character, and the result is a very readable and instructive volume, which is, moreover, enriched by a large number of photographic views of the land and its people taken on the spot.