

## THE JAPANESE SOUTH POLAR EXPEDITION

### 1910 –12 — A Record of Antarctica

Compiled and edited by The Shirase Antarctic Expedition Supporter's Association

Translated and edited by Lara Dagnall and Hilary Shibata



*Kainan-maru* and *Fram*, moored to the ice in the Bay of Whales

The Japanese Antarctic Expedition, 1910–12, under the leadership of army lieutenant Nobu Shirase was the first exploration of Antarctic territory by Japan. After initial scepticism about the expedition they sailed from Tokyo on 29 November 1910, in *Kainan-maru*, a vessel only 100 feet in length. They arrived in Wellington on 8 February 1911 and three days later departed for the Antarctic.

The entire trip south was dogged by poor weather and when the coast of Victoria Land was finally sighted conditions were so bad that a landing was impossible. They sailed on through the Ross Sea only to find even worse ice and soon it was impossible to go any further. Shirase ordered the crew to turn the ship northward for Australia. They arrived in Sydney on 1 May, 1911 and were initially greeted with suspicion and hostility. Captain Nomura went back to Japan, with the secretary to the expedition, returning some five months later with provisions, ships' parts and other equipment.

During the following season a second attempt was made to reach an Antarctic landfall, with the specific objective of exploring King Edward VII Land. At the Great Ice Barrier they met Roald Amundsen's ship *Fram*, which was waiting in the Bay of Whales for the return of Amundsen's South Pole party. Seven men were landed on the Barrier and a 'Dash Patrol' journeyed southward to 80°05'S, at which point adverse weather and lack of food and time forced their return. Meanwhile the ship landed another party on the coast of King Edward VII Land, where an exploration of the lower slopes of the Alexandra Range was carried out.

In mid-February *Kainan-maru* returned to Japan, reaching Yokohama on 20 June 1912. The expedition had sailed some 27,000 miles since leaving Japan and despite not reaching the Pole, they had achieved many of their other goals. There was a tremendous reception upon their return to Tokyo. Nobu Shirase died in 1946.

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## THE THIRD REICH IN ANTARCTICA

### The Story of the Third German Antarctic Expedition 1938-39

Colin Summerhayes and Cornelia Lüdecke



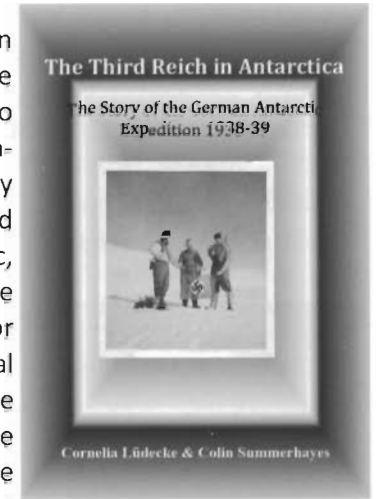
The origins of the Third German Antarctic Expedition lie in a combination of the aspirations of German scientists to contribute to exploring and understanding the Antarctic environment, and the Nazi Party's drive for self-sufficiency on the road to war. In 1936/37 Germany had joined the whaling nations in the South Atlantic, keen to obtain whale oil without having to use valuable foreign currency reserves needed for rearmament. Considering that it needed a local whaling base, Germany decided to explore the possibility of setting up a supply base on the coast of Dronning Maud Land. The man in charge of German whaling was Councillor of State Helmut Wohlthat who in 1938 put this idea of unclaimed Antarctic territory as a territorial basis for German whaling, to his superior, Hermann Göring, the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan for Economic Development. Following consultation with other ministries, Göring approved the concept, and assigned resources for a reconnaissance expedition, including a ship and two seaplanes for aerial survey and photographic mapping. The Third German Antarctic Expedition was born.



The expedition was led by Alfred Ritscher, a captain in the German navy and on 19 January 1939 *Schwabenland* arrived in Dronning Maud Land and began charting the region. Nazi German flags were placed on the sea ice along the coast and the area was named *Neu Schwabenland* after the ship. Its scientific studies, using state of the art equipment for meteorology and oceanography, made major discoveries. The expedition returned to Hamburg on 11 April, 1939.

This is the story of an ambitious and little-known expedition, which set out to map a large piece of Antarctica from the air, and in the process discovered an 800 km long mountain range and previously unsuspected freshwater lakes.

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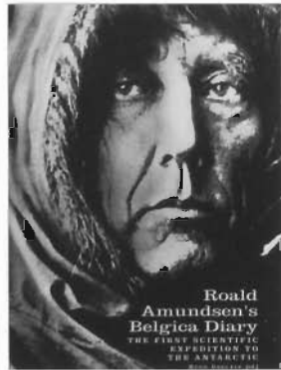
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John King Davis

with a new introduction by Beau Riffenburgh

Originally published in a small edition in 1919 this is the record of the voyages of *Aurora* in Southern Waters, written from a sailor's point of view. Built in 1876 as an Arctic whaler *Aurora*, though old and battered, captained by Davis, managed three Antarctic voyages in support of Mawson and his men. This facsimile of the original edition makes a scarce and fascinating book readily available.

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Written as a private record this diary provides a fascinating insight into the struggle for survival on the ice during the Antarctic winter and into the pressures involved in being part of a multinational crew.

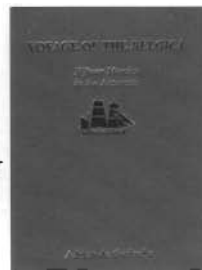
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Behind the Scenes of the *Nimrod* Expedition

Regina W. Daly

Ernest Shackleton was obsessed by the Antarctic. He was disappointed at his showing during Scott's *Discovery* expedition and he wanted to be the first to the South Pole, partly for glory but also because he felt he had to redeem himself. Raising money was fraught with difficulty but in 1907 he finally set sail, aboard the *Nimrod*. Here, gathered together for the first time, are some 160 letters and telegrams exploring his endeavours to find finance and to prepare for the expedition. His emotions are revealed through personal correspondence with Scott, Dr Edward Wilson, Sir Clements Markham and many others. The last section of the book reproduces Shackleton's intimate letters to his wife, Emily, and to Elspeth Beardmore, for whom he had a deep affection. Many of these letters have never before been published.



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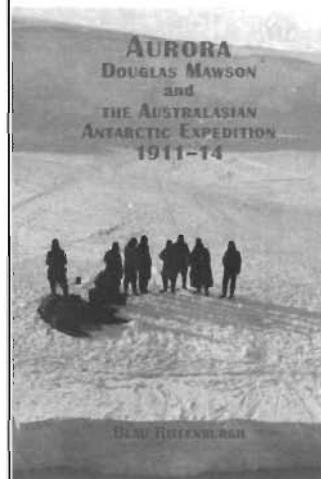
AURORA

## DOUGLAS MAWSON AND THE AUSTRALASIAN

## ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION 1911-14

Beau Riffenburgh

NEW



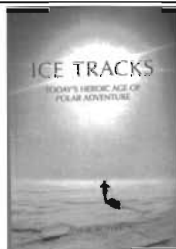
In 1911 Douglas Mawson organised and led the Australasian Antarctic Expedition - a scientific investigation of the Antarctic on a scale never before considered. At the same time it was responsible for the exploration of vastly more territory than any other Antarctic expedition. It consisted of three land bases operated by 32 men, seven major sledging journeys (as well as numerous shorter ones), and a full oceanographic programme in addition to its shore-based scientific studies. Yet what was intended by Mawson to be a scientific exercise devoid of heroic adventure, also proved to be a tale of death, determination, and raw courage. The late Sir Edmund Hillary described it as *the greatest survival story in the history of exploration*.

The dynamic character of Mawson, the expedition's sheer scale, and the fact that most of what happened on it has never entered the public consciousness were very appealing reasons to investigate such an epic venture. The result is the first examination of the full expedition since Mawson's *The Home of the Blizzard* was published in 1915.



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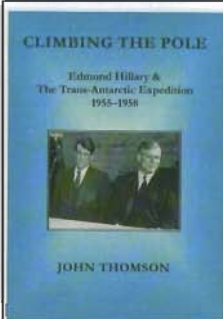
Today's Heroic Age of Polar Adventure

Angie Butler

*Ice Tracks* brings together for the first time the accounts of eighteen of our greatest explorers: Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Robert Swanri, Rosie Stancer and Ann Daniels, Matty McNair and Dr Victor Boyarsky—English, Russian, Swedish, Canadian, they all share a love of the extreme. Their explorations across two Poles have demanded extraordinary bravery, unimaginable privation and sometimes a little luck

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## CLIMBING THE POLE

### EDMUND HILLARY & THE TRANS-ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION- 1955-58

In 1957, on the Antarctic plateau, Edmund Hillary raced his expedition leader, Vivian Fuchs, to the South Pole for reasons that were never fully explained. His spin was that the Pole was there, he had time and fuel to reach it first, so he did! When

he suggested that Fuchs halt his march across Antarctica and return a year later to complete the crossing, Hillary appeared to be approaching mutiny on the ice. He was roundly criticised by many interested in Antarctic affairs but his spin took root and has never been vigorously challenged.



Examining records that could more fully explain why Hillary acted as he did took the author, John Thomson, into a part of the history of the TAE that somehow had escaped close examination for around half a century.

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## 8 MEN IN A CRATE

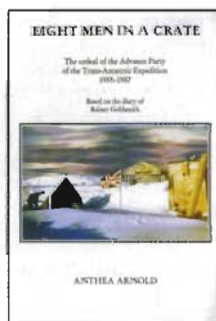
### The Ordeal of the Advance Party of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition 1955-57

**Anthea Arnold**

In January 1956 a party of eight men was left at Shackleton base to build accommodation, explore and lay depots to ease the passage of the following year's Trans Antarctic Expedition, led by Vivian Fuchs. The eight men left behind only just survived in a dreadful Antarctic winter, living by day in a Sno-Cat crate and sleeping in tents at night, while trying to erect a poorly designed hut with inadequate manpower and equipment. The loss of much of their stores put their survival on a knife-edge. Fuchs later admitted that:

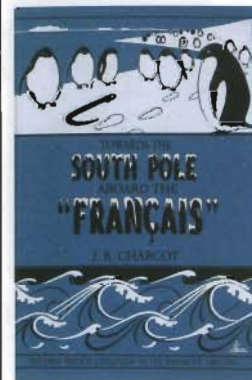
*apart from Scott's marooned Northern Party theirs was the most severe ordeal in the history of Antarctic exploration.*

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## TOWARDS THE SOUTH POLE ABOARD THE FRANÇAIS

**J.B. Charcot**



The first French expedition to the Antarctic set sail in August 1903 under the command of Jean-Baptiste Charcot. He had sailed the waterways of Europe until, in 1902, he visited Iceland and the Faroes. He reached the Arctic Circle and his taste for polar voyaging was established. On his return he commissioned a vessel to be built - *Français*. By this stage, although an amateur, Charcot had become quite well known, though Scott referred to him—with possibly a touch of disparagement—as 'the polar gentleman'. In August 1903 he set sail. Charcot had designed the ship so that each man could have a private space of his own and he was particularly proud of his choice of food and wine and the fact that fresh bread was baked three times a week.

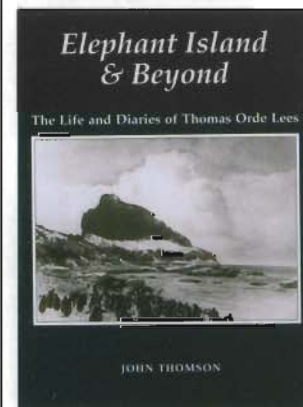
His diary reveals a man of culture and sensitivity. He charted new coasts and undertook scientific work. This is a fascinating insight into a totally different style of Antarctic exploration.

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## ELEPHANT ISLAND & BEYOND

### The Life and Diaries of Thomas Orde Lees

**John Thomson**

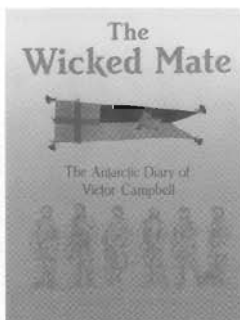


Orde Lees was probably the least popular and most criticised man involved in Shackleton's *Endurance* adventure. His diaries have often been plundered for much of the detail of life on board the ship and on the ice but the part he played in keeping the men alive has not been recognised. His journal has never before been published and this book is a long overdue testament to a much misunderstood man, with fascinating details of his later life.

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Edited by H.G.R. King



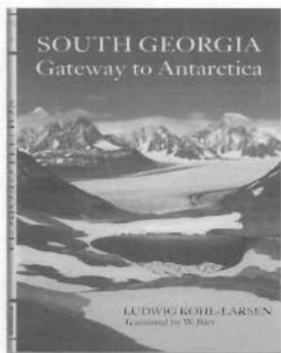
In 1910 Scott sent six men, the Northern Party, under the command of Lieutenant Victor Campbell, to explore along the coast of King Edward VII Land. After a successful 10 months at Cape Adare they moved to Inexpressible Island, as stormy and desolate a place as could be found anywhere on the planet. The failure of the relief ship to collect them at the end of the summer left them marooned with no hut and little food.

Campbell kept all the men alive through the winter in a snow cave, 12 ft. by 9 ft. After the winter, Campbell led the men 230 miles back to Cape Evans, only to learn of the death of Scott and the Pole party.

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Ludwig Kohl Larsen - Translated by William Barr

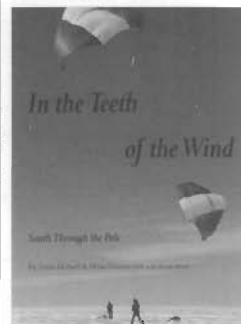


South Georgia had been the gateway to the Antarctic for many of the early expeditions to the continent. Ludwig Kohl Larsen first visited the island in 1911 as a doctor on the Otto Nordenskjöld expedition. Seeing South Georgia kindled in him an enthusiasm for returning to the Antarctic. He married Captian Larsen's daughter and used his close connection with the Larsen family to return, firstly in 1924 on board the first whaling factory ship (*Sir James Clark Ross*) and then, in 1929, to travel around South Georgia and film the wildlife. He spent a summer camped in various parts of the island, exploring the interior on skis, collecting specimens and filming. This is the story of this private expedition, translated for the first time from the German.

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Alain Hubert & Dixie Dansercoer



In November 1997 two Belgian explorers crossed the Antarctic continent from the Weddell Sea to the Ross Sea on foot. They travelled for 99 days and some 3920 kilometres. By using traction sails, specially designed for the expedition, they set many records, sometimes managing to clock up distances of over 100 km at amazing speeds. In full colour, this book contains some 85 pictures of their trip.

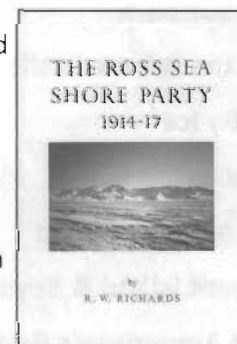
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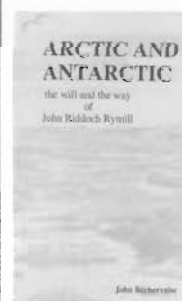
When Shackleton sailed in 1914 on board *Endurance*, he had arranged for a second ship to land a team in McMurdo Sound whose task it would be to lay food depots every 60 miles or so to supply the crossing party. However their ship was ripped from its moorings, and along with it went most of the supplies. Refusing to give up, they scavenged enough from an earlier expedition and set out to do their work. They trekked some 2000 miles, always convinced that when they completed their task Shackleton would have sufficient supplies for the latter part of his journey. Three men died along the way.

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John Béchervaise



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