

# READING CLOSELY GRADE 7 UNIT TEXTS

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Because of the ever-changing nature of website addresses, the resources may no longer be available through the suggested links. Teachers and students can relocate these texts through web searches using the information provided.

AUTHOR	DATE	PUBLISHER	L	NOTES
<b>Text #1: Robert Falcon Scott and Roald Amundsen (Photo Collages)</b>				
Various	NA	Scott Polar Research Inst., University of Cambridge - National Library of Norway - Norwegian Polar Institute	NA	Two collages combine pictures of the British and the Norwegian expeditions, to support examining and comparing visual details.
<b>Text #2: The Last Expedition, Ch. V (Explorers Journal)</b>				
Robert Falcon Scott	1913	Smith Elder	1160L	Journal entry from 2/2/1911 presents Scott's almost poetic "impressions" early in his trip to the South Pole.
<b>Text #3: Roald Amundsen South Pole (Video)</b>				
Viking River Cruises	NA	Viking River Cruises	NA	Combines images, maps, text and narration, to present a historical narrative about Amundsen and the Great Race to the South Pole.
<b>Text #4: Scott's Hut &amp; the Explorer's Heritage of Antarctica (Website)</b>				
UNESCO World Wonders Project	NA	Google Cultural Institute	NA	Website allows students to do a virtual tour of Scott's Antarctic hut and its surrounding landscape, and links to other resources.
<b>Text #5: To Build a Fire (Short Story)</b>				
Jack London	1908	The Century Magazine	920L	Excerpt from the famous short story describes a man's desperate attempts to build a saving fire after plunging into frigid water.
<b>Text #6: The North Pole, Ch. XXI (Historical Narrative)</b>				
Robert Peary	1910	Frederick A. Stokes	1380L	Narrative from the first man to reach the North Pole describes the dangers and challenges of Arctic exploration.
<b>Text #7: The South Pole, Ch. XII (Historical Narrative)</b>				
Roald Amundsen	1912	John Murray	1070L	Narrative recounts the days leading up to Amundsen's triumphant arrival at the Pole on 12/14/1911 – and winning the Great Race.
<b>Text #8: Scott's Last Expedition, Ch. XVIII (Explorer's Journal)</b>				
Robert Falcon Scott	1913	Smith Elder	830L	Journal entries from January 1912 communicate disappointment about arriving at the Pole – behind Amundsen.
<b>Text #9: Scott's Last Expedition, Ch. XX (Explorer's Journal)</b>				
Robert Falcon Scott	1913	Smith Elder	860L	Final journal entries from March 1912 are written in short sentences, showing Scott's weakness and desperation.
<b>Extended Reading: Letters, Ch. XX (Letters)</b>				
Robert Falcon Scott	1913	Smith Elder	1430L	Letters Scott composed in his final days provide additional evidence of his state of mind.
<b>Extended Reading: Voyages of Captain Scott, Ch. IX (Secondary Historical Narrative)</b>				
Charles Thurley	2004	Kessinger Publishing	1160L	Turley's account illustrates contrast between primary and secondary narratives. this excerpt matches the events from Text #8.
<b>Extended Reading: A Timeline of the Exploration of Antarctica (Website)</b>				
NA	NA	Cool Antarctica	NA	Cool Antarctica present many educational resources about Antarctica past and present, including this timeline of exploration.
<b>Extended Reading: British Antarctic Expedition 1910-13 Gallery (Website)</b>				
Scott Polar Research Institute	NA	University of Cambridge	NA	Archives over 2000 photos from the Antarctic expeditions of Scott and Ernest Shackleton.

# TEXT #1

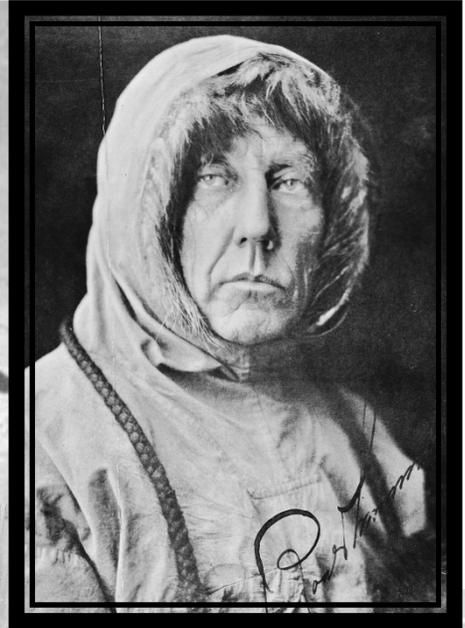


**Robert Falcon  
Scott**



<http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/library/pictures/catalogue/bae1910-13/gallery/>

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# Roald Amundsen

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Copyright information:

Portrait of Roald Amundsen, Alaska, 1925. Photographer: Lomen Bros. National Library of Norway - blds\_a\_SURA0055

<http://www.nb.no/nbdigital/polarbilder/Amundsen/Portretter-Privatliv/>

Oscar Wisting with his dogs at the South Pole, 14.-17. December 1911. Photographer: unknown. National Library of Norway - blds\_a\_NPRA0525

<http://www.nb.no/nbdigital/polarbilder/Amundsen/Sydpolen-polpunktet/>

"Fram" by the ice in the Bay of Whales. Bay of Whales, Antarctica, 1911. Photographer: unknown. National Library of Norway - blds\_a\_NPRA1063

[http://www.nb.no/nbdigital/polarbilder/Amundsen/Sydpolen-andre\\_bilder/](http://www.nb.no/nbdigital/polarbilder/Amundsen/Sydpolen-andre_bilder/)

In Framheim, sewing various equipment. Bay of Whales, Antarctica, 1911. Photographer: unknown. National Library of Norway - blds\_a\_NPRA1482

<http://www.nb.no/nbdigital/polarbilder/Amundsen/Sydpolen-Framheim/>

Roald Amundsen's South Pole expedition, 1911. Olav Bjaaland. Norwegian Polar Institute - np001855

<http://sivert.npolar.no/fotoweb/Grid.fwx>



# TEXT #2

## *The Last Expedition* **Robert Falcon Scott , 1911** Published by Smith Elder in 1913

### Excerpt: Ch. V **DEPOT LAYING TO ONE TON CAMP**

[http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk\\_files=1481376&pageno=90](http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1481376&pageno=90)

Thursday, February 2, Camp 4

So we are resting in our tents, waiting to start to-night...

Last night the temperature fell to -6° after the wind dropped - today it is warm and calm.

*Impressions*

**5** The **seductive** folds of the sleeping-bag.

The hiss of the **primus** and the fragrant steam of the cooker issuing from the tent ventilator.

The small green tent and the great white road.

The whine of a dog and the neigh of our **steeds**.

The driving cloud of powdered snow.

**10** The crunch of footsteps which break the surface crust.

The wind blown **furrows**.




The blue arch beneath the smoky cloud.

The crisp ring of the ponies' hoofs and the swish of the following **sledge**.

The droning conversation of the march as driver encourages or **chides** his horse.

**15** The patter of dog pads.

The gentle flutter of our canvas shelter.

Its deep booming sound under the full force of a blizzard.

The drift snow like finest flour penetrating every hole and corner—flickering up beneath one's head covering, pricking sharply as a sand blast.

**20** The sun with blurred image peeping shyly through the wreathing drift giving pale shadowless light.

The eternal silence of the great white desert. Cloudy columns of snow drift advancing from the south, pale yellow **wraiths**, heralding the coming storm, blotting out one by one the sharp-cut lines of the land.

**25** The blizzard, Nature's protest—the **crevasse**, Nature's pitfall—that grim trap for the **unwary**—no hunter could conceal his snare so perfectly—the light rippled snow bridge gives no hint or sign of the hidden danger, its position unguessable till man or beast is floundering, clawing and struggling for foothold on the brink.

The vast silence broken only by the mellow sounds of the marching column.




## **TEXT #3**

### ***Roald Amundsen South Pole Viking River Cruises***

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kW5p7ANwAU4>

## **TEXT #4**

### ***Scott's Hut and the Explorers' Heritage of Antarctica*** **UNESCO World Wonders Project** **Google Cultural Institute**

<http://www.google.com/intl/en/culturalinstitute/worldwonders/scotts-hut/>



# TEXT #5

## *To Build a Fire*

Jack London

Published by The Century Magazine in 1908

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2429/2429-0.txt>

### (Excerpt)

When the man had finished, he filled his pipe and took his comfortable time over a smoke. Then he pulled on his mittens, settled the ear-flaps of his cap firmly about his ears, and took the creek trail up the left fork. The dog was disappointed and yearned back toward the fire. This man did not know cold. Possibly all the generations of his ancestry  
**5** had been ignorant of cold, of real cold, of cold one hundred and seven degrees below freezing-point. But the dog knew; all its ancestry knew, and it had inherited the knowledge. And it knew that it was not good to walk abroad in such fearful cold. It was the time to lie snug in a hole in the snow and wait for a curtain of cloud to be drawn across the face of outer space **whence** this cold came. On the other hand, there was keen **intimacy**  
**10** between the dog and the man. The one was the **toil-slave** of the other, and the only caresses it had ever received were the caresses of the whip-lash and of harsh and **menacing** throat-sounds that threatened the whip-lash. So the dog made no effort to communicate its **apprehension** to the man. It was not concerned in the welfare of the man; it was for its own sake that it **yearned** back toward the fire. But the man whistled,  
**15** and spoke to it with the sound of whip-lashes, and the dog swung in at the man's heels




and followed after.

The man took a chew of tobacco and proceeded to start a new **amber** beard. Also, his **P2** moist breath quickly powdered with white his moustache, eyebrows, and lashes. There did not seem to be so many springs on the left fork of the Henderson, and for half an hour the **20** man saw no signs of any. And then it happened. At a place where there were no signs, where the soft, unbroken snow seemed to advertise solidity beneath, the man broke through. It was not deep. He wetted himself half-way to the knees before he **floundered** out to the firm crust.

He was angry, and cursed his luck aloud. He had hoped to get into camp with the **P3** **25** boys at six o'clock, and this would delay him an hour, for he would have to build a fire and dry out his foot-gear. This was **imperative** at that low temperature--he knew that much; and he turned aside to the bank, which he climbed. On top, tangled in the underbrush about the trunks of several small spruce trees, was a high-water deposit of dry firewood--sticks and twigs principally, but also larger portions of seasoned branches and fine, dry, **30** last-year's grasses. He threw down several large pieces on top of the snow. This served for a foundation and prevented the young flame from drowning itself in the snow it otherwise would melt. The flame he got by touching a match to a small shred of birch-bark that he took from his pocket. This burned even more readily than paper. Placing it on the foundation, he fed the young flame with wisps of dry grass and with the tiniest dry twigs.

**35** He worked slowly and carefully, keenly aware of his danger. Gradually, as the flame **P4** grew stronger, he increased the size of the twigs with which he fed it. He squatted in the snow, pulling the twigs out from their entanglement in the brush and feeding directly to




the flame. He knew there must be no failure. When it is seventy- five below zero, a man must not fail in his first attempt to build a fire--that is, if his feet are wet. If his feet are dry, **40** and he fails, he can run along the trail for half a mile and restore his circulation. But the circulation of wet and freezing feet cannot be restored by running when it is seventy-five below. No matter how fast he runs, the wet feet will freeze the harder.

All this the man knew. The old-timer on Sulphur Creek had told him about it the **P5** previous fall, and now he was appreciating the advice. Already all sensation had gone out **45** of his feet. To build the fire he had been forced to remove his mittens, and the fingers had quickly gone numb. His pace of four miles an hour had kept his heart pumping blood to the surface of his body and to all the extremities. But the instant he stopped, the action of the pump eased down. The cold of space smote the unprotected tip of the planet, and he, being on that unprotected tip, received the full force of the blow. The blood of his body **50 recoiled** before it. The blood was alive, like the dog, and like the dog it wanted to hide away and cover itself up from the fearful cold. So long as he walked four miles an hour, he pumped that blood, willy-nilly, to the surface; but now it **ebbed** away and sank down into the **recesses** of his body. The **extremities** were the first to feel its absence. His wet feet froze the faster, and his exposed fingers numbed the faster, though they had not yet **55** begun to freeze. Nose and cheeks were already freezing, while the skin of all his body chilled as it lost its blood.

But he was safe. Toes and nose and cheeks would be only touched by the frost, for **P6** the fire was beginning to burn with strength. He was feeding it with twigs the size of his finger. In another minute he would be able to feed it with branches the size of his wrist, **60** and then he could remove his wet foot-gear, and, while it dried, he could keep his naked




feet warm by the fire, rubbing them at first, of course, with snow. The fire was a success. He was safe. He remembered the advice of the old-timer on Sulphur Creek, and smiled. The old-timer had been very serious in laying down the law that no man must travel alone in the Klondike after fifty below. Well, here he was; he had had the accident; he was alone; **65** and he had saved himself. Those old-timers were rather womanish, some of them, he thought. All a man had to do was to keep his head, and he was all right. Any man who was a man could travel alone. But it was surprising, the **rapidity** with which his cheeks and nose were freezing. And he had not thought his fingers could go lifeless in so short a time. Lifeless they were, for he could scarcely make them move together to grip a twig, and they **70** seemed remote from his body and from him. When he touched a twig, he had to look and see whether or not he had hold of it. The wires were pretty well down between him and his finger-ends.

All of which counted for little. There was the fire, snapping and crackling and **P7** promising life with every dancing flame. He started to untie his moccasins. They were **75** coated with ice; the thick German socks were like sheaths of iron half-way to the knees; and the mocassin strings were like rods of steel all twisted and knotted as by some **conflagration**. For a moment he tugged with his numbed fingers, then, realizing the folly of it, he drew his **sheath**-knife.

But before he could cut the strings, it happened. It was his own fault or, rather, his **P8** **80** mistake. He should not have built the fire under the spruce tree. He should have built it in the open. But it had been easier to pull the twigs from the brush and drop them directly on the fire. Now the tree under which he had done this carried a weight of snow on its boughs. No wind had blown for weeks, and each bough was fully **freighted**. Each time he




had pulled a twig he had communicated a slight agitation to the tree--an **imperceptible**  
**85** agitation, so far as he was concerned, but an agitation sufficient to bring about the  
disaster. High up in the tree one bough capsized its load of snow. This fell on the boughs  
beneath, **capsizing** them. This process continued, spreading out and involving the whole  
tree. It grew like an avalanche, and it descended without warning upon the man and the  
fire, and the fire was blotted out! Where it had burned was a mantle of fresh and  
**90** disordered snow.

The man was shocked. It was as though he had just heard his own sentence of death. **P9**  
For a moment he sat and stared at the spot where the fire had been. Then he grew very  
calm.




# TEXT #6

## *The North Pole*

Robert E Peary

Published by Frederick A. Stokes in 1910

<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/18975/pg18975.txt>

### Excerpt: Ch. XX1

#### ARCTIC ICE SLEDGING AS IT REALLY IS

But the pressure ridges above described are not the worst feature of the arctic ice. **P1**

Far more troublesome and dangerous are the "leads" (the whalers' term for lanes of open water), which are caused by the movement of the ice under the pressure of the wind and tides. These are the ever-present nightmare of the traveler over the frozen surface of the

**5** polar ocean—on the upward journey for fear that they may prevent further advance; on the return journey for fear they may cut him off from the land and life, leaving him to wander about and starve to death on the northern side. Their occurrence or non-occurrence is a thing impossible to **prophesy** or calculate. They open without warning immediately ahead of the traveler, following no apparent rule or law of action. They are **10** the unknown quantity of the polar equation.

Sometimes these leads are mere cracks running through old **floes** in nearly a straight **P2** line. Sometimes they are zigzag lanes of water just wide enough to be impossible to cross. Sometimes they are rivers of open water from half a mile to two miles in width, stretching east and west farther than the eye can see.




15 There are various ways of crossing the leads. One can go to the right or the left, with the idea of finding some place where the opposite edges of the ice are near enough together so that our long sledges can be bridged across. Or, if there are **indications** that the lead is closing, the traveler can wait until the ice comes quite together. If it is very cold, one may wait until the ice has formed thick enough to bear the loaded sledges going at full speed. Or, one may search for a cake of ice, or hack out a cake with pickaxes, which can be used as a ferry-boat on which to transport the sledges and teams across.

P3

But all these means go for **naught** when the "big lead," which marks the edge of the continental shelf where it dips down into the Arctic Ocean, is in one of its tantrums, opening just wide enough to keep a continual zone of open water or impracticable young ice in the center, as occurred on our upward journey of 1906 and the never-to-be-forgotten return journey of that expedition, when this lead nearly cut us off forever from life itself.

P4

A lead might have opened right through our camp, or through one of the snow igloos, when we were sleeping on the surface of the polar sea. Only—it didn't.

P5

30 Should the ice open across the bed platform of an igloo, and **precipitate** its inhabitants into the icy water below, they would not readily drown, because of the **buoyancy** of the air inside their fur clothing. A man dropping into the water in this way might be able to scramble onto the ice and save himself; but with the thermometer at 50° below zero it would not be a pleasant **contingency**.

P6




**35** This is the reason why I have never used a sleeping-bag when out on the polar ice. I **P7**  
prefer to have my legs and arms free, and to be ready for any emergency at a  
moment's notice. I never go to sleep when out on the sea ice without my mittens on, and  
if I pull my arms inside my sleeves I pull my mittens in too, so as to be ready for instant  
action. What chance would a man in a sleeping-bag have, should he suddenly wake to find  
**40** himself in the water?

The difficulties and hardships of a journey to the North Pole are too complex to be **P8**  
summed up in a paragraph. But, briefly stated, the worst of them are: the ragged and  
mountainous ice over which the traveler must journey with his heavily loaded sledges; the  
often terrific wind, having the impact of a wall of water, which he must march against at  
**45** times; the open leads already described, which he must cross and recross, somehow; the  
intense cold, sometimes as low as 60° below zero, through which he must—by fur  
clothing and constant activity—keep his flesh from freezing; the difficulty of dragging out  
and back over the ragged and "lead" interrupted trail enough **pemmican**, biscuit, tea,  
condensed milk, and liquid fuel to keep sufficient strength in his body for traveling. It was  
**50** so cold much of the time on this last journey that the brandy was frozen solid, the  
petroleum was white and **viscid**, and the dogs could hardly be seen for the steam of their  
breath. The minor discomfort of building every night our narrow and uncomfortable snow  
houses, and the cold bed platform of that igloo on which we must snatch such hours of  
rest as the **exigencies** of our desperate **enterprise** permitted us, seem hardly worth  
**55** mentioning in comparison with the difficulties of the main proposition itself.




At times one may be obliged to march all day long facing a blinding snowstorm with the bitter wind searching every opening in the clothing. Those among my readers who have ever been obliged to walk for even an hour against a blizzard, with the temperature ten or twenty degrees *above* zero, probably have keen memories of the  
**60** experience. Probably they also remember how welcome was the warm fireside of home at the end of their journey. But let them imagine tramping through such a storm all day long, over jagged and uneven ice, with the temperature between fifteen and thirty degrees *below* zero, and no shelter to look forward to at the end of the day's march excepting a narrow and cold snow house which they would themselves be **obliged** to build in that  
**65** very storm before they could eat or rest.




# TEXT #7

## *The South Pole*

**Roald Amundsen, 1910-1912**

**Published by John Murray, London, in 1912**

<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/3414/pg3414.txt>

### **Excerpt: Chapter XII AT THE POLE**

The weather did not continue fine for long. Next day (December 5) there was a gale **P1**  
from the north, and once more the whole plain was a mass of drifting snow. In addition to  
this there was thick falling snow, which blinded us and made things worse, but a feeling of  
security had come over us and helped us to advance rapidly and without hesitation,  
**5** although we could see nothing. That day we encountered new surface conditions -- big,  
hard snow-waves (sastrugi). These were anything but pleasant to work among, especially  
when one could not see them. It was of no use for us "**forerunners**" to think of going in  
advance under these circumstances, as it was impossible to keep on one's feet. Three or  
four paces was often the most we managed to do before falling down. The sastrugi were  
**10** very high, and often abrupt; if one came on them unexpectedly, one required to be more  
than an acrobat to keep on one's feet. The plan we found to work best in these conditions  
was to let Hanssen's dogs go first; this was an unpleasant job for Hanssen, and for his dogs  
too, but it succeeded, and succeeded well. An upset here and there was, of course,  
unavoidable, but with a little patience the sledge was always righted again. The drivers  
**15** had as much as they could do to support their sledges among these sastrugi, but while  
supporting the sledges, they had at the same time a support for themselves. It was worse




for us who had no sledges, but by keeping in the **wake** of them we could see where the irregularities lay, and thus get over them. Hanssen deserves a special word of praise for his driving on this surface in such weather. It is a difficult matter to drive Eskimo dogs forward  
**20** when they cannot see; but Hanssen managed it well, both getting the dogs on and steering his course by compass...

On the morning of December 14 the weather was of the finest, just as if it had been made for arriving at the Pole. I am not quite sure, but I believe we **dispatched** our breakfast rather more quickly than usual and were out of the tent sooner, though I must  
**25** admit that we always accomplished this with all reasonable **haste**. We went in the usual order -- the forerunner, Hanssen, Wisting, Bjaaland, and the **reserve** forerunner. By noon we had reached 89° 53' by dead **reckoning**, and made ready to take the rest in one stage. At 10 a.m. a light breeze had sprung up from the south-east, and it had clouded over, so that we got no noon altitude; but the clouds were not thick, and from time to time we had  
**30** a glimpse of the sun through them. The going on that day was rather different from what it had been; sometimes the ski went over it well, but at others it was pretty bad. We advanced that day in the same mechanical way as before; not much was said, but eyes were used all the more. Hanssen's neck grew twice as long as before in his **endeavour** to see a few inches farther. I had asked him before we started to spy out ahead for all he was  
**35** worth, and he did so with a **vengeance**. But, however keenly he stared, he could not **descry** anything but the endless flat plain ahead of us. The dogs had dropped their scenting, and appeared to have lost their interest in the regions about the earth's axis.


At three in the afternoon a **simultaneous** "Halt!" rang out from the drivers. They had P3  
carefully examined their sledge-meters, and they all showed the full distance -- our Pole  
40 by reckoning. The goal was reached, the journey ended. I cannot say -- though I know it  
would sound much more effective -- that the object of my life was attained. That would  
be romancing rather too bare-facedly. I had better be honest and admit straight out that I  
have never known any man to be placed in such a **diametrically** opposite position to the  
goal of his desires as I was at that moment. The regions around the North Pole -- well, yes,  
45 the North Pole itself -- had attracted me from childhood, and here I was at the South Pole.  
Can anything more topsy-turvy be imagined?

We reckoned now that we were at the Pole. Of course, every one of us knew that we P4  
were not standing on the absolute spot; it would be an impossibility with the time and  
the instruments at our disposal to **ascertain** that exact spot. But we were so near it that  
50 the few miles which possibly separated us from it could not be of the slightest  
importance. It was our intention to make a circle round this camp, with a radius of twelve  
and a half miles (20 kilometres), and to be satisfied with that. After we had halted we  
collected and congratulated each other. We had good grounds for mutual respect in what  
had been achieved, and I think that was just the feeling that was expressed in the firm and  
55 powerful grasps of the fist that were exchanged.

After this we proceeded to the greatest and most solemn act of the whole journey -- P5  
the planting of our flag. Pride and affection shone in the five pairs of eyes that gazed  
upon the flag, as it unfurled itself with a sharp crack, and waved over the Pole. I had  
determined that the act of planting it -- the historic event -- should be equally divided


**60** among us all. It was not for one man to do this; it was for all who had staked their lives in the struggle, and held together through thick and thin. This was the only way in which I could show my gratitude to my comrades in this desolate spot. I could see that they understood and accepted it in the spirit in which it was offered. Five weather-beaten, frost-bitten fists they were that grasped the pole, raised the waving flag in the air, and planted **65** it as the first at the geographical South Pole. "Thus we plant thee, beloved flag, at the South Pole, and give to the plain on which it lies the name of King Haakon VII.'s Plateau." That moment will certainly be remembered by all of us who stood there.




# TEXT #8

## *Scott's Last Expedition* Robert Falcon Scott, January 1912 Published by Smith Elder in 1913

[http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk\\_files=1481376&pageno=1](http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1481376&pageno=1)

### Excerpt Ch. XVIII THE SUMMIT JOURNEY TO THE POLE

It is wonderful to think that two long marches would land us at the Pole. We left our **P1**  
depot today with nine days' **provisions**, so that it ought to be a certain thing now, and the  
only **appalling** possibility the sight of the Norwegian flag **forestalling** ours. Little Bowers  
continues his **indefatigable** efforts to get good sights, and it is wonderful how he works  
**5** them up in his sleeping-bag in our **congested** tent. (Minimum for night -27.5°.) Only 27  
miles from the Pole. We ought to do it now.

Tuesday, January\_16. Camp 68. Height 9760. T. -23.5°. The worst has happened, or **P2**  
nearly the worst. We marched well in the morning and covered 7 1/2 miles. Noon sight  
showed us in Lat. 89° 42' S., and we started off in high spirits in the afternoon, feeling that  
**10** to-morrow would see us at our destination. About the second hour of the march Bowers'  
sharp eyes detected what he thought was a **cairn**; he was uneasy about it, but argued that  
it must be a **sastrugus**. Half an hour later he detected a black speck ahead. Soon we knew  
that this could not be a natural snow feature. We marched on, found that it was a black  
flag tied to a sledge bearer; near by the remains of a camp; sledge tracks and ski tracks  
**15** going and coming and the clear trace of dogs' paws--many dogs. This told us the whole  
story. The Norwegians have forestalled us and are first at the Pole. It is a terrible




disappointment, and I am very sorry for my loyal companions. Many thoughts come and much discussion have we had. Tomorrow we must march on to the Pole and then hasten home with all the speed we can compass. All the daydreams must go; it will be a

**20** **wearisome** return. We are **descending** in altitude--certainly also the Norwegians found an easy way up.

Wednesday, January 17. Camp 69. T. -22° at start. Night -21°. The Pole. Yes, but under **P3** very different circumstances from those expected. We have had a horrible day--add to our disappointment a head wind 4 to 5, with a temperature -22°, and companions labouring

**25** on with cold feet and hands.

We started at 7.30, none of us having slept much after the shock of our discovery. **P4**

We followed the Norwegian sledge tracks for some way; as far as we make out there are only two men. In about three miles we passed two small cairns. Then the weather overcast, and the tracks being increasingly drifted up and obviously going too far to the

**30** west, we decided to make straight for the Pole according to our calculations. At 12.30 Evans had such cold hands we camped for lunch--an excellent 'week-end one.' We had

marched 7.4 miles. Lat. sight gave 89° 53' 37". We started out and did 6 1/2 miles due south. To-night little Bowers is laying himself out to get sights in terrible difficult circumstances; the wind is blowing hard, T. -21°, and there is that curious damp, cold

**35** feeling in the air which chills one to the bone in no time. We have been descending again, I think, but there looks to be a rise ahead; otherwise there is very little that is different from the awful **monotony** of past days. Great God! this is an awful place and terrible enough for us to have laboured to it without the reward of priority. Well, it is something to have got




here, and the wind may be our friend to-morrow. We have had a fat Polar **hoosh** in spite of  
**40** our **chagrin**, and feel comfortable inside--added a small stick of chocolate and the queer  
taste of a cigarette brought by Wilson. Now for the run home and a desperate struggle. I  
wonder if we can do it.

Thursday morning, January 18. Decided after summing up all observations that we **P5**  
were 3.5 miles away from the Pole--one mile beyond it and 3 to the right. More or less in  
**45** this direction Bowers saw a cairn or tent.

We have just arrived at this tent, 2 miles from our camp, therefore about 1 1/2 miles **P6**  
from the Pole. In the tent we find a record of five Norwegians having been here, as follows:

Roald Amundsen  
Olav Olavson Bjaaland  
Hilmer Hanssen  
Sverre H. Hassel  
Oscar Wisting.  
16 December 1911




# TEXT #9

## *Scott's Last Expedition* Robert Falcon Scott, March 1912 Published by Smith Elder in 1913

[http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk\\_files=1481376&pageno=1](http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1481376&pageno=1)

### Excerpt Ch. XX THE LAST MARCH

*Friday, March 16 or Saturday 17.*—Lost track of dates, but think the last correct. **P1**

Tragedy all along the line. At lunch, the day before yesterday, poor Titus Oates said he couldn't go on; he proposed we should leave him in his sleeping-bag. That we could not do, and **induced** him to come on, on the afternoon march. In spite of its awful nature for **5** him he struggled on and we made a few miles. At night he was worse and we knew the end had come.

Should this be found I want these facts recorded. Oates' last thoughts were of his **P2** Mother, but immediately before he took pride in thinking that his **regiment** would be pleased with the bold way in which he met his death. We can testify to his bravery. He has **10 borne intense** suffering for weeks without complaint, and to the very last was able and willing to discuss outside subjects. He did not—would not—give up hope to the very end. He was a brave soul. This was the end. He slept through the night before last, hoping not to wake; but he woke in the morning—yesterday. It was blowing a blizzard. He said, 'I am just going outside and may be some time.' He went out into the blizzard and we have not **15** seen him since.

I take this opportunity of saying that we have stuck to our sick companions to the last. **P3**




In case of Edgar Evans, when absolutely out of food and he lay **insensible**, the safety of the remainder seemed to demand his **abandonment**, but Providence mercifully removed him at this critical moment. He died a natural death, and we did not leave him till two  
**20** hours after his death. We knew that poor Oates was walking to his death, but though we tried to **dissuade** him, we knew it was the act of a brave man and an English gentleman. We all hope to meet the end with a similar spirit, and assuredly the end is not far.

I can only write at lunch and then only occasionally. The cold is intense, -40° at  
**25** midday. My companions are unendingly cheerful, but we are all on the verge of serious frostbites, and though we constantly talk of **fetching** through I don't think anyone of us believes it in his heart. **P4**

We are cold on the march now, and at all times except meals. Yesterday we had to  
**30** lay up for a blizzard and to-day we move dreadfully slowly. We are at No. 14 pony camp, only two pony marches from One Ton Depot. We leave here our **theodolite**, a camera, and Oates' sleeping-bags. Diaries, &c., and geological specimens carried at Wilson's special request, will be found with us or on our sledge. **P5**

*Sunday, March 18.*—To-day, lunch, we are 21 miles from the depot. Ill fortune  
**35** presses, but better may come. We have had more wind and drift from ahead yesterday; had to stop marching; wind N.W., force 4, temp. -35°. No human being could face it, and we are worn out *nearly*. **P6**

My right foot has gone, nearly all the toes—two days ago I was proud possessor of  
**P7** best feet. These are the steps of my downfall. Like an ass I mixed a small spoonful of curry powder with my melted pemmican—it gave me violent indigestion. I lay awake and in pain all night; woke and felt done on the march; foot went and I didn't know it. A very small measure of neglect and have a foot which is not pleasant to **contemplate**. Bowers


40 takes first place in condition, but there is not much to choose after all. The others are still confident of getting through—or pretend to be—I don't know! We have the last *half* fill of oil in our **primus** and a very small quantity of spirit—this alone between us and thirst. The wind is fair for the moment, and that is perhaps a fact to help. The mileage would have seemed ridiculously small on our outward journey.

45 *Monday, March 19.*—Lunch. We camped with difficulty last night, and were dreadfully **P8** cold till after our supper of cold pemmican and biscuit and a half a **pannikin** of cocoa cooked over the spirit. Then, **contrary** to expectation, we got warm and all slept well. To-day we started in the usual dragging manner. Sledge dreadfully heavy. We are 15 1/2 miles from the depot and ought to get there in three days. What progress! We have  
50 two days' food but barely a day's fuel. All our feet are getting bad—Wilson's best, my right foot worst, left all right. There is no chance to nurse one's feet till we can get hot food into us. Amputation is the least I can hope for now, but will the trouble spread? That is the serious question. The weather doesn't give us a chance—the wind from N. to N.W. and - 40° temp, to-day.

55 *Wednesday, March 11.*—Got within 11 miles of depot Monday night; had to lay up all **P9** yesterday in severe blizzard.<sup>27</sup> To-day **forlorn** hope, Wilson and Bowers going to depot for fuel.

*Thursday, March 22 and 23.*—Blizzard bad as ever—Wilson and Bowers unable **P10** to start—to-morrow last chance—no fuel and only one or two of food left—must be  
60 near the end. Have decided it shall be natural—we shall march for the depot with or without our effects and die in our tracks.

*Thursday, March 29.*—Since the 21st we have had a continuous **gale** from W.S.W. and S.W.


We had fuel to make two cups of tea apiece and bare food for two days on the 20th. Every day we have been ready to start for our depot *11 miles* away, but outside the door of the tent it remains a scene of whirling drift. I do not think we can hope for any better things  
**65** now. We shall stick it out to the end, but we are getting weaker, of course, and the end cannot be far.

It seems a pity, but I do not think I can write more.

**R. SCOTT.**

For God's sake look after our people.

**70** \_\_\_\_\_

Wilson and Bowers were found in the attitude of sleep, their sleeping-bags closed **P12**  
over their heads as they would naturally close them.

Scott died later. He had thrown back the flaps of his sleeping-bag and opened his coat. The little wallet containing the three notebooks was under his shoulders and his arm flung across Wilson. So they were found eight months later.

**75** \_\_\_\_\_

Inside the front cover of the third notebook were the following words: 'Diary can **P13**  
be read by finder to ensure recording of Records, &c., but Diary should be sent to my widow.' And on the first page:

'Send this diary to my **widow**.

**'R. SCOTT.'**

**80** The word 'wife' had been struck out and 'widow' written in.




# EXTENDED READING

## Letters

Robert Falcon Scott, 1912

Published by Smith Elder in 1913

[http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk\\_files=1481376&pageno=1](http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1481376&pageno=1)

### Excerpt: Ch. XX

*To Mrs. Bowers*

My Dear Mrs. Bowers,

I am afraid this will reach you after one of the heaviest blows of your life.

P1

I write when we are very near the end of our journey, and I am finishing it in

P2

5 company with two gallant, noble gentlemen. One of these is your son. He had come to be one of my closest and soundest friends, and I appreciate his wonderful upright nature, his ability and energy. As the troubles have thickened his dauntless spirit ever shone brighter and he has remained cheerful, hopeful, and indomitable to the end.

The ways of Providence are inscrutable, but there must be some reason why such a

P3

10 young, vigorous and promising life is taken.

My whole heart goes out in pity for you.

Yours, R. SCOTT.




To the end he has talked of you and his sisters. One sees what a happy home he must have had and perhaps it is well to look back on nothing but happiness. **P4**

**15** He remains unselfish, self-reliant and splendidly hopeful to the end, believing in God's mercy to you. **P5**

***Message to the Public***

The causes of the disaster are not due to faulty organisation, but to misfortune in all risks which had to be undertaken. **P6**

- 20** 1. The loss of pony transport in March 1911 obliged me to start later than I had intended, and obliged the limits of stuff transported to be narrowed. **P7**
- 2. The weather throughout the outward journey, and especially the long gale in 83° S., stopped us.
- 3. The soft snow in lower reaches of glacier again reduced pace.

**25** We fought these untoward events with a will and conquered, but it cut into our provision reserve. **P8**

Every detail of our food supplies, clothing and depôts made on the interior ice-sheet and over that long stretch of 700 miles to the Pole and back, worked out to perfection. The advance party would have returned to the glacier in fine form and with **P9**

**30** surplus of food, but for the astonishing failure of the man whom we had least expected to fail. Edgar Evans was thought the strongest man of the party.




The Beardmore Glacier is not difficult in fine weather, but on our return we did not get a single completely fine day; this with a sick companion enormously increased our anxieties. P10

**35** As I have said elsewhere we got into frightfully rough ice and Edgar Evans received a concussion of the brain—he died a natural death, but left us a shaken party with the season unduly advanced. P11

But all the facts above enumerated were as nothing to the surprise which awaited us on the Barrier. I maintain that our arrangements for returning were quite adequate, and **40** that no one in the world would have expected the temperatures and surfaces which we encountered at this time of the year. On the summit in lat. 85° 86° we had -20°, -30°. On the Barrier in lat. 82°, 10,000 feet lower, we had -30° in the day, -47° at night pretty regularly, with continuous head wind during our day marches. It is clear that these circumstances come on very suddenly, and our wreck is certainly due to this sudden advent of severe **45** weather, which does not seem to have any satisfactory cause. I do not think human beings ever came through such a month as we have come through, and we should have got through in spite of the weather but for the sickening of a second companion, Captain Oates, and a shortage of fuel in our depôts for which I cannot account, and finally, but for the storm which has fallen on us within 11 miles of the depôt at which we hoped to secure **50** our final supplies. Surely misfortune could scarcely have exceeded this last blow. We arrived within 11 miles of our old One Ton Camp with fuel for one last meal and food for two days. For four days we have been unable to leave the tent—the gale howling about us. We are weak, writing is difficult, but for my own sake I do not regret this journey, which has shown that Englishmen can endure hardships, help one another, and meet death with




**55** as great a fortitude as ever in the past. We took risks, we knew we took them; things have come out against us, and therefore we have no cause for complaint, but bow to the will of Providence, determined still to do our best to the last. But if we have been willing to give our lives to this enterprise, which is for the honour of our country, I appeal to our countrymen to see that those who depend on us are properly cared for.

**60** Had we lived, I should have had a tale to tell of the hardihood, endurance, and **P13** courage of my companions which would have stirred the heart of every Englishman. These rough notes and our dead bodies must tell the tale, but surely, surely, a great rich country like ours will see that those who are dependent on us are properly provided for.

R. SCOTT.




# EXTENDED READING

## *The Voyages of Captain Scott*

Charles Thurley

Published by Kessinger Publishing in 2004

<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/6721/pg6721.txt>

### Excerpt: Ch. IX - THE SOUTH POLE

From the very beginning of the march on January 11 the pulling was heavy, but P1  
 when the sun came out the surface became as bad as bad could be. All the time the sledge  
 rasped and creaked, and the work of moving it onward was agonizing. At lunch-time they  
 had managed to cover six miles but at fearful cost to themselves, and although when they  
 5 camped for the night they were only about 74 miles from the Pole, Scott asked himself  
 whether they could possibly keep up such a strain for seven more days. 'It takes it out of us  
 like anything. None of us ever had such hard work before.... Our chance still holds good if  
 we can put the work in, but it's a terribly trying time.'

For a few minutes during the next afternoon they experienced the almost forgotten P2  
 10 delight of having the sledge following easily. The experience was very short but it was also  
 very sweet, for Scott had begun to fear that their powers of pulling were rapidly  
 weakening, and those few minutes showed him that they only wanted a good surface to  
 get on as merrily as of old. At night they were within 63 miles of the Pole, and just longing  
 for a better surface to help them on their way.

15 But whatever the condition of the surface, Bowers continued to do his work with P3  
 characteristic thoroughness and imperturbability; and after this appalling march he




insisted, in spite of Scott's protest, on taking sights after they had camped--an all the more remarkable display of energy as he, being the only one of the party who pulled on foot, had spent an even more strenuous day than the others, who had been 'comparatively

**20** restful on ski.'

Again, on the next march, they had to pull with all their might to cover some 11 miles. 'It is wearisome work this tugging and straining to advance a light sledge. Still, we get along. I did manage to get my thoughts off the work for a time to-day, which is very restful. We should be in a poor way without our ski, though Bowers manages to struggle

**25** through the soft snow without tiring his short legs.' Sunday night, January 14, found them at Camp 66 and less than 40 miles from the Pole. Steering was the great difficulty on this march, because a light southerly wind with very low drift often prevented Scott from seeing anything, and Bowers, in Scott's shadow, gave directions. By this time the feet of the whole party were beginning, mainly owing to the bad condition of their finnesko, to **30** suffer from the cold.

'Oates seems to be feeling the cold and fatigue more than the rest of us, but we are all very fit. It is a critical time, but we ought to pull through.... Oh! for a few fine days! So close it seems and only the weather to balk us.'

Another terrible surface awaited them on the morrow, and they were all 'pretty well **P6** done' when they camped for lunch. There they decided to leave their last depot, but although their reduced load was now very light, Scott feared that the friction would not be greatly reduced. A pleasant surprise, however, was in store for him, as after lunch the sledge ran very lightly, and a capital march was made. 'It is wonderful,' he wrote on that




night (January 15), 'to think that two long marches would land us at the Pole. We left our  
**40** depot to-day with nine days' provisions, so that it ought to be a certain thing now, and the  
only appalling possibility the sight of the Norwegian flag forestalling ours. Little Bowers  
continues his indefatigable efforts to get good sights, and it is wonderful how he works  
them up in his sleeping-bag in our congested tent. Only 27 miles from the Pole. We ought  
to do it now.'

**45** The next morning's march took them 7-1/2 miles nearer and their noon sight **P7**  
showed them in Lat. 89° 42' S.; and feeling that the following day would see them at the  
Pole they started off after lunch in the best of spirits. Then, after advancing for an hour or  
so, Bowers' sharp eyes detected what he thought was a cairn, but although he was uneasy  
about it he argued that it must be a sastrugus.

**50** 'Half an hour later he detected a black speck ahead. Soon we knew that this could **P8**  
not be a natural snow feature. We marched on, found that it was a black flag tied to a  
sledge bearer; near by the remains of a camp; sledge tracks and ski tracks going and  
coming and the clear trace of dogs' paws--many dogs. This told us the whole story. The  
Norwegians have forestalled us and are first at the Pole. It is a terrible disappointment, and

**55** I am very sorry for my loyal companions. Many thoughts come and much discussion **P9**  
have we had. To-morrow we must march on to the Pole and then hasten home with all the  
speed we can compass. All the day-dreams must go; it will be a wearisome return.  
Certainly also the Norwegians found an easy way up.'

Very little sleep came to any of the party after the shock of this discovery, and when **P10**  
**60** they started at 7.30 on the next morning (January 17) head winds with a temperature of -  
22° added to their depression of spirit. For some way they followed the Norwegian tracks,




and in about three miles they passed two cairns. Then, as the tracks became increasingly drifted up and were obviously leading them too far to the west, they decided to make straight for the Pole according to their calculations.

During the march they covered about 14 miles, and at night Scott wrote in his **P11**  
**65** journal, 'The Pole. Yes, but under very different circumstances from those expected.'

That announcement tells its own story, and it would be impertinent to guess at the **P12**  
feelings of those intrepid travelers when they found themselves forestalled.  
Nevertheless they had achieved the purpose they had set themselves, and the fact that  
**70** they could not claim the reward of priority makes not one jot of difference in estimating  
the honours that belong to them. Well,' Scott continued, 'it is something to have got  
here, and the wind may be our friend to-morrow.... Now for the run home and a  
desperate struggle. I wonder if we can do it.'

On the following morning after summing up all their observations, they came to **P13**  
the conclusion that they were one mile beyond the Pole and three miles to the right of it,  
**75** in which direction, more or less, Bowers could see a tent or cairn. A march of two miles  
from their camp took them to the tent, in which they found a record of five Norwegians  
having been there:

Roald Amundsen

Olav Olavson Bjaaland

**80** Hilmer Hanssen

Sverre H. Hassel

Oscar Wisting.




# EXTENDED READING

## ***A Time Line of the Exploration of Antarctica*** **Cool Antarctica**

[http://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica fact file/History/exploration and history.htm](http://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/History/exploration%20and%20history.htm)

## ***British Antarctic Expedition 1910-13 Gallery*** **Scott Polar Research Institute** **University of Cambridge**

<http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/library/pictures/catalogue/bae1910-13/gallery/>