



# FRAM

The Journal of  
The Framlingham & District  
Local History & Preservation Society

4th  
Series

Number 2

December 2001



*Fram*  
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Framlingham and District  
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*All enquiries concerning Society membership should be addressed to  
the Hon. Secretary, 28 Pembroke Road, Framlingham, IP13 9HA,  
telephone 01728 723214*

For back issues of the journal and proposals for articles therein, contact the  
Editor, 43 College Road, Framlingham, IP13 9ER, telephone 01728 724324

*Heir of Antiquity! - fair castle Town,  
Rare spot of beauty, grandeur, and renown,  
Seat of East-Anglian kings! - proud child of fame,  
Hallowed by time, illustrious Framlinghame!*

From: *Framlingham, a Narrative of the Castle*,  
by James Bird (1831)

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 16th January: Mrs. Peggy Cole. Akenfield.

Wednesday 20th February: Mr. Timothy Easton. Lost and Found: Historic Discoveries in Suffolk Buildings.

Wednesday 20th March: Mrs. F. M. Moore. Work at Brandeston Forge: Hector and Mary Moore.

Wednesday 17th April: Mr. J. A. Harvey. My Experience with Pure Romanies.

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*Editor : M. V. Roberts, 43 College Road, Framlingham*

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There is no doubt that the September exhibition marking the 70th anniversary of the Pageant was very rewarding. The Pageant has entered Framlingham folklore so that, even after all those years, memories are still vivid. About twenty people who had taken part admitted their age as "more than three-score years and ten"! They looked at the photographs, remembered old faces, and settled in the church pews to talk it all through again.

The research was rewarding. To know who were the producers, to read the familiar names of past Framlingham people, and to know the tasks they undertook was illuminating. The manufacture of the 480 costumes, the publicity (Pageant stamps!), the team of children who ran messages, the number of horses, the co-ordination of people, the interest and support of the VIPs was amazing to consider in the context of 1931. Money was short; communications were less easy; transport was slower. But funds were forthcoming; letters were delivered the same day, or at latest, the next, and people did come from many miles distant to perform and attend.

So why did it happen? It was thought that Framlingham needed a boost. The years of Depression had taken their toll. In effect, Framlingham responded to its own medicine. It had an enormous amount of fun. The whole town displayed a sense of purpose: a determination to do the thing properly. From children to adults, from ladies to labourers, from Church and Trade a huge effort was forthcoming. Framlingham showed the world - at least as far as America - what it could do when it tried.

People said the Pageant was a "one-off". It could not be done again and indeed, on that scale, it never was. There was an Elizabethan Masque for the Hitcham Tercentenary Celebrations in 1936 but that was much smaller. The Millennium Pageant was different again.

We might, perhaps, sometimes ask ourselves why we do these things: whether we have an obligation as a society in the urban sense or as a Society with an historical mission. We may set out simply to earn money. Indeed, the Pageant paid for the Pageant Field, although that was not its initial aim. We may seek to disseminate knowledge which interests us to others by vehicles such as this journal. But at the end of the day, so long as the job is done well - whether there is financial gain or loss - and people are rewarded spiritually, we can say that we have made Framlingham a better place.

Many people find that service to a community is very rewarding, even though their paths are strewn with brick-bats, criticism and downright aggravation! Similarly, those who take out more than they put in become rather bitter and dissatisfied, and are usually the first to criticise those who seek to enrich the lives of others.

The Constitutional aims of this Society are: "To encourage and foster interest and research in all matters relating to the social history of all periods ... of Framlingham and ... district." To a reasonable extent we have not done too badly. The Lanman Museum, though now independent from us, had its basic collection formed by a founding father of the Society. Individual members have provided learned works in book form, talks and research. We have held exhibitions. As a Society, we act as a watchdog where buildings are vulnerable to vandalism of any sort. Year by year, we produce a varied programme of lectures and outings. We produce this journal which contains articles of "interest and research in all matters ..." We hold an Annual Dinner. Amongst us is a huge resource of personal knowledge, an archive of solid material and a burning desire to make Framlingham a better place.

Inevitably and probably in common with most Societies, the benefits to the many are brought about by the efforts of the few.

In 1931, almost the whole of our town pooled its resources, its enthusiasm and its efforts to provide a spectacle, the like of which has never been seen here again. What if our Society pooled all its might when called upon? Would we not then make Framlingham an even better place? And how rewarding that would be for all of us!

AJM

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 31st OCTOBER 2001

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This has been a year of growth and development for our Society: growth, in that we now have over a hundred individual members; and development, for we have been able to pursue a number of initiatives new to our Society, and which can, I feel sure, be taken forward in ways that will enable the Society better to serve this town.

Our winter lectures last season consistently attracted over fifty and often as many as seventy people - enough bodies to stretch to the limit the space available to us here at the United Free Church Hall; and this is clearly an issue to be addressed by our Committee in the future. Beginning with Mrs. Pitcher's paper on an artist sadly neglected in his home territory, Edwin Edwards, closely followed by Ronnie Blyth's spell-binding evocation of the Suffolk scene, we then went on from strength to strength.

As Editor of *Fram*, I was delighted that Mrs. Pitcher's paper, and also that on Framlingham branch line by John Simpson, were subsequently published in the journal. *Fram* itself took on a new look last August, with covers in full colour, thanks to Tony Martin's splendid watercolour and John McEwan's IT expertise.

As ever, Society outings last summer were resounding successes, although it was a pity that we had a few empty spaces on the coach taking us to Castle Acre and Houghton Hall, resulting in a small financial loss to the Society on that trip. We enjoyed our evening visits to Walpole Chapel and Easton church, and also, as a bonus, a September outing to meet up with a Suffolk Punch at Sibton!

It is rare for members to have the opportunity for hands-on archaeological work, but this occurred in August, when we assisted the County Archaeological Service with their investigation of the St. Michael's Room site. Only a few significant artefacts, and no human remains were found, a disappointment for us, but good news for the potential developers. I hope to publish the report on the dig in a later issue of *Fram*.

Last November, for the first time ever (I think!) we had a Society dinner, at the Conservative Club. The event was very well supported by members and guests, and was greatly enjoyed by all; we have another one arranged for 22nd November (the same date!) this year, and we fully intend that this dinner should become an annual event in the Society's calendar. If you have not yet booked your places for this year, please try to do so a.s.a.p. with past-Chairman Brian Collet, as there are very few left. And let us not forget the splendid exhibition last month in St. Michael's church, commemorating the Framlingham Town Pageant of 1931, organized by one of our Trustees, Tony Martin. We also contributed half the cost of refurbishing the gates to the Pageant Field, which now bear a plaque marking this initiative.

Running a society such as ours is not just about coming along to social and educational events; they all have to be organized, and here again the Society has been able to achieve significant progress over the past year. A detailed questionnaire had been distributed to members of the Society early in the year 2000, and attracted a 35% response, which I am told is not bad for an exercise of this kind. The officers and Committee have been slowly digesting its results since then, with several useful outcomes. We now have regular refreshments after each meeting here, thanks to Alicia Bond, most effective publicity in local media, courtesy of John Black, and also a number of ideas - and volunteers - for future lectures to the Society, and for articles in *Fram*.

A major boon for our Society's administration has been the creation of a computerized database of our membership. Now, for the first time, at the press of a button - or two - the Honorary Secretary can be provided with a hundred or so address labels each time a membership mailout is needed. In the past, it would have needed several typewriter ribbons and a bucket of Tippex to provide this service!

The Society has suffered some sad losses over the past year - personal, if not financial. Major Arthur Kirby, a very long-standing member and for four years Chair of the Society's Development Sub-Committee, has now moved away to distant climes (we wish him well), while Stella Sills now feels she has to leave our General Purposes Committee and Planning Sub-Committee - her quiet but penetrating guidance and advice will be sadly missed. More tragic was the sudden passing away of Heather Ling. Heather had for a number of years until shortly before her death, been responsible for the production and distribution around the town of the posters advertising Society events. It is particularly sad when an active Society member whose family has been in this area for generations is taken from us.

I must give my most sincere thanks to the Society's General Committee and its officers for their loyal support over the past year. Attendances at Committee meetings have usually been at least 90% - which is not such good news for the person running the meeting and trying to ensure that it finishes before closing time! And my thanks to all of you Society members, who turn up loyally and regularly for our meetings, who support our outings, and who pay their subscriptions ON TIME. Because, without you, we would not be here at all!

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### FRAM 1974

**Craftsmanship:** Mention earlier of Mr. Harry Coleman reminds me of his workshop on the Market Hill (now occupied by Mrs. McLeish, Olivia's, Violet Hill Cleaners and Rawlings). The foreman was Mr. Alfred Kerridge, who died only a few years ago, and the last apprentice was Mr. Asher Symonds who is still at work in Riverside. For many years Miss Coleman ran the shop. It was possible to buy ladies' and gentlemen's hand-sewn boots and shoes and, of course, men's working boots. They did not let the water in; I still possess a pair of shoes hand-sewn by Mr. Kerridge.

**Alarms:** Some will remember an earlier issue of this Newsletter in which I wrote of the "Tocsin" as a way of summoning the Fire Brigade and the people to help put out fires. The same method was to be used in the last war to announce invasion by the Germans. This reminds me of Mendlesham when the late Canon Percy Wareham showed me the weapons and armour stored in the Priest's Room over the porch and the Orders of the Day in Old English with a typewritten translation. These orders were for the men of the district to help repel the invasion of the Spanish Armada in 1588 and were worded in almost exactly the same way as the Orders for the Home Guard in the last war.

In 1798 the Framlingham Volunteer Infantry was instituted under the command of Major John Stanford who is buried at Badingham where a stained glass window has been erected to his memory. We have some of the silver buttons in the Museum inscribed "For God and King". We also have a medal presented by Lord Henniker and several cap badges of the Castle Gateway. These, strange to say, are made of lead because this metal was easy to cast and did not need the expertise needed for casting in brass.

The French actually made a landing at Felixstowe and captured part of Landguard Fort, holding it for six hours. They left in a hurry when they saw the Suffolk Hussars coming at full gallop. What a fine sight that must have been. The fighting with the garrison was quite a bloody affair during the six hours the French were ashore.

In 1932 the Eastern Command Army Manoeuvres were held in the Framlingham area and some meadows on Manor Farm, then owned by Mr. William Woodgate, were used. To provide sufficient water (we had no mains water then), Jeaffreson's Well was tested and continuously pumped for a fortnight. It was found to be of excellent quality and quantity so a pipe was laid up the lane past the Sick House (Tall Trees). The Artillery with their guns and horses arrived and so did the rain! It never stopped for three weeks. The troops really suffered but the manoeuvres went on. The pipe-line was left because of a request from the Suffolk Show Committee, who held their Show the following year on the same meadows. I am informed by Canon Bulstrode that the Suffolk Show was held previously at Framlingham in 1912, that time on the Fairfield or the Fens. It is a remarkable thing that our town with such a fine supply of water now has to have its water brought all the way from Holton.

## THE HEROIC AGE OF ANTARCTIC EXPLORATION: A CELEBRATION OF ITS BEGINNING ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

By Andrew A. Lovejoy

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On 6th August 1901, the following item appeared in *The Times*:

The King and Queen with Princess Victoria and attended by their suites, inspected the Antarctic exploration ship, *Discovery*, in Cowes Roads yesterday. Their Majesties ... were received at the gangway by Sir Clement Markham [President of the Royal Geographical Society] who presented Commander Scott; who in turn presented the officers of the ship and scientific staff. Their Majesties inspected the ship. On the return to the upper deck the men were again fallen in and were briefly addressed by the King. He then presented Commander Scott with the decoration of the Victorian Order (4th Class). Before leaving the ship, their Majesties and Princess Victoria signed their names in the visitors' book. The *Discovery* will leave Cowes at noon today on its voyage.

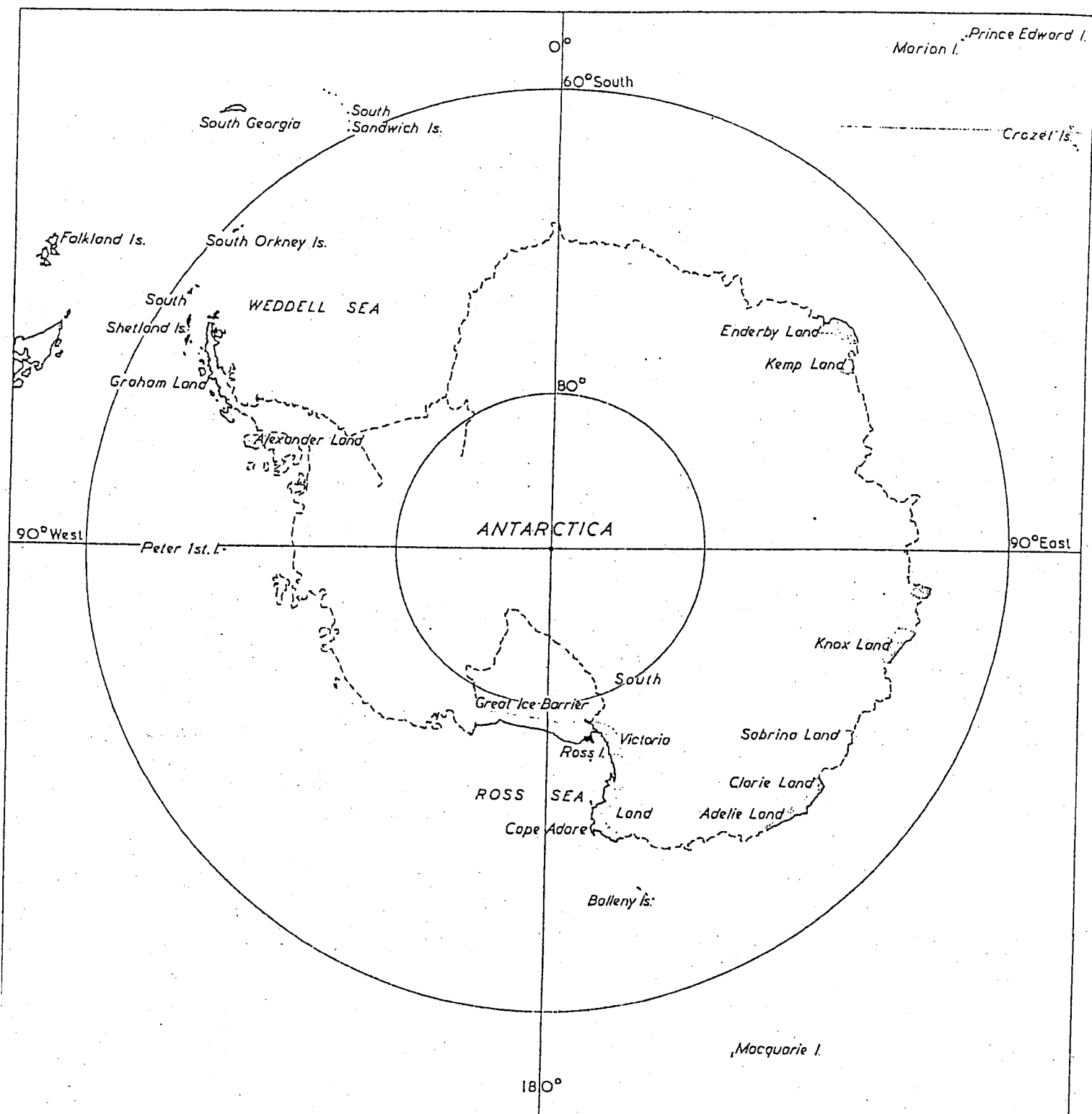
Polar exploration was once described by Apsley Cherry-Garrard (a member of Scott's final expedition, 1910-1913) as being "at once the cleanest and most isolated way of having a bad time which has been devised". The complement of the *Discovery* expedition 1901-04, 47 men aged between 22 and 44, had nothing of the sort on their minds, and were as gay as larks at the prospect before them. Thus was heralded the overture to the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration.

The British National Antarctic Expedition, called by most people the *Discovery* expedition, did not take place *in vacuo*. The circumstances of the expedition mirrored the times.

Queen Victoria died on 22nd January 1901: it was the end of an era. In politics, too, the tide was changing. Liberal and even socialist policies were being aired. New innovations in daily life soon included a more general use of the telephone and automobile, and the first manned flight took place in America on 17th December 1903. People's imaginations were stirring and quickening. England's position in the world was threatened by healthier beasts, namely Germany and the United States of America. Hitherto, Britain had been a country geared up to industry and Empire, and all that that meant. The Boer War caused a hiccup: the appalling casualty figures engendered doubts in many people's minds. The country needed something to boost its morale. Edward VII's accession to many seemed like a breath of fresh air after the torpor of the latter part of Queen Victoria's reign. Would a polar expedition help to symbolise the expectations of a new century and a new reign?

People in 1901, thanks in part to compulsory education arising from the Forster Education Act of 1870, were voracious readers. Their diet in newspapers in particular included tales of adventure and derring do arising from events in the Arctic and Africa. Antarctic stories of extraordinary heroism and adventure would surely also fit the bill? The *Discovery* expedition was launched, it seems, at a most propitious time.

The Antarctic is the fifth largest continent, nearly twice as large as Australia. It has a diameter of about 4500 kilometres and a circumference of 32,000 kilometres and an area of 14 million square kilometres. It is the highest continent with an average elevation of 2,300 metres. The highest peak is Mount Vinson at 5,140 metres. The ice sheet rises to over 3,000 metres over large areas. Everything in the Antarctic is prodigious. The permanent ice sheet covers 87% of the continent; 11% is permanent floating ice. Only 2% of the continent's surface is in the form of exposed rock. If all the ice were to melt, the world sea level would rise by about 200 feet (71 metres). In winter the area in the Southern Hemisphere covered by ice with its centre on the South Pole amounts to 20 million square kilometres. The high plateau of Antarctica is the world's largest and driest desert, the snowfall over much of the continent amounting to a rain equivalent of 50mm (1.96 inches) *per annum*.



— Charted coastline  
 - - - Unexplored coast

THE ANTARCTIC IN 1901, SHOWING ITS LARGELY UNKNOWN NATURE. Adapted from a map published by the Royal Geographical Society, 7 November 1904 (with contemporary place-names retained).



The weather on the coast of the continent is kinder. There the average temperatures fall to about minus 25 degrees C, whilst inland on the high plateau the average temperatures can fall to as little as minus 55 degrees. The Antarctic peninsula is an anomaly. The rainfall equivalent of the snow falling on the west coast of the Peninsula amounts to as much as 50 inches (126 cm). All in all, the Antarctic is a colder place than the Arctic.

Antarctica in the 18th century was still the great unknown. Captain Cook was the first man to cross the Antarctic Circle on 17th January 1773. He reached the furthest south of anyone in the 18th century in February 1774, reaching 71 degrees 10 mins. south. His rediscovery of the Antarctic Island of South Georgia in 1775 led to commercial interests invading the island for seal-skins etc. No-one as yet had put a foot on the mainland of the continent. Cook made the comment

That there may be a Continent or large tract of land near the Pole, I will not deny, the excessive cold, the many islands and vast floats of ice all tend to prove there must be land to the South.

The Continent may well have been sighted on the circumpolar voyage (1819-21) of Captain Thaddeus Bellinghausen, a Russian under direct orders from the Czar Alexander I. The first certain sighting was by William Smith of Blythe on 19th February 1819 in Lat 62 degrees 40 mins. S and 60 degrees W. Smith called this land New South Shetland. The mainland (Trinity Land) at the northern tip of the Antarctic Peninsula was reached on 4th February 1821. The whole matter was reported in the *Quarterly Review* and other contemporary journals.

With the end of the Napoleonic Wars, naval ships became available for other uses. The British Association for the Advancement of Science, (founded 1831) and the Royal Geographical Society (founded 1830) advanced the possibility of geo-magnetic studies in Antarctic waters, hence the Erebus and Terror expedition (1839-43), led by Sir James Clark Ross, with the ostensible purpose of discovering the South Magnetic Pole. Ross landed on 19th January 1841 on Possession Island, and claimed Victoria Land for the Crown. It was the best equipped Antarctic expedition of the 19th century, and discovered much in the McMurdo Sound and Ross Sea area. The Americans and French were also in the field at that time, mainly exploring the coast to the west of the Ross Sea.

There were also at that time a number of private ventures bent on finding more of the geographical details of the South Polar seas and land. In 1830 a firm of sealers based in London, the Enderby Brothers, sent down one of their Captains, John Biscoe, who circumnavigated the continent, in a momentous voyage. The Enderby Brothers soon went bankrupt. They paid a heavy price for their incursions into Antarctica.

Twenty-nine years elapsed after the Erebus and Terror Expedition, during which only 23 recorded voyages were made south of 60 degrees south. The stalemate was broken by the voyage of HMS Challenger. Between 1872 and 1876, the Challenger covered a distance of 68,890 miles in 719 days on a voyage which took the scientists round the world. Devoted to oceanography, the voyage really founded the subject. The reports of the voyage filled 50 volumes.

John Murray, employed as a biologist on the Challenger voyage, took 20 years to sift, analyse and interpret the records, and in November 1893, at the Royal Geographical Society, showed by means of an outline map, the probable position and extent of the Antarctic continent. He presented a remarkable word picture of the continent deduced from all the evidence then available. The pace was quickening. In 1895 the sixth International Geographical Congress had as its climax a unanimous resolution: "The exploration of the Antarctic regions is the greatest piece of geographical exploration still to be undertaken".

It was the whalers and not the scientists who gave the first boost to Antarctic exploration in the 1890s. Larsen, a whaling captain, in 1893 made a voyage to the South Orkneys and the Weddell Sea. Various other virtually privately financed expeditions took place, including the first wintering on the Continent by the Southern Cross expedition led by C. E. Borchgrevink (British Antarctic Expedition) in 1898-1900. On 17th February 1899, an anchor fell at the last *terra incognita*, when the Southern Cross anchored at Robertson Bay (Cape Adare) on the approaches to the Ross Sea.

1901 was an extraordinary year in the history of Antarctic exploration. The most well-equipped and advanced expedition was that put out by Great Britain, the British National Antarctic Expedition (Discovery Expedition), which broke new ground, and was a very successful pioneer effort. It is that expedition which will concern us for most of this article.

It was Sir Clement Markham (Secretary and later President of the Royal Geographical Society) who firmly laid the foundations for the British effort. In 1887 he was on the island of St. Kitts, and there and then at a sailing competition for young Naval Officers selected R. F. Scott as a possible leader of a future Naval expedition to the Antarctic. In 1899 Sir Clement met Scott by chance in a London street. Things snow-balled. On 9th June 1900, Scott was appointed commander of the prospective expedition to the South. At first, the Royal Society was involved in its preparations. They left the scene when Sir Clement, a very determined person, got his way in insisting that the expedition be treated as a Royal Naval expedition led by a Royal Naval officer. Money was a problem initially. A Mr. Longstaff contributed £25,000. Others followed. The Treasury contributed £45,000, and eventually £93,000 was available to fund the enterprise. On 16th March 1900 the keel of the RRS Discovery was laid in Dundee. The ship (displacement 1620 tons, registered tonnage 485 tons, hull 26 inches thick, layers of various kinds of wood) was ready for sailing on 21st March 1901. After six months of frenzied preparation and indefatigable work by Scott in particular, the Discovery and its complement of 47 officers and crew sailed from the Solent on 6th July 1901.

The first stop was Madeira. The ship took on more coal and a lot of mail was sent off. The officers wrote to Sir Clement Markham praising the ship for its comfort and buoyancy. He was also informed how much the officers liked each other. After leaving Madeira, various defects showed up, including a flooding of the hold, which was damaging provisions etc. All was put right, though the dogs' stock fish was rendered rotten, a crucial factor in later events.

The Discovery reached Cape Town in October 1901, a visit marked by many invitations. On Wednesday 9th October 1901 the whole ship's company enjoyed a dinner given by the Philosophical Society. Invitations came from everyone. It was a memorable visit.

On Monday 14th October 1901, the Discovery left Cape Town. Royds noted in his diary that

there appears to be friction on the mess deck through there being merchant and royal naval personnel together. Goodness knows what it is, it cannot go on.

Soon after leaving Cape Town, the Discovery met savage storms. The clinometer measured 50 degrees of roll. The ship proved to be completely sea-worthy and made good progress with a particularly good run on one day of 223 miles. For Scott it was not a rest cure. He had to cope with the problems resulting from some small defects in the ship, as well as having to shake down the crew into a practicable team, to face the vicissitudes of Antarctic living. The strain must have been great as he had little experience, no advisers, and no knowledge of what was in store for him and his colleagues.

In mid-November en route to New Zealand, the ship made a detour to within 200 miles of the Antarctic coast. The Discovery met pack ice at 62 degrees 50 mins. South on 16th November 1901.

At the end of November 1901 the ship berthed in Lyttelton, New Zealand, to prepare for the trip south. Invitations from the locals, great and small, flooded in. Some of the mess deck were regularly drunk, exasperating Scott and others. The problem members of the crew were replaced and others taken on. Two of the officers met their future wives on the visit - Skelton and Ferrar.

News reached Lyttelton that Sir Clement Markham had arranged for a Norwegian ship, the Morgenen, renamed The Morning, to be purchased. She was to be the relief ship for the expedition. Scott was much relieved!

The Discovery was loaded to the limits with stores, coal, polar equipment and livestock. The dogs and

45 sheep were amongst the cargo. On 24th December 1901, they sailed south, escorted by two RNZN warships.

The Discovery was fortunate to cross the stormy southern ocean without experiencing a storm. The journey to the Ross Sea in such conditions much have been particularly enjoyable. Wilson in his diary for 30th December 1901 reported

Fair wind and splendid weather continues, though at midday it clouded grey all over with a grey sea and black and white porpoises, a typical outlook of the approach to the ice pack. We all eagerly looked forward to entering the pack on the first day of 1902. Everyone in the best of spirits, and as keen for the fray as possible. Very few birds today, two or three albatross and a few whale birds. On 2nd January 1902 at 65 degrees 30 mins south met first icebergs. The icebergs provided a fine sight.

The Discovery was soon in the pack ice. Crabeater seals were shot and examined. Wilson was in charge of skinning and autopsies. It was hard work and time consuming.

It took Discovery five days to get through the pack which always lies in a band to the north of the Ross Sea. Sir James Clark Ross in his 1839-43 expedition spent 46 days in the pack, covering 800 miles. The advantage of screw propulsion (here powered by steam) to the future of Antarctic exploration here manifested itself.

On 8th January 1902 Royds, the officer on watch, sighted land on the port bow. This was Victoria Land, fringed by a chain of magnificent mountains. The sky was a clear azure blue with brilliant sunshine, the atmosphere so clear that the ship was 120 miles away when land was sighted. This sighting at the southern edge of the pack ice was marked by the tracks of seals, penguins and birds. Wilson thought it amazing good fortune to catch a third Ross seal.

The Discovery's first stop was Cape Adare at the mouth of Robertson Bay. There Ridley Camp had been set up by the Southern Cross expedition of 1898-1900. The beach was swarming with Adelie penguins, which had their nests near the top of the cliff-face. The stench was abominable.

The Discovery nearly foundered the next day during efforts to sail away. The ship made a course along Victoria Land and then on 15th January came to an inlet. Let Scott describe the scene.

It was a perfectly beautiful sight, and the absolute stillness and peace, a sort of eternal peace that could never be disturbed, seemed to hold about the cold clear air. I shall never forget it. Within a few minutes the eternal peace was shattered and crimson was added to the colours of the floe. Twenty seals and ten Emperor Penguins were killed.

Fresh food was recognised as essential though not before Scott had entered into argument with Shackleton, then in charge of food and diet. Scurvy was in 1901 still a possible bane of ships' companies lacking fresh green vegetables. As long ago as 1601, the value of lime juice as an anti-scorbutic had been recognised for its property to make good Vitamin C deficiencies. In 1753 Lind published in England *A Treatise on Scurvy* of which Captain Cook took heed, and not one case of scurvy appeared during his three great voyages. He placed reliance on many things including fresh vegetables. Scott seems not to have learnt from past experience. He was in any case squeamish about killing animals, the only source of fresh food in the Antarctic. It was Shackleton who was adamant that fresh seal meat was a requirement. As it was, the seal meat served fairly regularly from January 1902 at Hut Point (the base of the expedition in McMurdo Sound) realised an average intake of 7 milligrams of Vitamin C per person per day, where 10 milligrams is today considered a minimum. Tinned food was quite inadequate. This all boded ill for the various sledge journeys of the expedition. And so it turned out.

The introduction of fresh seal meat into the diet of the expedition did not happen without further problems. Betts, the ship's cook, at first refused to cook it, and then over-cooked it. He was charged with insubordination, clapped in irons, and then placed on the open deck for what was a fairly coolish day.

At the end of the day he was a reformed character and everything thereby was happy ever after.

The Discovery made for Cape Crozier, sailing eastwards along what is now the Ross Ice Shelf. Let Edward Wilson tell us more.

As we turned the corner of the Cape [Cape Crozier] the shoulders of Mount Terror appeared towering above us and here all the rock which showed in many places through the snow was blood red. And here we saw the commencement of the Great Barrier which is not at first sight stupendous in any way. It looks like an endless low cliff of ice, all white, varying from 100ft high up and down to 150ft or 50 ft rarely reaching more. The drift snow off the Barrier has a beautiful effect in sunshine, a thing I remember seeing in Switzerland. The air is full of dancing spicules of ice, all brilliant and sparkling, making a very bright mist.

The Discovery travelled along the Barrier to its end, a distance of 400 miles. It there met up with a 2000 feet high rock surface and was then forced out to sea by the north-tending coast of what is now Byrd Land (King Edward VII Land). They had to get to winter quarters if they were to avoid being trapped in the newly forming sea-ice.

The Discovery found its winter quarters at what was to be named Hut Point on Saturday 8th February 1902. Let Edward Wilson describe the scene.

Going further down the Bay [McMurdo] we were stopped by fixed ice and forced to turn East and cross the Bay towards Mount Erebus [3,794 Metres; only active volcano in Antarctica] and here we found a small sheltered bay in which anchor was dropped and the decision was come to that we should stay here and make the place our winter quarters. As things are we are in a safe place, but at the same time not in the most perfect little natural harbour imaginable. We all realise our extreme good fortune in being led to such a winter quarter with perfect shelter from ice pressure from the north and south and west, a low shore and ice foot on the east where the huts can be satisfactorily built on rock sheltered from the S.E. prevailing winds by a range of hills.

The ship's company settled down to the routine of work and even play. The ship having been secured for the winter, the aim was to get routine work done by mid-day, so leaving the men free after that to do as they liked. Off-duty smoking was allowed anywhere in quarters. People were encouraged to take exercise, but it was not made compulsory. Football was a favourite pastime. Sledging had the effect of blurring distinctions of rank. Everyone got to know each other. The varied workings of a fully equipped polar expedition must have resulted in a wealth of interest and activity on the moored Discovery.

Hardly had the Discovery docked than many people were keen to explore the new territory. White Island, for instance, was made the goal for a short skiing and sledging journal by Koettlitz (Surgeon and Botanist), Muggins, V. Hodgson (Biologist) and Edward Wilson. They set off on Wednesday 19th February thinking it would be a short journey, "We thought we could easily reach the island in a day". Problems arose with clothing and its unsuitability. The problems of being in the field surfaced. Field work was going to involve a long struggle. The mirage which makes distances look short, did not help.

Soon after starting coming from the South we could see a long low band of grey drift gradually approach us. We went on and on and on with an occasional glimpse of the island in front of us which never seemed even a little bit nearer than when we started. It was now blowing a regular gale and we were still on sea-ice and with the wind in the right direction for breaking it up at the fastest rate. At 11.30 p.m. the wind was worse than ever and we were all simply done, so we decided to camp and wait till the wind dropped. As soon as we halted and started to unpack, the cold and the snow-drift and the wind were so bad that we all began frostbites.

We raised the tent. It was a crowded place. Then we had to look to our frostbites. Shackle's ears were badly blistered and his hand was still all white. We got our foot-gear off. The ski-boots were frozen to the socks. The sweat of our feet had lined the boots with ice. It took all we knew next morning to thaw the socks out. Then we got our supper cooked, hot cocoa, pemmican, biscuit, jam and butter and then began to get our furs on, an awful job in a small tent but it was



too bad to go outside. The other two were bricks to me now. They dressed me first. At last we were all in our skins and pemmies and settled off to sleep huddled together to keep warm.

Shackle and I both slept fairly well until 1.30 a.m. the wind dropped and though of course it was midnight it was a beautiful still clear morning with a wonderful pink glow on Mt. Erebus and Terror. And there lay our blessed island still a long way off and so we slumbered again till 3.30 a.m. and then turned out, packed up our camp and started trudging again towards the island.

This introduction to polar travel must have come as a shock. The ship's company had to learn to ski, train the dogs (if that was possible) and generally acclimatise itself to polar travel, something our intrepid polar travellers were ignorant of. And all in what amounted to an alien climate and environment. And danger was not always far away. Able Seaman R. N. G. G. Vince lost his life whilst exploring the neighbourhood.

Scott and Wilson were perhaps the most hard-working people on the Discovery. Wilson's diary is full of his exploits:

Spent the whole morning and afternoon piecing together my sketches of the coast to make continuous panoramic views. A warm sunny day. Spent the evening sketching. Saw a school of Grampus Whales or Killers with very high fins. This afternoon we made up a party in a whaler and dragged old Muggins' trawl along the bottom of the Bay and brought up a most splendid haul of big sponges and a lot of other things.

These days were full of activity for the whole ship's company. The temperature at the time went up to as much as 28 degrees, but usually much less. The weather was as ever capricious, though blizzards as experienced in winter were not yet experienced.

Thought had obviously been given to the sledging programme. In all, the expedition completed 23 significant sledging journeys. The sledging programme in Wilson's words was as follows

Give up next summer [1902-03] chiefly to sledging in three directions. One party to go due South from Winter quarters. The ship to wait until its return. Other smaller parties and excursions to make out the immediate neighbourhood of McMurdo Bay, Mt. Erebus and Terror, and to come back to the ship. The relief ship [The Morning] will now take Armitage and a party to Wood Bay to go inland to the Magnetic Pole, and wait for them until their return when they and the relief ship will return to Littleton [New Zealand]. Meanwhile, the Discovery will have collected its sledge parties and will go up to Cape Adare and Cape North and see if anything can be made out of Wilkes Land. In December 1903 we start South again to get further information about the East End of the Barrier where we found our new land.

This was an ambitious plan, which in the end was not accomplished. In the event, the Discovery's attentions were confined to the hinterland of McMurdo Sound, the Ross Ice Shelf and Victoria Land. Discovery of the Magnetic Pole in particular proved elusive.

Settling into the routine of an expedition is a busy time. All had their duties to do, whether as cook, meteorologist, biologist, etc. Life on the Discovery, which was in fact the wintering hut, must have been a cramped experience. The ship, 172 feet long and 34 feet in the beam, was, with 47 people and their paraphernalia, cramped. It must have been cosy, but yet given to bouts of frustration and stress.

What was the atmosphere on board? Koettlitz once remarked that, on the expedition, he never saw anyone lose their temper. Wilson noted that at times he was sorely pressed. The under-currents in the ship were sometimes almost unbearable. The ship was run by Scott on naval discipline lines, yet he had the sense, for instance, to give the scientific staff a free hand which was fully justified by the quantity and quality of the expedition's scientific results. There must have been problems on board from time to time. The rivalry between royal naval and merchant navy personnel seems to have caused friction on the mess deck. Everyone had their faults. Scott had the habit of not telling anyone the future plans until the last minute, his only confidante of any note being Edward Wilson; Uncle Bill to all. (Yet there was a distinct

*esprit de corps* on board, which was evident by the fact that the Morning left the Discovery in March 1903 with just eight seamen volunteering for a return to England, precisely those who did not fit in. Shackleton left with them).

The sun sank for the last time on 23rd April 1902 and was not seen for 121 days. Four months of darkness were thought to have a depressing psychological effect. After all, two men went mad, on the Belgica expedition to the Bellinghausen Sea in 1897. Scott's answer was to keep everyone as busy as possible. There were of course occasions when there was something to see outside, and twilight in any case made short walks possible. Wilson noted that on 7th June 1902 he saw a fine Aurora

... a long low arch of vertical streamers from S. to E. and W. It was dead calm, beautifully still and clear and silent and these long straight beams of light all round the horizon lend a weird charm to the darkness and silence.

Life in a close-set community demanded one's attention 24 hours a day. Domestic duties had to be done. The ship's company were on all accounts adaptable. Life on board clearly had its high moments. On 23rd April 1902, the first issue of *South Polar Times* was published. It was the work of Wilson and others with Shackleton as editor. Today a collector's item, it brings high prices.

The ship's company were segregated on the Discovery on Royal Naval lines, the wardroom separated from the mess deck. It amused Shackleton, who in his time had served before the mast on sailing clippers going round the Horn. Scott did insist that exactly the same victuals be served to both men and officers, the only difference being that the officers drank wine and the lower deck beer.

The life in the Wardroom had its formal side. The officers and scientific staff dressed for dinner, the aim being to introduce a little civilisation into the proceedings. Entertainments in the Wardroom included weekly debates. Some like Royds played the piano, and then there was bridge. Reading was popular, and everyone on board kept a diary. For exercise everyone could take walks outside. Wilson went for a short walk round Hut Point to see the sunset (18th August 1902) "which was very nice as usual and the full moon rising over the hills in a deep violet or purple blue sky." And again (21st August 1902), "Went out with Shackleton up the hill. But a very heavy blizzard suddenly came on us so we turned back. Nearly everyone was caught in this storm."

Good food was essential to good morale. Ever since January 1902, fresh seal meat became part of the menu. If you liked seal meat, then you had a marvellous time. One day of the week the ship had stuffed seal heart, another seal steak and kidney pie, another seal steak and onions, and so on. For breakfast they had what was considered the best meal of all; seal's liver. On other occasions stewed or curried seal's meat. Thursday was deemed to be Scurvy Day, as the food consumed was out of tins.

The high point for gormands was the Mid-Winter celebration. On Monday 23rd June 1902, Mid-Winter was celebrated. The repast included turtle soup, New Zealand mutton, plum pudding and mince pies, with various extras and two magnums of champagne (Wardroom) followed by port and liqueurs. Then came a singsong followed by a cooling-off on deck under a full moon. At one stage in the proceedings the officers visited in turn the warrant officers', seamen's, and stokers' messes, exchanging good wishes and generally exuding good will.

The weather was always a consideration. Sometimes in winter it was so bad that it kept everyone on board. On 20th May 1902 "a blizzard again, our usual weather. Spent the whole day on the South Polar Times. No chance of going out". Wilson and his party on their first journey to Cape Crozier in 1902 experienced a temperature of minus 40 degrees F. The problem was compounded by the wind-chill factor. But the beautiful panoramic views and skies made up for a lot. On Monday 31st August 1903 Wilson wrote

the sky was perfectly wonderful all afternoon, a blaze of orange fire-light, brick red, dulling into leaden grey above on which lay again shreds and strips of rainbow-coloured cloud like frayed out floss silk of a multitude of colours.

The sun returned in August. The atmosphere on board must have been one of hope outrunning expectations. Scott, Wilson and Shackleton may have entertained the vision of a triumphal return from the sledging journey to the south. Scott's party for the south set off on 2nd November 1902 after a winter of much preparation. It was a cold and windy day, conditions being anything but perfect. Things appear to have gone well to start with. "Camped with the depot party who are in splendid form and high spirits. Quiet night with no wind and bright sun."

In the event Scott reached 82 degrees 17 mins. S., 480 statute miles from the South Pole. It involved a journey lasting 93 days and covered 960 statute miles. Why, in the event, did Scott and his two companions have such a thoroughly bad time? There are many reasons, among them, the party's dog management (19 dogs set off from the Discovery with Scott). At one time the dogs were required to pull a load of 1½ tons, 150 lbs per dog. An experienced dog-handler would not let his dogs pull more than half that load. Secondly, the diet of the dogs was a disaster. The dogs' diet on the journey was changed from biscuit to Norwegian stock fish, tainted with green mould. Eating the fish, the dogs developed violent gastro-enteritis. They failed.

The working conditions of the party were unenviable. The clothes, windproof Burberrys etc., were totally unsuitable. They did not breathe: perspiration built up between inner clothing and outer garment. That was discomfort enough. On taking off the anoraks at night, they froze. You were therefore obliged at the start of the next day to don garments cold and hard as boards. The Burberrys thawed out, but left you feeling very uncomfortable and probably miserable. Today's explorer uses fabrics which breathe, ventile in particular. The problem has been solved.

Furthermore, the diet enjoyed by these intrepid explorers was inadequate. The calorie content of the food on offer was 4200 per day. Today's explorer in similar circumstances would be supplied with at least 5000 calories. Indeed, the ration in total at the start of the journey amounted to 28.6 ounces per man per day which included only 7.5 ounces of meat. Based on medical calculations, it was adequate, but these men were man-hauling. Such calculations were irrelevant. The day's menu started with breakfast - chopped bacon fried with pounded biscuit, two cups of tea and four lumps of sugar. Lunch - one biscuit, two cups of Bovril, a stick of chocolate and four lumps of sugar. Supper - hoosh of pemmican, red ration, pounded biscuit, one soup lump and powdered cheese all boiled together. A cup of sweetened coffee rounded off the meal. One notes there was no hint of fresh vegetables in the meals. Hence, scurvy showed its ugly presence.

The stress and strain of man-hauling sledges, and all the other problems, were compounded by a diet deficiency of another vitamin, Vitamin B, which causes nerve problems and meant that with the best will in the world tempers were at times frayed. At one point Scott and Shackleton exchanged what appeared to them insulting words. From that moment on the Southern Journey was perhaps born Scott and Shackleton's mutual dislike and the deep-seated rivalry between them.

In the process of what was in hindsight a marvellous pioneer effort, other problems emerged. On Monday 12th January 1903, Wilson noted that Shackleton had been getting short of breath for a day or two. He had developed scurvy; he got progressively worse and reached the Discovery on Tuesday 3rd February 1903 in a sorry state.

The strain and stress, particularly after the dogs became useless, must have been a double burden. Sir Ranulph Fiennes, a polar explorer of today, likened pulling a sledge to dragging a bath through sand. If the snow surface was difficult and also covered with awkward sastrugi (humps), then the going was indeed rough. Man-hauling was Scott's first preference. This contributed not a little to the failure of his South Pole party in 1912.

The journey had its rewarding moments. Wilson reported on 31st January, "in the evening I did a bit of sketching one of the finest pieces of mountain scenery imaginable". Even Wilson paid a heavy price for his regular stops for sketching. He had to remove his goggles for the exercise, and thereby caught snow-blindness early in the journey. At one stage he was man-hauling blindfolded; a rare sort of hell.

Scott's reputation depended to some extent on making his mark by travelling as near to the Pole as possible. The party had in fact pushed 35 miles further South than anyone else to date. Considering the problems they endured, it was an extraordinary achievement. Incidentally, Scott's condition on arriving at the Discovery after the journey was the best of the three. That surely speaks volumes about the man.

On 24th January 1903, the relief ship, *The Morning*, arrived. All the various sledging parties were safely back at the Discovery. It was time to enjoy the mail, to write letters, and to prepare for the next year of living at Hut Point. Royds alone had 62 letters and a splendid cake. Eight members of the mess deck volunteered for repatriation. Scott wrote "Curiously satisfactory." Then there was the future of Shackleton. Of the two doctors on board, Koettlitz was ambivalent, but Wilson was more positive. Scott was adamant. Shackleton left with *The Morning* on 2nd March 1903, with tears in his eyes, vowing to return, hopefully on terms more suitable to his talents, wishes and character.

The rest of the Discovery Expedition's stay in Antarctica can be treated briefly. The winter of 1903-04 passed off quietly. If anything, the company of the ship enjoyed a more settled time. The return of the sun on 23rd August 1903 was marked by a celebratory dinner. The menu consisted of real turtle soup, tinned turbot (which made some people sick), seal and olives which were excellent, roast beef which was decidedly dicky, bottled peas and preserved potatoes, followed by plum-dough, jellies and dessert. The Wardroom then enjoyed Heidsieck champagne 1895 vintage, cigars, coffee, liqueurs and whisky punch. The latest issue of the *South Polar Times* was brought in after dinner; it was considered a good number.

The sledging programme for the season 1903-4 consisted of two long journeys requiring supporting parties, and five lesser ones. Scott led the most important journey up the Ferrar Glacier in Victoria Land, and so on to the High Antarctic Plateau. Scott left the Discovery on 12th October 1903. There appears to have been a certain pride in him. The difficulties they encountered would have defeated them a year before, but their experience and hardness of condition saw them through. "I cannot but believe we came near the limit of possible performance." As it was, it was the same old story which nearly defeated them; hunger, exhaustion, deep sastrugi, fog, snowdrift, frostbite and snow-blindness. Scott returned after a journey lasting 59 days, for nine of which they had been blizzard-bound. They had sledged a distance of 725 miles, climbing to 9000 feet and travelling at an average of 14½ miles a day. At one point, on losing a vital piece of navigational equipment, they realised, "they were lost somewhere on the High Plateau". Scott wrote, "I never want to revisit the summit of Victoria Land - the most desolate region in the world."

It was time to leave McMurdo Sound and Hut Point. The Discovery was, however, hardfast in ice. The *Morning* and the *Terra Nova* arrived on 5th January 1904 (a story in itself). The two newly-arrived ships were 20 miles of solid ice from the Discovery. Efforts to saw a way through were doomed to failure. Eventually nature took charge. On St. Valentine's Day (14th February 1904), the *Morning* and the *Terra Nova* tied up alongside the Discovery.

On Friday 1st April 1904, the Discovery reached Lyttelton, New Zealand, on a lovely morning, calm and hot. The welcome the ship's company received was anything but calm, and its warmth tremendous.

### What did the Discovery Expedition achieve?

Captain Cook, speaking on his return from his second great voyage of discovery in 1775, stated that

Should anyone possess the resolution and the fortitude to elucidate this point [the existence of an Antarctic continent] by pushing yet further South than I have done, I shall not envy him the fame of his discovery, but I make bold to declare that the world will derive no benefit from it.

How wrong he was! The Discovery Expedition, a pioneer effort, made the first substantial inroads into the continent. In so doing, 23 significant sledge journeys were made. Antarctica was proved to be a perfect scientific laboratory. The expedition mapped some of the Ross Ice Shelf, the McMurdo area and



Victoria Land. Wilson published a remarkable series of sketches in colour of just about everything he saw. All in all it was a proud achievement.

Not only that. The expedition proved that Antarctic science is difficult because support on a national scale is required to put explorers and scientists into the field on a realistic basis. Politics also come into the equation. The Discovery Expedition turned out to be a huge success, given all the attending problems. Much had been learnt, not only of benefit with regard to the body of knowledge on matters Antarctic, but also science generally had profited.

The expedition brought three now famous polar men to the fore. Commander R. N. Scott (1868-1912), later to be immortalised as Captain Scott of the Antarctic, made his Antarctic debut and returned to England perhaps chastened. The epitome of a Royal Naval officer of his generation, he left a huge stamp on the Discovery expedition. Lacking a sense of humour and to many not a born leader, he demonstrated an aptitude for continuous extraordinary energy, huge powers of endurance, and an adaptability to difficult situations, which marks him out as a polar worker of high tenacity. In the field he led the Discovery expedition almost singlehanded, and left a mark on all its achievements, in many ways an enviable record.

Sir Ernest Shackleton (1874-1922) who had what was an indifferent introduction to polar work, came back in the Heroic Age proper of Antarctic exploration on two expeditions. These he led very successfully, showing outstanding qualities of leadership, which in retrospect leave him with an unparalleled reputation in matters Antarctic.

Edward Wilson (1872-1912), whose reputation has grown with time, was as Scott once described him in a letter to Wilson's wife:

Words fail me when I think of Bill, I believe he is really the finest character I ever met. Wilson was scientist, medical doctor, naturalist, writer, artist, polar explorer and a fine Christian. He was the spiritual source of much of the goodwill existing on board the Discovery in Antarctica. He was everyone's confidante, known as Uncle Bill to all, his polar record is much to be revered.

The main legacy, other than the scientific records, must have been that the foundations of life-long friendships and contacts were laid down during the course of the expedition. They bore fruit in the various expeditions of the Heroic Age, starting with Shackleton's Nimrod Expedition, 1907-1909, which can trace its origin to what took place on the Discovery. Polar explorers become addicted to the Antarctic. They cannot wait to go South again.

### **Other Expeditions setting out in 1901**

The German Gauss expedition led by Drygalski was a national one. It sailed in 1901 from Kiel. The arrangements on the Gauss worked well with the scientists being given a free hand. The scientific team included a naturalist, a geologist and a geo-magnetist. The ship called at Kerguelen Island (sub-Antarctic) and sighted the mainland of Antarctica. It soon became beset in the ice. Winter was taken up with scientific observations and sledging. The Gauss freed itself and arrived home in Germany in November 1903. The scientific results were published in 20 volumes between 1905 and 1931.

The Swedish ship The Antarctic sailed in October 1901 for Grahamland (the Antarctic Peninsula). The expedition met with many tribulations. The Antarctic was crushed in the ice and sank. In spite of all, a full scientific programme was carried through and some research was done on the island of South Georgia. The expedition was led by the Swede, Otto Nordenskold.

The French Antarctic Expedition 1903-05, led by Dr. J. B. Charcot, sailed in the Français to the West coast of the Antarctic Peninsula, where much pioneering survey work was done. This expedition led to the more famous Charcot expedition, the Pourquoi Pas? Expedition of 1908-10, which, like Charcot's earlier effort, extended knowledge of what was known of Grahamland.

## Conclusion

100th anniversaries are usually fun. The expeditions of 1901 and 1903 can now be remembered as the first shots after a lull of 60 years in the campaign to conquer Antarctica. They were pioneer efforts which laid the foundations for the even greater achievements of the Heroic Age proper of the Antarctic exploration, whose start was signalled by Ernest Shackleton's Nimrod expedition of 1907-09. In that expedition an explorer hero made a gallant journey towards the South Pole and came within 100 miles of his goal. More was to follow. It was stirring stuff. It all heralded the early years of the new century with stories of polar heroism at a time when an unstable world order was declining into the horrors of the First World War.

Today we can look back on the pioneering efforts of the Discovery expedition with a sense that the frontiers of Antarctic knowledge had been finally rolled back. This overture to the Heroic Age was a proud effort. All those who took part were lucky men, many of whom then went on to even greater endeavours.

(The author of this article served with the British Antarctic Survey in Antarctica in the 1960s).

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## THE LETTER BOXES OF FRAMLINGHAM

By John Black

Among the many distinctive features of Framlingham are the two octagonal Victorian pillar boxes with vertical slits (Fig. 1). This type of box was made in 1856 by Andrew Handyside of Derby; in 1857 a horizontal slit was substituted, presumably as a better protection against rain.<sup>1</sup> The boxes were ordered by the Post Office's Eastern District;<sup>2</sup> at that time the districts were responsible for ordering and siting letter boxes.

A search at the Post Office (now Consignia) Archives in London for the years 1856 and 1857 failed to reveal any information about the erection of the boxes, but it was recorded that the postmaster had been "reprimanded" on two occasions; the offence was not stated. However, the *Framlingham Weekly News* for Saturday June 30th 1883 contained the following item:

Postal Pillar Boxes - For the convenience of the inhabitants, postal pillar boxes have been erected opposite to the Hare and Hounds Inn [Double Street], and at the juncture of the Saxtead and Dennington Roads in College Road. A box will also be erected at the Railway Station.

This shows that the two existing boxes are in their original positions. It is not known whether a third box was actually erected at the Station; it certainly no longer exists there.

The earliest post boxes were installed in 1852 in Guernsey, at the suggestion of the novelist, Anthony Trollope<sup>3</sup>. Initially, the boxes were painted in various colours, and it was not until 1884 that they were all painted red<sup>4</sup>.

Since the beginning, the convention has been to have the words, in raised lettering, "Post Office" with a crown and the initials or cipher of the reigning monarch; the 1856 design carries the words "Letter Box", but this was changed in later designs to "Letters" or "Letters Only". The exception was the "Anonymous Box", made between 1879 and 1889 by Handyside; this carried only the maker's name<sup>5</sup>. In most designs the maker's name appears at the base of the box.

The rarest boxes were those put up during the reign of Edward VIII; nearly 150 of these are still in use<sup>6</sup>. The most unusual and possibly unique pillar box is at the gates of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. This is placed in the middle of a row of iron railings and has a slit on each side, enabling letters to be posted from within the hospital grounds when the gates are closed, and also from the street.

Over the years the design of pillar boxes has changed, as have the manufacturers. Various types of octagonal

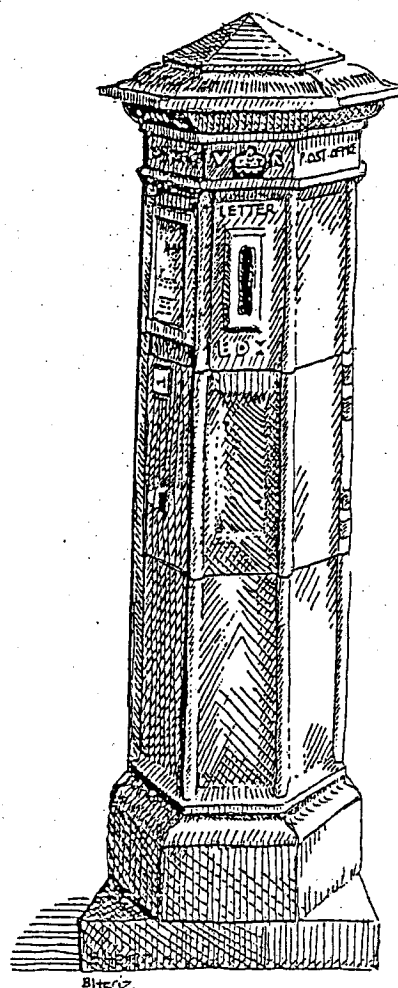


Fig. 1 Victorian pillar box, 1856 design in Double Street



Fig. 2  
George V wall box at the Post Office

boxes were replaced in 1876 by the familiar cylindrical box with a slightly domed top and overhanging serrated edge<sup>7</sup>. In 1980 the cylindrical type was superseded by what can only be described as a phallic shape, the "K type" of box. This was followed by a rectangular box. In big cities oval boxes with two slits are widely used; originally for "Town" and "Country", they are now for first and second class letters.

Though Handyside was one of the earliest firms to have a contract with the Post Office, the best known firm is the Carron Iron Works at Falkirk in Stirlingshire, founded in 1759 and closed in 1982. The firm specialised in cast iron goods from guns used at Trafalgar and in the Peninsular War, to grates and enamelled baths<sup>8</sup>. The firm gave its name to a gun, the carronade (a short cannon of large bore), and to Carron Oil (a mixture of linseed oil and limewater) used for the treatment of burns and scalds; in 1889 Patrick Tully, a moulder at the works, was treated with Carron Oil for a burn on his foot<sup>9</sup>. The firm also made the telephone kiosks to a design by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, inspired by Sir John Soane's tomb in Old St. Pancras Churchyard in London.

The site of the Carron Company works on the River Carron was chosen because of its proximity to deposits of iron ore, coal and limestone, and a river with a good fall of water<sup>10</sup>. For the same geological reasons other foundries were set up in the same area, McDowall, Steven & Co. Ltd., at Falkirk and the Lion Foundry at Kirkintilloch. There appears to have been only one major manufacturer in London, the firm of W. T. Allen & Co.

Apart from the two octagonal boxes there is one other Victorian letter box in Framlingham; this is a wall box by W. T. Allen now held in the Lanman Museum; identical boxes, but better preserved, are at Ipswich and Stowmarket Stations. There are two EIIR pillar boxes in the town, one in Market Hill by the Carron Company, and the other marked "Machan Eng. Scotland", at the junction of Pembroke Road and Saxtead Road. The oldest wall box still in use is at the Post Office; this is marked GR (George V) (Fig. 2) and was made by McDowall, Steven and Company. There are two lamp boxes (so called because they were originally designed to be fixed to lamp posts), both EIIR. One is in Station Road, facing Victoria Mill Road, and made by the Carron Company; the other is also in Station Road about half a mile to the south; this is made of welded steel and carries no maker's name. An example of the "K type" phallic design by the Lion Foundry is near the main car park at Woodbridge. There is a box of the rectangular design, again by the Carron Company, near the Post Office at Wickham Market.

It is hoped that this brief description of letter boxes will stimulate the interest of members of the society in one of the most useful and intriguing pieces of our street furniture.



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*Acknowledgements*

I am grateful to Canon David Pitcher and Mr. M. V. Roberts for their help in tracing the reference in the *Framlingham Weekly News*.

## WHO WERE THE COUCIES?

By Helen Pitcher

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When we moved to Coucy Close, Framlingham, in 1999, we were amazed by the response of people to the name. "What sort of name is that?", they asked; "How do you pronounce/spell it?", etc. With amusement, we would reply, "You know, Coucy le Château. Every time you pass the town sign you see it, 'Framlingham twinned with Coucy le Château'". "Of course", some replied. "Never noticed it", said others.

Subsequently we have found ourselves, along with our neighbours, challenged to produce a team for a Quiz evening, both for the Twinning and for the Primary School. We have challenged all-comers under the team-title of "The Coucies".

These experiences have led me to reflect more closely on the names Coucy and The Coucies, for how many people in Framlingham (twinned with Coucy) know that the name Coucy once re-echoed around Europe, and that "Les Coucy" were a dynasty who caused kings to tremble?

The fate of dynasties hangs on many things, the chances of fortune, wars, marriages, children, disease, etc. etc. Some rise, some fall, some, in a single family, encapsulate the key events of a certain period of history. The Coucies, or rather "Les Coucy", were such a family. Had circumstances been different, they might have become the French equivalent of our Howard family, but it was not to be. However, like the Howard family, they had a full measure of Plantagenet blood in their veins.

So what do we know of them?

We know that for 400 years they participated in the key events of their age, first the Crusades, and finally the Hundred Years War. We know that like all the great families of their day, they were ruthless, ambitious and prepared to stop at nothing to increase their lands and prestige, whether by warring or marrying, to achieve their ends. For 400 years they succeeded, and finally died out for lack of a male line of succession.

In 1059, Aubri de Coucy was a companion in arms of William the Conqueror in his conquest of England. His successor Enguerrand I was the real founder of the dynasty. He had carried off the wife of the Count of Namur, and to expiate his crime he went on the First Crusade, the first of eight members of his family to join the Crusades. Four would die in the effort.

The family married into the royal families of France, Austria and Great Britain, and Enguerrand II married a cousin of the king. Enguerrand II died on the Second Crusade and his son Raoul I died in 1199 at the Siege of Acre, where he was accompanying the three most powerful kings in Christendom, Frederick Barbarossa, Philippe-Auguste, and Richard the Lion-Heart.

In the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, there is a beautiful illuminated manuscript which tells a gruesome tale. It is called "Le Roman du Chatelain de Coucy". Although it dates from the fourteenth century, and is told in true troubadour vein, it is based on Raoul's adventures in the twelfth century. Renaud, chatelain de Coucy (recounts the story) accompanied his master, Raoul I to the Crusades. Before departing, he had fallen in love with a lady of the neighbourhood, who gave him an embroidered cloth as a keepsake. Three years later, mortally wounded, Renaud instructed his squire that after his death, the squire should remove Renaud's heart, preserve it, and send it back to his love in Coucy, wrapped in the cloth. The squire obeyed his instructions, but as he drew near to Coucy, he met a gentleman in whom he confided the details of his mission. Little did he suspect that the gentleman was the husband of Renaud's beloved. In jealousy, the husband caused his cook to prepare a fine dish out of the heart and made his wife eat it. But she, recognising the cloth, realised what she had done. She announced that never again would she eat finer meat, and with that, she withdrew into her room and starved herself to death.

Enguerrand III was known as "the builder". Three marriages, including a second one to the granddaughter of Henry II of England, greatly enriched him, and he it was who set about the first construction of a castle of royal grandeur, which could be seen as either a threat, or a protection, by the Crown. Enguerrand was led into being tempted to make a grab for the crown, but was restrained. His proud mottoe was "Roi ne suis, ne prince, ne duc, ne conte aussi. Je suis le sire de Coucy". He died at the age of 60, falling from his horse and pierced by his own sword.

Enguerrand IV hanged three trespassers whom he caught hunting in his forest. They were from a local abbey. The King was furious, imprisoned him in the Louvre, and only released him on condition that he build three Chantry chapels in memory of his victims, to atone for his deeds.

The most distinguished representative of the family was Enguerrand VII. In her amazing study of the fourteenth century, *A Distant Mirror*, the historian Barbara Tuchman takes Enguerrand as the pivotal character for her study. She wrote much of the book in Coucy, and she illustrates her whole work by personifying the age in Enguerrand, whose influence across Europe was quite extraordinary. In 1356, Enguerrand was amongst the young Frenchmen taken as hostage after the battle of Poitiers. But Edward III was so charmed by him that he gave him his liberty and also his daughter's hand in marriage, so that he became a member of the English royal family. This, of course, was the age of the Hundred Years War.

At the same time, Enguerrand embellished his château at Coucy to rival any royal château, at a time when royal tastes were at their most sumptuous. You will recall, for example, the magnificent Duc de Berry's "Book of Hours", which dates from this period.

Sadly, Enguerrand left no male heir, and his elder daughter died childless. The Coucy estates passed into the hands of Louis d'Orléans who inherited the title Lord of Coucy. His story is wonderfully told in Hella Haase's astonishing novel (based entirely on fact) *In a Dark Wood Wandering*.

Charles was captured by the English after the Battle of Agincourt. He was held prisoner in England for 25 years, passed from one castle to another, to the care of one great lord after another. His most important captor was William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, with whom Charles lodged 1432-6 at Wingfield Castle, Suffolk. Charles d'Orléans and William de la Pole were of an age and became friends working together to achieve better understanding between the French and the English. After Charles' release, Suffolk visited him at Blois.

Charles was one of the most significant prisoners in history - he must have been a subject of great interest. I wonder if he ever visited the Mowbray Dukes of Norfolk here in Framlingham? We may never know.

#### *Sources*

Coucy le Château guidebook

H. S. Haase. *In a Dark Wood Wandering*. (Hutchinson, 1990)

B. Tuchman. *A Distant Mirror*. (Papermac, 1989)

## THE TOWN'S MUSEUM: A FILE NOTE

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In an early issue of this journal's last series, a brief résumé was given of the history of the Lanman Museum<sup>1</sup>, and the editorial also referred to the hopes of the Museum Trustees substantially to re-model the Museum's display space, utilizing external funding, perhaps from the Heritage Lottery Fund<sup>2</sup>. In the event, given the growing calls and constraints on HLF resources, combined with the limited tenancy term that English Heritage was able to grant for the Museum's space at Framlingham Castle, a much more modest development has now been pursued, which at least ensures that the public has access throughout the time that the Castle itself is open, to study and admire the Museum's contents.

We should not forget, however, that the Lanman Museum has itself a lengthy history - a longer one, perhaps, than most independent local museums in the county of Suffolk; and it was, of course, originally set up under the auspices of our own Society. The brief notes that follow are largely derived from the *East Anglian Daily Times* of the period, supplemented by recollections of local persons still with us who were involved with the Museum in those early days.

Performing the opening ceremony of the Framlingham and District Local History and Preservation Society's museum on the Market Hill ... the Earl of Cranbrook said it was ... the intention of the [Society] committee ... to concentrate on articles from Framlingham and district to be saved for posterity.<sup>3</sup>

Lord Cranbrook also expressed the hope that Harold Lanman, the Museum's first Curator, whose personal collection formed much the greater part of the Museum's original (and current) holdings,

would be utterly ruthless when offered something which was not up to the standards of the Museum's requirements.<sup>4</sup>

The Museum at the time that it was officially opened by Lord Cranbrook, was located in premises on the south side of Market Hill, at number 10a, which are now occupied by Messrs. Akerman, Chartered Surveyors.<sup>5</sup>

At that time Gerald Leedam was Chairman of the Framlingham and District Local History and Preservation Society, and P. J. Stannard its Secretary. The opening ceremony was very well supported, although - sadly but inevitably - many of those present on that auspicious occasion are no longer with us. In his speech at the opening, Mr. Leedam referred to the Society's vital role in the preservation of the town's character and amenities (a role since exemplified in 1999 by the Society's initiative in restoring the Carley and Webb crane, and more recently, by our support for the restoration of the gates to the Pageant Field<sup>6</sup>). Back in 1957, Mr. Leedam's concern centred on the condition of the Castle Pond<sup>7</sup>, (now much reduced in size, to the regret of many inhabitants).

The Museum has since 1957 undergone one major transformation, to become a separate charitable trust, as well as enduring three moves, to Double Street, then to the former Court House, then to its present home on the first floor of the former Poor House at Framlingham Castle. And as from 1st April of this year, visitors to the Castle can come into the Museum without paying any extra charge,

Local residents are particularly welcome.

- Notes: 1     *Fram* 3rd series no. 3 (April 1998) pp. 7-8  
2     *Ibid.* p. 1  
3     *East Anglian Daily Times* 30.10.1957  
4     *Ibid*

- 5     Information from Mr. A. J. Martin  
6     A plaque on the gates acknowledges this support  
7     *EADT* 30.10.1957



### Departure Point

Some day this question will have to be discussed - whether the buying of odds and ends, chairs, fire-irons and decanters, and building at a great cost places in which to store them, along with stuffed birds and Esquimeaux boats and all the paraphernalia of the South Sea Islanders, is not a waste of public money? Every age has its folly, and the folly of the twentieth century is probably the desire to educate. I do not say the desire of education, of that desire there is very little - it is not uncommon to meet men who will admit that they are not educated, and we may meet men who admit that they are incapable of education, but we never meet anyone who will admit that he cannot educate somebody else. Hence the great vogue of museums.

From: George Moore, *"Hail and farewell!" a trilogy. III  
Vale* (London, 1914).

*"History is five minutes ago"*

THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN  
ARE MAKING HISTORY

**Framlingham and District  
Local History and Preservation Society**

**RESEARCHING**

**RECORDING**

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**Join our Society and make history**

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