



**Trans-Norway
Antarctic
Expedition
2003**

2003 Trans-Norway Antarctic Expedition



2 – 8 May 2003

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♣ The Norwegian flag on the front cover is one that Amundsen carried over the North Pole and to the South Pole. He gave it to Lincoln Ellsworth whose widow gave it to Beekman Pool who gave it to the current owner. ♣ The bas-relief portrait medallion of Amundsen on the back cover may be found in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco (for many years the location of the Gjøa, the boat in which Amundsen was the first to sail the Northwest Passage). ♣ The portrait of Amundsen above is adapted from the frontispiece of Vol. I of *The South Pole*. ♣ The sculpture of Amundsen with a sled dog stands in the grounds of his house near Oslo (from a photograph by James McCarthy). ♣ The view of the polar party is from a photograph that appears in Roland Huntford's *The Amundsen Photographs*. Amundsen and his men were then (December 8, 1911) seven miles north of Shackleton's 'Furthest South.'

Twenty copies of this Keepsake have been issued by the Erebus & Terror Press, Jaffrey, New Hampshire, April 2003 [E&TP-9].



AT THREE IN THE AFTERNOON [December 14, 1911] a simultaneous “Halt!” rang out from the drivers. They had carefully examined their sledge-meters, and they all showed the full distance—our Pole 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 barefacedly. 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, 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 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 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 powerful grasps of the fist that were exchanged. After this we proceeded to the greatest and most solemn act of the whole journey—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 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 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.

—From *The South Pole*, London, 1912.

THE POLAR PARTY: Roald Amundsen • Olav Bjaaland • Helmer Hanssen
• Sverre Hassel • Oscar Wisting



