

# THE AUSTRALASIAN ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION 1911-1914

UNIVERSITY CLUB  
Castlereagh Street  
SYDNEY  
Jan. 23rd. 1916

*B. 357. Cent.*  
The Premier,  
The Hon. W.A. Holman,

Dear Mr. Holman,

The subject of this communication is a request for some assistance, through the Government Printing office, in the publication of the Scientific Results of the Aust. Antarctic Expedition. The extent of the assistance asked is not great and will be spread over five years.

In the first place some explanation is necessary .

## THE CONDUCT OF THE EXPEDITION

The expedition has been brought to a successful conclusion, with but small loss of life. Operating in an unknown region, in a new sphere of action in Antarctic exploration, the vessel might have been lost with all hands, on many occasions, and no return have been forthcoming after the expenditure of life and money.

As it is, the venture has been attended by so much success, that a larger volume of geographic and general scientific results have accrued, than has been the case with any previous Antarctic expedition ; notwithstanding the fact that all British Antarctic expeditions have so far been attended with considerable fortune.

Upon the appearance of the popular volume, the public press in Great Britain and America have harmoniously regarded the Expedition as one of the greatest scientific undertakings of modern times and an Australian victory. The King's Polar Medal has been

awarded to every member of the Shore Parties and to the Ship's Officers. The Patron's Gold Medal has been awarded to the Leader by the Royal Geographic Society: Also the Helen Cuyver Gold Medal of the Chicago Geographical Society .

#### ELABORATION OF DATA AND COLLECTIONS

The preparation of data and descriptions of collections is now under way. To this, many of the members of the expedition staff are contributing, but for the most part it has been <sup>distributed</sup> amongst specialists the World over. So it is that, at the present moment, there is an army of some eighty specialists engaged upon the elaboration of the material, in preparation for publication. All this work has been undertaken without charge ; only a relatively small sum for incidentals has to be met by the expedition funds.

#### EXPEDITION FUNDS

Before going further it will be as well to make clear the financial position. A general preliminary statement has appeared as an appendix to the "Home of the Blizzard". Last year it was expected that the debit balance shown there would be wiped out by profits from lecturing, cinema films and popular volume. It so happened that war broke out, and the whole situation was reversed. we had looked forward to the above sources to pay for the printing of the Scientific Results. It is doubtful if any business has suffered financially, in proportion, to <sup>u</sup> such an extent as has the Expedition : For at the very moment when assets were to be expected to replenish the funds, the ground fell from beneath.

The Expedition funds on the 31st. Dec. 1915 stood as follows:

Debit balance on general account	- - - - -	£2100
Overdraft expended on incidental expences connected with the working up of the results	- - - - - } - -	<u>£535</u>
Total deficit	- - - - -	<u>£2635</u>

Some part of this can be expected in the course of time, but the major portion will in all probability have to be placed at the door of the leader himself.

During the whole period of the Expedition the Leader has been paid his regular salary as a member of the staff of the Adelaide University, and no other money consideration whatever has been received by him. So that the funds of the A.A.E. have been less taxed than has usually been the case with such Expeditions. With regard to the accounts, they have been audited from time to time by a public auditor in Hobart.

Lady Scott (widow of Captain Scott) has a good knowledge of expedition finances and expenditure, and it is a tribute to the deservedness of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition funds that she recently forwarded a sum of £1000 as a contribution to the outstanding debt.

#### THE MAGNITUDE OF THIS SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATION

All large scientific expeditions publish results in a fairly uniform quarto size. It is our intention to do likewise for it is important that the A.A.E. results shall appear uniform with others.

Almost without exception, all British and Foreign Antarctic expedition results have been published by the respective governments, or by government funds provided for the purpose. In Australia the State governments, in rotation, publish the scientific proceedings of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of science.

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The results of the A.A.E. are the most extensive of all Antarctic expeditions, and it only remains to publish the matter to secure general appreciation of Australian science and endeavour throughout the World, and to build a monument for Australian Enterprise that time cannot decay.

Such scientific records as these, for the most part, are distributed gratis to scientific societies the World over, and there is no question of sales paying for publication. There will be a number of volumes, and the issue of each will range between 400 and 800 copies. This is so because in some sections of science there is a wider interest than in others. It is proposed to bring the work out in small parts at a time: Putting through the press each contribution as it comes to hand from the specialist. In this way parts will be coming in from time to time over a period of five years. Extended over such a time there will be no rush in the printing.

#### ARRANGMENTS FOR PUBLICATION

The state of the finances as indicated above shows that the Expedition has really more than it can do to clear up existing obligations, and without Government help the financial circumstances would be an insuperable barrier to the publication of the results. The Commonwealth Government has no press of its own.

Fortunately the South Australian Government has agreed to help in any way, utilising the resources of the State Government Printing Office. They are able and prepared to do all the printing and binding, and to do much of the illustrating (making a large number of half-tone blocks). Thus everything is accounted for except

colour plates and certain half-tone blocks of <sup>a</sup> higher grade than South Australia can produce, these latter are needed in part of the work. The South Australian Government Printing Office has not the plant for either of this class of work, whereas the N.S.W. Printing Office can turn out the very finest productions of this class of work that it is possible to obtain. My object in communicating with you is to appeal for this additional assistance to complete our publication. It is a matter of occasional colour plates, and upwards of 100 quarto plates of half-tone reproductions. It is a small issue and is extended over several years. The plates would bear the inscription N.S.W. Govt. Printing office, and the circumstances of publication would be explained in the editorial.

#### GENERAL

We regret to be asking the Government to assist at this juncture and only the extreme importance of the matter leads us to do so. On no consideration would we come to you, during the period of the war, for assistance to start out on some enterprise. Here it is a case of putting the roof on a structure already built. Without the roof the whole value of the structure is lost. The value of the expedition is in the published reports. What we ask for, if done in spare time at the Government Printing Office, will be of the nature of a book debt, and but a small one at that. As I, the Leader of the Expedition, was educated and lived most of my life in Sydney, the Expedition was very closely associated with this city, and I trust that the Government will take this opportunity to make the record as creditable as possible. We are ever mindful of the great part you yourself and the Government played in the fitting

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