



READING: A Diary excerpt

Journey to the End of the Earth

The British explorer Robert Scott had an ambition. He was determined to be the first man to reach the South Pole. Scott and his men set out on their journey on 1st November, 1911 and reached their destination on 17th January, 1912.

Wednesday, 17th January

I am so disappointed! We have finally reached the South Pole – but the Norwegian explorers beat us to it. What a defeat! This is a terrible place. The temperature is -40°C and the wind is blowing hard. Our feet and hands are almost frozen. Still, we are proud that we got here. Now for the journey home, we must walk 800 miles. I wonder if we can succeed.



Saturday, 17th March

Tragedy! Two days ago, poor Titus Oates, one of our explorers, became ill and could not go on. He said that we should leave him – but how could we continue without him? At night he felt worse, and we knew that the end was near. Titus was a brave man – he did not give up hope. But when he woke in the morning, there was a storm. Titus said, "I am going outside and I may be sometime." He went out into the storm and we haven't seen him since.

Thursday, 29th March

For days we have been ready to start back, but we can't leave our tent because of the storm. Everything is against us. Our sleeping bags are wet and we have run out of food. We are getting weaker, of course, and the end can't be far. I don't think I can write more.

This was Scott's last diary entry. Scott and his men did not survive. They died in their tent and were only found eight months later.

(Adapted from Captain Robert Scott's diary)

QUESTIONS

1. Did Robert Scott get his challenge? Explain what happened.
2. How long did the journey take Scott and his team? How far was it?
3. How did Scott feel when they reached the South Pole?
4. What happened to Titus Oates? Why did he do that?
5. He wrote that everything was against them. What problems did Scott and his team face?
6. Why did he think he couldn't write more? How did he feel then?

