

FRANK WILD

At Ampthill I met Frank Wild, the noted Antarctic explorer, and we became great friends; this was after his return from Captain Scott's first expedition. If one could only get him to talk he was most interesting, but even then he said little about the prominent part he played. To know more of him it was and is necessary to read *The Heart of the Antarctic* by Sir Ernest Shackleton, whose expedition he also accompanied, and two volumes of *The Home of the Blizzard* by Sir Douglas Mawson.

His aged father had purchased a stationer's and newspaper business in the town, so that when home I saw a good deal of Frank and we had great times together until he went out with the Mawson Expedition, 1911-14, to the Antarctic. He was an excellent cricketer and could sing a good baritone song. He gave me a piece of rock from Mount Erebus, and a book entitled *Aurora Australis*, 1908-9, published at the Winter Quarters of the British Antarctic Expedition of 1907 during the winter months of April, May, June and July, 1908, printed at the sign of "The Penguins" by Joyce and Wild; their printing office measured 7 feet by 6 feet, and also contained a huge sewing machine and bunks for two men.

Frank told me that only twenty-five of these books were printed by them, these being distributed among the members of the expedition and a copy each for the British Museum and the Royal Geographical Society. The covers of the book given to me were made out of a butter box, on the inside of one is stencilled "Butter," on the other "sh Anta dition," being part of the words *British Antarctic Expedition*.

The fact of him parting with this rare and unique book, rather goes to prove the strong friendship that existed between us. He promised to get Sir Ernest Shackleton's autograph in the first book for me, but Sir Ernest's death occurred before he got the opportunity. He went out again with the ill-fated and last Shackleton expedition. I took a party of friends to London to view the ship *Endurance* lying in the West India Dock, and many things were shown and explained to us.

Source: Cooper, Charles W. *Town and Country or Forty Years in Private Service with the Aristocracy*. London: Lovat Dickson, 1937. Pp 147-48.