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My Favourite Explorer

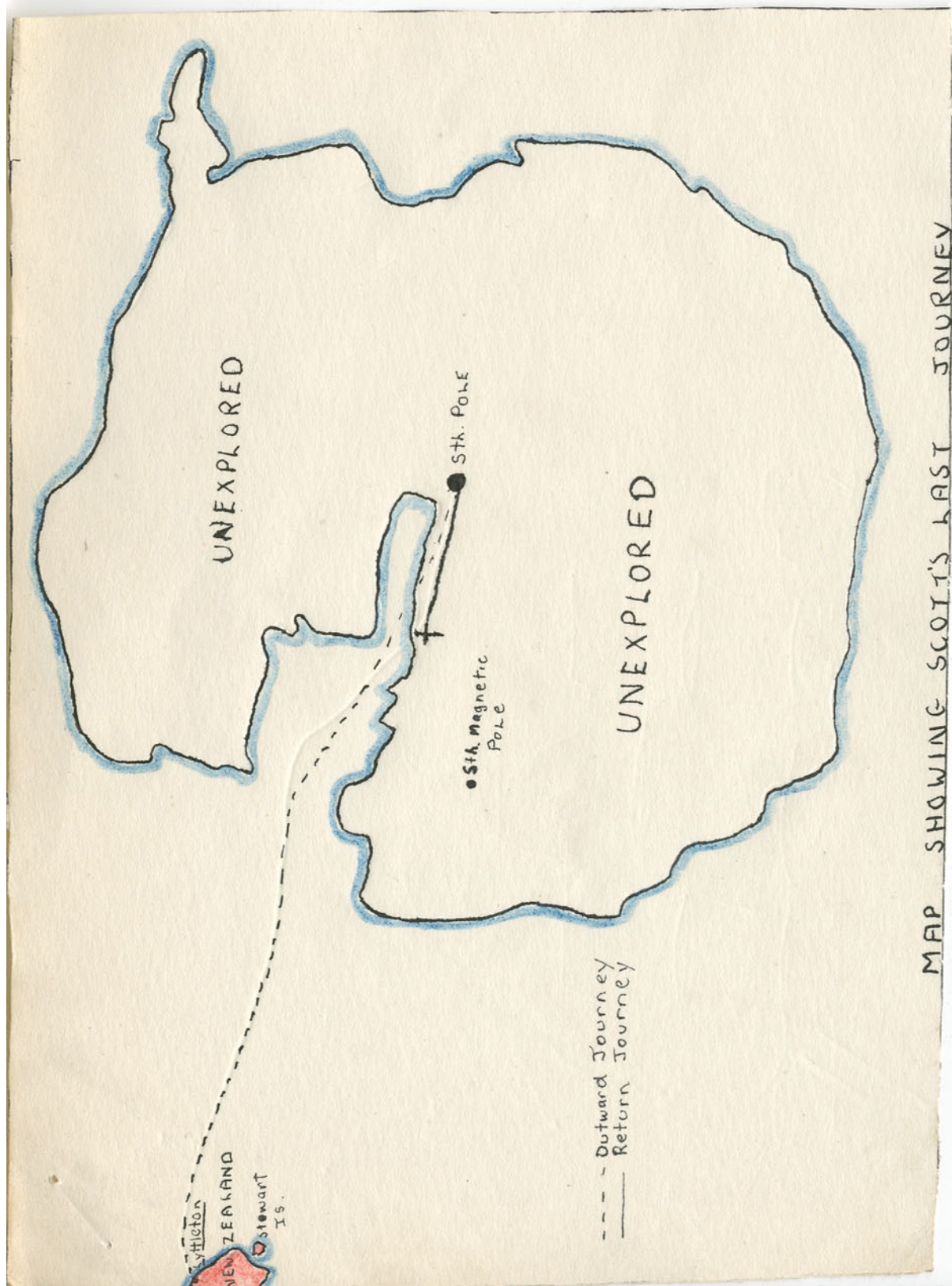
Captain Scott

To my mind, Captain Scott and his small party were the unluckiest men ever to start an expedition in any land. Although they carefully planned their route and, to the best of their ability, laid food depots all along their planned route, they met with a disaster which ^{was} a trick that only fate could play.

Scott was born in

1868 in Outlands, England
as and his schooling as a
boy was entrusted to Stubb-
ington House, a private
school in Fareham, and later
in 1881 he was entered as a
naval cadet in His Majesty's
Ship "Britannia." His promotion
was rapid and in 1900 he
headed the National
Antarctic Expedition into
the region of the South Pole.
This took four years and
as a result he was promoted
to the rank of captain. His
last official position was
naval - assistant to the
2nd. Sea Lord of the Admiralty,
being the first to hold
this position.

In 1909 he resigned to
prepare a second Antarctic
expedition. After many
difficulties, mainly through
lack of money, he purchased
the "Terra Nova". She was
a large, stout, Scottish
whaler, and had proved
herself magnificently in the
Northern Ice-fields in
whaling and sealing
expeditions for the previous
twenty years. She had one
great disadvantage and
that was that she was not
economical with coal.



MAP SHOWING SCOTT'S LAST JOURNEY

On June 1st 1910 Scott and his party set forth for the South Pole, via New Zealand. The voyage out was fairly uneventful and they arrived at New Zealand without any mishap. Whilst in New Zealand all the stores were landed, sorted-out and restowed. Other details were also completed and on November 29th 1910 the "Terra Nova" set sail for the "Great Unknown."

While on the voyage to the south, they encountered many storms and rough seas. Land was first sighted late on New Year's Eve, and by consulting their charts the land proved to be Cape Crozier, but ideas of landing were abandoned, because of the sheer cliff-face which formed most of the shore line. Being satisfied on this point Captain Scott set sail for McMurdo Sound. After much searching they found an ideal place for winter quarters and it was selected as their base.

When the men had settled down Scott decided to establish the food depots. These depots were every sixty-

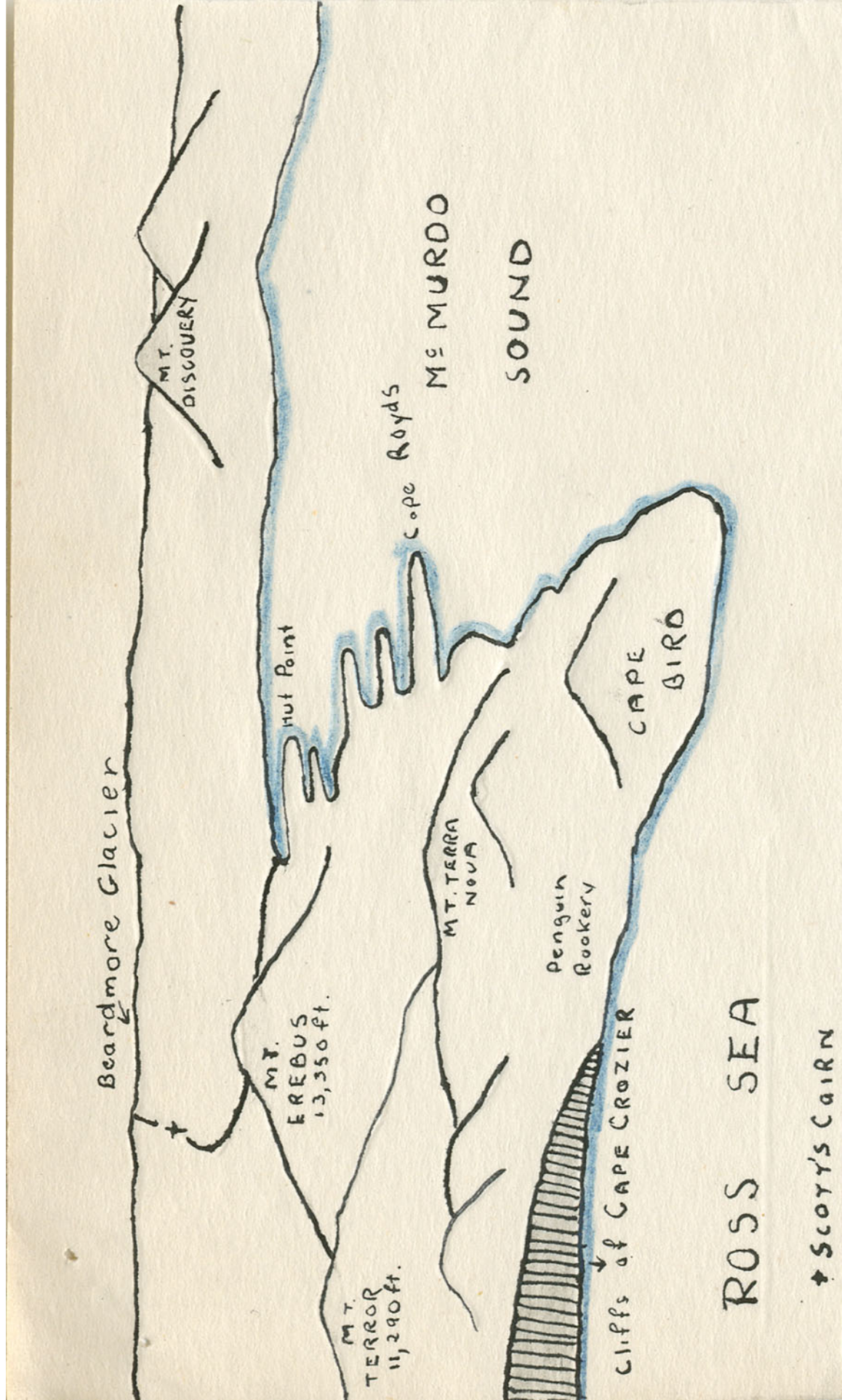
five miles, and they were marked by ~~big~~ big black flags flying from bamboo poles. When this was done Scott and his band prepared for the bid to reach the Pole. This was a very toilsome and monotonous task, as instruments, food and equipment had to be checked and sledges put in running order. Also the dogs and ponies had to be fit, or they would be more of a hindrance than a help. For most of the march except the last part, the party was divided into three. The first one was (was):

Scott, Wilson, Oates and Petty Officer Evans.
The second was:

Lieut. Evans, Lashly, Wright and Atkinson, while the third party consisted of:

Bowers, Cherry-Garrard, Breen and Keohane.

This formation proved very useful especially when advancing up Beardmore Glacier. After a while Scott decided to send back some of the men, and this broke up the three divisions leaving: Scott, Wilson, Oates, Petty Officer Evans, Lieut. Evans, Bowers, Breen and



Lashly.

With this party and two dog teams Scott pushed forward, keeping to an average speed of fifteen miles per day and a full load of 190 lbs. per man. On 4th January, Lieut. Evans, Lashly and Breen left the main party and headed home while Scott, Wilson, Oates, Petty Officer Evans and Bowers pushed on. It was a day of great rejoicing as nothing had been seen or heard of Amundsen who said he would beat Scott to the Pole.

Scott's final march to the Pole and the account of his homeward journey are particularly well-known, especially the story of Evans's sad, and Oates's sacrificial, deaths and of the tomb-like end of Wilson, Bowers and Scott. They are now fittingly enshrined among the epics of history but bear reviving as examples of unselfish devotion to duty.

Of the men who served under him Scott wrote in his diary: "Wilson & "Quick, careful and dexterous, ever thinking of some fresh expedient to help the camp life; tough as steel on

the traces, never wavering from start to finish."

Petty Officer Evans - "A giant worker with a really remarkable head-piece - he is responsible for every sledge, every sledge-fitting, tents, sleeping-bags, harness and when one cannot recall a single expression of dissatisfaction with any one of these items, it shows what an invaluable assistant he has been."

Extracts
from
Scott's
diary.

Bowers - "Little Powers remains a marvel - he is thoroughly enjoying himself. I leave all the provision arrangements in his hands and at all times he knows exactly how we stand - - - - Nothing comes amiss to him, and no work is too hard."

Oates - "Oates had his invaluable period with the ponies; now he is a foot-slogger, and goes hard the whole time, does his share of camp work and stands the hardships as well as any of us. I would not like to be without either. So our five people are perhaps as happily selected as is possible to imagine."

A few short words

from the party describing Scott are sufficient to show how they respected him. "Certainly no living man could have taken Scott's place effectively as leader of our expedition - there was none other like him." No living man could have been praised as highly as Scott was in those few words.

Perhaps the saddest note in Scott's diary was entered on January 16th. It was: "..... It ought to be a certain thing now and the only appalling possibility is the sight of the Norwegian Flag forestalling ours....." They are very touching words as he reached the Pole only to find Amundsen had beaten him.

When the rescue party, which left on October 29th, consisting of Wright, Nelson, Grant, Lashly, Grean, Williamson, Keohane and Hooper found Scott, Wilson and Bowers nothing could be done so the party said a prayer for their late fellow-members and built a huge twelve foot cairn and placed a cross made of a pair of skis

on it.

When the rescue party returned everyone greeted them eagerly as they wanted to hear the news. When they were told that Scott had perished a different atmosphere reigned over the camp.

A great cross of Australian jarrah was carved by Davis. It bore the following inscription.

In

Memoriam

Capt. R. F. Scott, R. N.

Dr. E. A. Wilson, Capt. L. E. G. Oates, Ins. D. R. G. S.

Lt. A. R. Bowers, R. I. M.

Petty Off. E. Evans, R. N.

Who died on their

Return from the

Pole — March

1912

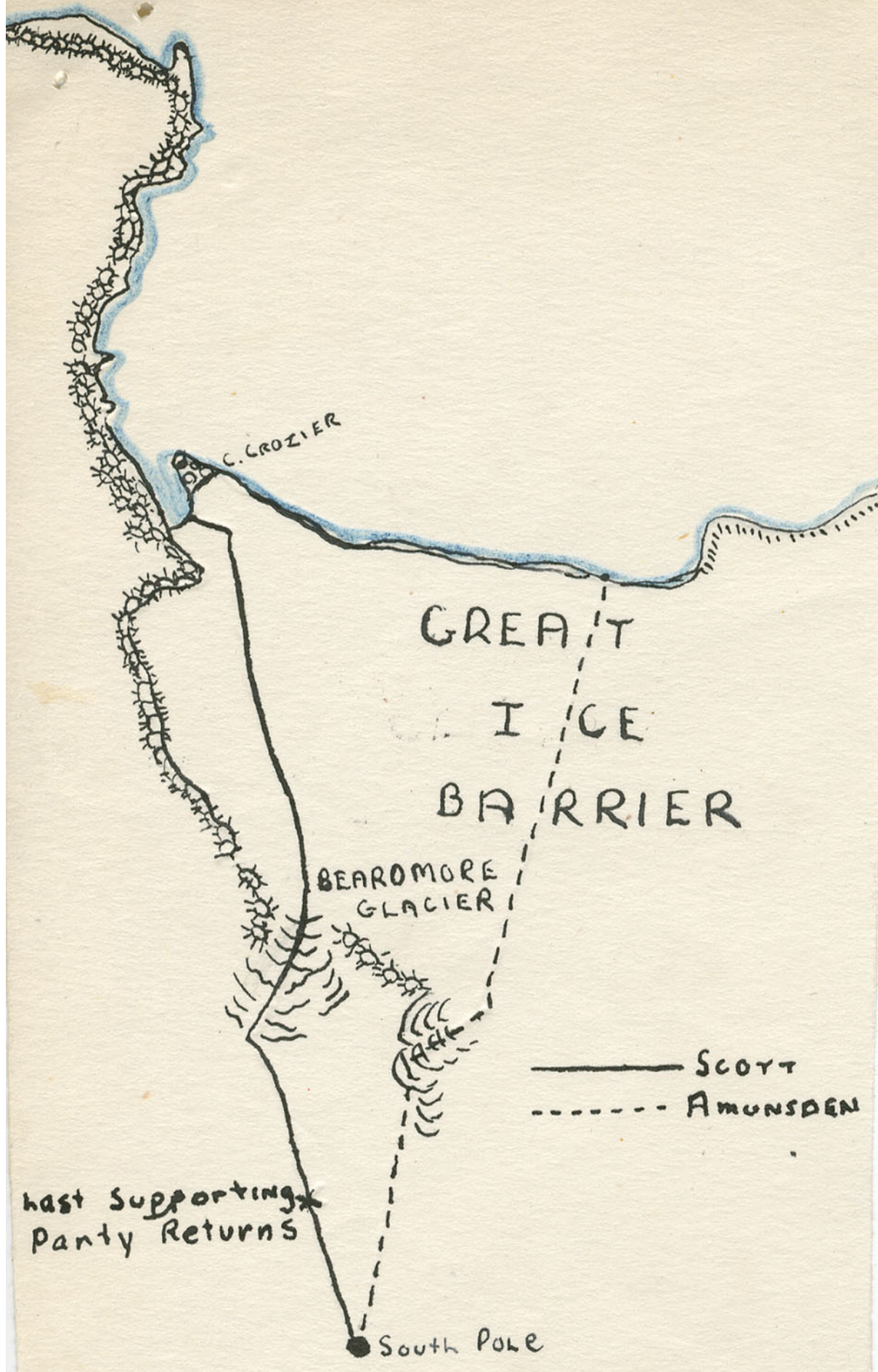
To strive, to seek

To find

And not to

Yield.

On March 3rd. 1912, the "Terra Nova" set sail for New Zealand. She arrived there on April 1st. only to learn of Amundsen's success in the South. Scott's expedition should be remembered as it was of scientific value as well as for the discovery of



the Pole. It also showed
how courageous was Capt.
Scott. The resulting dis-
aster was not anyone's
fault — but just misfort-
une amid all the risks
which had to be undertaken.

From "South With Scott"
by Admiral E. R. G. R. Evans.