



# ROBERT FALCON SCOTT



**Born:** 6<sup>th</sup> June 1868, Devonport, Plymouth.

**Died:** 29<sup>th</sup> March 1912.

Captain Robert Falcon Scott was an explorer and an officer in the British Royal Navy, who died attempting to be the first person to reach the South Pole.

## FAMILY

Scott was one of six children. His father, John Edward, was a brewer and magistrate. His grandfather and four uncles all served in the army or navy. Scott's wife was called Kathleen. She was a well-known British sculptor. Their son was called Peter. He became a famous painter and ornithologist (an expert on birds).

## HIS EARLY LIFE

In 1871, aged 13, Scott became a naval cadet. He learned his craft and served on several Royal Navy ships in the 1880s and 1890s. He was highly skilled and valued.

needed more income. By chance, in 1899, he met Sir Clements Markham, President of the Geographical Society (RGS) in a London street. Scott learned that there was to be an expedition to the Antarctic on a Royal Research Ship (RRS) called DISCOVERY. Scott was given the job of leading this expedition.





## HIS ACHIEVEMENTS

### THE BRITISH NATIONAL ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION 1901-1904 (KNOWN AS THE **Discovery** EXPEDITION)

Scott was not the first British man to visit the Antarctic. A Royal Naval Captain called James Clark Ross had already completed three voyages and had learned of its general shape and named some features in the early 1840s.

However, when Scott completed the expedition he and his team reached further south than anyone before them. His ship was called The Discovery. He and his fellow explorer, Ernest Shackleton, returned to Britain as national heroes.

Some of the discoveries made by Scott and his team on this expedition included:

- Some valleys that were **not** covered in snow.
- The longest river in Antarctica.
- A penguin colony.
- The South Pole – **sighted** by Scott during this expedition but not explored.



### THE BRITISH ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION 1910-1913 (KNOWN AS THE **Terra Nova** EXPEDITION)

Scott wanted to continue the work that he had begun on his previous expedition to Antarctica. He was determined to be the first to reach the South Pole, following his sighting previously.

- Scott set off with men, mechanical sledges, ponies and dogs in October 1910.
- The appalling weather and tough ground were too much for most of Scott's team and most had to turn back as the months passed.
- Scott and just four of his team (Wilson, Oates, Bowers and Evans) arrived at the South Pole on January 18<sup>th</sup>



- They were very disappointed to learn that a team from Norway had already arrived at the South Pole thirty-four days earlier.
- Scott and his companions died on the return journey from the pole. Their deaths were due to exhaustion, starvation and extreme cold.
- Many of the details of the sad end to Scott's expedition were recorded in his diary, which was found by a search party eight months later. His record of Oates's death has become very famous. Oates was suffering from severe frostbite in his hands and feet. He knew that he was moving very slowly and holding the others back. He walked out of his tent into a blizzard and said, "I am just going outside and may be some time." He chose certain death in order to help his companions.

## FIND OUT MORE

<https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/captain-robert-falcon-scott>

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## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. When was Captain Robert Falcon Scott born?
  2. Tell me something about Scott's family.
  3. What was the name of the Royal Research Ship that Scott captained in 1901?
  4. Who was Scott's fellow explorer on the Discovery expedition?
  5. Tell me something about the death of Scott.
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