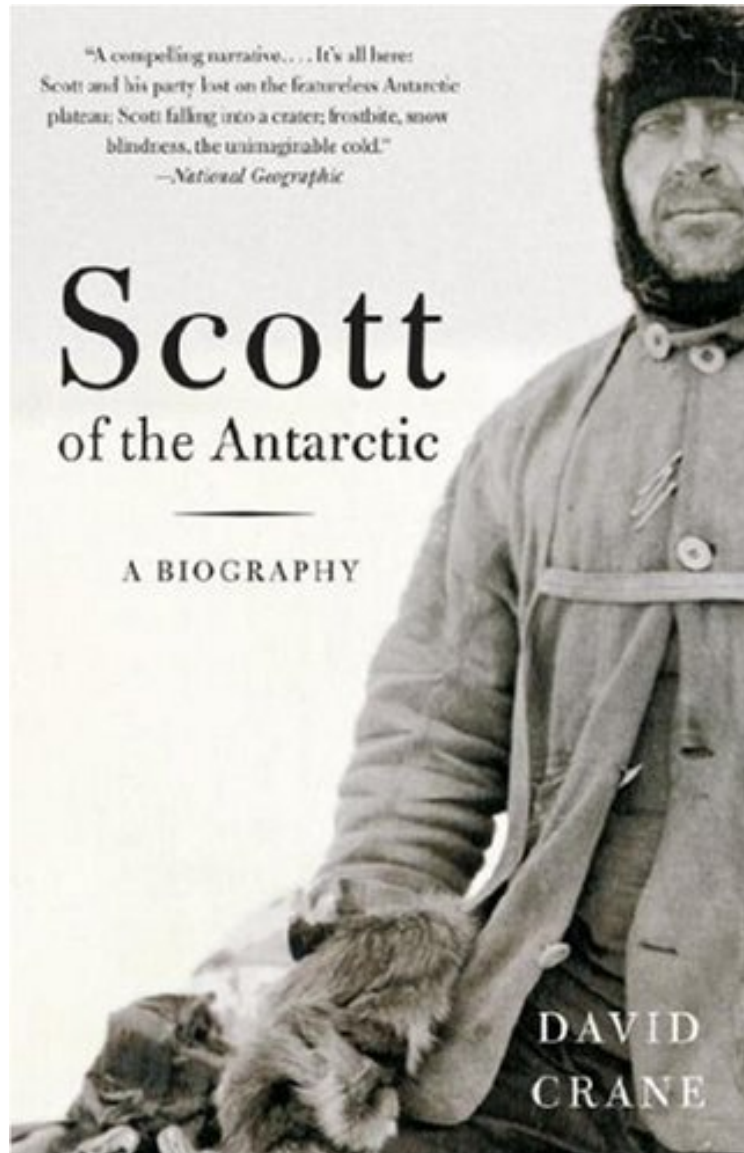


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Scott of the Antarctic: A Biography

David Crane

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#2020166 in Books Vintage 2007-11-06 2007-11-06Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 7.95 x 1.22 x 5.211, 1.20 #File Name: 1400031419608 pages | File size: 77.Mb

David Crane : Scott of the Antarctic: A Biography before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Scott of the Antarctic: A Biography:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. it is the best. Crane's book is a biography of ScottBy Herman MelvilleThis is the 17th book I have read on the Heroic Age of Antarctic exploration, and with the exception of Roland Huntford's The Last Place on Earth, it is the best. Crane's book is a biography of Scott, not an analysis of his

expeditions, and is thus somewhat skimpy on the details, especially on the journey that resulted in Scott's death. (By contrast, Crane presents a thorough discussion of Scott's Western Journey on the earlier Discovery expedition, and I learned a great deal from it.) One bizarre comment jumped out at me early on: Armitage, the pilot on the Discovery journey, is the only source of a couple of the most famous anti-Scott/pro-Shackleton anecdotes, and Crane dismisses their truth in part by calling Armitage a "proto-Fascist" because Armitage enjoyed feeling the power of the ship as he rode high above it in the crow's nest. Just an odd remark. Thankfully, the rest of the book, though opinionated, is not marred by such ill-founded judgments. Quite the literary stylist himself, Crane argues that Scott's saving grace was his ability to give voice to the suffering he and his men endured. In a sense, then--as was said of one of the characters in *Macbeth*--"Nothing in his life became him like the leaving it." Thus Crane presents a much more balanced portrait of Scott than Huntford does, and though Huntford's book has the detail and coverage of Amundsen that this one lacks, Huntford's savage tone really becomes off-putting after a while. If I were new to this topic, I would read Huntford, watch the magnificent production of *The Last Place on Earth* on DVD, and then read Crane's book. Crane's maps could have been better done--my memory is that only one has a scale attached to it--but overall this is a beautifully-written, well-researched biography that is an indispensable read for those interested in the subject. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good Realistic Biography By Chris J. Owen A fair balanced rendition of Robert Scott. Anyone who is interested in polar exploration should read this and make it part of their library. It was well written and researched and held my attention from front to back. It's time to end the misconceptions and put this seminal polar explorer in a place he deserves to be - as one of the greats. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Redeems Scott as a man, if not as an explorer By Thomas A. Turley By far the best recent biography of the explorer. Crane charts a discerning course between the Heroic Legend of Scott's Last Expedition and its leaders overzealous debunkers and defenders. While acknowledging the justice of most criticisms of Scott's naval methods, Crane rescues him from the outright character assassination begun by Roland Huntford. In analyzing Scott's leadership, Crane contrasts the inexperienced but confident young officer of the Discovery Expedition with the man who returned to Antarctica a decade later, beset by family and financial worries, unsure of himself in his strange marriage, and embittered by his rivalry with Shackleton. That this man lost the Pole to Amundsen was almost predetermined; yet, Crane accepts the conclusion reached by Susan Solomon and Scott's own *Message to the Public*: that extraordinary weather on the Barrier, not his expeditions flaws, killed Scott and his companions. To this biographer, Robert Falcon Scott's idealism realized fully only in his death redeemed him as a man, if not quite as an explorer. Whether or not the reader finds Crane's arguments convincing, his book is meticulously researched and marvelously written. Only its relative paucity of illustrations, given the wealth of photographs available, was a minor disappointment

Historian David Crane, with full access to the explorers papers, diaries, and expedition records, gives us an illuminating portrait of Robert Falcon Scott that is more nuanced and balanced than any we have had before. In reassessing Scott's life, Crane is able to provide a fresh perspective on not only the Discovery expedition of 19014 and the Terra Nova expedition of 191013, but his remarkable scientific achievements and the challenges of his tumultuous private life. Neither foolhardy dilettante, nor the last romantic champion of his age, Scott is presented as a man of indomitable courage and questionable judgment. The result is an absolutely compelling portrait of a complicated hero.