Biography of Borchgrevink, Carsten Egeberg

Borchgrevink, Carsten Egeberg (1864-1934)

He was born in Christiania, Norway in 1864, the son of a Norwegian father, Henrik Christian Borchgrevink and an English mother, Annie Ridley. He enrolled as a student at the Royal Forestry School in Saxony in 1885 and at the age of twenty-four emigrated to Australia. Initially, he worked on government survey teams in Queensland and New South Wales before becoming a teacher of languages and natural science in New South Wales.

In 1894 Borchgrevink volunteered as seaman, seal-shooter and naturalist for the Norwegian sealing and whaling exploration, 1893 - 1895 (leader Henrik Johan Bull), organised to investigate Antarctic whaling possibilities. The expedition ship the ***Antarctic*** managed to penetrate the ice of the Ross Sea and Borchgrevink was a member of the party that landed at Possession Island and Cape Adare in January 1895. This experience led Borchgrevink to visit England to raise funds to lead an Antarctic expedition of his own, the British Antarctic Expedition, 1898 - 1900.

In 1896 he married Constance Prior Standen, together they had two sons and two daughters.

The British Antarctic Expedition ship ***Southern Cross*** sailed from Hobart in December 1898 and after a successful landing at Cape Adare in February 1899, two huts were erected where ten men wintered, the first party to do so on Antarctica. Borchgrevink left Cape Adare on the ***Southern Cross*** in February 1900, calling in at the Possession Islands, Cape Crozier and then coasted along the Ross Barrier. On the Ross Barrier near to the Bay of Whales, a sledging party reached the furthest south for the time reaching 78°'83 in February 1900.

After his return to England, Borchgrevink did not receive the acclaim that he considered his due and had to wait more than a quarter of a century before receiving the Patron's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society in 1930. He returned to Norway with his family and continued to interest himself in scientific pursuits.

He died in comparative poverty on 21 April 1934 aged 70.

Published works

Borchgrevink, C. (1980) First on the Antarctic continent. Being an account of the British Antarctic Expedition, 1898 - 1900 C. London: Hurst and Co.

Borchgrevink, C. (1896) The voyage of the Antarctic to Victoria Land by Carsten Egeberg Borchgrevink, in: Report Sixth International Geographical Congress. London: John Murray London.

Further Information

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