Sunday, January 14th
Sun showing mistily though overcast sky all day. Bright, southerly wind with very low drift. In consequence, the surface was a little better, and we came along very steadily. 6.3 miles in the morning and 5.5 in the afternoon, but the steering was awfully difficult and trying; very often I could see nothing and Bowers on my shoulders directed me. To-night it is looking very thick. The sun can barely be distinguished, the temperature has risen, and there are serious indications of a blizzard. I trust they will not come to anything; there are practically no signs of heavy wind here, so that even if it blows a little we may be able to march. Meanwhile, we are less than 40 miles from the Pole.

At lunch to-day all our feet were cold. Oates seems to be feeling the cold and fatigue more than the rest of us, but we are all very fit. It is a critical time, but we ought to pull through. The barometer has fallen very considerably and we cannot tell whether due to ascent of plateau or change of weather. Oh! for a few fine days! So close it seems and only the weather to baulk us.

Monday, January 15th
It is wonderful to think that two long marches would land us at the Pole. We left our depot today with nine days’ provisions, so that it ought to be a certain thing now, and only the prospect of the Norwegian flag forestalling ours. Only 27 miles from the Pole. We ought to do it now.

Tuesday, January 16th
The worst has happened, or nearly the worst. We marched well in the morning and covered 7 ½ miles. Noon sight showed us in Lat. 89 degrees 42’ S., and we started off in high spirits in the afternoon, feeling that tomorrow would see us at our destination. About the second hour of the march, Bowers’ sharp eyes detected what he thought was a cairn. Half an hour later he detected a black speck ahead. We marched on, found that it was a black flag tied to a sledge bearer; near by the remains of a camp; sledge tracks and ski tracks coming and going and the clear trace of dogs’ paws – many dogs. This told us the whole story. The Norwegians have forestalled us and are first at the Pole. It is a terrible disappointment and I am sorry for my loyal companions. Many thoughts come and much discussion have we had. To-morrow we must march on to the Pole and then hasten home with all the speed we can compass. All the day-dreams must go; it will be a wearisome return.

Wednesday, January 17th
The Pole. Yes, but under very different circumstances from those expected. We have had a horrible day – add to our disappointment a head wind 4 to 5, with a temperature -22 degrees, and companions labouring on with cold hands and feet. We started at 7.30, none of us having slept much after the shock of our discovery.

Friday, February 24th
Beautiful day – too beautiful – an hour after starting loose ice crystals spoiling surface. Saw depot and reached it middle forenoon. Found store in order except shortage oil – shall have to be very saving with fuel – otherwise have ten full day’s provision from tonight and shall have less than 70 miles to go. There is no doubt we have been rising steadily since leaving the Shambles Camp. The coastal Barrier descends except where glaciers press out. Undulation still but flattening out. Surface soft on top, curiously hard below. Great difference now between night and day temperatures.

Saturday, March 10th
Things steadily downhill. Oates’ foot worse. He has rare pluck and must know that he can never get through. He asked Wilson if he had a chance this morning, and of course Bill had to say he didn’t know. In point of fact he has none. Apart from him, if he went under now, I doubt whether we could get through. With great care we might have a dog’s chance, but no more. The weather conditions are awful, and our gear gets steadily more icy and difficult to manage.
Sunday, March, 11th
Titus Oates is very near the end, one feels. What we or he will do, God only knows. We discussed the matter after breakfast, he is a brave fine fellow and understands the situation, but he practically asked for advice. Nothing could be said but to urge him to march as long as he could. One satisfactory result to the discussion; I practically ordered Wilson to hand over the means of ending our troubles to us, so that any one of us may know how to do so. Wilson had no choice between doing so and ransacking our medicine case. We have 30 opium tablets apiece and he is left with a tube of morphine. So far the tragical side of our story.

Friday, March 16th or Saturday, 17th
Lost track of dates but think the last correct. Tragedy all along the line. At lunch, the day before yesterday, poor Titus Oates said he couldn’t go on; he proposed we should leave him in his sleeping-bag. That we could not do, and induced him to come on, on with the afternoon march. In spite of its awful nature for him he struggled on and we made a few miles. At night he was worse and we knew the end had come.

Should this be found I want these facts recorded. Oates’ last thoughts were of his Mother, but immediately before he took pride in thinking that his regiment would be pleased with the bold way in which he met his death. We can testify to his bravery. He has borne intense suffering for weeks without complaint, and to the very last was able and willing to discuss outside subjects. He did not – would not – give up hope to the very end. He was a brave soul. This was the end. He slept through the night before last, hoping not to wake; but he woke in the morning – yesterday. It was blowing a blizzard. He said, ‘I am just going outside and may be some time.’ He went out into the blizzard and we have not seen him since.

Sunday, March, 18th
Today, lunch, we are 21 miles from the depot. Ill fortune presses, but better may come. We have had more wind and drift from ahead yesterday; had to stop marching; wind N.W. force 4, temp. -35 degrees. No human could face it, and we are worn out nearly. My right foot has gone, nearly all the toes – two days ago I was proud possessor of best feet... A very small measure of neglect and have a foot which is not pleasant to contemplate. The others are still confident of getting through – or pretend to be – I don’t know!

Thursday, March 22nd and 23rd
Blizzard bad as ever – Wilson and Bowers unable to start – tomorrow last chance – no fuel and only one or two of food left – must be near the end. Have decided it shall be natural – we shall march for the depot with or without our effects and die in our tracks.

Thursday March 29th 1912
Since the 21st we have had a continuous gale from W.S.W. and S.W. We had fuel to make two cups of tea apiece and bare food for two days on the 20th. Every day we have been ready to start for our depot 11 miles away, but outside the door of the tent it remains a scene of whirling drift. I do not think we can hope for any better things now. We shall stick it out to the end, but we are getting weaker, of course, and the end cannot be far.

It seems a pity, but I do not think I can write more.

R. SCOTT.

For God’s sake look after our people.