

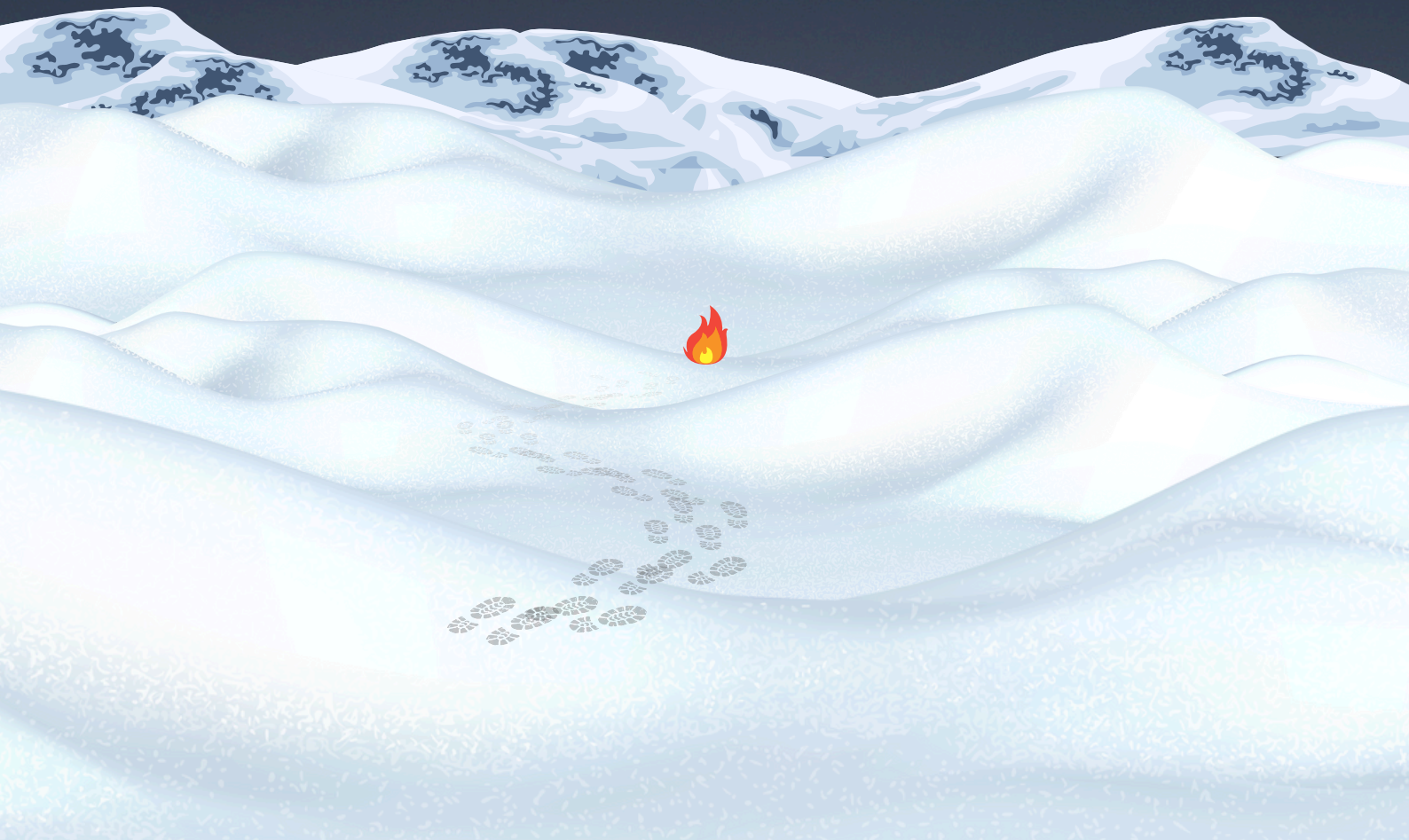


A Drama Merchant audio production



FIRE ON THE SNOW

Based on the work by
Douglas Stewart



What was the

Terra Nova Expedition?

The Terra Nova Expedition was a British exploration mission to the Antarctic which began in 1910. The expedition had two aims: to continue scientific research and secure the South Pole for the British Empire.

In early January 1911, after stopping to resupply in New Zealand, the Terra Nova anchored at Cape Evans and the base was quickly established. On 1 November 1911 Captain Scott and his men set out to reach the South Pole.

They reached their destination on January 18th 1912. Unfortunately for Scott and his team, Roald Amundsen had beaten them to the South Pole by almost a month.

Upon their return journey to base the team encountered many dangers and hardships along the way such as extreme weather conditions, poor nutrition, and illness.

All members of the polar party perished.

This expedition gave rise to some of the most inspirational and harrowing stories associated with polar history.

It was also instrumental in laying the foundations of modern science in Antarctica



Who was

Douglas Stewart?

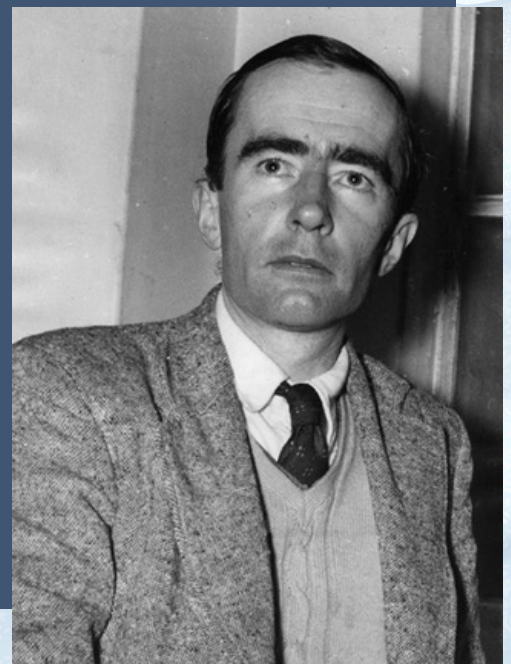
Douglas Stewart (1913-1985) was a poet, editor and literary critic. His first book of poems, *Green Lions*, had been published in New Zealand in 1936; his second, *The White Cry*, in England in 1939. Many of the poems had previously appeared in the *Bulletin* and showed extraordinary versatility with rhythm, rhyme and the placing of individual life and consciousness as a heroic, fragile, and sometimes alien element within the drama of the natural world.

This can be heard in his radio play *The Fire on the Snow*, about Captain Robert Scott's ill-fated expedition to the South Pole, which was first broadcast on Australian Broadcasting Commission radio in June 1941.

Its heroic perspective—'a man must learn/ To endure agony, to endure and endure again/ Until agony itself is beaten out into joy'—provided dramatic expression both to the oppressive spirit of the times, dominated by war, and to the power of radio as the medium for the spoken word.

There were similar forces at work in Stewart's second play, *Ned Kelly*, broadcast in 1942, but here human defiance was located within a social context.

Both radio plays proved extremely popular, and were widely set in high school curricula over the following decades.



Who was

Robert Falcon Scott

Captain Robert Falcon Scott, (6 June 1868 – 29 March 1912) led two expeditions to the Antarctic regions: the Discovery expedition of 1901–1904 and the ill-fated Terra Nova expedition of 1910–1913. Scott had a career as a naval officer in the Royal Navy and in 1899, he had a chance encounter with the president of the Royal Geographical Society. Thus he learned of a planned Antarctic expedition, which he soon volunteered to lead and would remain committed to this field of work.

On the first expedition, he set a new southern record and discovered the Antarctic Plateau, on which the South Pole is located. On the second venture, Scott led the ill-fated party of five which reached the South Pole on 17 January 1912, less than five weeks after Amundsen's South Pole expedition.

When party's bodies were found they had in their possession the first Antarctic fossils ever discovered. These fossils proved Antarctica was once joined to other continents and forested

Following the news of his death, Scott became a celebrated hero, a status reflected by memorials erected across the UK.

