

Albert P. Crary '31

Antarctic Explorer

America's achievements in outer space occupy the headlines, but exploration of the earth's surface continues.

Dr. Albert P. Crary '31 predicts that the next decade will bring dramatic scientific achievements in that "endless land of monotonous cold" known as Antarctica.

"Aerial conquest of that barren continent" has been the major achievement of United States exploration during the last dozen years, according to the Canton native. He's an expert on Antarctica with the National Science Foundation and has made several pioneering trips to the frozen continent.

Before 1955, he explains, many months at sea and many man-winters on the continent were necessary for a few man-weeks of work, but "this is no longer the case."

Every year brings new improvements in methods of operation. Long-range C-130 cargo planes, outfitted with skis, now can land in any part of the continent. Geologists and surveyors can land on high mountain peaks with the turbine helicopter.



He points out that new electronic distance-measuring devices make it easier to lay out survey base lines and obtain ice movements. Technical progress has also been made in electromagnetic ice-sounding, satellite navigation and photography.

"Due to the aircraft and those who have brought the air operation to its present status, it can now be said that the continent has been explored," he says.

Dr. Crary feels that, historically, the consequences of the 1959 treaty — sharing the scientific discoveries of Antarctica with the world — may far outstrip the other events of recent years.

It is a fitting reward for the efforts of many people from many lands that Antarctica should belong to all mankind, he says.

In addition to the 1959 treaty, Dr. Crary chronicles the following as major achievements in Antarctica since 1955:

- a 30,000-mile icebreaker voyage
- a 2,230-mile "fly-in" from New Zealand
- the discovery of a 300-mile mountain range
- the establishment of an inland station at the South Pole
- a 20,000-mile over-snow trek by civilian scientists, to be completed in 1969
- the first winter occupation of the South Pole

And all of these achievements, says Dr. Crary with some understatement, are the results of teamwork.

