

EDITOR'S NOTE

100 years ago, on 12 May 1876, a sledge party led by Commander A. H. Markham attained the furthest north latitude then reached by man, at 83°20'26". 'The announcement of our position', wrote Markham subsequently, 'was received with three cheers, with one more for Captain Nares; then all sang the "Union Jack of old England," our "Grand Palæocrystic Sledging Chorus," winding up, like loyal subjects, with "God save the Queen".' The sledge journey was one of several undertaken by members of the British Arctic Expedition, 1875-76, the last Royal Navy Arctic expedition in the old style. In this issue of *Polar Record* Ann Savours, Margaret Deacon and Geoffrey Hattersley-Smith celebrate the achievements of the expedition and those of its leader, Sir George Strong Nares.

As Dr Hattersley-Smith points out, names from the ships' companies of the British Arctic Expedition abound on the map of north-east Ellesmere Island and north-west Greenland. It was on this evidence of the expedition's priority of discovery that British, and later Canadian, sovereignty over the area was based. Geoffrey Power, in his article on the history of the Hudson's Bay Company salmon fisheries in the Ungava Bay region, also discusses the influence of historical activity on present-day decisions. His article gives credence to Eskimo claims that the largest of these salmon fisheries, Fort Chimo, has contributed to their subsistence for many years, a potentially important factor in the settlement of any land claim in the area and of particular significance in the light of the James Bay hydro-electric scheme. One of the consequences of the scheme will be an estimated 28 per cent reduction in the flow of the Koksoak River at Fort Chimo. The scheme has been delayed by discussion between the native people of Nouveau-Québec and the governments of Quebec and Canada concerning a land settlement for the people. Final agreement was reached in November 1975 and the first phase of the gigantic James Bay project is now able to proceed without further threat of legal delay. A summary of the James Bay Agreement is to be found in the Notes section of the journal.

Of course, all claims to portions of the Antarctic and the historical evidence to substantiate them have been stored away for a while, in accordance with the terms of the Antarctic Treaty. Representatives of the countries signatory to that treaty met in Oslo in 1975 for the Eighth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting. The recommendations that were made at the meeting are reproduced in full in the pages of *SCAR Bulletin*.