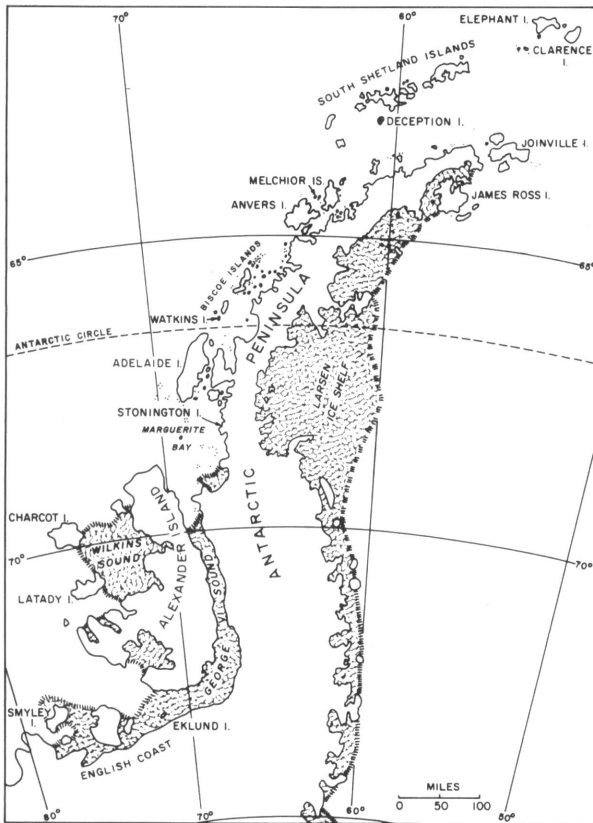


The United States' "East Base," Antarctic Peninsula

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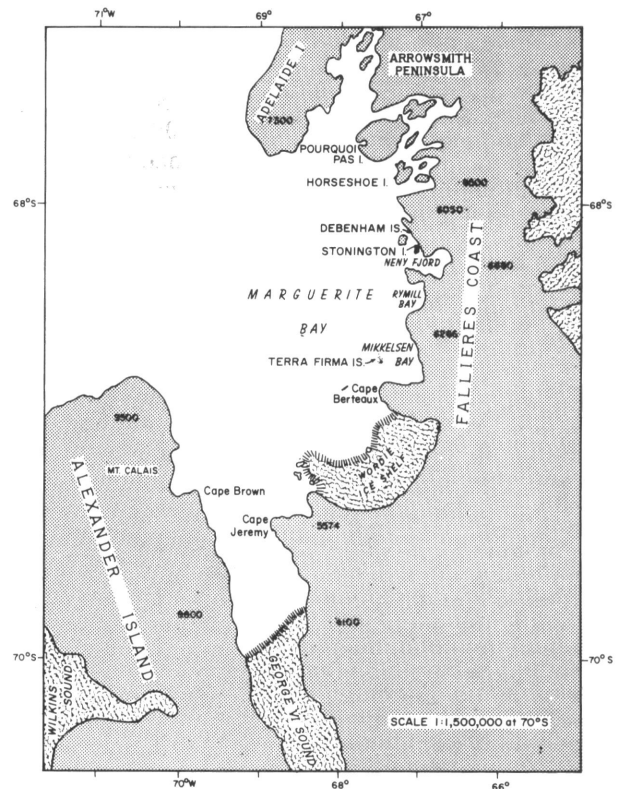
The United States has long had an interest in the Antarctic Peninsula region, beginning with sealers such as Nathaniel Palmer as early as 1819. But most of the U.S. antarctic effort has been identified recently with the Ross Sea sector — first at Little America, and later with the relatively large installation at McMurdo Sound.

Yet U.S. expeditions have done important exploration and science on the Peninsula (Bertrand, 1971). The most significant expeditions were the U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition (1939-1941) and the Ronne Antarctic Research Expedition (1947-1948). Both expeditions wintered on Stonington Island, Marguerite Bay (figures 1 and 2), near the base of the Antarctic Peninsula. They constructed the first permanent U.S. base on the Peninsula, from which exploration and scientific activities were carried out (see Bertrand, 1971, for an excellent history of the ex-



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Figure 1. Location map of the Antarctic Peninsula.



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Figure 2. Marguerite Bay.

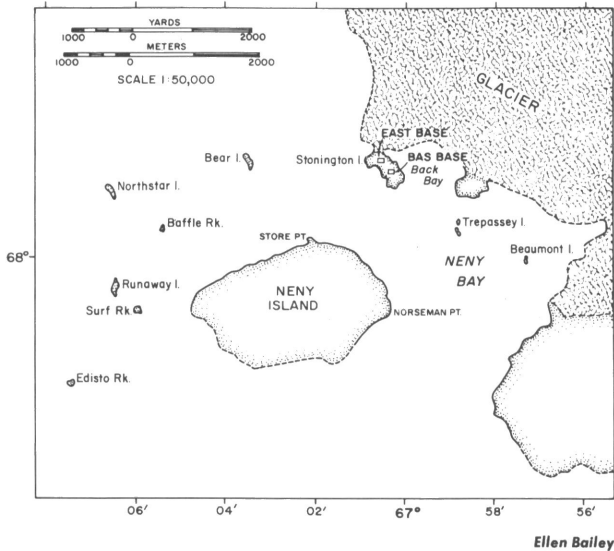


Figure 3. Neny Bay and vicinity, showing Stonington Island, East Base, and the existing (1975) British Antarctic Survey Base E.

peditions). This base, known as “East Base,” was abandoned by both expeditions. It is the oldest U.S. base still standing in Antarctica.

U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition and East Base. As a result of privately-financed U.S. antarctic expeditions in the early 1900s, the U.S. Government, with urging and encouragement from President Franklin D. Roosevelt, launched an official U.S. expedition in the late 1930s. The U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition emerged from two private and separate expedition proposals, one by U.S. Navy Admiral Richard E. Byrd and another by Richard B. Black and Finn Ronne, all antarctic veterans. Admiral Byrd was soon recognized as the expedition’s leader and foremost planner. Although the expedition was financed and guided by representatives from the Departments of State, War, Navy, Treasury, and Interior, equipment and supplies came from well over 100 private sources. Two ships, Admiral Byrd’s barkentine *Bear* (see Burroughs, 1970, for an interesting history of this ship), chartered by the Navy for \$1 a year, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ diesel-powered *North Star*, loaned by the Department of the Interior, were used to transport the expedition to Antarctica.

President Roosevelt took special interest in the expedition, communicating personally with Admiral Byrd. On 25 November 1939 President Roosevelt ordered that two bases be established: West Base, on the east shore of the Ross Sea, and East Base, on Charcot Island, Alexander I Land;

or, as an alternative in case a suitable site could not be found at either of these places, on Marguerite Bay. The bases were intended to be relieved by a new crew in 1941 for continued operation. World War II prevented this, however.

North Star and *Bear* departed from Boston, Massachusetts, on 15 and 22 November 1939 for the Ross Sea via Panama and New Zealand. The ships were soon unloaded at the Bay of Whales on the Ross Ice Shelf, and construction of West Base began. *North Star* then sailed to Valparaíso, Chile, to pick up supplies, a plane, and prefabricated buildings for East Base. *Bear*, with Admiral Byrd commanding, sailed east for exploration with the seaplane and to meet *North Star* in Marguerite Bay.

After both ships had been turned away from Alexander Island and Charcot Island by heavy pack ice on 3 March 1940, they finally met and were anchored together at Horseshoe Island, in northern Marguerite Bay (figure 2) on 5 March. Air and ship reconnaissance finally discovered two small islands in Neny Bay that might serve as a base site (figure 3). On 8 March the northernmost one, later named Stonington Island after the home port in Connecticut of Captain Palmer’s *Hero*, was selected. Stonington Island, tied to the Peninsula by glacial ice and snow, is located about 5.5 kilometers southeast of Debenham Islands, site of the base occupied from February 1936 to March 1937 by John Rymill’s British Graham Land Expedition.

The ships began unloading on 11 March, were finished on 20 March, and departed for the United States on the morning of 21 March, leaving 26 men with Mr. Black in command (table). Mr. Ronne was chief of staff.

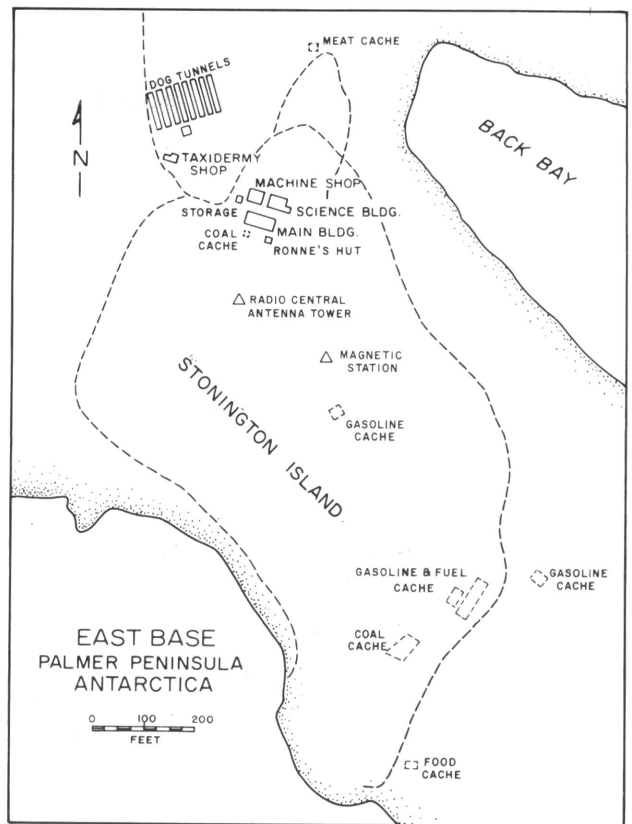
While the men lived in tents, prefabricated buildings were erected at the north end of the island adjacent to the glacial ramp that led up to the Peninsula (figures 3 and 4). On 27 March the main building, 18 meters long and 7 meters wide, was occupied. It contained the galley at the north end and the leader’s quarters and sick bay at the south end, connected by a corridor off of which there were five cubicles on each side. Five more buildings were completed: a science building, 10 by 7 meters, with a meteorological tower at the southeast end; a machine shop, also 10 by 7 meters and containing two generators; a small hut, 4 by 4 meters, built by Mr. Ronne; a taxidermy shop made of an aircraft wing crate; and a storage hut. The buildings had to be secured with cables to prevent wind damage until snow drifted around them. A small hut, which served the air strip, was constructed from a wing crate on the glacier above East Base.

The crew was housed in various parts of the base (Bertrand, 1972; F. Ronne, written communication, 20 May 1976). In the main building, Mr. Black had his own quarters; the medical officer, Lewis S. Sims, M.D., had space in the sick bay, and 20 others were in the 10 cubicles. Mr. Ronne and Arthur J. Carroll shared the 4-by-4-meter hut, while the radio operator, Earl Perse, slept in the science building's radio shack and the meteorologist, Herbert G. Dorsey, Jr., stayed in the meteorology office or tower.

The expedition brought a Curtiss-Wright Condor biplane, an Army artillery tractor, and an Army light tank to East Base, as well as dogs. The tracked vehicles were used around the base. The Condor was flown in May for local flights near East Base until an accident and bad weather curtailed its use until August. Exploratory flights began in September, resulting eventually in mapping Alexander Island, George VI Sound, the Dyer Plateau above East Base, and the Weddell Sea coastline south of the Larsen Ice Shelf. The plane was seriously damaged on 15 January 1941 when it fell into a crevasse on the base landing strip, thus ending exploration by plane.

Remarkable sledge journeys were also made from East Base. The most significant was the one by Mr. Ronne and Carl Eklund to the southwest end of George VI Sound. They were gone 84 days and sledged 2,034 kilometers, making their trip one of the longest of its kind ever in Antarctica. The expedition also gathered much scientific data in all fields, which are summarized in Volume 89 of the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*.

As the season closed, *Bear* and *North Star* tried to get back to Stonington Island but could not penetrate the pack ice in Marguerite Bay on 24 February 1941. The ships then went north to the Melchoir Islands to wait for improved ice conditions. Little could be done to help East base, so on 15 March *North Star* went to Punta Arenas, Chile, for another year's supplies in case the base evacuation was impossible or the ships became beset. Meanwhile, *Bear* worked south to the Biscoe Islands, where a landing strip was laid out on Watkins Island (known then as Mikkelsen Island), 195 kilometers north of East Base. The East Base Condor, by this time repaired well enough for evacuation, flew two trips to Watkins Island to bring out all the men, data, and some specimens. All other equipment, supplies, specimens, and less valuable records were left at East Base because of weight limitations of the plane. A notice was put in the science building that these materials were U.S. or personal property, together with a request that valuable items be removed by finders and that the Department



Ellen Bailey

Figure 4. Portion of Stonington Island showing the layout of East Base. From an unpublished map titled "East Base, United States Antarctic Service Expedition, 1939-41, Stonington Island, Palmer Peninsula, Antarctica," drawn by J. Glenn Dyer and deposited in the National Archives, Record Group 126, Records of the Office of Territories, Records of the U.S. Antarctic Service.

of the Interior be notified so that their return to the United States could be arranged. Neither could the expedition take the dogs, which were destroyed, half by gunshot and the other half by a dynamite charge timed for after the plane was safely off the ice and there was no chance that the crew might have to spend another winter at East Base (Sullivan, 1957, page 169). The Condor biplane was abandoned on Watkins Island.

East Base, 1941-1947. For 2 years, almost to the day, East Base apparently remained as the U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition had hurriedly left it. Then in March 1943 the Argentine transport vessel *Primero de Mayo* visited East Base for two days (Anonymous, 1945). Much of the equipment and most of the scientific collections of the U.S. expedition were recovered and eventually returned to Washington, D.C. The ship's personnel reported that the base was in ex-



Figure 5. East Base, Stonington Island, showing the southeast side. Left to right: Finn Ronne's hut, the main building, and the science building with the meteorological tower.

Photos by author

cellent condition (Anonymous, 1945; Ronne, 1949, page 30).

During the later part of World War II the British began to establish bases along the Antarctic Peninsula as part of the then-secret *Operation Tabarin*. As the war closed in 1945, British activities in the region were reorganized as the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (FIDS), which was concerned primarily with topographic and scientific work. By 1946 a base was needed in Marguerite Bay to extend surveys farther south. Under the leadership of E.W. Bingham, the

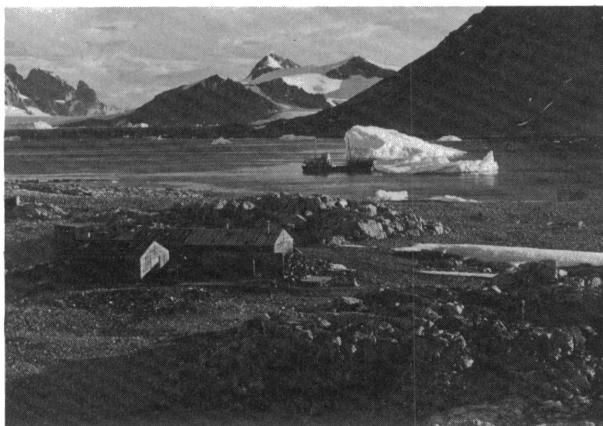


Figure 6. East Base and the middle part of Stonington Island looking west from the glacier above the island. R/V *Hero* is in the background.

wooden vessel *Trepassey* arrived at Stonington Island on 23 February 1946. East Base was inspected the following day and the FIDS party moved into the main building. At this time, Bingham (1947) reported that the U.S. base no longer had its protective covering of canvas, that the prefabricated panels had shrunk, and that meltwater poured in and through the building. From the mess lying about and the unwashed plates, the uneaten meals, and the generally littered condition, the FIDS assumed that not only had the Americans left suddenly, but that others had carelessly visited the base (Walton, 1955, page 24). Bingham was anxious to move from East Base and to get the FIDS buildings under way, so he selected a site about 230 meters south of East Base for FIDS Base E. The FIDS base could be occupied by 13 March, and the *Trepassey* departed the next day (Wordie, 1947). The expedition also built a greenhouse alongside the base to hydroponically grow flowers and vegetables (Bingham, 1952).

The FIDS men utilized portions of East Base past 13 March, however (Walton, 1955). They cleaned the site and buildings, repaired a generator and lighted the science building for their use, and cleared the U.S. flying hut on the glacier, where they laid a depot (Bingham, 1947; Walton, 1955). Some items, such as chairs, two prefabricated building sections, and supplies were borrowed or used by the British, and others were shipped to Deception Island to replenish a

burned base there or to other bases (Ronne, 1949, page 56).

In December 1946, Base E received word that Mr. Ronne's private U.S. expedition would arrive in February 1947 to reoccupy East Base. The FIDS people removed their stores from the buildings and straightened up and swept. They "tried to make the base look welcoming and habitable" to the Americans, despite much meltwater entering through the damaged coverings (Walton, 1955, pages 97 and 103). In the United States, however, the British Embassy sent a note to the State Department stating that East Base was in poor repair and much disorder, an action Mr. Ronne interpreted as intended to discourage him from reoccupying East Base (Ronne, 1949, pages 30-31).

February and March 1947 were busy times at Stonington Island. On 5 February *Trepassey* returned with a replacement crew and material for Base E, picked up some supplies for the burned-out base at Deception Island, and departed 7 February.¹ Major K.S.P. Butler was left in charge. Four days later, the Argentine vessel *Don Samuel* arrived (Thomas and Roberts, 1953a). East Base was examined and FIDS Base E was visited by the crew. *Don Samuel* soon sailed and was back at the Melchoir Islands on 14 February. On 20 February the Chilean vessel *Iquique* arrived in Neny Bay (Thomas and Roberts, 1953b).² The British base was visited the next day, and some of the crew went over to East Base. *Iquique* departed later the same day (Walton, 1955). Another Chilean vessel, *Angamos*, arrived on 7 March and put a party ashore on 8 March (Walton, 1955). They left on 9 March, a few days ahead of the arrival of Mr. Ronne's private U.S. expedition. During this time much damage was inflicted on East Base that resulted in controversy (*New York Times*, 25 March 1947, page 16; *Times of London*, 1 April 1947, page 3; Ronne, 1949; Walton, 1955).

Ronne Antarctic Research Expedition (RARE), 1947-1948. Mr. Ronne had been on the Second Byrd Antarctic Expedition and was chief of staff at East Base during the U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition of 1939. Mr. Ronne's op-

Wintering U.S. personnel, Stonington Island, Marguerite Bay.

Name	Position
U.S. ANTARCTIC SERVICE EXPEDITION (11 March 1940 to 22 March 1941), East Base	
Richard B. Black	Base leader
Herwil M. Bryant	Biologist
Arthur J. Carrol	Photographer
Zadick Collier	Machinist
Harry Darlington, III	
Hendrik Dolleman	
Herbert G. Dorsey, Jr.	Meteorologist
J. Glenn Dyer	Cadastral engineer
Carl R. Eklund	Ornithologist
Joseph Healy	Operations
Archie C. Hill	Cook
Donald S. Hilton	Surveyor
Paul H. Knowles	Geologist
Elmer L. Lamplugh	Communications
Lester Lehrke	
Anthony J.L. Morency	
Lytton Musselman	
Howard T. Odom	Communications
Robert Palmer	Supply officer
E.B. Perce	Copilot and radio operator
William Pullen	Aviation machinist
Finn Ronne	Chief of staff
Charles W. Sharbonneau	Carpenter
Lewis S. Sims	Medical doctor
Ashley C. Snow	Chief pilot
Clarence E. Steele	Tank driver
RONNE ANTARCTIC RESEARCH EXPEDITION (12 March 1947 to 20 February 1948), Port of Beaumont, Texas, Base	
Finn Ronne	Expedition leader
Charles J. Adams	Pilot
Harry Darlington	Pilot
Jennie Darlington	
Robert H.T. Dodson	Assistant geologist, surveyor, and trail man
C.O. Fiske	Climatologist
Jorge de Giorgio Valdes	Cook
Sigmund Gutenko	Chief commissary steward
Charles Hassage	Ship's chief engineer
Lawrence Kelsey	Radio operator
James W. Lassiter	Chief pilot
William R. Latady	Photographer
Nelson McClary	Ship's mate
Donald McLean	Medical officer
Robert L. Nichols	Geologist, senior scientist, and trail man
Arthur Owen	Boy Scout and trail man
Harris-Clichy Peterson	Physicist
James B. Robertson	Aviation mechanic
Edith Ronne	Recorder
Isaac Schlossbach	Captain, Port of Beaumont, Texas, and expedition second-in-command
Walter Smith	Ship's mate, navigator, and trail man
Andrew A. Thompson	Geophysicist
Ernest A. Wood	Ship's engineer

¹Bingham (1947) reported that the *Trepassey* arrived on 3 February, whereas Walton (1955) and Fuchs (1952) reported 5 February.

²Walton (1955, pages 107-108) states that *Iquique* arrived late on 18 March and the crew went ashore that evening.

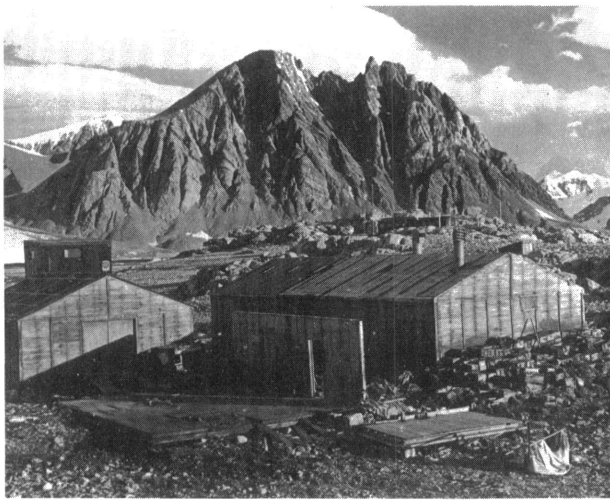


Figure 7. East Base viewed from the north. Left and right: the science building and the main building. Left foreground: the foundation, flooring, and west wall of the machine shop. Right foreground: foundation and flooring of the storage shed and stores piled against the back of the main building. Background: dark buildings of the British Antarctic Survey Base E.

portunity for his own expedition came at the end of the war through determination and hard work. He obtained about \$50,000, services, and equipment from private sources; in addition, he acquired loans from U.S. Government agencies. The Navy loaned a wooden, 56-meter oceangoing tug, ATA-215, renamed *Port of Beaumont, Texas*, the Army Air Force loaned three aircraft, and the Army provided two Weasels. The Army Air Corps, through the efforts of Lieutenant G. Llano (Polar Archive Center, National Archives Record Group Number 401/112), provided much gear and rations for testing under cold-weather conditions (Ronne, 1949, pages 107-109, 268). The expedition nonetheless was the last private U.S. antarctic wintering effort (table).

The objectives of RARE were the exploration of the rest of the Antarctic Peninsula south of about Marguerite Bay and of the western coast of the Weddell Sea, and the collection of geophysical, meteorological, and glaciological data. Much of the exploration was to be carried out by airplanes with dog teams establishing ground-control points and exploration.

Even after putting the expedition together, Mr. Ronne had much trouble before he arrived in Antarctica. First his twin-engine Beechcraft C-45 airplane, especially modified for trimetrogon aerial photography, was wrecked when it was accidentally dropped on the dock during the loading of *Beaumont*. There was not enough time to get a new one in the United

States, but fortunately another Beechcraft was obtained at Albrook Field in Panama.

Still another tragedy developed between Panama and Valparaíso. About half of the 43 huskies developed distemper and died. Mr. Ronne thought the dogs had been inoculated against the disease; Darlington (1956) attributes the sickness to improper care before departure. New dogs could not be obtained in South America, and Harry Darlington was deeply concerned that surface travel, so vital to the success of the expedition, would be severely curtailed. During a stop at Valparaíso, Mr. Darlington and his wife, Jennie, purchased what he thought were two llamas and 1,000 kilograms of hay (Darlington, 1956, pages 88-89). The llamas, which Mr. Darlington thought might work well in the snow, turned out to be alpacas. Still, they and their hay were loaded aboard the ship.

At this point it was decided that Edith Ronne, the commander's wife, who was serving a vital role as recorder and news dispatcher on the trip to South America, should stay with the expedition and winter in Antarctica. Mr. Ronne thought it would be best if Mrs. Darlington, who was to leave the expedition at Valparaíso, also went for the entire year. Some of the men refused to go to Antarctica for a year with two married women, but they were soon placated (Darlington, 1956). Thus East Base became the place where the first women wintered in Antarctica.³ Also, a young Chilean man was taken on in Valparaíso to assist in galley duties. A total of 23 persons, including a Boy Scout, comprised RARE.

After leaving Valparaíso the ship set course for Punta Arenas. On the trip some of the huskies broke loose and killed the alpacas. But Mr. Ronne decided to keep their hay anyway for the cook's five chickens. At Punta Arenas an apparent sense of desperation sent some of the men on a dog-searching expedition. With local help they acquired several dogs, including a corgi, a whippet, and some sort of "sheep dog" (Darlington, 1956). Surely this was an odd antarctic expedition!

When *Beaumont* arrived at Neny Bay on 12 March 1947 Mr. Ronne was quite bitter about

³Caroline Mikkelsen, wife of Captain Klarius Mikkelsen, accompanied the Lars Christensen 1934-1935 expedition, setting foot on the continent at 78°36'E. 68°29'S. Apparently she was the first woman to actually set foot on Antarctica (Aagaard, 1944, page 207; map, page 215; photograph, page 216).

the condition in which he found East Base. The buildings and supplies were reportedly “utterly ransacked, with rubbish thrown everywhere, and what was not stolen had been broken” (Ronne, 1949, page 55). Aside from material borrowed by the British, the damage was attributed to the several shore parties that had visited the base since the last U.S. party had been there. Mr. Ronne, however, believed the FIDS was responsible for much of the damage and mess (Ronne, 1949, page 57). In fact, he thought that the FIDS had occupied East Base since they had arrived in 1946, and that they had only recently moved into their own buildings because Base E looked too clean for a year’s habitation (Ronne, 1949, page 57; Walton, 1955, page 129). This and the political problems inherent to Americans occupying a base in territory claimed by Great Britain resulted in difficult relations and an order from Mr. Ronne restricting social contacts with the FIDS. These feelings, however, were not held by many others in either the British or U.S. parties, according to the personal account of RARE by Mrs. Darlington (1956). It took half of Mr. Ronne’s staff a month to clean up and refit East Base, which he renamed “Port of Beaumont, Texas, Base.” The U.S. and British leaders reconciled their differences over damages, flags, territorial claims, and the use of the outhouse because they knew that neither expedition could accomplish much without the other: FIDS had the dogs, and RARE had the aircraft essential for maximum exploration. An agreement therefore was drawn up that enabled the expeditions to jointly map a generally-unexplored area bigger than Texas. RARE was indeed a success in terms of exploration, and much scientific data were gathered as well (see Bertrand, 1971).

The Ronne expedition utilized the old East Base in much the same way it had been used previously. The Ronnes lived in the separate hut built by Mr. Ronne in 1940. The rest of the expedition was housed in the main building, the Darlington occupying their own space at one end. This arrangement, according to Mrs. Darlington (1956), put considerable strain on her new marriage and caused tension among the men. The machine shop and science building were rehabilitated, as were the generators. The chickens were housed among the scientists in the science building, an arrangement that apparently was well received after eggs were produced. All the buildings were connected by tunnels for easy access during the winter. Although secretive, Mr. Ronne also established the first U.S. post office on the continent (Ronne, 1949).

The *Port of Beaumont*, after a brief trip to inspect the head of George VI Sound, was an-



Figure 8. Light Army tank and refuse pile with East Base in background.

chored in Back Bay on the east side of Stonington Island, where it was frozen in the sea ice until the expedition’s departure nearly a year later.

As the year closed the men were anxious to leave rather than winter a second year with meager supplies. But in February 1948 *Beaumont* was still locked in by sea ice. Attempts to blast her free failed, yet Mr. Ronne seemed reluctant to call on the U.S. *Operation Windmill* icebreakers, known to be passing nearby (Darlington, 1956). To Mrs. Darlington, it was crucial to leave because she was several months pregnant. This information was passed to Mr. Ronne,



Figure 9. Broken stores and debris piled at the northwest end of the main building. Some of the boxes bear shipping marks identifying them as U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition or individual expedition members’ property. The debris also fills the space between the main and science buildings. The signs were put up by the British who stored dead seals in the main building in recent years. The canvas covering is nearly all gone from the northern parts of the buildings.



Figure 10. The light Army tank and artillery tractor brought to Stonington Island by the U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition in 1940, along with rusted and burned debris.

and on 12 February he radioed the icebreakers *Burton Island* and *Edisto* that he might need assistance in freeing *Beaumont*. Those ships' schedules permitted assistance from 23 February to 1 March, but in actuality they arrived earlier. Mr. Ronne's intention was to leave in mid-March so that the expedition could finish its scientific programs. However, he ordered *Beaumont* readied and packing commenced. On 20 February, after a 1-day visit by the crews of both icebreakers to Stonington Island, *Port of Beaumont*, hurriedly packed, was towed by *Burton Island* free of the pack ice. Despite the rush, all the equipment borrowed from other sources, all data and specimens, as well as personal gear were returned to the United States. The base was left in good condition.

East Base, 1948-1975. The United States never reoccupied Stonington Island following the Ronne expedition's departure. The British, however, maintained Base E as a year-around facility until February 1950. Then for several years it was used only during summers. In 1951 the Argentines constructed Base General San Martín in the Debenham Islands, which they maintained continuously until 1960. The British again occupied Base E in 1957-1958. The FIDS (renamed the British Antarctic Survey in 1962) abandoned the original buildings and constructed new ones a short distance farther south. These newer British Antarctic Survey (BAS) buildings were closed in March 1975 and now

serve as an emergency refuge and for summer work only. The older FIDS buildings had been completely removed, and the only sign of them in February 1975 was several concrete foundation pillars. All debris associated with British activities, except perhaps some at East Base, was placed in plastic bags and removed on RRS *John Biscoe*. Both British sites were quite clean in February 1975.

During this period the East Base buildings, although utilized by the British for various purposes, gradually deteriorated. This process was likely accelerated by visits of numerous expeditions and tourist groups over the years. British, Argentine, Chilean, U.S., and private tour ships all passed in the vicinity of Stonington Island during the 18 years since the Ronne expedition left. Most of the activity in the area, however, was British and Argentine.

East Base, 1975. On 9 February 1975 the U.S. Antarctic Research Program's R/V *Hero* entered Marguerite Bay for the first time just north of Alexander Island. Pack ice prevented movements farther south than about Cape Berteaux, so on 10 February, after biological and geological work at Terra Firma Islands, *Hero* sailed to Stonington Island, anchoring at 2105 hours. At 2107 a shore party visited the BAS base and examined East Base. BAS personnel escorted us around East Base before we returned to *Hero*. Because of very heavy winds *Hero* departed early in the morning 11 February and was unable to return to Stonington Island until 1935 hours on 12 February. For over an hour that day we made a more detailed inspection of the East Base area. Figures 5 through 10 show East Base on 12 February 1975.

Three of the original buildings were still standing: main, scientific, and Finn Ronne's. The exteriors of these buildings seemed in good repair on the southern sides, but the canvas was gone from the northern parts. Only the floor of the storage hut and the floor and west wall of the machine shop were still there. No evidence of the taxidermy shop was seen. The interior of the science building was rearranged, reportedly by the British, so that there were shelves and tables along the walls with most of the floor space clear. The building appeared in reasonably good shape and quite usable, as did Mr. Ronne's hut. The BAS people advised that we not enter the main building since it had been used to store dead seals destined for dog food. The two generators left by Admiral Byrd were gone from the machine shop.

The grounds surrounding the remaining buildings were a mess. Broken bags of coal and boxes of stores, apparently mostly left by the U.S. expeditions, surrounded the main buildings. Some of the stores (popcorn, for example) were still quite usable according to the British. A large portion of this material appeared to have been left by the U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition, for numerous boxes bore that name or the names of expedition personnel. To the north of the buildings was a large, burned-out trash heap capped by the rusted hulks of the U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition's Army tank and artillery tractor. Old barrels, nails, bolts, tin cans, and chunks of iron were piled there. Farther north, all the way to the northwest beach, were scattered bits of debris. Between the trash heap and the glacier was the remainder of Mr. Ronne's alpaca hay, intermixed with decomposing seal remains. And on the north, seaward edge of the glacier was a large conical pile of refuse.

Until the First Byrd Expedition of 1928-1930, no permanent structures had been built by the U.S. in Antarctica. Admiral Byrd's Little America bases on the Ross Ice Shelf have drifted away. Thus East Base is the earliest remaining U.S. station in Antarctica, and the first year-around U.S. base on the Antarctic Peninsula. This fact and the outstanding contributions in exploration and science made by the expeditions occupying the site suggest that the historically-rich East Base is worthy of preservation and restoration.

Captain Pieter Lenie and the crew of R/V *Hero* cooperated generously in my request to examine the Stonington Island base despite poor ice and weather conditions. Nicolas Temnikow and three members of the British Antarctic Survey assisted in the detailed site examination. In the United States, George Llano, Alison Wilson, Jerry Pagano, Finn Ronne, and Kenneth Bertrand helped with information and advice. At the University of California, Davis, Ted DeLaca, Malcolm Erskian, Mr. Temnikow, Robert Daniels, William Showers, and Debba Kunk aided in various ways.

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