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## *Preface*

This is an account of one small part of a magnificent enterprise — the United States Antarctic Program. American activities in the Antarctic have spanned 40 years and are now more valuable than ever. Scientific results exceed — by a large margin — those of any other nation. While accounts have been written about life at coastal research stations, none has sought to describe the modern face of geographical exploration. This book is not about science, but about adventures in the pursuit of science. I had the privilege of taking part in six inland expeditions in Antarctica between 1959 and 1989 with a variety of objectives. The only common thread is that all were concerned with the study of ice.

My career within the US program spanned a period of unprecedented change. Schooled, as I was, in the British tradition of traveling the hard way, with man-hauled sledges, dog teams, and spartan rations, my move to the US plunged me into a world of giant icebreakers, aircraft, tractors, gourmet food, and a US Naval Task Force struggling to come to terms with the eccentric ways of scientists. Over 30 years I crossed paths with many an unsung hero and to them I dedicate this story.

The title of the book derives from the US Immigration and Naturalization Service, which describes any foreigner working in the United States as an *alien*. In Antarctica, where hundreds of miles of virgin snow separate neighbors, humans sometimes feel like aliens.

Charles Swithinbank  
Cambridge, England