

WATKINS, EXPLORER, ENGLAND

Adventure in the Blood

Henry George “Gino” Watkins (1907-1932) was the greatest of all undergraduate explorers, not only because of his outstanding achievements, but also because of his contribution to the progress of exploration as a whole. He demonstrated both the art of leadership, brought to a far higher pitch than had ever been attained by the ‘semi-military’ organisation of previous expeditions, as well as the supreme art of living off a country – even through the Arctic winter – in the same manner as its native inhabitants. He successfully undertook sledge journeys of unprecedented length and was also probably the first Englishman to learn how to correctly handle a kayak.



Gino was born into a well-to-do family on 20th January 1907, and like the last five generations of only sons in the family had been christened Henry George, but he was always known by the short Italian name, Gino. His father Colonel Henry George was a King’s Messenger, his half Irish mother Jennie, the beautiful and loving focus of an affectionate family. With the outbreak of war in 1914 Gino’s father was sent to France with the Coldstream Guards, leaving Gino in charge of the family. In 1915 he went to preparatory school in Bexhill in Sussex, where he swam the 40-foot school swimming pool under water and built his own crystal set, demonstrating his particular

mental and physical resources.

With the cessation of hostilities in 1918 Gino accompanied his father on a tour of the deserted Somme trenches, leaving a strong impression on the young boy. Afterwards the family went on holiday to Dorset, where Gino enjoyed duck shooting with his father and became a good shot. Not academically gifted he failed the entrance examination for the Royal Navy and instead entered Lancing College in Sussex, where he excelled in swimming, cross-country running and rifle shooting.

The Watkins family downsized from their house on Eaton Place to a smaller house on Onslow Crescent, post-war restrictions teaching Gino to practice economy wherever possible. In 1923 the family went to Chamonix in the French Alps, where Gino hired a guide for a few days on his own: it was a decision that would change his life. He was a natural climber and mountaineering provided him with the sort of personal challenge he had been looking for. Back at Lancing he impressed the other boys by climbing the college buildings. He even visited the Lake District with one of his masters, who noted not only his rebelliousness, but also his painstaking attention to details of preparation before each climb.

Gino left Lancing in summer 1925 and was due to go up to Trinity College, Cambridge in October. In the meantime he and his father went chamois hunting in the Austrian Tyrol, allowing Gino to acquaint himself further in the arts of stalking, marksmanship, and living off what one kills. During the trip Gino had a bad fall resulting in a scar that meant he always parted his hair on the right to hide it!

Arctic Ambitions

For the first two terms at Cambridge he couldn’t work on doctor’s orders and instead he attended a series of lectures by R. E. Priestley on ‘Man in the Polar Regions’. Gino asked his friend Quintin Riley from Lancing to attend too, and on the way home suggested to him that they better go to the Arctic too. Later he met Priestley who introduced him to J. M. Wordie, a member of Shackleton’s 1914-17 expedition.

Sufficiently impressed he offered Gino a place on his planned East Greenland expedition in the summer vacation of 1927. In preparation Gino took up a fitness programme, slept with the window open to get used to the cold, and even worked as a deckhand on a North Sea trawler; he also attempted to climb Salisbury Cathedral – but called it off when it started raining! After Christmas 1926 he travelled to Switzerland to see his father and made his first attempts at skiing. Again he took to it well and stayed on until the summer, only to hear that Wordie's expedition had been cancelled. Unperturbed, and with a swiftness of mind that would become a trademark, he decided there and then to take his own expedition to the Arctic.

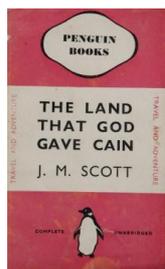
Aged just 20, and with professional guidance from Wordie and grants from the Royal Geographical Society and the Worts Fund of Cambridge, Gino decided to survey and explore Edgeøya (Edge Island), a forbidding uninhabited Norwegian Arctic island off the east coast of Spitzbergen in the Svalberd Archipelago. Named after Thomas Edge, an Englishman who sighted it in 1616, four Russian sailors had been marooned there for six years in the 1740s. In addition to Gino the expedition comprised eight scientists, mainly undergraduates but also two who were twice Gino's age. Together they made the 500-mile journey from Tromsø to Edge Island in a small Norwegian sealing ship, the *Heimen*. Despite straying 125 miles off course after storing a magnetometer too near the ship's compass they arrived safely at Deevie Bay on 30th July 1927. Over the next four weeks they traversed and surveyed the bleak and windswept island, the poor weather and time constraints testing Gino's skills as leader to the full. He described his journey (as H. G. Watkins) in an article, *The Cambridge Expedition to Edge Island*, published by the Royal Geographical Society in the August 1928 issue of their Geographical Journal. During the homeward journey Gino reflected long and hard on the lessons learned, and planned a list of future expeditions, from the Atlas Mountains to the Nile.

The Freezing Heart of Labrador

Back in London Gino collated the expedition's scientific data and prepared for lecture he gave to 500 Fellows at the Royal Geographical Society on 20th February 1928. It was a great success and he was elected a Fellow himself, despite being younger than the minimum age for election. Gino was now also preparing to accompany another expedition from Cambridge, this time into the freezing interior of Labrador, that remote and uncharted country where the far north-east of Canada borders Newfoundland, between the Hudson Strait and the Straits of Belle Isle. Set to last for nine months it was due to start in July 1928, its objectives being to map the headwaters of the so-called Unknown River (with a view to using the falls there for generating electricity to power a future wood pulp industry), to map the land north and south of the Hamilton River (as a reconnaissance for a future aerial survey of Labrador), and to map precisely the Canada-Labrador boundary. He was to take two companions only, one of whom would leave at the end of the summer. Unlike Edge

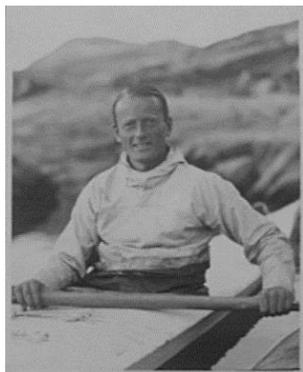
Island there would be no scientists this time, and the stay would be much longer. The experience would transform Gino from an undergraduate on an adventurous summer holiday into an experienced arctic explorer with an international reputation.

Once again the Royal Geographic Society offered financial support, including the Cuthbert Peek Grant, as did the Worts Fund of Cambridge. During the Easter term at Cambridge Gino recruited James ('Jamie') Maurice Scott, whose aptly named book *The Land that God Gave Cain* (1938) describes the expedition to this forbidding land. The two would become firm friends, so much so that Scott eventually married Gino's sister Pamela



and became Gino's first biographer (Jamie and Pamela's son Jeremy would pen a further biography in 2008). The third member, who would leave early, was Lionel Leslie.

Despite the death around this time of his beloved mother, Gino's father urged the young explorer to continue with his plans, the three men arriving in late July, by coastal mailboat from St. John's, Newfoundland to the trappers' settlement of North West River on Lake Melville. With a year's worth of supplies and the help of a local guide, the trapper Robert Michelin, they would use the settlement as the base for their journeys.



Their first foray, up the Hamilton River to survey the Unknown River, was abandoned after Michelin cut his foot with an axe. After his recovery they set off once again (with an additional trapper called Douglas Best), with the renewed aim of first mapping two rivers south of the Hamilton River, then after the onset of winter making a sledge journey with dogs north of the Hamilton to the coastal settlement of Hopedale. With these journeys under their belt they would try again to reach the Falls District of the Unknown River. Lack of time meant that the goal of mapping the Canada-Labrador boundary would now have to be abandoned.

Their first task was to paddle, haul and carry their Indian canoes a hundred miles up the wild Kenamu River. The going was tough, with torrential rain and dense clouds of mosquitoes hampering their progress. Nevertheless they reached the lake at the head of the river, from where they crossed to the Traverspine River, which delivered them via numerous rapids to the lower reaches of the Hamilton River and back to North West River. Leslie then left, as planned, and six weeks later Gino and Scott prepared for their sledge journey to Hopedale: it would be their first winter journey and one neither man would forget.

First they had to locate their guide Michelin, who had failed to appear at the appointed time. Gino decided they should cross the still dangerously thin ice of Goose Bay to reach Mud Lake, from where they would continue to the mouth of the Traverspine where Michelin lived. It was an impetuous decision that could have cost them their lives and it was only good fortune that saved them. With Michelin located (he had been suffering from a septic foot) they set out with the dogs in mid-November 1928, moving up Grand Lake to a cabin on the Naskaupi River: between them and Hopedale lay 150 miles of snowbound wilderness. With the nearly fatal crossing of the Goose Bay ice still clear in his memory, Gino realised the task ahead was extremely serious. Only twenty five years before two Americans had come the same way only to get lost causing one of them to perish.

Learning the Hard Way

Gino continued to learn the hard way: the best way. Snow shoes took quite some getting used to, and the twenty-three mile journey to Lake Nipishish took a whole week. Slowly they moved from lake to lake across the plateau, guided only by compass, but then near disaster struck again. Low on food they failed to locate the coast when they thought they would. With starving dogs and forty days of hard slog behind them they eventually picked up a sledge track that led them to an Esquimo house – and safety. They reached Hopedale in time to celebrate Christmas Day, with goose and mince pies, arriving back in North West River on 26th January 1929. An article written by Gino, *River Exploration in Labrador by Canoe and Dog Sledge*,

was published in the February 1930 edition of the Royal Geographical Society's Geographical Journal.

Gino now turned his attention to the third, and most important, of his expedition's objectives: a survey of the Falls District of the Unknown River. The journey would be more than twice as long as that to Hopedale yet Gino was determined to make it, despite being laid up in hospital for a week with dysentery. After only a week's rest the three set off again. Initially the going was good and with the Hamilton having already been mapped there was little to delay them except for the river's fierce, half-frozen rapids. However, at the Hamilton's junction with the Unknown River things took a turn for the worse. The going through the wooded river gorge became much slower, rations started running low, it was snowing, and a last-minute change of food type was beginning to seriously weaken the dogs. Only when they quite suddenly located the Unknown River and its Falls did Gino decide to press on and find the river's source. They were now at least 250 miles from home and food stocks were dangerously low, but Gino was determined to get what he came for.

The river's source turned out to be the huge Lake Ossokmanuan, which itself was already partly drained by the Hamilton River (whose headwaters farther north were marked by their own Grand Falls), confirming that the whole Hamilton-Unknown Rivers system was connected, a fact of great importance for the hydro-electric potential of the area. Despite having been on starvation rations for three weeks and losing most of their dogs their objective was achieved, and they arrived back in North West River on 1st April. After a couple of days' rest, and not wishing to sit around for two months until the next ship arrived to take them home, they bought new dogs and travelled 500 miles around the coast to Bonne Esperance in Canada, where they picked up a ship. During the journey Gino once again mulled over the many lessons learned, as well as the presentation he was obliged to make to the RGS upon his return, which in turn would dictate the likelihood of funding for another expedition. He believed that any future survey of Labrador was best done from the air, and that Lake Snegamook, surveyed on the return journey from Hopedale, was the best place to construct the necessary base. He also thought about the increasing importance of air travel and that in order for an aeroplane to travel between Britain and North America it would have to refuel at the Faroe Islands, Iceland, East and West Greenland, Baffin Island, and Hudson Bay. Before this could happen those lands would have to be surveyed and Gino planned to be in the vanguard.

Back in London

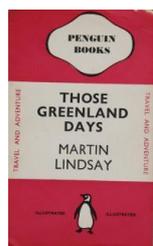
It was summer 1929 by the time Gino and Jamie Scott were back in London again. England was deep in the Great Depression and money was tight, yet Gino was determined to go to East Greenland to survey the most difficult section of the Arctic air-route, which if it were feasible would enable passengers and post to reach Vancouver from London in just five days. Planning to visit Greenland, the largest island in the world, from June 1930-Autumn 1931, Gino put aside a whole year to raise the finance for this his third expedition; it would also be his most expensive since he planned to use two small aircraft of his own to undertake much of the survey work, as well as to experience flight conditions throughout the year. He would use the small Danish-Eskimo settlement of Angmagssalik (Ammassalik) as his base. Between here and Scoresby Sound to the north lay an unexplored 500-mile coastline, every inch of which lay nearer to the previous re-fuelling stop in Iceland: the aim, therefore, was to survey this area thoroughly to locate further possible refuelling stops, as well as to provide vital physical information for pilots approaching Greenland. Additionally, he planned to establish a camp at the highest point on the Greenland ice-

cap between Angmagssalik and the next re-fuelling stop, Disco Island on the west coast. The camp would log a year's worth of precise meteorological data, invaluable to pilots using the Arctic air-route. At the end of the year Gino then planned to fly his two aircraft to Vancouver, and then make a triumphant return flight to London.

In late September Gino set about the task of getting his pilot's licence. Around the same time an idea was mooted by a film company that they would fund the expedition in return for help in shooting a romantic film on location: the curious idea was scuppered when the Danish Government failed to support the idea. Shortly afterwards Gino was introduced to the wealthy Courtauld family, whose son Augustine wanted to join the expedition as a surveyor (he had already visited Greenland twice with J. M. Wordie). Then, in early 1929, Gino gave an extremely successful presentation on Labrador to the RGS creating further momentum for his fund-raising efforts.

The Air Route Expedition

Only just turned twenty three years old Gino returned to Cambridge in January 1930 to complete the first of the final two terms of his geography degree (the second he would take after his return from Greenland). At the same time he and Scott took up cross-country running to improve their stamina, and began recruiting for what would be called the British Arctic Air Route Expedition. Gino preferred men like himself, lightheartedly determined, yet preferably with little or no Arctic experience, hoping



that they might learn with him and that he would thus have an idea of what to expect of them. The expedition became viable in June when a further thousand pounds was added to funds and Sir Ernest Shackleton's old ship *Quest* was made available. The two Gipsy Moth seaplanes were purchased and the 14-man team finalised, including surveyor Lt. Martin Lindsay, whose book *Those Greenland Days* (1940) describes the expedition. Despite the average age of the expedition being twenty-five, still eighteen months older than its exceptional leader, it would be the greatest British Arctic expedition for more than half a century.

On 5th July 1930 the *Quest* set sail for Greenland calling in at the Faroe Islands, where Jamie Scott was waiting with the dogs. Once at Angmagssalik Gino selected a suitable site for his base some forty miles to the west, and the next two weeks were used to unload the ship, and construct the hut and the aircraft. Gino's next priority was the establishment of the meteorological station high on the Greenland Ice Cap. It took Jamie Scott and four other men two and a half days to tackle the crevasse-ridden glacier that stood between the base and the plateau, and a further fifteen and a half days to cross the windswept plateau to its highest point. After setting up camp they returned leaving Lindsay and meteorologist Quintin Riley alone for a month to make their observations.

Meanwhile, Gino had set off with the *Quest* on the first of the expedition's seven journeys. He mapped 280 miles of coastline to the north of base camp using motor boats and a seaplane, the latter being based on Tugtilik Fjord (Lake Fjord), a sheltered spot at the northern limit of their forays, which Gino identified as an alternative landing-place for the projected air-route should the main base be storm-bound. The second journey saw Gino participate in a re-supply journey to the Ice-Cap Station, where two new men would take over, after which he and Scott struck out to measure the height and weather of the ice cap in a line 200 miles south-west of Ice-Cap Station to a point where that line crossed Nansen's first Greenland crossing in 1888. However, with only ninety-five miles covered they turned back due to soft snow hindering the dogs.

With the onset of winter the next re-supply team set out for Ice-Cap Station, taking fifteen days to cover just fifteen miles in the face of strong winds. The same weather conditions hindered Gino and Scott's return home too, and on 10th November both parties met. In a swift, considered opinion Gino told ornithologist and group leader F. ('Freddie') Spencer Chapman to jettison the heavy wireless they were taking up to the Station and to continue only with young Courtauld and geologist L. R. Wager, the pair whose turn it would be to remain at the Station.

Meanwhile, the worsening weather was also hampering a German scientific expedition, 300 miles north of Ice-Cap Station, led by the geophysicist Professor Alfred Wegener, famous for pioneering the theory of plate tectonics. When the weather drove back a motor-sledge party attempting to re-supply the German Ice-Cap Station *Eismitte*, the fifty-year-old Wegener decided on a dash with dog sledges and Eskimo drivers. Following an Eskimo strike, Wegener continued on with two men and reached the Station under appalling conditions. With not enough food to support all the men until relief came at the end of April Wegener made the return journey with one man and the dogs, all dying on the way.

Alone in the Ice

By contrast, the British team was making steady progress and after almost six weeks eventually arrived at the Station on 2nd December, where its two incumbents were found to be in good spirits. With only food enough for one man to remain at the station for the duration of the winter it was decided that Augustine Courtauld would be left behind, a proposal he actively supported as a means of proving himself. The men departed on 6th December leaving Courtauld to his solitary winter vigil, with supplies until the end of April.

Back at base Gino organised hunting trips and forays to visit local Eskimo communities, to keep his men occupied through the long winter months. Always in the back of their minds was how Courtauld was faring in his little tent 8,000 feet above the base and 140 miles inland. In late February an attempt was made to drop supplies on the plateau by air but bad weather made it almost impossible. Both aircraft were damaged as a result making Courtauld's predicament seem all the more precarious, and scuppering Gino's idea of flying to Vancouver. Even worse was the news that a sledge trip to recover the jettisoned wireless had discovered that the flags marking the way up to the plateau had disappeared.

On 8th March a three-man relief party comprising Scott, Lindsay and Riley set out to reach Courtauld, who by now had been alone for thirteen weeks, his supplies of food and paraffin now almost exhausted. Despite temperatures as low as -41°C, and the failure to locate any supply depots along the way, they forged on in search of their friend. Upon arrival Ice-Cap Station was nowhere to be seen and so, presuming it buried, the rescue party headed back to base.

Gino radioed the grim news to London and advised that he himself was setting out on another relief journey with Chapman and J. R. Rymill, and rations for five weeks. Courtauld had now been alone for 140 days and was reaching the end of his tether. The story was released to *The Times* and Gino's expedition suddenly became international news. Mercifully the weather cleared up and Gino's team made good progress, arriving at the Station on 1st May. Spotting a tattered Union Jack they approached the tent site, noticing a ventilation pipe sticking out of the snow: Gino called down and a voice answered back. After 150 days alone Courtauld was still alive! The party returned to base in triumph on 11th May, not only with Courtauld but also his priceless meteorological records.

Back at base it was business as usual, with Gino organising the expedition's four remaining journeys: a westerly crossing of the icecap to Holsteinborg, a southwesterly crossing to Ivigtut, an attempt on Mount Forel to the north (although the summit proved unattainable it was the highest point so far attained in the Arctic), and finally a 560-mile coastal boat journey south to Julianehaab. Between August and October the members of the expedition gradually went their separate ways, with Gino arriving in London in November 1931 a fully-fledged celebrity. On 12th December he was presented to the King at Buckingham Palace, followed by audiences with the Prince of Wales and Stanley Baldwin.

Pioneering for Pan Am

Of course Gino was once again thinking about his next expedition. During his boat trip down the coast of Greenland he had considered a boat journey right around the Arctic, mapping the coasts and locating further air bases, but for a celebrity this was not considered sensational enough. Instead he agreed to attempt the first transantarctic sledge crossing from the Weddell to the Ross Sea. Full of enthusiasm he set about raising funds for the expedition from a small room at the Royal Geographical Society. A recent recipient of the Royal Geographical Society's Gold Founder's Medal, Gino was at the height of his fame: one cable sent to him at this time was addressed with only three words: "Watkins Explorer England". Yet despite the newspapers seizing on the story the £40,000 necessary for the expedition was not forthcoming. Instead, Gino turned once more to the Arctic.

Pan American Airways agreed to employ Watkins, Rymill, Riley and Chapman for a year, while they collected a year's worth of weather records at Tugtilik, a hundred miles north of Angmagssalik, the location identified by Gino in 1930 as an alternative Greenland refuelling base in the event of bad weather at the main base. It was as leader of the East Greenland Expedition, which set off in July 1932, that Gino Watkins drowned. The four companions had struck camp at the head of the western arm of Lake Fjord. On 20th August the team arose to a dull day and abandoned their original plans for filming. Instead, Riley got the camp in order and made weather observations, whilst Chapman and Rymill went out surveying. Gino, as the main food provider, decided to go seal hunting, a pastime he described as "the most exciting sport in the world". He headed off to the dark and sinister waters of the northern arm of the fjord in order to stalk seals amongst the ice flows.

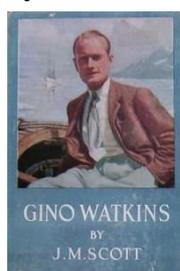
Only the night before, whilst discussing his future plans to make not only the first ascent of Everest but also the first sledge crossing of Antarctica, the ever enthusiastic Gino was warned by his companions not to hunt seals alone, and if he must then not to do it too close to the 85-foot high, calving glacier face at the head of the fjord (only several days before he had narrowly escaped being swept off the floe he'd been standing on by a wave caused by a falling block of ice). "A man can get anything in this world that he wants, absolutely anything", replied Gino, his mind half elsewhere. "We need seals to eat, and up in the northern arm is where the seals are," he had replied, turning the record over on his beloved gramophone to close the subject.

Death of a Legend

What exactly happened the next day is unclear but it seems that an overhanging arm of ice on a floe behind which he was hiding whilst stalking a seal knocked the white screen on the kayak's foredeck used to conceal the pilot. Gino's sealskin kayak, custom-built for him by Eskimos, was 18-feet long necessitating him to get out of it in order to straighten the screen. As he did so hundreds of tons of ice fell from the nearby glacier creating a wave that sent him into the freezing water. He managed to

haul himself back onto the ice floe and removed his heavy sodden trousers, re-entering the water to retrieve the kayak. Despite his physical stamina and mental resolve the twenty-five year old succumbed to hypothermia. When his companions arrived later they found only his abandoned kayak and his trousers laid out on the floe. Spencer Chapman's book *Watkin's Last Expedition* (1938) would be dedicated to his memory.

The results of both PanAm expeditions were expertly written up by F. Spencer Chapman and published later the same year as *Northern Lights: The Official Account of the British Arctic Air Route Expedition 1930-31*; the book included an introduction by Gino, as well as a forward by Admiral Sir William Goodenough, and additional chapters by J. M. Scott, Capt. P. M. H. Lemon and Augustine Courtauld (an abbreviated version appeared as an article in the July 1932 issue of the Royal Geographical Society's *Geographical Journal*). Both contained detailed accounts of the expeditions' sledge and boat trips (two across the icecap, three northward), studies of climate, geology, ornithology, mapping with the aid of an aeroplane, an attempt to climb Mount Forel, notes on the art of kayaking, and appendices detailing plants collected, field notes on birds, sledging rations, geology, and climate studies. Spencer Chapman himself would go on to become a well-published explorer and adventurer in his own right. Meanwhile, an article detailing both expeditions, *The Tugtilik (Lake Fjord) Country, East Greenland* by J. R. Rymill, appeared in the May 1934 volume of the *Geographical Journal*, followed in May 1935 by Jamie Scott's article, *Towards an Arctic Air Route*, published in the first edition of the new *Geographical Magazine*. Despite his early age Gino Watkins had already earned an international reputation for himself such as few men twice his age enjoy, ample testimony to his bold belief that a man should have achieved everything he wants in life by the time he is twenty-five! A passionate enthusiast for adventure, Gino was yet level-headed and shrewd; pleasure-loving, perhaps cynical in some ways, he was outstanding among explorers for his careful assembling of the details of the intractable wilds into which he journeyed. J. M. Scott said of him: "With Watkins, the most serious objectives always held something to laugh about, but in their achievement they suffered nothing from his light heartedness." It was also said of him that "his gift for sleeping was only equalled by his marvellous appetite when there was food about."



In 1986 Gino was the inspiration for Australia's first Arctic expedition of which HRH The Prince of Wales was patron and Lord Shackleton was principal British Advisor. The kayak in which Watkins took his last journey can today be found in London's Royal Geographical Society, complete with its hunting tray and harpoon, and set of wooden plugs used to prevent killed animals sinking whilst being towed back to camp. Together with the University of Cambridge the society manages the Gino Watkins Memorial Fund, which provides grants for polar exploration. Yet despite being the subject of two eponymous biographies, the first by his friend J. M. Scott (1935) and another by adventurer John Ridgway (1974), as well as a further effort *Dancing on Ice: A Stirring Tale of Adventure, Risk and Reckless Folly* (2008) by Scott's son Jeremy, Gino Watkins is today largely forgotten outside polar circles. Perhaps Simon Courtauld's *The Watkins Boys* published in 2010 will help redress further the balance?

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Books about Gino Watkins' Expeditions:

Those Greenland Days – The British Arctic Air-Route Expedition 1930-1931 by Martin Lindsay (1932)

Northern Lights: The Official Account of the British Arctic Air-Route Expedition 1930-31 by F. Spencer Chapman (Forward by Admiral Sir William Goodenough, Introduction by H. G. Watkins and additional chapters by J. M. Scott, Capt. P. M. H. Lemon and Augustine Courtauld) (1932)

The Land that God Gave Cain – An Account of H.G. Watkins's Expedition to Labrador 1928-1929 by James M. Scott (1933)

Watkins' Last Expedition by F. Spencer Chapman (1934)

Articles by and about Gino Watkins' Expeditions:

The Cambridge Expedition to Edge Island by H. G. Watkins, Geographical Journal (August 1928), Royal Geographical Society

River Exploration in Labrador by Canoe and Dog Sledge by H. G. Watkins, Geographical Journal (Feb 1930), Royal Geographical Society

The British Arctic Air Route Expedition by H. G. Watkins, Geographical Journal, Royal Geographical Society (May 1932)

The British Arctic Air Route Expedition Continued by H. G. Watkins, Geographical Journal, Royal Geographical Society (June 1932)

The Official Account of the British Arctic Air Route Expedition 1930-31 by F. Spencer Chapman (with an introduction by Gino Watkins), Geographical Journal, Royal Geographical Society (July 1932)

The Tugtilik (Lake Fjord) Country, East Greenland by J. R. Rymill, Geographical Journal (May 1934), Royal Geographical Society

Towards an Arctic Air Route by J. M. Scott, Geographical Magazine (May 1935), Royal Geographical Society

Biographies of Gino Watkins:

Gino Watkins by J. M. Scott (1935)

Gino Watkins by John Ridgway (1974)

Dancing on Ice: A Stirring Tale of Adventure, Risk and Reckless Folly by Jeremy Scott (2008)

The Watkins Boys by Simon Courtauld (2010)