# CONTENTS

List of Illustrations vii  
Preface ix  

## PART 1: THE AGE OF RECONNAISSANCE  

- To the heart of the Mongol Empire: Marco Polo (1271–95) 9  
- The wanderings of Ibn Battuta (1325–55) 18  
- Sailing west to America: Christopher Columbus (1492–1506) 30  
- East to the Indies: Vasco da Gama (1497–9) 42  
- A passage to the Pacific: Ferdinand Magellan (1519–22) 51  
- Adventures in the Amazon: Francisco de Orellana (1541–6) 63  
- The quest for the North-East Passage: William Barents (1594–7) 72  
- Mutiny in the Arctic: Henry Hudson (1610–11) 83  
- Looking for a North-West Passage: Luke Foxe and Thomas James (1631–2) 96  
- Colonizing the American wilderness: René La Salle (1669–87) 103  

## PART 2: THE AGE OF INQUIRY  

- Linking Russia and America: Vitus Bering (1725–42) 125  
- Measuring the world: Charles-Marie de la Condamine (1735–45) 138  
- In search of the Great Southern Continent: James Cook (1768–79) 149  
- The conquest of Mont Blanc: Horace-Bénédict de Saussure (1760–88) 171  
- Into the heart of South America: Alexander von Humboldt (1799–1803) 180  
- The Great Trigonometrical Survey (1800–66) 190  
- Across the American wilderness: Meriwether Lewis and William Clark (1803–6) 194  
- Furthest into the Arctic: W. E. Parry (1818–27) 207  
- Across Canada's Badlands: John Franklin (1818–25) 217  
- The quest for the Niger: Hugh Clapperton and Richard Lander (1821–31) 228  
- The road to Timbuctoo: Gordon Laing and René Caillié (1824–8) 243  
- Four winters in the Arctic: John Ross (1829–33) 256  
- Charting the Antarctic: James Clark Ross (1839–43) 264  
- The search for Franklin (1845–59) 271  

## PART 3: THE AGE OF ENDEAVOUR  

- Crossing the Australian continent: Robert Burke and William Wills (1860–1) 296  
- The source of the Nile: Richard Burton and John Speke (1857–65) 308  
- The conquest of the Matterhorn: Edward Whymper (1865) 316  
- The Great Survey: The Pundits (1865–1902) 326  
- Marooned off Greenland: Paul Hegemann and Karl Koldewey (1869–70) 331  
- An Arctic drift: Charles Hall, George Tyson and the Polaris (1871–3) 336  
- Across the dark continent: David Livingstone and H. M. Stanley (1871–7) 343  
- The discovery of Franz Josef Land: Carl Weyprecht and Julius von Payer (1872–4) 353  
- Britain's fight for the North Pole: George Nares (1875–6) 361  
- A Siberian disaster: George De Long (1879–82) 367  
- Tragedy on Ellesmere Island: Adolphus Greely (1881–4) 375  
- Skiing to the North Pole: Fridtjof Nansen (1893–6) 385  
- By balloon to the top of the world: Salomon Andrée (1897) 392  
- Across the Sahara to the Congo: Fernand Fourcroy (1899–1900) 398  
- Italy's northernmost: The Duke of Abruzzi (1899–1900) 404  
- The Pole at last: Robert Peary and Frederick Cook (1908–9) 410  
- The race for the South Pole: Robert Scott and Roald Amundsen (1911–12) 422  
- Alone in the Antarctic: Douglas Mawson (1911–13) 432  
- The Imperial TransAntarctic Expedition: Ernest Shackleton (1914–16) 444  
- The conquest of Everest: George Mallory and Sandy Irvine (1924) 462  
- By airship to the North Pole: Umberto Nobile (1928) 477  

Bibliography 489  
Index 495