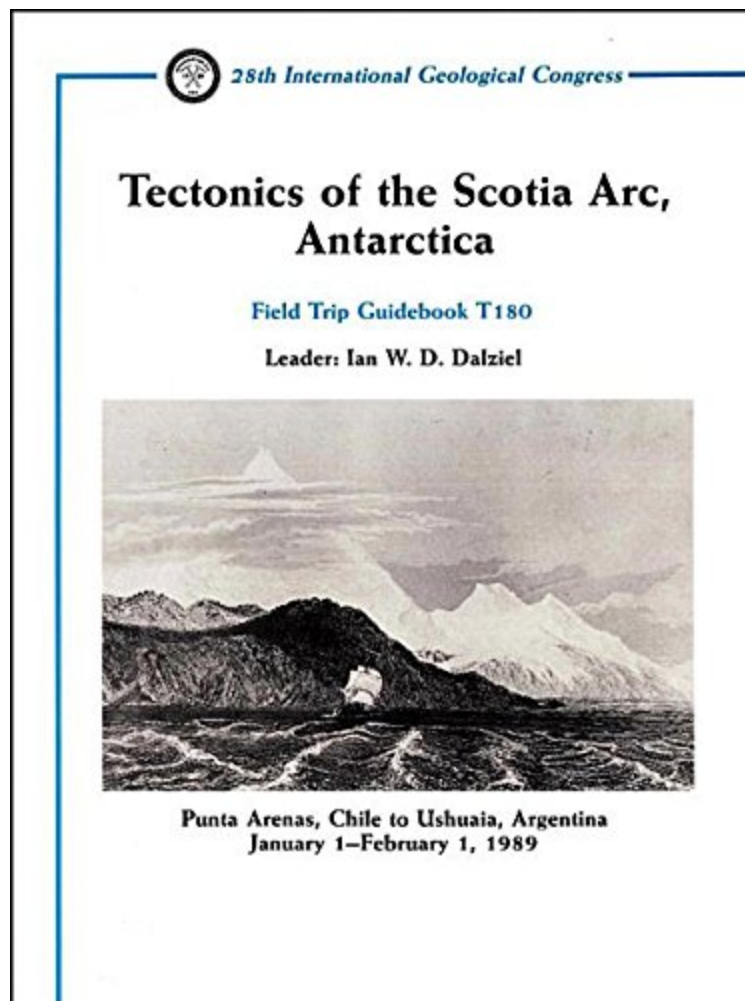


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Published by the American Geophysical Union as part of the Field Trip Guidebooks Series, Volume 180. The Scotia Ridge is the east-closing arcuate submarine topographic high linking the Andean Cordillera of South America to the Antarctic Peninsula (Fig. 1.1). The ridge emerges from the sea to form small but rugged islands: South Georgia on the North Scotia Ridge (Figs. 1.2 and 2.1; Pl. 1.1). All of these are displaced parts of the South American continent (South Georgia) or the Antarctic Peninsula (South Orkney and South Shetland Islands). The South Sandwich Islands that close off the Scotia Ridge in the east constitute one of the least mature intraoceanic island arc systems of the world. Eight of the eleven islands in the arc are presently volcanically active (Pl. 1.2).