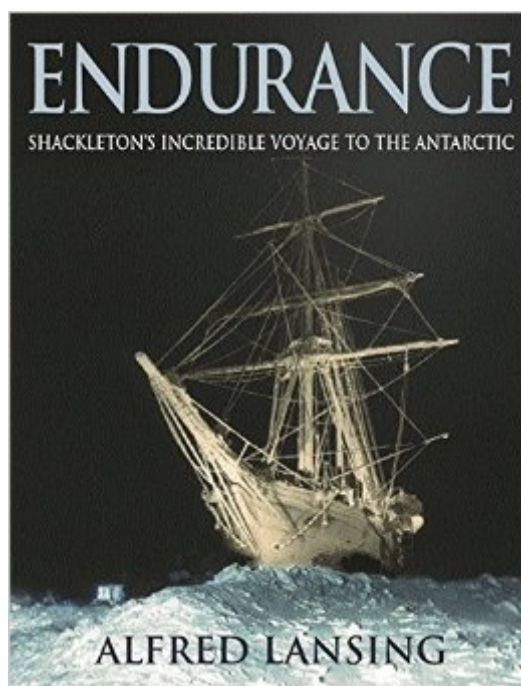


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"Endurance": Shackleton's Incredible Voyage To The Antarctic



Synopsis

'A thrilling reading experience! One of the greatest adventure stories of our times' - New York Times Book Review. In 1914 Ernest Shackleton and a crew of 27 men, sailed for the South Atlantic on the 'Endurance' with the object of crossing the Antarctic over land. In October 1915, still half a continent away from their intended base, the ship was trapped, then crushed in ice. For five months Shackleton and his men, drifting on ice packs, were castaways in one of the world's most savage regions. This gripping book based on firsthand accounts of crew members, describes how the men survived, living together in camps on the ice for 17 months, how they were attacked by sea leopards, had to kill their beloved dogs whom they could no longer feed, and suffered disease with no medicines (an operation to amputate the foot of one member of the crew was carried out on the ice). Their extraordinary indefatigability and their lasting civility towards one another in the most adverse conditions shines through.

Book Information

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: Weidenfeld & Nicolson (December 31, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 029782919X

ISBN-13: 978-0297829195

Product Dimensions: 6.9 x 0.9 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.5 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (1,873 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #890,761 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #288 in [Books > History > Arctic & Antarctica](#) #948 in [Books > History > World > Expeditions & Discoveries](#) #2237 in [Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Geography](#)

Customer Reviews

Within the genre of real life adventure books, Endurance is definitely a stand out. I am lucky to have a brother who regularly reads about explorers and wilderness adventures and recommends to me only the best of the best. Other must-reads in the genre are The Long Walk (though that turns out to be most likely fiction so I no longer recommend it), Into the Wild, and Arctic Adventure: My Life in the Frozen North. Endurance tells the true story of Ernest Shackleton and his crew's ill-fated and legendary expedition to Antarctica. It was likely one of history's best outcomes for what was essentially a disaster. At the time of launching, Shackleton's expedition was history's most extensively

planned exploratory trip to Antarctic, complete with a photographer, scientists, carpenters and engineers (a crew of 27 in total). Shackleton's goal was to transverse and study Antarctic. When they set off in 1914, this expedition was the pride of the United Kingdom. Shackleton was the toast of the town for his bravery and expertise. For his bravery he is still toasted, but his polar expertise proved to be lacking. The ship he guided was no match for the South Pole's crushing cold and ice. Soon after arriving, the Endurance was stuck in ice, absolutely unable to move. The crew salvaged what it could and was forced to make do with dwindling supplies and provisions, eventually eating some of their beloved dogs.

This book is one of the few exceptional -absolutely exceptional- tales of survival and it proves the maxim that nothing is so bad that it can't get worse. But also it proves that you can know the end of a story - it is a well known fact that Shackleton brought all his men through this arduous trial and all survived - and it doesn't spoil the story at all. Truth is not only stranger than fiction, but it is a good deal harder. The bare-bones of the story are that Shackleton and his team left civilisation in 1914 in the Endurance to travel to attempt to reach the South Pole - a trip he had tried and failed by only a couple of hundred miles or so to achieve in 1908. Amundsen had already reached the pole first but for Shackleton it was unfinished business. The Endurance had been built to push through the pack ice, but conditions proved too much and it was trapped in pack ice. Summer wore on and there was no escape - the winds were in the wrong direction - then winter hit and they were trapped in their boat. They settled in to a routine until the ice went against them and cracked the Endurance. Shackleton realised the only way out was on their own, so they abandoned the boat and made for the pack ice at first dragging the boats, then relying a floe to carry them north where they might find more supplies, or be rescued. In the end they had to rescue themselves and this is the story of their indomitable courage and strength to survive under incredibly harsh conditions and in grave discomfort. We are talking about camping out in Antarctica - in less than adequate shelter, with essentially starvation rations, no heating, barely adequate clothing. Lansing tells this story in a sparing style and it really works.

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