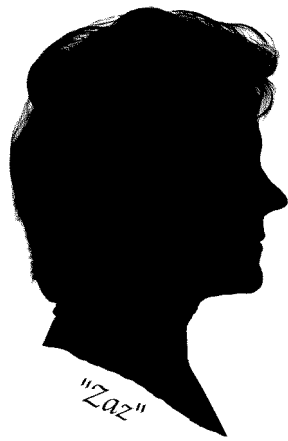
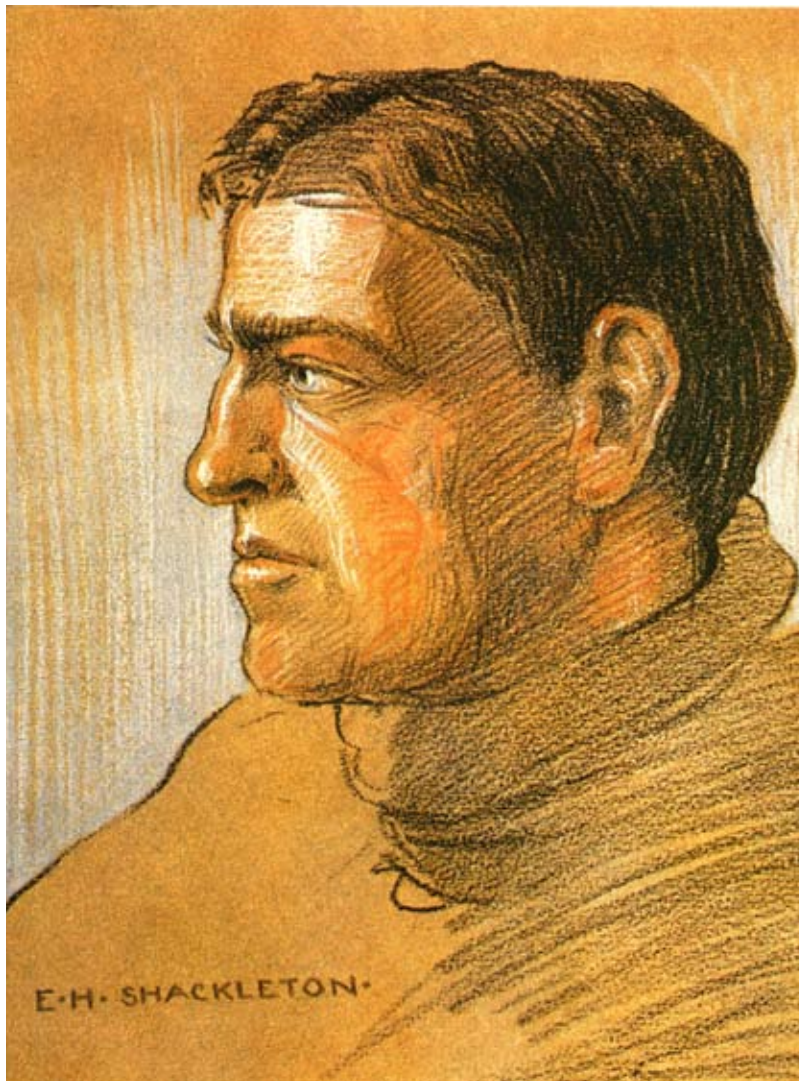


# AN ANTARCTIC EVENING



HELD AT THE EXPLORERS CLUB, NEW YORK CITY  
FRIDAY EVENING THE 9TH OF APRIL 1999





Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton by George Marston.  
This and other portraits of expedition members  
appeared in *The Antarctic Book*, a companion volume to  
the edition de luxe of *The Heart of the Antarctic* (1909).

# AN ANTARCTIC EVENING



HELD TO HONOR  
**THE HON. ALEXANDRA SHACKLETON**  
AND THE DESCENDANTS OF MEMBERS  
OF SIR ERNEST SHACKLETON'S  
IMPERIAL TRANS-ANTARCTIC  
EXPEDITION 1914-1916.



HOSTED BY **MISS MARGOT MORRELL**  
AND ATTENDED BY A DIVERSE  
ASSEMBLAGE OF ANTARCTICANS FROM  
AROUND THE WORLD.

**FRIDAY EVENING THE 9TH OF APRIL 1999  
THE EXPLORERS CLUB  
46 EAST 70TH STREET  
NEW YORK CITY**

# MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION

Philippa Foster Back, London (*Chairman, Friends of the Scott Polar Research Institute*)

John Blackborow & Jacqui Nelson, Newport, Wales (*Grandson of Perce Blackborow*)

Sam Blyth, Toronto (*Antarctic tour operator*)

Joe Bugayer, Seattle (*Antarctic book collector*)

Bob & Jackie Burton, Hemingford Abbots, England (*Former Director, South Georgia Whaling Museum*)

Susan Callahan, Littleton, New Hampshire

Stephanie Capparell & Stuart Ferguson, New York City (*Wall Street Journal*)

Lucia deLeiris, Waltham, Massachusetts (*Antarctic artist*)

Harding Dunnett, London (*Founder, The James Caird Society*)

Gail Evans, Sacramento, California (*Antarctic traveler*)

Doug & Jo-Del Gaeth, Boston

Martin Greene & Toby Saks, Seattle (*Antarctic book collector*)

Judy Haberkorn & Tom Daley, New York City

Judy Hallock, Centereach, New York (*Antarctic writer*)

Pippa Hare, London (*Secretary, The James Caird Society*)

Bob Headland, Cambridge, England (*Archivist & Curator, Scott Polar Research Institute*)

Richard Hudson, Colchester, England (*Son of Commodore Hubert T. Hudson*)

Adelie Hurley, Coffs Harbour, NSW, Australia (*Daughter of Frank Hurley*)

Phil & Louise Kolvoord, Essex Junction, Vermont (*Antarctic book collector*)

Nick Lambourn, London (*Christie's*)

Tom Lethbridge, Newmarket, Suffolk, England

David & Cathy Lilburne, Cold Spring, New York (*Polar bookseller*)

Daniel & Ann Lynch, Concord, Massachusetts

Dick & Louise Macklin, Aberdeen, Scotland (*Son of Dr Alexander H. Macklin*)

Neil Macklin & Lynn Simpson, Aberdeen, Scotland (*Son of Dr Alexander H. Macklin*)

Sandy Macklin, Aberdeen, Scotland (*Son of Dr Alexander H. Macklin*)

Valerie Mattingley, London (*National Geographic Society*)

Jim & Sue McCarthy, Cambridge, Massachusetts (*Antarctic travelers*)

David McGonigal, Roseville, NSW, Australia (*The Sydney Morning Herald*)

Fred McLaren & Avery Russell (*President, The Explorers Club*)

Toni Mooy-Hurley, Coffs Harbour, NSW, Australia (*Daughter of Frank Hurley*)

Jim Morrell, Garden City, New York

Margot Morrell, Far Hills, New Jersey (*Antarctic book collector & writer*)

Shane & Jane Murphy, Scottsdale, Arizona (*Antarctic historian*)

Rindy Northrup, Boston (*Owner of Admiral Byrd's house*)

Luke O'Neill, Boston (*President & Founder, The Shackleton Schools*)

John Phipps, Phoenix, Arizona (*Antarctic traveler*)

Jeff Rubin & Stephanie Wiles, Middletown, Connecticut (*Antarctic writer*)

John & Christine Rumely, New York City

Joanna Scadden, London (*Picture Librarian, Royal Geographical Society*)

Alexandra Shackleton, London (*Granddaughter of EHS & President, The James Caird Society*)

Charles & Miranda Shackleton, Quechee, Vermont (*Cousin of EHS*)

Jonathan Shackleton, County Cavan, Eire (*Cousin of EHS*)

Abel Shafer, New York City (*Antarctic traveler*)

Philippa Smith, Cambridge, England (*Manager, Picture Library, Scott Polar Research Institute*)

Rob Stephenson, Jaffrey Center, New Hampshire (*Coordinator, The Antarctic Circle*)

Bill & Alison Thompson, Fort Washington, Pennsylvania

Mary Pat Thompson, Patterson, California (*Antarctic traveler*)

Dan & Jonolyn Weinstein, Jamestown, New York (*Antarctic traveler*)

Nigel Winser, London (*Deputy Director, Royal Geographical Society*)

Peter Wordie, Dunblane, Perthshire, Scotland (*Son of Sir James Wordie*)

George & Mina Wordie, Huntly, Aberdeenshire, Scotland (*Son of Sir James Wordie*)

Michaela Wordie Wright, Edinburgh, Scotland (*Granddaughter of Sir James Wordie*)



# EXPEDITION PROGRAM

Reception 7:00 p.m. — Dinner 8:00 p.m.

Interspersed with and followed by numerous words of welcome, toasts, light verse, rousing song and general frivolity.



## SLEDGING RATIONS

HORS D'ŒUVRES

[KRILL]

Gulf Shrimp with Roasted Red Pepper Dip

[VARIOUS ANTISCORBUTICS]

Honey Mustard Brie in Phyllo ♦ Melon Wrapped with Prosciutto

Blue Cheese Stuffed Artichoke ♦ Streimer's Polar Nut Food

---

[SEAWEED]

Mixed field Greens with Sliced Pears

Gorgonzola Cheese & Walnuts

---

[WEDDELL SEAL PUP]

Baby New Zealand Lamb Chops

Garlic Mashed Potatoes & Haricots Vert

---

[SWEET HOOSH]

Crème Brûlée

Coffee & Tea

Various spirits, wines, &c throughout



## ON THIS DAY IN 1916

*From the Journal of Thomas Orde-Lees, a member of the Expedition*

LESS SWELL but any amount of open water all around us. Sir Ernest spent much time in cogitation and finally determined to make a start in the boats.

We packed up all we could carry. The floe split again during the morning so that there was barely enough of it left for us to stand on.

At 1 p.m. came the order to launch the three boats, & this successfully accomplished, they were soon laden with the whole of the sledging provisions, consisting of 24 cases of 100 - 8 oz sledging rations, 13 cases of 100 - 6 oz block of Streimer's nut food & 11 cases of Huntley & Palmer's Antarctic biscuits (300 - 1-1/3 oz biscuits per case), two bags of selected seal meat (72 lbs per bag), 200 - 6 oz packets "True milk", 336 lbs West India Produce Co's cane sugar in 8 - 42 lb cases, 8 lbs Virol, 12 lbs dry peas, 3-1/2 lbs lentils, 12 lbs pearl barley, 14 lbs jam, 7 - 1/4 lb tins sardines, 7 - 1/4 lb tins smoked salmon, 1 lb pepper, 20 lbs Cerebos salt, one case 400 - 1 oz Bovril cubes, 40 gallons paraffin, about 1 cwt blubber for fuel & seven candles, our total stock of the latter. Besides the ordinary boat's gear & tackle, oars, masts, sails, water barrocoes, etc., there were the 3 hooped tents and the 2 ordinary pole-tents, 28 sleeping bags, 28 - 10 lb bags personal gear, 7 sacks of spare clothing, boots, etc., 2 pair skis, a quantity of photographic gear, records, etc., the whole forming a consignment of some two hundred packages, and taking a good hour to stow into the boats.

The crews of the boats were as follows.

"James Caird" Sir Ernest, Wild, Clark, Hurley, Hussey, James, Wordie, McNish (carpenter), Green (cook) Vincent, McCarthy (sailors)

"Dudley Docker" Captain Worsley, Greenstreet, Kerr, Lees, Dr Macklin, Cheetham, Marston and the two sailors McLeod & Holness.

"Stancombe Wills" Lt. Hudson, Crean, Rickinson, Dr McIlroy & three sailors Howe, Bakewell & Stephenson.

The "Dudley Docker" was the first to start and had to lay off for about an hour dodging the shifting ice until the other boats were laden & manned.

At first they had a couple of sledges in tow but as these impeded them very much Sir Ernest gave permission to cut them adrift. Whilst waiting a small floe interposed itself between the boats & the camp floe & a few of the party were temporarily in danger of being cut off but a fortunate opening up of the ice enabled the Dudley Docker to slip in & rescue them.

About 2 p.m. we all shoved off, the "Caird", of course, leading. Owing to the bag of sea leopards we had recently been able to considerably increase the meat ration & had had a good hoosh for

luncheon & every one felt very fit & full of hope, but the attempt to break out of the pack in such small boats must fill the most fearless with apprehension.

We pulled hard making about three miles to the north when our further course in that direction was arrested by a belt of loose pack, whereupon we bore to the westward. In endeavouring to find a channel through the ice belt the Dudley Docker got into difficulties owing to her getting entrapped in a *cul de sac*, the entrance to which closed behind her before she could be extricated, but by dint of about half an hour's shoving & struggling they managed to regain the open lead, but it was a "near thing".

By this time the other two boats had pulled off some distance towards a large tabular berg against the sides of which the heavy swell was breaking with a loud roar. The Dudley Docker had a job to catch them up.

Immediately after doing so all three boats passed under the lee of the pack edge when all of a sudden, almost before we realized it, the whole pack was in motion as if impelled by some mysterious force against the direction of the wind & as if descending upon us to once more engulfed us in its awful grip. It was certainly advancing upon us at a speed of over two miles an hour & we had all our work cut out to outstrip it in our heavily laden boats. As it approached, it was creating a regular bow wave—a most uncanny sight.

Although we were passing through more or less open channels all the time we were never really altogether clear of drift ice & the large lumps of pack or broken bergs, called growlers, and it was necessary to keep a sharp look-out to avoid their hitting us or our charging into them.

By 5 p.m. it was getting dusk and shortly after we all pulled up at a small floe, to which the Caird had gone on in advance under sail.

Here we unloaded the boats, hauled them up on to the ice & prepared to spend a quiet night, but it was not to be so, as we shall presently see, in spite of the fact that the swell had somewhat subsided.

### The night of 9th—10th April 1916

Whilst hauling up the boats, which took a good hour to do, the cook had got our blubber stove going on blubber that we had brought with us and produced a fine beverage of hot milk (36 ozs Truemilk powder for 28 persons) which we stood in much need of. As we had had a quarter of a pound of dog-pemmican & two biscuits each, in the boats for tea, it was not considered necessary to supplement this, so we made do with the milk, & having erected the tents turned in.

One or two of us whose turn it was to do night watchman from 11 p.m. to midnight lay down in the bottom of one of the boats.

The night was fairly mild so that they did not get particularly cold before all hands were awakened, just before 11 p.m. by the now familiar cry of "crack". We jumped up just in time to see, as much as it was possible to do so in the dark, the floe separate into two halves & to hear the cry & commotion of a man in the water. The latter was the sailor Holness & his position was one of extreme danger, for apart from the usual restrictions of clothing, boots, etc., & the fact that his sleeping bag had fallen in on top of him, he was in imminent peril of being crushed between the two halves of the floe, for as a general rule when a floe splits & there is a swell running the two portions of the floe



surge to & fro, the crack opening & closing rhythmically with the swell, the edges thereof coming together with a crash & grinding against each other. Providentially, on this occasion, the two fragments merely parted company, separated about six feet from each other & thereafter did not approach within a yard of one another. This was well enough for the rescue of the drowning man but greatly impeded subsequent events.

It appeared that the crack had occurred immediately underneath the sailors' tent—the large 8 man hoop tent—right through the spot where Holness was sleeping. How he extricated himself from his sleeping bag is a marvel as he got clear of it before he actually fell into the water for his bag did not go entirely in but remained hanging over the ice edge.

Vincent, another of the sailors, also had a narrow shave, he did not fall in but his bag did.

Strange to say the tent sustained no damage whatever.

This was not all by any means, for the crack had cut off Sir Ernest's tent & the "J. Caird" from the rest of our little floating camp & it was a question whether we could contrive to "bridge" the boat over the now widening crack, the first care, the rescue of Holness, having been successfully accomplished. Curiously enough it was Sir Ernest himself who rescued Holness. No doubt he was spending one of his usual wakeful nights & so was up & out in an instant. First he saved Holness's sleeping bag & then the man himself, whose chief lament was that he had thus lost all the "baccy" out of his bag, We have since learned from the victim of this accident that he attributes his escape to the precaution he had taken to sleep with only the lowest one of the three buttons on the flap of the bag

fastened, owing to the scare that previous crackings of the floe had given him. Lt. Hudson very generously divested himself of some of his own clothing & also a spare suit of combinations in order to provide Holness with a dry change, for, as the temperature was only 18°, he would soon have been frozen in his wet things.

The rescue of the boat was eventually, but less easily accomplished. It took at least a dozen of us to slide it along. Choosing a moment when the two pieces of the floe were about to approach within four or five feet of each other we rapidly launched the boat across the gap whilst others on the opposite side seized her bow and hung on like grim death as the crack again widened in response to the swell & on the next closing of the crack they luckily managed to haul her over clear.

For a moment or two it was just touch & go, for the crack opened so wide that the boat was supported only by its very extremities & there was great danger of the ice edges breaking away under her weight.

Now came the question of getting all hands back on to the portion on which were the boats & the rest of the camp. This was achieved by leaving the stern of the boat projecting well over the edge of the floe and by one or two of us jumping from the opposite piece & catching on to it by our hands each time the crack closed a bit. In this way we all got safely across except Sir Ernest who insisted upon remaining until last. (As he is less agile than some of us this was unwise! Excuse my saying so.) Anyhow, at each undulation of the swell, the half of the floe on which Sir Ernest was was getting further & further away and for a time it was impossible for him to get across, & it looked as if we should have to launch a boat to get round to him, though this would also have been

fraught with considerable danger owing to the large number of pieces of floating ice all around us, which were bumping about quite enough to stave in one of our boats. Things looked ugly enough for a time but slowly the two parts of the floe again began to approach. We threw Sir Ernest a rope and by pulling on it tried to lessen the distance between us but I doubt whether our efforts contributed much towards what the elements were already effecting.

At an opportune moment Sir Ernest made the jump whilst willing & thankful hands saved him from falling backwards again into the water.

Several of the other sailors had narrow escapes, the boots of one falling into the water. He was just in time to save them.

When Holness first fell in he was able to support himself by holding on to both sides of the crack with his hands, but as the crack widened he was compelled to let go of one side, but managed to hang on long enough to the other side. As he states that he is a very indifferent swimmer it was fortunate for him that the ice edge did not carry away.

As soon as thing had settled down a bit we lighted a blubber fire in the old blubber stove & made a serving of hot milk (6 - 6 oz packets of truemilk) and whilst the milk was being prepared served out a 6 oz cake of Streimer's Polar Nut Food to each man: this being the first time we have drawn upon this article of our sledging rations since leaving the ship. It was just the very thing we wanted at that moment and was immensely appreciated.

It was a memorable sight—we twenty eight men all sitting round a blazing fire on that tiny ice floe through the dark night. It was nearly 3 a.m. by the time the milk was served and although it was very cold most of us preferred to remain up.

One or two crawled back into the boat and managed to put in another three hours sound sleep until 6 a.m. when we were all astir again standing by to launch the boats.

During the night a good deal of loose ice had come up & our floe was now cut off from open water by about a hundred yards of more or less loose ice.

Immediately adjacent to us were several pieces of heavy floes all jostling about in the swell in such a way that it would have been sheer suicide to have put the boats into the water amongst them; so there was nothing to do but wait. We filled in the interval & our interiors with a frugal breakfast of Bovril sledging ration hoosh (1/4 lb per man).

*Source:* From the journal of Thomas Orde-Lees in the collection of Dartmouth College.



Capt Thomas Orde-Lees, motor expert and store-keeper. Photo: Frank Hurley.

## ON THIS DAY IN 1916

*From Sir Ernest Shackleton's South*

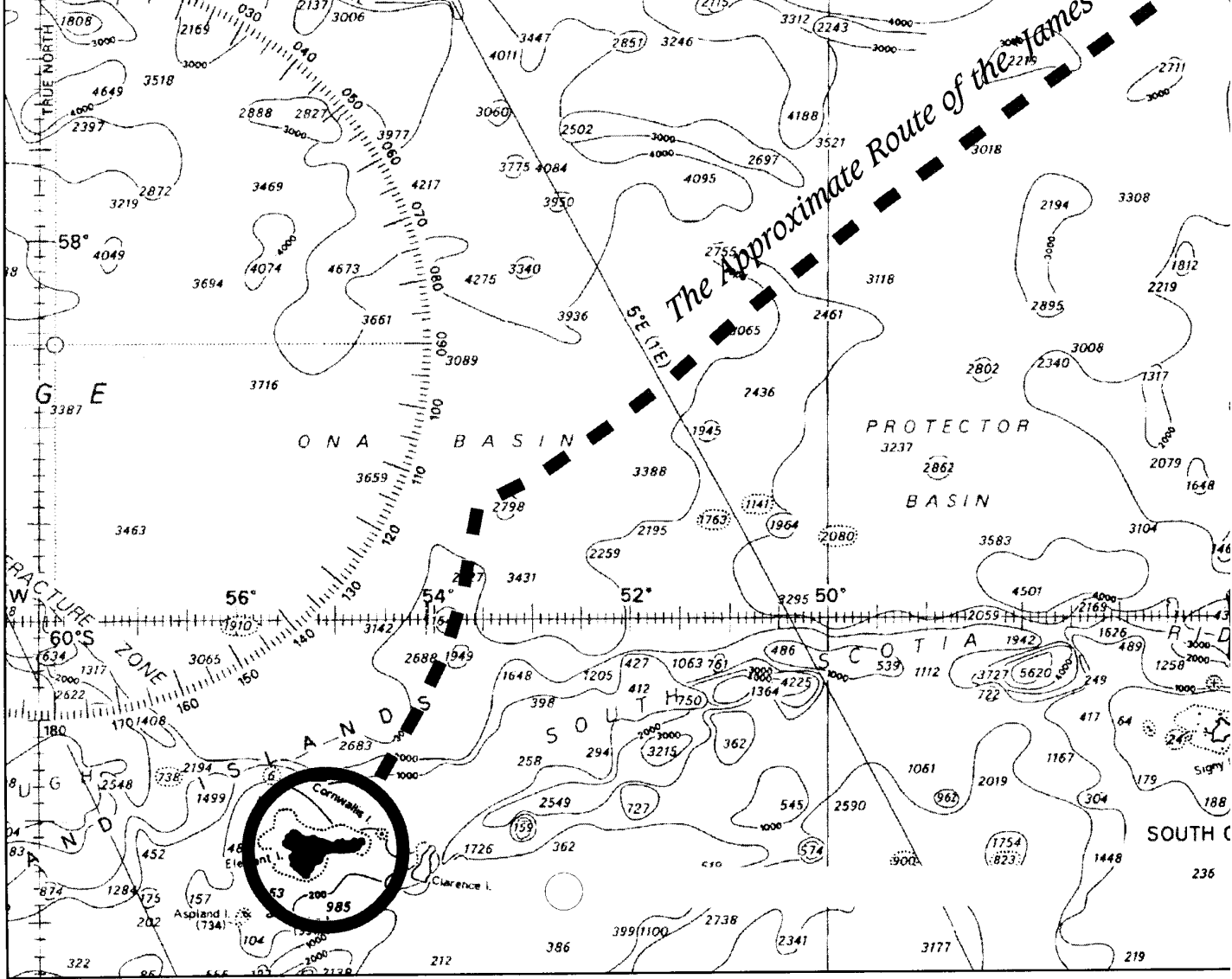
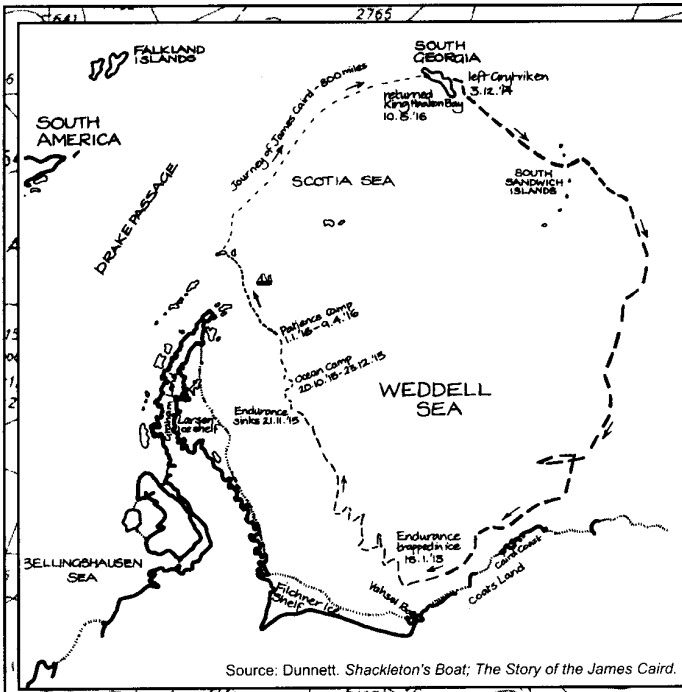
THE FOLLOWING DAY was Sunday (April 9), but it proved no day of rest for us. Many of the important events of our Expedition occurred on Sundays, and this particular day was to see our forced departure from the floe on which we had lived for nearly six months, and the start of our journeyings in the boats. "This has been an eventful day. The morning was fine,

though somewhat overcast by stratus and cumulus clouds; moderate south-south-westerly and south-easterly breezes. We hoped that with this wind the ice would drift nearer to Clarence Island. At 7 a.m. lanes of water and leads could be seen on the horizon to the west. The ice separating us from the lanes was loose, but did not appear to be workable for the boats. The long swell from the north-west was coming in more freely than on the previous day and was driving the floes together in the utmost confusion. The loose brash between the masses of ice was being churned to mudlike consistency, and no boat could have lived in the channels that opened and closed around us. Our own floe was suffering in the general disturbance, and after breakfast I ordered the tents to be struck and everything prepared for an immediate start when the boats could be launched." I had decided to take the *James Caird* myself, with Wild and eleven men. This was the largest of our boats, and in addition to her human complement she carried the major portion of the stores. Worsley had charge of the *Dudley Docker* with nine men, and Hudson and Crean were the senior men on the *Stancomb Wills*.

Soon after breakfast the ice closed

again. We were standing by, with our preparations as complete as they could be made, when at 11 a.m. our floe suddenly split right across under the boats. We rushed our gear on to the larger of the two pieces and watched with strained attention for the next development. The crack had cut through the site of my tent. I stood on the edge of the new fracture, and, looking across the widening channel of water, could see the spot where for many months my head and shoulders had rested when I was in my sleeping-bag. The depression formed by my body and legs was on our side of the crack. The ice had sunk under my weight during the months of waiting in the tent, and I had many times put snow under the bag to fill the hollow. The lines of stratification showed clearly the different layers of snow. How fragile and precarious had been our resting-place! Yet usage had dulled our sense of danger. The floe had become our home, and during the early months of the drift we had almost ceased to realize that it was but a sheet of ice floating on unfathomed seas. Now our home was being shattered under our feet, and we had a sense of loss and incompleteness hard to describe.

The fragments of our floe came together again a little later, and we had





our lunch of seal meat, all hands eating their fill. I thought that a good meal would be the best possible preparation for the journey that now seemed imminent, and as we would not be able to take all our meat with us when we finally moved, we could regard every pound eaten as a pound rescued. The call to action came at 1 p.m. The pack opened well and the channels became navigable. The conditions were not all one could have desired, but it was best not to wait any longer. The *Dudley Docker* and the *Stancomb Wills* were launched quickly. Stores were thrown in, and the two boats were pulled clear of the immediate floes towards a pool of open water three miles broad, in which floated a lone and mighty berg. The *James Caird* was the last boat to leave, heavily loaded with stores and odds and ends of camp equipment. Many things regarded by us as essentials at that time were to be discarded a little later as the pressure of the primitive became more severe. Man can sustain life with very scanty means. The trappings of civilization are soon cast aside in the face of stern realities, and given the barest opportunity of winning food and shelter, man can live and even find his laughter ringing true.

The three boats were a mile away from our floe home at 2 p.m. We had made our way through the channels and had entered the big pool when we saw a rush of foam-clad water and tossing ice approaching us, like the tidal bore of a river. The pack was being impelled to the east by a tide-rip, and two huge masses of ice were driving down upon us on converging courses. The *James Caird* was leading. Starboarding the helm and bending strongly to the oars, we managed to get clear. The two other boats followed us, though from their position astern at first they had not realized the immediate danger. The *Stancomb Wills* was the last boat and she was very nearly

caught, but by great exertion she was kept just ahead of the driving ice. It was an unusual and startling experience. The effect of tidal action on ice is not often as marked as it was that day. The advancing ice, accompanied by a large wave, appeared to be travelling at about three knots, and if we had not succeeded in pulling clear we would certainly have been swamped.

We pulled hard for an hour to windward of the berg that lay in the open water. The swell was crashing on its perpendicular sides and throwing spray to a height of sixty feet. Evidently there was an ice-foot at the east end, for the swell broke before it reached the berg-face and flung its white spray on to the blue ice-wall. We might have paused to have admired the spectacle under other conditions; but night was coming on apace, and we needed a camping-place. As we steered north-west, still amid the ice-floes, the *Dudley Docker* got jammed between two masses while attempting to make a short cut. The old adage about a short cut being the longest way round is often as true in the Antarctic as it is in the peaceful countryside. The *James Caird* got a line aboard the *Dudley Docker*, and after some hauling the boat was brought clear of the ice again. We hastened forward in the twilight in search of a flat, old floe, and presently found a fairly large piece rocking in the swell. It was not an ideal camping-place by any means, but darkness had overtaken us. We hauled the boats up, and by 8 p.m. had the tents pitched and the blubber-stove burning cheerily. Soon all hands were well fed and happy in their tents, and snatches of song came to me as I wrote up my log.

Some intangible feeling of uneasiness made me leave my tent about 11 p.m. that night and glance around the quiet

camp. The stars between the snow-flurries showed that the floe had swung round and was end on to the swell, a position exposing it to sudden strains. I started to walk across the floe in order to warn the watchman to look carefully for cracks, and as I was passing the men's tent the floe lifted on the crest of a swell and cracked right under my feet. The men were in one of the dome-shaped tents, and it began to stretch apart as the ice opened. A muffled sound, suggestive of suffocation, came from beneath the stretching tent. I rushed forward, helped some emerging men from under the canvas, and called out, "Are you all right?" "There are two in the water," somebody answered. The crack had widened to about four feet, and as I threw myself down at the edge, I saw a whitish object floating in the water. It was a sleeping-bag with a man inside. I was able to grasp it, and with a heave lifted man and bag on to the floe. A few seconds later the ice-edges came together again with tremendous force. Fortunately, there had been but one man in the water, or the incident might have been a tragedy. The rescued bag contained Holness, who was wet down to the waist but otherwise unscathed. The crack was now opening again. The *James Caird* and my tent were on one side of the opening and the remaining two boats and the rest of the camp on the other side. With two or three men to help me I struck my tent; then all hands manned the painter and rushed the *James Caird* across the opening crack. We held to the rope while, one by one, the men left on our side of the floe jumped the channel or scrambled over by means of the boat. Finally I was left alone. The night had swallowed all the others and the rapid movement of the ice forced me to let go the painter. For a moment I felt that my piece of rocking floe was the loneliest place in the world. Peering into the darkness, I

could just see the dark figures on the other floe. I hailed Wild, ordering him to launch the *Stancomb Wills*, but I need not have troubled. His quick brain had anticipated the order and already the boat was being manned and hauled to the ice-edge. Two or three minutes later she reached me, and I was ferried across to the camp.

We were now on a piece of flat ice about 200 ft. long and 100 ft. wide. There was no more sleep for any of us that night. The killers were blowing in the lanes around, and we waited for daylight and watched for signs of another crack in the ice. The hours passed with laggard feet as we stood huddled together or walked to and fro in the effort to keep some warmth in our bodies. We lit the blubber-stove at 3 a.m., and with pipes going and a cup of hot milk for each man, we were able to discover some bright spots in our outlook. At any rate, we were on the move at last, and if dangers and difficulties loomed ahead we could meet and overcome them. No longer were we drifting helplessly at the mercy of wind and current.



"The Boss" at Patience Camp. Photo: Frank Hurley.

**TOPICAL SONGS & NOTES**  
FROM FRANK HURLEY'S DIARY & PAPERS  
MITCHELL LIBRARY, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

**AN ANTARCTIC ALPHABET**

**A** for Antarctic buried deep by cold snows,  
**B** for the Blizzard that there fiercely blows.  
**C** are the chasms—crevasses are called,  
**D** are the dogs by which sledges are hauled.  
**E** for Endurance, a ship stout and bold,  
**F** for the frostbites we suffer from cold.  
**G** are the glaciers, where the ice visions flows,  
**H** is the hut for the winter's repose.  
**I** is the ice-bank that hangs o'er the pack,  
**J** une is midwinter cold, stormy and black.  
**K** are the Killers, our only feared foes,  
**L** eads are the water-lanes, that pass through the floes.  
**M** for the meter records miles we go,  
**N** is a Nunatak cropping out of the snow.  
**O** is the orca puffing in the blowhole,  
**P** for the Penguins, for pack-ice and Pole.  
**Q** for the quadrant we're out to explore,  
**R** are the rations—we hunger for more.  
**S** for the sledges, sastrugi, and seals,  
**T** is a tent where we sleep and take meals.  
**U** for the Union Jack that floats o'er our goals,  
**V** are the vapours, or sea smoke dense rolls.  
**W** is the Weddell-seal steaks we adore,  
**X** is the unknown we sledge to explore.  
**Y** are our yarns, and our chief source of fun,  
**Z** ero is the temperature in the warm summer's sun.



## MIDWINTER TOPICAL

You ask me for a Topical, alas I much regret,  
My muses lie in slumber and will not verses set.  
A score of themes I've hit on, but they would only serve to tire  
There's such a lack of incident on which to write satire.  
A lyric in hexameter dactylic, blank or prose  
Tis far beyond my talent, so a doggerel I compose.  
We've sung of personalities, and lonely Elephant Isle  
On grub and architecture, and beauties of each dial.  
Yet here I must make mention of a sacrilegious sin  
The lopping of the sacred beard from off that holy chin.  
There's many an ode on gloomy Tom—he of the Mont de Piete  
Who'll exchange steaks for Streimer's cakes or meat for sugar sweet.  
His Yiddish bargains haunt his dreams for he snores and nightly groans  
So Jimmy kicks him on the head, and Wild and I pelt stones.  
Beware ye who would barter of his extortionate rates  
He'll hum and ha although he wants your carbo hydrates.  
But there's a salt—we've all forgot, called "Greenus the Capacious"  
Whose appetite is so immense even Clark said it's voracious.  
Huge penguin steaks and hooshes are gone in scarce two bites  
And we've eulogised friend Macklin for his famous---by nights.  
But let us change the subject to Winter's festal joys  
We've toasted to the Sun God—at his return rejoice.  
We toasted him in liquor that makes the bosom glow  
But as to its constituents no mortal man doth know.  
Twas for kindling Primuses we brought it to this land  
But this I know its liquid fire upsets you if you stand.  
Famed Macklin analysed it and called it *Aqua Fortes*  
And said it likely would induce a state of *vigor mortis*.  
But a well known Ichthyologist with very learned breath  
Said he used it by the hogshead pronounced *Vinii Meth*.  
Then up spake our Frankie Wild "both gentlemen speak rot,  
It's neither *Meth* nor *Aqua Fort*—it's a vintage famed—Gutrot."  
It is the vital sap of life—a Bacchanalian fire,  
We gulped it down in silence, then chorused, "yours a liar."  
Hail to the sun, luck to the Boss—glory and long lived lives,  
Here's joy to friends and comrades,—our Sweethearts and our Wives.

## OUR COOK

*Air:* The Village Blacksmith

Within the spreading Bogie smoke, the gasping cook now stands,  
With watery eye, and stirring stick, he turns the stewing pans.  
And the grime and dirt upon his face exceeds that on his hands,  
His hair is matted o'er his face like prehistoric man.  
His clothes are black with blubber, soots and grease from many a pan,  
And he speaks in quivery tenor tones like good old Mary Ann.  
Week in week out, ere break of day, you may see his bogie glow,  
You may see him carving up hoosh meat with blunt sheath knife so slow,  
And many things go in that hoosh for the light is dim and low.  
The only light that he works by peeps in at the tiny door,  
And when we eat our hoosh and steaks we are thankful it's not more,  
For the meals are full of hairs that fly and grit from off the floor.  
He goes to rest upon his couch and soon in slumbers joys,  
He dreams he's back in the bakehouse warm, he makes a snoring noise.  
Mixing up rich cakes and pastries and custard puffs so choice,  
He kneads the dough with practiced hand, with gravy fills the pies,  
And with his hard rough hand he draws out drowning mice and flies.  
Boiling, frying, baking, his life is full of woes,  
He's cooked for us in the blizzard drift, with frostbit hands and toes,  
Always attempted—never shun—and at each occasion rose.  
Thanks, thanks, to thee, O worthy cook for the hashes you have wrought,  
Thus by your frying pan of strife our appetites you thwart,  
Let steaks and hooshes both be large, and you'll win our kindly thought.



C. J. Green, the cook, somewhere between Ocean Camp and Patience Camp.  
Photo: Frank Hurley.

## OUR HOME ON ELEPHANT ISLE

*Air:* Solomon Levi

My name is Franky Wild-O, and my hut's on Elephant Isle  
The most expert of Architects could hardly name its style  
Yet as I sit inside, all snug and listen to the Gale  
I think the pride is pardonable with which I tell my tale.

### *CHORUS:*

O Franky Wild-O tra-la-la-la-la-la  
Mr Franky Wild-O tra-la-la-la-la-la  
My name is Franky Wild-O, my hut's on Elephant Isle,  
The walls without a single brick, & the roof's without a tile  
But nevertheless I must confess, by many and many a mile  
It's the most palatial dwelling place, you'll find on Elephant Isle.

When first I landed here, I tried to live inside a tent  
And a howling blizzard came along, and in it tore a rent;  
And through the rift came streams of drift, and filled my bag with snow  
I said I'll not put up with this for any winds that blow.



I looked around, and soon espied, pulled up upon the strand,  
A pair of boats most stoutly built, which brought us to this land.  
I said you served us once, I'll surely make you serve again  
For if we turn you upside down, you'll keep out snow and rain.



And so I got my crew to build two walls of stones and rocks,  
And turned the boats up side by side, and fixed 'em tight with chocks  
We filled the gaps with canvas, and put the stoves inside,  
And then we rested from our work, and had some penguin fried.



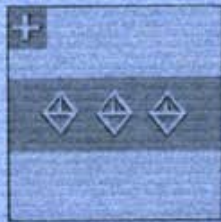
Our hut is double storeyed, and has bedrooms twenty-two,  
A kitchen, and a dining room, although indeed its true  
We haven't any bathroom, but however you may smile,  
We find it warmer not to wash, in our hut on Elephant Isle.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Among those who have assisted Margot in arranging this evening: Joe Bugayer, Shane Murphy, Jeff Rubin, Toby Saks and Rob Stephenson.

One hundred copies of this Keepsake were issued by The Erebus & Terror Press, April 9, 1999. Text set in Caxton, titles & display in Lithos.  
Printed by Savron Graphics, Jaffrey, New Hampshire. New material © E&TP. All rights reserved. [E&TP-1]



*Fortitudine vincimus*