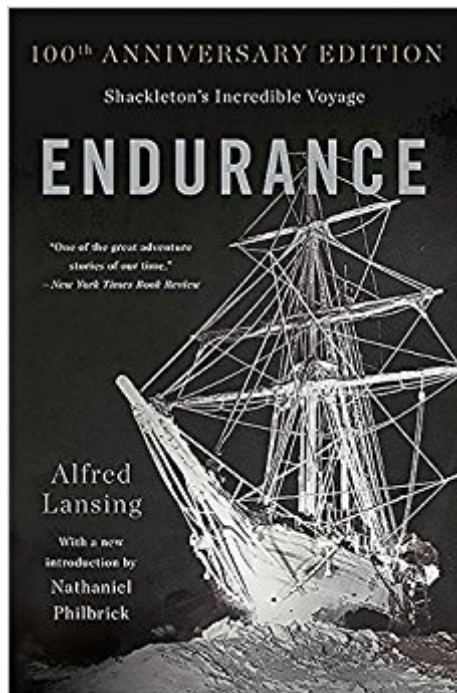




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Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage



Synopsis

In August 1914, polar explorer Ernest Shackleton boarded the *Endurance* and set sail for Antarctica, where he planned to cross the last uncharted continent on foot. In January 1915, after battling its way through a thousand miles of pack ice and only a day's sail short of its destination, the *Endurance* became locked in an island of ice. Thus began the legendary ordeal of Shackleton and his crew of twenty-seven men. For ten months the ice-moored *Endurance* drifted northwest before it was finally crushed between two ice floes. With no options left, Shackleton and a skeleton crew attempted a near-impossible journey over 850 miles of the South Atlantic's heaviest seas to the closest outpost of civilization. Their survival, and the survival of the men they left behind, depended on their small lifeboat successfully finding the island of South Georgia; a tiny dot of land in a vast and hostile ocean. In *Endurance*, the definitive account of Ernest Shackleton's fateful trip, Alfred Lansing brilliantly narrates the harrowing and miraculous voyage that has defined heroism for the modern age.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Chicago Tribune;One of the most gripping, suspenseful, intense stories anyone will ever read. •The New York Times;Riveting. •Christian Science Monitor;Without a doubt this painstakingly written authentic adventure story will rank as one of the classic tales of the heroic age of exploration. •Wall Street Journal;Grit in the face of seemingly insurmountable adversity. •Mary Roach, New York Times Book Review;[An] incomparable telling of Shackleton's travails. •

'A superb account of the greatest survival story of our time' - Chris Bonington The story of Ernest Shackleton's epic journey to cross the Antarctic overland has now been turned into four hours of gripping television with Kenneth Branagh playing Shackleton. Shackleton's mission failed, but the resulting adventure became one of the most celebrated accounts of man's survival against unbelievable odds. In August 1914 the Endurance set sail for the South Atlantic. In October 1915, still half a continent away from their objective, the ship was trapped, then crushed in the ice. Twelve hundred miles away from land, drifting on ice packs, Shackleton and his men survived the next five months on a diet of dogs, penguins and seals. When the ship eventually sank they were forced to escape by lifeboat. Shackleton then travelled another 850 miles in an open boat across the stormiest ocean in the world to reach help. Every single man got home safely. Miraculously, throughout this ordeal, the expedition's photographer, Frank Hurley, protected his negatives and photographs from destruction. It is these extraordinary photographs that are among those produced in this illustrated edition of Alfred Lansing's harrowing and inspiring classic. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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. I won't dampen your reading pleasure by giving away too much of the unfolding events, but through a combination of amazing resourcefulness, outstanding leadership, and ultimately incredible luck on the part of Shackleton, the whole crew survived without a single life lost.

Naturally, there was an abundance of suffering along the way, but also an impressive amount of team spirit and toughness. The book is inspirational and a quiet page turner. Please note, the "quiet page turner" part. Endurance is definitely an engrossing read, and once you get into it, you won't want to put it down. I found the book starts a bit on the slow side, at least for all its fanfare, but don't give up if you aren't immediately bowled over. You'll be justly rewarded if you stick with it.

Reading this book, I found I was looking for ice floes while driving down the street to the grocery. At the grocery, I considered food that could be preserved for a year. I was even looking strangely at my dog, and I love my dog. Endurance was one of the best books I've ever read.

Imagine being sentenced to months of polar exposure with nothing but seal blubber and penguin steaks for food. Your sleeping bags are perpetually wet. Your last remaining pair of clothing is continually soggy with ice water. Imagine further still being over a thousand miles from any remnant of human civilization, left on a God-forsaken pack of ice without any hope of being found. Your only chance at survival is to hope your ice flow drifts close enough to one of the Southerly islands, where you and your crew can make a mad break for it in three 20 foot boats--on the roughest, most unpredictable seas in the world. Yeah, count me out. This was the sentence of Ernest Shackleton's expedition that got stuck for months in the Weddell Sea. And as the journey homewards begins, every discomfort, every breaking wave, every blizzard becomes a desperate battle between life and death. The crew must face it all: the frostbite, foot amputations, hunger, and disease--all in the midst of the most uninhabitable conditions earth has to offer. Alfred Lansing's account of Ernest Shackleton's ambitious attempt at a Trans-Antarctic expedition is an incredible ride. It is well written and surprisingly descriptive. Some parts will make you squirm as you read. Others will make you grimace as you wonder what the breaking point for these poor men is. But upon completion you will be filled with severe respect for both the captain and the crew who could together undergo such unrelenting trials. One thing is for sure: they don't make 'em like the ones on Shackleton's voyage anymore.

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