



THE JAMES CAIRD SOCIETY



Image © and courtesy of Rob Crow and the Benington Family Collection

THE JAMES CAIRD SOCIETY



JOURNAL

Number Eleven

Antarctic Exploration



Sir Ernest Shackleton

October 2021



Scout Marr (left) and Scout Mooney (right)

The James Caird Society Journal – Number Eleven

Journal 'Number Ten' was published barely months before the global COVID-19 Pandemic hit the news and, as they say, the rest is history. As I publish 'Number Eleven', the world is still not out the woods and, for some people, life has stood still for (too) many months.

I hope you enjoy the latest Journal – if nothing else, it will help to while away a few hours!

This year marks the centenary of the Shackleton-Rowlett Antarctic Expedition (Quest) (1921-22). Accordingly, I have included an number of 'Quest' articles, including a diarised – style letter written by Frank Worsley to his wife, Jean, outlining the events of late December 1921 and early January 1922 onboard 'Quest R.Y.S'. His entry for 5th January 1922 is poignant, '*A terribly sad blow and I have lost a dear pal one of the whitest men, despite his faults, that ever lived. Poor Shackleton died at 3 this morning of heart disease A terribly sad blow and I have lost a dear pal one of the whitest men, despite his faults, that ever lived. Poor Shackleton died at 3 this morning of heart disease.*'

I have reproduced Shackleton's 'Quest' contract with Frank Wild as a reminder that these voyages were a serious business which had to be on a business-type footing. Lives were at stake and there had to be a disciplined framework for everyone's protection and guidance – physically and financially.

I am indebted to Michael Smith for his support of our Journal. His useful overview of Shackleton's last and fateful journey South is as understated as the expedition itself. Michael records, *Quietly and without fuss, the ship sailed back into Plymouth Sound on September 16, 1922, almost a year to the day Quest had ducked under Tower Bridge.* Pertinently, he reminds us that *Quest* was the last of Frank Wild's five expeditions to the Antarctic, a remarkable achievement. He drifted to South Africa where he died in 1939, aged 66. Writer Angie Butler later tracked down Wild's remains and thanks to her assiduous efforts, he now lies buried alongside The Boss at Grytviken.

Esteemed polar historian, Anna Lucas, has undertaken yet more ingenious and painstaking research for this publication - this time investigating a certain Campbell Mackellar. Followers of Shackleton will be familiar with the names of Dame Janet Stancomb, Dudley Docker, James Caird, John Quiller Rowett. Of course, they were all important and financially significant supporters of the Boss's polar endeavours. The first book produced in Antarctica was 'Aurora Australis' — a limited print run of collected essays and poetry, written by members of the British Antarctic Expedition (BAE), and edited by Ernest Shackleton. The inscription in 'Aurora Australis' No 44 reads: *To Campbell Mackellar of Lerags from the members of the British Antarctic Expedition 1907–09 as a remembrance of his unceasing interest, great generosity, and personal friendship to all. —Ernest Shackleton, Editor, Christmas 1910.* So, who was Mackellar and what role did he play in bringing to fruition the hopes and aspirations of Ernest and his fellows? Anna Lucas reveals all.

In 2013 Christine Hurley (no relation) submitted a thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree Bachelor of Antarctic Science (Honours) at the Institute for marine and Antarctic Studies, The University of Tasmania. With her kind permission this Journal includes an extract from her work (more will follow in later issues). Her thesis focuses of Shackleton's enduring legacy.

Karyn Bradford volunteers as a Researcher and Grant Writer for the Mawson's Huts Foundation (Australia). Her current project is compiling a daily chronicle of the Australian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) based on expedition diaries. In this Journal, Karyn explains Frank Hurley's role in the AAE. He was, of course, Shackleton's official photographer during SY *Endurance's* foray South during the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition (ITAE (1914-17)). It is his iconic

photos (along with Ponting's work on Scott's fateful British Antarctic Expedition 1910-12) that serve as a remarkable 'signpost' of the remarkable endeavours of the polar men of the so-called Heroic Age.

Dr. Paul G. Firth is an obstetrician-gynaecologist in the USA. He is passionate about Shackleton and has written two articles in this issue of the Journal. The first addresses that intriguing non-medical story of how Shackleton, Worsley and Crean all felt (quite independently) the presence of a 'fourth companion' as they travelled over the unknown mountainous interior of South Georgia heading for Stromness and salvation. The second focuses on the emergency on Elephant Island over stowaway Perce Blackborow's frozen left foot – the toes on which were quite beyond rescue. How did the men cope?

You will find a small selection of book reviews, to add to the mix, along with your Editor's take on the rising topical debate – should the six men (yes, six) who were denied the polar medal after ITAE be given a reprieve and be granted their reward in order 'to right a wrong'?

Stephen Scott-Fawcett FRGS
June 2021
stevescottfawcett@live.co.uk



Contents

Articles

- Shackleton – Rowett Antarctic Expedition (Quest) 1921-22 – *Michael Smith* 7
- A letter from Frank Worsley to his wife, Jean (at sea, Christmas Day 2021) 13
- Shackleton’s Proposal for ITAE. 17
- John Quiller Rowett – a brief biographical overview. 21
- Mackellar: one of Shackleton’s steadfast supporters – *Anna Lucas* 23
- Antarctic Apprenticeship: Frank Hurley and the
Australasian Antarctic Expedition - *Karyn Maguire Bradford* 38
- Sir Ernest Shackleton, CVO – An enduring legacy – *Christine Hurley* 59
- Shackleton’s Angel - *Dr Paul. G Firth* 65
- The Doctors of Elephant Island - *Dr Paul. G Firth* 68
- Agreement between Frank Wild and Sir E. H. Shackleton,
signed on 16th September 1921. 74
- Chippy and the Polar Medal – a few thoughts - *Stephen Scott-Fawcett FRGS* 77
- The James Caird Saved the Day (a ballad) - *Cliff Wedgbury* 80
- Book Reviews - *Michael C Tarver, Stephen Scott-Fawcett* 82
- Books on the Ross Sea Party - *Stephen Scott-Fawcett* 88

The James Caird Society Journal is edited by:

Stephen Scott-Fawcett MA (Cantab), FRICS, FRGS,
Apartment 6, Sutherland House, Cromer, Norfolk, NR27 0AQ.
Tel: 01263 515808/07788 319550.

Please note that the views expressed in the *Journal* do not represent an official view or stance of the Society, the Editor or the JCS Committee. Copyright of all articles, essays and reviews is vested in the authors.

Acknowledgements

The main front cover image is reproduced by kind permission of Dutch artist, Eva Mout and reproduced with her kind permission, as is the pen and ink hooded sketch of Shackleton in the Christine Hurley article <https://ursusart.studio>

I am very grateful to Rob Crow and the Benington Family Collection for their kind permission to reproduce the superb black and white portrait of Shackleton which adorns the inside front cover.

The paintings shown on the centrefold are by Sean Garwood. He is a New Zealand artist based in Nelson. He specialises in historical and marine paintings. In 2015 Sean travelled to Antarctica supported by Antarctica New Zealand and the Antarctic Heritage Trust to visit the historic huts of Shackleton and Scott. An exhibition of highly detailed oil paintings ensued. The exhibition included paintings of personal artifacts and the huts which sold out immediately. Sean's next exhibition will be a visual narrative of New Zealand's maritime history. The exhibition will be held in Auckland commencing on 9th October 2021 at the Jonathan Grant Galleries. Included will be two paintings of Shackleton's "James Caird".

www.seangarwood.co.nz
<https://www.facebook.com/Sean-Garwood-Classic-Fine-Art-430423393766126>

The formal Agreement between Shackleton and Wild was purchased by *the State Library of New South Wales* at a Sotheby's sale on 3 May 1971 (lots 290, 292) and is reproduced here. Microfilm copies available at CY 15, frames 440 – 885; Xerox copy Flo at CY MLMSS 2198/1 - 3 (open access)

Shackleton-Rowett Antarctic Expedition (Quest expedition) 1921-22

Michael Smith

For sheer symbolism, the Tower Bridge drawbridge being raised for the ship, *Quest* to sail through is a classic image. It is an historic snapshot in time, saluting both the passing of an era and the most charismatic figure of the age itself. Although unaware of this heavy symbolism at the time, *Quest's* departure down the Thames towards Antarctica in September 1921 was effectively the last chapter in the Heroic Age of exploration when the age of discovery, featuring the escapades of Amundsen, Mawson, Scott, and Shackleton, gave way to scientific endeavour. Most notably, it was the moment when Sir Ernest Shackleton left the stage for the last time. Less than four months later Shackleton was dead and Heroic Age was over. (Another link was the pioneering Arrol Johnston motor car, which was developed by Scottish engineer, Sir William Arrol and taken south by Shackleton on *Nimrod* in 1907-09. Arrol had earlier supplied the specialist steel for the intricate structure of Tower Bridge.)

However, the *Quest* expedition, formally known as the Shackleton-Rowett Antarctic Expedition, did not live up to the impressive farewell or come near to matching the compelling drama which characterised the Heroic Age.

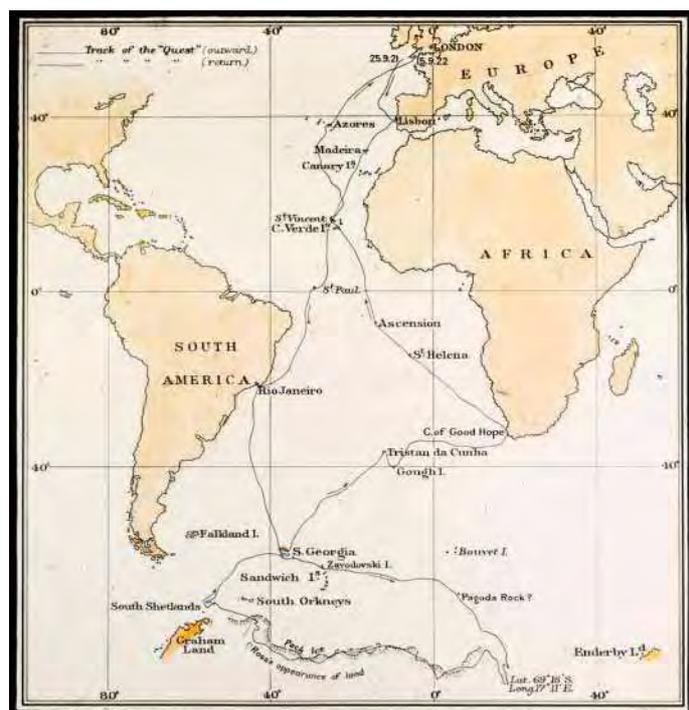
The roots of the *Quest* expedition can be traced back to Shackleton's recurring restlessness and the overpowering need for adventure. Three Antarctic expeditions in under 20 years were not enough for a man who invariably found a degree of peace and fulfilment in the wilderness which he rarely experienced at home.

James Wordie, chief of scientific staff on *Endurance*, said Shackleton was "willing to explore anywhere" in his eagerness to get away. To his wife, Emily, Shackleton once explained: "I feel I am no use to anyone unless I am out facing the storm in wild lands".

After returning the Trans-Antarctic Expedition in mid-1917, Shackleton had a brief but unfulfilling spell helping the war effort in Russia and even tinkered with the idea of building a commercial operation in post-revolution Russia which, like most of his business enterprises, came to nothing.

Weighed down with debts and struggling with increasingly poor health, in 1920 he embarked on a gruelling schedule of public lectures at London's Philharmonic Hall. Twice a day, six days week for five months, Shackleton enthralled audiences with stories from *Endurance*, though it was a huge relief when, after delivering more than 200 lectures, the demanding programme came to an end. "It is a strain," he told a friend, "but then all my life is a strain and I would not have it otherwise."

Shackleton pondered his next venture and turned his focus from the Antarctic to the Arctic north. He put together a scheme to explore the Beaufort Sea, the largest unexplored region in the Arctic



covering thousands of square miles to the north of Canada. The vast area, which is choked with ice for around 10 months a year, was believed to contain vast tracts of undiscovered land and possibly “missing” tribes of native Inuit. Always keen for personal glory, he also plotted to strike out for the North Pole, a crowning achievement which might help compensate for failing to reach the South Pole in 1909.

But Shackleton’s nemesis, the lack of money, was the inevitable stumbling block. Rough estimates put the cost at some £50,000 (approximately £1,000,000 in today’s terms) and possibly twice that sum. However, the Canadians were reluctant for several good reasons, Britain showed no interest and private appeals for money fell on deaf ears, probably because the project lacked an obvious purpose like a geographic Pole or a trans-continental crossing.

To cap his worries, the impatient Shackleton was also running out of time to meet the Arctic sailing season of 1921. By mid-year, Shackleton made an abrupt change of direction and switched attention from the Arctic to the familiar territory of Antarctica.

The change also brought better luck with an unexpected windfall from John Quiller Rowett, an old school friend from Dulwich College and a successful businessman. Rowett, then in his mid-40s, was managing director of a prosperous wines and spirits company called Rowett, Leakey & Co and a generous philanthropist. (The nutritional research body, Rowlett Research Institute at Aberdeen University, exists to this day.) Rowett had initially agreed to contribute to the Canadian expedition but on learning of Shackleton’s new plans, suddenly agreed to finance the entire Antarctic venture. He offered the staggering sum of £70,000 (approximately £2,000,000 in today’s terms) which was the largest single donation Shackleton had ever received and a gift which eclipsed the earlier generosity of benefactors like Lord Beardmore and Sir James Caird. For the first time in his career, Shackleton could sail free from worries about money.

The aim was to circumnavigate the Antarctic continent, map a 2,500-mile stretch of uncharted territory near Enderby Land for oceanographical purposes and establish the precise position of some islands which, it was hoped, might contain rich and untapped sources of minerals. It was a journey which would take *Quest* to the outer reaches of the treacherous Weddell Sea where *Endurance* was crushed in 1915. More fanciful was a fond hope searching the remote Trindade and Martin Vaz archipelago for the buried treasure of 17th century pirate Captain William Kidd.

Shackleton, a man never afraid to experiment, readily embraced the latest advances. Electricity was installed, radio communications were much improved, an odograph was fitted to measure the ship’s course and the men ordered up to the crow’s nest in the cold seas would enjoy the rare luxury of wearing electrically - heated overalls.

The most ambitious innovation was a single-engine A.V. Roe aircraft. Hubert Wilkins, the Australian aviator, dropped his own plans for an expedition to join Shackleton for the opportunity of making a pioneering flight in the Antarctic. But, like the abortive trial of the Arrol-Johnson motor car, Shackleton’s experiment with flying never materialised.

Old Polar hands, mostly from *Endurance*, flocked to sail with Shackleton, perhaps aware this was the last throw of the dice for many, especially the 47-years old Shackleton himself who was visibly battling with ill health. Including Shackleton, the rollcall on *Quest* included nine men from *Endurance*.

Frank Worsley, now 49 years old, was appointed ship’s captain and Frank Wild, second-in-command, was only a year younger at 48. Thomas McLeod was also 48 and Dr James McIlroy was in his early 40s. Also returning to the ice were *Endurance* veterans, cook Charles Green, Dr Alexander Macklin, and engineer Alexander Kerr. Leonard Hussey, famous for his banjo playing on the expedition, was in his late 20s. Douglas Jeffrey who left *Endurance* before departure to enlist in the war, was joined by James Dell, another over 40 who had served with Shackleton on *Discovery* 20 years earlier.

Jonathan Shackleton, the most authoritative Shackleton family historian, likened the ensemble to an old cricket team reunion. Much of the pre-sailing attention centred on the recruitment of two boy scouts for a life-changing opportunity to explore with the famous Shackleton. More than 1,700 hopefuls applied and Sir Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the scout movement, drew up the shortlist before finally selecting 18-years old James Marr and Norman Mooney, 17.

After a hasty refit and loading, *Quest* sailed through London Bridge on September 17, 1921. Shackleton left at Gravesend but re-joined the ship in Plymouth for his final send-off from home. As *Quest* slipped out of Plymouth Sound on September 24, he wrote: "At last we are off. Providence is with us even now."

Unfortunately, *Quest* was a poor ship. Although only four years old, the wooden 111 feet long Norwegian-built sealer – originally called *Foca 1* and renamed *Quest* at Emily Shackleton's bidding - struggled badly and barely reached more than 5 knots. Under-powered and heavily overloaded, the ship laboured in rough seas and soon developed significant mechanical problems. The crankshaft was out of alignment and the boiler sprang a worrying crack, forcing the vessel into Lisbon for urgent repairs. More repairs were needed as the ship trundled south and at Madeira the young scout Mooney and photographer Mason, too unwell to continue, left the expedition.

After two months at sea, *Quest* finally reached Rio de Janeiro in stifling heat late on November 21 where more urgent repairs were needed. The damage was far worse than expected and needed another month to correct, putting the expedition even further behind schedule.

In draining heat and troubled by the frustrating delays, Shackleton suffered a heart attack. True to style, he refused to allow doctors to examine him and never complained about his obvious discomfort.

He was well enough to make the important decision to cancel plans to visit South Africa where the vital aircraft parts and specialist winter clothing, tents and other equipment were stored and sail direct to South Georgia.

The obvious question is why Shackleton, clearly unwell and perhaps six weeks behind schedule, did not call off the expedition. But as Wild admitted: " nothing could have been more foreign to his mind – each obstacle but strengthened his resolve to carry on."

Quest left Rio on December 18 and immediately ran into severe storms. A few days later engineer Kerr reported another major problem with a leak in the ship's furnace, which forced the vessel to steam even slower. Although the ship was only four years old, it emerged that the boiler was over 30 years old.

The ship pulled into South Georgia's King Edward Cove on January 4. From the bridge Shackleton and Worsley picked out the mountains and glaciers they had crossed with Tom Crean less than six years earlier. Shackleton went ashore and seemed noticeably at ease chatting with the whalers. To his old *Endurance* shipmates, he was The Boss of old.

Shackleton retired to his cabin and asked Hussey to play a tune on his banjo and Hussey responded by playing the beautiful Brahms' Lullaby. In the early hours of the morning of January 5, 1922, Shackleton suffered a fatal heart attack and died. He was 47 years old.

Wild went ashore to report the death to the local magistrate, inform Emily Shackleton and plan to ship the body home. But, in line with Shackleton's likely wishes, he signalled that the expedition would continue.

Hussey, who had decided to return home, asked to accompany the body on the first leg of the journey to Montevideo where he learned Emily's wishes to have her husband buried where he was happiest, among the glaciers, icefalls, and mountains of the south. The remarkable symmetry of Shackleton's death and burial in the familiar landscape was captured by Wild who wrote: "If he could have chosen his resting place it would have been just here."

Hussey returned to South Georgia and was the sole member of the *Quest* expedition to attend Shackleton's funeral at the whalers' cemetery in Grytviken on March 5, 1922. Mrs Aarberg, the only woman on South Georgia, cut flowers from her conservatory and laid them on the coffin.

Wild took *Quest* south on January 18 with hopes of first exploring the coastline of Graham Land, skirting the Weddell Sea, and crossing over to Enderby Land on the eastern side of the continent. However, the odds were heavily stacked against him. Travelling slowly east in very bad weather, *Quest* edged cautiously along the pack ice guarding the entrance to the Weddell Sea. The ship rolled like a log, all hands were constantly soaked, and Worsley suffered broken ribs in one severe storm. As the ship came closer to the ice, Wild recalled that the smallest ship to penetrate the same seas was *Endurance* and "she lies crushed and broken many fathoms deep in the Weddell Sea." *Quest* was less than half the size of *Endurance* and Wild was obviously reluctant to risk another disaster.

By mid-February, dense ice blocked the way ahead and Enderby Land was beyond reach. The 1,000,000 square miles of Antarctica's Dronning Maud Land, which is sandwiched between Coats Land in the west and Enderby Land in the east, stood less than 100 miles to the south.

After consulting navigator Worsley and engineer Kerr, Wild decided that *Quest* did not have the power or coal to continue the struggle. In an echo of Shackleton's famous remark as he turned back just 97 miles from the South Pole in 1909, Wild wrote: "As far as finding landing in this segment was concerned, I felt that we had shot our bolt."

On February 24, the ship turned back to the west, first searching for land thought to have been sighted by James Clark Ross and Francis Crozier in the 1840s. No land was found. More poignantly, Wild wanted to revisit Elephant Island and later pick up coal from Deception Island before returning to South Georgia.

Elephant Island, where 22 men from *Endurance* spent 4 months, was sighted on March 25 and Wild went ashore with former castaways, including Kerr, Macklin, and McIlroy. But worsening weather and lack of fuel prevented a landing at Cape Wild, their refuge in 1916. Wild also cancelled the visit to Deception Island and turned north to South Georgia to refit and undertake some geology. Before leaving a rocky half-mile long islet off the southern coast of Elephant Island was named Rowett Island after the expedition's sponsor.

Quest entered Leith Harbour on April 6 where the party was reunited with Hussey who reported that Shackleton, instead of being shipped home, had been buried at nearby Grytviken. In the following days Wild and his former *Endurance* colleagues erected a cairn in his memory and visited the graveside for a final farewell.

However South Georgia was another disappointment for the expedition and hopes of exploring the Antarctic Peninsula the following season were dashed when Wild discovered no dogs were available. Although his options were diminishing, Wild was still confident of returning to ice in the 1922-23 season and in faintly optimistic mood turned the ship towards South Africa to collect the supplies left behind a year earlier. On the way, the ship stopped at various isolated islands in the South Atlantic, including Inaccessible Island and Tristan da Cunha.

The expedition reached Cape Town on June 18, where they found piles of old mail, were entertained by Prime Minister Jan Smuts, and began repairing the battered *Quest*. After so long in freezing conditions, the men also found they were highly susceptible to a local influenza outbreak and Wild was badly incapacitated.

By now it was apparent that *Quest's* journey was over. Rowett saw the futility of continuing and contacted Cape Town, summoning the party back to the UK. "On mature consideration," Wild wrote, "I realised that it was inevitable that we must return home."

Quietly and without fuss, the ship sailed back into Plymouth Sound on September 16, 1922, almost a year to the day *Quest* had ducked under Tower Bridge. The first person to greet the party was Rowett.

"I hope, when all is sorted and fully worked, that our efforts may prove of value in helping to solve the great natural problems that still perplex us," Wild concluded. The results were condensed into five short appendices to Wild's book on the expedition and some scientific papers were eventually produced.

Quest was the last of Frank Wild's five expeditions to the Antarctic, a remarkable achievement. He drifted to South Africa where he died in 1939, aged 66. Writer Angie Butler later tracked down the Wild's remains and thanks to her assiduous efforts, he now lies buried alongside The Boss at Grytviken.

Sadly, John Quiller Rowett did not enjoy a long life. An active supporter of Shackleton, he donated *James Caird* to Dulwich College in 1924. Six months later, weighed down by financial worries, Rowett committed suicide. He was 48.

The unreliable and lumbering *Quest* defied all expectations by outliving the main figures from the Shackleton-Rowett expedition. The ship returned to Norway, resumed work as an Arctic sealer and operated on two expeditions around Greenland during the 1930s. *Quest* was thrust into minesweeping and cargo carrying duties during World War Two and despite old age, later went back to sealing. In May 1962, more than 40 years after the expedition, *Quest* was holed by ice and sank off the coast of Labrador. All hands were saved.

However, the Shackleton-Rowett expedition will not be remembered for the geological studies, oceanography and other scientific data and specimens collected, or the troublesome *Quest*.

In death, as in life, Shackleton overshadowed everything.

Further reading:

Burton, Robert: *Shackleton at South Georgia*, Robert Burton 2001

Fisher, Margery & James: *Shackleton* James Barrie Books, 1957

Huntford, Roland: *Shackleton*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1985

Marr, James: *Into the Frozen South*, Cassell & Co, 1923

Mill, Hugh Robert: *The Life of Sir Ernest Shackleton*, Heinemann, 1923

Mills, Leif: *Frank Wild*, Caedmon of Whitby, 1999

Shackleton, Jonathan & John MacKenna: *Shackleton – An Irishman in Antarctica*, Lilliput Press, 2002

Smith, Michael: *Shackleton – By Endurance We Conquer*, Collins Press, 2014

Wild, Frank: *Shackleton's Last Voyage – The Story of the "Quest"*, Cassell & Co, 1923

Michael Smith has written many books and lectured on the history of Polar exploration.

His books include:

Shackleton – By Endurance We Conquer

An Unsung Hero – Tom Crean

Sir James Wordie – Polar Crusader

Great Endeavour – Ireland's Antarctic Explorers

I Am Just Going Outside – Captain Oates

The Boss (for younger readers)

Michael's new book is *Icebound in the Arctic – The Mystery of Captain Francis Crozier and the Franklin Expedition*.

Contact: www.micksmith.co.uk



*The Memorial Cairn — The men built a cairn on the point at the entrance to Grytviken Harbour. Able Seaman Thomas McLeod (centre front), who was on *Endurance* and *Quest*, is credited with the idea of building it. Photo: State Library NSW, DCL209849*



*Shackleton's men pay their respects at the graveside – Following Shackleton's death at Grytviken, South Georgia in January 1922, arrangements were made to transport his remains back to England accompanied by Leonard Hussey, Frank Wild and the other men sailed *Quest* south to continue Shackleton's work. When they returned, they found Shackleton's widow had requested, when Hussey arrived at Montevideo, that her husband's body be returned to his beloved Antarctica. After a service in the chapel at Grytviken, he was buried in the whalers' cemetery. The original 1922 cross was replaced by a granite headstone in 1928. Photo: State Library NSW, FL3444129*

Frank ('Wuz/Wuzzles') Worsley

*A letter to Stephen Scott-Fawcett FRGS,
JCS Journal Editor, with enclosure.*

Dear Stephen,

My name is Pat Bamford, and I have long been a member of the James Caird Society. I am at the ripe age of 94, and no longer able to attend meetings due to severe lung problems. I also have poor sight in my sole eye still working.

Having read your article on Shackleton and Norwegian connections (in the last Journal, 'Number Ten') - especially the piece about the Quest I thought you might be interested in the enclosed copy- letter written by Commander Worsley to his wife Jean in 1921 from the expedition ship, following Shackleton's death.

To explain how it came into my possession - I personally knew "Wuz" in my youth. Indeed, he died in my house during the war, and some 20 years later his wife Jean who lived with us until her death appointed me as her executor.



*Frank Hurley
(Colourised by Peter Vass)*

After settling her affairs, I was left with some very personal letters which I only looked at after I retired. This is one of them – they turned out to be history! The originals are in the Christchurch Museum in New Zealand. *

I hope you find it interesting.
Yours sincerely, Pat Bamford

**(Ed. International Antarctic Museum - International Antarctic Centre: Best Tourist Attraction in Christchurch, Neeland (iceberg.co.nz))*

QUEST .R.Y.S.

s w
37.22' 45.45'

At sea

Dec 25th, 1921

Darling bonny Jean,

Excuse pencil but I cannot find your stylo anywhere and none of the others will write. I have gashed my finger so am writing worse than usual. We left Rio Dec 19th and I wrote to you 6 hours before sailing. Hope you got it all right. Well, here is wishing you again a merry Xmas and Happy New Year. Our Xmas may or may not be merry, but it is certainly lively. It has been blowing a heavy Westerly gale for 48 hours – seas all over us and decks full up of nasty cold wet salt sea water. We made the great speed of 5 1/2 knots until noon when the wind coming more ahead, took in foresail, hove ship to and put out oil bags after which; although she tried to stand on her head and lie on her back at the same time; things were quieter.

Xmas dinner we postponed for better weather as our imbecile cook would only have "bitched up" some good grub under such difficult conditions. At lunch my table started comparing

notes as to where we had spent last Xmas Macklin surgeon of a blue funnel steamer at Singapore, McLroy central Africa trying to make a fortune growing cotton, 'Wuzzles' losing a fortune in command of the Schooner "Annie" in a drunken dissolute town called Reykjavik in Iceland, Roddie Carr losing more of our fortune in Lithuania, Kerr the Engineer better known as "Kranshki" in Hamburg spending time and money, God knows how but as only "dissolute mechanics" can do in Hamburg and 'Huz' demoralizing his family to say nothing of the "Tiddler" by spending his Xmas at home with them.

To commemorate this day at 6 a.m. having had 1 hours sleep in a mad drunken lurch of the Quest I charged across the bridge at about 30 knots an hour; altering course from a rangefinder to safeguard my matrimonial prospects, I proceeded to investigate Kent's Clear View Motor and getting on a nodding acquaintance with it found that steel was harder than wood. I then sat down with such promptitude and vehemence that although the bridge survived the welkin rang with the plaudits of the helmsman and his relief. P.S. I hope that my manly beauty is not impaired by this disastrous collision, or my wives will be clamouring for divorce.

26th Dec 1921 – To add to the gaiety of nations "Kranshki" in the height of a gale informs that the freshwater tank is empty, but he hopes he may make enough water to keep us alive to S. Georgia, I hope so. Ship hove to all night principally because our cranky engines cannot be trusted in a gale.

27th Dec 1921 – Still a hard gale but in our favour now. I have been driving her the fastest she has ever gone; 8 knots an hour with the engines stopped for "racing" as the thrust block appears insecurely fastened and leaps to and fro like a playful lambkin, accompanied by the engine.

*Extract from Letter To Jean Woolsey Re
Shackleton's Death 1921/22*

QUEST.R.Y.S.	S	W
	37.22'	45.45'
	At sea	
	Dec 25th 21	

Darling bonny Jean,
Excuse pencil but I can't find your stylo anywhere and none of the others will write. I've gashed my finger so am writing worse than usual. We left Rio Dec 19th and I wrote to you 6 hours before sailing. Hope you got it all right. Well heres wishing you again a merry Xmas and Happy New Year. Our Xmas may or may not be merry but it's certainly lively. It,s been blowing a heavy Westerly gale for 48 hours - seas all over us and decks full up of nasty cold wet salt sea water. We made the great speed of 5 1/2 knots until noon when the wind coming more ahead, took in foresail, hove ship to and put out oil bags after which; altho' she tried to stand on her head and lie on her back at the same time; things were quieter.
Xmas dinner we postponed for better weather as our imbecile cook would only have "blitched up" some good grub under such difficult conditions. At lunch my table started comparing notes as to where we had spent last Xmas Macklin surgeon of a blue funnel steamer at Singapore, McLroy central Africa trying to make a fortune growing cotton, Wuzzles losing a fortune in command of the Schooner "Annie" in a drunken dissolute town called Reykjavik in Icaland, Roddie Carr losing more of our fortune in Lithuania, Kerr the Engineer better known as "Krashki" in Hamburg spending time and money, God knows how, but as only "dissolute mechanics" can do in Hamburg and Huz demoralising his family to say nothing of the "Tiddler" by spending his Xmas at home with them.

To commemorate this day at 6 a.m. having had 1 hours sleep in a mad drunken lurch of the Quest I charged across the bridge at about 30 knots an hour; altering course from a rangefinder to safeguard my matrimonial prospects, I proceeded to investigate Kents Clear View Motor and getting on a nodding acquaintance with it found that steel was harder than wood. I then sat down with such promptitude and vehemence that although the bridge survived the welkin rang with the plaudits of the helmsman and his relief P.S. I hope that my manly beauty is not impaired by this disastrous collision or my wives will be clamouring for divorce.

26th Dec - To add to the gaiety of nations "Kranshki" in the height of a gale informs that the freshwater tank is empty but he hopes he may make enough water to keep us alive to S. Georgia, I hope so. Ship hove to all night principally because our cranky engines cannot be trusted in a gale.

27th Dec - Still a hard gale but in our favour now. I've been driving her the fastest she has ever gone; 8 knots an hour with the engines stopped for "racing" as the thrust block appears insecurely fastened and leaps to and fro like a playful lambkin, accompanied by the engine.

28th Dec - I had been driving her as hard as I dared all night with the ship half under water until 7 a.m. when Shackleton came up and said "none of your games Wuzzles heave her to" which we did and are now lying to with oil bags out to prevent the seas sweeping her decks. This reminds me, at Rio I saw some awful lies in the Daily Mail naturally - Shackleton had never left the

bridge for 5 days before we got to Lisbon well I was up here rather more than anyone else and I certainly never spent more than 24 hours on end there - if as much. Also that everyone even the seasoned sailors was sick except Shacks and three others one of whom was Lysaght. Well that only left 2 and as I am a seasoned sailor you might think I was one of the seasick ones. Well I wasn't and Shacks himself was a bit seasick and didn't mind acknowledging it, only fortunately he's not responsible for all that appears in the D Mail.

Jan 4th 1922 - Happy New year to you. Hope you had a grand Hogmanay and didn't get tight. I was stone cold sober, but then I've been that ever since the last night in Rio. Sighted S. Georgia at 1 a.m. Sir Ernest relieved me at 4 a.m. and after I'd had 2 1/2 hours sleep he and I were running about the ship like two excited schoolboys pointing out to each other and everyone on board the different spots we could recognise of our march across S. Georgia, we "fought our battles o'er again". In the afternoon by the way when we arrived in S. Georgia a Norwegian captain told Wild and I that Capt sortof said when we three arrived at his station after tramping across the island I was easily the freshest. I thought so myself (modesty!) but that confirmed it. Arrived in King Edward Cove in the afternoon 16 days from Rio which was rather good for us as we had been hove to for 1 1/2 da s also ether.

Thursday 5th Jan A terribly sad blow and I have lost a dear pal one of the whitest men, in spite of his faults, that ever lived. Poor Shackleton died at 3 this morning of heart disease. We had no suspicion whatever that his heart was so bad tho' the two surgeons had to a certain extent recognised it in his face. He himself being careless that way and an impatient patient seemed to have had no idea of it. Altho' being superstitious to a certain extent appeared to have been impressed by some fortune teller that he told us, had said before the previous expedition he would die at 48. He died within 41 days of attaining that age. Several times in the last 6 months he had said to me "Wuzzles I'm getting old and so are you" and when I indignantly denied my age he'd say "Well no you do keep young" He has been a very good friend and very generous in every way to me. In fact he was far too generous to many of his old friends some of whom did not deserve it.

Last night he and I played cards, poker patience, up to 10p.m. He was absolutely normal and cheerful and kept on chaffing me in his dear old way. Then we had a short yarn about geological matters future programmes etc. After setting the watches for the night I turned in. At about 2.35 he whistled to Macklin who was then on watch and told him he'd had a spasm of pain in his back and was then suffering badly from another one, and requested Mac in his usual imperious way to get him medicine to alleviate it. This Mac did, but on returning found him very bad. He said "You're always telling me to give up things Mac, what am I to give up now?" in a childlike way. He then tried to take the

28th Dec 1921 – I had been driving her as hard as I dared all night with the ship half under water until 7 a.m. when Shackleton came up and said “none of your games Wuzzles heave her to” which we did and are now lying to with oil bags out to prevent the seas sweeping her decks. This reminds me, at Rio I saw some awful lies in the *Daily Mail* naturally – Shackleton had never left the bridge for 5 days before we got to Lisbon well, I was up here rather more than anyone else and I certainly never spent more than 24 hours on end there – if as much. Also, that everyone even the seasoned sailors were sick except Shacks and three others one of whom was Lysaght. Well that only left 2 and as I am a seasoned sailor you might think I was one of the seasick ones. Well, I wasn’t and Shacks himself was a bit seasick and didn’t mind acknowledging it, only fortunately he’s not responsible for all that appears in the *Daily Mail*.

Jan 4th, 1922 – Happy New Year to you! Hope you had a grand Hogmanay and did not get tight. I was stone cold sober, but then I have been that ever since the last night in Rio. Sighted South Georgia at 1 a.m. Sir Ernest relieved me at 4 a.m. and after I had had 2 1/2 hours sleep, he and I were running about the ship like two excited schoolboys pointing out to each other and everyone on board the different spots we could recognise of our march across South Georgia, we “fought our battles o’er again”. In the afternoon (by the way) when we arrived in South Georgia a Norwegian captain told Wild and I that the (Stromness) captain had said when we three arrived at his station after tramping across the island I was easily the freshest, I thought so myself (modestly) but that confirmed it. Arrived in King Edward Cove in the afternoon 16 days from Rio which was rather good for us as we had been hove to for 1 1/2 days altogether.

Thursday 5th January 1922 A terribly sad blow and I have lost a dear pal one of the whitest men, despite his faults, that ever lived. Poor Shackleton died at 3 this morning of heart disease. We had no suspicion whatever that his heart was so bad though’ the

medicine but Mac fearing it was fatal called McIlroy but Sir E died as the latter arrived about 2.50a.m., 5.10 Greenwich time. Then they called Wild who sent McIlroy for me and Wild broke the painful news, which he, I suppose, felt more keenly than anyone

2

on board. Wild then said to me "I think we should go on with the expedition what do you think?" I said "certainly I agree and wish for nothing else." In the afternoon we took Sir Ernest's body ashore and later the Norwegians put it in a hermetically sealed tin coffin after our surgeons had prepared the body against decay to the best of our resources. We are sending the body to England in charge of Hussey. It will be taken from here in the S.S. "Professor Gruvel" to Monte Video where Huz will see to it's transfer to a mail steamer. I specially reminded Wild of the danger of leakage of news thro' wireless and to take every precaution to prevent the news being first seen by Lady Shackleton in the papers, wiring first to Rowett so that he could break the news. This he has done and I hope it will be successful, but I don't trust Marconi's altogether newspaper men not at all. Poor Lady S and the children will feel it dreadfully, but not I suppose, so much as in the case of a man who was at his home all the time. Well I have lost a great friend and we had some great schemes afoot, being an exchange of half my profits, if any, from my pearl lagoon for 10% of any his shows such as profit on cinemas etc. I feel sad and sorry about it in every way, but would never for a moment think of giving up my programme. At present our intention is to go East from here, Leith Harbour, on the 15th leaving the east end of S. Georgia on the 17th after the examination of a great fishing bank to the N.E., by sounding and bottom samples. We then proceed by the quickest route to Ederly Land or as far as we can towards it, then explore as much new coast as the ice and our low steam power will allow after which we will search for islands near Bouvet I. and examine the South Sandwich group before returning to S.G. which we hope to do in April. If however the Westerly gales are too strong driven East we will make for Tristan da Cunha and then on to Cape Town. So you can write not later than 5th March to "Quest" RYS South Georgia, then if you don't hear of us before end of April write not later than May 1st to Cape Town. I'm afraid all this change of programme delay etc will work for delay in our affairs, but we'll hope for the best and quickest. I imagine we will be back in England in 12 months but it is of course impossible to say what may happen under these circumstances, all now depending on what Rowett thinks. When we were in Rio Jeff hurt his leg and has been laid up ever since so that just now the officers to keep watch and look after the ship are reduced to Wild and I which means that as in Rio I have to run everything on board which leaves me very little time. However Jeff will be able to take his watch again by the time we go to sea. Goodbye sweetheart god

two surgeons had to a certain extent recognised it in his face. He himself being careless that way and an impatient patient seemed to have had no idea of it. Being superstitious to a certain extent (he) appeared to have been impressed by some fortune teller that he told us (about and who) had said, before the previous expedition, he would die at 48. He died within 41 days of attaining that age. Several times in the last 6 months he had said to me, “Wuzzles, I’m getting old and so are you” and when I indignantly denied my age he’d say “Well, no, you do keep young” He has been a very good friend and very generous in every way to me. In fact, he was far too generous to many of his old friends some of whom did not deserve it.

Last night he and I played cards, poker patience, up to 10 p.m. He was, absolutely, normal, and cheerful and kept on chaffing

me in his dear old way. Then we had a short yarn about geological matters, future programmes etc. After setting the watches for the night I turned in. At about 2.35 he whistled to Macklin who was then on watch and told him he had had a spasm of pain in his back and was then suffering badly from another one and requested Mac in his usual imperious way to get him medicine to alleviate it. This Mac did, but on returning found him very bad. He said, "You're always telling me to give up things Mac, what am I to give up now?" in a childlike way. He then tried to take the medicine but Mac fearing it was fatal called McIlroy, but Sir E died as the latter arrived about 2.50 a.m., 5.10 Greenwich time. Then they called Wild who sent McIlroy for me and Wild broke the painful news, which he, I suppose, felt more keenly than anyone on board. Wild then said to me "I think we should go on with the expedition what do you think?" I said, "certainly I agree and wish for nothing else." In the afternoon we took Sir Ernest's body ashore and later the Norwegians put it in a hermetically sealed tin coffin after our surgeons had prepared the body against decay to the best of our resources. We are sending the body to England in charge of Hussey. It will be taken from here in the S.S "Professor Gruvel" to Monte Video where Huz will see to its transfer to a mail steamer. I specially reminded Wild of the danger of leakage of news thro' wireless and to take every precaution to prevent the news being first seen by Lady Shackleton in the papers, wiring first to Rowett so that he could break the news. This he has done, and I hope it will be successful, but I do not altogether trust Marconi's newspaper men at all. Poor Lady S and the children will feel it dreadfully, but not I suppose, so much as in the case of a man who was at his home all the time.

Well, I have lost a great friend and we had some great schemes afoot, being an exchange of half my profits, if any, from my pearl lagoon for 10% of any his shows such as profit on cinemas etc. I feel sad and sorry about it in every way but would never dream of backing out of even a modified programme. At present our intention is to go East from here, Leith Harbour, on the 15th leaving the east end of South Georgia on the 17th after the examination of a great fishing bank to the N.E., by sounding and bottom samples. We then proceed by the quickest route to (Enderby) Land or as far as we can towards it, then explore as much new coast as the ice and our low steam power will allow after which we will search for islands near Bouvet I. and examine the South Sandwich group before returning to S.G. which we hope to do in April. If, however, the Westerly gales are too strong – driven East we will make for Tristan da Cunha and then on to Cape Town.

So, you can write not later than 5th March to "Quest" RYS South Georgia, then if you do not hear of us before end of April write not later than May 1st to Cape Town. I am afraid all this change of programme delay etc will work for delay in our affairs, but we will hope for the best and quickest. I imagine we will be back in England in 12 months, but it is of course impossible to say what may happen under these circumstances, all now depending on what Rowlett thinks. When we were in Rio Jeff hurt his leg and has been laid up ever since so that just now the officers to keep watch and look after the ship are reduced to Wild and I which means that as in Rio I must run everything on board which leaves me very little time. However, Jeff will be able to take his watch again by the time we go so sea. Goodbye sweetheart, God Bless.

Ed. I have taken the liberty of editing the grammar slightly and I have assumed Worsley meant to type 'Enderby Land' not Ederly Land'. Nicknames are common in expeditions of all types (then and now). We can safely assume 'Huz' is Hussey, and I can only guess that 'Wuzzles' is a fond name for Worsley given by his mates back in the day of 'Nimrod' or the ITAE.

STRICTLY PRIVATE

PROPOSED TRANS-ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION

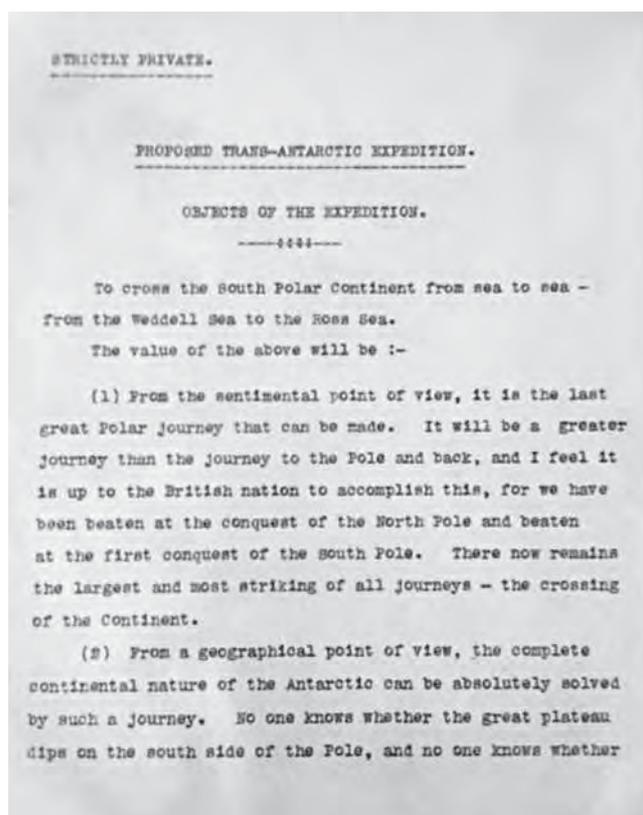
Objects of the Expedition

To cross the south Polar Continent from sea to sea – From the Weddell Sea to the Ross Sea.
The value of the above will be -

- 1) From the sentimental point of view, it is the last great Polar journey that can be made. It will be a greater journey than the journey to the Pole and back, and I feel it is up to the British nation to accomplish this, for we have been beaten at the conquest of the North Pole and beaten at the first conquest of the South Pole. There now remains the largest and most striking of all journeys – the crossing of the Continent.
- 2) From a geographical point of view, the complete continental nature of the Antarctic can be absolutely solved by such a journey. No one knows whether the great plateau dips on the south side of the Pole, and no one knows whether the great Victoria chain of mountains, which have been traced to the Pole, extends across the Continent and links up with the Andes. The solving of this problem is of intense interest to geographers all over the world, and the discovery of the great mountain range, which we assume is there, will be one of the biggest geographical triumphs of the time.
- 3) The geographical results will be of the greatest interest to the scientific world.
- 4) The Expedition would take continuous magnetic observations from the Weddell Sea right across the Pole, and the route followed would lead towards the Magnetic Pole and would make an ideal method of determining the general dip of the magnetic needle. This magnetic work has a direct bearing on economic conditions, in that an absolutely true knowledge of magnetic conditions is of use to ships in navigable waters.
- 5) The meteorological conditions would be carefully studied and would help to elucidate some of the peculiar problems of weather that at present are only dimly recognised as existing.
- 6) Biological work would be thoroughly carried on, and the distribution of fauna and plant life would be studied.

All branches of science would be most carefully attended to, and the nett result scientifically ought to be a large increase to human knowledge, but first and foremost, the crossing of the Polar Continent would rank as one of the greatest geographical feats of exploration ever done. The unknown fields to conquer are rapidly narrowing down in the world, but there remains still this great work.

Until 1909 England held the premier place in Polar exploration. She has lost this in the last three years, and now is the chance with one stroke to recover her prestige and the place where she should be.



Method of Conducting the Expedition

I do not propose in this statement to go fully into the method of carrying out the Expedition. It must be allowed that my experience and knowledge of Antarctic affairs are sufficient to warrant the matter to be seriously thought of.

As regards equipment, this matter is a familiar one to me, as I equipped the two relief ships for the National Antarctic Expedition of 1901/4, equipped the Argentine Expedition of 1904 that rescued the Swedes, entirely equipped my own Expedition in the 'Nimrod' 1907/9, assisted the equipment of the Australian Antarctic Expedition 1910/12, which has done much splendid work on the north coast of the Antarctic Continent; assisted the Macmillan North Polar Expedition equipment and the Stephenson Arctic Expedition equipment – so I may claim to have knowledge of this matter.

The main feature of the Expedition will be that a party of six men will undertake the Trans-Antarctic journey, with 114 dogs and two sledges driven by aeroplane propellers with aeroplane engines. I will take in their order these three factors of the journey: -

- (1) Personnel. The six men forming the party to cross the Continent have all had previous Antarctic experience:
 - a. FRANK WILD, a first-class surveyor, who was with Scott in 1901/4, was on the Southern Journey with me in 1907/9, made the big journey on the Australasian Expedition 1910/12, and who is one of the very best modern Polar explorers. He eats the food of one man (and not too much of that!) and has the brain capacity and strength of three ordinary intelligent men.
 - b. GEORGE MARSTON, one of my best men, an artist and photographer.
 - c. BERNARD DAY, a first-class surveyor, one of my strongest men, most intelligent, wiry, and hard, a splendid mechanical engineer, with full knowledge of motor work.
 - d. AENEAS MACKINTOSH, who made one of the riskiest journeys during our Expedition; one of my keenest men and a first-class surveyor – wiry, strong physique.
 - e. One of two men who have had experience with me and Scott, but I am not at liberty now to mention either of their names. It is sufficient to say that both men are first-class surveyors with a knowledge of geology, and all the others have a good practical knowledge of field scientific work.
 - f. Myself. I do not want to enlarge upon my knowledge, but I am a trained surveyor and hold certificates for magnetic work and would do the field magnetic work on the journey.

All these men who have been with me are desperately anxious to come again; in fact, every month I have letters from them asking me when I am ready to lead another Expedition. Should anything happen to myself as leader, any one of the rest can carry through the Expedition on the march, and we are a happy family, which is one of the most important things on such an Expedition.

- (2) Dogs. I propose to have 114 trained dogs obtained from Alaska and Siberia, taking teams used to post work, as these are the best dog teams, and it was with dogs of this kind that Amundsen made his wonderfully speedy journey in which he gained the South Pole. The arrangement of the teams and amount of weight, etc. dragged by the dogs is a detail which has been worked out but which it is not necessary to allude to here.
- (3) Aeroplane Sledges. In the last three years the aeroplane engine has reached what we may call absolute efficiency. Motor sledges in the ordinary accepted term are practically

useless in the Antarctic, as the amount of work put on the engine when passing over varying surfaces generally causes the motor to break down. I propose therefore to have an ordinary sledge, only larger than the usual size, with an aeroplane engine mounted on it and an aeroplane propeller. I have had the pulling power of such a machine worked out and find that a sledge of this description can drag 2,000 lbs. weight at the rate of 5 to 8 miles an hour. No doubt the reader of this is aware that there are motor cars running with air propellers that do their 60 miles an hour. I would propose to have two sledges built and thoroughly tested during the winter out in Siberia or the north of Canada under similar conditions to the Antarctic. These two sledges would be in the charge of Mackintosh and Day. I need not go more fully into this now.

Programme of the Expedition

The Expedition would leave Buenos Aires early in October 1914, pushing to the Antarctic to 79° south latitude; then if the conditions were favourable and a quick passage made, without ice obstruction, the party would land and proceed right across. Once the Pole is attained from the Weddell Sea the rest of the journey from the Pole to winter quarters (Ross Sea side) is quite easy, always allowing for the difficulties of nature. Should the season be unfavourable it may be necessary to make winter quarters on the Weddell Sea, lay out depots before the winter and cross the Continent in the following spring. The ship would return to civilisation in this case and go down the following year to the Ross Sea to pick up our party and we would come out to New Zealand. In the event of our party being late crossing, the ship would leave a fully equipped, unsinkable lifeboat, capable of living in any weather. The party would launch this lifeboat and proceed north to Macquarie Island, where it would be picked up by the ship. But the actual programme as regards this matter may be modified according to the weather conditions.

The ship, during the time the Expedition is away, will make biological and zoological collections, she will be fully equipped with cages and tanks for bringing home live penguins and seals, which have never yet been taken from the Antarctic regions, and which from an economic point of view would command a very high price from dealers and zoological societies all over the world. I am convinced that it only needs a certain amount of care to bring home live specimens. Also, complete geological collections would be made for distribution amongst the scientific societies of the world.

Cost of the Expedition

The total cost of the Expedition I propose would be about £45,000, but to be on the safe side it is best to put it at £50,000.

Return to the Man who Puts Up the Money

I should be prepared to call the Expedition by the joint names of the donor of the money and myself, such as, say, the X.Y.Z.-SHACKLETON EXPEDITION or the X.Y.Z SOUTH POLAR EXPEDITION.

- (1) He could have all the money from the book rights, cinematograph rights, and, under certain conditions, newspaper rights, through the world.
- (2) The ship would be his property and he could sell her on her return.
- (3) The entire scientific collections would be his property.
- (4) He would have the right to receive the first telegram and communicate this to His Majesty the King.
- (5) He would have the right to name new mountain ranges and all the mountains except one, which I want to name after my youngest boy; he has no mountain named after him,

whereas the other two children had mountains named during the last Expedition – the youngest was not then born.

All I would reserve for myself would be the lecture rights, and the donor of the money can have half the receipts of the lectures.

The ship can be named by the donor's desire whatever name he likes. I suggest, however, the name of the ship should be the "Golden Vanitee". The cost of the ship would be about £14,000, and £10,000 could be obtained for her on her return unless the donor liked to keep her as a yacht. The ship I have in mind is a new vessel, beautifully built. The captain of the ship would be my old Captain – Capt. Davis, who was on the "Nimrod" and who is now in command of the Australasian Antarctic vessel.

I may be able to lessen the cost of the Expedition if I can obtain the "Aurora" from the Australians for one journey down – but these are details.

I would like to mention that such an Expedition as I propose would be looked upon with the greatest interest in every civilised country. The President of the Royal Geographical Society in his Presidential Address this year said that he hoped the time would not be too remote before there would be found a man public-spirited enough and an explorer daring enough to make possible the Trans-Antarctic journey.

I have lately had a long talk with the King, and he has most definitely promised to entrust the Union Jack to me himself to carry across the Continent, and that he will make a point of coming on board the ship to see us off, as King Edward did when I first went. I know he would like to see a British Expedition make a success in the South.

I am urgent about this matter now, for it has come to my knowledge that the Norwegians are contemplating an Expedition on the lines I have proposed, and that they are already backed in their own country. The Norwegians are more – or - less making a corner in Polar exploration, as of late they have been so extraordinarily successful.

A append here a brief statement of what the donor may expect to receive back from an Expedition such as this, apart from the ethical value of being responsible for such a big undertaking.

Cost of Expedition	£50,000
Received back on ship	£10,000
Book rights for whole world	£10,000
(My share of the book rights on my last Expedition came to £12,000, but of course. this sum all went to pay off the Expedition)		
Cinematograph rights	£3,000
Newspaper rights for the world	£3,000
Half Lecture rights	£5,000
		<hr/>
		£31,000
		<hr/>

This, briefly, is my statement of this proposed Expedition.

Signed Ernest Shackleton

John Quiller Rowett – a brief biographical overview.

John Quiller Rowett was born 1876 in Rangoon, Burma, one of three children born to John Quiller Rowett (1841-1881) and Caroline Skentelbery (1847-1925). John Quiller Rowett (1876–1924) was a British businessman and philanthropist. He made a fortune in the wines and spirits industry as Chairman and Managing Director of Rowett, Leakey and Co., and a director of other companies. He and his brother Richard Percy Rowett (1873-1898) were partners in the firm R. and J.Q. Rowett and Company who for a time ran a tin mine in Burma.

John had a desire to do more than make money and in the years after World War I he was a notable contributor to public and charitable causes, including hospitals. An article dated March 20,1922 about dental care reported gave thanks to “Mr J.Q. Rowett who has generously defrayed the expense of this research”. The British Medical Journal of February 5,1927 referred to the late Dr. J.Q. Rowett “who had shown great interest in scientific research on agriculture.He was one of the members of the Biochemical Club”.

John was a schoolfriend of Sir Ernest Shackleton at Dulwich College, and became the sole financial backer (to the tune of £70,000) for Shackleton’s final Antarctic venture, the Shackleton-Rowett Expedition of 1921–22. Sir Ernest Shackleton (1874-1922) died at Grytviken, South Georgia on 5 January 1922, following a coronary thrombosis. He was buried on 6 March in South Georgia and a simple cross and stone provides a shrine for pilgrims.

After Shackleton’s death, Rowett was instrumental in acquiring the whaleboat ‘James Caird’, in which Shackleton had made his famed 1916 open-boat voyage from Elephant Island to South Georgia and presented it to Dulwich College. A mountain on Gough Island, a remote volcanic island of the Tristan da Cunha group in the South Atlantic, is named to honour Rowett. The Union Jack that the Queen presented to Shackleton in September 1921, before departing on the expedition, was returned to the Queen after the expedition who subsequently presented it to J.Q. Rowett. This flag and a plaque with it were sold by Christies auction house in the autumn of 2006 and fetched over £15,000.



18th June 1921 – a weekend with the Rowetts at Ely Palace, Sussex. EHS seen here with Helen Rowett.

The Straits Times of May 22,1923 reported on the late Sir Ernest Shackleton with respect to a meeting that had been held on May 8 at the Mansion House where it was agreed to set up a memorial fund for Shackleton. In part the article stated “Mr J.Q. Rowett moved and Commander Wild seconded that the fund be devoted to the erection of a permanent monument in London and other towns ; to provide money for his dependents; to pay for the education of his children, with the balance to be devoted to encouraging exploration”.

At this time John was the owner of Ely Grange at Frant where he lived from 1916 until his death in 1924. I have, somewhere, a photo of the ‘James Caird’ on the lawn of Ely Grange with children posing around it.

John was a co-founder of the Rowett Research Institute, an animal nutrition research laboratory now part of the University of Aberdeen. The publication ‘Science’ of August 19,1920 stated “the Institute of Research in Animal Nutrition at Aberdeen has received a gift of 10,000 pounds from Mr. J.Q. Rowett”. The Rowett Institute had been founded in 1913 and between the two wars the research staff led many landmark studies of diet and health, both in humans and in animals. This organization continues today. Their website states much of their success in obtaining premises was due to Mr Rowett and say “We were fortunate to meet John Quiller Rowett, a wealthy man who was the Director of a wine and spirits merchants based in London. In 1920 J.Q. Rowett provided money to purchase 41 acres to provide a suitable site for the institute to be built on.The Institute was formally opened in 1922 by Queen Mary with a tree planting ceremony.

On 1 October 1924, believing his business affairs to be on a downturn, Rowett took his own life. The Northern Advocate of October 3,1924 reported “Mr J.Q. Rowett who financed the last Shackleton expedition was found dead in his residence in London. Probate records show that John was a resident of 9 Hyde Park terrace and of “Ely Place”, Frant, Sussex, when he died October 1,1924 at 9 Hyde Park terrace. Probate was to Laurence Legge managing director. He left an estate valued at about 49,000 pounds.

On March 16,1913 John married Helen Graham Coates at Forest Hill, Christ Church with St Paul. Helen had been born 1874 in the parish of The Park, Glasgow, Lanarkshire and was the daughter of John Jackson Coates (born 1850) and Helen Graham, born 1852. In 1901 she had been living with her parents and four siblings in Scotland. John and Helen had the following children: Helen Graham Quiller Rowett (born 1916); John Penrose Quiller Rowett (1918-2000) and Caroline E. Rowett, born 1920. All three children were born in London.



Mackellar: one of Shackleton's steadfast supporters

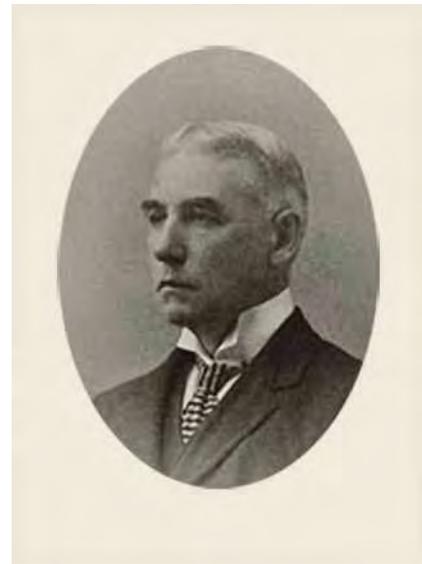
Anna Lucas

The first book produced in Antarctica was *Aurora Australis* —a collection of essays and poetry, written by members of the British Antarctic Expedition (BAE). Edited by Ernest Shackleton, it was illustrated, printed, and bound while in Antarctica before its distribution to BAE members, friends, and supporters. The limited print run produced about 100 copies, all with distinguishing marks, and the inscription in *Aurora Australis* No 44 reads:

To Campbell Mackellar of Lerags from the members of the British Antarctic Expedition 1907–09 as a remembrance of his unceasing interest, great generosity, and personal friendship to all. —Ernest Shackleton, Editor, Christmas 1910.¹



*Lerags House, south of Oban in Scotland. Photographer unknown, n.d.
Photo: McKellar family papers, State Library Victoria (SLV)*



*Campbell D. Mackellar (1859–1925)
Photographer: Alfred Ellis & Walery,
London, n.d.*

Introduction

The presentation of a copy of their 'first edition' of *Aurora Australis* and its appreciative message to Campbell Mackellar of Lerags, are statements of the high regard in which Shackleton and his BAE team (the *Nimrod* Expedition) held this man. The BAE discovered a mountain on the west side of the Beardmore Glacier which was named Mount Mackellar in his honour.

Who was Campbell Mackellar and what did he do to merit these awards?

Published accounts of expeditions make only passing references to Mackellar; he is usually described as a Scot, an author, and an exploration, particularly polar, enthusiast. He later received other acknowledgements of his support for explorers, but there was much more to this reserved and thoughtful gentleman.

¹ Presented to the Public Library of Victoria, now State Library Victoria (SLV), on 26 December 1925 by Campbell D Mackellar, Esq. who died in London in May 1925. His estate donated several items to SLV. *Aurora Australis* SLV RARELT 919.9 B77A.

Lerags, a Georgian house built in 1815 on land overlooking Loch Feochan in the south-west of Scotland had been purchased by his father in the 1880s and later, when Australian doctors advised against the elderly owner's return to Scotland, was gifted to his eldest surviving son, Campbell.² Though Mackellar maintained Lerags House as a base for many years, he was often away. He lived at times in Germany; he visited Jersey, where his sister Mrs Rachel Brock-Hollingshead lived; he enjoyed the theatres and clubs in London when residing in Chelsea, South Kensington, and Westminster; he travelled widely and took a great interest in the political affairs of several countries and in the expeditions of explorers.

This article offers an overview of Mackellar's background, his family and associates, his writing, his interests, and his support for the endeavours of Shackleton and others. It is not a strictly chronological presentation but has broad, overlapping themes of his early years, his work as a young author, his patronage of the Arts and of exploration, his work as a mature author and his later years.

Early years

His father, Thomas McKellar (1819–1900) was born in Glassary, Argyll, and travelled to Australia in 1848 on the same ship as Catherine McColl and her brother, also from Argyll.³

Thomas and Catherine were married on 20 December 1849 at the Church of Scotland, in Geelong, Victoria. A decade later, the birth of their fourth son, and the sixth of their nine children, Campbell Duncan, was announced with a brief entry in the Births column of a local newspaper: At 'Kanawalla', on the 3rd instant, Mrs. Thomas McKellar, of a son.⁴ 'Kanawalla' was a property (55,615 acres, 20,000 sheep), in the Western District of Victoria, eight miles north of Hamilton,



Strathkellar. Photo: McKellar family papers, n.d. SLV MS 10615/265

² Dates of ownership in the records differ. Thomas McKellar purchased the estate of Lerags from his wife's second cousin, John Beverley Campbell of Lerags on 16 May 1889 ('The Clan Mackellar Part IV.' In *The Scottish Genealogist*, XLIX i.19); but in the Valuation of Scottish Property database, Thomas is recorded as the owner of Lerags House in 1885 and 1895; Campbell D Mackellar as owner in 1905 and by 1915 it had been sold to Wm C MacEwan (www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk). The external appearance of the House has not changed, but the property was for a time a bed and breakfast establishment.

³ MacKellars (sic) were in Argyll as early as 1436, one Patrick McKellar (sic) appearing that year as a character witness at Carnassery Castle. McKellars held land in the old Parish of Glassary, including Ardare. Alternative spellings of the family name in various publications were McKellar, M'Kellar and later, by his own choice, Mackellar — as he explained in a long letter to his nephew, Tom. See in this article under heading 'Later years'. McKellar family papers, SLV, MS 10515/264

⁴ *Portland Guardian and Normanby General Advertiser*, Vic., 11 March 1859, p. 2

which was held by the McKellar family 1858–1870.⁵ Shortly after Campbell's birth on 3 May 1859, the McKellars bought part of 'The Grange' sheep run east of Hamilton and named their new home 'Strathkellar'. The family managed other properties in Victoria, South Australia, and Queensland, but 'Strathkellar' was their base for many years.

'The homestead,' wrote one journalist, 'is prettily situated on the crown of a grassy knoll, facing the main road, and is surrounded by spacious verandas and conservatories. The approach to the house is made through a very fine avenue of pines, and indigenous trees, which have grown so luxuriantly that their branches interlace overhead.'⁶

In April 1864, Thomas and Catherine took their family back to Scotland, at least temporarily, sailing first to London on *Roxburgh Castle* with John (13), Jane (11), Thomas (9), James (8), Rachel (6), Campbell (5), Catherine (3), and Ernest (1). A governess and a young maidservant travelled with them.⁷ This was the first of many trips. Their youngest child, Mary, was born on 24 August 1864 in Glasgow.⁸ Four of Thomas' and Catherine's sons were involved in pastoral activities: John, Thomas Jnr and James managed 'Tarrone' in Victoria; later James (until his death in 1888)



and Ernest managed Raglan Station in Queensland, but Campbell seems to have had little or no interest in that physically demanding lifestyle, preferring to travel and to write perhaps, as was suggested later, because of a heart condition. From his writing, from newspaper reports and official databases, we can trace, and piece together fragments of Campbell Mackellar's life over the next six decades.

Campbell Mackellar attended Alston College in Lancashire, England—a boys' school for boarders and day pupils—which was built in 1854 but which no longer exists. While there, he sent a studio portrait to his sister Jane, in 1875.

He saw the Ararat-Hamilton line being built (ca 1876–77).

I remember how as children we watched the building of the railway through Strathkellar paddocks. When I was a boy, it was my father who introduced hares into the district, and the first hares brought there were under my charge. Before they were let loose to breed wild, one escaped, and reports reached us from many farmers, that they had seen 'a wild animal', strange to them. We bred a lot, then let them

loose, and they soon spread and multiplied so that, as you know, it became a coursing district. Possibly farmers now do not regard that with the eye of favour – but we didn't introduce the rabbits!⁹

⁵ Billis RV and AS Kenyon (1974). *Pastoral Pioneer of Port Phillip*. Melbourne: Stockland Press

⁶ 'A Hamilton Sheep Station' *Hamilton Spectator*, 29 August 1885, p.4

⁷ Outward Passenger Lists, Public Records of Victoria

⁸ Scotland's People – online database

⁹ *Hamilton Spectator*, 'Discursive Letter from London' 25 August 1917, p. 7. Thomas McKellar also introduced deer into the area (1860s). Species of feral deer now hunted in Victoria include red deer, fallow deer and hog deer.

A few years later, Mackellar was boarding in Edinburgh (1881 census), but travelled back to Australia to visit his brothers at Raglan Station, then travelled by coastal steamer to New Guinea (1885), was a groomsman at the marriage of the Hon. Charles Nelson to Miss Nellie Petty in Melbourne (1887), and entered into the debate about Gordon's Leap at Mount Gambier when visiting South Australia (1887).¹⁰ He was in Strasburg when he wrote a letter to *The Times* encouraging support for polar exploration (1890)¹¹ and, when visiting Schloss Schwöbber, in Hameln, the home of his friend, writer Max von Münchhausen, he expressed his opinion of 'The New Guinea Question' in a letter to the editor of *The Australasian* (1891).¹² Von Münchhausen visited Mackellar at Lerags in 1893.¹³



*At Lerags, 1893. Mother Jeanie, Miss Campbell of Lochnell, Miss Rachel Stewart of Eriska, Baron Max von Münchhausen and an unidentified lady, possibly Baroness Freida von Bülow (1857–1909), a relative of the Baron, and a friend of Mackellar.
Photographer unknown: SLV, Nesta McKellar Collection*

The young author

Words flowed effortlessly from Mackellar's pen. He was a prolific letter writer, producing many handwritten pages of detailed opinion and argument, often for a cause. He had had several articles and short stories published in newspapers and magazines, but his book *The Premier's Secret and other tales* (1887), published in Melbourne, was the first of several which established his reputation as an author. His subsequent books were published in Britain, a few with pseudonyms such as 'Hilarion' and 'HRH', and most are held at the British Library. Between 1890 and 1897, he published seven more books. In 1896, his local newspaper claimed him.

¹⁰ Stephens, AG (1930) 'Gordon's Leap and Historical Evidence' Brisbane Courier 22 February, p.22, citing CD Mackellar's 'Notes on the Gordon country in South Australia in November 1887' referring to a claim that the poet Adam Lindsay Gordon had leapt on horseback over a high fence onto a narrow ridge and back again.

¹¹ The Daily Telegraph (Sydney). 'Proposed Antarctic Expedition.' 24 November 1890, p. 4

¹² The Australasian 'Correspondence' 6 June 1891 p. 46

¹³ Baron Max von Münchhausen (1868–1920) was a writer and is not to be confused with the protagonist in *The Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen* by RE Raspe (English version, 1785). <https://www.geni.com/people/Max-Freiherr-von-M%C3%BCnchhausen/600000000207767458/>

Mother Jeanie (also in photo 'At Lerags, 1893') was possibly Mackellar's maternal grandmother Jean/Jane who was the daughter of Archibald Campbell of Lerags and who married John McColl. If she were the mother of Catherine McKellar, neé McColl (b. 1821), she would have been in her 90s when the photo was taken.

As it was in the *Spectator* that Mr Campbell McKellar made his debut as an author, it is particularly gratifying to us to learn that he has recently achieved a great success. Table Talk says – Mr Campbell M'Kellar, whose latest novel, *In Oban Town*, has met with great success in England is not, as repeatedly asserted in the press, by birth a Scotch Highlander, but is the eldest surviving son of the Hon. Thomas M'Kellar of Strathkellar in Victoria, who is also a Scottish proprietor.¹⁴ Mr Campbell M'Kellar has been cordially thanked by the Crown Prince of Greece for his recent work, *Greece: her hopes and troubles*.¹⁵

In *Australian Roundup: stories from 1790–1950*, editor Colin Roderick gives a summary of Mackellar's early work:

Campbell McKellar, of Strathkellar, Victoria, whose first volume of short stories was published in Melbourne in 1887, became a celebrity in Europe because of his interest in Balkan politics. All his remaining books were written after he had left Australia and were published in Great Britain. His work in London, Douglas Sladen says, did much to win recognition in England for Australian art.

McKellar practised literature in three semes: the novel, the story, and the drama. His dramatic sketches were published in 1894 in London under the title of *The Old Stradioari and Other Dramatic Sketches*. Of his three novels, *Lothair's Children* (1890), *A Jersey Witch* (1892), and *In Oban Town* (1896), the second and third are interesting for their critical connection with the regional novel developed in France by Pierre Loti, Jean Revel, and Reno Bazin, and in England by Hardy. His best work is in the story; and of his stories, his first collection, *The Premier's Secret and Other Stories* (1887)—from which comes the story included here—is better than the second, *Grafin Rinsky and Other Tales* (1892).

In addition to the title-piece, the first collection contains four striking stories. 'A Daughter of the Vikings' is the tragic tale of a nineteenth-century Norsewoman, descendant of a royal house, and Wagnerian in her every lineament. This story has action, vigour, and colour. 'A Romance of the Tower', in which a family feud is happily settled when man and maid are accidentally imprisoned together in a cell, is witty, graceful, and urbane. 'The Princess's Black Pearls' is the romantic story of a hopeless love affair. The last story 'Vergiss-mein-nicht' returns to Australia. Its setting is in a German colony in Victoria. A sentimental narrative, it tells the story of a German girl who dies in the hour of her triumph as she reconciles father and mother after a long estrangement. This collection of McKellar's tales is as good as anything done in Australia before the rise of the Bulletin school. It deserves a better fate than to lie on a library shelf, unread and unknown.¹⁶

Mackellar's early novels and short stories were in the late-Victorian style, perhaps leaning toward the 'silver-fork' tradition. Keenly class-conscious, he wrote of, or dedicated his books to members of the aristocracy. The dedication in the front pages of *A Jersey Witch* (1892) is to 'My distinguished German sister-in-art, Baroness Freida von Bülow.' An advocate of German colonisation, Freida von Bülow (1857–1909) was also a writer. Her mother was Klothilde von Münchhausen, and Mackellar most likely met her at Schloss Schwöbber. He cites Freida in 'The New Guinea Question' his 1891 letter to the editor of *The Australasian*.¹⁷ He claims her as a friend and, in notes dated 1900, praises her and her ideals in a chapter on German New Guinea in his travel book *Scented Isles and Coral Gardens*. A disclaimer in the foreword of the book, published in 1912 three years after her death, states: 'It is curious to look back on the opinions expressed and the facts stated just as they happened at the time, for if here and there, in brackets, changes have been made, it has been best to leave it all as originally written.'

¹⁴ The Hon. Thomas McKellar MLC was an elected Member of the Legislative Council in Victoria (1870–1875).

¹⁵ Hamilton *Spectator*, 'A Successful Author' 3 October 1896

¹⁶ Roderick, C (1953). *Australian Roundup: stories from 1790–1950*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson. Also online.

¹⁷ The *Australasian* 'Correspondence' 6 June 1891 p. 46

Shortly after the death of his father in Melbourne in 1900, Mackellar sailed from London on the mail steamer *Oruba* (Orient Line) to visit his widowed mother and the family. His three older brothers had pre-deceased their father. Lerags had already been gifted to him and his father, after providing for his widow and daughters, left him £2000. In memory of their father, the four daughters donated money to the McKellar Hospital at Hamilton, which became the second in Victoria to train midwives.¹⁸ Campbell Mackellar travelled north to Raglan Station to visit his younger brother Ernest, then further north, recording the travels published in *Scented Isles*.

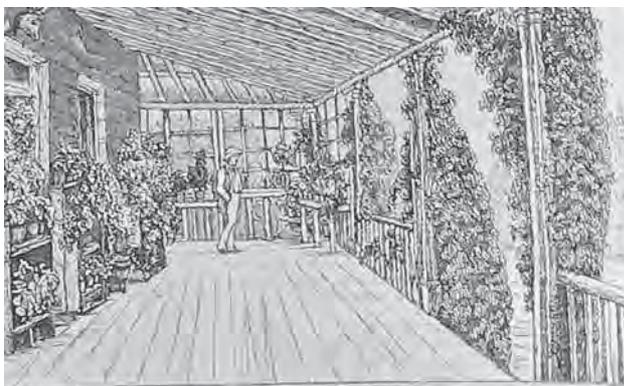
Patron of the Arts

In the foreword of *Scented Isles*, he modestly notes that 'the author, as is evident, is no artist and they [the illustrations] are only published here to try and give even a small and imperfect idea of the colour which the pen can only tell of but never paint.' He enjoyed sketching and painting. There are examples of his work in his books and tucked into the family's papers, and one opinion piece described him as 'a capital amateur draughtsman, [who] exhibited some sketches of his book illustrations at the last Victorian Academy'.¹⁹

His local newspaper echoed the praise of Melbourne's *Punch*.

We observe that the last number of that well-known illustrated paper the *London Graphic* contains four sketches of the homestead at Strathkellar, which, says the editor: 'afford a good example of the old and gradually disappearing type of an Australian squatter's bush residence.' The sketches, which have been charmingly executed by Mr. Campbell M'Kellar represent a dwelling in which many pleasant days have been passed, and give each a picturesque aspect to the place.²⁰

Mackellar supported Australian artists who lived and worked in Europe and London in the early twentieth century.²¹ State Library Victoria holds a portfolio of their works, which was presented to Mackellar at a dinner at Princes Restaurant in London on 12 December 1911, in appreciation of his support and for 'his kindness in connection with the artists' reception



at the Imperial Institute on May 30 1911'. The title page is signed by 21 artists, including Tom Roberts and Arthur Streeton. A range of styles in various media makes it a representative collection of the era.²²

'The Verandah, Strathkellar'. Sketch by CD Mackellar. Compare with photo of Strathkellar (3). Also note the stag's head above the window (top, left). His father introduced hares and deer to the surrounding countryside.



Canoe carving, Solomon Islands.



Temple, Seleo, New Guinea.

Sketches by CD Mackellar of places visited. McKellar Family Papers, SLV MS10615/266

¹⁸ <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/27236>

¹⁹ Melbourne *Punch* 'Chit-Chat' 2 June 1887, p. 3

²⁰ Hamilton *Spectator* 'Strathkellar' 10 Dec 1887, p. 2

²¹ Sunday Times (Sydney) 'Australian Artists: Powerful Influence of London Movement' 14 Sept.1924, p. 7

²² Individual artworks in Mackellar's portfolio can be viewed online in the catalogue at slv.vic.gov.au



'Portrait of a Theatre Patron' with cigarette and walking cane, an ink on paper by Will Dyson (1880–1938) could be, though it does not claim to be, a caricature of Mackellar. In the Australian artists portfolio, presented to Mackellar, 1911. SLV.



A studio portrait taken in 1887, in which Mackellar is wearing an Inverness cape/coat over a dinner suit and holding a cigarette and a case, warrants comparison. Photo: Stewart & Co. SLV, Nesta McKellar collection.

Patron of polar exploration

Mackellar's 1890 letter to *The Times* is particularly interesting because it identifies his interest in polar exploration, years before he met Shackleton. As reported in an Australian newspaper:

With reference to the expedition which it is proposed to send out from Australia for the exploration of the region around the South Pole, Mr Campbell M'Kellar (member of the Royal Geographical Society of Australia) writes from Strasburg to *The Times*:

Baron Nordenskjold and Baron Dickson have promised to organise and equip an expedition provided Australia contributes £5000. This is a small sum in comparison with the great results which may be achieved, yet I know from experience that it will not be easy to raise the sum in Australia where, I am sorry to say, a great indifference prevails as to Antarctic exploration.

Baron von Mueller, the celebrated botanist and explorer who is vice-president of the Royal Geographical Society of Australia, has repeatedly urged that such an expedition should be fitted out and has – in vain – attempted to raise the necessary funds. I hope therefore, that England may be generous enough to contribute her share and render the raising of this comparatively small sum an accomplished fact, so that the generous offer of Barons Nordenskjold and Dickson may be taken advantage of.²³

He had a profound respect for the people who faced the challenges that polar conditions presented.

The bravest and most heroic of human beings are the Antarctic and Arctic explorers who must possess the very highest qualities in man—physical and moral courage, endurance under terrible privations in terrible climates, resource, absolute self-control and unselfishness.²⁴

²³ The Daily Telegraph (Sydney). 'Proposed Antarctic Expedition.' 24 November 1890, p. 4

²⁴ Mackellar, C (1912). *Scented Isles and Coral Gardens*. London: John Murray, pp. 199–201

He was an acquaintance of Philip Brocklehurst, the young English baronet who offered financial support in exchange for a place on Shackleton's *Nimrod* expedition. Through him, Mackellar met Shackleton. Already a strong supporter, in theory, of polar exploration and an admirer of Shackleton, Mackellar offered financial support to the expedition and took a personal interest in the preparation, the progress and the publicity. His *bon voyage* gift to the ship's company was a good luck charm: a horseshoe and a sprig of heather.

'This is the man, and this is the expedition,' I said to myself and others when I first met Ernest Shackleton. As I write these lines, I remember how last night I sat in the drawing room of his London house. He stood on the hearth and, turning over the pages of the soiled little notebook he carried with him on his famous Southern march, read to his family and guests. Notes as he had written them daily under those terrible difficulties. Yes, he *was* the man and it *was* the expedition.²⁵

Mackellar was not the first in his family to support exploration. His father, Thomas McKellar, had subscribed generously to a fund for Ernest Giles' expedition into central Australia in the early 1870s. Giles named Fort McKellar for his supporter and was a dinner guest at 'Strathkellar' when Mackellar was a boy. He recalled an occasion when Giles spoke of the adverse conditions and the threat of starvation in remote areas. Once, when the explorer was desperate and ravenous, an opportunity arose to capture a baby kangaroo, and he 'fell upon it there and then and ate it up fur and all! I can hear yet,' wrote Mackellar a decade later, 'the clatter of falling knives and forks occasioned by this anecdote!'²⁶

Details of the *Nimrod* expedition to which Mackellar contributed books for their library as well as financially, are recorded in Shackleton's *Heart of the Antarctic* and in the diaries of his men. He was also able to procure the Queen's flag for them. A knighthood and lecture tours of Scandinavia and Europe followed Shackleton's return. After his investiture at Buckingham Place in December 1909, Sir Ernest Shackleton hosted a luncheon at the Berkeley Hotel, attended by members of the BAE, the expedition's administrator, and loyal supporters, including Campbell Mackellar.

The following year, Mackellar and Brocklehurst attended Shackleton's lecture in Berlin in an ongoing display of support. Though the explorer knew little of the German language, with coaching from an accompanying tutor, he determinedly practised his pronunciation then read



Luncheon at the Berkeley Hotel London, 13 December 1909. Shackleton standing at head of table; CD Mackellar far left. Photographer unknown. In High Latitude by JK Davis, p. 144

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 17

from notes as he delivered lectures in German to his audiences there. In Karlsruhe, John King Davis, first officer then captain of *Nimrod*, asked an attendee if she had understood Shackleton's address. She assured him that, though the accent was 'a trifle odd', she could understand him quite well.²⁷

In London, Shackleton introduced Mackellar to Douglas Mawson who, in 1911, was desperately seeking funds for his Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE). Mackellar in turn introduced Mawson to Lady Hart, who hosted a luncheon for Mawson with many distinguished guests, and potential sponsors.²⁸ Mackellar donated £250 and a library of about 60 books, which the men were to appreciate fully when confined to their Antarctic hut. His contribution covered a wide range of subjects, including Arctic and Antarctic exploration (*Furthest North*, by Fridtjof Nansen, *Through the First Antarctic Night* by Frederick Cook, *Voyage of the Scotia*, by William Spiers Bruce, etc.), travel (*First Footsteps in East Africa*), reference books (*Modern Geography*; *Hydrographic Surveying*; *Petrology for Students*), classical literature (*Poems by Tennyson*; *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*; *Pickwick Papers*) and many more.²⁹

Again, Mackellar took a genuine interest in the preparation for the expedition. When British AAE member, Lt Belgrave Ninnis, first met Mackellar on 17 November 1910 at Shackleton's office, he summed up his first impressions with 'red hot on Antarctic matters, a great Shack admirer.' A few months later, Ninnis had lunch with him, in the company of Shackleton, Mawson and Captain Davis; and Mackellar came with others, in July 1911, to farewell Mawson's ship *SY Aurora* a couple of days before it left the London docks.³⁰

Mawson named the Mackellar Islets (now gazetted as Islands) in Antarctica, a group of 30 small islands (66°58'S, 142°40'E), in recognition of his support, and wrote:

The group extends for several miles – most of the islets are ice-capped but others are bare rock. None reach more than 40 feet above sea-level. – only two are of any size Greater and Lesser Mackellar Islet – separated by a narrow channel which is frozen over in winter. Between the main group and the [Antarctic] mainland there are many reefs on these islands, bird and seal life are to be found in abundance during summer – Adelle Penguin rookeries – the total number of birds – 200,000 at least. Skua Gulls were observed nesting and – not less than fifty nests of Snow Petrels and a hundred nests of Wilson Petrels. Sleeping on the icefoot more than 500 Weddell Seals were counted.

The dominant rock of these island is a grey granite gneiss very similar to the adjacent mainland – all the rock exposures are encrusted with saline matter derived from the salt spray blown over the islets by the hurricanes which descended from the adjacent ice plateau. Patches of penguin guano are scattered over the surface amounting to about 500 tons.³¹

He also presented Mackellar with a copy of his book, *The Home of the Blizzard* (1915). In a thank-you letter, Mackellar wrote:

but dear me, it is magnificent! Every page fascinated me – and every illustration is so beautiful – my islets – no one could possibly admire them as I do – and proud is no word for how I feel about the honour you did me³²

²⁷ Davis, JK (1962). *High Latitude*. Melbourne University Press, p. 140. In his classic autobiography, Davis writes an entertaining account of his association with Shackleton.

²⁸ Ayres, P (2003). *Mawson: a life*. Melbourne University Press, p. 46

²⁹ South Australian Museum, Australian Polar Collection, 43AAE

³⁰ Mornement, A and B Riffenburgh (eds) (2014). *Mertz & I: The Antarctic Diary of Belgrave Edward Sutton Ninnis*. Norfolk: Erskine Press, p. 130

³¹ Mawson, D (1942). *Australasian Antarctic Expedition 1911–14, Scientific Reports, Series A Vol. 1: 'Narrative and Cartography'*, pp. 310–311 (Coordinates: Australian Antarctic Data Centre/Gazetteer).

³² CD Mackellar to D Mawson, 25 January 1915. S.A. Museum, Aust. Polar Collection, 51DM and photo of Mackellar Islands at: <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-141790265/view>

In November 1912, Mackellar was elected as a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) in London. His fellowship was proposed by Captain Cecil Rawling and seconded by JS Keltie, Secretary of the RGS.³³ Mackellar had supported Rawling's British Ornithologists' Union Expedition to Dutch New Guinea (1909–1911) and had arranged for Rawling to be received by the Prince Consort of the Netherlands.³⁴

Before he left for the war front in France in late May 1915, Lieutenant Frank Bickerton (Sussex Regiment), another British member of Mawson's 1911–1914 expedition, asked Campbell Mackellar FRGS, to intercede on behalf of the AAE team, many of whom were fighting (or wounded or killed) in the war, and to 'prompt their receiving the King's Polar Medal'.³⁵ Mackellar raised the matter with the RGS and wrote to the King's Private Secretary. King George V had approved the award of the medals, and, in February 1915, the Admiralty requested from Mawson a list of men who were to be awarded bronze medals and who were entitled to silver.³⁶ Mackellar also contacted Mawson, first in June then in July, explaining that the Hydrographer for the Admiralty was waiting on Mawson's lists. 'I think you must really write at once if you have not done so,' he urged, 'and give a full list.'³⁷ His efforts might have influenced the outcome. The medals were awarded at the end of 1915.

The mature author and traveller

Two of Mackellar's later publications were travel books, written as first-person narratives and published by John Murray. The title of his *A Pleasure Pilgrim in South America* (1908) is tantalisingly close to *The Pleasure Pilgrim* (1895) written by one of his contemporaries, Ella D'Arcy (ca 1856–1937). In her short story (available online), there are what seem barely disguised references to Mackellar's friends, the Münchhausen family of Schloss Schwöbber, Hameln. A young man named Campbell travels to a friend's castle, Schloss Altenau in Hamelin, Germany, where he meets a flirtatious young American woman who shoots herself when he rejects her advances.³⁸ Despite the strong coincidences of names and location, hopefully this story is not based on facts, though such a traumatic experience might explain the man's committed bachelorhood. D'Arcy who, like Mackellar, had lived on the Channel Isles, also wrote *White Magic* (1894), set in Jersey, but its storyline differs from Mackellar's *A Jersey Witch* (1892).

In *A Pleasure Pilgrim in South America*, after arriving in Panama in September 1904, Mackellar commented on the construction of the canal, begun by the French, and subsequently undertaken by the Americans. 'But all this,' he stated, 'should have been done by *us*, the British, and it would have been better and more honestly done than by anyone else' (p. 17). From Panama, he travelled to Ecuador, to Peru—where he carried Sir Clements Markham's *History of Peru* everywhere in his pocket (p. 238), Bolivia—where he met a few of his 'Scottish countrymen' (p. 305), to Chile—calling at Punta Arenas from where Shackleton, assisted by the Chilean Navy, in 1916 organised the rescue of his men stranded on Elephant Island. From Punta Arenas,

³³ RGS Librarian pers. comm. email May 2019

³⁴ Mackellar CD to Sir John Keltie, 10 July 1922. SPRI - MS 367 24 2

³⁵ RGS Librarian pers. comm. email May 2019

³⁶ Admiralty, London to Douglas Mawson, 14 February 1915. S.A. Museum, Aust. Polar Collection, 176 AAE

³⁷ CD Mackellar to D Mawson 14 July 1915. S.A. Museum, Aust. Polar Collection, 51DM

³⁸ *The Pleasure Pilgrim* (1895) is available online at http://www.1890s.ca/HTML/YBV5_darcy_pleasure.html (accessed June 2021). This is one of those intriguing tangential lines of research which begins with questions: Were Mackellar and D'Arcy acquainted? Both writers lived at times in London, in Europe and on the Channel Isles and drew on these places as settings. Did they discuss story lines? Collaborate? Draw on each other's experiences? Does his use of 'Pleasure Pilgrim' in the title of his own narrative indicate that he identifies with her story? He wrote that the name Mackellar indicated a lineage of sons of Ella and, with that in mind, her name (a derivative of her given name, Eleanor) might have sparked his interest. This line of enquiry, though speculative, seems to have potential for development, but no evidence has been produced (yet) to connect these two within the Victorian/Edwardian writers' circles.

Mackellar sailed to the Falkland Islands, Argentina, and Brazil before arriving back at Southampton in March 1905. The outcome is a cavalcade of Mackellar's observations and bizarre experiences, with flashbacks to times spent in Europe and Australia, coloured with the author's now unacceptable, racial, or condescending comments. His book, illustrated with photographs, is nevertheless a valuable historical and cultural snapshot of these countries, and his journey would have provided understanding of Shackleton's travels in the area.³⁹

His other travel book, *Scented Isles and Coral Gardens* (1912) is a series of letters and notes, his 'flotsam and jetsam' not originally intended for publication, written in the late nineteenth century, when he journeyed to Northern Australia, the Torres Strait, German New Guinea, Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), China and Japan, before returning to England via Canada. The travel accounts are interspersed with other people's 'yarns' ('I always believe yarns. It's easier to do so.') and his own thoughts.

In Yokohama he visited a teahouse with two German officers. The geisha thought he was English.

'I told her I was a Scotsman.' And when she thought he was married, because he was so quiet: 'I informed her that I was still a lone, lorn bachelor Whoever went to Japan,' he continued, 'that did not speak of its great glory—its women! It is their irresistible charm, their delicate, refined ways, and their beautiful soft, low-toned voices which so fascinate.'⁴⁰

He travelled to the Balkan states (ca 1915–1916) and was interested in the politics of the area, particularly in the tensions between Serbia and Montenegro. His sympathies were with the Montenegrins and he designed a travel guide to the country, intending to preface it with an appeal and to donate his author's proceeds to 'a fund for the widows and families of Montenegrins killed in war'.⁴¹ In 1919, he published an article describing the country and its economic resources.⁴² Despite his political leaning, he also introduced by letter, a Serbian Orthodox monk to his publisher, John Murray. The monk, representing his compatriots, wanted to publish two volumes of selected Serbian ballads, etc. Mackellar, though he claimed no knowledge of the merit of the translated works, expressed surprise when the monk told him that the English people wanted 'to know the soul of the Serbs'. Mackellar considered the move to be 'part of their propaganda for their country'.⁴³ The proposed arrangements for publication appear to have stalled.

He paid occasional visits to Jersey in the Channel Islands to visit Rachel and her family. Rachel's teenage daughter Margaret (Madge) kept a diary of her schooldays in Jersey and of travels. She (when aged 19) records both appreciation of and annoyance with her Uncle Campbell (aged 51). When her Aunt Kate (Rachel's and Campbell's sister) died at Tunbridge Wells, she noted that:

Uncle Campbell has bought a niche in the place where the ashes are kept which will hold three – besides Aunt Kate's, his own and one other McKellar. He has bought a beautiful marble urn for Aunt Kate's' (July 1910 - London).

A few months later she wrote:

When I got home that morning, Uncle Campbell was here. He had been asked as a matter of policy ages before but had grumpily refused. However, he brought both Helen and I a huge box of things, so we ought to have been thankful but he would not talk but just sat with his face on his hands and [would] yawn with the most bored expression I've ever seen. However, he took some interest in my collections and said I had the 'museum spirit'

³⁹ Available online (accessed June 2021) <https://archive.org/details/pleasurepilgrimi00mack/page/n19/mode/2up>

⁴⁰ Mackellar, C (1912) *Scented Isles and Coral Gardens* London: John Murray, p. 317

⁴¹ Mackellar CD to John Murray 21 November 1912. Nat. Lib. Scotland MS 40746

⁴² Mackellar, Campbell D. 'Montenegro' *Jnl Royal Society of the Arts*, Vol. 67, No 3474 June 1919, p. 507

⁴³ Mackellar CD to John Murray 21 November 1912. Nat. Lib. Scotland MS 40746

and promised to send me some specimens of his stones and spoons (22 September 1910 – Jersey).

After the Coronation of King George V: Aunt Jeannie insisted on our going to the White City with Uncle Campbell of all people. We were dead tired, furious, and altogether not inclined to talk to Uncle Campbell. On Saturday evening again, we went to the Tivoli with Uncle Campbell. I would have enjoyed it immensely if it had not been for him. Russian Dancers were the star turn Mme Pavlova (30 July 1911 - London).⁴⁴

Madge was not the only one entranced by Anna Pavlova. In July 1911, the 30-year-old prima ballerina visited Douglas Mawson's ship SY *Aurora* in the London docks, before it sailed for Antarctica. She went as a guest of Lieutenant Belgrave Ninnis who, also charmed by Anna, named one of the expedition's sledge dogs 'Pavlova'. Ninnis introduced Mackellar to Anna when he visited the ship,⁴⁵ but Madge did not seem to be aware of her uncle's connections. Her intolerance perhaps cost her an opportunity to meet the performer she so admired.

Not a lot is written about Mackellar by people who knew him. Tryggve Gran, the Norwegian with Captain Scott in Antarctica, was introduced to Mackellar by Shackleton. Recalling a later meeting with Mackellar in October 1915 at the Bath Club in war-time London, Gran described him as 'an extremely versatile man, both in terms of his interests and his concerns. In his company, one could discuss politicians, policemen, artists, scientists, enthusiasts, and beautiful women. [He] was a middle-aged man, but a heart problem prevented his active participation at the front. He nevertheless worked on what he called the greatest mission: to improve the plight of war invalids in all the warring countries. Truly a noble, but extremely difficult task.'⁴⁶

Gran, in his article published after Mackellar's death, wrote that Mackellar was psychic and had said he had a vision of Shackleton and the fate of *Endurance*, but Gran might have distorted the facts. Mackellar's letters indicate that, while perhaps interested in spiritualism, as he was in many subjects, his attitude was ambivalent. He wrote that other people told him that 'clairvoyants and spiritualists had declared that Shackleton and his men perished' or that they had spoken to the spirit of Shackleton. 'Of course, it may all be hateful nonsense' he wrote, 'but it affects one nevertheless.'⁴⁷ The next day, he wrote that he had been told, in a meeting with a clairvoyant Scottish lady, that she saw the unnamed friend of whom he was thinking (Shackleton) and other men treading carefully on dangerous ground. She also described the unnamed friend and said that he was 'thinking much about the sea'.⁴⁸

During his conversation with Gran, Mackellar mentioned that he had letters to write which were proving difficult to compose. He could have been referring to his petition, sent to the Foreign Office and to Lord Stamfordham, Private Secretary to the royal family, asking Dowager Queen Alexandra to persuade King George V to intercede with the Kaiser on behalf of Princess Marie de Croy and other ladies who were condemned to death by the occupying German forces in neutral Belgium.⁴⁹ Princess Marie nursed casualties and hid Allied servicemen in the family home, and worked with Nurse Edith Cavall assisting Allied personnel to escape. Edith

⁴⁴ Margaret (Madge) Brock-Hollinshead, Diary. SLV McKellar family papers MS 10615 – 265 Box 2

⁴⁵ Ninnis, B. Diary entry: 24 July 1911. In Mertz & I The Antarctic diary of Belgrave Edward Sutton Ninnis. Mornement, A and B Riffenburgh (eds) (2014). Norfolk: The Erskine Press, p. 130

⁴⁶ Gran, T (1930) 'Sir Ernest Shackleton og hans synske venn' *Aftenposten Magasinet* av major 22 March, pp. 8–9

⁴⁷ Mackellar CD to John Murray, 31 March 1916. Nat. Lib. Scotland MS 40746

⁴⁸ Mackellar, C to Captain JK Davis, 1 April 1916. SLV, JK Davis papers 3272/M

⁴⁹ Belgium, Prisoners. National Archives UK (Kew). Ref: FO 383/135

Cavall's execution on 12 October 1915 provoked a global reaction of outrage. Marie was sentenced to ten years hard labour but released in 1918. Edith Cavall's body was returned to England in 1919.⁵⁰

Mackellar often visited wounded men in hospitals and received many letters from the front or from prisoners of war, both known and unknown to him. He had travelled in so many lands that it did not surprise him, he wrote, when someone he had not seen for years contacted him.⁵¹ In a note at the end of his last known published book, *Scented Isles* (1912), he stated:

Especially did I appreciate those [letters commenting on earlier books] from invalids, and if I did afford them some hours of amusement and interest, I am grateful that I was allowed to do it. I hope those same kind people will 'Please come again' and make another journey with me in these pages. They have told me how they laughed at this or enjoyed that situation, and I in return say they cheer one on the way, and whether it is at me or the incidents they laugh, what matters is that they do laugh, and that is good for them. C.D.M.

He continued to correspond with publisher John Murray, suggesting ideas for additional works, for example his proposed guide to Montenegro, and

As for books I believe I have written dozens, many not finished and not even looked at once written — I cannot read my own handwriting! There are truckloads of them and probably neither I nor anyone will ever trouble to look through them; but writing these things was my relaxation when worried over other affairs.⁵²

Later years

In 1921, Mackellar resided in Jersey for a few months, but returned to England still troubled by problems in international politics and citing the policies of the Lloyd George government and the suppression or manipulation of information as the causes of many situations. Seeking diversion in the solitude of libraries, he went to Southampton where he could 'read up on the spot the particulars of the sailing of the *Mayflower* 300 years ago.' *Mayflower* was berthed in Southampton in 1620. In Bristol he looked up details of 'the Merchant Venturers, the Cabot family, Admiral Penn and Chatterton, the poet.' In Cambridge 'this seat of learning — and motor cars and cycles' he read Einstein's *Theory of Relativity* which, he wrote, he didn't understand; then Freudian theories on delusions and dreams, and psychoanalysis generally 'which did not appeal'; but he agreed with ideas expressed in Mrs Webster's *World Revolution* and thought the author, who had far-right political views and whom he claimed to know well, 'a marvel'.⁵³

Mackellar had reassured Emily Shackleton, during the worrying time in December 1916 when there was no news of her husband and *Endurance* that, despite the pessimists, Shackleton and his men would return.

You can then stand on your head — not that a 'real lady' should — and clap your heels together and say, 'To the devil with you all!' It will not be an elegant performance but a spirited one. All is going to [plan]. I do not doubt it; so you can quietly prepare for the Happy New Year which belated will reach you yet. Don't worry; that sort of man will not be asleep there, since he never slept, and seas, icebergs, wrecks, oceans, disasters overcome, do you imagine he will not overcome little difficulties out there?⁵⁴

⁵⁰ de Croÿ, Marie (1932). War memories. London: Macmillan

⁵¹ Discursive Letter from London' Hamilton Spectator 25 August 1917, p. 7

⁵² Mackellar CD to John Murray, 23 August 1921. Nat. Lib. Scotland MS 40746

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Mackellar, CD to Emily Shackleton, 8 December 1916. SPRI MS 1537 2 35 2

After the death of Shackleton in 1922, he assisted HR Mill and Emily with the preparation of *The Life of Sir Ernest Shackleton* but told Emily that he was not well and did not wish to become involved with committees. Mackellar was an occasional dinner guest at the Shackleton home and Emily, writing to HR Mill as they collaborated on her husband's biography, declared:

Mr Mackellar would, I am sure, be delighted to give you any information. He looks 'dour' but has one of the kindest hearts. I seldom see him, but he writes the most entertaining gossip, not to say scandal, and is always 'bored' but refreshing.⁵⁵

A few weeks later, Mills informed her:

I had a very long letter from Mackellar the other day, with a great deal of sense hidden in its haystack of words. He thinks that the less said about the quarrels and jealousies of the explorers the better and he is no doubt right; but still the question of the promise to Scott

⁵⁶

A concerned Mackellar, aware of Emily's worries, wrote to Sir John Keltie, urging him to use the influence of the RGS to apply for a grant from the Treasury to give financial support to Shackleton's family, and to ensure recognition of Shackleton's work, noting that much of the revenue from his lectures and onboard visits by the public had been given to charities.⁵⁷

A handwritten letter to his nephew in Australia the following year begins 'My dear Tom,' and rambles over 19 pages, dipping into a wide range of topics from ancestry and the meanings of names to advice on marriage, children, the importance of breeding and family records, to his own failing health and declining finances.

Mackellar means the son of Ella. In Scotland now, it is considered vile to write Mc-anything; they always write Mac. It does not matter but Mc is only an alternative. It is very simple: your children are the sons and daughters of Ella where they settled for centuries was Rasella – the resting place of Ella – a great circle of standing stones and the only Saxon name there. *Ceallair* referred to the superior of a monastery (before celibacy was imposed in the twelfth century). Money counts all the world over and so does blood and social position. You and Kathleen – for your children – should have your portraits painted by some Australian artist.⁵⁸

The peripatetic Mackellar was proud of his heritage and referred to himself as a Scot, with Vikings and Icelandic jarls, or regional Norse earls, as distant ancestors. When he travelled on ships, when the weather was wild and the sea rough, these ties roused his imagination as he identified with those ancestors and relived their challenges.

There were stories of other ancestors, including their involvement with Prince Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie). One had sheltered the Prince in the Highlands just before he escaped to France in 1746. The Prince is said to have given his host, Mackinnon, a scarf pin as a memento, 'it was all he had to give,' but the family were not allowed to speak of it for fear of punishment.⁵⁹ The pin was with Mackellar's family on Jersey, then in NZ, then Australia. It was

⁵⁵ Shackleton, Emily to HR Mill, 25 May 1922 in Rejoice My Heart: the making of HR Mill's 'The Life of Sir Ernest Shackleton'. Michael Rosove (ed.) Adelie Books, Santa Monica (2007) p. 17

⁵⁶ Mill, HR to Emily Shackleton, 7 June 1922. In Rejoice My Heart, p. 25

⁵⁷ Mackellar CD to Sir John Keltie, 10 July 1922. SPRI MS 367 24 2

⁵⁸ Mackellar, C. Letter to his nephew Tom, son of Thomas McKellar Jr. London, 2 October 1923. McKellar family papers, SLV, MS 10615 – 264. Rasella is in the parish of Kilmartin, Argyllshire, about 30 miles south of Lerags, and has been the subject of archaeological investigations. An image of the stone circle is at: www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1870-1008-124

⁵⁹ Matts, Jane (an aunt, the sister of Thomas McKellar), to Joan Galbraith (her niece),

5 August 1914, quoting Jane's grandmother, Isabella Mackinnon (wife of Thomas Harkness). McKellar family papers, SLV, MS 10615 – 264

offered to a Scottish Museum in the 1970s but rejected on the basis that scarf pins were not worn in the 1740s. Perhaps not in Scotland, but they had been for many years in France.⁶⁰ The McKellar family's personal correspondence supports the ancestral claim, but family members thought the pin was theirs by rightful inheritance and need not be returned to Scotland.

By 1922, Mackellar had settled into rooms in Vincent Square, London. When he did not come down to dinner on 10 May 1925, his landlady took a tray to his room, but she was unable to open the door. She asked her husband to help, and they found that Mackellar had collapsed and was lying unconscious just behind the door. A doctor who lived nearby was sent for and, soon after arrival, examined him and pronounced him dead. He was formally identified by his sister Mary's husband, Mr Arthur Ronald. A post-mortem indicated 'syncope while suffering from myocarditis and nephritis' with the possibility that he had had a convulsive attack.⁶¹ He died intestate with almost £8000 in assets (about £500,000 in 2020) and his sister Rachel was appointed administratrix.⁶² His copy of *Aurora Australis*, copies of his published books and the portfolio of works by Australian artists were donated to the Public Library of Victoria (now State Library Victoria).

Mackellar was a man of his time, yet atypical. He was influenced by his upbringing imbued with a sense of his family's Scottish heritage, by literature and (partially) by prevailing attitudes. He was impressed by rank, titles, class and celebrity status, but he was thoughtful and generally sympathetic toward the vulnerable. He travelled more widely than most people in the late-Victorian and Edwardian eras did, and published his political opinions, his observations and his impressions of people and places. He identified as a Scot, and as British, but lived at times in Germany where he had friends and acquired a good working knowledge of the German language and an understanding of the culture. He delighted in the company of women, though he never married, retreating to his bachelor home or his clubs. He was opinionated, yet reserved; adventurous, yet comfort-seeking; proud of his ancestral connections, but slightly distanced from his siblings and their families; well-meaning but often misunderstood. The extracts selected for this article, taken from his correspondence and his books, and from comments by others, allow us to gauge something of his character. Essentially, he remains still an unfamiliar figure, but one whose contributions and kindnesses to others, for example to the worried Emily Shackleton, to victims of war, to artists as well as to explorers must be acknowledged. Shackleton's message to Mackellar in his presentation copy of *Aurora Australis* is a worthy tribute.

Acknowledgements

My thanks go to the knowledgeable proof-readers, Antarctic specialists, whose comments led to a greatly improved article. I must also thank many archivists, librarians, and historians for their patience with my enquiries and for their suggestions, which facilitated further research. With alternative spellings of the family name and placenames, fact checking was often challenging. It was not possible to construct an uninterrupted timeline of Mackellar's story but, in the process of preparing this article, I have gained a greater understanding of one of Shackleton's most steadfast supporters.

Most illustrations in this article are from the McKellar Family papers held at SLV.

⁶⁰ Louis XIV (1638–1715) ordered jewels to be recut and one diamond 'mounted on a little enamelled gold bar was used as a pin in his lace cravat'. Morel, B (1988). *The French Crown Jewels*. Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, p. 166.

⁶¹ Brock-Hollinshead, M. *Diary*. Madge implied that her Uncle Campbell had made advance arrangements for his own cremation when his sister Kate died. Though Madge did not name the place in her diary, a service for Kate was conducted at Golders Green Crematorium, London, on 2 July 1910. McKellar family papers, unreferenced newspaper clipping. Also, in Rachel Brock-Hollinshead's notes. SLV, MS 10615 - 264

⁶² McKellar family papers, unreferenced newspaper clipping, n.d. SLV, MS 10615 - 264

Antarctic Apprenticeship: Frank Hurley and the Australasian Antarctic Expedition

Karyn Maguire Bradford

Volunteer Researcher for the Mawson's Huts Foundation

The first time we encounter Frank Hurley in *South*, Shackleton's account of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition (ITAE), he is sitting on a jury-rigged platform, hanging precariously under the jib boom, filming *Endurance's* bow breaking through the ice.¹ How did this Australian come to be there? He had served one of the toughest Antarctic apprenticeships ever—he had been on expedition with Mawson.

James Francis (Frank) Hurley was born in Sydney in 1885, and led a colourful life, although perhaps some tales grew in the telling. He left school at thirteen following a dispute with a teacher, ran away from home, and travelled to Lithgow, west of the Blue Mountains.² There he found a job at the Ironworks as a fitter's handyman, and acquired the mechanical and metalworking skills he would use throughout his life.

Hurley returned to Sydney in 1900 with a crew from the Ironworks, engaged in a contract on board a ship. Deciding that the adventurous life at sea was what he wanted, he resigned from his Ironworks job, but failed in his quest to obtain a job aboard a ship. Perhaps persuaded by his father, he took an apprenticeship as an electrical fitter and instrument maker at the NSW Telegraphic Department, and finally, excelled in his studies at Sydney Technical College.³ Hurley's story has it that a colleague suggested that he buy a camera and take up the hobby of photography. He did exactly that, paying off the 15-shilling Kodak box Brownie at a shilling a week, and the die was forever cast.

*I knew I had found my real work, and a key, could I but become its master, that would perhaps unlock the portals of the undiscovered World.*⁴

Hurley spent every spare moment studying both the art and technology of photography. Within just a few short years he had become a partner in a thriving Postcard business—and eventually took it over on his own. He had exhibited his work at the Kodak Salon, lectured to camera clubs, and had articles published in the *Australasian Photo-Review*.⁵

Dr Douglas Mawson's Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) was in the final stages of organisation during July and August 1911. Mawson apparently left the selection of a short-list of candidates for the photographer's position to Professor T. W. Edgeworth David, veteran of Shackleton's *Nimrod* expedition, and a key member of the AAE organising committee. David was himself a keen photographer, and Patron of the Ashfield Camera Club, of which Hurley was a member. David would probably have known of Hurley, even if he did not know him personally. One of those whom David approached was Henri Mallard. Mallard was not interested, but recommended his friend Hurley.

Hurley applied formally in September 1911, but Mawson only had time to offer him a brief interview at Sydney's Central Station, just before he boarded a train. Rather than be satisfied with a short interview on the platform, Hurley purchased a ticket to travel as far as Moss Vale,

¹ Shackleton, EH *South* Century London 1983 p.9 (First published: William Heinemann London 1919)

² Hurley, F *Argonauts of the South* G.P. Putnam's Sons New York 1925 p. 9 ff.)

³ McGregor, A *Frank Hurley: A Photographer's Life* Viking/Penguin Group Camberwell 2004 p.15

⁴ Hurley, *Argonauts* p. 10

⁵ *Australasian Photo Review* Online from the National Library of Australia. 1909 No 3 & No 5, 1910 No 6, 1911 No 1)

a journey of a couple of hours. Hurley claimed later that Mawson was most impressed by his initiative, and he was appointed.

All did not go smoothly, since Hurley's mother vehemently opposed her son going on the expedition. She wrote to Mawson claiming that Frank suffered lung problems and was unfit for the position. Tuberculosis was common, so such an illness was potentially a serious matter. Mawson requested that Hurley undergo a medical examination, and also sought the opinion of the representatives of Gaumont Company, who knew Hurley, and were to instruct him in cinematography.⁶ Hurley's fitness was soon certified, he received his instruction at Gaumont, and on 20 October 1911 his appointment was confirmed. This left little time for preparations, or for winding up his business, since he was due to depart just one month later. An extensive collection of photographic equipment, plates, and films was needed. Some came from London, but some from local suppliers such as Baker & Rouse, and Australian branches of Gaumont, Lumiere, Kodak and Eastman. It is not clear how much of this Hurley organised himself, or whether arrangements were already in place. Professor David loaned his stereo camera, and Hurley also took his own cameras.

In November 1911, Mawson, his 30 chosen men, and supplies of every conceivable type began assembling in Hobart. Frank Wild, appointed as leader of one of the three planned bases on the Antarctic continent, had arrived in Adelaide on 30 September, and the Vickers REP Monoplane aircraft that Mawson had purchased, was carried in crates on the ship's deck. Mawson wanted a plane for reconnaissance, and for publicity in Australia. When the aircraft arrived, Pilot Hugh Watkins and Engineer Frank Bickerton set to work readying it for a display at the Adelaide racecourse on 5 October. On the morning of the display, Watkins took off for a test flight, with Wild as a passenger, but crashed shortly afterwards – badly damaging the aircraft and injuring both of the men—they both needed a week in hospital. The aircraft would not be able to fly again, but Mawson salvaged what he could from the wreckage. He retained the services of Bickerton, to repair and modify the aircraft (minus wings) for use as a mechanical sledge puller, it was now the "Air Tractor." Since a pilot was not required, Watkins was sent home. When he had recovered, Wild travelled to Hobart ahead of the main group of men, to begin making arrangements.

The SY *Aurora* arrived in Hobart on 4 November, with Captain John King Davis in command. Aboard were Dr Xavier Mertz and Lt Belgrave Ninnis, and the Greenland Huskies that were to remain in their charge for the duration of the expedition. The voyage had been rough, and seven dogs and two pups had died along the way.

Experienced Antarctic hand Ernest Joyce, had also been hired. Joyce had been on both Scott's *Discovery*, and Shackleton's *Nimrod* expeditions, so Mawson knew him. Mawson wanted another man with Antarctic experience, and dog handling experience, however Joyce was dismissed before the expedition departed. The precise reason for this has never been clear – possibly the fact that Joyce spent very little time helping with the dogs at the quarantine station.

The assembled expedition members all joined in the task of readying the supplies. Since everything would be unloaded by hand into small boats at its destination, a significant proportion of goods had to be repacked into smaller cases for easier handling. Every case had to be labelled, and marked for its intended base. The expeditioners worked in shifts in the dockside warehouse, but all loading had to be done by the longshoremen, who refused to work with non-union members. An inadvertent breach of this rule—an expedition member carrying a box onto the ship, almost caused a strike.⁷

⁶ Mawson Correspondence: Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW. MLMSS 171/vol. 14/pp 261-263,265,269-271,289-291,295. Available online.

⁷ *Hobart Mercury* 25 November 1911 p. 8

The AAE Departs

Aurora was not able to take all the massive load, so another vessel was chartered to take men and supplies as far as Macquarie Island. There was a huge crowd at the wharf to farewell *Aurora* when she departed on 3 December 1911. Aboard for the voyage were Mawson, Wild, Ainsworth (leader – Macquarie Island), Hurley and 10 other expedition members. Mertz was aboard for the departure, but returned with the pilot boat. Mertz's photo shown here, taken from high in the rigging shows the crowds on the wharf. SS *Toroa*, the chartered vessel, departed on 7 December, heavily laden and carrying the remaining 16 expedition members.



Macquarie Island

After a rough passage *Aurora* reached Macquarie Island on 11 December, and *Toroa* arrived the following day. Hurley was in his element on the island

*Hurley wanders round in sheer delight with cinematograph on penguins, sea elephants etc.*⁸

Hurley's own response to their initial landing site at Caroline Cove was:

*I felt that had I sufficient plates and films, I could live here for the rest of my life! How helpless I felt to portray even a glimpse of it all in a few hours. I must have more time: I must return. But how was this to be done?*⁹

So began Hurley's first Antarctic adventure. The problem was that Caroline Cove is located at the opposite end of the island from where the shore party was to be landed. Hurley "accidentally" left behind one of his valuable lenses, carefully wrapped up and hidden. After *Aurora* reached anchorage in the north of the island, he "discovered" the loss and reported it to Mawson, who ordered him to walk overland to get it, a distance of about 19 miles each way in a straight line (further with diversions), over rough and not very well-known country. To accompany him, Mawson chose Charles Harrison (Biologist/ Artist), who would also do some specimen collecting, and at the nearby sealers camp, one of the men, Hutchinson, volunteered as a guide. Although the men stationed on the island are referred to as "sealers," at this time most of the seals had already been hunted to near extinction, and the hunters were mainly engaged in capturing and boiling down penguins for oil. The first land journey of the AAE was not an easy trek, and, with minimal equipment for camping, quite uncomfortable. Nevertheless, they set out on the 13 December, made it to the destination and retrieved the "lost" lens.

By the time they were about midway through the return journey, Hurley was close to being incapacitated. On the afternoon of the 16 December, he was lagging behind. Harrison, despite himself having strained a knee, went on ahead to get help. Harrison reached the expedition camp site on the morning of 17 December and Leslie Whetter (Surgeon) and Mertz went out with supplies to assist Hurley and Hutchinson back to the camp.

⁸ McLean, A *The Antarctic Diary of Archibald Lang McLean* Ed Beau Riffenburgh Erskine Press Norwich 2020 p 20.

⁹ Hurley, *Argonauts* p. 24

Accounts vary as to the cause of Hurley's problem. Harrison's diary says that "he had strained a muscle in the thigh and I one in the knee."¹⁰ McLean (Chief Medical Officer) wrote that Hurley told him he had "canvassed as a covering for the feet."¹¹ Mertz wrote that "He had gone through his shoes and they hung around his feet."¹² Kennedy (Magnetician) wrote that "Hurley had to be carried the last few miles by a relief party, (sore feet)."¹³ In Hurley's later account he wrote that while descending to Lusitania Bay "my right foot jammed between two boulders and, falling, I wrenched my ankle badly."¹⁴ Whatever the truth, Hurley later judged that he "was surely doing heavy penance for the subterfuge that had been the origin of my tribulations."

While Hurley was absent, the work of unloading continued, but there were mishaps. The main purpose of the base on Macquarie Island was to act as a relay station for wireless communications between Hobart and bases on the Antarctic continent, one of the truly innovative aspects of the expedition. Wireless masts, timbers and equipment were hoisted up to the top of the 300 ft hill at the northern end of Macquarie Island by means of a flying-fox that had been constructed by the sealers. One vital part of the generator, weighing more than 300 lbs came loose when almost at the top, and tumbled straight to the bottom of the hill. Walter Hannam (Wireless Operator), was confident that he could repair it, so this component was returned to the ship, and swapped with another from the main base cargo. This time, it was hauled successfully to the top of the hill. Crew from the *Aurora* assisted with erecting the wireless masts: deep holes had to be dug for the mast footings, "deadmen" buried deep to provide anchor points for stays, and the masts themselves raised and stays secured. Hannam was concerned that the masts were not being erected to their full extent

*One mast erected up to 84 ft, lot of trouble with anchorages. My advice was not accepted so they are not going up any higher. Sawyer and Sandell (Wireless Operators) must take responsibility if Gear does not work.*¹⁵



Nuggets Beach, Macquarie Island – Wreck of the Gratitude

¹⁰ Harrison, C *Mawson's Forgotten Men* Ed Heather Rossiter Pier 9 Sydney 2011. 15 December 1911.

¹¹ McLean, *Diary* 23 December 1911 p 24

¹² Mertz, X *Swiss Alps to Antarctic Glaciers* Ed Anna Lucas Finline Studios Melbourne 2014. Entry for 17 December 1911.

¹³ Kennedy, A *The Antarctic Diaries of Alexander Lorimer Kennedy* Ed. Beau Riffenburgh Norwich Erskine Press 2018 Diary entry 17 December 1911.

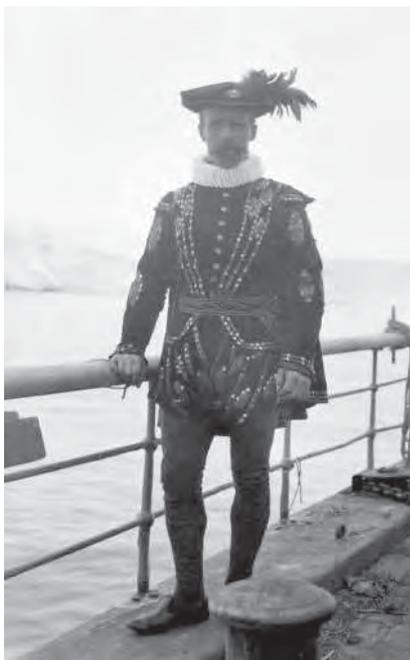
¹⁴ Hurley, *Argonauts* p 36.

¹⁵ Hannam, W *Diaries 21 Nov 1911-14 March 1913*. Unpublished manuscript. State Library of NSW MLMSS 384. Entry for 19 December 1911.

With unloading completed, *Aurora* left the new base on 24 December 1911 and headed back to Caroline Cove at the south of the island to water the ship. While there, the vessel dragged on her anchor and bumped into the rocks, fortunately, without suffering serious damage. Further attempts to obtain water were then abandoned as too dangerous, and Captain Davis set course for Antarctica.

Establishing Bases on the Antarctic Continent

Mawson's plan called for three bases to be established on the Antarctic continent, but plans are as nothing when faced with an unreliably charted coast, and unpredictable ice conditions. Davis had headed due south from Macquarie Island, aiming to reach the coast of the Antarctic continent in the area near Cape Adare. Finding the pack ice impenetrable on 31 December, Davis turned west. Weather, ice, and passing days with no hint of a viable landing site, forced Mawson to change his plans—reducing the number of bases to two. His main base would now take two huts, himself, and 17 men. Wild would still be in charge of a second base with 7 other men, to be landed further west along the coast. On 8 January 1912, *Aurora* entered a large bay, and a rocky area was sighted at last. Hurley, as official photographer was in the first boat launched to reconnoitre the site, on an afternoon of perfect weather. Mawson and Wild deemed it suitable for a base, and landing of stores began immediately and continued for 10 days, interrupted by periods of gale force winds. These wind conditions were just a taste of things to come, since they had unknowingly landed in possibly the windiest place on Earth. For those who wonder how much worse the winds were than the Ross Sea area, the chart below compares the mean monthly wind velocity for the Main Base and Western Base during the expedition, with modern data for McMurdo Sound.¹⁶



Finally, everything necessary for the largest base was unloaded – stores, fuel, timbers for two huts, nineteen dogs, wireless gear and masts, air tractor, and eighteen men were ready. On 19 January 1912, speeches were made, and toasts drunk, and Frank Wild appeared in costume as Sir Francis Drake for the occasion. Farewells were made and the men rowed ashore in the whaleboat, while Davis turned the ship west to find another landing site.

In the 21st century, it is difficult to comprehend the degree of isolation experienced on this expedition. Authorities at least had an idea of where to look for Scott's *Discovery* or Shackleton's *Nimrod* in the event that they failed to return. Mawson had no firm landing site planned, and men possibly scattered in multiple locations anywhere along nearly 2,000 miles of Antarctic coast. The only people who knew where the expedition had landed were those who sailed away on *Aurora* that day. There was absolutely no communication, unless they were successful with the wireless, which was itself an experiment. Most people today would find such isolation unimaginable, even a base on the Moon, were one to be constructed, would have better communications. Wild's appearance in costume probably served to add a touch of levity to a somewhat dramatic and emotional parting.

*It was with strange feelings that we watched the Aurora steam out of the Bay and become lost to our sight. Our link with home and civilisation was broken. We were isolated in icy solitudes.*¹⁷

None of Mawson's party had time to worry or mope, since there was an enormous amount of work to do. They had already experienced the prevailing winds, so the necessity of building

¹⁶ AAE Information: Published Scientific Reports available at: <https://mawsonshuts.antarctica.gov.au/>
McMurdo information from: Weatherbase.com, comparable historical data for McMurdo Sound not accessible.

¹⁷ Hurley *Argonauts* p 46.

the hut immediately was obvious. Unlike other expeditions of this era, Mawson did not hire cooks. Everyone would eventually take their share of this duty, with varying degrees of success. Cooking three course meals for eighteen hungry men is not a simple task, even under perfect conditions. Hannam was assigned as cook for the entire period of hut construction, and managed to turn out rough but edible meals using the sledging equipment—Nansen cookers and Primus stoves—until the kitchen stove was assembled and installed. The first meal served in the unfinished hut was on 23 January, with the men seated mostly on the floor. By 30 January the main hut was substantially completed, and furnished with a large table and bench seating. A proper sit-down housewarming dinner was held, complete with a menu card written by Hurley, and followed by a gramophone concert. Civilisation had arrived!

Scientific work was the focus of the expedition, and it commenced almost immediately. The meteorological instruments were set up in two screens—and continuous records commenced on 1 February. Dredging for marine specimens started on 5 February, and construction work continued on the smaller hut. It would be joined to the main hut, and furnished with workbenches for the geologists and biologists, and would house the engine, generator, and wireless equipment.

Meanwhile, *Aurora* steamed westwards. Mawson wanted the Western Base located about 300 miles west of his own, but there was no suitable site to be found. Previously sighted and named “lands” proved to be either mirages, or blocked by impenetrable sea ice. With coal supplies dwindling, the situation was becoming desperate, and none of the expedition members wanted to return home without landing. Finally, on 15 February, a large area of “barrier” ice was sighted, attached to a glacier, 1274 miles west of Mawson’s Main Base. Wild took the gamble that it was permanent ice, and planned to build his base inland from the barrier edge.¹⁸ Unloading began, requiring a flying-fox to be constructed to hoist materials up onto the top of the barrier. All was completed by 21 February, and Davis finally set course for Hobart with only 90 tons of coal remaining – just sufficient for the journey, however the light load made for reduced stability in heavy seas.

At Main Base, work commenced on the first of two huts for the magnetic instruments in late February. Magnetic observations for internationally agreed “Term days” had started on 20 February, and the recording magnetograph commenced operations in its new hut on 1 April.

Photographer

Hurley documented everything with the cinematograph and numerous still photos, and when not photographing lent a hand wherever it was needed, as well as taking his turns as cook, messman and nightwatchman. He had set up his small darkroom in the corner of the main hut behind the stove. It is not known precisely *when*, but at some stage in his tenure he wrote in pencil on the darkroom wall “*Near enough is not good enough*” an interesting insight into his approach to his work. It remains visible there today.¹⁹

Some of the men who kept diaries recorded impressions about their fellows fairly early in the expedition. Comments about Hurley include the following:

XavierMertz:

*Hurley is most cheerful; he plays the comedian among us. His wit is inexhaustible. We learnt a lot about photography from him.*²⁰

¹⁸ Amundsen had made his base in a similar situation. This news had been published, so Wild was probably aware of it.

¹⁹ <https://www.360cities.net/image/antarctica-cape-denison-hurleys-darkroom>. The motto is on the wall just above the Lumiere film pack.

²⁰ Mertz, *Swiss Alps* 1 March 1912

Walter Hannam:

*Hurley – one hard case. Enough said.*²¹

Charles Laseron (Taxidermist / Biological Collector):

*Hurley being the life and soul of the party. He acts the giddy goat better than anyone I know.*²²

Laseron's diary also contains a humorous scientific classification of his companions as different types of Sub-Genus of human "Homo Blizzardia". This composition was probably a contribution to the proposed hut newspaper *The Adelie Blizzard*, but the publication did not eventuate in 1912, amusing contributions were read aloud by Mawson instead. The newspaper was produced in 1913, but earlier contributions were not used. Laseron notes the species: "Blizzardia Hoylei" (Hoyle being Frank Hurley's nickname):

*This species can easily be recognised by the extraordinary size of its oral aperture, and by its production of a wide variety of noxious noises. Hair black and curly, expression of optic, ridiculous it has at rare intervals been known to utter sensible remarks, but this point must remain for the present in abeyance until such time as more data are accumulated.*²³

Cecil Madigan (Meteorologist): Madigan described Hannam as: *a coarse bore, a loathsome fellow.* For him, Hurley was: *a rather modified repetition of Hannam*²⁴

John Hunter (Biologist):

*He is a fine photographer and very keen on his work. He is a great favourite, especially with the Doctor and at times does things simply to please the Doctor. Personally he is most amusing and light hearted, and in a way perhaps not so solid as other members of our party. At times too he is a bit too daring; yet he is a very good sort His photographic work is exceedingly fine and will be a feature of the expedition.*²⁵

Belgrave Ninnis:

*It would be impossible to praise Hurley too much He is a glutton for work.*²⁶

Mawson made no specific comments about Hurley personally at this stage, but mentioned his success with unusual photographic efforts, including photographing the blizzard,²⁷ crawling along the sea shore to get a shot²⁸, and devising ways to take photographic enlargements of bacteria,²⁹ as well as praising his cooking and singing efforts:

*Hurley is cook and makes a great splash—ushering in the courses with duets between himself and Hunter.*³⁰

Hurley took advantage of circumstances as they presented themselves. When one of the magnetic huts was still unfinished, he seized the opportunity to use it as a shelter for filming in blizzard conditions.

²¹ Hannam, *Diary* 13 March 1912

²² Laseron, C *Diaries 1911-1913* Unpublished manuscript. State Library of NSW MLMSS385. Entry for 16 February 1912.

²³ Laseron, *Diary* Item 2. Related papers, unpaginated.

²⁴ Madigan, C *Madigan's Account* Ed J W Madigan Wellington Bridge Press 2012. 20 December 1911.

²⁵ Hunter, J *Rise & Shine: Diary of John George Hunter AAE 1911-13* Ed Jenny M Hunter Hunter House Publications Hinton 2011 Entry for 17 July 1912.

²⁶ Ninnis, B.E.S *Mertz and I* Ed. Mornement, A and Riffenburgh, B Erskine Press Norwich 2014 April 4 1912, p 277

²⁷ Mawson, D *Mawson's Antarctic Diaries* Ed F & E Jacka Allen & Unwin Australia North Sydney 1988. Entry for 10 April 1912

²⁸ Mawson, *Diaries* 21 March 1912

²⁹ Mawson, *Diaries* 25 March 1912

³⁰ Mawson, Sir Douglas *The Home of the Blizzard* William Heinemann London 1915 Further references will show: Mawson, *HOB*

While there still remained a breach in the wall, Hurley repaired there with his cinematograph camera and took a film showing the clouds of drift-snow whirling past. In those days we were not educated in methods of progression against heavy winds; so, in order to get Hurley and his bulky camera back to the Hut, we formed a scrum on the windward side and with a strong 'forward' rush beat our formidable opponent.³¹

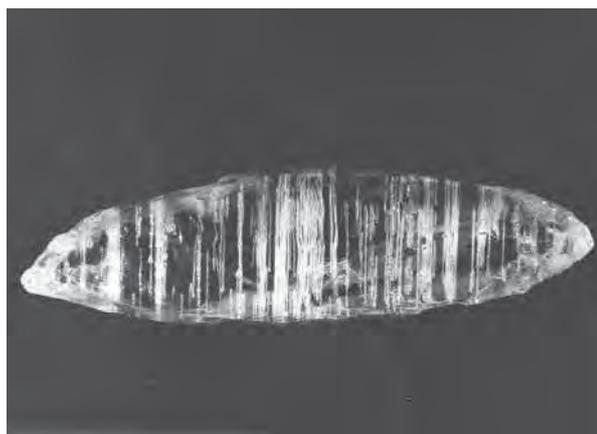
One man with a camera simply cannot be everywhere, and inevitably, many cinema scenes were either re-created or deliberately staged specifically for the purpose of filming, such as attempts to erect tents in high winds³²

On some occasions Hurley undoubtedly found that the camera was utterly inadequate to capture the circumstances. He had already experimented with darkroom image manipulations in his early days, and was later to suffer severe criticism for using such techniques in his war photographs. Hurley regarded himself as a "camera artist" as well as a documentarian, and some of his most famous AAE images are composites.

Hurley's photographs during the expedition can be divided into three broad categories – firstly those documenting the life and events of the expedition, secondly—those taken of the environment, landscape, wildlife and weather, and thirdly—those taken to document scientific subjects. Many readers will be familiar with Hurley's famous landscape and wildlife pictures. However, the "scientific photos" were quite unique, and are less well known today. They are rarely included in exhibitions or books – so I have included some here. His one failure was an inability to capture the Aurora Australis – the only two images are just overexposed blurs.



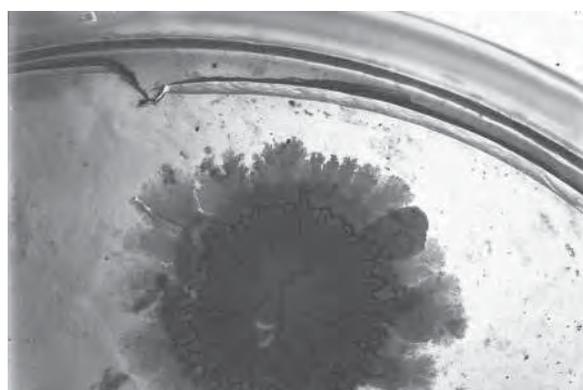
Bubble structures in ice.



Cross section of ice sample showing gas tubes



Glaciated rock surface – with ice axe for scale



Mould culture

³¹ Mawson, *HOB* p. 103

³² Mawson, *Diaries* 28 September 1912



Cape Royds hut. Artist, Sean Garwood.



'Path of Legends' – old boots left in the 'Nimrod' hut at Cape Royds. Artist, Sean Garwood.



Shackleton looks out of the hut window. Artist, Sean Garwood.

And of course there is the iconic “image” of the expedition – portraying perfectly the strength of the winds regularly experienced. This is however, a composite image.



An earlier uncoloured version. The toning adds great contrast, but much more swirling white has been added.

Showman

While Hurley earned the respect of his companions for his ability and daring with the camera, and the output of long hours spent in the darkroom, he also made a mark in other ways, including developing skills as a cook, and as a seemingly inexhaustible supply of humour.

Alasdair McGregor has suggested in his outstanding biography that there may have been a deeper reason for Hurley becoming the group comedian—as a way to overcome his working-class origins, especially when in the company of many much better educated men.³³ Madigan’s

³³ McGregor, *Frank Hurley* p. 60-61.

perception of Hurley and Hannam mentioned earlier shows that class distinctions could have been a factor apparent to Hurley. There was no overcoming his origins, but he was not alone in this on the expedition, and his writings show that Hurley had made considerable effort to educate himself. It is one thing to write well in the comfort of a warm room, but the following was written in a tiny tent on the Antarctic plateau, in pencil, with frozen fingers.

*the midnight sun lit up our tent and rough surroundings. It looked just as if the ocean had been suddenly frozen in storm, while the midnight sun in his glory tipped the rough waves with a golden glow. How weird and beautiful it all appears in Balm Summer and hard to realise that Winter will come, and all the dark, a hell of snowdrift and Blizzard.*³⁴

As a cook, Hurley was much admired, and often combined the serving of meals with entertainment. On 18 March 1912, he and Hunter (messman) served dinner dressed in underpants and football singlets. They sang songs composed for the occasion, paraded with a live penguin, and at the end of the meal presented everyone with a book from the library they thought most appropriate for them.

During a dinner to celebrate Mawson's and Hannam's shared birthday on 5 May 1912, songs were presented:

*In one of the songs was a skit on Dr M(awson) shooting birds. Frank (Hurley) let off a blank cartridge from his rifle—a bell rang, bulls eye marked on target at end of table, a skua fell on Close's head and flour poured on Hodge's head out of gramophone funnel. As all this was absolutely simultaneous the result was sublime*³⁵

Robert Bage's (Astronomer) diary records on 31 July 1912 that dinner was "a triumph. Model Aurora in pastry by Hoyle."³⁶ However, it cannot have been that remarkable, no-one else mentioned it! Laseron wrote in his later account of the expedition that Hurley "sometimes sacrificed tastiness for effect, deliberately making pastry tough so that it would stand up in the form of a ship or some grotesque shape".³⁷

Hurley was often doing skits and entertainments even when not cooking. On 7 March 1912, he and Laseron attended dinner dressed in blackface and costumed as a man and wife. Hurley wore three watches around his neck – one to tell the time, one to tell the distance, and one to tell him when the boss wasn't watching.³⁸

An acetylene generating system had been set up to provide gas light. Initially located in the workshop hut, the water in the system kept freezing, so it was moved into the warmer main hut, positioned on a platform above the table. John Close (Collector) was genuinely frightened that it would explode. This was not an idle concern, it was indeed quite dangerous, and many were worried about the safety of this position.

*Bick(erton) and Hannam are holding an argument as to who will get the "Championship" if the generator falls down. Odds are on Bick as Hannam sleeps almost under it and would probably be killed.*³⁹

Never one to let a chance for a prank go by, Hurley made plans for the next time that Close was on night watch—24 April. Hurley and Correll (Mechanic / Assistant Physicist) rigged up an

³⁴ Hurley, F *Sledging Diary 10 Nov 1912-10 Jan 1913* Unpublished Manuscript State Library of NSW MLMSS 389/1. Entry for 4 December 1912 (If you look this up, note that there is a transcript document provided by SLNSW, but this has been heavily edited, possibly by Hurley himself. The quote is from the manuscript.)

³⁵ Bage, R *Antarctic Diary of Robert Bage 1911-1912*. Unpublished manuscript. State Library of Victoria MS Box 4176/3. Entry for 5 May 1912.

³⁶ Bage, *Diary* 31 July 1912

³⁷ Laseron, C *South With Mawson* Angus & Robertson Sydney 1957 p. 51

³⁸ Stillwell, F *Still No Mawson: Frank Stillwell's Antarctic Diaries 1911-13* ed B Hince Australian Academy of Science Canberra 2012. Entry for 7 March. This was possibly a not very subtle dig at Mawson's management style.

³⁹ Bage, *Diary* 19 April 1912. "Championship" was hut parlance for a mistake, or complete stuff-up.

elaborate system of tubing between the generator and Hurley's bunk, which enabled him to blow bubbles through a can of water in the top of the generator at random intervals. Laseron writes that Close was so alarmed that he woke Mawson, who, being in on the joke, remarked that nothing could be done before morning, and calmly went back to bed, much to the consternation of poor Close.⁴⁰

During the winter months gambling was rife in the Hut. It started with Madigan running a sweep on the average wind speed for the month.⁴¹ Hurley and Hunter—who saved much of their monthly allowance of chocolate, tobacco and candles, the trading currencies of the hut—pooled their “finances”, storing their wealth in a large box. They made the mistake of letting others see how much they had one night, and Mawson called “What’s in the butcher’s shop” to be answered by “steaks” and a raid on their Bank ensued, rapidly followed by a counter-attack. The Bank of Hunter & Hoyle lost half its capital.⁴² Perhaps unsurprisingly, Hurley and Hunter launched their new gambling game a short time later, known as “Huntoylette”. This consisted of two separate numbered rotating wheels (film winders), each showing the numbers 1 to 12. Players bet on a number between 2 and 24 – the sum of the two numbers on the wheels after both were spun, with varying odds on each number. Most of the diary writers said they had fun, but the odds were heavily in the favour of the Bank. This game became a regular feature of Saturday nights, and gambling debts were taken quite seriously. Dr McLean was officially bankrupted at one point, and had to “sell” his possessions to pay off his debt.

Acting performances had started to appear from the time of the Midwinter dinner – when Madigan and McLean performed a scene from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, and Hunter delivered Henry V's speech before Harfleur.⁴³

On 6 October, Xavier Mertz's birthday – Hurley gave a performance dressing as John Close after sledging – covered with bandages and frostbites—and sang a topical song composed for the occasion. He also took part in the presentation of a short play titled “Revenge,” along with Laseron, Hunter and Correll. The plot is minimal – but diary reports indicate that it involved a lost son, a dying father and someone being throttled – all in the space of three minutes.

*it is marvellous how much twaddle can be jammed into such a short space of time. The best part of the show was the scragging scene at the end when all actors rolled on floor among the greasy buckets.*⁴⁴

This short “performance piece” led to the development of the undoubted highlight of entertainments for the expedition, which was worked out within a week, completely unrehearsed, and performed to universal acclaim on 12 October. This was the five act “Grand Opera”, *The Washerwoman's Secret*, presented by the *Sydney Its Society for Prevention of the Blues*, alias Hunter, Hurley, McLean, Laseron, Correll, and Bickerton, and Frank Stillwell (Geologist). The kitchen and darkroom provided the stage area, blankets were hung to provide curtains, and the audience were seated at the dining table. Hodgeman (Cartographer / Artist) carried a tray of chocolate during scene changes, just like at the theatre.

The improbable plot involved an old washerwoman Mrs Fuclose (Laseron), who was dying. Dr Stakanhoiser (Hurley) performed an operation, but she could not be saved. With her last breath she revealed to the Doctor that her daughter Jemima (McLean) was really the Princess of Theotherendofnowhere, whom she had rescued during the revolution. The Doctor, Baron de Brent (Laseron), Chevalier Tintail (Hunter) and Count Spithoopenkoff (Correll) all court Jemima

⁴⁰ Laseron, *South With Mawson*, p 62. Close was eventually let in on the joke.

⁴¹ Madigan, *Diary* 1 May 1912 Gambling on the monthly wind speed average in some form continued until October 1912.

⁴² Madigan, *Account and Bage, Diary* Entries for 11 May 1912

⁴³ Shakespeare *Julius Caesar* Act 4 Scene 3, *Henry V* Act 3 Scene 1

⁴⁴ Hannam, *Diary* 6 October 1912

seeking her hand in marriage to become a “prince”. Jemima rejects the Doctor, and the Baron (who already has four wives), and the Count—but declares her love for Chevalier Tintail. The Baron and the Count form an evil plot to kidnap Jemima, but they are overheard by the good Doctor. The Doctor reveals the plot to Jemima and the Chevalier, and the two men hide to catch the conspirators. The villains enter via a ladder to kidnap Jemima, but are caught and thrown out. The villains then accuse each other of betraying the plot, and manage to kill one another simultaneously while singing a duet “Mort de Botheo” in Italian. The Doctor gives his blessing to the Chevalier and Jemima, and the Village Idiot (Bickerton) makes an appearance for no apparent reason.

Only the outline and some of the words to the songs from this “opera” survive. In the usual fashion of the hut, the songs were made by putting new, often topical, words to popular tunes. Stillwell played the music for the entire production on the Faber Pump Organ, and Correll performed a piccolo solo. (A good supply of music for both popular tunes and hymns had been taken on the expedition.)

Perhaps the most complete “song” remaining from the opera is found in Eric Webb’s (Chief Magnetician) sledging diary, but sadly, there is no mention of the tune.⁴⁵ It is likely that Hurley wrote the words to his solo song, possibly with assistance for the medical terms. Its appearance in Webb’s diary suggests that it was recalled, and written down during their South Magnetic Pole sledging expedition. The opera was set in Berlin, plus the German accent was also probably a dig at Dr Xavier Mertz’s accented English.

The Doctor’s Song

*I vass ze doctor gross und learned, moderate vass mine fee
Und ven ze haf in ze head ze pain, I vas cut ze open to see*

*Mitt learned skill I diagnose, inzipient meningitis,
Ze patient hav ze compound fracture of ze appendicitis,
I twizzle mine knife into ze ribs to cure ze apoplexy,
And treat ze patient with the house-maids knees,
And cure ze hysteropexy, ze hyperhistropedexy⁴⁶*

The (captive) audience were delighted, reporting that it was “excruciatingly funny”⁴⁷ and “done exceedingly well.”⁴⁸ It was perhaps a good thing that everyone had a jolly time that night, because the next day became known as Black Sunday. One of the wireless masts collapsed in extremely high winds, putting an end to any hope of successful wireless communication.⁴⁹

Daredevil

Hurley frequently took risks, but on 3 September 1912, he came quite close to dying. During a rare period of calm he ventured out onto sea ice, alone, in an area beneath ice cliffs. Suddenly, the ice gave way beneath him, and both he and the camera were tossed into the freezing water. He barely managed to save himself by forcing his way through the thin ice – pushing the rescued camera ahead—until he reached a piece of heavier ice, and managed to pull himself

⁴⁵ Eric Webb, *Sledging Diary*. Unpublished manuscript. Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, MLMSS 2895

⁴⁶ Hysteropexy is a surgical treatment for a prolapsed uterus. This word either came from one of the doctors, or an encyclopaedia.

⁴⁷ Madigan, *Account* 12 October 1912

⁴⁸ Mawson, *Diaries* 12 October 1912

⁴⁹ The wind played havoc with attempts to raise the wireless masts. The lowest sections of both masts were erected on 27 April, mid sections added in July and August, top section of northern mast only erected 7 October. Unknown to Hannam, Macquarie Island had received parts of some messages. Hannam had not received any transmissions.

out of the water. He then raced back to the rocks, only to see that the blizzard winds were about to descend again and he was still two miles from the safety and warmth of the hut.⁵⁰ He made it back of course, in his stiff-frozen Burberrys, sufficiently chastened to take someone with him on most future occasions. Diary reports indicate that he spent the evening wearing pyjamas and a long overcoat, plus a straw hat. He used the bellows of his wet camera as a concertina, and sang minstrel songs.⁵¹

Sledger

One of Frank Hurley's major contributions to the AAE was as a member of the Southern Sledging Party, which travelled 300 miles inland from the base towards the South Magnetic Pole. His companions were Robert Bage (Leader) and Eric Webb. Their purpose was to take regular magnetic observations, and to reach a position as close to the Magnetic Pole as possible. This party would approach the pole from the north-west, the opposite side of the Pole from the journey made by Mawson, David and McKay in 1909.⁵²

The party left the huts on 10 November 1912. Most of the heavy sledging provisions had been taken 5 miles up the steep slopes inland from the huts in numerous sorties over the preceding weeks. Here they were left in a depot called "Alladin's Cave." When Bage's party reached the depot, they loaded their sledge with over 800lbs of supplies and equipment. Mawson, Mertz and Ninnis were also at the depot, and Hurley's photographs and Cine film of them with the dog teams are the last images of Ninnis and Mertz. Bage's team continued on to the 11 mile camp and there met up with their support party of Murphy (Leader), Hunter, and Laseron which had departed the hut earlier.

The two groups travelled together until 21 November 1912. They had reached 67.5 miles, and constructed a large depot marked by a large snow mound and a 20ft flag, named "Southern Cross" depot. This was the turn-around point for the support party, who headed back to the hut. Bage's party remained encamped, planning to depart the following day, but winds of 75 mph put a stop to that. On 24 November 1912 they woke to 50 mph winds – and what Webb described as "*another filthy day*" but they departed anyway.⁵³



On 7 December 1912, a set of observations were taken, with the tent sheltered by a large windbreak. The following day, travel was again impossible, so Webb decided to take a 24 hour "Quick Run" observation. An ice cavern was dug to provide shelter and space for cooking, and sleeping while the observation was done in the tent – the observer took readings every half hour, and a second man recording. Bage and Hurley also took turns at the readings to give Webb some rest. The ice cave however, was so cold that they called it "*the sarcophagus*", and as soon as the observation was completed, they gladly returned to the tent.⁵⁴

On 12 December 1912, they reached 200 miles from the huts and made another depot, this one was called "Lucky Depot." It was situated on a high point with good visibility all round, and

⁵⁰ Although we do not have Hurley's diary for this period, the incident was reported by Mawson, Stillwell, Madigan, Ninnis, Mertz, and Hunter in their respective diaries.

⁵¹ Madigan, *Account* 3 September 1912

⁵² A diagram showing the various magnetic readings of the AAE and BAE can be found in the AAE Scientific Reports Series B Vol I p.55 All of the reports are accessible online: <https://mawsonshuts.antarctica.gov.au/national-heritage/scientific-reports/>

⁵³ Webb, *Sledging Diary* 24 September 1912

⁵⁴ Webb, *Sledging Diary* 9 December 1912

again marked by a snow mound and a flag. Proceeding onwards, sledging conditions were occasionally perverse, since when the sun shone they were hot.

I always said this was a humorous country if you cared to look on the funny side of things. Sledging was terrifically hot, what with reflection from the snow and sun glare, that we were mightily glad to strip ourselves and haul in our shirts. What characters we looked! Faces nearly black with sunburn and seared with frostbites, begoggled and whiskered.⁵⁵

Hurley found that pursuing his profession while sledging on the plateau was tough indeed. The cameras often required running repairs, and were not easy to operate with stiff and frostbitten fingers, but worse was persistent problems with film. While Hurley does not mention this in his diary – Webb does.

Cine (Hurley) was wishing for a decent camera when he reckoned he could have built no end o f plates (or film). The camera we have has given trouble the whole way along and the film packs are worse..the films won't draw out of the packs.⁵⁶

On 21 December they reached their turning point—301 miles from the Main Base, and magnetic dip measurement of 89°43'05." Again, Webb took various observations for about four hours and after the usual flags, photographs, and three cheers for the King, they turned for home. The sledge was lighter now, and sometimes they could use a sail, since the wind was now mostly behind them. They needed to travel fast to reach the hut by the 15 January deadline. Christmas celebrations were postponed until they reached the "Lucky Depot" on 27 December 1912. Hurley was chef for the festive dinner, which was spread out into several courses served between observations taken by Webb, and the toasts were drunk with a brew called "Tanglefoot," made by boiling raisins in the primus alcohol and adding sugar and a limejuice nodule. (Very similar to Wild's brew on Elephant Island.)

No doubt the King and the the other toasts would have been amused at the grimness with which we drank their healths

We enjoyed our dinner thoroughly, probably because we were hungry and I have have never had a happier or more jolly Xmas dinner than the one spent with Bob Bage and Azimuth Webb at Lucky Depot.⁵⁷

Inspired by a good feeding, plus the alcohol, the following day they broke the 24 hour manhaul sledging record by covering 41.5 miles, with two rest breaks. However their good luck did not last. Feeling confident and travelling well, they had slightly increased their rations. On 5 January 1913 they should have been at "Southern Cross" depot, yet they could not find it. On the 6 January it was overcast and snowing, they could neither see the depot nor travel, and they reduced to half rations. To lighten the mood Hurley began composing a long poem about their Christmas celebration dinner and the fine vintage "wine"

*Then up and spoke our Azimuth Webb, "A noble draught" quoth he,
"It tangles alike both head and foot, and scarcely can I see.
"Pray tell me of its vintage, it seems without compare"
"It's Gut-rot-Hoyle 1912, a vintage very rare"
Then I tells them all about it, how the flaming stuff was brewed,
How I mixed the primus alcohol, with the raisins I had chewed.
I explain how to taste and sugar it, and give a proper boil,
And after straining thro' a sock, you've brewed the famous Hoyle.
Again quoth he "Then nineteen twelve is of a truth its date"
"But the primus alcohol you've used was only methylate. "⁵⁸*

⁵⁵ Hurley, *Sledging Diary* 19 December. Note that the passage in *Argonauts* p79-80 purporting to be a diary quote from this date bears absolutely no resemblance to the actual diary entry. Clearly a later composition.

⁵⁶ Webb, *Sledging Diary* 18 December 1912.

⁵⁷ Hurley, *Sledging Diary* 27 December, 1912.

⁵⁸ Recorded in Webb, *Sledging Diary*. Numerous poems and songs at the end of the diary.

On 7 January 1913, the weather was still bad, but they moved east hoping to find the depot without success, so they camped again. They decided that unless the weather cleared the following day, they would have to make a dash for the hut with the supplies they had left. That is exactly what happened, and all non-essentials including Hurley's cameras and Webb's instruments were abandoned, lightly loaded they made 19.5 miles the first day, and 20 miles on both 9 and 10 January 1913. On 10 January 1913 they came in sight of the sea, but were not sure where on the coast they were. Fortunately they sighted the Mackellar Islets so they now knew their position, and reached "Aladdin's Cave" after midnight, and the hut the following day, where they were met with a "great reception and were carried into the hut."⁵⁹

*The three of them were pretty well done out and looked thin on it, especially Webb.*⁶⁰

*They looked like so many bags of bones with plenty of sharp points sticking out they were in a pretty feeble state owing to being practically without food for 3 days on less than half ration Bob Bage was in a bad way with snowblindness, and all hands the same with emptiness, taking the hut crew 3 hours hard going to feed them.*⁶¹

Mawson Is Missing

Hurley was not yet done with sledging. *Aurora* arrived on 13 January 1913, but three of the four main sledging parties had not returned, their deadline was the 15 January. Madigan and Bickerton's parties returned in the subsequent days, but by 20 January, there was still no sign of Mawson. Davis was in command, and anxious to depart as soon as possible, since he knew that Wild's situation might be precarious. He had extremely difficult decisions to make. On 22 January, Davis announced that preparations would be made to re-supply the base for a relief party to remain for a second winter, and the wireless would be re-installed and improved.

On 25 January, Hurley, McLean and Hodgeman went out on a short journey to search for any sign of Mawson's party. Proceeding southeast from Aladdin's Cave, they laid three depots, each containing a bag of food rations, and notes indicating directions to the Cave. The last of these was laid on 28 January, 21 miles from the Cave. Low level snowdrift prevented them from seeing any sign of the missing men, and they camped for the night. After a final, unsuccessful, scan with the binoculars the following morning, they left, and returned to the hut. Mawson found that depot just a few hours after the search party had departed, and the food, plus the hope that it generated in him, probably saved his life.

Most readers will know the rest of the story. Ninnis and Mertz were dead, and Mawson eventually reached the Main Base alone. *Aurora* had departed just hours earlier, and a wireless message was sent, but Davis was unable to return. The ship proceeded to relieve Wild and his party, who had completed their own sledging expeditions. *Aurora* reached Hobart on 15 March 1913, leaving seven men in Antarctica for another year.

During this second year, Mawson came to appreciate the huge contribution that Hurley's presence made to the happiness of the group within the hut. The circumstances were very different, with less than half the previous complement, Mawson recovering slowly from his ordeal, much loved colleagues mourned by friends, and no-one really wanted to be there. In a wireless message sent to Hurley on 26 March 1913, Mawson used four unnecessary, and very expensive words, to say "We miss you here."⁶²

⁵⁹ Hurley, *Sledging diary* 11 January, 1913

⁶⁰ Hunter, *Rise & Shine* 11 January, 1913

⁶¹ Hannam, *Diary* 11 January, 1913

⁶² National Archives of Australia Series MP341/1 p. 134. The telegrams were collected to calculate charges for "non expedition related" messages. Mawson was charged £95-0-07 in total. This telegram cost 8s.06p. Approximate values today (AUD), \$22,800 total charges, this telegram, \$102. No wonder Mawson was stingy with allowing wireless use for private messages.

1913

An additional voyage to rescue Mawson required a significant refit to *Aurora*, and more wages, supplies and fuel to be paid for. Funds that the AAE did not have. The organising committee sent Davis to England to raise money, and Frank Wild also gave lectures in support of the Relief Fund. They had taken Hurley's film with them, and while it was not publicly released, it is possible that Shackleton saw it at a private showing.⁶³ Shackleton was then planning the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, and would have been looking for a photographer.

In Australia, Hurley's footage was screened nationally in July and August to raise money for the Relief Fund, but it was not as successful as everyone hoped and ultimately contributed little.

Hurley volunteered to go on the relief voyage, since he was keen to obtain more footage to improve the film, especially of Macquarie Island, and of the summer wildlife in Adelie Land, which he had missed filming since he was out sledging for more than two months. However, before he returned to Antarctica—Hurley had been offered another job, and he took that too. This was a contract for the Royal Dutch Steam Packet Company, which ran ships between Australia and the East Indies, to promote Java as a tourist destination.

Mawson was greatly annoyed by Hurley taking other commissions while he had AAE work unfinished, and this was the cause of considerable conflict between them. But while Mawson was responsible for clearing the AAE's ever increasing debts, he had the security of an academic position at Adelaide University to return to. Hurley had nothing. He needed to build his professional reputation to ensure a future income, and probably felt that he could ill afford to turn away any paying commission.

Hurley, Hunter, and Correll all returned to Adelie Land on the relief voyage. Correll as assistant photographer to Hurley. He had learnt much more about photography, obtained his own equipment, and learnt the Paget Color process during the time at home. Even better, he offered to go without salary, which no doubt appealed to the cash-strapped organisers. Hunter's biological work had been hampered during the first year, and he was keen to obtain a many more samples for the biological collection.

The voyage proceeded uneventfully, and after collecting the Macquarie Island men, Mawson, and his companions, *Aurora* cruised along the coast doing oceanographic work, photography, and specimen collecting. Finally, they headed home, reaching Adelaide on 26 February 1914, arriving to a tumultuous welcome and a whirlwind of engagements.

There were Receptions at Adelaide Town Hall and Adelaide University, but it is likely that McLean, Hurley and Hunter returned home to Sydney. *The Sydney Daily Telegraph* published some of Hurley's photos on 3 March, and on 6 March, *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported an interview with Hurley, with an intriguing mention at the end of it, that he had applied to go on Shackleton's expedition. This would indicate that Hurley *must* have been in contact with Shackleton *before* he went on the relief voyage.

Mawson travelled to Sydney briefly for a reception at Sydney Town Hall on 12 March, attended by Hurley, Hunter, Hannam, and McLean. Mawson then returned to Melbourne for his wedding on 31 March, and he and his bride Paquita, plus Archie McLean and Captain Davis sailed for England the following day. McLean had been engaged to help Mawson prepare the expedition book. Mawson had asked Hurley to hand all relevant prints and negatives to McLean before he departed Sydney. Hurley sent some material, but not the images that Mawson had asked for, and no negatives or colour plates. Hurley appears to have abandoned his own credo at this time, but again, there may have been a financial imperative.

⁶³ Ponting's films of Scott's *Terra Nova* expedition were being shown to raise funds for the families of the men who had died.

Instead of finishing the AAE work, Hurley took on another contract, this time as Cinematographer for Australian adventurer Francis Birtles on a three month expedition to the Gulf of Carpentaria in a Model T Ford, leaving Sydney on 11 April 1914. Since there was scarcely anything that could be called a road suitable for a motor car in much of remote Australia, it promised to be an exciting trip⁶⁴. Hurley's account tells that he received a cable from Shackleton at Burketown, confirming his appointment to the ITAE and had to "rush" back to Sydney to make the ship for Buenos Aires. Hurley arrived back in Sydney on 27 July.

Mawson had become disenchanted with his former leader while he was trying to organise the expedition that developed into the AAE, and he advised Hurley against joining Shackleton's new expedition. He warned Hurley that if he did choose to go with Shackleton, to be wary in financial dealings, to get written agreements, and to ensure that he retained a portion of the film rights. Mawson firmly instructed Hurley (again) to leave all of the AAE negatives and plates where he could access them on his return to Australia.⁶⁵ Hurley left some additional work with the Kodak office, but still no colour plates, and as a result – none of the colour plates in *The Home of the Blizzard* are Hurley's. They are all Correll's.

Shackleton seems to have placed Hurley in charge of obtaining all the photographic gear necessary for the ITAE, a long list of equipment he was taking appeared in *The Lone Hand* magazine,⁶⁶

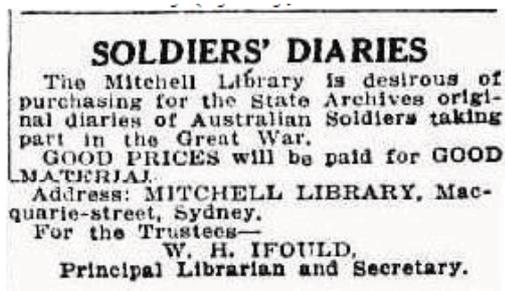
and there was a display in a photographic shop window showing just a portion of the gear, along with some of Hurley's images.⁶⁷

It is not known precisely when Hurley left Sydney, since, unusually, he seems to have slipped out unnoticed. He did make a splash in New Zealand, however. The Mayor of Wellington presented him with a New Zealand flag to carry on the expedition in the spirit of fellowship between Australia and New Zealand.⁶⁸ Hurley sailed on *SS Remuera* which departed Wellington, New Zealand on 24 September 1914 bound for Buenos Aires.⁶⁹

A Note On Hurley's Diaries

Throughout most of his later life, Hurley kept diaries while on expeditions, but the only diary that survives from his time with the AAE is his diary of the Southern sledging journey. Hurley makes several references to another diary in his 1925 account, *Argonauts of the South*, and entire passages are "quoted" from it.⁷⁰ However, in August 1919, Hurley had sold his AAE sledging diary, his *Endurance* diaries, and his War diaries to the Mitchell Library (State Library of NSW.)

Captain Frank Hurley had returned to Australia in September 1918 with his pregnant bride Antionette Leighton, who gave birth to twin daughters in May 1919. Hurley therefore had an urgent need to establish a home for his new family, and possibly needed money to do so. The



⁶⁴ They both later reported that the worst road of the entire trip was between Sydney and Parramatta, many Sydneysiders would say nothing has changed. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/115808083>

⁶⁵ Correspondence quoted in McGregor, *Frank Hurley* p 86,87

⁶⁶ *The Lone Hand* November 1914 Accessed via Trove: <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-392052101/>

⁶⁷ Reported in *The Farmer & Settler* 21 August 1914. The location not mentioned, likely the Kodak shop in George St. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/116707100>

⁶⁸ *Wellington Evening Post* 24 September 1914. <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/EP19140924.2.12>. The spirit of fellowship between the two nations was about to be forged in blood at Gallipoli. Hurley's sledging companion Lt Robert Bage was killed there on 7 May 1915.

⁶⁹ The ship was captained by Herbert Greenstreet, father of ITAE member Lionel Greenstreet.

⁷⁰ Hurley, *Argonauts* p 51-56 for example.

Library at that time had advertised that they would pay good prices for interesting diaries. Whether the Library approached Hurley, or vice versa is not known, but the Library decided that Hurley's diaries were very interesting indeed, and the price they paid—a princely £600.⁷¹ More than enough to set up a home. Why was another AAE diary not sold at the same time? Its existence must be considered questionable.

In Conclusion

When Frank Hurley set out to join Shackleton in 1914, he was more than just a skilled photographer and darkroom wizard, he was an experienced *polar* photographer, explorer and adventurer. He had traversed the polar plateau manhauling an 800lb sledge, and travelled the remote Australian outback in a Model T Ford. He had spent a year in Antarctica enduring some of the worst weather imaginable, and knew from grim experience that the place could easily kill you. He knew the importance of keeping spirits up in even the direst of circumstances, and the value of extracting what fun there is to be had from any situation. He knew how to bake a loaf of bread or a birthday cake, cook a good meal, and perform in an “opera.” He had been faced with life or death decisions, and experienced short rations. He could write amusing doggerel, make up songs and wear a ridiculous outfit to cheer people up. He knew how to make do and mend, how to cobble together a much needed gadget, and fix just about anything. He was also accustomed to sledge dogs, although he had only made one short dog-sledging trip, as far as Aladdin's Cave, and return.⁷²

Hurley knew the value of what he could contribute to Shackleton's expedition. He had taken Mawson's advice about protecting his interests, and had the self-confidence necessary to negotiate a favourable deal, even with a person as famous as Sir Ernest Shackleton. Not bad for a working-class colonial kid who had run away from school aged 13. Hurley was *exactly* the kind of man that Shackleton needed, and having served his “Apprenticeship” he was eminently qualified to face the trials ahead. The tale of the *Endurance* has captured imaginations for generations, and Frank Hurley's extraordinary images have played a significant part in that.



Ice cliffs near Land's End, west of the AAE Main Base, Commonwealth Bay.

⁷¹ Source: State Library of NSW response to the authors enquiry. Average wages at the time less than £3 per week. (Measuringworth.com) Rental of a substantial home in Sydney's expensive eastern suburbs –around £3 - £5 per week. (Sydney Morning Herald advertisements. Accessed via Trove)

⁷² Sledging trip 21 – 25 August 1912 with Mertz and Bage to rescue dogs previously left behind. One dog died and the others required care and re-feeding before returning to Base.

Except where indicated otherwise, all photographs are by Frank Hurley.

Units are expressed in miles, since this was the measurement used during the expedition.

Acknowledgements

With thanks to the extensive AAE material in the Manuscript and Picture collections of The Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, and their invaluable “Ask A Librarian” service.

Thanks also to the State Library of Victoria for Robert Bage’s Diary.



Biography



Karyn studied History and Psychology, planning to become a History teacher, but after graduation, her career took a different path—starting as an Air Traffic Controller, and ending in Logistics. She has been interested in Polar exploration for most of her life, and has read and collected books covering the heroic era expeditions, with a particular focus on Mawson and the Australasian Antarctic Expedition. In 2015, she was so infuriated by David Day’s views about Mawson that she researched and wrote a refutation of his arguments, *The Crevasse: A Critical Response to David Day’s Flaws In The Ice* which was published by Erskine Press. Now retired, Karyn volunteers as a Researcher and Grant Writer for the Mawson’s Huts Foundation. Her current

project is compiling a daily chronicle of the AAE based on expedition diaries. Karyn lives in Sydney with her polar history library, her supportive husband, and a cat who has recently taken up Zoom-bombing.

The Mawson’s Huts Foundation

The Mawson’s Huts Foundation—a charity established in 1996—has funded and organised fifteen major expeditions to conserve the historic buildings at the AAE main base in remote East Antarctica. The Mawson’s Hut Replica Museum, located on the Hobart waterfront, is a full-scale replica of the original expedition hut. Supported by enthusiastic staff and volunteers, the Museum is consistently ranked the No 1 Museum in Hobart on Trip Advisor. All profits from Museum entry fees contribute to the Foundation’s important conservation work.

For further information please visit the Foundation’s Website: www.mawsons-huts.org.au

Sir Ernest Shackleton, C.V.O.

An Enduring Legacy

Christine Hurley lives in Hobart, Tasmania and describes herself as bit of an Antarctic fan (if not an addict!). She told me, *'I have lived and breathed an interest in Antarctica since reading a book, The White South, by author Hammond Innes, when growing up in London in the 1950s. I used to think that when I grew older, I could fly to South Africa from London and watch the ships leaving for Antarctica – I never thought I would be living in Tassie and able to watch those ships heading south on a regular basis.* In 2013 Christine submitted a thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree Bachelor of Antarctic Science (Honours) at the Institute for marine and Antarctic Studies, The University of Tasmania.

She went on to explain, 'I have been privileged to visit Antarctica three times from South America, on the last expedition going ashore at South Georgia and visiting Shackleton's grave at Grytviken. Just the most incredible experience. I have been on two Qantas overflights of the continent and participated in a Shackleton centenary voyage from New Zealand in 2009. This proved unsuccessful because of very heavy ice in the Ross Sea that year – we were unable to gain access to the continent. A big disappointment, but we did get to see several of the beautiful New Zealand sub-Antarctic islands, and visited Macquarie Island twice, both travelling south and when returning north.

I have also been involved with the University of Tasmania since arriving in Hobart in 1972. I worked there in an administrative capacity for some 25 years, during which time the Institute of Antarctic and Southern Ocean Studies (IASOS) was founded. Following retirement and as a mature age student I enrolled in the University's Antarctic Science undergraduate degree course, first offered in 2005, followed by Honours, completed in 2014. Previously located on the University's Sandy Bay campus, IASOS has since morphed into the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS), located on the docks adjacent to Salamanca Place.

In 2014 The Royal Society of Tasmania accepted a paper based upon my Honours thesis – Shackleton – An Enduring Legacy – for inclusion in its Papers and Proceedings, Volume 148. I would like to acknowledge the help of the Hon Editor, Margaret Davies in the writing of this paper, and to thank the Society for its subsequent acceptance.

With her kind permission, I reproduce an extract of her thesis here (other interesting extracts will be reproduced in future JCS Journal publications).

Abstract

Sir Ernest Shackleton was an intrepid explorer and voyaged to Antarctica four times between 1901 and 1922, participating in Scott's *'Discovery'* expedition as third officer and later leading his own *'Nimrod'*, *'Endurance'* and *'Quest'* expeditions. This thesis examines Shackleton's contribution to polar exploration and his enduring legacy to subsequent generations. His legacy is represented in leadership.

training methods and contemporary management techniques, heroism and the making of heroes, and Antarctic tourism, particularly *'adventure'* tourism.

Shackleton's name is one which I associate with the twentieth century. From growing up in England during the Second World War, and as a young adult in the nineteen-fifties and aptly named *'swinging'* sixties, my first memories are associated with the names of polar, wartime and mountaineering heroes, and of literature depicting their adventures. Ernest Shackleton,

Robert Falcon Scott, Douglas Bader (Reach for the Sky), Guy Gibson (The Dam Busters), Thor Heyerdahl (The Kon Tiki Expedition), Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tensing Norgay (The Ascent of Everest).

Later the boundary extended even further than the Antarctic, Europe, or the Himalayas, to Neil Armstrong and 'Buzz' Aldrin's famous walk on the moon's surface in 1969. I sat in my parents' lounge-room a few weeks before leaving England to live in Australia, gazing out at the moon shining over the English Channel and at the same time viewing a relatively small, black, and white, television screen depicting the lunar landing module's landing.

One of the first movies seen was *Scott of the Antarctic*, with John Mills playing the iconic England adventurer, Scott. The first 'adult' book which I read was Hammond Innes' *The White South*,



Portrait: Eva Mout

closely followed by Maurice Hertzog's *Annapurna* and Sir John Hunt's *The Ascent of Everest*.

In comparing Shackleton with Roald Amundsen, Douglas Mawson and Robert Falcon Scott, this thesis concludes that Shackleton achieved the impossible through a combination of finely tuned leadership and management skills together with a strong component of luck. Shackleton's support for his men, and for his family and friends, and their reciprocal support for him, rendered the impossible achievable, albeit against outstanding odds.

Unpacking Shackleton's Contribution

Sir Ernest Shackleton was a complex and confounding figure. A giant of the Heroic Era of Antarctic exploration, with his endeavours helping to define this period, his life was shaped clearly by his experiences 'South'. Unpacking Shackleton's contribution focuses on his four voyages and his 'enduring legacy' to future generations, central elements of the key questions underpinning this thesis. This research focuses particularly upon Shackleton's leadership attributes; his contribution to geographic and scientific discovery and exploration; the subject of heroism including the changing face of heroism and the making of heroes; the contemporary Antarctic including 'adventure' tourism, ship-based tourism, and continental over-flights, and to current leadership training methods and contemporary management techniques.

Leadership Attributes

Examples of Shackleton's leadership attributes have been sourced from direct observations made by his officers and his men, his contemporaries and from more recent authors and biographers. These include:

Roald Amundsen, famous Norwegian explorer and first to reach the South Pole, has famously been quoted as saying that 'Sir Ernest Shackleton's name will for evermore be engraved with letters of fire in the history of Antarctic exploration' (cited in Huntford, 1985, frontispiece).

Niven (2000), when assessing Vilhjalmar Steffanson's ill-fated 1913 Arctic expedition and the loss of the vessel *Karluq*, referred to Shackleton's leadership skills from a more oblique, third party, perspective. Dr Alistair Forbes Mackay and James Murray, two of the *Karluq* expeditioners

may themselves have been compromised through the memory of their unequivocal support for Shackleton with whom they had served on the *Nimrod* expedition. Mackay and Murray were among those who died on the *Karluik* expedition.

Bonington (1981, pp. 302-303), explorer, adventurer, and mountaineer, writing some sixty years later of the perils faced by Shackleton and his crew following the loss of the *Endurance*, notes 'But for Ernest Shackleton's extraordinary powers of leadership, the twenty-seven men under his command would almost certainly have died'.

Scientific Discovery and Exploration

Significant contributions to scientific discovery and exploration made by the *Nimrod* expedition, under Shackleton's leadership, include expedition parties being the first to (a) climb Mount Erebus, (b) reach the South Magnetic Pole and (c) pioneer the original route to the South Pole (Riffenburgh, 2004). These feats were made public through the Wellington, New Zealand, correspondent of *The Times* newspaper, who cabled preliminary details of the scientific results of the expedition to *The Times'* London office. Shackleton later reported at length to the Royal Geographical Society on results achieved, following his return (Shackleton, 1909).

Shackleton was only too aware of the importance to sponsors of polar expeditions of a commitment to undertake scientific research. This was often essential to securing financial backing. Proposals for scientific discovery and exploration scheduled to be undertaken during the *Endurance* expedition were cut short following the loss of the ship to the ice, but all was not sacrificed. While on the island of South Georgia awaiting departure for the Antarctic, members of the expedition had been instrumental in the establishment of meridian transit beacons in King Edward Cove (Burton, 2010).

Details of Shackleton's contribution to scientific discovery and exploration are documented in greater detail in Chapter 4. However, a more emotive viewpoint expressed by biographer Dr Hugh Robert Mill successfully captures the popular perception of Shackleton which has endured and grown in stature over the years: 'No-one ever exemplified better the pure romance of exploration' (Mill, 1923, p. 289).

Heroism, the Changing Face of Heroism, and the Making of Heroes

In the northern hemisphere the area which became known as the Arctic (named for Arktos: the Bear) had been identified comparatively early in human development. Details, indeed, the very existence, of the area believed to balance the Arctic on the opposite side of the world, the Antarktos, remained open to conjecture. During the Antarctic Heroic Era there was a determined focus upon the extension of human reserves beyond what might perhaps be considered reasonable 'for king and country'. While in many cases the expeditions were driven by nationalism, financial exigencies in funding the expeditions often required adherence to the goal of scientific exploration.

The Antarctic has long presented a challenge for human endeavour. For example, Amundsen, upon learning of Americans Frederick Cook and Robert Peary's conflicting claims of having conquered the North Pole in April 1909, abandoned his plans for an expedition to the Arctic and instead changed his focus southwards. Scott, on his second expedition south in *Terra Nova* in 1910, died with his companions in their attempt to be the first to reach the South Pole. Shackleton, having accompanied Scott on the *Discovery* expedition and upon learning of Amundsen's success in being first to reach the Pole, focused instead upon being the first to cross the Antarctic continent from west to east. There is room for conjecture as to whether he would have succeeded, had the *Endurance* not been lost and had the expedition continued in its

proposed endeavours (Fuchs, 1975). It would be another forty years or so before a further attempt to achieve Shackleton's goal was made by Sir Vivian Fuchs from the west, supported by Sir Edmund Hillary from the east, and major difficulties would be encountered even then, notwithstanding the availability of modern equipment and technology.

Of equal importance, the cultural perceptions of what today constitutes "heroism" have changed in the last one hundred years, from 'imperial' expectations at the end of the nineteenth century, through impediments to exploration arising from the two World Wars, to the late twentieth century and beyond when observations of the polar regions can be made from space. Evidence to date indicates that the making of heroes is not necessarily confined to any one individual or generation, but only occurs in extreme and often exceptional circumstances through the determined willpower of an exceptional individual or group. Professor Frank Debenham, geologist in Scott's *Terra Nova* expedition, writes: 'It has sometimes been called the Heroic Age of Antarctic exploration, but you would find very few of those who took part in it who like that name, for heroes belong to any age and every path of life' (Debenham, 1959, p. 95).

Barczewski (2007), in *Antarctic Destinies: Scott, Shackleton and the Changing Face of Heroism*, draws a comparison between Shackleton and Scott which identifies what is described as a decline in Scott's reputation and a re-emergence of Shackleton's persona. However, from research undertaken for this study it appears that observers at the time, and authors and biographers since, have exhibited a bias in respect of either Shackleton or Scott for whatever may be their personal reasons. Does personality play a part in the success or otherwise of one's motivation, and to what extent?

Shackleton was considered by many to be a popular and successful leader. Amundsen was without doubt successful, achieving the ultimate prize, the South Pole. Mawson, too, achieved great success, but in being commonly referred to as 'Le Dux' by his men, may not have enjoyed peer popularity to the extent that Shackleton did. Scott was something of an enigma, being bound by his British upper-class Royal Naval background. The fact that Scott and his companions died on their return from reaching the South Pole while others, including Shackleton, survived but without reaching it, cast a shadow over his legacy compared to other Antarctic explorers.

Antarctic Tourism: 'Adventure Tourism', Ship-Based Tourism and Continental Over-Flights

Has Ernest Shackleton had an influence upon twentieth/twenty-first century Antarctic tourism?

Veterans of mountaineering and polar expeditions now vie with each other to re-enact a challenging journey to the South Pole or a traverse of the Antarctic continent under hostile and unpredictable conditions, or to emulate Shackleton's hazardous journey by small boat from Elephant Island to South Georgia and his crossing of this glaciated and mountainous island from where they landed at King Haakon Bay in the west, to Stromness in the east.

In addition to this more extreme form of 'adventure tourism' there is a growing demand by wealthy 'armchair' travellers to participate in luxury voyages to the Antarctic Peninsula, the Falkland Islands and South Georgia, or to the Ross Sea and areas made famous by Shackleton and other Heroic Era explorers. During the southern summer, expedition ships visiting the Ross Sea commonly leave from southern ports in Australia and New Zealand, often with stops at sub-Antarctic islands south of New Zealand and at Macquarie Island, spending anything from ten days to three or four weeks at sea. Voyages departing from South America for the Antarctic Peninsula leave from the port of Ushuaia in Argentina and cross Drake Passage in under two days. These voyages are usually of a week's duration, while those incorporating the Falkland Islands and South Georgia take up to a month.

Greg Mortimer, renowned explorer, mountaineer and until recently owner of *Aurora Expeditions* travel agency, now associated with adventure travel company *World Expeditions*, operates voyages both to the Ross Sea area and to West Antarctica. Some of the groups which he has conducted personally have attempted to include a traverse (available only to experienced mountaineers) of Shackleton's route across the mountainous interior of the island of South Georgia. Not every attempt has been completed (or could even be commenced) due to extreme difficulties of terrain and climatic conditions. Shackleton's success in making the crossing, following on as it did from many months' deprivation on the ice, exigencies of small boat travel to Elephant Island and beyond, together with lack of equipment, appropriate clothing, or food supplies, renders his achievement even more noteworthy.

Two recent expeditions have anticipated the forthcoming centenary of Shackleton's 1914-1917 *Endurance* expedition:

(1) Renowned adventurer Tim Jarvis was successful in leading an expedition which achieved not only a re-enactment of the voyage of the lifeboat *James Caird* from Elephant Island to South Georgia but also the crossing of the island to Stromness in February 2013 (Robertson and Darby, 2013, pp. 25-6), and

(2) Veteran explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes was forced to withdraw from a planned crossing of the Antarctic continent from the Weddell Sea to the Ross Sea during winter 2013 after suffering severe frostbite while in training for the proposed expedition (Collins, 2013, p. 13).

The New Zealand airline *Air New Zealand* operated over-flights to areas of East Antarctica some forty years ago until the tragic loss of its DC-10 aircraft which crashed into the volcanic Mount Erebus, Ross Island, on 28 November 1979 (Hickson, 1980; Mahon, 1984). Thereafter, there was a lengthy period without over-flights until the Australian *Qantas Airways* more recently introduced half a dozen over-flights every summer from Adelaide, Melbourne, Perth, and Sydney. These flights are much sought-after and are often booked up for one or two years ahead.

Regular itineraries drawn up by *Aurora*, *Heritage* and *Quark Expeditions* for their Antarctic voyages and *Croydon Travel* (agents for *Qantas Airways* over-flights) confirm the continuing influence of Shackleton upon tourism in these regions. *The Heritage Trust of South Georgia* and the Scottish *James Caird Society* also pay due deference to Shackleton's enduring legacy and his influence upon tourism, which has resulted in increasing numbers wishing to visit South Georgia.

Current Leadership Training Methods and Contemporary Management Techniques

In recent years many educational institutions, particularly in the United States, have based their leadership training methods and management technique courses upon methods pioneered – wittingly or unwittingly – by Ernest Shackleton. Was his enviable reputation for leadership and management expertise based solely upon a gregarious personality and a genuine rapport with his fellow men, or upon something more diverse?

A more recent example of exceptional twentieth century leadership and management ability is Sir Reginald Ansett, founder of Ansett Transport Industries (Wilson, 2002). Ansett, who built up a respected road and aviation empire in the mid/late twentieth century, was a passionate advocate of the Calvin Coolidge definition of leadership:

Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence.
Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent.
Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.
Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.
Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.
The slogan "press on" has solved, and always will solve,
the problems of the human race (*cited in Courtenay, 1992, Book One, p. 21*)

Shackleton's enduring legacy in the field of leadership, geographic and scientific discovery and exploration, heroism, training, management, and tourism has extended over many areas in the last one hundred years and its influence continues to be felt. However, his greatest legacy (and particularly from an Australian perspective) is in an area different from those areas initially identified as key criteria for analysis. Shackleton's commitment and passion for representing his country, Great Britain, in his ongoing preoccupation with Antarctic exploration, represented a major contribution towards Great Britain's later claim to the 'Australian Quadrant' and sovereignty over 42% of the Antarctic continent. Following persistent prompting by Australia, this was followed by the transfer of that sovereignty to Australia in 1933, resulting in the proclamation of the Australian Antarctic Territory in 1936 (Kriwoken, Jabour and Hemmings, 2007).



Alexandra Shackleton examines the Bible her grandfather carried to Antarctica, her face reflected on his portrait.

Shackleton's Angel

by Dr Paul. G Firth

South Georgia Island is a tortured upheaval of mountain and glacier that falls in chaos to the jagged coastline of the South Atlantic Ocean.¹ From thirty miles of this wind-blasted sub-Antarctic wilderness came walking on the afternoon of the 20 May 1916 "a terrible-looking trio of scarecrows,"² soaked to the skin, cold, and exhausted. Their leader, Ernest Shackleton, wrote in 1917, "I know that during that long and racking march of thirty-six hours over the unnamed mountains and glaciers of South Georgia it seemed to me often that we were four, not three."³

Shackleton and his two companions Frank Worsley and Tom Crean had an epic story of survival that would defy belief were it not true. They had navigated an open lifeboat from Antarctica to South Georgia Island, across hundreds of miles of the worst seas on the planet. Then they walked over the uncharted saw-tooth spine of South Georgia to reach help at the Stromness whaling station on the east side of the island. But while the details of their marathon journey have been extensively documented, the mysterious addition to their party has not been well explained.



Shackleton's Angel

Shackleton's biographers suggested that some have interpreted the account as Shackleton's attempt to court publicity, at a time of national emotion following the trauma of World War One, by producing his own "Angel of Mons."⁴ Following the ferocious Battle of Mons in August 1914, numerous publications described angels who emerged to save outnumbered British troops from the German onslaught.⁵ There were no primary reports to support these rumors of divine intervention, however. Rather, the intense patriotism and propaganda of the time may have helped to popularize and sustain these myths.⁵

In contrast, however, Shackleton's experience was clearly documented, and confirmed by the others: "I said nothing to my companions (during the crossing), but afterwards Worsley said to me 'Boss I had a curious feeling on the march that there was another person with me.' Crean confessed to the same idea."³

Their expedition ship *Endurance* had left South Georgia for Antarctica in December 1914.³ They had sailed into the pack ice of the Weddell Sea, intending to land a party of men and achieve the first crossing of the continent. Instead, the *Endurance* was beset and finally crushed by the ice. The twenty-eight men of the expedition camped for months on the shifting ice until the pack broke up under them and thrust their three lifeboats into the open sea.

Surviving six days of exposure and hypothermia, they made land on Elephant Island, a desperately isolated rocky outcrop surrounded by treacherous reefs and ice. From here, Shackleton decided to take four men back to South Georgia to find rescue. Navigating an open

¹ Lansing A. *Endurance – Shackleton's Incredible Voyage*. New York: Carroll & Grafton, 1986.

² Worsley FA. *Endurance – An Epic of Polar Adventure*. New York: WW Norton & Company, 2000.

³ Shackleton E. *South – The Endurance Expedition*. New York: Signet, 1999.

⁴ Fisher M, Fisher J. *Shackleton*. London: Barrie, 1957.

⁵ Machen A. *The Bowmen and Other Legends of the War*. London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1915.

22-foot lifeboat by sextant and compass 800 miles across the brutal autumn South Atlantic, they made landfall on the storm-wracked west side of the island two weeks later.

Recovering from “trench foot” and exposure suffered during the two weeks of prolonged cold and damp, they were still exhausted by their sea voyage.

But deliverance lay with the whaling settlements on the more sheltered leeward side of the island. Their battered boat was now unseaworthy. With the lives of the men on Elephant Island hanging on a rescue, the only option was for some of the party to cross the inland on foot.

The weather was wet and ferociously cold, visibility was frequently poor, and the broken terrain was unexplored and unknown. Their clothes were threadbare, they had no portable shelter, and their climbing equipment amounted to little more than a length of rope, some brass screws driven through their boots, and a carpenter’s adze.² Crossing the mountains in uncertain weather risked once again exposure, hypothermia, and inevitable death.

In his own expedition account, Frank Worsley wrote, “*While writing these seven years after (almost), each step of the journey comes back clearly, and even now I again find myself counting our party – Shackleton, Crean and I and – who was the other? Of course, there were only three, but it is strange that in mentally reviewing the crossing we should always think of a fourth, and then correct ourselves Three or four weeks after (arriving at Stromness) Sir Ernest and I, comparing notes, found that we each had a strange feeling that there had been a fourth in our party, and Crean afterwards confessed to the same feeling.*”²

As mountaineers began to explore other remote parts of the globe in the decades that followed, similar descriptions of sensed companions began to accumulate in expedition accounts of extreme high-altitude settings.⁶ Comparable experiences have also been reported or described in the context of a variety of situations such as religious experiences, sleep disorders, neurological conditions, therapeutic or recreational drug use, and various states of intense psychological or physiological stress.^{7,8}

While an early and famous example, the phenomenon Shackleton’s party reported is therefore not an isolated occurrence. The “feeling of a presence” or “sensed presence” can loosely be defined as the subjective experience of the presence of an external entity, being, or individual, despite no clear objective sensory or perceptual evidence. Various models have been proposed to explain or interpret this phenomenon.

A neurological model focuses the anatomical and physiological correlates of perceptual experience. Integration of proprioceptive, vestibular, and other sensory input occurs at the angular gyrus of the right temporo-parietal cortex, generating a coherent sense of bodily position. Disruption of this area of the cortical function, whether by experimental electrodes or seizures, is associated with a sense of being outside of the body, or of a nearby illusionary person.^{9,10} The sense of the phantom presence of another being may be part of a spectrum of conceptual anomalies that include out-of-body experiences and altered perceptions of body proportions.⁶

The three men walked across broken terrain for thirty-six hours, with no prolonged sleep or rest. They were exhausted and cold.^{2,3} A neurological explanation for these accounts, therefore, would involve perceptions arising from a low-level disruption of visuo-spatial integration in the parietal cortex, associated with extreme physiological stress during the latter part of their journey.

⁶ Firth PG, Bolay H. 2004. “Transient High Altitude Neurological Dysfunction: An Origin in the Temporoparietal Cortex.” *High Alt Med Biol* 2004;5(1):71-75.

⁷ Geiger J. *The Third Man Factor: Surviving the Impossible*. New York: Weinstein Books, 2009.

⁸ Barnby JM, Bell V. The Sensed Presence Questionnaire (SenPQ): initial psychometric validation of a measure of the “Sensed Presence” experience. *Peer J* 2017; 5: e3149. doi: 10.7717/peerj.3149

An alternative model situates an explanation at a higher level of functioning, as a subconscious psychological coping mechanism. The sensed presence may be an adaptive response, a normal reaction to an abnormal situation.¹¹ Conceptualizing the presence of a helpful or comforting person in a highly stressful context may be a helpful method of dealing with the challenge of the situation.

Worsley's account seems to place the experience of a sensed presence earlier in their trip, at a time of less physiologic stress.² At this point, however, they were unsure of the route, and had to grope their way through steep and icy terrain, sometimes by moonlight or through thick fog. Their feet had not recovered completely from the exposure on the boat, and with worn boots, the fear of frostbite lurked.

Exposed to life-threatening danger for prolonged periods, it was unclear if they would survive this last portion of the journey. The sense of an additional steadying group member may have been subconsciously comforting during a period of immense danger. Their perceptions may therefore have been shaped by a coping mechanism during a difficult time.

It might be unusual for all three men to independently experience and report similar anomalous sensations. Although less frequently reported, however, descriptions of shared or common sensed presences by groups of people "alone together,"¹¹ despite there being no independent confirmation of the presence outside the group, do exist. These include accounts of isolated groups of mountaineers and shipwreck survivors in desperate circumstances.⁷

With the quiet help, perhaps, of the fourth companion in reaching Stromness, Shackleton's efforts were ultimately successful. The men waiting through the winter on Elephant Island had variously survived frostbite, illness, cold, hunger, and even surgery and anesthesia.^{12,13,14} On the fourth attempt at navigating the winter ice, Shackleton reached Elephant Island, and all were rescued and returned home.

Historical and medical science can guide examination of the fourth member of the trio of South Georgia explorers – but observations can only show associations, not explain causality. Psychological or neurological models allied to historical enquiry therefore can provide some insights, but ultimately cannot answer deeper questions: the "how" does not explain the "why."¹⁵ Shackleton, however, had a very clear view of where the person came from: "When I look back on those days I have no doubt that Providence guided us across not only across those snowfields, but across the storm-white sea that separated Elephant Island from our landing-place on South Georgia."³

*Dr Firth researched and wrote this article. A version of this essay was published on-line in Hektoen International Volume 10, Issue 4 – Fall 2018. <https://hekint.org/volume-10-issue-4-fall-2018/>
Paul G. Firth, MBChB, BA Department of Anesthesia, Critical Care and Pain Medicine, Massachusetts General Hospital, Assistant Professor, Harvard University*

⁹ Blanke O, Ortigue S, Landis T, Seeck M. 2002. "Stimulating illusory own-body perceptions." *Nature* 2002; 419(6904): 269-70.

¹⁰ Arzy S, Seeck M, Ortigue S, Spinelli L, Blanke O. Induction of an illusory shadow person. *Nature* 2006; 443(7109): 287.

¹¹ Suedfeld P, Mocellin JSP. The "Sensed Presence" in Unusual Environments. *Environment and Behaviour* 1987; 19(1);33-52.

¹² Macklin AH. *Manuscript 1589, Transcript of Diary 1915-1916*. Cambridge: Archives, Scott Polar Research Institute.

¹³ Hurley F. MS883; *Papers of Frank Hurley Series 1: Dairies 1912-1961: Item 3*. Canberra: National Library of Australia.

¹⁴ Firth PG. Of penguins, pinnipeds and poisons: Anesthesia on Elephant Island. *Anesthesiology* 2016;125(1):25-33

¹⁵ Firth P. "The Man Who Wasn't There." *The Guardian*, May 29, 2003.

The Doctors of Elephant Island

Dr Paul.G. Firth

Chippy McNish wrote a blunt assessment in his diary: “I don’t think there will be many survivors.” He had volunteered for a planned voyage in patched-up lifeboat across hundreds of miles of some of the worse seas in the world, attempting to locate with minimal navigation equipment a small island in the vastness of the South Atlantic. But he felt his chances of making South Georgia alive were better than those of the twenty-two men who remained on Elephant Island.



The maximum extent of the spring sea ice. Composite satellite photo, September 21, 2005. NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center Scientific Visualization Studio. The Blue Marble data is courtesy of Reto Stockli (NASA/GSFC). *File:Global View of the Arctic and Antarctic.jpg - Wikimedia Commons*

It was not an unreasonable evaluation. Elephant Island, an ice-shorn jagged rock rearing from a violent sea, provided limited shelter from the gales that regularly lashed the island. Worsening the situation, the party had already suffered severely from exposure during the six-day boat trip to the island. Many of the men were injured by frostbite, freeze damage to their hands and feet. Others were ill with other problems. And the Antarctic winter was coming.

Expedition doctor Alexander Macklin wrote in his diary: “everything deeply snowed over, footgear frozen so stiff we could only put it on by degrees, not a warm pair of gloves amongst us. I think I spent this morning the most unhappy hour of my life—all attempts seemed so hopeless, and Fate seemed absolutely determined to thwart us. Men sat and cursed, not loudly but with an intensesness that shewed their hatred of

this island on which we had sought shelter.”¹ And the party’s two doctors, Macklin and James McIlroy, would not only have to survive themselves, but also manage the medical problems of their teammates.²

The most severely affected was the youngest man in the expedition, Perce Blackborow. With limited footwear, his feet constantly soaked in the smallest and least sea-worthy of the lifeboats, he had developed severe frostbite in his left foot. The senior expedition doctor McIlroy felt that amputation of the frozen toes would be inevitable.

Frostbite, an injury of temperature extreme, resembles a severe heat burn in many ways. Some temperature-damaged tissue dies at the time of injury. Other surviving tissue produces fluid, which typically collects into a protective blister over the wound. Preventing a secondary infection and worsening the damage is key to recovery, allowing the body to heal damaged tissue and regrow skin over the wound. Careful cleaning and protective bandaging of the wound, both for a frostbite and for a burn injury, is appropriate management.

¹ Macklin AH: Manuscript 1589; Transcript of Diary 1915–1916, Archives. Cambridge, Scott Polar Research Institute, 1915–1916.

² Firth PG. Of Penguins, Pinnipeds, and Poisons: Anesthesia on Elephant Island. *Anesthesiology*. 2016;125(1):25-33.

However, on Elephant Island even this basic treatment was difficult. Macklin wrote: "McIlroy and me have several patients to see daily; this, with the difficulty of getting hot water, shelter or good light, was very difficult and trying. Added to this my own little finger got frostbitten... (during the boat trip), and has been insensitive ever since, and the tips of all my fingers had blisters from the same cause, making skillful bandaging or manipulation difficult."¹

The doctors also had to deal with other problems. Dental caries was a common problem on long expeditions, and many accounts of journeys of exploration make mention of dental work being performed on unhappy explorers. The discovery and publication of the pain killing effect of nitrous oxide (laughing gas) and ether in America in the 1840's was driven by the search by dentists to find a way of relieving the extreme pain of dental surgery. Later the broader recognition of the numbing effects of coca leaf, widely used in South America, led to the purification, and use of cocaine and other local anesthetics in dental surgery.

However, neither local nor general anesthesia was used on Elephant Island for dental work. In May Macklin diarized: "One day I pulled a tooth for Kerr and a grimy quack of a dentist I must have looked, not much refinement here – Come outside and open your mouth - no cocaine or anesthetic." In July he reported "Wordie has had some tooth ache tonight. I... recommended 'cold steel' which he refuses." Alexander Kerr again needed some dental work: "Pulled a tooth for Kerr after supper. Had an interested audience."¹

Perhaps the demonstration – or perhaps more likely, the persistent pain – persuaded the reluctant patient. "After supper pulled a back molar tooth for Wordie." The anesthetic-free ordeal could not have been pleasant for the patient. "Another interested audience, pretty embarrassing for poor Wordie" noted the sometime dentist.¹

Another of the crew, Hubert Hudson had a more severe problem. He had developed an infection in his buttock, probably the result of chaffing of his skin during days of rowing in soaked clothes during the lifeboat trip to Elephant Island. Bedridden for weeks with an additional hip injury, his infection had worsened into an abscess, or a collection of pus.

The management of an abscess involves draining the pus, since the body has walled off the infection into a pocket. Macklin noted in his diary "McIlroy asked me to look at Hudson today, He seems worse and the swelling in his buttock is larger. I advised incision and drainage, or at any rate passing in a (probe and drain), as he has considerable pain from the tenderness."¹

A few days later Macklin diarized: "Hudson has been suffering a great deal of pain for the last few days, I recommended McIlroy to drain his abscess a little while ago, and he attempted to do so, but failed in doing it. I wish he would decide to do something radical for Hudson: I would advise giving (chloroform anesthesia) and making a thorough attempt."¹

McIlroy had lanced the abscess, but pockets of pus remained in the large abscess, and more work was required to clear out the inflamed infection. Three days later, "McIlroy made another and successful attempt to open Hudson's abscess, with the result that he now has great relief."¹

While Macklin suggested giving general anesthesia for the painful drainage of the abscess, perhaps the more senior and experienced doctor was reluctant to do so. Or perhaps the patient refused. Whatever the reason, there was good cause to be wary of chloroform. In current practice, anesthesia can be delivered with such a high degree of safety that the general public today often does not recognize what surgical anesthesia actually is: a deep, drug-induced coma.

Before the modern era of surgical anesthesia, surgery techniques were generally brief, bloody and brutal - operations performed rapidly without any effective pain control, the patient held down while the surgeon cut rapidly. The discovery and publication of the pain-killing effects of inhaled ether in 1846³ in Boston in the USA allowed for the development of a wide variety of

surgical procedures. It also led to the discovery of other drugs with anesthetic and pain-killing properties. One of the first and most successful discoveries was chloroform.

By 1847, both ether and chloroform were in widespread use. Within months of the discovery of chloroform, the first anesthetic death was reported. A healthy teenager undergoing minor surgery on an ingrown toenail abruptly died during chloroform anesthesia in January 1848.^{4,5} The doctor reported “A girl of 15 died under the influence of chloroform... I seated her in a chair and put about a tablespoon of chloroform into a tablecloth and held it to her nose. The time would not be more than three minutes from her first inhaling the chloroform until her death.” Over the following decades, thousands of patients died suddenly and apparently unexpectedly under chloroform.



With increasing clinical experience and research, some of the mechanisms of these chloroform deaths became apparent. The dose of the anesthetic mattered – too little, and a painful stimulus could trigger a lethal irregular heartbeat or cause the throat to go into spasm and choke the patient. Too much, and the patient could stop breathing. So accurate judgement of how much anesthetic was given was crucial to ensuring the patient went safely into an anesthetic coma – and came out. Anesthesia, in the most ideal of circumstances, is not to be taken lightly. And the circumstances on Elephant Island were far from ideal.

Chloroform bottle, of the type used on the Endurance expedition. The chloroform was manufactured by Duncan, Flockhart and Co. of Edinburgh and London. The label contained a blunt warning about the contents: “Poison”.

Although ether, chloroform and modern inhaled anesthetics are stored in liquid form, they are extremely volatile or aromatic liquids - a large amount exists in a gaseous state. Inhaling the vapor allows the gaseous component of the drug to be breathed into the lungs, from where it is taken up by the passing blood and carried to the brain, spine, and nerves. Here the anesthetics act to produce unconsciousness, limit nerve reflexes and movement, and blunt pain responses.

Today inhalational anesthesia is typically given by extensively trained clinicians, using much safer anesthetic drugs delivered by precisely calibrated vaporizing equipment, the dose of anesthetic vapor delivered accurately quantified, and the patient’s condition recorded by automated physiological monitors.

The doctors of Elephant Island were not highly experienced anesthetists, and they did not have any way of measuring chloroform vapor. Anesthetic administration would have simply involved pouring some chloroform onto a cloth, suspended, or held over the mouth and nose, and allowing the inhaled vapor to anesthetize the patient. Estimation of how much anesthetic was delivered would be approximated from how much liquid was poured on to the cloth, and carefully watching the patient’s response.

³ Bigelow HJ. Insensibility during Surgical Operations Produced by Inhalation. The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal. 1846;35(16):309-17.

⁴ Anonymous. Fatal application of chloroform (editorial). Edinburgh Med Surg J. 1848;69:498.

⁵ Knight PR, 3rd, Bacon DR. An unexplained death: Hannah Greener and chloroform. Anesthesiology. 2002;96(5):1250-3.

The amount of chloroform delivered, however, would have depended on the amount in the gaseous state. At low temperatures, less chloroform would vaporize, and the amount of drug inhaled by the patient would decrease.^{2,6} A similar situation might be envisioned with a less volatile substance, water, which also exists in liquid and gas states at typical environmental temperatures. At near freezing, or zero degrees Celsius, very little water is in the form of vapor. As the water is heated, more is given off as steam or water vapor.

The amount of anesthetic delivered therefore depended on how much chloroform 'steam' was inhaled. At a low temperature – such as found on Elephant Island in the depths of an Antarctic winter - the doctors worried that the amount of chloroform vapor would have been quite low. How would they determine how much anesthetic the patient was getting – indeed, would enough chloroform even vaporize to anesthetize the patient? Given their limited experience with anesthesia, and the early state of anesthetic knowledge during that era, they had little way of knowing.

A patient under anesthesia is also vulnerable to hypothermia, or extreme cold. Amongst other effects, anesthetic drugs tend to blunt peripheral vasoconstriction, or the constriction of blood flow to the cold skin. Unable to respond to the cold, the exposed anesthetised subject is at risk of losing excessive body heat. McIlroy later explained that they were also worried that an anesthetic delivered in extreme cold might kill their patient through low body temperature.

Most of the injuries and illnesses on Elephant Island could be managed without general anesthesia. Pulling teeth and draining abscesses, although painful and unpleasant, could be done in cooperative and stoic patients. But amputation of frostbitten toes – and the careful cleaning and closure of the wound to prevent infection – would require an anesthetic for any hope of success.

There was at least a potential place to operate – the crew had built a hut, walls built from the stones on the shingle beach, the overturned lifeboats as a roof. It was not an ideal space - "but our hut is a mansion to us, being our only shelter from the incipient weather of Elephant I."¹ And it would have to do as an operating theater for them too. They also decided to heat up their operating theater to promote the chloroform vaporization, and to protect their patient from the cold.

A week short of mid-winter solstice, June 15th was a 'dreich' day – "a nasty morning with a wet sort of drizzle"¹ - but importantly, a relatively toasty 31°F (-0.5°C). The doctors decided to anaesthetize and operate. Perce Blackborow was just five years older than the first anesthetic victim of some fifty-eight years previously. And he was not simply having a toenail repaired under chloroform; he needed five toes removed.

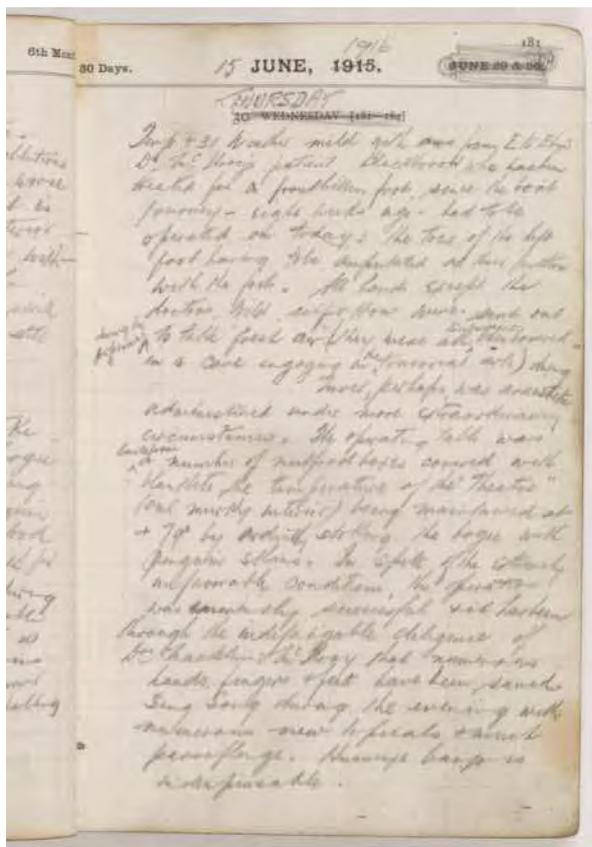
The 'Snuggery', now transforming into 'Elephant Island General Hospital', was cleared of superfluous bodies. "(All) hands turned out and kept themselves occupied outside (un)til we were finished—it was unpleasant for them. Greenstreet and Hudson stayed in; Hudson lay in his bag with his face averted, he did not like it; but Greenstreet lay on his place in the thwarts and took a lively interest in the proceedings. Both of them are semi-invalids and as such were not turned out."¹

Operating equipment was prepared, and a surgical team assembled. "The operating table consisted of packing cases, and I had another case for a stool ...We managed to sterilize instruments pretty well by using a Primus and a (hoosh pot). We heated up water over the stove ... I had brought with me some soap and a towel, foreseeing some such use for them, and McIlroy, Wild and myself had the luxury of a WASH. THE FIRST FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. Even this was only a half wash ... We had not sterilised overalls to get into: we merely stripped to our vests. Wild lent a hand at the operation, he is a hard case, and did not show any signs of

revulsion at the sight ... Howe stayed in as a 'generally useful' man and indeed was very useful in many ways."¹

Leonard Hussey, the expedition meteorologist whose weather instruments allowed for accurate measurement of temperatures, would have been familiar with fluctuating barometric pressures of gases and vapors. He subsequently recollected: "I think the most difficult part ... must have been the anesthetic. The patient's head was placed as near to our little oil-drum stove as was possible and the stove was then stoked up with lavish supplies of seal-blubber. This helped the chloroform to volatilise, which otherwise would have been difficult owing to the cold."⁷

Frank Hurley, the expedition photographer, worked to warm up the shelter as the stove stoker. He reported: "The operating table was built from a number of nut boxes covered with blankets, the temperature of the 'Theater' (our murky interior) being maintained at +79° by ardently stoking the bogie with penguin skins."⁸



Diary of Frank Hurley, 15th June 1916. From: Hurley F: MS 883; Papers of Frank Hurley, Series 1: Diaries, 1912–1961: Item 3. Canberra, National Library of Australia, 1912–1962.

McIlroy operated, while Macklin delivered the anesthetic. From his hammock swung from the upturned keel, Greenstreet watched. "Blackborow had an operation on his foot with the toes of his left foot taken off 1/4" stumps being left ... the poor beggar behaved splendidly, and it went through without a hitch ... The time from start to finish 55 minutes. When Blackborow came to he was as cheerful as anything and started joking directly ..."⁹

Macklin wrote: "he took his anesthetic very well and was not at all sick afterwards ... We had only 8 oz. of chloroform, but although the operation lasted 55 minutes, I only used 1 oz ... Blackborow was soon round from his anesthetic and asking for that now rare luxury—a cigarette. After the job was finished there was some hot water left, so we decided not to waste it, and borrowed 3 lumps of sugar from tomorrow's lunch and made a drink of hot sugar water. This, with the unusually high temperature, soon made us pour with sweat – we oozed at every pore in a way we had not done for many along day."¹ The delivery of the anesthetic, despite the improbable circumstance, had worked out perfectly.

Blackborow was not out of danger yet. The post-operative unsanitary environment was not ideal. "It is hard to realize one's position here, living in a smoky, dirty, ramshackle little hut with only just sufficient room to cram them all in drinking out of a common pot with people suffering from caries etc., and lying in close proximity to a man with a large discharging abscess—a horrible existence." Four days after the operation, Hurley reported that "Blackborow's foot is

⁶ Firth PG, Pattinson KT. Anaesthesia and high altitude: a history. *Anaesthesia*. 2008;63(6):662-70.

⁷ Hussey LD. A doctor's job on polar expeditions. *Med Press* 1952;277:125-7.

⁸ Hurley F: MS 883; Papers of Frank Hurley, Series 1: Diaries, 1912–1961: Item 3. Canberra, National Library of Australia, 1912–1962.

⁹ Greenstreet L: MS 1438, MJ Diary (Microfilm), 1914–1916. Archives. Cambridge, Scott Polar Research Institute, 1914–1916.

not progressing as well as might be expected. It is suppurating badly and the surrounding tissues are in a very unsatisfactory condition.”⁸

By August 21, Orde-Lees noted: “Poor Blackborow’s foot is very bad. It is much swollen and inflamed and the (bone infection) is extending slightly ... (he) deserves all credit for the manly fortitude with which he puts up with his serious infirmity. He is a model of patience.”¹⁰

Shackleton’s improbable rescue attempt, however, also worked out perfectly. On August 30th, he arrived in the *Yelcho*, and the entire party were rescued from the island. Blackborow was admitted to hospital in Chile, where with clean dressing his wound finally healed completely. He returned to England and was sufficiently recovered to find work on the docks and boats.

Chippy McNish had been proved wrong. Shackleton later wrote to his wife: “I have done it. Not a life lost, and we have been through Hell.” Perhaps, however, Shackleton should have added some details about the doctors of Elephant Island. As Frank Hurley wrote in his diary on 15th June 1916: “Never perhaps was anesthetic administered under more extraordinary circumstances it has been through the indefatigable diligence of Drs. Macklin and McIlroy, that numerous hands, fingers and feet have been saved.”⁸ And, Hurley might have added, lives.

A more extensive and detailed academic account of medical and surgical practice on Elephant Island, “Firth PG. Of penguins, pinnipeds, and poisons: Anesthesia on Elephant Island. Anesthesiology 2016:125:25-33”,(2) can be accessed and downloaded for free at: <https://pubs.asahq.org/anesthesiology/article/125/1/25/14559/Of-Penguins-Pinnipeds-and-PoisonsAnesthesia-on>

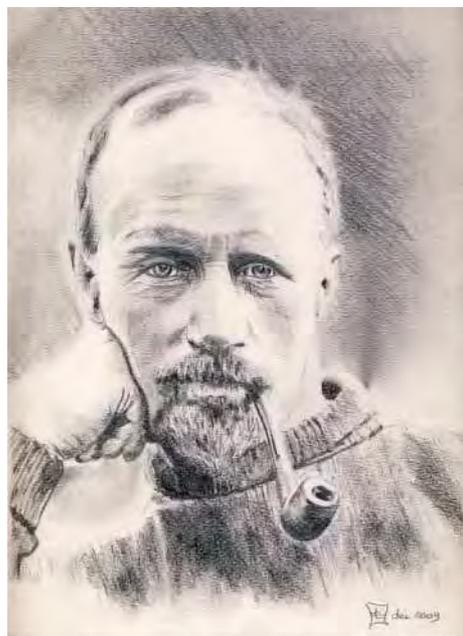
¹⁰ Orde-Lees T: MS 967/1–2; Diaries, 24 October 1916–2 September 1916. Archives. Cambridge, Scott Polar Research Institute, 1916.



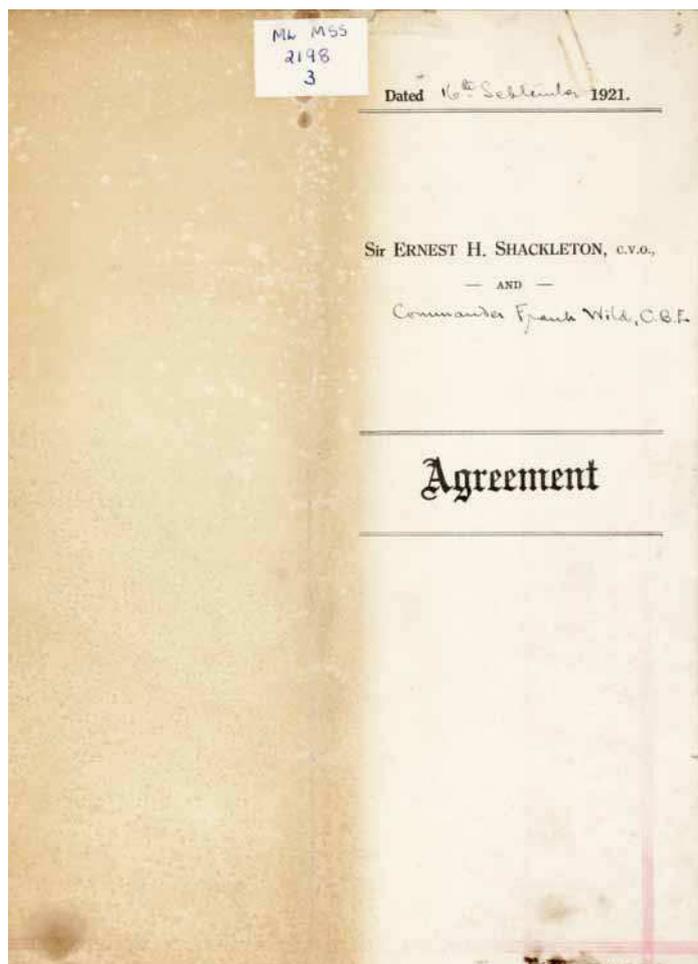
‘Serenity’ – Shackleton’s arrival in SY Nimrod at Cape Royds on 3rd February 1908. Artist, Sean Garwood.

Agreement between Frank Wild and Sir E. H. Shackleton, signed on 16th September 1921.

The common notion of the onlooker is, perhaps, to see polar expedition teams as a group of men (expeditioners, ship's officers, and crew) who share a common goal – to brave the unknown and seek adventure for self and glory for country. Whilst many were friends, it is true, it is incorrect to imagine these ventures were simply 'jollies'. They were not. The expeditions were serious enterprises on many levels – for the individual, for the nation, for science and for geographical discovery. The risks were many and the sacrifices expected of the participants were not to underestimated. After all, who in their right mind would simply drift into a trip which meant danger and absence from home and loved ones for many months or years without careful assessment and agreement. Above all, such enterprises needed strict discipline and a clear line of responsibility and authority. Without these the journey would be lost before it started and, quite possibly, many lives lost.



Portrait by Katy Longuet



It is well known that Shackleton and Frank Wild were close friends and companions. By 1921 there were veterans in the business of ice discovery. And business it was. To get a good grasp of the implications of signing up for a long and difficult foray into the polar regions back in the Heroic Age a close look at the contract signed between Shackleton and his erstwhile buddy is both illuminating and sobering.

The formal Agreement between these two great polar men was purchased by the State Library of New South Wales at a Sotheby's sale on 3 May 1971 (lots 290, 292) and is reproduced here.

GENERAL NOTE: Microfilm copies available at CY 15, frames 440 - 885
Xerox copy Flo at CY MLMSS 2198/1 - 3 (open access)



An Agreement

made the
seventeenth day of September. One thousand nine hundred and twenty-one **Between** SIR ERNEST HENRY SHACKLETON Knight of 186 St. Stephens House in the City of Westminster C.V.O., Leader of the Expedition Captain and Owner of the Pleasure Yacht named "The Quest" Representative of the Air Ministry and Postmaster appointed by the Postmaster-General for certain of the areas to be visited and discovered under British protection (hereinafter called "the Captain") of the one part and **FRANK WILD, C.B.E.**

(hereinafter called "the Member") of the other part **Whereas** the Captain is the owner of the Pleasure Yacht named "The Quest" registered at Cowes in the Royal Yacht Squadron **AND WHEREAS** the Captain is about to sail on a voyage of discovery to various little known islands in the South Atlantic Ocean and from thence into the Antarctic Ocean towards the Antarctic Continent and thence to other islands and into the Pacific Ocean and to circumnavigate the Globe at a high latitude for the purpose of scientific research and discovery and the Member has agreed to engage himself to the Captain upon the terms of this Agreement **AND WHEREAS** the Member fully appreciates that in an expedition of this character the safety of the members of the expedition renders it is essential that he shall at all times obey all the orders and commands of the Captain and also obey all the orders and commands of the various persons who may from time to time be in command performing duties either in the navigation of the Yacht or of the boats or in the conduct of any expedition on shore or ice under the directions of the Captain in pursuance of the objects of the expedition **AND WHEREAS** the Captain has engaged Commander Frank Wild C.B.E. to act as Second in Command and Commander Frank Worsley D.S.O. as Hydrographer and Sailing Master of the Yacht **NOW THIS AGREEMENT WITNESSETH** and it is hereby mutually agreed as follows:—

1

1. **THE** Captain engages the Member as a Member of the expedition in the capacity of **Second Officer in command of the expedition in charge of bonded stores ammunition and firearms with full authority to issue or withhold the same subject to the general provisions of the agreement with the member** The Member agrees to act in that capacity and also as a Member of the expedition to perform all duties assigned to him as hereinafter mentioned as from the first day of September One thousand nine hundred and twenty-one during the whole of the said expedition which is estimated to last for a period of twelve calendar months subject nevertheless to determination of such services as hereinafter stated.

2. **THE** Member shall subject to the commands of the Captain have the direction and control of the particular work connected with his duties as mentioned in Clause 1 but in addition to these duties he shall at all times serve the Captain as a Member of the expedition under his leadership and he shall obey to the best of his ability at all times during the day and night or the period aforesaid the commands of the Captain irrespective of the character of the work to be done according to the exigencies of the expedition **AND FURTHER** he shall subject to orders of the Captain obey all the orders and commands of Commander Frank Wild as Second in Command and of the Officer-in-Charge of the navigation of the Yacht for the time being.

3. **THE** Member being fully aware of the uncertainties and emergencies affecting the work which may be required from the various members of the expedition agrees to perform his duties and to co-operate with all other members of the expedition at all times during the expedition to the best of his ability without complaint regarding the character of the duties and work assigned to him or of any other member of the expedition according to the directions of the Captain or other Officer in command for the time being.

4. **THE** Captain shall have power at all times and from time to time during the expedition to nominate and appoint any member of the expedition as officer to perform particular duties during such periods as the Captain shall determine and assign to him all the necessary and proper authority for the purpose of directing other members of the expedition in the particular work assigned.

5. **SHOULD** the safety of the Yacht or any member of the expedition require the presence of the Member he shall immediately

2

respond to any call that may be made by the Officer for the time being in command and generally he shall well and faithfully serve the Captain and do his utmost to assist the Captain in bringing the expedition to a successful issue.

6. **THE** Member shall receive as remuneration for his services as aforesaid in accordance with the Memorandum endorsed hereon the sum of *One thousand and twenty five Pounds* calculated at the rate of

per calendar month from the date of the commencement of his services as aforesaid which shall be paid on the *fourth* day of each month. The Captain shall have sole discretion with regard to making advances on account of such salary at the request of the Member but if at any time such advances shall be made the same shall be taken as part payment of the salary and if the Captain shall so determine the periodical payments of salary shall be discontinued until the amount of the advances has been duly brought into account.

7. **THE** Member agrees that all discoveries information benefits and advantages arising out of the expedition and from his services and the services of the members of the expedition shall be and remain the absolute property without condition of the Captain. And he further agrees to do his best during the period of the expedition to make discoveries obtain information and secure advantages and benefits for the expedition and he shall report the same to the Captain or to any Officer appointed by him for such purpose at all times and where possible daily.

8. **THE** Member agrees that he will not except so far as he may do so in the ordinary course of his duties or with the permission of the Captain or the Superior Officer in command for the time being take any photographs during the expedition and any photos that he may take in the course of such duties shall be and remain the property of the Captain.

9. **THE** Member shall be allowed at any time to contribute articles and matter to technical and scientific journals **PROVIDED ALWAYS** that the same shall not in any way interfere with the work of the expedition within the provisions of this Agreement and for such purpose such articles shall be submitted to the Captain or other Superior Officer acting in his stead for approval before publication but subject thereto the Member shall not during the

3

period of the expedition or during two years after the determination of the expedition disclose to any person firm or corporation any fact relating to the voyage or the work of the expedition or the discoveries made or information obtained by the expedition nor give any lectures nor write any articles for the public press upon the subject of the said voyage or anything relating thereto and in particular he shall not write any private correspondence to be used for publication in any manner and shall in his correspondence with his relatives and friends refrain from making any statement which might be utilised by them in a breach of the spirit of this Agreement and for better security shall inform all his correspondents of these restrictions and affix a slip to each letter in a form to be supplied.

10. **THE** Captain shall be entitled during the period of this Agreement to determine or suspend the services of the Member for any misconduct or disobedience to commands **AND FURTHER** the Captain may for any cause which he in his absolute discretion may deem fit without stating such cause determine the services of the Member on giving three calendar months' notice in writing of his intention or in the alternative to pay to him a sum of money equivalent to three months' salary which he would have received if notice had been duly given.

11. **IF** the Captain shall determine the services of the Member from any cause whatever prior to the expiration of the term of service contemplated by this Agreement he shall pay to the Member such sum as shall be sufficient to pay his passage money to a Port of Call in the United Kingdom.

12. **UPON** the determination of the services of the Member for the reason above stated or for any cause the provisions of this Agreement relating to the non-disclosure of secrets and information relating to the expedition and its work shall remain in full force and effect and be binding in all respects as if such services had not been determined.

13. **ALL** provisions articles and clothing instruments and property whatsoever upon the Yacht other than the actual personal clothing and articles brought upon the Yacht by permission of the Captain by the Member shall be and remain always the property of the Captain.

14. **THE** Member shall at all times recognise the proper authority of the Captain or the Superior Officer for the time being

4

in command in relation to the conduct of all civil affairs during the navigation of the Yacht or in Port and shall always whether on sea or on shore observe any regulations and legal provisions that may affect him in his duties at the time being applicable and in force in any British or foreign country.

15. THE Member shall not consume any alcoholic liquor or any drug during the whole of the expedition without the express authority of the Captain or the Superior Officer for the time being in charge.

16. IN the event of the death of the Captain or in his absence or any other disability which prevents him having command of the Yacht or of the expedition on land or on the water the Member shall obey the said Commander Frank Wild in general command of the expedition and as regards the navigation of the Yacht he shall obey at all times the orders of Commander Frank Worsley or in his absence or in case he shall be incapacitated of Lieutenant-Commander R. D. Jeffrey to the full extent as the Member is called upon to obey the orders of the Captain or such other officer as may be in command of the navigation and in particular in the event of any disaster occurring to the Yacht during the voyage the Member shall without hesitation implicitly obey all orders which may be given by any person in charge of any boat or of any party on shore or on the ice to which the Member may be assigned.

17. THE Member appreciates that no definite hours of work can be recognised but the Captain will at all times exercise the greatest care in assigning work within reasonable limits according to the physique experience and ability of the Member from time to time and unless there shall be any serious emergency the Captain agrees to take into account all advice that may be given by the acting surgeon regarding the state of health and strength of the Member.

18. THE Member shall supply his own ordinary equipment and clothing and necessities for personal comfort having regard to the space allotted to him but the Captain shall provide such cold weather equipment and clothing to the Member at all times and in such manner as the Captain shall deem advisable or necessary And the Captain shall further provide the Member with a full ration of food during the whole of the period of service together with a

reasonable supply of tobacco PROVIDED ALWAYS that in cases of emergency or difficulty the Captain or other Superior Officer acting in his stead shall have the full power to reduce the ration of food and tobacco according to the special circumstances and conditions existing at the time.

19. THE Member shall at all times during the said expedition have free access and intercourse with the Captain on any matter that may arise but the Member agrees not to abuse this particular privilege in the conduct of his duties generally so as to assist in every possible way order and discipline in the conduct of the expedition and consequently general orders and communications shall be passed through Commander Frank Wild or other Officer for the time being in charge acting under the direction of the Captain AND FURTHER if the Member shall at any time be engaged in working in the stoke hole or engine room of the Yacht he will not only take orders from the engineer in charge as aforesaid but he will so far as practicable make all his communications direct to him subject to his right to communicate direct with the Captain as aforesaid.

20. THE Member appreciating the difficulty and exigencies of an expedition of this character hereby exonerates the Captain for or in respect of any accident or injury which may occur to him during the said expedition subject always to the provisions of the Employers Liability Acts the Workmen's Compensation Acts and amendments thereof where the same apply.

AS WITNESS the hands of the parties hereto the day and year first above written.

Signed by the above-named
Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton in
the presence of

Signed by the above-named
Frank Wild
in the presence of

Frank Wild

Mrs. Hutchins
Solo
Lincoln Inn London

IN CONSIDERATION of the Member entering into the above-written Agreement I acknowledge and undertake the sole responsibility for and agree to pay his salary as stated in Clause 6 thereof and subject thereto the obligations of the respective parties to the said Agreement shall remain in full effect.

Chippy and the Polar Medal – a few thoughts

Stephen Scott-Fawcett FRGS

As some will know, I run the Sir Ernest H Shackleton Appreciation Society on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/6533344678>). It has a big following worldwide. In May 2020 one of its members, Richard Hankinson, posted a considered response to those who lobby for 'Chippy' McNish (and the others without award) to receive a posthumous Polar Medal for this work during the Imperial Trans Antarctic Expedition (ITAE) 1914-17). Here is what he had to say on the matter.



The recent posting of the list of recipients and non-recipients of the Polar Medal has given me cause to think of the reasons behind Chippy's failure to be awarded one. It seems to me there are a few factors which contributed to the decision, and I felt like it might be an idea to mention some of the thoughts I've had on the subject, which have largely stemmed from reading his diary snippets in 'files'.

Firstly, it is difficult to dispute that Chippy had a significant part to play, both onboard ship and in the success of the voyage of the James Caird. He was prepared to go to extremes in his preparation and repair of the vessels, demonstrated by Orde Lees comment at the time of the Endurance becoming seriously damaged in October 1915 that 'the carpenter turned to like a trojan and has worked continuously for 48 hours building a coffer dam'. His work on the Caird changed it to a boat capable of dealing with the worst the Southern Ocean could throw at it, and all under conditions which rendered the maintenance of the few tools he had left extremely difficult. I would also suggest, contrary to some previous comment, that the Boss' inclusion of Chippy in the crew had more to do with his capabilities as a carpenter than any desire to remove a source of discontent. Who else could have been relied upon to repair the Caird if required in an emergency during the journey?

All this said, there was friction between Chippy and other members of the group, and he clearly had little respect for some members of the shore party. Orde Lees comment about insubordination at the end of December perhaps highlights this, but Chippy probably had his reasons for making a stand against further sledging of the boats over difficult terrain. His diary entry of the 30th is probably relevant, stating 'I have been refastening and caulking the Dudley Docker as she has all opened up going over the hummocks of ice'. This was his trade and perhaps his forthright speech was borne of his position on ship, which would have given him a degree of independence unknown to the sailors. His upholding of his responsibilities towards the boats as he saw them would have easily been misunderstood by anyone who was unaware of those responsibilities.

The other cause of friction was probably borne of his world view which seems to have demonstrated a lack of respect for the powers that be, and his comments on Lloyd George give a pretty good idea of this. It must be borne in mind this is the early years of the 20th century, not the modern day, so this attitude would not have gone down well. His diary entry of 10th April could not make it more plain – stating with regard to the war 'we unanimously hope that the war god has been crushed without further loss of life and we are all sorry that we have had no part in the hanging of him but we all sincerely hope the Russians will capture him (this predates

the Revolution, so does not have the political overtones that it would signal later) for if Briton do they will set him up in a palace for the ratepayers to keep'. With that view, no doubt made known to others of the party, it is unlikely that Chippy would be surprised to miss out on a medal and the decision would no doubt have confirmed his opinions. From what little I know; I even have some doubt that he would have accepted one from an establishment that he did not respect. The appreciation of his shipmates would have been a different matter, however. All told, it is not surprising that he found a new life in New Zealand, where the ethos of hard work and self-sufficiency may have been more in keeping with his views.

These are only personal observations which I felt might add to the debate. I have no wish to upset any relatives of those involved, who will have their own views as to the rights and wrongs of the events of the time, which I fully respect. Not knowing the people involved, it is impossible to know the truth of any of it and I have no wish to judge. The facts of the expedition, however, speak for themselves and the fortitude of those involved can only be applauded.

Ed. My comment to him at the time was straightforward, 'A most interesting and worthwhile contribution to the debate. My view has always been that, however hard we try to analyse things, it is difficult (and perhaps presumptuous) for any of us armchair enthusiasts to deliberate on a matter we have no hands-on experience of'.

Some further thoughts

Endurance and Harry McNish

I was very grateful to members of the McNish family (in particular, Isabel Laws) who gave me permission to reproduce extracts of Chippy's diary in the James Caird Journal (Number Four), published in October 2008 and of which I am Editor (see FILES in this Group).

The carpenter of the *Endurance* used a unique style in his diary. Certainly, his spelling and grammar are somewhat idiosyncratic. Here is a man with a story to tell in a way he liked and was perfectly comfortable with. The mere fact that he took the trouble to write anything, given the travails of the expedition, is a credit to him.

The carpenter's diary reveals a man of many sides. It is true some found him arrogant and abrasive, on occasions. There is that awkward and challenging moment when Harry questioned Shackleton's authority, following the loss of the ship (although there is no mention of this in his diary). Chippy's diary reveals, however, other aspects. Here is a craftsman at his best, always turning his woodworking skills to great use and for the benefit of all. Often, Chippy would work under terrible conditions and for long hours with the barest of equipment. His ability to improvise when materials were missing or in short supply was second to none.

The diary shows a softer side to the Scotsman, too. He would refer, often, to his 'loved ones' at home. He hated the mercy-shooting of the animals (the dogs, as well as his beloved Mrs Chippy). Harry's real name was Henry McNish. He was born in 1874 (the same year as Shackleton) at Port Glasgow Scotland and died in 1930 at Wellington, NZ, in rather impoverished circumstances. McNish was the oldest crew member (40) on the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition (1914- 17). Crucially, he was responsible for much of the work that was carried out on the *James Caird* to maximise her chances of safe passage across the high seas. The epic journey of the little lifeboat across a thousand storm-tossed miles of Southern Ocean is the stuff of legend. Without that journey, Frank Wild and his band of men would have perished on Elephant Island. Indirectly, at least, Chippy played his part in their salvation.

After the loss of the *Endurance* McNish refused, for a moment, to follow orders. The risk of mutiny was very real. Attempts to man-haul the *James Caird*, *Stancomb – Wills* and *Dudley Docker* across the ice floes (at Shackleton's suggestion) proved very hard work and the carpenter

refused to take his turn in the harness. This was a real low point for The Boss and his men. Perhaps McNish had become impatient and doubted his leader's ability to save them? However, Sir Ernest dealt with this insurrection head-on. He sternly reminded the carpenter (and all his men) of the contractual obligation to obey orders. He made it patently clear, too, that their only chance of survival was to stick and work together. McNish sorted himself out and got on with the job. Notwithstanding McNish's carpentry contribution (Worsley, the captain of the *Endurance*, called him, 'a splendid shipwright') the Scotsman was one of only four ITAE expedition members (McNish, Vincent, Holness and Stephenson) not to be awarded the Polar Medal, upon their return to England.

After the expedition McNish returned to the Merchant Navy. It is said that he would often complain of physical pain in his joints, following the open ocean odyssey of the *James Caird*. Eventually, Harry secured a job with the New Zealand Lauren Shipping Company. In 1925 he



moved there, alone. He worked on the waterfront in Wellington until injury made it impossible to work. Destitute, he would sleep in the wharf sheds under a tarpaulin, relying upon the charity of the local dockworkers to get by. After a while, a place was found for him in the Ohiro Benevolent Home.

Sadly, his health continued to decline. He died in Wellington Hospital on 24th September 1930. Two days later he was buried with full naval honours (courtesy of 12 men from HMS Dunedin, who happened to be in port at the time). However, it was not until the New Zealand Antarctic Society Inc (NZAS) stepped in that Chippy's grave became marked, some thirty years later.

A headstone was erected at the Karori Cemetery on 10th May 1959. In 2004, the NZAS tidied the grave and a life-size bronze sculpture of McNish's beloved cat, Mrs Chippy, was placed on it.

In 1958 the British Antarctic Survey named a small island in his honour. 'McNish Island' (originally spelt 'McNish Island') lies in the approaches to King Haakon Bay, South Georgia. In October 2006, a small, oval, wall plaque commemorating his achievements was unveiled at the Port Glasgow Library (in his hometown).

In Praise of Song

Here is a ballad written by Cliff Wedgbury many years ago. He is a well-known Cork-based, poet, playwright, performing artist, broadcaster, and lover of all things Antarctica. He writes:



“The James Caird Saved the Day”.

I had forgotten I had composed it and went searching my notebooks yesterday.

My interest in Antarctic exploration began in 1956, when at the age of ten my late father brought me up to central London from our home in the suburbs to visit “Discovery” berthed, at that time between Hungerford Bridge and Waterloo Bridge. We went below decks to the Wardroom and he showed me Scott’s cabin in the top corner and Shackleton’s cabin, halfway down on the left side. We were alone in the Wardroom, so we sat at the long table and Dad told me stories of Antarctica. Stirring stuff for a ten-year-old. The seed was planted for a lifelong interest.

Now at 75 that interest is still as strong as ever.

The James Caird Saved the Day

On Elephant Island the men were trapped,
Survivors from the ice.
Endurance crushed by surrounding floes,
In the Weddell sacrificed.
Upturned boats on that barren shore,
Their home for months to come,
As the James Caird they prepared,
For a suicidal run.

On the Southern Ocean,
Heroes of the tide,
The James Caird and her valiant crew,
Helped all hands survive.

Eight hundred miles to South Georgia,
Salvation their belief,
Six brave men on the stormy main,
Sailing for relief.
The savage waves surrounding them,
Drenched by icy spray,
Through screaming winds, they battled hard,
To hold their nerve and pray.

And the James Caird brought them safely back,
To South Georgia's mountains high,
Seventeen days on the ocean wide,
Neath the wild Antarctic sky,
Six brave souls with a savage tale,
Of endurance against all odds,
To amaze the Stromness whaler men,
Who thought all hands were lost.

The whaler boat with a canvas deck,
McNish had used his skill,
To raise the gunwales, caulk the hull,
And every crack to fill.
To cross the cold tempestuous sea,
To find King Haakon Bay,
The tiny craft had made it through,
The James Caird saved the day.
And the hardy crew showed bravery,
For their shipmates cast away.

On the Southern Ocean,
Heroes of the tide,
The James Caird and her valiant crew,
Helped all hands survive.



The James Caird and the giant wave. Artist: Ghislaine Tillier

With Scott Before the Mast: Francis E. C. Davies - Leading Shipwright Royal Navy (1885).

Joy Watts (Author, Draft Writer), Nicholas Reardon (Editor, Designer)
Reardon Publishing 2020 ISBN-13 9781901 037555
Reviewed by Michael C. Tarver FRGS

Almost one hundred and ten years have passed since the British Antarctic Expedition 1910-1913 returned to Cardiff, yet this fascinating story still springs surprises. A great niece of Francis Davies, Joy Yates of Plymouth, found herself the family custodian of a seaman's trunk, owned by her Great Uncle, Francis Davies, himself a Plymouth man. Therein, were countless items of photos, letters, bric-a-brac and memorabilia linked to the voyages aboard the *SS Terra Nova* and the British Antarctic Expedition 1910-1913. A true maritime polar 'treasure chest'.

Among those belongings was his own written account, *'With Scott Before the Mast'* describing his time with Scott's expedition. It is Davies's own account illustrated with the many items and photographs found in his sea-trunk. Joy Yates has edited his story presented in this beautifully prepared book, all with many photographs and documents, previously unseen.

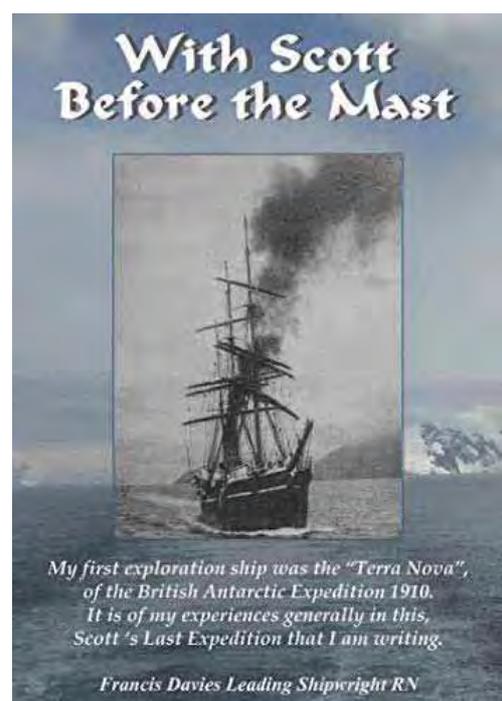
Davies, a Leading Shipwright, Royal Navy, had been appointed by Scott himself and was soon to show his worthiness as the expedition's 'jack of all trades and master of all'. In his famous book, *The Worst Journey in the World*, (Pub.1922) Apsley Cherry Garrard, writes in Chapter 1V,

"Davies, who was 'Chippy Chap the Carpenter' deserves much credit. He was leading shipwright in the navy, always willing and bright, and with a very thorough knowledge of his job. I have seen him called up hour after hour, day and night on the ship, when the pumps were blocked by the coal balls which formed in the bilges, and he always arrived with a smile on his face. Altogether he was one of our most useful men."

Throughout the story, it shows that Davies's contribution to the expedition was considerable. From his preparation work aboard ship before leaving London, to when nearly all were lost during the terrible storm in the Southern Ocean, when a hole had to be cut through a steel bulkhead to gain access to the pumps. Then there was the assembly and building of the huts at Cape Evans and the hut for the northern party at Cape Adare, to the shaping of the memorial Cross erected on Observation Hill. It was Davies with his skills throughout the expedition, that were so much in demand.

Davies went on to serve in the Royal Navy during both world wars. In WW11, he was to tragically lose his only son Peter Pennell, named Pennell after Harry Pennell, navigator, and relief captain of the *Terra Nova*, who was killed at the Battle of Jutland.

Like Shackleton, Scott was to know of the presence in his team of men, good skilled operators. Men who could be relied upon to deliver their skills in a crisis. Francis Davies showed that he could be a skillful practical deliverer of whatever was required 'when the chips were down'. His story is well worth reading and this book is a must have addition, for it will sit so well with any collector's library of polar books.

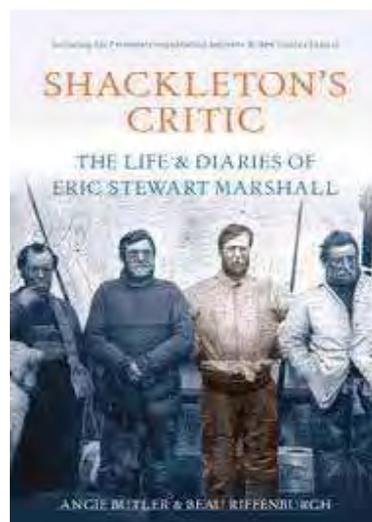


Shackleton's Critic: The Life & Diaries of Eric Stewart Marshall.

Angie Butler & Beau Riffenburgh, Jackleberry Press (2020). ISBN 978-0-9569272-2-4

Reviewed by Stephen Scott-Fawcett FRGS, February 2021

Dr Eric Stewart Marshall (1879 – 1963) was an enigma. Many years after the return of the British Antarctic Expedition (BAE) (1907/9) he became an increasingly bitter critic of Shackleton alleging him to be a fraudster (by falsifying the expedition records) and a diehard egotist (putting himself, his desire for fame and fortune, ahead of the welfare of his men). He finally went public over his anger and disillusionment with his former leader in 1952 when he delivered a lecture to pupils of his former alma mater (Monkton Combe School, Bath). This outburst caused no little embarrassment and cautious concern, not just at the school but for those in Marshall's immediate and wider social circle. To denounce a national hero in such a bold and brutal manner was very contentious, to say the least.



When James and Margery Fisher decided to research and write their biography of Shackleton (*Shackleton*, James Barrie (London), 1957 - a work considered, then and now, as a fair and balanced assessment of their man), Marshall (eventually) offered them sight of three short diaries he had kept during his time with the men of *Nimrod*. These little notebooks of 55, 47 and 50 pages (covering the periods 31st December 1907 to 22nd March 1908, 23rd March 1908 to 19th October 1908 and 29th October 1908 to 1st March 1909 respectively) tell the story of the BAE and of its Irish leader - a man who collapsed on the outward leg of the celebrated Southern Journey (on 20th January 1909 to be exact); a man incapable of good judgement. Marshall subsequently would claim that Shackleton had caused the death of five good men of the Ross Sea Party through bad planning. Furthermore, so untrustworthy was Shackleton when it came to recording distances and making maps, he had even contributed to Scott's demise on that fateful march south!

By giving the Fishers access to his diaries his hope was that finally, by absorbing the new and painful facts contained therein, the 'truth will out'. By useful default, the biographers would serve as convenient messengers of an awkward truth enabling any criticism from the Shackleton's fanbase to land fair and square on *their* laps, not his. In this hope he was to be disappointed, badly. The Fishers' book in fact endorsed the perceived and accepted wisdom of the time, that Shackleton was a great leader and inspirer of men – espoused beautifully in the words of none other than one of Marshall's companions on the Southern Journey, Jameson Adams - 'I think Shackleton was the most wonderful organiser that ever came into the world, bar none - and king of leaders and adventurers'

Of the Fisher book Marshall wryly commented, 'As a 'novel' I can excuse it. As of historic value I can severely criticise it'.

Some of Marshall's angry criticism of Shackleton's leadership has a certain ring of truth. There can be no doubt too much gloss is put over the 'darker' or less sure aspects of Shackleton's leadership. The fact that he was dishonest about his own poor health (a suspect heart condition which finally caught up with his in 1922) is a reasonable criticism. It seems a little inconsistent to expect his men to be physically fit when his own mortal body would never have stood the test of proper medical examination. By leading men into the frozen unknown he was putting

them at great risk if his own health failed (and it did on the Southern Journey). That Shackleton's planning of/provision for the crucial Ross Sea Party (RSP) element of Imperial Trans Antarctic Expedition (ITAE) (1914/17) was a shambles is a given. Aeneas Mackintosh (leader), Ernest Wild (Frank's brother and ice veteran) and Joseph Stenhouse (captain of *SY Aurora*) were tireless and courageous in their focused actions to save the expedition from an early and catastrophic failure. However, whether Shackleton's mismanagement can be linked to the later deaths of five good men on the ice is another matter entirely. Every single member of the Ross Sea shore party were totally loyal to the Boss and committed to laying depots from the coast all the way inland to Mount Hope (at the foot of the Beardmore Glacier) to ensure Shackleton's safety as he advanced northwards, beyond the Pole, during his intended crossing.

Marshall's assertion that Shackleton's untrustworthiness in keeping accurate/honest polar journey records and map-making played its part in the eventual downfall of Scott in 1912 is perverse, however. Without the benefit of the route mapped out by Shackleton and his team during the Southern Journey of late 1908 to early 1909 Scott's own progress would have been (possibly) slower than it was. It is now accepted by most that Scott's fate was largely due to extreme cold weather on the return journey (as well as logistical matters).

All this said, we should not imagine for a single moment that Eric Marshall was a 'lightweight' polar adventurer – far from it. Although opinionated in character he was physically strong and he played a crucial (possibly life - saving) part in the safe return of himself, Shackleton, Adams and Wild from the Southern Journey in early 1909. On the medical side, his professional role in championing the importance of a good diet of Vitamin C to prevent scurvy, the scourge of Scott's Furthest South Journey in 1902 (and many previous global expeditions), should not be underestimated. Shackleton described Marshall as 'loyal, hardworking, heroic and modest' – at least that was his public stance on the man. The other polar men around Marshall, however, saw a different character – a man who was snobbish, superior, unforgiving, cold, aloof and elitist.

Shackleton's Critic: The Life & Diaries of Eric Stewart Marshall is a superb addition to any serious polar library. It is a quality book both in terms of its physical presentation and its content. The life of Marshall is tackled comprehensively. Any book containing primary sources is to be applauded and treasured. To be able to read the actual words of the diarist without third-party interpolation is a joy - readers can make their own minds up on what the diarist is saying and why. The beautifully produced facsimile map of the Southern Journey attached at the end of the book is a great extra and reminiscent of many of the original books of the Heroic Age expeditions. Angie Butler struck gold with her work on Frank Wild - she has struck another precious seam of gold here. Co-author, Beau Riffenburgh, is (to my mind) one of the best polar historians and author of countless excellent books (not least on Mawson and *Nimrod*). Back in 2011 he graciously agreed to supervise my PhD research in Cambridge. Alas, University red tape disenfranchised our working together but I will be grateful, always, for his faith in me.

It is a total mystery why Eric Marshall grew increasingly bitter towards Shackleton and his public recognition in his later years. Perhaps he simply was professionally angry about the Boss's medical dishonesty? Perhaps he simply disliked the Boss? Others have suggested that perhaps Marshall felt he was a better leader and resented his subordination. We will never know. He certainly felt that public admiration of the Irishman was misplaced.

Fifty-four years after BAE Marshall died in a fog of unhappiness and self-isolation. On his death in 1963 his daughter admitted, 'My father was a difficult and complicated man'.

Footnote: I should add that, if you are a purveyor of all things New Guinea, this book also contains Marshall's diaries of his time spent there as a member of The British Ornithologists' Union Expedition (British Expedition to Dutch New Guinea, 1909 – 1911).

Herbert Ponting: Scott's Antarctic Photographer and Pioneer Filmmaker

by Anne Strathie, The History Press, 2021 (ISBN 978 0 7509 7901 6)

Reviewed by Stephen Scott-Fawcett FRGS, May 2021.

What is clear from this book is that Herbert Ponting (1870 – 1935) was no ordinary photographer/filmmaker - and no ordinary traveller either.

Ponting was already famous when Scott invited him to be the official photographer on the Terra Nova expedition (British Antarctic Expedition 1910-13). The tragic loss of the Expedition leader (and four other good polar men to boot) catapulted him into another level of fame. He spent the next twenty years relating the story of Scott's extraordinary endeavours and loss to an eager audience – through his book, 'The Great White South', Duckworth (London) 1921 and his remarkable portfolio of photographs and pioneering cinematography.

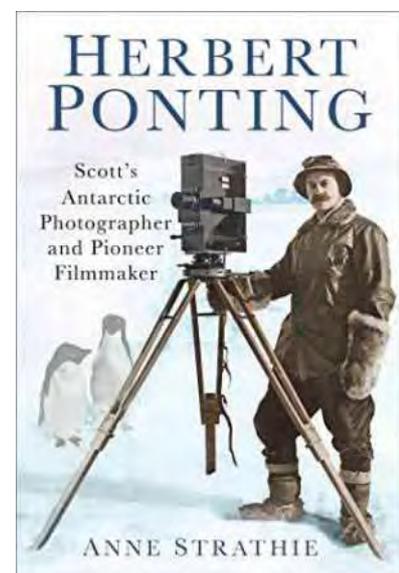
What is no less remarkable is the fact that Ponting was a self-taught photographer who launched into a career of photography and travel almost by osmosis.

Without Ponting's supreme images the sheer scale and nature of Antarctica and Scott's efforts to attain polar priority and pursue science would have been lost to the public mind. The written word has its place, but exquisite and haunting images add an entirely different, even higher, dimension to any story of great endeavour and fortitude in a hostile environment.

It would be a mistake, however, to understand Ponting as a man of the Antarctic only. He was a man of the world. His photography took him all over the globe – Japan, India, Burma, China, Hong Kong, and Korea – to name just a few destinations. His subject matter was never dull – ranging from erupting volcanoes to the Russo-Japanese war (1904-5).

Of course, Ponting is most remembered as the 'first professional Antarctic photographer' and aficionados of photography heaped great praise on his artistry with the camera. Many were inspired by his methods. Without question, Frank Hurley (1885 – 1962) - the official photographer on Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition (ITAE) 1914-17, sought to emulate the panache and style of his senior fellow professional - hanging from high places on 'SY Endurance' or precariously laying at the edge of ice floes – to capture the best images of the ship and its crew.

Ponting was, like most travelling men of his time, a bit of a maverick. He was a public yet private man. Alas, we can find no journals ever written by him. His camera was an extension of his persona. It was through his close friendship with Cecil Meares that Ponting seized the chance to join Scott in 1910. He was impressed by the Naval leader, describing Scott as having, 'an air of great authority'. In fact, at the time Ponting was asked to join the trip South he had another offer on the table – a contract to spend two years travelling through and photographing the British Empire. It was more lucrative and far less risky. However, Ponting saw the chance to journey into the polar regions and photograph it and their explorers as, 'the most challenging and exciting commission of my career to-date'. After meeting with Scott, it took the photographer less than 24 hours to sign up.





Onboard 'Terra Nova' Ponting was known as 'Ponko' – everyone had a nickname. Perhaps the two most well-known images of that expedition are: (1) the iconic image of Scott sitting at his table in the Cape Evans, complete with pipe and book in-hand and (2) the tear-shaped ice grotto at Cape Evans. Here, Ponting stepped into the depths and looked out to see, quite by chance, the expedition ship dead centre and framed by the icy walls of the opening. For the supremo photographer it was, as they say, a 'no-brainer'.

Rather like Shackleton, Ponting's fame did not guarantee fortune, and, on his death, he was in debt. It took others to rally around and raise much-needed funds by exhibiting and selling some of the great images we know so well today. Had Ponting lived to a *very* great age his images would have been a most comfortable pension indeed!

On his death certificate his occupation was stated as, 'Explorer and Photographic Expert'. If that is not an understatement, I do not know what is.

I commend Strathie's latest offering. This is her third polar book and, like the others, is eminently readable, enlightening and well researched.



Audacious Goals Remarkable Results

Brad Borkan & David Hirzel, Terra Nova Press, 2021 (ISBN978-1-945312-14-4)
Reviewed by Stephen Scott-Fawcett FRGS, May 2021.

I have met Brad Borkan and exchanged emails with David Hirzel on numerous occasions. If there is one word in the English language that sums up both these gentlemen, it is this – ‘enthusiastic’. Another word comes a close second – ‘energetic’.

So, it shouldn't come as a surprise to any reader of their latest book that *Audacious Goals Remarkable Results* is shot through with what is rapidly becoming the authors' trademark - high octane excitement in learning lessons from great people. Their subject matter here is three unique achievers in history – a remarkable engineer, politician, and explorer. We are introduced to Isambard Kingdom Brunel (now THAT's a name to conjure with!), Theodore Roosevelt and Roald Amundsen.

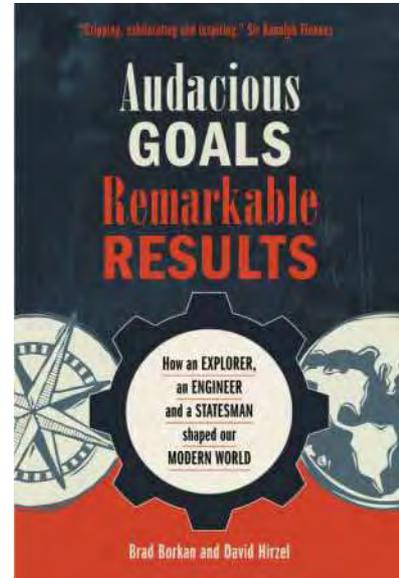
What unites these three, seemingly disparate, characters is a common strand – that of high achievement, where success through adversity, focus over distraction and levels of energy beyond measure bear fruit. Brunel's engineering prowess masterminded the Great Western Railway; Roosevelt's political determination delivered the Panama Canal, and Amundsen's polar prowess defeated the frozen clutches of the Northwest Passage and the South Pole. And these were only *some* of the achievements of these great men.

This engrossing book sets out to understand the contributions these men made in human history and recognises the valuable lessons we can learn from them and how we might translate such into our everyday lives.

The synopses of three great lives and their achievements so clearly described in this very readable and modest-size book is a wonderful history lesson in itself. However, we soon discover this is nothing more than a means to an end. That end is this – from all the great endeavours of these extraordinary individuals, leaders in their field, ten valuable and enduring lessons emerge. They are a kind of modern 'Ten Commandments' for success in life – delivered by mortals and not the divine. These ten lessons from an accomplished engineer, a supreme statesman and explorer *par excellence* set the standard – a blueprint on how individuals and whole societies can improve, move forward, and find fulfilment and success.

And what are these ten lessons? (1) Think big; (2) Be patient; (3) Master the details; (4) Accept the attendant risks (physical, political, or financial); (5) Work as a team or partnership; (6) Accept failure along the way; (7) Continuously learn and adapt; (8) Find your passion; (9) Build on your successes and (10) Press on to the next great goal. These lessons should be followed not in isolation but as a homogenous whole.

As the book nears the end of its tale and the reader thinks the revelations are complete – not so. We are to learn, too, from the recent huge success of the NASA Mars Rover space programme. Inscribed on the parachute of the Mars Rover was a three-word code. Clever people set out to solve the riddle and with success. It read, *Dare mighty things*. This is our challenge in life. For my part, I challenge you to buy this enjoyable and deeply educational book. It is worth every penny/dime.



Books on the Ross Sea Party

Stephen Scott-Fawcett FRGS

It is often remarked that very little is written on the exploits of the men who ventured into the Ross Sea region (the Ross Sea Party) in support of the Imperial Trans Antarctic Expedition (1914-17) and, without whom, Shackleton's intended march across the continent would have been impossible. In fact, there are quite a few books on the subject and the significance of this extraordinary element of ITAE is being recognised more and more – by polar historians and polar enthusiasts alike. As I remarked at the end a lecture I delivered in Dundee (May 2017),

The Ross Sea Party expedition was no 'debacle'. It was an adventure in the awful face of Mother Nature. It was always going to be a tough challenge. The weather was particularly extreme – who knows how typical those seasons were? Nor was it a 'miracle', for that is to suggest something 'supernatural' happened. It did not. This expedition, to my mind, was nothing short of a stunning victory. A victory of human ingenuity over natural adversity.

This expedition was not an unmitigated disaster, as some might declare. It was, in fact, a remarkable feat where seven men somehow survived a truly outrageous ordeal. Two of the three deaths could have been avoided completely had Aeneas Mackintosh been a little more patient and waited at Hut Point a little longer (the rest of the team and dogs crossed eventually over to Cape Evans just over nine weeks later). That said, Mackintosh was no fool – he had crossed this way before with five men in June 1915. Whilst Ernest Joyce had been right to warn of impending bad weather no-one could have predicted that the blow would last for 12 long days. The expedition leader took his chance and perished in the process. Such is the thin line of success and failure in those places.

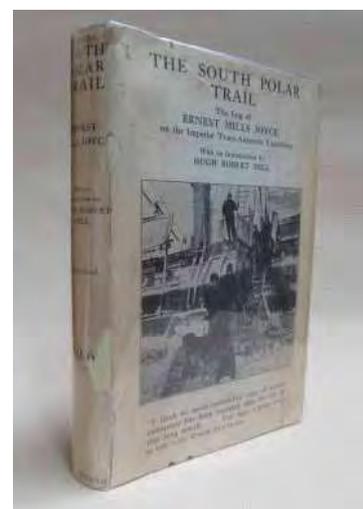
The Reverend Arnold Spencer-Smith died because, well, something had to give! No human being should have had to face the grim and dangerous conditions of the Ross Ice Shelf after scraping out survival over ten long months – barely clothed and barely fed.

Ernest Joyce described the 199-day sledging journey as, 'Without parallel in the annals of polar sledging'. From my armchair I would go further and say that the entire events of the RSP (and I include in this the 700-mile drift of SY Aurora) was, quite probably, without parallel in the annals of polar exploration.

Here is a selection of excellent books for you to consider, along with some excerpts to whet your appetite. I would encourage you to learn more:

THE SOUTH POLAR TRAIL: Ernest Joyce. *Duckworth (1929)*

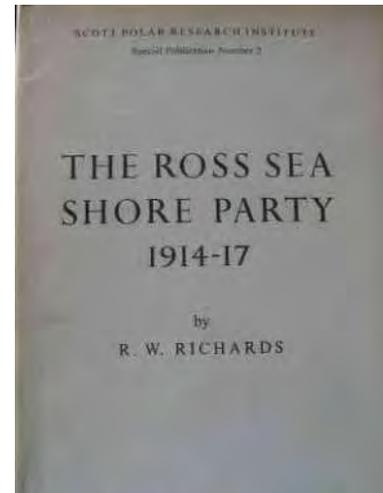
This is the only first-hand *narrative* of the Ross Sea party of Shackleton's Imperial Transantarctic Expedition. While Shackleton and his men in *Endurance* were trapped in the ice on the opposite side of the continent, the men of the Ross Sea party laboured to set depots from Hut Point to the Beardmore Glacier in anticipation of Shackleton's arrival from the Weddell Sea. Of the ten men of the Ross Sea party who over-wintered, three died; these were the only deaths associated with Shackleton's unsuccessful effort to cross the continent.



The Ross Sea Party consisted of ten men, including Joyce, Aeneas Mackintosh (leader), Ernest Wild (brother of Frank Wild), Joseph Stenhouse, and Dick Richards. For the Antarctic crossing, Shackleton placed Joyce in charge of dogs, provisions and laying out of depots. When their ship 'Aurora' ripped from its moorings, along with most of their supplies, the ten men scavenged equipment and food and set out to set the depots needed for Shackleton and his men. Joyce and his companions sledged over 1600 miles to lay the depots which, with the sinking of the Endurance, were never utilised. Of the ten, three men died including Mackintosh. This book is based on Joyce's diary and is the primary, first-hand account of the Ross Sea Party.

THE ROSS SEA SHORE PARTY 1914-17: Richards RW. *SPRI* (1962)

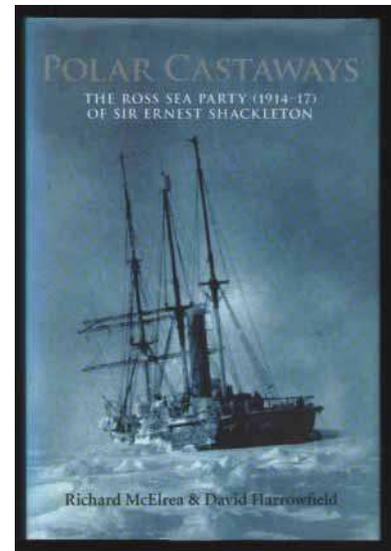
Richard Walter Richards was a scientific (physicist) member of the Ross Sea Party. A slim volume telling story plainly in 44 pages. Modest in contrast to Joyce's flamboyant *The South Polar Trail* it is written without bitterness and untroubled by disappointed hopes. Richards wrote the book in late mid-life (68 years old) after long reflection 'weighing the credits and debits (and there were very weighty debits). I have no regrets. The struggle was not a futile one. Richards was the last of the RSP survivors to die (age 91 on 05/05/1985).



POLAR CASTAWAYS. Richard McElrea and David Harrowfield. *Canterbury University Press, Christchurch* (2004)

Two Antarctic historians from New Zealand who have researched the fate of Sir Ernest's advance supply team for the first time say that three members froze to death due to bad leadership, faulty planning, and woefully short supplies. As leader of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, Shackleton inevitably bore responsibility for their deaths," said Richard McElrea. The book includes testimony from the diary of Ernest Joyce, one of the members of the ill-fated party. "Nobody would consider undertaking such a trip with such miserable equipment for a single second," he wrote.

Polar Castaways tells the little-known story of the "Ross Sea party" - a team of 10 men dispatched from Tasmania to the Antarctic in 1914 to deposit advance supplies for Sir Ernest, who had planned to cross the South Pole from the opposite side of the continent until his ship sank.



According to David Harrowfield, "Shackleton had given the Ross Sea party tasks which were almost impossible to fulfil".

The party was beset by squabbles, supply shortages, bad planning and - ultimately - death. Aeneas Mackintosh, who had been selected by Sir Ernest as team leader but turned out to be fatally hot-headed, was blown out to sea on drifting pack-ice, together with Victor Hayward, another expedition member. The Rev Arnold Spencer-Smith, the team's padre, contracted scurvy and froze to death.

Sir Ernest gives only scant mention of their plight in South, his own account of his 1914 expedition. Mr McElrea explained his book was based on previously unpublished interviews that he and his co-author conducted with survivors of the expedition during the 1970s and 1980s.

Their task was to deposit more than two tons of supplies at five separate depot camps along Sir Ernest's planned route - a trip that involved covering more than 2,000 miles on dog sledges across pack ice plagued by relentless blizzards and sudden thaws.

The historians' new account begins with the explorers' realization that Sir Ernest's London-based supply team had failed to deliver almost half the equipment promised for the expedition - a bad start.

Once it had set off, the party ran into difficulties almost immediately. Their ship, the Aurora, which was moored according to instructions set down by Sir Ernest, snapped its anchor cables in a storm and was blown out to sea with most of the supplies aboard.

The ship drifted in ice for nearly a year before it could be freed, leaving the 10-man party marooned ashore with pitifully inadequate provisions. Members of the party had to sew makeshift footwear made from sealskin sleeping bags and trousers were cut from the remains of discarded tents.

The party stuck to its task, but squabbles broke out after Mackintosh, the one-eyed explorer selected by Sir Ernest to lead the expedition, refused to reduce the heavy loads the team was dragging, even though several men had frost boils and most of the dogs had died from exposure.

Discipline continued to deteriorate, and the food ration was reduced to eight sugar lumps and a biscuit a day. Spencer-Smith, who was just 31, died from scurvy, while Mackintosh had to be strapped to a sledge after becoming delirious.

The party finally made it back to a camp at McMurdo sound in March 1916 after a tour that had lasted six months. Two months later, Mackintosh insisted on making a dash across the frozen McMurdo sound to a hut with better supplies at Cape Evans, 15 miles to the north.

"First we save you from death and now you want to risk dying again. What idiots are we dealing with here!" Joyce is recorded as saying.

Mackintosh nevertheless walked out on to the floating pack ice with fellow explorer Hayward. An hour later, a blizzard blew up and forced the ice out into the sea. The pair were never seen again.

The Ross Sea party was not rescued until January 1917. Men had given their lives in a worthless sacrifice, the historians argue, because Sir Ernest neither crossed the Antarctic nor reached any of the depots they had laid.

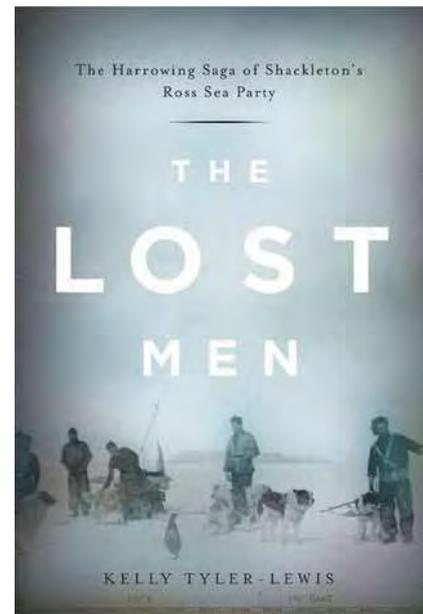
The London-based James Caird Society set up to honour Sir Ernest's memory and named after the boat on which the explorer and his crew made their escape - rejected claims that the explorer was to blame for the plight of the Ross Sea Party.

"Shackleton was at the time coping with his own party and its problems on the other side of the continent, said Maj Gen Patrick Fagan, the Chairman of the Society. The Ross Sea Party lost most of their supplies when their ship was blown away during a blizzard. They consequently developed scurvy and later made errors of rash judgment that we do not think Shackleton would have allowed them to make."

THE LOST MEN: The harrowing saga of Shackleton's Ross Sea Party. Kelly Tyler-Lewis. *Bloomsbury* (2007)

Just as you thought Shackleton's *Endurance* expedition had clutched success out of the jaws of failure in the Weddell Sea we are reminded by Kelly Tyler-Lewis that, thousands of miles away in the Ross Sea region, a party of men (commissioned by the Boss to lay essential depots across the Ross Ice Barrier to the foot of the Beardmore Glacier) endured extreme hardship and even death, in support of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition.

It is an extraordinary and exhausting story. It is a story of sheer guts and determination (principally and variably on the part of Aeneas Mackintosh and Ernest Wild) against all the odds. It is a story, too, of disagreement and under-funding. Here, perhaps, we have a counterweight to the Weddell Sea saga. Unlike Shackleton's failure to attain his main objective of crossing the Antarctic continent (indeed, he did not even make landfall), the Ross Sea Party *succeeded* in laying the supply depots (critical to ensure Shackleton's safe passage across the final leg of his proposed journey). Despite this, 3 men perished (arguably needlessly) and, in the final analysis, the stranded party of blubber-stained and mentally strained survivors had to be rescued, courtesy of a mercy dash by the *Aurora* from New Zealand with John King Davis at the helm. Shackleton was on board, too, but for political reasons, entirely, the hero of the Elephant Island rescue (on his first voyage on board *his own vessel*) was reduced to the role of supernumerary officer. There is a poignant photograph of Shackleton standing on the deck of the *Aurora* in Wellington, NZ, after the relief expedition (1917). It shows a man deep in thought - a man probably mourning the loss of 3 good men. A man contemplating the remarkable achievements and sacrifices of 10 beleaguered men who risked their lives daily, in foreboding circumstances, to ensure that he, Shackleton, might succeed. Little did they realise that the Boss would never appear over the horizon, not in 1915 nor 1916.



What is significant about Kelly Tyler-Lewis's book is the attention to detail and the objective way in which the many difficulties of logistics and relationships are explained.

From the very outset of the journey south, problems accumulated. There was a chronic lack of manpower (many eligible men were in France fighting the Germans). Some of those who *were* recruited seemed unsuited to the icy task ahead. There was very little cohesion. There was, also, a clash of cultures. The Australian contingent would often challenge the decisions of their superiors, much to the embarrassment of the Europeans. Whilst the experienced Ernest Joyce was always the reluctant rod-bearer, he anguished, often, with the decisions of his leader, Aeneas Mackintosh - not least when (ignoring Joyce's protests) the latter decided to push the dog teams too hard in the first season of depot-laying. It was a fateful strategy with only 6 dogs surviving through to 1916. Joyce was livid.

Upon arrival in New Zealand, it fell to Mackintosh to get the *Aurora* ship-shape and fully supplied. Shackleton had not planned it through. His focus was on the Weddell Sea operation. Furthermore, there was very little funding available (unsurprising given the advent of the Great War). Time and time again, pleas by Mackintosh to the Expedition's London-based lawyers for more funds would go unanswered - 'the wartime economy is to blame', they would finally reply. On many occasions the private savings of Shackleton's men would save the day - Stenhouse being a classic example. The story of how Stenhouse wrestled with the *Aurora* over hundreds of miles, through the pack ice, when a giant storm blew it from its moorings at Cape

Evans is remarkable and probably worthy of a book itself. That Stenhouse finally made it back to New Zealand then had the wherewithal to get the ship repaired and re-stocked for a relief journey is truly remarkable.

Throughout the entire expedition (on board and on shore) the men were never truly united. There were always cliques and intrigue. Most often the men were split between following Mackintosh's lead or that of Joyce. Feelings ran high on many occasions. Still, the status quo just about remained. In many ways, whilst Joyce took control of the later stages of the second depot-laying season to the foot of the Beardmore Glacier (as Mackintosh's health gave way), Joyce never assumed full command - it only became a necessity when, finally, Mackintosh and Hayward attempted a suicidal crossing over young ice (and ahead of a brewing storm) from Hut Point to Cape Evans, *after* the depot-laying journeys had been completed successfully. As if to emphasise the fraught relationships, the disappearance and certain death of the two men (Spencer-Smith had died earlier, on the Barrier) simply caused anger rather than a sense of loss. For the 7 men still clinging on in the shanty hut of Hut Point, the decision by Mackintosh (and Hayward) to attempt a crossing to the better-equipped hut at Cape Evans was foolhardy - especially given the huge effort it had taken to transport the two ailing men back to camp. As far as the survivors were concerned, it might have been better for Mackintosh and Hayward to have gambled (and lost) their lives earlier, on the depot journey home. At least the survivors might have stood a greater chance of saving the chaplain's life! Of the shore party, Spencer-Smith was the most liked by all.

For anyone who is keen to get 'close' to the harsh realities of Heroic Era polar travelling (albeit from the comfort of an armchair) *The Lost Men* pulls no punches. It tells it how it really *was*, the ups and the many downs. Above all, it gives us an important insight into a part of the *Endurance* Expedition that is so often overlooked and probably under-valued these days. Thanks to the author's tireless research and her refreshingly frank and balanced approach, the saga of the *Aurora* commands our attention. Her heroes demand recognition *today*, as they deserved and, to a certain degree, received in their time. Shackleton was so inspired by what the Ross Sea Party had achieved that he made sure these heroes, *his men*, received the full pay they were due, even bonuses (unlike their counterparts on *Endurance*). All (bar two troublesome crew members) were awarded the Polar Medal (Joyce, Richards, Wild and Hayward (post)) eventually securing, also, an Albert Medal, in 1923).



Original photograph inscribed:
Edgecombe y Curtis - 212 Reconquista, B. Aries.
and shows: (From left to right)
William Bakewell, Thomas McLeod, Bill Stephenson, an
unknown man, Ernie Holness, Charles Green and Wally Howe.
Sitting in front: An unknown lady and Sir Ernest Shackleton.



