

"It was so sad when their ship sank, but they kept going and didn't ever give up. What a very inspiring account it is." Thomas, 14

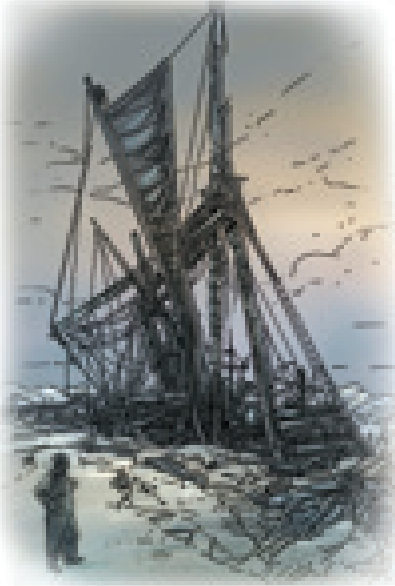


SOUTH

At 5 o'clock on the evening of November 21st, after the ice had drawn back like pall bearers at a funeral, *Endurance* slipped lower in the water, her stern pointing skywards. We stood in silence while she said her last farewell. A cacophony of cracking timber and rushing water signalled her end and then she was silent, slipping into the watery grave. The bravest ship, she had struggled to the bitter end and now she was gone. *Endurance* – well named.

When his ship *Endurance* sinks in the icy Antarctic, Ernest Shackleton is left with the responsibility of getting his crew safely back home. Can they survive crossing dangerous icefloes and setting up camp on a remote island?

Even when they reach land nobody will know where they are unless somebody can sail the tiny ship's boat across eight hundred miles of the world's most dangerous seas to summon help. Can it be done?



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Ernest Shackleton

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Retold by John MacKenna
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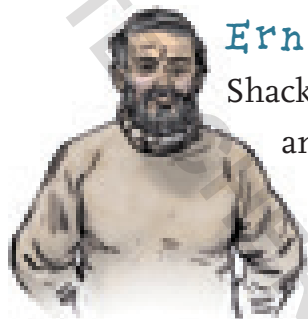
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THE CHARACTERS

Ernest Shackleton – 'The Boss'

Shackleton's boyhood dream of becoming an explorer takes him to Antarctica on several expeditions. What is so special about him that his men want to follow him so loyally through thick and thin?



Frank Wild

Shackleton's trusted friend, Wild has been on five expeditions to the Antarctic. The Boss leaves him in charge of those stranded on Elephant Island after the loss of *Endurance*.

Will this prove a wise choice?



Frank Worsley

Worsley is a New Zealander, a sailor and explorer who is the captain of the ill-fated *Endurance*. Shackleton chooses Worsley for the dangerous voyage of the *James Caird* and the trek across South Georgia. Is he up to the challenge?



Frank Hurley

Frank Hurley's photographs, especially those of the sinking of *Endurance*, show vividly what the men on the expedition have been through. How does he feel having to leave so many of his pictures behind on the sinking ship?



Tom Crean

Crean is another crew member chosen by Shackleton for the dangerous crossing to South Georgia in the *James Caird*. He is an Irishman renowned for his singing – will that help in a small boat?



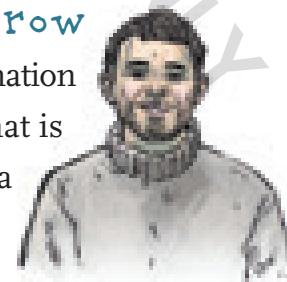
Harry 'Chippy' McNish

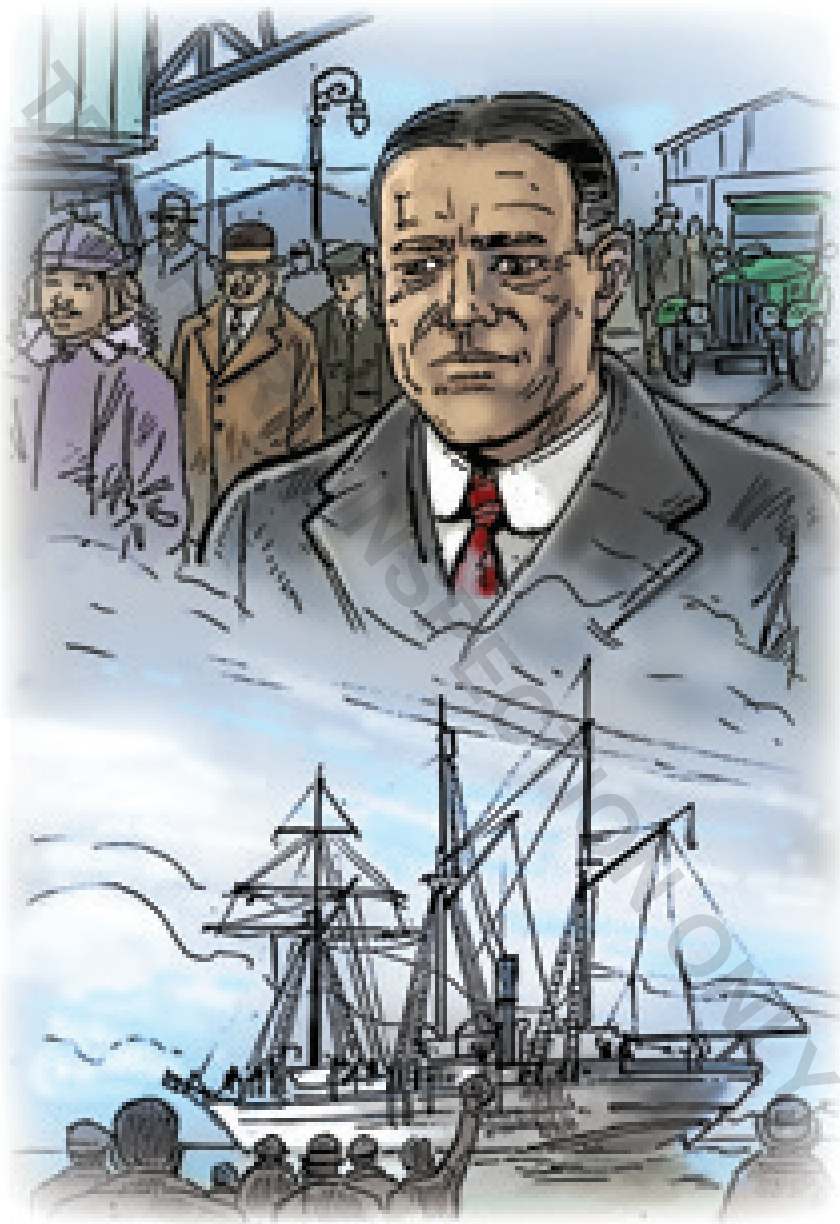
The carpenter on board *Endurance*, it is McNish who makes the ship's lifeboat, the *James Caird*, capable of crossing treacherous seas to attempt the rescue of the whole crew.



Perce Blackborow

Teenage stowaway Perce shows a determination which is taken to heart by The Boss. What is it that makes him want to stow away on a ship bound for the Antarctic?





SOUTH

It was early in the month of August 1914 when I watched the ship *Endurance* sail away from England, bound for Antarctica. This was my ship, manned by the crew I had chosen, setting off on a voyage I had planned. Yet, in my heart, I wasn't sure if I should meet up with her. There were so many reasons not to go. Firstly, war was about to break out and I had offered my ship and my crew for service to the Royal Navy, but the offer had been declined. Secondly, I was short of money – as I so often was. And lastly, I felt a great sadness at leaving my wife and family. Whenever I was away from home I wished to be at home, yet when I was at home all I dreamed of was being at sea. I loved my family, but I never seemed to find contentment at home. I was born to wander.

My dream had been to be the first man to reach the South Pole, but I had been beaten to that prize by the Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen, and my other great rival, Scott, had died in his attempt to be the first to reach the Pole.

So here I was with a new plan, beginning an expedition that I hoped would see the South Polar continent crossed from sea to sea.

As I watched *Endurance* sail away I made my mind up to follow her, to meet with my crewmen in Buenos Aires and attempt this journey that had never before made done.



We left Buenos Aires on October 26th aboard *Endurance*. Whalers who had recently returned from South Georgia had warned me that the ice was the worst they had ever seen, and I believed them, but I also believed that *Endurance* could make her way safely through that ice. She was a sturdy ship and I had a well-chosen crew, men who were experienced sailors and scientists but who could also sing and act and play music – valuable qualities on a long and rigorous journey. What I didn't know was that I had one more crewman than planned. A nineteen-year-old stowaway called Perce Blackborrow had



found his way aboard in Buenos Aires, and was now travelling with us.

The whalers hadn't lied. We were no more than two days out from South Georgia when we encountered the worst ice I'd ever seen. I had expected it, but not so soon and not so badly. The world in which we found ourselves was a jigsaw of ice and clear water, smoking and groaning, opening and then closing again. My great worry was that our supply of coal was being eaten up by the slowness of our progress.

Back in Time

South was first published in 1919, almost a hundred years ago. It is Ernest Shackleton's account of the *Endurance* expedition, led by him, which set off in August 1914 to attempt, for the first time ever, to cross the Antarctic continent from one coast to the other via the South Pole.

Shackleton is often thought of as the last of the explorers of the great 'heroic age' of Antarctic exploration, which started in 1895, when the International Geographical Congress claimed that 'the exploration of the Antarctic region is the greatest piece of geographical exploration still to be undertaken'.

Big and cold as Antarctica is, the main goal for expeditions at the beginning of the twentieth century was the South Pole, and in 1911 two 'competing' expeditions, one from Norway led by Roald Amundsen and one from Britain led by Robert Falcon Scott, set out on a polar race which gripped the popular imagination. How Amundsen reached the pole first in December

1911, with Scott's party arriving a month later, then perishing in appalling blizzard conditions just eighteen miles from help on the return journey, is another story.

One of the members of Scott's first expedition to the Antarctic, in 1901 on a ship called *Discovery*, was young naval officer Ernest Shackleton. Though Shackleton had been born and spent his early years in Ireland, his family moved to London and he went to school there. His father wanted him to be a doctor as he was, but Ernest joined the merchant navy when he was sixteen and qualified as a master mariner in 1898. He travelled widely, yet his most fervent wish was to explore the polar regions. With Scott and another expedition member, Shackleton trekked towards the South Pole in very difficult conditions, getting closer to the pole than anyone had been before. Unfortunately Shackleton became seriously ill and had to return home, but had gained valuable experience.

Back in Britain, Shackleton spent some time as a journalist and was elected secretary of the Scottish Royal Geographical Society. In 1908 he returned to