

QUOTATION

WORSLEY ON SHAPING UP HABITUATION AND ENDURANCE

On December 5, 1914, Sir Ernest Shackleton left South Georgia Island leading a scientific expedition to Antarctica. The expedition ship, *Endurance*, captained by F. A. Worsley, sailed into the Weddell sea, and on January 18, 1915, became locked in the pack ice. Remaining locked in the ice, the *Endurance* drifted until November, at which time the ice crushed and sank her. The expedition members then camped on the drifting ice until April 1916, when the ice began breaking up. Faced with the prospect of their camp melting out from under them, the men put to sea in the pulling boats they had salvaged from the *Endurance*. In the boats they sailed to Elephant Island, but Worsley* later commented on their journey:

“In spite of it all, the men, inspired by Shackleton, were magnificent. Their courage and humour came to the front when it was most needed. It was well that they had been toughened and tempered to hardness for this ordeal, by the progressively severer conditions which we had undergone since leaving civilization.

‘Shackleton and several of us had been trained in square rigged ships. After the cold of South Georgia our party worked the *Endurance* through 3,000 miles of pack ice—a fine, hard, open-air life. Then came 1,000 miles drift, with temperatures down to 100° of frost, but in the comfort of the ship. Then the 600 miles drift in gale-worn tents—lying by night on snow that, melted by the heat of our bodies, ran into our sleeping bags until we lay in pools of ice-cold water. Now that conditions were worse the men, like true British seamen, ceased complaining and said, ‘Grin and bear it. Growl and go.’ ”

*Worsley, F. A. *The Great Antarctic Rescue: Shackleton's Boat Journey*. London: Times Books, 1977, p. 51.

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