

The Race for the Pole: Shackleton, Scott, and Amundsen



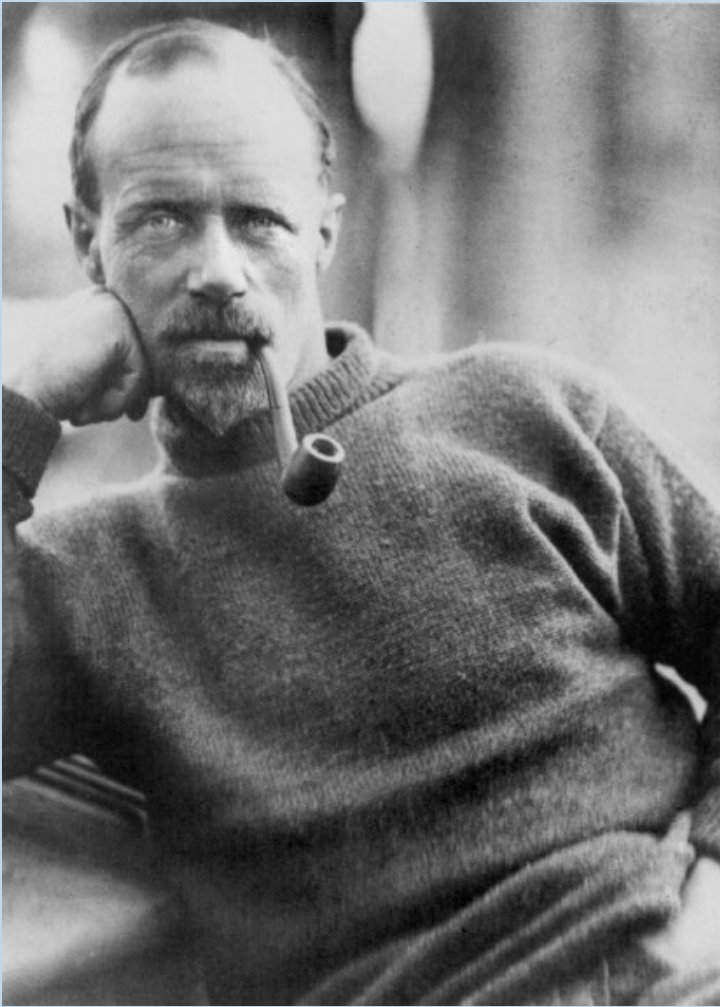
Shackleton resented Scott for sending him home from the *Discovery* expedition, which might have been done in part because Shackleton was so popular with the men.

Spent two years in England trying to raise funds for his own expedition south, with the purpose of reaching the pole, and finally succeeded by 1907

Used an old refitted whaling ship, the *Nimrod*, to go south with 15 men chosen from over 400 applicants. They included the Australian, Douglas Mawson, a geologist, but who came as the physicist



Shackleton recruited two loyal men who were with him on Scott's *Discovery* expedition



Frank Wild



Ernest Joyce (right) with Frank Wild (left)



Douglas Mawson, geologist



Raymond Priestley, geologist

He wanted Edward Wilson to come, but Wilson felt he would be breaking his allegiance to Scott and turned it down

Finally left on 7 Aug. 1907 and went to New Zealand first

The ship leaked and was overloaded but they made it to McMurdo Sound in January 1908, mainly because they were towed by a steamer ship to the ice edge

At first, he wanted to set winter quarters on the ice shelf, closer to the pole, but saw that it had collapsed so was unreliable

Hut Point was surrounded by ice, so he turned back and built his quarters at Cape Royds



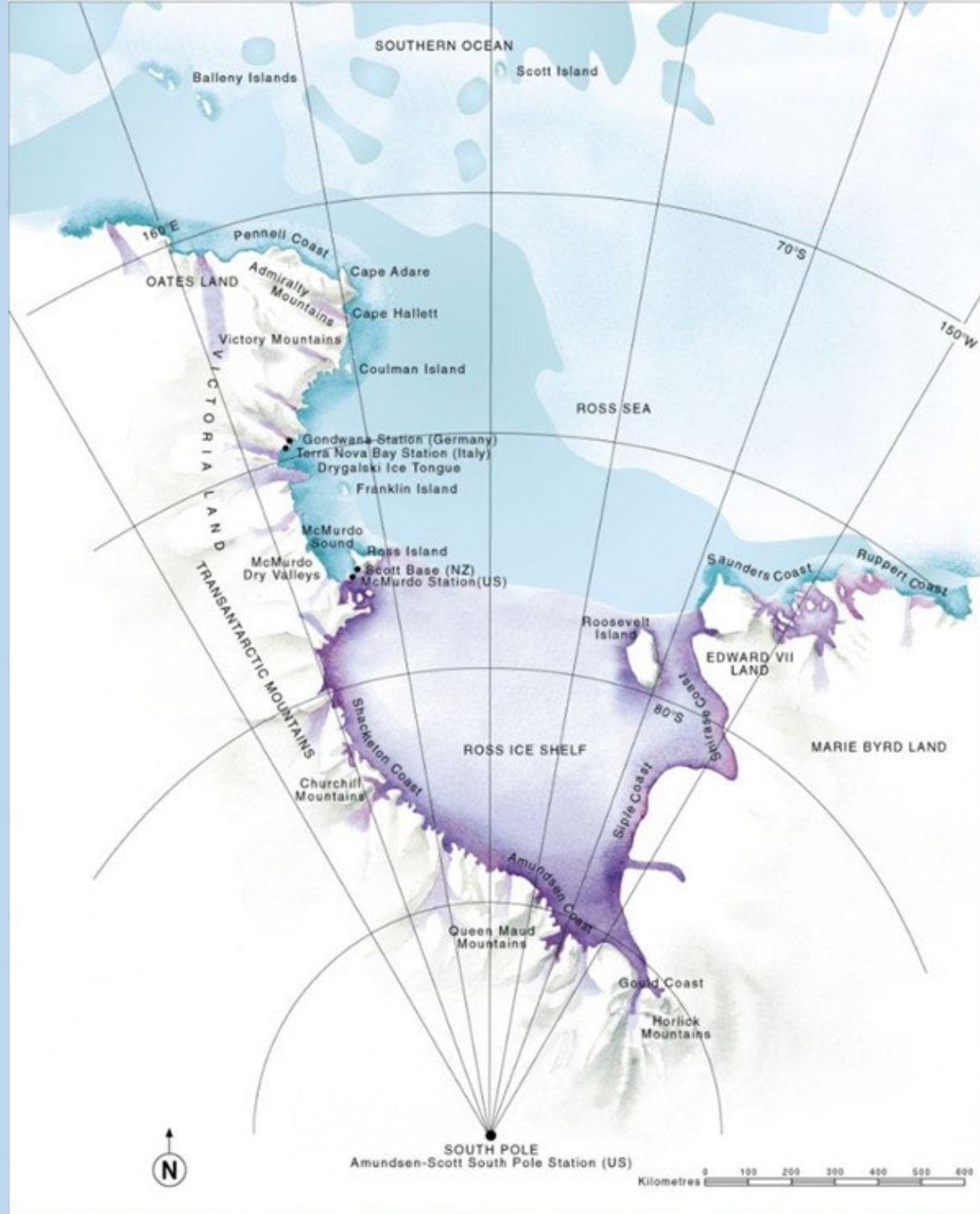
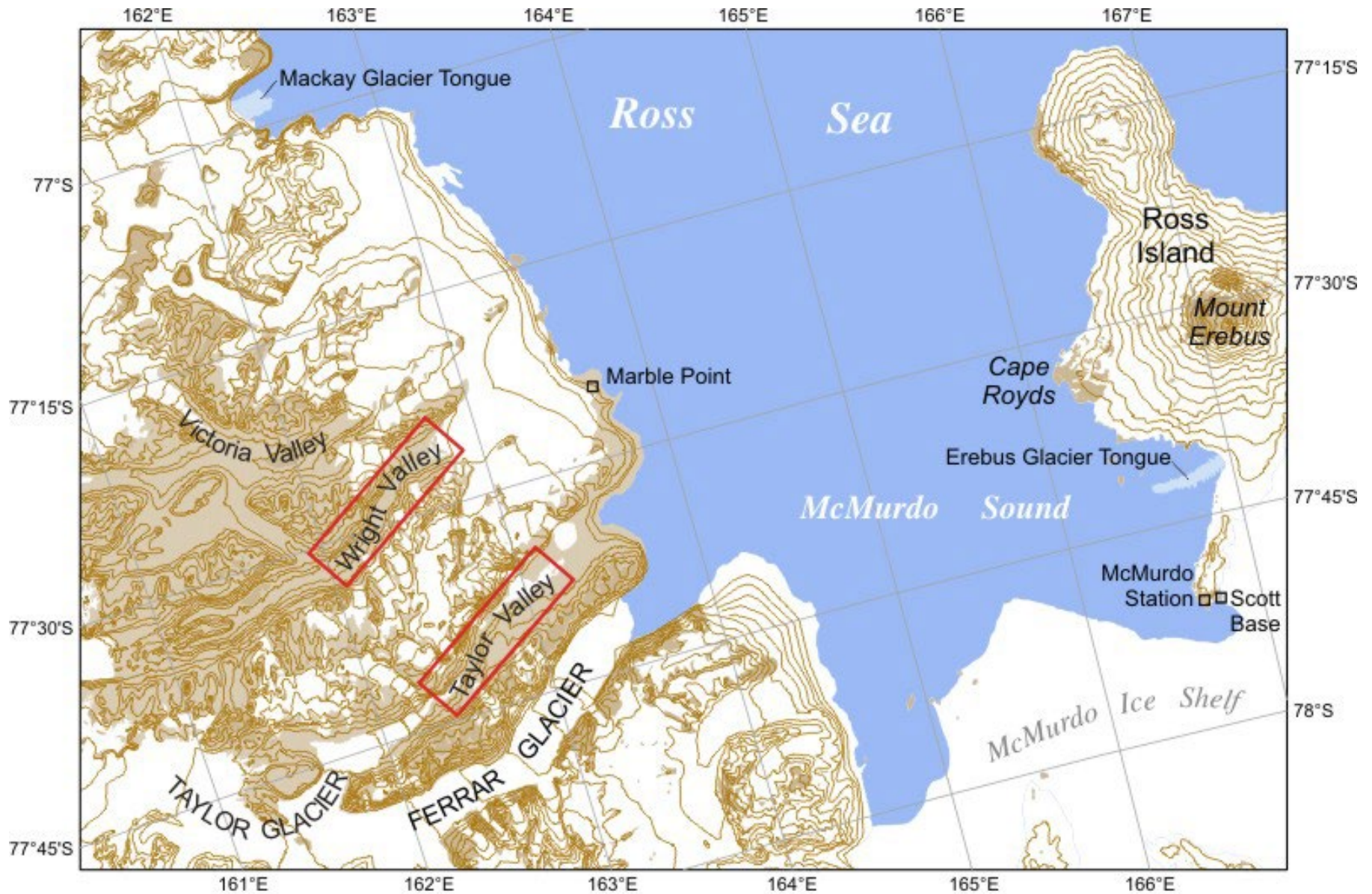


Figure 2: The Ross Sea region of Antarctica



0 5 10 20 MILES

0 5 10 20 KILOMETERS

Shackleton and his men spent the winter working on various projects and preparing for the trip to the Pole in the spring.

Had the first motor vehicles with them, but they got stuck easily and actually overheated more than froze

They also brought the first ponies, but they sank into the snow and were useless for most of the polar travel

They made the first ascent of Mt. Erebus, studied lake and ocean waters, and kept a meteorological station to stay moderately busy through the winter



Bernard Day in his motor car.

In spring 1908, Shackleton chose three men to accompany him on his attempt for the Pole using the ponies for the first leg of the journey across the Ross Ice Shelf.

Left on 29 October 1908 with four ponies to assist



At the same time, a party of three including Mawson set out for the south magnetic pole with the car towing sledges and helping set depots across the sea ice.

Only the latter group succeeded in reaching their goal and returned in time to board the *Nimrod*, back to pick them up



Mackay, David, and Mawson at south magnetic pole, 16 January 1909

Shackleton and his party made it to the polar plateau and over 10,000 foot elev., but were weak and low on food so they turned back at 88° 23' S on 9 January 1909, a new record for farthest south and only 97 miles from the pole.

Shackleton made a tough decision, but his men's survival came first and all made it back, having covered 1700 miles total.





"I thought, dear, that you would rather have a live ass than a dead lion."

Sir Ernest Shackleton to his wife Emily, after deciding to turn back 97 miles from the Pole.



**The hut in 1907
and today**





<http://www.heraldsun.com.au>

Shackleton had also stashed three cases of whiskey beneath the hut that were not discovered until 2011 during renovations

You can now buy a remake of the whiskey as determined by chemical analysis of the original



Scott's *Terra Nova* Expedition, 1910-1912

After Shackleton's attempt on the Pole, Scott felt the need to try again and began raising funds

Bought an old whaling ship, the *Terra Nova*, and left in June 1910

Soon after leaving, received a telegram from Roald Amundsen stating that he also was heading south for the Pole



By 1909, Amundsen was a well-known polar explorer in Norway

He had been doing lots of Arctic exploration and wanted to be the first to reach the north pole, but Robert Peary made it there in April 1909, though now there is some question about this

Amundsen had raised funds for a north pole expedition, but now set his sights on the south pole, keeping it secret until Scott was underway

The Race for the Pole had begun



Amundsen and Scott had each been to Antarctica once before, but the similarities between the two stopped there

Amundsen was highly experienced in Arctic exploration, an expert skier and with the use of dogs and sleds, very professional in his goals



Scott brought back some men from the *Discovery* expedition



Edward 'Bill' Wilson



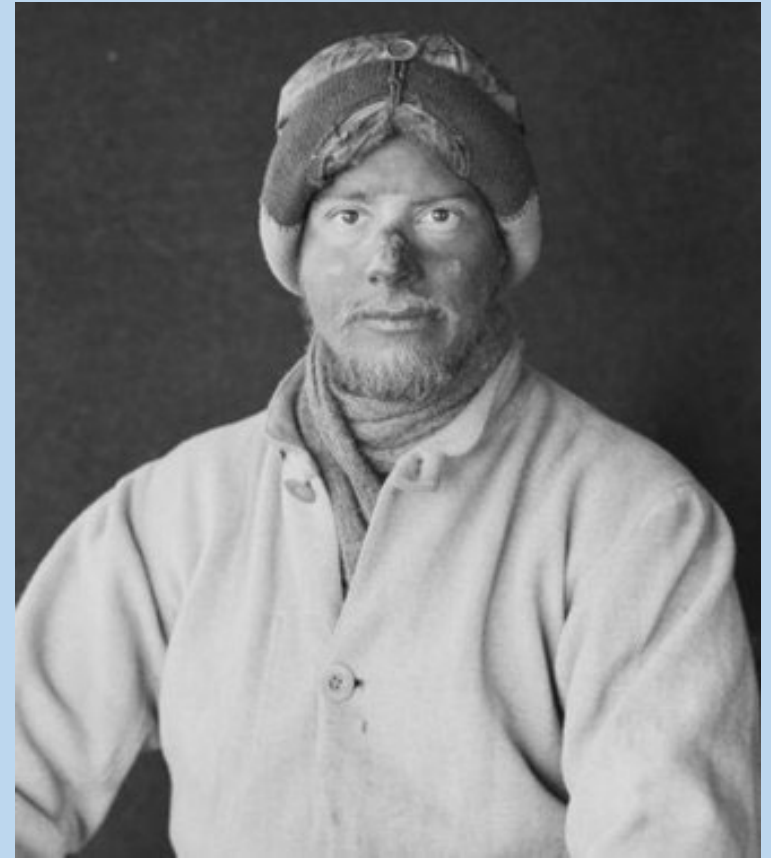
Petty Officer Edgar Evans



Tom Crean, seaman and petty officer on the *Discovery* and *Terra Nova* Expeditions



**Henry Robertson Bowers
'Birdie'**



**Apsley Cherry-Garrod
'Cherry'**

Scott was not experienced with skis and had no use for dogs. After all, Shackleton got within 97 miles of the pole by man-hauling sleds

He took ponies but again they had limited uses in the deep snow

Both reached the Ross Sea and set up winter quarters in different places, Amundsen placed his prefab hut on the ice shelf at the Bay of Whales using dogs and sleds to move gear and supplies, a head start to the pole

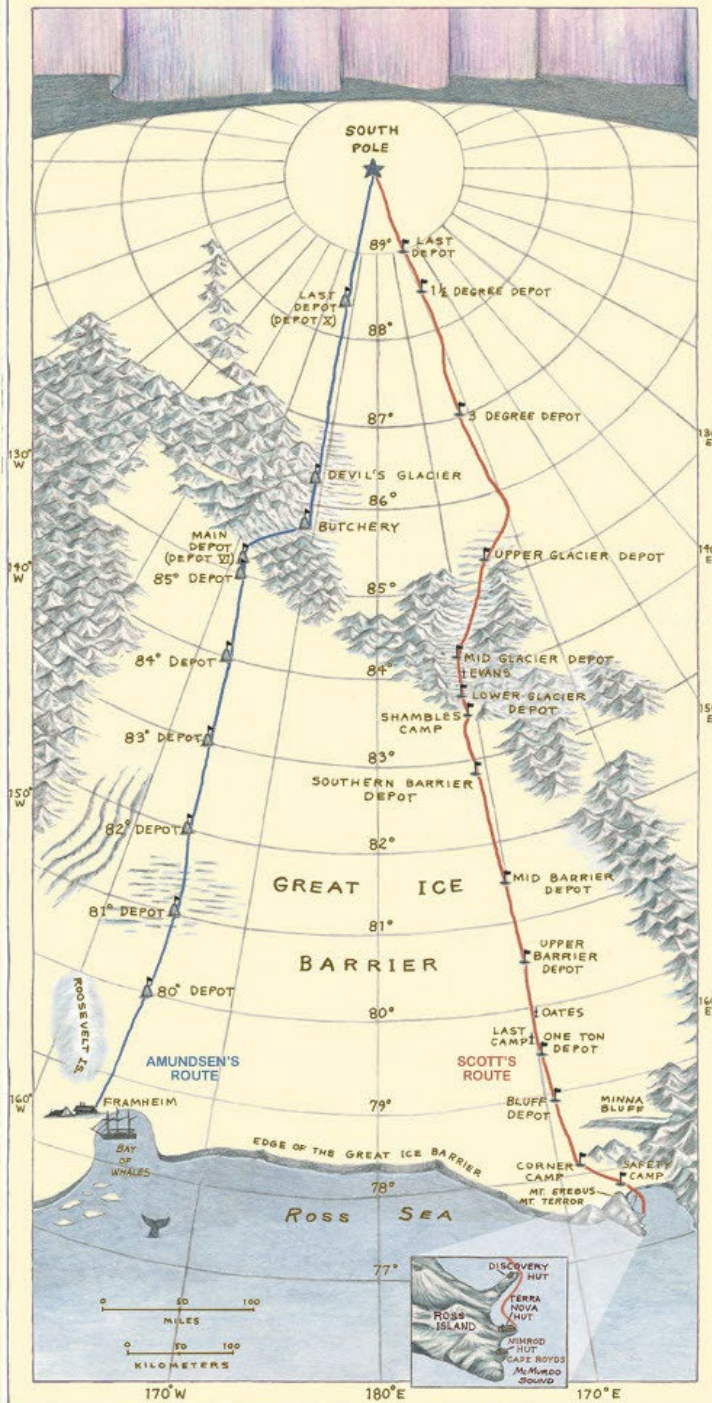
Scott could not reach Hut Point with the ship, so built a new hut at Cape Evans, farther from the pole



© Scott Polar Research Institute <http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/>



Amundsen route



Scott route



Amundsen and his men



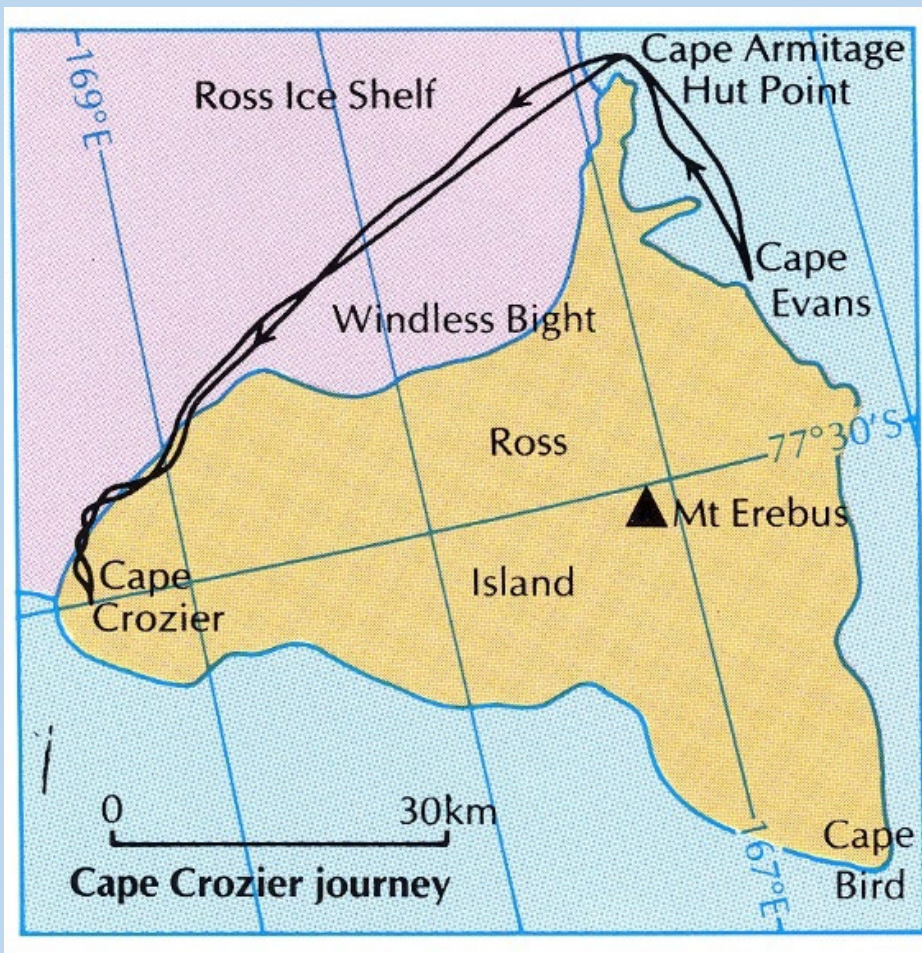
Scott and his men

Both camps kept their men busy and on a daily routine through the winter

Scott ran his with naval discipline and both groups prepared for their trip to the pole in the spring, not knowing when either one would start

Three men in Scott's group, including Edward Wilson, made a winter journey to the Emperor penguin colony at Cape Crozier in mid winter, mainly to test use of sledges, food rations, etc., but also to collect eggs

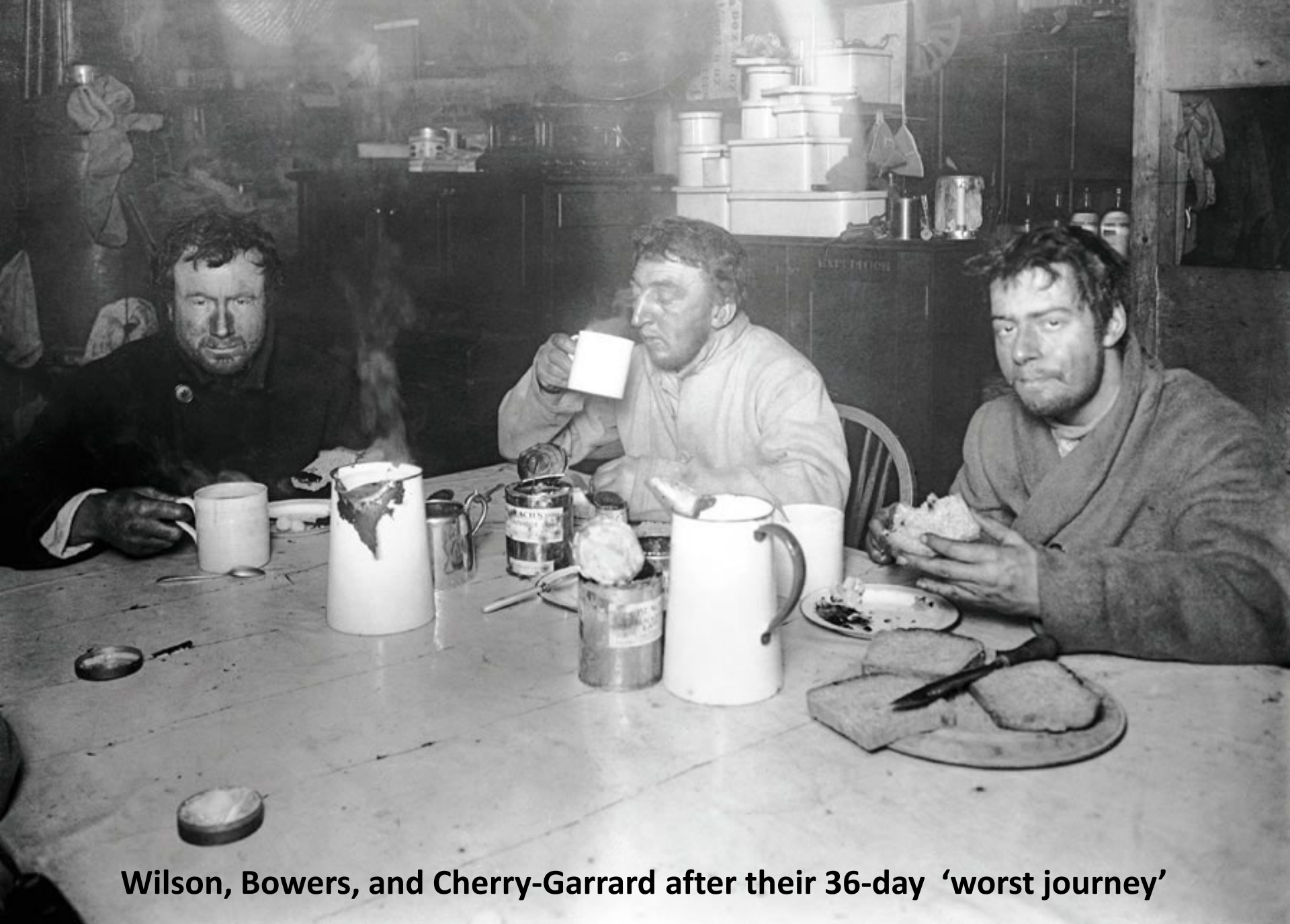




The purpose of the expedition was to obtain eggs from an Emperor penguin colony at Cape Crozier

Had 750 lbs of gear on two sledges, but found that all three were needed to pull just one sledge once on the ice shelf, where snow friction was worse.

Doubled their efforts—pull one forward, then go back for the other



Wilson, Bowers, and Cherry-Garrard after their 36-day 'worst journey'

Emperor penguin eggs at Natural History Museum, London





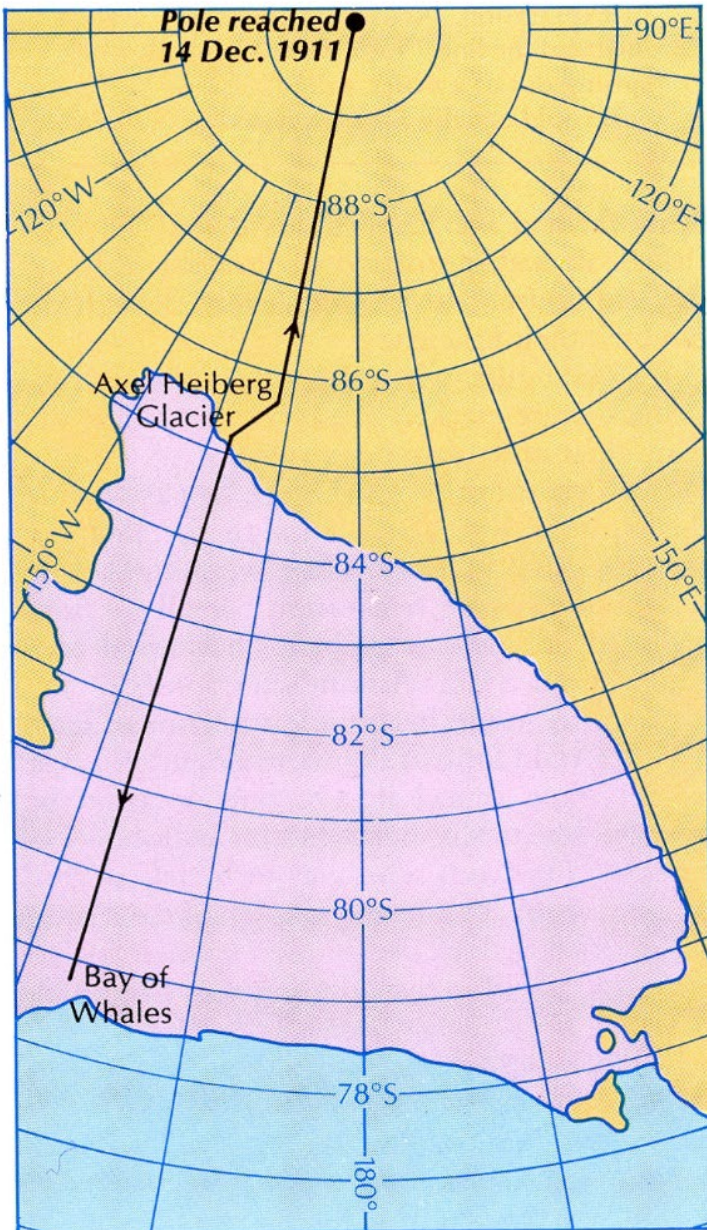
The expedition also included a photographer, Herbert Ponting, who produced many classic photos of the trip



Capt. Scott in his 'den' at Cape Evans



Fund raising was always necessary for Scott to support the expedition. It was not unusual to include ads for corporate sponsors.



By spring 1911, both groups were preparing for the race to the pole, both had placed supply depots along part of the route.

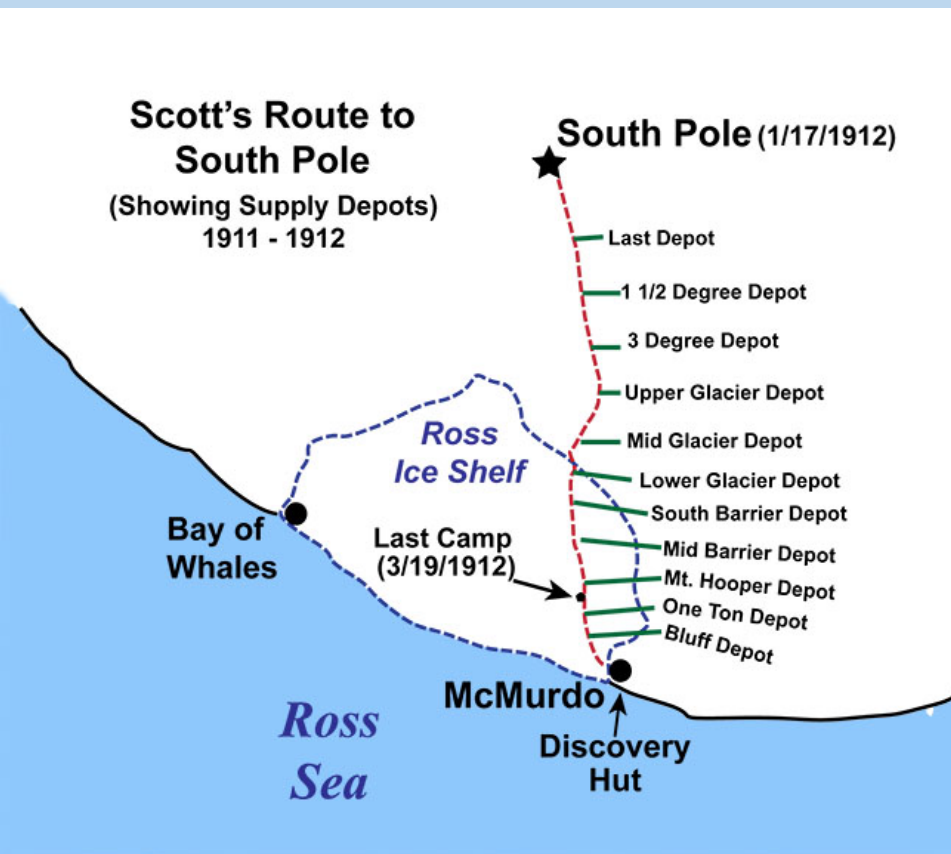
Amundsen, anxious about Scott, left on 8 Sept. and made good progress at first, then was stalled by bad weather and turned back. Left again on 19 Oct.

After some setbacks and hard conditions, they reached the pole on 14 Dec.



Scott didn't start his trek until 1 Nov. Man-hauling sledges and skiing, they moved slower than the Norwegians and suffered from the cold and hunger.

Originally planned four total as the Polar Party, but took one extra man, Birdie Bowers, at last depot where all the depot parties left



Scott began the journey with 15 men as it included the depot parties who turned back on the way.

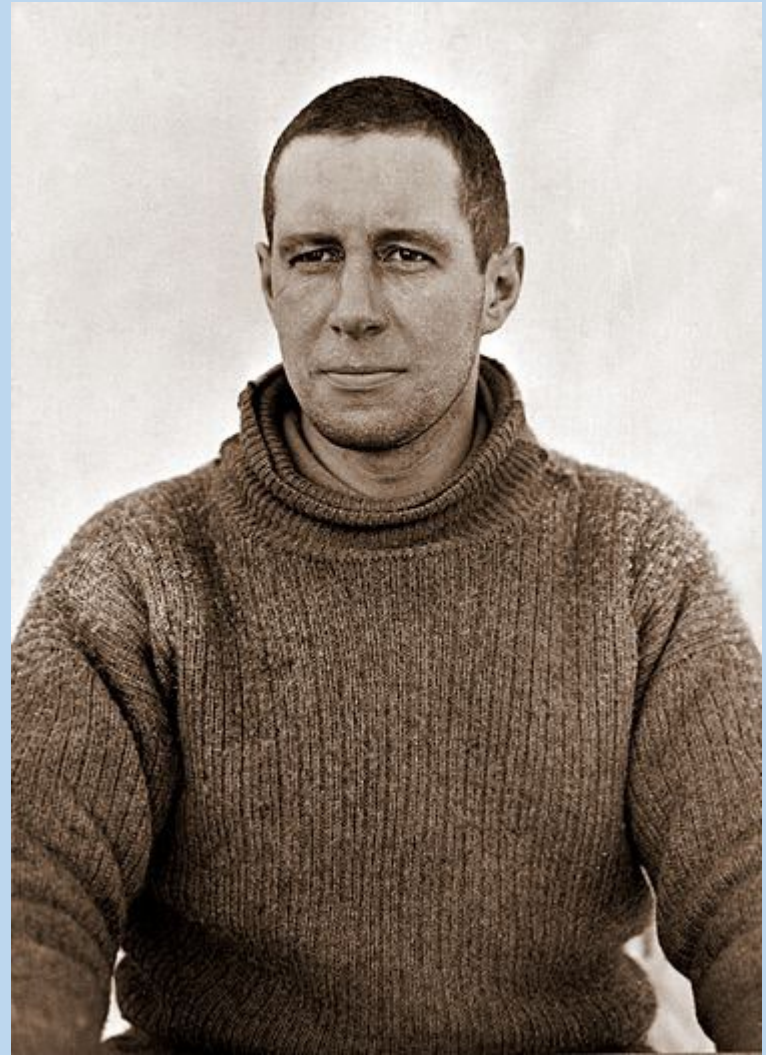
The last depot party turned back at 3 Degree Depot and the Polar Party of five continued and placed two more depots before reaching the South Pole on 17 January 1912.

They reached the pole on 17 January 1912, depressed at finding the tent and Norwegian flag Amundsen had left there over a month before along with a letter for Scott.





Petty Officer Edgar Evans



Capt. Lawrence Oates

Now had to turn back for the long return journey, knowing they had not beat Amundsen to the pole

Did not move fast enough—weakness, frostbite, injuries, but stopped to collect geologic samples which increased weight of sledges!

Evans fell and suffered a concussion on the Beardmore, died at the foot of the glacier

Oates had frostbite and gangrene from cut on hand, could not move well and asked to be left behind. Finally walked out of the tent one night and never returned:

“I am just going outside and may be some time”

17 March 1912

Scott, Wilson, and Bowers made it to 11 miles from One Ton Depot, but were very weak, low on food, and were caught in a blizzard for nine days and couldn't go on.

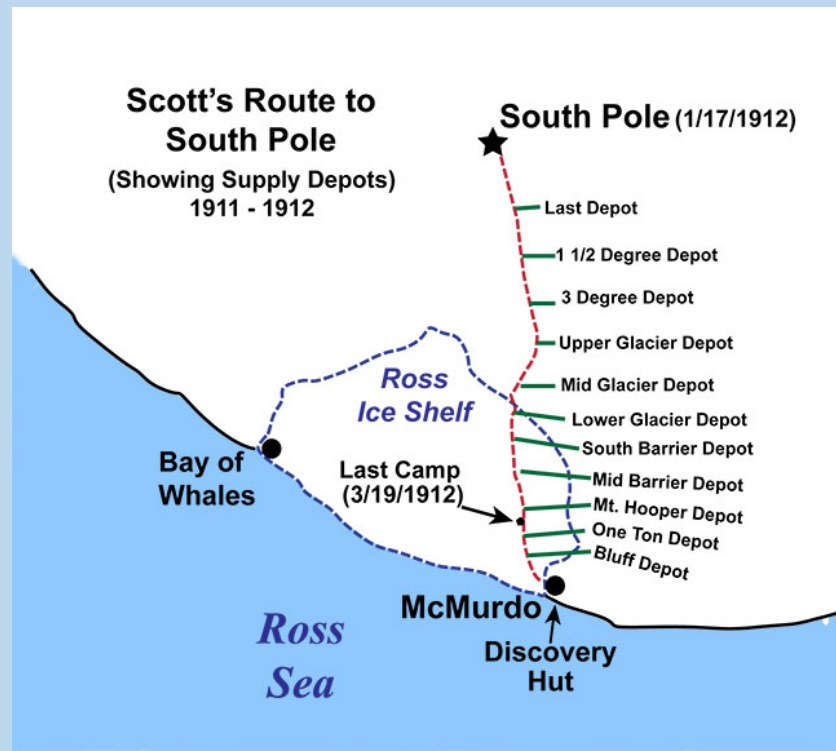
Scott spend those final days writing letters to he men's families and writing in his diary

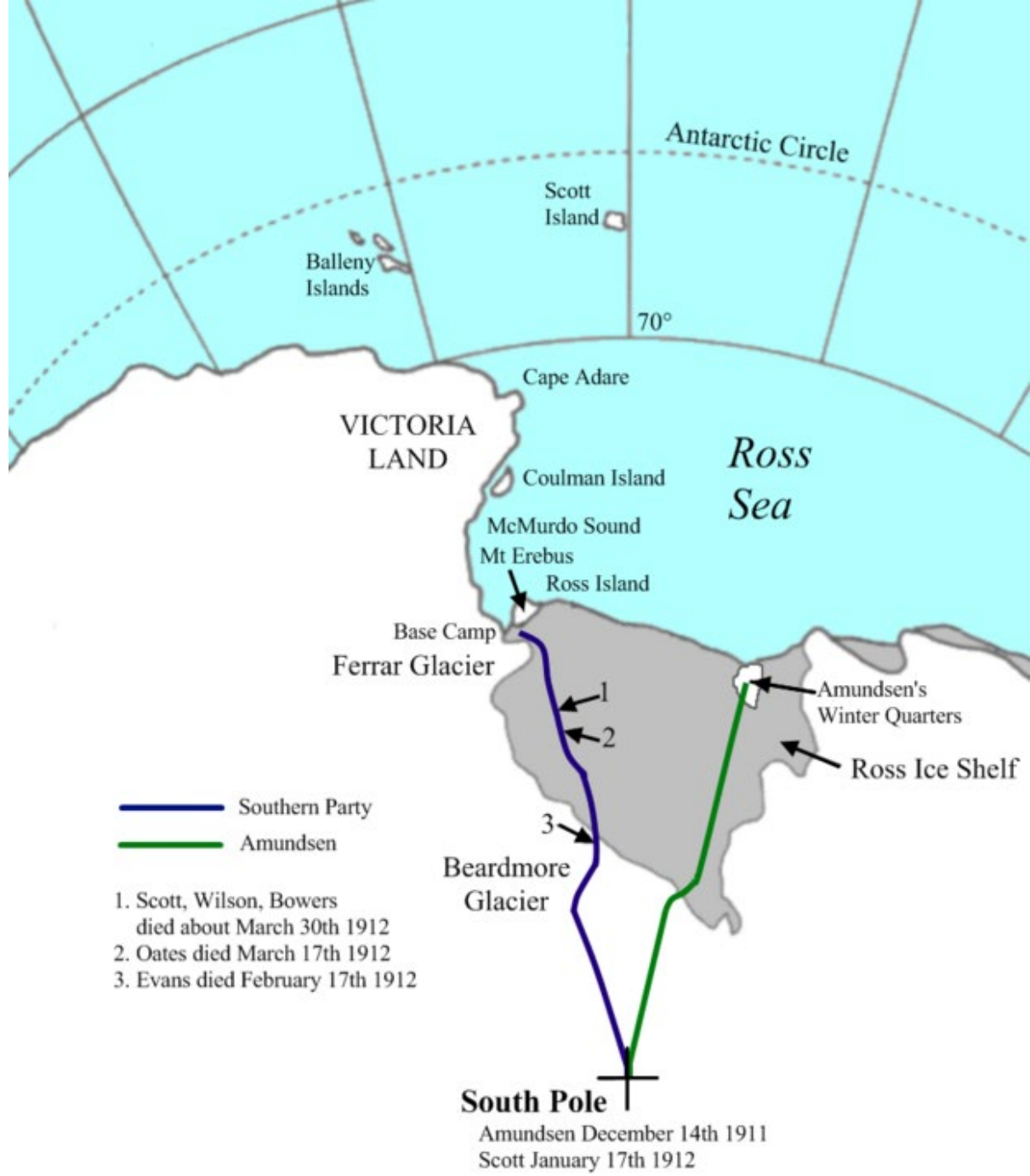
Before Scott arrived at his last camp, Apsley Cherry-Garrard went with a team in March 1912 to wait for Scott at One Ton Depot and drop extra supplies, not knowing he was then about 60 miles away.

Bad weather kept him at One Ton for seven days, waiting, before he turned back because his orders were not to kill any of the dogs, and he was out of dog food.

Going farther to look for Scott was not possible and, at that time, it was not a rescue mission.

For the rest of his life, he regretted not proceeding farther and Scott, Wilson, and Bowers died only 11 miles from One Ton on March 30.





1. Scott, Wilson, Bowers died about March 30th 1912
2. Oates died March 17th 1912
3. Evans died February 17th 1912

When Scott did not return to Cape Evans, winter was setting in and no further search parties could go out

The following spring, a search party including Cherry-Garrard, found Scott's tent and their bodies, with letters and journals

They also found 35 lbs of geological specimens, mostly *Glossopteris* fossils, later used to support continental drift

They left the bodies there and built a cairn and memorial



Scott's last diary entries:

For four days we have been unable to leave the tent – the gale howling about us. We are weak, writing is difficult, but for my own sake I do not regret this journey, which has shown that Englishmen can endure hardships, help one another, and meet death with as great a fortitude as ever in the past. We took risks, we knew we took them; things have come out against us, and therefore we have no cause for complaint, but bow to the will of Providence, determined still to do our best to the last. But if we have been willing to give our lives to this enterprise, which is for the honour of our country, I appeal to our countrymen to see that those who depend on us are properly cared for.

Had we lived, I should have had a tale to tell of the hardihood, endurance, and courage of my companions which would have stirred the heart of every Englishman. These rough notes and our dead bodies must tell the tale, but surely, surely, a great rich country like ours will see that those who are dependent on us are properly provided for.

we shall stick it out-
to the end but we
are getting weaker &
Coxen and the end
cannot be far
It seems a pity but-
I do not think I can
write more -

R. Scott

Last Entry -
For Gods sake look
after our people

Scott's last diary entry, probably on
the day he died, 29 March 1912:

Since the 21st we have had a
continuous gale from W.S.W. and S.W.
We had fuel to make two cups of tea
a piece and bare food for two days on
the 20th. Every day we have been
ready to start for our depot 11
miles away, but outside the door of
the tent it remains a scene of whirling
drift. I do not think we can hope for
any better things now. We shall stick
it out to the end, but we are getting
weaker, of course, and the end
cannot be far.

R. Scott

Last Entry

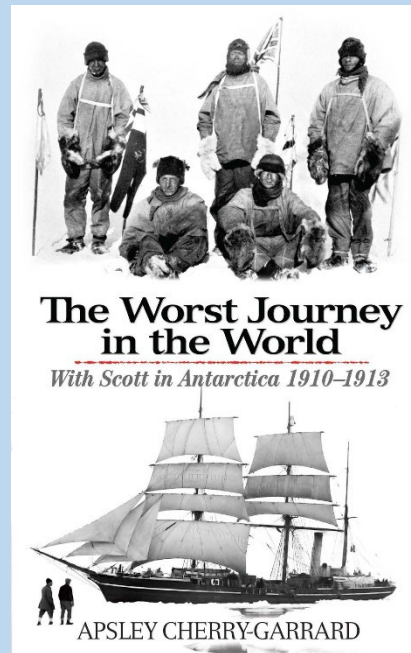
For Gods sake look after our people

Scott was immortalized in England as a national hero, though there have been critics who thought he led himself into danger and was not properly prepared, more of a bungler than a leader

Cherry-Garrard spent the rest of his life feeling remorseful for not doing enough, not going a little farther to look for Scott at One Ton Depot

He suffered from PTSD for the rest of his life and was the last surviving member of the expedition, dying in England in 1959.

Wrote a book about the expedition and his journey to Cape Crozier, 'The Worst Journey in the World', now a classic in Antarctic literature



[Iconic photos by Herbert Ponting of the Terra Nova Expedition](#)

George Simpson, meteorologist on the expedition, later completed detailed study of weather in 1912 in Ross Sea

Much colder than normal that year

The Cape Evans hut is now preserved and maintained by the New Zealand Heritage Trust

In summer 2011-2012, the 100th anniversary of Scott's expedition, his grandson Falcon Scott helped with work at the hut and flew to the South Pole on 30 January 2012





**Falcon Scott at the South Pole
30 January 2012**



**PARK HALL,
CARDIFF.**

CAPT. AMUNDSEN

WILL GIVE HIS

LECTURE

ON

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3rd, at 8 p.m.

ENTITLED

**HOW
WE REACHED
THE
SOUTH POLE**

The Lecture will be a vivid narrative of Capt. Amundsen's successful journey to the South Pole. It will be illustrated by **Lantern Slides and Kinematograph Films** taken during the Expedition.

THE CHAIR WILL BE TAKEN BY

THE RT. HON.

THE LORD MAYOR OF CARDIFF

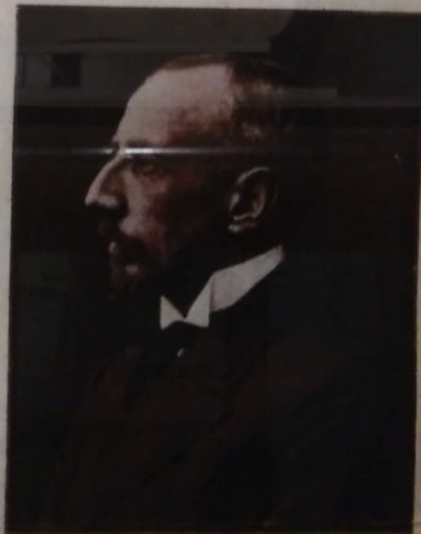


Photo by Portlock, Christmases.

BALCONY:—Front Row, 5/-; Other Rows, 3/-.

AREA:—Numbered and Reserved, 3/-; Unreserved, 2/- and 1/-.

Tickets may be obtained from The Y.M.C.A., Opposite Queen St. Station (T.V.R.), CARDIFF.

Telegrams: "Manhood, Cardiff."

Telephone: Cardiff 449.



Scott's Northern Party

Six men dropped at Cape Adare in Feb. 1911 to explore the region, study the geology

Spent winter in hut next to Borchgrevink's hut

Could not find route inland from and were picked up by the ship and moved to Inexpressible Island in January 1912

Figure 2: The Ross Sea region of Antarctica



Scott's Northern Party camp at Cape Adare in December 1911 – January 1912



**Northern Party campsite as of
January 2016**



Fruitcake found at Cape Adare left by Northern Party in 1911

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/13/world/europe/fruitcake-antarctica-scott.html>



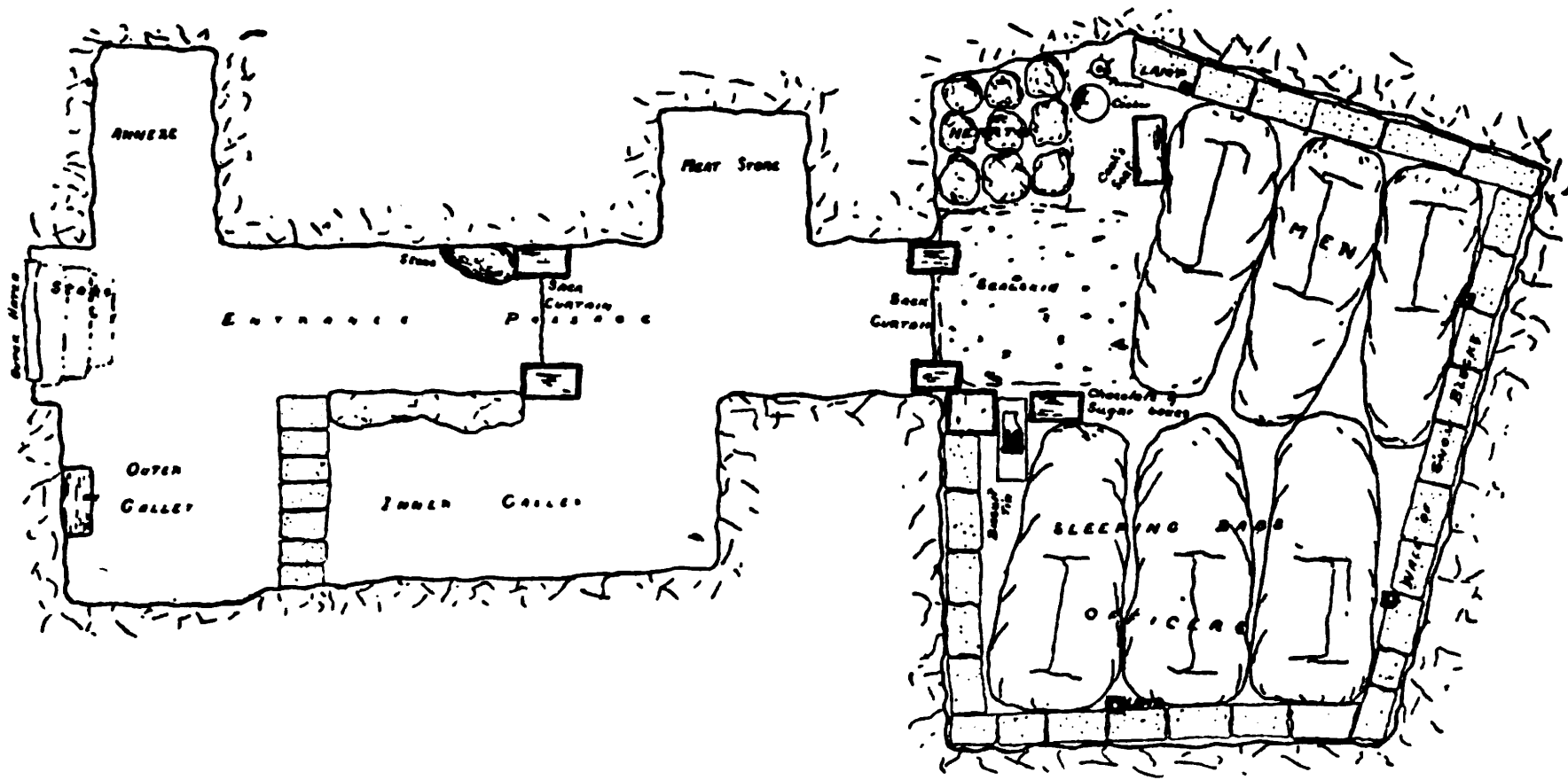
Hell's Gate and Inexpressible Island



Northern Party Campsite, Inexpressible Island

Inexpressible Island snow cave site, winter 1912-1913



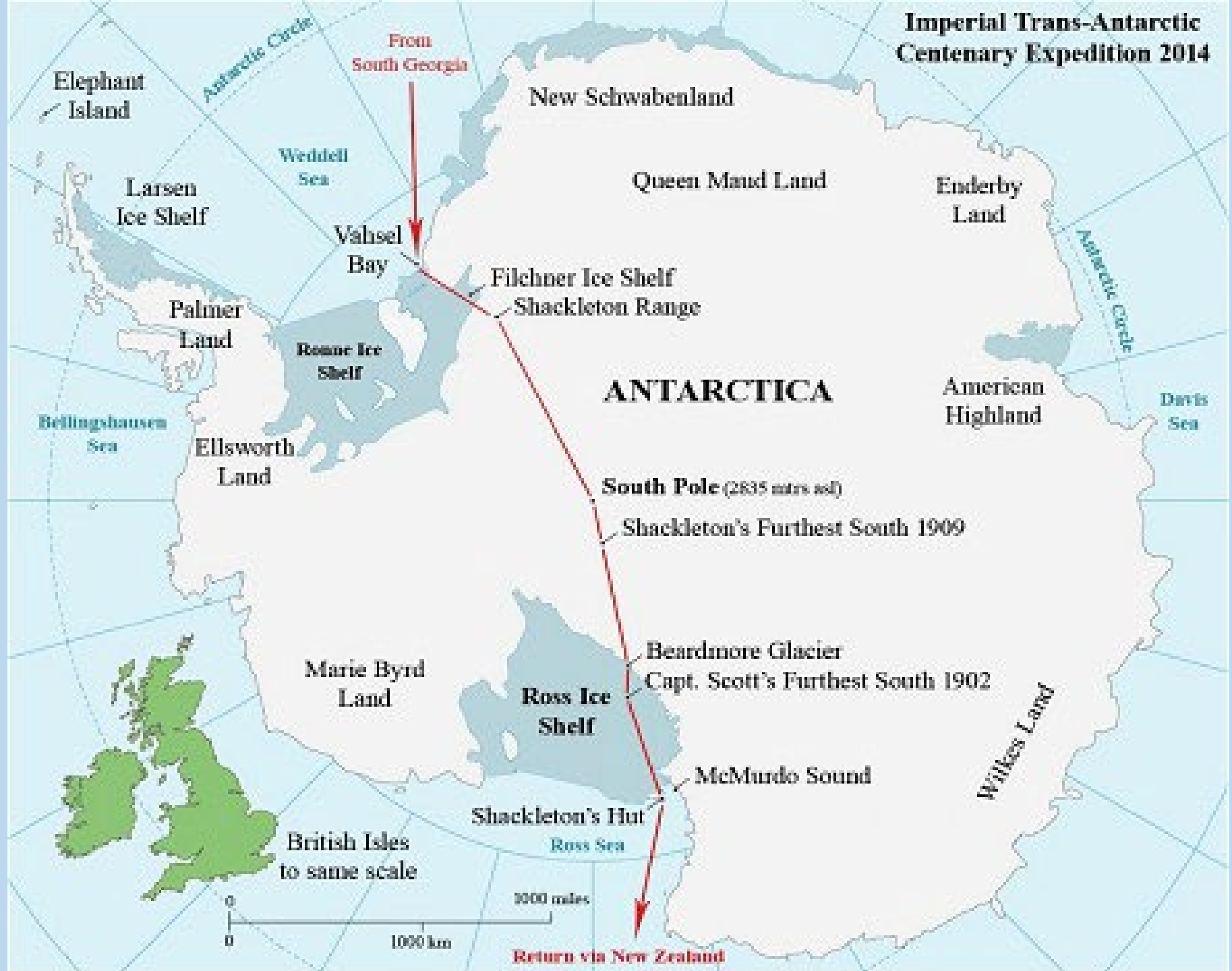


PLAN OF IGLOO.

Shackleton heads south one more time on the first Trans-Antarctic Expedition



Imperial Trans-Antarctic Centenary Expedition 2014



Urban legend has it that Shackleton placed this ad in the London *Times* in 1914, but no such ad has ever been found, nor would he have needed to advertise



<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/>

No. 4 New Burlington Street, London, 1914



2017—103 years too late!

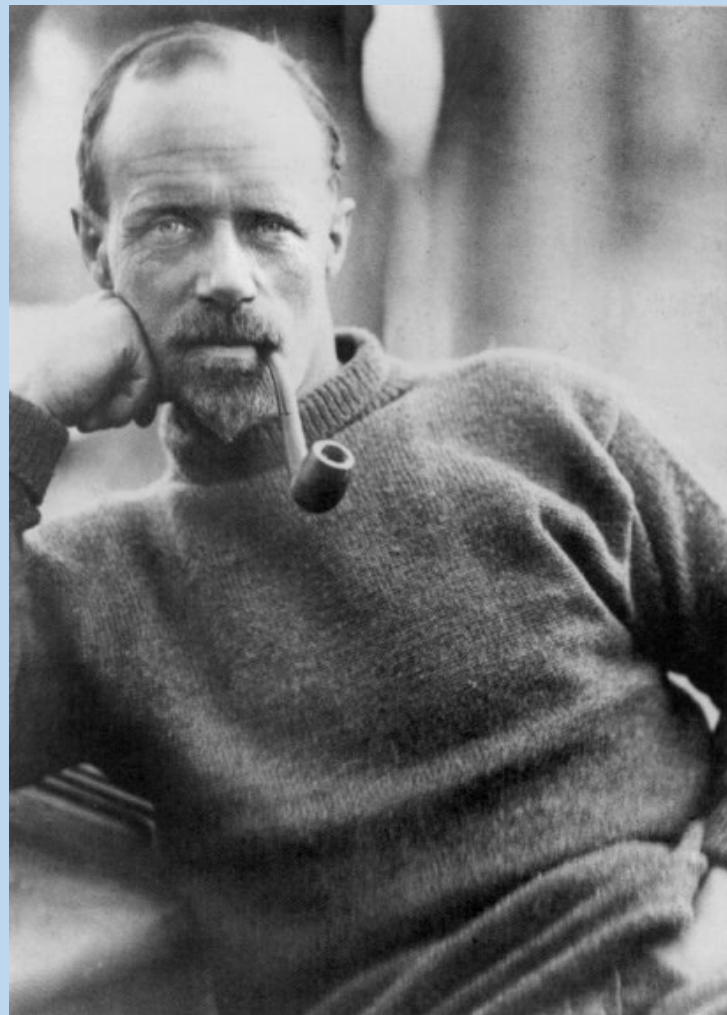


Frank Worsley
Captain of the *Endurance* and navigator

Shackleton left London on the *Endurance* on 1 August 1914, but England declared war on Germany on 4 August, the start of WW I. Shackleton offered his ship to the war effort, but Churchill's telegram back stated 'Proceed'



Frank Hurley, Photographer



Frank Wild, Second in Command

Shackleton's Ross Sea Party also traveled south in 1914





The main hut at Hut Point is still there and protected as an historic site by the New Zealand Heritage Trust



DISCOVERY HUT, HUT POINT
THIS HUT IS A HISTORIC MONUMENT AND
WAS DESIGNED BY ROBERTSON AND
ERECTED BY THE NEW ZEALAND
NAVY IN 1841. IT WAS THE FIRST
ANTARCTIC BUILDING OF ITS KIND
LED BY CAPTAIN JAMES COOK
WHO BUILT THE HUT IN FEBRUARY
1805.

ANTARCTIC DISCOVERY HUT POINT
QUESTO EDIFICIO È UN MONUMENTO STORICO
PROGETTATO DA ROBERTSON E COSTRUITO
DALLA MARINA NUOVE ZELANDE NEL
1841. È IL PRIMO EDIFICIO ANTARCTICO
CONSTRUITO DA ROBERTSON IN ANTARCTICA
PER IL CAPITANO JAMES COOK
NEL FEBBRAIO 1805.

ANTARCTIC DISCOVERY HUT POINT
QUESTO EDIFICIO È UN MONUMENTO STORICO
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1841. È IL PRIMO EDIFICIO ANTARCTICO
CONSTRUITO DA ROBERTSON IN ANTARCTICA
PER IL CAPITANO JAMES COOK
NEL FEBBRAIO 1805.

Jan 21 1915

SY Aurora and

21.1.15

I.T.A.E

IO Gaze

JR Stenhouse

VT (second letter indistinct) Hayward

E Joyce

A Stevens

HE Wild

Handwritten in blue ink:
Aurora and
21.1.15

Handwritten in blue ink:
H. E. Wild

The Cape Evans hut was used as the main headquarters of Shackleton's Ross Sea Party, 1914-1916



R. W. Richards

August 14 1916

Losses to date

Hayward

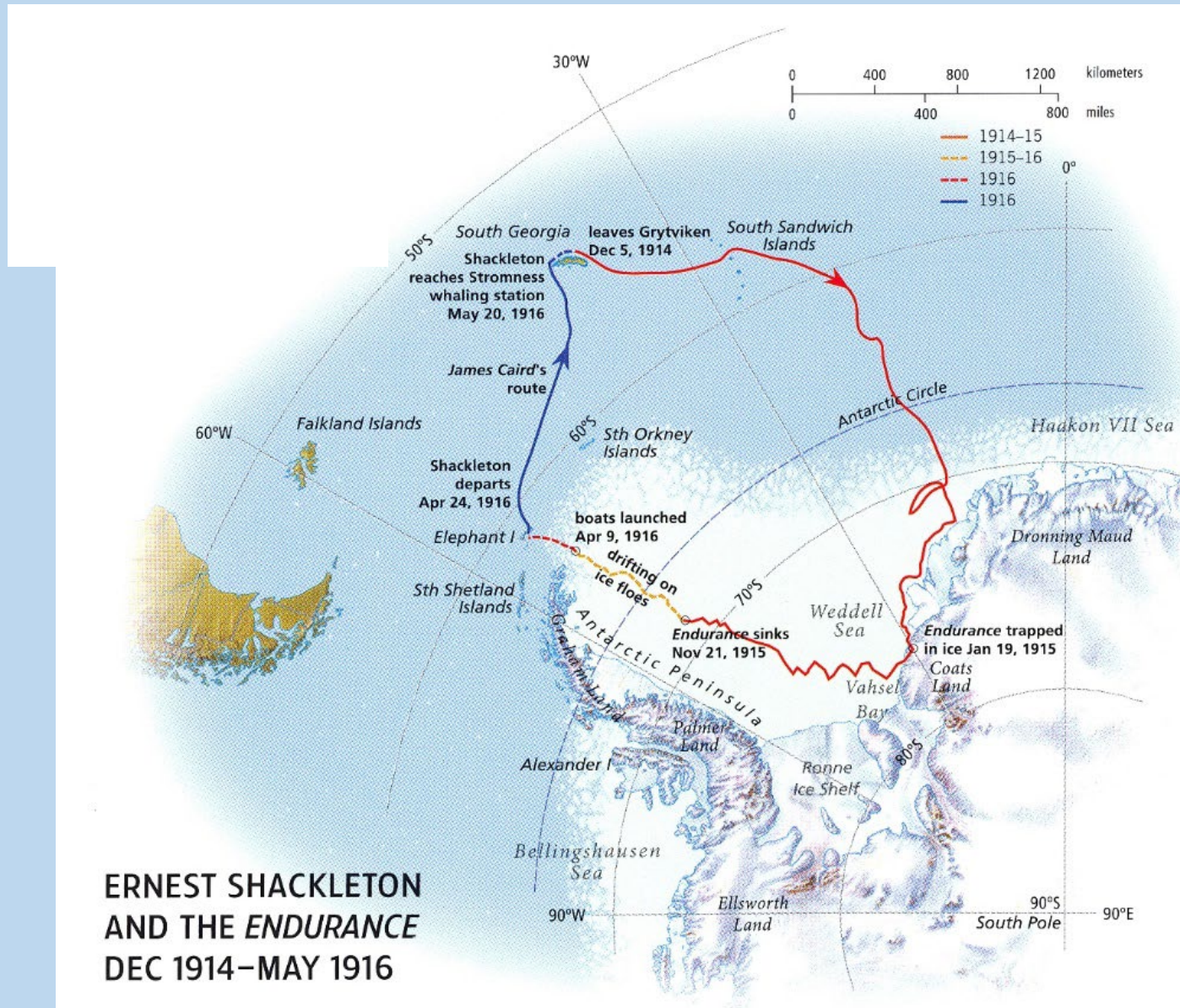
Mack

Smyth

Shih (?)

R. W. Richards
August 14 1916
Losses to date
Hayward
Mack
Smyth
Sh___ ?

Shackleton's ship, the *Endurance*, gets trapped in ice, a heavy ice year not known at the time



Frank Hurley, the expedition photographer, documented the trip with many outstanding photos such as this one of the *Endurance* trapped in ice





**Ship trapped in ice on 19 Jan. 1915,
crushed by ice in October and sinks
on 21 Nov. 1915.**

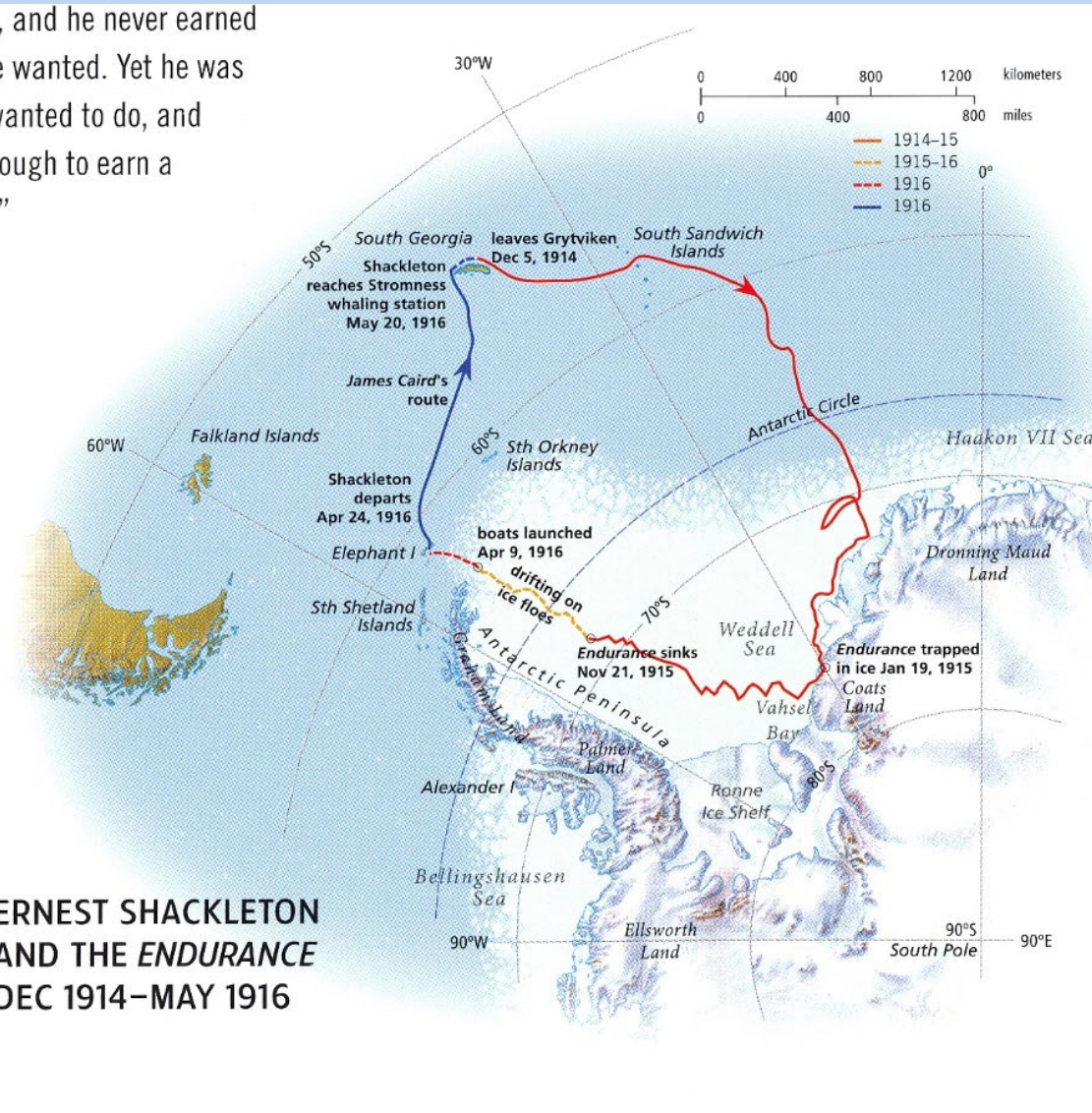
**So far the men had spent about
10 months stuck in or on the ice**

**They had three wooden life boats
from the ship, as well as supplies**

After the *Endurance* sinks, the men live on the sea ice and ice floes which continue to northwest until open water is sighted. Worsley navigates them to Elephant Island, a small rocky island with nothing but seals and penguins

goals, and he never earned
ey he wanted. Yet he was
he wanted to do, and
ill enough to earn a
tory.”

**ERNEST SHACKLETON
AND THE *ENDURANCE*
DEC 1914–MAY 1916**



Attempt to cut a passage through the ice to free the ship, February 1915



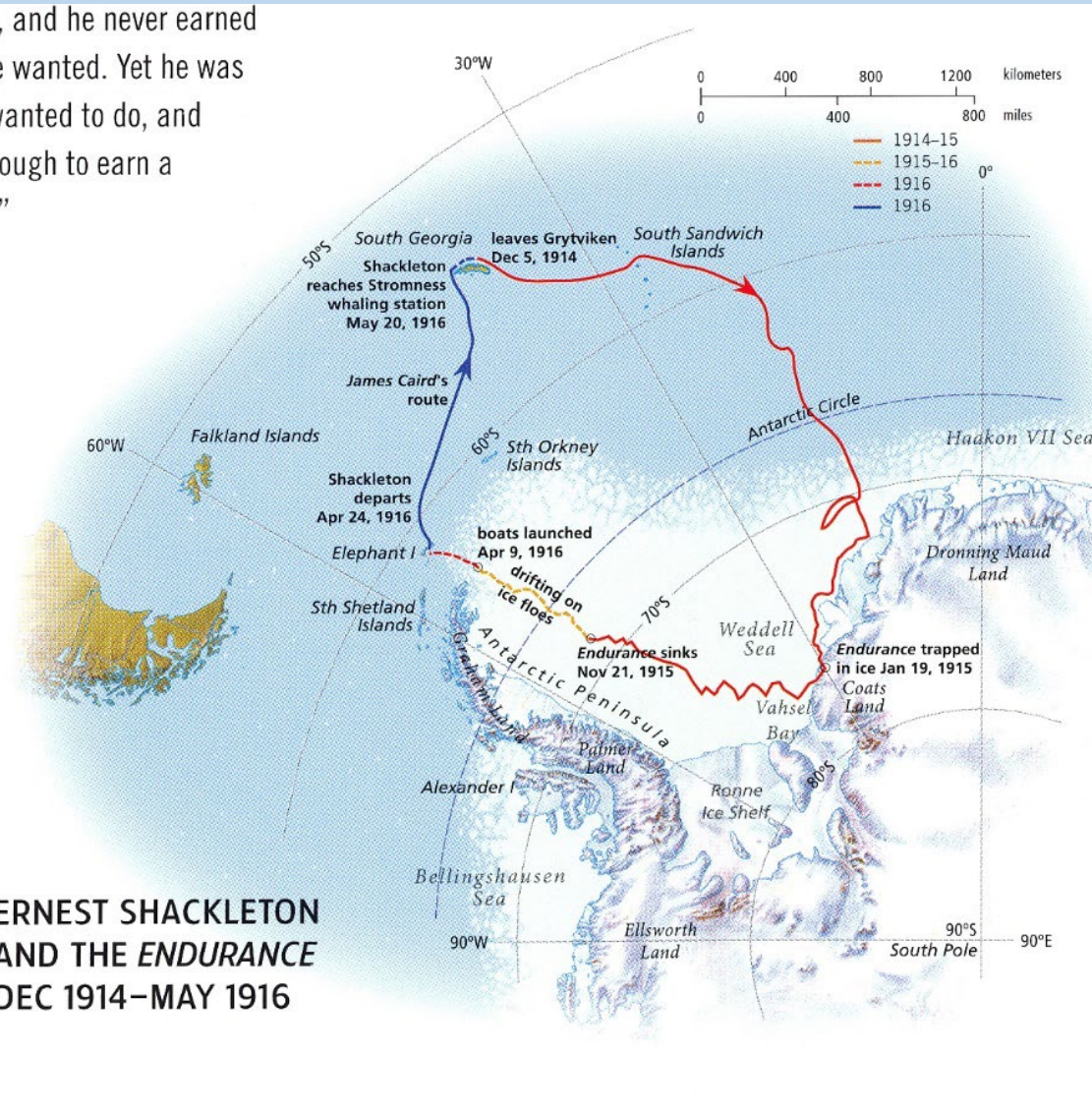
Pulling life boats across the ice, November 1915



After the *Endurance* sinks, the men live on the sea ice and ice floes which continue to northwest until open water is sighted. Worsley navigates them to Elephant Island, a small rocky island with nothing but seals and penguins

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**ERNEST SHACKLETON
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DEC 1914–MAY 1916**



Arrival on Elephant Island, 15 April 1916

First men to ever land there, first time they were on land in 497 days



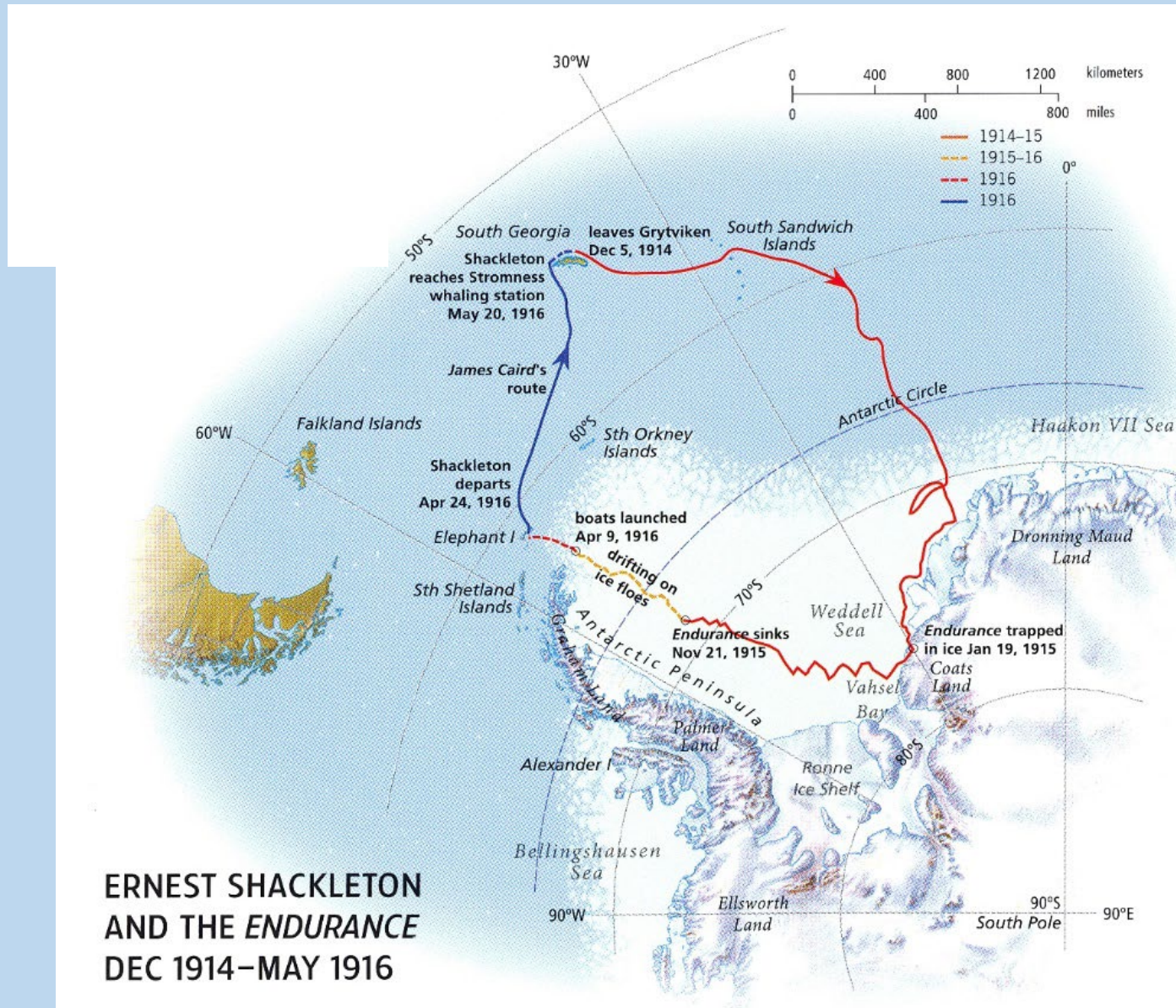
Most of the men were left on Elephant Island while Shackleton took five men in their small boat, the *James Caird*, across Drake's Passage to South Georgia Island



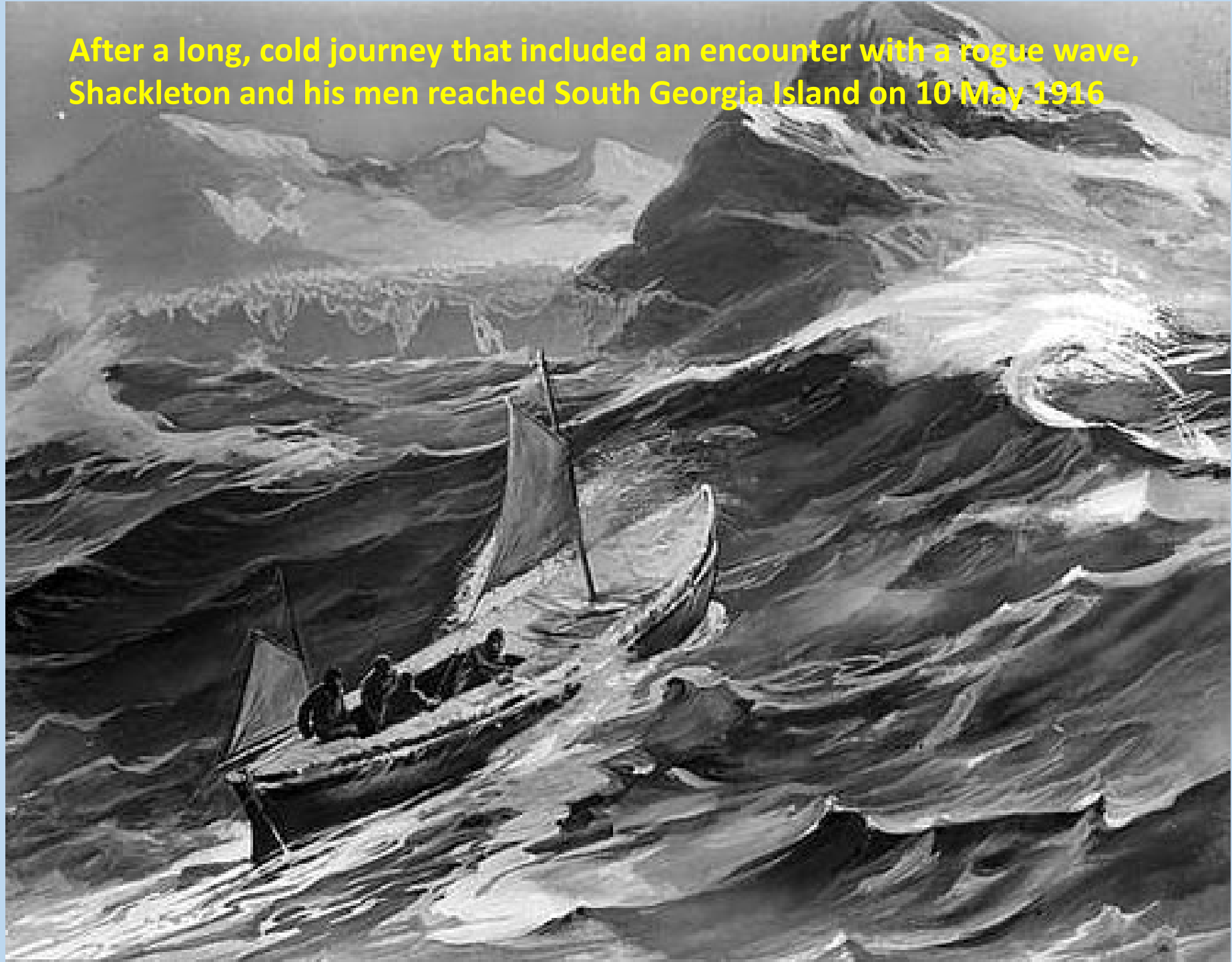
Launching the *James Caird* from Elephant Island, 24 April 1916
Frank Wild left in charge of the men remaining on the island

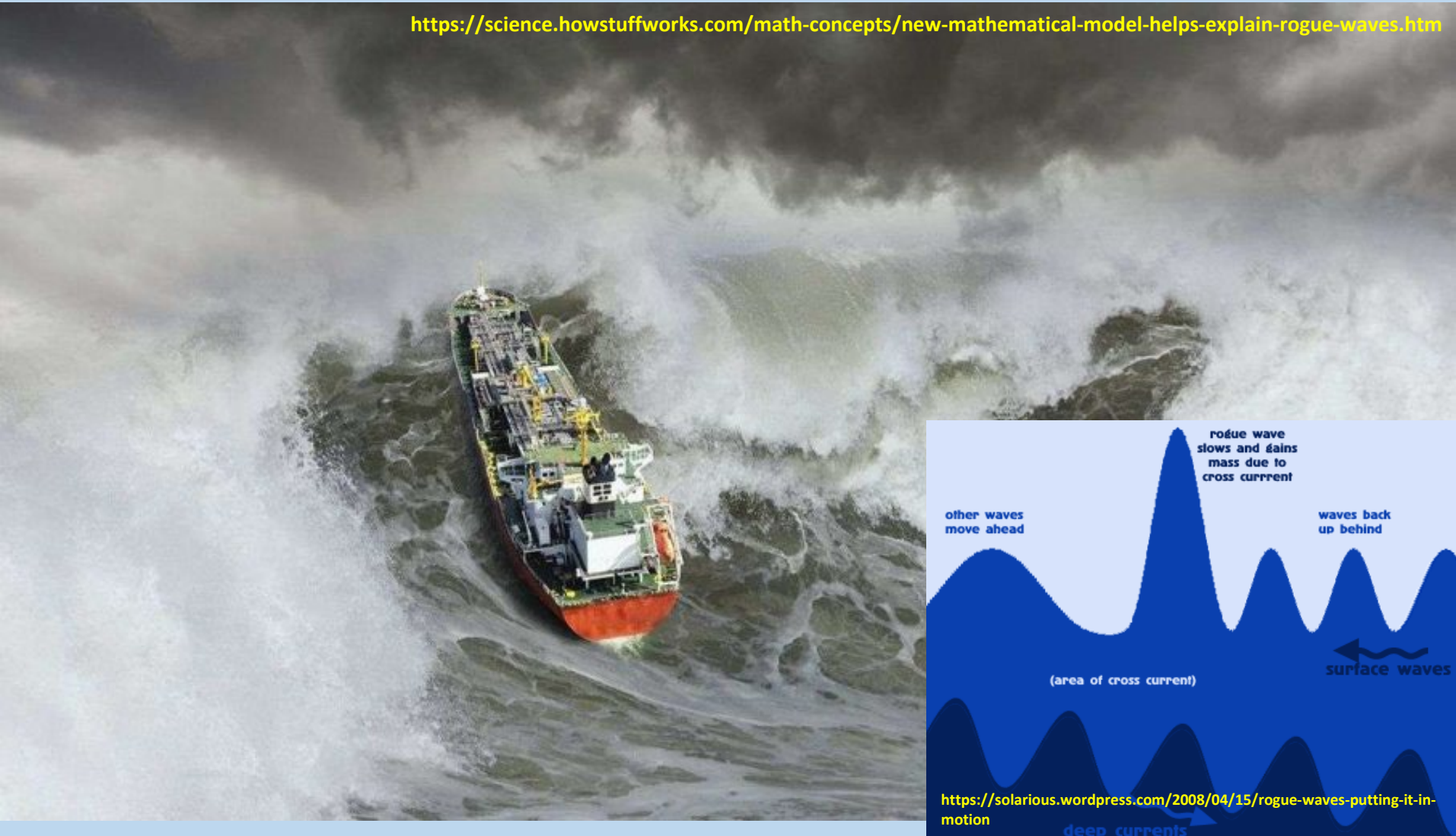


Shackleton's ship, the *Endurance*, gets trapped in ice, a heavy ice year not known at the time



After a long, cold journey that included an encounter with a rogue wave, Shackleton and his men reached South Georgia Island on 10 May 1916





Unlike tsunamis, rogue waves can appear suddenly from seismic activity at ocean floor, or a change in undercurrents, and disappear quickly as well

However, they had to land on the unoccupied side of the island, 17 miles and a mountain range away from Stromness, a whaling village where they could be rescued



After rescue, Shackleton's immediate concern was getting the men on Elephant Island

Tried four times with different ships, but pack ice conditions prevented getting there

Finally got a ship out of Punta Arenas, Chile, to go with him and all men were rescued on 30 August 1916 after 4.5 months on the island



Elephant Island



Beach where Shackleton's men spent 4.5 months, which Shackleton's men named Point Wild after Frank Wild



Here on August 30th, 1916, the Chilean Navy cutter *Yelcho* commanded by Pilot Luis Pardo Villalón rescued the 22 men from the Shackleton Expedition who survived the wreck of the *Endurance* living for four and one half months in this Island



The *James Caird* is preserved and on exhibit at Dulwich College, South London



After all his men were rescued, they were promptly sent into WW I

After the war, Shackleton planned one more expedition south to circumnavigate Antarctica and left in September 1921

Many of his same men signed on with him and they went to South Georgia but he suffered a heart attack and died there on 5 January 1922.

He was buried at Grytviken where his men also built a memorial cairn and cross on a hilltop above the town

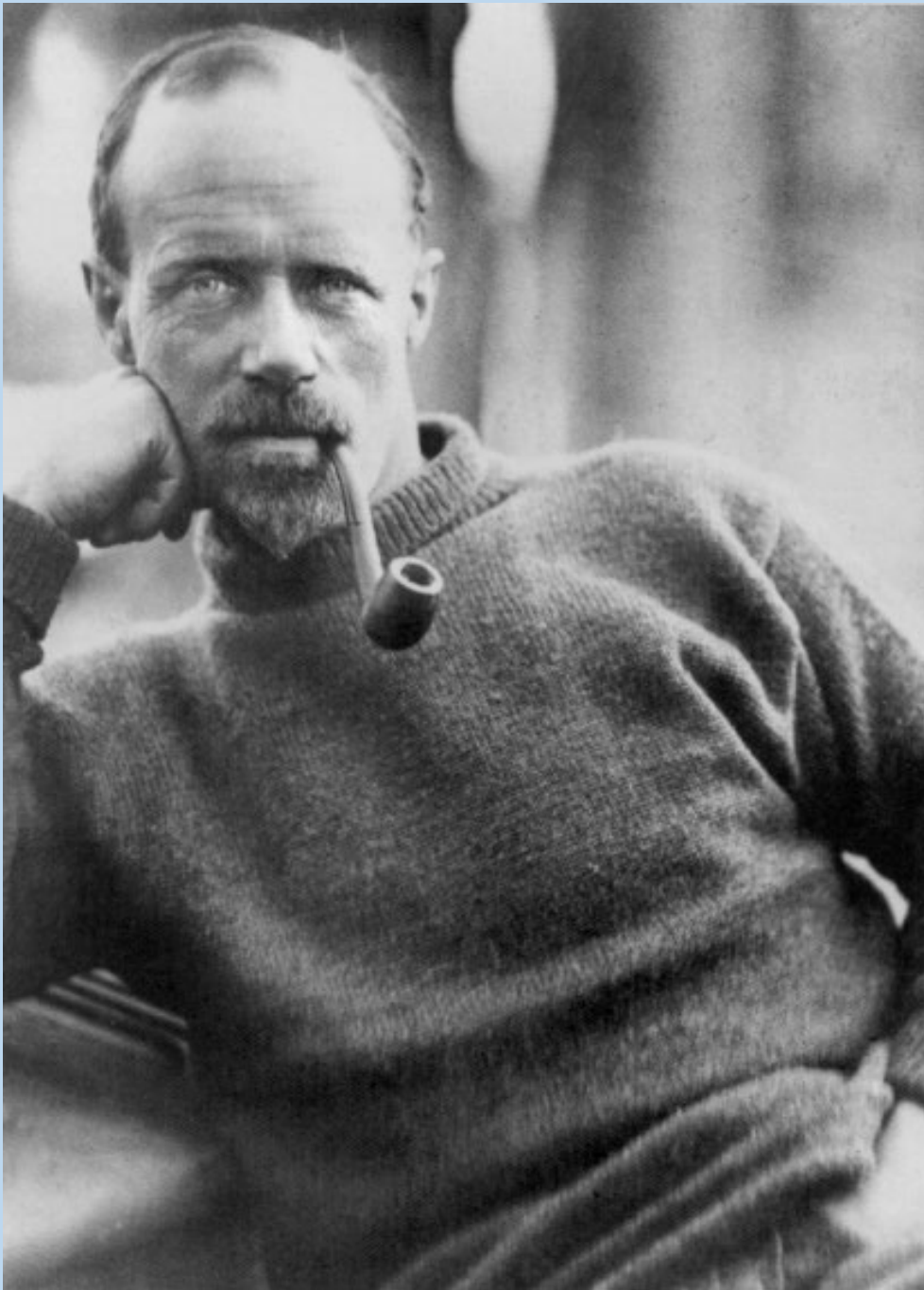




One tribute to Shackleton read:

**“For scientific leadership give me Scott;
for swift and efficient travel, Amundsen;
but when you are in a hopeless situation,
when there seems no way out, get down
on your knees and pray for Shackleton.”**

---Sir Raymond Priestley



Frank Wild died in 1939, cremated in South Africa. His ashes were found in a vault in a cemetery there and reinterred on the right side of Shackleton's grave November 2011.

A search was initiated to locate the *Endurance* in the Weddell Sea:

Endurance Found

Now many tour companies take groups to retrace parts of Shackleton's journey:

<http://wandrianadventures.com/latest/022Shackelton.aspx?d=76&i=0&m=0>

Quiz

1. What were the major contributions of Shackleton's *Nimrod* Expedition?
2. What was the origin for the race to the pole between Amundsen and Scott and why did Amundsen win?
3. What were some of the major reasons that led to the death of Scott and his men returning from the Pole?
4. What was the Northern Party and their major contributions?
5. Why is Shackleton considered the greatest explorer and leader in British history?