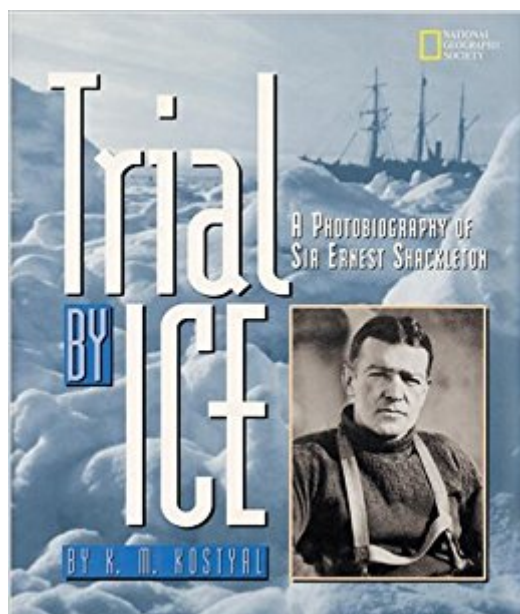


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Trial By Ice



Synopsis

Trial by Ice is the incredible story of one man drawn south - to the icy continent of Antarctica - and an adventure that turns into one of the greatest survival stories ever told.'

Book Information

Series: Photographies

Hardcover: 64 pages

Publisher: National Geographic Children's Books (October 1, 1999)

Language: English

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Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

Grade 5-8-One of several recent titles about the explorer and his ill-fated expedition to Antarctica, this generously illustrated volume focuses on the man rather than the expedition. Shackleton's life is traced from his early childhood to his death en route to another Antarctic voyage. Readers learn how he went to sea at an early age, and how his hunger for adventure and interest in exploring developed. It is not surprising that the author devotes a great deal of attention to Shackleton's Endurance expedition. Unfortunately, that amazing story has already been told several times in more compelling narratives, most notably in Jennifer Armstrong's *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World* (Crown, 1998). The stunning, archival black-and-white photographs are this book's strength, but there is little new information here. Libraries already owning other books on Shackleton and the Endurance may also want to have this one as a starting place for readers. It tells enough about the man and his adventures to whet the appetite for deeper reading on the subject. Edward Sullivan, New York Public Library Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Kostyal has written a tight, bracing biography of the renowned Antarctic explorer, illustrated with dramatic black-and-white photographs. Shackleton, a man whose sense of romance and adventure

repeatedly drew him from conventional British society to Antarctica ("that lonely, windswept desert of ice and snow at the bottom of the world"), succeeded neither in reaching the South Pole nor traversing the continent, but he exhibited such remarkable valor that, according to the author, his name has become "synonymous with bravery and endurance." As usual, there is more about his expeditions than the man, but Kostyal renders the tale in vivid prose that is enhanced by maps, quotes, a timeline and some remarkable photographs. This quality book will be a useful addition in both home and school libraries. (map, chronology, index) (Biography. 8-10) -- Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Ernest Henry Shackleton was born in 1874 in the green hills of Ireland's County Kildare. When he was six, his landowner father decided to become a doctor and eventually moved the family to the London, England, suburb of Sydenham. Ernest longed to go to sea, so when he was sixteen, his father arranged for him to sign with a commercial sailing ship. He spent ten years as a merchant marine and by age 24 was qualified to command a British ship anywhere in the world. Then in 1901, he joined the National Antarctic Expedition led by Robert Falcon Scott on the *Discovery*. They failed to reach the South Pole, and when Shackleton returned to England, he married, settled in Edinburgh, Scotland, and worked with the Royal Scottish Geographic Society. Then in 1907 and 1908, Shackleton led his own expedition to the Antarctic on the *Nimrod* but failed again to reach the Pole. After Roald Amundsen did make it to the Pole in 1911, Shackleton led still another expedition from 1914 to 1916 on the *Endurance* intending to sled all the way across Antarctica. That mission also failed to achieve its goal, but after a long series of harrowing experiences, he managed to bring his entire crew to safety. Well, it's another book on Ernest Shackleton. In the recent past I have read *Endurance* by Alfred Lansing, *Mrs. Chippy's Last Expedition* by Caroline Alexander, and *Trapped by the Ice!* by Michael McCurdy. However, those books focus primarily on the 1914-1916 *Endurance* expedition, whereas *Trial by Ice* is a more general biography focusing on the man rather than on the one expedition. This book does cover the *Endurance* expedition, but it also discusses Shackleton's life before and after his most famous trip, although there is not too much afterwards, since Shackleton died and was buried on South Georgia Island just six years later, in 1922, while leading yet another Antarctic expedition on the *Quest*. The biggest complaint is that it would have been a better read if it had been broken up into chapters or had more obvious places to pause in the reading. However, generously illustrated with stunning, archival black-and-white photographs and accompanied by Shackleton's quotes to

introduce sections, it is a great photo biography for older children that tells the incredible story of one man drawn southward to the icy continent of Antarctica.

In searching for an additional reference material for a classroom unit on Sir Ernest Shackleton's journey to Antarctica in 1914, and planning on using photography as a middle school classroom project, the book *Trail by Fire: A Photobiography of Sir Ernest Shackleton* caught my attention. Photobiographies can have deep impacts on students with the plethora of pictures to help them absorb a great amount of information quickly for research purposes. The story itself fascinates, but the addition of Frank Hurley's fabulous black and white pictures astonishes. K.M.Kostyal succeeds by providing excellent text to accompany the photographs: concise, easy to understand, good context definitions of new vocabulary for those unfamiliar with ships and Antarctic travel, and neatly bracketed around Hurley's works. The addition of Shackleton's quotes to introduce sections is very powerful. For many students, just reading the captions to the photographs will open new thinking about the trials Shackleton's crew faced while trying to reach first one goal, then another, which eventually was to just survive in the freezing, punishing elements. If there is one criticism for this book, it is with the map. First it is located at the end of the book, when it would serve the reader better to be either first, or near the beginning. Secondly, it has few of the places mentioned in the text, and I found myself having to refer to a more detailed map from another source to find all the places Kostyal includes. Coming under the umbrella of the National Geographic Society as it does, this is curious. But map critique aside, this book will provide my students with an excellent model for their own personal photobiographies as well as assist them in researching Shackleton's incredible Antarctic sojourn. Well done, K.M. Kostyal!

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