

BOOK REVIEW

COLD COURAGE – EXTRAORDINARY TIMES

WILLY MITCHELL

Exquisitely written, *Cold Courage* teleports you to back in time, to the Imperial Transantarctic Expedition (1914-1917). Attributing to human resilience and endurance, Willy Mitchell's authentic approach in describing the generational, familial, and friendly relationship with carpenter McNish's is profound. Throughout *Cold Courage*, the spirit of this relationship illuminates a trove of intimate knowledge on the subject matter. It further serves to establish a tangible connection to what the world was like just before, and during WWI. Crafting the interconnectedness of the leader and crew's physical condition, emotional awareness, and natural setting lays the foundation for this work. While Willy writes about the quest to traverse the icy continent, he compassionately reflects the dire circumstances endured. He creates awareness through his storytelling, which leads the reader through intricacies of the expedition. It feels as if Willy had the same view of one who stood with his boots on the ice, amongst the men, experiencing this journey, firsthand.

On their departure, Sir Ernest Shackleton and his crew had insight into what was awaiting them. Many had experience in the Arctic, or the Antarctic. Blunt words of an advertisement seeking crew, could possibly, in hindsight, be seen as a foreboding of what eventually transpired. These tough men came from all walks of life. Through the unparalleled leadership of Shackleton and his officers, the Weddell Sea party did not suffer any loss of life. Unfortunately, the Ross Sea party sadly lost three members. Using lapsed days since their departure from England, up until their ultimate rescue and return, Willy Mitchell positions anyone to easily understand the

timeline, and how it unfolded. This lasted 939 days! The writing style is as gripping as the ice, which captured the expedition vessels. While Shackleton mounted the rescue of the *Aurora* party, most of the *Endurance* crew, upon return to England, immediately enlisted to serve in WWI. Additional useful information is provided, which instantly help the reader fathom unfamiliar concepts associated with this inhospitable environment.

Valuable lessons contained in this well-appointed book will speak to readers' own lives. The young stow-away resonates with younger folk, seeking life's answers. Because of that, it renders this book a perfect gift! Willy Mitchell penned this historical account describing real people, with real events, who had real courage! A compilation of short biographies of all the men frames their post expedition lives. The men in this book, having survived treacherous times, furnish perspectives on the meaning of honor, and sense of duty, which were ingrained in all of them. Relevant to today's world, where we are facing survival perils comparable to the magnitude of the Transantarctic Expedition, this book will profoundly inspire and benefit all who read it. Embrace lessons learnt and attitude acquired here, for it will be beneficial moving ahead in uncertain times, and uncharted territories, real or imagined.

You will be gripped by this timeless account of human resilience, and may find it impossible to relinquish it, until you have read the very last, well-chosen word. Having read the penultimate, and final release, *Cold Courage* presents value, far beyond its pages!

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