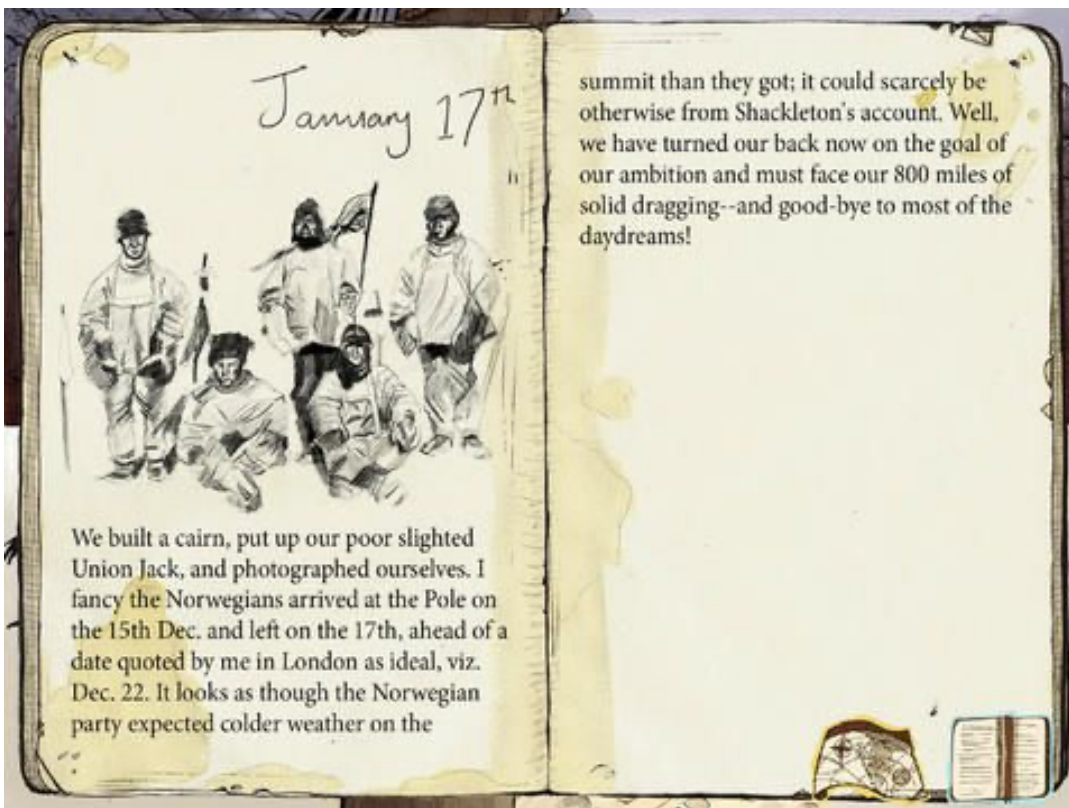


Extreme Antarctic Explorer's Journal Entries

In the dawn we slowly crept under care NE along the coast looking for a landing place. Glaciers and steep cliffs seemed to deny us the right. Finally about 8.0 a.m. we were at Cape Valentine, marked by a prominent stack and outlying skerries. Meantime we were all crunching pieces of ice, broken from the glaciers and picked up as they drifted past us, for we were frightfully thirsty—48 hours without water. That had been our fear during the night—to be carried out to sea without any water.

Ernest Shackleton Antarctic explorer



Captain Scott 1902 - South Pole explorer
Experienced severe blizzards, extreme fatigue, frost bite and snow blindness.

These explorers were constantly hungry and their thoughts and dreams were often filled with food. Shackleton headed a whole page in his diary 'Desire', and wrote:

'Duck crisp fried bread with salt and pepper
Thick bread soaked in golden syrup
Porter House steak and onions with plenty gravy
Huge salad of fruit. And also green stuff.
Sirloin of beef with brown crisp fat. Soak bread in the gravy.
Pastry 3 cornered tarts fresh hot crisp. Jam hot inside. A pile of these with a bowl of cream
Jam sandwich crisp but heavy pastry and jam between.
The end of a porridge pot providing there is plenty of milk'

The diary entries are from 19 Dec to 31 Dec 1902 during the sledge journey towards the South Pole with Scott [Captain] and Wilson [Billy]

19th December.

Eight miles today, dogs entirely played out. Got into our sleeping bags for lunch. Splendid range of mountains stretching to the south. Billy and I killed 'Wolf', he was strong because he did no work, other dogs made short work of him. Camped at 7.30 ; very soft snow. It will soon be Christmas, and wonder what they are all doing at home. We are saving up for a full meal on Christmas day, - little bits of bacon which a month ago were unconsidered trifles to day are hoarded religiously. Hunger seems to be continuous now a days. Tightening our belts is the only remedy for it, and filling up with water. We always dream of something to eat when asleep; poor Billy cannot get to sleep sometimes, and has to get out and eat his next day's lunch biscuit. My general dream is that fine three cornered tarts are flying past me upstairs, but I never seem able to stop them. Billy dreams that he is cutting huge sandwiches for somebody else always. The Captain - lucky man- thinks he is eating stuff, but the joy only lasts in the dreams for he is just as hungry when he wakes up. However, there is one comfort, we won't be inclined to run to fat on this treatment, and were we really washed and clean, we'd look quite respectable, nice and thin.

20th December.

Eight miles to day, travelling hard. Very hungry still, and shall be for the next two months. I steered in the morning, Billy in the afternoon, land fairly clear. Same eternal snow clad mountains stretching into the blue.

24th December

Did eight miles by sledgeometer. More hungry than ever today, but tomorrow we shall be full, I hope, then shall be hungry til February. Noon latitude 81.33 South; Hope to do 82 before turning back.

Christmas Day

Beautiful day, the warmest we have yet had- clear blue sky. We have made our best march, doing today ten geographical miles; we are entirely doing the pulling, the dogs being practically useless. Started breakfast at 8.30, Billy cook.

Christmas breakfast:- a pannikin of seal's liver, with bacon mixed with biscuits. Each; topped up with a spoonful of blackberry jam; then I set the camera, and we took our photographs with the Union Jack flying and our sledge flags, - I arranged this by connecting a piece of rope line to the lever. Then four hours march. Had a hot lunch. I was cook:- Bovril, chocolate and Plasmon biscuit, two spoonfuls of jam each - Grand!

Then another three hours march and we camped for the night. I was cook and took thirty-five minutes to cook two pannikins of N.A.O. ration and biscuit for the hoosh, boiled the plum pudding, and made cocoa. I must of coarse own up that I boiled the plum pudding in the water I boiled the cocoa in, for economy's sake, but I think it was fairly quick time. The other two chaps did not know about the plum pudding. It only weighed six oz. And I had stowed away in my socks (clean ones) in my sleeping bag, with a little piece of holly. It was a glorious surprise to them - that plum pudding, when I produced it. They immediately got our emergency allowance of brandy so as to set it on fire in proper style. We turned in really full tonight.

Boxing Day.

Similar weather but we only did five miles today, Billy's right eye being so bad that we camped in the afternoon. The poor chap suffered agonies all the afternoon, in spite on temporary relief by cocaine. He bore it very well though. It was pitiful that he should have to lie there, shaking with pain, while we could do nothing for him.

I killed Brownie tonight to feed the other dogs; he had no trouble, I luckily got his heart first dig. There is a huge mountain to the South of us which I suppose will be named Mount Longstaff.

28th December

Weather fine and clear all day; I am still leading, Billy going blindfolded.