



Shackleton's Captain

A documentary by **Leanne Pooley**

In co-production with **Making Movies, ZDF/arte, ZDF Enterprises**
85, 52min

Captain Frank Worsley signs on as captain of the Endurance to navigate Sir Ernest Shackleton and his crew across the Southern Ocean to Antarctica. But when the ship becomes trapped in the ice and crushed, the fate of the crew stranded on the Antarctic ice seems sealed – were it not for the exceptional seamanship and navigational skills of Captain Frank Worsley.

In October, 1914, under the command of Capt. Frank Worsley, the Trans Antarctic Expedition ship, Endurance sets sail for Antarctica. The goal of expedition leader, Sir Ernest Shackleton, is to cross the icy continent by way of the South Pole but just sixty miles off the Antarctic coast, the Endurance becomes trapped in the pack ice and slowly but surely is crushed. The crew members are now without shelter, exposed to the mercy of howling storms and sub-zero temperatures. Fifteen months go by before they can finally launch their lifeboats back into the water thus beginning another, even more torturous ordeal.

With almost superhuman determination and after forty hours in the bitter cold clutching the tiller of the tiny lifeboat James Caird, Worsley manages to steer the crew to Elephant Island – an uninhabited pile of rocks in the Antarctic Ocean. With no shipping routes anywhere close by, there is little chance of the crew being rescued. Shackleton, Worsley and

four others set sail in the James Caird on a desperate rescue mission for help headed for the island of Sth Georgia. Ahead, they face 800 miles of the worst ocean in the world and it's winter. During more than two weeks amidst ferocious seas, pouring rain, storms and tempest, Worsley is only able to catch a glimpse of the sun four times. With extraordinary skill he uses his sextant to determine their position– knowing the slightest inaccuracy will keep the small lifeboat from ever reaching the safety of their island destination.

Shackleton's Captain tells for the first time ever, the true story of Shackleton's expedition across the Antarctica from the perspective of his exceptional captain. Beautifully realised, emotional and moving recreated scenes bring to life the rigors experienced by the crew in the freezing cold of the wintery Southern Ocean as we experience how, despite the most adverse conditions possible, Captain Frank Worsley navigates and sales the James Caird through pack ice, ocean currents and winter storms.

Script & directed by **Leanne Pooley**

DoP **Simon Baumfield**

Editor **Tim Woodhouse**

Music **John Gibson**

Executive producer **Christian Beetz, James Heyward**

Editorial Office **Peter Allenbacher**

A production by **gebrueder beetz filmproduktion & Making Movies**

In co-production with **ZDF /arte, ZDF Enterprises**

© gebrueder beetz filmproduktion 2011