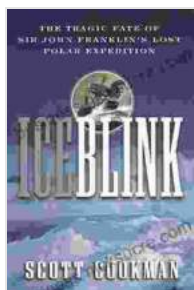


The Tragic Fate of Sir John Franklin's Lost Polar Expedition: A Haunting Mystery of the Arctic



Ice Blink: The Tragic Fate of Sir John Franklin's Lost Polar Expedition by Scott Cookman

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 260 pages



HMS Erebus and HMS Terror departing on their ill-fated expedition in 1845.

The tragic fate of Sir John Franklin's lost polar expedition remains one of the most enduring mysteries of the Arctic. In 1845, the British explorer set out with two ships, HMS Erebus and HMS Terror, in search of the elusive Northwest Passage, a navigable route through the Arctic connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

The expedition was well-equipped and experienced, but it was never seen again. Over the next century, numerous search missions were launched, but no trace of the ships or their crew could be found. The fate of Franklin and his men became one of the most haunting unsolved mysteries in history.

The Expedition

Sir John Franklin was a seasoned Arctic explorer with a deep desire to discover the Northwest Passage. In 1845, he was given command of HMS Erebus and HMS Terror, two of the most advanced ships of the British Royal Navy.

The expedition set sail from Greenhithe, England, on May 19, 1845, with a crew of 129 men. Franklin was determined to find the Northwest Passage and claim the prize of £20,000 offered by the British Admiralty to the first person to successfully navigate it.

The ships were well-provisioned for a three-year voyage and equipped with the latest technology, including steam engines and ice saws. Franklin was

confident that he could overcome any challenges that the Arctic might throw his way.

The Disappearance

The expedition sailed north along the west coast of Greenland and then turned west into Baffin Bay. They then headed north through Lancaster Sound and into the Northwest Passage.

The last confirmed sighting of the expedition was on July 26, 1845, when they met the whaling ship Prince of Wales near Beechey Island, off the coast of Devon Island. The crews of both ships exchanged greetings and news, and Franklin reported that all was well with his expedition.

After that, the expedition disappeared into the Arctic wasteland. No further contact was ever made with Franklin or any of his men.

The Search

When the expedition failed to return by 1848, concerns began to grow about its fate. The British Admiralty launched a series of search missions, but no trace of the ships or their crew could be found.

Over the next century, numerous expeditions were sent to the Arctic in search of Franklin's lost ships. Some of the most notable search missions included:

- The Franklin Search Expedition (1850-1854), led by Sir John Ross and Sir William Penny.
- The Belcher Expedition (1852-1854), led by Sir Edward Belcher.

- The McClure Expedition (1850-1854),led by Robert McClure.
- The Kane Expedition (1853-1855),led by Elisha Kane.
- The Hayes Expedition (1860-1861),led by Isaac Israel Hayes.
- The Hall Expedition (1871-1873),led by Charles Francis Hall.
- The Nares Expedition (1875-1876),led by Sir George Nares.

These expeditions explored vast areas of the Arctic, but they failed to find any significant trace of Franklin's expedition. The mystery of its fate remained unsolved.

The Discovery

In 2014, a team of Canadian researchers led by Parks Canada discovered the wreck of HMS Erebus in the Victoria Strait, near King William Island.



The wreck of HMS Erebus discovered in 2014.

The discovery of HMS Erebus was a major breakthrough in the Franklin search. It provided concrete evidence that the expedition had indeed entered the Northwest Passage and had become trapped in the ice.

In 2016, the wreck of HMS Terror was also discovered, about 50 miles north of HMS Erebus.



The wreck of HMS Terror discovered in 2016.

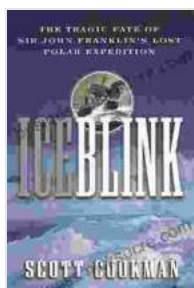
The discovery of both ships has shed new light on the fate of Franklin's expedition. It is now believed that the ships became trapped in the ice in September 1846 and that the crew was forced to abandon them in 1848.

The crew then traveled overland in an attempt to reach safety, but they all perished along the way. The exact cause of their deaths is still unknown,

but it is believed that they died from a combination of starvation, exposure, and disease.

The Legacy

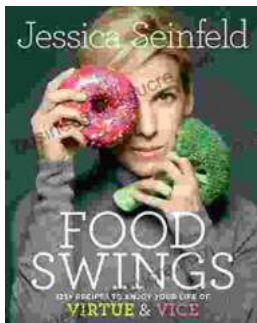
The tragic fate of Franklin's lost polar expedition has left a lasting legacy. The



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