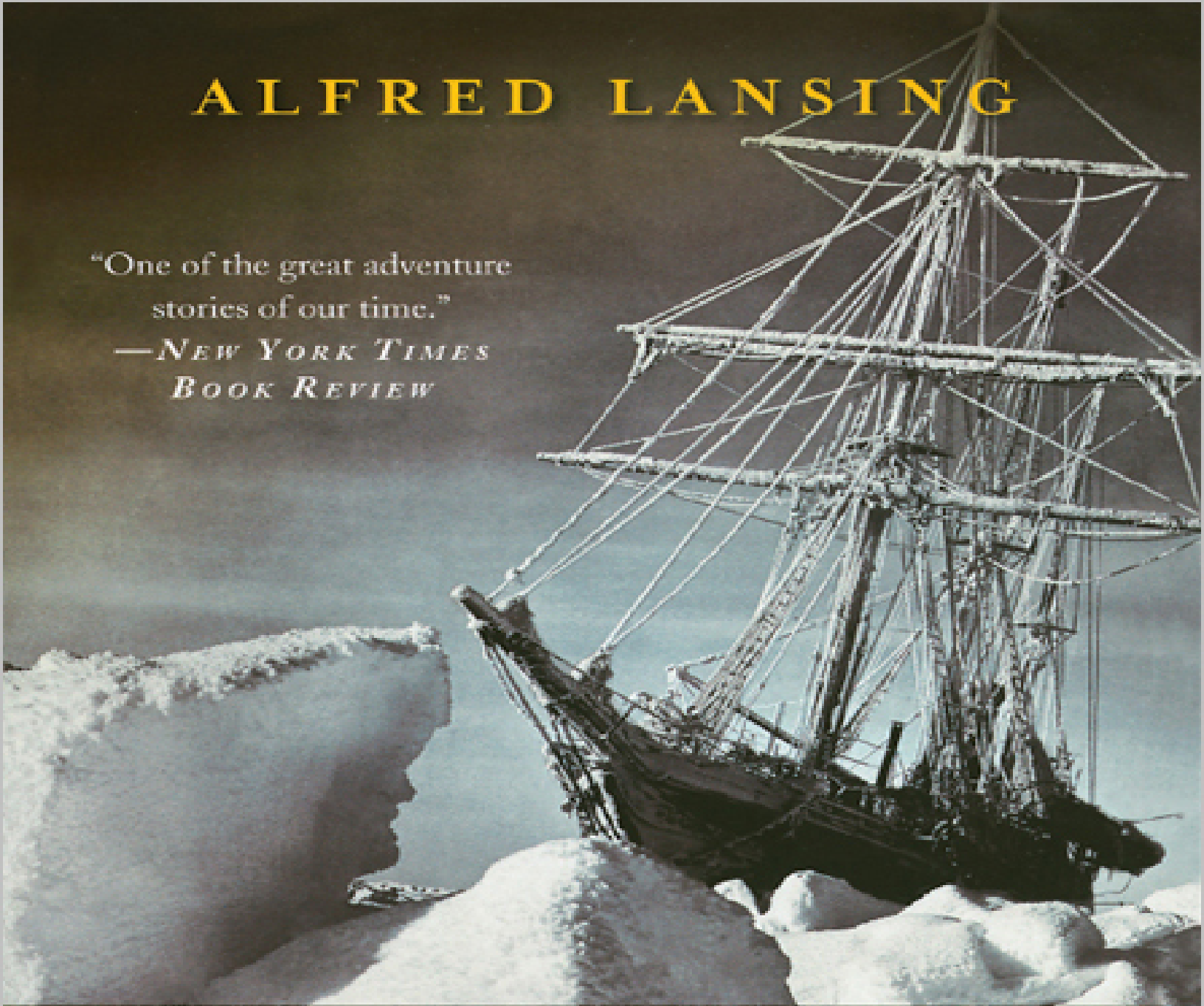


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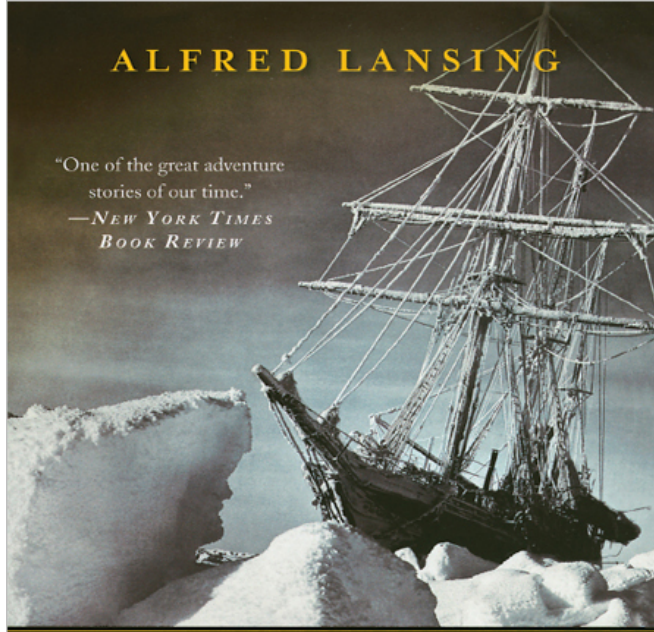


ENDURANCE

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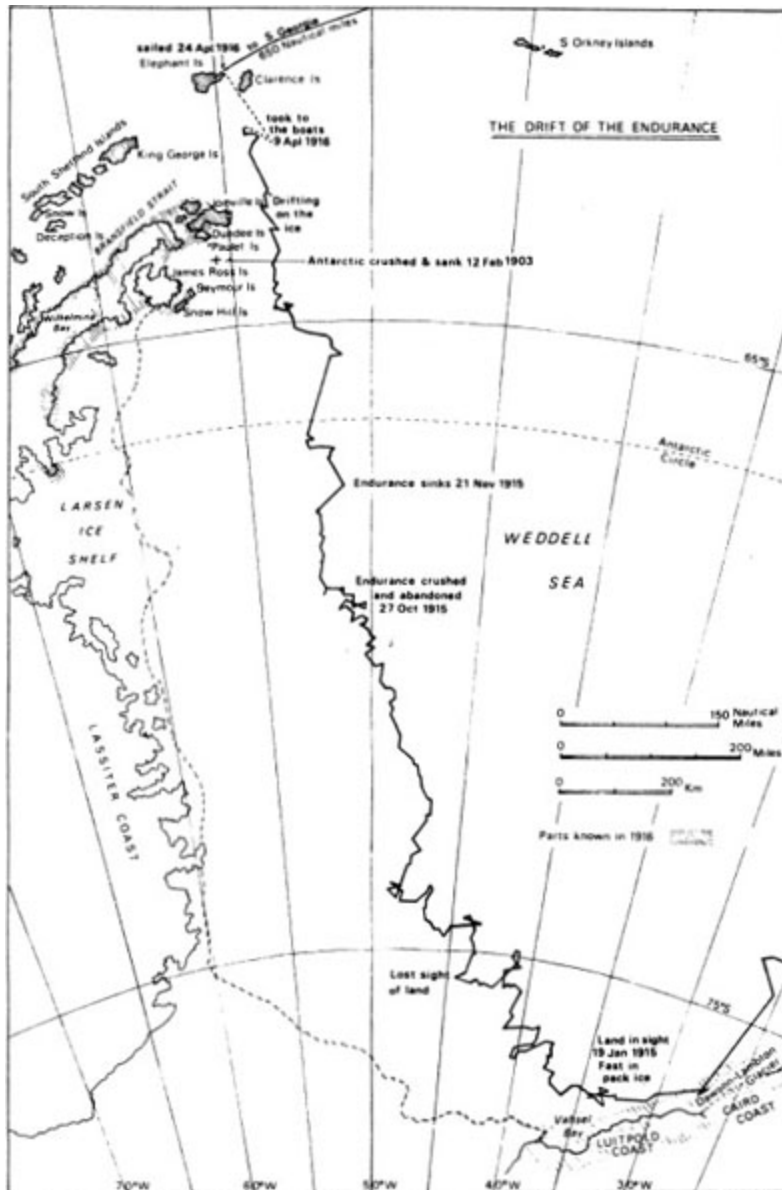
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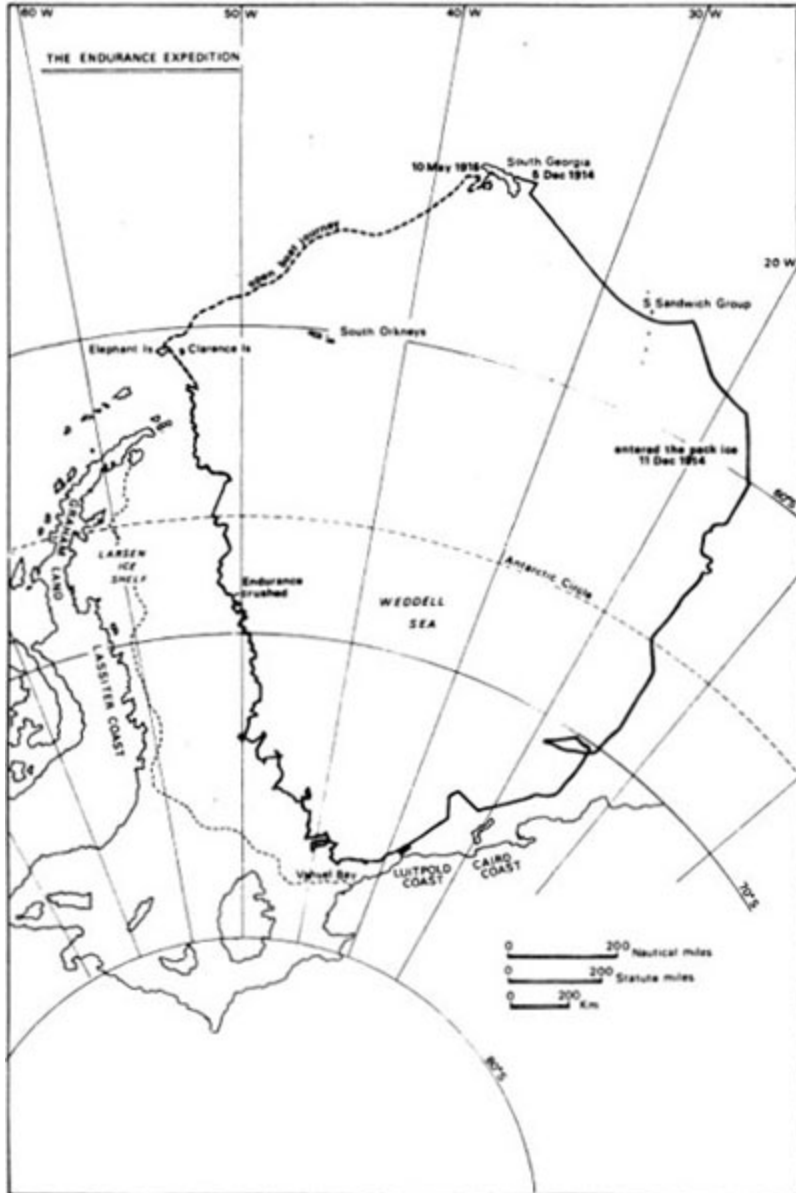
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preface

The story that follows is true.

Every effort has been made to portray the events exactly as they occurred, and to record as accurately as possible the reactions of the men who lived them.

For this purpose, a wealth of material has been generously made available to me, most notably the painstakingly detailed diaries of virtually every expedition member who kept one. It is amazing how thorough these diaries are, considering the conditions under which they were kept. In fact, the diaries contain much more information than could be included in this book.

These logs are a wonderfully strange assortment of documents, smudged with the smoke of blubber oil, wrinkled from being waterlogged and then dried out. Some were written in bookkeepers' ledgers in appropriately large handwriting. Others were kept in very small notebooks in tiny script. In all cases, however, the exact language, spelling, and punctuation have been preserved just as they were originally written.

In addition to making these diaries available to me, almost all the surviving members of the expedition submitted to long hours, even days, of interviewing with a courtesy and cooperativeness for which my grateful appreciation is hardly an adequate repayment. The same patient willingness marked the numerous letters in which these men replied to the many questions which arose.

Thus most of the survivors of this astounding adventure worked with me, graciously and with a remarkable degree of objectivity, to re-create in the pages that follow as true a picture of the events as we could collectively produce. I am extremely proud of my association with them.

However, these men bear no responsibility whatever for what follows. If any inaccuracies or misinterpretations have crept into this story, they are my own and should in no way be attributed to the men who took part in this expedition.

The names of those who helped to make this book possible appear at the
back of the book. A.L.