



“Men wanted for hazardous journey. Low wages, bitter cold, long hours of complete darkness. Safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in event of success.”

Such was the advertisement with which Ernest Shackleton was said to have recruited team members for his unsuccessful Antarctic trip.

This is a special issue to coincide with the release of Whyte & Mackay’s “MacKinlay’s rare old Highland Malt.” The original MacKinlay’s rare old Highland Malt whisky was taken to the Antarctic by Ernest Shackleton and his British Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition crew in their 1914-16 attempt to cross Antarctica. This was to turn into one of the greatest survival stories of all time and is a testament to heroism and human endurance. All twenty eight men survived nearly two years in the barren, frigid Antarctic when their ship was caught in pack-ice and eventually crushed.

Almost a century later, in January 2006, The New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust found several cases of spirits lodged in the ice under Shackleton’s hut; Three of which were MacKinlay’s whisky (now owned by Whyte & Mackay). Vijay Mallya, owner of Whyte & MacKay’s, provided his private jet to fly three of the bottles to Glasgow earlier this year for analysis.

Richard Paterson, master blender at Whyte and Mackay, described the find as “a gift from the heavens” for whisky lovers, and has analyzed the whisky after extracting small samples from the bottles with a syringe and has recreated the original whisky. The age of the malts used in the replica is given as between eight and thirty years old and the cost of a bottle of this whisky (if you can get hold of one) is expected to be around \$160.00.

The original bottles are now back in New Zealand on their way to being returned to the ice underneath Shackleton’s hut.

Why would you want one? There were only 50,000 bottles made and people like me (and possibly you) are going to drink them, a few months from now there are only going to be a few bottles left. If you have one, I would imagine that it would have increased in price very quickly and would continue to do so. A bottle or two might be a good investment.

For myself, I have admired Ernest Shackleton for many years. The leadership he showed when things went wrong and the fact that he sailed a 1000 miles with a few shipmates in a lifeboat across the southern oceans, then crossed mountains to get help for his men and finally rescued all of them, for me that deserves a toast to with this, a scotch whisky that he would recognize.



“Slainte Mhath”
Paul Bissett



As I, and almost every other person on the planet have not tasted this whisky, I cannot comment on it's attributes, therefore;

The official tasting notes are below:

Color – Light honey, straw gold with shimmering highlights.

Nose – Soft, elegant & refined. Delicate aromas of crushed apple, pear and fresh pineapple arouse the senses. The spirit is exciting and vibrant with attractive notes of oak shavings that release hints of buttery vanilla, creamy caramel and nutmeg. A whisper of marmalade, cinnamon and even a tease of smoke, ginger and muscovado sugar completes this spectrum of delight.

Taste – With a generous strength of 47.3% this gives the spirit plenty of impact on the palate but in a mild warming manner. Harmonious and exhilarating. Whispers of gentle bonfire smoke slowly give way to spicy rich toffee, treacle and pecan nuts. These enticing flavors linger lovingly on the palate but are soon combined by a sensual, complex array of creme brulee, orange rind and freshly baked bread. It is a remarkable tapestry of tantalizing taste sensations which truly rewards the palate.

Early reports are favorable, with Dave Broom (whisky expert & writer), who also tasted the original recovered sample) being quoted in Whyte & Mackay's press release as follows:

“The Shackleton whisky is not what I expected at all, and not what anyone would have expected. It's so light, so fresh, so delicate and still in one piece – it's a gorgeous whisky.

“It proves that even way back then so much care, attention and thought went into whisky-making.

“I think the replication is absolutely bang on. Richard has done a great job as it's a very tricky whisky to replicate, because you have this delicacy, subtlety and the smoke just coming through.

“The sweetness, fragrance and spice, and the subtle smoke, are all there in the replica. I'm blown away.”

To read Richard Paterson's blog on the Whyte & Mackay website, go to;

<http://www.whyteandmackay.com/blog/2011-04-04-the-shackleton-south-pole-replica-whisky-revealed.aspx>

**1914**

- Aug. *Endurance* departs London.
1
- Oct. After stopping for supplies, the *Endurance* departs
26 Buenos Aires.
- Nov. *Endurance* arrives at the whaling station of
5 Grytviken, South Georgia Island, the last outpost of civilization encountered en route to Antarctica.
- Dec. *Endurance* departs Grytviken.
5
- Dec. *Endurance* first encounters pack ice.
7

1915

- Jan. *Endurance* becomes beset in pack ice and,
18 immobilized, begins drifting in the ice.
- Feb. *Endurance* drifts to its furthest south point, 76°58'
21 S.
- Oct. Shackleton gives the orders to abandon the ship,
27 which is severely damaged by the ice.
- Oct. Shackleton orders each of the 27 men to dump all
28 but two pounds of personal possessions. Exceptions are made for Frank Hurley's photographs and Leonard Hussey's banjo.
- Nov. Shackleton establishes a camp on an ice floe, dubbed
1 "Ocean Camp."
- Nov. Hurley dives into the flooded ship to recover the
8 precious glass plates. With Shackleton, he chooses 120 to keep. They then smash the remaining 400 or so, so Hurley isn't tempted to risk his life to return for them later.
- Nov. *Endurance* sinks at 68°38.5' S, 52°28' W.
21
- Dec. After a failed attempt to march across the ice to the
29 safety of land, Shackleton establishes "Patience Camp," hoping that they will drift north, on an ice floe, to safety.



1916

- April 9 Shackleton orders the lifeboats—the *Dudley Docker*, the *Stancomb Wills* and the *James Caird*—to be launched. The boats are named for the expedition's main patrons.
- April 16 The three boats land on Elephant Island, a remote uninhabited island far from shipping lanes. This is the first time that the men have stood on solid ground in 497 days.
- April 24 Shackleton decides to sail the *James Caird* to South Georgia, where a whaling station is located, to get help. He brings Captain Frank Worsley, second officer Tom Crean, carpenter Chippy McNeish, and seamen Tim McCarthy and John Vincent.
- May 10 The *James Caird* arrives on the uninhabited south coast of South Georgia.
- May 19 Shackleton, Worsley, and Crean begin their trek across the island's unexplored and largely unknown interior to get help at a whaling station on the north coast.
- May 20 Shackleton and his men arrive at Stromness whaling station. Worsley sails to the south coast to pick up the three men left behind.
- May 23 Shackleton borrows a ship, *Southern Sky*, and sails for Elephant Island to rescue his men. The pack ice prevents passage, and the ship returns. Two subsequent rescue attempts, aboard the *Instituto Pesca No. 1* in June and the *Emma* in July, are also stopped by pack ice.
- Aug. 25 Shackleton departs on the *Yelcho*.
- Aug. 30 Shackleton rescues the 22 men on Elephant Island.