



Ice Ship: The Epic Voyages of the Polar Adventurer Fram

Charles W. Johnson

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In the golden age of polar exploration (from the mid-1800s to the early 1900s), many an expedition set out to answer the big question—was the Arctic a continent, an open ocean beyond a barrier of ice, or an ocean covered with ice? No one knew, for the ice had kept its secret well; ships trying to penetrate it all failed, often catastrophically. Norway's charismatic scientist-explorer Fridtjof Nansen, convinced that it was a frozen ocean, intended to prove it in a novel if risky way: by building a ship capable of withstanding the ice, joining others on an expedition, then drifting wherever it took them, on a relentless one-way journey into discovery and fame . . . or oblivion.

Ice Ship is the story of that extraordinary ship, the Fram, from conception to construction, through twenty years of three epic expeditions, to its final resting place as a museum. It is also the story of the extraordinary men who steered the Fram over the course of 84,000 miles: on a three-year, ice-bound drift, finding out what the Arctic really was; in a remarkable four-year exploration of unmapped lands in the vast Canadian Arctic; and on a two-year voyage to Antarctica, where another famous Norwegian explorer, Roald Amundsen, claimed the South Pole.

Ice Ship will appeal to all those fascinated with polar exploration, maritime adventure, and wooden ships, and will captivate readers of such books as *The Endurance*, *In the Heart of the Sea*, and *The Last Place on Earth*. With more than 100 original photographs, the book brings the Fram to life and light.

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