

# Surviving Erebus

An Antarctic Adventure

Onboard Her Majesty's Ships *Erebus* and *Terror*

John Barell

Royal Fireworks Press

"A rippin' good yarn. One which makes you turn the page, over and over again. But it's more than this. It is historically faithful to the extraordinary, epic voyage of Sir James Clark Ross. It captures the characters of the leader and those whom he led in the treacherous waters and ice of Antarctica. It brings events, which happened over one hundred and fifty years ago, vividly to life. A compelling read. Congratulations on a considerable achievement."

—James Ross, Great-great-grandson of Admiral Sir James Clark Ross, Commander of the Voyage of Discovery and Research in the Southern and Antarctic Regions during the years 1839–43

"For the mariner, this tale is a humbling reminder of the mystery and the mastery of the sea. For the adventurer, the story of hardy shipmates sailing a small bomb vessel in the wildest place on earth stretches the imagination. For all readers, the lessons for young Davey, from adolescence to experience and eagerness to patience, catch the spirit as dashing sea conquests lash us to the mast and hold us there."

—Capt. Nonnie Thompson, USCG Merchant Marine Officer



Royal Fireworks Press



Book Review by Mark Forecast. ANARE 1965, '67 '69.

**“Surviving Erebus – An Antarctic Adventure onboard Her Majesty’s Ships *Erebus* and *Terror*”**  
is an unusual and wonderful account of one of the ‘last of the great polar sailing voyages’.

The Author, John Barell, without losing any authority or historical and geographical accuracy has produced a powerful rollicking good tale of adventure in the unforgiving oceans of the Antarctic. Barell, with skillful literary license, slips in a wisp of fiction and some lovable ‘*Fictitious Crew Members*’ including the hero, stowaway David (Davey) Smythe, who narrates the epic adventures in the first person.

Once the reader acclimatizes to Davey’s Canterbury slang and accent, which is another of Barell’s genius to properly bring out Davey’s super personality, one thirsts for more and ‘can’t put the book down’. (It took me but three pages).

When Davey is discovered as a stowaway, the story almost ends before it begins with the Bosun Mate, Bagley (the villain) wanting to keelhaul him or just throw him over board. The Surgeon and then Captain Ross appear in the nick of time (after Davey is almost drowned), recognize Davey’s ingenuity in staying hidden for four days and his “seaworthy looks” and give him a chance to prove himself.

Perhaps Bagley should have been the Bosun who drowned before reaching Tasmania – then what is a good yarn with out a villain? Maybe he will fall down a crevasse.

Through many adventures they reach and name Mt Erebus, for their ship Her Majesties' S.V. Erebus. Davey plans to go ashore, look for Penguins and climb the Volcano for a possible sighting of “a way down to the South Pole”. (One of the many fine Zoological achievements of this expedition was to prove that King and Emperor Penguins were two distinctively different species).

The *Erebus* is possibly more renowned for her loss when abandoned during the infamous Canadian expedition seeking the North West Passage, some five years after her super efforts in the Antarctic. – However -

For a wee 378 ton, 106 ft. long, Wooden hulled Signal Boat that charted over 1000 miles of Antarctic coastline in a three year Antarctic “Discovery Service” Voyage, 1839-43 and affectionately claimed by Scott as “the discoverer of Antarctica” she seemed rather overlooked by her Mother Country. Ross was knighted, rightly so for his achievements, but *Erebus* received no medallic recognition as did later British ships voyaging to the Antarctic.

John Barell has now helped to correct this oversight with his “*Surviving Erebus...*”

A vigorous truly historical novel which will appeal not only to the young, releasing their adventurous spirit but also to the mature adventurer-explorer. - Are not they all of us?

**About the Author, John Barell and his other published books: see his website**

**<http://www.morecuriousminds.com/>**

**‘Surviving Erebus – An Antarctic Adventure onboard Her Majesty’s Ships *Erebus* and *Terror*’**

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