

# Shackleton S Dream: Fuchs Hillary And The Crossing Of Antarctica

In the annals of polar exploration, the story of Vivian Fuchs and Edmund Hillary's crossing of Antarctica in 1957-58 stands as a testament to human endurance, ingenuity, and the indomitable spirit of adventure. This arduous journey, which spanned nearly 2,200 miles (3,540 kilometres) and lasted for 98 days, marked a significant milestone in the exploration of the icy continent.

## Vivian Fuchs: The Leader of the Expedition

Vivian Fuchs, a British geologist and explorer, was born in 1908. He had a distinguished career in polar exploration, having led several expeditions to the Arctic and Antarctic. Fuchs's leadership skills, scientific expertise, and unwavering determination made him the ideal candidate to lead the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition (CTAE).

## Edmund Hillary: The Acclaimed Mountaineer

Edmund Hillary, a New Zealand mountaineer, was born in 1919. He became a global icon after successfully summiting Mount Everest in 1953, alongside Tenzing Norgay. Hillary's mountaineering skills, physical stamina, and adventurous nature made him an invaluable member of the CTAE.



## Shackleton's Dream: Fuchs, Hillary and the Crossing of Antarctica by Stephen Haddelsey

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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## **The Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition (CTAE)**

In 1955, Fuchs conceived the ambitious plan to cross Antarctica from the Weddell Sea to the Ross Sea. The expedition, known as the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition (CTAE), was a collaborative effort involving support from 12 nations, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, Norway, and South Africa.

The goal of the CTAE was not only to traverse Antarctica but also to conduct scientific research on the continent's geology, meteorology, and biology. The expedition was divided into two teams: the main party, led by Fuchs, which travelled from the Weddell Sea to the South Pole, and the support party, led by Hillary, which established supply depots along the proposed route.

### **The Journey Begins: Scott Base and McMurdo Station**

The main party departed from Scott Base on the Weddell Sea on November 24, 1957. Meanwhile, the support party left from McMurdo Station on the Ross Sea on October 20, 1957. Both teams encountered treacherous terrain, blizzards, and extreme cold as they made their way across the desolate landscape.

### **Cooperation and Scientific Research**

Despite the challenges, Fuchs and Hillary's teams maintained close communication throughout the expedition. They shared scientific data, coordinated their movements, and provided support to each other. The expedition also benefited from the participation of scientists from various disciplines, who conducted valuable research on Antarctica's environment and natural history.

### **Meeting at the South Pole**

On January 19, 1958, the main and support parties met at the South Pole. It was a moment of triumph and celebration for the explorers. They had successfully crossed the vast expanse of Antarctica and reached the South Pole. The historic encounter was marked by a symbolic handshake between Fuchs and Hillary, representing the unity and collaboration of the expedition.

### **Completion of the Crossing**

After resupplying at the South Pole, the main party resumed their journey towards the Ross Sea. They completed the arduous crossing on March 2, 1958, reaching McMurdo Station after 98 days of gruelling travel. Hillary's support party had already arrived at McMurdo Station on February 11, 1958.

### **Legacy and Impact**

The Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition was a remarkable achievement in polar exploration. It not only crossed Antarctica for the first time but also provided valuable scientific data and fostered international cooperation. The expedition's success inspired future generations of

explorers and scientists and contributed to our understanding of Antarctica's unique environment.

Vivian Fuchs and Edmund Hillary's crossing of Antarctica stands as a testament to the human spirit's ability to conquer adversity and achieve extraordinary feats. Their journey across the icy continent required meticulous planning, unwavering determination, and exceptional teamwork. The Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition remains a landmark in polar exploration and serves as an inspiration for those who dare to venture into the unknown.



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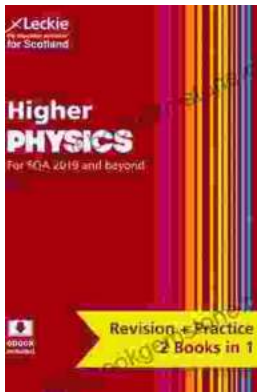
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