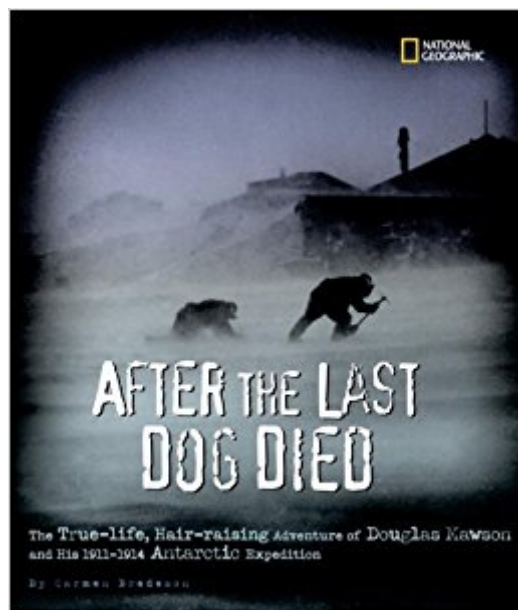




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After The Last Dog Died : The True-Life, Hair-Raising Adventure Of Douglas Mawson's 1912 Antarctic Expedition



Synopsis

Describes the life and career of the Australian explorer, Sir Douglas Mawson, focusing on his 1912 scientific expedition to Antarctica.

Book Information

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Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 5 Up-About a century ago, Australian Douglas Mawson's interest in glaciers led him to become a member of Ernest Shackleton's 1908 expedition to Antarctica. The geologist and two others made their way to the magnetic South Pole and back, gathering valuable scientific data. Mawson subsequently met with Robert Scott but decided not to join that ill-fated trip to the Pole. Instead, he organized his own Australasian Antarctic Expedition. Double-page duo-tone photos are one of several adept design details that suggest the vastness of the terrain, while the text describes how Mawson and two companions, Lt. Belgrave Ninnis and Dr. Xavier Mertz, set out to explore the ice shelf with sled dogs. Five difficult weeks out from base camp, Ninnis was lost to a crevasse along with most of the food. Over the next few days the remaining dogs were shot and butchered. Both men suffered greatly during the treacherous journey back to camp, and Mertz died. Mawson barely survived, but recovered and eventually returned home. An appendix explains that the men had inadvertently been poisoned by a surfeit of Vitamin A from the dogs' livers. A resources list

includes books, interviews, and Internet sites. An enticing, attractive, and inspiring addition to adventure/exploration collections. Joel Shoemaker, Southeast Junior High School, Iowa City, IA
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Gr. 5-8. Before Shackleton's 1914 expedition on the *Endurance* came Douglas Mawson's tragic South Pole exploration. The 1911 expedition was a dream come true for the 29-year-old Mawson, an Australian geology teacher, and the carefully planned journey went well until Mawson and two companions set out to map the interior of the continent. Three hundred miles from base camp, tragedy struck: a member of the party fell into a deep crevasse along with most of the team's food. Badly frostbitten and starving, Mawson managed to return to the base camp, surviving to tell of the harrowing ordeal. Although the personal loss was tragic, the expedition was a great success because of its scientific contribution. Mawson was hailed a national hero and knighted for his efforts. Bredson's compelling story of courage and survival draws heavily on quotes from Mawson and other primary source documents; there are also charts, maps, and many photographs, including some taken by Frank Hurley, who later traveled on the *Endurance*. A chronology and sources for further research are appended. Ed Sullivan
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received this book quickly and in great condition thanks to great packing. Book was exactly what we needed to replace a lost school book. Thanks!

Five stars is not enough for *After the Last Dog Died*. I read it several years ago, but kept thinking of it while I was reading *The Impossible Rescue* by Martin Sandler. The stories are almost opposite (geographically and humanly) true survival stories. The two events actually happened within 20 years of each other. It is amazing that exploration continued after news of these horrifying events became known. While *The Impossible Rescue* is all about teamwork, in *After The Last Dog Died*, Australian explorer Douglas Mawson thought he could lead a small expedition of the outer reaches of Antarctica on his own. It was going badly from the beginning and turned into a disaster when one of the men fell down a steep crevasse and took the sled filled with their food with him. The photos and primary source quotes bring the desperation and fear of Mawson and his partner to the reader. The reader and Mawson know that things are not going to end well. Blizzard, a sled puppy that traveled with the sled dogs, should have been awarded whatever the Australian version of the purple heart is. Although *After the Last Dog Died* is classified as a children's story, all readers will be

spellbound. Younger readers may even find the story too realistic. After the Last Dog Died is National Geographic at its best.

Polar exploration aside, This is a MUST for dog lovers or parents who want their child to have one but can't. The photo on page 30 of little Blizzard, the mascot of the tragic expedition, is astounding. It is like a picture of a dog saint, which the little fellow probably was.... might enlist the publisher, National Geographic, to get going with sepia posters and stuffed toys (but only the finest-made, please) because this is a dog unlike any other. My bro has an old print of a mutt with his head in a bandage and a "please kill me" expression, which I guess was how one was to think of dogs a long time ago. Blizzard is a whole 'nother pup. He is fat, like more and more of us, but with doggie devotion and perhaps foreknowledge. On top of that, this is a wonderful book, something for anyone of any age. An excellent introduction to polar exploration, Aussies, heroism, puppies.

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