

Amundsen Variations: Friday, October 20



We saddled our steeds, 13 before each of the four sledges, and set out. Pr. stood with the cine camera at the foot of the run down to the sea ice and filmed us all. Twenty seal lay in a group shielding a couple of new-born pups. He shot us again on the climb on the other side of the bay. The fog came down again after we had covered a little ground. HH ran first and set a course with his compass. For some reason we ran too far East, and into an unknown maze of cracks and crevasses. I sat together with W. His sledge was last. Suddenly a large piece of the surface fell away next to the sledge and exposed a gruesome abyss – big enough to swallow us all. Luckily we were so far to the side that we were saved.

When the fog lifted we found ourselves at a long inlet with a great deal of open water. We bayed the dogs and decided to run along the coast for about an hour, then turn inland again. This saved us going through more sea ice – but it was worse crossing a

lake of soft snow which had formed from slush, partially frozen on top. Here we could not make any speed at all, because of our fear of getting stuck under the surface if anyone should fall through.

The distance we covered was far too small for us to think about breaking camp, so I went out with W. after we had eaten supper and shot another film on our skis and then drove north along the coast to see what kind of country it was in that direction before returning home by following our own tracks back again. These were nothing but holes, which were difficult to get over without falling – especially when you are tired!

It is now 8 o'clock and HH has just come in from his sledge trip – he only managed 4 km/hour or less! They followed their compass course North instead of bearing North West as they were supposed to do today. It is quite certain that they will not reach any mountains today even if they follow their course correctly tomorrow (Jan 17). But everything takes so much longer than I thought it would! But why should I be surprised? We have never been this far north before on land or sea since mankind began living here some 10

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thousand years ago! The weather is still cloudy with light snow showers – which may explain why there are no animals about here at all! There must be some movement around Godhavn though – surely these people cannot sit inside for six months each year without moving about? Even if most animals migrate south later on during winter there must still be some left behind because humans cannot live off “nothing” even though they seem able to survive such conditions (up until now). Maybe there should be other countries besides Denmark? Maybe ours is probably one massive meat factory where people go round gorging themselves until they explode like balloons and die; just like how icebergs break off glaciers into fjords when they become overloaded and sink like sinking ships... The fishing boats come earlier here than anywhere else in Greenland—in May already—so that must mean something!/? Nothing goes together as well as this North West wind together with this snowfall... It glues everything together: my mind—my thoughts—my plans—my hopes... As long as you don't let your mind slip away from you things can always become worse; don't let yourself fall asleep up here “if you know what I mean”...

17 January 1934 Monday–Isortoq Fjord

UP AT 6 O'CLOCK AND PACKED UP SO WE COULD LEAVE BY 8 O'CLOCK OR SOON AFTER 9 O CLOCK IF THE SNOWSHOWER WE HAD NOW TURNED INTO A STORM CONTINUED FOR SOME TIME LONGER.. THE DOGS WAS BAYED OUTSIDE IN ORDER TO KEEP THEM WARM WHILE WE PACKED UP AND THEY HUNGRILY EAT THEIR FOOD UNTIL IT WAS READY TO LOAD ONTO THE SLEDGE AGAIN....THE FIRST PART OF OUR JOURNEY TODAY WAS ALONG THE COAST AND THEN ACROSS AN INLAND AREA WHERE THERE WERE A LOT OF CREVASSES AND HOLES IN THE SNOW COVERING

POWERFUL STREAMS RUNNING UNDERNEATH...ALTHOUGH WE WERE UNABLE TO CROSS THEM EVERYWHERE WITHOUT GETTING STUCK IN ONE PLACE OR ANOTHER FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME....WE EVENTUALLY REACHED SOLID Ice across Isortoq Fjord but THAT IS NOT QUITE AS EASY AS IT SOUNDS BECAUSE THERE ARE TWO BIG GLACIERS RUNNING DOWN INTO IT FROM BOTH ENDS WHICH RENDER PASSAGE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THAN YOU MIGHT IMAGINE....WE DID NOT EXPECT THIS BECAUSE LOOKING DOWN FROM ABOVE THEIR APPEARANCE IS MISLEADING.....OUR ADVANCE IS NEVERTHELESS STEADY BUT QUITE SLOW NONE-THE-LESS.....WHEN DO YOU THINK 15 PEOPLE WILL BE ABLE TO TRAVEL FASTER THAN THIS??? WHEN THEY DISCOVER SOMETHING WORTH SEEING ...AND SHE IS RIGHT AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE.....BUT WHERE??? 19 KM TODAY!! ALL 3 FILMS GONE!!!!.....OH DEAR PAPA..... WHY HASN'T SOPHUS LAURITZEN WRITTEN???? HAVE YOU HAD ANY NEWS YET???? HOW ARE YOU



We understood from the surroundings that we had strayed too far to the East, and therefore set a course directly East by the compass (S. by W. true). That soon

brought us within sight of some flags, and a short time afterwards reached the place where we shot «Kaisa» on our last trip – 20.2 nautical miles. We managed splendidly in our improved tent. Although we were five, there is plenty of space.

This afternoon we took the Ski Skating Machine with us and drove to the other side of the fjord where there are two glaciers which run down into it from both sides. We drove in between them along an alleyway which is just as narrow as a normal road, but then we had to turn around. Pr. shot some film, but no animals were about at all.

The wind rose during the night and has been blowing a gale since morning, so we stayed inside the tent all day – only going out to water our horses and provide them with food – although they have not been able to digest their food properly because of their constant high spirits at being able to go out again after such a long time!

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18 January 1934 Tuesday–Isortoq Fjord

It is still blowing hard outside today; at least that's what I believe because I can hear it howling! But even if there is no wind where I am now things do not go any easier here either; nothing ever gets easier on this trip! But that's okay if it always stays like this – then everything should work out fine....I must find new words for this cold!! It freezes your breath in mid-air into crystals before you can finish exhaling...I don't know whether many people could stand this kind of extreme climate for long periods of time up here???...You took me by surprise last evening when you wrote about "strange thoughts coming over me sometimes"Please tell me more about that.....You are very kind indeed...I hope you will be happy soon.....My thoughts also travel beyond divorce—and marriage—to death.....but only sometimes: when my mind slips away from my body without my consent....But why should these thoughts be "evil"? ...Or harmful??? ...As long as they don't make you depressed or sad beyond repair...in which case something must be wrong with your physical condition....There is something perverse about losing faith in yourself so completely that you feel unable even to breathe—let alone think clearly—or bear happiness (or anything else) without falling apart? As far as I am concerned I have never had any problem bearing happiness or unhappiness without shattering entirely.....A life lived entirely within oneself runs dry before very long.....but all human relationships contain much more than just love (passionate or otherwise); much more important than mere love.....If, for example, understanding does not exist between man and woman there will always be conflict because one person does not understand another; therefore he/she cannot bear happiness together with him/her either because nobody understands anybody else anyway.....And neither can he/she understand his/her own sufferings nor his/her own joyful moments unless he understands himself first.....That's why such an understanding relationship must begin with oneself first before it can develop further towards others.....So what good would divorce do anyway? What could possibly come out of such an extremely selfish action!!! And don't let anyone tell you differently!!!! The same goes for marriage too!! So maybe a broken relationship is FAULT OF BOTH PARTIES????... Not

just one party's fault??.....Of course my opinions on this matter may seem strange for someone who has never experienced anything like this before...and therefore thinks himself superior enough to pass judgement upon others mixed up in other relationships ??? Think again next time!!! These are things people forget once they have become involved themselves! Everybody thinks he knows EVERYTHING until fate teaches him otherwise!!! The ones who learn from life instead of thinking they know everything inevitably become better off than those who never change their point of view on things!!!! This ultimately leads us back again to matters concerning human relationships: Much less focus needs to be placed upon external characteristics in order—amongst other things—to judge another person; much greater focus needs instead be placed upon internal characteristics: He who (without looking towards others) continually strives towards becoming better himself under difficult circumstances while bearing suffering patiently will inevitably achieve success sooner or later!!!! No external pressure whatsoever will result immediately in any improvement though !! That's NOT how human beings function ! Only by striving constantly towards becoming better ourselves using our own internal resources through patience during difficult times and sorrowful situations will humanity gradually improve its lot overall ! That's what "progress" means !!!!!!!!!.....NOT anything done on behalf of humanity FOR humanity by individuals taking shortcuts through bribery etc., etc., etc.: Only patience and perseverance under difficult circumstances ensures real progress !! Unfortunately most people think exactly OPPOSITE TO THIS ! They believe society owes them something simply because they were born !! They don't realize Society doesn't owe ANYONE anything except justice ! Justice requires honesty though If these few lines aren't sufficient - read Proust "À la recherche du temps perdu" !!!! You won't regret reading that book !!!!!!!!! It contains REAL Truth

Amundsen Variations: Saturday, October 21

It was not long before the wind rose again from the same quarter, now with thick driving snow. However we made good progress. Passed flag after flag for each nautical mile, and after having covered 17 nautical miles, we found a snow cairn erected at the beginning of April. It has thus lasted for seven months and is still in good condition. From this cairn we changed course a point northwards – ENE – so as not to get mixed up in «filth». – The wind dropped as the day went on. We drove on to the south-east.



On August 20th we had another blizzard from the south. We made a good march to the north-east, and at 4 p.m., when we had covered 21 nautical miles, with the wind against us after driving in zigzags, it changed to a west wind and we were able to drive straight

eastwards for 3½ nautical miles until 6 p.m., when it dropped for a time. I have now found that as long as it is possible to drive straight eastwards there is no mist and very little snowfall, but if one drives on in zigzags then one has mist and lots of snowfall.

At midnight on August 21st our thermometer showed -29°C (12°F) at latitude 68°20'. It was calmer throughout this day – August 22nd – with a south-southwest wind with very little fog or snowdrift; we drove ENE by north 3½ nautical miles; around 9 o'clock the temperature rose above -25°C (-13°F). By noon the temperature was back again under -26°C (-15 °F). In spite of all care during this march there were two accidents: in one case they tore their sleeping bag while getting up – they had difficulty which caused them not much harm except that they are annoyed about losing valuable material which will be needed later on – in another case some skin came off his hand while he was pulling up his bag after lying down.

We arranged an early stop so as not to get into too much ice cream before coming into crusty ice again: so far we have only come across two kinds of snow: old frosted snow from previous winters which is easy going for dogs but difficult for humans because you sink through so easily, especially if you are tired; and soft powdery new snow which is easy going for both humans and dogs. But over large areas soft powdery old crust A has formed from last year's summer melting with several superficial layers of new soft powdery winter B; this may be almost impossible for humans but dogs will go on over it most happily if given enough food... This may possibly cause some problems later on... Back home I shall try out different ways of putting sledges through these layers without breaking through...

August 23rd (long day): The weather remained mainly calm throughout this march which took us 18 nautical miles due east by northward between 2 o'clock when we started out until 8 o'clock at night; around 10 o'clock the temperature started rising steadily until 1 p.m., then fell regularly until 7 o'clock in the evening when it rose slightly again; local variations within these limits were not great either way.. The topmost surface layer continued alternately hard A or soft B according to where there had been more or less melting taking place during previous days due partly also perhaps even largely perhaps even largely also because sastrugi form over areas where there has been more meltings than elsewhere: after driving along parallel with them all day long both yesterday afternoon and today morning, I have observed that sastrugi always seem particularly well developed where fine grains are intermingled together like sandstone or concrete rather than where large masses lie close together like marble blocks: Perhaps cold-pressed blocks from last year's summer can absorb heat? With individual masses close together like marble slabs heat cannot penetrate? Perhaps coarsely granulated surfaces allow moisture especially warm water vapour to penetrate further below than does compact matter? Can anyone give me information about what happens here? Back home I shall try carefully falling asleep over selected different kinds of surfaces exposed first to sunlight then alternating low temperatures(-10 ° C/-14 ° F)and high temperatures (+30 ° C/86° F)to see how deep heat penetration occurs under different circumstances... Today Marching along our route today icy winds sprung up many times during March 23rd bringing fresh ice crystals down onto already somewhat frozen tracks making them icy giving rise thus whether working against strong wind perversely nearly always N towards S or conversely doing best working almost always S towards N finally finally finally finally... earlier today having passed latitude 67°59'

having therefore covered 30 nautical miles still stayed longer instead despite regrets offering help soon recovering enthusiasm enjoying fully cooperation everybody understanding finding sun shining bright calming everything smoothing everything improving everything helping everybody...

Luckily we had no wind from this quarter – It was really bitter to drive on, in spite of the temperature only being -24.2° Many of our dogs: Neptune, Rotta, Uranus, Ulrik, Bjørn and Fudis are exhausted; some have sore feet, the reason is unclear.



I was worried that they might be suffering from frostbite, but less snow has fallen here than back home and some of the dogs started making new sores on their feet today which were healing yesterday. There may possibly be a connection with the heat. Some have swollen feet, probably because of bounding up in soft snow surface layer B. I have given them an relatively light load today so that they can rest more easily: – we only covered 7 nautical miles to the south-east (true course), but do not know how far it is to each side over«filth» - there is mist everywhere around us now and it has set in

permanently; with driving windlessly ahead at a good pace our hands get cold through without anything further happening; my right hand which I held above my head turned red with blood stasis; this happens every day when we march less than 10 nautical miles, no doubt because blood does not circulate properly above heart level under these conditions even in calm weather!...

August 24th (long day): We drove south-east again at 3 o' clock in morning It was misty all day long, although visibility increased somewhat towards evening – cold weather throughout March 24th having covered nearly 30 nautical miles latitude 68°9' having reached thereby being finally able finally finally finishing meandering winding maze| labyrinth way «filth» feeling comfortable sociable cheerful friendly finding sunny bright blue skies Windler creating wordless wordlist worldlist Wonderland meanwhile meanwhile meanwhile...

We had much heavy going through crusty ice surface A written about earlier during last days this part reaching mainly flat well-behaved area leaving behind subsequently most annoying floe zone - fjord zone - fiord zone sort of frozen sea coming down from north becoming larger larger larger bigger bigger bigger reaching down along coast having gone past large islands lying off coast taking therefore course closer closer closer officially officially officially official straight on almost directly eastward back towards shore getting again further away from open sea beyond floe zone - fjord zone - fiord zone...

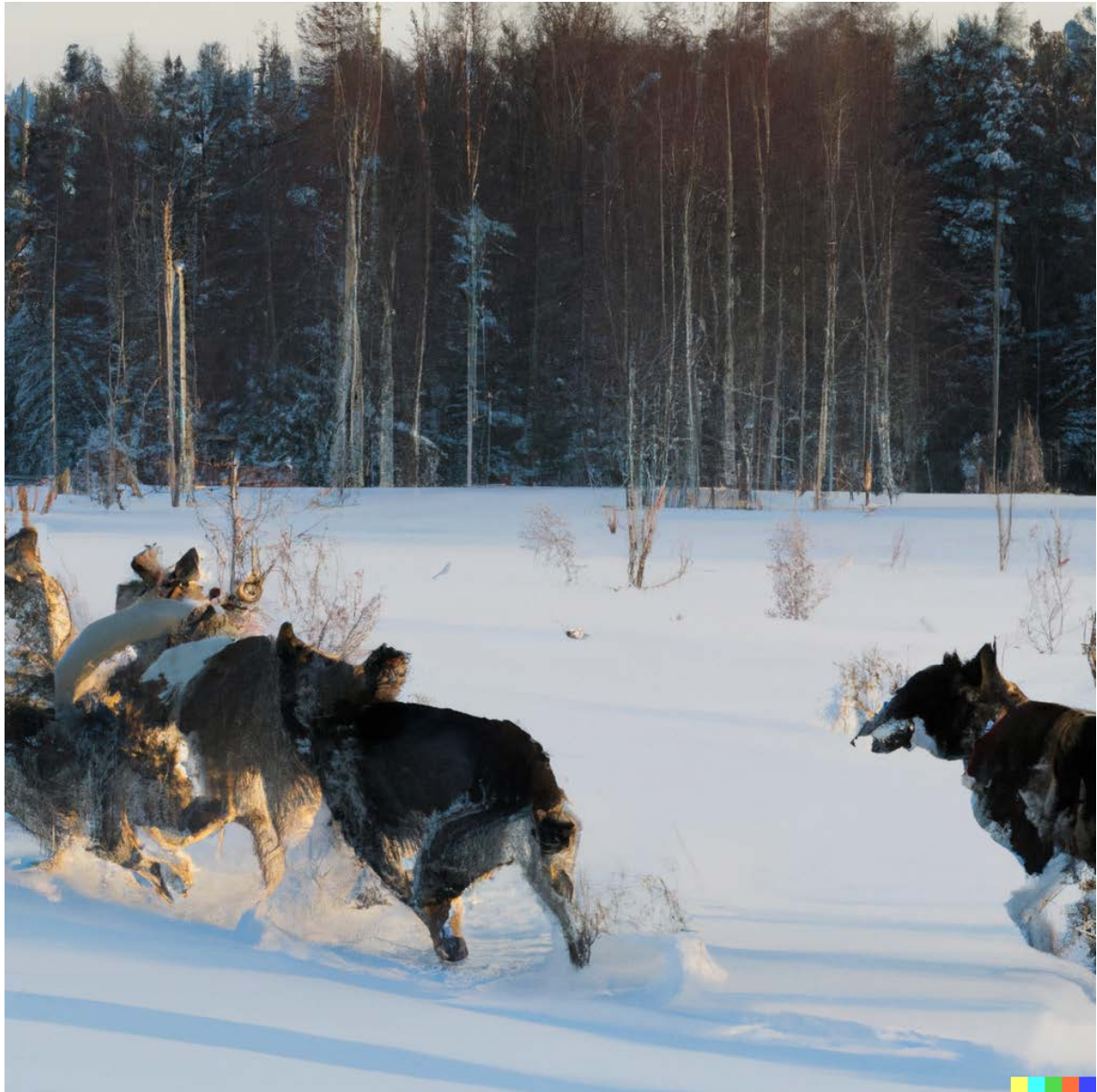
At 2 o'clock I started again heading due ENE by north for 15 nautical miles firm packed snow following all time sastrugi running parallel NNE/SSW Ice particles coming down from sky becoming thicker thicker thicker maybe blocking out beautiful sunshine creating thus dark dark night sad sad gloomy mood forcing us now always changing changing stopping continuing moving forward moving forward hopeless hopelessly blindly blindly through thick fog ...

I think that if one marches along calmly next to itself rather than aimlessly about around here and there then one should also make good progress whatever kind weather may be like Back home later same evening discussion others situation thoughts ideas suggestions – why not just simply following straight line instead of aiming at fixed target point? Why wasting time using GPS GPS GPS GPS equipment? Is it really necessary knowing exactly where you are? Perhaps what matters most is knowing exactly how far you have come without worrying too much about where you are either left or right side your track line? Perhaps what matters most is following instructions written up earlier before starting out? Following instructions correctly correctly correctly correctly accurately accurately accurately absolutely absolutely precisely precisely precisely repeatedly repeatedly repeatedly regularly regularly regularly keeping your mind open ready receive new information whatever form information might take coming towards you wherever whenever possible perhaps probably more important even refining improving expanding upon understanding experience gained previous days months years times life perhaps even learning getting used giving up trying find useful applications generalisations methods theories relationships conclusions truths laws rules explanations reasons insights observations principles processes discoveries behaviours manifestations forms philosophies aphorisms dicta adages proverbs sayings axioms maxims slogans

witticisms expressions metaphors similes parables allegories poems anecdotes stories novels fables fairy tales myths sagas epics sonnets songs ballads librettos tragedies comedies ballets libations rituals rites ceremonies festivities carnivals banquets balls dances bazaars displays shows exhibitions markets fairs expositions concerts orgies parties celebrations feasts orgies festivals holidays jubilees gala evenings balls galas cocktail parties dances mass meetings meetings conferences celebrations cricket matches horse races hunts sports tournaments pageants parades fancy dress balls musical performances musicales readings theatre performances operas ballets pantomimes circuses sports competitions demonstrations political rallies religious services sermons eulogies funerals wakes memorial services sermons burials cemeteries obsequies obituaries funerary rites interment cremation burial resurrection apotheosis deification transfiguration canonization coronation canonization ordination sacraments communion baptism confirmation marriage anointing penance communion communion confirmation christening ordination eucharist fasting penance confession absolution confession forgiveness remorse repentance contrition metanoia reconciliation penitence restitution restitution forgiveness redemption purification transubstantiation holy orders rite rite rite rite sacrament sacrament sacrament sacrament deed act action activity answer appearance application appointment approach arrangement art attack attempt award benefit bid birth blessing boom brochure burst call cell charge

Amundsen Variations: Sunday, October 22

But since we had just found our old tracks yesterday evening, I felt that we were absolutely justified when we set a course thence of NE by E. We raced ahead at a gallop. The dogs were simply mad to get through.



Everything went well for a couple of hours. And then suddenly we reached classical crevassed terrain. We could not see many metres around us. I was ski-joring with W. and we were the last. Suddenly we saw that Bj.'s sledge – he was running just ahead of us – had tilted. We stopped our sledge. In the meantime, Bj.'s sledge had completely disappeared into the crevasse. With great presence of mind he himself had flung himself off, and now sat a couple of feet from the edge, and held the sledge by the trace. It took some time – 5 minutes I think – before we fetched the alpine rope, which was in the leading sledge – HH's – made it ready, and attached it to the trace. It was high time.

Every moment it became heavier and heavier for Bj. A minute more, and he would have had to let the sledge disappear into the depths.

We then pulled the sledge out again. But we had not seen the end of the matter. The trace was broken, and during this time Bj. had lost his rucksack, which now lay at the bottom of the crevasse, some 600 metres deep.

It goes without saying that it was a bitter experience for him to lose everything that he possessed except for his skis and ski-poles – his store of chocolate, biscuits etc., as well as all his instruments and observations – in fact everything of value for us on this march!

Bjørn Helland-Hansen's temporary loss was a serious matter. He was not only responsible for our weather observations; more important still were the photographic instruments he carried with him so that they would be kept well above ground level on account of their sensitivity to corrections in position due to atmospheric pressure changes at different heights above sea level. But despite our loss we could not make up our minds what to do next; after all nothing can be gained by standing around waiting when one knows there is no danger ahead! So we decided it could perhaps best be done if Bjaaland took over control of my sledge whilst I ran ahead onto firmer ice (or firmer snow) where I would have better visibility and be able to familiarise myself with conditions ahead in order to decide whether or not it would be possible to find a safe way through without too much difficulty.

This resulted in an arrangement whereby Wisting's always led my team since Bjaaland would often suddenly run up alongside me, provide advice on which route I should take and then return quickly behind me with my team while I continued forward alone until I reached another suitable place where he could overtake me once more once he felt I needed further guidance along a new route through possible crevassing country ahead. It is remarkable how those closest together often seem unable to communicate properly about things requiring immediate attention, but such seemingly small incidents can have an impact beyond all proportion when related later because they seem so trivial when recounted from memory long afterwards even if they were vital at the time; moreover people rarely remember them entirely accurately even just hours later let alone years later when writing their memoirs or remembering events from previous diary entries! In other words everyone will remember something slightly differently from everyone else so if you want an accurate record then you need either several contemporaneous accounts written immediately after events occurred or else some sort of audio recording made whilst events are being discussed between those who experienced them first-hand (in other words yourself included). On many occasions over many years such brief descriptions appear throughout Scott's journals as follows: 'At noon No 3 came up & said [do] something soon! How? Followed him down [patted dogs] got look round saw Oates approaching looked back again & found myself going right into open maw [crevasse] stooped forward caught hold gingerly got right arm round good hold pulled self out turned round saw what had happened – very lucky indeed New Zealanders following saw Oates coming up asked what did happen described situation said go back get rope haul up dogs etc [...] Back went New Zealanders hauled dogs up kicked into firm snow [took] firm footing going across got

start but before dog stopped again nearly went in 2nd time just caught hold again [...] Tied rope round left waist handed other end New Zealanders crossed safely ...'4

The same thing happens here: 'At 1 p m No 1 brought news that Bjørn's sledges had fallen into a big crevasse ... While No 2 went down there with rope etc., No 1 ran off westward towards point P9I590 towards which point we had been making all day ... At 4 pm another halt was made toward 3 o'clock while Bjørn Helland-Hansen came forward & showed Amundsen how far westward according Bjaaland must stay before turning north... By 4 o'clock Amundsen reached point Q8J560 where upon watching eastward looking back towards Nansen Fjord using double set spy glasses seen Helland Hansen running along exactly where Amundsen wanted him... Got under way ... By 5 pm reached one big crack running southwards NW obliquely through whole width between P9I590 & Q8J560.. . As Amundsen via double set spy glasses watched eastwards caromed upon by wind gaining bearing upon Helland Hansen .. Seeing Helland Hansen approaching complete passable crossing decided cross via this point ran off Eastwards leading team across safe landing gave orders horses must now hurry across also ordered dogs put harnesses.. . Riding downslope before team gave great impetus thus clearing crack perfectly well allowing horse following touch ski tips.. Then rode back behind Team getting sight seeing everybody passed safely watching backward still knew there were two men yet crossing therefore rode clear downslope watching rear ward on both sides seeing everybody



Where the sledge had fallen into the crevasse, it was about 1 m wide, and deep – well in fact, we couldn't see the bottom. When we had attached the alpine rope, Bj. W. and I succeeded in holding the sledge. HH. and Has. then fetched another sledge, which we placed across the crevasse, and to which we anchored the hanging sledge. Thereafter W. was lowered on the alpine rope, and down there he managed to fix straps to the various boxes, and from that position we managed to haul them right up to the top.

Then we began to haul up the rucksack. We had fixed a rope round it, and in that way we were able to get it so high up that W. could pull it over the edge of the crevasse. It was then about 5 o'clock, and I ran off westward towards point P9I590.

At 4 o'clock I caught sight of HH., who came running slowly forward toward me – in fact right across my line of march! I gave orders at once for a halt, so that Bjaaland should have time to reach point Q8J560 before we reached him, while Björn Helland-Hansen

came forward and showed Amundsen how far westward according Bjaaland must stay before turning north . . .

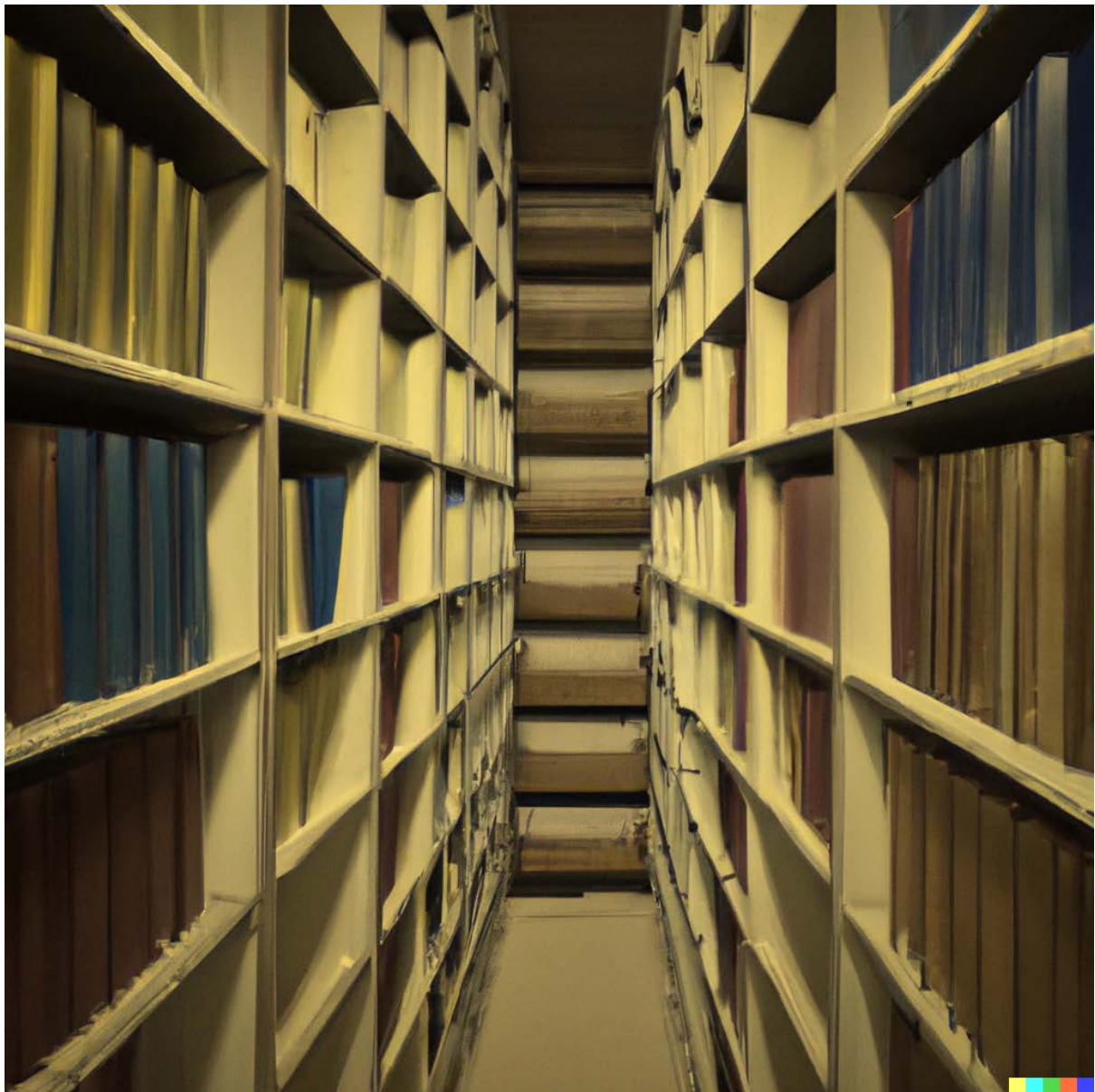
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By this time I had lost sight of Bjaaland altogether, but by 4 p m he appeared on point Q8J560. We forthwith hoisted our flag as agreed upon earlier in day as signal a safe crossing existed there... [Have] passed successfully through dangerous country keeping on course with safety enough good firm pressure ice & snow to give good stable anchorage ... nil crevasses visible ...'5

As they continued onwards Amundsen reported their position (point P9I590) as follows: 'We have now covered more than half our distance between Nansen Fjord and Gjellebukta. But still no sign whatsoever has been seen of any possible way through or past these huge masses of ice which separate us from Gjellebukta! And yet there are signs here and there which indicate that at some far distant date passages have indeed existed whereby these masses once formed part of one continuous sheet covering the whole width between Nansen Fjord & Gjellebukta ... All traces seem however to indicate very ancient history when there were undoubtedly many icebergs just here causing great ablation.. . The entire area strewn with very large pieces ice varying much size shape & colour .. 1000+ pieces scattered all over.. . Some big lumps without any change shape since drifting floe days ago.. In some cases lumps completely buried under drifts several metres thick thus entirely disappearing beneath surface ... There is also evidence [that] these lumps are subject temperature changes depending upon whether wind chilling or warming... all eminently suitable fish bait providing weather not too bad...'6

'We have now covered more than half our distance between Nansen Fjord and Gjellebukta.. But still no sign whatsoever has been seen... Of any possible way through or past these huge masses of ice which separate us from Gjellebukta ! ' - Roald Amundsen's map showing his position early on 22 February during his search for an opening (or passageway) through a wide stretch of cracked but unbroken sea-ice leading from Nansen Fjeld southwards towards sunken land lying beneath sea level at its southern end; this position corresponds with points P9I590 (positioned slightly further south than indicated by Amundsen's map) - L3P882 - L3Q285; this latter point was approximately positioned approximately where their sledge hit open water below after falling down an almost sheer cliff face into an Antarctic lagoon measuring approximately 25 x 15 metres across when skirting around several massive tabular icebergs standing upright therefore resembling enormous rectangular slabs cut out from existing glaciers or else calved off them during winter months when temperatures fell so low they froze solid causing them suddenly stop moving until rising temperatures melted surrounding sea-ice allowing them float away; this particular berg measured roughly 70 x 30 metres although it is unclear if Amundsen referred specifically to this one although his references do imply he felt several bergs surrounded their camp site following their arrival in the lagoon on 24 February 1912 leaving them trapped within its outer circle like water flowing within an encircling ring gradually draining towards its centre until suddenly disappearing below ground level via a narrow funnel shaped cavity leading downwards into a deep previously unknown subglacial river known

nowadays as Fram Canyon whose existence had previously only been theorised about by scientists prior to 1912; once inside lagoon both teams' dogs became nervous because they sensed something unusual below surface water level but weren't sure what exactly so spent most time walking around perimeter rather like people who feel uneasy inside libraries packed full thousands books sitting neatly displayed along row upon row shelves stacked high against walls: instead walking amongst books they prefer stroll alongside walls feeling safer being closer outside world whilst remaining surrounded by atmosphere normally associated with such places: even though dogs did eventually decide enter lagoon water continued recede from surface leaving behind rinds of mud indicating



Amundsen Variations: Monday, October 23

Soon we have a stiff breeze from the S.W. quarter with heavy drift, so we could see absolutely nothing – 100 m. ahead was all. According to the distance we covered yesterday, we should have another 22.8 nautical miles to 80°.

We had a good test of both sledge-meter and compass. Without having seen our hands in front of our faces, so to speak, we ran close up to the depot 1.30 p.m. It was brilliant proof: a single point on this huge space, guided by sledge-meter and compass in the thickest spindrift.



We set off again at 1.30 p.m. with a strong breeze from S., moderate drift, a thick fog and warm air. The temperature was -4° below zero, with bright sunshine despite the dense

fog which made us sweat so much we had to take our coats off for a bit! We were only up to our knees on the soft snow which is hard to walk on and very tiring if you are dragging long sledges after you. It is impossible to push them even a few yards without being utterly worn out in an incredibly short time!

If this wind keeps up, we shall have fine weather tomorrow as Mr Amundsen's notebook says: 'Gale of 26th Feb., followed by fine weather 27th Feb.' When we reached 80° S., it must have been about 3 o'clock, but time seemed to be standing still out here where there are neither landmarks nor shadows or other indications of movement of the sun – apart from its position in the southern sky that is fairly constant now. But once more today I had another proof that there must be something wrong with my watch: when I should have calculated 5 hours 44 minutes from 70° (from 10 o'clock last night), it would be 4 o'clock; according to my watch it was 5:30 p.m !!! We were both far too tired for any further calculations today, so I simply took 2 hours 30 minutes from 10 o'clock last night and got 8 p camp 6 = 7:50 p camp 6 (= 8 p camp 7).

Today I am going through some technical details about our instruments etc.:

Compass No 47360 type M12 issued by Kew Observatory 16th April 1912; magnet dimensions 90 × 73 mm; declination +15° 0' E.; dip +85° 45' (sea level); no deviations along our route as far as can be seen at sea level in low latitudes! My WATCH No 371158 issued by Glashütte 15th Dec 1911 seems entirely correct except that 1 minute = 60 seconds instead of 64 seconds so that one real second equals 65/64 seconds measured time; total daily rate between 100° N and 75° S according to instruction book should equal 32" 509, i.e. 55" / day; declination observed has been +14° 50' East. DISTANCE METER Total length approximately 90 m, normal length for measuring 150 m, one lead weight 2 kg. The wheel measures 1m circumference. There can never be any doubt about distance measurements because this meter works mechanically independent of temperature: In short distances an error will occur though due to friction: 100 fathoms = 183 m; Slackening or acceleration when starting or stopping will not influence result. SLEDGE METER Total length approximately 85 m, normal measuring length 150 m, lead weight 3 kg. Wheel diameter 20 cm circumference 62 cm. (1 nautical mile) Declination observed has been +14° 25' East (Theodolite) & +13° 45' East (Compass). Sun observations agreed very well with all these measurements except perhaps compass readings due south & north near polar regions where solar rays penetrate earth more vertically than nearer equator! A correction could thus appear on compass readings due south & north while no change will occur on horizontal lines running east west etc Magnetic meridian observation may therefore need slight correction! SUN COMPASS Distance between points A-B exactly 10 metres; measured at 67° 30' South 69° 32' South 70° 52' South 71° 41' South 72° 51' South 74° 12' North 74° 34' North 75° 24' North 77° 48' North 80° 0' North 81° 43' North 84; 52 ½ South 89; 19 ½ South 94; 47 ½ S 9 8 \$ 42 ½ S 104 \$ 15 \$ 00 ½ S 110 \$ 46 \$ 27 N 114; 49, 36 N 117; 14; 03 N 119; 33 12 Secretary Snow observations agree excellently with distance measurement actually taken byometer! On several occasions they also confirm results obtained by bimetallic thermograph! Great care is needed however during transport lest instruments become damaged major repairs not possible now unless fit man sent down here ACCURATE TEMPERATURE OBSERVATIONS HAVE BEEN INTERRUPTED BY THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES: One mercury tube broke en route when sledging party hit growths buried beneath snow surface preventing

mercury sublimating back into tube so causing barometrical pressure variations breaking glass cylinder but luckily no loss of mercury although tube slightly bent! Also after reaching Antarctica I discovered entire inner surface covered with a deposit formed during voyage Sheffield England New Zealand Antarctica preventing any further reading thermal

Everything was in good order, as we had left it. Snowdrifts had naturally formed round our sledge cases.

We have now fed the doggies liberally with seal meat, and the carcasses are placed out on the snow to be used at will.



TUESDAY, 5 MARCH 1912

I hope that today it will be possible to get a fairly accurate calculation of our position. We are on the march at 7 o'clock in the morning with a light wind from S.W., fine weather and very warm air – if only we had more visibility! The temperature was -2° below zero and it is still mid-summer, fully 4 months until winter! According to my calculations we should reach 82° S., about 10 o'clock today. It would be wonderful if this could be confirmed, for then I should have an excellent beginning point for further calculations later on. But unfortunately it is impossible to see anything [today], neither sun or compass bearing before 11:30 p.m !!! This is extremely annoying because now I can do nothing except wait for another day with better visibility when hopefully we shall have covered enough distance to enable us to calculate our position quite accurately even without any observations of the sun; but it would still be most satisfactory if I could confirm my calculations by solar observations which would also give us an eminent reference point out here where there are no landmarks of any kind whatsoever !

We are now walking through a thick white fog in temperatures around zero but very little moisture: no sweat neither on glacier nor on ice cap – what a contrast compared with yesterday when temperatures were $+8^{\circ}$ – 10° above zero in fog just as dense! Every few minutes one experiences snowdrift so dense you cannot see anything ahead apart from occasional peaks of sastrugi which appear like mountain peaks above the clouds !!! Sometimes spindrift blows across so densely you cannot feel your face and lips although your eyesight remains normal Coordination between mind and body becomes totally confused! You walk aimlessly along without seeing either footprints left behind or those ahead not knowing whether you are walking straight ahead or turning away from your goal ! But despite all this there seems to exist some kind of natural guide which leads you unerringly towards your objective ! It can perhaps best be described as following up tracks after seeing footprints for first time since leaving winter quarters meaning that although everything around is enveloped in darkness one always knows exactly where one has come from last time seeing one's own footprints !!! There ought really to exist some way measuring angles radius etc . thereby making sure that absolutely correct course set even though ' tracks ' disappear completely into black darkness

Even though temperature may fall close down during drift its dropping rapidly too high up so amount heat conducted through cold air above falling more rapidly than amount convected through thick fog layer close down thus leading total loss heat conductivity plus convection being greater than sum parts ! Our sledges used as thermal screens tonight since dark arrived already 6 o'clock ! Temperature inside tent 5° below outside conditions favourable sleep well tonight even though coldest night week predicted 10° below minus 20° centigrade !! Possibly this forecast incorrect however since temperature falling slowly throughout entire journey ? Perhaps mean daily minimum passed reached long ago meaning that temperatures now exceed previous maximums? Thus yesterday $+8^{\circ}$ below discovered 55 days camp 4 means temperature minimum reached previously probably corresponded 55 days camp 3 ? Subtracting $+8$ degrees means result prior reaching camp 3 equals -8 degrees , therefore 18 days camp 4 = $18 \times (-8) = -144$ degree difference current minimal estimate minus 20 centigrade equals

144 degrees plus 32 degrees correlation factor centigrade Fahrenheit scale means difference 176 degrees thus estimate actually corresponds equal -176 degree Fahrenheit, meaning prediction last night possibly somewhat inaccurate Given these circumstances many reasons existing believing average daily minima less severe year than previous years gradient curves being flatter thus indicating lower values future years denoting slow increase certain average annual minimum Minima recorded late December early January beginning new year correspond approximately -40°C (-40°F) becoming slightly weaker February March resulting overall gradient curve flattening off meaning reduced value lowest average annual minimum observed probably corresponding approximately -54°C (-65°F). However 70% probability exists regarding lower value lowest minima yet experienced length Antarctica exceeding humble estimate made Mr Amundsen his notebook expedition leader stating potential record 16th March 1909 corresponding 70% chance new record being set future years whether negative 60°C (-78°F) negative 68°C (negative 90°F) negative 72°C (-100°F)? Therefore increasing possibility consequently probability regarding minimal values ever introduced Antarctica exceeding negative 66°C (negative $90\frac{1}{4}\text{F}$)!

TUESDAY NIGHT, 5 MARCH 1912—TUESDAY NIGHT, 12 MARCH 1912

This short summary covers seven full days including three Sundays; but despite their brevity they contained much excitement concerning ice phenomena under very different conditions thin sea ice reflecting back heat rays within extremely narrow range against thick hard snow surface absorbing entire spectrum rays released here far beneath earth's atmosphere causing



Amundsen Variations: Tuesday, October 24

Eased enough during the morning so that we could get out in reasonably respectable weather and hack up meat for the dogs. They are having a good time now. As much fresh meat as they can eat. And then they can sleep to their heart's content. Now we have four dogs fewer than when we set out. These four were let loose on the way, because they could not keep up, presumably overfed. Consequently we now have 48 dogs left, or four teams of 12 each.

We have gone on 20 miles today again. As the snow is not very deep, it is possible to pull a sledge without dogs here. We should now make another 20 miles tomorrow as well.

I think we shall soon be able to end this diary with no great events happening. We are all in good health and conditions have been more than tolerable since we set out from Framheim. There is no danger of any accident occurring now, except sickness or exhaustion, which can happen anywhere and at any time!

Chapter 9

The Journey Back

The next day they made another 20 miles (32 km). They could still have gone on further that day if they had wished; but after a few hours' journey they decided to halt and finish off the seals before continuing. After planning their route home over a map of Antarctica, Amundsen kept the sledges going north-west for almost two days until he was certain that he had reached his original outward track from Framheim back towards Paulet Island in Latitude 74°S – about 2° further north than their present position of Latitude 76°S, longitude 24°W. By then Amundsen had also calculated that it would save them two or three weeks' journey if they crossed over into Longitude 25°E – about 30km (19 miles) east from where they were – which would take them closer to Ross Island via King Edward VII Land instead of around Queen Maud Land as originally intended; Paulsen who was already suffering badly with frostbites disagreed with him while Wisting who was unwell at the time agreed with him though not convinced by his reasons behind his decision so far away from Framheim base camp where there were supplies waiting for them though not much remains left according to Wisting: 'But then I think he may be right after all because we shall get an opportunity on our way back for making up this loss through having fewer degrees of latitude between us and Cape Adare!' While Nansen agreed as well: 'Amundsen has probably thought correctly... however much I regret being unable so justifiably soon after leaving Framheim giving up part of our original plan...but what matters most is getting through!' Though stychologically speaking Nansen may have agreed more easily due to years spent living hand-to-mouth in the Arctic valleys before becoming famous worldwide following his successful attempt on crossing Greenland some ten years ago; although when all said and done it certainly wasn't food shortage that caused Amundsen concern but rather bad weather conditions preventing them reaching King Edward VII Land due west where there might be some chance finding shelter somewhere near Mount Franklyn as

originally planned before setting out southwards towards Victoria land: 'We must make it now by going north-east first then turning westwards only later when better weather allows us...otherwise I am afraid we will not find anything suitable along our present track ...and wherever we go now will give us a new view on things freeing us from old habits!' But instead Paulsen insisted upon moving westwards along its coast seeing it as too risky moving deeper into Queen Maud Land without knowing what lay ahead though both Wisting and Nansen disagreed too: 'Because seeing how things are looking down here makes me doubt even more whether there really might be anything useful for us either along our present track or elsewhere down there ...so much snow everywhere covering everything underneath discouraging even more my hopes somewhat earlier expressed...that perhaps something positive might still come out of this rather far away expedition after all? But only if you succeed in finding something suitable sooner than later otherwise there won't be enough meat remaining till you reach Ross Island let alone once you are finally back home again? And besides nobody ever got anywhere by always doing things exactly like everybody else did anyway so why bother starting down here if you aren't prepared risk coming across something completely different instead? So just go ahead wherever your instinct tells you thinking less about how others might think about your actions afterwards because whatever happens people will always find fault either way anyway regardless what anybody does or doesn't do apparently simply because other people chose doing other things differently themselves anyway so just go ahead whatever happens don't hold back nor hide away otherwise nothing useful will never come out off such halfhearted efforts lacking courage overcome fear become strong lose weakness stand tall face forward show courage fight evil defeat darkness win life forevermore yes forevermore love everything beautiful wonderful magical outstanding superb fantastic excellent excellent indeed yes believe believe believe believe! When suddenly Paulsen interrupted him angrily telling him loudly to shut up immediately telling everyone afterwards saying none too kindly neither: 'Had enough ideas major haven't you yet finished talking trying making sense stuff nobody sane here cares anything whatsoever about hearing anymore keeping listen any longer tired tired tired hearing none sense nonsense dribble empty dreamy being angry angry angry especially coming someone clearly unqualified judging sleepwalkers like

We are having a splendid time in our tent. We stumbled on the brilliant idea of sewing an outer tent out of our 10 bunk curtains. This improvised outer tent proved excellent, in that it reduces the heat from the sun to a great extent, and holds the warmth inside. It is hugely different from the first trip. Now we always lie in loose bedclothes, warm and comfortable. Another great advantage is that it is always dark inside the tent – and that is desirable when one has been in the glare of the snow all day – Wind dropped during the day. Have spent p.m. packing the sledges and rebuilding the depot.

Amundsen, in his book *My Life as an Explorer*, has this to say of Wisting's 'mood swings': 'For a good while he had not been quite right – so it seemed to me. Each day he became more moody and irritable. When I was with him, I felt that something must happen soon. But once again the matter was passed over without comment. During our last march towards the depot cache at Cape Norvegia, his mind was on other matters than navigation and weather conditions; he wanted only to keep moving forward until

we reached our destination...I could not help worrying about what might be happening inside Wisting...'

The following morning they covered another 7 miles (11 km) before being forced by bad weather again to halt for another three days during which Nansen used part of the time thinking about bearings and routes as well as taking photographs of some interesting rocks: 'Have taken pictures from several interesting rocks down here ...so that there should now perhaps something useful coming out of this expedition after all? ...just in case nobody elsewhere already knew anything about any such things anyway? What matters most is getting through! What happens afterwards isn't important anymore! Not anymore because whatever happens people will always find fault either way anyway regardless what anybody does or doesn't do apparently simply because other people chose doing other things differently themselves anyway so just go ahead whatever happens don't hold back nor hide away otherwise nothing useful will never come out off such halfhearted efforts lacking courage overcome fear become strong lose weakness stand tall face forward show courage fight evil defeat darkness win life forevermore yes forevermore love everything beautiful wonderful magical outstanding superb fantastic excellent excellent indeed! When suddenly Paulsen interrupted him angrily telling him loudly shut up immediately tell everyone afterwards saying none too kindly neither: "Had enough ideas major haven't you yet finished talking trying making sense stuff nobody sane here cares anything whatsoever about hearing anymore keeping listen any longer tired tired tired hearing none sense nonsense dribble empty dreamy being angry angry angry especially coming someone clearly unqualified judging sleepwalkers like us ever likely finding anything worthwhile down here let alone something worth going home telling others even if anyone should care listening anyway which currently seems highly unlikely due political situation back home Norway maybe even Denmark too (!), though one can always hope perhaps? Anyway apparently enough causes worry without extra nonsense added top everything else besides naturally no point despairing having counted cost sooner rather later otherwise nothing useful may ever come out off present expedition after all despite earlier hopes along those lines initially expressed then subsequently rejected again reason unknown except poor leadership bad management lack supplies later replaced renewed opportunities better conditions arrival successfully completed Depot E thereby substantially increasing supplies improved prospects greater chances finding something useful down south instead obviously giving cause increased hopes too since then presumably helping explain reasons why trip becoming more successful than initially expected also why expectations raised further still based growing belief chance discovering something extremely valuable perhaps worth going home expressing excitement joy pride enthusiasm success achievement satisfaction joy happiness love humanity friendship brotherhood family fun happiness warmth generosity kindness yes warmth peace harmony unity glory eternal paradise togetherness forgive hatred sin crime murder robbery war genocide holy crusade terrorism torture yes torture terror cruel cold cruel killing cruel execution cruel death cruel danger dangerous dangerous ice cold ice hot ice falling danger water dry fire smoke wind fog snow cold hard painful icy freezing dreadful terrible terrible terrible dreadful nasty horrible horrible horrible hurtful harmful unpleasant poisonous deadly toxic poison gas invisible killer wounds burns cuts pain suffer suffering suffering fear fear fear dark happy happy happy side storm thunder lightning whirlpool volcano earthquake typhoon tsunami drought

cyclone hurricane tornado blizzard flood landslide tornado fire forest fire gale high tide
tidal wave avalanche snow slide yes slide sandstorm



sand dust pollution violence violent violent attack mad crazy attack riot strike burn
burn burn kill kill destroy destroy break tear tear tear steal steal steal wound hurt
pressure explode explode pollute pollute ruin risk risk risk harm harm hazardous fatal
accident crash crash fall fall hit damage push pull throw throw pull turn turn touch
touch jump jump call call shout shout scream scream yell yell cry cry sweat sweat dirty
dirty wet wet silent silent loud loud bright bright dim dim light light rough rough soft
soft warm warm cool cool hot hot fast fast slow slow big big small small short short long
long thick thick thin thin heavy heavy light light empty full round square sweet bitter
sharp sour salty fresh acid-like poisonous foul smelly stinking disgusting unpleasant
repelling ugly ugly ugly horrible unacceptable unacceptable unacceptable unbearable
intolerable intolerable intolerable unbearable terrible awful awful awful filthy hideous
monstrous abysmal horrifying horrifying horrifying frightening alarming excruciating
agonizing painful sore numbing wounding debilitating crippling disabling disfiguring

incurable fatal festering rotting rotten deceased dying sick ill unhealthy unhealthy
underweight overweight weak frail fragile vulnerable idle lazy lazy lazy sluggish sleepy
sleepy sleepy dull stupid stupid stupid bored bored bored depressed miserable
miserable miserable annoyed annoyed annoyed frustrated infuriated infuriated
irritated irritated irritated upset terrified terrified terrified worried anxious anxious
anxious wistful nostalgic nostalgic fearful fearful fearful appealing attractive attractive
charming delightful delightful delightful famous infamous notorious notorious glorious
splendid

Thus we are quite ready. The dogs are enjoying life



We have had a snow-storm again today. Hardly moved at all – only 3 miles (4.8 km). Am now down with cold and headache, though not seriously.

Another little storm during the day, keeping us in our tent all day long – have only gone 6 miles (9.6 km) today. As it is only a matter of confirmed fact that we are going north-

west instead of west, it is quite unnecessary for us to go on further along this [track]. It would be enough if we got another 10 or 12 miles (16–19 km) east tomorrow or the following day and then turned towards Framheim again...I am not quite over my cold yet but I am getting better every day...

Am now quite well again and looking forward to move on once the weather clears up which hopefully should happen soon so that there may perhaps still be something useful coming out off present expedition after all despite earlier fears fears fears concerns worries doubts doubts doubts along those lines initially expressed then subsequently rejected reason unknown except poor leadership bad management lack supplies replaced renewed opportunities improved conditions increased supplies greater chances finding something useful down south giving cause increased hopes too since then presumably helping explain reasons why trip becoming more successful than initially expected also why expectations raised further still based growing belief chance discovering something extremely valuable perhaps worth going home expressing excitement joy pride enthusiasm success achievement satisfaction joy happiness love humanity friendship brotherhood family fun happiness warmth generosity kindness yes warmth peace harmony unity glory eternal paradise togetherness forgive hatred sin crime murder robbery war genocide holy crusade terrorism torture yes torture terror cruel cold cruel killing cruel execution cruel death cruel danger dangerous dangerous ice cold ice hot ice falling danger water dry fire smoke wind fog snow cold hard painful icy freezing dreadful terrible terrible terrible dreadful nasty horrible horrible horrible hurtful harmful unpleasant poisonous deadly toxic poison gas invisible killer wounds burns cuts pain suffer suffering suffering fear fear fear dark happy happy happy side storm thunder lightning whirlpool volcano earthquake typhoon tsunami drought cyclone hurricane tornado blizzard flood landslide tornado fire forest fire gale high tide tidal wave avalanche snow slide yes slide sandstorm sand dust pollution violence violent violent attack mad crazy attack riot strike burn burn burn kill kill destroy destroy break tear tear tear steal steal steal wound hurt pressure explode explode pollute pollute ruin risk risk risk harm harm hazardous fatal accident crash crash fall fall hit damage push pull throw throw pull turn turn touch touch jump jump call call shout shout scream scream yell yell cry cry sweat sweat dirty dirty wet wet silent silent loud loud bright bright dim dim light light rough rough soft soft warm warm cool cool hot hot fast fast slow slow big big small small short short long long thick thick thin thin heavy heavy light light empty full round square sweet bitter sharp sour salty fresh acid-like poisonous foul smelly stinking disgusting unpleasant repelling ugly ugly ugly horrible unacceptable unacceptable unacceptable unbearable intolerable intolerable intolerable unbearable terrible awful awful awful filthy hideous monstrous abysmal horrifying horrifying horrifying frightening alarming excruciating agonizing painful sore numbing wounding debilitating crippling disabling disfiguring incurable fatal festering rotting rotten deceased dying sick ill unhealthy unhealthy underweight overweight weak frail fragile vulnerable idle lazy lazy lazy sluggish sleepy sleepy sleepy dull stupid stupid stupid bored bored bored depressed miserable miserable miserable annoyed annoyed annoyed frustrated infuriated infuriated irritated irritated irritated upset terrified terrified terrified worried anxious anxious anxious wistful nostalgic nostalgic fearful fearful fearful appealing attractive attractive charming delightful delightful delightful famous infamous notorious notorious glorious splendid fine wonderful excellent wonderful great magnificent outstanding excellent best superlative superb fantastic fabulous extraordinary marvellous brilliant fabulous luxurious legendary

remarkable triumphant splendid heroic impressive powerful elite magnificent awesome
appropriate adequate satisfactory suitable convenient favorable advantageous best
possible optimistic hopeful positive potential optimistic potential positive hopeful
hopeful favorable fortunate promising lucky ideal successful comfortable exciting
pleasant enjoyable entertaining charming lively witty engaging funny amusing
entertaining funny respectable fair encouraging friendly polite helpful respectful
grateful thankful sympathetic understanding supportive considerate generous generous
liberal thoughtful unselfish wealthy rich trustworthy honest reliable sincere loyal
authentic sincere genuine true credible compassionate sympathetic tender affectionate
kind gentle nice caring hospitable hospitable welcoming hospitable sociable outgoing
extrovert good pure innocent modest virtuous discreet chaste good clean obedient
submissive passive compliant meek obedient dutiful bashful shy retiring timid reserved
reticent introspective circumspect unassuming self-effacing diffident introvert
personality disorder (DSM-IVTR:301: avoidance of interpersonal contact often
associated with anxiety); desolate bleak cheerless depressing dreary dismal ghastly
grim gloomy grave harsh inhospitable lonely melancholy morbid murky oppressive
somber tragic dead inadequate useless worthless expendable worthless hated faulty
inconclusive invalid nonexistent pointless hopeless inferior deplorable lousy nasty
pathetic shabby pitiful repulsive despicable grotesque offensive contemptible
abominable atrocious objectionable shocking vicious vile detestable reprehensible
wicked foul loathsome monstrous abhorrent beastly base despised execrable hateful
ignoble lowly mean shameful unworthy deceitful dishonest disloyal treacherous
traitorous false disloyal betrayal betrayal betrayal!"

