

snowshoes, who will retrieve for me. I threw a piece of ice for him, and he managed to get over the "slob" for it, on to another pan about twenty yards away. The other dogs followed him, and after much painful struggling all of them got on but one.

Taking all the rush I could get on my little pan, I made a rush, slithering with the impetus along the surface till once more I sank through. After a tough fight I was able to haul myself by the long traces on to this new pan. I had taken care this time to tie the harnesses, to which I was holding, under the dogs' bellies, so that they could not slip them off. But the pan I was now on was still not enough to bear us, and so this exhausting process had to be repeated immediately to avoid sinking with it.

I now realized, much to my dismay, that though we had been working towards the land, we had been losing ground all the time, for the off-shore wind had now driven us a hundred yards further out. The widening gap was full of pounded ice, which rose to the surface as the pressure lessened. Through this no man could possibly make his way.

I was now resting on a floe about ten feet by twenty, which, when I came to examine it, was not ice at all, but simply snow-covered "slob," frozen into a mass, and which I feared would soon break up in the general turmoil and heavy sea, which was continually increasing as the ice drove off-shore before the wind.

At first we drifted in the direction of a rocky point on which a heavy surf was breaking, and I made up my mind, if there was clear water in the surf, to try to swim for the land. But suddenly we struck a rock, a large piece broke off the already small pan, and what was left swung around in the backwash and went right off to sea. I saw then that my pan was about a foot thick.

There was nothing now for it but to hope for rescue. Alas! there was no possibility of being seen by human eyes. As I have already mentioned, no one lives around this big bay. It was just possible, however, that the people on the other komatik, knowing I was alone and had failed to keep my tryst, would, perhaps, come back to look for me. This, however, they did not do.

Meanwhile the westerly wind—our coldest wind at this time of the year—was rising rapidly, it was tantalizing, as I stood there with next to nothing on, the wind going through me, and every stitch soaked in ice-water to see my komatik some fifty yards away. It was still above water, packed with food, hot tea in a Thermos bottle, dry clothing, matches, wood, and everything for making a fire to attract attention, if I should drive out far enough for someone to see me—and yet it was quite beyond my reach.

It is easy to see a black object on the ice in the daytime, for its gorgeous whiteness shows off the least thing. But, alas! the tops of bushes and large pieces of kelp have so long deceived those looking out that the watcher hesitates a long time before he takes action. Moreover, within our memory no man has ever been thus adrift on the bay ice. The chances were one in a thousand that I would be seen at all, and, even if I were, I should probably be mistaken for a fragment of driftwood or kelp.

To keep from freezing I took my long moccasins, strung out some line, split the legs, and made a kind of jacket, which preserved my back from the wind down as far as the waist.

I had not drifted more than half a mile before I saw my poor komatik disappear through the ice, which was every minute loosening up into small pans. The loss of the sledge seemed like that of a friend, and one more tie of home and safety lost.

By midday I had passed the island and was moving out into the ever-widening bay. It was scarcely safe to stir on the pan for fear of breaking it, yet I saw I must have the skins of some of my dogs—of which there

were eight on the pan—if I was to live the night out. There was now from three to five miles of ice between me and the north side of the bay, so I could plainly see there was no hope of being picked up that day, even if seen, for no boat could get out.

Unwinding the sealskin traces from my waist, around which I had them coiled to keep the dogs from eating them I made a slip-knot and passed it over the first dog's head, tied it around my foot close to his neck, threw him on his back, and stabbed him to the heart. Poor beast! I loved him like a friend, but we could not all hope to live. In fact, at that time I had no hope that any of us would, but it seemed better to die fighting.

In the same way I sacrificed two more large dogs receiving a couple of bites in the process, though I fully expected that the pan would break up in the struggle. A short shrift seemed to me better than a long one, and I envied the dead dogs, whose troubles were over so quickly. Indeed, I began to debate in my mind whether, if once I passed into the open sea, it would not be better by far

would have looked so unearthly out there on the ice that I felt sure they would have seen me. However, I kept the matches, hoping that I might be able to dry them if I lived through the night. While working at the dead dogs, about every five minutes I would stand up and wave my hands towards the land. I had no flag and I could not spare my shirt, for, wet as it was, it was better than nothing in that freezing wind, and, anyhow, it was nearly dark.

Unfortunately, the coves along the cliffs are so placed that only for a very narrow space can the people in any house see the sea. Indeed, most of them cannot see the sea at all, so that whether it was possible for anyone to see me I could not tell, even supposing it had been daylight.

Not daring to take any snow from the surface of my pan to break the wind with, I piled up the carcasses of the dogs. Moreover, I could now sit down on the skin rug without finding myself in a pool of water, thawed out by my own heat. During these hours I had continually taken off all my things, wrung them out, swung them

Lapp fashion, and carried the bandage on up over my knee, making a ragged though most excellent puttee.

In order to run easily and fast with our dogs in the spring of the year, when the weather is usually warm, we wear very light clothing; thus we do not perspire at midday and freeze at night. It chanced that I had recently opened a box of football garments which I had not seen for twenty years. I had found my old Oxford University running "shorts," and a pair of Richmond Football Club stockings of red, yellow, and black, exactly as I wore them twenty years ago. These, with a flannel shirt and sweater, were all I now had left. Coat, hat, gloves, oil-skins—everything else—were gone, and I stood there in that odd costume exactly as I stood in the old days on a football field. These garments, being very light, dried all the quicker until afternoon; then—nothing would dry any more, everything freezing stiff.

My occupation till what seemed like midnight was unravelling rope, and with this I padded out my knickers inside and my shirt as well, though it was a clumsy job, for I could not see what I was doing. Now, getting my largest dog, as big as a wolf and weighing ninety-two pounds, I made him lie down in order that I could cuddle around him. I then piled the three skins so that I could lie on one edge, while the others came just over my shoulders and head.

My own breath, collecting inside the newly flayed skin, must have had a soporific effect, for I was soon fast asleep. One hand I had plunged down inside the curled-up dog, but the other hand, being gloveless, had frozen, and I suddenly woke, shivering enough, I thought, to break my pan. What I took to be the sun was just rising, but I soon found it was the moon, and then I knew it was about half-past twelve. The dog was having an excellent time; he had not been cuddled up so warmly all the winter. He resented my moving with low growls, till he found it wasn't another dog.

The wind was steadily driving me now towards the open sea, where, short of a miracle, I could expect nothing but death.

Still I had only this hope—that my pan would probably be opposite another village, called Goose Cove, at daylight, and might possibly be seen from there. I knew that the komatiks would be starting at daybreak over the hills for a parade of Orangemen about twenty miles away. I might, therefore, be seen as they climbed the hills, though the cove does not open seaward. So I lay down and went to sleep again.

I woke some time later with a sudden thought in my mind that I must have a flag to signal with. So I set to work at once in the dark to disarticulate the legs of my dead dogs, which were now frozen stiff, and seemed to offer the only chance of forming a pole to carry a flag.

Cold as it was, I determined to sacrifice my shirt for that purpose with the first streak of daylight. It took a long time in the dark to get the legs off, and when I had patiently marled them together with old harness rope they formed the heaviest and crookedest flag-post it had ever been my lot to see. Still it had the advantage of not being so cold to hold because the skin on the paws made it unnecessary to hold the frozen part with my bare hands.

What had awakened me this time, I found, was the pan had swung around and the shelter made by my dog's bodies was on the wrong side, for, though there was a very light air, the evaporation it caused from my wet clothes made quite a difference. I had had no food since six o'clock the morning before, when I had porridge and bread and butter. I had, however, a rubber band on instead of one of my garters, and I chewed that for twenty-four hours. It saved me from thirst and hunger, oddly enough. I did not drink from the ice of my pan, for it was salt-water snow and ice. Moreover, in the night the saltwater had lapped up over the edges, for the



"I could see that my rescuers were frantically waving."

to use my faithful knife on myself than to die by inches. There seemed no horror whatever in the thought; I seemed fully to sympathize with the Japanese view of hari-kari. Working, however, saved me from dangerous philosophizing. By the time I had skinned the dogs and strung the skins together with some ropes unravelled from the harnesses I was ten miles on my way and it was already getting dark.

Away to the northward I could see a single light in the little village where I had slept the night before. One could not help picturing them sitting down to tea, little thinking that there was anyone watching them, for I had told them not to expect me back for four days. I could also see the peaceful little schoolhouse on the hill, where many times I had gathered the people for prayer.

I had now frayed out some rope into oakum and mixed it with some fat from the intestines of my dogs, with the idea of making a flare, but I discovered that my matchbox, which was always chained to me, had leaked, and my precious matches were in pulp. Had I been able to make a light, it

in the wind, and put on first one and then the other inside, hoping that what heat there was in my body would thus serve to dry them. In this I had been fairly successful.

My feet were the most trouble, for they immediately got wet again on account of my thin moccasins being easily soaked through on the snow. I suddenly thought of the way in which the Lapps, who tended our reindeer, manage to dry socks. They carry grass with them, which they ravel up and put into the shoe. Into this they put their feet, and then pack the rest with more grass, tying up the top with a binder. The ropes of the harness for our dogs are carefully "served" all over with two layers of flannel, in order to make them soft against the animals' sides. So, as soon as I could sit down, I started with my trusty knife to rip up the flannel. Though my fingers were more or less frozen, I was able to ravel out the rope, put it into my shoes, and use my wet socks' inside my knickerbockers, where, though damp, they served to break the wind. Then, tying the narrow strips of flannel together, I bound up the tops of the moccasins,