

TOM CREAN

Ireland's Unsung Hero



1915: Tom Crean aboard HMS Endurance
(Photo Frank Hurley)

An Illustrated Talk by Polar Historian

Michael Smith

Friday 13 November 2015 at 19:30

TOM CREAN (1877-1938) from Kerry is the most unsung figure from Irish history whose incredible exploits exploring the wastes of Antarctica with Captain Scott and Ernest Shackleton were overlooked for 80 years.

Crean, who ran away from home at 15, served on three expeditions to the Antarctic, spent longer in the ice than either Scott or Shackleton and outlived both men. He was among the last to see Scott alive near the South Pole in 1912 and returned to the ice to bury his frozen body. Crean was also a major figure on Shackleton's *Endurance* expedition exactly 100 years ago. But Tom Crean took his story to the grave and he was the forgotten man of Irish history until Michael Smith, the Polar historian, wrote the first-ever account of Crean's remarkable life.



MICHAEL SMITH is the author of the best-selling book, *An Unsung Hero – Tom Crean* (The Collins Press, Cork 2000), whose work has been responsible for raising awareness in Ireland of the major contribution made by the Irish to the history of Antarctic and Arctic exploration. His books and frequent lectures on the history of Polar exploration have revealed a largely overlooked chapter in Irish history and brought widespread recognition to a series of forgotten Irish men including Tom Crean, Francis Crozier and Patrick Keohane.

Michael's biography of Tom Crean was the N°1 best-selling non-fiction book in Ireland and was responsible for Crean's story being incorporated into the Irish schools' curriculum for the first time. The book was shortlisted for the Banff Mountain Book Festival 2002 and *Tom Crean – An Illustrated Life* (The Collins

Press, Cork, 2006) was also shortlisted for the Irish-published Book of the Year 2007.

His most recent book is the first comprehensive biography of Sir Ernest Shackleton in a generation, which is entitled *Shackleton – By Endurance We Conquer* (The Collins Press, Cork, 2014). His other works are: *Great Endeavour – Ireland's Antarctic Explorers* (The Collins Press, Cork, 2010); *I Am Just Going Outside – Captain Oates* (The Collins Press, Cork 2002); *Polar Crusader – Sir James Wordie* (Birlinn, Edinburgh, 2004); *Captain Francis Crozier – Last Man Standing?* (The Collins Press, Cork 2006).

Michael has also written two non-fiction books for younger readers: *Iceman – Tom Crean* (The Collins Press, Cork 2003); *Shackleton – The Boss* (The Collins Press, Cork, 2004). *Iceman* has been translated into an Irish language edition, *Tom Crean – Fear San Oighear* (The Collins Press, Cork, 2009).

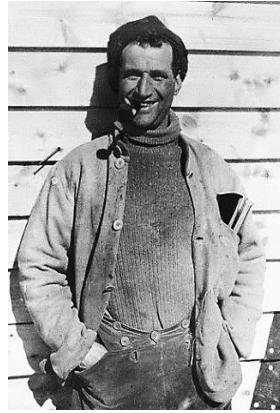
He was formerly an award winning business and political journalist with leading British newspapers, including *The Guardian* and *The Observer*.

He lives in England but visits Ireland regularly to speak to schools and adults groups about Tom Crean, Ernest Shackleton, Francis Crozier and other Irish figures from the history of Polar exploration.

Michael has lectured extensively at venues which include the National Library of Ireland, National Museum of Ireland, Queen's Gallery Buckingham Palace, Queen's University Belfast, Royal Geographical Society, Royal Scottish Geographical Society, Scott Polar Research Institute Cambridge, University College Cork and to over 100 schools throughout Ireland.



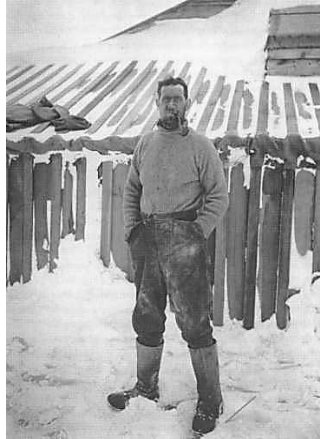
1901



1912: Cape Evans.



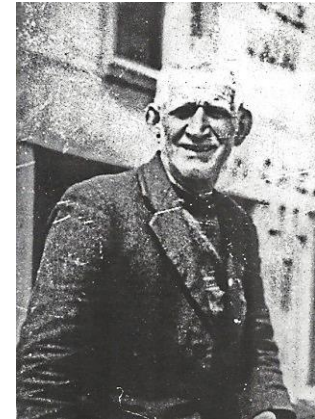
1917: After the voyage of the Endurance.



1901-1904: Discovery expedition



1913: Wearing his Polar Medal and Albert Medal after the Terra Nova voyage.



1930s: Last known photograph, South Pole Inn, Annascaul, Co. Kerry.



1911: Hut Point, Cape Evans, Antarctica.



1915: With his litter of puppies born aboard HMS Endurance.

Reservations are essential due to the limited number of seats. Entry 10 EUR per person payable at the door. The doors will close at 19:30 sharp.



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