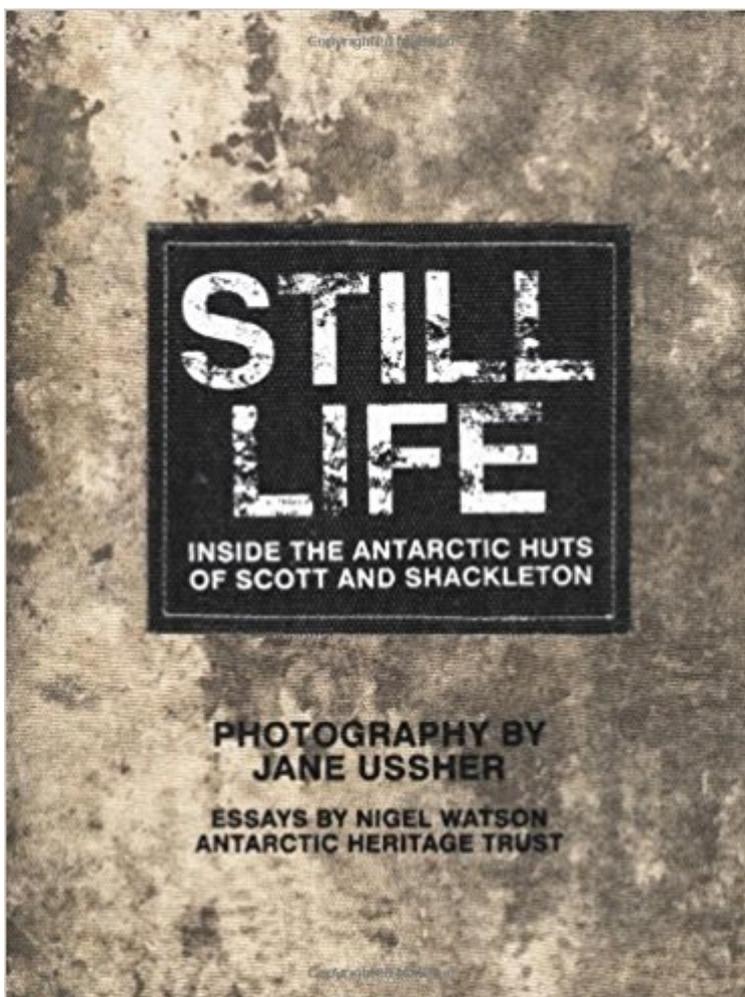


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Still Life: Inside The Antarctic Huts Of Scott And Shackleton



Synopsis

A magnificent, hauntingly beautiful photographic study of the Antarctic huts that served as expedition bases for explorations led by Captain Robert Falcon Scott and Sir Ernest Shackleton. At the turn of the 20th century Antarctic explorers set off from their huts in search of adventure, science, and glory, while the huts were left as time capsules of Edwardian life. The huts had never been the subject of a thorough photographic survey until Jane Ussher was invited by the Antarctic Heritage Trust to record "the unusual, the hidden and minutiae of these sites," and this tome is the stunning result. Seven gatefolds reveal wide-format photos, while intimate close-ups explore the fascinating details in each small, gritty corner of the huts. A portrait of King Edward VII hangs amid seal blubber, sides of mutton, a jar of gherkins, penguin eggs, cufflinks, and darned trousers. The executive director of the Trust provides a fascinating introduction to the history and atmosphere of each hut and detailed photographic captions. Diary excerpts from the explorers bring their time in the huts to life, while a final chapter discusses the current work to conserve the huts.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This oversize book asks--no, begs--the viewer to marvel. But numerous problems with the editing of both pictures and text undermine its ability to elicit the reader's awe. Ussher's expedition to photograph the three huts that stand in McMurdo Sound from the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration (1895-1917) was undoubtedly a noble effort. The huts, "the jewels in the crown of Antarctic heritage," despite the exemplary conservation efforts of the Antarctic Heritage Trust have

suffered extensive decay, as Executive Director Nigel Watson ruefully notes in the Introduction. Given the isolation of the site, the rigors of the environment, and the constrictions necessitated by conservation operations, accommodating a visiting photographic team was a rare occurrence. Ussher's mission thus has an aura of capturing these historic images before the sites are too far gone. The book has been produced with deep sincerity and dedication that shines through on every page, making it perhaps an essential tome for the shelves of Antarctic aficionados. The three sections cover the Discovery Hut, Shackleton's Hut at Cape Royds, and Scott's Hut at Cape Evans. The photography is accomplished and brilliant. The pictures--all in full color--are in sharp focus, perfectly lit, and solidly composed both indoors and outdoors. Ussher admits in her Foreword that of the three, the Discovery Hut especially disconcerted her, describing it as "one of the most desolate places on earth." She admits she was tempted to create personalized photos "that reflected my uneasy relationship with these interiors." To her they spoke of the death and deprivation that surrounded these expeditions.

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