Isolation, Connectedness and the Uses of Text in Heroic-Era Antarctica: The Cases of Inexpressible and Elephant Islands

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Abstract This article focuses on the experiences of early 20th century expeditions trapped over winter on Antarctic islands. These explorers were in a paradoxical position, completely isolated from the world they knew but in uncomfortably close quarters with their companions. Prominent amongst the available resources that they could use to maintain sanity in these doubly trying circumstances were texts. Like the Antarctic ice, which effectively turns islands into part of the mainland, but can just as easily make an icebreg out of a seemingly stable "piece of the continent", texts serve a means towards both connection and insularity for these men. Keywords: Antarctica, exploration, isolation, text, Inexpressible Island, Elephant Island Copyright © 2007. Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, Canada. Island Studies Journal, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2007, pp. 67-76

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