

ACTION man

Polar exploration



Polar Exploration Most early Arctic explorers searched for short cuts to the Far East, either by sailing round the north of Canada or the north of Russia. They didn't find short cuts. Instead they found ice and bitter cold. Some even found death.

The Norwegian explorer Nansen, in his boat the 'Fram,' eventually proved that the Northern Polar region was composed of a slowly drifting icepack. This specially strengthened boat entered the ice near the New Siberian Islands in 1893, then drifted westwards frozen into the ice for 35 months before it emerged again above Spitzbergen.

The American Robert E. Peary, after many expeditions of exploration in Greenland, finally made a successful sledge journey over the ice to the North Pole in 1909. Since then other explorers have flown to the North Pole in planes and airships, and the nuclear submarine 'Skate' has surfaced at the Pole.

The southern polar region, Antarctica, is the world's coldest continent. It is a wasteland of five million miles covered with a layer of ice a mile thick and surrounded by a floating belt of pack ice 50 to 1000 miles wide.

Captain Cook certainly sighted this pack ice in his voyages of 1772-75.



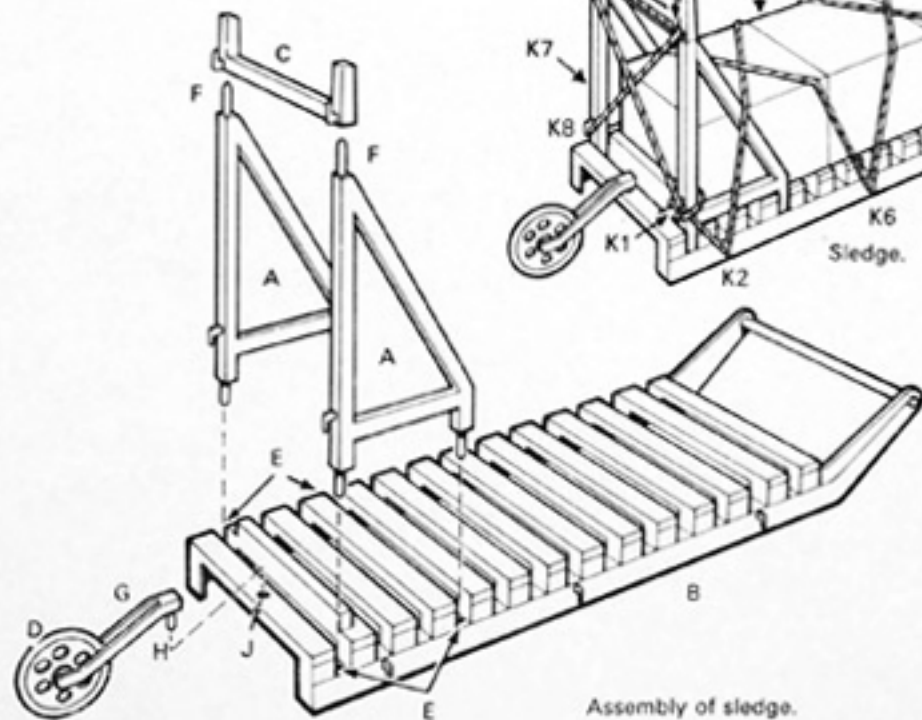
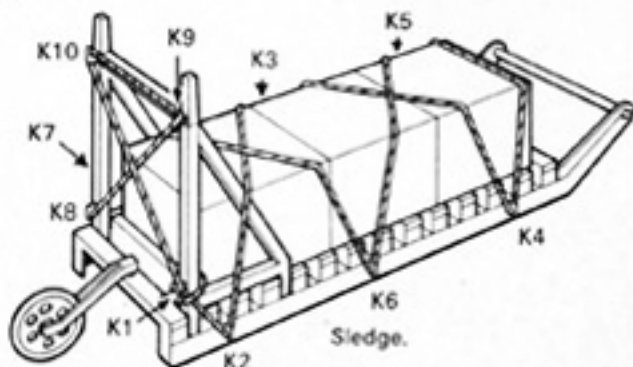
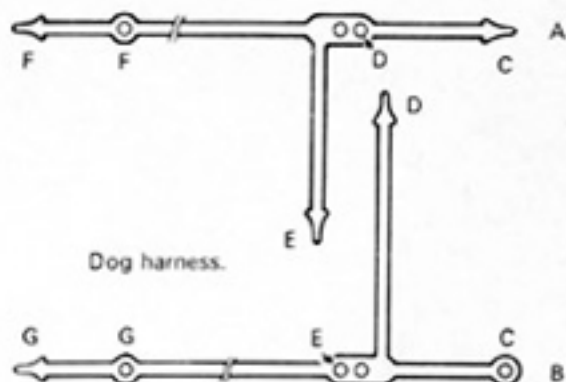
During the 19th century national expeditions and seal hunters gradually mapped the outlines of the southern continent. But the real effort to explore Antarctica began about 1900. Ernest Shackleton sledged to within 97 miles of the South Pole in 1907. Roald Amundsen, a Norwegian, reached the Pole first using Gog teams in 1911. Scott and four other men reached the Pole a month later with man-hauled sledges, but they died on the trek home. The most amazing of all polar expeditions was Shackleton's last one. He intended to trek right across Antarctica from 1914-1916, but his ship 'Endurance' was crushed in the ice and the party was stranded. So Shackleton set out in a 22 ft. boat to fetch help from over 1000 miles away! After a hazardous journey he got help and the party was saved.

Since the Second World War many nations have established experimental stations in Antarctica to pursue scientific research. In 1957-58 a Commonwealth Expedition under Dr (now Sir) Vivian Fuchs crossed Antarctica using a route close to that which Shackleton had intended to take.



Sledge and Dog Team Your Action Man Polar Explorer's sledge is based on the Greenland sledge, which has been used on many polar explorations. It consists of two 'A' bracket supports (A), main chassis (B), handle-bar (C) and milometer wheel (D). To assemble the sledge first press the two 'A' brackets into holes (E) on the chassis. Then press the handle-bar on to pipe (F) at the top of the 'A' brackets, making sure that the hooks are at the back. The sledge is now assembled, and you can stand Action Man on the rear runner. The milometer wheel, a very useful accessory, is used to discover how far the sledge travels. It is made from two parts; the fork (G) prises open to take the wheel (D), and at the other end a pip (H) presses into a hole (J) on the rear runner of the sledge. You will notice that on the sledge are ten hooks, six on the chassis, one on each 'A' bracket and two on the handle-bar. After having loaded the sledge with the supply boxes, which can be filled with equipment, beginning at hook K1, take the string from hook to hook (i.e. K1, K2, K3 and so on) in a criss-cross fashion. This will hold down the supplies on the sledge. You may find, however, that with differing arrangements of supplies there are more suitable methods of lashing them down. There is a team of three huskies to pull your sledge. The husky is very hardy and with his thick coat and large flat paws he is the most suitable animal for withstanding the very cold polar conditions. Each dog

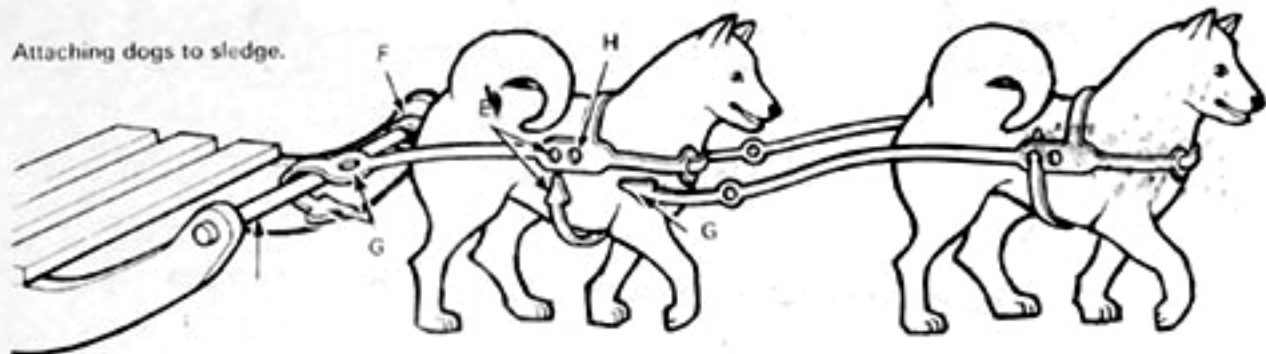
has a harness made from two parts, (A) and (B). Take two parts to make up a harness and assemble them by joining (C) to (C) and (D) to (D). You do this by pushing the "arrowheads" through the holes. Now put the harness over the dog's head as in the diagram, and finally join (E) to (E). The end of the harness fixes to the bar (N) on the front of the sledge by joining (F) to (F) and (G) to (G) as in the diagram. To add the second and third dogs, put them into their harnesses as before, and then push the "arrowheads" at (F) and (G) into the holes (H) on the harness of the dog behind.



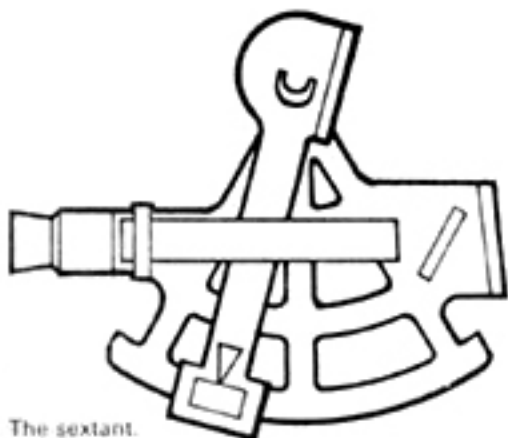
Assembly of sledge.

It is usual practice for the explorer to know his dogs individually and give each a pet name which describes a special characteristic of the dog, eg Snowy, Bear, Lively. All dog teams have a leader, which is invariably the strongest and most intelligent and experienced of the team. You may wish to choose a lead dog and give your dogs names.

Attaching dogs to sledge.



Use of a sextant The sextant is a precision instrument designed to measure the angle between two points. It is used primarily at sea to take sights on the sun, moon or stars to determine one's latitude. Can be used in the same way in polar regions where landmarks are rare.



The sextant.

Action Man Polar Explorer set and Action Man Sledge and Dog Team are sold as separate items.



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