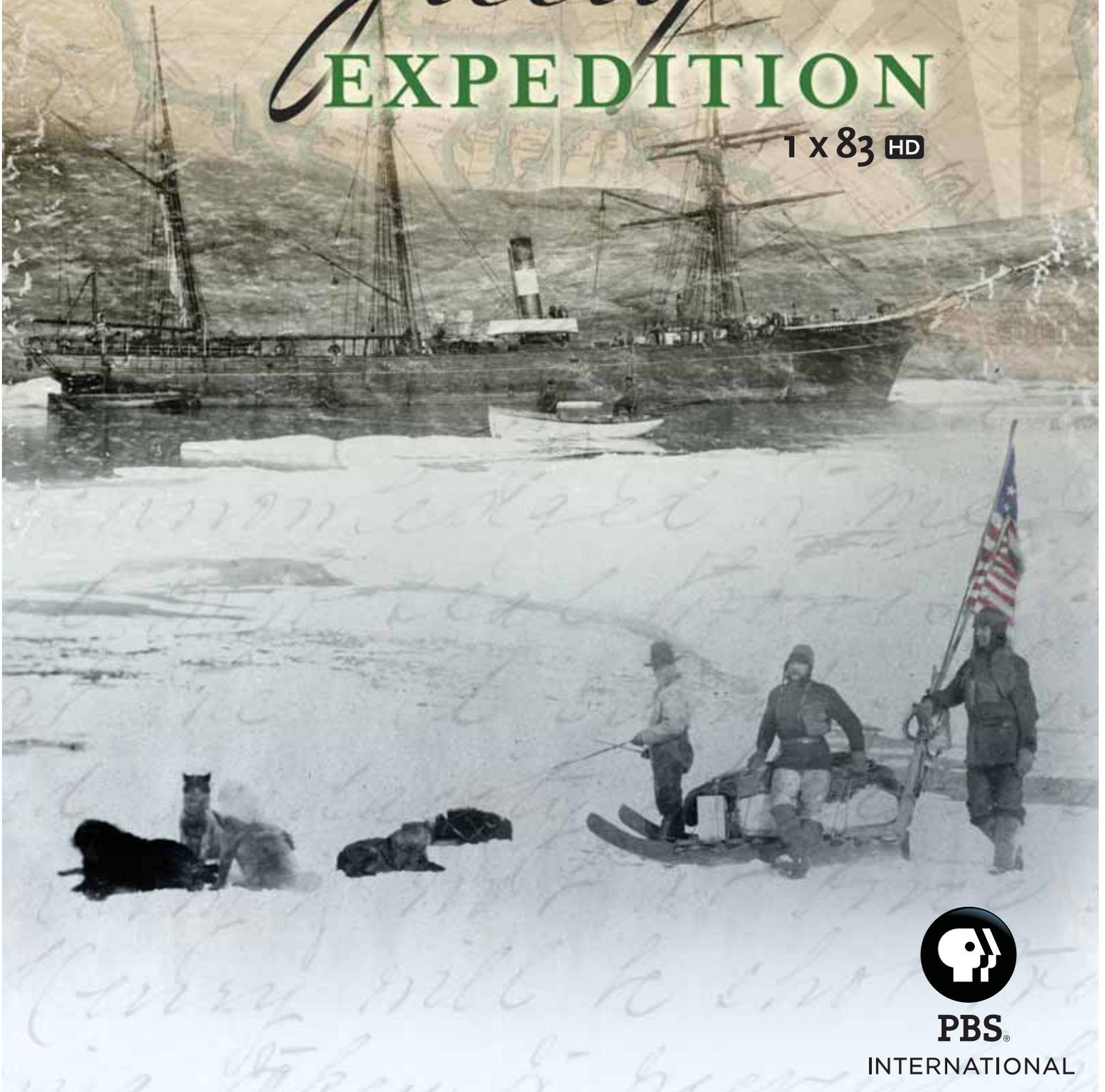


THE  
*Greely*  
EXPEDITION

1 x 83 HD



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# THE *Greely* EXPEDITION

1 x 83 HD

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On July 7, 1881, 25 Americans led by US Army Lieutenant Adolphus Greely sailed from the harbor of St. John's, Newfoundland. Their destination was Lady Franklin Bay in the high Arctic, where they planned to collect a wealth of scientific data from a part of the world that had been described by a British admiral as a "sheer blank." Three years later, only six survivors returned, with a daunting story of shipwreck, starvation, mutiny, and cannibalism. *The Greely Expedition* tells a harrowing tale of scientific mission turned to tragedy.

The Greely Expedition was part of a cutting edge, multinational quest to understand the earth's climate. Called the First International Polar Year, its goal was to create a chain of fourteen stations around the Arctic at which observers would collect meteorological, astronomical, and magnetic data. Greely and his men were awarded the most prestigious assignment: they were to establish the northernmost station on the shores of Lady Franklin Bay, just 600 miles from the North Pole. On August 26, 1881, the whaling ship *Proteus* sailed away, leaving Greely and his men in one of the harshest environments on earth, with no connection to the outside world. The plan was that at the end of their first year, a ship would arrive to re-supply the station. And at the end of the second year, another ship would return to bring them home. But it was not to be.

Drawing on a rich documentary record that includes scientific accounts, diaries, photographs, and letters, the film reveals the nearly unbearable pressures experienced by the members of the expedition, and shows how poor planning, personality clashes, questionable decisions, and pure bad luck conspired to turn a noble mission into a human tragedy. Ironically, the doomed mission was not a scientific failure. Although Greely's data was ignored for almost a century, it has recently been rediscovered, and is helping us to understand global warming and climate change.

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## AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

CREDITS

*Writer, Director, Producer:* Rob Rapley

*Executive Producer:* Mark Samels

*Photo Credit:* Courtesy of American Experience



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