

## Re: Gruesome question apollo 13

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**From:** Henry Spencer ([henry\\_at\\_spsystems.net](mailto:henry_at_spsystems.net))

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In article <4124e0e7\$0\$99773\$75868355@news.frii.net>,

Charles Buckley <[rijrunner@frii.com](mailto:rijrunner@frii.com)> wrote:

>> *Moreover, on a historical note, there is some reason to believe that Oates  
>> took his walk simply because he was in constant pain and had despaired of  
>> ever making it home...*

>

>*...it is entirely all too possible that Oates decided he was better off  
>alone pushing ahead.*

Not pushing ahead -- he didn't take anything with him, and conditions were most unfavorable. He was definitely committing suicide; the point is that he was quite probably doing it simply to end his own pain, rather than nobly sacrificing himself that his comrades might live.

>*They weren't going to make it if they camped  
>every day the weather was bad.*

Unfortunately, given that they relied on being able to \*see\* their supply caches to find them, and that they'd cut their supplies too fine and could not survive missing a cache(\*), they really couldn't travel a lot in poor visibility. And they were already suffering from inadequate clothing; traveling in storms would have made their frostbite problems worse.

(\* Partly because Scott had made little allowance for delays when he sized the supply caches. Whereas Amundsen assumed that he would be unable to travel one day out of every four, and planned supplies accordingly. )

Despite bad weather, the remaining members of the party probably \*could\* have made it to their next cache if they'd tried pushing on from their last camp. But they were still a long way from safety, in bad shape with the weather steadily worsening, and that cache wouldn't have saved them.

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"Think outside the box -- the box isn't our friend."

-- George Herbert

| Henry Spencer

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