

ALASKA CRUISE 1919 Copied from the diary by E A Coffin

Officers	Sr. Captain	F G Dodge
	Captains	W K Thompson
	"	T G Lewton
	"	E A Coffin
	Lieut.	G W MacLane
	"	C E Anderson.
	"	W B Huebner
	"	E W Scott - dentist
	"	F L Johnson, M.D.

Alaska Cruise - "UNALGA" - in 1919

April 12 Reported aboard Unalga at San Francisco

April 20 Left San Francisco for Seattle - pretty rocky going -- good many sick.

April 26 Arrived Seattle - some wild burg - four days of raising hell.

April 30. Left Seattle - anchored Burrows Bay - wonderful weather.

May 1 Arrived Vivian Bay for coal - wild dance & feed.
Wilder & Dr. Connor detached.

May 2 Passed through Semans Narrows at slack water -- same scenery - anchored in Plumper Bay.

May 3 Through Inside Passage - anchored Port Alexander.

May 4 Anchored Bella Bella, B.C., 7:30 P.M. Went ashore to see hospital.
One white man & four or five women - rest were Indians. Went to church with Dr. Scott.

May 5 Anchored Lowe Inlet, off Grenville Channel, a most remarkable spot,
very small harbor surrounded high rocky hills - waterfall at head of bay.

May 6 Tied up at Ketchikan - wild party on board - even Mac sipping, though sober.

May 8 Tied up at Sitka for water - wonderful mountains - visited school with Andy and made a speech - very quiet time.

May 12 Anchored Kodiak for two or three hours - very clear weather. Jigged for cod and caught eight - underway for Unalaska about noon.

May 13 Anchored Channel Island (Simidi Islands) account ESE gale.

May 14 Anchored off Sand Point, Popof Island - went ashore at dark and looked over mink and fox skins - no buy. Cold as the very devil.

May 15 Anchored Deer Island and stayed there the 16th - northwest gale and cold.

May 17 Stopped Acherk Harbor, Samuck Island, and took off a white teacher and native girl - underway and on thru Unimak Pass - SE gale and rough as the devil - heavy snow most of the P M

May 18 Tied up Unalaska - school teachers down to dinner. Next day coaled and landed stores - muchly to do - no mail.

May 20 Down to Unimak Pass to get survivors of schooner "Premier" - met steamer "Knichaks" and put Mittendorf on her - then anchored Akun Cove for the night.

May 21 Anchored Tigalda Bay - 22nd anchored West Harbor Cove, Ikatan Pen.

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- May 23 & 24 Under way - making lines on chart south of the Pass, over Davidson Bank.
- May 25 Anchored after noon inside Cape Lutke, account fresh NW gale.
- May 26 Anchored south side Okun Island account of gale and went ashore with Scott and "Shorty" for ducks and ptarmigan - Pete Bugaras got one ptarmigan. Received word by radio from "Saturn" of influenza epidemic at Unalaska.
- May 29 Nursing Mr. & Mrs. Lewis and week-old baby all day - relieved by Lewton at 9 P M - gave baby a bath, 'n' everything. Twenty cases in that house - all boys. Forty cases in big house of Jesse Lee Home - mostly girls.
- May 30 Nursing Mrs. Lewis and the baby and keeping an eye over the 18 other cases in the building - relieved by Lewton 8 P M. Dr. Johnson operated on the lady at 4 P M - curetted - patient pretty low and delirious - baby mighty puny, but taking milk regularly. 340 cases in Unalaska with 12 deaths to date, all natives - 15 cases in Dutch Harbor. Unalga feeding and nursing the entire town and burying the dead. Mrs. Lewis didn't have the "flu" but child-bed fever. Sent night letter home.
- May 31 A nightmare of a day - nursing Mrs. Lewis and the baby - doctor said she'd be dead by 5 o'clock but by 9 P M she was still breathing. Got an answer to night letter - looks like another small Coffin in sight. Mrs. Lewis died at 9:30 P M - too bad. 7 more buried today, making 19 in all.
- June 1 Helped dress Mrs. Lewis - buried her at 2 P M. Buried nine today, making 28 in all, to date. Baby doing well - Mr. Lewis started taking care of it himself. Teachers and all in Jesse Lee Home doing fine - six men looking out for the whole outfit and doing it well.
- June 2 "Bear" should be in today - beautiful clear day - warm and cloudless. Got picture of Pete Bugaras and most of his orphans. Buried three men today. Peter Cashiewierof very low. Cleaned up all rooms in the Home and everything looks fine. Sang to the kids in the evening, at their earnest solicitation - they were highly amused. Peter died tonight.
- June 3 Dr. Newhall up and inspected his Home - claimed it looked fine. Buried Peter. "Bear" got in about 3 P M - sent over a lot of 2nd class mail but no letters - she must have some letters for us somewhere. Went over with motor-sailer and got 21 sacks mail for Unalaska - out of which the Unalga got a goodly sample - 11 letters and two proofs from Peggy - oh boy! Five buried today - making 36 in all. Chief Lewton been in bed two days now, not so very sick. All excited reading my mail and looking at my two pictures, one serious, one smiling - crazy about both, but particularly the serious one - got to sleep about midnight.
- June 4 Andy taken sick last night - in bed all day - Lewton getting better. One native girl died at the Home yesterday, the only casualty there - buried her this morning. Moved two school teachers into the marshal's house and Mrs. Kashaverof into the A. C. Company's house. All the small kids up and dressed at the Home. "Bear" men hauling coal. Warm argument on the "Bear" anent transfer into the Navy.
- June 5 Solved problem of fly in the room but "Bear" crowd refused to bet, saying they were framed - revived Pope's old geometry problem of inscribed Δ in circle with perpendiculars dropped to three sides, to prove feet of Δ in one straight line. "Our baby" (Lewton's and mine) doing fine - all hands up at Home except 2 teachers - Lewton almost ready to get up and Andy apparently better.

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- June 7 Men withdrawn from Home yesterday. Doc J and I went gunning for ravens in the hills today - no luck. Morris' wife died this evening - probably won't be any more.
- June 13 Officers from "Vicksburg" over for dinner and a little game - Andrews, Everson, Dr. Russel, Pay Armstrong and a couple more. Heard "Marblehead" would be in Sunday.
- June 19 Anchored off Dillingham at 8 P M having brought 4 nurses (Mrs. Warden, Miss Locker, Wilbur, McKinnon) 3 doctors (Carpenter, & McGillicuddy & Hubbard) and 3 Ph. mates from the "Marblehead". Big party in wardroom - officers dressed up as girls - girls as officers - all except me and the captain. Jane Thompson & myself were last to retire, along about 3:30 A M.
- June 24 Still anchored off Dillingham with all the doctors going ashore to bury stiffs & care for sick in the entire surrounding district. Ship getting to be a madhouse from having women aboard all the time and no one allowed to go ashore - why I don't know - old man peevish as a wet hen and the women scrapping amongst themselves. Hope we get out of here soon and get 'em off the ship.
- June 26 Yesterday P M went to Wood River Cannery in Dr. French's boat, "Attu", with all the doctors. Back to the ship and all hands made ready for trip up Wood River - left about seven P M and got to destination at 1:30 A M - ten of us on the "Attu". Tied up to Government scow at the barrier where they are counting the salmon that pass up to spawn. Mr. Nichols of the Alaska Salmon Co., Dr. Scott & myself slept on the scow in the bunkhouse - got about half hour's sleep altogether account of mosquitoes. Up at 6 A.M and took skiff with one man and rowed down to the Indian village we had come all this way to investigate. Found a dug-out house (barabara) with very offensive odor coming out and investigated - on going into the low narrow door into the first of two connecting rooms was unexpectedly confronted by three big malamutes - promptly retired closing the door - broke windows on the roof and shot the dogs - two skulls and many large bones all picked clean scattered over floor and evidence that the dogs had been fighting over the remains. Rowed back to "Attu" for breakfast of fried salmon steaks - oh boy! - back to the village with the gang - sprinkled everything with kerosene and set her afire. Shot two more big dogs in same house & Scott shot one in the bushes. These dogs looked more like big timber wolves than anything else. When fire was going good we headed down river with the tide - stopping at Wood River Cannery (Alaska Salmon Co.) Bought reindeer hide and tried hard to get a collie dog, a beauty about three years old, crossed with malamute and grey and black in color.
- June 27 Served as one of jury of six on case of an insane native up at the jail.
- June 28 Up anchor at 11 A M and started back for Unalaska - all hands glad of it.
- July 1 Arrived Unalaska yesterday P M - sent night letter home. Doctors and nurses went back to "Marblehead" which was coaling at the dock all day and she pulled out about 5 P M for Frisco.
- July 4 Big day in spite of the rain - all kinds of boxing, games & races. Calmed riot in the steerage at night.
- July 5 Went to Mackshin and spent the night there - no one in the village at all

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- July 6 Went to Kashaga and Chernofki - got a basket in each village - first one for three lbs of tea.
- July 7 Tried to get underway this A M but too foggy and anchored again. Went ashore with Chief, Thompson, Scott, Johnson & "Shorty" in P M, trout fishing. No fish but plenty rain and cold - got back just in time for dinner.
- July 9 Back in Unalaska yesterday P M - two letters from Peggy & one from Dad. Went seine fishing this P M with men of the crew, up Captain's Harbor, and got about 130 fine big salmon trout. Busy writing home - off for the Pribilofs tomorrow morning.
- July 12 Ashore on St. Paul's Island this P M and walked over to the seal rookeries with Shorty, Floe, Scott & Benilla - carpenter got some wonderful pictures of the herd. Seals seem to spend all their time in battle - leastwise the bulls were hard at it all the time we were there. Stopped last night at St. George, landing freight there, but didn't go ashore.
- July 13 Anchored off North East Point, St. Paul Island, this A M and started boating 20 tons of salt ashore in native bidaras (boats made of oiled canvas over a framework - hold 8 or 9 tons). Went ashore in P M with Scott, Benilla, Greene and Floe and walked across to the biggest seal rookery in the world, with Haley, the school teacher (from Boston). Wonderful sight. Got some good pictures of a baby seal about 3 days old which we managed to separate from his ma and pa - he objected in a plaintive way and the old bull objected decidedly - until he got a rap over one eye. Couldn't find any sea-lions. Extracted numerous seal teeth from ancient skulls of thousands of fresh carcasses lying around on the killing grounds - should be made into oil and fertilizer. Saw about three hundred thousand dollars worth of pelts in the salt house - didn't look worth a nickle apiece. Took about 1225 skins and went back to Village Cove to anchor for the night.
- July 20 Arrived Fort Heiden in morning to get 14 orphans to take to Dr. French at Nushagak. Only got eight, delivered them to Dr. French at mouth of Nushagak and started back when were called to Mackuck to get some prisoners - arrived there night of 21st. Got fifteen prisoners - 4 insane.
- July 22 Anchored off Ugashik River - prisoners and marshal on board. Got word that there about 25 orphans here to go to the Nushagak. Persuaded cannery to transport orphans and proceeded down coast - stopped a day or so later at Port Maller and picked up another prisoner - draft dodger.
- July 25 Anchored in Uria Bay, Unimak Island, all primed for hunting caribou, bear, ptarmigans, etc., but the wind blew so hard that we couldn't pull the boat in. Saw caribou wandering around on the beach.
- July 28 Unalaska. Shot an eagle weighing 30 lbs. with 6 foot spread - Pete got the claws for the 50 cent bounty - Scott got the head. Bunch went fishing up at Captain's Harbor - no such luck because I had the duty. Much against my will have been obliged to break off amicable relations with MacLane, a fairly intelligent boy but very unstable emotionally. - been getting pretty fresh lately. Thompson seems inclined to side with him and things promise to be interesting if they develop further - I love a scrap better than anything on earth.

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- July 29 Climbed Ballyhoo Mountain with Anderson and Jordan - 1600 odd feet and believe me it was some walk - put our names in the books - shot a couple of ptarmigan. - gave one to the Skipper.
- Aug. 3 Pulled out of Unalaska on the 31st with all our prisoners aboard - anchored Dutch Harbor, then later English Bay, where stayed all of the 1st - anchored next night in East Anchor Cove, Cape Pankof - and tonight we're anchored in Balboa Bay - on our way to Valdez.
- Aug. 10 Anchored in Hanning Bay, waiting for better weather. Anchored yesterday out in the Gulf off Cape Cleare, lost in fog - some gale from N.E. Got plenty mail on the 8th, at Kodiak. - We have on board 23 prisoners, 6 of which are insane - 3 guards and Marshal Casler - and 3 passengers, one a native woman from Unga - all going to Valdez.
- Aug. 11 Fort Liscum.
Arrived Valdez on 12th, went to movies - next evening dropped in at dance up-town - coaling ship all day - party on ship at night but I went to bed instead - this morning left Valdez and stopped at Fort Liscum for water - got Chicago paper this morning and found out that Peggy was pretty darned close to the riot zone - no answer yet to my wire of Tuesday so sent another today.
- Aug. 15 Left Ft. Liscum this morning - no answer to messages - Chicago must be cut off from the rest of the country. Fine crowd at the fort, particularly the C.O., Overstreet.
- Aug. 20 Arrived Unalaska yesterday - "Saturn" left just before we got in, breaking corner off the wharf in her hurry. Many magazines and three letters in the mail. Sent night letter home.
- Aug. 23 Landed at Atka with MacLane and yeomen and took inventory of the Atka Native Store - muchly fur scattered around but prices prohibitive. Left this day for Attu - fine weather. Scott, Thompson & Lewton shot many ptarmigan.
- Aug. 25 Arrived Attu at 7 P M - the extreme western end of our run. Seems queer to be in east longitude - Ashore for baskets - wonderful weather.
- Aug. 27 Anchored Kiska - beautiful day. All hands ashore hunting. Seltzer and myself covered about 8 miles and brought back 3 ptarmigan, 4 snipe and a couple of eider ducks. Pretty tough, walking over tundra and along the beach. Enjoyed the day immensely. Up anchor in evening and stood out.
- Aug. 29 Anchored at Atka, took on water, chickens and beef, also Cassel and his family, and beat it.
- Aug. 31 Anchored off Mikalski, Unimak Island, and took on Applegate and his furs - much fog, rain and wind - out again in the evening.
- Sept. 1 Tied up at Unalaska at 3:30 P M Big relief to have western trip off our hands - time is getting short now before we beat it for home.
- Sept. 4 Pulled out for Kuichak Bay to survey some bleeding cannery ship that is leaking 3 feet of water an hour - crew refused to bring her down.
- Sept. 13 Been lying off Makuck for a hundred years more or less - tomorrow we will leave for Unalaska with the "Abner Coburn" in tow, and a hundred fishermen on the Unalga.
7 P M the "Haller" came alongside with a scow load of men and we took aboard 92 Bolsheviks with their bags and bedding - some gang of cut throats!

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- Sept. 14 Standing by all day waiting for the "Abner Coburn" to take the turns out of her anchor chains.
- Sept. 15 Picked up the "Coburn" at 8 A M and at last got started for Unalaska - ship jammed to the rails with men - heaven be praised that the Mexs and Chinks are on the "Coburn" - Andy on board her to represent the U.S., don't envy him.
- Sept. 22 Arrived Unalaska on 17th after a fine passage down - have got to stay here until passenger boats can take these damned Bolsheviks down to the States as they positively refuse to go on the "Coburn". We might have been well on our way home now but for them. Got night letter from Peggy last night - oh boy! Both the "Manshan" and "Saturn" in port - former is going to Seal Islands today.
- Oct. 12 Some weary wait, but looks like something is going to happen at last. "Victoria" got in today and took 183 of the Bolsheviks on board - also MacLane, ordered to Washington.
- Oct. 13 "Victoria" left at 4 A M - rumors of our going soon.
- Oct. 15 Thank the good Lord! At last we pulled out of Unalaska at 10 A M, bound East - straight across for Flattery - coal in Seattle and get paid, then home to Frisco. Took on board furs, Kashaverof and her five kids, Applegate, the three Rosenberg girls, the two mates and the blacksmith, Coombe and his wife from the "Haller", one insane coon and six "wobblies". Fine clear day - most of the town down to see us off.
- Oct. 20 Been having beaucoup bad weather, but the wind has been fair so it helped us along.
Got wire this morning that Peg arrived Frisco on the 18th.
We should be in Seattle in three days now.

Reminiscences of All Three Trips to Bering Sea -(including the first, preceding)

In April 1919 I went to the West Coast to the Cutter UNALGA at San Francisco and made my first trip to the Bering Sea.

I made three trips to Alaska, twice on the Cutter UNALGA - the first time on the UNALGA to Unalaska under Capt. Dodge, the second trip on the UNALGA to Unalaska and Juneau under Captains Brockway and Boedeker - and the third trip on the ALGONQUIN to Unalaska under Capt. Gabbett.

"Sailor ne'er can sailor be
Until he's sailed the Bering Sea!"

The old-timers used to yell that at us "youngster" officers but a lot of those old timers had never been to Bering Sea, either. However, some of the old captains I served under had been up to Bering Sea six, seven and eight trips in succession -- and loved it, for some reason.

There was fog overhead all the time - maybe once in a great while you would see the sun just for a few moments. It was hard to do the navigating because you couldn't take any sun sights!

That first trip in 1919 was when we found the influenza epidemic raging in Unalaska. Certain officers stayed aboard ship because they might get the 'flu and others stayed ashore to help the civilian population, both white and native. Lieut. Lewton, Chief Engineer, and I, along with other officers were detailed to stay ashore and care for the population. We had only one doctor with us, F. L. Johnson, M.D., from Tucumcari, New Mexico. He told us what to do as best he could.

There were about 300 people in the town and they were all sick. We buried a good many of them.

I was assigned to the Jessie Lee Home in the daytime and Lewton relieved me there at night. The Home was a sort of orphanage run by some missionary society. My chief care there was a Mrs. Lewis, the wife of one of the men teachers in the school, and Mrs. Lewis had a very bad case of the 'flu. The doctor and I did a "D & C" on her. She had a bad heart and we could not give her any anesthetic. I had to hold the patient while the doctor performed the curettage. Later on, she died (having become infected due to the dead foetus) and we buried her.

Navy ships and nurses were sent to Unalaska, after we yelled for them.

We then went north in the Bering Sea to the salmon cannery area, where it was rumored that the 'flu was raging. I went ashore with the landing party, officers and doctors, at one village where we found that all the natives were dead. We poured kerosene over everything and set fire to the entire settlement. We found another village like that.

One experience scared me to death. In one barabara I went up to a door, went through the tunnel entrance, opened the inside door, and was met by several ferocious looking, snarling, hungry sled dogs. I fled in one direction and the dogs ran away in the other. Going back there later, I found that the dogs had been feeding on the corpses. Only the bones were left. So we set fire to that place along with the others.

There was a sad and heartbreaking sequel to this. After we set fire to the place, I went up on the roof of the house (barabara) and saw two little pups run out from under the beds all afire. I had to fire down on them and put them out of their suffering.

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A part Alaskan girl, Katie Rosenberg, from the Jessie Lee Home in Unalaska came down to Oakland in the Fall of 1919 to work for us. She had long black hair almost to the floor. After only a month she was found to have TB; then went to Albuquerque and was "cured" - but later married a soldier and died.

On the first trip to Alaska, there were in Unalaska (the last little town on the Alaska mainland) and in towns on the little islands along the Coast of Alaska on to the northward, many Russian speaking people who were mixtures of Russian, Aleut Indian and Eskimo. They had samovars, ikons and other artistic possessions.

Our Capt. Dodge collected everything he liked.

The U.S.C.G. Cutter was a representative of the United States and the only authority the people up there ever saw.

Capt. Dodge stopped at all the houses and he would just say, "Give me that" or "I'll take this". I guess he paid something for the things, no doubt. Anyway the people were afraid of him and felt they had to let him have the things he selected. He had been going to Alaska for many years.

He returned with collections of silver and brass objects and picked up copper things in all the villages where we stopped. It was all valuable stuff. The only one who saw it all was probably the Captain's steward. I was a very junior officer and didn't go around being nose about the Captain's affairs.

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We returned to San Francisco from my first trip to Alaska on the UNALGA by the end of October 1919.

My daughter Lynne was born 1 November 1919.

I was on waiting orders at Oakland for medical care until June 1920,

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In June and July of 1920 I had a short trip from San Francisco to Seattle on the USCG "Eagle" boat BOTHWELL. The captain was Capt. Austin and Louis Bennett was executive officer. I was aboard as a passenger on my way to join UNALGA in Bering Sea.

These Eagle boats were unseaworthy, flat-bottomed, underpowered, funny looking things. Ford had built several hundred of them during World War I for tracking down subs but they did not work out.

We were caught in a gale off the coast of Washington at Point _____ and were nearly wrecked. The captain had a nervous breakdown and retired soon afterward. We were all horribly seasick - including me.

After we reached Seattle, I had to leave the BOTHWELL instead of going on to Alaska, due to severe nasal pain resulting from the broken nose I had sustained in the plane crash in 1917, and returned to San Francisco where I had several nose operations.

This took about a year and from 20 July 1920, to September 1920, I was on waiting orders at Oakland, Calif. Between nose operations, from 20 September 1920 to 31 March 1921 I served as inspector for hulls as a member of a team supervising the building of the Coast Guard's Cutters Numbers 36 to 40 - _____, TAMPA, HAIDA, MOJAVE and MODOC) which were being built at Union Construction Company at Oakland.

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On 16 October 1920, daughter Sheila was born at Oakland.

"Miscellany"

In 1921, while still on the UNALGA (Ben Brockway, Capt.), we were at Unalaska, and the ALCONQUIN came in and tied up at the same wharf. William T. Stromberg was Captain of the ALCONQUIN and I used to go over and talk to him on board his ship. He was a hard character; kind of a fussy chap. He had a good mind. But he fussed about things like a woman. I had served under him in Milwaukee in 1916, when I was attached to the TUSCARORA, and Stromberg was executive officer. I knew him for 10 or 12 years after that. He had one daughter and a rather plump, sensible sort of a wife, a solid common-sense character.

When I was at the Sesquicentennial at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1931, I found out that Capt. Stromberg chewed tobacco and swallowed the juice! I was there with my division of 5 destroyers from New London and there were 6 or 7 of the white cutters anchored near us. He was in command of one of the white cutters. We sat together in the grandstand and saw this huge spectacle - the reenacting of the Yorktown surrender. We were all dressed up in our best bibs and tuckers and sitting there with all the other people all dressed up, when all of a sudden I noticed that he was chewing and I said, "Why, you're chewing tobacco! - where will you spit"? There was no place for him to do that. He looked at me solemnly and said, "I am swallowing the juice. Don't you know that Indians always do that"? and I am sure about this because we sat there for more than an hour.

Incidentally, the destroyers distinguished themselves that day in leaving the anchorage in formation and we all got a commendation.

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One time we went fishing outside of Seward and I caught 72 pounds of trout

The UNALGA was at a dock in Seward and one of the friendly town people offered to take me out about 6 miles out of town where there was a good trout stream. I wore rubber boots, pea coat and a watch cap to keep my head warm and took along a jar of salmon eggs for bait.

I stood by the bank of the stream and fished all day. The man who took me out had not turned up to take me back. So I started walking back, rubber boots and all, carrying all the trout strung on a line over my shoulder.

Someone remembered that I had gone out to fish and they met me with a car when I was about halfway back to town.

When I finally got back to the ship and weighed the fish, I found I had 72 pounds of brook trout and this was enough to feed the whole crowd.

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An Episode on Attu Island

Out at the end of the Aleutian chain on Attu Island, I was wandering around with a shotgun looking for anything that I could hunt. I wandered around and proceeded cautiously. I came upon a sinkhole, got down on my hands and knees and peered into it. Way down below there was a stream of water. I was lucky that day because if I had fallen into that hole, I would never have been able to get out. I was all alone there and no one would ever have known what had happened to me. Needless to say, I made my way very carefully back to the ship and did not stray away again by myself.

Capt. Ben Brockway

The cold, miserable, desolate Bering Sea patrol duty did things to people, and sometimes made drunks out of them.

It is hard to describe Brockway. I don't remember everything in sequence. I just remember "vignettes" about him.

In the first place, he was an old timer up there in Alaska. By that I mean he had made several cruises to Alaska on different ships and he knew lots of people at the canneries. Every time we would put in at some cannery, they would give him bottles of liquor and he would come back aboard and try to drink it all at once. The cabin door was in the rear of the wardroom quarters where the officers lived. Some officer would come to me and say he thought the old man was getting soused. They all appealed to me, for some reason, maybe because I had a sort of relaxed attitude toward drunks.

In order to make my invasion of the Captain's privacy authentic, I would take in some paper for him to sign. Usually, I would find him sitting at his desk with a vacant look in his eyes and his Shriner's-fez on his head. He would say, "Give me the pen!" and he would make an illegible swipe at the paper with his pen. I would pick up the bottle and say it was about time for him to turn in. He would look at me and agree!

Well, somewhere along the line, a cannery operator had given the Captain a pair of Belgian hares of which he was very proud. He kept them running loose in his cabin and the cabin boy brought them grass to eat. They nested under one of the side settees. At times the Captain would be on his bunk (more or less) in his stateroom and would say to me, "Where are my rabbits"? I would locate one and bring it to him and he would grab it and put it on his chest, and say "O.K."!

What I mean to imply is that this man was really a kick!

In spite of his eccentricities, we had no trouble in navigating without incident the difficult waters of Bering Sea and the various ports.

The Captain eventually retired and I never heard anything more about him.

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Second Trip on UNALGA to Unalaska and Juneau, Alaska

From 1 April 1921 to 20 September 1922, I served as commissary and watch officer on the UNALGA at San Francisco, Calif., Unalaska, and Juneau, Alaska under Capt. Ben L. Brockway, and, later, under Capt. John Boedeker. E. D. Jones was executive officer.

This was my second trip to Alaska on UNALGA.

Capt. Brockway was being relieved; E. D. Jones was in temporary command and I was temporary executive officer. After Capt. Brockway was relieved, he came aboard, . . . at Seattle, I think - came up on the bridge and told E. D. Jones he did not know how to handle the ship. E. D. Jones was going to report him but we finally decided to let it go as Capt. Brockway was leaving the Service, anyway.

So E. D. Jones and I took the ship on up to Juneau and took station there, waiting, until John Boedeker arrived and took command. On the arrival of the UNALGA at Juneau, Governor Bone and all of his staff came down to greet us.

John Boedeker was one of the older officers in the Service. (He had a young red-haired wife who it was said was an epileptic but I never saw her have a fit so maybe it was some cousin or someone else who was living with them.)

The tour of duty in Juneau was very pleasant. We didn't have much to do but just cruise around in the inland waters.

More Miscollany

The people of Juneau all had a piece of the Juneau gold mine and were carefree about doing anything as they all expected to get rich some day.

I think the best story was the episode of Ona Jones (Mrs. E. D. Jones) and the umbrella mender. She was rather a society type, proper - sort of a member of the elite. Juneau then was a rough frontier town and didn't care what people thought. She told this story on herself which made it all the funnier. This umbrella handle had a small brace between 2 prongs which broke and she took the umbrella to a man to be fixed. She explained at length and in great detail about it. He listened to the whole thing and when she got all through, he said to her, "Lady, I don't feel like fixing your umbrella".

That was the attitude of the people in Juneau.

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In September 1921 all wartime temporary rank went back to permanent rank. Mine reverted from Lt. Cdr. to Lt. (j.g.).

In March 1922 a few months later, I was made Lieutenant, U.S. Coast Guard - (also received Victory Medal, with Aviation Clasp.)

ALGONQUIN

In November 1922 I was ordered to join the ALGONQUIN at Astoria, Oregon.

That was a miserable winter in Astoria - gale after gale - a terrible place to be in the winter.

We had to perform rescue duty over the Columbia River bar and this was wicked duty.

That winter the city of Astoria, Oregon, burned, just a few days before Christmas. We were up the river when we received word that Astoria was on fire. We sped back to our dock at the city and landed troops to stand guard over the bank vaults and jewelry stores and other places where there would be looting, and did what we could to relieve the distress of the civilian population. The fire was completely out of control and thirty-two city blocks were destroyed in that fire.

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To Bering Sea on ALGONQUIN - Third Trip to Alaska

From November 1922 to March 1924 I served as executive officer and navigator on the ALGONQUIN at Astoria and Unalaska, under Capt. C. M. Gabbett.

The ALGONQUIN made a trip to Unalaska and this was my third trip to Bering Sea.

We did the usual business of carting things around for the Department of the Interior, the Department of State and for the Post Office, too. We also enforced seal regulations. We were a floating court - the captain was deputized as a judge and heard all sorts of cases requiring decisions including criminal cases, murders, robberies, and cases of insane persons, etc. We were - the "law and the prophets".

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That was the trip when we went up into the Arctic Ocean and into Kotzebue Sound and rescued about fourteen miners and their families who were marooned up there with no means of getting out.

We were in Nome when we got word that these people were marooned with winter coming on. We started with fear in our hearts because we were a steel vessel and any steel vessel caught in ice would be crushed and sunk. We went up through Bering Straits and into the Arctic Ocean and on to Kotzebue Sound in October 1923.

One of those miners gave me a nugget which I had made into a stickpin and I still have it.

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Our tour was completed and we were getting ready to start back for Seattle. I was navigator as well as executive officer and had figured out a great circle course for Seattle. ("Great circle course is shortest distance between two points on the sphere - the surface of the earth - everybody knows what a great circle course is!" - said E. A. C. at this point when asked what it was.

The night before we were due to sail, we got word that a Japanese ship, Shinkoku Maru, had lost her propeller. She was 700 or 800 miles away and we had to go to her

Rescue of the Shinkoku Maru in Alaska

We went to the rescue. We got a line on this thing and started to tow it but we could not straighten it out. Finally the line broke because our stern kept bobbing up in the air and sawing the line and we could not protect it.

The biggest hawser we used to use in the old days was the 12-inch hawser - the biggest line men can handle.

The Jap steamer was in no immediate danger - just drifting along. So we told Seattle to send out a sea-going tug. The tug came out and then advised us they had no one who could navigate on the ocean. So we met the tug and brought her out to the steamer. All this took 2 or 3 weeks. Cutters are built and equipped to stay out a long time. Up in the Gulf of Alaska distances are tremendous.

We finally hooked the tug on and left. The tug had to take the Jap steamer around the shore line since they had no navigator.

Then another steamer hit; the tug cut the line they had on the Jap steamer and just let her go. I never heard whether the ship was saved or not.

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(Note: The next four pages are copies of an article in The San Diego Union when E A C took ALGONQUIN down there after the adventures in Alaska. It is so well written that it must be included here. The newspaper pictures are also very good but cannot be reproduced.)

E. A. C. made a long and very detailed report to the War Department - Office of the Chief of the Air Service, giving information on harbors of the Aleutian for the then contemplated round-the-world flight of four or five Army Air Force planes to circumnavigate the globe - via Alaska, the Aleutian Islands, Kamchatka, Kurile Islands, the Orient, India, and Europe and to Quebec then back to the U.S. E. A. C. advised as to the hazards that might be encountered in the Aleutian Islands area and the need for pontoons, E. A. C.'s opinions were valued as he was a former flyer and knew the Aleutians after spending the previous year there, so could furnish the best information on the Islands west of Unimak Pass.