

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Killam for their kindness and encouragement, also to my ever patient wife, Siddie, who has sat for years listening to my tall tales of the North, and as the years go by they get taller!

As these tales deal mostly with the "St. Roch" and her numerous voyages to the Arctic, it will be necessary to go back a few years to get everything properly organized.

I remember the day it all started. I had a nice comfortable job as O.C.'s driver, working out of "E" Division, Vancouver, B.C. We had just left the Barracks for the downtown office, when the Officer Commanding, quite casually said to me. "Foster, how would you like to go north?" I said, "I think that's a good idea, Sir." "That's fine" he replied, because that's just where you are going." The Mounted Police are building an Arctic Patrol vessel over at the Burrard Dry Dock, and I have recommended that you go in her as engineer. As soon as you can find a replacement you can go over to the north shore and take up your new duties. This happened during the first week of January, 1928, and a week later I moved over to the shipyard and was present during the construction period, and the installation of her machinery.

The "St. Roch" was constructed of B.C. Fir, and heavily reinforced with natural grown knees, an overall of 104 feet, 24 foot beam, 12 foot draft when loaded, with accommodation for 14. From rubbing stroke to the keel the vessel was sheathed with iron-bark, bringing the total thickness of the hull to 22 inches. The stem was incased in a welded steel shoe and the bow additionally reinforced with steel plates.

One of the unusual features on the St. Roch was the Rudder Well, into which the oversize Rudder of Australian gum wood could be raised if in danger of being damaged when we would be caught in a bad ice squeeze. A heavy pin at the base of the rudder stalk would fit into and ride up along a curved track as the rudder was lifted off the pintles and into the well out of harms way, a large chain block to be hung from the main boom was kept solely for that purpose.

The vessel was a two masted schooner rigged, and powered with a 150 Horse power union diesel engine. I can remember the night she was launched, in May, 1928. She was christened by the wife of the Officer Commanding, who at that time was Supt. Newson, as she skid down the ways, old Jim Andrews, the head rigger said to me, take a good look at her Jack, that's the fastest trip she'll ever make. I said, I don't know, according to specification she's supposed to make eight knots. Old Jim said, if that thing ever makes eight knots, she'll shove the Bering Straits right into the Arctic Ocean.

Early in June the St. Roch was given a trial trip in Burrard Inlet, and surprised everyone by making eight knots in the speed trials over a measured course.

After the trial run the St. Roch was taken to Evans Coleman and Evans Dock to take on cargo, from then on until we sailed, everything was in a mad turmoil. The registered tonage of the vessel was 80.07, but by the time we were ready to sail we had 165 tons aboard her.

The original crew of the St. Roch on her maiden voyage in 1928 was made up of regular members of the Force and three specials. The regular

members of the force were Larsen, Olsen, Tudor Parsloe, Parry Lamothe and myself. The master was Capt. W.H. Gillan an old sealing skipper, Special Const. F.W. Sealey; wireless operator and Patrich Kelly, Engineer from the Union Diesel plant in Oakland, who was being sent into the North by his Co. to see how the Union Diesel operated in Arctic waters. On arrival at ~~H~~<sup>er</sup>schel Island, Capt. Gillan was to turn over command of the "St. Roch" to Const. H.A. ~~L~~<sup>r</sup>assen, then he and Pat Kelly, were to take passage home on the "Baychimo" on her return voyage.

Up to the time the "St. Roch" made history with her two trips through the North West Passage, and I think the fact that her trip from Vancouver to Halifax by way of the Panama Canal, making her the first vessel to circumnavigate the continent is also worth mentioning. Very few people had ever heard of her. Actually when the first attempt was made in 1940, it was her fifth voyage to the Arctic. Although there was plenty of excitement on the first west to east trip through the Passage, which took 28 months (June, 1940) from Vancouver, B.C. to Halifax, N.S., Oct. 1942, I would like to go back to 1928 and talk about her maiden voyage-- although it only lasted 18 months it was packed with excitement from start to finish. To start with only two of the original police crew had ever been north before, so actually we didn't know what to expect, we never knew what was going to happen, and we were usually very surprised when it did.

Before the "St. Roch" was commissioned, our outposts in the Western Arctic were dependent on the Hudson's Bay Co. for the transportation of their annual supplies. Transportation by way of the coast from Vancouver

was uncertain, as ice conditions in the vicinity of Point Barrows, on the northern tip of the continent, are bade in summer even under favourable conditions, only vessels of shallow draft can work inside the big ice, some of which is grounded. Larger vessels are forced to stand well off shore in the deeper water, and in doing so are in danger of being caught in the pack, and believe me this has happened to a goodly number of ships in the past. The Jeanette, the Karluck, the Kind~~is~~ley and later the Bayshimo. I imagine a little research, and you could compile a list as long as your arm.

After careful consideration it was decided to build a strong, reinforced wooden auxiliary schooner, drawing not more than two fathoms, capable of withstanding terrific ice pressure, and equipped to remain in the north for long periods. This vessel would be known as a floating detachment and would winter at any given point on the coast, that would afford a reasonable amount of protection from ice pressure, there it would form a connecting link during the winter months as it was proposed to equip her with up-to-date broadcasting equipment. During open water she could act as a supply and inspection vessel.

#### Note on Dad Parry

I would like to give you a little side light on the book, A Welchman by the name of W.J. Parry. Affectionately called "Dad" by all members of the crew. Parry who had served two tricks on the McKenzie River was employed as teamster at G Division, Edmonton. One day in the spring of 1925 the Officer Commanding sent for Parry and asked him how he would like to go back to the North. Parry said he would like that very much. The O.C. then informed him he had been selected as Cook for the "St. Roch". Dad, according to his own words, said. "But Sir, I'm a teamster, not a cook." That's all right Parry, replied the O.C., just get a cook book and read up on it. Dad must have taken him at his word, for he turned out to be a first class cook.

First Voyage of the St. Roch

Now lets get started with the maiden voyage

Leaving Vancouver June 26th, 1928, we had a most enjoyable trip up through the inside Passage and outside of a bit of a dusting when we poked our nose outside Dixon Entrance, had a very good trip across the North Pacific. Capt. Gillan had ordered all deck vents to the hold plugged before leaving Vancouver and when we hip open water we saw it had indeed been a wise precaution, as there was usually a foot of water in the well deck, with the vessel being heavily laden another fact soon became apparent--the large hardwood wedges placed at 6 foot intervals along the hull below the rubbing strabe would have to be removed as they acted as brakes and slowed us down considerably (these were later removed). On the second day out on the Pacific, Capt. Gillan decided to give the St. Roch a chance to show what she could do under canvas, for as an auxiliary schooner she was supposed to sail most of the time. We clapped on every stitch she could carry, there was a spanking breeze at the time, Then he rang down, finished with engines, we had no sooner complied with this order, then we got stand by. Full ahead. And that's what it was from then on in. Later I asked the mate what had transpired, and he told me it was one of the funniest things he had ever seen, when the power was cut off the St. Roch just seemed to lean forward, buried her nose and refused to answer the helm. That blunt nose was designed for ice, and not for sailing. We often used canvas afterward but only to help her along or to help stop rolling (which was one thing she could do quite well). On arrival over the Sanak Banks near the Aleutians the Capt. thought it might be a good chance to catch a fresh cod or two for the table. We did too,

and all hands rigged cod liner, we used spreaders and were soon pulling them aboard two at a time. We were soon knee deep in Cod fish (over a ton) and after putting a few aside for the cook the remainder were split and salted for our first winter in the north. Some of the bales of salt cod came to a sorry end, at Herschel Island. Before leaving for winter quarters, we rearranged some of our cargo in order to make room for additional winter supplies, lumber, etc. in the shuffle the cod fish was stored on the forecastle head, well covered with a tarp, when loading was completed, there was no room for the fish elsewhere, so it was left where it was, as it was comparatively short run to winter quarters. The last to come aboard, just prior to leaving, were the dogs, and, you guessed it, most of them were chained up on the forecastle head. In short order they had the tarp off the fish, but being tied up short, they just couldn't reach the baled fish. So to show their contempt they swung around and around and sprayed everything within reach. As soon as this was noticed all the outside bales went over the side. Then the question arose, how many of the inner bales were edible? On being assured by the cook that he always used three waters when soaking salt fish, we decided to take a chance, and the results were highly satisfactory. It was fortunate for us that the dogs couldn't reach the fish, for the quickest way to kill a Kogmalik dog is to feed him salt food. On arrival at Dutch Harbour we topped off our fuel tanks and that evening were entertained by the Officer of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter "Unalga" an enjoyable time was had by all. The next day we

continued on our way headed for Tiller, Alaska to take on a ton of dried fish for dog food as we were approaching Tiller we were treated to an amazing sight. It seemed as though the whole hillside was slowly flowing down into the sea. On putting the glasses on this phenomenon, we discovered it was an immense herd of Reindeer being herded down to the beach for the annual round up and slaughter. Just outside the harbour we noticed a small schooner under sail, beating up and down trying to make the harbour. On speaking to her we discovered that she was the "Morrisay" under command of Capt. Bob Bartlett, a fine old Arctic veteran who had been with Peary on most of his attempts to reach the North Pole. The "Morrisay" was having engine trouble so we offered to tow her in to Tiller. However, Capt. Bob took a dim view of that idea, nobody was getting a line aboard his schooner as long as he had a stitch of canvas. He would sail her in if it took a week. As a matter of fact he made it the same day. We then found that he was under charter to a movie outfit, and was in northern waters getting whaling shots.

As soon as we dropped anchor we went ashore to make arrangements for getting the dried fish aboard. Teller proved to be quite a village, We soon found out it was split into two factions. This apparently was brought about by a notable event two years before. It will be remembered that the dirigible "Norge" with Amundsen and Nobile left Spitzbergen early in May, 1926 and in 71 hours crossed the North Pole and landed at Teller, Alaska, where she was dismantled. There seems to have been a slight difference of opinion between the two principles, for the party split-up. Nobile and his Italians were entertained at one

trading Company and Amundsen and his party at the other. Some of this feeling must have rubbed off on the inhabitants, for on our arrival in July, 1928, it was still going strong. Whatever the differences might have been between Amundsen and Nobile, they were resolved two years later (early in June, 1928). Nobile in the airship "Italia" crash landed on the polar ice. Amundsen took off for Spitzbergen in the first plane available to take part in the rescue and was never seen again. The trading Company that supplied us with the fish decided to hold a dance in our honour. It was a huge success, but needless to say the rival Company did not attend. At about 3 a.m. we regretfully said goodbye and returned to the St. Roch, besides the ton of dried fish we also took aboard a 50 lb keg of salmon bellies in brine (If you haven't tasted them, you haven't lived). Larsen also brought aboard a Siberian husky which he intended to use as a leader. We then weighed anchor and headed for the Bering Straits.

NOTE

North of King William Land  
 St. John Franklins expedition  
 Two ships Erabus and Terror, stranded and lost about one hundred years ago (some time between 1845 and 1849).

1853 Sir John Ross searched for lost Franklin party  
 Cache at Beeckey Island

Ronald Amundsen 1872 to 1928 Born at Sarpsbork, Norway  
 1897 Gerlache expedition  
 1903 to 1906  
 1911 and 1912 - South Pole  
 1926 first try by plane - given up for lost--returned after four weeks  
 1928 - lost looking for Nobile ("Italia").

(Notes in side margin on original): Check on McClintock Channel  
 Sydney, N.S., Oct. 8th, 1942.

We passed through the Bering Straits into the Beaufort sea headed for Point Barrow, where we were halted by adverse ice conditions. On approaching Barrow, Capt. Gillan called out attention to a pinkish haze along the horizon to the north, this he informed us was called ice blink and usually indicated heavy concentrations of ice which might spell trouble for us. He was so right, for we made four attempts before this vessel was able to work through the heavy flow ice drifting down from the north, but once through this it was comparatively clear sailing to Herschel. The Hudson's Bay freighter "Bayshimo", which was later caught in the ice off Sea Horse Islands and abandoned, followed us through the ice, but once in the clear showed a clean pair of heels and arrived at Herschel six hours ahead of the St. Roch. The "Bayshimo" later became known as the ghost ship of the Arctic, as late as the mid thirties, she kept popping up fast in the ice off Point Barrow, then disappear for another year. It would be just a matter of time before she would be crushed and sunk by the big ice.

On one of the stops made while waiting for the ice to slack off we were very close to Flaxman Island, to the east of Barrow. Larsen and myself took rifles and a small light dingy with runners on the bottom and went ashore. We were hoping to bag a seal. On landing, Henry, who had been on the island before on one of his voyages as mate, with Klenkinberg in the "Old Maid No. 2", said he wanted to show me something. Flaxman Island isn't very high and is quite flat. On topping the slight rise from the beach I saw about one hundred skulls scattered over a wide area. Larsen told me this had been the site of one of the pitched battles between the Indians and Eskimos, years before. Returning to the beach we wandered along following an open lead and a short time later we got out seal.

Putting him in the dingy we started back to the ship which fortunately wasn't very far, as the slight on shore wind had abated and the ice started to slack off. As the leads started to open we would drag the dingy over a floe, launch it in a lead, and row like mad for the other side--pull her out and start over another floe. Once or twice, we were tempted to ditch the seal, but Henry had been making my mouth water talking about delicious seal liver and how good it was with bacon. We were making slow time, but we were spurred on by the crew who lined the rail and gave us all sorts of useful information. Well, we finally made it, but I was sure that during the last hundred yards, that little seal had grown a hundred pounds heavier.

#### Herschel Island

We were all looking forward to our first look at Herschel Island. Whalers and Whaling ships, who hasn't read about their adventures, and hardships, in the frozen wastes, tales of their winters at Herschel, where as many as twenty ships would be in the Bay at one time, of what happened to the unwary, who were caught away from their ships when the howling sou-westers would swoop down over the bluffs. One of the favorite pastimes of the off-duty crew members during the winter months was football on the ice, wherever it was smooth enough. On one occasion thirty men perished, being unable to find their ships when a sou-wester reduced visibility to zero.

Tales of whalers who were too tough to stay buried. This I know for a fact, periodically at the Herschel Island Cemetery one of these tough old rascals would be pushed up to the surface by frost and have to be reburied,

as well preserved as when they were first buried, frozen solid.

On landing at Herschel one gets an idea of permanency. The place looks as if it were ready to dig in and withstand anything nature could throw at it. The police detachment buildings were originally built by the whalers, the walls of the living quarters are a foot thick, and have stood for years with little or no repairs needed.

The store house was also built by the whalers on generous lines and it was used by them to store whalebone, and still goes by the name of the Bone House. It was inside this building that two Eskimos were hung in 1926 for the murder of Cpt. Dock of the Mounted Police and Otto Binder of the Hudson's Bay Company at Tree River. One of the Eskimos was named Alagomiak, the other Tatimagama.

At Herschel, further supplies for the eastern detachments were taken aboard and on August 1st we started the long trip to Cambridge Bay, Victoria Island, the eastern end of the district. The officer commanding the western arctic accompanied the patrol on his annual tour of inspection. The first stop en route was Shingle Point, about 65 miles east of Herschel. Here one man was landed to assist in nursing sick Eskimos, who were dying off in large numbers due to an epidemic of influenza. Bob Kello who had been acting in that capacity, came aboard as second engineer. Next came Bailliee Island where the usual inspection was carried out and stores landed. Bailliee, off Cape Bathurst, was indeed a pretty sight, all the buildings gleaming in their new white paint with red roofs on the Police buildings and green for the Hudson Bay Company. All looked calm and peaceful--but on looking around the little harbour, the gaunt ribs of Capt. Fritz Walker's old whaler, the "Rosy H" reared up out of the sand, a grim reminder that the

arctic sometimes wins a hand in the game.

Leaving Baillie Island we continued on our easterly course. Next stop Bernard Harbour, examining enroute two bays which had been suggested as possible winter quarters for the St. Roch. After landing supplies at Bernard, we picked up one man who has being transferred to Cambridge Bay, and continued merrily on our way, but not for long--about four hours out of Bernard, we ran hard aground on a gravel bar which had been pushed up by big ice just off Lambert Island. This is a common occurrence in this area. The entire deck load of fuel drums had to be unloaded and rafted over the side, and most of the cargo below decks had to be shifted to give her as much list as possible. After we had made all possible adjustments, there was nothing to do but wait for the tide. The deck crew decided to take off in the ships launch on a seal hunt. On their return they were in for a bit of a shock. The Officer Commanding had read the riot act to them in no uncertain terms. He couldn't understand anyone going off on a pleasure jaunt whilst a valuable piece of police property was lying forlorn and unattended on a sand bar. A day and a half later we were able to work the "St. Roch" off the bar, and, after spending some time getting everything back aboard and shipshape, we continued on our way and arrived at Cambridge Bay without further mishap.

On entering the harbour, the first thing that caught our eye was Ammundsen's old ship the "Maud". Built in Oslo, Norway in 1916 for his attempt to drift across the North Pole. She was purchased by the Hudson's Bay Company and renamed the "Baymaud". She had carried supplies into the Western arctic and was now permanently moored at Cambridge Bay to be used as a wireless station. The "Baymaud" is 107 ft. with a 41 ft. beam. Her

hull is of solid oak 20 inches thick and sheathed in ironbark.

Sgt. F. Anderton came aboard to take over the "St. Roch" Detachment, bringing with him the principles and witnesses in two Eskimo murder cases. The prisoners were being transported to Aklavits for trial.

The patrol then left on its return voyage to Herschel, arriving without mishap during the last week of August.

I would like to recall an incident which occurred whilst making the first try to get around Point Barrow. We were approaching our first ice field and Capt. Gillan was up in the crow's nest to us through. He sighted what he considered a promising lead, and rang for full ahead. There was a tremendous crash followed by a terrific uproar from the Crow's nest. Apparently, suitable back stays had not been installed on the main mast, for to quote the Capt. when we hit, the main mast snapped ahead like a buggy whip, and almost tossed him out of the bucket. Then to add insult to injury, when he tried to come below the trap door in the bottom had jammed and couldn't be freed from above. In response to the Capt's very polite request, one of the crew scrambled aloft with a mallet and soon had the skipper safe on deck once more. Needless to say, till we reached Herschel, his trips to the mast head were of short duration and he was usually back on deck!

Winter supplies were taken aboard along with 13 howling huskies and on September 1st the "St. Roch" left Herschel for Langston Bay, some 370 miles to the east. This small bay located at the foot of Franklin Bay had been picked for our winter quarters. A stop was made at Baillie Island, and while lying at anchor there, one of the worst Souwesterns of the season was encountered. We attempted to ride out the storm at anchor, but this

had to be abandoned, as the vessel pitched so badly in the shallow water, there was danger of the windless being pulled loose from its moorings. It was then decided to run before the storm, this we did for 24 hours, at which time the seas subsided sufficiently for us to turn back. At this time we were in the vicinity of Banksland. We set out course for Langston Bay and arrived there on September 4th. Langston Bay at first sight appeared to be just what we had been looking for, through a narrow entrance, deep water all the way, it opened up into oval shaped little bay, about two mile long and just over a 1/2 mile wide, with a high, wide, curving sand-spit about a mile long to anchor behind. It sure looked like a home for us.

Preparations were immediately started to get the vessel ready for winter, and were practically complete, when the "St. Roch" was driven ashore in a 70 mile an hour gale. Due to poor holding ground, three anchors failed to hold her, and before steerage way could be obtained from motor power, the vessel was half out of water on the sand spit, where she remained for three weeks.

During this time all movable cargo and ships gear was taken ashore, in order to lighten her as much as possible. The toughest part of this operation was the coal, thirty tons of soft coal in bulk, and all we could round up was twenty empty coal sacks. We'd fill them, hoist them, carry them ashore above high water mark, empty the sacks and scurry back for more. It sure was a crude way of making a living.

Then we ran the anchors as far out in the bay as possible with the motor launch, and with the first favourable winde from the north, the foresail and staysaid were set, close hauled, and by gradually taking the

strain on the anchor chains, the bow was swung off the beach. This move left her still hard aground by the stern. Our fresh water tank in the bow was empty, so we pumped that full of salt water, which took her nose down a little but not quite enough. We then opened the sea cocks and allowed water to enter the bilges and run to the bow. The weight was gradually shifted forward and the "St. Roch" slid gently off the beach into deep water, none the worse for her little adventure.

There is usually an aftermath to most of these little episodes, and this was no exception, as soon as the vessel was water borne, the salt water we had pumped into the bilges started working back to the stern, into the engine room, and was being picked up by the fly-wheel and clutch drum of the main engine. Greasy black bilge water, smelling like nothing on earth, was being plastered all over the engine walls and deck-head. I was on watch at the time and got more than my share of the black goo. There was nothing we could do about it as we were still underway, sounding for good holding ground, By the time we found safe anchorage the pumps had things under control and the water level started to drop. At one time we had six inches of water over the engine room plates.

Ten days after the vessel was refloated, ice formed in the bay, and a week later the "St. Roch" was fast in the ice, safe for the winter.

In wintering a boat in the ice there are a few precautions that have to be taken. The most important of these is to try and find a spot that offers as much protection as possible from ice pressure, behind an Island or sand spit if possible. Violent storms in the fall just after freeze-up will sometimes cause the newly formed ice to break up, and once on the move,

will build up pressure ridges, sometimes over a hundred feet in height on the nearest shore.

Another point to be considered is to anchor far enough from the shore so as to be outside the shore-ledge. When the ice forms on the shore with each high tide a new layer of ice is added until a solid ledge is created. The floating ice in the bay rides up and down against this ledge with the tides. Past experience has shown that a vessel should be lightened as much as possible before freeze-up, all deck load and as much coal as possible should be lightered ashore to be brought back aboard just before break-up the next summer. This is done to protect the stern post and rudder from possible damage in case the bow should let go and rise, before the stern of the vessel has been cut clear.

It is also important to have the vessel freeze in heading directly into the prevailing wind. Unless this is done, huge drifts will form against the side of the vessel and the resulting concentrations of weight in one spot will cause the young ice to sag and if the overflow of sea water which is caused by this is great enough, it will endanger the ship itself. On more than one occasion it has been necessary to wait until four to six inches of ice has formed, then cut her free with ice saws, move her into a more favorable location and allow the vessel to freeze in once more. This entails a lot of hard work, but it is absolutely necessary.

Once the "St. Roch" was frozen in solid, the next job was to get her winter suit on. Sails and rigging were removed and stowed below decks, then a framework of 4 x 4's and 2 x 4's was erected and covered with heavy tarps which had been made for that purpose, with the installation of a door on the sheltered side, we were ready to snug down for the winter.

After we had finished making the "St. Roch" comfortable for the winter, we had time to get started on a variety of jobs. People have often asked, what on earth do you do with the vessel frozen in the ice for nine months of the year. They should try it sometimes. The first thing to be attended to was to find the nearest and most accessible fresh water lake. With this spotted, the whole crew would proceed there with ice saws and chisels and cut enough ice to ensure a supply of fresh water for the long winter. This ice would later be hauled to the vessel by dog-team, as required. A forty-five gallon drum was placed in the fore-castle and the after living quarters, and a number of the crew detailed to melt ice in buckets and keep these drums full of fresh water at all times.

Next the sanitation experts swing into action. The ice saws are used again, and an ediface known as the Ice Palace is erected about 25 yds. from the gangway. After the first snow has packed sufficiently, a snow house is built on the ice palace as a waiting room, When this is occupied, certain jokers have been known to drop a lighted match into the accumulation of toilet paper before leaving. Some members of the crew have been almost trampled to death in the stampede that follows!

Next on the list, a wall of snow blocks is built around the after part of the vessel usually about six feet out. The space between the snow wall and the vessel is then filled with loose snow and tramped down hard. This is done to keep the ice at a minimum thickness at the stern. It can usually be held to eight feet, whilst farther out in the bay you can get from 10 to 12 feet. This pays off in the spring, as with the first sign of water forming on top of the ice, the work of cutting the stern of the vessel free is

gotten underway. This is quite a chore. Three trenches are dug, one on each side and the other across the stern. They are kept separate with about a foot of ice between, when all three are completed, the foot ice wall between is then knocked out and the three trenches form a chain of open water around the stern of the vessel.

Some of the old whaling ships had a different approach to this problem. They would build a shelter enclosing the stern of their vessels and the crew kept the stern free of ice by chopping everyday. Besides keeping the crew occupied, this also kept an unlimited supply of water available in case of fire.

By the time we had finished all work connected with winterizing the "St. Roch" there was enough snow to start conditioning the dogs. The first time we hitched them to the big basket sled, was something to remember. With one man standing on the brake and the remainder of the crew putting the dogs in harness and quelling dog fights! It was quite a show. To start with we had plenty of dogs, but not the least idea as to where they worked in the team--wheel dogs, or swing dogs, didn't mean a thing to us, as we had never worked them before. However, we finally got them strung out and took off. We didn't get very far, for about a hundred yards from the "St. Roch" there was a glorious pile up, and more dog fights. Then we discovered something else. The dog we thought was the leader, wasn't a leader at all. So by using the old trial and error system, after the fourth try we found the one we wanted and away we went. By extending the daily workouts, we soon had a well conditioned hard working team, and it didn't do us any harm either.

As we had been fully occupied before freeze-up getting the vessel off the beach, there had been no time to catch fish for winter dog-feed. The

majority of the dry-fish we had picked up at Teller, Alaska, would be kept in reserve for patrols, we decided to set up a fish camp at a place called Tom Cod Bay, about 15 miles from winter quarters. We had been told by the police at Baillie Island that Tom Cod were easily obtainable in this area. That was the overstatement of the year. Sure they were easily obtainable, after you had worked up a good sweat, chopping a hole in the ice, you stood and jigged Tom Cod till you just about froze! Then run around for a while to get the old circulation going, and back for more. On a good day you can jig up to six or seven hundred Tom Cod. The Eskimo's use a jigging hook made from a small piece of ivory about 3 inches long and 1/2 inch wide, inserted into the ivory close to the bottom, is a piece of curved bone or a nail, filed to a point and curving upwards. No barb is needed. At the top of the piece of ivory they usually tie a piece of coloured yarn or a white button. We tried to improve on this by using a 303 cartridge case with four pieces of wire inserted in the bottom and held in place with solder. This worked rather well, and there was quite a demand for them from the local natives.

With the dog-feed situation under control, Sgt. Anderton, Olsen and myself took off by dog team to the hills back of Langton Bay on a deer hunt. We were lucky enough to run into a small herd about 10 miles inland. After circling the herd and crawling for half a mile we got within range and knocked over eight of them. After skinning and cleaning the deer we made camp. We started to build a snow house. By this time it was pitch black. So with the snowhouse half built we quit and threw the sled tarp over the top, weighted the ends down with snow blocks, had a meal, and rolled into our sleeping bags for the night. Olsen and myself were awakened at daybreak by Andy's booming laughter. On peeking out of our sleeping bags we saw the

reason for this unseemly mirth. It had turned warm during the night and started to snow, and with the three of us sleeping in the confined space, the sloping walls of the partially built snow house, plus the weight of the canvas tarp and the fresh snow, had caused the walls to lean inwards to such an extent that there wasn't even room to sit up. As you sleep in the raw in northern sleeping bag, this presented quite a problem. How to get into our clothing. Andy solved the problem like a true veteran. As he was sleeping in the middle and partly under the canvas, he was able to sit up by facing the canvas and almost a foot of snow up with his head, and whilst in that position, by a series of acrobatics, managed to wiggle into his skin clothing. You would have to see this to appreciate it as Sgt. Anderton was a big man. Andy then crawled outside after removing the snow block used to plug up the entrance. We then rolled to the place vacated by him and tried to duplicate his performance. After we made it, we removed the tarp, salvaged our gear and made breakfast. Something happened right here that I think you should hear about in case it ever happens to you. Andy detailed me to make coffee, taking a sauce-pan, I went outside and scooped it full of snow, lighting the primus lamp, I proceeded to melt the snow and make coffee. When ready the three of us sat back to enjoy same. It didn't taste very good to me, and on taking a look at Andy, I could see he didn't think much of it either. However, we kept sipping away and finally finished it. Only one cup to a customer. Olsen enquired in a very polite voice, "What the hell did you put in that brew"? Andy picked up the sauce pan and very slowly poured the remainder of the coffee into the snow. He then said to me, take a look in the billy. I did, and on the bottom was almost an inch of Ptarmigan droppings. The next time you get snow for coffee, said Andy, keep well away from the willow bushes.

The weather didn't look as good, so we decided to get some fresh meat back to the "St. Roch". We loaded up our gear and three of the caribour and after making a cache of the remainder and putting up a marker, we headed for home. On the latter part of the trip we had to follow a chain of small lakes, over a gravel bar, on to the sea ice and along the outside of the Langton Bay sand-spit, till we were opposite the ship, then cut across and then we were home free. By the time we reached home our guess about the weather had turned out to be correct. It was blowing a half gale, and worked itself into a man sized three day blow. As soon as the gale blew itself out we headed back for the cache. We knew something was wrong before we arrived there by the way the dogs were acting. They appeared uneasy, looking from side to side, sniffing the air and whining. We stopped the team and checked our rifles. Andy said, the way the dogs are acting can mean only one thing. There's wolves about. When we top the next little rise we will be able to see the cache, keep your eyes open. We topped the next rise, nothing--we arrived at the cache--nothing, that is, nothing but bones scattered all over the countryside. There had been wolves around all right, been and gone. On well, said Andy, the dogs needed a workout, let's go home. The trip wasn't a total loss however, for on the way home we bagged a dozen Ptarmigan, which we stowed away by the cook for our Xmas Dinner.

Our first Xmas in the arctic was something to remember. Dad Parry, the cook, put up a meal fit for a king. The only substitution was Ptarmigan, one a piece, in place of turkey. Canned hams, all kinds of fruit and nuts and Xmas puddings, you name it, we had it. And on Xmas night, we all sat and listened to the Northern Messenger. There were messages for all hands.

It was very pleasant, hearing from wives and sweethearts, sitting there fat, full and happy, with a nice hot rum in your fist.

Shortly after the New Year, we had a visitor. Father Benami from the Catholic mission at Lilly Harbour, in Darnley Bay. The day he arrived was stormy and there was quite a ground drift. We could hear someone shouting at the dogs, but could see nothing as the ground drift was between 5 and 6 feet in height, as the team got closer we could hear the shouted commands. It's a white man, said Andy, he calls his lead dog Kaiser. Suddenly a man's head showed above the drifting snow, it looked like a football, just rolling along with nothing else in sight. He was over the sand spit and on the bay ice before we could see the dogs. As by this time there was a well beaten tract to the boat, all he had to do was let the lead dog bring him in. But somehow we got the impression the Father didn't altogether trust Kaiser.

The main purpose of the Father's visit, was to report that two trappers, Beaupre and Lassard had not been seen or heard from since leaving for their fish camp at the foot of Darnley Bay in the early fall in their small schooner. Both men had ordered skin clothing, of which they were badly in need, from a native woman at Letty Harbour, to be picked up, just after freeze-up. They had failed to do so, and some concern was felt for their safety by the people at Letty Harbour. Sgt. Anderton immediately started getting gear together for a patrol to Brock River at the foot of Darnley Bay and told me that I was to accompany him.

The first of the many items to prepare for the trail are the beans. Northern trail beans are something special. First into a five gallon stock pot go the required amount of beans. After soaking overnight, you add bacon, dehydrated onions, canned tomatoes, Bovril, Molasses, salt and sugar

and a generous helping of hot mustard. Sometimes we used to add diced sealmeat. When cooked this mess was spread out thinly on the ice and allowed to freeze. It was then broken up, packed into a sugar sack and beaten with a piece of 2 x 4 till it was compact and would store easily on the sled. This, with sliced bacon, hardtack, jam, condensed milk, coffee and trail chocolate, which incidentally was as hard as a rock, was just about all we required in the grub line. If you wanted soup, you melted some snow, threw in a hand-full of our special beans and you had the best obtainable. If your taste ran to bacon and beans, on went the frying pan on the primus stove and you could eat your fill in 3 minutes flat.

The heaviest item to be packed on the sled for the trail is usually dog-feed. On this patrol we were using some of the dry-fish we had purchased at Teller on the trip in from Vancouver. The bales were opened and packed into small compact bundles, one days feed to a bundle. These were then packed tightly into sacks. Item by item the long list of requirements were checked off the list and stored on the hatch cover ready to be loaded on the sled. Matches, candles, gloves, needles, caribou sinew for making thread to repair skin clothing. Duffle bags packed with spare clothing, primus lamps (with spare parts and cleaners). One thing we learned early in the game, your coal oil containers have to be of sturdy construction and nested in a well padded box as it rides on the nose of the sled, well away from the food and clothing, and when working through rough ice, takes quite a beating, so carrying coal oil on the trail can make things pretty tough.

The day before our departure an old native arrived from Letty Harbour. He was quite a character, speaking a garbled mixture of English and Eskimo he told us his name was Eddie Kooblo and as a boy he had served aboard

whaling ships as a cabin boy. He had heard at the Letty Harbour mission that we would be making a patrol to Darnley Bay and he wished to offer us the use of his line camp, about one days journey from the ship. As this would save us making a snow house, we accepted his offer. He then drew a map showing the location. According to his description, the camp was small but comfortable, and contained a stove, made from a four gallon oil tin, with a chimney made from milk cans. For fuel he used peat, blubber, and willow twigs, it sounded real cozy. He informed us the trail over the lakes we would cross was well marked, due to the fact that his eyesight was failing. He always carried on his sled a roll of willow sticks and when crossing open stretches of country he planted the sticks at regular intervals to make sure he could find the way back. On the stretch of tundra after leaving the last of the small lakes the camp would be easy to find as it was beside a large Pingo which was visible for a considerable distance. A pingo, by the way, is a mound caused by an upheaval of the permafrost. They are usually from thirty to fifty feet in height and about the same in diameter.

With the business in hand, attended to, Eddie turned to the cook and informed him that "Long time I no eat pie". Dad rectified that promptly.

The next morning Andy and I left for Darnley Bay. We had a team of nine dogs, all in fine shape and ready to go. We were out of sight of the "St. Roch" in short order. It was a cold clear day and we made excellent time. During the afternoon we sighted some of Eddie's markers. Our lead dog picked up his trail and we arrived at the Pingo well before dark. We spent some time looking for Eddie's line camp, and were on the verge of putting up a snow house of our own, when Andy noticed a can sticking out of

a drift, that was it, apparently there had been a blow since the camp was last used, and all that was visible was the top of the chimney. After some little digging we found the entrance and we crawled inside. Eddie Hooblo was a very small man, and he had built his camp accordingly, inside it was about four feet high and about the same in diameter. Andy was a bigger man than I, and I weighed over 200 lbs, so you can imagine how much room there was with us all decked out in our bulky skin clothing. However, after tending to the dogs we figured the whole thing out. By cutting two small tunnels in opposite directions through the side of the snow house and out into the snow drift, we were able to roll out our sleeping bags and lay with our legs out in the tunnels and our heads in the snow house, and after a nice hot meal we enjoyed a most comfortable nights sleep.

We were off at the crack of dawn, after a succulent breakfast of bacon and beans washed down with coffee, and this time I kept away from the willow bushes. We had arranged to rendezvous with a trapper named Fred Mathews who had a camp close to the pass through the hills leading down into Darnley Bay. Fred was on the look-out for us and after spending the night at his cabin, we were guided by him to the mouth of the pass in the morning. The trip through the pass was worth remembering. There wasn't even a breeze, it was about 45<sup>0</sup> below and the dog's breath rose in a cloud, straight up. We were through in just over two hours, and were very pleased to start the down grade into Darnley Bay. Rough ice was encountered crossing the bottom of the Bay, which slowed us down to a crawl, so on reaching a long spit on which we had been informed Beaupre and Lassard had a fish camp, we decided to make camp and wait for morning

before giving the spit and good inspection.

We were fortunate as far as the weather was concerned. The next day was cold and clear, so we got an early start and began working along the spit, which runs at right angles from the foot of the bay, and is about four miles in length. At the extreme tip we found a tent ring. This was the site of the fish camp and it was quite evident the camp had been used the previous fall. So far, so good. We then started down the other side of the spit, working slowly we examined every inch of the shore line. There was no sign of a trap line, nothing. By now we were back to the base of the spit, and not more than 1/2 mile from where we had camped the night before. The going was better on the easterly side of the spit and we were able to make good time. We had hoped to make our next camp at or near the mouth of Hornaday River, and were nearing that point when we spotted what appeared to be a habitation of some sort on the beach. This proved to be a snug, well made camp, but with no sign of recent occupancy, as the light was failing we decided to move in for the night. After unharnessing and feeding the dogs, we had our evening meal and crawled into our sleeping bags. We were just about to snuff out the candle, when we heard a disturbance outside and the dogs started to bark. We quickly jumped into our clothing, but before we had our things on, the low door opened and a stooped figure all bundled up in furs stepped inside. It was not until a voice said, "It would appear that I have visitors" that we realized that it was a white man. Then, with a chuckle he pushed his hood back and we recognized him as one of the missing trappers, Beaupre. We had met both of them at Baillie Island the previous summer. Andy, who was quite a kidder, said you so and so, we're looking for you. Beaupre gulped and asked in a weak voice, "What have I done?" It isn't what

of the trail you stopped the team and prospected around till you found it.

The sun disappeared at Bache on the 17th of September and by that time we had things pretty well organized. Stall could turn out a batch of bread that would make your mouth water. I handled the biscuits and hot cakes, one thing was certain, we wouldn't go hungry as the store house was packed to the rafters with a good assortment of canned goods.

As the days grew shorter the radio started to pick up our best station Pittsburgh, and all messages official or otherwise were relayed through that station. We were always tuned in at 10 p.m. every Saturday all during the dark period. The reception was good, but during the remainder of the year it was very poor to say the least. One of the things we missed at Bache was the Northern Lights. We never saw a sign of them all the time I was stationed there. Another odd feature about this immediate area, no fish, just clams, and I have already told of the trouble we had in getting a feed of these.

The Cider ducks had nesting grounds on three small islands near the mouth of Flagler Fiord about five miles from the post. In the fall after the main flock headed south, there were usually around two hundred or more that elected to remain behind for some reason or other, as the patches of open water grew smaller, we would go up Flagler Fiord by dog-team and bag as many as we could with 22's. Noocapingwah had quite a system for retrieving birds in the water. He would flick his 45 ft whip out over the water and nine times out of ten the lash would lay across the body of a duck. He would then draw it gently to where he could reach it. We would

you've done, said Andy, It's what you didn't do. Why didn't you pick up the winter clothing you ordered from Letty Harbour? You and Tom Lassard were reported missing and that's why we are here. Beaupre laughed, and said. I am on my way to Letty Harbour right now. Otherwise you would have had a much longer trip before you caught up with us. We've been trapping from Brock River east toward Cape Lyon. Trapping was good this season and we couldn't spare the time to pick up the clothing till now. This is the first time either one of us have been to this camp all winter. That's why you couldn't pick up any sign of us. We shot the breeze for hours and finally after we were all talked out we grabbed a few hours shut-eye. Beaupre left at dawn. He was travelling light and hoped to make Letty Harbour in one day by cutting straight across the bay. By doing so he figured he would miss most of the rough ice we had encountered farther down in the bay. We decided to give our dogs a breather and leave around noon. As we intended using our old camps on the way home. This worked out well indeed and by travelling in easy steps we were back home eight days after we had left the "St. Roch". Mission accomplished, and everybody happy.

With a patrol to Baillie Island coming up in March to pick up the official mail, Andy decided we needed a native Kogmolik sled, as he figured it was more adaptable than the basket sled for the rough ice we were bound to encounter nearing Cape Bathurst on the last leg of the trip to Baillie.

With all material needed available, we soon had one under construction. In making this type of sled the only metal used is the steel runners and screws to fasten them. ~~The~~ The hardest part of the whole operation was drilling and counter sinking the holes in the steel runners.

Having no electric drill this was done by hand. All the cross members were lashed. When properly made these sleds are practically indestructible and are very easily repaired. The sled we made was 14 feet in length, and to break it in we made a trip to Tom Cod Bay for a load of fish.

Andy with eighteen years experience in the north, had an eye for spotting things that might be needed. In the fall, just after our arrival at Langton Bay, he had spotted a cut bank containing peat. A sled load of this was brought to the ship. It was then thawed out in wash tubs and shredded by hand--all coarse fibres removed. Then water was added to the peat and it was heated over fire-pots on deck and stirred till it was similar to thick porridge. This was then moulded by hand over the entire length of the steel runners of the sled, and extending about two inches up on the wood on each side. When this part of the operation was completed, the peat had been moulded to a width from 6 to 7 inches, with about four inches over the steel. This was then left to freeze. The following day we went to work on the runners with heavy course rasps till they were fairly flat with gently rounded edges. The bottom surface was then worked over with a plane till it was perfectly flat. Then the sled was taken outside for the final touch. With the sled turned over, runners bottom side up, you take a piece of bear skin on your right hand, fur side out, then a mouthful of warm water, usually out of a thermos, the water is blown on the bear skin and you quickly place this on the runner--run from end to end, two or three trips and you have a smooth skin of ice on the bottom of the runners, which, if you are reasonably careful, in guiding the sled will be good for one days travel. All you have to do is keep away from sand bars or smooth glaze ice and try to avoid too much

pounding working through the rough ice.

The icing operation is usually carried out just after breakfast and before loading up for the days travel. The results more than justify all the work that goes into it. Steel runners start to squeal and scrape if the weather is around fifty below, with mud runners, it doesn't make any difference how cold it gets. Thirty below is ideal travelling weather. When on the trail you can usually tell approximate temperature by watching the dogs, around thirty below their tails are up over their backs and they want to go. Getting close to fifty below they just shuffle along at a working pace and refuse to be hurried, as a matter of fact at fifty below you don't feel like running either!

While Andy and I were building the sled, Larsen and Olsen were preparing for a patrol to report on conditions in general, along the peninsula separating Franklin Bay from Darnby Bay. The natives are scattered along both sides of the peninsula, living in small family groups, from 15 to 20 miles apart. They were to visit natives in the Tom Cod Bay, Stevens Point and Letty Harbour area. Preparations completed, they left the "St. Roch" early in February, with a team of 5 dogs pulling a light Basket sled, Henry was using his siberian husky, which he had purchased at Teller, and of which he was very proud, as a leader. Larsen figured on a two week trip, but it was almost a month before they returned to the ship. We thought they were delayed by bad weather, but as it turned out, they had gotten itchy feet and had been clear up to Cape Parry at the northern end of the Peninsula, which is covering a fair amount of territory.

With the return of Larsen and Olsen, we were all set to make the patrol to Baillie Island for the official mail. Baillie was in need of another

man, so Parsloe was going up with us to give them a hand till summer. We would pick him up on leaving winter quarters for Herschel. We left the "St. Roch" on the first of March, the weather was perfect and we made the run to Horton River, 55 miles from the ship, in one day. Horton River is what is commonly known as a blow hole. To pass the mouth of the river you have to keep at least five miles out in the bay as the snow from there is mixed with fine sand blown out from the river mouth and that makes exceptionally hard pulling.

(On tape).... Another feature worth mentioning from this area are the smoking mountains. There is one 5 miles from each side of the mouth of the river and with an off shore wind, the dogs sure dig to get past in a hurry, as the smell of sulphur is very strong. These mountains have been a landmark for a good many years. How far back I have been unable to ascertain. On a clear day two columns of smoke are visible for miles. At Horton River we were royally entertained by Patsy Wyant who ran a small trading post there. Patsy makes the best sourdough hot cakes in the country and we kept him busy before pulling out the following morning. From Horton River to Whale Bluff, a distance of about thirty miles, is usually rough travelling on the sea ice, so it is the custom to go up a narrow ravine to the top of the bluffs and travel overland. This ravine is about 5 miles north of Horton River and is the only place to get up on top in the whole stretch of coast line till you get to Whale Bluff, where there is a well built cabin for all to use. There was a bit of wind when we left in the morning, but we figured it was local and we would soon be clear of it. Patsy had given us all the information regarding the location of the ravine and we were quite sure we would have no difficulty in finding it. However, the wind picked up a bit and

we were well past the cut off before we realized it. The going so far hadn't been too bad, so we decided to continue rather than turn back. That was a mistake, the farther we got, the worse travelling we encountered. More than once we had to chop a path through the ice hammoks. It took us 16 hours to make Whale Bluff. We found out afterward, we were the only team to make it on the sea ice that winter, but that was something we never bragged about. After a good sleep and a good breakfast we were all set for the final dash to Baillie, and were agreeably surprised to find that by keeping close to the shore line, the ice was smooth all the way to the Island. We had to wait three weeks for the mail from Aklavik and as a result we were fat and lazy when it was time to start for home. There is a custom in the north that you might be interested in. The first two days after you arrive off the trail you are treated like visiting royalty, however, on the third morning you are rudely awakened and a frying pan shoved in your hand, a gentle hint that you have been promoted to cook. (Recorded 27/2/66).

On the day we left Baillie on our return trip, we were told by the Police interpreter that a native from Cape Bathurst was leaving the same day for Horton River, so rather than take a chance on missing the cut-off again, we decided to travel with him from Whale Bluff. He was going to Horton River alright, but what we didn't know at the time, he intended to follow his usual route, which was over his trap line, at one time we were 20 miles inland, instead of following the bluffs. However, it was smooth going, the weather was nice and we finally arrived at Horton River in good order.

After spending a day visiting with Patsy Wyant we started on the last leg of the trip home, it was the end of March, usually the coldest month of the year, but this was perfect. The days were long, the sun was high, and the dogs knowing they were getting close to home, travelled at a good pace,

with no urging needed. This was northern travel at its best and believe it or not, we were a little sorry when we arrived home at Langton Bay.

With all major patrols taken care of, the month of April gave us a chance to relax a bit. The dogs were kept in shape in case they would be needed for a quick trip, we hauled ice from the lake, fish from Tod Cod Bay, with occasional sweeps inland for Ptarmigan.

In May things started to liven up. The weather started to improve and with the sun overhead 24 hours a day, we were kept on the jump. Our favorite sport was now seal hunting. By making daily sweeps out over the ice in Franklin Bay we kept the cook supplied with fresh meat, Some people don't care for seal meat, which when fried is a black coal, but I never met anyone who didn't enjoy a nice feed of fresh seal liver.

About the middle of May we took a trip to Tom Cod Bay to break up the fish camp and bring in the gear. Pete Strandberg, a trapper who had wintered near the ship, asked up to keep an eye open for a watch, which he thought he had lost on the portage near Tom Cod Bay. Sure enough on the portage we found it. This is unbelievable along side the trail, sitting on top of a snow pinnacle about a foot in height was the watch, with the sun directly overhead, the surrounding snow settled, but the little snow pinnacle, protected from the sun's rays by the watch had remained intact, we picked up the watch, wound it up and it started working immediately.

Getting close to the end of May, first signs of water started to show on the ice close to the ship. This was the signal to start cutting the stern clear and whilst half the crew were engaged with this, the remainder started removing the winter housing. Everything as it was removed as numbered, starting from the bow, as well as a daub of red or green paint for port or starboard. Then all winter gear was stowed below. Then the coal and heavy

gear we had moved ashore to lighten ship was brought back aboard. We were very pleased to note that the thirty tons of soft coal in bulk, we had put ashore in the fall, when the "St. Roch" was driven on the beach, had diminished considerably during the nine months we were frozen in.

On June 1st the black gang started overhauling all the machinery. There were considerable repairs to the deck gear, both the winch and the windlass had been damaged in getting the vessel off the beach, the main engine and the auxilliary were given a thorough overhaul and everything was finished well before the break-up deadline.

The deck crew were lucky enough to get the hull painted before the ice started to candle. Walking over a stretch of candled ice is quite an experience. The first time I tried it, it scared hell out of me. Imagine millions of candles made of ice, standing on end, packed close together. They are usually about a foot in height. You step on them and they start to crumble, and you can't help thinking, am I going down a foot or all the way through. If you are unfortunate enough to be late coming home from a patrol, your dogs sure take a beating as the candled ice not only cuts their pads, but cuts their legs to ribbons. We always carried a number of dog moccasins made from moosehide or canvas, but when these are worn out the dogs have a tough time of it. They know they have to get home and will stay on their feet as long as possible, when they lay down its time to take them on the sled. Sometimes its a toss up whether the dogs bring you home, or you pull the sled yourself.

The crew also managed to get most of their painting finished before the mosquitoes became to numerous. Its quite a sight to see the boys painting away on a hot day wearing gloves and head net, cursing like a trooper because they can't smoke, for fear of setting the mosquito head net alight.

With the first sign of water forming on the ice, the dogs were moved ashore. When the ice became too dangerous to travel back and forth we put a man ashore to look after them. One of his chores was to smear grease on the nostrils, eyes and ears of each dog every evening, after feeding, as the mosquitoes just above drive them crazy. I don't think there is a spot on earth that breeds more blood-thirsty mosquitoes than the arctic coast. The natives call them kikeaks.

With patches of open water beginning to show, the ducks and geese started arriving in large numbers. In a short time they were there by the thousands. Talk about noise--for the first week or so it was difficult to get any sleep at all. However, they say you can get used to anything.

The ice moved out of Langton Bay on the 9th of July, and after bringing the dogs and all the equipment from the sand-spit aboard, we left for Herschel on the 11th, stopping at Baillie Island to pick up Parsloe. We arrived at Herschel on the 14th where we laid at anchor awaiting the arrival of the "Baychimo" from Vancouver with the next years supplies. During this time the first plane ever to reach Herschel arrived. A Dominion Explorers Puss. Moth, piloted by a chap named McMillan sat down in the bay on August 10th. The natives treated it as an everyday event, some of them had never seen a plane before, they just referred to it as a Tingmiak (which means big bird).

The "Bayshimo" arrived on August 12th and we immediately moved in alongside her for the transfer of supplies.

Due to the fact that the deck machinery had proven too light for the type of work it had been called upon to perform, we received instructions to proceed to Vancouver after delivering the yearly supplies to the coast detachments.

It was a good ice year and the trip to Cambridge Bay and return to

Herschel was routine and without incident.

At Herschel we took on water ballast for the trip outside. As the vessel is not equipped with ballast tanks it was necessary to fill our empty fuel drums with water and stow them in the hold.

Leaving Herschel on September 1st, the "St. Roch" was fortunate in encountering no ice at Point Barrow and it looked as if all our troubles were behind us. They were until we poked our nose through the Unamak Pass into the North Pacific. We ran into a three-day blow, that was the equal if not worse than anything we had thrown at us in the Arctic. For three days we didn't make an inch, we just held our own and crabbed along the coast. When the blow finally quit we were seventy miles off our course.

The remained of the voyage was uneventful and very much enjoyed by all aboard. The only event worth mentioning was on the trip down the Inside Passage. We missed the tide at Seymour Narrows, and went through broadside, but after what we had been through in the north, it wasn't even noticed. We arrived at Vancouver on September 23rd, 1929, and after discharging our cargo of oil drums at the Home Oil Dock the "St. Roch" proceeded to the Burrard Dry Dock, where she tied up for the winter, to be refitted in the spring for her next trip to the North.

It was here that I left the "St. Roch" for a while, as a matter of fact the next time I saw her was at Herschel Island during the summer of 1932, at which time I rejoined the vessel after a voyage to the eastern Arctic and a trip down the McKenzie River.

Although I was to spend quite a few years aboard the "St. Roch" and saw her pull herself out of some sticky situations, when I sit back now, and think about some of the things that happened on the maiden voyage, with her

green crew aboard, are the things most readily remembered.

Notes (in Margin)

1. Left Sydney, July 30th.
2. Aug. 12th at Fram Haven.
3. Sydney to Cape Sabin, 2,165
4. Sydney to Godhaven, 1,450
5. September 17th, sun disappeared.
6. February 23rd, saw sun rise and set in same spot
7. Godhaven to Fram Haven, 715.

Bache Peninsula Lat. 79 degrees, 4 Minutes, Within  
700 miles of North Pole

On May 4th, 1930, I left Vancouver bound for the Eastern Arctic. On arriving at Ottawa there was a slight delay whilst the draft for the various detachments was being assembled. Eight men, myself included were ordered to report at the Dominion Observatory at Toronto, for a 10 day meteorological course. This work was undertaken by the police to furnish the H.E. Watkins party, which had left England on the "Quest" for a years study of conditions in Greenland and Iceland with information pertaining to the Canadian end of the England to Canada Air Route. The observations taken three times daily were to include maximum and minimum temperature and barometer readings, do theodolite and balloon work and keep records of rain and snowfall, study and tabulate cloud formations, wind velocity and visibility.

An advance party was sent to North Sydney to check detachment supplies going aboard the Newfoundland Sealer "Beothic" which had been chartered by the Department of the Interior's North West Territories Branch for the 1930 expedition into the Eastern Arctic. The Commander of the expedition was George P. MacKenzie, who at one time had been gold commissioner for the Yukon.

Some of us were lucky enough to wangle a few days leave, and I was able to spend a few days with my parents at Fredericton, N.B. whom I had not seen

for 11 years, before reporting at North Sydney. By the 25th of July we were all assembled and ready to go. Accompanying the expedition were two artists, A.Y. Jackson and L. Harris, who were to paint Northern scenes for the Canadian government. Also aboard was Dr. Parsild, the scientist who represents the Danish Government in the administration of Greenland. He was on his way to Godhaven on Disco Island, the capitol of Northern Greenland.

With Capt. H.W. Stallworthy, I had been assigned to Bache Peninsula Detachment on Ellismere Island, which at that time was the farthest north post in the world (Latitude 79 degrees, 4 minutes, 668 miles from the North Pole).

We sailed from North Sydney, July 30th, 1930, through the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Straits of Belle Isle along the coast of Labrador then cut across to the southern tip of Greenland. At times, if conditions are right, when making this crossing, a change in color can be noted in the water, a greenish tinge from the north turning to blue to the south. We encountered rough weather in Baffin Bay, but made good progress arriving at Godhaven, Disko Island on August 6th. Dr. Parsild went ashore and we were given permission to land. No one is allowed on Greenland without the permission of the Danish Government. There are no free traders. All trading posts being operated by the government. After a few hours ashore to stretch our legs, we again headed north. We hugged the Greenland coast, as it had been ascertained that the Melville ice pack which is usually in the central portion of Baffin Bay, was well off shore. Two stops were made, one at Robinson Bay and at Thule. Thule now the site of a gigantic U.S. Air Base was at that time, except for two tiny prefab shacks transported from Denmark, on the shore just about the most desolate spot you could find, anywhere on earth. On arriving at Etah, Greenland's most northerly inhabited point, we swung

across Smith Sound to Cape Sabine, bucking heavy ice all the way, through Rice Straits and on to Fram Haven, on Aug. 11th, where three members of Bache Detachment, who were being relieved, had crossed Buchanan Bay in a whale boat and were awaiting our arrival. After a short consultation on ice conditions in general, it was decided to make a try to force our way through the heavily packed ice to the post. After working ice for a day we were within ten miles of the detachment, but increasing ice pressure forced us to turn back. We anchored behind Cocked Hat Island till the pressure eased. On the next attempt we reached Alexandra Fiord still about ten miles from home, or what was to be our home if we ever made it. As the ice was packed solid in front of us, it was decided to land some of the heavy supplies at Cape Alexandra. Drums of gasoline and kerosene and about 20 tons of coal were cached at this point.

By Aug. 16th it was apparent the vessel would be unable to cross to the Bache Detachment, under existing conditions, so the attempt was abandoned and the "Beothic" returned to Fram Haven, all remaining supplies were landed there. As soon as this operation was completed the "Beothic" left immediately for Winter Harbour on Melville Island. The purpose of this patrol was to re-provision the cache, established by the C.G.S. "Arctic" around 1908. The vessel would then proceed down the coast of Baffin Land landing men and supplies at the various posts. As soon as the "Beothic" left, Stall and myself, along with our Greenland Eskimo Noocappingwah loaded all the perishables we could into the whale boat and started our first trip for the post, by working the tides, and taking advantage of any small leads that opened up, we made the 35 miles in just over a day. After unloading, we slept for four hours and then with 2 days in tow started once more for Fram Haven. About 15 miles from the detachment we saw three walrus sleeping on

on a large ice pan (the whale boat was powered with a model T ford engine and made very little noise), and by holding a piece of board over the exhaust we were able to get within range without disturbing them. Stall was at the tiller and Noocapingwah and myself were in the bow with our rifles. With the engine idling we decided to get as close as possible. We were about 25 feet away from the pan before one of the Walrus lifted his head, luckily it was the one in the middle and he was facing the other way. The two outside were facing us. By arrangement, when Stall gave the word, the Eskimo and myself would put one round into each of the outside Walrus. Both of us would then fire at the one in the middle. It worked like a charm. We bagged the three of them with the total expenditure of four rounds of ammunition. One thing you learn early in this game, never try to kill a walrus with a head shot. You always shoot for the neck. The following spring during a hunt a walrus surfaced about three feet from our whale boat. I shot him right between the eyes with a 303 British high velocity. The bullet snapped his head back just enough for me to put a finishing shot in the neck. Our Eskimo hunter drove in a harpoon, otherwise we'd have lost him, as when killed, they immediately sink. After we got a line on the carcass and towed him ashore, I decided to find out what happened to the bullet I had put in his head. The skull was over four inches of solid bone and the bullet had penetrated half way. Walrus have been known to crash up through three or four inches of sea ice to obtain air, when caught by a quick freeze up. This only happens on rare occasions, as they usually move out of the Fiords and into the larger bays before freeze-up, where there is usually open water to be found.

Now to get back to our three walrus on the ice pan. We now had close to three tons of valuable dog feed to get to a safe place. We cut up one carcass and put the meat in the dorys, as soon as the walrus was opened up, Noocapingwah examined the stomach, and seemed quite pleased with what he found inside. The stomach was full of clams, and on picking them over he filled a tea billy with fresh ones that the stomach juices hadn't started to work on. The walrus apparently had been feeding a very short time before we discovered them. They sleep soundly on a full tummy which is probably why we were able to get as close to them as we did.

We then put lines in the remaining two and towed them off the ice pan, tying one on each side of the whale boat. We headed for a small island about five miles closer to the Post. As it was high tide we beached them there, and decided to have a meal whilst waiting for the tide to drop. We started up two primus stoves, on one went the clams and a big feed of walrus heart on the other. We were a little dubious about the clams, but on tasting them, we found to our surprise, they were as good, if not better, than any we had tasted fresh from the shell or out of a can. When the tide had receded enough for us to go to work, we cut up the remaining two carcasses and made a cache on the island. A survey from the top of the island showed ice conditions out in the bay toward Fram Haven weren't too good. So it was decided to return to the Post with the remaining Walrus we had kept in the dorys, take on provision and equipment (including Noocapingwah's Kyack, and his wife Enalungwah and head for the top of Hayes Fiord on a hunting expedition. Narwhal were supported to like the feeding grounds in this area, and we would be needing all the meat we could get, with over sixty dogs to feed.

There was still 24 hours of daylight and we intended to make the most of it. By the 22nd of August we were on location and ready to go. Narwhal are scary to hunt, so Noocapingwah would take off in his kyack, and when he made a kill, had only to call in a low voice as the high sheer walls of the Fiord acted as a sounding board and we would go out in the whale boat and bring in the bacon. In seven days of hunting in this manner, with very little sleep, we had three large caches containing Narwhal averaging around 1600 lbs. apiece and Ugyuk (bearded seal) which usually weigh around 1000 lbs. each as well as a dozen smaller seals which we shot with a .22.

With the caches full, we returned to the post. Akamalingwah, an old man of seventy but still active, the father of our hunter, had been left at the detachment to look after the dogs, so we found everything in good shape. The Eskimos employed at the Bache Detachment are Greenland natives from Etah. Permission was requested of the Danish government to hire northern Greenlanders, when it was discovered that the Baffinland Eskimos were unwilling to live on Ellesmere on account of the long dark period (which at Bache Peninsula was of five months duration). One native explained it this way, we get the "Piblocktoo" which is a polite way of saying it drives them mad.

Every minute of favourable weather we were out with whale boat and kyack on the prowl for anything we could use for dog-food. When we made a kill it was customary to head for the nearest point of land and make a cache in the rocks. These caches were numbered. Location and contents noted and on return to the Post would be entered in a ledger for future reference. At the Detachment were two large blubber tanks 8 x 6 by 4 ft high. These were kept full for home feeding. After freeze-up when on the move by dog team we would

pick up food from whatever cache happened to be nearest.

On September 4th ice started to form in the bay, and a week later we pulled our whale boat out for the winter.

The days were beginning to grow shorter and now there was a mad rush to get all the small jobs done that had been holding fire. All the meteorological gear had to be set up, and the records started. It was at this time we discovered we had no calendar. Luckily Stall had been keeping his pocket diary right up to date so there was no question about the day or the date. We then made a calendar of our own. In case you are wondering why all the bother about a calendar, I will explain the system we used during the dark period. The first thing we did in the morning was to mark a blue square around the date, and the last thing before retiring a red X inside the blue square, by using this double check system we made it without a hitch. It is sometimes a little confusing when it is as black at noon as it is at midnight.

As soon as the sea ice was safe to travel on, we began conditioning the dogs. In the Eastern Arctic the dogs are driven fan shaped as opposed to the Nome and the Landen hitch of the Western Arctic. The fan shaped hitch is far more effective for working rough ice, each dog is on a separate line usually about 25 ft. in length. These are threaded on to a bridle which is fastened to the sled. These bridles are carried in various lengths, and are often joined together in order to get the dogs out in the clear when working real rough sections of ice. Practically all travel on the east coast of Ellesmere is by sea, as the coast line is precipitous and the interior an ice cap 5000 feet high. In preparing for the period of darkness, we drove the same dogs over the same trail daily. Then when there was no moon, you hung a lantern on the sled and sat looking backwards. If you could see no sign

bring the ducks to the post, skin them and stack them like cordwood in a cleft in the rocks for winter use.

In October I started having trouble with my teeth, especially one of the molars in the left upper jaw. One morning I was working outside and it really started to jump, so drastic measures had to be taken. In going through the medical kit I found a couple of pairs of forceps. After gingerly trying them both I selected the pair that seemed to fit. Setting up a mirror on the table, I sat down, fitted the forceps over the offending molar and gave a tentative tug, wow, have you ever tried to pull one of your own teeth. My advice is, don't. Well it had to be done, so I went to work, wiggle, twist, then pull. After a minute or so of this I found the solution. By resting my front uppers on the corner of the table I was able to apply enough pressure and out it came. Boy, what a relief. The tooth had appeared sound as a dollar whilst in my jaw, but after it was removed, the cause of all the discomfort was readily apparent. From the back at gum level was a hole about the size of a pin, half way through the tooth. It sure felt good to have that tooth out, but I sincerely hope I never have to pull another. I had to have considerable dental work done on my return to Ottawa in the fall of 1931. My dentist stated, in his opinion, the main cause of all the trouble could be traced to the use of glacier water which contains no minerals.

Travelling during the dark period by dog team is quite an experience. We ran short trap lines, being allowed to trap for souvenirs. By doing this, both the dogs and ourselves got our exercise. As mentioned before, you hang a lantern from the handles on the back of the sled and you keep

looking backwards to check if your team is keeping to the trail. When the dogs turn in spread out and lie down, you know you have reached a set. Most of our sets were in the vicinity of the meat caches we had made during open water. You take your lantern and snow knife, walk through the dogs straight ahead and there is your trap. After picking up the catch, if any, and resetting the traps, you return to the sled, hang up the lantern and sit down, the dogs immediately swing out on the main trail and continue on to the next set. Usually no word or comment is necessary, as a matter of fact it's so quiet you hate to make a noise.

Sometimes the dogs will wander off the trail and if you are unable to find it immediately, the best plan is to stop the team, and, sitting on the sled, start slowly in a circle. What you are looking for is called land loom and usually after a few minutes you will be able to pick up the dark line of the cliffs that show up just a shade darker, and if there is no wind it is usually fairly easy to discern if you concentrate. Once you have picked this out you head your team in the desired direction and go merrily on your way. In case you are wondering why we don't use a compass, we are about 500 miles north of the magnetic pole, and they are quite useless. The needle just keeps turning in a crazy circle.

I was standing at a window of the detachment one evening, watching Stall untangling his dog lines by lantern light. When he finished this chore he picked up the lantern and started out along the trail leading out into the bay. After watching him for a few minutes I went outside and shouted. He then returned to the post. When I asked him where he was heading for, he gave a chuckle and said, you won't believe this, but I thought I was heading for home.

Stall, who was a seasoned arctic veteran, wouldn't have gone very much farther before realizing something was wrong, and he would know how to rectify it, but the point is, living as we were in total darkness, you have to check and double check before you make a move.

The storehouse has to be built at least 75 feet from the detachment. This is a safe guard in case of fire, and during the winter months you are supposed to rig a life line from door to door, in case you should require something during a blow when visibility is nil.

Another little yarn to illustrate how confusing it can be travelling in the dark. One of the chaps who had been stationed at Bache Detachment the previous year, was returning from a patrol to Cape Camperdown at the end of the Peninsula. At the estimated time of arrival the two other members at the post would go outside periodically and listen. When they heard him shouting at the dogs, that was the signal to start a hot meal for the weary traveller. When the meal was ready, they went outside to assist in the unloading of the sled, but their pal was nowhere to be seen. After standing outside for some time they heard him shouting at the dogs again. They naturally assumed he had stopped to untangle the dog lines, and went back inside, as it takes from 20 to 30 minutes from the entrance of the bay to the post. Another half-hour elapsed and as he had not arrived one of the boys took a lantern and started walking towards the point. Just off the entrance of the bay is a small island and on reaching the point he could hear sounds from the direction of the island. He waved the lantern and shouted to attract attention and shortly after a dog team loomed up out of the darkness. What had happened was easily explained. Having swung a little too far out into the bay, our friend had passed close to the island but on

the outside, bearing in mind that you always keep the land on your right. He had circled the island twice and would have made it the third time had he not been flagged down by his pal from the post.

By keeping ourselves occupied with the various detachment duties, the dark period finally came to an end. On the 22nd of February there was a little glow on the eastern horizon and a big event happened the following day. The tip of the sun just showed. The next day we got our first full look at the sun in five months as it just sat on the horizon and then slowly sank out of sight again. With the return of the sun the temperature started to drop, and during the first part of March we got the coldest readings of the year. During the dark period the temperature never went lower than 30 below, but during the first half of March, it would dip to forty and sometimes 50 below, then warm up to about 10° for a blizzard.

Early in March, Stall started preparations for a patrol to Axel Hieberg Island situated off the west coast of Ellesmere, to search for Dr. Kruger, a German scientist who had reported at the Bache Detachment during the spring of 1930 accompanied by a native guide with a permit to collect mineral samples on the west coast of Ellesmere and Axel Hieberg Island. He had stated he would establish a base camp at Depot Point on Axel Heiberg, and expected to return to Bache late in the fall of the same year.

As soon as the weather would permit Stall and Noocapingwah with two teams would cross the Ellesmere Ice cap and get the search underway. Around the middle of March the weather started to clear and they immediately took off. The first days travel is to the bottom of the glacier at the head of Flagler Fiord. The following day you start to climb, if the going is tough you split your load in half and make two trips to the first camp.

It usually takes 2 days to get to the top of the ice cap which is 5000 ft. and a half day to descend on the west side into Bay Fiord. If you are unfortunate enough to encounter a blow whilst on the ice cap the first move is to chop two converging holes in the ice, hook a heavy skin line through and tie the sled down. Otherwise you are apt to see your outfit take off. The patrol went direct to Depot Point on Axel Hieberg, but found no sign of the missing men. It is customary when travelling through unfamiliar territory in remote regions of the north to build a cairn on some prominent point of land and enclose a container of some sort with a record, containing information as to who you are, what you are doing in that part of the country, where you are going next, and the date. After a fruitless search of Axel Hieberg the patrol circled north for a couple of days and then started down the west coast heading for Craig Harbour on the southern tip of Ellesmere, where there was an old police post, abandoned in 1926, the year the Bache Peninsula Detachment was established. It was just possible that the missing party had headed in that direction, intending to make use of these buildings rather than attempt to climb the ice cap in the late fall when the days are very short and the weather uncertain. No sign of camp sites or anything resembling a cairn was noted on the trip down the west coast and on arrival at Craig Harbour it was apparent that no one had used the living quarters, as the kitchen was full of drifted snow. There were, however, ample signs of the presence of Polar Bears, and it looked as if one of the playful ones had put his paw through one of the small glass panels in the upper half of the door, almost a ton of snow had to be shovelled out before the patrol could move in. After giving the dogs a

short rest the patrol continued, now working up the east coast of Ellesmere. There was the odd chance that Dr. Kruger might have crossed the island farther south than intended and come down Mackinson Inlet. This Inlet was carefully scrutinized, up one side and down the other. On the trip up the coast results negative. The patrol arrived back at the Post during the second week of May, and after being along for two months we just about talked each others head off. As can be imagined the failure to find any sign of the Dr. and his guide was the main topic, and this was rehashed from all angles. For one thing, it has been said that in this country the only safe way to climb a glacier is to follow polar bear tracks, that is if you can find them. They must have built in radar, for in some instances the tracks show that the bear has stopped, carefully back tracked and then swing off at right angles from his original course. If you sound with a harpoon shaft, ahead of where the tracks stopped you will find a snow bridge over a crevass. On one of his trips up the glacier from the head of Flagler Fiord, Stall broke through just such a snow bridge and slid down around fifty feet before his descent was checked. He had been lucky enough to break through in a spot where the crevass narrowed to a mere crack, otherwise, it is hard to say how far he might have fallen as they took a sounding by tying all their available line together, but were unable to reach the bottom. Noocapingwah had no trouble pulling Stall out with a line, but supposing that the Dr. and his guide with their one team of dogs had one of these snow bridges collapse under them whilst unknowingly passing over a wide crevass. The whole outfit could disappear without having a trace. Or there is the possibility that he might have broken through the ice whilst crossing from Ellesmere to Axel Heiberg. This is not as far

fetched as it sounds. We had an example within 3 miles of the post at Bache. At the mouth of Flagler Fiord is a spot which opens up in January and again in March. Stays open for about 2 days then freezes over, and a couple of days later you can drive your dogs over the spot. Our theory is that being a bottle neck, at certain tides the rushing water just wears the ice through.

However, the search for Dr. Kruger will be continued. Stall intends to ask for another man when the supply ship arrives in August, and also will hire two more Greenland natives with their dog teams to assist in the search.

During the latter part of May along with the good weather and twenty four hours of sunlight, we were visited by ten or more families from Etah Greenland. Their arrival couldn't have been better timed as we were all set to start hauling supplies from the cache at Fram Haven. We hired the lot and with a dozen teams at our disposal we emptied the cache in short order. After a short visit the Greenlanders returned home with the exception of two young eskimos with good dog teams which were hired to assist in the full scale search for the Kruger expedition. The natives from the Greenland coast, are loathe to camp on the ice in Smith Sound, so they usually made the ninety mile trip from Etah to the Post at Bache in one jump.

As soon as conditions would permit we moved out on the sea ice bordering Smith Sound to get the spring hunt under way, as we now had ninety dogs to feed and that would require plenty of meat. The first kill was a large ugyuk or bearded seal, weighing around 1000 lbs. It is fascinating to watch these natives move heavy objects. They were unable to pull the ugyuk up on the ice with a straight pull, so by knotting a series of loops in their skin line, they manufactured a very effective block and tackle and

walked the big bull up on the floe with no trouble at all. After examining the hide, it was decided to use the central portion for new skin line, a cut was started just back of the front flippers and continued around the carcass. Then another circular cut around the body was made about three feet back from the first, by working under the hide with a knife, it was freed and slipped off over the hind flippers. Thus, by cutting a strip 1 inch wide, and continuing the cut around the edge, you have a line of considerable length. This is then taken ashore and strung across a ravine and tied together and hung from the middle. At intervals more weight is added until the line has been stretched to 1/2 inch in width. When this line has been softened it is very easy to handle and has great strength.

Seals were plentiful and we were soon hauling meat ashore by the sled load and caching it in the rocks in future use. One of the Narwhal harpooned was a female, and when opened up contained a calf, which was the cause of much rejoicing amongst the natives. Unborn Narwhal cut into thin strips and sun dried is a much prized delicacy.

Narwhal blubber is always saved by the Greenland Eskimos for their stone lamps when rendered down they claim it is far superior to seal blubber, as it burns clear and does not smoke. The male Narwhal sports an ivory tusk, which points straight ahead, a little offset, usually to the left of centre of the head. Some claim these tusks grow to a length of 12 ft, but the longest one I ever saw was 7 ft. Most of the Narwhal we killed had broken tusks. These are straight and tapered with a twisted grain, and have a tiny hollow running the full length of the tusk. The Greenland natives claim these tusks are used for plowing the bottom in search of food. I have never met anyone who has seen the males fighting, they appear to be very timid and are hard to hunt.

The first male Narwhal our hunters harpooned, interested us very much. One little item I remember was Noocapingwah sliding the blade of his knife under the fold of rubbery skin at the base of the tusk and flicking out what resembled a tiny crab about the size of my thumb nail. These were later identified as whale lice and were present on all Narwhal we killed.

After ten days at the floe edge, the shore ice started to move, and that was the signal for us to move in a hurry. Loading our gear which included 3 kyacks and 1 small dingy with runners, we worked our way deeper into the bay hunting at the open leads as we went. The first part of the journey was kind of tricky, if the lead was too wide to jump we would put a longer bridle on to the dog lines to lengthen them to about fifty feet. Then you put your boss dog in the water and he swims the lead, the rest of the team follow, when they are all safely on the other side you stand on the back of the sled, crack your whip and off they go on the run. When the sled hits the water, it starts to slowly sink by the stern, how far it will settled in the water depends a lot on the speed of the dogs, but usually you can cross a twenty foot open lead without getting wet above your knees. The nose of the sled is tilted up in the air and when you hit the ice on the other side you come out with a jerk that will almost snap your head off.

The ice moved out of Buchanan Bay late in July and we switched from dog teams to whale boat and the hunt went on. Anything the dogs could eat, Walrus, Narwhal, seals of all sizes, they were all grist for the mill.

We usually had two natives with us with their kyacks which we stowed in the whale boat one on each side of the engine. When walrus were sighted,

we would put them over the side and wait for results. Watching these Greenland hunters in their kyaks is a real treat. They will tell you, never get between a walrus and open water, but thats just what they do. I've seen them slip up on a sleeping walrus so close that the prow of the kayak is practically touching the ice pan. Before they throw the harpoon. Then they sit for a second to see which way the walrus is going to turn before he starts his scramble for the water. The hunter has to position the kayak so the coiled line, the drag and the seal poke float will run off the deck immediately behind him when the walrus sounds. The drag is a foot square frame covered with seal hide. With a line from each corner, these four lines converge into one which is in turn fastened to the harpoon line. This acts as a very effective brake and slows the Walrus down considerably. As soon as the mammal takes to the water we follow the bobbing seal float and get in a shot every time the walrus surfaces. You have to place your shots carefully otherwise there is a possibility of cutting the harpoon line, and that would mean the loss of a tone of meat, to say nothing of a feed of clams.

1931 was an exceptional ice year. On the 10th of August we left Bache Det. to camp at Fram Haven awaiting the "Beothic". Buchanan Bay was clear of ice, not a berg or a floe in sight, and it looked as tho the "Beothic" would make the run to the post, something she had been unable to do since the post was established in 1926.

The supply ship arrived on the 12th and we had a hard time convincing Capt Falk that the way was clear. The run to the post was made at full speed and the unloading was completed in record time. If things showed signs of slowing down, the Capt. would stop his pacing up and down the

bridge long enough to yank on the whistle. He was a happy man when we were back in the bay heading for Fram Haven. I was a passenger, having been relieved to go outside for dental treatment. We crossed Smith Sound to the Greenland coast, stopping at Etah and Robinson Bay to see if we could pick up any loose ends on Dr. Kruger, also to land our old friend Akamalingwah who had decided he would like to go back home and die among his people. This native was over seventy and had been very active up to the spring of 1931 at which time he started to fail rapidly.

This old Joker had quite a sense of humor, during the spring he had been raising six fine looking pups, and I don't mind admitting we had our eyes on them, and figured when the time was ripe, to start dickering for them. However, they started to disappear, one at a time, When they were down to two I enquired as to their whereabouts. He just gave a toothless grin and rubbed his stomach.

After concluding our business on the Greenland side we recrossed Smith Sound heading for Craig Harbour on the southern tip of Ellesmere, where we landed supplies and thirty ton of coal. Landing coal at this point is a real man killer. The supply ship anchors about one mile off the beach, and the coal is lightered as close to the shore as possible, then all you have to do is hop overboard into ice cold water knee deep and pack the wet sacks up the beach to a spot well above high water.

The replenishment of Craig Harbour stores could only mean one thing, the force was getting the ground work done so the Bache Peninsula Detachment could be abandoned at the first favorable opportunity. This would come as no surprise as the chances of getting supplies to the Bache Det. by supply ship every year were indeed remote. As a matter of fact when the

1932 expedition failed to make contact, the post was closed in the spring of 1933 and the personnel moved out by dog team and reopened Craig Harbour. Just for the record, in eight attempts to reach Bache Detachment the supply ship made it only twice.

After leaving Craig Harbour we stopped at Cape Sparbo to look over the musk ox herd, and whilst doing so we also examined the rock and sod hut where it is claimed Dr. Cook wintered on one of his attempts to reach the North Pole.

Our next stop was Dundas Harbour in North Devon Island to land supplies. This spot is noted for winds of high velocity. The year after it was established, the N.C.O. in charge requisitioned for heavy chain to moor the buildings down.

Here's a little note I would like to add with reference to Bache Peninsula Detachment. At Herschel Island during the summer of 1934 I received a letter from Stall in which he told me he was leaving for Denmark to join the Oxford Expedition as northern advisor. This expedition was headed by a young gentleman named Shackleton, who was following in the footsteps of his famous father. Stall further stated they would sail to Etah, pick up dog teams and our old friend Noocapingwah, cross to Ellesmere and make their headquarters at our old home on the Bache Peninsula. From there they would explore the northern end of Ellesmere Island, especially the area around Lake Hazen.

The patrol then crossed Lancaster Sound, through Navy Board Inlet into Eclipse Sound and on to Ponds Inlet where we found our arrival had been anxiously awaited as one of the Detachment members had injured his right hand, blood poisoning developed and he was in bad shape. Luckily we had

Dr. Peter Heinbeck on board, Professor of Surgery from the University of Washington who was carrying out scientific experiments amongst the natives of the Greenland coast and Baffin Land, as well as Dr. Livingston who was on his way to the hospital at Pagnistung in South Baffin land. Preparations were immediately made for an emergency operation. I was told my assistance was needed, so fortified by a few hefty shots of rum, I presented myself at the scene of operations. My duties appeared to be very simple, all I had to do was to keep lifting the patients arm, at a nod from Dr. Livingstone, who was the anaesthetist. When the patient was completely under, the arm would drop, so I was told, with a thud. But with the smell of the ether and the rum I had consumed, it was a toss-up as to whom was going under first. Finally, after what seemed an hour, the hand hit the table. Dr. Heinbecker who had been standing, looking very relaxed and bored with it all, pounced on it like a hawk. He made two deep incisions in the palm and there in the back of the hand before I had time to blink, after waiting a few moments for all the pus to run out, he inserted drains and put on dressings. Then looking at me he said, thank you for your assistance. I suppose you could do with some fresh air. Brother, did I take off. The patient was due for a trip outside, so he moved aboard the "Beothic" and by the time we reached North Sydney, about three weeks later, was as good as ever. I'll bet I will remember that operation longer than he will.

Our next stop was Pagnistung in Cumberland Sound, where we lost Dr. Livingstone who moved ashore to take charge of the local hospital. It is hard to realize that a spot as remote as Pang is south of the arctic circle.

The remainder of the trip was a regular Cooks tour. We landed supplies at Lake Harbour on the Baffin land side of Hudson Strait and then on across Hudson Bay to Chesterfield Inlet. On the return trip whilst rounding the end of Southhampton Island we almost lost one of the stewards overboard. He was cleaning fish on the after well deck when we took a big over the rail. When the deck cleared all the fish were gone through the scuppers and the steward was half over the rail. Luckily, he had been able to get a good grip on a ringbolt and we almost had to pry him loose.

We next made a call at Cape Hopes Advance to pick up a native who had been foolish enough to pull a shot gun off the roof of his hut by the end of the barrel. The trigger snagged something and the gun discharged and took all the flesh off the under side of his right forearm. We later put him aboard the government ice break N.B. McLean when we met that vessel in Hudson Strait.

Our last port of call on our way out was Port Burwell at the outer tip of Ungava Bay. This is quite a spot. The post is at the head of a long inlet, they get tides up to 45 feet and are forced to anchor their boat about 2 miles from the Detachment, in order to keep it afloat at all times.

The trip down the Labrador coast through the Strait of Belle Isle and on to North Sydney was made in perfect weather and very much enjoyed by all aboard. We arrived at North Sydney on the 20th of September and the next day left for Ottawa by train. The end of an interesting experience in the Eastern Arctic.

The Greenland Eskimos have the utmost patience in the making of equipment for instance, if they decide they would like ivory runners on their sled, that is no problem at all, provided they have plenty of ivory on hand. The ivory tusks are sawn into strips 1-1/2 inches wide, six inches long and 1 inch thick. It will take from 28 to 30 pieces for each runner. These are then carefully drilled, two sloping holes in the end of each six inch piece match up, and are lashed together with fine skin line, then each piece is drilled and lashed to the wooden sled runner and when the job is finished, the only lashing visible is where it goes through the runners. Ivory runners wear well, and a sled equipped with them moves easily, even when loaded to capacity.

Another piece of equipment worth mentioning is a northern Greenland skin tupik or tent. They are made of seal skin scraped very thin. The skins used in the back part, or sleeping portion of the tent, are left in their natural dark color, whilst the front portion is of bleached skins (this is done by pegging them out on the snow in the spring) and from the inside is as effective as a window, two eight foot uprights fit into a short ridge pole, which is located across the top instead of running from front to rear. These tupiks can be erected with remarkable speed. Two people flip the poles in the air and another drops a few rocks around the perimeter of the skin walls. Someone once said, coming events cast their shadows before. During the winter of 1931 the man known as Albert Johnson, the mad trapper of Rat River, went on a rampage in the north and before he was finally killed in a running gun battle with a posse composed of Mounted Police, members of the Signal Corps and trappers, he had killed one member of the force and wounded another. Also wounded was a member of the Signal

Corps. I was stationed in Ottawa at the time, and when the news broke I had an idea there would be some transfers of personnel in the offing. The member of the force who was killed and the constable wounded were both friends of mine, and when it was ascertained that the wounded member of the Signal Corps was from Fredericton, N.B., my home town, I felt that I had more than a passing interest in the proceedings. Some weeks later the Sgt. Major told me to report to the Adjutants Office. On the drive down to headquarters, there was the smell of spring in the air, and more than once I found myself looking at the sky. It suddenly dawned on me knowing that I would soon be on the move again, I was looking for signs of the birds heading south. The Adjutant of the Force is a busy man, when he sends for you, it isn't to enquire after your health. He wants to put you to work. This visit was no exception. Johnson, the mad trapper, he said, had punched a couple of holes in the northern ranks. These had been filled immediately, but this caused a reshuffle of men going in to relieve those due to come out. I was instructed to proceed to Edmonton immediately on arrival, there I joined the party for the trip north. We travelled by train to the end of steel, then by Hudsons Bay water transport. From Waterways to Fort Fitzgerald, across the portage to Fort Smith, then on down the McKenzie by the Distributor, dropping the relief men at the various posts as we went. Aklavik was the end of the line for the remaining three men. I proceeded on to Herschel Island by small schooner as soon as the ice moved out from the mouth of the delta. And rejoining the "St. Roch" on her arrival there from winter quarters. Since I said goodbye to the old girl at the Burrard Dry Dock in North Vancouver in the fall of 1929, I had travelled over 30,000 miles. That's coming home the long way round.

The "St. Roch" arrived at Herschel on schedule and I was given a warm welcome on reporting aboard. Andy, Henry, Kells and old dad Parry, were all that remained aboard of the crew that finished the maiden voyage. Henry had stepped up another notch since I last saw him, and was now a Sergt. While waiting at anchor for the arrival of the H.B.C. supply ship which in 1932 was a charter ship called the "Karese, Henry told me of one of the last good deeds performed by the old "Baychimo" before she was abandoned in the ice off the Alaskan Coast. Shortly after returning to the north in 1930, the "St. Roch" ran hard aground on a rock ledge whilst working ice near the entrance to Cambridge Bay, Victoria Land. Working around the clock a goodly portion of her cargo was lightened ashore before the "Baychimo" arrived two days later. Having been in touch by wireless, she had towing gear ready, and after a couple of tries had the "St. Roch" off the ledge and back in deeper water. It was fortunate indeed that a vessel of the "Baychimo's" size and power was available, otherwise the story might have had a different ending. Then it was just a matter of getting the cargo off the beach and back aboard. Nearing the end of this operation, it started to blow, and on one of the last trips to the beach, the launch was pooped by a big one and started to sink. Luckily she was tied fast to the ship's lighter and didn't go to the bottom. With some little difficulty the launch was raised enough to start bailing and after a little coaxing the engine was going once more and the operation brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

At Herschel, with the arrival of the H.B.C. supply ship from Vancouver, we took aboard detachment supplies and started out in our usual trek along the Arctic Coast as far east as Cambridge Bay. On arrival at that point we saw that the poor old "Baymaud" had given up; and had sunk at her mooring.

Apparently she was leaking so badly the pumps couldn't keep up, and she had just settled to the bottom, with only her masts showing above water. Chalk up another win for the Arctic and the sad ending for Amundsen's famous ship.

We then steamed for our winter quarters at Tree River in Coronation Gulf and arrived there during the first week of September. As soon as the anchor was down, three members of the crew left for the cut banks up Tree River to establish a fish camp. It all boils down to this, if you can catch 3000 Char before freeze-up, you won't have to cook for the dogs, and believe me the boys sure try. To show how much they hate cooking dog food, they have been known to set nets under the ice in the river, and fish up to Xmas, and by that time the ice is usually about four feet thick.

In setting nets under the ice you chop holes about 5 feet apart in a line to the required length, then drop a weighted line down the first hole and fish it up through the second with a long pole which has a hook on the end for that purpose. Then move on and bring the line up through each hole in turn until you have the line stretched from the first to the last hole under the ice, then tie on one end to the net, feed it down through, and pull it along under the ice. When you come to the end of the net, you tie on a 2 x 4 about sixt ft long which has holes drilled in each end. The 2 x 4 is placed in an upright position and packed with slush to hold it till it freezes. This is done to prevent cutting the line the next time you chop out the end holes to inspect the net. Fishing under the ice in the north is in my estimation just about the coldest job in the world.

During the four years the "St. Roch" wintered at Tree River, one of the last things to be attended to before leaving each year, was the visit to the little burial plot near the old post at the mouth of the river. The

head stones usually needed straightening and the railings touched up with paint. Where there had been two graves, Cpt. Doak and Otto Bender, another had been added. In the summer of 1932 a trapper named Fritz Schurer found his last resting place along side of them. Capt. Doak of the Mounted Police and Otto Binder, Post Manager for the Hudsons Bay Co. were shot at Tree River in the early twenties by a native called Aligomick, who was later hung at Herschel Island for the crime.

Fritz Shurer was shot at Cape Barrow during the winter of 1931 by an Eskimo woman named Kobuella. Fritz Shurer came to the Arctic coast in the summer of 1931 as second mate on the "Patterson", operated by the Northern Whaling and Trading Co. from San Francisco. Shurer liked the north and decided if at all possible to remain and trap for a living, but with very little money, and no experience at all in trapping, his only hope was to find a partner with the necessary experience, plus a good outfit. He struck pay dirt when he met Pete Brandt, one of the best trappers on the coast. Pete agreed to stake him to an outfit and show him the ropes, they would use Detention Harbour, in Coronation Gulf as a base for their operations.

If you intend spending much time on the trap line, you need a good supply of fur clothing, and that means obtaining the services of a good seamstress. Shurer went to Wilmot Island to order winter clothing, and on leaving to return to Detention Harbour he practically kidnapped a dim witted woman in her mid twenties named Kobuella. Big, jovial, easygoing Fritz became very hot tempered and would fly into a rage, if unable to make the woman understand his needs. Pete Brandt on the other hand, spoke Eskimo, and being a kindly man tried to keep everything running smoothly. Kobuella was attracted to the older man and this didn't help matters. As Shurer got the idea she was spending all her time sewing for Brandt. Early in

December, Shurer forced the woman to accompany him on his trapline and it was during this trip that the terrified woman shot him with his own rifle. On the morning of December 12th, as he crawled out of the snow house, she was waiting for him and put three bullets in to him. He died instantly.

At the preliminary hearing aboard the "St. Roch" in January, 1932, Kobuella stated that Shurer had threatened her on numerous occasions with a knife, and told her he would shoot Pete if she didn't stop sewing for him. When on the fatal trip he loaded the rifle in front of her and said he would shoot Pete when they got back to the base camp. She became terrified, not only for Pete but for her own safety, and not knowing what else to do, she shot him.

At her trial the following summer Aklavik, the court ruled that in view of the fact Kobuella was feeble minded and not accountable, no action was to be taken and the woman was therefore returned to her people. This decree by the Court gave rise to much speculation amongst the coast Eskimos, several were heard to express the opinion that it was alright to shoot a white man, but if you killed a policeman, they hang you.

It is surprising how soon open water appears. Nine months frozen in the ice, to some it seems an eternity, but if you keep busy, time means nothing. We followed the ice out of Port Epworth (which is the name of the bay at the mouth of Tree River) during the last week of July, 1933 and after a short stop at Coppermine to put our dogs ashore for the summer, we headed for Bernard Harbour, but were slowed down by heavy pack ice near Cape Krusenstern, at the entrance to Dolphin and Union Strait. We expect trouble at this point (which is a bottle neck) and we usually get it. This

is where the Hudson's Bay Co. vessel "Fort James" was crushed and sunk by the worst concentrations of big ice in years, during the 1935 Navigation season. The "St. Roch" was also caught at the same time, but managed to survive and was able to rescue the crew of the "Fort James" when they were forced to take to the ice. Capt. Summers, the last man to leave the doomed vessel had to leave in such a hurry he was forced to leave even his dentures behind.

On arrival at Bernard Harbour, we anchored well off shore, as the bay was full of slob ice, and went ashore in the ships launch with the small scow to pick up gear from the detachment. The northerly wind that had packed the strait with ice was still blowing, so we were well bundled up. On reaching shore I jumped from the launch on to the afterdeck of the scow, slipped on a patch of oil and cartwheeled into the icy water. Luckily it wasn't over five feet in depth, as I went clear to the bottom, which wasn't surprising as I was encased in a sweater, a heavy leather windbreaker and a pair of hip waders. After some difficulty I scrambled ashore and then back aboard the launch, casting off from the scow I headed for the "St. Roch". By the time I reached her my clothing was so stiff the crew had to haul me aboard, like a pack of coal. I never believed water could be so cold in the so called summer. After polishing off nearly a bottle of brandy my teeth still chattered and my bones ached for a week afterward. I remember Bernard Harbour, but they are not fond memories, I can assure you! On arriving at Herschel we received word that the "Anyox" carrying the annual supplies from Vancouver had been damaged by ice, in the vicinity of Point Barrow, and had been forced to return to Vancouver. We received instructions to remain at Herschel until supplies were transhipped down the MacKenzie to Aklavik and then by a fleet of schooners to

engine  
for Col.  
River  
fishing  
boat)

Herschel. In about three weeks time the supplies started to arrive and loading commenced. We always thought we were overloaded on leaving Vancouver with 165 tons aboard, (the "St. Roch's registered tonage is 80.07) but by the time we had the Hudson's Bay Post supplies as well as the Police Detachment plus our own ships supplies, we had 202 tons, aboard, which according to the Skipper's calculations was within four tons of our absolute limit. Rough weather was encountered crossing Liverpool Bay near Baillie Island and the tough little vessel fought every inch of the way. She would bury her nose into one wave and rise with a sort of a stagger to meet the next, but we never lost even a sack of coal from our enormous deck load, although anyone opening the forecastle hatch, took his life in his hands. After leaving Baillie, very little ice was encountered and the weather was perfect, but we were quite happy when Cambridge Bay was reached and we discharged most of our deck load. From there the run to winter quarters seemed like a holiday cruise. During the spring of 1934 one of our patrols from Tree River to Bathurst Inlet pick up an Eskimo named Kowtak for taking a shot at his son-in-law Oohukweluk. He was brought to Tree River and told to put up his tupik on the beach near the dog line.

One evening during the latter part of May, Kowtak took to the hills, on foot, heading for his home in Bathurst Inlet. Before the patrol sent out by dog team to bring him back and caught up with him at Wollaston Point he had covered a hundred miles. He had to keep on the move, as all he was wearing when he made his bid for freedom, was shirt, pants and a pair of skin boots, and he carried no food. When asked why he took off, he said he was worried about his family and was lonesome. We had his wife and family brought to Tree River and had no more trouble as he was quite happy in his little tent on the beach.

Kowtak had been in his younger days, a mighty hunter, once whilst jigging for fish through the ice, he was stalked by a polar bear. Kowtak tackled the bear, armed only with a snow knife, but came off second best as the animal swiped him over the head and split his skull. Some of his people were fishing nearby, and frightened the bear off. Kowtak recovered but was never quite the man he used to be.

During his trial aboard the "St. Roch" before Henry Larsen, J.P. he was asked if he fired a rifle at his son-in-law. He admitted that he had tried to shoot Oohukwelcik, when his authority was questioned, during a caribou hunt. This had never happened before, and must not be allowed. He then proceeded to apologize for missing, he was using an old worn out rifle and poor ammunition, but if he had a good rifle, he certainly would not have missed. He wanted to make sure his stature as a mighty hunter was not impaired.

Kowtak was found guilty of shooting at Oohukweluk, but the Skipper having had many long conversations with the old man, before the trial, was convinced he was getting senile, and had frequent lapses of memory, which could be attributed to his bout with the polar bear. So after giving him a good chewing out, sentenced him to a month at hard labour. Kowtak served his sentence at Tree River and became quite attached to the "St. Roch" and her crew. It was quite a blow to the old boy when we said goodbye and sailed out of the Bay. He was left standing on the beach slowly shaking his head while tears ran down his cheek.

After the spring overhaul in 1934 it was apparent that we were due for a refit. Practically all the pitch had been knocked out of our propeller from working ice for four years and our speed was reduced to four knots. Bucking a head wind we were lucky to make one. We were later

instructed to proceed to Vancouver at the conclusion of our regular summer schedule. The trip out was far from dull. We groped our way past Point Barrow in pea soup fog and later have two more days of the same, probing for the Bering Straits, on the third day the fog lifted and we found ourselves in under East Cape, Siberia. Believe me we got away from there as fast as our four knots would take us. Later in the Bering Sea, the skipper used sails whenever possible to make a little better time, and during a sudden gale, the top lift of the foresail carried away. It was around two in the morning and as black as pitch. It was quite a scramble while it lasted. Later after a good run across the Pacific we had four more days on Queen Charlotte Sound in pea soup fog. We would steam so many hours and then drift, hoping to hold our position till we made landfall.

Henry Larsen had by this time built up an enviable reputation as one of the best Arctic skippers in the business, and to me who has sailed with him for quite a few years, he was tops in Navigation too. On the evening of the fourth day, I went into the chart room where Henry was working out our position, when he had finished he made a small circle on the chart and said with a grin, there you are, right in the middle of that circle. The fog lifted the next morning and we were within one mile of where the Skipper had positioned us the evening before.

The run down the inside passage is to us a chance to relax and decide which pub we will visit first. It is usually the Anchor just outside the gate at Evans, Coleman and Evans. The voyage from Herschel to Vancouver with our beat up prop took 44 days.

As far back as 1576 men had been searching for the fabled North West Passage. Hundreds of men and ships by the dozen have been lost in various attempts to find a shorter route to fabulous Asia. Sir Martin Frobisher in 1576 was the first British Navigator to attempt to find the Passage. Frobisher Bay on southern end of Baffin Land was named by him. He is also credited with the discovery of Labrador.

Henry Hudson in 1609 attempted to discover the North west Passage. He discovered and named Hudson Strait, also Hudson Bay. He was later cast adrift in a small boat with eight members of his crew after a mutiny in 1611 and was never heard of after.

Sir William Parry in 1819 in command of the "Hocla" tried Lancaster Sound but was caught in the ice at Melville Island. The following year he was able to break clear and returned to England. He was half way through the Passage. He discovered Barrow Strait which connects Lancaster and Viscount Melville Sounds. He also discovered Melville Island.

Sir John Franklin made his first voyage to the Arctic in 1818. In 1819 and in 1825 he was again off to the Arctic in search of the illusive North West Passage, and in 1845 he started on his last and fatal voyage. Many expeditions searched for traces of the "Erebus" and the "Terror" without success. It was not until 1857 that Capt. McClintock in command of the "Fox" found traces of the illfated expedition along the shores of Boothia Peninsula. A cairn was discovered containing records that showed after having been hopelessly trapped in the ice off the northern end of King William Land, for 18 months, both ships were abandoned in 1846. The officers and crew then started on the long hopeless march south, none survived. According to records found in the cairn Sir John Franklin died June 11, 1847.

Sir John Ross sailed from England in 1829 in command of the "Victory" part sail, part steam. He was the first to try steam propulsion in Arctic waters. The attempt was a failure and after working his way down Prince Rupert Inlet into the Gulf of Boothia, he wintered at Victoria Harbour on the east side of the Boothia Isthmus. Here the steam engine having been proven useless was junked and dumped on the beach. After three closed years, Ross abandoned his ship in 1831 and with his crew started to work his way in small boats up the coast of the Boothia Peninsula hoping to salvage some stores from the "Fury" which had been part of Sr. William Parry's second Arctic expedition and had been wrecked on Somerset Island some years before. Ross wintered at the site of the wreck and the following summer, after losing several of his crew, the survivors made their way by small boat to Lancaster Sound where they were picked up by an English ship. Sir John Ross made one more voyage to the Arctic, an attempt to find Sir John Franklin in 1850. He died the following year.

Capt. McClure took part in the search organized to look for Sir John Franklin in 1848 and in 1850 succeeded in discovering the long sought Passage. He was given credit for his discovery although he never actually made it, as he was trapped and had to abandon his ship. On his return to England he was knighted by the Queen and awarded the sum of ten thousand pounds. The strait that bears his name lies between Banks Land and Melville Island.

It is interesting to note that the two men who first traversed the North West Passage were Norwegians. Amundsen from East to West, 1903 to 1906, losing one member of his crew. Larsen from West to East 1940 to 1942 also lost a member of his crew. Larsen's original plan was to use the more direct westerly route by way of Prince of Wales Strait into Viscount

Melville Sound. Blocked from this route by adverse ice conditions, he decided to try the longer easterly route used by Amundsen, with the following exception. Amundsen worked his way from Lancaster Sound through Barrow Strait and down Peel Sound. Larsen chose Bellot Strait, up through Prince Regent Inlet into Lancaster Sound. Here is a fact worth mentioning, Amundsen was born at Sarpsbork, Norway and Larsen at Fredrikstad, roughly about 12 miles apart.

It was spring, 1940 the "St. Roch" lay quietly at her berth in the old graving dock at the Naval Dockyard, Esquimalt, B.C. Shipwrights, Engine fitters, pipe fitters, electricians and their apprentices were swarming all over the ship. The refit was nearing completion and the installation of a new auxilliary Diesel which had just arrived from England was being speeded up to meet the deadline. Skipper Henry Larsen, just returned from Ottawa called me into his cabin. He was wearing a grin a mile wide, In all the years I had known Henry I had never before seen him so elated. After he figured he had kept me in suspense long enough he said, what I have to tell you is not to go any farther. You will not tell even your wife where we are going. I said O.K. and just where are we going? Henry took hold of my arm and in a voice that shook with excitement said, I have been ordered to take the "St. Roch" to Halifax by way of the North West Passage. I could now understand his excitement, for in the 12 years I had known the Skipper, he had often talked about his chances of some day being able to make such a voyage. Henry was a great admirer of R. Amundsen, whom he had met in 1921 at Seattle. After I had extended my congratulations, Henry instructed me to prepare a list of engine room requirements. Fuel oil, lub. oil and any spares I figured were necessary, which would be taken into the Eastern Arctic by the yearly supply ship and

cached at Ponds Inlet, Baffin Land, pending our arrival at that point.

By the first of June the new crew reported aboard. We who had been standing by during the refit, that is Sgt. H.A. Larsen, Skipper, Capt. M.J. Foster, Chief Engineer, Cst. F.S. Farrar, Mate and Cst. A.J. Chartrand, seaman, were joined by Cst. J. Frederich, second Engineer, Cst. J.M. Monette seaman, Cst. W.J. Parry, Cook, and Cst. E.C. Hadley, Wireless Operator, just before sailing we were joined by Cst. P.G. Hunt, on transfer to the Coppermine Detachment.

On June 9th, 1940 the "St. Roch" left Esquimalt for Vancouver to take on cargo at Evans Coleman and Evans Wharf, where 151 tons of coal, fuel oil and supplies for Western Arctic Detachments were taken aboard. As usual when we pulled out on June 21st we had an enormous deck load which necessitated the rigging up of bulwarks and life lines for the safety of the crew whilst crossing the Pacific. The old girl at times developed a nasty corkscrew motion, which could be very disconcerting to say the least. It has been said that the "St. Roch" always stays on top, but she'll break your neck doing it.

With a heavy deck load we usually figure on making a few adjustments on sailing, and in this case it was the new clutch installed on the fly wheel of the main engine to operate the deck machinery. Just off Point Atkinson this clutch seized up and could not be freed. On reporting to the Skipper that it would require lathe work to ensure efficient operation, he reluctantly returned to Vancouver where the necessary repairs were carried out. On June 23rd we set out once more and this time all went well. One stop was made at Alert Bay for a final checkover before leaving the shelter of the inside passage. The run across the Pacific was made without incident. Sails were used to advantage and no rough weather was encountered

till we sighted Unimak Pass. Strong gales were encountered in the Pass and we were forced to run for shelter to a well protected anchorage in a small cove on Akun Island. Frenchy who had the first anchor watch, set a hand line and gave the boys a treat by pulling aboard a nice chicken halibut. Two days later we were able to proceed to the whaling station at Akutan where fresh water was taken on. July 6th we arrived at Dutch Harbour, took on a consignment of fresh vegetables and topped off our fuel tanks. On Sunday the crew were entertained by the Officers and men of the U.S. Coastguard cutter "Shoshone". Adverse weather conditions kept us at Dutch Harbour till July 9th. We then headed for Teller to take on dry fish, bucking strong winds all the way. We arrived there on the 14th but were unable to enter the harbour till the following day due to strong sou-west gales. After a check on main engine we proceeded to Cape York, and in lashing rain and fog groped our way through the Bering Strait into the Beauport Sea. No land was sighted till we approached Cape Lishourne. We reached Point Hope on July 18th then travelled in heavy fog to Point Barrow arriving there on the 22nd of July, here we encountered our first ice. After rounding Point Barrow the ice got progressively thicker as we proceeded Eastward. On the 24th, the engines were stopped and we drifted with the pack. (NOTE: (July 23rd to August 12th to make the 400 miles from Point Barrow to Herschel Island).

1940 was definitely not a good ice year. There is a saying in the north that the wind blowing at breakup will be the prevailing wind during the navigation season, and this has been proven a good many times. Northerly and nor-westerly winds had brought old heavy ice down from the vast stretches of the Arctic Ocean. We made Cape Halket on the 25th and as

the ice was solid clean in to the beach, the Skipper decided to have a go at getting outside of the immense floe that was blocking our advance. We steamed north for several hours and then had to backtrack as more old heavy ice was moving down from the north. Henry Larsen had a nose for ice. He could smell a lead before there was one. Time after time from the mast head he would direct the ship into small bights in the floe just in time to save her from a bad squeeze. Beset by heavy ice he kept the "St. Roch" continually on the move and by taking advantage of tiny leads he was gradually moving eastward. During the night new ice was forming binding the floe together. By July 31st we had worked our way close inshore off Beechey Point, but to avoid being crushed we had to move out and sink our ice anchors into a large grounded floe. AS the pressure eased we would ram till there was room to squeeze through any small openings. Usually the ice would close in behind us curtailing our ability to manueuvre. Five days later we were caught in a pocket near Cross Island completely hemmed in by heavy ice. With the strong Norwest wind packing the ice ever closer to the shore, there was nothing we could do but sit it out. On August 10th the wind abated and by using our supply of ice bombs and ramming under full power we finally broke through to a ribbon of open water close to the shore. This was the break we had hoped for and after passing Barter Island the ice had slackened off enough for us to proceed at full speed. After playing hare and hounds with the ice pack for three weeks we arrived safe and sound at Herschel Island midnight, August 12th, 1940. Immediately on arrival we started refueling from a cache we had established in 1928. The following day the R.C.M.P. schooner "Aklavik" with the Officer Commanding the sub-division arrived and took aboard supplies we had brought in from Vancouver. Herschel Island once the largest settlement

in the Western Arctic was by now the proverbial ghost town. A flu epidemic in 1928 almost wiped out the entire population and the few that remained were scattered along the coast when the Hudson's Bay Co. moved their post to Tuktoyaktok near the mouth of the McKenzie River Delta. Tuktoyaktok is an Eskimo word meaning the place where the deer cross-- and is usually called Tuktuk.

On August 17th we left Herschel for Tuktuk but were forced to return owing to a heavy swell and strong easterly gales. As we still had our enormous deck load we were taking quite a beating. The following day we proceeded to Tuktuk where we discharged part of our deck load of coal. Here we lost Jim Frederich who was transferred to Aklavik Detachment. He was replaced by Cst. G.W. Peters as second engineer.

August 24th the "St. Roch" with the R.C.M.P. boat Cambridge Bay in tow started out on our eastward trek. Bad weather dogged us all the way, twice we were forced to run for shelter once at Pierce Point and again at Bernard Harbour as a result of these days we did not reach Coppermine until August 31st, 1940, Sixty-nine days out of Vancouver, having logged a distance of 4,253 miles. Detachment supplies were put ashore and with the supplies went another member of our little crew. Cst. Monette who had one of those stomachs that do not take to the sea was transferred to the Coppermine Detachment and Cst. Hunt who had been slated for that post remained aboard to replace him.

On September 2nd the "St. Roch" left Coppermine for Cambridge Bay. Before leaving we managed to collect three dogs. This was one of those years that made you wonder why you ever came to the North. Everything has to be done the hard way. We were beginning to think we would have trouble

getting a team together. Shortly after leaving Coppermine we ran into easterly winds and decided to anchor at our old winter quarters at Tree River and take on fresh water. We were using the Cambridge Bay boat we had been towing, and as luck would have it, she ran aground on a sand bar at the north of the fresh water creek. The tide was running out at the time and we had to leave her there over night. The following day she was refloated and the operation resumed. September 4th we were under way again bucking strong Nor-easterly winds and had to take shelter at Wilmot Island. This was the pattern all the way, head winds and pea soup fog. It was not until the morning of the 8th that we dropped anchor at Cambridge Bay. After landing detachment supplies we collected four more dogs and were also fortunate in hiring a native and his family, who also had a good team of dogs. The bad weather continued and it was not until the 10th that we were able to get out of the harbour. We were forced to take shelter twice before reaching Coppermine on September 16th. The mail plane was due so we decided to wait for the official mail. Due to adverse weather conditions and taking into consideration the lateness of the season and the fact that small parts were urgently needed for the main engine, the Skipper decided it would be useless to attempt to make the Passage, by way of Prince of Wales Strait, and would winter at Banks Land or Walker Bay on Victoria Island where spare parts could be obtained by plane to Coppermine and then on to us by dog team with the winter mail. Our next move was to check all possible locations for suitable winter quarters. On September 20th we anchored at Holman Island and Larsen immediately contacted an Eskimo named Natkogiak, who was also known as Billie Banksland. He had been one of Stefansson's men and knew Banks Land like the palm of his hand. Cape Kellott the first location mentioned, no good, too exposed, strong

currents and milling ice. Next, Sack's Harbour. No good, for a boat drawing more than 5 or 6 feet. DeSales Bay, best one so far, but its big, and no little islands to anchor behind. As the Skipper had instructions to visit natives on the west coast of Banks Land during the winter, he decided to take a long look at DeSalis Bay. We arrived at that point on the 22nd and anchored inside the sand-spit in 15-1/2 fathoms of water. DeSalis Bay on the south east corner of Banks Land was a bit oversized for safe winter quarters and on looking over the beach with our glasses we could see huge gravel bars pushed up by ice pressure at break-up. After spending two days looking the surrounding country over to locate a fresh water lake, the closest found was six miles distance. We pulled out and crossed over to Walker Bay, arriving there on the evening of September 25th. We anchored at winter cove for the night and the following morning moved to the South East portion of Walker Bay and anchored in a small cove in 10 fathoms of water. It was in this same cove that British Explorer Collinson wintered the "Enterprise" over a hundred years before. Total miles travelled to date from Vancouver to Walker Bay, 5,220. Steaming time 921 hrs. 50 min.

Everything now moved into high gear. First the "St. Roch" would have to be lightened as much as possible before freeze-up. First to go ashore were the dogs. Twenty tons of coal, and drums of fuel oil. Whilst this work was in progress two crew members were out setting fish and seal nets. Work was frequently interrupted by Sou-East Gales which would force us to move out from the beach into deeper water and drop both anchors. By September 28th all our drums of oil and gas were on the beach and more time could be spent trying to catch as many fish and seals as possible for dog feed.

The native we had hired at Cambridge Bay was a half-breed named George Porter. A jack-of-all trades, after setting up his quarters on the beach he went to work on a 45 gal drum with a cold chisel and hammer and after cutting out the central portion of the drum, he fitted the top section down over the bottom and finished up with a double walled stove 15 inches high. To this he fitted a small door from an old Quebec heater and stove pipe he had brought with him. For fuel he used peat, blubber and willow twigs. Over the tent which Porter had put up on the beach, he erected a frame work of lumber, this in turn would be covered by snow blocks as soon as available. Freeze-up in 1940 was the latest on record. This was mainly due to the strong easterly winds which moved the young ice off shore as soon as it formed. During the last week of October we erected the wooden frame work over the decks, preparatory to housing her in as soon as the ice formed. It was not until October 31st that the "St. Roch" was frozen in solid. Once the tarps were secured and the vessel was all snug for the winter we all trekked to the fresh water lake which had been selected, and cut the forty odd tons of fresh water ice that was to see us through the winter. During the winter patrols were made to Holman Island, Minto Inlet, Ramsey Island, Princess Royal Island, and Banksland and a check made to see that the N.W.T. Game Act was being observed.

We were no sooner settled in our winter quarters than we began to receive visitors. It is truly remarkable how moccasin telegraph works in this country. We had crossed over from DeSalis Bay to Walker Bay in foggy weather and had arrived at winter cove late in the evening, yet these natives, some from over a hundred miles away, knew we were there, and as soon as the ice was fit to travel on they arrived for a visit. You could tell at a glance that the hunting in this area had been good. The dogs

were all fat and the entire group, children and grown ups, were decked out in new deer skin clothing, and all their equipment was in good shape. A tall well set up Eskimo named Konaluk was the leader of the little group. Although he was not a chief, all the men respected his ability as a hunter and accorded him first place when they all lined up to shake hands. When this little ceremony was over our visitors were invited aboard to meet the cook, and as you can imagine Dad Parry was a very popular man. After a good meal and cigarettes all round the men moved to the beach and soon half a dozen snow houses were under construction. All the new members of the "St. Roch" crew were interested spectators. It was good training for them to watch and igloo being built by experts. What is fascinating is the crucial moment when the key block is carefully lowered into position, one false move before this block is inserted and the whole structure will collapse. In the week that the Eskimos were with us, Henry and Konaluk were continually pouring over maps of the district. Konaluk was a regular fountain of local information and we were all more than sorry to see them depart. Before leaving they extended cordial invitations to come and see them. Come and stay as long as you like. All you have to do is find them. Sometimes this is like looking for a needle in a haystack. The winter slipped by very comfortably. There was plenty of game and we always had a variety of fresh meat. It seemed as though we were just nicely settled down when it was time to start the spring overhaul. The spare parts required for the main engine had arrived with the winter mail patrol and by break-up everything was in perfect working order and we were all set for the tough season we all knew lay ahead. On July 31st, 1941 a change in the wind allowed the ice to slack off and we squeezed out of our snug little cove and were on the move once more. We were stopped by large heavy packed ice

near Pemican Point, but when the tide changes were able to work through and the "St. Roch" arrived at Holman Island that evening. Here we picked up a native boy, Jack Goose, who had been accidentally shot in the face whilst hunting. Leaving Holman Island we groped our way in thick wet got through vast fields of scattered ice. When visibility was reduced to zero we moored to a large floe to await clearing. Shortly after tieing up, there was a shout from the man on anchor watch. He pointed towards the bow and on looking over we saw three polar bear. They had been trying to come aboard, but the overhang proved too much for them as they couldn't get traction on the slippery bow plates. As we were not in need of fresh meat a shot was fired to scare them off. On August 2nd we were forced to anchor off Cape Bathurst in heavy fog and the following day we made Taker Point where we hove to in shallow water, it being unsafe to proceed owing to poor visibility. The water in this locality is from e to 5 fathoms. With the strong Nor East wind a heavy ground swell developed and the "St. Roch" started bumping the bottom. We were forced to come about and head for deeper water. We hit several times before we made it. Luckily being near the mouth of the MacKenzie River Delta the bottom was mostly sand, otherwise we might have been in trouble. By noon August 4th the weather moderated and we rounded Taker Point and reached Tuktuk the same evening.

The following day we started loading freight for Coppermine and Cambridge Bay Detachments. Jack Goose was put aboard the Police Boat from Aklevik enroute to hospital. Loading completed we left for Coppermine on August 8th before leaving, we took aboard two native boys from the Anglican Mission at Aklavik who were being returned to their people. Scattered ice was encountered till we passed Baillie Island then we ran into large

unbroken floes, we by-passed these by swinging down into Franklin Bay. On August 10th we practically scraped the beach at Booth Island working inside a floe that was at least 10 miles long, Various leads were worked till we eventually passed Pierce Point. Shortly after we worked out way to open water and reached Krusenstern on August 12th. After landing the native boy David Adam we proceeded to Coppermine arriving there on the same day.

Detachment supplies were unloaded and empty drums taken aboard. We left for Cambridge Bay on August 14th and for a change had favorable weather and we dropped anchor at that point on the evening of the 16th. After discharging supplies all spare fuel oil drums were emptied into our tanks, the drums were then filled with water and stored in the hold for ballast. Jimmie Pancktuk was put ashore and the "St. Roch" left Cambridge Bay at 1:30 p.m. August 19th. This to us was the start of the big adventure. We were about to enter waters where no vessel of the St. Roch's draft had ever ventured before. Bad weather now started to plague us. We had to anchor at Simpson Rock until the 20th when we moved into Queen Maud Gulf. Owing to the proximity of the magnetic pole, the ships compass was now useless moving eastward we made Lind Island where we were forced to anchor for four days due to adverse weather. When visibility proved better we worked out way eastward taking frequent soundings. On the morning of August 25th we sighted King Williams Land and during the afternoon anchored in the entrance to Simpson Strait, where the Ships launch went on ahead to find a passage through the numerous small rocky islands in the Strait. The bottom was found to be uneven but we found more water than we had expected. On August 27th we dropped anchor at Gjoa Haven, Peterson Bay. This is