

BOB BARTLETT

Master Mariner



Fitzhugh Green

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Title: Bob Bartlett—Master Mariner

Date of first publication: 1929

Author: Fitzhugh Green (1888-1947)

Date first posted: Apr. 14, 2022

Date last updated: Apr. 14, 2022

Faded Page eBook #20220437

This eBook was produced by: Mardi Desjardins, Pat McCoy & the online Distributed Proofreaders Canada team at <https://www.pgdpCanada.net>

By FITZHUGH GREEN

Peary, the Man Who Refused to Fail

Our Naval Heritage

Some Famous Sea Fights

Hold 'em Navy

Fought for Annapolis

Won for the Fleet

ZR Wins

Uncle Sam's Sailors

Midshipmen All

I'll Never Move Again

Dick Byrd—Air Explorer

Martin Johnson—Lion Hunter

Bob Bartlett—Master Mariner



CAPTAIN BOB AND TWO OF HIS ESKIMO FRIENDS.

BOB BARTLETT

MASTER MARINER

By

FITZHUGH GREEN

Author of "Dick Byrd—Air Explorer," etc.

With 31 Illustrations

New York : London
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
The Knickerbocker Press
1929

BOB BARTLETT—MASTER MARINER

Copyright, 1929

by

Fitzhugh Green

First Edition

Made in the United States of America

February 1st, 1929.

TO THE BOYS OF AMERICA:

I owe a lot to the boys of America. More than once an American boy has helped save my life and my ship.

The greatest fliers and travelers in the world have had your blood running in their veins. I have a lot to be proud of.

Go to sea if you will, but give it up in time. It is a tough life. I stuck too long. Now the sea is part of me.

I am glad Fitz Green is putting my story together for you. He knows the sea and the North and, I think, he knows me. Certainly he has had a chance to see this old hulk in action.

Robert A. Bartlett.

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BOB BARTLETT

MASTER MARINER

CHAPTER I

ON A SCHOONER'S DECK

NOTED SEA CAPTAIN REACHES NEW YORK

New York, N. Y., November 16, 1928. At 10 A.M. this morning the Schooner, *Morrissey*, dropped anchor in the lower bay after a successful voyage through polar ice to Siberia under command of Captain Robert A. Bartlett, Master Mariner and famous for

I read no further. Dashing the newspaper to the floor of my office, I seized my hat and coat and made at top speed for the subway. In a few noisy minutes I reached the Battery, where I boarded a ferry for Staten Island.

A cold wind chilled the marrow of my bones as I stood in the bow, peering with watery eyes down the crowded harbor in hope of sighting the ship I sought. Little tugs darted to and fro. Whistles shrieked. A lumbering liner crossed our course.

Near the ferry building on the other side I chartered a small boat.

"Schooner *Morrissey*," I ordered, pointing to a dingy little craft anchored further upstream.

I found Captain Bartlett abaft the main hatch clad in boots, woolen peacoat and sou'wester. His feet were wide braced on the wet deck, and his face was crimson from a summer in the midnight sun.

"Shake a leg!" he was roaring at a man in the foretop as I came over the side. "Handsomely on that tackle!"

He pronounced it "*tay-cle*," after the fashion of a man of the sea; and his voice boomed like a Block Island fog horn.

"Oh, you *lubber*!" he bellowed in uncontrollable exasperation.

Suddenly he caught sight of me. And, although months had elapsed and he had been through many hair-raising adventures since we parted, he gave me no sort of greeting. Instead, he launched into a tirade against the modern sailor:

"They don't make real sailors any more!" he complained loudly. "Monkey-wrench mariners is what they all are now! Too much machinery and not enough ropes! Why, that lummoX in the foremast couldn't tie a carrick bend if his life depended on it!"

He paused for breath. Then, suddenly, his beet-red face relaxed and spread into a grin.

“How are you, boy?” he asked, extending a large and calloused hand.

I maneuvered him down into his little cabin. It was a stuffy hole, smelling of tar and seal oil. One small sheet-iron stove kept it over-warm. Captain Bartlett insisted I take the only chair, while he perched on a bunk piled high with heavy blankets. Between us was a low table bolted to the deck and littered with charts, pencil stubs, clay pipe, sextant, rulers and a tin mug half full of cold coffee.

“Well, what deviltry are ye up to now?” he asked with twinkling eye.

Because I’ve “swallowed the anchor”—that is, retired to live ashore after many years at sea—Bob always accuses me of wasting my time.

“How did you guess it?” I retorted.

He looked nettled. “Guess *what?*” he asked suspiciously.

“I’m writing a book.”

Slowly he filled his pipe. It had a clay bowl and a broken stem, and was the color of stained oak. Then he leaned confidentially across the charts:

“Don’t do it, boy. I wrote one myself. It doesn’t pay.”

His look was too solemn for me to smile.

“Why doesn’t it pay?” I asked.

“Well, I’ll tell you. You work a long time—two years maybe. That’s what it took me to get my ‘Log’ done and the bloody publishers satisfied. You use up gallons of ink and tons of patience. You stay up late of nights and wreck your eyes. And what’s the result?”

He shook a fist the size of a ripe cabbage.

“The result is nothing but trouble! You’re not done with the job when you’ve finished writing. You’ve just begun! They’ve got to take your picture every five minutes. They give you dinner parties. They give you tea parties!”

At the thought of tea parties the Skipper’s mouth curled up as if he had just taken a dose of bitter medicine.

“They write you letters—thousands of ’em! They run after you for autographs! They—”

“Only if you’re famous,” I interrupted.

He snorted: “Oh, go bite a rubber boot!”

I launched my barb: “But my book’s about you, Bob!”

“*What!*”

He sprang to his feet, knocking the rulers and a bottle of mucilage to the deck. His mighty shoulders loomed over me. His long powerful arms reached out, gorilla-like, as if to crush me.

“Just a little story of your life,” I went on hurriedly. “People like to hear about the kind of things you have done: narrow escapes from death, storms, sealing, whaling, exploring, shipwrecks—”

“There’s been plenty of ’em,” he growled, somewhat mollified. “But I’m only half done with my life. Wait a few years, boy.”

“Boy” is Bob’s one term of affectionate address; and it makes no difference whether you’re eighteen or eighty.

“You’ve had more adventures than most people. Take that time the *Karluk* was crushed in the ice and all those men were frozen to death.”

“Didn’t compare with the loss of the sealer, *Leopard*, with one hundred and fifty men in her,” he put in. “Ice took her whole bottom out! But you can’t make a story out of such things.”

“Why not?”

He seized a grimy chart and pressed a thick forefinger on a spot midway between Newfoundland and the southern tip of Greenland.

“See that!” he cried. “Just dry chart. A couple of figures for the soundings. White paper. Dead facts. Does it look to you anything like a full gale?”

“Not exactly,” I admitted.

“Does it show seas high as the foreyard? Do you see a scud of flying clouds? Can you hear the creaking of blocks, the groans of injured men or the crash of a topmast over the side? Can you see my own uncle with the look of death on his face? Or a main deck littered with wreckage? Or a half-frozen helmsman sobbing behind his wheel? Or an iceberg as big as a church teetering over the ship?”



A VISIT TO BRIGUS.

Last year Capt. Bartlett took his schooner to his home port where members of his expedition were entertained by his parents and neighbors.



BROTHER WILL.

The Captain's brother is First Mate of the *Morrissey*. He, too, has spent an adventurous life on the sealing grounds and down the Labrador.

Captain Bartlett's tense face was close to mine as I shook my head.

"That's why you can't put such things into a book. Just dry paper and little black marks and a neat cover that are no more like the terrible sufferings and brave deeds of the men you tell about than the word sea is like the great blue ocean!"

"That's more or less true of all books, Bob," I told him gently.

He tossed his hands, palms up. "Yes," he sadly agreed. "So why keep on?"

"Because there are many people who never face death at sea, who will never live to see an iceberg, who haven't cruised all over the face of the

globe in every type of vessel—the way you have. Think what such people would miss if it weren't for books!"

He looked at me with quizzical doubt spread all over his gnarled features. He shifted his stubby pipe to the other corner of his mouth.

"You really think someone might like my yarn?" he asked.

"Captain Bob," I told him, "if I could write the story of your life even one thousandth as exciting as it has really been, I'd have created the most exciting adventure story that was ever put together!"

His eyes fell. He looked cornered. It was an effort for me to keep from smiling at this great hulking mariner's doubt about his own prowess.

"Ah, well, boy," he sighed. "Go on and do it. It's your own funeral, not mine."

So with those encouraging (?) words ringing in my ears I went home and set about fashioning my story.

CHAPTER II

A NEWFOUNDLAND BOY

CAPTAIN BOB BARTLETT was born in the little fishing village of Brigus, Newfoundland. His old friends are still there, and his father and mother still keep open house at the old homestead. The town consists of a few little white houses nestled under a rocky hill. The narrow harbor and its fish wharfs line the shore. Ancient glaciers have worn the boulders smooth, so that there are no trees save a few sheltered ones that have been planted about the dwellings. By day grizzled seamen and ruddy-faced robust women walk the unpaved roads. By night the yellow flicker of oil lamps here and there pierce the heavy fog that settles so much of the year on that rugged coast.

The other mothers shook their heads over young Bob in his early days. He was a skinny, pale-faced lad, with spindling legs and hands like a pianist.

“He’ll never live,” they whispered to one another. “He isn’t strong enough!”

Sure enough Bob didn’t grow as the other boys did. When Uncle John Bartlett came home from a cruise he remarked that perhaps the lad wasn’t fed plum duff often enough. That day Bob’s mother tried to make him eat a second helping.

“Don’t want any more,” was all the scrawny little fellow would say. Whereupon Uncle John rose in disgust and stamped out of the dining room.

“He’ll never make a sailor!” growled the old seadog.

At the age of ten Bob continued to fail. He grew even thinner than he had been before. He ate less. He sat about the house and did not play with the other boys as he should. And every time he had an ache or a pain some new medicine was tried to bring him back to health.

“Gorry!” he exclaimed when telling me about it, “I ate and drank enough pills and medicine in those days to stock two drug stores!”

When he got a little better he was urged to study more. As he was the eldest son his parents had resolved that he should be a minister of the gospel. At fifteen he was sent to the Methodist College at St. John’s, Newfoundland. As he was quiet and apparently a deep thinker it was thought by his instructors that he had just the personality to make a good man for the church.

He came home from the college paler and quieter than ever. Years of patent medicine and poor eating had done little for him other than to sap his strength and leave him poorly equipped for the struggle of life.

The trouble was that people did not reckon on his long line of seafaring ancestors who had sailed all the oceans of the globe and fought the arctic ice long before Bob was born. The sea was in Bob's blood.

One morning his father, a bluff old Skipper, could stand it no longer.

"My oldest son amounts to nothing!" he blustered. "He isn't a man! He never will be a man! He's not much more than a walking dish-rag!"

"What are you going to do about it?" asked the mother, who was just as worried as the father.

"I'm going to take him fishing!"

"But all the Bartletts are mariners. It would be so nice if Robert were in the church," she protested.

Skipper Bartlett brought his fist down on the dining room table with a terrific crash. "The church doesn't want a sick puppy like him! If the sea won't make a man of him, nothing will! And now I'm going to give him a dose of it!"

Captain Bartlett sent for his son.

"Pack your dunnage bag, Robert," he ordered. "You're going down the Labrador with me this summer."

"Yes, sir," said Bob meekly. He didn't much care what he did. As sickly as he was nothing seemed to make any difference.

On a little schooner he sailed out of Brigus for the north. Right outside the harbor a raw cold fog shut in. As a strong wind had been blowing from the east for days a heavy sea was running. The small craft tossed about like a chip and her decks were knee deep in rushing water.

When dinner time came the coffee was flavored with brine. A smoking dish of boiled cod was the only food, except for some hard bread. Young Bartlett ate very lightly of this rough diet. When some boiled salt pork and more brine-flavored coffee was served for breakfast he scarcely touched it. He felt tired and his bones ached from having slept with his clothes on in a narrow wooden bunk without mattress.

"Come on, get up there on deck, lad!" his father shouted when a squall struck and the sails had to be shortened. "There're to be no loafers on this

ship!”

Bob pulled his weary body up the swaying ladder. He lost one of his mittens overboard. The hard wet ropes hurt his tender hands. Just as he reached the deck a heavy sea struck the ship's bow, lifting her dizzily into the air. Bob slipped. The green water caught him and threw him into the lifelines. Half-stunned and nearly wholly drowned he struggled to his feet.

“Stand by the main halliards!” roared old Skipper Bartlett. “Lend a hand now, boy!” he added sharply to Bob.

Painfully the lad tailed on to the hard rope. Another sea swept over the ship. He shivered with cold.

The midday meal was duff, greasy and soggy, but enjoyed by the sailors. No bread was served with it. The cook reported that the coffee pot had been flung off the galley stove; so there was nothing hot to drink. Bob crawled into his bunk, shaking and weak.

That evening boiled codfish was again put on the table. For a strange reason, so Bob thought, it looked much better than it had the night before. The reason, of course, was that his appetite was beginning to grow as a result of the cold air, ducking and hard work that he had been forced to do.

Day by day he grew stronger. He began to ask for “seconds” from the galley, second helpings; then for “thirds.” He began to like to haul away on the halliards and sheets. He learned how to swing into the shrouds when a comber flooded the deck. He took his trick at the wheel.

By the time the vessel reached the upper Labrador Bob was doing useful work all over the ship. He was assigned to a dory and tended a corner of the nets when the fishing started. He got blown to sea one afternoon in his boat and had to tie up to a small iceberg to keep from getting so far away that he could never get back. He was hungry and cold and had to sleep in the bottom of the boat in his oilskins. All night he rolled around among the dead fish. But when the weather cleared and he rowed back to the harbor, he suffered no ill-effects.



BOB BARTLETT'S HOME TOWN.

This is Brigus, Newfoundland, where Capt. Bartlett was born and raised.



A HARDY FAMILY.

Captain Bob with his father and mother at their home in Brigus, Newfoundland. Father Bartlett still commands a sealing vessel. Bob writes to his mother every day, no matter in what part of the globe he is.

He began to take on weight. As a result of the toil and hardship his drooping shoulders slowly lifted. The muscles on his arms became stringy and hard. The palms of his hands grew calloused until they were tough as leather.

One day, some months later, a storm forced another fishing vessel from Brigus to take shelter in the same harbor where the Bartlett craft was working. Some of the young men in her crew came ashore for a visit with their neighbors. As a drizzling rain was falling all wore oilskins.

One lad, named Jim Dennis, climbed up to the fishing shack among the rocks. On his way he passed Bob Bartlett, also muffled in sou'wester and slicker.

"Hello, cheese cake," Jim sneered, remembering the pale-faced Bartlett boy of the spring before. "Mother know you're out?" He didn't notice that Bob had grown and filled and thickened.

"How's that?" asked young Bartlett sharply.

“Cod livers!” taunted Jim.

Whereupon the “sickly Bartlett boy” stepped quickly forward and grabbed the other lad by his collar.

“Who’re you talking to?”

Jim Dennis was too surprised to reply. Could it be possible that this defiant fellow was the same ailing creature who had never amounted to anything at home?

“I’m talking to Bob Bartlett,” said Jim with a little less assurance. “You’re him, ain’t you?”

“I am. And don’t get fresh. You’ve come to a place where they know how to fish.” Bob gave Jim’s collar a jerk. “See?”

“Leggo!” Jim gave a jerk, but failed to free himself.

The next moment the boys grappled. Their bodies thudded to the wet rocks. Legs curled over legs. Arms hugged. Breaths came panting.

“Ho! A fight!” yelled some passing fishermen.

Quickly the crowd gathered. But Bob and Jim paid no heed to those about. Neither lad was aware of the shouts of encouragement. Each was determined to get the other flat on his back and make him admit that his ship and his companions were the best fishers on the coast.

“What’s all this!” suddenly demanded a stentorian voice. It was Captain Bartlett, Senior.

“Just a little fight, Skipper,” explained one man.

“Who’s fighting?”

“Your boy.”

Captain Bartlett grunted, but made no move to separate the pair. Just then young Bob got his opponent’s shoulders flat on the rock. “True, ain’t it?” he panted.

A muffled sound came from the defeated Jim. Bob rose. Then he started back. His father stood before him. Fighting was forbidden on the station. It meant a thrashing from the “old man.”

“Finished?” asked the Skipper.

“Yes, yes, sir,” stammered Bob. Now would come the summons to the salt shed where the punishment would take place.

“Well—” the Skipper hesitated.

“Yes, sir,” murmured Bob uncomfortably.

“Well, invite Jim up to supper,” snapped the old man, and turning proudly to the circle of weather-beaten faces around him stared into them for a long minute before stalking off. How glad he was: *his son was going to be a man after all!*

Today Bob Bartlett weighs close to 210 pounds, all solid bone and muscle, one of the most powerful men that ever passed a reef. Truly, hard work outdoors was the medicine he needed.

CHAPTER III

FIRST COMMAND

IN the two following years the Bartlett family gave up all hope of making a minister out of their son. He was too plainly a man of the sea. As if by a miracle he sprang up. He gained several pounds in weight every month. He grew taller. And he showed that aptitude for handling boats and ropes for which the Bartletts had been famous during many generations.

Rapidly he learned to make the things that a fisherman uses. He wove nets out of twine. He repaired boats with red lead and canvas. He found out how to lay a cod trap, which is a big square of sea water entirely surrounded by net into which the fish are driven.

He did a lot of straight line fishing, that is with hook and sinker over the side just as most of us fish as boys. One day he got a cod hooked and was hauling him in when he slipped on the slimy boat bottom and tumbled overboard. As the boat was not anchored and he the only one aboard, she drifted out of reach before he could seize her painter.

The shore was more than a mile away and Bartlett had on heavy sea boots and woolen garments. Quickly he kicked out of his boots, brushed his cap clear and began to swim hard for the boat. But she was drifting faster than he could swim. He began to tire. There was no use shouting for help, as no one was nearby. Death stared him in the face.

He glanced toward the shore. But he knew the bitterly cold water would exhaust him long before he could reach it.

To keep his courage up he began to sing an old hymn the family used to sing on Sunday nights. There wasn't much music in his singing because he was almost winded, and every now and then a wave would fill his mouth with water. But the sound of his own voice cheered him.

"I was scared, all right," he admits now. "But there wasn't anything to do but to swim—and sing—as long as I could last."

Only an act of Providence saved him. A little whisking breeze spun over the water. It was scarcely enough to make a ripple. But it proved sufficient to change the course of the light and drifting boat. Lazily the dory turned about, slowed. Bob splashed up. When he seized the gunwhale he was too exhausted to climb aboard. But after a few minutes' rest he clambered in. For an hour he lay over the thwart before he had strength enough to row ashore.

At this time Bartlett's father and several brothers were running a small fishing station at a native village on the Labrador known as Turnavik. One morning Captain Bartlett sent for his son. Bob swallowed his last mouthful of boiled codfish, sprang from the breakfast table and hurried to the little "office" where his father attended to the fishing records. He stood there before him, a sturdy young lad, his shoulders showing the fine muscles of a man who lives on the sea.

"Yes, sir," he said, politely.

None of your "Yeh, dad," with which the modern son would be likely to slouch in and greet his father.

"Good morning, my boy," said the old Skipper with all the dignity of a Captain talking to one of his deck hands. Slowly he wound the station chronometer before he turned and faced his oldest son.

A long silence ensued. Captain Bartlett stared at his son and Bob stared back at his father. Their blue eyes met.

"A queer feeling came over me," Bob tells me now. "Somehow in that moment I seemed to see my father age. Of course he didn't look any older; but he seemed older. His eyes were tired and the lines in his face deeper. I think the same thing must have been going on in his mind as in mine: that I was growing up and he would have to lean on me more in the future.

"Presently he said: 'Son, the schooner is ready. I want you to take her up the coast and bring back a load of fish.'

"I was startled. Until that moment I had been a boy. I had always manned the oars or pulled on a rope. I had always been just one of the crew.

"'But, sir—,' I stammered.

"'Go out and get me a load of fish in the schooner,' commanded my father, 'and don't come back until she's full up!'



DRYING FISH ON THE LABRADOR.

Some of the catch is split and spread on frames to dry in the summer sunshine before shipping.



CLOSE-UP OF A MUG-UP.

“Mug-up” is the sailor’s term for a light lunch sent on deck from the galley during heavy weather. We see here Billy the cook handing one to Captain Bartlett.

“It was true. He was putting me in command of a ship. At last I was to be a Captain! I was to go out into the ocean and command men! A ship under my feet was to be my own ship! It was the most wonderful feeling I have ever had before or since!

“I headed down aboard. She was just a little schooner, but she looked very big that morning. I think I must have stood up straighter, for Simmons, one of the crew, who had been with us for years, looked up and said:

“ ‘Hey, what are you so cocky about this morning, Bob?’ ”

But Bartlett ignored the sally. Having been a Captain only about ten minutes, he didn’t want to begin by being too familiar with his crew. He directed that the anchor be hove up. He stationed a man at the wheel. He had the peak halliards hove taut so that the canvas spread evenly between the spars.

Slowly the little vessel moved out of the harbor. Her gleaming white sails matched the wings of an ivory gull that hovered over the topmast. Little waves caressed her sides affectionately. And near the harbor entrance a lumbering growler stood aside to let her pass.

“Gorry!” laughs Bob now, “but that was an exciting morning of my life!”

Once outside he had the helm put down and the bow swung around into the north. A heavy swell came in from seaward, sure sign of a storm on its way. Mother Carey’s chickens were scurrying out to meet the blow. The barometer fell steadily.

That night a gale sprang up. The sea was lashed into foaming waves. Sail was shortened in the late northern twilight. Towards midnight Bartlett hove his schooner to and put oil bags over her sides to ease the rough water nearby. Like a cork she rode in the high waves. Her young Skipper dared not go below. As he was her Captain, he was responsible for the lives of his men and the safety of his ship.

For two days it blew. Thick fog came down and blanketed the sea. Once on the second afternoon a heavy booming roar was heard to the westward. This meant the ship was being driven to the lee shore. If she struck she would be crushed and all hands lost.

Bartlett ordered the reefs shaken out of the fore staysail. He let her ride off the wind and began to tack out. It was heavy work for all hands. Two men could scarcely manage the wheel. The ship rolled so terribly that the cook could not even make coffee on his little galley stove.

And still the 17-year-old skipper refused to go below. It was *his* ship and *his* crew, and he couldn’t stand the thought of sleeping while peril threatened them. On the third day the weather moderated and Bartlett got his first sleep.

When he again came on deck he found a change had come over his crew. No longer did they cast sidelong glances of doubt at their youthful skipper. No longer did they smile behind their hands at his commands. They felt at last that Bob Bartlett was a real Captain; a man who understood how to handle a ship and one not afraid to carry the responsibility and hardship of command.

But Bartlett was no high-hat skipper. There was an old fellow in the crew named Noah Blackwell. Bob realized that old Noah had been fishing down the Labrador for a lifetime. He knew that Noah had seen more fish than any man on board.

So he consulted with Noah about where they had best go in order to find the big schools of fish that would quickly give them a load.

“You’re the skipper,” said the old fellow. “It’s your place to pick the spot.”

Bob laughed in a friendly way that has won men to him. "I'm a poor skipper," he said, "if I can't count on my crew to help out."

Whereupon Noah came down off his high horse and allowed that a reef up ahead close to Thimble Rocks was a likely spot. So Bartlett ran the schooner in, lowered the dories and for nearly a week all hands fished. Old Noah had been right. One school of fish after another was overtaken. Quickly the schooner filled up. The men sang as they tossed the silvery bodies of the fish aboard. This luck meant extra pay. The crew laid it to their new Skipper whom they liked better and better.

A day or two later Captain Bartlett Senior went down to his little landing to inspect one of his boats. He saw his absent schooner entering port.

"Holy Neptune!" exclaimed one of his brothers. "That's your boy Bob back. Looks as if he must have bumped a rock."

He meant that the schooner was lopy and far down in the water as if she were half swamped. It never occurred to him that the vessel could be back so soon with her hold full of fish.

Ten minutes later the schooner rounded to and anchored. Young Bob rowed ashore in a small skiff.

"What's the matter with her?" asked his father impatiently.

"Matter? How do you mean?" said Bob, taken suddenly aback.

"Aren't your pumps working?"

Then Bob realized what was up. "It's not water, sir," he laughed. "It's *fish*! She's nigh full of fish, Dad! I guess we shouldn't have taken on the last five hundred."

The old Captain's chest swelled with pride.

"By gorry!" he exclaimed. "You're a Bartlett after all! Here you go out and before I know that you've got away, you get back with a bigger load than any skipper in the outfit!"

The rest of the summer, and from then on until he went into deep sea vessels, Bob Bartlett commanded his own vessel.

It was a hard life. Often Bartlett could not undress for days. The weather was raw and cold, with much fog and rain. There were only two meals a day on the little ship, one at 7 A. M. and one at 4 P. M. And both of them consisted of boiled fish or pork with hard bread. Twice a week plum duff was served.

The narrow bunks were just hard boards with heavy blankets. A strong fishy smell pervaded the whole craft.

As Bartlett's father hired more than 150 people, there was plenty of competition. Those who did well and made good catches had a chance to come again. Those who failed would not be taken on the following summer. They were a rough, hardy crowd, tireless and loyal, who had never known any other life.

Much of the fishing was done with nets. "I have seen over a thousand fish struggling in a single net," says Bartlett. "And it's a great sight. To get them out a man goes into the circular area surrounded by the net and dips the fish into his boat. The boats then bring the fish ashore where they are tossed up on platforms. Here they are opened and washed out in tubs of water before being spread out in the open air to dry. Finally they are salted and piled on vessels to take them home. The fish caught and cured in this way by the Newfoundlanders are shipped all over the world."

It is wonderful how nature provides food for man and beast at certain times. Bartlett has told me some great tales about the caplin season. This is a small fish, not much larger than a sardine that swarms the northern shores in summer. Some of them are packed in cans and called sardines.

During the summer of 1913 I visited the Labrador coast in the neighborhood of a small station known as Battle Harbor. One morning I heard a great shouting by the local inhabitants and a chorus of howls among dog teams tied up.

"*Caplin!*" yelled a boy running past me.

The caplin had come. I hurried down to the beach after the crowd. As I approached the water I saw that the low surf had turned to silver. I couldn't believe my eyes. For fifty feet out from the beach the water was one solid mass of small fish!

The fishermen say that the chief reason the caplin come into shallow water in this way is that bigger fish are pursuing them. Indeed, the poor caplin are surrounded by enemies! for scarcely have they succeeded in escaping the big fish by rushing near the shore, than men wade in and capture them. The men use big shovels and scoop the fish out on the beach by the thousands.

Just for fun I waded in myself and shovelled until my shoulders ached. I worked until I had piled up a small mountain of silvery bodies that glistened in the sunshine as they flapped and wriggled and tried to hop back into the

sea. Caplin are laid out to dry in the sun just as the codfish are. Some are packed for shipment to the United States and other countries. A lot are kept for dog food during the winter months.

I noticed that the natives let their dogs come down and wade in the water and eat all they could. This seemed a great waste to me because I knew the dogs weren't hungry. But I soon saw the sense of it. As they devoured all they could hold, one dog after another turned away from the fish in disgust. I remember one dog thumped himself down, heaving a great sigh and turned his back to the beach. A fish hung from his jaws: he couldn't swallow another one. This kept him away from the fish for a long time. It's the same method used by candy store owners. When a new clerk comes, the candy store owner tells him to go ahead and eat all the candy he wants. In a day or two the clerk can't face another sweetmeat and from that day forward usually leaves the candy alone.

Towards the end of the summer Bartlett took his schooner down to the Grand Banks, the great shallow spot in the ocean southeast and south of Newfoundland. Here he sent his men over the side in dories to catch cod fish with long lines. During the day the schooner tacked back and forth until the dories returned, one by one, and put their catch aboard.

Catching the fish is really the easiest and cleanest part of the fisherman's job. Bartlett used to turn to with his men at splitting and "stripping" the fish when the loads come in. The tongues are put in casks by themselves; also the livers, from which cod liver oil is made. The bodies, which contain the market meat, are laid down in salt and ice so that they will keep in good condition until the ship reaches port.

After the schooner had taken aboard several thousand fish she was coated with scales and oil and blood from one end of her decks to the other. Food tasted of fish; clothing and bunks smelled fishy; even the men's whiskers and hair were scented with the pervasive odor.

"All hands, wash down!" Bartlett would order when the hold was filled.

At once holystones and brushes would be broken out of their lockers and the decks scrubbed with salt water and sand until some of the mess had been eliminated. But the fishy flavor was never quite got rid of. Indeed, the fishing schooner smells of her trade even after she has been laid up for years in dock.

"Land ho!" from the lookout, and soon the little vessel would round-up to her dock at home for the excitement of marketing and the gay parties that

Newfoundlanders know so well how to hold to celebrate the homecoming of their menfolk.

CHAPTER IV

INTO THE ICE AFTER SEALS

SEVERAL winters after his first command Bob Bartlett was home in Brigus with his family. Passing through the living room of the famous old house he saw his mother in deep conversation with his father. Now and then Mrs. Bartlett would shake her head vigorously as if trying to change her husband's mind.

Suddenly Captain Bartlett Sr. left her and she turned to young Bob.

"Your father wants to see you," she said. Her voice had a sad note in it.

The day was Christmas. The dining room table was groaning under its weight of good things to eat. There was a whole roast pig; dishes piled high with sweet potatoes and cabbage and pork cracklings. There were platters of sweet pancakes; great plates of cookies; a huge pound cake; gay red ribbons streamed over the chandeliers from the corners of the room. There was a chatter of voices. Bob's brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts and some of the neighbors were all present to help celebrate this day of days.

It was Bartlett's 21st Christmas. And although he had commanded his own ship he was still but a sturdy lad without any real worries in life.

"Your father wants to see you," repeated his mother, and after glancing quickly over her shoulder, suddenly kissed her son, holding him close as if an invisible enemy were trying to kidnap him.

There was something in the way she looked that made Bob pause. The smile disappeared from his lips. What had he done? Why was his father sending for him here in the midst of all this celebration?

In the little library off the main living room Bartlett found the old seafarer, his father, waiting for him.

On the desk was a list of names. Captain Bartlett was studying this list. His stern face was deep-lined and leathery from a lifetime in northern waters.

Presently he turned around and looked his son up and down.

"You know what day tomorrow is?" he asked.

Bob Bartlett thought for a moment. Then he burst out:

"No, sir, but today is Christmas!"

His father nodded solemnly. "Yes, my son. But tomorrow is St. Stephen's Day."

Bob's face fell. He knew then what his father meant. St. Stephen's Day, December 26th, was the day on which men came from inland farms and settlements, from the outposts up the coast and from every hill and valley of Newfoundland to sign on for the spring sealing. In a few weeks the fleet would leave for the long hard voyage among the ice.

"You're going this year," said old Captain Bartlett. "I've found a place for you. Not on my ship. I'd like to take you, son, but there isn't a berth. I have more applicants than I can handle. You will report to Captain Diggs tomorrow."

Bob went back to the Christmas party a sobered young man. He knew what lay ahead of him. The bitter spring weather and the hard days in the ice were to be his life as soon as the harbor cleared with the March tide.

By noon next day a driving snow storm blanketed the port. But the town of Brigus was in an uproar. Every minute young men arrived afoot or on horseback, and even by dog sled. They gathered in knots outside the houses of the various captains. Some more courageous ones applied to different skippers for jobs. But most of them simply stood about and waited until they were sent for. They were a hardy lot, used to long hours and heavy work. The danger and toil of sealing was just one more excitement in their adventurous lives.

It was several days before the confusion had quieted down. A few were disappointed in not getting berths. But most of them had been signed on one ship or another. This meant that when the sealing season began each man would go out for several months and make a few dollars which must keep his family in flour and molasses during the coming summer.

"It was ridiculous how little money there was in such a cruise," Bartlett tells me. "And yet it was the only way to make money at that season of the year. Of course there were no business openings for young men in a tiny town like Brigus.

"When a ship came in after the cruise, all her seals were sold to one of the big companies in St. John's. The money so received was divided up according to shares. The Captain got a good many shares. An ordinary seaman got only one share. Often a man with several children would get only \$15.00 for the whole three months' work!"

Early in February the skipper to whom Bartlett had been assigned ordered his men out into the woods to get fire wood and logs for the ship. This wood had to be dragged in, trimmed and prepared for use on board. There was no pay for this work, although each man got a small allowance for food.

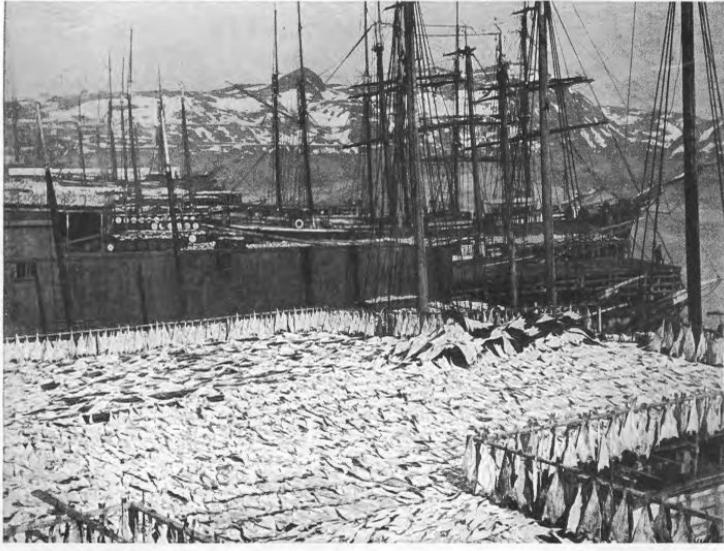
Others were assigned to the ship herself for overhauling the rigging; cleaning up her decks and making everything ship-shape for the coming cruise. Often the temperature was far below zero and the work done in the biting wind that swept in off the ice.

By February 25th all the stores were put aboard. Most of the weight was in ammunition and rifles, sealing lines, blocks and tackle. The canvas was put on the yards and made ready for spreading when sailing time should come.

Now Brigus gave all the appearance of being a big shipping port. Nearly fifty vessels were lying fast in the ice along the docks of the waterfront. There was much movement about the crowded streets. And the little cottages that lined the hillsides were swarming with men ready for the year's great adventure.

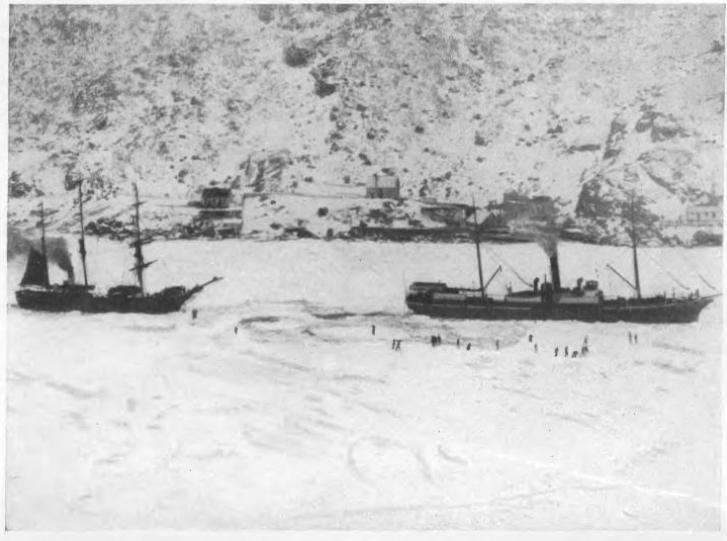
This first year Bartlett went out there was nearly four feet of solid ice in the channel. Skippers banded their men together to saw a lane through it so the ships could be released in time to get at the seals. Finally two ships were freed in this fashion. But just then a heavy gale blew in from outside, causing a ground-swell which broke up the harbor ice.

Bartlett's sea station was on the fore-top-gallant yard. It was his job to run up the rigging, climb out on the end of the yard and loosen the sail when the ship was ready to get under way. It was not much fun up there in the biting cold, working with frozen canvas and without a bit of shelter. His years of training down the Labrador and fine health stood him in good stead.



FISHING FLEET AND THEIR CATCH.

Millions of dollars worth of dried codfish have been shipped from St. John's to all parts of the world.



WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO ESCAPE.

Often the crews had to cut lanes in the ice so that their ships could put out of Brigus for the sealing grounds in early March.

He was not cold. He was dressed in heavy blanketing drawers, two flannel shirts, a thick woolen sweater, reefer and trousers of homespun. Over the top of it all he wore oilskins to “cut” the wind. However, after a morning of hard work making sail, he was glad to lay below near noon for the midday meal. As usual the cook served a big platter of flour pudding and boiled pork.

“It was just like a dish of cement,” says Bob now. “But we certainly stowed it away!”

All afternoon was spent restowing stores and clearing the main deck space for the great mass of seals that were to come aboard. The Skipper paced his bridge, an eye on the rival vessels to port and starboard of him. He wondered who would reach the seals first. For once outside, the ship had swung on a northerly course and was racing neck and neck with the rest of the sailing fleet for the great ice pack near the northern end of Newfoundland, where the seal herds gather every spring.

The reader must remember that in those early days crude oil wells had not been developed in California and Pennsylvania as they are today. The world depended for much of its oil upon seals. Whales and other fish, and even walrus, were the source of much of the oil needed by industry. That is why whaling and sealing were so profitable in the early days.

Of recent years the need for animal oil has dropped off enormously. The figures give some idea of the change. For instance in 1840 631,375 seals were killed by the Newfoundland fleet. In 1923 only 101,770 were brought in. Today hundreds of tankers carry crude oil from California and Mexican wells to ports that used to buy fish and seal oil instead.

Seals live in the summertime along the Greenland coast. Bright sunshine, smooth waters and an undisturbed habitat afforded by Baffin Bay are ideal for these curious sea animals. In the winter most of them migrate south and swing around in the great circle, reaching the ice fields in North Newfoundland and St. Lawrence Bay in the Labrador early in the Spring. Here the baby seals are born and for this reason the seals come out by the hundreds of thousands on the ice, making them easy victims for hunters.

On the eighth day after Bartlett's ship left Brigus the sea became less boisterous. Along the northern horizon was a grayish white light, signifying the presence of the pack. A great field of floating ice lay ahead, choking the Gulf of St. Lawrence and extending right up to Baffin Bay.

Next morning the ship was crunching her way through trash ice near to the main pack.

"Swile ho!" shouted the lookout from the barrel in the foretop.

Almost at once the men crowding on the forecastle saw black dots scattered far and wide over the white floes. The sealing grounds at last! Five miles away was the smoke of a rival ship. On the horizon were two more ships.

Now would come the great race to see who could be loaded first, get home, and so take advantage of the best prices at the market.

"Hunters overboard!" commanded the Captain.

Men clambered over the side and scrambled out on the slippery ice. Some carried rifles and some only clubs; but all were bound to kill the helpless seals basking out in the sunshine. It was murder pure and simple, yet scarcely worse than any fisherman commits.

Young Bartlett was determined to make a name for himself at once. He could run as fast as any lad in the party and he knew he was as strong as any man his size. All morning long he hurried over the ice making his kills as he went. He remembered that he must skin his seal as soon as he had dispatched it as the warmth of the body permitted the skin to come off easily. If he waited it would freeze into a solid mass impossible to cut.

He dragged his skins to a central pile so that they could be easily got aboard by long lines attached to a winch. Towards noon the mate, an oldtimer, came out to see how the men were getting along. He spotted Bartlett just as the tide broke a rift in a large floe on which the lad was working.

“Oh, ho!” shouted the mate, “so you’re wasting your time!”

Bartlett didn’t know what he meant until he glanced over his shoulder and saw the widening crack of green water between him and a fine seal pelt which he had just skinned.

It was an unlucky break, Bartlett felt. Here he was trying to make a record and the mate had to turn up just when it appeared he was careless. He knew it was a bad business to skin a seal and then lose the skin. Yet how could he get his prize across that smoking lead of icy water.

Then he did something which is still spoken of in Brigus. He even widened the eye of the old and hardened mate with surprise.

Bob Bartlett suddenly seized his peacoat and tore it open. In a jiffy he whipped his woolen sweater over his head, hopped out of his pants and boots and *plunged in!* Of course the temperature was far below freezing. The sea was terribly cold. The weather was still wintry.

In ten seconds the water made Bartlett numb in every muscle. But he bravely splashed on towards the other side. He scrambled out. He seized the skin of the seal and whirling it round his head as if he had been a hammer thrower, he sailed it across the lead. It came down with a *gulp* at the very feet of the mate.

For a moment Bartlett hesitated. The mate was too surprised to speak. Another swim in the awful water seemed more than the lad could bear.

A sharp wind whipped down across the ice. Spray froze as it was dashed into the air. In a few moments the naked boy would have frozen to death.

There was nothing left to do but swim back. He dove in. The mate had to help him out on the other side. It was well-nigh incredible that the boy had the constitution and endurance to stand such a terrible test. Shaking in every limb he pulled his garments over his blue body. It was a mad thing for him to have done; but he had proved that he would stop at nothing to finish his job.

In five days the ice around the ship was marked in every direction by black piles of sealskins. Now began the task of hauling them in close to the

side so that they could be hoisted aboard. Some of the nearer piles could be reached by the ship's steaming ahead and breaking the ice. But some had to be dragged a long way by the men hauling on ropes to which the skins were lashed.

First the cargo space was filled between decks. Then the main deck where the men had slept on the voyage north. And finally the top deck. Not a single inch of stowage was wasted.

The whole ship became a horrible slimy mass. Frozen blood covered every rope and rail. There was grease on the tackle and grease on the steering wheel. The food tasted of seal oil. The coffee carried a floating scum of it.

Yet the men were happy. The Skipper beamed from ear to ear. It meant that the return to St. John's would end in the biggest possible profit. Every man aboard could go home with the money he had dreamed of. All the toil and hardship and misery of life aboard a sealer was erased by that one joyful thought.

However, the ship was still miles from her home port. And those miles were filled with drifting ice and heavy winds. Even as she steamed out of the pack the southern horizon showed a bank of black clouds. Many a heavy-laden sealer had been lost on her way home. It was an anxious time for those aboard.

Slowly the gale came up. First there were only sharp gusts of wind and a choppy sea. But by the following morning a good old-fashioned Newfoundland gale howled through the rigging.

A hard fight ensued; but by good handling the ship was brought safely to port. Sad to relate there were several disasters among the fleet. Captain Isaac Bartlett, great uncle to Bob, had the brig *The Brothers*. He was forced by the gale into the heavy ice for protection. By keeping the hull of his ship among the old floes he was able to avoid the heavy sea running outside. (Ice kills the big waves just as oil does.)

But after two days this very protection became the ship's greatest menace. Little by little the gale broke up the heavy floes. They split into great islands of ice, and these islands were driven slowly landward. Each weighed thousands of tons. And the pressure of their jagged edges on the helpless unprotected hull of *The Brothers* became finally too great for her powerful timbers to stand.

In the darkness of the night the first water began to seep through her seams. Pumps were manned and worked at top speed. But little by little the hull filled. As the ship was already overladen with sealskins it began to sink. But before it went to the bottom the ice cut clean through the hull at the water line and cleanly sheered the bottom right off the doomed ship!

“All hands out on the ice!” roared the Captain above the howling gale.

Some terrified men held back. These few were not seafarers. They lived inland. They had come down to the coast only for the sealing season. They didn’t love or understand the sea the way the true mariner does. It seemed safer to them to stay with the wreckage still supported by the ice than to commit themselves to the grinding floes that lay for many miles between them and the distant land.

But Captain Bartlett knew there was no hope for the ship. Her bottom was gone. Her masts were tottering. The shrieking wind had torn her canvas to shreds. There was only one thing to do.

“*Take ’em off!*” he yelled to the mate.

Whereupon he and the mate returned to the ship and seized the cowering men from the lee of the little after deck house and threw them over the side one at a time. It was rough kindness, but it meant saving the lives of his crew.

The snow was drifting and there were leads of open water between the floes. It was perilous work. Some of the men had had the foresight to bring along a few planks from the ship. By means of these planks temporary bridges were thrown across narrow leads that the men could not jump. Slowly the little party struggled shoreward. Feet and fingers began to freeze. One man who had tumbled in said that both his hands seemed to have “turned to wood.”

Many hours later the last man was carried from the ice to the Newfoundland shore. Captain Bartlett lost his ship, but had brought every one of his men ashore alive. Two fishermen’s cottages nearby provided the shelter during the balance of the storm. It was a sad party. The whole season’s catch had been lost as well as the ship. Every one of the men had to go home without the money he had hoped to make.

Bob Bartlett landed in St. John’s and received his share, which amounted to \$62.00. This was a very large share in those days. It meant that he was rich for the balance of the year. And it gave him a fine start for the summer

fishing because it made it possible for him to buy lines and gear for the schooner that he would use down the Labrador.

He received this money in cash, which he put in a leather wallet attached by a small strap to his belt. That night he slept in a small sailors' boarding house in St. John's. He put the wallet under his pillow for safety.

In the morning he threw on his clothes, and went downstairs for early breakfast of boiled codfish and cracklings. He made sure that his wallet was attached to his belt because he expected to leave for Brigus that day. Just as he sat down to the table he discovered to his dismay that the wallet was empty.

"I've been robbed!" he cried.

There was great excitement. All the other sealers immediately examined their own wallets. Then each began to look suspiciously at his fellows. Was the thief among the crowd? Or had some stranger come in during the night?

It was a terrible blow for young Bob because he had worked all spring for his \$62. The money meant much to him during the coming summer. And now it was gone.

The boarding house was in an uproar. There was talk of sending for the police.

"Have you looked in your room?" asked one man.

Bartlett stared as if he had been struck. Without a word he ran back up the stairs. In five minutes he found that the money had slipped out of the wallet and down under the mattress of his bed!

"I tell you," he grinned, "I was ashamed to go back and face the gang. But I had to. They certainly joshed me about it. But they were relieved, nevertheless, to learn there were no thieves about."

CHAPTER V

MASTER MARINER

BEFORE BOB BARTLETT could legally command a big sea-going ship he had to win a diploma from the official maritime office which examines sailors for their nautical ability.

A mariner is a good deal like a doctor. When a boy goes to medical school he must graduate before he can get a diploma and a legal certificate to practice medicine. Of course, unless he has such a certificate, his patients can't be sure that he has learned enough to treat them. And since it is often a matter of life and death whether the doctor gives the right medicine or not it is very important that he be properly trained.

In the same way the law makes sure that the Captain of a ship is properly trained before he is permitted to take her to sea. He must know how to navigate, how to maneuver his ship, how to find his way up and down the coast and into a harbor; how to load his ship, and in general how to practice the seamanship necessary to take a vessel safely from port to port.

As a boy Bartlett knew how to handle a small ship. He learned the ropes and the spars and the thousand and one details about a ship's equipment. He learned about weather and lighthouses and the ways of sailors. But no big ship owner would let him go aboard and take any sort of authority until Bartlett carried the "papers" of a master mariner. The owner, for instance, couldn't get any insurance for his vessel unless she were commanded by a duly authorized captain.

This is the reason Bartlett soon left Newfoundland waters and began to take cruises on tramp ships about the world. Under the tutelage of the captains under whom he served he became a second mate. But on one voyage he nearly lost his job through over-zeal.

He was on a ship called the *Grand Lake* carrying bananas from the West Indies up to New York. The fruit was put aboard her green. By hurrying to New York the *Grand Lake* could get it to market before it ripened too much for sale. But it was important that the ship wouldn't waste any time along the way. If the fruit became overripe it would rot. That was before the day of the modern refrigerator ship.

One night Bartlett had the watch as second mate. It was his duty to stay on the bridge and see that a straight course was steered and that there was no danger of collision with other ships.

About 2:00 A. M. he left the bridge and took a turn about the deck. It was necessary that the ventilators be kept trimmed so that the fruit had plenty of fresh air. Also he wanted to be sure that the lookout was not asleep. He walked rapidly about over the gently heaving deck, being careful not to bump against the shadowy hatches in the darkness.

When he returned to the bridge he instantly sensed that something was wrong. The brilliant north star that had been visible over the bow was no longer there. Now stars, he knew, don't move rapidly. When they are no longer where they ought to be in relation to the ship it isn't the stars' fault. It is usually the ship's fault.

He stepped at once to the compass.

"Where do you think you're going?" he exclaimed angrily.

When no answer came he glanced at the helmsman. The fellow was nodding, braced against the wheel. Now and then he emitted a gentle snore. Without further word Bartlett seized the man's shoulder and whirled him about.

"What's the big idea!" he cried.

The helmsman gave a gulp and muttered something unintelligible.

"Don't you see you're wandering all over the ocean?"

The man sleepily rotated his wheel and slowly the ship came back to her course. Bartlett glanced apprehensively over his shoulder. If the Captain found the ship off her course, he might reduce Bartlett again to an ordinary seaman. Moreover, a zigzag course meant losing time and possibly losing the whole cargo.

The next night almost the same thing happened. Bartlett inspected the decks and when he came back he found the helmsman dozing. And it was the same helmsman. This time he didn't stop to argue with the man.

Remember that Bartlett was young and full of energy. Also he was determined to get his master's papers just as soon as he could.



CAP'N BOB GETS BOBBED.

Robert Peary, son of the discoverer of the North Pole, tries his hand at barbering.



SHOOTING THE SUN.

Captain Bob measuring the elevation of the sun above the horizon in order to fix his position at sea.

Without a word he grabbed the fellow by his coat collar and threw him against the bridge rail.

Naturally the seaman resented such treatment. Before you could say Jack Robinson the two were pounding each other for all they were worth. It was a fine fight. Up there in the darkness the wind singing in the rigging and the ship rolling in the ground-swell, the two men fought back and forth across the bridge. Of course the *Grand Lake* began to swing in circles over the ocean.

Right in the middle of the row the Skipper came up.

“What’s all this?” he cried.

But he was more interested in the ship’s course than the fight. One look at the binnacle was enough. He saw the ship was not only off her course but headed almost *due south* again!

“*Mate!*” he yelled.

“Yes, sir!” panted Bartlett. The helmsman crept off to the end of the bridge, wiping a bloody nose with the back of his hand.

“What goes on here?”

“A little argument,” said Bartlett, and grabbed the wheel. In a few moments he had the ship back on her course. “Twice I have found that fellow asleep and I decided to punish him,” Bartlett went on; his heart was in his boots. He was sure that the Captain would demote him.

But the Captain said nothing. While Bartlett stood at the wheel, the Captain leaned against the bridge rail, peering out into the night, apparently thinking hard. After a long time he seemed to decide that he liked the way Bartlett was handling things. He apparently favored a good, energetic mate, who was not afraid to use his fists when necessary.

Finally, after a long silence, he turned and said, “Well, Bartlett, how’s the glass?” (Meaning the barometer.)

Bartlett was so surprised at the Skipper’s friendly tone that he couldn’t answer for a moment. Then he swallowed and said: “About the same, sir.”

With that the Captain grunted and went below and never mentioned the matter again.

In the course of time Bartlett got his first mate’s papers. For six years he cruised on many ships waiting for the day when he could take his final examinations and qualify for a master.

Again he had many adventures. Again and again it looked as if he were going to lose the rank he had gained. He had one cruise on the *Strathavon*, a big steamer that carried ore. Her captain was named Cross.

“A good name, too, at times,” says Bartlett. “For the old man certainly was cross when he got excited!”

One afternoon some young sailor began playing with the ship’s bell. Of course the bell is a sacred article at sea. For when it tolls it not only tells those on watch how soon they can come off duty, but it is the signal for fire and for many observations and other bits of nautical work about the ship.

As Captain Bartlett was on watch at the time he was responsible for anything that went wrong. When he heard the bell jangle he sprang forward to put an end to the foolishness.

But Captain Cross, in a fury, was there ahead of him. With a single blow the Captain knocked the sailor who was playing with the bell into the waterway. Then hearing a noise in the crew's quarters under the forecandle, he hopped down the ladder, Bartlett following close behind.

"There's going to be no fighting on my ship!" shouted the Skipper. Bartlett grinned when he heard this threat, because he knew by experience that one of the best fights of the voyage was about to take place.

Sure enough, the minute the Captain reached the lower deck he lit into the entire crew, a gang of nearly a dozen men. They were so surprised that only a few of them fought back. By the time Bartlett reached the scene three of them were flat on the deck. The Skipper had two others engaged in hot combat. Several were hiding in upper bunks.

Bartlett instantly realized that his Captain was still outnumbered five to one; and that as soon as the crew got over their surprise they would make short work of him.

Bartlett rushed for a powerful Swede sailor. He was the biggest of the crowd and the leader of the forecandle gang. Planting a heavy blow on this man's chin, Bartlett downed him instantly. He whirled about in time to swing at a big Irishman who was coming for him behind. As the latter outweighed him, the two went down together. But in the half-second while they were falling Bartlett gave a quick twist and landed on top of his man.

The next instant he was on his feet again and attacking a Newfoundland deck hand who seemed to be getting the better of the Skipper. He tackled the man as if he had been a regular football player. Down they went in a crash and the deck hand lay still among the wreckage.

Only two sailors were left on their feet. All the zest seemed to have gone out of their hostility. They cowered in a corner. Captain Cross gave them a contemptuous look and turned his back on them.

"Well, that's that, Bartlett," said the Skipper, wiping his hands. Bartlett was too much out of breath to reply. Together they climbed the forecandle ladder and smoothed their rumpled clothes.

On deck Captain Cross turned suddenly to Bartlett and said:

"Well, Mate, I think your time has come."

Bartlett quaked in his shoes. Was it possible that the Skipper was displeased with him for letting the bell be rung? Hadn't he put up a good enough fight in the forecandle?

“Come for what?” he stammered.

The Skipper’s eyes twinkled. “Come for me to lose you.”

“But I don’t want to leave!” cried Bartlett. “I’ll do my best!” It didn’t seem fair after he’d fought such a rattling good fight between-decks.

But the Skipper laid a hand on his arm. “I don’t mean that, Bartlett. I mean that a man who knows the sea as well as you, who can put up a fore-castle fight with your ability, is wasting his talents being a mate. Your time is up and I’m going to give you the strongest recommendation I know for your Master’s papers.” He held out his hand.

Overjoyed, Bartlett gripped it. “Thank you, sir!”

The final examinations were held in Halifax. There Bartlett had to face the Board of Trade examiners. It was the strictest test in the world at the time; and no mariner got by who was not fully qualified to handle any ship in any sea in any sort of weather.

“To brush up on my book knowledge, I spent a few weeks at a nautical academy,” says Bartlett. “They gave me an armful of books and I took them to my boarding house. It was worse than sealing. In two days my head was in a whirl. I couldn’t sleep and my meals were scarcely tasted.”

The chief trouble was that he had spent most of his life aboard ship and was not used to book work.

In addition to the studying, Bartlett found his apprehension unnerving him. He began to feel that he was more ignorant than any seafaring man had ever been. Of course he could navigate now and he certainly could handle a ship. But he felt his book learning was pretty weak.

It was the same feeling that every man has; in fact, every boy and girl has, when he goes up for examination. We may have studied for weeks and months; we may have had good marks for a long time; but when the great day dawns for the final test, we are sure that few people ever lived who were as ignorant as we.

One chilly morning Bartlett arose with the sick sensation of a man who was about to die. On this day his examinations were to begin.

“My breakfast lodged in my throat,” he said. “Ordinarily I could eat three bowls of porridge. On that morning I got stuck half way through the first one.

“My appointment was for 10:00 A. M. I walked up to the imposing building where the Board of Trade was housed. It was a dark, gloomy place, with long corridors and dusty windows, more like a prison than anything else.

“I sat down on a long wooden bench outside the office of the Chief Inspector. There were three other seafarers there. All looked as miserable as I. Their eyes were roving and their hands were fingering their caps. One man was muttering to himself, asking and answering his own questions, I suppose. When I saw him doing this I began reciting over some of the things that I knew. To my horror I had forgotten the definition of a simoon. I knew it was a kind of wind and I had always known what it was. But I am hanged if I could remember at that moment exactly how you’d define it. My heart sank.”

Bartlett was ushered into the presence of a Captain Smith of the Royal Navy, Senior Inspector. He was a big man with the air of a mariner about him. His face was ruddy and he had a firm jaw. His hair was white as snow. His eyes were very black and seemed to go through Bartlett as the young candidate entered.

“Ho, hum!” said Captain Smith, “and who might you be?”

“Robert A. Bartlett, sir.”

“So you think you can command a ship?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Been to sea long? Let me see your papers.”

Bartlett handed out his records to date, showing that he had been all over the world, had commanded his own schooner, had been second and first mate, and had a splendid record in all of it.

The Captain’s piercing eyes darted over the papers. He raised them again to Captain Bartlett who stood stiffly erect before him, heels together and shoulders back.

“So you think you ought to be a captain, eh?” he observed.

Bartlett didn’t know what to say. He had come for an examination and not his opinion about himself.

He was about to say so when the Captain swung around in his swivel chair and put his fingers together. After what seemed an endless time he looked back at Bartlett and asked:

“Robert A. Bartlett, what is a simoon?”

The worst had happened. The one easy thing that Bartlett ought to know he had forgotten. How could he explain to the Captain his wonderful knowledge of navigation and weather and the handling of ships when he fell down on this very first question? How could the Captain ever believe he had ever been to sea if this simple bit of knowledge had escaped him?

“What did you say?” snapped the Captain.

“I didn’t say anything, sir.”

“But I did. I asked you what a simoon was.”

Bartlett’s face grew red. His blue eyes went about three shades bluer. His big fists doubled up. He showed signs of inner emotion, but no outer result in a correct answer.

“I don’t know what a simoon is,” he finally blurted, feeling that this finished him; feeling that all the years of struggle and labor had gone for naught.

Captain Smith sprang to his feet. His close-cropped mustache bristled. It was as if Bartlett had insulted him.

“What!” he cried. “You don’t know what a simoon is?”

“No, sir,” said Bartlett, stoutly.

“Did you ever know what a simoon was?”

“Yes, sir,” said Bartlett.

The Captain’s eyes twinkled, but Bartlett was too disturbed to notice.

“When?” shouted the Captain. “When did you know what a simoon was?”

“I have always known what a simoon was,” answered Bartlett loudly.

The Captain came around from behind his desk and stood in a threatening attitude in front of Bartlett. “Well, why don’t you know now?” he asked, his eyes twinkling more than ever.

Bartlett did not retreat. His fists were now so tight that the color had gone out of his knuckles. His face was beet-red. He cudgled his brains for something intelligent to say. If only he could explain to the Captain that he was not used to examinations, that might help. Suddenly a thought jumped into his mind.

“I think I have forgotten, sir, because I am a seafaring man. I’m not used to offices. I’m not used to standing up before people and answering questions. On board ship I’m not asked questions. I give orders and men take them. I know how to give orders, sir. And I’m hanged if I think that answering questions is one of the first requirements of a sailor!”

He paused for breath. Then he added, more loudly than ever:

“If I want to know what a word means I look it up in the dictionary!”

The words literally came tumbling out of the young man’s mouth. As he heard himself say them, Bartlett felt a growing horror within him. His own tongue was undoing him. After this tirade the Captain could only throw him out of the office. Surely no one had ever been so impertinent before.

Then a strange thing happened. Captain Smith’s big form seemed to relax. His hard face softened. His thin compressed lips curved into a friendly smile.

“I say, Bartlett,” he chuckled, “—and you must not quote me on this— but I’m blamed if I could answer questions myself if I had to stand up before an examining board! It’s the hardest thing in the world and I happen to know there is no time when a man feels so stupid.”

If the earth had opened and swallowed him up the young candidate could not have been more astonished.

From that moment the whole thing went beautifully. Bartlett sat down and talked to Captain Smith as if he were talking to a shipmate. And it took very little conversation to show the Inspector that Bartlett knew the sea as well as any man alive. They discussed wrecks of ships and makes of engines. They had a dispute on how to load ore and how to load fruit. Bartlett told the Inspector some first-hand experiences that made the officer take notes for further investigation.

After over an hour he arose and shook hands with the candidate. “I’m glad you came in,” he said heartily. “It made my whole day for me. Now all you have to do is go and finish up your technical examination. You’ll find it very easy after the experiences you’ve had.”

In a few hours he passed his compass and other tests before a Captain Tingling, R. N. Here he shone because he was doing the work that he did every day aboard ship.

Finally he was ushered into a big office with book shelves running to its ceiling. There was heavy plush carpet on the floor and a single wide

mahogany desk near one window. A fire burned in a small grate.

Behind the desk sat an old man with white hair and a lean face. He wore no uniform, but Bartlett knew he was another naval officer, one who had been retired after long and faithful service to his country.

“*Captain* Bartlett—”

The old fellow emphasized the “*Captain*,” for now Bob Bartlett had won the right so to be addressed.

“*Captain* Bartlett, I hope you appreciate the solemn responsibilities that your certificate of Master Mariner gives you.”

“Yes, sir, I do,” said Bob humbly and passed out clutching the paper he had so long dreamed of having.

CHAPTER VI

TOWARDS THE POLE

SOON after Bartlett got his Master's papers it so happened that Peary, the famous American arctic explorer, was looking for a man to command his northern ships. He heard such fine things about the young Newfoundland skipper that he determined to hire him. He met Bartlett, liked his looks at once, and employed him thereafter for many years.

In 1898 Bob Bartlett sailed from New York in Peary's little ship *Windward*. As the *Windward* could only make about five knots, she could scarcely buck the tide in the East River. But she managed to get clear and, once at sea, set her sails. After weeks of tacking back and forth across the North Atlantic Ocean, she finally entered Baffin Bay. She cruised on through the trash ice of the cold northern waters and slowly skirted the northwest Greenland coast.

At the end of the summer she went into winter quarters on the east coast of Ellesmere Land. From her deck Captain Bartlett could see the ice-covered heights of Greenland across Smith Sound. West lay the black mountains and snow passes of an unexplored country.

The little ship was moored in shallow water among the bergs. Sea ice soon gripped her. Just inshore rose the bleak rocky desert of the Ellesmere coast. Eskimo snow igloos were built nearby to house the natives Peary had picked up at Cape York. Dogs howled in this little encampment. The rank odor of seal meat pervaded the air. Hooded men in heavy furs stumbled about the rough ice. Frost whitened the rigging, decks, gear and sides of the vessel, and filled the air with a sort of cold white mist. It was a terrible scene of death-like isolation.

Admiral Peary was at the time trying to reach the North Pole by sledging from his ship up the Ellesmere coast and then out over the rough ice-filled Polar Sea. Bartlett and others carried out food supplies to be ready when Peary left in the early Spring.

“What we need is fresh meat,” said Peary to Bartlett one morning. “Only good fresh red meat will keep us from scurvy.”

Scurvy is one of the dread diseases of the polar explorers. It comes from eating too much canned food and not enough fresh meat and vegetables. Of course there are no vegetables in the far north. But the eskimos keep well by killing game and always having plenty of fresh meat. A man with scurvy

feels wretchedly depressed, rapidly loses his strength and soon dies unless given fresh meat or vegetables to eat.

“Let’s see what we can do,” said Bartlett to Tom Murphy, the boatswain, a tall, hard-bitten young Newfoundlander in the ship’s company, who had the reputation of fighting first and talking afterward.

Murphy shook his head. “It’s 15° below zero this morning,” he protested. He pointed to the white pass between the nearby mountains. Ghost-like streamers of drifting snow waved down across the fiord ice.

But to Bartlett, it was his chance to make an impression on Peary. He felt that if he could get fresh meat for the crew he would have done a great thing for the expedition.

So he persuaded Murphy to take a chance. The pair set off about 10:00 in the morning. As the sun had disappeared over the southern horizon three weeks before and would not return until the following Spring, only a murky twilight marked the short polar day. Presently even this twilight would be gone and the long arctic night set in.

Bartlett’s idea was to drag a small sledge by hand and camp for one night near the head of the fiord. From this camp they could hunt bear and musk-oxen. On the sledge he lashed a small alcohol stove, a little tea and biscuit and two tins of pemmican (a mixture of preserved beef and suet). For shelter he took a light tent.

After about an hour the pair crossed the tracks of a big bear. But it led towards the heights over which the wind had begun to whistle and they dared not follow for fear they might be caught in the darkness at a point where they could not camp. The going was through heavy snow and both men felt the load of the sledge tax their strong muscles.

A little farther on they came to the tracks of musk-oxen, showing that they might soon see the game they sought. But by this time the twilight had turned to dusk. It would not do to be caught in an exposed position. The cutting wind and bitter cold would have made camp on the fiord ice impossible. So before it was completely dark Bartlett led the way up over the rocks of the rugged shore line into a small ravine.

“We will pitch a tent here,” he said to Murphy.

“But won’t we be drifted in?” objected the boatswain, who was now shivering with cold.

“Perhaps. But it will be better than being blown away in the middle of the night.”

With stiff fingers and frost-bitten noses they unloosened the load from their small sledge. Overhead howled the wind. Through a break in the clouds were visible bright streamers of the aurora borealis. A powdery vapor filled the air; fine particles of frost were dripping down from the thick drift above them.

They were soon inside their little shelter. The tent slatted so noisily in angry gusts of wind that they had to shout to make themselves heard. For supper Bartlett hacked open a can of pemmican with his little camp ax. Murphy busied himself lighting the alcohol stove. A flickering candle was the only illumination.

“Get out of the light,” said Murphy presently.

“I’m not in the light,” retorted Bartlett.

Murphy crawled over to Bartlett’s side of the tent to find out why the light was so dim. To the surprise of both men the flame of the candle was almost out of sight down inside the wax. So bitterly cold was the air that it kept the outside of the candle from melting, while down the center burned the wick. The flame of the candle was therefore enclosed in the little cup of unmelted wax. Bartlett looked at the thermometer. *It was 60° below zero!*

A big tin cup of hot tea stimulated their hearts into action. For a while, at least, the awful cold was driven from their stiff bodies. The tent kept the wind out, and heat from their cooking warmed the air about them.

Melting snow on their little alcohol stove gave them some more water. Into this water they dumped lumps of frozen pemmican. Bartlett broke up a half dozen big thick ship’s biscuits. The result was a fine “hoosh,” as the explorer calls such a pemmican stew.

“Not so bad, Bob,” observed Murphy a few minutes later, talking thickly through a mouthful of hot food.

But Bartlett shook his head. He knew that nearly fourteen hours of darkness lay ahead before the few dim hours of twilight would come again. The gale seemed to be increasing. Roar of the blizzard across the heights above them was louder.

“I hope we don’t get storm-bound,” he said. He nodded at a small store of food in the corner of the tent. “That chow wouldn’t last us a month even if we went on quarter rations.”

Across Bartlett's mind flitted a memory of other men who had been caught in wintry darkness without food while a blizzard raged for weeks on end. He had dismissed such things from his mind earlier in the day because the risk had seemed worth the prize of fresh meat.

He began to regret just a little his impetuous plan to get fresh meat for the expedition. But then Bartlett was still young and had not counted on disaster. He was willing to take far greater risks than he would today under similar circumstances.

When they had eaten, there was nothing for the two men to do but crawl into their fur sleeping bags while the warmth of the food was still in their bodies. Bartlett found that he had to beat his bag with a stick because it was frozen together. He pried it open with his stockinged feet and managed to wriggle down. Murphy, half a head taller, had an even harder struggle before he was out of sight inside his fur bag.

After the toil of a hard day, the punishment of the wind on their faces and the good meal they had just had, both young men were soon fast asleep.

Bartlett was awakened by a peculiar feeling of suffocation. In telling me about it afterwards, he said: "I thought Tom Murphy had rolled over on me in the night." He tried to lift his shoulders, but could not budge. An enormous weight seemed to be pressing down on him. He wasn't cold; in fact he was warmer than any time since he left the ship.

"Hey, Tom!" he called after a few minutes.

No answer. Then a grunt that sounded a long distance away.

"Where are you, Tom?" called Bartlett again, and tried to sit up. But he couldn't move.

By exerting all his strength he finally managed to free one arm. He put it out of the top of the bag. He felt something soft and cold. At once he knew it was the roof of the tent. And by the heavy softness beyond the cloth he knew that a great weight of snow lay on top of the tent.

"Hey, we're buried!" he shouted to Murphy.

"I know it," grunted the latter. "I can't move. Come and dig me out!"

"Dig you out!" exclaimed Bartlett. "I can't get out myself!"

It was an hour before Bartlett could finally clear himself sufficiently to knock away some of the snow from the edge of the tent near his head. Apparently while they slept a small avalanche had come down from the

rocks above and had buried them under ten feet of snow. It was only due to the fact that Bartlett waked up promptly that both were not smothered. Although the snow was light and fluffy, both had to use all their strength before they could get clear.

And then what a mess! It was pitch dark. The bitterly cold wind was still howling. Their sledge had disappeared under the avalanche. Their precious rifle had gone. Murphy had lost one of his boots. Starvation stared them in the face, provided they lived long enough to starve.

“Where are you, Bob?” Murphy asked in the darkness.

“Right here, old man.”

“Well, you’ll have to take my foot. It’s gone wooden.”

Tom Murphy meant his bootless foot was frozen. Both men knew by long experience down the Labrador that a man with frozen feet was completely out of the running. When a wooden feeling comes it must be attended to at once.

Bartlett reached for Murphy’s arm. No word passed between them. Quickly Murphy sat down in the soft snow while Bartlett whipped off his friend’s sock and placed the frozen foot under his shirt.

“That’s better,” grunted Murphy, when he felt the warm flesh of Bob Bartlett’s bare stomach bringing life again into the frozen member.

The next task was to find Murphy’s missing boot. Bartlett finally dragged it out of the bottom of Murphy’s sleeping bag.

The problem now was to get back to the ship.

Any chance of finding their sledge and rifle was very slight, even though both could be only a few yards away. But they had no tools with which to dig in the snow and their food supply was very limited.



KARKOTEE-AK.

A young bear hunter of North Greenland, usually known as "Jimmie" by the white explorers. His brother is the famous Etukeshuk.



THE TOUGHEST ANIMAL IN THE WORLD.

Eskimo sled dogs which Bartlett drove in the Far North. "They can live on three meals a week and travel 100 miles a day."

Murphy was for starting back at once.

"No," said Bartlett, "we might fall through the tide crack and be drowned."

"Then let's get back into our sleeping bags."

But Bartlett shook his head. "This is a dangerous spot. I've seen more than one avalanche come down from the same place," he said.

"Then why not try the fiord ice?"

"No. There are bears out there. You're a good scrapper, Tom, but a bear would only laugh if you poked him in the nose with your fist."

At Bartlett's suggestion they decided to walk up and down to keep warm while waiting for the dawn. It was the only thing to do. They moved out clear of the chance of another avalanche and linked arms in the darkness so as not to be separated. They didn't waste their energy by talking.

The long night seemed endless. Twice above the tumult of the storm they thought they heard a bear approaching. Both knew that polar bears lived in the vicinity. To the shaggy bear covered with long, thick hair, the blizzard was only a pleasant breeze. He might be out hunting for seal, or returning from a meal down near the tide crack. He might not want to eat a man, but he would angrily resent these two-legged strangers being in his path. It

would take but one blow of his huge paw armed with long sharp claws to tear their flesh to ribbons.

“It got so bad,” says Bartlett, “that we began to see bears in the darkness. Every now and then Tom and I would stop and grab each other. But then we’d have to start moving again or we’d freeze.”

When the gray dawn finally came over the southern hill, it was a weary pair of men that faced it. Their task was now to reach the ship. The wind had fallen, but the snow was deep along the road they had come. At once they set off eastward, falling and stumbling over rough nubbles of ice and bruising their aching muscles. Darkness had come again when the first flicker of a single lantern broke through the frost smoke ahead. Peary met them at the gangway. He was ominously silent.

“Where is your sledge?” he asked.

“Buried,” said Bartlett.

“What did you shoot?”

“Nothing.”

Peary shrugged his shoulders. Presently he said: “You two boys have learned something about the Arctic, haven’t you?” That was all. The famous Commander felt their punishment had already been enough.

Young Bartlett and Murphy went below deeply thankful that they were alive and back aboard ship.

After that Bartlett did not go again alone without eskimos into the arctic night. But he still had a lesson to learn.

In December Peary sent him with three of the natives up the coast to lay down a cache of provisions. Although there was no daylight, the weather was fine and clear, moon shining and little wind. Top speed was made. The dogs galloped along, tails in the air and the eskimos gaily cracking their whips. In two days’ travel the point was reached that Peary had designated. Here the loads of pemmican and fuel were cached and the return journey started.

Bartlett was driving dogs on a long journey for the first time. He had practiced about the ship using a long eskimo whip. He had learned to hurl it to the end of his twenty-foot dog traces and steer his team this way and that by cracking his lash over their backs.

On the return journey the eskimos began to speed up. Their whips cracked like a volley of musketry. They began to draw ahead. Poor Bartlett, a tenderfoot in the far north, began to fall behind. Soon the natives were out of sight. Bartlett's dogs quarreling among themselves, tangling their traces and only half-heartedly pulling, moved forward very slowly.

Bartlett swung his whip impatiently. As he had not learned to use it skillfully the lash flashed past his head too closely and wrapped around his neck. He felt a stinging cut on his cheek just below one eye. The pain almost blinded him. To prevent the dogs running away he capsized the sledge. As he sat with his bare hand over his injured face, he heard a queer sound like a distant whisper. The hissing noise seemed to come from high up among the rocks.

Bartlett looked up. The moonlight was still almost as bright as day. But across the hillsides above him he saw being drawn what appeared to be a gigantic veil. At first he thought it was fog. But soon he realized that it was a long streamer of white snow being swept from the ice cap by the rising wind. With sinking heart he felt again that he was being caught in an arctic blizzard, one of those terrible unexpected storms of the far north. This time he had no tent, no gun nor any companion in his misery. In one pocket he had a cake of chocolate, his only food. He had no tools on his sledge. He had broken his camp ax the day before. He had one spare pair of mittens, but these were both badly worn so that they were useless. He had only a knife with which to cut snow blocks for his shelter.

His dogs lay curled in balls in front of the sledge resting from their long pull. Suddenly the great King sat up and cocked his ears, then raised his snout to the moon. And as the storm cloud of the coming blizzard obscured the bright disk in the sky the old King dog let out a mournful howl.

"I tell you," Bartlett says now, "when I heard that dog howl I figured it was all up with me. It was just as if he said: 'This poor white man is going to die. Oh, the poor white man!'"

"And I knew why he was howling. He was howling because we were a hundred miles from the ship. There was practically no food and I didn't know the tricks which the eskimo uses in protecting himself in a blizzard."

The ghostly whisper on the hills was becoming louder. The storm was getting closer all the time. Hard particles of ice which were swept across the rocks to cause the hissing sound began to sweep over Bartlett himself. If he were going to save his life he had to act quickly.

But what could he do? There wasn't a chance of his overtaking the eskimos. In a few minutes the blinding blizzard would be upon him. He had no shelter from the wind and drifting snow. And while his fur clothing would keep him warm for a while, the storm might last many days.

Quick, intelligent action was needed. Luckily Bartlett kept his head. Seizing his snowknife from his sledge he ran to a deep drift that spread across the face of a nearby ridge of rocks. In ten minutes he had cut a deep block from this drift and had begun to burrow in. Before the storm struck him he was able to unload his sledge and put his small equipment into the hole he had dug.

With the blizzard howling without he excavated a little cave. He replaced the first block he had cut as a door, lit his stove and settled down comfortably to have tea. The dogs slept outside, letting the snow drift over them for warmth. As eskimo dogs often have much wolf blood in them, they did not suffer.

The storm lasted only twenty-four hours. When Bartlett did not overtake them the eskimos built snow igloos, waited and then went back. They found him safely ensconced in his drift house. The whole party reached the ship safely two days later.

CHAPTER VII

LEARNING TO BUILD A SNOW IGLOO

ON the day after Christmas Captain Bartlett stood on the deck of the little ice-bound ship and looked out into the dark arctic night. He was terribly discouraged. He knew that before he could ever be safe in the frozen north he must learn how to build a snow igloo. He had tried to learn and he had failed.

He had found that a tent was not comfortable nor was it safe. He had learned how easy it was to get lost. He had found that an arctic blizzard will sometimes blow for days.

And the only possible way he could be sure of being safe when out on the trail was to be able to build an igloo in case of emergency. He could not always be lucky to find a deep drift into which he could burrow.



BUILDING AN IGLOO.

Note how evenly the snow blocks are cut. One man stands outside and passes them in to the builder.



READY FOR THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

Captain Bartlett in a diving suit which he used two years ago in repairing the *Morrissey's* bottom after her accident in Smith Sound.

On the ice near the ship lived an eskimo family. The neat dome of their snow house shone like a gray shadow in the dim light. A faint glow came through the seal-gut window on the lee side of the igloo. Bartlett knew that within were half a dozen eskimos, warm and comfortable, living and talking by their little blubber lamp.

He knew that the wind could blow without ever shaking this solid house; that the snow could drift and never batter down its strong walls. He knew

that the insulating value of the snow was so great that even the tiny flame of the native stove was sufficient to keep the interior warm.

Suddenly, with a gesture of determination, Bartlett pushed back the fur hood on his shirt of caribou skin and exclaimed:

“I’m going to learn to build one if it takes me ten years!”

He went to the Boatswain and borrowed a lantern. From the Carpenter he got a saw and a large knife. Then he trudged out over the uneven floes and hunted for a snow drift.

He found one that sloped gently upward of the side of an iceberg. Walking about on it he stuck his knife down until he thought he had some solid snow. He proceeded to cut blocks. He remembered that the eskimos made their blocks about three feet long and two feet wide.

By hard work he carved out about twenty-five blocks. He began standing them up on edge in a circle the way he had seen the eskimos do. Then he began to place another row of blocks on top of his first row. Everything went well for a while. The walls began to take shape. He was much encouraged.

He saw himself inside a real igloo. He pictured himself going back and telling his shipmates how he had become an eskimo. Perhaps he could sleep out there. It would be good training for the next sledge trip in the bitter cold of early spring.

Then suddenly Bartlett heard a slight swishing sound behind him. He was startled. Whirling about he prepared himself to face a bear. There was always danger that the big wandering beasts might turn up and attack a man.

Alas, the sound was only that of the whole wall of his igloo falling down. The edges of the blocks had not stuck together. Their weight had not been properly distributed. When the walls became topheavy they caved in.

He tried again. He got more blocks; thicker ones; longer ones. And again he piled them edge on edge until the walls banked up above his head.

But he found the curve of the roof was not enough. There was no way he could balance the blocks so that the ones that would make the ceiling would stay in place. Again and again he tried. But he only succeeded in knocking down the walls he had already built.

Worried and discouraged he went back to the ship. “Probably it’s an eskimo trick,” he thought. “The white man isn’t fitted for this sort of thing.”

He remembered then that no white man he ever knew could build an igloo. Even Peary had not practiced the task.

About a week later he took his rifle and went to an open lead nearby hoping that a seal might possibly come up. He found Ootark out there looking for a fox trap which had been dragged on to the sea ice by a captured fox.

Ootark had his knife in his hand in preparing for resetting the trap. It was a long knife, bigger than a bread knife; in fact, it was about the size of the knives that butchers use. It was one of the knives that Peary brought north to the eskimos for them to use to build snow houses.

“Going to build an igloo?” asked Bartlett.

“Why?” asked Ootark, laughing. “We’re at home, aren’t we?”

Bartlett nodded. Suddenly he said: “Ootark, I’ll give you my undershirt if you’ll teach me to build a snow house.”

Ootark’s face lit up. In spite of his warm furs there was nothing he’d like better than the soft woven undergarment that the white man wore. Ootark knew that it would be a beautiful thing to wear in an igloo when all the other eskimos sat stripped to their waists.

“Sure, white man,” he said. “I’ll teach you to build a snow igloo.”

He took Bob to a drift of snow nearby. He put his knife down into it and shook his head.

Then he walked on to another drift, put his knife down and again shook his head.

“Too soft,” he said. “Too soft.”

The third drift they came to proved exactly right. “Now we’ll build,” said Ootark.

But Bartlett seized the knife from the eskimo’s hand and plunged it down into the snow. He did this two or three times. He wanted to get the exact feeling of the resistance the hard packed snow offered to the knife blade. He knew that one of the troubles he had had was in trying to build with snow that was too soft. And he remembered that on the trail the eskimos had always potted about sticking their knives in the snow drifts until they found exactly the right sort of snow for an igloo.

Snow that is too soft will not stand up; that which is too hard won’t cling sufficiently. Remember this in building an igloo.

Next Ootark marked out an ellipse on the smooth surface of a nearby snow slope. As there was a half moon in the sky the light was sufficient. The ellipse was about ten feet in its long dimensions and eight feet across. It made the floor plan of the igloo.

Bartlett noticed that the long dimension of the ellipse was towards the south. This meant that the front door of the igloo would face away from the wind and so protect those entering it.

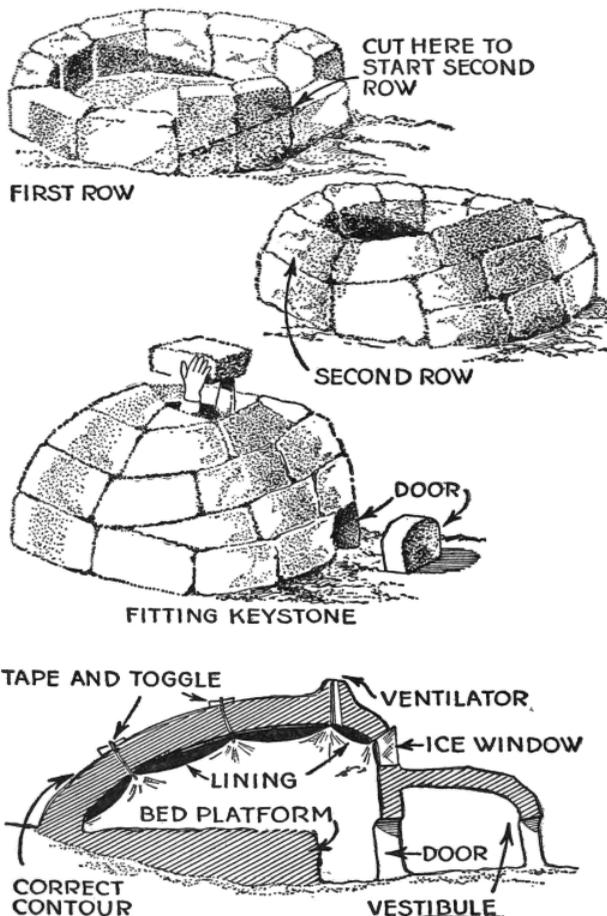
Now Ootark set about cutting blocks. He did this by putting his knife down in the snow along four sides of a rectangle three feet long and two feet wide. Then on the fourth side he cut a little trough about ten inches deep. This enabled him to stick his knife under the snow block and work it back and forth, loosening the block from the mother drift. Next he gave it a slight kick, breaking it loose. He lifted the rectangle up and stood it on its edge, a fine big solid building block of white and hard-packed snow.

It took Ootark about forty-five minutes to get fifty blocks. When he had this many blocks all standing on edge around the center space, he was ready to build.

Bartlett watched every step carefully.

The next move was to stand the blocks on edge around the ellipse. The ends of the blocks met tightly. Those at the north or back end of the igloo were slanted slightly inward. Then Ootark took his knife and smoothed off the upper surface of this ring of blocks so that it all slanted slightly and made a good solid foundation for the next row of blocks.

“Right here I found one mistake I’d made,” said Bartlett. Because the next thing that Ootark did was to cut two of the blocks slant-wise down almost to the ground. This made it possible for his next row of blocks to start on an angle upward.



HOW TO BUILD A SNOW IGLOO.

Any boy can put together a snow igloo if he cuts blocks of packed snow and follows directions.

Again Ootark laid a row of snow blocks on their edges, working slowly around the ellipse and slanting the back ones slightly inward.

As he placed each block, Ootark ran his knife back and forth under the lower edge so that it settled solidly and nestled closely to the block beneath. He did the same on the right hand edge, which edge was against the last block erected. In this way the building was neatly and firmly done. A last touch was given each time by tapping the block with his closed mittened fist so that it settled firmly in place.

By the fourth row the blocks in rear of the igloo slanted in at a very sharp angle. In fact the two at the very rear were almost parallel to the

ground. From this Bartlett saw that the ceiling was then in progress. Finally, about the fifth or sixth row, the spiral of blocks came together. Only a rough rectangular opening about two feet on the side was left in the very top of the igloo.

Ootark now got a specially solid and thick block and took it inside the igloo with him. He stood erect. Carefully he put the block outside the roof through the single hole left to fill. Slowly he lowered it until it rested on the roof. Then with his knife he trimmed the edges of this block until it settled slowly into the hole.

“I was encouraged,” says Bartlett, “when I saw how carefully he put in his keystone block. It showed me that even the eskimo felt he was building a fragile house. Fragile, yes. And yet when Ootark emerged through a small round hole he cut in the bottom of the front of the igloo he proceeded to climb on the walls of the house and chink in the cracks between the blocks.”

Already the structure had begun to settle into itself. Every block was doing its share in holding up every other block. And as Ootark tamped in the soft snow, and pounded it slightly with his fist, the structure seemed to grow in strength and unity.

“There you are, white man,” said Ootark. “Now we’ll finish it.”

“But I thought it was finished!” exclaimed Bartlett.

“No, just wait.”

With that Ootark went to his own igloo. He brought back a shallow pan of soap-stone. Into this pan he placed a few lumps of frozen blubber. Along its edge he put a little dry moss, scarcely enough to fill a thimble. Then he chewed a small piece of blubber, crushing it with his teeth into a soft, oily mass. He lit the wick.

A tiny flame flickered up. Glistening walls of the snow house reflected the light as from a million diamonds. Heat of the tiny flame melted the blubber into oil which fed fuel to the wick.

While the inside was warming up Ootark cut a small door of snow and put it in the front opening. He built a low platform of snow on both sides of the door. These were for the lamps. Then with some extra blocks he built a long platform starting just back of the door and running the full length of the igloo.

“For the skins,” he said simply.

He spread on this long platform two sealskins which he had brought.

“And there we sat,” said Bartlett. “Ootark took out a pipe which Peary had given him. The igloo warmed up. Heat from the inside gradually ‘set’ the walls. The temperature rose above freezing. The inside walls thawed slightly, but almost immediately froze from the cold air within. That is, there was no dripping.

“I was so delighted that I stayed in there for an hour. Ootark related stories of the hunt; told me about the time a bear overtook him and his team ran away. How he lay on the ground and pretended to be dead so that the bear would not touch him. He told me about the time he capsized in his kayak. How he nearly starved to death when he drifted out to sea on a floe of ice.”

All winter long that igloo stayed there. Its strong solid walls resisted the wind and the cold. Two men could stand on its roof without breaking it in. A whole family could have lived comfortably in it, safe from the cold and the terrible blizzards.

“At last I knew how to build an igloo,” Bartlett relates. “Yes, I knew *how*; and yet I still couldn’t build one. I went out to practice. Igloo after igloo I built. I found there was a great trick in knowing just how far in to slant the snow blocks. It took a skill that I had not yet mastered to smooth off the under edges during building. I had to learn just how hard to tap the blocks in place. And last of all I tried and tried before I could put the keystone block neatly into the last hole of the ceiling and have it settle into place.”

Later out on the trail Bartlett had occasion to build igloos at times when eskimos were not with him. As he was still not so skillful as the native, he always made sure to start his alcohol stove before he leaned against the walls. This heat made a thin lining of ice that acted like strong cement. Time and again he was caught by storms and forced to wait for days inside his shelter. And not once did any of his igloos cave in. In fact, when the thick walls shut out the noisy tempest it seemed as if those within had escaped to the peace and calm of a warmer climate.

Because this is a subject of interest to every boy, the author wishes to add a few words to what Bartlett has said. I went through the same struggle in North Greenland that Bartlett did to learn to make a good snow house. It took me nearly a year, even though I practiced steadily. However, an igloo that will hold up can be put together after a few trials.

It was worth all the trouble I took. And I know now there is no reason why a boy right here at home can’t build snow igloos for camping purposes.

Be sure to get well-drifted snow. Try it with a knife and if you find the snow grips the blade on withdrawal you have just about the right consistency for a successful igloo.

Make the sleeping platform a foot or two above the floor of the little front door. In this way the cold air cannot get up to where you sit. And the warm air inside does not escape. Instead of the blubber lamp you can use a small alcohol stove, or one of the primus stoves such as Byrd has taken with him to the Antarctic. Even two or three big fat candles help in cold weather.

The temperature must be below freezing in order to build an igloo that is satisfactory. If the air is above freezing the blocks will not set, nor will the inside harden after the lamp is lighted. The chinks in the edges between blocks outside must be well packed with snow so that the whole thing becomes hardened as a single mass.

A canvas or cloth lining adds a great luxury to an igloo. It should be sewn together roughly the shape of the house. Then small strips are pinned or sewn on at various points in its outer surface. These strips should be about a foot long. Then holes are made with a small stick through the roof of the igloo and the strip tucked through each to be tied to a stick laid flat against the wall outside. In this way the igloo has a lining which makes the air space between it and the narrow snow wall. In a lined igloo of this sort I have sat with the temperature as high as 80°, or hot enough to lie on the furs without a stitch of clothing on!

CHAPTER VIII

A HARD BATTLE

AFTER his northern cruise in the *Windward* Captain Bartlett returned to Newfoundland for a period of fishing and sealing. He had been able to save only a little money during his work with Peary, and he felt he should help his father at home.

Meanwhile, in 1904, Peary laid the keel of a new ship, the *Roosevelt*, especially designed to stand heavy ice pressure. In July, 1905, he sailed from New York in her, sure that he could go far enough north to reach the Pole by a final dash with sledges and dogs.

Bob Bartlett went as skipper of the ship. In her he was to have some of the most exciting times of his whole adventurous career.

“In fact the hardest battle I ever fought on the sea,” says Bartlett now, “was in the autumn I brought the *Roosevelt* home after Peary’s narrow escape in 1906.”

Peary was then 49 years old. He had crossed the Greenland ice cap. He had worked up the Ellesmere Land coast for nearly ten years. And now, with Bartlett’s help, he had put the *Roosevelt* at Cape Sheridan on the edge of the polar ice. Starting in the early spring he had traveled with eskimos up to 87° 6′ north, only 174 miles from the Pole. Then he had been cut off by the Big Lead (open water between floes) on his way back and nearly starved to death. He made Cape Sheridan early in the summer of 1906.

When he finally reached the ship he found her surrounded by enormous blocks of ice that held her prisoner and threatened every moment to crush her hull to kindling wood.

“We may have to walk home, Commander,” Bob Bartlett told him.

Peary nodded calmly. He saw that the ship was under heavy pressure and might have to be abandoned.

With the use of dynamite an attempt was immediately made to break the *Roosevelt* free. Bartlett buried about twenty sticks of dynamite in the heavy floe just ahead. He thought if he could start a crack his ship might push her way out.

“All ready!” he called to the Boatswain when the men were clear and the electric connections made. Bartlett dodged behind a small berg while the Boatswain closed the circuit.

Instantly a terrific explosion rent the air. Huge pieces of ice were thrown skyward. A whole floe lifted and a column of water shot up.

The bow of the *Roosevelt* trembled. The ship heeled sharply to starboard. There was a sound of crashing timbers. The explosion had fractured not only the ice but also the side of the hull. When the ship straightened up there was a bad crack in her port bow and her fore stays had been torn loose. Her crockery was broken, her galley stove askew and every man aboard badly shaken.

It took several days to make repairs. By that time the channel which had been opened ahead of the ship nearly closed. But, putting on full steam, Bartlett drove her forward.

It was a hard fight every inch of the way. The ship would move a few yards and then be thrown backward by the grinding ice. Peary stayed in the bow. Bob Bartlett shouted orders from the foretop barrel. The terror-stricken eskimos huddled aft.

Finally, near the end of August, the *Roosevelt* got into the looser ice of Kane Basin. But here a new danger was met. The big floes had wider leads in which to move. So when a gale sprang up they came charging down upon the *Roosevelt* and pounded her against the rocks of Ellesmere Land coast. One sheet of solid ice a quarter of a mile in diameter struck her aft. Before it could be dynamited the floe sheered two plates off her counter and ripped the rudder post from its fastening. Bartlett slid down from the rigging like a monkey. He dashed aft and plunged into the lazarette. He found a big hole in the ship's bottom. Outside the ice was crushing and grinding as if determined to put an end to the vessel then and there. Then, just in time, the pressure providentially slackened. Luckily, also, the vessel was heeled over so that a temporary patch could be put on outside the hull. At that, the pumps had to be kept going night and day to keep her from sinking.

Cautiously Bartlett worked his vessel across to the little native village of Etah. Here he drove her up to the head of the deep fiord and put her on the beach. With the high tide and rocky bottom, to say nothing of drifting icebergs, it was a dangerous task. But the ship had to be made seaworthy for the long trip south.

A makeshift rudder post was fashioned out of some old timbers. The boilers, one of which had blown up, were patched. The hole in the side was blocked with okum and planking and covered over with lead plates. It was a rough job, but there was little material for repair.

Time was getting short. It was past the middle of September already. The sun was sinking lower in the south. Brief snow squalls swept over the struggling men almost every day. A week or two more and the awful arctic winter would set in.

There was not much food aboard, not enough to winter with. Some of the men were ill from overwork and the constant strain. Yet it was necessary to put the ship in condition that would enable her to cruise 3,000 miles of storm-swept waters towards the south.

“We might take a chance on wintering,” suggested the Boatswain.

Peary shook his head. “We must go, Murphy,” he said. “We failed this year; and if we don’t get home this winter we’ll never get away for another try next summer.”

Bartlett agreed. He felt, with Peary, that the North Pole would be won only by keeping at the job.

On September 20th the little *Roosevelt* steamed slowly out of Etah. She could make only about four knots. Her canvas had been set so that she could take advantage of the cold wind that was sweeping down Smith Sound. When a heavy floe struck her abeam the *Roosevelt* staggered. Her patched rigging nearly gave way. Grim looks were on the faces of all the crew. They knew the chance Bartlett was taking. Yet they were willing to share the risk with him of a perilous sea voyage in a damaged ship. Their wives and families were in the south. Starvation in the north or shipwreck on the bleak shores of Baffin Land were the only alternatives.

On September 26th a blinding snowstorm swept off the ice cap from Cape York. Twice the *Roosevelt* collided with icebergs. The helmsman’s hands were frozen as he clung to the wheel. Bartlett in the foretop, literally hanging by his elbows from fatigue, shouted hoarsely to shift the deck details every half hour.

After the snow came wind. By this time the big floes had been left behind. The sea kicked up into mountainous combers. One tore off the door to the main hatch. Water roared down the ladder. It swept through the fireroom plates into the bilge pumps. Water in the bottom began to gain. Some of the fires were put out.

Bartlett joined the helmsman. Together they swung the heavy wheel until they hove the little ship to. Bartlett tried to get out his sea anchor, a mass of spars and canvas that could be put overboard to hold the ship’s nose into the wind. But the seas were running too high.

“Will she make it?” asked Peary.

“*She’s got to!*” roared Bartlett to make himself heard above the tumult of the storm.

With the ship lying more comfortably head-on into the seas, he sprang below into the fireroom. The firemen were up to their knees in icy water. Courageously they stuck to their posts, although threatened every minute with drowning like rats in a trap.

“What’s the matter with the pumps?” yelled Bartlett.

“Choked!” retorted the old Scotch engineer.

“All of them?”

“No,” admitted the engineer. “We have a big pump aft, but we can’t get water to it on account of the engine room bulkhead.”

Bartlett, being a man of action, did not wait to argue longer. He seized an ax. With half a dozen heavy blows he stove in the bulkhead. The water rushed in. What little steam was left was put on this pump. Slowly the ship began to lift. Her sluggish rolling, due to the enormous cargo of water she had shifted, began to improve as water poured over her side from the scupper holes. Once again she showed signs of life.

Two days later the wind and sea moderated. By this time the little crew were nearly exhausted. Bartlett himself had had no sleep for seventy-two hours.

On the third of October another gale came out of the north. Using all her canvas, the *Roosevelt* sped before it. A huge following sea caught her as her stern was buried in the trough of one that had just passed. With a crash of splintering timbers the rudder was wrenched free of its moorings and torn completely away. The ship was helpless.

Again Bartlett hove his vessel to. With only a foresail he held her steadily into the wind. He could not steer. His only hope was to rig another rudder.

On the following dawn the wind dropped sufficiently to enable the deck force to get some heavy beams out of the hold and lash them together. To these were bolted a series of planks cut the right length to fit between the stern and the rudder guard.

“All ready, Skipper,” reported the Boatswain wearily.

“Stand by your winch,” replied Bartlett, “and hold up a hand for the first hoist to be made.” He knew that if he could swing the rudder over the stern he might secure it in place so that he could steer.

All waited for the ship to get on an even keel for a few moments during the maneuver. But she danced on the crest of the waves like a crazy thing. Suddenly a gust of wind struck her with such force that her over-strained rigging could stand no longer. There came a terrific rending and tearing of ropes and timbers.

“*Stand from under!*” screamed Bartlett.

With a crash the foretopmast fell to the deck. Only by a miracle no one was killed.

“Clear it away,” ordered Bartlett grimly.

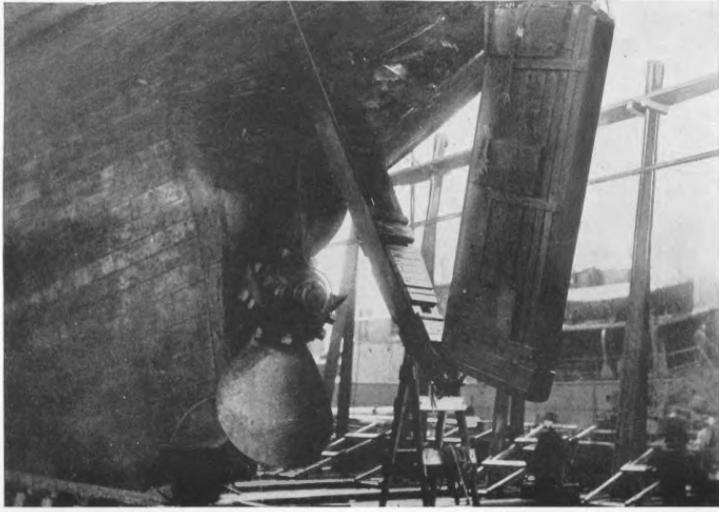
Two men sprang forward with axes. The rigging was slashed away. A heavy spar hanging over the side was cut adrift. Once more the ship rose free of her encumbrances. The hoisting tackle was rove again. Slowly the new rudder was lifted into the air, swung aft and over the side. It was heart-breaking toil. But Bartlett’s cheery voice was always there to encourage his weary men.

Finally the rudder hung under the stern. A small kedge anchor was attached to its small end to weight it down. A heavy line was led from the after edge of the rudder to the port side and one to the starboard side. By hauling these lines the crew on watch could put the helm to one side or the other and so steer. But instead of having a single helmsman do the job, it was necessary for half a dozen men to haul away with all their strength. Just one more drain it was on the energy of the worn-out crew.



SEAL-SKIN TUPIKS OF SMITH SOUND ESKIMO.

In late June the snow igloos of Greenland natives become very damp. They are deserted for the warm, dry skin tents with their frames of driftwood.



THE RUDDER THAT SAVED THE SHIP.

How the *Roosevelt's* stern looked after she returned from her terrible trip north in 1906.

Snow came again as the ship was put on her southerly course. Heavy seas hurried after her as if hungry to swallow the crippled little ship. Wind howled through the rigging and drove sleet and snow into the eyes of the men who were trying to steer.

Luckily, by this time, the ship was out of the zone of many icebergs. Only occasionally did the enormous ghost-like mountains rise out of the murk and slip noiselessly by.

For four days the *Roosevelt* ran before the gale. Her rudder worked fairly well, but it was difficult to handle. Food was scarce. On the shortened rations the men slowly weakened. Bartlett, eyes bloodshot and lips split from the ceaseless wind, seemed like a man possessed. Tirelessly he kept the deck, always encouraging his men and keeping a weather eye peeled for an iceberg ahead or a dangerous sea behind.

Ten days later, the ship rounded the rugged cape that marks the entrance to the little Moravian mission station at Hebron, Labrador.

Peary clasped Bartlett's hand. "The rest ought to be easy, Skipper."

"Yes, sir, if we can get some fuel."

Bartlett had the whaleboat lowered. In a cold drizzling rain and flurries of snow he went ashore to buy some coal from the local trading station.

But the Factor shook his head. “Sorry, Captain, but we’ve only a few hods of coal left. Didn’t get our supply this summer.”

Bartlett’s heart sank. The *Roosevelt* was still nearly a thousand miles from home. “We’ve got to have something to burn!” he groaned.

“Blubber and wood is all we’ve got.”

Bartlett knew no ship ever burned fuel like that. But he also knew that Peary was determined to get home at any cost. “All right,” he told the Factor, “we’ll take wood and blubber.”

“This diet soon gave the *Roosevelt’s* furnace acute indigestion,” is the way Bartlett puts it in his recital of their awful voyage.

The wood was green and the blubber flickered up with an awful smell of scorched seal. But somehow or other the firemen managed to keep enough steam on the boilers to give the wretched ship a few knots.

Then the wood gave out. The blubber wouldn’t burn alone. The wind was directly off the coast and another storm brewing.

“Only one thing to do, sir,” Bartlett told Peary.

“What’s that?”

“Burn some of our own hull.”

“What!” cried Peary. He couldn’t bear the thought of feeding his own ship to his furnaces. But even as he said it he knew that Bartlett was right.

So that night the men began chopping out bulkheads and tossing the fragments into the fireroom for the voracious flames.

Steam was kept up, but only while the *flesh* of the poor ship was used as fuel.

Late in November the *Roosevelt* limped into Sydney, Nova Scotia. She was minus much of her woodwork and all but two of the blades on her propeller. Her Captain and crew looked more like ghosts than live men. But she was still a ship, and they still her crew.

From the Sydney coal docks she took on enough fuel for the final leg of her voyage and set out south towards New York. Bitter winter weather was encountered at once. The wind was out of the north, blowing a half gale, and snow flurries came in every watch.

Two of the men began showing signs of scurvy. One poor devil was so exhausted that he could not get out of his bunk. Only Bartlett’s powerful

constitution made it possible for him to keep the deck with a few hours of sleep whenever he could catch them.

On Christmas Eve the *Roosevelt* steamed slowly up the North River off New York. Faces of her men were lined deeply with frost and weariness. None had had time to shave. Some of the wreckage of Baffin Bay was still strewn about her decks.

“Look as if you’d been through the war,” commented the customs man who came aboard.

“War!” exclaimed Bartlett. “We’ve been through a hundred wars since we left the Polar Sea four months ago!”

CHAPTER IX

ON TOP OF THE GLOBE

I REMEMBER in the summer of 1909 I was on the battleship *Michigan* out in the Atlantic Ocean off Cape Henry, Virginia. We'd just finished target practice. Stepping down out of my turret, grimy with oil, I collided with a classmate of mine.

"What do you think?" he cried.

"I'm not paid to think," I replied, trying to be funny. "I'm just a poor gunner."

He thrust a newspaper into my hands. It had just come out by the Navy Yard tug which brought our mail from Norfolk. Instantly my eye read the big black headlines:

"North Pole Discovered!"

I read the story of how Peary had at last struggled across hundreds of miles of polar pack ice and reached the very top of the globe. The story went on to point out that for nearly 400 years men had been freezing and dying in their efforts to reach this isolated spot on the earth's surface.

I felt proud to be an American and realize that one of my own countrymen had succeeded where so many others had miserably failed.

As I have already related, Bob Bartlett was master of Peary's ship, the *Roosevelt*. After the terrible trip South in 1906 Bartlett had reached home early in January, 1907. He sat up half the night telling his father and mother about the wonderful adventures and narrow escapes of the previous year. Next day he set about preparing his clothes for the usual spring sealing. Now for a year Bartlett sealed and fished with his father. Early in 1908 he returned to St. John's, Newfoundland, and at once took a steamer for the United States, where he was due to join Peary for a new effort to reach the Pole.

Bartlett arrived in New York on a hot day in June. There were several heat prostrations on the morning of his arrival. It certainly wasn't weather one could link with polar work.

He found the little *Roosevelt* tied up in the East River. Her decks were piled high with stores. Trucks were driving up every few minutes with more cases and bags. Sailors were working on the rigging. The scientific staff were busily engaged in getting their instruments aboard.

Peary met Bartlett at the gangway. The former's face showed the strain under which he was living. His tall lean frame had been worn to skin and bone with the struggle against poverty and heart-breaking delays. But his ambition to plant the Stars and Stripes on top of the globe was as strong as ever.

"Glad you're back," he said simply to Bartlett and held out his hand.

"Not half so glad as I, Commander!" exclaimed Bartlett, and gripped the other's hand with the deep feeling of loyalty with which all followed Peary.

"It's our last trip, Bartlett."

"I hope so, sir." Bob glanced round the busy ship. "The same old story," he added.

"Not quite," said Peary. "We're going to succeed this time!" He smiled.

Bartlett said afterward that there was something in the great man's tone and the look on his face which made him know that Peary felt in his heart the end of his long struggle was soon to come.

And yet there was much to be done and thousands of miles to cover before the little band of explorers could even be on the threshold of the great white North.

The *Roosevelt's* lines were cast off on July 6th, 1908. Slowly she steamed out into the East River, her rail almost under from the heavy load of fuel and supplies she carried. She stopped next day at Oyster Bay. There Theodore Roosevelt came over from his summer home. He was a stocky man, full of energy, and one who felt a deep admiration for Peary's tireless efforts to win the North Pole.

"*Bully!*" exclaimed Roosevelt in a loud voice as he stepped on the crowded deck. And again he cried, "Bully!" when he saw how completely the expedition was prepared. He inspected the ship and spoke heartily to the crew. When he left he turned to Peary:

"I believe in you, Peary," he said.

That simple sentence was heard by all the crew, and did much to carry them through the hard months to come.

The long slow journey across the North Atlantic ended when Cape York was sighted. This was the southern limit of the Smith Sound eskimos. It was a looming headland heavily buried in ice. Black clouds hung over it and a summer snowstorm broke just as the *Roosevelt* steamed up alongside. She

hove to for a day and night. Then the natives began to come out in their little skin boats called kayaks. They were delighted to see the white man again who had visited them so often.

“Pearyaksuaq” was what they called him, meaning “The Big Peary.”

Stops were made at several small native villages up the coast. Team by team, the dogs were collected until there were nearly 300 of these sturdy sledge animals aboard. Seventy tons of whale meat was piled on the forecastle. In addition hunting parties from the *Roosevelt* killed fifty walruses. All this meat was to feed the valuable teams that would drag sledges across the frozen polar sea towards their goal.

If you will look at a map you will see that at its northern end the west coast of Greenland extends closer towards Ellesmere Land. This makes a sort of bottle neck in which the arctic ice chokes up until there is no passage for a ship to use. Yet Peary had found by years of experience that it was necessary to put his ship through this narrow strait so that he could sledge northward from the very edge of the polar sea.

“It was like going into battle,” said Bartlett. “We steamed straight towards the solid pack ice. We threaded our way through narrow leads of water that had been opened by the tide. Then near Cape Sabine we were stopped by heavy floes hundreds of miles from our goal.

“The ship was a mad-house. The eskimos sang their native songs. All the dogs howled in chorus. The rotting whale meat and walrus blubber smelled to high heaven!”

Day after day Bartlett flung his ship against the ice. It seemed sometimes as if he would crush her sides in. Twice he nearly cracked her bowsprit off. Only her solid oak timbers and staunch framework saved her from being crushed in this battle.

Because the midnight sun rolled around unsetting no time was taken for sleep. When Bartlett was not in the barrel at the foremast, Peary took his stand there to con the little vessel through the floes.

Sometimes she would advance a mile or two and be carried back three or four miles when the ice turned with the tide. It almost seemed as if the North knew what the white men were after and was determined to defeat them.

Twice she was caught between massive icebergs. Her timbers cried out at the pressure as if in their death agony. While ice fragments thundered upon her decks stores were landed. It looked as if the ship would be lost and

the expedition end then and there. Then, as if by the will of Providence, the ice relaxed and the ship wriggled clear.

On September 5th the ship rounded Cape Sheridan on the north end of Ellesmere Land. To her left lay the rugged barren hillsides of an ice-clad wilderness. To her right spread the awful white chaos of the polar pack. Overhead was the leaden sky. Snow sifted down over the crowded deck and on those aboard the ship. Figures muffled in fur struggled with the heavy weights that had to be landed. Dogs howled and fought. Eskimos chattered. It was a scene of grim preparation for the great journey to the North Pole.

Day by day the light grew less. In a few weeks the long dark winter night had settled down upon the ship. The bright aurora streamed overhead. The moon rose and circled around and around for fourteen days without setting. Then came an equal period of complete darkness.

“But we were not idle,” says Bartlett. “Then it was we did our most important work. We mended our harnesses. We made light boxes for our small alcohol stoves. We sewed pemmican into canvas bags. We built sledges. We had the natives fashion foot lashes. We taught our tenderfeet to drive dogs and live on the ice.”

In December, Bartlett left for a muskox hunt over the Ellesmere hills. He and three eskimos travelled by moonlight. The weather was bitter cold. Yet in a space of five days, two of which were smothered in driving snow, the party shot half a dozen fat musk-oxen. This fresh meat heartened all the men. It gave them new strength for the hard days ahead.



THE *Roosevelt* IN WINTER QUARTERS AT CAPE SHERIDAN. Capt. Bartlett put Peary's little ship here in 1906 and again in 1908, preparatory to the last two polar dashes of the famous explorer.

Early in February Bartlett and five other white men left with over 100 dogs and 16 sledges for Cape Columbia, 90 miles west. This, Peary figured, was the point of land nearest the North Pole.

From Cape Columbia the sledges worked out three at a time due north. Bartlett and two eskimos were in one of the lead parties. Like the others he wore a heavy caribou-skin shirt and breeches of bear-skin. He and his men trudged behind heavily-laden sledges pulled by dogs.

"You know how it is," he told me when I asked him how he felt at this time. "You've worked your way over those big pressure ridges. When you're not cutting through high walls of solid ice, you're stumbling and falling in cracks between the floes."

There was constant danger from young ice that formed in leads of open water which had been opened by the tide. At 60° below zero it was bad business to plunge through into the ice water. Bartlett did it once. Luckily he was not alone. The eskimos yanked him out and had him in his sleeping bag before he could say "Jack Robinson." That was the only thing that saved him from freezing to death.

Mile after mile the little party struggled northward. Bartlett's experience in past years stood him in good stead. He knew how to fix the grass in his boots so that his feet would not freeze. He knew how to fold his arms inside

the sleeves of his fur shirt when he slept at night. He knew how to find in the darkness the lumps of fresh water ice for making tea so much more quickly.

Night after night he fumbled with freezing fingers at a tiny alcohol stove on which the tea was boiled. Then, after an hour of shivering, he and his two silent eskimos would sit in their snow igloos and drink a quart of the scalding liquid. They would munch at frozen lumps of pemmican and a few hard ship's biscuits.

These were the only rations of the party. The small meal was repeated in the morning. There was no lunch; only a long hard day of toiling onward towards the top of the earth.

One by one the eskimos and white men turned back. Finally only Peary and Bartlett were left with a handful of eskimos and several dog teams. It was necessary now for Peary to travel as fast as possible. He felt that it would be safer for the success of his plan and for the men who were with him if Bartlett turned back with part of the eskimos and dogs.

The Pole was almost in sight. Ice spread out on every hand. The glow in the south broke each day into a brief radiance of sunrise. The weather was incredibly cold. An unceasing wind stabbed through the men's fur clothing.

Only a few marches from the Pole Bartlett bade his leader good-bye. Outside the igloo they met and silently clasped hands.

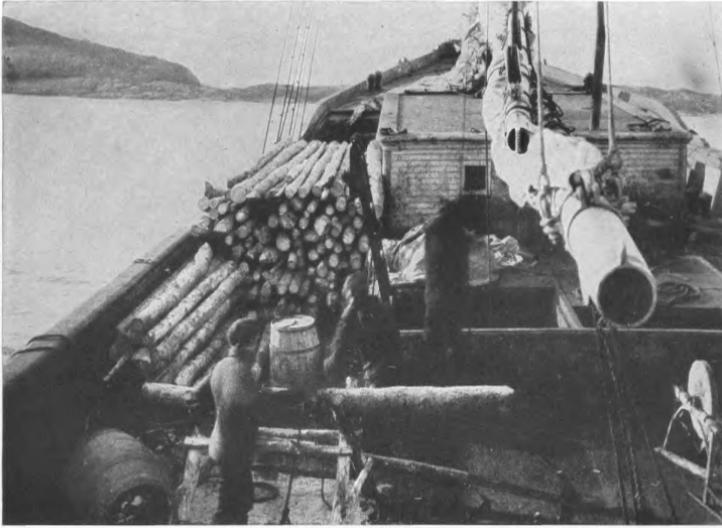
"Good-bye, Captain," said Peary. "Take care of yourself. Watch out for young ice. Clean up the ship when you get back. Don't worry about me."

Bartlett opened his mouth to speak. His lips were cracked with cold and his face streaked with oil and frostbite.

"Good-bye, sir," he said. "I hope you win."

Peary gave a mirthless chuckle. His face, too, was streaked with cruel frost sores.

"I will," he said. "I will, because you have made it easy now. The dogs are strong and we have plenty of food to take with us on these last few easy marches."



DECK OF *Roosevelt* WITH STRANGE FUEL.

As no coal was available on the Labrador, logs were piled on the ship's deck, sawed into small pieces and passed below to the fire-rooms.

"I believe you will, sir," said Bartlett, fervently.

Bartlett had a pretty tough journey back. He didn't have any too much to eat. Had bad weather struck his party he might have starved to death out there on the ice. The eskimos wanted to eat some of the dogs. But he wouldn't let them. It didn't seem fair when the animals had worked so hard and taken him so far.

He got back to the ship on April 23rd. Poor Ross Marvin had fallen through the ice and drowned on the way back. The other men and eskimos had all come in safely.

On April 27th there was a great shouting and barking of dogs. Bartlett rushed out on the ice. Peary was coming. By the look on the great explorer's face Bartlett knew that he had reached the Pole.

"I congratulate you, sir, on the discovery of the Pole!" shouted Bartlett.

Peary smiled his appreciation of his Captain's enthusiasm. But even as he smiled, he swayed slightly in his tracks from the fatigue of his terrific struggle over nearly a thousand miles of ice, through storm and cold and always on short rations.



ADMIRAL R. E. PEARY.

The discoverer of the Pole stands on the deck of the *Roosevelt* just after Capt. Bartlett had put her on the shores of the Polar sea.



TWO ARCTIC VETERANS.

At the left is Knud Rasmussen who recently sledged from Greenland to Alaska. Captain Bob stands at the right. Photograph taken on the *Morrissey* in South Greenland.

Ootark shook his head as he came over the side of the ship. "We should never have returned," he observed, "except that the Devil must have been having trouble with his wife."

He meant that the Devil, whom the native blames for all his troubles with ice and weather, hadn't been paying attention to the white men or he wouldn't have permitted them to come home safely.

The dogs were skeletons. Only a few of each team that had started out were still alive. Many had died and been fed to their mates. The sledges were practically empty. All but a few pounds of food had been eaten. Not

even a sleeping bag had been kept, in the effort to reduce the load on the exhausted dogs.

In a few weeks the ship was free and working her way down Smith Sound. Bartlett landed her eskimos at their villages along the Greenland coast.

“You will come back, Pearyaksuaq,” they told the leader of the expedition.

“No,” laughed Peary. “I’ve reached the ‘Big Nail’ and now I have no need to come back.”

But the natives did not believe him. “You always have come back before,” they insisted.

Alas, it was the last time Peary ever saw them. He never went north again, and he died a few years later.

The trip home was without incident until a small port on the Labrador was reached. There something of fearful importance happened, about which I will tell you in my next chapter.

CHAPTER X

DR. COOK BOBS UP

THE terrible thing that happened could scarcely happen today. You will remember that back in 1906 most small ships had no radio. Therefore the *Roosevelt* steamed south without any knowledge of what was going on in the outside world. She had no means of reporting the wonderful discovery that Peary had made.

Captain Bartlett was as happy as any of the others. For many years he had been dreaming of the day when Peary should reach the Pole. He knew what a triumph it would be. He felt that the whole world would rise up and congratulate the expedition. He didn't feel this immodestly, but with the pleasure of a man who has completed a hard job and knows that he has done his best.

Then, unexpectedly, Doctor Cook reached Copenhagen from Greenland and announced that he, too, had been to the North Pole. Worse still, he declared that he had reached this point a whole year before Peary had. He said he had based at Etah, a tiny village on the west coast of North Greenland, and travelled across Ellesmere Land and then out on the polar ice.

Dr. Cook was a real medical doctor who had been on expeditions in both the arctic and antarctic for some years. He had even been on one of Peary's own expeditions. He was a good traveller and the eskimos liked him. So when he went to Greenland with one other white man and started north with native sledgers he stood a good chance of making a long journey. The trouble was that it afterward turned out that he did not go as far as he claimed he had gone. Today Doctor Cook is in the penitentiary. It has been proved that he is a faker and that he is dishonest. But there are many who still believe that he got to the North Pole.

Captain Bartlett and I have had many talks on the subject. I have always soothed the Captain's feelings in this way:

"Bob," I tell him, "you needn't worry. In 1914 MacMillan and I took the same two men that Cook had travelled with on his polar journey. We crossed Ellesmere Land in the early spring, and we went up and out on the Polar Sea. When we reached the ice both eskimos told us that Doctor Cook turned south before he ever lost sight of the land. This meant that he never was within 500 miles of the North Pole!"

But in 1909 the world had little means of choosing between Cook and Peary. The world knew nothing about driving dogs or exploring far north. So the world was prepared to accept each man's story on its merits. Indeed, what people finally enjoyed was not the stories of exploration but the fun of the great dispute between two explorers.

There wasn't much going on at the time in the way of politics or war or any other kind of thing such as newspapers like to print. So all the papers began a grand controversy about who got to the Pole.

The public divided; some sided with Peary, and some sided with Cook. Many believed that both men succeeded.

Naturally the members of the expeditions were targets for much curiosity. Cook had gone alone. Therefore he alone could tell his story. But every one of Peary's men were pursued by reporters and cranks who tried hard to find out if Peary were concealing anything.

"Honestly, they used to chase me all over town," exclaimed Bartlett. "I changed my boarding house four times. On the fifth time I went to live with a friend in a private house. At last I felt that I had escaped the mob.

"After the first quiet dinner in weeks, I turned in for a good sleep. I hoped I could forget the North Pole for a little while.

"In the middle of the night I was awakened by the noise of a creaking door. Slowly the door swung open. I thought at first it was a ghost. Then, when I saw the black figure of a man, I was sure it was a burglar.

"Go ahead and take it!" I cried.

"Take what?" asked a surprised voice.

"My wallet. It's in my pants' pocket." I heard a chuckle in the darkness.

"I don't want your money, Captain Bartlett," said a voice. "I want your views on whether Peary reached the Pole or not."

"Then I knew the reporters had found me. My impulse was to attack the man and throw him out. I was so angry I was afraid to lay hands on him. I arose and turned on the light. He was all ready with four pencils and a thick pad of paper.

"Now, Captain," he said, "how did Peary know when he got to the Pole?"

"Before I could reply, I glanced over my shoulder and found two heads sticking in the window. In five minutes there were half a dozen more

reporters in my room.

“ ‘I say, Bob,’ called my host from the floor below. ‘What’s the big idea? Are you giving a party up there?’

“ ‘Party my eye!’ I yelled back at him. ‘I’ve been captured by pirates!’

“Well, that’s the way things went all that summer. Never once was I able to escape for more than twenty-four hours from the reporters.”

It turned out afterwards that Dr. Cook persuaded some seafaring men in New York to work out fake navigational sights for him which he produced as his record of the polar journey. Against these sights Captain Bartlett had to give his views on arctic navigation. Bartlett showed how simple it was to navigate over the polar ice. He pointed out that for many years he had been taking sights of the sun in bitterly cold weather and successfully navigating the ship on sealing voyages under conditions that were little better than Peary met on the polar sea.

One day a rich man sent for Captain Bartlett. As the man was not only rich but an important business man, Bartlett thought he’d better go.

“Would you like to go on another expedition?” asked the man.

“I certainly would, sir,” said Bartlett.

Before the other could reply, Bartlett went ahead with details for a south polar journey. At that time Scott and Amundsen had not reached the South Pole. The antarctic was still an unexplored wilderness. Bartlett described special sledging methods that he had devised. He told the type of ship that he would like to use and explained the food and clothing that would make the journey possible.

“Then,” he exclaimed, “the Stars and Stripes would float at both ends of the globe!”

The rich man smiled. “I am not so sure,” he said.

“What do you mean?” asked Bartlett.

“I mean that it seems to me possible that neither Peary nor Cook reached the North Pole.”

Bartlett’s red face turned redder and he seemed to inflate with anger. But before he could tell the rich man what he thought of him, the latter went on:

“Bartlett,” he said, “I’ll give you \$50,000 to take out another arctic expedition. You can then prove whether Peary reached the Pole or not. If

you did it once, you can do it again. You can find Peary's records and bring them back. If Cook's records are at the Pole you can bring them back, too."

For more than an hour Bartlett argued with the rich man. He explained that the North Pole is at the center of a vast sea of ice; that every day this ice moves a little; that before another expedition could reach the Pole the ice which Peary had been on while there would have drifted a long way from the top of the globe.

But the rich man wasn't satisfied. "Then how can we tell whether anyone ever reached the North Pole?"

"We can't, sir, in the way we can tell about the South Pole, which is on solid land covered by glaciers."

"How do we know there isn't land at the North Pole?"

"Because Peary says there isn't. Because he took soundings of thousands of feet near it. And because the movement of the ice couldn't be possible if there were land there to stop it."

"How thick is this ice?"

"About six feet in the leads where it has frozen for one year only. About thirty to fifty feet in the old ice which has been growing thicker each year."

The rich man was studying Bartlett while he plied him with questions. No doubt he thought that the Captain might trip over some of the facts and show that even Peary's trip was all a fake.

"How big is this ice pack which floats around the Pole?" he went on.

"About two thousand miles in diameter."

"What makes it move?"

"The winds and tides, sir."

Luckily Bartlett didn't lose patience, but gladly kept on giving polite answers. He felt that if people knew more about the north they wouldn't doubt Peary.

"Which way does the compass point at the North Pole?"

"South, sir."

"What!"

Bartlett grinned. "That's right. And we were travelling south by compass when we were going to the Pole."

The rich man beat on his desk with his pencil and looked as if he thought the Captain might be making fun of him.

“You see, sir, the compass does not point to the geographical North Pole, which is on top of the globe; but to the magnetic North Pole, which is in the islands north of Canada, and hundreds of miles from the axis of the earth.”

Well, it took about an hour to get this point through the rich man’s head. But when Bartlett had finished, the rich man finally understood.

“Bartlett,” he said. “I believe in you. I am a pretty good judge of men. I think that some day aviators will fly across the Pole and find it exactly as you and Peary have reported it to be.”

And that was exactly what happened. In 1926 Commander Byrd took an airplane to Spitsbergen and flew from there to the Pole and back. And when he reached the northern axis of the globe he saw only a vast field of floating ice such as Peary had reported. He saw no land nor any sort of life. Later Amundsen and Ellsworth confirmed these facts again when they flew across the Polar Sea in the dirigible *Norge*.

But before the public learned that Dr. Cook was a faker Peary’s great chance to become rich and honored for his triumph passed. So Peary died a poor man and never properly rewarded for his life of struggle in the cause of Science.

CHAPTER XI

LOSS OF THE *Karluk*

“. . . will you join me in the *Karluk* as master?”

(Signed) STEFANSSON

Bartlett's father handed this telegram to him in the spring of 1913, just after he returned to Brigus from his spring sealing voyage.

For a year the world had been reading the news of Stefansson's great plans. Stefansson was one of the leading arctic explorers of his day and had done most of his work on the Alaskan side. He planned now to take a party of scientists and a large ship around Point Barrow and winter somewhere north of the arctic coast of Canada.

While Bartlett was pondering over the great opportunity, his heart beat with the thrill of going into the arctic again.

Father Bartlett was at this time nearly 70 and the mother not much younger. "You're not going away again, Bob, are you?" she asked. But the answer was in Bob Bartlett's face. A lifetime of battling with the wintry seas of the far north had left in him a hunger for that life.

"It's a wonderful opportunity," he murmured.

The father turned to Mrs. Bartlett. "Don't forget he is a Bartlett," he said gently.

Tears came into the mother's eyes. After all she was the mother of seafaring men and married to one of the great mariners of Newfoundland. A few days later her son left for another arctic voyage.

By June Bartlett had joined the *Karluk* in Victoria, British Columbia. She was a small steamer having a heavily-built hull and especially outfitted for a hard cruise north through the ice. But about her busy decks, the cheerful faces of her crew and the energetic actions of her officers there was no hint that she was to be the scene of great tragedy only a few months later.

Indeed, that is one of the things which one first notices about a ship. So strongly built is the hull, so erect and proud are her masts and smoke-pipes, that one can scarcely imagine their succumbing to the force of the seas or the ice, even in the most tempestuous weather.

Bedecked with flags and cheered by the city's populace the *Karluk* set sail for the Alaskan coast. She was heavily loaded with supplies for several years. She had splendid scientific equipment aboard her. On her staff were

picked scientists, some of the finest minds in the world. The Canadian Geological Survey, for instance, had sent four men to work on the northern seas and ice-hemmed islands of the Canadian archipelago. James Murray of Glasgow was on the staff. He was of particular interest to Bartlett because he had been in the antarctic with Shackleton. The surgeon was also an arctic veteran, Dr. Forbes McKay.

Another celebration took place at Esquimaux. A special banquet was given in honor of the expedition. Everybody felt that the brave little ship was going out and succeed in a splendid way that would put all other expeditions in the shade.

As the *Karluq* steamed northward the air grew colder. That peculiar penetrating chill of the far north caused the men aboard her to put on their woolens and muffle up their hands and feet. As she rounded into the Arctic Ocean after passing through Bering Strait, a large pan of ice was sighted dead ahead. On this was visible a white polar bear.

To the average voyager such a sight would have been a source of great pleasure. But to a Newfoundlander the bear was an omen of disaster. Some of the sailors began to worry about it. There was whispering in the fore-castle.

The cook said: "This ship will never get home." But nothing happened—at least for some time. The ship gradually worked her way eastward through the ice that drifts about the north coast of America. Her scientists began taking samples of the sea water, making notes of the kind of weather and the direction of the wind. Trawls were put over the side to bring up samples of the microscopic sea life which exists in the cold waters at the edge of the ice.

All seemed to be going well. The food was good. The men were full of health and spirits and there was every indication that winter quarters would be in little-known waters far to the eastward when the ship finally froze in for the dark season.

Then, some distance east of Point Barrow, Stefansson and a small party went ashore to do some hunting. Bartlett, aboard the *Karluq*, tied his vessel up to the shore ice. The weather was calm, slightly misty and no indication of a storm. But the Arctic is a place of sudden tempests. A few hours later a brisk wind sprang up. The sea was lashed to a foam. The sky became overcast. A flurry of snow scudded through the rigging.

“Secure for sea!” ordered Captain Bartlett. He dared not take any chances in case the ship were carried out.

Next day the wind grew stronger. It shifted into southwest. Heavy floes of ice came moving silently by like great flat ghosts on the surface of the ocean. The eskimos aboard became uneasy. They muttered to one another about the evil spirits of the ocean.

Next day heavy snow fell. And by the following morning a full-blooded arctic blizzard was howling over the *Karluk*.

Into every cranny of the rigging and the deck load the fine powdery snow found its way. The watch stood muffled by the mooring hawsers ready for any emergency. Orders had to be shouted to be heard above the grinding ice.

Still the wind rose. Soon it was blowing over seventy miles an hour, making a steady roar through the rigging. The ice about the ship began to break loose. With an unceasing crashing the great floes swirled about, piling on top of one another and attacking the ship like so many demons determined to have her blood.

For a whole week the storm continued. The ship was soon torn clear of her ice mooring. Her engine was started and with slight way upon her she was headed into the storm. Only by the most careful seamanship was she able to escape the floes which swept along.

Again, as with Peary, Bartlett had days and nights of sleepless watching for the safety of his ship. Time and again it seemed she must be caught in the pack and her hull crushed. This would have meant loss of all her equipment and the probable drowning of those aboard her.

Despite the efforts of the engine and the careful maneuvering of Bartlett the *Karluk* was finally carried out into the ice-filled Polar Sea. And before the storm abated she was frozen fast in the heavy floes. Piled all about her were huge blocks of ice tumbled helter-skelter by the heavy pressure. Dynamite could not have released her. Only the providential opening of the ice-field by another storm from a different quarter could possibly have permitted her to escape.

It was a distressing situation. The ship for the moment was safe enough, although she was a prisoner in the ice. But aboard her were the staff who were to do the scientific part of the expeditional work. Also she held most of the food and equipment. At the same time Stefansson, the leader, with his party were isolated on the mainland many miles away. A freak of fate had

split the expedition in half and had tied up in the Polar Sea the very life blood of the whole project.

The ensuing month was a painful one. Bartlett hoped against hope he might escape and rejoin the leader. But as weeks went by and the night grew colder and the ice about the ship more solid, this hope gradually failed.

By October 28th, the sun shown only a few hours over the southern horizon. The temperature had fallen far below zero and the sea ice about the ship had become solid. It meant now that the helpless *Karluk* must float out into the Polar Sea and escape when she could, if ever.

Bartlett was almost the only man aboard who had had any real arctic experience. He realized that an entirely new routine had now to be carried out. One of the most serious dangers was that of fire. If the ship were destroyed suddenly the entire party would be isolated on the ice and have to walk home. With low temperatures, darkness and chaotic ice conditions, this would be well-nigh impossible.

Bartlett ordered all hands to shift to the ice enough provisions to save their lives in case the ship were sunk. He built a small house out of provision cases. Over this house he spread canvas supported by spars. In it he put a small stove. Little did he dream how soon he would have to resort to this wretched shack.

Lower and lower fell the thermometer. The sun disappeared below the southern horizon. Darkness closed in about the helpless ship.

On New Year's Day it was 60° below zero. Within the ship only a small stove kept the party warm. All was silent save for the occasional crunch of the ice pack. The party often sat there listening, while to their ears came the most terrible sound that the arctic mariner can hear: the grinding squeak of ice pressure, always punctuated by recurring crashes of the doomed ship being slowly crushed.

For days the poor little *Karluk* struggled to free herself. As the cruel floes closed in upon her helpless hull she twisted this way and that, often heeling as though in a seaway. Sometimes her masts were canted as much as 40° from the vertical. Sometimes she would free her bow while her stern was caught. Her propeller was literally pinched off. Her rudder was crushed to kindling wood. She was making a game fight, but the odds were terribly against her.

Bartlett saw the end could not be far away. He ordered those aboard to stand by to abandon ship. The stove in the little house on the ice was lighted.

Sleeping bags were spread on the cold surface under the canvas roof.

That night the pressure grew worse. Suddenly the *Karluk* seemed to stop struggling. Perhaps she knew the jig was up. Near midnight Bartlett roused everybody out of their bunks. "All hands on the ice," he ordered.

There was no protest from those aboard. Everyone knew that the ship was doomed. Then, for ten days, the *Karluk* was in her dying agony. For ten days and nights the ice slowly crushed its way into her hull. Her seams opened. The water came in. Her shrouds snapped. One mast tottered. Inch by inch the *Karluk's* bow settled; and while the whole party looked sadly on, she plunged to the bottom of the arctic ocean.

The expedition was now in desperate straits. To be sure, there was considerable food on hand: 9,000 pounds of pemmican, 20 tons of meat, 250 pounds of sugar and many bags of ship's biscuit. But the way south led over the roughest sort of ice. Only a small amount of food could be dragged over such a trail. Bartlett knew that it would be dangerous to try to reach Alaska. A sudden storm or a change of tide might easily open the ice near the coast so that many miles of water would lie between its edge and the dry land.

The temperature was 40° below zero. The high wind cut through the woolen clothes of the marooned men. Yet there was only one thing to do: try to reach the nearest accessible land. This happened to be Wrangell Island, a small rocky outcrop north of the Siberian coast.

Bartlett now organized his party into small groups and started south. It was a heart-breaking journey. Some had their feet frozen. All suffered from painful frostbite on faces and fingers. Sleep was well-nigh impossible in the bitter cold. Frosted feet slowed the marches.

On February 1st, 1914, four of the scientific staff persuaded Bartlett to let them try to escape direct to Alaska. After considerable argument, he decided that the brave men should be given the chance to try. He let them have plenty of equipment and food. This party got away on February 5th. Those left behind and headed for Wrangell Island sent them away with cheers and good wishes.

That was the last ever seen of those four brave men.

"They probably became worn out and froze to death," is Bartlett's explanation.

On March 12th, the main party reached Wrangell Island. Probably there is no more desolate spot on the face of the globe. The island is surrounded by mountainous ridges of ice. It is bare of vegetation, save for some few

patches of tough arctic grass which grows for a few weeks on its southern side. There was no shelter for the worn-out travellers. The little food they had brought had to be rationed carefully. Their few tents were small, and flimsy protection against the cold.

Bartlett rested for a week. Then with seven dogs, one sledge, and an eskimo, he started for Siberia. He hoped to reach Alaska and bring help when the spring (i. e., monthly high) tides cleared some of the ice away.

He had a hundred and nine miles to go over ice that was rougher than any yet met. As his dogs were weak and underfed, he had no assurance that he would be safe even if he reached the mainland. But he set out with a feeling that this was the only chance his party had of being rescued.

It must be remembered that so far neither Stefansson nor anyone else knew the *Karluk* was crushed in the ice. Therefore it was necessary for those in Alaska to be told that her survivors had reached Wrangell Island, so that a ship could be sent for them in the late summer or fall.

On March 30th, Bartlett's eskimo sighted land. Bartlett himself was unable to see on account of snowblindness. Five days later land was reached. It was a low barren coast, with no sign of life. But it was the mainland. And Bartlett knew that he must find eskimos at once if he were going to succeed in his journey.



JUST BEFORE THE TRAGEDY.

Karluk as she appeared by the fading rays of the sun while imprisoned in the polar pack. She was crushed and sank soon after this photograph was taken.



THE SKIPPER LAYS HIS COURSE.

Captain Bartlett in the cabin of the *Morrissey* plots his position on the chart while a full gale travels overhead.

After some time Bartlett fell in with a native of one of the Siberian tribes. He bargained with the fellow to guide him east to a point at which he could cross to Alaska. As neither could speak the other's language it wasn't a very intelligent conversation. But Bartlett finally got the fellow to understand what he wanted.

Now came weeks of hard travel on little food in low temperature. But Bartlett knew the lives of those he had left depended on his success. So he kept on. Finally he reached Nome and in September brought a ship back to Wrangell Island. Three of the party had died of their sufferings. The others reached Alaska alive to tell their unhappy tale. Bartlett was hailed as the "hero of the *Karluk*," and to this day is considered as the man who risked his life to save the few who escaped.

CHAPTER XII

A PASSENGER AT SEA

ONE day while I was writing this story I called Captain Bob in and asked him to tell me his most exciting experience on the ocean.

The Captain took a short-stemmed clay pipe out of his mouth, grinned at me and said:

“Well, that’s the way with you fellows! You sit around writing pages and pages of words and finally run out of ideas. You ask for adventures. Well, there aren’t any real adventures. When a seafaring man has an adventure it is usually just a piece of tough luck. And then he’d rather not talk about it.”

“All right, Bob,” I told him. “If you want it that way, I’ll admit that you never had an adventure in your life, in spite of the fact that you’ve been shipwrecked fourteen times.”

“Fourteen rotten breaks of luck,” he growled and crossed to the window.

“But there must have been some times,” I persisted, “when you were more thrilled than at others.”

“Women have thrills,” he corrected me. “Men feel encouraged or discouraged.”

“Just words,” I retorted. “But wasn’t there some time when the ocean seemed a different place? When the people around you were stamped into your memory? When you had a feeling of emotion that was not only different but greater than any in all your past life up to that moment?”

Captain Bob stood there by the window, his feet wide-placed as if on a teak deck, his great shoulders swung slightly forward while he rocked slowly back and forth on his heels. I could picture his mind going back over shipwrecks and blizzards, sudden death and destruction. I wondered what splendid tale of bravery and adventure he would produce.

Suddenly he turned. His eyes had narrowed. He bit down on his pipe until I thought the stem would crack.

“I have it!” he exclaimed. “I remember an adventure that stands out. I remember the time that was most exciting of all the times I ever had on board ship.”

I could scarcely restrain my eagerness. “Go on,” I told him.

“Boy, it was in 1914,” he said, “when I went to Europe as a passenger.” He paused.

“Yes, go on,” I commanded.

“That’s all.”

“That’s all! That isn’t an adventure—just going to Europe as a passenger!”

He seized my arm. “*You* can say that!” he cried. “You, who have been to sea yourself for many years! And you don’t understand what I mean?”

Then slowly his thought began to dawn on me. And as he described that one voyage, I realized what he meant.

“Don’t you see, boy, it was the first time I’d been on a ship without the slightest bit of responsibility! The wind could blow and the seas could roar and all I had to do was to lie in my bunk and let ’em blow and roar!

“I could eat five times a day. I could eat off a menu that had a hundred items on it for every meal. I could walk about the decks and think about anything I chose. The ropes could be coiled all over the place. There could be Irish Pennants in every rigging. The old crock could be off her course. The safety valve could be hooting into the sky. The life boat falls could be snarled in double bow knots. The bottom could be leaking like a sieve; and the topmast could be tottering in its step. And not one of those bloody things would make a bit of difference to me!

“Why, I tell you for a week I wandered all over that ship hunting for things that were wrong, little things such as gear adrift and dirty paint work and loafing sailors. And every time I’d see one I’d chuckle to myself and say ‘Just look at that, Bob, and realize you don’t have to worry!’

“This, after years and years of all the hardship and anxiety I’d had! This, after cruising on close to a hundred ships all over the ocean! Do you blame me for saying it was my greatest ocean adventure?”

I laughed and admitted that he was perfectly right.

But Bartlett’s adventuring didn’t stop when he landed in Europe. You see he was travelling at the time with Admiral Peary, who had been invited abroad by the many geographical and other scientific societies who wished to honor the discoverer of the Pole and his famous Captain.

One of the first entertainments given for the two famous Americans was in London. Here both Peary and Bartlett received medals from the Royal Geographical Society.

The ceremony was held in the huge Royal Albert Memorial Hall. The plan was for the President of the Society to make a speech describing what Peary and Bartlett had done. Then he would present a medal to Peary and Peary would make a speech. After that he would give Bartlett his medal and Bartlett would make a speech.

As soon as Bartlett reached London the Secretary of the Society came to him and described the plan.

“You see, Captain, I thought you ought to know about this because there will be a big crowd and you’ll have to say something. Perhaps the King, or at least the Prince of Wales, will be in the audience and there will be many other fine people.”

This was anything but encouraging and Bartlett asked if it were possible to escape. “I might not be feeling well that day,” he suggested hopefully.

The Secretary laughed. “We have plenty of ambulances here, Captain. If you are not well, I’ll see that you will travel to the hall in style.”

So Bartlett saw there was no way out of the difficulty. He had to make a speech and it had to be one that would suit thousands of people.

After the Secretary was gone he hustled out and went to a man who was used to writing. He explained the situation and asked him if he would prepare a speech for the occasion.

“I will,” said the man. “But it will cost you \$25 because it won’t be an easy thing to do for a great occasion like that.”

Bartlett, being a thrifty mariner, bargained away until he got the price down to \$10.

The great night came. From the platform on which he sat, Bartlett looked out over the sea of faces. There were over 10,000 people in the great hall.

The President of the Society arose. “Ladies and gentlemen,” he said, “we have with us tonight two famous men.” There was long and loud applause. The President then launched into a grand oration.

“But I felt secure,” says Bartlett, “because there in my hand I held the piece of paper that was to save my life; the neat little speech which I had bought for \$10.”

Admiral Peary rose and, as always, spoke gracefully.

As Captain Bartlett’s turn approached, he became more nervous than ever. The thousands of faces, and tumultuous applause, the fact that he

would presently have to rise and speak to them, unnerved him more than being chased by half a dozen hungry polar bears.

“. . . and now,” shouted the Chairman, “I present to you Captain Robert A. Bartlett, Master Mariner and hero of twenty arctic voyages!”

Bartlett rose. His feet felt numb, but he managed to get to the front of the stage. As in a trance he faced the audience. Then with a great effort of will he centered his mind on the speech he had had prepared. He looked at his hands in which he held the paper. To his horror he saw in his fingers only a few bits of torn and wrinkled paper. In his nervousness *he had torn the speech to pieces!*

“I had to speak,” he says. “Somehow I struggled through it. What I said I haven’t the slightest idea. I know I said it loudly, roaring like a mate on the forecastle. But not one sentence remained in my memory next day.”

However, Bartlett’s speech was a great success. Long afterwards, a British Naval Officer who had been in that night’s audience said to me: “I think Bartlett made the greatest hit of all. He was a seafaring man to his fingertips. His fine weather-beaten countenance, his stentorian voice and his humble words were more effective than all the oratory we had heard.”

From London Peary and Bartlett went down to France. After sightseeing and more banquets, they slipped off to Switzerland for a visit to the beautiful Alps.

Although Bartlett didn’t exactly tell me so, I think his experience here was very much like that aboard the liner coming over. He was on ice when he climbed the glacier. He saw snow slides and once a flurry of snow swept down from the heights. It was cold on the journey and the climb they made was toilsome.

But he was a passenger. He didn’t have to make the climb. He had a big meal before he left the hotel and half way up the glacier the guide handed him a fat package of sandwiches with hot coffee. He even had somebody to take off his boots and hand him dry clothes when he got through. It was a pleasant luxurious experience with the ice and snow, in happy contrast to the bitter cold and painful toil he had always known in such surroundings.

The next stop was Rome. With all the enthusiasm of the Latin temperament, the populace of this great old city turned out to greet the heroes.

One of the first men to greet Bartlett was the Duke d’Abruzzi, himself an arctic explorer of note.

“I am proud to know you,” he told Bartlett.

“Thank you, sir,” said Bartlett, wondering if he ought to have said, “Thank you, Duke.”

But the Duke was a “regular fellow.” I can remember his inspecting the brigade when I was a midshipman at Annapolis and admiring his athletic build and fine face, his cheerful smile and informal manner.

At once he launched into a discussion of the polar pack ice. He told Bartlett some of his own experiences, anecdotes which only a man who had lived his life among the floes would understand.

Then came presentation to the King of Italy. He, too, was informal and friendly in his greeting of the Americans. He asked Bartlett how he liked Rome.

“Fine!” said Bartlett. “Only from what I had heard I thought I’d find it in ruins.”

“Why?” asked the King, very much surprised.

“Because in our history books all we ever saw of the city were pictures of ruins.”

The King laughed understandingly.

A great banquet was held in the royal dining room. The King presided. On every hand sat great Lords and Ladies. Rich hangings and priceless paintings were on the walls.

Fine liveried servants served the food on golden platters.

“Sort of stiff, wasn’t it?” I asked Bartlett.

He laughed. “Well, not exactly that, because there was a fine lady on one side of me and a pleasant gentleman on the other and they both talked a lot about interesting things that I could understand. But it did seem a lot of dog to put on just for a midday mug-up.”

Lest the reader may not have heard the term “mug-up,” I’ll explain that it applies to a bit of lunch passed up to sailors on watch in heavy weather when the ship is rolling too much for eating off a table.

That royal banquet was Bartlett’s final thrill on his European trip. He soon caught a boat home, “glad enough to be done with taking it easy,” as he put it to me.

CHAPTER XIII

BUYS A SCHOONER

THE next four years of Bartlett's life were full of varied cruises and strange turns of fate. He did some sealing and fishing, as usual, between voyages. He led a relief expedition for the Crocker Land Expedition—1913-1917—of which the writer of this book was a member. He cruised on many ships in many seas. And then came the World War.

Because Bartlett was such an experienced man with ships the U. S. Army grabbed him in 1917 to supervise loading of their transports. But he was soon transferred to the U. S. Navy and put in command of an ammunition ship. Later he commanded Navy transports and became widely known for his splendid work in carrying troops.

After the war Captain Bartlett did what a great many men had to do in that confused year: he got out his memorandum book and began to figure up how much money he had in the world. He had laid by a few thousand dollars from sealing. He had written a book about his *Karluk* adventure which had netted him a little; and there were odds and ends that he had been able to save out of his pay.

Altogether he found he had enough to buy a small ship, provided the owner took a mortgage or promise to pay the balance at some future date.

For nearly thirty years he had been watching a little two-masted Newfoundland fishing schooner, the *Effie Morrissey*, go down to the Grand Banks and along the Labrador. She was about 100 feet long and had a 22-foot beam. She drew only fourteen feet when she was loaded. She was a sturdy little craft with heavy green-oak knees bracing her thick sides.

Bartlett knew that she would be able to stand the ice. Putting all his eggs in one basket, so to speak, he bought the *Morrissey*. His idea was to use her for small expeditions, and go sealing in her in off seasons.

The first year he had her he got some of his old friends in the neighborhood of Brigus and went out sealing and fishing. The cruise was a success. There was enough money left over to pay some of the mortgage on the *Morrissey* and divide up a nice little bonus all around.

But Bartlett realized that this work would permit him to use the *Morrissey* only part of the year, mostly in the winter and spring. He felt that she was too good a property not to employ her in other ways if he could. He thought first of carrying cargo in her up and down the American coast, but he soon saw he could scarcely compete with the big steamers.

He then came to New York, where he made friends with George Palmer Putnam, the man who publishes this book and the father of David Putnam. But before Mr. Putnam made books he travelled about the world, poking into all sorts of queer corners looking for adventures very much the same way that Captain Cook and Magellan did. So when he met Captain Bartlett and saw what a good seafaring fellow he was, and heard that he owned a ship of his own, Mr. Putnam at once had an idea that it would be interesting to make a trip to the Arctic.

Part of the reason for his wanting to go was young David Putnam, a fine lad of 13 in that year. So in almost less time than it takes to tell, the *Morrissey* was on her way to New York and David Putnam was packing up his sweaters and heavy boots for a trip north.

The *Morrissey* was outfitted at a little shipyard down on Staten Island, N. Y., which is across the harbor from New York City. A heavy engine was put into her; extra bunks for the party of passengers; and new rigging was rove throughout her upperworks. She was even supplied with a new suit of canvas. So she looked spic and span from top to bottom when the great day for sailing came.

Up through Hell Gate and down Long Island Sound Bartlett drove his little ship with a feeling of great happiness that he was once more headed for the "polar regions." It wasn't exactly like the hard Peary trip, when provisions for a year or two had to be taken and eskimos and dogs provided for. But, because the ice is always dangerous, there was an air of adventure and suspense among those in the little ship.

Newfoundland was sighted on June 28th and the first icebergs, great white masses on the horizon, came into view on the 29th. From there the ship continued northward and sighted the Greenland coast near the south edge of Melville Bay. Here heavy ice was met and for some days the *Morrissey* was a prisoner in the summer floes. Fog beset her and it looked as if the cruise might end without any further northing.

But after a few days the ice slowly opened, the fog lifted and the way north was cleared. Cape York was reached July 20th. This marks the southern boundary of the Smith Sound eskimos which Peary had used for so many years.

"*Captain-suaq!*" cried the natives when they saw Bartlett.

"Hello, Egingwah!" replied Captain Bob, recognizing an old bear hunter with whom he had sledged many thousands of miles.

Soon the natives drew up alongside in their little skin boats, called *kayaks*, and tumbled aboard. A mug-up of tea and hot beef stew was given to them, which they ate greedily. After their long winter's diet of walrus meat and seal, the white man's food was a delicious change.

Trading began at once. Putnam had brought along candy, calico and beads, knives, tools and other articles which the eskimos so highly prize. These mean a great deal to the native of the far north because civilization has no real contact with this small isolated body of people.

Young David bought a kayak. Mr. Putnam bought some eskimo clothes for his home museum. Captain Bartlett traded a pocket knife for a fine walrus tusk which he planned to take to a friend.

"How is the ice?" he asked one of the old men.

"*Namaktosuaq!*" cried two or three of the young hunters, meaning there was very little and the going was fine on up the coast.

So taking several of the eskimos aboard as passengers and also to help pilot the ship in some of the narrow fiords, the *Morrissey* continued towards her destination, Etah. This was the little village at which Peary had based at one time and was the northern boundary of the tribe. It was at Etah that the writer of this book spent nearly three years for the purpose of travelling up across Ellesmere Land and into the Polar Sea.

But, as usual, the Arctic held a surprise for the seafarers.

On Monday morning, July 26th, the *Morrissey* struck a reef off Northumberland Island. As the latitude was 77° 20' north, the air was very cold and raw, and there were many small icebergs floating about. Of course these waters are not charted accurately and there are no buoys or lighthouses, so the navigator has a tough time finding his way about. Bartlett's experience stood him in good stead, but even he had never known that close to the island was this small shallow spot. Luckily he had been moving along at slow speed.

The trouble was that the tide was high when the *Morrissey* struck. In a few minutes the water lessened in depth and the ship was left high and dry on the rocks when low tide came.

All hands were ordered over the side into boats and a cache of food promptly established ashore. There was no assurance that ice would not come up and wreck the little ship while she hung helplessly half out of water.

As quickly as possible she was unloaded in order to lighten her. Fuel oil was taken ashore. Her ballast was shifted so that she would slide over the reef if she got a chance. Even empty oil drums were lashed under her stern as floats to help her lift when high tide came again.

But even with all this work the ship still stuck fast. As you know, the tides go through one complete cycle each month. When there is a new moon the tides are highest because then the sun and moon are close together and pull the water up in the air with their combined attraction. This is also true when the moon is full, and exactly opposite the sun. These tides are called “spring” tides, and come twice a month. The *Morrissey* unfortunately had gone on at a spring tide and one of the highest of the whole month. So she had everything against her escape.

But Bartlett was an old hand at trouble. For his entire life he had fought with the wind and seas and tides. He was not to be defeated without a battle.

“Set the sails,” he ordered.

It was a desperate move, for if the wind rose too suddenly the strong sails might heel the ship over and cause the rocks to tear her bottom out. In fact the wind did rise, though not dangerously. And again the tide came up. More weight was taken out of the ship. The sea began to kick up into white caps. The *Morrissey* strained and chattered on her rocky berth.

“There she goes!” the mate suddenly shouted from the bow.



THE *Neptune* REACHES ETAH.

In 1917 Bob Bartlett rescued the Crocker Land Expedition, of which the author was a member, after the small party's four-year isolation in the polar regions.



STERN VIEW OF THE HELPLESS *Morrissey*.

Here we see Captain Bartlett lashing empty gasoline drums under his vessel's counter to help her float off.

It was a sort of grinding lunge the little *Morrissey* gave. She swayed giddily and her masts creaked. But the canvas, the choppy sea and the lightened hull combined to free her. She slid off into the deep water and all hands heaved a great sigh of relief.

A few days later a big herd of walrus was sighted. They were feeding near the foot of a glacier. A walrus eats clams which lie buried in the mud brought down by the glacial ice. He scrapes and digs around the mud with his tusks and gobbles up the clams which he pokes free. He has heavy short teeth which enable him to crunch the shells much as a boy would bite down on peanuts. He then spits out the shells and swallows the clams.

The walrus means much to an eskimo. In the first place, the huge animal weighs nearly 2,000 pounds. More than half of this weight is a fine rich meat under a covering of blubber two or three inches thick. Not only does the eskimo live on this diet throughout the winter, but he feeds his dogs with frozen lumps that keep them strong and well. However, the poor dog has to eat his meat with the hairy skin left on. The eskimo says this makes the dog tough. It certainly is an unattractive diet.

When the walrus herd saw the ship they were not frightened. To them she looked like a big iceberg with dirty sides. But they knew that it was better to feed clear of the bergs; so they simply changed course. Among the herd was a pair of fine tuskers.

Mr. Putnam gave orders to launch the whaleboat. Not only did he have his eyes on the tusks of a big bull walrus, but he wanted to do something for the natives who had been so helpful. He realized that no finer present, except perhaps a rifle, could be given the natives than to provide them with several thousand pounds of good fresh meat for their winter larder.

By the time the boat was launched the walruses had apparently got tired of feeding. They began to climb up on a pan of heavy ice that floated in the still water just inside a nearby promontory.

As the whaleboat left the side of the *Morrissey* an eskimo harpooner took his station in her bow. Soon the boat reached the herd which was gamboling about near the ice. Two of the walrus had already climbed up and were preparing for an afternoon doze. When the huge animals saw the boat they charged viciously forward to see what this queer-looking animal was which had come to annoy them. The big bull leader raised his head and shoulders out of the water and gave a loud fierce roar.

“We can get him,” said the eskimo harpooner.

Bartlett in the stern steered directly for the bull. In a moment the whaleboat was surrounded by the herd. Their wicked eyes were staring angrily at those aboard her and their tusks flashed in the sunshine, threatening to puncture the boat’s bottom. The mate, who was manning a starboard oar, rose from his seat and swung his blade at the head of the nearest walrus. At the same moment the eskimo let drive with his harpoon. Shouting and yelling, the other men did their best to scare away the remaining animals.

The instant the harpoon struck, its head detached from the shaft and buried itself in the tough hide of the walrus. The walrus dived. The sealskin line ran over the boat’s bow, dragging after it an inflated float and a sealskin drag. The drag gradually tired out the walrus and the float showed in which direction he was going.

By quickly changing course Bartlett put the boat out of danger from the attacking herd.

Now came a long and exciting chase. As soon as the harpooned walrus would come to the surface to blow, Bartlett would try to have the boat near

enough to him to force him down again. Gradually the walrus got out of breath. The drag on the sealskin line forced him to swim slower and slower. Finally Bartlett skillfully put the boat alongside the animal's shoulder and Putnam dispatched him with a single round from his high-powered rifle. The massive body was hoisted aboard the *Morrissey* and divided among the natives.

The ship was now taken across Smith Sound over to the Ellesmere Land side. Here she entered a fog-bound ice-filled inlet called Jones Sound. Little progress was made on account of the difficult navigation. Bartlett felt that the *Morrissey's* bottom might be damaged more than it seemed by her contact with the reef on which she had grounded. She was leaking and there was a chance that her keel had been seriously injured. So having turned the ship about for a brief look into Jones Sound he headed her again towards Baffin Bay.



AN ESKIMO MEETS THE SHIP.

The skin boat, or kayak, of the Greenland native is the most seaworthy craft of its size in the world. Behind the paddler is his sealskin float which is attached to his harpoon line.



NATURE'S DRYDOCK.

Repairing the *Morrissey* by beaching her on the northern Labrador coast. A new propeller was fitted in place of one that had been torn off by the ice.

On the second morning three bears were sighted on an iceberg. One had to be shot; but the other two were captured by a lasso in the hands of Carl Dunrud, a cowboy who was a member of the expedition.

This should have been the last adventure of the voyage. But, as Bartlett had feared, the *Morrissey* had sustained more damage than appeared on the surface. Almost as soon as she started home she lost her tail-shaft and propeller so that the entire journey of about 1,500 miles had to be made with only her two fore-and-aft sails. But she reached Sydney, Nova Scotia, safely and finally came to New York, smelling strongly of seal oil and with two live bears on her deck, but otherwise much the same as when she left.

CHAPTER XIV

SOME SHIPWRECKS

I LIKE to get Captain Bartlett talking about his shipwrecks.

“The most terrible thrill a seafaring man can ever feel,” he says, “comes when his ship goes down before his eyes.”

That is because a sailor loves his ship. It is his home. It has protected him from wind and sea. It has taken him safely over the ocean and into port. When his ship is destroyed a sailor sees both his home and a good friend lost.

Captain Bartlett's first shipwreck was in the barkentine *Corisande*. He was just a boy when he joined her. He was still little more than a boy when he saw her crushed to pieces by huge waves off the rocky south coast of Newfoundland.

He signed on the *Corisande's* crew in the Fall of 1893. Already strong winter gales were cropping up over the whole north Atlantic. And by the time the *Corisande* had gone to Pernambuco and started back for her home port, St. John's, Newfoundland, the dark winter had come.

“Down in the forecastle,” said Captain Bartlett, “we felt something was going to happen. To the creaking of the old ship's timbers was added a sort of ghostly whisper that had not been there before. It was as if she knew that she would never drop anchor again in her home port.”

This feeling seemed to get about the ship. It told on the nerves of the Captain. When Captain Bartlett got a boil on his neck, he did as sailors still do on small merchant vessels. He went to his skipper and asked him what treatment should be used.

“I'll have a look,” said the Skipper; and took a small doctor's book from the medical chest. Running over the pages he discovered that a boil should be lanced—at least that's what he told Bartlett.

So the Skipper boiled a long sharp knife and prepared for the operation. At sight of the knife young Bartlett lost his nerve. Without a word of explanation he fled from the Captain's cabin.

In a rage the Captain followed. Soon the pair, joined by the Boatswain and Carpenter, were racing about the ship in an undignified procession. Work stopped while the Skipper galloped after his young seaman. Near the foremast Bartlett sprang for the rigging and ran up, the Skipper still after him. In the foretop he jumped for a stay, slid down it and made the deck

again. In his wild pursuit the Skipper had dropped his knife and somewhat cooled. Luckily a squall struck the ship at just that moment and sail had to be shortened. By the time the reef points had been made fast the Skipper had decided not to operate.

The very next morning two of the sailors had a fight on the forecandle. One accused the other of stealing his boots. They went at it hammer and tongs, much to the delight of their shipmates. But suddenly in the middle of the battle a dark cloud passed across the sun. Like all sailors, the fighters were superstitious. They took this to be an omen of disaster.

“Maybe,” said the cook in the sudden silence that prevailed, “none of us will have need of boots in a few days.”

There was a feeling that the cook spoke the truth.

There were other things that happened. One night the ship’s cat disappeared. This caused talk about the rats that had always been thick aboard the *Corisande*. Then the sailors realized that there had not been a sound of a rat gnawing since the ship left Pernambuco. This meant that the rats had deserted her at her last port, something that always happens before a ship is to be lost.

Two days later the ship gave a great heave while the cook was preparing dinner. Off the galley stove rolled a large pot full of potatoes.

“We saw the old cook come running down the deck,” says Bartlett. “He rushed up to the mate and asked him to come and look. We all crowded about the galley floor. There were the potatoes strewn about where the cook had left them. And they formed a rough white cross on the galley floor. This was another sign the ship was doomed.”

Off Cape Cod the weather began to thicken. The sky became a murky gray, hiding the sun. Flurries of snow whipped across the deck. The wind moaned through the rigging. From then on until the ship was due to make her land-fall on the south coast of Newfoundland, the weather steadily grew worse. The wind came down in sharp gusts and lashed the ocean to a fury. The ship shrank like a living creature from the assault of the wind. Seamen muffled in sou’westers and oilskins clung to the lifelines lest they be washed overboard.

All afternoon the Skipper hung to his swinging bridge watching for a sign of land. But he could see only a mile or two ahead through the scudding clouds and drifting snow. The early darkness of high latitudes came down

and blotted out the sea. But the roar of the giant waves that surrounded the *Corisande* on all sides never stopped.

No one undressed that night. The watch below slept with their oilskins on. Not a sailor among them believed the ship would live through the night. They could only hope and pray that she would reach land before she succumbed to the tempest.

Dawn had not yet come when the *Corisande* was lifted high on a mountainous sea. She perched there dizzily for what seemed an endless moment. Then with a dizzy swoop she fell into the black trough that followed. There came an awful crash. Her bottom struck solidly. She shivered from keel to truck.

Another sea swept under her. Upward she swung, her masts tottering. And again the great sea let her fall. This time her bottom struck so hard it seemed that she could never rise again.

“Stand by the boats!” shouted the Skipper from the bridge.

But his voice was swept away in the howling wind.

Instinctively the men rushed for the davits. But before they could reach them the *Corisande* had struck twice more and had been carried in among the breakers. She came to a rest in lee of the towering black cliff which just showed through the first streaks of dawn. Only one life boat remained undamaged. The men piled into this.

“I had only a big red handkerchief,” says Bartlett, “which contained all my belongings. It was tied together at the corners. In it was an extra suit of underwear and one or two trinkets which I hated to lose.”

Half way in the boat swamped. Luckily the beach shelved at this point. The men hopped overboard and struggled ashore through the icy surf. The water seemed to freeze the marrow in their bones. Panting and exhausted they fell upon the slippery rocks.

The stronger ones helped their weaker brothers to a point above the tide line. There they crouched, half-frozen and exhausted, waiting for the morning.

When daylight came the *Corisande* was just going under. One by one her masts toppled and fell. When the wind shifted slightly, bringing in the full force of the seas, she broke in half. Save for a few bits of wreckage flung high among the bristling rocks, the fine ship had disappeared.

Another bad wreck that Bartlett survived was that of the steam sealer *Leopard*. She was a fairly old ship, but a staunch one. Many Newfoundlanders believed that she would one day be lost at sea because a fortune teller had once made the following statement to her mate:

“I see your ship riding high. She is on the shoulder of a giant.”

“Is she going fast?” asked the mate eagerly. His thought was that the fortune teller meant the *Leopard* would beat the sealing fleet home next year.



BARTLETT SAW HER CRUSHED AGAINST THE ROCKS.

This is the barkentine, *Corisande*, which was wrecked on the south coast of Newfoundland with Captain Bartlett aboard.



CAPTAIN BARTLETT'S FIFTEENTH SHIPWRECK.

The *Morrissey*, high and dry on a ledge off the North Greenland coast.

“High, but not fast,” droned the fortune teller.

“But how can she do that?”

“Because she is on the shoulder of the giant.”

The mate laughed and didn't believe what he was told. But later some of the old mariners said that the “giant” was not the sea but the land. And that the fortune teller meant the *Leopard* would some day ride out of the ocean with her bottom on the rocks.

But this was years before Bob Bartlett took her as Skipper. He had little care for the vague prophecies of a half-mad prophet. He was thinking only of the seals he hoped to get and the ice he must avoid.

Early in March he gathered his crew of one hundred and fifty men. Some were young adventurers who had scarcely been to sea before, brave hardy lads who cared little for danger and less for heavy toil. Others were seasoned mariners who had spent years down the coast in sealing and fishing vessels, men who were tempered by cold and hardship and toughened by long dark winters in that subarctic climate. There were still a few more who were old men. These were gnarled and twisted like ancient trees. They were men who had never been able to command ships, yet had faithfully followed the sea since boyhood.

It was the belief of these old men that the *Leopard* would “ride the shoulders of a giant” as the fortune teller had predicted: and that the “giant” was to be some rocky shore.

On the day of sailing friends and families of the crew crowded the dock. There was a spirit of festivity in the air. The *Leopard* had always brought in fine cargoes of seal skins and oil. Young wives and sweethearts could scarcely hide their joy in anticipating the new dresses and gay ribbons that would be theirs if success came on this cruise.

As usual there were several fights among the men just before the ship cast off. But these were not important and only added to the excitement of the occasion.

Because the *Leopard* was a small vessel and had so many men aboard she could not carry enough coal in her bunkers for the long cruise down to the sealing grounds and back. So Captain Bartlett had put a deck load of coal aboard her at the last minute. This made her top side very dirty, and weighted her down so much that she rode heavily in the rough seas.

On the second day after leaving port a strong easterly wind began to rise. This wind kicked up a nasty sea. The heavily loaded *Leopard* began taking green water over her bow and rail. Even her bridge was deluged from time to time as the ugly combers crashed against her side.

“Put the staysails on her,” Bartlett ordered his First Mate. His idea was to steady the ship and be ready to heave-to in case she became too hard to handle. He hated to lose time, but his duty was to the men who had entrusted their lives in his care.

Later in the day the wind rose quickly into a full gale and lashed the sea into waves that rose nearly as high as the little *Leopard's* foremast. It was clear that even heaving to would not be safe.

The wretched men who were crowded between decks on the tossing vessel could only hope and pray. They were used to storm and cold, but they knew by the violent motions of the ship and the thundering crashes of the seas that this was worse than anything they had ever lived through before.

Down forward in the dingy little forecabin, the old men nodded knowingly at one another.

“On the shoulders of a giant—” muttered one.

Night came down. Darkness added to the difficulty of keeping the ship clear of the heaviest seas.

She began to leak. Her terrific pitching had loosened some of her seams around the rudder well. The only thing Bartlett could do to lessen this strain was to put her in among the loose shore ice which by its weight kept the seas down. He headed in.

The *Leopard* was soon among the floes. Sound of distant surf could be heard. The combers had ceased and only a heavy ground-swell ran, its rounded crests weighted down with a burden of trash ice.

Suddenly the *Leopard* lifted high in the air. A bigger wave than all the others had run under her. She dropped back into the trough with a giddy rush. Down, down she went. Then suddenly came a crash that shook the ship from keel to truck.

“*The bottom!*” yelled a frightened man in the waist of the ship.

Bartlett’s heart sank. Good mariner that he was, he knew the unmistakable sickening thud with which a live ship strikes a hidden reef.

A few more hard thumps, and she was fast aground.

“On the shoulder of a giant”—just as the fortune teller had predicted. And this giant was old Mother Earth, sticking up under the storm-tossed sea.

The night was inky black. All around the ship were the grinding floes. And the swirling waters sucked and clutched at the vessel’s broken timbers as if eager for her destruction.

There was too much ice for launching of the boats. Bartlett saw this at a glance. So he had his men rip planks from the decks and bulwarks and lay a teetering sort of bridge along the broken ice fragments shoreward.

At 3 A. M. the *Leopard* disappeared beneath the surface of the sea. But her men, drenched and shivering, were by that time crawling shoreward, passing their planks from one to another as they worked by inches toward safety. As the dawn broke they struggled half-frozen and exhausted up the base of a black cliff. Fishermen sighted them just before it was too late, lowered ropes and hoisted them to safety.

“It’s times like that,” says Captain Bartlett, “that make a man appreciate warm clothing, enough food and a dry bed to sleep in.”

CHAPTER XV

A SAILOR'S SUPERSTITIONS

BECAUSE a sailor is the most superstitious man in the world I asked Captain Bartlett if he had any special superstitions.

“Wait a minute,” he exclaimed.

Whereupon he crossed his fingers, shut his eyes, and mumbled something.

“What on earth’s the matter?”

“Don’t you know it’s bad luck to ask a seafaring man if he has any superstitions?” He shook his head emphatically. “Worst luck in the world!”

I guess Bartlett was right because that very day he got a letter cancelling a profitable engagement to lecture.

However, once having broken the ice I persuaded him to talk about ghosts and other things of the sort.

“I remember one ghost,” he said, “which nearly ended in the death of the famous Captain Halfyard. He lived in Western Bay near Brigus. One winter he sailed from home just before Christmas. Four hours after he sailed, another ship followed the same course north.

“In the mid-watch the helmsman heard a cry in the night. He was scared stiff. He crossed himself and uttered the phrases a sailor is supposed to say when he sees a ghost.

“Luckily, my Uncle John Bartlett, who was Skipper of the ship, happened to come on deck at that very moment. He asked the helmsman what was the matter with him.

“Just then the ghost gave another cry. Uncle John, although he believed in ghosts, knew that no ghost ever made a noise like that. He had the helm put down and in a few moments brought his vessel alongside a man swimming in the water. The man was Captain Halfyard, who had been washed overboard from his own ship. There was great excitement the next day when the ‘dead man’ was delivered hale and hearty at his own front door!”

An interesting yarn, but what struck me was the endurance of a man who could keep afloat for hours in the icy ocean in the middle of winter without freezing to death.

Another time, when Captain Bartlett was out fishing, there was a black cat on the ship. This cat used to climb up on top of the capstan and meow loudly in the middle of the night. When the ship failed to have good luck at fishing, a man in the forecandle decided it was the fault of the cat. So he got it and threw it overboard.

Two days later one of the nets came up with the body of the black cat in it. The sailors were horrified. The black cat had come back! This meant they were going to have a run of bad luck. Sure enough the vessel ran aground before the cruise was over. And that summer Tom Barb, who had thrown the cat overboard, died!

“Is it true that women are bad luck aboard ship?” I asked Captain Bartlett. I didn’t know because in the Navy where I spent most of my life, women are not allowed aboard when the ship is underway. And on passenger ships there are so many women, it would be impossible for bad luck ever to catch up with them.

“Absolutely!” cried Bartlett. “It’s all very well for the Captain to take his wife or his daughter, but sooner or later it means he will be in trouble.”

He went on to tell me several yarns about bad luck that came from having women aboard. On one ship the Skipper was a young man. He had just been married and had got his owner’s permission to take his wife on a cruise with him. The sailors were not at all pleased. They felt the cruise was bound to end in misfortune.

Yet, despite their fears, everything went beautifully. The weather was fair and the ship made good time. There were no quarrels among the men and nothing seemed to disturb the even progress of the voyage.

The return voyage was just as fine. She left the South American port on a perfect day and the sun rose in the clear sky every morning. A fair spanking breeze blew over her quarters, carrying her rapidly home.

Every day the sailors expected something terrible to happen. Every day the Captain smiled a knowing smile when he realized that their fears were in vain. His joy on getting into port after such a wonderful cruise was unconfined. He spoke gaily to the pilot and made his remarks loud enough for the boatswain to hear so they could be passed down into the forecandle.

“A fine cruise?” grunted the pilot. “No bad luck?”

“Absolutely!” said the Captain. “Not a bit of bad luck has come our way, although everybody on board except my wife and me had expected it.”

The pilot grinned without humor. Remember those were the days before radio.

The Captain was disturbed by something in the pilot's face. "What's the trouble?" he asked.

"Not my trouble," retorted the pilot, "but I think you might like to know that your house burned down while you were away. Your mother-in-law died and all those fine cows you had on your place have the hoof-and-mouth disease!"

The boatswain couldn't get off the bridge quick enough to tell all hands down the forecandle. Everyone of them had a terrible desire to go up to the old man and yell in his ear: "*I told you so!*"

Bartlett told me one blood-curdling tale that kept me on the edge of my chair until he finished. It seems he was walking down the beach one night not far from his home, for a breath of air after dinner. There was a slender moon in the sky which enabled him to see only a few feet ahead.

To his horror he suddenly came on a dead body, washed up just above the tide line. He stopped, paralyzed with terror. Only that day he had had a sign of misfortune in the shape of having put his undershirt on inside out. Like all good sailors he knew that he should have left it so. But he very imprudently took his undershirt off and put it on right side out, something that the seafaring man knows is sure to bring bad luck.

He now felt chained to the spot. He couldn't run and he couldn't get up enough spunk to look at the body. And yet he felt it his duty, since he had discovered it, to try to identify it and make a report to the local authorities. Finally he mustered up just enough courage to light a match and start towards the body. At that instant the body suddenly rolled over and with a loud splash swam away. It was nothing but a seal sleeping on the beach!

In the fall of 1890, when Bob Bartlett was a boy, he was digging a cave in Brigus with several other boys. A man ran by and said that one of the big schooners, the *Treasurer*, was about to set sail. The boys trotted down to see the vessel leave. The father of one of them was on board. And the brother of another was one of her sailors.

"We were talking about the ship after we went back to the cave," says Bartlett. "I remember a queer feeling coming over me at the time. I had a premonition that I should die if I had gone on the voyage."

He couldn't explain this strange feeling and there was absolutely no reason to account for it. And yet only a few weeks later the *Treasurer* was

reported overdue. She never came back. Apparently she sank at sea with all hands on board. Bartlett's premonition had been correct.

There was the case of the brigantine *Berkeley* which sailed from Francis Harbor in the Labrador, bound for Brigus. She had on board many of Bob's neighbors and friends. The weather was fair and the load of fish aboard sure to bring a big profit to the Captain and his men.

Down off Green Bay, Newfoundland, the *Berkeley* suddenly plunged into a small but severe blow. She was buffeted by the waves for two nights and days, during which time she was sighted by other vessels also making heavy weather of it.

The *Berkeley* would no doubt have got through as the others did, but she strained her mainmast rigging on a big roll and then lost the whole thing overboard. Before the wreckage could be cut away she partially swamped; she finally sank with all aboard.

That same night the mother of one of the boys aboard her was sitting by the lamp and sewing. Suddenly she heard a slight noise. She glanced up. Her astonished gaze saw the door open silently. In walked her son, dripping wet and with a face white as death.

"You're not back!" she exclaimed.

The apparition—for so it was—slowly and sadly shook its head.

The poor woman sprang to her feet in terror. But before she could reach her son he had disappeared into thin air.

"So you see," Bob Bartlett tells me, "I cannot say that there are not ghosts. I just hear the stories which any seafaring man can match, and draw my own conclusions."

CHAPTER XVI

THE SEA STILL CALLS

AFTER forty years of seafaring life Captain Bob Bartlett certainly deserves to be retired. He should be living by the edge of the sea, comfortably ensconced in a little cottage, where he can sit in front of his own fireplace and spin yarns of his long and adventurous life.

But he is doing nothing of the sort. Indeed, just as I finished that paragraph he came bustling into my office with:

“Belay that typewriter, boy, and lend me a hand for a minute.”

“What’s up, Bob?” I asked.

He stepped aside to admit a slender, well-groomed young man, who was followed by a gnarled old fellow with white hair, who must have been at least a hundred years old.

“Mr. B—— and Captain M——,” Bartlett introduced them. With an air of mystery he closed the door.

For an hour I sat spell-bound. It seemed that Captain M—— had received a map from a dying sailor many years before when his ship was wrecked on a small island in the South Pacific. This map showed where \$100,000 in gold coin was buried by the Captain and Mate of a vessel on which the crew had mutinied and taken to the boats. They thought the ship was going to sink and left the two officers to go down with her. Instead she drifted as a derelict for many months and finally grounded gently on an island in northern Polynesia.

Mr. B—— was willing to finance an expedition to recover the gold. He wanted to charter Captain Bartlett’s schooner, the *Morrissey*. The Skipper insisted upon asking my advice in view of the fact that at least two other groups were also trying to use the little vessel in the coming summer.



JIM MAGOOK.

One of the seal hunters of the Point Barrow district who wanted Captain Bartlett to bring him to the White Man's Land.



NARWHAL ALONGSIDE THE *Morrissey*.

This is the fabled “Unicorn of the Sea”; so-called because of its single long ivory tusk. Eskimos consider its raw skin a great delicacy.

Whether the treasure will be found or not, and whether Captain Bartlett will use his ship for the expedition, time alone can tell. But the incident is characteristic of the life that Bartlett is living today. It is a life still full of excitement and action; a life that is more replete with adventures than ever; and a life that is no more relation to being retired in front of an open fireplace than Babe Ruth is to a ping pong player.

A good sample of this sort of thing came just a year ago when Bartlett took the Stoll-McCracken expedition to the Polar Sea north of Siberia in a search for relics of pre-historic eskimos. He left New York in the early summer, passed through the Panama Canal and reached the Aleutian Islands in June.

The purpose of this expedition was to find some trace of early men who must have migrated to America about 5,000 years ago by way of the narrow straits that separate Alaska from Asia.

Traditions of the eskimos say that their ancestors came from the west. If this be true they must have discovered America thousands of years before Columbus lived. Certainly the facial and other characteristics of the eskimos

are almost exactly the same as some of the Tartar tribes living in Central Asia.

At first the Eskimos lived only in Alaska. Then some migrated east to Greenland, where they are found today in small groups. And some must have migrated south to what is now the United States, and even to South America. All this movement happened so slowly and so long ago that today the eskimo tribes of the far north are completely isolated and out of touch with each other. Not until white travellers happen along and bring the news, do they know that their own kind of people live only a few hundreds of miles away.

The North Pacific gave the *Morrissey* a taste of stormy weather before she reached the rock-bound harbor of Unalaska, the only settlement of any size or importance in the Aleutian Islands. Here the scientific members of the expedition, led by Harold McCracken, delved into rocks and crannies for days in search of some clue to the dwellings of ancient natives.

As these efforts met with no success Bartlett took the *Morrissey* on to a small island that was well-nigh inaccessible. It lay in an uncharted bay near Umnak Pass. And because of its precipitous sides and the ugly rock-bound shore it seemed less likely to have been visited by wandering hunters or fishers than any of the others in the locality.

“This island,” says Bartlett, “was about the diameter of a city block. It rose straight out of the sea and was flat-topped as a table.

“I suppose some sort of earthquake had shaken it loose from the larger island nearby. Yet strange to say its body was practically undamaged. That is, there were no large cracks in it to indicate that it might soon tumble down.

“McCracken could not sleep until he had seen the top of it. He felt sure that there might be some sort of eskimo relics up there that would give us some idea of the mystery we were following, of just where the early people lived in this part of the world.”

Ropes were taken from the hold of the *Morrissey*. By fastening these to small nubbles of rock and carefully hoisting one after another of the members of the expedition up the perilous cliff, the top was finally reached.

First view of the top made it seem that all the effort and risk of the climb had been in vain. A few lichens, one or two patches of grass and a spread of rock fragments broken by frost and heat were all that met the eager eyes of the explorers.

Then suddenly Junius Bird, one of the younger members of the expedition, knelt and began to scrape at the gravelly soil.

“Here’s something!” he cried.

The others rushed up. Bird held out a small bit of flint-like rock shaped roughly to a point and less than half the size of his hand.

“An arrow head, or I’m crazy!” he exclaimed.

In half an hour other specimens had been collected: spear heads of obsidian, chipped basalt arrow heads, harpoon points of ivory, etc. It was clear that this place had been either a dwelling place, or at least a camp, of pre-historic peoples.

But the big find did not come for some hours. This too was made by Bird.

He was digging deeper for more arrow heads when his trowel struck wood. At first he thought he had found a log cabin. For gradually he uncovered a row of logs laid neatly on one another to make a wall. The chinks in them were filled carefully with moss. By the rock and gravel formation on the outside of the structure it was plain that it had been built many centuries before the white men visited it.

After some hours of hard work the explorers uncovered a sort of rude mausoleum. It was square and somewhat longer and wider than a full-grown man. The logs used in it were so well preserved that they could be identified as driftwood that had come ashore in the vicinity.

Underneath the roof of the structure was a deep protective covering of sealskins and grass. By this time it was clear that the find was an ancient grave of some sort.

Although it was late in the evening, the arctic sun circled in the north and the blue sky was dotted with screaming gulls which hovered over the diggers as if resenting their intrusion. A cold raw wind blew in off the icy waters of Bering Straits, chilling the explorers to the marrow.

“The thing that interested me,” says Bartlett, “was that no tree grows within 700 miles of the spot at which we found this burial place.”

McCracken in describing this remarkable find wrote:

“It is impossible to describe our sensations as we uncovered this first mummy. Here at last was one of the objects for which scientists had been searching for so long. It had been placed in a large saucer-like tray made of

tanned and decorated pup-seal skins attached to a wooden hoop and tied with a remarkable rope of woven grass fabrics, tanned seal and bird skins.”

The mummy was taken out and examined. It proved to be dressed in the finest skins the explorers had ever seen in the north. Probably the body was that of a famous chief. This idea was supported by the fact that nearby were found, in garments of lesser value, the bodies of three other people. These were no doubt his servants who may have been put to death so that their spirits could accompany his and attend him in the other world.

In speaking of the Chief’s burial costume, McCracken says that “the skins that went into it would have a present-day value of \$3,000 to \$4,000.”

There were many implements and utensils in the grave with the body. This was also in accord with ancient rites, the belief being that the spirit would have to live and cook and fight much the same as its owner did in his life. Even a carved wooden hat was found!

After long hours of hard work the whole find was lowered to the base of the cliffs and taken aboard the *Morrissey*. At once there was great fear aroused among the native Aleuts who were aboard as guides and helpers. They were astonished at the find. But they were more moved by their belief that evil spirits would now pursue the ship.

“You are white men,” said one of them. “And you know much more than we do. But you are still men. And no man is as powerful as a spirit. Therefore, disaster will overtake your vessel before you have gone much farther.”

However, despite these dark prophecies the *Morrissey* continued safely up into the Polar Sea. Here Bartlett caught a glimpse of Wrangell Island, the site of his hardships after the sinking of the *Karluk* some years before.

The plan was to continue along the Siberian Coast for further investigations, but heavy ice beset the vessel and winter cold began to form thin young ice on the surface of the sea. So it was necessary to turn back. Most of the party landed at Prince Rupert, in British Columbia. But Captain Bartlett continued on down the California coast and through the Panama Canal. He reached New York in the autumn of 1928. The newspaper account of his arrival was quoted in part on the opening page of this book.

And so it goes with Bob Bartlett, just one adventure after another. Even now as I write he is planning at least three expeditions in the near future.

During the coming summer he hopes to cover the icy trail up the Greenland coast along which he struggled with Peary for nearly a quarter of a century. He wants to weave in and out among the picturesque northern fiords, visiting the old Peary bases, making notes and photographs of historic spots and revisiting the surviving eskimo members of the old Peary expeditions.

“The eskimos who worked with Peary are rapidly dying off,” he tells me. “An influenza epidemic took many of them only a few years ago.

“I feel that men like Ootark, Seegloo and Inughitoq should have their pictures and stories put into permanent form. The modern talking film can practically keep them alive for posterity.

“Ootark, for instance, was a very intelligent man; a great big rock of a fellow—tall for an eskimo—and really interested in reaching the ‘Big Nail,’ as the native called the Pole. If he can’t go in the Hall of Fame, he ought at least to have his name on the vestibule list.”

Then he hopes next year that he may have a chance to cross the North Pole by submarine. He would leave New York with a party and tow a small submarine to Spitsbergen, whence he would descend beneath the ice and cross the Pole to Alaska.

A hazardous plan, yes. Yet it is no more hazardous than flying across the ice by plane. The submarine will be so equipped that a diver can leave her and place a bomb under the surface of the ice and blow a hole through if it becomes necessary for the little craft to come up for air.

The purpose of the expedition would be to investigate the bottom of the Polar Sea. Soundings would be made by electric sounding machine and samples of the bottom and sea water brought up. This has never been done by the fliers and only a few soundings were made by Peary and Nansen.

“This investigation of the bottom of the Polar Sea,” says Bartlett, “is of peculiar interest because we know now that the South Pole is at the crest of a great plateau. If we find that the North Pole is over a deep depression at the northern axis of the globe we shall have learned an astonishing fact about the original formation of the sphere on which we live.”

Even this is not all.

For Bartlett has made designs of a special ice ship with which he hopes later to go into the heavy polar ice off Wrangell Island and drift near the North Pole for five years. He will take a body of scientists along with him

and do much of the work that explorers have been too busy to do while searching for new land or the North Pole.

“But it’s time you retired, Bob!” I exclaimed when he told me the details of this latest plan.

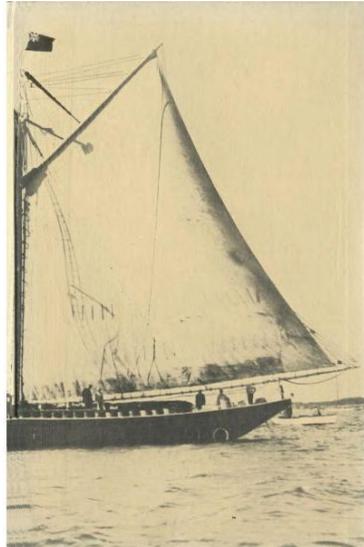
A grip like a steel vise closed on my hand.

“Feel that!” The Captain held out a half-fathom arm strung from wrist to shoulder with rocklike muscle.

“Retire!” he snorted. “Sure I’d retire if I’d been sitting at a desk these forty years!”

He glanced at a calendar on the bulkhead. “Do you know my father leaves in his own vessel for the Newfoundland sealing grounds tomorrow?” he cried. “Past eighty, the old man is—and you talk of me retiring!”

THE END



TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Illustrations have been relocated due to using a non-page layout.

Illustrations appear in the same order as in the original text, although that may differ from how they are indicated in the list of Illustrations.

Misspelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

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[The end of *Bob Bartlett—Master Mariner* by Fitzhugh Green]