

FIELD NOTE BOOK

CROCKER LAND EXEDITION

1913 - 1915

No. 14

#20

Crocker Land Expedition
1913-1917.

[1916]

Wednesday, July 12

The Devil couldn't have worked with a more intelligent design than he did today.

Had it been ^{head} fair wind we would not have started. Had it been fair we would have sailed. Therefore he decided to have it calm, compelling us to row ten miles. When about to round Cape Alexander, the Cape Horn of the Arctic, white caps rolled out by the front and away from the cliffs.

The wind increased suddenly to such strength that I could do nothing but let her "shiver" along for a mile or so until I was certain that it was something more than a squall when we turned tail and ran for the Crimson Palace Cliffs.

I thought at least we would have fair wind back but to my surprise it was right in our teeth.

We could not round the Cape
and we couldn't go back.

Finally it died but
altogether excepting at the
Cape where there was a
heavy sea, the swell of which
we got to such an extent
that we could hardly row.

With alternates - calm
spells, strong guffs, head
wind and fair wind, we
worked into camp here
on south side of "The Ark. Lk.
low-me", up close to glacier.

It is a beautiful spot,
one of the prettiest I have
ever been in here in the
arctic. The grass is long
and green, the soil enriched
probably by animal debris
of years ago left here by
the Eskimos who had an
igloo in occupied an igloo
close to our tent.

There is a cave up on
the hill and we can hear
a fox barking.

Thursday, July 13.

An unusual sight - we
were favored with today,
namely, to see geese running
up the hill side like
arctic hare!

Upon leaving camp this
morning we had it calm
until we reached the Cape
when it began to breeze
up from north east. We
were soon under the sea,
however, and from there on
rowed to Sutherland Island,
which we found literally
covered with ducks' nests.

Many of these ducks, I
think, have been driven
away from Littleton and
W. G. G. Islands by us
during the last two years.
They were safe today as
nearly all of their eggs
were incubated. We took
fifty fresh to use on our
floating trip. A caught a
~~there were~~
mother bird on the nest

which makes the third case of this kind that I know about. Each of the boys killed two with rocks. There were also many nests of the Glaucous Gull, all of which contained two and three young. One nest of the Brant pleased me especially; for out of it I secured a young Brant, which I have been wanting to get for two years. As he could scarcely walk, I think he must have been born today. I have him now in a box with three young eiders.

We saw many white whale coming down, and also two walrus. A berg about two miles from land attracted our attention. To all appearances there was a house built on it with a stove-pipe sticking out through the side. The Eskimos were fully as puzzled as I was. To allay our curiosity I sent E out to it in his

kaiah. On his return he informed us that it was a rubble of ice covered with sand.

Arriving here in Simg Harbor, we found it alive with gulls, old squaws and brant. The two former left but the latter to my surprise remained after firing six shots from 33 Winchester into the flock at about 100 yds. it dawned upon me that they couldn't fly; they were moulted!

E in his kaiah drove them ashore and off they went up the hill and we after them. E caught one Arctic and I caught one Alaskan. I killed two with shot gun and I two with 22 as they were swimming out of the harbor. In all we killed eight and captured two.

Tonight we have eaten two and eight eider eggs. Am disappointed in not finding eggs of Arctic Tern.

Friday, July 14.

Pandora Harbor

I decided this morning not to go on but to return to Etah where I have much to do. Had we gone on I do not know what would have happened, but we got the very devil coming back.

We made Sutherland Island with a fair wind to my surprise. I might have known that nothing good comes out of the south. All winds from S South East to South West bring bad weather. At the island we stopped for four young gulls and one young duck.

When about half a mile from end of cape it began to blow strong from south. I could not turn back. I could not tack, or wear, or reef. Letting the main boom swing out over

the bow I worried her along until we rounded the cape when we dodged into a crevice and took in a double reef.

With such a bit of a sail I was sure she would go up to Etah like a lady. Even with this she had more than she could stand. The peak of the sail unlaced from the gaff which compelled me to lower it down. It was now so rough that there was danger of slipping a heavy sea which would sink us.

I told the boys to keep her going with the bars until I could repair the tacks. When done I gave her the peak only. One or two cinders came aboard but did no harm except to wet us and everything in good shape.

When between the Queen Palace Cliffs and Cape Hendrich E's hairies filled

and turned bottom up. As
had filled some distance
back. Here we were in
a heavy sea with more
sail than we could
carry, water up over the
floor, wet through, with
two baiahs in tow filled
with water. Such a short
distance to Estak and yet
we could not make it
without cutting the baiahs
adrift and this I could not
think of doing.

I headed up into
Pandora Harbor. With wind
on the beam now it was
infinitely worse. It was a
question whether I could
get by the cliffs on the
south side of Cape Hendrick.
We weathered it, however,
and are now in camp well
up into harbor on north
side of Crimson Palace cliffs.

To my surprise on
unloading the cargo, we found
three of the gulls, and two
of the ducks had either

drowned or perished from
the cold water. The other
ducks showed a faint sign
of life. Reaching him in the
hollow of my hands I blew
warm breath upon him
while he hurried with the
Primus. In about ten
minutes a faint peep
informed us that he decided
to live. He is now in the
box preening his feathers and
as active as ever. One gull
received similar treatment
and is alive. Our two brant
were a bit miserable, wet
and bedraggled, but seem
to be all right.

We find here two tinie
rings, of which one is very large,
much larger than those in
use today.

Drift de Roche (Rock drift)

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Nicholas Stories for Boys
and Girls"

















































































































