

Two Big Game Animals of Unimak .

On the morning of June 15th, the wanderlust seized us for seeing something of the country around our camp, so the two camera cranks slung the knapsacks on their backs, filled with cameras, film, lenses, field-glasses - always field-glasses - and struck off toward the foot of Shishaldin, sparkling in the morning sun. The two Campbell Churches had already gone on before to reconnoiter and locate the caribou beds, as a herd was known to frequent this region. Before we caught up to them they had spied the caribou ranging the plains ahead, so they were crouched behind a knoll watching them. We crawled up with them, and soon most of the members in camp had joined us in ambush to watch the caribou. All of us were flattened on our stomachs in the soft moss, peeping over the top of the knoll. We were in the lee of the wind, so the animals had no chance to catch our scent. But that same secretive wind whizzed over the top of the mound into our faces like a stinging whip till our eyes were blurred with tears and our breath came in gasps. Lying motionless for fear of detection by the keen-eyed caibou, the cold soon bit through our warm clothing, leaving us numb and aching. But there is no other way to stalk wild game on the open, treeless tundra except by this stoical Indian method.

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Please return  
me at Jennings  
H.B.

The Oregonian  
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this in  
story



out around a big hill that formed one rim of the valley and see if there was any approach by low ground or intervening mounds on the other side of the grazing herd. But this was only a chance, as it would bring him where the wind might instantly tell his whereabouts. The chilled camera crowd crouching behind the knoll was to await his signal if the venture was feasible. We envied him the long walk. It is the only way to keep warm on the tundra. We sunk deeper into our soggy beds and pulled our coats close up around our noses for a long wait. The white mountain loomed above us, congealing our very breath.

The caribou had seen us. They are alert to pick up any strange object or movement even at long distances, and in keeping sentinel over the rim of a rise, sooner or later a hat or a head is discovered. They, however, had got no man scent, so they were not frightened, but merely uneasy. They grazed along, edging slowly further away toward the lake. Two of them lay down with heads in our direction, eyes on the watch, noses to scent the breeze. They were suspicious about what lay behind that hill-top. They might have rested easy: there was not a gun in the crowd.

Soon it was noticed that a watchful old cow had levelled her eyes off toward the hill near the lake. It was from this direction that we were impatiently awaiting a signal from Campbell. Slowly and dimly a lumbering object loomed up in the distance, moving straight out into the open tundra toward the caribou. It was a big brown bear. But where was Campbell?



Had he and the bear crossed tracks? The two caribou still lay quiet with eyes riveted on the bear. The rest of the herd had grazed gradually over toward a higher level near the other end of the lake and joined another bunch that were leading off up the hill. On came the bear, deliberately stopping once in a while. The two caribou guards got up liesurely, but with a purpose, and began feeding slowly back toward the main herd, keeping their eyes on the clumsy bear. Soon they dipped over the rim of a knoll and were out of sight. Then the bear stood up and walked toward us. It was Campbell.

In the meantime, the <sup>two</sup> camera hunters jumped up and made a dash for a position nearer the receding caribou. Now running over the tundra with its surface like a bubbling sea of green hummocks and tussocks of grass, constantly hopping up and down, and with packson one's back, is not so easy as it looks. The mat of moss is soft and slackens momentum and often the long, wiry grass tangles one's feet. It's a pull of energy and will power, and when one gets to a stopping place he is sure to be winded and ready to drop down for another watch. In this way by relays, the two of us lessened the distance to the caribou hill, and met Campbell out in the middle of the valley.

"There is only one way of getting near this herd in its present position, as they are on high ground and can see every object on the plain," he said. "Your only chance is to skulk along in the hollows on your hands and knees down to the lake shore where a cut-bank borders it and leads around to the foot of the caribous' lookout. In this way you may come around a point of the bank square upon them. Then stand up and pump



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We accordingly took the hard road over "no-man's-land" on our hands and knees, crawling over the low hummocks and squinting an eye occasionally at the caribou. A herd of sixteen were now feeding quietly on the slope in plain view above us. We reached the rim of the cut-bank and dropped over the edge with relief, as it had been tedious going. And now we looked off over a new world. On the steep slope, we sat braced behind the bank, the crawling after caribous far away from us. At our feet lay the wide, flat, marshy margin of the lake, and those who lived there were not big game. I looked down upon a clear spring bubbling out of the bank at my feet. As we settled down, a pair of pintails flushed with excited eyes and paddled frantically away into the tall marsh grass. They didn't go far, but for some minutes sidled around in the tiny tricklets of water that threaded in and out of the bogs, eyeing us sidewise and suspiciously as if they couldn't make out what we were. Certainly we had no business there. They had traveled north many hundreds of miles to this lonely island, and the peaceful nook by their spring had never been invaded by human beings before. Anyway, the best thing for them to do was to fade away before our eyes so we might be deceived about that nest that lay cuddled under a cool corner of the bank. So all at once, they were gone with no noise, not even a tell-tale ripple of the water nor rustle of the grass.

But still the broad marshland breathed and bubbled with life. Sandpipers by the dozen, but always in pairs, were so busy courting that they couldn't pay any attention to other folks.



Like little sky-rockets they soared into the air and floated back to earth, pouring forth a plaintive, ecstatic song of love. The morning in the marsh was musical with rippling whistles as here and there in quick succession the delirious sprites launched into the air.

I sat silent and half smothered <sup>in</sup> with sedge on the bank. Two little lovers fluttered up and settled just in front of me. They looked me over, and finding me quite inconsequential, they bent their heads close together over a tempting tussock of grass, twittering confidentially as to whether this might not be the very time to commence building. They bowed, and whispered, and considered. But no, it was early, and they must not be too hasty. And away they went again out over the waving marsh grass, to commence their courting all over. And so the days would go until they must settle down to the serious problems of nursery life.

And we must go on to bigger game than ducks and sandpipers. Rather haltingly we picked up our packs and started on, threading our way along the steep bank just below the rim to be out of sight of keen eyes on the hillside. Coming around a point, we found that the caribou herd on the hill had separated, a few lying down while eleven had moved down on the marsh to feed. This was a puzzle. We could hardly keep hidden from both bunches, and once detected, one group would probably convey its fright to the rest and stampede the whole herd. But we had to go on and take a chance. We had not tramped tiring miles over the tundra for nothing.

Then we put our heads together and planned a little



trick. The two of us moved close together with heads bent, simulating a loggy bear as much as possible and walked straight out into the open toward the foot of the hill where five or six animals lay resting. Even those on the marsh could see us, but we should soon be behind the foot of the hill out of their view. The five on the hillside eyed us for a scant few minutes in surprise, then all got up nervously and began to mill around in indecision. Then they started down the hill and coming to one of their usual trails, they commenced running straight toward us. Evidently we were in their line of escape, or they thought to take the shortest cut to the rest of the herd. It looked like a head-on collision of camera hunters and caribou. They were now running at full speed in a bee-line for us. We threw discretion to the winds, straightened up and started for them. It was a case of the best man wins to gain the foot of the hill first, they for a get-away, we for pictures even at the expense of a mix-up. By good fortune, we hit their trail at the point ahead of them, which seemed to bewilder them for a minute. They stopped and stared us in the face, three bulls with flaring antlers taking the lead and standing defiantly close together, a cow and a calf behind. The camera was grinding away unmindful of everything but a fine shot that must not be lost. Frightened into frenzy, the three bulls all at once bolted squarely past us and circling around us, to get our wind, they furnished fine chances for pictures as they raced across the marsh bottom and then up onto the tundra. Here they stopped in battle front, outlined against the sky and the white clouds. On again along the rim of the hills, and feeling a little more secure at being



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But the best of the day remained, for the eleven caribou in the marsh bottom grazed peacefully on, oblivious that a battle of wits had just been waged around the corner. We crawled stealthily up the ridge above the marsh and settled down behind a hummock to watch the herd below. As they moved further along the lake shore, we kept pace on hands and knees, waiting for them either to range up the hill to lie down and rest, or to wander around the foot of the point toward us as the first five had. Finally we had dragged ourselves along on our stomachs, hitching our packs beside us, clear to the top. Using the long lens and aiming over the rim, we were blissfully shooting the unconscious caribou below, when we caught a movement of some object in a ravine above the lake and directly opposite our ambush. Soon it came out into the light - a big brown bear ambling solemnly down the mountain. The caribou on the plain saw him also, for all eyes were fixed up the hill. The plot had thickened, much to our joy.

The old bruin shuffled liesurely down, stopping here and there to paw out a squirrel hole, usually to his own discomfiture, for he seemed to be an indifferent digger. He was a surly, unfriendly looking fellow with the melancholy manner of one who prefers to go his way alone, and naturally he is given a wide berth by most of the wild folks of the fields and hills.



Heavy of head and shoulder with an awesome breadth of chest, and a great, loose-jointed, shambling frame, the Kadiak bear is made for massive power and lightening speed. And he more than lives up to his looks. But it's when you look into his face that you shudder and know him for what he is. That great, bulging hulk of a skull with a jowl as forbidding as an ox's from which protruded disgusting, gnarled snags of teeth which have spent themselves in tearing great trees asunder, or crunching the bones of his own kind in the eternal battles, tell something of his brutish life.

I crouched close to the tundra on top of the hill with my eyes glued to that tawny figure that calmly held the forte on the opposite ridge against all comers. As he turned his back and with one huge paw scooped the dirt out of a squirrel hole, sending a shower far behind him, I saw the changeable lights on his golden-brown coat. Then he ambled on down the hill. The camera man was ahead, running low and crouching down to head Bruin off at the foot of the slope. He carried his Eyemo Camera in his hand, ready to shoot when he got within range. This little hand movie-gun is the only one to take on a hunt for caribou and Kadiak bears of the northern tundra where one has to run and stalk his game for long distances, or jump for safety. Bending and running behind the camera, I saw big Bruin reach the bottom of the hill and disappear over the cut-bank of the lake. The camera man stood up and made a run for it. He reached the top soon after the bear and I saw him duck down behind some tussocks of tall grass, or perhaps he went over, too. Everybody was out of sight, and the landscape was empty from where I labored on



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The silence and great space around me were oppressing. I couldn't stand it any longer, so I began to hurry down the slope toward the top of the bank where man and bear had disappeared. I crept to the edge and looked over. The bear was leaning over the lake rim, drinking and splashing in the water, about fifty yards away. Just then immediately below me, the camera man raised up. The motor of the movie was humming. Both of us were in plain sight. At the noise, the old bear turned, startled. What would he do? The camera man was cornered, and too close. That enormous, shaggy form started to rise on its hind feet; his head went down and his neck bowed up like a bull's. The camera still buzzed on. I was petrified. I could



not make a sound. All at once, that great, lumbering hulk bolted straight up the hill where he came down, loping like a fast horse. As he rolled up and down one knoll after another, he looked back over his shoulder to see if the demons still pursued him. At last I could move. I waved my hand to him, as I watched him disappear over the last rise. Far in the distance at the end of the lake against the white, lower slopes of the mountain, the herd of caribou grazed peacefully again.

That night at eleven o'clock, I stepped to the door of the tent to take a last look at the white mountain. The little river rippled at my side. Above the top of the bank hung the moon. The dim reaches of the tundra melted into the white night of this northern land, and there like a pale amethyst in the sky was Shishaldin with a candle lighted in his tip, the glowing reflection of his burning heart. Somewhere at his feet the caribou lay asleep; somewhere the big brown bear mounded about in the moonlight.



(9)

In spite of the fact that one assures himself that this northern world is wide enough for both man and beast, and that there is no undercurrent of real antagonism, yet this sudden meeting with big bruin was a shock to <sup>my</sup> our faith and almost shattered <sup>my</sup> our self-control. I stood thinking. It seemed the only thing to do just now. Bewildering visions fogged my mind. Another meeting with a bear flashed before me. One morning when the Westward was anchored off the Alaska Peninsula under the shadow of Pavlof Volcano, the camera man was ashore scouting about as usual. While the other members of the party were reconnoitering the mouth of a little river in a canoe, he wandered along the bank and happening into a wild flower garden, picked a handful. Crossing a sand wash, he came to a clump of thick alders. They could hardly be called trees, as they grew straggly and barely twelve or fifteen feet high. Tall grass reached up among the spreading limbs. Striking the trail of some animal, he pushed on through the patch to the opening beyond. All at once he noticed that the grass <sup>in one place</sup> had been freshly flattened, and a few feet further on it had been uprooted and the sand scooped out, making a big, round hollow. It came upon him that he was looking at a bear bed, and almost a warm one. Just then his imagination



was aided by a movement a little ahead, and there about thirty feet away, a big, shaggy, brown face with beady eyes was peering at him through the leaves. He was face to face with the big fellow he had been hunting for days and weeks. And his camera was rocking peacefully on the yacht out in the bay! There he stood, hatless and gunless, with a little bouquet of wild flowers in his hand. The bear stared intently at him for a moment, then dropped down and was gone. The disconcerted wanderer back-tracked ~~quickly~~ on his own trail. After all, it goes back to individuality. One bear may be amiable; another may be irritable and dangerous to tamper with. It occurred to the listener at the door of the woods that perhaps a bunch of wild flowers was about as appropriate as anything else to stalk a bear with.



*Worked into Under Shadow of Shishaldin*  
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*(Lodials + Caribou)*

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out around a big hill that formed one rim of the valley and see if there was any approach by low ground or intervening mounds on the other side of the grazing herd. But this was only a chance, as it would bring him where the wind might instantly tell his whereabouts. The chilled camera crowd crouching behind the knoll was to await his signal if the venture was feasible. We envied him the long walk. It is the only way to keep warm on the tundra. We sunk deeper into our soggy beds and pulled our coats close up around our noses for a long wait. The white mountain loomed above us, congealing our very breath.

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Had he and the bear crossed tracks? The two caribou still lay quiet with eyes riveted on the bear. The rest of the herd had grazed gradually over toward a higher level near the other end of the lake and joined another bunch that were leading off up the hill. On came the bear, deliberately stopping once in a while. The two caribou guards got up liesurely, but with a purpose, and began feeding slowly back toward the main herd, keeping their eyes on the clumsy bear. Soon they dipped over the rim of a knoll and were out of sight. Then the bear stood up and walked toward us. It was Campbell.

In the meantime, the <sup>two</sup> camera hunters jumped up and made a dash for a position nearer the receding caribou. Now running over the tundra with its surface like a bubbling sea of green hummocks and tussocks of grass, constantly hopping up and down, and with packson one's back, is not so easy as it looks. The mat of moss is soft and slackens momentum and often the long, wiry grass tangles one's feet. It's a pull of energy and will power, and when one gets to a stopping place he is sure to be winded and ready to drop down for another watch. In this way by relays, the two of us lessened the distance to the caribou hill, and met Campbell out in the middle of the valley.

"There is only one way of getting near this herd in its present position, as they are on high ground and can see every object on the plain," he said. "Your only chance is to skulk along in the hollows on your hands and knees down to the lake shore where a cut-bank borders it and leads around to the foot of the caribous' lookout. In this way you may come around a point of the bank square upon them. Then stand up and pump



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We accordingly took the hard road over "no-man's-land" on our hands and knees, crawling over the low hummocks and squinting an eye occasionally at the caribou. A herd of sixteen were now feeding quietly on the slope in plain view above us. We reached the rim of the cut-bank and dropped over the edge with relief, as it had been tedious going. And now we looked off over a new world. On the steep slope, we sat braced behind the bank, the crawling after caribous far away from us. At our feet lay the wide, flat, marshy margin of the lake, and those who lived there were not big game. I looked down upon a clear spring bubbling out of the bank at my feet. As we settled down, a pair of pintails flushed with excited eyes and paddled frantically away into the tall marsh grass. They didn't go far, but for some minutes sidled around in the tiny tricklets of water that threaded in and out of the bogs, eyeing us sidewise and suspiciously as if they couldn't make out what we were. Certainly we had no business there. They had traveled north many hundreds of miles to this lonely island, and the peaceful nook by their spring had never been invaded by human beings before. Anyway, the best thing for them to do was to fade away before our eyes so we might be deceived about that nest that lay cuddled under a cool corner of the bank. So all at once, they were gone with no noise, not even a tell-tale ripple of the water nor rustle of the grass.

But still the broad marshland breathed and bubbled with life. Sandpipers by the dozen, but always in pairs, were so busy courting that they couldn't pay any attention to other folks.



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And we must go on to bigger game than ducks and sandpipers. Rather haltingly we picked up our packs and started on, threading our way along the steep bank just below the rim to be out of sight of keen eyes on the hillside. Coming around a point, we found that the caribou herd on the hill had separated, a few lying down while eleven had moved down on the marsh to feed. This was a puzzle. We could hardly keep hidden from both bunches, and once detected, one group would probably convey its fright to the rest and stampede the whole herd. But we had to go on and take a chance. We had not tramped tiring miles over the tundra for nothing.

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*enlarge*



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bolted straight up the hill <sup>toward us from</sup> where he came down, loping like a  
fast horse. As he rolled up and down one knoll after another, <sup>He</sup>  
<sup>and</sup> ~~he~~ looked back over his shoulder to see if the demons still <sup>hassed</sup>  
pursued him. At last I could move. I waved my hand to him, <sup>was on</sup>  
as I watched him disappear over the last rise. Far in the dis- <sup>a rolling</sup>  
tance at the end of the lake against the white, lower slopes of <sup>lope</sup>  
the mountain, the herd of caribou grazed peacefully again.

That night <sup>at</sup> eleven o'clock, I stepped to the door  
of the tent to take a last look at the white mountain. <sup>with a lighted candle</sup> The  
little river rippled at my side. Above the top of the bank  
hung the moon. The dim reaches of the tundra melted into the  
white night of this northern land, and there like a pale ame-  
thyst in the sky was Shishaldin with a candle lighted ~~at~~ his  
tip, the flowing reflection of his burning heart. Somewhere at  
his feet the caribou lay asleep; somewhere the big brown bear  
mouched about in the moonlight.



## After Whales

Akutan Bay lay empty. The whalers had gone to sea, where, <sup>for</sup> the most part, they lived. Now the Westward was after whales, too, so she slid out of the quiet bay, set in green hills, backed by higher, snowy peaks. Out on a treacherous tide, she threaded a narrow, rock-strewn pass into the Pacific after the whalers. Unsuspected islands appeared constantly ahead, leaning out of misty billows and <sup>low</sup> floating clouds. As the little boat rolled over the billows through the churning narrows, birds in singles and bands rose in fright and skimmed the surface- guillemots and puffins with clouds of gulls winging wildly in the upper air. Cliffs towered on either side around which circled more sea birds of many kinds. Borne faintly on the wind, came their plaintive, clamoring babel. Then out into a wild ocean far from land went the boat, an ocean so huge and stormy that one sat in a daze with earth, and sky, and water in a great commotion.

But the whalers, where were they? There was no sign of smoke curling from a funnel on the horizon. Off to the sea in ships they had gone, and might not be back for several days. Daily and nightly the sturdy, battered, rusty sea-farers crawled back into their hidden bay ~~that~~ where the sea had pushed into the very heart of an island. Up to a red buoy they slid, tethered a great hulk of a whale to it, backed softly away and hung at the dock for a little while- only a little while- with their smoke puffing patiently for the next quick departure. Neither wind nor tide could deter them from their sea journeys. A few hours in for food and things even more necessary to whalers, tobacco and Scotch, and the grizzled salts of the sea, like vikings on



their stormy decks , turned their rugged faces seaward again.

Now they were far and away, scattered like specks on the sea, some north in the Bering Sea, some south in the Pacific, hounding the beasts of the deep to their doom. Northward the <sup>whales</sup> ~~great beasts~~ come in the summer along a traditional route that skirts the Aleutian chain of islands, feeding on the tiny crustacians that current-led and wind-blown, shimmer on the surface like wavering veils. Summer food for both bird and beast, they are, and a host of sharp-winged, <sup>shearwaters</sup> (blunt-nosed birds) flutter above them as herald of their whereabouts. In their wake come the whales, floating lazily along at evening, billowing up and down, "blowing" at intervals with just their long dark backs gleaming among the white-caps.

The great rendezvous~~x~~ of the whales in this region are the deep-sunken <sup>reefs</sup> ~~banks~~ of the Pacific, the Davidson Banks. Here they love to lie as resting places in their journey before pushing on up into the Bering, and here the dauntless whalers roam and roll the boisterous billows, hovering above their shadowy beds till they emerge. Then out <sup>shoots</sup> ~~goes~~ the big harpoon with its spear-pointed head and concealed charge of powder, slithering over the water deadly true, to tear into the lungs or vitals of the great animal and explode. Writhing and thrashing, down to the deep he heads, only to bleed to death and come to the surface, blown-up and bloated by the gun that gored him. Frequently if the aim was not true for a vital spot, the great beast, held by the four big claws that automatically spread out and hook into the flesh, starts apparently for another ocean, dragging the lead rope of hundreds of feet,



behind <sup>of</sup> which are many more coiled up in the hold of the boat. Then a merry chase of from two to twenty hours he leads the whalers, until he is spent or they put another harpoon into his lungs, Probably his first harpoon of some three feet long of heavy cast-iron is twisted and bent out of shape when extracted from the mass of torn flesh and black blood. Then the great dark hulk, sometimes white-bellied, is pinned to the side of the whale boat with the huge anchor-shaped tail high on the prow. From afar, these whale boats are waited for and scanned with glasses to see if they bring fair game, not ~~not~~ merely a badge of black and white hanging to one side of the boat, but hunters that bring double <sup>trophies</sup> ~~burdens~~ streaming back from their prows. The calm, dark master<sup>s</sup> of the whalers stands on the dock estimating the catch as a puffing sea-prowler moves serenely up to the bobbing buoy. It may be a pair this morning, a seventy-ton female fin-back with her twenty-ton baby, the latter being hardly worth the trouble of cutting up and frying for his grease.

In ten minutes the great mother of the sea is hauled tail first up a wide run-way so slimy with ~~the~~ blubber and blood that only a native can navigate it, and then with clumsy, spiked boots. Watching from a distance, the great beast seemed to fill the bay. Her seventy-seven feet stretched along the wharf against the steep hillside, rearing the fan-shaped tail above the roofs of the buildings. About a ton to the foot, said <sup>us</sup> the whaler, and fat with blubber. He rubbed his hands together as he gazed out toward the red buoy where by this time five other floating forms were tied. The dock was lined with hundreds of empty metal drums for whale oil, and one month from now the three hundred-



foot freighter would worm her way into this lonely, narrow bay and loom so large that she obscured whales and whalers.

Walk around the prostrate monster and watch the cutting-up process. Great chains manipulated by machinery in nearby buildings are run out on the wharf. Native Aleuts hustle about fastening enormous hooks into slabs of blubber already marked off into sections by long, razor-like knives. The signal is given by a raised hand, the machinery rattles, the chain tightens and one hears a crackling, tearing sound as long slabs of pearly-white flesh, stained here and there by trickling, black blood, slide across the gory run-way and up another incline into the big room lined with steam vats. This is the end of the story for fin-backs, big blues and little humpies alike, that cross the paths of the whalers of Akutan.

Take one last look at the face of old Mother Whale. Seventy-seven feet she stretches, and it looks as if a good twenty-five of it were head. Over her carcass swarm the hob-nailed workers like harrying ants, cutting and slicing with flashing knives. The great maw lies gaping toward the sea. A fair-haired Norse giant steps up to the <sup>wide mouth</sup> (entrance) and looks like a pigmy in a mammoth cave. He stands up to his waist in a bristling fringe of whale-bone that lines the creature's mouth all the way around its cavernous curve where teeth ought to be. This is the whale's "strainer". Sometimes it is black; sometimes it is creamy-white. When Mother Whale scents food on the waters, she lifts her great lip from fifteen to twenty feet deep, starts her high-powered motor and slides through the green depths with the velocity of a submarine bent on business. She scoops in a



houseful of sea, clamps her jaws together and drains out the water through her whale-bone strainer. And what has <sup>she</sup> got in her big trap? Millions of those same infinitesimal crustacians that far and frail float the surface of the sea. One has a queer, foolish feeling - for the whale- when he looks up at that great, fringed face with its tiny, pig-like eyes hidden in a fold back of the corners of its mouth, and thinks of the baby food <sup>she</sup> it eats.

So the Westward, eager for prowess and pictures, pursued the whalers far to sea, and found them not that day. <sup>Then</sup> Into a sheltered bay for the night, she stole, and over went the little boat and the cameras for an exploration. To one who wanders the waters of Alaska, there comes the pirate's exhilaration of booty around every corner. And the coastlines of these islands are all corners with hidden coves and secret channels, behind them.

The bed for the boat that night was a circling little bay backed by knife-blade headlands at the end of a narrow and tortuous water-way, a hushed, peaceful place that didn't even know of the tumbling ocean and singing wind outside its ramparts. A baby sea bird with unafraid eyes paddled serenely and alone among the rank water-weeds at the edge of the shore pretending to be all-sufficient for the needs and safety of his daily life. A pair of diligent and secretive ravens went back and forth to some mysterious place above ~~some~~ shale rock on the hillside. And nearer still to the clouds in the evening light, an eagle wheeled and circled, restless and suspicious at the invasion of his hermitage.

The sound of ~~the~~ paddles came softly as <sup>a</sup> the little



boat with the explorers nosed into green nooks around the shoreline, till finally it edged out to the doorway of the bay. The moon rose red out of the wild ocean, big, luminous and near at hand. And on the horizon, lined against the sky, ~~rose~~ a whaler with her trail of black smoke blowing straight out to sea. She was acting queerly. Back and forth like an abandoned spirit, she careered, now toward land, now puffing fiercely back to sea. She was evidently hard after one of her big prey of the depths. And redder and bigger glowed the moon behind <sup>the</sup> her spindling, black mast as <sup>the ship</sup> she was lost in the night.

Three-thirty, A. M., and the little bay lay cold and quiet under the mist. And close beside the Westward, twin whalers were rocking peacefully. Wind, and storm, and darkness had sent the sister huntresses into the little bay to await the day. But now the black smoke of the never-weary funnel rose into the morning air, and the "Kodiak," big bear of the north, was awake and ready to fare for the sea again. On the deck stood the hardy fishermen, unwashed, unshaven, with tin cups of steaming coffee in their hands. For the day and the night are the same to them; they sleep and they eat on the go.

The Westward was awake, too, and after depositing the two cameramen aboard the whaler, with movie guns ready for wild action at sea, the twin ships moved out of the dark, deep bay, followed by the <sup>persistent</sup> little yacht. Only the rattle of anchor chains and the scream of an excited gull broke the stillness. It was gray and dull, and a cold wind blew into the mouth. The hills were a wet green. A songsparrow was singing from the hillside; the eagle again hung high above the rocky cliffs, now seen, now



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Underneath steamed the black whalers, ever on the watch. A sailor climbed into the crow's-nest and behind him went the cameraman. The crow's-nest is neither a comfortable nor a happy place to be. It's a swaying, unstable perch buffeted by the gales and chilled by the oceanmists, and made fruitless by the perversity of whales. Up and down the huge, swinging swells for hours, then over a calm, monotonous sea with nothing living in sight but a lonely "goonie" skimming behind, they steamed- and not even the ghost of a whale!

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luck to take strangers aboard. There must be a Jonah somewhere. The whales knew it. At five o'clock two frozen cameramen dropped overboard into a little boat with all the "bogey guns", boarded their own little ship and streaked away for a bay to sleep in, forty-five miles away.



## Bores of Alaska rivers:-

An abrupt tidal wave which breaks in an estuary, the water then rushing up the channel with great violence and noise. The tidal wave being a wave of translation, the shoaling and narrowing of channels where the tide rises very rapidly produce a great increase in the height of the wave. The forward parts of the wave advance less rapidly than the backward parts and so cause a great cumulation in front. The most celebrated bores in the old world are those of the Ganges, Indus and Brahma Putra. The last is said to rise to a height of twelve feet. In the Amazon and other rivers in Brazil the bore reaches a height of from twelve to sixteen feet. The bores in some estuaries at the head of the Bay of Fundy are remarkable.

When the rise of the tide begins the surface of the water is disturbed in mid-channel; but the water is not broken, it is merely like a common wave. But as this rapid rise elevates the surface suddenly above the level of the flat sands, the water immediately rushes over them with great velocity and a broken front, making a great noise.

Billie and Irene have made two long cruises along the coast of British Columbia and Alaska, and out along the Aleutian Chain of islands. In fact, all this northern coast is bordered with small and large islands, the largest being Vancouver Island. The shoreline is heavily indented and irregular from the heavy tides and wash of the sea. The majority of the coast of British Columbia slopes abruptly to ~~the~~ <sup>deep</sup> water, the tides rushing against the shores and up the channels between with such force



that they eat deep grooves. It looks like this had happened for so many long years that it had eaten into the coast and formed the many small islands which protrude like tufted knolls. All of these islands, small and large are heavily wooded with fir, spruce, and cedar, the cedar growing to immense size especially toward the north.

The yacht usually moored in some bay for a few days, so the exploring party could go ashore and reconnoitre the woods. It is unsafe to moor too close to the shoreline on account of the break of the sea. Small boats, rowboats, canoes and cruisers with motors on them were used for landing. The canoes were almost the only boats that could be used for threading the narrow inlets between some islands, and also for entering the narrow channels into the little lakes that had forced themselves into the very center of these islands. The tide ebbs and flows every six hours along this coast. The only time when a canoe can enter a narrow inlet is on the crest of the tide when the water hangs suspended. This lasts for only about ten minutes, then it begins to pour rapidly in a great, roaring flood that forms eddies and swirls that are very dangerous if one is not an expert boatman. Once when

Billie, Irene and William attempted to enter one of these little inlets to get into the middle of an island, they were just a few minutes late. They crawled along the steep, rocky edge of the channel, paddling for dear life to get up before the flood fell out in a great torrent. They worked and worked like beavers, but couldn't make it, the current was so swift. Then they crawled up onto a big rock in the center and pulled the



canoe up with them and tried to launch it on the upper side and thus crawl along the shoreline above. But the current pulled the canoe out of their hands once or twice. They finally got into it and thought they might by hanging onto the bushes and paddling for dear life make the shore which was only about twelve feet away. But the flood had begun to fall out of the little runway so rapidly that it lifted the canoe and tossed it like a shell on the great billowing waves that curled and tore down into the bay beyond. They were completely helpless and expected to be capsized in the wide maelstrom below them. They lost a paddle and could not use the other one, and finally gave up and only tried to stay in the canoe. The waters boiled like a great kettle, and in the center was a great whirlpool. They were rushed into the center of this and turned around and around, and finally were rushed down into less frenzied waters, where they were able to get their breaths and let themselves float down toward the sea. One of the motor cruisers saw their trouble and went to their rescue. It was very exciting; but it would have been sure death to be forced to swim in those rapid boiling waves.

The harbors along the coast of British Columbia all have to contend with the tides that come and go every six hours. Small Boats have to await the tide to depart from Vancouver going out on the flood tide. Even then they are turned and twisted about until they pass the narrow part of the bay. Coast boats going up the inside channel toward Alaska thread their way between steep mountain sides, and if large enough they can stem the rushing tides, but they are in danger of being thrown on shore



or dashed against the rocky slopes and broken up by the force of the water.

The Yukon River has a great, spreading delta at its mouth, filled with sand-bars, and at the ebb of the tide the waves are mountain high as they roll over these. But whether this conforms to the bores of the narrow channels along the coast where the tide eats into the shore, I do not know. All the little rivers of Alaska, including those on the Aleutian Islands are precipitate, coming down from the slopes of volcanoes which are close to the shoreline. They are short and rush down with great velocity. When the tide is in-coming, the waters of the rivers and the tides fight back and forth, and a boat cannot enter their mouths at all at this time.

Journal of the Yukon



MEMBER OF THE  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
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For the Protection of Wild Birds and Animals

[FOUNDED 1901] [REORGANIZED 1902]

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