

ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL

A VOYAGE ROUND THE
WORLD, FROM 1806 TO
1812

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Archibald Campbell

A Voyage Round the World, from 1806 to 1812 / In Which Japan, Kamschatka, the Aleutian islands, and the / Sandwich Islands were Visited

PREFACE

A perusal of the voyages of discovery, which shed so much lustre on the reign of George III. naturally excites a strong desire to learn what effects have been produced among the nations whose existence they have introduced to our notice.

That the interests of science and commerce have been greatly promoted by these voyages, cannot be doubted; but it may be questioned whether the result has been equally beneficial to the natives of the newly discovered countries; and, as the editor¹ of Cook's last voyage justly remarks, "it would afford exquisite pleasure to every benevolent mind, to be instructed in facts which might enable us without hesitation to answer in the affirmative."

The solution of this momentous question can only be obtained from the accounts of subsequent visitors; and the following narrative is submitted to the public, as a contribution to the evidence required for that purpose. It was drawn up partly from the papers,² but chiefly from the recital of the author; and the editor has adhered as closely as the nature of the case would permit, to the language in which they were originally related. The intervention of a third person between the traveller and the reader, is an evil which ought always, if possible, to be avoided; but in the present instance, some literary assistance was absolutely necessary; and the editor conceives he shall best have executed the task he has imposed upon himself, by stating, with strict fidelity, and in the simplest language, the facts as they were related to him.

A short account of the life of the narrator will enable the reader to judge of the necessity of such assistance, as well as of his qualifications to relate the incidents of his voyage.

Archibald Campbell was born at Wynford, near Glasgow, on the 19th of July, 1787. His father, who was a soldier in the 45th regiment, died at St. Lucia, upon which his mother removed to Paisley, her native place, when her son was about four years of age. He there received the common rudiments of education, and at the age of ten was bound apprentice to a weaver. Before the term of his apprenticeship had expired, however, a strong desire to visit remote countries induced him to go to sea; and in the year 1800, he entered as apprentice on board the ship *Isabella*, of Port-Glasgow, commanded by Mr. Hugh Paterson. In this vessel he made three voyages to the West-Indies. He afterwards served about a twelvemonth in a coaster; and, in 1804, again sailed for the West-Indies, in the sloop *Robina*, belonging to the same port.

At Madeira he was pressed on board the *Diana* frigate, and remained in that ship till her arrival at Portsmouth in 1806. He there found means to make his escape, and entered as seaman on board the *Thames* Indiaman.

The history of the six most eventful years of his life will be found in the following pages. He returned to his native country, in April, 1812, having lost both his feet; and from the unskilful manner in which amputation has been performed, the wounds have never healed.

¹ Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury.

² For some account of these papers, see [Note A](#).

A gentleman in Rio Janeiro, of the name of Lawrie, had furnished him with letters to his father in Edinburgh, by whose interest he obtained admission into the Infirmary in that city; but after remaining there nearly four months, he was dismissed as incurable.

Mr. Lawrie, senior, presented him with a barrel organ; and he contrived to earn a miserable pittance, by crawling about the streets of Edinburgh and Leith, grinding music, and selling a metrical history of his adventures.

Being ambitious, however, of performing on a more dignified instrument, he has since learned to play on the violin; and he finds employment on board the steam-boats that ply upon the river Clyde, by playing for the amusement of the steerage passengers.

In one of these vessels his appearance attracted the notice of the editor; and the answers he gave to some questions excited so much curiosity, that he took him home with the intention of making a few memoranda of his story for his own information.

The modest and intelligent manner in which it was told, the interesting nature of the incidents, and the curious information it contained, on the subjects to which the attention of the editor had been much directed, created a strong interest on behalf of the narrator; and the hope that an account of his voyage might be of service to an unfortunate and deserving man, and not unacceptable to those who take pleasure in contemplating the progress of mankind in the arts of civilization, gave rise to the present publication.

In the execution of his task, simplicity and perspicuity are all that the editor has aimed at. The ornaments of style, which are generally misplaced in such relations, would have been peculiarly incongruous in the mouth of a common sailor. In those parts of the work which relate to places already well known, the narrative is entirely confined to the personal adventures of the author; and had the editor been aware that so much had been recently written regarding Kamschatka and the Aleutian Islands by the Russian navigators, the description of those places would have been either altogether omitted, or much more condensed; but, in fact, he had no opportunity of seeing their voyages till the work was sent to the press, and it was not then considered necessary to make any alteration in the text.

The importance of the subject will account for the disproportion of that part which relates to the Sandwich Islands to the rest of the work. From the advantages they owe to their situation, placed midway between the continents of Asia and America; from the fertility of the soil, and the natural talents and industry of the natives, they promise to become by far the most important of the recently discovered islands³ in the Pacific Ocean.

Scarcely thirty years have elapsed from the period of their discovery, yet how wonderful the change!⁴ Their king is surrounded by workmen of every description, native and European; his guards are regularly trained to the use of fire arms; and he possesses a navy of nearly sixty sail of decked vessels, built upon the islands; whilst almost every ship which navigates the Pacific, finds shelter, provisions, or trade, in his harbors.

In Tamaahmaah these islanders possess one of those remarkable characters, who, like Alfred or Peter the Great, seems destined to hasten the progress of civilization. He is known in this country from the accounts of Turnbull, Lisianski, and Langsdorf; but as none of these navigators ever saw that chief, their accounts are consequently very imperfect; the length of time, however, during which our author remained in his family, afforded him opportunities of observation not enjoyed by those of higher qualifications, and in some measure compensates for the unavoidable defects of his education.

³ The concluding sentence in Captain Cook's journal affords a striking proof of the high value he attached to "a discovery, which, though the last, seemed in many respects the most important of any that had hitherto been made by Europeans throughout the extent of the Pacific Ocean".

⁴ A short historical account of the revolutions that have taken place in the Sandwich Islands, from their discovery in 1779, till the arrival of the author in 1809, collected from the voyages of Cook, Meares, Portlocke, Vancouver, Broughton, Turnbull, and Lisianski, will be found in the Appendix, No. [IV](#).

Although no new discoveries, strictly speaking, are recorded, the work will not be found altogether destitute of useful nautical information; the account of the reef to the southwest of Halibut Island, upon which the ship was wrecked, and the numerous rocks that lie near the coast of Aliaski, will show what ought to be avoided; and in the account of the south coast of Wahoo, will be found a description of the only harbours in the Sandwich Islands.

From the humble situation held by the author, a distrust may be entertained of his qualifications to relate the facts which fell under his notice; but few, in the same ranks of life, are possessed of more intelligence or information; with the advantages common to his countrymen, he seems to have neglected no means of improvement. It will be seen that at the age of nineteen he was appointed a petty officer, and had he not been incapacitated by his misfortune, it may be presumed, that he would soon have attained a higher rank.

The editor has to claim indulgence on his own account. His motives for undertaking the work, and the principles upon which it has been executed, have been already stated; the work is published for the benefit of the poor fellow who is the subject of it; nor would it ever have met the public eye, had there been any chance that the task would have been undertaken by another hand. But to rescue much of what is true and extraordinary from the oblivion to which the obscure condition and limited powers of the narrator would have condemned it, appeared to him well deserving of the labour which he had bestowed. The best apology for the appearance of the work itself will be found in the words of a celebrated periodical publication.⁵ “It is obvious that the discovery of new tribes, and the first account of manners formerly unknown, are by no means more interesting than the subsequent history of those tribes, and the changes which rapidly take place in their manners. The greatest obligations, therefore, are conferred upon us by those adventurous persons who, having visited these islands of late years, give such statements of what they saw, as enable us to trace the progress of society in one of its earliest stages, and to estimate the effects produced by the sudden revolution in their circumstances which the natives have experienced from their intercourse with Europeans.”

JAMES SMITH.

Jordonhill, May, 1816.

⁵ Edinburgh Review, Vol. IX. p. 332.

CHAPTER I

Departure from England – Voyage to China – Transactions at Canton – Author enters on board an American ship – Passage to Kamschatka – Touches at Japan – Transactions there – Arrives at the harbour of St. Peter and St. Paul – Some account of the Russian settlement in that place.

Early in May, 1806, I entered as seaman on board the Thames Indiaman, Matthew Riches, Esq. commander, on a voyage to China.

We sailed on the 14th of that month from Motherbank, in company with the Arniston, Royal Charlotte, Glatton, Marquis of Ely, Marquis of Wellesley, Monarch, Cirencester, and Neptune, Indiamen, under convoy of the Lion, 64, and Medusa frigate; we were also accompanied by a fleet of transports, with troops, destined for the expedition to Buenos Ayres.

In our voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, no incident occurred worthy of being recorded, not even the ordinary ceremonies upon crossing the line. We had a detachment of the 30th regiment on board, the commanding officer of which did not choose that the men should undergo the ducking usual upon that occasion. About this time I was appointed sail-maker's mate.

We arrived at the Cape on the 7th of August, and remained there 15 days.

We sailed from thence on the 22d; and on the day after our departure, encountered a severe gale of wind. It came on so suddenly that we had only time to take in our studding sails; all the others, except the fore and fore-top gallant sails, were blown out of the bolt ropes; the ship was running before the wind, and broached to several times; fortunately, however, we suffered no other damage than the loss of the sails. We experienced two other gales whilst in the Indian seas, but, being better prepared, met with no material accident.

On the 12th of September we saw the island of St. Paul, and arrived at Pulo Penang, or Prince of Wales' Island, about the middle of October.

We proceeded on our voyage for China on the 24th of November, and anchored at Wampoa on the 18th of January, 1807.

Having remained there nearly six weeks, and taken in about half of our cargo, an unfortunate dispute took place between the crew of the Neptune and some Chinese, in which one of the latter lost his life. In consequence of this, the government insisted that a man should be given up in his place, and stopped the loading of the ships to enforce compliance with this demand, threatening, at the same time, to prevent their departure by choking up the second bar.⁶ As a measure of precaution the ships dropped down the river below the bar, and a boat was despatched to Canton to wait the orders of the commodore.

I was sent in the cutter on this service; and during the time of our stay in that city, the captain of the American ship Arthur, bound to Rhode-Island, endeavored to induce me to quit the ship I belonged to, by offering high wages, and a bounty of twenty dollars; I, however, declined his proposals. Afterwards, when I was in company with a comrade of the name of Allen, we were met by another American captain, who also tried to persuade us, by offering still higher wages; we resisted his offers, till he informed us that his ship was bound for the South Seas and the north west coast of America. – It had always been my ambition to visit those distant parts of the world, and the opportunity that now presented itself was too tempting to be resisted. We agreed to his terms; and as his ship lay at Wampoa, he concealed us in the American factory till an opportunity of proceeding thither should occur.

Whilst at this place, we very narrowly escaped detection. Being in want of provisions, we sent out a Chinese to buy some bread, and gave him a dollar stamped with Captain Riches' initials. Instead of fulfilling his commission, he took the dollar to the captain, and brought him to the factory. When

⁶ For an account of the dispute, see Appendix, No. IV. [Note B.](#)

we saw them approach, we made our escape from a window to the top of an adjoining house, and ran along the roofs, till we reached a warehouse, which we asked permission to pass through; this the owner refusing, I went out on a beam that crossed the street, and dropped on the ground, being a fall of about eighteen feet. – When the Chinese observed this, he allowed my comrade to pass through the house. I was a good deal stunned with the fall, but soon recovered myself. We then got to the river side, where we hired a *san-pan*, or small boat, to take us to Wampo, and reached the ship with no other interruption.

She was called the Eclipse, and belonged to Boston; a new ship, on her first voyage, commanded by Captain Joseph O’Kean. She was chartered by the Russian American Company, for their settlements at Kamschatka, and the northwest coast of America, with a cargo of nankeens, tea, silks, sugar, rice, and other articles, the produce of China. The number of the crew, including officers, amounted to twenty-eight, four or five of which were procured from the Indiamen. There was also a Russian supercargo.

At Captain O’Cain’s desire I changed my name, which I entered on the ship’s books as Archibald Macbride.

Having completed our cargo, the ship sailed on her voyage upon the eighth of May. – When opposite to Macao, we saw the Indian fleet getting under way; the Captain, fearing that the man-of-war might board us, and take the men belonging to the India ships, put back, and remained within the Bocca Tigris till they were out of sight.

On the 6th of June we descried the coast of Japan, and ran along shore till we reached the bay of Nangasaki.

We stood into the bay under Russian colors, and were met by an immense fleet of boats, who took possession of the ship, and towed her to the anchorage. When about half way up the bay, the Dutch ambassador came off. He could speak English; and finding we were Americans, advised us to haul down the colors, informing us that the natives were much exasperated at some outrages lately committed by the Russians upon their islands. We found this to be so much the case, that we deemed it prudent to keep the supercargo out of sight during the whole of our stay.⁷

When the ship was moored, eight guard-boats were anchored round us, within pistol-shot, and no person allowed to land or hold any communication with the shore; the muskets were taken out of the arm-chests, and our gunpowder demanded; six or eight kegs were given up, with the assurance that it was all we had.

Seeing so many boats come off, a large assortment of articles of trade was brought on deck, but none of the people would make any purchase. They told us they had plenty of every thing we had to offer.

When the captain was asked what brought him to Japan, he replied, want of water and fresh provisions; and ordered several butts in the hold to be started and hoisted on deck empty. Next day a plentiful supply was sent off, in small boats, filled with water, and in tubs, which we were obliged to empty on deck, stopping the scuppers, and allowing it to run off at night. We were also abundantly supplied with fresh fish, hogs, and vegetables; the whole of which was furnished gratis.

On the third day of our stay, the Captain, finding nothing was to be gained by remaining, got under way. The arms and ammunition were immediately restored, and the ship was towed about five miles out of the bay, by nearly a hundred boats; on parting the crews cheered us, waving their hats and hands.

⁷ It appears from Dr Langsdorf’s Voyage, that the *amour propre* of the Russian ambassador, Von Resanoff, was so much mortified by his reception at Japan, that he despatched in October, 1806, an expedition against the most southern of the Kurile islands, where the Japanese have settlements. A second expedition was undertaken in May, 1807. — *Vide Langsdorf, Vol II. p. 298.*

The town of Nangasaki was concealed by an island; but from the view we had of the land, it seemed to be in a state of high cultivation, and very populous. The natives have the appearance and complexion of the Chinese, but are taller in stature.

Their boats, which were open, with small covered cabins abaft, were mounted with guns, about the size of our largest swivels. Instead of being rowed they were sculled; the oars on each side never being lifted out of the water. In each of them were two men, apparently officers, dressed in loose frocks or gowns, with long hanging sleeves. These were armed with matchlocks, and had a sabre hanging at each side.

After leaving Nangasaki, we navigated the strait which separates the principal island of Japan from others that lie to the north: in several places it is not above five miles broad. On each side the country is beautiful, abounding with cultivated fields, woods, villages, and single houses. Frequently, when near the coast, we observed the inhabitants come down to the shore, and make signals, as if to invite us to land; but, after the reception we had already experienced, the captain did not choose to have any further communication with the Japanese.⁸

At one time, in a thick fog, we were alarmed with the noise of breakers, apparently very near. Upon sounding, we found twenty fathoms, sandy bottom, and immediately let go the anchor. When the haze cleared away, we found ourselves close to a remarkable island or rock, about the size and the height of the craig of Ailsea, in the Frith of Clyde. An archway passed completely through it; and into this the sea rushed with that tremendous noise which had occasioned our late alarm.

In about a week we were clear of the strait, and proceeded on our voyage.

The 4th of July, being the anniversary of American Independence, was celebrated by a salute. One of the guns having missed fire, the captain took the powder-horn to prime it; in doing which some fire in the gun kindled the powder, and exploded the horn. By this accident his hand was dreadfully scorched and lacerated.

Upon the 6th we descried the two lofty mountains of St. Peter and St. Paul, in Kamschatka.

Owing to foggy weather, it was two days before we discovered the entrance of Awatska bay. We were within the heads on the 8th, and were met by a Russian boat, on board of which was Mr. Meznikoff, commissioner of the store, who piloted us into the harbour of Petrapaulouska, or St. Peter and St. Paul. The ship having been seen off the coast, intelligence had been given of our arrival by people stationed for the purpose at a light-house on the north side of the entrance.

Awatska bay is a spacious basin, 25 or 30 miles in circumference; any part of it would afford safe anchorage, but it has three very fine harbours. That of St. Peter and St. Paul, where we lay, is sheltered from every wind by a projecting woody point; but, owing to the great height of the mountains is subject to heavy squalls.

The entrance to the bay is not above a mile and a half wide, and may be known by several remarkable rocks on the starboard hand going in, somewhat like the needles at the Isle of Wight.

We remained at St. Peter and St. Paul thirty-three days, and discharged nearly one third of our cargo.

The town, although the principal sea-port of the Peninsula of Kamschatka, is nothing more than a miserable village, containing 300 or 400 inhabitants, of whom about two-thirds are Russians and the remainder natives. It is situated on an eminence above the harbour, and, with the exception of the governor's house, consists of huts of one story high, built of logs and covered with thatch. In a few of them the windows are glazed with talc, but more generally the intestine of the seal supplies the place of glass.

⁸ Those friendly invitations seem to be somewhat inconsistent with the inhospitable character of the Japanese. It is most likely, however, that the author is mistaken in the nature of the signals they made, which were more probably those of reproach than kindness, similar to those captain Saris was assailed with – “Core, core cocori ware,” – “you Coreans, with false hearts.” *Vide Quarterly Review, Vol. IV. p. 379.*

The huts of the natives lie below the town towards the shore. They are almost wholly under ground, nothing but the roof being seen, which is long and rounded at the top, resembling a vessel with the bottom upwards.

On a rising ground on the north side of the harbour, near the governor's house, stands an obelisk, erected to the memory of Captain Clerke, the coadjutor of Captain Cook, who died at sea, and was buried at this place. The monument is about sixteen or eighteen feet high, built of hewn stone, with a ship on the top; there were inscriptions on each side, which were much defaced by the weather; and owing to the rail which surrounded the place, we could not get near enough to ascertain in what language they were written.⁹

The natives are stout made, round-faced, with a yellowish complexion. The men are dressed in skin frocks; the women in a similar dress made of nankeen.

The country round is perfectly barren, and no cultivation of any kind is to be seen, except one or two gardens near the town.

They have a few horses and horned cattle; but these are so scarce, that the fresh beef we required was brought from Boltcheresk, a distance of seventy miles.

On the right hand entrance of the bay, and round by the foot of the mountain, the country is covered with wood, chiefly pines.

The town and its neighbourhood are infested with an immense number of the dogs used for sledges in winter. At this season, they are allowed to go at large and find food for themselves. They live almost entirely upon fish, which they obtain either by springing upon them as they lie in the water, or picking them up dead along the shore. In winter, they are fed upon dried fish, which are cured in large open sheds erected for that purpose on the shore, and which, it would appear, they prefer to any other food. Our sailors, by way of amusement, often purloined a few to give to the dogs; in consequence of which kindness, thousands of these hungry creatures watched the landing of our boat, and flocked after us, to the great annoyance of the inhabitants. – This practice became at last so troublesome, that the Russians insisted on our putting an end to it. Their howling every morning at day-break, was so intolerable, as to awaken us even on board the ship.

Boltcheresk, the capital of Kamschatka, is about seventy miles from St. Peter and St. Paul. The communication in the winter season is by sledges drawn by dogs over the snow; in summer the intercourse is carried on by the river Awatska, which being in some places extremely shallow, boats of a particular construction are made use of. They are formed of light frames of wood, covered with tarpaulin, and are so flat in the bottom that they do not draw above six inches water; they are extremely light, and can easily be carried over the rapids.

The two remarkable mountains, St. Peter and St. Paul, which give name to the place, lie about thirty miles to the north. One of them is a volcano; and when we could see the top, which was seldom free from clouds, it was constantly smoking, and at night sparks were frequently to be seen. An eruption took place some time before our arrival, by which the whole town was covered with ashes.

There were no vessels at this place during our stay, except the wreck of a ship which had sunk in the harbour; the sails having been loosed for the purpose of drying, a sudden squall laid her on her beam-ends, when she filled and went down.¹⁰ As the upper works were above the surface at low water, it appeared to us that she might have been raised without much difficulty; but it seems they did not mean to make the attempt, for her cordage and anchors were put on board our vessel.

Whilst we remained here we were abundantly supplied with the finest salmon, and fish of all descriptions.

⁹ The inscriptions will be found in Captain Krusenstern's Voyage. The Monument was erected by the officers of his ship, the *Nadeshda*, near the tree where Captain Clerke was buried. *Krusenstern, Vol II. p. 203.*

¹⁰ It appears from Captain Krusenstern's voyage, that this was the *Slawa Rossii*, the ship commanded by Captain Billing, and afterwards by Admiral Sarytsheff. *Krusenstern, Vol. II. page 29.*

Having delivered the part of our cargo which was to be left at this place, we sailed on the 8th of August for the settlements on the Aleutian Islands.

CHAPTER II

Departure from Kamschatka – Shipwrecked on a reef of rocks, on the northwest coast of America – Author, with the rest of the crew, save themselves by the long boat – Are drifted on an island – Transactions upon the island – Prepare to build a vessel.

We left Kamschatka on the 8th of August, and proceeded on our voyage to the northwest coast of America. Nothing material occurred till the 10th of September. On the morning of that day it blew hard from the south, and the ship was reduced to close reefed topsails; about three in the afternoon, the gale increased to such a degree that it became necessary to take in the fore and mizen topsails. Whilst the men were on the yards, they discovered land off the lee bow, distant about five or six leagues; we conjectured it to be that part of the continent called Aliaska; the ship's course was immediately altered from N. E. to E. and the weather proving more moderate in the evening, stood on, close hauled, but did not set more sail. About ten at night, the alarm was given that there were breakers ahead, and on the lee bow. Mr. Brinkman, the chief mate, who had the charge of the watch, immediately went to the mizen topmast head, and observing there was room to wear the ship, hastened below to report the circumstance to the captain. When he returned upon deck, he instantly went to the wheel and ordered us to our stations, with the intention of wearing; but the captain, who followed him, was of a different opinion; he said what we saw was only white water, and not breakers; that there was no danger, and ordered us to stand on our course. He had scarcely given this order before the ship plunged, and struck with such violence as to knock away the fore-foot, and the watch below were driven from their hammocks against the deck. The sea running very high, she beat so hard that in a few minutes the rudder was unshipped, and the stern-post forced up through the poop; as she still had way upon her, she shot over the reef into deep water: upon sounding we found seventeen fathoms. It was immediately determined to let go the anchor, and remain by the ship as long as she would swim. In case she went down, we hoped to save our lives by the long-boat, which was accordingly cleared and hoisted out, that she might be ready; seven of the guns were at the same time thrown overboard, in order to keep her above water until daylight. The carpenter attempted to sound the well, but owing to some obstacle, could not get down the sounding rod. I was sent below with him to bore a hole beside the pump thro' the lower deck; but on taking off the after hatch, we found the water as high as the shifting boards.

Early on the morning of the 11th, to our great joy, we saw land to the leeward of us, distant about three or four leagues. It was immediately determined to watch the lull, slip the cable, and cast the ship's head in shore, and steer her for it with the jib and fore-topsail. – After she was under way, the captain ordered that any of the crew that could not swim should go into the long-boat astern, and be ready as soon as she struck to come alongside for the rest, as he expected that she would then go to pieces. As soon as she struck, all hands came into the boat, and went for the shore, the captain taking his quadrant, until the tide should ebb, when he expected she would be nearly dry. We landed between eleven and twelve o'clock in the forenoon.

The land upon which we were thrown presented a most dreary appearance; it was an extensive plain, intersected by pools of fresh water, stretching about five miles from the sea, and terminated by two mountains. The ground was covered with heath and moss; not a tree nor a bush could be seen, neither did we observe the least trace of human habitations. As the land afforded us no sustenance, we turned our attention to the sea, and when the tide ebbed found some large muscles. – Having satisfied our hunger with some raw muscles, we prepared to go off to the ship; but on our way off we had the mortification to see her fall over on her beam ends. When we reached the ship we found that we could do nothing with her, and were preparing to leave her, when we discovered in the bottom of the long-boat the carpenter's axe; we then cut the parrel and gear of the main-topsail yard, and let it drive clear of the wreck, while we went to cut away the topmasts, and then left her for that day. On

our way ashore we found the main-topsail yard, and took it in tow, and landed again about six o'clock in the evening. The approach of night rendering some shelter necessary, we made a sort of tent with a sail, and lay down on the moss, cold and wet, and spent a most uncomfortable night.

Next morning, the 12th, we set off along shore in search of any thing that might have driven from the ship, and found, in a bay at no great distance from our tent, a barrel of rosin, the arm chest, with one or two small carbines, some swan-shot, and, what was of greater consequence to us, several calking irons and mallets; on finding these we went to the ship, but the sea was so high we could not come near her, and we returned to our tent.

On the 13th, 14th, and 15th, we were employed in repairing the boat, which had begun to get very leaky; having picked some oakum, we calked the seams as well as we could. Over the places where this was insufficient, we nailed pieces of boards, and calked round the edges. Although we could not pay the seams, having nothing to melt our rosin in, we succeeded in making her tolerably tight.

On the 16th several pieces of wreck and some sails were secured; this day was chiefly employed in preparations for going off to the wreck. We formed a grappling iron by lashing four bolts together, and bending them, and made a line out of the rigging that came ashore with the spars; this proved of great service in fishing up articles from the wreck. Every thing being ready, and the 17th proving fine, we set off at day-break, and taking the carpenter's axe with us, we cut a large hole in her side, just before the main channels. – With the grappling irons we hooked several sails, and a number of other articles, such as boxes of silks and nankeens, and made three different trips to the wreck this day.

On the 18th we were busy in making a larger tent with the sails we had got. We set up two small spars at each end, and laid a studding sail boom across the tops of them; over this we spread a topsail, hung smaller sails at the ends, and placed planks round the bottom, to prevent them from being blown up by the wind. With the soft moss of the island for beds, and planks to sit upon, we now found ourselves pretty comfortable in every respect but one: All our attempts to kindle a fire proved unavailing, and we were obliged to eat our victuals raw. Observing a flight of large birds, resembling ravens, carrying something in their talons, we watched where they alighted, and going to the spot, found several parcels of pork and beef which they had picked up, the barrels being staved by the rocks. In this manner we procured about a dozen of pieces. We again went off to the wreck in the afternoon, to see what we could get on shore, as it had every appearance of a gale of wind, and managed to get three of our chests out of the vessel before dark; and amongst them mine. It contained only one shirt and my bible, which I had put into one of those squares, common in sailor's chests, for holding case bottles, and in which it was firmly fixed, in consequence of having swelled with the water. I was at great pains in drying it in the sun, and succeeded so well that I could read any part of it. It was afterwards saved from a second wreck; and in my future hardships and sufferings, the perusal of it formed my greatest consolation. It is still in my possession, being the only article I brought with me when I returned to my native country.

We also secured this day, a barrel of fine biscuit; it was soaked with salt water, but was, nevertheless, a most acceptable addition to our store. In the night, between the 18th and 19th, it blew so hard from the south, that the ship went to pieces before morning. At day-break, we discovered on a small isle, separated from the land by a channel which was dry at low water, the fore part of the ship, which had driven high up on the beach. Had we been able to have moved it to a better situation, it would have made an excellent hut; but this was beyond our strength. It was broken up and gradually removed when we could afford time. Some more fragments of the wreck, consisting of knees and planks, came on shore this day. We also recovered a few packages of nankeens and chests of tea, which we spread on the moss to dry.

Our horizon to the south being interrupted by the reef, the captain and mate went out in the long-boat to determine the latitude by a meridian altitude of the sun. The result of the observations gave 54 deg. 52 min. north, as the latitude of the south side of the island.¹¹

We made a number of trips to the wreck in the course of the ten following days, and saved a considerable part of the cargo, consisting of chests of tea, packages of nankeens, and bags of rice. The last time we went off to the wreck, before the arrival of the Indians, the wind was off shore, and began to blow so fresh that we were obliged to desist from our labours. After having secured a few more sails, some coils of cordage, and two bales of silks, having only two oars and a heavy boat to row, we reached the shore before dark, after a most fatiguing pull. By this time so much of the wreck was recovered that we determined to build a vessel large enough to carry us to the Sandwich Islands, where we were certain of meeting with an American ship. Our principal attention was now turned to that object, and we began our preparations by collecting into one place planks and other pieces of wood suitable for the purpose.

¹¹ This observation, made without the assistance of an ephemeris, or tables of declination, can only be considered as an approximation. It however proves that Sannack and Halibut island is the same, the latitude of that island, as ascertained by captain Cook, being 54 deg. 27 min. As the observation was made about the time of the equinox, the correction for declination might be estimated within a few minutes.

CHAPTER III

Arrival of a party of Natives, and of the Russian Commandant of Oonalaska, who determines to send to Kodiak for assistance – Long-boat prepared for the voyage – Some account of Sannack or Halibut Island.

Our necessary occupations, and the unpromising appearance of the country, had hitherto prevented us from leaving the neighbourhood of our hut; but we had seen nothing that led us to imagine that the island was inhabited. We were, however, visited on the 28th, by a party of natives, who had traced the fragments of wreck along shore.

About mid-day we saw them approach in three small skin canoes, with one Indian in each. One of them, who had a gold medal about his neck, came forward, and addressed us in the Russian language. The captain, who had made a former voyage to these settlements, and understood a few words of the language, contrived to make our situation known to him. He immediately despatched one of his companions to a village on the northern part of the island for assistance, and the other to Oonalaska to give information to the commandant of the Russian settlements on that island.

The chief himself remained, and most willingly gave us a share of his provisions, which consisted of a bladder of train oil, and a basket of berries, about the size of bilberries, preserved in oil. These, to people in any other situation, would scarcely have been deemed an acquisition. Even we, who had lived so long on raw muscles, found some difficulty in reconciling ourselves to train oil; but we thought the berries, which had been cured with seal oil, no small luxury. This friendly Indian, who had hooks and lines, went out in his canoe, and in a short time returned with a few small fish. He then kindled a fire in the following manner: he laid a piece of soft wood upon the ground, and took another within his teeth; between these he put an upright piece of a harder quality, which he twirled rapidly around with a thong of hide, as we would a drill; the friction soon kindled the soft wood, and by placing it in dried grass, and blowing it, it burst into a flame.

We lost no time in broiling the fish, and enjoyed the first comfortable meal we had since the shipwreck.

Next day about forty Indians, men and women, came and encamped beside us; they made huts for themselves, by setting up planks, leaning against each other at the top, and throwing earth upon them, over which they put a covering of grass.

They brought a supply of provisions, consisting of berries, oil, blubber, and dried salmon, and gave us a share of all they had with the utmost liberality.

By the assistance of the Indians, who towed our boat with their canoes, we made two more trips to the wreck, and were successful in saving a considerable quantity of the cargo, as well as several articles of greater use to us for our intended vessel; such as bolts of canvass, cordage, and other naval stores, being part of the rigging of the ship that was stranded in the harbor of St. Peter and St. Paul. In saving these articles, the grappling-irons proved of the greatest service; for though the wreck lay in about three fathoms, the water was so clear, when the wind was southerly, that we could distinctly see what lay at the bottom. A considerable part of the ship still held together.

In about a week after this, Mr. Bander, the Russian commandant of Oonalaska, arrived in a large skin canoe or baidare, with twenty or thirty Indians, who also hutted themselves beside us. The presence of so many visitors formed a singular contrast to the solitude in which we had hitherto lived. Our tent was now in the centre of a busy and populous village.

Some of our new visitors erected huts, whilst others contented themselves with sleeping under their baidare, which they placed bottom up, and raised by supports from the ground on the lee side.

We were now in no want of provisions. – In addition to what the Indians brought with them, they procured us a plentiful supply of fish and fowl, particularly geese, in which the island abounded; these they shot with their rifles, in the use of which they are very expert.

These rifles are no wider in the bore than our own; but the metal is extremely thick, particularly at the muzzle. They load them almost full of powder, over which they force a piece of lead, three or four inches long, with a mallet; this comes out like an arrow. The piece is rested upon two supports, which fold out, and are stuck in the ground. I have seen them fire at the geese, which usually sat in rows, and kill several at one shot.

Mr. Bander took possession of the ship's cargo. Under his directions we went off to her several times, in company with the Indians, and brought away a considerable quantity of the nankeens and cloth; but were not successful in getting provisions, for we secured nothing except a few casks of damaged bread, and half a puncheon of rum.

Our chief attention was now turned towards our vessel, and we had a reasonable prospect of completing her by the aid of our visitors.

From Oonalaska we procured twelve Indians who could use the axe, and Mr. Bander promised us the assistance of Russian carpenters from Kodiak. To obtain which, as well as to report the loss of the ship to the governor of the Russian settlements, the long-boat was fitted out for a voyage to Kodiak. – About the 6th of November the necessary repairs were begun.

The seams were payed with a composition of the rosin that had been saved from the wreck, and train oil, boiled to a consistence in the kettles of the Indians. A kind of spar deck was formed, by laying the boards of the hat boxes over the thwarts; and upon these we nailed a tarpaulin: a hatch way was left at the stern, by which we got below, and in which the man at the helm could stand. We laid a small platform on the bottom, and covered it with skins; this formed a birth into which we could creep, but it was too low to allow us to sit upright. Out of the ship's spanker I made a suit of sails. She was rigged a sloop, and provided with a cable and grapnel. She was small enough for a voyage of 500 miles at such a season, being only twenty-two feet long, and measuring about six ton. She, however, proved an excellent sea-boat.

Every thing being completed by the 17th, we laid in our stores, consisting of dried salmon, berries, and oil, with a cask of water, and sailed on the following morning. The crew consisted of Mr. Bartram, second mate, myself, and seven more of the crew, one Indian, who acted as pilot.

The island on which we had now remained two months, is called by the natives Sannack; by Captain Cook it is named Halibut Island. It is situated in latitude 54. 27. north, longitude 197. east, and lies 10 or 12 leagues to the south of the promontory of Aliaski, and about 60 east of Oonalaska. It is quite flat, with the exception of two mountains, is eight or ten miles long, and about six broad. The main land could be distinctly seen; and the remarkable volcano mentioned by Captain Cook, bore N. N. W. from our tent. It was constantly smoking during the day, and at night we could frequently see the flames.

The land produces nothing eatable but berries. To the south lies the dangerous reef upon which we were wrecked; it is of great extent, for when at the ship we observed breakers a considerable distance to the southward.

There is a village of 12 or 15 Indian families at the northern extremity of the island. – These people are under the government of the Russians, for whom they provide furs for the American company. They are a quite inoffensive race, converts to the Greek Church, and if not very devout, are at least extremely attentive to the ceremonial part of crossing themselves.

Their appearance and manners will be afterwards more particularly described. As the whole of their sustenance, clothing, and, indeed, every article they make use of, except a few berries, are the produce of the sea, they are extremely expert in managing their canoes, and most ingenious in their modes of catching fish and other sea animals. They are excellent marksmen with the rifle and spear; to the latter they fix a bladder, which prevents the wounded animal from taking it under water, and dart it with great force and certainty by means of a throwing stick.

Like all other savages I have seen, they are immoderately fond of spirits and tobacco.

CHAPTER IV

Sail from Sannack in the long-boat – Touch at the Island of Ungar – Distressing state of the settlement there – Sail from thence – Anchor at the village of Schutkum – Departure from it – Boat nearly embayed on the north coast of Kodiak – Arrived at Alexandria – Transactions there – Boat fitted out to return to Sannack.

We sailed from Sannack, in the long-boat, on the morning of the 18th of November; but had scarcely been an hour at sea, before we discovered a leak in the counter, which forced us to put back.

Having repaired the damage, we again set sail next morning, with a fair southerly wind. Our little vessel made better weather than could have been expected, and so long as it continued moderate, she scudded before the sea perfectly dry; we boomed out the foresail on the weather side, and the wind being fair, proceeded on our voyage at a great rate. – About noon it freshened into a smart gale, and the sea rose considerably, frequently curling over the stern in an alarming manner. Our open cock-pit rendered this extremely dangerous, till we adopted an expedient of which I fortunately recollected having read in the voyages of some Dutch navigators, who used oil to smooth the sea. Upon trying the experiment, it proved an effectual remedy. We lashed a keg of oil upon the taffrail, allowing a small stream to run from it, which spread a scum over the surface in our wake, and completely prevented the waves from topping.

The coast of Aliaski which we passed this day, is very mountainous, and deeply indented with arms of the sea. Many small islands lie near the shore, which are covered with brushwood. Sometimes a temporary hut erected by the hunters is to be seen, but there were no other symptoms of inhabitants. Extensive reefs of rocks lie a considerable distance off the land; our pilot, who was well acquainted with the navigation, took us within them; but strangers should be very cautious in approaching this part of the coast.

About ten at night we were close in with an island of considerable height, and attempted to pass to leeward, but were prevented by breakers, which obliged us to tack and pass on the outside. A round lofty rock lies a quarter of a mile to the southwest; the channel within seemed also full of rocks, and we were obliged to make another tack before we could weather it. Our situation for about two hours after this, was very alarming; we passed many sunk rocks, and were repeatedly obliged to tack in order to avoid them.

At day-break we found ourselves near a barren island, four or five miles in length, lying to the south of a larger one called Ungar. We passed through the sound between them, and, coasting along the southern shore of Ungar, arrived about ten A. M. at a village, situated on the eastern part of the island, after a run of 160 miles.

We found the settlement here in the most distressing situation. The whole of the male inhabitants, except the Russian overseer and his son, and the Indian interpreter, having gone out to catch seals, about three weeks before this time, a severe gale of wind came on, which their slight canoes were unable to resist, and every one of them perished. This dreadful calamity did not prevent the survivors from receiving us with the kindest hospitality. We were lodged in the hot bath, which was effectually warmed by the steam of water thrown upon red-hot stones.

Ungar is nearly twenty miles in length; in the interior the country rises into lofty mountains; near the sea it is more level, and is covered with brushwood, but produces no vegetable food, except berries, and a root from which the Russians make the liquor called quass. We remained eight days at this place, during which we went out several times to shoot deer, with which the island abounds, accompanied by the son of the overseer and the interpreter; we had tolerable sport, and the venison made a most acceptable addition to our store.

The natives seem, in all respects, the same as those at Sannack. The settlement consisted of one Russian and about thirty Indian families. The houses of the latter were built of mud, in the form of

a bee-hive, with a hole at the top instead of a door; they had no fire-places, but warmed themselves by means of lamps made out of flat hollow stones, with rush wicks, which when cold, they placed under their frocks. One cooking place served for the whole village.

This island is separated from the main land, by a strait nearly ten miles wide at high water, but so extremely shallow that it is said to dry at low ebbs, when deer frequently pass over from the continent.

The village is situated on the north side of a small, well sheltered harbour, the entrance to which is between two rocky heads, not above a cable's length asunder. Within it is a quarter of a mile broad, and divides, a short way above the village, into two branches, one of which extends a considerable distance to the west. There are three or four high pointed rocks a little to the south of the entrance, but there is deep water all round.

We sailed on the morning of the 28th, with the wind at N. W. and steered between the main land and a small isle to the east of Ungar. Before we reached the open sea, the wind headed us, and blew with such violence as to force us back to the harbour we left in the morning. Gales from the N. E. with heavy falls of snow, prevented us from sailing for the eight following days. I employed myself in making a squaresail out of a bolt of canvass we had for the purpose.

Having laid in a store of deer's flesh, dried and boiled, the only provisions the place afforded, we again sailed on the morning of the 6th of December; the wind strong from the west, with squalls, accompanied with snow showers. The excessive cold made us feel severely the want of a camboose, or fire place in the boat.

We continued to coast along the main land, within half a mile of the shore. Nothing could exceed the barren aspect of the country, which consisted of a range of steep and rugged hills, destitute of wood, or almost any appearance of vegetation. Many reefs lie a considerable way off the land.

On the 7th we passed an island called St. Ivan, the weather still very cold, with snow.

In the afternoon, the wind veered to the N. E. and blew with such violence that we were driven out to sea; had the gale continued, our situation would have been highly critical; for our water was nearly expended, and we were unprovided with a compass to direct our course; fortunately, however, it abated towards morning, when we tacked and stood to the shore. About noon we were close in with the land, and being anxious to kindle a fire, anchored in a bay, where the brushwood grew down to the water's edge. One of the Indians landed to cut firewood, but, he was scarcely upon shore when three bears made their appearance, and forced him to swim back to the boat. We were reluctantly obliged to desist; and having weighed anchor, we went ten miles further, to a village called Schutcum.

A number of sunk rocks lie about half a mile to the south of this place, with an intricate and narrow channel, through which we were piloted by the overseer, who came out to meet us in a bidarka.

After remaining here three days, we sailed again on the 13th, having met with the same hospitable treatment we had uniformly experienced from these islanders. They liberally supplied us with berries and oil, bear's flesh, and dried salmon. Soon after leaving Schutcum, we doubled a bluff head, and opened up a strait¹² that separates Kodiak from the main land; a short way beyond it passed a narrow entrance leading into a spacious bay or inlet; the pilot told us that it stretched twenty or thirty versts¹³ into the country, and afforded an excellent shelter for ships. We then stood over to Kodiak, which we reached in the evening; the wind W. S. W. with fine weather; we run along shore during the night. Next day, about two o'clock, we passed near a rock, on which several outches, or sea-lions, were sitting; some of them swam towards us, uttering loud yells; but as the boat was going at a great rate through the water, we soon lost sight of them.

¹² Captain Mears, in the Snow Nootka, navigated this strait in 1786; he named it Petrie's Strait. In the chart affixed to Coxe's Russian Discoveries, and by Dr. Langsdorf, it is named the Strait of Chelekoff.

¹³ A verst is about two thirds of a mile.

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