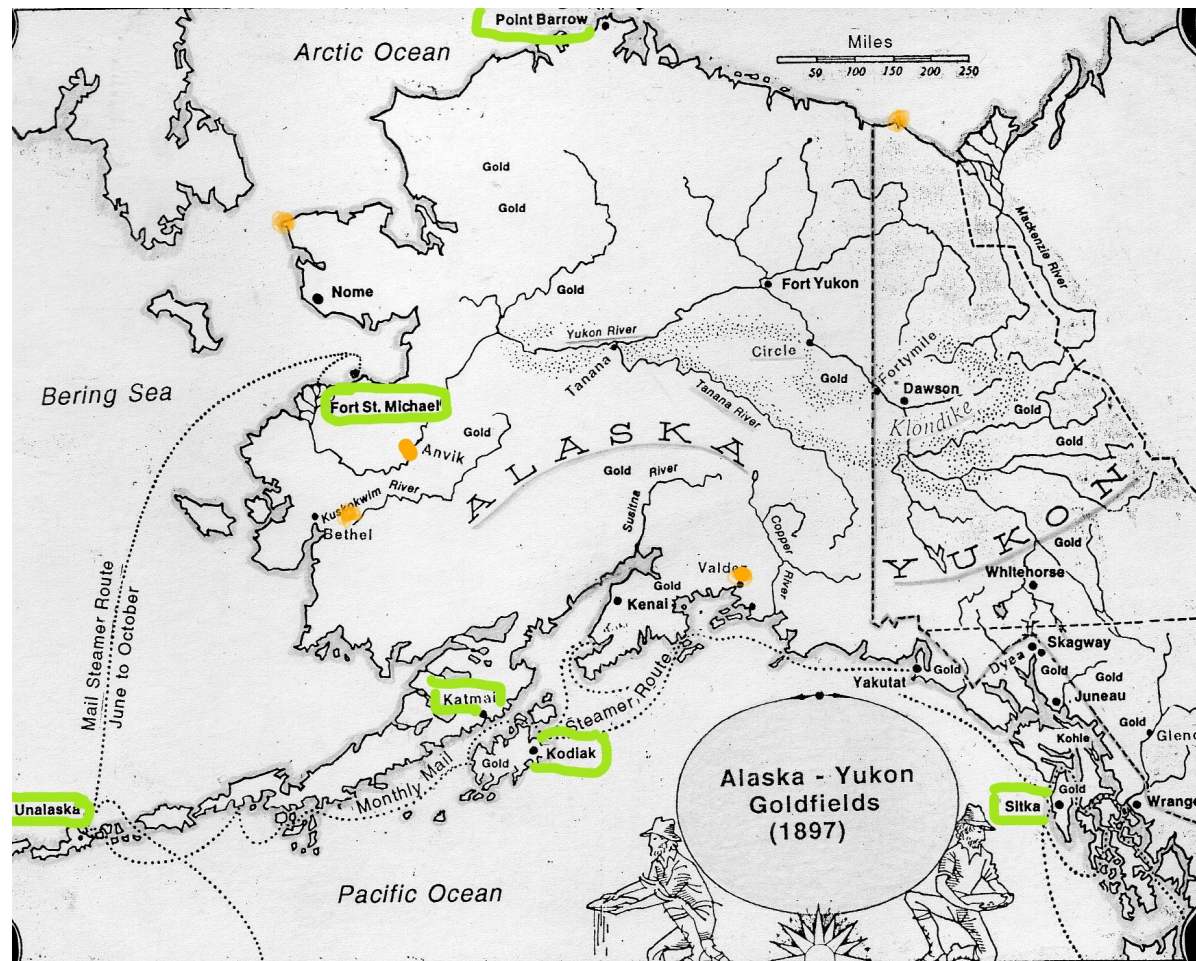


Alaska Postgeschichte – Ship Letters

Die „*Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America*“ vom 3. März 1891 behandeln in Kapitel 28 ausführlich „Ship and Steamboat Letters“

Da es in Alaska viele Gebiete gab, wo es kein organisierter Postdienst vorhanden war, wurde die Post oft Kapitänen mitgegeben, die diese im nächsten Hafen mit Postamt aufgeben mussten. Dafür erhielt der Kapitän eine Auszahlung von 2c pro Brief, die dem Empfänger des Briefes in Rechnung gestellt wurde. Die Postämter in den größeren Häfen hatten deshalb Zeilenstempel „SHIP LETTER“ und stempelten dazu einen Betrag – „Due 2c“ bei frankierten Briefen oder „Due 4c“ bei unfrankierten Briefen. Die Stempelfarbe war rot und das Empfangspostamt quittierte den eingezogenen Betrag mit „Postage Due“ Marken, soweit verfügbar.

Übersichtskarte Alaska
mit Postrouten 1897
und Herkunftsorte der
gezeigten Briefe



Post vor dem Klondike Goldrausch (1897/8)



[Anvik] via St. Michael Alaska, Juni 1888

Der früheste bekannte Brief von Missionar Chapman in Anvik am unteren Yukon, von St. Michael mit Dampfer *Dora* der Alaska Commercial Co. über Ounalaska und Esquimault nach San Francisco befördert (Bericht zum ersten Gold von Fortymile in *Sacramento Daiuly Union* am 31. Juli 1888)

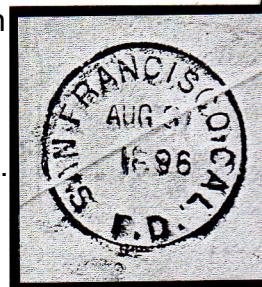


The Alaska Commercial Company's steamer *Dora*, which arrived from Esquimault last Saturday, brought down \$60,000 in gold-dust and amalgam. This unusual shipment represents in part the result of the work of the miners on the **Yukon** river during the past season.

Sec. 814. No Fee on Foreign-Addressed Letters.—If such letter is addressed to any point in a foreign country no fee will be allowed thereon by the postmaster to the carrier. Such letters, however, should all be marked "SHIP."

Karluk August 1896

unfrankierter „Ship letter“ nach D., vermutlich Missionarspost vom unteren Kuskokwim, in Karluk zur Post gegeben u. unfrankiert mit Dampfer *Llewellyn J. Morse* der Alaska Packers Assn. nach San Francisco gebracht. Dort scheinbar versehentlich nicht mit Nachportoverkehr versehen u. auch in Braunschweig ohne Nachporto ausgeliefert



Post vor dem Klondike Goldrausch (1897/98)

Die Ellen Loop Korrespondenz vom Cape of Prince of Wales

Ellen Loop, geb. Kittredge wurde als Lehrerin 1892 von der Presbyterianischen Mission zu den Inupiaq Inuit am Cape Prince of Wales geschickt. Ihr Mann Tom Lopp wurde Leiter der Rentier Station in Teller wo eine Herde aufgebaut werden sollte, um die Abhängigkeit der Inuit vom Walfang abzuhefen. Sie war bis 1902 dort und die Korrespondenz mit der Familie ist erhalten geblieben.

Der 1. Versuch mit Rentieren von der Station Teller weite Strecken zurückzulegen fand im Januar 1897 statt - dabei wurde ein schwedischer Missionar mitgenommen, der nach Süden wollte um in Urlaub zu gehen.

Von Bethel reiste dann mit 2 Einheimischen mit dem Hundeschlitten bis zur Mission Carmel, von wo ihn der dortige Missionar Schoechert bis Katmai begleitete, wo regelmäßig Dampfer hielten. Der Dampfer *St. Paul* brachte ihn bis Kodiak, wo er Anschluß an den Postdampfer *Dora* nach Sitka hatte.

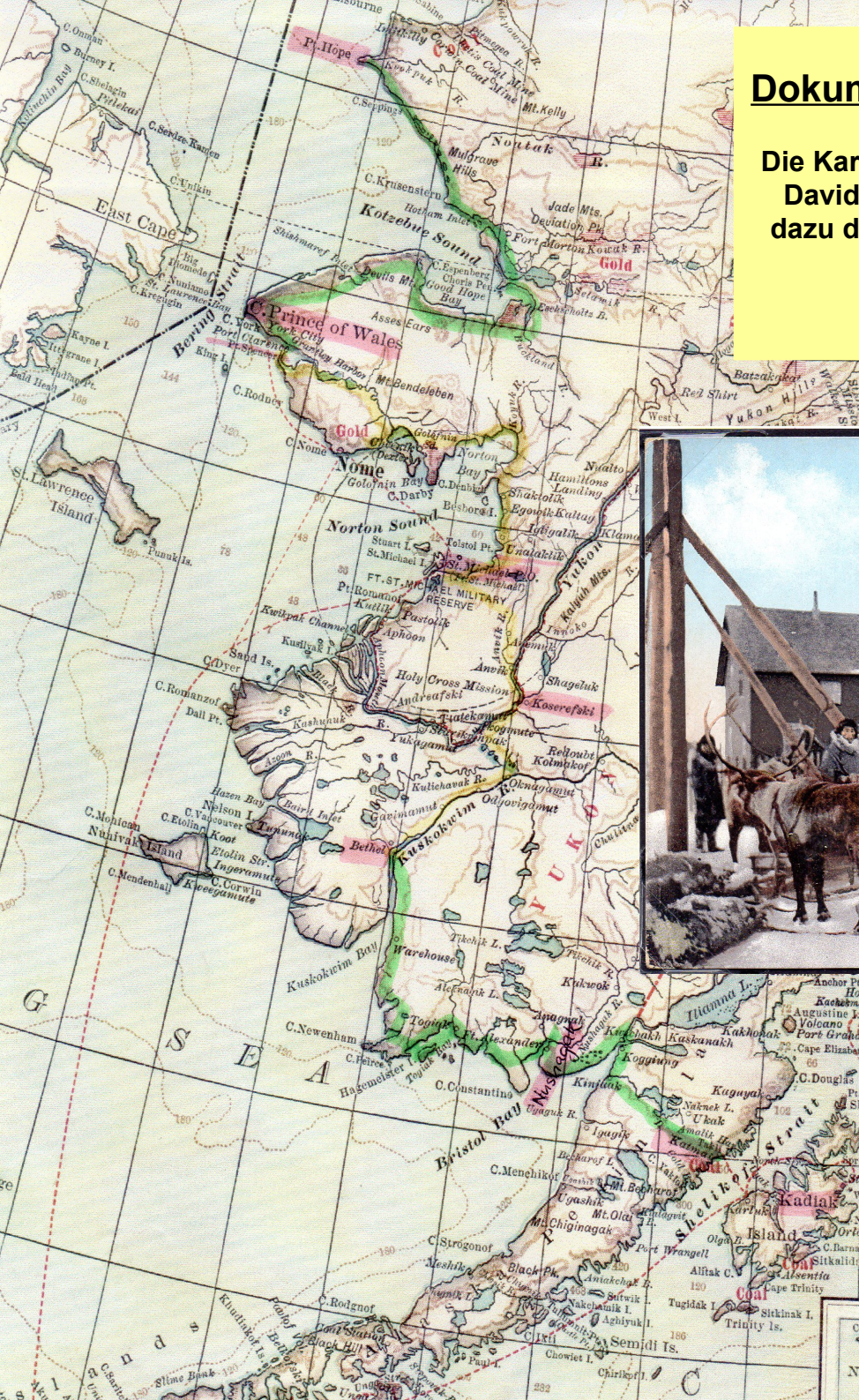
Overland Mail

Due 4 C



1897 - Winter Überlandpost von Ellen Kittredge-Loop aus Cape Prince of Wales mit Vermerk links „Overland Mail“

Der Brief wurde in Kodiak dem regulären Postdienst übergeben, von dort auf dem Dampfer bis Sitka befördert, wo er als „Ship Letter“ mit 4c Nachporto behandelt wurde



Dokumentation dieser Postbeförderung

Die Karte zeigt die Überland-Route des Missionars David Johnson mittels Hundeschlitten in grün, dazu die Route der Rentier-Expedition von Teller bis Bethel in gelb.



Ansichtskarte der Herrnhuter Mission zeigt die Ankunft eines Rentiergespanns bei der Mission in Bethel

Bericht von der Reise des schwedischen Missionars von Pt. Hope bis Sitka
(San Francisco Call May 26, 1897) ➔

Two Thousand Mile Trip Made by a Swedish Missionary in the Far North.

SEATTLE, WASH., May 25.—David Johnson, a Swedish missionary, who has been isolated for six years in Western Alaska, arrived at Juneau recently from a trip of 2000 miles of mountain riding behind a pair of reindeer. He brought the mails from Point Hope on the Arctic Ocean and the Port Clarence reindeer stations, as well as the news from the mission of the Far North. In narrating his adventures Johnson said:

"On New Year's day I left with the first reindeer mail for Unalaklik and Bethel, a Moravian mission station on the Kuskowim. We had two teams of reindeer each. One of these teams was owned by the native boy accompanying me. Most of the time we drove the reindeer double and they did good work. We reached Unalaklik on January 8. Then we pushed on toward the Kuskowim and joined Mr. Kjellman, superintendent of the Teller reindeer station, who with two Laplanders and a small herd of reindeer was on a reconnoitering trip, looking for good feeding grounds for the deer. We made St. Michaels in one day. There we were snow-bound for eight days. Having no guide we took our course by the compass, with the aid of such maps as we had, and eight days later reached the Russian mission at Belkofsky. Our route lay over mountains and across several rivers, but everywhere there was an abundance of the best kind of moss for feeding the reindeer.

"After leaving Belkofsky we went to Bethel, which mission is in charge of J. H. Kilbuck. Two of the Bethel mission offered to go with me to Fushamak. On reaching Carmel, a Moravian mission station, we found Mr. Schoechert all ready to set out for Katmai, so sending the boys back the next morning, I set out with him. We called at all the canneries, gathering up the mail.

"Our experience in crossing the mountains was a bitter one. When on top a storm came shrieking down upon us from the northeast. To retreat was as impossible as to go forward. The only thing we could do was to dig a hole in the snow and put up our tent as best we could and crouch down in it, waiting for the storm to pass. Neglecting to take the dogs in, they were found next morning very stiff, while one was frozen to death. We then took the dogs inside the tent and sat on them to thaw them out. The sixty-seven hours that seven men of us and ten dogs were huddled in there, shivering and hungry, was an experience not soon to be forgotten.

"When the weather cleared we hurried down to Katmai, where we arrived on March 30. This finished my overland journey. During the winter I had traveled about 2000 miles, half with deer and half with dogs. On April 19 the steamer St. Paul crossed Shelikoff Straits, from Katmai to Kodiak, where I took the steamer Dora for Sitka."

Post während dem Klondike Goldrausch (1897-99)



Oktober 1897

Post vom Cape of Prince of Wales, die in Saint Michael den Dampfer *Humboldt* erreichte, der Goldsucher zur Mündung des Yukon gebracht hatte. Unfrankiert aufgegeben und auf dem Dampfer mit Zeilenstempel und Nachportostempel in grün versehen. Beim Stop In Ounalaska am 16.10. aufs Postamt gebracht, dort gestempelt, Ship Letter fee ausgezahlt und dem Kapitän zur Weiterbeförderung wieder übergeben. Ankunft Seattle am 23 Okt. 1897, am 24.Okt.

9 Uhr der Post übergeben.

(*San Francisco Call* Nov. 5, 1898)

Durch den Klondike Goldrausch gab es ab Sommer 1897 starken Schiffsverkehr bis St. Michael, von wo die Flussdampfer den Yukon River hinauffahren zum Klondike.

RETURNING KLONDIKERS.

SAY THERE WILL BE MUCH
PRIVATION AT DAWSON.

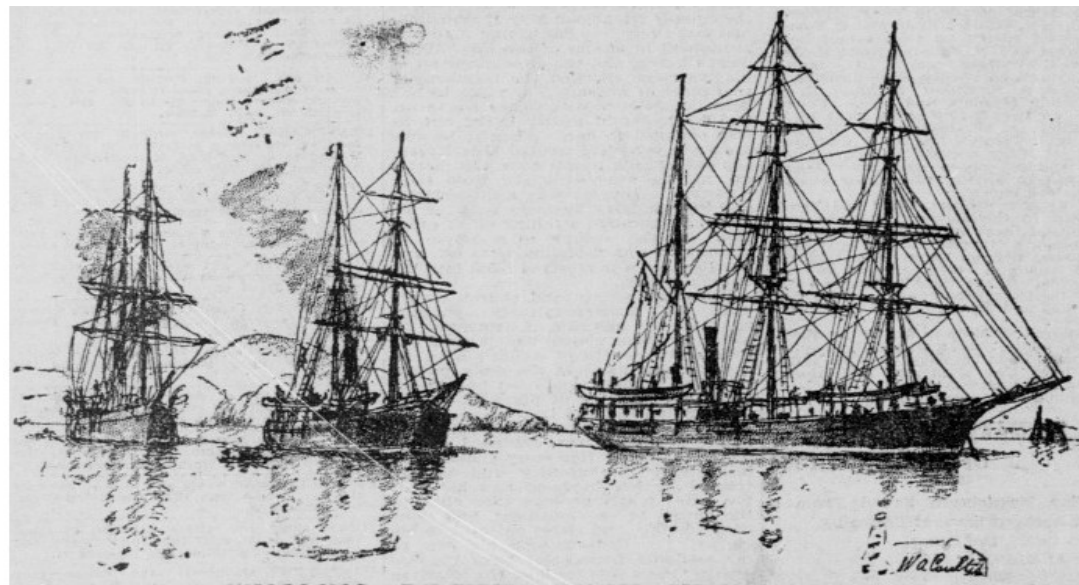
At Least One Thousand People
Will Have to Flee From Im-
pending Starvation.

SEATTLE, Oct. 23.—The steamer *Humboldt* arrived to-night at 10 o'clock with five men from Dawson City, leaving there September 30th, and three men from Munaok and other points on the Yukon. They say no gold will come out this fall, as this steamer has taken the last of those who have come down the Yukon. The river is already frozen hard, and the river boats laid up for the winter. The *Humboldt* left St. Michaels October 9th.

Alaska Postgeschichte – Ship Letters



Post vom Cape of Prince of Wales, die am
5. Nov 1898 mit der Walfangflotte in
San Francisco ankam
(San Francisco Call Nov. 5, 1898)

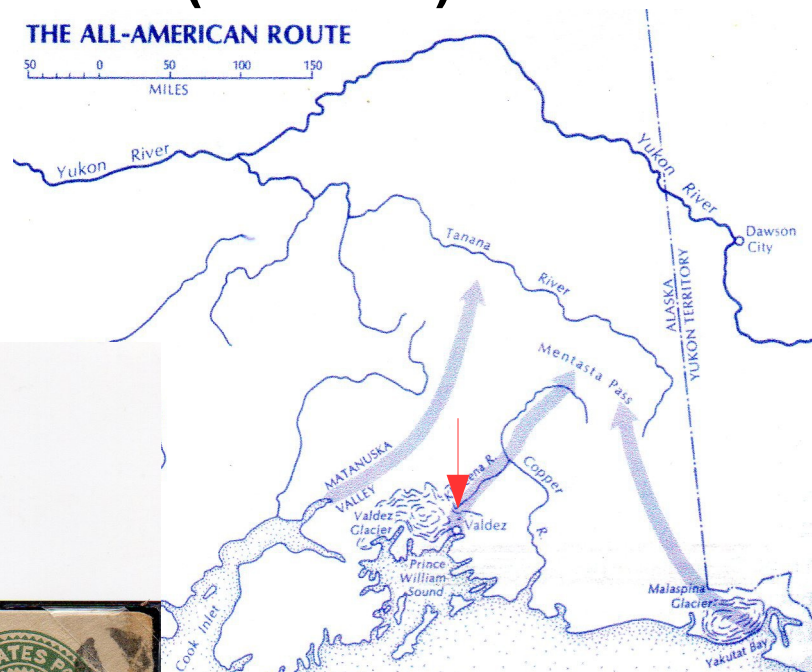


WHALING BETTER THAN KLONDIKING.

The steam whalers Narwhal, Grampus and Karluk got in from the Arctic yesterday. All three vessels did wonderfully well. In connection with what other vessels of the fleet have sent down their catch is worth fully a million dollars, while other whalers yet to be heard from will bring in half a million more.

Post vor dem Klondike Goldrausch (1897/98)

Brief eines Stampeders aus Bethel, Conn. der zum Klondike über die Copper River Route wollte.

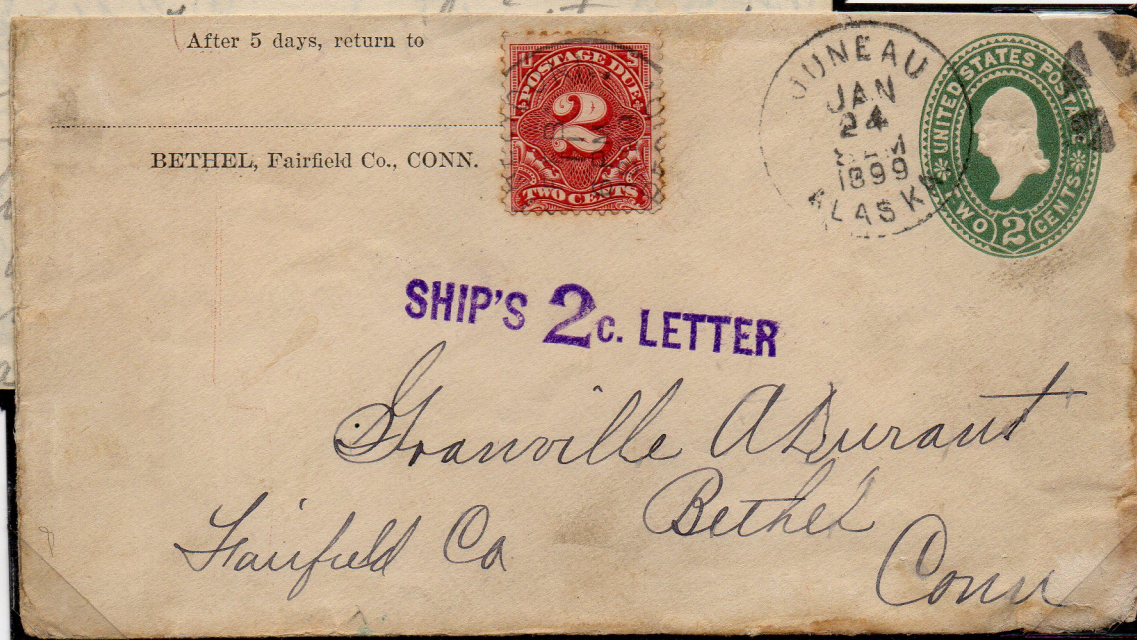


SAVED FROM DEATH ON VALDEZ GLACIER

Oakland Prospector Found After He
Had Laid Down in the Snow
to Die.
BY HAL HOFFMAN.

JUNEAU, Alaska, Jan. 24.—Thirty more disappointed Copper River gold seekers, with as many hard-luck stories, arrived here to-night on the steamer Wolcott, which just completed a midwinter trip to Valdez and the westward. Men are coming over the glacier as fast as they can get out. D. R. Marshall of Mexico, Mo., was the last man over the glacier. He said it was 46 below zero and blowing a gale. The Young Men's Christian Association lodge, a small building on the glacier, has afforded shelter to many and saved a number of lives.

J. R. Barnes of Matawan, New Jersey, saved the life of H. L. Wilson of Oakland, Cal., who was formerly employed by Newman & Levinson of San Francisco. Wilson lost everything in the river, and had been eight days without food when found by Barnes and his partner. Wilson fired his revolver to attract their attention. He was so weak he could not climb a three-foot bank, and had lain down to die. He is all right now and on the way home. He has had enough of Copper River.



Brief vom 13. Nov. 1898 aus dem Landesinneren.

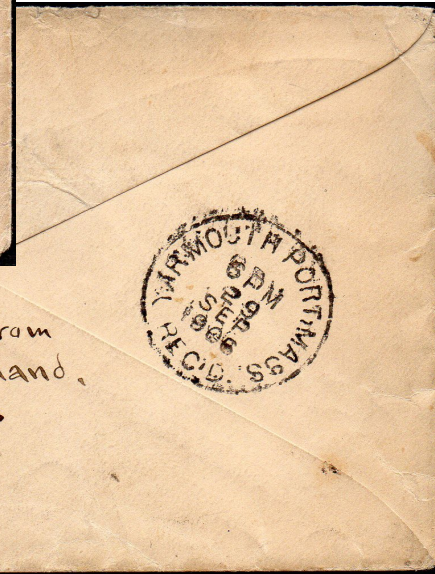
Mitte Januar von einem Dampfer *Walcott* von Valdez nach Juneau gebracht, wo der Kapitän die 2c Ship Letter-Gebühr kassierte. Vorgestempelte Nachportomarke am Ankunftsort angebracht.

Bislang nur 1 Postabgang aus Valdez vor Öffnung des Postamts am 13.5.1899 bekannt.

(Bericht im SF Call 31.1.1899)

Alaska Postgeschichte – Ship Letters

Post von einem Walfänger von der Insel Herschel
(Yukon Territory) 1906



Brief vom 16. Aug. 1906 von
Hershell Island.
Mitte September vom Dampfer
Harold Dollar von Point
Barrow nach Seattle gebracht
u. am 24.9. als Ship letter mit 4c
Nachporto belegt, die am 29.9.
In Yarmouth Port kassiert wurden.
(Bericht im SF Call 22.9.1906)

Quellen: The Library of Congress > Chronicling America
California Digital Newspaper Collection
<http://www.uspostalbulletins.com>

ICE FAST CLOSING. ABOUT WHALERS.

SEATTLE, Sept. 21.—The steamship Harold Dollar, Captain Thwing, which carried supplies to the whaling fleet in the Arctic, reached port last night. Thirty-one men of the wrecked whaler Alexander and fifteen sick men from the other ships of the fleet were brought down on the vessel. She also brought whalebone valued at \$350,000, which had been loaded on her from the different ships.

The Dollar met the fleet at Point Barrow and delivered the stores and foodstuffs and coal. The entire fleet, with the exception of the whaler Jeanette, is to return this season, unless they are caught in the ice, which was reported to be fast closing in when the Dollar left.

Twelve of the whalers are still in the north. They are the Narwhal, Beluga, Jeanette, Alexander (wrecked), Bayliss, Karluk, Thraube, Thurman, Monterey, Belvedere, Bowhead and Olga. The whalers state that the catch of the entire fleet amounts to fifty-two whales.

The men who return on the Dollar tell stories of terrible suffering on the different ships, one of the principal causes being the lack of food on the different vessels. They also state that charges have been preferred against a number of the whaling captains, among whom are Captain Bodfish, master of the Bayliss; Captain Newth, master of the Jeanette, and Captain Elton, former master of the Alexander and present master of the Jeanette in the absence of Captain Newth, who, with Captain Bodfish, is under arrest.

The men also confirm the stories of stealing of native girls from their homes for immoral purposes and say that full depositions regarding these charges were taken before they left. Charges of brutality and of insufficient feeding are made against Captain Thurston and also Captain John Cook, master of the Beluga.

The Dollar encountered the fleet at Point Barrow. Her officers say that the crew of the wrecked whaler Alexander were living ashore in the whaling station at which they had arrived only a few days before. The fifteen sick men had also been put ashore. Some of the men are scarcely able to walk and are suffering from various diseases, consumption being the most prevalent.

As soon as the fleet had received their supplies and discharged part of their whalebone into the hold of the Dollar they started for the westward whales. The fleet left Herschel Island as soon as the ice broke last summer.