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Who Really is the Discoverer of North Pole

At a session of the U.S. Congress, H.T. Helgesen, a member from North Dakota, introduced a resolution which is still pending, providing for the repeal of the bill which advanced Robert E. Peary to the rank of rear-admiral. The act which Congressman Helgesen seeks to have repealed, and which not only made Peary a rear-admiral, but also provided that he should receive the highest retired pay of that grade, was passed in recognition of Peary's polar discoveries.

Congressman Helgesen claims that Peary was not the first man to reach the Pole, and hence should not receive any honors based on Peary's claim to that effect. And the same thing applies to Dr. Cook's claim to have reached the Pole. The Congressman claims that the Pole was discovered nearly three centuries ago, and offers documentary evidence that not only one ship, but two, within a space of sixteen years or so, reached that uttermost northerly spot to which so many adventurous and ambitious spirits have aspired.

To those who might inquire why Congressman Helgesen should take such an active interest in this controversy it can be explained that he was born and brought up in the same town with, and was a very intimate friend of Stefansson, the Arctic explorer, and has always followed the polar activities of all the explorers. When the polar controversy arose between Peary and Cook his interest in Arctic discoveries led him to search diligently and painstakingly into the records of the past, and his research work has resulted in his conviction, supported by documentary evidence, that neither Peary nor Cook has any right to claim any distinction, honor or emolument, even admitting that they both reached the Pole.

In the following article prepared by the congressman, he sets forth at length his views and the evidence supporting them.

Perhaps no one subject—aside from the war—has occupied more space in newspapers and magazines, of late years than the discovery of the North Pole. And yet, throughout these years of discussion, since 1909, no one has apparently known or remembered that the North Pole was actually reached or "discovered" about 260 years ago.

There is a vast amount of material written on polar expeditions by well-known and authentic authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Research among old books and manuscripts in the congressional library at London, and also to be found in the reports of the Royal Geographic Society of London, and in Scandinavian literature.

The account of the first attainment of 90 degrees north was given by an Englishman. This report was made by Joseph Moxon, "Hydrographer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty," and is printed in a rare little book entitled, "A Brief Discourse of a Passage by the North Pole to Japan, China, etc.," published in London, 1674.

This little book contains a passage which cannot fail to interest modern explorers, for it states that some twenty-two years earlier, or about 1652, the author was in Amsterdam, and, feeling a desire for a cup of the excellent Dutch beer, went into a drinking house to satisfy his thirst. While sitting by the public fire with other people in the place, a seaman came in, who, seeing a friend who he knew had been in the recent Greenland voyage, was surprised to see him home so early, and asked what accident had brought him home so soon, as it was not yet time for the Greenland fleet to return.

His friend, who had been the steersman for a Greenland ship that summer, told the seaman that the ship of which he was steersman did not go to fish that summer, but only to take in the lading of the fleet and bring it to an early market. "But," added the steersman, "before the fleet had caught fish enough to lade us, we by order of the Greenland company sailed into the North Pole and back again."

This story was of great interest to Moxon, who thereupon entered the conversation himself, and seemed to question the truth of the steersman's story, but was assured that it was true, and that many of the seamen belonging to her were ready and able to corroborate the truth of his story. The steersman stated, moreover, that they had sailed two degrees beyond the Pole. Moxon thereupon asked if they had found no land or islands about the Pole. He replied: "No, they saw no ice; but had fine, warm weather, such as was at Amsterdam in the summer time, and as hot."

As Moxon was hydrographer to his majesty, Charles II, and was also the author of various scientific treatises, his acceptance of the story of the Dutch steersman was not the ready credulity of an unlearned or unsci-

entific man. His report is seriously considered by scientists and writers of his own time, as well as by those of a later date; it was also translated into the German, and was referred to by German writers and geographers. The illustrious A. E. Nordenskjold, Swedish explorer and writer, discusses Moxon's report in the account of his own expedition. The Voyage of the Vega, commonly known as the North-east Voyage, and uses it to support his own theory of an open, navigable sea near the Pole in favorable seasons.

Nordenskjold says that he was personally converted in this theory after two winterings in the Arctic, one in 79.53 North, and the other in the neighborhood of the Asiatic Pole of cold, where he observed that the sea did not freeze completely over, even in the immediate vicinity of land. He drew the very reasonable and logical conclusion from his own experience that there is nothing unreasonable in the old accounts, and that what happened once may be expected to happen again.

Samuel Richard Van Campen, F.R.G.S., in his Dutch in the Arctic Seas (London, 1878), also analyzes Moxon's story, and arrives at the conclusion that the statement of the Dutch steersman may be accepted as true. He adds that no less a distinguished naval officer than Admiral Fitzroy has expressed confidence in its credibility and declares it as his opinion that the papers of the Honorable Daines Barrington, embodying this and other accounts, are entitled to more attention than they have received.

As in the twentieth century, so in the seventeenth, more than one claimant for the credit of sailing to the North Pole arose, but so far as we can discover, these earlier claimants did not consider the feat sufficiently extraordinary to arouse a discussion or controversy. The first attainment of the Pole, as I have already shown, was in 1652; the second occurred about sixteen years later, and is related by the German author Rudolph Capell, in his Vorstellungen des Norden (1675).

The story was told by Rudolph Capell by his friend Johann Ben (then living in Wapping), who sailed to Japan with a Hollander, as ship's carpenter, and in 1668 returned from Japan. He said, as they sailed from Japan, the captain ordered the steersman to sail north, and they went 400 German miles, or approximately 27 degrees north. He declared that no land or indication of land was seen, but on the contrary a free and open sea was traversed, thus corroborating the story of the Holland steersman from the Greenland (Spitzbergen) whaling fleet. Johann Ben did not know the reason for the northward voyage, only that the captain so ordered, but it was surmised that the East India company desired to increase their commerce and had, therefore, ordered the captain to search for new land.

These two accounts coincide as closely as do those of later and better known explorers—and may be

Submarines in West India Waters

Four Enemy Underwater Boats Have Come Over—British Sank Two Others—President Wilson Has Made Strenuous Representations to Germany

NEW YORK, Dec. 4.—The Providence Journal says:

The wireless warnings recently issued to captains of merchant vessels in the western Atlantic were put out by the order of the British Admiralty with the full knowledge that there are now in the neighborhood of the West Indian waters two large German submarines, which have been here since the visit of the U-53, and also because of the knowledge of the British Admiralty that two other German submarines of the newest and speediest type left Kiel for the coast of the United States on November 5 and were able to evade every effort that was made to capture or sink them before they got out of the North Sea.

"The Journal is able to state authoritatively that the plan of dispatching four of the new German submarines from Kiel on November 5 was known in advance to the British authorities, that all four submarines left Kiel on that date and at different hours, and that two of them were sunk during the same day by British destroyers, the other two getting safely away."

"The United States government has been fully informed of this situation and President Wilson has made strenuous representations to Ambassador von Bernstorff concerning it."

Electric Signs Banned in Berlin

And Early Closing Hours Are Enforced For Economy by German Government

BERLIN, Dec. 4.—via London—Prohibition of the use of electric signs and other forms of illuminated advertising, restriction of lighting for show windows and the interior of shops, limitation of street railway and elevated traffic and an early closing ordinance for business establishments, restaurants, hotels, theatres, and moving picture shows are in progress as parts of the campaign to reduce the consumption of fuel and employment of labor to which the government is now energetically bending its attention. These measures have been discussed by the ministry of the interior and representatives of the federated states and according to the afternoon papers have been approved in principle. The lighting of show windows will be permitted only so far as it serves for interior lighting, which will be restricted to half the usual amount in some cases. Although no definite decision has been reached regarding hours of closing, it is probable that business establishments other than groceries, butcher shops and other food distributors, will be closed at 7 p.m. and theatres and restaurants at 10 p.m. The people will be urged to restrict lighting in their homes.

taken as seriously, for although we do not know that either the Holland steersman or Johann Ben told his story to the Danes, we do know that a man of the northern hemisphere published in Berlin, Germany, under the direction of the Academy of Sciences and Belles Lettres, places a ship at the North Pole, as having arrived there, according to Dutch accounts.

The theory of an open polar sea at certain times of a favorable season is corroborated by the fact that later explorers, who have adopted dogs and sledges as transportation power in the Arctic regions, in place of ships, unite in declaring that they are obliged to get off the ice early in June or risk death by drowning. The latest American explorer to make such a report is Donald B. McMillan, who has stated that just as he and his men set foot ashore the ice broke up behind them. Since our modern explorers are thus forced by their later-day methods to return to land early in June, we have no direct, up-to-the-minute knowledge of the ice conditions in the Arctic ocean north of North America during the later months of the long Arctic "day." The fact remains that the accounts of the several voyages herein mentioned, are as authentic as the reports of the twentieth century.

A young Irish recruit neglected to salute his officer, who at once asked the reason.

"Oh, I forgot, Sir!" said Paddy, along with two buckets of water he again encountered his officer and, coolly laying down his burden, he raised both hands in salute.

"What's this for?" asked the officer in surprise.

"Sure, one of 'em is for yesterday, sir," was the cool reply.

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