

assignment was a three-year study of the Copper Eskimos around Coronation Gulf.

EARLY SETBACK

In June, the expedition's flagship, the old whaling vessel *Karluk* under command of Captain Bob Bartlett, steamed northward to Nome, where Stefansson bought two 60-foot schooners, the *Alaska* and the *Mary Sachs*, to supplement the *Karluk*. The three vessels were to rendezvous at Herschel Island, near the mouth of the Mackenzie River. These plans, however, were not to be realized. Throughout the summer the winds blew continuously from the west and northwest, driving the pack ice close inshore, imprisoning the *Alaska* and *Mary Sachs* in Camden Bay midway between Point Barrow and the Mackenzie, and carrying the *Karluk*, drifting helplessly in the ice, to her eventual destruction off the Siberian coast near Wrangell Island. Jenness' colleague, the French ethnologist Henri Beuchat, was one of those who perished on the ice, or on Wrangell Island, in an attempt to reach the Siberian coast after the *Karluk* had been crushed in the ice.

On September 30, Stefansson, with his secretary Burt McConnell, Jenness, two Eskimos, and the expedition's photographer G.H. Wilkins (later Sir Hubert Wilkins), left the *Karluk* near the mouth of the Colville River to hunt caribou and lay in a supply of fresh meat when it had become apparent that the ship, immobilized in the ice, could proceed no further. With two sleds, 12 dogs and food for 12 days,



Dr. Diamond Jenness

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the party set out for the mainland, but they never saw the *Karluk* again, for a week or so later the unfortunate vessel began her final drift westward.

This was the inauspicious beginning of Jenness' Arctic career. Few young anthropologists have faced such difficulties in beginning field work in a new and unfamiliar area; yet none, surely, has emerged from the test with a more brilliant record of work accomplished.

With no signs of habitation nearby and with the first permanent settlement to the east, Herschel Island, 300 miles away, the stranded party set out for Barrow, 150 miles to the west, to obtain provisions and some news of the whereabouts of their three vessels. On October 12 they reached Barrow, where the trader, Charlie Brower, supplied them with new skin clothing and provisions to carry them over the winter. On October 27, before the outfitting was completed, Jenness and Wilkins, with two Eskimos and two dog teams, were sent east again to lay in a supply of fish from a lake near Cape Halkett and obtain meat for dog food from two stranded whales.

They were joined by Stefansson, McConnell and two Eskimos on November 21. Two days later Stefansson and the rest of the party, including Wilkins, left for Camden Bay, where they had learned that the *Alaska* and *Mary Sachs* had found refuge, and which was therefore to be the expedition's winter base. Jenness remained behind to spend the winter with an Eskimo family at Harrison Bay to learn the language and obtain whatever information he could on Eskimo customs and folklore. What he was able to record on these subjects was later described in various reports of the Canadian Arctic Expedition 1913-1918: *Eskimo folk-lore*, *Eskimo language and technology*, *Eskimos of Northern Alaska: A study in the effect of civilization*, and *Eskimo music in northern Alaska*, published in technical journals.

FIRST YEAR IN THE ARCTIC

Jenness' first winter's field work on the Arctic coast of Alaska that led to this impressive list of publications was conducted under conditions that many an ethnographer would have found intolerable. The people he lived with most of the time were inland Eskimos from the Colville River, who spent the winter on the Arctic coast trapping white foxes to trade for ammunition and other necessities; their food consisted mainly of whitefish and trout caught in nets set under the ice in coastal lakes, supplemented by ptarmigan, waterfowl, and an occasional caribou. Food was never plentiful, indeed often insufficient for their needs, and it was frequently necessary for the group to pack its belongings on sleds and set out for some other locality where the prospects for food were more promising. Jenness shared this precarious existence with his Eskimo hosts, living with them in their tiny overcrowded wooden cabins and travelling with them or, sometimes, after he had mastered the technique of dog-