

TACOMA MAN IS BACKER OF TRIP INTO FAR NORTH

General Ashton Tells Cornelius Vanderbilt Why He Is Fitting Out Expedition for Siberia.

By Cornelius Vanderbilt Jr. (Special Correspondent for the United News.) (Copyright 1920 by United News.)

Chehalis, Wash.—The combination of both mystery and romance has surrounded the fitting out of an American expedition, seeking furs and ivory from the Ural of Siberia far above the Arctic circle. With the announcement, however, of the name of the man backing the latest American Arctic argogy, the mystery has gone. The romance remains.

The Siberian Commercial company, backing the expedition, is really General Ashton, of Tacoma, known throughout maritime circles as the man who will back anything as long as he is assured he will get something more out of it than he puts into the enterprise.

WAS BEHIND PEARY

Many years ago he was one of the leading backers and later counsel for the Peary expedition. It is common talk that it was Ashton's work that tripped Cook during his cross-examination concerning the sealing of Mount McKinley.

When I heard of his interest in the scheme which has captured the fancy of all business men along the Western coast, I went to see him, to get a story of the expedition. After a short story I was ushered into the office of this Western magnate.

Ashton, although not a young man, is far from showing any indication of age. Six feet two in stocking feet and as broad as tape measure allows, he still presents a formidable figure to an unsuspecting interviewer. When asked about the Siberian enterprise, Ashton answered with evident satisfaction:

"Some three months ago, some mariners came to me asking whether I wished to finance a ship which was going into interior western Siberia to trap and exchange valuable with Eskimaux.

WHY HE BACKS PARTY

"They told me that there had not been a trader in that part of Siberia since the opening of the war in 1914. There must be a great accumulation of furs, ivory, and other valuables, by this time. That is what we are going after and that was why I was willing to back what may seem to an outsider as a foolhardy expedition.

"The Eskimos are very anxious to have someone come in. The only message to that effect, of course, has been by dog sled to Anavir. After I was certain it would be wise to equip such an enterprise as an experiment, I continued my plans and incorporated a company. We bought the schooner Iakum, which left Tacoma for Kolyma bay, Siberia, last week. Then we bought the Roosevelt. She is the ship in which Peary discovered the north pole. We will left this winter and next summer we will follow the course of the Iakum, if the latter is successful in its quest. We expect, moreover, to buy several other little vessels. We choose our own crews. They are all bonded, although I believe they will be perfectly honest and square with us.

HAS FAITH IN CREW

"Although the type of men on these cruises is usually considered as shifters, we have chosen with care, and I believe we have all good men on our payroll. They all speak Eskimo and have lived 10 or 20 years above the Arctic circle.

"Four of the present crew were with Steffanson in 1913. At present Captain Clarence I. Olson, better known as Kelly Olson, is in charge of the expedition.

"The Iakum should reach Nome from Kolyma about October 30. This would give her time to clear for Tacoma before ice sets in at Nome. The start this year is very late in the season, but Captain Olson assures me that there is no doubt of their being able to avoid being caught in the ice and at the same time they will have ample opportunity for full bartering and trading of their present cargo with the natives.

WILL LEAVE TWO TRADERS

"Our first plan was to make this voyage to Kolyma and return to Nome for another cargo, which we were going to send to Nome on the Victoria the latter part of this month, but summer is so far advanced we will not attempt this additional trip this year. Olson is going to leave at Kolyma on the Victoria at one other point of the Siberian coast, two traders of the present crew, who will trap and live with the Eskimos this coming winter, remaining there to await the return of the Iakum or possibly the Roosevelt when the Arctic ice breaks up in the season of 1921."

General Ashton believes that Ta-

WASHINGTON ELKS ELECT NEW OFFICERS



Above—A merry automobile load of antlered brothers—and their sisters—from Aberdeen lodge No. 593, who lent gaily to the closing hours of the annual state convention in Vancouver Saturday. Below are the newly elected officers. They are, top row, left to right—Martin Gottfeld, Olympia, third vice president; Clement Scott, Vancouver, president; J. T. Rogers, Everett, treasurer. Lower row, left to right—Sydney S. Anderson, Tacoma, secretary; Alex Fulton, Tacoma, second vice president; Paul F. Wells, Bellingham, first vice president.

coma will some day be the great fur exchange of the world.

"I have every confidence," he declared, "that the voyage of the Iakum is the initial step of what will prove to be a business of greatest importance in the near future to the Northwest, and, for that matter, to the entire country. It is also, in another way, opening up a trade channel of a new aspect for our future merchant marine."

General Ashton, whose title was secured in the national guard several years ago, said there was on board the Iakum a motion picture man with a complete outfit, and that as soon as the ship returned, photographs would be sent throughout the country.

The Iakum is carrying, I have found, a cargo worth approximately \$50,000. Its makeup may be interesting.

There are huge stacks of hard candles, as well as the finest of rifles and steel traps. There are 400 mouth organs, 200 saw-harps and a host of other instruments of similar nature.

General Ashton assured me, by the way, the Eskimos would pay 500 ermine pelts for one 225 phonograph. There are 50 alarm clocks and 36 watches—not all cheap ones, by any means. And in addition to all this there is gaudy wearing apparel for women folk, mirrors for Arctic beauties, and all kinds of little articles calculated to bring joy to Eskimo minds during long winters and perpetual snows.

Although a schooner, the Iakum is equipped with a four-cylinder standard engine and carries 6000 gallons of gasoline. That should be enough to take her 17,000 miles up the Siberian coastal rivers.

WASHINGTON ELKS NAME SCOTT HEAD

(Continued From Page One.)

Chair: Centralia, R. C. Stanley; Chehalis, O. J. Albers; Ellensburg, R. A. Weaver; Everett, Bothwell; Hoquiam, George Brault; Olympia, E. E. Fritz; Port Angeles, R. M. Morrissey; Port Townsend, Kincaid; Rainier, E. E. Colket; Seattle, J. E. Hammond; Tacoma, H. E. O'Neil; Vancouver, E. J. Pender; Wenatchee, J. J. Therman; Wenatchee, Charles A. Flannigan; Yakima, Fred Fontaine.

Clement Scott, the new president, and who served the past year as first vice president, is in the coal business in Vancouver; Paul F. Wells, first vice president, is engaged in the piano business at Bellingham; Second Vice President Alex Fulton is the representative of the United States Immigration office at Seattle, and Martin Gottfeld, third vice president, is engaged in the clothing business at Olympia. Secretary Sydney S. Anderson, who was re-elected, is business manager of the News-Tribune of Tacoma, and Treasurer J. T. Rogers is secretary of the Elks lodge and club at Everett.

Next in importance after the selection

CHINESE IS RUN DOWN AND KILLED

Hong Yee Duck, Hop Grower of Wilsonville, Suffers Fracture of Skull in Accident.

Becoming confused while crossing the intersection of Third and Oak streets at 7 p. m. Saturday, Hong Yee Duck, 57, dashed directly in front of a large touring car driven by Herbert G. Schiewe, 461 Webster street, and was thrown to the pavement by the impact. He sustained a fractured skull from which he died at St. Vincent's hospital an hour later.

The Chinaman is a hop grower living near Wilsonville, Or.

Duck was walking east on Oak street and had gone half way across the street when, spying the approaching automobile, he suddenly started back and then jumped against the machine, according to the report of Investigator Yost, who interviewed a number of witnesses. He was carried to the emergency hospital by M. D. Taylor and C. N. Moore, citizens, and Patrolmen Kelly and Tully of the traffic bureau.

Schiewe, witnesses declare, stopped his machine, then started up again and was going five miles an hour at the time he struck the pedestrian. He was detained a short time in police headquarters pending investigation, but later released.

Irwin, chairman of the Vancouver general committee, and his corps of assistants. Retiring President Johnson has stated that the Vancouver Elks and citizens have set a high record for convention entertainment, and the resolutions themselves expressed gratification over the clean and wholesome character of the amusements and entertainment provided for the visitors.

The spectacular feature of the three day gathering occurred Saturday forenoon, when the grand parade was staged. All of the lodges of Washington were represented among the 383 Elks in line, with a large delegation from Portland, headed by the Elks' band. Six Elks from far-away Juneau, Alaska, participated.

The Seattle band of 60 pieces and 350 members of its marching club headed the parade. Then followed the Tacoma band and 200 members of that lodge, and 140 Bellingham Elks, conspicuous with their adornment of purple tulips.

JOEIE IS RAFFLED OFF

While Portland Elksdom sent to Vancouver fully 2000 members, but 450 of them, with their band, appeared in line. The others were spectators. On down the line the men in purple and white marched along to the strains of lively music of many bands. Aberdeen made a parade with its mascot, Joeie, a real silk brought to her first convention. Later in the day Joeie was raffled off to one of the visiting lodges.

A feature of the parade was the battleship Oregon, brought from Portland and prepared by the Portland recruiting office. It was decorated in the Elks' colors and masses of greenery and flowers. The float was manned by J. A. Armstrong, E. E. Mavers, S. J. Sprague, C. E. Long and E. A. Roggenbuck, all of Portland, and little Louise Crane of Vancouver rode on the float.

EVERETT BAND BEST

While the last session of the convention was in progress, the band contest occurred at City park. Great crowds of people listened to the program, which included the playing of one standard march and one standard selection by each contesting organization.

The bands entering were, in the order appearing, Anacortes, Bellingham, Everett and Hoquiam. The judges were F. G. Butler, bandmaster of the Twenty-first infantry; S. S. Jenkins, bandmaster of the first infantry, and H. N. Stoudenmeyer, bandmaster of the Portland Elks lodge. Their decision gave Everett band first place and Bellingham band second place. The score was on nine points, with a possible rating of 180. Everett got a rating of 127.3 and Bellingham of 126.

CARNIVAL SPIRIT REIGNS

During the afternoon the visitors were entertained with races at the county fair grounds, motor races on the Columbia river, bowling contests and automobile trips through the prunes belt. In the evening there was dancing at Elks' temple and at the Purple Gardens, and band concerts at various points, while carnival spirit reigned through all the downtown streets, many impromptu programs being staged.

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