

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE

# United States Revenue-Cutter Service

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30

1912



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U. S. REVENUE CUTTER "MANNING,"  
Kodiak, Alaska, June 21, 1912.

The SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,  
Washington, D. C.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report upon circumstances relative to an eruption of Katmai Volcano, Alaska, beginning June 6, 1912, to effects and conditions resulting therefrom upon Kodiak Island and vicinity, and to duty performed by the *Manning* in this connection.

On June 6, 1912, the *Manning* lay moored outside the barge *St. James* lying at the wharf at St. Paul, Kodiak Island, taking coal. About 4 p. m., while standing on the dock, I observed a peculiar looking cloud slowly rising to the southward and westward, and remarked that it looked like snow. Later, distant thunder was heard, and about 5 p. m. I notice light particles of ashes falling. At 6 o'clock the ashes fell in considerable showers and these gradually increasing. The cloud bank had spread past the zenith, when I observed another bank to the northward, and the two met about 30° above the northern and eastern horizon. Thunder and lightning had become frequent at 7 o'clock, very intense at times, and though lacking two hours of sunset, a black night had settled down. At 9 p. m. Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Erskine and child, Mr. A. C. Erskine, Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Fletcher, and Dr. and Mrs. Silverman came on board, they having become alarmed over the situation, and all were sheltered for the night. It was impossible, owing to electrical conditions, to use the radio apparatus, consequently no information could be sent out. This was also found to be true of the Woody Island naval radio station. Specimens of the deposit were taken at various times, and it was found to consist of dust and fine sand or granules. At midnight the thunder and lightning diminished, but continued intermittently until the storm (if this term may be used) ceased on the 8th.

The 7th began with volcanic matter falling, and from 3 a. m. this gradually diminished and ceased at 9.10 a. m., when it was believed that the eruption was over. All of this time no one knew where the eruption had occurred. Owing to excessive static, no work could be done by the radio operators. All streams and wells had now become choked, about 5 inches of ashes having fallen, and water was furnished the inhabitants by the *Manning* and the schooner *Metha*

*Nelson*, lying at the end of the dock. Started evaporators to provide drinking water and continued this for several days.

At noon ashes had begun to fall again, and at 12.30 were increasing until at 1 p. m. it was impossible to see over 50 feet. Deep concern was visible on every countenance, and the advisability of the *Manning's* getting to sea was discussed. However, this was out of the question, as few of the inhabitants wished to leave, and the voice of the ship's company was "take all or none."

During the afternoon I visited the two saloons in the place and, finding considerable drinking, requested the proprietors to close. This they readily did, agreeing with me that it was a time for every man to keep his mind clear. At 2 p. m. pitch darkness had shut in; heavy static disturbances were observed, and our radio was dumb. A few refugees were on board, and the night of the 7th was spent in anxious watching. We got little sleep, and the dawn of the 8th, which we anxiously awaited, failed to appear. While all ashes of the previous day had been removed, decks, masts, and yards were loaded, as were also the ship's boats. The ashes now were fine dust and flakes, and of a yellowish color. Sulphurous fumes came at times in the air, and many thought and spoke of the destruction of Pompeii. Avalanches of ashes on the neighboring hills could be heard, and these sent forth clouds of suffocating dust and ashes. All hands were on duty from 7 a. m. Men often collided in working about decks, as the feeble glow of the electric lights and lanterns failed to dispel the awful darkness for any distance. The crew kept constantly at work with shovels, and four streams of water from the fire mains were playing incessantly in what at times seemed a vain effort to clear the ship of its horrible burden. The bells of the Greek church boomed out in the blackness and few, if any, of its followers there were who did not grope their way to the call to prayer.

At about 8.30 a. m., at my request, the storehouse on the wharf was opened, and after a hurried consultation with some of the chief citizens, I sent a message to the priest at the church that all the people could be cared for on the *Manning* and in the storehouse. Prior to this many had sought refuge on board. I then called together a committee meeting of the officers of the ship and several citizens, among whom were local pilots, and it was agreed that, as every landmark was obliterated, that it was impossible to see from the bridge, and that as the chances were vastly against a ship making the narrow channel without striking, it was better to stay where we were and take what most of us believed to be only a fighting chance. I might state at this point that I believe the catastrophe appeared worse at Kodiak village than at the near-by settlements because of the terrible clouds of volcanic débris that swept down from the hills close to the town, adding to the fall from above.

At 10 a. m. the people of the village had collected, 149 in the warehouse on the wharf, and 185 on the *Manning*. These numbers are to some extent an estimate, and others were added later from vessels, the salmon cannery, and the people of Woody Island.

We had decided to house in the quarter-deck by using boards and canvas, thus making shelter for the exhausted and blinded workers. During this work our main trysail had to be cut from the roping, ruining the sail, it being impossible to get it clear by other means. A stream of hose injected under the temporary deck house cleaned

up the dust and fumes somewhat, and all hands sought this shelter when driven to it. While much confusion existed, it was remarkable how every man worked, and how promptly all my orders were obeyed.

Ignorant and untried for a situation of this character, I found that the people, of one accord, looked to me to lead, doubtless because I happened to be the ranking United States officer, and I certainly felt a great responsibility.

Shortly before 11 a. m. Lieut. W. K. Thompson of the *Manning* informed me that several men were cut off in the cannery, about one-half of a mile distant below our dock. He stated that he had a party willing to try a rescue, and asked for orders. I replied that I would not give him orders, for it might be sending men to death, but that he and his party might have my permission to make the attempt. This party departed at 11 o'clock, and returned successful at 1.30 p. m. A report of their work, written by Lieut. Thompson, is appended, and my indorsement appears thereon. I simply state here that it was a heroic act, deserving of highest commendation.

Many of the native men were turned to on deck to aid the crew. The surgeon of the *Manning*, Dr. N. D. Brecht, United States Public Health Service, worked day and night, almost to exhaustion, and frequently assisted the commanding officer by giving advice as to sanitary work necessary owing to the crowded condition of the ship. The village doctor, Joseph A. Silverman, rendered valuable aid throughout.

Several ladies quartered in the cabin and wardroom, wives and daughters of citizens and teachers in the schools, acted as nurses and assisted in serving food and coffee. When men working on deck became blinded by the dust and ashes they went below, and these women washed their eyes and bathed them in a medicinal preparation prepared by the doctors, enabling them to return to work. Many times were men so overcome by breathing ashes and sulphurous fumes, even though protected by veils and sponges over eyes and nostrils, that they would have become completely disabled but for the ministrations of the doctors and nurses. Officers and men from other vessels, and four men from the naval radio station at Woody Island, took refuge on board and took their part of the work. Rations were served to all, and in this the firm of Erskine & Fletcher assisted, providing some food, and cooking on board of their schooner, *Metha Nelson*, lying at the dock.

At 2.30 p. m. of the 8th the fall of ashes decreased, the skies assumed a reddish color, and finally objects became dimly visible. All clothed and festooned in ashes, nothing looked familiar. As similar phenomena had occurred the previous day, and frequent seismic disturbances were still felt, much fear existed that worse was still to come. I hastily summoned a committee of citizens and, after hearing various opinions, decided that to stay might mean death, and there would be a chance of life if the ship could get to sea. Consequently all hands were taken on board except United States Deputy Marshal Armstrong (who decided that duty required him to remain) and three other men. While Marshal Armstrong remained ashore, he sent his wife on board. This action furnishes its own comment. Only brave men offer such a sacrifice.

At 5.30 p. m. the ship cast off and, with two leads going, and Capt. Brown, an old and skillful Kodiak pilot, conned her through the narrow

channel. At 5.55 p. m. we anchored in the outer harbor, having secured a bearing on Woody Island that practically assured a safe passage to sea, even though darkness again shut in.

As soon as the ship anchored the motor boat *Norman* stood in to Woody Island and brought off all the inhabitants, 103 in number, many of whom were nearly famished for food and water. While others demanded the attention of doctors and nurses. This day food and water were furnished to 486 people, outside our own crew, quarters to 414, and 72 were quartered on board the tug *Printer*, which came out of harbor with the *Manning* and moored alongside.

The night of the 8th was spent in suspense, but as the morning of the 9th dawned, all precipitation of ashes having ceased, it was felt that the eruption was over. All hands were turned to early in the morning, including native men, clearing off volcanic deposit and cleaning quarters. The temporary deckhouse was removed and two tents were erected for quarters on the hurricane deck and quarter-deck. The surgeon and shore physician were constantly employed in caring for the sick and initiating sanitary arrangements.

At about 10 o'clock a. m., I appointed a committee of officers from the *Manning* and citizens to go to Kodiak, examine into the situation, and make report to me. Also I sent others to Woody Island for a similar purpose. At 12.20 p. m. the committee made report upon subjects as follows:

Quantity and condition of water.

Pay roll and sustenance of natives.

Condition of houses.

General results of eruption, habitability of the town, and measures for immediate relief.

The report was partly verbal and partly by notes taken, and served me as a valuable guide in future actions. During the afternoon I sent Third Lieut. Dench and Second Lieut. of Engineers Hahn in the surfboat to rescue workmen on a ranch 4 miles below Kodiak, and they later returned with five people.

The coal barge *St. James*, lying at the wharf at Kodiak, and partly unloaded, was towed into the outer harbor, cleared of over 200 tons of deposit, with the help of a large crew of natives that I sent on board, and held for refugees if necessary. This, however, was not found necessary, and some days later, as soon as the consignees were ready to resume business, was towed back to her wharf.

Having found that the people of Woody Island could with safety return to their homes, at 3.15 p. m. I sent all of them ashore except widows, children, and the sick, who were unprovided for or needed medical aid. Sometime during the eruption the radio station at Woody Island was destroyed by fire, doubtless caused by lightning. Our efforts to reach the outside world by radio were futile, and at 4.20 p. m. I drafted the tug *Printer* into service, placed First Lieut. H. R. Searles of the *Manning* in charge, and sent her to Seward with dispatches and instructions to ask for orders and confirmation of my actions by the department. Later we reached Cordova wireless station, and I was gratified to receive the confirmation requested.

At 8.05 p. m. of this, the 9th, Mrs. Anne Olsen, a refugee on board, died, her death being due to tuberculosis and nephritis, and the end doubtless was hastened by the terrible experience through which the poor woman had passed. The flag was half-masted, and the following

morning the body was placed in a coffin, and sent on shore in charge of Father Kashervaroff, the priest of the Greek Church.

As the engine and all machinery were impregnated with ashes, I did not deem it wise to get underway unless absolutely necessary, and on the 10th instant the passengers were gradually landed and sent to their homes. At the end of the day there remained on board only 8 white people and 24 natives, the latter being the sick and indigent, who consequently were better off on board.

While I believed at this time that Kodiak had been in the worst position in the line of disaster, it seemed to us all that other settlements must be suffering, so at noon of the 10th, being unable to locate any Government craft, I requested the use of the tug *Redondo* from Supt. Blodgett of the St. Paul, Kodiak, cannery. My request was promptly granted, and the *Redondo* was at once supplied with 2,000 gallons of fresh water and 200 rations, and at 1.35 p. m., with Second Lieut. W. K. Thompson of the *Manning* in charge, she left the *Manning* on a cruise to Afognak and other points. The report of Lieut. Thompson is hereto attached, and the prompt and efficient service performed in the case doubtless saved lives and great suffering.

June 11 I went on shore at St. Paul, with First Lieut. of Engineers T. G. Lewton and Asst. Surg. N. D. Brecht, of the *Manning*, and inspected dwellings, water supply, and other matters. Finding some drunkenness, I ordered the only saloon open to be closed. Other than this I found it unnecessary to exercise authority because everyone appeared more than willing to accede to any request. While on shore I requested United States Marshal Armstrong, Dr. Joseph A. Silverman, and Father Kashervaroff, priest of the Greek Church, to act as a relief committee to inform me as to any person needing food, and those gentlemen have been of great aid to me in receiving and carefully distributing food. While on shore we arranged to have all the sick cared for, and they were landed this day, the 11th, leaving only four white persons on board. Of these, one was an indigent mariner, crippled by rheumatism, and he was given asylum for several days, when opportunity came to send him home.

The other three were Mrs. W. J. Erskine and child and Mrs. C. A. Fletcher. I desire to state that both Mr. Erskine and Mr. Fletcher had sacrificed both time and means throughout the disaster, and were still doing so at this time. They were using every effort to provide work for the needy and distressed men on shore, and I permitted their families to remain on board for this reason. Also especially as Mrs. Erskine's little child was delicate and ill, and to remove it to shore might endanger its life.

June 12 a message reached me from Lieut. Thompson, in charge of the *Redondo* expedition, that he had gone to the vicinity of the volcano, which we had learned was Mount Katmai, and would need fuel at Afognak. As no fuel (*Redondo*, an oil burner) could be obtained, I dispatched the motor boat *Norman* (a cannery boat), in charge of Second Lieut. W. J. Keester of the *Manning*, with orders for the *Redondo*, and 100 rations for refugees.

This date, upon recommendation of my shore relief committee, I permitted the shore saloons to reopen, under promise of good conduct and under strict surveillance by Marshal Armstrong. Up to the date of this report I have heard no complaint, though I trust that I may be pardoned if I here make a comment that the saloon does not

appear to be a good influence upon either the morals or fortunes of Alaskan natives.

During the 9th, 10th, and 11th the appearance of the skies seemed to indicate that some substance was held in suspension, and at times most unpleasant and strangling gases were observable. Some of these were of such a character as to turn our white paintwork a dirty gray color.

While I mentioned somewhat in detail the work at Kodiak, I desire to state that similar work was carried on at Woody Island as to the destitute, and our surgeon waited upon the sick at both places. I was ably assisted in the Woody Island work by Mr. George A. Learn, superintendent of the Baptist orphanage there, especially in distribution to the poor. I also purchased some provisions from Mr. Learn from his orphanage supply, there being no store on the island.

June 13 the *Redondo* and *Norman* expeditions returned at 7.55 a. m. This morning the air was pure and no trace of volcanic matter observable in suspension. Lieut. Thompson reported that there were possibly a few natives left on the mainland, and it was decided best to send the *Redondo* on another trip. This I did, with Lieut. Keester in command, and Third Lieut. of Engineers J. F. Hahn assisting. Mr. Keester's report of this trip is attached hereto, and the results show how well the work had been previously done.

On this trip of the *Redondo*, the 13th, I detailed Lieut. C. H. Dench, of the *Manning*, to proceed to Afognak, taking supplies for the needy. Lieut. Dench returned to the *Manning* on the 20th, having been relieved by Second Lieut. W. F. Towle, United States Revenue-Cutter Service. I do not submit the report of Mr. Dench at this time, as he desires to make it in conjunction with that of Mr. Towle, which appears to be the best method.

The population at Afognak consists of 318 regular inhabitants and 115 refugees. These latter, I am informed, and their future are to be reported upon by Senior Capt. W. E. Reynolds, United States Revenue-Cutter Service.

June 14, the tug *Printer*, sent to Seward under First Lieut. Searles, returned with dispatches and information that Mr. Searles had remained at Seward by order of the department. The *Printer* was released from duty this date.

My report closes with June 14. Subsequent reports will follow, and the transcript of the ship's log notes many items herein omitted. I desire to state that I have incurred considerable Government expense, but have tried to keep it as low as conditions permitted. Most of my expenditures have been outside the prescribed methods, and I am deeply grateful to the department for the confirmation of my actions. I hope that the summing up will demonstrate that my judgment has not caused any unnecessary expense.

The outlook for the future of this vicinity is at present a problem. While the fish are now very scarce, it is generally believed that they will return. Many gardens have been uncovered, but I doubt if they produce much this season, and their product will be greatly missed by the natives. Cattle are finding a little feed on hillsides, where the deposits have slid down, but all of the feed is impregnated with sand and ashes. I have purchased some grain, enough to give the few cattle in St. Paul one feed per day. The Government station has feed. Cattle belonging to the orphanage at Woody Island are suffer-

ing from the lack of it, and some in fit condition were butchered soon after the eruption ceased.

Senior Capt. W. E. Reynolds, United States Revenue-Cutter Service, commanding the Bering Sea Patrol Fleet, has recently arrived at Kodiak and will, I understand, make recommendations as to the several matters requiring Government action.

I desire to commend and thank the officers and crew of the *Manning* for their gallant and unflinching service through an ordeal that was arduous and terrorizing beyond description. Several of the best men from shore expressed themselves to me to the effect that the fight was almost hopeless, but I saw no case of neglect or flinching in the performance of duty.

Many of the men and women of Kodiak are deserving of the highest tribute that can be paid. Some of the names I can not recall and so I refrain here from mentioning any. It should be a matter of great pride to every American citizen that even in such remote settlement, men and women are found who, forgetful of themselves in times of peril, can face danger and threatened death with such coolness as we of the *Manning* observed, and all working on in behalf of the weak and suffering.

Respectfully,

K. W. PERRY,

*Captain, U. S. Revenue-Cutter Service, Commanding.*

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U. S. REVENUE CUTTER "MANNING,"  
*Kodiak, Alaska, June 19, 1912.*

Capt. K. W. PERRY, *U. S. Revenue-Cutter Service,*  
*Commanding U. S. Revenue Cutter "Manning,"*  
*Kodiak, Alaska.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report relative to assistance rendered to the crew of the steamer *Redondo*, of Seattle, Wash., on the 8th instant:

About 11 o'clock on the forenoon of the date mentioned, during a heavy fall of volcanic ashes at Kodiak, Alaska, received information that seven members of the crew of the steamer *Redondo*, then lying near a cannery one-half mile to the westward of Kodiak, had failed to reach the village, being the only people unaccounted for, and that fear was entertained for their safety. Pitch darkness prevailed, falling ashes made breathing and seeing difficult, and avalanches of ashes were coming down to the beach at intervals, making the task of reaching the cannery hazardous. In view of the circumstances I called for volunteers, and of the number chose Second Lieut. of Engineers J. F. Hahn, United States Revenue-Cutter Service; Third Lieut. of Engineers K. W. Krafft, United States Revenue-Cutter Service; Ship's Writer F. R. Breed; Assistant Master-at-arms R. J. Madden; Coxswain O. Huitfeldt; Seaman F. Campbell; W. Davis, a local resident; and William C. Ansel, master of the tug *Redondo*.

Leaving the *Manning* at 11 a. m. equipped with lanterns, guide ropes, and compass, the party proceeded across the village and down the beach to the westward. It was found necessary to proceed with great caution, as lanterns could be seen but a few feet, and I wished to prevent the separation of the party.

Avalanches of the dust had filled the beach to a depth of several feet in places and were apparently carrying all obstacles with them. Disaster was narrowly averted, at one time an avalanche coming between the leading and rear members of the party. After following the beach for some distance we raised the *Redondo* by shouting, and found that she was lying at anchor off the cannery wharf. Directed the crew to launch their boat, and when this was done directed them to the beach by repeated calls.

When the seven members of the crew were landed the party returned along the beach, and reached the *Manning* without mishap at 1.30 p. m.

Respectfully,

W. K. THOMPSON,  
*Second Lieutenant, U. S. Revenue-Cutter Service.*

Respectfully submitted with my official report of which it forms a part, and with the statement that these men have my sincere admiration for the manner in which the deed was performed.

K. W. PERRY,  
*Captain, U. S. Revenue-Cutter Service, Commanding.*

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U. S. REVENUE CUTTER "MANNING,"  
*Kodiak, Alaska, June 19, 1912.*

Capt. K. W. PERRY, U. S. Revenue-Cutter Service,  
*Commanding U. S. Revenue Cutter "Manning," Kodiak, Alaska.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report of the services performed by the steamer *Redondo*, when under my command, and cruising from Kodiak to Afognak Island to land stores, and then to Katmai to determine if a Russian priest and six other persons were still in that vicinity.

Friday, June 14, 1912, at 1 a. m., sailed from Kodiak for Afognak by way of Narrow Straits. At 3 a. m. it became necessary to anchor at Uzinki, Spruce Island, to repair a new oil-feed pump that was giving trouble. At 5.10 a. m., having made necessary repairs, up anchor and stood across Marmot Bay and at 6.30 a. m. anchored off Afognak. Landed Third Lieut. C. H. Dench and Coxswain W. Kinloch to take charge of destitute natives quartered there, and landed 450 rations for sustenance of those natives. Took on board a native who belonged to the Katmai tribe and was well acquainted with the region.

At 8.05 a. m., up anchor, stood around Whale Island, through Kupreanof Straits and down Shelikof Straits to Uyak village, arriving there at 6.30 p. m. Found only a small amount of dust, and all plant life appeared green and healthy.

Blew salt water and sand out of boilers and filled with fresh water. Received information that the Karluk radio station at Larsens Bay had received several radio messages from Cordova for the *Manning*, but had been unable to relay them. At 7.45 underway, stood out of Uyak Bay to the station at Larsens Bay.

At 8.40 p. m. arrived at station, but found that no messages were on hand for the *Manning*, but that they could be obtained by calling Cordova. I requested that this be done. This request was complied with, and beginning at 10.30 p. m. (the time their power was

available) several messages for the *Manning*, and for the Government stock ranch at Kodiak, were received. Messages also came in from the Naknek station giving conditions in that vicinity, and stating that many refugees were there from the mountains. The superintendent of the cannery informed me that the salmon run had been stopped around Uyak and Karluk, at least temporarily, by the great amount of sand in the water.

At 3.15 a. m. left Larsens Bay and stood down Uyak Bay and across Shelikof Straits to Cape Kubugokli. There the fall of dust appeared to be light; the westerly wind at the time of the eruption seemed to have kept the cloud of dust off to the eastward.

Stood along the coast to the northward but saw no houses or boats. At 9.50 a. m. anchored in Katmai Bay, near mouth of Katmai River. A party composed of Second Lieut. of Engineers J. F. Hahn and myself and five men started for shore.

At about one-half mile from the beach the floating sand and pumice stone was 4 inches thick, and close to the beach about 10 inches thick, and having been closely packed by easterly breezes, made rowing difficult and progress slow.

Landed and walked inland about 2 miles to the town of Katmai. This place was entirely deserted and no traces of recent habitation could be found.

The deposit of dust varied from 3 to 4 feet on the level, to depths of 10 to 15 feet in drifts. The dust lay in several distinct strata, namely, fine light gray, light orange, coarse black, and then dark gray. With the dust were a great number of pieces of pumice stone of all shapes and from 2 to 10 inches in diameter, and weighing as much as 4 pounds.

During the day a large black cloud, streaked with lightning, obscured the view to the northwestward, and a grayish cloud filled the valleys, volcanic rumblings were incessant, and were varied at times by loud reports, the earth trembling frequently.

A careful search was made for some distance around Katmai, but no trace of anyone could be found.

Then walked back to the beach and returned to the ship.

At 5.55 p. m. up anchor and stood along the beach and into the next bay to the northward to search for a family who lived there in the summer. Located the house but could see no boats or trace of anyone. This family had been outfitting at Cold Bay and from all indications it appeared that they had not arrived.

At 7.15 p. m. headed across Shelikof Straits for Uyak. At 11.40 p. m. arrived at Uyak and made fast to U. S. Revenue Cutter *Bear*. Went aboard and gave commanding officer all information on hand with regard to extent and results of the fall of dust. Put one man aboard the *Bear* as a pilot. Obtained water for boilers at cannery wharf.

June 16, 1912, 2 a. m. left Uyak in company with U. S. Revenue Cutter *Bear* and stood up Shelikof Straits and through Kupreanof Straits. Left the *Bear* off Whale Island and stood through Afognak Straits and came to anchor off Afognak. Landed to ascertain conditions.

At 12.30 p. m. underway for Kodiak, taking report of Lieut. C. H. Dench, and transporting eight persons who wished to go to Kodiak and who had means of support.

Stood across Marmot Bay and entered Narrow Straits. At 1.45 p. m. stopped at Uzinki to confer with Mr. O. Grimes, but found that he was on a trip to Kodiak. The water was good and food supply temporarily sufficient.

At 1.55 p. m. underway, stood through Narrow Straits and around St. George Rocks to Kodiak Harbor, arriving there at 3.50 p. m.

In conclusion I have to say that after hearing all available information and in view of the above explorations of the vicinity of Katmai Bay, I believe everyone had become frightened by the earthquake and had left the place before the eruption, and that no lives were lost in that locality.

Respectfully,

WM. J. KEESTER,  
*Second Lieutenant, U. S. Revenue-Cutter Service.*

Respectfully submitted with my official report, of which it forms a part.

K. W. PERRY,  
*Captain, U. S. Revenue-Cutter Service, Commanding.*

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U. S. REVENUE CUTTER "MANNING,"  
*Kodiak, Alaska, June 19, 1912.*

Capt. K. W. PERRY, U. S. Revenue-Cutter Service,  
*Commanding U. S. Revenue Cutter "Manning," Kodiak, Alaska.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report of work performed by the steamer *Redondo*, under my command, during a cruise over the area most affected by the eruption of Katmai Volcano on the 6th instant.

*Monday, June 10, 1912.*—One-thirty-five p. m., cast off from the *Manning* and stood out of Kodiak Harbor and through Marmot Bay and Whale Island Passage to Uzinki, Spruce Island, where anchored at 3.05 p. m. Landed, investigated existing conditions, and found that water was plentiful and but slightly contaminated by volcanic ash; health conditions normal, with no casualties; food supply sufficient for three weeks. Mr. O. Grimes, local storekeeper, reported that all men from Kizhuyak Bay fishing camp had returned and that all settlers in the vicinity had reported themselves safe and well supplied with food and water. As village did not demand immediate assistance, retained rations carried for later emergencies. Three-twenty p. m., up anchor, and stood out of Uzinki Bay and over to village of Afognak, Afognak Island, where anchored at 4.35 p. m. Investigation developed the fact that health conditions were normal; no casualties; water supply sufficient, though slightly contaminated with ashes; food supply short. Salmon were reported to have stopped running, the Government fish hatchery reporting the death of 8,000 fish due to contaminated water. Inasmuch as salmon is the staple diet of the natives and the supply was apparently shut off, I issued orders to Charles Pajoman, of the village, to supply all destitute natives with rations, he to be paid at a later date, or the rations to be replaced in kind.

Five-fifteen p. m., up anchor, and stood to Little Afognak, where anchored at 7 p. m. Ten natives were found in the village, no deaths having occurred and health conditions normal. However, the water

supply was greatly diminished, and but a scant quantity of food remained. Left 50 rations with chief of village and directed him to proceed to Afognak, where more food could be obtained.

Eight p. m., up anchor, and stood out of Little Afognak, and around Pillar and Tonki Capes to Seal Bay, Afognak Island.

*Tuesday, June 11, 1912.*—Anchored at Seal Bay at 8 a. m., having been delayed by very thick weather and heavy tide rips. Twenty-nine natives were found at Seal Bay and were without food. The water supply was sufficient, but muddy. Took on board the 29 natives, and at 1.45 p. m. up anchor and stood out of bay, the delay being occasioned by necessity of filling water tanks. Six p. m., arrived Little Afognak and landed 8 passengers with 50 rations, they wishing to secure their summer camp before leaving for Afognak. Six twenty-five p. m., up anchor, and stood for Afognak, where anchored at 8.15 p. m., and landed 21 natives from Seal Bay. Received report from Charles Pajoman that great distress prevailed on mainland near Kafia Bay, and at 8.35 p. m. up anchor and headed for that position. Ran slow speed through Kupreanoff Straits, owing to thick weather, then across Shelikoff Straits to Kafia Bay.

*Wednesday, June 12, 1912.*—Anchored Kafia Bay 2.30 a. m. Landed and found natives destitute, but apparently in normal health, and very badly frightened. Volcanic ashes had buried village to a depth of three feet on the level, closing all streams and shutting off the local water supply. Salmon were dead in the lake, and as it was apparent that the fish would not return for some time, I gathered all natives, with cooking utensils, bedding, and boats, and placed them on the *Redondo*. The village was comprised of natives from Cape Douglas to Katmai, seismic disturbances having caused them to abandon their usual camps and seek mutual protection at Kafia Bay. In addition to the refugees, found five natives employed by salmon fishery located at this point. From all information gathered from the head men, I judged that all natives along the coast had been accounted for, and therefore stood out of Kafia Bay at 10.30 p. m., and shaped a course for Uganik Bay, Kodiak Island, where a fishing camp was reported. Entered Uganik Bay at 10.30 a. m., and anchored. Found only 17 natives in village, who requested transportation to Afognak, where relatives could assist them. Received these natives on board and moved up to head of bay to speak steamer *Alitak*. Twelve-twenty, anchored at head of Uganik Bay, and conferred with master of the *Alitak*, who reported little disturbance to the westward, and that natives in that region were in no need of help. One-twenty p. m., up anchor and stood back to Afognak, where anchored at 8.20 p. m., landed all destitute natives, 114 in number, and quartered them at the Government schoolhouse in the village. Issued directions to Charles Pajoman to supply them, and all destitute natives, with necessary rations, under promise of payment. Received information that Russian priest of Afognak, with six natives, were in the vicinity of Katmai Bay before the eruption took place and were proceeding to the westward. As fuel was low, and no supply available, deemed it advisable to return to Kodiak before searching for the last party reported.

*Thursday, June 13, 1912.*—Five a. m., up anchor and stood to Kodiak, where anchored at 8 a. m., and reported on board the *Manning*.

In explanation of my action relative to the food supply at Afognak, I respectfully inform you that, inasmuch as the salmon have ceased

running, the staple diet of the natives has been removed, leaving them destitute. The natives have depended largely on the fish catch to sustain life, and, as they are not thrifty by nature, the catastrophe has left them without food supply and no immediate means of support. A few natives in the vicinity of Afognak have potato patches, but in view of the volcanic ash so covering the ground it is doubtful if any crop will be realized.

I have endeavored to assemble the destitute natives at one place to facilitate the issue of rations, and, in the case of the natives brought from Kafia Bay, I may safely state that without food or water the village was untenable. It is doubtful if any human being can live on the mainland for some time, owing to the lack of water and cessation of fishing. Further, several earthquakes have been felt on the mainland since the eruption, the air is more or less foul with sulphur fumes, and the future action of the volcano a matter of doubt.

As a résumé I may state that the *Redondo* transported 139 natives, men, women, and children, to Afognak, 114 being transported from a region that is dangerous to human life. At present there are no natives on the mainland between Cape Douglas and Katmai, the region most affected by the eruption, they having been transported to Afognak by the *Redondo*.

Respectfully,

W. K. THOMPSON,  
Second Lieut., U. S. R. C. S.

Respectfully submitted with my official report, of which it forms a part.

K. W. PERRY,  
Captain, U. S. R. C. S., Commanding.

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
Washington, August 9, 1912.

Capt. K. W. PERRY, U. S. Revenue-Cutter Service,  
Commanding U. S. Revenue Cutter "*Manning*,"  
Unalaska, Alaska.

SIR: From the official reports received from the commanding officer of the Bering Sea Fleet, United States Revenue-Cutter Service, and from other sources as well, it appears that during the recent eruption of the volcano known as Mount Katmai, in Alaska, you and the officers and men of the *Manning* performed gallant work.

While you could have put to sea at the commencement of the eruption, and thus taken your command out of the zone of danger, it is of record that you remained in port in the face of apparent destruction in order to give such aid as was possible to those on shore who had no means of escape, and that your officers and men welcomed your action.

The able manner in which you assumed charge of the surrounding country both during and after the catastrophe to the end that not only were all the people saved, but order was restored out of the chaotic conditions, compels admiration and deserves praise.

It is my pleasure, therefore, to commend you, your officers, and your crew for your heroic services on this occasion.

Very respectfully,

WM. H. TAFT.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
United States Revenue-Cutter  
Service

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30

1913



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1913

## ERUPTION OF MOUNT KATMAI, ALASKA.

Mention was made in the last annual report of the helpless condition in which the inhabitants of Kodiak, Alaska, and vicinity were left as the result of the devastation incident to the eruption of Mount Katmai on June 6, 1912. With the ruin of the crops, disappearance of the fish, all sources of employment destroyed, and many cattle killed during the eruption, the outlook for these poor people was anything but encouraging. On the recommendation of the President, Congress, with its usual generosity to the American people in times of great calamity, came to the rescue with an emergency appropriation of \$30,000. At the request of all branches of the Government concerned in Alaskan matters, the distribution of the supplies purchased by this fund was intrusted to the Revenue-Cutter Service. As several of the smaller villages were almost obliterated by the falling pumice and ashes, it was deemed expedient to centralize the inhabitants thereof at a new village, the houses of which were built and arranged along sanitary lines from the most improved designs for structures of the kind. This new village was named Perry, in honor of Capt. K. W. Perry, the commanding officer of the *Manning*, whose heroic services at the time of the eruption called forth a letter of commendation from the President of the United States.

Second Lieut. William J. Keester and one enlisted man were, by orders of August 16, 1912, detailed for duty at Kodiak, to take charge of the distribution of the supplies furnished by the Government from the emergency appropriation, and in a general way to supervise the restoration of the villages which had suffered from the eruption. It was deemed important for the future sustenance of the people that all of the milch cows which survived the earthquake should be cared for, and to that end sufficient quantities of hay, bran, etc., were furnished with the other supplies. Unfortunately the ravenous bears which infest Kodiak Island killed and devoured 10 of these cows during the early autumn.

By exercising the strictest economy in the use of the supplies and impressing upon the natives the vital necessity of husbanding their resources, the long winter season passed without undue suffering among the natives. In the spring over 15 tons of seed potatoes were

distributed among the native farmers to allow them to plant their crops for the ensuing year. Potatoes grow quite readily in this latitude, and with the fish obtainable in the summer form the staple articles of food.

On May 9, 1913, Lieut. Keester reported that all supplies had been distributed. There will be, in all probability, some people, such as the aged, lame, etc., who will greatly miss the Government assistance and be in need, but it is expected that these will be cared for in the future, as in the past, by their relatives. On the whole, it is believed that the natives have been tided over the worst part of the period of want brought upon them by the catastrophe, and that they are now again in a position to earn their own livelihood from the resources of the neighborhood. On May 9, 1913, Lieut. Keester reported on board the *Unalga* for duty, and the governmental assistance was concluded, with the satisfaction that all danger from starvation and want had been prevented through the timely assistance of the Government.