

# 1,000 km by DOGSLED

Northeast Greenland in 1940

by

Niels Haarløv



# 1,000 km by Dogsled - Northeast Greenland in 1940<sup>1</sup>

by

**Niels Haarløv**

Translated by Lars Christian Ingerslev

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This text is dedicated to Eli Knudsen, Corporal,  
The Northeast Greenland Sled Patrol,  
killed by the Germans 26th March 1943 outside Sandodden.

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<sup>1</sup>Published in *Tidsskrift for Grønland* (Greenland Periodical) August 1957 under the title *Fra Mørkefjord til København i 1940* (From Mørkefjord to Copenhagen in 1940). This translation has been prepared using letter drafts, notes, personal diaries, the original manuscript entitled *Southbound - a Diary from Northeast Greenland*, a reprint from *Naturens Verden*, (The World of Nature) 1941, under the title *En Foraarstur langs Grønlands Østkyst* (A Spring Journey along the East Coast of Greenland), and the 1957 published text, all by my uncle Niels Haarløv. Catherine Tate and Melissa Crawford provided editorial assistance to the 2004 edition.



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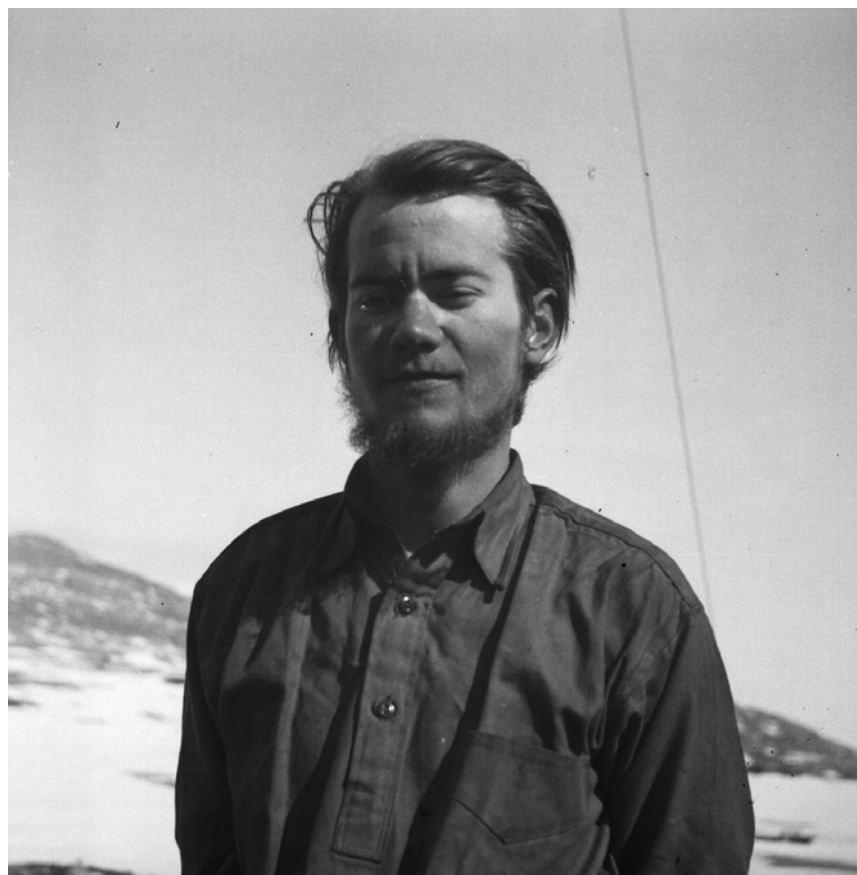


## Preface

### About the Author<sup>2</sup>

Niels Haarløv was born in 1919 in Rindum close to Ringkøbing, in western Jutland. His earlier childhood was spent in Haderslev, southern Jutland, where his interest in nature began. After the death of his father in 1931, the family moved to Copenhagen. After finishing high school in 1937 where he studied modern languages, Niels began his studies in zoology at Copenhagen University.

As a result of his early youth spent in the countryside of Jutland, it seemed very logical to him to get involved with insects and microfauna in soil. Of crucial importance to this was also an offer he received early in his studies in 1938 to participate in Ebbe Munck and Eigil Knuth's expedition to Greenland (The Danish Northeast Greenland Expedition of 1939-40), where he was to study creatures in the soil and to collect insects for the Copenhagen Zoological Museum. After spending the winter at Mørkefjord Station and following the occupation of Denmark by Germany, Niels sought to return to Denmark. It became both a difficult and an eventful journey home. As described herein,



**Figure 1** Niels Haarløv, the author, in 1939.

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<sup>2</sup>Information extracted from Vidensk. Meddr dansk naturh. Foren. (1988) 147: 139-149 by Erik Rasmussen

he and a Danish trapper both travelled by dogsled southwards to Scoresbysund, about 1000 km away. After his homecoming, first by ship to Reykjavik and from there to Spain, and then by air via Berlin to Copenhagen, he got a job as a volunteer, as he liked to call it, at the old Zoological Museum. There, during his first real year of studies, he busied himself with the specimens of soil mites brought back from Greenland. Already in 1942, he published the results.

His collaboration during this period with Dr. Tuxen became his lifelong inspiration in this field. Niels later played a very significant role in an expedition to Afghanistan in 1947. In 1949 he began his lifelong career at the Landbohøjskole in Copenhagen, a career that encompassed both farming zoology and veterinary zoology. He developed a method of lecturing that made him one of the best lecturers there, not least during his 20 years as professor. During his researches in Denmark into creatures less than 1 mm long, he discovered at least 100 species new to Denmark. He also made possible personally the creation of a private marine biology field laboratory in Isefjord, Zealand, Denmark. He published about 140 articles and a 4-volume textbook before his accidental death in 1987.

### From a 1939 draft letter:

I, Niels Haarløv, an M.Sc. student, became a member this year of the Danish Northeast Greenland Expedition, led by Eigil Knuth and Ebbe Munck. As the zoologist, I will spend the winter of 1939-40 at the Expedition's Station at Mørkefjord and will carry out the zoological work stated below.

The primary task of the zoological investigation will be both a qualitative and a quantitative investigation of the microfauna in the soil with special regard to mites and Collembola. Using traps built by Berlese, specimen collection will be made all year to the extent possible. On the basis of the material collected, which will be processed on the spot, it will presumably be possible to determine both the conditions under which the species in question spend the winter and their breeding periods. Measurements will also be taken of temperature, dampness and acidity of the soil layers in which the collected creatures are found. From these measurements, data will be obtained about the most important ecological factors of that area. On the basis of these, it might be possible to determine a degree of relationship between the ecological factors and the conditions under which the individual species expand.

Specimens will also be collected over as wide an area as possible of other land articulates as well as of land invertebrates. Freshwater fauna will be investigated and collected from freshwater. Skins and skeletons of as many birds and mammals as possible will be brought home. Parasites from birds and smaller mammals will be collected and investigated. As far as all fauna is concerned, biological observations will be made all year, especially concerning reproduction.



**Figure 2** My zoologist's tools



**Figure 3** Inbound to Greenland. This picture hangs in both Ziebell's and the author's homes.

## Outbound

### 9<sup>th</sup> July 1939

At exactly two o'clock on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July, the vessel Gustav Holm<sup>3</sup> left Trangraven in Copenhagen. A sizable crowd had assembled to bid us farewell. Besides the family, there were Svend, Schmidt, Møhl, Flemming, Bent, Erna and Emmy - plus Professor Spärck who came especially to say goodbye to me. The sizeable crowd of people and the fine breezy weather made the departure easy for myself and probably also for those staying behind.

When the crowd disappeared from our view, it gradually disappeared more and more from our minds; your thoughts, if one had any, were directed ahead. On the ship itself, there was also enough to keep one occupied. Once out in The Sound, we introduced ourselves and exchanged some introductory remarks. Besides the five of us going to Mørkefjord, namely Munck, Gitz-Johansen, Hvidberg, Madsen and I, there are about a dozen men to be set ashore at various Nanok stations located along the eastern coast. Director



Søværnets Operative Kommando

**Figure 4** Gustav Holm during an earlier expedition.

Jenov of the Nanok company has come along too, and, in addition to him, some of the management.

My cabin is intended for twelve people and there are ten. No effect of the vent can be felt, so, consequently, the air was thick and heavy last night. I felt it even more so because I am used to fresh air in the room where I sleep. What further affected the singular quality of the air was that there had been considerable smoking and drinking before we turned in. My berth faces across the ship and is uppermost, just to the left of the entrance.

The ship's speed is even and most of the time we use some of the sails. The sea causes a recognizable roll of the ship, though without my feeling any trace of seasickness. This morning I talked to one of the Nanok people for a couple of hours who was previously in Lauge Koch's service and from whom I heard some gossip about the other zoologists travelling to Greenland.

This evening around five, we anchored below Skagen, dropping anchor because we were warned that the wind out in the North Sea was Force 4 to 8, southwesterly, with hail showers, and that the forecast for the whole country was unsettled weather. We can see the harbor and have had the

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<sup>3</sup>Built in Copenhagen in 1893, the ship was extremely well suited to sailing in sea ice because the hull consisted of nearly 1 meter thick oak. It was rigged as a barkentine with three masts and had a steam-powered auxiliary engine of 230 HP.

most wonderful skies and cloud-scapes. I wonder whether the family in Skagen can see us? We have been split into two groups by the steward because the mess is too small to fit us all in together. Since the other Mørkefjord people were in the first group, I was also put there and transferred to a 4-berth cabin where Hvidberg, Madsen, a trapper and I live. The air will probably be a bit better here than in the 12-berth cabin where I caught a bit of a cold, my throat being a little sore and dry, but otherwise everything is fine.

I am lying in my berth, writing, and in to me comes not only the sound of a gramophone record where a man and a woman are singing an ardent duet with musical accompaniment, but also a carpenter's quiet discussion with some friends about the construction of a sled. The ship is rolling quite gently and one can hear the sea as a faint gurgle against the side of the ship; one misses the herring gulls' quite special and raucous "laughing" calls that fit so well into the mood out on the ocean when land is out of sight and one's innermost wish is to see it. The gull's strong colours exhibit some other strength than for example an ordinary Great Belt gull; it has a strength that fits with being quite alone out in the open ocean.

It's a real "male" trip that I am on; on the ship there isn't a single woman, and what men there are can probably be defined as 100% menfolk. You can see that on most of them just by their appearance and their long supercilious glances. From the way they talk, one feels it too (about hunting, weapons, towns and contempt for everything petty) and more especially so when one of them says that he has been a soldier in the Spanish Civil War on the lawful government's side (with the Republicans). Some have already been several times to Greenland, others have driven around Europe, etc. etc. But how pleasant and small Denmark is! I am talking to a fellow passenger, and it turns out that he is a student and journalist with Aalborg Stiftstidende [Ålborg Diocesan Times], and that he comes from Holtegården [Holte farm, 12 miles NE of Ålborg] between Langholt and Dronninglund and knows the family at Langholt very well [2 miles away]. He has from time to time been to auctions on the farm and has come along on the trip as the carpenters' helper.



**Figure 5** Onboard ship 1



**Figure 6** Onboard ship 2



**10<sup>th</sup> July 1939**

Today for the second day, we are lying at anchor, hove-to at the same spot below Skagen as yesterday when we anchored. The weather has been alternately overcast and sunny, with strong winds Force 7 to 8 that moderated towards evening. The day went quickly even though it has really been monotonous. Now and again one has long delightful discussions with one's fellow passengers; it is good to see to what extent they distance themselves from a dictatorship, especially from the Nazis.

I talked to one of the ship's carpenters who has been around, and after lunch had a discussion with Ries, the one that had been in the Spanish Civil War and who is Icelandic. According to him, Southerners are called "fegus" as term of contempt, Spaniards are



**Figure 7** Onboard ship 3

cowards, Italians are as important as dirt, German soldiers carried out a tremendous task during the civil war, and most Icelandic girls are beautiful and mostly sick. On the whole, one sees more and more on this shipload of men what terrible power women have; it is on account of them that the Nanok hunters travel home; if they only had their wives with them up in the cabins in Greenland, they would live there for ever. The ship's mascot, a pig that we are taking along to Mørkefjord, is the pet of everyone onboard and the subject of great attention from all of us. Much of the reason for that is probably as stated above – though without directly including the pig in the comparison – well, one seems to get an involuntary desire to allow the innate kindness that is almost always present to be extended to someone, and in this case it is the pig that was selected.

In Odessa, he, the Iclander, and his friends were taken around by "friends", who showed them a factory; when they had later to write a report to the "friends", they wrote that it was fine, but that the machines were foreign brands – the report was torn up at once. When they went ashore with their white collars and all nicely dressed, the children gave them a Soviet greeting with clenched fist and called them capitalists. The Tsar's summer villas at Odessa were outfitted with dance floors, probably especially for sailors among whom the Russians strongly spread propaganda, but if one wanted to go out with a girl, they would be stopped at the doorway by an armed sentry. At midnight everyone had to get up and sing the Internationale and then the dance was over. All this happened around 1930.

I remained standing awhile on deck after having spoken to the Iclander and watched the most beautiful sunset over Skagen, or rather the country a little south of town – the last, I suppose, for a long time over Danish soil, because now, when hopefully the wind slackens, we shall round Skagen and then we are in the Atlantic.

**11<sup>th</sup> July 1939**

We are actually still lying hove-to here in the Bight of Ålbæk. The wind force is still the same out in the North Sea, but the wind has backed a bit to the south which is only good. When I went into the 12-berth cabin last night with the diary, the journalist was serving rum in hot water with sugar. After

a while the rum probably began to work because we got into a violent discussion with birth control as the main topic. Some of the Nanok men reckoned that birth control was permissible, in that they made a comparison to the fox which, for example, bit the cubs to death when they were not in a position to raise them; but so much was said, especially by the journalist, that it is impossible for me to repeat it all; but there is a certain mood about having a discussion in a room like that with rum and the smell of tobacco and the gentle roll of the ship. Today we dawdled around on deck and have had a pleasant time, but after a little while one does begin to wish that one could get off the ship, especially since one can see Skagen town and hotel, and onwards to where high season is in full swing. My cold has settled in my throat and it is a



**Figure 8** Onboard ship 4

little sore, but then one is often out walking on deck and half frozen even when the sun is shining. If only the cold does not reach my ears; now and again they can hurt a little, but hopefully that will get better as I get used to that much fresh air.

That evening there was still no change in the weather. After dinner we had a fun game for which Gitz and Hvidberg together were responsible: Gitz drew on the deck a naked Eskimo girl whose characteristic body parts were given a value according to their desirability. With a little piece of wood one had to try and hit one of the numbers, and the one scoring the highest won. I discovered how unbelievably annoying or rather vain I really am; I did actually manage to finish third in the latter of the two games; in the first I was not placed at all – ha, ha!!! After that we sat down in the 12-berth cabin, most playing cards while I read.

They are very cozy, these berths, and if sometime I should die, I would prefer to finish up in one – maybe best from some kind of plague-like illness. Down here in the small rooms, a quite different and intimate atmosphere can develop than could for example in a large white-washed hospital room. One can get much closer to the dying person at the same time as fading mystically away in the shadow of the berth. Part of the reason for this pious hope is that the berths here correspond very closely to the picture I had as a child of similar ones on ships that were drifting abandoned around the Atlantic because down in their cabins the whole crew lay bloated with black abscesses, precisely those passages in novels about seamen that have always had an



**Figure 9** Onboard ship 5

attraction for me. The solid beams that everywhere travel the length and breadth of the ceilings of the cabins on Gustav Holm have a further ability to reduce the space in the room and compress it. Involuntarily, one thinks of the enormous burden that the beams must carry. There is also something

stressful about a room when it is strengthened with beams, not so much as bearers, but as an expression for the weight they must carry. It is therefore the room as such that has to endure the enormous pressure from all sides.

### 12<sup>th</sup> July 1939

This morning around 5 or 6 o'clock, I was awoken by a frightful noise. It was the anchor being raised. When we got up and came out on deck, Skagen already lay like islands in the sky over the horizon. The weather has been fine all day with light winds from the west that are now veering towards north and strengthening. It was so warm in sheltered locations on the ship that I sat in shirt sleeves. The day has otherwise been spent alternating between conversations with one's friends and reading Brødrene Askenazi<sup>4</sup>. It has been pleasant and enjoyable, but great experiences were not on offer. The waters up here are heavily trafficked, so much of the time has also been spent watching passing ships. An oil tanker was one of the most beautiful that I have seen; then two large *Kraft durch Freude*<sup>5</sup> liners passed us and out on the horizon we saw one of those nasty warships that currently are so common. Several times during the day I have to say quietly to myself "You are damn well on the way to Greenland"; It seems so strange to me that I find it absolutely necessary to remind myself of it. But now he (not her) is beginning to pitch so roughly that I would rather lie down on my back.

### 13<sup>th</sup> July 1939

The weather today has been sleet with moderate winds, swell and very poor visibility. The day so far (3:30 PM) has gone quickly and pleasantly with the planned meals, reading before lunch and sleeping after lunch; The deck has not been inviting for longer stays, so I have not really been talking to anyone. Part of the charm of a ship like Gustav Holm seems to be that one is in such close contact with the sea, wind and precipitation. The battle against them seems to become more personal when one must, for example, spend 2½ days hove-to in order to get good weather; all the difficulties are not left to a motor that makes one independent of the weather. One has to make a sacrifice oneself for the wind to drop. Our berth is in the bows, and after each sharp pitch one can hear the sound of water running across the deck above us. On the sides, the water hits with a hard thump and a



Figure 10 Onboard ship 6

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<sup>4</sup>The Brothers Askenazi, by Israel Joshua Singer, 1893-1944, Polish painter and poet, was originally written in Yiddish and is about the town of Lodz and the story of its inhabitants during the nineteenth century, heavily influenced by the German weavers that were enticed there by prospects of land and money.

<sup>5</sup>A subset of the national German labor organization *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* was the National Socialist Organization's *Strength through Joy*, designed for the purpose of providing organized leisure for the German work force. Wildly popular and affordable cruises on its own fleet of liners included trips to the coast of Norway. [www.feldgrau.com/KdF.html](http://www.feldgrau.com/KdF.html)

rustling sound. All that and much more, which to some extent is common to other steamers too, result in one feeling much more than otherwise how dependent one is on one's surroundings.

### 14<sup>th</sup> July 1939

Visibility today has been very poor with sleet and fog. I spoke for a long time this morning with a carpenter, Knudsen, and amongst other things got into his social standing; Through this, one clearly got the impression that the Social-Democrats are now out of date, the common worker is exploited for payments to the trade unions, sickness benefits and a lot more, so that one might as well be unemployed as employed. Income, if there is any, is the same. The workers pay to a strike fund and they are forbidden to strike! The money goes to the trade union's management that act like capitalists and exercise a pure dictatorship over the common workers. Otherwise time has gone by with a little chatting here and there, and reading Nordsagens (?) book, interrupted by a snooze between half past one and three o'clock. Breakfast is at half past seven, lunch at half past twelve, afternoon coffee at three, and the evening meal at half past six. As I am on the first sitting, I eat at these times whereas the other sitting eats half hour later each time. Now the foghorn is starting to hoot and he is rolling quite a bit.

### 15<sup>th</sup> July 1939

All sails except for the topgallants are now set and we are making good headway. Several new species of animal are visible: Gannets and arctic skua, and dolphins that play around the ship; but what is the zoological name for the dolphin? I certainly don't know!!! The sky is overcast. One could almost wish that there was a really furious gale. The idle life here onboard also affects moods; now and again one can find oneself becoming a little melancholic from time to time, though ones thoughts are not directed to anything in particular; it is merely like a mood that fills one, and for precisely that reason cannot be reasoned away because one does not have a particular place to suppress in that momentary feeling that dominates one. One vegetates easily from an existence where one actually only eats and sleeps; when one is awake, one can feel that one has slept, or what is worse, dozed recently. We seem to be making good headway with all those sails set; one feels how hard the seas hit the sides of the ship and, down below at the front end of my bunk, water is dripping so I have had to put a sick bucket there so that everything is not swimming when I go to bed.



Figure 11 Onboard ship 7

It is evening and now I am happy again! That happened pretty quickly after I had written the above. Maybe it was that I had written it down, maybe that I had afternoon coffee immediately afterwards, maybe a bit of both. Now that we have the sails set, there is quite a different speed on the hull. It cuts into the waves and throws them back with a contemptuous and supercilious air; then they rush away from the ship and, wise from their experience, they seek to hold back the wave approaching

the ship with a tearing, self-confident air by nestling its strong compliant body into the other and entangling its whirling hair into the other's. One has the feeling that one is making a terrific headway, but it hasn't become submarine sailing yet.

I can hardly get tired of looking at the sea. Like Boëtius once said, he could just sit and stare down into the water; one just stares and takes pleasure in the continuing changes in colour and form, and if one thinks about something, it is as if the thoughts go in gentle turns up a mountain with a lovely view. One cannot see small details clearly, but on the other hand one gets the most wonderful general picture. The mind does not analyse individual items but draws up the big picture. The sea seems to give inspiration; one does not get distracted by the surroundings and all one's attention gets caught by the sea, though it does not occupy one so much that it does not allow one to have things other than that in one's head. The sea is reminiscent rather of an imperceptible but definite guide to any thoughts that one has. There is of course a difference between those thoughts that arise when it is flat calm and those when it is blowing a gale!

A widely used and offensive nickname for an Icelander is the word "Kaskelai". Friess is the one who told us, but the source of the word is unknown. Now I am going up on deck to get some fresh air and then I will turn in. A sick-bucket is now nailed to the wall and catches the drips.



Figure 12 Onboard ship 8

### 16<sup>th</sup> July 1939

Today it really is Sunday weather, with wind Force 4-5 across the stern, sunshine, changing skies and mostly sunshine. During breakfast and for a while afterwards, we discussed the position that young girls take regarding ever-present admirers, such as whether it is immoral to let them go out alone with a young man or to let them camp with a hundred other couples, etc. Hvidberg could name some girls that had become strangely difficult after such excesses and he would not allow it; he considered that their future character was ruined. Hvidberg also considered youth hostelling to be immoral, not its original purpose but the way in which it is practised! These are problems that do not really affect me because it is quite impossible to give general rules as to whether the one is better or worse than the other. One must take a position for each individual case, and from its natural conclusion say whether one is capable of resisting those temptations that are destructive and which undoubtably will occur; but as I said before, it is up to the girl herself and that is what in the final instance her parents will say.

I talked to Gitz-Johansen later in the day. We talked about art and its peripheral areas. He complained especially that today's young artists cannot draw; they bypass that using the dummy excuse that it depends upon colour. It becomes a mess and a deference to the very use of colour. He also thought that a reaction against it would come. Willumsen thought he lacked feeling, and that is right: he had it when he was young, said Gitz-Johansen. But now he is a logician who paints correctly,

but it easily becomes a parade of pictures that do not get into the soul, like for example the Trilogy of Ikkepsen (?), etc. I got out of him that he considers Uncle Vilhelm is a competent painter, but not one of the greats, and about the Three Brothers picture, he said quite correctly that there was no coherence between the three gentlemen. The young, modern french art is sterile. He complained that people would rather follow what a reviewer said than the individual artists themselves. I do think that it is reasonable that people do not make a decisive judgement as to whether they like or don't like something; for the essence about a good painting is that the artist has put down so much of himself, that the painting as such can only be understood by someone who also has a little of the same in him as inspired the artist. (Professor Kuhr would probably agree with me on that.) He also pointed out the clarifying effect that photography had on the art of painting. Paintings merely need to resemble. The painting can then continue to work not so much in the direction of tracing the face, but rather to let it give expression for that disposition that the artist believes the victim hides. It almost sounds commonplace, but when someone (wasn't it Siefert?) has alleged the opposite. I must add that of course the painting has to be distinctive and becomes so automatically. Now I will please Poul Martin Møller!

One of the Nanok hunters said to me earlier, it was Hennings, that on his sled he always had P.M.M.'s collected works and for half an hour before going to bed he loved to read some poems or some of "Den krøllede Frits"<sup>6</sup>. During one snowstorm, he had read "Tine" twice.

### 17<sup>th</sup> July 1939

I have a terrible habit of blurting something out that later I will quickly see has been totally wrong. We had a competition to guess how far the ship would run during the night, and I picked too high a number without thinking properly about whether it could possibly be too high a number. It annoys me when I don't get placed, especially when I had correctly judged that it would be quicker than the previous night; but perhaps too it could be because the competition is the biggest event onboard. There isn't so much to distract one. The day is not filled with bigger events than that.

We are now nearing Iceland after three days of record sailing, 175-85 nautical miles a day<sup>7</sup>, but then we have also had a steady noreaster without heavy seas. Next year, when I get home and collect my pay, I will buy the Icelandic Sagas. After having been onboard this expedition ship with all its heavily armed warriors, one can more easily enter into the spirit of the mood onboard the vessels of that time when they set off from the mother island for the continent and back.

There is not so much talking now, down here in the cabins. Pen and paper has appeared several places so that the time while on Iceland is not used to write to "the dearest." I will only write to mother - it is more amusing for the more distant friends to receive letters and cards from Greenland - and maybe to Timmi. My relationship to her has recently appeared to be that I am head over heels in love with her, but in my heart it has been characterized by a calculated cynicism. I knew that I had to be equipped with a certain amount of erotism, and when she offered herself, I knuckled down and took advantage of the situation. It sounds brutal, but I must of course also remember that I really am very fond of her, and do mean those things I have said to her. Even so, I have been afraid of saying too much because I saw clearly that, as far as I am concerned, it would not last until after the

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<sup>6</sup>The *Curly Frits*, as it is often known, is Poul Martin Møller's 1824 book *A Danish Student's Adventure*.

<sup>7</sup>It is about 850 nautical miles between Hanstholm near Skagen and Seyðisfjörður on Iceland.



Greenland trip. On the other hand, she seemed to be in love with the situation. Some feeling of a lack of independence and admiration for “the man” on her part irritates me a bit. The first and last point also manifests itself in her lack of interest in a certain area that she might wish to get into; it may perhaps be due to her - conscious (?) - female qualities that are necessary to make a girl interesting and captivating, though in themselves alone they cannot make her so. But I must really not forget the great importance she has had for me.

It was her that ripped me out of the innumerable bonds of the age of puberty during the summer holiday of 1938, and thereby has given me practically a totally new life by opening a world for me which before was closed. How I have been delighted by her spontaneous, witty and intelligent way of conversing; yes, by her whole being which could never do anything other than make one happy and inspire one; and by her personality that lies behind all that she says and that has bound us together more than words could have done. She is good looking now, but in 30 years time? Of course different from now, but just as beautiful; she will not become as one might think. For everything that she has meant to me, I say thank you, and also for the last few days of sensuous love before my departure. If only you were sitting here beside me; I restrain myself against longing for you so that I could talk to you, but - but I would not be able to say a single word of what I would want to tell you. It is a good thing for me that you are not here because you would distract me, remove me from my real mission, hog-tie me with fragile chains as fine as a hair that would be impossible for me to break; here we are at the real reason why I don't think that our relationship can be sustained. It is for completely selfish reasons: you prevent me from going the whole hog, just because I love you so much - bunkum, hypocrisy!!

### 18<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> July 1939

A note on the characteristics of the Kaskelai is that they totally lack the concept that we call “hygge”. In Akureyri I had the following experience: When the ship had berthed, a young Danish-speaking lady came aboard and wanted to talk to a chemical engineer Fadum, but he wasn't there. During the evening, it was lovely weather, I met her in town, talked a bit with her and went for a walk with her around the town, up through gardens that Akureyri was very proud of and down into the town's most sought-after hotel, “Hotel Akureyri” Most of those from the ship had gathered in the same hotel. When sailors see a man and a woman together, they believe from their



**Figure 13** Onboard ship 9 - the butcher



**Figure 14** Onboard ship 10

own experience that sexual intercourse and the like are the only possible end result from that, so they were somewhat shocked when they saw me with her (Miss Jacobsen, a shirt cutter-outer). When the hotel closed, the time was only half past eleven, so then we took a short walk out of town to a power station located right by a waterfall, after which I escorted her home and I went down to the ship. I had gradually become a little fed up with her, besides which there was the obvious possibility that she was a hooker with the profession's diseases. It irritated me therefore a lot when I returned from Myvatn, to hear that she had been down to the ship to ask for me and said that she would return later, which she did around 8 or 9 o'clock. She stood on the quay and on the ship with a number of others from the ship. One of them (Laursen) talked to her and went with her, but parted rather quickly from her up at the cinema. I hadn't said anything, as she had asked me nothing.

After the town had been cleaned up like that, I went out into it at random; there I was caught by E.F. Møller with whom I talked zoology. When I was invited up into his apartment, I saw an old handwritten saga, a printed psalm book and a bible. He was a chatty, fine schoolteacher-type with a twinkle in his eye. From there I went down to "Hotel Akureyri", where Gitz-Johansen, Hvidberg and Madsen were sitting. After the hotel closed, I joined them for the walk back to the ship.

The next day, I met the cutter-outer in town, she smiled and wished me a safe journey. She looked really good, but was too mean for me. I was disgusted by her when I thought about two such delightful beings as Ingeborg and Timmi, with whom I would compare her, were I to behave with her as I do with them. Psychologically, it has been good for me because should I happen to yearn for the female sex on that green island, all I need to do is think of her - and be disgusted.

### 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939

Fog, wind, swell, slow speed and listlessness among the passengers after being on land.

### 23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> July 1939

Foggy weather without any noteworthy experience.

### 25<sup>th</sup> July 1939

This morning we saw the ice for the first time. Up until this moment, fog had lain on the sea and shut out distant views. Then when it lifted, a white edge that we were sailing towards and along stretched from as far as the eye could see in to land. A sound like that of the surf heard from a mile inland came from the ice mass. Occasional pieces of ice had the most delightful colours. One does not feel the cold, a degree or two above freezing, but my fingers are stiff and so I can't be bothered to write any more. It is now ten o'clock at night and except for a couple of hours, we have been sailing in ice. The weather has been very clear without a breath of wind. Flocks of little auks and many guillemots (and some razor-billed auks) still fly and swim past us. During the evening, a thin layer of new ice forms; the drift ice itself is fortunately very



Figure 15 Onboard ship 11 - nearing land.

scattered. I saw two seals and some small polar cod at the icy foot of a larger mass of ice. I won't even try to describe the green colour, let alone the blue-blue of the sea, ditto.

### 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> July 1939

The 26<sup>th</sup> July 1939 was the day I first set foot on Greenland, it was on the south side of Wollaston Forland [Sandodden 425-1, *The Sand Spit*]<sup>8</sup>. We stopped there in order to unload some of our cargo, sacks of coal and boards for the company Nanok there. I went ashore too, especially to catch insects. I think that I got most of the ordinary species except for the bumblebee, which I caught once but then it escaped. The place where they were caught was a continuation of the beach, almost equivalent to the

lowest terrace. The terrace above it was swampy and covered with grass tussocks between which there was open water; the following terrace extended into a plain exclusively covered with stones, here and there interspersed with soil patches and vegetation. The terrace with the stones was also very damp and at the same time the soil consistency was fine-grained; these two factors together provide the best conditions for polygon soil, which is very characteristic and common there. After I had run around a little in there, I discovered that I had dropped my glasses; I searched for them, but gave up



**Figure 16** Onboard ship 12 - in through ice.



**Figure 17** En route in to Loch Fyne.



**Figure 18** A barge made from two lifeboats.

<sup>8</sup>Source: For station numbers and historical notes, refer to: Peter Schmidt Mikkelsen: [Nordøstgrønland 1908-60, fangstmandsperioden](http://home4.inet.tele.dk/petersm/index.html), [Northeast Greenland 1908-60, the trappers period] Aschehoug 2001 with English summary: <http://home4.inet.tele.dk/petersm/index.html>. Nanok owned Stations Aalborghus, Bessel Fjord, Mønstedhus, Hochstetter, Zackenberg, Loch Fyne and Knudshoved. In addition, Hvalrosodden, Germaniahavn and Sandodden were used by Nanok since the company was established in 1929.



**Figure 19** Two horses are ferried ashore on it...



**Figure 20** ... and have to be coaxed off it in Loch Fyne.



**Figure 21** The third horse is unloaded.



**Figure 22** The horses are made ready on the beach.

the search without success. On the way back, at a spot where I turned around to look at the scenery, they were lying there 3 yards behind me and flashing up at me. It was almost as if mother nature had smiled at me.

The evening was spent putting the insects on pins and filling out case sheets for them. I went back there for an hour today, but caught nothing since I had specimens for most of the species that I came upon – but some I missed (the bumblebee, a black shiny one like a bluebottle). After talking to Gitz, I am now going to collect all the samples that I can get hold of. I also had a ride on one of the offloaded Icelandic ponies. I fell off once when it gambolled up a slope and my one leg got stuck in the lacing of the stirrup, but I did get loose and continued on without anything happening.

At half past ten we weighed anchor and have been sailing continuously until now, half past six, when we dropped anchor in the vicinity of Loch Fyne. At Eskimonæs [405], Teresias (Christiansen) was dropped off; some Eskimo men came out to fetch him, one of whom was very handsome. Tomorrow I will travel with the Nanok people on an eight-day trip to build cabins; hopefully I can then get a lot collected.

### 8<sup>th</sup> August 1939

Yesterday between half past seven and eight-ish, we returned from the Loch Fyne trip: On the morning of 28<sup>th</sup> July at about eleven o'clock, three horses, Harder, Baungaard and I all disembarked onto a barge made from two lifeboats joined by planks and were then ferried to the shore. After our safe arrival, we got on our horses and rode to the place where the goods had been put ashore the previous day and where we had to wait an hour for the others who came in the motorboat. We put pack saddles on the horses together with a little baggage, essentially our backpacks (rucksacks), while the boat took the remainder. We got no further than a little way into the moor before one of the horses began to go crazy and kick with both front and back legs because one of the girths had slipped too far back. As we still had problems with the saddles, we decided turn back to the motorboat and get the pack saddles off so that we could then ride the rest of the way. We did that, and at the same time Paulsen switched to the motorboat, he had come along with us until then – because as there seemed to be so much to photograph. This left three of us on the three horses. We set off on horseback along the shore of Loch Fyne. We managed across rivers and dry ground, but the horses could not carry us in soft mud, so we had to get off and pull the horses across. Because of that, the route became long and difficult, with only two or three rests of about five minutes.



**Figure 23** Onboard ship 13 - “the barber”



From the first Norwegian trapper cabin [*Norske Villa 373, Norwegian Villa*], we took a tin of dried milk that we enjoyed by a river, and from the next [*Mellemhuset 367, The Middle House*] we took some skonrogger<sup>9</sup>, which, incidentally, Harder had left behind during his time there. I have never seen anything more unappetizing and maggot-filled than those huts.

After riding for ten hours, we reached the place where the crew of the motorboat had unloaded, located on the southern side of the Ibaja River delta. Already there we received an excellent foretaste of the nightmares that awaited us. The entire mosquito population of the valley had swarmed



**Figure 24** Mellemhuset [367], well-outfitted small trapping cabin with roofing felt, earth bank and porch.

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<sup>9</sup>Sixteenth century three-cornered rye bread or rusks often used as sea biscuits, made from sourdough.





**Figure 25** Insects being collected at Loch Fyne, Clavering Ø behind.



**Figure 26** Bird's nest with an egg, Loch Fyne.



**Figure 27** The eastern shore of Loch Fyne.



**Figure 28** Hay sacks and boards on the beach.



**Figure 29** Tarpaulin used as a tent, with the wagon standing behind.



**Figure 30** Sunset over Hudson Land



**Figure 31** Companionship by the stove.



**Figure 32** How to protect against mosquitos.

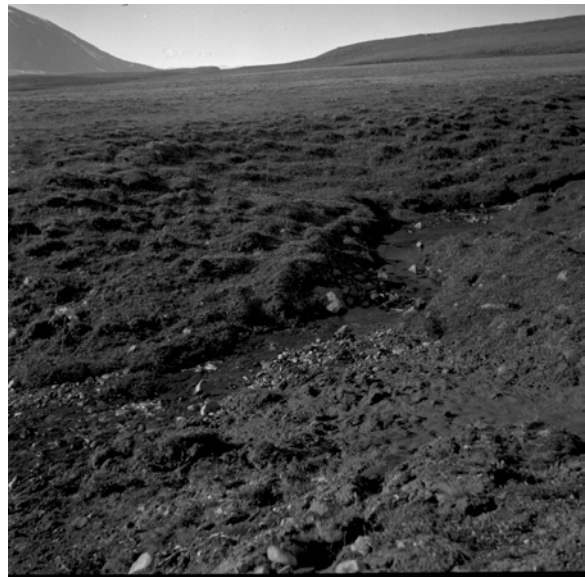
together to give us such a festive and localized reception as possible. Already from a distance of two to three km, we could see how the smoke billowed across the camp, but it didn't help, we were ruthlessly thrown into the embrace of the mosquitos. The crew of the motorboat disappeared with all possible speed and we were left to ourselves on the desolate shore. A triangle of hay sacks with a tarpaulin across and with a wooden floor with hay on was our refuge. Quite scandalous. Had we just had two good tents, we could have endured not only the mosquitos but also the rain on the last night.

The next day, I went alone for a long walk to find the way into Tobias Valley. I didn't manage it this time because I had gone too far north and because the maps were very poor. On the way, I met four men, two of whom were Newfoundlanders (stocky and tough), a cheeky young New Yorker and a fourth that I presume was Herdahl (see below). They had been sent out by the Norwegian Government to catch muskox calves for the Arctic exhibition in Bergen. Fortunately they had not got any. Later in the day, we saw them sail across the loch to the other side, opposite us, but without being able to see whether they were successful. I then got lost in the mountains trying to find Tobias Valley and wandered around in there for a couple of hours, but didn't dare go too far in for fear that the fog lying in wait on the mountaintops should close off all further visibility. At the mouth of the Herja valley, I went into the Danish Nanok cabin [Herjahytten 361, Herja Cabin], where I ate the food I had brought, a tin of sardines and some rye bread. As I had expected it to have been a Norwegian cabin there<sup>10</sup>, I went back down to the camp. We had a small get-together in the camp during the evening with rum, tobacco, and stories about the wolf-killer.

I decided the following morning to explore Tobias Valley more closely as I knew the way now. To do it more thoroughly, I would stay overnight in a cabin half way down the valley. I set off with provisions and the butterfly net; but when I had got far enough away from the coast that I could look down into and across the valley, I couldn't see any difference between that and the way I had just come. Furthermore, as I had seen a flock of muskoxen a little to the north of the valley and as the



**Figure 33** Another way to be protected.



**Figure 34** En-route to Tobias Valley.

<sup>10</sup>Niels should have been 7 km further east in Tobias Valley if he was to find the Norwegian cabin Tobias Dal (Vest) [360, Tobias Valley West]. The other Nanok cabin, Tobiashytten [359, Tobias Cabin], is 3 km even further east.

mosquitos were so annoying that in despair I smeared tomato puree over my whole head, I decided to go home via the muskoxen. Up on a spur sat a snowy owl; I crept up quite close to it before the white bird flew away. I now hurried down the mountain, over some marshy ground and part way up the other side; down there by a lake were the first muskoxen that I have seen, four with a calf. It was open country, but I had the lake between us. A dignity and pride without equal characterized them when they walked forward with their sad faces and their long, black, silky, glistening hair swaying in time with their legs. The mother of the calf still had much of her winter coat. When I whistled, they became anxious and broke into a pig-like gallop up the hill and disappeared. I then turned for home and reached there as the others sat eating their evening meal.

Then followed the usual evening with a small get-together. The previous evening, the others had attempted to haul some of the timber in to one of the cabins inland, but with the result that both horse and wagon got completely bogged down. The intention of our expedition was, in fact, to transport two huts into the valley using the horses, one hut being 35 km in – over up-and-down countryside with impassible boggy terrain in the valleys. Of course that had to be abandoned. Nothing else new had happened. Since night-time was the only time that was free of mosquitos, we decided to sleep during the day. When we were up, we sat for most of the time and talked, or went and moved a board somewhere so that we could move it back again half an hour later. The boards for one of the huts were placed inland for collection during the winter so that they could be transported in by dogsled to their destination. A porch was built for the hut described previously, and the rest of the boards were sawn up for traps that Harder and I drove inland a couple of kilometres. I caught a good many insects initially, 84 altogether, especially when we were up during the warmest hours of the day.

We were six men altogether, of whom the “Wolf-killer” was the leader, without being “The Leader” [Der Führer], and he was the one who had the most character. He had been a hunter and a forest worker in Canada, was born and grew up in Sørup and was very fond of Uncle Wilhelm and Lauritz (A.H. Tetens), especially the latter. He is clever, and when it counts, he is not afraid to “bend over backwards,” and he tells his stories with double-meanings. He hated all untruths and complained about corruption in Greenland being as bad as at home. All in all, he was typical of the most engaging



**Figure 35** The countryside was unsuitable for the horse cart.



**Figure 36** A pleasant evening by the beach.

form of manliness. Up here, he was at odds with the Norwegians despite associating with them on a friendly footing.

The Norwegian trappers here are sent out if not directly then indirectly by the Norwegian State. Despite being expressly forbidden, trapping using poison is rampant here. The trappers obtain the strychnine through sailors from countries that do not have a prohibition against its purchase. On our way home, we found three foxes killed by poison around a depot (in a field containing poison), and later three poison-otters, sticks on which there is poisoned bait (grouse, for example). Though most deny trapping with poison even though they do it, the Danish State does not step in against them. Judging from the results of the trapping, it means that the Norwegians catch about 100 foxes when we catch 30 to 40. A number of the poisoned foxes disappear, for example, when there has been a snowstorm, and if the poison stays through the summer, many worthless [unwanted] animals also perish. In the long run, it is hard on wildlife. Besides this stiff competition, the Norwegians behave shabbily and unsportingly towards the Danes. For instance, Herdahl, mentioned earlier, had made a hole in a drum of kerosine (paraffin) at a Danish depot so that all the liquid was lost, and they often steal from the depots. Furthermore, they have the advantage of being so primitively focussed that they can live in the most wretched cabins. Taken as a whole, one can say that they show such an ignorance and cheek that they do not deserve to live in Greenland.

The landscape around Loch Fyne consists of dreary basalt rocks that are heavily weathered. The most beautiful that I have seen was a type of red lichen that covers almost all stones.

Today we are anchored in front of an ice plug just outside Franz Joseph Fjord on our possible way in to Ella Ø. In Loch Fyne valley, we had often seen the amusing sight of heavy and threatening clouds gathering over the mountains, but when they came out over the valley, they split into smaller sections and finally evaporated totally away (like those described by Karen Blixen in *The African Farm*).

### 9th August 1939

Rain, heavier rain, drifting ice, pack ice and wind; this is the menu for the day. We have again dashed northwards after having tried to get into Franz Joseph Fjord, but without luck. I have spent most of the day reading the book that Timmi gave me, "*Sangen om de lyse nætter*"<sup>11</sup>. Those types that one meets out in the country, the farmer, the farmer's wife, the old servant and the older unmarried members of the family, are gathered on Horsager Farm. However, they appear to be mostly caricatures, in that only the most characteristic sides of those people are portrayed in detail. The author does not let them reveal themselves; they seem to be much too proper for them to live in one's imagination. However, after Hans dies, we also get to know his wife from sides other than that of the dutiful wife and the father exposes himself with the particulars of Hans' death. The servant's life has probably really been filled with other people all his life, so I would quite like to withdraw what I wrote above, and say instead that the things that really characterize this part of the book are the very real portrayals that stand out so clearly.

The sterility of the professor's family is convincingly and characteristically described, she seems to be the driving force in it, and Iver's marriage is easily understood. In the same way that he is a dreamer that is never satisfied with his own life and must live an everlasting self-confident life, both his brothers become dreamers in the same way, each in their own field. The one wants to expand

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<sup>11</sup>*The Song about the Light Nights* is Willy-August Linnemann's first novel, written in 1939.

the borders of Denmark as far down as the River Eider<sup>12</sup>, the other is a pan-German (“Germany great in numbers, but not in mind”), but farcically the pan-German is spineless. Iver has restlessness in his blood, probably stemming from his father, but without his ability to restrain it as he does. His monologues, his writing down of thoughts, his compulsion to work overtime, all these seek to work off his unrest and his craving for including everything. Hans can be set as his counterpart, who, with at least just as many talents, steadily and organically carries out his work. (Everything, with the good, the bad and luck, is very unclear and probably some nonsense.) War is coming and as a need, he vegetates to be able to endure the mental hardships to which he is exposed and as a consequence of which he can make do with substitutes for many of life’s most important phenomena. But then after the war, then the book falls totally apart, disintegrates in Petersen, Knudsen etc. Chaos! No imperceptible, organic guidelines as before. The characters are continued only thus far. Signe Horsager is young and beautiful, and all this is too stimulating to handle with a wintering in mind, also much too difficult for me. The language is too pretentious at times. The very last about Nazism is again good, but not as a novel considered of value.



**Figure 37** View northwards along Loch Fyne with Hudson Land to the left.

### 10th August 1939

We have now given up entering Franz Joseph Fjord and are on our way north towards Eskimonæs. The weather is sunny, tidy ice and beautiful blue water. I have felt somewhat tired today and have slept a while. The evening was rich in colours, absurd sea ice, spouting whales and a thin layer of fresh ice.

### 11th August 1939

This morning we dropped anchor outside Sandodden [425-1]. Around ten or eleven o’clock, Gitz and I went ashore and caught only a few insects since their time is ebbing away now (it was sunshine today). Later we went into the trapping cabin and had a cup of coffee with Harder and Baumgaard. Baumgaard had of course been with the motorboat crew that started the same day that we left Loch Fyne. One of the towed boats had sunk and they themselves had drifted out to sea in the large boat and could easily have perished. That is a typical example of Director Tinsel-Delight’s travelling circus, which is what we call Director Jennov and all his trappers and horses. He is a true parody of an expedition leader and if I ever have to lead an expedition, then I definitely know how it should not be led. Besides that, not much else has happened today. Most of the time, I have been reading Sigurd Hoel’s book “A day in October” which has given me a reason for good thoughts, since I am not

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<sup>12</sup>The River Eider separates Schleswig from Holstein and was the early mediaeval border between Danes and Saxons. Holstein was eventually incorporated into Denmark. Both provinces were lost in the war of 1864.

always in agreement with Dr. Ravn. Today, for the first time, I experienced Greenland sled dogs and their distinctive barking.

### **12<sup>th</sup> August 1939**

At around six o'clock, the whole Nanok "expedition" returned home; I don't know exactly what the result has been, but already it appears not promising. Soon afterwards, at noon, we weighed anchor and sailed to Eskimonæs where we had to fetch two Swiss, Paulsen and two Eskimos together with their dogs; they all go to Scoresbysund. To complete the circus, we took a polar bear on board that the Eskimos had caught at a lair where the mother had been shot dead. We were entertained handsomely by Christiansen, Jensen and Paulsen, who gave us wine, coffee with bread and cigars. The station looked very cozy and inviting.

Around five o'clock, all cargo was stowed onboard and we set our course northwards. If only the ice would get out of the way so that we can sail all the way in, at least to Hvalrosodde! By visiting Eskimonæs Station, I experienced for the first time a real feeling of being on an expedition to Greenland; an indescribably happy and thankful feeling filled me. If only I can now manage fully satisfactorily those tasks I have been given, then the coming year will be an experience of note. I would rather have personal regrets than reduce my scientific tasks, if they deserve that designation.

Today I discovered for the first time that even animals in cages are dangerous. Until now, I have had only moderate respect for wild animals behind bars, but today when I put my knee between the bars of the polar bear (Nanora), so that it stuck in less than an inch (1-2 cm), it grabbed it with a movement like lightning and gave me a bruise on one side of my kneecap.

### **13<sup>th</sup> August 1939**

In along the shore, the ice is firm and continuous, but further out it is scattered. We cannot reach land and must go east of Koldewey Island. Excellent weather. I have an unexplainable desire to tease the captain with "The ice is designated as an area of outstanding natural beauty". Writing letters home. We are not allowed to touch the polar bear.

### **14<sup>th</sup> August 1939**

Fog, heavy rain, ice, one degree above freezing - weather to stay in our bunks.

### **15<sup>th</sup> August 1939**

The weather is almost like yesterday. My literary works have been to write letters to mother, Keiding and Boëtius. I won't write to Timmi; she must definitely believe that I am not thinking too much about her. In that way she can be more free when I am out of town and I myself can be the same, and I don't want to make her think that I cannot live without her, etc. Right now at midnight we have anchored off the station at Danmarkshavn [628-1]. Goodnight!!



**Figure 38** Unloading the dogs 1.

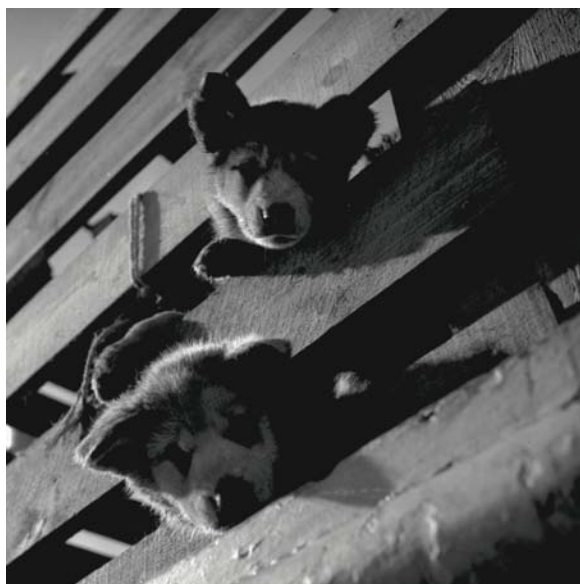




**Figure 39** Unloading the dogs 2



**Figure 40** Unloading the dogs 3



**Figure 41** Unloading the dogs 4



**Figure 42** Onboard ship 14 - dogs.





**Figure 43** Stormbugthytten [631] (?) at Danmarkshavn.

## **The Mørkefjord Period: My Work in Greenland**

### **20th August 1939**

The ship has gone and I am in full swing with my work. Gelting has really helped me to explain the plant communities. I have taken samples for the Berlese funnel and discovered today that I will carry out similar tests in fresh water. I am very busy, hence very brief.

### **21st August 1939**

During the morning I made a map of Area "I" and marked it out using bamboo sticks. I have given up taking samples from the bed of the lake because I have no instruments for it and besides, it is outside my scope. But in no time at all, I did take samples on land one metre from the edge and, with a small net that I had, I fished in the adjacent ponds that were only inches deep. During the evening, I took up the net which was filled with catch. I was at the ponds until three o'clock. After that, I went around right by the house and took some samples and checked the thermographs. During the evening, I sat and processed the material.

**23rd August 1939**

Yesterday I had a fire in my room, caused by one of my kerosine drafting lamps [no electricity]. Thus I spent the day repairing the damage, collecting bed samples and fished a little, amongst other things for apus. I collected samples again today, and during the morning I dragged up walrus meat and fished. I caught a planaria alpina in the apus lake. I examined the results from the Berlese<sup>13</sup> funnel sieves; couldn't find any creatures, presumably the reheating occurred too quickly – or is my work a fiasco????!!!.

**24th August 1939**

Took acidity tests all day. A cold job, but never mind. If only I could have driven a whole lot of creatures out of the sieves! Oh, if only I could! Saw an acorina [parasite] at a snow lair, so they really are here, but why don't they come then? I must take my time and wait, I suppose.



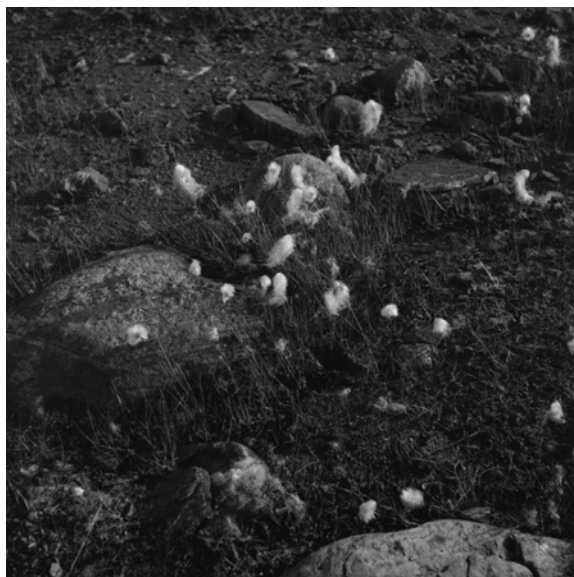
**Figure 44** Spring flowers at Mørkefjord with the Orienting Islands in the distance.

**25th August 1939**

How is it going to go with my Berlese funnels? I am so afraid that the smell from the lamps will be too rank. If only it would succeed. Come, acorina, you holy creature!

**26th August 1939**

Today, one of the sieves has produced a whole lot of collembola [springtails], but there is something else, and the other sieves - what about them? When one of them gives good results and I treat them the same, then one would think that my technique is correct, but I ask myself so many questions that I cannot answer. I sleep restlessly during the night, partly because I am afraid that the lamps will cause accidents, partly because I am anxious that the whole of my stay up here and the money spent on me may have been a waste of time and I will come home like a false hero; my greatest wish is to become a distinguished scient-



**Figure 45** Flowers 1.

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<sup>13</sup>A Berlese funnel is a device that enables entomologists to separate the active stages of insects and other small invertebrates from a sample of moist soil, humus, compost, or leaf litter. The sample is placed in the funnel where it dries out over a period of days. Organisms living within the sample tend to move downward to escape desiccation and eventually fall into a container of alcohol beneath the funnel.

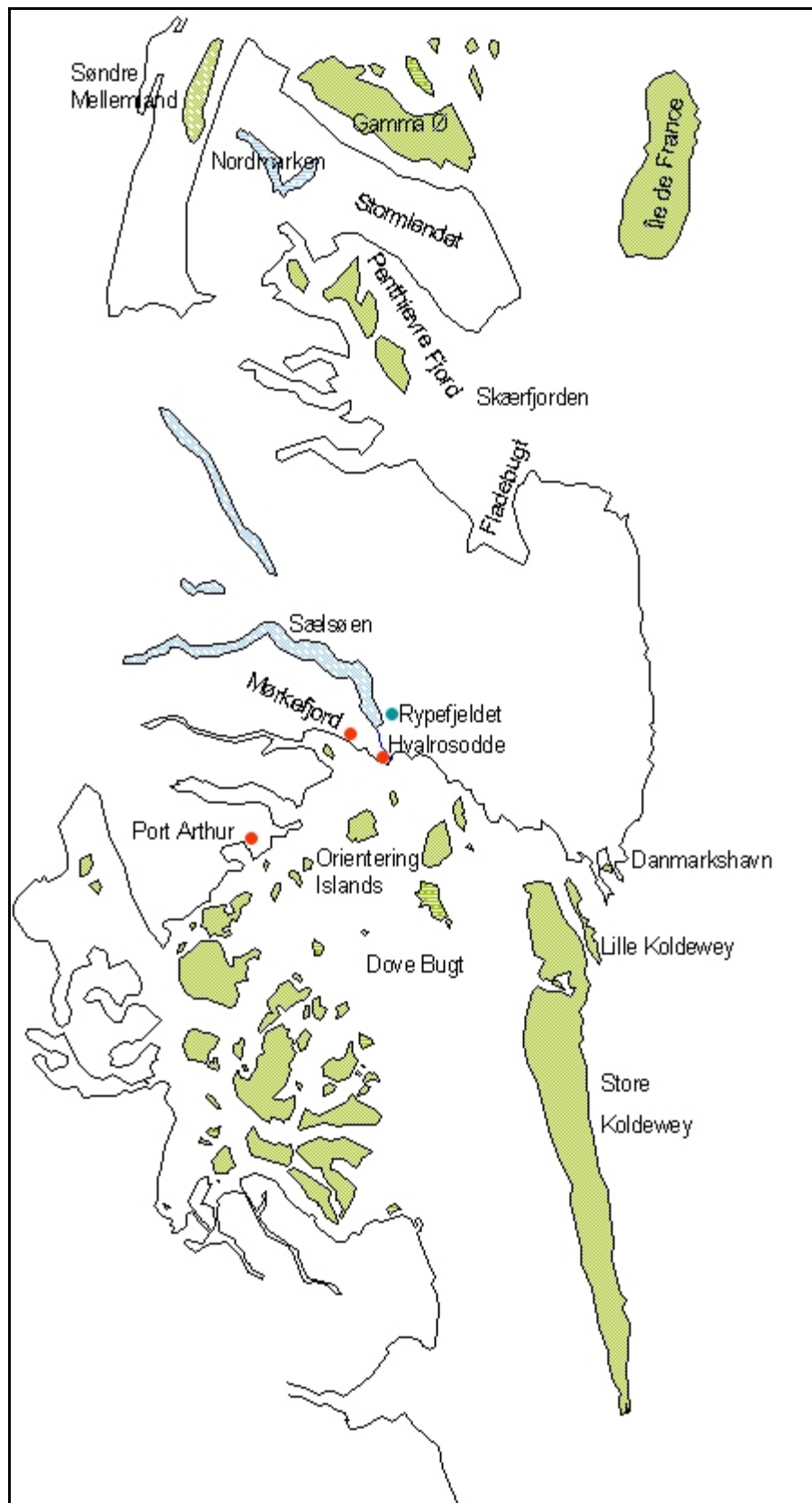


Figure 46 Map of Mørkefjord Area  
25

ist, but do I really have the talents for that? I really am particularly alone up here, even though those that I am with are hugely decent to me. It is a tremendous independent assignment into which I have been thrown. My greatest wish is to be able to return home next year on the “Gustav Holm” with every right to be satisfied with my work. The only one from whom I am really asking for help is the force of nature up here; you could call him God if you will. Perhaps I am not doing enough to be able manage completely alone, instead thinking of my assignment and the enormity of silent nature that surrounds me.

When I go for my walks out across the plain, there has been a raven following me the last few times. When I lie on the ground, it comes so close to me that I can clearly feel the whirr of its wings and when I leave, it settles on a rock and croaks or rather wheezes hoarsely at me. It is very ominous - I never see it coming and going - it is as if it expects that I shall soon lie dead. That one feels so insecure about it may also be because one cannot pick out its eye so that it seems that either it cannot see or sees with its whole body. You who have not been up here will be unable to understand that and will think it is my imagination, but for you others and especially for those of you for whom everything fails, you will understand me!

### **27th August 1939**

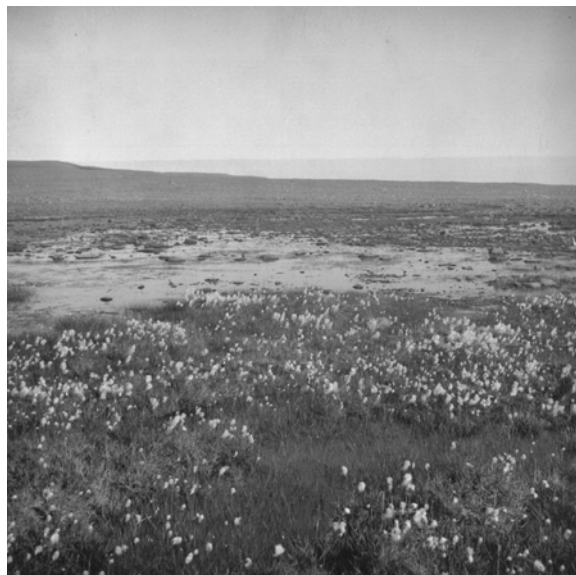
I can see in my collection glasses that I have caught something, at least some collembola. To see them lying on the surface is nearly as delightful for me as the evening light up here. By the way, I was on a hike to Sælsøen (Seal Lake, see map) in the most wonderful sunshine while I looked for both a depot that Gelting had installed and some walrus skeletal parts, both of which I found; a rib cage down by the river was the best preserved. The raven was there. I arrived home later in the afternoon and have been fiddling around with and discussing possibilities for the layouts of the cabins. In preparation for that, I have been trying to crack a dog whip - I cannot, it is not that easy.

### **28th August 1939**

I have changed the specimens in the warm water funnels today, dug a narrow trench and took soil specimens at a depth of 20 and 25 cm. A warm föhn wind has been blowing, which dries one out quite terribly, but it does give splendid weather. Apart from that, nothing much has happened.

### **29th August 1939**

Today, I took samples from all the different types of area around here, altogether 18, one for each 500 m<sup>2</sup>. (...) is uncertain, one for each 1000 m<sup>2</sup>, since some plots of land can easily be isolated so that a dry crust forms on nearly all sides at once to prevent small creatures escaping. With a more coherent layer, the drying out would be mainly from the surface and from the periphery inwards towards the middle so that the tiny creatures have much greater freedom to move.



**Figure 47** Flowers 2.

I expect a lot from this series that also shows conditions before the frost really sets in. Hvidberg and Ziebell are out hunting in the fine weather while Madsen and I have had a pleasant time together alone at the station. After I finished taking the samples, I practised shooting and cracking the dog whip, on which there is progress. I am in a good mood and hope with all my heart that my soil investigations succeed, as long as winter can wait a little before coming.

### 30th August 1939

I began the series of Berlese tests beginning with T(...) today. I am very anxious about the results. If only they are right. The fine weather gives good insect catches, and I am particularly concentrating on diptera. The hunt yesterday resulted in a walrus and I have helped with the flensing and hanging the sectioned pieces up. Everyone has gone to bed and I will too now: Goodnight!!!

### 31st August 1939

This morning, I dug out and investigated further some narrow trenches, but found nothing of interest to me. Groundwater level is very high at the polygon rings. On my wanderings to look for good trenches, I also reached my freshwater areas, some of which were completely dried out because they were fed from a spring. The soil is very porous to water on account of the preponderance of stones; a number of places one can see water disappear without trace into the ground. After lunch and during coffee, I hunted with really good results. There is an ichneumon fly at almost the same place as yesterday, that is apparently almost unable to take off, but which nevertheless is quite impossible for me to catch! During the same period, I extracted samples from the Terrace II area to be Berlesed in the natural funnels, thereby having comparison material for the warm water funnels. I hope now to have overcome the start-up problems, but I am still very anxious about too rapid an increase in temperature and too high a temperature. The initial temperature is about 20°C also because the samples have been standing a little while in the room; during the subsequent hours, the temperature rises slowly to 30°C and holds more or less steady there.

At this moment, says the radio, there have been conflicts at the German-Polish border; however, we do not want war, or at least we must not get involved in it. It is a pity for mother; she is the one I long for most of all; I can now feel how much she means to me and how infinite her love is for the three of us. There is no mother like her.

### 1st September 1939

Now war has really broken out!

### 2nd September 1939

I have made Berlese tests in Cassiope Heath at different depths. For the rest of the morning, I caught insects and did target shooting with my 67-er. After lunch, I tried using the casting net in the triangle, but without particularly good results. At least I kept it

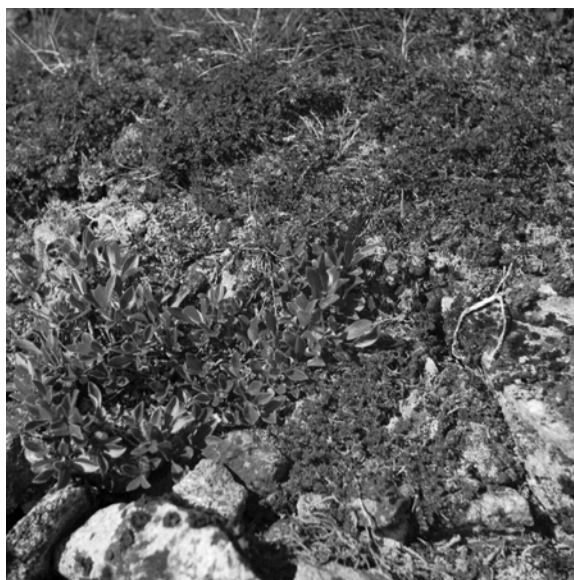


Figure 48 Flowers 3.

afloat at a particular height using a tin, but there was probably no life in the pond anyway. I used twine instead of the rope that was intended and it seemed to work much better. I drank coffee and made a Berlese from Location V. I had my evening meal and am now treating the material I collected. Madsen and I have been home alone, the other two have been out hunting. I can now hear the motorboat and want to go out and see what they caught, if they did so.

### 3rd September 1939

I have taken a double set of Berlese tests from everywhere except the stone field at Rypefjord (Red Grouse Fjord) because I cannot be sure of the weather and so have ensured potential product for



**Figure 49** Mørkefjord Station upon arrival

several days ahead. The one set of tests will go into the natural funnels as controls for the warm water funnels. The weather continues otherwise to be fine. Madsen has repaired the antenna. Hvidberg made the most wonderful meal, partly with blessed Sofus. Ziebell has skinned the seals shot yesterday (fjord and bearded seal) and prepared their meat in ways that he thought up. A pleasant Sunday, but — the war: if only mother can bear all the many anxieties that probably now pour in over her. There is a bitch here that in her frantic and motherly love of her three lovely young ones, quite without consideration to herself, always reminds me of mother.

### 4th September 1939

This morning I drew plankton samples from the apus lake. This afternoon I went up onto Rypefjeldet (Red Grouse Mountain) and down here, I changed thermograph paper. It is difficult to make them match the time exactly. Otherwise one cannot help but think of the war, of those at home, whether

one will get home next summer and so much else. It divides one somewhat, but one must try to concentrate on this moment and enjoy and exploit it to the greatest extent possible.

### 5th September 1939

I took Berlese samples at different depths in the thermograph meadow; I noticed that there is mould on several of the samples I took. If Hanner has had samples for six weeks in tightly closed boxes from the edge of a lake and does not complain about the effects of mould, then I think also that perhaps it has no significance; I am not so afraid of the mould as such, but that there is a basis for the formation of mould, which means a change in the natural conditions and furthermore this probably changes the degree of acidity as well, according to what Gelting states. For the rest of the morning, I helped Ziebell carry coal up to the house. After lunch, I changed out the Berlese samples and after that went out on the plain to a pond "Great Lake", because I found a very large apus there (or are they called lepiduris arcticus [tadpole shrimp]); it is larger than the apus lake and I took samples to test for plankton in the remote expectation that I could find a planarie [flatworm] and a dytiscus [diving beetle], but it was no use.

Two puppies followed me out there, I thought they should be allowed to have fun running around in the countryside, remembering Thorson's description of how a puppy came out to him during the winter while he took samples for plankton in his little hour out on the ice; but suddenly I see five dogs or wolves on the other side of Great Lake. I call to them and see that it is the two old ones from Hvalrosodde that stay by the lake and three young ones that unabashed follow me all the way home. It reminded me of the descriptions of people that are pursued by wolves. When I turned around, they stopped, but ran after me when I went on. Neither they nor I got a warm welcome at home here, because I had made the station dogs into roamers and brought three strange dogs with me. That soon passed and it is only reasonable that Hvidberg was unhappy about getting them here on the station. This evening, I treated the materials I brought. Goodnight.

### 6th September 1939

I changed out the Berlese in the dry funnels this morning. I am particularly anxious to store the wet samples in tins for a longer period. There was today, for example a sample from 28th August that was covered with mould. Otherwise I helped with jobs around the station.

### 7th September 1939

I changed out the Berlese samples this morning in the dry funnels. It really is not impressive what small creatures one can find using a magnifying glass, but then it is late in the year. For me the exiting time will come soon because the small creatures must soon decide how to spend the winter. Just before noon, I took samples for the wet funnels for tomorrow. After lunch I was out at the apus lake where I fished for



**Figure 50** The dogs at Hvalrosodde Station.



water creatures for an aquarium that I want to have in one of my large glasses, partly to see how they behave, and eventually to have a little life around during the dark period. I also have an apus, but for the time being I will keep that in clean water because it chokes in muddy water. It is quite wild about coming over in all that warmth. It is blowing quite a bit and it was a cold job fishing in water only 1½ degrees above freezing. I took a sample for the Berlese at the lake and two at a bird stone on the way home. Up until dinner, I larded my dog whip.

After dinner, I dealt with the material I had collected. With my indescribable clumsiness, I knocked over a collecting glass containing those mites that I could see. That sort of thing makes me extremely depressed, partly because of the direct loss and partly because I can do things like that. Then there was also something a bit wrong with the numbering, that immediately makes me believe that all the numbering is wrong because I cannot confirm that it is right, but it probably is; I have been thorough with it; The mess I mentioned above was something I knew would happen and could have been avoided with sufficient aforethought at the time. But now – goodnight. If only that damned war would soon end, mother keep herself both physically and mentally well, and my research be completed very successfully.



**Figure 51** Flowers 4.

### **8th September 1939**

Erected double windows, added water to the funnels and changed out a number of Berleses. There will not be much in some of the funnels due to the ground soon being frozen and the consequence thereof for the animal kingdom. Straight after lunch we chased away some of the Hvalrosodde dogs that the three puppies and I had dragged home. The two ran with the others, but the third either went far out to sea, rolled up into a ball on the ground or hid behind a rock because it thought we could then not see it. When we had gone home again and been there a couple of hours, it turned up again at the station. It had a really stupid slave disposition. On the whole, the dogs here are very encouraging inasmuch as they learn much about human nature. After the chase, I helped with spring cleaning the main room, my job being to clean the windows that Gelting in his mosquito tantrum had covered with glue to catch the sweet creatures. I help as much as possible with work at the station, it is absolutely the wisest, when we are so few. I say thank God we have been lent so filthy a house that the others, and really to some extent also I, can have something to work with and when the work is over, take pleasure in the fine results and then have the feeling of a job well done.

### **9th September 1939**

I completed my window cleaning so brilliantly that no one can see what I have done. After coffee, I went for a walk up at the apus lake to get an apus for my aquarium. The first one died before it got there. The ice now covered the whole lake, about 1½ inches thick, so it was only by breaking a hole



in the ice with a stone that I could get hold of one. The catch was rather lifeless, but has now livened up very much in here in the warm. I measured the water temperature under the ice at the shore in the sunshine and it turned out to be 2°-3°C. Animal life also turned out to be quite normal with water fleas and apus, some of which by the shore were frozen into the ice. I took one home to see whether it would eventually revive. The weather is fortunately fine with sunshine and calm winds, but cold weather is clearly approaching even though the migrating birds have not yet left; the river in which we wash each morning is nearly frozen solid and we must break a hole in the ice in order to get washing water. Yesterday, I saw a mite right up at the ground surface below a single ball of muskox turd. I have just been up to remove the thermographs because a storm - perhaps a snowstorm - is expected.

### 10th September 1939

I have taken Berlese tests and pottered around the station and enjoyed the good weather. I did that this afternoon too, but that was while I was walking up to the apus lake, where, for the first time on the ice, I caught a lively apus for my aquarium; the water temperature was 4°C. The rest of the day has been spent more or less pottering about. I have begun to look at the preparations for getting ready for the classification work. Now goodnight!

### 11th September 1939

The warm water funnels and two of the dry funnels were changed this morning; after lunch until coffee, I was greasing my boots, making my whip supple and tried to make it crack, which I cannot do yet but which I doubtless will be able to, and began to tidy up my room. After tea I went around Rypefjeldet. Nature gives a very dead impression, though both yesterday and today there have been flocks of snow buntings out over the plain migrating southward - strange that they dare to stay here so long. On a southerly expedition at the shore on my way around Rypefjeldet, I picked a little at the earth and saw a mite and a collembola both lying upside down in front of me. They were from the uppermost layer of soil 1-2 cm thick. Yesterday I also saw collembola at the same shallow depth on a mound. That the frost should cause vertical migration is something I consider unlikely, even



Figure 52 Flowers 5.

though the two locations were both thawed and were examined in sunshine. Since getting home and until now, I have been arranging my room. I have unpacked a number of things because in that way they occupy much less space. I am now beginning to get more time because the freshwater areas are now closed. An apus that I caught yesterday and which, in contrast to the previous one, had swum around lively is now dead.

### 13th September 1939

My day yesterday was spent doing Berlese tests and pottering around the station. When I was up on the mountain for a Berlese test from Stenmark (Field of Stone) and as I followed some cairns on my way down that Madsen had set up to guide himself on his observation trips during winter darkness, I suddenly realized as I was looking at one of them in silhouette that the hairstyle of the Greenlander women was of course stylized cairns. The knots of hair on top of the head are merely the small stones on top of the large one. Figuratively, it is also a great picture, with the woman, who is life, pointing out the way ahead. I did not get anything written yesterday because the people from Hvalrosodde and Gefion Havn<sup>14</sup> came to visit for the evening. They had had a good walrus hunt that day, so were in good spirits. Since our station has now been beautifully restored, we had a fantastic party, first with coffee with our dinner and even though the others had eaten, they had a bite too. Later in the evening we had snaps, beer and smoked salmon — in other words, the best that the house was capable of, and for East Greenland, that was pretty good. Harder fell down and slept the last hour on the floor and had to be more or less carried to the boat. They had not really had proper food during the last few days, so that was why it hit them twice as hard. However, when we reached the boat, it was such low water that it was aground and sailing was impossible. The men from Gefionhavn had therefore to stay overnight at the station. They are two very pleasant and competent guys. The men from Hvalrosodde walked home.

Next morning, it took a while before they departed with their “flying boat” and the rest of the time went with chatting and changing Berleses. Between lunch and coffee, I studied a collembola and a mite that I had caught on the 11<sup>th</sup>, but the mite was dead and half disintegrated and I must have squeezed the collembola a bit too much, but I am pretty certain that it was an *Isotoma*. After coffee, I went for a brisk walk along the beach and half way up Rypefjeldet on the way back. I shot a couple of ice floes. I don't have a hangover, but I still want to go early to bed. Goodnight!



**Figure 53** Stony shore in summer with the Orienting Islands behind.

### 14th September 1939

This morning I went for a familiarizing trip up onto the shoulder and during the afternoon, I went up there again to the 350 m level beyond Poulinen. I took a sample in Cassiope Heath a bit further down, a sample on a front-lying slope, a sample beneath a muskox skull a bit further on, and right down at the 50 m level, I took one sample from meadowland and one from a bed of snow. While I was taking the Cassiope samples, I got to thinking that perhaps I compress the samples too much while extracting them from the tube; still, earth is elastic and the vegetation also takes some of the pressure. Under the

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<sup>14</sup> Ålborghus 613-2, located at Gefion Havn on the south side of Godfred Hansen Island in southern Dove Bugt.

head of the muskox there was a small group of collembola that unfortunately I did not take separately; I got to thinking whether this phenomenon, seeing groups of collembola during autumn, was due to newly-hatched offspring that cannot be bothered to move due to the low temperature and because there is sufficient food where they are, though not appreciably more than in the surroundings. If old collembola are found, it could be partly due to pure chance or it could be the mother or mothers; they do not seem to move that far. Right down by the station on a snowdrift, I scraped together some plant remains that had drifted together to Berlese them; they were about 1-1½ metres from the uppermost peak of the drift.. It could be fascinating to



see whether they contain creatures - it is not impossible. In other respects, nature up here is desolate. Even the raven does not whoosh low over my head. A few individuals twittered around me; I advised them preferably at once to set out southwards - a snowstorm could come at any time and it is a long way, especially dangerous is the trip across the oceans with autumn storms; but they just twittered on and sat on the same spot when I came down as when I had gone up - it would have been nice if it had meant that we would be allowed to keep the good weather for a few days more, because tomorrow Hvidberg, Ziebell and I set off for Skærfjorden where there is to be a hut that we hope will be located right out by the fjord<sup>15</sup>. I had to take samples from the snow area in completely frozen soil, and it was successful with the test pipe. I think that come winter, I will make the rim saw-toothed, so that I can grate soil up into sample size.

One's desire for female company becomes rather cooled when you watch the dogs. In future, when a woman sails out in all her female splendour, I will think about bitch puppies that, in order to ingratiate themselves with and with any luck defend themselves against the large male dogs, lie on their backs with back legs far apart and put their sexual organs up for auction; quite defenceless they surrender themselves to the whim of the other. Yes, even the holy sexual intercourse becomes quite profaned when one sees a large male dog with the most listless air stand with its rear quarters at the sex opening of a pitiful whining bitch. Thank God one has the dogs!

Figure 54 Sailboat and dogs on the beach at Hvalrosodde, with Orientering Islands behind.

### 15th September 1939

We should have set off today, but on account of bad weather it came to nothing. Heavy and blowing weather with light snowfall. When one has prepared for something and it does not happen, one has such difficulty in doing anything else constructive; consequently I have potted about the station, changed Berlese samples and had a cozy time with the others. All the boats have been pulled out of

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<sup>15</sup> Knuthsminde 708 on Kap Li in Fladebugt, completed by Hvidberg and Ziebell in 1940.

the water except for the motorboat that had a large hole in one side from bumping against some stones. This evening we were visited by five Hvalrosodde dogs including Laila.

It seems to me most probable that collembola and mites stay in the uppermost soil layers during the winter. What counts is making as much use of the sun as possible, and by staying in those layers that the sun first dominates, they will also be energised by the first sunshine. Furthermore, they have of course no protection against the cold by going deeper; everything is frozen solid and is easily permeated by the cold, but that must mean that they can sustain big changes.

### 16th September 1939

In contrast to yesterday, we set off today, but after going only about 100 metres, the supporting frame collapsed upon which we had laid the boards on the wagon to get them above wheel height. We had to completely reload, which took until midday. Then we left and after a difficult trip, especially for the horses, we descended to Salmon River (Lakselven), but not to any fordable location. It turned out not to exist on account of imprecise investigations by Ziebell. There was no other course than to turn back to the station. Arriving there, one horse was about to collapse and Hvidberg had dropped his rifle along the way; he has still not found it and I am making use of the time to write down this very amusing picture of the journey. I myself have changed shoes, socks and trousers that had become sodden after wandering about in the river in search of the ford. If only we get to eat soon! Hvidberg found the rifle, but now a rubber boot is missing! A whole day with needless difficulty and real loss. Nevertheless, it was a lovely trip, despite being cold to sit and wring water out of one's socks while the wind blows and it is freezing.

### 17th September 1939

The morning's work was removing the timber from the wagon and other tidying up after yesterday's fiasco. After an early lunch, we drove over to Hvalrosodde station with the horse and wagon, and three dogs; in exchange, we returned with Sam. With that, the whole afternoon was gone. It is now also freezing during the day, so the soil layers that I investigate are frozen and presumably the animal life does not change - consequently I have plenty of time and am giving a helping hand with the station. As long as we can be outside we ought to do it. Unfortunately the samples were of too soft a material to be able to use the bottom edge as a saw with any luck - but they seem to be good enough.

I must keep myself busy the whole time, for when I think of those at home, I have the mistaken thought that I have run away from it all in order to save my own skin from the big madhouse, and a feeling of not being used can sometimes come over me. Totally rationally, I can suppress that thought very well but the feeling of being spared is more difficult to put down; when I think that I am taking myself a little too seriously, I only have to turn my



**Figure 55** Cairn, Wireless Operator Gunnar Andersens grave at Hvalrosodde.

eyes towards Danmarksmonumentet<sup>16</sup>, remembering the words on the final pages of "De blinde"<sup>17</sup> by Kidde. Yes, then I think I can also take the news that Russia has joined the war on the side of Germany. Ye Gods, what a paradox, Russia with Germany and Italy presumably with England. To you, my diary, I will tell everything, not so that the others can read it, but so that I can through you release those things that from time to time can brew in the heart of a 20-year old. My travel companions are decent and I think I can stand them - Madsen must just try to move around a bit more outside and not, when he is out, merely clean skins for his beloved; it gives him remote-staring eyes - but I cannot really discuss the ways of the world with him because we are not quite on the same wavelength. They do not understand science as such. I can really yearn for Keiding and Boëtius to be my guests for an evening so that we could entertain ourselves in our own subtle and jesting way. These two are so nicely intelligent. What do you suppose that Keiding would say to my plenary telegram? Now I have written enough, and as a conclusion to the day I will read a Persian fable.

### 18th September 1939

Just now on the radio, they played "Sejled' op af åen..."<sup>18</sup> and student parties appeared as large as life in front of me. Inge J. was my preferred at that time, and now that I think about that young woman, she is the one that means something to me and not Timmi; I think that she is slipping away from me now and I am glad that I did not write to her on this journey, which would have given her an incorrect picture of my holding onto her.

But never mind, today we had the first snow and I was out in it to take three soil samples and experienced the strange phenomenon that the soil was not frozen at all; I could imagine that it houses southern varieties. It is now covered by a large sheltering snowdrift. Now begins a very exiting time for me, in that the samples from the Cassiope Heath and meadow are now quite frozen. They will therefore be allowed to stand for a day to thaw before they are Berlesed. Søggaard did say that he could get something out of his funnels on Ella Ø, so I hope that I can also. I have a shrewd idea that they overwinter as developed individuals, perhaps as nymphs. The most-common species of spider up here certainly does that. That would give me two advantages, firstly that I have solved one half of my assignment and secondly that I will be able to collect the creatures during my sledding trips in the spring, presumably for zoological or geographical use, but I can no doubt all include some ecology in the picture.

The morning went with taking samples and, after lunch, I sat and examined the collembola slides. They are of inestimable value to me. I am anxious that I might not be able to identify with the greatest certainty the Onych. species with the microscope that I have here, but for the other species I am of the opinion that it is going well, at least for the time being, anyway. After coffee, I changed paper in the thermographs, which I was prevented from doing during the morning on account of the drifting conditions. After dinner, I read some of Gelting's amusing dissertations.

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<sup>16</sup>“The monument to Denmark”, located west of Mørkefjord at 76° 55' N, 21° 6' W

<sup>17</sup>“The Blind,” a novel by Harald Kidde (1878-1918), not published since 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1928.

<sup>18</sup>“Sailing up the river...”, a very famous song.

### 19th September 1939

I spent the morning changing out the Berleses. After lunch until five, I went walking in Rypefjeldet, hoping also to see oxen. The only living things that I saw were the snow buntings that looked eagerly for seeds because the plants have not yet dispersed them all. Between reaching home and until nine o'clock, I have determined collembola and have gone through all the slides of them, and between times read about them. Tomorrow, then, I expect to start with the mites.

### 20th September 1939

I have now finished determining collembola and have read about tempanus, dipturus (diptera) and proturus (thrips) in my various books. Following that, I have begun to study literature about mites. I have been inside most of the day except for once this afternoon when I helped to pull the motorboat ashore. The men from Hvalrosodde dropped in on us for dinner on their way further into Mørkefjord with hut materials, etc. They left, therefore, very soon after the end of the meal since there is a chance of rapid formation of new ice.



**Figure 56** Coastline at Mørkefjord with Orienting Islands.

### 23rd September 1939

I realise that I have forgotten for two days to write down my reflections on life up here. The recollection from these two days that is most marked for me - and which I really did not need to write down - was the aerobatics of two ravens out over Mørkefjord against a cloudless sky seen from Rypefjeldet. Delight with the lovely weather and beautiful landscape - the entrance to Mørkefjord itself is one of the most magnificent that I have ever seen - made the one raven perform spins and rolls in the air while the other clucked its admiration. The two black birds then disappeared. Hvidberg was with me. We were on a hunt up on Rypefjeldet, incidentally without any result, but found a stone trap presumably dating from the time of the old Greenlanders. Time has otherwise not presented any big surprises, but gone on its even way without of course having been boring. But time is not really right for outdoor games, luckily I got those samples from up on the shoulder before the snow came; I am sad though that I did not get right up onto the plateau on the ridge. I have standing a number of samples waiting to be Berlesed, so I have enough material for the first few days, which is only good because it looks as if the snow is coming for good; sea ice has now formed for this year.

### 24th September 1939

As things stand, I cannot write this evening because my room is in wild confusion. Incidentally, today I was up on the plateau that I mentioned yesterday.

**26th September 1939**

Dear readers, I confess to you that I cannot remember at all what I did yesterday, but it was probably not the important items on the program. It is my turn in the kitchen and I have been putting my room in order: I am in the middle of the former and I have finished the latter. To be honest, the mattress has not been brought in yet and I still have some fiddly things to do. Above the desk, which is placed against the wall opposite the window, I have placed ten dry funnels on two shelves, supported most elegantly on bamboo poles. Above the bunk are my books and on the shelves are my clothes and the store, i.e. spares and things that I am not using now but that I may need during the winter. It has become very cozy, as you, dear reader, will be unable to understand, and with open window and spring cleaning, it is also fresh and comparatively dust free. I am therefore sitting and smoking a La Perla which is a luxury for me, because I brought too few cheroots up here. Today I have had a regular turn in the kitchen; I can enjoy having to make food and clean up in the kitchen and common room, using Hvidberg's patent "cold glue" and plaster of Paris. I take my turn with all the odd jobs when I don't have something special to do with my own work. Now I am jolly well going to read some of Gelting's thesis and you, dear reader, must wait until tomorrow. Today I believe that I heard the chirp of a snow bunting, but I did not see it even though I have seen one daily until now. Waders, especially *stepsilos interpres*, were observed here until the day that the beach was covered in ice and the first new-ice formation began.

**27th September 1939**

I cooked, made the desk wider, took samples and this evening I played billiards. I am sleepy and cannot be bothered to come out with my immortal thoughts!!!

**28th September 1939**

Today, I baked white bread that was excellent as a dough but which emerged from the oven with the mildest form of scorched top, but which was otherwise excellent - and it tastes wonderful; it is only the crust that is spoilt. Most of the day was spent doing this and a little other indoor work.

This evening I have sat and looked at some of S.L. Tuxen's slides of mites. I have had a lot of trouble with a sphaerozetes, as he calls it, but that it certainly is not, nor is it a nymph if Mich's description of it is correct. What kind it is, I cannot say, perhaps it is a nymph semitalpl., though I have great difficulty in seeing whether it is even about the creature discussed. My room is now really cozy, clean and tidy so I can soon start on my identification work since it will soon be Christmas. Yesterday I heard a snow



**Figure 57** Flower.

bunting and Madsen saw one on Rypefjeldet; the last wader that I saw was on the day after our failed drive to Skærfjorden, but that trip was pitiful. For the snow buntings there is still enough feed from the seeds of various different plants. The snow as it lies as the moment is favourable for the spreading

of seeds in that many small dips are filled with a little heap of snow. The flowers can therefore make use of the whole summer and do not need to consider spreading seeds until far into the autumn. Even seeds without the ability of spreading can be scattered over a big area with that layer of snow. Now I will use the microscope a little again.

### **29th September 1939**

The morning was spent changing Berleses. The catch was not overwhelmingly great except from moss from a watercourse. This afternoon I have taken samples from 14 locations. Significant from those that are first covered with snow are the different mosses and low catches that happen here. A little moss can be removed as flakes in that they lie on top of the earth below which is frozen - can you imagine. I am most inclined to assume that the creatures, if there are any, are found in the uppermost flakes, but on the other hand when one sees how dry they are, one begins to doubt it. I can hardly make them any dryer.

This evening we played billiards and now I am sitting writing and hearing dance music from home. One can get an intense desire to go out dancing with a lovely young lady, it is really quite strange; for me it is not unimportant with whom, and I know well whom it should be, but that, O reader, you will not get to know. For the dance not to satisfy one, quite a large number of factors have to fit together; one dances not merely with the body but also with soul, the dance exposes one, just like one's handwriting only to a much greater extent. A much more primitive form of sexual satisfaction is to fornicate, or to screw those that the wolf-killer mentioned, because it is that in particular that the body seeks, and if wax did not melt below 34°C then prostitutes could well be replaced by similar-looking wax figures. The class of people that uses something like that also have an unsophisticated and dreary existence. When I speak about those things, then I would like to tell you, O dear reader, that Leni Riefenstahl, or as the Greenlanders call her "The Mattress" (because of her life as a whore), has been Hitler's sweetheart, but was removed when she got too much influence. Source: a Swiss geologist. I am now going to read a bit in "Dr. Renault" and not look through my microscope. I must soon be able to start identifying my samples, if I actually am able. The mites will probably be difficult.

### **30th September 1939**

Baked, cooked, changed samples, read some of Dr. Renault, i.e. have had cozy station life.

### **1st October 1939**

I need to take some Berlese samples: Moss, that needs to lie for a month to see whether it contains anything and that should then meanwhile evolve (...) on black seaweed marine locations. Especially the last mound is a newly-discovered location that contains large quantities of small creatures. I spent the rest of the morning washing the kitchen and the common-room floor, activities that belong to my turn as cook. The Hvalrosodde men came here for dinner (roast pork and prune pudding), are still here and stay here tonight. The day continued with billiards, tobacco and food.

### **2nd October 1939**

It has been windy today with both snowdrifts and snow. For that reason I have been unable to change thermograph paper and my only outdoor sport was a trip up to the ermine trap, without result. I have



otherwise been sitting looking at slides of mites to make myself confident with "Tiermelt mitteleur," but it is probably going to be difficult. Nevertheless an interesting group of creatures to busy oneself with - but really difficult. Now I am dead tired and really cannot be bothered to write any more. It is howling really loudly and is real winter weather so that in an unguarded moment I think that I am at Langholt.

### 3rd October 1939

Surrounded by smoke from a "La Perla", I am now sitting writing in the world's most cozy room. Now, finally, I have finished putting it proper order. The six warm-water funnels are now totally contained with asbestos sheets on all sides, so now I hope that nothing happens. The whole day has been spent putting the funnels in order, inserting samples and little other indoor activity since it is blowing and snow is drifting. Unfortunately, while moving it, I knocked over the jar below the funnel with samples from "dirty" on the vane of snow. Among that which remained in the jar was an Oribatid, but it got lost during the classification - things like that can make me very sad in a matter of moments. The mites will probably be nasty to classify, I hope not to have to lose too many - my fingers are a bit clumsy. Just getting the small creatures out of the collection jars is itself a problem. Oh well, hopefully it will work, though as usual it does not look promising.

### 4th October 1939

I have now been through all the slides; the mites are really an interesting group of creatures, not merely because they need an acarinologist back home, but also because of its, alas, such enormous richness of forms that can pose hundreds of wondering questions. Besides, snow has now stopped; it became only a scant snowfall and this evening we played billiards in grand style. Goodnight!

### 5th October 1939

This morning I tried to classify a type of mite from Loch Fyne, but of course without luck. This evening I have begun to investigate slides - but to hell with it. It is starting just as poorly as the catch of small creatures did.

### 6th October 1939

Now I am tired after having gone through not even one specimen. It is the damned onychirus species that make you sick.

### 7th October 1939

Haven't finished with the specimens yet; struggled with a mite all day, a form of parasite, without being able to classify it, but I must get more experience so I am now making a Dauer slide of it; but it is fun, though I only hope that not all the samples take that long because then I would have to stay up here for many years. I heard a snow bunting today and Don



Figure 58 Small cairn.

Carlos saw one. It must be because the seed-bearing plants are not quite covered in snow. Received a heartening telegram from Keiding.

### **8th October 1939**

I tried this morning to classify an oribatid, but I honestly don't think it exists in Germany. After lunch, we had an amusing bird shoot with prizes including chocolate and cigars. For the rest of the day, I have only been in the mood for chatting and pottering about. One must also take care of ones eyes (one can always think of excuses). This evening I gave Hvidberg a severe shock by wanting to wash my toes in the washing up bowl! Otherwise we all get on well with each other. The weather is settled fine.

### **9th October 1939**

I attempted to classify mites and took samples including exposure samples from Cassiope Heath near the thermograph. Having then struggled with samples for the last few days, I have taken the very wise decision to leave out altogether classification of the trombidiformes (mites) and parasitiformes (parasitic mites, e.g. ticks) into species but only into group as my orders also permit. With those sources that I possess, I cannot determine species anyway and if I can only - which I certainly cannot - determine families or genus, it has no more importance than if I classify only into groups. I am thinking here of predominance in the one or other area. For collembola and oribatids, I have greater technical skill with a microscope and reference books, enabling me to classify them. Besides, I do not want to spend the whole time up here bent over a microscope; I want to go on trips in the spring and collect samples from on land and from freshwater lakes, and to lie in my bunk with a big cigar and a good book. Today, I have finally completed Sample 2 and labelled it. The way they stand, stacked in the collection glass, is the loveliest sight. So then, snow buntings, goodnight.

### **10th October 1939**

Took and sorted samples. Goodnight. (Hvidberg saw a snow bunting today.)

### **11th October 1939**

Today I had a magnificent sight, inasmuch as I recognized for the first time the post-antennal organ of an *Ornyshiomes groenlandicus* and at the same time a logical explanation as to why I have not seen it before, namely that it has been nymphs that I have previously been investigating; perhaps they have had it but I have been unable to see it. Besides, like the English and French pilots, I have been making reconnaissance investigations in the enemy's land, which in this case is that of the *Collembola*. I have identified several species in detail using KOH, so I hope to be able to identify *Halutus*. *Folsomia* species are difficult, taking time and I have not nearly completed one complete test. However, it will doubtless go more quickly later, when you do it thoroughly from the start; but with the experience of this splendid sight - just as beautiful as the first plenarie up at Apus Lake - I will now go to bed, read and smoke after washing my legs because they itch terribly, especially when I remember that they must be dirty.

### **12th October 1939**

Sorted samples and began to lash a sled. It seems to me that the job of sorting the samples drags a bit.

**14th October 1939**

I have lashed a sled, repaired harnesses for the dogs and today was out to test them. The dogs are called Sif, Kvik, Søs (the bitch), and Leo (the boss dog). Unfortunately, I am much too naive to manage them, but it is great fun and I feel that I ought to make the most of the good weather to learn to drive dogs rather than to sit and sort. I had a pleasant Saturday and it is late after a long and fun evening of billiards.



**Figure 59** At the beach, with mountain behind.

**15th October 1939**

I sorted samples and after lunch, after I changed thermograph paper, I wanted to go for a drive with my dogs; but, because they slipped off their harnesses, I decided to punish them by not driving with them. Otherwise nothing much happened. Yesterday Hvidberg saw two snow buntings from the window as they flew by.

**18th October 1939**

A flock of eight snow buntings are staying in the immediate vicinity of the house. I have sorted samples for the last few days and drove badly with the dogs yesterday. Well, I tried to teach them to react to the command “right”. After a drive on the smooth ice, our clothes are totally covered in salt when we get in. It is bad for the dogs’ paws.

**19th October 1939**

It has been snowing today, so I have not been out except to attend to my weasel trap and I went over to the dogs. I think they recognize me and like me, and, strangely, I like them very much. It is not Leo but Sif that is boss dog.

**20th October 1939**

Now we have a real blizzard. How will it go with a flock of snow buntings that I heard today? I drove the dogs poorly and got stuck in a dryas tussock at the top of Rypefjeldet.

**26th October 1939**

You have missed me for several days, dear reader, and the reason is that we have had bad weather outside and I have busied myself almost only with sorting. However, I am now the cook and I have discovered a quite new and amusing game that I therefore call unique. Serving as cook takes up too much time, but I suppose that I must make an effort with it since the others, especially Hvidberg, attach such great importance to food. Those good terms must be maintained. As I am not so methodical with things that do not interest me, Hvidberg believes that I am incredibly sloppy and that it would be worth my while to become trained. However, I merely dissect and expose the other party’s motives and do not enter into any further discussion, which would in any case be quite unnecessary

and hurtful. It would be the same as saying to me that mites and collembola can only be evidence of an insane's interest and not that of a normal person ( I would without doubt give the concerned person right if it actually happened). I do not at all believe that I can be offended when I merely absorb the injuries for a discussion with myself. Now the weather is good again and I have checked upon the thermographs to see how they have taken the drifting snow. The one was completely full of snow, but luckily none had got into the box itself. In the others there was only an insignificant amount of snow. The first one I sealed with cotton waste - brilliant.



**Figure 60** Waterfront.

### **27th October 1939**

I have been the cook and made good food (medisterpølse [a kind of sausage] and boiled caramelled beans og stewed apples) and the two giant white loaves that threatened to burst the oven inasmuch as they continued to rise in it. This evening I have been sorting; it is all the small types that one sees with big magnification that take time. Sorting with any other magnification seems quite ridiculous to me.

### **28th October 1939**

Today I saw a wonderful thing! There, under the binocular in front of my eyes was a beetle, and with that, their northern limit was moved a good distance northwards. I am not exactly proud of that, just overjoyed, since it is not I but that which led my hand to take a sample precisely in the location where the beetle was that is owed all my thanks; I stand outside myself and sort of observe what I achieve. The sight of the beetle is the third most wonderful thing I have seen. The first was the plenarie that I saw up at Apus Lake; the next was the clucking raven over Mørkefjord, seen from Rypefjeldet towards The Monument to Denmark, and the third was therefore the beetle. A strange creature that I saw in the same sample yesterday was, I believe, a beetle larva! Besides all that, this morning I had a fine ride with Ziebell acting as driver, passenger and advisor. Lunch went well with dried cod, mustard sauce and rice pudding. Between lunch and coffee, I washed the kitchen and the floor in the common room; after coffee, I had my hair cut by Ziebell for the first time since our departure and I started to sort Sample 26 which has 200-300 gomasids. I continued with that after dinner until I found the beetle; I then offered cigars and fat cigarettes, and played billiards. Now I am tired and happy, and am going to bed.

### **30th October 1939**

Today I have sorted samples and changed thermograph paper. The one thermograph deigns not to run out in the open but will in the house. What a scamp!

**31th October 1939**

I have sorted samples and been along to the trap that so far has caught nothing.

**1st November 1939**

Sorted samples all day.

**2nd November 1939**

I had a fine drive right over to the Ram's Hut (Vædderen [635]) with my dogs. They had a major argument with Hvidberg's that were standing outside on the ice. Mine managed proudly without any bloodletting. Hvidberg was in at the bottom of Mørkefjord, but it was very barren. I spent the rest of the day sorting samples.

**3rd November 1939**

After lunch, I was up with the dogs and down at the shore searching for a harness from yesterday, it was Kviks, it had bitten it to bits up at the thermograph (the front thermograph will not run in the cold) and at the weasel trap. Otherwise, I spent the whole day sorting four samples.

**4th November 1939**

I had an excellent ride out across the fjord and to the fox trap - without a fox. I spent the rest of the time sorting 3½ samples.

**6th November 1939**

I have sorted samples and had a good sled trip. There are still snow buntings here.

**8th November 1939**

I sorted more samples and have been out for a sled trip. Sif was ill, though, presumably an abscess in the rectum that paralyses the whole hind quarters. Several times I had to take the dog up onto the sled because it could not keep up with the others. I have finished reading Hamlet.



**Figure 61** Wilderness flowers.

**9th November 1939**

The night brought me a deep sorrow. Sif is dead.

**10th November 1939**

Celebrated Martinmas eve with roast pork, wine and stories, but in spite of that, Sif is still dead. Where do you suppose the dog is now?

**12th November 1939**

I had a fine sled trip yesterday, but with a lot of high jinks with the dogs that were without their leader. While I was searching for the fox trap, I ran into it. I have been sorting samples today and went for a little walk inland. There are still snow bunting here.

**13th November 1939**

After eating, I went for a drive with the dogs; the ice gave great sighs. Kvik bit through the traces when I had left them for a while to go up to the trap. I remember Nimbus' expression in its eyes as I sat and looked it in the eyes while I repeated its name many times. Played bridge this evening.

**14th November 1939**

The dogs are howling now. I have been sorting samples today and been up to the thermograph. The front thermograph is still on strike. A nail on one of my toes is coming off. Soon, when I reach Sample 100, I will take a couple of days off so that I can rest my weary eyes. I report that all is well.

**15th November 1939**

I had an excellent drive nearly over to Winsel Island, but otherwise I have been sorting samples.

**17th November 1939**

Reached Sample 100.

**18th November 1939.**

I spent today spring cleaning my room and walked a little about the station while the dogs were fed, since I could not go for a drive because it looked like snow. For the rest of the day until now, I have been reading scientific literature, mostly related to acarinology og related to collembola. I am now very anxious to know how a sample from the meadow will turn out when I Berlese it tomorrow.



**Figure 62** Mountain near Mørkefjord Station(?).

**23rd November 1939**

I hear on the radio that the university's annual celebration is today. I think better of wanting to be home now and can feel how far away I am. Last year I was in the Royal Theatre and afterwards with Inge and Keiding and another girl at the Italian Restaurant. It was a lovely evening. I wonder if they are out having fun again this evening - and with whom? I hope you really enjoy yourselves. Do you spare a thought for me up here in the cold and dark - do you, Inge?

**25th November 1939**

Oh, what luck! I was sitting on my sled and saw the more than lemon-yellow moon rise over "The Shoulder" while I steered my three dogs towards the sun's faint orange reflection. Oh, what luck!

**26th November 1939**

I completed my week as cook today. An attack by Russia on Finland can be expected any day now. O tempora, I hope we survive and do not switch with them.

**27th November 1939**

It was Ziebell that played firebug today. He set fire to the wall adjacent to Hvidberg having a fire in the pot-bellied stove so hot that the flue was red hot. The wall had to be demolished and work has continued on it nearly all day. It has been windy and cold, so I have not been outside much, instead I stayed in and potted about with my samples.



**Figure 63** Fjord

**28th November 1939**

A hideous fate plagues my dog team. Sif is dead, Nimbus is dead, and now Sus will soon be gone. Her rear quarters can no longer carry her and she can no longer leap up at me as she used to. Now only Kvik (the little fornicating lad) and Leo (set himself up as boss) are left.

**29th November 1939**

I read "Two People" by Voss, an unusual book that has affected me very much; maybe I have a little of Peter Paul's nature in me and because the portrayal of Judith was so realistic for me. One must not misunderstand life. It is the basis of the book, as it was in "Aage and Else". But I won't tell you any more, because my right thumb got pinched between the front teeth of Leo when I tried to separate him from Kvik, both dogs filled with mad love for Stine, "Wer immer strebend sich bemüht, den können wir erlösen" [German: Whoever always looks for trouble, we can rescue] something that is now my belief (though not with regards to the love life of the dogs)!

**30th November 1939**

In this period of strife, one becomes conscious of one's own attitude to the world. When does Nemesis settle on his just spoils? One would have thought it was overdue! When I want to see a concrete sign of the war, I see a certain young girl with a little round hole in her breast that a bullet has made.

**1st December 1939**

I have prepared today everything to begin determination of acidity tomorrow. Besides that, I have had both Stine and Rikke in my team for the first time. Under the circumstances, it went well, but Kvik was as usual full of his mad love or, perhaps more correctly, very randy. How the Russians are swine. Who will send me Christmas wishes? I hope that Lasse will do really well in his exams, but it is probably a foregone conclusion. Why does Nemesis hesitate with regard to Hitler and Stalin?

**2nd December 1939**

I have spent the day taking acidity tests as well as a pottering about in my room. My eyes are still red.

**13th December 1939**

That you, dear reader, have had to do without me for so many days is the fault of my eyes that have been on strike. They have been working really hard. The first days, I lay quietly with my eyes shut for most of the day. For many reasons, I can allow myself to take a holiday. Firstly because I have worked diligently and very steadily until now, secondly because I am so far ahead with my material, and thirdly because my eyes are being wrecked and it makes me nervous and irritable when they are not in order, but of course only with myself. As a consequence, I have not experienced anything whatsoever exiting. I have however had plenty of time to meditate, and that is always pleasant. Would it interest you to hear what I have been thinking about? Probably! But I cannot be bothered to repeat it! The main point then? Yes, the main points!

Woman: (Personified most often as Inge J.) both naked and intellectually and, I must admit, totally sensually; as I am capable of visualising my thoughts, it can become quite something. However, when I again get together with girls at home there, I will probably not be able to do anything other than smile, as I see myself then as a love-sick male dog with tail up like a flag and drooling at the corners of my mouth, shuffling my feet behind a bitch in season that places that so attractive swollen baboon opening onto the snout of that very male worshipper. The whole behaviour of the dogs seems like a very striking exposé of mankind.

Then I think about the close association with the university; one feels put to one side up here. A real Thöger Larsen land: The way that the firmament talks of the sunlight period with the colours of the sun and of the darkness period with the play of colours from the northern lights and faint reflections - through the brownish-black, stiffened landscape with its long horizontal lines that do not disturb it but enhance it. Aged, and probably just like the way the landscape looks today, after the tertiary periods's spell-binding



**Figure 64** Fjord

youthful mystery, when it thought it could say farewell to the ice age and got winter, which has still not fully been subdued. The land answers more to Odin than to Jesus. We have only one scornful laugh left for him that cannot manage. He does know what he can be exposed to and how the dangers can be averted. Only the panic-stricken succumb here.

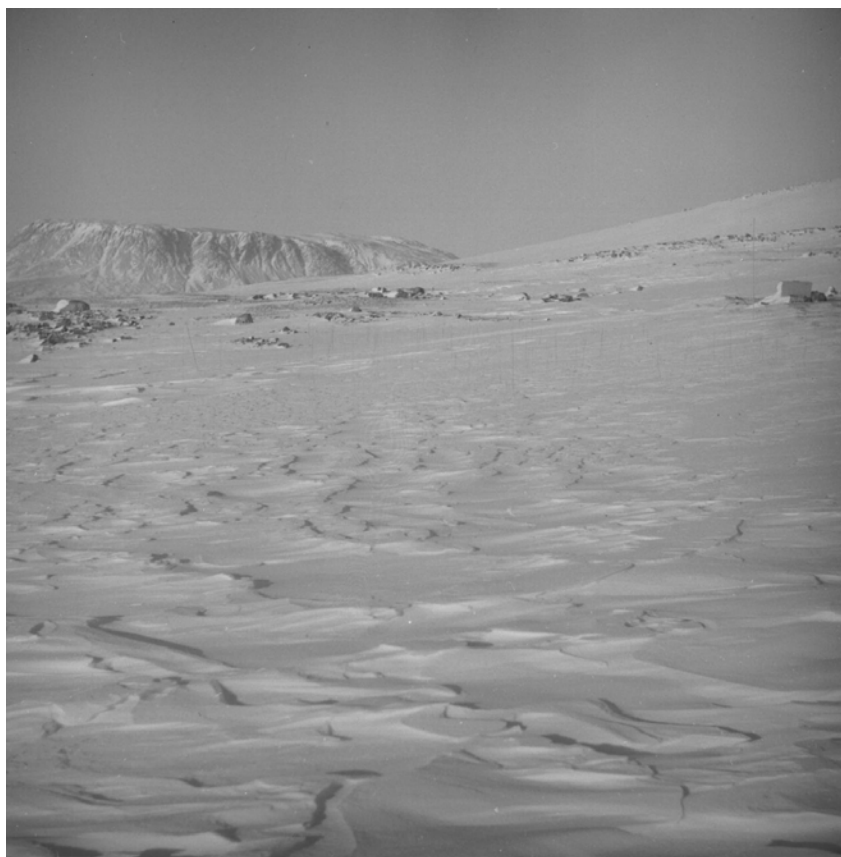
I think about my work and am laying plans for the summer, about my family, my friends, my future, about Inge and Timmi, yes, even the repulsive Danish-Icelandic woman (rare, luckily!) yet again, about the detestable war, and about mites and the other small creatures. When I am tired of all that, I fantasize tales that include me as the shining star. It is just like when I was little and could not fall asleep at once, then too I was the king at the head of his victorious army. Now I am acting like



the hero that wishes to avoid all public mention, but who becomes famous anyway. It is not because he pushes himself forward, but because his deeds are so exceptional that as a matter of course they must become the ordinary topic of conversation. However, the hero is not impressed by himself because you can of course only be impressed by things that you cannot do yourself. Furthermore, if he feels himself sort of standing outside his working self, rather like a tool for an invisible force (“Life”), the deeds of which he has only for reference. He can clearly see how many of the factors that are particularly crucial for his success just as easily could have been reversed to his disadvantage without he himself being able to do anything about it. His mind is therefore filled with humility and gratitude like someone that received a gift from somebody that towers miles above one in every respect and where the gift is terribly expensive. Life gives one gift after gift, the only thing it expects in return is that one accepts them.

### 17th December 1939

My eyes are not yet in order; if only they will be sometime! I might have wanted to write about woman, the young girl, because my recent idleness has taught me to recognise that the feelings of missing her are too permeated by my strong erotic emotional life for them to be clear and matter-of-fact. In part, I would expose myself too much because there are of course things that one can only confide to one's current beloved one summer evening with the night's subtle noises, swirling mists out on the meadow, the constant gurgling of the brook at one's feet, the luxurious scents of humus and growth, the acrid smells of conifer resin, the heavy drips of dew drops when they have overfilled their leaf-bowls and fall down onto the next leaf, when a summer night brings out its whole nature, then one says things that a diary can never contain.



**Figure 65** Snowscape

## Christmas 1939

If Knuth came only to Mørkefjord,  
Then he'd be surprised;  
And if his bad temper created hilarity,  
Then we'd be surprised.

If Hvidt drank mocha extract  
And gave dinner his contempt  
Yet travelled home in swim-wear,  
Then we'd be surprised.

If Madsen drank himself silly,  
Then you'd be surprised;  
And if it swarmed with fox cubs,  
Then we'd be surprised.

If Haarløv travelled Greenland  
With mites in herring sandwich  
And went straight home to mother,  
Then we'd be surprised.

If Schultz no foxes got,  
Then you'd be surprised;  
But drove around with machinery,  
then we'd be surprised.

If Hennings became teetotal  
And only water drank,  
And spoke with clear understanding,  
Then we'd be surprised

They enjoy themselves at Gefionshavn,  
But foxes probably a scarcity.

*[Song refers to: Eigil Knuth, Andreas Hvidberg, Kristian Madsen, Niels Haarløv, C.H. Schultz, and Poul Eivind Hennings.]*



**Christmas 1930  
Hochstetter Forland**

Niels Hansen  
Jamiszan(?) Haume  
Bendt Jensen  
Knud Østergaard  
A. M. Hvidberg

**Christmas 1929  
Sabine  
The Island of  
Greenland**

Eiliv Herdal Norway  
M. Johnsen Norway  
K. Knudsen  
O.E. Rasmussen  
A.C.F. Schwartz  
A.M. Hvidberg

**Gamma  
Expedition  
Danmarkshavn  
Summer  
1938**

**Christmas 1940  
Mørkefjord**

Kurt Olsen  
Carlos Ziebell  
Kristian Madsen  
Léo Chretien Montreal Canada  
Dudley Caw  
Findland (?) Jake Canada  
Svend Pultz Denmark

**Christmas 1939  
Mørkefjord**

C.H. Schultz  
Poul Eivind Hennings  
Niels Haarløv  
Kristian Madsen  
Carlos Ziebell  
Andreas Hvidberg

© Anne Haarløv

Inscriptions on Christmas Flag

Figure 66 Christmas Flag



**Figure 67** Christmas 1939 in Mørkefjord (the Christmas Flag is on the wall). Seated (left to right) are Master mechanic and trapper C.H. Schultz, zoology student Niels Haarløv, author Andreas Hvidberg, trapper Poul Hennings, wireless operator Kristian Madsen and trapper Carlos Ziebell

**26<sup>th</sup> December 1939**

You have now, dear reader, missed me for many days. Today I turn to you, because for the last week I have acted as a housewife and have been responsible for all the preparations for Christmas. Through that, I have formed a good impression of how a housewife must feel the joys of Christmas, though in this case I did not mind being responsible for the preparations because my eyes have not fully recovered yet. On Wednesday, I heard the Christmas greetings. It was lovely to hear their voices. On Thursday we celebrated Solhvervsfest<sup>19</sup>, for which I had made a solstice cake which was a big success and on which there was a chariot heading northwards on the horizon with migrating birds in the air and down on land stood a dog team with tails aloft observing the phenomenon. We celebrate Christmas Eve on Sunday, with Schultz and Hennings as guests. That evening I had an impression of the earth's rotation. Just over Aries was a bright star that slowly sank down behind the mountain.

## **Daylight Returns to Mørkefjord**

**13<sup>th</sup> February 1940**

We saw the sun today for the first time this year. At the same time, we received a sun-telegram from Knuth that contained the possibility that we might not get home in the summer. For that reason I am a bit depressed this evening; I feel the pressure of the distance and long for those I love.

**3<sup>rd</sup> March 1940**

The weather today is overcast and windy - unfortunate, because I should have been out to chop out some soil samples, but when it blows, it is much too cold to sit hammering into the frozen ground. I have decided to undertake systematic sampling from the meadow and from the field of stones up in Rypefjeldet. I don't believe that temperature and acidity exert a differentiating influence on the various micro-fauna communities. The ph varies very little. The determining influence is the degree of humidity and in that respect, in my opinion, these two localities encompass the limits, the wettest and the driest; all the other places represent transitions between the two outer limits. I cannot tell the various species of mite apart, at least not with regard to species, though in a few cases I can identify the family - so I have taken the consequences of that into account by making Dauerpräparats<sup>20</sup> for those species that I believe I can differentiate, and thus each species gets a number for a name.

The big question that now occupies me is whether a ship will come up here this summer. I fervently hope that it comes, because quite frankly I have no desire to stay here another year; we can doubtless get food, and for firewood we have the boxes that lie in a big heap outside the house, but I must have more to my existence than food and warmth even though they are probably the most vital. From a period of having belonged to those that "cherish heaven", I have become a strong worshipper of life. When one drives out onto the ice or merely turns one's back on the station and looks out over

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<sup>19</sup> Saturnalia, Roman pagan festival of the winter solstice when the sun dies and is reborn, converted later to Christmas. In Scandinavia, "Solhvervsfest" is sometimes used interchangeably with Christmas.

<sup>20</sup> Type of sample preparation, in this case for insects.

the land, one feels the “chill of nature”(a concept that Knud Poulsen mentions in his letters). One sees oneself standing opposite a world that does not care anything about whether it is me or a Brach sample to be placed in alcohol. All human pride evaporates and one is left with one’s own ability and is on one’s own. Now we shall see what you are worth - here, Darwin’s principles of selection dominate, but one senses that something must lie behind it! Not like a deity that is special to the world or even less for a particular nation, but something that lies behind the whole universe, and its most wonderful creation is what we call life. As a natural consequence of one’s own insignificance, one must come round to determinism, or a belief where nothing is predetermined about the fate of mankind. The result in both cases will be the same, namely that one must live to the extent that society now permits it. Whether one is a wailing flagellant or a sincere jabbering preacher, it will not influence punishment in the hereafter in the slightest. When all is said and done, each individual person has not the slightest responsibility for his actions - but that is not something one should say out loud. Heredity and upbringing forms a person and that is something over which an individual has no control. Even though I have a very fixed opinion about the cosmos, that does not prevent me from recognising the great psychological significance of prayer. If one had to discuss the position of the church, I would always be in favour of it - perhaps mostly the roman catholic one because only an unattainable unworldly goal can unite people, make them happy and make them produce noble deeds. However, I have an overview of everything and so I believe more or less that I can see the consequences of my own actions; therefore I can allow myself the luxury of having an anti-social belief. It has, however, made me into a devotee of life and that is, so to speak, the reason amongst others why I do not wish to stay another year.

I long for a personified life: woman. Even though when my thoughts go in that direction, I happily begin quite abstractly, it always ends in the definite fact named Inge. Before I travelled up here, I had no idea of the place that she occupies in my heart - but now I see that she occupies three quarters of my whole outstretched emotional life. I know her actually only slightly, but from what I have seen of her, I believe she lies a bit above the norm. She is intelligent, has an excellent emotional life, sparkling, full of vitality, and is proud and as unapproachable as the born mistress; just because of that, she becomes a so much more desirable prey. Women that are only flesh and blood are an abomination. Besides, she is pretty and has an elegant figure that is very suitable to my abnormal body. What is it then that pulls my thoughts to her? It can be split into bodily and spiritual parts. There are many things, especially from the more personal sides of one’s intellectual life, that one can only discuss with a girl that loves one, and that one facies. Barring one’s own mother, of course, one can only find the purely motherly comfort in one girl. From other perspectives, solace is an abomination and an attempt at self assertion on the side of the comforter. Everything up here is cold and hard, but with a woman one finds warmth



**Figure 68** The beach in winter with the Orienteering Islands in the distance.

and softness - but I have forgotten something! In order that I might contribute something to society, I must have something that can inspire me to do my very best. Who else other than the most beautiful of all can do that? Perhaps it is just as well that I have her at a distance because in that way I can get a more complete picture. However, it was what I said earlier about cold and warmth, because that gets me over to the more physical side of things where I invariably end, just as certainly as I go from the concrete to the abstract. That is what is most easily described, because it cannot be described at all. So when I meet you in the autumn or next year, then I will stand there blushing and saying some absolute rubbish.

The snowstorm has now returned and I should have been out for samples. The day before yesterday, when we also had a snowstorm, my nose froze white and I lost all feeling in it, but I did not get frostbite. If I come here another time, I would like to be at a location where navigation conditions are relatively guaranteed, and where there are women - that is the only point of similarity that Knud Rasmussen and I have in common. It would be fun to explore Dronning [Queen] Louise Land, but there are large practical difficulties; the same holds true for exploration of Sælsøen. As a third, there is Peary Land itself. However, Denmark is like a white spot on the map containing exceptionally many things new to my field. One of my many ambitions is to be allowed to write in "Danmarks Fauna" about our Trombidii. There is enough work for me for the rest of my life if I marry a rich girl.

#### 5<sup>th</sup> March 1940

From the meadow, I chopped out a sample today that was almost entirely moss. It is fine weather and for the first time the sun's warmth can be felt. Today, in a strange instinctive way, I have the feeling of having grown up, of becoming a man if you like.

#### 6<sup>th</sup> March 1940

I was up on Rypefjeldet today so that I could take a sample from the dryas mounds in the field of stones. I am not completely satisfied with it. The work is made more difficult because the layer of soil is so thin. I think I will repeat it tomorrow morning if the weather permits.

It is quiet in the station at the moment. Madsen, who is the cook this week, is baking bread in the oven and the three of us are waiting for Ziebell, who is out driving and has not returned yet.

I am somewhat concerned about how mother is tolerating the cold at home, the dangers of which she probably disregards if she thinks that thereby she benefits Tyge and Lasse.

#### 7<sup>th</sup> March 1940

The weather did not permit me to go up Rypefjeldet. Instead, I took a sample from the meadow. It was blowing somewhat and snowing just a little, but it looked as if a snowstorm was imminent. This afternoon I sorted the first creatures from Sample 165, an isotoma that I think is a vialacea except that



**Figure 69** Driven snow.

it has strange appendages to the empodial, which does not fit a vialacea in that it gets very broad in the middle and after that drops off rapidly towards the tip. A new species???

Praying regarded as a prayer is self-deception, but it does give self-confidence because one believes that one faces The Almighty and that personal attention is paid to oneself in particular, ahead of everyone else; with self-confidence, one gets strength to carry out the job about which one is praying. Life on earth is like the works of a clock. Through the all encompassing spirit of life, the works are set in motion by the creation of life here on earth, and the various forms of life appear. They are each given their special form of amusement, only to disappear again in order to give room for the next picture when the running of the clock-spring reaches them.

I just heard an amusing revue from the Apollo Theatre.

### **8<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

I awoke last night from a kind of nightmare, the basis of which was that I had not managed to complete my assignment, which is to study the over-wintering conditions of the micro-fauna. It was perhaps caused by the continuing storms with drifting snow and overcast weather. I have been sorting samples, all according to how the creatures deign to dribble down.

It is alarming how the war nears Denmark; if only I were home in case something happens to those I love so much. Idleness is the worst thing I know and one's imagination can easily make one believe that things at home are much worse than they are - just as they at home believe that one lives in earth caves up here, etc. In addition, I am afraid that the stay up here can make one lethargic. My reading abilities are unfortunately limited because my eyes cannot tolerate the constant looking; if they develop in one direction at home, then I will instead get that much more in another direction to make up for it. If I should live to grow old, yes, then what do two years matter? What special advantages have I got? I suppose one only realizes that after one has returned.

Firstly, I have got to know a number of types of people; however, I am fearful of the dreamer and visionary that lies in his bunk and from there experiences his world independent of his surroundings and the moment, who therefore does not get one jot or tittle out of his stay and does not use his abilities to collect souvenir material for later use, but stands still in his dream. In brief, he is not living at all and carries out his allotted task only in his dream. Then we have the restless type that has no idea what to do with himself but always craves for a change; he does not live either, because he is not in harmony with himself as he goes from one extreme to the other without connecting them with smooth and even transitions. Finally, I have also met the aimless and disorderly type that has no ability at self-control and who therefore gives in to most instincts, e.g. sleep.

There was someone back home who was afraid that I would become restless, but I think quite the opposite. I have had my love of adventure satisfied, and that with a very difficult challenge, to which, one must probably say "in spite of everything". For example, I have played no small part in the atmosphere here in the station being so good: Firstly I have listened to excellent advice without being silly and without playing at being a sceptic and a know-it-all, and secondly I have followed Möhl's advice. I know what harmony means, and if - which I hope - I get married one day, then our home is to be characterised by it, because I have had a home like that myself and I have only first really realized it up here. A harmonious home gives a sense of responsibility - one feels that one has received a valuable gift that can only be repaid by personal honest work.

**9<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

I did not finish writing my epistle yesterday because we played cards for the rest of the evening - we play cards a bit too often, but I am pleased to have learned a bit how to play bridge, in case I ever get home. The bad weather has now become a veritable snowstorm. The day has been spent sorting and reading up in Michael about the inner anatomy of oribatids. Will we get home this year or....?

**10<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

This evening the snowstorm has abated and a half-metre-thick layer of very loose snow has been deposited on level areas. Today I have found a strange creature in a sample from the meadow, six legs, two long hollow-thread feelers, small, yellow and translucent. I think it must be a fully grown insect - do any larvae have feelers?

It seems that there are different peace-feelers out. Will we ever have peace?

**12<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

Peace between Russia and Finland! Subsequently we had a long discussion about social conditions, especially at home.

**13<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

A sad peace, but personally I am tremendously pleased about it because firstly, the bloodbath will end, secondly the war will pass Scandinavia by and we will thereby avoid getting involved in it, and lastly there is a greater chance that we will get home. If I was Chamberlain, as soon as war broke out, I would have immediately sent an auxiliary army to the Finns without taking any notice of the Norwegians' protests. Thank goodness I am not Chamberlain!

Today we have heavy drifting. I really hope to hear a little from home soon. One's skin gets tough in the cold. I almost enjoy standing in the wind - wearing snow-goggles and letting the grains of snow rattle against the hood of my anorak like raindrops against the canvas of a tent.

**14<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

There was some grit in my otherwise excellent hamburgers today! It has been breezy with drifting snow. I have not looked through my microscope, but I have read a very, very, very little in I.M.S.N.S; there really is something in his embryology that I do not understand. When I am not reading, I can find myself longing a bit for you and all of you, but it does not mean anything at all. Listen now to what I have to tell you:

I thought about the concept of God today! For me, God is pantheistic; if I go out into the open, every single thing speaks to me. Everything is alive; one gets the feeling that there is a spirit speaking behind all things. Since man is a branch of nature, there is within everyone a divine voice - even within the kind of person one judges to be the worst. That point of view gives one a belief in social



**Figure 70** Mountain Scenery



justice. God does not meddle with the life of man, he just says that we should make full use of those talents that we received at birth. Judgement will definitely be here on earth if we waste talents; evidence for that hypothesis can be found in the animal kingdom - it does not have any bearing on the belief in God itself. Each individual animal gets certain talents from birth that it blindly follows without any knowledge of their significance (good); it merely makes use of them and is happy. The animal acts out every situation to which it is exposed on impulse because it has an unconscious life. The feeling of consciousness is a characteristic of culture. In the most evolved animals it can be sensed, with primitive people it is perceptible and with civilized people it is acknowledged. Consciousness results in one considering one's actions and spontaneity disappears; apathy gains a footing and since apathy is stagnation with little movement, it works against life and restricts one's abilities. In other words, it combats apathy. God's plan for us can perhaps also be taken as evidence for the concept of "The Devil," but those conditions exist only in civilised people that admit that they have abilities but not why they have them and why that is. It is up to God to answer the first. One's abilities have a divine origin and, because of that, have a particular meaning that we can perhaps not divine; moreover, they form links in the marvellous chain that we call life. One can also put one's abilities on the same footing as that of the most outstanding; their abilities are merely different. The most civilised people are the proudest people who have plumbed their own depths and have become humble (c.f. Karen Blixen).

About life after death, I neither know nor feel anything at all - it will be immensely exiting to experience. One must use a neutral expression - the kingdom of the dead. I have a feeling that, at the moment of death, everything is dark and then I am convinced that we get to somewhere and meet the entire population of the Cosmos. Now to close, I only wish to suggest that you do not claim that one can prove the existence of God by Jesus' miracles; God does not in the least require to be proven and cannot be proven at all because evidence is good one day and bad another, and belongs to comprehension. God occupies that part of mental life called emotion, because feelings are common to all living creatures, and primitive feelings that are the only sense we all have in common. The mind operates with convictions that have a certain lifespan and feelings with faith that are eternal. You will perhaps understand that miracles appeal - and must appeal - to the mind, which has nothing to do with faith.

It is not blowing any more and the time is nearing midnight. I am going out for kindling for early tomorrow morning. Goodnight.

### **16<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

Today it is Saturday and I am soon finished with my week as cook. If you consider going to Greenland some time in the future, listen to what I have to say: After you have been home for some time, you will think about the dogs, the lovely colours, how the country is unspoilt, etc., and you will probably long for up here, but then you should think about the cold mornings when you have to get up and light the fire, and yes, about all the housework that is quite necessary but unbearable in its boredom, about bad weather that hinders you in your work, about your station companions that do not understand you and that therefore you must manage with your private thoughts, about pettiness, but first and foremost about the conditions for ships to call at the port. This year, they are particularly difficult; each time I hear on the radio about ships that are sunk, I hope that the Greenland

Administration turns a deaf ear so that they pull themselves together to send the Gustav Holm up here.

I will not overwinter one more year. Conditions at the station are good and for that we are all responsible, but now, as far as I am concerned, I have striven to keep them good all year and done it quite consciously. I have taken my station companions quite straightforwardly and if they have made an insult, I have tried to forget it and if they have been friendly, I have ensured that I remember it. When Hennings has reproached me for a lack of a sense of cleanliness, I did not enter into a discussion. On the whole, overall, when I have felt that it is emotion speaking and not intelligence, I have reversed my engines and not led the conversation to the conclusion that I could lead it, since emotion does not give way to reason and, for those that cannot put their emotions to one side, an attack against emotion will always be taken personally. Up here, where one has time to brood over trifles, one wounding word can have very far-reaching consequences.



**Figure 71** Minervuat looking north



**Figure 72** Minervuat looking west.

Among the things that I have learnt up here is the importance of recognising and being able to control most perfectly one's mental life. As far as I am concerned, I have a clearly divided soul, in one half emotion governs and in the other half intelligence governs; the first is spontaneous, quick-tempered, biased and with an unlimited wish to dominate, full of feelings of justice and true compassion for anyone for whom it goes wrong (plus a feeling of justice, both exposing a sense of symmetry), terribly proud and ruthlessly ambitious, selfish, passionately loving both women and animals, untidy, etc. When intelligence reacts, for good reasons there is not much room for manoeuvre and the little that there is has the task of limiting it; that department is quite unscrupulous. No measly business is a stranger to it. It makes one play the lover with a heart of stone (Timmi) and to be a cynic that laughs at everything, the negative sceptic, the appalling doubter, unprincipled, the restless, the tormenter of animals, the opportunist, the slow witted, the one for whom "it fails from time to time," etc.

However, above these two departments stands the real me that watches them both, that is an active part with me, that selects the choice of the attitude of the two departments and that exercises them in practice. For example, if the first department is white with rage, then the second department can laugh scornfully; thus the director must make his selection and most often selects the second department. In most cases it is to my advantage (when the first department says you should be the leader and rule, the second department says absolutely no, and I must follow the recommendation of the second department), though that means that I lack spontaneity and my answers become woolly and slow, for which the poor equipment of the second department is much to blame. In that way, one also gets to playact if, for example, the first department is cross at some one that the second department says that one can gain benefit from and follows the second department, to which I would add that at home, where one has a plentiful selection from which to select one's friends, I am not an actor - or at least as good as not. Thus I can never be passionate, because, due to the poor sound insulation in modern buildings, the director always hears a suppressed sniggering from the second department. Of course, I am not an actor with my friends, such as Keiding, Boëtius, Svend Holm etc. The small numbers of them alone make it unlikely.



**Figure 73** Frozen fjord with a mountain on the opposite side.

However, I avoid scenes and that has been of great benefit to me - especially up here, but the power of the second department is also limited!!! I remember from school that Goethe had the same feelings as I do, though in my case they have arisen independently of the big man. (Why has the modern meaning of the word manliness come to mean brutality and not chivalry? Because the Nazis refer to themselves as "the man," especially "the healthy man" whereas their most noble virtue is brutality.)

Today, apart from all that, I cleaned the kitchen, common room and yes, even my own room. After lunch I went for a drive with Leo, Kvik and Stine. Some snow has fallen on the ice and the going was very heavy, not because I sink in, but the sliding was very slow and squeaky. I had terrible trouble with the dogs yesterday and had decided never again to drive dogs. Mette would not go at all, Rosa fought Mette and Stine, Sunero and Leo pulled inwards - I did not get out at all. I left the station with the help of Ziebell; I do like him. A short distance past the icefall, I stopped and made Kvik's harness shorter, thereby letting Stine get away from me; while I struggled to secure her, Leo twisted the reins off himself but remained attached by the neck loop, on account of which he gave me an arseful with the whip handle - that hurt! When Kvik wanted to go homewards, he received a powerful rap with the shaft across his thigh; that hurt. At that, there was at first real confusion in the team, but then I took Leo and Kvik by the harness and walked with them for some five minutes away from the station; then I steered them away from the sled (whereupon they began their howling, no doubt to give notice that it was their absolute intention to run home; previously they had had a fight; Leo: boss) and

the rest of the trip went very well. I think that my firm behaviour made a definite impression on them, namely generating respect. No compromise is the first condition for driving dogs.

Up in the meadow, one can differentiate three distinct areas purely by flora, namely:

1. Exclusively grass and cotton grass, the knife-layer<sup>21</sup> is thin,
2. Grass and cotton grass on mosses, the knife-layer is thick,
3. Moss with grass, the knife-layer is very thick.

The first area exists only in a few places and corresponds most closely to black algae meadow (NB seasonal hydrophilic). In terms of fauna, I don't think that there is any qualitative difference, whereas unquestionably there is definitely a quantitative one because (3) has the richest fauna. It has probably got the richest micro-flora, is most protected against sunlight and changes in humidity, and is not exposed to big temperature changes because of the water content. Furthermore, there is the thickness of the knife-layer, in that I believe it is that alone that houses the microfauna. I will investigate that now and I will still take samples from the meadow so that they are retained as regards quantity. I will set aside a sample under favourable conditions, half of which I will Berlese at once, and store the other half; to that, I will add one sample from up on Rypefjeldet. When the meadow and the field of stone are secured, I will investigate the winter conditions for the other areas.

Oh how I wish that I could write a thesis about the dear creatures so that I can become distinguished within the field of Zoology - all other fields are unimportant to me as regards being distinguished - but that is for the gods to decide.

The long screed above exposes me; you can understand that there is something weighing heavily on me. Hvidberg's principles of cleanliness seriously get on my nerves, as does his never admitting his own faults (playing bridge, the dog "Tryne" [snout]), his roaring feelings of inferiority that put a severe brake on my conversation, his exaggerated sense of taking food seriously, and taken together, how he looks upon himself. I myself have twice as many faults and he saved the burning house.

### 17<sup>th</sup> March 1940

Work is now getting underway at full speed again! It is very difficult to take precise samples from Rypefjeldet. The weather is excellent.

Schultz and Ziebell are coming now.



**Figure 74** Hennings with arctic fox skins at Hvalrosodde Station.

<sup>21</sup>Term used to describe the thin layer of soil inhabited by collembola, etc., q.v. below.

### 18<sup>th</sup> March 1940

I finished sorting sample 165 today. If only I could just once be completely satisfied with the treatment of a sample!

### 19<sup>th</sup> March 1940

Is it not strange to have winter tantrums at this time of year? But Hvidberg has. He is taciturn and the reason is that he feels overlooked, which he is not at all. Perhaps it is especially me that he has a grudge against, even though I have more reason to be offended. I can control myself more and am not in the slightest bit angry with him. He takes his anger out on Tryne that he treats in an utterly stupid and brutal way, that of course also results in that he cannot control the dogs at all. We three young ones deplore his behaviour most deeply.

I received a telegram today from mother; I cannot deny otherwise than it almost brought tears to my eyes when she wrote “miss you.” All her uncompromising love of the three of us lies hidden in that. Work for spring starts now little by little in the garden at home.

I have given up on the systematic sampling from up on Rypefjeldet, partly because of the very stony ground making the taking of samples insufficiently precise and partly because of its fine grain. The soil dribbles down in the collection glass and when I take the sample, the soil dribbles out of the dryer and makes it even more imprecise. I feel like sampling vegetation in the snow layer in order to obtain other ecological extremes. I did take a lovely precise sample today from the meadow, but that was also Vat’s fault, because Vat sat thoughtfully the whole time and looked at me while I worked, so I had to take exceptional trouble over fulfilling the strict requirements that his spoken silence commanded me. Apart from that, I have sorted some of Sample 166.

For my own sake, I must hope that I will get married and have several children and at least one boy. We have the case of Hvidberg with a wife and daughter. It is a given that he will ultimately always get his way with these two; particularly bad when Hvidberg believes that his wife is very independent and makes up her own mind - that is naturally a self-delusion. The result is the type that says: “What does it concern etc.,” “and only we...,” and who will always lead the conversation at the table and gets upset when it excludes him, and always wants the last word. For that reason, I have been tired of discussions with him already now for a long time - but how I miss a real discussion about abstract topics. However, I am so pleased with my work and as long as I stay healthy, I will probably manage.



**Figure 75** Skeleton of a whale, looking towards Seal island.

### 20<sup>th</sup> March 1940

I sorted samples this morning. This afternoon I took a lovely trip overland with Rikke, Stine, Kvik and Leo to Sælsøen, and from there by way of Salmon River (Lakselven, the outlet from the lake) to Hvalrosodden and home. Rikke caused me trouble by choking many times, so then I tied her harness

to Leo's, as I have seen Ziebell do in similar circumstances; he then pulled her along. It went from chaos in the team to going really well, especially down Salmon River where one encountered every type of condition. At Hvalrosodde, Hennings had just returned and served an excellent meal, the menu consisting of C.L.O.C. [caraway liqueur], coffee with bread, snaps, hamburger and potatoes, and then he had the most delicious strawberry jam with whole strawberries and - Heavens - it tasted of strawberries.

He had caught two bears and 32 foxes altogether, so he was in excellent spirits; it is really pleasant to talk to a bloke like him who is intelligent in his own special way that expresses an independent and sensitive soul. He had composed a lot of ditties out at Danmarkshavn that he sang for me. The trip home was very strenuous for me; the dogs were in fine spirits because many times I had to go in front and help Rikke by pulling on her traces and the others of course took advantage of that. I was also afraid that it was too early to drive with her after giving birth to her six puppies. Most of the way I had either to walk or half-run behind the sled, so now I will stop and go to bed.

### 21<sup>st</sup> March 1940

This morning I was out looking at localities. I finished sorting Sample 166 this afternoon and I spent the evening removing the scull from an ermine that Hennings had given me.

### 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1940

O, I thank the gods because they permit me to work. The whole day has been busy, never letting one's initiative rest, still trying to discover something - O, what a delight. Today, for example, I finished arranging my Dauer slides this morning and after lunch I skied at terrific speed over to Sælsøen where I dug out the whale skeleton. I don't think that it really is the one that Knuth meant, since I cannot understand the map he drew for me - though, as there are in any case several skeletal remains over there, I might as well take the one I am aware of and that I can easily find because it is close to the depot. First I photographed it untouched, then I removed the snow from the bones and photographed them so that the white bones contrasted with the black soil, and finally I



**Figure 76** Excavated hole. (Zoologist at work!)

placed some stones on the bones so that they would not blow away before I could come and fetch them with my dog team. As the bones lie in groups, I will number the bones in the same group with the same number, then the learned gentlemen back home can more easily sort them out. When I had done that, I skied home; I got lost among the fields of stone in front of "the shoulder" and had to carry my skis across a large bare area. At Rypefjeldet, I ran into Madsen and Ziebell who were practising turns and we had fun doing that for another quarter of an hour until the time was nearly six.

I call Hvidberg "the male housemaid" and I have lost all respect for him; if a man has no self-respect, he cannot demand the respect of others. A man that is only in good spirits if he gets his own

way is a poor wretch; a man that says that our generation is lax and emphasizes his own fitness when he was young in contrast to ours where we lie in our bunks or sit and read novels, is he not a poor wretch? A man that has pontificated on the theory of dogs, especially the breaking in of young dogs, and who completely contradicts his theories in practice (mishandling of Tryne), is he not a poor wretch? A man that cannot take a disappointment, a sneer, who is wrapped up in principles, etc., is he not a poor wretch? Especially now when the sun is shining and one's insides are like a bubbling pool of mud where each bubble that bursts is a thought that escapes one, it seems twice as irritating to see such apathy. I harbour such apprehension and scorn for theorists and visionaries!



**Figure 77** Hennings at Hvalrosodde Station.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> March 1940**

Tidied up, cleaned up some foxes, sewed a little fishing net and took samples, this was the day's work.

### **24<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

Another good day's work during which I began tests for acidity. After lunch, Jensen came from Eskimonæs.

### **24<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

Jensen is still here. He is a pleasant chap with a likeable straightforward nature; nevertheless, I still managed to determine some acidity levels during the day. The weather has deteriorated with wind and drifting snow.

It looks black for them at home; if only they send a ship up here and it is not lost to war.

### **25<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

Yesterday, I had a gorgeous trip to Goose Lake (Gåsesøen), up the slope to Goose Mountain (Gåsefjeld), and down again in a rush, tipping over the sled, cheerful dogs, speed, excitement and fetching home the whale skeleton. I visited Hvalrosodde Station and stayed there overnight because Jensen was there too. I finished the acidity tests today and put aniseed oil on the weasel trap.



**Figure 78** Work area near Mørkefjord Station.

### **28<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

I sorted samples and took a new sample so that I could check the position of the small creatures. I did a little skiing, but this evening I am rather tired and my head feels heavy. The others are in good spirits, but I cannot stand rum, snaps and whisky, which are the only types of alcohol that we have. For me, they are too hard, bitter, dry and much too macho. Heath wines are better for me.

I am now going to repair Sunero's harness. I do hope that we do not have to overwinter one year more because Hvidberg irritates me infinitely. I miss someone that is on the same wavelength as I am; I especially miss you! Please excuse my melancholy, but I have only had little sleep these last days. I slept very lightly at Hvalrosodde, partly because I froze and partly because I was afraid that the dogs might get free or get into a fight with Jensen's.

### **29<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

I sorted samples, went skiing with Jensen and the others, repaired harnesses and had a whiplash from Petrus.

### **30<sup>th</sup> March 1940**

For a whole week now, we have had no contact with the rest of the world; perhaps that is why I am not in particularly good spirits. I miss people, especially some with whom I can talk quite freely. It is quite impossible for me to overwinter one year more. During the dark time, I did not miss the sun that much, but now that we have it, I shudder at the thought of losing it.

I have prepared samples today because I took one from the vicinity of the Cassiope Heath. Late in the afternoon, I went for a drive with my five dogs.



**Figure 79** Traversing the pass 1.

### **1<sup>st</sup> April 1940**

Tried again to set fire to the station, and my dogs ran from me out on the ice.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> April 1940**

I worked with the samples and went for a drive with the dogs around "Kalven" [the Calf]. Claus Sørensen is not coming up here now. I must get home, no matter how

### **4<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

I worked with the Cassiope sample both yesterday and today because it contained a great many creatures. I have prepared for a trip following the evening meal. Ziebell and I will perhaps drive to "The Pass"; It is a good thing that Ziebell is on the station. Without him, my relations with the remaining three would not be good!





**Figure 80** Traversing the pass 2.



**Figure 81** Traversing the pass 3.



**Figure 82** Traversing the pass, looking out over a fjord(?).



**Figure 83** Traversing the pass, further on.

**6<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

I had one of my best experiences yesterday! I was with Ziebell up over the pass and looked out over Skærfjorden. I skied behind the sled, past Hvalrosodde Station in a curve and up a river bed to Lookout Hill which we climbed. From there, we saw "the Bear Track" and found our bearings from there; we then stood and pointed out the most likely route up to the pass. We went down from the hill and set off with me following Ziebell's lovely, strong and delightful dogs with my miniature imitation dogs. We drove into the range of hills at the point where we had chosen the start of the ascent, drove carefully over a snow vane that was hanging obliquely out over a river, step by step continuing upwards and took rests along the way to discuss the route. "Mugi" sniffed a stopping point where at least three oxen had been.

We had still not reached the top and sweated ourselves on through the gorge - yes, we had found the correct route because suddenly we were up on the plateau. After a short check on our bearings using the map, we continued on northwards when - hurray, hurray - Ziebell stopped at a range of hills. I did not notice him waving his hand, but then I saw why he had stopped, because before us lay Skærfjorden and we are at the top of the descent. We climbed some 200-300 m up the mountain and can see out over the entire fjord, out to Rekvedøen [Rekved Island], Cape Amier, the whole Northland fades away, Joinvilles Island, glaring - but dominating as the focus of the landscape, we can see Cape Recamier, in over the flat land from which the mountain peaks shoot up, and to the south to Dove Bugt, a wonderful country that is now indelibly engraved in my memory. We set off homewards at full speed, tipping over the sled and stopped at Henning's, where he served hamburger steak and fruit soup [a dessert], and finally home to Mørkefjord; we had been underway for 16 hours and today we have lovely sore muscles. Hvidberg's brain is nothing but porridge. I spent today working with the samples.

**8<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

I drove in to the bottom of Mørkefjord yesterday and today I worked with samples.

**9<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

Events are too far-reaching for me to work this evening. The worst that could happen has happened. Denmark is occupied by the enemies - yes, because our enemies are the Nazis. Everything in the future lies hidden in uncertainty. Mother, Tyge and Lasse, my thoughts are with the three of you. I wish to God that you stay well during this period so that we can see each other again. When will we meet again, Inge? When and what and where? We know nothing. I know only one thing, as true as the earth is controlled by an unalterable invisible existence and by very visible working laws, this war will end with the fall of Hitler, and I think it will happen soon. I remember the story from when I was very young about the man in the muddy ditch who wanted to be everything, even in the end to be God himself - but at that he was dumped back into the muddy ditch from whence in a unilateral and mad greed had raised himself up. Into the paintpot with Hitler, into the beer barrel with Göring and into the wine cask with Rippentrop. In Norway, they are probably fighting for the country, even though we hear almost nothing on the radio. I do think that Denmark has behaved absolutely correctly - especially when I think about Tyge and Lasse who could have been shot dead if we had shown resistance; I feel how strong those ties are that tie us three brothers together, how infinitely much we love each other and that we will never part in anger. We respect each other's capabilities and up here,

I feel very much inspired by them to do my best in order to meet them sometime again with a good conscience. I want especially to do well because in that way I will please mother. Oh, how hideous it is!

Madsen and I are alone home. We are having a very pleasant time, even though we are discussing the frightful affairs. The Germans cannot hold Norway. The hour of vengeance is nigh. My beloved mother country, the only thing I can do for you is to work to enhance your reputation - while at the same time I acknowledge the abilities of other countries. Denmark. Denmark. Denmark = Dänemark.????????? I want to fight! We have heard uncensored broadcasts from Tromsø. Germany is now feeling resistance; first, the lines of communication with Germany are to be broken, i.e., the German forces in Norway are to be annihilated; next, landings in Jutland with the Germans suffering defeat in Jutland with its lack of strongholds and in the flight through Jutland and Germany, they will have no time to make a stand anywhere. The war is won by the Allies in two months and we are collected in August.

#### **10<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

We follow the battles very dramatically through the conflicting radio reports. The censored Danish press and the uncensored from Bodø and Tromsø. Good luck follows the British-French fleet!

#### **11<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

Our father, who art in heaven, free our home!

#### **12<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

I have not done much today. Through Tromsø and especially Bodø, we follow events hour by hour; in their war, the Germans are following a disgraceful code of ethics and that must bring its own revenge, as it probably does. We can certainly hope that by now the British have complete command of the seas and that the occupation of Norway thereby is crushed, but first of all, the Norwegians should have the honour! They have saved the democratic culture. I wonder whether Mother is alive? I am apprehensive about never seeing her again. Let me not become a lump on a log. The thing that worries me the most is that the others at home are envious of my job. I feel that I have shirked my duty, that I have been spared (c.f. Paul La Cour: *Alt kræver jeg*<sup>22</sup>). The inability to do anything is terrible when one believes that one's friends suffer that which one should have suffered oneself - and then to come home hale and hearty while the others, yes, perhaps are dead even though of course it would make no difference whether or not one is home; but seen sensibly, it is of course nonsense.

#### **13<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

Terrible inability to do anything and uncertainty!

#### **14<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

I hope that it is correct that the British are advancing and crushing the unchivalrous and cowardly German Nazi soldiers. Now comes a trip to Denmark for England. If only we get home this summer.

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<sup>22</sup> *I demand everything*, a collection of poems, 1938, by Paul La Cour, Danish author 1902-1956.

The thought of doing without you, you who in this barren land are for me like the symbol of life itself, is for me unreal and unbearable.

The plenari have awoken from hibernation.; they are quite small forms, so they have most likely overwintered as eggs. Luckily I have now completed my cooking week and can again devote myself to my work, my lovely dogs and my random meditations.

#### **15<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

If only it were true that the British have occupied Narvik! I worked with my samples and drove over to and went around "Kalven" [The Calf] with six dogs.

#### **16<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

If only they do not bomb the Zoological Museum! I would rather see my home wrecked than Zoological Museum. For more than 100 years, young people have entered through its arches, offered their time and abilities to work for the museum's - and their own - honour, only to leave it as old men. Irreplaceable valuables are hidden there, diligent years of work. Dramatic journeys of exploration lie hidden in alcohol there - everything can be spoilt by one single foolish bomb. People to whom one is attached with the bonds of love, one can stand the loss of - life gives one others instead, but if you wreck the museum, one kills oneself because it is like the expression for one's most holy interest that fills one's whole being and without which one cannot live. I mean what I have just said. I love everything that radiates life and consider it to be a holy duty to have to study it. Worked with a Cassiope sample. The weather is fine with a strongly warming sun.

#### **17<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

For most of the day, I have been reading "The Life of Hugo David"; this evening I went for a drive with my dogs.

#### **18<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

Today, I have done almost nothing but read the unsurpassable book about "The Life of Hugo David". It is late at night and it is light. The moon is out and the dogs are howling. When one day I die, I will see before me the sight I had from Mørkefjord's barren heaps of gravel when I looked westwards straight into the sun which stood over a black landscape with a glinting river that snaked in to a distant lake. In the far distance, the blue mountains of Dronning Louise Land rise towards the blue sky. If we stay here one more year, then I will drive up the river and in to the lake to see how the landscape is in there...

#### **19<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

I worked quite a lot with the samples. There is warmth in the air; it is dripping everywhere from the



**Figure 84** In the vicinity of Hvalrosodde Station.

ceiling onto the floor and the air in the living room is drowsy and warm. I cannot really pull myself together to do more today and perhaps I will go for a little drive now. As a result of yesterday, my moods are fluctuating, more inhibited than displayed since anyway I cannot completely let go the reins. I am thinking of all of you whom I might perhaps never see.

The mouth-part of the beetle larva is quite strange; I will be famous for that. I am pleased about that, but I do not really know why.

### **20<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

I feel tired and uninclined to work today, while at the same time that I have a strange feeling of anxiety that makes me restless. I think that the heat is part of the reason, after all the temperature has risen to freezing point.

### **21<sup>st</sup> April 1940**

I felt like working today and it is also a little cooler. Schulz has now gone home after a pleasant visit; it is quite possible that he gave Hvidberg a mouthful. If I can this evening, I will drive over to Hvalrosodde for some walrus meat. Madsen and I get on very well; we are now alone at the station.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> April 1940**

I worked for a while with samples, read parts of "Insektlivet" [Insect Life], etc., and went for a short drive with the dogs after lunch.

### **24<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

I worked with a sample and drew a typical opus with the help of Tuxen's drawing apparatus. I then drove to Kalven and through the pack ice home. Denmark has never been so disgraced as it is now - the dumb naivety of the press alone is an outrage - but when we get home, we will help to raise its honour. In my field with my inferior ability, I will busy myself with doing my best.

### **25<sup>th</sup> April 1940**

I took a sample from the meadow and nearly finished determining a sample from the vaccinium; strangely enough it had no type of hypogastura and only one T.4. After dinner, I went for a drive, now with seven dogs because I have included Mette in the team. She is a lovely dog and it went well except for just outside the station when she got into a fight with Rikke and Stine with the result that she finished up in under the sled. I managed to stop and it seems that nothing had happened to her.

Madsen and I have discussed the Germans, their principles of slavery - no free man could have carried out their infamy - and of the hate that one will meet with in Denmark when they have been driven out of the country, because that they will. Evil always triumphs in the beginning, but good always wins in the end. The suppressed hate that the Danes must bear now, how will it be vented? Out of pure curiosity, I would like to be home; I have completely got used to the thought that Mother and perhaps Tyge and Lasse are dead when I get home. If that is the case, I hope that I have money enough left to be able to continue my studies and move into an apartment on the top floor with a clear view of the harbour; it should have a study, kitchen, toilet, and a small bedroom, and then I will get engaged so that I am not completely alone, because I have discovered that on account of often

changing schools, I have no childhood friends. The Norwegian broadcasts from London are due now at twenty minutes past midnight.

### 26<sup>th</sup> April 1940

I worked with samples and looked at the numerical data obtained. Madsen has shot a seal out on the ice; it had climbed up through a hole that froze over again so that it could not get down. He shot it dead instantly.

### 27<sup>th</sup> April 1940

I have been very sleepy today because lately I have not been getting to bed until about one o'clock in the morning and then get up at seven or eight, but I will no longer listen to the 12:20 AM broadcasts; Sørensen from Tromsø tells us anyway what happened during the night. I worked as well as I could today with the winter samples to get an overall view. I went for a drive in the snowy weather, hence along the coast and in across land; it was great fun. With my long traces and fine dogs, it must have been a magnificent sight. The whip got cut through, but I have just repaired it. In addition, I have also read some technical literature.



**Figure 85** Hvalrosodde Station from a distance, 1.



**Figure 86** Hvalrosodde Station from a distance, 2.

This evening, the snow has completely ceased and everything is covered with a thin layer of snow. I went for a walk with the saloon rifle up to “Inge’s Cairn”, “Gelting’s Garden” and home past the thermographs and the weasel trap. My towering and daring cairn, from which one can get an overview of the Hvalros Plain and more, the wind had toppled it - alas, what is Inge capable of without me - h’m! There were delightful effects of light on the ice and on the land, with fog banks that came, dissolved and generated again in a new offensive. The land could rather be sensed than be seen, but now the fog has gone. Only at Vædderspidsen [Ram’s Point] is snow still drifting. It looks like a young girl’s daringly flourished quiff. Inge’s final words to me about being careful not to get shot will get a strange basis of reality if I were to enlist as a volunteer with Norway’s defence forces.

### 29<sup>th</sup> April 1940

I had a very “hard case” overland trip to Sælsø yesterday along the saddle, when not only I fell over but also the sled, and many other things happened, but both the dogs and I were in excellent spirits. Most of today I worked with samples and tried to determine some Oribatids. It is a bit of a dead time now between winter and spring, since I consider that my winter work is finished except perhaps for two samples from the thermograph meadow.

I will not after all enlist as a volunteer because in doing so, I would run the risk of becoming an invalid. Firstly, that would make me a poor lover which would be tragic, and secondly I would become a burden to others because I am not certain that the state pays disability benefits to foreigners. In any case, I have not the slightest desire to fight and naturally also because I would risk being killed, and since my hatred of life at the age of puberty, I have gone over to being a humble worshipper of life.

I believe that mites will be a field in which I would be satisfied to work, giving me a tingling in my guts similar to when I drive along with the dogs through the untouched country here, feeling like the explorer who discovers it for the first time for mankind. Mites, it can be said, is a field not fully developed, in which anyone wishing to study it will still encounter problems that no one has previously encountered and upon which he must take an independent position. Since 9<sup>th</sup> April, I have become even more aware of my feelings for my homeland, so it would be a big satisfaction to me if one could say on my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday that Denmark occupies a fine position in the research of acarinology.

### 30<sup>th</sup> April 1940

I have just returned from a very unsuccessful trip which I had planned should have gone to the Annex River estuary at Sælsøen. I gave up three-quarters of the way there because for the first half I had smooth ice with patches of snow while the remainder was soft going. On the way home, the dogs ran from me because Vat's traces came undone from the hasp and I was only holding his traces; I then had to walk for about three-quarters of an hour to an hour and even then I got off lightly. When I met the dogs again, they all had a big dressing-down, except for Mette and Vat. Through Salmon River, the going was half-bad. Even when it went so-so, the drive was very monotonous with the landscape being as dead as it is; but in a way, I am pleased with the trip because I can now clearly see that it is not always fun to drive dogs. On the other hand, had I only made do with short trips, I would perhaps (when) if I get home be passionately fond of travelling by sled as the only way to go, but now in contrast, I have seen so many of the disadvantages of it that I can imagine the rest, in other words, it can be “bloody awful”.

Even if the station is clean and tidy, the rooms will never be “cozy.” On the way home, I thought how differently cozy it would be if one came home to “Vendle” instead. I do not think that the stay up here has made me restless - on the contrary. Something else on the trip that made me absolutely angry was Rikke's despairing, servile, questioning look that she sent me every three minutes or so (like Timmi). I could hear the water gurgle beneath the ice on Sælsøen. "Unten fängt's schon an zu Blühen" [German: Below it is already starting to bloom.]

**1<sup>st</sup> May 1940**

I worked well today, partly because of the exercise yesterday and partly because I had a thorough wash yesterday and put on clean clothes throughout. Madsen has driven over to Hvalrosodde Station, so I am making myself a cup of cocoa and making myself as comfortable as I can. Just now, when I went out the outer door, a little multi-coloured bird came flying low across the snow and sat upon a tooq<sup>23</sup> next to me, looked at me for a moment and then flew on: It was really nice of it to come right up to me.

**2<sup>nd</sup> May 1940**

I long somewhat for other people. Madsen and I get on well with each other and I enjoy doing without the company of Hvidberg, but what I miss I can express in a single word: lushness. The landscape up here is becoming too dead, even for me. Its character approaches that of a desert.

A brilliant person who could direct my thoughts, that could bear fruit... Stagnation is what I fear most in my intellectual life, but what I have got out of my stay up here can most probably first be recognised and evaluated after I have been home for a while. If only sometime I could really enjoy myself spontaneously and without thinking about anything other than having fun, i.e., not thinking at all. Things look black for Britain and France



**Figure 87** Distant view of fjord.

**4<sup>th</sup> May 1940**

I am setting off for Scoresbysund soon!

**5<sup>th</sup> May 1940**

Preparing for the trip south.

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<sup>23</sup> Tooq is described later at Carlsberg Fjord, Page 104.





**Figure 88** Mørkefjord area



**Figure 89** Mørkefjord Station [641], April 1940

## Introduction

For many Danes, 1940 will be remembered as the year when old habits and traditions were destroyed and replaced by new guidelines for the future and by experiences to which one would previously never have dreamt of being exposed. In Greenland that same year, foundations were laid for the society that would develop so strongly during the subsequent decades. For those Danes that had only planned a shorter stay in Greenland, that year also became a watershed.

On the 9th of April 1940, I was at Mørkefjord [Dark Fjord] Station<sup>24</sup> [641], 76°N 20°W, as one of the four members of the *Danish Northeast Greenland Expedition 1939-40*, led by Ebbe Munck and Eigil Knuth. Mørkefjord Station lies on the south side of Germania Land at the same latitude as Danmarkshavn. It is the most northerly Station on the east coast and is situated about 1,000 kilometres north of Scoresbysund<sup>25</sup>. Between the two, there are only widely spaced cabins and

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<sup>24</sup>In 1939-40, the fourteen inhabited stations on the east coast consisted of six Norwegian and five Danish trapping stations, two stations (Ella Ø and Eskimonæs) owned by the Danish State, and one, Mørkefjord Station, belonging to the Danish Northeast Greenland Expedition. The Danish trapping stations are owned by the trapping company Nanok. Small cabins were located at intervals of 20 to 30 kilometres between trapping stations.

<sup>25</sup>Scoresbysund is today known as Ittoqqortoormiit.

stations, chiefly Danish and Norwegian trapping stations<sup>26</sup>. While the trapping stations and the expedition station are designed for year-round occupation, cabins are used only for overnight stays on trips. They are therefore spread out down along the coast with about a day's journey between them.

Listening to Tromsø Radio to the fight for freedom in Norway, it quickly became clear that now we would have to get used to a quite different existence than the one we had planned when we had set out for Mørkefjord. But then, suddenly in early May, our position changed completely upon receipt of a telegram from the sheriff's office. It stated that a ship from the west coast would visit Scoresbysund that year, and that we would have to make our own arrangements since all connections with Denmark had been severed. We then started to plan our futures. The station leader, author Andreas Hvidberg, the wireless operator Kristian Madsen and Carlos Ziebell, then a trapper, all decided to stay on another year at the station. Mechanic C.H. Schultz, who was spending the year with Poul Hennings at the nearby trapping station Hvalrosodde [Walrus Point], both as trappers, was determined to reach the west coast as soon as possible to get a job as a mechanic. I was also interested in the hopes of getting home from there to resume my studies in zoology. The two of us then decided to try our luck together and to get to Scoresbysund that year, despite the lateness of the year being totally unsuited to long distance travel. That close to summer, it is unwise to start a 1,000 km journey by dog sled, especially southwards, but of course we did it anyway!

A better traveling companion than Schultz could scarcely be found, and the following pages give an account of our experiences during our travels together. They may seem to be an exiting string of adventures and fantastic experiences, but in reality they tell the tale of a long series of boring and strenuous days endeavoring to reach the target that we had set ourselves.

#### REMINDER

Towel  
Toothbrush  
Bricklayer's cap  
Khaki trousers?  
Sommek sleeping bag  
Kerosene [paraffin] can  
Thermos® flask  
Hiking boots  
Chocolate  
Harness for Lev  
Alwyn's photo exposure table  
Knife  
Drawer gear  
Mug  
Tear drops  
Rope traces (for dog teams)



**Figure 90** Pelts hanging out to dry at Hvalrosodde

<sup>26</sup>Translator's note: The trapping stations were inhabited by Danish and Norwegian trappers. They collected pelts for sale in Europe, mostly from arctic foxes and polar bears.

## 1000 km by Dogsled

### Departure

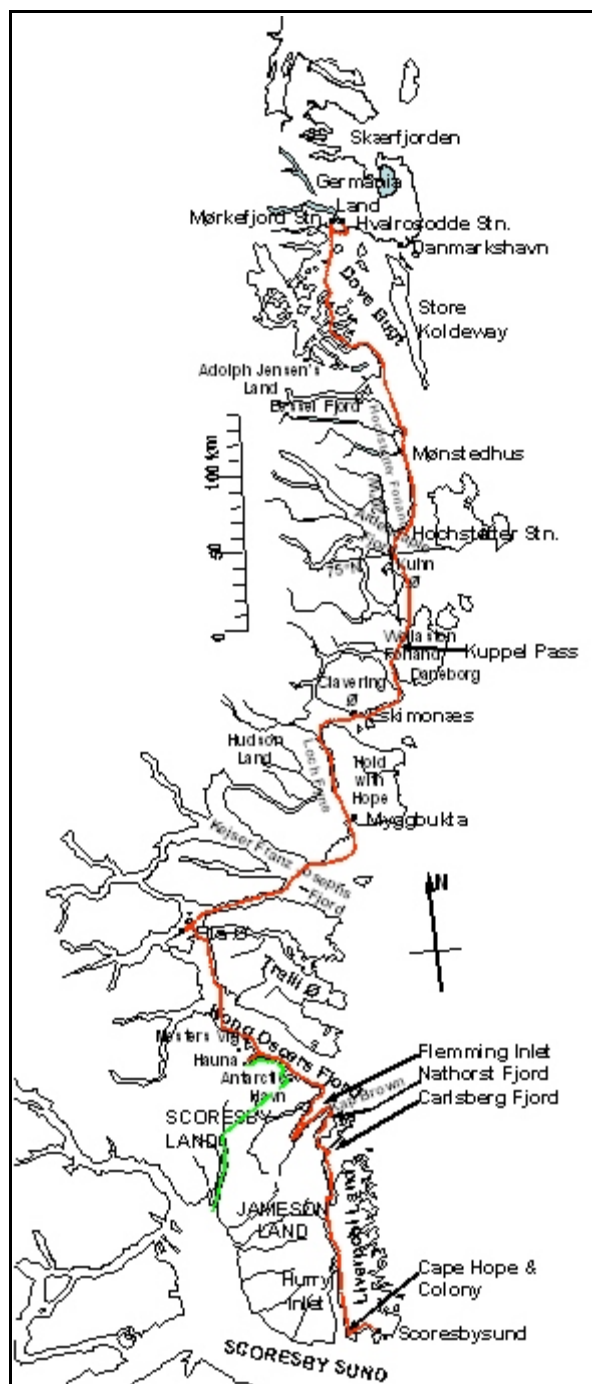
At 10 pm on the 13th of May 1940, trapper Schultz and I set out from Hvalrosodde on our way south to Scoresbysund, a distance of about 1,000 kilometres. We left Hennings at Hvalrosodde Station [639-1] well and in good spirits, and with a complete dog team of about six or seven good dogs.

The preceding week had been spent busily preparing for the trip. We fed the dogs well, the sleds were re-lashed, the bindings tightened, traces exchanged, harnesses sewn and so on. The fever of an imminent departure was in the air. A journey by sled would shortly begin, a journey completed many times on the map, but somewhat more difficult to achieve in practice. If we should reach Scoresbysund that year, then what? Would the West Coast, America or perhaps Europe then be the next destination? We didn't know and therein lay the charm.

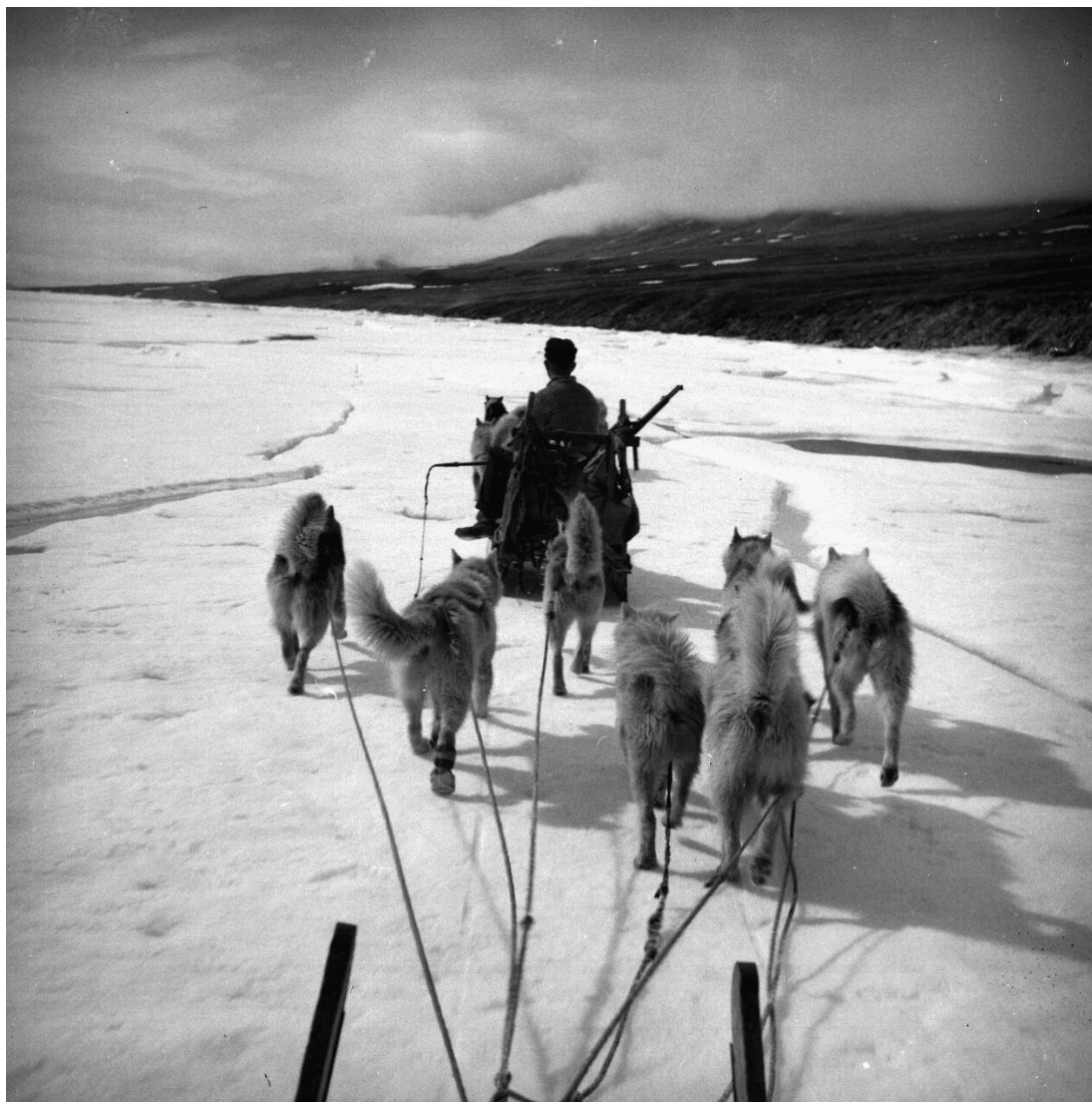
The dogs were also infected by the preparations for the journey. The old and experienced looked at us with mild reproach as box after box was piled up upon the sleds. In the middle of their ecstasy of food and well-being, they had not forgotten what accompanied a long sled journey in terms of want and punishment. On the other hand, the young and inexperienced, who did not know that many boxes on a sled meant a trip of many kilometres, lived only in the present.

Finally everything was ready for departure. The first snowstorm of the year had abated and the sun had come out. With our faces turned to the south, we gave the dogs the signal to go, jumped up onto the sleds, and swung the long whips in a final farewell to those staying behind.

We each had our own dogsled, and Port Arthur in Dove Bugt was our initial goal. Dove



**Figure 91** Map shows Journey (Red) & Dash (Green)



**Figure 92** Sledding on even sea-ice and with dogs in good form.

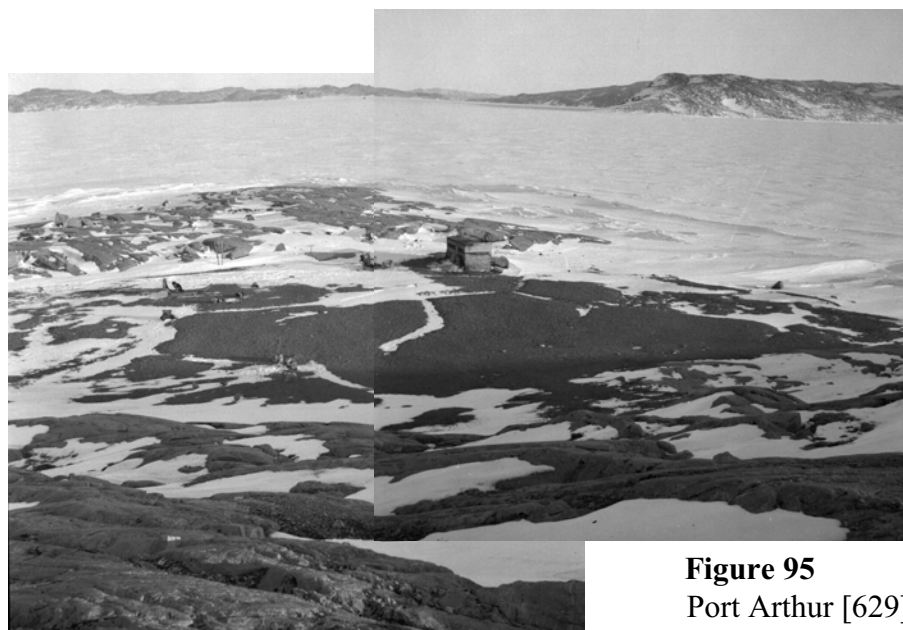
Bugt was reputed to have bottomless snows wherein both man and dog vanish, making possible advances of only two or three kilometres a day. Danish Expedition members were the first to research the bay and make maps of it, maps that since then were used for decades. Later, I.P. Koch and Wegener roamed the area on their trip across the inland ice, Einar Mikkelsen and Ivarsen pushed their sleds across the bay, Lauge Koch was there in the late twenties, and following the establishment of Hvalrosodde Station, their trappers too crossed the bay, albeit often on forced marches.

The countryside there was sterile. No muskoxen were to be seen and no animal tracks. Once a raven flew out from a rock and hung cawing overhead. Now and again we passed the imprints of

a bear's colossal paws, most often accompanied by the neat little footprints of a fox. We had made a good start to our journey and when we reached Vædderhytten [Ram's Cabin, 635], we rested and drank a cup of milk. Grey siskins and snow sparrows could be heard singing all around and the sun shone in the little valley where the cabin lay, giving a real feeling of spring. Apart from them, all was quite quiet except for the occasional minor rock fall that broke the silence. The dogs were quite tired, but recovered after the short rest. We put on our skis to cross Hellefjord because otherwise we fell through the crust that the wind had formed on the snow. We also had some fog, but with many short rests we made good progress to Port Arthur [629] where we arrived around 6 or 7 o'clock.



**Figure 93** Vædderhytten [635] (?)



**Figure 94** Port Arthur [629]

**Figure 95**  
Port Arthur [629]

When we set off the following morning, the going was excellent at first, but it gradually became worse, becoming terrible in the valleys where the going was loose. As it was also very warm, we had to stop often in order not to overtax the dogs. We saw the fresh trail of a polar bear just north of Gotfred Hansen's Island. A raven flew by out into the bay near the bear track. The islands there in the bay have a characteristic similarity, eroded down by the tough climate into rounded or flat areas, with scree at the bases of their steep sides. The stones were friable, in that they crumbled



away in your fingers when touched. The scenery therefore consisted primarily of horizontal and vertical lines, something that gave it an impression of severity.

### Gefionshavn

We arrived that evening at Gefionshavn [613-2] after being under way for about 13 hours from Port Arthur. The landscape had been dominated by Store Koldewey on one side and the glacier on the other, while at the station there were many Greenlander ruins. We had a big dinner of roast muskox and other good things at Gefionshavn. We were the first to bring them the news of the German occupation of Denmark.



We were delayed 11 hours at Gefionshavn due to fog and started out at around 7 or 8 in the morning of 16th May. Progress through the bay was easy that year because little winter snow had fallen. Most of the way I went in front of my dogs which were pulling very well. We saw many old bear tracks. At Kap Peschel [607], Schultz scalded his thighs and cut his thumb deeply. After a good two days, we finally said farewell to Dove Bay, having reached the outer coast for the first time. The coastal area north of Bessel Fjord, Adolf Jensen's Land, because it was named after the zoologist, seemed rather a paradox to me, since I had never seen banks of gravel so devoid of animal life. From Kap Peschel, we ran on good going down to Paaskenæshytten [Easter Headland Cabin, 604]. We reached there at ten thirty the same evening. Due to a shortage of coal at the cabin, we burnt a fox trap that we found there.

**Figure 96** Tip of the Glacier



**Figure 97** Resting on sea ice



**Figure 98** Rest Period along the fjord

Ahead of us was a 60-kilometre straight coastal stretch with firm going, sun and frost, ideal for travel by sled. The brown, uniform landscape north and south of Bessel Fjord raced past us. The going from Paaskenæshytten was exceptionally fine, so we were able to sit on the sleds most of the time while the dogs trotted off in good spirits. We only had to pass a few narrow channels in the ice, and then there was even a bunch of seals lying on the ice. In anticipation of fat-filled seal roasts smelling of crackling, the dogs ran forward excitedly, only to get a supercilious farewell wave from the seal's tail flippers as it slipped into the hole in front of us. So as not to lose face with the other dogs for the abortive hunt, the team's lead dog turned to the nearest dog, vented his annoyance at the loss, and thereby felt the situation restored, ready to dash after the next seal and to be foolish again.



**Figure 99** Store Koldewey from Paaskenæs Cabin



**Figure 100** From the pass after Ardenryste Inlet and Paaskenæshytten 1.



**Figure 101** From the pass after Ardenryste Inlet and Paaskenæshytten 2.

### **Mønstedhus**

After a day's trip, we rounded the next corner of the coast and drove up to the Danish trapping station Mønstedhus [532-2] on the 19th May. Mønstedhus was the home of Niels Hansen, a short man with a long silvery-grey beard, small lively eyes, quick movements and a fiery temperament. He was a



worthy role model for all the trappers. He ran Nanok's mink farm, which, at least zoologically, was a success in that the animals (*mustela vison*) were happy and bred well under his thorough care.

After only eight hours there and having devoured his famous food and beer, we travelled on southwards that night along Hochstetter Forland from Mønstedhus past Ottostrand [531] to Ailsahytten [Ailsa Cabin, 519]. Apart from seeing 72 muskoxen, the trip was very boring with firm going and a washboard surface. Gradually the coast became lower and lower until at last it was indistinguishable from the sea ice. Often we did not know whether we were driving on land or on ice. If one were to get caught in a snowstorm there and continue despite the poor visibility, one would invariably get lost. One would either be heading out to sea where open water furthest out lie in wait, or else inland where the rivers have cut canyons some ten to twenty meters deep that are invisible in a snowstorm. About two years previously, two of Nanok's trappers disappeared on that stretch and were never found. Trappers used to tell many stories about that stretch of coastline where many of them were exposed to danger.



**Figure 102** Ottostrand [531] (?)

### Hochstetter Station

The onward journey from Ailsa to Hochstetter Station [510] along the coastal edge of Hochstetter Forland was very uniform with even and good going. While seated on the sled, I was often on the verge of falling asleep. The station itself lay at the southern tip of Hochstetter Forland at the mouth of Ardencaple Fjord.

We had intended to stay at the Hochstetter trapping station only a few hours, but just after we arrived, a tremendous snowstorm began, holding us trapped. Drifting prevented any activities outside, nearly burying the house. Of the three trappers, only Finn Christoffersen was at the station. To make our reception more festive, he fetched a sharpening stone, some old gramophone needles and player without a spring. While the snow piled up in front of the windows so that darkness descended more and more in the room, the trapper sat with a bitter-sweet smile around his mouth and a distant, dreamy expression in his eyes and let lovely female voices emerge in that he with the one hand turned the record, and with the other sharpened a needle for the next.

We were feeding the dogs on old biscuits softened in water containing fat and they were in fine form. On the third day, the storm itself weakened, but it still looked heavy. The days seemed like one, but I believe that it was the evening of 23<sup>rd</sup> May, and we were hoping soon to get underway.



**Figure 103** Rest stop

As soon as the storm abated, we had to leave. We started at around six o'clock the next morning from Hochstetter Station. Ardencaple Fjord seemed to form a division between the brown flattish rocks to the north and the black, more alpine rocks to the south. We skirted the seaward edge of Kuhn Ø. The going on that stretch was bad, because the wind had not yet packed the snow down firmly and besides that, it stuck just like on a Sunday ski trip to Dyrehaven in Copenhagen. In a few spots, the snow had drifted away from the hard base. The dogs went well and they were each given some muskox meat and half a loaf of rye bread that we had baked there at the station. At Kap Mauner, which we reached around noon, the weather thickened up around us, but by four, it had completely cleared up.

Just before Kuppel (Dome) Pass, which lies at an elevation of 100 m on Wollaston Foreland, we had to rest because the midday sun had made the snow wet and the dogs tired. Schultz chased after seven oxen that promptly disappeared. Earlier, we had seen a single ox at Kap Mauner, and a sizable herd down on the coast of the sound. It was a long steady climb to the pass where we saw a further ox, and a steep descent which we managed by inserting a couple of hairpin bends. Going otherwise was excellent with crust some places, though with soft snow. We used skis the whole way. The scenery was more living and varied there than further north, but without the very large lines.



**Figure 104** Rest stop

### Sandodden

By about one in the morning of the 27th May, we reached Sandodden [The Sand Spit, 425-1], where we were well received by Jensen, Knudsen and *the Wolf-killer*. Leaving Sandodden, we had fog at first. The overland passage through the Henning River<sup>27</sup> gorge was difficult due to the many stones and the almost complete lack of snow at the bottom. Once I turned the sled over while driving on a steeply sloping wall of snow. A little further on, we nearly ran into a herd of muskoxen, but luckily got the dogs stopped in time. We went on along a fjord and again up over land, but that time with an even longer and steeper descent than



**Figure 105** Sandodde Station [425-1]

<sup>27</sup>Henningelvhytten [Henning River Cabin, 416] lies on the west bank of Henningelv on Clavering Ø



**Figure 106** The Sandodde grave



**Figure 107** Stopped at the pass

at Kuppel Pass. We had to harness all but three of the dogs behind the sled to provide braking, and by using a chain under one of the runners, we were able to descend at a reasonably rate, arriving safe and sound on the fjord ice. At Elvsborg [407], we rested for about 45 minutes. Rivers were running, rock falls were often heard from the mountains, and both plovers and geese were to be seen. After Elvsborg, the going was only so-so with rather deep snow, though most places it did have a good crust. Through Dødemandsbugten [Dead Man's Bay] the going was awful, and since the dogs were tired, progress was painfully slow from point to point. At last we got through, and both we and the dogs were encouraged by the final stretch.

### **Eskimonæs**

A couple of hours later and after a 14-hour trip from Sandodden, we reached Eskimonæs [Eskimo Point, 405] on the south side of Clavering Ø, arriving mid-morning on the 28<sup>th</sup> May.

At Eskimonæs, the main Danish station on the east coast, we were given a very hospitable welcome. Both we and the dogs were fed and rested sufficiently to last several days. The first alarming reports reached us there about the impending approach of spring. Rivers had begun to run and fissures in the ice were getting wider each day. We dared therefore stay only one day in that lovely and cosy station.



**Figure 108** Resting



**Figure 109** Either “Vart” or “Chiang”



**Figure 110** Muskoxen in the distance



**Figure 111** Muskoxen



**Figure 112** Muskoxen

### Loch Fyne

The following day we set off and soon experienced the sad truth about the rumours. Our progress from that point on developed characteristics that clearly distinguish it from those usually associated with a journey by sled. Loch Fyne is a long narrow fjord that extends in southwards between Hudson Land and the Hold With Hope peninsula. The going was good except at the mouth of the fjord where the crust could not carry the sleds, so we drove in onto the sloping snow banks along the coast. The last few kilometres to The Villa [Norsk Villa, 373], the most northerly trapping cabin in Loch Fyne, we had a strong headwind. We reached the warm and cozy cabin on the 30<sup>th</sup> May.



**Figure 113** Loch Fyne plain(?)

The next stage of the journey was to the central cabin [Mellehuset, 367, Figure 24] in Loch Fyne, and then on to the bottom cabin [Bunnhuset, 349]. We needed to pass two rivers, and at each we had to unleash and carry the baggage across because the sea ice was too thin. Other places we needed to drive far out into the fjord to avoid the holes in the ice at the mouths of rivers. In the fog that still followed us, they only showed up as dark areas against the otherwise pale ice. Reaching Bunnhuset, the cabin at the bottom of the loch, we had to wait at the cabin for a thick fog to lift sufficiently for us to continue the journey. We needed clear conditions partly because we had soon to pass some large rivers, the rolling sound of which we could clearly hear, and partly to orient ourselves on the flat land between Loch Fyne and Myggbukta [335].

Never again an expedition in the Arctic! Remember that! Of all the things that someone on a journey by sled should be absolutely advised against, it is an overland trip in spring. By the end, we had lost track of both day and time, but it took us a day and a half to do the 40 kilometre overland crossing from Bunnhuset at Loch Fyne to Myggbukta. It was thawing the whole time. The snow that remained was heavy water-laden snow or slush that made the runners stick; gorges were filled with slushy mire and therefore impossible to pass, and the clouds hung low. Ice on the rivers had broken so that they were now raging and deep. The rain fell almost unendingly, sometimes quite light, sometimes heavy, with the sleds getting heavier and heavier the wetter they got. It was difficult to get one's bearings in the landscape, especially with any accuracy. Mud bogged down



**Figure 114** Norsk Villa [373] (?)

the runners when we crossed areas without snow, and three times we had to unlash and carry the baggage over the rivers before taking the sleds across the ice, probably not many hours before the largest of the rivers where we ran on a ridge of ice would have become impassible. In short, water and slush everywhere. Again and again fog threatened to obscure the landscape. Even so we were lucky, for if fog had really come down, we would have been seriously in trouble without a tent. Soaking wet, we reached the sea and went over to the Norwegian trapping station Myggbukta [Mosquito Bay], after struggling for 36 hours nonstop through the mire. We were received there most warmly.



**Figure 115** Carrying supplies across a river.



**Figure 116** Myggbukta Station [335]



**Myggbukta**

Wet and exhausted, what one wanted most of all was a snaps [aquavit], but Myggbukta's original inventory of alcohol had naturally long since been exhausted. For a moment, I regretted my departure from Mørkefjord and thought longingly of the 40 litres of 96% alcohol that I had left there. That we were with Norwegians was quickly evident! When the supply is exhausted, they fetch all the station's unusable potatoes and pour them with some sugar, dried fruit and water into a large milk churn where they leave the mixture to sit and ferment. Then they place a Primus stove under the churn, and the alcohol so formed begins to evaporate. With a tube and a water bath, it is condensed and collected. However, when thirsty guests arrive at the station, production has to be increased. A large blowlamp was fetched and that together with the Primus stove soon had it bubbling rapidly and with a hollow sound in the churn. With the forced production, considerable amounts of fusel oil are also produced, changing the previously clear alcohol into one with a more grubby appearance, finally almost like ink. At the same time, the taste gets progressively worse.

The next day, 4<sup>th</sup> June, one of the Norwegians was in fact very ill. The weather had blown up into a storm. We continued to be entertained in the best possible manner, with juicy ox roast for us and meat for the dogs. We would have preferred to leave right away, but fog, slush and poor visibility held us back. Visibility had been good for about ten hours, but as we were about to set out towards evening, it quickly thickened up, so we had to unlash the sleds again. Fortunately, there on the station, they had sufficient meat for the dogs which were in fine form. But we had to reach Scoresbysund and get to the west coast that year, for the east coast was gradually getting on my



**Figure 117** The Crossing of Franz Joseph Fjord. The gray expanses are sludgy snow, the white are dryer snow piles on which the dogs bunch up. On the extreme left is Chiang alone!

nerves. I am pleased to have got to know Greenland's real self, not as it is from the window of a station or from a motorboat during the summer, but as it is experienced by one who tramps on skis through melting snow, slush, water, mud and so on, completely at the mercy of the whim of the elements.

### Kejser Franz Josephs Fjord

We were about to try travelling through pack ice. From in front of the station as far as Kejser Franz Josephs Fjord lay a continuous belt of pack ice. Out there, progress of the sleds depended almost entirely upon manpower. Either there was that much slush that the dogs could not get a foothold, or else they had to climb around on slippery sloping ice floes that also provided no support. Each time we did



**Figure 118** Schultz with the seal on pack ice.

eventually get going well, a fog bank would almost invariably roll in so that we lost our bearings, making progress impossible. There was then no choice but to pitch tent, hope that the fog would not turn into rain, and hope that the fog would soon disappear.

We left Myggbukta on 5th June and reached Kap Bennett [327] late that morning. There was an extraordinary amount of water on the ice. In a few places, the sled actually floated and was carried away by the current on the ice. Most of the time, I walked in front of the front sled, so that we progressed at a uniform speed. The snow lay in drifts and was very tough. Because of the rapid formation of fog on the fjord and in the bay, we made our way in to the cabin [Kap Bennett, 327] and had already given up finding it when it suddenly appeared just as things looked blackest. We stopped there to eat, sleep and dry our clothes, since they were dripping wet.

After starting from the Kap Bennett cabin, we travelled well out away the coast as we had been advised at Myggbukta, but in doing so, we got lost in an endless field of pack ice, where large ice floes had frozen together in all directions and where thick layers of slush filled the gaps. When our speed dropped to about one kilometre per hour, we camped using Schultz's "tent" made from sheets sewn together, not exactly designed to resist wind and rain. Clear weather was now replaced by fog that isolated us completely out there on the ice. Schultz shot a seal that had climbed up onto the ice about 25 m from the tent. The dogs could then be given a meal of meat. When the fog eased a bit, we set out again. For about an hour we continued, most of the time having to push the sleds ourselves, as the dogs could not get a footing on the slippery base. It was tremendously exhausting, and the combination of fog and the tough going was frightfully depressing. We set up the tent again when the fog thickened around us a second time. When the fog lifted yet again, we could see that we were surrounded by pack ice to all sides, but that the packing was less towards the coast than further out. Eventually we realized that the advice we had been given was not particularly good. We therefore decided to change our plans and travel in to the coast. While Schultz stayed by our campsite and roasted seal liver, I attempted to find a passable route inwards and was successful. As we followed my route that evening, we found that the night frost had covered the flat ponds on the ice



with another layer of ice about one centimetre thick that greatly bothered the dogs' paws. After about two hours travel like that, we reached the Norwegian Kap Franklin cabin [319] and therefore thanked the gods, since we were by then hungry, tired and sleepy.

As we had previously benefited from the practice, I walked out to the cape itself. After six hours walk in big rubber boots, I returned tired to the cabin where Schultz meanwhile had baked some lovely rolls using rolled oats and flour, had made apricot jam, boiled some green peas and roasted a delightful piece of muskox from Myggbukta. We had to rest after the meal, and by about eight thirty next morning, we set out for Kap Franklin and arrived about noon. The sun baked down on the red rocks, so we had a cup of tea with a roll and soon all the exertions we had experienced were almost



**Figure 119** River at Kap Franklin?

forgotten and we looked optimistically ahead.

But now we met a new form of sled travel. The ice across Kejsers Franz Josephs Fjord was almost entirely covered by a layer of water 10 cm deep, just occasionally broken by small amounts of pack ice that stuck out of the water. It took us 16 hours, and for the last six hours of the crossing, the water on top of the ice was itself covered by a thin layer of ice two centimetres thick, and close inshore at Kap Humboldt there were some banks of slush across our path in which the sleds were for ever getting stuck. For the final few kilometres, one of us went in front of the leading sled, partly to smash the fresh ice and partly to cheer the dogs up that then made every effort to follow immediately behind, and the other sled behind that one. It was very important to cross the fjord as quickly as



Figure 120 Kap Franklin(?)

possible as there was no place to erect a tent should we be overwhelmed by fog. Furthermore, as night drew on, the fresh ice layer became thicker and thicker. When the dogs fell through that ice layer, the sharp shards often tore deep cracks in their paws which had gradually softened in the water, the dog kamiks [Eskimo dog booties] being too short and of no use.

### Sofiasund

We were lucky and after 16 hours uninterrupted going and a terrible trip from Myggbukta, we were able to bid farewell to the foggy and slushy outer coastline and proceed in to Kap Humboldt [308], the Norwegian trapping station on the south side of the fjord where we arrived on 10th June. Unfortunately, somewhere on our way across the fjord, I dropped my rifle.

From Kap Humboldt, we were going up the fjords, and if we could just reach Ella Ø [Ella Island], I thought that the chances of reaching Scoresbysund would be considerable. We stayed a couple of days at the Humboldt Station, during which time it had continued to drizzle, as indeed it still did when we departed. We travelled up Sofia Sund to the first cabin there [Orvinhytten, 307], but as we reached it, it began to pour with rain. The going was good and dry by the shore in the tidal zone where the surface water on the ice had drained through the fissures, but elsewhere there was a lot of water on the ice. As I came down from the cabin to the sleds, I saw that the dogs had eaten my whip and the straps on my pack.



Figure 121 Rest break

The dogs paws were sore, and Thulle actually left bloody tracks, not surprising since the dogs had been almost continuously in water since Loch Fyne.

From the second cabin [Stordalen, 306], the going was fine, excellent in fact, especially since we were traveling at low tide and along the shoreline. The tidal fissures were nearly closed, and many of the pools on the ice had partly dried up. We reached the first birches, and I saw the first butterfly that year. Arriving at the third and last cabin [Arentz Hytten, 304], we could then make out Ella Ø.

We had to overnight in the last of the cabins in Sofia Sund, because the fog lay thick around us. Schultz's bread was used up, so we made pancakes of rolled oats and coarse wheat flour. Even though the fog had not lifted, we broke camp and when we reached Svedenborg [241], it did lift. Since then, we have had fine weather. We had to cross a river that extended in a very wide channel out into the ice right over to the other coast by carrying the baggage from the larger sled some 200 to 300 m over land and then across to the other bank, while the smaller sled could cross carrying all its baggage.



**Figure 122** Note the dog kamiks on front paws.

### **Ella Ø**

On the 17th June, we reached the Danish station Ella Ø [235]. Outside the station, we executed a kind of wild-west chase, since the dogs were desperate to head directly towards the station. Unfortunately, that route also had the most fissures, but we got the dogs stopped and reached the station without incident. At the station, we were generously supplied with cartridges, food for both man and dogs, and a tent.

### **Kong Oscars Fjord**

We stayed a day at the Ella Ø station, and then continued down Kong Oscars Fjord [King Oscar's]. Along the tidal fissures at the edge of the fjord, the going was good, but the opposite was true out in the fjord where one ice pond after the other lay hindering progress.

The biggest hindrances in Kong Oscars Fjord were still the open channels. Most often, we



**Figure 123** Tent and sailboat on Ella Island beach.



**Figure 124** The river in Kong Oscars Fjord where we had to unleash all the baggage, carry it across further upstream, and then ferry the empty sleds across.

were able to skirt them by driving on the root ice in by land, i.e. the narrow band of ice along the shore that is grounded at low tide, and which is crossed by deep through-fissures because of the tidal movement. From time to time, a loose ice floe could be used as a bridge between the two fixed edges, but now and again we had to bite the bullet and carry everything first overland and then out onto the ice again on the opposite side of the channel. At headlands and points, the ice was usually worn very thin from the current, so that it was a veritable lace pattern of ice bridges that one moved across, with many holes to each side.

We crossed over to the eastern shore at Kongeborg [King's Castle] and the going was perfect as we continued southwards until we met a river, the mouth of which was on a point and which continued in a broad channel, the first of many. We therefore had to unleash all the baggage and first carry it 100 to 200 m up the river until the water was shallow enough to wade across, and then lash it back onto the sleds again on the opposite bank. By the time that we got going again, the sun had gained such strength that the good going had gone. As we could not find the cabin,



**Figure 125** Sunero, the lead bitch in my team, left front paw with dog kamik.





**Figure 126** Hut at Kongeborg in Kong Oscars Fjord. The roof is an inverted boat outfitted with asphalt roofing felt, laths, etc. Driftwood is stacked up to dry against the earth protection

shown incorrectly on our map, we set up tent so that we could start again on excellent going at one or two in the morning.

Summer out there in the more open part of the fjord was not as advanced as in the narrower waters around Ella Ø where the high and dark mountains absorb and exude the sun's warmth. Around eight, we arrived at the cabin [224-1] at Kongeborg's most southerly point. It had a roof that was an inverted boat with roofing felt and beams. A good earthen wall had been thrown up around the house, but the door was abysmal. Driftwood had been piled against the earthen wall to dry. There we ate pemmican fried in margarine.

Yet another bout of labouring followed with fairly poor going, having to go in and out of endless bays. All that splashing around in water had its effect on the pads of the dogs which were rather sodden, allowing the rough knobby ice to cut deeply into their feet. Apparently the darker colored dogs had more durable pads than the others. With the dog kamiks, some improvement to their injured pads could be made, but wearing these up to three weeks in a row inevitably wore holes in the skin where the kamiks were tied on, leading to sores that easily became infected. Sunero was on the sled as her back legs could no longer carry her, Mette, Kvik and Leo were no longer pulling, Chiang on the other hand was fine, while Vat and Plet were alright but had sore pads. There were many rivers but no channels in the last bay before our arrival at a primitive Norwegian cabin covered in roofing felt, with a terrible door and no plank beds, and where we overnighted.



**Figure 127** Preparing for an extended stop after Kongeborg (?).



**Figure 128** Later, sled empty (1).



**Figure 129** Snow shadows even later.



**Figure 130** Travel on flat ice



**Figure 131** Tent camp by fjord



**Figure 132** Fuel drum, axe and beach. From Kongeborg(?)



**Figure 133** Resting, top of the pass.



**Figure 134** At the top of the pass.



**Figure 135** The cabin in the bay beyond Kongeborg [Holm Bugt Hytten, 222]



**Figure 136** Underway by Dogsled.





**Figure 137** From our drive on the ice sheet north of Havna

Next morning we started on excellent going with Havna as our next goal. Between two islands that we had to pass, we were stopped by a broad transverse channel. As we went over to investigate the possibilities of crossing it, the ice suddenly broke beneath me and I fell in, though without my head going under. Instinctively I made a lot of doggy-paddle type of swimming strokes, and as there was no current, I quickly got up onto firm ice again, but of course drenched and with two rolls of spoilt film.

We made camp and I put on some dry clothes. We had Serena soup, pemmican and hardtack, and drank coffee with it. At that sacred moment as we finished it, we saw an ice floe drifting along the channel. By adjusting its speed and direction a little, we



**Figure 138** Tent camp

made as good a bridge as we could have asked for, and with the dogs at full speed, we successfully managed to get across to the other side of the channel. We now continued diagonally across the fjord to the western coast. Several places, we passed large holes in the ice, often with a seal basking at the edge. At about five, we reached the shore after having left the islands shortly before noon. We found the cabin [Elveide, 213] that lay between Kap Petersén and Havna, ate there and slept.

The next morning, we started with unwilling dogs. Around the first point, there was open water, though containing floes that could be used as a bridge for the sleds. Other places where the ice had holes and was rotten, we advanced by one of us staying put with both sleds while the other went a bit ahead to test the ice for safety with a pole, marking the track to take on the return journey to the sleds. We managed safely to leave the point behind us, but it must have been only by a hair's breadth that we did not fall through. We continued on and soon reached Havna, a bay with a narrow canal-like channel through the fjord. Because the mouth was completely free of ice, we travelled as far into the bay as possible on the root-ice, at which point we tethered the dogs. We knew that there ought to be a Norwegian trapping station [Havna, 208-2] in the bay, so while Schultz stayed with the dogs, I went in search of it. It turned out that it lay on the far side of the more southerly of the two spits, and I was extremely well received by the trappers there. They suggested themselves that they ferry both dogs and sleds across the open water, so soon we were all safe at the station, the morning of 24 June.

### Havna

Havna was the last Norwegian Station on our route, located about 150 to 200 kilometres south of Ella Ø. It was owned at that time by the archeologist Søren Richter, who for the preceding decade had not only run a most profitable trapping station, but also scientific studies of East Greenland archeology. Havna was the most beautiful place that I have seen on the east coast, both compact and open with strong rock formations, unlike the minor rock formations of Dove Bay. Virtually no musk-



**Figure 139** Havna Station



**Figure 140** Havna Station towards the mouth of Kong Oscar Fjord



**Figure 141** Fox farm at Havna Station



**Figure 142** Dogs at Havna Station

oxen had been there that year unlike other years when they were numerous. On Traill Ø, we had seen a flock of six.

We left the dogs Lev, Sunero and Mette at Havna because they could no longer pull on account of sore pads. In place of them, I was helpfully entrusted with an old dog that pulled well, and also two young dogs that also pulled well but that howled terribly, which was most irritating. For a while, I had to harness two of them behind my sled so that I did not leave Schultz's behind. From Havna to Scoresbysund, we would be totally cut off from the world at large. We stopped at the last cabin [Jostein, 205] before Antarctic Havn [Harbour] on 26th June. I was alone in the cabin and fast asleep when it began to rain heavily, so that many of the things that lay outside got damp and had to be dried in the cabin.

### **The dogs**

As it was still raining the following day, I decided to make time pass by writing a little about my dogs before taking a nap: Leo was boss, as it is called, of the team. All the other dogs showed him unconditional obedience and should he want it, they would throw themselves on their backs whimpering. He had first choice of meat and of bitches, and should one of us unfortunately hit the boss with the whip, he would reinstate his pride by quickly giving the closest dog a powerful bite. Kvik and Leo were once both candidates for the



**Figure 143** Havna

boss position after Sig, my former boss, died. At that time, the two of them fought on every trip, up until Leo finally took over and Kvik had to be satisfied with second place. Chiang, the hardest worker of the team's male dogs, was entrusted to me by Ziebell when I went south. The dog so wanted to be boss, but was just not capable of it. It simply did not have the intelligence and superiority for it. Its never fulfilled ambitions made it a lonely dog on the team; it sought to elevate itself by being more fierce and unfriendly with the other males and compensated for its pent up energy by channeling all its energy into the job of pulling the sled. The Boss, on the other hand, recognized fully the man driving the sled as his superior, his boss. I could, for example, have taken meat out of Leo's mouth, should I have wanted to, an experiment that one should refrain from doing with dogs from another's team. The dogs in one's own team would never think of snapping at one. The ranking within the males was very fixed. The youngest puppy was bullied by all; the next youngest had to bow to all the others but had in exchange the youngest puppy to tyrannize, etc. etc.

Among the bitches, things were a little different. Two or three bitches were needed in a team, otherwise spirits sagged among the males, the tails did not lie in the usual curl, up over their backs, and they would not pull as well. The males had to have an audience from whom they could reap a reward for their protestations. Within the ranks of the bitches themselves, unlike the males, no form



**Figure 144** Fighting in the dog team...



**Figure 145** ...but more often resting!

of ranking existed. They never recognized any superiority amongst themselves. When they got the opportunity, they would nip each other in the hocks or other tender places, and bother each other in every way, but rarely reached pitched battle. They were excellent workers, wearing themselves out rather than giving up their job of pulling the sled, quite opposite to the males that rarely used all their strength. There are of course big individual differences. A few bitches were said to be so tough that they could give birth even while pulling on the team, tasty morsels for the males that swallowed the puppies as fast as they were born. When two teams met out on the ice, there was invariably a fight between the teams. However, I never saw a fight between a male and a bitch, only between dogs of the same sex in the two teams. As it was still raining when I had finished writing, I slept.

### Kap Biot

The following morning, 28th June, we broke camp and started for Kap Biot, reaching there late evening. We travelled in to the cabin [Villa, 117] that lay a few kilometres north of the cape itself. The going there was similar to Sofia Sund, though with some pack ice here and there. As Schultz had shot a seal on the ice, we had plenty of food for the dogs and he fried the liver for us. Ravens forecast dog food: Shortly before reaching the cabin, a raven flew out from the coast. When we reached the vicinity of that spot, the dogs suddenly dashed off and stopped at a dead baby seal over which a wild frenzy erupted. We took that along too as dog food. After a rather bleak prospect during the rain, we began to look more lightly upon the situation. Just as well, since we felt a numbness in our limbs that probably only sleep and a more varied diet could cure.

We had to celebrate Schultz's birthday at the cabin, since we were tied to the cabin all day until the morning of 30th June on account of rain. Seal liver was the birthday cake and later we brewed pemmican and liver sauce. The going on the return to Kap Biot was still similar to Sofia Sund, with the occasional pack ice, though not troublesome. The strong current around the cape itself had cut many large holes in the ice, so we went ahead with the greatest caution. What we feared most of all was that a seal would suddenly stick its head up out of one of the holes, for then all hell would break loose with the dogs and they would dash out after the seal and drag the sled along too. Here too, we encountered the widest cracks in the ice of the whole trip, one to two metres wide. Full speed with the dogs, steer the long sleds square across the cracks, and when the dogs and the front of the sled are across the channel, jump off oneself and get the rest of the sled and oneself across to the other edge. Everything went well, and the rest of the trip across the fjord was like child's play, especially when the dogs could smell seal and then increased speed.

### Flemming Inlet

After King Oscars Fjord, we crossed Flemming inlet aiming for a Norwegian cabin on the opposite shore [Holstad, 110]. It held a new surprise for us. It had been visited not long before by a most determined bear. It had destroyed some of the roof, the entire window had been smashed, and it had put the lamp down into the stove. We quickly put right the worst damage and made a temporary roof when,



**Figure 146** “Red” and “White” from Schultz’s dogsled team.



**Figure 147** Mountain pass





**Figure 148** The cabin in Flemming Fjord that a polar bear had wrecked [Holstad, 110]

within fifteen minutes of finishing, the bad weather that had been looming over us the whole trip then burst upon us with heavy drumming rain and fog. The dripping from the roof was lively, while the stove blew back and continuously filled the room with smoke. We consumed some bouillon, coffee, bread, and pemmican, and then slept for a couple of hours. The wind rose and whistled through the still smoke-filled cabin.

In the fog and rain, and with half-empty sleds, we set out for the Danish Flemming Inlet cabin at Kap Brown [The Kap Brown House, 107] that had been uninhabited for several years. The going was good. We helped ourselves to the following stores from the station:



**Figure 149** Kap Brown Station

- 8 tins split peas with ham,
- 8 tins of minced meat,
- 10 tins sweetened milk,
- 2 tins brawn,
- about 10 tins of liver pate,
- 8 tins of cooked pears,
- 1 pig's bladder of fat,
- 10 packets of macaroni,
- dried potatoes,
- margarine,
- flour,
- sugar, coffee, cocoa,
- salt, pepper, ground mustard,
- 1 tin opener, 1 shovel, 1 cup, 1 wooden spoon,
- wood for a hand-barrow (similar to a stretcher)
- kerosine (paraffin).

Besides all that, we baked three pan (saucepan) breads. We packed these provisions into tins which were in turn placed in a large wooden box on the sled.

We stayed there until the morning of 2nd July, and with the exception of the last couple of hours, it rained continuously. When we returned to the cabin, an animal with wolf-like tracks had broken the box containing seal meat and had emptied it. It turned out later to have been a stray husky. The countryside seemed otherwise to be devoid of animal life. We were shortly to reach the final sheet of our maps. My body was tired of travelling, despite the meal we ate at the Flemming Inlet Station that had so filled our stomachs.

### Nathorst Fjord

At about one on the morning of 3<sup>rd</sup> July, we reached the cabin at the bottom of Nathorst Fjord [Sidste-Huset (The Last House), Bunn-huset, 104]. The weather was the best imaginable, but the going was with slush in the middle of the fjord, and with closely-spaced, upward-facing, long ice spikes extending over long stretches of the shoreline. The dogs paws were therefore very sore, being continually pricked, and Kvik' right leg had become infected because the kamik had cut into his flesh. The countryside was still devoid of animal life.



**Figure 150** Wolf tracks 1



**Figure 151** Wolf tracks 2

### Carlsberg Fjord

We set off at noon on the 4th of July and, by way of the pass, reached Carlsberg Fjord where we camped on the shore. As that was the last fjord, the big question was whether that too would be passable, for then the completion of our journey would be virtually assured. It was indeed passable. We broke camp the following day and had first to head a good way out to sea to avoid the clear channel opposite the mouth of the big river half way down the fjord. Fortunately, the fjord did not have any transverse channels. Schultz went in front the whole way, partly to cheer up the dogs and partly to find the right way, so steady progress was made. Chiang pulled exceptionally well. Plet II's slave-like humility irritated me excessively. The going was the usual, a few large blow holes, but few seals. Approximately opposite the final glacier, there was yet another section of clear water at a large river mouth, again without transverse channels. After about another kilometre, we went ashore and set up tent. We could then see the bottom end of the fjord. The provisions from Kap Brown over the previous few days had given both Schultz and me rounded cheeks.

Around 4 in the afternoon of the 6th July, we set off towards the bottom of the fjord. Twice we sought to catch a seal, but without luck. On the other hand, about two kilometres short of the bottom of the fjord, we spotted oxen high in the mountains. We steered towards the coast, but gave



**Figure 152** From “the crossing” between Nathorst and Carlsberg fjord. Schultz in the process of fording a shallow river, after which he has to cross the pile of sludgy snow in the foreground.





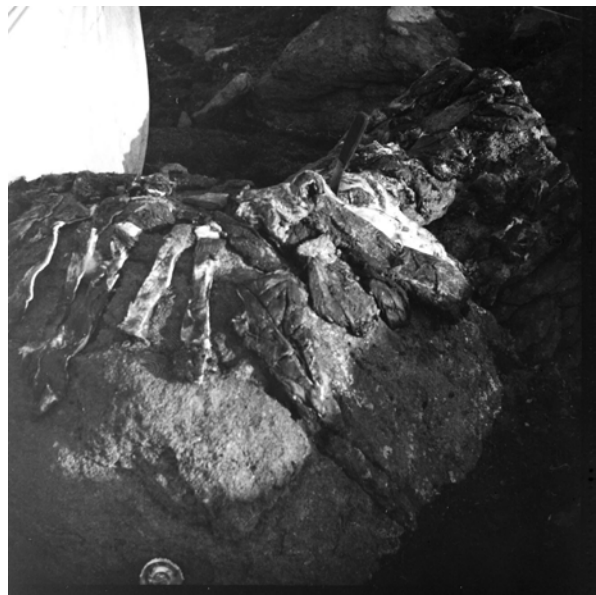
**Figure 153** Fjord view



**Figure 154** Resting



**Figure 155** View



**Figure 156** Strips of meat drying on rocks

up on the idea of getting in there on account of open water. Meanwhile, we set course in towards the bottom of the fjord itself, but there we were stopped by even more open water. We therefore turned back to the first place where, by crossing several wide cracks, we were able to get to a point about ten metres from the shore where there was open water. By towing a number of ice floes, tying them with rope, and holding them with tooqs<sup>28</sup>, etc., we managed to form a useable bridge across which we first took the dogs, then the baggage, and finally the sleds. We had also tried a ferry with a rope fixed to each side, but it didn't work. Once all the baggage was successfully on land, we could say goodbye to the sea ice. Schultz, with the dogs Gorki and Hans, went in pursuit of the oxen while I carried the baggage some 700 - 800 metres up the slope to a fine campsite where both we and the dogs would be able to recover our strength for the last stage of the journey.

In Scoresby Land, oxen were plentiful. Small herds of five to six with one or two calves could be seen everywhere. With the exception of Dove Bugt, herds of muskoxen seemed to have been evenly distributed along the whole length of the coast. Apart from them, fauna was uncommon. The number of lemmings and ermine had been minimal, not only at Mørkefjord where I knew that from my own experience, but also elsewhere along the coast where trappers had related that to me. The number of foxes caught had been very poor for both the Norwegian and Danish trappers. The record number of foxes caught was held by trappers Schultz and Hennings from Hvalrosodde Station with a total of 70 between them, of which three or four were blue. In that area, I saw many of the foxes caught, and all were over one year old. In



**Figure 157** Taking a break southern Germania Land, it could with great probability be said that only rarely had foxes had cubs in the spring of 1939. Something similar perhaps applied to the more southerly coasts down as far as Scoresby Land. During the whole of my stay on the east coast, I did not once see a bear. The coastal stations had shot between them almost a dozen polar bears. Only one hare was shot at Mørkefjord Station during the entire winter, and during our journey, we saw only two in Scoresby Land. At the beginning of the century, hares were used as dog food, but by the time we made our trip, they were a rarity. Such a great swing in animal population made it possible that the fauna might flourish again within a couple of years and again reach its former peak.

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<sup>28</sup>A tooq is a pole about two metres long, usually of ash, to one end of which is fastened a narrow chisel. This tool, still available today from hardware stores in Greenland, is used to cut holes in the ice as well as for testing the quality of the ice. The chisel is provided with a hole for fastening it to the shaft. Originally, the chisel would have been made of bone or walrus tooth and would have been lashed to the pole. (Ref: Svend Kolt of Greenland House, Århus, Denmark.)



**Figure 158** The author, Niels Haarløv, carrying muskox meat down to the camp

Curiously enough, as far as birds were concerned, the snow sparrow first left the vicinity of Mørkefjord Station at the end of November 1939. That abnormality probably stemmed from the lack of winter snow and the consequent easy access to seed-bearing plants.

Three or four hours later, as I was putting up the tent, Schultz came back with the leg of an ox. He had shot a herd of four adult and one calf, a suitable amount of meat for our dogs as they were becoming rather listless due to our dog food almost being exhausted. After the tent was up, we had a cup of coffee with hardtack, gave the dogs some food, lay down and slept until one the next afternoon. The rest of that day was spent carrying the meat down to the tent, skinning it, and cutting it up into strips which we dried on warm stones. Schultz went out to reconnoitre the route ahead. The following day was fine sunny weather. Schultz built an excellent oven by placing a flat stone on the Primus stove and an upturned casserole thereon. In it, we baked lovely small, white loaves and rolls that we ate with chocolate sauce and pears. During the evening, we roasted an ox roast in the oven. Apart from that, we did nothing special other than to enjoy the mosquito-free and rain-free view.



**Figure 159** Our final campsite at Carlsberg Fjord using the tent from Ella Ø. The partially ice-covered fjord is in the background. Schultz's 40 white polar fox pelts are hanging out to dry.



**Figure 160** Another view of our final campsite at Carlsberg Fjord. The fox pelts are behind.



**Figure 161** Looking uphill at our final campsite at Carlsberg Fjord. Schultz's 40 white polar fox pelts are still hanging out to dry.



**Figure 162** The hand-barrow (stretcher) used to carry some of our baggage

### Lack of snow

The following day, 9th July, we made a hand barrow from the wood we had taken from the Kap Brown cabin. During the evening, in order to lighten the load on the sled, we carried about half of the baggage about a day's journey, some seven or eight kilometres, up the river valley that was a continuation inland of the fjord. We set it down there while we investigated the course of the Carlsberg River which was not shown on the map. The valley had snow only in the hollows, and in many places there were large clumps of vegetation, but otherwise bare stony ground. At the bottom of the fjord there were large amounts of driftwood. We returned to the camp again the following morning in fine sunny weather.

The day was spent either sleeping or preparing for the trip inland. During the three days camping at Carlsberg fjord, the dogs paws healed so well that they were in good form and keen to start working again. We left one of the sleds and all the excess



**Figure 163** Chiang lying alone.



**Figure 164** Driving across the stony landscape bare of snow in Scoresbysund Land

baggage that we could spare, behind in a cache at the campsite. With the other sled, we tied a ski to the inside of each of the uprights so that they stuck out backwards and could function like the arms of a wheelbarrow. With all twelve dogs in front and a man behind to lift up on the arms, progress was made over terrain virtually bare of snow. It was easy across the vegetation in the beautiful sunny weather, worse over the mud and stones.

We made camp the following morning, 11th July, having retraced the steps we had taken with the hand barrow. We slept after lunch, ate pemmican and mashed potato, and wandered on a further six or seven kilometres with the hand barrow. We saw five herds of oxen with five to eight adults and one or two calves in each. We turned back and fetched the dogs, sled and remaining baggage. The dogs pulled surprisingly well, presumably enlivened by the considerable scent of muskoxen in the air!

The evening of 12 July, we again went forward with the hand barrow, but dumped it already two kilometres after setting off in order to find the correct way ahead more easily. We managed to see Hurry Inlet, but from afar, and it seemed to be ice-free. The going was going to be bad, no vegetation or



**Figure 165** Sled almost empty on stones below a steep snow slope.





**Figure 166** Resting in a stony area, empty sled behind.



**Figure 167** The hand-barrow lashed to the sled.

snow to drive on, and the mosquitos plagued us considerably. We got back to the dogs at about one in the morning.

We ate and slept until about six or seven o'clock, then lashed up the sled and drove to the spot we had left the hand barrow the previous day. In anticipation of the bad going, we left yet more of our stuff, including sleeping bag, anorak and as much else as we thought we could spare, together with those things that were too heavy to drag further. In place of the skis, we lashed the hand barrow onto the sled base and uprights with the one pair of arms protruding far out behind like the arms of a wheelbarrow.

When on the move, one of us went ahead carrying a bundle on his shoulders and to pick the route, while the other followed behind, lightening the sled by pushing upwards and forwards on the two bearers of the hand barrow. It was a rather arduous job over time. The dogs were in good form, despite the fact that the going was terrible. Across the fields of stone, the runners often got hot enough to burn, if touched. When the scent of muskoxen was in the air, it went especially well, so that far behind us one could smell burning metal from the sparks that flew from between the runners and the stones. Finally, in many small stages, we made a climb of 100 metres across fields of stone, an impressive feat by the dogs.

Around noon we went on, the first three kilometres being uphill, by which time we had reached an elevation of some 300 metres with a view



**Figure 168** Travel by night in Scoresby Land



**Figure 169** Rest en-route between Carlsberg and Hurry Inlet. The sled is behind the 12 dogs.

out over Ryder's River and a small section of Hurry Inlet. The descent down to where we camped at Ryder's River was even.

We left there at about ten in the evening of 14th July, travelling on fine grassy vegetation along the river until four or five in the morning the next day. Until a couple of hours earlier, the weather had been fine and sunny most of the time, whereupon it had become thick fog and we stopped. Schultz shot a bull from a herd of muskoxen that passed close by our camp site. The dogs ate two thighs while we took the liver and the lumps. We ate a tin of pemmican with potatoes and then took a nap. After it cleared up, we finished dividing up the bull. The cold was raw, and since we had little kerosine left and our clothes were half wet, we were freezing.

On the evening of the 15th July, we drove on through Klittdalen despite the one runner being worn through and the other well on the way to so being. The going was the worst possible, sand, and sometimes very wet sand into which the sled sank, occasionally down to the cross members. Once we had to unlash to cross a river. We camped at midnight. Schultz went for a walk and first got back well into the morning. He had seen Hurry Inlet clearly and confirmed open water. After he got back, I went out and found a place to ford a large river at it's the delta that we needed to cross. We ran out of coffee, and would soon run out of pemmican and kerosine. The inland areas were very fertile, and for the first time on the whole trip, Schultz saw some hares, but the bank of the river was desert-like.



**Figure 170** River





**Figure 171** Inverted sled.



**Figure 172** Tented camp



**Figure 173** Evidence of people, a broken concrete pipe.



**Figure 174** Preparing hot drinks (at Hurry Fjord?)

### Hurry Inlet and Scoresby Sund

We started at noon on 16th July by first wading across the river delta, even though the water level had risen 5 cm since morning (more glacier melt later in the day than early morning). On both sled runners, sections about 10 centimetres long had worn out, a problem Schultz easily overcame by moving the metal in front of the gap backwards to close it. The repairs held up excellently. At first, we were surrounded by desert landscape. Later, nearly a week after leaving the icy coast of Carlsberg Fjord, we reached Hurry Inlet where we were surrounded by wonderful, wide grassy strips with glacial ice in the background, a plague of mosquitos, sunshine and, for the first time in ages, completely open water in the fjord.

On 17 July, we reached Scoresby Sund and the Greenlanders' tent cabin by Hurry Inlet. We made camp for the last time and there saw the first evidence that we were nearing people again: An old boat was beached just below the site. As my footwear was still in better condition than Schultz's, we decided that I should be the one to walk to the Greenlander settlement Kap Hope<sup>29</sup>. That also gave Schultz an opportunity to stay in camp and get the 40 polar fox skins aired that he had carried with him the entire trip, still in good condition.

I started at midnight, taking my favourite dog Vat along with me. At the bottom of Hurry Inlet, the vegetation was quite overwhelming, appearing tropical to those of us who came from the extensive stone fields of Northeastern Greenland. The birch and willow occasionally stretched their nearly two centimetre thick trunks a whole 25 cm high to form small bushes. The plains along the fjord were covered with a pretty meadow vegetation whose green colour dominated the inland areas. However, the character of the landscape gradually changed on the way out to Scoresby Sund. The damp-loving plants of the inland areas gradually gave way to others that preferred a dryer soil and that crunched underfoot. They were rather more brownish than green in colour. Right out at Kap Hope lay two picturesque ruins of Eskimo houses that bore witness to the earlier inhabitants of the coast.



**Figure 175** The dogs are transported by boat.

From there, the view was panoramic, right up into the fjord, across towards the alpine snow-clad mountains of the Blossville Coast to the south of Scoresby Sund, and out towards the outer coast. Those ancient Greenlanders had placed their home centrally in their hunting territory. Within and along the fjords, there were salmon, narwhals, seals, bird life, and muskoxen, whereas out along the outer shore, there were polar bears, walrus, hooded seals, and bearded seals. The Greenlanders had given over that hunting area to the benefit of others;

<sup>29</sup>The current name for Kap Hope is Itterajivit, formerly spelt Igterajivit



**Figure 176** The dogs feel unsafe in a rocking boat! Transport of the dogs and baggage from Hurry Inlet to Scoresbysund.

they had moved away, and their houses were in ruins. But about fifteen minutes walk beyond there, new Greenlander buildings had been erected.

My sixteen-hour walk in long rubber boots had left me with sore hamstrings. The last ten kilometres were not amusing, and even Vat was so worn out that several times he refused to get up after our short rest stops. Vat suddenly became agitated and at that moment we came upon the Kap Hope settlement itself. He drew the rich odour of blubber from the settlement lovingly in through his nostrils, then tucked an extra curl into his tail. I saw how the women, who stood in front of their homes, quickly tidied their hair a little before running over to greet me, while children spread the

news about my arrival around to houses from which men and women soon came running. Some children rushed terrified into a house to emerge dragging a line of adults. From everywhere the residents of the settlement came running towards us, until we finally were surrounded by a thick wall of talking and laughing people. Encircled by all of the settlement's residents, I was led into house of Johsva, the great hunter, where his wife served coffee and rye bread. She was actually his fourth, and as far as Johsva was concerned, better than the three previous.

Most of the other hunters in the settlement had followed us into the room and sat cross-legged or squatted on the floor against the wall, talking and laughing as they smoked their pipes. Any tobacco remaining in their pipes when they cleaned them, they used as chewing tobacco. I explained as well as I could why and from where I had come. After the meal, a message was taken by kayak in to Høegh, the colony leader in Scoresbysund, advising him of our arrival, and with a request for the settlement's motorboat to be despatched to Schultz in Hurry Inlet to fetch him, all the dogs and our baggage to Scoresbysund. While wandering around Kap Hope while I awaited a reply from Høegh, the great hunter Hanseraq invited me to dinner. His wife set a large pot of seal meat and blubber between us two men while she modestly withdrew, leaving us to pick out the



**Figure 177** “Cotton” and “Spot”

best pieces of meat. When we had eventually eaten our fill, we magnanimously let the wife and children have the remaining meat. The inhabitants were dressed European style, with only the occasional old woman still putting her hair up into a bun. At ten o'clock at night, a couple of hours after dinner, the boat from Scoresbysund reached Kap Hope. I went on board and sailed with it into Hurry Inlet and Schultz. Our dogs and baggage were then safely stowed on board and the motorboat made its way direct to Scoresbysund.

We broke camp for the last time on 18th July, and had reached the Scoresbysund goal we had set ourselves a good two months earlier, on 13th May when we set out on our southbound trip. The first stage of both our journeys had been completed. Our stay in Scoresbysund with our gracious host Høegh was only short. Ten days later, Schultz and I separated, he to travel to America and enter shipping as a chief engineer, and I to go to Denmark.



## Scoresbysund



**Figure 178** Settlement manager Høegh's house in Scoresbysund.



**Figure 179** Noticeboard building with settlement manager Høegh's house in Scoresbysund (behind).



**Figure 180** Another view of Høegh's house.



**Figure 181** Scoresbysund wash house.



**Figure 182** Noticeboard building obscures settlement manager Høegh's house, Scoresbysund wash house behind to right.



**Figure 183** Bearskins at the Scoresbysund Wash House.



**Figure 184** Water supply from river



**Figure 185** Water supply pump

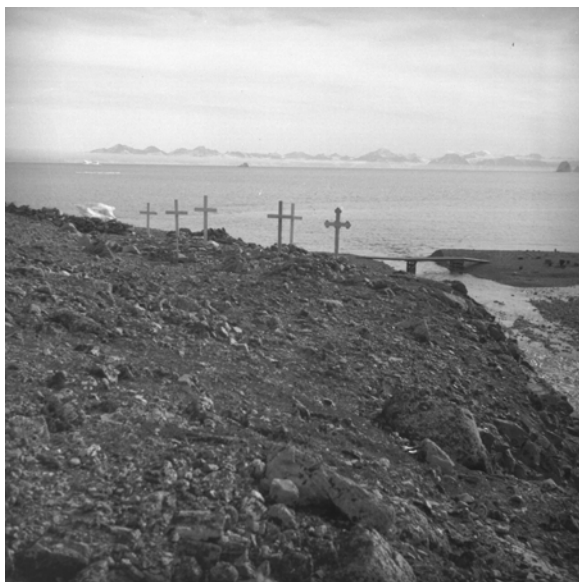




**Figure 186** Scoresbysund church



**Figure 187** The church in Scoresbysund.

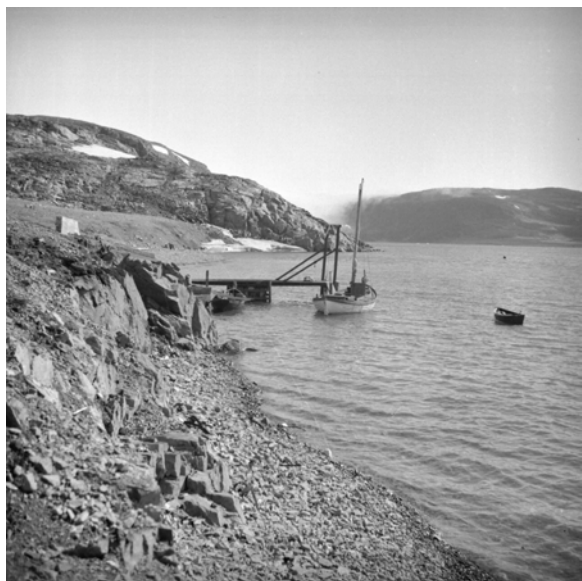


**Figure 188** Graveyard, Scoresbysund.



**Figure 189** Canon.





**Figure 190** Fishing boat and pier



**Figure 191** Construction.



**Figure 192** Sleds waiting in line for snow!

## **The Dash to Hauna**

Scoresbysund had been reached, but there was still a long way home to Denmark. I received a telegram on the 30<sup>th</sup> July by radio from Vesle Kari, the Norwegian seal hunting ship, stating that it had been sent from German-occupied Norway and would call during the summer at the Norwegian trapping stations on the east coast to fetch back to Norway those Norwegian and Danish trapping and expedition parties that so desired. While Schultz on the one hand was uninterested in that ship (and later that year he did reach the west coast), I on the other hand was most interested in the ship since in that way, I had a chance of getting home relatively easily to Copenhagen. When I left Schultz in Scoresbysund, he had plans to continue on to America, presumably taking his 40 fox pelts with him, since we considered at the time that America was the country with the highest pelt prices. Therefore, on 2<sup>nd</sup> August, I left both Scoresbysund and Schultz, who had been a great and incomparable travelling companion throughout our journey.

I left with some Greenlanders, on their way to hunt narwhals, in to the bottom of Scoresbysund Fjord. From the station there, I walked with a Greenlander as guide almost non-stop across Jameson Land as far as Antarctic Havn [201] in Kong Oscars Fjord. Twice we were attacked by muskoxen, once by a herd of seven to ten and the other time by a lone bull. Both times we got them stopped five to ten metres away from us by shouting, screaming, and firing warning shots at them. At Antarctic Havn, we had our first longer rest, for a couple of hours, and thereafter I continued alone along the coast northwards to the nearest Norwegian trapping station which was Søren Richter's station Havna [208-2] at Mesters Vig, and where I had already been earlier!

The trip was about 175 km long and was very forced because I really did not know when Vesle Kari would reach Havna. I therefore had to reach the station as quickly as possible. The journey lasted three days, first across the fertile plains of Jameson Land with the deep river valleys, then later across more stony stretches and across many rivers, and finally many kilometres alone on the dirty sharp rocks along the sea between Antarctic Havn and Havna. During the last fifty kilometres, it was not so much strength that began to fail as footwear. When the holes in my shoes got big enough for a couple of toes to stick out, I saw no solution other than to cut the flap off one of the outer pockets of my rucksack [backpack] and to fasten it around the shoe with twine. It was also impossible to prevent the shoe from chafing a few holes in my foot. When Havna Station itself appeared on 8<sup>th</sup> August, I was faced with the most crucial moment of the trip: Had Vesle Kari already called there so that it was now deserted, or had the ship not yet arrived? It had not yet arrived;

I had to stay ten days at the station to await its arrival, and for the whole time, I enjoyed the most hospitable treatment not only from Søren Richter who was manager of the station, a Norwegian archeologist and a trapper, but also from his men.



**Figure 193** Kong Oscar's Fjord from Scoresby Land on the final leg to Havna

## The Journey back to Denmark

Somehow the allies must have learned that the vessel was on its way to the coast, for when Vesle Kari<sup>28</sup> early one morning anchored outside Havna, it was escorted by the Norwegian warship Frithiof Nansen<sup>29</sup> that had confiscated it upon its entry into Greenland waters on behalf of the Norwegian Government in exile in London.

Vesle Kari reached Greenland waters at the latitude of northernmost Svalbard. From there it sailed southwards along the coast to Myggbukta.

Vesle Kari's seizure presumably took place on the 17<sup>th</sup> August. The seizure was presumably a bit of a disappointment in that the British had expected a heavily armoured ship with a German crew, etc. The seizure took place in Kong Oscars Fjord a little south of Ella Ø when it had entered Greenland waters. A Norwegian lieutenant, Lieutenant Hove, and two Norwegian sailors were sent across to Vesle Kari as prize crew. The rifles on Vesle Kari were commandeered. Both ships prior to the seizure had been in to Myggbukta Station, but Vesle Kari reached



**Figure 194** Vesle Kari before the war

Photo from Per Rønberg



**Figure 195** Frithiof Nansen

Photo from Per Rønberg

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<sup>28</sup>The old wooden seal hunting ship Vesle Kari (or Veslekari) of 296 gross tons was built in Oslo 1918 and was specially strengthened for service in icy waters. It was steam powered, 125 ft long with a 27 ft beam, 14 ft draft and a top speed of 9.5 knots. It entered into service with the Norwegian Icelandic department after its confiscation and took part in rescues in Icelandic waters. In 1941, Vesle Kari took part in one of the most daringly planned and best executed Arctic expeditions probably ever made. The task was to occupy militarily the Jan Mayen Islands and reestablish for Free Norway the important weather station there as soon as possible in order to forestall German attempts at so doing. Thereafter, the vessel took part in supplying the garrison on Jan Mayen. In 1943, the Royal Navy took the vessel over and named it HMS Bransfield in order to take part in the planned British fleet's expedition to Antarctica "Operation Tabarin". Before leaving England, the use of the vessel was abandoned because of its poor condition. In 1946, it was returned to its owners. While trapped in pack ice off Newfoundland during the night of 7 April 1961, the vessel was crushed and sank without loss of life. [From Søren Richter, Per Rønberg [warcovers@adslhome.dk](mailto:warcovers@adslhome.dk), and *Ishavsskuter III* by Johan Ottesen,].

<sup>29</sup>Frithiof Nansen (or Fritjof Nansen) had in addition to its original Norwegian crew an English control officer. In November 1940, the ship ran onto rocks in the Jan Mayen Islands and sank.

there first and after Myggbukta went to Hoelsbu and continued south from there while Frithiof Nansen continued southwards from Myggbukta Station though Sofiasund. Consequently, the two ships had to meet at Ella Ø where Frithiof Nansen lay at anchor as Vesle Kari passed by.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> August, we all left Søren Richter's station Havna onboard Vesle Kari. The living foxes and considerable goods were also brought onboard. During the following days, the two ships jointly visited most of the Norwegian and a few Danish stations along the coast.

Between about 6 PM and 8 PM the same day, with prize crew onboard, we sailed away from Havna Station northwards to Kap Humboldt [308]. The two trappers stayed on there a further year. The goods for Kap Humboldt was then all offloaded. We also stayed there a day in order to continue northwards to Myggbukta [335]. Frithiof Nansen had immediately upon its first arrival closed Myggbukta radio station and left 25 British naval seamen behind with two machine guns to protect it against possible attack while Frithiof Nansen operated elsewhere. At Myggbukta, Schaanevik and Thølløfsen came onboard whereas Hannesgaard went ashore there. Some of the British troops had gone ashore there. Some of the British troops were brought back onboard Frithiof Nansen again. Johansen and Siewers both stayed a further year. After Myggbukta, both ships continued northwards to Eskimonæs [405]. Gathered together were the three from Revet, the two Danish trappers from Sandodden and the three from Mørkefjord who were put ashore by Vesle Kari on the journey down. In response to a request from Giæver, secretary to the director of operations in the Svalbard office, as to whether he be permitted to go ashore to spend the winter, it was denied as he was to continue to London. Here on the cape, the final decision had to be taken as to whether one wanted to stay in Greenland or sail with Vesle Kari.

The following overwintering Norwegians decided to sail from Greenland with Vesle Kari: Richter, Råum, Bache, Thølløfsen, Schaanevik, Sjøberg and Rodahl; however, none of the Norwegians had arrived at that decision because they wished to fight in the Norwegian Army in England. Even though they would not be taking an active part in the war, there were still none of them that voted to be taken to Iceland or England; they all wanted to return to their homes and work in Norway. The crew were naturally forced to stay with the ship, but the statements above are equally valid for them as for the other Norwegians.

On the day that it arrived, Vesle Kari was given permission to sail to Hochstetter [510], later, after requesting permission from senior grade commander [captain] Uhrling to continue to Mørkefjord, the next telegraphic communication with the ship gave it counter-orders and it returned to Hochstetter where the goods for Mørkefjord were offloaded. During Vesle Kari's manoeuvres north of Eskimonæs, Frithiof Nansen remained stationary at Eskimonæs, awaiting an American warship Northland(?) That was expected to come. It did not come. Shortly after Vesle Kari's return to the cape, we sailed southwards and anchored for a couple of hours outside Myggbukta. I believe that Vesle Kari reached Myggbukta radio station on the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> August in order to continue down along the coast from there in the evening. A couple of hours before our arrival, the Norwegian supply ship Polarbjørn [Polar Bear] arrived at Myggbukta because the Norwegian Government in London had sent Polarbjørn from Canada to the East Coast to provide the Norwegian stations with supplies, and thereby raised Norway's right to the East Coast. Some supplies were offloaded, whereupon it sailed back to Canada. Andresen, amongst other things, was a seaman onboard Polarbjørn. The remainder of the British soldiers were then taken onboard Frithiof Nansen.



**Figure 196** This picture of a dog wearing kamiks hung both in the author's and Ziebell's homes.

The final decision about the radio station was now taken. The Commander [Captain] had no confidence in Hannegaard and would not believe that he had not had special orders from the Germans. Schaanevik could not overwinter a further year for mental reasons. In any case, the Commander had no confidence in him either, because he had sent a telegram to Norway about how the barometer readings should be interpreted in a particular way, and since insufficient radio data had been sent from Norway for normal operation of the station throughout the past year, it was decided to dismantle the radio station. No doubt the radio station was disabled by removing some of the valves (tubes). Hannegaard sailed with Vesle Kari, which received in addition two British marines onboard.

Vesle Kari sailed southwards together with the Frithiof Nansen, which attempted to go in to Scoresbysund, a manoeuvre that failed due to compressed drift ice in the mouth of Scoresby Sund fjord. Frithiof Nansen's mission on this part of the coast was now finished, so it sailed to Iceland. Vesle Kari received orders to proceed to Isafjord in Island, so, outside the Scoresby Sund fjord, it turned from land towards Iceland. The ship went to Iceland without being escorted by the Frithiof

Nansen, which did not arrive at Isafjord, Iceland, on this occasion. Vesle Kari arrived presumably on 27<sup>th</sup> August. However, upon our arrival there, we learnt that it could only be used as an emergency harbour; we therefore immediately weighed anchor again and sailed to Reykjavik. We arrived there probably on 28<sup>th</sup> August; Frithiof Nansen had arrived a few hours before we reached there. I left Vesle Kari on 5<sup>th</sup> September in Reykjavik harbour.

For two days, we were not allowed to disembark. Not until the evening of 31<sup>st</sup> August did we receive shore leave, though it did not apply to Hannesgaard, Giæver and Cold, passengers on Vesle Kari. They had the task of photographing the East Coast for a ??? press agency, and therefore they had to stay onboard for the entire stay at Iceland. Cold was an absolutely unfortunate person to have onboard; his behaviour towards the British and his quite unclear and suspicious mission gave rise to suspicion with the British. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> September, Vesle Kari received orders to set out on an 800 nautical mile journey with one British naval officer and four British marines. The destination was unknown. We believed it to be England. The Norwegian passengers from Greenland were given the choice of staying in Iceland and joining a ski patrol there, or continuing the journey to England. Schaanevik stayed in Iceland and got a job as a telegraph operator in the British army. Richter, Råum, Bache and Sjøberg entered the ski patrol. I know nothing about the later fate of Vesle Kari<sup>30</sup>. It sailed alone, but British warships had received orders to keep an eye on it.

Meanwhile, this left me standing in Reykjavik without any idea how I should continue, but it went much easier than expected. In the dozen days or so that I stayed in Iceland, the Danish legation there took care of my stay in the best possible way, as well as alerting me the possibilities for my journey home that were offered. I was advised there to try to obtain a passage with one of the dried cod ships that sail with regular and steady trade with Spain. It was successful and 8-10 days later I was at sea again - bound for Bilbao.

Danes on Iceland had the freedom to do whatever work they wished. They were not “taken” away somewhere by the British, because our government was not at war with the Britain, and as far I I know, none were on their way home. They probably got work in Iceland. Of Richter’s captured foxes, I would comment that the experiment with live foxes had worked out very fortunately and several of the animals had bred and had arctic foxes in their litter. In my opinion, there was no chance at that time for the Norwegians to escape from Britain before the war was over.

I obtained passage to Bilbao with an Icelandic steamer loaded with dried cod. A couple of weeks later, I was in Bilbao. Here everything went smoothly and without difficulties of any kind. From there, I travelled on and reached Madrid. There I had to wait about six weeks for my passport and transit visa through Germany were in order before I could embark on the final part of my journey home. Again the local legation helped me in every way, so that I easily and conveniently could fly from Barcelona to Berlin.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> November 1940, I reached Copenhagen, exactly six months after Schultz and I, in a hard frost and with fully laden sleds, had swung out southbound from Mørkefjord Station.

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<sup>30</sup> See Note 28 on Page 121.



From Nationaltidende [National Times] 21/11/40:

Fantastic East Greenland Journey:

## *Home from Mørkefjord via Barcelona - Berlin*

**The zoologist, arts degree student Niels Haarløv's  
eventful journey by dogsled, captured seal hunter and  
aeroplane**

Sunburnt by both the East Greenland and Spain's sun, The young zoology student *Niels Haarløv* has returned from Eigil Knuth's expedition base, Mørkefjord, in Northeast Greenland. Under all this sunburn collected under such varied skies is hidden one of the war's travel adventures that is just as exciting as it has been lengthy.

Young Haarløv, son of the late county chief administrative officer, journeyed up to Mørkefjord last summer to join up with the overwintering group that occupied the station when Count Knuth and the main body travelled home. Up there in the Danish expedition's old sphere of operation, the news reached the four friends by radio of the new major war.

### **Whole War on Radio**

- We could, explained Niels Haarløv, who last night was entertained out at Eigil Knuth's, follow the events, and we



Figure 197 Arts Student Niels Haarløv

naturally also aware that it would not be so easy to escape home. But I did not have time to stay in Northeast Greenland for more than the one year of the contract, so it ended with me joining up with the brilliant Nanok trapper, mechanical engineer Schultz, who also wanted to get back to more civilized areas. Schultz is a trained trapper and dog team driver, so we hitched up and set

our course southwards towards Scoresby Sund. Mørkefjord is situated just below latitude 77°N and Scoresby Sund is 70°N. It took us a little time - two months - to reach there, but the long journey went well. Driving conditions on the ice were good, and we got down to Scoresby Sund without particular difficulties, where we received a hospitable welcome by the excellent colony leader Høegh.

Meanwhile, Schultz's and my ways parted in Scoresbysund. Before we started from Mørkefjord, we had contact with the West Coast, from which we heard that a ship would arrive at Scoresbysund. That route did not suit me as I wanted to go home, whereas Schultz had set his course towards America. When I heard that there was a Norwegian ship in the offing to call at the Norwegian stations further north, I walked up to Antarctic Havn where the closest Norwegian station was located, and here, quite

correctly, a Norwegian ship, or rather two of them, came -.

### The “VesleKari” Trip

It was the old seal hunting vessel “Vesle Kari”, continued Niels Haarløv. I was allowed to sail with it, but first we set course northward to Eskimonæs, from where the original intent was for “Vestle Kari” to continue up to Mørkefjord with new supplies. We did set sail, but the route was changed, and we sailed south across the pond.

During the trip down along the coast, we called in at the main Norwegian station in Mygge- or Mackenzie-Bay and after a short visit, we sailed on.

### With Dried Cod Ship to Spain

“Vesle Kari” was seized after calling at Reykjavik, and the Norwegian crew was given the choice between travelling to Britain or joining a Norwegian ski division.

- Were there any well known people onboard the “Vesle Kari”, - ?

- There were three passengers onboard, and the best known of them was the Svalbard office secretary, *John Gjaever*.

Meanwhile, there I was in Reykjavik without any idea about how I was going to continue, but it went much

easier than expected. At the legation, they advised me to try to get passage with one of the dried cod boats that ply regularly and with steady trade with Spain. I succeeded and 8-10 days later I was again on the high seas - bound for Bilbao. Here, everything went smoothly and without problems of any kind, I reached Madrid. It took 5-6 weeks before my passport was in order. Once again, the local legation helped me in every way so that I easily and conveniently could fly from Barcelona to Berlin, and now I am here, laughed the young expeditionary, who has quickly shaken off all his long journey’s hardships -

- How was it otherwise in Northeast Greenland - ?

- We had an excellent winter. My three colleagues, author Hvidberg, trapper Ziebell, who was previously in “Nanok”, and radio operator Morten are overwintering once more and have supplies and coal enough to last until next summer -

- And “Nanok”’s people - ?

- All the stations are also alright. With the exception of mechanical engineer Schultz, who now is in America, they all stayed up there and they also are well supplied -

- Did “Nanok” have good hunting?

- Fox hunting was poor last winter, which was extremely mild in Northeast Greenland, but otherwise hunting was good.

*DI.*

Nationaltidende 21/11/40  
Eventyrlig Østgrønlandsfærd: Nationaltidende 21/11/40

## Hjem fra Mørkefjord via Barcelona-Berlin

Zoologen, stud. mag. Niels Haarløvs begivenhedsrige  
Rejse med Hundeslæde, opbragt Sælfanger og Flyve-  
maskine

**B**RUNET af baade Østgrønlands og Spaniens Sol er den unge Zoolog, stud. mag. Niels Haarlov vendt hjem fra Eigil Knuths Ekspeditionsbasis, Mørkefjord i Nordøstgrønland. Under al denne Solbrændthed, der er samlet sammen under saa forskelligartede Himmelsstrøg, skjuler sig et af Krigens Rejseeventyr, der er lige saa spændende,



Stud. mag. Niels Haarlov.

som det har været langstrakt.

Den unge Haarlov, den afdøde Stiftamtmands Søn, drog sidste Sommer op til Mørkefjord for at slutte sig til det Overvintringshold, som besatte Stationen, da Grev Knuth og Hovedstyrken rejste hjem. Deroppe i Danmark-Ekspeditionens gamle Virkefelt naaede Budskabet om den nye Storkrig de fire Kammerater gennem Radioen.

### Hele Krigen i Radio

— Vi kunde, fortalte Niels Haarlov, som i Aftes fejredes ude hos Eigil Knuth, følge Begivenhederne lige saa sikkert i Radioen som I herhjemme. Vi holdt os hele Tiden à jour med Begivenhederne, og vi var naturligtvis og-

saa klar over, at det ikke blev saa let at slippe hjem. Men jeg havde ikke Tid til at blive i Nordøstgrønland mere end det ene Aar, Kontrakten lod paa, og det endte saa med, at jeg slog mig sammen med den brillante Nanok-Fangstmand, Maskinmester Schultz, der ogsaa vilde tilbage til mere civiliserede Egne. Schultz er trænet Fangstmand og Hundekusk, og vi to spændte for og satte Kursen sydpaa mod Scoresby Sund. Mørkefjord ligger tæt under den 77 nordlige Breddegrad og Scoresby Sund paa 70 n. Br. Det tog os lidt Tid — to Maanedes — at naa frem, men den lange Rejse gik fint. Føret paa Isen var godt, og uden særlige Vanskeligheder naaede vi ned til Scoresby Sund, hvor vi fik en gæstfri Modtagelse af den brillante Kolonibestyrelse Høegh.

I Scoresbysund skiltes imidlertid Schultz' og mine Veje. For vi startede fra Mørkefjord havde vi haft Forbindelse med Vestkysten, hvorfra vi hørte, at der vilde komme Skib til Scoresbysund. Den Rute passede nu ikke mig, der vilde hjem, mens Schultz havde sat sin Kurs mod Amerika. Da jeg hørte, at der var et norsk Skib i Farvandet for at anløbe de norske Stationer længere Nord paa, gik jeg paa mine Ben op til Antarctic Havn, hvor den nærmeste norske Fangststation laa, og her kom ganske rigtigt det norske Skib eller rettere to —

### Turen med „Veslekari“

Det var den gamle Sælfanger „Veslekari“, fortsatte Niels Haarlov. Jeg fik Lov at sejle med den, men først satte vi Kursen nordpaa op til Eskimonæs, hvorfra det oprindelig var Meningen, at „Veslekari“ skulde fortsætte op til Mørkefjord med nye Forsyninger. Vi kom ogsaa af Sted, men Ruten blev lagt om, og vi stod Syd over Dammen.

Paa Turen ned langs Kysten blev den norske Hovedstation i Mygge- eller

Figure 198 Nationaltidende 21/11/40

## Appendix 1: Birds and Mammals Observed in NE Greenland

*Excerpt of letter written to Captain Einar Mikkelsen.*

Because my main task was lower animal life during my stay at Mørkefjord Station, my knowledge of birds and mammals is very incomplete.

The animal world in 1939-40 was very lean at Mørkefjord. During the autumn, I noticed no birds other than those already known there. The snow sparrow remained in the area until the end of November; the vegetation was barely covered by snow so that the snow sparrow had easy access to the seed-bearing plants. They could naturally also more easily find fallen seeds, since the seeds would form a relatively larger proportion of the seed-snow mixture when snow is scarce than when it is plentiful. The snow sparrow was said to spend the winter near Ella Ø. About six grouse were shot near Mørkefjord Station, but their occurrence was very scarce in the area.

Of the small mammals, I only caught one mink, despite having a trap set outside for the whole period; I saw only a few mink tracks in the snow. The number of lemmings was very low, even though there were lots of holes. Out in the vicinity of Danmarkshavn, there should be more lemmings than at Mørkefjord, according to what Trapper Hennings told me. One hare was shot in the vicinity of the station, and since then, no fresh tracks appeared in the snow. There were very few foxes. During the spring of 1939, foxes breeding was the exception rather than the rule, because all the fox skeletons belonging to the two trappers at Hvalrosodde were from old foxes with the teeth clearly worn down, and also Alwin Pedersen could not find any fox droppings that spring. No polar bears have been at the station, but the odd one has been nearby; we found bear tracks in April inland in the vicinity of Lookout Hill. Muskoxen too have been rare. During 1939-40, Mørkefjord Station only shot one lone bull and Hvalrosodde Station only three. The trappers on their hunting trips did not see more than the three that were shot. Noone at the Mørkefjord Station is competent to give an opinion as to the actual number of muskoxen in the Mørkefjord area. None of us have been on the plateaus. Ziebell (employed at Mørkefjord Station) and a Greenlander (who was visiting with Jensen from Eskimonæs) have spent only one day in the area alongside the inland ice at the end of Sælsø (Seal Lake), and they saw one bull there. A possible reason for not seeing muskoxen near the station could be that the mild and almost snow-free winter, which has given easy access to vegetation, has inhibited their migration so that they have remained on their summer and autumn grazing areas. Rich vegetation is to be found at the bottom end of Sælsø which presumably has been so easily accessible during the whole winter that they have had no reason to leave the grassy valleys in there. Not many could have wintered at the bottom of Sælsø since in spring only one ox was seen there and no tracks of other animals. In the end, the oxen could also have been drawn away to other areas. After the winter of 1938-39, several trappers are said to have spotted muskoxen where one otherwise never or only very rarely have encountered them before. In the spring, a flock of about 10 animals was seen north of Sælsø.

On the sled trip down along the coast, we saw muskoxen everywhere, and that even though we did not take the slightest trouble to seek them out. We saw oxen in the following places: a flock of about twenty wandered two or three kilometers inland between Mønstedhus and the Ailsa Cabin, a lone bull in the vicinity of the Danish Cape Mauner Cabin, three bulls in Kuppelpas, a large flock of about ten

was seen far off further into the fjord during the descent from Kuppel Pass, about five in the Henning River Pass, in Loch Fyne we had a lot of fog and so of course saw only a little of the countryside, single bulls were seen everywhere on the Loch Fyne Plain that perhaps were connected with flocks, a single bull on Society Island, a flock of six or seven was seen high aloft a couple of kilometers after Kongeborg on Trail Island, at the bottom of Carlsberg Fjord one continually came across small flocks of about six with one or two calves, occasional flocks at the watershed, some animals on the east side of Klitdalen, occasional flocks at the bottom of and along Hurry Inlet, a bull in Hvalrosbugt (Walrus Bay) near Scoresbysund, small flocks constantly between Surreholm and the mouth of Ørsted Dal in Flemming Inlet, though most on Jameson Land and fewest in Ørsted Dal the closer one got to approached the ocean, and finally a flock of about ten at Mesters Vig in Kong Oscar's Fjord.

My traveling companion Schultz saw altogether only two hares, near Klitdalen, and I saw none at all; mink, lemming and fox we saw nothing of except for occasional tracks. There were several bear tracks in Dovebugt and as far as Mønstedhus, but no bears were seen there or later.

The long-tailed skua was often seen on the trip, most often in Sofiasund. Otherwise nothing of ornithological interest was observed.

Niels Haarløv

## Appendix 2: Station Supply Status in 1940<sup>31</sup>

On the 13 May 1940, Trapper Schultz and I left Mørkefjord Station and traveled by dogsled down along the whole coast to Scoresbysund, which we reached on 18 July 1940. Ten days later I went to a Norwegian station, Havna, owned by Søren Richter, from which I boarded the vessel Vesle Kari bound for Iceland, from where I reached home by way of Spain.

On the journey, we visited the occupied Nanok stations, plus Eskimonæs and Ella Ø, as well as a few Norwegian stations. All the Danish stations are supplied with coal, kerosene (paraffin) and provisions for 1940-41, but if during the summer of 1941 new supplies do not reach the coast, there are probably some stations that must be abandoned because the supplies of fuel and provisions there will be insufficient for another winter's stay. The result of a ship failing to call in 1941 must be a greater concentration of people at the better-supplied stations.

As far as the Norwegian stations are concerned, I estimate that they are well supplied, since they were all reprovisioned by the Vestle Kari during 1940. The Frithiof Nansen's task at the coast was to capture Vestle Kari and to remove the radio station at Myggbukta, both of which it did, sailing under the Norwegian split-flag. It also visited the Danish stations Ella Ø and Eskimonæs. At Eskimonæs, aviation fuel was seized except for four barrels that were left for use at the station. The warship did not otherwise encroach on Danish properties. The two Danish trappers Bernt Jensen and Christian Petersen left Greenland on the Frithiof Nansen, and seven Norwegians and I on the Vesle Kari. The following Danes remain on the coast: six at Mørkefjord Station, one at Hvalrosodde Station, two at Gefions Havn, two at Mønstedhus, three at Hochstetter Station, one at Sandodden, two at Eskimonæs, and one at Ella Ø. Norwegians remaining are one at Revet, two at Myggbukta, two at Humboldt Station, and two at Hoelsbu.

About Greenland in general, I only want to say that the west coast fish catches are sold in part or altogether in Spain and reach there either direct or via Iceland. My information here stems from Director Proppé (Palace Hotel, Madrid), who arranges the sale of the fish in Spain.

If further information is needed, I am naturally available. I have written to Director Jennov a detailed briefing of the situation at all the Nanok stations, and to Captain Einar Mikkelsen, I am writing a short description of the animal life as I have experienced it at Mørkefjord station and on my journey to Scoresbysund, in that might be of interest.

### 1. Hvalrosodde Station

Until the 13<sup>th</sup> May 1940, Hvalrosodde [Walrus Point] Station was occupied by two trappers [Fangstmænd], namely Schultz and Hennings. On 13-5-40, Schultz drove southwards to Scoresbysund with one dog team and 40 fox pelts, all of which reached there safe and sound. Schultz has presumably later taken them with him to the "West Coast" and perhaps to America. When I left him in Scoresbysund, he planned to take them with him to America, since at that time we considered

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<sup>31</sup>Compiled from a draft and a letter written 20<sup>th</sup> November 1940 to Director Oldendow of the Greenland Administration.



**Figure 199** Walrus meat fed the dogs.

America to be the country with the highest pelt prices. Hennings stayed on at Hvalrosodde Station; he was well and in good spirits at the time when we left him on 13<sup>th</sup> May. Left behind with Hennings at the station was a complete dog team consisting of about six or seven good dogs. There had been plenty of dog food all year (walrus). The station was fixed up in the autumn of 1939 and maintained throughout the whole winter and spring, so it was in good order. For 1940-41 the station is supplied with coal, provisions and paraffin, but only the provisions will last until 1941-42. The motorboat is in working order. In the autumn, a big project was undertaken consisting of preparing new cabins, repairing the old, transporting foodstuffs and coal to the cabins, manufacturing and laying out traps. The total catch for them both was about 70 fox pelts, the most of any of the similar Norwegian and Danish stations, plus two polar bears caught at Danmarkshavn. Three muskoxen were taken near Port Arthur in the Autumn 1939 and none since.



## **2. Mørkefjord Station**

Six Danes remained at the station. [Danes present during Christmas 1940 included Kurt Olsen, Carlos Ziebell, Kristian Madsen, Svend Pultz and Andreas Hvidberg.]

## **3. Aalborghus**

Trappers Harder Jensen and Rich. Nielsen are at Aalborghus, and both were well and in good spirits when we passed the station in May. The station was in excellent condition, and they had apparently put a lot of effort into fixing up and maintaining it. They had built a larger meat rack at the side of the house than had been there before, and they were building a rather large shed for provisions. They have coal, paraffin and provisions sufficient for 1940-41, but for 1941-42 they have none of these supplies. There is one dog team at the station and the two of them never drive alone, but they have also reared puppies; provided the puppies and the adults survive, they can have two good dog teams in the autumn of 1940. The motorboat is in working order (Ford motor). They have obtained sufficient muskoxen for the station and for meat for the drying racks. No new cabins are being prepared, the catch has amounted to one polar bear, caught in the vicinity of the station, and about 28 fox pelts caught on the mainland in a valley that runs up to the inland ice. Jointly with Hvalrosodde Station, they shot so many walruses in the autumn of 1939 that have had plenty of dog food for all of 1939 and 1940.

## **4. Mønstedhus**

The relationship between the trappers was also excellent at Mønstedhus, and both were well when we reached the station in May 1940, and neither of them had been ill during the past year. The station was in admirable condition and they have coal, paraffin and provisions for 1940-41, but I don't know whether there is coal and paraffin enough for yet another year. On the other hand, there will be sufficient provisions for at least another year. Niels Hansen managed the local area, while Peder Nielsen with a dog team of four managed the remaining trapping area. With reference to the minks, I can only say that they had bred and that the young lived, and that Niels Hansen was well pleased with the result. There had been no shortage of salmon and muskoxen. As far as I know, no cabins were erected from Mønstedhus during 1939-40; the catch ran to about thirty foxes between them.

## **5. Hochstetter Trapping Station**

When we reached Hochstetter at the end of May, only Christoffersen was at the station, and naturally we obtained information only from him. Alf Hansen and Mads Kristensen had both not been ill the preceding year. On the other hand, Finn Christoffersen complained not only that he had a bad tooth that hurt, but also that he had had some stomach pains during the winter that he himself considered originated from the appendix. Due to these complaints and on account of the poor possibilities for trapping, he was much in favor of traveling southwards with us. In the end, he made up his mind to stay at the station, but not because of any doubts as to his fitness to complete the journey to Scoresbysund due to the disabilities stated above. Upon "Vestle Kari's later arrival at Hochstetter Station, he refused to go onboard, even though he was aware that by doing so he could have quickly reached medical help. The station was tidy and some cracks were to be repaired during the Summer of 1940 that had affected the heating of the living room in winter. Two underfed dogs were at the station; the rest of the dogs (one team) had been driven by Alf Hansen and Mads Kristensen to

Sandodden to fetch some of the Hochstetter provisions. During the summer of 1940, some provisions were probably sailed from Sandodden to Hochstetter. The supply of provisions during May 1940 was very poor. The station's meat supply had been very sparse; they claimed that no oxen had been within their hunting area during autumn 1939. There had been no oxen during the spring of 1940, although Hansen and Kristensen had shot one or two animals at Cape Mauer. The supply of provisions and paraffin was sufficient for 1940-41; to what extent it will stretch to more than one year, I don't know. No cabins were erected during autumn 1939, but erection was planned for summer 1940, I don't remember where. The catch had been especially poor, in that the three together had no more than five pelts. The relationship between the trappers at the station was good.

### **6. Sandodden [Sand Spit]**

At Sandodden, we met Eli Knudsen, Bernt Jensen and Christian Petersen. They were all in good spirits. Eli Knudsen was and had been well the whole time, whereas Bernt Jensen had had some digestive difficulties, and Christian Petersen's teeth were in a very poor state and he had had considerable toothache. The station was in excellent condition. All three had each their own dog team with well fed dogs. There seemed to have been muskoxen all year, certainly in the spring. At the end of May they had in addition seals on the ice and later they got two walrus. The station's supply of coal, provisions and paraffin seems to be very plentiful for one year. The boat with outboard motor is working. Knudsen has erected one or two cabins, and Petersen has erected one inland in a valley behind Knudshoved Station, from which cabin he has caught most of his foxes. The total catch for the three together amounted to about 35 pelts.

When they learnt at Sandodden that "Vesle Kari" would sail to the coast, Bernt Jensen and Christian Petersen decided to sail with the ship to Norway. Eli Knudsen wished to stay. Some of the dogs went to Hochstetter Station, Knudsen naturally kept his team, but I don't know what was decided as to the rest of the dogs. At the end of August, they boarded the Frithiof Nansen that was at Eskimonæs with the Vestle Kari, which had been escorted there by the Frithiof Nansen and sailed with the Frithiof Nansen to Iceland, to which the Vestle Kari also had orders to sail. They brought their catch to Iceland and deposited it with the Danish legation, from which it might possibly be sold if a favourable opportunity arises. They both have the possibility of getting work in Iceland, perhaps with the British army there but only if they can obtain assurance that they will not be sent away from Iceland, for example to England. Iceland is well stocked with food and fuel. Eventual employment with the British army applies particularly as far as Petersen is concerned, in that he would not mind becoming a lorry [truck] driver in the army, whereas Bernt Jensen hopes especially for a job on an Icelandic fox farm. When I left them, nothing was yet certain.

### **7. Eskimonæs**

At Eskimonæs, a store of aviation fuel was confiscated except for four barrels that were left behind there for use at the station.

### **8. Scoresbysund**

The colony at Scoresbysund is well supplied with provisions and fuel, so that it can survive the winter 1940-41 without a ship calling in 1940.

### **9. The Norwegian Hunting Results**

For the Norwegians as well as the Danes, the results of hunting have been very poor. I do not know the exact numbers for each station, but approximate indications are: Jonsbu did not get more than five, Revet [The Reef] rather few, Myggbukta 20-30, Humboldt about 60, Havna in Kong Oscar's Fjord 60-70, and I do not know the number for Hoelsbu at all, but it was probably not more than 30. The winter of 1939-40 offered excellent opportunities for travel on sea ice, since the snowfall had been so light that for example the vegetation had barely been covered throughout the winter. On the other hand, travel was very difficult. 1940 was an unusually good year for ice, but extremely small quantities of pack ice. Dovebugt was completely ice-free the second half of August. At Mørkefjord, to my knowledge, temperatures did not fall below  $-35^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and during the dark winter we often had cloudless skies. Spring has been unusually damp with rain and fog.

I cannot find more at present to relate from up the coast about the Nanok stations, but I will always gladly be available to answer questions, since I may recollect later things that I have forgotten at the moment.

Yours faithfully [The director's respectful (servant)]

(Signed) Niels Haarløv.

## Appendix 3: Time Line

For station/hut numbers and historical notes, refer to: Peter Schmidt Mikkelsen: Nordøstgrønland 1908-60, fangstmandsperioden, [Northeast Greenland 1908-60, the trappers period] Aschehoug 2001 with English summary: <http://home4.inet.tele.dk/petersm/index.html>.

### 1939 (Inbound by Ship)

Hut No.	Location	Arrival	Departure	Notes
	Trangraven, Copenhagen		8 July	
	Anchored below Skagen	38541	38544	Gales in the North Sea
	Akureyri, Iceland	38550	20 July?	
419?	Grønlænderhuset ?	26July	26July	First landing location uncertain
405	Eskimonæs	38559	38560	Went ashore
373	Norsk Villa	38560	38560	Eight day trip along Loch Fyne east shore
367	Mellemhuset	38560	38560	
	Depot with tarpaulin camp	38560	38570	Mosquitos
361	Herjahytten	38561	38561	
405	Eskimonæs	38570	38570	
425-1	Sandodden	38574	38575	
628-1	Danmark Havn Station	38579		The Villa, port access to Mørkefjord
631	Storbugthytten			Adjacent to route
632	Store Snenæs Hytten			Adjacent to route
637	Lille Snenæs Hytten			Adjacent to route
639-1	Hvalrosodden			Adjacent to route
628-1	<b>Mørkefjord Station</b>	38579		

### 1940

	Location	Arrival	Departure	Notes
639-1	<b>Hvalrosodde</b>		13 May 22:00	Film 7.
641	Mørkefjord			
635	Vædderhytten, north side of Hellefjord estuary			
629	Port Arthur	14 May 18:30	15 May 07:30	
613-2	[Nørresundbyhytten, 617] Aalborghus, Gefionshavn, on Gotfred Hansen's Island [Kroken, 611] [Hasseriishytten, 608]	15 May 20:30	16 May 07:30	The route may have passed this cabin Film 8.
607	Kap Peschel, (or Strømsbukta) cabin			Adjacent to route Adjacent to route End of Dove Bugt
	Adolph Jensen's Land			

	Location	Arrival	Departure	Notes
604 (601-2)	Paaskenæs cabin [Olestua, 603] [Sætherhytten, 602] (Bessel Fjord)	16 May 22:30	38488	Adjacent to route Adjacent to route
532-2	[Kaphytten og Mundingshytten, 537] [Hundehuset og Sønderelv, 535] [Haystackhytten, 533] Mønstedhus, east side of Hochstetter Forland	38490		Adjacent to route Adjacent to route Adjacent to route 8 hour stay.
519 510 -467	[Ottostrand, 531] [Kap Oswald Heer Hytten, 528] Ailsa cabin Hochstetter, mouth of Ardencaple Fjord, north side [Kap Bremen Hytten, 473] [Bolettestua, 471] [Sigurdsheim, 468] Kap Maurer (cabin), Kuhn Ø [Holmeslet, 460-2] [Sletta, 453-1]	38491 24 May 12:00	24 May 06:00	Adjacent to route Adjacent to route Adjacent to route Adjacent to route Adjacent to route
-432	Kuppel Pass, Wollaston Foreland [Kuppel Pass cabin]			Kuppel Pass cabin was built in 1946
425-1	Sandodden	27 May 1:00	27 May 20:00	Film 9
-416 407 -408 405	Henning River gorge Elvsborg Dødemandsbugten [Breivikhytterne, 404] Eskimonæs, southern tip of Clavering Ø [Krogness, 403]	28 May 10:00	38500	Almost no snow at bottom. Film 10. The Henning River cabin [416] is on the west side of Henning River, Clavering Ø. 45 min rest. Dødemandsbugt cabin was built in 1943 Adjacent to route Adjacent to route
373 367 349 335 327 319	The Villa, northernmost cabin of Loch Fyne Mellehuset, Loch Fyne Bunnhuset, Loch Fyne Myggbukta Kap Bennett cabin, Kejser Franz Joseph fjord Tented twice on pack ice Norwegian Kap Franklin cabin	38501 5 June dinner 8 June late eve	38507 early	Hudson Land and Hold-with-Hope  Waited for the fog to lift. 40 km/36 hours from Bundhuset. Ate and slept.
308 307 306 304 241 235	Kap Franklin [Funkis, 316] Kap Humboldt (Norwegian station) Orvind cabin, 1 <sup>st</sup> Sofia Sund Stordalen, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sofia Sund Arentz Cabin, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sofia Sund Svedenborg & river crossing Ella Ø Danish station Kong Oscar's fjord	9 June 12:00 10 June 04:00 Evening 38519	38514 Morning 38520	Film 11. Adjacent to route  Ella Ø visible. With deep open channels

	Location	Arrival	Departure	Notes
	[Nordborg hytterne, 231]			Adjacent to route
224-1 222	Kongeborg River crossings Tented Kongeborgens sydlige pynt. Holm Bugt Cabin	38520 38521	19 June 01:30 38522	Crossed to the eastern shore. Film 12. Kongeborg Cabin not found Cabin; roof consists of an old boat; ate Covered with roofing felt.
213	Fell through the ice; tented Elveide cabin	20 June 11:45 20 June 17:00	38523	Ice floe bridge, crossed to western shore. Rain.
208-2 205 -201	Havna, Norwegian station Jostein (Antarctic Havn) [Flatstranda, 114-1]	38528	38530	Film 13. Rain. Last cabin before Antarctic Havn See later. Adjacent to route
117 110 107	Villa, Kap Biot cabin Holstad, Flemming Inlet Cap Brown House	28 June late	38532 2 July AM	Wrecked by a bear. Provisions.
104	Nathorst Fjord Bunn-huset Reached Carlsberg fjord (tented first time, Camp 1) Carlsberg Fjord (Camp 2)	3 July 01:00 38536 38537	4 July 12:00 38537 6 July 16:00	Film 14. Also known as "The Last House"
	Carlsberg Fjord end (camp3) Built and used hand barrow Back to Carlsberg Fjord (c.3) Jameson Land camp1/barrow Jameson Land camp2/barrow Ryders River	10 July AM 11 July AM 12 July AM	9 July evening 10 July evening 11 July evening 13 July AM 14 July 22:00	Film 15. Third camp.
	Camped Klitdalen Hurry Inlet/fjord Greenlander tent cabin at Hurry Inlet Kap Hope Scoresbysund	15 July 04:30 16 July 00:00 38548 38549 18 July 16:00 38550	15 July evening 16 July 12:00 18 July 00:00 18 July 22:00 38565	
201 208-2 308 335 405 510 335	Bottom of Scoresby Sund Antarctic Havn Havna Norwegian Station, Mestersvig Aboard Vesle Kari: at Havna at Humboldt at Myggbukta at Eskimonæs at Hochstetter at Myggbukta at Isafjord, Iceland in Reykjavik harbour Reykjavik City Bilbao, Northern Spain Madrid Transit through Germany Copenhagen, Denmark	c. 7 August 38571 38581 c. 19 August c. 20 August c. 21 August c. 22 August 38587 38590 28 August 38596 c. 28 September c. 29 September c. 12 November 13 Nov 1940	c. 5 August c. 7 August 38581 38581 c. 20 August c. 21 August c. 22 August c. 23 August 38587 38590 38596 c. 14 September c. 28 September c. 12 November c. 13 November	A couple of hours rest. End of 175 km dash in 3 days Onboard ship until Iceland 12-day stay in Iceland. 14-day journey by ship to Bilbao. 6-week stay in Madrid. By air via Berlin. Arrived home.