

A detailed painting of a World War II fighter plane, possibly a P-51 Mustang, lying on its side on a grassy hillside. The aircraft is silver with blue and red markings. The scene is set in a lush, green landscape with rolling hills and a small figure of a person in the distance. The sky is a pale, hazy blue.

**ALEUTIAN WORLD WAR II  
NATIONAL HISTORIC AREA**

*2012 CALENDAR*



**D**uring World War II the remote Aleutian Islands, home to the Unangax̂ (Aleut people) for over 8,000 years, became one of the fiercely contested battlegrounds of the Pacific. This thousand-mile-long archipelago saw the first invasion of American soil since the War of 1812, a mass internment of American civilians, a 15-month air war, and one of the deadliest battles in the Pacific Theatre.

In 1996 Congress designated the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area to interpret, educate, and inspire present and future generations about the history of the Unangan and the Aleutian Islands in the defense of the United States in World War II. In a unique arrangement, the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area and visitor center are owned and managed by the Ounalashka Corporation (the village corporation for Unalaska) and the National Park Service provides them with technical assistance. Through this cooperative partnership, the Unangax̂ are the keepers of their history and invite the public to learn more about their past and present.

For information about the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area, visit our web site at: [www.nps.gov/aleu/](http://www.nps.gov/aleu/) or contact:

Alaska Affiliated Areas  
240 West 5th Ave  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
(907) 644-3503

Ounalashka Corporation  
P.O. Box 149  
Unalaska, Alaska 99685

Visitor Information (907) 581-1276  
Visitor Center (907) 581-9944

**Front Cover:** "Crash Landing" (P-38, Adak Island) by Ogden Pleissner. For more about the P-38s of the 54th Fighter Squadron, see month of May, this calendar. For more about the artist Ogden Pleissner, see month of December, this calendar.

**This Page:** "High above, over a true 'home of the brave,' the floating folds of the Star Spangled Banner symbolize the American way of life to soldiers in training for the battles that will bring freedom to an unhappy, wartorn world, Fort Knox, Kentucky." June 1942. Library of Congress, LC-USW36-4.

**Below:** Commander Innis entering Aerology Building, 4 September, 1943. Restored, the Aerology Building now serves as the Aleutian World War II Visitor Center. Photograph courtesy Archgraphics.



*Naval Air*  
**TRANSPORT SERVICE**  
DUTCH HARBOR  
KODIAK 529 MI. KISKA 585 MI.

Alaska Veterans Museum

# Knives, Lances, and Needles

*A Woman of Oonalashka*



*A WOMAN OF OONALASHKA.*

Unangan woman (above) with tattoos, labrets (lip plugs), nasal ornaments, and earrings. The incision for inserting labrets was the most extensive surgical procedure for body ornamentation among the Unangan, requiring two or three piercings in the lower lip into which were inserted pieces of bone, animal teeth, or other objects. It is thought these holes were cut early in the first year of life when a small plug was inserted from the inside to keep the opening from closing during healing. The lower end of a female's nasal septum was also pierced during early childhood with a hole large enough to hold a long bone (a nasal pin) as well as a string of beads or other objects. The nasal pin could also be a piece of bark, bone, or eagle feather shaft. Before the introduction of European trade beads, pieces of amber or coral would dangle from the pin to chin.

*A Man of Oonalashka*



*A MAN OF OONALASHKA.*

Traditionally, women were tattooed after their first menses, men after their first animal kill. Tattoos were pricked into the skin or "sewn" with needle and thread, the "ink" comprised of a black pigment of coal dust and urine. Males also pierced their nasal septum, and both sexes pierced their ears, inserting dentalium shells, bones, pieces of amber, feathers, dried bird wings, or skulls. Sea lion whiskers worn in male's ears were a trophy, a sign he was a good hunter. Males would also wear labrets made of walrus ivory, beads, and bones. It is thought such ornamentation was both decorative and symbolic of social standing, reputation, and elder status. It was, in any circumstance, a mix of surgical expertise and art.

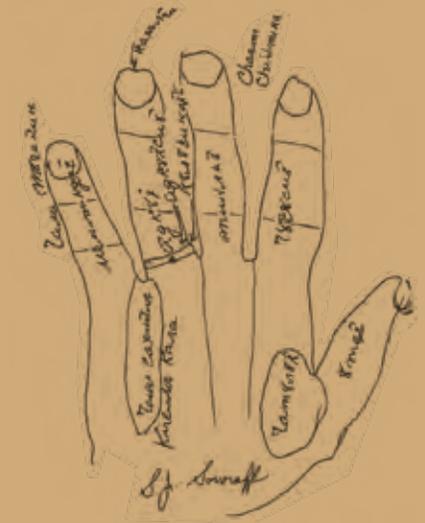
# January 2012

*Aleut (Unangan) physicians were renowned for their skill. In order to establish fundamental knowledge of the internal organs of the human [body], especially those [places] on which they performed operations, they did autopsies of deceased slaves and killed enemies.*

—Father Ioann Veniaminov. Unalaska District priest, 1824-34

*Aleut doctors could detect things by feeling the sick person’s body. Even cancer could be found that way. This examination is called chagilgalix—“touching with hands.”*

—Sergie Sovoroff, *Cuttlefish 2*, Interview with Ray Hudson



Cuttlefish 2, Ray Hudson, editor.

Through the butchering of sea mammals and human dissection, the Unangan acquired a sophisticated knowledge of the human body, evidenced above in this detailed anatomical rendering of the Unangan hand by Sergie Sovoroff. Part identification in Unangan Tunuu.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 Martin Luther King Day	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

In a time well before antibiotics, before the notion of sterilization, the Unangan cleansed deep wounds with fox fat, then dusted them with powdered teeth. They were closed with bone needle and sinew thread, then covered with a bandage of fresh mouse skin. Using such methods, infection was nearly nonexistent. Elder women practiced massage or “chagilgalix.” They set fractures and tended the pregnant, turning the fetus to right breech births and massaging the newborn to bring the organs into place. Piercing with a lance was performed by only the most skilled physicians—for colic, for consumption (to let the bad air out). Nearly every part of the body, excepting the eyeballs, was pierced, with elders showing evidence of 100 or more scars. Blood was let to treat headache, hardness of the internal organs. For a sick heart, nausea or lack of appetite, a vein under the tongue was bled. In the time of Father Veniaminov, “old Russians” sought Unangan physicians for treatment, but for most *promyshlenniki*, Unangan medicine was seen as sorcery—a sin—and was stamped out. But there are Unangan to this day who remember some of the old healing ways.

Archeological evidence indicates that prior to European contact, it was commonplace for the Unangan to reach the age of eighty and beyond. The Nikolski woman in the portrait above was 94 years of age when the image was taken in 1938. In 1940 North America, the average lifespan was 63 years. UAA-HMC-0690.

# The Sea Cow

*To the half-starved castaways, the sea cows were like manna from heaven.*

—Corey Ford, "Where the Sea Breaks Its Back"



*[The fat of the sea cow, which covered the body four inches thick, was] ...firm, and shiny white, but when exposed to the sun takes on a yellowish tinge like May butter. Both the smell and taste of it are most delicious... and even greatly preferable to the meat of any quadruped... The fat of the calves is so much like fresh lard that it is hard to tell them apart, but their meat differs in no wise than veal.*

—Georg Wilhelm Stellar, naturalist,  
Vitus Bering Expedition, 1741

*When [a sea cow was] caught with a hook... [the cows] nearest began to stir and feel the need to bring succor. Some of them tried to upset the boat... while others pressed down on the rope and endeavored to break it, or strove to remove the hook from the wound by blows of their tail... It is a most remarkable proof of their conjugal affection, that the male, after having tried with all his might... and in spite of the beating we gave him, followed [his mate] to shore, and that several times, even after she was dead, he shot unexpectedly up to her like a speeding arrow. Early next morning... we found the male again standing by the female, and the same I observed the third day..."*

—Georg Wilhelm Stellar, naturalist,  
Vitus Bering Expedition, 1741

Skull of Steller's Sea Cow (*Hydrodamalis gigas*).

# February 2012

*Every day... during our ill-fated adventure [on Bering Island] I had a chance to watch from the door of my hut the behavior and habits of these creatures...*

*—Georg Wilhem Steller, naturalist, second Vitus Bering expedition. Description written during a ten-month stranding on what is now known as Bering Island in the Commander Islands, Russia. Twenty-nine of Vitus Bering's crew of seventy-seven died during the voyage to Alaska and forced refuge on Bering Island, including Vitus Bering. Roughly thirty years after Steller's observations of the sea cow, the creature would be hunted to extinction by Russian sailors, seal hunters, and fur traders exploiting the Aleutian Chain.*



Zimmerman, 1780.

Illustration of sea cow's "keratinous pads" used for mastication.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18
19	20 President's Day	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

They fed in the shallows offshore, moving slowly forward, one forefoot after the other, half swimming, half walking like cattle grazing on a pasture of seaweed. Four or five minutes partially submerged, then they would raise their nostrils above water and blow—the sound like a horse snorting. Up to thirty feet in length, twenty-five in girth. Four tons and upwards. From navel to head, they resembled a land animal—from navel to tail, a fish with a whale's fluke. The head suggested a buffalo, and they chewed, not with teeth, but with horny plates like bovines. Their forefeet ended in "hooves" and with these the gluttonous "sea cows" loosened kelp from rocks to eat, their stomachs six feet long, five round, always hungry.

For ten months the shipwrecked crew of Vitus Bering's ship *St. Peter* watched the "sea monsters" fill their bellies. The cows came so close to shore and were so unafraid of men that the naturalist Steller could stroke their backs with his hand. The Russians were starving to death, but scurvy had left them too weak to hunt the sea cow herd. In desperation, they finally harpooned a cow and with great effort pulled it to shore. There they cut immense slices from the still living, struggling animal and found its fat and meat delicious.

Under Steller's direction, the *St. Peter's* draftsman, Plenisher, made six accurate drawings of a sea cow to scale. These accompanied Steller's manuscript when sent to St. Petersburg, Russia after the expedition. The illustrations disappeared en route across Siberia and have never been found. Rendering of sea cow above from Sven Larsson Waxell's chart of Bering's voyages, 1741. Courtesy Alaska State Library, Alaska Purchase Centennial Commission Photograph Collection, ASL-P20-182.

# *Alaska's Japanese Americans*

*I want to forget the day I lost my country. The day I lost my future. The day all of me was drained, and I felt empty. I want to forget the day we were herded like cattle into a prison camp. What did we do wrong? What was our crime? Who do we pledge allegiance to now?*

*—Sylvia K. Kobayashi, Japanese American interned in Puyallup, Washington, and Minidoka, Idaho*



War Relocation Authority camp, Tule Lake, California—a detention center for “security risks,” and a “segregation center” for the “disloyal” considered for deportation to Japan. LC-USW36-786.

# March 2012

*I don't want any of them here. It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen, he is still a Japanese... we must worry about the Japanese all the time until he is wiped off the map.*

—General John L. DeWitt, Commander IX Corps, charged with defense of the western U.S. and territory of Alaska

*A viper is nonetheless a viper wherever the egg is hatched...*

—Los Angeles Times editorial



Museum and the Online Archive of California.

Japanese American mother presenting her G.I. son a *senninbari*—a protective talisman worn into battle. "In Camp Jerome" by Henry Sugimoto, 1943.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Japanese American G.I. (left) interrogating Japanese survivor of Banzai attack (center), Attu Island. Upwards of fifty Japanese American soldiers took part in the U.S. invasion of Attu acting as translators and interrogators. It is said each was assigned his own Caucasian bodyguard, as they were "...in double jeopardy—a target of the enemy and a target of their own men." Japanese American soldiers served in the U.S. army in both the Pacific and European theaters, shedding their blood while their families remained incarcerated in their own homeland. "Questioning" by Edward Laning. Courtesy Eleventh Air Force Office of History.

**K**awabe, Kimura, Fukuyama and Tatsuda. Beginning 7 December, 1941, roughly 200 Alaska Japanese men, women, and children were rounded up and transported to internment camps in the badlands of the western United States. Immigrants and U.S. citizens alike—any person with a one-sixteenth quantum of Japanese blood. About 150 of the Alaskans were interned behind barbed wire in the "sagebrush dust bowl" of Minidoka, Idaho. There they segregated themselves in the overcrowded barracks of Area A, Block C, a place they called the "Alaskan Way." Some were the children of Japanese fathers and Alaska Native mothers. They had taken up the subsistence way, knew only the hills and rivers of their Alaska homeland. A fatherless boy from Wiseman had never even seen another Japanese except for his own Japanese-Eskimo face in the mirror. Nonetheless he was interred as a risk to the security of the nation. The whole thing stank of racism from beginning to end. Today, ten Japanese internment camps are preserved as NPS historical landmarks, "reminders that this nation failed in its most sacred duty to protect its citizens..."



# *Feeding the Bear:\**

## *The P-39 Airacobra*

P-39 Airacobras support Russian ground troops during the battle for Stalingrad. "Stalingrad Story" *Bellringer* magazine, August 1943. Courtesy Niagara Aerospace Museum collection, Niagara Falls, NY.

Lend-Lease U.S. aircraft, like the Airacobra, that were bound for Russia were ferried from the Lower-Forty-eight through Canada to Fairbanks, Alaska. There Russian pilots took the controls. Nearly 8000 aircraft were delivered to the Soviets by way of the Alaska-Siberia Air Route, with only 133 lost to weather or pilot error.

\*Title taken from *Feeding the Bear: American Aid to the Soviet Union, 1941-1945* by Hubert van Tuyl.

# April 2012

*We must be the great arsenal of democracy.*

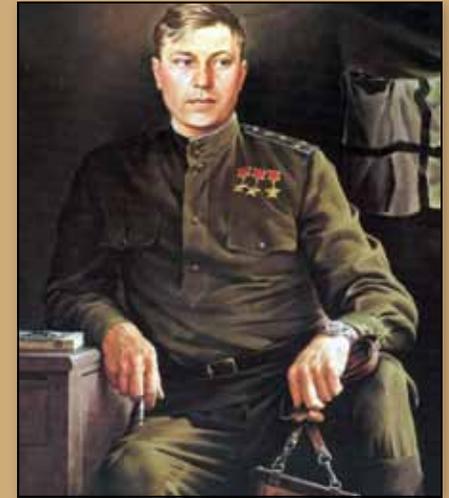
—President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, architect of the Lend-Lease program, 29 December, 1940

*If we see that Germany is winning, we ought to help Russia, and if we see Russia is winning, we ought to help Germany, and that way let them kill as many [of each other] as possible.*

—Senator (later President) Harry S. Truman, June 1941

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Easter	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

In the Aleutians, Airacobras of the 54th Fighter Group flew seventy-five sorties against Kiska, strafing ground targets and antiaircraft and providing top cover for bombers. The group was credited with downing ten Japanese aircraft and awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation. In the end however, the P-39 fell victim to its unique tricycle landing gear which could not stand up to the Aleutian's primitive airfields. Early in December 1942, the Airacobras retired gracefully from the Aleutian Theater. Image: P-39 configured to Aleutian Campaign specs, United States Air Force Museum.



Russian ace Alexander Pokryshkin, credited with 59 German kills. Awarded three times the gold star of "Hero of the Soviet Union," Pokryshkin was shunned by the Soviet Air Force at war's end. His transgression: preference for the U.S. made P-39 over Soviet designed fighter aircraft. Painting by S. Prisekin.

The U.S. made Bell P-39 Airacobra. The Brits didn't want it, Lend-Lease or not. After one combat mission, the RAF rejected the aircraft, dumping their P-39s on the Soviets. The USAAF in Europe declined the fighter as well. It literally sucked for air above 20,000 feet—the rarefied atmosphere where heavy bombers and their fighter escorts flew. The P-39 was regulated to secondary theaters—the Southwest Pacific, the Aleutians, and as Lend-Lease, to Russia. The Soviets loved the *Kobrushka*, the "little cobra" ... loved the 37mm Oldsmobile cannon mounted like a stinger in the propeller hub, and the machine guns on fuselage and wings. Fired in unison, the P-39's heavy weaponry could disintegrate German aircraft in low-altitude dogfights. Soviet P-39 pilots scored the highest number of individual kills attributed to any U.S. fighter type during WWII. President Roosevelt fed the hungry *Russian Bear* a diet of nearly 5000 P-39s. Even Joseph Stalin admitted, "Without American production the United Nations could never have won the war."

# Death Stalked the 54th\*

\* John Haile Cloe, The Aleutian Warriors

*Buried "Spider" today in this dreary, uncivilized little island [Umnak]. The funeral was impressive but superficial. The wind howling over the tundra was the funeral march and the sting of the rain helped bring tears. He lay in a plain pine box coffin and the Chaplain raised his voice over the howl of the elements... We all saluted our comrade...and that was the last chapter in the life of Lieutenant Carl Middleton.*

—54th Fighter Squadron Historian recording the first death among P-38 pilots in the Aleutian Theater

P-38s of the 54th Fighter Squadron in formation over Aleutian coast. Photograph by Col. Kent Ramsey.



# May 2012

*Those pea shooters [P-38 pilots] are a bunch of blood-thirsty sons of guns.*

—Diary entry, Lieutenant Billy Wheeler

*Ground crews were having to lift numb and exhausted [P-38] pilots from their cockpits. The constant specter of death and the...exhausting seven-and eight hour missions... watching the fuel indicator needle steadily move towards empty, were rapidly aging what once used to be young and carefree boys. Pilots complained of severe headaches and nervous apprehension.*

—John Haile Cloe, *The Aleutian Warriors*



Image courtesy Archgraphics.

54th Fighter Squadron pilot.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Mother's Day	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	Memorial Day					

The Japanese called the P-38 “two planes, one pilot” because of its unique architecture. Twin booms housing two turbo-supercharged 1,000 hp engines, each propeller spinning in opposition to the other to eliminate torque. In the center “nacelle” was the pilot’s bubble canopy, and in the nose, the weapon cluster—two 50 caliber machine guns and a 20mm cannon. Fired in unison against lightly armored Japanese fighters, the weaponry had a devastating “buzz saw” effect.

In the Pacific Theater, the P-38 was credited with more kills than any other USAAF aircraft. The 54th Fighter Squadron claimed the first two aerial victories of the war in the Aleutian Campaign—two Japanese *Mavis* floatplanes, 4 August, 1942. P-38 pilots of the 54th flew bomber escort from Cape Field to Japanese held Kiska Island—1200 miles to and back. It was the only plane in the Aleutian Theatre with such range. But for the pilots—fresh, flight school graduates with no training in instrument navigation—the missions over such great and wild distances would prove nearly suicidal. Within a year, roughly half of the original thirty P-38 pilots were dead. For most, the Bering Sea was their grave.

“A few seconds and the bitter Arctic cold rockets to 1400° inside the Solar Exhaust Manifolds on America’s Alaska-based airplanes.” Marketing illustration *P-38 over Dutch Harbor* courtesy Archgraphics.

# Block 13

*We're enjoying our new home [in Anchorage] immensely and you can never imagine how much fun it is to have a [place] of your own that you raised "from a pup." There is a lot of finishing touches, but the house looks swell...*

—Lt. Bert Perrin, 30 December, 1940

Deployed: Aleutian Theater: Adak Island; European Theater: Battle of the Bulge, Liberation of Nazi Concentration Camps

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②

③

④

- ① Captain Joe E. Golden family House
- ② Lt. Bert Perrin family House
- ③ Captain Robert C. Ratliff family house, Battalion Executive Officer/Commander Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion; Battle of Attu, Defense of Enginner Hill, Japanese Banzai attack, 29 May, 1943. Current home of M&M San Angelo
- ④ Lt. Lynden R. Anderson (Coastal Artillery) family house. Current home of Francis Broderick, calendar author

Block 13, Army Housing Association, Anchorage Alaska, 18 September 1940. Photograph courtesy M&M San Angelo, principal investigators.

EAST "C" CORDOVA STREET

EAST "B" BARROW STREET

E11TH AVENUE

E10TH AVENUE

A STREET

# June 2012

*I was sitting in my second grade classroom. It was about 11am... My teacher told me to get my wraps... I was scared to death I was going to be punished for something... I was told to leave everything... When I got out in the hall, Mom was there... She took me out to the car and the rest of the family was in it. We drove down to the train station and boarded the train [to the port of Seward]. Dad [Capt. J.E. Golden] saw us off... My mother and grandmother only had time to pack a few suitcases... Months later several [moving] cartons were delivered to Peoria Illinois... [Inside one] was a waffle still in the iron, meat in a fry pan, and the breakfast dishes unwashed. The [three] dogs stayed behind... Most of the toys and books that belonged to us kids disappeared.*

—Joanne Golden, age 7, Evacuation from Anchorage, Block 13, 10 February, 1942

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 Flag Day	15	16
17 Father's Day	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the territory of Alaska was declared a war zone. All U.S. military dependents beginning February 1942 would be evacuated—first wives with children, then pregnant women, then “able-bodied” adults. For many of the servicemen of Block 13—men of General Simon Bolivar Buckner’s 4th Infantry, the 32nd Engineers, and 81st Artillery—Attu and Kiska would be their next deployment. March 1942, Captain Joe E. Golden would become assistant chief of staff, intelligence, for the Alaska Defense Command, serving as observer with the Aleutian Task Force. As was true for many other Aleutian veterans, this would only be the beginning of his personal war. Next would come Normandy, the Battle of the Bulge, then training for the invasion of Japan. Looking north at Block 13 from what is now Cordova Street, ca. 1940. Image courtesy Jeannette Golden.

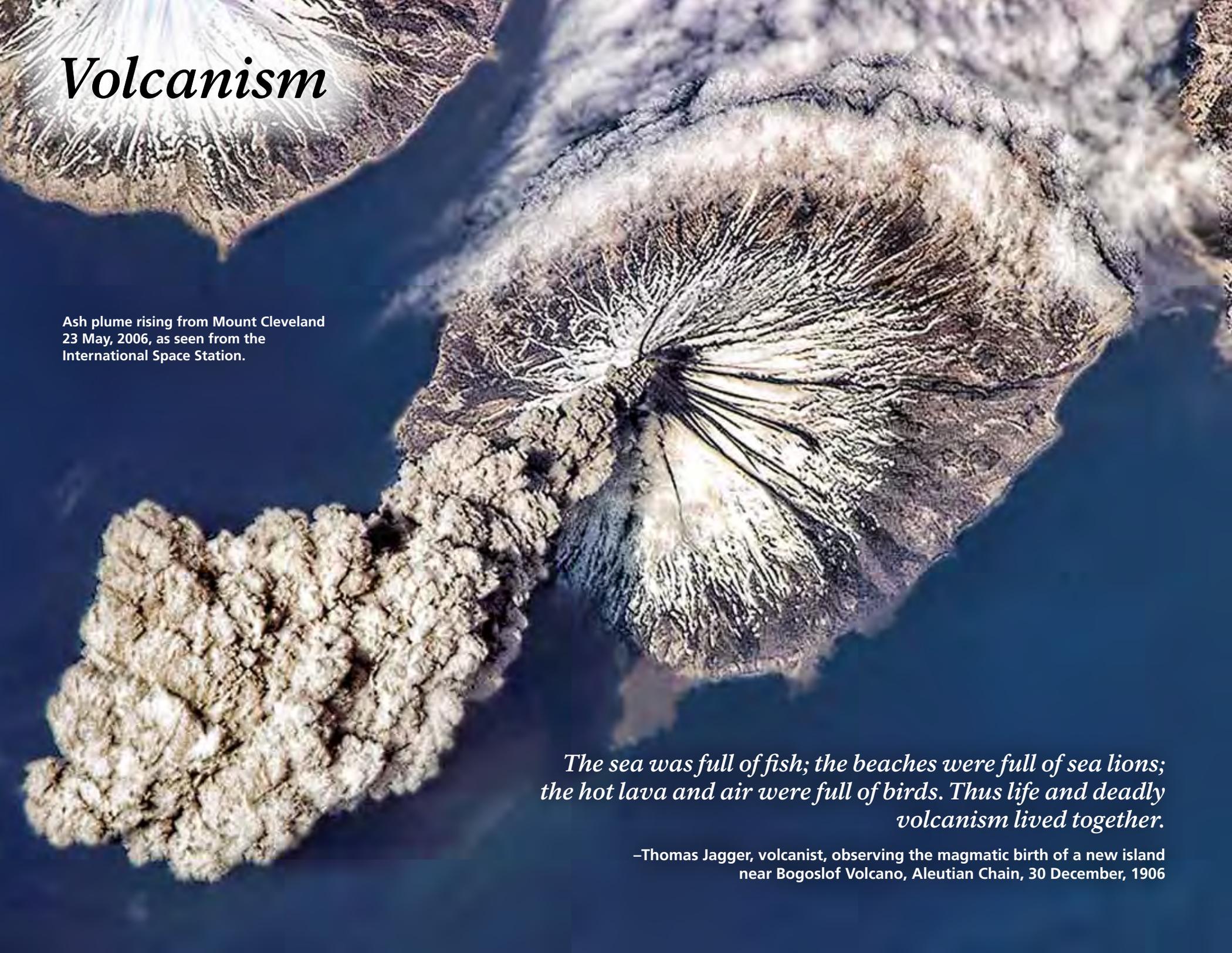


Photograph courtesy Joanne Golden-McElfresh.

Captain Joe E. Golden, G-2 Intelligence, 4th Infantry Regiment, wife Jeannette, and children (front) Eleanor and Joseph (and standing, back) Joanne. Block 13, E10th Avenue, ca. 1940.

Anchorage 1940 was a military boomtown—off-base housing for newly deployed soldiers from the south nonexistent. If these servicemen wanted to see their families, they must build their own places and build them fast while summer lasted. A cooperative was created, financed by Anchorage businessman R.H. Stock—the muscle: newly-minted West Point officers and World War I noncom veterans. Together, they formed Army Housing Association, Block 13. It was nothing but brush, moss, and trees in the sticks east of Anchorage. The men worked evenings and weekends. They surveyed lots, built streets and sewers, poured concrete foundations. They worked in cold and rain, tormented by mosquitoes. The houses were pre-cut, packaged kits—*Modelow* structures. Each man built at his own skill level. One hung his windows upside down until counseled by neighbors. The houses raised, a community was formed. In short order, two babies were born. But the dream of Block 13 lasted only a year.

# *Volcanism*

An aerial photograph showing a volcanic eruption. A large, dark, conical mountain is the source of several massive, billowing plumes of ash and smoke that rise into the sky. The plumes are a mix of dark grey and light tan, indicating ash and steam. The surrounding ocean is a deep blue, and the overall scene is one of intense geological activity.

Ash plume rising from Mount Cleveland  
23 May, 2006, as seen from the  
International Space Station.

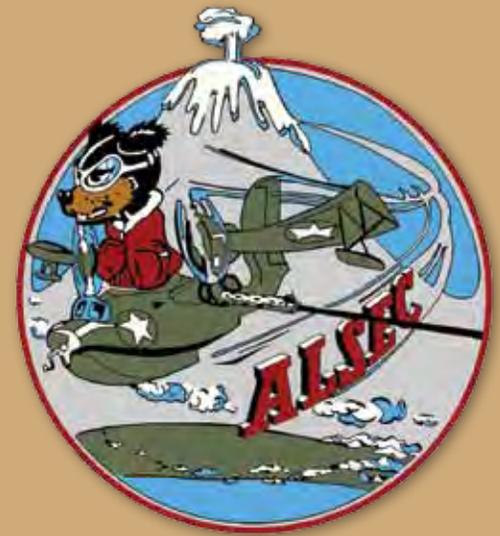
*The sea was full of fish; the beaches were full of sea lions;  
the hot lava and air were full of birds. Thus life and deadly  
volcanism lived together.*

—Thomas Jagger, volcanist, observing the magmatic birth of a new island  
near Bogoslof Volcano, Aleutian Chain, 30 December, 1906

# July 2012

*Umnak [8 August, 1945]—Shooting hot volcanic ash bombs high into the air, a long-dormant crater, nearby Mount Tulik, gave soldiers at this Aleutian base [Fort Glenn/Cape Field] some anxious moments this summer. But after Dr. Howell Williams, a volcanologist who had been making bedside observations at Mexico’s Paracutin volcano, came north for a look-see, he told worried base officers there was no immediate danger from the erupting volcano.*

—Quote from verso of photograph of Mount Tulik eruption by Lt. Ray Wilcox, Signal Corps.  
Image may be seen online at [vilda.alaska.edu/cdm4/item\\_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/cdmg11&CISOPTR=2513&REC=4](http://vilda.alaska.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/cdmg11&CISOPTR=2513&REC=4)



Adapted by Gecko Graphics from the original.

ALSEC (Aleutian Sector) cartoon mascot—bear piloting U.S. Navy PB4Y with venting Aleutian volcano in background.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Like precarious stepping stones, the Aleutian Islands span the seas between the New and Old Worlds—reaching westward from the Alaska Peninsula to within 500 miles of Russian Kamchatka. Situated along the seam of the shifting Pacific and North American tectonic plates, the 1,100 mile long archipelago has been, and continues to be, the locus of often violent seismic events. It is thought that at least twenty-six of the chain’s fifty-seven volcanoes have erupted in the past two centuries. The stratovolcano Mount Cleveland has erupted at least 21 times in the last 230 years, most recently in 2011. In June of 1944, Cleveland sent an ash plume nearly 20,000 feet skyward. Large boulders ejected by the eruptive force were carried out to sea. The VEI 3 (severe) eruption accounted for the only confirmed direct volcanic fatality in Alaska, taking the life of Sergeant Purchase, Eleventh Air Force, stationed on the volcano at the time. Purchase had left his post early in the event to take a walk and never returned. It is presumed he was killed by mud slides. The Eleventh abandoned the volcanic post for the remainder of the campaign.

Eruption of Mount Veniaminof, Aleutian Chain, 30 March, 1944 as viewed from the nose of a naval air transport service aircraft. University of Alaska Fairbanks-1970-11-108.

# Enemy Aircraft off Coast



*Coast Guardsmen were warned to be prepared for incendiary bombs along New York's waterfront where millions of dollars of war supplies are crowded into wooden piers. Dock Commissioner John McKenzie said that he had received word from Mitchel Field shortly before 1 p.m. to be on the alert...that several hundred [Japanese] planes were off the East Coast and that their estimated time over Long Island was about 2 p.m.*

**-Chicago Daily News, 9 December, 1941**

# August 2012

*The Army and Navy were on the prowl today for an enemy aircraft carrier that sent at least two squadrons of planes in reconnaissance flights over industrial plants ringing San Francisco Bay... Army interceptor planes followed the first of the "unidentified" squadrons, but were unable to determine where they finally went. The Navy then took up the search for a plane carrier, presumably lurking off California's coast, and possibly 500 or 600 miles at sea.*

—The Chicago Daily News, 9 December, 1941

*I don't think there's any doubt the planes came from a carrier.*

—General John L. DeWitt, Commander IX Corps, charged with defense of the western U.S. and territory of Alaska



Photograph courtesy Archgraphics.

"AT ATTENTION—Hitherto little publicized but always vigilant, the unpaid observers, 100,000 of them on the Pacific coast, are typified by Mrs. C.H. Spitzer and Mrs. B.H. Hill, seen in photo above on duty at San Rafael post." *San Francisco Examiner*, 27 April, 1942.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Dr. W.M. Whitehead clears a path to his backyard Juneau bombshelter, 1 January, 1942. The concrete shelter measures 9 inches thick and can house Whitehead, his wife, and three children. It is said to be the only private shelter in Alaska. Image courtesy Archgraphics.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, America feared a Japanese invasion of the U.S. mainland. The winter of 1942, the beaches of the western states were guarded against attack; towns were blacked out; the night skies cut by searchlights. February 25, 1942, formations of Japanese planes were reported over Southern California and "the air...erupt(ed) like a volcano" with anti-aircraft fire. In the morning, residents of Long Beach-Santa Monica awoke to find anti-aircraft shrapnel littering their sidewalks, housetops, and rose gardens. But the enemy planes proved illusory—the "Battle of Los Angeles" nothing more than a case of frayed nerves. U.S. fears of an invasion were not without warrant however. Japanese I-boat submarines prowled the West Coast of the United States making bold attacks on U.S. shipping at times no more than twenty miles distant from their ports. The undersea ships stood offshore Oregon and California, shelling a fort and oil field. Aircraft launched from Japanese submarines dropped incendiary bombs in the Pacific Northwest in attempts to tinder the ancient forests into firestorm. And a land invasion would come...but far to the north of the continental United States, to two small islands named Attu and Kiska at the western tip of the Territory of Alaska.

# The Springfield M1903



Caliber .30 Ball Cartridge, Model 1906—case, primer, charge of smokeless powder, and bullet. This round is a "pointed" .30-06 fired at 2,800 feet per second.

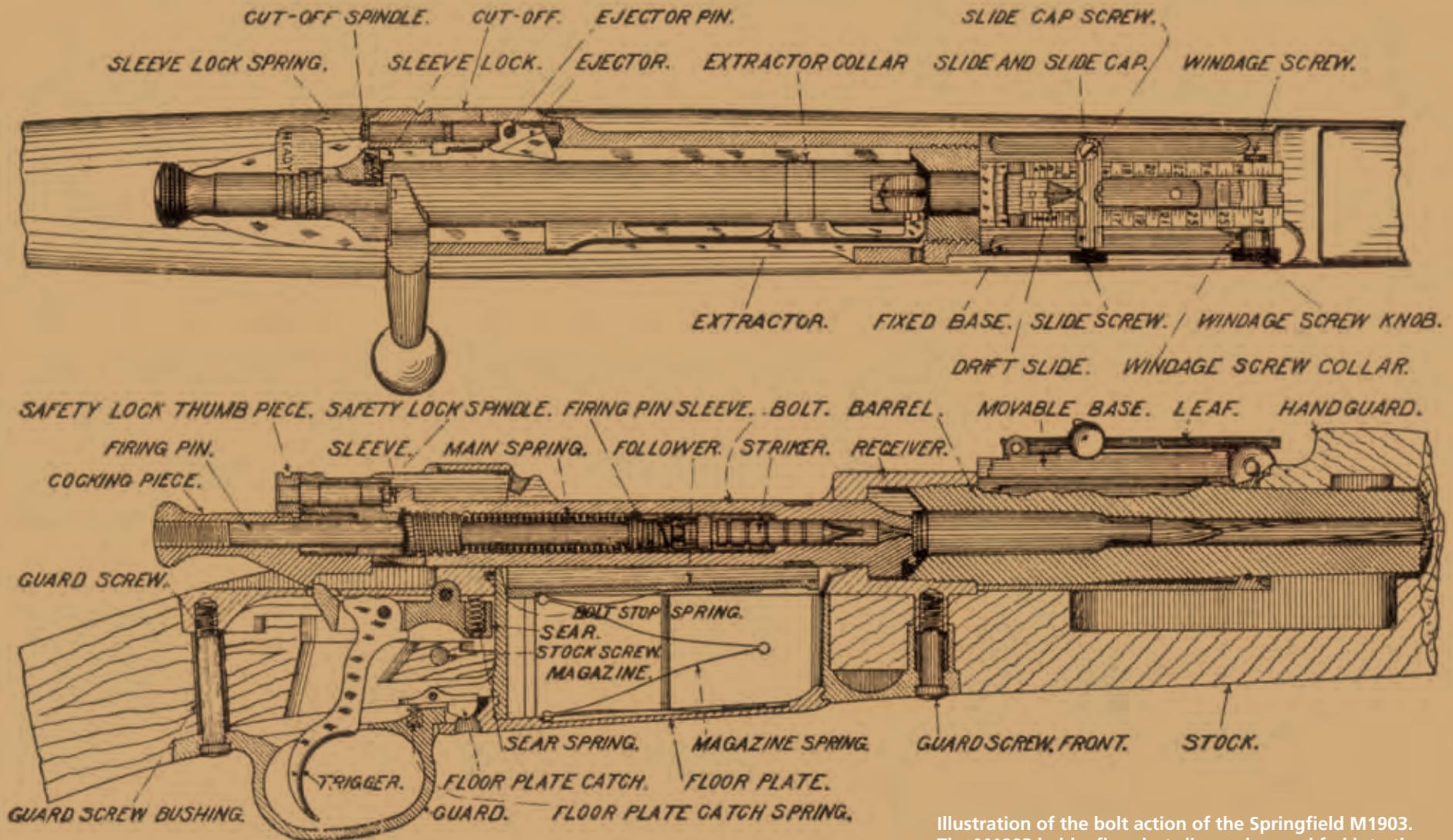


Illustration of the bolt action of the Springfield M1903. The M1903 held a five shot clip, each round fed into the breech by manually working the bolt. Renderings from *U.S. Rifle Model 1903 .30 Caliber Official Handbook* courtesy Archgraphics.

# September 2012



Rock Island Arsenal U.S. Model 1903 Rifle, manufactured 1906. Image courtesy "Curiosandrelics."



<http://www.aef-doughboys.com/index.html>

WWI U.S. soldier in wool M1912 service uniform. He is armed with the M1903 Springfield rifle and equipped with a leather garrison belt and the second generation M1905 bayonet in scabbard.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Labor Day	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Decorated U.S. soldiers stand at attention after Japanese aerial bombardment of Dutch Harbor, 3 and 4 June, 1942. They are equipped with antiquated World War I-era helmets, woolen greatcoats, web gear and gas masks, (in shoulder bags). In their ammo pouches are rounds for the Springfield 1903 bolt-action rifle. The Japanese bombardment claimed 78 U.S. lives. A feared Japanese land invasion never transpired. Image courtesy Museum of the Aleutians.

On the eve of modern, mechanized warfare, the defenders of Dutch Harbor, June 1942, stood as their forefathers had done in the battlefields of WWI—in trenches they had laboriously dug, not in Flanders Fields, but in the hills above Fort Mears, Amaknak Island. And like their forefathers, they wore World War I-era woolen greatcoats, uniforms, and web gear...the “steel hat” helmet designed as protection from falling shrapnel, but not bullets. Their firearm was the single-shot, Springfield M1903 bolt-action rifle, reliable, accurate—used by U.S. snipers up to the Vietnam War. But in 1942 it was decades obsolete as an infantry weapon, its “thirty-ought-six” ammunition aged and prone to misfire. Against powerful automatic fire or attack from modern fighter aircraft, the single-shot M1903 was little better than a stick. The defenders of Dutch Harbor believed upwards of 65,000 Japanese troops would be landed in amphibious invasion. With their worn, antiquated weapons, from rifles to big guns, the chances of survival for the “doughboys” of Dutch Harbor would have been nil.

# *A Century of Servitude\**

*Nowhere, nowhere else could there possibly be so much teeming life. Every inch of earth is covered with writhing, barking, roaring, fighting fur seals...*

—Libby Beaman, St. George Island, 1880  
Wife of the Assistant Special Agent for the Seal Islands

*I was afraid to leave [St. George]... If you got out without permission, [the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries] reduced your sealing division, threatened not to give food to your family.*

—Unangan sealer, St. George, name unknown

*"Seal Drove Crossing" by Henry Elliott, Saint Paul Island, October 20, 1872. Elliott coauthored a 1905 document that would eventually become the 1911 North Pacific Fur Seal Convention—the first international treaty dedicated to the conservation of wildlife. UA482-2.*

# October 2012

*[Internment of the Pribilovians during World War II] caused great inconvenience and hardship, and resulted in the loss of more than a million dollars by reason of the discontinuance of [sealing]. . . I urge that arrangements be made to return the natives . . .*

—Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes

*“The native [sealing] gang here at Funter [Bay internment camp] wish for me to notify you that they do not want to make the trip to the [Pribilof] islands until the war is over.”*

—L.C. McMillin to E.C. Johnston, March 6, 1943, Fish and Wildlife Service



Rendering by Mark Luttrell, Artifact Illustration.

Using a two-handed knife, a Unangan “blubberer” strips the fat from a seal skin held fast against a wooden beam with his stomach.

**T**hey were paid in food—1700 calories for fifteen hours of back-breaking, bloody labor. From the age of sixteen on, Pribilovian sealers were held in servitude by the U.S. government—treated not as human beings but as instruments in the herding, slaughter, and processing of seals. In 1867, the United States bought Alaska and the Pribilof Islands from Russia, bought the northern fur seal herd and the Pribilovians as well. For a century, the government did with seal and sealer as they wished, bringing both to the brink of extinction in order to enrich the U.S. treasury.

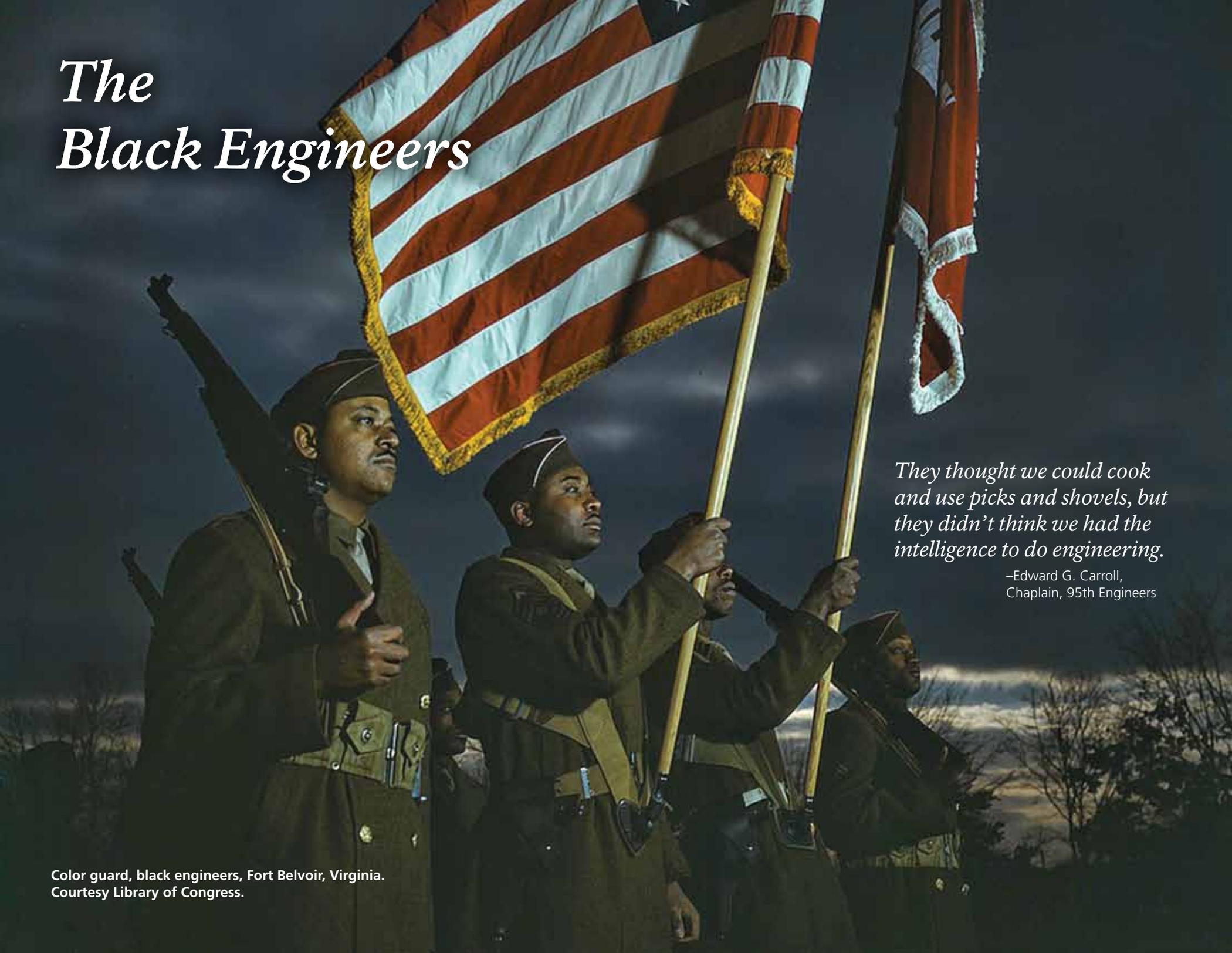
**U**nder U.S. rule, Pribilovians were designated “wards of the state”—children in essence—with all aspects of their lives, including choice of spouse, dictated by Treasury Department Agents. In 1943, sealers were coerced to return to the Pribilofs from internment in southeast Alaska to harvest seals. Those serving in the military were furloughed to participate. That year, Pribilovian sealers infused the U.S. war chest with 1.58 million dollars while their wives and children wasted away in the internment camp at Funter Bay.

**I**t was not until 1966 that Pribilovians were granted U.S. citizenship, over one hundred years after the abolition of slavery.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Columbus Day	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Aleut Independence Day (Pribilofs)	29	30	31 Halloween			

Seal hunters, St. Paul Island, circa 1880, Russian colonial period. In 1786-87, Russian fur sealers transplanted villagers from Unalaska and Atka islands two hundred miles north to the uninhabited islands of St. George and St. Paul. There the Unangan worked as seasonal itinerent slave labor in the harvest of the northern fur seal. By the 1880s, permanent villages were settled on the two islands. Courtesy Alaska State Library, Gray & Hereford Photograph Collection, ca. 1880, ASL-P185-03.

# *The Black Engineers*

A color guard of Black engineers in military uniforms marching with the American flag and a regimental flag against a dramatic, cloudy sky. The soldiers are in profile, looking forward with determination. The American flag is the central focus, held high on a wooden pole. To its right, a smaller red and white flag is also held high. The background shows a dark, overcast sky with some light breaking through the clouds, suggesting a dawn or dusk setting. The overall mood is solemn and respectful.

*They thought we could cook  
and use picks and shovels, but  
they didn't think we had the  
intelligence to do engineering.*

—Edward G. Carroll,  
Chaplain, 95th Engineers

Color guard, black engineers, Fort Belvoir, Virginia.  
Courtesy Library of Congress.

# November 2012

*[Black soldiers in Alaska] will interbreed with the Indians and Eskimos and produce an astonishingly objectionable race... which would be a problem here from now on.*

—General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Commander Army Forces Alaska

*[do not] “go to town”... [do not] “say a word to the ladies.”*

—Paul Francis, 93rd Engineers



Courtesy Library of Congress.

Black engineers using a Caterpillar tractor to widen the nascent Alaska Highway, 1942. The road was built to supply the airfields of the “Northwest Staging Route” through which U.S. made Lend-Lease aircraft were ferried to the Soviet Union (see month of April, this calendar).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
			First Quarter Moon			
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		Election Day				
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Veterans Day						
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
			Thanksgiving Day			
25	26	27	28	29	30	

The 93rd, 95th, 97th Regiments—the “Negro Engineers”—one-third of the 10,000 soldiers charged with cutting the Alaska Highway—1,428 miles across tundra, permafrost... along glaciers, across rivers, and through mountain passes. Construction was initiated after the Pearl Harbor attack, then spurred on by the Japanese invasion of Attu and Kiska. The 97th and their white counterparts, the 18th Engineers, raced to compete different segments. When they met at Beaver Creek, Yukon Territory, 25 October, 1942, it was the 97th that was victorious. By then all “were worn down, their clothing [in tatters] their equipment unserviceable...” Both white and black had suffered extreme cold, hordes of mosquitoes, and the monotony of “miles and miles of nothing but miles and miles.” But only black soldiers were forbidden to visit nearby communities. They were isolated in the wilds, forced to stay the bitter winter in tents, and worked hard, “in two reliefs on a twenty-four hour schedule.” It was agreed, at project’s end, they would be quickly transferred below the forty-ninth parallel. But General Simon Bolivar Buckner—a Kentuckian, the sole son of a Confederate General—in desperate need of engineers, ordered the 93rd to the Aleutians. There they would build at Cold Bay, Fort Glenn, then Adak. It was dubious reward for a job well done by the 93rd.

The winter of 1942-43, temperatures dropped to -60°. Paul Francis (see quote above) left two frostbitten toes on the pioneer road. Another black soldier, ordered to stay with a broken vehicle, was found frozen the next morning. Ten black soldiers who refused an order to ride in the open back of a truck were found guilty of “common sense,” not “insubordination,” and were exonerated by an appeal’s panel. Image above: Frost rimes an Army engineer’s face and clothing. Courtesy Alaska State Library, Fred B. Dodge Photograph Collection, ASL-P42-100.

# *A Watercolor War*

*...[the Aleutians] were somber, gloomy, fogbound, depressing...the sun rarely shone...*

*—Ogden Minton Pleissner*



# December 2012

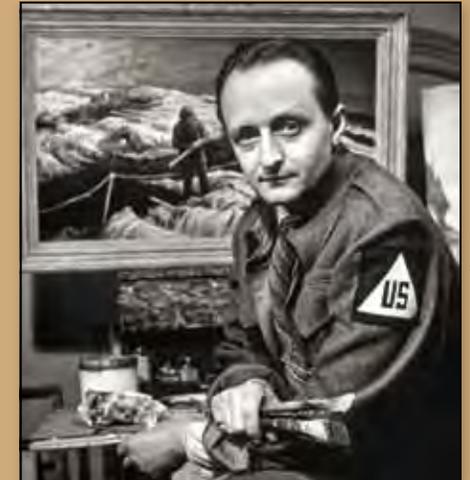
*A friend of mine asked me why I didn't paint watercolors. I said I don't know how, and he said all you have to do is keep your board a little slanted so when you wash the color onto the paper it runs downhill. That was my only lesson...*

*I would go out to do these watercolors [in the Aleutians] and it was so damn wet nothing would dry... I used to run into one of the huts where there was a fire and dry [the painting] and go out again.*

—Ogden Pleissner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Watercolor by Ogden Pleissner. Courtesy U.S. Army Art Collection.



Courtesy U.S. Army Art Collection.

Ogden Pleissner, Captain U.S. Army Air Force (USAAF). Photograph by Alfred Eisenstaedt, 1945.

Pleissner was an exacting oil painter by training, a painter of Western landscapes with their big, open vistas. But in the summer of 1943, he found himself USAAF artist in the Aleutians, working under stormy, claustrophobic skies. Pleissner was forced to adopt the alien, fluid medium of watercolors because oils would not dry in the incessant wet. The experience was a dark time for Pleissner, and it would forever change his life and his artistic vision.

“He was unhappy [in the Aleutians] not only physically and mentally, but he felt that something had gone wrong with his work. Something, indeed, had *changed*, but nothing had “gone wrong.” On the contrary, the very depression he experienced was the one thing that transformed him from a painter of great technical skill to an artist of moods. The fog, the gloom, the absence of sunlight, all had gotten into his work and had, somehow, wrought a change in feeling and outlook. The accustomed accuracy, the minute observations had, to a marked degree, given way to a sort of intuitional apprehension, more fundamental than mere surface appearances.”

—R.G. McIntyre

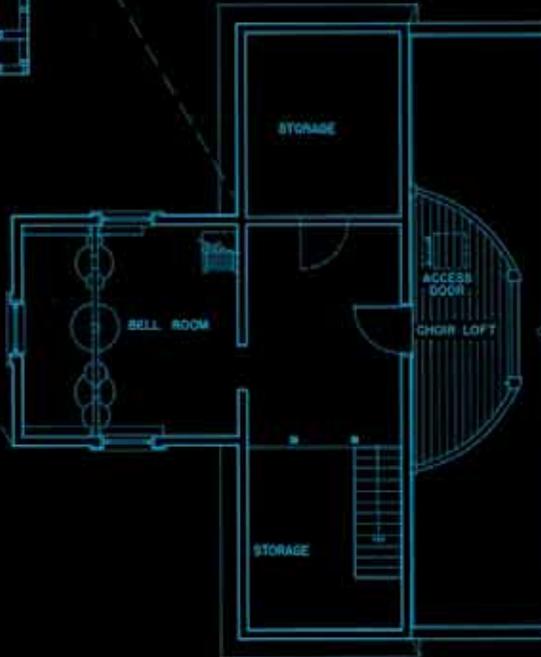
# Aleutian World War II National Historic Area



FOURTH FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR

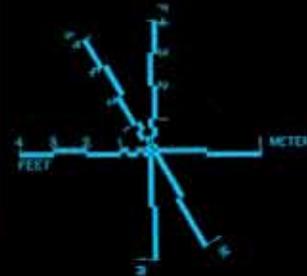
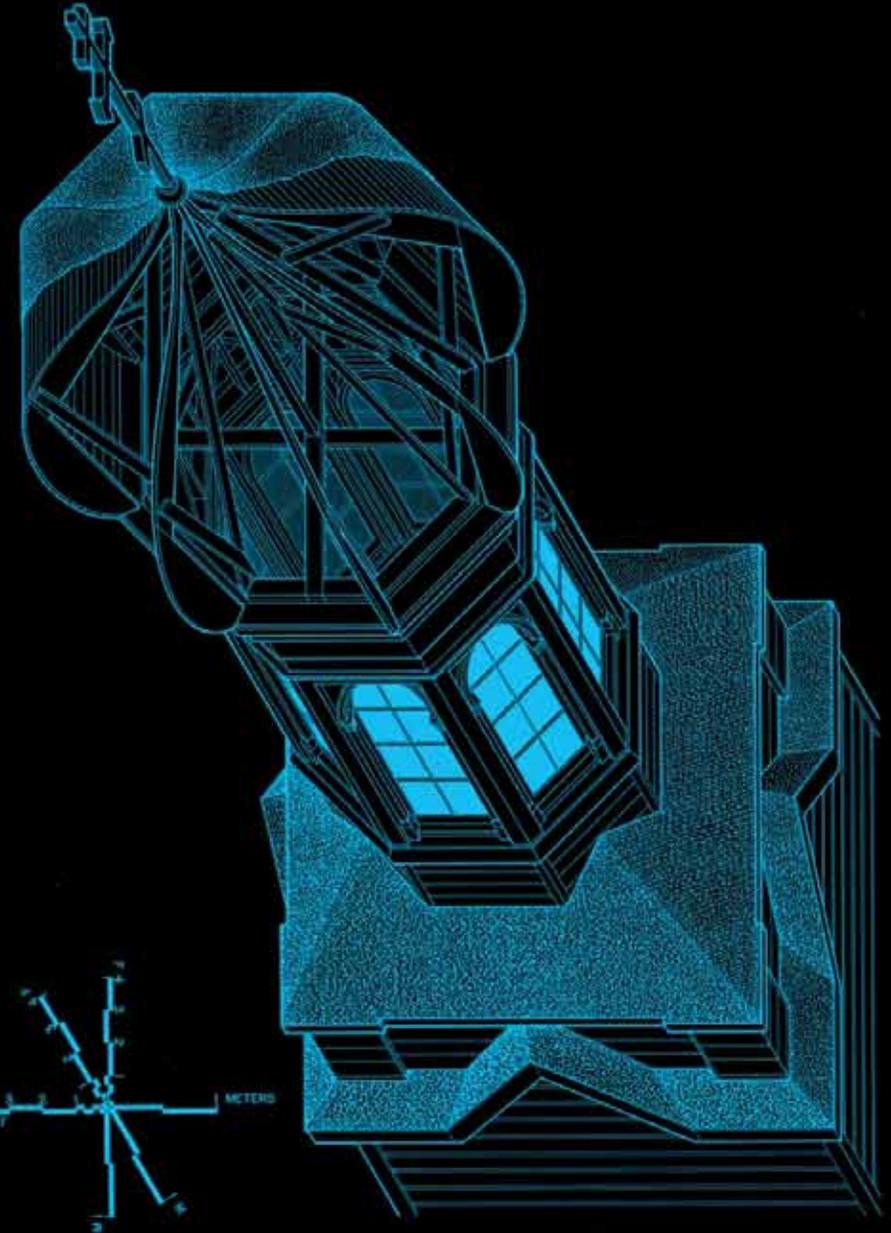


SECOND FLOOR

SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



For over a quarter century the National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office, has been actively documenting the built heritage of Alaska through the Historic America Buildings Survey (HABS). Structures recorded include the Cathedral of the Holy Ascension at Unalaska (detail of bell tower shown here) as well as WWII-era structures at the Naval Operating Base, Dutch Harbor; Fort Mears; and Fort Schwatka. Rendering by James Creech, 1991.



AXONOMETRIC OF BELL TOWER DOME

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

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