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LITTLE AMERICA III

With

Admiral Richard E. Byrd

LITTLE AMERICA III

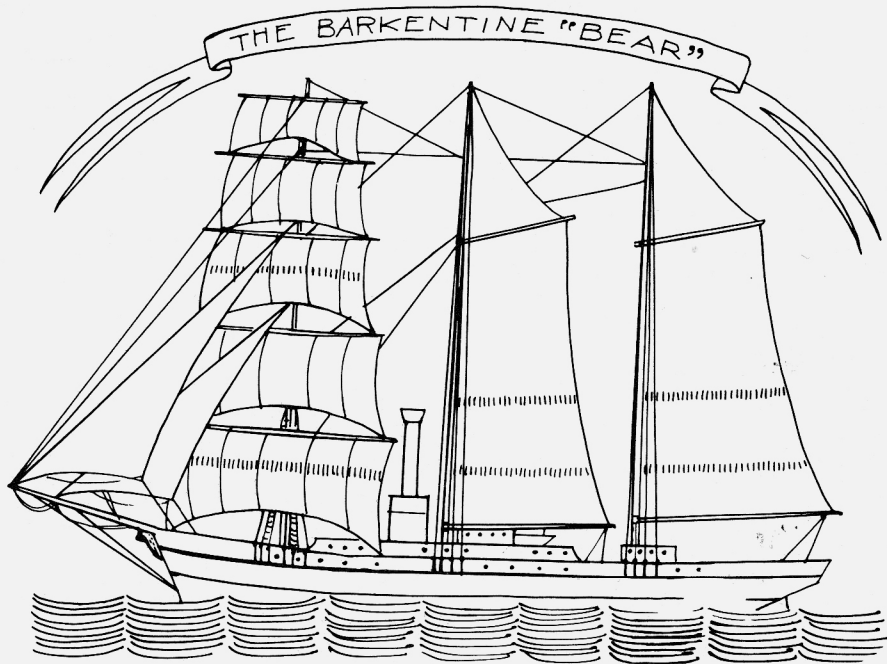
(1939-1941)

with

Admiral Richard E. Byrd

A Young Navy Recruits Personal Experiences

by Joseph Austin Daigle
and
Corinne LaRocca Kavaya



Joseph Austin Daigle & Corinne LaRocca Kavaya

Published
Anaheim, California
1988

*Best wishes
Joseph Austin Daigle*

*All events and incidences are true.
Actual names have been used as appropriate.*

JAD

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Corinne LaRocca Kavaya, Co-Author & Editor

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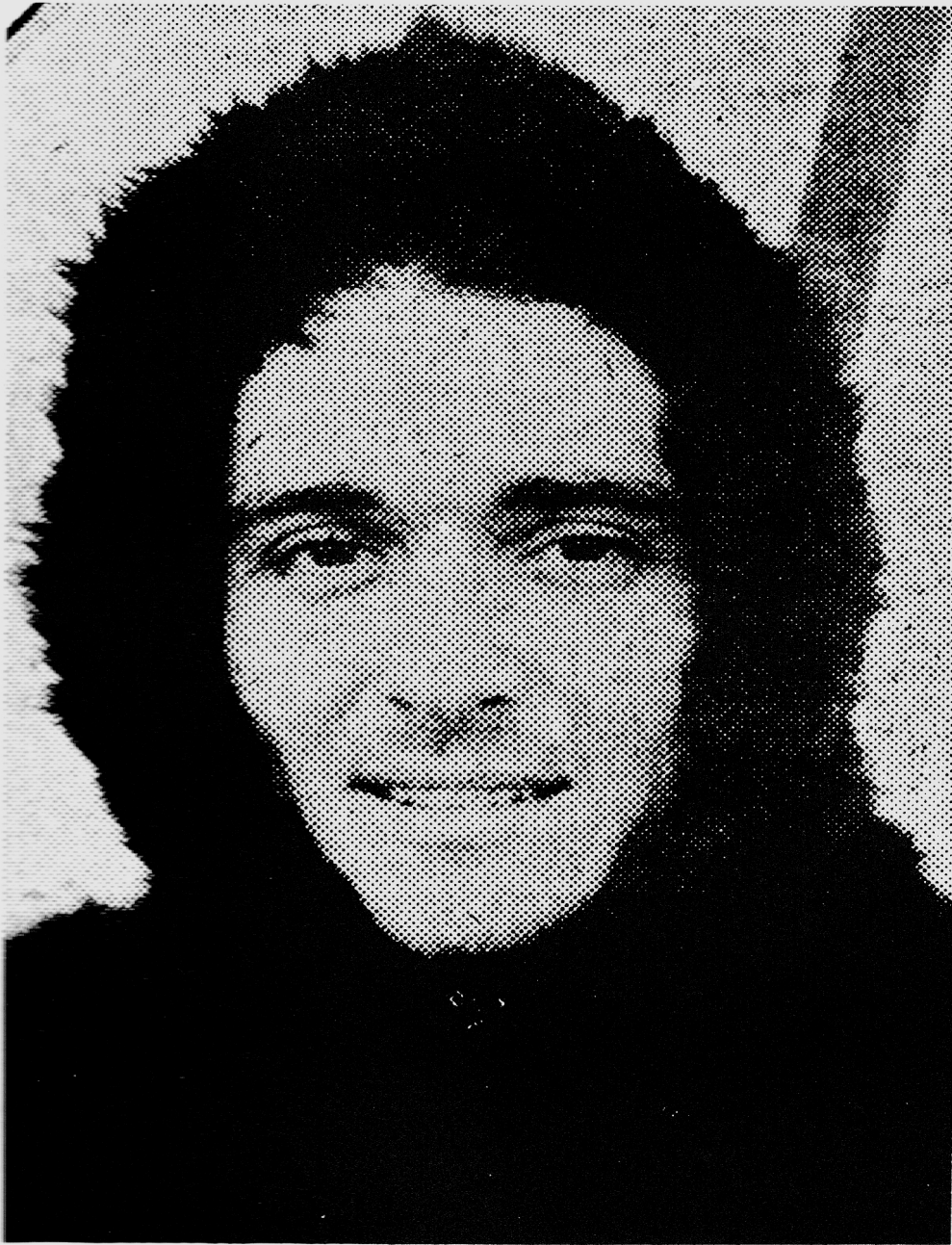
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LITTLE AMERICA III

Austin Daigle

*Best wishes,
Corinne LaRocca Kavaya*



RM 2/C Joseph Austin Daigle – 1940

AUTHOR

CONTENTS

Dedication _____	iii
Authors' Note _____	iv
List of Illustrations _____	v
Preface _____	vii
Introduction _____	ix
Chapter One	
Objectives of Expedition _____	1
Cameo On Admiral Byrd's Career _____	2
History of the Barkentine Bear _____	4
Funding _____	6
Chapter Two	
Recruitment and Crew Members _____	7
Supplies _____	13
Chapter Three	
Communications _____	15
Infamous Snow Cruiser _____	17
Chapter Four	
First Trip to Little America III – Part 1 Establish West Base _____	19
Chapter Five	
Arriving at the Bay of Whales _____	25
Chapter Six	
Establish East Base _____	43
Chapter Seven	
Return Trip Home _____	47
Chapter Eight	
Second Trip to Little America III – Part II Evacuate Base Personnel _____	53

CONTENTS

Chapter Nine

Greenland Assignment – Part III Investigate German Infiltration _____	67
Epilogue _____	72
Glossary _____	73
Tribute to JAD _____	74
About the Author _____	75

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this book to my children; Andrew, Betty Anne, Janice, Michael and Joseph Austin, Jr. (Skipper). Also, to all of my grandchildren. It is my sincere wish that they will gain some knowledge about the Antarctic region and the U.S. Antarctic Service Expedition where I spent the beginning of a Navy career helping to make recorded history.

JAD

AUTHORS' NOTE

When we both received a copy of "Americans in Antarctica, 1778-1948" by Kenneth J. Bertrand, CLK encouraged JAD to specifically read the Chapter on "The United States Antarctic Services Expedition, 1939-1941 with Admiral Richard E. Byrd. This particular chapter contains information pertinent to the expedition that JAD participated in as a team member aboard the *USS Bear* as communications specialist. He assisted Admiral Byrd in sending messages, along with other shipboard duties. With raw dictated tape material furnished to CLK, it was her duty to spend many hours sifting and weeding through transcribed narrations to integrate research material she selected to substantiate events. At the same time CLK applied for copyright and transmitted related correspondence to obtain proper approvals from various agencies. At that time, appropriate photographs were selected, manuscript typed and retyped with deletions and additions which eventually brought about an interesting storyline. Finally, after many long and arduous months, both authors agreed the material was ready for final printing.

It is our sincere wish that our readers will enjoy the fruits of our efforts.

Joseph Austin Daigle, Author
Corinne LaRocca Kavaya, Co-Author

September 1988

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Personal Property – JAD

Photo of Author
Photo of Admiral Richard E. Byrd and his Dog
The Barkentine Bear
Photos of Some of the Recruited Personnel Aboard the *USS Bear*
The Infamous Snow Cruiser
Surveying Desolate Antarctic Region
Photo of Lone Figure on the Ice
Aerial Photo of Glacial Ice
Aerial Photo of Marginal Moraine
Reconnaissance Flights
Petrels Build Their Nests on Rocks
USS Bear at Anchor on Ice Shelf at West Base
Author with Seals at the West Base
Adelie Penguin Rookery
Author at Work in Radio Room on *USS Bear*
Author Standing on Deck of Ship – *North Star* in Background
North Star Moored Offshore from Stonington Island – 1940
Author on Deck Observing Icebergs
Luau/Clambake at Punta Arenas, Chile
Indian Man Presenting Captain Cruzen with Pup
Carved Wooden Bear Head on Prow of Ship
Catch of Fish off Galapagos Islands
Samoan Navy Guards
Author on Skis – Bear in Background
Author with Penguin
Evacuation of Some East Base Personnel
Author – 1988

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Maps – American Geographic Society

- Figure 1. Map of Antarctica at the South Pole. Little America III can be seen 150° - 180° longitude and 75° latitude.
Figure 2. Tracking the *USS Bear* – 1940
Figure 3. West Base Operation – 1940
Figure 4. East Base Operation – 1940

Plates – National Archives

- IX-A Unloading of the *North Star* at Bay of Whales
IX-B Unloading of the *North Star* at the East Base
X-A Admiral Byrd Standing on Seaplane
XIII-A Staff Meeting at East Base
XV-B Conference of Leaders with Admiral Byrd and Captain Cruzen

PREFACE

This book is intended as a personal observation of the author's experiences. He was a young man just embarking on a long and active career with the U.S. Navy. They encompass duties as a Radioman 2/C aboard the *USS Bear* between 1939-1941. This accounts for the simplicity of the narration since he was gaining experience as a young recruit; therefore, his memories are those as seen by a young, inexperienced seaman full of excitement and adventure. Every event that took place lent new excitement to his life. His duties were confined aboard ship as part of the crew and not as one engaged specifically in scientific experiments that were carried out at the East and West Bases at Antarctica; but, he was part of the team aboard ship that assisted Admiral Byrd in communications and put together a daily newspaper for the staff and crew aboard ship. The activities that occurred aboard the *Bear*, such as the pilots taking the airplanes on reconnaissance flights that were launched from the ship, the loading and unloading of the ship, and the accompanying *North Star* at the two bases took the effort of everyone aboard both ships as well as those who were to man the bases. Therefore, his services were needed ashore as well as aboard ship.

There are many journals, narratives, scientific experiments and statistics put in writing by various individuals on this expedition for scientific purposes and documentations. This is not the case in this narration. The author simply intends to give his interpretation of his own experiences; some humorous about the crew aboard ship as shipboard life; some description of ports visited enroute; and mostly an account of his life as a young Navy man and a member of this expedition.

In order to enhance the storyline, facts were gathered by the co-author, Corinne LaRocca Kavaya from other sources. It is not our intent to misguide or issue false information as to incidences, dates or places. Some photographs and information used came from newspaper accounts about the expedition, printed in the Corpus Christi and Beaumont Journals during that period. Other sources were *Americans in Antarctica, 1775-1948*, by Kenneth J. Bertrand; an article written by Richard B. Black, USNR leader of the East Base and published in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 89, No. 1, April 1945, titled *Geographical Operations from East Base, United States Antarctic Service Expedition 1939-1941*, pages 4 through 12.

The authors wish to express their gratitude to Dr. Douglas McManis, American Geographic Society, New York City, for permission to use excerpts and maps (Figures 1 through 4 in this publication) taken from Chapter 21 of *Americans in Antarctica, 1775-1948*, special publication No. 39 published by the society. Scientific passages lent credence to actual events as remembered by the author. Also, the National Archives and Record Administration, Washington, D.C. especially Fred Parnell, Stills Photo Branch, for assisting in providing plates IX-A #126-USAS-206; IX-B #26-USAS-1068; X-A #126-USAS-3033; XV-B #306-NT-549D-1 and XIII-A #126-USAS-733.

A very special thanks to Gil Kinoshita, Pace Publishing Company for taking on this task. Our appreciation to Erik Seineke, Liz Markos, Pat Luft and all the crew at Pace who took such an interest in the project. They accepted a rough typed manuscript and put it into printed book form that brought about the reality of a dream.

A special thanks to Rick Olds, artist, who took an idea and reproduced the barkentine *Bear* in scrimshaw form for the cover of this book.

Gratitude is expressed to the author's aunt, Lorecia Daigle East, for her encouraging him to put his experiences in writing. Her advice given to us and her approach to life has been an inspiration. Mrs. East is the authoress of *The History and Progress of Jefferson County, The Boomers, and My Acadians*.

Last, but not least, love and gratitude to the author's daughters, Betty Anne Daigle Stroud and Janice Daigle Walz for the support given to him. Mostly, for believing in him and lending him encouragement in this and other endeavors. The co-author wishes to express her thanks to her children, Christie Ann Hagey, Corliss Marie Watkins, and Chris Kavaya, Jr. for believing in "mom" to pull a difficult project together after months of research and writing.

Joseph Austin Daigle
Corinne LaRocca Kavaya

Beaumont, Texas and Whittier, California
September 1988

INTRODUCTION

The pages to follow will be filled with experiences while on the Little America III expedition (1939-1941) to Antarctica under the direction of Admiral Richard E. Byrd.

The first few chapters present the objectives of the expedition, a cameo on Admiral Byrd, some history of the barkentine *Bear*, funding for the project, supplies needed for the journey. Also information about the infamous Snow Cruiser. The later chapters deal directly/indirectly to activities at the South Pole. Recruitment of crew is also described as they were fellow-members of this team. The author's prime interest on this expedition was communications as he was trained in that field. He participated as radioman aboard the *USS Bear*.

This narration begins from the period of enlistment through termination of the U.S. Antarctic Services Expedition and a Greenland assignment. He left the *Bear* after returning to the States, entered RADAR school and later was assigned to the fleet in Naval aviation.

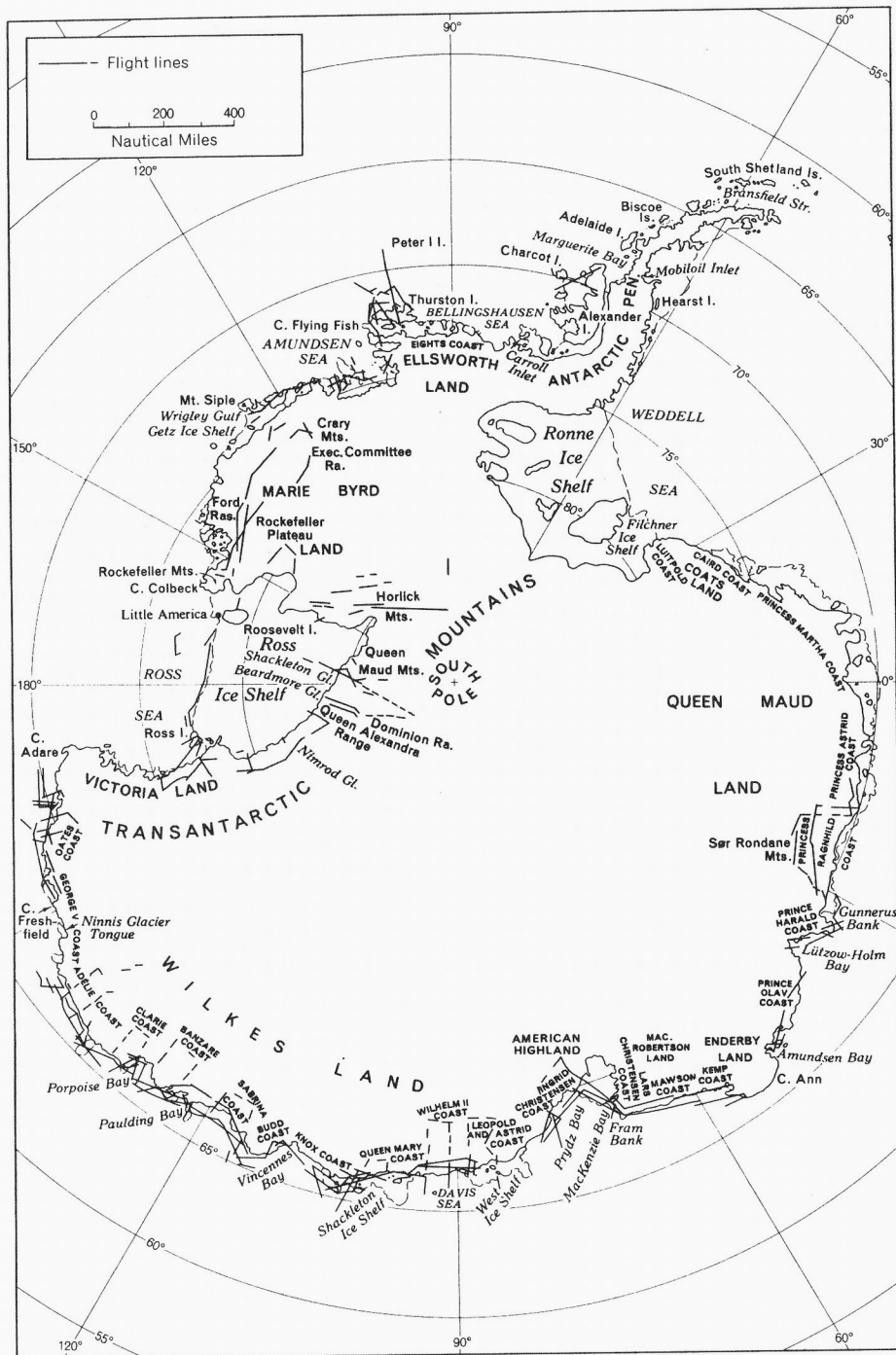


Figure 1. Map of Antarctica at the South Pole. Little America III can be seen 150° - 180° longitude and 75° latitude.

Chapter One Objectives of Expedition

The objectives of the United States Antarctic Service Expedition were received by Admiral Byrd at Balboa, Canal Zone as he boarded the *North Star* on November 30, 1939. The President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, directed that two bases be established. One to be designated East Base, to be located in the vicinity of Charcot Island or Alexander I Land, or on Marguerite Bay if no accessible site could be found on either of the specified islands. The second base, designated West Base was to be located in the vicinity of King Edward VII Land, but if this proved impossible, a site on the Bay of Whales at or near Little America was to be investigated.

The scientific program to be carried out at the two bases included observation of the aurora australis, cosmic rays and meteors. It also included investigations in geology, glaciology, geophysics, terrestrial magnetism, botany, zoology, oceanography, and meteorology. The medical officers were to carry out physiological observations on the base personnel.

The President requested that the United States Antarctic Service cooperate with the Argentine meteorological station on Laurie Island in the South Orkneys and with the Chilean Meteorological Service in the exchange of data.