

We have had rough following seas for days.

Much difficulty breaking in helmsmen from among the volunteers.

Wednesday, April 14, 1926

Sat up until late last night making list of things to be taken on sledge and in plane. It is quite a problem to know just what to put on the sledge in case we have a forced landing and crack up. What one carries on the sledges may make the difference [between] success and failure, life and death.

Thursday, April 15, 1926

We are still so low by the stern that we have decided to move the coal from no. 3 hold, one of the after holds, to the starboard and midship bunker. We filled this hold with 900 tons of coal in order to have enough of coal to get to Spitzbergen and back to New York without coal-ing. Everyone on board including the Pathe news men, except the doctor, have turned to at the important job. The spirit of the men is great.

The engineer's force is making all the speed possible but we cannot seem to make more than 8 and one half knots. Hanson the stowaway is working day and night on the radio. He gets only three hours sleep on an average, a night. He has a terrific proposition [challenge] with the

high frequency radio. This field is so new he is meeting with many unsuspected difficulties. Whatever results he gets I am extremely grateful to him.

Friday, April 16, 1926

In spite of the almost superhuman effort of Hanson, [L. K.] Grenlie and [G. H.] James the noises about the ship prevent proper reception. I don't see how Hanson stands the loss of sleep as he does.

Spent last night weighing equipment to be taken on planes and also in deciding what is to be taken. The weight has to be kept down to a minimum and yet there are so many things we should have to add to our safety. We find that we should carry 1400 lbs of equipment, food, etc. That counts Bennett and myself. We think this may leave us with 1800 miles cruising radius but as to that we can't tell until we reach Spitzbergen and actually try out the plane.

Got about 20 tons out of the after hold today. That helps the trim of the ship a little. Half way to Trondheim [Norway] our destination in Norway. We should reach there the 25th.

Saturday, April 17, 1926

Got about 25 tons out of the after hold today. I shoveled coal in the morning and spent the afternoon working out

instructions for the main base to observe after we leave on our flight. We are flying in dangerous country. The 300 miles to Greenland is the most hazardous region in the world to fly over. If we should have a forced landing there we would be swept in to the Atlantic before we could cover 50 miles and the ice would melt under us.

Read [Robert Falcon] Scott's diary of his trip to the South Pole where he writes just before he died when his fingers would hold the pencil no longer. It is a wonderful dramatic though modest and simple narrative of unequaled heroism.

Though my state room is on the upper deck it is so rough tonight. The spray is bombarding my cabin.

Sunday, April 18, 1926

I am much too occupied with doings and plannings to give the proper attention to this diary. Consequently it is a very poor affair indeed. The most uninteresting one ever written. I guess that's saying a lot too.

Hanson has rigged up a sub radio station on the poop deck to get away from the interference he encounters at the main radio room amidships. It was frightfully rough and windy last night but not a word of complaint from Hanson and too he got good results. Good for Hanson.

All hands took a rest today. They certainly needed it

after very very hard work and long hours. It has been fairly calm today. There was a great deal of fun on deck—boxing etc. and the dog [Byrd's terrier, Igloo] and dummy goat afforded great amusement to everyone. The crew serenaded me outside my cabin tonight. I didn't know just what to do with a serenade but enjoyed it just the same.

Monday, April 19, 1926

Funny incidents: Touchette collecting mail for mail buoy. [Roy] Bryant getting pyrene when told to get fire hose for muddy chain when we were moving 900 tons of coal to move from 3rd hold to bunker singing "Sweet little coal bunker don't you cry. You will be empty bye and bye. When our commander is crossing the pole, we will be in the bunker shoveling coal."

Touchette trying to find the fishing box.

Bryant holding a line and when asked to let go the line didn't know what he had in his hands.

Tuesday, April 20, 1926

Bad blow continues to hold us back.

Wednesday, April 21, 1926

I have radioed ahead to Bird the newspaper representative to meet us at Saetimo Light on the coast 80 miles

from Trondheim in order to save time. He is bringing certain supplies we lack.

Thursday, April 22, 1926

Due to head winds yesterday and last night made only 6 knots. Too bad. We must get to Spitzbergen as soon as possible.

Friday, April 23, 1926

Looks as if this blow will never stop. We won't reach Saetimo Light until tomorrow night probably. I spend most of my time working on problems of the flight.

Saturday, April 24, 1925

N.Y. Times correspondent William Bird met us off Saetimo Light in a tug about midnight tonight. He brought with him about \$1,000 worth of supplies we had radioed ahead for. The ice pilot and Pathe news representative Wyand from London also came with Bird. Flares were lighted and moving pictures were taken of the three of them coming aboard.

Good old Hanson has left us. Went to Trondheim on the tug that brought Bird. I was delighted when the crew gave Hanson three cheers as he went over the side.

Sunday, April 25, 1926

Being Sunday I took the morning off.

Preparing for the polar flight is a matter of great detail and takes much time and thought. Noville has been a trump. He has relieved me almost entirely of the details of administering the ship! We have 55 men aboard now and it is no easy matter to keep everything running efficiently and smoothly. [Roald] Amundsen seems to us hurrying as much as possible. I am afraid [George Hubert] Wilkins and I have hurried him unduly.

We should reach Kings Bay early Friday morning.

Monday, April 26, 1926

The crew published a Sunday paper yesterday that was splendid. The jokes were great.

Tuesday, April 27, 1926

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Wednesday, April 28, 1926

Sent radio today offering help of our crew if he [Amundsen] should need it. Also asked him to arrange for us to go alongside dock.²⁴ Should get in tomorrow about 3 PM.

24. Byrd to Amundsen, April 28, 1926, BP, folder 4319: "Please arrange for our ship *Chantier* to go alongside dock at Kingsbay immediately upon arrival tomorrow night, Thursday, about 6 PM. I wish to offer you any help we are capable of. We have fifty men aboard. Kindest and best regards to you and all members

The crew is working hard to get everything ready to put the planes ashore immediately.

Got radio message that Wilkins was 13 days overdue. Hope he is o.k.

Thursday, April 29, 1926

Greatly disappointed today to hear from Amundsen by radio that we could not go alongside dock as there are two Norwegian ships alongside.

Amundsen sent a lieutenant from the Norwegian gunboat that is alongside the dock out to meet us. He informed us that he didn't know when we could go alongside dock.

We arrived about 4 PM. Asked the captain of the gunboat if we could go alongside him. He reluctantly consented. I called on Amundsen immediately but he was at supper. Met him later and went to his quarters with him.

I then called on captain of the gunboat and asked him when we could get alongside dock and get our plane ashore. He replied Monday. I then requested that he let us go alongside when he is not coaling at night and put the plane ashore. He would not do that.

of your expedition from all members of our expedition and my personal greetings to you."