

AMERICAN TO GO ON GRAF ZEPPELIN

Lieut. Commander Smith, Expert on Icebergs to Be One of Crew on Pole Dash

If and when the Graf Zeppelin starts for the North Pole it will have on board a distinguished American who is an officer of the United States Coast Guard. This American is Lieutenant Commander Edwin H. Smith, who will make observations for our government. In speaking of this proposed trip by an American scientist, Oliver McKee, Jr., says in the current issue of the National Republic: "Icebergs are both a hobby and specialty with Commander Smith. For several years he studied the movements of Icebergs in the North Atlantic, on the Coast Guard cutters assigned during the danger season to warn mariners of the location of these floating menaces to navigation. This is one of the little explored corners of science. Why are icebergs more frequent some years than others? Can ice conditions be predicted in advance? These and kindred questions press for an answer, if navigation in northern waters is

to be carried out more safely, and if mariners are to have a greater knowledge of the conditions which they are to meet.

Watch with Interest

"Scientists will watch with close interest the results of the Graf expedition. It aims to widen our knowledge of the polar region, and make new discoveries, if it can. A further purpose is to demonstrate the practicability of the dirigible as an agency of arctic communication. No man has been a more successful dirigible pilot than Eckener, but his triumphs have not been won in the face of the trying conditions of the Arctic. He now hopes to demonstrate to his friends that the Graf can cross the Arctic region as easily as it can cross the Atlantic.

"The selection of Commander Smith

as the expedition's ice expert was a fitting one. While collaborating with other scientists at the Geophysical Institute at Bergen in 1926, he worked out a forecasting system. This has proved fairly accurate in four years out of five. Smith takes occasion to point out that if we can forecast accurately the number of icebergs that will move into the North Atlantic every year, it would be a great help to ocean mariners. Note the wide variation from year to year. In the North Atlantic, in 1929, for example, Coast Guardsmen counted 1,350 icebergs; this year, up to date, very few have appeared. Had the captain of the ill-fated Titanic known that 1912 was one of the heaviest iceberg years on record, he might have steered a safer course.

Studies Icebergs

"Studies which he has made at Baffin Bay indicated to Commander Smith that there is a greater movement of icebergs when an 'ice fence' is built up along the coast of Baffin Land through which the icebergs float when they break off the polar ice cap. This 'ice fence' acts somewhat like a bulwark to throw the bergs off and into the current southward. In those years when there is no ice fence along this coast, the bergs wash ashore, and comparatively few break away, and start their long and lonely march into the ocean and down toward the trans-Atlantic steamer lanes."

Some of the Jeffersonian leaders deny that John Raskob speaks for the Democratic Party. Well, he puts up the money and doesn't money talk?



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