

Col. McAlpine and Party Safe on Victoria Island Now

Wireless Monday Brings the Glad News of Safety of Airship Party, Which Included Men Well Known in North. Missing Men Found by Eskimos. Flyers Had Followed Wrong River on Their Last Hop Across Barrens. Planes Forced Down at Melbourne Island on Account of Lack of Fuel.

There was very general jubilation all through the North Land on Monday of this week when messages came through over the private wires of the A. E. Moysey Co. and the Homer L. Gibson Co. that the McAlpine party lost for

eight weeks in the Barrens of the far north had been found safe and well. There was especial interest here in the missing airmen because several of them were personally well known in Timmins and district.

The missing men in the party included:—
Col. C. D. H. McAlpine, Toronto, President of the Dominion Explorers.
Pilot C. A. Thompson, Winnipeg, of Western Canada Airways.
Pilot Capt. Stanley R. McMillan, Edmonton, of Dominion Explorers.
Major Robert F. Baker, geologist and radio-operator, St. Catharines, Ont.
A. D. Boadway, Winnipeg, pilot-geologist.
Richard Pearce, Toronto, editor of the Northern Miner.
Alex Milne, Winnipeg, mechanic.
John Goodwin, Hamilton, Ont., mechanic.

Col. McAlpine spent some time here in 1925 in connection with election work, being the campaign manager for J. R. O'Neill in the Dominion election. During the election Col. McAlpine made wide circles of friends and became very widely known.

Mr. R. Pearce, editor of The Northern Miner, lived for many years at Cobalt and regularly travelled over all the mining territory of this north and so was very widely known and enjoyed great popularity. Other members of the party were also known here, so in addition to the general interest there was personal anxiety for the missing men during the eight weeks they were not heard from. Monday when the despatches first came through to Timmins there was no further word than that Col. McAlpine and his party were safe at Cambridge Bay, an isolated trading post on Victoria Island, off the northern shore of Canada.

Tuesday a few more details were to hand. It was then learned that the story of the rescue was first given to the world by an amateur radio operator at Cambridge Bay. At Churchill, the original report had been snatched out of the air as a message from the Hudson's Bay Company steamer, Fort

James, moored at Gjoahaven, a tiny port on the shore of King William Island, off the north shore of Canada. With a crew of 18 and a powerful radio set aboard, Captain A. W. Bush had "freeze in" his craft just two months ago as a wireless station in the North. The Fort James' home port is St. John's Nfld. But the nine-word message of hopes realized and fears shattered did not originate on King William Island. It came, with the laboured awkwardness of amateur sending from young Jack McKinnon, on board the year-worn "Bay Maud," anchored in Cambridge Bay on the south shore of Victoria Island opposite Bathurst Inlet. When an experienced operator went on furlough, a high-powered set on the "Bay Maud" was shut down, but young McKinnon stayed on the job with his miniature apparatus—and to-day his efforts won their reward, when he flashed his tacit message from the cabin of the "Maud," a boat that 20 years ago Raold Amundsen had planned to float across the North Pole in the ice-drift.

The nine welcome words, clicked off by young McKinnon, were:

"McAlpine and party found. All well. Located Cambridge Bay."

It is understood that the rescued men were found by Eskimos. Fully a score of pilots during the past two months have been daring death in a search over the Barrens to locate the missing airplanes. During the last three weeks since the freeze-up, onus of the man-hunt has devolved on a quartette of roaring ski-fitted planes, sweeping along the north coast of Canada. But—while the speeding aircraft zoomed over the barrens—a party of friendly Eskimos, "mushing" their huskie teams over the ice, discovered the McAlpine men and conveyed them over the sea-ice to safety.

Despatches this week from Winnipeg indicate that tentative plans were made to send three or four planes under command of Capt. G. S. Blanchett, Dominion Government explorer, to Cambridge Bay to bring out the eight rescued flyers. First news of their machines being safe at Melbourne Island will mean probably that one or two ski-fitted craft can carry sufficient fuel over 300 miles of barrens to the halted machines. Captain Blanchett and his men are at present stationed at Burnside river, 60 miles south of Bathurst Inlet radio station on Canada's Arctic rim.

The next move will be to inform the Blanchett party—a dozen men who have been risking their lives in aerial search of the tundra lands—that their quest is at an end. This will necessitate sending either a native runner or a dog-team party from Bathurst radio station to the gasoline cache at Burnside river, where the search flyers are stationed. Since Bathurst was informed Tuesday of the rescue, it is probable that "Peace River Jim" Cornwall, veteran Arctic traveller, has already despatched a land messenger to the air camp at the south. Meanwhile further rescue activities will be in the hands of the residents of the snow-crueted North.

That the McAlpine men had flown off their course and even over-flown the north coast was evident from the report that they landed off Melbourne Island. It was probable that the pilots became bewildered after surmounting the fog-veiled heights of land on their 450-mile flight over the barrens from Baker Lake, west of Hudson Bay, to Bathurst Inlet. No doubt, instead of following the Western river which leads to Bathurst, they traced the course of the Ellice river, which flows into Queen Maud Gulf, an arm of the Arctic ocean on Canada's north shore.

Even at the mouth of the Ellice, they had passed on, probably believing they had reached the southern extremity of the inlet. Sweeping northeast, they pushed over the frigid stretches of Campbell Bay, at the mouth of the

Ellice, as they would have flown north-east from the inlet point to the Bathurst radio post. But they landed at Melbourne Island instead of on the west coast of the northern inlet.

In the meantime the McAlpine party are being royally entertained by the staffs of the Hudson Bay Company and the Canalaska Trading Company. The staffs of these companies are showing the McAlpine party the finest of hospitality.

When all are prepared for the exodus to more widespread civilization, seven planes will soar down from the North. Captain Stan McMillan and C. A. Thompson, long-lost pilots will probably fly down their own machines. Under Captain Blanchett will be a quartette of planes manned by Pilots Roy Brown, William Spence, H. Hollicke-Kenyon and Andy Cruickshanks—now stationed at Burnside River. Another of Captain Blanchett's men—Pilot J. D. Vance—will join the returning squadron at Baker Lake, at the western end of Chesterfield Inlet.

Messages by radio were sent out Monday from the far north to relatives and near friends of the McAlpine party assuring them of the safety and good health of the airmen missing so long. The messages further dispelled anxiety over the safety of the seven exploring airmen who have been lost for the past two months in a region about 1,200 miles north of Winnipeg.

Commander C. P. Edwards of the radio branch of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, stated the messages were all personal and private ones. It was learned that members of the exploration party were all well, although Col. McAlpine had lost 40 pounds in weight. Experts here stated this would indicate either a shortage of food or very strenuous exercise in seeking to get in touch with civilization.

Group Captain Lindsay Gordon of the Royal Canadian Air Force last night forwarded instructions by wireless to Burnside, the most northerly post to a search party of four planes, two of them Government machines, to proceed immediately to Cambridge Bay. These instructions, however, will not reach the search party for two days as the Government radio station is at Bathurst, 60 miles north of Burnside and the message has to be relayed by runners.

With the receipt of these orders the search planes will take off immediately for Cambridge Bay, where it is expected they will pick up Colonel McAlpine and party, and return them to Burnside. Then they will fly back over the route, part of which was followed by the McAlpine party before they were lost.

A despatch from Ottawa on Tuesday says:—

"It is not expected the two machines of the McAlpine party will be brought back till spring. They will likely be left at Melbourne Island where they are at the present time. This point is about 60 miles south of Cambridge Bay where Colonel McAlpine and his companions are now resting.

"The McAlpine machines are in good condition and were only forced down through lack of fuel. It will be necessary to send skis and an additional supply of fuel before they can be flown out probably next March.

"As Colonel McAlpine and his companions were delayed in reaching Cambridge Bay before the freeze-up occurred similar conditions may delay their return as it will be difficult for the search planes, which are equipped with skis, to return far south until the freeze-up works its way south.

"Officials here are reluctant to make any prediction as to how long it will take the search party and the McAlpine group to return to civilization. "It will all depend on weather conditions," said the one official of the Interior Department. "It may not take any longer than a month," he added."

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