



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY -- NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER
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Shelling of the Alaskan Native American Village of Angoon, October 1882

In response to a group of Native Americans taking hostages and property from a trading company near Angoon, Alaska, in October 1882, the US Navy sent an expedition to provide assistance. After freeing the hostages, Commander E.C. Merriman, USN, shelled and burned the village of Angoon on the southwestern side of Admiralty Island at Kootznahoo Inlet. In a 14 September 1882 letter to Charlie Jim Sr., Vice Chairman, Kootznoowoo Heritage Foundation, John S. Herrington (Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Manpower and Reserve Affairs) officially acknowledged the Navy's involvement in the affair saying, "The destruction of Angoon should never have happened, and it was an unfortunate event in our history."

[Alleged Shelling of Alaskan Villages, 5 December 1882](#)

[Shelling of an Indian Village in Alaska, 28 December 1882](#)

[Affairs in Alaska, 8 January 1883](#)

[Affairs in Alaska, 29 January 1883](#)

47th			
CONGRESS, } HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES {			Ex. Doc.
2d Session.			No. 9.

ALLEGED SHELLING OF ALASKAN VILLAGES.

LETTER
FROM
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,
IN RESPONSE TO
*A resolution of the House of Representatives relative to the alleged shelling of two
villages in Alaska by the revenue cutter Corwin.*

DECEMBER 6, 1882.--Referred to the Committee on the Territories and ordered to be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
December 5, 1882.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of House resolution dated the 4th instant, stating that it is publicly reported that the revenue cutter *Corwin* has recently shelled two villages in Alaska, and requesting the Secretary of the Treasury to report to the House whether the statement be true, and if true, the circumstances which called for this procedure and the orders under which the commander of the *Corwin* acted, and all correspondence in relation thereto.

In reply, I transmit herewith a copy of the official report of Lieutenant Healy, commander of the *Corwin*, received at the department three or four days ago, in which a statement is given of the firing done by the *Corwin*, and the circumstances which led to it. From this it appears that the action of the cutter was taken in concert with the commander of the United States ship of war *Adams*, to whom application had been made by white citizens for protection against Indians who were in a state of tumult.

This department was in possession of only meager telegraphic information concerning the affair until the receipt, very recently, of Lieutenant Healy's report. No further facts than those contained in the inclosed extract are at present known to the department.

Lieutenant Healy was acting under no other orders than the general orders of the department, copies of which are inclosed herewith.

A more particular inquiry into the affair will be made, and the result communicated to Congress.

Very respectfully,

CHAS. J. FOLGER,
Secretary.

Hon. J. W. KEIFER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C., April 13, 1882.

SIR: Referring to department letter of yesterday, directing you to proceed with the revenue steamer *Corwin*, under your command, to Alaska, on special duty in connection with the seal fisheries, you are hereby clothed with full power to enforce the law

contained in the provisions of section 1956 of the United States Revised Statutes, and directed to seize all vessels, and arrest and deliver to the proper authorities any or all persons whom you may detect violating the law referred to, after due notice shall have been given.

You will also seize any liquors or arms attempted to be introduced into the country without proper permit, under the provisions of section 1955 of the Revised Statutes and the proclamation of the President dated February 4, 1870.

A copy of said proclamation is inclosed.

Very respectfully.

CHAS. J. FOLGER,
Secretary.

Lieut. M. A. HEALY, *Commanding Revenue Steamer Corwin, San Francisco, Cal.*

[Extract.]

UNITED STATES REVENUE MARINE,
UNITED STATES REVENUE STEAMER CORWIN,
San Francisco, Cal, November 20, 1882.

SIR: * * * We left Juneau City on the 20th, and touching again at Killisnoo, arrived at Sitka on the 21st.

During the afternoon of the 23d, the superintendent of the fishing station at Killisnoo reached Sitka with his family, with the following report, and requesting protection from the United States steamer *Adams*. On the 22d of October, while the company's whaling-boat was fishing in Hootsnoo Lagoon, one of the bombs used in whaling accidentally exploded, killing one of the native crew, who happened to hold the rank of medicine man or shaman among the tribe. For this man the natives demanded two hundred blankets, at the same time seizing the whaling-boats with their equipments, and holding two of the white men prisoners until the amount should be paid. In case the demand was not met by the company, the natives threatened to burn the company's store and buildings, destroy the boats, and put to death the white prisoners.

Acting upon this information, Capt. E. C. Merriman, of the *Adams*, placed on board the company's steamer *Favorite* some marines, and, as the *Adams* was thought too large for the work, the *Corwin* was tendered, and Captain Merriman, together with the collector of customs, proceeded upon the *Corwin* to the scene of the disturbance.

Remaining at Lindenberg Harbor that night, we reached Killisnoo early on the morning of the 25th. The following morning we proceeded to Hootsnoo Lagoon, and came to anchor off the Indian village located there.

Immediately we anchored the white men were released, some of the ringleading Indians captured, and the release of the property effected. In addition to this, as a punishment and as a guarantee for future good behavior, Captain Merriman demanded twice the number of blankets demanded by the Indians, and threatened, in case of refusal, to destroy their canoes and villages. Refusing to pay the amount and remaining defiant, their canoes, to the number of forty, were taken and destroyed, after having selected those which belonged to the Indians who had remained friendly to the white men. Remaining unsubdued, their summer camp at this place was burned. Weighing anchor we steamed out of the lagoon, and at two o'clock hove to off the village of Hootsnoo and proceeded to shell the town. After shelling the village the marines were landed under cover of the guns, and they, setting fire to the houses, destroyed the entire village, with the exception of the friendly Indians.

After the boats returned we steamed down to Killisnoo, and, remaining there during the night, reached Sitka the following afternoon, with twenty-two seamen of the *Adams*, whom we had received on board for transportation. * * *

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

M. A. HEALY,
First Lieutenant, U.S.R.M., Commanding.

Hon. CHARLES J. FOLGER,
Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D.C.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D.C., April 12, 1882.

SIR: The department having determined to dispatch the revenue steamer *Corwin*, under your command, to cruise in the waters of Alaska for the enforcement of the provisions of law and protection of the interests of the government on the seal islands and the sea-otter hunting-grounds, and of Alaska generally, you are directed to take on board that vessel, without delay, sufficient supplies of provisions for a six months' cruise, and such quantities of fuel and water as can be conveniently stored on board, and leave San Francisco with your command not later than the 25th instant for the water named, and make the best of your way to the places hereinafter designated.

You will touch at Nanaimo, British Columbia, and take on board all the coal that the *Corwin* can carry consistently with safety, bills for which, properly certified, you will

transmit to the department. You will also touch at Fort Wrangel and Sitka, and leave at those places the copies of printed orders relating to the protection of the government interests in those waters, which will be furnished you.

From the last-named port you will proceed direct to Kodiak, and thence to Ounalaska, touching at Ounga and Belkosoki en route, and posting at each of these places copies of the order mentioned above. At Sitka you will take on such quantities of coal as you may require from the coal in store at that place belonging to the Navy Department, authority having been obtained from the Secretary of the Navy to use the same for revenue vessels. you will keep an accurate account of the amount of said coal received on board, and upon your return to San Francisco will certify the same to the department.

Having supplied the *Corwin* with coal, you will cruise actively with said vessel amongst the Aleutian Islands and in Norton and Kotzehue Sounds, going as far as point Barrow, if found practicable, until the 20th of October next; and will strictly enforce the instructions contained in the printed orders and the letter of authority referred to above. To this end you will visit Saint Paul and Saint George at least twice during the season, and cover in your cruising the sea-otter hunting-grounds from Kodiak to Ounalaska, leaving an officer and two seamen on Otter Island during the sealing season to prevent the killing of seals on that island; and you will, in the course of the season, make one cruise to the westward, if practicable, as far as Atton, and touch at the principal otter-hunting stations between that island and Ounalaska. You are authorized to ship two additional seamen for duty on the *Corwin* during the cruise, and to employ a surgeon and pilot for the vessel, at a compensation not to exceed \$150 per month for the first-named, and \$125 per month for the latter, without rations. You will submit to the department the names of the persons so employed.

In carrying out the instructions sent you herewith, you will cruise the *Corwin* under canvas to assist steam whenever practicable, and with a free or fair wind of any force will uncouple the propeller and depend altogether upon sails.

Very respectfully,

CHARLES J. FOLGER
Secretary.

Lieut. M. A. HEALY.

Commanding Revenue Steamer Corwin, San Francisco, Cal.

47th
CONGRESS, }
2d Session.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

{ **Ex. Doc. 9,**
Part. 2.

SHELLING OF AN INDIAN VILLAGE IN ALASKA.

**LETTER
FROM
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,
IN RELATION TO *The shelling of an Indian village in Alaska by the revenue steamer
Corwin***

DECEMBER 21, 1882.--Referred to the Committee on the Territories and ordered to be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *December 20, 1882.*

SIR: Respectfully referring to the letter of this department of the 5th instant, in answer to House resolution of the 4th instant, calling for information regarding the reported shelling of an Indian village in Alaska by the revenue steamer *Corwin*, I have the honor to transmit herewith a report of Mr. W. E. Morris, collector of customs at Sitka, Alaska, dated the 9th of November last, in which he gives more circumstantial information than that hitherto received by the department regarding this affair.

Very respectfully,

CHAS. J. FOLGER,
Secretary.

Hon. J. W. KEIFER *Speaker, House of Representatives.*

CUSTOM-HOUSE, SITKA, ALASKA,
COLLECTOR'S OFFICE, *November 9, 1882.*

SIR: On the 28th of last month I had the honor to transmit to the department the following telegram:

"SITKA, *Oct. 28, 1882.*

"SECRETARY TREASURY.
Washington, D.C.:

"26th inst. Hoochenoo Indians becoming troublesome, capturing property from whites, Commander Merriman repaired thither in *Corwin*. Became necessary to shell and destroy village, canoes, and make prisoners. Severe lesson taught. Particulars by mail."

It is presumed that all essential information has already been rendered the department by the report of the commander of the *Corwin* himself, and that as the expedition was a joint one upon behalf of the Navy and Treasury Departments, that the report of the naval commander will also reach the head of this department, hence it will be unnecessary for me to enter into general details, but merely to give a synopsis of what I saw myself as an eye witness, and my opinion of the necessity which existed for adopting such stringent measures.

It has been a custom for many years in this territory, when an Indian has been killed or injured by another, or by a white man, for his surviving relatives to demand at the hands of the parties who injured him a certain payment or tribute, consisting generally of blankets. When this levy is made it means potlatch (pay) or die. It has been attempted by the Navy to break up this practice, but without effect.

Shortly previous to the case at bar, whilst an Indian was cutting down a tree for the Northwest Trading Company at Killisnoo, he was warned of the danger, and continued in a position of peril. The tree fell and killed him. Immediately a certain number of blankets were levied as a fine upon the company by his relatives, and payment demanded. The company refused, of course. Matters remained *in statu quo* until the *Adams*, Commander Merriman, arrived in these waters. He touched at Killisnoo on his way to this port, and complaint was made to him of the exaction by the superintendent of the company. He informed the Indians that in future no such payments should either be demanded or enforced as far as white men were concerned; that if they persisted in such course he would punish them severely, and that in this instance the company would and should not pay. They submitted with bad grace.

On the night of October 22, whilst this company were whaling in the Kottzenoo Lagoon, a bomb, shot from the whale-boat at a whale, accidentally exploded and killed an Indian *shaman*, who composed one of the crew; whereupon the latter immediately arose, and aided by about one hundred Indians, overpowered the two white men in the boat and took them prisoners; captured the boat, nets, whaling gear, and steam launch of the company, valued at several thousand dollars, and demanded payment of two hundred blankets for the dead man. The white men were kept close prisoners. A plan was formed to murder the engineer of the launch, who fortunately did not take the trail expected.

Capt. J. M. Vanderbilt, the superintendent, at once got up steam on the company's tug-boat *Favorite*, and started with his family post haste to Sitka for aid from the naval commander. The Indians endeavored to cut off the *Favorite*, but failed.

As soon as Vanderbilt reported the facts to Commander Merriman, the latter put a howitzer and Gatling gun on the *Favorite*, sought the co-operation of the revenue-marine steamer *Corwin*, then in port, and as early as practicable, with a force of about one hundred marines and sailors, started himself for the scene of action, picking up his large steam launch on the way. I accompanied the expedition.

Upon arriving at the lagoon, matters were found exactly as represented by Vanderbilt; the men still prisoners; the Indians increasing in force and very much excited. Commander Merriman lost no time in arresting the ringleaders, and got the two principal chiefs of the tribe on board the *Corwin*, and informed them that, instead of the Northwest Trading Company paying anything to them, he should inflict upon them a fine of four hundred blankets, payable the next morning, under the penalty of having their canoes destroyed and principal village shelled and burnt.

So temporizing has been the policy pursued within the past two years by the Navy towards the Siwashes that they evidently thought this a game of bluff. They were surly and impertinent, and affected not to think Commander Merriman would put his threat into execution. they, however, took the precaution to make use of the intervening night in taking to a place of security their large canoes and valuables.

On the following day, the Indians having failed to come to time, Commander Merriman made good his threat, destroyed their canoes, shelled and burnt their village.

My object in addressing the department upon this subject is for the purpose of placing my opinion on record as to the propriety of this measure and the absolute necessity which existed for such harsh measures being adopted.

The Hoochenoos are a rich and warlike tribe, very insolent and saucy towards the whites. Not long since they proceeded to Wrangell and attacked the Church Indians there, killing several, amongst them Toyatt, a missionary Indian, a very useful and intelligent man.

As long as the native tribes throughout the archipelago do not feel the force of the government and are not punished for flagrant outrages, so much the more dangerous do they become, and are to be feared by isolated prospecting parties of miners. Once let it be understood by the Siwashes that the life of a white man is sacred, and that they will be severely handled if they harm him, there will be no danger or difficulty in small parties traversing the country in search of mineral and other wealth.

The punishment has been most severe, but eminently salutary, and in my judgment the very thing that was needed, and unhesitatingly, in my opinion, is the prompt and energetic action of Commander Merriman to be applauded, and this occasion is sought to express great confidence in the result of his action and general management of the Indians since he has been on this station.

Owing to the heavy draught of water needed for the *Adams*, the presence and co-operation of the *Corwin* were most opportune.

The conduct of Lieutenant Healy in command of said vessel, is especially to be commended, as that of an officer and a gentleman and a credit to the service. His officers and men conducted themselves well throughout the whole affair, and deserve therefor special mention.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant.

WM. GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.
Collector

Hon. CHAS. J. FOLGER,
Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D.C.

47th CONGRESS } <i>2d Session.</i>	HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	{ Ex. Doc. 9, Part 3.
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AFFAIRS IN ALASKA.

**LETTER
FROM
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,
TRANSMITTING
*A communication relative to the condition of affairs in Alaska.***

JANUARY 10, 1883.--Referred to the Committee on the Territories and ordered to printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *January 8, 1883.*

SIR: Referring to the department's letters to you of the 5th and 20th ultimo, forwarding reports of the commanding officer of the United States revenue cutter *Corwin*, in relation to affairs in Alaska, I now have the honor to inclose herewith, at the suggestion of the Secretary of the Navy, as a proper accompaniment of the documents referred to, a copy of a dispatch (No. 4), dated the 28th of October last, from Commander E. C. Merriman, commanding the U.S.S. *Adams*, relating to the condition of affairs in Alaska and the suppression of the importation of liquor, &c., into that Territory.

Very respectfully,

CHARLES J. FOLGER,
Secretary.

Hon. J. W. KEIFER,
Speaker House of Representatives.

U.S.S. *Adams*, 3D RATE,
Sitka, Alaska, October 28, 1882.

SIR: I have the honor to report that on Monday, the 23d instant, Mr. J. M. Vanderbilt, the agent of the Northwest Trading Company at Kilisloo, came over here on his steamer, the *Favorite*, and reported the following:

The day previous, while his fishermen were in the act of discharging a bomb at a whale, the bomb accidentally exploded, killing a medicine-man Indian instantly. The Indians at once seized the small steamer and two large fishing boats and all the seines and two white men, and declared that they would kill the white men and destroy the fishing steamer and boats unless paid two hundred blankets. They attempted to take the tug *Favorite*, but she fortunately had enough fuel on board to steam away. He also reported that unless the Indians were paid two hundred blankets they intended to fight.

I at once organized an expedition of fifty men and twenty marines, all under the charge of Lieut. C. W. Bartlett, U.S. Navy of this ship. I had previously sent the steam launch, Ensign H. Taylor in charge, with Cadet Midshipmen Croven and Kase, to survey in Neoski Strait. I directed Lieutenant Bartlett to pick up this launch and take this party with him. The *Favorite* took Lieutenant Bartlett's party on board, and they got away at 3 a.m. The revenue cutter *Corwin*, Lieut. M. A. Healy commanding, was coaling here at the time. As soon as Captain Healy heard of the trouble he at once offered the services of the *Corwin*, and placed her at my disposal. I at once accepted it, and proceeded in her at 7 a.m. on the following morning. We overtook the *Favorite* and steam launch at 11 a.m., when the *Corwin*, at Captain Healy's suggestion, took both vessels in tow. The weather proving boisterous, I did not think it advisable to cross Chatham Strait with the launch, and so anchored for the night in Lichtenberg Harbor, near the eastern entrance of Peril Straits. The next morning at daylight we got under way and went to Ketosoh Harbor to see if the Indians had molested the stores of the merchants. I found them all absent, and that none of the Indians were allowed to work, and that they still held possession of the white men, the steamer, and the boats. We immediately steamed around to the lagoon where the property and the people were detained. I held a powwow with the Indians. Lieutenant Bartlett and ensign Taylor in the mean time collecting all the canoes they could find. The Indians demanded two hundred blankets in payment for the accidental death of the medicine-man. For instance, if our surgeon attended a sick man, and he died, they would demand pay. If a boat capsized and drowned an Indian, they make the man who originally directed the boat to be built pay for the man if they can get him, otherwise the present owner has to suffer. I had explained to them on my previous visit the fallacy of any claim when the death was purely accidental. I ascertained that they had attempted to destroy the boats, and that they were only waiting for another white man to put two to death. One of the men captured had but one eye, and they wanted a whole one, or one with two eyes. I told them I demanded the fine of four hundred blankets, or double what they tried to get, and gave them twenty-four hours to bring them in. They said they would do so, but went to the village of Augoon, drew their canoes up in the woods, took their

winter food and blankets and their women and children with them, and sent me word that they would not furnish the blankets; that if we attempted to land they would fire on us, and would defend the town if we attempted to burn it. I then sent the chiefs to tell them if they did not furnish the blankets I would destroy their canoes and shell the town. When the time was up, after ascertaining without their knowledge that their women and children were in the woods, I proceeded to the village, after capturing two of the leaders. As soon as the village was in range, the *Corwin* opened fire, and the *Favorite* following, opened fire with the howitzer, she having previously destroyed the canoes and the principal houses in the lagoon. I purposely spared some houses, although apparently accidentally, sufficient to house the Indians for the winter. After shelling the town for a time, Lieutenant Bartlett landed his force in the *Corwin's* boats and our whale boats, and fired the village, sparing five additional houses. Captain Healy and his boats, and Lieutenants Doly, Lentz, and Reynolds, and some men to land our men, and his officers and men, Lieutenant Bartlett says, were of great assistance to him. After burning the town I directed the Indians to come to the trading post, where I would talk to them. A crowd came about 8 p.m., with the chief Kenalkos and Loginon Jake. I told them in substance what I had said before, that while the government felt friendly to them and wanted them to till the soil and fish and hunt, and would protect them in pursuing their peaceful avocations, it would put down with a rigorous hand any attempt to seize and injure white men or their property, or to distill rum. They replied that they would never attempt anything of the kind again; that the old men and chiefs had tried to restrain the young men, but were unable to do so; that as a lesson to the young men and squaws they were glad I had burned the village. To those who had rendered service to the whites by protecting them I gave small presents. To one old medicine-man and a herculean squaw, who had quietly brought their guns to the white men's cabins and declared their intention of defending them and the property of the trading company, I gave letters, with large seals attached, recounting their services. I am told they think more of these than anything else, as it give them much importance in the tribes. Lieutenant Bartlett returns to Kilisloo to-morrow with a detachment of twenty-five men, and will remain during the fishing season, or about three weeks. I have directed Lieutenant Bartlett to proceed to the village of Neltuskin, about 14 miles below Kilisloo, and raid the village for distilleries, as they are making large quantities of koo-che-roo there. I have further directed him to call the headmen and as many of the tribe as possible together, and tell them that they must look upon the man-of-war as their best friend if they behave themselves, and to assure them of our protection and care; but that they must not make rum or interfere with the white men fishing, as they have threatened to cut the seines if any fishing is done there except by themselves; but I do not apprehend any difficulty whatever.

I accepted Captain Healy's offer of the *Corwin* for two reasons; one, that it was reported that the *Adams* could not enter the lagoon, and the other that the show of force would have a good effect. He was of the greatest service in many ways. It would be a great gratification to me and a deserved compliment to a worthy and faithful officer if the Navy Department would take notice of his services through the Treasury Department. I have been greatly impressed with the judgment and tact with which Lieutenant Bartlett carried out the orders I gave him. The men were packed closely on the *Favorite*, and were necessarily uncomfortable, but they showed no discontent whatever. Captain Healy

brought back about thirty on the *Corwin*. I inclose the different orders of Lieutenant Bartlett, marked A, B, and C.

I would again most urgently ask if I cannot be authorized to stop the sale of liquor, including beer, in the Territory, and if sections 2139 and 2148 of the Revised Statutes of the United States are applicable here, as being Indian country. If by President's order or otherwise the sale of liquor and beer can be stopped there will be no trouble in the country. Section 2140 of the Revised Statutes states that "if any * * * commanding officer of a military post has reason to suspect or is informed that any white person * * * has introduced any spirituous liquor or wine in the Indian country in violation of law, such * * * commanding officer may cause the places of deposit of such person to be searched * * * . It shall moreover be the duty of any person in the service of the United States, or of any Indian to take and *destroy* any ardent spirits or wine found in the Indian country, except such as may be introduced by the War Department. In all cases arising under this and the preceding section Indians shall be competent witnesses." Now is not the fact that they sell liquor openly in their saloons sufficient to induce a commanding officer "to suspect:" that they have introduced it? It is natural for me to hesitate to enter the premises of a citizen and destroy his goods, and although the law might seem to allow it I should prefer an order. To stop the sale of liquor, without including beer, however, is simply farcical, for alcohol is easily introduced into beer in sufficient quantities to intoxicate. If the sale of liquor and beer can be stopped there will be no trouble in the country, and if I can be authorized to search for and destroy both, either by law or President's order, or declaring temporarily martial law, I will in a few days make a bottle of whisky in Alaska as rare as fresh water in the desert of Sahara. Until this is done there will be trouble constantly recurring, and these rascals who sell the whisky and beer are the very first to help for assistance when drunken riots occur. I respectfully request a telegraphic reply in relation to the liquor and beer. A telegram as late as December 2 will catch the mail steamer at Nanimoo, B.C. The health of the officers and crew is most excellent. The weather is abominable. There is some scarlet fever on shore, and many old chronic cases of sickness, the result of the uncleanly habits of life of the Indian. Surgeon J. D. Ayers, as well as Assistant Surgeon L. W. Curtis, have been unremitting night and day in their care of and attention to the sick.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant.

E. C. MERRIMAN,
Commander United States Navy, Commanding, Senior Officer Present.

Commodore JOHN G. WALKER, U.S.N.,
Acting Secretary of the Navy,
Navy Department, Washington, D.C.

A.

U.S.S. ADAMS, 3D RATE,
Sitka, Alaska, October 23, 1882.

SIR: Proceed with the designated force in the Northwest Trading Company's steamer *Favorite* to Kiliskoo. On your way pick up the surveying party now in or about Whilistone Narrows under the command of Ensign Taylor, and direct Ensign Taylor to report to you for orders. you will take his launch and whaleboat in tow and with the whole party report to me at Kiliskoo. Use your discretion and do not cross the straits should the weather be too inclement for the launch. If blowing, leave the cutter for me to pick up. Get off about 1.30 a.m. to-morrow. I will follow at 5 a.m. in the revenue cutter *Corwin*, and should overhaul your party somewhere in Lost Straits.

Very respectfully,

E. C. MERRIMAN,
Commander, Commanding.

Lieut. C. W. BARTLETT, U.S.N.,
Commanding Expedition to Kneasnour Rapids.

B.

U.S. REVENUE CUTTER CORWIN,
October 26, 1882.

SIR: Proceed up the lagoon behind the Indian village of Angoon, and upon your arrival with the *Favorite* and *Jamestown* rescue the employees of the Northwest Trading Company, now held by the Indians, their steam launch and such property as the Indians have belonging to this company. They will at first probably attempt to take charge of the *Favorite*, thinking only the employees are on board. Treat the Indians kindly if they show a peaceful disposition. With the *Corwin* I shall proceed off the town. Should the Indians show fight attack them vigorously, blow three long blasts of the whistle of both steamers, and fire *two* guns; one gun I shall look at simply as a show of force form you. Should the Indians be on *our* side of the town a *second* gun from the *Corwin* will denote that we will attack. In the first case we will come to your support, in the second you will come to ours. Get possession of every canoe you can, and get all the Indians to come to the white settlement possible. The cause of the outbreak is the accidental killing of an Indian by the premature explosion of a whaling bomb. They demand two hundred blankets as damages. On the contrary, I propose to fine them four hundred, or double what their claim may be. In case of refusal I have determind to burn their village and destroy their canoes and fishing tackle. Remember in the *first place* to free their white prisoners, and secondly the property. Should the Indians forcibly resist after knowing your intentions, do not hesitate; open fire at once, and I will immediately come to your support in the *Corwin*. Use all diplomacy possible first, however. I rely on your discretion, and wish you a most successful trip.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. C. MERRIMAN,
*Command United States Navy,
Commanding United States Steamer Adams.*

Lieut. C. W. BARTLETT, U.S.N.,
Commanding Expedition to Kenasnow Rapids.

C.

U.S.S. ADAMS, 3D RATE,
Sitka, Alaska, October 29, 1882.

SIR: You will proceed in the Northwest Trading Company's steamer *Favorite* to Kiliskoo as soon as she is ready, taking with you the designated force of twenty-five men and Assistant Surgeon L. W. Curtis, taking with you rations for one month. You will take with your arms and accouterments for the men and the howitzer. You will drill the men at small arms and the howitzer as much as possible. The first whale boat will also be sent with you. You will in every way possible endeavor to bring about a friendly feeling on the part of the Indians, and as far as possible among themselves, and encourage their sending their boys over here to school. At a time when the *Favorite* can be spared, I desire you to go to the village of Neltuskin, fourteen miles below Kiliskoo, and raid the village for Hoo-che-noo. Destroy all their liquors and distilleries, and should you discover one in the act of distilling bring him and the witnesses along, and I will send him to Portland for trial. As they may not understand properly the cause of our burning Angoon, you will explain it to them and make them feel that the government is friendly to them, but will put down quickly any attempt at making or selling liquor, or any disturbance. You will also do everything in your power to induce them to send their children to school. Should you find the Indians quiet, and no necessity of your remaining, you will take the first opportunity to return to the *Adams*, but in no case will you remain away long enough to endanger your getting out of rations. In the event of your being obliged to resort to extreme measures you must use your judgment, and as I rely on your discretion I will assume the responsibility of any measure you may see proper to take. Wishing you a pleasant trip, I am,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant.

E. C. MERRIMAN,
*Commander United States Navy, Commanding,
Senior Officer Present.*

Lieut. C. W. BARTLETT, U.S.N.

AFFAIRS IN ALASKA.

LETTER
FROM
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,
TRANSMITTING
*Resolution of the Board of Trade of Portland, Oreg., in relation to the recent shelling
of an Indian village in Alaska by United States forces.*

JANUARY 31, 1883.--Referred to the Committee on the Territories and ordered to printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
January 29, 1883.

SIR: Referring to this department's letters to you of the 20th of December last, I have the honor to inclose herewith a copy of a resolution of the Board of Trade of Portland, Oreg., dated the 13th instant, touching the action of Commander Merriman in regard to Alaskan matters.

Very respectfully,

CHAS. J. FOLGER,
Secretary.

Hon. J. W. KEIFER,
Speaker House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

Resolutions of the Board of Trade of Portland, Oreg.

At a special meeting of the Board of Trade of Portland, Oreg., held on January 13, 1883, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

Whereas the Board of Trade of Portland, Oreg., has for many years observed with concern and regret the state of lawlessness and violence which has existed in the Territory of Alaska; and

Whereas said lawlessness has culminated in the recent seizure and threatened massacre of American citizens by the Indians of that region; and

Whereas the greater portion of the trade with Alaska is controlled by the merchants of Portland, members of this board, who are thus vitally interested in the preservation of peace and good order in that Territory; and

Whereas the board has heard with much satisfaction of the action of Commander Merriman in punishing the insubordinate Indians, in rescuing the American citizens, and in the preservation of American property above referred to: Therefore,

Be it resolved by the Board of Trade of Portland Oregon, That we highly commend the course pursued by Commander Merriman in suppressing the above attempt at violence, and in chastising the refractory natives.

Resolved, That Commander Merriman took the only proper means to render life and property safe among the Indians of Alaska.

Resolved, That our thanks are due, and we hereby tender the same, to Commander Merriman for his prompt and vigorous action in the premises, whereby life and property have been rendered secure, and the majesty of the law vindicated, as far as is possible in the absence of any form of civil government, the establishment of which has long been denied to our appeals.

Resolved, That a copy of the foregoing preamble and resolutions be properly certified to and sent to Commander Merriman, and similar copies to the honorable the Secretaries of the Navy and Treasury.

DONALD MACLEAY,
President.

F. K. ARNOLD,
Secretary.

True copy. Test: [SEAL]