

The First Tourist Cruise in the Soviet Arctic

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ABSTRACT. In the summer of 1931 the icebreaking steamer *Malygin* sailed from Arkhangel'sk, bound for Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa with the first Soviet tourist cruise to the Arctic, the main objective being to visit the various historic sites of the archipelago. The steamer also made a rendezvous with the airship *Graf Zeppelin* at Bukhta Tikhaya. Other historic sites visited included Mys Flora, Bukhta Teplitsa and Camp Ziegler on Ostrov Al'dzher. Of special historical interest was the recovery of a message left by Baldwin at his satellite camp at the west end of Ostrov Al'dzher. A significant contribution to the charting of the archipelago was the discovery that Jackson's "Arthur Island" and "Alfred Harmsworth Island" were in fact a single island, for which the name Ostrov Artura was retained. Surprises such as this, a brief accidental grounding, and a three-day drift amongst ice and in dense fog probably combined to persuade the Soviet authorities not to repeat this experiment for several decades.

RÉSUMÉ. À l'été 1931, le bateau-vapeur équipé comme brise-glace *Malygin* partit d'Arkhangel'sk à destination de Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa, effectuant ainsi la première croisière touristique soviétique dans l'Arctique. L'objectif principal était de visiter les divers sites historiques de l'archipel. Le vapeur rencontra aussi le dirigeable *Graf Zeppelin* à Bukhta Tikhaya. D'autres sites historiques furent visités: Mys Flora, Bukhta Teplitsa, et Camp Ziegler à Ostrov Al'dzher. La découverte d'un message laissé par Baldwin à son camp-satellite de l'extrémité ouest de Ostrov Al'dzher fut d'un intérêt particulier. De même, la découverte que les îles "Arthur" et "Alfred Harmsworth" de Jackson ne formaient en fait qu'une seule île, pour laquelle le nom Ostrov Artura fut retenu, apporta une contribution significative à la cartographie de l'archipel. De telles surprises, un bref échouage accidentel, et une dérive de trois jours dans la glace et le brouillard intense contribuèrent certes à persuader les autorités soviétiques de ne pas répéter cette expérience pour plusieurs décennies.

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In the eastern Canadian Arctic, the Greenland fiords, and especially the waters around Svalbard, tourist cruise ships have been a part of the summer scene for a number of years. It is not widely known, however, that for some years now similar cruise ships have been plying the waters of the Soviet Arctic carrying Soviet and East European vacationers. Two of the liners involved, *Tatariya* and *Vatslav Vorovskiy*, have been reported cruising the waters of the Barents and Kara seas, and in 1971 the latter ship even called at Ostrov Kheysa in Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa at 81°N (Armstrong, 1972). It will probably come as an even greater surprise, even to most Soviet readers, that this year represents the fiftieth anniversary of *Intourist's* first cruise to the High Arctic.

In the May 1931 issue of *Byulleten' Arkticheskogo Instituta* [*Bulletin of the Arctic Institute*] there appeared the following announcement:

The State Joint-Stock Company *Intourist* is organizing a cruise to Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa and the northern part of the Kara Sea in July 1931. It is proposed that the icebreaking steamer *Malygin* with a party of tourists should visit the Soviet polar station at Bukhta Tikhaya and other sites on Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa which are of interest for historical or other reasons.

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Thereafter *Malygin* will head for the northeastern part of the Kara Sea. Professor V. Yu. Vize, who is intending to use the voyage for scientific work, has agreed to undertake overall leadership of the expedition (Anonymous, 1931:82).

In order to free *Malygin* for this task the escort of the annual Kara Sea expedition to the mouth of the Yenisey, which she normally undertook, was entrusted to *Rusanov*.

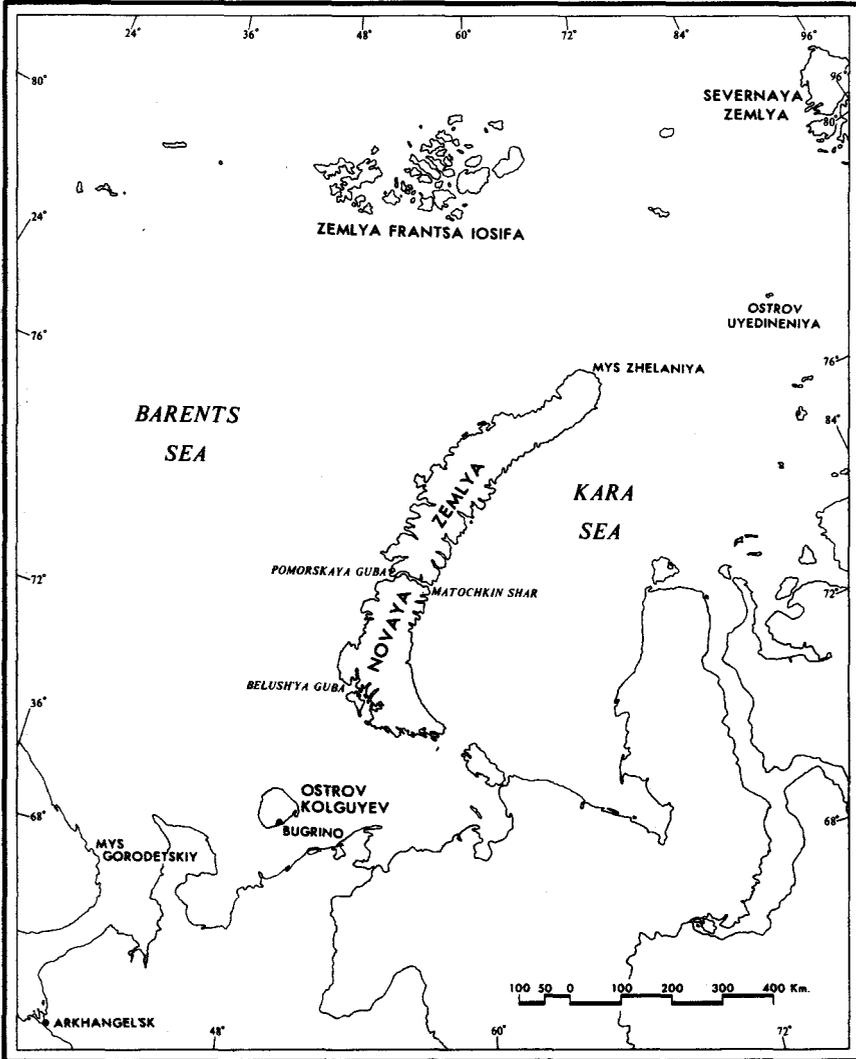


FIG. 1. The western Soviet Arctic showing areas visited by *Malygin*.

Malygin was in many ways better suited for cruising arctic waters than *Tatariya* or *Vatslav Vorovskiy*, which are conventional passenger liners (for details see Wilson, 1978). Originally the Reid Newfoundland Company's passenger steam-

er *Bruce, Malygin* had been designed to provide year-round passenger service on the Cabot Strait run from Port-aux-Basques to Sydney, and as befitted such a task her design was essentially that of a small ice-breaker. Built by Napier and Miller at Old Kirkpatrick on the Clyde and launched on 9 December 1911, *Bruce* was 76.4 m in length, beam 11 m, draft 6.4 m with a gross tonnage of about 1700 tonnes (*Glasgow Herald*, 1911; *Clydebank and Renfrew Press*, 1911). With engines developing 2850 hp, she made 16 knots on her trials on 1 February 1912 [*Evening Herald* (St. John's), 1912]. She first reached St John's on February 12 that year (*Evening Herald*, 1912b) and began regular operations on the Cabot Strait run immediately, continuing practically without a break until sold to the Tsarist government on 3 July 1915 (*Evening Herald*, 1915). Along with a number of other Canadian and Newfoundland icebreaking vessels she had been bought to help maintain winter navigation to the vital, but icebound, port of Arkhangel'sk during World War I (Barr, 1977).

Malygin sailed from Arkhangel'sk on her first (and last) arctic tourist cruise on 19 July 1931 with Captain D. T. Chertkov in command (Vize, 1933). Despite the somewhat limited opportunities offered by this tourist cruise function (and it was very clear that this aspect took precedence) there were several scientists aboard. Apart from Professor Vize himself, they included the veteran N. V. Pinegin, who like Vize had been a member of G. L. Sedov's expedition to Novaya Zemlya and Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa in 1912-1914, and also R. V. Khutsishvili, seconded to the expedition by the Hydrometeorological Commission of the USSR, and normally in charge of the Geomagnetic Observatory at Slutsk (Vize, 1931), in order to carry out geomagnetic observations and to inspect the magnetic observatory at Matochkin Shar on Novaya Zemlya. In a special category was a two-man party from the *Ekspeditsiya Vsesoyuznogo ob'yedineniya grazhdanskogo vozdušnogo Flota* [Expedition of the All-Union Association of the Civil Air Fleet], whose objective was to locate a suitable site for a floatplane base on Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa (Ivanov, 1931). The party consisted of pilot I. K. Ivanov and technician Fel'chakov.

Among the tourists on board *Malygin* three deserve special mention. The writer Sokolov-Mikitov was making his second visit to Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa and would write about his experiences at great length (Sokolov-Mikitov, 1931; 1932; 1951). The second was General Umberto Nobile who was now working with the Soviet authorities on the building of airships and whose purpose was in part to see if he could spot any signs of his missing dirigible *Italia*, or of Alessandrini and his five companions who were still aboard the derelict airship as she drifted off downwind after her crash north of Svalbard in May 1928 (Nobile, 1931; 1948). Vize (1931) notes that Nobile also took part in the meteorological and hydrological observations. Finally, the indomitable American traveller Miss Louise Boyd was occupying one of the tourist cabins (Papanin, 1977); she had made a previous private visit to Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa (including a landing at Mys Flora) on board the Norwegian sealing vessel *Hobby* in 1926 (Fernandez de Henestrosa y Gayoso de los Cabos, 1927). There was also a whole corps of newspaper correspondents on board: P. F. Yuchin was representing

Pravda, Romm was covering the expedition for *Izvestiya* and Rosenfeld for *Komsomol'skaya Pravda* (Papanin, 1977). None of the accounts makes mention of any private Soviet citizens being among the tourists.

From Gorodetskiy lighthouse at the mouth of the White Sea Captain Chertkov set a course directly for Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa through almost totally icefree

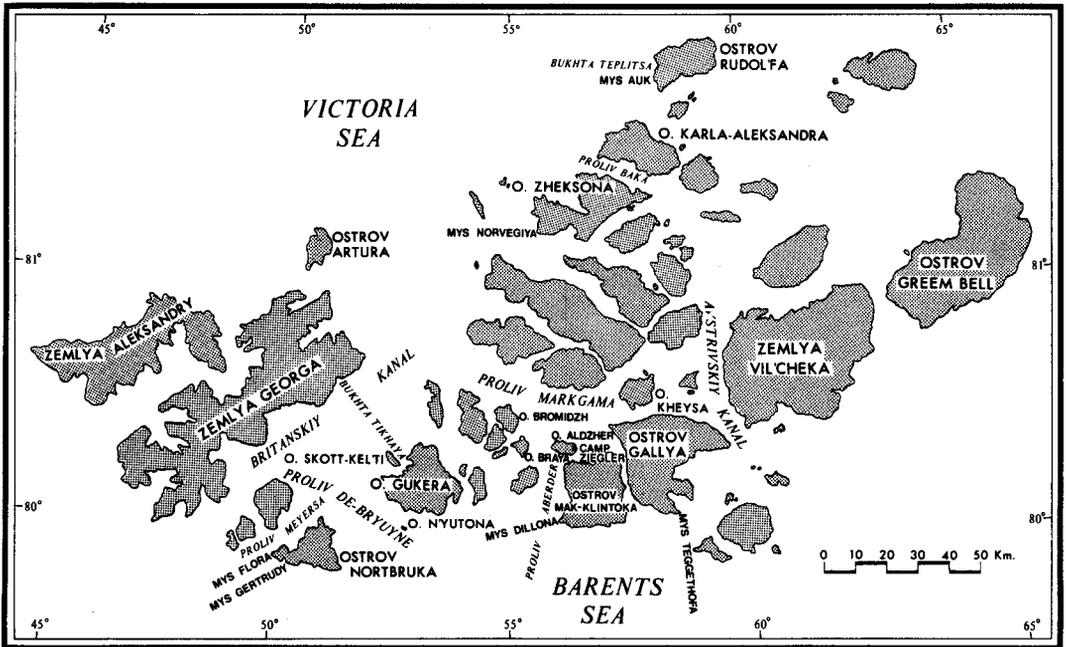


FIG. 2. Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa showing the sites visited by Malygin.

seas; a belt of thin, broken one-year ice about 160 km wide posed no real difficulties (Vize, 1931). On July 23 the first polar bear of the trip was spotted as it strolled across a floe near the ship, and was soon shot and hoisted aboard. The captain had planned to make his landfall at Mys Flora on Ostrov Nortbruka but when, on the evening of the 23rd, land loomed through the fog the captain was unable to pinpoint his position (Vize, 1933; Sokolov-Mikitov, 1951). Chertkov stopped engines and after some consultation among the officers and scientists it was decided that Malygin was considerably east of her intended landfall and that the land in sight was Mys Dillona on Ostrov Mak-Klintoka at the mouth of Avstrivskiy Kanal (Vize, 1931). When the fog cleared after midnight celestial observations established that the ship was lying at $80^{\circ} 00' N$, $53^{\circ} 32' E$, some 40 km north and 50 km east of her dead-reckoning position (Vize, 1933). As Vize has discussed in great detail, this error was the result of a current setting the ship northeast.

Getting under way again next morning Chertkov headed west for Mys Flora; he proceeded with caution since there was dense fog and the water was quite shoal. Suddenly the ship ran aground, bumping several times on a rocky reef; Sokolov-Mikitov has described Captain Chertkov's reaction, standing by the

engine-room telegraph, slapping his thigh and swearing at each new impact (Sokolov-Mikitov, 1951). The veteran Pinegin tried to calm the distraught captain: "Don't get excited. There are still a lot of 'blank spots' in these latitudes! This is how shoals and banks get plotted on the charts" (Papanin, 1977:76). When the fog cleared it was discovered that the ship was lying only some 2½ km southwest of Ostrov N'yutona surrounded by a congregation of some 125 stranded icebergs (Vize, 1933). All initial attempts at getting the ship off, using her engines at full power, were unsuccessful. Finally, after a wait of almost 12 hours for the flood tide, the ship came free almost without warning after 180 tonnes of fresh water had been jettisoned, the ballast had been pumped from forward to aft, and with engines running full astern. *Malygin* had suffered no serious damage in the grounding.

Captain Chertkov now swung well out to sea, then west to Mys Flora. When he spotted what he thought was that cape looming through the fog he hove-to until morning. Clear sunny weather next morning (July 24) revealed that this cape was in fact Mys Gertrudy, 16 km east of Mys Flora. As *Malygin* steamed west along the south coast of Ostrov Nortbruka the wind strengthened from the north-northeast, producing heavy seas and wild surf. Any possibility of making a landing at Mys Flora was clearly ruled out (Vize, 1931; 1933; Papanin, 1977). It was decided to postpone the visit there for the meantime and to head directly for Bukhta Tikhaya on Ostrov Gukera. The course lay through Proliv Meyersa and Proliv Mellenius along the south coast of Ostrov Skott-Kel'ti, both straits being icefree, as was Bukhta Tikhaya itself. A boat put off from shore with three of the station personnel led by the chief, I. M. Ivanov. All were heavily bearded and were in excellent health.

Bukhta Tikhaya was one of the historic sites which the tourists had come to see. In 1913-1914 Lieutenant G. L. Sedov's expedition vessel *Sv. Foka* had wintered in the bay (Pinegin, 1948; Vize, 1953; Laktionov, 1964; Barr, 1973). And it was from here that Sedov had set off with three dogteams and two sailors on his forlorn attempt to reach the Pole in the spring of 1914 — an attempt which ended in his death even before he had reached the northernmost island of the archipelago. More recently Bukhta Tikhaya had been selected as the site of the first Soviet weather station on Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa, and indeed anywhere in the High Arctic. An expedition on board the icebreaking steamer *Georgiy Sedov*, under the leadership of Professor O. Yu. Shmidt had established the weather station in the summer of 1929 (Wiese, 1929; Murov, 1971; Shmidt, 1962; Samoilowitsch, 1930), and it had been successfully resupplied the following year.

By prior arrangement, while *Malygin* lay at Bukhta Tikhaya she was to make a rendezvous with the airship *Graf Zeppelin* (LZ-127). The airship had left her home base at Friedrichshafen on the Bodensee at 9:00 A. M. on July 24 (Kohl-Larsen, 1931). She was bound for Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa by way of Berlin, Leningrad and Arkhangel'sk, the main purpose of her trip being to carry out aerial photography of Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa, Severnaya Zemlya and parts of Poluostrov Taymyr and Novaya Zemlya. The flight was organized by the

Aeroarktika company and the airship was under the command of Captain Hugo Eckener (Belov, 1959). There were four Russians on board: Professor R. L. Samoylovich, P. V. Molachanov, radio operator E. T. Krenkel', and engineer Fedor Assberg. The main purpose of the rendezvous with *Malygin* was to exchange sacks of mail, all bearing special stamps issued for the occasion by the German Post Office. They would be specially franked for the benefit of philatelists (Sokolov-Mikitov, 1932). In charge of *Malygin's* mail room to handle this special mail was I. D. Papanin, making his first voyage to the Arctic (Papanin, 1940; 1977).

On the 27th *Malygin's* wireless operator picked up a message to the effect that *Graf Zeppelin* had passed the latitude of Mys Zhelaniya (Sokolov-Mikitov, 1932) and calculated that she should reach Bukhta Tikhaya by evening (Papanin, 1977). The film crew and photographers feverishly made their preparations. By 5:20 P.M. the airship was passing over Ostrov Nortbruka; by 5:40 *Malvein* could

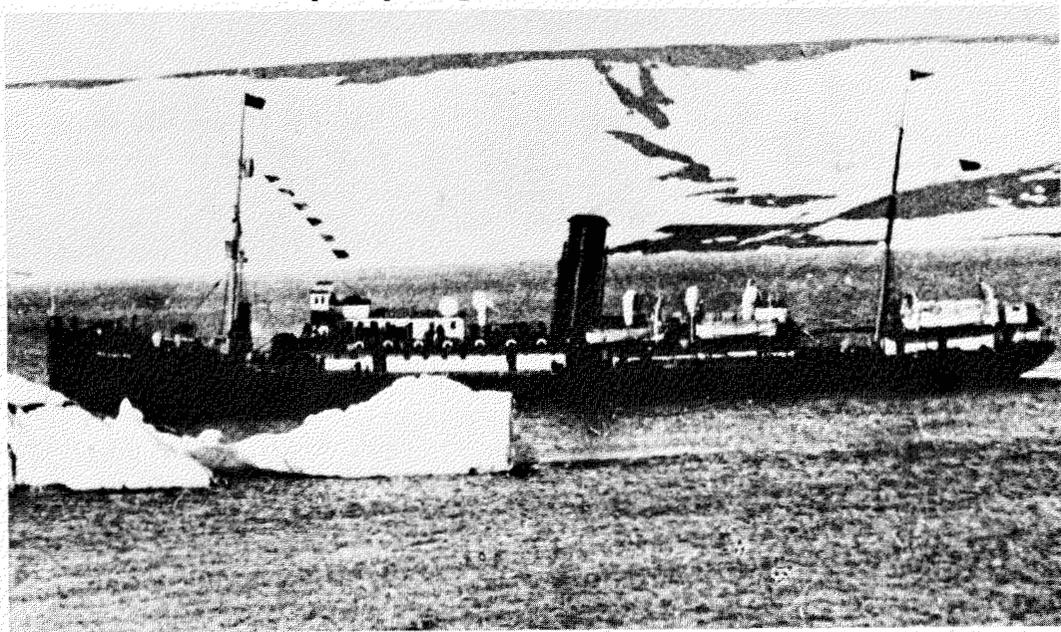


FIG. 3. *Malygin* lying at Bukhta Tikhaya, just prior to her rendezvous with *Graf Zeppelin*. *Malygin* subsequently had a distinguished career in the Soviet Arctic, carrying out survey work, escorting convoys and resupplying weather stations, year after year. This career ended when she foundered in a severe gale off Kamchatka in October 1940, with the loss of all hands.

be seen lying in Bukhta Tikhaya and those on board the airship could make out the station buildings on shore (Kohl-Larsen, 1931; Eckener, 1958). It was a beautifully calm, clear evening with only a few ice floes in sight. The passengers on board *Malygin* were sitting down to dinner when the airship was first sighted and everyone tumbled out on deck (Sokolov-Mikitov, 1951). At the captain's orders the stokers piled coal into the fireboxes to make smoke. The result was certainly effective: the observers on the airship saw a black plume of smoke belching from the ship's funnel.

After circling for some 40 minutes Captain Eckener now prepared for a water landing near *Malygin*; he had rehearsed such a landing on the Bodensee shortly before leaving but to attempt the same manoeuvre in the Arctic was a totally different matter. As the airship descended gently towards the water, canvas buckets attached to ropes were thrown out to act as anchors. A hose was also let down into the sea and water was pumped aboard to act as ballast.

There was no immediate sign of a boat putting off from *Malygin* (Kohl-Larsen, 1931) and in the meantime *Graf Zeppelin's* bosun, Schönherr, supervised preparations for inflating and launching a rubber boat. It was just about to be launched from the gondola when a boat finally arrived from *Malygin*, filled with photographers, a film crew and eight bags of mail (Sokolov-Mikitov, 1932; Papanin, 1977). To the excitement of everyone on board the airship, General Nobile was among the boat's passengers.

The exchange of mail had barely been completed when it was noticed that ice floes in increasing numbers and of increasing size were drifting rapidly towards the fragile airship, and indeed some of them struck the gondola (Vize, 1933; Eckener, 1958). Captain Eckener immediately gave orders for take-off; there was a momentary crisis where one of the airship's sea anchors fouled on an ice floe. There was no opportunity for the visitors from *Malygin* to go aboard the airship. Within minutes, with water spouting from her ballast tanks *Graf Zeppelin* rose safely into the air, circled once, then headed north. Her water landing had lasted exactly 15 minutes, but despite its brevity it had demonstrated the feasibility of such an operation under arctic conditions, as the airship's captain has convincingly argued (Eckener, 1958). Swinging east to Severnaya Zemlya, south over Poluostrov Taymyr, then west over Novaya Zemlya, the airship returned safely to her base at Friedrichshafen. Aerial photographs were taken of all the arctic landmasses she overflew and some remarkably accurate maps were produced on the basis of this photography (Berson, 1933).

Meanwhile for the next three days *Malygin* lay at Bukhta Tikhaya while her passengers made short excursions to various points of interest in the vicinity. Papanin (1977) recalls how General Nobile went strolling around the tundra in ordinary city shoes and how he had to carry him across tundra streams on his back. In the meantime R. V. Khutsishvili was studying the terrestrial magnetism of the area; he also selected a site for building a magnetic pavilion which would be arriving in early August on board the steam bark *Lomonosov* (formerly the Scottish whaler *Eclipse*). A description of the latter's voyage, whose main purpose was to resupply the station at Bukhta Tikhaya, is to be found in the account by Ivanychuk (1934).

I. K. Ivanov and his assistant Fel'chakov were also busy, surveying the area and assessing Bukhta Tikhaya's potential as a floatplane base (Ivanov, 1931). They would remain at the station until *Lomonosov* started back south on August 14.

On July 30 *Malygin* weighed anchor and put to sea, bound for Mys Flora to permit the tourists to see the various historic relics there. She reached Ostrov Nortbruka via Proliv De-Bryuyne, then swung round the south side of the island

through loose ice. Next morning the icebreaker anchored off the historic cape and all the tourists went ashore.

Benjamin Leigh-Smith and the crew of the wrecked *Eira* had wintered here in 1881-1882 in a primitive stone hut a few miles from the cape (Jones, 1975). Then in September 1894 Frederick Jackson had established here his well-appointed base camp, Elmwood, which his expedition was to occupy until August 1897 and from which they explored a considerable part of the archipelago (Jackson, 1899). It was in the spring of 1896 that Mys Flora was the site of one of the most amazing encounters in arctic history when Fridtjof Nansen accidentally stumbled across Jackson's camp (Jackson, 1899; Nansen, 1897), after he and Johansen, having left the drifting *Fram* well to the northeast, had wintered under extremely primitive conditions farther north in the archipelago.

In July 1898 *Fridtjof*, the expedition ship of the Wellman Polar Expedition, called at Mys Flora, and having dismantled and loaded a collapsible building left by Jackson, proceeded east to Mys Teggetgofa where the hut was re-erected and used as the expedition's wintering quarters (Wellman, 1899a; 1899b). The following year the Duke of Abruzzi, on his way north to his base at Bukhta Teplitsa on Ostrov Rudol'fa, left some supplies at Mys Flora, adding to the vast stock of food and equipment left by Jackson; more equipment was cached on his way south again in the summer of 1900 in case Querini's party, which went missing during their polar attempt, might later make their way to Mys Flora (Abruzzi, 1903). H. A. Støkken of Sandefjord was a member of the missing party; in the summer of 1901 his father, Captain Støkken, on board *Capella*, searched the southern coasts of the archipelago and left a memorial to the missing men at Mys Flora (Horn, 1930). A little later, during the winter of 1904-1905, the substantial group of buildings left by Jackson was occupied by a large wintering party belonging to the Ziegler Polar Expedition which had retreated by sledge from Bukhta Teplitsa after the loss of their expedition vessel *America* in the ice (Fiala, 1907).

The next recorded visit was by Lt. Sedov's North Pole Expedition on board *Sv. Foka* in September 1913. Having wintered on Novaya Zemlya, Sedov was determined to push as far north as possible in Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa to establish a base for an attempt at the North Pole. Calling at Mys Flora he loaded some coal left by Fiala and assorted lumber for fuel before proceeding farther north to a wintering at Bukhta Tikhaya, the starting point for his final, suicidal, attempt at the Pole (Pinegin, 1948; Vize, 1953; Barr, 1973). The following summer (1914) the buildings and supplies at Mys Flora offered a wonderful refuge to Al'banov and Konrad, the sole survivors of the Brusilov expedition, at the end of 2½ months of travel by sledge and kayak after they had left their ship *Sv. Anna* adrift in the ice well to the north of Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa (Al'banov, 1954; Barr, 1975; 1978). Then, only a few weeks after their arrival there occurred a chance meeting even more amazing than that of Nansen and Jackson. On 20 July 1914, *Sv. Foka*, southward bound from her winter quarters at Bukhta Tikhaya under the command of Dr. P. G. Kushakov, who had assumed leadership of the expedition after Sedov's death four months earlier, made an emergency call at Mys Flora.

The ship was almost completely out of fuel and Kushakov was counting upon demolishing the surviving buildings for fuel in order to reach icefree water from where *Sv. Foka* could proceed under sail. As *Sv. Foka* dropped anchor off Mys Flora, to everyone's amazement a man put out from shore in a kayak, paddled out to the ship, climbed aboard and introduced himself as Valerian Ivanovich Al'banov, first officer of Brusilov's *Sv. Anna* (Barr, 1975; Pinegin, 1952; Kouchakoff, 1946).

This was the historic site at which the tourists were now landed from *Malygin's* boats. All that remained of Elmwood, Jackson's base, was an axe-scarred floor resting on a wooden foundation. The only building still standing was the little hut in which Al'banov and Konrad had been preparing to spend the winter of 1914-1915 when *Sv. Foka* hove into view. Inside they found a polar bear skin which Ivanov, leader of the station at Bukhta Tikhaya, had shot during the winter while on a visit to Mys Flora by dog sledge, but which he had been unable to take with him because of its weight. A cache of supplies left by *Sedov* during the previous two summers had been ransacked by bears, particularly a case of biscuit. The tourists examined the memorial to Querini and his men and scoured the area for souvenirs from among the scattered debris. At the sound of a whistle blast from *Malygin* the visitors all trooped back to their boat.

Malygin next headed north via Proliv Meyersa and Britanskiy Kanal. The next stopping place, on the evening of August 1, was Mys Norvegiya on Ostrov Dzheksona (Vize, 1931; 1933). The attraction here was the site of the primitive hut where Nansen and Johansen spent the winter of 1895-1896, after they had reached the archipelago from the drifting *Fram*, travelling by sledge and kayak (Nansen, 1897). Despite a strong south-southeasterly wind a party went ashore to search for the remains of the hut. The heavy seas provided the tourists with plenty of excitement as the boats ferried them the 3 km to shore and landed them through heavy surf. A careful search of the rockstrewn coast produced no sign of the hut (Sololov-Mikitov, 1932). It was assumed that they were probably looking in the wrong place, in that Mys Norvegiya was divided by a glacier which descended right to the sea. The landing site was to the north of the glacier and the latter effectively barred access by land to the area to the south where the hut may well have been located (Vize, 1933). The heavy seas prohibited a visit to that area by sea.

With the passengers all safely re-embarked *Malygin* again headed north, bound for Bukhta Teplitsa on Ostrov Rudol'fa. She encountered the edge of the pack in the Victoria Seas on August 2 at 81° 26' N, 53° 12' E. Thereafter she was immobilized for three days, drifting in nine-tenths ice and in dense fog (Vize, 1931; 1933; Sokolov-Mikitov, 1932). According to Papanin (1977) many of the passengers found this period of inactivity intensely boring. During this drift the ship reached her highest latitude of this voyage, 81° 49' N, at 56° 44' E (Vize, 1933).

Malygin finally reached Bukhta Teplitsa on August 5 and moored to ice anchors at the edge of the fast ice. A shore party set off across the ice in a long file (Vize, 1933; Sokolov-Mikitov, 1932). The ice was extremely rough, broken by cracks and studded with pinnacles; several people fell into the water and one, a

German correspondent, was almost dragged under the ice by a strong current. He was hauled out badly scared and chilled and went straight back to the ship to change (Papanin, 1977). The large hut from the Ziegler-Fiala expedition was found to be more or less intact, as were the framework of the stables and the scientific hut. Vast amounts of equipment and canned goods, much of it still in good condition, lay scattered around. Sokolov-Mikitov and some others entered the main hut through a hole in the roof and found it almost completely filled with ice, derived from snow which had drifted in. However, it was still possible to crawl into most of the rooms. Professor Pinegin, head of the Arctic Institute's museum, salvaged various items which would deteriorate completely if left and which would make invaluable exhibits for the museum. A display of these artifacts was set up on board and Professor Vize later gave a lecture on the Ziegler-Fiala expedition. Before the shore party returned to the ship a plaque recording *Malygin's* visit was cemented to the rocks (Papanin, 1977).

The original plan had called for a serious attempt at pushing north from Ostrov Rudol'fa into the Arctic Basin. Professor Vize was particularly keen to get beyond the edge of the continental shelf and to carry out deepsea oceanographic work in the Arctic Basin (Vize, 1933). Owing to fog and bad weather 13 days had already been spent in the waters of the archipelago instead of the scheduled 7-10 days. Hence Vize reluctantly gave orders to start back south. According to Papanin, however, *Malygin* at this point pushed north to $82^{\circ} 43'N$ (Papanin, 1977), i.e. almost a full degree higher than her farthest north as reported by Vize; as a reputable scientist writing immediately after the event, one suspects that the latter is more reliable.

The last scheduled stop in the archipelago was to be at Ostrov Al'dzher and Vize now decided to try to reach that island by the little known waters of Proliv Baka and Avstrivskiy Kanal through the eastern part of the archipelago. As *Malygin* headed for the mouth of Proliv Baka on August 7 a group of three small islands was discovered off the southwest coast of Ostrov Karla-Aleksandra. They were named Ostrova Pantremoli after one of the Italian scientists lost with the *Italia* (Vize, 1931; 1933). Swinging into Proliv Baka *Malygin* at first steamed easily through young ice; but in the eastern part of the strait the ice was much thicker and at $81^{\circ} 23'N$, $57^{\circ} 15'E$ she was brought to a halt. Turning back Captain Chertkov retraced his route to Britanskiy Kanal; crossing the northern end of that strait he next headed for Ostrov Artura with a view to attempting to steam along the north coast of Zemlya Aleksandry in a search for remains of Nobile's *Italia*. But this plan too was foiled by heavy ice.

As some consolation, however, the expedition was able to make an important correction to the map in this area. It was determined that instead of two islands, "Arthur Island" and "Alfred Harmsworth Island", separated by a strait named "Harold Harmsworth Strait", all of which had been plotted and named by Jackson, in fact there existed only one island, straddling the alleged strait. The name Ostrov Artura was retained for this island (Vize, 1931; 1933).

From here Captain Chertkov swung into Proliv Markgama, still bound for Ostrov Al'dzher. Encountering fog and very strong winds in that strait the

captain tried to anchor off the southwest coast of Ostrov Bromidzh at the northwest end of Proliv Nyukomba. But in a force-9 gale the anchor would not hold and *Malygin* was forced to get under way again despite fog. She reached Ostrov Al'dzher via the strait between that island and Ostrov Brays, anchoring off the southwest tip of the island on August 8.

A party went ashore in dismal, rainy weather and found a small hut, previously unnoticed, built of provisions boxes (Vize, 1931; 1933; Sokolov-Mikitov, 1932). In the hut Sokolov-Mikitov found a bottle containing a note, left by the Baldwin-Ziegler Expedition of 1901-1902. Since very little indeed has been published on the activities of this American expedition, the note merits being quoted in full:

Baldwin-Ziegler Polar Expedition
Steam Yacht "America"
New York, U.S.A.

S.S. "Fridtjof"

S.S. "Belgica"

On board Steam yacht *America* off site
of West Camp Ziegler,
Alger Island
July 2nd, 1902

To whom it may concern,

The Baldwin-Ziegler Polar Expedition arrived here on this date from Camp Ziegler (Latitude 80° 21' N; longitude 56° 44' E) on the eastern end of this (Alger) island, having left Camp Ziegler July 1st at 2 pm, since which date we have bucked much ice lying to the eastward of this point. We have called here for the purpose of taking on board one whale boat, a ton or two of coal, besides a few other articles, before proceeding southwards in the effort to get through the apparently thin ice between here and the east coast of Brady Island, and thence into open water. Should we gain open water, it is our intention to proceed westward to Cape Flora where later information should be searched for within the log house at Cape Flora.

In the easternmost room or house at Camp Ziegler on the eastern end of this (Alger) island will be found detailed written instructions concerning the disposition of coal and supplies which I expect to arrive on the supply steamer from Norway by the end of this month. Should a cargo of coal be brought, all but 50 or 60 tons should be left at Camp Ziegler if possible for the steamer to reach there; if not, then at this point, or as near there as possible. Fifty or sixty tons of the coal however, should be kept on board and brought at least as far as Cape Flora, as we are now endeavouring to get through the ice with a very small supply on board, we having aboard yesterday noon but 65 tons.

The supply steamer should discharge as quickly as possible, and if consistent with arrangements already made endeavor to overtake us at Cape Flora, or elsewhere. All fish or perishable goods brought should be stored in the empty room at Camp Ziegler; if unable to reach there, then in one of the

houses at Cape Flora. All sledges etc. should be made secure (so that they may not be blown away) and left at Camp Ziegler for my use a year hence. All letters, papers, etc. should be kept aboard. Messages should be deposited as frequently as possible giving information as to the progress of the supply steamer. Should we be forced to return to land, we will look for coal both at Camp Ziegler and at Cape Flora.

Although I do not doubt the arrival of a supply steamer with coal, etc., still I cannot assure the members of the expedition that a steamer will positively arrive, and am therefore endeavoring to get into open water to the southward of the land while our coal lasts. We were obliged to get up steam on the 8th of June as a large water hole formed to the eastward of Camp Ziegler, and we were set free from the ice against our will; this necessitated the use of our reserve supply of coal until now we must either get home with what we now have, or obtain an additional supply, in failure of either of which the ship will be lost.

If not heard from by early August, it may be concluded that we are in serious trouble.

All are in health. We have aboard five (5) ponies, and more than one hundred and fifty (150) good dogs.

Matilda Island lies about three quarters of a mile south of this signal.

Evelyn B. Baldwin,
Commanding expedition.
(Vize, 1933:7-8)

As mentioned earlier the published record of the activities and achievements of the Baldwin-Ziegler Expedition is very meagre. Indeed about all that is generally known is that despite the size of the expedition (45 Americans and Norwegians, 6 Ostyaks, 400 dogs, 15 ponies and 3 ships) its major achievement was to relay some 20 tons of pemmican north to Mys Auk on the southwest coast of Ostrov Rudol'fa (Fiala, 1907). Two quotations by Russell William Porter, one of the expedition's scientists, will suffice to place the expedition in perspective:

As a result of the season's sledding, several tons of food and equipment were landed on Rudolph Island, the most northerly of the group, only to be picked up by Fiala in 1903 and carried to his winter quarters a few miles farther on. There would be something almost humorous in this vagary of fate were it not for the heartbreaking drudgery expended on dragging that stuff over hundreds of miles of ice (Porter, 1976:86).

and

As a result of Mr. Baldwin's policy of concentrating on advancing supplies north, the year yielded little to science. With virgin land all about us, no one was allowed there. It was forbidden ground (Porter, 1976:92).

The letter found by Sokolov-Mikitov almost thirty years later reveals something of the closing phase of this extraordinary expedition.

Malygin made one further stop at the other end of Ostrov Al'dzher and several boatloads of tourists went ashore at Camp Ziegler. As at Mys Flora equipment and food were found strewn around in wild disorder (Vize, 1933). On the

morning of August 9 *Malygin* weighed anchor in steady rain; emerging via Proliv Aberder into the Barents Sea, she left Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa astern. Heading south she reached open water next morning at 78° 27'N, 59° 55'E and set an easterly course towards Ostrov Uyedineniya. Professor Vize hoped to carry out oceanographic work in the northern part of the Kara Sea and also to check his hypothesis that there must be an extensive shallow area, and possibly more islands, in the vicinity of Ostrov Uyedineniya (Sokolov-Mikitov, 1932). Steaming east along the 78th parallel *Malygin* again encountered ice on the morning of August 11. The ice concentrations became progressively heavier and finally, at 77° 35'N, 81° 22'E, it was decided to turn back (Vize, 1933). This decision represented a resolution of the conflict between Professor Vize's scientific curiosity, whetted by the fact that the bottom was shoaling steadily, and Captain Chertkov's anxiety over his dwindling coal reserves. A heavy swell, apparent even here well inside the ice, gave notice that a bad storm was raging in the open sea and hence the captain waited for it to abate before heading back towards Novaya Zemlya. *Malygin* emerged from the ice at 77° 32'N, 79° 55'E at 1:00 A.M. on August 12 (Vize, 1933); five buoys were thrown overboard here to help in a study of drift directions.

That evening the steamer dropped anchor at Bukhta Andromeda on the northeast coast of Novaya Zemlya. The attraction here was provided by the herds of wild reindeer in the vicinity. One of two hunting parties managed to kill a cow and two calves; the other group did not return until the following day, having been cut off by a flooded river. They had killed four animals but were able to recover only the heads and hides (Sokolov-Mikitov, 1932).

Later that morning *Malygin* weighed anchor and steamed south along the east coast of Novaya Zemlya to Matochkin Shar. Encountering thick fog off the entrance to the strait that evening, the cautious captain stood off all night and most of the next day. The fog cleared on the evening of the 15th enabling him to head into the strait. *Malygin* soon dropped anchor just off the station at the east end of the strait and a boatload of people went ashore (Vize, 1933; Sokolov-Mikitov, 1932).

They found the wintering party in poor health owing to scarce supplies and poor hunting success (only one bear had been sighted all winter). Five of the 11 men had suffered from scurvy, two being very severely afflicted. Worst of all, one man, geophysicist Matvey Lebedev, had frozen to death out on the ice of the strait early in March and had been buried near the station. All the station personnel came to dinner aboard *Malygin* and were supplied with all the fresh meat and vegetables the ship's cook could spare (Vize, 1933).

Just before the ship got under way next morning two fishermen from Pomorskaya Guba at the western end of the strait, a Nenets and a Russian, begged a tow back home. This request was granted. The weather was fine for the passage of the spectacularly beautiful, fiord-like Matochkin Shar. The captain dropped anchor at Mys Khryasheviy on the south shore of the strait long enough to permit a party to go ashore to climb one of the nearby mountains. A brief stop was also made that evening (the 16th) at Pomorskaya Guba where a party went ashore to see the settlement and to talk to the local people.

Heading south along the Barents Sea coast *Malygin* made one last stop on Novaya Zemlya, at Belush'ya Guba, on the evening of the 17th. Here a shore party paid a visit to the Chairman of the Novaya Zemlya Soviet, Tyko Vylka, famous for his role as guide to V. A. Rusanov during his explorations of Novaya Zemlya in 1909-1911 (Pervakov, 1953; Pinkhenson, 1962).

According to the cruise schedule *Malygin* was supposed to make one last call, at Bugrino on Ostrov Kolguyev. But the captain argued that given *Malygin's* draft she would have to anchor 16 km offshore. His argument won the day and *Malygin* ran directly back from Belush'ya Guba to Arkhangel'sk, where she arrived on August 20.

Despite rather poor weather (18 days of fog out of 25) the first *Intourist* cruise to the Arctic had been a great success. Five days were lost completely as a result of fog, with respect to either travelling or scientific work. Indeed the only really fine weather had been while the ship lay at Bukhta Tikhaya waiting for *Graf Zeppelin*, and in Matochkin Shar (Vize, 1933).

The attempt at combining scientific work with a tourist operation can be described as only a limited success. Surface water temperatures were measured at 295 locations and water samples were taken from 273 stations (Vize, 1931). Meteorological observations were made every four hours. But Professor Vize and his colleagues would undoubtedly have liked to have occupied more protracted and more detailed oceanographic stations. The conflict between the professor's scientific interests and the captain's caution, augmented by his responsibility for a shipload of tourists, which surfaced in the northern part of the Kara Sea, epitomizes the opposing currents at work. Probably the most revealing aspect is that this first attempt at operating an Arctic cruise appears not to have been repeated for some 40 years. Given the very real hazards of navigation which *Malygin* faced, as clearly demonstrated by her brief grounding and her period adrift in the ice and fog of the Victoria Sea, it is scarcely surprising that this Arctic cruise did not become an annual event until very much later.

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