

The Great Lunar Walk

"O Allingnuk, Dweller of the Moon—Allingnuk, a great and generous giver of whales.

"I, Nikuwanna, whose wife I am of Killikvuk, a young and hopeful new whaler of Tigara, implore thee for thy life-giving gift . . ."

The Eskimos of Point Hope (Tigara) on Alaska's far northwestern coast, bowhead whalers traditionally for centuries, implored Allingnuk, Dweller of the Moon. The wives of whaling captains after doing deeds of goodwill among their people to purify their souls offered vessels of pure water and held them aloft into the night toward the pre-spring Arctic crescent moon whose arc "leaned to the right" so that the point of the lower crescent was high enough to "hold water." This was the whaler's moon.

The wives of the whaling captains then prayed to Allingnuk for talismans of whales. According to the purity of the soul, the vessel of water reached higher than others and the moon dweller dropped talismans down to the upraised vessels. One, "sometimes two," would drop unerringly into the pure water. Others would fall by the wayside. The number of talismans in each vessel would be the number of whales caught during the following spring whaling season.

As did other peoples of the world, the Eskimos of the Arctic held reverence for the moon. They were awed by the mysteries of the lunar orb of the heavens. They also blessed its light-giving rays during the long winter nights. It also gave lithe spirit in the team of the huskie dogs driven in moonlight. Their tails curled up happily and a least little whistle sent them into a yipping gallop of seeming ecstasy.

Mysteries of the moon, and the Universe beyond it, have always intrigued man. And of course, collectively, the great powers of the world. The United States and the Soviet Russia have been the forerunners of the modern probe of these mysteries. They are now achieving the first mincing steps into the technology of space. The greatest steps toward this are still cradled in future history.

The epochal flight, the intricate maneuvers of the Apollo 11 crew members and its vastly important home base—the space center at Houston, Texas, landed Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin on the moon last Sunday while the all-important command ship Columbia, piloted alone by Mike Collins, orbited patiently over the lunar landing waiting to pick up the Astronauts. The amazing liftoff from it and the successful "docking" back to the mothership were achieved. The successful splashdown yesterday in the Pacific Ocean bringing the space-landing pioneers back home safely is indeed the sparkling jewel of achievement by man—the American members of our 50 states.

"This is a small step for man—a giant leap for mankind." This historic statement was uttered by Neil Armstrong after he stepped on the soil of the moon as the first in the world to do so. The statement is prophetic and one that will be enhanced with greater deeds in time to come. Armstrong's and Aldrin's footsteps on the lunar surface

up to this point are brave new steps for man. The human being will not stop with the successful lunar landing. His quest for new celestial conquest will prevail and while doing so, it is hoped that modern man will not forget that mysteries of yesterday had primitive beginnings of which today's man is a definite part.