

# Were They Really Lost?

Not long ago, two Russians, Peter Kalishenko and Gregory Sarapushkin, came bobbing out of the Bering Straits and landed at Cape Prince of Wales, a village about 52 miles from the Russian mainland, Siberia. Upon landing, they promptly got tipsy on some sort of Soviet liquor, perhaps vodka. They were in a tiny 17-foot walrus skin boat and they had traveled about 70 miles in two days while being lost. They said they were smelter workers from Laurentia. They had been mushroom picking.

The Eskimos at Wales came right out and said that they didn't believe the two men were lost. Clarence Ongtawasruk writing for The Nome Nugget expressed the Wales Eskimos' feelings in the following manner:

"More of the people here in Wales don't believe these strangers that they were lost, otherwise, if they travel two days they would have run out of gas. They don't have lot of gas containers and they have left overs of gas when they land here."

The Russians told the Wales people that they had been lost for two days going around in circles in the Bering Sea. While going aimlessly in circles they made quite a trip for 70 miles in two days. They could have doubled that mileage by going around in circles. We go along with the Wales Eskimos that they could not have gone on for two days without running out of gas especially when "They don't have lot of gas containers and they have left overs of gas when they land."

Another odd twist was that the Russians had adequate amounts of intoxicating liquor with them and as Ongtawasruk wrote, " ' ' ' "I learned these strangers were getting drunk. One of them cannot walk straight."

Perhaps the Russian custom is to take liquor when they go out "mushroom picking" but that doesn't seem to cut the mustard with us somehow. Another odd thing was that they were in a small walrus skin boat. To wander around for two days in the Bering Sea with it would seem to be quite a feat because it gets pretty rough and dangerous sometimes. The weather must have been in their favor all the time.

We go along with the Wales Eskimos and ask, "Were the Russians really lost?"