

ON HIS 21ST TRIP—

ELDERLY NEGRO EDUCATOR, AS A HOBBY, DOES RESEARCH OF ARCTIC, ITS CULTURE

By **HOWARD ROCK**

Times Editor

Dr. Herbert M. Frisby is making his twenty-first trip into the Arctic and he is going to spend it at Point Hope in Northwestern Alaska.

Dr. Frisby is a silver-haired Negro with a sparkling personality. When asked how old he was, he said, "I'm pretty old."

He laughed heartily and added, "I'm not going to tell you my real age but I'll admit I'm over 65 years old."

He has been making annual trips to the Arctic to study Eskimo cul-

ture every year for 21 years excepting one. That was in 1961 when he worked on a state memorial in honor of the late Matthew A. Henson, Maryland born Negro who accompanied Admiral Robert E. Perry to the North Pole on April 6, 1909.

Henson has been Dr. Frisby's hero ever since he was a boy. One day his class was studying the Perry expedition and Frisby got up and said he would be the second negro to go to the North Pole.

He was punished for the outlandish outburst and he had to write, "I must not say foolish things in

class" 500 times.

However, on August 12, 1956, U.S. Air Force flew the doctor from the Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks to North Pole where Dr. Frisby dropped a bronze memorial in Henson's honor.

"In doing so, I became the second Negro to go to the North Pole which has always been the ambition of my youth," said Frisby.

Dr. Frisby is an authority on his hero, Matthew Henson, who had been his friend for 13 years before his death on March 9, 1955. Henson

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Hobbyist . . .

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handed over his diary and artifacts to Frisby before the former's death.

In November of 1961, the State of Maryland honored Matthew Henson with a huge bronze memorial. The tablet was unveiled by the explorer's widow. Governor J. Millard Tawes made the memorial speech.

One of the speaker was Admiral Perry's grandson, Edward Perry Stafford. Dr. Frisby read a "brilliant letter of commendation" from Perry's daughter, Mary Ahnighito Stafford.

Admiral Perry had taken his wife to Greenland on one of his expeditions and Mary Ahnighito was born there. Her Eskimo name "Ahnighito" means "snow baby."

Dr. Frisby talked about the controversial aspect of the Perry expedition to the North Pole. He said that Donald MacMillan, surviving member of the expedition, told him that it was Matthew A. Henson who reached North Pole first—45 minutes before Admiral Perry.

Perry, who had suffered frostbitten toes, and which had been amputated, was carried to the Pole by four Eskimo members of the expedition 45 minutes after Henson reached it. The Eskimos were: Eginwah; Okeah; Seeglo; and Ootah.

Dr. Frisby is now at Point Hope to study the culture of the people there. He has been to Barrow, Greenland and many areas of the Canadian Arctic. He had a chance to go to the Soviet Arctic but this opportunity was cancelled by the Russians when an international incident grew out of the flight made by the U.S. pilot, Powers.

"I try to carry gifts to children in villages I visit," said Frisby.

On his trip to Point Hope, he is taking 500 lollypops, 500 toy rubber balloons, 500 pieces of bubble-gum and 500 sample cigarettes for the women.

"When I give the cigarettes to the men, they usually don't share them with the women," the doctor said.

Dr. Frisby is a science consultant in the State Teachers College in Baltimore, Maryland. He and his wife Annie have one son Russell.

His hobby is doing Arctic research which he finances himself. Although he obviously enjoys his hobby, Frisby said:

"This might be the last trip into the far north—but I have said this over 20 times in the past."