

Voyage In Dory From Sitka to Tacoma By Oars, Sail, and Tow Rope: An Adventurous Journey Through Alaskan Waters



In the summer of 1905, a young man named Harold Johnson embarked on an extraordinary journey - a voyage from Sitka, Alaska to Tacoma, Washington in a small dory boat. Armed with little more than oars, a sail, and a tow rope, Johnson set out to navigate the treacherous waters of the Inside Passage. This article chronicles Johnson's remarkable adventure, showcasing his courage, determination, and the unique challenges and rewards of exploring the Alaskan wilderness by boat.



A Voyage in a Dory, From Sitka to Tacoma by Oars, Sail, & Tow Rope by R.N. DeArmond

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

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Preparing for the Voyage

Johnson had spent several years in Sitka, working as a fisherman and learning the intricacies of navigating the Alaskan waters. He meticulously planned his voyage, studying charts and consulting with local boat builders. Johnson chose a 16-foot wooden dory, a sturdy and seaworthy vessel commonly used for fishing and exploration in the region.

With his boat ready, Johnson gathered supplies for the journey. He packed non-perishable food, water, a stove, and basic tools. He also brought a small tent for shelter and a rifle for hunting game along the way.

Setting Sail from Sitka

On a clear July morning, Johnson bid farewell to Sitka and set sail into the Inside Passage. The journey began smoothly, with gentle winds propelling the dory northward. As they approached Cape Edgecumbe, Johnson encountered his first challenge - a strong headwind. Undeterred, he

lowered the sail and rowed against the wind, making slow but steady progress.

Navigating the Inside Passage

The Inside Passage is a 1,000-mile labyrinth of waterways, islands, and inlets that runs along the coast of Alaska and British Columbia. The route is renowned for its stunning scenery, with towering mountains, pristine forests, and abundant wildlife. However, the passage can also be treacherous, with unpredictable currents, strong winds, and hidden hazards.

Johnson faced numerous challenges as he navigated the Inside Passage. He encountered dense fog, which obscured his vision and made navigation difficult. He had to contend with strong tidal currents that could sweep his boat off course. At times, he was forced to tow the dory behind a larger vessel for safety.

Hunting and Fishing for Sustenance

During his voyage, Johnson relied on hunting and fishing to supplement his supplies. He used his rifle to hunt deer and other game along the shores. He also fished for salmon, halibut, and other seafood in the rich waters of the Inside Passage.

Johnson's hunting and fishing skills proved invaluable. He was able to acquire fresh meat and fish, which provided him with sustenance and variety in his diet. The abundance of wildlife in the region also provided him with a sense of connection to the natural world.

Encounters with Wildlife

The Inside Passage is home to a diverse array of wildlife, including whales, sea otters, seals, and bears. Johnson had numerous encounters with these animals during his voyage. He observed humpback whales breaching the water, marveled at the playful antics of sea otters, and kept a respectful distance from curious black bears.

One particularly memorable encounter occurred when a large bull moose emerged from the forest and stood on the shore, watching Johnson's dory pass by. The moose and the man shared a moment of mutual respect and curiosity, a testament to the harmonious coexistence between humans and wildlife in the Alaskan wilderness.

Arrival in Tacoma

After several weeks of arduous travel, Johnson finally reached Tacoma, Washington. He had successfully navigated over 1,000 miles of treacherous waters in a small dory boat, relying on his skills, determination, and the kindness of strangers along the way.

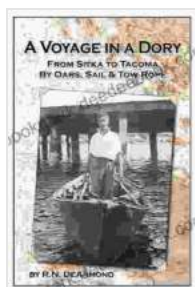
Johnson's arrival in Tacoma was met with fanfare and admiration. Newspapers hailed him as a hero and celebrated his remarkable journey. He gave numerous speeches and interviews, sharing his experiences and inspiring others to pursue their own adventures.

Legacy and Impact

Harold Johnson's voyage from Sitka to Tacoma became a legend in the annals of Alaskan history. His story inspired countless others to explore the Alaskan wilderness by boat, and his journey remains a testament to the indomitable spirit of adventure and the unique rewards of exploring the natural world.

Johnson's voyage also shed light on the challenges and opportunities of living in remote Alaskan communities. It highlighted the importance of self-reliance, resourcefulness, and the value of collaboration and support among the people of the region.

Harold Johnson's voyage from Sitka to Tacoma in a dory boat was an extraordinary adventure that tested his limits and showcased the beauty and challenges of the Alaskan wilderness. His story is a reminder of the power of human determination, the importance of self-reliance, and the enduring allure of the natural world. Johnson's legacy continues to inspire explorers and adventurers to this day, reminding us that even the most daunting journeys can be conquered with courage, perseverance, and a spirit of adventure.



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