COAST D, SECTOR VI

Preliminary Report

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Geographical Bureau

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Coast D Sector VI

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Sector VI comprises the south coast of Foxe Peninsula from the west side of Bottleneck River, 77° 28' W to Ice Cove 77° 48' W.

Maps

(1) National Topographic Series 8 miles to 1 inch 36 SW & SE. 1947.

(2) Canadian Hydrographic Chart of Hudson Bay and Strait (1948) No. 5000

(3) World Aeronautical Chart, U.S. Aeronautical Chart Service; Foxe Peninsula 1: 1,000,000 No. 83, 1948.

(4) J. D. Soper's map of Foxe Peninsula, 5 miles to 1 inch 1928-9.

(5) L. T. Burwash's map of S. W. Corner of Baffin Is., July 1924.

Photographs

Air Survey Trimetrogon: 20,000 feet.

T 208 L - 33 July 2, 1948 - 1321 hrs E.S.T.

T 205 L - 183 July 1, 1948 - 1236 hrs E.S.T. (See Sector V).

Geographical Bureau Photo Library Oblique Scenics File No. 625.451.

4,000 feet.

July 1948 R.C.A.F. 98 A 92 (See Sector V).

Shore

Southwest from the estuary of Bottleneck River the low rounded hills which form the shore are fringed with a narrow beach until cove 'a' is reached. Here the beach broadens as it forms the eastern end of a flat-floored valley which extends across Thumb Point peninsula to Bay 'a'. On the south west side of cove 'a' there are steep cliffs rising to over 100 feet. The cliffs become more gently sloping for the half a mile as far as inlet 'a'. The inlet appears to be quite deep but there is a small shoal area or islet off its mouth. The inlet is v-shaped and has at its head a sand and rock bar which connects the mainland to a 'near-island', Thumb Point. The west side of inlet 'a' has steep cliffs rising to about 150 feet for half a mile to cove 'b', where there is a small beach. The coast of Thumb Point as far as the small islet off its west point is low and slopes gently inland. On the north west side of the 'near-island' is cove 'c', which has a narrow beach. Inlet 'b' which forms the north side of Thumb point is horseshoe-shaped and contains a long low rocky island. The inlet was filled with a jumble of ice, sand and gravel in July 1948. Low cliffs continue round the east side of bay 'a' for half a mile to the point where a low valley connected with the estuary of Bottleneck River meets the coast. Steep cliffs rising perhaps to 200 ft extend northward for a mile, at which point the land becomes lower and the beach wider to form several small coves. The wider beach stretches all round the head of Bay 'a', enclosing a small islet. Several small streams enter the bay from the lower country to the north. Most of them are the overflows from small lakes, some of which still contained ice on July 1, 1948. Along the west side of the bay the low-lying area is superseded by high rugged cliffs forming the western end of a ridge which runs southwest and then south to Finger Point. At the mouth of bay 'a' opposite cove 'c' is a similar cove 'd' which contains a small beach. The coast from cove 'd' to inlet 'c' is formed where the gentle south slope of the ridge meets the sea, thus, though the cliffs are of gentle slope and well indented, yet they are without a beach. Inlet 'c' is surrounded by steep cliffs and has a single beach at its head. For over a mile from the head of inlet 'c' rounded hills reach the coast as far as cove 'e'. This cove has a small sand and gravel bar separating it from cove 'f'. The same bar connects the southernmost portion of Finger Point promontory to the mainland. This portion of the promontory may become

an island at high tide, but the presence of ice on the bar makes it improbable. South of the sand bar the land rises to a considerable height then falls gradually to Finger Point, which is only a few feet above sea level. (Air Photos T 205L-183 and 92). The whole of the three and a half miles of coast forming the east side of Lona Bay is of steep cliffs without a beach. There are four groups of small islets and shoals joined at low tide by sand bars. In the north east corner of Lona Bay the land is lower and there is a narrow beach in front of several small indentations. To the west of the lower area cliffs again predominate for a distance of two miles, as far as inlet 'd'. The cliffs are broken by four small clefts or coves which all contain small sand and boulder beaches. Inlet 'd' is wide and surrounded by cliffs, it dries out completely at low tide and is entered by a small stream. Between inlets 'd' and 'e' is a high cliff coast fringed by a narrow beach. Off the headland thus formed, are four small islands (See under Islands). From the east side of the mouth of inlet 'e' a scarp face runs to the north east. At the foot of the slope the land is low and flat. It contains lakes and several small streams which flow into the inlet. The beach is narrow but should afford means of access to the mainland. On the west side of the inlet there is a low headland off which a shoal area extends for at least half a mile forming the east side of the entrance to inlet 'f'. Both sides of inlet 'f' consist of steep, high cliffs but the head of the inlet opens out into a broad flat valley containing a lake. The stream outlet of this lake has a braided channel cutting through the beach and foreshore which is 100 yards wide at the head of the bay. The three miles of coastline, between the head of inlet 'f' and the head of inlet 'g', consists of three large rounded hill masses fronted by cliffs. Between the hills two flat-floored valleys, both containing many small stream channels, which are without any definite pattern, reach the sea. In front of the cliffs the beach is narrow; in front of the valleys it is wide. A hook like promontory forms the eastern side of the shallow inlet 'g'. The head of the inlet leads to a valley which is joined to cove 'g' and almost cuts off the promontory. Two small islets and a shoal area lie to the south of cove 'g'. Between these islets and Ice Cove the two and a half miles of coastline consists of

irregular cliffs with numerous small indentations and one large one, inlet 'i'. There is no beach along the coast but landings should be possible in the small clefts. Ice Cove has a narrow beach which leads inland to a sheltered valley. (Air Photo T 208L - 33). (The name Ice Cove is used by Soper but its precise location is impossible to determine from his map. It is applied here to the cove at the south tip of the peninsula to the west of Lona Bay).

Islands

The only islands in the sector which have not been mentioned under Shore are the four which lie in the mouth of inlets 'e' and 'f'. The islands are a continuation of a rounded ridge of the mainland, the structure of which trends NE - SW at this point. Islands A and B are high rounded rocks joined at low tide by sand bars both to the mainland and to each other. Islands C and D are lower but of the same type. They are joined by a shoal which dries out at low tide. There appears to be a very small cove on the south side of island D.

The southernmost point of Figer Point peninsula and Thumb Point penisula, to the west of Bottleneck River, are 'near-islands' and may become true islands at equinoctial springs.(Air Photos T 205 L - 183, T 208 L - 33).

Hinterland

The structure of the hinterland of this sector near the coast has a north east - south west trend in contradistinction to the trend inland which is north west-south east. So that the coast cuts transverse to the structure except along the sides of peninsulas and inlets. This leads to the alternate inlet and headland form of the coast. "An average elevation of 400 to 500 feet obtains, though higher ridges of the Kingnait Range appear inland at no great distance. On the whole the territory presents a forlorn and dreary appearance with an almost complete absence of vegetation; here and there a wisp of green in secluded valleys tends to relieve the dead monotony." (Arctic Pilot 1947 Vol III p. 245). The land is rugged yet rounded with many intersecting valleys between the ridges. Most of the valleys contain typical glaciated finger lakes. (Air Photos T 205L - 183, T 208L - 33).

Rivers

There are no rivers in this sector of the coast but there are many small

streams of no great length entering the sea in the numerous inlets. The streams entering inlet 'f' from the west are rather larger than most, because they emanate from lakes, but even these are not navigable since they have diffused channels. (Air Photos T 205L - 183 and T 208L - 33).

Shelter

There is no shelter for large vessels in this sector apart from what could be derived from lying in the lee of Finger Point or Ice Cove point, for the water is too shallow to allow large vessels to enter any of the inlets. Small boats and canoes could find good shelter in Bay 'a', inlets 'c', 'e', and 'f'. Also in all these harbours there are possible landing beaches, though care would have to be taken to avoid shoals and large boulders on the beaches.

Aircraft Landing Possibilities.

There are no lakes in the sector suitable for aircraft landings. Sea landings might be attempted in Lona Bay but the shallowness of the water would enforce careful inspection of the landing path. Shoals and large boulders would make beaching hazardous. Winter landings on skis may be possible on the smooth sea ice. There appears to be no suitable site for air strip construction in view of the rugged terrain.

Approaches

There is no information available on the approaches to this sector, but the water appears to be very shallow, with numerous shoals near the coast which dry out at low tide. The deepest water is probably off the east coast of Ice Cove Peninsula, where 15-20 fathoms can be expected (Unpublished chart of Hudson Bay and Strait. K. Morley. Geographical Bureau).

Tides

There is no observed information about the tides of this sector but it is expected that they will be similar to the ones at Schooner Harbour which lies ten miles to the west (Sector VII). "The mean high water interval at Schooner Harbour is 10 hours 33 minutes. The mean tidal range is 14.2 feet, and the spring range is 18.9 feet." (Sailing Directionsfor Northern Canada 1946. U.S. H. O. Pub. 77 p. 419). In view of the shallowness of the bays and the large tidal range

strong tidal currents are to be expected at the mouths of bay 'a' and inlets 'e' and 'f'.

Landmarks.

There is no shortage of natural landmarks along the coast of this sector. The Kingnait range inland rises to 1000 feet and is said to be visible for 30-40 miles (Soper, G. R. 1930 p. 401). Three promontories form outstanding landmarks. These are Ice Cove Point, Finger Point and Thumb Point to the west of King Charles Cape. There are no artificial beacons or cairns.

Ice and Snow Conditions

Break-up

Along the shores of Hudson Strait the ice forms a broad coastal belt which breaks up from west to east in June (Arctic Pilot Vol III p. 53). Some mush ice remained in the lakes of the mainland on July 1 and 2, 1948 but all the streams were ice free (Air Photo T 205L - 183 and T 208L - 33).

Freeze-up

Towards the end of October ice begins to form in the small bays along the shores of Hudson Strait from west to east, gradually forming a broad coastal belt (Arctic Pilot, Vol III p. 53). Hudson Strait probably remains open all winter but is rendered impassible to navigation by great ice floes carried back and forth by tidal streams (Sailing Directions for Northern Canada, U.S.H.O. Pub. No. 77).

Winter Travel

The sea ice off the coast is said to make excellent sledging (L. T. Burwash). Inland winter travel by dog team and sledge is possible but "as the country is practically gameless in winter, elaborate preparations are required in estimating the necessary provisions, fuel and dog feed"(Soper 1930 p. 412).

New Names

The following new names are suggested and used for Sector VI;-

Finger Point- The promontory is finger-like in shape.

Thumb Point - Stands in relation to Finger Point as a thumb, on the east side of Bay 'a'.

Remarks

Baffin in 1615 and Foxe in 1630 first sailed past this coast but did not name or map it. The first map was by L. T. Burwash who made a rapid reconnaissance survey, from a whaleboat, of the whole coast from Cape Dorset to Cape Queen between June 28 and August 1, 1923. His compass traverse established the positions of Thumb Point, Finger Point and Ice Cove Point. These are marked as stations 2, 3, 4, on his map. J. D. Soper mapped the coast during the month of August 1928 on a scale of 5 miles to the inch. The coastal survey was made by means of a large freighter canoe with an outboard motor. Measurements were made with a Negus taffrail log. Bearings were taken with a four inch prismatic compass or a four inch surveying compass with Jacob staff. (Soper 1930 p. 424). Several inaccuracies are noted in comparing his map with air photographs.

T 208-33. Ice Cove Point and Finger Point, Lona Bay; inlets 'd', 'e', 'f', 'g', and 'h'; coves 'f' and 'g'; Islands A, B, C and D, looking east from 20,000 on July 2, 1948 at about 1322 hours E.S.T.

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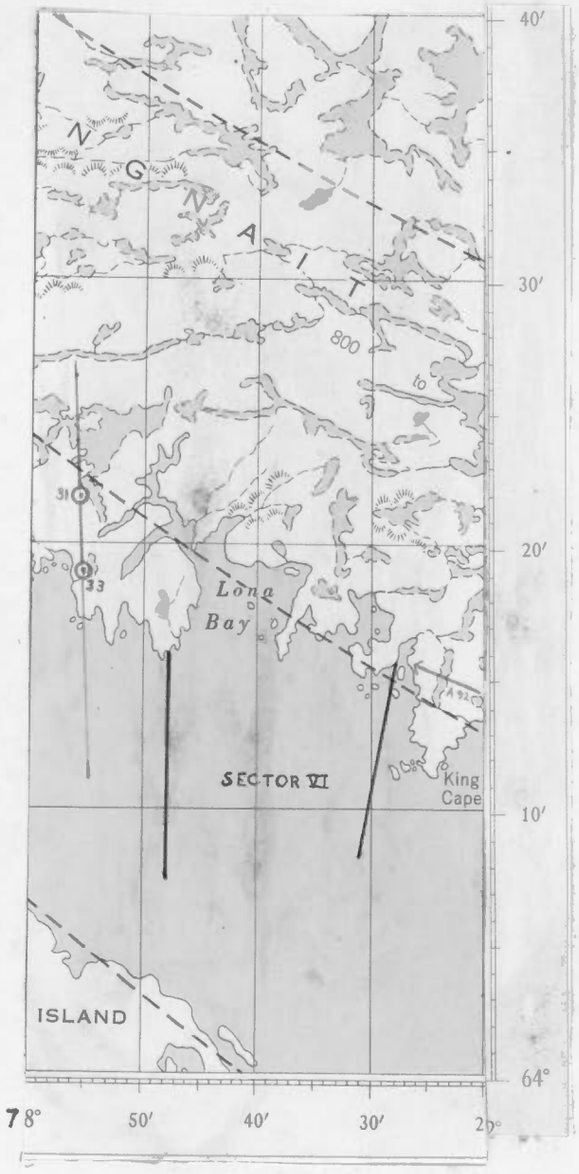

Foxe Peninsula

Sheets 36 S. W. and 36 S. E. 1947, 8 miles to 1 inch.

Air Survey Trimetregon Flight Lines and Photo numbers.

Limits of sector

Oblique Air Photos.

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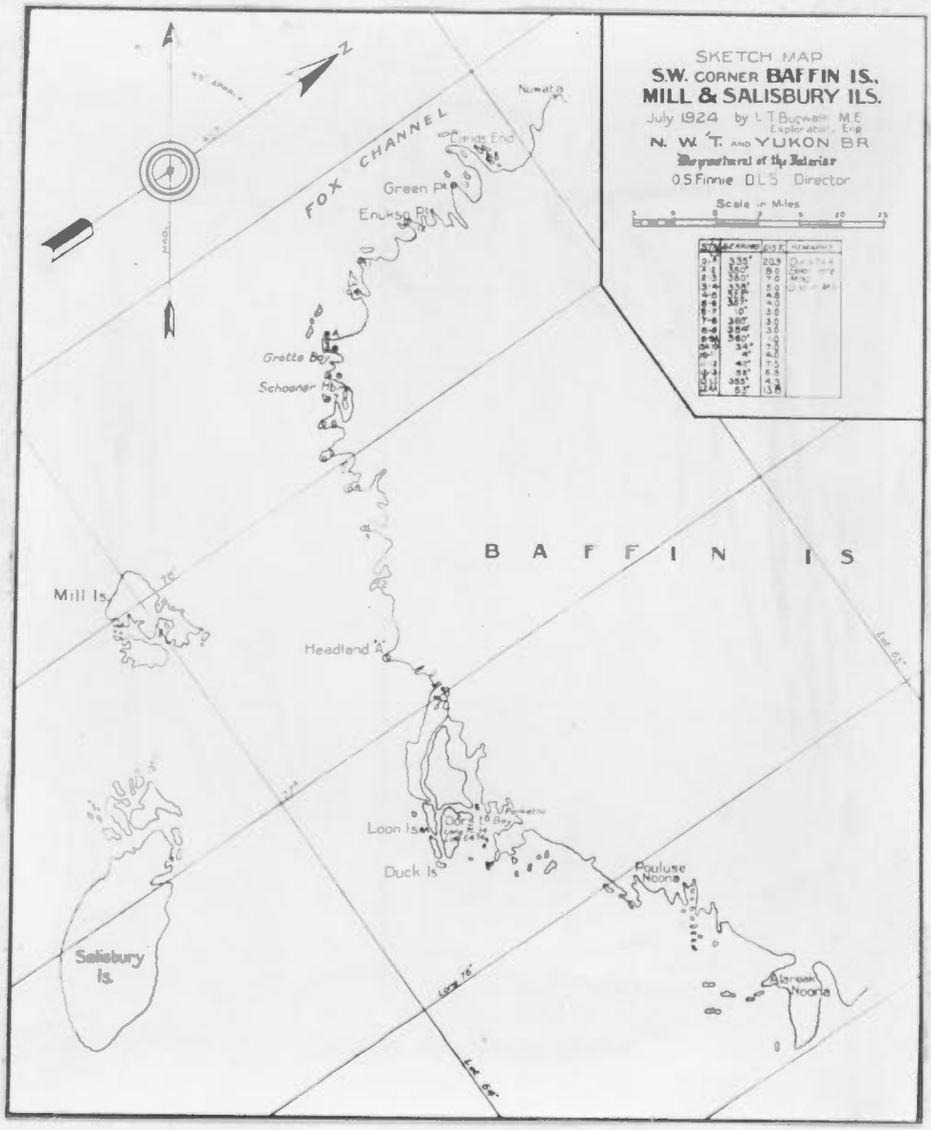

L. T. Burwash's map of South West Corner of Baffin Island, Mill Island and Salisbury Island.