

HB

299

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3/26



REPRESENTATIVE FRED DYSON

Alaska State Legislature

MEMORANDUM

- Interim (May-Dec) -
10928 Eagle River Rd., Suite 140
Eagle River, Alaska 99577
☎ (907) 694-6683
FAX (907) 694-1015

January 21, 2002

- Session (Jan-May) -
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
☎ (907) 465-2199
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To: Representative Morgan, Co-Chair
House Community and Regional Affairs Committee

From: Fred Dyson
State Representative

RE: Request for scheduling HB 299 for HCRA Committee

HB 299, Naming and Renaming Alaska Geographic Features.

I respectfully request scheduling of HB 299 at your earliest convenient time.

Thank you.

- E-mail -
Representative_Fred_Dyson
@Legis.state.ak.us

- Internet -
<http://www.akRepublicans.org>



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REPRESENTATIVE FRED DYSON

HB 299, ALASKA NAMES FOR ALASKA PLACES

The names of Alaska's geographical features come from a variety of sources, many of which have no connection or relevance to Alaska or its peoples.

This legislation will allow the State Place Names Commission to begin to substitute relevant Alaskan names that are local Alaskan Native names, honor a local citizen, honor a famous Alaskan, uniquely describe an identifying feature, or describe a local event.

A companion resolution will encourage the US Geological Bureau to follow the lead of the State Agency in renaming the features on Federal maps and documents.

"Many of Alaska's geographical names were given by European explorers to honor a benefactor or curry favor with some powerful politician or ruler. Some of these people never saw Alaska or made any contribution to it. Most of the European explorers had no concept of recognizing the contributions and names used by Alaska's Native people who had been here for at least 10,000 years. Some of the American, Asian, Canadian, and European settlers who later came to Alaska made profound contributions to Alaska. It is far more fitting that our geographical place names should honor its people instead of the Alma Mater of some rich tourist on a quasi-scientific expedition. HB 299 encourages the Alaska Naming Commission to do the research and suggest more appropriate ALASKAN names.

Alaskans tend to give rivers, bays, glaciers, mountains and lakes far more descriptive names than did the Europeans. "Purgatory Creek" and "Murder Lake", are descriptive of conditions and events. "Looks like a Neck" is far more apropos than "Bainbridge Passage". "Place of the Last Great Battle" is much more colorful than "Green Lake".

Under the Alaska Native Lands Claim Act, Section H, a group under the US Department of the Interior, has done extensive work researching Native place names. The Native Language School at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks also has a large amount of similar information.

HB 299 will begin a public process that will hopefully result in more appropriate Alaska place names and the honoring of the native and non-native people who actually lived here or made a contribution to Alaska. We have too long a history of people from somewhere else coming here and taking our furs, gold, timber, fish, and oil and going back south. At least, with this legislation, we have a chance to take back some of our geographical names.

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FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA
2002 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: HB 299
 () Publish Date: _____
 Dept. Affected: Natural Resources
 BRU: Parks & Recreation Mgt
 Component: State Historic Pres.
 Component Number: 451

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____
 Title: Alaska Place Names
 Sponsor: Rep. Dyson
 Requester: (H) CRA

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
Personal Services	60.0	61.3	62.6	63.9	65.2	66.5
Travel	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
Contractual	25.1	25.1	25.1	25.1	25.1	25.1
Supplies	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Equipment	5.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	101.6	99.9	101.2	102.5	103.8	105.1

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	101.6	99.9	101.2	102.5	103.8	105.1
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type)						
TOTAL	101.6	99.9	101.2	102.5	103.8	105.1

Estimate of any current year (FY2002) cost: none
 Check this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY2003 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time	1	1	1	1	1	1
Part-time						
Temporary						

(Attach a separate page if necessary)

This estimate is based on adding a full-time Historian position (Range 16) and using a quarter of one existing position (that would be pulled off of federal grant projects) to conduct research, public meetings, coordinate with DNR mapmakers, coordinate with the U.S. Board on Geographic Names and USGS mapmakers, and prepare documentation for proposing to change 15-18 place names annually. An additional day meeting would be needed for the AK Historical Commission to consider proposals and take public testimony.

Prepared by: Joan Antonson Phone 269-8714
 Division: Parks Date/Time 18-Mar-02
 Approved by: Pat Pourchot Date 18-Mar-02
 Agency: Natural Resources

ANALYSIS: (continued)

DNR Map and Plat Updates. Assuming that 5-6 name changes are approved per year, DNR will need to provide updates of maps and plants. Further assuming that changes to names are only posted when a map or plat is being updated for other purposes such as adding new mining claims, adding new state title, or new publication of joint state and federal land ownership maps, we estimate that one quarter of a full-time Cartographer II would be needed. Over time all the name changes would be incorporated to state maps and plats. A cross reference database would also need to be maintained between state and federal names if the two authorities do not agree. The estimated cost is \$15.0 per year for RSA support (in 300 contractual funds) of a Cartographer II in the Information Resource Management Component of DNR.

The numbers do not consider the difficulties of dual names for geographic features and private sector expenses for this.



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Alaska's Place Names

Alaska's Native people, along with explorers and settlers from Europe and America, gave names to many Alaskan communities and geographic features. A record of these geographic names can be found in the *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names* by Donald Orth (1967) and *Alaska Place Names* by Alan Edward Schorr (1991).

Not all features in the state have been named. Naming geographic features needs to be done carefully and thoughtfully. Place names should identify significant places. Reasons to name a feature include safety, education, and area administration. It is important that a proposed name have an association with the location.

The Alaska Historical Commission, a citizen board of the State of Alaska, reviews names proposed for lakes, streams, mountains, and other physical features in the state. The commission coordinates its program with the U.S. Board on Geographic Names.



The Alaska Historical Commission
The Office of History and Archaeology
Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
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ALASKA'S GEOGRAPHIC NAMES PROGRAM

A responsibility of the
ALASKA
HISTORICAL COMMISSION



The Alaska Historical Commission

Since 1993 the Alaska Historical Commission has served as the geographic names board for the State of Alaska. Its powers, duties, and authority in the naming of geographic features in Alaska are defined in Alaska Statute 41.35.350. The commission has been directed to:

- determine the correct and most appropriate names of geographic features in the state and their spelling;
- pass upon and give names to geographic features in the state for which no single generally acceptable name has been in use;
- cooperate with the local subdivisions of government and, with their approval, change the names of geographic features to eliminate duplication of names in the state;
- serve as the state representative of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names and cooperate with that board so that there is no conflict between state and federal designations of geographic features in the state.

In addition, the statute directs the Alaska Historical Commission to consider using Alaska Native place names for geographic features in the state that have not been named.



Guidelines

The Alaska Historical Commission has established guidelines which it uses along with the policies of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names.

§ Local Usage

- The name has been used for years by the community
- The name is supported by local residents and there is published evidence of verbal or written usage

§ Descriptive Names

- The name is relevant to and descriptive of the feature
- The name is not in use elsewhere in the region

§ Commemorative Names

- The individual has been deceased for at least five years
- The person made a noteworthy contribution to Alaska
- The individual had a direct, long term association with the feature
- The name is supported by residents of nearby communities

§ Historical Names

- The authenticity of the name can be established
- The name is clearly associated with the area

§ Alaska Native Names

- The name is in common local usage
- The name is linguistically appropriate to the area in which it is to be applied
- The name is pronounceable without considerable difficulty
- The land owner, if on Native land, supports the proposed name in writing

§ Name Changes

- The current official name is derogatory to any radical, ethnic, gender, or religious group

- The current official name is duplicative and causing confusion
- Evidence of extensive local support by authorities and residents is provided

§ Other

- There is an overriding need to name a feature within a **wilderness area** (for purposes of safety, education, or area administration), and the land manager has been consulted and given the opportunity to comment on the proposed name
- An existing name is applied to a **related feature**, *i.e.* the name of a mountain is applied to an unnamed glacier that is part of it
- A spelling that includes **diacritical marks** includes substantial evidence of active local use, such as official records, maps, and signs, in the area where the feature is located

Application Process

Applicants are encouraged to study the guidelines before they complete an application. Supplemental information, such as letters from community leaders, area residents, and local organizations, is often helpful.

Prior to review by the Alaska Historical Commission, staff contact appropriate land managers, Native corporations and councils, and communities to obtain comments on proposed names. The Alaska Historical Commission meets three times a year.

The commission's recommendation is forwarded with the proposal to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names for review. The U.S. Board sets national policies and procedures relating to both domestic and foreign place names. It is the final word on choice, spelling, and official use of place names in the U.S.

The process of naming a geographic feature takes at least a year.



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66:
REPRESENTATIVE FRED DYSON

15 November, 2001

Alaska Historical Commission
550 W 7th Avenue, Suite 1310
Anchorage, Ak 99501

Sub: Alaska Names for Alaska Places

Like most Alaskans with a sense of our history I resent on some level the fact that so many Alaskan place names commemorate some person whom has never been here or done anything for us. It fits into our historical pattern of people from somewhere else coming here to take our firs, fish, gold, oil, timber, heritage, and artifacts and carting them off to Russia, China, Europe, the Lower 48, Seattle/Tacoma, Portland, or San Francisco. There is no reason why they should also dominate our place names too.

We have places like Prince Williams Sound that is named after the British King's incompetent son, neither of which ever saw Alaska or ever indicated any interest in our State.

The Eklutna People in my district have many very colorful names for local geographical features. They say that Green Lake on Elmendorf Air Force Base should be called the "Place of the Last Great Battle". They also say that Point Waranzoff should be called "the place where we killed the raiders from over the portage.". I think those are far more interesting and fitting then the "official" names

The Department of Interior has a significant effort going forward to record traditional Native names for geographical places and preserve them before they are lost forever. Many Alaska Native groups are working to preserve their heritage and we in the legislature are wanting to do all we can to repair and preserve the relationships between rural and urban, Native and Non-Native Alaska.

With this in mind, I am interested in giving you the mission to research the Alaska Place Names that have no direct Alaska connection and suggest more appropriate Native Alaskan or Alaskan based names. I have attached the correspondence that I have exchanged with our Legislative Research Department. I do not want to initiate anything foolish or improper so I am asking for input from the Historical Commission to guide me. I would be glad to meet with you to discuss this at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fred Dyson".

Fred Dyson
State Representative

Enclosure (s)

- E-mail -
Representative_Fred_Dyson
@Legis.state.ak.us

- Internet -
<http://www.akRepublicans.org>

LEGAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF LEGAL AND RESEARCH SERVICES
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
STATE OF ALASKA

(907) 465-3867 or 465-2450
FAX (907) 465-2029
Mail Stop 3101

State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Deliveries to: 129 6th St., Rm. 329

MEMORANDUM

October 5, 2001

SUBJECT: Alaska Place Names (Work Order No. 22-LS1122)

TO: Representative Fred Dyson

FROM: Kathryn L. Kurtz *KK*
Legislative Counsel

OCT 9 2001

COPY

You asked about actions needed to permit the Alaska Historical Commission to change Alaskan place names to names with Alaskan origins, as well as how to persuade the federal government to adopt any changes made by the Alaska Historical Commission.

Short Answer

The Alaska Historical Commission could be instructed by statute to review Alaska place names and make changes according to revised naming criteria. The Alaska Legislature could also use a joint resolution to recommend that the U.S. Department of the Interior make it a policy to adopt any name changes made by the Alaska Historical Commission, but the Department would not have any obligation to follow this suggestion.

Explanation

At the state level, Alaska place names are determined by the Alaska Historical Commission. The commission is charged with identifying the "correct and most appropriate" names of geographic features in the state, naming features for which no single generally acceptable name has been in use, as well as cooperating with the U.S. Board on Geographic Names "so that there is no conflict between the state and federal designations of geographic features in the state." AS 41.35.350(a)(13), (14), and (17). A name given by the commission is the official name of that feature, to be used in all maps and publications of the state and its political subdivisions. AS 41.35.350(d). At the federal level, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names is responsible for standardization of geographic names for all materials published by the federal government. 43 U.S.C. 364e.

The duties of the Alaska Historical Commission are defined in statute; they could be changed by amending AS 41.35.350. If you would like the commission to review existing place names, and change existing place names that do not have Alaskan origins, that direction could be added to the existing statute. Any changes made by the commission would become official for purposes of state publications. However, federal publications would not be affected unless the changes are also adopted by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names.

ALASKA HISTORICAL COMMISSION GUIDELINES FOR GEOGRAPHIC NAME PROPOSALS

Local usage

Local usage is the single, best reason to name a geographic feature. Local usage refers to a name for a geographic feature that has evolved over a period of years, is called that name by the community or area as a whole, and is supported by local petitions, diaries, oral histories, and documents or other publications. A feature named by the applicant is not considered local usage, even when the applicant has called the feature by that name for a number of years.

The Alaska Historical Commission will consider if:

- the proposal includes published evidence of verbal or written usage, petitions signed by local residents, and resolutions or letters of support from government entities and community groups

Descriptive names (includes features named by applicant)

The Alaska Historical Commission will consider if:

- the name is relevant and descriptive of the feature
- the name is not in use elsewhere in the region
- the name is in good taste and not frivolous

Commemorative names (please read the following page)

The Alaska Historical Commission will consider if:

- the individual has been deceased for five (5) years and evidence of this is provided
- the individual made a significant contribution to Alaska
- the individual had a direct, long term association with the feature
- evidence of local support by authorities and residents is provided

Historical names

The Alaska Historical Commission will consider if:

- the authenticity of the name can be established
- the name is clearly associated with the area

Native American names

The Alaska Historical Commission will consider if:

- the name is in common local use and that use is documented
- the name is pronounceable without considerable difficulty
- the name is linguistically appropriate to the area in which it is to be applied
- the land owner, if on Native land, supports the proposed name in writing

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Name changes

The Alaska Historical Commission will consider if:

- the current official name is derogatory to any racial, ethnic, gender, or religious group
- the current official name is duplicative and causing confusion
- evidence of extensive local support by authorities and residents is provided

Other

The Alaska Historical Commission will consider if:

- there is an overriding need to name a feature within a wilderness area (for purposes of safety, education, or area administration), and the land manager has been consulted and given the opportunity to comment on the proposed name
- an existing name is applied to a related feature, *i.e.* the name of a mountain is applied to an unnamed glacier that is part of it
- a spelling that includes diacritical marks includes substantial evidence of active local use, such as official records, maps, and signs, in the area where the feature is located

All proposals must be accompanied by relevant U.S. Geological Survey 1:63,360 or 1:25,000 scale topographical maps. The feature to be named must be marked on the map. The applicant must clearly express reasons why the feature needs to be named. Photographs and other identifying aids are useful, but not required. Evidence of local support, in the form of letters, petitions, and newspaper articles and letters to the editor, showing public awareness and endorsement of the proposed name is encouraged.

COMMEMORATIVE NAMES

A commemorative name of a geographic feature is to honor and recognize an individual who has made an outstanding or noteworthy contribution to an area or the state, or is a national or international figure. A commemorative place name is not intended to memorialize a family member or friend.

Proposals containing a given name (first or last) or nickname of an individual are considered commemorative. The full name of a person as part of a geographic name normally is not approved unless surname use alone would be ambiguous.

The person must have been deceased *for at least five (5) years* before the Alaska Historical Commission will consider the proposal. An obituary and biography of the individual must be part of the proposal.

The person should have a *direct association* with the feature, or have made a *significant contribution* to the area in which it is located.

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Direct association. The individual should have been physically present at, or in the vicinity of, the feature for several years; or engaged in some activity that affected the feature; or spent a great deal of time at or in the vicinity of the feature. A person's death on or at a feature, such as a mountaineering accident or plane crash, or the mere ownership of land or the feature, does not normally meet this criterion. Similarly, recreational use of or visits to a feature does not normally meet this criterion.

Significant contribution. The contribution that the individual has made must be notable, of consequence, and have had a noticeable impact on the community, region, or state. A significant contribution is an extraordinary effort, achievement, or impact. It may come from the individual's work, professional or civic activities, and can be in the social, political, economic, scientific, or cultural areas. The significant contribution should have benefited Alaskans beyond the individual's immediate circle of family and friends. Generally, these individuals will have been recognized through a letter of thanks from the Governor, certificates of appreciation from an agency or group, awards, newspaper articles featuring the contribution made, dedication of local man-made features (park, street, garden, building), inclusion in *Who's Who*, etc. The individual might be a historical figure.

Features can be named for persons who made a significant contribution nationally or internationally, especially if the individual made advancements in the area of global peace or cooperation, made the nation or planet a better place to live, or made an exceptional and unique contribution to the nation or planet in the social, political, economic, scientific, or cultural areas. In such instances, the requirement of direct association does not need to be met.

Commemorative name proposals must include evidence of local support by authorities and residents attesting to the individual's association with the feature and significant contribution.

[adopted by the Alaska Historical Commission 12/03/98]

Prudhoe Bay's namesake found at end of a long trail

By MICHAEL CAREY

Prudhoe Bay, the largest oil field in North America, takes its name from the waters that edge the field along the North Slope.

But who named this place that brought Alaska so much wealth?

Open Orth's "Dictionary of Alaska Place Names" You will easily find that Sir John Franklin of the royal navy put Prudhoe on the map.

Unfortunately, you will find another source to discover who or what Prudhoe was. Orth goes no further.

Sir John Franklin was the most celebrated arctic explorer of his day.

In 1825, the British admiralty dispatched Franklin and a small party of sailors, supported by Canadian voyagers and Canadian Eskimo guides, to the northern latitudes of far western Canada in search of the Northwest Passage.

They were to float down the Mackenzie River — which runs north — in summer 1826, mapping the country and gathering scientific information.

At the Mackenzie mouth, they were to row westward.

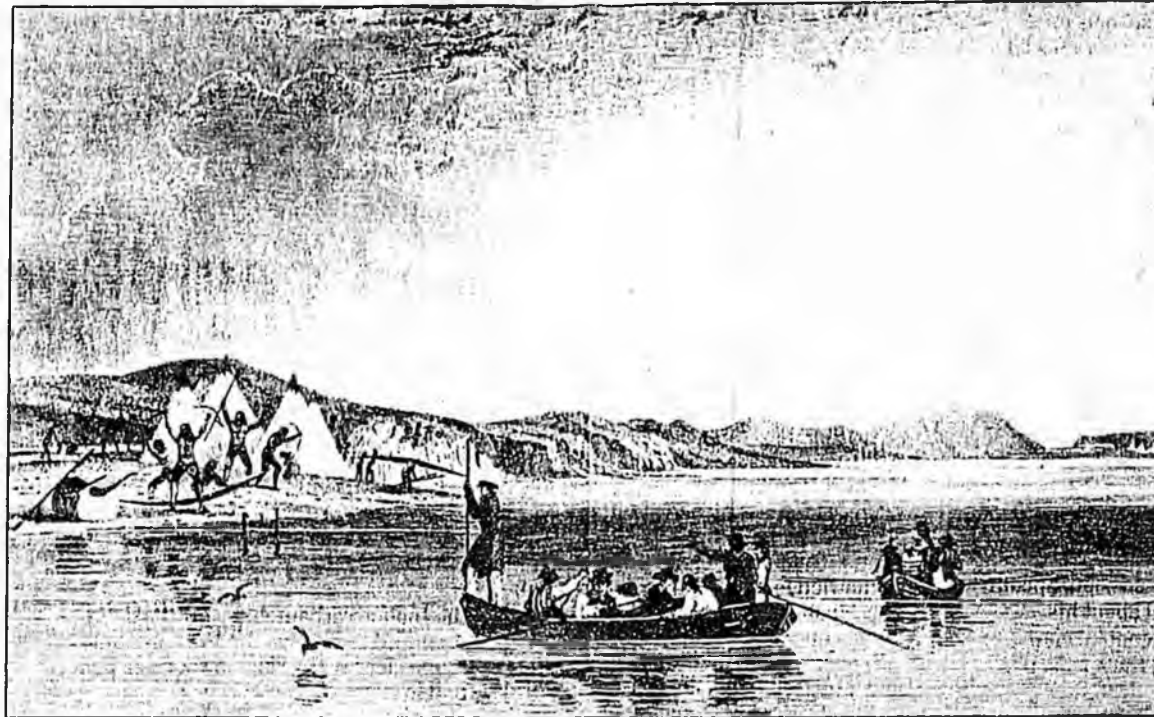
Somewhere east of what is now Barrow, Franklin would meet Capt. F.W. Beechey and the HMS Blossom, arriving after a two-year voyage from Britain.

Apparently no one in the admiralty — or Beechey or Franklin — thought it unusual to send Beechey on such a time-consuming pickup mission.

Franklin left home in February 1825. By August, his men were on the Mackenzie, traveling in three boats of mahogany and ash, 24 feet to 26 feet long, built in Britain, hauled across Canada.

Franklin was convinced he could make saltwater before freezeup, if for a brief look, and did so. The only non-Native to proceed him was Alexander Mackenzie, namesake of the river, in 1789.

Franklin and his troop wintered at hastily built Fort Franklin on Bear Lake, perhaps 600 miles from the Mackenzie mouth. With Natives and their families who joined them, about



From John Franklin's "Narrative of a Second Expedition to the Polar Sea"

This drawing by E.N. Kendall shows an "Esquimaux encampment on Richard's Island."

50 people lived at the fort.

Everyone kept busy hunting for food.

Franklin's men also gathered scientific information, especially about the weather, hours of daylight, and the behavior of the aurora. (Occasionally their natural history is a bit strange, such as their reference to "herring salmon.")

The temperature on Jan. 1, 1826, hit minus 49, lowest of the winter, but did not interfere with a New Year's Day party, where English, French, Gaelic and Indian songs echoed through the fort.

Franklin again set forth for the Arctic Ocean in July 1826 after splitting up his party.

Dr. John Richardson, surgeon and naturalist, took 14 men to explore the coast east of the Mackenzie. They were to return home through Canada, not rendezvous with Beechey, and so they did after mapping 863 miles of coastline.

By Aug. 16, Franklin and 14 sailors, plus their Eskimo translator, Augustus, had reached Prudhoe Bay.

Franklin, who had been at sea since a teen, was not one to complain. Yet imagine rowing and pulling loaded boats through ice, wind, rain and fog for hours on end. Some days the mariners, legs swollen by freezing water, made only a few miles.

It is a tribute to the British navy that the men were never openly fearful, confused or hesitant.

It is also a tribute to Franklin that he got along so well with, in his spelling, the "Esquimaux." Yes, the two cultures had run-ins. Some Eskimos apparently plotted to murder Franklin and his company.

Still, Franklin showed great patience in the face of provocation, in part because he realized his chance of survival would diminish if he fought the Natives as well as the

elements.

He surely was mindful as well that Natives had saved his life in 1821 when he faced starvation during his first visit to the Canadian Arctic, a trip down the Coppermine River.

Shortly after reaching Prudhoe Bay, Franklin realized that with another winter approaching the risk of continuing was too great. Thus, he turned his boats eastward, abandoning the plan to join Beechey, who unknown to him was but 160 miles away.

The explorers retreated to Fort Franklin and wintered there.

In the spring, Franklin returned to London a hero. He would remain a national figure well after he perished in 1847, deep in the Canadian Arctic, on yet another search for a northern route from Britain to the Orient.

The accolades Franklin received for reaching the Arctic were deserved. He also deserves credit for producing the first map of the waters

The temperature on Jan. 1, 1826, hit minus 49, lowest of the winter, but did not interfere with a New Year's Day party, where English, French, Gaelic and Indian songs echoed through the fort.

from the Mackenzie to Beechey Point, about 374 miles.

Franklin's name-dropping atop his map may seem like cultural imperialism. After all, the Eskimos had their names, and the Russians claimed Alaska.

Sir John Franklin was following the royal navy's mandate. The navy assumed a common nomenclature was essential for those Englishmen who would follow Franklin.

In the 20th century, English followers included the men and women of British Petroleum, a development that no doubt would have pleased the admiralty.

As for Prudhoe Bay, Anchorage writer and filmmaker Nan Elliot can tell us the name's source.

Franklin invoked Prudhoe, Elliot says, to honor Baron Prudhoe, an admiral who patronized science and exploration. The baron, Elliot notes, "was tall and fair and described by his contemporaries as 'a bit of a dandy.'"

The baron also was known as the Fourth Duke of Northumberland, lord of Prudhoe Castle near the Scottish border.

Baron Prudhoe is buried in Westminster Abbey, a mighty trek from Alaska's coastal plain, yet one John Franklin made more than 175 years ago.

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