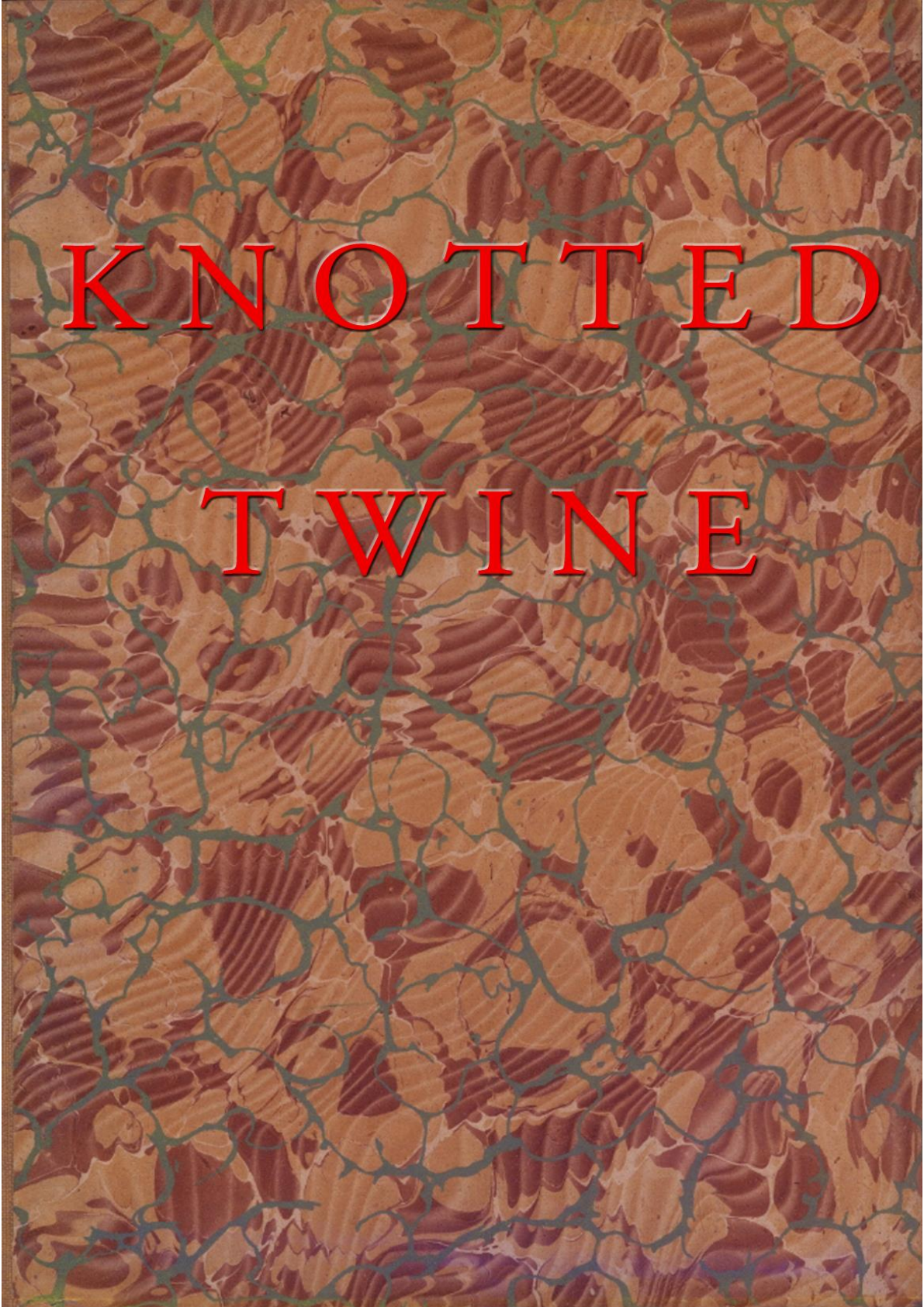


KNOTTED TWINE



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To unravel this knotted twine, fashioned of various lengths, textures, and hues.

We demand eternity for a lifetime: when our mortal half-hours too often prove tedious'.

From: Ponderings of Old Bardianna; "MARDI", Herman Melville

" What is most valuable in man is his eternal and almost divine discontent, which is a kind of love without a beloved, and like an ache we feel in members of our body that we do not have. Man is the only being that misses what he has never had. And the whole of what we miss, without ever having had it, is never what we call happiness. man (is) the only being who is unhappy, for the very reason he needs to be happy. That is because he needs to be what he is not."

José Ortega Y Gasset

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Obiter Dictum.

Very often these Introductions, Prefaces, Prologues, Prefigurations, Exordiums, By The Ways, are reserved for the hullabaloes of some celebrity, other famous persons, an all-knowing one, an affined one, exhorting the prospective reader with plaudits, laudations, kudos and sundry clappings, generally extolling the virtues of, and offering insights, into he that hath inscribed what followeth.

Very often these forewords contain an exposition, preparing the reader for a certain mumbo-jumbo, and the shock of his own ignorance in the face of the high-flown rhetoric, and the rationale behind the incomprehensibility and insensibility of the scribe. Often the attempt is made to cajole the innocent reader into perceiving what ensues as a major contribution to the field and not a prosaic run-of-the-mill literary endeavor. The intent is to persuade, you, dear reader, you would benefit from whiling away, despite the nods and precocious yawnings; utter bafflement and incoherence; impenetrable and stilted syntax; and oft' repeated self-conscious pleas for indulging and tolerating one's hapless, deficient, exposed and vulnerable humanity.

Often these prefatories list chronologically, alphabetically, or, in order of importance, certain acknowledgements of those most helpful, inspirational, or otherwise instrumental in producing the eventuality that follows. These would include one's right hand, his girl friday, his secretary, goffers, his mailman, his spouse, one's offspring, one's favorite editors, other *littérateurs*, perhaps one's mistress, or mister, **confident(e)**, and an unforgettable one who acted as precipitant to the whole.

Since I have not garnered the hullabaloo, since I cannot explain the obscurantism of the text, since I cannot assure you of the significance of the contents, since I have few, if no ones, to thank for my efforts, and since you would only wince at the apologies, this prelude departs somewhat from tradition, utilizing the usurpation of the space to hopefully clarify the author's position with respect to writing, and to self-expression in general; and to declare his own perception of what follows (the contents of this publication).

Beginning with the latter, what follows, and this very viewpoint you are now reading with respect to what follows, has

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been influenced by the cursory judgments of others; cursory, for not anyone I have known could stomach reading it to the full, thus affording them a more circumspect notion of its contents. All is transience in any case, but I have read the contents through and through, often making notes in the margins, pursuant to altering the text periodically, and what you read may not be the last word.

This latter thus prefigures something of what I had wanted to espouse with regard to writing and self expression in general. One needs to be inspired in order to get beyond the first page, the first startling colorful brush strokes, the first seemingly indelible marks of the chisel. Labor alone will not produce the desired result. If I had taken under advisement my first attempts at scribbling I would have recommended to myself - a going to sea - never turning back. But because I am of the obdurate species; block-headed, egomaniacal, conceited, pompous, I have persisted, all the while attempting to shroud the basic human formulation, and its earthly and finite surround, in some deceptive and glorified raiment. While obdurate and persistent, I am not insensitive and unselfconscious, and would not ignore even the most inappropriate, out of hand, judgment rendered with regard to these efforts, and would respond to them in some manner.

Let it be said finally, if I had an audience in mind, it is not readily apparent. At the very least, when assembling this epistle, I had in mind those, not unlike ourselves, who had not sprung from the sea; that having been my original inspiration. Most of us become idle dreamers and humble cowards, not stirring beyond a certain familiar and securely patterned and routinized existence. However, there are rewards for bolting the traces; thus the focus of this narrative, excluding none.

There is more to a narrative than its contents; there is the manner of the telling, the style as it were, with which one embellishes the events. While it has been the easier part to recall and recite all that has happened, it has been a challenge, as writer, to reach beyond a conversational tone into other realms of self expression. I have plugged away, sometimes luxuriating in the word, as is my bent. Be not offended if I speak not precisely in your tongue, project your metaphor, or surmise in your vernacular. With a little aplomb, you will fathom my depths and adjust to the stroke.

I believe everyone has a story to tell. I tell mine in a searching, provocative language, sometimes with poetic and philosophical

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overtones. I am not skilled in the art of writing, or in the art of telling tales. I cannot address everyone in their own tongue; I am barely schooled in my own. I was an average student. I was not an inspired student, ever. Nonetheless I did stumble along. I responded to challenges of a certain kind. For obtaining an education there were the senses. In my country there were bookstores and libraries everywhere. Between books and the senses, and some wild conversations, I became informed of certain things. I became aware that there is not a universal language; and that even if there was, language is limited in its ability to communicate everything, every nuance of thought and feeling. Just about everything that is written is open to interpretation; regardless of its apparent clarity. It may seem I use too many large words serving some dubious purpose that is not readily apparent; when some simpler more common term might have served as well. Maybe words to suit the common man. I cannot answer to that concern; I cannot apologize either. I have read works that have required many repeated readings, sentence after sentence, in order to understand them, and still felt my head bursting with a lack of comprehension. I had felt for a long time, if a man wrote it, I should be able to understand it. But I must admit to some very real cases of boredom, because the matter under discussion was intended to be so obscured that only a person of very very great erudition could be expected to fathom its depths. I hope my writings do not fall into that category. I like to stimulate the imagination in others, but I do not find much comfort in fairy tales. What I would thus stimulate might be quite limited, but however it is accomplished, often twists and turns in thought, evoked through language, words, use of words; sometimes in context and sometimes only bordering on context. If I was Kurt Vonnegut Jr., I would write, So It Goes.

In order to further amend this dictum I add something from another introduction to my first disciplined piece of writing. I must warn you, it borders on the demented and unpatriotic.

After leaving my post as a functioning member of the Life, Liberty, and Pursuit of Happiness Contingent, ostensibly to pursue the aforementioned dubious goal (something to do with the artistic life), I discovered that literary ambitions are attendant with labors of a kind I found tedious and discouraging; and not very rewarding in terms of proving that the artistic life fulfilled its expectations. I had already tasted the fruits of such endeavors. These were sometimes succulent fruits, not necessarily sweet. That is, as a young

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prospective sculptor, imbued with the example and spirit of Michelangelo and Rodin, and the curse of my father's muse, I found my efforts, as they say, 'pretentious and lacking'. At least I recognized some of my limitations. It was the nonremunerative aspects of artistic endeavors that interfered with the basic premise of the Life, Liberty, and Pursuit of Happiness Contingent. As I have grown older, I have learned to augment my arguments for abandoning the one for the other without proving my case. The one has steeped itself in a hollow materiality which leaves behind a shambles, or a dungheap (midden) of discarded junk; the accumulated character of which and with which one may measure and assess the validity of his assumptions. The other, the artistic, has indeed proven more rewarding in a personal sense, the only one that matters, it seems. However, as one proceeds down the road as the Master of his own Fate, and Captain of his own Soul, he finds he must answer to the integrity of his muse, which quite easily could lead to drink and a plunge over the precipice.

*To further augment this opening salvo, of late our nation has seen fit to tear itself limb from limb in an attempt to exculpate its own sense of perversity. The First Amendment to our Constitution allows a Police Blotter mentality to flourish. We are constantly reminded that we live at the lowest level possible, beneath the dignity of an animal. There is little understanding and much less forgiveness. We are a hard lot. It is revealed in our faces; there is no concealing the fact that we are mean, vindictive and lascivious. There is little to justify the behavior. There is little aspiration to become something finer simply because it requires too much effort. The atmosphere is pervaded by a sense of Why Bother. We are near to admitting that we are fraudulent; and we escape that judgment by pointing the finger at the other guy as though the lowly dirt of ourselves will slough off onto them. We lack the courage to become like them; we desire to revel in their dirt; but like all cowards we falsify ourselves further with pretense and righteousness. We don't know who the hell we are, and we don't have a clue. What's more, our mouths are wide open, dumbfounded. If we had the English to battle, the Indians to slaughter, the Japs and Nazis to subdue, the Reds to HUAC, The Atheists to Inquisit, then we could wave that infernal banner until we puked our guts from indigestion (a surfeit, a surfeit, a surfeit). Then what; Jesus; plainly **NOTHING!** We would have prevailed with our pathetic materialistic decadence; the envy of the world. Doesn't say much about mankind does it? You're asking me?*

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indictment, the First Amendment to our Constitution allows the unconscionable promotion of violence and filth as it seeks to discover that lowest, prurient titillation and murderous instinct within us. Constantly demeaned by such exposure, deluged as it were, we succumb to an awful sickness of soul which no amount of Righteousness will overcome. These same purveyors, dolled in their transient garb, speaking in their glib smirking self-assured manner, make the audacious claim to Truth when in fact they traffic in blatant innuendo. As of Old "Slander sits on the high road mocking all the passers-by.". And these mockings; what do they portend?, What purpose do they serve? It is pointless to name these harbingers of Control, thought control; Control Addicts. To name one names them all; as they attempt to outdo each other with the gory details. They are all, to a man or woman, assassins. Assassins of the truth They should by chance they come in possession of a fact, their drooling repetitions, hour after hour, day after day, picadors, leaving not a square millimeter remaining upon the spine of the beast readied for the kill. Should I expose myself to the calumny of these purveyors, they would outdo any and all the carrion feeders as they picked me clean, so vile is their appetite.

Shifting perspectives live with us because we simply DO NOT KNOW. WHICH paves the way for the evening yak. The guesses for the day by those with the vested interests, that infamous status quo. If your addiction is the evening puke; what they have to offer is a kind of regurgitated pap that just sort of drools out. The rabid yak, annihilation, or assassination, denying any satisfaction, though drooling in telling it like it is; your right to know.

From it all we are left to deduce our so-called Civilization, is a disaster; not because it could do better, but because the opportunity to become something better, after so many centuries of strife, recorded in great detail, along with all the perorations of the lessons of history at our disposal, we have chosen to take the low road, almost without conscience. The Righteous imagine themselves going to Heaven while they have done nothing on this earth to prove their worthiness. They have abused, rationalized the abuse, even pointing to the Black Book as the source of their admonishment. They leave behind nothing, but the used and abused scorched earth.

The indictment continues: The words are there; I just haven't found them. The smug complacency invested in the whole affair seems a self-validating premise for its continuance. Nothing succeeds like success, sort of dressed up in stream-lined designer

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pants. The sham rhetoric pours forth unabated from every organ of

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*promulgation, promoted by that vested First Amendment, in order that a moment of silence will grant one moment too long for reflection upon the emptiness of ourselves as well as the emptiness of the message. Something shoved down your throat. **Decadence!***

I had previously imagined this whole interlude, this transience, as a holding action; as though, with patience, dedication and perseverance we could carry forth something worthwhile into an environment forever unsuited for it to flourish. A delusional aberration. Pandora's Hope was proposed by some son-uv-a-bitch who wanted to keep the masses under control. Throw the dogs (social retards) a bone. Yearn Away poor suckers.

*Because little real companionship exists within this transience amongst that which so predominantly occupies this planet, one feels his own isolation too keenly, all the more painfully taken in by (look-a-likes that are not alike; a gross deception dolled in a familiar [mirrored] coded epidermal carcass). Yet, this is the only stage upon which even those who do not fit or do not belong must act out their allotted roles; surrounded by the delusional. **WHO DOES NOT BELONG?***

You Ask, if you have read this far: What place has all this in a sea story? Why all this hell, fire and damnation?

Because, just because, that's all.

More might be conjectured; however it appears the moment has arrived to confront the flamboyant specter of Knotted Twine.

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Illustrations (Not Part Of Text)

Copies of charts showing route from Oak Harbor WA to Glacier Bay AK and return.

- 69 Octopus on deck of good ship, snagged at entrance to Kumealon Inlet BC.
- 70 Repast of Cutthroat Trout fly-fished Orchard Lake AK, outflow into Shrimp Bay.
- 71 Ear to Ear with first halibut (6 lb.) jigged in Blue Mouse Cove AK.
- 72 Repast of sea lettuce, shrimp, octopus, and plantain (goose tongue).
- 73 First Mate with another: Entrance to Roscoe Bay BC
- 74 Captain rowing dignitaries ashore. Laddie and Little Bit
- 108 Did You Ever see such a smile? First mate at wheel.
- 109 At The Helm
- 215 The Acrostolium
- 265 Interior Lake, Blakeley Island WA

Illustrations (As Part Of The Text)

- 1. Painting: Albert Ryder *Moonlight Marine*
- 2. Chart Depiction: *Cape Horn*
- 11. Our Ship in various Promotional Depictions:
- 14. All Sails Set Downwind: *Big Genny; Main; Staysail; and Mizzen.*
- 15. *Dead Eyes.*
- 16. *The Captain* as Swabbie
- 17. *First Mate* as Teen Deckie.
- 20. *A Sunfish*
- 21. More *Dead Eyes*
- 22. *ATAVIST*, at her leisure.
- 26. *ATAVIST*, ghosting
- 27. *Alaska Flag.*
- 31. *ATAVIST*, leaving a remote dock.
- 32. *ATAVIST*, being cradled in the front yard.
- 37. *ATAVIST's* new Perkins 4-108 installed.
- 41. *ATAVIST* en route to the sea.
- 42. Under way; a stop at *Mink Island*. BC And *Cape Caution* BC passage.
- 46. Sojourn through the maze, north of *Queen Charlotte Straits*. BC
- 47. *Nakwakto Rapids* BC, anointed.
- 48. *Seymour Inlet*. BC
- 52-55 *Baird Glacier* AK
- 59 Happy First Mate Ernest Sound AK
- 80 *Endicott Arm*, AK, The Route to *Ford's Terror*. (The photo that got our attention.)
- 81. *Sumdum Glacier*. Entrance to *Endicott Arm*. AK
- 82. '*Berg*' inside *Wood Spit (Endicott Arm)*. AK
- 83 Fleet of Whales *Berg*, inside *Wood Spit (Endicott Arm)*. AK
- 89. Very large '*Berg*' (*Endicott Arm*) liberated from tidal *Dawes Glacier*. AK
- 89 *Dawes Glacier*, Terminus of *Endicott Arm*. AK
- 90 Harbor Seal on floe nears *Dawes Glacier* AK
- 92 *First Mate*. *Sanford Cove*. *Endicott Arm*. AK
- 92/107 Imaginary Flag for a disparate ship.
- 114-115 A ten gauge, a 45-75 Government, an artillery piece.
- 117-119. Dialogue with a Black Bear. *Sandy Cove, Glacier Bay* AK
- 121 The Culprit
- 124 Headed North past *Strawberry Point*, toward *Sandy Cove, Glacier Bay*. AK
- 125 Docile King Crab, 42 inches across legs, *Sandy Cove, Glacier Bay* AK

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- 127 *First Mate* gathering ice for the ships' ice box outside *Riggs Glacier* (tidal). *G*Bay.
- 129 Scenes from the terminus of *Wachusett Inlet, Glacier Bay*. AK
131. *Haematopus Bachmani*.
- 134 *Reid Glacier* tidal *Glacier Bay* AK
- 135 *Blue Mouse Cove*, looking West. *Glacier Bay*. AK
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- 140 Leisurely Blowing Humpbacks in Snow passage, *Zarembo Island* AK
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- 152 *Chapin Bay, Admiralty Island* AK
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- 164 Sunset *Meyer's Chuck, Meyers's Island, Cleveland Peninsula*, mainland AK
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- 168 Fireweed, and Parnassus (Weed) from *Wachusett Inlet, Glacier Bay* AK
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- 209 *The Green Shirt*
- 211 *Birth Of Aphrodite* , Greek Sculptural Relief
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234. Herman Melville.
235. Joshua Slocum.
- 237 Erskine Childers
- 239 Jack London.
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243. The Perfect Ship, albeit *Southseaman*.
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- 252 Donald Crowhurst
255. Bernard Moitessier
- 256 John Masfield
- 257 Edna St. Vincent Millay
- 258 Solomon August Andree, Henry David Thoreau
- 259 *Tenedos Bay* BC
264. Onward to better climes.

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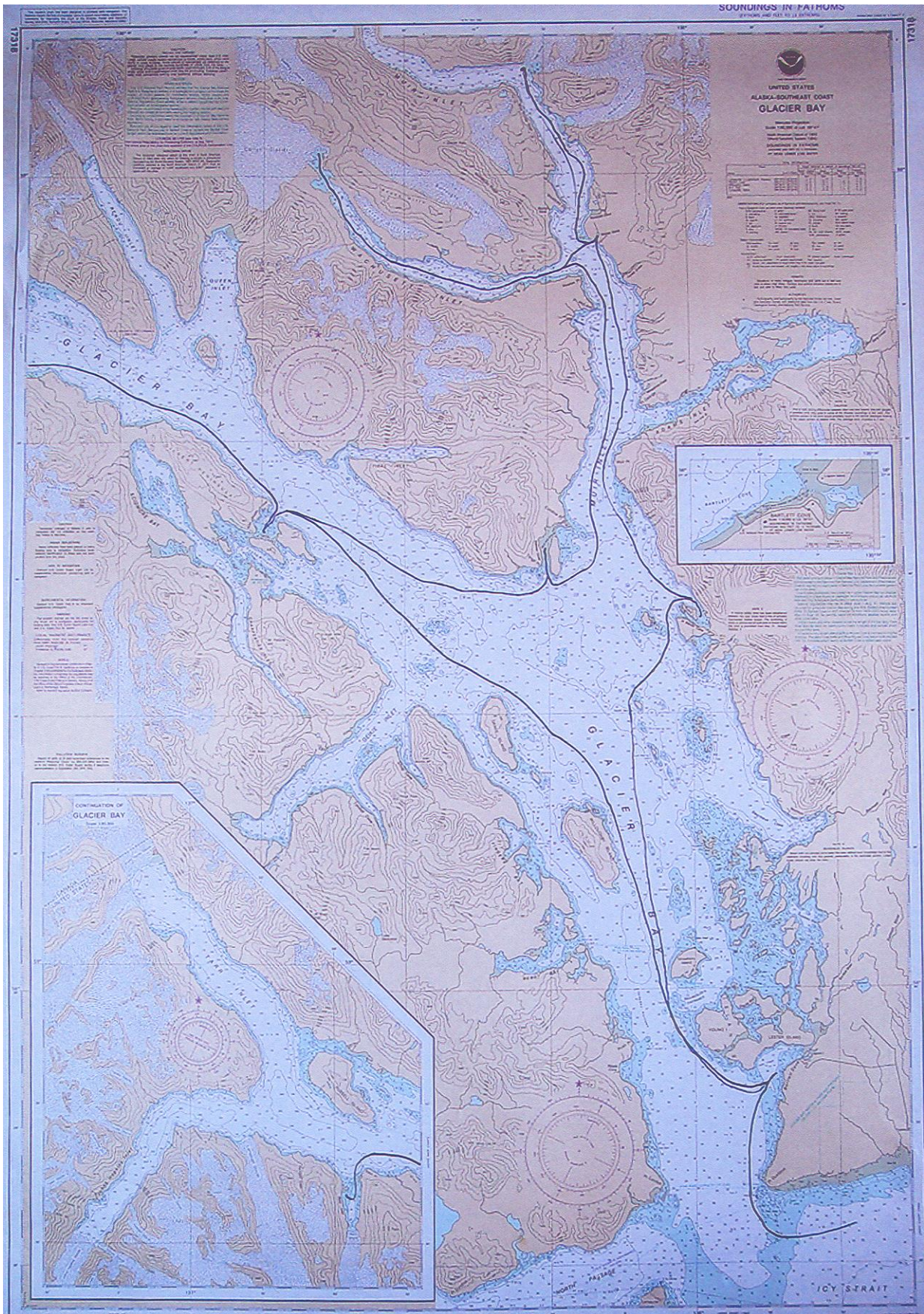
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