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Department of Commerce and Labor  
COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

*O. H. Tittmann*  
Superintendent.

State: *Alaska*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

*Topo* Sheet No *2806*

LOCALITY:

*Cape Trinity and  
Cape Melior Island*

*1906*

CHIEF OF PARTY:

*W. C. Hodgkins*

U. S. C. & G. SURVEY.  
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
JUL 19 1907  
Rec. No

2806

# Descriptive Report

2806  
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
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JUN 19 1907  
Rec. No.

to accompany Topographic Sheet No. 2806,

Cape Trinity and Aiaktalik Island, Alaska.

COAST AND  
GEODESIC SURVEY

As projected, this sheet would have included the Geese Islands and the shore eastward from Cape Trinity, on the northern side of Geese Island Strait. On account of bad weather, however, all that could be surveyed on this sheet was a short stretch of shore line on each side of the point of Cape Trinity and the western half of Aiaktalik Island, besides the smaller island to the southwestward of the latter, called by the natives "Little Aiaktalik", but for which I suggest the name "Sundstrom", in memory of one of the quartermasters of the Patterson, who was drowned off the south point of this island while acting as coxswain of the launch "Reynard", on June 29, 1906.

The land areas shown on this sheet are rolling and comparatively low, resembling sculptured drift in their surface formation, but almost always terminating in steep rocky cliffs at the shore. In some places, however, earth bluffs take the place of the rock cliffs.

The western shore of Cape Trinity and of the islands as well is fringed with numerous outlying and pinnacle rocks. There is reason to believe that similar irregularities occur in the bottom of that part of the approach to Alitak Bay, as the soundings vary very suddenly at times. No dangers are known to exist as much as half a mile from the beach, except

at the western point of the entrance to Aiaktalik Harbor, where there is an extensive reef of rocks which uncovers at half tide and which is marked at high water by a heavy growth of kelp, so that there is ordinarily no difficulty in avoiding it by the exercise of ordinary care. This patch is separated from the shore reef by a deep but narrow passage, through which the tidal currents run with considerable force, especially at springs.

Outside of the dangers mentioned the water is generally bold but the ever present danger of submerged pinnacle rocks not yet discovered makes it advisable to give these shores a berth of a mile.

Beaches composed of shingle and sometimes of sand are found at intervals in the more sheltered parts of the coast but at high tide the rocky cliffs of the more exposed portions are beaten directly by the waves.

Aiaktalik Island is composed of two distinct hills, the eastern of which is the larger, connected by a neck of sand and shingle. On the northern side of this neck, at the head of the harbor formed by the two parts of the island and the kelp reef already described, is the native village of Aiaktalik with about eighty inhabitants. Back of the village, in the southern part of the sandy neck, is a lagoon of moderate extent with a shallow passage into Sitkinak Strait.

There are no trees on these shores, but scrubby alder bushes occur in places. No land is cultivated, with the exception of small garden patches, and the inhabitants subsist almost entirely upon fish.

The only way of communication is by water, the two-holed bidarka being the kind of boat chiefly used.

At the village there is a small church of the Greek rite. During the summer the people spend a large part of their time at a point called by them Litnik, i.e. "Summer place", at the head of the large bight north of Aiaktalik Island, on the Cape Trinity shore, where a salmon stream flows into Geese Island Strait. At such times, the village is entirely deserted except for half starved dogs and cats.

The work shown on the sheet is from a compass reconnaissance made by Messrs Paul C. Whitney and W.M. Steirnagle.

*W.C. Hodgkins*  
Chief of Party.