

BRAVO NAUTILUS! WELCOME TO BRITAIN:

It was the end of the voyage. Nautilus came into Portland, Dorset, the maker of maritime history. And we, a maritime people ourselves, knew how to bid her welcome and acclaim her triumph. Nautilus set out, not to set some record of small practical value; but to make a voyage that would change the pattern of ocean travel. There has been no comparable achievement afloat since Drake circumnavigated the globe.

Commander Anderson and his crew of 115 paid gracious tribute to Britain by bringing Nautilus to an English port, for we too have contributed to Polar history. Nautilus was launched in 1954, the first ship of any kind to be nuclear powered. Incidentally, Mrs. Eisenhower only just made it with the champagne. As the hull slid to the water the operation seemed to emphasize her enormous length, 323 feet. But it was not size that made her unique, but nuclear power. She was to travel 60,000 miles before she had to be refuelling - a staggering fact indeed.

Commissioned in 1954, Nautilus soon began her many voyages. Off Honolulu, just over three weeks before she came into Portland, Nautilus began the mission that was to astound the world; her orders, to travel under the North Pole. When she submerged, the ship, as always, behaved perfectly. She had more than 8,000 miles ahead of her before she would reach England, but for the men who man the incredibly complex vessel the high drama lay nearer. It would come when they reached the polar ice cap.

The emergency breathing apparatus was tried out, but as the medical officer said later, the air condition throughout the trip was superior to what it is in most homes.

Off Point Barrow, Alaska, Nautilus went under the Polar ice cap. It would be nearly 2000 miles before she surfaced. On August first, she submerged. On the fourth Nautilus passed under the North Pole. Now comes news that a second American nuclear submarine has repeated the achievement. Between Iceland and Spitsbergen Nautilus was on the surface again.

Now, after her astonishing voyage, Nautilus was at Portland, for her Commander and crew to receive congratulations all round and, from the American Ambassador, Mr. J.H. Whitney, the Presidential citation. Perhaps no U.S. Ambassador to the court of St. James ever had a more pleasing task when was Mr. Whitney's now. But even so it is only being slowly realised of what immense practical value the voyage of Nautilus will be.

(Presidential citation)

"The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the Presidential Unit Citation to the U.S.S. Nautilus, for services in connection with operations in the Arctic Ocean, as set fourth below for outstanding achievement in completing the first voyage in history, across the top of the world, by sailing under the Arctic Ice Cap from the Bearing Straits to the Greenland Sea".

The men who designed and built Nautilus as well as Commander Anderson and his crew, have put all humanity in their debt by the historic voyage of under the Polar Ice.