

30th June

Memory verse

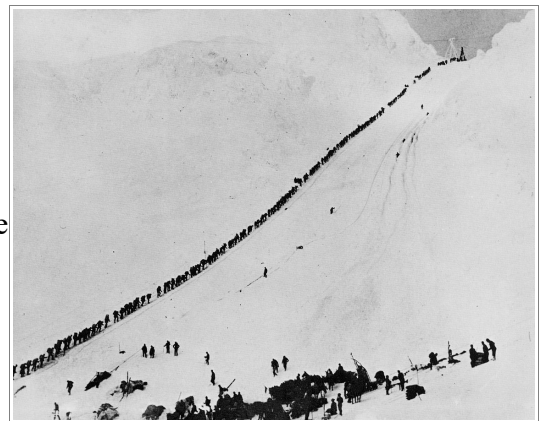
One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. Psalm 145:4



Map work¹

“STATEHOOD! Make it the forty-ninth!” proclaimed the headlines of the Anchorage Daily News on 30th June 1958, continuing, “The Senate tonight gave final congressional approval to statehood to the vast and rich north territory of Alaska in an historic vote that added a forty-ninth star to the flag. The roll call vote was 64 to 20 in favour of admission.”

The admission of Alaska to the States extended the USA to the borders of Siberia and the shore of the Arctic Ocean. The Russians had been the first non-native people to colonise Alaska but it became too expensive for them to maintain such a distant possession and in 1867 they sold the territory to the Americans. It was formally organised as a Territory of the USA in 1912 but did not become a State until the vote in 1958.



In 1897 thousands of men rushed to Alaska from all over the world. You can see some of them in the picture! Gold had been discovered. Today the lure is oil and natural gas which Alaska has in abundance.

Look at your atlas to see where Alaska is in relation to the rest of the USA. Look up the places marked in green.² Look up the Siberian place where the meteorite fell (see below) and work out how far it is from Anchorage.

There are about 20 “native” languages spoken in Alaska because there are a number of different indigenous people groups in the state. Fifteen percent of the population belong to these groups which is a higher percentage than in any other state in the USA. Ground breaking research into the origins of the “native” peoples of the Americas is taking place at the moment as genetic research is being placed alongside a biblical timescale and giving very surprising results.³

1 Adapted from Owen, Evan, *What Happened Today* Volume 2, available on the *Mothers' Companion* Flashdrive. <https://motherscompanion.weebly.com>.

2 You can also read about what is happening to the Alaskan coast line here: <https://answersingenesis.org/environmental-science/climate-change/adios-alaska/>

3 .Episodes 11 and 12 of this series https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xP297DOy-Pc&list=PL0aJPc4nX_wB73qvkhJ1u75mbiV2Frn-v have the information.

Astronomy, geology and ethnology



Have you ever seen a shooting star? These beautiful celestial phenomena are really meteors – pieces of rock which have entered the earth's atmosphere from space. The heat causes the rock to vaporise, causing a streak of light falling through the night sky. Of course meteors occur during the day but cannot be seen because of the daylight. Sometimes, however, a meteor large enough not to get burnt up enters the atmosphere. This falls to the ground as a lump of rock or metal called a meteorite. Small meteorites can be found lying about – if you know what you are looking for. On the left is a picture of the largest known intact meteorite. I wish the picture showed a person

standing by it so that you could see its size; it weighs more than 60 tonnes and is made of iron!

On 30th June 1908 a huge meteor fell in **Tunguska in Russian Siberia**. “It was like the sky opened up and split in half. I put my hands in front of my eyes and I could see the bones in my hands,” recalled a lady from the Evenki people. “Luckily,” says one book breezily, “it was in a uninhabited area and nobody was hurt.”⁴ In fact the area *was* inhabited but the people who lived there probably counted for “nobody” in 1908. It was nearly twenty years before an expedition to the area, led by Leonid Alekseyevich Kulik, (1883-1942) a mineralogist with a special interest in meteorites from St Petersburg Museum, reached the place to investigate. Artist Nikolay Ivanovich Fedorov accompanied him in order to depict the event as described by the Evenki eye witnesses. They had tried to reach the area previously in 1921 but failed due to the harsh conditions.

Kulik interviewed eye witnesses and explored the area, noting that the trees were blown down in a vast circle, roots inward. He found no fragments of the meteorite itself, however. The Evenki were reluctant to talk about the incident at first as their shamans⁵ had convinced them that the event had been sent by their gods to punish them.

‘There was thunder,’ said one. ‘The earth began to move and rock.’

‘I saw the sky split in two,’ recalled another. ‘Fire appeared high and wide around us.’

‘It became dazzling bright,’ a third told Kulik. ‘As if there was a second sun in the sky.’

One thing is certain — they weren’t making it up. Shockwaves rolled right around the planet that day. Twice. Seismic measuring devices in cities all over world picked it up. Windows broke and people standing 60 kilometres from the explosion were rudely flung to the ground. Observers 170 kilometres from the blast saw something sun-like in the cloudless sky, and ‘deafening bangs’ were heard 500 kilometres away.

In Edwardian London, newspapers reported luminous clouds appearing in the night sky — providing enough light to play tennis in the middle of the night. There was temporary talk of a midnight sun. Russian publications reported it too — briefly. And then it was forgotten. But not by the Evenki.⁶

Modern researchers estimate that the meteor entered Earth's atmosphere at a speed of about 33,500 miles per hour. It heated the air surrounding it to around 25000°C. Then the combination of pressure and heat caused the meteor to break up and destroy itself, producing a fireball and releasing energy

4 Owen, Evan, *What Happened Today* Volume 2, available on the *Mothers' Companion* Flashdrive. <https://motherscompanion.weebly.com>.

5 Mediums or “witchdoctors.” This word is actually from the Evenki language although it is now used in English.

6 <https://medium.com/love-nature/the-strange-history-of-siberia-s-unexplainable-explosion-1000-times-greater-than-an-atomic-bomb-e10a2616486c>

equivalent to about 185 atomic bombs like the one used on the Japanese city of Hiroshima at the end of the Second World War. The meteor blew itself up before it hit the surface of the earth and that is why Kulik could find no crater made by an impact. The only later similar event, on a much smaller scale, of which we have better records occurred was the Chelyabinsk meteor in 2013. There were dash-cam and CCVT recordings that have enabled scientists and meteorologists to analyse the effect of the meteor – which was totally unpredicted.⁷



The Evenki today are a group of people who have had little or no experience of the gospel. Some converted to a kind of Russian Orthodox religion centuries ago which blends the idol worship of Orthodoxy with the shamanistic practices of the Evenki religion. The picture on the left shows shamanistic totems in modern Siberia.⁸ Today would be a good day to remember the Evenki people in our prayers and pray for evangelists to be sent to them.

Something to make

What is the most famous bridge over the River Thames? Many people would say “London Bridge.” But the bridge most people have in their mind's eye is not London Bridge but Tower Bridge with its twin towers and lifting mechanism. Tower Bridge was opened on **30th June** 1894. This makes it older than the present London Bridge which opened in 1973 but not older than its predecessor, a nineteenth century arched bridge which had in turn replaced a stone bridge that had stood for about 600 years.



In the nineteenth century London's docks were growing. New docks opened at Rotherhithe on the south bank of the river and alongside them industrial and residential areas. The people who lived and worked there could not cross the river by bridge without going a considerable distance to London Bridge. London Bridge itself also became congested with traffic. A new bridge was needed.

Below London bridge however the river was very busy with shipping. The task was to build a bridge that would not interfere with transport on the river. Research was carried out: how many ships passed up to the Pool of London every day? How high were their masts? The information was helpful in identifying the problem. But how could it be solved?

A floating chain bridge at Greenwich was one proposal. Free ferries was another proposal. A third idea was to have a high bridge over the river approached by a spiral ramp on the south bank. All these schemes were rejected and instead the idea of the City of London's architect, Horace Jones, was adopted. He proposed a low level bridge with a central section that could be moved to allow ships to pass. In 1883 there was an exhibition of the various proposals which included eleven different models. A deputation went to visit various other lifting bridges in England and in Holland all of which were operated on the bascule or counterweight principle – which is how London Bridge

⁷ You can see the footage here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBLjB5qavxY>.

⁸ You can hear Bible readings in Evenki here: <https://globalrecordings.net/en/program/25750>.

works.⁹

Get out your building equipment: Lego, wooden bricks, Knex, whatever you have. Set yourself a target. You might have to make bridge, for instance, strong enough for toy cars to pass over but high enough for the cat to walk under. Or maybe it has to open so that your Mum can get through with the dinner! Plan your bridge and be creative: use whatever comes to hand!

⁹ Watch the bridge open up for a huge cruise ship here and see what the controller's job is like.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LVurL2udOTw>.