Unalaska, Alaska. (Delayed): Home tonight out here on the ragged edge of the world are the Aleuts, the only North American forced to flee their homes by the Pacific war.

Gone three years, they came back today, their oriental stoicism unbroken by the sight of rundown houses, dilapidated as a result of foul weather and souvenir hunters.

One by one, 120 came down the gangplank of an army transport and blinked their eyes when they looked at the snow-covered mountains, palisades of light.

Babies in arms and children born as long ago as 1942 on the Alaska mainland were there, too. It was a strange homecoming for a strange people who were never happy away from their traps and dories and the treeless hills that stick out of the cold sea.

The island looked different to the repatriated people. Good roads had replaced muddy trails. Army and Navy air fields were beehives of activity where the Aleuts used to graze their sheep.

They had been homesick a long time. The Aleuts were moved en masse from the islands in 1942 -- all except 100 or so who were at Attu. Their fate is a mystery. No word of them or the two white teachers, Charles Foster Jones and Mrs. Etta Jones, who were with them, has been received since the Japanese seized Attu in 1942. When the island was retaken by American troops there was no evidence of the natives or the teachers.

Those who disembarked today were only a part of the islanders being repatriated. Others on the same army transport were headed for Nikolski, Akutan, and Atka. There were 400 in all.

The entire village of Atka is being rebuilt. The Japanese bombed it, and the navy destroyed it when it appeared the Japanese might land there. Even the Russian Orthodox church, with its onion shaped spire, is being rebuilt.

Don C. Foster, general superintendent of the Alaskan Indian service, said the army and navy would supply the Aleuts with necessities, replacing even lost guns and dories. Soon the men will be able to go to the Pribilof Islands for the sealing season and others will take up their traps.