

ARCTIC EXPEDITION,
1875-6.

LIEUTENANT W. H. MAY.

SLEDGE JOURNAL,

18th to 25th June.

H.M.S. "ALERT" (AT SEA),

Lat. 59° 35' North. Long. 53° 25' West.

9th October, 1876.

SIR,

In compliance with your memorandum of June 18th, I have the honour to inform you that I left the ship with the dog-sledge "Clements Markham," Jas. Self, A.B., Wm. Malley, A.B., George Thornback, A.B., and the six dogs mentioned in the margin, on the evening of that day, provisioned with twelve days' groceries, 8 lbs. of pemmican, to meet Lieutenant Aldrich and party, taking medical comforts for their use in case they wanted them. The following are the results from my journal :—

Black Face
(King).
Sal (Queen).
Ginger.
Bos.
Topsy.
Starver.

June 18th to 19th.

Left the ship at 10.30 P.M.; arrived at the tent, Mushroom Point, at 12.30 A.M., and took from there all the medical comforts (with the exception of one tin of arrowroot and one of milk), and one gallon of spirits. Arrived at Harley Spit at 2.30 A.M., and lunched; arrived and camped at Cane's Folly at 8.20 A.M. The travelling as far as Mushroom Point was very good; crossing Ravine Bay the snow was softer, and amongst the hummocks it was heavy; from Harley Spit to boats the travelling again was very good; crossing Black Cliff Bay it was very heavy, as every 20 or 30 yards we came across soft snow, the sledge sinking deep into it, and the dogs useless, being up to their bellies and hardly able to get along themselves, so we had to drag the sledge across these places ourselves.

3 A.M.
North, 2-3,
misty.
Barometer 30-18.
Temp. +28°.

Shot a goose close to the boats, which we had for supper.

Took from tent at Cane's Folly three tins of preserved meat for dogs, and filled our spirit cans up, as we found the 8-man lamp (which I had taken to gain time) used with the 5-man cooking apparatus very extravagant, burning 6 to 7 pints of spirits in lieu of 2 to 3 pints.

Ginger has been very sick from eating the skins of birds, and consequently has not been much good.

Distance travelled, 22 miles.

Hours travelling, 9.

Lunch, 1.

June 19th to 20th.

Roused the cook at 5 P.M.; I started off to Dépôt Point at 6.45, but could not make out any alteration in the dépôt at View Point, nor could I see anything of Lieutenant Aldrich's camp on the floe.

North, 2-3, o.m.
Temp. +30°.

Returning to Cane's Folly, started with sledge at 9 P.M.; lunched at midnight; started again at 1 A.M.; passed Porter's grave and picked up 56 lbs. of pemmican close to one of Commander Markham's old encampments; arrived at the dépôt, View Point, at 5.30 A.M. Whilst I looked through the papers at dépôt, I sent Malley up the hill, and he saw H.M. sledge "Challenger" amongst the hummocks, just off the mouth of Snow Valley, so fired gun to attract attention. I walked along the icefoot and met Aldrich, and was very glad to hear that although his party were all attacked by scurvy, none as yet had bad symptoms; he walked back with me to my tent, and we had supper together, sending Malley to his camp with some medical comforts and to tell them all the news.

The travelling has been good; amongst the hummocks there was a good deal of sludge, and the snow was soft in places.

We destroyed the dépôt as soon as we saw Aldrich's party; rather late in bagging, as we had lots to talk about.

The dogs were a good deal done up; last night Topsy gave Starver a very nasty bite in the stomach, making a large hole there, consequently both she and Ginger (who has been sick constantly since leaving the ship) had fits, and during the latter part of the journey we have been obliged to carry Ginger on the sledge. Topsy is also lame from a bite which Sal gave her. So to-night instead of making them all fast together, I had them fastened up in couples.

Distance travelled, 18 miles.

Hours travelling, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$.

„ lunch, 1.

June 20th to 21st.

Calm, o.m.
Barometer 29.75.
Temp. +32°.

Roused cook at 7.15 P.M., and sent Malley and Thornback as soon as they had had their breakfast to assist "Challenger's"; Self and I packed the sledge, taking "Challenger's" depôt.

At 10 P.M. Aldrich came in, and we removed the stones from the depôt, making everything as level as possible; we then took the dog-sledge through the first ridge of hummocks, and leaving Self to pitch the tent and unpack sledge, Aldrich and I went back to his party, who by this time had fallen out from the drag ropes with the exception of Ayles; they were all much affected at seeing us, and could only just crawl along through the hummocks; how they managed to get a sledge along one can hardly imagine. Aldrich, Ayles, Malley, and Thornback and myself dragged the sledge through the hummocks up to where my tent was pitched, and we then had lunch at 4 A.M.

9 A.M.
Calm, b.c.
Barometer 29.95.
Temp. +36°.

During lunch time, packed the gear of both sledges on the "Challenger." Self and myself took empty cases and all gear that could be left behind into View Point with dog-sledge, and then followed Aldrich, who had not got very far before we picked him up. The plan of travelling Aldrich adopted was, himself, Ayles, Malley, Thornback, and myself dragging the "Challenger," Self with dog-sledge taking the invalids along by short fleets, but even then we found we were detained by the invalids. Camped at 9.30 A.M.

The travelling has been very heavy, "one, two, three, haul" nearly all the time over hummocks.

Dogs a little better; Starver had another fit; Ginger takes his food now.

Took 20 lbs. of pemmican for dogs' meat from View Point Depôt.

Aldrich has joined me in my tent I am glad to say, and Malley or Thornback sleep in his; the medical comforts are very much appreciated.

Distance travelled, 8 miles.

Hours travelling, 9.

„ lunch 1½.

June 21st to 22nd.

9 P.M.
Calm, b.c.
Barometer 29.75.
Temp. +34°.

Roused cook at 8.25 P.M., and started by 11.25. It takes us a long time camping and getting under weigh, on account of the extra cooking done for the invalids, and also packing the sledge, as we are only five to take down the two tents; the dog-sledge starting off with the invalids as soon as breakfast is over, and not getting in till after the tents are pitched.

Dog-sledge started this morning with the excuse of pitching the tent two or three miles on for the invalids, but in reality to take down the cross erected over Porter's grave, as Aldrich did not wish his men in their present weak state to know about it.

On account of the Sergeant not being so well this morning, Aldrich thought it better to put him on the sledge, so that the collapsible boat had to be left behind; after going one and a half miles we had to wait an hour for the invalids to come up, as the dog-sledge is not able to get along with more than two at a time; we then went on for another two miles, and lunched at 2.50 A.M., the dog-sledge going back to replace the cross and pick up tent gear.

Started after lunch at 5.20, and travelled at a fair pace up to 10.45, when we camped about four miles north of Depôt Point.

Midnight.
Calm, b.c.
Barometer 29.90.
Temp. +34°.

Dog-sledge in the afternoon took Goode and Doidge on to place fixed for encampment, and then went back to pick up Stubbs and Mann; the latter makes but slow progress, and the sledge had to go back almost to our lunch place. Stubbs fainted before getting to encampment.

11 A.M.
N.N.W., 4.5 b.c.
Barometer 30.
Temp. +34°.

The travelling during the first part of the journey was good, but towards the end the snow was getting very sticky.

Just as we were starting this morning, Aldrich thought he saw a sledge coming through the hummocks, so went on with dog-sledge, but it turned out to be Flo, the dog we let go at View Point on June 1st; she was looking as lean as a lantern, but could not be tempted to approach us.

Dog-sledge. Distance travelled, 20 miles.

"Challenger." „ „ 9 miles.

Hours travelling, 8¾.

„ lunch and detained, 2½.

June 22nd to 23rd.

Roused cook at 10.30 P.M. It had been blowing fresh during the night, but was falling when I roused the cook.

Started at 1.25 A.M. Dog-sledge took Stubbs, Doidge and five-man tent to the large floe off Depôt Point, where they pitched and returned for Goode, Mann and Mitchell, the latter not being so well this morning.

"Challenger" arrived at five-man tent at 4.15, and pitched tent for lunch, as the wind was very cutting, the invalids feeling it a good deal; the dog-sledge did not return to lunch encampment till 6 A.M., as it is as much as the dogs can do to drag two men at a time. Altered the weights for the latter part of the journey, taking the five-man tent and gear on "Challenger." Started at 7.15, and arrived at Cane's Folly at 11.30, where we found Parr and Feilden who were there trying to procure game. Parr kindly took the flag and placed it on Depôt Point, so that you should see it from our cairn.

The travelling has been heavy, frequently sinking in the snow above the knees; during the second part of the journey it was heavier; a great many "one, two, three, hauls," and not an inch; a great deal of sludge and some water amongst the hummocks.

All the "Challenger's" were glad to get so far, and to find some hares and geese for their consumption; Ayles is not so well, having a stiff knee, which has been brought on sooner by the pace we have been travelling; but we must try and keep pretty well a-head of the thaw, as it is the snow is getting very moist, and our feet are wet through all day.

Dog-sledge. Distance travelled, 20 miles.
 "Challenger." " " 7 miles.
 Hours travelling, 6.
 " lunch and detained, 3.
 Dog-sledge. Travelling, 9½ hours.

11 P.M.
 N.N.W., 2-3, o.c.
 Barometer 30.05.
 Temp. +34°.

11 A.M.
 S.W., 4-5.
 Barometer 29.75.
 Temp. +35°.

June 23rd to 24th.

Roused cook at 10.30 P.M., and started at 2.30 A.M. We left everything behind we could, only taking on 24 rations; took from tent Cane's Folly 3 lbs. of bacon, three 4 lb. tins of preserved meat for dogs, and 7 geese which Parr and Feilden had shot.

Lunched at north end of Simmon's Island; started after lunch at 11.10, arriving at boats at 3 P.M. Dog-sledge did not get in for 2¼ hours after us. The five of us found great difficulty during the latter part of the journey in getting the sledge along.

The travelling during first part was heavy, frequently sinking up to the knees in the sticky snow, and during the second part amongst the blue tops we had standing pulls for over 100 yards frequently, the snow being so deep that we were obliged to crawl on all fours, as we sank so deep on our feet; there was water under the snow, and it was very wet work.

Broke the upper part of the right runner and back of the dog-sledge; fished them with spare battens.

Had goose again for supper.
 Distance travelled, dog-sledge, 16 miles.
 " " "Challenger," 6 miles.
 Hours travelling, dogs, 11 miles.
 " " "Challenger," 8½.
 ,, at lunch and detained 3.

S.W., 6-7, o.c.
 Barometer 29.98.
 Temp. +34°.

3 P.M.
 S.W., 4-5, o.c.
 Barometer 29.98.
 Temp. +35°.

June 24th to 25th.

Roused cook at 3.30 A.M., and had breakfast. Wind moderating, started at 7.15, adopting the same plan of travel as before. Stopped for lunch at 11.15, in Ravine Bay; started again at 1.30, and arrived at tents, Mushroom Point, at 3 P.M., where we had 3 hours' rest and tea. Started from tents at 6.30 P.M., made sail on "Challenger" soon after starting; at 10 P.M. observed you and party coming out to relief; after meeting you went on to the ship with dog-sledge, taking Goode and Mann; arrived on board at midnight.

The travelling round Harley Spit was good, and the wind having gone and a bright day, it was so hot that we were hauling in our drawers and shirts, but the wind

4 A.M.
 S.W., 2-3, b.c.
 Barometer 30.05.
 Temp. +34°.

6 P.M.
S.W., 6-7, b.c.
Barometer 30.
Temp. +35°.

springing up on rounding Harley Spit, we soon put on our trowsers and jumpers; crossing Ravine Bay the snow was very heavy and deep, and we had to have a great many standing pulls.

Took from tents, Mushroom Point, 3 tins of ox cheek, a small bag of biscuits, 1 pot of milk and 1 of arrowroot.

Before concluding, I wish again to bring to your notice Jas. Self, A.B., who has worked with the dog-sledge all the time; he was most indefatigable in his exertions to help the invalids along, and is a very trustworthy man.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Captain G. S. Nares.

WILLIAM H. MAY,

Lieutenant.

Weights.

	lbs.	ozs.
5-man tent	24	4
4 poles	21	8
sledge	39	0
back	8	4
bottom	2	4
Lower robe	16	0
Waterproof	10	0
8-man trough	5	12
Cooking apparatus	16	0
Medical box	3	13
4 bags	32	0
4 knapsacks	32	0
2 spare battens	3	7
Rifle and gun	12	0
Constant	226	4

Provisions.

	lbs.	ozs.
Pemmican	8	0
Biscuit	42	0
Bacon	18	0
Potatoes	9	0
Cocoa	3	0
Tea	1	8
Sugar	12	0
Fuel (spirits)	16	0 pints.
Rum	6	0 "
Pepper and salt	1	0 "
Lime juice	6	0 "
Medical comforts	40	0
Provisions	162	8
Constant	226	4
	388	12
	64	13 per dog.

Provisions for dogs were picked up at the different depôts.