

ARCTIC EXPEDITION,
1875-6.

LIEUTENANT W. H. MAY.

SLEDGE
RELIEF PARTY TO ASSIST COMMANDER
MARKHAM'S PARTY.

JOURNAL.

8th to 14th June.

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

Lat. 71° 12' N. ; Long. 57° 37' W.),

23rd September, 1876.

SIR,

In compliance with your letter of June 8th, I have the honour to inform you that I left the ship, accompanied by Dr. Moss and Jas. Self, A.B., on the evening of that day, with the dog-sledge "Clements Markham" and the six dogs mentioned in the margin, provisioned for five days, and taking medical comforts for the relief of Commander Markham's party; the results of my journey are as follows:—

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

June 8th to 9th.

Left the ship at 11.30 P.M.; lunched at the boats; Black Cliff Bay at 6.15 A.M.

Starting again at 6.40 A.M., camped at 10.30 A.M. on a large floe 1 mile north of Dépôt Point.

North, 1.2 o.m.s.
Barometer 29.95.
Temp. +31°.

The travelling on the whole was good, but the snow was deep in places; crossing Black Cliff Bay, followed Lieutenant Parr's homeward tracks. Dr. Moss on snow shoes was able to keep ahead of the dogs and pick up the track, which assisted me greatly, as Self and myself had to shove behind in order to keep the sledge moving through the snow, for if it stops the dogs sit down and look at you, and you have to have a one, two, three, haul, to start again.

Self was a little tired, so I did the cooking and made him get into his bag, as I only intended to make a short halt.

Distance travelled, 25 miles.

Hours travelling, 9½.

„ lunch, 1 hour 25 minutes.

June 9th to 10th.

Breakfasted at 4.30 P.M., and started at 5.45, following up Parr's track, which was of great advantage, as the weather was thick, and picking our own route would have delayed us very much. Sighted and joined Commander Markham's party about 5 miles from View Point at 10.30 P.M. His party of course were very glad to see us, but we were very sorry to hear of the death of George Porter, R.M.A.; there were only six, including the Commander, who were able to pull a sledge.

4 P.M.
North, 1.2 o.c.m.
Barometer 30.5.
Temp. +29°.

We turned with the Commander's party, and after travelling for another mile (during which we halted whilst the sick had lime juice), I camped at 2 A.M., as we were all tired. The Commander's party having only done half a day's work, went on another mile.

Dr. Moss after supper visited the sick.

The travelling during the first part of the journey was heavy, for amongst the hummocks and sometimes on the floes, we sank in snow up to the knees.

2 A.M.
North, 2 o.m.
Barometer 30.
Temp. +26°.

Distance travelled, 11 miles.

Hours, 8¼.

„ lunch nil.

June 10th to 11th, 3rd Journey.

Roused the cook at 2.30 P.M., and started at 6 P.M.; went on to Commander Markham's camp; we found them just getting breakfast, so I sent Self into sledge "Victoria's" tent, and I went into "Marco Polo's" and told them all the ship news, to say nothing of our getting a second breakfast.

3 P.M.
North, 1.2 o.m.s.
Barometer 30.05.
Temp. +30°.

Commander Markham gave me orders to return to meet your party, so leaving Dr. Moss and medical comforts, started at 7 P.M., and went on towards Dépôt Point to meet you, placed a flag on hummock on a large floe, 2 miles beyond Commander's camp.

Met you and party at 9.30, and you sent me back with Egerton and Thornback; leaving our tent on the way at flag previously placed on floe; rejoined the Commander at midnight, and after assisting him for a short time, halted for lunch.

Half an hour's march after lunch brought us up to you. Yours and Commander's party encamped at 4.0 A.M., about 4½ miles north of Dépôt Point.

8 A.M.
N.W., 2.3 o.m.s.
Barometer 30.07.
Temp. +29°.

Started with the dog-sledge at 4 A.M., with two of the invalids, Rawlings and Pearson, on the sledge; arriving at Cane's Folly at 7.20 A.M., where we found Mr. Wootton with eight-man tent. Had our supper, which consisted of hare and preserved meat, and were soon asleep.

The travelling has been good on the whole; we had a breeze from the northward, which freshened up towards the latter part of the journey, making it very cold.

The dog-sledge whilst travelling with Commander's party, carried the invalids, taking two on at a time.

Distance travelled, 18 miles.
Hours travelling, 11 hours 20 minutes.
Lunch, 1 hour.

June 11th to 12th.

Barometer 29.95.
Calm, o.m.
Temp. +34°.

Started from camp, Cane's Folly, at 7.30 P.M., and met your party at 9.15; took Thornback and Simpson on sledge, and returned to Cane's Folly; lunched and waited the arrival of your party.

We all camped at Cane's Folly, and from 2 A.M. to 5 A.M. packing the provisions to be left in depôt here, and you were rigging up the twelve-man sledge as an ambulance to carry 4 men.

In consequence of the high temperature, the travelling was not so good as yesterday; it being very sludgy in places.

Distance travelled, 12 miles.
Hours travelling, 5.
Detained packing provisions, &c., 4 hours.

June 12th to 13th.

Calm, o.o.c.
Barometer 29.95.
Temp. +32°.

Started at 8 P.M. for the ship, with the two invalids, Shirley and Pearson, on the sledge; crossing Black Cliff Bay the snow was deep, making it heavy work both for the dogs and us; the upper part of our right runner carried away, so fished it with spare battens; stopped for twenty minutes at the boats, to give the invalids some lime juice.

Lunched in Ravine Bay at 2 A.M.; administered champagne, Bagot's extract, and a little calve's foot-jelly to Shirley and Pearson; started after lunch at 3.20, arriving on board at 6.45. A.M. The travelling fair.

Distance travelled, 22 miles.
Hours travelling, 9.
Lunch, 40 minutes.

June 13th to 14th.

Left the ship at 5.45 P.M., and picked up yours and Commander's party at 8.30 P.M.; gave to the latter medical comforts and soft bread.

Returned to the ship with Lawrence, Harley, and Winston on the sledge. The two former not being able to haul any more, and left Thornback with Commander's party.

Left at tent, Mushroom Point, 6 4 lbs. ox cheek and 4 gallons of rum.

Arrived at the ship at midnight on the 13th.

Distance travelled, 15 miles.
Hours travelling, 6½.

Before concluding, I wish to bring to your notice Jas. Self, A.B., who has now accompanied me on three trips, he is a most willing and able man, and looks after the dogs very well.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM H. MAY.

Captain G. S. Nares.

Weights.

					lbs.	ozs.
5-man tent	..	..	..	..	24	4
poles	..	..	..	..	21	8
lower robe	..	..	..	..	16	0
3 bags	..	..	..	..	24	0
2 duffles	..	..	..	..	10	0
3 knapsacks	..	..	..	..	20	0
5-man cooking apparatus	..	..	..	..	13	0
Sledge bottom	..	..	..	..	2	4
" back	..	..	..	..	8	4
8-man trough	..	..	..	..	5	12
Spare battens	..	..	..	..	3	7
Waterproof sheet	..	..	..	..	10	0
Medical box	..	..	..	..	3	13
Rifle and gun	..	..	..	..	12	0
Sledge	..	..	..	..	39	0
					<hr/>	
					213	4
					<hr/>	

Provisions, 15 Rations.

					lb.	ozs.
Pemmican	..	..	..	..	11	0
Biscuit	..	..	..	..	13	0
Bacon	..	..	..	..	5	8
Potatoes	..	..	..	..	1	14
Cocoa	..	..	..	..	0	15
Tea	..	..	..	..	0	8
Sugar	..	..	..	..	2	13
Lime juice	..	..	..	..	0	15
Rum	..	..	..	..	1	14
Fuel (spirits)	15	0
Salt and pepper	1	0
Medical comforts	50	0
					<hr/>	
					104	7
6 dogs, 4 days	48	0
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Provisions..	152	7
Constants..	213	4
					<hr/>	
					6)365	11
					<hr/>	
					60	15 per dog.
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