

ARCTIC EXPEDITION,

1875-6.

LIEUTENANT W. H. MAY.

SLEDGE JOURNAL,

25th May to 7th June.

SLEDGE JOURNEY TO FEILDEN PENINSULAR. LIEUT. W. H. MAY.

Between 25th May and 7th June, 1876.

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

Lat. 73° 33' N. ; Long. 58° 48' W.

September 20th, 1876.

SIR,

I have the honour to inform you that I left the ship with the dog-sledge "Clements Markham," 7 dogs (mentioned in the margin), on May 25th, provisioned for ten days; accompanied by and under the personal superintendence of yourself; also accompanied by Captain Feilden, R.A., Naturalist, James Self, A.B., John Hollins, private R.M.L.I., and Spiro Capato (servant).

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

The following are the results of our journey from day to day:—

May 25th to 26th.

Left the ship at 10.30 P.M. Whilst crossing Ravine Bay saw a large wolf, which we did not follow, as we thought we should get a shot at him before our return. Arrived at the tent placed at the entrance of Dumbell Bay at 2.30 A.M., and had lunch, leaving here 1 gallon of spirits (fuel) and taking one sleeping bag for yourself. Proceeded after lunch at 3.40 A.M.; encamped at 5.40, three miles beyond Harley Spit, making a short journey on account of it being John Hollins and Spiro Capato's first trip.

3 A.M.
Calm, misty.
Barometer 29.70.
Temp. +31½°.

The travelling was very good in some places, between hummocks or close to shore; it was sludgy where water had come up through the tidal cracks; the snow was getting soft in places, but the dogs, who were pulling 102 lbs. each, only required a help in one or two places.

We were all bagged and asleep by 9.30 A.M.; the temperature in tent varied between 50° and 60°, and we slept comfortably without an upper robe.

Distance travelled, 14 miles.
Hours travelling, 6h.
,, lunch, 1h. 10m.

May 26th to 27th.

Roused the cook at 3.30 P.M., but as it was snowing and very thick we did not hurry to get away.

3 P.M.
N.W. 2.3, o.s.
Barometer 29.62.
Temp. +26°.
N.W. 5.6.
Midnight.
N.W. 2.3; o.
Barometer 29.65.
Temp. +20°.

Got away at 7.15 P.M., following along the track, as we could not see the land, but it was difficult to pick up any track on account of them being nearly filled up with snow-drift; passed close to the northward of Simmon's Island, and as the wind was increasing, and still snowing, we camped when about 3 miles from Depôt Point, at 11.15 P.M., and had lunch. The wolf was following our track, and we had a good look at him, but he was not within shot.

After our lunch we went to sleep, and roused up again at 7 A.M.; as the weather had cleared a little, had lime juice and biscuit, and started at 8.15 A.M.; we could not make out the track; you were ahead picking out a route; the weather was anything but nice, blowing and snowing. Stopped and encamped at 11 A.M., on account of Hollins, who was not well, about 2½ miles from Hercules Point.

The travelling, which was heavy, on account of the soft snow, was over old floes and some young ice off Depôt Point; in some places amongst the fringes of hummocks round the old floes it was sludgy.

The wolf still following, Feilden and I dodged behind a hummock whilst the sledge went on, hoping we should get a shot, but he smelt us, and after waiting until one of my fingers was frost-bitten, we thought it time to go on, and came to the conclusion he was a very clever gentleman.

Noon.
Calm; o.; misty.
Barometer 29.80.
Temp. +24°.

Distance travelled, 12 miles.
Hours travelling, 7.

May 27th to 28th.

Roused cook at 6.30 P.M. Started at 9.15, and stood in towards Hercules Point; you went a head, picking out route, which was not easy work in this thick weather; the snow was also soft, making it heavy work, as one sank half way up to the knees.

8 P.M.
Calm, misty.
Barometer 29.80.
Temp. +25°

(3245)

B

Stopped at 12.40 A.M. for lunch, whilst you and I went on to Hercules Point to find best route through shore hummocks.

Started after lunch at 2 A.M., and got over the ridge of hummocks between us and the shore, and then followed coast line to the northward; the snow on the land was so deep that the dogs, with 4 officers and men assisting with drag-belts, were not able to make any progress; so after getting round Hercules Point, we had to take some of the weights off the sledge and leave them in depôt; proceeding another mile and a half, we encamped on a ridge at 4 A.M. After we had had some lime juice Feilden and I returned with the dogs to bring up the depôt, arriving back at 6, when we soon bagged and all had supper.

6 A.M.
Calm, m.
Barometer 29.65.
Temp. +25°.

Distance travelled, 7 miles.

Hours travelling, $7\frac{1}{4}$.

„ lunch, $1\frac{1}{3}$.

May 28th to 29th.

Roused cook at 4.15 P.M., and had breakfast by 5.15. Left a depôt, as the travelling was too heavy to proceed with full sledge, and started at 7, following the coast line; Feilden went over the hills to geologise and shoot.

After half an hour the travelling became easier, and I started up the ravine in Rawlin's Bay to try and obtain fresh provisions, while you went on with the sledge for another half hour, and pitched the tent off mouth of ravine for lunch, sending Self back with dogs to pick up depôt. After lunch you proceeded and encamped just to the southward of Mount Julia.

I arrived back with Captain Feilden at 3.45; we having shot 2 ptarmigan and a hare; Feilden also obtained many specimens of fossils.

The travelling was easier to-day, and across Lawrence Bay it was very good.

The wolf was prowling round the camp.

Had supper and bagged by 7.33 A.M. Spliced the main brace, it being the anniversary of our leaving England.

Distance travelled, 8 miles.

Hours travelling, $9\frac{1}{2}$.

„ lunch 2.

May 29th to 30th.

Roused cook at 3.30 P.M., and breakfasted; at 5.30, you and Feilden started away up Mount Julia with theodolite, and had a beautiful day; all the high hills were very distinct; it was nine and a half hours before you returned to camp. Feilden also obtained many fossils.

Jas. Self and I started away at 5.20 P.M. with the dog-sledge for Depôt Point, taking all extra gear and fossils. Arrived at the depôt (Depôt Point) at 12.45 A.M., and had lunch.

Took from the depôt 44 rations, and deposited there 4 duffle jumpers, coverlet and fossils; leaving there at 3.45 A.M., and arrived back at camp at 11.30 A.M.; found everyone bagged, but awake; had our supper whilst you, Feilden, and the other two men had breakfast.

The travelling to Hercules Point was fair after rounding it; we had to go round the snow cliffs on the ice crossing the hummocks; took to the land again to the southward of snow cliffs, as we had got into a fog, and consequently had to follow the trend of the coast; it was very heavy travelling after this on account of the deep snow, and our progress was slow; the dogs were only just able to drag the light sledge, they being frequently up to their bellies in snow; in one place I went in up to my waist, and had to crawl out on hands and knees, and we were nearly always up to our knees. Coming back the weather being clearer, we crossed Marco Polo Bay on a blue topped floe, which saved us at least 2 miles. The dogs were very tired during the latter part of the journey; we were not sorry to get into our bags, and after supper did not require much rocking to send us to sleep. The weather was clear and foggy alternately, but the fog was low, as you on the top of Mount Julia had it clear, whilst we were in the fog on getting to Hercules Point.

The wolf was prowling about the camp, but he is very wary, and takes good care not to come within shot.

Calm, b.c.
Barometer 29.75.
Temp. +30°.

Calm, b.c.
Barometer 29.80.
Temp. +30°.

On our journey to-day Flo had a fit, and was little or no good during the latter part; Starver has been pulling very well.

Hollins had a touch of snow blindness, and my eyes were rather weak; shot to-day 2 hares, 2 ptarmigan.

Distance travelled, 36 miles.

Hours travelling, 15 hours 10 minutes.

Lunch and placing depôt, 3 hours.

May 30th to 31st.

As soon as you had had your breakfast you went away with Feilden, to take some more angles and collect fossils, arriving back at camp at 9 P.M., when we all had lunch together.

After lunch you went away surveying, and Feilden was exploring the country. Self and I went out shooting, but with no luck.

We all returned to camp at 4.30 A.M., and had supper, which consisted of ptarmigan and preserved meat.

Hollins' eyes were bad, so administered *vini opii*, mine were a little better.

The dogs had no work to-day.

It has been blowing to-day.

5 A.M.
N.W., 6.
Barometer 29.70.
Temp. +18°.

May 31st to June 1st.

A nasty day blowing at noon; you and Feilden went to collect fossils, and returned at 3.30 P.M., when we all roused up and had breakfast.

After breakfast you went up to the small cairn (which had been erected the day before) to take theodolite angles, whilst Feilden went geologising and shooting with Self.

You all returned to camp at 9 P.M., when we had lunch; by the time it was finished the wind had increased to a gale, and in consequence there was a great deal of snow drift, so there was nothing for it but to stay in tent.

At 3.30 A.M. it was still blowing hard, so had supper and remained in bags.

Hollins and myself have been unable to go out to-day on account of snow blindness; after supper Feilden administered *vini opii* to both of us; it was not nearly so painful as I expected.

Dogs have had no work again to-day.

4 A.M.
N.W. 7.8. o.m.z.
Barometer 29.45.
Temp. +28°.

June 1st to 2nd.

The gale of wind which has kept every one in tent since lunch yesterday, lulled at 3.30 P.M.; we have had rather a heavy fall of snow during the night.

Roused the cook at 3.30 P.M., and had breakfast finished by 5 P.M.

Broke up encampment and started with dog-sledge at 7 P.M. in a snow storm, arriving at the depôt (View Point) at 10 P.M., when we camped and had lunch by 11.30 P.M. on the 1st.

Flo who had had three fits since she came back from Depôt Point, had another to-day, so we let her go. Feilden stopped behind and tried to coax her along at first, afterwards tried licking her, but it was no good.

It was blowing too hard to proceed after lunch, so remained in bags; had supper at 6.40 A.M., and afterwards started with empty dog-sledge to the northward, passing behind View Hill into the snow valley, and then through the shore hummocks towards Conical Hill, but the wind and drift prevent our going any further.

Feilden went away for an hour geologising, and we returned to the tent by the coast line, arriving there at 1.30 P.M., when we had a meal which was extra.

It has been very misty and snowing in the squalls.

Hollins' eyes all right to-day, but my right one a little shaky.

Placed three hares in a hummock for the use of the northern party.

Flo has not returned yet.

The snow in places was deep, and we had two men dragging.

Distance travelled, 8 miles.

Hours travelling, 9.

5 P.M.
N.W., 5, o.m.z.
Barometer 29.40.
Temp. +28°.

7 A.M.
Barometer 29.48.
Temp. +34°.

2 P.M.
N.W. 3.4, o.m.z.
Barometer 29.54.
Temp. +34°.

June 2nd to 3rd.

10 P.M.
North, 3.4, o.m.
Barometer 29.60.
Temp. +32°.

Roused the cook at 9 P.M., and started at midnight. As it was still blowing we rigged the sail up, and managed to get along with two hands shoving at the back; but after getting across Lawrence Bay we had to have two hands dragging in front, the sledge being very heavy on account of the fossils. Stopped for lunch at 5.30 A.M., and left depôt of gear as we could not get on with a full sledge. Our lamp was a long time burning up, and so you at last would not wait any longer, and we had to content ourselves with cold water.

Noon.
Calm, b.c.
Barometer 29.70.
Temp. +32°.

Started after lunch at 6 A.M., following the coast line; travelling very heavy on account of the deep snow being up to one's knees; encamped at 8.30, close to Hercules Point. Self and myself went back with dog-sledge for depôt, and did not return till 11.30 A.M.; the snow was very heavy and sticky; all the latter part of the day we had three officers and men dragging in front and two shoving behind, and then we made but slow progress. Ginger was not well to-day, and the dogs were not much good in consequence of the number of standing pulls we were forced to have, not being able to keep the sledge going.

Shot 2 ptarmigan.

Hours travelling, $11\frac{1}{2}$.
Distance travelled, 17 miles.
Hours at lunch, $\frac{1}{2}$.

June 3rd to 4th.

Midnight.
Calm, o.m.
Barometer 29.70
Temp. +31°.

Roused the cook at 9 P.M., and started at 11.30 P.M. with half sledge load; rounded Hercules Point, and went over first ridge of hummocks, where we left the half load, and returned for remainder of gear; picking up the gear we had left on floe, proceeded with a full sledge, and after a good deal of pulling and hauling, got on to a large floe for lunch by 3.30 A.M.

Went on again at 5 A.M.; the mist kept coming on, which made it very difficult for you picking out a route; encamped at 8.45 A.M., about 1 mile N.b.W. of Depôt Point.

The travelling, which has been over large heavy floes with barriers of hummocks between them, has been very heavy, in consequence of the deep snow being soft and sticky; in places amongst the hummocks there was sludge. One of the rounded hummocks in the middle of a large floe you estimated at 20 feet.

9 A.M.
Calm o.f.
Barometer 29.80;
Temp. +31°.

We have had two officers and men dragging in front, and two shoving behind; by no means easy work, as every now and then one sinks in above the knees.

The smoked moose deer skin trousers which Feilden and I have been wearing this trip were not comfortable, as they get wet through with perspiration, resembling cold tripe.

Hours travelling, $7\frac{3}{4}$.
At lunch, $1\frac{1}{2}$.
Distance travelled, 7 miles.

June 4th to 5th.

8 P.M.
Calm, b.c.
Barometer 29.90.
Temp. +32°.

Roused cook at 7 P.M., and started at 9.45 P.M.; passed Depôt Point, and encamped on point just to the northward of Black Cliffs, as you wished to take angles from this position. Travelling heavy; the young ice along the coast line by Depôt Point was sludgy in places, and we were obliged to have three people dragging and two shoving.

After a short sleep roused the cook; had breakfast by 5.30 A.M., and shifted our tent on to the shingle; you then went up the hill to take angles with theodolite; Feilden was shooting and skinning birds; Self took dog-sledge and brought on depôt left by me at Depôt Point. I went out shooting, but returned unsuccessful at 2.30 P.M., and found everyone back and ready for supper. We had a most beautiful day, and saw three birds we had not seen before this season. Shot three *tringa canutus*, two ptarmigan, one turnstone.

8 A.M.
Calm, b.c.
Barometer 29.92.
Temp. +33°.

Distance travelled, 8 miles.
Hours travelling, $4\frac{1}{4}$.

June 5th to 6th.

Roused cook at 10 P.M., and started at 1 A.M., with half load, for Dumbell Lake ; crossed Black Cliff Bay, and went over a dip in the land, which took us to the lake ; encamped on peninsula between lakes, for the purpose of taking the measurement of the ice ; had an extra meal and slept for three hours.

Travelling over a large blue topped floe with hummocks on both shores ; snow heavy and sticky.

Roused the cook at 11.30 A.M., and as the wind was getting up and the weather threatening, Self and myself hurried away at 1 P.M. with empty dog-sledge, for the depôt left behind, whilst you and the other hands dug down 4 feet in the ice and then came to mud, so you commenced another hole further out.

Returning with the depôt at 6.30 P.M., found everyone ready for supper, so had it and went to sleep.

The weather cleared up again in the afternoon.

Saw one skua gull and a flock of geese.

Hours travelling, 10.

Distance travelled, 24 miles.

Midnight.
Calm, b.c.
Barometer 29.95.
Temp. +20°.

Noon,
North, 34.
o.c.

7 P.M.
Calm, b.c.
Barometer 29.96.
Temp. +30°.

June 6th to 7th.

Roused cook at 5 A.M. ; after breakfast you, Feilden, and Spiro returned to the ship, leaving us to dig an ice hole. We commenced digging at 6.30, and got through to water at 10.30 A.M.

At 10.20 Spiro came back from you, telling us about the seal in Dumbell Bay.

At noon had lunch ; leaving the tent pitched and provisions inside, I started with Spiro for the seal hole ; Self and Hollins remained at ice hole to fish, with orders to bring the sledge on.

After watching seal hole for a couple of hours without seeing the seal, saw the dog-sledge crossing the lower part of the bay, so joined them and returned to the ship at 10.20 P.M. The snow made the travelling very heavy.

Distance travelled, 10 miles.

Thickness of ice, 7 feet 7½ inches.

Surface of ice above water, 8½ inches.

Depth of water, 18 feet.

Calm, o.b.c.
Barometer 30.
Temp. +31°.

Temperatures.

Surface, set at 35°, 31°-2.

Bottom, set at 35°, 31°-5.

In shade + 30°.

A chart with the track of the sledge and different encampments is appended.

I am,

SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

Captain G. S. Nares.

WILLIAM H. MAY.

Gear left at Dumbell Bay.

8-man tent.

5-man lower robe.

5-man sail.

Cooking apparatus, 4 pannikins, 3 spoons.

Pick and shovel.

Provisions left.

Biscuit, 40 lbs.
 Pemmican, 25 lbs.
 Bacon, 38 lbs.
 Chocolate, 8 rations.
 Tea, 48 rations.
 Sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
 Preserved meat, 7 4 lb. tins.
 Tobacco, $5\frac{1}{2}$ cakes.
 The bacon is in tin, so fat can be used as fuel.

Ammunition left.

20 rounds No. 6 and No. 3.
 18 „ bullets.
 11 „ wire.

Weights.

	lbs.	ozs.
8-man tent	44	0
poles	25	0
lower robe	18	4
waterproof	11	4
cooking apparatus	21	10
trough	5	12
5-man sledge	39	0
back	8	4
coverlet	16	0
sail	7	8
sledge bottom	2	4
Pick and shovel	13	8
6 bags	48	0
6 duffles	30	0
6 knapsacks	36	0
Store bag	17	0
2 rifles and guns	24	0
Ammunition	10	0
Medical box	3	13
Spare battens	3	7
Theodolite	10	0
Constant	394	12

Provisions, 60 rations.

	lbs.	o zs.
Pemmican	45	0
Biscuit	50	0
Bacon	22	8
Potatoes	7	8
Cocoa	3	12
Tea	1	14
Sugar	11	4
Lime juice	3	12 pints.
Rum	7	8 „
Fuel (spirits)	30	0 „
Pepper and salt	1	0
	194	2
7 dogs for 9 days, 2 lbs. per dog ..	126	0
Constants	320	2
	394	12
Total	714	14

102 lbs. 2 oz. per dog.