

ARCTIC EXPEDITION,
1875-6.

LIEUTENANT W. H. MAY.

SLEDGE JOURNAL,

4th to 9th May.

H.M.S. "ALERT" (AT EGEDESMINDE).

30th September, 1876.

SIR,

In compliance with your letter of the 4th of May, I left the ship with the dog-sledge "Clements Markham," provisioned for 10 days, accompanied by James Self, A.B., Frederick, Eskimo, and the eight dogs mentioned in the margin; the following are the results of my journey:—

Black Face
(King),
Sal (Queen),
Soresides,
Ginger,
Bruin,
Topsy,
Bos,
Flo.

May 4th to 5th.

Left the ship at 10.10 P.M. on the evening of the 4th, and after getting over the difficulties of rounding Cape Rawson and Black Cape, struck off towards Crossing Harbour at Black Cape, where the road through the shore hummocks had previously been made; lunched at 1.10 A.M.; after getting through the first $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of hummocks and small floes, the sledge tracks were rather confusing, as the sledges do not appear to have followed the same track, but we found a very good road and went along at a very fair pace. Finishing our lunch by 2.30 A.M., another hour's travelling brought us on to a large floe, on which we travelled for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours; this floe cannot be less than 7 miles across; after getting over another $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of hummocks and small floes, I was looking out for a suitable place to encamp, when I saw H.M. Sledge "Alert's" crew encamped another mile on, so we went on to them and pitched tent, arriving at 7.40 A.M.

Midnight,
Bar. 22.90.
Temp. -10° .
Calm 0 b.

We found the Alert's all awake, having only just finished their supper. Mr. Egerton, to whom I gave your orders, turned out of his bag and came to the top of a hummock where I had fixed the theodolite, and kindly sketched the surrounding land, which was very cold work, as there was a southerly wind, force 4 to 5, and the temperature -10° . I obtained sights for longitude and a round of angles to all the principal headlands and hills; the land to the north-eastward was slightly miraged, but the rest of the land was very distinctly seen. We were called back to the tent by the cook, who had supper ready, but I was surprised to find that the Alert's cook was doing our cooking. Mr. Egerton joined me in my tent, and then I found why the Alert's cook had been so kind as to do our dirty work, for having given us our tea and pemmican, he helped Mr. Egerton and himself, who made a very good meal, although they had not finished their own more than an hour.

We were all bagged and ready for sleep at 10.30 A.M., but I stayed awake to get a meridian altitude.

Bruin had so many fits to-day, that I let him go, as I thought he would probably return to the ship.

8 A.M.,
Bar. 29.90.
Temp. -10° .
South, 3.4
b.c.

May 5th.

Meridian Altitude.	Index Error.
48° 6' 50"	On, 33' 30".
	Off, 28' 30".

Longitude.
West, 8° 27' 47".
Altitude.
42° 10' 30".

THEODOLITE.

Cape Brevoort, zero. Sun left of zero.
Time, 9h. 19m. 10s.
Altitude, 22° 12'.
Azimuth, 317° 30'. See sketch.
Distance travelled, 20 miles.
Hours travelling, $8\frac{1}{4}$.
Hours lunch, $1\frac{1}{2}$.

May 5th to 6th.

Roused the cook at 8 P.M., but as the lamp went out and the cook did not know it, we were a long time before we got our breakfast. Before starting obtained a true bearing

(3243)

South
1.2 b.c.
Bar. 29.85.
Temp. -10° .

of Cape Rawson ; Mr. Egerton having sent his sledge on, started with me, travelling over small pieces of old floe and hummocks, but so many sledges having been before me, we had a good road ; picked up the sledge "Alert" in an hour's time after starting, and proceeded on by ourselves ; the floes from here to Crossing Harbour were larger, three of them we travelled over being $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles across. Lunched after $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours' travelling ; a five-man cooking apparatus is enough to try any one's patience, it took us two hours to get our tea.

Starting after lunch at 6.30 A.M., we arrived on the shores of Greenland at 8.30 A.M. ; the travelling after lunch was good, but a very serpentine route ; a S.E. wind blowing over Cape Brevoort, which increased as we approached the land.

Encamped close to the cairn built by Lieutenant Beaumont.

Noon,
South, 4.5.
Bar. 29.88.
Temp. -2°.

The hummocks along the shore here do not extend out for more than 100 yards ; you have here and there a floeberg, but they are chiefly composed of boulder ice.

After pitching tent, took sights for longitude, but the wind made it very cold work ; had tea, but just as pemmican was ready had to take the meridian altitude.

May 6th.

Time.	CHRONOMETER.		Index Error.
	Altitude.		
9h. 36m. 59s.	46° 19' 00".	On, 34' 20".	
9 37 58	46 21 20.	Off, 28 50.	
9 38 40	46 23 30.		

Meridian Altitude.

48° 55' 10".

Distance travelled, 15 miles.

Hours travelling, 7.

Hours lunch, 2.

Distance made good, $11\frac{1}{2}$.

May 6th to 7th.

South, 6.7.
Bar. 29.80.
Temp. zero.
South, 3.4.

We had a stormy night ; and when I roused the cook at 10 P.M., it was moderating a little ; by midnight we had finished our breakfast, and as the wind was going down quickly, I went up to the cairn and sketched the opposite shore, taking a round of angles with theodolite, which was very cold work, and you had to leave off every two minutes and run round the cairn to warm yourself ; the opposite coast was very distinct.

On returning to my tent, I found Fred. ready with the empty sledge, so started away with him at 3 A.M. to the southward, with the intention of trying to find a passage into Newman Bay.

The travelling very good, over hard snow, and in some places the icefoot was completely bare of snow ; we were both able to ride on the sledge, and the dogs took us at a very good pace, I should think 5 miles an hour, but travelling at that rate against a wind force three was very cold ; I had frequently to get off and run behind to keep myself warm. After going along for a couple of miles, the pace was too much for old Soresides, who had a fit, so made him fast to a hummock, picking him up on the way back.

As far as the valley between Crossing Harbour and Coast Brevoort, which I estimated at 5 to 6 miles, there was only one place which would be any obstacle to a heavy sledge, but that did not extend for more than twenty yards, and a road could easily be made ; at the mouth of the valley there are several mounds about 100 feet high, composed of mud and shingle ; passing through these the valley has a very gentle slope for 3 miles, and about 1 mile in breadth. After that the passage, which was very narrow, continued on between raised mounds. After proceeding up the valley for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, Fred. and I ascended the highest hill (2,250 feet by aneroid), on the south side of the valley, and just inside Cape Brevoort ; we had a magnificent view from the top, and saw that the valley led into Newman Bay, the ice there appearing to be quite smooth, and I should think very good travelling. I tried to get some bearings from the top of the hill, but the southerly wind was so cold that I was unable to get more than three or four.

Arriving back at camp at 12.15 P.M., I found that Mr. Egerton and Dr. Coppinger, with the sledges "Alert" and "Stephenson," had arrived, and was glad to hear that Lieutenant Beaumont's party were all right.

The hummocks along the coast, as far as I went, are composed chiefly of rounded broken pieces of ice, piled up in some places to a height of about 15 feet.

We were very glad to get supper on our return, as we had had only a little biscuit since breakfast, and afterwards were soon in our bags and asleep.

Distance travelled, 18 miles.

Hours travelling, $9\frac{1}{4}$.

Lunch, none.

Calm o.b.c.
Bar. 29.82.
Tem. +10°.

May 7th to 8th.

Roused cook at 7.50 P.M. and had breakfast. Mr. Egerton turned his sledge over to Dr. Coppinger and joined my crew with Thomas Smith (private), we assisted Dr. Coppinger in arranging depôt. I deposited at the depôt 11 rations, leaving for my crew, which now consisted of 5, four days' provisions.

Lunched at 2 A.M., and after getting all news and giving letters to Dr. Coppinger, started from Greenland at 3.30 A.M.; following the track which we came by, arrived at encampment of May 5th, at 9 A.M.; the travelling was the same as coming.

Obtained sights for longitude. Whilst camping, Mr. Egerton, who had the photographic apparatus with him, wished to take a photograph of the camp, so after we had stood still for five minutes, which is not pleasant in a temperature below zero, he found out that he had forgotten to take the glass out. After a good deal of persuasion he got us to stand again, and then after five minutes' exposure, could not find the cap to put on the end of the apparatus; he kept us so long fumbling about for it with his cold fingers, that we all burst out laughing.

8 P.M.
South,
2.3 b.c.
Bar. 29.80.
Temp. +8°.

8 A.M.
South, 2.
Bar. 29.82.
Temp. -5°.

May 8th.

CHRONOMETER.

Time.	Altitude.	Index Error.
9 h. 17 m. 41.5 s.	46° 15' 10"	On, 34' 00"
9 18 4.5	46 16 10	Off, 29 30
9 18 25	46 17 10	

Distant travelled, 15 miles.

Hours travelling, 6.

Lunch, $\frac{1}{2}$ hour.

May 8th to 9th.

Roused cook at 8 P.M., and got away by 11.30, following the track which we came by; arrived at the end of the large floe at 3.30 A.M., where we lunched.

We tried the plan of getting water boiled whilst going along, as we were on a fairly smooth floe; so secured the cooking apparatus on the sledge and lighted up an hour before lunch; it answered very well, for we had a kettle full of warm water. Mr. Egerton and myself, walking in front of the sledge, compared it to one of the little steam engines you see going about London at night with hot coffee and chestnuts; however, when we halted for lunch, we found that the wicks of the lamp were burnt out, so that we did not gain any time.

Started after lunch at 5 A.M., and arrived on board at 9 A.M., or in fourteen hours' actually travelling from Crossing Harbour to ship.

Travelling the same as on first day. Picked up No. 10 flag and the affirmative. Soresides had two fits to-day, so let him go. I am afraid he is too old to be much more use; we picked up Bruin on the floe close to Greenland, and put him into harness again, but he had not pulled for an hour before he got fits, so let him go.

I think that the passage to Newman Bay will be found quite practicable, and informed Dr. Coppinger about it.

Distance travelled, 20 miles.

Hours travelling, 8h. 5m.

„ lunch, 1h. 35m.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM H. MAY.

8 P.M.
Calm o.b.c.
Bar. 29.84.
Tem. +10°.

Weights.

					lbs.	ozs.
5-man tent	..	..	..	..	24	4
„ poles	..	..	..	..	21	8
„ sledge	..	..	..	..	39	0
„ back	..	..	..	..	8	4
Coverlet and lower robe				..	31	0
Sail	..	..	..	..	7	8
8-man trough	..	..	..	..	5	12
Pick and shovel				..	13	8
3 bags	..	..	..	..	24	0
3 duffles	..	..	..	..	15	0
3 knapsacks	..	..	..	..	25	0
Cooking apparatus				..	13	0
Store bag	..	..	..	..	17	0
Sledge bottom	..	..	..	..	2	4
Spare battens	..	..	..	..	3	7
Sextant	..	..	..	..	12	0
Theodolite	..	..	..	..	10	0
Rifle and gun	..	..	..	..	12	0
Ammunition	..	..	..	..	2	0
Medical box	..	..	..	..	3	13
					<u>290</u>	<u>4</u>

Provisions, 40 rations.

Pemmican	..	..	..	30 lbs.	0 ozs.
Biscuit	..	..	..	35	„ 0 „
Bacon	..	..	..	15	„ 0 „
Potatoes	..	..	..	5	„ 0 „
Tea	..	..	..	1	„ 4 „
Cocoa	..	..	..	2	„ 8 „
Sugar	..	..	..	5	„ 0 „
Fuel (spirits)	..	..	..	25	pints.
Rum	..	..	..	5	„
Pepper and salt	..	..	..	1 lb.	0 oz.
				<u>124</u>	<u>12</u>
7 dogs, for five days	..	..	..	70	0
Provisions	..	..	..	194	12
Constants	..	..	..	290	4
				<u>7)485</u>	<u>0</u>
				<u>69</u>	<u>4 per dog.</u>