

DIARY OF HARRY V. McCOMB

Trips to the Klondyke

Seattle July. 28th [18]97 1:30-a.m. On board Stmr. City of Kingston. boat just leaving for Victoria.

7:30-a.m. Just landed at outer wharf. Kellogg & I going up town.-Found every thing very dissatisfactory. Frieght [sic]charges excessive [sic]- boat not going to leave on time - got to pay duty on our goods etc.

29th. 1:30 P.M. Cleaning decks of spectators and geting [sic] ready to start on our journey once more Islander loaded to her guards and Br. Stmr. Tees at dock loading freight.

7:45. Just going into Nanimo [sic] after a beautifull [sic] run from Victoria. Tees coming up in the rear.

July-30th Nanimo [sic] turned out en mass [sic] to receive us and bid good bye to about 30 people from their town. 8-a.m. passing throug [sic] Seamore Narrows and traveling along rate 9-a.m.-stmr. Alki passing with quite a few passengers in sight.

31st 1:30-P.M. Stmr. Queen just passed with full passenger list. - 8 - P.M. Just coming into St. Mary's. Island a U. S. costumes [sic] house station. glad to see "Old Glory" once more. U.S. Customs Inspector Smith going to Dyea with us.

August 1st 97-10 a.m. Stmr. aground in Wrangle Narrows will get off as soon as the tide raises.

-----Jan. 18th 1898-----

Since the above was written have put in lots of hard work on the Skagway trail and blown in \$500 in trying to get my outfit over to Lake Bennett.

Left Seattle last night at 8-P.M. on the Stmr. Rosalie. Woke up this a.m. and found we were aground in Port Madison Bay.

Arrived at Skagway **Jan. 24 Jan 26.** Started for summit of White Pass with Willis at 10:15 a.m.-arrived at the Ford at 2:45 P.M. going to stop in tents for the night.

27-Left Ford for summit at 8:15 a.m. Left Summit lake at 9:20 a.m. arrived in Skagway at 3 - P.M.

30th - Man brought from Summit Lake dead another sick with pneumonia.

31st Two men killed and another wounded in Saloon row last night.

Feb. 11th Kellogg arrived from Seattle.

Feb. 13th Sold cabin to Dr. Stewart for \$400.

Feb. 15th Hauled stove and tent to foot of Canyon and set them up.

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Saturday May 28th 1898 Broke Camp on Lake Bennett 1 1/2 miles below the island at 8:30 arrived at Caribou Crossing at 2 - P.M. found the ice jammed [sic] 1 mile below and are hung up for the present. Found lots of wild onions just below. Met lots of the boys that I know. At least 500 boats here waiting for the ice to go and expect as many more tomorrow.

Sunday 5/29 - 6 a.m. Hobbs has been up for half an hour and has the stove up ready for me to get breakfast. We came through the ice in the Crossing and arrived at Kenneys mill at 11 oclock [sic] P.M. - 9 a.m. worked down about two miles down Tagish ice jammed ahead of us - 3 P.M. made another break and got as far as the mouth of Windy Arm. Wind blowing pretty hard will camp here and watch a chance to get across onto the island.

---Deckoration Day---

7 a.m.- Got up at 4:30 found ice gone & wind down so we started and are across Windy Arm. 8-a.m. Tagish House - Ice opened up about noon and about 100 boats got through and are here without an accident. The Martin & Swallow took the lead and held it until we got tired.

May 31st Woke up this morn at 4 o'clock with it raining in our faces. Cleared through the customs [sic] house and got Miners Lisene [sic] by 1 are about 15 miles down Marsh Lake and are going into camp for the night.

June 1st 9 P.M. In camp at the head of Miles Canyon.

Thursday - 2nd We all went down and took a look at the Canyon & the Rapids and were all agreeably disappointed [sic] saw several boat[s] shoof through the Canyon. Got back to camp at just 12. Were up at 6 had breakfast and started for the race with Willis & Kellogg in the Swallow and Hobbs & I in the Martin. both boats went through with out any trouble. Wrote letters home but Police station had moved so could not send them. On the way down the river Hobbs saw one cotton tail rabbit [sic] 8 P.M. Just arrived at the head of Lake LeBarge with about 20 boats in sight. Wills thinks he can afford to mend the seat of his pants now as he had gone through White Horse - 12 a.m. Made about 12 miles down the lake are in camp on an island.

3rd Got up at 6:30 Willis got breakfast. Hobbs gathered onions and I fixed a sail on the Swallow After breakfast K& H took the Swallow Willis & I the Martin and now at 10 we are sailing before a fine wind - 1 P.M. Arrived at the foot of the lake and will leave for Dawson as soon as dinner is over 9-P.M. In camp at the foot of 30 miles river saw 5 boats upset and their outfits lost.

4th Have been out one week to day [sic] from Bennett. After Breakfast cleared from the Customs at the mouth of the Hootalinqua. Passed Police Post at the Big Salmon at 2. P.M. and at the Little Salmon at 7:30 camped about 5 miles below At the Eagles Nest. It was rather inclined to want to rain to day [sic]. had several little showers. Passed one boat bottom up heard afterwards that the man was ashore and calling for help.

Sunday June 5th Got up at 4:30 and Willis got breakfast while we were drifting down stream. are now getting dinner and expect we are close to Five Finger Rapids. 6-P.M. Were

camped about 6 miles above rapids. Passed there at two o'clock. Lost an ash oar just before entering. Quite a heavy shower of rain this P.M. 9 P.M. Had a hard time finding a place to camp made 5 or 6 landings got hauled through the limbs of a fallen tree and hands all skinned in one place and boats broke away and left me on an island in another [?] boys picked me up below.

6th Got to the mouth of the Pulley at 8 a.m. - In camp two miles below the mouth of White river at 9-PM.

Tues. 7th Willis got breakfast while the rest of us cut some wood. 8:30 a.m. just leaving the mouth of the Stewart 9 P.M. - Dawson at last 11 days on the trip.

8th Changed our camping place twice today. Came near losing our boats & outfits under a scow in one place. Will move our things up on shore tomorrow. Witnessed the landing of the first boat up the river this year at 5:30 P.M. - May Wess

10th Second boat (Victoria) of the season arrived at 3 a.m.

12th P.B. Weare arrived at 12 a.m.

13th Starting for Hunker with Kellogg, Willis & Lake.

17th Willis and I got back to camp at 6 P.M. yesterday. Lake & Kellogg [sic] have gone over to Eureka.

July 21st Stmr. Monarch first boat from St. M. this year

July 26th Stmr. Soverign & John C. Barr arrived today.

27th Leah with Barge for acc-

Sept 22nd First snow of the season fell in Dawson today.

Oct. 1st Willis Irving went up stream for the last time to day [sic].

Oct. 2nd Lake & Hobbs helped Willis move from the island up to the cabin.

Oct. 4th Ice strong to hold my weight on the pond.

5th Klondyke running full of ice to-day [sic] & Yukon had a little. Read letter from home dated Aug 29.

13th made first trip up to Mosquito Creek to day [sic].

14th Dawson City Post Office burned today.

15 - Klondyke river frozen clear across this mon.

Nov. 3rd Yukon closed to day [sic].

Coldest weather in Nov. was 52 below.

Dec. 7 Rained to day [sic], also on the 17th.

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Jan. 15th 1899 Hillside opposite 16 above. Hunker (L.M.) Saw the Sun today for first time since Nov. 15th came up at 10:10 a.m. and set at 12.M.

Feb. 1st Average temperature for Jan. 29 28/31 [degrees] Below zero.

April 23rd First rain of the year to day [sic].

26th Dawson burned.

May 1st Klondyke unsafe and Bridge Co began collecting toll to day [sic].

17th Yukon broke at 4 P.M.

Sept. 22nd [18]99 Grand Forks. First snow fell to day [sic] same date as last year.

Oct. 19th People crossing Klondyke on the ice at the lower ferry. Open water above and below 5 inches of snow. 13 digs last night.

23 Yukon jammed early this morning and has remained so all day.

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May 15th 1900 Yukon river broke in front of Dawson May 8th.

Aug. 21st First snow fell today - 30 Eldorado.

Wed. Sept. 19 Left Dawson at 4 a.m. on stmr. - Flora - Passed Bonanza King with scow at 9 & Eldorado at 10:30 Indian river at 1 - P.M.

21 - Selkirk - 2:30 P.M. - Stopped about 5 miles above Selkirk to clean out the boilers. Started up at 6 a.m. **22nd** Passed Minto at 2 - P.M. Place where Clayton party were killed at 3:30 Hootchakuo at 6:45 - 9:10 Just passed steamer tied up to the bank (presumeable [sic] the Victorian) a beautiful display of Northern lights almost as bright as day 10:30 P.M. Tied up about one mile below Rink Rapids.

23rd Started up for the rapids at 5:45 went through all O.K. and went through five fingers at 7:15 was very much dissappointed [sic] in both places found them much smother [sic] than when we went through them in '98 - Rocks in Five Fingers a conglomerate.

24th Found ourselves about 10 miles above Little Salmon at 7 o'clock. The Zelandian passed up at 9. Met the Nova at 10:15 on the way down. Got to Big Salmon at noon. Hootalinqua at 9 P.M. Found Sifton laid up for the night at the mouth of 30 mile.

25th At the foot of Lebarge at 8:30 with a good breeze blowing - 4 scows on the beach 1 P.M. got across the lake all OK Arrived at White Horse at 4:15

26th Left White Horse at 8 A.M. Arrived at Skagway at 5 P.M. - Met J. W. Troy.

27 Got up at 8 had breakfast and then bought a ticket for home on the city of Seattle.

29th 8:30 P.M. City of Seattle just leaving dock with a full [company] of passengers.