

CLARKE'S CROSSING, 20th May, 1885.

SIR,—In accordance with orders, we left Saskatchewan Crossing at 8 a.m., Monday, the 11th instant, on the barge "Hard Tack," the crew being made up of two officers and 29 non-commissioned officers and men, and the cargo consisting of oats and regimental baggage. During the day the barge was stuck four different times, and three times the men had to go into the water and push the barge off. The halt having been sounded, we tied up for the night—about 7.30 p.m. Next morning a start was made at 6 a.m., and we were very fortunate up to about 3 p.m., when the barge ran aground, and after the men had spent three hours in the water trying every possible way to move the barge, I ordered them to remove enough of the cargo to float the boat. There were about 75 bags taken off, all of which were piled on the shore. We caught the remainder of the boats at 9 p.m., and I at once reported, and as you ordered, took on 100 bags from the stranded barge to replace portion of cargo left behind. The morning of the 13th inst., we started at 10 a.m., and had a clean run for the day, tying up at 5 p.m., as per orders. On the 16th inst. we started at 8 a.m., and at 5 p.m. ran aground; but as the strong wind, then blowing, made it impossible to get off, we remained where we were for the night. Friday morning we started at 4 a.m., and at 10 a.m. halted, awaiting the arrival of other barges. Left again at 1 p.m., and had another clean run, tying up at 5 p.m. Saturday morning we started at 5 a.m., and at 10 a.m. ran aground, causing a delay of almost two hours, the men being in the water all the time. After this we had a good run for the remainder of the day, and tied at 5.30 p.m. Sunday we started at 5 a.m., and halted at 12.15, as we had received orders to that effect. The trip was not continued that day. Monday morning we started at 5 a.m., but at 7 a.m., again at 8 a.m., we struck, and the men were in the water about three hours. We got a long lead on the other boats by 12 o'clock. So to allow the others to come up we tied up for three hours, starting again about 3 p.m., and after two hours' run tied up six miles from Saskatoon for the night. On the 19th inst. we started at 5 a.m., and on arriving at Saskatoon we tied up, and there waited for the arrival of barges, and these having come in, the journey was continued at 2 p.m.; and after a seven hours' run we arrived at Clarke's Crossing at 9 p.m., having been 9 days making the distance. Too much cannot be said in praise of the men who, during the whole trip, were ready for anything. Some days the water would be very cold, but there was not a complaint from one. The trip was most laborious, the barge sticking many times on sand and clay ridges. The day we were forced to remove a part of our cargo we had run in a pocket formed by three sand bars on the three sides of a square, and on these bars not a foot of water could be found. Other barges in the same place had to unload almost all their cargo. After lighting up the barge somewhat we had to tow it up the river about 500 yards; and as we were about 80 yards from the shore then, it was not possible to take the bags on again. The barge was not itself properly equipped, as we were not given any nails and no tools, and had anything gone wrong it would have been impossible to have repaired it; in fact we broke a sweep one day, and as a result had to run the barge on a sand bank, and take nails out of boxes to fix it so as to overtake the other boats. Cold tea was supplied to the men in quantity, by the cooks, as you ordered, so as to prevent the use, as far as possible, of the water.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) HORACE A. YEOMANS, Lieut.

To Lieutenant-Colonel DEACON, in command, Clarke's Crossing.