

Alaska, with all contiguous land and islands within 100 miles of the location of the flagstaff of the present garrison on that island, is set aside from the public lands of the Territory of Alaska and declared a military reservation, and shall be known as Fort St. Michael.

Parties who have, prior to the receipt of this order, located and erected buildings on the land so reserved, will not be disturbed in their use of lands, buildings, and improvements, nor in the erection of structures needed for their business or residence.

During the fall and winter the Department issued permits under this order to sixty commercial and transportation companies and individuals for the occupancy of lands bordering on the harbor of St. Michaels. Owing to the fact that the two old companies had already occupied the most eligible portions of the water front, many of the new companies were forced to locate in the outer harbor, where there is no protection from the strong winds which almost constantly prevail, while some of the later arrivals had not succeeded in securing a landing place at all. The old companies were charging a wharfage of \$6 per ton, but as "wharfage" meant simply the privilege of landing freight on the beach by means of lighters and small boats, no one was taking advantage of this opportunity to discharge cargo.

According to the best information obtainable at St. Michaels, about one hundred steamboats were equipped during the winter and spring for navigation of the Yukon. More than half of these are new boats, built specially for the river traffic. The Alaska Commercial Company has added to its river fleet 5 steamboats and 6 barges, and the North American Transportation and Trading Company has constructed 4 steamboats and 5 barges. The new boats of both companies are of the latest type and of high power, and as they have been officered with experienced Missouri and Mississippi river men, there is no doubt of their successful operation. Several of the new companies have introduced boats fully equal in every respect to the best boats of the old companies, and there are now on the river probably over 20 first-class steamboats with a carrying capacity of from 220 to 450 tons of freight and from 50 to 150 passengers each. Fifteen or 20 new steamboats were lost at sea while being towed from the place of construction to St. Michaels, and the owners were greatly embarrassed by the presence of a large number of passengers who had arrived by their ocean steamers, as they had no means of transporting them to Dawson. In this dilemma they appealed to the old companies to carry their passengers up the river, and were informed that a new passenger tariff had been adopted, the revised rate being \$200 from St. Michaels to Minook and \$250 to all points beyond, with an allowance of 250 pounds of baggage. The new companies were unable to meet this demand, and as late as July 9 probably a thousand stranded gold seekers were still wondering how they were to get to Dawson.

The cost of operating steamboats on the river is much greater this year than heretofore, the increase being principally due to the advance in the price of wood. The unusually high water which accompanied