

The second accident occurred on the 21st October, at Red Rock, while the parties were waiting the arrival of a steamer to take them home.

By it a Foreman Packer, Wm. Playter, of Toronto, was lamed for life.

He was cutting wood for the camp fires on the above named date when his axe glanced from a tree and cut his foot, severing all the tendons. It was dressed by some of the party to which he belonged, but owing to there being no Surgeon at hand, it was imperfectly done, and when he arrived at Collingwood, it had so far healed as to render it impossible to remedy the defect.

This young man is most highly spoken of, for the manner in which he discharged his duties, by Mr. McConnell, the Engineer in charge of the party; and I can myself bear testimony to the fact that he seemed to be qualified for a higher position than he then occupied.

I had enclosed with my former Report, a letter received from him since his return home, which fully bore out my opinion of him.

If something could be done in the way of procuring for him a position as clerk in an office, I believe it would be more satisfactory to him than a pecuniary consideration.

He was paid in full to the date of his discharge, and I directed that he should be given two months pay extra, amounting to \$66.00, to support him until able to move about again.

In addition to the above mentioned loss of life by accident, I regret extremely having to report the loss of two of our "chief commissariat officers in the field;" whose deaths, if not caused, were at least accelerated by unavoidable hardship and exposure to which they were exposed while engaged carrying out their very arduous duties.

The first of these was Mr. John P. Robson, formerly of St. John, N. B., who received an appointment, in the above named capacity, when this work was commenced in 1871, at which time he removed his family to Kingston, Ontario, where they at present reside.

During the past summer, Mr. Robson was stationed at Red Rock, Nepigon Bay, Lake Superior. I left him there when I returned to Ottawa for a short time, on the 6th September; and upon going up there again about the 15th October, (I can not speak exactly as to dates, my diary having been destroyed in the fire) I found that he had been taken on board the steamer *Cumberland*, the day before my arrival, in an insensible state, and, I subsequently learned, died on the passage down, the day after leaving Red Rock.

The complaint of which he died was, I believe, neuralgia in the head.

Mr. Robson's duties during the past summer, was to receive all supplies brought to Red Rock by steamer, keeping an exact account thereof; he then had to superintend personally the forwarding of them, in such quantities as were required by the engineer in charge, to the principal depot of each party, in the interior of the country. From which point, the engineer's commissariat officer saw to their being forwarded along the line of exploration.

The number of parties for which Mr. Robson had to provide were four, and the distance of their depots from Red Rock varied from 10 miles to 100 miles.

He had also to keep account of Government and Hudson's Bay Co.'s stores supplied to the men, and the paying off of men who were discharged during the progress of the work.

These various duties, some of which subjected him to considerable hardship and exposure, he performed in a faithful and energetic manner.

In consequence of Mr. Robson's sudden death, considerable difficulty was experienced in closing his accounts.

But with Mr. Price's assistance, this was effected in as correct a manner as possible under the circumstances.

So far as can be recollected, Mr. Robson's account shewed a balance against