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Although the feed along the trail was abundant the animals did not thrive. Hoof disease and mud fever broke out among them, and we had to drop them one by one at places where pasturage was good, hoping that they would recover; but on the return trip we found many of them dead and the rest had to be shot.

There had been rainy weather for some time and our progress was slow. On September 4, we reached the 'Forks' with only five horses out of a band of nineteen. After occupying two stations to take in the neighbourhood of the forks, I decided to turn back. We built a raft, and relieving the horses of all loads, started them on the back trail in charge of two men and with the rest of the party I continued down stream. We had to abandon our raft when we came to the rapids, and build another below the falls. At suitable points along the valley I made camera and sketch stations, and by making a few ascents succeeded in filling the gap in the triangulation. On September 19, I reached the point where our trail from Fort Selkirk struck the river, and next day my men arrived with four horses. I went down to call on the mining recorder at McQuesten, and in exchange for some moose meat, he was good enough to let me have flour and tea, of which we stood very much in need.

There had been quite a rush during the latter part of the season, and the recorder informed me that about two hundred good men were wintering on Haggart, Johnston and Nelson creeks, tributaries of the McQuesten. While at the office about a dozen men came to file claims, and a number paid their fees with gold which they claimed to have gleaned from the properties they were recording. Very promising quartz ledges have been discovered on Johnston creek. Only four men are wintering on Stewart river above McQuesten. They are on Mayo brook.

I took seven days to cross to Fort Selkirk. The snow was deep on the high ridges, and we had to relieve the horses of their loads. We managed to get them to Pelly river, where we arrived on the 27th, but they were too weak to swim and I left them where feed was plentiful. I notified the police officer where they were, and he promised to have them shot when winter set in.

I boarded the steamer "Ora" at Fort Selkirk on October 1, and reached Skagway on the 15th. I arrived in Ottawa on November 3.

THE STEWART RIVER.

Between the mouth and McQuesten there is a ripple which, however, does not interfere with navigation. From McQuesten to Mayo brook the river is deep, and the current about four miles per hour. From Mayo to the falls the current is barely two miles an hour with good navigation all the way. From the rapids to the forks there is nothing to impede navigation. On September 3, I met two men coming down stream; they were the latest prospectors on the Upper Stewart, and claimed to have been to the head of Beaver river. They had taken notes and allowed me to make a copy of their sketch. The north fork retains its good character as far as the '7 mile Canyon.' It was the prospectors' opinion that a steamer could go through the canyon, in which case there would be uninterrupted navigation for a distance of one hundred miles up the Beaver, which they described as a rather sluggish stream. The north branch above the Beaver is very swift. Lansing river is a considerable stream, which comes in from the south east, one and a half miles below '7 mile Canyon.'

The south branch of Stewart river is the smaller. It is rather swift, and for 30 miles from the mouth flows through a succession of box canyons. A number of prospectors crossed over this season from the MacMillan. They report an easy portage. Moose and bears are very plentiful. We never had to walk more than a mile or so to secure one. We saw many beavers along the river. Fishing is good below the falls. There are no extensive timber areas, but there is quite enough for building and mining purposes, mostly spruce.