

TENTING IN WINTER

EDMONTON TO ATHABASCA LANDING

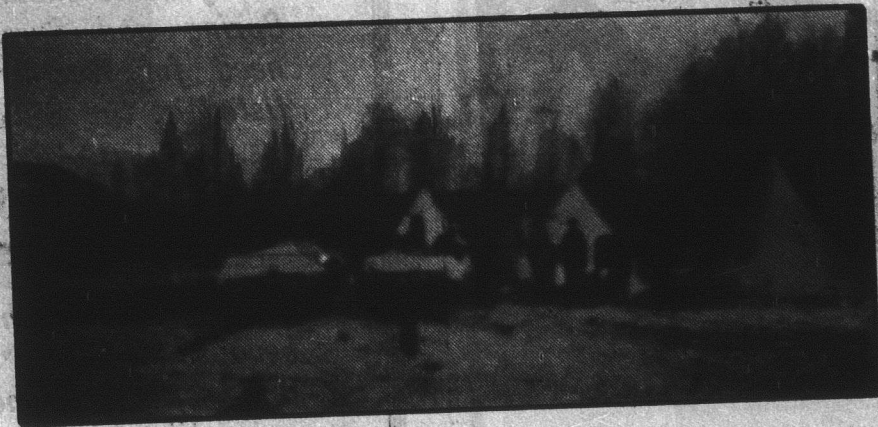
Special Correspondence of
The Western Home Monthly.

[On a recent visit of a representative of The Western Home Monthly to Edmonton, he found the Dominion Exploration Party about ready to start on their journey north. Arrangements were made with one of the party for notes of the trip. A camera was procured and given the gentleman, he agreeing to take views on the way and forward the films. The first letter and views are to hand, and they are given below. The party spent Christmas on the banks of the Athabasca river. Since receipt of the article, a short note is to hand from the correspondent dated Lesser Slave Lake, January 6th. He reports having taken quite a number of photos which will be forwarded to us, along with his notes, from the Post at the head of the lake, by next mail. The party will be away some two years and will make full exploration of the great country in the far north. When he last wrote all were well and in good spirits.—Ed. W.H.M.]

Our party left Edmonton Saturday afternoon, December 17th, and on ac-

in the early days. He was a garrulous old man, and roughened by years of "toughing it" on the prairie, but his stories were entertaining and in-

Here we catch a glimpse of the various means of transportation utilized by the people of the north. At present, large numbers of freighters, with teams and sleighs, are leaving for the north with provisions and stores of all kinds, while yelping trains of dogs are also to be seen coming and going, bringing in the Indian with his furs to trade, and going out loaded with the few simple purchases required by the primitive life of the man running so tirelessly behind.



STURGEON RIVER CAMP.

The photo for this was badly blurred, but it gives an idea of how the Exploration Party camps en route.

structive, and his personality novel and pleasing, for he is one of the old-timers, who followed the various waves of emigration all over the Western States and Canada, to California in '49, and to Oregon and British Columbia later, and then away to the vast prairies of Alberta, finally to settle down in a little, out-of-the-way nook in the hills, there to dream away the remainder of his days at peace with all the world.

We travelled most of the next days on the ice, following up a chain of small lakes known as the Half-Way Lakes. Shortly after noon we left the ice, and, following an old trail, came to what is called the "Stony Creek." This creek, like all the creeks and rivers in this part of the country, had high, steep banks with hills on each side. We had a quick ride down, but a long, slow, tedious, heavy pull up on the other side. Six miles further on we halted for the night at Two Creeks stopping place. This "hotel" was kept by a bachelor, and consisted of a one-room shack, constructed of logs and thatched with sod. We had to do a lot of house-cleaning before we could lay our beds; the proprietor was too busy tending to his cattle to bother with a detail of this kind. We were not sorry when early the next morning we pulled out and left the bachelor to batch to his heart's content amidst the accumulated dirt of years.

We stopped the next night at "The foot of the Big Hill," ten miles from "the Landing," and on Saturday evening (Christmas Eve) we arrived at the end of the first stage of our journey—Athabasca Landing.

Here there are three small general stores, a hotel or stopping-place (for there are no licenses granted north of the Alberta boundary), a church, several large warehouses, and an Anglican mission church.

The town is situated on the Athabasca River, a fine stream of very considerable size, and from here the Hudson's Bay Co. start out large transports of freight for the north. In fact, this place is the distributing point from which radiate all the various trails and waterways that give access to that vast and almost unknown territory lying north and west.

Hauled up on the bank of the river is to be seen a large fleet of York boats. The freighters, in the summer,

become boatmen, and the boats take the place of the sleighs. At this point the Hudson's Bay Co. have just completed building quite a large river steamer, and she is appropriately christened the "Midnight Sun." A boat of this type will be a great convenience here, as it will afford towage to the York boats and quicker and easier method of travel to those who seek an entrance to the unknown regions that lie beyond the rim of the northern horizon.

In the course of the next few days our party will leave for Lesser Slave Lake. Our route will take us up the Athabasca River to the Slave River, and then we shall follow that stream to the lake, and skirt the shores of the lake to its northern end, where there is quite a large settlement and a

Hudson's Bay Post. Leaving Lesser Slave, we shall travel across a portage of eighty miles to Peace River Crossing, and from there to Dunvegan, which place is 340 miles from Athabasca Landing. We will then push on to Fort St. John, in the foothills of the Rockies, where we shall take up our quarters for the winter.

Philosophy.

Let the heart sing while the hand and head work, and your success will be sweeter.

Good friendship is like good business—the kind that develops slowly is the kind that lasts.

Life is a pendulum. Motion means joy and sorrow. Quietude means stagnation, rust and decay.

The man too prejudiced to even listen to a new theory is like one who cheats at solitaire. He injures no one but himself.

The man with ability to pick assistants (on a salary) who are capable of initiative and thorough work is on the high road to success and is headed in the right direction.

Pleasures and sorrows are largely matters of concentration. Our life is joyful or sad, depending on which we focus our thoughts. All men have plenty of each.

Cleanliness, exercise, fresh air, a regular vocation, prudent conduct and home love produce peace and happiness.



READY FOR A START.

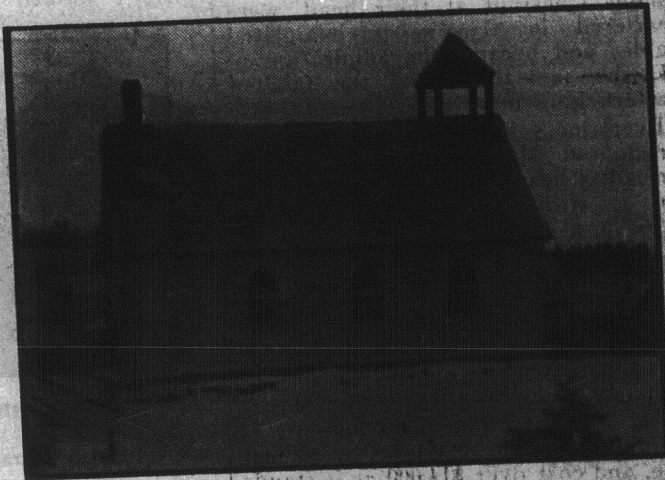
This cut shows the Exploration Party at Athabasca Landing looking and feeling well in front of their quarters there.

count of our late start we made but a short day's trip to a comfortable little roadside stopping place called the Half Way Hotel. Here everything was neat and clean and warm and the boys were inclined to laugh at the stories they had heard of the hardships they would have to endure.

The next morning we proceeded to Sturgeon River, where our advance camp was established. Here we found the men who had gone ahead camped on a beautiful little river, flowing between steep, hilly banks clothed with spruce and pine, and making a delightful change of scenery from the swampy prairie which was our landscape from Edmonton to that place. As this was our first camp, we had a photograph of it taken, as winter tenting was a decided novelty to most of us.

Bright and early the next morning we crossed the Sturgeon and continued on our course to the north. On account of the extra camp equipment picked up at the Sturgeon, it was necessary to hitch up a couple of our spare cayuses in toboggans. These novel steeds were given into the care of two of the younger members of the party and they found great sport in driving them for a few days till the weather turned very cold and the novelty wore off.

That evening we camped at Deep Creek, at a stopping-place kept by an old pioneer named Grant. This old man amused us all the evening, as we sat around, with stories of frontier life



THE CATHEDRAL.

A Bishop is stationed at Athabasca Landing, hence the above dignified title is given to the church.

ness. Indolence, shiftlessness, dishonesty, suspicion, malice, makes life miserable.

Let us remember this rule of Dr. Drummond's: "If there be any good deed I can do or kindness I can show, let me do it now. Let me not defer or postpone it, for I shall not pass this way again."

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