

SESSIONAL PAPER No. 13

observations were the means of detecting considerable abnormal deviations of the needle in certain localities. For instance in the vicinity of the headwaters of the Rose river the deviation is to the east of the meridian and amounts to 60°. Similar observations carried on in connection with the traverse of the streams failed to show any abnormal deviation of the needle in the valleys, thus tending to prove that these extraordinary deviations are a feature peculiar to the high peaks which form the crest of the mountain ranges.

The instruments furnished me for the work were a three inch transit-theodolite and a surveying camera. I was also given an improved surveying aneroid made by Keuffel and Esser. This was a new instrument, and it proved to be a reliable one, a very uncommon thing for an aneroid.

The recommendation made in the instructions that I should observe frequently for latitude was adhered to during the whole season.

It had been arranged that I should go by way of Skagway and the White pass to the district in which I was to spend the summer, but at the last moment my route was changed and I went by way of the Stikine river. This change fortunately gave me the opportunity to complete some work which had been left unfinished in the autumn of the previous year.

On May 20 I took passage on the Canadian Pacific Railway company's steamer *Athenian*, which sailed from Vancouver, and on the 23rd landed me in Wrangel, which is the place of departure of all steamers navigating the Stikine. A day later the sternwheel steamer *Ogilvie*, one of the swiftest boats on the river, left Wrangel and arrived at Glenora on the 26th. We saw several large parties of prospectors camped at different points along the river, who were on their way to the Yukon gold-fields. They started on their journey the previous winter and had hoped to be able to utilize the ice on the Stikine and reach Glenora before the spring thaw. But as the winter had been unusually mild, the ice had not formed over the canyons, and before they could get their outfits around the open water spaces a general breaking up of the ice had occurred, and they were obliged to seek safety for themselves and outfits on the higher banks of the river. At the time we passed they were anxiously waiting a chance to be taken on board of a passing steamer. Glenora, which was six months before composed of a few old dilapidated log houses surrounded by some small cultivated patches of land, now presented a lively appearance. Hotels, stores and large warehouses had been erected in that short space of time along the street facing the river. Back of the business part of the town miners had pitched their tents, and these covered the ground as far as the foot of a high cliff which limits the town site towards the west. This portion is low and some parts are liable to be flooded in the spring. Better ground is to be found towards the south of the town; this had been judiciously chosen and was at the time occupied by the Yukon military force, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Evans. The tents were pitched on the top of a bench which is several feet above the river and dotted here and there with poplar bluffs. A cool breeze constantly blowing across the terrace had the good effect of tempering, at midday, the scorching rays of the sun; all this coupled with fine springs of cold water spouting from the face of a hill close by, rendered the spot an ideal one for a military camp. The daily arrival of small river steamers loaded to their utmost capacity also tended to make Glenora a centre of great activity during the early part of the season.

On my arrival in Glenora I was informed by some returning packers that the trail to Teslin lake was in a very bad condition, and for that reason the pack animals could not carry a heavier load than 150 pounds each. In my outfit, which included three acme folding boats, I had also some packages of stationery addressed to Gold Commissioner Pawcett. I therefore made arrangements to have these carried by a pack train which was advertised to start at once for the lake. I then left with the rest of my outfit for Teslin lake, where I arrived on July 16, having been twenty-six days covering the distance. The report as to the bad condition of some parts of the trail had not been exaggerated, but on the other hand improvements in the shape of good substantial bridges over the largest streams, such as the Tahltan and Nahlin rivers, where in former days delays caused by freshets were a common occurrence, compensated to a certain extent for the slow travelling over the bad sections of the trail.