

lower Yukon. Scores of vessels carrying a vast multitude of gold seekers and thousands of tons of freight left San Francisco, Portland and Seattle in time to reach Bering Sea at the moment it should be clear of ice, and no time was lost in pushing forward to that distant, and yet well-known transfer point, St. Michael.

The village of St. Michael is located upon the North-eastern portion of an island of the same name, and is one of the oldest of the Russian outposts in Alaska. Here passengers and freight are transferred from the ocean vessels to the light draft river steamers. It is sixty miles from St. Michael to the northernmost mouth of the Yukon, through which a majority of the steamers entered the river, but inasmuch as the waters of the Bering Sea, adjacent to the Alaskan coast are very shallow, and there is no harbor or suitable anchorage nearer the mouth of the Yukon, it has been found necessary to maintain the transfer station at St. Michael. The crusaders of 1898 who followed this route gave the little port an air of importance and thrift.

No. 98.

The "Dora Blum" at the Port of St. Michael.

The two oldest transportation companies operating on the Yukon are the Alaska Commercial Company and the North American Trading and Transportation Company. They are located on the little harbor about a mile from each other and have spacious wharves and extensive and commodious warehouses. These great companies had their warehouses filled with supplies for the upper river, while thousands of tons were piled up in their yards and protected by expansive tarpaulins. At the time of our arrival over thirty vessels were anchored in the little harbor, and hundreds of Klondikers were awaiting transportation up the river.

In this view we have a panorama of the harbor of St. Michael, showing a portion of the wharf and warehouses of the Alaska Commercial Company. The little steamer in the foreground is the "May West," which was the first boat to reach Dawson when the river opened in the spring of 1898. The larger steamer, to which the "May West" is moored, is the "Louise," a new and powerful tugboat,