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Hood River, Oregon



### STORY OF DABNEY'S TRIP TO KLONDIKE

Hood River News:

As promised, will try to give you a few details of my recent trip to that immense north country, Alaska.

Our tourist steamer leaving Seattle at 9 o'clock in the evening, slowly pulls away through the placid waters of Puget Sound, while the many passengers on board view with great interest the thousands of beautiful lights in the city as they play and flicker upon the clear blue waters, and they were watched with much interest until they grew dim and faded away in the distance. It was then that we all retired to our state rooms, trusting to our captain and pilot to carry us safely across the rough Strait of Juan de Fuca, as crossing at night, while the people are asleep, helps to alleviate the distress of seasickness, and by morning we are moving northward far up in Georgia strait, at the rate of twelve knots an hour. The atmosphere is dusky with smoke from the forest fires which are raging on Vancouver Island to the left and on the mainland to the right of us, but after we have traveled four or five hundred miles north we are out of the region of forest fires and the atmosphere is clear and crisp. The thousands of islands range in size from 40 miles wide and 170 miles long down to so small that a merry widow hat would almost cover one, and of every shape that one could imagine, all covered with the beautiful primeval forest of evergreens. When the tide is full the water extends up to the very base of the timber and brushes the limbs of the trees with its foamy billows, but when the tide is low the coast line shows the dark green moss in which the trees are imbedded, then a strata of gray granite rock and another strata of very dark lava, and beneath it another strata of light colored rock, then beneath that comes a bed of light green moss or sea weed. This, with the reflection of the snow-capped mountains in the clear, transparent, rippling water, produces a beautiful picture that one will never forget. The most of these islands are very mountainous and are, to me, much more beautiful and interesting than those of the St. Lawrence.

As we go farther north we notice that many of the mountains are streaked or covered with snow, and hundreds of silvery streams are dash-

ing and foaming down the mountain sides, wending their way through the green forests and plunging headlong into the channel or bay below. The timber is of a much younger growth and therefore much smaller than that of Washington and Oregon, and not much of it is suitable for lumber except in small quantities found in the basins and in the low depressions of the mountains.

Our first stop after leaving Port Townsend was at New Mettukahitta on Annette Island. This Indian village has been made famous by the great work which the Rev. Wm. Duncan has accomplished with the Indians by that name. Mr. Duncan is nearly eighty years old, but looks as robust and strong as many men of forty. He said that August 7th was the twenty-third anniversary of their landing on that island, having been driven away from Old Mettukahitta, near Port Simpson, on account of religious intolerance, after having been with the Indians in his great work for thirty years, making in all fifty-three years.

Mr. Duncan stated that when he first went among them they were very barbarous and almost down to low cannibalism. The present population of the village is 823, besides Mr. Duncan and a doctor who has recently located there. The village is built up with good frame houses, good sidewalks, etc. They have a large church, school and other buildings, and have their own canneries, sawmills and other industries. Their town is incorporated and they also have an industrial corporation whose duty it is to look after the marketing of their products. These Indians do all their carpenter work, blacksmithing, printing, and, in fact, carry on everything pertaining to a well-civilized community. The Annette Island has been especially set aside by the United States government for their exclusive use and benefit. It is very rich in minerals, and some day these Indians will become a very wealthy and independent people.

Our next stop was at Ketchikum, a port of entry, and a beautiful little town of several hundred nestled up near the base of the mountains. Ketchikum creek, with its white, foamy waters, is noted for the thousands of salmon which play in the stream. This place is headquarters for numerous mining prospectors, as well as fishermen. But we are now in Clarence strait, plowing our way through the clear blue waters, so still that there is hardly a ripple. And now our attention is drawn to

the right of us about two hundred yards away. A battle royal is on between a huge shark and a whale. See how the shark jumps up many feet out of the water and pounces down upon the whale's head. For twenty minutes the fiercest battle raged, and we all watched them with great interest until they faded away in the distance and we were unable to tell how it ended.

We are now landing at Ft. Wrangel, on the northernmost point of Wrangel Island. It was at one time quite noted for its many Indians and their numerous and peculiar Totem poles, but many of the better Totems have been destroyed by fire. We are now 750 miles from Seattle and it is raining hard. I asked one of the Indians if it rained there all the time, and he said, "No, it sometime snow."

We are just passing Petersburg, at the north end of Mitkof Island, where large fish canneries are located, in which they are using the most improved machinery, enabling them to put up many thousands of cans per day of the famous Red King salmon, which are considered the best of all Alaska salmon. These fish will average about eight pounds, and the fishermen receive 35 cents apiece for them. We also stopped at the Lake Bay cannery. A great deal of the work at this place is done by hand and they employ Chinamen, Japs and Indians, and sometimes you have to look twice before you can tell "tother from which." The Lake Bay fish are of a much cheaper quality and from this cannery many of the cheaper markets of Europe are supplied. The cannery pays eight cents each for these fish, or one cent per pound. I was told that the Alaska canneries are paying their owners handsome profits.

It is beautiful as we go up Frederick Sound and into Stephens passage, and in doing so we pass a little village to our left called Killis, where a good many whales are worked up into the many different articles of commerce. The waters in this part of Alaska are noted for their many whales, and it is interesting to see them sleeping or blowing the water high in the air. Sometimes they will hardly get out of the way of our ship as we pass along.

In going out of Stephens passage we enter Eaku Inlet, and all on board are watching the great icebergs and waiting to get the first glimpse of Faku Glacier. For many miles back we had been seeing cakes of ice floating on the water, which at a distance looked like great white swans; but as we near the glacier the icebergs become very large and numerous, and are of all manner of shapes.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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