

Headquarters U.S.A. & V.C.  
Markova N. C. S. Bay 23<sup>rd</sup> 1897

Lt. Col. S. Abasa,

Sir:

As stated in my last report I left the Station in Golden Gate Bay Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> 1897, taking with me, Mr. W. C. Norton, an interpreter, and two others, besides a supply of provisions to last us about 3 months, intending to send for others as soon as I reached Markova, and could obtain transportation for them, also make provision for supplying them from the Chijigla Supply Depot, as our supplies at the mouth of the river were so few that little could be spared from that post. The first 4 days out we encountered severe snow storms accompanied with cold northern winds which checked our progress considerably and killed 4 of our dogs, but after leaving Red Bluff you'ta, had good roads and fine weather, and reached Markova Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> 1897, having been 12 days on the road.

Upon reaching Markova we found the natives very despondent, and much alarmed about procuring food for the coming winter. During the last summer very few fish appeared in the Anadyr, and as fish are their chief dependence for food, for both themselves and dogs, they would undoubtedly have to undergo some privations if not great suffering. Already though

only at the commencement of winter many of the poorer inhabitants were living upon their deer skin beds, which they boil and make into soup, and their starved dogs were prowling about eating the carcasses of other dogs that had died from starvation, or from a disease that prevailed among them during the Autumn months and swept off nearly  $\frac{2}{3}$  of all the dogs throughout this section of the country.

Every 4 or 5 years fish fail in the same manner, when they manage to get through the winter by going to the wandering Schutchies or Keracks and buying deer or trapping grouse which are generally very abundant. But this year many of the dogs died as they could not reach the Schutchies, and to add to their alarm, scarcely any grouse were to be seen. Their only hope was that the deermen hearing of their situation would come near to the town with their herds so that they could reach them.

The failure of fish for dog food, and death of so many of their dogs were discouraging prospects for our winter work along the Inyan river, as we would have to depend entirely upon our dogs for the transportation of men, supplies and material and for the distribution of poles along the line. Having left instructions with Mr. Norton to buy up all the deer possible, for dog food, and to assist the natives, to many of whom I was in debt for past services. I started for Shijigha Nov 8<sup>th</sup> 30<sup>th</sup> three days after my arrival in this place to make

arrangements for the transportation of supplies from that place.

The third day out I met Capt. Kennan on his way to Markova with a small quantity of supplies carted. He told me there was an abundance of provisions in Ghizgha and thought he would have no trouble procuring transportation for it, which relieved my mind as far as supplying working parties was concerned, but in order to accomplish much, dog food would be necessary for parties used on the line. It was yet early in the winter, and it would be impossible to accomplish anything before Feb. in account of the extreme cold, I concluded to let the other parties remain at the mouth of the river until that time, as there would be supplies enough for them there, and sent out two Cossacks to find the Schuchkas and buy 200 deers. After a few days they returned with out success, but as the Schuchkas come every winter in large numbers to Orupast to trade their furs, I expected to learn from them where the deers were, where the necessary quantity could be obtained.

Jan. 1 - 13<sup>th</sup> I succeeded in getting 11 dog teams to go to the mouth of the river for men & working implements by supplying them with dry fish to feed their dogs of which I obtained 1100 fish from Capt. Kennan. They arrived at the Station Jan 13-35 and after two days rest, started back with S. G. Norton & 5 men, reaching Markova Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> after a quick and pleasant trip.

Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> Kaschin arrived from Peijina with some

supplies and (8) eight Peujina harts, which the Peujigna  
Kopravnik had engaged to go down the river for us, knowing  
the scarcity of dogs and food here.

I also learned from Kaschum that several harte loads  
of supplies had been left in Peujina for us.

With these harts which left Markova Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> I sent  
instructions to Lt. Macrae to engage any of the crew of  
the Golden Gate who wished to join the land service, and  
to bring up a supply of salt provisions for the month of  
June during the freshet, when it will be impossible to procure  
fresh supplies.

Lt. Macrae engaged Mr. Frost the 1<sup>st</sup> Officer of the "Gate"  
and 4 of the seamen and left the station on the 6<sup>th</sup> Feb.  
Feb. accompanied by Lt. Baxter, Mr. Frost and six con-  
structors. On the 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. at Ice Bluff quarters one of the  
men John Robinson, constructor, died of inflammation  
of the bowels (see Lt. Macrae's report which accompanies this).

They had a very stormy journey, and the loss of their  
companion cast a gloom over the whole party.

They arrived at Crepast March 3<sup>rd</sup> and on the  
4<sup>th</sup> Lt. Macrae came to Markova. I had sent  
instructions for him to go to the Nyany river with his  
party as we had no meat here, and could not procure  
any until the arrival of the sledges.

Mr. D. C. Norton with six men were already on the Nyany  
with a supply of provisions, having left Markova  
Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of March after allowing the dogs  
two days rest. Lt. Macrae started for the Nyany.

which he reached the next day. The instructions I sent instead of meeting him at Vaccarana as I intended were delayed at Crepast until Lieut M's arrival.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> of Feb we had extremely cold weather, the Thermometer ranging from  $-60^{\circ}$  Fahrenheit to  $-62^{\circ}$ . During this period Mr. Norton and party went to the Myaw and suffered a great deal from cold, while preparing the unfinished house for quarters which we were compelled to abandon last spring from want of provisions. By working at intervals and taking shelter in a very small yurta nearby, occupied by an enterprising native named Illia Beachkoff, after a few days they made comfortable quarters of it. Mr. Norton in his report which accompanies this gives a full account of his proceedings. It was already past the time for the Schuctchus to begin to appear, and fearing that they might have gone to Olenka to trade I sent Kaschwin to some Karaks near Penjina to buy deer and leaves they driven to Markova. The Eskimoes had bought 170 deer which were in Penjina but as it was almost impossible to get dogs to transport them to Markova and the expense would be so great if any parties were procured, I endeavored to get them alive. Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> some Karaks arrived with 36 deer, a portion of which I sent to Mr. Norton on the Myaw and the remainder were consumed for dog food, to transport supplies to that place.

By these Karaks I learned that another herd of

70 deer were on the way and I was daily expecting them until the 30<sup>th</sup> February when a native arrived saying that the Karaks started but finding the snow too deep this side of the Orlykai, killed the deer at that place and left them lying undressed on the snow.

Just after the deer were killed we had comparatively warm weather and when Kaschwin reached the Orlykai on his way he found the deer spoiled from being left in the condition they were and wholly unfit for anything but dog food. In the meanwhile a few Tchutchus arrived at Orepast but they had no deer, so I sent Kaschwin to try and find some Tchutchus near the "Lelunice" or "Vastrá Soapka".

He succeeded in buying 6 deer from a few Tchutchus at a large price, which were sent to the Niyau.

By this time our own supplies as well as those on the Niyau were nearly exhausted, and as there was very little hope of obtaining any from the Tchutchus I endeavored to get wartes to go to Penjina for meat and supplies.

Most of the families were perfectly destitute, as they had been unable to obtain deer, and others had been depriving themselves, with the hope of saving enough scraps for dog food to enable them to reach Pijigka where they expected to procure provisions for themselves and food for their dogs. By offering to feed their dogs on deer meat at the Orlykai both going & coming & at Penjina, also to give them deer for the use of their wartes to bring our supplies, several volunteered and six wartes immediately started

March 19. Sent Lieut Norton to Penjina to take charge of supplies and forward them as fast as warts could be obtained. Learning from him that no more supplies had reached Penjina from Shijigha since the Repranips was there in Jan and finding that Capt Kemmer had been unable to procure the transportation he expected, I engaged 4 dog teams by feeding their dogs in the road and March 26<sup>th</sup> left Markova for Penjina to try and procure other warts to go to Shijigha.

I left Mr. Harder in Markova to forward supplies to the Myan, and purchase deer should it be possible. On the way to Penjina I and the six warts traded with provisions and at the Orlofka found 40 deer left and as there were 150 in Penjina, had no fears for the parties in the Myan as there was provision enough to last them to the 2<sup>d</sup> of May, in Penjina and on the road to the Myan, before which time the warts I had already engaged, would return loaded. Before leaving Markova I left instructions for Lieutenant Moberg to take charge of the parties in the Myan and supplied him with trading stores for purchasing deer should any come in the neighborhood. Upon arriving at Penjina I found the place almost deserted, all the warts having gone to some neighboring Karaks for deer, but was told that several wished to go to Shijigha and if I would supply them with dog food I

could turn them to bring supplies for us.  
I instructed Lieut. Norton to engage all the parties that  
he could, and having made arrangements with some  
Cossacks to buy deer and have them driven to the  
Myan, left Penzina March 30<sup>th</sup> for Shijiglia with  
the 4 parties I brought from Anadyrsk.

At that time 24 reindeer were on the  
road to the Myan.

I procured food for the dogs at Sustakova and  
Bozil, and arrived at Shijiglia April 9<sup>th</sup>. On the 12<sup>th</sup>  
a severe proonga began to blow, which moderated a  
little on the 13<sup>th</sup>, when I started back, the 4 parties  
I had brought, with supplies, remaining in Shijiglia  
myself until the Penzina parties arrived to load  
them up and settle the acct. of the district.

The 14<sup>th</sup> April the storm commenced again and blew  
almost without cessation for two weeks. On the  
19<sup>th</sup> the parties that started the 13<sup>th</sup> returned to Shijiglia  
empty, having lost their way in the woods in  
the storm, and as their dogs had been 5 days  
without food, were compelled to leave their loads  
and return. I fed their dogs and allowed them  
one day to rest, and started them off with two  
other parties loaded with stores through the storm  
was still raging. Owing to the weather and  
the condition of their dogs, the other parties did not  
arrive until April 30<sup>th</sup> when all the parties from  
Anadyrsk that could travel, came also.



These parties left Uarkova April 3<sup>rd</sup> and were 28 days  
in the road. In Ghijgha I settled with all the  
Quadyrsk people for past services paying them  
mostly in Tea, Sugar and flour for their families.  
While in Quadyrsk in the absence of mares I gave  
all who desired them notes on the Company for the  
amount due them with which they purchased supplies  
from the Merchants though at exorbitant prices at  
Ghijgha. After receiving provision for  
their families their warts were so heavily loaded that  
it was with the greatest difficulty I could find trans-  
portation for the necessary amount of supplies for the  
parties on the Nuyau.

I left Ghijgha May 5<sup>th</sup> with the last of  
supplies but owing to the amount of bar ground and  
water in the Mestakova river did not reach Penjina  
until May 14<sup>th</sup>.

In Penjina I overtook the 6 parties that left  
Ghijgha April 21<sup>st</sup> it having taken them 23 days  
to make a journey which usually occupies 8 days with  
loaded warts.

They lost some dogs in the road and the remain-  
der were in a very bad condition but I started them off  
on the day of my arrival, knowing that the parties on  
the Nuyau must be out of supplies.

I learned from Lieutenant Norton that shortly after  
my departure all the dogs that were able to travel  
left both Quadyrsk and Penjina for Ghijgha.

leaving him without the least possibility  
of procuring transportation.

The deer on the Orlofka were consumed and  
there was no dry dog food to be bought at any price,  
or they might have obtained one quart, by gathering  
together the stray useless dogs that were left behind.  
But they could not find more than 3 days food  
of dog meat for themselves without other loads.

Two Esquacks whom I had engaged to purchase  
deer and have them driven to the Myan, reported  
that the Koraks refused to drive things to that place  
on account of the deep snow, though they were  
promised anything they wished for.

The last I had heard from the Myan  
was when the Quadyrek parties arrived in  
Pujigha bringing a letter written the day I left  
Markova. I with difficulty obtained transport  
ation for the stores brought to Pujiver by the Pujiver  
parties who would not go further as their families  
were in need of meat and they wished to go to some  
Koraks near the head of the Pujiver river.

After all the supplies were forwarded I  
took St. Norton and on the 4<sup>th</sup> night arrived in  
Markova May 21.

Here I found St. Macrae with 4 men  
subsisting on fish and living with natives. The  
remainder of the party were in the Myan still.  
From St. Macrae I learned that after their

supplies were exhausted, they abandoned work and had to depend entirely upon what game they could catch in their traps, grouse and rabbits and fish that Alia furnished them with until the snow began to melt when their traps would no longer stand.

Lieut Macrae endeavored to reach the Koraks but without success, whence he came to Mar Kora to try and get supplies. The inhabitants were also nearly starved, as the storms delayed their parties so long longer than they expected, for a while they had been living upon almost nothing. There was nothing in the country to be obtained for food but herds of reindeer there were 13. Two of these Lieutenant Macrae had killed and sent to the Nyaw for food. The reports of Lieut Macrae and Mr. Norton who accompany him, will relate the sufferings and anxieties they had to undergo. The day before my arrival, Lieut. Barton started for the Nyaw with supplies, but encountered so much water in the rivers which are breaking up, that he turned back, leaving no implements with which to build a raft. Knowing it to be impossible to continue the work until after the frost, and as our supplies were all in Worskog, I immediately dispatched parties to bring the remainder of the men from the Nyaw, who arrived here May 25<sup>th</sup>. By comparing the acts of Lieut. Norton who was

in Penzance and St. Bart's acting Quarters master  
in the Myan I find that of twenty four deer sent  
from Penzance and the transportation paid for,  
only 14 reached the Myan. I investigated the  
matter and found that the drivers had used  
them for dog food and for themselves.

We have now supplies of Tea, Sugar, Flour,  
Rice & Beans to last to the 15<sup>th</sup> of July and Bacon  
enough to last through the freshet, when fish &  
deer meat can be obtained.

The parties in the Myan accomplished  
much more than could be expected under the  
circumstances.

Mr. Norton started from the station at  
the mouth of the Algan to cut and distribute poles  
along the Myan and Abas rivers. I could  
procure no parties for him, as we could get no food  
for the dogs, but by dragging the parties themselves  
in snow shoes, exposed to very severe cold, before  
their supplies failed, they cut and distributed  
30 miles of poles.

He had but six men who were compelled to  
haul their own supplies.

His men worked willingly and without  
complaint.

The other party suffered much from sickness  
(diarrhoea) but succeeded in cutting about  
four thousand poles.

Had it not been for the assistance of Mica they would have suffered much more. He shared his fish with them, and gave them traps for catching grouse and rabbits. His teams of dogs were constantly going from one camp to another with supplies and in search of Kooksto buy deer. He refused compensation from St. Macrae, but I paid him well upon my arrival.

I could not account for the absence of Schuctchay this winter, until he told me it was always the case when fish failed in the country. They avoid the place knowing they would have to give away large numbers of deer without receiving anything in return for them from the inhabitants who have very little to give. I however provided them all, who desired it, with tobacco for buying deer this winter.

Merchants who came from Chigizha with 60 and 70 loads of tobacco, the amount they usually trade during the winter, returned, many of them having disposed of only two or three loads.

I had hoped, and it was my intention as soon as I could get dog food, to send Reartis and have Mr. Robinson's body carried to his station at the mouth of the river, and buried, but owing to our ill success, was compelled to abandon that hope. It still lies at Bel. Bluffs, but as soon as the river is free enough of ice to admit of travelling I shall

take a Caribass and carry it to the mouth of  
the river.

The men on the Myon were very much  
discouraged and alarmed when their supplies  
gave out, but the arrival of fresh supplies encour-  
aged them so much, that all whose terms of service  
expired this year, have signed agreements for  
an other year. They now make sport of their eating  
Horse flesh, and some declare they prefer it to  
poor deer meat.

But their sufferings both from cold and  
want of food have been undoubtedly great.

Should the vessel destined for the mouth  
of the Anadyr not arrive early, we may be led  
to undergo more privations, and in the case  
of any accident happening to the vessel, it will  
be a very precarious position for all, as we  
cannot depend upon the country, with any  
certainty for support.

To secure parties on the Anadyr from  
the possibility of starvation, we ought to leave a  
years supplies in advance, at the mouth of the  
river. I have heard nothing from here since  
the arrival of Lt. Macrae, who brought letters from  
Lieut. Farnham & W. at that post, dated Feb 7,  
saying that he had stores sufficient to last the party  
that would remain, until the 1<sup>st</sup> August so I entertain  
no fears for them.

(Signed) Rich. J. Bush  
Supt.