BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF CAPTAIN WILLIAM MOORE

(*Continued from Vol. XXI., page* 203.)

Flat Boating to Omineca

In March, 1872, Captain William Moore with his three sons took passage on the Steamer *Otter* for the mouth of Skeena River. On arriving there they found a new place had been built called Port Essington. The Hudson's Bay Company had one store, Mr. Feak manager and there was one other store owned by a Mr. Cuningham. Moore and his sons at once went to work, building two barges with a capacity of fifteen tons each. After completing them they employed twelve coast natives as crew for each barge, twenty-four in all, and hired two canoes with six natives to each one. They then loaded barges and canoes and started up the Skeena River. Moore, Senior, took charge of one barge, his son W. D. Moore took charge of the other. On getting to Kitselas Canyon they ran a line as far as it would reach. They, having a capstan on the first barge, would heave her up to the head of the line leaving a line with the second barge so they could heave her up with the capstan. This was done on all the rapids that they could not tow up by hand.

There were about forty natives at this place waiting for the salmon to come up stream. They had not left this place very long when they were met by a canoe with T. Hankin aboard of her who stopped and told them that miners who had gone up the river sometime previous had camped close to Kitsegoogler Village and neglected to put out their fire which scattered along the ground and timber, destroying the whole winter village, and that several shots were fired at him as he was passing through the canyon which is close to the village, and that about twenty-five miners who were well armed got up through the Canyon with their canoes but there was one white man killed and two wounded. They thought that several natives had been killed, and that when he got to Essington he would go up to Metlaktla which is about twenty-five miles north of Essington and report to Mr. Duncan, the Missionary, who held the office of justice of the peace. He told Moore that he would have trouble if he ventured to go up. However, Moore and his sons went up on their way.

On coming to Kitwanger (Kitwanga?), a village of about 100 natives, he concluded to lay over for a while. In a few days Mr. Brown and a number of native policemen were sent by Mr. Duncan

from Metlakatla to interview the natives, "Sticks" as they were called by the coast natives, about the burning of their village.

Captain Moore and his sons started up again the next day. A couple of days after, they met Mr. Brown. He had induced three of the important chiefs to go with him to interview Mr. Duncan. On seeing Moore's barges they wished to return but Mr. Brown and the native policemen held them from doing so, and took them on down the river. Mr. Brown had told them that they would be paid for their village. Moore and his sons proceeded up the river. On arriving at Kitsegoogler Canyon, which is a bad place, twelve miners having been drowned there the fall before, their canoe, having no ribs, split and let them all into the water. They perceived 60 or 70 natives sitting with their blankets around them, not a woman or child in sight.

Moore's coast natives, who were composed of Hydahs, Tongas, and Tsimpseans, told him that he and his sons were liable to get killed and these "Sticks" did not like the coast natives either. Moore told his crew that they must stand by him, that the Hudson's Bay Company would pay them to take care of their goods. The natives said they would but they could do nothing without guns. Moore at once ordered them to open four cases of muskets and ammunition which they did at once, so the thirty-six of the crew were pretty well armed. Moore and his sons had two Henry rifles and two revolvers. They then began towing up. On getting abreast of the Kitsegooglers (called "Sticks" because they live in the woods), two natives came down close to them and said they wished to talk. Moore stood on the barge, and the natives said: "We will not let you go up unless you pay." Moore answered he could not as the goods did not belong to him but he was sure the Government would pay them for their village. The "Sticks" answered; "If you try to go farther we will fight."

Moore told them he would go, and if the "Sticks" did harm to him or his crew, their chiefs who had gone to the coast would not be allowed to come to their home again. Moore would never have got through if the chiefs had been there. He then ordered his crew to proceed. It took that day and the next to heave both barges through the canyon, having to sleep one night among the "Sticks" who were walking around the whole night with their guns. It was galling to them to see all these goods get past them. Close watch was kept by the armed crew.

They arrived safely at Hazelton, where they found that the two

men had driven the horses from where they had wintered in good shape, even with no hay or grain the whole winter. There was not more than two feet of snow and they procured their own feed.

J. W. Moore worked with the two men operating the pack train over the Babeen Portage, while Moore, Senior, and his two sons, W. D. and Henry, started down the Skeena for another load. As they passed through Kitsegoogler, several shots were fired at them, one taking effect in the fleshy part of the leg of a member of the crew. Another struck the steering oar, six inches from Moore's hand. One of the crew grabbed Moore's riflle and fired several shots but could not tell if they had hit any one. The river began to rise very fast as the yearly freshets were on the current and were very swift. It took most of their attention to manage their barges.

On arriving at Port Essington the Steamer *Otter* was in port. There was also an English gun-boat at Metlakatla which took the three chiefs to Victoria. Moore loaded up and made another trip. In going through the Kitsegoogler there was not one "Stick" native. They had heard of the man-of-war at Essington so took their families back into the woods, not to be seen.

When Moore got back to Essington the gun-boat had got back from Victoria and had settled with the chiefs. They appeared satisfied but the $1000 they got was a very small amount. They must have lost at least five times that amount. The chiefs went back up to their homes and did not molest any one that season.

Captain Moore and his sons made one more trip to Hazelton and it was arranged for the two men and J. W. Moore to drive the animals over the Indian trail from Skeena River to the Nass River which empties into Observatory Inlet. Moore with his two sons went down the Skeena River with their barges. A little above tidewater they camped for the night at what was called "Mumford's Landing." This was as high up the Skeena River[1] as the stern wheel steamer *Mumford* got, as she was a heavy built boat. She had been operated by the Western Union Telegraph Company in the years 1865 to 1867.

On arriving at Essington, Captain Moore took the centerboard schonner and started up the coast to Nass River to bring the animals to a place ten miles south of Essington, in Grenville Channel, to winter them there. They sailed up Chatham Sound and thence

1 The Skeena River is one of the worst of the swift water rivers of the North to navigate. It has rapids with whirlpools that are said to hold a steamer in the suction for a time, or will take logs down in the vortex at its strongest force. It was called the Simpson River by the Hudson's Bay Company in early years.

up Observatory Inlet. In going up this Inlet they encountered a strong head wind and concluded to go into a bight to anchor on the Alaska shore. There they remained three days. While there, W. D. Moore went ashore and succeeded in killing two deer which were very fat and fine eating. All went ashore and their father said: "Now you are in Alaska for the first time as the thirty mile strip runs along this part of the coast."

The wind shifted so they could get under way and several hours afterwards they passed a mission kept by an Episcopal Minister, named Tomilson, at the mouth of Nass River. They proceeded up a few miles above tidewater to a native village and there they saw J. W. Moore and twenty-four animals. They had some trouble with the Kitwanger natives who wanted them to pay for going over their trail. He not having any means with him, tried to talk them out of it, but when he wished to start the next morning he found two of the animals dead. The "Stick" Indians had killed them.

There were too many of the "Sticks" for the three men so they watched closely and got away from them. They then loaded the animals on the schooner, went as far as the mouth of the river and waited there at a village until a favorable wind blew. They bought over a ton of potatoes from the natives for $25.00 and fine potatoes they were. Also four boxes of oolachan oil. These oolachan sometimes called candle-fish, run up the Nass River in great quantities during three weeks in the spring of the year. The natives had great quantities of dried salmon that they had caught during the summer months.

They loaded the animals on the barge and started down the Inlet. Late in the evening they arrived at Port Simpson, a Hudson's Bay Company post, managed by Mr. Hall. There was a native village here of nearly 250 people. They laid over a night and let the animals ashore to feed. The grass is good at all the villages. The afternoon of the next day they proceeded to Metlakatla, a mission in charge of an Episcopal Missionary named Duncan.[2] On arriving close to the beach they were met by a native policeman who would not let them land, and enquired what their business was. Moore told them he wished to remain over night and probably the next day to let the animals feed, this being a good harbor. The natives told him they would see if Mr. Duncan would allow it. They came back in a short time with Mr. Duncan's consent, and asked for Moore and his sons to pay him a visit when they had the time. In

2 This is the Dr. William Duncan who transferred his colony from old Metlakatla in B.C. to Anette Island in Alaska in 1888, to what is now called New Metlakatla.

the evening Moore and his sons called on Mr. Duncan who treated them very nicely, telling Moore he could remain as long as he wished. They spent a very enjoyable evening. The next day they were shown over the whole place by a couple of well dressed natives who were very well educated. The village was built on a high bank facing the bay in a right angle shape. The church seats 600 people, the store and meeting or council houses were in the center while the building Mr. Duncan occupied was opposite. There were at this time 500 people there, all followers of Mr. Duncan.

They got under way, passed Kitsen Island where three white men were murdered by the "Kitkala" natives, who lived on an Island a few miles to the south and west of there. They passed the mouth of the Skeena River, Woodcock's place, but did not stop and about fifteen miles below came to the place which Moore had selected to winter the animals. There was a lagoon there. They sailed the schooner in on the high tide and put the animals ashore.

W. D. and H. M. Moore sailed the schooner up to Essington with one man and their father who would go to Victoria.

Going to the Cassiar

On return of the Steamer *Otter* they received a letter from their father in Victoria, informing them of a gold strike being made by McCullough and Thibert the season before on the bars of Deloire River, which empties into the Mackenzie River, and for them to go to Port Essington and prepare the schooner and one of the small barges. He would come up on the next steamer that would leave Victoria, in March. W. D., his brother, and Elie did so, and were all ready when Moore, Senior, arrived with a summer's provisions. Elie Harrison stopped at Essington. Moore and his sons lost no time in getting away from Essington. It was March, 1873, when they got started with one small barge in tow of the schooner. They were fortunate to have favorable winds which carried them up Chatham Sound and across Dixon's Entrance as far as Tongas Narrows. They came to anchor as the schooner could not make headway against the wind with the barge in tow. They saw quite a number of deer there. They made three mistakes by taking the wrong channels. However, considering the towing of a barge, almost as big as the schooner, they did very well, arriving at Fort Wrangel, Alaska, the 4th of April. This is about 200 miles north of Essington, B.C.

The Steamer *Otter* had been at Wrangel and landed goods at

that place for the Hudson's Bay Company post, which was situated seventy-five miles up the Stikine River. A. Choquette,[3] known as "Buck," was in charge of the post and was loading goods into canoes manned by natives to transport them to that place. The mouth of the Stikine is about eight miles from Wrangel.

There were only three white residents at Wrangel, Charles Brown, store-keeper, Mr. Dennis, customs officer, and W. K. Lear, storekeeper. Lear occupied the barracks, built by the United States Army shortly after the purchase of Alaska and occupied by a company of soldiers for a short time. Moore, Senior, remarked: "It does not seem to be half the natives here as there were in 1862."

They were told of McCullough having froze to death a short distance up the Stikine in February. Henry Thibert was joined by Tifair and Loozon, both Frenchmen, and kept on their way up the Stikine, hauling their handsleds.

Moore and his sons hauled the schooner up on the beach, and left her in charge of a native chief.[4] This chief's house was built on the ground where the Russians had their stockade. You could see the ends of the logs sticking in the ground. They then got the small barge in readiness, poles, oars, and sail, employed two natives who would help them up the Stikine River and also pack over the portage. George, and his brother, Bill Rath, Bill Waldroun, Bill and his brother Dick Lyons joined the Moore party on the barge. They wrote letters to their mother in Victoria and left Wrangel on the 20th of April.

The second day from Wrangel they passed the place where McCullough had been frozen to death. Two days after, they camped at the Hot Springs. They all took a bath and washed up their clothes. On the opposite side of the river is a large glacier running from the mountains, its nose spread out for seven or eight miles, about 150 yards to a quarter of a mile back and along the river. About thiry miles farther up, they stopped a while at the Hudson's Bay Post. It is situated in the coast range of mountains and is in Canadian territory. There was still four to six feet of snow along the bank of the river. Buck told them the snow gets as deep as seventeen feet at this place some winters. Large quantities of cottonwood, spruce and willow grow along the banks. They passed another large glacier, some distance up the river. When they got

3 "Buck" Choquette was the discoverer of gold on the Stikine in 1862.

4 This must have been the house of Chief Shakes, whose house still stands on the island by the sawmill where the Russian Redoubt St. Dionysius stood and on the site afterward occupied by Fort Stikine of the Hudson's Bay Company. Some of the stubs of the stockade were standing in 1915. (CLA.)

through the canyon, being through the coast range mountains, everything was changed. The air was warmer, the grass was growing, and cottonwoods were budding.

About thirty-five miles farther, Moore pointed out the place where he landed in 1862 with his steamer, the *Flying Dutchman.* About three miles further up they passed a Frenchman, Collins by name, mining with sluices on the bank of the river. He had been there since 1861. In about ten miles they stopped with Miller, commonly called "Buckskin." He had a trading post and made a trip every summer for supplies which he transported up the river in canoes towed and poled by natives. There were two more white men there who were working for Miller. Bill Whig was another 1861 man. Ned Casey was an ex-United States soldier who had deserted the United States post at Wrangel. Every one of these men had native women for wives and from one to six children. Miller, also Collins, had just got their gardens planted. They raised potatoes, turnips, cabbage, etc., in plenty for their own use.

Captain Moore and his party were twelve days towing their barge up against the strong current, using poles, oars, sails and towline, to Telegraph Creek. This place was named by the Western Union Telegraph Line explorers in 1866 and is 160 miles from Fort Wrangel.

On reaching Telegraph Creek they had to stop, as the Stikine River is not navigable for any kind of craft above this point. They put up their goods so that there would be four packs for each man, caching two packs at Telegraph Creek. They took the barge back to Miller's place with the remainder of their goods for safe keeping.

They then walked back up the old Indian trail to Telegraph Creek and started in to pack on their backs, taking a pack one half of a mile or a full mile, and coming back after the other. They had a hard hill to climb right on the start. The trail followed the right limit of the river, along which grew scrub spruce, pine, and birch. There were a number of steep gulches encountered which they had to negotiate. In some places the trail was on the side of a mountain which was very steep. If a person slipped he would fall into the river below. After following the river for about ten miles, the trail swung toward the north. About five miles from the river and about fifteen miles from Telegraph Creek, they came to a stream called the North Fork,[5] which they crossed on an Indian made bridge. The bridge was constructed of poles and bound to-

5 Now called Tahltan River on the map of Int. Dept. Can. 1898.

gether with withes. It was strongly made although there were no nails used in putting it together. The span was about seventy-five feet and it had considerable swing when one was crossing it. After traveling about ten miles they came to another stream called the Second North Fork.[6] Here they found another Indian made bridge, with a span of forty feet. It looked too old and not strong enough to cross on, and as the water under it was a turbulent torrent, they decided that they would not venture on it, but would look for a safer place to cross. They went up the stream about half a mile, where they found a good place to build a bridge and plenty of timber close by. In four days they built the bridge and crossed over.

The trail from here on led through a comparatively level country, but was bad for walking, being of a swampy nature, carpeted with moss that their feet sank into, and containing many obstacles, such as fallen timber, scrub brush, etc. None of them had done such hard work before, but the young fellows would be well rested every morning. Every one thought Henry would not take the load through. They told him he was taking too much. He was only fourteen years old. One of his packs was not heavy but it was an awkward one, as it was the long whipsaw and other tools. They were making about four to five miles a day. That meant they traveled about eight or ten miles with a pack and four or five miles without it. One of their camps they named Caribou as there were many caribou tracks there.

It took twenty-eight days to reach Dease Lake from Miller's. They rested one day, cached their goods safely, took three day's food and no blankets, just the shotgun and rifle, and went back for the remainder of their goods. They reached Miller's house the third day. They then got the two packs ready. The two natives wished to quit, but Miller who could talk their tongue, urged them to finish with their contract. They consented to do so. Moore was very glad as they were a great help. Moore and his sons could talk "Chinook," but the men could only talk a few words of that jargon and a few words in English. It was hard to make them understand, but they were good men all right.

After they got across the Second North Fork they met a party of fifteen natives and their families, called "Sticks" by the coast natives. Their fishing ground and village were on the First North Fork. The village is called "Taltan." They had loads of fur on their backs. Their dogs were also packed. Moore's outfit were

6 Now called the Tuya, or Second North Fork.

just making camp, they always had both packs in at camp every night. The natives set down their packs and began talking pretty loud to Moore's two natives. They could not interpret very well but anyway Moore's party got onto what they wanted. The natives said the whites would scare all their game away, etc., and that they would not let the whites go any farther into their country.

Moore and the Lyons and Rath party saw that they had to stand pat and make the natives know that they would go. The natives began to cool down a bit. The whites saw at once they had the upper hand as the natives had their families with them. The whites deliberately took their rifles, three in number, two shotguns and three pistols, which they at once proceeded to load. The rifles were the old Henry repeating ones. At this the natives began to cool off more and pointed to their wives and children. The whites understood what they meant all right. So the natives began to talk sensibly and said; "You whites ought to pay us something for going over our trail and bridges." The white men that they had seen on a lake had given them some provisions. The Moore, Lyons and Rath party agreed to give them twenty dollars but would not give any provisions, only for their supper. This was agreed on.

The natives then explained where they saw the three white men. They made motions by taking up a handful of small particles from the ground and scattering them about, then picking them up again, making the whites understand it was gold they were picking up again. The head man undid the rag and showed the whites some gold, about ten or fifteen dollars worth, that the three white men had given them. These men were Thibert, Tifair, and Loozon, and they were on a creek putting into Dease Lake.[7]

This was good news to the whites as it showed plainly that Thibert and party had struck it good. It put heart into the party and they worked hard getting to Dease Lake. In twenty days from the time they started from Miller's, although their packs were a little heavier than their first loads, they reached the Lake. They lost no time in getting rafts made to get on down the Lake. The two natives were paid off, at the rate of $50 apiece, then they went back taking from the party letters to Mrs. Moore and others in Victoria.

They loaded their goods on their rafts and poled and pulled along the shore. They were three days making the foot of the lake

7 Dease Lake was named for Peter Warren Dease, who was one of the first to reach Point Barrow, Alaska, in 1837, while exploring for the Hudson's Bay Company.

which is about thirty miles long, being sixty-two days from Fort Wrangel, and about two hundred and sixty-two miles.

On the way to Dease Lake they saw the remains of an old Hudson's Bay Post,[8] which had been built by P. W. Dease, Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company in the year about 1840. This post was destroyed by the coast natives. The occupants made their escape down the lake and down the Deloire.

These waters flow into the Mackenzie River, thence to the Arctic Ocean. Moore and his sons and the others stopped at the mouth of the creek putting into the lake. They saw a new boat and an old camp here.

C. L. Andrews

(To be continued)

8 Morice says: "It may suffice for our purpose to remark that in 1838, R. Campbell, a young Hudson's Bay Company officer, hailing from the east, having crossed the Rocky Mountains, started a post on a sheet of water called Dease Lake, four years earlier by the discoverer, John M. McLeod. See *History British Columbia*, p. 203.