FIRST ACCOUNT OF CONQUERING MT. McKINLEY

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Thomas Lloyd, Leader of the Successful Expedition, Tells How He and His Comrades Planted the Stars and Stripes on the Heretofore Baffling Peak, the Highest Point on the American Continent.

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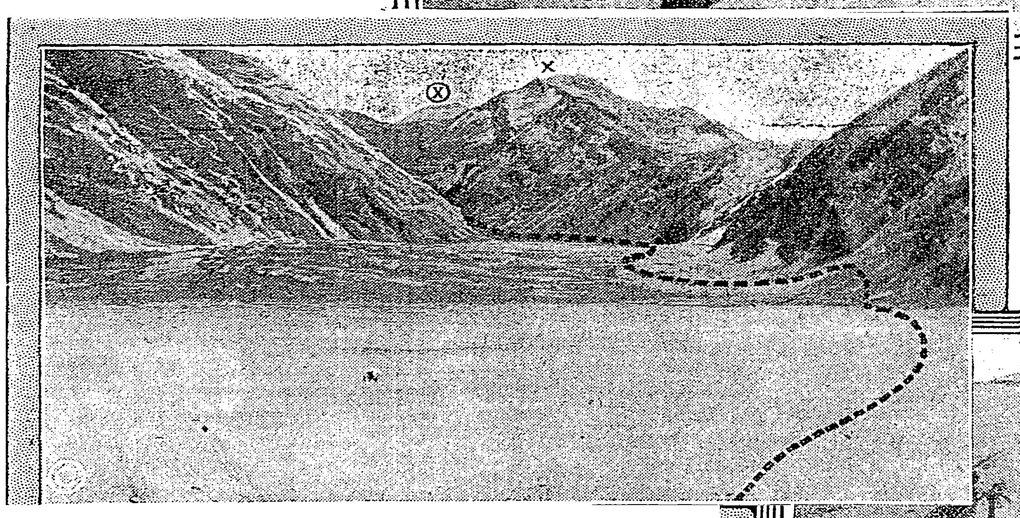
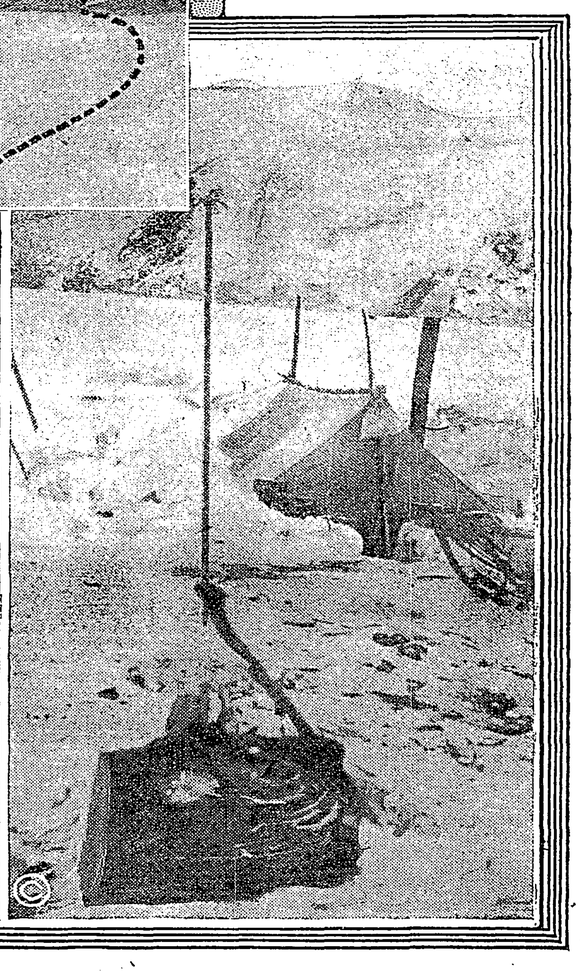


The Twin Peaks of Mt. McKinley Photographed Before the Final Climb. The Dotted Line Shows the Route Traveled. The Two Peaks Are of Equal Height, and the Party Scaled Both of Them. The Flag Was Planted on the One Marked with a Circle, Which Was of Rocky Formation and Admitted of Firmly Fixing the Flagpole.



Tom Lloyd and the Dog Team Arriving at Chena, Alaska. Lloyd Is the First Figure at the Left.

By W. F. Thompson,

Editor Fairbanks (Alaska) News-Miner.

AT the request of THE NEW YORK TIMES I have obtained from the members of the Lloyd party, who were the first men to stand upon the "roof of the continent," which is Mount McKinley's twin summits, the story of their climb.

Scarcely easier than the climb itself is the building of a story upon the incidents of that climb, because of the hatred of the members of the Lloyd party (and men of their class of bona fide pioneers) to publicity being accorded them. The ascension was not made for purposes of publicity but for peculiar personal reasons.

These four men have performed a feat that has set the world talking—a presumably impossible feat—during which they risked their lives a dozen times. They have stood upon the highest peak of the American continent, have seen sights that thousands of people would give much of their time and money to see, and have passed those sights up without particular interest or attention.

They have done this allegedly impossible thing solely with the desire to prove to themselves and a small group of their friends of the North that there is more endurance and perseverance in the men of the North than there is in the men of the South—have done it for no reason but to convince themselves that the stories which have been printed of them and their powers of endurance have foundation in fact.

Having performed the so-called impossible, having obtained the knowledge which the world is eager to possess, they consider the matter a closed incident and are willing to allow the world to remain in ignorance of that which the world is entitled to know—that is, all the world save a number of other old-timers of the North who had the confidence in them to back them to ascend Mount McKinley. That is the source from which I dragged this story.

When the "outside" newspapers and magazines were last Fall full of the faking of Dr. Cook, a number of Alaska pioneers were gathered in a local resort in Fairbanks, Alaska, and their talk turned upon the alleged ascent of Mount McKinley by him.

One of the party, Tom Lloyd, has spent years alongside Mount McKinley, and every feature of that grand monument of nature is impressed upon his memory. To the assembled "sourdoughs" he said that he would consider it an easier matter to make the climb to McKinley's summit than it would be to fake a story of the ascent.

Bill McPhee, one of the most widely known pioneers of Alaska, expressed the opinion that Lloyd could not make the ascent, that he was too old for high climbing and too heavy for such work. Tom rejoined that he was not too old and that for two cents he would proceed to "show" Bill. Bill said he would give $500 out of his own pocket if Tom would make the ascent of Mount McKinley and prove to the "tribe of Cheechacos" that no man had ever before set foot upon the summit of McKinley, as some Cheechacos had told of doing.

Gust Peterson chipped in with another offer of $500, and E. W. Griffin, the wholesale merchant of Chena, Alaska, "trailed" with a third $500. Then came the Alaska Order of Pioneers with the offer to finance the entire trip, but Lloyd would not listen to that suggestion. The object of the order is to help pioneers who need help and Tom never needs help. Estimating that the ascent could be made for $1,500, he took the three pioneers up on their offer and proceeded to prepare for the climb.

The newspapers of Fairbanks heard of the proposed trip and began to write it up. This nearly broke up the expedition. The pioneers hurried out of Fairbanks and to Chena to escape notoriety, and outfitted at Mr. Griffin's store in Chena, seven miles below Fairbanks. They started out from Chena outfitted as no McKinley expedition was ever before outfitted, and with less "junk" with them than an Eastern excursion party would take along for a one-day's outing in the hills.

They took with them no historian, no photographer, and no topographer, although they had been deluged with requests from professional men who desired to accompany them. They wanted no publicity and they cared not if the world never heard of their trip.

Their only desire was to prove to their three backers and to the pioneers of the North that they personally were just as "husky" as they ever were and could still reach any place they started for—that and the desire to give to the Cheechacos "the laugh" by proving that what the Easterner brags about and writes about in the magazines and which to the Easterner is impossible, the sourdough Alaskan performs as a part of "the day's work."

"Buster," the Dog That Climbed Up 15,000 Feet.

The Lloyd party consisted of Tom Lloyd, Billy Taylor, (Lloyd's mining partner;) Pete Andersen, and Charles McGonagell, (two miners who have worked for Lloyd and Taylor for years;) C. A. Davidson, a surveyor, and Bob Horne, who had a piece of surveying to do in the McKinley district and who took this opportunity to reach that section.

Davidson and Horne quit the party before the actual ascent of McKinley began, and the four old "tillicums" made the climb alone.

They were more than thirty days in reaching the summit from its base, but they did reach that summit, (it proved to be two summits of equal height,) and on that, the highest spot of ground on the North American continent, they planted the American flag and left there monuments to mark the event—monuments which will remain there, despite wind and weather, long after the members of the Lloyd party have made their last climb and passed on.

They had numerous escapes from death, discovered rock which was unknown in their mining experience, were short of food at times, suffered some from freezing, their faces were turned to well-tanned leather by the sun's reflection upon the snow and ice over which they traveled, their eyes were bloodshot and blinded by the sun's reflection upon the ice, despite their snow glasses; they accomplished feats which were seemingly their very limit of endurance, left permanent camps along the trail to and upon the summit of Mount McKinley, and returned to Fairbanks to find that they had brought upon themselves the prominence and publicity which it is their life's work to avoid.

In fact, so little did they consider publicity and notoriety "coming to them" that three of the four men stopped at their mining camp in the Kantishna and took up their work where they had dropped it to make the ascent of Mount McKinley, sending one of their number here to report to the Pioneers the success of the climb. One of them could tell the story, and why should the others bother to come to "town" and lose time which might be worth money to them?

From the man who returned to Fairbanks to "close the incident" this story is coaxed.

There were times in the interview when the narrator would rise to points of description where intense interest would be aroused, but as the interviewer would wait in breathless expectancy for the living words of description, the old sourdough story teller would close up like a clam, possibly with the terse remark that "It was great!"

He would start to describe mountain passes never before seen, and which are greater and grander than any known to the world; would start stories of crevasses which are bottomless, of glacier-scarred mountains, sublime in their coloring and sculpturing, only to stop short with the concise but maddening statement:

"Finest thing you ever saw!"

And you had been just about to see it through the eyes of the-man-on-the-spot, when the glass was closed with a snap!

When he, near the finish of his story, described the condition of the men of the party and their larder on the last day of the ascent, when their only drink was made from the dregs of the coffee they had first boiled six days before; and, when Pete Andersen, the Swedish stoic, was suffering tortures from his frozen toes, the old story teller actually spent more time endeavoring to convince his hearer that six-day-old coffee is really better than fresh coffee, and that frozen toes, frozen for weeks at a stretch and bleeding every night with chagrin over their inability to wring a complaint from their bearer, are all that is really necessary to make a champion mountain climber out of an ordinary surface wayfarer!

The "Pothole" Camp on 10,000 Foot Level at Wall Street Glacier.

From such a source was this story drawn. It is a "roughneck" story, told by a roughneck pioneer, who will not believe that he has done anything worthy of "making a fuss over," and who acts as though he considers it "peluk" work to climb higher up a mountain than the end of "pay" in a mineral-bearing ledge thereon.

With an ordinary five-dollar kodak the party took some thirty-odd pictures of Mount McKinley and its summit—the first pictures ever taken on or near that summit. Eighteen of those pictures turned out well. To the men who obtained them they were considered valueless save as the proof to a bunch of old-timers of Fairbanks that the Lloyd party made the ascent as they claimed to have done.

The Lloyd party made the ascent of Mount McKinley upon plans formed upon their experience upon that mountain and in its vicinity, upon lines marked by personal experience.

They estimated as closely as can a mariner with chart and compass reckon his course upon the seas the exact time and direction to accomplish the ascent of Mount McKinley and as they arrived at each stage of the ascent they found that nature had anticipated their coming, according to their schedule, and had smoothed the way and prepared for their reception.

They climbed in February, March, and April, making a successful ascent, demonstrating also to their own satisfaction that the ascent can be made at no other time of the year. Dr. Cook claims to have made the ascent in September, which every condition of climate and mountain proves that he could not do.

The Lloyd party traveled every step of the way across the vast glaciers on snowshoes, and declare that they can be traveled in no other way. Dr. Cook makes no reference to the use of snowshoes, nor is it a matter of record that he would know how to travel a foot upon snowshoes.

The members of the Lloyd party, though exhausted from their climb and weakened from lack of nourishment, remained upon the summit of Mount McKinley until they had marked their arrival there and occupancy thereof in a manner which will be plainly noticeable for centuries to come.

Dr. Cook, after making his "dash," claims to have left his records in a cartridge shell. The members of the Lloyd party found no cartridge shells upon or near the summit of Mount McKinley—found no indications that the foot of man had ever before been placed upon either of those two summits.

They did find there rock and other phenomena which no scientist could see and not mention, for in their lifetime spent among the hills and rocks they had never before been called upon to attempt to classify such rock.

The pictures and the records, the latter kept by Thomas Lloyd in an old memorandum book in which he has kept the records of other mushes through Alaska during past years, are herewith presented in all their simplicity and paucity of description.

The pictures are taken by the veriest amateurs. The record is one of plain words, kept by a plain old pioneer who, after spending thirty minutes reading from his notes, paused to remark:

"I never talked so much before in my life—my mouth is all puckered up."

But the words are words of truth, and there's the wealth of the rich valley of Tanana to back the truth of every word in those records in which the ascent of McKinley by the Lloyd party is told. They are indifferent photographs, but in their indifferent treatment they show their sublime possibilities and their sublime truth.

In the years to come thousands of aspiring Cheechacos will make the ascent of Mount McKinley (maybe) and volumes of beautiful description will be written of the trip; paintings sublime in their coloring and conception will result from the visits of great artists to nature's tallest monument of lights and shadows, but history will always be compelled to record that it remained for a party of hardy Alaska pioneers to blaze the trail and point the way for the people of the world before McKinley's sublime height could be negotiated.

IN CONCLUSION.

IN conclusion it may be said that two Eastern expeditions are undertaking the ascent of Mount McKinley. Whether these expeditions succeed in reaching the summit or not, they will certainly go far enough to pass judgment upon the Cook claims.

The claims of the Lloyd party are in no danger of being disputed, for the "flag is still there," and the tents left on the mountain, the stakes set to mark the trail, and every evidence that is mentioned in this article. These evidences of the truth of the Lloyd party's story the Eastern expeditions will see and tell of.

Mr. Lloyd says that for $50,000 he will guarantee to make a permanent trail from the summit to the base of Mount McKinley, with lumber bridges across the crevasses, with fifteen or sixteen miles of continuous rope handrails anchored to anchor bolts driven into the solid rock, with shelter camps built of lumber and containing beds and stoves, so that Mount McKinley may be ascended in safety and comfort by future Cook tourists in four or five days' time.

He welcomes the coming of real scientists, and offers to take, in February or March next, any party of scientific men to the summit of Mount McKinley, helping them to it, for $5,000. If some lover of nature wishes to potlach his money to build and maintain an easy route to the world's storehouse of beautiful scenery, the opportunity is here for him—it is only a matter of money to overcome the difficulties of the ascent of Mount McKinley.

In the meantime, there is no charge for looking at the flag—it is there, where all may see.

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DRAMATIC STORY OF THOMAS LLOYD

He Reinforces His Simple Narrative of the Remarkable Climb with His Diary of Each Day's Journey.

(Stenographic report of Thomas Lloyd's Account of the Trip.)

WELL, I will tell you—

"About two or three weeks prior to the Pioneers' Order being organized here (during last November) Bill McPhee and me were talking one day of the possibility of getting to the summit of Mount McKinley, and I said that I thought that if any one could make the climb there were several pioneers of my acquaintance who could. Bill said that he didn't believe that any living man could make the ascent. I said that another fellow and myself had been on and around Mount McKinley more than had any one else, and that the other fellow was satisfied that he could climb it from one certain point, while I was satisfied that I could climb it from another point. Bill said:

"'You are too old to climb it,' and I said:

"'I may be, but I can find men who will do it.' He said:

"'To prove whether that fellow Cook made the climb or not I will willingly give $500 myself to have the ascent made.' I said:

"'I don't mind going in on it myself. I have dogs and horses coming out from my mines in the McKinley district after supplies, and when they arrive, with some of my men, we will see about this climbing party business.' He said:

"'We will see, in the meantime, if we can get any one else to join us in the game.' I said:

"'I am not going to coax anybody else to go into it, but I know some of my boys will go with me if I say the word.'

"The consequences were that in a few days time I was talking to Gust Peterson and mentioned my talk with McPhee. Gust remarked that he would like to make the trip, and believed he could make the climb, and I said:

"'By golly, you go, then. I am not going, but I will put you on the right track where you can make the climb successfully if it can be made by any one.'

"I should say here that a few years ago I went through a pass on McKinley which I believed to be the shortest way from the coast to the interior. I met people who told me that a Swede had come from the coast through a pass to the east of the Muldro glacier, which was believed to be shorter than any other.

"I wished to know if there was a nearer way to the coast than by going around the way I knew, so in April, 1908, a fellow named Mercifield and myself made the 'mush.' (I made two trips through that pass, but this one I am now referring to was the first trip.)

"We left camp on Glenn Creek on April 27, 1908, and in three days we were on the Chulitna. There we found the camp the Swede had made. Later we met the Swede, himself. His name was Pete Andersen—the same Pete Andersen who was with us on the climb.

"We made a trip over the old pass with the horses in the Summer, thinking it was the only feasible route by which to make connections with Broad Pass, and we reached Broad Pass thereby, considering that we made the trip in forty miles from our Glenn Creek camp. With us was young George Wallace, son of the Fairbanks gardener, who was also a good man on the trail. On that trip George remarked that he would like to join with us some time in a climb up Mount McKinley.

"On our return, I put Andersen to work on some quartz properties we have there, and in August of that year, guided by him, W. R. Taylor, Charles McGonagle and myself started for the Chulitna with horses over the glacier. We made the trip in twenty hours by the pass which Andersen had discovered, and which we had heard about—by going through this pass to the left of the Muldro Glacier. The Muldro Glacier is to the left of Mount McKinley.

"Well, to go back to Gust Peterson. Gust promised he would go on the McKinley trip. The news got into the papers, through telling Roy Tozier of it, and it soon got to be more of a joke than anything else.

"Finally, E. W. Griffin of Chena came to me and said that he would furnish the flag for us to put on top of McKinley if we made the trip, and I said:

"'If you furnish us with a flag for the top of McKinley, and put your name on that flag, your name will fly on that flag from the summit of McKinley.' I told him that just a few of the Old Pioneers had considered the trip, and that we were not asking any one else for anything; not a dollar. We simply wished to demon-

(Continued on Following Page.)

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FIRST ACCOUNT OF THE CONQUERING OF MT. McKINLEY

The Trip Was Made Just to Show It Could Be Done and Was Backed by Three Pioneers. Nearly Overcome by Hardships.

(Continued from Preceding Page.)

strate that the climb could be made, and I said:

"'If any one, (I don't claim to be anybody,) any Easterner, can make that climb, us pioneers can skin them. Also, I believe that conditions are more favorable for the climb at this time of the year than they were when Cook claimed to have climbed it.'

"Well, later on Gust Peterson told me that he and two other men would finance the trip, and he asked me what the cost would be. I said:

"'I don't believe the actual expense will be over $1,500. (It was not.) for we will use our own dogs and horses. I have a dog team here and more dogs near McKinley.'

"E. W. Griffin, Gust Peterson, and Bill McPhee financed the trip. Of course, the rest of the Pioneers thought they were going to assist, but I refused any assistance from the lodge or anything of that kind. I simply wished to go as one of the Alaskans, free from anybody else, so if we failed we would be accountable to no one.

"Of course, after the papers got hold of the story we hated the idea of ever coming back here defeated. So we started out. In the party were Pete Andersen, Billy Taylor, Charley McGonagell, C. E. Davidson, Bob Horne, and myself. We traveled first to the Nenena River. From there we were freighting goods into our quartz property, double-tripping it, and it took us quite a time to get the goods to the camp, but we finally arrived there with them.

"Preparatory to the big climb to come, Charley McGonagle and myself started out on Feb. 11 to look up the location for a camp on the south fork of Moose Creek, and we established one there by putting up a tent. It was put up temporarily, and we broke trail to it to haul our goods to that point. (From here on Mr. Lloyd reads from his diary of the trip.)

Diary of the Trip.

Feb. 12.—Foggy to-day. We covered the distance between the two forks of the McKinley River, breaking our own trail and camping in the cottonwoods.

Feb. 13.—We did not move camp to-day, but spent the time in looking over the country. Charley McGonagell mushed over to what we considered clear water, and I took the direction of the mountain. Found an old camp of Geologist Brooks, and decided we had better move camp to that place.

Feb. 14.—We moved our camp to timber line, and there found the old Brooks camp. Blazed on a tree were the following records:

"United States Geological Survey. Tyonark, Cook's Inlet, Tanana, Yukon. Camp No. 57. Elevation 1,980 Ft. August 21, 1902." I couldn't tell whether it was "21st" or "2d." "Alfred Brooks, Geologist; D. L. Owens, Topographer, 20, Latitude 63.24, Longitude 150.47."

Snapshot of Tom Lloyd After the Trip.

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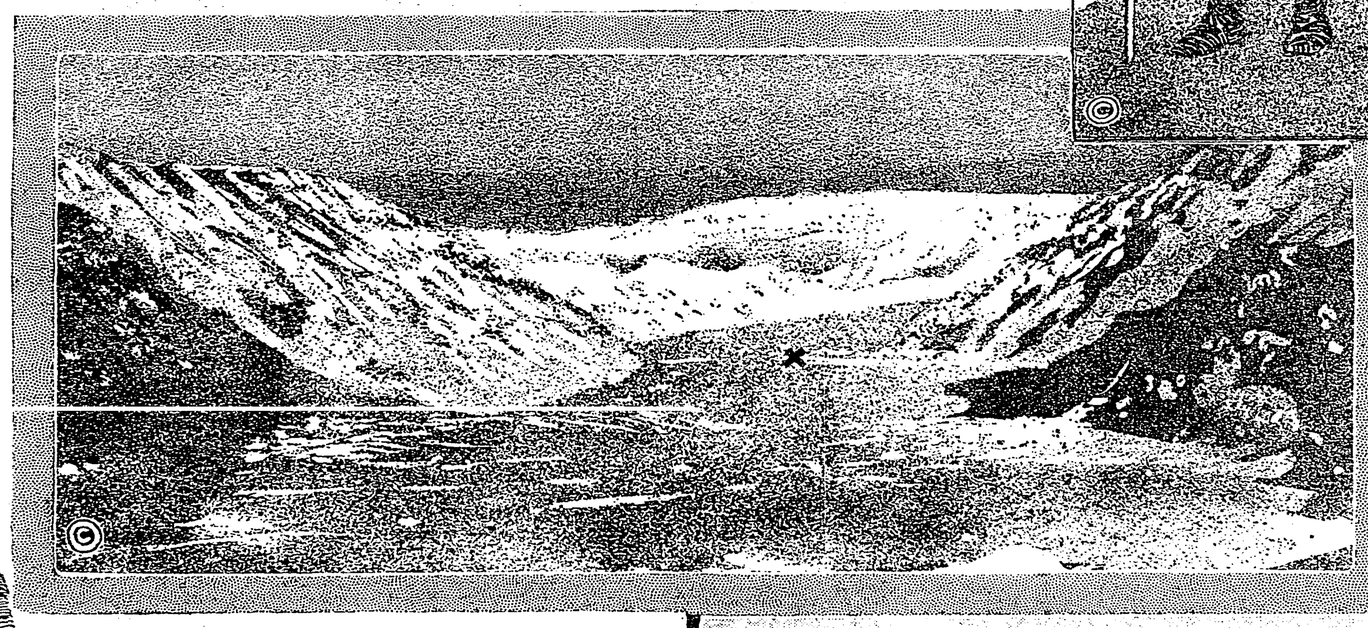
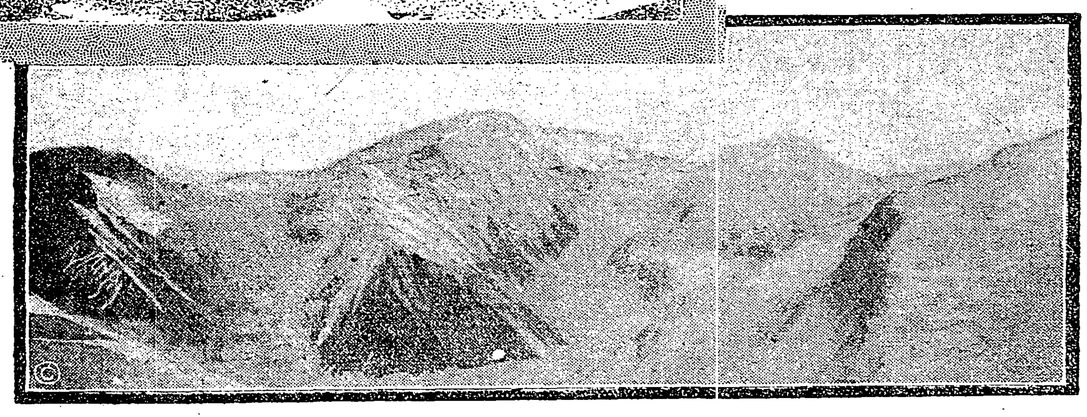
Closing in on the Summit—11 Miles Away.

Lloyd and Charley McGonagell at Tunnell Tent.



Glacier Between Walls of "Wall Street." At x It Is One and a Half Miles Between Sides. Mt. McKinley Is 14 Miles Away.

Tom Lloyd Arriving in Chena, Alaska, After the Climb.



Foothills of Mt. McKinley, Taken from the Side of the Mountain Looking Down Toward McPhee Pass.

That camp was eight years old. It was to the flats to look up wood for the upper camps on the timber line on McKinley Fork.

Feb. 15.—Having established our camp at timber line we returned to our camp on Glenn Creek. Our quartz properties are there, and Davidson is making a survey of them, assisted by Bob Horne and others.

Feb. 16, 17, 18, 19.—We lay in camp, cooking things for the trip up the hill. On the 16th Pete Andersen and McGonagell mushed out, one to Glacier for supplies, and the other to a caché of meat we had. Both returned that evening. Davidson, Horne, and Taylor returned on the 18th, having completed their survey of the quartz properties.

Feb. 20.—Taylor took Jackman's dogs back to Glacier City. We returned to the old Brooks camp on the west fork of the Muldro and spent the night in the camp we established there on the 14th. Davidson was complaining of a bad knee. We erected the big tent there—at the old camp of Brooks.

Feb. 21.—Pete Andersen and myself traveled ten miles toward clear water, above the timber line, and found a bunch of willows in which camp could be made above the Brooks camp. This was about ten miles, going south toward McKinley on clear water. Returned to camp this evening.

Feb 22.—McGonagell and Anderson returned to-day to the willows and put up a tent. We are not climbing for the summit yet, but are getting higher on the mountain as we proceed with the establishment of camps. Davidson is still complaining of his knee. Horne took two teams of dogs and went back to Glenn Creek to meet Taylor and help him along. The wind blew a gale all night.

Feb. 23 and 24.—The gale continues and you cannot see 50 feet in any direction. No team could stand the trail as the blizzard is blowing over the big flats.

Feb. 25.—Davidson, McGonagell, Andersen, and myself stayed in camp to-day, waiting for the teams, which did not come. The wind is still blowing, but not so hard as yesterday.

Feb. 26.—The wind died down in the valley, and Taylor and Horne arrived from Glenn Creek with the two teams and supplies. We will move camp to the willows to-morrow.

Feb. 27.—Moved camp. Andersen and McGonagell went to Muldro Glacier and did not return until dark. They saw a band of 200 caribou, but had no guns with them. Taylor and Horne took the two dog teams back to the Brooks camp to-day, where the big tent is and where there are supplies to be brought from.

Feb. 28.—Andersen and McGonagell took the guns and went out this morning. They killed two caribou, which was a good thing, for we were badly in need of meat. It turned cold toward night, and Taylor and Horne returned to the willows camp from the big tent on Muldro.

March 1.—We are now prospecting for the big climb. Andersen and McGonagell examined the galcier to-day. We call it the Wall Street Glacier, being inclosed by exceedingly high walls on each side. They returned at 1:30. Horne went hunting but had no success. I spent the day baking bread to take on the climb.

March 2.—Davidson and Horne started for Fairbanks and home to-day, and Taylor started for Glacier City after fish for the dogs. Andersen, McGonagell, and myself are getting ready to tackle Wall Street Glacier to-morrow. It is 32 degrees below zero to-night. We started keeping the temperature to-night, and it feels colder already.

March 3.—The weather moderated this morning, so Pete and Mac mushed down to the camp for the camera and took six pictures: the first of the camp, the second, third, fourth, and fifth of Mount McKinley. All the while I was thinking, "There's only 10,000 feet more to climb!" The sixth picture was looking back down the glacier over the trail we had just traveled.

The upper part of the glacier is full of crevasses. We looked down some of them, and in some we could not see the bottom. We will start to climb from right here over this glacier.

Started back to the Willows Camp at 3:20, arriving about dark; 26 below zero, but a fine day.

March 6—Pete returned to McKinley Fork to-day for a saw with which to saw wood. He mushed downhill ten miles to find the saw, and then climbed back. McGonagell looked for the aneroid, but could not find it, so to-night we made a rake and will hunt to-morrow for it. At 7 P. M. it is 20 below, and we have had fine weather all day. I spent the day baking for the trip.

March 7—We hunted all day for the aneroid without being able to find it, so must give it up. Saw a band of caribou to-day. Pete spent the day on a trip to Clearwater with the dogs for wood and poles.

March 8—Charley and Pete spent the day hauling wood and poles from Timberline, on Clearwater. Taylor has not returned. It is but a little below zero—4 or 5 degrees.

March 9—The boys are still hauling wood. I spent the day cutting stakes to stake the trail over the glacier, so that we can find our way up and back in the storms. I have 750 stakes cut. The weather is fine.

Taylor had 50 miles to go for fish when he left on the 2d, a week ago to-day, and he has not returned yet. I am becoming anxious about him. We have only two dogs here, and can't do much about hauling wood. It is only 10 below to-night.

March 10—Pete and Charley took a load of firewood and poles out on the glacier to the pass. We call it seven miles from here to the head of the first McPhee Pass. It is easy; there is just a little drop down on the glacier, and then we go up about four miles and a half to our glacier cap.

March 11—Last night it snowed about an inch and a half, and this morning it is still snowing a little. Taylor returned to-day. It was foggy and storming a little all day. Two above zero.

March 12—The trouble we have now is fogs. It is cloudy this morning. We took two dog team loads of wood to the Glacier Pass, the round trip being about fifteen miles. If the weather permits we will move camp to Wall Street Glacier to-morrow, but will leave one tent here, at Willow camp for protection.

March 13—Took stove, tent, and bedding to Wall Street Glacier. We called it that because you look straight up as at a wall. I would not like to estimate the height of the walls, but in places it honestly looked to me to reach 10,000 feet straight up. Of course, it cannot be anything like that distance or height, but it looked to be—stretching straight up in the air. It is the grandest thing I ever saw in my life—that long stretch of glacier.

Going across the glacier toward McKinley for the first four or five miles there are no crevasses in sight, as they have been blown full of snow, but the next eight miles are terrible for crevasses. You can look down in them for a distance stretching from 100 feet to Hades or China. Look down one of them and you will never forget it. Some of them you can see the bottom of, but most of them appear to be bottomless. They are not good things to look at.

Over the upper eight miles of that glacier you cannot move a foot in safety unless you have snowshoes on.

[Note.—On snowshoes they tested the trail to find the safe crossings.]

Across the glacier the wind blows at a swift rate. It didn't blow very hard while we were there to-day, but it blew across from the coast and seemed to lift straight up.

The route was practically east and west until we turned close to McKinley. The trail was raising all the time. Then the trail turned to the south—to the left of the ridge that we climbed on. Arrived at the Pothole camp. We sank straight down in the snow, (about four feet and a half into the glacier, and snow in a kind of a pothole,) where we pitched our tent. The weather was fine. Had no aneroid to determine elevation, but estimate it to be about 9,000 or 10,000 feet.

We have seen some great ice slides down the sides of Wall Street Glacier to-day. The weather (thermometer) about zero, the warmth causes the ice to break away from its anchorage, and it comes tearing down the sides of the almost perpendicular walls with a most awful noise, grinding and tearing its way.

A slide seemed to be taking the glacier under the tent away, and startled by the sound, like the report of a great gun, (I had never heard anything like it,) I jumped up.

It didn't seem to affect the other boys, and the Swede, who had crossed many glaciers, paid no attention at all. He simply looked at me and smiled, and said: "It's just ripping a little below; it is safe here."

We had hauled timber here to put the stove up on, and to put rock under the stove for a base we had to go half or three-quarters of a mile to an old moraine for some volcanic rock. The rock is black slate; it looks like volcanic slate. I could not classify it, but have sent some of it to Geologist Brooks, and he can say what it is.

We put some of this rock under the bottom of the stove, but the stove would sink, naturally, from the heat, and we had to keep digging down and lowering our beds to keep on the level with the stove.

Around the tent we piled snow so that the storms could not move it. We were finally down four or five feet in this hole, and we tied our tent down and filled it all around with snow, and it was all right then.

This tent we had was the balloon-silk tent. If the four of us were in this tent, which is about 8 by 10 feet, (not more than that,) there was plenty of room.

We had two caribou hides for beds and mattresses for four of us. They are the clear quill to put on the ice or snow.

Pete had a mountain sheep skin sleeping bag as well, and besides that we had three robes in all for the four of us—one of them was not much good—and a piece of canvas to throw under all. You want to be sure and keep the snow and ice from thawing underneath you.

We had no discomfort in sleeping—none at all. McGonagall and I each had a pillow, but Bill Taylor was never known to carry a pillow; neither was the Swede.

March 14—We arose at 5, (never on the trip did we arise later than 5 in the morning; we were always up, so as to be ready to start out just at daylight.) It is 8 it was blowing a gale, when Pete and Charley went over the glacier to locate a trail forward. Taylor went back for wood.

At 2 P. M. it was still blowing a gale, and continued to do so until 10 P. M. I spent the afternoon banking the tent. Pete and Charley came back about 10:30, after two and a half hours out on the trail. They could do nothing in the way of trail staking because of the wind, and we camped in the tent for the day.

Note—Here follow observations recorded of the day while they were "holed-up," reminiscences, byplay, &c., which finish that day and the next, March 15.

I was born Feb. 4, Taylor March 15, Pete in April, and Charley in May. The prospects seem good for all of us spending our birthdays on Mount McKinley this year. It blowed pretty much all night.

We had one magazine in the party—all the reading matter we had—and we read it from one end to the other. As in our conversation we always referred to Mount McKinley as "Mac," so we called the magazine the "Mag."

I don't remember the name of the magazine, but in our estimation it is the best magazine published in the world, whatever its name may be. I remember, among other things, that it had pictures in it of Morgan and some of them guys, but I can't remember the name.

It is still there on Mount McKinley, within a few miles of the summit, unless a slide has carried it away, and maybe some of those Cheechaco climbers will find it there some day and make the find an advertisement for the magazine.

March 16—It started to snow at 9:30 A. M., and at 2 P. M. it was snowing heavy and hard, but we concluded to move—or try to. Charley and Pete went ahead on the trail, but it became too thick or foggy for them, and they returned to camp about 4:15. It is clearing up a little this evening, and we hope for a clear day to-morrow.

I passed part of the day on the glacier and found the crevasses to be very numerous, and some of them if you tried it any other time you would be threatened with destruction by ice slides and avalanches from above, and by the danger of falling into the crevasses below or under foot.

It has been a fine day. Taylor went back to Willow camp this evening with the dog team. Charley and Pete returned to camp at 4:15. It is a little colder, but fine.

The formation along the Wall Street Glacier where it is uncovered by slides (on the side facing south) seems to be slate and feldspar, with numerous fissures showing. We have samples of the rock to take back with us, and Brooks will know.

March 18—This morning took the blue tent up to our last camp (at the Saddle) and approximate the elevation at not less than 15,000 feet. We drove a tunnel into the snow on the left-hand ridge to make a place to pitch the tent in. The tunnel seems now to be built of solid ice. Then we dropped back to the Pothole camp.

It has been a fine day on the glacier, but it is a little cloudy this evening. Taylor returns from Willow Camp with dog feed and some provisions, but unfortunately he brought a "wrong" quarter of caribou, from an old bull we had killed, and it is not fit for dog feed. Consequently we have no "caling" meat. It is blowing a little and looks like a storm for to-night.

March 19.—We had a great storm all night, and it is still blowing and snowing this morning. Couldn't move out of camp all day. The wind went down some this evening, but it is still snowing hard. Toward night it let up a little. It is 6 or 8 above zero.

March 20.—It cleared up a little this morning. Took five of the dogs with a jag of freight up to a little below the 15,000-foot level, with coal oil stove and a little outfit, preparatory to the final camp moving.

Boys questioned the ability of the dogs to make the trip, as they would go through the snow and into a crevasse where a snowshoe only would pass, but I said I would take a chance with the dogs; that when we came to a sharp turn or a critical place we could take a couple of them off and pack them around.

However, we didn't need to do that, for the dogs seemed to know, intuitively, when and how to protect themselves. If one of them would go in, the others would shy and keep on the track.

We had traveled so much on the trail with snowshoes that it had hardened enough to hold up the dogs, and it was only at the crevasses where the dogs were endangered, but when one of them would fall through the snow bridge or off of it into a crevasse, the other dogs would shy from the danger and pull the fallen dog out by his harness, to which they were also hitched.

(I took the dogs for the upper trail as an experiment only. They couldn't go over the trail for the first few days, but after we had traveled over it a few times with the snowshoes they could make it all right, and they helped to haul our stuff up.)

It is snowing a little to-night. The scenery is grand.

March 21—Snowed all night last night, and kept it up until 2 o'clock this afternoon. Taylor went back to Willow camp after wood and flour and meat. It is clear and bright to-night, and about 10 degrees below zero.

March 22—On this trip we were always praying for the thermometer to drop, so that it couldn't snow any more, and the trail could not soften.

From the start of the trip I always maintained that it was best to be early to the summit and the climb, as we didn't want soft weather for the trip. We didn't want any weather above zero. It is all right to-day. There is no danger of avalanches once we form the trail. The colder the weather the better it is for climbing over glaciers.

It snowed all night. Charley and Pete and myself started with bedding and a few things for the glacier, or the ridge between the two mountain peaks of McKinley, where we had drove the tunnel in the snow and where the blue tent is.

After we had driven that tunnel we climbed onto the roof of the ridge, which was about 50 feet above the roof of the tunnel, and looked over the other side. If we had driven the tunnel a little farther in, so as to have a back door to our home, and had we opened that back door, we would have found ourselves looking down a precipice which stood at about 80 degrees to perpendicular. If our foot had slipped at such a back door there wouldn't have been a grease spot left of one of us by the time we reached the bottom of that precipice.

The boys did all the packing, and the tunnel made a fine camp. This is the first night we have camped in the tunnel, although we have made several trips to it before to-day.

Everything is comfortable in our tunnel camp. From it we can see more country than is given to many men to see. On the trip up we crossed crevasses that it would make you dizzy to look into. Saw some great sights.

March 23.—Charley and Pete are trying out the final moraine to the summits, cutting steps and staking the way. I think we can make it. It was a little cloudy this morning; by noon it was foggy, and at 2 P. M. it was snowing.

We are anxious about Taylor, as he is coming from the Willow camp through the storm. The boys went down the trail

(Continued on Page 3.)

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FIRST ACCOUNT OF THE CONQUERING OF MT. McKINLEY

THE PIONEERS WHO BACKED THE EXPEDITION:

E. W. Griffin.

W. H. ("Bill") McPhee.

Gust Peterson.

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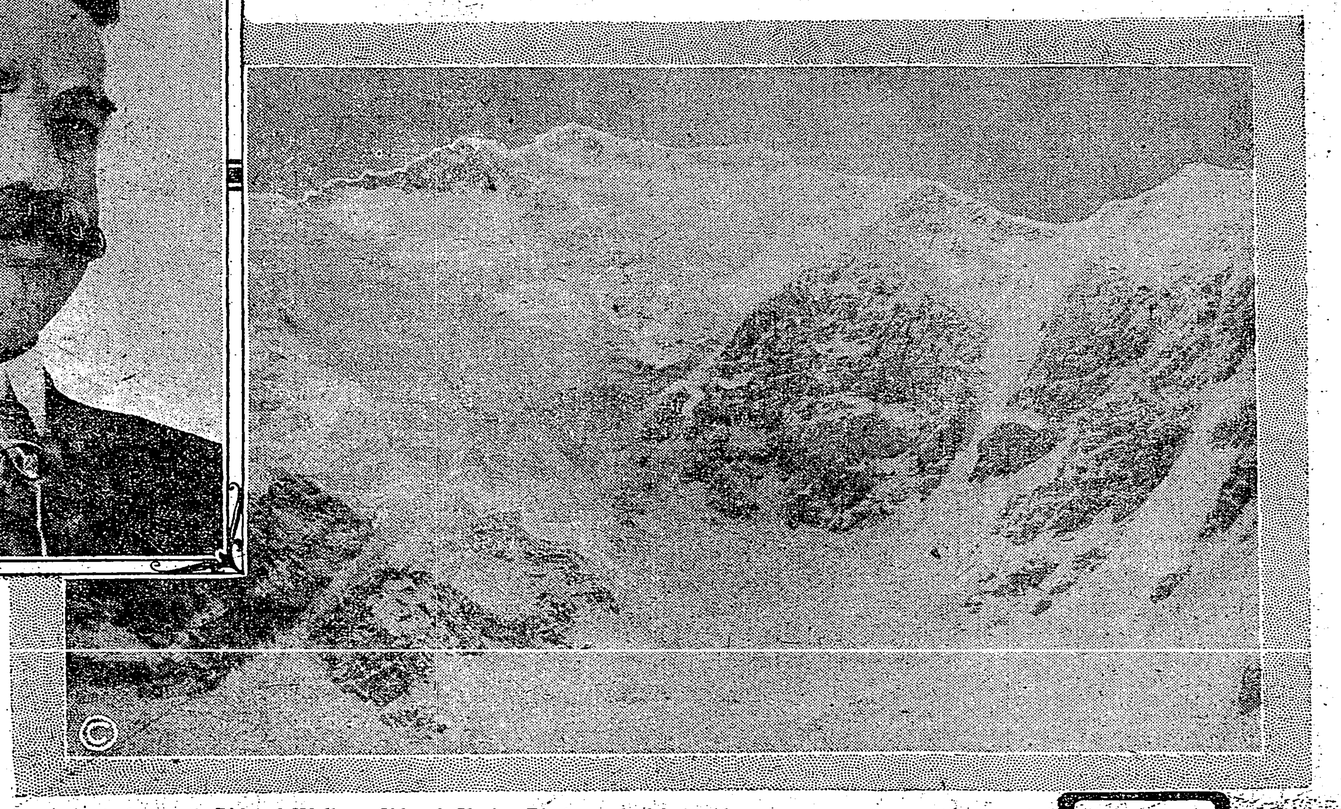
Thomas Lloyd Who Led the Successful Ascent.



Ride of Wall on Side of Glacier, Photographed from Above.

Pete Andersen, the Intrepid Swede, Is Given the Honor of Hoisting the American Flag On the Highest Peak, Where It Still Flies.

(Continued from Page 2.)

about half way to the Pothole camp, following the stakes, but found no sign of Taylor and came back. I presume he could see the fog up here and didn't start

Note later.—We thought he could see the fog up where we were and didn't start on account of it, but later we learned that it was storming down where he was, and he didn't see anything above or start.

This camping in a tunnel in the ice is no Summer picnic. Still, I don't feel quite so bad as I thought I would. We cut steps and took the flagpole up toward the summit this morning.

We took some pictures of the country at what we considered to be about the 19,000-foot level, looking down thousands of feet toward McPhee Pass. Looking to the right of that Pass going toward the Coast there are lots of unknown mountains that ought to be named, and which I expect to name later.

March 24.—We see no signs of Taylor, and as it is getting a little cloudy and cold (at 3:20 P. M.) we start out to find him. It is three days since he left for Willow camp, and I am very much worried about him. We started at 3:20 and tried to reach the Willows before dark, following the stakes. At the Pothole camp we had a cup of coffee, and I stopped there while the boys went on toward the Willow camp.

We are about out of wood here at the Pothole camp, and I am very glad. It's lucky the weather is not cold. I am troubled about Taylor. The boys would have returned if they had met the sled in the pass, but they are not here, so I will go to bed. I hope nothing has happened to Taylor.

March 25.—Taylor has been gone since the 21st, and no signs of him yet, or of the boys who went in search of him. If they don't show up by noon I shall start out after them, because I am out of wood. It is foggy, but I will have to go.

I started out with bed on sled, but met them before I reached McPhee Pass. Taylor turned up all O. K., and proved to have been delayed by storms. It had not stormed where I was very much, but I was made more uneasy for the boys' account by a slide which occurred that morning.

Opposite our camp a great slide came tearing down the rise, and I tell you she was a pretty sight. She came half way across the glacier, and it looked as if it was coming all the way, but it filled up the crevasses as it came and stopped when it had covered about half the distance across the glacier.

There were chunks of ice in that slide that were bigger than any house, but the glacier is a mile wide at that point, and she stopped or was stopped in time.

March 26.—Taylor went back for some wood left on the Pass, and Charley and me started back up the trail to the Saddle and our Tunnel Camp. It has been a fine day, and it is only 6 below zero to-night.

We are going to make our final effort to ascend the summit within the next few days. We have cut steps and put stakes along up to the 19,000-foot elevation.

Charley and Pete continued on to the Tunnel Camp, but I dropped back to the Pothole Camp on the glacier and spent the night with Taylor.

March 27.—While the boys above us are cutting the final steps to the summits to-day, Taylor and I go back to Willow Camp for wood. It is a fine day. In talking of McKinley we call it "Mac."

March 28.—When we reached the Pothole camp to-day (Taylor and me) we found that Charley and Pete had cleaned the camp of most all the supplies on their last trip. There was only a little flour and lard and a small piece of meat. We are on our last can of butter.

March 29.—We have ten pounds of flour left. We are pretty nearly out of everything to-day. Coming toward the pass to-day I saw six buck sheep. They stood and gazed at me, and were about 100 feet away. Finally they started and walked leisurely away. I had no gun with me, and we needed meat badly, too; had left my gun out a mile below that point. [Note—We could have gone out any time and got mountain sheep, but we didn't take the time until we had made the climb.]

March 30.—It blew a gale across the Glacier last night, and was very foggy this morning, but it cleared up about 10 A. M. Taylor started out for the summit, and I started back to Willow Camp for that last can of butter. When I got there I found we had only five pounds of flour and a can of butter left. I killed some ptarmagin for the dogs, and made a big ptarmagin stew for myself. It has been a fine day. We are running short of dog feed.

March 31.—Hauling wood to the Willow Camp from down in the Flat. Forenoon fine.

April 1.—I started this morning for the summit to join the other boys for the final climb. It is getting foggy. I left notices in case anybody should come along the pass.

It snowed a little last night, and it was as foggy as it could be this morning, but I pulled out so as to leave enough wood here for our use when we return from the summit. This evening I joined the boys in the Tunnel Camp, but it was pretty late in the evening.

April 2.—We left Tunnel Camp at daylight to make the high ridge toward the coast summit, along which we intended to proceed to the summit. [Note: There are two summits to Mount McKinley, apparently of equal height, and connected by a "saddle." We climbed them both.]

I might say that from below, at the Tunnel Camp, the summit toward the coast looked to be higher, and we decided to stick the flag on top of that summit.

Pete and Charley had been on the "saddle" previously, cutting steps and staking the trail and preparing the way, so that the flagpole might be dragged to the summit and erected there.

When I reached the coast summit I couldn't find any rocks or any formation in which the flagpole could be placed permanently. From that summit it looked as though the north summit was equally as high as it, and we could see the mountain wall on its right-hand side and a reef of rocks that crossed right over it, (the north summit.) So we determined that on the morrow we would make our last climb, reach the north summit, and plant the flag there.

It took us (to reach the south summit) from daylight until about 3 P. M., and we covered six or seven miles to make that distance of a thousand feet up.

We returned to our camp in the tunnel for the night.

[Note.—As these people here in Fairbanks wanted us to put up a permanent monument upon the summit of McKinley to show forever that it had been climbed, and as we couldn't find any rocks or permanent foundation on the south summit, we determined to go to the north summit, where we could see there were rocks exposed, and put up the flag and a permanent monument of rocks there, as the boys out here wanted us to.]

The Last Ascent.

April 3.—This morning before daylight we climbed to the saddle between McKinley's two peaks, dragging the flagpole with us.

We had little difficulty in reaching the saddle, as the boys had been there previously and had cut steps, which made the ascent easier. Once there we proceeded to cross the Glacier between the two summits, to the north summit, where the rocks were.

The distance from the left, or coast summit, to the right, or north summit, (zigzagging as we had to go,) must be about three miles, but it is a hard matter to estimate distances up in that air. [Note.—Peter Andersen kept the time, as my watch had gone on the bum, and I can get the time we made from him—didn't think of it when I left, never dreaming that our story would be printed, or desiring that it should.]

When we reached the northern summit we found plenty of rocks there and we erected a monument that will endure as long as the top of the mountain does, although the rocks were hard for us to dig out in that altitude.

The snow filled in between the rocks, and they were frozen together, but we dug down 15 inches into the rocks until we had found a solid spot, where there will be no question but that the flagpole will stand, and into it we stuck that flagpole.

We tamped it in, and filled in with rocks and built rocks up around it in a substantial, time-enduring monument to a height of fifteen inches above the surface, so that the flagpole is anchored in thirty inches of solid rock.

The flagpole is a straight, seasoned spruce sapling full four inches at the butt and tapering symmetrically to full two and a half inches at the top, and is full fourteen feet long.

The flag attached to it is 6 by 12 feet in size, is an American flag erected by four Americans of Welsh, Scotch, Canadian, and Swedish descent, and on the flag, written thereon in ink, is the name "E. W. Griffin."

To the flagpole we attached four guy ropes, each anchored in the rocks. The flag was raised at 3:25 P. M., April 3, 1910. A picture of the flag and pole, with Pete Andersen standing by them, was then taken.

(Note—The boys in taking the picture did not pull the slide far enough, being unfamiliar with taking pictures, and it looks as though the picture was taken in a storm, but it was clear on the summit at that time.)

On the summit we also left a board from a candle box, and on the board is written: "Lloyd Party, Pioneers of Alaska. William H. McPhee, Gust Peterson, Pete Andersen, Charles McGonagell, W. R. Taylor, T. Lloyd." And on the corner of the board "Date, April 3, 1910," and "Ascended April 3, 1910."

Over the face of this board, to protect the writing from the elements, we nailed another board and said, in writing, upon it: "Open and look inside. Lloyd party." We nailed these boards to the flagpole.

That is the story of the climb.

RIGHT here I wish to state emphatically that I, personally, could never have got any place if it hadn't been for Pete Andersen, Charley McGonagell, and Bill Taylor.

"I wish to here publicly acknowledge that they were far superior to me in ability at any stage of the climb, up or down or on the level. They did the work, before and behind, and I kept camp.

"They will say that they think that I had the hard end of it in lots of things, but I am telling you the truth—I picked my men and in picking them I was satisfied that I had the men who could make the climb. The result showed that my estimate was right. That Swede, Pete Andersen, is a world's wonder.

"The boys staked the trail and moved the camps, and I moved on with the camps. They made it as easy for me as they possibly coould and so I was able to get through. But for their help I never could have done half of even what I did do. The trouble with me, principally, was that I was mostly too fat for climbing mountains, but I lost thirty pounds on the trip.

"The altitude affected us all differently. We all had to breathe through our opened mouth. You couldn't get enough air through your nostrils; our nostrils would not serve any one of us for windgetting.

"Bill Taylor is a big man and strong as a horse, but he could not pack very big rocks on top of the summit of McKinley, although he packed rocks for the monument.

"I cannot express myself satisfactorily regarding that Swede, Pete Andersen. He is a tower of strength; his endurance seems limitless.

"Every one in Tanana knows Charley McGonagell. He has been a mail driver in the North for years, and he is a wonderful fellow.

"Those boys can climb that mountain at that time of the year any time they want to. I think I could if I can keep at the weight I am now—but I wouldn't care to make that trip again unless I could have with me the three fellows who were with me on this trip I am telling you of.

"Pete Andersen had a frozen toe from the start of the trip to the finish, and in using snowshoes over the glacier and going up the mountain he would, naturally, stub that toe, and during the last few weeks it bled something fierce every night. He must have suffered the tortures of the damned, but he never complained; not once. When we asked him of the toe he would say: 'Well, it is a little bit sore,' as a fellow would say.

"In coming down the glacier on the return and final descent, Bill Taylor's foot slipped. He shot down the glacier with the speed of an express train. He had the presence of mind not to attempt to hold or catch with his feet, but let his hook drag, and when he reached softer snow on the glacier the hook caught and he hung there.

"This saddle he was sliding down turned at the bottom and dropped sheer down, no telling how far, but you can see by looking at the picture how it looks, and if his hook had failed to catch there would not have been a grease spot left of him when he reached the end of the precipice—or its bottom. As it was, he slid 200 feet down and then he 'hung up,' and then he got his feet again.

"Another time, we were climbing down the slope from that tunnel. To look at it you wouldn't think it could be climbed by man, but with creepers on to bite into the ice you can climb ice walls just as you can go up a telegraph pole with creepers on, with your hook to reach up and catch hold above with to help you.

"One day, in coming down, Charley McGonagell, who is quick as a cat on his feet, thought he would escape the full climb down by taking a cutoff, so he turned from the hanging trail to his left.

"He had nothing but creepers on, and when he stepped on what appeared to be solid footing he went right down through, in a crevasse which had been blown over with snow. He had his pole, of course, and it fell across the walls of the crevasse and held him suspended there, in snow up to his waist, with limitless space below him. He threw himself out, but he never attempted to turn off the trail again on that trip.

"Where he fell was in one of those crevasses I was telling you about, the surface of which becomes covered with snow. We could see the crevasse stretching away to the right and we went and looked into it to see where Charley might have landed. We couldn't see any bottom to it.

"Those boys with me don't want any credit handed them for what they did, but I want them to get it, because they are entitled to it.

"The entire trip was simply a matter of endurance—work day after day. There was not a bit of dissension in the party from the start to the finish. Taylor and me have been partners for years and (I don't claim that it is because of any good qualities of mine) I have never had words with him. He is, beyond question, one of the finest men you ever met.

"Charley has been with us for five years, and since Pete came in over the Pass years ago he has been with me. And I have known them to be good men. I banked on them, more than on myself, and they made good.

"Now, about that trip down from the north summit. It was 10 o'clock at night when we got to our Tunnel camp, and we stayed all the night of the 3d and left there on the morning of the 4th.

"We left the blue tent there and a pole to hold the ridge pole up, and the ridge pole, and a double coal oil stove and about a gallon and a half or two gallons of coal oil, and shovels; and shovels along the trail, too; and a few small cans there in the tunnel.

"We had set 100 stakes between the Tunnel camp and the summit, and 500 (about) from the Tunnel camp down the glacier to mark our trail to the Glacier camp, and we traveled some on the down trail, making the Willow camp that night.

"You can't make any possible headway over that glacier unless you have tested every foot of the trail before you. And you will find I am telling the truth. You must probe every step you take there.

"We went over lots of places you could travel with snowshoes on, but where, if you stuck your pole into the apparently solid face, it would go clean through. Where such crevasses were large we would bridge them over, but the little ones we did not mind.

"You can't fall down a crevasse that is only a foot or so wide when you have snowshoes on, or even if you do fall in a small one your pole will fall across the walls and hold you up if you carry it in the right position.

"Counting that we left the summit in the afternoon of the 3d, stopping at the Tunnel camp that night and starting on the morning of the 4th down the trail, reaching Willow camp that night, you will see that, in less than a day and a half we covered the distance going down which it had taken us over a month to cover going up.

"We traveled light coming down, having no grub and not much of a camp outfit, and we made good time over our blazed and secured trail.

"The 5th we made it to McKinley River. The snow was deep, but it was a fine day and we had what we would call good traveling. At McKinley River we next made Fairbanks—it was only a matter of riding behind the dogs.

"Phill Ott saw the boys in the Kantishna after I left, and he says that they are blacker than I am, although I look pretty dark. He says the boys are feeling fine after their climb. The reflection of the sun on the ice burned us very dark.

"I have good eyes, and it did not affect them very much, (we all wore snow glasses,) but the reflection pretty nearly put the eyes of the crowd out of business. It will be a long time before our skin gets back to its natural color.

"As so much is being made over this trip I am sorry now that we did not take a photographer and historian with us, but we didn't make the trip for any purposes of publicity. We simply desired to be able to come back and say: 'We put the flag upon the summit of McKinley; it is there, and you can see it, and you don't have to do any climbing to see it, for it is in plain sight.' We just wanted to show that we could do it, and we expected our mountain climbing would end right there.

"We used no ropes in climbing. We took our chances individually, traveled over the glaciers on snowshoes equipped with roughlocks, while in making steep climbs we carried long poles, with double hooks on one end—hooks made of steel—and a sharp steel point on the other end of the pole. They were all made in Fairbanks from the design of Charley McGonagell by Jim Johnson. We also used ice creepers in climbing, and snowshoes only over the lower glaciers.

"When we were up a little ways on the glacier we could see a big mountain opposite to us, and at a distance from us. It appeared to be a solid wall, and you could see no divisions in the wall.

"When we reached that mountain we found it almost as perpendicular as it appeared to be from a distance, with a pass at its feet that is a mile wide and as level as a floor, but it is filled with a glacier, and goes a little west of south, directly behind McKinley, toward the coast.

"I believe that it would cut off at least 75 miles over the last pass which Pete Andersen came through from the coast, and which we traveled together through before, but it would be glacier traveling.

"To the likes of me this perpendicular mountain which I am telling you of is a far grander sight than Mount McKinley itself. You walk up this level pass looking up at those perpendicular walls, scarred with the glaciers which have crashed down its side, and it is the grandest sight I ever saw—beautiful.

"The glacier through this pass is a large one, but it is only a spur of the Muldro Glacier. I would like to have Brooks and Pringle investigate this and report on that pass. The trail taken by Brooks probably covered more than 100 miles more than it would be necessary to cover coming by this new pass I mention.

"If Dr. Cook had made the summit of Mount McKinley as he said he did he could not have escaped seeing samples of the rock on that summit and near it. Had he seen that rock he would have mentioned the fact, for it is rock that would command the attention of any mountaineer, especially when encountered in such a spot. I have sent samples of the rock to Smithsonian Institution for classification.

"Furthermore, he absolutely could not pass over the glaciers that it is necessary to pass over to get up Mount McKinley—could not get over them at the time of the year he claims to have gone over them. There are glaciers there that he would have had to pass over to make the ascent, and at that time of the year neither he nor any other man could pass over them; nor at any time of the year can any man pass over them without using snowshoes—and Dr. Cook mentions no snowshoes.

"This statement can be proved in two weeks from Fairbanks, and will not cost much money to prove—that it is impossible to make the trip without wearing snowshoes. No man would make the trip with snowshoes and not mention them.

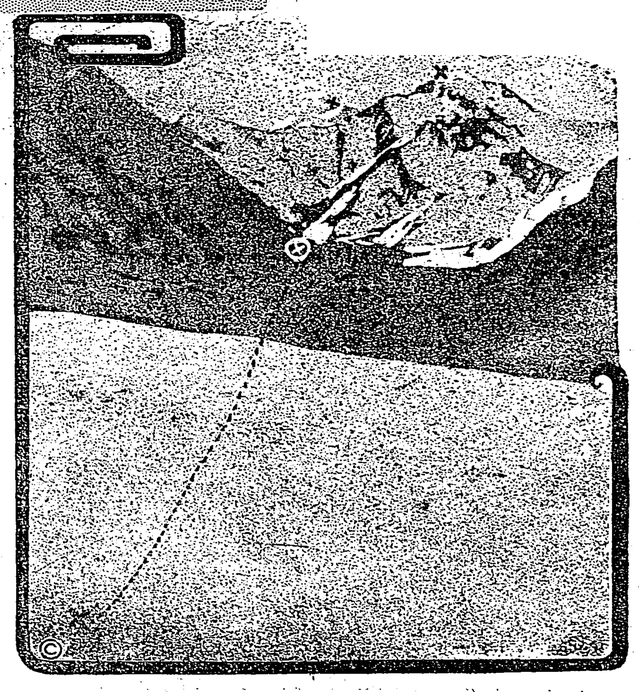
"Although I was pretty stout, the stoutest of all of them, in making those trips over the glaciers, when I passed over a crevasse I stepped pretty light. At such times I don't believe I weighed an ounce.

"When we were on the summits of Mount McKinley, on both days, it was bright and clear at the top, but fogs and clouds obscured the view below us and we took no photographs of the surrounding country from the summits.

"We were out of coffee and tea for a week, so we kept boiling the coffee grounds over and over. Of course I don't want to talk about any hardships, because we didn't have any really. We had bacon and beans and bread.

"I would like to mention one thing we had. Billy Strong of Chena made for us two teapots of copper. He used to make them for the pioneers in the early days, but he don't make them now, as these newcomers don't like to pay the price for them. But he said to us: "You fellows will appreciate them." We certainly did. They are very wide at the bottom and taper up small at the top, and they are the greatest teapots ever. They will boil from a burning match.

Mount McKinley must be 21,000 feet high, but that Swede is a wonder. If it was twice as high as it is I believe the Swede could go to the top of it.



Looking Across the Glacier. The Distance Between the Marks x Below Is Eight Miles.

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