

F. GRAY MEEK, Editor

To Correspondents.—No communications published unless accompanied by the real name of the writer.

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IN THE WILDS OF ALASKA.

Graphic Description by Dr. Meek of Her Trip Overland by Dog Sled.

Cripple, Alaska
En route from Ruby to Flat,
October 31st, 1921.

My dear Home Folk:

I started out bravely enough to keep a daily record of my doings thinking that in this way I could best help you to visualize Alaska, at least the parts I have been living in, but frozen ink and a "bum" pen made such a very bad combination that, added to my natural desire to just move on, I surely put all my letter writing in that big batch of things we do "tomorrow." But I'll try to do just a little better today.

Last Thursday, after many and various delays, we left Ruby with the mail-carriers. Oh! that you could have seen that get-away and the "lay-outs" as these mail-carriers call them!

The dogs are hitched two by two with one well-trained, intelligent dog in the lead. The harness attached to the collar is held by a strap passing around the body. First came Sig-hard Wig, a Norwegian by birth but a resident here for twenty years, a rather quiet sort, very nice to travel with—in short a gentleman. He had seventeen dogs in his team with three running loose and seven pups about five months of age. Then came our team (these mail-carriers had loaned us these dogs), eleven dogs in harness with two loose ones behind. The loose dogs had been kept in a summer camp on the Yukon and were now being returned to their owners. The dogs are fed once a day on dried fish with a side dish of beef suet. The third team was held for a day longer to bring along the mail that was reported to have been sent down the river but had not arrived when we left. This man was a young Scotchman but, also, an old resident of Alaska and an old hand with dogs. He drove nineteen dogs with two or three "dog-boarders" running loose and caught up with us on the second day. The sleds to which the dogs are hitched are long, strong, well-built affairs. The big ones are fifteen foot long and sixteen to eighteen inches wide (diagram), an upturned, curved bow at the front that, striking trees, enables the sled to glance off, or, nosing into the bank, the dogs can more readily pull the sled to the top of the bank and, since there are many small streams with deep-cut water ways to cross, you see how good an idea it is. The sled with which we started was only a foot shorter than the big sleds; otherwise was exactly like them. The driver stands at the back on the extended runners, holding onto handles at each side and uses a heavy brake (diagram) to help control the teams. He calls "Haw" or "Gee" for left or right and the leader understands, so off one goes with a whizz. Later on, when the snow is deep (we have had only a few inches thus far), the driver sits on the front of the sled and guides it with skiis.

Flat, Alaska, November 9, 1921.

Again I start and will try to finish by tomorrow since the mail will start back Friday morning. One mail a week and that brought in by dogs. I am beginning to think that I must have some dogs for, in a country where we must either travel by dog-sled or on foot, one surely feels cut off when not owning dogs. But I won't stop to talk dog just now.

The "get-away" from Ruby was spectacular since, as usual, most of the people were down to see us off and wish us "safe-journey." The dogs were excited and barking madly and, just here, let me tell you that pandemonium is the one word applicable about the stable when dogs are being harnessed for the trail. The ones that go are joyous, so proclaim their joy loudly; the ones that stay seem to be wailing in a minor key about their disappointments, but it all goes together.

The mail comes down the Yukon on boats while the river is open but, when it closes, dog teams are the only means available. Since the passage from Seattle to Seward is always open, mail is sent there, thence up the railroad to Tanana and then down the Yukon. When the river is frozen over it makes a smooth highway for dog-teams. As the river was full of floating ice so that no boats could move and offered no footing for dogs, the mail was held at Tanana and we waited for that "water" to stop moving but, after six days, one mail-carrier was ordered off. The second one, George Clark, a Scotchman so "Scotty" for short, was held a day in the hope that the last mail, which had been brought down the river on the other side, could be brought across before he left on the two-hundred-and-fifty mile trail to the two, Iditarod and Flat, and other lonely hamlets of the interior.

The parts of the sleds are all lashed together and, after the first day, I saw the reason for this plausible conveyance. Such trails! Good gracious! I hadn't much use for the dogs except what a lover of dogs might have but, I now have great respect for them. There is a formation or growth of grass up here called "nigger-heads," tufts of coarse grass grown up on each other each season until, in some places, they are two or three feet high with a space between that, in spring, contains water. At this time, these spaces should be full of snow but, since the snow is scarce, the sled slid along on one tuft just to slide off the next. It takes skill to balance these sleds with a thousand pounds of baggage on them and you know in how narrow a space two dogs could run, so the sled follows a trail scarcely wider than this paper is long (about eight inches). Truly, a deep-sea vessel rides almost as smoothly. The weather was not cold, just clear and crisp, and the trip was broken often enough to be not tiresome. The first day was only a fourteen mile run and to see the charming little cabin, with smoke pouring out of the chimney, that greeted my eyes that first evening made an unforgettable picture. The remainder of the nine days we had longer runs—twenty-eight to thirty-two miles. As it was the first trip, the dogs became quite weary on the third day and their feet began to bleed but moccasins of heavy drill were put on the bleeding feet and on we went. By the sixth day, the dogs seemed to come back and, as we stopped for an entire day at Ophir, the finish was nearly as good as the start. The road-houses ranged in variety from a cabin, with two bough-filled bunks and a prospector to give one their food, to a very nice place about on a par with the hotel at Centre Hall. But there was no difference in price as it was one dollar for a bed either a bunk, with a dirty cotton comfort and a hard pillow, or an iron one with woven-wire springs, sheets and warm comforts; one-dollar and a half for breakfast and the same for the late dinner that we always had as soon as we landed. The food was excellent and all had seemed good after a day in the open and the exercise from those rocking sleds.

I wish I could describe the country through which we passed but if you remember the drive to Snow Shoe where all the big timber has been taken off leaving only scrub pine you will have a good idea of what I saw. Mountains on all sides and small streams but all so barren and infertile that, with the few people we saw or met, one feels this is, indeed, a big country and I wonder why it seems to belong so to the past. Yes, I know miners are not home-makers, but take and move on. These camps are diminishing, the gold has been dredged from the streams, the wood burned for we paid twenty-one dollars a cord today for wood to burn to keep us warm. Gardens can be made, potatoes, turnips and cabbage raised but these miners preferred to have them shipped into the towns. So a little cabin without yard or garden and the country poorer than when they came is what remains when they leave. Of course, I have not been on the other side of the mountains; that, I am told, is much better land, agriculture has gotten hold and population is increasing.

I had hoped to get on my way this next week, since Flat is only half way to Alkai, where is located the government hospital that I have promised to look after this next year. Whether I will stay longer than this winter remains for the future to tell. It is a native hospital, not so very large and is, indeed, at the "jumping-off" place and I am wondering how I shall like it all. A wireless came today informing me that the trails are too soft and the river not frozen for travel and I must wait until "sharper weather" ere I can hope to move. Can you believe that here in Alaska, November twenty-eighth, this state of things could be?

The day before Thanksgiving, a man, originally from Ohio, but twenty-two years a resident here, came into our cabin and asked where we were going to eat our Thanksgiving dinner. When we told him we had made no plans, he suggested that he buy the chickens, (raised here at five dollars apiece but, of course, we are not supposed to know the price) and we would cook the meal. We agreed and then another "forlorn" man came along and offered to cook it if he could join us. We had stewed chicken with excellent dumplings, cream gravy, mashed potatoes, peas, hot biscuit and butter, celery, fruit salad of oranges, pineapple, apples, celery and nuts, but he made a boiled dressing and it was none too good, coffee and chocolate. Although we had prepared plum pudding with hard sauce, they all decided they had enough without it.

A bad accident occurred last week when a man was feeding wood into a circular saw, slipped and his arm went in taking it off about three inches above the wrist. Of course they ran for me and I had to go to work and sew the stump up. It has not been behaving nicely since but I am hoping that the end will be a better stump than it now gives promise of. For some reason he bled very little.

I have "doctored" men with bad hearts, bad backs, bad stomachs, arms, babies with any and all complaints, pulled a tooth the other night and I am wondering what will come next.

Last night we were invited in to Iditarod, eight miles, for dinner; so two men came along with their dog teams and, tucking us in, off we went. Our hostess, Mrs. Buttons, is a very vivacious, young woman of perhaps twenty-eight, with a pretty little

house and is a good cook. We had fried grouse, mashed potatoes, carrots, peas, tomato aspic, pudding, cake and coffee. We played cards until two o'clock, then went to bed right there, leaving this morning at ten-thirty. By the way, one of the interesting things there is the little green house where, early in the spring, they plant tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers. It is like a doll's house and yet they have all the fresh tomatoes they want and can use.

November 28th, 1921.

Business Men's Association Elects Officers for Ensuing Year.

At the annual meeting of the Bellefonte Business Men's association on January 4th officers for the ensuing year were elected as follows: President, Harry C. Yeager; vice president, Frank M. Crawford; secretary, G. Oscar Gray; treasurer, John M. Bullock.

Among the various discussions carried on during the evening was one pertaining to some method of financing the building of new homes, owing to the woeful shortage of desirable homes in Bellefonte, but no definite conclusion was reached.

A resume of what the association has been a leading factor in accomplishing for Bellefonte since its organization was given, but in doing so the association did not assume to take all the credit nor belittle the efforts of other organizations or individuals. Included in the list was the bringing to Bellefonte of the Eagle company, silk mill which, when in full operation, employs approximately one hundred women and seventy-five men, with an annual pay roll of \$120,000. The reorganization of the Abremson Engineering company by the introduction of local capital which enabled them to purchase the plant outright and become established on a more permanent basis under the firm name of the Sutton-Abremson Engineering company. The placing of signs on the main highways leading into Bellefonte, the dollar day campaign, guaranteeing of the Chautauqua for next year; the guaranteeing of Building and Loan association shares to an amount approximating \$10,000, and which has been an important item in the erection of several new homes; the weekly band concerts during the summer and the big business men's picnic at Hecla park.

After reading the above there can be but one conclusion, and that is that the Bellefonte Business Men's association is proving a factor in the business life of Bellefonte and every business man should belong to it.

"Gorgeous" Only Way to Describe "Queen of Sheba."

In keeping with all the accounts and traditions of splendor and magnificence attending the arrival of the Queen of Sheba at the court of King Solomon, more than three thousand years ago, is the spectacular photodrama "Queen of Sheba," which will be shown at the Pastime theatre, State College, Monday and Tuesday, January 16th and 17th. The sensational success of this remarkable William Fox super-special in its opening run on Broadway, New York, is easily understood by all who see the picture.

Scene after scene of extraordinary power and splendor keeps the audience gasping with surprise and admiration.

Betty Blythe was a regally beautiful Sheba, Fritz Lieber an effective and convincing King Solomon, Nell Craig a dashing and fascinating Prince Vashti, and other members of the notable cast gave excellent portrayals.

As a stupendous spectacle, "Queen of Sheba" is unsurpassed. As a photoplay presenting a great love story with the utmost power of appeal, it is a dramatic triumph of the screen. "Queen of Sheba" will be remembered long after most of the screen specials of the season are forgotten.

Thieves Busy at Pleasant Gap.

Residents of Pleasant Gap have been pestered for some time past by considerable petty thieving which has become almost as prevalent as an epidemic of measles among school children, and one of the last deprivations of this character took place on Saturday night when some one broke into the pool room of Ray Noll and stole a small glass show case containing about \$150 worth of merchandise. Mr. Noll closed his room about eleven o'clock and went home. About a half hour later an alarm was spread broadcast that the pool room was being robbed. Men hurried to the building only to find that the robbers had made good and gotten away. The case carried off contained two gold watches, ten gold rings, an automatic revolver, fountain pens, pearl necklace, and other articles amounting in value to about \$150. The next morning the case was found in some brush about one hundred feet from the pool room. The necklace and several fountain pens were all that remained of the contents, about fifteen dollars' worth all told. The same night or night previous H. S. Thompson, an employee of the penitentiary who makes his home at the Gap, claims that some one stole a quarter of beef from his larder. There is a pretty well grounded suspicion who some of the thieves are but so far no arrests have been made.

The Central Pennsylvania Odd Fellows association will hold its regular anniversary meeting in Tyrone this year, on Friday, April 28th.

DR. WILLIAM FREAR. Some two months or more ago Dr. William Frear, of State College, while discussing with a friend a recent illness he had experienced remarked that he had never worried as to the outcome. That his affairs were as much in order as it was possible to have them and as to death, he viewed that merely as a transition from this life to life immortal. That the overpowering dread of death that characterizes the feelings of the great mass of humanity is because of the fear connected with it, but that he had no fear and was ready to go whenever God in his wisdom saw fit to terminate this life. What a blessing to his family and friends that his life has been such that he had no apprehension as to when the call might come, because it came very suddenly last Friday night. Of late he had been in comparatively good health and had not missed a day from his office and regular duties, until Friday, when he remained at home because he was not feeling up to capacity for work. Between midnight and Saturday morning he suffered a stroke of apoplexy and passed away before a physician could reach his bedside.

Dr. Frear was one of the best agricultural research men in the country. He was born at Reading, Pa., on March 24th, 1860, hence was only in his sixty-second year. His parents were Rev. George and Malvina Rowland Frear, his father being a Baptist minister. He was educated at the public schools in his home city then took a course at Bucknell University, Lewisburg, where he graduated in 1881. He took a post-graduate course at Harvard and also Illinois Wesleyan University, receiving the degree of Ph. D., in 1883. From the time of his graduation at Bucknell in 1881 until 1883 he was assistant in sciences at Bucknell and in 1883 he was made an assistant chemist of the United States Department of Agriculture. In 1885 he became professor of agricultural chemistry at The Pennsylvania State College, and two years later was made vice director and chemist of the agricultural experiment station, positions he held until his death. His entire life was devoted to research work in connection with agriculture and his abilities in this line attracted more than State-wide attention. In 1905 he was made chemist for the State Department of Agriculture and some years ago he was prominently mentioned as successor to Dr. Hugh Wiley as pure food chemist in the United States Department of Agriculture.

Among the research projects to which Dr. Frear devoted considerable time was the development of tobacco culture, and his efforts in this direction resulted to the great financial advantage of all tobacco growers in Pennsylvania. Just recently he had been at work on the development of a new strain of tobacco which also promises marked improvement in the crop. In addition to numerous bulletins issued in connection with his work Dr. Frear's writings have been confined to scientific reports of his various researches and work done at the experimental station at State College. From 1892 to 1894 he was editor and proprietor of Agricultural Science, a journal devoted to the exploitation of research work and later he had been a contributor to scientific journals and agricultural reports.

While his life work was naturally in connection with the important position he held at State College he still found time to take considerable interest in civic affairs and local business interests at the College. During the days of the old University Inn he was secretary and treasurer of the company; he also held similar positions in the State College Water company, treasurer of the Westmont Coal company and president of the Hillside Ice company. He was an ex-president of the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations, president of the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists of the United States, president of the Society for the Promotion of Agricultural Science, member of the American Chemical Society and Deutsche Chemische Gesellschaft, and chairman of the executive committee of the National Pure Food and Drug Congress.

Following in the footsteps of his father Dr. Frear adhered to the Baptist faith. He was a Republican in politics but never aspired to political preferment. He was a member of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity, and president of the State College Chapter of the honor fraternity, Phi Kappa Phi. He was a member of Washington Grange Patrons of Husbandry, the Odd Fellows and very prominent in Masonic circles, being a past master of Bellefonte Lodge No. 268 F. and A. M., a past high priest of Bellefonte Chapter No. 241 Royal Arch Masons, a past eminent commander of Constant Commandery No. 33, Knights Templar, as well as a member of the Williamsport Consistory and the Jaffa Temple Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of Altoona.

In 1900 Dr. Frear was married to Miss Julia Reno, of Greenville, Ky., who survives with four children, George Lewis, a junior in the College; Mary Reno, a Sophomore; Elizabeth, a junior in the High school, and William, in the grade school.

Commenting upon his life work the Altoona Tribune says: "In the performance of his duties in connection with the enforcement of the food laws of the State he was prompt, exact, conscientious and accurate. He concerned himself chiefly about the special business toward which education and inclination directed his energies. He was a loyal American always.

Those who knew him loved him because of his many virtues and the simplicity and genuineness of his character." Dr. Frear's death is a serious loss to the College, and marks the passing away within twenty months of three of the leading men of that institution, Dr. G. G. Pond, who died in May, 1920; Dr. H. P. Armsby, who passed away in October and now Dr. Frear, the latter the dean of faculty members.

Funeral services were held at his late home at the College on Monday afternoon by Dr. Samuel Martin and on Tuesday morning the remains were taken to Wilkes-Barre where final services were held that afternoon and where the interment was made.

BRADFORD.—George W. Bradford, a life-long resident of Centre Hall, died on Tuesday at the home of his son Albert, at Phoenixville, as the result of a stroke of paralysis sustained the same day.

Deceased was a son of William and Catherine Bradford and was born near Boalsburg sixty-six years ago. For many years he lived on a farm between Centre Hall and Potters Mills. He was a member of the Reformed church, the I. O. F. and the K. G. E. He married Miss Mary Bohn who survives with the following children: Albert, William and Mrs. Jerome Auman, all of Phoenixville; Daniel, of Willard, Ohio; Mrs. John Marks, D. M. and Paul, of Centre Hall. He also leaves the following brothers and sisters; W. Frank Bradford, Mrs. Elizabeth Brown, W. S. Lewisburg, where he graduated in 1881. He took a post-graduate course at Harvard and also Illinois Wesleyan University, receiving the degree of Ph. D., in 1883. From the time of his graduation at Bucknell in 1881 until 1883 he was assistant in sciences at Bucknell and in 1883 he was made an assistant chemist of the United States Department of Agriculture. In 1885 he became professor of agricultural chemistry at The Pennsylvania State College, and two years later was made vice director and chemist of the agricultural experiment station, positions he held until his death. His entire life was devoted to research work in connection with agriculture and his abilities in this line attracted more than State-wide attention. In 1905 he was made chemist for the State Department of Agriculture and some years ago he was prominently mentioned as successor to Dr. Hugh Wiley as pure food chemist in the United States Department of Agriculture.

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BOWERSOX. — The venerable Franklin Bowersox, for many years a resident of Ferguson township, died at the Glenn sanatorium at State College at eight o'clock on Wednesday evening of diseases incident to his advanced age.

He was born at Middleburg, Snyder county on March 11th, 1838, hence had reached the age of 83 years and 10 months. His boyhood days were spent at Middleburg and when not quite twenty years of age, or on January 12th, 1858, he was united in marriage to Miss Catherine Ocker and two months later the young couple came to Centre county and settled on a farm near Millheim. Forty-one years ago they moved to Ferguson township where they lived on a farm until fourteen years ago when they retired to a cosy home in Pine Grove Mills. Mr. Bowersox was among the most thrifty and progressive farmers of the county and in the years that he tilled the soil acquired a substantial competence that enabled him and his wife to pass their declining years in comfort. They also reared a large family of children, fourteen in all, and the eleven still living are substantially situated and an honor to their deceased parents and upbringing. Mr. Bowersox was a life-long member of the Methodist church and a ruling elder for many years.

His wife passed away on June 19th, 1921, but surviving him are the following children: Mrs. John B. Rockey, of State College; Mrs. Charles Weaver, of Millmont; Mrs. T. D. Gray, of State College; Edgar O., of Philadelphia; Oscar, of State College; Mrs. Gordon Harper, of Fairbrook; Dr. Frank Bowersox, of Millheim; Elmer, in Fort Worth, Texas; John, of Pennsylvania Furnace; Mrs. John Dry, of Millmont, and Prof. A. L. Bowersox, of Pine Grove Mills. He also leaves twenty-eight grandchildren and twenty-three great grandchildren, as well as two brothers and three sisters, namely: Mrs. Tessie Hummel, in Kansas; Curtis, Adam and Sarah Bowersox and Mrs. Mary Bendinger, all of Middleburg.

The remains were taken to his home at Pine Grove Mills where funeral services will be held on Saturday morning, burial to be made in the cemetery at that place.

SUNDAY.—The many friends of Mrs. Sarah Sunday, wife of Elmer Sunday, of Tadpole, were shocked to learn of her unexpected death in the Clearfield hospital on Wednesday morning. She recently submitted to an operation for the removal of a tumor and was getting along so well that it was thought she would be able to be taken home in a few days. Tuesday night, however, she suffered a collapse and her death followed in a few hours.

Mrs. Sunday was a daughter of David H. and Elizabeth Kustaborder and was born in Ferguson township about fifty years ago. All her life had been spent within a few miles of the place of her birth. She was a member of the Lutheran church and an excellent woman in every way. Surviving her are her husband and one son, William Sunday, as well as four grandchildren. She also leaves three sisters, Mrs. John Harpster, Mrs. John Barto and Mrs. George Barto, all of Ferguson township. The remains were taken to her old home at Tadpole yesterday where funeral services will be held at ten o'clock tomorrow morning, burial to be made at Gatesburg.

Weather statistics show that in a normal season the snow fall during the winter season amounts to a certain number of inches, and it would seem as if we got our full allotment on Wednesday. Snow began falling about five o'clock in the morning and the snow got must have been using a coarse sieve, as it drifted down in clouds all day and up to six o'clock in the evening. Fairly accurate measurements where the snow had not drifted showed a strong twenty inches. It is the deepest snowfall this section of the country has experienced at one time in many years, and while traffic was greatly impeded on the state highways and public roads, and trains were somewhat late, the wind fell after the snow was all down and it did not drift as bad as anticipated. A report from Ferguson township states that the fall up there measured twenty-eight inches on the level and practically blocked all the roads. Several auto parties were caught in the deep snow and had to be rescued, none the worse for their adventure, however.

Early Movings. Mr. and Mrs. Hassel Montgomery have reserved apartments at the Bush house, which they will take possession of next week.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Craft, who are now occupying the second floor apartment in the Schlow building, have leased the house on Spring street vacated by Geo. R. Meek and his family, and will move there before the first of April.

Mr. and Mrs. Lester Musser, now living in the McQuiston house on Thomas street, have leased the house on Lamb street to be vacated by Geo. Harpster, the Harpster family will go to the William McClellan property, while Mr. and Mrs. Sunday, who are now occupying it, will move to Pleasant Gap. Mrs. McClellan will make her home with her children for the present.

The borough auditors are now at work auditing the borough accounts.

BUZZELL.—Mrs. Alveretta Feister Buzzell died in Philipsburg Wednesday morning after an illness of several days. Mrs. Buzzell was born in Winterset, Ohio, in June, 1851, but has lived in Philipsburg since the early seventies, being among the well-known older residents of that place. She is survived by her husband, two daughters and a son, Mrs. Harriet Merrill, of Ben Avon; Miss Fannie, at home, and Dr. Edgar Buzzell, a dentist of Philipsburg; and one sister, Mrs. Emma B. Smith, living in Kansas. Funeral services will be held Saturday afternoon, burial to be made in Philipsburg.

VALLANCE.—William T. Vallance, for many years a resident of Bellefonte, died at his home in Winburne on Wednesday last week, aged 78 years. He will be remembered by the older residents of Bellefonte as the faithful watchman at the old Ardell Lumber company during his residence in Bellefonte. He left here some fifteen or more years ago and moved to Winburne. His wife is dead and two of his children, Sarah and Harry, are in Rochester, N. Y.; Margaret is at home, while the whereabouts of the others could not be learned. Burial was made at Winburne last Friday.