

2175

Form 504

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

Type of Survey

Topographic

Field No.

Office No.

2175

LOCALITY

State

Alaska

General locality

Oscar

Locality

River

~~1894~~
194

CHIEF OF PARTY

John E. Mc. Rath

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U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

T. C. Mendenhall, Superintendent.

State: *Alaska.*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheet No. 2175.

LOCALITY:

*Osar River to the
Yakhtae River.*

1894.

CHIEF OF PARTY:

John E. McGrath.
Assistant.

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Descriptive Report on the sheet showing results of the
 Traverse Survey from the Osoe River to the Yaktze River made
 in June and July - 1894 -

This survey was made along the beach in front of the
 Malaespena Glacier and except for the section taken up by the
 Sitkagi Bluffs a fairly traversable stretch of sandy beach was encountered
 all the way - no heavy shingle or boulders make travel difficult
 except immediately in front of the Sitkagi Bluffs - The principal
 drawback the traveller has to complain of is the great number
 of streams draining the glacier & intersecting the beach.

The country between the Manly and Osoe Rivers is covered with a dense
 growth of spruce timber in which will be found many small ponds or
 lakeslets - When these woods near the foot of the moraine much of the forest
 is dead, having been destroyed by some advance of the moraine but
 it appears now as if the glacier was retreating again - The Manly has
 several arms which unite & enter the sea, near the point of the same name,
 but the mouth of the main stream and the direction of its arms near
 where they unite is not fixed & may vary from year to year -

The topographical features were put in as minutely as possible
 according as the work progressed - but the wintering condition of the
 weather when we did much of the work made it impossible
 to secure much that would be desirable - When we started out
 the Manly was just opening - and its whole delta was covered.

with ice and snow through which only the trees and some bushes could penetrate - this will explain many of the white spaces which appear on the map -

The most difficult part of the coast to pass was that in front of the Litzke Bluff. Here the Glacier comes to the very water line and a great mass of boulders of all degrees of size from masses containing 5000 or 6000 cubic feet to small gravel fringes its base - The Bluff have a very thin coat of mud and broken stone and as half high water brings the surf up on this icy face passage along here is extremely difficult.

Just beyond the bluff another fair sized delta is encountered through which the various arms of the Finstern River meander - then another wooded stretch with considerable clear sand beach in front & then comes the Tahoma river one of the largest of the streams that drain the glacier - at present all the water off the Tahoma delta enters the ocean from one mouth but as there is only a slight sand ridge which separates one of them from the sea another season may develop another mouth - Between the Tahoma and East mouth of the Taktse is another stretch of dense woods which appear to extend inland for a mile and a half - The delta of the Taktse is a very extensive one and a great deal of water seems to come out of it through (at present) three mouths -

In this delta is considerable woodland & great mud

flats behind a sandy beach that is several hundred yards wide -

The most important feature of this part of the coast is a small islet which seems to be the prolongation of an arm of the moraine which extended down from the glacier - Behind this islet is a good anchorage for small hunting & trading ships & a good landing place for boats - Off the whole coast, herein shown, the water is shallow and vessels drawing sixteen or eighteen feet of water cannot safely anchor within a mile - There does not seem to be any outlying rocks, but the effect of a great number of rapid streams all heavily loaded with sediment constantly pouring into the sea has been to cause a steady shoaling in front of them -

When arranging for the construction of this map the projection was made with the expectation of showing the relative position of Mt. St. Elias to the shore line; but it was afterwards found that the limits of the sheet selected would not permit this and so the shore line was moved bodily upwards and now does not bear any ^{regular} relation to the projection -

No people live anywhere on this shore between Disenchantment Bay & Icy Cape and it is only visited by the Indians when hunting sea otter -

John E. McGrath

Assistant U. S. G. & S.