U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

Type of Survey: Topographic
Field No.: 2516 Office No.: 2516

LOCALITY
State: Alaska
General locality: Northern
Locality: Coast Being Sea

1900
- 1944

CHIEF OF PARTY
J. F. Pratt

LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

DATE

B-1870-1 [1]++
U. S. COAST & GEODETIC SURVEY,
DR. HENRY S. PRITCHETT, SUPERINTENDENT.

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT
OF THE
TOPOGRAPHIC SHEET, SCALE 1/40,000.

EMBRACING
THE
SHORE LINE AND CONTIGUOUS TOPOGRAPHY
FROM
ONE MILE WEST OF TAPKOK HEAD TO CAPE NOME.

NORTHERN SHORES
OF
BERING SEA,
ALASKA.

BY THE PARTY UNDER CHARGE OF J. F. PRATT, ASSISTANT.
JULY - 1900.

TOPOGRAPHY BY R. L. FARIS, ASSISTANT, C. & G. S.
DESCRIPTIVE REPORT
TOPOGRAPHY FROM ONE MILE WEST OF
TAPKOK HEAD TO CAPE NOME, INCLUSIVE.

SCALE, 1/40,000.

PLANE TABLE SURVEY BY R. L. FARIS, ASSISTANT.
JULY AND AUGUST, 1900.

The first portion of the season of 1900 was an unusually dry
one, consequently the tundra became very much like and as
inflammable as dry punk. The entire country was overrun with
mining prospectors, whose camp fires spread to the tundra, so that
the entire stretch from Golofnin Bay to Nome City was enveloped most
of the time, for about five weeks, in the dense smoke from the
smouldering tundra.

In starting the season's work it was expected that the
triangulation would keep ahead of the topography and hydrography, so
that the positions of the signals could be computed and plotted
on sheets with projections in advance, but the tundra smoke made
this an impossibility, so that in order to keep the work progressing
as rapidly as the weather would permit, it became necessary to
execute the topography by forward telemeter distances on rough
field sheets, which naturally became exaggerated in scale, at the
same time determining topographically the triangulation signals.

Then after the triangulation had been computed and the points
plotted on the projections to transfer the work from the field
sheets, adjusting it at the same time, by making the work conform to the triangulation points common to both, entails a very large amount of additional work, which should be taken into consideration.

Cape Nome Promontory, which abruptly rises about five hundred feet from the shore line, is the landmark for making this portion of the coast, and is the only headland between Tapkok and Nome City, which lies 11-1/4 miles to the westward of it.

Safety Sound, extending from Cape Nome to Solomon River, is a very shallow stretch of tide water. Its eastern entrance is narrow and crooked. Its westerly entrance, Port Safety, has sufficient water on the bar (6 feet at low tide) for the smaller class of local coast wise vessels.

A separate resurvey, on a scale of 1/10,000, was made of Port Safety. This place has a few wooden buildings and at times a floating population of one to two hundred souls.

Solomon, or Solomon City, at the mouth of Solomon River, was destroyed by high water during one of the gales of September last. This is a small, distributing settlement for the Solomon River mining country. There was supposed to be two or three hundred miners scattered along this stream and its tributaries.

Pack trains and two or four horse wagons are driven from Nome City along the beach to Cape Nome, then over the promontory, then along the sand spit to Port Safety, where the horses are swum across and the freight and wagons ferried, then along the sandy island to Solomon City, where the swimming and ferrying again occurs, then
then up the bed of Solomon River to the divide, then down one of the tributaries of the Neucklück to Council City.

The long narrow island, extending from Solomon to Port Safety, is principally of sand with marshy places along its inshore edge. All the back country, with the exception of the summits of the higher hills is covered with tundra.

The surface of the summit of Cape Nome is principally covered with irregular broken granite, which is largely covered with a dark umbilical lichen.

[Signature]

Assistant U.S.C & G.Survey,
Chief of Party.