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U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

Henry S. Pritchett, Superintendent.

State: Alaska

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Hydrographic Sheet No. 2451

LOCALITY:

Upper Kawanak Pass

(See Topc 2428)

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CHIEF OF PARTY:

R. L. Faris

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Henry S. Pritchett, Superintendent.

State: *Alaska*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topo. & Hydro Sheets Nos ²⁴²⁸ *2451*

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R. L. Faris

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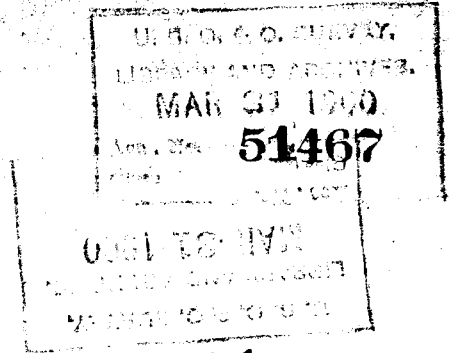
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Yukon Delta
Alaska

Descriptive Report.

Upper Kawanak Topographic Sheet



This sheet includes the Skwipak and Kawanak Passes from head of the latter pass to the mouth of Lukyuk Slough, a distance from head of pass of 9 miles.

The banks of the pass like those on the Skwipak, are from 10 to 15 feet high and covered with a dense growth of alder and willow trees from 15 to 25 feet in height. In many places the banks are cutting away and changing from the erosion effect of the currents.

Three and one-half miles from its head Kawanak Pass makes a sharp bend and "doubles back" upon itself for a distance of more than a mile then again making another sharp turn assuming approximately its original direction. There are no sand bars in midstream in this stretch of Kawanak Pass. Four fathoms of water

can be carried from head of Kawanak Pass to mouth of Kusyuk Slough. This portion of Kawanak Pass is considerably narrower than the upper part of Sivikpak Pass.

That portion of Sivikpak Pass shown on the sheet, while there is a good depth of water in many parts of it, yet it is full of shoals and islands which makes it very confusing to decide which way carries the best depth of water. This stretch of the Sivikpak was mapped from a running sketch made in a steam launch using a Bliss Saffrail log for measuring distances and a prismatic compass for taking bearings of the direction of the axis of the stream. Bearings and distances were read every two minutes and whenever the launch grounded. The width of the stream was estimated. The entire line of the axis of the stream was then plotted and adjusted for length so as to fit in between the triangulation stations at either end.

Kawanak Pass depends up a scheme of triangulation, the topography being filled in from sketches based upon sextant angle locations,

which method, for much detail work, lacks some of the advantages of the plane table, yet for the work in hand it yielded ample accuracy and was a very expeditious method being applicable in almost all sorts of weather.

There are no inhabitants, native or white, in this region of the "Delta". One deserted village was found on the left bank of the Kavanak $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles from its head.

No Steamboats or sailing craft have been known to use either of the passes on this sheet, though the natives sometimes travel these passes in going from or to the villages at the mouth of Kavanak Pass. One or two small boats with miners from the Klondike have lost their way and gone down the Kavanak, mistaking it for Apoon Pass. It was found difficult to get these boats back up stream again, to Apoon Pass, owing to the swiftness of the current and the clumsiness of the usual miner's boat. Owing to the narrowness of the Apoon, in comparison with the Kuispak and Kavanak, strangers are liable to make

the mistake of keeping "straight ahead" and going down the Kawanak, instead of turning off and keeping the right hand stream when en route down river to St. Michael.

As a consequence of this somewhat natural mistake, more than one instance is known of persons being lost at the mouth of Kawanak. In coming down the Yukon, from the head of the delta, en route to St. Michael, the safe rule is to always keep ⁱⁿ the right hand stream until reaching the coast, seven miles below Kothik, or Upon Pass. Persons getting lost at the mouth of the Kawanak can get information of their whereabouts from the natives there, provided they understand sufficient Eskimo language. Generally a native will be found there who speaks enough English to make himself understood, but it may require a few pipes of tobacco to induce him to try conversing in any but his own tongue. Many of the natives have a speaking knowledge of the Russian language.

Here, as elsewhere in the Delta, driftwood is found along the banks of the passes.

The ice, weather and fog conditions are similar to that already published in the C. & G. S. Coast Pilot--Ed. 1900-- for the Yukon Delta.

The water is fresh down to the coast and for several miles out to sea.

The current does not exceed 1.5 knots per hour, and is somewhat less than this at high tide. At head of Kawanok Pass the range of the tide is one foot.

The Swikpok, just where the Apoon branches off from it, is filled almost entirely across with sand bars, but there is a deep narrow channel around the east edge of the bars close under the right bank.

In the region covered by this sheet the Kawanok carries much more water than the Swikpok.

R. L. Faris

(mch. 30-1900)