



1905

Excerpts from a personal journal, 1904-1905

Martha Hunnicutt

Excerpts from Journal of Martha Hunnicutt

1904-1905 at Deering Alaska

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Oct. 7 We have had ptarmigan pie, ptarmigan stew, and ptarmigan fried.

Busy, oh my! it was awful for about ten days after we came. No time to sit down, hardly time to get meals, and not very long hours for sleep. Bertha and Anna began school Sept. 29, they have had 27 enrolled. We are well supplied with various foods.

Anna was telling the Eskimos Sun. night at meeting to come and sod up our house, and told them if they would do that well, they would get their reward by and by in Heaven, and that "my sister Martha is plenty good cook, and we will give you all a Thanksgiving dinner". There are about 65 or 70 of them.

Anna is the boss carpenter of the crowd. She made a very good table leaf, making our table (dining) about 4x5 ft. She and Bertha spent 2 or 3 hours one evening fixing some supports for the bolts for our folding bed (springs). When they finished Anna laid down to try it, and down it came, one of the boards broke, but we have some 2x4s now and it is good and strong. Both our beds are very comfortable, - springs, mattress, then feather bed and blankets.

That was fall No. 1. No. 2 I think was Esther May, off the bed. They are about 18 inches from the floor so she was not hurt or scared much.

No. 3 Anna and I had worked most of one forenoon on a cupboard, 5 shelves 5 or 6 feet long. There was so much good room in it. I had all the dishes arranged in it, and supplies of mush stuffs, coffee, tea, spices, lard, baking powder, etc, and had spoken every little while of how I was enjoying my cupboard. In the P.M. after it had been up about 3 hours, down the whole thing came with a fearful crash. Anna and Bertha began to laugh. I felt too bad, I couldn't laugh for a while and when I did I found the tears rolling down my cheeks. The honey running over the stove and floor and everywhere was the first thing I saw. I found some sugar and soap and germea and honey mixed up in one bucket. All our supply of pearl barley in the slop bucket. Strange to say, only 2 or 3 dishes were broken. Anna said it might have been worse if one of us had been under it or hurt by it. The rest of that day whenever even a spoon dropped we would all jump and look around. Well, when we fixed up the cupboard again Bertha and I swung on it to see if it was strong enough.

Fall No. 4 was the clothes line full of clothes, but they were not very clean, and we had the Eskimo girls wash them over next day, and so Anna said that was a good thing, too. We had an immense washing as you can imagine, our first since we left Seattle; four girls one day and two the next finally finished it.

Mon. evening is our time to get our bundles out of the wonderbag. Last Mon. we found four dolls for the children. Gladys faily sang the next morning when she saw them all. Anna named them Tim, Tam, Tum, and Tom.

Feb. 18 E, Anna and Bertha papered their bedroom. I made pumpkin pies. Everybody very tired tonight. Feb. 22 We papered the dining room, got thru about noon. 25th Papered our room. We were all tired to begin with and more tired when we finished. Just as we finished Mr. Wentworth and Mr. Solomon came, and we wanted to clean up, and didn't know what to do. 26th Sunday. I did not get up all day, was too sore and tired and sick. Ashugak got breakfast. Bertha got dinner. E. got supper. Everybody tired again. 27th E. got breakfast.

Mar. 5 E, and Anna and Bertha held an outdoor service at the village for the Eskimos.

Mar. 13 Esther May a year old and as jolly as can be.

Mar. 18 Counted up and I had made 16 garments since last Sept and made over or fixed some way 9 more.

Mar. 19 Sunday, Seven attended the afternoon white people's service, one s^hoon keeper, a squaw man, a gambler, a storekeeper, a grass widower in the audience.

Mar. 24 Ashugak started in a blizzard for Kotzebue with her brother who had come for her on the 22nd.

Mar. 26 A beautiful sunny day after almost a week of windy weather. April 11 Mr. Kinne from Council took a picture of the school. \$1.25 each for picture unmounted.

May 25 Had our first goose last Friday.

April 3 E, and Anna And the children left at 7.30 for Hannum. June 12 The Lord put upon us, (Bertha and Me) an unusual spirit of prayer for the Eskimos, and last night 8 of them said they knew they had clean hearts, Kupalik, Nellie, Queen, Harry, Pencil, Charlie, Kootenah and Peter. The others seemed anxious and troubled to understand about it. One wanted to be prayed for, that he wanted a clean** new heart. It snowed a little just before we went to bed.

June 26 E, and Anna came at 1 A.M. Sunday, quite tired. Anna had been seasick.

June 29 Had a reception for Gladys, her birthday. Mr. West and Mr. Born played some pieces with Bertha. She and Gladys sang. Bertha made some candy. Six men and Mildred Pritchard were here. They gave Gladys 12 nuggets.