



Lower end of Kobuk River Gorge, described by Cantwell. This is a 1901 photo, W.C. Mendenhall 232, USGS Historical Photo Library, Denver.



Rapids at the outlet of Walker Lake. W.C. Mendenhall photo 227 of 1901. USGS Historical Photo Library, Denver.



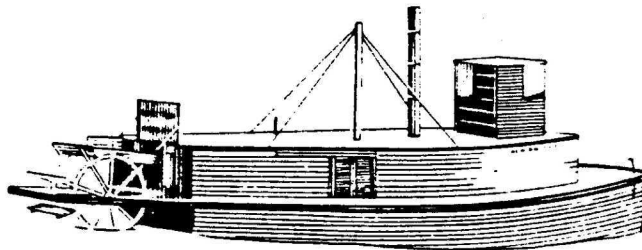
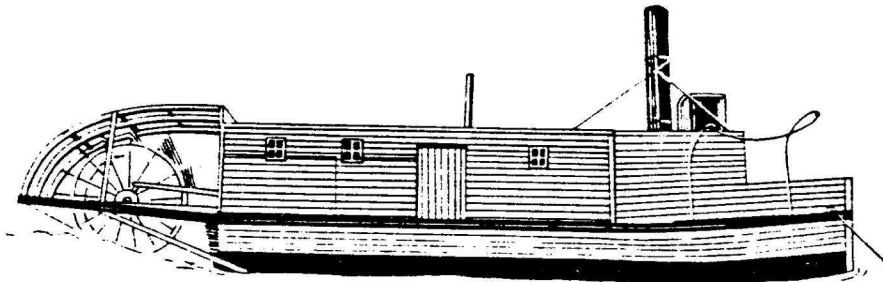
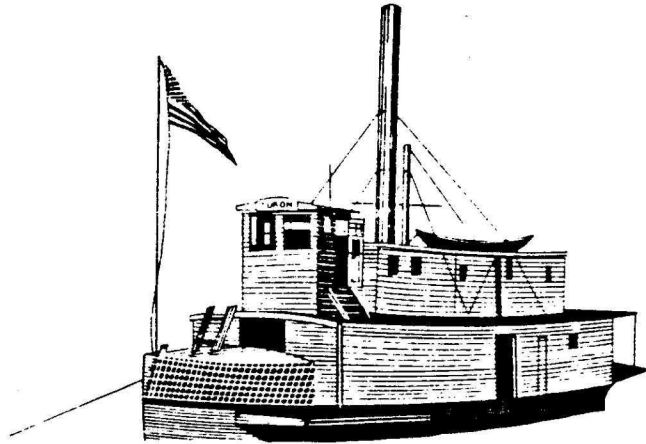
Looking southwest from the headwaters of Koyukuk River, more than 600 miles above its mouth. F.C. Schrader photo 355 of 1899. USGS Historical Photo Library, Denver.



Koyukon camp on Koyukuk River. F.C. Schrader photo 497 of 1899.  
USGS Historical Photo Library, Denver.



Nowikakat on the Yukon River in winter, showing dogs and sled, 1885. From Henry T. Allen, Report of an Expedition . . . in the Territory of Alaska, 1885. Reproduced through the courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.



Yukon River Steamboats: Yukon (1869), St. Michael (1879), and New Racket (1883), after Schwatka and Allen. From Cornelius Osgood, The Han Indians, Yale University Publications in Anthropology, Number 74 (Yale University, New Haven, 1971), p. 7.

This section from the end-map of William H. Dall's Alaska and its Resources (1870) shows the state of knowledge of the Gates of the Arctic Region as of 1869. Except for the coastwise segments of draining rivers, the region is a blank, fit only for the map title.

# ALASKA

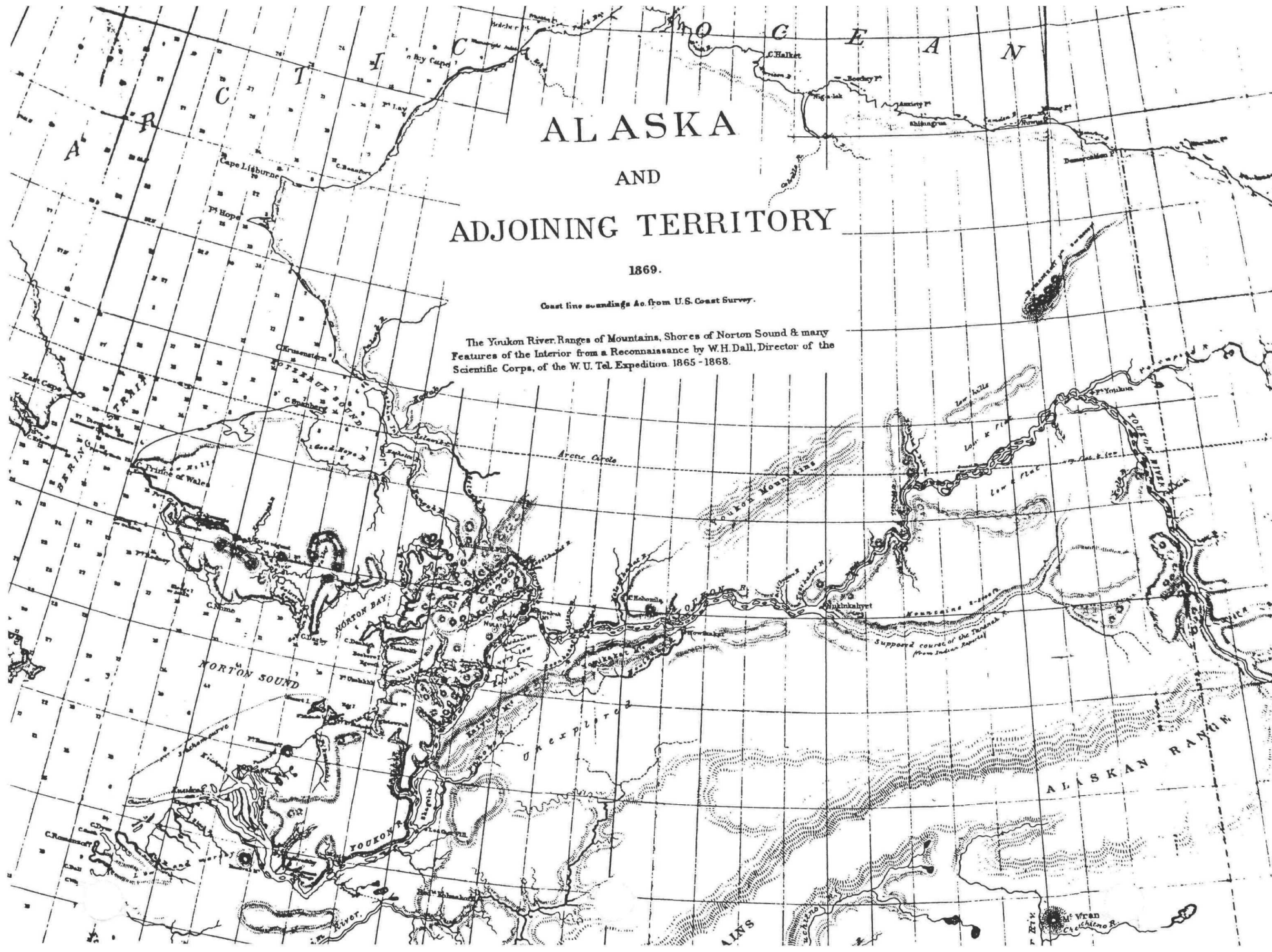
AND

# ADJOINING TERRITORY

1869.

Coast line soundings &c. from U.S. Coast Survey.

The Youkon River, Ranges of Mountains, Shores of Norton Sound & many Features of the Interior from a Reconnaissance by W.H. Dall, Director of the Scientific Corps, of the W. U. Tel. Expedition 1865 - 1868.





Passages from Lt. Henry Allen's original trip journal, Henry T.  
Allen Papers, Library of Congress.

The field notes that follow record Allen's farthest ascent of the John River, or Ascheeshna as he called it. The words ". . . and here we turn back" were the signal for the long float back down the Koyukuk to the Yukon. Before that final departure Allen stopped at the site that later became the river town of Bettles. He climbed "Mt. Lookout" behind the later townsite, describing in his notes the "splendid views" of the Brooks Range, then the Snow Mountains, and the river courses that drained them. Then, plagued by mosquitos, he and his companions jumped in their canoes and joined the current downriver.

Census 441

J. T. Allen,  
1885

$54 = 26$        $109 - 105 = 4$        $15' 14''$   
 $53:10 = 7hr 0' 35''$       index error = 0  
 $53:20 = 7hr 1' 38''$   
 $53:30 = 7hr 2' 31''$   
 $53:40 = 7hr 3' 32''$   
 $53:50 = 7hr 4' 27''$   
 Left at 9:15 = 170 at the  
 very foot of Wright Hills -  
 9:30 = light 9:45 = Sierrita and high  
 light - in ascending this river  
 No diminution in volume of  
 water has yet been observed -  
 (One look at right of river limited =  
 8" rock bars and rice floor  
 3" Basal 2nd bar - little bit rough  
 lead of riffle and + dog salmon  
 9:53 = 220 altitude - 200 = 20 +  
 altitude from the ft of river to  
 appearance of cong. 10.10.  
 ascending the Aechshnah at  
 river which went down main  
 side for the largest of  
 three beds - the general course  
 of river as I can judge = 105

which takes it to west of mt. 27  
 with short snow tops 10:30 = 180  
 current about 5 mi from  
 Right bank a gravel one with  
 much wash about at  
 foot. Cross not Aechshnah,  
 but a channel of K. 11:00 = 2:30  
 is a large one of  
 has high cut bank  
 Start 11:20 for noon obs -  
 merid. alt.  $77^{\circ} 57' 40''$   
 index error = + 1'  
 Left at 12:20 = 170. 12:40 = 190  
 12:50 = 110 - it is the  
 Aechshnah and here  
 we turn back -  
 started this run and  
 find it to have a depth  
 of 14 or more feet and this  
 is confined to narrow  
 channel. The river will  
 average 120 yds  
 I could find a little below  
 mouth of Aechshnah -  
 Left at 2:20 for mt. 27

28  
for observations of Asches -  
at Fort Yukon. Set a fair  
Reached Mt Gore at 3:15 PM  
Got a splendid view of Asches  
and the mountains from  
which it comes. The entire  
mountain which it comes  
appears to be all of 8000 ft  
high a right line from the  
The highest peaks of mts on  
each side are about 4000'  
above sea level being covered  
with snow on the ~~mountain~~  
River makes more ~~mountain~~  
angle with the range to  
East than that to West  
There are only two lakes  
visible and they are each  
about 1/2 miles from  
here on East side - Better  
than this the valley  
present no marked  
characteristics the

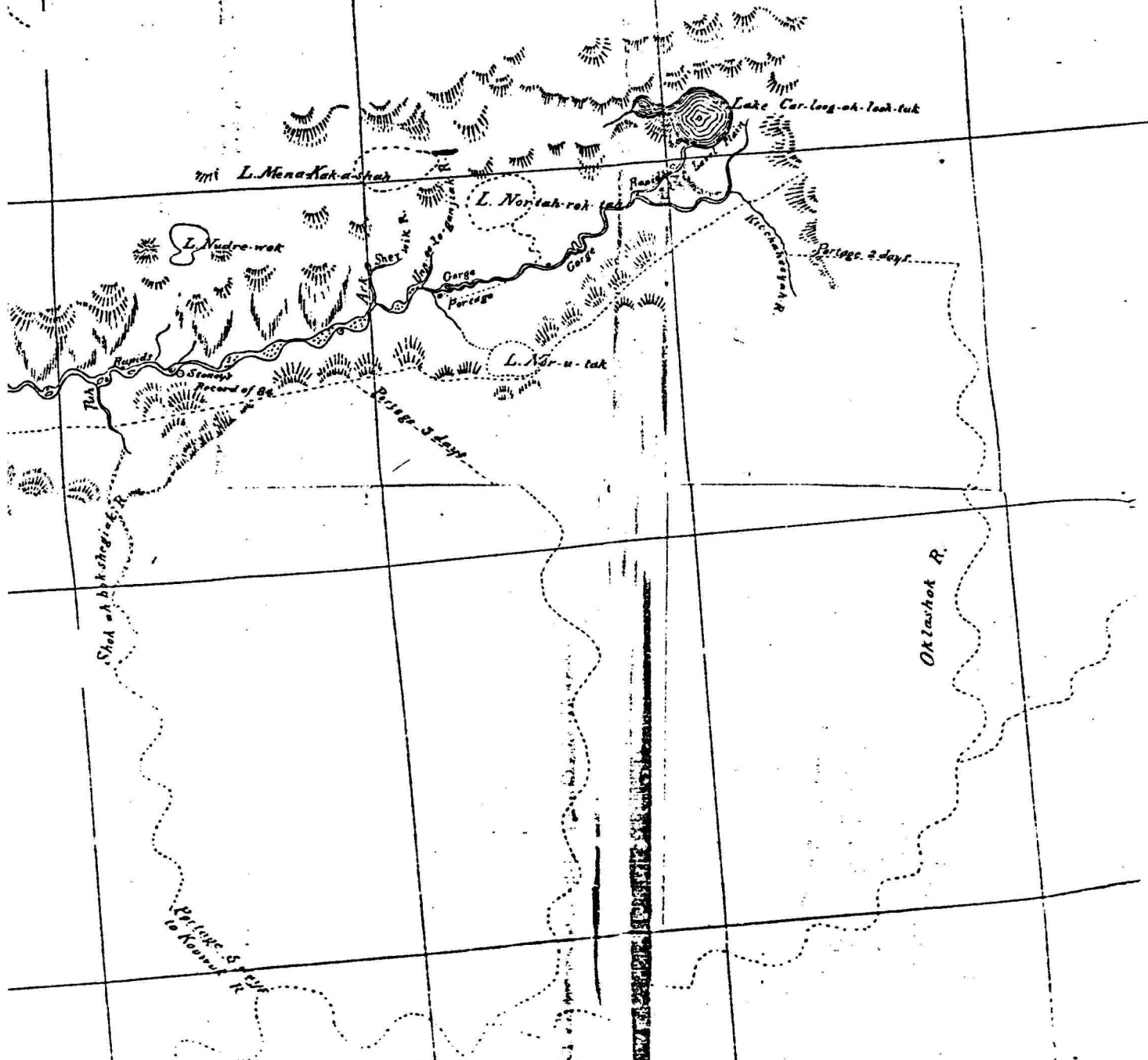
Course of Asches - for wide view  
distance is to north and East  
of what I first thought  
the gates -  
The general course of Koutuk  
is 20° - Mt Cone = 20° -  
The course of river for about  
miles = 190 then to 5 miles =  
220. then for 15 or 20 miles it  
bends towards Mt Gore and  
has a bearing from here  
of about 228 since it goes it  
away by many turns to  
105. The mountains from  
which it seems to come are  
much more distinct than  
those of Asches - though of course  
the same range - They appear  
to get down to Eastward though  
not to Westward as far as I can  
see. I do take the mountains  
to extend from N 10° W to S 35° E  
I see a break in the mts =  
195 from which Damagun  
the Tolambitnah comes to  
which place the old water

30. Said it would require  
 15 days to reach from here -  
 I see no lakes whatever -  
 Mosquitoes are worse here  
 than in the river. The  
 mountains extend to the head  
 but below the two rivers -  
 at 3:50 started down to  
 an Anovv Nady to go  
 down the Koutuk which  
 is this morning a  
 depth 18 to 20 feet -  
 Left dinner place at 4:40  
 Found for Nudalo -  
 5:15 = Sunday 6 n of Sun  
 5:35 met a Nahlamute  
 who had been down a  
 Nohool chintah. My sus-  
 picions are aroused as to  
 whether he brought over  
 Courtell. He is going  
 the Acheshmah. He had  
 a bag of Iron pyrites  
 crystals.

Could make out very little  
 from him. Bought his pipe  
 and 3 dog sleds from him  
 His headgear mouth orna-  
 ments of whalebone valued  
 at one skin each -  
 His outfit was a rather  
 heavy one. Went into camp  
 at 8:00 p.m. (Sun rate  
 was at least 9 miles -  
 a full pic being due to  
 current  
 Distances for  
 Ascheshmah to dinner = 8  
 dinner to camp = ~~8~~ 9 = 24  
 Total = ~~44~~ 37

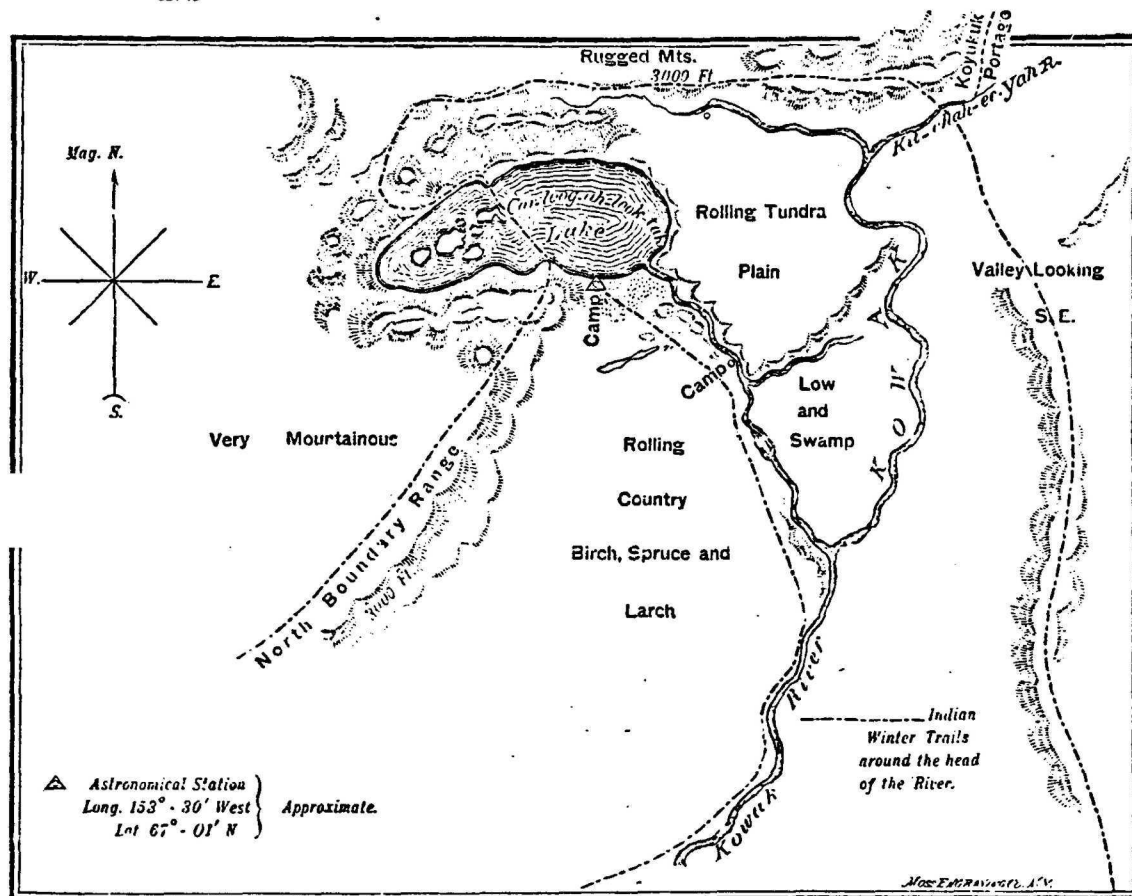
Monday Aug 10th 85  
 Run full rig right last night  
 Left camp at 5:25 in a rain  
 that promises to continue -  
 The Nahlamute met as far as  
 we could hear had come  
 the least about 7:30  
 just came above  
 Nohoolchintah

The upper Kobuk River and detail of the Walker Lake area in  
Lt. J.C. Cantwell's Narrative Report, from Cruise of  
the . . . Corwin in 1885.



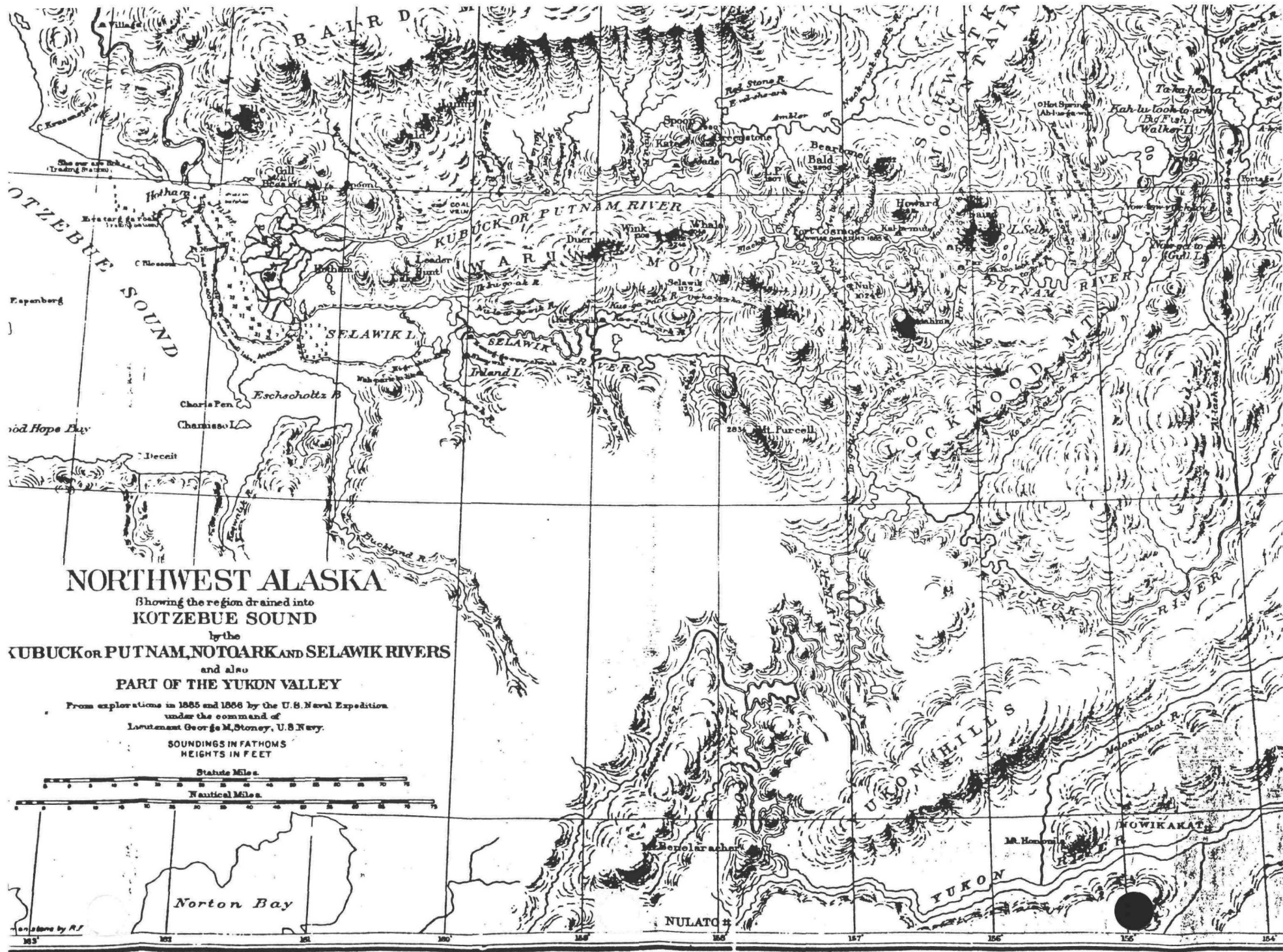
MAP OF  
**KOOWAK RIVER**  
**ALASKA**

FROM A RECONNAISSANCE MADE BY





Section of Lt. George M. Stoney's map of exploration on the  
Kobuk River, published originally in the U.S. Naval  
Institute Proceedings in 1899. Note Fort Cosmos, winter  
quarters in 1885-86, near the upper center of the map,  
and Walker Lake, upper right.



# NORTHWEST ALASKA

Showing the region drained into  
KOTZEBUE SOUND

by the

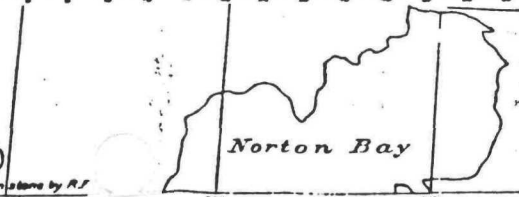
**KUBUCK OR PUTNAM, NOTOARK AND SELAWIK RIVERS**

and also

**PART OF THE YUKON VALLEY**

From explorations in 1855 and 1856 by the U.S. Naval Expedition  
under the command of  
Lieutenant George M. Stoney, U.S. Navy.

SOUNDINGS IN FATHOMS  
HEIGHTS IN FEET



Drawn by R.F.

153 152 151 150 149 148 147 146 145 144 143

From USGS Professional Paper 301, History of Exploration, Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4, 1944-53 (GPO, Washington, 1958).

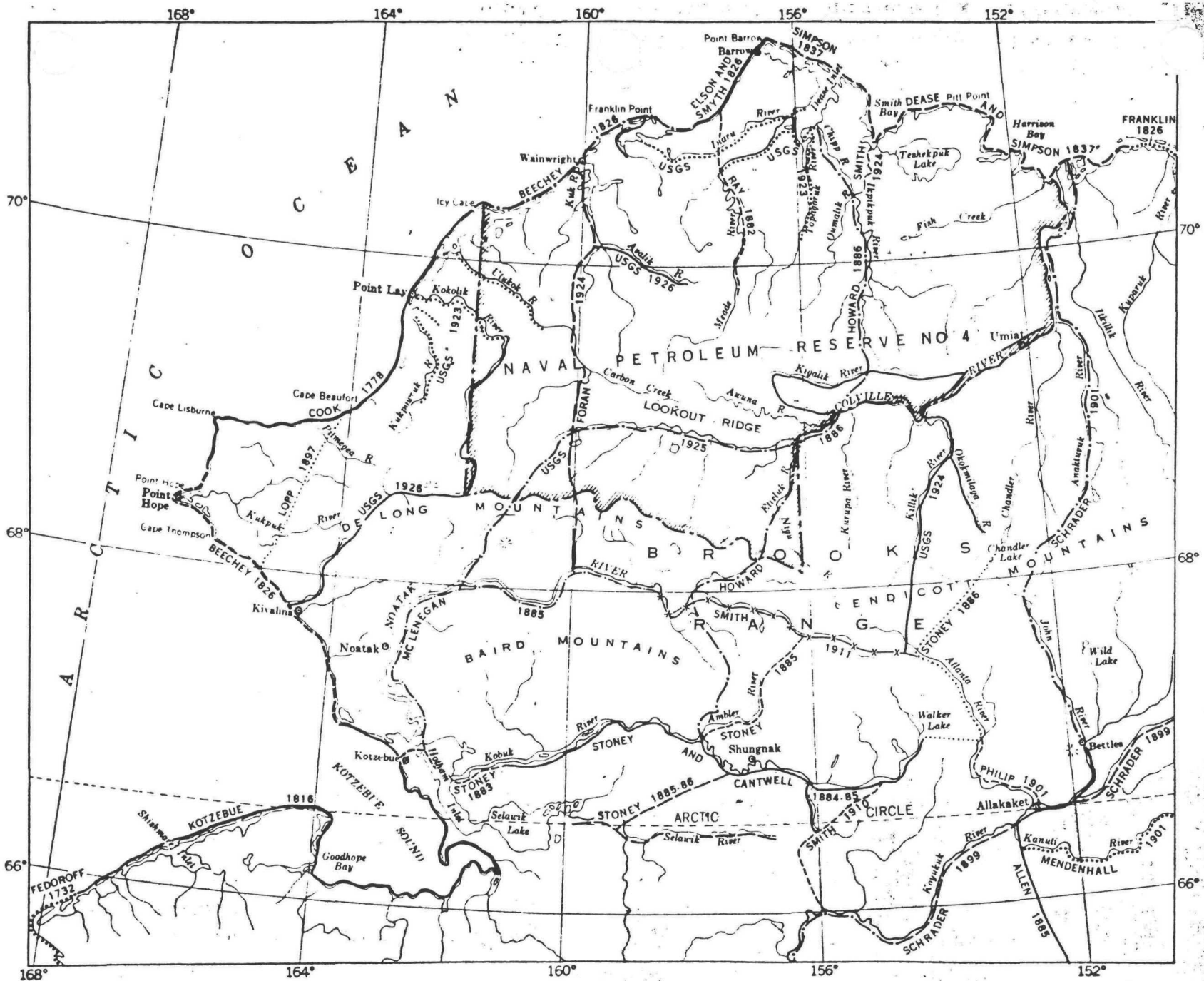


FIGURE 8.—Sketch map showing exploratory routes and progress of investigations in northwestern Alaska. (Map is modified from plate 3 of Geological Survey Bulletin 815.)