

# **A Most Remarkable Trip**

**From Dusty Streets to Fifteen Feet of Snow in One Day.**

May 4, 1899

*Harry Hamilton Makes a Trip From Libby to the Head of Cedar Creek and Encounters All Kinds of Hardships-Nothing to Eat for Over Twenty Hours.*

Probably one of the toughest trips ever made in the mountains was the one made by Harry Hamilton when he went from Libby to the head of Cedar creek last Friday. He left Libby about six o'clock in the morning and went down the railroad track to Cedar creek and then took the trail from there up the gulch, making the first part of the trip without snowshoes, and as soon as the snow line was reached he put on snowshoes and continued the journey. The last part of the trail keeps getting steeper and steeper, until the last mile or so is reached which is so steep that snow or anything else has to hang on with both feet: To make matters worse the snow had not packed any and even with snowshoes on he sank to the middle at every step. Arriving at the shaft on the Selkirk claim, he found that he was so wet that it was necessary to get a fire to dry himself. The cabin on this claim did not have a stove in it so he started for a cabin owned by Andy Swanson, which is about three-quarters of a mile further up the hill, where there was a stove. Before starting he tied the grub he had taken with him to a tree near the Selkirk shaft, so that he would not have this additional weight to carry.

He had gotten but a short distance on his trip up the hill, which is almost straight up and down, when one of those only blizzards came up and it blew so hard and got so cold that he had to take off a sweater that he wore and wrap it around his head so that he could breathe and to protect him from the cold. To make matters worse, he started from Libby without any gloves and to protect his hands he took off a pair of sox, having fortunately two pair on, and put them on his hands. Thus handicapped he continued his journey and after the greatest exertion arrived at the cabin. The location of the cabin was indicated by a mound, and the snow at that place was fifteen feet deep, seven feet being on top of the cabin. As he had no shovel he broke off the limb of a convenient tree and started to dig to the roof of the cabin. After digging a hole through the seven feet of snow he encountered the roof of the cabin and as the roof is made of long cedar slabs instead of shakes he had to cut through these slabs with a pocket knife, having no other tools. His industry and patience were finally rewarded and he found himself on the inside of the cabin. Here, again, he was confronted with another problem. He had a stove, but his food was down the mountain, and he was hungry. To stay where he was and wait until he dried his clothes would not satisfy the appetite, so he decided to take the stove down the hill with him. To get the stove up through the hole in the roof was an engineering feat which required considerable ability and exertion, but this was accomplished and he started down the hill with the stove, a sheet iron one, and the pipe, on his back and arrived at the other cabin.

He then started out to find his grub. Had he gone to the cabin on the Selkirk first and left it there, all would have been well. But he thought he would save the time it takes to go from the shaft to the cabin and tied it in a tree. When he tried to find the tree the blizzard had obliterated all his tracks and he couldn't locate the tree and before he did find it it was after two o'clock in the morning. After finding the grub he

returned to the cabin, lit a fire and put in the rest of the night drying his clothes and feeding a hungry tape.

The distance from Libby to the mine is about thirteen miles and it is probably five thousand feet higher. In Libby the streets were dusty. While he was there a foot of new snow fell and none of the old snow had settled any, a most Remarkable thing for so late in the season. He remained at the mine three days. A feature of this trip, and one which shows the remarkable endurance of a man, is the fact that he had nothing to eat from early in the morning until after two o'clock the next morning and almost every minute of the time was occupied by extraordinary exertion.

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