



StarTribune

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Spokane to New York on foot

WOMEN WALKERS

THEY TRAVEL ON FOOT FROM SPOKANE TO NEW YORK CITY.

Left Home May 5, 1896, and Reached New York Dec. 3 — Were to Have Received \$10,000 if the Feat Was Accomplished by Dec. 1 — Are on Their Way Home Again and Arrived in Minneapolis Yesterday — Speak Entertainingly of Their Trip to the Tribune — Passed Through Many Uncomfortable Experiences and Had Many Narrow Escapes From Death — Will Remain in Minneapolis for a Short Time.

Mrs. Helga Estby and her daughter, Clara Estby, of Spokane, Wash., who last year performed the marvelous feat of walking from Spokane to New York city, arrived in Minneapolis last evening on their way home, and are at present at the Excelsior-Scandia house. They came from Chicago, which city they left May 5.

The women left Spokane May 5 last year at the instance of private parties in New York, who offered them \$10,000 if the feat was successfully accomplished by Dec. 1 the same year. In the contract made was a provision which took into consideration sickness, but accidents were overlooked. The travelers reached New York Dec. 3, three days behind time, which was owing to the fact that Miss Estby had her ankle sprained in Pennsylvania. The matter was finally satisfactorily adjusted, and the women will receive \$10,000 when the book, written by them and describing their travels and adventures, is completed.

When seen by THE TRIBUNE last evening, they presented a very home-like appearance. They had modestly made themselves comfortable in the kitchen at the hotel, and were busy telling their story to the proprietor and waiters of the place. The mother, who is 37 years old, is of somewhat slender build, but has rosy cheeks. The daughter, who is 19 years old, looks more like a maiden in some of the rural districts of Europe than an American girl. She appears in the vigor of health-budding womanhood. Both are apt talkers, and, although of Scandinavian birth, speak the English language fluently and entertainingly.

Mrs. Estby essayed the part of spokesman. "We left Spokane May 5, a year ago," she said. "We took the Union Pacific track from our starting point to Denver, whence we followed the Burlington to Omaha. Here we took to the Rock Island to Chicago. In Pennsylvania we followed the Harrisburg & Reading, and which led us into New York. We walked 4,600 miles, and have touched 13 different states in the Union. The average number of miles covered during the day was 27 ½, but we have traveled 50 at times. During our travels we have worn out 16 pairs of shoes, eight hats, and have now on our fifth costumes.

"You must not suppose that our travel was one of pleasure entirely. When we left Spokane we had only \$5 each, which was of course soon spent. From then on until we reached New York we had to work for what we got. Sometimes it was very hard, and we have often gone with but one meal a day. We got along comfortably when we only got two meals. We have encountered all kinds of weather, snow, rain,



Helga and Clara Estby in Minneapolis, 1897. (Photo courtesy of Bahr family collection)

electric storms, hurricanes. In Wyoming we had a narrow escape from a mountain lion, while in Colorado we experienced the dangers of the rattlesnake. At one time we got into a cloudburst, and it was only by holding onto shrubs that we escaped with our lives.

“At one time we had some trouble with the Indians. That was in Utah. They took our small satchel and went through it, but oddly enough, the only thing they found that they thought they could make use of was our curling iron. This puzzled them very much, and we had to demonstrate its use.

“We have done about all kinds of work except saw and split wood. Of the different states that we passed through we had the most trouble in Pennsylvania. There the Italians working in the coal mines were troublesome.”

The women exhibited a document signed by Mayor H.M. Belt, of Spokane, chronicling the object of the tour, and recommending them to any they may come in contact with. This was also signed by President William McKinley, Mrs. William Jennings Bryan, Gov. F.M. Drake, of Iowa; George E. Swift, ex-mayor of Chicago; Gov. W.W. Wells, of Utah; Gov. W.J. McConnel, of Idaho; Gov. Daniel Hastings, of Pennsylvania, and Gov. Albert W. McIntyre, of Colorado.

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