

DIGGING GOLD AT CAPE NOME.

THE ARGONAUTS AT NOME.

How the gold was discovered on the beach has been told with so many variations that one may almost conclude, in the words of one who wrote at Nome four months after the discovery, that "the name of the man who first washed gold from these shores will in all probability never be known." Several persons appear to have discovered gold on the beach at nearly the same time, and when the importance of the discoveries became known, so rapidly did the news spread that it might reasonably seem as if the discovery was made simultaneously in several places.

It is true, yet hardly credible, in view of the hold it has taken upon the imaginations of people, that the beach should be of much less intrinsic value, mile for mile than the creeks and gulches. Anvil Creek had been discovered just a year; the Cape Nome Mining District has been organized and the stampede for the new fields begun before the beach gold was known. Anvil Creek was discovered in July, 1898; the beach in July 1899. As early as January, 1899, fine beach gold was found at Penny River, ten miles west of Nome, and some claims located there as "black sand" claims. The claims were in the mouth of the river, and it was thought at the time that the black or magnetic sand which contained the gold came there from the river. During the whole winter the staking of creeks went on, and even the tundra for miles east and west on Snake River was attacked by Laplanders and others.

Upon the opening of navigation in the spring of 1899, a small steamer from St. Michael was the first to arrive, sailing into Snake River on May 28. Some whalers next arrived through the pack ice. Then followed the steamer Garonne, about the 20th of June, with passengers from outside. Before she succeeded in landing them all a storm arose and she made for St. Michael, the remaining passengers shipping on the Alaska Company's steamer Bertha, which proceeded to Nome, carrying also some passengers from the first river steamer down the Yukon—about two hundred altogether—which she landed at Nome on June 28. Other boats arrived with a few more Yukoners. The new-comers found, as soon as they set foot upon the beach, the ground staked as far as the eye could reach. They went out upon the creeks, and finding them also staked for miles, they returned to town disgusted. Among these first-comers was a newspaper man, J. W. Logan, whom I had first met on the Dyea trail in 1897, on his way to Klondike. After many hardships, he reached that winter, dragging his sled over the ice, worked at his profession, being one time editor of the "Midnight Sun," and left Dawson on the strength of a report brought overland by dog-team of the strike on Anvil Creek. A published statement that Logan was the man who found the first gold on the beach led me to question him on this point, and he said:

HOW "PAY DIRT" WAS FIRST FOUND.

"I have never exclaimed that I was the first to find gold; gold may have been found before. But I will tell you what I know about the beach discovery. When I got here from Dawson, I went back on the creeks and prospected, but didn't find anything I thought much of. I came back to the beach, and I found a man whom I had known in the Yukon—Paul Becker—and he let me stay in his tent, as I had no tent. I was broke. Oh, I may have had a hundred dollars or so, but a man's broke in this country when he hasn't more than that. "Becker and I went down the beach, and just a quarter of a mile below Nome I saw some Swedes working on the tundra. I went to them, and I asked them how much

they were making. They said, Five or six dollars a day. I examined their dirt, and I said to them that with such dirt they ought to be making fifty or a hundred a day. They laughed. I told them they didn't have the right kind of a rocker to save the gold, which was so fine. That was on Wednesday 19th of July. Next morning I went up the beach to the west of Snake River about a mile, and at the foot of a little 'draw' which ran out of the tundra I dug three holes and found a prospect that excited me. I brought some dirt back, a shovel-ful from each hole, and washed it in an iron rocker in the street and got over two dollars—two dollars and eleven cents. I didn't tell Becker as I had promised another man to work with him if we found anything. In the afternoon of the same day Becker went up the beach about two miles, and when he came back he showed me gold in a little bottle, and he asked me, 'What do you think of that?' There was about nineteen dollars in what he had panned out. He wanted me to work with him, but I staved him off. The next day, Friday, July 21, Becker went to work at this place, and on the following Sunday, July 23, I went to work where I got my prospect. We were the first to begin work on the beach. I made the first discovery of 'pay,' but Becker was the first to begin working."

THE BUILDING OF A GOLD CAMP.

At the moment of the discovery of the beach gold there were in the neighborhood of Nome probably 500 to 800 miners. Several hundred miners from Kotzebue Sound, disgusted and disheartened by their wretched experience upon that crazy stampede, and attracted by the reports of the recent discovery of gold on Ophir Creek at Golofnin Bay, had worked their way overland during the winter and around the coast in boats in the early summer. The Anvil discovery had attracted many of these together with miners from Golofnin Bay, and even the Yukon, but the report of that fabulously rich strike was generally discredited at Klondike. By the first boat down river went a trusted man who was to return immediately and report the truth; but, leaving before the beach was discovered and the creeks themselves not proving attractive as he thought they should be, he returned to Dawson with word that Nome was a "fake"—"a scheme of the transportation companies." Consequently it was late in August before the news reached Dawson and early September before the great rush, numbering, according to one report, 8000 miners, landed on the golden strand.

At one time there were 2000 men working on the beach. Lawyer and Doctor rocked side by side with the sunbrowned miner. Two men rocked out \$600 in a day of ten hours. Cummings and "Missouri Bill," two old Yukon miners, did better than that—127 ounces in one day an ounce better than Lancasters famous hence-claim record at Klondike. Most of the gold was very fine—so fine and flaky that many of the crude rockers employed saved but a small part of the gold that was in the sand. Yet five dollar nuggets were common, and one was found that weighed \$36.65. Ground that would not pay more than 25 cents a day, was accounted poor, while some averaged \$100 a day per man for over fifty days. \$900,000 was the lowest estimate of the output of the beach—and is probably correct. But the wild ones guessed from two to six millions, and their wild guesses were given the utmost publicity. Newspapers, obviously, have no means of verifying statements which require immediate publication. Upon the arrival of the steamers at Seattle and San Francisco many exaggerations and false statements found their way into print. A certain company carried back from Nome as ballast a quantity of the "ruby" sand in

which the gold was found. This sand was taken from a rich "pay-streak," but it was reported outside that sand like that was to be found everywhere a man might put his shovel along miles of beach. No wonder the new-comers believed that any one who could find room on the beach to place a rocker could take out a moderate fortune in a short summer. They brought with them "known-down" rockers, or else the lumber with which to build them, and lumber for boats to carry them, a tent, some grub and their mining tools to the selected spot along the beach. Others invested in patent gold saving machines, which look like farm machinery more than anything else, while many who had gone outside with fat "pokes," which they had rocked out of the beach, returned with small gasoline and steam pump for pumping water from the sea into sluice boxes. Nor was the "poor man" and the small capitalist the only ones allured to the beach. Companies were organized: in the large cities of the east particularly and brought huge pumping plants and dredging machines for operation upon barges and steamers, to work that portion of the beach below the surface of the water where the "rocker men" could not go.

THE JUNE STAMPED TO THE BEACH.

All day and all night—if there may be said to be any night in this latitude in June—the sound of hammers and saws was to be heard along the tent-packed seashore of Nome. Men, usually in parties of three to five, threw together, with more or less skill, skiffs and dories, dragged them into the water loaded them with a few weeks' provisions, with rockers and other mining tools, and then hoisting a sail, if the wind was fair, started off up or down the coast. The sea continued as smooth as a lake, oftentimes with hardly a ripple of surf. Cool breezes tempered the hot rays of the sun, which only grew less oppressive as it swung around to the northern horizon. Behring sea had been described as continual storms and Nome as a land of perpetual rain. Finer weather than that which smiled upon this army of gold hunters could scarcely be found in any land.

Last year the work on the beach was done from Snake River (Nome City) eastward to Nome river, distance of 4 miles, and westward from Snake to Penny River, a distance of 10 miles. In the latter stretch the richest sand was found, and so it was there that the main body of the miners proceed directly. The more impatient set up their machines alongside their tent in town or hauled them a little way out of town, where niggling a hole in the sand, they began shovelling it into their machines. Naturally there were the first to become discouraged. Put altogether the first results may be described as disappointing. The greater part of them had no experience at mining nor were their machines generally adapted for saving the exceedingly fine gold which predominates on this beach. Several other facts were not taken into consideration. Gold even in the richest gold fields in the world, as Klondike, is ex-

remely uneven in its distribution and, besides, navigation closed the fall before. In one place a steam thawer was set up in a tent and successfully worked. At short intervals the miners built caquins or dugouts of pritwood and after stripping the sand packed it to their warm cabin where they rocked or panned it out. Thus by the time we arrived the richest spots of the previous year had been worked over once or twice.

A SPECTACLE UNIQUE IN HISTORY.

On the 4th of July, between Snake and Penny Rivers, no fewer than five thousand men were working on the beach. In the first six miles west of here, by actual tally made as I passed along in a launch half a mile from shore, there were six hundred add fifty-four tents, eighty cabins, seventy-four steam and gasoline plants in operation or getting started, and one hundred and seventy-seven small gold-saving machines, of which ninety per cent were rockers. As many of the rockers were down in holes or in cabins, and escaped observations from the considerable distance from shore, their actual number, judged by the number of tents, was hardly short of five hundred. While beyond, in the remaining four miles to Penny River, tents and men were in spots even more numerous than in the nearer distance. On that strip of sand the inhabitants of the miners averaged a distance apart of only forty to fifty feet, and as each tent was occupied by no fewer than two, men, while there were a dozen in others, it is almost literally true that a letter could be started from Penny River and passed to Nome City, ten miles, without a man stepping from his tracks! And still the boats and scows kept passing westward, until, in the short space of a few weeks from the time the steamers discharged their cargoes upon the shore, a beach once peopled by a few score of men in "dugouts" was a line of tents, a thin dotted line of white glistening in the sunlight, from Nome River to Sinrock, a distance of over twenty-six miles. At the present date, between Sinrock River and Topkok, some forty miles east of Nome, they are in operation no fewer than one hundred and seventy-five plants operated by steam and gasoline, and rockers without number.

Regarded purely as a spectacle the like has never been seen before, and like that thin black line of men going over Chikoot, and the miles of boats side by side along the bank of the Yukon at Dawson in 1898, it is a sight which one can be reasonably sure will never be witnessed again.

Likely all newly discovered gold fields, Cape Nome has been overrun by would-be miners—persons with a little money and no mining experience. Many of these, enticed by stories of fabulous wealth to be had for the asking, gave up their homes in the East. All the money they possessed was just enough to land them at Cape Nome. They had apparently no thought of the homeward journey—one equal as hazardous as the outward passage.

Some few of course, were lucky enough to make "a strike," but the majority, after a few weeks of "alleged" mining, found themselves "stranded" at the mercy of boarding-house keepers, and compelled to beg for a passage home.

Navigating the waters leading to Cape Nome, through fields of ice at times and often in unknown and uncharted channels, has been one of the drawbacks encountered by the captains of the steamers which have been carrying passengers and stores between Seattle and Cape Nome. Several of these vessels with their precious freights, have grounded at various points, others have stuck fast in the ice. If while in this predicament a gale had sprung up, the steamers would undoubtedly have been lost, and a number, perhaps all, of their passengers would have been drowned.

The Canadian Order of Foresters.

This purely Canadian fraternal benevolent society was organized in 1879, and now has a membership of upwards of 32,000, distributed in every province of the Dominion.

The society gives insurance to its members in policies of \$500, \$1000, \$1500 or \$2000. The premiums payable monthly in advance, are as follows:

Between the	On	On	On	On
Age of	\$500	\$1000	\$1500	\$2000
18 to 25	35c	60c	90c	\$1.20
25 to 30	40c	65c	95c	1.25
30 to 35	45c	70c	1.05	1.40
35 to 40	50c	75c	1.15	1.50
40 to 45	55c	1.00	1.50	2.00

After paying upwards of one million and a half dollars in death claims, the order had a surplus in the insurance department of \$823,000, at the end of November last, all of which is invested in gold-edged securities in Canada, or in deposit in the best monetary institutions of the country. Not a dollar of the monies collected for the insurance fund is or has been used for the expenses of management. The death rate per 1000, of membership in 1898 was 4.56 and since the organization of the society in 1879, the average death rate has been only 4.95.

The sick and funeral benefit branch is a very popular department, and upwards of 16,000 of the members of the society are participating in this feature of the order. The benefits are \$3 per week for the first two weeks of illness, and \$5 per week for the succeeding ten weeks, and \$56 during any year, besides a funeral benefit of \$30. The fees, payable monthly in advance, are as follows:

Between 18 and 25 years	25c.
25 and 30 years	30c.
30 and 35 years	35c.
35 and 40 years	40c.
40 and 45 years	45c.

During the year 1898 over \$43,000 was paid out in sick and funeral benefits, and \$143,000 in death benefits. All physically and morally qualified males between 18 and 45 years of age, who are not debilitated on account of their occupation, are accepted for membership.

For further particulars enquire of any of the officers or members of the order or address:

E. ELLIOTT, THOS. WHITE.

H. C. R., Ingersoll, High Sec Brantford.

Or ERNST GARTUNG, S. O. Brantford.

The Warm Weather has come

and so have the flies

To help you keep them out of your house I have on hand a good supply of

Screen Doors.

Adjustable Window Screens.

Green Wire Netting.

Spring Hinges.

Knobs and Hooks

for doors, which I am selling very low. Also

White Mountain Ice

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2 to 8 quarts.

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Carriage Tire

A new carriage tire that makes

riding on all roads a pleasure—economical, too, for it does away with the vibration that shakes and breaks the carriages.

A V-shaped space between the rubber tire and steel flange prevents the creeping and cutting which other tires are subject to. See the exhibit at the big fairs.

Send at once for Free Tire Catalogue, giving prices of all sizes.

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Notice to Builders and

Contractors:

ONE CAR STEEL

WIRE NAILS.

Sold low to the trade.

P. Hennessy

In the Clutch

Of Consumption.

Don't neglect that persistent hacking cough till you find yourself in the clutch of Consumption. It's an easy matter to stop it now by taking

DR. WOOD'S NORWAY PINE SYRUP.

This pleasant remedy heals and soothes the lungs and bronchial tubes, and cures lingering and chronic coughs.

remedies fail.

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