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NEWS FROM COLDFOOT

Koyukuk Looks Bad to Stewart McCrea

McCrea Broke and There is Said to Not be a Dollar in Sight.

Stewart McCrea, bronzed and tanned, arrived yesterday morning shortly before six o'clock from Coldfoot, from which he had traveled alone as far as Yukon, save for the presence of "Mr. Finnegan," which is about half mongrel and half cur with his weight in gold as he says. McCrea's life on the trip was just finished. Mr. McCrea left on February 22 to see for himself whether or not the Koyukuk was worth the promise it had been held up to be. Being one of the best travelers and best mushers in the country, he outdistanced many others subsequent to his departure. After a week's stay in Coldfoot, he again where the sight of a piece does not cause a palinode. A Nugget man corralled the musher last night while putting away a side of beef in the Northern cafe and succeeded in getting some very interesting information from him while an imitative hungry man at a meal was given.

McCrea do I think of the Koyukuk and Coldfoot in particular, that is the hardest graft the toughest proposition I have ever seen up against in my eleven years experience in the north. I will say there is no gold in the country that would be a pretty rash statement to make, but it is a safe bet if a fine tooth comb were run through Coldfoot scarcely a white quarter could be found. The most completely and absolutely broke community I ever saw. There is no work to be had, money to pay for anything and a dollar in sight and there are a lot of old Dawson people there who give their right arm if they ever heard of the Koyukuk. For me to go there with the intention of engaging in business or for employment the chances success would be about as great as want to the north pole. On the other hand, the opportunities for prospectors with plenty of grub and a chance to see them through in case they are excellent. That is the class of people and they who have any business in the north today.

McCrea all the old Dawson gang and most of them have cold feet. The rigidity of their pedal extremities has extended almost to a condition of their legs. Next to Mackenzie, F. X. Gowans, former deputy clerk in the court, seems to be the biggest man in camp. His official positions are numerous as those of Peoh Bah, a man who own the townsite. Gowans a power of attorney straightaway proceeded to the site according to his plan. He hired Billy Devine, Thomas and Frank Gardner to him, completed his survey and each lot \$25 for the job. Afterward he posted a notice every lot which failed to pungle April 1 would be declared for the townsite company. Geo. a cook who used to be here, and upon a lot and Gowans had arrested for trespass. The jury tried him acquitted him and gave him the lot as damages. Hot I tell you, where justice is out by the chunk.

Gardner shook the camp before I left. He saw a man from the Colville river connection miles across the divide contrary to the Arctic, who had buttons on her jacket. He got a dog and a little grub and off after the new Eldorado, promising to pilot him to find. Billy Thomas is broke and work for Jack Flowers sink-shaft at \$8 a day and board, a proposition. They sank 75 without striking bedrock when grub gave out. Flowers went to try and raise the wind though he owned a hotel there he offered to put up as security couldn't get a sack of flour. He back to Billy that he was

sorry but they would have to call the deal off. So was Billy sorry. His feet are so cold now he has used up all the cariboo socks in the country trying to keep them warm. The last I saw of Billy Gorham he was pulling in house logs with a team of five dogs. Dogs, by the way, are a drug on the market; you can't give them away. Vergne Casley is running a roadhouse in Coldfoot. The day I was there I saw five men at the bar at one time, said to have been the biggest crowd in the place for a year. May Walker, Edith Montrose and Maud West are in Coldfoot busily engaged in holding down a town lot each.

"I walked out alone and was glad to get away, though had it not been for my one dog I undoubtedly would have perished on the divide. I ran into a blizzard that was a fright, lost the trail and in a last extremity tied my mitten string around the dog's neck and told him to mush. Fortunately he found the trail again and we got out all right, though I never would have done so had it not been for the dog's sagacity. When I left Coldfoot all I took with me was some fried bacon and a pan of biscuit I got from Billy Devine. Had no other grub, no blanket or no axe. Knowing there were many people coming in via the Chandelar I took my chances in meeting some on every night with whom I could camp. I missed calculations one day, however, and was all of one day and night with nothing to eat. Found an old camping place where some wood had been left over a few days before, and there I remained all night. Had to sit up and keep the fire going in order to keep warm.

"The first party I met after leaving Coldfoot was Frank Potts, Wally Brown and "Tex" McIlroy, 20 miles out. They were all shot to pieces and their bank roll looked like 30 cents. Tom Rockwell and George Noble I met at the mouth of Flat creek, 110 miles from Coldfoot. They were in bad shape as their horses were about gone, having been three days making ten miles before I met them. Archibald I met on the Chandelar 30 miles from the Yukon. Fay I found at Circle laid up for repairs. His wheel had proven a frost on the lower river trail and he was feeling pretty blue. H. N. Coleman was passed on the Yukon near Charley river.

"Regarding the outlook for the Koyukuk, it don't look good to me from a mining standpoint. The camp seems to be more of a sniping proposition than anything else. You are liable to turn over a boulder and find a \$500 nugget and then again you may turn over forty million more and not find a color."

Mr. McCrea had as traveling companions from Eagle, P. D. Willis, agent of the N. A. T. & T. Co. at Eagle, J. Wesley Young, from Rampart, and Ben Downing, the veteran mail man. They made the trip from Eagle, 104 miles, in two days. Mr. McCrea brought out a quantity of mail from Coldfoot.

Staples, Canned Goods, Coal, Lumber and Feed Favored as Special Commodities.

Agent J. H. Rogers, of the White Pass road, while he has as yet not received the classification of this year's tariff, is making contracts with all who may desire to ship over his line this season. Just prior to Mr. Rogers' departure for the inside several weeks ago a new classification for this year was completed and he succeeded in securing a type-written copy, but it is not at liberty to use as he has since been advised that it has been subject to revision, in consequence of which a considerable modification has been made. In speaking of this year's classification, Mr. Rogers said:

"I am expecting the new tariff on every mail and until it arrives and a comparison is made with the copy I now have I can not tell just what alterations have been made. As you probably know, goods this year will all come under three classes, "A," "B," and "C," where last year there were four. Another innovation is the number of special commodity rates which will provide a greatly reduced rate on certain articles. For instance there is the special commodity rate on staples of \$65 a ton, the lowest rate that has so far been quoted. Just what will be included under that rate I of course cannot tell until the new classification is received, but from its title one might infer the class of goods it will cover, heavy freight that will stow well and is easily handled, such as sugar, flour, salt, soap, etc.

"Canned goods also take a special commodity rate of \$70 a ton and as the name implies includes fruits, vegetables and meat products packed in tins. A special commodity will be provided for coal, of which, of the blacksmith's variety, there is a great deal shipped into the country, but what the figures will be I do not know, they as yet not having been sent me. There will also be a special commodity on lumber which will permit of the importation of Puget Sound fir at a figure which builders will be enabled to pay, and feed will likewise be specially favored, though what the rates will be I have not yet been advised.

"Class A will cover such articles as hams and bacon in casks or barrels, evaporated fruit in boxes, blankets in bundles, small mining machinery that can be handled easily, hardware, nails, etc., the rate being \$75.

"Class B takes a rate of \$85 and will include the harder class of perishable goods such as potatoes, onions, etc.

"Class C is \$100 a ton and covers eggs, apples in boxes, cranberries, lemons, oranges, etc. You will understand, of course, that the classification that I am giving you is in a way problematical and must not be taken as absolutely authentic. The different articles I have enumerated are as they are classified upon my typewritten copy, and that as I have said has been modified and might include some of the very commodities I have mentioned. In addition to the three regular rates, classes B and C will have several subdivisions, such as B₁, B₂ and B₃, and the same with the C class. The highest rate quoted this year on any articles is C₁, which is \$250 a ton. Last year some things took a rate as high as \$480. After a most careful consideration of this year's tariff I find that the reduction will average about 35 per cent."

"How about passenger rates?" was queried.

"I have not received the new passenger tariff, either," was the reply, "but I do not look for any very great reduction in the first class fare. Last year the through fare from Puget Sound and British Columbia points was \$105 and this year I imagine it will be about \$100. That is upon a basis of \$30 to Skagway, \$20 to Whitehorse and \$50 here. It has been intimated to me that the railroad fare would have been reduced very materially, but the government in regulating the rates has allowed the charge of \$19.98 from Skagway to Whitehorse and it probably will remain at \$20. One thing, however, I am informed will be done

THE SECOND CONTINGENT

Cigar Store Women in Court Today

Eighteen Have Paid \$50 and Cost Since Yesterday—More to Follow.

The second contingent of cigar store women were before Judge Macaulay this morning, making a total of 18 for yesterday and today. All those up this morning followed, the example of those arraigned yesterday and pleaded guilty to the charge of being inmates of houses of ill-fame. A fine of \$50 and costs was imposed in each case. Those in court this morning were: Paulette Barge, Rein Semen and Alice Carmon of Third avenue; Gwilla Barge of Second avenue; Augustine Dubois, Margaret Grochier and Marie Lambert of Queen street.

There are supposed to be a dozen or fifteen alleged cigar stores yet to be investigated and their inmates will probably be asked to appear in court tomorrow. Thus far all the 18 women fined have paid the amounts and smilingly departed from the temple of justice.

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CONCERNING REDUCTIONS

Agent Rogers Talks of This Year's Rates

Staples, Canned Goods, Coal, Lumber and Feed Favored as Special Commodities.

which will be of special interest to the working classes, and that is the establishment of a second class rate of somewhere near \$60. That will enable people of limited means to go outside or come in where now they may feel they can not afford it."

New Townsite.

Victoria, April 4.—J. W. Ladd, manager of the Sereta Iron Mining Company of the West Coast, arrived in the city yesterday by the noon train and registered at the Dominion.

This morning Mr. Ladd, in an interview, stated that the work on these properties was progressing favorably. Surveyors have been at work for some time past in laying out a townsite at the mouth of the Sereta, and also preparing a route for a proposed railway from the iron mines to the townsite. John Braden and Capt. Thomson are those interested in the former scheme, while the railway is to be built by the Pacific Steel Company for the transportation of their ore. The same company also intend erecting wharfs and other necessary equipment for the shipping of ore. Messrs. Braden and Thomson are receiving inquiries regarding the sale of lots.

At present Mr. Ladd says that things from a mining standpoint of the coast are rather quiet. The shutting down of Hayes mine has in a measure put a damper on mining in that locality, but in spite of this year there will be a larger amount of work done than ever before. He states that as yet there is not enough ore being mined to warrant the establishment of a smelter nor a furnace. In reference to the latter, he said, however, that Mr. Swaney's plans for the future include the building on the west coast of an iron furnace as soon as business was brisk enough to make it pay. The Pacific cable station is one of the most busy points on the coast at present. Out-houses have been erected and the work on the main buildings is about to commence.

Referring to the proposed railroad from the Sereta iron properties to the new townsite, Mr. Ladd stated that the company was now looking for parties to do the construction work, and as soon as arrangements could be made operations would commence.

Job Printing at Nugget office.

Mail Has Arrived.

The stage with one lone passenger, J. R. Miller, and eight sacks of mail arrived at noon, five and a half days out from Whitehorse. The latest pouches from Seattle are under date of April 5; Vancouver, April 6f.

Job printing at Nugget office.

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