

THE KLONDIKE NUGGET.

VOL. I. No. 28

DAWSON, Y. T., SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1898

PRICE 50 CENTS

FREE BOOKS OF RECORD.

A Night Force of Clerks to Post Them Up for Public Inspection.

The History of Every Claim Made Public—An Inquiry Clerk for Present Emergencies—How Witnesses Can be Mistaken.

Miners have been somewhat interested in a report to the effect that upon payment of a certain sum of money at the gold commissioners' office claims were being renewed without representation. It was even said that the sum of money required to be paid to escape the representation was \$130. The NUGGET proceeded to investigate at once. There is a regulation by which the gold commissioner is empowered to hold claims over for the owners without representation in certain exigencies. It has been done, notably in a certain case where the claimant lay sick, though it afterwards developed that the man was worth a large sum of money and could easily have hired the work done. But the regulation opens a way for abuse as the gold commissioner has the same powers, and he is quite often merely a clerk in the office, who did not come to Klondike for his health. Whether or not money has been paid would be hard to determine; but it is self-evidently worth \$130 to any man, and double—yes, triple—that amount to escape the representation, which costs from \$600 to \$1,000, according to the distance of the claim from town. Only a government inquiry can determine to what extent the power has been abused.

Mr. Ogilvie was interviewed on the matter, and talked freely and entertainingly. He said: "I don't know of anyone escaping representation by payment of \$130 or any other amount. Before I left Ottawa there was a regulation under consideration by which a payment could be accepted in lieu of representation. 'Have you got the new regulation?'"

"No."

"Have you received official notification of such a regulation?"

"No; we have not."

"There is a rumor, Mr. Ogilvie, that you are about to overhaul and remodel the gold commissioner's office and that a night force of clerks will be employed to enter up in books the transactions of the day?"

"Yes, something like that. It is something which ought to have been done long ago, but owing to the scarcity of material, was not feasible."

"By 'material' do you mean in a clerical sense or do you refer to a lack of paper and books?"

"Why, paper and books. There are files of papers ragged and almost illegible. If the public was allowed unhindered access they would soon become valueless. I am putting men to work writing up the complete history of every claim into books which are to be open and free to the public. Every transfer or mortgage will be kept posted up to date."

"Do I understand you that the night force will post up the books for the transactions of the day before, and that each morning the books will be up to date?"

"Yes, up to date and free. In case the inquirer wishes to see any of the documents mentioned in the record, he can do so by payment of a stipulated fee. The documents themselves cannot be allowed to be handled promiscuously. A fee will be also charged for an official abstract."

"These plans, Mr. Ogilvie, are going to take a long time to perfect, are they not?"

"So, I don't think so. Just as soon as our offices are completed we will make rapid progress. I believe that by the commencement of the new year every transaction of the recorder's office will be public and of easy access. Meanwhile an inquiry clerk will be appointed whose duties will be solely to give the public any information desired."

The commissioner of the Yukon dwelt upon the present congested condition of the affairs before the gold commissioner and their causes. He thought it was owing in some measure to the people themselves. There were often so many applicants for the same claim, all declaring themselves the first stakers, that it was difficult to decide between them. The NUGGET suggested that the most of them must be lying. Mr. Ogilvie did not quite concur. He said:

"You see, it is so easy to be conscientious and yet mistaken. I recall a case which illustrates this. An official whose integrity is unimpeachable and whose question happened to be out on a certain creek when a lady was making a claim. She took him over the ground to witness that it had never been represented. However, the owner had secured a renewal, and in looking into the case I asked the witness, 'You went over the claim?' He said, 'Yes, and not a sign of work did I see. There has not even been a shovel stuck into the ground. I happened to remember the ground as a claim from which in 1897 I had been given an title taken from the gravel 30 feet under the surface. I had taken the horn out with me as a scientific curiosity, but had first visited the shaft for personal investigation. Another shaft had also been sunk some 25 feet, but had eaved in, almost catching the digger. The witness was non-plussed at what I told him, and declared that but for what I told him he would have been ready to swear to his first statement in any court of the land."

Other matters were touched on, and the NUGGET thanked the commissioner for finding time to talk, and then made way for the crowd waiting for a chance to be heard.

On the Koyukuk.

Mr. Martin Anderson has returned from a hard summer spent in ascending the Koyukuk river. Mr. Anderson and party left New York this spring and crossed the Chilkoot summit with the crowd. The boat they built at Lake Bennett was taken through to Koyukuk and by sheer strength was forced 700 miles up that stream. In places it took eleven men to tow the boat.

Six hundred miles up the river a town which has been named Arctic City has been started. Nearby is the Allekaka river, (pronounced "Alatka") by the natives. Absolutely no work has been done yet on the river. Prospects in the river bars and side streams are considered promising.

Deciding to come to Dawson Mr. Anderson sold his outfit and took the steamer at the mouth of the river. Prices were not high, flour bringing but \$5.50 per sack, which would tend to show that prospectors are selling out and returning to civilization.

On his way down the river he counted over 30 steamers making the ascent, together with a host of small boats. So many people being on the river the coming winter is quite likely to uncover pay if it exists there.

NO MORE POSTOFFICE "JAN."

Seventeen Hundred Boxes Added to Facilitate Business—Six Delivery Windows.

At last the long promised improvements in the postoffice are materializing in good shape. Seventeen hundred boxes have been placed in position this week and the mail will now be sorted to the fourth and fifth letter of the name. One hundred of the boxes will be fitted with doors and locks upon the outside which will obviate the need of our business men waiting in line at the delivery window. Besides there will be as many numbered rent-boxes as necessary, and the chances are they will be well patronized, for a glance is all that is necessary to show the owner whether there is mail for him or not. The front of the rent-boxes will be covered with wire gauze—glass being much too scarce in Dawson to be used for any such purpose. There will be six wickets or delivery windows, with a registered letter department in the rear.

Thirty-five sacks of mail came in on the Flora on Thursday morning and will be distributed into the new boxes. By Monday the new office will be open for the first time in shape to attend to the business of this community. The NUGGET congratulates the public upon the new order of things being ushered into Dawson. The fines of two and three hundred men who have had to wait in line at that office are now merely matters of history which can scarcely be repeated.

Deputy-Postmaster John McEwen is smiling triumphantly when he thinks of the ease with which the crowds will now be handled.

Politics Already in Dawson.

While Dawson has a population of nearly 20,000 people, she has not any superabundance of eligible material for political preferment. Dawson is largely an American town, and the oath of allegiance will be a qualification which will debar many a good man from the political arena. The following are the names of gentlemen being talked of in private circles and in public for the mayorship and for councilmen: Col. McGregor, George J. Armstrong, E. Leroy Pettibler, Mr. Willis, W. H. Smith, Captain W. Galpin, A. F. George, Dr. McEwen, Dr. McDonald, Mr. McLemmon, John Cameron, J. C. Cunningham, P. R. Ritchie and Mr. Vernon of Vernon & Story.

As the prospective election grows closer there will be other names put forward. There is good material in the foregoing list, but "there are others."

It will be observed that the gentlemen named are British subjects. Attorney Woodworth is spoken of for city attorney, and Attorney Kiske for city clerk, a position he has held for a good many years elsewhere.

The qualifications for voters and candidates cannot be definitely stated until the passage of the ordinance of incorporation by Mr. Ogilvie and his council. It will probably be the holding of a certain amount of property, together with the oath of allegiance for successful candidates.

No More Gold Dust Currency.

Modern conveniences are everywhere putting in an appearance, and even "cheer charge" money is becoming more common. Gold dust as a medium of exchange, in conformity with this new order of things a notice has been posted around on all the government buildings that on and after October 1 nothing but currency of the realm will be taken in payment of anything but the royalty.

The quantity of coin in the country is hard to estimate. The constantly taking out of circulation of coin and paper currency will decrease the per capita until in the end there will be none to pay recording fees with, unless there is some way devised to reissue it or bring more into the country.

Attempted Robbery of Stove-Boxes.

There is a story brought down from lower Eldorado that attempts have been made to rob the stove-boxes in the night. It is reported that a night watchman was attacked by masked

men and bound and gagged while they proceeded to clean out the boxes. He worked the gag loose and yelled for help, the robbers decamping into the darkness.

Deeds of desperation are becoming altogether too common, and the "blue ticket" system is being revived, for the protection of the community. When a man's criminal record is known he is quietly invited to disappear down the river and usually does so without argument. It is an easier and cheaper method than to wait until some crime can be fastened on to him and then give him an opportunity to defend himself in court with the proceeds of his crime.

Re-the Incorporation Petitions.

The gentlemen in charge of the incorporation petitions to Mr. Ogilvie and council seem to have considered their labors ended when they had made out the petitions and had a copy lying at the principal stores of town. There are dozens of business men anxious for incorporation who would willingly sign if one of the documents was brought to their attention. It ought to be someone's business to circulate the petitions from house to house. Weight would be given to the names of the signers if they would give their qualifications as voters, as: "John Brown, owner of lot 61; Thomas Smith, lessee of No 27 Pith street," etc., etc.

Every Wednesday and Saturday the NUGGET is delivered to subscribers, \$2.50 per month.

HAS GONE TO REPORT.

Special Mining Commissioner Leaves on the Domyville for Ottawa.

Mr. W. H. Lynch has started for Ottawa. He was specially commissioned by the Dominion government to collect and arrange data on the Klondike country for the use of legislators who have to frame the laws. Naturally enough Mr. Lynch's impressions of the Klondike and Klondikers is of importance. His report to his government is jealously guarded, but it is known to his friends that the offices and officers of the government at Dawson have been pretty generally investigated by the gentleman who started out on the Domyville via the upper river. It was impossible for his acquaintances not to see that his sense of justice was much outraged in his month of residence in the country. The monstrous doings at the gold commissioner's office were clearly seen to have angered him, and his information concerning the goings on within those sacred portals was not gathered exclusively from official sources. Naturally enough the gentleman, while here, was very unobtrusive, and his comings and goings have been unheeded. The peculiar nature of his commission was not conducive to popularity or good-fellowship with his brother-officials, and there were no public expressions of regret at his departure. Mr. Lynch was shrewdly conscious of the fact that you cannot hear all the truth of a man from his friends.

Technically Mr. Lynch was here simply as a mining expert. In reality that was but half his work. It is known that the wrongs from which we suffer have not been neglected nor the complaints entirely overlooked. As a result of Mr. Lynch's month in Dawson and surrounding country, we may expect speedy changes in the regulations and some unexpected deceptions.

And Still They Go.

Captain W. Anderson is leaving on the Willie Irving for the outside. The captain has been here about a year, and has secured some very good properties, including 800 feet of Hunker creek's best gravel. The following is a tribute by the captain to Joaquin Miller, whose venerable appearance mystified the Dawson children last winter:

JOAQUIN MILLER'S ARRIVAL AT DAWSON, FROM CIRCLE CITY, ALASKA.

On a bright, frosty December day
A bevy of Dawson children at play
Whispered in furs and with a sleigh
A happy band are they.

As coasting down the Yukon they go
What care they for the 42 below?
Bright, rosy cheeks; with health aglow,
Thus their conversation did flow.

"Christmas will soon be here;
Santa won't know where we are, I fear."
"Why," said Bertie, "he lives up here,
And goes down Christmas with sleigh and reindeer."

As far down the Yukon a sleigh they spied,
As swiftly over the ice it did glide,
Said Bertie: "I wonder who in that sleigh
Does ride?"
"Why, it's Santa Claus," in chorus they cried.

A moment from play they pause,
Look careful, "Yes, 'tis Santa Claus,"
Said Willie: "I know it is he,
For I saw him at our Christmas tree."

Said they, in innocent, childish prattle:
"Let's tell him we've come up from Seattle,"
So he'll know where we are;
Then he won't have to go so far."

As Santa's sleigh draws near
They see he drives dogs instead of deer.
A moment in doubt they appear,
Their faces brighten; all is made clear.

For says Frankie: "I know it's Santa all right,
He's savin' his deer for the last night,
When he takes candy and toys
To all the girls and boys."

Clad in furs, flowing locks and kindly face,
We welcome him our Arctic homes to grace,
Who is this Santa that out of the Arctic circle
Came?

Why, it's Joaquin Miller, of Sierra poet fame,
Dawson, N. W. T., Dec. 14, 1897.

The NUGGET has blank bills of sale.

EXPRESSIONS ON INCORPORATION.

Short, Pithy and Very Much to the Point.

Expressions of Some of Our Public Men on a Public Matter—Largely in Favor of the Movement.

T. H. Parker of McConnell, Parker & Rogers: "Yes sir. Am thoroughly in favor of incorporation for every reason, streets, sidewalks, drainage, fire protection, all speak for incorporation."

Mr. McConnell of the above firm: "Mr. Parker has just spoken my sentiments."

J. W. Rogers of the same concern and one of Dawson's heavy property holders: "Always try to be on the right side and the right side is incorporation."

J. F. Burke, proprietor Yukon sawmill: "I am in favor of it heartily. The question is one which will scarcely permit of any exception or opposition. The people will, at least in certain respects, be in a position to govern themselves."

Mr. Liebes, manager Alaska Exploration Co., before leaving for San Francisco, said: "We are large property holders in Dawson and have every faith in her future. You may say I am in hearty accord with the supporters of incorporation."

Mr. L. R. Fulda, agent A. E. Co.: "Why shouldn't Dawson be incorporated? Every reason why she should; none that she should not."

Dr. H. W. Yeamans of Yeamans & Chisholm, agents Empire Transportation Co.: "Emphatically yes."

Dr. J. O. LaChapelle: "By all means, for it."

Harry Spencer, proprietor of the Pioneer: "I don't care to express an opinion."

Tom Chisholm, proprietor of the Aurora: "Do not care to speak on the question at present."

Capt. C. W. Anderson: "Am for it."

Harry Ash of Ash & Manning: "It is shameful to see the fire apparatus to which our firm contributed largely, going to rust in the rain on the public streets, and we still without a dollar's worth of protection. We have striven to be law abiding citizens, and ready contributors to hospital funds, the care of the sick and matters of public interest. There is every reason why Dawson should be incorporated and I am in favor of it, so that we may know what becomes of our money. But what we fear most is fire."

W. M. Rudio, cattle dealer: "Yes, sir. Everything makes me an endorser of the movement."

G. G. Berg of the Arctic Meat Co.: "Why, certainly, I'm in favor of it. It is the only thing for us to do. I've made money here but could have made more had there been anything permanent in Dawson. We will incorporate, manage our own affairs in our own interest, and there you are."

Captain Hansen: "Indeed I am strongly in favor of incorporation and I have signed the petition both for myself and Harper & Eadie. It is for the general good of the community that the public burdens should be born proportionately by all. We cannot have fire protection without incorporation. The reasons for incorporation are numerous and there are no good reasons against it."

Political Association.

A public meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 27th, at 8:30 p. m., at the Fairview hotel, Dawson, for the purpose of organizing a Political Association for the Yukon Territory, with the view of obtaining representation in the Dominion parliament.

G. J. ARMSTRONG,
DR. E. D. DUNN,
W. GALPIN,
FRANK JOURNAL,
DR. McDONALD,
COL. D. MCGREGOR,
R. P. MOLENNEN,
H. C. LEBES,
P. R. RITCHIE,
Organizing Committee.

Public Meeting.

On Saturday evening, September 24th, at 8 p. m., Pioneer Hall. To discuss "Incorporation and Fire Protection." It is to the interest of every citizen to be present.

J. E. HANSEN,
DR. W. DAVIS,
H. T. WILLS,
J. A. CHUTE,
J. J. RUTLEDGE.

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