

CLAIM EVOLUTION

An Industry Confined Exclusively to the Yukon Territory.

THE RECORDER'S OFFICE IS THE HATCHERY.

A Lesson in Scientific Surveying on the Yukon Plan

Diagrams Showing How Claims Are Eaten up—More Interesting Features of Very Peculiar Transactions—Whole Claims can Be Carved up Into Fractions if You Know How to Run the Lines.

When the history of the Yukon Territory has all been written and the historian lays down his pen at the word "finis," no part thereof will occupy so prominent a portion of the reader's attention as the volumes covering the corruption, extortion, bribery, injustice and dishonesty exhibited in the handling of governmental affairs in a country more famous in a shorter space of time, than any other part of the world. When a little over a year ago, the eyes of almost every nation on earth were turned towards the Arctic sun, their attention was attracted thither by the accounts of the almost fabulous wealth said to be contained in the glacial formations and volcanic blow-outs in the never ending mountainous surface of the great Northwestern Territory, reaching away into the eternal frozen barriers and peaks of the north. Each private letter and avenue of information, seldom though they reached the outside from the hardy prospector, or sturdy adventurer, blinted at and told of the liberal supply of the precious yellow mineral, which came nature in her evolutions had so liberally sprinkled and spread in the beds of the creeks which flow directly or indirectly into the wonderful Yukon river. Suddenly like the flash of a brilliant Northern light there flashed forth upon the world the magic name of "Bonanza," and instantly eyes were strained, hopes entertained, ambitions advanced to reach the famous creek which set all the world afire with quickening animation. Upon this followed Bonanza's most productive feeder, and "Eldorado" became to the world, a formidable rival of the rich Bonanza.

Immediately the whole civilized world was awake and intoxicated with excitement, men of every tongue save probably the Chinaman, were engaged in outfitting. Homes, farms, workshops, commercial enterprises of various kinds were sold, mortgaged or turned over to supposed competent hands, that fathers, brothers, husbands, lovers, might be enabled to go forth, and tickling the fair Goddess of Fortune invite her smiles, and if possible woo from the sickle empress of men's ambitions her smiles in wealth that glitters. The year of 1898 saw steamships leaving their home ports crowded to suffocation. Old hulks that had lain moored in the "boneyards" were drafted into service and if the keen eye of the inspector could fail to note any objections, were sent on their mission of carrying would-be prospectors to the now famous gold fields. Railroad trains were operated in sections, utilizing all available rolling stock to accommodate the throngs of eager men who were journeying to the new Eldorado.

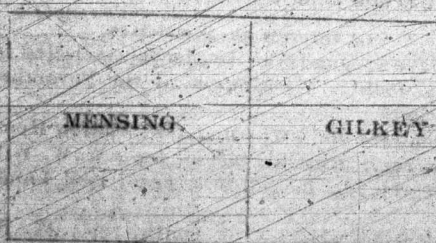
Never again probably in all the history of this world, will such energy, perseverance and persistence be exhibited as at the meeting of Alaskan waters with the magnificent mountain sentinels standing at the White and Chilkoot passes, men struggled with enormous loads of precious necessities and finally landed all at the placid lakes which mark the journey down the famous waters leading to the Yukon valley. The risks taken to life and property are familiar to every one upon the "inside" and by description to an almost limitless population upon the "outside." Such scenes certainly in the present generation will never be seen again.

Arriving in Dawson, the metropolis of the Yukon Territory at the time spoken of (the spring of '98), men stepped with alert and active tread, that at last the goal had been practically reached. But little did they suspect that just ahead of them had arrived officialdom in all of its majestic pomposity. Titles had been given, and men installed in office, establishing a civic government for the regulation of affairs in the then suddenly inflated population of Dawson. The very word government would seem to indicate to every lay mind, a body with powers of governing. Em-

anating from so liberal a home government as either the Dominion or Imperial, it was natural to presume at least that justice would prevail, equity be distributed, and fairness honestly administered. There was then no ever-watchful eye of an honest press to counsel in legislation, to criticize the errors liable to be made. None knew what powers any official possessed, what authority they exercised under their commissions. Far away from the seat of parental authority, a series of regulations, acts and edicts were promulgated which soon began to be felt as a yoke upon the neck, like the story of the straw-gatherers for the brick making of ancient history.

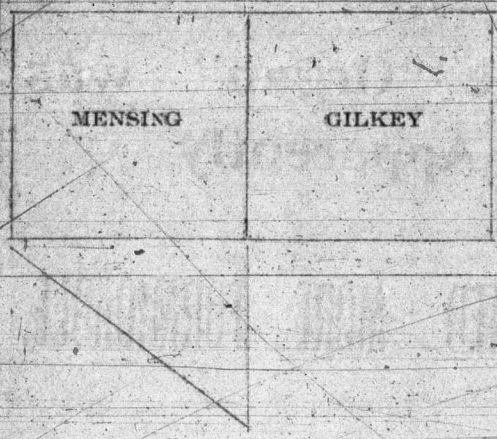
Without at present going into any other department of the Territorial government, we will confine ourselves to one which has caused more trouble to the miners of this section than any other, that of the gold commissioner. For months, in fact, from almost the very first issue of the NUGGET, it having been quietly at work in its investigation of the many and innumerable tales of wrongs and impositions poured into its ears by the men who had braved the passes, the hardships of the trails, the perils of the rivers, only to arrive here and encounter the more brutal, diabolical wrongs perpetrated upon them by those occupying places of official trust and dealings with the public. Gradually, but surely, the curtain was being torn aside by the NUGGET, which, single-hand and alone dared to enter the sanctity of the self-enveloped officials and hirelings, and despite the snarling of the little insignificant sycophants, the threats made, the inducements thrown, the attempts at purchase of silence, and ploddingly but persistently delved away at its work, until now, are breaking away the dark clouds of wrong doing never equaled in all Christendom. With never-ceasing persistence the muck and mud and dirt of the gang of hirelings who have, with a shamefacedness, before which His Satanic Majesty would humbly lift his chapeau, made the business end of the Queen's territory here the sinner and contempt of the meanest subject, or temporary resident under the Union Jack. The revelations which the NUGGET has been making in its latest issues simply startle the people as they read of the accused double dealings committed in the office of the gold commissioner, and the "pals" on the outside of those within. The Duboise case first brought to light in the columns of this paper and its astounding revelations, as detailed in other columns of today's issue, caused a tremor of excitement to run through the hearts and minds of everyone. It now devolves upon this paper to show to the public the "Evolution" of a claim, and in doing so uses another case of how claims can be eaten up.

DIAGRAM NO. 1.—"PRISTINE PURITY"



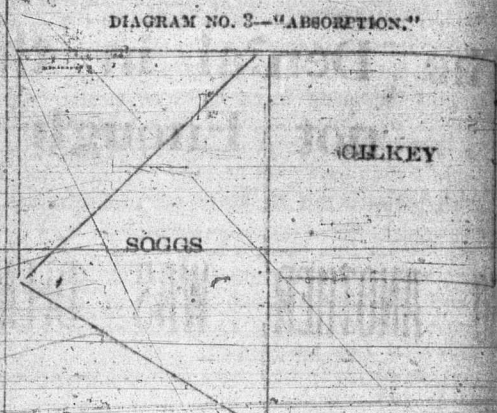
The above diagram No 1 shows two claims on Gold Hill, located on Bonanza and Skookum. They are 100 x 100 feet square, and were located by Messrs. Gilkey and Mensing, and duly and properly recorded January 26, 1898. As time wore round Mr. Mensing leaves the country disgusted with its management. Little, if anything was known at that time, as to the value of ground on Gold Hill. Consequently, on October 26, 1898, Mr. Mensing not having represented his claim, the ground became vacant, and this was generally looked after by several people, who with longing eyes looked toward the hour of 12 o'clock at night on this date. Among these were Mrs. Addie Butler and Nelson A. Soggs and at midnight, or 12.01 a. m. October 27, 1898, Mrs. Butler, accompanied by Dr. Hatton, Harry Wallace and Willie Lear, acting as witnesses, ascended Gold Hill, each carrying a stake, and at the hour noted staked off Mensing's claim which had then become vacant, Mensing probably never intending to return to the country. While there,

Mr. Nelson A. Soggs approached and was also a witness to Mrs. Butler's staking. DIAGRAM NO. 2—"EVOLUTION"



This diagram shows No. 1 still intact with a fraction added, on which had been placed the three corner stakes, and for these stakes Nelson A. Soggs paid \$100 to the staker. The staking now being completed Mrs. Butler happy to think she had at least gotten so far as to have staked a claim, at 1 a. m., left Grand Forks and hastened to Dawson both she and Mr. Soggs appearing at the gold commissioner's office at 9 o'clock. Mr. Soggs going to Mr. E. D. Bolton's window, and Mrs. Butler upstairs to Mr. Craig's department. Mrs. Butler offered her claim for record, but was told by Mr. Craig that she could not get her certificate of record until two weeks had elapsed. This was all right to her, but coming down stairs she saw Mr. Bolton hand Soggs a paper, and both left the office together. "What's that paper?" said Mrs. Butler to Soggs. "Oh! that's a bill of sale" replied Soggs. Shrewd little business woman that she is, and like so many others naturally looked upon anything emanating from the gold commissioner's office with suspicion, snatched the paper

from Soggs's hands, when lo! and behold it was a mining certificate issued by Bolton and this is how the Mensing claim was to be disintegrated. DIAGRAM NO. 3—"ABSORPTION"



This diagram includes No. 2—the dark line through the Mensing claim gone, showing the first bite out of the Mensing claim, and a pretty good chunk it was. This, it will be seen, would give Mr. Soggs already a large owner of mining claims and rights in this territory, a pretty nice claim. But why could Soggs record this claim, fractionizing a whole claim, while another claimant to re-location of an already duly recorded claim must come back in two weeks? Is there any wonder the people hate the very name of gold commissioner's office? Is there any wonder that not occasionally but absolutely universally over the creeks the names of Bolton, Craig and Hurdman are not only treated with contempt and derision but profanity? And this is the office remember, concerning which the NUGGET pounded away with vigor all last summer and fall. What think you now good people after the revelations of the past few days and the case in point? But, let us go on. It's interesting to go through this.

DIAGRAM NO. 4—"DISINTEGRATION"

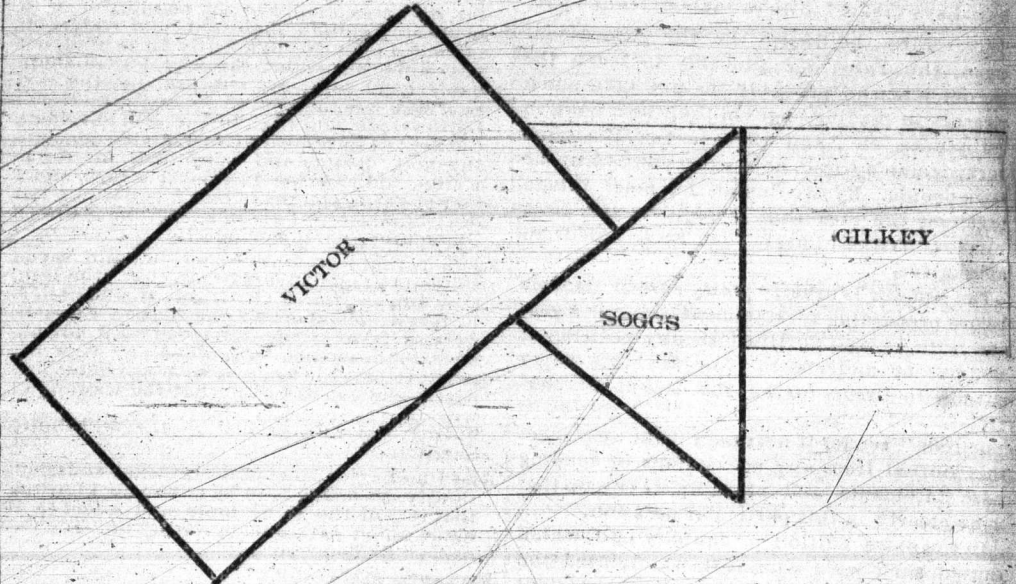


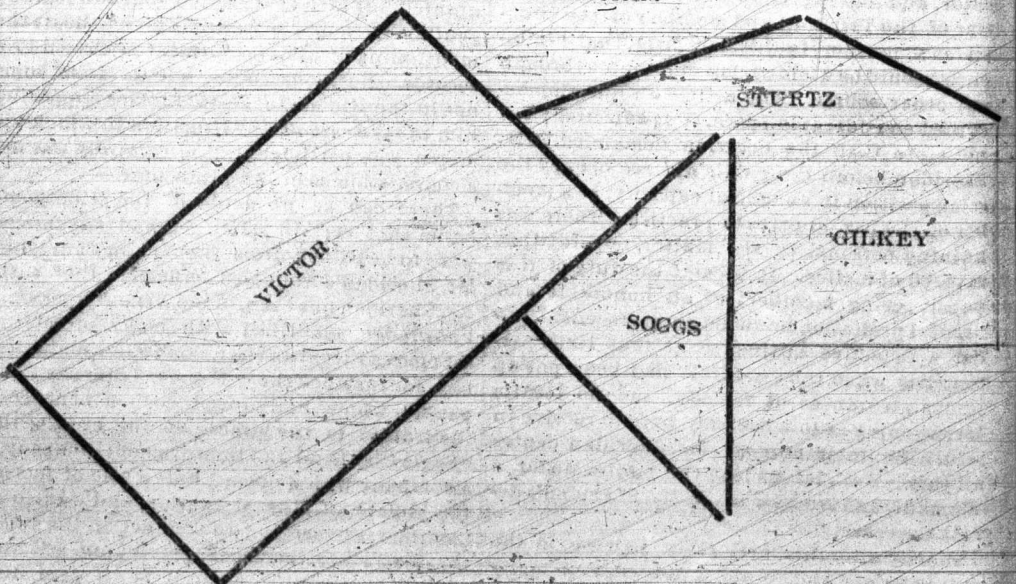
Diagram No. 4 shows the next bite out of this pie, by Mr. Victor, a gentleman of Gold Hill, whose claim ran to the Mensing claim, and as he didn't have a very large piece of ground—only about twice as much as the usual sized claims—thought he might as well put his hand in the pudding and the dark line surrounding his name shows what he was to grab.

Now, Mr. Victor was also very thoughtful of Mrs. Butler's interests, and knowing that she was to relocate this claim, on the day previous he called at the cabin of the lady and told her "she could go on down to Dawson and record all right, as he would stake the claim for her and save her the trouble of going away up on the hill." Certainly! but Mrs. Butler didn't

take any chances. There wouldn't a thing have happened to her claim had she done so, we don't think. Again, and later, finding she had staked the claim, he called upon her and told her "he had pulled up two of her stakes." And Mrs. Butler found two of Mensing's stakes at the lower shaft on Victor's claim, but her own two were gone.

Now, then, in Mr. Soggs's employ was a gentleman named Sturtz, and Mr. Sturtz saw a plum in the pie, and having a piece of ground staked off, looking to a man with one eye very much like a fraction, so he swipes the remainder of poor Mensing's claim, as shown in the following diagram.

DIAGRAM NO. 5—"DISSOLUTION"



It will thus be seen that poor Mensing is wiped off the face of the earth, in so far as the parties above mentioned are concerned, but not so with plucky and shrewd little Mrs. Butler. The record paper held by Mr. Soggs naturally made the little lady hostile, and she sailed into Mr. Soggs in true blue style, and that gentleman must have had conviction carried strongly to his mind when, on that same day and date, he made the following bill of sale, which speaks for itself:

Original recorded October 27th, 1898. Bill of Sale. DAWSON, N. W. T., Oct. 27th, 1898. Know all men by these presents that I, Nelson A. Soggs, of Dawson, for and in consideration of one dollar (\$1.00) and other valuable consideration to me in hand paid, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, do sell, assign, transfer and set over unto Addie Butler an undivided two-thirds (2/3) interest in and to bench claim on Gold Hill, opposite No. 3 on Bonanza Creek

above discovery, bounded by Wallace, Condon, Victor and Gilkey, as shown on plans by Bolton. [Signed] NELSON A. SOGGS.

Witness: E. J. Ogburn, S. C. Kirk. Well! Well!! A two-thirds interest in a claim showing these lines: Dimensions, 150 feet on one side, 100 feet on the other, 110 feet on the lower fractional line, and 90 feet on the other, disposed of for the consideration of one dollar! And that on Gold Hill, opposite Bonanza! Mr. Soggs, the opportunity may be afforded you to tell under oath before the Royal Commission held by Commissioner Ogilvie, whether or not any valuable consideration was paid by you to old gentleman Bolton, the father of E. D. Bolton, the mining recorder, who surveyed up the fractionizing of Mensing's claim, or to E. D. Bolton, mining recorder, or to both, for record. (Concluded on page one.)

CORDWOOD.

\$18 PER CORD.

Orders taken for Flume and Sluce Lumber. Office at office, upper Klondike ferry, or from Sisk & Zilly, agents, A. C. Office Building

BOYLE & SLAVIN.

THE VOL. 2 No 9

ANNO Staked

HURDMAN Recorded

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The records of the are as full of suspicion At \$250 per record within certain limits brought to the New shaped piece of M. L. Minick. As a known to bear that of claims by employment some morsel, it was of \$250 on the M. Minick was the same in the office. This To show the way th the gold commissio esting to tell that t the service there is cation somewhere q phone with all the existence. The Nug as stated, of Mr. Fo a neighboring claim his business. With tise of one of those with a long and clo publicity, and in a a representative of upon the same erra underground teleph people with suspici tive operation. The piece of grou upon an irregular opposite the left lin recorded size of th irregular rectangle

N. D. WALLING B. DAVIS

The size will show two claims at the recorded. The ab after emigrants had for its suppression.

Mining Division of Dawson, Yukon MINING

The following is of title to the un taken from the bench placer mine site the left hand Creek, bounded up stream by Davis ch by Goodrich, claim Division in the Da Recorded by Mrs 1898; certificate nu October 6, 1898. M of this claim to N. G. ber. 15, 188. Certified correct.

The abstract was to be worthless at "Here! This thi was buying the e abstract be which getting a square fo the size and I want Clerk Fortune t interested in a pap table. Fortune's o shook his head de pined:

"But I've got to know them, but I applied for, even i record." Fortune's clerk shrugged his shou "What's the ord the sizes!" "It's made out a it out." The scribe made stoners office, and the abstract clerks the date of staking "Have you a writ clerk.