

# THE EDMONTON ROUTE.

## True Account of a Trip Via McKenzie and Porcupine.

### Eighteen Months of Terrible Travel—Fearful Rapids—Exposure—Starvation—Scurvy.

(The following is compiled by a traveler from a diary kept for a year and a half, which was required to reach Dawson. The matter of fact way in which the story is told carries conviction with it. Many of the matters treated are entirely new, as for instance, the abundance of coal oil in certain districts. The length of the article requires its publication in several chapters.)

#### CHAPTER V.

By December 15th we were starved out and frozen out, our only hope of saving our lives being to make the fort, distant some 60 miles. Several days previous to this we had been preparing for a start, making a toboggan and mending up some of our old rags.

Having loaded as many things on to the sled as it would hold we started out, having only one pair of snowshoes between us. The snow was over three feet deep and we were so weak that we could not draw our toboggan, so returned again to our shack, where we stayed the night. Next day with half a load we again started out. By about 6 p. m. we had reached the mouth of Rat river, having many times to wade through snow banks over six feet deep. We were glad when we saw a young Indian coming along with a dog team. His sled being empty, we induced him to take our load, which he did, for we were already badly frostbitten. By 10 p. m. we had reached his shack, about nine miles up the Husky. While only a quarter of a mile from this shack I became insensible, and when I came to I found myself before a blazing fire, while my naked feet were being rubbed by the old Indian and his squaw. They made us as welcome as they could during the two days we stopped with them. While we were here the young Indian caught a lynx, which made us all a good substantial meal, the remains of which we took with us on the trail. We arrived at Fort McPherson on Sunday night at 10:30 p. m., in company with the young Indian, who had been our good Samaritan. I cannot speak too highly of the Indians and half breeds we met at the fort. They showed us far more consideration than the white men who were also making for the same goal as ourselves.

The Stewart family with whom we stayed were very kind and considerate. The Hudson Bay factor hearing of our condition, sent for us. He gave us 40 pounds of flour, 30 pounds of beans, 10 pounds of bacon, 1 pound of tea, and 2 pounds of tobacco, at the same time advising us to stay there for a few days in order to recruit our strength. We were unable to obtain any portaging here, so on the 22d we pulled out for the camp on Rat river—"Destruction City," distant by the overland trail some 45 miles. This trail can only be used in the winter, as there are so many lakes and muskeges to cross. Soon after hitting the trail we came to Husky lake, eight miles long. The glass registered on our departure from the Fort, 45 degrees below zero. The trail here was drifted full of snow, in fact we had to break a trail from here onwards for over 20 miles. The wind springing up we were obliged to make a hasty camp. Not a stick of dry wood was to be seen.

We camped for the night between two lakes on the side of a small hill. Great difficulty was experienced in kindling a fire. Neither of us slept during the night. The snow was over five feet deep and we did nothing all night but cut down the small green spruce trees in order to keep the fire going. The whole of the night of the 23d was spent in the same way. During the 24th we ran into thick brush, where we found much dry wood. Here we camped till the 26th, keeping a huge fire blazing all the time. I shall ever remember this Christmas day. On the night of the 26th Destruction City was reached. The whole of my face, fingers and toes were badly frozen on our arrival. Having recruited our health somewhat, we secured a job of portaging some flour to Trout river about 40 miles away. Before we had completed this task we were summoned back to Destruc-

tion City where a miners' meeting had decided that we should proceed some 2 miles further up river to wait on some sick men afflicted with scurvy. Three out of this party were already dead and the remaining two were not expected to recover. Having been supplied with the necessary letters by the miners' committee, we reached the cabin on the 14th day of January. The scurvy had set in in all the camps along the line.

We found these men in a most deplorable state. On the 15th of February one of these men died. I despatched any companion to Trout river to report this death and in the meantime I secured the assistance of another man from a camp known as Shacktown some seven miles below us.

No member of the committee arriving to view his body and take charge of his outfit we buried him. It took us two days to make a hole four feet deep. Next day after the burial, some members of the committee arrived and we were obliged to dig him up again in order that he might be identified, as we learned that an insurance on his life had been effected before he started from civilization. This party was now reduced to one man. He gave up several times, but I would not hear of such a thing. I used to talk to him pretty firmly and cheer him up all I could.

To obtain firewood I was obliged to go into the brush a mile away, where the snow in places had drifted to a depth of over 20 feet, and was badly frozen on several occasions.

Overflows being likely to take place at any time now we left this place for the main camp on April 5h reaching the same on the 8th. On our arrival we found this camp nearly deserted, for the major part of the men had gone over to Bell river by way of the McDougall pass. Our stay here was not long, and on April 19th we, too, pulled out for Bell river. Here the sick man left us and joined another party. McDougall pass, about eight miles long, lies between the headwaters of the Bell and Rat rivers. It is a terrible place to cross in the winter, being surrounded with high mountains down which the wind rushes with relentless fury. Here the Rat river takes its rise. In this pass is also situated Bell lake, which connects with Bell river by means of a creek. The trail from Trout river to Bell river is 13 miles. Over this trail my companions and myself drew a sled with over 300 pounds of provisions on it. During the summer many mountain sheep and deer may be seen on this trail. A few days after our arrival at Bell River I discovered that we had left a bag behind at Trout river. In company with another man we set out to recover this bag, but found it was gone. On returning we found that several deer had crossed the trail. We followed one lot for several miles into the mountains but could not come up with them. Many wolves also had crossed and recrossed the trail. At Bell river it was necessary to build boats in order to make the descent into the Yukon. To find logs for this purpose we were obliged to go seven miles from camp, where we whipsawed the lumber and brought it back on toboggans. During the latter part of May large flocks of geese were to be seen very high up and making toward the headwaters of the Porcupine. The mosquito made his first appearance on the 21st. From the mountain tops a fine view of the Arctic ocean can be obtained, while the midnight sun was seen for the first time on May 31st. A midnight rainbow is a strange phenomenon, but here they are to be seen in all their glory. Night during the Arctic winter is not that impenetrable darkness as some suppose, but a bright twilight.

On June 1st Bell river commenced to break up and on June 3d we followed the ice out, but continual jams ahead greatly impeded our progress. June 4th we were obliged to lay up and I took an opportunity of ascending a mountain some 4000 feet, from which a view of 100 miles could be obtained. This mountain was composed of dark limestone and much loose quartz near the summit. Here a species of Arctic moss was in bloom, and several other kinds of flowers. The current in Bell river is about 2 miles an hour. No fish or any other sort of game were to be seen. Next day, June 5th, we got rid of the last ice jam and view of the river from the mountains showed the river to be free of ice as far as the eye could reach. La Pierre's house was reached on the 6th. This is an abandoned Hudson Bay post. Many Indians left here with us for the Yukon, where they belonged, and we heard that all that remained would return during the summer. This day we encountered strong head winds and a thunder storm springing up and brought rain and small particles of snow. We traded matches here for moccasins and dried meat. When approaching La Pierre's house the mountains get less lofty and stunted birch, spruce and willow grow along the banks.

The river from here onwards is most uninteresting with very shallow and muddy banks till Old Crow river is

reached, when it again changes. It was the same tale of misery at every Indian camp we struck—no fish. Some of them were starving. We crossed the international boundary between 3 and 4 p. m. on the 10th. At midnight when the sun was shining bright we saw a black object on the right bank some distance ahead. On getting level with it we saw that it was a bear. Our boat was drifting fast down stream and we made not a sound. A well directed shot from a 44-Winchester entering his right eye and scattering his brains out gave him his quietus. We at once set to work and skinned him and we calculated that he dressed between 300 and 400 pounds. We were in sore need of fresh meat, the scurvy having attacked my left leg since leaving Bell river. On nearing the Ramparts the banks begin to get precipitous. Limestone is to be seen on all hands and the banks are ornamented with blue flowers. The current ranges from two to seven miles an hour. At times the sun became very hot and an occasional shower descended. We passed through many fine reaches on the 11th and 12th, where the scenery was most picturesque. During the night of the 12th we saw another large brown bear, but he scampered off before we could get a shot at him.

There are many islands in the lower part of the Porcupine, where many ducks and loons may be seen and a few swans. There are large numbers of swallows on this river. These birds build their nests against the face of the limestone cliffs. Here may also be seen butterflies and sea gulls. There are no rapids in the Porcupine. On nearing the Yukon the channel is to the left. Fort Yukon is situated about one mile above the mouth of the Porcupine on the Yukon river—this mile having to be tracked against a strong current. This place was reached on June 17th. It is a trading post and Indian encampment. Here is a custom-house, a mission and a store of the N. A. T. T. Co. This being the only store here, they have a monopoly, though prices are not so exorbitant as we expected. The majority of the men camped at this fort came in by way of the Porcupine, having passed the winter within the Arctic circle north of Fort McPherson. I left Fort Yukon with a large number of these men on June 22d, by the steamer City of Sault Ste Marie, and arrived in Dawson on July 20th last.

ALPHONSE WATERER.  
(The End.)

#### HELLO, DEWEY.

##### Uncle Sam to George.

By Joe Kerr [Manville D. Kerr]. Recited in Admiral Dewey's presence at the smoker for the marines at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on Saturday night, Sept. 30, 1899, by Mr. Cal Stewart, the Yankee comedian, attired in the character of Uncle Sam.

Hello, Dewey!—Have a seat:  
How're th' boys? An' how's th' fleet?  
Little weary?—Never mind!  
You can rest when you're inclined:  
Rest on laurels, if you please,  
On a hero's couch of ease;  
Not, however, till we've had  
Chance to show you that we're glad:  
Glad you're not now with the dead—  
Glad you had a level head—  
Glad you laid the Spaniard low—  
Glad you proved a noble foe:  
Glad you kept your record clean—  
Glad we made you a marine:  
Glad you bravely fought and won—  
Glad for everything you've done.  
Glad? By gad, we're glad, my lad:  
That George Dewey had a dad:  
Glad he had a mother, who,  
Loyal to Red, White and Blue,  
Years ago, when he was young—  
Taught him how to—run by rung—  
Mount Fame's Ladder—never stop  
Till, by grit, he gained the top:  
Taught him, when he'd won the fight,  
How to stay there, on the Height.  
Glad to see you, George, but—say!  
Don't get spoiled on Dewey Day!  
Don't get "rattled" at the noise  
Made by millions of my boys  
Most of whom would "lead the dance"  
If, like you, they had the chance.  
Words like these all men admire:  
"Gridley, when you're ready, fire!"  
Keep that up!—Keep cool, my lad!  
We'll raise Cain because we're glad:  
You just "watch our smoke," my boy:  
Note our overwhelming joy:  
Don't get dizzy!—Calm content  
Sometimes makes a President.  
Hear that shouting, prolonged—loud!  
George, th' whole darned Nation's  
proud:  
Proud of what you did that day  
In Manila's beastly Bay;  
Proud of you—proud of a fleet  
That knows no fear—knows no defeat.  
Of whom the wide world stands in awe,  
God bless you, George! Hip, hip,  
hurrah!

Send your friends on the outside a special edition of The Nugget. It will tell them more about this country than you can.

Bargains—Watches and diamonds at reduced prices. Uncle Hoffman.

Juno burner nickel stand lamp. \$7.50, at Mohr & Wilkens'.

#### Extenuating Circumstances.

"Have you anything to say before the sentence of death is pronounced?" asked the judge.

"Yes, your honor," replied the condemned murderer. "I desire to relate an incident which was not brought out on trial. The day before I killed this man I was called to my telephone by a violent ring. The instrument was in a box, and the temperature inside was 113 in the shade. 'Wait the e a moment,' said somebody over the wire. 'A gentleman wishes to ask you a very important question.' I waited, your honor, while the perspiration rolled off me in gurgling streams. I waited 15 minutes by the watch, and then this wretch whose life I took asked from the other end of the line how I would like to be the ice man."

There was profound silence in the courtroom.

"In consideration of extenuating circumstances," said the venerable judge, his voice trembling with emotion, "the verdict is hereby set aside and the prisoner stands discharged. Call the next case."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

#### Domestic Sociability.

After six unsuccessful attempts to place the curtain in position he paused on his chair for breath. His wife watched the perspiration rolling down and said:

"Would that you were a cur!"  
"What? Woman!"  
She side tracked the cyclone of wrath.  
"Yes, John; would that you were a curtain hanger by trade."  
Without a word he continued his labors.—Chicago News.

#### Maintained His Honor.

Algy (much agitated)—Gwacious! Have you heard that the twouble between Caneby and Checkerton resulted in a duel?

Jack—By George, no!  
Algy—Yaas; you should have seen them face each other, pale, but intrepid. Lots were drawn, and Caneby, poor fellow, must wear a turn down collar for the next six months.—Tit-Bits.

#### Professional Jealousy.

"Who are these people?" asked Aginaldo fiercely as the captives were brought before him.

"According to their confession, they are ban'its."  
"Bandits! Off with their heads! There is getting to be altogether too much competition in this business."—Washington Star.

#### When She Understood.

"Can you understand all those golf terms that your husband uses, Mrs. Farwell?"

"No. The only ones I can understand are those that he uses when his ball goes behind one of the mounds or into a sand hole or when he tears up the sod with his club."—Chicago Times-Herald.

#### To Our Creek Subscribers.

We have just placed in stock the largest and most complete line of stationery in Dawson. Give your order to our creek carriers if you are in need of anything in the line of pencils, pens, ink, writing paper, tablets, account books, pocket books, or anything else in the stationery line. We also have the best line of legal blanks, including bills of sale, lay contracts, deeds and mortgages, carried in the city. These blanks were prepared and approved by the ablest attorneys in Dawson. Remember that all orders placed with our creek carriers will be filled as though the purchase was made by yourself in person.

#### THE KLONDIKE NUGGET.

##### The London Klondike Development Co., Ltd.

Noice is hereby given that Mr. W. Joel is no longer connected with the above company and the undersigned is the sole representative for the Yukon territory.  
F. C. LIDDLE,  
Hotel McDonald,  
Dawson, Nov. 9, '99.

Fine line of Christmas cards. Nugget office.

Frank Buteau's own make miner's picks for sale at A. C. Co. or Frank Buteau's blacksmith shop, Klondike City; thirteen years' experience. \$5.25 without handle, \$6 with handle. Name stamped on every pick.

The Nugget Express has established an office at 28 below upper, Dominion. Orders for expressage on the creeks or to the outside may be left at any branch office or given to messengers.

You can get stationery in big variety at the Pioneer Drug Store. E. Shoff, chemist.

Dawson's only qualified horse and dog doctor. Dr. Strong, D. V. S., Pioneer barber shop.

The Salvation Army holds services in the new barracks, Second avenue, as follows: Tuesday, 8 p. m. (barracks time); Thursday, 8 p. m.; Saturday, 8 p. m.; Sunday, 3 and 7:30 p. m. Free reading room in same building; open every day. Also in the evenings of Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

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