

TRAVELED EDMONTON ROUTE

In an Attempt to Reach the Yukon
In 1897.

Remarkable Story of Hardships and
Endurance Related in Victoria by
George Woolley.

Among the Islander passengers from the north was George Woolley, of Edmonton, Alberta, a veteran of the Northwest rebellion of 1885. Mr. Woolley's adventures and the vicissitudes of his wanderings during the past four years would make an interesting and bulky volume.

He left Edmonton in August, 1897, as one of a party of five, with the intention of proceeding to the Yukon by way of the Mackenzie river to Fort Good Hope, thence crossing the divide by the most feasible route and prospecting the streams as they went. The first winter was spent at Great Slave lake, where the party put in their time fishing and hunting. The following spring they continued down the Mackenzie to Fort Good Hope and struck out from there, making the best of their way by land and water towards their destination. Their wanderings were beset by dangers and hardships so great that Mr. Woolley, in speaking of his experiences, old and hardened Norwester as he is, concentrated his memory of them in the expression, "God, it was a hard trip!"

The party separated at Great Slave lake. Woolley and P. H. Braine determined to cross the mountains west of Fort Good Hope, on the Mackenzie, while the others proceeded to Fort McPherson, thence across the portage, 70 miles to La Pierre's House, on the Porcupine river, and down that stream to the Yukon. This, says Mr. Woolley, is an easy journey and pleasant, if one is not in a hurry. He and his friend, however, thought they would take a short cut.

From Good Hope they went to Big Pine river and up Porcupine creek, whence they portaged to the Red river of the Arctic. After prospecting those streams, without finding anything, they returned to Good Hope and waited for the freezeup, meantime fishing and hunting for their winter's dog feed. As soon as the ice was firm they started again and built a cabin on Big Pine and then made several trips back and forth, bringing up their outfit. Finally,

with the help of some Indians, they got everything to the Red river. They ascended the stream and made a long portage across the country to the head waters of the Peel river, on which they put in some time prospecting without success. The country traversed was all rock and moss, and very often they found it difficult to gather enough wood to boil their kettle, as there were not trees. At one place they came upon a large lake, called by the Indians Lalaitue, on the top of a mountain, a remarkable freak of nature. From the Peel they made across to the Stewart river, where they hunted and starved most of the winter. It was cruelly cold, the mercury going as low as 63 at times and they had only a single blanket each and no tent—having had to leave everything behind on a coast of their dogs giving out. They were fortunate enough, while at Good Hope, to get a map of the country drawn by a French missionary priest, and published in Paris, which Mr. Woolley says is the best map of that country that he has seen. With out it they would have had even more difficulty in getting through, in fact, they regarded it as their salvation. During all their wanderings, when starvation and death threatened them, at the critical moment something turned up to relieve or mitigate their sufferings. The Indians they met treated them with great kindness and hospitality and assisted them in every way possible.

Finally, after many weary months, spent in a vain search for gold, they made a permanent camp on Lanesing creek, a tributary of the Stewart, and devoted themselves to hunting and trapping. In this venture they were tolerably successful. Mr. Woolley tired of the life and left his old partners this spring to return to his home at Edmonton. He arrived in Victoria with a fine lot of furs, which he proposes to dispose of here and then proceed east.

Mr. Woolley reports the general condition of the Yukon as very promising, but he says wages will be low on the creeks during the coming winter, judging from the number of men he met going down river. The Stewart river has been pretty thoroughly prospected and colors of gold are found everywhere, promising for hydraulic, but useless to the ordinary sluice miner. He is strongly of the opinion, however, that a big strike of coarse gold will be made soon on the south branch of the Stewart, where the formation is much more promising than on the main river. He and his companions are well pleased to be back in civilization and will spend a brief holiday in Victoria before going east.—Colonist.

COMING AND GOING.

Father Lefevre, stationed at Whitehorse, is a recent arrival in the city. The total amount of the royalty certificates issued for gold dust shipments for the month of June was \$5,918,700.

C. W. Chamberlain, a prominent commission merchant of Seattle, is in the city on business, having arrived on the Columbian.

F. X. Gowans is temporarily occupying the position of deputy clerk of the territorial court in place of J. S. McKay, who has gone to Woodstock, Ontario, on a visit to his parents.

Mrs. Marshall, the popular proprietor of the roadhouse at the mouth of Gold Bottom, is making preparations for a social dance on the 19th of this month to which her friends are all invited to attend.

Mrs. Townsend, mother of the well-known tobacconist of this city, arrived yesterday on the steamer Clifford Sifton. Norton and Albert Townsend, his children, accompanied their grandmother on the voyage.

In the police court yesterday afternoon Russell Gerry, a waiter, was given judgment for wages due from the Martony Cafe for \$90.75, payment to be made within two days or a distress warrant will be issued.

Mr. Girouard, registrar of land titles, requests the announcement for the benefit of the public that hereafter no deeds or other documents will be received or recorded unless made out in compliance with the land titles act.

Rev. R. Whittington, superintendent of the Methodist church, arrived in Dawson Wednesday morning on the steamer Florn. Mr. Whittington expects to remain in Dawson some time and while here will more thoroughly organize and place men in charge of the work of the church on the various creeks.

The Methodist church building is receiving extensive repairs. The building has been moved back from the walk 15 feet and the foundation will be raised. The roof will be shingled. The present gables in front are to be removed and the whole building will be finished in rustic style, giving it a very much better appearance. The costs of the improvements will be about \$3500.

Latest stamp photos at Goetzman's.

For Defamed Character.
Wm. Aukland has commenced a suit for damages against the Yukon Gold Fields Co. for \$50,000. About a year ago Aukland was working on the company's claim on Chechako hill and was arrested on a warrant sworn out by the manager of the company charging him with stealing dust from the sluice boxes.

The case was brought into court and was dismissed without any evidence being given by the defense. The present action is brought by Aukland against the company for defaming his character by having him arrested on a false charge.

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N. F. HAGEL, Q. C., Barrister, Notary, etc., over McLennan, McPhee & Co., hardware store, First avenue.

WADE & AIKMAN—Advocates, Notaries, etc. Offices, A. C. Office Building.

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MINING ENGINEERS.
J. B. TYRRELL—Mining Engineer—Mines and shafts, out or managed. Properties valued. Mission St., next door to public school, and 4th below discovery, Hunker Creek.

SOCIETIES.
THE REGULAR COMMUNICATION of Yukon Lodge (U. D. G.), F. & A. M., will be held at Masonic hall, Mission street, monthly, Thursday or on before full moon at 8:00 p. m. C. H. Wells, W. M.; J. A. Donald, Secy.

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