

# THE DAILY KLONDIKE NUGGET.

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DAWSON, Y. T., THURSDAY, MAY 10, 1900.

PRICE 25 CENTS

## SERIOUS CHARGE

Against Wm. Struthers, Clerk in Office of Assistant Gold Commissioner Bell.

PREFERRED BY SERGEANT WILSON

Accepting Bribe While in Employ of Government Is Charged.

HELD ON BOND OF \$6,000.

Wm. Brown and R. D. Sutherland Arrested as the Evils That Tempted Adam.

William Struthers, a young man employed in Assistant Gold Commissioner Bell's office in the capacity of recorder of bench claims and receiver of affidavits, was arrested yesterday evening on a charge sworn to by Sergeant J. J. Wilson, of the N. W. M. P., of having accepted a bribe while in the employ of the government in a manner which defrauds the said government of its dues. At about the same time Struthers was taken into custody by the arresting officer, Wm. Brown and R. D. Sutherland were also arrested, the former on the charge of having given compensation to an employe of the government to obtain a grant to a mining claim contrary to the statutes of the Dominion of Canada, the latter on the charge of complicity in giving compensation to such government employe.

All three of the men were taken to the guard house, but at a late hour Struthers was released on bond until 10 o'clock this morning, the bond being indorsed by himself to the amount of \$6000 and by H. Feeney and W. V. Somerville to the amount of \$3000 each.

Brown and Sutherland passed the night in jail. When the police court opened at 10 o'clock this morning Struthers was on hand with an attorney. Sergeant Wilson the prosecuting witness, stated that he wished the case enlarged until tomorrow morning in order that further evidence may be gathered. Struthers' attorney at first demurred to the date being fixed on tomorrow and asked that it be made for next Tuesday; he also asked that the bond be materially reduced. Sergeant Wilson objected to the bond being reduced and informed the court that during the day another and more serious charge would be preferred against Struthers. It was finally agreed to fix the date of enlargement at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning. Magistrate Primrose stated that as it was only a preliminary hearing he deemed it proper to make the bond sufficiently heavy to insure the appearance of the accused, therefore no reduction in the amount previously fixed was made. As the bondsmen who had stood for the prisoner over night were not in court this morning, he was taken to jail; but later today the bondsmen appeared and qualified, when the prisoner was allowed to go until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

William Brown and R. D. Sutherland were arraigned on the respective charges above stated; but at the request of the prosecuting witness, Sergeant Wilson, both cases were continued until tomorrow at 11 o'clock. Both men were escorted to the jail where they are now confined. Two additional charges, one of forgery and one of perjury, have been made against Brown, while it is not known that Sutherland will be charged with other than complicity in bribing an employe of the government.

Sergeant Wilson is reticent in talking of the matter, but assumes an air of confidence that is suggestive that he knows what he is doing.

The Nugget refrains today from giving what are purported to be the facts in the case, all of which will be brought out in the preliminary hearing tomorrow forenoon, further than to state that the money alleged to have been accepted as a bribe was paid to Struthers that the records might be made to show that regular representation work had been performed on a certain claim on Lovett gulch, which records, it is alleged would show the claim to be represented up to October 23, 1901.

William Struthers came here last year from Stratford, a small town near Toronto, and has since filled the responsible position above mentioned in the office of the gold commissioner.

William Brown has for some time been in the employ of Dr. McFarlane as sort of general factotum.

R. D. Sutherland has been here some time and has been a broker in a small way.

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## PUBLIC RECORDS

Are Still Subjected to Concealment By Assistant Gold Commissioner Bell.

STRICT SECRECY IS MAINTAINED

Respecting the Transaction of Official Business.

POSITION IS NOT INDORSED.

Members of the Yukon Council Do Not Attempt to Excuse the Conduct of Bell.

Assistant Gold Commissioner Bell still persists in the enforcement of the order, which he issued some time ago to the effect that representatives of the press be refused all information respecting the transaction of official business in his particular department. Strict secrecy is maintained in regard to placer and quartz grants, water applications and grants, and transfers of mining interests. Indeed, this most important office in the territory is conducted as mysteriously as it was in the halcyon days of the Fawcett administration.

The present incumbent is aware that the records of his department are public, and he endeavors to avoid criticism by asserting that every detail respecting his public trust is entered in certain books, called registers, which are open to the inspection of anyone.

It is practically impossible to ascertain any information from an examination of these registers; for the books are so voluminous and the contents so arranged that even an employe of the office cannot make an intelligent search unless his efforts are directed by references to index books, which are closed to the inspection of the public. There are about 25 registers, each of which is comprised of about 800 pages. Separate books are used for the different creeks; for instance all entries in reference to claims on Sulphur are made in a certain register which is devoted exclusively to the record of this particular creek. In some instances one creek requires several books; this is true of Dominion, the records of which are entered in five different books, each of which contains at least 800 pages.

As a general rule, a single page is given to each claim, and every transaction is recorded on the particular page which has been allotted to the respective claim. Transfers which affect different claims are recorded on different pages; and if the properties are located on separate creeks the assignments are entered in separate registers. If the owner of No. 12 below on Gold Run should dispose of a fourth interest of his grant, the transfer would be recorded in the Gold Run register on the special page which has been assigned to creek claim No. 12. If at the same time, the same man should sell an interest in property on Hunker, the latter sale would be entered in the Hunker register. Thus, it can be readily seen, that in order to obtain a list of the transfers for any particular day, it would be necessary to examine every page in all the registers—an amount of labor which would require a month to perform.

The index, which is on the front page of each register, refers only to claims, and not to the particular sort of record which is entered, nor to the individuals who are interested in the transaction. For instance, a portion of the index to the Sulphur register is as follows:

Sulphur creek claims, below discovery, pages 1 to 101.  
Sulphur creek claims, above discovery, pages 101 to 158.  
Tributary entering Sulphur at No. 2 below, left limit, pages 159 to 162.

Tributary entering Sulphur at 46 below, pages 163 to 168.  
Tributary entering Sulphur at 59 below, pages 169 to 174.

In this manner, all the creek, hillside and bench claims of Sulphur and its tributaries are indexed.

In addition to these registers, in which are entered everything, there are other record books which are used for special purposes, and which refer to the general registers. Transfers of title, besides being entered in the registers, are recorded in a book which is designated as the transfer book; likewise with grants, representation and so forth. The public is not permitted to examine these special books, which are the only ones that are used by officials and government employes when they desire information respecting the transaction of business in the gold commissioner's office. Assistant Commissioner Bell refers the public and the press to voluminous books of record, which were never intended for casual inspection, and from which it is impossible to ascertain by ordinary examination any fact in connection with routine business.

Mr. Bell has not been successful in his effort to delude the people into the belief that his reprehensible actions are excusable; even his official associates do not endeavor to palliate his conduct. A representative of the Nugget interviewed the members of the Yukon council; and not one of the gentlemen attempted to support the assistant gold commissioner in his secret treatment of the records of the most important office in this territory.

Gov. Ogilvie, when questioned concerning the matter said: "I do not care to pass any opinion concerning Mr. Bell nor his management of the gold commissioner's office. I am unacquainted with all the particular facts; but I understand that the registers are open to the public."

Justice Dugas replied: "I have nothing to say. My own business occupies all my time, and I do not feel disposed to pay attention to the duties of other officials."

Gold Commissioner Senkler answered: "I decline to be quoted. Mr. Bell has absolute charge of his particular department, and I have no right to criticize the management of his own official affairs."

Mr. Clement said: "I am not going to discuss the action of the assistant gold commissioner. Concerning his conduct, I shall not express an opinion favorable, or otherwise."

Mr. Girouard replied: "The affair is none of my business, and I have nothing to say."

"Are the records, which refer to the titles of land in your office open to the inspection of the public?" was asked of Mr. Girouard.

"Why, certainly," was his laconic reply.

### Officers Elected.

The lady board of managers of the living whist club held a meeting last night when the following officers were elected: President, Mrs. Alex McDonald; vice-president, Mrs. Lancaster; secretary, Mrs. Davis; treasurer, Mrs. Morrison; advisory board, Mesdames Sale, Turner, Wheeler, Agnew, McNeil, Boyker, West, Marsden, Misses Hughes and Croft.

The great tournament takes place on the evenings of the 22d, 23d and 24th of this month. The person taking the greatest number of tricks on the three evenings will be presented by Prof. Whitley with a prize which consists of a heart-shaped nugget bearing the words "Living whist" and beautifully set with a diamond, garnet and ruby; also with pick and shovel. The beautiful prize is valued at \$150, and can be worn either as a charm or breastpin.

## STILL ALIVE

James Rogers' Doctors Say He Has a Fighting Chance for Life.

SOGGS BEFORE CAPTAIN STARNES

Who Journeyed to Cariboo to Hold Preliminary Hearing.

WHICH IS NOT COMPLETED.

Adjourned to Procure Evidence Which Exists on Gold Run—Lang's Story.

The preliminary hearing of Nelson A. Soggs, charged with the shooting of James Rogers on claim 34, Gold Run, on the evening of the 8th instant, was begun at 9:30 o'clock this morning at the mouth of Caribou creek at which place Magistrate Capt. Starnes, who left Dawson yesterday morning, met the prisoner who was brought there from Gold Run by the police.

The first witness called was Henry H. Lang, who was one of several who were present and who saw the shooting, and who was standing on the dump watching the work of cleaning up when Soggs came from his cabin and on to the dump. Witness said that Soggs had stood by the sluice box perhaps three minutes when Rogers came and asked him what he was doing there? Witness did not hear Soggs' reply.

Rogers then said "Get to hell out of here," but Soggs did not leave. Rogers said, "You had better go and get a bath," and stepped towards Soggs, and they stood about four feet apart and moved from side to side; Rogers' tone of voice not being threatening.

Soggs crossed the sluice box from Rogers, and he saw Rogers' hand touch Soggs' coat. He heard Soggs say "Rogers, keep away from me," several times. Then Rogers put his foot on the sluice box as if to cross it and Soggs drew a revolver from his right hip pocket and fired at Rogers, but missed. The bullet struck the dirt a foot from the feet of witness who, with a two others, was standing 10 feet away and above and in line with Soggs and Rogers, the latter two being face to face and four feet apart at the time the first shot was fired. Rogers dodged and making a quick move, partly fell down when Soggs pulled his gun. Rogers then turned away, his left side and back being towards Soggs who fired three more shots in rapid succession, holding the revolver in both hands. Rogers continued all the time to walk towards his cabin.

After the shooting Lang said that Burge and Wade went towards Soggs to take the revolver from him, but Soggs pointed it in their direction and said he was going to go to the police station.

(Continued on page 4.)

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