

# THE KLONDIKE NUGGET.

VOL. 3 No. 33

DAWSON, Y. T., WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1899

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## WRECK OF THE STRATTON.

And the Willie Irving Crushed in an Ice Jam at Selwyn.

Stratton on the Bottom and the Irving Sinking Rapidly—Passengers Escape by a Miracle—Mail Lost.

Special to The Klondike Nugget.

Selwyn, Oct. 24.—12:15 p. m.—The steamer W. S. Stratton was caught by the ice in a narrow gorge opposite this place at midnight. The Stratton was floating by fast in the ice when an immense crush of ice from a broken jam above occurred.

Before the extent of the impending catastrophe could be grasped, a horrible crunching sound was heard, and like a match box the Stratton and everything it contained was splintered into atoms, turned over and engulfed.

The passengers and crew happened to be all on deck, and at the first crushing sound leaped over the handrail onto the heaving ice.

Not a thing was saved. Jewelry, money, hand satchels—indeed everything, went down in an instant.

By a miracle, not a life was lost. Amidst the mad upheaval, the men scrambled from floe to floe and everyone made shore, but not before the last spar of the W. S. Stratton was lost sight of forever.

The passengers are without food, clothing or blankets, there being not even tents and axes to provide temporary shelter and warmth.

### THE PASSENGERS.

The passengers on the W. S. Stratton who have escaped and are now at this point, are: Lieut. Adair, E. Leroy Pelletier, Cecil Marian, Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Rooney, Miss Rose Blumkin, Mrs. Chas. J. Dumbolton, Mrs. Hugh Foley, Miss Nelly Cashman, Miss M. Comer, Mrs. E. Comer, Thos. Comer, Henry Griner, Geo. Christ, P. Cowie, J. Steward, J. F. Cohen, O. Maylin, W. Gill, "Sybil" Johnson, M. F. Campbell, Archie Johnston, Harry Paulsian Rev. Father Desmarais, D. Johnston, J. Steward, John Ripley, a fireman, C. Stephens, O. Christie, Fred ErJman, an old man name unknown, John Nichol, L. Odell, N. P. Matlock, C. H. Prinz, E. C. Woods, the engineer, A. Desmoney, E. V. Macbeth, Geo Curran, Oscar Fisher, Jas. MacFarlane.

### WILLIE IRVING GOING DOWN.

Selwyn, Oct. 24.—12:15 p. m.—In sight of the spot where the Stratton went down is seen the Willie Irving with all hope of saving her gone. The passengers were seen escaping over the ice to the opposite shore. No word has reached here from them yet. The Irving can be seen to be going to pieces and no help can be extended.

The Stratton was carrying 36 sacks of mail down to Dawson and not a package was saved.

For the foregoing we are indebted to Mr. E. Leroy Pelletier, one of the unfortunate passengers of the Stratton.

## THE STROLLER'S COLUMN.

Alabama Bill says he beat the record from 2 below upper on Dominion to town. He is willing to swear he made the trip in seven hours, and will so state to anyone in either prose or poetry. He is also willing to back his original effusion, "Why Bill Left the

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Klondike," against anything of the kind ever composed inside the Frigid zone. He says he will publish it in the spring, when there is a chance for his readers to leave the country, as everyone who ever hears it is subject to an uncontrollable desire to do as Bill did make a flying trip.

"Flume" McCool, who has been a character in every mining camp of the West during the past 20 years, came in from the creeks one night last week, and among the resorts of amusement which he visited was the Monte Carlo. As he entered the dance hall, his cleanly shaven face and rough clothes gave him the appearance of a miner who had spent the past summer in hard work, and who had come to town for a few nights' fun.

Daisy D'Avara approached him, but before she had a chance to make the customary request for a dance, Flume grasped her hand and greeted her familiarly.

Daisy was surprised. She looked at Flume critically, and then hesitatingly said: "I know that I have met you somewhere before. Your face is familiar."

"Well, I should think it was," replied Flume. "You remember when we were working at Union theater in Cripple Creek four years ago. I was the strong man who broke chains, juggled cannon—"

"Why, of course," interrupted Daisy; "how stupid of me not to have recognized you at once," and she took the hand of Flume and shook it heartily. "When did you arrive, and what are you doing?" she continued.

"I just came in on a scow," he answered. "I am broke and properly on the hog. I am going to try to get work in this house. But say, Daisy, do you know that you look younger, and you certainly are prettier, than you were when I saw you last?"

"Quit your joking," replied Daisy, "and let us have a drink."

Three two walked to the bar and the drinks were served. Daisy assured Flume that she would introduce and recommend him to Manager Mulligan the next day. She treated to many rounds of drinks, and offered to Flume the loan of \$20. He recalled many reminiscences of Daisy's life in the Creek, and told her of all of her old acquaintances.

The joke would have continued all night, but Nellie Holgate interrupted the contented couple by asking Flume to dance.

"Where did you know this gentleman?" inquired Daisy of Nellie. "Know him?" responded Nellie. "Why I have known him in here for a year and a half, haven't I?" as she turned towards Flume.

But Flume was making his way rapidly through the saloon.

"He told me that he had just arrived on a scow," said Daisy.

"Oh, he was joking. He is a miner working on Bonanza."

"He's a brute. That is what I think of him," replied the exasperated Daisy.

The hardships of a sailor's life are of ten referred to by sentimental writers, but a recently returned "able seaman," who volunteered from Chicago for service at the beginning of the recent war with Spain, says that they are as nothing compared to the trials of a landsman trying to become a sailor. He stepped from a real estate office on La Salle street, Chicago, into the recruiting station, and almost before he realized it, found himself on one of the warships in the Gulf. And his habits of life, his language, and his business methods seemed all at variance with the life around him but the language worried him worst of all. He relates that once after working hard all day scrubbing decks and doing other unfamiliar tasks, he reported to his superior officer that he really felt ill, and that he thought he would go downstairs. Immediately the officer began to dance up and down. "Down stairs!" he roared; "downstairs! Why don't you say you'll go out in the back yard! You lubber! Go below!"

The Stroller was much amused the other night at a "butterfly" which was going the rounds of the dance-houses. It consisted of a stout twisted wire in the form of a horseshoe. Between the ends was a twisted piece of elastic with a short splint of wood which made the butterfly jump whenever liberated from the letter and envelope which contained it. Some demure dance girl would hand the letter secretly to a bystander who would immediately retire to open it and learn the name of his inamorita. All eyes would be upon him and when he opened the letter and the

"butterfly" jumped in his face, he would usually jump about four feet high and yell like a Comanche losing his scalp. Then shrieks of laughter would apprise him of the extent of the joke, and it was generally his treat. Some of the recipients of the "billet doux" really believed at first that the horrible leaping thing in the letter was an infernal machine, and had to be restrained from rushing out of the door.

Fitzsimmons is dead. "Knocked out" by the ice of the Yukon would be the verdict if the case ever went before a jury. In this case Fitzsimmons is a mule which, with three companions, broke through the ice in front of the A. C. stores about 10:30 Monday morning.

"Fitzsimmons" worked on the Chilcoot trail two years ago and became famous from his pugnacity and his success. It is said that he was never defeated in any kind of a contest, hence his cognomen. He could out-fight, out-run, out-bite, out-kick, out-leap, out-pull, out-talk anything within several hundred pounds of his own weight on the trail. On his journey down to Dawson, when taken from the scow to graze he was as liable to be found on the opposite bank of the Yukon in the morning as not. Indeed, to swim the Yukon was before-breakfast exercise with him, and it is said if he found the grass to be at all inferior he would unhesitatingly turn around and swim back again.

But alas! Poor "Fitz" met his Jeffreys in Dawson. He never acknowledged ownership to any man on earth, but for several months he has been wearing out horseshoes for Cleveland & Cook, The V. Y. T. Co. scow refused to stop at the company dock last week on account of the ice, and was not snubbed until it reached its present location. This necessitated the use of "Fitzsimmons" and three base born helpers to drag a wagon to and from the scow to get the nails, etc., ashore. "Fitz" objected to going over the new edge ice, for his judgment was that in so doing he would be decidedly "up against it."

It took the other three mules and the driver to pull him on and off the ice the few days immediately preceding his demise. On Monday morning, as stated, he was at work as usual. The wagon was backed up to the scow and "Fitz" stood absorbed in contemplation of the inferior development of the mules ahead of him. Nails were the articles being loaded, and by-and-by "Fitz's" judgment seemed to tell him he had enough. He first of all bit the mule in front of him and then evened things up by biting the other leader.

To show impartiality he kicked his mate over the tongue. No resistance was offered and then he tackled the front of the wagon with his heels. About the third time those heels came down from their airy flight they went through the ice. In another second all four mules, wagon and load were in the "drink." Poor "Fitz" didn't know who to kick, for he couldn't make up his mind who or what had hit him. When he rose for the third time he found a crowd of men standing around the hole in the ice. When they threw a rope to him he refused to let it encircle his neck. When they pushed a plank under him he kicked it out of the way. The other three were rescued and "Fitz" is sleeping in a Klondike vale tonight, frozen as stiff as a plaster cast, a dazed expression on his face similar to that discovered on his great prototype when Jeffreys got through with him. And now he is no more; a victim of misplaced confidence and a pugnacious disposition.

It is a matter of exceeding regret that errors, irrespective of all precautions, will be published occasionally. Such is true of an article, which was printed last week in this column, respecting Mr. William G. Jenkins. The information had been obtained through a third party, who it appears drew very largely on his imagination, and in consequence Mr. Jenkins was made to appear in a wrong light.

## MISSED DAWSON BY A HAIR.

The Nugget Express Scows Just Beyond the City Limits.

Ice Stops Above Some 19 Hours After Stopping at Dawson—Lands the Scows High and Dry.

The last Nugget Express consignment of 45 tons, is frozen in, high and dry five miles above Dawson.

The stopping of the flow of ice in the river has relieved much nerve tension in Dawson amongst the many owners of the fifty or more scow loads of precious merchandise still on the river, when navigation closed for the season of 1899. It is better for the peace of mind to know that one's valuable are firmly frozen in at some upper river point than to be hour after hour watching that sullen, moving ice floe which might be grinding one's craft to kindling on some bar, or closing up the gap left by crushing planks and sinking valuables.

The shipment was in three scows, in care respectively of Frank J. Hemen, E. N. Davidson and J. L. Hawley. It comprises every pound of express matter and Nugget freight picked up in the congested warehouses at Skagway, Bennett and Whitehorse, and everything is in good order and ready for freighting the last five miles just as soon as the river will permit. Had the ice continued to flow one hour more, the consignment, which means so much to so many Dawsonites, would have been abreast of Dawson.

The Nugget Express shipment is virtually the last to reach Dawson, and escaped the thousand and one dangers of late navigation on the Yukon which have landed high and dry some 45 scows of the C. D. Co, the B. L. & K. N. Co., the V. Y. T. Co. and the numerous samller concerns.

The three scows left Bennett on October 8th, manned by a crew of 20 men and the three captains. On the 13th the severest storm of the season was encountered on Lake LeBarge, a storm which swamped every small boat caught in the storm which tossed immense scows around like a bubble of foam on the waves. Many of the men comprising the crews became helplessly sea sick, while one of the scows lost a spar and swung around into the trough of the sea, seemingly beyond all chance of escape. But escape they all did, and continued on down to Dawson without touching a rock or more than scraping a bar. At Pelly a novel expedient was tried for protecting each other in the ice. The three scows were lashed firmly side by side, and in this manner buffeted the ice until in stopping it crowded all three crafts high and dry on a jam of floes and there left them to be unloaded at leisure and their contents freighted to Dawson. The telegraph kept the head office at Dawson apprised of their whereabouts, messages being exchanged to and from the boats at Sixty-mile by shouting across the ice, the barges being firmly frozen in and being carried resistlessly along with the moving floe. However, "all's well that ends well," and the Nugget Express congratulates itself highly upon having so nearly completed every engagement made the past season.

It will interest our readers to know that while the ice stopped for good in front of Dawson on Monday morning at 7:30 o'clock, it continued to run above here until the scows stuck at exactly 2 o'clock on Tuesday morning, a difference of 19 hours. Jack Carr was one of the Nugget arrivals.

This journal has 15 tons of white paper and other printing supplies in the boats and is thus profusely supplied against all possible demands the coming winter.

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