

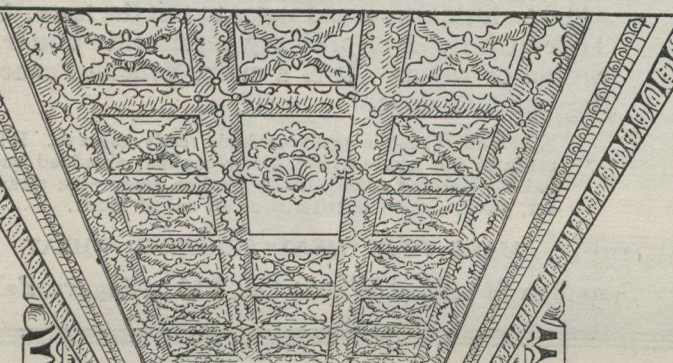
# HOLBROOKS SAUCE



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After packers, himself on a smaller scale—eighteen thick-set, tan-coloured dogs, with white tails and black muzzles, harnessed to three long toboggans, on which the loads, encased in canvas, were strapped down to the narrow wooden frames—dogs and men breathing hard, but in no way exhausted—these conquerors of wind and frost and storm.

#### IV.

TOM MOORE thrust a brown hand into his tunic and held out a packet to Strong. The latter found in it two letters, one from Montreal, the other in a feminine writing, and postmarked Florence.

So it came that, while his men sat themselves down to a smoking feast—Tom had forgotten nothing—Strong, in his tent, laid carefully aside the foreign envelope, and read the following from Jenkins:

Montreal, February 1.

Dear Sir: Not having heard from you for four weeks, we assume that you have nothing special to report, but matters which have transpired within the last few days make it imperative that the survey should be finished within the stipulated time. The facts in brief are as follows: The Northwestern has been offered a good price for its charter, provided our plans are filed by April twenty-second. If this is not done, the charter expires automatically on that day, and will not be renewed either to this or any other company. While we have every confidence in the outcome of your work, it is right that you should know of this new offer, which has just been made in the absence and without the knowledge of our president, Mr. Angus Strickland. He knows that a survey is being made, but that is all. I trust everything is going well, and that you are enjoying better weather than we have had in Montreal. Yours very truly,

PETER JENKINS.

Vice-Pres. S. & N. W. Ry. Co.

Strong read it over again, pulling at his tawny beard, a quizzical smile on his face, and then took up the other letter. It was postmarked a month back, and as he opened it the sounds of his camp died away.

Villa Marguerita, Nice, Jan. 20.

John, Dear John: It seems years and years since we parted, and the only good thing I can tell you is that we start homeward in about six weeks. We should be in Montreal by the third week in April. I have only had one letter from you, but it made my heart jump. More than ever I love you. The luxury and ease all about me make me long for real life with you. Father hasn't said much; he seems bitter about the whole thing. I told him that it was engineers who had made his money for him, and he said it was knowing how to use engineers that made money and that he has one in the woods now trying to save some old charter for a railway. He seems to think that this trip will banish you from my heart, but, John, he doesn't know how deep your dear image lies there; and so when I come back I am ready to go with you wherever you go, and then you will go on teaching me the meaning of things, for I am so tired of just the taste of them. I know you are somewhere in the woods, but have not the faintest idea where. You told me there would be one hundred degrees of longitude and temperature between us, and the roses are indeed blooming around me, for I am writing in the garden; but dear, there is only one wish in the heart of your Laura, and you alone know what that is.

Strong drew a long breath, and laid this letter beside the other. Half aloud, he ruminated:

"First—The president will take care I don't work for any of his roads—but I do.

"Second—The president makes a fortune if this survey goes through—if it does.

"Third—The president says it's knowing how to use engineers that makes money—he ought to know.

"Fourth—His daughter will give me a job any day—God bless her!

"Fifth—The vice-president has delivered the president into my hands—God bless him!"

After all of which John Strong went over to the cook camp, where he was greeted with shouts by his men, and sat down and ate a good dinner.

#### V.

ALDERSON stood gesticulating in front of the fireplace in a private room in his club; the other two were smoking, and looked anxious.

"I tell you, gentlemen, it's dollars to doughnuts we miss it. This is the eighth of April. It is now one month since we heard from Strong. He said going was hard, but that work proceeded fairly satisfactorily, and he expected to meet us here the morning of the twenty-first, and since then not a sign out of him—now you can



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