

THE KLONDIKE NUGGET.

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HURDMAN'S THIRD

Couldn't Record for a Lady but Does so for a "Ringster"

AND TAKES OFF HIS TITHE OF A THIRD INTEREST

A Damning Case of Official Depravity and how the Strings are Pulled.

The Gold Commissioner Makes an Unwilling witness Talk—The Witness Forever Damns Self and Hurdman—Mrs. Crane Tells What she Knows—Her "Own Skirts Clean" Though She Winked at the Duplicity of Others—Attempt to Defraud a Poor and Honest Woman.

Never was an official change so rapidly productive of startling results as the recent change of gold commissioners in Dawson; and never was more damning evidence against official corruption so unexpected and disastrous as that which cropped out on Thursday at the trial of the Duboise-Murdoch claim case in the gold commissioner's office. The case is the one which the Nugget related in its issue of the 21st, in which Hurdman, the bench claim recorder, "stood off" the public on a piece of valuable Bananza ground while the "ring" got in its work and recorded it. In the first case the trial came up on a protest filed by Mrs. Lena M. Duboise against the recording of a third tier claim opposite No. 60 below on Bonanza by one Fred. Murdoch. There was no intention of implicating officials in a system of "spoils," only to decide priority and ownership. But when a witness admitted that Hurdman, the recorder, held a third interest in the claim, the new gold commissioner proved himself every inch a man, and insisted upon the witness answering the questions to the bitter end. The astounding result of this impartial fairness on the part of Mr. Senkler was the swearing of two witnesses that Mr. Hurdman, the haughty bench claim recorder, had been given a third interest in this valuable claim because, as one witness expressed it, "I heard people did business in the office that way." The other witnesses reasons were still more terse: "I thought it a good plan, because I thought we (Hurdman and I) were to do business together in future."

What admissions from witnesses on top of the Hurdman exposures of the past month! But listen to the evidence, and judge for yourself whether or not the Nugget has been "sensational" in its accusations of duplicity against this same Hurdman and others.

Mrs. Lena M. Duboise was sworn, and said that she had staked the claim in dispute on September 27th at five p. m. Upon application to Hurdman, the bench claim recorder, she had been assured that the claim could not be recorded until surveyed, but that he would hold the ground for her until such survey was made. She said further she lived in a cabin where she could see the claim, and could have seen Murdoch if he came there, but she had never seen him in her life. There were men in cabins all about the claim who would look out for her if a stranger appeared to stake the ground over her. Some time ago two men stopped where she was and asked where the claim was. They looked for the stakes but could not find them.

John Hanna testified that he went round the claim with Mrs. Duboise on the 27th of September and saw her stake it. Did not put his name on the stakes as a witness.

Robert Logan lives on No. 60 below, abreast of the claim in question; knew the claim well, but had never seen Murdoch's name on any stakes there.

Z. E. Boyaj said he lived on No. 60 below, and on September 27th had been shooting at the hill. Saw Mrs. Duboise staking the claim in question, so turned his gun and fired the other way. Had seen the claim twice a day since then, yet had never seen Murdoch's name on any stakes.

Thos. Moosh lived close by the claim and saw the stakes every day. Had never seen any names on them but Duboise.

John Morgan had frequently seen Mrs. Duboise's name on the stakes, as he lived in a cabin seven feet away from one of them. Never saw Murdoch on the claim, though he would undoubtedly have seen and heard him had been there as he claimed. Would have surely heard him driving his stakes had any been driven, night or day.

Mrs. Alice Rollins Crane proved the stakewit-

ness of the occasion. To skillful questions by Mr. W. H. Bard, who was handling the case so cleverly for Mrs. Duboise, she answered as follows: She owned a third interest in the claim as it stood at present in the name of Fred. Murdoch. She had a bill of sale for that third, given her for having furnished the information to Fred. Murdoch. The way she happened to know about it, she had been stopping at Mr. Bard's place, and Mrs. Duboise had spoken to her about the claim, and said she was expecting to get it. Mrs. Crane then went home to Dawson and told Fred. Murdoch about it. By cross-examination by Allan R. Joy, who handled the case for Murdoch, it developed that she had no interest in the case with Mr. Bard. Attorney Joy recalled Mrs. Duboise for some details of the location, etc., of the claim. She made a rough sketch of it, which was afterwards used in the case.

J. F. Murdoch was sworn and said he staked the said claim on October 8th, and recorded it on the 11th at five p. m. He put in four stakes, and they had not been seen by him since. He had no witnesses to the operation of staking. Mrs. Duboise's stakes were not there. It was about five p. m. in the evening when he staked, and he used regulation sized stakes picked up about claim No. 70 below on Bonanza. Mr. Bard drew out of the unwilling witness that he had an understanding with Mrs. Crane that she was to get a half interest for the information she gave him of the claim. He gave her a third interest. It was at this point that the good work of Mr. Bard showed itself and Mr. Senkler, as an honest man, insisted on the questions being answered.

"What became of the other two-thirds?"

"I control them," Murdoch answered.

"Have you got that two-thirds yet?"

The witness did not want to answer, and replied that he had sold another third.

"Who?" asked the inexorable Bard.

The witness again did not want to answer, and Joy, his attorney, tried to shield him from the damning admissions he must make. Again, he was compelled to answer with downcast face, "Hurdman."

"What was the consideration?" asked the unrelenting Bard.

Murdoch hesitated and replied, "I don't think I have to answer that."

"No, you don't," interjected his attorney, appealing to the gold commissioner. But he had to answer nevertheless—

"I sold it to him for twenty-five dollars."

"So you sold him a third interest in a valuable claim for twenty-five dollars?" repeated Bard.

No answer.

"Did you get the money?"

Joy broke in again with "I don't think the witness should be made to answer this. This is not an investigation into the acts of officials." Again the witness was forced to reply.

"No, I did not receive any money from Hurdman, and haven't yet." The witness here shamefacedly admitted he had given a third to Hurdman some ten days after recording, but knew of no reason why he should. He admitted he would rather have retained the third, in fact would like to have retained the whole claim. Had had no understanding with Hurdman about giving him a third. Considered his right, which he had used up, as worth \$1,500. Did not answer at first as to why he gave away

\$500, or one-third of his right. Afterwards the witness admitted, "I thought it a good plan to do so, because I thought we were to do business together again in future."

Mrs. Crane was recalled and questioned at length about the third of the claim given to Hurdman. She admitted suggesting to Murdoch that they give a third to Hurdman, the bench claim clerk who recorded the claim. Her only reason for doing so was, "I had heard that the people did business in the office that way—giving information of vacant claims and for the information to get an interest from the person that gets the information." Several days after she had told Murdoch of the ground he had handed her some papers for Hurdman and remarked, "The bill of sale is there." Did not know what was in the papers but thought there was a bill of sale among them. Had put them through the window to Hurdman with the remark "The boy has sent you these." Hurdman was busy so she came away from his window. Hurdman had never given the papers back nor had she seen him since. Murdoch recorded on the 11th and it was on the evening of the 10th, she had told him about the claim. It was after 8 o'clock in the evening and she was to see him at the office in the morning. She met him there and he recorded the claim. To the Nugget man, after the trial, the witness said Murdoch had apologized in the morning for having overstepped and being a trifle late, showing conclusively that he had not been up the creek in the night. She is sure she told him of the claim only the night before the morning he recorded, as her diary bears her out in the statement. Of course, she knew he had never been up the creek to stake; but that was not her affair and her own skirts were perfectly clean of anything crooked. She had the bill of sale with her for her third and held it in her hand.

W. H. Bard, after bringing out such a hurricane of testimony, went on the stand himself. "I was in Dawson when Mrs. Duboise staked the claim, but went back and looked it over. Found the stakes in place and everything according to law. October 8th I was on No. 60 below, between 4 and 6 in the afternoon, and could see the claim, but I never saw Murdoch. I swear positively I never saw Murdoch's name on any stake on that claim. On October 7th I called on Hurdman and asked him about the claim. He told me he had explicit instructions from Hurdman not to record the claim until it was surveyed, as the claims were all mixed up in that vicinity, and they could not tell where they were. I notified Hurdman that I would see to it that Mrs. Duboise secured a surveyor and surveyed the claim at once."

The opposing council summed up the case and then Mr. Senkler took the awarding of the claim under advisement for an indefinite period. He explained the holding of the ground for a survey, as a protective measure of the government to secure the fractions which were its share of the ground. He could not for a moment understand an official employe refusing one person one day to record until a survey was made while next day the claim was recorded for someone else without a survey.

Hurdman Suspended.

The Nugget's first attack on Clerk Hurdman, something like a month ago, so startled that gentleman that he had to retire to his room for several hours on the morning the paper appeared upon the scene. It was simply the beginning of the end. Friday morning he was indefinitely suspended from service until his case can be investigated. The charge, of course, is the receiving of a third interest in a claim for recording it over another applicant and against the orders of the gold commissioner. Naturally the gentleman is in great distress of mind, and was closeted with Mr. Ogilvie and Mr. Senkler much of Friday. What the outcome will be is hard to tell.

CLAIM EVOLUTION.

(Continued from page six.)

ing this fraction, and you may be prepared to answer yes or no. Retaining the above bill of sale, Mrs. Butler now quietly bided her time until November 10th, or just fourteen days from the date of application to record her claim. When she again appeared at Mr. Craig's window, and obtained a certificate of record of the original Mensing claim, which she still holds. Now, then, it is not unnatural to ask: "1. Why did Mr. Soggs give a bill of sale for a two-thirds interest in a claim which contained one-half of the Mensing claim and his fraction, purchased by him, and contained within the three stakes alluded to above? 2. What conditions were the books of the recorder's office in that gave to Mr. Soggs certain property, to issue a bill of sale upon, when the same identical piece of ground offered for record could not be recorded for fourteen days for another? 3. When Mrs. Butler received her certificate of record, signed by Craig, how were the books fixed that showed Soggs' recording?"

The most important feature in all this disorder and irregularity in the gold commissioner's office is this fact, that capital the most needed and necessary thing to this country at the present time, will not seek investment in any place where titles are clouded, subject to dispute and law-suits. Without capital labor comes to a standstill. Without labor population comes either to a stop or decreases. Let us therefore have a cleansing up of the Yukon house and invite capital and people to come into a country rich in prospects, wealthy in natural resources and promises glorious for the future.

MR. OGILVIE TO INVESTIGATE.

The Public Soon to Be Invited to Make Charges.

The "Nugget" Secures the First Day in Court—Promised an Opportunity of Having Charges Against Corrupt Officials Investigated.

As the Nugget loses two of its staff on Sunday morning by dispatching them to Ottawa, it was deemed wise to first interview Mr. Ogilvie, and learn what course he proposed to pursue in regard to the exposures which have been made of the corruption in the gold commissioner's office. An appointment was made for Thursday afternoon, and was kept. Messrs. Allen (E. C.), George and Scamper met the governor in the presence of the governor's private secretary. Dr. Brown took the conversation down in shorthand for the governor, a curious proceeding, which, by the way, we have neither seen nor heard of being done before. The object of the interview was explained to the Yukon commissioner by Mr. George, who informed him of the approaching departure of two of the Nugget's staff for the outside. The air and papers had been full of corruption talk for months, and the governor had lately been empowered to investigate. There was now a rumor that that gentleman was about to take positive action. Unfortunately the gentlemen going out would not be here, and unless the governor spoke of his plans now they would arrive at Ottawa in total ignorance of any attempt he might be making at reform. Information might be sent after them and follow them to Ottawa, but they would not know for some time, and the fact would remain that the Nugget representatives would be in the unfortunate position of knowing nothing, and being able to say nothing that the governor had done in the way of abating the evils in the office, punishing wrong, or in remedying the things complained of.

Mr. Ogilvie objected to the introduction and declared he cared nothing for what was or would be said of him here or at Ottawa. Time was his friend and right would work out. Said he had nothing to say. He appeared determined, but in conversation outlined his plans as follows: He is preparing, or having prepared, a lot of posters setting forth to the people of the district his powers of investigation and setting a time and place where they could make their charges. The defendants would, of course, be given time to prepare a defense to the charges made. The posters would be ready for distribution in a very few days and it would be seen to that the Nugget would be invited to take the stand and tell what it knew to make good its charges. This latter was said with so much evident gusto that Mr. E. C. Allen declared emphatically that if there was going to be an opportunity for the Nugget to be heard he would not start for the coast on Sunday as contemplated, but would stay right here and use his best endeavors to assist in the settling in one way or another the charges of corrupt on among government employes. He asked:

"Will you, Mr. Ogilvie, give us the very earliest day in court?"

"Yes, you can be heard as soon as I'm ready."

"I assure you, Mr. Ogilvie, I shall feel myself under a personal obligation if you will bear our charges at your earliest opportunity and will give us a chance to substantiate them," Mr. Allen continued, "What figure does politics cut in this investigation?"

"Absolutely none at all. I know nothing of politics. I propose to go through with this thing if it costs me my position."

The governor's resolution was approved by those present and he went on further to explain his position in the past. He had when he first arrived dealt shortly with some of the accused. The result was that they had left the country. If they were here now it might be hard with them. He knew his crown powers of investigation were coming to him, but expected them sooner. Meanwhile he had not been idle as would soon be seen. But he had been confronted with difficulties at every turn. Men would make charges and would fall down when it came to proof, and in one case in particular the man preferring the charges narrowly escaped prosecution for perjury. As an illustration of what he had had to contend with the governor related the case of Murdoch, who just a few hours previously had sworn to Mr. Senkler that he had decided a third of his claim to Clerk Hurdman. Just six weeks before he had had Murdoch before him and the young man had there and then denied the very things he had sworn today. With much in the same line the long interview was brought to a close with thanks expressed by the Nugget for the promise of an early opportunity to make and prove charges of corruption.

Everyone should attend the big benefit for the indigent sick in hospitals at the Monte Carlo to-morrow (Sunday) evening.

"Wow! You've got mangle!" "YerHar! I had, but I'm cured now. I'm feelin' fine, too! Just tread on my tail and see the Dawson Dog Doctor at the Pioneer Drug Store. Fixed me in a hurry."

With Slav in as the feature, and the baroque between Ramps Peterson and Iver Broen, the Monte Carlo will be crowded Sunday night.

If you cannot attend the benefit at the Monte Carlo Sunday night, buy a ticket anyhow.

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