

**True Story of the Discovery  
of the Klondike by Bob  
Henderson**



AUTHOR :  
CAPTAIN HENRY HENDERSON

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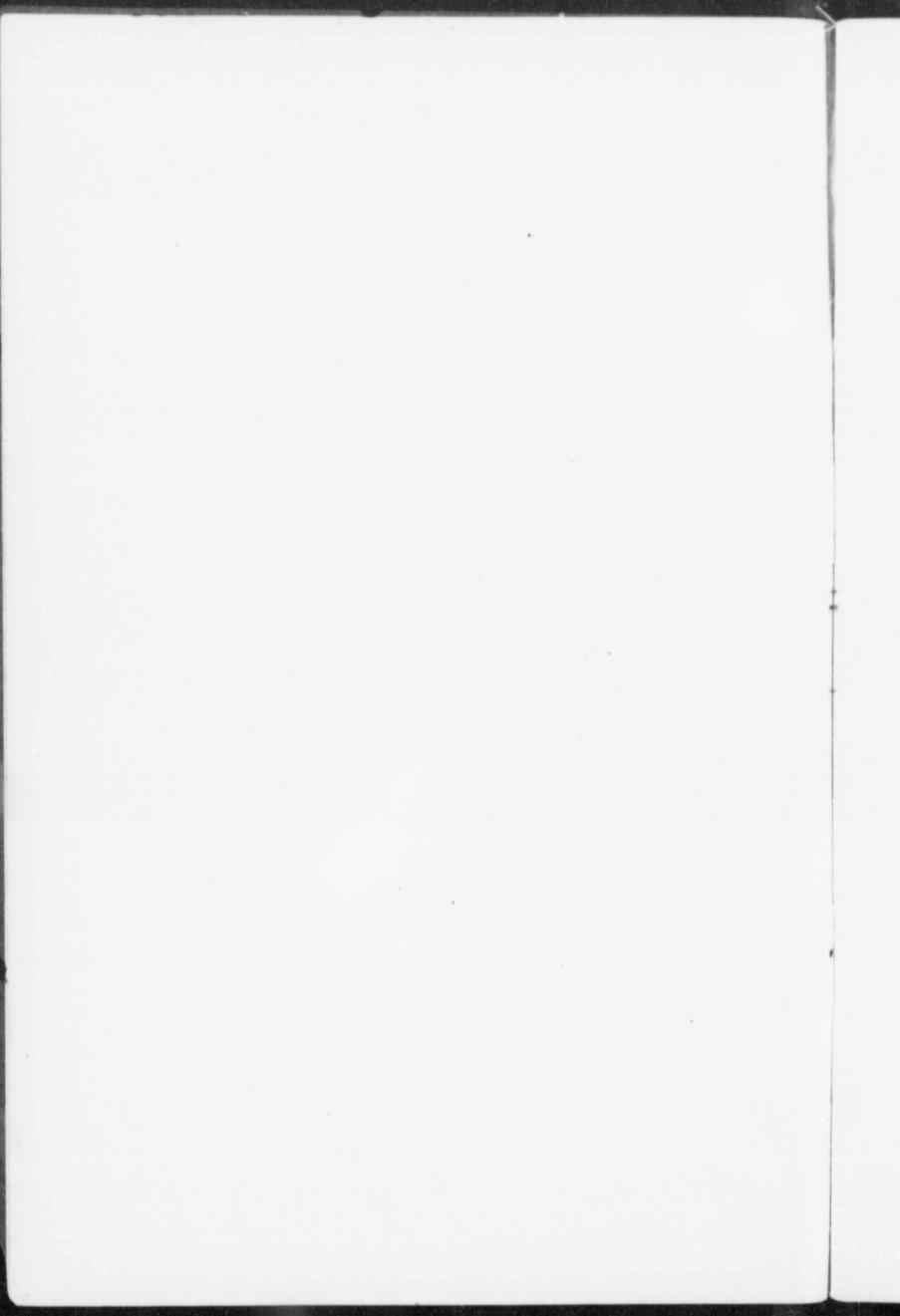
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Edmonton, Alberta*

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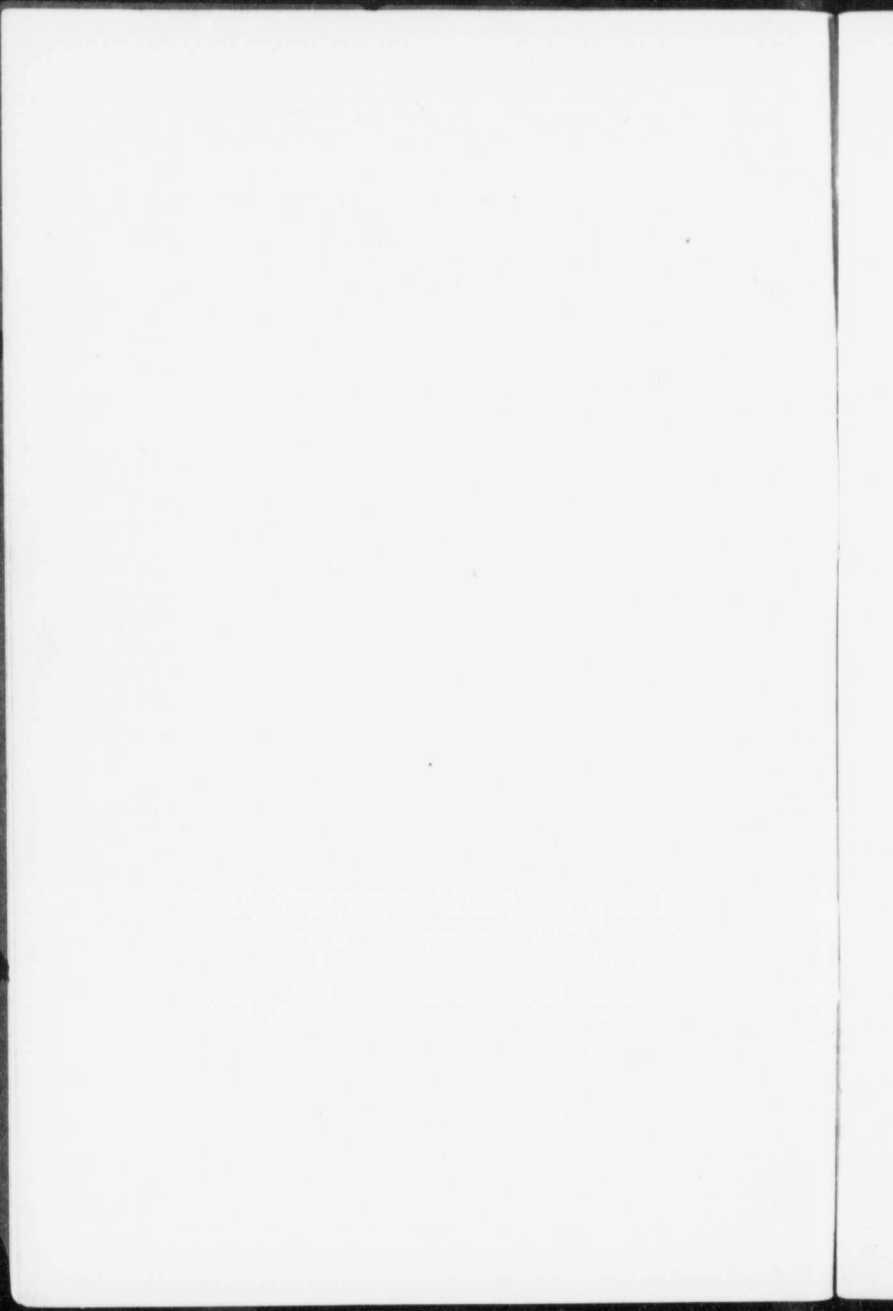






## PREFACE

Robert Henderson, Captain Henry Henderson's elder brother, was the discoverer of the Klondike, in the Yukon, in 1896. He was born and raised in Pictou County, Nova Scotia. Captain Henry Henderson writes this story. He was in the Yukon first in 1893 and ran the first steamboat on the Upper Yukon River from Forty-Mile to Five Finger Rapids and Stewart River, a distance of three hundred miles; the name of the steamboat was *The Pelly*. The boat was of 10 H.P. owned by Harper & Leduc, of Selkirk and Sixty-Mile posts.





## *True Story of the Discovery of the Klondike by Bob Henderson*

### CHAPTER I.

My parents were old country Scotch. My mother died first at the age of ninety and father at ninety-eight. There were seven in the family, three girls and four boys. John, the eldest, was drowned at the age of forty. Bill, the second son, died ten years later after sailing the Western ocean for twenty years. My two sisters, Mary and Maggie, married in New York, and Martha is living with her husband in the Yukon.

My brother-in-law owned a little vessel which ran as a packet from Merigonish to Pictou and when I was about nine years old I thought it would be great fun to work on her. Jack McGregor was the Captain's name; he was a fine man and came of a noble family, and his brother, Dr McGregor, was one of the ablest doctors in Nova Scotia.

I sailed part of three summers with McGregor. The boat carried passengers, but Jack took no fares. Liquor was plentiful and as Jack, who was a kind hearted fellow, liked a little drop as well as the rest, they generally had a big time. Then the ship would be turned over to the First Officer and crew—I was First Officer, crew and cook all in one—and I always managed to get her home safely.

Our windlass was the oldest style known—a big log with holes in it for the bars. Sometimes we would lose the bars or they would be used for firewood so we couldn't raise the anchor, in which case we would put a buoy to the chain and leave it. When we came to the next port we would go to a wharf, if there was one, or if not, would make her fast to a tree or run her into the mud, and in this way everything went smoothly. Often just before we were to sail, the passengers would meet the Captain up town to have a final drink, then he would forget to buy the ship's supply of grub, but the passengers generally had some and I always had water on board and if we ran short we could land at some farm and get a new supply.

This went on for two years when, one Fall, Jack ran the boat so hard in the mud that she went into the hands of a receiver. She is still in the mud and I have my wages coming yet.

I next sailed with Captain Miles, a minister's son, in a vessel about the same size as my first. I forget her name, but she carried about twenty tons and was in the same business as the other. This Captain was a very sober man,

never touched a drop of liquor, and was very careful about wasting money, even for grub. He used to say that it was not healthy to live too high. He finally sold the vessel and I went home.

My next vessel was commanded by Captain Dan MacDonald. He was the brother of a priest and had studied for priesthood himself, but for some reason did not finish the course. He was a big strong man without fear. This vessel was a little bigger than the others and would carry about forty tons; she should have had a crew of three, but, as I was a very big boy for my age, I was the whole crew. She was thirty years old at this time and the sails, rigging and ropes about the same age, for, on our first trip to Charlottetown the Captain got cross and broke all the halyards. The sails came down and with only the jib left we drifted into the harbour flying signals of distress.

We got some new gear and made the next trip, with a load of gravel for Prince Edward Island, in fine style. Then we went up the Georgetown river to a monstrous bazaar with a load of passengers, handsome young ladies with their favorite boys and some of the fathers and mothers to see that they didn't get washed overboard. We had six days to get to our destination and made it right on time. There was a great turnout, over two thousand people, and everything went smoothly till about noon, when, liquor having been handed about very freely, the fun commenced. That was 45 years ago now and the country was new, the day was hot, the men strong and most of them had come a long way out of the bush and were naturally wild. I had been among the wild tribes of the West, with the natives in Colorado, Arizona, Mexico and the Yukon and with the Indians of the Peace River, but I never saw anything like this wild crowd. They fought all afternoon with their fists, swore in Gaelic and hopped and jumped very high, but none was hurt very much. That bazaar was considered a great success and made lots of money and everyone went home, with black eyes and bruises, happy and contented.

We made a lot of trips all right that summer but, coming home from our last voyage to Cape Breton, one to West Bay and North Sydney with a load of stoves, late in the Fall, we got mixed up in a south-east gale that drove us ashore in Antigonish Bay.

The sea washed over us for a whole desperate night, but the old vessel was built of oak and was strong enough to see us through. Next day the gale moderated and three days later we got afloat once more and continued on our voyage. After rounding Cape George we ran into a north-west gale and a heavy snowstorm and were driven back round the Cape. Three times we tried to make round the Cape and each time the storm drove us back. Captain Donley was a noble man with a commanding voice and I will never forget how, when it was my watch below and the storm would start to break over us, he would call out, "All hands on deck to shorten sail." I was the whole crew and only fourteen years old. One night the Captain, all tired out with fighting the storm, was sleeping below and I was at the wheel when the storm came on again accompanied by snow squalls. I tried to call the Captain but he was so tired I could not waken him, so I lowered all the sails, double reefed the foresail, hove her to and lashed the wheel. The way she rolled when I was trying to reef the foresail was frightful. Once in a while the sea would break right over us, so I watched her for a while then lay down. I did not intend to sleep but was so tired that I couldn't help myself. After a while the Captain came on deck and, not seeing me, thought I had been washed overboard. He called me and was very glad to see that I was all right. With the vessel headed out to sea we rolled about for several hours, then put her before the wind and got to the breakwater at Cape George. We left her there and the ice in the winter broke her up, and that ended my schooner sailing.

Our people thought we were lost, but one cold day in November, after walking fifty miles, I came home, followed shortly by Captain Donley. The farm looked good to me for a while after that.

Bob went to New Glasgow and learned the carriage building trade. When he got through with his apprenticeship he joined a barque called "The Kipper Fae," with Fraser as master, bound for New Zealand, and after rough experi-

ences for five years, he came, via Cape Horn, to London, then across to Halifax, N.S., arriving home. His adventures in Australia, California and other places were many and varied. Once with a barque overloaded with coal near the coast of New Zealand she shipped a heavy sea which filled her decks. He was at the wheel at the time and he saw the mate pull hairs out of his head as he thought the ship was sinking, nevertheless she righted and they got her hove-to and lived through it safely.

These stories of the sea turned me against that rough life but I wanted to leave home and wanted to know how to get along away from home. We were shingling the house and he pointed to the carpenter's square and said, "Remember that." I have never forgotten it yet nor my mother's advice.

## CHAPTER II.

About 1876 I left home and went to Boston and New York and worked in Boston for one year. In 1877 I went to New York and worked for E. G. Brown in Broadway and 67th Street, North River, at dock building. I worked two years and made good. I sent a little money home and had a little left.

Hearing that Bob had gone to Colorado in the Spring of 1878, I went to Gunison, Col., and met Bob. When I met him he was driving a "Six up" of mules with one line. I asked him about the line and he said, "That's all right; that's what I, as a sailor, call the tiller rope." I found out later that "Jerk line" was the proper name for it. He asked me if I wanted to try a ride on the hurricane deck of the starboard mule.

We went to work for Carrick & Fay in the Black Canon, building the Denver and Rio Grande, as carpenters, making more coffins than anything else. The blasting half killed the men and the doctor put on the finishing touch. It was a desperate place to work in; we never saw the sun all winter.

In the Spring of 1879 Bob wanted to start for the Yukon River as it was a mineral country and a good place to look for gold, and I agreed to go. He said that by walking two hundred miles West we could build a boat and go down the Grande River to Lower California and up the coast to Alaska.

We got our grubstake and blankets and started on our journey over the mountains and on to Grand Junction. There we whip-sawed lumber for a boat.

At that place lumber was worth \$100.00 per thousand, so we sawed lumber all summer, it being the first lumber used in Grand Junction, which is a lively town now.

This delayed our start for a time. Bob was receiving letters from his Nova Scotia girl and he wanted to go home by way of California and round Cape Horn, but after much persuasion I got him to go by land. He went home and married Elizabeth Grant, the eldest daughter of Hector Grant, of Antigonish Co., N.S.

For the next seven or eight years I built ferry boats and ran them. Then Bob got tired of farming in Nova Scotia and came back to Colorado with his wife and two children. He wanted to go to the Yukon, but could not leave his family and the life there was too rough for them.

We went to Glenwood Springs in 1885 and Bob hired as boatman for the U. P. survey and I for the Rio Grande survey party. In the rough canon above Glenwood Springs, where I worked for two years, was the roughest water I ever met.

About the year 1887 Bob went to Aspen where he worked in the Sheller mine as carpenter and there he met Alex MacDonald, Duncan Stewart, Jack Grant, his brother-in-law, and Hector McLean, Jack's cousin. In 1888 Jack Grant was Sheriff of Aspen and had the record of never putting hand-cuffs on a prisoner; he was a fearless man and strong.

In the year 1889 I made a trip home to Pictou where I found mother and father well and became good friends with Janet Grant, a fine girl, sister of Elizabeth Grant, Bob's wife. After a short stay home I left for Colorado. While in New York on the way out I asked a time keeper one day what was the best way to make money in Colorado. He scratched his head for a while, then said, "Study your health, for the money will come and go with the tide." In my case this was true, for I had made some money there and lost it again.

In 1889 money was very scarce with me and I talked to Bob about the North, which he said was a rich country. I went to San Francisco and Seattle and on to Alaska in 1890 and stopped there that winter, staying with

old miners who had been in the Yukon and told of the fine gold to be found on the bars. They said that a man should have about \$600.00 worth of grub to start with and to earn that amount was slow work.

In the Fall of 1892 I worked as a sailor on the Steamship George W. Elder and came to Astoria. There I met Donald Robertson from Big Island, N.S., and I told him what I had heard of the Yukon River and he agreed to go with me in the Spring.

In March, 1893, we started from Seattle and took passage on the Steamship Elki for Juneau, Alaska. Before we got to Juneau we fell in with Tom Kilpatrick, McLean, Neil McArthur and a few more bound for the Yukon, and all well known to old-timers there.

Arriving at Juneau, we left for Dyea on the little tug "Fisher." When we landed at Dyea about thirty Indians gathered round us and commenced lifting our stuff. They wanted to carry our supplies to the top of the mountain, and we eventually turned things over to them at the rate of \$10.00 per 100 pounds, and we all took a load ourselves.

We loaded our sleighs and started down the mountain side to Lindeman for the Yukon, to the head of Lake Bennet, where we whip-sawed lumber to build boats.

We all got boats built and had a long wait till the tenth of June for the lake to open. Before we left Bennet, Fred Wright, of the Yakimo Sheep Co., and Dick Perkins, of the Hotel Perkins, Portland, Ore., joined the fleet of boats, as did also Peter McDonald and party, with the first two horses that ever came into the Yukon country.

We sailed over Lake Bennet, Lake Tarkish and Lake Marsh and down the river to Mile's Canon and White Horse Rapids, where we came to a full stop to look at the Canon. All the party were first class rivermen until they saw this boiling water. Neil McArthur, who had been in the Yukon the year before, was our leader, a noble man, and we all took his advice. The Commdore's order to unload all our boats was quickly obeyed. The horses were led around the Canon while I ran McArthur's scow and some small boats through the Canon and the White Horse Rapids.

Fred Wright and Dick Perkins had a canvas boat which Neil McArthur had ordered to be carried over the Canon, but, when he took his load around, I got into the canvas boat and headed for the rapids. He saw me start and at once began a stampede to the bank of the Canon, firing three shots, which was a signal to the men at the lower end, where a boat and crew were ready to help, that there was going to be a wreck. However, I landed safely; not that I was a better man than the rest but I had had eight years experience in the Grand Canon in Colorado.

The next morning we all loaded up to drop down to the White Horse Rapids. While we were unloading our boats just above the rapids, we heard shouting up the river and saw bundles coming down stream; in a minute I saw that the canvas boat had struck a rock in mid-current about half a mile above us. To get there quickly we towed the boat with a rope along the rough shore and, as the men kept on shouting, we made good time and finally got them safe ashore, nearly frozen from their dip in the icy water.

We waited one day for them to dry their outfit, then all got over the rapids in safety. From there our journey was a pleasant one to Sixty-mile Post, owned by Harper & Leduc, where we stopped for a day. We gathered round Joe Leduc to get the news of the country and to find where was the best place to look for gold. He advised Miller Creek, which flows into Sixty-Mile Creek, as a good course to take, and next morning we started out. The following week was hard work, poling up stream for seventy-five miles and panning on the bars as we moved along. We found fine gold on lots of them, but we were looking for coarse gold, which we could not get.



After some three weeks of prospecting, Donald Robertson, my partner, and myself decided that we had better work on the fine gold as our grubstak was getting low. We whip sawed lumber, made a rocker and worked hard for thirty days, making \$10.00 per day apiece. Then as our grub was diminishing fast, we returned to Sixty-Mile for more.

When we got to Sixty-Mile the Steamship Arctic had arrived from St. Michael's with supplies and the first saw-mill outfit for Joe Leduc. This we helped to unload, and as Donald Robertson could run a saw-mill he went to work for Leduc at \$10.00 per day, leaving me to paddle my own canoe. As Leduc's steamboat was one hundred and twenty-five miles up the Stewart River, he wanted me to go and bring her down and make trips to Forty-Mile for supplies, paying me \$10.00 per day to take charge of her and I agreed to go.

I had a thirty-foot boat with eight hundred pounds on and found it hard work poling it upstream, but made the trip in ten days. Moose and bear were plentiful but I had no gun. Sometimes the moose would wake me up at night, swimming the river, and bears would keep me company in the daytime as well as at night, though I could not always see them.

I arrived at McQuestron River and found the "Little Pelly" with her engineer and an old timer named Alex. McDonald, who died the next winter on his second trip to the Little Salmon River. He claimed that on his first trip he got twenty-five cents to the pan. What he got the second time no man will know—as he died alone.

After a day's rest I found that I had three weeks in which to get down to Sixty-Mile, though, after two natives had left we were short handed on the boat. The boat had a pump that could throw a great head of water so we dropped down the river a little way and set up sluice boxes. After three weeks' work on the bars and giving one-third to the owner, we found we had made seven dollars a day per man, then we went down river to Sixty-Mile. We made two trips successfully after that, then laid up the boat for the winter.

My next job was rafting logs to Forty-Mile, with two men I hired. I made good money at that for two months until the ice began to run, about October 20th.

At Forty-Mile there were two stores, the N. C. and the N. A. T., about sixty miners, and three white women—Mrs. J. J. Healey, Miss Bridget and Mrs. Bompas—and about three hundred dogs, four liquor houses, and a Church of England Mission. The miners coming from Miller Creek, Franklin Gulch and Circle City, which was discovered in 1893, made the place lively, as some of them had made as much as \$20,000.00 in the summer.

The chief pastime of the camp was card playing and dancing with the native women. In this we had two leaders, Frank Densmore and Kate McQuerstron, a fine native woman. At twelve o'clock the dance stopped and the women went home, then, after a few hot rums and a song or two, if it happened to be Saturday night, Frank Densmore would call our attention to the fact that the next day was Sunday, telling us that we had better call on the Rev. Bompas and hear what he had to say. I remember we all followed his advice.

One Sunday a Mr. Rivers came to church, after being up all Saturday night playing cards and having had a hot drink just before, was overcome by sleep. One of his friends woke him up and before he realized where he was Rivers called out:

"Give us a new deck!"

Coming out Rivers remarked, "I must turn over a new leaf and settle down."

On his way from church he asked a handsome native girl to marry him.

"You got no boat," she answered. "You got no dogs. No claim on Miller Creek. What for you talk?" Rivers was clean out of luck that day.

Late in the Fall of 1893 a man named Shumack and his wife, a native of Sitka, came to Forty-Mile. He was a bad man, but his wife was a handsome woman—for a native—spoke a little English and dressed in the fashion. At the first dance she appeared in a silk waist with puffed shoulders and, as she was a good dancer, all the miners wanted to dance with her. This made the Forty-Mile natives jealous.

At the next dance there was a great change; the N.C. store had sold about \$1000.00 worth of silk to the women and they all had silk waists, with puffed shoulders as big as cabbage heads and silk sashes and ribbons galore. The Sitka girl was not in it for a minute and the miners had to take several hot drinks to celebrate the occasion. You could hear them say, "You bet my girl can wear lots of silk and puffed shoulders."

Shumack, who was stopping with Johnny Reid, made trouble later on. One night Johnny Reid had had quite a few drinks and John Nelson was taking him to his house when Shumack barred the door and would not let them in. Reid told Nelson to break in the door. This he did. Shumack grappled with him, cutting his head with a knife. Then Nelson went back to the liquor house and told what had happened. George Medlock went after Shumack and in the struggle was knifed. Feeling the blood running down his breast he felt he must be badly hurt and running over to his cabin, got his rifle and shot Shumack in the legs. Shumack recovered all right, but whenever he got too much liquor he wanted to fight and one year later was shot dead.

At one time Frank Densmore, our leader and floor manager, noticed that some rough talk was used at the dance and ordered the miners to use better language or leave the dance. After that there was nothing but the best of order and all ladies were addressed with bows as Mrs. McDonald or Mrs. O'Brien. There were no police of any kind there at that time, but the law was respected and order was good.

## CHAPTER III.

Before the river was closed in the fall I got a letter from home (it was written in June and reached me in October) which told me that my father had gone blind and wanted me to return to Nova Scotia. Three weeks before Christmas, Jack Reid said he, with Hank Wright and a native named Pitka, was going to take mail out to Juneau and wanted another man to go with them. Thinking of my mother, my blind father and the Scotch lass, Jennie Grant, of James River, and, now that I had a little money, I might do well at home, I volunteered to join the mail party. It was a desperate trip to take—six hundred miles without a broken trail and the Chilcoot Pass to cross in midwinter—and we had to haul all our grub from Selkirk to Dyea, four hundred miles.

In three weeks' time we had got together nine dogs, two sleighs and a good outfit and were ready to start. When Reid told the miners to get their letters ready as he was going to start right away they refused to let him go, saying that no man could cross the mountains at that season of the year, and we had to promise to lay over at Selkirk for thirty days.

The day after Christmas we finally started. Three days later we camped at the mouth of the Klondike River where a few Indians were living and where my brother Bob afterwards discovered gold on Gold Bottom Creek and All Gold Creek, now known as Hunker Creek. That night we slept on a bed of gold and did not know it. Next morning we left with the thermometer at forty below zero, and three days later arrived at Sixty-Mile where Donald Robertson, my partner, and ten miners were passing the winter. I told Donald Robertson of my father going blind and that I was going out. I asked him if he would go with us.

"No," he said, "the trip is too hard at this time of year."

Joe Leduc gave me a letter to deliver to the N. C. Co. in San Francisco, asking them to put a new boat on the Upper Yukon River.

After resting for two days we again started out. Ten days of hard travelling over rough ice and deep snow brought us to Selkirk, where we had promised to lay over. We rested here three days, then Reid decided to forget our promise given at Forty-Mile as it cost too much to stay at Selkirk and we all agreed with him.

It was four hundred miles to Dyea, with two chances to get grub on the way. Harper did not want us to go, as the chance was too great, but, thinking that we could get grub from the Indians at Lake Lebarge, we started with all the dogs could haul. After nine days' hard work we came to where Gorge Cormack was camped with his native wife, and from him we got as much flour and beans as he could spare, then went on again. The next ten days were the worst yet. The ice was rough; the snow was twenty inches deep; the thermometer showed fifty-five below zero—then froze up. But we kept on travelling all the time. When we got to the foot of Lake Lebarge we had seven days' grub for ourselves and two days' food for the dogs.

Hank Wright, at the first signs of distress, wanted to turn back. This was a dangerous thing to do. We only had seven days' grub. It had taken us twenty days to come this far and if we returned we would have to eat our dogs. In the hope that the lakes would be good travelling we decided to keep on. Travelling on the lake proved to be good and we made forty miles the next day, camping with some Indians from whom we got two caribou hams at \$10.00 each and a dozen rabbits—all we could rustle at any cost. This was the last meal our faithful malemutes got, though we still had hopes of finding one more camp.

To make time we took a chance and went through Mile's Canon on the ace. At Turkish House there were no Indians, and at Caribou Crossing only one native woman. She came out to meet us and ask for grub. Her men folk were all out hunting.

We kept on to Lake Bennet. We had now only four days' grub, bacon and flour, and the mountain still ahead. Next day we crossed the last lake, Lyndeman, only two miles up the mountain, and the following day kept on going up. It was snowing heavily. The dogs were getting weak from hunger, so finally we had to stop. We pulled our sleighs together, tied our canvas over them and crawled under and were there two nights without wood for a fire. We were near the summit with only snow and bacon to keep us from starving. The second morning it cleared and going out I said: "There is the summit." Reid said I was wrong, for it did not look right to him.

We found we were too weak to struggle through the deep snow to look for the summit so we turned back down the mountain about eight miles, dug a hole in the snow to enable us to put on a fire, and fixed up a pot of flour and bacon. It sure tasted like chicken to us.

After resting two nights and a day we started up the mountain again, and when we got to our Crater Lake camp I said to Reid:

"Which way do you think is right?"

He pointed to the West, and though I thought he was wrong, we decided to try his way first, as he had been over the pass late in March with an Indian guide; our Indian had never been outside. We climbed up only to find ourselves at the wrong place, so we had to return to our camp. I suggested that we had time to try my way yet before dark. If I was right we could go over the pass at night, if not we could go back down to timber. Two winters before this two men had tried to cross the pass but had frozen to death. Reid had been our leader up to this time, but he was becoming discouraged so gave up the lead to me. Pitka was just at my heels and Hank Wright not far behind; Reid was lagging in the rear.

As we neared the summit I was telling the Indian how it should look and he soon began to recognize it from my description. When we found the little lake at the foot I knew I was right. I hollered to Wright, and Reid came along as we were on the right trail at last. As we went up the snow began to drift fearfully and near the top we came to a steep pitch up which we had to crawl on our hands and knees.

Reid said, "This is not the summit."

"Come on," I replied, "Don't mind this. If the jumping off place is all right we are all right."

In about twenty minutes we were looking down the slide and I was proved right.

Shoving the dogs down ahead of us, we all pulled out our sheath knives to act as a break, and away we went down the slide, getting to the bottom well bruised up but able to walk the rest of the way down the mountain. We travelled till we came to what the miners call Stone House, and when we saw the stumps of the trees sticking out of the snow a loud cheer went up and the Indian clapped me on the back.

"You heap savey this country," he said. "We all die only for you."

We were all happy then. Two miles farther down in the timber we stopped and built a fire and ate our last meal. It was bacon and bread without yeast, but it tasted good and we were only twenty miles from Dyea, which we reached at five o'clock in the morning.

The first light we saw was in an Indian house and it certainly looked good to us. Halley & Wilson's store was there so we routed them out. Thinking we had come from Juneau, Halley said:

"Good morning, men. I didn't hear the steamer whistle."

Then we told him we came from the Yukon River.

"You mean last Fall," he said.

"No," we replied, "right now."

"If you have you are the first to come over the pass alive in midwinter," said Mr. Wilson. "You must have had a hard trip.

He was right.

They asked us where our outfit was and we told them it was on the other side of the summit on Crater Lake and that we were going to get it as soon as we were rested. What gold we had taken with us was left on the sleighs; Hank Wright had \$10,000.00, Jack Reid \$4,000.00 and I had the same. We left it without a thought—to get over the summit alive was more to us at the time.

The storm raged for ten days before we tried to get our outfit. Reid, Pitka, an Indian and myself, with ten days' grub, set out on the back trail. Two days later we found the sleighs nearly covered with snow and the gold safe; in two days more we were back at Wilson's. Before daylight the Steamship Rustler blew her whistle and we got on board for Juneau, where we parted. Jack Reid returned to the Yukon and died on the way back; Hank Wright went to his home in Kansas City, and I went to Frisco.

I first went to the mint with what gold I had, then went to the N. C. Co. and gave them the letter from Joe Leduc. The manager thought it would cost too much money to build a new boat, at least not in that year. I told him, "The Upper river is the best route to the Yukon, a river full of fine gold and with only two boats, slow ones at that, you should have half a dozen boats there that can run to White Horse Rapids." However, they evidently paid no attention to what I said, for they never built the boats. At the time of the Klondike rush an English company, the White Pass & Yukon, manned the Upper river and hold it yet with a good line of river boats and, in winter, the finest stage line in the world, and have made millions in freighting.

I went to Aspen, Col., where my brother Bob, whom I had not seen for six years, was living, and told him what I knew of the Yukon, of the fine gold on the river bars and the coarse gold at Forty-Mile.

"That is a rich country," he said. "I am going there and nothing will stop me this time."

He was referring to the time fourteen years previous when he wanted me to go there with him. One month later Bob left for the Yukon and I went home.

I found mother well and active at 80 and father well and hearty, though blind and ninety years of age. My eldest sister took him to New York for an operation and it did no good. Finding that I had to stay at home with my father and mother, I built a house and got married to Jennie Grant, of James River, Antigonish County, N.S.

## CHAPTER IV.

For the next four years I farmed and fished, lobster principally, to keep the pot boiling. In 1897 poor mother died at the age of 85 and I missed her terribly. By this time my two children, Isabel and Norman Robert, were able to run about. Isabel is now teaching school, and Norman Robert, at sixteen, is farming.

The first letter from Bob in the Yukon was in 1896, and I sent it on to his wife in Aspen. Somehow it got lost but I can never forget what it said. It was this: "Ogilvie, Yukon River, June 29th, 1896. Dear Brother—I am well and have struck it right at last. I called the Creek Gold Bottom. It runs into the Klondike. If it rains this summer, will get some gold out; if not, will do big work in the Spring. From your brother—Bob."

I was receiving the Juneau Mining Record, the only paper printed in the North at the time, and one month later I read in it about the gold strike in the Klondike. It stated that the discoverer of Hunker Creek and Gold Bottom was Robert Henderson. This, with the mention of Gold Bottom Creek, checked up with Bob's letter of the month before.

On my way home from the Yukon in 1894 I had met a man named Beardsley and told him of my trip to the Yukon, of the gold and that my brother Bob was going there in 1897. When the papers told of the great stampede for gold and of hundreds rushing to the Klondike, he wrote to me to come to New York. As mother was now dead and my children getting bigger I went to New York. Beardsley and others formed a company called the Henderson Klondike Co., of which I was vice-president, to buy mining claims in the Yukon. In the Fall of 1897 I left New York in company with a man named Cleary, whose wife accompanied him to Seattle. He had about \$5,000.00 for expenses and carried the money although I was in charge of the trip. After one week in Seattle I was ready to go, but he said he was waiting for his brother to come out to Seattle. While we were staying there he was advised by some boosters to get a lot of dogs and take grub to Dawson where he could get \$1.00 for every pound—a get rich quick proposition. Soon after that he bought \$1,000.00 worth of dogs and also took a trip to Frisco in company with his wife. When he came back he told me that the money was getting short. I said, "That will not go down with us. We need a lot of money to get to Dawson. Wire to New York and have them send a barrel of it." A few days later he wanted me to train the dogs. In the Grand Hotel, where we were staying, he came into the office and, in a loud voice, said:

"Henderson, you will get a pair of overalls and train these dogs!"

"Mr. Cleary," I replied, "you will remember in New York we organized a company, of which I am vice-president. You have bought dogs and spent a lot of money without my order and now you want me to train the dogs. Mr. Cleary, there will be 'nothing doing' with the dogs. I resign right here and now without a dollar."

A week later I joined the Boston and Alaska Transportation Co. at \$300.00 a month and \$1,000.00 in advance, as pilot and fuel agent.

## CHAPTER V.

With three dogs I went to the foot of Lake Lebarge and there met Henry Dore and Joe Bouche, both bound for Dawson with dogs, so we travelled together. On the lake I heard that the river was opening up and told them we would have to build a boat. My partners asked me if I had any tools.

"No," I had to answer.

"We haven't either," they said, "but we'll build a boat together if we can get any slabs."

"I can build a boat with an axe," I said.

"The Frenchman is pretty good," replied Bouche, "but he can't build a boat with only an axe."

Next day I got a pound of nails for five dollars and some slabs and by evening had got the boat well under way. Dore came over to see what I was doing.

"Henri," he said, "I thought you were fooling when you said you could build a boat with an axe. I'll go to camp and get my partner and we'll all help."

In three days we had her ready and we made a pleasant trip. They were good men to travel with. It was the rush of 1898 and a thousand boats of every description followed the ice down the river, keeping close to the jam. Frank Fisticator, Captain Mickle and Jimmy Jackson, an Indian, were with us. Fisticator was very much in a hurry to get to Dawson so he went down stream a little way, and when we came back told us the water was open a long way below the island where the jam was and that we could pass the jam. So we started and went about three miles, coming to the end of the open water. We heard the roar of the ice jam coming down behind us. The water came so fast that we had to jump for the boats and were driven into the woods. It looked badly for a while and there were a few pale faces when the jam had passed. Henry Dore turned to Fisticator:

"You would go before the jam. You would drown all the people in the world."

This made us laugh, but we did not go ahead of the jam again.

It was now a race for Dawson, with a thousand boats entered.

My boat was a little scow and could not be driven fast. In order to win out we ran day and night shifts and slipped past the others while they were asleep, although there was considerable risk following the ice in the night. Frank Fisticator thought we were behind, while all the time we were ahead of them. At Stewart River, seventy miles from Dawson, he caught up with us. He had six oars in his boat while we had only two. My partners did not like to get beaten because there was a claim to be staked. When we saw their boat coming and saw them strip off their clothes for action, my French crew and I did the same. We sent a white foam before our scow and held our own for fifteen miles. Then blisters broke out on the Frenchmen's hands and they said, "Let them go to hell!" So Fisticator reached Dawson first and we came in second.

There I met my old partner, Donald Robertson, who told me that Bob had started out in the Fall of 1897 and had got frozen in at Circle City, but would be back in Dawson with the first boat. Donald wanted me to go with him to

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Author's note—Fisticator died in San Francisco after making a fortune.

his claim, seven miles below, on Hunker Creek, as he was really my partner and wanted to do well by me, but, as I had agreed to go to the mouth of the Yukon and meet the river boats, I left Dawson with fifteen men to chop wood along the river to Circle City. I met Bob at Circle City and he told me the history of the years since I had seen him at Aspen. He said he had gone up the Hoodelink and Pelly rivers and down in the Fall to Sixty-Mile and on to Indian river, where he had gone in the summer of 1895, prospecting for gold in the many streams running into Indian river.

"In crossing a stream near Indian river," he said, "I felled a tree to cross the stream. In falling it struck a sharp limb which had been cut off and this went into my leg. By hard work I managed to get clear and back to camp, but it made a big hole in my leg and I had to stay in camp alone for three weeks, moving around on crutches. One day I shot a moose and with the skin made a boat and then managed by hard work to get to Sixty-Mile post."

In that struggle for life Bob lost forty pounds in weight. It was a close call and his leg still hurts him.

When he got better he went back to Indian river and wintered on Quartz Creek the winter of 1895 all alone, and took out \$800.00 in gold.

In 1896 he went over the divide to the Klondike side and dropped in a creek he named Gold Bottom, and another he called All Gold, the first names given them. In a week's time he found gold good enough to put up sluice boxes, but he had to get help. At Indian river he got Munson and Swanson to proceed to Gold Bottom to whip-saw lumber for sluice boxes. Then, as grub was getting scarce, he went to Sixty-Mile.

He told Joe Leduc what he had found on Gold Bottom and advised him to move his saw-mill to the mouth of the Klondike and take up a townsite, as it was going to be a big camp. So Leduc, with four horses, loaded with grub, started for Gold Bottom. Bob took his boat and grub and went down to the mouth of the Klondike where he met George Cormack and his wife fishing with the Indians. Bob told him, too, of finding pay on Gold Bottom and advised him to go over and stake a claim. When Cormack was leaving Bob said to him:

"Are you going to prospect on Rabbit Creek on your way back? I think all those creeks are good. If you find anything better than mine let me know."

This Cormack promised to do, and with his two brothers-in-law started up Rabbit Creek over the divide to Gold Bottom and on to Bob's camp where they staked claims.

On their way back, at Rabbit Creek, Skookum Jim panned out twelve dollars, and they at once went to Forty-Mile and forgot to send word to Bob.

A steamboat with one hundred men on board then came up to the mouth of the Klondike, changed the name of the creek to Bonanza, and staked it all as well as another creek called Eldorado.

About three weeks later two men, one of them, Andy Hunker, came over the hill looking for Bob's camp and told him of Bonanza and how the whole creek had been staked. Bob asked who had made the strike and when he heard that it was George Cormack he exclaimed:

"George Cormack! Why that's the man I showed the creek to and he promised to let me know if it turned out better than Gold Bottom."

Hunker then asked if Bob had staked on the creek below.

"Yes, Bob replied, "I staked over a month ago."

Hunker remarked he would like to call the creek Hunker Creek, and to decide the matter they tossed up a dollar and Hunker won.



Three weeks later Bob went to Forty-Mile to record his claims and asked for "Discovery" on the two creeks, Gold Bottom and All Gold. The Recorder, Constantine, said he had given the discovery to Hunker and that the creek was known as Hunker Creek.

"Well," said Bob, "give me 'Discovery' on Gold Bottom."

"We can't give two discoveries in the same district," said the Recorder.

"But I staked two months before Hunker," replied Bob.

"Why did you not come before to record?" said the Recorder.

"The law gives me six months to record after staking," said Bob, but in the end he was beaten out of his just claim.

Five years later, while going up the river on a steamboat with Andy Hunker, who did not know who I was, he told me and others that he had staked a claim for Constantine and thus disclosed the reason why Bob got the worst of the deal. Constantine is now dead, Hunker is broke, and Bob is enjoying life.

## CHAPTER VI.

Leaving Circle City I went on my journey down the river, taking on two Indian pilots for the Company, and started a wood camp every one hundred miles along the fifteen hundred mile route. At New Latta I got one more pilot, Siresky. The boys, Silas and New Latta Johnny, were good rivermen and are still at the job. We got to the mouth of the river on the eighth of June, after following the ice from Lake Lebarge to the Behring Sea, about two thousand miles, then on to Cape Dyer, seventy-five miles south of the river. It was a dangerous trip with the boat we had, but, after a hard struggle we got to Camp Dyer, called by the Indians, Askeena. Cape Dyer is a very high, rocky point, with rocky shores.

We waited there forty days but the boats never came. Then we ran out of grub and had to leave for St. Michael's, a distance of two hundred miles. The Company had changed their plans and gone to St. Michael's. When we got there it looked like New York with ships of all sizes, both river and ocean boats.

After a week we got started up the river with the steamer Eldorado and two barges. Captain Fussie and myself with one hundred and fifty passengers and six hundred tons of freight. After a hard struggle we got to Dawson on the first of October.

On arriving there I met Bob, who had just come down from the Stewart River where he had discovered Henderson Creek, which they are mining yet, with a good yield of gold.

We went home that Fall, I going as pilot on the Steamship Florence S. to White Horse and Bob as passenger on the same boat. Seven days later, after cutting all our own wood as we went along, we got to White Horse Rapids where we found the steamer Goddard which ran to Bennet—fare twenty-five cents and meals two dollars extra. The crew consisted of captain, fireman and captain's wife, who was cook, purser and deck hand.

The boat had accommodation for fifteen persons, but there were thirty on board. The boat sometimes listed badly and the captain's wife had to order us to "trim ship." The dining room was small, holding only three people at a time and the cook always advised us to "Go easy on the butter; it costs money." About every fifteen miles we had to go ashore and bale the water out of our boat. However, we managed to get to Bennet safely.

The trail to Dyca was good and in two days afterwards we took a passage on the "City of Seattle" for Seattle, and the train from there to Colorado. Bob went to Aspen where his wife and family lived. He did not come home rich, but they met him at the station with the band and Aspen was a lively town that night. There were lots of Canadians in Aspen who knew Bob, and he belonged to that hardy class of miners that first find the gold for the rich.

I went home to Nova Scotia and found father quite smart at the age of ninety-seven years and my wife and children well. In the Spring of 1901 Bob went back to Dawson and went to the head of the Klondike but did not find anything big.

In 1900 I went back to Dawson and started to pilot scows. I again took a scow load of potatoes to Dawson for D. D. Sawyers, who made seven thousand dollars profit on them. I made three hundred dollars. He had four other scows coming but all got wrecked, so I saved him from going broke.

The next summer I ran scows from Lake Bennet before the road got to White Horse. There were one hundred and fifty miles of lake to go over, then Miles Canon, White Horse Rapids and four hundred miles of river. The Thirty-Mile river was a bad piece and Five Finger and Rink Rapids were especially bad water, as also were Hell's Gate and Steamboat Slough.

On our last trip that fall we had seven scows. I had three, Sawyer two, and a new pilot two. The first night we left Bennet I took the lead. The new pilot wrecked his scows on Lake Bennet, it being rough weather with high winds. That night Sawyer and myself reached Caribou safely; Sawyer started to gather some of the wrecked goods so I went on with a general cargo containing a lot of potatoes. I ran the Canon and White Horse Rapids by myself. On that trip I passed one hundred and seventy-five scows, twenty were abandoned, seventy-five on the bars and the rest I outran after long hours. Keeping afloat I got to Dawson with the ice running thick.

D. D. Sawyers wrecked both his scows, but as I had his goods with my outfit I again saved him from going broke.

In the Spring I took a load of oats and wagons to Dawson after the lake opened. While trying to get through the ice on the lake a storm came up and was driving our scow through the broken ice on a lee shore; I took the side boards of the wagons, nailed them on the side of the scow, making a lee board ten feet long and six feet below the bottom of the scow. Hoisting our sail and with the help of the sweeps we sailed through the ice and got into shelter. The lee boards saved a bad wreck and probably our lives and the rest of the trip went well.

Late in the Fall the 23rd of October we left with six men and two scows loaded with oats for Dawson. The ice was then forming and it was extremely cold. We got along fairly well until we reached the Stewart River when four men tried to come aboard our scow. Their boat was in the running ice and the thermometer showed fifteen below zero. About one hundred and fifty yards from our scow they got stuck in the ice and were there four hours with only their summer clothing on. They were hollering to us for God's sake to save them. One of our men said he would try, and with the help of a pole got a rope to them and when the rope was made fast we pulled the boat alongside the scow. We had to help some of them on board, as their hands were nearly frozen. That night we tied up at Adams Island. After a struggle next morning we started off again, it being the 3rd of November, and pulled for Dawson, thirty-five miles away. We had made four miles down the river when the ice drove us against the bank with great force and it looked as if all was over. I told the men to pull in their sweeps and come to the after end.

When the scow struck she broke ten feet from the forrard end and smashed all our outriggers as well. The oats saved it from breaking further and the slush ice jammed so tight that very little water came in and we drifted on a bar below. I rigged up our sweeps again, took some oats off the scow that was broken and put them on the other, and we got off the bar and reached Dawson at twelve at night. Next day the river closed; it was a close call getting it.

In the Spring of 1902, with two scows and a general cargo for Andy Mushro and Clark, we loaded at the foot of Lake Lebarge. Andy Mushro took two scows and followed the ice; it meant big money for the man who reached Dawson first. At Rink Rapids thirty scows were waiting for the jam to break. About midday the jam broke and in three hours Mushro wanted to start. I did not want to start until morning but he was bound to go. The other scows waited till morning and they were right. That night we came to the jam and it was moving; we could not land for there was a wall of ice twenty feet high on either side, so we went right into the jam, which was a wild sight and made through safely with only a few holes above the water lines. Two days later we got to Dawson and Andy made good money.

That summer I ran two trips to Circle City, three hundred miles below Dawson, with cattle that were driven there from Fairbanks. In 1903 I was the pilot on the La France, the first steamer up the Pelly River, to Houle Canon and Ross River, with goods for Tom Smith, who had a trading post at Ross River. On my first trip in 1904 I made safely to Dawson and went pilot on the Steamship Quick and ran the rocky Pelly River with Captain Gear.

In 1905 I again followed the ice to Dawson and at the Hoodelinke tied alongside Al. Lovely's scows. In the morning he gave me the s.l.p and got away an hour ahead of us. We ran all that day and the next evening found him tied up, about ten o'clock, four miles above Hell's Gate. The steamer Prospector was ahead of us and, not seeing her, we thought the ice must be clear of Hell's Gate, but we soon came in sight of him and Captain Jackman blew three whistles to let us know that the ice was still in Hell's Gate. We pulled for the steamer but she wouldn't take our line; said we would part his wire cable. We had only a light load of seventy tons and were now up against a half broken jam, while four hundred yards below us the current was running fifteen miles an hour. We tried to land below the steamer, getting one man on shore with a line to make fast to a tree, but when the line was nearly all out, it parted. Then one man jumped ashore and deserted, leaving us two men short and in the night watch. It looked as if the end of life was near, but I told the men to stand by the sweeps and we would fight our way through. The roar of the ice in rocky Hell's Gate below put a chill through our hearts as we neared the battle of our lives. The holes through the jam were narrow, not wide enough for two scows, and crooked, and one could not see far ahead. When we struck the ice the scows raised high, knocking all hands down and breaking the sweeps. The double ends of two inch plank saved us from wrecking and with two men short, no line and three sweeps missing we fought the ice till daybreak and reached Selkirk where the river broadens. I will never forget that night. It was reported from Selkirk that Henderson's scows were wrecked in the ice jam, but when the steamer reached Dawson we were safe there, winning the race against Al. Lovely. The remainder of the summer I went as pilot on the Steamship Prospector.

## CHAPTER VII.

In the summer of 1906 Bob went to Ottawa, was appointed mining engineer, then to Aspen and took his wife and four children back with him to Dawson. The next fall he went up the Pelly river with his two boys, Henry and Johnny, and Billy Forbes. In our last trip that fall we got stuck in the ice at Dawson for four days, but when it moderated we followed the Steamship Oasca, a good boat to buck ice, and got to White Horse. As the ice was commencing to run and Bob and Billy and the two boys were not yet home Bob's wife was getting anxious. I kept on the look-out for them. Some thirty miles up the river we saw them coming down on a raft seventy feet long by twenty feet wide. They had on it five moose and a tent made of moose hide. The two boys were on the forward sweeps, Billy at the after sweep, while Bob was pilot, on the hurricane deck. It was a picture of an old timer from real life, and the steamer blew three whistles as we passed Bob and his brave crew. They got home that night and we got safely to White Horse.

In the Spring of 1907 I went from the foot of Lake Lebarge with a load of cattle for Cowmiller, Victor and Shade, traders of Fairbanks. The scows were each twenty feet by ninety feet and the three of them carried two hundred tons of freight besides cattle, sheep, horses, poultry and a crew of twelve men, with fourteen passengers. At Thirty-Mile the passengers all helped in working through the short bends of the river and we got through safely. The next bad place was the Five Fingers, then the Rink Rapids and on to Hell's Gate. The passage through the Five Fingers is only seventy feet wide and our scows together being sixty feet wide it was close work with the current running about fifteen miles an hour. That was the largest load ever taken down the Thirty-Mile in low water without a steambot.

The rest of that summer I took freight up the Forty-Mile River to Chicken Creek. I was working with Billy James, the man who found the Shushana placer mines. He was a good river man and we finished the summer all right though a lot of men have been drowned in that river.

In the spring of 1908, with a partner named Felischer, I started with two scows of general cargo and all went well till passing Yukon Crossing where we were told that the ice was clear to Selkirk, some fifty miles down. When we had gone only six miles we came to the moving jam. We tied up to an island and fought the ice all night; sometimes when the jam moved, the water would fall ten feet, then it would rise again as much, but by hard fighting we managed to save our scows and went on our way to Dawson in safety. I freighted up the Forty-Mile the rest of the summer with good luck.

In the Spring of 1909 I again followed the ice to Dawson and got there first. That summer I went pilot on the Steamship Quick, the first steambot to go to Teslin Lake, and we built for Tom Smith the first trading post on that lake, then laid the boat up at White Horse for the winter.

In the Spring and Summer of 1910 I took scows to Dawson and Circle City. This was my last summer running scows, as the White Pass Company boats all handled barges and put the scowman out of business.

When scowing first commenced on the Yukon the scows were twelve feet by forty feet and fifteen tons was considered a good load. Now they are twenty feet by ninety feet and seventy tons is the ordinary load, and each pilot takes three scows at a time.

In the Spring of 1911 I went to Victoria and got my captain's papers, then ran a boat, the Steamship Klunna, for Taylor & Drewry, up the Pelly and Hoodlinke rivers, finishing the summer satisfactorily.

In 1912 I ran a boat for the boundary survey, which was in charge of Mr. Craig for the Canadian Government and Mr. Riggs for the United States Government. With four gasoline boats we left White Horse for Fort Yukon and Rampart House, and after making a few trips with the mail to Fort Yukon, Craig and Riggs, with a man named Pope, wanted to explore the Crow River to see if freight could be taken up there. Going up the Porcupine River about one hundred miles above Rampart House we came to the mouth of the Crow River and on up it for three hundred miles. We found it a very crooked stream running through a flat country full of small lakes, with game, caribou, wild geese and ducks, very plentiful. That was the first boat ever up the Crow River and we got within one hundred miles of the Arctic Ocean. When Craig and Riggs finished their business we came back to Rampart House and for the rest of the summer carried the mail. We made the round trip of five hundred miles in a week. After getting back to Dawson in the Fall this finished my work on the Yukon River after following the ice jam for ten years, during which time I never had a wreck or lost a man. I now leave the river work to younger men.

The Guggenhemers are now mining in the Yukon with the largest mining ditch in the world and the largest dredges I have ever heard of. My brother Bob is still living in the Yukon with one girl, Cassie, and three boys, Henry, Johnny and Grant. The oldest is in charge of the clean-up on five dredges with Henry and Johnny helping him, while the father looks after his own government work. They are a happy family.

The discovery by Bob of gold on Gold Bottom and All Gold Creeks attracted hundreds of prospectors, started Nome, Fairbanks, Detroit and Shushanne and put millions of dollars in circulation.

## CHAPTER VIII.

In the Fall of 1912 I came to the great valley of the Peace. Although I have been fourteen years away from home I never had enough money to go East and return to the Yukon. I have sent money home every year to keep the pot boiling and intend to visit Nova Scotia next year. My wife is in good health and now my boy is 17 years old, while my girl, one year older, is teaching school.

To the average miner too much money is dangerous. I could name at least thirty old timers who had accumulated from two thousand dollars to five hundred thousand dollars who are now dead and gone before the age of sixty years. Bob and myself were perhaps lucky that we did not get too much gold, for we are still enjoying life. I had several different partners in the Yukon, and as my schooling was poor they kept the books, and it seemed that every time they figured I lost. They kept the books and the money too. One partner I remember went under the ice with seven more below Forty-Mile in the ice jam and were never seen again.

I am now, in 1914, on my homestead in the Peace River Valley near Grande Prairie City. Last year I raised thirty acres of oats and averaged seventy-five bushels to the acre and I enjoy the life. I don't have to turn out at midnight to take the wheel of a river steamboat in the dark cold nights of fall on the Yukon River, or still worse, man the hurricane deck of a scow load of freight following the Yukon ice jam where so many good men have met a watery grave.

I came to the Peace River with John McAuley and his partner, W. L. Caldwell, who are doing a large fur and general business in Grande Prairie. Mr. McAuley used to keep the trading post at Little Salmon River and is well known to many old time Yukoners.

## CHAPTER IX.

There are two incidents in my life that I cannot forget. Once in my home in Nova Scotia, when I was driving a cow to Pictou town, thirty miles away, I came to the railroad crossing and the cow refused to cross the track. I was only twelve years old at the time and very tired and had to give up tearfully. Then a strange boy came along, and seeing how things were helped me with the cow and we soon had her across the track in good shape. I thought that boy was a mighty good fellow but I had nothing to offer him. Three years later I went to live with my brother-in-law near the old Richmond depot in Halifax. One day I saw a boy coming up with a bundle of straw, the wind was blowing hard and he could not hold it and his tears were flowing freely. I went over to him and offered to help, and together we got the straw home. On the way he said, "I know you," and when I asked him where he had seen me before he replied:

"I helped you to drive a cow across the railroad track in Pictou."

Twelve years later in Astoria, Oregon, I was on the pier when the Frisco boat came in and one of the crew came to where I was standing and told me he was sick. He looked pale and asked me if I could give two dollars to buy some medicine, as the purser would not advance him any money because he had only four days' pay coming to him. I gave him five dollars, thinking he might need to buy more. He left with the boat, saying that he hoped he would see me again.

One year later I went to San Francisco and after one month my money ran short, and on going to the waterfront to look for work I met Dan McLean, the Sea Wolf of Behring Sea, and he wanted me to go with him, but I did not want to go to sea, so he finally told me to go to work by the day with the ship's carpenter. On Saturday, after paying for my board and room I had five dollars left. I went to bed at ten o'clock; two hours later the carpenter came to my room and said he was short of money to pay his room rent, so I gave him a five dollar gold piece, telling him that that was all I had and to be sure to return some of it in the morning. In the morning he pulled out ten cents, all that was left, and asked me to join him in a glass of beer. Then he gave me an order on Captain McLean for the five dollars. On going to the dock where his vessel lay I found she had pulled out to midstream and it would cost me a dollar to hire a boat. But I had no dollar. Looking for a chance to get out to the boat I saw Alex, McLean, Dan's brother, and told him I wanted to see Dan. He told me to jump into his wagon and he would see me through. After driving a few blocks he stopped before a rough looking house and said:

"This is the hotel."

"But," I answered, "you said you were taking me to the vessel."

This hotel was run by Sailor Brown, who ran a shanghai sailors boarding house in Frisco, and they had taken me for a tenderfoot, trying to get me roped in. Bob had told me so much about these places and how they robbed poor sailors and my blood began to boil. I then told them what I thought of them and when Brown spoke up I struck him one in the eye. Soon a large crowd gathered but as it was two to one no one took their part and I got clear away. I got away unhurt, but forgot about the money, and as it was four o'clock in the afternoon and as I had had no breakfast and was without money to buy any food I went to the waterfront again and sat down on a watering trough talking to myself.

"I have always been in the wrong," I said, "but this is the worst luck yet."

As I was sitting there a man came up and putting his hand on my shoulder said:



"Hello, pard. What are you doing here?" I looked up but did not recognize him and said:

"You have got the best of me."

He put his hand in his pocket and pulled out five dollars. "Do you remember giving a sailor man five dollars one day in Astoria?" he asked.

"I do," I said. "But you don't look like the same man."

"I am though," he replied. "I was sick then and very thin."

Then I told him about my escapade of that day and he was more than kind to me just when I stood most in need of help.

These two incidents have taught me that it pays to help a man in need.

## CHAPTER X.

It might not be out of place to mention here my idea of a poling boat. Having worked with all kinds of boats I find a shovel-nosed boat is good, but it costs much money and much labor to build it, and for a cheap safe boat the scow model is the best for river work.

For a party of two or three a boat forty-five feet long and four feet wide will carry two tons and draw only six inches of water.



Description—Six feet wide on top, forty-five feet over all, four feet wide at bottom, two feet deep, six inches to the foot of flare. In the after end give seven inches of a rise in eight foot run. This boat, as sketched above, with poles and bell cord line two hundred feet long is good; a sail ten feet by ten feet with back stays and halyards leading forward will in some parts of the river be a help. The sail should be six feet above the boat so that one can see under it and when the halyards lead forward the sail can be lowered from the boat.

The discovery of gold on Gold Bottom and All Gold Creeks by Bob Henderson started twenty thousand prospectors and traders to the Yukon River and the Klondike, and after many of them had made fortunes in the Klondike more prospectors wandered over to the American side and discovered Nome, Fairbanks and other places. Then more gold on the creeks of the Lower Yukon, copper at White Horse, coal fields on the South-West Coast, oil and gold at Seward. Hundreds of traders followed the prospectors and this, with fur buying, farming and fishing at the coasts, made hundreds of small towns grow up. This in turn started the great coast freighting business and built Vancouver, Seattle and other coast towns into great cities. The great number going to the new country greatly increased the market for the farmers' produce and turned for the opening of the Peace River country, which has shown the people of Canada that the limit of their best agricultural land has not yet been reached. The Americans are now going to spend mil-

tions in Alaska in developing its resources and, as the Canadian Pacific Railway, Grand Trunk Railway and Canadian Northern Railway will all connect with the railroad in Alaska, that means more opportunity for the farmers of the West. And all this comes from Bob's discovery.

The reason for the wonderful ice jam on the Yukon River: In the first place it is two thousand miles long, rising from the Rocky Mountains, running North-West one thousand miles to Fort Yukon, in the Arctic Circle, then South-West twelve hundred miles to the Behring Sea. It has many tremendous tributaries. Commencing at Dawson on the left hand going up, there is the Indian River, five hundred miles; Stewart, one thousand; Pelly, one thousand; Big and Little Salmon, five hundred each; Hoodlink and Tisling Lakes, eight hundred; and on the right hand the Sixty-Mile, five hundred; White, one thousand; Nortenskol, five hundred; Tarkino, five hundred, and Lebarge, fed from glaciers and the mountains. When the warm weather starts in May a mighty rush of water starts and when it runs about three hundred miles the river goes through more mountains where the sun does not shine and the ice is five feet thick, the river rises thirty feet and when the ice breaks it carries all before it. I have seen the jam sweep islands with timber fourteen inches through and cut it close to the ground as if it were straw. You can imagine what dangers I have escaped after getting into these terrific ice jams and come out alive.



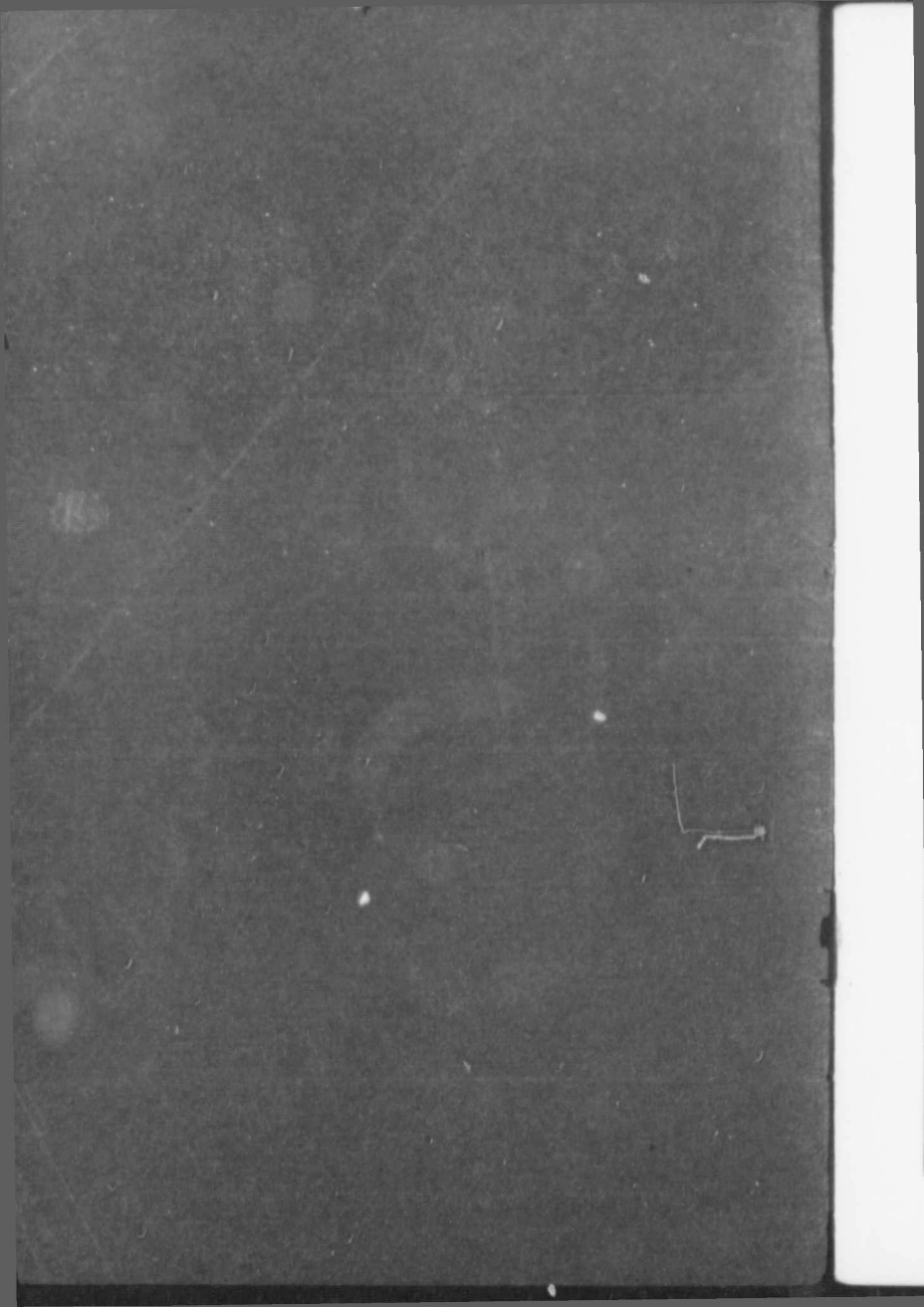


**True Story of the Discovery  
of the Klondike by Bob  
Henderson**



AUTHOR :  
CAPTAIN HENRY HENDERSON

Price - - - 35 Cents



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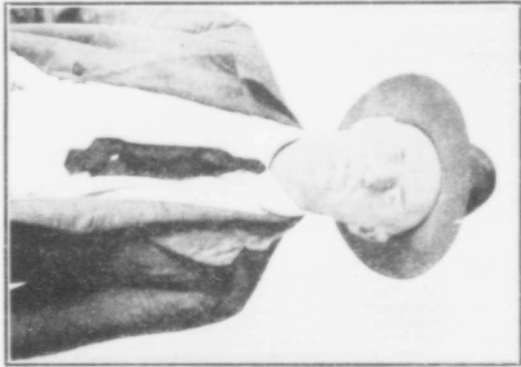


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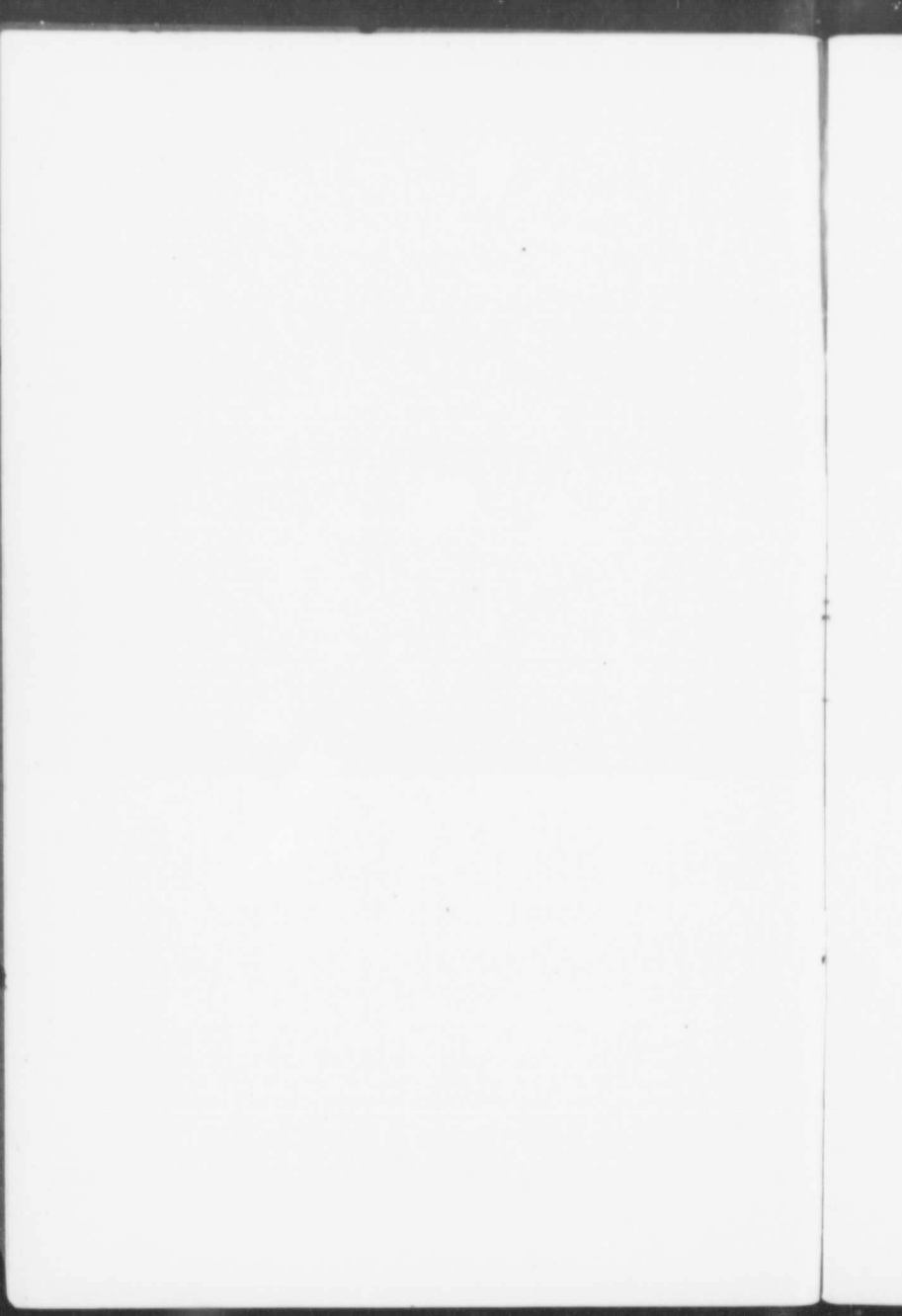
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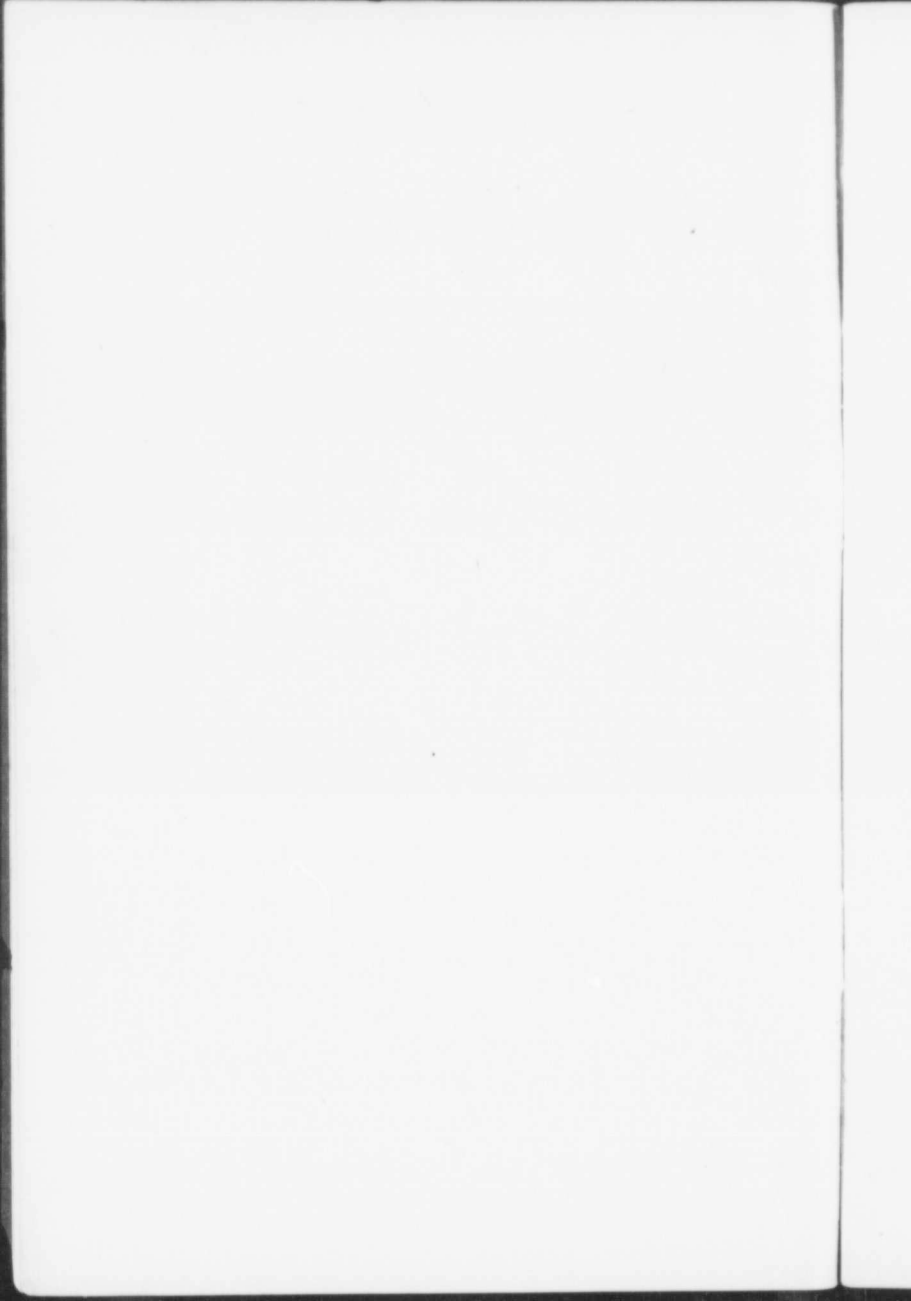


CAPTAIN HENRY HENDERSON



## PREFACE

Robert Henderson, Captain Henry Henderson's elder brother, was the discoverer of the Klondike, in the Yukon, in 1896. He was born and raised in Pictou County, Nova Scotia. Captain Henry Henderson writes this story. He was in the Yukon first in 1893 and ran the first steamboat on the Upper Yukon River from Forty-Mile to Five Finger Rapids and Stewart River, a distance of three hundred miles; the name of the steamboat was The Pelly. The boat was of 10 H.P. owned by Harper & Leduc, of Selkirk and Sixty-Mile posts.





## *True Story of the Discovery of the Klondike by Bob Henderson*

### CHAPTER I.

My parents were old country Scotch. My mother died first at the age of ninety and father at ninety-eight. There were seven in the family, three girls and four boys. John, the eldest, was drowned at the age of forty. Bill, the second son, died ten years later after sailing the Western ocean for twenty years. My two sisters, Mary and Maggie, married in New York, and Martha is living with her husband in the Yukon.

My brother-in-law owned a little vessel which ran as a packet from Merigonish to Pictou and when I was about nine years old I thought it would be great fun to work on her. Jack McGregor was the Captain's name; he was a fine man and came of a noble family, and his brother, Dr McGregor, was one of the ablest doctors in Nova Scotia.

I sailed part of three summers with McGregor. The boat carried passengers, but Jack took no fares. Liquor was plentiful and as Jack, who was a kind hearted fellow, liked a little drop as well as the rest, they generally had a big time. Then the ship would be turned over to the First Officer and crew—I was First Officer, crew and cook all in one—and I always managed to get her home safely.

Our windlass was the oldest style known—a big log with holes in it for the bars. Sometimes we would lose the bars or they would be used for firewood so we couldn't raise the anchor, in which case we would put a buoy to the chain and leave it. When we came to the next port we would go to a wharf, if there was one, or if not, would make her fast to a tree or run her into the mud, and in this way everything went smoothly. Often just before we were to sail, the passengers would meet the Captain up town to have a final drink, then he would forget to buy the ship's supply of grub, but the passengers generally had some and I always had water on board and if we ran short we could land at some farm and get a new supply.

This went on for two years when, one Fall, Jack ran the boat so hard in the mud that she went into the hands of a receiver. She is still in the mud and I have my wages coming yet.

I next sailed with Captain Miles, a minister's son, in a vessel about the same size as my first. I forget her name, but she carried about twenty tons and was in the same business as the other. This Captain was a very sober man,

never touched a drop of liquor, and was very careful about wasting money, even for grub. He used to say that it was not healthy to live too high. He finally sold the vessel and I went home.

My next vessel was commanded by Captain Dan MacDonald. He was the brother of a priest and had studied for priesthood himself, but for some reason did not finish the course. He was a big strong man without fear. This vessel was a little bigger than the others and would carry about forty tons; she should have had a crew of three, but, as I was a very big boy for my age, I was the whole crew. She was thirty years old at this time and the sails, rigging and ropes about the same age, for, on our first trip to Charlottetown the Captain got cross and broke all the halyards. The sails came down and with only the jib left we drifted into the harbour flying signals of distress.

We got some new gear and made the next trip, with a load of gravel for Prince Edward Island, in fine style. Then we went up the Georgetown river to a monstrous bazaar with a load of passengers, handsome young ladies with their favorite boys and some of the fathers and mothers to see that they didn't get washed overboard. We had six days to get to our destination and made it right on time. There was a great turnout, over two thousand people, and everything went smoothly till about noon, when, liquor having been handed about very freely, the fun commenced. That was 45 years ago now and the country was new, the day was hot, the men strong and most of them had come a long way out of the bush and were naturally wild. I have been among the wild tribes of the West, with the natives in Colorado, Arizona, Mexico and the Yukon and with the Indians of the Peace River, but I never saw anything like this wild crowd. They fought all afternoon with their fists, swore in Gaelic and hopped and jumped very high, but none was hurt very much. That bazaar was considered a great success and made lots of money and everyone went home, with black eyes and bruises, happy and contented.

We made a lot of trips all right that summer but, coming home from our last voyage to Cape Breton, one to West Bay and North Sydney with a load of stoves, late in the Fall, we got mixed up in a south-east gale that drove us ashore in Antigonish Bay.

The sea washed over us for a whole desperate night, but the old vessel was built of oak and was strong enough to see us through. Next day the gale moderated and three days later we got afloat once more and continued on our voyage. After rounding Cape George we ran into a north-west gale and a heavy snowstorm and were driven back round the Cape. Three times we tried to make round the Cape and each time the storm drove us back. Captain Donley was a noble man with a commanding voice and I will never forget how, when it was my watch below and the storm would start to break over us, he would call out, "All hands on deck to shorten sail." I was the whole crew and only fourteen years old. One night the Captain, all tired out with fighting the storm, was sleeping below and I was at the wheel when the storm came on again accompanied by snow squalls. I tried to call the Captain but he was so tired I could not waken him, so I lowered all the sails, double reefed the foresail, hove her to and lashed the wheel. The way she rolled when I was trying to reef the foresail was frightful. Once in a while the sea would break right over us, so I watched her for a while then lay down. I did not intend to sleep but was so tired that I couldn't help myself. After a while the Captain came on deck and, not seeing me, thought I had been washed overboard. He called me and was very glad to see that I was all right. With the vessel headed out to sea we rolled about for several hours, then put her before the wind and got to the breakwater at Cape George. We left her there and the ice in the winter broke her up, and that ended my schooner sailing.

Our people thought we were lost, but one cold day in November, after walking fifty miles, I came home, followed shortly by Captain Donley. The farm looked good to me for a while after that.

Bob went to New Glasgow and learned the carriage building trade. When he got through with his apprenticeship he joined a barque called "The Kipper Fae," with Fraser as master, bound for New Zealand, and after rough experi-

ences for five years, he came, via Cape Horn, to London, then across to Halifax, N.S., arriving home. His adventures in Australia, California and other places were many and varied. Once with a barque overloaded with coal near the coast of New Zealand she shipped a heavy sea which filled her decks. He was at the wheel at the time and he saw the mate pull hairs out of his head as he thought the ship was sinking, nevertheless she righted and they got her hove-to and lived through it safely.

These stories of the sea turned me against that rough life but I wanted to leave home and wanted to know how to get along away from home. We were shingling the house and he pointed to the carpenter's square and said, "Remember that." I have never forgotten it yet nor my mother's advice.

## CHAPTER II.

About 1876 I left home and went to Boston and New York and worked in Boston for one year. In 1877 I went to New York and worked for E. G. Brown in Broadway and 67th Street, North River, at dock building. I worked two years and made good. I sent a little money home and had a little left.

Hearing that Bob had gone to Colorado in the Spring of 1878, I went to Gunison, Col., and met Bob. When I met him he was driving a "Six up" of mules with one line. I asked him about the line and he said, "That's all right; that's what I, as a sailor, call the tiller rope." I found out later that "Jerk line" was the proper name for it. He asked me if I wanted to try a ride on the hurricane deck of the starboard mule.

We went to work for Carrick & Fay in the Black Canon, building the Denver and Rio Grande, as carpenters, making more coffins than anything else. The blasting half killed the men and the doctor put on the finishing touch. It was a desperate place to work in; we never saw the sun all winter.

In the Spring of 1879 Bob wanted to start for the Yukon River as it was a mineral country and a good place to look for gold, and I agreed to go. He said that by walking two hundred miles West we could build a boat and go down the Grande River to Lower California and up the coast to Alaska.

We got our grubstake and blankets and started on our journey over the mountains and on to Grand Junction. There we whip-sawed lumber for a boat.

At that place lumber was worth \$100.00 per thousand, so we sawed lumber all summer, it being the first lumber used in Grand Junction, which is a lively town now.

This delayed our start for a time. Bob was receiving letters from his Nova Scotia girl and he wanted to go home by way of California and round Cape Horn, but after much persuasion I got him to go by land. He went home and married Elizabeth Grant, the eldest daughter of Hector Grant, of Antigonish Co., N.S.

For the next seven or eight years I built ferry boats and ran them. Then Bob got tired of farming in Nova Scotia and came back to Colorado with his wife and two children. He wanted to go to the Yukon, but could not leave his family and the life there was too rough for them.

We went to Glenwood Springs in 1885 and Bob hired as boatman for the U. P. survey and I for the Rio Grande survey party. In the rough canon above Glenwood Springs, where I worked for two years, was the roughest water I ever met.

About the year 1887 Bob went to Aspen where he worked in the Sheller mine as carpenter and there he met Alex MacDonald, Duncan Stewart, Jack Grant, his brother-in-law, and Hector McLean, Jack's cousin. In 1888 Jack Grant was Sheriff of Aspen and had the record of never putting hand-cuffs on a prisoner; he was a fearless man and strong.

In the year 1889 I made a trip home to Picton where I found mother and father well and became good friends with Janet Grant, a fine girl, sister of Elizabeth Grant, Bob's wife. After a short stay home I left for Colorado. While in New York on the way out I asked a time keeper one day what was the best way to make money in Colorado. He scratched his head for a while, then said, "Study your health, for the money will come and go with the tide." In my case this was true, for I had made some money there and lost it again.

In 1889 money was very scarce with me and I talked to Bob about the North, which he said was a rich country. I went to San Francisco and Seattle and on to Alaska in 1890 and stopped there that winter, staying with



old miners who had been in the Yukon and told of the fine gold to be found on the bars. They said that a man should have about \$600.00 worth of grub to start with and to earn that amount was slow work.

In the Fall of 1892 I worked as a sailor on the Steamship George W. Elder and came to Astoria. There I met Donald Robertson from Big Island, N.S., and I told him what I had heard of the Yukon River and he agreed to go with me in the Spring.

In March, 1893, we started from Seattle and took passage on the Steamship Elki for Juneau, Alaska. Before we got to Juneau we fell in with Tom Kilpatrick, McLean, Neil McArthur and a few more bound for the Yukon, and all well known to old-timers there.

Arriving at Juneau, we left for Dyea on the little tug "Fisher." When we landed at Dyea about thirty Indians gathered round us and commenced lifting our stuff. They wanted to carry our supplies to the top of the mountain, and we eventually turned things over to them at the rate of \$10.00 per 100 pounds, and we all took a load ourselves.

We loaded our sleighs and started down the mountain side to Lindeman for the Yukon, to the head of Lake Bennet, where we whip-sawed lumber to build boats.

We all got boats built and had a long wait till the tenth of June for the lake to open. Before we left Bennet, Fred Wright, of the Yakimo Sheep Co., and Dick Perkins, of the Hotel Perkins, Portland, Ore., joined the fleet of boats, as did also Peter McDonald and party, with the first two horses that ever came into the Yukon country.

We sailed over Lake Bennet, Lake Turkish and Lake Marsh and down the river to Mile's Canon and White Horse Rapids, where we came to a full stop to look at the Canon. All the party were first class rivermen until they saw this boiling water. Neil McArthur, who had been in the Yukon the year before, was our leader, a noble man, and we all took his advice. The Commodore's order to unload all our boats was quickly obeyed. The horses were led around the Canon while I ran McArthur's scow and some small boats through the Canon and the White Horse Rapids.

Fred Wright and Dick Perkins had a canvas boat which Neil McArthur had ordered to be carried over the Canon, but, when he took his load around, I got into the canvas boat and headed for the rapids. He saw me start and at once began a stampede to the bank of the Canon, firing three shots, which was a signal to the men at the lower end, where a boat and crew were ready to help, that there was going to be a wreck. However, I landed safely; not that I was a better man than the rest but I had had eight years experience in the Grand Canon in Colorado.

The next morning we all loaded up to drop down to the White Horse Rapids. While we were unloading our boats just above the rapids, we heard shouting up the river and saw bundles coming down stream; in a minute I saw that the canvas boat had struck a rock in mid-current about half a mile above us. To get there quickly we towed the boat with a rope along the rough shore and, as the men kept on shouting, we made good time and finally got them safe ashore, nearly frozen from their dip in the icy water.

We waited one day for them to dry their outfit, then all got over the rapids in safety. From there our journey was a pleasant one to Sixty-mile Post, owned by Harper & Leduc, where we stopped for a day. We gathered round Joe Leduc to get the news of the country and to find where was the best place to look for gold. He advised Miller Creek, which flows into Sixty-mile Creek, as a good course to take, and next morning we started out. The following week was hard work, poling up stream for seventy-five miles and panning on the bars as we moved along. We found fine gold on lots of them, but we were looking for coarse gold, which we could not get.

After some three weeks of prospecting, Donald Robertson, my partner, and myself decided that we had better work on the fine gold as our grubstak was getting low. We whip-sawed lumber, made a rocker and worked hard for thirty days, making \$10.00 per day apiece. Then as our grub was diminishing fast, we returned to Sixty-Mile for more.

When we got to Sixty-Mile the Steamship Arctic had arrived from St. Michael's with supplies and the first saw-mill outfit for Joe Leduc. This we helped to unload, and as Donald Robertson could run a saw-mill he went to work for Leduc at \$10.00 per day, leaving me to paddle my own canoe. As Leduc's steamboat was one hundred and twenty-five miles up the Stewart River, he wanted me to go and bring her down and make trips to Forty-Mile for supplies, paying me \$10.00 per day to take charge of her and I agreed to go.

I had a thirty-foot boat with eight hundred pounds on and found it hard work poling it upstream, but made the trip in ten days. Moose and bear were plentiful but I had no gun. Sometimes the moose would wake me up at night, swimming the river, and bears would keep me company in the daytime as well as at night, though I could not always see them.

I arrived at McQuestron River and found the "Little Pelly" with her engineer and an old timer named Alex. McDonald, who died the next winter on his second trip to the Little Salmon River. He claimed that on his first trip he got twenty-five cents to the pan. What he got the second time no man will know—as he died alone.

After a day's rest I found that I had three weeks in which to get down to Sixty-Mile, though, after two natives had left we were short handed on the boat. The boat had a pump that could throw a great head of water so we dropped down the river a little way and set up sluice boxes. After three weeks' work on the bars and giving one-third to the owner, we found we had made seven dollars a day per man, then we went down river to Sixty-Mile. We made two trips successfully after that, then laid up the boat for the winter.

My next job was rafting logs to Forty-Mile, with two men I hired. I made good money at that for two months until the ice began to run, about October 20th.

At Forty-Mile there were two stores, the N. C. and the N. A. T., about sixty miners, and three white women—Mrs. J. J. Healey, Miss Bridget and Mrs. Bompas—and about three hundred dogs, four liquor houses, and a Church of England Mission. The miners coming from Miller Creek, Franklin Gulch and Circle City, which was discovered in 1893, made the place lively, as some of them had made as much as \$20,000.00 in the summer.

The chief pastime of the camp was card playing and dancing with the native women. In this we had two leaders, Frank Densmore and Kate McQuestron, a fine native woman. At twelve o'clock the dance stopped and the women went home, then, after a few hot rums and a song or two, if it happened to be Saturday night, Frank Densmore would call our attention to the fact that the next day was Sunday, telling us that we had better call on the Rev. Bompas and hear what he had to say. I remember we all followed his advice.

One Sunday a Mr. Rivers came to church, after being up all Saturday night playing cards and having had a hot drink just before, was overcome by sleep. One of his friends woke him up and before he realized where he was Rivers called out:

"Give us a new deck!"

Coming out Rivers remarked, "I must turn over a new leaf and settle down."

On his way from church he asked a handsome native girl to marry him.

"You got no boat," she answered. "You got no dogs. No claim on Miller Creek. What for you talk?" Rivers was clean out of luck that day.

Late in the Fall of 1893 a man named Shumack and his wife, a native of Sitka, came to Forty-Mile. He was a bad man, but his wife was a handsome woman—for a native—spoke a little English and dressed in the fashion. At the first dance she appeared in a silk waist with puffed shoulders and, as she was a good dancer, all the miners wanted to dance with her. This made the Forty-Mile natives jealous.

At the next dance there was a great change; the N.C. store had sold about \$1000.00 worth of silk to the women and they all had silk waists, with puffed shoulders as big as cabbage heads and silk sashes and ribbons galore. The Sitka girl was not in it for a minute and the miners had to take several hot drinks to celebrate the occasion. You could hear them say, "You bet my girl can wear lots of silk and puffed shoulders."

Shumack, who was stopping with Johnny Reid, made trouble later on. One night Johnny Reid had had quite a few drinks and John Nelson was taking him to his house when Shumack barred the door and would not let them in. Reid told Nelson to break in the door. This he did. Shumack grappled with him, cutting his head with a knife. Then Nelson went back to the liquor house and told what had happened. George Medlock went after Shumack and in the struggle was knifed. Feeling the blood running down his breast he felt he must be badly hurt and running over to his cabin, got his rifle and shot Shumack in the legs. Shumack recovered all right, but whenever he got too much liquor he wanted to fight and one year later was shot dead.

At one time Frank Densmore, our leader and floor manager, noticed that some rough talk was used at the dance and ordered the miners to use better language or leave the dance. After that there was nothing but the best of order and all ladies were addressed with bows as Mrs. McDonald or Mrs. O'Brien. There were no police of any kind there at that time, but the law was respected and order was good.

## CHAPTER III.

Before the river was closed in the fall I got a letter from home (it was written in June and reached me in October) which told me that my father had gone blind and wanted me to return to Nova Scotia. Three weeks before Christmas, Jack Reid said he, with Hank Wright and a native named Pitka, was going to take mail out to Juneau and wanted another man to go with them. Thinking of my mother, my blind father and the Scotch lass, Jennie Grant, of James River, and, now that I had a little money, I might do well at home, I volunteered to join the mail party. It was a desperate trip to take—six hundred miles without a broken trail and the Chilcoot Pass to cross in midwinter—and we had to haul all our grub from Selkirk to Dyea, four hundred miles.

In three weeks' time we had got together nine dogs, two sleighs and a good outfit and were ready to start. When Reid told the miners to get their letters ready as he was going to start right away they refused to let him go, saying that no man could cross the mountains at that season of the year, and we had to promise to lay over at Selkirk for thirty days.

The day after Christmas we finally started. Three days later we camped at the mouth of the Klondike River where a few Indians were living and where my brother Bob afterwards discovered gold on Gold Bottom Creek and All Gold Creek, now known as Hunker Creek. That night we slept on a bed of gold and did not know it. Next morning we left with the thermometer at forty below zero, and three days later arrived at Sixty-Mile where Donald Robertson, my partner, and ten miners were passing the winter. I told Donald Robertson of my father going blind and that I was going out. I asked him if he would go with us.

"No," he said, "the trip is too hard at this time of year."

Joe Leduc gave me a letter to deliver to the N. C. Co. in San Francisco, asking them to put a new boat on the Upper Yukon River.

After resting for two days we again started out. Ten days of hard travelling over rough ice and deep snow brought us to Selkirk, where we had promised to lay over. We rested here three days, then Reid decided to forget our promise given at Forty-Mile as it cost too much to stay at Selkirk and we all agreed with him.

It was four hundred miles to Dyea, with two chances to get grub on the way. Harper did not want us to go, as the chance was too great, but, thinking that we could get grub from the Indians at Lake Lebarge, we started with all the dogs could haul. After nine days' hard work we came to where Gorge Cormack was camped with his native wife, and from him we got as much flour and beans as he could spare, then went on again. The next ten days were the worst yet. The ice was rough; the snow was twenty inches deep; the thermometer showed fifty-five below zero—then froze up. But we kept on travelling all the time. When we got to the foot of Lake Lebarge we had seven days' grub for ourselves and two days' food for the dogs.

Hank Wright, at the first signs of distress, wanted to turn back. This was a dangerous thing to do. We only had seven days' grub. It had taken us twenty days to come this far and if we returned we would have to eat our dogs. In the hope that the lakes would be good travelling we decided to keep on. Travelling on the lake proved to be good and we made forty miles the next day, camping with some Indians from whom we got two caribou hams at \$10.00 each and a dozen rabbits—all we could rustle at any cost. This was the last meal our faithful malemutes got, though we still had hopes of finding one more camp.

To make time we took a chance and went through Mile's Canon on the ace. At Turkish House there were no Indians, and at Caribou Crossing only one native woman. She came out to meet us and ask for grub. Her men folk were all out hunting.

We kept on to Lake Bennet. We had now only four days' grub, bacon and flour, and the mountain still ahead. Next day we crossed the last lake, Lyndeman, only two miles up the mountain, and the following day kept on going up. It was snowing heavily. The dogs were getting weak from hunger, so finally we had to stop. We pulled our sleighs together, tied our canvas over them and crawled under and were there two nights without wood for a fire. We were near the summit with only snow and bacon to keep us from starving. The second morning it cleared and going out I said: "There is the summit." Reid said I was wrong, for it did not look right to him.

We found we were too weak to struggle through the deep snow to look for the summit so we turned back down the mountain about eight miles, dug a hole in the snow to enable us to put on a fire, and fixed up a pot of flour and bacon. It sure tasted like chicken to us.

After resting two nights and a day we started up the mountain again, and when we got to our Crater Lake camp I said to Reid:

"Which way do you think is right?"

He pointed to the West, and though I thought he was wrong, we decided to try his way first, as he had been over the pass late in March with an Indian guide; our Indian had never been outside. We climbed up only to find ourselves at the wrong place, so we had to return to our camp. I suggested that we had time to try my way yet before dark. If I was right we could go over the pass at night, if not we could go back down to timber. Two winters before this two men had tried to cross the pass but had frozen to death. Reid had been our leader up to this time, but he was becoming discouraged so gave up the lead to me. Pitka was just at my heels and Hank Wright not far behind; Reid was lagging in the rear.

As we neared the summit I was telling the Indian how it should look and he soon began to recognize it from my description. When we found the little lake at the foot I knew I was right. I hollered to Wright, and Reid came along as we were on the right trail at last. As we went up the snow began to drift fearfully and near the top we came to a steep pitch up which we had to crawl on our hands and knees.

Reid said, "This is not the summit."

"Come on," I replied, "Don't mind this. If the jumping off place is all right we are all right."

In about twenty minutes we were looking down the slide and I was proved right.

Shoving the dogs down ahead of us, we all pulled out our sheath knives to act as a break, and away we went down the slide, getting to the bottom well bruised up but able to walk the rest of the way down the mountain. We travelled till we came to what the miners call Stone House, and when we saw the stumps of the trees sticking out of the snow a loud cheer went up and the Indian clapped me on the back.

"You heap savey this country," he said. "We all die only for you."

We were all happy then. Two miles farther down in the timber we stopped and built a fire and ate our last meal. It was bacon and bread without yeast, but it tasted good and we were only twenty miles from Dyea, which we reached at five o'clock in the morning.

The first light we saw was in an Indian house and it certainly looked good to us. Halley & Wilson's store was there so we routed them out. Thinking we had come from Juneau, Halley said:

"Good morning, men. I didn't hear the steamer whistle."

Then we told him we came from the Yukon River.

"You mean last Fall," he said.

"No," we replied, "right now."

"If you have you are the first to come over the pass alive in midwinter," said Mr. Wilson. "You must have had a hard trip."

He was right.

They asked us where our outfit was and we told them it was on the other side of the summit on Crater Lake and that we were going to get it as soon as we were rested. What gold we had taken with us was left on the sleighs; Hank Wright had \$10,000.00, Jack Reid \$4,000.00 and I had the same. We left it without a thought—to get over the summit alive was more to us at the time.

The storm raged for ten days before we tried to get our outfit. Reid, Pitka, an Indian and myself, with ten days' grub, set out on the back trail. Two days later we found the sleighs nearly covered with snow and the gold safe; in two days more we were back at Wilson's. Before daylight the Steamship Rustler blew her whistle and we got on board for Juneau, where we parted. Jack Reid returned to the Yukon and died on the way back; Hank Wright went to his home in Kansas City, and I went to Trisco.

I first went to the mint with what gold I had, then went to the N. C. Co. and gave them the letter from Joe Leduc. The manager thought it would cost too much money to build a new boat, at least not in that year. I told him, "The Upper river is the best route to the Yukon, a river full of fine gold and with only two boats, slow ones at that, you should have half a dozen boats there that can run to White Horse Rapids." However, they evidently paid no attention to what I said, for they never built the boats. At the time of the Klondike rush an English company, the White Pass & Yukon, manned the Upper river and hold it yet with a good line of river boats and, in winter, the finest stage line in the world, and have made millions in freighting.

I went to Aspen, Col., where my brother Bob, whom I had not seen for six years, was living, and told him what I knew of the Yukon, of the fine gold on the river bars and the coarse gold at Forty-Mile.

"That is a rich country," he said. "I am going there and nothing will stop me this time."

He was referring to the time fourteen years previous when he wanted me to go there with him. One month later Bob left for the Yukon and I went home.

I found mother well and active at 80 and father well and hearty, though blind and ninety years of age. My eldest sister took him to New York for an operation and it did no good. Finding that I had to stay at home with my father and mother, I built a house and got married to Jennie Grant, of James River, Antigonish County, N.S.

## CHAPTER IV.

For the next four years I farmed and fished, lobster principally, to keep the pot boiling. In 1897 poor mother died at the age of 85 and I missed her terribly. By this time my two children, Isabel and Norman Robert, were able to run about. Isabel is now teaching school, and Norman Robert, at sixteen, is farming.

The first letter from Bob in the Yukon was in 1896, and I sent it on to his wife in Aspen. Somehow it got lost but I can never forget what it said. It was this: "Ogilvie, Yukon River, June 29th, 1896. Dear Brother—I am well and have struck it right at last. I called the Creek Gold Bottom. It runs into the Klondike. If it rains this summer, will get some gold out; if not, will do big work in the Spring. From your brother—Bob."

I was receiving the Juneau Mining Record, the only paper printed in the North at the time, and one month later I read in it about the gold strike in the Klondike. It stated that the discoverer of Hunker Creek and Gold Bottom was Robert Henderson. This, with the mention of Gold Bottom Creek, checked up with Bob's letter of the month before.

On my way home from the Yukon in 1894 I had met a man named Beardsley and told him of my trip to the Yukon, of the gold and that my brother Bob was going there in 1897. When the papers told of the great stampede for gold and of hundreds rushing to the Klondike, he wrote to me to come to New York. As mother was now dead and my children getting bigger I went to New York. Beardsley and others formed a company called the Henderson Klondike Co., of which I was vice-president, to buy mining claims in the Yukon. In the Fall of 1897 I left New York in company with a man named Clarey, whose wife accompanied him to Seattle. He had about \$5,000.00 for expenses and carried the money although I was in charge of the trip. After one week in Seattle I was ready to go, but he said he was waiting for his brother to come out to Seattle. While we were staying there he was advised by some boosters to get a lot of dogs and take grub to Dawson where he could get \$1.00 for every pound—a get rich quick proposition. Soon after that he bought \$1,000.00 worth of dogs and also took a trip to 'Frisco in company with his wife. When he came back he told me that the money was getting short. I said, "That will not go down with us. We need a lot of money to get to Dawson. Wire to New York and have them send a barrel of it." A few days later he wanted me to train the dogs. In the Grand Hotel, where we were staying, he came into the office and, in a loud voice, said:

"Henderson, you will get a pair of overalls and train these dogs!"

"Mr. Cleary," I replied, "you will remember in New York we organized a company, of which I am vice-president. You have bought dogs and spent a lot of money without my order and now you want me to train the dogs. Mr. Cleary, there will be 'nothing doing' with the dogs. I resign right here and now without a dollar."

A week later I joined the Boston and Alaska Transportation Co. at \$300.00 a month and \$1,000.00 in advance, as pilot and fuel agent.

## CHAPTER V.

With three dogs I went to the foot of Lake Lebarge and there met Henry Dore and Joe Bouche, both bound for Dawson with dogs, so we travelled together. On the lake I heard that the river was opening up and told them we would have to build a boat. My partners asked me if I had any tools.

"No," I had to answer.

"We haven't either," they said, "but we'll build a boat together if we can get any slabs."

"I can build a boat with an axe," I said.

"The Frenchman is pretty good," replied Bouche, "but he can't build a boat with only an axe."

Next day I got a pound of nails for five dollars and some slabs and by evening had got the boat well under way. Dore came over to see what I was doing.

"Henri," he said, "I thought you were fooling when you said you could build a boat with an axe. I'll go to camp and get my partner and we'll all help."

In three days we had her ready and we made a pleasant trip. They were good men to travel with. It was the rush of 1898 and a thousand boats of every description followed the ice down the river, keeping close to the jam. Frank Fisticator, Captain Mickle and Jimmy Jackson, an Indian, were with us. Fisticator was very much in a hurry to get to Dawson so he went down stream a little way, and when we came back told us the water was open a long way below the island where the jam was and that we could pass the jam. So we started and went about three miles, coming to the end of the open water. We heard the roar of the ice jam coming down behind us. The water came so fast that we had to jump for the boats and were driven into the woods. It looked badly for a while and there were a few pale faces when the jam had passed. Henry Dore turned to Fisticator:

"You would go before the jam. You would drown all the people in the world."

This made us laugh, but we did not go ahead of the jam again.

It was now a race for Dawson, with a thousand boats entered.

My boat was a little scow and could not be driven fast. In order to win out we ran day and night shifts and slipped past the others while they were asleep, although there was considerable risk following the ice in the night. Frank Fisticator thought we were behind, while all the time we were ahead of them. At Stewart River, seventy miles from Dawson, he caught up with us. He had six oars in his boat while we had only two. My partners did not like to get beaten because there was a claim to be staked. When we saw their boat coming and saw them strip off their clothes for action, my French crew and I did the same. We sent a white foam before our scow and held our own for fifteen miles. Then blisters broke out on the Frenchmen's hands and they said, "Let them go to hell!" So Fisticator reached Dawson first and we came in second.

There I met my old partner, Donald Robertson, who told me that Bob had started out in the Fall of 1897 and had got frozen in at Circle City, but would be back in Dawson with the first boat. Donald wanted me to go with him to

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Author's note—Fisticator died in San Francisco after making a fortune.



his claim, seven miles below, on Hunker Creek, as he was really my partner and wanted to do well by me, but, as I had agreed to go to the mouth of the Yukon and meet the river boats, I left Dawson with fifteen men to chop wood along the river to Circle City. I met Bob at Circle City and he told me the history of the years since I had seen him at Aspen. He said he had gone up the Hoodelinke and Pelly rivers and down in the Fall to Sixty-Mile and on to Indian river, where he had gone in the summer of 1895, prospecting for gold in the many streams running into Indian river.

"In crossing a stream near Indian river," he said, "I felled a tree to cross the stream. In felling it struck a sharp limb which had been cut off and this went into my leg. By hard work I managed to get clear and back to camp, but it made a big hole in my leg and I had to stay in camp alone for three weeks, moving around on crutches. One day I shot a moose and with the skin made a boat and then managed by hard work to get to Sixty-Mile post."

In that struggle for life Bob lost forty pounds in weight. It was a close call and his leg still hurts him.

When he got better he went back to Indian river and wintered on Quartz Creek the winter of 1895 all alone, and took out \$899.00 in gold.

In 1896 he went over the divide to the Klondike side and dropped in a creek he named Gold Bottom, and another he called All Gold, the first names given them. In a week's time he found gold good enough to put up sluice boxes, but he had to get help. At Indian river he got Munson and Swanson to proceed to Gold Bottom to whip-saw lumber for sluice boxes. Then, as grub was getting scarce, he went to Sixty-Mile.

He told Joe Leduc what he had found on Gold Bottom and advised him to move his saw-mill to the mouth of the Klondike and take up a townsite, as it was going to be a big camp. So Leduc, with four horses, loaded with grub, started for Gold Bottom. Bob took his boat and grub and went down to the mouth of the Klondike where he met George Cormack and his wife fishing with the Indians. Bob told him, too, of finding pay on Gold Bottom and advised him to go over and stake a claim. When Cormack was leaving Bob said to him:

"Are you going to prospect on Rabbit Creek on your way back? I think all those creeks are good. If you find anything better than mine let me know."

This Cormack promised to do, and with his two brothers-in-law started up Rabbit Creek over the divide to Gold Bottom and on to Bob's camp where they staked claims.

On their way back, at Rabbit Creek, Skookum Jim panned out twelve dollars, and they at once went to Forty-Mile and forgot to send word to Bob.

A steamboat with one hundred men on board then came up to the mouth of the Klondike, changed the name of the creek to Bonanza, and staked it all as well as another creek called Eldorado.

About three weeks later two men, one of them, Andy Hunker, came over the hill looking for Bob's camp and told him of Bonanza and how the whole creek had been staked. Bob asked who had made the strike and when he heard that it was George Cormack he exclaimed:

"George Cormack! Why that's the man I showed the creek to and he promised to let me know if it turned out better than Gold Bottom."

Hunker then asked if Bob had staked on the creek below.

"Yes, Bob replied, "I staked over a month ago."

Hunker remarked he would like to call the creek Hunker Creek, and to decide the matter they tossed up a dollar and Hunker won.

Three weeks later Bob went to Forty-Mile to record his claims and asked for "Discovery" on the two creeks, Gold Bottom and All Gold. The Recorder, Constantine, said he had given the discovery to Hunker and that the creek was known as Hunker Creek.

"Well," said Bob, "give me 'Discovery' on Gold Bottom."

"We can't give two discoveries in the same district," said the Recorder.

"But I staked two months before Hunker," replied Bob.

"Why did you not come before to record?" said the Recorder.

"The law gives me six months to record after staking," said Bob, but in the end he was beaten out of his just claim.

Five years later, while going up the river on a steamboat with Andy Hunker, who did not know who I was, he told me and others that he had staked a claim for Constantine and thus disclosed the reason why Bob got the worst of the deal. Constantine is now dead, Hunker is broke, and Bob is enjoying life.

## CHAPTER VI.

Leaving Circle City I went on my journey down the river, taking on two Indian pilots for the Company, and started a wood camp every one hundred miles along the fifteen hundred mile route. At New Latta I got one more pilot, Siresky. The boys, Silas and New Latta Johnny, were good rivermen and are still at the job. We got to the mouth of the river on the eighth of June, after following the ice from Lake LeBarge to the Behring Sea about two thousand miles, then on to Cape Dyer, seventy-five miles south of the river. It was a dangerous trip with the boat we had, but, after a hard struggle we got to Camp Dyer, called by the Indians, Askeena. Cape Dyer is a very high, rocky point, with rocky shores.

We waited there forty days but the boats never came. Then we ran out of grub and had to leave for St. Michael's, a distance of two hundred miles. The Company had changed their plans and gone to St. Michael's. When we got there it looked like New York with ships of all sizes, both river and ocean boats.

After a week we got started up the river with the steamer Eldorado and two barges. Captain Fussle and myself with one hundred and fifty passengers and six hundred tons of freight. After a hard struggle we got to Dawson on the first of October.

On arriving there I met Bob, who had just come down from the Stewart River where he had discovered Henderson Creek, which they are mining yet, with a good yield of gold.

We went home that Fall, I going as pilot on the Steamship Florence S. to White Horse and Bob as passenger on the same boat. Seven days later, after cutting all our own wood as we went along, we got to White Horse Rapids where we found the steamer Goddard which ran to Bennet—fare twenty-five cents and meals two dollars extra. The crew consisted of captain, fireman and captain's wife, who was cook, purser and deck hand.

The boat had accommodation for fifteen persons, but there were thirty on board. The boat sometimes listed badly and the captain's wife had to order us to "trim ship." The dining room was small, holding only three people at a time and the cook always advised us to "Go easy on the butter; it costs money." About every fifteen miles we had to go ashore and bale the water out of our boat. However, we managed to get to Bennet safely.

The trail to Dyea was good and in two days afterwards we took a passage on the "City of Seattle" for Seattle, and the train from there to Colorado. Bob went to Aspen where his wife and family lived. He did not come home rich, but they met him at the station with the band and Aspen was a lively town that night. There were lots of Canadians in Aspen who knew Bob, and he belonged to that hardy class of miners that first find the gold for the rich.

I went home to Nova Scotia and found father quite smart at the age of ninety-seven years and my wife and children well. In the Spring of 1901 Bob went back to Dawson and went to the head of the Klondike but did not find anything big.

In 1900 I went back to Dawson and started to pilot scows. I again took a scow load of potatoes to Dawson for D. D. Sawyers, who made seven thousand dollars profit on them. I made three hundred dollars. He had four other scows coming but all got wrecked, so I saved him from going broke.

The next summer I ran scows from Lake Bennet before the road got to White Horse. There were one hundred and fifty miles of lake to go over, then Miles Canon, White Horse Rapids and four hundred miles of river. The Thirty-Mile river was a bad piece and Five Finger and Rink Rapids were especially bad water, as also were Hell's Gate and Steamboat Slough.

On our last trip that fall we had seven scows. I had three, Sawyer two, and a new pilot two. The first night we left Bennet I took the lead. The new pilot wrecked his scows on Lake Bennet, it being rough weather with high winds. That night Sawyer and myself reached Caribou safely; Sawyer started to gather some of the wrecked goods so I went on with a general cargo containing a lot of potatoes. I ran the Canon and White Horse Rapids by myself. On that trip I passed one hundred and seventy-five scows, twenty were abandoned, seventy-five on the bars and the rest I outran after long hours. Keeping afloat I got to Dawson with the ice running thick.

D. D. Sawyers wrecked both his scows, but as I had his goods with my outfit I again saved him from going broke.

In the Spring I took a load of oats and wagons to Dawson after the lake opened. While trying to get through the ice on the lake a storm came up and was driving our scow through the broken ice on a lee shore; I took the side boards of the wagons, nailed them on the side of the scow, making a lee board ten feet long and six feet below the bottom of the scow. Hoisting our sail and with the help of the sweeps we sailed through the ice and got into shelter. The lee boards saved a bad wreck and probably our lives and the rest of the trip went well.

Late in the Fall the 23rd of October we left with six men and two scows loaded with oats for Dawson. The ice was then forming and it was extremely cold. We got along fairly well until we reached the Stewart River when four men tried to come aboard our scow. Their boat was in the running ice and the thermometer showed fifteen below zero. About one hundred and fifty yards from our scow they got stuck in the ice and were there four hours with only their summer clothing on. They were hollering to us for God's sake to save them. One of our men said he would try, and with the help of a pole got a rope to them and when the rope was made fast we pulled the boat alongside the scow. We had to help some of them on board, as their hands were nearly frozen. That night we tied up at Adams Island. After a struggle next morning we started off again, it being the 3rd of November, and pulled for Dawson, thirty-five miles away. We had made four miles down the river when the ice drove us against the bank with great force and it looked as if all was over. I told the men to pull in their sweeps and come to the after end.

When the scow struck she broke ten feet from the fore end and smashed all our outriggers as well. The oats saved it from breaking further and the slush ice jammed so tight that very little water came in and we drifted on a bar below. I rigged up our sweeps again, took some oats off the scow that was broken and put them on the other, and we got off the bar and reached Dawson at twelve at night. Next day the river closed; it was a close call getting it.

In the Spring of 1902, with two scows and a general cargo for Andy Mushro and Clark, we loaded at the foot of Lake Lebarge. Andy Mushro took two scows and followed the ice; it meant big money for the man who reached Dawson first. At Rink Rapids thirty scows were waiting for the jam to break. About midday the jam broke and in three hours Mushro wanted to start. I did not want to start until morning but he was bound to go. The other scows waited till morning and they were right. That night we came to the jam and it was moving; we could not land for there was a wall of ice twenty feet high on either side, so we went right into the jam, which was a wild sight and made through safely with only a few holes above the water lines. Two days later we got to Dawson and Andy made good money.

That summer I ran two trips to Circle City, three hundred miles below Dawson, with cattle that were driven there from Fairbanks. In 1903 I was the pilot on the La France, the first steamer up the Pelly river, to Houle Canon and Ross River, with goods for Tom Smith, who had a trading post at Ross River. On my first trip in 1904 I made safely to Dawson and went pilot on the Steamship Quick and ran the rocky Pelly River with Captain Gear.

In 1905 I again followed the ice to Dawson and at the Hoodlinke tied alongside Al. Lovely's scows. In the morning he gave me the slip and got away an hour ahead of us. We ran all that day and the next evening found him tied up, about ten o'clock, four miles above Hell's Gate. The steamer Prospector was ahead of us and, not seeing her, we thought the ice must be clear of Hell's Gate, but we soon came in sight of him and Captain Jackman blew three whistles to let us know that the ice was still in Hell's Gate. We pulled for the steamer but she wouldn't take our line; said we would part his wire cable. We had only a light load of seventy tons and were now up against a half broken jam, while four hundred yards below us the current was running fifteen miles an hour. We tried to land below the steamer, getting one man on shore with a line to make fast to a tree, but when the line was nearly all out, it parted. Then one man jumped ashore and deserted, leaving us two men short and in the night watch. It looked as if the end of life was near, but I told the men to stand by the sweeps and we would fight our way through. The roar of the ice in rocky Hell's Gate below put a chill through our hearts as we neared the battle of our lives. The holes through the jam were narrow, not wide enough for two scows, and crooked, and one could not see far ahead. When we struck the ice the scows raised high, knocking all hands down and breaking the sweeps. The double ends of two inch plank saved us from wrecking and with two men short, no line and three sweeps missing we fought the ice till daybreak and reached Selkirk where the river broadens. I will never forget that night. It was reported from Selkirk that Henderson's scows were wrecked in the ice jam, but when the steamer reached Dawson we were safe there, winning the race against Al. Lovely. The remainder of the summer I went as pilot on the Steamship Prospector.

## CHAPTER VII.

In the summer of 1906 Bob went to Ottawa, was appointed mining engineer, then to Aspen and took his wife and four children back with him to Dawson. The next fall he went up the Pelly river with his two boys, Henry and Johnny, and Billy Forbes. In our last trip that fall we got stuck in the ice at Dawson for four days, but when it moderated we followed the Steamship Gasca, a good boat to buck ice, and got to White Horse. As the ice was commencing to run and Bob and Billy and the two boys were not yet home Bob's wife was getting anxious. I kept on the look-out for them. Some thirty miles up the river we saw them coming down on a raft seventy feet long by twenty feet wide. They had on it five moose and a tent made of moose hide. The two boys were on the forward sweeps, Billy at the after sweep, while Bob was pilot, on the hurricane deck. It was a picture of an old timer from real life, and the steamer blew three whistles as we passed Bob and his brave crew. They got home that night and we got safely to White Horse.

In the Spring of 1907 I went from the foot of Lake Lebarge with a load of cattle for Cowmiller, Victor and Shade, traders of Fairbanks. The scows were each twenty feet by ninety feet and the three of them carried two hundred tons of freight besides cattle, sheep, horses, poultry and a crew of twelve men, with fourteen passengers. At Thirty-Mile the passengers all helped in working through the short bends of the river and we got through safely. The next bad place was the Five Fingers, then the Rink Rapids and on to Hell's Gate. The passage through the Five Fingers is only seventy feet wide and our scows together being sixty feet wide it was close work with the current running about fifteen miles an hour. That was the largest load ever taken down the Thirty-Mile in low water without a steamboat.

The rest of that summer I took freight up the Forty-Mile River to Chicken Creek. I was working with Billy James, the man who found the Shushana placer mines. He was a good river man and we finished the summer all right though a lot of men have been drowned in that river.

In the spring of 1908, with a partner named Fellscher, I started with two scows of general cargo and all went well till passing Yukon Crossing where we were told that the ice was clear to Selkirk, some fifty miles down. When we had gone only six miles we came to the moving jam. We tied up to an island and fought the ice all night; sometimes when the jam moved, the water would fall ten feet, then it would rise again as much, but by hard fighting we managed to save our scows and went on our way to Dawson in safety. I freighted up the Forty-Mile the rest of the summer with good luck.

In the Spring of 1909 I again followed the ice to Dawson and got there first. That summer I went pilot on the Steamship Quick, the first steamboat to go to Teslin Lake, and we built for Tom Smith the first trading post on that lake, then laid the boat up at White Horse for the winter.

In the Spring and Summer of 1910 I took scows to Dawson and Circle City. This was my last summer running scows, as the White Pass Company boats all handled barges and put the scowman out of business.

When scowing first commenced on the Yukon the scows were twelve feet by forty feet and fifteen tons was considered a good load. Now they are twenty feet by ninety feet and seventy tons is the ordinary load, and each pilot takes three scows at a time.

In the Spring of 1911 I went to Victoria and got my captain's papers, then ran a boat, the Steamship Klunna, for Taylor & Drewry, up the Pelly and Hoodlinke rivers, finishing the summer satisfactorily.

In 1912 I ran a boat for the boundary survey, which was in charge of Mr. Craig for the Canadian Government and Mr. Riggs for the United States Government. With four gasoline boats we left White Horse for Fort Yukon and Rampart House, and after making a few trips with the mail to Fort Yukon, Craig and Riggs, with a man named Pope, wanted to explore the Crow River to see if freight could be taken up there. Going up the Porcupine River about one hundred miles above Rampart House we came to the mouth of the Crow River and on up it for three hundred miles. We found it a very crooked stream running through a flat country full of small lakes, with game, caribou, wild geese and ducks, very plentiful. That was the first boat ever up the Crow River and we got within one hundred miles of the Arctic Ocean. When Craig and Riggs finished their business we came back to Rampart House and for the rest of the summer carried the mail. We made the round trip of five hundred miles in a week. After getting back to Dawson in the Fall this finished my work on the Yukon River after following the ice jam for ten years, during which time I never had a wreck or lost a man. I now leave the river work to younger men.

The Guggenheimers are now mining in the Yukon with the largest mining ditch in the world and the largest dredges I have ever heard of. My brother Bob is still living in the Yukon with one girl, Cassie, and three boys, Henry, Johnny and Grant. The oldest is in charge of the clean-up on five dredges with Henry and Johnny helping him, while the father looks after his own government work. They are a happy family.

The discovery by Bob of gold on Gold Bottom and All Gold Creeks attracted hundreds of prospectors, started Nome, Fairbanks, Detroit and Shushanne and put millions of dollars in circulation.

## CHAPTER VIII.

In the Fall of 1912 I came to the great valley of the Peace. Although I have been fourteen years away from home I never had enough money to go East and return to the Yukon. I have sent money home every year to keep the pot boiling and intend to visit Nova Scotia next year. My wife is in good health and now my boy is 17 years old, while my girl, one year older, is teaching school.

To the average miner too much money is dangerous. I could name at least thirty old timers who had accumulated from two thousand dollars to five hundred thousand dollars who are now dead and gone before the age of sixty years. Bob and myself were perhaps lucky that we did not get too much gold, for we are still enjoying life. I had several different partners in the Yukon, and as my schooling was poor they kept the books, and it seemed that every time they figured I lost. They kept the books and the money too. One partner I remember went under the ice with seven more below Forty-Mile in the ice jam and were never seen again.

I am now, in 1914, on my homestead in the Peace River Valley near Grande Prairie City. Last year I raised thirty acres of oats and averaged seventy-five bushels to the acre and I enjoy the life. I don't have to turn out at midnight to take the wheel of a river steamboat in the dark cold nights of fall on the Yukon River, or still worse, man the hurricane deck of a scow load of freight following the Yukon ice jam where so many good men have met a watery grave.

I came to the Peace River with John McAuley and his partner, W. L. Caldwell, who are doing a large fur and general business in Grande Prairie. Mr. McAuley used to keep the trading post at Little Salmon River and is well known to many old time Yukoners.



## CHAPTER IX.

There are two incidents in my life that I cannot forget. Once in my home in Nova Scotia, when I was driving a cow to Pictou town, thirty miles away, I came to the railroad crossing and the cow refused to cross the track. I was only twelve years old at the time and very tired and had to give up tearfully. Then a strange boy came along, and seeing how things were helped me with the cow and we soon had her across the track in good shape. I thought that boy was a mighty good fellow but I had nothing to offer him. Three years later I went to live with my brother-in-law near the old Richmond depot in Halifax. One day I saw a boy coming up with a bundle of straw, the wind was blowing hard and he could not hold it and his tears were flowing freely. I went over to him and offered to help, and together we got the straw home. On the way he said, "I know you," and when I asked him where he had seen me before he replied:

"I helped you to drive a cow across the railroad track in Pictou."

Twelve years later in Astoria, Oregon, I was on the pier when the Frisco boat came in and one of the crew came to where I was standing and told me he was sick. He looked pale and asked me if I could give two dollars to buy some medicine, as the purser would not advance him any money because he had only four days' pay coming to him. I gave him five dollars, thinking he might need to buy more. He left with the boat, saying that he hoped he would see me again.

One year later I went to San Francisco and after one month my money ran short, and on going to the waterfront to look for work I met Dan McLean, the Sea Wolf of Behring Sea, and he wanted me to go with him, but I did not want to go to sea, so he finally told me to go to work by the day with the ship's carpenter. On Saturday, after paying for my board and room I had five dollars left. I went to bed at ten o'clock; two hours later the carpenter came to my room and said he was short of money to pay his room rent, so I gave him a five dollar gold piece, telling him that that was all I had and to be sure to return some of it in the morning. In the morning he pulled out ten cents, all that was left, and asked me to join him in a glass of beer. Then he gave me an order on Captain McLean for the five dollars. On going to the dock where his vessel lay I found she had pulled out to mid-stream and it would cost me a dollar to hire a boat. But I had no dollar. Looking for a chance to get out to the boat I saw Alex, McLean, Dan's brother, and told him I wanted to see Dan. He told me to jump into his wagon and he would see me through. After driving a few blocks he stopped before a rough looking house and said:

"This is the hotel."

"But," I answered, "you said you were taking me to the vessel."

This hotel was run by Sailor Brown, who ran a shanghai sailors boarding house in Frisco, and they had taken me for a tenderfoot, trying to get me roped in. Bob had told me so much about these places and how they robbed poor sailors and my blood began to boil. I then told them what I thought of them and when Brown spoke up I struck him one in the eye. Soon a large crowd gathered but as it was two to one no one took their part and I got clear away. I got away unhurt, but forgot about the money, and as it was four o'clock in the afternoon and as I had had no breakfast and was without money to buy any food I went to the waterfront again and sat down on a watering trough talking to myself.

"I have always been in the wrong," I said, "but this is the worst luck yet."

As I was sitting there a man came up and putting his hand on my shoulder said:

"Hello, pard. What are you doing here?" I looked up but did not recog-  
nize him and said:  
"You have got the best of me."  
He put his hand in his pocket and pulled out five dollars. "Do you remember  
giving a sailor man five dollars one day in Astoria?" he asked.  
"I do," I said. "But you don't look like the same man."  
"I am though," he replied. "I was sick then and very thin."  
"Then I told him about my escapade of that day and he was more than  
kind to me just when I stood most in need of help.  
These two incidents have taught me that it pays to help a man in need.

## CHAPTER X.

It might not be out of place to mention here my idea of a poling boat. Having worked with all kinds of boats I find a shovel-nosed boat is good, but it costs much money and much labor to build it, and for a cheap safe boat the scow model is the best for river work.

For a party of two or three a boat forty-five feet long and four feet wide will carry two tons and draw only six inches of water.



Description—Six feet wide on top, forty-five feet over all, four feet wide at bottom, two feet deep, six inches to the foot of flare. In the after end give seven inches of a rise in eight foot run. This boat, as sketched above, with poles and bell cord line two hundred feet long is good; a sail ten feet by ten feet with back stays and halyards leading forward will in some parts of the river be a help. The sail should be six feet above the boat so that one can see under it and when the halyards lead forward the sail can be lowered from the boat.

The discovery of gold on Gold Bottom and All Gold Creeks by Bob Henderson started twenty thousand prospectors and traders to the Yukon River and the Klondike, and after many of them had made fortunes in the Klondike more prospectors wandered over to the American side and discovered Nome, Fairbanks and other places. Then more gold on the creeks of the Lower Yukon, copper at White Horse, coal fields on the South-West Coast, oil and gold at Seward. Hundreds of traders followed the prospectors and this, with fur buying, farming and fishing at the coasts, made hundreds of small towns grow up. This in turn started the great coast freighting business and built Vancouver, Seattle and other coast towns into great cities. The great number going to the new country greatly increased the market for the farmers' produce and turned for the opening of the Peace River country, which has shown the people of Canada that the limit of their best agricultural land has not yet been reached. The Americans are now going to spend mil-

tions in Alaska in developing its resources and, as the Canadian Pacific Railway, Grand Trunk Railway and Canadian Northern Railway will all connect with the railroad in Alaska, that means more opportunity for the farmers of the West. And all this comes from Bob's discovery.

The reason for the wonderful ice jam on the Yukon River: In the first place it is two thousand miles long, rising from the Rocky Mountains, running North-West one thousand miles to Fort Yukon, in the Arctic Circle, then South-West twelve hundred miles to the Behring Sea. It has many tremendous tributaries. Commencing at Dawson on the left hand going up, there is the Indian River, five hundred miles; Stewart, one thousand; Pelly, one thousand; Big and Little Salmon, five hundred each; Hoodlinke and Tisling Lakes, eight hundred; and on the right hand the Sixty-Mile, five hundred; White, one thousand; Nortenskol, five hundred; Tarkino, five hundred, and Lebarge, fed from glaciers and the mountains. When the warm weather starts in May a mighty rush of water starts and when it runs about three hundred miles the river goes through more mountains where the sun does not shine and the ice is five feet thick, the river rises thirty feet and when the ice breaks it carries all before it. I have seen the jam sweep islands with timber fourteen inches through and cut it close to the ground as if it were straw. You can imagine what dangers I have escaped after getting into these terrific ice jams and come out alive.



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