

MARVELLOUS KLONDIKE.

SOMETHING ABOUT THE COUNTRY AND ITS DISCOVERER.

It is a Fascinating Story—Unfold Wealth in the Far North—Hardships of the Miners—Many and Bitter Disappointments—Stampedes From Circle City—Told By a Special Correspondent of Harper's Weekly.

He treated with disdain Cobb's threat to jump the claims, and said he would go and see the recorder. McKay arrived on the scene, and the recorder told them that if they cut their names off Bonanza, he would put their names down on the new creeks. This Clements, Antone, and Keller did.

The first of a gang of stampedes, who had come to Dawson on the steamer, arrived. Among those were William Scouse and William Sloan, who took 14 and 15. Some one staked 13 in a fictitious name, to try to hold for a friend, perhaps, and this was afterwards jumped by a man of the name of Hollingshead.

"We all went over to the creek, and began to measure and record.

Cobb jumped Phiscater's claim, as he had not taken his name off Bonanza. The name of the creek was formally declared to be "El Dorado, as agreed upon at the meeting the night before.

Cobb lost his claim, for Constantine decided that at the time he jumped there was plenty of as good ground farther up the creek, and that it was hoggyish, to say the least, to jump ground where a discovery of gold had been made. Had all the five claims been jumped, instead of only one, and this been done after the creek had been staked, there is a chance whether Antone, Keller, and company would

NOT HAVE LOST THEIR CLAIMS,

to which they had not the slightest legal right until they had taken their names off Bonanza, and the reasons that barred Cobb would not have applied to late comers, when there was no more ground on the creek above.

The spot where the gold was discovered was, like the discovery on Bonanza, at the edge of the creek on the line of Nos. 2 and 3. It was taken from a cut in the bank, and was practically surface gold that had slid down from the old channel on the hill-side. It was nothing more or less than 'bench' gold, the existence of which was not even suspected at that time. From a hole eighteen inches deep in the creek-bed, and under water, as high as two dollars was taken out. Bed-rock where the real richness lay, and the real creek-bed, was fifteen or sixteen feet below the surface, under muck and gravel.

The next morning, at six o'clock, we started back, and reached the Indian village at one p.m. crossed over to our cache, and had dinner. Then we started for Forty Mile, which we reached at ten-thirty that night, and next day we recorded again, and finally at Constantine's office.

Johns, like so many others, little knew the value of the claim he had staked. After some days, a favorable report must have been received from the new diggings. He was offered \$500 for the claim, and sold it to Knut Langlovs and Mrs. Healy. One half was cash, the other half to be paid when bed-rock was reached. In the case of the man who staked 29, and played Charlie Anderson for an easy mark, he too simply judged Klondike values like others in that country. Those who sold were by no means fools. They simply had a chance to sell for a grub stake, which was about all a man usually got from a year's work. And if the truth were confessed, the reason why there were not more sales at that time was that

THERE WERE FEW BUYERS.

For this is what happened; first claims were of no value; then, as gold was found, they rose in value slowly first, then with great leaps. The seller would want, say, a thousand dollars; by the time the buyer found that it was really worth a thousand, the claim owner had discovered it to be worth ten thousand; and when the buyer was willing to buy at that price, the value had jumped to twenty thousand, and so on. The buyers were just one lap behind the sellers.

No. 31 El Dorado was sold by the original staker for \$100, \$80 being cash. Within six months it was sold for \$31,000, and one year later the owner refused \$150,000.

One-half of 39 El Dorado, it is said, was sold for a sack of flour. The owners, big Alec McDonald and Billy Chappell, did not think enough of it to work it themselves, but rather late in the season put it out on a lay, and took a lay themselves on another claim. The laymen struck it the first hole, and out of thirty burnings took out \$40,000.

Antone went to Forty Mile after staking. He was short of grub, and wanted to work his claim. Ordinarily any man could get credit in the lower country, but when Antone applied to the Alaska Commercial Company, the temporary agent would not let him have it unless it was guaranteed. One Clarence Berry came forward, guaranteed Antone's bill, and received in return a one-half interest in the claim. Berry was sometimes spoken of as a "tin-horn gambler," was not supposed to have much money

and he was never called upon to make the guarantee good. It was whispered about the camp that the agent expected to profit by the transaction. As a matter of fact he did not. Afterwards Antone and Berry bought controlling interests in Nos. 4 and 5, and a fraction of claims became known, through the public press as "the Berry claims," about which there was a little romance of a winter trip, a young bride, and nuggets by the handful.

The length of the claims here, as elsewhere in the Canadian Yukon, was five hundred feet, instead of one hundred feet allowed by the general law of Canada. The modification in favor of the larger claim was brought about in 1894 through the agency of Captain Constantine, who recognized that, on both sides of the international line, which crossed the heart of the Forty Mile diggings, mining conditions were precisely the same; indeed, the exact location line was unknown until 1896. On the American side the miners

MADE THEIR OWN LAWS,

and might make the claim any length they chose, up to something over three hundred feet; but upon nearly all the gulches it had been fixed at five hundred feet, as the smallest claim that could be worked, at the same time being large enough to afford return for the labor of prospecting. At least five hundred feet was required to give a sufficient drop of water for the sluice-boxes. This wise act was one of many indications at that time of Canada's sincere desire to govern her growing territory in the best interests of the country and the miners.

Another right which the miners had under United States law was that of appointing one of their own number, and one recorder for each gulch. The Canadian system, however, provided one man in a mining district, appointed by Ottawa, whose sole business was to act as recorder, or gold commissioner. Where the diggings were near at hand, this was no great inconvenience, but where they were distant not less than sixty miles, as the new diggings of Klondike, the miners themselves were under the necessity of appointing a temporary recorder, as Mr. Johns has mentioned, so as to avoid the long trip, as well as to straighten out at once disputes that inevitably occur. They paid this recorder \$2 for each claim, agreeing at the same time to pay to Captain Constantine in due season the \$15 required by Canadian law.

When they began to measure the claims, by some trick, a forty-foot rope was introduced, instead of a fifty-foot one. This had the effect of reducing the five hundred foot claims by fifty feet or more, which left fractions between that by this time were of great value. These were seized upon and staked the same as full claims, but upon the deception being found out, there was a big row, and Mr. William Ogilvie the Canadian Boundary Commissioner, who happened to be in the country at the time, called from Forty Mile to settle the trouble. Mr. Ogilvie, being a magistrate, took testimony; the men confessed, were repentant, and were forgiven; and then Mr. Ogilvie made a partial survey of Bonanza and El Dorado. But many of the claims on Bonanza were short.

One of these short claims was not the fault of the official measurer. It was on lower Bonanza. I never found out just where, but it was staked by a mounted policeman. The creek winds very much there, and

THE VALLEY IS BROAD,

He should have measured the five hundred feet in the direction of the valley, but he was not able to see the direction, perhaps on account of the thick woods, and followed the creek in its winding. When the surveyor came along and threw lines across the valley corresponding to his upper and lower stakes, the poor policeman, instead of having a claim was in debt six feet.

One of the claims near Discovery on Bonanza was staked by Micky Wilkins. Micky was not one of those who were thrown into boats and brought along noisens volens from Forty Mile in the first stamped, but he was one of a party who did help tie a drunken man and throw him into the boat. Micky, like a wise man, sold out for a few hundred dollars. When they came to survey the claim, the new owner found only a few inches. I felt sorry for all who sold at the very start until I met Micky.

A fraction of a claim would hardly seem worth having, at least except in staked like Klondike. No. 2 above was staked long. John Jacob Astor Dusel was a good miner and he wanted to take in the mouth of Skookum Gulch. Dick Low put the tape to Dusel's claim, and found it about eighty-five feet too long, and took a narrow slice directly opposite the mouth of Skookum. He did not think so much of it at the time. He wanted \$900 for it. No one was so foolish as to pay that much for the narrow strip of ground. He tried to let it out on a lay, but no one wanted to work it for an interest. He had to work it himself, poor man! The first hole was put down by his present foreman, and he did not find a cent. Further account of what is probably the richest piece of ground in the whole Klondike must be left till later, when there are pack-horses to carry the gold down to Dawson.

On El Dorado the claims were almost all excessively long. It looked as if they were measured by guess while on the run, and then a lot more added to make sure. One fraction, 37 A, is four hundred and twenty feet long—almost a whole claim! Several are from one hundred to one hundred and sixty feet in length. Sometimes the second man has been in a hurry and not measured his fraction correctly, and a third man comes along and

FINDS ANOTHER TINY SLICE.

Nothing was too small on El Dorado. There was one ten-foot fraction. It was

thought to be worth ten to twenty thousand dollars. A thirteen-foot fraction was found next to it. It was so narrow that the owner had to take a lay of thirty-seven feet on an adjoining claim in order to work it.

Nor was all the luck confined to the mines. A butcher by the name of "Long Shorty," otherwise Thorp, had driven in some cattle, and was trying to reach Forty Mile late in the fall, in the ice with the meat on a raft. He was frozen in at the mouth of the Klondike, only to discover there a big mining camp. That beef was a godsend to the miners that winter. It is considered essential to prevent scurvy. Provisions were very scarce. The transportation company had been able to bring enough up to supply the camp. Flour had to be freighted with dogs from Forty Mile, and sold at four for fifty to sixty dollars for a fifty-pound sack. Beef was one to two dollars a pound. Mining tools were scarce also, shovels bringing seventeen and eighteen dollars each. But wages were proportionately high—one dollar and a half to two dollars an hour for common labor, and often not to be had at that price. The price of wages corresponded to the opportunities afforded by prospecting.

The first hole to be put down by burning is credited to Skookum Jim. Pages could be filled with the finds that day by day were made on those claims that were worked that winter. The personage not unknown to fame, "Swiftwater Bill," with William Leggett and six others, took a lease, or lay, of 13 El Dorado. Seven holes were put down before the pay was struck, though many think there was pay in one of the first holes, and that they filled it up. At any rate, they asked the price—\$45,000—bought the claim paid \$10,000 down, put in a rocker, and paid for the claim in six weeks.

On account of the distance to Forty Mile, sixty days were allowed in which to record. Any claims not recorded within the sixty days were open for relocation. There were several such claims, left vacant by men who considered them no good, and recorded elsewhere. Such a claim was No. 40 above on Bonanza. It was known to a large number that the claim was open, and a Mounted Policeman was there, with watch in hand to announce when exactly twelve o'clock midnight came.

IT WAS IN JANUARY.

There were several parties on foot, and two men who had dog outfits. Promptly at twelve o'clock all hands staked and started. Lereaux and a companion, Vaughan, ran to No. 48 above, where one team was waiting. Lowerie, the other dog-man, put down the trail on the run for Dawson, where an In-Indian was waiting. Lereaux had the same number. At Dawson they were not far apart. The men both had good dogs. But dogs are poor things to race with, as every one knows. A dog has no ambition to pass ahead like a horse; he prefers to follow. Besides, when the trail is narrow, it is hard for one team to pass another. How they did manage to pass each other at all is a marvel, but it happened that every time they passed a cabin the leading team insisted on turning out, whereupon the hind team would seize the opportunity and dash by. It was a great advantage to have a man run ahead of the dogs. When they reached Forty Mile, Lowerie and the Indian were ahead. The recorder's office was across the creek, at Fort Cudahy. The Indian did not know this, or else the dogs determined to turn into Forty Mile. Lowerie saw the mistake, jumped from his sleigh, and made for the recorder's office on the dead run, with Lereaux just with him. Both men reached the office at the same moment, and fell against the door. They were both so exhausted that for a moment they could not say what they had come for. When they recovered sufficient breath to announce their business, Captain Constantine told them he would wait to see if there were others behind; and no one else coming, he divided the claim between them.

A detachment of Mounted Police came up to Dawson in the late winter or spring, bringing the record-books with them. The certificates of registry of that time were in manuscript, there being no printed blanks available. A military reservation was set apart between Ladue's town site and the Klondike River. A rectangle of log houses, for barracks, was built on a piece of ground somewhat higher than the general level of the flat, and was set up the union-jack in the red flag of Great Britain.

The clean-up was already under way, and preparations being made for the summer ground-slucing, when the river broke, and the new-comers, who had received the news from friends inside, began to pour in.

SUDDENLY MADE RICH.

There was no real disorder, no shootings, no hold-ups, none of the things associated in the popular mind with a real live mining-camp. Something in the Yukon air discourages all that. It could not be the presence of the police, for there are no police at Circle City, and a baker's dozen were at Dawson. Gold flowed, and when it would not flow it was sowed, literally sowed, broadcast over sawdust floors, in drunken debauch, as if there was no end to the supply. Gold was panned out of the sawdust on the floors of the saloons; whole saloonsful of men would be asked up to drink, at a dollar a drink. Sometimes orders were given to call in the town, and then the bartender would go out into the street and call everybody in, and they would have to drink. Whenever one of the new millionaires was back-crowded, always a good-natured one, would forthwith pick him up by the legs and arms and swing him like a battering-ram against the side of the house until he cried out, "Enough," or "I seen you first! I seen you first!" and the new millionaire had to treat. There had never been seen anything

like it before, nor was anything quite to equal it the second year.

The afore-mentioned "Swiftwater Bill," whose chief claims to have been the way he "blew" in money, spent \$40,000, and had to borrow \$5,000 to go outside with. His claim was good for it, though. He quarrelled with a woman, and observing her order eggs in a restaurant, he bought up every egg in town—at a cost of one dollar each.

How much gold came out of the ground that first summer can never be known. Two and one-half millions is probably not far from the mark. The richness of the fifteen miles reported by Mr. Ogilvie was much exaggerated. The pans of dirt that were washed out gave him reason for believing, upon computation, that there might be actually four million dollars in each claim. But these were not averages. Far, far from it. Even if they were, the enormous cost of working the richest, yet costliest, diggings in the Yukon was not taken into consideration as it should have been.

Clements panned out of four pans \$2000, the largest being reported at \$775. Clarence Berry showed gold in bottles that he said represented, respectively, \$500, \$230, and \$175 pans. There were many others like these. Of course they were picked and scraped off bed-rock, and did not represent average dirt. Five dollars, even one dollar, "straight," as it is called, would be.

ENORMOUSLY RICH.

If pay streak were 100 feet wide and 3 feet deep, there would be 150,000 cubic feet, equal to, say, 675,000 pans of dirt. Think what an average of a dollar to the pan, or even twenty-five cents, would be! On some claims the streak is wider; on others, less.

One hundred and thirty thousand dollars came out of the Berry-Antone claims, 6 and the fraction. There were spots on Bonanza as rich as El Dorado, but not so even and regular. One thousand dollars to the foot is the top figure, on an average, for best of El Dorado, but the cost is one third for taking it out.

The first year showed nuggets of all sizes up to one of \$85, estimated at 1 oz., or \$17, from 36 El Dorado.

The fortunate ones started for civilization with their new wealth. Not all. Many remained to work their claims, and these, perhaps not less happy nor exultant, were not heard of outside in the excitement that accompanied the breaking of the good news to the world. The bulk of the gold, amounting to not over \$1,200,000, went out, of course, down river, to St. Michael, where waited the good steamer Portland of the N.A.T. & T. Company, crowded with friends and relatives of the returning miners, who had sent word home of their coming. Others preferred the up-river trip, and in parties of three and five took to their poling-boats, and it was some of these, and still others, fleeing for their lives from the threatened famine, that we ourselves met on our way in last year.

WOMEN YOU CAN'T SNUB.

Do you know who is the most exasperating woman in the world? The woman you can't snub. She is two kinds—the meek and lowly sort, that when you snub her turns the other cheek, until you're positively too tired to deal her another blow, and the one whose self-importance is invulnerable as Achilles' heel. I met one of the last kind early in the winter, says a writer. On general principles, I would avoid this woman, because she's skinny and her face shines. Something is all wrong about a skinny woman; one way or another she's dangerous.

When a skinny woman's face shines it means she's above using powder and is sure to make a parade, as a virtue, of the very wrong that is to account for the lack of flesh on her bones. I couldn't help the woman calling on me, and I returned her first call rather than run the risk of what she might do to me if I violated this fundamental principle of right social action as prescribed by every etiquette book in the land. When she called a second time she addressed me as an "my good woman." I can forgive almost anything but being called a good woman—only a mental or mediocrity past 40 is properly termed good woman. I resolved to snub this creature, and I wanted her to know I was snubbing her. I would never return her visit—never. And how do you suppose she takes it? Every time she sees me she apologizes to me for not having returned my visit—blots my intended neglect of her out of mind and patronizes me with the assumption that it is she who is neglecting me. Mark the wisdom I have uttered.

TEA CIGARETTES.

The fierce crusade against tobacco cigarettes in London has developed the tea cigarette, which is particularly patronized by women.

The cigarettes are made of a coarse grade of green tea, which has but little dust, and is composed of unbroken leaf. This is dampened so that the leaves may be stuffed in the paper cylinders, but not sufficient to affect the paper. The taste is said to be disagreeable at first, the effect on beginners being a sense of oppression in the head and a desire to take hold of something.

After a few cigarettes have been smoked the depressed feeling is succeeded by one of intense exhilaration. Physicians say the effect on the nerves is as deleterious as drinking absinthe. The first step toward a cure is a cup of strong tea.

Permanent Cure of Cancer.



MRS. GILHULA. Some twelve years ago Mrs. Elizabeth Gilhula, wife of the postmaster of Burlington, Ont., was taken ill with an obdurate stomach trouble which her physicians pronounced cancer of the stomach and informed her that her life would be short.

On the advice of Blood Bitters, the results that followed were little short of marvellous. Her strength and vigor returned and in a short time she was completely cured. Mrs. Gilhula is to-day in the full enjoyment of good health, and in all these years there has not been the slightest return of the trouble.

Here is the letter Mrs. Gilhula wrote at the time of her cure: "About four years ago I was taken sick with stomach trouble and consulted several of the leading physicians here, all of whom pronounced the disease to be cancer of the stomach of an incurable nature, and told me that it was hardly to be expected that I could live long. Afterward the two doctors who were attending me gave me up to die. By the advice of some of my friends, who knew of the virtues of Burdock Blood Bitters, I was induced to try it, and I am now happy to say that after using part of the first bottle I felt so much better I was able to get up. I am thankful to state that I am completely cured of the disease by the use of B.B.B., although it had baffled the doctors for a long time. I am firmly convinced that Burdock Blood Bitters saved my life."

Here is the letter received from her a short time ago: "I am still in good health. I think Burdock Blood Bitters for saving my life twelve years ago, and highly recommend it to other sufferers from stomach troubles of any kind."

ELIZABETH GILHULA.

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