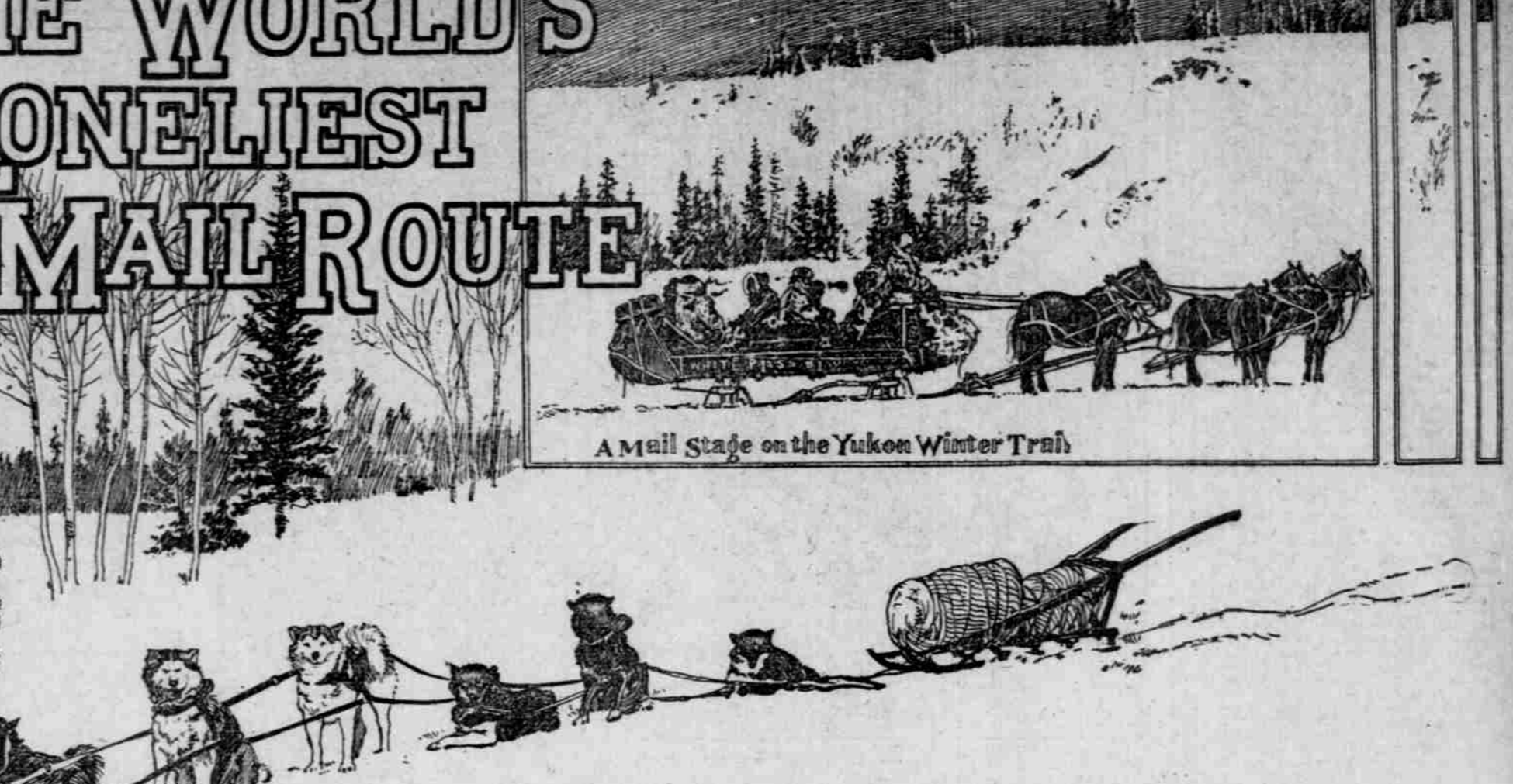


THE WORLD'S LONELIEST MAIL ROUTE

A Mail Stage on the Yukon Winter Trail



Ben Downing Intrepid Mail Carrier



"ANOTHER mailcarrier's been frozen to death, boys."

hears in the trappers' huts and "rest-houses" on the frozen Yukon River and the Hocking coast up to Nome along 2000 miles of this rugged, ice-bound region.

mail route in the world. The mailcarriers travel on foot over 4000 miles of this route, and one stretch of nearly 80 miles through a desolate, uninhabited country has to be covered by a single postman.

Ben Downing, the most famous of the mailcarriers, a magnificent specimen of the pioneer, whose big frame has been toughened fighting Indians in Arizona and in the Dakotas, narrowly escaped death

at the close of last season. It was Spring time, and the sun for an hour before and after noon melted the snow and made travel difficult, so most of his traveling was done in the night.

able, in these vast solitudes, to say what becomes of the mailcarriers on the short run to Atlin did not arrive last Winter, and a search party was sent out. They found the tracks of the sled leading to what had been a hole in the ice. That was all. In the same district, the frozen body of a mailcarrier was found and identified by his watch. He had been lost three years previously.

miss the heaped up ice, the soft places and the snowbanks. Where the trail is good, he grasps the long handles at the rear and at a continuous jog trot guides the sled along. In fairly smooth places he jumps on a narrow board, resting a good part of his weight on the handles.

THE GREAT IDEA

By JOSIAH FLINT AND FRANCIS WALTON

At the time Herbert Renshaw, Esq., announced himself a candidate for the office of Mayor of Corvallis there were three bad men in the municipality who traveled and transacted business under the names of "Fritzie" Gannes, "Soapy" Wadlow and "Frenchy" Latane. In the class beneath Ruderick McKiowd they were the greatest and most envied Under World celebrities living in the community, "Fritzie" was a gamster from London, "Frenchy" was a "tool" from Fresno, and "Soapy" was a "stall" from Quebec.

piece on me, I have. Renshaw and his gang don't know you and me, from any other four stiffs in town. He'll change the whole force, thinkin' they're all crooked, and them that's turned out'll keep in under cover o' spite. Things are bound to go that way, an' there we get our gruff in an' there ain't no Barwood around to squeeze the profits out of us. See?

that it would like to see Ruderick's credit. "I see that you are certified to as being a very 'wise' man," remarked Mr. Cowles, after a hasty perusal of Ruderick's paper. "I suppose that word 'wise' is merely a technical term in police parlance."

Barwood's face broadened into a grim smile. "You are quite resolved not to be advised to put the money back?" "It is really my duty to urge the point," Barwood said.

of age, powerful, deformed, inordinately slouch-batted, great-coated, long-haired and whiskered. "The bills, to the best of my belief, are gen-u-u-uine; your beard, to the best of my belief, is not," said Barwood appreciatively. "I do not offer you the beard as a retainer. I offer you the bills."