

# The Copper River Railway

## THE GREAT RIVAL OF UNCLE SAM'S ROUTE TO THE INTERIOR OF ALASKA

BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.

CORDOVA, Alaska.—I have crossed Prince William Sound from Seward to Cordova. Seward is the terminus of Uncle Sam's railway to Fairbanks and Cordova is the terminus of the Copper River Railway, which was built by the Morgan-Guggenheim syndicate to open up their great copper mines which are at Kennicott, about 200 miles in the interior. The two ports lie almost opposite each other at the western and eastern ends of the great bay known as Prince William Sound. Their distance apart is the width of the bay, which is 200 miles. Both ports have excellent harbors free from ice all the year round. Both are close to valuable coal fields, and each forms a natural gateway for a railroad to the interior of the country.



On the Guggenheim Railroad. A Snapshot at Cordova.

The railroad commission appointed by President Taft to plan out the best lines of transportation for the development of Alaska chose Cordova and the Copper River road for extension to Fairbanks in preference to Seward and the Alaska Northern, but it advised that a second road be built from Seward around Cook Inlet and across to the Yukon by way of the Iditarod gold region. It also proposed a branch line to the Matanuska coal fields. The present administration has decided that the Seward-Fairbanks line is the better, and the road along that route is now being built. It is not improbable that the Copper River road may be extended at some time in the future.

During my stay in Cordova, I have taken a trip over this railroad. Its technical name is the Copper River & Northwestern Railway. The cars go smoothly. The passenger coaches are like those of the states. Their finish is oak and the seats are upholstered in wicker. The road is well built and well ballasted. It has the standard-gauge track, with 70-pound rails similar to those on the new Government railway. The road crosses the mountains by easy grades, having a maximum of not over eight-tenths of a percent, and it is so made that a train load of about 700 tons can be carried each way over it. The construction of the road began in 1896, and was completed in 1911. Its cost, it is said, is somewhere between \$15,000,000 and \$20,000,000, and some of its building shows great skill and scientific engineering. There are 126 miles of road now in operation, and upon this there are daily freight trains on the Kennicott branch, and three trains a week between Cordova and Clifton, the station from where it was proposed to extend the road on to Fairbanks.

The company has office buildings and machine and car shops here at Cordova. It has also built a large ocean wharf accessible to steamers at all stages of tide. The cars bring their freight right to the steamers, and are unloaded with the minimum of handling. There are ample warehouses and facilities for furnishing the steamers with fresh water and fuel oil. There is an automobile service between the wharf and the town, which is about three-quarters of a mile away. As soon as our ship came to anchor, the hatches were raised and we began to

load copper ore. The ore cars were automatically dumped and the bags of copper, each holding about a half-bushel, were shot from the cars right into the hold of the steamer. The loading went on for almost a day, and that time we took in a cargo valued at about a pound. The road is now bringing down from the Kennicott mines 200 carloads of such ore per month, and its yearly revenue from that source is something like \$2,000,000. The ore is charged freight according to its value, and that now coming down averages over 70 per cent pure copper and pays at the rate of \$1900 a carload. Some of the lower grade ores pay only \$7 to \$8 a ton.

Another argument made for the Copper River railway was its accessibility to the Bering River coal field, which is only 22 miles from the present tracks and about 75 miles from Cordova. This is the spot that was so widely discussed when Gifford Pinchot and others made their great campaign for conservation. It is of excellent character, and it could be brought here to Cordova for smelting and reducing the ore. There are at present being mined about Prince William Sound and in the mountains nearby ores amounting to 50,000 tons per month. Much of this goes over the railway to Cordova, and it all has to be transported from here to the smelters at Tacoma, 1200 miles away. With smelters at Cordova, the cost of reduction would be greatly decreased and new mineral regions could be opened up. At the same time, the coal from the Bering River field would have a local market, and both the coal and the ore would furnish a steady and valuable traffic to the railway.

The Copper River & Northwestern Railway is one of the picturesque routes of the world. It is the only railroad that carries you right to the foot of magnificent glaciers and allows you to examine these greatest wonders of nature while the train stops. Within an hour of our arrival at Cordova an excursion train started out from the wharf, and the tourists on board were carried a distance of about 50 miles up the Copper River Valley to the Miles and Childs glaciers, two mighty rivers of ice that stand almost facing each other on opposite sides of the track. Leaving Cordova, the road winds around the hills high over the water. It hangs to rocky cliffs, which are covered with a dense vegetation. A little later it enters the mouth of the Copper River Valley and skirts Eyak Lake, which fills a depression scooped out by some prehistoric glacier. The lake is star shaped and is almost entirely shut in by high, wooded mountains, which rise abruptly from the water's edge. The road goes for four miles along the winding shores of Eyak Lake, and then crosses the Eyak River, which carries the glacial waters of the lake out to the sea. It is by this river that the boats from Cordova go into and out from the lake, and during the summer months the stream is gay with canoes, rowboats and power crafts of every description. The lake teems with fish and has excellent trout. During the winter it is sometimes frozen over, and is then used

for skating and sleighing. There is some fishing done at that time through holes in the ice.

Leaving the lake we passed through a dense forest of spruce, some of the trees of which were two feet in diameter. We then wound our way over the Copper River delta, crossing stream after stream, which come from the great glaciers of the interior. The flats extend for a distance of 16 miles east and west, a wide expanse of green, level land, half swamps, with water here and there showing out of the green. There are ducks and geese on the ponds. They fly up and away as the train comes. We could often see walls of green ice from the train. The glaciers reached the clouds that dark, rainy day. There was a dense forest between us and them. The ice seemed to be looking at us over the trees.

We rode by several fox farms, composed of cages of wire netting, with red and black foxes within; and further on at one side we saw the graves of some miners who tried in vain to get through by this way to the Klondike in the gold rush of 1898. Some parts of the flats are flooded by the ocean at high tide. There are many bridges. At Mile 16 the bridges seem to go from island to island. We are crossing the mouths of the streams. As we left Round Island we passed through snowsheds on the flats. It is an unusual thing to build snowsheds on the level. A little further on we crossed Long Island, and at Mile 34 came to the Hot Cake Channel bridge. It is so called because a party of engineers were shut up there during the railway construction and for weeks had nothing to eat but hot cakes. They called the place Hot Cake Channel, and so it is known to this day.

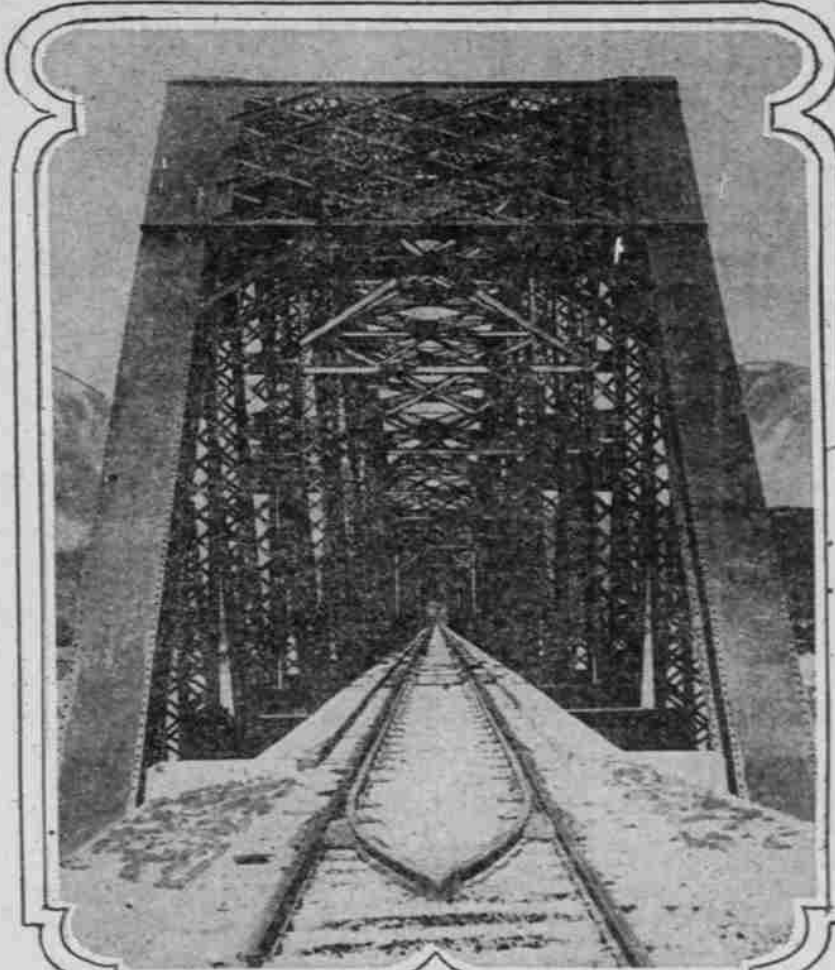
The road goes over flats like these all the way to the foot of the mountains. It winds about through the delta, crossing the channels. The engineers had to wade through the mud to lay out the route, and it was hard to find a solid roadbed. At Mile 39 we were only 32 miles from the Bering River coalfield, and 20 miles further on came to the narrow passage through



Loading Copper at Cordova.



I stood on the bank of a river Under a mighty ice wall as high as the dome of the Capitol.



Miles Glacier Bridge Which Cost \$1,500,000 to Build. It Crosses the Copper River Between the Childs and Miles Glaciers.

which the road runs between the Miles crosses the Miles Glacier bridge, which and Childs glaciers. Here the road cost more than \$1,500,000 to build, and

then goes on its way up the mountains. Think of riding on a railroad for two hours or more with glaciers in sight almost all the way. The Copper River Valley is a great glacial garden. Just east of Eyak Lake is Scott Glacier, which is a mile wide and six miles in length. It is only seven miles from the track, but is of so little account that it is seldom placed on the map. Sheridan Glacier is about 15 miles from Cordova and within two miles of the railway. This glacier rises in snow fields about a mile above sea level and ends in a great bulb-shaped tongue which is only four miles in length and three miles in width. The terminus is a mighty gap of ice 150 feet above sea level.

A little east of Sheridan Glacier is Sherman Glacier, which flows southward for a length of over seven miles and not far from the railway is Pickett Glacier, an ice tongue more than four miles in length. And then there are Saddlebag Glacier, which is south of Pickett, and Goodwin Glacier, which expands into a bulb of two or three miles in width where it enters the valley. The McPherson Glacier, which can also be seen from the railroad, is seven miles long, while Goodwin has a greater length by three miles or more.

The two mightiest glaciers of the Copper River Valley are the Miles and the Childs. Childs Glacier is within a quarter of a mile or so of the track, and Miles Glacier is in plain sight as you sit in the cars facing the Childs Glacier bridge. Of these two the Miles Glacier is by far the larger. It rises in the snowfields of the mountains and it is probably 53 miles long. Where it enters the Copper River Valley it spreads out in a great bulb, which at the end is six and one-half miles across. It is about 1 1/2 miles around the whole front. The waters of the glacier flow into the Copper River, but there is also a lake in front of it which is about two miles in width and four miles in length.

Our train stopped on a switch near (Continued on Page 5.)

# For the Young People

## MOTHERS' DAY AND FRECKLES



HOW MUCH ARE WHITE CARNATIONS? HE ASKED WITH PRIDE AND SOME HESITATION.

FRECKLES stood on the corner trying to sell evening papers to the throng of passersby as they left the station. "Here ye are—all the news! Buy the night extra paper," he shouted, thrusting a paper toward a woman who was talking to a little girl at her side. "Give me your best evening paper," she said, handing him a five-cent piece—and keep the change. "Geel! ain't she a fine lady!" exclaimed Freckles, looking after her. "She was a regular beauty—with her carnation—I say, Tom," he said, turning to his pal who kept him company during his dull business moments. "Why have so many women white flowers on today? I never saw so many white carnations in one day."

depended on his earnings, and unconsciously his hand went into his rascal coat pocket, and his finger ran through the pennies. His paper sold for three cents and he made a cent for every copy he sold.

Tom was watching his friend and knew the struggle going on in Freckles' little brain. "How many did you sell?" he asked. "Fifteen," replied Freckles, "but that lady gave me a nickel—I say, Tom, how much are white carnations?"

"Why, that makes 17 cents all your own—you are a real millionaire, Freckles; go on buy your Ma a flower," said Tom, poking him in the ribs. Freckles' eyes filled with tears. "I would," he said, "if the money was mine to do with what I wanted, but mother's sick, and hasn't been able to work for days. She needs good food, and I counted on buying her some meat for supper. Dyer think I could get a carnation for two cents?"

"Two nothings," answer Tom contemptuously, "but I'll lend you a dime. It will cost every bit of that."

"Mother wouldn't like me to borrow—Mister, want yer baggage carried?" cried Freckles, interrupting his talk with Tom and running alongside a man with a suitcase who was leaving the station.

"All right, son; follow me to the restaurant and let me have a paper." In a few moments Freckles rejoined Tom on the corner. "He was a regular gent. Look!" and Freckles displayed a new silver dime. "Now I can get mother a white flower. So long, Tom; I'm going home after I leave these papers at the office," and with a smile he was off.

Fifteen minutes later he entered a florist's shop. "How much are white carnations?" he asked with pride and some hesitation, for this was his first floral purchase, and he was buying a boutonniere for his "best girl."

"Boy, I'll give you a pretty one for nothing and throw a handful of other flowers into the bargain, if you'll sweep up the place for me. This has been one busy day, and my boy went home at noon. Will you?"

"Better life," cried Freckles, pulling off his threadbare coat and grabbing the floor brush. "Fine little fellow," thought the florist, "better than Karl. Besides, Karl was only a temporary arrangement." Aloud he said, "Would you like a steady job here as errand boy?" Freckles' face showed the answer. "I'll give you four dollars a week and

extra on Sundays when I need you." "Thank yer, sir. Mother needs a mark so hard ever again, I'll try to please yer. When shall I start?"

"Report at 8 Monday morning. Here are your flowers. You may go now. Give your girl my regards," said the florist, laughing. "What's up?" he asked, seeing Freckles hesitate. "There ain't no white carnation in the bunch, and I want one to give mother. She's the best mother ever a feller had, and—"

"You're a fine little man. Here's a carnation her, and tell her you earned it honestly. Now you can give them both to your mother. Bertha's Mother is my best and only girl, and she loves flowers. Thank you, sir. I'll be here on Monday."

Freckles now called the second Sunday in May his "lucky day," although his mother insists that it is "Mothers' day," and in her heart she thanks a good lady—Anna Jarvis—for instituting that one day in the year on which mothers are publicly honored.

That day was the beginning of Freckles' good fortune. He did his duty toward the florist, and before long he was raised from errand boy to assistant, with the hope that in years after his name might appear over the shop. His mother superintends his home, but it is now a more pretentious one, and in the best room a white carnation graces the table from one year's end to another.

"Every day is 'Mothers' day' for me," said Mr. James Logan (alias Freckles), putting his arms around his mother and kissing her, and mother returned his embrace, smiling contentedly.

Certainly Frank. From the Kansas City Star. A rector in South London was visiting one of his poorer parishioners, an old woman, afflicted with deafness. She expressed her great regret at not being able to hear his sermons. Desiring to be sympathetic, and to say something consoling, he replied, with unnecessary self-depreciation, "You don't miss much."

"So they tell me," was the disconcerting reply. THE VIOLET. I picked a fresh blue violet. That by the morning dew was wet; I pulled the crisp leaves all apart; And looked down deep into its heart: I opened all its petals wide, And saw a little seed inside. Its hidden secret then I knew— From such a seed the violet grew.

## A Born Nurse

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE, born May 12, 1820.

Next Friday is the birthday anniversary of Florence Nightingale. This lady had the distinction of being the first Red Cross nurse, in fact she called the organization into existence. Florence Nightingale was born in sunny Florence, Italy, and was named after that beautiful spot, where flowers hold full sway. When a wee child she showed her fondness, not only for flowers and plants, but for everything in nature. When a young girl she lived in a town in England, and she had a little corner of the garden for her special care. Her father said of her, "She is a born gardener," and he encouraged her to care for wild flowers as well as the cultivated ones.

"Florence is a born nurse," said Mr. Nightingale to his wife one day. "I found her yesterday caring for a poor little robin that had broken its wing, and then she built the bird a nest. I dare say she intends to feed it until it can hunt its own food again."

Whenever she found any animal or bird that was hurt, or any creature that was suffering she nursed it, and by and by her father gave her a corner in the green-house for hospital purposes, and he called her "the little sister of mercy."

From dumb animals she became interested in humans who were suffering, and soon the neighborhood began to know her as the "cheer-bringer to the sick." She was so sunny in disposition as the lovely land in which she was born, and her gifts of flowers to the stricken ones were as regular as her visits.

When Florence grew to young ladyhood she went to Kaiserswerth on the Rhine, in Germany, to study nursing at a school that had just been formed. After a time England went to war with Russia and Florence went to the Crimea to nurse the soldiers of her dear England back to life and health.

She took a band of women with her and there, as in her home town, she became the idol of the people. King Edward singled her out as the one woman to receive the Order of Merit, and the people of London gave her the freedom of the city. Her story is one of the most beautiful for she led an unselfish, useful, heroic life. She died in August of 1910, after celebrat-

ing her ninetieth birthday. Her monument is the record of her noble life.

Feasible. The class was being instructed on the "circulation of the blood." The teacher said, during the course of instruction:

"If I stand on my head, the blood will run down into my head. Do you understand?"

"Yes," replied the class. "Then," continued the teacher, "why

is it that the blood don't run into my feet when I stand upon them?"

There was a pause for a few seconds, when one of the pupils said:

"I guess it's because your feet ain't empty."

Worth Seeing, Anyway. Stanford Chaparral. Her—"You ought to have seen Mabel run the quarter-mile."

It—"What did she do it in?" Her—"I don't know what you call the darned thing."

## OUR PUZZLE CORNER

### DINNER PUZZLE.



Bea and Bob went to dine at their grandma's. Four things which they had for dinner are represented in this picture.

MOTHERS' DAY PUZZLE. I am composed of two words of five and ten letters each. 1. My 11, 12, 14 is a measure of weight. 2. My 1, 12, 9 is to gain in a contest. 3. My 2, 5, 7, 8, 4 is an organ of the body. 4. My 3, 15, 10, 7, 6 is a boy's name. My whole is something emblematic of Mother's day.

HIDDEN PARTS OF A TREE. The queer names of Mr. Smith's boys were Imro, Otto and Jasper. The General fought the battle, after which he retired from the Army. The costumer loaned him hat, wig, sword and boots. The colt could trot, run, kick and neigh. The horse attached to the cab ran, chased by the crowd.

Answers. Dinner puzzle—Rice, bread, butter, milk. Mothers' day puzzle—White Carnations. 1, ton; 2, win; 3, heart; 4, Isaac. Hidden parts of a tree—Root, leaf, twig, trunk, branch.