

# The Romance of Gold Mining

Ups and Downs of Fortune Hunters in the Early Days of the Klondike—Cupid Often an Interested and Impatient Bystander—Millions Won and Wasted—Stories of the Dance Hall Days.

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**D**AWSON, Yukon Territory.—Take a seat with me on the top of King Solomon's Dome and listen to the romance of the Klondike. The air is full of its stories and the truth in them surpasses the wildest dreams of the "Arabian Nights." King Solomon's Dome is the very center of the Klondike gold region. It is a mountain higher than the average peaks of the Alleghenies. It rises 3000 feet above Dawson, and I have climbed to its top in an automobile. Standing upon it I can look over the Klondike valley and the creeks leading into it from which almost \$200,000,000 worth of gold has been won, and turning to the south I can see the Indian River valley, where is Dominion Creek, Sulphur Creek and Gold River, and where there is a vast bed of low-grade gold-bearing earth which they are now preparing to mine. The engineer at the head of the project is John D. Brown. He is washing off the muck with hydraulic giants, and he expects that the sun will so thaw the strata of perpetual ice that he can use a new kind of machine to get out the gold. The average content of the earth is less than 20 cents' worth of gold to the ton, and the most of this is from 20 to 30 feet down in the frozen conglomerate.

Standing upon the dome we are in the very center from which radiate the creeks that held the enormous pockets of gold when the discovery was made. There at the west is Bonanza Creek, where, just two decades ago, gold was first found, and running into it is Eldorado Creek, where Swift Water Bill Gates and the Lucky Swede, Charlie Anderson, as well as scores of others, made their fortunes about a year later. The man who discovered the gold was George Carmack, a New Englander from North Adams, Mass. He came to Alaska as a laborer and worked on the Seal Islands. He married an Indian and he had three Indians with him when he was prospecting on the ground just below us. As the story goes, it was one of these Indians who had gone to the creek for some water who saw the gold shining there in the sand. They took up some dirt on the edge of the creek and washed it, and they got \$20 worth of gold within a half hour. Carmack then laid out claims for himself and the three red men, and each claim brought a fortune which all too soon slipped through its owner's fingers.

The news of the discovery spread like wildfire over the North. It was telegraphed to all parts of the world and by the next year men were rushing to the Klondike from every direction. They staked out both sides of Bonanza. They laid out claims along Eldorado, Dominion and Hunker creeks, and dug out gold all along the valley of the Klondike River.

Charlie Anderson's claim was No. 23 Eldorado. It cost him \$500, and the deal was made when he was too drunk to know what he was doing. Anderson was living at Forty Mile at the time, and he had saved this money from his wages as a pick and shovel miner. He bought the mine at night, and when he awoke the next day he cried bitter tears and asked the man who thought they had swindled him to take back the claim and give him his money. They refused, and he walked 80 miles to the Klondike and started to work. He found only a hole in the ground, but he thawed and dug 18 feet further, and the result was a fortune. When he made the first strike the men who sold him his claim were nearby. They saw he was panning, and asked with a sneer what he had found. He replied: "Ay tank ay got some gold here," and he showed them his pan. There was \$1400 worth of gold nuggets in it, and the claim eventually yielded between \$1,000,000 and \$2,000,000.

Swift Water Bill was a Portuguese.

who got his nickname from a story he told of having swam down the rapids of the Yukon on his way to the gold fields. He began his work on the Yukon, some distance below Dawson, as a waiter in an eating-house. One day while serving two miners he heard one tell the other of the gold discovery in the Klondike. He left the order unfulfilled, and got a dog team and rushed on to Dawson. He was in at the first and picked out a number of claims, including that on Eldorado, which made him a fortune. He was successful for years, but was so dissipated that he ran through the millions he made, and finally left with the stamped and Fairbanks. He had only 50 cents in his pockets, but he made a second great strike and a fortune. He lost that fortune as well, and is a poor man today.

Speaking of the extravagance of Swift Water Bill, he was the man who cornered the egg market in Dawson at a dollar per egg. There were \$8000 all, and it cost him more than \$8000. The reason for the corner was his love for Miss Gussie Lamore, a popular and beautiful young lady who had been nicknamed "The Little Klondike Nugget." As the story goes, Swift Water was courting her, but the course of true love was too rough, and for a time it seemed as though Bill's cake was all dough. Then he remembered that Gussie doted on eggs, and he prepared for the corner. He slipped about from store to store and bought every egg in the town. He then remarked that if Gussie wanted more eggs she would have to eat out of his hand, or if she stuck to his rival "she sure wouldn't eat no eggs." The result was Gussie succumbed, and so Cupid won by an egg.

The antics of Charlie Anderson were quite as wild as those of Swift Water Bill. He ran through his money as fast as it came. He was cheated by every one and I understand that he is now poor doing day's work somewhere in the states.

In coming up to Dawson I had a chat with Captain E. G. Baughman, who commanded the steamer Humboldt, which has piled between Seattle and Skagway since the days of the gold rush. He knew Charlie Anderson well, and told me many stories about him. "Anderson was known as the 'Lucky Swede,'" he had been at work on the railroads in the states, but was discharged and that drove him to Alaska. When he struck it rich he took out more than \$200,000 the first year, and during the next four years his claim yielded him almost \$2,000,000.

"What did he do with the money?" I asked. "He spent it as fast as it came. He kept a gang of gamblers and dance-hall girls about him and gave away thousands. When he was at the height of his fortune he had an income of half a million dollars a year. He then fell in love and was married. He took his wife to San Francisco, where he bought a house and gave it to her. He gave her other money, and when he was about at the end of his fortune he told me she had cost him a quarter of a million. With that he pulled out of his pocket a garter which had a diamond clasp as big as the end of your thumb, and showed it to me saying: 'And that is all I have for it. I am almost broke now, but I will go back and find some more.'

"His claim was then played out. He tried to find others, but failed. In his first trips with me he lived in state, buying all the liquor and cigars that that ship had and handing them out free to the passengers. His last trip he made in the steerage. He was dead broke. Shortly after we started I saw him, dressed in rough clothes, sitting at the prow of the boat. I went up to him and said: 'Well, Charlie, it is different with you from what it was in the past?' He looked up and his eyes

filled with tears. 'Yes,' said he, 'I am going to work for I have not enough money to pay for first class.' I was August, 1899, in a claim on Bonanza Creek, George T. Coffey took up two shovelfuls from which he washed 62 ounces of gold, worth between \$800 and \$1000. This included three nuggets, each of which was worth \$100.

A miner by the name of McDonald took out \$24,000 from a 42-foot patch of ground two feet in thickness, and it is said that some of the miners on Bonanza Creek were dissatisfied when the gravel went less than a dollar a pan. In ordinary regions 5 cents a pan is considered good and, as I have said, the earth they are now mining in the valleys of the Klondike and Indian rivers does not run more than 30 cents on the average to the cubic yard.

The gold of that day was discovered

in quantities. Pockets worth hundreds of dollars were not uncommon. In August, 1899, in a claim on Bonanza Creek, George T. Coffey took up two shovelfuls from which he washed 62 ounces of gold, worth between \$800 and \$1000. This included three nuggets, each of which was worth \$100.

A fortune for a young secretary of the Y. M. C. A. This man had started mining on Forty-mile Creek, and when gold was discovered near Dawson he left his young wife there and came on with the crowd. The first claim he selected was comparatively small, and it had no timber upon it. He wanted logs to build a cabin for himself and wife, and traded his claim for another further down the creek where the valley was wider, and timber was plentiful. The Y. M. C. A. man then built his cabin, sent for his wife and started to work. When he had thawed the earth to some extent below the surface his wife helped him. He labored down in the mine, and she would the windlass that drew up the buckets of rocks. Time and again they were in despair and talked of selling out and going back home. After a while they came to bedrock, and the gold was so rich that the claim paid them about \$2,000,000. That man took his money to Seattle and invested it in real estate. He is now said to be one of the rich men of the West. The claim he first took up turned out very well, but not as well as No. 18 Eldorado, which gave him his fortune.

In the early days no one thought of getting out all the gold from the earth. The miners sought the rich spots only. Today every bit of the valley is being worked over by the dredges, and that in such a way that all of the precious metal is saved. In fact you can fire your gun at a bird anywhere in the dredging ground and be sure that the shot will be recovered when that ground is mined. You can throw a red cent into the heart of a ten-acre field that is to be upturned by these machines, knowing that the cent will come out with the gold. The Canadian five-cent pieces are thin silver coins half as big as a nickel. These have been thrown into the fields and later on caught by the dredges. A common amusement is to take a dime, sawing it in halves and then bet whether the dredge will reclaim one

of the pieces. The man who bets in what is slang phrase is known as the "wide open." There were scores of saloons, gambling houses and dance halls and they all made money. In one dance hall 12 women were employed at \$50 per week, and they received in addition 25 per cent commission on the drinks and cigars sold through their blandishments. Another saloon had six waitresses to dance at \$150 a week, and in many of the leading restaurants, and one girl stated that her bar commissions for the first week amounted to \$750. The gambling houses had employees who were paid from \$15 to \$25 a day, and \$15 was the wage of a bartender.

I have before me a copy of a bill of fare of one of the old restaurants, with the prices attached. A bowl of soup cost \$1, and a bowl of mush and milk \$1.25. A dish of canned tomatoes cost \$2, a slice of pie 75 cents, and a sandwich with coffee or tea \$1.25. Beans, coffee and bread were \$2, a plain steak \$2.50, and a porterhouse \$5. One of the leading restaurants, which had a seating capacity of 32, employed three cooks, one of whom received \$100 per week, and the others \$1 per hour. The waiters were both men and women, the latter receiving \$100 per month. That restaurant was held in a tent 30 by 40 size, and the rent for the tent was \$300 per month.

From an old bulletin of the United States Department of Labor I have other prices and wages at Dawson in 1898. Carpenters were receiving \$15 and common laborers \$10 per day. Skilled woodworkers got \$17 a day and journeyman tailors \$150 an hour. The ordinary charge for a sack suit was \$125. Barbers made from \$15 to \$40 a day, each receiving 65 per cent of the receipts of his chair. Four such shops were in operation, and their prices were \$1 a shave, \$1.50 for a hair cut and \$2.50 for a bath.

During that winter newspapers his old glass, truly I didn't!" "Dot ain't a old greenhouse. I built me dot only two weeks ago." "Protected Mr. Schultz indignantly. "Papa smiled. "But you discharged it in the direction of Mr. Schultz' greenhouse, didn't you? And you know, Mabel, what goes up in the Black Eagle nor Flying Wolf ever air must come down. That will be all now, children. You may leave the room."

Schultz' greenhouse this afternoon, children. I merely wanted to make certain it belonged to you children. And right, Mr. Schultz, you may have the pane replaced and send me the bill." "But—but, papa, I just shot it up in the direction of Mabel's greenhouse, didn't I? And you know, Mabel, what goes up in the Black Eagle nor Flying Wolf ever air must come down. That will be all now, children. You may leave the room."

## Our Puzzle Corner

### ZIGZAG PUZZLE.

If the following are written one below another, their zigzag letters, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and ending at the lower right-hand corner will spell the name of a feature of Summer:

1. A fruit.
2. A flower.
3. A contest.
4. An arched cavity for baking.
5. Free from blemish.
6. One hundred and sixty square rods of land.
7. An animal.

### HIDDEN MOVIE STARS.

No. 1—Thy dog or his; No. 2—Go love apart; No. 3—He arms Ma; No. 4—Get no lard, Mama.

### Answers.

ZIGZAG—Picnics. 1. Pear; 2. Lily; 3. Race; 4. Oven; 5. Fair; 6. Acre; 7. Seal.

HIDDEN MOVIE STARS—No. 1. Dorothy Gish; No. 2. Olga Petrova; No. 3. Mae Marsh; No. 4. Nigma Talmadge.



Prospector Panning out Gold.



A Prospector's Outfit

brought in over the trail sold for \$3 apiece. A weekly newspaper was started, known as the Yukon Midnight Sun, which cost \$15 a year, and a little later the Klondike Nugget was issued weekly, and single copies of it cost 50 cents. Job printers got \$1.50 an hour, and the charge for printing bill heads and business cards was \$25 per 1000.

Banks were soon established and they did a big business in buying gold dust and putting their notes into circulation. The first eight days after it opened its doors the Canadian Bank of Commerce bought \$1,500,000 worth of gold dust. It paid \$14 an ounce upon the receipt of the dust and the balance, less certain charges, after assay. The Bank of British North America also had a branch. Both these institutions are still in Dawson and they are buying gold dust today.

Not long ago the old building in which the Canadian Bank of Commerce had its offices was burned to the ground and one of the clerks asked permission to work over the ground as a gold claim. He wanted the label from the assay office and also the dust which had fallen on the floor from time to time in the purchase of gold. His request was granted and his panning paid thousands of dollars.

While cashing a draft at the Bank I saw them sending away a shipment of gold. It had come into them in the shape of dust and nuggets and been melted to bricks. There were \$50,000 worth of these about three feet square. The bricks were of a light yellow color, and some were almost white on account of the percentage of silver mixed with them. Their average value was \$15 an ounce. They were of various sizes, from that of a big cake of laundry soap down to a cake of milk chocolate. I lifted one of the larger ones and weighed it. It weighed more than 12 pounds and its value was \$2000. Later I saw the bank clerk put the bricks into canvas bags and label them for export by registered mail.

Leaving the bank I dropped in at the offices of the Northern Commercial Company and watched them make up a shipment of gold dust and nuggets to be sent to the States. The gold filled two satchels, and it was worth altogether in the neighborhood of \$100,000. It was put up in a half dozen little sacks of about the size of a five-pound salt sack such as is sold in our grocery stores. Each sack of that size contained from \$5000 to \$10,000. There were also two larger sacks that held more.

All gold that is shipped out of Canada pays a royalty or tax to the Government. In 1898 the amount charged was 19 per cent on all the gold mined, and I think there was in addition a tax on all gold sent out of the country. Today there is an export tax of 2 1/2 per cent, and travelers are examined at the frontier to see that they do not evade the duty. Every one who goes out of the Klondike into Alaska is met by the customs officers as he crosses the border and examined to see that he has no gold upon him.

There are women examiners who take charge of the females and if they suspect them make them go into a private cabin for careful inspection. Not long ago a woman took out a large quantity of nuggets and dust. She was examined in passing, but the inspectors took no account of a big flower pot containing a rose bush that she was carrying out with her. The top of the pot was covered with soil, and it was not until she got safely away that it was learned that the soil was only half an inch deep and that what was below was almost pure gold.

# For the Young People

## "AN ARROW SHOT INTO THE AIR"

**T**HE three little Larkin children were never at a loss as to how to amuse themselves. Out in their big back yard they had a tent; and, furthermore, each of them was the proud owner of an "Indian suit."

Jack fancied he looked very fierce and warlike in his, with its tall "war-bonnet" and stick-up feathers. Ned considered himself quite as much a "big chief" as his older brother. And Mabel, for once in her life, was really glad she was a girl instead of a boy, since she thought Indian clothes for a "squaw" were much prettier than for a "brave."

Naturally, the favorite amusement of the "three Larkins," as they were called, was to "play Indian." First of all, there was the whole country-side over which to roam, for the Larkin house was on the outskirts of the town and all but in the open country.

There were hedges and fences and dense bushes, behind which one could "sneep" while tracking the enemy or hunting wild animals. And as for Mabel, she could quite around the tent all day and pretend to be cleaning and cooking the "big game" which the boys brought home with them. Then, too, she had to get their "meals" ready for them.

Also, there were the "papooses"—the little Indian babies—to be looked after. At other times they were her real dolls, but when the game of "Indian" was being played they, of course, were straightway transformed into "papooses."

One afternoon Jack and Ned—big pardon, I mean Black Eagle and Flying Wolf, for, of course, no Indians were ever named Jack and Ned—well, one afternoon when the "braves" were out hunting, Mabel (or I should say Dawn Mist, to use her Indian name), was in the "tepee" preparing for the

return of the hunters in the evening. Now Mabel—I mean Dawn Mist—was an expert shot with bow and arrow. Uncle Will had laughingly declared that she couldn't hit the side of a barn door with it, but of course he didn't know a thing about playing Indian or shooting an arrow. Of course not!

Dawn Mist, as brave as brave could be, crawled slowly forward. Then she lay, quite still, waiting in true Indian fashion for the enemy to make a move and reveal himself. Suddenly she saw something move way down beyond the fence, which separated the Larkin place from the garden of the next door neighbor. Mr. Schultz, who raised flowers in big greenhouses and sold them to florists in the city. He would have been surprised indeed had he known that Indians, wild, bloodthirsty Indians, were lurking about his place; but of course he didn't know it, since he never "played Indian."

But Dawn Mist plainly saw the enemy crouched down right beside one of Mr. Schultz's greenhouses. She fitted an arrow to the string of her bow, jumped to her feet, gave voice to a wild "war cry"—intended to both frighten the enemy and to give the alarm to the hunters in the field—and, in supreme indifference to any attack from the treacherous enemy, she let fly her arrow at him.

Now, there is a saying to the effect that an arrow shot into the air must come to earth again. And Dawn Mist's arrow was no different from any other arrow. Indeed, she saw it come down, down and land right on top of the head of the snooping enemy.

She saw him throw his hands wildly above his head and sink to earth—dead. Indeed, she did, oh yes!

And—and—well, just then the hunters, Black Eagle and Flying Wolf, came charging into camp, and, shouting encouragement to her and brandishing their tomahawks, they gave chase to the rest of the enemy and sent them scampering back to their own hunting grounds. Of course, however, in the chase they did not neglect to kill a few hundred of the enemy and scalp them. Of course not, for they were terrible fighters!

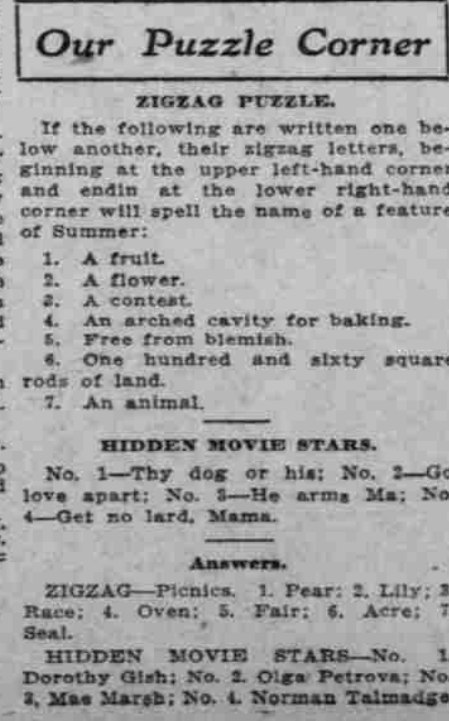
That evening, however, after supper, when "playing Indian" was over with for the day, there came a ring at the front doorbell. And presently papa called Jack and Mabel into the library. Mr. Schultz, florist, who lived in the next place and owned the greenhouse down beside which the enemy Dawn Mist had killed had been snooping was there, and he looked very angry and very, very—well, unpleasant.

Also he was holding an arrow in his right hand so that all might see it. "Is this your arrow?" asked papa. "Yes, sir," said Mabel presently. "Well, den, why for you don't keep it out of mine greenhouse?" demanded Mr. Schultz.

"This arrow," papa went on to say, "broke a large pane of glass in Mr. Schultz' greenhouse this afternoon, children. I merely wanted to make certain it belonged to you children. And right, Mr. Schultz, you may have the pane replaced and send me the bill."

"But—but, papa, I just shot it up in the direction of Mabel's greenhouse, didn't I? And you know, Mabel, what goes up in the Black Eagle nor Flying Wolf ever air must come down. That will be all now, children. You may leave the room."

## BATHING PUZZLE



Solution of Bathing Puzzle.

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Solution of Bathing Puzzle.