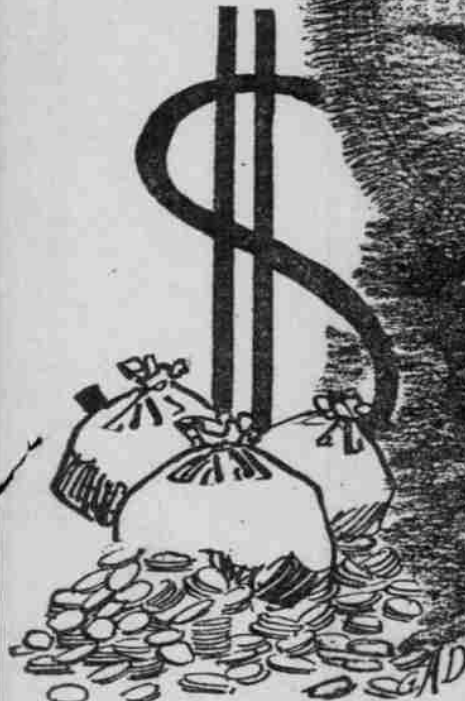


# WILD FARMS OF ALASKA

## Thousand-Dollar Foxes Being Raised Like Chickens On The Banks Of The Yukon.

By Frank G. Carpenter.

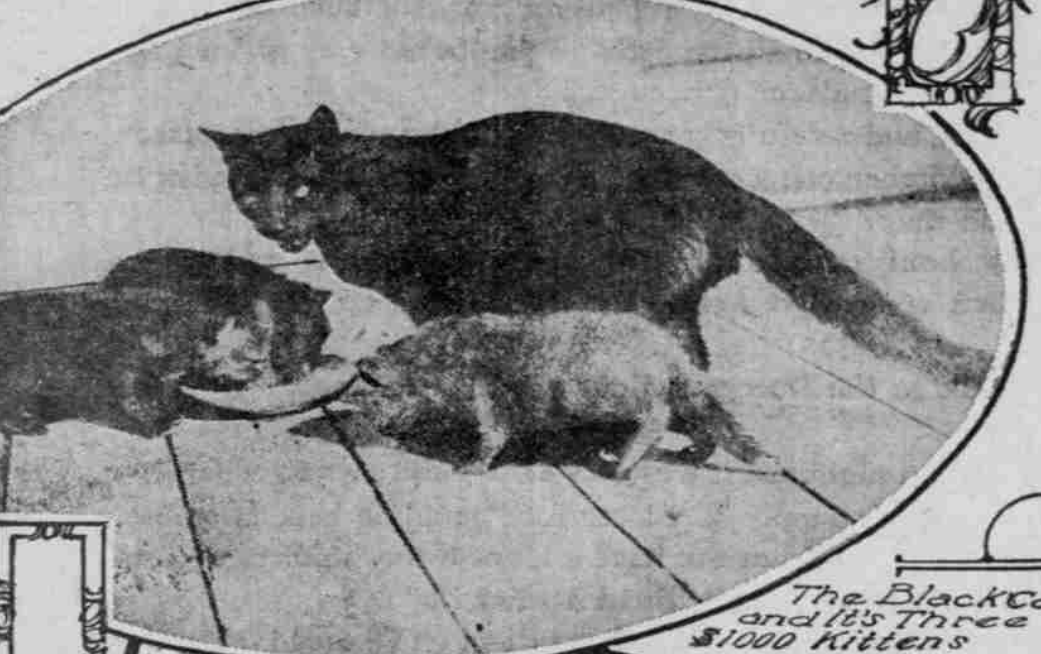


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**FAIRBANKS**—During the past few weeks I have visited some of the largest fox farms of Alaska. There are altogether, perhaps, 10 or 15 in the territory. There are some near the Yukon River and some not far from Prince William sound. There is one at Copper Center on the trail between Fairbanks and Valdez, which is said to have 200 foxes, and to have sold three live ones not long ago for just about \$10,000. There is a farm at Baker Hot Springs which has paid as high as \$1500 apiece to the Indians for black fox pups, and one near here which has interested Eastern capital to the amount of \$300,000. Judge Moran, a member of the Alaska Legislature, has established a fox farm at Shungnak on the Kobuk River in arctic Alaska. He is raising white foxes, as well as blacks, reds and crosses, and says that these animals can be reared just as easily as cattle and hogs.



Two Silver Fox Kittens.



The Black Cat and His Three \$1000 Kittens



Thirty Four Wild Silver Fox Skins Worth More Than \$21,000.



Inside the Fox Pens.

The business of fur farming was begun by the Canadians about 25 years ago. The first fox ranches were on Prince Edward Island, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and the largest and most profitable farms in the world. There are 210 different companies engaged in the business, and their capitalization is about \$30,000,000. The most of the companies are paying dividends, and many are not only profitable but are making a profit. The island has about 600 fox ranches, and the business has spread to other parts of Canada. Over 400 companies are engaged in it in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and New Brunswick, and farms have been started also in Quebec, Ontario and Western Canada. There are several fox farms in New England, some in New York state and a number in the far north-western part of the continent.

The chief originator of fox farming was Charles Dalton, who is now a millionaire member of Parliament. He was born in Canada and started life as a fur trader and trapper. He realized the value of fox skins and concluded to see if he could not raise foxes in captivity. He started with red foxes, but about 20 years ago was able to get two pairs of silvers, which he bred on his own islands. He succeeded and kept on buying wild animals and breeding tame ones. He was known to have many fine skins, but no one knew of the wealth he was making until the small banks of the neighborhood refused to take any more of his cash for deposits. He then looked out for a better market for his skins, and he was selling skins produced on his ranch for prices which averaged hundreds of dollars per skin, and that he was fast growing rich. I have before me a record of 203 skins sold by him from his farm on Prince Edward Island. The skins cover a period of 15 years. In that time he sold 203 fox skins, which brought him in just about \$158,000, or on the average \$778.33 per skin. Dalton also sold foxes for breeding. When he sold his ranch it had 20 years of silver foxes upon it. He says that 800 for it, or an average of \$25,000 per pair.

In the meantime the news of Dalton's success had spread over the world. Other fox farms were established and were capitalized at large sums, according to the number of breeding animals they had. Many of them have paid large dividends, and it has been shown that, rightly handled, there is no other livestock industry that can produce anything like the profits of the raising of foxes. But suppose we visit some of the big fox farms of Alaska. I saw a big one there are some of them which cover more than five or ten acres, and if you want to start a new ranch Alaska gives you all out of doors to select from. The first farm we shall see is situated in the Tanana Valley, a mile and a half from Fairbanks. It consists of 10 acres of cleared land, the greater part of which is covered with pens in which these little animals live, move and have their being. Looking at it from a dis-

tance, the fox farm has the appearance of a great chicken yard with walls of woven wire and hen coops of various sizes inside them. Each of the pens is 50 feet long, eight feet wide and about 10 feet high. The wire is much like chicken wire, but is made of tough steel, and it extends as high above the ground as the wire about a tennis court. The wire is sunk about four feet in the ground and is then bent over so that it runs under the ground for about two feet. This is to prevent the foxes from burrowing out from under the wire. At the top the wire has an overhang of two feet, forming a little roof of that width all around the coop. This is to prevent the foxes climbing over the wire. Each pen has its own kennel made of boards. This is a house like a dog kennel. It is entered by a board chute up which the fox runs when it goes in, and in some cases wooden planks are used as an entrance. The foxes run in and out of these pipes, and they usually carry their food inside to eat it. There is but one pair of foxes in each pen. The animals are very timid, and they have to be handled carefully. Most of the fox farmers will not permit visitors to enter their property for fear they will frighten the foxes. The animals grow crazy when excited, and sometimes eat their young. On the other hand, they get acquainted with their keepers and there are some which become so tame that strangers can handle them. During my visit to a fox farm on the Tanana River my daughter, who is with me, picked up two little silver gray fellows of the size of kittens and hugged them to her while I made a snapshot. I do not know what those foxes are worth at this writing, but three years ago they would have brought \$1000 apiece.

The farm where the foxes are so tame is near Hot Springs, about three or four miles from the river. It was started by men who have been in the business of foxraising on Prince Edward Island. They have gotten their breeding stock from the Indians, paying from \$100 to \$1500 apiece for the animals. The latter price was for a jet black fox whose skin would have brought almost as much as the price paid for it. That farm covers about six acres, divided up into woven wire pens. The wire is of steel and the mesh is about an inch in diameter. Another farm on the Tanana is that belonging to two brothers named Vachon. It is situated at Tolovana, about 150 miles from Fairbanks, and its high main inclosure and near the bank of the river. Among the older foxes there are 17 fine silver grays and a number of blacks. The cages near the river seem to be devoted mostly to the babies. The latter are the size of kittens and are far more cunning and pretty. They have long, bushy tails, little sharp noses, and their eyes sparkle like jet. In the same pens are baby martens, with heads not bigger than the flat of a baby and eyes the size of a black-headed pin. The marten has a gorgeous yellow throat. The rest of its fur is a rich brown. It is really a sable, and is sometimes known as the Alaska sable, the best of which are equal to the sables of Russia.

To return to the big ten-acre fox farm at Fairbanks it belongs to men who live here in Alaska, and to others in New York and New Jersey. It was started a year or so ago with a capitalization of about \$200,000. So far about \$80,000 has been invested, and this includes the cost of the farm and the equipment and the breeding animals. The land, kennels and all the machinery cost \$18,000, and the breeding animals \$12,000. There are altogether about 200 animals, including foxes and others, and all that is needed to care for them is two men. The Alaskan owners became interested in fox farming by a visit from some of the farmers of Prince Edward Island. These men came here to buy five foxes from the Indians and trap and divide up into compartments. There were also small pens or cages roofed with chicken wire outside the main inclosure and near the bank of the river. The foxes were fed with fish and meat, and their eyes sparkle like jet. In the same pens are baby martens, with heads not bigger than the flat of a baby and eyes the size of a black-headed pin. The marten has a gorgeous yellow throat. The rest of its fur is a rich brown. It is really a sable, and is sometimes known as the Alaska sable, the best of which are equal to the sables of Russia.

I have asked a number of the managers as to the food used for their fur-bearing animals. On the fox farm here it costs \$11 a year to feed a fox. \$5 to feed a mink and \$4.50 to feed a marten or sable. The animals are given salmon, moose meat, horse meat and rabbits, and also carrots and turnips. On the fox farm near Dawson a common feed is rice and rabbits cooked together into stew. One farm there feeds 16 rabbits and 15 pounds of rice a day to 42 foxes. The stew is fed cold morning and evening. The foxes will come out of their dens and grab what they like to eat. After days or more after mating before the animals bear. They have only one litter a year, and a litter may consist of from one to nine pups. A fox will continue to bear up to 10 or 11 years of age and will mate at eight months of age. The young look like dog pups and play and bark just like dogs. I am told that silver gray foxes usually breed true to their color and that cross foxes will sometimes throw black foxes. A cross fox is the marriage of the black and the red.

### THE SILENT THIRD DEGREE

(Continued From Page 5.)  
said to Ruff: "I did it. Can they hang me for this?"  
Now the words "I did it" were something in themselves, but the detectives wanted a full confession while the effect they had created was still strong. Geldel had come recently from Connecticut, where hanging was still legal, and apparently he did not know that the death penalty was exacted by electricity in New York.  
"No, they can't hang you," said Ruff.  
Then Geldel told the whole sordid story of how he had climbed to the roof of the aged broker, and when his victim discovered him how he leaped upon the man who had once befriended him, stuffing the chloroform-soaked towel about his head and strangling him at the same time.  
Geldel was convicted.  
An early foxer's experience.  
"It was silent witness that third degree, in that no questions were asked, was practiced on 'Abe' Ruff, the San Francisco political boss, who was convicted of graft."  
Ruff was in prison awaiting trial. William J. Burns was handling the case, and he made every effort to wring a confession from the prisoner.  
There was a keeper in the prison named McCarthy, who was on duty near Ruff's cell. Burns discontinued his calls and instructed this man to waken Ruff every night at 2 o'clock sharp.  
This McCarthy did by banging on the wall with a heavy stool. Ruff, the first few nights, did not pay much attention to the disturbance, merely turning over and going to sleep again. At last it got on his nerves. He would jump off his cot at the first sound and demand to know what it was.  
"McCarthy would make no reply, and Ruff would run to the barred door of his cell and look out to see the keeper apparently asleep.  
Sometimes he would waken the keeper and say, "Didn't you hear anything?"  
"Not a sound," McCarthy would answer.  
This formula was gone through night after night until on one occasion Ruff leaped from bed, to find McCarthy wide awake.  
"Didn't you hear anything at all?" asked the prisoner.  
"Nothin' but you talkin' in your sleep," said McCarthy.  
"What was I talking about?" said Ruff, alarmed.  
"The graft cases," said McCarthy. "My heavens!" cried Ruff. "Am I going crazy? My mind must be getting unsettled. I want to see Burns tomorrow."  
Next day the detective called on the prisoner. Ruff tried to bring up the graft cases, but Burns turned to other subjects, until at last Ruff broke down and half shouted: "Look here, Burns, you've got to listen to this! It's my confession!"  
Then he told the whole story, which a stenographer took down. Afterward he repudiated this confession.  
It was silent witness that wrung a confession from Hans Schmidt, the bogus priest, who killed Anna Amuller. After finding a receipt and a key to the apartment in which the girl was killed and a photograph of the girl herself Inspector Faurot traced Schmidt

to the rectory of the church where he was waiting as a priest.  
The inspector and the men with him waited in the reception-room while the suspected man came downstairs.  
"Is this Hans Schmidt?" asked Faurot as he stepped to the side of the bogus priest.  
"I am he," said Schmidt.  
Faurot reached into his pocket as if searching for something. Withdrawing it, he fumbled with the rent receipt for the apartment where the girl had been murdered and with the key to the door. Schmidt saw them in his hand and must have recognized them, for he glanced nervously toward the door, and his fingers began twisting and untwisting convulsively.  
Hans Schmidt Confesses.  
As though this was not what he was looking for, Faurot thrust his hand again into his pocket. This time he withdrew it like a flash and before Schmidt's terrified eyes had ceased to devour the receipt and key the detective thrust in front of him a picture of Anna Amuller.  
"You killed that girl, didn't you?" Faurot almost shouted. "You not only killed her but you cut up her body."  
"Drops of perspiration stood out on the brow of the bogus priest. He staggered and clutched the arm of his accuser for support.  
"Yes, I did," he stammered.  
They took him to the apartment where he had killed Anna Amuller. There Faurot made his prisoner sit on the edge of the very bed on which he had put Anna Amuller to death. Rapidly the detective sketched the outline of a human figure, and handing the drawing to Schmidt said:  
"Now, show me how you cut up the body of the girl you killed."  
The prisoner took a pencil and indi-

cated how the body had been dismembered. The lines corresponded exactly with the parts which had been discovered. Bit by bit Schmidt detailed the crime for which he was later condemned to die.  
A variation of the silent third degree was practiced with results by William Allender, chief of detectives of St. Louis, in the case of Barbara Arnold, accused of setting fires in the Berlin and Windemere hotels in that city, resulting in the loss of several lives.  
For two hours Allender, alone with the girl in his office, had questioned her, with no result. He himself was worn out with fatigue and exasperation, yet he knew if he lost his temper the girl would have the advantage of him.  
Suddenly he wheeled and held out toward Barbara a handful of matches.  
"Now, Barbara," he said, in matter of fact tones, "show us how you set fire to the Windemere."  
Mechanically the girl went through motions with her hands as though scraping together a little pile of paper and waste, struck a match, and for an instant held it to the imaginary tinder.  
With a cry she dropped the match on the heavy rug of the office and threw her head upon her arms at the table.  
When she was calm again she confessed that she had set fire to the hotel and told just how she had done it. Persons interested in the girl declared that she was innocent and that under the strain the suggestion, so subtly made, forced her to act as she did.

**Roumanian Titles.**  
Indianapolis News.  
Roumanian traditions are democratic in that the language ignores titles of nobility. In Roumania the title of his or her "highness" or "his excellency," is given only to the foreigner. The national idiom knows only one appellation of this kind, "thy grandeur," "Matria ta," and this is reserved for the sovereign. The men call each other "brother" even in moments of anger. "Marquis" and "countess" are two expressions which have in Roumania a significant intended to wound. A "little prince" is a clown. The most astonishing thing is that the word "king" in ordinary usage is far from complimentary. In Roumania a scoundrel will be "a king of the old court," and miserable wretch may be "a king and a half" "the last of the bandits"; "a king to be hanged." This aversion is for the word, not for the thing, for Roumanian from a principality became a kingdom; yet the feeling is such that in the Roumanian translation of the Bible the "Book of Kings" has become the "Book of the Emperors."

**Baths to Ease Pain.**  
At the large open-air hospital connected with the University of Cambridge, England, it was found that many of the patients arriving there had such terrible wounds that the pain made necessary such large and frequent doses of opiates that their progress was seriously retarded. In an attempt to remedy this, Colonel Griffiths now keeps these cases comfortably suspended in a tub through which water at 100 degrees Fahrenheit is continually running. One case which is referred to had lain on a rubber mattress in a bath of this character for six weeks, and while for a period before entering the bath the uncontrollable pain from a laceration of the thigh was so great that the officer feared he would go insane, in the bath he had not felt anything worse than the usual discomfort from long confinement in bed.