

Alaska--America's Last Frontier--A Land of Pure Delight-- Adventures on the Yukon River to Klondyke

By Myrtle Mason.

"There is a land of pure delight" we used to sing from page 33 in the Sunday school song book. And the land, we were taught in all good orthodoxy to know, was far, far away, beyond excursion rates and specially conducted tours. Its golden shores, we surmised, were never foot-marked by the summer tourist; flowing milk and honey did away with the necessity for cafeterias; and spotless robes of white swung in graceful answer to the problem of changing styles and a vacation wardrobe.

Now there is another land, which, though lacking some of the priceless attributes of the farther realm, is, for all that, one of pure delight—the inside passage trip to Alaska and the Yukon territory beyond. Every steamer's length from Seattle to Skagway is sheer beauty growing in grandeur as one travels northward. Mountains heaven-hurled and saddled with glaciers and perpetual snow; picturesque gorges with curved and wooded shores; gentle, feathery cascades; mad water falls exulting in their release from icy prisons; incomparable reflections in waterways, and insets of velvet, rose and gold. The inside passage makes good the boast that it is the

The Klondyke totem, the most photographed totem in Alaska. Totems were coats of arms, family crests or hereditary emblems. They were placed before houses, at graves and other places. This totem is surmounted by something representing a mountain. Below is the frog, the coat of arms of the clan, which follows the mother's lineage. Still below, the old raven (the creator, according to the Klondyke tradition), talking to his grandson that made man. Lowest of all is the beaver, coat of arms of the father's side, and again the frog, the mother emblem.

most wonderful 1,000 miles of sea voyage in the world. Skagway, reached by way of mountains, Lynn canal, is the northern terminus of the inside route. From there one goes by way of a breath-taking railway journey through crowded mountains to White Horse, swinging around rugged slopes, looking far down to a rushing torrent, in the canyon directly below, crossing slender bridges over dizzying precipices and emerging at last along the shores of sparkling Lake Bennett. Thence, on a Yukon river boat to Dawson in Yukon territory, or in another direction through a waterway reminding of the Thousand Isles, to Lake Atlin, a jewel set among mountains, solemn and cold, which mark the return voyage, owing to a strong current, requires four days.

Dawson itself is but an echo of past glory, a city of waning hopes. Yet, it is a shrine for those whose blood surges with the spirit of adventure and no one goes to Dawson or puffs along the Yukon without a quickening thrill. The visitor of 1924 becomes a prospector of '98, and, in imagination, intensely lives again those stirring days. He packs his outfit, builds his frail raft, shoots the dangerous White Horse rapids, fights mosquitoes, scurvy and lonesomeness, studies the creek beds, stakes his claim and with pounding heart and trembling hand sends down his pan, murmuring a prayer in his heart for the yellow gold.

Men literally picked up gold in the streets in those days. Hasty panning or crude sluice boxes made them millionaires in for their pains. What wonder they "scrabbled and mucked" like slaves.

Gold was the medium of exchange. Every bar had its scales where the lust was weighed and taken over in exchange for drinks for the customer or "for the house."

That day is gone, both as to gold and drinks. For though Yukon is not getting territory, there is no way of getting alcoholic drinks in except through Alaska, and this, we were told, is not permissible. The supply that once was is diminishing and can not be replaced unless some entrance route not touching our border can be discovered. It is understood that great minds are working on this problem and who knows but another Columbus may arise to conquer the uncharted seas.

Dawson has been pretty well taken out and the individual prospector has little opportunity left. Profitable mining is being done now only by big concerns, who go on a large scale, equipped either for hydraulic or dredge operations, both being placer mining. The quartz or lode method has not yet been made to pay in this



Island reflections in Atlin lake. Goat, or Teresa Island. A mountain, a lake and a perfect day.

area. Improved methods are being employed constantly, thus making it pay to work the poorer fields. It was a great day when the miners discovered that cold water would melt frozen ground as well as piped steam, and the ground a foot or two beneath the surface is always frozen in that country. But all these methods require sizable capital and so the individuals sell out to companies. Water running under high pressure for 24 hours is expensive. At the Jones place out of Dawson the water last year cost 42 per cent of the return from the full "clean-up," and the miner never knows until this annual reckoning what he is going to make, though his expenses are both high and certain.

Daylight 24 Hours. Two things always impress the cheechaco, or newcomer, the agreeable summer climate, the temperature being about the same as in our Puget Sound cities, and the 24 hours of daylight, during the "high tide of the year."

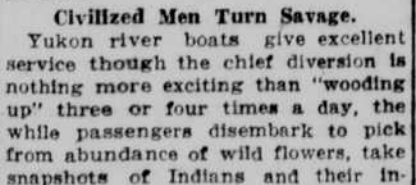
Imagine a moonlight waltz with daylight streaming in at the openings, or a full moon on a July night blanching out by the brighter sun. Discouraged to romance, but a novelty at least! That's Dawson in summer, where the



Abandoned log cabin of Robert W. Service at Dawson, Yukon territory. Mr. Service went to Dawson as a bank clerk and remained to write poetry and some prose.

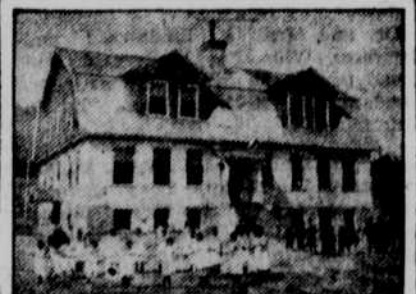
Press carried the story on the 12th and on the 13th Mr. Walker had a cable order for a bulb. His begonias are single, double and serial. Some idea of the grade of color may be had from the fine graduation pointed out by Mr. Walker. His whites include white, ivory, lemon, orange and chrysanthemum, pinks are scarlet, crimson and red. A double salmon rose pink begonia is like a waxen rose of seric hue. The last creation of this Alaskan Burbank is the crested variety, the single petals holding up a fringed crest near their edge.

Juneau, the capital and home of Scott O. Burns, the governor, is a garden spot. The mountainous background seems to have pushed the town down to the water's edge, and standing on its shores, one looks across Gastineau channel to Douglas, the site of the former famous Treadwell mines, which caved in with tragic result a few years ago.



Atlin Lake, B. C., "Framing its image in her trembling heart."—Service.

Ivory or mastodon beads at from \$15 to \$150 a string. Genuine Indian basketry is high, and then very difficult to obtain, small baskets of the finer work ranging from \$40 up to any price. Moccasins, Indian dolls and gold nugget jewelry are sold, but one turns over most of the curios expecting to find a label somewhere. "Made in the U. S. A." Indian hands have not touched many of the reputed native souvenirs, and it would be no inducement to know that they had unless one could obtain along with his purchase a certificate of sterilization. Dirt and disease still prevail among our redskin brothers.



A baby bear, from Taku glacier, looking like a huge conch shell. It is indigo blue, and two-thirds submerged. Watch out! It may turn over any minute.

Fortunate were we at White Horse on our return, arriving there in time for the annual celebration, "Days of '98." Gambling games, dancing, a bar, Dan McGraw and "the lady that's known as Lou," were all there. For \$1, 100 in paper money could be purchased, to play on roulette, black jack or fan tan. The dealer or attaches of the "house" were old-time professionals or at least experienced in handling the game. The dealer in black jack, especially, had all the flourishes, or perhaps lack of them, that one would think of attributing to a "shark." And many of those who played, when asking for extra cards, were not calling "hit me" for the first time. The games were very spirited. An old lady who had obviously seen better days, played the roulette wheel all evening, serious and sober about it, never moving except to place her money, never smiling and seemingly unconscious of the facetious crowd around her. One wondered!

beasts ashore. The steamer whistle is their signal for action. They start yelping along in the direction of the boat, dashing wildly and howling pathetically in their frantic hunger. Some start to swim out to the boat and then turn back to a surer footing, keeping their eyes fixed on the floating object which to them is the

The girl winning prize money for costume, wore a small waisted white dress with Battenberg yoke and full skirt. Around her neck was a white feather bog and her hat scooped far out over her face and high pompadour. The atmosphere had reality in it and was a fitting close to our stay in the Yukon.

The Burbank of Alaska. Skagway, though it was a boom town, has both prospect and prestige as the gateway to commerce of the Yukon Interior. Glacier and mountain side trips are numerous out of this "garden city of Alaska." We saw three rhubarb with leaves measuring 40 by 44 inches across. No finer strawberries grow than those from nearby Haines and Charles O. Walker, florist, has a continent-wide reputation for his begonias. He has taken many floral prizes in the states, and ships his bulbs everywhere. In July of a year ago, Mrs. Harding christened one of his new plants, "The Lady Harding dahlia." The Philadelphia

bearer of all good things. Even the ship's crew are interested observers. One of them wishing to add to his measure of sport, fastened a bone on either end of a foot or two of wire, and was rewarded by the tussle between two infuriated animals, each trying to carry his bone to his lair for an isolated meal.

We visited a Moosehead Indian village by launch from Dawson, and upon arrival, instead of seeing the old chief in white dance, were met by a young man who told that one of the men of the tribe had just died. "Boys, sorry, no dance, awful sorry." Whereupon our launchman, a white man, drew out his handkerchief and wept. "I knew him well," he said as if in apology. "You get attached—up here."

This was only one evidence we had of the freer flow of human sympathy in a land where smaller numbers and common hardships draw men closer to their fellows, whatever creed or color. The Indians, we were told, postponed their wailing until our departure, which was soon made. Two of their tribe accompanied us back to town, seeming to have business in connection with their brother's death. Indian villages, schools, cemeteries and totems are always points of interest. Little fences of hand-cut pickets surround many of their graves and the totems always hold one spellbound before their grotesque and astounding imagery.

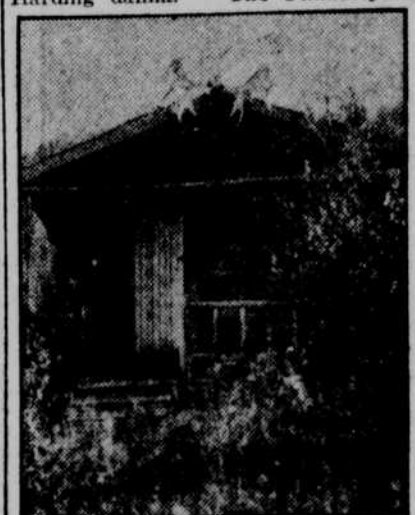
The now deserted log cabin of Robert W. Service is pointed out to visitors who are told that the poet came to Dawson as a bank clerk, and remained to record as the "Kipling of the Yukon" the life of the north in memorable verse. Service may not be a great poet, but his "Spell of the Yukon," "Law of the Yukon," "The Shooting of Dan McGee," and "The Cremation of Sam McGee," convey the spirit of that section in '98 better perhaps than anything else in literature, though Rex Beach, who made his fortune in gold during the rush up there should be mentioned in this connection.

Moose and caribou meat are on bills of fare along the river, while the sea venues offer deep sea cod, salmon, trout and halibut as local delicacies. Tourists are invited to buy fossil

of gold nuggets and from it dangled a mounted wolf's tooth. His cuff links were gold-mounted bear claws. During the evening, a dog team and sleigh were driven in and two ladies at a time given a ride. "A-mush" is the official command for "go" in the north, derived some say from the French, "Marchon." Robert Service's "stranger" came in, recited part of the poem, shot, and and was shot, by Dan McGraw, while Lou, wearing a blonde wig of unraveled rope, "kissed him and pinched his poke," or money bag.

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An old lady who had obviously seen better days, played the roulette wheel all evening, serious and sober about it, never moving except to place her money, never smiling and seemingly unconscious of the facetious crowd around her. One wondered! Back of the bar (soft drinks only) were bartenders wearing bright red vests. Their hair was dark and slick. One of them was wonderful with a flaming nettle, set off by a nugget pin. Over his shoulders ran flamboyant hand embroidered suspenders. His fastenings watch chain was a string

Benson Society

Benson Women's Club Activities.
The program committee of the Benson Women's club will be entertained Friday, August 1, at the home of Mrs. C. C. Beavers. Hostesses for the club meetings during the year will be selected at this meeting.

Mrs. W. H. Loehner has tendered her resignation as recording secretary of the club. The vacancy is to be filled by the executive board.

Attend Baptist Quarterly.
A group of ladies from the Benson Baptist church attended the Omaha Missionary quarterly missionary meeting, Friday at the Olivet church.

Tri-City Birthday Club.
Mrs. W. A. Wilcox was hostess Wednesday, July 23, at her home in the Highland park district to the members of the tri-city birthday club. A 1 o'clock luncheon was served.

Sunday Dinner Party.
Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Stafford entertained at dinner Sunday, July 20, complimentary to Miss Fenella Legge and her fiancé, Rudolph Carl Mueller, Charlotte Melchior, Jenkins and Mrs. P. A. Legge. Preceding the dinner the party attended services at the First Methodist church where the new bishop Rev. Frederick T. Keeney delivered the sermon. Rev. Mr. Keeney and family were former friends of Mrs. Stafford in Syracuse, N. Y.

Attends Peru Normal Graduation.
Mrs. Edward Sorenson and daughter, Miss Olga Sorenson, and Mrs. Charlotte Melchior, Jenkins drove down to Peru Thursday where they remained over to be in attendance at the graduation exercises of the summer normal class of which Miss Alice, younger daughter of Mrs. Sorenson, was a member. Miss Alice graduated a year ago from the Benson high school.

Deaf Mute Missionary Conference.
The national deaf mute missionary conference was held at the Immanuel Lutheran church at Sixtieth and Military avenues Sunday, July 20. The sermons, songs and prayers were all delivered in the audible voice and then interpreted by a missionary who was a sign language expert and whose hearing was perfect. The communion was all conducted by the sign language. This was a unique service fraught with much spiritual devotion.

I. W. B. Class Picnic.
Members of the "I Will Boast" class of the Methodist Sunday school enjoyed their annual picnic Friday at Elmwood park. This class is composed of the young married women of the school.

Sunday Dinner Guests.
Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Mauer and the Misses Daisy and Ann Mauer

headed, sit in two and backbones removed, washed, thrown in a pan of salt and then into the barrels ready for foreign market. At Wrangell we saw shrimps brought in for canning. Observing the small daily haul, the labor of picking the shrimp by hand from their scaly covering, the several steamings and final sealing up, we wondered not at their high price in our markets. The Wrangell cannery does not pack by vacuum, so their cans must be shipped and kept on ice until used. A sawmill and famous totem poles are other points of interest at this old town, which was made a military post when Alaska was purchased in 1867.

Resources of Alaska, America's Last Frontier.
The inside passage trip includes only southeastern Alaska or the panhandle. The Yukon territory is British. They tell the story of a post office official at Washington who wrote into the Klondyke with a reprimand for their failure to send in government reports.

The reply taught the American some geography. The big Alaska peninsula to westward is the real Alaska, a land of paradoxes. "Nothing can be said of Alaska of which the opposite is not true," said one writer.

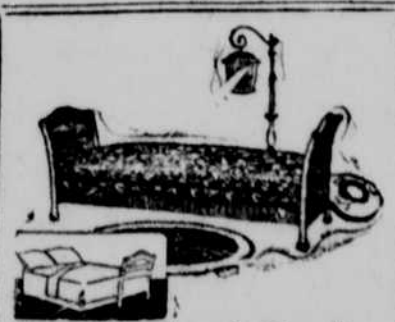
We paid \$7,000,000 for Alaska in 1867, and since then have realized \$500,000,000 from mines, two-thirds of this amount being gold. Copper is a strong second for place, with silver, tin, lead, petroleum, marble, quicksilver and platinum following in the order named. Undeveloped mineral resources are said to be enormous.

Fishing and fur seal have brought us even more than minerals since 1867. Their total valuation was, up to 1922, \$540,000,000. Fox, mink, marten are other furs are marketed and there are two active whaling stations.

There are two national forests in Alaska. From these about 500,000,000 board feet have been sold during the past 10 years, most of it having been used locally. Western hemlock predominates with spruce, poplar and birch as other varieties.

Agriculture and stock raising are minor industries as yet. Five government agricultural experiment stations in Alaska are doing enterprising work in developing varieties of fruits and grains, cross-breeding cattle and other livestock for successful production in that country.

Despite increasing knowledge of this wonderful correction of fallacies regarding its climate, and growth of normal community life, Alaska still holds charms as a country of mystery and silence, of beauty and loneliness, of great and yet hidden wealth, a challenge to the lover of freedom and adventure, America's last frontier.



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Summer Visitor and Her Hostess



Among the pretty young summer visitors is Miss Marion Louise Chapin of Kansas City, Mo., guest of her aunt, Mrs. Joseph Bushman. They arrived in Omaha together this week from Excelsior Springs. Miss Chapin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. D. E. Chapin, is a senior in high school and possesses a promising contralto voice. She will be the inspiration for several social affairs during her stay, the first of which will be given by her hostess.

Mrs. Bushman is prominently identified with the Omaha Woman's club. She was chairman of the house and home committee last year. The Child Saving Institute is her favorite charity.

An extensive vacation motor trip to Minnesota.

Mr. and Mrs. Axel Raamussen of Washington, Neb., were Sunday guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Fitch.

Mr. Howard Piersol returned to Herman Monday after having spent the week-end at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gorton Koch.

Miss Carol Killien, who has been a guest at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fitch, returned to her home at Albion, Neb., Monday.

Mr. O. Lundell underwent an appendicitis operation Saturday at the Presbyterian hospital. Mr. Lundell is the millinery buyer for the Brandeis stores.

C. F. Roe, vice president of the Farmers and Merchants bank, and son, who, with Mrs. Roe, were injured in an automobile accident recently, came home Thursday from the Methodist hospital. Mrs. Roe is unable to be removed from the hospital.

Degree of Honor Meeting.
Regular meeting of the Past Presidents' association, Omaha lodge No. 14, Degree of Honor, will be held at the home of Nannie Pence, 3112 North Sixty-sixth street, August 5.

Ice Cream Social.
Members of the Waltham league of the Immanuel Lutheran church will entertain at an ice cream social and party Wednesday evening, August 6, on the church lawn.

Picnic at Bennington.
Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Stafford and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bromfield and family attended the Modern Woodmen and Royal Neighbor picnic Saturday at Bennington, Neb.

Personals.
Rev. and Mrs. F. W. Seasko returned Thursday from a vacation trip to Minnesota.

Miss Roma Roth is spending two weeks with relatives and friends in Tekamah, Neb.

Mrs. Sharley Smith of Valley, Neb., is a week-end guest at the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. Burford.

Mr. and Mrs. McKennie of Newman Grove, Neb., were recent guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Fitch.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Reed and daughter, Dorothy, are home from

Women Voters' League Meets

Members of the League of Women Voters from over the state will gather in Lincoln Friday and Saturday to hear Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham, second vice president of the national league, and chairman of the league's national "get out the voter" campaign. Miss Ruth McIntosh, secretary for the sixth region of the national league, will be present at this time to confer with Nebraska league members on organization and finance problems as a beginning to her six weeks' visit in this state.

Mrs. Cunningham will make the chief address on the Epworth assembly program on Friday afternoon and will meet in an all-day conference with state workers on Saturday, beginning at 10 o'clock, in the Chinese room of the Lincoln hotel.

The Lincoln league is arranging a luncheon for the two national workers at 1 o'clock Saturday at the Lincoln hotel. Miss Dorothy Pettis and Mrs. W. B. Comstock comprise the committee having charge of the arrangements.

Miss Baum Returns.

Miss Cornelia Baum has returned after four months spent in the east. Miss Baum spent a great deal of her stay in Washington, D. C., where she had been a student last year in Mrs. Somers' school. In addition, she visited Mrs. Mary Morris, former Omahan in her home in Easton, Pa.

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