

THE LOG OF A SEA-GOING PIONEER

By

ALFRED BENNETT ILES
1855-1942

**Alfred Bennett Iles, during his
tour of duty in the British Navy.
1868-1875.**

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Chapter I

My grandfather was one of the wealthiest landowners of Dorking, in the County of Surrey, England. He was also a great gambler, and at the time of his death he had lost everything but his wife and four children. Grandmother's maiden name was Ann Bennet, sister of the then Earl of Tankerville, of Chillingham castle, Nottinghamshire. The House of Tankerville was created by King Henry V in 1418. At the time of Queen Elizabeth, Sir John Bennet's son was raised to the peerage of Lord Ossulston, and his son, having married Lady Mary Grey, only child of the Grey Earl of Tankerville, became heir to the title. My father always claimed that he was the rightful heir to the title, but the connection brought no emolument to the family.

The Castle of Chillingham, with its ancient park of 25,000 acres, came to the Bennet lords through the Tankerville marriage, and is one of the oldest country seats of England, having already been known as ancient in 1418, when the Grey earldom



was created. The famous herds of white cattle, wild and fierce, have roamed under the trees of Chillingham Forest from time immemorial, having been described as of unknown antiquity in the days of William the Conqueror. The late King Edward had a narrow escape from death while engaged in shooting the king of his herd, and the head and horns now adorn the walls of Sandringham.

On the death of my grandfather, my father and his family moved



*Cholmondeley Castle, England.
Alfred was born here in 1855.*

There I was born on October 11, existence I attended the village sisters, until some change fortunes and we moved to Exeter, in the White Lion Hotel. The time of the Ascot races, when he unlucky venture. Father was the world's greatest cricket taught King Edward of England, late Czar of Russia the great fortunes he became Stewart of the Singh, an Indian Rajah, resigning manager of Rossie Priory, the



*Elizabeth Willshire 1824-1891,
mother of Alfred Iles.*

to Cheshire, where he became the steward of Cholmondeley Castle, the home of the Marquis and Marchioness. 1855. At an early stage in my school with my brother and occurred in my father's where he invested his capital business prospered until the lost his investments in an known at the time as one of players and the man who then Prince of Wales, and the English game. To recoup his properties of Prince Dhuleep this position to become Scottish estate of Lord

Kinniard.

After the Exeter collapse, Mother had taken the children to London, and I was growing to be a big boy of seven years. Word came to her one day from Father that I should be shipped post haste to Dundee, Scotland. As mother was in poor health, my Aunt Betsy was delegated to accompany me to the steamer, which was lying at anchor in the Thames, off the West India docks.

The boat that took us to the steamer was one of the small wherrys that ply on the river for two pence a trip. It was manned by a one-eyed boatman just from the country, who had invested his capital in the rowboat and was about to try out his new investment on us. He shoved off and the boat swung out with the tide. By the time he got settled in his seat and the oars shipped, we were well up the river and nearing Lambeth Bridge. The water was choppy, with a fresh wind blowing up from the sheerness banks, and the spray was coming over the boat. Our Charon was pulling against the tide with all his might when one of the oars "caught a crab" and we all but capsized. My aunt nearly collapsed with fright, but I, who knew something about rowing, seized one of the oars and she was soon herself again, whereupon she devoted herself to giving the boatman a dressing down in language that must have been a revelation to the Yorkshire yokel. After an hour's hard pull we reached the Scottish liner, and the boatman caught a line that was thrown from the deck and made it fast to a ringbolt in the bow. A Jacob's ladder was lowered from the gangway. The old lady stood up in the boat while I kissed her goodbye, and she helped me to catch the steps. Just as I got a good hold a heavy swell came up with the rising tide, the boat rolled toward the ship, the ladder swung out, and I bumped my aunt full in her ample coporosity. As she slumped down between the thwarts she gasped: "oh, you bad boy!" while I clambered the rest of the way to the deck. When I looked out, the boat was well on it's way to the shore, and Aunty in the stern sheets was shaking her umbrella at the man at the oars, as if urging him to greater efforts.

I was given a berth in the cabin with a Scotsman who was returning to Perth after a successful sale of a shipment of sheep. His trip had been a profitable one, and he was in a hilarious frame of mind. Producing a bottle of Jamaica rum, he regaled me not only with the rum but also with tales of Bonnie Scotland and what he did to London on his visit, until we dropped off to sleep. I knew no more until two days later I was roused out of my bunk by the roar of the cable as the steamer dropped anchor in Dundee harbor.

Evidently my arrival on the dock at Dundee had not been heralded in trumpet tones, for beyond the fishermen who were cleaning skats for the market and probably thought I was a likely customer, there was no one to welcome me. As I gazed over the prospect, I felt like Japhet in search of his father. Suddenly my luck turned, for my fellow-passenger, the Scotchman, just then coming over the dock, guessed my predicament and offered to take me with him as far as Inchtute, a village about two miles from the Kinniard estate. Arriving there my friend of the boat bade me farewell and went on his way to Perth, while I was driven to the castle in a light phaeton behind a spirited pair of ponies that had been waiting.

Rossie Priory reminded me strongly of my birthplace, Cholmondeley Castle in Cheshire. It was surrounded by a high stone wall, pierced by an entrance gate large enough for a troop of soldiers to march through ten abreast. Outside the wall was a deep moat spanned by a drawbridge with a gateman in charge, who with his family lived in a pretty thatched cottage just

inside the gate. As the pony carriage drew up to the drawbridge, the gateman lowered the bridge and touched his hat as the spirited ponies darted across, along the graveled roadway bordered by flowers and carefully landscaped gardens for a distance of one hundred yards, and up to the portico of the great stone castle of the Lord and Lady. On each corner of the castle round turrets rose twenty feet higher than the roof, from which peered small windows, and along the cornice of the roof were battlements for the shelter of the men-at-arms who formerly protected the castle. English ivy climbed profusely over the building, and luxuriant trees shaded the lawns on that summer morning.

As the door of the castle opened, my small figure passed between two footmen with chins high in the air, clad in gorgeous livery of purple velvet, lace-trimmed coats and tight-fitting knee breeches, pink silk stockings and slippers. Their hair was plastered down with a substance that looked like white plaster. Had not my father appeared to take me in charge at that moment, I would have been overwhelmed with bashfulness at such magnificence.

The entrance hall was a scene of beauty. The ceiling was high, and the walls were hung with great paintings of Scottish chiefs and rural scenes. The floor was covered with carpet that must have cost a fortune. From the entrance hall we entered the cloister, a great hall running the full length of the building. Huge oak beams supported the ceiling. Along the sides stood figures of men in armor, and on the walls were crossed swords, crossbows and bows and arrows, arranged between great paintings of the ancestors of the House of Kinniard. A thick rug covered the floor. Into this cloister opened the dining rooms, ballrooms, and drawing rooms. At one end of the cloister was a great staircase leading to the bedrooms. The kitchen and servants' dining room were in the basement.

My father, through some misunderstanding, had thought that I was to be billed through to Inchtute, and did not appear to be particularly enthusiastic over my coming. He conducted me upstairs to the housekeeper's room, where the motherly old lady took me in charge, and my palate still yearns for the supper of tea and sponge cake.

Next morning Lady Kinniard sent for me, and I was taken to meet her. Her ladyship was a kind and loveable person, and did not inspire me with as much awe as did the pompous footman at the door. She tested my voice, and, finding that satisfactory, duly enrolled me in the Chapel choir. There were rehearsals during the week for the Sunday class, attended by eight or ten other small boys, children of the tenants of the estate. For the choir I was equipped with a white surplice with a wide black ribbon. Father also sent for some new clothes for me from Dundee, and the following Sunday I appeared in a smart black Eton jacket, white shirt and collar, with a neat bow tie and a little black silk plug hat.

For a month my life at the castle was a symposium of bliss, until my father returned from a sudden trip to Dundee and coolly informed me that my holiday was over and I was going to work.

Easton and Sons was the cognomen of a dry goods store in Westport, Dundee. It was called the linen draper's shop, although it sold no linen that I could see, and was in no sense the department store that it developed into today. It is still in business and has become the largest store of its kind in Dundee. There I received my first lesson in salesmanship. With my little scissors fastened to the front of my Eton jacket, I would take down bolts of cloth from the shelves and cut off pieces for the lady customers, or sell them paisley shawls.

Before I could graduate as a floorwalker, my watchful parents apprenticed me for two years to a stonecutter in the city, and I was soon in a far way to become proficient in the art of making tombstones. The owner of the monument yard took me into the bosom of his family, and, aside from the regular diet of porridge, fish, and cheese for breakfast, it was a fairly good home for me. The family was piously inclined and as rigid in their religious customs as the most fanatical Puritan that landed on Plymouth Rock. Every Sunday morning a bawbee was pressed into my hand as a contribution to the Almighty, who was supposed to need a tithe from little boys to defray the expense of making the wheels of the Universe go round. The services at the Kirk began at eleven o'clock and lasted well into the afternoon. Drowsiness overcame me long before the preacher reached his "ninthly," and I was jarred back into consciousness by sundry pokes in the ribs from the umbrella of my employer.

As I became more expert in smoothing down slabs of granite, I was allowed to try my hand at lettering. Under the tutelage of an old and grizzled mechanic I fast grew to be quite an artistic stonecutter and completed several jobs, the last one of which, I gathered, was a tribute to the capacity of a fellow townsman:

"Here lies Tom Bales, who lived at South Bell, A man who carried his can to his mouth well. He carried so much and he carried so fast, He could carry no more so was carried last. The liquor he drank being too much for one, He could not carry off, so now he's carrion."

Three months before the expiration of my apprenticeship to the monument works I returned to Rossie Priory because of another change in the family fortunes. By this time Mother and the other children, who had arrived in Scotland, were ready to fly south again, and Father, whose fame as a cricketer had spread all over the United Kingdom, was persuaded to return to London by the "All England Eleven," a great cricket club, and a place was created for him on the staff of Lord Palmerston, then Prime Minister.

Chapter II

London in 1865 was not particularly fascinating to a boy of ten after the free and wild life in the Scottish mountains. True, the great Exhibition was in full blast, the city was humming with life over the opening of the underground railroad, and the throngs on Piccadilly and the Strand were spotted with Oriental costumes gathered from the four corners of the earth. Although the Exposition was within a couple of miles of domicile, I never saw it. The intricacies of the “underground” remained a mystery to me, and I was more interested in the proud privilege of being selected to carry the bass drum in the Royal Band of Grenadiers at the “Trailing of the Colors” then in all the fantastical costumes from Afghanistan to Zanzibar.

Our home had been established in a court running from Piccadilly near the Marble Arch, and a job was provided for me in a coffee shop across the way, where from six in the morning to seven at night I sliced bread and butter and brewed strong coffee at the munificent salary of eighteen pence a week. Like a dutiful son I handed over my wages to Mother every Saturday night and received in return a penny for pocket money. On Sundays in company with several other boys of equally affluent circumstances, we would tramp to the other end of London to invest our pennies in hatful of damaged fruit, and then with our provender we would trail over to the East India docks, on the Thames, where our visions of far-off ports were inspired by watching the ships from all over the world unloading their cargoes. We would arrive home in time for church, where as a reward for our piety we were given a ticket for the next Sunday School excursion.

Promotion was slow in the coffee shop, and when I found a job in a chemist’s establishment in the Edgeware Road at three shillings a week and my tea, I felt that my financial future was assured. The hours were from six in the morning to nine at night. The family had then moved to Crick Elwood, one of the suburbs of London, and I could usually catch a ride for the three miles to the chemist’s shop on the rear spring of a four-wheeler. Often precariously when someone would shout, “Put the whip behind!” I was learning how to mix pills for ailing people when a millinery shop proprietor discovered me and offered me a raise of sixpence a week, which I promptly accepted.

Still my ambition was not appeased. I was making weekly visits to the docks now, and I longed for the sea. In my spare time I used to read the exploits of Dick Turpin and Black Bess, his wonderful mare, and I wanted to emulate his hold-ups on the King’s highway of rich magnates and beautiful ladies. I was getting more pocket money with my high wages, so with the three other youngsters, all yearning to be Robin Hoods, we purchased a horse pistol which had a barrel as large a modern shotgun. One morning before daylight we crept out of our homes, met at a crossroads armed with the pistol and a goodly supply of powder and ball, and struck out for Epsom Downs. When about four miles from London and we could no longer hear the tolling of Big Ben, the clock in the tower of Westminster Abbey, we held a council of war and decided it was time to load the gun and make ready to waylay the first victims. Then an argument rose as to who should have the honor of firing the first shot. The choice fell to Darby Kelly. I ran down three fingers of the powder and poured in the lead. A cap was poised on the nipple and the trigger pulled back to full cock. We all ran as Darby raised the pistol, pointed it in the air, shut his eyes, and – bang! The explosion was terrific, Darby was thrown to the ground by the recoil; his hand

was bleeding and his eyes raining tears. The pistol was blown to bits and we found no trace of it. Thus ended our escapade into banditry, and it was late at night when we reached our homes, tired, hungry, and our martial spirits in the discard.

My millinery career soon came to an end through the death of Madame's husband, who was a sort of Mr. Mantalini, a well-known character in *Nicholas Nickleby*, and the consequent removal of the establishment to Burlington Arcade. There, relieved of the incubus of a liability, which had been absorbing the profits, the concern burst forth into immediate success.

Since I was out of a job, it behooved me to get busy, so I purchased a birch broom and joined the ranks of crossing sweepers on the multitudinous muddy crossing of London. Having located by virtue of discovery a street crossing on Fleet Street where the traffic was thickest, I soon had the mud swept aside and the grateful public rewarding me with the pennies of the realm. Those unfortunates who either could not or would not pay toll no doubt regretted the oversight, for either by accident or design my broom, by some peculiar twist of the wrist, was want to fly up and a gentle spray of soft mud sprinkled the back of the delinquent. Then I usually had to fly! In the long run my public service was not a success. The Bobbies vicariously watched the character of service I was rendering, and one day a burly copper pulled his truncheon and gave chase. I darted along Fleet Street, under the old Temple Bar, past the Bank, and finally ran among the crowd filing into "Dirty Dick's" near the Thames embankment. I had eluded the policeman, but lost my broom and my job was thereafter taboo.

I was then approaching thirteen and was becoming more self-reliant every day. My mother seldom saw me in daylight, but she made strenuous efforts to regain control of me. The rest of the children were more tractable, but I was obstinate, willful, and possessed of a devil-may-care disposition that boded ill for my future. On a Sunday morning she wore herself out imploring me to go to church. Finally she called in a policeman and then gave him a shilling to go away again, after he had somewhat frightened me with the enormity of my offense and vowed he would send me to Botany Bay if I did not obey my mother. For the rest of the day I was subdued and penitent. That night my father came home and I got a licking that has not yet been effaced from my memory.

Thompson's Hotel in Berkley Square next availed itself of my youthful services. From my earnings with the broom in the city, I had had sense enough to purchase a suit of clothes that made me presentable when I appeared at the hotel office soon after the broom episode. With five shillings a week as my emolument and a tight-fitting black suit with three rows of bright buttons, a cute little cap with a cockade sitting over my left ear, I felt I was not only an ornament but a real acquisition to that far-famed hostelry. At that time the King of -----, several other notables, and all their retinue, were stopping at the hotel, and I think if I had been endowed with a contentment for a life of servitude, a fortune would soon have been in my grasp. Thompson's was not a large hotel, but it was exclusive and enjoyed a clientele, which embraced all the crowned heads of Europe, dukes with their duchesses, earls and their countesses, and millionaires from America. It was a revelation to me, and the half-crowns, half sovereigns and shillings which poured into the silver salver that I carried were a constant delight to the crowd of servants below with whom I had to divide. At times, when I had ushered a beautiful lady into the presence of King -----, he would slip a half sovereign into my hand and chuck her under the chin

as I looked the other way. I was “innocence abroad” for a fact, and was yet to learn that there was low life above stairs as well as high life below stairs.

Chapter III

In my leisure hours I was absorbed in the “Boys of England” and “Young Men of Great Britain,” periodicals of that day replete with historical romances of Walter Raleigh, Frances Drake, the Spanish Armada and freebooters of the bounding main. My longing for life on the ocean grew, until one spring morning in 1869 I appeared at the naval office with my Uncle Ephraim and was accepted as a prospective admiral on Her Majesty’s seventy-four gun ship, the “Boscawen.” My age was a trifle over thirteen, but I was a well-developed lad for that age and I underwent all the tests without question.

The arrival of a package at the home of my parents containing my civilian clothes, accompanied by a short note of farewell, was the first intimation my family had of my departure, but the loss of one out of a flock of ten was regarded more in the light of a lucky break than a misfortune. The die was cast anyway, and there was nothing to do but make the best of it. For myself, I entered upon my new life with enthusiasm, a determination to learn the ropes and perhaps ere long to become a post-captain; for although I had come aboard through the hawse pipe, I proposed that when I left it would be through the cabin window.

Along with fifty other boys, we were taken aboard a government steamer to Portland, where lay the “Boscawen,” an old line of battleship, veteran of the Napoleonic wars and now a training ship for boys entering Her Majesty’s service. The arrival of the new recruits on the “Boscawen” created no excitement as we filed into line on the quarterdeck. The ship had a compliment of over six hundred boys in addition to the officers and men, and our class of fifty merely replaced the group that had been transferred to the “Excellent” for their gunnery course.

We were served our allotment of “slops” consisting of the naval uniform, brush, comb, knife, towel, and a sewing kit. No shoes or hose were worn aboard ship, in order more easily to climb the ratlines aloft. We were then treated to a dissertation on the “articles of war,” rules and regulations of the ship, and marched down to the bathroom. Six bathtubs large enough to hold a dozen boys each contained twelve inches of fresh water, and two other tubs were nearly full of seawater. The boys were ordered into the fresh water to lather off the dirt, and the rinsing took place in the other tubs. By the time the lads were through the first installment, the residue was about the consistency of bean puree. As we came out of shivering from the icy cold concoction we were lined up so the master at arms with a short cane could poke under our arms, around our necks and ears, and if any lines of demarcation were found, back went the culprit for another dowsing, with an added slip of the cane to accelerate the circulation.

Rigged in the “slops” we were now full-fledged sailors, with the name “H.M.S. Boscawen” in gold letters on our caps. We were at liberty to go below to our mess, and our supper consisted of hard tack and tea. The pipe of the boatswain’s mate “Stand at Hammocks” was made to chime in with eight bells. That night I fell out of the hammock twice and was let down once again by the neighbors, who slipped the rope of my bed without any warning. The other newcomers fared no better, for the yells and curses lasted throughout the night.

At four bells we were roused out to lash up and stow our hammocks, scrub and holystone the decks, using a squeegee to dry them just as the squeegee is used nowadays to clean windows. By the time the brass-work was cleaned, prayers read by the chaplain, and the bugle sounded for breakfast, our appetites were keen for the regulation bowl of cocoa and hard tack. During the day

there were more inspections, with more poking about the ears, legs, and feet for dirt. The unlucky Wight that was not absolutely pure was taken to the tubs and there rubbed with sand and canvas until he was the color of a ripe raspberry.

The boys were also taught to tie knots, splice ropes and sew the sails. They made all plain sail at least once a day, ran the rigging, climbed over the futtock shrouds, and reeved the ropes.

There were swimming lessons, and some of the boys learned to swim, but I never could by the method used. A canvas band with a cord through it was put around my chest, and I was told to jump off the gangway. I did so, but as soon as I struck the water I would claw at the side of the ship and the instructor would raise me out of the water with the cord and then let go. The more he ducked me the more frightened I became, and finally he would tow me to the ladder.

In the evening the boys would run up the rigging on one side and down the other, and it was during this pastime that I encountered my first punishment. Climbing up to the fore royal truck, I unscrewed the lightning conductor, which slipped from my hands and narrowly missed a boy on deck. The royal truck was a thick disk of wood six inches in diameter, and formed the top of the mast. On this I sprawled and went through the motions of swimming. The officer of the deck, who had been watching my antics, suddenly cried out; "Down from aloft!" When I reached the fo'castle a boatswain's mate escorted me to the quarterdeck and I was entered on the report. Next morning I was summoned before the Commander, who read the docket and without asking my version of the affair sentenced me to two-dozen strokes with the cane.

It was not the punishment that threw me into a blue funk for the next few hours, but the fact that I was to be made a spectacle of before the whole ship's company. Promptly at four bells in the afternoon the boatswain's pipe "All hands witness punishment" brought a solid mass of boys to the quarterdeck, with the officers ranged about the capstan. I was in the limelight facing the Commander, who without more ado read the record and wound up with "Seize him up!" The master at arms, who was a big, pompous brute, jerked me over the arm of the bitts and pulled my shirt up from my pants, while a quartermaster with a rope stopper around my legs, reeved it through an eyebolt and held on to the end, thus between them clamping me into a vise in which movement was out of the question, and leaving only the rear part of my anatomy visible. On this section another quartermaster rained twenty-four blows with a long cane, the end of which had been wound with waxed whipcord. The fact that I was boiling with rage at the indignity of the ordeal and the manifest injustice of such punishment for my trivial act helped to mitigate the pain, and it was soon over. I felt myself being released; the burly master-at-arms raised himself from my neck and shoulders, and I was free to drag my sore limbs to the lower deck and nurse my wounds.

There was not much rest for the boys of the "Boscawen." When we were not holystoning the decks and polishing the brass work, we drilled the guns, washed our clothes and scrubbed our hammocks, everything being done consistent with the strict discipline of the ship. Even the hammocks were inspected after being scrubbed, and on one washday my hammock still showed the tar stain from the lash rope after I had washed it, so the officer of the watch, whose breakfast had probably disagreed with him that morning, ordered me to scrub it again and carry it on a pole until it was dry. Thursday afternoon was "Rope yarn Sunday," which time was given up to mending clothes and putting kits in order. Most of the boys learned to sew and do fancy stunts

with the needle, and even my black silk handkerchief was hemmed with a strand from a young lady's locks.

After nine months of this life, I passed my examination and was drafted as midshipman to "H.M.S. Excellent" in Portsmouth Harbor. The "Excellent" was a gunnery ship of the British Navy, and on this floating fortress I was taught, in addition to the feature of manipulation of the big guns, the manufacture of ammunition, shells, shot and fuses, the construction of torpedoes, and finished with a course in diving.

During our tuition, officers and men formed the classes together, and I found in my class the Duke of Clarence and the Duke of Edinburgh. When my turn came to tell what I knew of the instruments of war, I was quite bossy to the two dukes as to the men before the mast. The Duke of Clarence was then the heir apparent to the throne. He was a studious boy and he advanced quickly, but his health was frail and it was evident that he was guarded with great care. Edinburgh was a wild, intractable youth who was as full of tricks as a dog is of fleas. He would break his leave with impunity, perpetrate jokes, and was most of the time undergoing some mild form of punishment. One dark night, after being refused permission to go ashore, he broke out of the ship by stripping off his clothes and crawling out of one of the gun ports. As he held on to the ship's cable I lowered his bundle to him, and the last I saw of him he was striking out for shore with one hand while with the other he held his clothes out of the water. The late King George was the younger brother of the Duke of Clarence and Queen Mary was then the Princess May and engaged to the latter. On the death of the Duke of Clarence, Prince George became heir to the throne and also to the affections of the lovely Princess.

While on the gunnery ship "Excellent" in Portsmouth Harbor, a tragic incident occurred. My chum Jim Furbridge and I were then in the small arms class, which included cutlass and bayonet drill, and it was Jimmie's call to take part in "loose play." This meant that Jim, armed with a cutlass, and Bill Heming, his antagonist, with a rifle and bayonet, were to cut loose and decide the merits of the two weapons. The cutlass was the regulation side weapon and the bayonet was a flat blade with a spring cushion, so there was little danger of the contestants hurting themselves under ordinary condition. On the point of the bayonet was a metallic button as a further protection. Both the young men wore pads and helmets, similar to those of the umpires at baseball games nowadays. However, there was a bitter enmity between the two, for they were rivals for a certain "Black-eyed Susan" who lived near the docks.

The class formed a ring around the contestants, and the instructor gave the word, "Ready!" Jim brought his cutlass to the guard and awaited the onslaught of Heming, who dropped his snider rifle to the hip with the tip of the bayonet well inside Jim's guard. "Advance!" roared the instructor, and both took a creeping step forward. Bill made a lunge at Jim's breast, but this was safe from attack. His only vulnerable part was the place where the helmet and padded jacket met at the neck. Jim caught the bayonet with his second guard, and in doing so the stabber went well over his shoulder. They were then at close quarters, and Jim was beating his opponent over the head with his cutlass, the edge of which made a nasty dent just below Bill's shoulder. The bayonet was useless against Jim's cutlass until Heming jumped back, threw his rifle to the "point," parried and thrust at the padded figure before him. It was rapidly becoming a fight in earnest, and the silence of the class was intense. I was near Jim's elbow and was watching Bill for signs of foul play, for I knew well that there was no love lost between them.

Once Heming thrust his bayonet between Jim's legs, but he recovered and countered with a smashing blow on Bill's head that staggered him.

Suddenly I caught a flash of Bill's eyes, and saw "murder" written there. The button from the tip of the bayonet was gone, and Bill was shortening his hold on the rifle and advancing on Jim, who was wielding his cutlass like a flail. It was then that I called out, "Look out! He will stick you in the neck!" But the warning came too late. Jim Furbridge made a slight turn, there was a sharp thrust, and the blade of the sword passed clear through the side of his neck. Jim gave a sharp scream, Heming jerked the bayonet back, and my chum dropped into my arms mortally hurt.

There is little more to tell. The funeral was attended by the whole ship's company, about eleven hundred men, who followed the coffin to the grave in Portland cemetery. Bill Heming was put under arrest at once and confined in the ship's "brig" to await a general court martial. His trial and conviction followed in due course, and the verdict read that "owing to extenuating circumstances" he was sentenced to only five years in the convict settlement at Portland Bill.

Chapter IV

About the time I completed my course in the "Excellent," in the spring of 1870, there was waiting to be commissioned for service a new battleship of novel construction, the "H.M.S. Captain." I was in the draft that comprised her first compliment, which was a crew of six hundred and thirty-seven officers and men. She was flat bottomed, carried the turret guns which were just coming into vogue, and the whole ship was considered in the light of an experiment. Almost as soon as she put to sea the word went around that she was top heavy.

We joined the channel fleet, and for six weeks cruised about the coast of Spain, calling at many points in the Mediterranean. The weather was fine and the ship acted splendidly. While ploughing our way through the Bay of Biscay in fan formation, the Admiral of the fleet signaled an invitation to the various captains to dinner on the flagship, which included the designer of the "Captain," whom we had aboard. The sea was calm when the boats put off, and a gentle breeze was coming from the east. At eight bells that evening the party dispersed to their ships in a stiffening wind that was brewing in the southwest, and the captains' galleys had to pull hard to reach their ships.

All through the first watch the gale increased in violence; the ships began to separate; and it was every one for himself. The "Captain" was a full rigged ship, and we were under double-reefed topsails and unreefed courses. The propeller having been unshipped and hoisted, she was breaking through mountainous seas with the wind before the beam. At six bells we cast the log, but the line was snapped off before we could count the knots. The loss of the log, while not serious, threw our course into dead reckoning and we were running wild. This continued until eight bells (midnight), which was the time to change watches.

The rule was to call the watch below from their hammocks on the stroke of the bell, and muster them five minutes later by calling their names as they passed around the captain, the first watch remaining on duty until the middle had been mustered. It was this fateful five minutes that caused the loss of the "Captain," her designer, and all but nineteen of her crew. The toll of the midnight bell had hardly ceased when a heavy gust of wind struck her. The order from the bridge "Watch up course!" was taken up by the boatswain's mate and resounded through the ship, but there was no one to obey it. The first watch was rushing down the Hatchways to their hammocks while the watch just called was declaring they were not on duty until they were mustered. In this way both watches were below with the ship heeling over and the water pouring down the hatches. Again the cry from the officer of the watch, "All hands save ship!" rang through the lower deck, but the panic stricken crew could go neither up nor down, and the ship was nearly on her beams ends in the trough of the sea with the fore and mainsail full of water holding her down. As officer of the fo'castle, I clung to the upper works along with a few stragglers who did not get below, and endeavored to unlace the canvas cover from one of the launches that were carried in the waist of the ship. None of the men had a knife to cut the rope, but I found a small penknife in one of my pockets and this saved our lives. The cover was ripped off and all of us clambered into the boat as a sudden lurch lifted it out of the crutches and we were afloat. The oars were shipped and we pulled frantically from the suction of the sinking ship as she gradually rolled more and more until she was bottom up. We lost sight of her in this position, but it could

not have been more than a few minutes before she took her final plunge, carrying with her more than six hundred lives.

The launch was equipped with sails as well as oars, but the wind was so fierce that the men could not step in the mast. With the oars we kept her head to the wind until morning, when we sighted land. We stepped out on the shore of Cape Finnisterre and found shelter in some fisherman's homes.

Chapter V

Three days later we were back on the receiving ship “Excellent” in Portsmouth with a new outfit of clothes, and I was drafted to the “Glasgow,” bound for the East Indies. Her Majesty’s Ship “Glasgow” was a wooden frigate with twenty-eight guns, full-rigged, with steam of 600 h.p., and her screw could be disconnected at will and hoisted out of the water. Her captain was Theodore Morton Jones, and Francis Hope was her commander. The crew numbered five hundred and twenty-eight officers and men.

On leaving England, our first port on the way to the tropics was Funchel, a picturesque town on the Madeiras. After a few days in that beautiful harbor, the ship headed for the Cape Verdes, and then for thirteen weeks we wallowed in the doldrums, the monotony being broken only by the unique ceremony of crossing the line.

The night before we reached the equator, preparations were made for the coming of King Neptune by stretching the fire hose into the fore and main tops and manning the pumps. All hands were then piped on deck, and soon the lord of Davy Jones Locker was seen coming over the bow of the ship rigged out with white flowing robes, his spiked crown and trident shining with glitter of gold leaf and his long white hair flowing to the breeze. He was asked the reason of his visit, and Neptune replied that he had heard that there were many novices on board, and if so they would have to be baptized or they would not be permitted to pass through his dominions. The announcement that he would be prepared to accept their allegiance on the morrow appeared to be the signal for the turning on the water, for a torrent was sprayed over everybody from the tops, and the ceremony for that day was over.

Next morning an immense tank was constructed on the quarterdeck from a mainsail, and four feet of seawater was pumped in. Close to it a platform and throne were rigged up, with a slide leading into the tank. Promptly after the morning exercises, six husky old sea dogs took their places in the water of the tank. King Neptune seated himself on the “throne” at the far of the platform and called for the first victim. A tub of whitewash had been provided, with a brush and a piece of iron hoop, which was to be the official razor. An impromptu barber’s chair had been improvised, and the committee was combing the ship for the young sailors who had not crossed the line before. There was no lack of candidates, and as fast as one could be blindfolded and seated before him, Neptune would ask him his name, but as he opened his mouth to answer, the high priest would jauntily fill it with a wave of the whitewash brush. After a number of questions concerning his nativity and what he had eaten for breakfast, receiving a dab of whitewash every time he tried to reply, his face was scraped with the “razor” and he was led to the slide where he was seated backwards. A gentle push was given him, the blinders were snatched from his eyes, and he was in the arms of the “bears,” who passed him along, mostly underwater, to the end of the tank where he was allowed to climb to safety.

Soon after the equator we ran into the southeast trade winds, and our speed began to pick up. In the evenings the yards of the mainmast would be squared and she would put on the appearance of a ship in stays. Having been brought to a standstill, the end of a lower studding sail boom would be lowered into the water and all hands piped to bathe. Although I had taken many swimming lessons on the training ship I had never learned to swim, so when the bathing call went out I did my best to hide until the exercise was over. But I was soon detected, and the

captain made it plain to me that when the hands were piped to bathe it meant just what it said. As I slid down on of the “lizards” I had the “all gone” feeling that culprits are supposed to have when they are about to be hung. The “lizards” or ropes were about fifteen feet apart along the boom. It was now a case of sink or swim. On reaching the water I called to a swimmer who was holding on to the next rope to look out for me. I then let go and struck out, making an exhibition of my self in that fifteen feet of distance, but I finally reached the rope and looked around for my friend, who had vanished. My lungs were full of seawater, but a sudden feeling of confidence had come over me, and it was a new-born exhilaration that I swam back to the rope I had left and knew that I could swim. That part of the ocean where the ship was floating was nearly two miles deep, yet when the hands were called to bathe the next evening I was the first one overboard and swam as far ahead of the ship as anybody.

Chapter VI

We arrived at Simon's Bay, Cape of Good Hope, in the middle watch. In the glory of a full moon one night in the fall of 1870. The "Glasgow" entered the harbor under steam power, having lowered her propeller and taken in and furled her sails the day before. "H.M.S. Rattlesnake," which had the record of having captured some of the most bloody pirates of the age, was calmly lying at anchor near the wharves. As the "Glasgow" steamed into the harbor in the moonlight, we poked our jib boom over the waist of the "Rattlesnake" and her crew was given the fright of their lives. Only a miracle saved this crack corvette. A timely reversal of our engines prevented a catastrophe, as we backed away to a more comfortable berth with no injury save the loss of our dolphin striker, dropped our anchor, and called it a day.

After such a prolonged voyage it was customary to grant the crew a three days' general leave. The privilege included both officers and men, and the following afternoon the men began trickling to the shore. The three midshipmen, Lord George Hay, the Hon. Augustus Brown, and myself, aged fourteen and thereabouts, held a consultation which resulted in pooling our finances, consisting of a penny and a postage stamp from his lordship, three shillings and sixpence from Brown, and eighteen pence from myself – total, five shillings, two pence, and the stamp. This was thought ample to take us to Capetown, thirty-five miles away, and from thence to the diamond diggers some four hundred short miles inland, after which we need not bother ourselves any longer, as we would then all be millionaires! It was all very simple.

We hastily hid about our persons what food we could pilfer from the captain's gallery, passed the scrutiny of the officer of the watch, entered one of our boats, and reached shore. Knowing the signalman on the poop would be following our movements with his glass, we disported ourselves on the silvery sands of the beach by playing leapfrog until the opportune moment arrived to disappear from the view of the ship. Slipping through the town, we located the highway and began our hike to the capital city of South Africa. The road led through a country seemingly fertile with here and there a farmhouse. Whenever we thought we had about reached the jumping-off-place, a village would heave in sight. Here we would straighten up and march through as if we were carrying a commission of major importance.

We had come about eight miles from Simonstown, and the unusual strain put upon our sea legs had left us tired but with undiminished enthusiasm. Daylight was departing and it was with a feeling of gladness that we espied a farmhouse in the distance. The farmer was a dour and sullen Dutchman who would have us be gone, but his wife, seeing three middies in uniform appealing for shelter and having in mind a boy of her own, thrust the man aside, took me by the arm, led us into the house, and gave us supper and a bed for the night. Although I was the youngest of the three, my battle with the world had already taught me the fallacy of trusting a man with a face like that of our host, and I whispered my suspicions under the blanket to my companions. They had more faith in human nature than I, and were convinced that my fears were groundless. Soon we were lost in dreaming of the wonderful Kohinoors that awaited us at the diggings. Had we been more observant, however, we would have seen a horseman leave the farm about daylight and quietly move in the direction of Simon's Bay.

The farmer's wife aroused us early, gave us a hearty breakfast for which she would accept no pay, and presented each of us with an apple for lunch. We started the morning by

running the first mile. The rest of the day was uneventful. We met with no further hospitality and had to draw on our capital for bread, with a bed on top of a haystack.

Next day a man passed us on horseback and took what we thought was more notice of us than the situation justified, but we put it down to be mere curiosity. It was on the third afternoon of our journey that we saw the spires of Capetown among the trees ahead, and putting a spur to our movements we were approaching the town limits when a cart met us and a constable jumped down, read our names from a paper, and ordered us to get into the cart. Realizing now that we were the victims of a trap set by the farmer at our first night's stopping place, we saw our hope of diamonds and mythical millions vanish, as back we went. The horse was whipped into a smart trot, and on the morning of the following day we were delivered to the ship. The constable got his five pounds reward, and all three of us were placed under arrest for the heinous offense of breaking our leave.

The day following this debacle, the hands were called to "Up anchor," and the ship moved slowly out of the harbor amid a salve of cheers from the "Rattlesnake," which had manned her yards to bid us farewell. As the mere matter of putting the ship to sea was simply routine business, being handled by the commander and the navigating officer, the captain was free to attend to the truants, and he lost no time in informing us as to what was coming to us. "Captain Jones," said Lord Hay, "I will have you know that I have a title!" "Oh yes," returned our skipper, "so you have my lord! Go to the foretopmast head and stay there till I tell you to come down!" Hon. Augustus Brown was sent to the mizzenmast, while I was selected to adorn the head of the main topmast. "And you will stay there until I tell each of you to come down," he added in a particularly malevolent tone of voice.

We were under topsails and courses as we left the bay and the ship pointed out to sea. A gale was coming from the southwest, which expended its force on the starboard quarter. We climbed to our perches on the topsail yards between the tie blocks, and reeved an arm around each tie. Presently the ship wore away from the wind and the gale was dead astern. Running like a wild thing over the tremendous swells, the frigate, with double lashed guns and lifelines strung along the upper deck, was rolling her yard-arms under and shipping seas over her taffrail. With the tops of the masts describing an arc of eighty degrees, we youngsters had to hang on for dear life as we were "rocked in the cradle of the deep" to such an extent that nothing short of a cast-iron stomach would stand such treatment. To soil the deck with the contents of my innards was unthinkable, as it would have brought additional punishment. To avoid that, I climbed up to the crosstrees above me and abstracted a handful of rope yarns that had been secreted between the head of the topmast and the heel of the to'gallantmast. With this I returned to my nest on the topsail yard and picked the yarns into oakum as my nausea became more acute. My stomach was then relieved and the package was tossed overboard, but the swing of the mast all through that night of terror made an impression on my youthful mind that will be fresh to my dying day. That a man possessing such a small trace of milk of human kindness could be so callous as to send boys, hardly in their teens, to such a perilous punishment, keeping them in a state of terror for eighteen hours, is almost unbelievable, but such was the character of the discipline exercised in the British Navy of sixty years ago.

The gale subsided as daylight broke, and with a shifting of the wind to the beam the ship held on an even keel. At seven bells we were ordered down from aloft, piped to breakfast, and were again on duty.

On mixing again with my fellowmen I soon learned that we were not the only ones who played truant at the Cape. Three seamen, who had transgressed the law of the ship and the articles of war, were then in the brig under sentence of four dozen with the cat for breaking their leave and coming on board in a state of inebriation. At four bells in the morning watch I heard, for the second time in my naval career, with a sickening feeling in my heart, the pipe of the boatswain's mate:

"All hands witness punishment!"

There was the usual rush from below as the men fell in line on the quarterdeck. Every man was in his place according to his number, the even numbers on the port side and the odd on the starboard, so that the crew formed the regulation hollow square, the officers gathered about the capstan, with the captain in the open. A space had been left in front of the main rigging on the starboard side, where two capstan bars stood upright, three feet apart, with their upper ends lashed to the shrouds. Across there were laid the wooden gratings taken from a hatchway and securely fastened. Four quartermasters, each armed with a cat o'nine tails stood in line near the gratings. The prisoners in irons and under a guard of marines faced the mainmast, while the master-at-arms with his "Doomsday Book" held it as the captain read the sentence, at the end of which the usual word was given to "Seize him up!"

At this order the first victim was stripped to the waist and a band canvas was strapped around his body to take care of the lashes that were too low. He was then spread-eagled against the gratings and fastened by his wrists and ankles. A leaden bullet had been slipped to him by a friend to grind his teeth upon and help to alleviate the pain. A quartermaster then toyed with the cat, straightened out the tails, and came down upon the wretched man's back with all his force. The blow would land on the right lobe of his back muscles, but the real sting was inflicted around and under the armpit where the catgut whipping on the end of each tail would cut into the flesh so that the ribs resembled a layer of chopped meat. Before the last dozen were given the man fainted, but was revived by the ship's surgeon, and after testing his pulse the flogging was resumed. This man when released had to be carried to the sick bay, and he stayed there until his wounds were healed.

The other two culprits received the same treatment, a different quartermaster for each dozen strokes, but these last two men were of stouter constitution and nerve. They cursed the Navy, the ship and the captain, and promised to kill him at the first opportunity, but to no purpose. At the finish of the brutal exhibition the deck around the gratings presented a gory sight, the tails of the cats having flicked the blood in every direction.

This was near the end of that form of punishment, for an order was shortly afterward issued by the Admiralty abolishing flogging in the British Navy.

Chapter VII

After leaving the Cape of Good Hope, the “Glasgow” laid her course for Zanzibar, the first port of call on the east coast of Africa, included in the East Indian Station of the British Navy and under the protection of Great Britain. Sir Henry Morton Stanley had not yet arrived on his search for Dr. Livingstone, which was later to give the place the worldwide notoriety it later achieved.

When we dropped anchor in this never-to-be-forgotten port, Zanzibar presented only a replica of the typical Arab town, with its alley of bazaars, its squalid and mud-built dens of filth and iniquity, its market place and slave auction block – all dominated by the palace of the Sultan, which was built on higher ground and commanded a view of the ocean.

We had no sooner anchored in the roadstead when Sate, Bucket & Company reached the ship with their bumboat loaded with a supply of fresh bread, meat, and sweet potatoes for ship account, and for the men, plantains, bananas, oranges, mangoes, and “sudden jerk,” a concoction of boiled rice, sugar, and native ingredients that gave it a dark brown color and a diabolical flavor. There was also a stew that was popular with the crew, and designated by the suggestive name of “curried snake.” Everything but the bread, meat, and spuds was bought with the men’s own money, and if coin was scarce the postage stamps they found in their letters from home passed current at par.

The bumboat was operated by two Arabs. Sate was tall and lean while Bucket was short and fat – a perfect Mutt and Jeff. If Mr. Fisher had ever been in Zanzibar I would certainly suspect that it was from this place that he got his idea. These worthies, who pretended to be honest traders, in reality were the ringleaders of the gang that controlled the slave trade of the African coast.

Zanzibar in 1870 was the great clearing port and market for an immense territory, and the traffic in slaves went on unrestricted by law. It was perfectly legitimate for a band of Arab cutthroats to raid a village, put iron collars on the necks of the whole marketable population, lock them to a single chain, and then march them for days to the Zanzibar market, where they were sold to the highest bidder. From there they had been shipped to America previous to the Civil War, and to other places. The Sultan, old Tippoo Tib, received a tribute or royalty of fifteen pounds on each transaction, and as this constituted the entire revenue of the throne, the trade was wide open. The native villages in each direction from Zanzibar contributed to these raids, and it was because of the ease with which the slaves could be transported by coastwise dhows that the bulk of the trade followed the sea route.

The arrival of a British man-of-war, followed by a proclamation by its captain that thereafter the slave traffic in these waters was contraband and that any dhow with slaves on board would be subject to capture, carried consternation to the Arab headquarters. The Sultan responded by inviting all the officers of Glasgow to a banquet at the palace. All accepted with the exception of Captain Jones, and the next afternoon the commander, lieutenants, midshipmen, and officers of the marines, in full dress, were presented to Tippoo Tib, the Sultan of the Dominion of Zanzibar.

Tippoo Tib was a powerfully built Arab of about sixty years. He was dark and swarthy, his face partly hidden by a heavy gray beard and his head covered by a high turban. He wore the

usual white robe of Arab sheiks, but I saw no jewelry on his person save a heavy diamond ring on his left forefinger. I looked around for his crown and scepter, but not being in sight I concluded they were kept in the royal treasury for a more portentous occasion. The Sultan was squatted on the throne of lion and leopard skins, surrounded by a villainous a looking mob of bandits as ever slit a throat. Over all, a punkah embroidered richly in gold and silver stretched across the room, waving gently over the guests. Arab eyes bulged in admiration of our uniforms, some of which were resplendent with medals and gold lace.

An interpreter conveyed in English the pious protestations of fealty and obedience from His Majesty to Queen Victoria, and our commander replied in diplomatic fashion, so that everything was serene. Tippoo then rose from his skins and led the way to the chamber adjoining.

The banquet hall almost took my breath away with its wonderful adornments. The walls were hung with tapestries, oil paintings, gold ornaments, figures of men in armor, and firearms from the date of their invention – a collection that would be priceless in any museum. In the center of the room a long, low table, just off the floor, was loaded with the most luscious fruits in the land, candied fruits, nuts, dates, all in dishes of chased gold; cigars in ebony boxes; wines, rum, and arrack in delicate containers of cut glass near every guest. The Sultan seated himself cross-legged at the head of the layout, with our crowd on each side of the royal person, the aforesaid “courtiers” occupying the rest of space about the board.

For an hour we ate sweetmeats, fruits, and other delicious morsels, drank the wine, and smoked Tippoo’s cigars, and when the old Sultan thought his guests properly primed, he ordered in his harem of concubines, ranged the beauties in a line, and invited us (through the interpreter) to take our choice. At this interesting moment Commander Hope suddenly thought of an important commission that could be accomplished only by the immediate return to the ship of his three midshipmen, where further instructions would be forthcoming. An escort was detailed to conduct us to the boat, and after expressing our regards through the interpreter to the old reprobate on the throne of skins and casting a lingering glance at the loveliness lined up against the wall, we made our exit. Being young and unsophisticated we never suspected the commander of any duplicity until we reached the ship and found our “commission” was a hoax.

As the days wore on a new interest was aroused by the arrival early in January 1871 of Henry M. Stanley, who had been sent out by James Gordon Bennett, publisher of the New York Herald, to locate David Livingstone, an itinerant missionary who was somewhere in the interior of Africa uplifting the savage tribes. Stanley proposed to organize his safari at Zanzibar.

My spirit of adventure had not been suppressed by the collapse of my diamond expedition, and as soon as I could get the ear of the New York newspaperman I poured into it such a tale of my accomplishments that he promised to take me along if the consent of Captain Jones could be gained. The latter at first gave Stanley faint encouragement, frankly telling him that I was wild kid, and while he was more than willing to lose me it would entail a vacancy on his staff, which might occasion some explaining at the Admiralty. A party or two at Stanley’s, however, disposed of the captain’s objections, and I was given indefinite leave.

The safari got under way on the morning of March 21, 1871 and formed a line of carriers, mostly slaves, half a mile long, each black having a package of supplies on his head. Stanley, with his guide and interpreter, was in the lead. Fred De Gama, who knew Livingstone, and I

moved from end to end to assist in any breakdown and get the line going again. The journey into the interior was at a snails pace, through the usual open veldt or desert, mostly sand and some patches of timber, with little game.

After few days of travel I became sick, having shortness of breath, dizziness, and headache. Stanley, who knew something about medicine and had a box of drugs, diagnosed my case as liver compliant and without more ado ordered me back to the ship. On a light cot slung on a pole resting on the shoulders of two of the carriers, with a headman in charge who carried our supplies, I was taken back to the “Glasgow,” where in the sick bay I hovered between life and death for several weeks.

During my absence the ship had been refitted, painted, and a couple of divers had scraped the barnacles from the bottom of the vessel, so that she looked as if she had just come from dry dock. The crew had been given their shore leave and was restive for action. Through my convalescence the ship was active in running down slave dhows, and had put the fear of the British Navy in the Arab conscience to such an extent that extraordinary exertions were put forth to gain information as to the movements of the ship’s boats, which had begun to patrol the coast.

Sate and Bucket, the two inseparables, too frequently appeared with their bumboats, and while it was being unloaded they would circulate among the crew, giving packages of dates, bottle of rum and curios where they would do the most good. Little attention was given to their spying activities until it reached the ears of the commander that the movements of the boats was known on shore, and that the business of Sate and Bucket was not confined to supplying the Glasgow with beef. Investigation substantiated the suspicions, and a trap was set, with the result that one morning the two Arabs were invited below ostensibly to settle their account. While occupied, the anchor was raised and we quietly steamed out to sea. On reaching the three-miles limit, the navigating officer announced that we were on the high seas. In the meantime the gratings were rigged and the quartermasters stroked out their cat o’ nine tails. Sate and Bucket were brought up from below and to their unfeigned astonishment were unceremoniously disrobed, tied up to the gratings, and given four dozen lashes with a vim, regardless of their screams and curses in Arabic. This done, the ship retuned to its anchorage, Sate and Bucket were bundled into a boat, and that was the last seen of those worthies.

Chapter VIII

On being discharged from the sick list, my leave was abrogated and I was returned to duty. During one afternoon watch I was notified to hold myself in readiness for special duty at eight bells, and word was passed to me that the special duty consisted of taking a ten-oared cutter on patrol under secret orders. Promptly at the last tap of the bell the boat was at the gangway, fully manned with ten seamen and victual led with a keg of rum, a sack of hard tack, a bucket of salt pork, two kegs of fresh water and a washtub half full of sand in which to build a fire for cooking. The men were armed with Colt double-action revolvers and the regulation cutlass; the interpreter was unarmed, and I wore a midshipman's dirk. In the bow of the boat was a nine-pounder, segment shell, and breach loader. The men each had a blanket, but the nights were warm and we needed little bedding. At the gangway I received an official envelope under seal, with the superscription "Not to be opened within eight hours of departure."

The boat was shoved off, the oars were shipped, the sail hoisted, and I gave a course of SE by S to the coxswain as we moved away in a gentle breeze from the west. Our supper consisted of hard tack, a tot of rum, and all the water the men wanted to drink. The crew whiled away the hours by singing songs, one of which had a chorus declaring the songster to be "the Demon of the sea." The boys had a good time anyway, and when their throats gave out the blankets were spread on the bottom of the boat, and soon no one could be seen from the outside but the man at the tiller.

When I awoke the following morning, the sun was already sizzling the pork in the bucket, and when I looked at my watch I found it was long after the eight-hour limit, so I piped the men to breakfast while I gingerly broke the seals of the envelope. The contents were brief:

"Proceed coastwise in southerly direction for 250 miles and return. Search all inlets; keep lookout without lights; capture or destroy all dhows engaged in slave trade and send slaves to Zanzibar. Francis Hope, Commander"

The day dragged along its course with our crew straining their eyes over the horizon for the sail that did not appear. We were close in shore and turned in an inlet that looked like a hideout. We found nothing there, but picked a place near the entrance and dropped our kedge while dinner was prepared, the stove being the tub of sand and faggots of wood furnishing the heat. We had not long to wait. Before we had finished the meal, a small dhow was seen to pass the mouth of the inlet not more than five miles away, and we immediately pulled up the kedge and gave chase.

The dhow kept her course and distance, and we followed her steadily through the night. At daylight we added the oars to the sail, and in an hour were near enough to hail her to heave to, which the dhow obeyed. Stepping on board with the interpreter I demanded the ship's papers, and while the captain was getting them from his cabin my men went below and found two slaves. When the captain returned he said he could not find his credentials, but that the slaves we had found were lawful passengers, and demanded his release, which I refused. Leaving three of my men on board we took the dhow in tow, and with the assistance of sails on both crafts soon had

her in shore near a native settlement. The headman of the village said he knew the tribe to which the slaves belonged and agreed to turn them over to the British consul at Zanzibar.

An inspection of the cargo showed an assortment of rice, sugar, arrowroot, and spice, which I sold to an Arab trader for four hundred American gold dollars. When this had been removed we exchanged our mast for that of the dhow, which was a setter stick, and it was stepped in our boat. Then I made a bomb from our ammunition, towed the prize out to deep water, lit the fuse of the bomb, and lowered it into the hold, left her to her fate. The explosion blew off her upper works and also opened her planking, so that she sank while we looked on.

After the dhow had disappeared under a swirling whirlpool, I ran the cutter on the beach, called the crew ashore, and made an impromptu camp. Eight of the men went foraging for food, returning with enough provender to last us a week. There were a dozen chickens, baskets of sweet potatoes, a suckling pig, yams, oranges, mangoes, and other fruits. The crew had a feast that evening that they talked about for a month.

The next morning the men were roused from their slumber at an early hour, and after the morning meal the boat was manned and we pulled out to open water. A fresh wind from the southwest was coming up so we shipped the oars and hoisted the sail. Our course was still southerly, and estimating that we had lost thirty miles in overhauling the dhow, there still remained 150 knots to be covered before turning homeward.

It was about five bells in the afternoon when the lookout called, "Sail on the port bow, sir," and there, almost hull down, appeared a dhow with a spread of canvas as big as the "Glasgow's" mainsail, and whose bulk I estimated to be in excess of 400 tons. She was evidently keeping a sharp lookout, for she changed her course to SW by W, hoisted another sail at the stern, and was making a run for it with a bone in her teeth. All we could do was to tighten our halyards, bring the cutter a little closer to the wind, and help along with the lee oars.

A lull came and the breeze died down, allowing us to gain on her temporarily with the oars, during which we bombarded the fugitive with our nine-pounder. We could see the Arabs along her taffrail as they dodged when the gun was fired, but when they discovered they were out of range their thumbs went to their noses in derision. The wind again freshened and the slaver had no difficulty in maintaining her distance. It was a stern chase sure enough, and we prayed for a more favorable breeze as night came on. As we were using only the starboard oars I put the men on two-hour watches, and in the moonlight we were able to keep the big dhow in sight.

Daybreak showed us to be in the same position as the night before, and with the rising sun the wind died down for an hour, which enabled us to creep a little closer to our prey but not enough to get the gun within range. So far as our speed was concerned, it was apparent we were evenly matched, but my men were playing out for the loss of sleep. I was just about to give up the chase when a black object appeared on the horizon, and through the glass I made out the outlines of our ship's pinnace, bowling towards us under a stern wind. Twilight was coming on, and I kept the cutter on the course just the same, as I knew that the pinnace was a faster boat and would quickly overhaul us, as it did shortly.

Sub-lieutenant Treloar was in command of the pinnace, and our consultation was brief. His boat immediately mounted her rocket tube on the gunwale, shipped a Hale's rocket into place, primed it with a friction tube, and pulled the cord. With the roar of a dozen elevated railroad trains the projectile, which combined three separate charges, described a brilliant arc of

fire from the boats to the dhow, lighting up the slave ship so that we could see the panic aboard. The sails dropped with a crash; she lost way, and was drifting to leeward when we came up. We saw that the Arabs were going to make a fight for it, and Treloar shouted to me that he was going to board her on the starboard quarter and for me to take the port bow. The Arabs were rushing about the deck, battening down the hatches, and all of them were armed with the long, flintlock rifles of long ago. Our men had Colt six-shooters and cutlasses that were sharp enough to shave with. The Arabs had the chance of their lives to rake us fore and aft, but for some reason they withheld their fire.

Quickly our oars were shipped and with a line the boat was lashed to the dhow. Then our men with drawn cutlasses slung to their wrist, and I with my dirk in my teeth, swung onto the deck. As I cleared the rail an Arab brought his rifle down in line with my ear only three paces away, but before he could get the spark a member of my crew made a leap throwing the gun out of line, so that it exploded in the air, and made a slashing cut with his cutlass at the Arab. As the blade was descending, a slave boy, running around in terror, slipped between us, and the sword dropped on his rear anatomy. The boy gave a blood-curdling yell and leaped into the sea. We both jumped on the Arab, who tried to use the butt of his gun as a club, but we bore him to the deck and tied him up with one of the loose ropes.

On looking around I saw that the men from the pinnace had cleared up the after part of the ship and had the enemy bound to the bitts. Leaving a guard to watch, we opened the hatchway to see what was below. The clearance between the two decks was not more than four feet, and when we waited a few minutes for the fresh air to dissipate the stench that was wafted up through the hatch, the commander of the pinnace, myself, and the interpreter went below. The lanterns we had found above cast a sickly light over a scene that was horrifying in the extreme. Ranged in rows, sitting each one between the other's legs, we counted three hundred and fifteen wretched slave or captives. Some were dead, others in the last throes of some dreadful disease, and all wallowing in an accumulation of filth that was indescribable. On the deck below that living mass of horror was stored the dhow's cargo of rice, arrowroot, dates, and sundries.

No more captives were found, and after a consultation we decided to put a prize crew on board and send her to the hip as quickly as possible. Two men and the coxswain were selected from my cutter and four men from the pinnace, this being deemed sufficient as three of the Arab crew were dead and only four were left to take care of. The prize crew were given instructions to throw the dead overboard, feed the living, and guard the four Arab prisoners, after which they were ordered to proceed to the ship at Zanzibar without delay. As both the pinnace and the cutter were still under patrol orders we left for our stations after seeing the dhow under way. That was the last ever seen of our prize or her human cargo. It was believed that the Arabs scuttled her during the night and escaped in the only boat she had, leaving the white crew and slaves to drown.

We saw no more dhows during the rest of our patrol duty, and we returned to the ship only to learn that the Customs court at Zanzibar had declared our first capture to be a lawful trader, with five hundred pounds damage against the "Glasgow," and no tidings had been received of the big show or its prize crew. Thus faded our visions of prize money, and brought forth a reprimand from the naval board at Whitehall.

Chapter IX

There is always something doing on a warship at a foreign station. After the arrival of Sir Bartle Frere's slave commission and its installation on shore, we got up steam and headed for the island of Johanna, a tiny speck of land in the Indian Ocean five hundred miles southeast of Zanzibar, near Madagascar. On our way out we passed the island of Pembla, considerably larger than Johanna, but it was said that the anchorage was poor and we did not stop.

The island of Johanna, although only a few square miles in area, is one of the beauty spots of the South Seas. It has a splendid harbor on one side and a long inlet on the other, both protected by steep slopes and high promontories that afford a panorama of rare scenic splendor. Waterfalls drop from the cliffs into pools clear as crystal, and tropical fruits, tobacco, and yams are abundant. Here I saw the flying foxes of which I had read. The animals were equipped with wings similar to those of a bat, had reddish fur, and were as large as the small-sized fox of America. They made their homes in the tree and joined with the monkeys in raising a continuous chatter on the approach of strangers.

The island was governed by a Sultan, and the day following our arrival in the harbor he sent an ambassador to inform the captain of the "Glasgow" that he was about to honor the ship with a visit. We therefore prepared for his coming by changing into No. 1 uniform, polishing the brass work, squaring the yards, and when the royal party hove in sight, about seven bells in the forenoon watch, the yards were manned and a twenty-one gun salute boomed forth his honor. The procession was seen coming through the gates of the royal enclosure, yeleft the palace the "place." There were no conveyances, and the entire party was on foot, preceded by four punka holders. These were followed by the Sultan arrayed in spotless white robes with trimmings of tiger skins. He wore on his head a red silk turban with a dazzling ruby in front. His feet were protected by sandals. Around his ample waist was a broad sash which protruded a curved scimitar. He was closely attended by a number of courtiers and followed by about a hundred of his subjects, and his every movement was accompanied by the weird ceremonies surrounding an Oriental potentate.

He came aboard with a white man at his side who acted as interpreter. The latter was an American castaway from a wreck of years before, who had settled down among the natives and had cultivated a sugar plantation, learning the language and customs of the people. Later that day I visited his "sugar works," which consisted of a large tub in which was installed a set of upright rollers, from the top ends of which extended a long pole. At the end of the pole a water buffalo was harnessed, and as the cow moved around the circle, a couple of natives fed the sugar cane between the roller and the juice fell into the tub below. I secured some of the product, but found it plentifully adulterated with sand.

To return to my story, the Sultan expressed his astonishment to the captain at the appointment of the warship, and gazed with awe at the mechanism of the guns between the decks. A modern rifle was loaded and fired in quick succession, and he dodged behind the captain while his courtiers raised their hands in fright. His Majesty's nervousness was soon allayed, however, and he was bowed and kaytowed into the captain's cabin, where I presumed he sampled that officer's stock of liquors, for on emerging he was in a quite convivial mood and he waved his farewell to the entire crew as he stepped over the gangway into the royal barge.

Previous to our arrival, no ship had anchored there for several years, and the excitement of the natives was great when the men were given leave to go ashore. As there was no rum on the island there was no danger of the men getting drunk, and as the currency of the Suzerain consisted of an assortment of buttons, with which commodity all of our men were equipped, they were well supplied with "money." This I found to my cost when I inspected my dress coat and found all of the brass buttons missing.

One of the most interesting things about Johanna was the fact that it had been used as the headquarters of many of the pirates who swarmed those waters for three centuries past. On one of the high promontories overlooking the harbor is perched a fortress, which we were told had been built by Captain Kidd. History relates that Captain Kidd did spend some time at Johanna. Captain Mission, another prosperous pirate, settle down to make his home on the island of Johanna, there to enjoy in peace the fruits of his spoils. Johanna was one of the ports to which Black Jeffreys frequently retired when his victims objected and made matters too hot for him. The fact that these pirates made such substantial and extensive preparations for their security by building the stronghold makes it reasonable to suppose that the wealth of some of them will some day be found on the island, perhaps in the vicinity of the old fort.

On the island side, the fort is reached by a long flight of steps, over which stone arches are placed at intervals of about one hundred feet. Up these steps several of us climbed until we reached the circular structure of masonry surmounting the crest of the peak, above a sheer drop of two hundred feet to the sea. Inside the fort the walls are about three feet thick, pierced by many portholes through which the guns were fired. Brass Howitzers, probably twelve pounders, point their muzzles from each port, but they have been spiked at the vent so that they are perfectly harmless. An ancient flagpole rose from the roof, from which the skull and crossbones were wont to fly during the palmy days of the bloodthirsty pirates. I made an effort to climb the pole, but an ominous crack warned me of the danger and I gave up the effort. The roof of the fort affords a view of the entire island and an obstructed vision of the Indian Ocean for many miles.

Many were the tales of pirates and their adventures which were told to us by the white castaway. The story of Black Jeffreys still clings to my memory, so I will tell it to you as it was told to us. The capture of Black Jeffreys was brought about by his chase of a clipper ship from Melbourne on her way around the Cape of Good Hope to England with a valuable cargo. After sighting her, the chase lasted several days, and the pirate would undoubtedly have overhauled the clipper if the bark's foretop hamper had not given way under the strain. Night was falling, and before the spare rigging could replace the damage aloft the pirate ship, the clipper got away in the darkness, and changing her course ran into Simon's Bay, where the "Rattlesnake" lay at anchor. There the master of the clipper told his story to the commander of the gunboat and gave the position of the pirate ship.

Meanwhile, Jeffrey's, whose ship already had a fair cargo of loot taken from an East Indiaman, had given up the chase and headed for Johanna. There the cargo was unloaded and stored in some hiding place back in the woods. The reserve force that had been left at the fort was then taken on board and Jeffreys immediately put to sea. The second day out, the lookout at the masthead reported a sail on the starboard bow, and Jeffreys, thinking that another prize was in his grasp, pointed his ship for the stranger while all the ship's telescopes were trying to identify it. They were not kept long in suspense. Quickly the faint speck on the horizon grew, its

outline became bolder, and a column of smoke was seen coming from its funnel. Then consternation and fear spread among the crew, for it could be none other than the dreaded “Rattlesnake” that was racing toward them under steam and sail. The captain roared out to the helmsman to put the helm down, and the sails were trimmed as the ship started to run for dear life before the stiff wind with all sails set, studdin’ sails on both sides bellying out to the breeze. The crew were huddled in the stern, which raised her bow almost out of the water, and the pirate tore along at fifteen knots.

Had the conditions been equal, she would have escaped her Nemesis. The “Rattlesnake,” however, with every inch of canvas she could carry, aided by her steam power, was rapidly closing the gap between them, and soon her bow chaser was throwing shot clear over the pirate as a signal to heave to and shorten sail.

The pirate’s crew had not been idle following the discovery of the character of her pursuer. They scurried around to clear her decks of all traces of her bloody business and to try to put on the appearance of an honest merchantman endeavoring to escape from a suspicious character. They knew that they were no match for the man of war, so they masked the guns, stowed away the firearms, cutlasses, and pikes.

A second shot went through her main topsail and cut away the port stun’ sail boom. This dropped the big canvas into the sea and it became a drag that almost stopped the ship. By this time the corvette was abeam, her ensign flying at the masthead. A shout came from her bridge” “What ship is that? Heave to! I am about to board you!” Black Jeffreys, realizing that it was useless to put up a fight and that he had a better chance of bluffing innocence, ordered his ship hove to. The “Rattlesnake” also stopped, her decks cleared for action. Lowering a boat manned with an armed crew, a lieutenant in charge pulled over to the bark. With the guns of the “Rattlesnake” trained on the pirate ship and other boatloads of armed seamen and marines on the way, the first boat’s crew clambered over the side of the captive vessel. The lieutenant covered Black Jeffreys with his revolver and called on him to surrender; and that worthy stepped forward with his hands down. By this time the other boats had arrived alongside and their crews were climbing aboard. The first lieutenant beckoned to a rifle of marines and they took positions on either side of Jeffrey’s. His first and second mates were next singled out from the crowd and put under arrest, and the pirate’s crew ordered below. Those cutthroats, realizing that with their own arms hidden away resistance was out of the question, then slunk down the ladders; the gratings were closed over them and locked; while a guard of marines paraded the deck.

Jeffreys, with his two officers, trying to fabricate a story which was innocent of any piratical activities but being unable to make it hold water, was taken to the “Rattlesnake” and confined in the brig for safe keeping. A prize crew was placed on the bark, and both ships laid their course for Simons Bay. From there the prisoners were sent to England. Jeffreys and his mates were tried and hung. The crews were sentenced to penal servitude for life and were sent to the Botany Bay penitentiary.

The “Rattlesnake,” after delivering the pirate ship and prisoners at Simon’s Bay, resumed her patrol, and stepping at Johanna two years afterward discovered the fort. The guns were put out of commission by filling the bores with cobblestones and a spike driven into the vent of each. From all appearances, at the time of the visit of the “Glasgow” no damage had been done to the fort itself, and beyond the ravages of sixty years’ time, it is probably in about the same condition

today. A search was made for the treasure and other booty that had been left hidden by the pirates, but no trace of it was found. It is still there.

Chapter X

We had passed Pembla on our way back to Zanzibar when smoke was discovered issuing from one of the coalbunker chutes. The sounding of the fire alarm brought every man to his station. On investigation it was found that spontaneous combustion had ignited the 700 tons of coal stored in the bunkers. The fire hose was turned on it and we pumped a heavy stream of water into the bunker by hand power. The blaze continued to gain headway, and the order went forth to jettison the coal. All night the fuel was hoisted from the depths of the ship, and when the fire was found to be burning into the wooden sides of the old frigate, all the boats were lowered, provisioned, and towed at the stern. At one time it was proposed to open the sea cocks of the vessel, which would have flooded the "Glasgow" and put her in more danger from the water than the fire. With all hands working at the pumps and hoisting coal, half being thrown overboard, the fire was at last subdued. The water was pumped out again and repairs were started on the ship's sides, which were almost burned through. The crew had plenty to do until we anchored in a cove or estuary of the Mozambique Channel.

The Mozambique Channel is a shark-infested strip of water between the island of Madagascar and the mainland. It literally swarms with these tigers of the sea. There are hammer-headed sharks, blind sharks, ground sharks, shovel-nosed sharks, and many other breeds of the beasts. The blind sharks are always accompanied by two pilot fish, about the size of a grayling, whose function seems to be to lead them to the bait and then leave them. I have fished for these sharks with a four pound piece of salt pork as an enticer, and watched their movements in the clear still water as the fish moved slowly towards the meat. When nearing the hook the two pilots, one on each side of his nose, would move in closer and then each one would touch the big fellow as if to kiss him goodbye and wheel away into the depths.

One day an American bark, the "Susan" from Bangor, Maine, dropped her anchor in the same bay with us, and it was not long before one of her boats came alongside and a mate and some of her men came aboard. The bark had a cargo to jute for Cardiff, and in the run from Chinese ports had been blown out of her course. She had run short of hard tack and water, of which she hoped to obtain enough from us to carry her to Aden.

While the mate was below dickering with the steward, the rest of the crew were getting acquainted with our men. The conversation drifted into an argument over the number of sharks in those waters, and how long a man could survive should he fall among them. One American sailor said no shark will touch a man so long as he is moving in the water. Others said it depended on the breed, and the discussion was getting warm when one of our men offered to bet a sack of flour, some sugar and raisins that no one could swim around the ship three times without being attacked. The bet was accepted by a tall, raw-boned Yankee, who was introduced as Pete Kendrick, quartermaster of the "Susan." Pete was a likable fellow, and his winning smile told us he was popular with the bark's crew. He looked seriously over the ship's side and guessed that he would take a chance. I explained the condition to the commander and obtained permission to make the test.

The exhibition took place the following evening when the sun was low, the sea smooth as a lake, and at a time when the sharks gathered about the ship to fight for the garbage from the cook's galley. The entire crew of the "Susan" came over in two of their boats to witness the

show. Our men were out in full force, filling the hammock nettings, the riggings, and the yardarms, and an international air was given the occasion by both ships dressing their yards with strings of signal flags, the Union Jack and Stars and Stripes flying from their mastheads. A whip had been rigged on the main yard, well beyond the earring of the mainsail, one end of the whip with a loop lowered to the water; the other being run through a block on deck and manned by many volunteers, so that he could be snaked out of the water quickly at the finish.

The Yankee seaman came on board accompanied by the master of his ship. The latter was invited to the bridge, where the officers of the "Glasgow" were gathered in an exciting discussion of Pete's chances of coming through alive. The master had an air of confidence and made several bets, and it was evident that he would wager his ship and all her cargo if he could have found a taker. Meanwhile the betting among the men below had been fast and furious, so that by the time everything was in readiness the excitement was shared by all men on board.

The gangway was then cleared, the American sailor was stripped, and a belt harboring a wicked-looking sheaf knife was buckled around his waist. He shook hands with those near him, and then with a grin on his face he stepped to the gangway, glanced at the rope hanging from the main yard, and dived into the sea. The water was so clear that we could see every movement as he made his graceful curve just under the surface, while a dozen sharks, darted from nowhere, closed in near the ship and like black demons started the pursuit. Before Pete's head returned to the surface, the commotion occasioned by the rush of the sharks lashed the sea into foam, and the race was on.

The Yankee struck out hand over hand for the ship's head and nothing had yet happened to him. He passed the cable and churned up the water with the sharks as he made the rush to the Glasgow's stern on the first lap. Coming along the starboard side as he passed the gangway he was cheered to the echo by six hundred throats, and had hardly turned across the bow of the ship when a big hammerhead made a vicious rush at the swimmer. Pete saw the brute coming, and shipping out his knife he missed a stroke. For a moment the weapon flashed in the air, and as the shark turned over to make his bite, it was buried to the hilt in his belly.

Without troubling to withdraw the knife, Pete, who showed that he was at home in the water, quickly dashed away. The hoard coming from behind closed in on the wounded monster and tore him to pieces. For a few minutes the sailor was getting a respite as he easily swung around the stern for the third lap. The feast was soon over, and the other sharks, smelling blood from afar, were now coming, so that Bedlam reigned in the water as the terrible pursuit was resumed. They climbed over one another, bunched themselves against the side of the ship, and fought like devils to get in front, and still did not touch their prey.

Pete, now having his second wind, was coming up to the starting point on his last lap, but it seemed impossible that he could escape the hundred of fangs that were reaching for him. He was making his last spurt, and my heart stood still as he shot into the loop with a yell and swung into the air. The sharks, seeing their quarry escaping, leaped their lengths out of the water. Peter was laughing when he was pulled on to the deck, and in that moment of rescue he was cheered until everybody was hoarse, but I never heard of anybody offering to duplicate the act.

Chapter XI

Tamatave, the capital of Madagascar, was our next anchorage, and there we found the harbor well sprinkled with ships from all over the globe. At that time the Queen of this island territory had not been deposed by the French, and she was then at the zenith of her power. She felt honored by the presence of a British man-of-war in her dominions and was profuse in her endeavor to ingratiate herself in the favor of our commander. She invited all of our officers to the palace, which proved to be a reception on a lavish scale.

The palace was a large building in the center of houses of smaller dimensions. A series of stone steps led up to the entrance, and on the whole I thought the building was much more modern than I expected to see, but still was typical of the Orient. At the entrance we were met by a sort of bodyguard composed of soldiers, tall as the Sikhs of Calcutta, armed with short swords and lances, who formed a line on both sides of the hall. A sort of royal chamberlain conducted us to the audience chamber, where the Queen and her attendants were waiting.

I thought I had never seen such a beautiful woman as she sat on a throne under a dais of gold and silk. She wore a tiara of precious stones on her head instead of the crown she was entitled to, and she probably looked more beautiful without it. Her skin was dark, as were her eyes; her hair curling over her shoulders in wavy abundance. As she rose to greet us she showed an outline of her perfect symmetry, with gestures that were imperious and queenly. She was tall, agile, flexible, and her movements were adorable. We judged her age to be about thirty-five years. She held a short conversation with our captain through an interpreter, and then led the way to another sumptuously furnished room, where we were served tea and biscuits. It was a pleasurable entertainment.

On our departure from Tamatave, the bosen borrowed one of the sheets from my bunk, and the Queen's ensign, a milk-white flag, was hoisted as we left the harbor thundering a farewell salute of twenty-one guns.

Bombay was our ultimate destination, but on our way we crossed over the Seychelles Islands, a British dependency where a school was maintained by England's government for the education of the indigent wards of the country. Where we anchored, the floor of the ocean could be plainly seen to a depth of fifteen fathoms, and the fairy dell of shell and marine vegetation was a never-ceasing topic interest. After two day's stop at this interesting port, and a call at Manila in the Philippines, we left for Trincomalee, our home station on the island of Ceylon.

Trincomalee is one of the world's most beautiful harbors, large enough to accommodate all the navies of the world, completely landlocked and speckled with islands that accentuate its beauty. It has a country behind it that is self-sustaining by its wonderful plantations of tea, spices, coconuts, tropical fruits, vegetables, etc. Here, on a small island inside the harbor, was established a rest house for the use of the officers, with a small for a landing place. The dock afforded a good jumping-off platform when we wanted to bathe. The sharks, though plentiful, were arrant cowards and never bothered when three or four of us were in the water together. One evening a big shovel-nosed shark paraded in front of the dock with only his fin showing. We waited for him to leave until our patience was exhausted, and then three of us lined up abreast, took a running dive from the dock, which gave the shark such a scare that we saw his fin scurrying for open water for minutes afterward.

We reached Bombay after an uneventful trip, and picked our moorings off the Bund. Parsees with their queer hats and Brahmins with caste marks on their foreheads were there in an endless procession, while the humble Hindoos did the digging, the carrying, and the sweeping of the big city. During our leave from the ship we prowled through the bazaars and found plenty to interest us in the Armenian quarter where the girls sat in the doorways with tattoo marks extending from their necks to a point below their navels. Beggars annoyed us all along the line with their display of mutilated limbs, disease in the stages of corruption; and naked children would rub their bellies with one hand, hold out the other and treble, "Rice! Give it rice!"

We were returning through the darkness of the evening when we were attracted by a bright red glow coming from a courtyard just off one of the principal streets of Bombay. On drawing nearer we saw that the courtyard was surrounded by four-story building, the occupants of which were sitting in the windows with their legs dangling outside, while the yard below was crowded with people, their faces illuminated by the blaze of a bonfire set against a building. We were at a loss to know what the gathering meant until one of the crowd explained to us it was a "suttee," or the burning of the widow with the corpse of her dead husband.

Squeezing through the crowd to get a better view of the proceedings, we saw that a pile of wood had been built up, like a rectangle, with at intervals around it that were stuffed with inflammable kindling. Two men with jars of cocoanut oil were sprinkling it over the mass, and when all was ready a procession filed from one of the houses, led by priests, followed by the corpse on a litter and the child wife. The girl was weeping, and was supported by some old hags who were probably relatives. The corpse was laid on the pyre, and then the wife tried to make a break for freedom, but she was frustrated by the priests, who tied her hands and feet with a cord and tossed her bodily on to the blaze with the corpse. The woman's screams were drowned in the loud incantations of the priests as the fire mounted in a roar of flame. Suddenly all was silence, as a priest spoke some final benediction. The fire died down, the crowd dispersed, and the suttee rites were over.

There is now a law prohibiting the suttee, but is still observed in some parts of India.

From Bombay we laid our course for Kalicut, then to Aden, where our crew invested their spare cash in ostrich feathers. In another month we were back at Tricomalee to refit and take on supplies.

One bad feature of Ceylon is the snake population. They exist in every variety of species and cussedness. There is always some of the villagers laid up with a snakebite, and a few of them recover. On one hot, sultry day I joined a party for a hike into the country. We were swinging along the road when someone spotted a python in the timber nearby. He had evidently just finished a meal, for his body had a big bulge, which prevented him from moving very swiftly. One of our party had a rifle and started to shoot at him. The first shot missed, while the big snake tried to reach a tree. Another shot struck him 'midships and that made him angry, for he made a turn, tried to coil, and began reaching and spitting at us. The third shot caught him just behind the jaw and he laid down. It took two more shot to give the reptile his final quietus. He was the longest snake I ever saw, measuring eleven paces (about thirty feet), and beautifully marked.

To make the scene more realistic, we spent an hour draping the python along the bushes, and no doubt the sight created some consternation to travelers passing along that road.

Chapter XII

We left the harbor of Trincomalee on Christmas Day, 1871, with the ship decorated above and below with greenery of the country. The men had been provided with mess money so that they could purchase Christmas delicacies, and an extra tot of rum was issued, so that a seasonable spirit was abroad regardless of the insufferable heat. Our destination was Calcutta. As there was no wind to speak of, we used steam power for the entire voyage.

We had reached the mouth of the Hugli River, and were proceeding up that stream under full steam, as the current was strong. The men were furling the sails, and I was out on the jib boom with the men stowing the jib. Suddenly I slipped and fell into the water under the ship's bow. As I fell I had sense enough to know that the danger was not in having the ship run over me, but from the propeller, and I struck out madly to get away from the suction that was drawing me in. How I cleared it is a mystery, but there I was in the backwash. A lifeboat dropped from the davits soon had me on board again.

Our arrival at Calcutta was signaled by a cloud of pigeons rising from the King of Oudhe's palace, darkening the sky with their immense numbers. The ship's company was given its usual leave while lying in the Hugli, and I visited the site of the famous Black Hole, where in 1756 one hundred and forty-five wretches were seized by the tyrannic violence of Siráju 'd daulah of Bengal and crowded into tiny rooms where all but twenty-three were suffocated and their bodies thrown the succeeding morning into the ditch of the Ravelin. Another interesting sight was the wonderful zoological collection at Jumsagee Jebadehoy's palace, a few miles out of Calcutta, near 'Alípúr. At the estate of this Indian nabob is gathered one of the world's most complete aggregation of wild animals in existence. The zoo is in the form of an amphitheatre, with great pools in the center which contained fish so tame that they eat out of your hand. Coolies at the top of the steps leading to the water sell a sort of dough which is kneaded in the hand to the right consistency and held just below the surface of the water. In a few minutes you will feel the delicate and pleasurable sensation of a fish nibbling, and there will be half a dozen trout waiting their turn to get at the food.

The Hugli, as well as the Ganges, is one of the sacred rivers of India, and the Mohammedans consider it an honor to be drowned in its waters. So sure are they that it is the "open sesame" to Paradise that the sick are brought down to the beach at low tide, and if it is decreed by the River God that they should recover, they are given strength to crawl above the high tide mark. While we lay at anchor in the river, scarcely a day passed that a corpse did not lie athwart the ship's mooring cable. In addition to this, our marine corps almost every morning lost a man from the deadly miasma that swept down from the channel, and it was found necessary to abolish night sentry duty while at Calcutta.

The errand of the "Glasgow" to Calcutta was for the purpose of taking Lord Mayo, the Viceroy of India, on a trip of inspection to the penal settlement on Andaman Island. He came to the Bund with Lady Mayo and their retinue, escorted by the crack squadrons of cavalry for which the Indian army is famed, and were cheered to the limit by the dense crowds that filled the streets as far as the eye could see. Lord Mayo was a typical Irish earl, as democratic as Parnell,

and an all-round good fellow. While on board the “Glasgow” the Lord and Lady and their party occupied the cabins of our Admiral, who had not yet transferred his flag to our ship.

We got under way without delay, and by nightfall the “Glasgow” was well out of the Hugli. For the first few days the voyage was uneventful, and then things began to happen. It was one of those typical hot days of the tropics. The ship was under all plain sail, but there was a little wind, and deck awnings had been spread fore and aft. It was afternoon, and everyone was hunting for shade to escape the infernal heat. Suddenly a lookout called the attention of the officer of the watch to a gray cloud that was coming along with the wind. The navigating officer recognized it as a white squall close in, and ordered in the upper sails. It was too late however, for the squall struck us with a terrific force, and before the royals and to’gallantsails could be taken in, they were blown to ribbons. The ship was almost thrown on her beams ends, and the boatswain’s shrill whistle was drowned in the screech of the gale as he called, “All hands on deck!” To make matters worse, the awnings obscured the ships hamper from view, and in the excitement the men ripped the lacing from the ridge ropes and tossed the canvas amidships.

Then the dreaded calm, the precursor of another squall, dropped upon us like a pail, and still not a drop of rain had fallen. Soon, with a peculiar whistling roar, the wind changed to dead ahead, bringing to us an entirely different storm as it struck the ship with a blinding force, and the to’gallantmasts went flying through the air accompanied by their yards and sails as if they were matchwood. Then came the downpour. It rained as if a miniature Niagara Falls were descending upon us, and all we could do was to cling to a rope and try to breathe.

With the ship gathering sternway, the topsails and courses aback, it looked extremely critical for the old “Glasgow,” but with a display of seamanship seldom encountered, the vessel’s head wore away from the gale and we were safe. The end of the storm was not yet in sight, however, for instead of subsiding the wind increased, and it was with difficulty that the remnants of the top spars were cut away and the flying ropes and blocks made fast until the storm should subside. The ship was heeling over to the blast, and wave after wave swept over the deck, washing everything that was loose into the lee scuppers. The men, watching the combers, would leave the lifeline at the quarterdeck and make a run for their lives to catch the rope around the fore hatchway. Sometimes they would make it. If not, they flung themselves on the deck and held on to a ringbolt. The guns were lashed to the open ports with their muzzles dipping into the sea with the roll of the ship. The danger was too great to move them so the ports could be closed. The main deck was awash, but all below was sealed tight and the old frigate rode like a cork. Though the vessel was under close-reefed topsails and staysail only, she was tearing through the mountainous sea at an eighteen-knot gait, and all a seaman could do was to hold a lifeline with one hand and cover his mouth with the other so that he could breathe.

It was now time to heave the log, and I, with the paraphernalia under my arm, leaving my hold on the fo’castle steps, started for the run aft. I was either too soon or too late in reaching the open deck, for I had barely passed the foremast when a tremendous sea boarded us; my feet slipped from under me; and I was slammed against the hammock nettings. Then the receding wave carried me across the deck, only to meet another comber that went completely over, carrying me with it, half conscious. Only for a moment, however, was I in the open sea, for a returning wave washed back against the ship and I found myself wedged in between an open gun port and the muzzle of one of the guns, to which I clung. Before the next wave could carry me

out again, I was inside the ship and clear of the port, making a break for safety. The log, reel, and glass were lost.

The following days were given over to clearing away the wreck above. Fortunately we carried spare spars, so that all the top hamper was replaced, and when we steamed into Andaman harbor we looked spic and span with all new gear aloft.

Andaman Island is to India what Devil's Island is to France and Botany Bay to England. There were incarcerated malefactors ranging from nana Sahib's followers in the Indian Mutiny (the real leaders were blown from the guns) to the rebel chiefs of the Kybeel Pass in the Afghan War. One of these Afghans was Shere Ali, an exceptional character of personified villainy. Being a lifer, he had no other ambition and purpose than to wreak vengeance on the powers that were, which at that time were vested in the person of the Viceroy.

Lord Mayo, who was a genial, benevolent, sympathetic, and typical old Irish gentleman, was loth to visit this penal settlement. He hated rules of high office that required him to inspect an institution that touched his heart as he gazed at the abject misery and despair that was depicted on the faces of the wretches behind the walls. He wore a look of palpable distress as he and his lady stepped over the gangway and were taken in the Admiral's barge to the landing dock. Carriages for the party awaited their arrival, and a troop of cavalry was drawn up facing them. The warden and his staff were to offer a welcome, and the procession set out for the great institution.

Night had fallen before the inspection was completed, the clearance signed, and the vice regal party, dispensing with the carriages for the short distance to the dock, were walking amidst their escort by torch light. Suddenly there was a stir among the crowd, a rush, and Shere Ali, who by some means had eluded the vigilance of his keepers, broke through, knife in hand, and flinging himself on Lord Mayo stabbed him first in the back, and then as his victim fell backward, stabbed him again in the chest. Death came quickly, and the body was rushed to the ship.

Shere Ali was instantly captured and also taken to our ship. As the Afghan was dragged up the steps to the gangway he was bumped unmercifully by the seaman who had him by the hands and feet, and he yelled for mercy as he was dropped on the quarterdeck. The assassin was taken ashore again the next day, tried, and hung within forty-eight hours.

The "Glasgow," under both steam and sail, made for Bombay, where the body of Lord Mayo lay in state for several days. The ship was then commissioned to take the remains to Suez, enroute to England, and the body, preserved in a casket filled with rum, was placed amidships on the upper deck.

Chapter XIII

We left Bombay under forced draft and headed for Aden, at the mouth of the Red Sea. There we took on supplies and mail from one of the P. & O. boats, and continued to Suez.

The Straits of Babel Mandeb were passed in the evening with all sail set and a spanking breeze. I was called for the middle watch, and on reaching deck noticed that the wind was strengthening. At four bells the boatswain's mate pipe:

"In royals and mizzen t' gallant sail!"

Under such an order my station was in the mizzen top, and on reaching the crosstree I saw that one man was missing from the lee side. Without waiting for him to appear, I swung out on the yard and prepared to furl the sail. The yard had not been pointed to the wind, and as the jackstay had been nailed down so that I could not get my fingers under, I leaned over, using my elbow for a brace. Before I could bring up the slack of the sails, a vicious gust of wind caught it from below, bellied out the canvas, threw my arm off the yard, and I dropped, yelling "Man overboard!" as I fell into the sea.

The lifebuoys of the Glasgow hung at the stern. They were released by a bell-like arrangement, and as they fell a cord would snap a friction tube, which in turn would ignite a port fire laid on a plate over the center of the buoy, in order to light up the sea and show up the man overboard to the rescuers. In this case the ignition was out of order, and when the sentry on duty pulled the bell, neither of the two struck a fire, and I saw nothing of them.

The lifeboats' crew had already been called, and as I rose to the surface I saw a cutter drop from the davits with a crash that almost swamped it. A second lifeboat was called, and in the distance, as the ship sailed away from, I heard the order to shorten sail and "Bout ship!" as more boats were lowered for my rescue. I lay on my back paddling, making no attempt to swim but reserving my strength for the time when a boat should come near. The first cutter started to make a wide sweep around where I lay, and I counted seven more that were launched, but none of them came within hailing distance. The inky darkness made the illuminated ship stand out in bold relief, and I could hear some of the orders from the quarterdeck as they wafted to me by the gale. The upper sails were being taken in as the ship was being brought into the wind.

All this had taken place in less time than it takes to write it, and the frigate was not more than a quarter of a mile away. Her head was slowly passing the eye of the wind, and the sails were beginning to backfill when the order came:

"Raise tacks and sheets; let go to' gallant bowlines!"

The lower corners of the course were raised so that they would clear the hammock nettings.

"Haul well taut the main brace!"

"Mainsail haul!"

With four hundred men on the ropes double-banked, running head long in different directions, the great fabric of timber and canvas was swung around as if on a pivot, and the ship was now hove to and drifting back on her wake. Meantime, one by one the boats were working back to the ship and were hoisted on board, while I, still paddling myself over the combers, was reviewing my past life and wondering if this was the spot where the Egyptians met their

Waterloo when chasing Moses and his Israelites into the Land of Canaan. I also wondered whether sharks went to sleep at night.

At last all the boats had trailed back to the ship except the first cutter, which had made a wider sweep than the other and was also turning to go in, leaving me to my fate. As it came on I calculated when it should be nearest to me as it made for home, and then it was that I began to fight for life and strike out with all my strength. Rising on a high wave I gave forth a blood-curdling yell, and was rewarded by hearing "Give way starboard! Back port!"

At that moment I knew my voice had been heard, and I fought my way towards the boat with every cause of strength. The cutter was pointed directly for me, and as I slipped under the oars the lieutenant in charge caught me by the hair and towed me to the stern, where strong arms pulled me into the lifeboat.

In the cutter was one of the life buoys, but the other was lost and they came near losing me. We closed in on the ship and I was hoisted on board, put into my bunk with dry clothes, and given a tot of rum. The next day I was running around the ship relating my adventure.

Arriving at Suez, the Viceroy's casket was transferred to the "Enchantress," the paddle-wheel yacht of Queen Victoria, which had been waiting for us at the canal entrance, and this done the "Glasgow" started on her return to our station.

We had then been over two years in India waters, and for the following twelve months we flitted from one port to another, mostly to isolated places that had known the presence of a warship for years, finally winding up at Trincomalee to refit for the home voyage and await the coming of our relief ship, the "Undaunted."

The land-locked structure of Trincomalee harbor gives it acoustic qualities of high order, so that when the "Undaunted" arrived and made her anchorage half a mile away, we had concerts at night in which every sound on board one ship could be heard by the other. As both ships had instrumental music, the effect of the singing of song on one ship, with the chorus by the other, gave us an entertainment not equaled by our present-day radio.

The day at last came to leave for England, and the route was to be through the Suez Canal. The two ships were dressed for the occasion with flags from stem to stern, with the addition of a homeward bound streamer that reached far into our wake from the main royal. As we steamed out of the harbor our yards were manned in honor of the Admiral we were leaving behind, and I, with a signal flag in each hand, was standing on the main royal truck with the lightening conductor between my legs for a brace, waving the flags. No one noticed this freak of mine, but the vibration of the propeller gave me all I could do to keep in balance.

We were nearing the bar at the mouth of the harbor, which at high tide we would not have noticed, but now it was only half tide, and although it was a sandy bottom it gave the ship such a jolt that I was left without a foothold, and dropped like a plummet into the maze of ropes around the topmast. Instinctively my hands grasped one of them, which checked my fall and at the same time burned a channel across the palm of my hand, the scar of which I carry to this day. For this monkey trick of mine I had to do double duty for three days.

On the fourth day out we passed through one of those rare sights that occur in the Indian Ocean, known as "milky sea." In the daylight the water had a grayish hue, but after nightfall it was white as milk. No one on board had heard of such a phenomenon before, and the thought that we had run into an area of submarine disturbance and shoal water gave us a scare. Drawing a

bucket of it revealed phosphorescence in exaggerated form, and stirring the water made it resemble a bucket of disintegrated flame. We ran out of it before midnight.

The next day we called at Aden, and a week later dropped our anchor at Suez. Passing through the canal, we called at Malta, Gibraltar, and Vigo, having completed the circling of the continent of Africa during our absence.

The “homeward bound” feeling on board was quite different from the atmosphere on our way out. Then the men, while not despondent, had a resigned look as if they regarded the coming four years at a foreign station as one of the breaks in the game; but going home instilled in them a hilarity that did not wear off, and they made the skies ring with the song:

“When we arrive in the Portsmouth docks,
The pretty girls come down in flocks.
And one to another you’ll hear them say:
‘Here comes Jack with his four years’ pay,
‘Hurrah! He’s homeward bound!’”

Our ship reached home at last and docked at Portsmouth harbor. The men were paid off and given six weeks leave. My longing to see my family could not be satisfied in England however, as they had gone to America during my absence, and therefore I made application for my discharge from the British Navy, which was granted.

Chapter XIV

During my absence in the South Seas my father had taken the family to the United States, and I determined to join them. As soon as I had secured my discharge from the Navy, I lost no time in saying farewell to my relatives in London, purchased a ticket for New York, and took the train for Liverpool, where I boarded the S.S. Atlas, then about to sail for Boston.

After years of discipline on board a man-of-war, the passage on the Atlantic liner was one of luxurious contentment. Although we were thirteen days in crossing and had a gale in our teeth all the way. At Boston I was transferred to a Fall River boat, and eventually landed in the metropolis of the new world in the fall of 1875.

New York had nothing to hold me, and I continued my journey westward. At that time the gold excitement of the Black Hills of Dakota was in full swing. The train on which I came west was crowded to suffocation with the Argonauts, all armed to the teeth. The locomotive was a wood burner, and at intervals the passengers got out and helped to load the cordwood that was stacked along the track. On the plains, herds of bison would graze along the railroad, and the passengers were called upon to help drive them out of the train. On the Colorado Central, between Cheyenne and Denver, we had more trouble with the thousands of antelope that infested that region, and a few miles north of Greeley we lost an hour shooing them off the track. Some of the passengers took shots at them through the coach windows as we passed.

While I was in India, my father had contracted to establish a hotel at Colorado City, and soon after his arrival had discovered the soda water springs at Manitou. Father was in the throes of a lawsuit, which contested his right to the homestead, and its ramifications led to its being included in the fight instituted against President Grant in his candidacy for the third term. The house where the family lived was a wooden building on the top of a hill overlooking the road to Ute Pass at the foot Pike's Peak. Directly below us flowed a creek, and Father had located the four springs at the water's edge, each one having a different chemical content. The largest of the four was almost pure soda water. We invariably used a pitcher full of it at the midday meal, and its effervescence lasted to the last drop. Father took great pride in segregating the four springs from each other, and if his plans had not been disrupted by the lawsuit, these springs would eventually have proved to be a mine of wealth to him, as they have since to others.

Sometime before my arrival in Colorado, my brother Harry, being practical minded, had gone to Pueblo, where he was filling the position of foreman on a newspaper called the "Chieftain." Later in the year I developed a desire to see my brother, and incidentally to get to work if I intended to realize my ambition to make a fortune in the new country, so I took the narrow gauge to Pueblo. Harry had already inveigled Captain Lambert to give me a job on his newspaper as generalissimo of the hellbox, otherwise known as the "devil." It was there that I received my first lesson in the art of typesetting when not actuating the various presses of the plant.

Independence Day, 1876, was Pueblo's time for rejoicing. The town was not only celebrating the Fourth of July, but also the entrance of Colorado into statehood and the advent of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad. A small howitzer had been secured for the occasion, and I was given the honor of loading and firing the salutes that were continuous throughout the day. The howitzer, captured in the Mexican War, had been trundled to the summit of the hill just

north of Sante Fall Avenue, and contributed to the din of the celebration. Gus Withers, who is still the editor of the Chieftain, led the parade on a beautiful white stallion and looked every inch the general that he was, while the ladies in their best bib and tucker lined the streets and gazed with the admiration as he pranced along in advance of the band.

That night I found myself in a hic-hic-hilarious condition in the old Troubadour Saloon, where a large and motley crowd of celebrants had gathered for the occasion. Perhaps I should not relate this incident, but since this story is the plain, unvarnished truth concerning my life, I have not set out to picture myself with a pair of wings. Two barrels of beer had been contributed by the local brewer, which was free, but with whiskey at five cents a drink it was not long before several first-class fights were instituted between the discordant elements. And then the crowd broke into song, which ranged from Hersygovinian ditties to "Donnybrooke Fair." Someone called on me for a song, and that was where I made my mistake! With a muddled brain that placed me back on the old "Boscawen," I led off with:

"The sea is England's glory.
Her wealth the mighty main.
She is the world's defender.
The feeble to sustain.
In war the first, the fearless,
Her banner leads the brave.
In peace she reigns as peerless,
The Empress of the waves!"

"Not by a damn sight!" yelled a voice, and pandemonium reigned. Everybody was on their feet and making a mad rush for me. Jake Palmer, a Pueblo contractor, and Ed Stone, a bricklayer, both fellow boarders with me, hustled me out of the door and shouted "Run like Hell!" I tore down the street and never stopped running until I reached the old Santa Fe bridge and hid under its sheltering abutment. My ardor for patriotism was very much dampened!

The following spring was a notable one in the history of Colorado, for it brought to the notice of the country the great potential wealth in metal mining throughout the western part of the state. Two great prospecting fields were open. California Gulch, in which is located the town of Leadville, Colorado, was at the height of its glory as a producer of the yellow metal. Tabor's prospectors had just discovered the Little Pittsburgh on Fryer Hill, which changed the gulch from a gold placer into a silver camp and founded Leadville, which later was to become the scene of the greatest mining boom of modern times. Also, in the southwestern corner of the state there was a rush to the San Juan, where gold, silver, and lead were being found in vast true fissure veins.

My spirit of adventure had never been dulled since my fiasco of the diamond fields, and I watched for the chance to join some party going to the San Juan. In those days this was not merely a matter of buying a ticket and boarding a train, or driving at ease over a beautiful highway. It was necessary to cross several high mountain passes through country having a vertical topography equal to the Swiss Alps, heavily timbered, and with scarcely a road or trail to guide the way. My brother Harry, who has always been my best friend and helper, had married a

lovely girl of Colorado Springs and was not willing to risk his bride's home comforts for the hardships of a mining camp. This brought us to a parting of our ways, Harry going to Los Angeles to make a fortune as a publisher, while I, with a party of seven, in a covered wagon drawn by two mangy horses, with "San Juan or Bust!" painted on the head in Flamboyant letters, started from Pueblo on the long trail and became one of the pioneers.

We reached Lake City in the month of June, 1877, after a trek over roadless mountains and through swampy valleys, during which we pushed the wagon uphill because our horse power worked only on one cylinder, and pulled back going downhill for the reason that we had no brakes. Our "team" was composed of an old stallion and a sickly-looking mare, both of which we had acquired in consideration of their "keep." We carried no feed for the horses, and it was necessary every night to find not only a suitable camp for ourselves but also pasture for the stock. As this was not always obtainable, the horses would wander through the night, and we would scour the country the next day for hours before they were found. In this way we more than earned our transportation for fourteen days, at the end of which we drew up before Olds House in Lake City and presented the contraption to the city, for we never saw it again.

Lake City was a lively town, and discoveries of rich ores were being made every day. The Ute and Ulay Mines were producing a great tonnage of lead and silver ores; the Crocke Brothers of New York had a smelter under construction; and the place was filled with prospectors, mine buyers, gamblers, and town lot speculators.

I secured a job on the "Silver World" as a compositor, but gave that up to join a bridge-building gang who were constructing a wagon road up Henson Creek, as I thought that would be a logical way to reach Silverton in Baker's Park, which was on the side of the Continental Range of the Rockies. When the road crew reached Rose's cabin at the head of Henson Creek, I shouldered my roll of blankets, took to the trail, and that night made my bed on a billiard table in the Old Lot Saloon in Animas Forks, five miles away.

The next day was the Fourth of July, and in company with three other pilgrims, we worked our way down the trail to the valley, at the end of which lies Howardsville. The snow slides of the previous winter still blocked the passage of wagons, but the season was opening up and the trail was lined with pack trains loaded with supplies for the surrounding mines.

Silverton was a camp of 2000 population at that time. It is situated in an open park at an altitude of 9300 feet, surrounded by mountains divided by four canyons, through the largest of which the Animas River flows, carrying with it the waters of Cement and Mineral Creeks. The camp appealed to me as one of the great possibilities, but I decided to push on and see the town of Ouray, which formed another corner of San Juan's triangle.

My route lay up Cement Creek, as the Mineral Creek trail was not passable and the Red Mountain territory was as yet unexplored. Gladstone, a small camp on Cement Creek, was an active village where an English company was building a reduction plant for the treatment of the ores coming from the head of the creek. The trail over the range to the Uncompahgre was a mere track along the rocks, and every footstep was fraught with danger. A foot-log was the only bridge over the Bear Creek Falls, and one had to be a tightrope walker to negotiate the chasm where the water disappeared into smoke long before it reached the river below.

Ouray, named after the Ute Chief who lived a few miles below the town, was then a village just aborning. It is situated in a most delightful spot, nestled in a small pocket surrounded

by perpendicular walls of beautiful red sandstone and granite which rise in towering peaks on all sides, the rugged cliffs softened by the delicate green of the quaking aspens and deep forests of spruce. From the everlasting snow banks among the cliffs which tower above and the alpine lakes which are caught in pockets on the upper slopes, tumble sparkling streams, pure and cold from the melting snow, which cascade over the high walls surrounding the town. One of the greatest joys to a person coming from the hazy and diffused atmosphere of the sea coast is the clear and brilliant blue of the mountain skies, as blue which is as deep as a Chinese rug, through which float on summer days the billowy cumulus clouds like huge piles of whipped cream. Through the clear atmosphere the distant peaks stand out in sharp-cut beauty, as far as the eye can see.

The young town was very interesting. It was peopled by a few of the hardiest pioneers who could stand the buffetings of Nature in the primeval. A grocery, hardware, clothing store, and seven saloons were doing business on the main street. The Ouray Sentinel, edited by Doc McKinney, shouted the news from the hills in its columns. As Doc was editor, manager, printer, and devil, the arrival of an expert compositor, of at least two months' experience at the case, was welcomed by a column write-up and credit at the boarding house for a full week.

The railroad was about three hundred miles away from us at Alamosa, and we had a bi-monthly mail with a tri monthly shipment of food supplies from the outside. The arrival of one of those prairie schooners with double trailers, hauled by ten yoke oxen, as it pulled up to Alling's store, was the occasion for an outpouring of the populace, who formed a line for blocks waiting their turn to buy flour at \$50.00 a sack and bacon for \$1.50 a pound. Everybody seemed to have money, as the rich discoveries then being made were readily snapped up by Eastern investors, who had only to be shown a specimen of ruby silver or gray copper to reach for their check books, and the deal was made.

This condition of affairs soon attracted the attention of the banking fraternity, and a gentleman who sported the name of Fogg conceived the idea of starting the Bank of Ouray. Fogg was not long in sizing up the opportunities presented in such a speculative community. In 1877 the fractional currency of the country was represented by shinplasters, slips the size of the present-day cigar coupons, good for five, ten, twenty-five, and fifty cents. Ouray was shy of small change, having little use for it at the stores, but the banker was on to his job and soon inaugurated a fractional currency of his own to cover the shortage. To keep the new money in circulation, he printed on the bills: "Redeemable in amounts not less than twenty dollars." Ouray found these plasters very convenient until one morning the bank did not open, and it was found that \$80,000 of the fractional "money" was in circulation. The gentleman is till at large, so far as I know.

Chapter XV

With the coming of October I conceived the idea of returning to Lake City to “hole in” there for the winter. The distance was only about twenty-three miles by the Bear Creek trail, across the mountains and I felt that I could easily reach Rose’s cabin before dark, where I could either pass the night or complete my journey by the new wagon road.

To Theron Stevens, the blacksmith, I confided my intentions, and he collected all the mail available for me to post at Lake City. The mere detail of food I considered unimportant. I wore a light summer suit, and was well up Bear Creek when I discovered that I had neither matches nor a knife. I was only a tenderfoot, however, and did not attach much importance to this discrepancy.

As I turned up from the Uncompahgre River the trail became steeper, my progress slower, and soon I had to rest about every hundred yards. Night was coming on, clouds were gathering, and snow flurries began to tingle my cheeks. At last I reached the summit, and looking around I endeavored to recognize the peaks I had seen on my way from Silverton, but they all looked alike to me. The snow commenced falling so fast that I could not even see the trail behind me. Darkness came swiftly, and found me on the summit of the Continental Divide, hungry, without a match or knife, and shivering with the cold. I crept into some brush, and by beating my hands and kicking around with my feet I succeeded in keeping my blood in circulation until the grey of morning came sweeping over the mountaintops. It was still storming, and a foot of new snow covered the wind-swept flat where I found myself. I looked around, but saw nothing that offered a solution to my whereabouts. I was plainly lost.

In the absence of a trail I searched for water, and finding a small rivulet I followed it. The stream soon grew to a fair-sized creek, and began dropping in cascades as it cut through the rugged formation of a ravine. At times I was in the creek, then on the bank, and when it passed through a narrow canyon overlooking a fall of a hundred feet, I had to shinny along the side of a cliff where one slip from the ledge I was following meant certain death.

Down again in the creek I passed a deer sheltered from the storm by a shelving rock, and by reaching out I could touch its horns. I was hungry as a bear by this time, and bitterly regretted coming on such a journey without preparation. The storm was subsiding, and since I was on an unknown creek, I determined that afternoon to turn up from the bank in what I thought was the direction of Lake City. The range of mountains followed the water shed, but once over the top I could reach my destination. I climbed to the summit, looked over, and saw another range confronting me, but with the varicolored rock I had seen around Capital City on Henson Creek. When I reached the bottom of the valley I expected to find the Henson Creek road, but there was no trace of travel and no creek.

I had now been thirty-six hours without food and was getting weak. I searched the brush for berries and found a few dried ones, but they gave me no relief. When night came I gathered leaves, and filling my hat I stuffed them around my feet, but by morning they were solidly numbed by the cold. Realizing now that I was getting nowhere by crossing the ranges, I determined to retrace my course and get back to the top of the Divide, but I was too weak to make much progress. I now began to smell the order of food cooking, and the aroma of coffee and sizzling beefsteaks almost maddened me. In my rational moments I knew that these

sensations were indications of delirium, and that the party of men with their guns pointed at me from the cliffs was only a mirage.

The third night I camped as usual in the brush on the slope over the river I had left two days before, and in the morning, almost too weak and cramped with the cold to stand upright. I continued my weary way down the long slope. Suddenly, when looking on the far side of the river, I saw the white outlines of a tent, but attributed it to another mirage like those I had been seeing, and pushed on towards the creek. Again in the distance I saw the tent, and getting closer, a wagon wheel burst into view. This apparition seemed to give me new strength, and I ran the remaining distance to the river. Although it was in flood, cold as ice, and running like a mill-race, I plunged into it, was swept off my feet, but regained my footing by embracing a boulder, and then, grasping an overhanging snag that hung from the bank, I clambered onto the floor of the valley.

From the river I staggered to the flap of the tent, and, flinging it open, I saw a man sitting up in the blankets with a rifle at full cock pointed at my head.

“Hold up your hands!”

In obeying the command I lurched forward and fell headlong into the tent. Throwing down the gun the man sprang up from the bed, and taking me in his arms he drew me over and laid me on the blankets. I must have been a pitiable sight. My face and hands were scratched and bleeding, my pants ripped into streamers, while my coat with the mail in its pockets had been lost in the river.

The man, without speaking a word, left the tent and returned in a few minutes with a pan full of meat and bread, which he put into my lap. I fell upon it like a ravenous wolf, but after a few mouthfuls he took it away from me. Then I told him my story, to which he listened as if enormously interested, after which he advised me to go to sleep.

It was towards evening when I awoke. My host was outside the tent making a fire, and I smelled hot coffee. He gave me more of the meat and bread and plenty of the coffee. He then said he was one of a party of five who were on a prospecting trip and had been out for many moons. His partners were off in the woods and had already shot seven bears, but had failed to kill any of them. The trail I had seen coming into camp was the Horsethief Trail, and we were on Cow Creek. He had never been in Ouray, and his name was Alfred Packer.

Packer impressed upon me the fact that I could not stay there that night, as he had no extra blankets, but said he would show me how to reach the Uncompahgre Indian Agency, which was only nine miles below Ouray. I thought it singular that none of his partners put in an appearance while I was there; neither did I see any preparations on Packer's part for their arrival.

It was a bright moonlight night when I got ready to leave. I thanked him for his hospitality, and he showed me in the distance the gap in the mountains through which I should go, and said: “It is only ten miles to the Agency. You can make it in four hours easily from this creek.”

It was after midnight when I roused the Indian agent from his bed. After he got over his astonishment at seeing the apparition at the door and I had a chance to explain, he went back into the house and brought out a buffalo robe, which he handed to me, and told me to go in an adjoining tent. The tent was empty, so I spread the robe on the ground, rolled into it, and was soon dead to the world.

When I awoke it was afternoon, and after a hasty meal I resumed my hike back to Ouray, where I was thankful to arrive after nightfall. I had been absent five days, during which I had circumnavigated the town, never more than twenty miles distant, traveled over a hundred miles, and eaten three meals. The Sentinel in its following issue, said it was only by a miracle that I had escaped from attack by one of the wounded bears, but as events turned out my escape from the camp of Alfred Packer was considered far more wonderful, when it became known that Packer had murdered and eaten his five partners!

Sometime previous to this event, Packer had been employed to act as guide to a party of twenty-one men starting from Bingham Canon, Utah, to the San Juan country, Colorado. At that time he was known to be entirely broke. The party separated at Ouray, and five men, with Packer still acting as guide, left camp, going in the direction of the Los Pinos agency. The next spring Packer turned up alone in Saguache with a great deal of money, which he displayed in a saloon, and told so many conflicting stories that he aroused suspicion. He said that his party had almost starved and frozen to death during the winter, and yet he looked to be in very good condition. He was arrested for murder and a search made to discover the missing men, but no trace of them could be found, so he was released. He disappeared soon after, and during the following summer a hunter discovered the five bodies lying side by side, as though they had gone to bed and been murdered in their sleep. No money or valuables were found on or near them. Wild animals had partly devoured them. Nine years passed before he was discovered and arrested at Fort Fetterman, Wyoming, and it was during the time that he was at large that I enjoyed his hospitality.

He was brought to Lake City, Colorado, for trial before Judge M. B. Gerry. He claimed that he did not kill the five men, but had eaten them to keep from starving to death. Witnesses testified that wild game had been abundant in that region during that winter, which was not severe. Packer was a tall man with long, dark, curling hair, dark mustache and goatee, and deep-set dark gray eyes. He looked more like some professor than a murderer.

One of the principal witnesses at the trial was James (Larry) Dolan, an Irish wag of rare and sometimes profane or vulgar wit, who had met and associated with the prisoner at Saguache. It was said that Dolan had developed a grudge against Packer and had threatened to kill him should he be acquitted of the charge of murder. The Silver World said that Larry was the first man up town from the courthouse after the verdict was in and sentenced passed.

“Well, boys, ut’s all over; Packer’s t’ hang!” Pressed for particulars by the habitués of the Saloon (for of course this was a saloon), Larry took an appropriate attitude before his motley audience and delivered himself thus: “The judge says, says he, ‘Stan’ up y’ man-atin’ ---iv a---! STAND UP!’ Thin, p’intin’ his tremblin’ finger at Packer, so ragin’ mad, he was: ‘They wus siven Dimmycrats in Hinsdale County an’ ye ate five iv them, G—d---ye! I sintins ye t’ be hanged be th’ neck ontill ye’re dead, dead, DEAD! As a warnin’ agin’ reducin’ th’ Dimmycratic popyalashun iv th’ state!’”

Judge Gerry was, it may be readily understood, an ardent Democrat. Therein lies the refined, subtle humor of this story.

But Packer did not hang. Because of a technicality in his trial his sentence was afterwards changed at a new trial to forty years in the penitentiary at Cañon City, Colorado. He was paroled in January 1901, and died several years later near Littleton, Colorado.

Chapter XVI

Soon after my return to Ouray I abandoned the printing business and acquired a prospecting partner, Charley Morris. Together we built a log cabin near the river for my future home, as Charley lived with his wife in the upper part of Ouray's main street.

Our first venture into mining as partners was a lease on the dump of the old Fisherman mine, at the mouth of Canyon Creek, almost adjoining the town of Ouray. Establishing ourselves on the dump at the entrance of the mine, we sorted out twelve hundred pounds of grey copper ore, which we took to the mud smelter below Ouray and Old Man Paquin paid us \$1200 for it. We did not try to operate the mine itself, and so far as I know it has never been operated since, probably on account of the hot water in the mine, which made it difficult to operate. The whole San Juan Basin is sprinkled with springs of hot mineral water, and the proximity of many other hot springs at Ouray may have caused the suspicion that the Fisherman vein is the source of all the hot water at that point. It is a pity, however, that a mine, which should produce such rich ore, should be abandoned and the workings allowed to go back to nature.

After we paid our debts we still had \$200, and with this as a backlog we started out to locate a mine for ourselves. Together we climbed the hills for a week, until we found a vein of lead ore running along a cliff that hardly afforded standing room. Charley was for passing it by, but I suggested that we take out a ton of the galena and then I would go down to Paquin and ask him to buy it. Our only tools were a gad, hammer, and pick, with which we dug out of the cliff a quantity of the ore. I took some of it down to the smelter, and after the old man had examined the ore he said: "I'll give you twenty dollars a ton for it on the dump." I replied, "All right; we will have a load for you tomorrow." The next afternoon Paquin was there with his burros. We had twenty sacks filled, and he handed me twenty silver dollars.

After a few days of gadding the ore, the gutter from which we were getting the lead was becoming too tight to make further progress without using powder, so we decided to abandon the ground. We learned afterwards that the ore assayed 80% lead and 20 ounces of Silver to the ton. In after years this property became the Grizzly Bear Mine, which for a long time paid large profits to the owners.

One evening, while I was standing in the doorway of my cabin, an elderly man, with a bundle tied in a red bandana handkerchief, came along and asked if I could accommodate him for the night, as there were no hotels in the town. I told him I would be glad to, and invited him into my cabin. As he entered, he lowered the bundle from his shoulder and tossed it under my bunk. When it rolled over on the floor something peculiarity about it attracted my attention, and I asked him what was in it. He replied: "There is fourteen thousand dollars and some change in there." I gasped at this, for I had never been in such close proximity to such a fortune before. He then explained that he was an Illinois doctor, had sold his practice, and had come to the San Juan to buy a mine.

The next morning the doctor, having absorbed all the information I could impart about the mining district of Mt. Sneffels, especially regarding a prospect called the Virginus, which I advised him to buy if he could get it at a reasonable price, took his stick and bundle and disappeared up the Canyon Creek trail.

Fours days later the doctor, minus his bundle, stepped into my cabin and laid a slab of grey copper ore on the table. "Well," said he, "I bought that mine! Jim rubbed his name off the stake and put mine on. That was all there was to the transaction."

"How much did you pay for it?" I asked.

"I gave him an even fourteen thousand dollars."

That transaction marked the beginning of the Virginus Mine. The ore he had brought down assayed 1740 ounces in silver to the ton, and silver was then worth \$1.12 an ounce. The doctor took out \$3,500,000 before his death, and the mine went to Diamond Joe Reynolds.

My partner Charley Morris was the owner of the Silver Point Mine, high up on Uncompahgre Mountain, and had leased the mine to a party of Swedes. At intervals he would make the leasers a visit, and on his next trip I determined to go with him. I was just recovering from an attack of mountain fever, and my friends told me the climb would do me good.

The snowfall in the winter of '77 was particularly heavy. We traveled on snowshoes, and bucked snow all the way to timberline, where we had to cross the path of the Riverside slide. The sluice or draw down which the big slide rushes when it makes its run – an occurrence that takes place several times every winter – was less than one hundred feet wide where we had to cross. The run starts far above timberline, and when it moves it strikes terror to every thing for miles around. Just below the sluice, which it has cut out for itself, at the point where we had to cross, the avalanche leaps over a precipice twelve hundred feet deep and then cascades to the river two thousand feet below. At the bottom the mass spreads out to fifteen hundred feet and packs into solid form along the highway sixty feet deep. In the spring the mass was tunneled, so that the coaches could pass under instead of over the blockade.

A heavy snow had fallen earlier in the month, and weeks of fine weather had formed a hard crust. The next snowfall, therefore, was resting on the glassy surface and was ready to slip at any moment. My partner, who was an experienced mountaineer, saw the danger and directed me to wait on the bank until he reached a large tree stump that stood in the center of the draw, which I did. There he waited for me and I joined him. The rest of the crossing was made in the same manner.

We reached the Silver Point for dinner, and I waited while my partner inspected the workings. Then we started back, crossing to the halfway stump as before. I watched for him to reach the farther bank, and he shouted to step lightly. I minced across, and was reaching for Charley's hand when – C-r-a-c-k!! went the snow above us, and the whole mass slipped with a monstrous rush, bringing with it great boulders and huge trees in splinters. Over the precipice it went in a great volume of smoke, while we watched the awesome sight and congratulated ourselves that we were not in it. When I entered my cabin that night my mountain fever was gone.

It was a hard winter in Ouray and supplies came slowly. I had been down to the Indian Agency, where they had butchered an antiquated work ox, and I was able to secure a fore quarter, which still had the shoe on. This I hung up outside the cabin and it kept me in meat until spring, it was that tough! I also found that a little of it went a long way when scientifically connected to a pot of beans.

Thanksgiving passed and Christmas was coming on without a ripple of change from the daily routine. My partner said that if I intended to become a mine owner I would have to take out

my citizenship papers. I had just turned twenty-two, so I got Jim Vance, the Clerk of the Court, to make them out for me, and he said I could now locate claims and hold property. My first location was made on the hill south of Ouray, over which the wagon road to Poughkeepsie Gulch was being built. I called it the Black Eagle, and some surface specimens from it assayed \$18,000 in silver and gold to the ton, but when my shaft was fifteen feet deep the average value was only \$24.00. The following spring the road builders filled up my poor little mine, and I forgot it.

As Christmas approached I determined to celebrate the day with a big English plum pudding, such as Mother used to make. There were no turkeys or other poultry in town, and very little meat of any kind. Eggs were fifty cents apiece and butter \$1.50 a pound, but I sailed in and if – but I am anticipating!

Mother's pudding must have been a large one, because she used to bring out a big piece of it as late as the middle of July, carefully wrapped in a white cloth; and that was the kind I wanted. I procured four pounds of beef suet, and froze it until the blows of a hammer it fell apart like crackers under a rolling pin. This I mixed with some flour in a washtub. I had four pounds of raisins, four of current, two of citron, four of sugar (and four pounds of salt in the same kind of bag). After mixing everything else I put in the sugar, adding a pint of brandy to give it a zest, then giving it another stirring I tied it up in a cloth and boiled it until Christmas morning, when it looked as fine and plump a pudding as ever graced a boiler!

I had invited a few hungry friends, who had otherwise expected to eat their Christmas dinner out of the conventional bean pot, to partake of my feast, and when a big hunk of my fore quarter beef, which I had succeeded in separating from the shank with an ax, was placed on the table and the plum pudding was on the bunk ready to fall apart with its puffiness, their enthusiasm knew no bounds. With the assistance of a saw and cleaver I had already carved the joint, so the guests lost no time in attacking the roast. They did not seem to have much success with the meat, which I attributed to the desire on their part to save their appetites for the English plum pudding. Their jaws must have ached from the exercise they got from the beef, for they gave grunts of relief when the table was cleared and the big pudding was set down in their midst.

My partner was the first to be served, so I gave him a chunk big enough to choke an alligator, with a generous portion of the brandy sauce. The guests had the politeness to wait until all were served, and meantime expressed their admiration of my culinary skill. At the psychological moment the boys fell to. The first mouthful seemed to be plenty, for they rose from the table as one man and made for the door. I was aghast with consternation, and hastily took a spoonful of the pudding. Fish warts and whales blubber! Instead of the sugar I had dumped in the four pounds of salt! I felt like sinking through the floor with mortification and disappointment, but my guest had gone and I was left alone to mourn over the results of my misplaced confidence.

Chapter XVII

Seven miles south of Ouray the canyon opens into a wide valley and then closes abruptly to form the saddle, which divides the waters of the continent. The valley between is known as Red Mountain Park. Hay was in great demand at Ouray, and the fertility of the little flat near timberline had enticed a young lad, George West, the son of a wealthy Eastern Merchant, to locate a ranch there. He used to bring the hay down on the backs of burros to the Ouray market. George needed a grindstone and he purchased one from Alling's store on credit, but because he could not pay for it when the bill became due, Alling threatened to have him arrested. This action frightened the boy, and in spite of the fact that the trail was closed for the winter, he started for his ranch to bring back the grindstone.

After waiting a week for his return, his friends became apprehensive as to his safety, and I made up a party to search for him. With rope, axes, and shovels, we took up the trail. The day was intensely cold but clear, there was a hard crust on the snow; and for a mile or more we had to chop holes in the surface for a foothold. At the forks of the Uncompahgre, where one branch becomes Poughkeepsie Creek and the other Red Mountain Creek, we found one of his shoes and followed the tracks leading to the right-hand stream. Evidently the lad had a frozen foot, had cut off the shoe, and tried to reach the creek to thaw it out. There were several small waterfalls along the stream, and at the foot of one, with the water spraying all over him, we found the body of the poor boy encased in the ice. The mass was frozen to the rocks and we had to chop the body loose so that we could roll it, ice and all, up the bank. Once on the hard snow above, the ice was chipped away so that we could carry the body on a pole, two ax men going ahead to cut foot holes along the steep cliffs. Progress was painfully slow, the burden was heavy, and the trail, which overhung the deep canyon below, was a constant danger, as one slip would have precipitated the whole party, roped together, into eternity.

We plodded into town with our ghastly burden, and that night was given up to thawing out the body, which was later shipped east to his parents. So ended another episode of the many tragedies of the early days of the San Juan.

The Mount Sneffels district was then growing in reputation as the richest on the Western Slope. The ores were high grade, and many of the prospects gave evidence of becoming valuable mines, as the later discoveries of the Smuggler, Sheridan, Camp Bird, and other mines began to disgorge their treasures of silver and gold. There were also many disappointments in claims, whose croppings showed rich ores only to change with development into low-grade sulphide.

One very high-grade prospect was the York State. Here was a vein three feet wide, and at the time of my visit the entire breast of the tunnel was gleaming with ruby silver. I suggested that they sell it while it was looking good, but the owners thought \$250,000 was the most they could probably get for it, and it was worth a million. I said, "All right, but if it were mine, I would not put another shot into it for \$10,000!" They went ahead however, and took out a burro trainload of ore, which they packed to the Lake City smelter and sold for \$1.65 a pound. Three tons of ore at \$1.65 a pound meant quite a little money, and when the pack train returned to the mine it was loaded with winter supplies which included table luxuries, wines, and cigars, and a suite of furniture de luxe with which the boys were going to make themselves comfortable during the cold months.

The York State continued to yield rich ore for several more weeks, and then came the finale. The men in the drift suddenly encountered a smooth wall of barren rock extending across the face of the tunnel, and the fault showed no indication of the direction the vein had been thrown. The owners worked day and night to recover the lode. They started new tunnels, crosscut both ways, continued the drift through the fault, and sank winzes, but all to no purpose. The vein was gone. So they stoped out what ore there was above the level, packed up their tools, their suite of furniture de luxe, and abandoned the claim. The last time I walked over this ground the tunnel had fallen in, the house was in ruin, and the mine was well on its way back to nature.

I had been prospecting on Mt. Sneffels one day in the spring of '78, and was loaded down with a sack of samples from a location I had made, when I heard a blast and then a cry for help. Throwing down my ore, I raced up the hill to the place where I had heard the shot. The dump had been hidden in the trees, and when I scrambled up to it I saw a house and a tunnel into the mountain, with a sign over the portal: "Millionaire Mine." On the dump lay what appeared to be a man, and approaching closer I saw that his arm had been blown off and the stump was bleeding into a pool by his side. The man was moaning but not unconscious. I looked around for something to be used as a torque, but could find only a coil of fuse, which I wrapped tightly around what was left of his arm. Going into the cabin, I discovered a bottle of whiskey and some cold coffee in a pot, so I gave him a stiff drink and followed it with the coffee.

The distance to Ouray was more than five miles, and I wondered whether I could carry him that far. The man was of slight build, and I judged that if he did not weigh more than one hundred and forty pounds I could make it. He begged me not to leave him, of which I had no intention and without more ado I got his good arm over my shoulder, boosted him to a balance, and started down the trail. My load was soon unconscious and a dead weight, and when I had proceeded about a mile I sat down to rest. Luckily, two miners coming down from the Wheel of Fortune arrived on the scene, and realizing the trouble helped me with my burden and we forged ahead. The stump of his arm had stopped bleeding, and between us we reached Ouray with our man still alive.

He proved to be Frank Spinola, a Spanish-American, and the owner of the Millionaire Mine. Later he told me that he had been drilling in a missed hole loaded with black powder, which had been tamped down too hard. His drill had created a spark and it went off, carrying his arm with it. He recovered eventually and worked the property for several years afterward, selling out for a large sum of money.

Lake City still had its attraction, and a job was offered me in the Croke Smelter. Starting out on foot, I took the Uncompahgre route via the Lake Fork of the Gunnison, and arrived at the mining town near Lake Cristobal without mishap.

The next night I was drawing slag from the blast furnace, and resting the moulds on the dump to cool so that the matte on the bottom could be separated and taken back to the furnace. Below the dump a large pool of water had been collected. My jinx was still with me, for on one unlucky night, after I had drawn off a pot of the molten rock and disengaged it from the truck, it slipped over and ran into the pool. With a bang that sounded like an explosion, the contents of the pot went into the air, and hot slag rained down all about me. Balls of fire lodged in my woolen clothing, and in a twinkling burned through to my back. I leaped into the pool and rolled over in the water, welling with pain. The roar of the explosion brought men running, and they

dragged me out. I was rushed to the hospital, where I lingered for weeks before I was able to walk about.

Being fed up with the smelting business, I returned to Ouray. My partner had sold the Silver Point and moved to Ogden, Utah, so I joined a party of five prospectors headed for the Salt Mountains near the Utah line. After a week's march, we camped at an old Mormon fort, an outpost of Brigham Young days, a time when every Gentile was an enemy. From there we made excursions into the Wasatch range of mountains, finding plenty of native copper in the sandstone formation, but we made no locations.

Bill Long, an expert ore sorter, who could tell the assay value within a few ounces by looking at a piece of ore, was my companion one morning, and in following up a small gulch we espied a small white streak running through what appeared to be a contact between the sandstone and lime. Bill pronounced it a white carbonate and proposed that we fill a sack, which we had with us. He said it was rich, so we filled the sack, taking turns to carry it back to the camp. Next day we broke camp, loaded our wagon, and began our return, expecting to pick up the Ophir Trail.

Camping at the head of Ophir Creek. Bill Long and I took a shovel and a pick, with the intention of prospecting the streams in search of placer. Our scent for gravel led us to the flat where the town of Rico, Colorado, is now established, and taking a pan of dirt from near the surface we washed it at the creek and got nearly one hundred colors. Back we went to the spot and began digging a hole with a vim, as if we had located a ground hog when there was no meat in the house and the preacher was coming for dinner. We made the shaft big enough for both of us to work, and were down about seven feet and on our knees scanning the gravel for colors, when we heard a step above us and a shadow fell across us. Looking up we saw a Navajo Indian in full war paint and a scowl on his face that meant real deviltry. Unslinging the gun from his shoulder he pointed it to the north and uttered one word in a harsh, guttural tone that sent our hearts thumping against our ribs: "Git!"

We forgot our tools in our alacrity to leap out of the hole, and when we reached the top we saw a huddle of redskins with their ponies, awaiting orders from their chief. The Indian still had his arm outstretched pointing to the timber, and we got away with a flying start, which continued until we were out of sight. We built no fire that night, and gradually circled back to our camp, from which our party lost no time in getting back to God's Country.

Chapter XVIII

Our little company of five was still intact at Ouray when news of the Leadville mining boom began to filter into the San Juan, and the urge to follow the stampede grew more insistent as reports were brought in of fortunes made over night. At last we hitched up our wagon, threw in our dunnage and supplies, together with the sack of ore we had brought from the Wasatch Mountains, and hit the trail to join the throng of pilgrims that were headed for the carbonate camp from all points of the compass.

We laid our course up the Gunnison River to the Powderhorn; then over the Cochetopa Pass to Saguache, at the head of San Luis Valley. Driving along the base of the mountains a flock of hundreds of wild turkey paraded ahead of the wagon as we approached the watershed of the Arkansas River, but we had no guns and when we ran after them and attempted to capture them with clubs they took to the air with an angry gobble.

Arriving at Cleora, some of our party got cold feet, and we changed our course for Denver. There we took the sack of ore to the smelter, and our hilarity was unrestrained when a check for \$1047 was handed to me. There were five of us and in a wide open town like Denver was in those days, \$200 apiece did not last long. I managed, however, to salvage enough to pay my stage fare part way, so one night I boarded the blind baggage on the narrow gauge and got a free ride to Canon City, where I took a seat by the driver on one of the Barlow & Sanderson coaches for Leadville.

In the fall of '78 the Leadville boom was well under way, and I joined the crowd that created the wildest stampede that ever flocked into a mining camp. While two railroads were fighting for the right of way through the Royal Gorge of the Arkansas, fourteen Barlow & Sanderson six horse stagecoaches, loaded to the guards with passengers and followed by two fast coaches carrying the express, were every day racing pell mell into the carbonate camp.

I was sitting on the extreme edge of the driver's seat with my legs dangling over into space. While the coach swung around the curves in the road. About three miles from the village of Cleora, I espied an object hanging from a tree over the roadway. As the coach drew nearer, I saw that it was a man hanging by the neck in his red flannel under-clothes, while under the same tree were the man's blankets where he had evidently been sleeping. The driver of the coach said to me in a low tone: "push that damn stiff off." As the body was coming straight for me and nearly knocked me off my seat. I had to use good judgment in pushing the thing away from the coach, but I cleared it, and the body bumped against the side of the vehicle as we rolled along. At Cleora we learned that the man had murdered his partner the day before and the vigilantes had gone down the road that night and promptly hung him up.

It was Thanksgiving Day, '78, when I pulled into Leadville. Horace A.W. Tabor's prospectors, Rische and Hook, had found the Little Pittsburgh, and the country storekeeper was already a millionaire. That night saw the opening of the Theatre Comique, and the whole town was on a jamboree. Seats were at a big premium, but I managed to squeeze in among the jam in the aisles. Tabor had the only box in the house, and he was carrying a bag of silver dollars, which he tossed on to the stage by the handful. Everyone else seemed to have a load of the coins, which rained on the stage after each skit. At intervals a super would gather them with a fire shovel, and it was safe to say that \$2500 to \$3000 was divided among the actors that night.

As I had learned to set type on the Pueblo Chieftain and other papers, I had no difficulty in getting a case on the Leadville Reveille. This paper was engaged in guerrilla warfare with one of the town cliques, which was so serious in character that the newspaper office kept the doors barred and each compositor had a rifle standing against his case, while Dick Allen, the editor, was armed with six-shooters. Either the enemy had no relish for a fight or the daily spectacle of a lynching be proved sufficiently deterrent, for beyond the nightly threats that were handed in on paper, nothing happened. The Reveille was making money and the printers got good wages for those times. I was always broke, however, for every Saturday night I deposited my wages in a bank run by a man named "Faro." Shades of my paternal ancestors!

But the lure of gold was upon me, and getting tired of slinging type I started for the hills to prospect. Walking down the road by the Little Pittsburgh Mine one day I met Tabor, who had been inspecting the Vulture, a fraction of a claim between the Chrysolite and the Pittsburgh, which he had bought from "Chicken Bill" for \$17,000. We stopped in the road to talk, the upshot of which was that he hired me for \$6.00 a day to do some work on his purchase. I was to get two other men and sink deeper the shaft, then down about sixty feet. We commenced work next morning, having procured a windlass, bucket, and other tools. The first bucket of rock that came up looked strangely familiar to me, and I recognized the ore as having come from the Little Pittsburgh. Climbing into the bucket I was lowered to the bottom. There the ore was, plenty of it, all broken up and easy to dig, just stamped down in the clay and made to look like a new-born bonanza. It would have been, too, had it been "in place", but the evidence of its having been put there by human hands was all too plain, Chicken Bill had dumped several wagon loads into the shaft, and Tabor, who knew practically nothing about mining, had not gone down the shaft, so that Chicken Bill was able to hide the deception long enough to get his money.

My business then was to inform Tabor of our discovery, which I did without loss of time, and told him that the Vulture had been salted. He took the news complacently, and told me to clean out the salted ore and stop work. I thought that was a poor decision and told him so. I said the claim was in a good location with mines surrounding it, and that it would be good business to put the shaft down deeper with the idea of striking the same contact that undoubtedly extended from the Chrysolite to the Pittsburgh. Moreover, unless the shaft were put down to mineral the claim would be open to location by anyone who came along. A discovery of mineral was essential before even a location could be made and recorded. Tabor said, "All right, go ahead."

The second day after the discovery that the Vulture had been salted, we had the shaft cleaned out and were digging in virgin ground. We sank two feet a day, and on the twelfth day the shots broke through into the contact and we were on top of as pretty a body of silver-bearing sand carbonate as ever greeted the eyes of a miner! The sand had the dark grey color of sulphuret, and imbedded in the ore were boulders of galena. The day was freezing cold, and we had no building over the shaft, but a big log fire on the dump kept us warm, and it was interesting to watch the silver bubble out of the ore, which was close to the blaze. Anyone could see that the ore was rich, and I determined to give Tabor a surprise by making a shipment to the smelter and handing him the returns.

Leaving the two men to continue hoisting the ore, I went down to Leadville and hired an ore wagon with four horses, which I drove back to the mine. There we loaded four tons of the mineral; I mounted to the seat, gathered the lines, whipped up the horses, and headed for town.

When I arrived it was too late to get admission to the smelter, so I parked the load of ore at the curb, unhitched the team, fed them their grain, and then went around to find a bed and get my supper.

It was near midnight when I got away from the "keno" game and went around to the place where I had left the wagon and team. It was gone! And I spent the rest of the night searching the town for my ore. At daylight I found the outfit in the yard of the city jail, where it had been impounded for being abandoned on the city streets. I was not locked up, but passed the time until the court opened under the surveillance of the night watchman. Before the Court convened, however, he pocketed my \$5.00 and told me to "Scoot!"

That afternoon I received \$3890 for the wagonload of ore, and Tabor was delighted. The news of the strike reached Chicken Bill, and that worthy immediately claimed that he had been bilked out of his mine, but he subsided when he realized that the game was up, and we thought he was lucky to get out of town without being punished for stealing the Little Pittsburgh ore. The Vulture developed into one of the big mines of Leadville, and Tabor turned it over to its neighbor, the Chrysolite, for \$2,800,000.

Leadville in 1879 was a wild yet orderly town. It was only natural that a city of forty thousand population suddenly thrown together in the excitement of the stampede for riches should require stern measures for the control of its inhabitants. Therefore, it was upon the protection of the Vigilant Committee that the city depended for the capture and punishment of the footpads and other malefactors. This committee was extraordinarily prompt and efficient in dealing out justice, and it was not unusual to see three or four culprits hanging in the jail when daylight began to appear. Gambling was wide open, great halls being crowded with the devotees of faro, and the yell of "Keno!" followed by the cry of "Oh, Hell!" from the disgusted players, resounded far into the night.

Fortunes were made in real estate in a few hours, and lots bought for a song changed hands for thousands before the ink on the deeds was dry. Everybody seemed to be well-provided with funds, and immense sums of outside money were available for investment in the mines. Prospects and just locations did not lack for buyers. All deals were consummated for cash on the dump, and a prospector with a few specimens of ore could obtain all the money he wanted, even in the Eastern cities. I have known a sale to be made in New York for \$200,000, the only tangible evidence of the existence of the mine being a lump of rich silver ore.

Chapter XIX

When I left the Vulture in the early spring, I took with me Joe Whitaker, one of the young miners, full of vigor, vim and enterprise. Together we got a camping outfit, some tools, and started up Big Evans Gulch, finally pitching our camp on a timber flat between Big Evans and Little Evans. The snow was four feet deep in the drifts, but had a hard crust on it, so that we had no trouble in getting around and did not have to use our snowshoes. After shoveling out a place for the tent we had a wall of snow around us that we could not see over, but as there was plenty of timber, a roaring fire soon dried out the ground, and we were fairly comfortable.

We then set about to locate our mine. By tracing out the stakes of the adjoining mines we settled on a vacant spot and began sinking our shaft one morning. By the following Sunday we had a hole twelve feet deep, neatly timbered with split poles, windlass, bucket and everything, and at the bottom of the hole was a bed of clay of variegated colors which looked as if we had struck the contact. As it did not appear on closer examination to contain any values, however, we began to lose our enthusiasm over the claim, and when a German prospector came to us with an offer of \$100, we looked wistfully across to the south slopes of Big Evans, with its bare ground with green grass and sunshine, took the \$100, and handed the stake to the German with our names deleted and Hans Wolfe written thereon.

Next day we rounded up some burros and moved across the gulch, where on the sunniest spot we could find, we made our camping place. No stakes being in sight, we located the Wheel of Fortune group of four claims. On them we sank a shaft eighty feet deep, and at the bottom was a bed of grey sand that assayed twelve ounces in silver.

Promoters were frequent visitors, and one of them, after looking at the dump, offered me \$7000 for my interest. I said: No, I want \$50,000 or nothing. Then it will be nothing, said the man, and he walked away. Sure enough it was nothing, for after sinking two more shafts and running a long tunnel without results, we were broke and sold out all our holdings for \$150 to the Kent Mining Company, which spent \$100,000 on the property and developed it into a ten million dollar concern.

The \$150.00 just squared our debts for supplies used on Big Evans, so Joe and I secured a contract at a mine some distance away to sink an eighty-foot shaft fifty feet deeper for \$12.00 a foot. The rock was tight and broke short, which means that an ordinary shot did not dislodge much. We were short of tools, and our big hammer had been left at the bottom of the Wheel of Fortune shaft, under fourteen feet of water.

We returned to the old claim one afternoon, and after looking disconsolately down the shaft I said: Joe, we must have that hammer. You man the windlass and I will go down after it. With that decision made I stripped off everything but my overalls, put my foot in the loop, and swung off into the middle of the shaft. Joe slipped the toggle, holding the windlass from the upright, and lowered me into the icy bath until I struck bottom. I knew exactly where the hammer was located, and found it without difficulty standing against the timbers. The water was so cold that I had to work quickly, and with my numbed fingers grasping the handle I gave it a wrench that loosened it from the clay that had gathered around it, and then gave the signal to hoist. My lungs were almost bursting from the effort of holding my breath when I was pulled to the surface of the water, and my partner had all he could do to pull me out of the shaft with the

windlass, for I was about exhausted and a dead weight on the rope. However, we had the hammer, as with other tools we had forged, were ready for work on the contract.

The shaft drew just enough water to be mean, so I had to stop drilling every hour or so to fill the bucket, and in this way I was treated to sundry shower baths as the bucket swung against the sides of the shaft. In those days there were no such thing as jack-hammers to do the drilling or batteries to fire the shots. The drilling was by single-jacking, holding the drill with one hand and striking with the other, and the firing was done by building up little rock piles above the level of the water and putting a snuff of the candle under the fuse, which under ordinary circumstances allowed one time to get out of the shaft before the flame burned through the fuse to the powder. I did the drilling, while my partner on top hoisted the rock, sharpened the steel, and framed the timbers. He was not a big as myself, but he was strong and wiry, and never seemed to have any trouble in windlassing a heavy bucket of rock or in pulling me out of the shaft.

One day, however, I had five holes ready to shoot. Joe lowered the powder and fuse, and before loading I sent up all the water I could dip up. My partner then unhooked the bucket from the rope and sent the end of the rope down to me. As soon as the holes were loaded, I lit the candles; Joe signaled that he was ready to pull me up; I put my foot in the loop, slipped the five snuffs under their fuses; and gave the word to hoist.

Half way up the ninety-foot shaft I heard the fuse begin to spit, but as the powder had to run along the length of the fuse before it reached the cap, I felt that I had plenty of time to get out of the shaft.

Suddenly I felt myself ascending slower and slower, until when still forty feet from the top the windlass stopped and Joe called out that he could pull no more. I had to think quickly, as the first explosion would soon be due.

The shaft was cribbed up solidly with split timbers, the flat side in and round side to the rock, laid horizontally, with room between in which I was able to stick my toes. Swinging to the wall, I grasp at a crack, shook my feet clear of the rope, and climbed for my life. I had just reached the collar of the shaft and Joe was straining at my arms when the first shot went off with a terrific bang and filled the hole with flying rock. As I was still wriggling to get over the collar, a flat piece of stone caught me fair and boosted me over, unhurt. Had the piece struck me with its edge, it would almost have cut me in two. Our excitement over the first shot was so great that the rocks that filled the air from the other four shots passed unnoticed.

This experience made it necessary to put on another man, and we finished the contract as we had expected in the red.

Coming down off the hill to the Leadville road on our way to town one day for groceries, I saw a man moving towards the city, swinging his arms and singing at the top of his lungs. It proved to be our old friend, Hans Wolfe, who had bought our Lowland Chief claim on Little Evans for \$100. Joe, thinking to have a little fun with the Dutchman, said: I'll give you \$500 for the claim back, Hans! Wouldn't take \$5000, replied Wolfe. Then we learned to our dismay that we had relinquished the substance for the shadow, and that the claim we had carelessly given away for a few dollars was now a shipping mine; that Hans had sent his wife in Germany \$2000 to come to America; and six months later the property was paying a dividend of \$100,000 a month!

Chapter XX

The fact that Lady Luck continued to frown upon us did not discourage either my partner or myself, and after a few days of “good time” in Leadville we were again out in the surrounding hills. This time we followed the trail up White Horse Gulch for several miles and stopped for lunch on the dump of the Glass Pendency shaft on Carbonate Hill. The claim had been abandoned, but at once we decided that this was as promising a location as any, and in a few hours we had the old shack cleaned up. My partner then went to town, where he hired some burros, and was back before sunset with our camp outfit and tools.

The shaft was full of water, and judging from the size of the dump it was about seventy-five feet deep. An old horse whim had been left intact, and a torpedo bucket with a moveable bottom was borrowed from an adjoining claim. A mule, looking terribly old and decrepit, was rented to us for a dollar a day, and the water was lowered so quickly to within twenty feet of the bottom that we thought we could easily keep it under control. Our disappointment was great, therefore, when next morning we found the shaft full again. This meant a night shift if we were to get to the bottom, and our efforts were rewarded by the addition of two more men, whom we had inveigled into the enterprise by persuasion and promises of big reward when we got down to mineral. Working day and night it took us eleven days to get the water out, and even then the big torpedo had to be going constantly. I was encased in hip boots and rubber coat, but there was never a minute that I was not soaked to the skin. The bottom of the shaft was still in the “wash,” and it was a feat to get more than six shovels fulls of gravel into the water bucket before it was hoisted away.

It looked as though we were sinking in an underground river, and it was not to be wondered at that we were fast losing our courage as day after day passed without any progress. At last it began to dawn upon us why the claim, in such a desirable location, on a hill overlooking the city and with a known contact running through it, should have been abandoned. We finally had to look the facts in the face, and one morning we fired our extra men, returned the mule to his pasture, and mournfully moved away.

With our ambition to achieve riches still unassuaged, my indefatigable partner was for giving our luck another test, and then if the jinx was still with us, to dissolve partnership and go it alone. This time we intended to look for a piece of high ground where we would be unlikely to strike water at less than one hundred feet. We were both fairly acquainted with the mines of the district, and our object was to trace out the lines of the different claims and discover any fractional odds and ends that were frequently left in locating the hodge-podge of mining claims in all western mining camps.

After several days’ tramp over Fryer and Carbonate Hills, we stumbled upon an unlocated fraction of a claim that we thought contained about seven acres, surrounded by producing mines. It took some nerve for a couple of irresponsible prospectors to plank down their outfit among the towering gallows frames of the opulent shippers of that section, but we paid no attention to the neighbors and went about our work in a non-chalant way that disarmed any suspicion of our intentions for the time being. After getting our tools on the ground, we selected a site on a mound that gave us a dump without having to build up our shaft collar too high.

In the days of the Leadville excitement, the mining laws were obeyed to the letter, and there was no such gobbling of claims as is practiced in modern times. In order to effect a legal location it was necessary to make an actual discovery of mineral in place before a prospector could even put up a stake, but that once accomplished by the find-of ore, the discoverer was entitled to record his claim under the rule, "First to mineral, first survey." Under such conditions it was not unusual to see three or four prospect shafts going down on the same claim, and each party had a saddle horse tied to a nearby stump ready to race to the Granite recording office, twenty miles away.

It was therefore with great trepidation that we saw two other outfits begin to sink shafts close by, within a hundred feet of each other. One called itself the Star of the East, the other dubbed itself the Robert E. Lee, while our location had the honorable name of the Blue Jay. Visions of the power of wealth rose before us as a bogey to keep us awake at nights, when we learned that Jerome B. Chaffee, a millionaire United States Senator, owned the Robert E. Lee. The Star of the East boys also seemed to have plenty of money. However, my partner and I cajoled and coaxed the boys we had had with us on the water shaft to give us another chance, promising them a substantial interest in the mine if we won, so they joined us once more and the race was on! Four six-hour shifts were put on the Robert E. Lee, three shifts on the Star of the East, while we could afford only two shifts, but we worked the full twelve hours each and sank the shaft as fast as either of our rivals.

Each day vituperous discussions would occur between the miners of the different shafts on top, several fist fights occurred, and every night there would be thrown on the air a shout that ore had been found. Replying epithets in derision drew crowds from the neighboring mines to see the entertainment.

The ore veins in the Leadville district lie horizontally in the earth like coal, rising and falling in an undulating manner, so that in the case of three shafts going down at about the same rate of speed, it was a pure gamble as to which should be the lucky one and catch the top of the wave. By some fortuitous circumstance, however, the ore rose somewhat higher under the Robert E. Lee shaft, and daybreak on that fateful morning sounded both the discomfort of the Star of the East and the Blue Jay, when a miner from the Robert E. Lee leaped on his horse carrying the certificate of location to Granite. All three shafts were down the same depth, but only one showed ore.

That forenoon an engineer surveyed in all the ground, and put out the stakes, while Joe and I loaded our tools and windlass in an express wagon and called it a day. We stayed around, watching the buckets of beautiful horn silver as they came from the Robert E. Lee shaft. The ore was put into new canvas sacks for shipment to the smelter, and the foreman later announced that the first day's output was \$112,000!

But we had yet another bitter pill to swallow when we reached town, where we learned that another party had continued the work in the Glass Pendery shaft after we quit, and the papers told the rest of the story in glaring headlines: "Strike \$12,000 Ore on Carbonate Hill!"

Chapter XXI

Apparently I was no relation to Midas, and seemed to be an expert in bringing luck to everyone in Leadville except myself. Thereupon I decided to let the town shift for itself and return to the San Juan, provided I could get work for a few days to finance the trip. I had found another partner, Byrd Wilson, nephew of Adair Wilson, a San Juan lawyer, who was also keen to get back to Silverton, so we took a contract with a mining promoter to do assessment work on a claim near Red Cliff. My new partner was as green a hombre as I had ever met, but as beggars could not be choosers, I made the best of it.

We purchased ten pounds of dynamite, a couple of drills, and other essential tools, which when added to our blankets made quit a load to be carried on our backs. Leaving Leadville with our packs on our shoulders, we traveled on skies across the valleys, reaching that deadfall known as Chalk Ranch that night, and found beds in a tent doing double at \$1.00 per, meals ditto. We left there early, still on skis, and found the camp where we were to work early in the afternoon. The snow was about three feet deep, and it kept us busy until dark shoveling out a place to camp and preparing for work the next morning. We soon had a rousing fire to dry out the ground, after which the tent was put up and we rolled up in our blankets.

The next morning I woke up to find that Byrd had the fire going, but when I looked closer I had to gasp. He had taken out the forty sticks of giant and ranged them in a row close to the fire! I yelled to him to run, and he leaped over the bank of snow and I saw him no more for an hour. Now ordinarily dynamite will burn like a port fire, and I have seen boxes of high content nitro burn itself out without any explosion. Then again a stick of the stuff will explode seemingly without any reason whatever. There is always a chance of there being a defective stick in the box, and therein lies the danger. In this case I had to consider the long trip to replace the powder, and the chance of saving part of it by throwing it out on the snow. I chose the latter and won. Several of the sticks had already ignited, but I picked up the whole ones and tossed them far out on the snow and not one of them exploded. I saved enough to do the work on the claim.

We completed the assessment work on the property, signed the affidavit, collected the \$100, and struck out for Alpine Pass. With only our blankets to carry, and stopping at farms and mine boarding houses for meals, we moved rapidly on our skis. The Alpine tunnel was entered and left behind us, so we were well on the way to Ruby Camp.

We were slipping along on the snow through the heavy timber, when about a hundred yards ahead of us we were astonished to see a man coming up out of the snow. He came toward us, and I called to him: "How far is it to Irwin?" You can imagine my surprise when he replied: "You're right on the main street. That hole I came out of is the post office." We looked around then and saw other holes, and later found they were connected underneath by snow tunnels. We descended to the post office, and the postmaster, as a great favor, showed us how to find a boarding house where we could put up for the night.

Next day was long to be remembered in Irwin. A newspaper was to make its bow to the enterprising town. An auction of the first one hundred copies off the presses was arranged, and Dick Irwin, the father of the budding city, bid in the first copy for \$145.00. The bids for the succeeding copies ranged from \$1.00 up to \$100.00, and the editor realized enough from his hundred copies to more than pay for his printing outfit.

While the auction was going on, my partner and I secured a contract to furnish logs for a cabin at \$19.00 a log, and we made more money in the next month than we made all the time I had been in Leadville. Unfortunately, there were three gambling institutions in addition to the side issues in the saloons, so that our pile was kept down to our modest requirements of \$4.00 a day through the machinations of our old friend "Fare."

Spring came and the snow disappeared rapidly, exposing a mining camp with two grocery stores, a hardware-clothing-and-drug store, seven saloons, and plans for a church. Here my partner decided to stay.

One fine morning I took a trail for Gunnison. On the way I met a man with one arm. His face looked quite familiar to me, and when he called me by name I knew he was Frank Spinola, the man I had brought down from the Millionaire Mine. He was on his way to Ruby Camp, and I told him I was on my way back to Silverton. In saying goodbye he put his hand into his pocket and pulled out a handful of silver, saying, "You will need this on the way!"

I stopped at Gunnison for dinner, then pushed onto to Ouray, where I put up for the night. In the morning, with my roll of blankets, I took the Uncompahgre trail, which was being changed into a wagon road, and turned up Poughkeepsie Gulch. At the top of the hill I paused at the Alaska Mine, another of H.A.W. Tabor's investments. They were sinking a shaft and were evidently taking out high-grade ore, for a large block of bismuth silver was leaning against the steps of the shaft house. The foreman said it would run 2000 ounces in silver to the ton. I pushed on past the Canandaigua, the Columbia, Queen Anne, and Tribune mines, and took the road for Gladstone. The whole district seemed alive with prospectors and miners, in sharp contrast to the other side of the range. At Gladstone I was still eight miles from Silverton, but I reached the "gem of the Rockies" at dusk and prepared to settle down.

In the spring of 1880, San Juan County, although the smallest county of the state, far outstripped in activity any other mining camp in the San Juan Triangle. No less than six thousand miners were employed in the hundred or so mines, some of which produced small tonnages of rich surface rock, but most of them were in the various stages of development. The big producers of the present day, with their modern plants, their ball mills and flotation cells, had not even been dreamed of. The railroad had not yet crossed the Conejos Range, and the town site of Durango had only just been located. However, with trains of ox-wagons trundling daily into Silverton from the end of the track in the San Luis Valley, there was no lack of supplies. The Greene smelter at the mouth of Cement Creek was turning out a steady stream of bullion, and an ore-buying sampling works that paid cash for the richer ores furnished return freight for the teamsters, which put plenty of money into circulation.

The hills were swarming with prospectors, all of whom had locations to be recorded, making the county officials rich with their fees. Pack trains of mules and burros provided the transportation between the town and the mines, and strings of a hundred animals loaded with lumber, rail, coal, and other supplies, lined the trails in constant procession. The small sturdy burros, with their shaggy coats, long ears, and stubborn dispositions, deserve a great deal of credit for their help in developing these pioneer communities, as on their strong backs were brought the necessities of life to the mining camps isolated high on the slopes of the Rocky Mountains. They are still used in packing supplies to mines where they alone are able to cling to the narrow trails, and returning with bags of heavy ore, which bring riches to their owners.

It was not to be wondered at, with all this excitement around me, that I was again fired with the prospecting fever, and it was only a question of hours before I found a partner to furnish me with a grubstake. Bill Aley, a wagon maker in Mickey Maguire's blacksmith shop, was my backer, and Bill Long, my old time companion in the Wasatch, went along to prospect on his own account.

The headwaters of Cement Creek offered the most promising field, so with a few burros to pack the outfit, we put up at the abandoned boarding house of the Columbia Mine. The first night we slept there we were visited by a swarm of mice. We had laid our blankets on the floor, and we must have been directly in the path of an army that was about to assault the citadel of our pile of grub, which we had stacked up in one corner of the building. They got under and tramped over the covers of our bed, while another squadron directed a vicious attack on my feet and Bill's baldpate. Bill was a sound sleeper, and it was only when the vermin began to take bites at his face that he woke up and realized that it was no dream. I got up and made my bed on two long stools joined together, but the mice did not mind the climb, and I brushed them off as they scurried over my body. Lighting a candle had no terrors for the little devils, and there seemed to be no limit to the reinforcements coming up from below, every square foot of the floor having its quota. Arming ourselves with rubber bootlegs, we passed the rest of the night in wholesale slaughter. Not being willing to experience another night in such lively company, we put up a tent in the open and thereafter slept in peace.

Bill took up his trail for riches by climbing Brown Mountain, while I decided to cast my lot on Hurricane Peak. I had good luck from the start, for in a steep draw between the Columbia and Pony Mines, I uncovered a boulder of mineral that shone with antimonial silver. The rock had the appearance of having broken off a ledge above, and weighed five or six tons. As a matter of fact, I later sold four tons of it that yielded a profit of \$1,670. Returning to camp for my drills, I put in a shot that split the boulder, and taking two of the largest pieces I could carry, I took them to Silverton and later sent them to the Denver exposition. Returning to find the vein, which was easy, for not a dozen yards above the boulder I found the lode, I made preparations at once for its development. On the footwall ran a streak of galena, and between that and the side of my drift, the rich ore appeared in pockets, at intervals of seven to ten feet.

Antimonial silver is a beautiful combination of the white metal, sulphur, and antimony. The mineral stands out in the quartz-like rays of the sun with points of brilliance not exhibited by any other silver ore. Miners who came to view my strike stood at the mouth of the tunnel and said it looked like a jeweler's window. One especially attractive specimen I conveyed down to my partner's workshop. It weighed ninety pounds, and it occupied the key position on his bench as he expounded his enthusiasm to the visitor. Mickey Maguire used to say that Aley said his prayers to it, and there is no question that my partner idolized the chunk of silver in terms of reverence.

But Bill, while he worshipped the specimen as a thing of beauty, thought more of it as a symbol of the almighty dollar than an ornament, and it was not long before he began to get action, for among the crowd that daily came into the shop was a man by the name of Leach, a lumberman of Kansas City. The large boulder of shining metal attracted the attention of the old gentleman, for its refulgence cast a ray of brightness over the dingy shop, and his interrogations led Aley into an enthusiastic description of the mine. Leach was much interested, and asked the

wagon maker how much he asked for the property. "A hundred thousand dollars, and there's millions in it," replied Bill, without a flicker of an eyelid.

Leached walked out of the shop, made a couple of turns around the block, and came back. "I will take that mine if we can agree on the terms. I will pay fourteen thousand dollars in cash, and the balance in good bankable paper." This offer my partner promptly accepted, and sent a man for me with a spare saddle horse.

With visions of wealth engaging my attention, that ten-mile ride to Silverton seemed but a few moments, for we came on a dead run along Cement Creek and wound up with a wild rush down Greene Street until we reached the shop, into which I burst with a "Hurray!"

Bill was in tears. "The buyer," he said, "after the price and terms were agreed upon and it was arranged that you should be manager and I secretary of the company, went to the bank to make a draft for the first payment and told the cashier what he wanted it for. Werkheiser said he should be very careful, as all this high grade ore was pockety." This undoubtedly frightened Leach, and after telling my partner he could not take the mine, boarded the train for Durango. While we were discussing the matter, a telegram was handed to Aley, which said:

"Wm. B. Aley

Silverton, Colorado

I have a good mind to take that property yet.

George F. Leach."

But he never did.

I was not discouraged at the collapse of this deal, knowing that we had a good thing and we would eventually win out in spite of all the knockers in Silverton, so I returned to Hurricane Peak and pushed my drift with more vigor than before.

On the point of Hurricane Peak was a claim called the "Pony." It adjoined Alexandria, which was the name of my property, and was owned by an itinerant miner called "Limber Bill." This worthy came on my dump one day and offered me \$800 for a sixth interest. I refused, saying that I did not want to split up the mine anymore, but would entertain an offer for the whole. This did not seem to satisfy Bill, as I found him the next following morning digging under my dump. Each time I brought out a load of waste I would empty it into the hole he was digging, which brought out threats, and finally he appeared on the scene with a pistol one morning, and accompanied by another man.

Without giving any attention to this new development, I calmly dumped my next load as usual, and this seemed to inflame the enemy, for he promised explicitly to "bore a hole through my hide if I did it again." When I wheeled out my next load I set it down without dumping. Limber Bill dared me to spill the rock, and pointed the gun in my direction. At this demonstration I reached down and picked up a piece of the quartz. Turning it around in my hand, without any idea that I could make a bulls eye, I let it fly. It struck his pistol on the back of his fingers. The gun went off, and with a howl of pain he put his hand to his mouth, cursing me to the finish, as he and his helper disappeared in the direction of his cabin. Bill Aley, who had now recovered from his disappointment, was as optimistic as ever. He got me a Savage rifle, and on my return to the camp I amused myself by popping off the groundhogs that made a playground of the Pony dump. I never saw Limber Bill again.

After mining the ore I carefully sorted it and put it into sacks, which I stacked up against the galena streak on the footwall. There were probably fourteen tons of it ready for shipment, but I did not send it to the smelter, as I figured that it looked much better at the mine than on an ore-buyer's blank. Inquiries had begun to come in respecting the discovery, and one from people connected with the Denver Fire Clay Company looked particularly attractive. The result of this correspondence was the dispatch of Ernest Waters, a noted engineer, to make an examination.

A heavy snowstorm had covered the country in the meantime, and we had to use snowshoes on our trip to the mine. Arriving there, we found that someone had been there before us and made a tunnel through the snow to the drift. Every sack of ore was gone, and a shot had dislodged all the mineral that had been showing in the face. I made my peace with the engineer the best I could, and the deal was cancelled.

Adjoining the upper sideline of the Alexandria, near the summit of the mountain, were two abandoned prospects owned by the Weinschenk Brothers of Chicago. It is presumed that these men, having heard of the rich find in their vicinity, suddenly conceived the idea of patenting their claims, and by swinging their survey from the original course, ran their lines in such a manner as to cover my tunnel with their claim. At a cost to us of \$1000, we brought an adverse claim against their application for a patent, but the Weinschenks were given judgment against Aley and myself, not only for the ground, but \$1800 besides. I afterwards settled the damage claim by giving the Chicago men a deed for the ground. Two years afterwards negotiations were instituted whereby I was offered any sum necessary to develop the mine, and although the offer was several times renewed under the plea that I was the only one who knew how to uncover the ore. I declined the offer with thanks. This rich vein has never had a pick stuck in it since I left it, the tunnel has been covered with slide, and a mine of great potential value is well on its way back to its original condition.

Chapter XXII

The winter of '80 – '81 was a dangerous one for miners, and in no less than three instances I was within a hair's breadth of crossing the Great Divide. I was mining at the Belcher on Sultan Mountain, and between the mine and the boarding house was a draw that was a constant menace from snow slides during the winter season. One morning we were crossing this draw on our way to work when a slide started. All but one of our crew of seven were buried in the snow. Two were killed; three were able to scramble out. I was covered entirely except one hand, which was out of the snow about six inches. The rest of my body was packed in what seemed to be a mould of concrete. My hand however, was seen in time, and I was quickly rescued. The La Plata Miner had a headline that week, "Saved by a Handout!" The two men killed were not found until the following spring.

My second escape was with Rasmus Hansen, while carrying the mail on skis from Mineral Point across Lake Como to the Alaska Mine. Lake Como is an ancient crater, the sides or rim of which rise abruptly to a height of a thousand feet or more, and the lake itself is of unknown depth. It seems to have had some influence on the deposition of mineral in that locality, for great veins cross and criss-cross the lake. The "Bonanza" lode alone measures 304 feet in width, and the "Seven-thirty," "Red Rogers," "Saxon," and numerous others indicated mineral deposits of gigantic proportions. Many years ago dragnets were used to salvage the rich ore that had crumbled from the immense outcrop, but no real effort has been made to drain the lake with a tunnel. In the winter, many slides run from the heights above the lake, and if one is caught in the path of one of these avalanches, there is no escape except by running before it, and unless the lake is frozen over, there is no possible way to avoid death by drowning. Once a slide has started and one is on it, there is no escape. Everything is moving, and there is no stepping aside to reach terra firma. A leap to one side or in any direction is fatal, for in the churning mass any movement at all will involve one, and he will become part of the slide. I have found there is only one way to save oneself in a snow slide, and that is to drop at once and spread-eagle on the surface. In nine times out of ten one will float along to safety, if they are lucky enough not to be dropped over a precipice.

On this particular day, Rasmus Hansen and I had begun to coast down the hillside to the lake when we heard the snow break above us. There was an ominous crack, succeeded by a sudden sinking of the snow under our feet. Instantly we swung our ski poles between our legs as a brake to control our speed down the slope and give us better balance, as we were racing like lightning over what seemed to be a mass of jelly, the like of which resembled the feeling one has in an earthquake. The entire mountainside was on the move, and we were flying over it with a rush that sucked the very air from our lungs so that we could hardly breathe. Without our poles it would have been impossible to maintain equilibrium, and even with them the slightest obstruction in our path meant death. Down that terrible half-mile slope we rushed, beating the slide by a hair as we reached the ice of the lake, our momentum skimming us over the then surface of ice as feathers wafted in the wind. We had reached the opposite side as the snow behind us swept down like a tidal wave, crashing through the ice and losing itself in the blue waters below.

My third experience with slides that winter was at Red Mountain, while taking a pack train of forty-five mules along the hill under the Genesee Mine. It was the most innocent-looking

place in the world, being only a gentle slope from the mine to the trail, and no one suspected that a slide would run there. Yet the whole mountainside slid with a swiftness that enveloped the entire pack train, which was loaded with supplies. I went down with the mules, but the body of one of the animals protected me from suffocation. We lost thirty-five mules in that slide.

That winter Bill Long and I made another excursion to the Salt Mountains to try to locate the white ribbon of ore that had paid us so well at Denver, but although we spent two months in the search we were unable to find either the gulch or the vein.

During one of my prospecting trips around Silverton I had found a fine outcropping of ore near the summit of Storm Peak, at an altitude of 13,000 feet. The ore was a grey copper, and a specimen from the vein croppings assayed 1002 ounces in silver. The height of the find and the lateness of the season made the cost of working the assessment prohibitive at that time, so I covered it up, intending to make the location early in the spring.

It was late in April 1881, when I returned from my quest in search of the lost mine in the Salt Mountains. The spring in the San Juan was opening up with fine promise. The snow was already disappearing from the flats, and in the higher reaches the hot sun in the middle of the day, followed by the frosty nights, had put on a crust that would hold up a man no matter how deep the snow. On the steep sides of the saddles, the snow had melted into ripples so that the slopes resembled a natural staircase, until softened by the two o'clock sun.

To take advantage of this condition, on the evening of April 20 I went up to timberline, where I built a fire, and with my back against a tree I waited for the break of day. During the night a few coyotes came and snarled at the fire. Then a huge porcupine, which I first thought was a bear, lumbered by and mounted into the next tree, but soon all was still as I sat there and watched the brilliant display of spring stars. A person who has never been on a mountain peak at night, lying on his back and looking up at the heavens through the clear atmosphere, has no idea of the brilliance of a spring sky in the Rockies. The stars seem so close that you can almost reach up and touch them. The whole transparent sapphire dome is ablaze like a billion diamonds, sending off flashes of blue, green, red, and gold. Each tiny star is separate and distinct as it sparkles and glitters along the Milky Way, so well named by the Chinese as the "River of Light." There is a feeling of exaltation of which comes in knowing that you are a part of it all, and yet a realization of what an infinitesimal speck you are in such a universe, where neither time nor space is important. The wind blows over you, clean and fresh from the everlasting snow, bringing the scent of the pines and mountain flowers, and peace from the petty affairs of men.

When the first streak of day appeared and the sun began to gild the tips of the peaks above me, I gathered up my pack and started for my goal. My course lay up the Uncle Sam Basin, which derives its name from the big Uncle Sam vein that fringes the foot of Storm Peak.



Then mounting the staircase of the steep slope to the saddle, I rested. Down the other side of the saddle was a corresponding bank of snow to the floor of the adjoining basin, on the far slope of which lay my discovery.

Using a shovel as a sled, I let go, fairly flying over the icy surface, spinning around and around and only touching the bumps, but by spreading out and keeping a firm grip on the handle of the shovel, I maintained my equilibrium while the mountain carried across

the floor of the basin and up the opposite slope. Leaving the shovel stuck in the snow and using the location stake as a staff, I reached my discovery of the previous fall. The winds of winter had kept the outcrop bare, so I had no difficulty in breaking off pieces of the vein for a monument around my stake to prove my discovery. I named the claim the “Ariadne,” the name of a ship I once knew which bore the name of the wife of Bacchus.

With my errand accomplished, I slid down the slope on my feet. As I retrieved my shovel, I saw two men emerge from the timber, evidently bound for the same place I had been. I continued on my way, however, in the same direction I had come, and arrived in town in time for breakfast.

Chapter XXIII

My room in Silverton was in the second story of a ramshackle building in which the town's only newspaper was published. The editor owned not only the paper but also the building in which it was housed, which in those hectic days was an outstanding accomplishment for a country newspaperman. To divide my room expense, I had a pal by the name of Will Graf, who was rapidly acquiring a fortune by carrying supplies to the mines with his burro trains. Will was a strong, virile, and capable young fellow from Canton, Ohio, generous to a fault and true blue in friendships. Therefore, it was not surprising that, after an intimation from the editor that he wanted to sell the Miner, I should ask Will to finance me to the tune of \$50.00, which was to constitute the first month's rent, with which he readily complied. The balance of the purchase money was in the form of notes, amounting to \$1800.00. I then became the editor and proprietor of the La Plata Miner, a nine-column weekly newspaper.

By working day and night, as editor, compositor, pressman, and devil, I made the paper go, much to my astonishment and that of my friends, and with the profits I sent miners to do the assessment work on the Ariadne. In doing this they took up a carload of ore that yielded silver, gold, and lead. This I sold to the Sweet Sampling Works at a loss, for the working charge, added to the transportation and mining, brought me out of debt. When my first note came due, however, I had the \$500.00 ready for it, and also an account at the bank.

The town was wide open, with the lawless element running amuck and the miners from the hills on a continual spree. The problem of maintaining law and order was becoming serious. Sentiment was about equally divided, and I took the reform side by delivering a weekly broadside of vitriolic remarks that called for belligerent preparations before going to press. The sheriff, whose political hide I had punctured on divers occasions, was particularly vindictive, and one morning, when it was presumed his digestive organs were on strike, he suggested a duel. I had a dark room adjoining the office, and proposed that we lock the door from the inside and fight it out with knives. The sheriff said that as soon as he had served an important warrant he would call me down, but Will Graf stepped in as intermediary, and the trouble died of inanition.

On another occasion, a stranger entered the editorial sanctum when I was engaged in writing a column of locals, and reaching over the desk he grasped a monkey wrench that had been left there by a foreman, and in a threatening tone of voice asked: "Are you the editor?"

I gave one glance at the monkey wrench and gulped: "no, he has just gone over to the bank!" The answer probably saved me from a nasty indentation on my cranium, and after that the orders were strict to leave no more tools on the editorial desk.

An exasperated subscriber, after depicting some mythical visit to the Miner Office, wrote: "You bowed me out of your office with the air of a Chesterfield, but nevertheless I shall take it upon myself to shoot you on sight!"

Even Bill Long had grievances, either because he was disgruntled because I had abandoned his wigwam or because it was now open season on editors. When I stepped out of the office one morning he was waiting for me, and kept step with me on the sidewalk for a block, then leaping suddenly to the roadway he pulled a Colt 45 and roared: "Now I've got you, you --- -- ---!" But I gave him no time to carry out his intentions or pull the trigger, for I sprang on top of

him and bore him to the ground, took away the gun, gave him a stiff clip over the ear with the butt, and his martial air was gone.

In the following years, Silverton was a hotbed of lawlessness. Twenty-one saloons, four of which were dance-halls with full equipment of the gambling, fraternity, made night hideous and daylight a time for repentance. Cowboys from the lower country made their forays, and troops of mounted rowdies raced along Greene Street, shooting their guns into the air, to the consternation of the law-abiding element of the town. So bad did the situation become that a Vigilante Committee was organized, and for a time quiet reigned. Then one night a bunch of cowboys galloped into camp, put up their horses, and began to paint the town. They were known as the Eskridge Gang.

At the "Sage Hen" dance-hall two of the daughters of prosperity, known as "Long Annie" and "Timberline," ran foul of "Roughhouse Nell," who wanted the cowmen ejected. The town marshal took a hand and cleared the place. Later in the night, when dancing had been resumed under the marshal's surveillance, the stockmen gathered around the "Sage Hen's" corner and began shooting at the building. One bullet went between the logs and killed the marshal. The cowboys mounted their horses and fled down the Animas Valley.

San Juan County offered a reward of \$5000 for the capture of the murderer, dead or alive, and a mounted posse scoured the mountains around Durango for a week. Bert Wilkinson, a wild but weak-minded youth, whose only ambition was to have a good time, was picked as the killer, although it was never proven, and his capture was effected through Ike Stockton of another gang of cowboys, who betrayed the boy's hiding place to the posse.

Bert was brought to Silverton sitting on the front seat of a spring wagon with the driver, one foot on the dashboard, and smoking a cigarette. The wagon was surrounded by the posse as he was hurried to the jail. The next night the Vigilantes secured the keys of the prison and questioned Wilkinson as to his guilt. "I don't know who fired the shot that hit the marshal," said he. "I fired with the others."

A rope was thrown over a bar of the cage, a loop put over his head, and he was told to get up on a chair. The rope was made fast, and with an "Adios, gentlemen," the chair was kicked away and he swung into eternity. Stockton drew his \$5000 blood money, went back to Durango, and was shot dead a short time afterwards.

The need for moral uplift and spiritual guidance in this pioneering community was a source of great worry to the conscientious ministers, who labored long and hard to bring about a more righteous state of affairs. Our sister town of Durango had a young and enthusiastic Episcopal minister who embraced every opportunity to warn the people that they were headed straight for Perdition if they did not mend their ways, not only in his Sunday sermons, but at every gathering where he could corner a few people to listen to him. At the funeral of a young girl he discouraged at great length concerning the ungodly condition of her parents, which of course made the mourning parents very wrathful. A short time after that, one of our Silverton gamblers went down to Durango to get himself buried, on account of being caught with too many aces up his sleeve. Most of the citizens of Silverton turned out to attend the services, and with the many Durango friends of the deceased, the crowd was so large that the Episcopal Church, which had a bell to toll, was selected for the funeral. The minister was given due warning that he had better not repeat the type of sermon he had given before or there would be

trouble. However, he could not pass up the beautiful opportunity to reach the ears of some of the Lost Souls with whom the church was packed, and so he launched into a tirade against Sin and all its terrible consequences, and waxed eloquent in showing its relationship to the case at hand. The atmosphere of the church became intense, and outside of the fervid words of the minister booming from the pulpit, you could hear a pin drop, as the congregation waited breathlessly for the fireworks to begin. Just then a girl who was seated near the family and keeping an eye out for trouble, as she watched the brother of the deceased get red and redder in the face, saw him fumble for his pocket. Instantly she signaled to her sister, a soprano in the choir, who sprang to her feet and began to sing at the top of her voice, drowning out the words of the minister. The organ and the rest of the choir chimed in, and the funeral was carried off very successfully.

The minister would arrange musical programs for his church in order to attract a congregation and bring in visitors from the surrounding towns. He would send me a copy of the programs for his services, and I would publish it in the Miner under the heading "Tailings from the Gospel Mill." This made him very angry, and one Sunday he preached a sermon about me that was red hot. After my friends had returned from the services, there was a rush for my Miner office, and the circulation of the paper took a big jump that day.

Those were happy days for me. My newspaper was so prosperous that, in addition to paying off all indebtedness, I had purchased the plant of a competitor, as well as the new corner building, which it occupied, and was issuing a morning daily.

While these events were taking place I had another level run on the Ariadne. Five feet of mineral had been cut and we were again sacking ore for shipment. The first car from the new strike yielded silver, gold, copper, and lead. On this I had a profit of \$48.00 a ton over costs, and the mine was now making money.

One day Gus Stoiber, the owner of the sampling works that had been buying my ore, with a stranger from Chicago, accompanied me to the Ariadne. The miners were bringing out the ore in a wheelbarrow, and it made a fine showing. The Chicago man went into the crosscut where they were breaking down the mineral and carefully examined the vein. Returning to the dump he conferred with Mr. Stoiber, the ore buyer. Another visit to the face of the tunnel. Returning to the outside again, he said to me in a low voice: "Would you take seventy-five thousand dollars for your mine?" I thanked him for the offer, but refused, remarking that I considered the mine a bank from which I could draw money at my pleasure.

Chapter XXIV

On the Miner's exchange list, the most interesting newspaper to me was the New York Herald. It was loaded with want ads, not only the Sunday edition, but also every day of the week. The personal columns were a never-failing source of interest to me, and every day I would pore over the wants and troubles of the "agony column" to the exclusion of every story of war, pestilence, tragedy, pathos, or bathos.

Time had slipped quickly by, and I was going on thirty-six and still "heart and fancy free." The girls of Silverton of marriageable age were few, and the one I knew best and sometimes escorted to dances always showed alarm when I started to get serious. I had a good home but no one to share it with, with as little prospect of finding a suitable companion as Robison Crusoe on his desert Island. It was therefore not surprising that one day, in casting my eye over the day's personals in the latest copy of the New York Herald, I was suddenly transfixed by the following: "To ladies, unattached, afflicted with a sense of ennui, would correspond with a Western gentleman. X Y Z, Washington Star."

I cut out the advertisement and spent half the night in framing a letter that would attract those ladies and relieve them of their ennui, a letter which would stand apart from the hundreds of answers they would receive. As a matter of fact, they did receive hundreds of letters, and no longer did they complain of that tired feeling. They had entered the advertisement in the paper as a lark and source of amusement. Each day they would meet at their rendezvous with their bundle of letters, and would laugh at the merits and demerits of the various love-lorn wights who had the temerity to put their heartthrobs on paper.



**Mrs. Ida Stone, daughter of
Edson Fobes.**

Across the continent, in the little mountain town, after many days of anxious waiting, watching for the arrival of the mail, and hoping that there would be a letter for me, I was greatly elated to receive a reply stating that of all the letters received, mine was the most attractive! A correspondence ensued, and one of the ladies proved to be Mr. Olivia Star, the widow of a general, a woman of wealth and owner of one of the palatial residences of Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, D.C. The other was Mrs. Ida M. Stone, not so wealthy, but a brilliant writer and possessing a delightful disposition. Through an absorbing correspondence I learned that she was the daughter of a professor of the Glens Falls Academy. She had a sister Mrs. Hathaway, the widow of a Congressman from Missouri, and both were members of the Congressional Club. I had no great difficulty in persuading Mrs. Stone that her lark could easily be turned into a matter of lifetime importance, and soon I very happily laid plans for a trip East to meet her.

It was November when I telegraphed Mrs. Stone of my coming, and arranged to meet her in New York. The train was late arriving in Jersey City, and the cab that I chartered seemed to take hours in reaching Forty-second and Broadway, where the two sisters were awaiting my coming at the St. Cloud Hotel. We met in the parlors of the hotel, and after

mutual greetings and my embarrassment had worn off, we ordered dinner in their apartment. Over the various courses, we discussed the situation, and by the time the evening was over we were so entranced with each other that we decided to be married the following evening, November 23, 1891.

The wedding took place in the apartment of the bride in the St. Cloud Hotel in the presence of Mrs. Hathaway and the wife of the minister. My bride was arrayed in a beautiful dress of pearl gray silk, and about her throat was a necklet of precious stones with a pendant of a gold cross. Her hair, a golden chestnut, curled gloriously about her sweet face, and she carried a corsage of roses which I had provided.

We left for Washington the next afternoon to spend a brief honeymoon at the Shoreham Hotel, after which we took the train for Colorado to make our home. Our arrival at Silverton was the occasion for a boisterous greeting from a large crowd that had gathered at the station and around our dwelling. The same night we were treated to a real old Charivari from the younger element, with all the embellishments of rice, old shoes, noisy wash boilers, caroling (?) and attempted kidnapping. The occasion of course ended in a happy party, for which I had expectantly provided in the way of refreshments.

The change from the comforts of a large city to a mining camp lying under a blanket of six feet of snow must have been a heavy strain on my wife, she stayed with it and did not complain. Her sweet disposition was ever a joy to me. When spring came and the trails were open, with a saddle horse that was a beauty to look at, a single-footer with a gait that was a constant delight, Ida had the happiest time of her life. In my search for mining news she would accompany me to the highest mines, would follow me through the stopes, climb the upraises, and join me in the bucket that lowered me in the winzes.

We had a summer home in one of the picturesque spots that abound in the San Jun, about seven miles north of Silverton. The house was built of peeled logs, with a shingle roof and windows all around that afforded a view of the surrounding peaks. It was perched on a bit of a table land a hundred feet above the highway, with tall spruce timber all about, while a never-failing stream of mountain water, clear as crystal and sparkling as the nectar of the gods, rushed by on its way to join the waters of Cement Creek. We had brought some of her furniture and rugs from Washington, where Ida owned a house on Third Street, and with some things from the Silverton home, we were as snug as the proverbial bug.

May is the month that the snow pictures ornament the peaks above timberline. From our windows we had front seats at one of the greatest shows on earth. Before us was a scene of sublime interest, and so vast that the human eye could not encompass it. For miles across the rocky slopes, crevices, jutting spurs, and cave-like openings begin to show their lines, and points above the melting snow, leaving figures of grotesque shapers, and forming pictures that change from day to day with the influence of the warm spring sun.

Have you been among the mountains
When the rocks begin to show?
Then try Ariadne Basin,
Under Boulder Mountain's brow!

There you'll see the wondrous pictures,
As you high and higher go.
Rich with changing beauty –
Formed by the vanishing snow!

There's Napoleon on his charger,
Leading his tottering clan;
While on a cliff, split by a rift,
Is "the bear that walks like a man!"

The old woman doing her knitting,
A pot o'erhanging the hearth;
The dog on a run, a man with a gun;
Creating a feeling of mirth.

Then there's that other picture –
The most wonderful scene of all –
A never-forgettable picture,
That formed on my memory's wall!

Two saddle horses carried us to town when we needed supplies, and on the arrival of my wife's sister from Washington for a visit, I added a fat burro to our livestock, which led contented lives on the rich mountain grass that covered the hillsides. In fact at times they were too contented, as I found to my chagrin when I wanted to catch them for a trip to Silverton.

We made frequent excursions to nearby places of interest, and often parties of young people from town would join us and we would ride to Gladstone, a mining village three miles above our cottage, to watch the stamps dropping in the Gold King mill and the gold washing in long strings along the concentrating tables. From Gladstone the waters of the south fork of Cement Creek joined the main stream, and we would follow the trail to the lake that forms the headwaters of the branch. There, with the mountains rising almost perpendicularly on three sides of us, with the blue water of the lake filling what appears to be the neck of an ancient crater, we would spread our lunch and loll around to count the threads of mineral that rise from the solid rock not unlike the threads of a spider's web, through which the great Ariadne lode, as it courses through the mountain, rises above the surface like a section of the Chinese wall.

On one of these trips we visited the Ariadne Mine, my wife and I on the saddle horses and her sister on the burro. "It wasn't so high up," she said. We climbed the long, steep, zig-zag trail through the heavy forest to timberline, and then the trail emerged into a wide expanse of the Ariadne Basin. The snow had yet disappeared from the flat, but its surface was frozen and the animals went over it without difficulty. The peaks above us were bare on the sunny side, and the columbines were already in full bloom on the bare spots of the flats. The day was an ideal one, and the few fleecy clouds floating above through the deep sapphire blue of the brilliant Colorado sky served to make the scene still more beautiful. Across the floor of the basin, the mine houses were far up on the mountain's slope, which is steep and smooth except for the zig-zag trails

leading from each of the mine openings. As we gazed up this awe inspiring slope, my sister-in-law thought she would stay below and pick flowers, leaving my wife and me to make the climb alone.

Back and forth on the switch-backs our horses climbed the steep trail, as we watched the small figure of our sister below us growing tiny in the distance, stooping here and there to pick her Alpine flowers. We reached and passed the two lower tunnels, but between us and the top level the trail led around a jutting rock with space barely wide enough for a horse to pass. On the outer side the slope was too steep for a foothold, and I had once seen a mule slip off at that point – it did not stop sliding for a thousand feet. My wife however, was a fearless horsewoman, and I allowed her to take the lead. As she approached the rock, which was less than a hundred feet from the upper tunnel, her horse shied, but she urged him on until they reached the point of the curve around the rock, where he rose on his hind legs and pawed the air as he turned outward. In an instant I was off my horse, and leaping below the trail I caught the weight of the animal as he was coming down. Ida, agile as a panther, slipped off the saddle on the upper side, and I swung the horse back on the trail. We lead the horses the rest of the way to the mine, but are spirits were too depressed to enter the tunnel.



*Mrs. Udora F. Hatahway,
daughter of Edson Fobes.*

We were late returning home that day. Mrs. Hathaway had gathered her flowers but was having difficulty in making her burro behave himself. He simply would not go! I got behind him and pushed, but he pointed his ears backward and stiffened his forelegs, and there he stuck. My wife petted his nose, they both pulled his bridle, and I coaxed, but all to no purpose. Finally after an hour or so, the darn thing walked off as if nothing had happened, and we had no further trouble. That evening, after taking off the burro's saddle, I found a sharp piece of rock in the blanket which had been chafing him had worked loosed, so the sturdy little animal was forgiven.

That night we were roused from our beds by the clatter of horse's hoofs coming up the road, and as he neared the house the rider began shouting "Fire! Fire!" at the top of his lungs. I flung open the door and asked the visitor what was the cause for all the noise. He replied that the "Miner" office in Silverton was on fire, and that if I expected to save anything I must hurry. Throwing on my clothes as I dived out the door, I caught my sorrel mare "Nellie"

and raced to town on a dead run. My building was on the corner of the main street. It was a two-story wooden structure, the upper story fitted up for living quarters and the ground floor being occupied by the printing plant. A large crowd had gathered around, but no attempt had been made to salvage any of the material. At the time of my arrival, the volunteer fire department had the blaze under control. The damage was largely confined to the upper story, and the printing office was still capable of operation.

This event marked another change in my life. I did not have the heart to rebuild in the face of the increasing depression, so I sold what was left of the building to the masons, who wanted a permanent lodge room, and put a man in charge of the paper, giving him power of

attorney to act. The slump in the price of silver had stopped shipments from the Ariadne, and I decided to close the mine until a better price could be obtained for the metals.

Whereupon, in August '92 my wife and I packed up our belongings, bid our fiends goodbye, and boarded the narrow-gauge train (which by that time had been extended up the Animas Canyon from Durango) bound for New York City, with the intention of embarking in some small business until a revival in mining should make its appearance.

Chapter XXV

It was the fall of 1892 that we made our home in one of the apartment houses on Fifty-second Street. Next door lived a theatrical man, Charles E. Bolt, with his wife and children, a son, Campbell Bolt, who had become a New York lawyer, and a daughter, Enid. A friendship sprang up between Mrs. Bolt and Ida, and we learned that Bolt was then promoting a series of Sunday night concerts at the Lenox Lyceum, for which enterprise he was looking for an "angel" to furnish the wherewith. I became interested in the proposition and advanced some two thousand dollars necessary to get the concert inaugurated. Bolt had no money, but in return for my investment I was to receive a payment of \$150 a week and a share in the profits.

On the opening night, which was heralded with great *éclat*, the house was crowded to the doors to hear Seidel's orchestra of eighty pieces and such stars as Melba, Nordica, Campanini, Fischer, and many other great artists of the day. Mr. Bolt conducted my wife and I behind the scenes, where he formally introduced us to Madame Melba and Campanini, who had just arrived. Melba was regal in her appearance, but at the time I did not consider her the beauty that she was reputed to be. Campanini was a handsome fellow and a pleasant conversationalist. I liked him, and he in nowise the unapproachable chap he was said to be. My company paid him \$400 for each night's performance, while Fischer got \$450. Bolt told me that Melba received \$600 and Nordica \$550. Seidel's orchestra cost \$600 for each performance. Besides these stars there were other luminaries of lesser degree, so that the box office did not show much profit, although the receipts ranged from \$4000 to \$4500 for each Sunday performance, and after the first payment of \$150 to me I received no further return on my investment.

After a run of several months Bolt put on an opera "*parsifal*," giving performances in Philadelphia, Wilmington, Baltimore, and Washington, chartering for the occasion a special train to carry the company. My wife and I accompanied the troupe, and while the run was a success from a financial standpoint, Bolt always had a plausible excuse for not reimbursing me. His Nemesis never did overtake him, however, for although on returning to New York to resume the concerts he was unable to renew his lease on the Lyceum, which put him out of the opera business, the Spanish war came on, and with a powerful connection with the administration, he and Abner McKinley secured a lucrative contract to supply the army with "fresh" meat, from which he emerged with a fortune that enabled him to buy a palatial residence on Seventy-second Street, New York.

The loss of my investment in New York and the fact that my wife was a Washington girl impelled us to move to the capital city, where my thoughts naturally reverted to the newspaper business. The era of typesetting by machinery and the great Sunday editions was only just starting, so I thought there would be plenty of time, if begun in a modest way, to develop with the crowd. The Sunday Herald and National Intelligencer, a weekly newspaper of twenty-four pages, owned by Soule & Hensey, was then on the market. The national Intelligencer was the oldest newspaper in Washington, and was doing business when Washington was invaded by the British in 1814. It had been merged with the Sunday Herald and was enjoying a wide circulation, with offices on the corner of Eleventh and E Streets, the site of the present Hotel Harrington.

In less than ten days after our arrival the paper passed into our possession. My wife was a natural-born politician and versatile writer, and when she took the editorial chair with myself as

business manager, we were sure that the road was open to success. In addition to our large acquaintance with the statesmen “on the hill,” my wife’s brother-in-law, Robert A. Hathaway of Missouri, and a cousin, Thomas Updegraf of Iowa, were both in Congress, while Wade Hampton, the war governor of South Carolina, was one of our most intimate friends. Our staff included Clarence B. Rheem, later of the firm Swartzel, Rheem & Hensey Company, as dramatic critic, John F. Doyle, sporting editor, and several local writers.

The paper was not a moneymaker, in spite of a reasonable circulation. After continuing the paper as a weekly for a year, the competition of the big dailies began to have its effect, and I decided to turn the paper into a daily. Thereupon, the first issue of the Washington Morning Herald made its appearance on October 7, 1893. It consisted of four pages, six columns to the page, and sold for one cent. Its politics were Democratic, and it printed all the news up to the hour of going to press in a much more condensed form than was usual with other morning newspapers. The paper started with a circulation of 5000 copies, and from the first morning of its publication it was a favorite with the newsboys. For quite a while the sheet looked as if it would make a go. However, small as it was, the expense was enormous. There apparently were not enough Democrats to make the paper self-supporting, and although Mr. Cleveland, who was then in office, issued orders to the department to use the Herald for the government printing, even this support failed to provide enough revenue to put the paper on a paying basis. Therefore, when a syndicate made me a cash offer I accepted the inevitable. The Herald is still running, and has grown to be one of the most influential newspapers of the nation.

The year 1894 marked the worst phase of the panic of ’93. Industry was taking a lay-off; unemployment was rife everywhere; the banks were issuing certificates for money; and the mining regions of the West felt the stoppage of the silver purchase law acutely by the closing down of the silver mines. However, since my Eastern ventures were not crowned with success, in spite of advice from friends to remain in Washington, and regardless of the depression in mining, I felt that the opportunities were greater for me in Colorado. There is something about the West which clings to one. The years that I had spent on the clean, wind-swept slopes of the Rocky Mountains was in my blood and had become a part of me. Ida, the lovely and faithful wife that she was, was quite in harmony with my sentiments, and was quite willing to return with me to Silverton, to go back to her saddle pony, the clear mountain sunshine, the deep forests of spruce, and the glamorous excitement of mining.

Chapter XXVI

On our arrival at the old camp I found that during my absence the editor of the Miner had mortgaged the plant, left the country, the mortgage had been foreclosed, and the paper was running under a new ownership.

With the extinction of my newspaper, I fell back on my old standby, the Ariadne, with the aid of a sound physique and robust health I was able to work the mine single-handed and ship several carloads of ore, which gave me a good profit. With my new capital I decided to promote some promising prospect rather than rob the Ariadne, and my choice fell on the Star of the West, a mine located among the clouds on Mt. Kendall, which claim I secured for a few dollars on bond and lease. I had the force of four miners, including my old-time partner Byrd Wilson as a cook, and we made camp under the shelter of a rock jutting out below the mine. The mine workings were well above timberline at an altitude of 13,000 feet, close to the summit of Mt. Kendall, and instead of packing lumber from town for a house, we built it of rock, using a white sticky substance (which I afterward found to be rich in gold) for mortar. We also erected a bake-oven of rock that would bake bread for a large force of men. The house, however, proved to be cold and damp and the walls did not dry out that winter, although we had plenty of fuel and kept a good fire, so that we were fairly comfortable.

The ore in the mine contained copper and gold, not rich enough to send to the smelter, but a good concentrating product. I had sent a carload to Denver to be tested for the most adaptable treatment, and while this was being done, the ore body, which was large, was opened up and put in shape for production.

One forenoon, on coming into the cabin, I found Byrd engaged in the act of thawing powder for the noon shots. He had a piece of wood laid lengthwise on the plate in front of the stove, and standing upright against it were fifteen sticks of dynamite, with the nitro-glycerin running into the ash pan. Quickly gathering up the powder I warned my cook that another break like that would find him either in Kingdom Come or flying down the hill, as he seemed to have learned nothing from his former experience in the Gunnison country. I carried out the threat a few days later, when I caught him sprinkling dynamite on the kindling like so much sawdust, which he said was "elegant" for making a quick fire.

It was late in the fall when we started. I had not laid in our winter supplies, as we had no place to protect them from the icy blasts of that region, and we had no liking for frozen vegetables. Therefore, when our provender would get low and the trail blocked with snow, a couple of men on snowshoes would bring up enough from town on their backs to keep us going for a few more days.

Winter closed in upon us, and a food shortage was looming. All four of us therefore went on skis to town for supplies. When we started back the next morning, the thermometer stood at forty degrees below zero. Our route lay along the south slope of the mountain, as it was easier traveling than up the steep gulch on the north overlooking the town, although the mine was on the north side and it was necessary for us to climb up over the top and down the other side to reach the mine. After the laborious climb to the summit, which we reached about noon, we stopped for a brief rest, and thinking it would warm me up I took a generous drink from the flask I carried. Perspiration from the climb and melting snow froze into my clothes, so that I could

bend only my knees with an effort, but the whiskey stimulated me so that I thought I could make the descent to the mine and catch up with the others before they reached the cabin, which was now in sight. The liquor deceived me however, and its stimulating effects quickly wore off. I felt deathly tired, and with a weak shout I called to the boys ahead to go on and I would follow. Then I sat down in the snow, exhausted, perfectly helpless, and leaned back without a care in the world. The next thing I knew I was being dragged by a rope feet first to the cabin, where my icy clothes were pulled away and hot ginger tea poured down me. By rubbing me with snow, which stimulated the circulation, the boys successfully thawed me out so that I had no ill effects from my experience. The process of freezing to death is not painful, especially in the last stages, as only a delicious drowsiness overcomes one. It is much more painful to be brought back to life, however, as the circulation is restored and the nerves recover from their torpor, which brings an excruciating pain in every muscle and bone. If warmed too quickly, the patient will suffer at times for the rest of his life.

Shortly after this I made a trip to Denver and sold my interest in the mine to an attorney for \$7,000. It was with great satisfaction that I brought this back to my wife, who had been patiently enduring, if not enjoying, the hardships of a small mountain town while I was at the summit of the mountain above, working the mine.

About this time, the great Cripple Creek discoveries of gold took place that attracted miners and prospectors from all over the West. W. S. Stratton, one of my former employees at the Ariadne, was there and had located the Independence Mine. He had optioned his find to an English company, who had given him \$20,000 as a first payment, spent \$50,000 in prospecting the property, but after finding no values had turned it back to the owner. Stratton, still having faith in the property, sank the shaft sixty feet deeper, and inside of three months was shipping ore so rich that it went to the smelter by express, protected by armed guards. This started a boom at Cripple Creek, and as I was footloose after having sold the Star of the West, and my wife enjoyed the novelty of the gold rush, we joined the crowd that was swarming into the new camp.

My experience in Cripple Creek was limited to a location on Mineral Hill, where we found plenty of low-grade stuff but none that would stand the heavy treatment charges of that day. The divining rod men were there in force, and one of them tried his doodlebug on our ground, finally "locating" a rich ore chute under the table in our cabin. He assured us we would strike \$100 ore in thirty-two feet. We went him eighteen feet better and sank fifty feet, but failed to get a trace of gold. The first fire at Cripple Creek mercifully stopped any further expense by burning up our hoisting plant.

We then followed the stampede to Creede, and after we had tried out the camp on the Rio Grande, we flitted over to Silver Cliff, which also had an incipient boom. Silver Cliff got its name from the surrounding escarpments, of which there are plenty, but the mineral deposits are limited in extent, and the camp resulted in nothing more than a temporary field for crooked promoters, gamblers, and thousands of tenderfeet, most of whom did not know what they were there for, but just "joined the stampede."

There is an old saying among prospectors that "when you are dissatisfied with your own mine, go and see others." Well, I had done that very thing, and returned to Silverton convinced in my mind that there was no better mining camp in the West.

In the early nineties an English company had built a smelter, but a slump in mining had closed it down, and its idleness had accentuated the depression in Silverton. Thomas F. Walsh then happened along and took a lease on the English plant. The Red Mountain district was just opening, and Walsh found plenty of heavy sulphide ores, but he needed siliceous ores to be used for flux. In his search for silica, Tom would scour the district, and his pack train was a familiar sight at the Ariadne, where the dump was highly siliceous and also carried sufficient values in the royal metals to offset his cost for packing.

It was while Tom was looking for more dumps that we encountered the Camp Byrd property in the Sneffels district. The mine was owned by two brothers, one of whom was engaged in business and the other did the work on the claim. When there was any assaying to be done, the brother in town did it. In the days of the pioneer, gold was little thought of. The smelters never paid for the yellow metal if they could help it, and the whole San Juan was devoted to silver. In fact, it was widely known to be strictly silver country. Under these conditions, when the brother at the mine sent a sample to the brother in Ouray, the assayer merely weighed the silver button, without parting it for the gold content, and let it go at that. Tom Walsh was more careful, and on sampling the dump of the Camp Bird he found it to contain \$60 in gold to the ton. He secured an option on the mine for less than \$20,000 and paid for it out of the quartz already mined. How Tom took millions from this accidental find, built business blocks and a palace in Washington, and died a multi-millionaire, is a story of only one of the many individual fortunes, which had their origin in the mountains of the San Juan.

With the passing of the years, my life was subject to many changes. I alternated in the working of the Ariadne with the leasing of other mines, which never failed to be called off if by chance I should make a rich strike, which I frequently did. The Spanish War brought back good prices for the metals, and thereupon began one of those cycles of prosperity that was checked only by the free silver campaign of William Jennings Bryan, the Boy Orator of the Platte.

My old operatic friend, Bolt, who was wont to say that what he owed was "a debt of honor," was then a rich man, having accumulated a fortune through war contracts in partnership with a man high up in administrative circles, and his palace on Seventy-second Street is one of the show places of New York. So I still have 'opes!

Chapter XXVII

Among my wife's Eastern friends was Colonel C. C. Bean, the first delegate to Congress from Arizona. Bean was a mining enthusiast of the first rank, and his experiences and exploits in the great copper state are written indelibly on its records. He was one of the discoverers of the United Verde, which he worked for silver, totally oblivious to the fabulous wealth in copper that lay underneath his working and which was destined to bring fame and fortune to W. A. Clark. Bean sold the United Verde for \$2500 to other men who continued to work it for silver, and then meandered over to Copper Basin, where he made a stake of \$100,000.

In 1898, Colonel Bean secured an option on the old Ajos group of claims forty miles south of Gila Bend, Arizona, a watering station on the Southern Pacific Railroad. The Ajo property was a group of six patented claims set down in an ancient crater, dotted with shafts and honeycomb workings that are characteristic of Mexican mining. Colonel Bean, who was also a promoter, organized a syndicate in New York in order to work the property. It was composed of Willard B. Ward, a retired mining engineer, a member of the executive Union Club of New York and Commodore of the New York Yacht Club; Isaac Untermeyer, brother of Sam Untermeyer, a prominent lawyer; Anton Eilers, the builder and owner of the great Eilers Smelter in Leadville, which was consolidated with the American Smelting & Refining Company; Henry R. Wolcott, retired capitalist; and R. P. Lounsbury, a New York broker and son-in-law of J. B. Higgins, one of the owners of the Homestake gold mine.

Through my wife, Colonel Bean was given to understand that my accomplishments as an expert mining man were legion and that without my assistance the Ajos would not amount to a hill of prairie dogs, and so impressed was the genial colonel with my capabilities that he sent me a wire asking if I would take the job of superintendent of the Ajos. This I accepted promptly, and in a few days, accompanied by my wife, I arrived at the Ajo camp to start operations.

My crew at Ajo consisted of an assortment of I.W.W.'s Yaki Indians, renegade Mexicans, and two Americans. Communication with Gila Bend, some forty miles away, was maintained by two mules and a buckboard, driven by a local character known as the "Arkansas Traveler," a title acquired by virtue of his naïve curiosity and stupendous gall. He would carry no letters without first tearing off the corners, and his inquisitiveness sometimes extended to reading the contents. Tom Childs, who had a cattle ranch adjoining the Ajos, told him to inquire for his mail on one occasion, as he had sent in a mountain lion's pelt to the state treasurer and expected a check for the bounty. On the return of the buckboard, Tom asked Arkansas if he had a letter for him. Arkansas said: "Yes, I have a letter for you, Tom," and felt in his pockets for the missive. "I guess I must have lost it; but anyhow, it was all about a lion's skin." Except for these little foibles he was a faithful fellow, but when I caught him reading a private communication from the company, I had to find another driver.

The supply of water in that arid desert was always a matter of concern to me at the Ajo camp. There was an incline tunnel in a wash, which was filled by rain when we had it, but it was usually dry and used as a cellar to store our food supplies. My sailor instincts detecting the indications of a coming storm one day, I advised my Irish cook to get the goods of the tunnel before the flood came. This he neglected to accomplish in time, and the tunnel began to fill with

water. I ordered him to get busy, but he sashayed with the reply, "Do you take me for a submarine diver?" and I was minus a cook.

We had a hoisting plant on one of the shafts, and the water from this was sufficient for boiler purposes, but it was so strongly impregnated with copper that the tubes had to be replaced every six months. By condensing the steam from the boiler we were able to supply the boarding house with water. At the southern end of the claims was an excavation in the wash, twenty feet deep and about the same in diameter, which furnished water for the saloon camp that had inevitably been established outside our sidelines. This "well" water was greatly relished by the denizens of the neighborhood, who assured me of its wholesomeness, adding, "There's some body to that water!" In order to avert an epidemic I had the whole cleaned out, and among the curiosities hoisted was a variety of Mexican saddles, skeletons of coyotes, snakes, and the decomposed carcass of a burro.

While we are on the subject, I might mention a trip taken during my sojourn at Ajo with a visiting engineer who wished to inspect the Harqua Halar Mines, located about sixty miles from Ajo. We traveled in a light spring buckboard, and carried only a small tank of water, as I planned to reach the mine on the second day from Ajo. All went well until we sprang a leak in the water tank, and my companion suggested that we branch off to the south, where there was water in the Aqua Dosia Mountains. There was no choice in the matter, so we pointed the mules to the well, which was twenty miles off our route. When nearing the well we met a prospector with his burros, and asked if there was water in the Aqua Dosia well. He replied that there was plenty of it, and that all we had to do was to "shove that Mexican who was floating in it to one side, and get all we wanted." And that is what we found, the body of a man floating in the well face downward; also a coyote, which in its desire for a drink had leaned too far over the rim of the hole and tumbled in. The water was not particularly appetizing, but quenched our thirst and that of the mules, after which we put a plug in the tank to stop the leak and filled it to the brim. We did not salvage the Mexican or the coyote!

The climate of the Ajos is warm and dry, and the nights, cooled by the breeze from the Gulf of California, are delightful. In the summer the days are intensely hot, and several times I crossed the desert with the thermometer at 128° in the shade, while the water in the tank behind almost reached the boiling point. The great desert, which, while it possesses neither a Sphinx nor a pyramid, nor a Muslim, Arab, or camel, is rich in varied fascinations, which one could never imagine to exist upon such an arid waste.

The moment the sun is up - and he is no laggard there - intense heat prevails. The air pulsates with it. The sun, accompanied by the hot winds, scorches one's bones, blisters the flesh, creates boiling water in his canteen, cooks eggs, and does all manner of extraordinary stunts. The sagebrush, mesquite ironwood, and cacti are all as dry as the sandy arroyos. Then the dazzling and glaring day passes, and the sun like molten gold disappears. A marvelous transition comes over the desert. A cooling freshness permeates the air. The refulgent light is merged into an almost supernatural beauty. The Western horizon blazes with glory, and the wonderful rainbow sky of Arizona entrances us. All around the edge of the heavens, encompassing the entire horizon from where the sun had gone down and back again, there is a gorgeous rainbow of every prismatic shade.

Twilight is of brief duration in a tropical climate, and suddenly the sky turns and quivers with the marvelous constellations. They look as if one could reach up and grasp all the planets like so many jewels and bring them down to earth. But between sundown and the blossoming of the stars a most incredible transition takes place, which is to that part of the world what the Aurora Borealis is to the North. Often we would take seats out of doors, as if in a theatre and the same intent – to watch the transition scenes enacted by the peculiar tropical atmosphere, which, strange to say, I have never heard described. George Elbert Purr, in his exquisite etchings of Arizona, has caught the spirit of the desert. You have all beheld transformation scenes upon the stage, where the magnificent filmy curtains, fine as gossamer, ascend and descend, and each revelation exceeds the other in splendor.

For months in this part of Arizona the sky is cloudless, but when there is a storm, Nature works miracles. Upon one occasion, my wife and I were returning to our camp from Gila Bend, forty miles away. It was early morning, and the atmosphere was enchantingly and marvelously blue, of the liquid radiance and brilliance of a zircon. There was a felling of unreality, as if we were in Fairyland. We had traveled thirty-five miles when the sky suddenly became overcast. Deep indigo clouds of surpassing beauty began to gather. The sun fled; the wind became a hurricane. The air grew cold, and the lightening blazed across the sky with dazzling forks of electricity, plunging into the ground on every side of us. Then came the cloudburst, and we were overwhelmed with water that came in endless sheets until it reached the horses' knees. Part of the top and sides of the carriage, together with our canteens and other articles, flew with the winds. We were wet to the bone; our teeth chattered, and we would not speak. Momentarily we expected death in one from or another – from the lightning or the wind, or, if we escaped that, from being drowned when we reached the arroyos we had to cross before reaching Ajo.

Night came with intense darkness, save when Illuminated by lightning, and we had raging rivers to ford, for the arroyos that had looked so guileless ordinarily now were tremendous, turbid, roaring, dangerous torrents, and the water cold as ice. Our horses partly swam and then touched the ground, while the water overflowed the floor of the carriage. On the sand dunes we could almost fancy hearing the rattlesnakes shaking their rattles in the bushes as we crossed. When at last we saw the lights of the little settlement and knew that we were safe, our emotions were mixed with relief over our escape from danger and a felling of awe and exultation over having witnessed nature in the grandeur of her angry mood.

With morning the storm was over, and the desert bloomed and sparkled like a garden. The ashen earth, devoid of vegetation in the way of grass or flowers, was at once covered with the most delicate and fragile blossoms, like the field of Ardath. The cacti, so weird, uncanny, and varied, grotesque in shape, fantastic beyond description, was covered with blossoms of brilliant hue, and rain-washed in the cool of the morning assumed a new dignity and meaning. In the desert, nature performs marvels whenever a few drops of rain fall from the passing clouds upon the fertile soil.

Chapter XXVIII

From the days of 1859 the Ajo mines have been producers of copper. Hi Golly, a Greek who did odd jobs about the camp, told me that he had come to Arizona with a herd of camels and packed copper to California for many years. The veins were small but rich, and no two openings had the same form of mineral. None of the shafts were more than seventy feet deep. The deepest had a streak of calcite studded with native copper the size of a pea; another shaft had copper glance or chalcocite; still another had red oxide; but the best showing was in the shaft where I put the hoist. There, after the hole had been deepened below the old workings, I found a streak of bornite and glance that produced several carloads of ore yielding 63% of the red metal. This was hauled over the desert in wagons to Deming and sold to the sampler there. A drip of water, blue in color, from the back of one of the drifts, was productive of almost pure copper when it fell upon the iron scrap. The formation on the surface was a soft porphyry, well saturated with the copper solutions, but that was only the secondary excretion of the vast bodies of sulphides that underlay the whole mass.

Barney Barnatto, the South African diamond king, was approached as likely to finance the project on a large scale, and he sent Charles Roelker, the chief engineer for the Chartered Company of South Africa, to make an examination, but the grade of ore was just below his limit and he turned the proposition down. That was before the day of “porphyry copper” and no process had yet been invented for the successful reduction of low-grade ores. It was owing to the sagacity of Karl Eilers and his sterling qualities as a geologist and mining engineer that the values of the great Ajo copper deposit was demonstrated to the world. Mr. Eilers, who was an official of the American Smelting & Refining Company, came to the Ajos to study the geological conditions prevailing around that ancient volcanic crater out in the middle of the desert and decide whether there was a real mine there. Together we selected sites for four shafts, which were sunk to a depth of one hundred feet each, and these four pits have since proved the existence of a mineral deposit that has produced hundreds of millions of dollars in copper. Since then has come the transformation of that barren spot, on which was nothing but cactus and greasewood, into a thriving young city, modern to the Nth degree, including business houses, hospitals, churches, schools, hotels, theaters, parks, and fine residences, a water system that is the envy of every town in Southern Arizona, and a railroad connected with the Southern Pacific at Gila Bend, forty miles away.

The job of managing an outfit of misfits, renegades, and bandits forty miles from nowhere and getting a reasonable day's work from them was not altogether a sinecure. The Mexicans would demand high wages, and by working two days would make enough to keep a family of ten children for two weeks, so they would quit work and spend most of their time lolling around their adobe huts. The Yaki Indians were by far the best workers, as every payday they had me send their wages to their people in Sonora to buy arms with which to fight the Mexican government, and for this reason they were always broke and anxious to hold their jobs. This set an example to the others, which engendered a fierce antagonism. However, should a grievance arise, they all banded together against the common enemy – the management.

Colonel Bean, the manager, was seldom at the camp, as it was necessary for him to give his time to the financing of the work and other activities of the syndicate. Mr. Ward, the

chairman of the group, was very prompt in forwarding the pay roll to Bean, but in those days of uncertain transportation the money did not always arrive on time at the camp. This would cause a hullabaloo and give the radical element an opportunity to stir up trouble. On one occasion when the pay roll was behind time, a stick of dynamite with a lighted fuse attached was thrown into the assay office, but no one was present and the damage was confined to the destruction of the assay furnace and chemicals.

My wife and I had a house separate from the rest of the camp. The building rested on posts as a protection from snakes, Gila monsters, and other reptiles. A delayed pay roll had aroused the anger of the I. W. W.'s, and one morning as I emerge from the house I observed a thin line of smoke coming from the spot under the house above which our bed was located. I walked over to it and saw that it was a lighted fuse, which I jerked out from a bundle of six sticks of powder wrapped in burlap. In another minute the house would have been blown to atoms with my wife in it. I was never able to locate the dastard who had intended to murder us in our bed.

The most trying time at the Ajos was when the whole force went on strike for more pay and shorter hours. The pay roll was also behind, which added to the dissatisfaction. The men were in an ugly mood, drinking heavily at the saloon tent, and word was sent to me of the dire threats they were making. Fortunately there were no firearms in the camp, or an attack would have been made that night.

The following morning, as my wife and I were walking over to the cookhouse for breakfast, the crew came around the corner of the house and blocked the way. I told them stand aside. The spokesman, one of the most rabid of the I. W. W.'s, said: "Where is our money?"

I answered: "Why worry about your money? The mail will soon be here and then you will be paid off!"

"We don't propose to wait any longer! Come on, boys!" they all shouted in unison, and closed in on me. One of the Mexicans produced a lariat and flung the loop over my head. Another tried to tie my hands, but I frustrated him. Pushing and dragging me toward the head frame of the mineshaft, they fastened the lariat to the sheave wheel above and evidently intended to drop me into the hole.

My wife rushed in among them and pleaded for my life, explaining to them that I was only an agent and should not be held responsible for their troubles. This had not occurred to them, and the argument seemed to have some weight. The gang began to argue among themselves, and I saw that my wife's pleading had erected a split, the outcome of which was in doubt when the crunching of wheels was heard coming up the canyon. With the coming of the buckboard I was released, and I lost no time in going through the mail sack. Fortunately the money for the pay roll was there, and I fired each one as he reached for his money.

While waiting for a new crew of men, I did some prospecting on the desert and found that the mineralization was not confined to the Ajo crater. The formation looked good to me and I made one location on what appeared to be an exceptionally rich piece of ground. I did not proceed with its development, however, but a company several years later opened up a producing mine at that spot.

On one of these prospecting trips I went out into the desert with another engineer, traveling in a light spring buggy drawn by two horses. At nightfall we made our camp, and tried out a recipe we had heard of to keep the snakes by tying our hair lariats together and running it

around our camp. The theory was that the snakes would not cross the scratchy rope. Then we spread our blankets on the ground and rolled up together. Our sleep was undisturbed until the wee sma' hours, when I felt a heavy lump of something between us which was slowly moving. I was awake in an instant and threw back the blankets, yelling "Hey! There is a rattler in the bed." My companion leaped out, and we looked around for a club, but before we found one the snake had uncoiled and wriggled off into the brush. We spent the rest of the night in the spring buckboard.

The flies at the Ajo boarding house were legion. Everything was covered with wire screens, yet they would get into the food while we were in the act of eating it. The scorpions and tarantulas would crawl along the rafters and drop down on one's plate; then scamper off with a mouthful, much to the disgust of the diner and the despair of the cook. Armies of ants, both red and black, were always on the march in front of my house. Trapdoor spiders seemed to be their meat, for they were usually transporting to their barracks, in sections, a spider, which had probably been disabled by a scorpion. On one occasion they had captured a small tarantula, and if a moving picture could have been taken of that battle, showing the neat and scientific way in which they overwhelmed the big insect, then jauntily dissected the monster, and ended in a victory parade conducted in precise military order, it would have been the prize feature of the year.

A few Gila monsters made their habitat in the district, and sidewinders, king, and rattlesnakes were plentiful. The king snakes would dart between one's feet with lightning swiftness, but they are harmless and we encouraged them because they are death to the rattlers.

Colonel Bean was a connoisseur in rattlesnakes, and one day as we were riding together on muleback to Gila bend, I saw a large rattler coiled on a bank beside the road, and called his attention to it. I always had an aversion for snakes, no matter what the breed, and was for keeping on our way.

"Hold on!" cried the colonel. "I want that snake. I promised a friend in Phoenix I would bring him one!"

Dismounting so as not to disturb the reptile, the old gentleman cut a forked stick, and moving closer began to manipulate the switch over the snake until it uncoiled, when he got the forked end over its neck, pinning it to the ground. Then he reached down, and running his hand along its back, grasped the rattler behind the fork. Straightening up, with the snake writhing and thrashing about, and winding about his wrist, he came over to where I was standing and shoved its head close to my face. As I sprang back he shouted: "Isn't he a beauty?"

I was too disgusted to express any admiration for the reptile, but nevertheless unstrapped a pair of overalls from my saddle, tied up the bottom of a leg with a shoelace, and the old fellow dropped it in. This impromptu sack was tied on behind the colonel, and we pursued our way. We nearly lost the rattler though, for on looking behind I saw that the string had loosened and about a foot of the snake's tail was hanging out and flopping against the mule's belly with the movement of the animal. Bean dismounted and shook the snake back where it belonged, tying it up more securely. Later he presented it to his admiring friend without any further mishap.

Later on in the year the option on the Ajo came due, but the syndicate declined to exercise it, and we closed down. The land lay idle for several years. Then came the discovery of a method of treating low grade copper ores; the old Ajos became the New Cornelia; and the

dream of my old manager that the property would one day become the greatest copper mine in Arizona has been fully realized, although the old colonel did not live long enough to see it.

Chapter XXIX

With the closing of the Ajo, I was summoned to New York for consultation with Mr. Ward, the leading spirit of our syndicate. On my arrival, I was asked to make an examination of a gold mine near Halifax, Nova Scotia. This was very agreeable to me, as I had always wanted to visit the northern part of the country and inspect the operation of their mines. The property I was to examine lay about eighteen miles from Halifax, and the owner of the mine accompanied me from New York.

We took the New York Central to Boston, a steamer to Halifax, a slow train, and finally a long drag in a spring wagon to reach the mine. We stopped for the night at a farmhouse, and I was in shape for a hearty meal and a good night's sleep. The farmhouse was surrounded by a stone wall topped with broken glass bottles, and flower beds all about. The house was of red brick, and the walls were covered with a heavy growth of ivy. Half-opened lattices peeped through the greenery at intervals, and a massive stone chimney reared its crest above the roof. The farmer and his wife were English and very cordial in their welcome. Of course I was more than pleased to see the interior of a cottage that reminded me so vividly of the old country. We were hungry, and as we sat in the cozy room with the big logs glowing in the open fireplace, a tankard of old ale beside us, and the odor of a pot roast to tickle our nostrils, I for one felt at peace with the whole world.

The next morning a ride of two miles in the spring wagon took us to the mine, and for the rest of the afternoon I explored the drifts and shafts, crawled through the stopes, and chipped samples of the gold bearing rock from the vein. I also panned the fine sands and gave the mine much more than the usual inspection. The day passed quickly, and it was long after dark before our buggy left us at a hotel on one of the streets of Halifax leading down to the waterfront. The steamer carried me to Boston the following morning, and I was soon back in New York with my bags of samples and notes for an elaborate report.

When I returned to the Mills Building, a commission awaited me to go to Old Mexico to examine and report on some mining properties which the syndicate had been operating for some time with indifferent success. Two of these mines were in the state of Durango.

The Mine Grande near Torreon was the first one visited, and then the Purissima in the southern part of the state. Neither justified the expenditure that was being made upon them, so on my unfavorable report the syndicate closed them down and gave them to the superintendents as presents. The third mine was situated near the Pacific Coast and was called the San Francisco. To reach this mine meant a long horseback ride from Durango, with a pack train carrying the supplies. We passed through Santiago Papasquero (which in English means "St. James, some potatoes") and spent a night at Topia, where I went through the Peria Mine, which had one of the most continuous and uniform veins of galena ore I have ever seen. The drift was 1400 meters in length, with a solid streak of lead ore the entire distance and assaying high in silver. It was offered to me for \$20,000 Mexican money, which was a wonderful bargain, and I wired my syndicate to buy it, but they refused. Two years later I saw an item in a mining journal that La Perla at Topia had been sold to an English company for \$900,000 in gold.

From Topia we descended from the great Mexican plateau into a nest of foothills, where we found the San Francisco Mine perched on a ridge overlooking the Pacific and close to a

village of the same. There had been but little work done on the claim, although the vein showed a large body of chalcopryite, which in a more accessible location would be pay ore.

The men of the village were an ugly lot and seemed to resent my presence. They carried guns around with them, and followed my every movement. I was something of a shot myself, having won several prizes at the shooting ranges of the British navy. To show them a sample of my skill I put on a shooting exhibition. My companion would toss tomato cans and bottles into the air, and my bullets would invariably hit the mark. After that their courtesy knew no bounds, but I still suspected the place to be more of a bandit's hideout than a modest mining camp. This property too was abandoned on my recommendation to the syndicate, and then I took the return trails.

Soon after my return to the city of Durango, I received a visit from a Señor Gonzales, who said he represented the governor of the State of Puebla; that he knew of my reputation as a mining engineer; and that he wished to interest me in procuring capital for the governor's mine. He said that the property was situated near Zapotitlan, in the state of Puebla; that it had not less than 100,000 tons of 14% copper ore in sight; and that he would guarantee not only my expenses but that his statements were absolutely correct. This appearing to be a reasonable proposition, I telegraphed Mr. Ward in New York for permission to make the trip, and he wired back to go ahead.

My wife was then visiting in Washington and I sensed a pleasant experience for her, so I wired her to come with me. We met at San Antonio, Texas, and together took the train for Mexico City, where we stopped at the Hotel Iturbide, a very old and historic hostelry. We did not find it extremely comfortable. It was early in the spring and the weather was cold, especially at night. Our room was unusually large and there was no way to heat it. On the center table was a huge coal-oil lamp, and this we proceeded to burn all the time. Each of the four corners of our room was adorned with a cuspidor. There was also one on each side of the bed - in fact, all the houses are profusely decorated with them, as every one bows to Lady Nicotine. The maids who did the chamber work were men, who were not particular in their vocation.

There was no cafe connected with the hotel, so we foraged around for our meals. The restaurants were very inferior in character, and decidedly unattractive. The cooking was poor and not at all appetizing. However, we made some discoveries and managed to sustain life. There is a fire-and-brimstone quality about the food in Mexico that would blister the internal organs of a salamander.

Mexico City itself is interesting. Only a few motorcars had up to that time made their appearance, but the carriages of the aristocracy were drawn by the most beautiful horses in the world. The drives and parks about the city are most charming. The quaint and ancient cathedrals, the old palatial dwellings with the inevitable patio, with the Castle of Chapultepec over towering the city from its eminence, give the scene an atmosphere quite in line with its antiquity.

My arrangements included an excursion to the mining property with the two sons of Governor Saltillo, one a member of the Mexican Congress and the other a doctor, both of whom made their homes in the city. They met us at the appointed time, and we took the train, which runs between Mexico City and Vera Cruz. Fifty miles east we changed to a narrowing jerkwater road which ran north, and after twenty-five miles of slow travel we arrived at a peon hamlet, from which we were to take saddle horses for a thirty-five mile ride to the mine.

It was dusk when we alighted at the station, and the landlord of the "hotel" where we were to stop met and escorted us to the edifice. The sign "Hotel Zaragossa" was so immense that it covered the entire building, but the hotel was a small shanty with no windows. Ushered into our bedchamber, we found it small, cold as ice, with a coal-oil can half full of charcoal for a stove, which we lost no time in starting. The furniture consisted of two iron cots opposite each other, with no sheets and only a single blanket on each, a clumsy table with a washbowl, a tiny pitcher half full of water, one wooden chair, and the usual complement of cuspidors. This cozy boudoir was of course without windows.

The landlady was dumpy woman of Spanish origin; the landlord a Mexican, tall and brigandish, who wore the tightest of trousers, the brightest of striped blankets around his shoulders, and a huge sombrero. The chef was a filthy squaw, and the food – well, it was commensurate with the surrounding.

We awoke to see the rain in a downpour, and not wishing to subject my wife to such weather, we agreed that she should remain while I made the trip to the mine.

A party of horsemen gathered together by the Señors Saltillo were to accompany us as an escort. The riders were political adherents of the governor, and eager to do him honor. At the first village I telephoned back to my wife, telling of our progress, while the escort, now being joined by additional riders, were regaling themselves with liquid and other refreshments, of which there was an abundance. When we left that village our little army had increased to sixty-men.

The weather had cleared, and another fifteen miles brought us to Chalito, a larger town, almost a city, with cathedrals, town halls, quaint dwelling surrounded by orange trees loaded with fruit, coffee bushes in bloom, and flowers everywhere. A banquet hall, large enough to accommodate the entire escort, had been prepared by the local politicians, and the tables were spread with a lunch that included the choicest of wines and cigars. Such munificence was a revelation to me, as it was my first experience with Mexican hospitality.

Another squadron was added to our party at this place, so that we now tallied up an escort of one hundred and fifty men. The road led to the summit of a low range of hills, from the top of which we looked down upon the Valley of Zapotitlan. I thought this scene was the most beautiful in Mexico. The valley was enclosed by two spurs from the main range, and was probably four miles across, through which a rippling, silvery river extended as far as the eye could reach. Arched bridges spanned the stream at intervals, wherever a hacienda appeared, and the entire country was in bloom with fruit orchards, coffee plantations, and banana fields, providing a setting that was a delight to the eye.



Valley of Zapotitlan, Puebla, Mexico.

Along the floor of the valley, paralleling the river, was a wide roadway paved with cobblestone, and in the distance I saw another cavalcade of horsemen coming in our direction. It was Governor Saltillo of the State of Puebla, with his escort. We met, and after our greetings were over, we joined his cavalry. It was quite a company that cantered into the city of Zapotitlan, eight horses abreast, with the governor at the head and myself at the right. As we rode up the band in the Plaza struck up "The Washington Post" march. It was a remarkable reception and could not have been improved upon had I been prince of royal degree.

Halting in front of a long building, a mozo sprang to my horse's head; another took my foot from the stirrup and assisted me to alight. I was conducted to a small house where an apartment had been prepared. One mozo served as a valet; another brought in hot water for a bath. Refreshments were placed on the table, and I was left alone. Reflecting on the wonderful journey and my reception, I deeply regretted having left my wife behind in that dismal Zaragossa shack while I was having the time of my life.

Soon an escort called upon me to join the Governor at a banquet in the great hall where we had halted our arrival. The party was already seated at the long tables, while I, as the guest of honor, was next to the governor. The food was deliciously cooked and served, and here I learned that to enjoy real Mexican cooking one has to be entertained by one of the Old Spanish grandes, below Mexico City. Wine flowed and the choicest cigars were handed around, while the Mexicans expounded their political views until near midnight, when Señor Saltillo invited me to a seat on the Plaza, where the band had been playing the entire evening. The bandmaster asked me if I could suggest something for them to play, and I mentioned a few selections, which they immediately rendered. I retired to my apartment shortly afterwards, and a mozo slept outside my door on guard.



Streets at Zapotitlan, Puebla, Mexico.

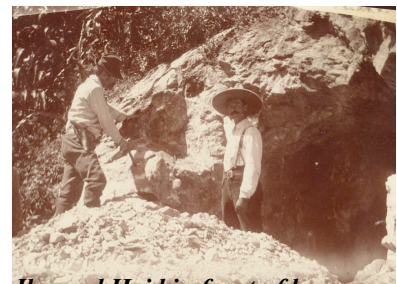
The next morning, after breakfast, I took a walk about town. It was a quaint old place, full of interest and none of the squalor that one sees in the towns further north. The people were clean looking, and while there were no such things as modern conveniences, the houses looked neat and well kept. Each home had its little garden and orchard, and the walks were lined with flowers. The governor's home was not palatial in size, but it was a two-story building set in a commodious patio enclosing artistic fountains and beautiful gardens.

The whole town turned out to see us as we prepared to go to the mines, which were three miles away. In addition to the governor and myself, only twenty-five of the party went with us. At the mine a brush house had been prepared, fully furnished, and with kitchen arrangements equal to any in the country. I was eager to see the mine, and acquainted the governor with my desire, but he said mañana would be time enough, and I must rest. There was nothing to do but put in the time the best I could. The same excuse was offered the next day, but on the third day I insisted on seeing the mine or else I would have to leave. This brought acquiescence on the part of the governor, and I climbed down the ladder to the workings.



Peons were carrying baskets of white muck, which I examined and found to be quite innocent of any mineral content. "Alfred Iles"

What I saw was a great disappointment to me. Instead of a vein of ore, there was exposed a quarry of barren rock which had been excavated beside a ledge that formed a wall, and on a beach was a small mound of copper ore that I could have put in my Gladstone bag. About a hundred feet away was a tunnel, from which peons were carrying baskets of white



Hes and Haid in front of larger head Vein number VI Arrayo de las Minas.

muck, which I examined and found to be quite innocent of any mineral content. With effort I disguised my chagrin while I pretended to be pleased with the proposition. I reasoned that while the governor and his sons appeared to be gentlemen, yet I was a lone American far from civilization, and the zeal of the rest of the crowd might be put to the test of it were known that I was going to turn down their chief's mine.

The rest of the day I prowled around the estate, chipping off pieces of the different rocks, taking photographs, one of which showed the governor and several others with outstretched arms showing the width of the "deposit," and making every effort in my power to discover something which would make it possible for me to conscientiously give a favorable report to my syndicate.



Head of vein No. VI, Arroyo de las Minas. Salzer, Hernandez, Iles & Sato. Haid took view about 1900.

The evening was spent much the same as the others, dinner lasting to nine o'clock, and the interval before bedtime filled with wine and cigars. The next was again a day of rest. The old cry of "Mañana" seemed to be a chronic affliction, and no amount of argument had any effect. They could not understand that time was any object to me, and "tempo fugit" had no place in their lexicon. We finally got into the saddle again, and with many "Adios, Señors" we bade farewell to Zapotitlan. On the way back I had much the experience as in coming, leaving the sections of my army in each town as I passed through.

My wife had not been having a very gay time during my absence, and had this story to tell me: "After you left and the rain had subsided, I took a walk through the village. As I passed along the street every man I met absolutely swept the earth with his sombrero, for there is an old-time grace about these vagabonds and an air of great gallantry. The houses of the village are low huts, where one has to double up like a jackknife to enter. I went about making friends among the poor, ignorant people, uttering a few Spanish words and listening to their excited replies, of which I understand not a word.

"Not being a bat, and since there is no window in my room, I have been compelled to leave the door open in order to see. The women have congregated there to watch me make my toilet. They shyly enter sometimes and handle loving my hat, gloves and wearing apparel. They all call me "Señorita," as they do not think I have any "esposo" because I have been alone. No American woman unaccompanied has ever stopped here; hence I am as good as a circus, and they regard me with curiosity. One of the station agents has become alarmingly attentive and pursues me everywhere with a Spanish-English conversation book, which he gravely consults when he attempts to address me.

"The dirt that I must have devoured while here is appalling. The "kitchen" adjoins my room, and the "stove" consists of an excavation in the dirt floor with a hole in the roof through which the smoke is supposed to escape. Here on a flat rock they make the tortillas and totopos, and toast them amid smoke and grime. Huevos fritos, frijoles, and other atrocious concoction, together with café con leche, have formed my diet. Upon seeing a dog lapping a drink from the water pail that is used by the family, I insisted that the water be thrown out and a fresh substituted. This caused them to laugh, as it seemed funny to see me so particular.

“Your return is hailed with joy, I assure you! I have been here six days and it seems like six centuries, I have nearly forgotten how to speak English in struggling for so long to make myself understood in Spanish, and all night I have murmured “Muy frio! Muy frio!”

The next morning we left the city of Zaragossa. The dumpy landlady embraced my wife; the landlord embraced me; the squaw cook chattered some kind of jargon most feelingly; and the entire population escorted us to the station. There my wife’s admirer, the station agent, took leave of her. He hung on to the platform of the car until his neck was endangered when he jumped off, and the last we saw of him was a dark, frantic figure waving his sombrero and crying, “Adios, Señora! Adios, Señora!”

On our arrival in Mexico City, I wrote the governor a letter, giving him a copy of my report of my examination of his mine, and regretting my inability to interest my friends in its financing. On account of the royal treatment which he accorded me, I felt my situation to be somewhat difficult, and I made no attempt to collect the guarantee.

Having nothing further to detain me in Mexico, my wife and I began our return to the States by easy stages, stopping in Durango, Torreon, Agua Caliente, and finally reaching the border at El Paso we boarded the Southern pacific and in due time reached New York.

Chapter XXX

The quickest way to open up a new country is to make a discovery of gold there. No matter where it is, be it around the North Pole or in the interior of Africa, the prospector will do the rest. This was exemplified in the Klondyke craze, the rush to Nome, and the frenzied excitement on the Copper River in 1898, the latter did not prove so wide or rich a field as the others, and its gold boom faded. The excitement was revived by the copper discoveries in 1900, both on the coast and in the interior of Alaska.

During the winter of 1900, while we were still in New York, my syndicate obtained an option on some copper claims lying some two hundred miles in the interior north of Valdez, Alaska. They were owned by one Scotty Crawford, a Copper River prospector. It was arranged that as soon as the snow had gone in the spring, I should make an examination of the property. When May came around, I bade my wife goodbye in Washington, where she was visiting with her sister, and entrained for Seattle with no more preparation for the trip than if I were going to Arizona.

At Seattle, I secured passage on the "Elihu Thompson", a small steamer that had a mail contract. There were no other passengers on the boat, which was a leaky old tub that under no circumstances would be allowed to clear from an Eastern port. The captain was a veritable drunken sot whom the crew called "Bunny." I was given a bunk in the mate's cabin and took my meals in the fo'castle with the crew. We were to take the outside passage. The first night out, when off Port Townsend, Bunny was so drunk and his conning of the ship so peculiar that I protested to the mate and insisted that he drop anchor until morning, the mate agreed, and coaxing the skipper into his cabin where he dropped off to sleep, we anchored the boat in three fathoms of water and I felt safe for the night. The next morning the captain was duly sober. He expressed astonishment at finding his ship riding at anchor, and damned everybody for a lot of land lubbers as we got under weigh.

For seven days and nights we were buffeted by gales, during which we shipped seas that threatened to break the back of the old Elihu Thompson with each comber and kept the crew diligently at the pumps, until on the eighth day we entered Prince William Sound.

Prince William Sound is formed out of the eastern corner of the Gulf of Alaska, and the north-bound passenger drew a breath of relief when the steamer passed the long headland of Kyak and swept from the rough waters of the open sea into the quiet waters of the Sound Islands, large and small, dot the estuary, all covered with a dense growth of spruce timber with an undergrowth that defies the most hardy adventurer to penetrate. Excepting a few Indian villages, a fox farm, and a mining camp or two, the islands are mostly given up to the wild life of the region. On the mainland side there is unfolded to the view an expanse of towering peaks for hundreds of miles, outlining the coast range, most of them covered with snow, with great glaciers extending to the water's edge. A belt of timber reaching to timberline two thousand feet above sea level fringes the foot of the range, through which small inlets formed by mouths of rivers and the erosion of the sea form minute breaks in the coastline.

Passing through these waters we came to a narrow opening at the extreme eastern boundary of the Sound, through which the tide rushes with tremendous force. The walls on either side are vertical and smooth, and one standing in the waist of a ship can almost toss a biscuit (if

they haven't a dollar) to the shore on either side. The passage is about a half mile in length and opens into the great harbor of Valdez. This is one of the finest bodies of water in the known world, and from this landlocked bay Alaska could be defended from all the navies of Europe. Great mountains rise into the clouds all around, and little side bays through which glaciers sweep down in awesome magnificence nestle behind coves and inlets. Rushing streams pour their torrents down the Mountainsides, and some of them have since been harnessed to furnish lights and power for the town and surrounding mines. The town of Valdez is situated in the extreme northern corner of Valdez Bay.

On that June morning the sun was rising over the Valdez glacier as the steamer slid into the mud bank that skirts the town at low tide. With the lowering of the gangway, leaving my baggage to be brought off later, I stepped off into the mud of the tide flat and picked my way to dry land.

Valdez was only a village at that time, but it had many of the creature comforts that had been a stranger to me on the boat. There was a large merchandise store, a jeweler's shop, two restaurants, a number of saloons, and one dance hall. The mail boat came twice a month, and there was talk of another steamer coming with a big load of passengers. Several new buildings were in process of construction, and with the expectation of a boom coming the people were preparing for it.

During the day I met Pete Cashman, a relic of the days of '98. By reason of his having fallen through an ice bridge covering a crevasse on the Shoup Glacier, he had acquired the cognomen of "Glacier Pete." He had also made several excursions into the interior, so I employed him as guide to pilot me as far as the Copper River. With two saddle horses and two horses for packing the camp outfit and supplies which I collected at Valdez, we took the Abercrombie trail, which was in the making just then and had been completed along the bank of the Lowe River to the top of the coast range, which is known as Thompson's Pass. For fourteen miles the route lay along the river flat, and although it was covered with a heavy growth of spruce timber we made good time. The river bottom then closed into a deep canyon, which the stream had scored through the foothills to the main range. It was called Keystone Canyon, and was too narrow for a trail by the aide of the river, so a pathway was made above it. From the upper end of the canyon the river curves to the east and finds its source at the summit of a low pass which overlooks the Copper River, while the trail from the canyon maintains its northerly course and zigzags its way over Thompson's Pass, which is a thousand feet higher. This route was selected because of the impassability of the Copper River canyons.

We camped on the other side of the pass, where we found plenty of grass for the horses, but the mosquitoes were a torment. On the Valdez side of the range they were the size of a dragon fly and slow of movement, so that when they would land on a bare spot with their cold feet one would have time to brush them off before they prospected around and got their drills in operation. But with the army on the other side of the range, there was all the difference in the world. They were much smaller and came in clouds; got in one's ears, eyes, and nose. We had to scan every mouthful of food and scare off a dozen or so or they would surely go in with the morsel. There was nothing slow about them either! They would sting as they landed. The sleeping tent was not much protection so we got very little sleep that night and were up and off at daybreak, which in that country at that time of year was soon after midnight.

Four days of travel through narrow valleys, open marshes, deep morass, occasional grassland, and patches of timber, brought us to the Tonsina River, which we followed down for a few miles to where it joined the Copper. The trail had ended at the Tonsina, and from there on it was anybody's choice. Here Pete experienced a siege of "cold feet" and decided to turn back in the morning.

We put up the mosquito tent on the bank of the river, and it was not long before we had a visit from Copper River Charley, whose wicky-up could be seen in the distance. The old buck was a Copper River Indian, and he lived in the wicky-up with his squaw, a son and two daughters, Mabel and Minnie. Outside his domicile could be seen the usual fish line strung between two trees, decorated with split salmon hung out to dry. He was accompanied by his family, as well as an aroma of fish that was far from appetizing. It was apparent that Saturday night was unknown to them!

These Copper River Indians have not received any assistance analogous to their cousins of the United States from the federal government, and they live in poverty and squalor that the American Indians would regard with contempt. Their clothing is nondescript, mostly depending upon the generosity of the white man, and none know the luxury of the furs of the Eskimos, being content with bare feet and legs so long as they can have a blanket around their necks.

While we were preparing supper, the Indian group squatted down and watched the process with great interest. When we had finished the meal, Mabel emptied the coffee grounds from our breakfast pot into a tomato can she was carrying, then added the tea leaves from the meal we had just finished, and scraped the bacon grease from the frying pan into the mess, after which with her filthy paw she gravely mixed the concoction and whispered to me: "Bi'me by, hi yu soup!"

Early next morning Pete mounted his horse, wished me good luck, and trotted away up the Tonsina for Valdez. Copper River Charley agreed to transport me and my outfit across the river, so he and his boy loaded my belongings into his flat-bottomed boat, with the two of them at the oars and me in the stern holding the ropes which towed the horses behind, and we crossed without mishap. There I was deposited alone, with nothing but my map to guide me to Scotty Crawford's camp on the Kotsina River. I was one hundred miles from the coast, with three horses to take care of, but I thought to myself, "If McPherson of the Geological Survey could find his way through the country, I can."

For two days I followed McPherson's route as marked on the map, which took me northeast over divides, across rivers, and "nigger-head" flats. Those nigger-head flats are found all over this part of Alaska. They are great stretches of water-soaked moss with deep little ditches criss-crossing and cutting up the field into small squares like a checkerboard. They are difficult to negotiate on foot and almost impossible on horseback.

As the long days had already set in and the fear of darkness coming on meant nothing to me, I kept going the second day out until I emerged from the timber on to a plateau overlooking the headwaters of the Kotsina River. Below me were wide slopes on both sides, and with my binoculars I scanned the landscape for a glimpse of Scotty's camp, but there was nothing in sight. Taking A chance that he was somewhere in the neighborhood, I fired several shots from my automatic, but no reply was heard. The grass was abundant, so I dismounted and left my horses to graze while I worked around the point of the mountain on my right into another open basin,

and there I found a tent but no Scotty. I deducted that this must be his camp, and yet if it were, where were the samples of ore that a prospector always accumulates around his bed? All I found was a bandanna handkerchief full of float pebbles, some of copper ore, but most of them almost barren. Scotty had described his mine to be a vein of copper glance, with hundreds of tons in sight, and his price was the modest sum of \$50,000! I figured that if he had any ore at all, some of it would be lying around his camp.

While I was meditating over these matters and trying not to be prematurely disappointed, Scotty appeared on the scene. I listened to his story and then said: "Scotty, you have told me where your claims are. Now take me to the best showing you have!"

I followed him two miles to the head of the basin, and he pointed out to me a split in the greenstone with a knife-blade streak of chalcocite on one of the wills. I then realized that my journey had been another of those will-o'-the-wisp hunts that crowd the life of every mining engineer!!

Chapter XXXI

From Scotty Crawford I learned that a rich strike of copper ore had been made near Kennicott Glacier, and that I was within seventy miles of the discovery. Having come thus far, I determined to see what there was in the country. Wishing Scotty good luck, I returned to the horses and camped for the night. The next morning I spent several hours rounding up the horses and packing, and it was late before I started out.

My course lay over the Kotsina divide, across the Kuskalina to Lakina, and from there up the Copper River. I had no trail to follow, but was told that there would be one after I left the Lakina River. My saddle horse was a spirited animal, and for some reason I changed him for one of the pack animals that day, which action probably saved my life. We had been crossing some swampy ground, and I turned my horse's head up a steep hill to get away from it. As the horse made the turn, with his forelegs up the ascent, his hind feet sank into the morass and he fell over on his back with my right leg under. Had it been my regular horse he would have struggled and thrashed about and probably injured me, but fortunately this animal lay still, and when I saw that he had quieted down I said gently, "Get up, Moore," and he rose without giving me a scratch. I was then entirely alone one hundred and twenty-five miles from Valdez, and had I suffered a broken leg my body would have been lying there yet.

In due time we reached the Kuskalina Glacier. At first glance I thought it was a muddy river flowing down from a great cloudburst, the surface resembling a choppy sea. The valley at this point was probably a mile wide, and was completely filled with enormous masses of ice, the sides rising straight up a hundred feet or so. It was necessary to cross this monster or else make a detour of many miles, so I found a place where I could lead the horses to the top and managed to make the crossing by following the riffles and dodging the big waves of ice. From this ice sea I descended and wandered about as though I were lost, but I followed an old Indian trail leading over a meadow of nigger heads for many miles until I reached the Lakina River, which was running over the banks.

It was late in the day and I was tempted to camp for the night. In order to get some rest before attempting the ordeal of crossing the swollen river. The warm sun had been melting the ice of glaciers during the day, and water was running everywhere. However, as I had none too much food to carry me through this detour on my way back to Valdez, it was necessary to make as many miles as possible during the daylight hours.

My horses had hardly entered the river when one of the pack animals stumbled against a boulder. The horses were tailed together, and when one went down the others followed suit. Instantly we were all floundering in the torrent. I slipped out of the saddle and turned my animal loose. The water was up to my waist and I had difficulty in keeping my feet, but I managed to work my way to one of the pack horses which was struggling to get to his feet with the heavy pack dragging him down, and resting his head on a boulder to keep his muzzle above water I loosened the pack and managed to toss the packages to the bank. The other horses were able to regain their feet without assistance.

As the river would be lower in the morning, I decided to camp there and dry out my provisions and clothes, and soon I had a rousing fire going. Being so far north, it was daylight

twenty-two hours and -twilight two hours more, so I was early in the saddle and successfully negotiated the river.

Twenty miles down the Lakina, which is a good day's travel in Alaska, I came in view of the Copper River, bordered by a wide expanse of river bottom covered with timber, and reached what appeared to be a camping place where I stopped. There I found a big blazed tree which bore this information:

"Sixty- five miles to Tonsina
One hundred and fifty miles to Valdez
Forty miles to the Kennicott Pot Hole
God bless our home."

The Kennicott Pot Hole is the place of discharge for the melting waters of the Kennicott Glacier. The lower end of this body of ice forms a quarter circle, and the river coming down underneath the glacier under pressure boils up in the pothole like a turbulent cauldron. It is an awesome, fearsome, and dangerous spot. The surrounding wall of ice is eighty to one hundred feet high, which is another source of danger, as great masses of the clear blue ice break off from above from time to time and splash into the pool below.

The only way to cross over was by a narrow path, which had been cut around the edge close to the seething, roaring up burst. I dismounted and turned the horses loose. Then, watching my chance to cross between avalanches of falling ice, I led one animal along the narrow trail to a safe place. Returning, I did the same with the other horses, leading each one in turn across the icy precipice.

Three miles beyond, I reached the camp of the Bonanza Mine, soon to be famous. The Bonanza and Jumbo Mines, later to be absorbed under the name of the Kennicott Corporation, had been discovered only a few days before my visit by a party of grubstaked prospectors. They were supposed to have obtained the information leading to the staking of the deposit from Chief Nikolai of the Copper River Indians. Standing on one of the high ridges that abound in that section, the bright green color of the outcropping ore could be seen for miles, so that its discovery was a simple matter after once having obtained the direction.

The whole party numbered eleven men and these were grubstaked by eleven others, making twenty-two owners, all told. The shares were divided into smaller units, and the four who had located the mines were headed by Charles McClellan, who was the leader of the group. Stephen Birch, who later became the president of the great Kennicott Corporation, was there, at first only as a visitor like myself, but he had purchased one of the interests and was then a full-fledged partner. He was said to be a relative of the Havemeyers, which seems to be borne out by the fact that the sugar men later on purchased all the other interests at prices running from \$2,000 to \$25,000.

No work had been done on the mine, for as a matter of fact none was needed save to put the ore in sacks and ship it to market. McClellan asked me for an estimate of the ore in sight, and I guessed six thousand tons. He also asked whether I would make an offer for the whole property, and being asked for a price he said it could be bought for about \$200,000.

On my offering to mine and market the ore on a fifty-fifty basis, Mac said that if I would meet the whole party in Valdez when we come out, he thought a deal could be arranged, When I left, Birch became one of the party, and we each had packages of the ore. My samples assayed 76% copper and twenty ounces of silver to the ton, which meant a value at that time of \$250 per ton.

On arrival at Valdez, I cabled ay syndicate a report of the find and recommended its purchase; but while they thought well of the mine they balked at the \$20,000,000 railroad necessary to properly develop it. The Havemeyers completed their purchase, but for a year or more the mine lay idle, during which the Alaska Copper Company made a vigorous fight for its possession through the court, alleging that it was the source from which the grubstakes were supplied. It was also claimed that Major Abercrombie, the trail builder, had secured his interest by supplying army food to the discoverers. Be this as it may, the Havemeyers won their ease. Delamar, an Idaho mining man, sent his experts to appraise the Bonanza, but the railroad question was again the stumbling block. Finally the Guggenheims entered the field, and how the richest body of copper ore ever found on this continent was opened up in the Bonanza and Jumbo Mines, how the railroad was finally built up the Copper River from Cordova, the coal fields were opened up, and how the Kennicott Corporations became one of the foremost copper producers, is now current history. All of these enterprises were conducted in the face of almost unbelievable difficulties through the conservation activities of the government. Since then the consensus of opinion of the Alaska people has been. "Would that we had half a dozen Guggenheim companies!"

Chapter XXXII

The Northwest coastline of the North American continent is formed by a partly submerged range of mighty peaks. Up the coast of Canada and into Alaska, the ocean has poured in between these mountains, filling the valleys and following the canyons in long fjords of exquisite beauty. The Japan Current on its way north, not being able to escape into the Arctic Ocean through the narrow Bering Straits, swings east of the Aleutian Islands and follows the curve of the Gulf of Alaska, continuing southward down the coast. This warm current brings a mild climate along the entire coast, with almost tropical vegetation during the summer. The inside passage of ships plying between the States and Juneau lies through the ocean-filled valleys of this coast range, as they stop here and there at the canneries located in the coves and bay, waiting at times for the changing of the tides as they pull through the narrow channels, and now and again feeling the swells of the open ocean when passing the entrances of the sounds which open into the Pacific. Out through the icy Straits into the Gulf of Alaska, the ships continue to follow the coast like bees in a hedge of flowers. There is Mt. St. Elias, towering over eighteen thousand feet into the clouds, and many other giants which look down at the tiny specks floating along on the ocean below.

My return voyage to Seattle was made through the inside passage. The days were long and nights only short periods of luminous, lavender twilight, which made us stay on deck at all hours, drinking in the beauty of the magnificent scenery, and only dropping off for a nap in the sun in a deck chair when sleep would overcome us.

Back in New York, the depression in mining was gradually evaporating, and metal prices were once more on the upgrade. At that time, the Nowell Brothers of Juneau were in New York City, endeavoring to interest J. B. Haggin in their mining at Berner's Bay. Haggin was the principal owner of the Homestake, and probably the foremost mining operator in the United States at that time. During one of my daily visits to the office of my syndicate in the Mills Building, Dick Lounsbury, son-in-law of Haggin and a member of the syndicate, said that Mr. Haggin would like to see me. The office of the mining magnate was on an upper floor of the same building, so I hurried up to see him and was ushered into his private office. Having closed the door, I took the seat indicated by him, and Haggin, drawing his chair closer, gazed at me with his fishy eye which seemed to bore through to the back of my head, and said, "What do you know about gold mining?"

"I know how and where to prospect; how to pan free milling ore or assay a sulphide. I also know how to sample or develop mines when found."

"Where would you look for gold?" asked he. "Most anywhere," I replied, "Gold is where you find it."

Mr. Haggin appeared to be satisfied with my answers, for after giving me another look of peculiar fixity, he said: "I have sent two engineers to examine Nowell's mine at Berner's Bay. They will return with long, larruping reports that I have neither the time nor the inclination to wade through. I want you to go to Alaska and check them up. Tell me in as few words as possible whether it is a good thing or not. Be brief. The cashier will give you a check for \$1000.00 for your expenses."

When I left the office of the foremost mining operator in the United States, I was treading on air and felt as if I had been exalted into a new sphere of life. To be singled out for such an important mission, and the fact that on my judgment and decision would depend an investment running up into the millions, could mean nothing less than an appreciation of my work for the syndicate.

Again I took the train for Seattle and the inside passage for Alaska. Outside of the superb beauty of the scenery, the voyage was uneventful, except for a side trip to Governor Hoggatt's mine above Juneau. There I spent the first night picking pieces of rock out of the anatomical structure of one of the miners who had nonchalantly drilled into a missed hole. The man's body from his face down had been peppered with rocks the size of a pea. Dust and even a piece of cap was dug out of his chest. He was a pitiable sight, but he afterwards recovered and for years served as an example around Juneau for the people who fool with dynamite.

When I reached Berner's Bay I learned that the two engineers sent ahead of me had completed their work, but after a perfunctory handshake the silent antagonism of the fraternity kept them aloof and I saw them no more. I was favorably impressed with the mine, but the situation was so complicated that many years of successful operation would be required to straighten it out. Retuning to New York, I made my report to Mr. Haggin. He said my opinion had already been corroborated by D. O. Mills, the controlling engineer of the Alaska Treadwell Mine on Douglas Island.

By this time my trips to Alaska had awakened my imagination as to the possibilities of the country, and after I had completed my mission for Haggin I returned to Juneau. Before leaving the States I secured an option on some mining claims back of Juneau, for which I was to pay \$100,000. At that time things had begun to move rapidly around Juneau. The country was discovered to be full of mineral, and anyone who could handle \$1.00 ore at a profit could find a mountain of it for the asking and ample capital. However, it was only when the great consolidation of claims engineered by F. W. Bradley made possible the Alaska Juneau Mining Company, which transposed the industry from mining into a manufacturing proposition, that success was reached. My Humbolt claims went in with the others, so I shifted my activities to making mine examinations along the coast, and was appointed consulting engineer for the Alaska Treasure Mines on Douglas Island.

Those were pre-conservation years, a time when everything was wide open and the pioneer still had a chance. It was the pioneer's last frontier. The mining lands were still open to the prospector, and he could harness a water power plant, build a cabin, help himself to the coal that lay scattered along the beaches by the thousand of tons, and obtain a patent for his mining claim without interference from government agents. The steamers were crowded with passengers going to the interior to prospect. Business seeking locations, and investors with money for building, for electric light plants, canneries, and saw mills. The traffic was all one way, save for those going back to the States to buy goods, a few tourist and salesmen. The stampede to the Klondyke was about over, and the tide of travel was turned to Valdez and the Copper River country.

It was early in 1902 that I joined the rush by taking passage on the "S. S. Excelsior" from Seattle to Valdez. She was an old boat of about seven hundred tons, slow as cold molasses, but safe enough in the smooth waters of the inside passage. In addition to the crew, she had two

hundred and four passengers crowded on her, the second class sleeping on the dining tables and on the deck. Dr. Fred Cook, who many believe to have reached the North Pole before Peary, was on his way to climb Mt. McKinley. Major Abercrombie, who built the first military trail from Valdez to the interior, was also a passenger. C. E. Johnson, Captain Barnett, and Jim Fleming were on their way to the Yukon, from which they were to emerge as millionaires in the next two years. Charles Miller, of Miller Gulch fame, with his small daughter, Nancy, who was later to become the wife of an Indian Rajah, were also on the boat, as was Charles Anderson, who in 1898 had three five-gallon oil cans filled with gold dust in his cabin on the Klondyke River, had gone broke, and was now on his way to Valdez to make another stake.

It was snowing hard on the "morning" that the Excelsior butted her nose into the same bank that had greeted the Elihu Thompson eighteen months before. After debarking from the steamer in a small boat and wading through half a mile of the tide flat mud, the passengers who were to stay in Valdez wended their way into the town and were soon located in the hotels and boarding houses. The snow was some five feet deep, but it did not seem to bother anybody, as all were on snowshoes except when in the sled track on the main street. About three thousand people were in the town and more were coming on every boat.

Two Swedes, just arrived, saw a twenty-five cent piece lying in the snow. One stooped to pick it up, but the other restrained him, saying: "Don't fool him that! We'll be finding five-dollar gold pieces soon!" That describes the sentiment prevailing. Although it was winter, reports were coming in from the interior of rich strikes on all the creeks. Everybody was expecting to get rich as soon as they could get over Thompson's Pass.

In the meantime, I was looking for an opportunity close at hand that promised a profit, and decided that what the town needed more than anything else was a dock where boats could unload their passengers and freight cargoes without having to wade and draw everything through the mud. There was plenty of money available, so a few of us got together and outlined our plans, with the result that the Valdez Dock Company sprang into being forthwith, for which I was made president, Walter Gollin, the agent for one of the steamship companies, treasurer, and Frank Kinghorn, secretary. There was plenty of timber for piling on the hillsides overlooking the bay, so we hired some ax men, and as the logs were dropped into the water they were towed to the wharf site. The commander of the military post across the bay had promised to loan us a pile driver.

Valdez Glacier, three miles beyond the town, from which the place derives its name, is gradually receding, and the moraine resulting there has formed a level plain several miles in extent, reaching out one half mile below the limit of high tide. Below that line the loose, gravel deposit has been carried away by the action of the tides, leaving a perpendicular bank extending entirely around the head of the bay. Arriving at this bank the steamers could come no closer to the shore. Our dock enterprise therefore contemplated a roadway trestle for one half mile out over the tide flat with a landing place for steamers to tie to in deep water.

While the piling was being driven, some of it being ninety feet long, I went to Seattle to buy lumber. The first load of planks was taken by the S. S. Excelsior and landed in safety at Valdez. The balance nearly one hundred thousand feet, comprised the cargo of the S. S. Bertha had seventy-five passengers for Valdez, and I went along for good measure. All went well and we were making good time until we reached Queen Charlotte Sound, when at a late hour on a

moonless night we crashed on a rock off the shore of Fitzhugh Island. Immediately all was bedlam on board. The passengers awakened in fright from their berths and rushed around the decks. The women screaming and the men calling for the boats. I at once saw that there was little danger from a wooden ship laden with lumber going down while spitted on a pointed rock, and I did what I could to quiet the passengers, while the captain shouted that we were close to the shore and there was no danger. Some of the men passengers then took off their coats and helped the crew in throwing the planks overboard, so that soon the cargo of lumber was floating around the ship. Thus relieved of her load and the holes in the hull of the steamer plugged, the Bertha was easily floated with the incoming tide. Later in the day, the Santa Ana, which had recently been added to the Valdez line of boats, came along and our passengers were transferred to her. The Bertha was towed back to Puget Sound for repairs and reappeared on the run on her regular sailing date.

Very little of our lumber was saved, but it was insured, and I suffered no loss, however it was necessary for me to return to Seattle to replace the shipment. When I finally appeared at Valdez with the dock material, I learned that the government had recalled the loan of the pile driver, and by the time we had the wharf completed it was spring.

Chapter XXXIII

During the spring of 1902 I took one of the most perilous expeditions of my life into the interior of Alaska, and yet one of the most interesting. My syndicate had called on me to proceed to the head of the White River and investigate the native copper deposits in the vicinity of the Russell Glacier.

As assistants for the expedition I engaged Jim Davis, whom I brought from Juneau, Bill Anderson, an old timer of the Tanana, and Jim Fleming, who was just one of the rush. Our equipment consisted of fourteen horses, bobsleds, and a complete line of tools and supplies to last several months. Before leaving, I inquired of Anderson if there was anything else that should be added to the outfit. He casually glanced over the list.

“Hev yez eny mush?”

“Sure,” I said, “two sacks of it, oats and cornmeal.”

“Then,” said he sagely, “get some more mush.”

We left Valdez late in March. Spots of bare ground were appearing on the flat, and time was precious. If the ice should go out in Keystone Canyon, all travel by that route would be impossible for that year, so we worked long hours, but still it took several days to get our outfit over the range. Once on the other side it was colder and the going better. The snow was leaving fast, and by the middle of April we were dragging our sleds over bare ground.

At Copper Center, about one hundred miles from the coast, were the remains of the winter camp of the ‘98ers. There were still several log cabins in a fair state of preservation, one of which was a supply store and post office, but used only for convenience of the mail contractor, James Fish, who also owned a store at Valdez. He had the contract to carry the mail between Valdez and Eagle, a village on the Yukon, just below the international boundary, a distance of 405 miles. We camped in one of the log cabins, and next day built a wagon out of the wooden sleds, hewing the axles from logs and making the wheels from boards. It was a crude affair, but it held up under the load. What we could not pile on the wagon we packed on the horses.

Long before any trail had been built, the United States Signal Corps had strung a telegraph line to the Tanana River, which afforded communication with the interior. After the first few miles, the line, which was a fine copper wire, a mile of which was carried on a small reel, had been laid along the proposed trail on the ground, over bushes and tree branches. As our wagon trundled along, the wheels would pick up the loose wire and wrap it around the axels, much to the disgust of the driver, although it wound up prettily and gave the axles a roller-bearing action. We managed to clear this without disrupting the telegraph service.

For forty miles we got along fine and then trouble began. There was no suggestion of a road or trail, and we were meeting with obstacles that no wagon could long survive. Over broken timber, around rocky points, through swamps, and over nigger-head flats, our home-made wagon held up sturdily until one day a hind wheel dropped into a rut and the axle broke off short. The wagon was wrecked, so it was abandoned, and it can probably still be found beside the old trail which we blazed as we went along. From that time on we had to depend on our horses to pack the supplies. What could not be taken along we cached in the woods and covered with some canvas.

Crossing the Golkona was a problem (the last two letters "na" mean "river"). The river was edged with ice, with an open stream four feet deep in the middle. Getting the pack train across the break was no easy matter, but we made it without any mishap. That night two prospectors from the Koyakuk and one from Forty Mile on the Yukon visited our camp and took supper with us, and agreed to carry my mail to Valdez. In crossing another river, the next day, one of the horses broke through the ice, and we barley saved him and the pack from being sucked under. Still plodding through mud, water, and nigger heads, one of the horses played out and we had to leave him to recuperate in the rich pasture.

The Chestachina, 178 miles from Valdez, is the largest river this side of Tanana. On the morning of May 11 it was running bank full, and at the place where we had to cross it was 1500 feet wide. A hundred yards back from the river the Signal Corps had established a camp, and from the soldiers I borrowed a canvas boat. With this we carried the outfit across and then returned and swam the horses. At this point Jim Fleming decided to leave us and strike out for the new camp on the Tanana, so I provided him with supplies. The next time I saw him he was a full-fledged millionaire.

Once again on our way and wading through mud, water, and nigger-heads, we camped to an ideal camping place by a clear stream. A heavy rain that night with five inches of snow in the morning induced me to remain there for a couple of days to rest and dry out. That evening, while Jim Davis was cooking supper, a flock of blue cranes flew over us more than a thousand feet up. I reached for my savage 303, and with a doubt that a shot could reach that far, I pointed it at the bird and pulled the trigger. With the second shot, one of the birds was seen to be fluttering down from the flock, and Bill Anderson, who was an experienced hunter and had been watching, shouted, "If he hasn't hit one, w'y damne!" It fell two hundred yards away, and Davis killed it with a club. When dressed it weighed over thirty pounds, and we had meat for a week.

Day after day, we made slow progress, with heavy rains above and mud under foot. A very little sufficed to tire the horses, and as we toiled through a wide expanse of nigger-head flats, we eagerly watched for a dry place to camp. In the twilight one evening, as we emerged from a bunch of bastard spruce, cold and wet. I saw a dim light in the distance, which proved to be a Siwash wicky-up, and we approached the dulcet strains from a phonograph broke upon our ears: "Just because she had dem goo-goo eyes!" Copper River Indians are always glad to have men come to their camp, because it means flour, tea, and sugar, the three luxuries they are eager to take in exchange for their furs, fish, and copper knives. They brought dry wood for a quick fire and helped with the tent, all the time chattering about a bad kinsman who had stolen their only horse. Chestachina Billy was willing to run back to the Signal Corps camp on the river for my mail, and he brought a cablegram from my wife, which he said had come by "white man's string talk."

My aneroid showed me that we were then at an altitude of 2500 feet. We were approaching the foothills of the great Arkansas Range, of which we had a fine view, as well as the Wrangell Mountains, with Mt. Drum smoking in the distance. Mt. Drum is the only active volcano in the interior of Alaska. It rises in the Wrangell Mountains as a smooth, round dome with a thin spiral of smoke issuing from its summit, with numerous cracks surrounding the dome from which smoke and steam spout perennially. If Mt. Drum should become active, it would follow the tactics of Mt. Katmai to the westward and blow the top off with a burst of gas, filling

the atmosphere with sulphurous smoke, which curiously enough, I imagined that I could smell as a reminder that another Katmai could break out at any time and cover the country with ashes.

The Signal Corps of the U.S. Army blazed the trees as the telegraph “buzzer” was strung along, and had put up posts marking every five miles. This we called the government trail to the Yukon, but at the 190-mile post our route diverged into the foothills, through which we picked our way haphazard. In doing so, we met with plenty of trouble, and arrived at the banks of the Slana with half-drowned horses and packs thoroughly soaked. We found the river to be a large, sluggish stream, too deep for fording, and heavily timbered on both sides. We were not long in building a raft, and in swinging the float to the other side, Jim Davis endeavored to jump ashore with the rope but landed short and went in over his head. Jim was one of those rare souls who are able to turn an unpleasant incident into something amusing, and therefore he performed some antics to get out of the freezing water, which gave us the heartiest laugh we had had since leaving Valdez. We ferried our goods across and then swam the horses. In crossing, one unruly animal jumped into the stream before we were ready, but was glad enough to scramble out again when he found the temperature of the water not to his liking.

Above the confluence of the Slana with the Copper, the river becomes the Batzulnetas, the headwaters of the Copper River. The rivers had widened into lakes at that point, and the ground around was swampy. There was little firewood, and even that was green, but we needed rest and decided to camp. Some Indians had their shacks at the junction of the two rivers. There were six of them: the old buck Dick and his squaw, two daughters, an Indian named Batzulnetas Jim, and a boy about ten. There they spent their lives hunting and watching their fish traps. They had no firearms, but were expert with the spear, bow and arrow. The arrows and spears were tipped with copper, though they did not know where the metal came from except that it was brought from the Tanana. The lakes were high and the flood had washed away their fish traps and their only bridge, so that they had to wade in the ice-cold water up to their armpits in order to reach my camp. They brought salmon to our table, for which I paid them two cups of flour. I also gave them supper, and had Jim put on a pot of beans to give them in the morning.

We were now on the divide from which one lake discharged into the Copper drainage and the other ran off into the Tanana country and the Yukon. We chose Nebesna Creek as the one to follow, on which not even a game trail was discernable. The timber was dense, interspersed with thick willow brush, windfalls, bog, and thick moss down to the water’s edge. The horses were heavily loaded, and we had all we could do to make any perceptible progress. At last we reached the summit of a hill where we could see the mountains on the other side of the Nebesna. There we camped and were rewarded by the arrival of Indian Joe with the mail. I kept the Indian to show us the trail to the river. He took us through some fine grassland, surrounding which, in the form of an amphitheatre, the fringe of mountains with their snow-covered peaks gave us a view of sublime grandeur. Off to the west is a mountain of variegated colors, which contains an immense deposit of copper, owned by Washington men, of whom James C. Dulin was president.

We found a camping place on a small flat, nestled against the spur dividing Nebesna Creek from the big river of that name. Close by were the ruins of several cabins, all in line and backed up against the bluff behind like a village street. At the lower end were the remains of a larger log building which may have been the church and meeting house. Or, more likely, a Saloon! There was no indication of any windows, but roughhewn timbers were mute evidence of

bygone floors and benches. The outlines of an immense fireplace were still to be seen, the rocks used for masonry being nearly leveled off to the ground. A long bar of copper, crudely hammered and dovetailed together to give it the required length, on which to hang a great copper pot, was salvaged from the pile of debris, while the pot itself was discovered a few yards away from the house. It was of flattened copper, and the handle had been broken off. Years of use by the early Muscovites had worn holes in its bottom, and two of them had been patched over with thin sheets of the red metal that were sewn on with threads of copper about the thickness of old-time ten-penny nails. I should have liked to bring these relics back to civilization, but the pack horses were too heavily loaded to undertake it, so I contented myself with bringing a handful of copper nails, which have long since been distributed among friends after my return to the States.

A short distance from the "community house" were the remnants of a rude fence which enclosed the graveyard, and a number of mounds, not yet crushed to the elements, some wooden crosses put together with copper nails, gave us the clue that the place had been an early Russian settlement, long before the real estate deal was consummated with Uncle Sam.

Searching among the old cabins, we unearthed a few dozen leaves of a diary of a member of the Cooper expedition, which had passed that way some years before my arrival. It related incoherently a drab story of the sufferings of the party after being stranded in an unknown country three hundred miles from the coast. By piecing the story together, it told of the terrible condition of the party, which was reduced to the necessity of eating decayed eggs, berries, and willow brush in the efforts to sustain life; how they had lost their firearms and ammunition in the rivers; and although in one of the greatest game countries in the world were literally starving to death. We were told later that the few that survived were finally rescued by some Indians, who took them to their village, and after feeding them, showed the way to the Yukon River.

The sun was beating down upon us as we crawled out of our sleeping bags at three o'clock in the morning, stirring the day shift of the mosquito army into action so that they might make life a burden to everybody except the cook, who secured immunity by keeping his head close to the outskirts of the column of smoke that came from the green willows we were using as a fire. It promised to be one of those rare days in June that the poets tell about, and after the morning meal we hastily packed the horses and soon were crossing the foot of the glacier on the ice and beginning the climb over the divide between the Nebesna and the great Ranana. About half way to the top of the divide we found ourselves in the snow, and had to lead the pack train up the bed of the stream we were following. Then the creek ran under the snow, which forced us to the bare spots on the bank. Now and then the horses would slip from the bank and get down in the water, wetting everything and necessitating taking off their packs and repacking on the bank in the wet moss. We were not traveling on solid ground, but passing over an old glacier. The horses were exhausted and it was getting late, with nothing in sight but ice. Although there was no wood or water, no food for the horses, and the night freeze was upon us, I decided to camp. We made supper of raw bacon and frozen beans, and then spreading our wet blankets upon the ice, we rolled in and shivered until daylight.

The morning came, but it brought no cheer. We were hungry, homeless, cold, and damp, and our blankets were frozen to the glacier. The horses had strayed, but were seen huddled together behind an ice hummock not far away. However, we perked up our spirits, munched some crackers and cheese for breakfast, and gathered the horses. They were too spiritless to

remonstrate, and submitted to the diamond hitch without trouble. It was a woe-begons and bedraggled outfit that staggered up the hill to the saddle of the divide that morning and by good luck reached the top, altitude 4800 feet. The sun was just coming from behind the great Alaskan Range in all its glory, and the rays imbued the whole party with a cheerful refulgence. The sky was a beautiful rose color merging into blue, with a few rolling clouds on the western horizon, which seemed to reflect the sun's brilliance on the ice and snow gradually merged into a welcome scene of green meadows, flowering streams, and forests of timber.

Before the sun had reached its zenith we had selected as a camp a small flat under the shelter of a hill, which had a southern exposure, with a good pasture and plenty of dry wood and a lovely stream of cleaner water close by. While Davis built a roaring fire to dry our outfit, Anderson took the horses to the pasture and left them for a well-earned rest.

Chapter XXXIV

For the hunter or the lover of wildlife, Alaska is a veritable Paradise. Through the entire expedition we saw many game birds, and at this camp especially there seemed to be an abundance of feathered game all about us. Mountain sheep in flocks filed along the cliffs above, and at no time did we fail to see animal life in some direction from our camp. One red fox came within a few yards of the camp, but he reached cover before Davis could rush from the tent with the rifle.

In the afternoon I took the gun and made for the timber that bordered the meadow below us, remarking that I would try to get some ptarmigan that appeared plentiful all about. I had hardly gone two hundred yards when among the trees I saw what appeared to be one of the horses, and I wondered why it had strayed from the rest of the bunch. The animal had its head down in the tall grass, and I drew nearer with the intention of driving it back where it belong, a short distance behind the camp. I had approached within fifty yards when suddenly, to my astonishment, the animal raised its head, and I saw with consternation that instead of it being one of the horses, it was a glacier grizzly bear.

It was the first time I had ever seen a bear outside the menageries. My hair rose up like bristles, and I was almost paralyzed with fright as I contemplated that I was face to face with the most furious beast in Alaska, not excluding the Kodiak bears. These grizzlies do not have to be hungry in order to attack a person. They are simply downright mean, and usually when encountered it means a fight to the finish, as they are not afraid of anything. Also, it quickly recurred to me that these bears have a way of going through prospectors' camps and scattering everything in the way of food among the scenery, an experience that would be almost fatal at this stage of the trip. An injured bear is of course more ferocious, and I hesitated to shoot, fearing that I would miss the target. As I backed away, the bear calmly returned to his grazing, and it looked as if he had not even noticed me. Returning to the camp, I shouted: "Ho, Anderson, here's a bear. What shall I do with him?"

Jim Davis called out not to shoot, as Bruin might make for the camp and we had enough trouble for the time being, but Anderson whooped: "Shoot the ---- ! Kill him!"

At that I dropped on one knee, pointed the gun and took careful aim - and missed! The bear started to run, and I shot again. This time the big fellow lunged forward, his head went down, and he crumpled up on the grass. We all crept up but stood at a respectful distance and pelted the carcass with rocks to make sure he was not shamming; then closed in, peeled off the skin, transferred the best of the meat to our larder, and called it a day.

That was a wonderful country for grizzlies. While looking for horses, Anderson said he saw a very large one, which he designated as "Pa," and was sure that "Ma" was not far off.

Later in the day I counted eighteen mountain sheep in the rocks opposite our camp, and bear and caribou signs were plentiful. In the morning the sheep were still there, with a venerable old bighorn keeping guard. I directed the men to take the gun and get one, and they started off. The old ram was smarter than they were, however, as he gave the alarm, and shortly the hunters returned to camp.

"Well, what about the sheep?" I inquired.

"They saw us coming and got away, so we thought we would get that bear over there!"

I looked around, and there within one hundred yards of me, in the middle of a draw running up the mountainside, was a big grizzly calmly digging for roots. This time I was not so frightened, and hastily opened my camera, motioning the men with the rifle to keep back. Stealthily I crept within fifty yards, but the bear pricked up his ears and moved behind a clump of bushes in the middle of the draw. There he stood upright and peered over the bushes at the men with the gun, paying no attention to me. Having taken the picture, I motioned to Davis to fire away, which he did and missed! The bear started over the rim of the draw and along the mountainside on the lope. Jim kept firing and the bullets would strike the rocks just behind the grizzly, who would look around at each shot, while we were holding our sides in merriment and Jim was cursing a blue streak. If the animal was wounded he did not show it, so we returned to camp.

After a meal of boiled bear, I took the rifle and wandered up a hill to get a shot at some different kind of meat. I had gone only a short distance when I stumbled on an immense vein of rich copper ore, in places twenty feet wide, and I could see it outcrop for half a mile along the mountain. The rest of the day was spent in staking out six claims.

We broke camp the next day, leaving such bear meat as we could not take along for the benefit of other pilgrims. Our course lay down the bed of the river to the right fork of the Chisana. This was the locality in which the Indians had told me there was copper, so we decided to camp. About three miles away was a gulch running south and heading up a tall mountain with a crest of snow. I carefully prospected this to the snow line, as Indian Joe said the copper was up there. There was plenty of lime and greenstone, with the usual diabase and volcanic material of the country, but no mineralization, and panning the gravel brought no better results. Ten mountain sheep watched me from a cliff as I hiked back to camp for supper.

At a point four miles below the glacier we crossed the Tanana River, fording the different channels, none of which were more than four feet deep, and then passed over a low divide between the Tanana and the White. On the way down we killed two caribou, and now having plenty of fresh meat we threw away what we had left of the bear. Later we saw twenty-nine more caribou, but did not molest them. The sun was bright and hot as we continued down the creek, which was assuming the proportions of a river. Soon we came to an ice overflow, at the end of which was a narrow canyon. One horse got his leg in an ice crack, and we narrowly missed losing a good pack animal. Then another floundered into a stream of flowing mud, and was swept down the slope with his pack. We finally fished him out all covered with mud, and he was a sorry-looking object by the time we got him straightened up again. And then it began to rain torrents! Looming ahead of us was another box canyon, so we crossed the river to a clump of timber and unpacked the horses.



Camp at the head of the White River in Alaska.

If the reader had ever had the experience of finding himself in an absolute virgin country, where “the hand of man has never set foot,” so as to speak, he can visualize our camp as it appeared the following morning. Our tent was pitched in a small clearing among the trees, a log fire built with uprights and a crosspiece for the convenience of the cook, and a table improvised from the box containing our provisions. As the aroma of our old stand-by, the bacon, sizzling in a pan, mixed with the pungent incense of the

burning logs, tantalized our appetites, my gaze wandered to the west where the hills were still shrouded in mist, and heavy clouds hung over the great range, while the sharp peaks protruding through gave the impression of a second layer of clouds ready to relieve the low ones as soon as the sun appeared to dissipate them into the fog below. The great patches of grassland about us were spotted with miniature lakes, with vast stretches of timber in the distance that would delight the eye of any timber cruiser, although it will be generations before these giant logs of spruce will be called upon for the use of civilization.

While the men were drying out their clothes, bedding, and making repairs to our dilapidated outfit, I left the camp to reconnoiter and to find a way out of the pocket we were in. Climbing to the summit of a hill to the southeast, I crossed a wide plateau and then circled around a lake to the top of a ridge to the east, from which I could look out over the beautiful valley of the White River. The Russell Glacier was directly ahead of me, part of it pouring from a canyon to the southwest, where it heads in the saddles of the hills known as the Scolai Pass. Below the glacier the river is diverted into many channels through the valley, and forty miles below it empties into the Yukon.

This was the region which I had been directed by my syndicate to explore. At the headwaters of the White had been reported many discoveries of copper, not only by prospectors, but also by responsible engineers, and the only drawback to their operation was the extreme inaccessibility of the deposits. We therefore moved the camp to a desirable position on the riverbank, where we had a fine view of the White for at least twenty miles. With two packhorses to carry tools and emergency supplies, we proceeded up the river, with a man paralleling the pack train a mile or so distance on the lookout for indications of mineral and also for the camps of the prospectors who had reported the discovery of copper.

Suddenly we changed our course from the main channel to a small creek running up into a basin in the mountains. Bright nuggets of copper were shining in the water! We followed the float until the narrow canyon opened out into a basin half a mile wide, surrounded on all sides by precipitous rocks. The upper walls of the basin had the appearance of a monster vein of mineral. Erosion of the softer parts of the deposit had left the quartz in all sorts of fantastic figures. The whole was covered with a heavy green stain of the carbonate of copper. Chunks of copper, pure as the metal ever comes, lay scattered everywhere, much of it peeping out from the debris of the finely granulated quartz, and tons of the red metal lay in such big slabs and grotesque forms that all three of us combined could not turn them over. One especially large mass was in the form of a mushroom, with its root in the solid quartz. Among the odd shapes of the metal, one piece weighing about sixty pounds attracted my attention, and I determined to take it along. It was in the shape of a ham, with the knucklebone and hole through it in exact counterpart of those hanging in the neighborhood butcher shop. I had been led to expect a large deposit of copper somewhere in the district, but this wondrous exhibit in this basin far surpassed anything that had yet been discovered in Alaska.

The procedure was to put up several mounds for our location notices in the name of the corporation. I then secured



Dall's Sheep shot by Alfred Iles at the head of the White River in Alaska. From tip to tip 56 inches, 19 inches in circumference, and 7 inches through the base of horns.

my specimen on one of the horses, and we returned to our base camp, well satisfied with our discoveries.

Following up our success of the day before, we roamed over a large section of country below the glacier, but found no more copper. We avoided the main stream, which was swift and too deep to wade, but we climbed hills, crossed deep and precipitous canyons, and scaled almost perpendicular cliffs. The only result of our effort was a bighorn sheep with a record pair of horns. This specimen I nailed to a stump and took a picture of it, which picture later found its way into the New York Herald.

Never was there such a country for game! Anderson brought in the hindquarters of a young caribou, and we were happy. On every mountainside were mountain sheep, foxes, caribou, bear, and ptarmigan. We caught two cross foxes and one silver, but fur was out of season, which applied to all game at that time of year. Approximately one hundred and fifty sheep were grazing on ram Creek as we passed, and Jim Davis hid behind a rock and caught one as it trotted by. They were on the slope of a hill, and Jim, with one arm around the sheep's neck and the other clutching a hind leg, had the fight of his life. Over and over they rolled down the hill, the sheep in its struggles cutting a deep gash in Jim's cheek. The sheep was strong and so was Jim, but the latter was badly out of breath when they reached the bottom of the hill. However, the sheep had reinforcements! Along came an old ram to the rescue. Lowering its head as he charged, he gave Jim such a jolt that it loosened his hold on the sheep, and it scampered away, leaving Jim hors de combat! I washed and dressed Jim's wound, and we resumed our tramp.

The most friendly and affectionate of the fauna of Alaska are the mosquitoes. They followed us everywhere faithfully! However, we forgot about them for a short time while we chased a small grizzly, which we killed and also a young caribou.

This about concluded our exploration of the headwaters of the White. On a side hill Anderson uncovered a ledge of chalcopryite or copper sulphate, forty feet wide, from which we broke some specimens, but we made no locations. After a little more hunting, we made preparations for the return trip, little knowing what dangers and suffering we were to encounter before at last reaching civilization.

Chapter XXXV

We began our return journey with the horses recuperated, Jim's wound healed, and a satisfied feeling of having made a successful trip. All the horses wore cowbells, which we found a great advantage in holding the train together. Our route lay along the side of a grassy ridge, and we were making good time, as the ground was firm and very few obstacles were in our path. Suddenly we espied in the distance in the valley below a large herd of caribou, coming toward us on the run. They had heard the bells, and were coming to hear the music and see what kind of animals we were, as I do not suppose they had ever seen anything in the shape of a horse or human being. I stopped the train, got out my camera, and went down to within forty yards of them. There seemed to be several hundred in the herd, and they spread out in a line across the valley. As I edged down closer I unfolded my tripod. Two old bulls that were in front of the line reared up on their hind legs and pawed the air as if in defiance and daring me to come any further. It was a wonderful picture, but later I lost it in the Nebesna. I then returned to the pack train for the rifle, but by the time I was ready to shoot, they were out of range. Then two brown bears calmly walked along the mountainside, but we would have none of them.

Next morning I went to the top of a high hill to look over the country west of Scolai, and as I turned to descend I found that I was in the midst of a countless herd of caribou. They were everywhere – and I was without a gun! Working my way back to camp without stampeding the herd, I started Jim out with the Savage to get one. He returned with the choicest part of a three-year-old, and we sat around the fire broiling the meat on sticks, eating it as it cooked – a meal that was fit for the gods.

We stayed at this camp for several days, making excursions into the surrounding mountains, panning the streams, and hunting. The days were hot the nights cool. The spring rains were over and the rivers rising fast. An eighteen-mile trek brought us back to our old stopping place at the Chisana cabins, where we found the mosquitoes so numerous that it was impossible to keep them out of the tent, and sleep was out of the question. The trip had been a hard one. The Chisana River was up and divided into about twenty branches, which we managed to cross after getting the horses down in the quicksand, from which they were rescued with great difficulty. One horse, in climbing up the bank, fell back with his pack into the water, and the excitement, combined with our frantic efforts to save his life, tired us all out, but we managed to pull him out. At our camp that night we managed to get some rest from the mosquitoes by making smudges to drive them away.

The morning set in with a sizzling drizzle, but as there is no way to judge the duration of such rains, it was useless to wait for clear weather. As we left camp, it was pouring steadily and the river was bank full. The passage over the divide was a nightmare. Descending to the Nebesna, we found the canyon still clogged with ice and the creek rushing madly down like a cataract. We were stopped by a narrow gorge, which we crossed next morning on the subsiding of the flood.

The Nebesna River was covering much of its mile-wide bed, and in crossing the first small branches of it the mare I was riding was forced to swim. In order not to drag her down, I scrambled off her back by grasping the root of a tree that was near the bank, while the mare made the crossing safely. We did not attempt to move the next day, as the storm was not over and

the main channel of the river was very high, so we made our camp and rested for the ordeal of crossing the main body of water. The Nebesna is a large stream, similar to the Tanana. Some of the channels are fifty to one hundred yards across, and its crossing is a perilous undertaking. About ten miles below the spot where we found ourselves, the river gathers together all its branches and passes between two mountains in one torrent. Anderson rode up the valley several miles to see if a fording could be more easily effected in that direction, but returned to report that there the river was running in one channel also, and there was no way to get around by land. I prospected the channel at which we were camped and decided that it could be crossed, but the matter was deferred until morning, after putting out marks to show the rise and fall.

During the night the river fell two inches below the level at the previous noon, so Jim and I saddled our horses and began to cross. At the second channel my horse swam for a few yards, but we reached the bank safely. After this, we met with no very deep water, although the channels were quite wide in places, and the greatest care had to be used in gauging the depth and swiftness of the stream.

We had tested out the crossing of the river successfully, so now we returned, prepared to take the outfit across the next day. At seven o'clock on the morning of July 16 (that fateful date is engraved on my memory), we began our perilous undertaking of crossing the Nebesna with a loaded pack train. The horses were tailed into three sections of four horses each, I leading the first bunch on my saddle horse. We negotiated the first three leads without a mishap, but the fourth and largest branch resulted in disaster. When nearing the shore my horse suddenly sank in the quicksand, and he immediately floundered. In his efforts to dislodge me, we both were swept into the swiftly rushing current. I was crushed under the horse, and as he torn away I struggled madly to rise to the surface and struck out for the bank with all my remaining strength. The weight of my clothes, binoculars, camera, and long rubber boots bore me down and rendered my frantic efforts futile, and as I was rolled over and over on the bottom of the stream, I clawed at the gravel of the river bed, digging my fingers into the bottom as I tried to work myself toward the bank. By some extraordinary effort, I rose to the surface and got a few mouthfuls of air; then down again to the bottom to be rolled over like a log by the force of the raging torrent. At last, when almost exhausted, I felt a bar beneath me, and I again clutched at the rocks as I was rushed by. Finally, I was able to drag myself up the bank on my hands and knees high enough to raise my head out of the water and gather strength to hold against the sweep of the river.

Looking around, I saw Jim in the water and reaching the bank, while three horses and their packs were being carried off down the river. My saddled horse appeared to be drowned as the water was flowing over him, but he soon recovered and reached the opposite shore, and the rest finally came across. Anderson with the third section, got over without much trouble. I was still holding my head above water without the strength to move when Jim came running down the bank and pulled me ashore.

On the bank I changed my clothes, and as soon as my blood began to circulate again, for I was numb with cold, we gathered our train together and prepared to cross the remaining channel. Here once more I was doomed to trouble. In the middle of the stream my horse went down in the quicksand, and we were again fighting for our lives in the muddy waters, but I swam to the bank, and with the help of the other men rescued the horse.

This ended our tribulation for the day, and after finding a suitable place, we pitched our camp to dry out, figure up our losses (among which was the loss of my last set of pictures, including those of the herd of caribou taken at close range), and congratulated ourselves on escaping with our lives.

The following day we resumed our homeward march and covered twenty miles. It had required four days to make the same distance coming in, but our packs were now light and we knew the way. We ferried across the Slana on the raft which we had constructed on our journey north, and entertained our friends the Indians at Batzulnetas at dinner. We lost no time getting back on the government trail, forded the Chestachina, and stopped at the mail station, where we packed out enough supplies to take us to Valdez, and sold the rest to the agent for a dollar a pound.

Only about a hundred and twenty-five miles more to go! We had passed through many dangers and had escaped with no real injuries. It seemed that no evil had the power to touch me, and we continued our journey without apprehension.

We had arrived within seven miles of the Tazlena River when the pack train, which was a hundred yards ahead, walked over a hornet's nest in the trail. By the time I arrived at the spot the hornets were on the warpath and ready for business. I was riding with my leg thrown over the horn of the saddle and the other foot in the stirrup. When the hornets began to sting, the horse gave a leap and sprang from under me. My foot was caught in the stirrup and I kept hold of the lines as he dragged me along the trail. As the hornets continued to sting the maddened horse gave me a vicious kick; my leg crumpled and slipped free of the stirrup, and I dropped on the trail like a bag of sand. As I let go of the lines I knew that my leg was broken, and I called to the men in front, who ran to my assistance.

After a hasty examination it was found to be a compound fracture, a part of the bone protruding through the skin. Anderson ran to the pack train and tied the horses, returning with a rope. With this they tied me to a stump; then, with both men pulling on my leg, I pushed in the bone. Anderson, who seemed to have handled such cases before, said: "now pull hard! We must get the big toe in line with the knee-cap and hip, and it will be all right." This they did, and with the aid of some willows for splints, with dry moss for padding and a flour sack torn in strips for a bandage, we soon had it fixed.

The boys then made camp ready for a long stay, as it was apparent that I would not be able to travel for some time. My rubber mattress was inflated, and with the bearskin I had obtained on the Nebesna and plenty of blankets, I was made as comfortable as possible, but I passed the night in great pain owing to a miner fracture above the ankle and the tightness of the bandage. In the morning I loosened the wrapping and gained considerable relief. Meantime, Anderson rode to the Tazlena River for assistance, and returned with a Mr. Hammond, who was on his way to the coast with gold dust from Slate Creek. They brought news that the ferry on the Tazlena had been swept away, drowning four people. That night I had another painful time of it, and the following noon an ex-Red Cross man arrived, bringing an emergency kit. Ramage soon showed that he was at home in the sick room, and in an hour had my wound comfortably dressed. He also gave me the comforting news that the bone would not begin to knit until nine days had passed, and would take two months to thoroughly heal. The fracture was a clean break, and the bone had been set in place.

Romage stayed with us and helped to prepare a litter on which to carry me back to the Tazlena River in the morning. The boys made the litter, and swung me, bed and all, between two horses, with a man at each bridle. Romage with an ax led the way, and chopped out the timber to widen the trail, so that I made the seven miles without discomfort.

At the River we found a number of others waiting to cross the turbulent stream, which was overflowing its banks and wildly tearing away everything in its path. The Indians call it the mad River, as it acts in a crazy way every seven years. The source of the trouble is the large glacier at the head and a hot sun. Tazlena Billy, a Siwash Indian who operated the ferry, and who had escaped drowning a few days before by clinging to a branch from the bank as he was swept down the river, declared that the spirits of the white men who had been lost in the crevasses of the glacier were angry, and that they turned the waters loose every so often to remind the living of their fate. He said that there had been many who had lost their lives during the gold rush of 1898 through their folly in taking the Valdez Glacier route as a short-cut to Copper Center. One party of fourteen in that year followed the glacier, and four of them in crossing a snow bridge over one of the crevasses in the ice, dropped through. They were caught in a narrow part of the crevasse sixty feet down, with nothing but sheer walls of ice above them. Their companions on top could do nothing to help them, and dispatched one of their number to Valdez for a rope. While waiting they conversed with the doomed men below for hours, as one by one froze to death before help arrived.

On the bank of the river my men put up the tent we prepared again for a long stay. A week later they tried to swim the horses across but failed. The government pack train came in, bringing a dozen more weary travelers. On the eleventh day after my accident, I could lift my leg without assistance, showing that the knitting of the bone was progressing, and I could sit out in front of the tent. The boys caught some salmon, which we had for dinner, and we entertained some prospectors who had also been in the Nebesna section.

At last came the time when we could cross the river in a boat, and on the other side I mounted the mare Kate, but on reaching the Copper River clay banks the men had to carry me on a litter for half a mile. The trail was torn away, and the horses had to swim from one point to another. The eight miles I spent in the saddle were almost unbearable, but I stuck it out until we arrived at copper Center, where I was carried into a cabin in a fainting condition.

This was the first time we had slept under a roof in three months. We had a stove, table, a big supply of wood, and clear water, and all were comfortable. I was now convalescent, and my leg was painful only when I attempted to use the crutches the boys had made for me.

Copper Center, the old camping place of the '98ers, is at the confluence of the Copper and Atna Rivers, one hundred and two miles northeast of Valdez. At one time the place had a population of 1500, with stores, saloons, and all the concomitants of a wild and hilarious western mining camp. It was Dawson on a small scale, and there was neither Mayor nor Marshall. The only law enforced was that presided over by Judge Lynch, and the first man to be convicted was William Norton, who had stolen the camp outfit of his partners, had sold it, and was hiking back to Valdez. A posse was formed which captured the thief, brought him to Copper Center, and he was hung to a branch of a big cottonwood on the bank of the river. Here the gold seekers gathered, some coming up the Copper from Orca, more in the Thompson pass from Prince William Sound points, and others over the deadly Valdez Glacier and down the Tonsena. At

Copper Center the pilgrims would separate, one group heading for Nizina, which is the Kennicott district, and the others following up the Copper, some by the route we had traversed to the Tanana, to the Yukon and Koyukuk.

It will be remembered that this is where we had built the wagon on the way north. Our stay at Copper Center was more extended on the return trip on account of my disability. After a few days of rest, we started out for the lap of our journey, and camped at Teikel Point, almost in sight of the pass over the coast range. I had the stirrup strap around my leg below my knee, but the long ride in the saddle was a constant torture. Next day we made twenty-two miles to Wortman's on the coast side of the range, and the following morning reached Valdez. At the hotel I examined my leg to see how it stood the trip. I found that the pressure of the strap had worked the bone back, but I gave it a smart kick from behind and knocked it back into place. The next day I was out on crutches and have never had any further trouble with it.

To my syndicate I made a glowing report of my discoveries in the White River country. However, again we were confronted with the problem of accessibility – of bringing this ore to market with a reasonable profit over and above the cost of transportation. The tremendous cost of developing these inaccessible copper deposits, together with the exploitation of vast areas of copper of exceptionally high grade in the interior of Africa, militated against the Alaskan discoveries, and my syndicate deferred taking any action until the situation clarified. The death of Mr. Ward, followed by that of Mr. Lounsbury, then served to disintegrate the syndicate and end its activities.

Chapter XXXVI

After seeing with my own eyes the enormous deposits of copper in interior Alaska, it was simply impossible for me not to make an attempt to open up the country so that such resources could be developed. In surveying the situation, it was clear to me that Valdez was the natural gateway to the interior of Alaska, being many miles shorter than any other route and the only town of consequence on Prince William Sound. Therefore, I decided to make Valdez the terminus of a railroad to the Yukon River – a trunk line that could throw out its branches on both sides and draw business from every point in Alaska.

I conceived the idea that I was the man to build such a road, and shortly after my return from the expedition to the White River and my convalescence from my broken leg, I lost no time in starting the enterprise. George Baldwin, a prominent railroad engineer, was selected to survey the line through to Eagle, on the Yukon River, and a company was organized to have a capital of \$25,000,000, with dummy officers, who contracted with me to build the road. I was to receive \$250,000 for each mile built, in stock, and 30,000 a mile in 6% bonds. The details of organization completed, I applied to the Secretary of the Interior for a franchise and right-of-way through Keystone canyon on the Lowe River, which I obtained, and the town of Valdez granted me a right-of-way through the streets. I already owned the wharf, the income from which would pay the interest on the bonds for the first ten miles. I bought ten thousand ties at fourteen cents each, and built a railroad trestle paralleling the dock, following that with eight miles of grading.

Having started and paid for this work with my own personal funds, it dawned upon me that I could not build the road myself, and would have to get outside money. With this in view I called a mass meeting, and that evening the town hall was filled with the citizens of Valdez. I laid my plans before them, offering the railroad stock at par, payable in quarterly installments on the completion of each five miles of road. This proposition took like wildfire, and before the meeting broke up they had subscribed for 276,000 shares. Still, I was getting no cash to pay for five miles of rail and some rolling stock, a matter of \$14,000. Now, \$14,000 was not much money to put into the construction of a railroad, but it would have completed the five miles, after which twenty-five per cent of the stock subscription would be due. On the whole, the proposition was sound. It was the first railroad in western Alaska, and no other project of the kind had been mentioned.

While all this furor about a railroad from Valdez was going on, the town started to boom. Houses began to go up on all sides, and at once there was an occupant for every vacant lot in the town. The steamers were coming in crowded with passengers and heavy with cargoes. Inside the range there was the Bonanza mine with trainloads of high-grade ore waiting for transportation, with freight, passengers, and mail all along the line, offering a business for the road that would pay for it in five years.

I determined to try Seattle for the money I needed. There, though it is possible that many wealthy men would have been glad to give me the funds if they could have been reached. I could get in touch with none of them. In Seattle I put my plan before the Chamber of Commerce, which appointed a special committee, and these gentlemen obtained additional subscriptions for 700,000 shares, but not a dollar in money, although Seattle was the greatest beneficiary of the Alaskan trade. The same thing happened in Portland: plenty of stock subscriptions but no

\$14,000! From Portland I continued my pilgrimage to Whatoon and then to Bellingham, but the best the latter would do was to offer me free wharfage for my steamer. One shipbroker offered me three steamers, then in the Eastern fruit trade, in return for my bonds, but I had no money to take them over and bring them around the Horn, so the deal fell through.

During the time when I was commuting between Alaska and the States, my wife stayed in Seattle, as she was not well. During my railroad affairs she was taken dangerously ill from anemic poison, and I dropped everything to attend to her. As soon as the physician permitted, I secured a drawing room on the Burlington and removed her to Washington D.C. There some doctors took her in charge, declared her trouble to be cancer of the liver, and carried her to Dr. Fry's hospital on Connecticut Avenue for an operation. As soon as she could be removed, I brought her home, and with careful nursing she recovered, much to the astonishment of her physicians.

In New York I resumed my railroad activities, and put my proposition up to Mr. Willard P. Ward, Dan Guggenheim, and Sam Untermyer. These gentlemen were very dubious concerning the feasibility of building a railroad in Alaska. They said I was years ahead of time, and that it was impossible at that time to buy railroad iron. I told them I had an option on the steel at Vancouver, and if they would give me the money, I would show them. With such powerful men as these refusing to come in, what chance had I with smaller fry?

In Washington I had a bill introduced in both houses asking for a subsidy of \$5000 a mile, for which I agreed to carry the army and munitions in case of war and the mail free in time of peace. For a time the bill had a favorable reception, but the knockers heard of it, and one man, who would have been largely benefited if the road had been built, appeared before the Senate committee and declared that I had no financial backing. Senator Nelson of Minnesota, who I knew was a great friend of Alaska, talked with me in the Marble Room of the Senate, and said: "Tell me who your backers are, Mr. Iles, and if they are satisfactory we will put this measure through for you!" I replied, "Senator, I have no backers except the subscribers to more than a million shares of stock. If the Government gives me this subsidy, I shall need no backers." The news of my application for a subsidy soon brought opposition from various promoters, who were preparing, on paper, railroads for Alaska, with the result that my bills went into that bourne form which there is no return.

The closest I ever came to financing my road and putting it through as originally planned was when a telegram was handed to me in Washington from James Murray, president of the Miners & Merchants Bank of Butte, Montana, which read:

"Alfred B. Iles

Washington, D.C.

"Will take two hundred fifty thousand bonds Valdez & Northern provided I am president of the road. Come to Butte and close deal.

James Murray."

I promptly wired back:

James Murray

Butte, Montana

"Conditions accepted. Send guarantee for trip.

Alfred B. Iles."

To which I received the following reply:

“Alfred B. Iles
Washington D.C.

“You don’t need any guarantee. Come on and get the money.

James Murray.”

With those telegrams I boarded the Pennsylvania Limited at the old Sixth Street Station in Washington the next morning. The car was empty and I took the first chair in the aisle. The next passenger was a lady, who took a seat about the middle of the car. A newsagent next appeared on the scene and the lady bought a magazine, handing him a ten-dollar bill, and he turned to me for change. In my pocket was a folder used for letters of credits, etc., and in it was \$192.00 in bills, cards, and my railroad ticket from Chicago to Seattle. In my vest pocket were my railroad and sleeper tickets from Washington to Chicago and some silver. I took the folder from my inside coat pocket, gave the boy two fives, and returned the flap to its place. That was the last I saw of it.

The car filled up, and the conductor changed my seat. I had a buffet lunch on my way to Harrisburg and paid for it from the silver in my vest pocket. On the main line platform I sent a telegram to a friend in Seattle and also paid that from my silver. Dinner in the dining car cost me \$2.40, and I reached for my pocket book. It was gone! I was on the Pennsylvania Limited going to Butte, with the capital of about ten cents! I called the conductor of the diner and told him of my loss, and asked him if he would take a check for my dinner, to which he agreed, and accepted a draft on the Boston National Bank of Seattle.

We arrived late in Chicago, and the Pioneer Limited was waiting to pull out. I rushed up to the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul office and there met Mr. Southy, the passenger agent. I told him of my loss, showing him my telegram, etc., and asked if he would take a check for a ticket to St. Paul. He said: “Certainly! And I am something of a sport myself. Take this – you will need it to eat on!” handing me a five dollar bill. He then stepped to the telephone and held the Pioneer Limited until I could get on to the train. The Milwaukee road had never lost anything through that kindly act.

At Milwaukee I telegraphed my Seattle bank to have money for me at St. Paul on my arrival. When we pulled into the station I hurried to the Western Union Office. “Have you any money for me?” I inquired, giving my credentials. “Yes,” the operator replied, “but you can’t get it tonight. The cashier has gone home, and we haven’t the combination of the safe.” I said it was of the utmost importance that I got the money at once, but it resulted in nothing, so I went to a hotel to wait for the next day’s train. In the morning I reported the loss of my ticket at the Northern Pacific offices, and a year afterward received a check for the amount. The lost ticket was never presented.

I had a presentiment that the delay meant no good to me. When the train stopped at Butte and I saw Jim Murray on the platform with a telegram in his hand, I knew that my fears were well grounded. After a perfunctory greeting, Murray said that the deal was off, as his partner had decided to go into a streetcar line in Los Angeles. Without further words I stepped on the train again and went on to Seattle.

This episode ended the first phase of my attempt to construct a railroad in Alaska. I had built the trestle from the ships’ landing, completed five miles of grading, and had ten thousand

ties ready to lay. Yet I could not raise the few thousand dollars that would have completed the five miles and furnished me with plenty of funds for the next section, made my bonds marketable, and insured the building of the road. Had I succeeded, the history of that part of our Northern territory would be vastly different from what it is today.

Chapter XXXVII

Pigeonholing my railroad activities for the time being, I returned to Valdez and proceeded to locate a water right in Solomon Gulch with the intention of supplying power and light for the town, which was then being furnish by a steam plant. This, together with another visit to the interior in the region of Wrangell on behalf of my New York syndicate, occupied several months, during which I experienced plenty of hard work and many disappointments. There was an abundance of copper but in such inaccessible localities that I was compelled to pass them by, and returned to Valdez with no tangible results other than a fund of information. This information inevitably led to the same conclusion: that if the natural resources of Alaska were to be reached and developed, there would have to be railroads. Everywhere was this stumbling block, and it was not possible to consider any project without facing the problem of transportation.

Therefore, in spite of my previous disappointments, I again tackled the proposition and organized the Copper River & Tanana Railroad Company, secured another right of way through Keystone Canyon, and started east for capital. In New York I met Duncan B. Cannon, treasurer of the Brooklyn & Coney Island Railroad. Mr. Cannon introduced me to the firm of Gifford, Hobbs & Beard, in the Hanover Bank Building on Nassau Street. These gentlemen, one of whom was the son-in-law of James J. Hill, the railroad magnate, made a contract with me to build the road on approval of their engineers. A Canadian surveyor named Rose, with assistants, was sent out to report on its feasibility and cost. After months of waiting, the engineers came back with a report admitting the advantages of the road, but recommending adversely because of cost. As they had based their estimates on a Pennsylvania Railroad scale, this was not surprising. Gifford, Hobbs & Beard, however, claimed that I should pay several thousand dollars toward the expense of examination. This tied up my proposition, and as my right of way was good for only a year, I had to act quickly to save anything.

I had about given up hope, when one morning, as I was hurrying up Broadway, I collided with a man. For some reason a conversation ensued and he said that his name was Bradshaw; that he was about to build a railroad in Alaska; that his company was called the Valdez & Yukon Railroad, with a capital of ten million dollars, half of which was in the treasury, along with \$250,000 cash. He also stated that A. W. Swanitz was their chief engineer and had already been dispatched to Alaska, but at Seattle he had learned that the Iles road had the right of way, and he was awaiting instructions. I told Mr. Bradshaw that I was Mr. Iles, and that if his company really meant business, there was no reason why we should not get together. He then took me to 70 Wall Street and introduced me to Ambler J. Stewart. Mr. Stewart is the brother of Judge W. F. Bay Stewart, a Pennsylvania millionaire, who was president of the Valdez & Yukon. Mr. Stewart said that if I could demonstrate the validity of my right of way they would be willing to join forces with me in building the road. I agreed, and made an appointment for a meeting at the Gifford offices the next morning, at which I introduced him to the firm and left him. The meeting was satisfactory, and a contract was made wherein I was to receive \$750,000 in stock and the privilege of selling an allotment of bonds on the same terms as Mr. Stewart. This had the effect of making me a minority stockholder and I lost my controlling interest.

Swanitz, the chief engineer, was given full authority to build the line, the New York office merely furnishing the funds. He began the work by sweeping my plans into the discard and

locating a town site about two miles from Valdez, where he built a \$100,000 dock and located the terminal buildings. This action set the old town of Valdez by the ears, and the antagonism engendered resulted in a boycott of the wharf, the railroad, and the new town site, so that not a ton of freight came over the dock nor could a lot be sold. Swanitz, who in his sober moments might have been a good engineer, did not have enough of them to offset the forces arrayed against him and was carried aboard the steamer, after squandering about \$400,000 of the company's money, which I had deemed sufficient to build twenty miles of the road twice over, and Valdez heard no more of him.

While this railroad work was going on, I was developing my water right and building a power plant. With a force of two men and myself, we constructed a concrete dam across Solomon Creek, giving us a head of 410 feet at the wheel. From this we laid a wood flume, first cutting a foundation in the rocky walls of the canyon. This was a difficult piece of work, and for several hundred feet we drilled holes for blasts while hanging in rope slings suspended over the cliffs. Tools were scarce, an ax doing service for a hammer, and I did the sharpening of the drills by heating them in a cook stove, using a boulder for an anvil. In time we completed the grade, and the electric company came along one day and leased the plant for two hundred dollars a month.

Having established an income, which would provide for my wife and relieve me of that worry for the time being, I set about to regain the fortune which had been lost in my railroad ventures. During this time I had retained my ownership of the Ariadne, my mine in Colorado, which I knew would produce some capital in time of need. Therefore, having arranged my affairs in Alaska so that I could absent myself for a while, I returned to the San Juan, where even single-handed I knew that I could take out enough ore to make me a decent stake by the time I was ready to return to Alaska. At Silverton I hired a burro train to take my supplies up to the mine. I found the workings all in good condition, but the winze on the third level, where I wanted to work, was half full of water. This was overcome by putting in a stage at the water level, and I began work on a small streak of ore on the footwall of the lode. As I shot out the quartz the streak widened, and in a week I was well into the vein under the ore step above. Tossing the broken mineral onto the stage, letting the waste drop into the shaft, and loading the ore into the bucket, I would climb the ladder to the level above, windless up the loaded bucket, and dump it into the car. When the car was loaded, it was run out to the dump, the ore put into sacks, and piled up until I had a car shipment. As I drove ahead in the drift the ore streak gradually widened until the entire face was mineral, and one morning I took a sample from the foot wall that looked so good that I rushed to town and caught the assayer just as he was putting through a batch of assays. The ore proved to be worth \$370 to the ton! I had nearly two carloads of ore sacked, and continued to push the drift ahead, with no change in the vein.

One afternoon, while putting in a shot, I heard some one descending the ladder, and presently a light appeared coming along the drift. It proved to be Colonel E. C. Condit, a well-known promoter around the San Juan and a man who had brought many thousand of dollars into the district. He said he had heard of my work at the mine and wanted to see it; that if terms could be arranged he would include the Ariadne in a company he was organizing. He made a careful examination of all the workings, and said: "I will pay you \$100,000 in easy payments in money,

300,000 shares of stock in my company, and if you will come to Silverton, I will give you \$5,000 to bind the bargain.”

I did not reply for a few minutes, during which my memory floated back to the time when I was offered \$75,000 and the mine was only a prospect. Experience had taught me since then that it takes capital to develop mines, and while I could make a good living working the mine by myself, the time would come when a deeper mining would call for more money than I could command. So, turning to my visitor, I replied, “Colonel, you’re on!”

In Silverton I received the first payment of \$5,000, and the following afternoon took the train for Seattle, arriving there just in time to catch the “Santa Ana” for Valdez.

Chapter XXXVIII

Many changes had taken place in Valdez during my absence. The prospect of Valdez becoming the terminus of a railroad had naturally started a building boom, so that every lot owner was putting up some kind of shack in order to protect his title, and little attention was given to the railroad activities at the new town site. Alaska at that time was in high favor all through the East, and a railroad up the Copper River also was being talked of. The Government was laying a cable from Seattle, mines were being discovered in the hills surrounding the town, and one had already begun to pay dividends.

A letter was waiting for me in the post office, appointing me manager of the Alaska Consolidated Copper Company on Nugget Creek, 175 miles in the interior. I had been on Nugget Creek prior to this, and had seen a nugget of copper weighing about four and a half tons on the property, with outcroppings of bornite on the mountainside. This appointment caused me to hurry back to the States to assist in financing operations. We raised \$200,000 in the next six months, the largest subscription being gathered at such places as Lancaster, Reading, York, Baltimore, and Washington. At Baltimore we entered a hotel at ten o'clock in the forenoon. At ten-forty-five we had a check for \$10,000, and the next day secured \$40,000 from a bank near Havre de Grace.



Pack Train at Strelna, Alaska, ready to leave for Nugget Creek.

The long trip into the interior was accomplished, packing in supplies. Commencing work on the property, we found a large block of solid ore at the entrance of the tunnel, which was probably the bottom of some rich lense that had been eroded away in prehistoric times, as underneath the ground the ore gradually tapered into small pockets, and finally disseminated among the calcite (lime). I sank the shaft and ran drifts on the vein in search of more of the rich lenses found on the surface, as that was the only ore that would stand shipment. In this way months passed, during which the railroad up the Copper River was built, and we then began hauling the sacked ore to Strelna, the railroad station nearest to us, a distance of twenty-three miles. I had also opened other deposits near by, and Steve Birch made us a visit, remarking as he left that we had a fine property, and that all it needed was work. The proposition was so encouraging that I made a trip to New York to promote the extension of the railroad from Strelna to the mine. Mr. Stewart and I called on J. P. Morgan, who lent us considerable encouragement by assuring us that whenever the engineers reported a sufficient tonnage of ore in sight the road would be built.



Baron Von Ravens on the left and Alfred Bennett Iles on the right, checking the ore at Nugget Creek, Alaska.

All was not well, however, in the councils of the company. A change was desired in the directory, and my principal was offered a handsome sum to step out. He did not take it, but had

to resign anyway. The new president was Samuel Warriner, president of the Lehigh Valley Coal & Navigation Company, who selected George Dubois, mining engineer to be manager in my stead.

Dubois was supplied with a large sum of money, ample to build a mill of large capacity. After a year of his administration the new manager made a statement that he had developed \$5,000,000 worth of ore and wanted a mill. Mr. Warriner went to Alaska to corroborate the report, and on his return from the mine it was whispered that Dubois' figures had somewhat exaggerated the tonnage. The next day the body of Dubois was found in the Philadelphia River with a rock tied to his neck. Since then the Nugget Creek Mine has been idle. The big copper nugget is still there.

The World War had started. My power plant at Valdez was completed and supplying the town, the government fort, and one of the local mines with light and power. The railroad had laid five miles of track and was in status quo. The Guggenheims had built the Copper River & Northwestern to the Kennicott mines. I was summoned to Juneau in my capacity as consulting engineer for the Alaska Treasure Company on Douglas Island, to make an examination of a property, plan a system of development, install a power plant and build a twenty-stamp mill to be used to sample the ore, all of which occupied several months.

On the completion of this project, I was invited to participate in a bear hunt on Admiralty Island, together with Fred Stone, the president of the Company, Louis Potter, a New York sculptor, and Baron von Olegar of London. Our boat was a powerful steam launch, in charge of Captain Rufus Graham, with a camp cook and roustabout.

Our course lay up a channel of the Glass peninsula, then turning into an estuary called "Windfall Harbor." We had scarcely made the turn when we saw a bear prowling around some huts on shore. Mr. Potter took a shot at him, but bruin scampered off into the timber. Just ahead were five deer swimming across the inlet, but no sportsman would shoot a deer in the water, we passed on to a good landing place, where we tied up and spread out into the forest with our guns. We saw but one bear, and that was when I was making my way through a clump of bushes. A big black bear was in the middle of the brush, standing upright, with one forearm around a bush loaded with salmon berries on which he was feeding. The surprise of our sudden meeting was so great that I do not know who was the most scared. I was within five feet of his paws, and he could easily have reached out and ripped me from head to toe. Instead, he turned on his hind legs, and as I ran away I turned my head and saw him loping madly through the timber! I did not even get a shot at him.

The other two hunters brought in a young buck, and that evening we changed from city provender to juicy venison steaks, with salmon berries for dessert. The night was made hideous by the coyotes, that kept up a serenade of howls and blood-curdling screams which seemed to come from a band of fifty. It is amazing what a racket a few of these wolves can make when they are following a trail. At the Ariadne mine I had had some eerie nights when a big porcupine would start his scratching on the mine building, sounding like a sawmill wrestling with a knotty log, and three or four coyotes would come racing up the basin, snarling, screaming, and yelping, as if they were close to their quarry. That night on the boat, nobody got any sleep, and to vary the monotony of the serenade, one after the other of us would crawl out of his bunk, reach for his rifle, and take a shot out of the cabin window. As a matter of fact, however, we had not expected

the comforts of home while on this trip, and we certainly were not disappointed. A sportsman will sleep out in the woods in wet clothes, eat with his fingers, and under go any hardship for the thrill of bringing down his game, whether it be bear or buzzard.

The next morning the launch was cast off and we moved to the head of the inlet, where a large creek emptied into the salt water. We landed on an expansive flat through which the creek wound, in a series of bends. The flat itself was trampled about with hundreds of bear tracks, which made it resemble a corral. The stream was loading with fish, humpbacks and dog salmon, as they are called. There must have been millions and millions of them. In crossing the creek we had to push the fish aside in order to get through. Our roustabout was an Indian, and he made us hide behind trees.

Presently a large she bear emerged from the timber driving her two cubs ahead. As soon as the young ones saw the salmon in the creek they scrambled in and played exactly like a couple of boys. They then began to pick up the fish with their sharp claws and throw them at one another, but this the old mother would not stand for. She trundled down the bank, reached for the cubs with both forearms, much in the same manner as the Captain catches the Katzenjhammer Kids, and slammed them together as if to say, "Didn't I tell you to leave those salmon alone?" Then she tossed them on to the bank, where they scampered away, with Ma after them.

We were about to move toward the boat, but Indian Jake motioned up to keep our place behind the trees. The hillsides were heavily timbered, and well-worn trails ran through the forest in every direction. We had not long to wait, for the bears were coming from their hideouts for dinner, and they made straight for the creek. I counted seventeen feeding on the salmon at the same time, all within two hundred yards of us. We watched them for an hour, and it was only when most of them had disappeared up their trails that Jake waved his hand to us to begin firing. At the first volley no one hit a target, and we lost our best chance, for when the bears start to run, although they have a clumsy gait, it would take a fast horse to keep up with them. One of them was making the run up the flat on the other side of the creek. Indian Jake and I floundered across the stream after him, to try to head him off. Jake fired and apparently missed, and I did the same. The bear was now within fifty yards, and coming full tilt. The situation was desperate, for another miss meant death to one of us. I dropped on one knee and fired just as he raised his head for another leap. The shot caught him square in the throat and almost raked him for and aft, for we afterwards found the bullet in the muscles of his stomach. It was a splendid specimen of black bear, as large as any I have seen outside of Kodiak, and his skin went to the home of Mr. Stone as a prize exhibit. Potter in the meantime had killed two of the bears, and with another deer brought down by Stone, we left for Juneau with the felling that our trip had been a success.

Chapter XXXIX

The route to Prince William Sound from Juneau lies through Icy Straits, which is the northern end of the inside passage, although some masters take their boats through a channel nearer to the open sea, to avoid the ever present danger of ice. The straits at times are full of floating blocks coming from the Muir Glacier. Some of them are large enough to assume the dimensions of icebergs, and every so often a mass is turned loose which may be several acres in extent and moves out to the sea covered with trees and vegetation, with all the dignity and enchantment of a floating island. The Alaskan glaciers are of such antiquity and moved so slowly that large trees and vegetation grow upon them before reaching the end and breaking off into the sea. As a matter of fact, much of Alaska is laid on a foundation of ice, which underlies a great deal of territory that has all the appearance of solid ground. This account for the fact that it is sometimes not possible to lay a finger on a spot which is not either rank, tropical vegetation or running water.

Out through Icy Straits, passing Cape Spencer, we emerged into the open sea, and most of the passengers took to their berths as the mighty wavers of the broad Pacific were captured and restrained by the curve of the Gulf of Alaska. The hoary summit of St. Elias was lost in the mist that hung over the coast range, and the white cliffs of Kayak Island was the first glimpse we got of Prince William Sound. Passing the Copper River delta, we were soon once more in Valdez.

The lease on my power plant was about to expire, and the local company, anticipating some difficulty in its renewal, had gone a few hundred yards above my intake, constructed another dam, and built a power house just above my works. This left me out in the cold with a power plant on my hands and no market for the power. A small town is always in a state of unrest, no matter what kind of service it gets, and Main Street will invariably encourage a rival utility. Such is human nature. To organize another local company to wire the town was only the work of a few days, and the new concern contracted with me to deliver them power at three cents a kilowatt. Happily, just then another payment on the Ariadne arrived, and I was able to build my own transmission line from the plant to the town, a distance of seven miles. The new company quickly signed up a majority of the consumers, and then the war was on!

My competitors' plant being above mine, it commanded a view of the full length of my flume, so that I was completely at its mercy. In the night I would suddenly see the lights in the town across the bay grow dim and the voltage at the plant drop, which was the signal for trouble on the flume. There would be a run to the hill and a climb of 400 feet, partly by rope, until the intake was reached, to find no water was being delivered; then a wild run along the waterway, at last to find the sides of the flume chopped away and the water discharging into the gulch below. The rest of the night would be put in repairing the damage, and then there would be a week or two of peace, during which offers to purchase would come from the other company. Nothing coming of this, a stick of dynamite with a fuse just long enough to allow the powder to be carried through the pipe a couple of hundred feet would be inserted at the intake, and the resulting explosion would cause another shutdown.

This sort of thing got on my nerves, for no amount of watching had any effect. I had put a guard on the flume with a shotgun, but the vandals shifted their operations to the transmission line, short-circuiting the wires in the most difficult places to find. Finally, the guard was shot off

the flume, but the murderer was never found. I had plenty of power, but the market was limited, which added to the cutthroat competition made life a burden, and supplemented my crop of gray hairs. The other company never missed an opportunity to try to buy me out, and I was equally stubborn in refusing to sell. My water right, having been located prior to the advent of conservation, was free from government interference and therefore, under any other conditions, would be valuable. But the blight of conservation was now spreading over Alaska. The influx of pioneers, businessmen and prospectors was tapering down. Seeing the handwriting on the wall, I accepted an offer for my plant and followed the stampede to the States.

The old Santa Ana, a steamer of doubtful ancestry and one of the fraternity that had long been condemned on the Eastern seaboard, but which was a crack boat compared to some of the Alaska fleet of those days, was returning to Seattle crowded to the taffrail. I took passage with the benighted pilgrims who could not find a berth and made up their beds on the dining tables. At Cordova, Kayak, and Yakutat we picked up more passengers, for like the New York subway during rush hours, there was always room for one more. To make the trip more interesting, the ship's larder was not overstocked, and the purser, with an eye to his company's welfare, would find supplies conveniently scarce in the way ports as we "went down." At Juneau we had a list of 197 passengers, and the purser opened the ship's purse strings to the extent of \$19.75 for delicacies for the rest of the trip. It was a hungry and angry crowd that filed over the gangplank at Seattle, but the Santa Ana was going on the Southern run, and why worry over the troubles of the Alaska crowd?

On my return to the States, I was besieged by my friends who had large interests in our northern possession for an answer to the query, "Why is Alaska declining?" Now to me, who resided there for seventeen years and had watched the peculiar methods in vogue, the answer was easy: "because of conservation, the constant meddling of government officials, and the still worse system of 'home rule.'" From 1896 to 1910 the population of "Seward's Folly" had increased by leaps and bound, the gold production of the vicious Federal license laws and the unconscionable rulings of the Land Office. Then came the blow that finally killed Alaska. It went under the name of "Conservation," but it was really an attempt to gather all the public lands of the territory into an estate; its forests, of old ago? The area embraced by this reserve receives rainfall of 70 to 120 inches per annum. As over 90% of this reserve is destitute of timber and the treeless Aleutian islands to the westward receive more rain than this does, the idea that the cutting of the timber needed by our citizens will have any effect on the rainfall is utterly absurd. The river and creeks have their sources in the everlasting glaciers, and would flow bank full for generations without a drop of precipitation. Furthermore, Alaska has a superabundance of rivers, and the country could be more easily developed if water was not running everywhere to increase the difficulties and perils of pioneering. There never has been a fire in this reserve and never will be. It is soaked with rain in the summer and covered with snow in the winter.

If this conservation policy is for the purpose of raising government revenue, the record is pathetic. It has cost the Treasury \$2 for every \$1 collected so far, besides imposing a tax of thousands of dollars on the residents in obtaining permits. The Forest Service cannot show one single benefit it has conferred upon the people living in this reserve, upon the people, if any, who will live in it in the future, or upon the people of the United States generally.

Chapter XL

The sale of the power plant brought me \$100,000 in securities, and my next objective was Washington D.C. There, as a bull in a bear market, I promptly dropped some \$8,000 in U.S. Steel common, and Dean, Onatova & Company failed and swallowed up the rest of my available cash. Then my thoughts again reverted to my mining property in Colorado, which had come back to me on the failure of the promoters' plans in Switzerland.

In New York I met my old friend and promoter, Ambler J. Stewart, and together we started out as of yore in search of capital with which to properly develop the Ariadne. We were successful from the start. We found investors in an office on Nassau Street in the persons of B. F. Barling and H. H. Seaman. Barling was a mining engineer and Seaman a retired bond salesman. The two made an ideal combination and impressed capital favorably. The result was that they raised \$55,000 as working capital, for which I gave their syndicate a deed for one-half interest in the Ariadne group of mines.

During the two years which followed, new ore was opened up on deeper levels and adjoining property was acquired which increased our holdings to four hundred acres, with six thousand feet of development and one tunnel penetrating the mountains more than half a mile. With this addition to the Ariadne the syndicate organized the Ariadne Corporation and \$21,000 was added to the treasury.

Above timberline we had another tunnel that had already been driven through the Uncle Sam lode, but the three-hundred-foot drift, which had been made, was badly caved, leaving a series of awesome caverns overhead. To retimber this was probably the most dangerous job I had ever undertaken in mine. Great blocks of ore had been caught in their descent from a hundred feet above and hung by their points to the slight swellings in the walls. Every few hours other blocks would be dislodged from the stope and come down with a crash, bringing in their wake tons of debris.

With one man to help me, we had trammed out hundreds of tons, and by dint of placing sets of heavy timbers close together we were gaining some headway. One particular vicious looking spot caused us trouble and nearly cost me my life. A three-ton flat rock had found its "apex of rest" on the footwall, but was gradually sliding down until it was within ten feet of the level, my object was to set the timbers so as to keep it out of the drift. A pile of clay muck had accumulated where I was working, and when I was about to set the post I noticed that the rock had resumed its slide. I tried to withdraw my foot from the muck, but it was fast. I wrenched, and reached for a hold on the timbers, but the monstrous slab of ore kept coming until it was over my foot, and I was fast in a horrible vise. On and on it came, slowly, inexorably, bearing me down, and would soon be over my body unless help came. I yelled to my helper to get his arms around my body and pull, but I could not budge. At last my right foot found lodgment against a rock and I gave another wrench, which pulled my left foot out of the rubber boot and I fell back free. The next moment the rock had covered the long leg of rubber, and I saw it no more until the rock had been blasted and broken up.

It was early in February at the time, and the thermometer for days had stood at 14° below zero. Between the mine and the cabin was a great draw, down which the deep snow was ready to slide. Without my boot in the bitter cold, I was eager to reach the cabin, but the draw looked too

dangerous to cross. Without knowing whether or not it would work, I inserted a fuse in a stick of powder, lit the fuse, and tossed it into the snow. With the explosion came the roar of the avalanche, as it tore past the mine workings and swept everything along with it. We now had a safe trail to the house, where I made a warm fire and thawed out. It was several days before we could haul away the rock and debris, set the post in place, and proceed to other caves beyond.

A week after this happening my companion and I went to Silverton for supplies and I returned alone. The snow was deep, and I left at daybreak. The sky was clear but the morning was cold, and the lofty peaks of the region were surrounded in a heavy mantle that glistened in the sun with a silky sheen. My route lay up Cement Creek for three miles, where at our Yukon Mill I would turn up the mountainside. I wore web snowshoes, but the extra weight of the pack on my back caused me to sink deep at every step, and the snow falling in on the webs made my progress difficult.

It was one o'clock when I reached the mill, where I cooked some bacon for lunch and started out again. From the mill it was two miles to the mine, during which I had to ascend 2400 feet. By the time I arrived at timberline I was very tired. The snow was harder, but the sun had gone down and the cold was intense. It was growing dark as I dragged my weary limbs up the long slope of Uncle Sam Basin, but a bright moon coming up over the mountain peaks showed me the way. My clothes were stiff with frost, which was rather an advantage, as they kept out the icy blast. As night closed in I reached the foot of the steep slope which was covered with the last of the timber, and on the upper edge of this was the mine boarding house. The snow here was soft and six feet deep. My snowshoes were useless, as it was necessary to pat down the snow before I could put my weight on them, so I left them and plunged into it on all fours. It was only a hundred yards to the cabin, but it took every ounce of my strength, and when I burst in the door I fell prone on the floor, completely exhausted.

Those who now travel at ease on the highways which penetrate the mining district may sometimes see a small cabin or mine dump perched high on the slope of a lofty peak, and wonder about the tales of adventures and hardship which could be told by the human beings who clung to the cliffs and battled the forces of nature in order to discover her secrets and enjoy her treasure. The stories which I have told of my experiences in and within the mountains of the San Juan will give the reader some idea of the lives of the prospectors and pioneers of the rugged country, some of whom were not so fortunate as I in escaping its dangers.

In 1923 my Ariadne company, on account of a slump in the price of silver and lead, shut down all operations at the mine. Just as thirty years before, on account of a depression in mining I had left with my wife for the east, the cycle had returned and we again took up our residence in Washington D.C. To be sure the town had changed somewhat since the days of '93, but my old newspaper, the Washington Herald, was now flourishing under the ownership of Mr. Hearst and had become a power on Capital Hill among the great brains of the country.

Like many other new arrivals in Washington, I soon became an habitu   of brokerage office, where I promptly invested and lost my slender capital in close margins. Among the stock operators I met one John Alden Standish, who intimated that he was interested in mining and offered me a liberal commission if I would go to North Carolina and make an examination of the Gold Hill Mine. Standish was president of the Pyorrout Laboratories at Rockville, Maryland, and I opined that I could not be wrong in tying up with such a time-honored name as he was carrying

about. After making the report, which was not a favorable one, we investigated the Vaocluse Mine near Fredericksburg, Virginia, a two-hundred acre tract of land that in 1830 had been the scene of one of the earliest gold operations in America. This mine had a fine record, so I looked up the owner, Judge Alvin T. Embrey of Fredericksburg, and when I left him I had bought the Vaocluse for \$6000, having about \$15,000 in operating the mine, cleaning out the various shafts and tunnels, and putting a large tonnage of ore in sight. While operating this property I had an offer of \$200,000 for the mine with a down payment of \$20,000 from the manager of a large English company. I took the proposed buyer with me to New York, where we found Standish occupying the bridal chambers in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel with his new wife. He nonchalantly refused the \$20,000 deposit and calmly asked for two million dollars. Three months later Standish could not make the last payment of \$4000 and the property went back to Judge Embrey. After many vain attempts to obtain another option, Henry Ford stepped in and bought the mine for \$10,000, and removed the antiquated machinery to his museum at Dearborn. He has never put the Vaocluse in operation.

Another combination, under the name of the Virginia Gold Mines, availed itself of my services, and would have been successful had it been possible to finance the project, but the fact that it was so close to Washington militated against it, for no one would believe that there was any gold in Virginia. Had it been in Alaska, Canada, or Kamschatka, investors would have fought for the stock, for distance lends enchantment in mining as well as in personal charms.

The allure of the yellow metal still clung to me, and my irrepressible quest for gold resulted in a coalition with my old partner Ambler J. Stewart. Together we secured another Virginia gold mine that prior to the Civil War had been a noted producer. In fact, it was on this property that the first nugget of gold was found in this country. The name of this mine was the Whitehall, and the property consisted of a thousand acres of land. On this tract there are no less than fifty-two veins of quartz outcroppings, and there may be many more in the apex of which do not appear above the surface. There are large bodies of iron, both metallic and pyritic, which will be commercially profitable on the exhaustion of the Texas sulphur deposits. The immediate value of the property is in the quartz veins, nearly all of which are gold-bearing. These mines were in active operation at the time of the Civil War, but were closed on the arrival of the Confederate troops, who demanded that the miners either join the army or go north. The operators, being Northerners, elected to leave, and the shafts were filled up, the machinery destroyed, and the building burned. One shaft in particular, where a pocket of gold amounting to \$240,000 was found within a space of three feet square at a depth of twenty-eight feet, was filled to the top, and at the time of our arrival an oak tree two feet in diameter was growing in the center of it. In addition to this pocket, a report written by the superintendent in 1859 stated that \$172,000 was also recovered in a stamp mill within a few months.

There were some drawbacks, which we had to overcome before success could be reached. As luck would have it, the best showings of quartz were found to be in low ground. We had a forty-foot shaft there, and opened several pockets of the rich quartz that indicated the presence of a prospective mine. We had sunk the shaft to sixty feet when a heavy rain fell one night and the next morning we found our shaft in a middle of a lake. As this situation could not be remedied without the expenditure of much capital, we were compelled to take our loss and give up the Whitehall.

It would be natural for the ordinary individual to reason that with so many failures to my credit it would be proper for me to withdraw from the mining business and try something else. But not I! The glamour of the mines has been ingrained in my bones, and I must keep on. Any way one looks at it, I must have a nose for the mineral, or I never would have prowled about in the Blue Ridge Mountains until I discovered a fine deposit of native copper. Immediately I got busy in its development, secured a twenty-year lease on a thousand acres, organized the Blue Ridge Copper Company. I sold some stock, and one enthusiastic stockholder was so delighted with the showing that he wrote me the following letter:

Washington, D.C., May 6, 1929

“Dear Mr. Iles,

“Recently, on hearing of your find of copper ore in the Old Dominion State, in company with some mining friends, it was good pleasure, also great surprise, to visit your Blue Ridge Copper property, some 1200 feet up on the southern slopes of Mt. Marshall, Virginia, which we reached by alighting at Little Washington, journeying by horseback along beautiful Rush River and up the mountain slopes to the goal, a trip of about three hours and one thrill after another. This venerable old mountain seemed to tower 2000 feet higher, and from the enormous amount of the real red metal deposit viable, I think no doubt in the future it will be known far and near as Copper Mountain.

“I have personally visited big mines in the great Southwest and helped to work some. After carefully going over your 1000 acres of unique holdings, never before have I seen such an opportunity to quickly develop a great producing copper mine; never before have I ever seen or ever heard of any mine so favorably located for workings: an abundance of water, health and living conditions simply ideal and so clean, in God’s sunshine, fine native timber surrounding, and labor eagerly waiting at minimum wage. The ore can be taken out so easily, sent down to low levels by gravity to great ore bins, from which it can be loaded on cars or trucks, and on hard roads taken to nearby markets just as rapidly as men, machinery, and powder can loosen it from the mountainsides, which should be hundreds of tons daily, then increase to thousands, operating day and night, by sunlight and electricity. It seems to me that no one can go over the property, if they have a mining knowledge, without being deeply impressed with its immense wealth so near at hand. There need be no long-drawn-out-make-ready, but high grade ore quarried right now from the surface, and millions of tons, as is usual with such copper deposits, will no doubt be found richer with depth.

“It is so remarkable that the old mountains of the East have been overlooked since 1849, in the rush to California, and that it has remained for you, after traveling the world over inspecting various mines, to make the richest find of copper deposits known to the world today, perhaps, high up on the Blue Ridge, surrounded by primeval forest, which I think will prove better than a gold mine soon, growing better for a century.

“You deserve great credit. Your capitalization is small (\$500,000), and selling about one-fourth of it will suffice. We predict a big winner in profits for you and your associates. If you need development funds your friends here will gladly inspect it and join you quickly if they want to make good honest dollars fast. It is a rare opportunity, which we have never had in the east. By

all means hold your controlling interest, as its quick earning will make you rich soon. Your great practical experience and your staying on the property to watch and direct its progress mean so much, and I would advise my closest friends to put in with you to the limit if given a chance. I trust, for a few weeks at least, you may afford them such an opportunity.

Very sincerely,
George Myerz”

The deposit continued to improve, and I was beginning to see a prosperous mine in sight, with dividends galore for my stockholders, when the government closed in on me and took possession of my land for a part of the Shenandoah National Park. Then, with a claim for damages of \$20,000 against the State of Virginia, which will probably be paid to my grandchildren, if any. I gracefully withdrew from one of the finest propositions with which I was ever connected.

Chapter XLI

The greatest disaster of my life came in March 1928, while my wife and I were in Washington after the closing of the Whitehall. We lived at the Westmoreland Apartments, where we had maintained our home for many years. Ida had not been well for several weeks, but on this day felt that a walk down Connecticut Avenue would benefit her. The morning was cold and a raw wind blowing up from the Potomac flats made our walk so disagreeable that after a few blocks we turned back. At the corner of Florida Avenue we met an old acquaintance and stood talking for some time. Reaching home, my wife complained of a cold and I advised her to go to bed while I prepared for her some simple remedy.

Towards evening of the next day she felt worse and I put in a call for a doctor, but none responded. Late that night a doctor came, but after he had examined the patient he said he could not prescribe for her because he was not a general practitioner but a surgeon. Again I called for a physician, but it was noon on the third day of her illness before one came. Pronouncing double pneumonia, he ordered a nurse and gave me no encouragement. By evening her pulse had stopped and I prepared for the worst. I had been in constant attendance on my beloved wife since she took to her bed and as night wore on I noticed her hands and lower limbs were growing cold, so I heated them with hot water bags. Her breathing was difficult and her chest sounded dry. She tried to talk to me, but I could not distinguish what she said. Then she lay quiet until 2:00 A.M., when she said clearly, "You are worn out, Allie. Lie down and get some sleep." I lay down on the bed and she turned over on her side. I must have slept about fifteen minutes when I woke with a start, and reaching out my hand I felt her body growing cold. I sprang off the bed and ran to the other side. There she lay still in death, a seraphic smile on her face. I knelt by her side to chafe her dear hands, but all was quiet and I knew no more.

When I revived, the doctor was there and all that was left of the dearest woman in the world was being taken away in a basket by the undertaker to prepare for burial. We held the funeral services in a chapel and I took the body to Glens Falls, New York, where in the midst of the friends of her girlhood, she was lowered to rest in the family tomb with her parents. Thus passed the love of my life, my helpmate of thirty-five years, an incomparable wife, and a woman true as steel.

Lonely and discouraged, I tried to throw myself into the development of the copper deposits in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, with the results as given in the preceding chapter. My efforts to start a mining enterprise in the East were doomed to failure. It was getting late in the spring, and if I was to accomplish anything that year in the West, it was time for me to be moving. Therefore, I sold my apartment furnishings, and again turned my face to the San Juan, where I had spent so many happy days with my beloved Ida.

If one can stand an altitude of over 9000 feet, life in Silverton can be endured if not enjoyed by "holing up," listening to the gossip of the neighbors, watching the bus come in, and if fortunate enough to have a job, trying to keep it. Silverton, being a thriving camp, is far ahead of the general run of the mining towns, and having the mines to support its population, it is the Mecca of outside miners in search of employment and the goal of the itinerant promoter, all of which tends to a state of versatility which is needed to absorb the surplus energy of the people. One thing to be sure, the town is not so "wide open" as in former times. The pack trains and ox

teams no longer crowd Greene Street, and lynching bees no longer put the fear of vigilance committees in the hearts of thieves and other evildoers. The businessmen do not outfit the prospector on credit any more, and the mine buyer has quit appearing on the dump of a new strike with his checkbook in his hand. The glamour of rich mineral is still there, but somehow the mines change hands differently from the methods of the '80s. I can recall the day when New Yorkers paid \$250,000 for an Ouray claim, and all the sellers had with which to make the deal was a specimen of ruby silver from Mount Sneffles. Today the \$250,000 would have to be blocked out in the mine before they got a nickel. But the mining game is still very much alive, and as long as one plays honestly and with business sense, there will always be profits in mining.

I am now coming to the end of my narrative. I have passed my eightieth year, and feel that I have earned at least a temporary rest. I have related my story without embellishment, at the risk of being called a first-class liar by those who do not know that truth is often stranger than fiction. As to whether it is believed I am entirely indifferent, for I am rich in my memories of adventures in all corner of the globe. My hairbreadth escapes from death have been almost uncanny. The incident of the Hugli River, where the ship passed over me and there was less than two fathoms of water between the bed of the muddy stream and the "Glasgow's" keelson; the fall from the royal truck; the loss of the "Captain" when she went down with nearly all hands; the awful feeling of falling from a ship into the Red Sea in the dead of night in a gale of wind; the almost miraculous escape from drowning while being washed overboard by one sea and thrown back by another; the tumbling along the river bottom of the muddy Nebesna in Alaska; the extremely embarrassing situation I was in at the Ajo mine, when I was standing on the brink of a shaft with a rope around my neck, at the mercy of a band of hoodlums; the wild scramble up the shaft at Leadville to escape the explosion; the moments of terror as I watched tons of rock slip slowly down upon me in the true style of Edgar Allen Poe, not to mention the dallying with the deadly snow slides of the San Juan – These things have brought me close to Eternity and snatched me away again. Fate has ordained that I should miss them one after another, and seems to have me tucked comfortably under her wing until perhaps some time I will feel too sure of myself --

My story is one of adventure, struggle, and enterprise, in which failure and success is alternated with sometimes surprising rapidity. The reader, from a disinterested perspective, not influenced by the human element, which was present in each incident, can see my errors of judgment and so may take steps to avoid similar mishaps if confronted with like circumstances. The wise person is one who learns to capitalize upon and not be crushed by failure and misfortune. In the coming years I hope to take advantage of them myself. The secret of success seems to be embodied in the ability to know just when to hang on and when to let go, and it is not always possible to know at the time which procedure is best.

In chronicling many of my disappointments in mining ventures, it was not so much to record the events of my life as to give first-hand information to those who follow as to locations in which lost mines are waiting to be rediscovered and developed. This old world has many fabulous treasures tucked away in her wrinkled old surface, waiting for the hardy prospector who is willing to dig. Let them take advantage of my sixty years of poking about this earth. In this story I have touched many opportunities, which may be seized with advantage by others who are in a position to work out the steps necessary to carry them to a successful conclusion.

There is one lost mine which I reserve for myself, and before "30" is written over my name and I am gathered to my forefathers, I will find it. Back in the summer of '81, one afternoon I was returning from a trip to the south fork of Cement Creek, on the side of Boulder Mountain. It was growing late, and I stopped for the night at the cabin of Doc Wattles, in the timber near Illinois Gulch. Doc was an old-time prospector, and what he did not know of Boulder Mountain was not worth telling. We sat up late swapping stories, he telling of hair-raising discoveries and I of my experience at sea. The next morning I was awakened by a rifle shot under my bunk, and on jumping from my bed I found that Doc had shot a ground hog that had crept into the cabin during the night and crawled under my bed. The ground hog was young and we had him for breakfast. After the meal Doc said he was going my way, and we started out together toward the Pride of Cement Mine, which was in the next gulch. The trail lay along the side of the mountain through heavy timber. After walking about half a mile Doc suddenly stepped off the trail, saying, "Wait a minute," and went straight down the hill. About eighty or a hundred feet below the trail he began to pick in the hillside, and I, curious to know what he had found, also went down to where he was working. He had laid a slab of the moss back and dug a hole about twelve inches in diameter, from which he was pulling out the broken rock with his hands. What I saw made me gasp! The hole was in white quartz, which was speckled all through with a glittering yellow metal. I reached in and took one of the flakes in my finger, thinking it was iron pyrite, but it bent to my touch and I knew it was gold. I slipped a piece of it into my pocket, and Doc, without a word, filled up the hole and covered it with the slab of moss that he had thrown back. He then motioned me back to the trail and we proceeded on our way. Later in the fall, Doc went to Seattle and died there.

After carefully preserving that piece of quartz all these years, in October 1935, I had it crushed and run into a button of gold by Root & Norton, the Durango assayers. The button weighs four pennyweights, showing that a ton of the same quartz is worth \$84,000.

For the past several years I have searched that hillside, but there have been many changes in the district that I have not yet recognized it. Old trails have disappeared and new ones have been built, but I have at last located the remains of the old cabin, and feel that I am close to the spot where the blanket of green moss may again be laid aside to disclose the pot of gold which is at the end of every prospector's rainbow. But even if I do not find it, I can think of no lovelier spot in which to spend my last days. There is no place in the world where I would rather be, unless perhaps, if I find that mine, I may again be able to visit the island of Johanna, or some other quaint port in the South Seas!