

Property of Norman S. Abbott,
Lancaster, California.

by Norman S. Abbott.

This is a simple story of the life of a sailor in the last days of sail ships, while some of the world's commerce was still being carried by sailing vessels and seafaring was a trade calling for specially trained craftsmen, well drilled in their work and hardened to the strenuous life of battling with the elements.

It is the story of a life soon to be forgotten, for there are very few of the cargo ships, propelled only by wind, left in active service, and they are for the most part manned by apprentices working for experience rather than for a living as tradesmen; apprentices who hope to fit themselves for positions as officers of the more modern commerce carriers, steamers and motor ships, which have almost completely crowded the wind ships out of commercial transportation.

The sailor of today is but little different from the stevedores who load and unload the freight carried by machine-driven cargo carriers plying along the coast or crossing the waters between the continents. He acquires but little knowledge of the work done by wind and current in helping the sturdy ship to deliver her freight or perhaps driving her relentlessly to her doom on some rocky reef. His life is one of routine rather than responsibility.

Even the few cargo-carrying wind ships of today are officered by men who recognize that their crew are students rather than laborers, and while giving valuable instructions to the youths, not sparing them in any of the strenuous tasks required of a sailor, still treating them as intelligent humans, furnishing ample and wholesome food and safeguarding their lives in a manner that would be beyond the comprehension of the average sailor of the old type, accustomed as he was to battling for his very life amid accommodations of the crudest sort, where safety nets and life lines were considered unnecessary expenses and a sailor or two disabled or drowned was just an inconvenient incident, regrettable, to be sure, but unavoidable.

English ships, in those days, carried a few apprentices, never more than four, who were supposed to be students and expected better treatment than the sailor before the mast, but with the exception that they were given berths in the half-deck, a cabin located in the waist of the ship, away from the sailors, their lot was no different.

The American ships, instead of calling the students apprentices, signed them on as Ordinary Seamen, thus differentiating them from experienced sailors, who were called Able Bodied Seamen, These students lived with the sailors and were expected to receive the same treatment, except that they were relieved of the heavier tasks.

Seafaring life began for me when as a boy still in grammar school I learned to paddle a dugout canoe around the shores of Elliot Bay on the outskirts of Seattle. From

that small beginning I acquired a taste for salt water, and much of my idle time was spent on the bay in some kind of a contraption that would float and move around: Indian dugout canoes, canvas and light wooden canoes, row boats, small sailboats; anything at all that would float, I soon mastered the handling of them all. So it seemed to be the natural thing for me to do when I was in need of a livelihood, to turn to the occupation that I was most familiar with and seek a berth on some sort of a boat.

Chance led me to apply for a place on the little steamer "City of Topeka," carrying freight and passengers between Seattle and southeastern Alaska, and I was given the job as deck-boy. A few inquiries as to an outfit and a few purchases of clothing and blankets all stuffed into a capacious war-bag, and I was prepared. Then with my war-bag on my shoulder, I climbed up the gangplank and found my way to the sailors' quarters in the forecabin, --pronounced by all sailormen "fo-c-ale." The berth allotted to the deck-boy was shown to me and I dumped the bag into it and reported on deck to the boatswain --"bosun,"-- for duty and was told the work I was to take care of.

This fo-c-ale was a den located right up in the front end of the boat, and was a narrow, three-cornered space used to eat, sleep and loaf in, although the loafing time was more imagined than real.

The deck-boy's duties were to wash decks, paint work and windows, polish brass trimmings, coil down hawsers and mooring lines and do any odd jobs suggested by the officers of the steamer. His working hours were from six in the morning until six in the evening, with time out for meals. He was also subject to call at other times in case of emergency. It was advisable for him to remain below in the forecabin when off duty, for if he was seen on deck he was subject to call for work. To stay below was no hardship, for the boy saw all he wanted to during the day. But if the steamer was tied up to the wharf in some port in the evening, shore leave was always allowed the boy and I had many a pleasant hour strolling around the towns, visiting with the inhabitants and examining Indian boats, dwellings and totem poles, and other things of interest to a youth full of a boy's curiosity.

The Topeka was an average good boat and the officers averaged up well enough with the officers of other steamers in the coastwise trade, which placed them slightly above the general average of the officers of deep-sea tramp steamers and wind ships. With these officers, the deck-boy's life on the Topeka was not at all bad, especially when it came to the food question. This was good beyond all but the wildest dreams. Coffee and pie was on the table in the sailors' mess all the time, day and night. A snack was served when the crew turned out at five in the morning. Breakfast at seven; another bite about nine-thirty; dinner at twelve; "coffee and," about three-thirty; supper at six, and a lunch left on the table for the night. This night lunch was very acceptable to the crew whenever they were called out in the night to dock ship and discharge some cargo at some way port. And the meals were hearty, well balanced and well cooked.

The sailors in the coastwise trade ranked the highest of all I was ever shipmates with while I was following the sea. Highest mentally, morally and mannerly, with a sprinkling of wits and wags among them, and I soon adjusted myself to sharing their mode of life with them, and found that they were always willing to give me a lift and help me to get the hang of things we had to attend to aboard the boat.

Barney Burns, the bosun, had the most enormous fists I have ever seen on a human being, and I often glanced with respect out of the corner of my eye at that ham-like paw, I think he had probably acquired the size of those hands from long years of pulling and hauling on ropes, for he had followed the sea all his life from early boyhood

up. He boasted that he had never been seasick in his life, when I first got acquainted with him.

An incident occurred, however, on one rather rough trip, that ended his boasting along that line to me forever, and that threatened my young life as well. While crossing one stretch of open sea, it may have been Milbank Sound, for we usually caught a bit of a sea there even if the other exposed waters were quiet, we got into a nasty swell which caught us under the starboard quarter and kept the ship twisting and shivering in a manner upsetting to any squeamish stomach. I was called to go aft to the fantail with the bosun where the hawsers and mooring lines were coiled, to help lash them fast so as to prevent them from possibly washing overboard and getting tangled up in the propeller, which event would put us out of commission and endanger the ship.

Barney was just ahead of me as we came to the fantail, and of course was the first to discover a couple of women passengers coiled up with the ropes, and oh, so sick! Well, they were in a dangerous place, so the bosun took one of them on his arm and I took the other, and we started forward along the narrow passageway on the lee aide of the after-house. We had only just started, however, when the boat gave a shivering heave that was just too much for our fair companions, and they swung toward the rail with Barney between them. Swung quickly, but not quite fast enough, and our bosun got a spray from one of them on his cheek, while the other sprayed his clothing. This was too much for poor Barney. "Here, grab this one!" he said, and with an "ooouulp," he too let fly, swearing between every heave.

I was young and new and not a bit bothered by the circumstance, so I was able to deliver my charges to their staterooms and return to my work of cleaning up the fantail and making the ropes all fast.

Barney soon regained his equilibrium, and immediately sought me out, finding me in the fantail just finishing my job. With the most horrible oaths and threats to my life he enjoined me to secrecy regarding his mal de mer. I respected his ham-like fists, and anyway I respected his wishes, for I knew the joy the other sailors would have at his expense if I told the story, and so, not only am I alive today but I profited by my hidden knowledge and had him as a valuable ally for the remainder of my service on the Topeka.

Naturally, among rough men, the witticisms might be a bit rough and the humor rather raw. Old "Welsh" Dave was a fair example of a wag, though a good sailor, with a proper respect for his officers and ship. Our captain, William Thompson, dubbed "Hog Bill" because of his having run a ship engaged in the transporting of live pork at one time, was rated the best pilot on the inland route between Seattle and southeastern Alaska. But he had an irascible temper, much to the delight of the crew so long as none of us were directly involved in his tantrums. When properly aroused, he had an impulsive flow of undignified diction, the like of which, so Dave said, was unequalled on land or sea. I could hardly believe that broad an assertion until Dave, to convince me, framed old Hog Bill very successfully. In his recent roamings ashore, Dave had acquired a superb crop of warmth-loving livestock. The kind that get in your hair. He caught a dozen of so of his most active pets and placed them in an envelope, and soon was washing paintwork by the captain's cabin door, while Hog Bill was on the bridge. Then, with me on watch to warn him in case of approaching danger, he slipped into the cabin, and turning back the covers of the captain's bed, he deposited the contents of his envelope between the sheets and carefully spread the covers in place again.

Next day we were threading some difficult passages between islands and mainland which kept the captain busy pacing back and forth on the bridge. As he warmed

up with the exercise, he became more and more convinced that he was beset unfairly, until, when we came into some open water which did not require his closest attention, his enthusiasm burst all bounds and passengers and crew alike fled in wild dismay before the torrid torrential tirade which flowed in a steady stream from his bountiful store of pent-up phrases, exclamations and adjectives. Welsh Dave was ecstatic. "Didn't I told you he could do it up right?" he said to me when we were in a safe place and dared to breathe freely. You may be sure that the culprits involved in this episode maintained a discrete silence, for the wrath of the captain would have swept us from the face of the sea.

It was about my second trip north on the Topeka from Seattle when we were crossing Dixon's Entrance in the evening with a rough chop catching us under the quarter, that I had my first and only touch of seasickness. Immediately after the meal I had climbed up into my bunk, which placed me close to the top of the room and with the mess table directly in front of me. The room was full of odors of steaming beef, cabbage and other greasy smells, and the sailors all pulled out the vilest rotten pipes and added their perfume to the already overburdened atmosphere. With those smells in my nostrils, the sickening roll and heave started pensive thoughts to generate in my subconscious mind, and soon I became aware that I was likely to emulate the antics of my friend the bosun when we had the two sick females in tow unless I could assume an upright position. There was no room for me to sit up either in my bunk or on the floor, so I had to turn out and go on deck where the fresh air quickly revived me. On our arrival at Seattle from the return trip I took my small pay check and spent a part of it for a corn cob pipe and a package of tobacco, and proceeded to immunize my system against any further attacks of upsetting smells. It worked, and I've never since felt any touch of seasickness. Nor did I have any trouble in acquiring the habit and taste for smoking. Lady Nicotine has been my constant companion ever since, excepting, a few occasions when I fancied I could do well enough without her and put her aside, only to find that I still craved her soothing, quiet, comforting and nerve-resting effect on me.

The Topeka made stops at many way ports between Seattle and Skagway, frequently tying up late in the afternoon or early evening, when I would take advantage of my privilege of not having to work after six, and after finding out how long we expected to be delayed, if there was to be time enough I would go ashore and take in the sights, which were always a novelty to me. Fort Wrangel had an unusually large number of totem poles. Family histories, these were; they might well be called family trees, carved as they were out of sizeable pine trees, some of which it seems to me must have been around about thirty feet tall. There was a fairly long row of Indian dwellings on the edge of the town, nearly every one of which had a handsome totem pole erected in front of it. Some truly wonderful poles there were among this row, and all were original Indian work, representing the life and deeds of their owner families, since at that time there was not any developed commercial demand for these native monuments.

In calm weather these inland channels were mirror-like and their glassy surfaces would reflect the wooded hills of the shore line, making perfect images upside down as clear as the actual landscape appeared. Many glaciers added their blue and white to the charm of the scenery, and also added chunks of ice to enhance the difficulties of navigation of this so-called inland route to Alaska.

Through these channels our captain used to pilot the ship with as much assurance on a dark night as by daylight, with the exception of one or two very narrow passages, or where the tide was running dangerously fast. Then we might anchor and wait for daylight or for a slackening of the tide. During one of these enforced delays I was awakened by

some unusual noise on the deck. I heard a boat being lowered over the side. Then shortly after this, I heard the boat returning and the boatmen calling for a sling. I thought we might have picked up an invalid, and went on deck to see just what was up. Two deer had been seen swimming the channel and one of them had been caught by the boat and brought aboard, and the boat was after the other, which was easily overtaken and captured. Two deer caught alive. I never knew just what became of those deer. Never even speculated aloud. In fact, I was not much interested. Deer were too common, and I had no craving to hunt for the fun of killing, anyway.

Just before my first trip to Skagway, a notorious character, one "Soapy" Smith, reputed to be an ex-soap box orator, but graduated in this town of easy money to the position of big-shot gangster, had been running the underworld part of the town with a high hand. He and his cohorts had been taking toll of all who were foolish enough to try their luck at gambling in any of the resorts under his control in the locality. In fact, it was not necessary to do any gambling to be relieved of any surplus money, for if any spectator was not willing to buck some game, but was suspected of hoarding his gold, there was always a chance that he would be forced to disgorge before he was allowed to leave town. Soapy was a dictator, and hoarding gold was as much a crime to him, if he wasn't the one who was hoarding, as it has since become to others holding more power than Soapy ever had.

However, Soapy had been eliminated shortly before I first arrived. The grease spot he made when he fell in a duel with the law was still to be seen on the wharf where the affair had been staged. We had as passengers going south, some of his brethren gentry traveling more or less incognito for their health.

That episode just about ended lawlessness in the district. The law had more and better gunmen than Soapy's class could muster.

We made a pretty picture on one of our trips, after bucking a freezing wind and a choppy sea. The deck was coated deep and the rigging sheathed with ice. We used many pounds of salt trying to soften the deck ice so that we might clear it off enough to get around about our work with a margin of safety.

The little town of Ketchikan was one regular stopping-place for us, usually on our return trip south, when we would take on tons of halibut packed on ice in large boxes weighing when full about two hundred pounds. On one trip, part of the halibut catch was not yet in the port, and we stopped out in the channel, tying to one of the larger fishing boats, and took her cargo from her. The fishermen were packing the fish in their boxes as we came alongside, and we had the opportunity of observing the fish, hardly dead enough to have ceased wiggling, being iced for shipment. Those fish would go on the market in the best possible condition. They were the most enormous halibut I ever saw, some, I believe, weighing more than a hundred pounds. And they were delicious. Far better than are the fish caught farther south where the waters are so much warmer.

Juneau gave us but little freight, though always a few passengers, but right across the inlet we frequently took on tons of sacked concentrates from the Treadwell mines located on Douglas Island, to be delivered to the smelters in Tacoma, Washington. Then our ship would have been a prize for pirates, for the concentrates were rich in gold. But pirates were simply unheard-of up there, so we missed that touch of romance and considered our valuable shipment from the mines as just so much additional cargo. One of our crew, Martin Taafe, had served as deck-boy before me, and while I was still with the boat he was advanced to the job of third mate. He was a kindly, friendly fellow, studious and rather quiet. Not the boisterous type I had imagined I would find climbing

up from the deck crew to an officer's place. He it was who first suggested to me that to make a first-class officer one should have deep-sea experience on a sailing ship.

Some of our crew were deep-sea sailormen, and they gave me instruction in rope and cable splicing, tying all of the knots used on ship, and some practice sewing with palm and needle, and any other things they could think of that a deep-sea sailor has to know. But they could not give the most needed part of the education, experience. That could be acquired only on a square-rigged sailing ship.

The quartermasters (steersmen) took a hand in my education also, and frequently invited me into the wheelhouse and taught me to box the compass, which means the reading of that instrument in any position, and allowed me to handle the wheel for hours at a time, of course under their watchful eye every minute. That work just seemed to be naturally made for me and soon I was rated an excellent hand at the wheel.

With all this knowledge acquired, I began to feel that I should ask for advancement, but the sailors were unanimous in their opinion that I should have deep-sea experience before I tried to get an officer's berth on a steamship, and I felt then and know now that their advice was for the best. So with that idea in mind I took up the matter with my father when I was in Seattle, and he arranged for me to ship on a full-rigged ship, the "Marian Chilcott." She was bound from Seattle to the Philippines, under charter to the Government with a load of hay and lumber for the army in Manila.

I had expressed a desire to enlist in the volunteer army for service in the Philippines during the Spanish-American war, then going on, but Father, being of Quaker faith, could not give his consent to this, and I was not yet of age, so this chance to go on this chartered ship to the Islands was very acceptable to me, and I quit the Topeka willingly enough, although I had become attached to the boat and her crew and officers, who had all been so willing and useful in helping me to get a start in this occupation of "following the sea."

The Marian Chilcott had formerly been named the "Kilbrannon," and was built in Glasgow and owned by the English before Barneson and Chilcott of Seattle bought and re-christened her. Three-masted, with square sails on all three masts, with royal sails as the highest, made her an ideal ship for me to gain the experience I had to have, so I went down to the wharf where she was loading, and presented myself to her mate for duty. I was put to work on the wharf with the stevedores who were doing the loading, for while she was nearly loaded, there was still a week or two of work to be done. In this work I teamed up with another sailor who was to ship as our bosun. The hold had been filled with lumber, the 'tween-decks were being stuffed with hay, and hay was to be loaded on deck up level with the bulwarks. A bulky load, but not heavy, and when finished it did not load the ship too heavily and she rode high, which promised us a fairly dry ship unless we encountered very bad weather.

With the loading completed, some carpenters came aboard and rigged up substantial pin rails above the bulwarks for the running gear to be fastened to, and also to act as guard-rails to save us from falling into the sea. Then the ship was ready to go when the crew should come aboard, and we were pulled out into the bay and anchored about a half mile from the water-front.

I had been living ashore while the loading was going on, but now I brought my outfit of clothing and bedding aboard and was assigned a bunk in the focsle by the bosun where the rest of the sailors would soon be ensconced. The ship was to lie where she was, "out in the stream," until the crew were secured, signed and shipped, provisions of perishable nature loaded, papers signed and many such last-minute details attended to. I

was given the job of boatman, with duties of ferrying crew and visitors to and from the ship to the shore.

This job was assigned to me for the reason that I was not getting drunk nor deserting the ship, and besides, I was very handy with a boat and oars. I ought to be handy, for I had had years of practice.

I brought the crew off from the shore to the ship in installments, some fairly early in the day and some rather late. Those late ones were well pickled and rather fogged as to just what was going on, but none of this bunch were shipped against their will, -- shanghaied, as they called it. However, drunk or sober, I managed to get them all safely out to the ship and aboard with their dunnage.

The officers, it seemed to me at the time, placed unusual confidence in me, for they not only travelled with me themselves, but entrusted their wives and other visitors to my unaided boatmanship.

I had been told by the crew of the Topeka that if I showed myself willing to do cheerfully whatever work was given me, I would have a gentleman's life on an American ship, and with that admonition in mind I was only too anxious to take the jobs as they came. And I profited by it, too, for I soon found that I was given better work than were the other boys, and shown more favors as well.

Orders were given to "flake" down some running lines, and I promptly started coiling down the line nearest me, but was checked by the mate, who told me to watch how it was done by sailors. They had a neat way of laying the coils carefully down, working toward the pin-rail, so that when the rope was paid out rapidly the coils would not tangle. That was lesson number one that I had not learned on the Topeka. From now on, there would be hardly a day pass without something new coming up, something of value to one who wished to be a thorough seaman as well as an officer of a steamship.

We were anchored in the stream for only a few days, but it seemed a long time to me, eager as I was to be going. However, the day for our departure finally came, and about four in the afternoon the sea-going tow-boat "Tyee" tied on to us and we manned the windlass and hove up the anchor. A sailor was sent to the wheel, and we swung around and headed out on the bay. The crew were busy now clearing up the deck and getting the anchor aboard and lashed down, fishing and catting, it is called. This work called for experienced sailors, one of whom had to go over the side of the ship and down to where the anchor was hanging on its chain. A block and tackle was lowered to him, which he fastened to the anchor, and then we hauled away on the line and the sailor rode up on the anchor, guiding it so that it would come up right-end foremost, ready to be lowered into its cradle on the deck. The anchor chain was unshackled from the anchor and stowed away in the chain locker. The hawse pipe, through which the chain disappeared into the chain locker, was tightly plugged to prevent any water from coming in if the ship was ready to meet any heavy sea that we might encounter in our long trip across the mighty Pacific.

Then the crew got out their panikins and spoons and gathered around the dinner kettle. All but one, and he was at the wheel and would have to wait to be relieved before he could eat. I was hungry, and the food tasted all right, but maybe I was a bit journey-proud, for I seemed to finish off my share before any of the others did theirs.

Just as I was licking up the last morsel from my plate, one or the older sailors suggested that one of them had better relieve the man at the wheel so as to let him get his dinner. Remembering that I was to be willing at all times, I promptly got to my feet and volunteered. Mind you, I was only a boy, a green hand, signed on the ship's articles as

ordinary seaman, supposedly absolutely new at sailorizing, and only able-bodied seamen were supposed to steer. But none of them said a word, just let me go to my inevitable fate, and I started aft as confidently as though I knew what I was about.

George Cathcart, with whom I had worked loading the ship, and who was now bosun, flagged me down with a call: "Where are you going, Abbott?"

"Aft to relieve the wheel, Sir!" I responded.

You are not supposed to address the bosun as "Sir," but I did not know that, and I was not overlooking any bets.

"The mate won't allow you on the poop," warned Cathcart.

"Oh yes, he will," I assured him, and climbed up on the poop deck and headed for the wheel.

Again I was challenged, this time by the mate, with the same question; and I replied as before, "Aft to relieve the wheel, sir."

"Can you steer?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," I replied, and I took the wheel from the sailor and sung out the course given me by him that I was to steer, just the same as the quartermasters did on the Topeka.

The Tyee was a powerful towboat and we could feel the quiver of her engines telegraphed to us through the taut tow line. The water curled away from our bow and rushed along the side, closing in behind us with pressure against our rudder that made steering easy, with the ship responding to the slightest movement of the wheel.

The shores of wooded islands and mainland slipped past and one familiar landmark after another loomed up in front of us, then came abreast of us and finally faded into the dusk behind us to join the fast growing group of scenes which tomorrow would be out memories only.

As we neared port Townsend, which lies right at the inland entrance of the Straits of Juan de Fuca, I noticed the Tyee waver in her course and then promptly straighten up again. I had steered the Topeka past this point and knew the cause of the wavering of the boat. A strong tide-rip is formed by the current running with the tide in the channel as it contacts the slack water in the bay and it is almost impossible to keep a boat from swinging off her course as she passes through the rip. Moonlight on the water and late daylight brought out every ripple on the water, and I watched the approaching rip, calculating the time of our entering it, and just as it was about to hit us I started to spin the wheel over to turn the ship's nose against the current as we were entering it at an angle. Tell me the mate wasn't alert! He jumped to the side of the wheel away from me, and with a mighty yank he tore it from my hands with an emphatic: "What the hell are you doing?" Right then the ship's bow cut slantingly into the current and we swung around almost broadside to the rip. So powerful was the towboat that the ship leaned over quite noticeably towards the pull and the tow line stretched up almost out of the water. Had the towboat not slowed down some, the strain might have torn out the bits or parted the cable. I guess the towboat pilot was watching us, for just such things have happened before to others unused to these strong rips.

The mate then helped me to steady the ship on her course, and as he released the wheel to me he asked: "How did you know we were going to hit that current?" I told him of my experience in the Topeka, and I am sure he felt I was fairly safe to be entrusted with the wheel after that, for he never again complained of my steering.

Soon I was relieved of the wheel and turned in for the night, for we expected to be routed out fairly early in the morning; and sure enough, at early daybreak all hands were called to make sail.

The towboat had slowed down and was reeling in the long towline. Some of us were ordered aloft to loosen and set the sails, while others remained on deck to handle sheets and braces. One bunch of sailors, headed by the boatswain, went up to the foresail, and another bunch headed by the second mate started up the mainmast. I joined this bunch and followed one of the sailors up as fast as I could scramble. This was my first experience up in the air, and I admit that I had difficulty in getting up, that first trip, and getting out on to the yard. Climbing up the rigging where it sloped in toward the mast was not too difficult, but just under the crosstrees a short ladder sloped sharply out, and one needed to call up all the latent monkey instincts in him to climb up on the under side of a sharply sloping ladder way up in the air on a swaying mast. One could go up through what is known as the lubbers' hole, between the crosstrees, and so avoid this upside down effect, but I chose to follow the lead of the sailor ahead of me, and feverishly clutching the ropes, I made the up and over trip safely and started out on the yard. The second mate was on the yard ahead of me, and I was in next to the mast, the safest place for a beginner to get the feel of being aloft with the deck so far below.

Before I came down I took one long look around for land and saw Tatoosh light still burning, but the shore line was dim and distant and we were far out on the ocean. Farther from land than I had ever been in anything but a steamer. Here, if we were ever to set foot on land again, we must have wind, for we had no other power once the towboat left us. And she, rolling gently in the sea ahead of us, even now was reeling in her long towline, preparing to leave us alone on the waves. Soon we cast off her towline and she swung around and pulled up abreast of us within reach of a light line by which our captain sent over to her a bundle of papers and letters. Last words.

Then, with a farewell blast of her whistle, the Tyee again swung in a long curve away from us and headed for land.

I felt just a little lonesome for a moment. Every familiar object, every familiar face was behind me. Ahead of me, I knew not what. Only a moment for dreary thoughts, for I was too busy to dwell on the past, too busy to think much about anything but the present, which was so full of new scenes and experiences for me, all interesting and engrossing, dimming the past and promising so much for the future.

As soon as the sails were set and I came down from the rigging I was called aft to take the wheel again, and given the order to "keep her full and by." "Keep her full and by, sir," I responded, and guessed at the meaning of the order. Keep the ship headed as near as possible toward the point the wind is coming from and yet keep the sails full and drawing. Well, I had guessed that one right, and that was another lesson not taught me on the Topeka. I began to see why the man on the steamer recommended deep-sea experience. There were things coming up every day on this ship that could not be learned on a steamer and could only be acquired on a wind ship, wind-jammer, such as I was on.

Then came the choosing of the watches, the division of the crew into two gangs, between the first and second mates. The crew were called aft and gathered just forward of the poop on the left of which the mate was standing with the second mate on the right. The mate had first choice of the men and the second mate the second choice and so alternating until the crew were divided into two groups, the port and starboard watches. I was the first ordinary seaman to be chosen, which put me in the mate's, the port watch, which is usually and was this time the best watch. For me, at any rate, for though the men

in this crew were average good sailors, I fancied the mate gave me a better chance to learn than I could have had under the second mate. I was still at the wheel, and from then on I was elected to take my regular two-hour watch at the wheel, an A.B. seaman's duty. This wheel duty pleased me far better than the routine deck labor, and besides it was as a rule not nearly so strenuous and never got monotonous.

It was now nearly eight bells and the starboard watch went below for breakfast while our watch cleared and cleaned up the decks. Eight bells and I was relieved of the wheel and went below for breakfast and then arranged my belongings in my bunk for a long tenancy. It was to be my home, for how long no one knew, but surely for months. It would be the only place where I could retire with any semblance of privacy.

There would be absolutely no more real privacy for a sailor on that ship than a goldfish has in its bowl. But our bunks were our castles and were respected as such by all except sneak thieves, who have no respect for man or God on land or sea. But unless there is an entire watch of unprincipled curs who do not hesitate to step over the line between the two watches' quarters, there is not much chance for petty larceny, and our crew were all pretty decent fellows.

There was some discussion, this first watch below, as to what kind of officers our captain and mates would prove to be. One man who later proved to be what the sailors call a "sea lawyer," claimed that our captain was just a Liverpool pug, and that we would feel his wrath before the end of the voyage. But fortunately for us, Captain Weeden never showed any unfairness or meanness during the entire time I was on the ship, and I concluded that our precious sea-lawyer was mistaken in his man. Some of the sailors thought that there would probably be quartermasters chosen from the crew and that I would be one of those selected for that job. The thing that gave that idea some weight was that it was unusual to put an ordinary seaman at the wheel at all, and as I had been called for that job it would naturally follow that I and three others would be elected for that work. I did not care very much what work I did, so did not bother much about these speculations, but on the whole I rather hoped that I would be given the same work the rest of the crew were employed with, and this proved to be the case.

The watches on the ship were timed the same as deep-sea watches have been timed since ocean voyages first began. That is, four hours on deck and four hours below, from eight o'clock in the evening until four the next afternoon when there were two short two-hour watches, dog watches, which automatically changed our time of work each day. So, one morning we would work from eight until twelve and the next morning we would be off from eight until twelve and work from twelve to four. This arrangement gave us twelve hours on deck at work and twelve hours below to eat, sleep and rest in. And could we sleep! Any time we dropped in our bunks we would immediately go to sleep and remain unconscious until called. Blow high, blow low. It made no difference. We could sleep through any kind of a noise.

As it turned out, there were no quartermasters chosen from the crew and I was given just the same work as was given to the other sailors, and it was only a few days after leaving the coast that I was working on the mizzen royal sail, the very highest sail on the mizzenmast, and I was taught to make and furl that sail all alone, an A.B. seaman's job. From then on I was given that job to do at all times when I was on deck and not at the wheel or on lookout duty. In fact, I was soon doing any work that an A.B. seaman was supposed to do, and if the work was new to me, someone soon taught it to me.

At that time I did not realize that I was being favored when given these jobs that rightfully belonged to the older seamen, but just supposed that I was needed for the work

because of our having what was called a fair-weather crew, which meant that we were woefully short-handed, as we had only eight A.B. seamen and three ordinary seamen including myself. The other ordinary seamen were given the usual jobs assigned to boys, such as cleaning out the sailors' quarters and officers' cabins and any odd jobs that were beneath the dignity of an able-bodied seaman. More drudgery, while mine was THE LIFE.

As I said, we had a deck cargo of hay which necessitated the use of makeshift pin-rails to take the place of the regular rails that held the belaying pins to which the ropes, lines and running-gear were fastened. These pin rails were fastened to the stays and shrouds very securely and answered the purpose for which they were designed well enough for the voyage, which, fortunately, was made without encountering any really rough weather. Had there been any very bad weather we might not have fared so well with just these poor rails as safeguards to keep us from falling overboard. The deck, as I said, was piled full of hay up level with the top of the bulwarks and covered with heavy canvas to protect it from rain and spray. Because of the fact that our crew were orderly and willing at all times to do whatever came up, we were allowed to lie quietly around on the hay and even go to sleep during our night watches on deck, always provided that we kept one man up and alert, ready to arouse the others at a moment's notice when there was any work to be done. I was usually the one to stand guard -- "Policemen," we were called -- for I thoroughly enjoyed the marvelous effects of moon, waves and the phosphorescence glowing with every disturbance of the water, and so was very willing to stay awake to enjoy these pleasant hours.

Looking down over the side of the ship I would watch the fiery streaks as some dolphin raced and sported around our bows, or else noted the glow as the wavelets curled away from the ship's side and the wake astern of us was just a boiling lava flow, fresh from a volcano.

One night when I was leaning on the rail enjoying the ever-changing display of fiery phosphorescence, and the rest of the watch were napping, or at any rate quietly resting under folds of canvas, the mate came down off the poop and talked quietly with me in a very friendly manner. This was quite out of the ordinary, for, as a rule, the officers of a ship do not permit the slightest sign of familiarity to appear between the sailors and officers, the idea being that any show of friendship or familiarity by an officer, if not a sign of weakness on the part of that officer, surely will lessen the respect of the sailors for their "betters" or cause some feeling of jealousy on the part of the sailors not included in the intimacy, which would serve to lessen the absolute control of the crew by the officers, perhaps at a time when instant action was most needed.

I was so surprised by this kindness of the mate that I hardly heeded his words, and nearly failed to catch the purport of his talk. He told me that I must consider myself superior to the sailors I was then with, although I must be constantly on my guard to keep from showing the slightest evidence of any feeling of superiority, as that would be laying myself open to much unfavorable feeling on their part towards me and close effectually one valuable source or learning. However, I was not to do any of the menial chores around the forecabin for them, but leave that work for the other Ordinaries to do, for there was plenty of regular Sailor's work for me to keep myself busy at, which would be more useful to me in my education than would be the cleaning out of the sailors' forecabin and toilet bowls and washing their dishes for them, I was to stand my watch at the wheel and lookout, with the older men, and to respond to any call for an A.B. sailor with the rest of them. In fact, I was to do only an A.B. sailor's work from then on. I was

just too dumfounded to fully appreciate the kindness the mate was expressing, and I am afraid I failed utterly to express my gratitude.

On lookout, the sailor is required to constantly pace back and forth across the forecastle head and watch the port and starboard lights which in those days were oil burning affairs that could, of course, go out at any time, although they were so well constructed that they were very reliable and I never in all my watches had one go out. At every tolling of the ship's bell by the man at the wheel who strikes off the hours and half-hours, the lookout must respond with the bell on the forecastle head, and also sing out: "All's well and the lights are burning brightly." Subconsciously that song sounds sweet to all hands whether they are on deck or off watch. While no one consciously hears it, yet let the words be changed to a warning, *that* instantly registers, and uneasy feelings disturb the sleepers.

This lookout duty appealed to me, for it was just one of the most interesting parts of the ship's work to be done, and I enjoyed the feeling of responsibility it gave me. A feeling that those men, both fore and aft, were resting secure in their berths with no uneasiness or fear that their safety was in any way endangered by carelessness or lack of vigilance on my part. It was really a very small part, but my youth and conceit gave it great magnitude and importance.

On the brighter nights the lookout was especially pleasant for me, for then I need not give such close scrutiny of the sea before me or of the horizon for lights or shore outlines, and in the simply sublime quietness of the night I could engage in daydreams without rude interruptions from the boatswain or some other officer with orders for some thought-requiring task to be done, I was alone with my thoughts on the sea, with the safety of the ship and man depending much on my vigilance. There I found true romance well worth living for.

Our captain, Mr. Weeden, had secured permission to bring his family, a wife and young boy of perhaps six years of age, with him on this trip, an event almost unheard-of, and we frequently had them on the poop-deck in fair weather. The boy was exceptionally well-behaved and almost never bothered in any way the work of the men. He would not have fared very well with our captain if he had not been so unobtrusive. One time when a line flaked down on the deck was uncoiling pretty rapidly as a sailor was paying it out, it threatened to entangle the boy. The mother cautioned the boy pretty sharply. Ella, however, was silenced by Captain Weeden, who said: "Let him get hurt once; it will teach him to keep out of the way."

I never had any occasion to talk with the captain, our conversation being limited to his giving me an order and my replying to it in the briefest possible manner, so I never got acquainted with the man, but I nevertheless formed a very favorable opinion of him, for I never saw any real evidence of his being anything but very fair in his administration of the ship's crew. No doubt existed in any mind but that he could be hard if occasion demanded stern measures, but on this entire trip such an occasion never arose.

Our mate, Mr. Warren, was, I believe, the same man who was with Jack London on his cruise in the *Snark*. I thought he was a very fair and just man in his dealings with the sailors, nor did I ever hear one word of complaint against him from the men, even though he was a very strict disciplinarian at all times. If a mate is a good seaman and fair to the men, they will always respect him, and we all knew Mr. Warren to be a very thorough sailor.

He was married and was compelled to leave his wife, who was shortly to become a mother, in Seattle when we left that port. I had ferried her to and from the ship several

times while we were anchored in the bay, and while I did not talk with her any more than necessary, I formed a very favorable impression of her and believed that she was a refined and well-intentioned woman. The life of a sailor's wife is at best a hard one, and to be married to a man whose duties take him across the ocean and keep him away from home for months at a stretch is not an enviable position for a home-loving woman to find herself in, and I felt sincerely sorry for both her and Mr. Warren.

That the man had a sudden temper I knew, for one dog-watch when I was sitting by the foremast doing some repairing on my clothes, Mr. Warren passed by and as he went he gave me some slight order to be performed when I came on watch. The task pleased me, and without thinking how it sounded, I answered him with: "That suits me." Quick as a flash I caught a blaze of fire from his eyes. "You're damned right it will suit you;" and he was gone. Then I knew I had made an improper remark and I felt a chill that I never forgot. I felt that I had brought the rebuke on myself and did not feel any resentment in the least toward him. It has always been hard for me to believe any of the reports I have heard of his violence and disagreeableness, after the unlimited kindness I always received from him. And to think that he had to be separated from his wife when she needed him the most, appeared to me to be a hard fate. It had to be that way, though, for a mate can never be allowed to bring his family on such a trip. In fact, with the exception made in Captain Weeden's case, I never heard of any officers of that day being allowed such a privilege. The idea was, apparently, that the officer's loyalty to the ship might be exceeded by his feeling for his wife at a time when his presence and best judgment were most needed.

Our second mate, Mr. Anderson, was a large, fairly good-natured man who also knew the ropes and was rated by the crew as a fair man. Being in the first mate's watch myself, I saw but little of Mr. Anderson, and so formed no definite opinion of him, but just accepted him as another one of the ship's officers, a man to be respected and obeyed. With these officers on the ship, it should have been hard for a sailor to find cause to grumble, but with some sailors grumbling is a second nature and if they were fed on the finest fried chicken, they would complain that the after-watch had tried the mess and found it not to their liking or else the crew would never have had a smell of it.

Of the minor officers the boatswain of course ranked the highest, for it was his duty to see that the orders given by the officers were performed properly, and he was on duty all the day acting as foreman over the crew in their daily tasks and was also on call at night in case of bad weather, as for that matter were all hands including the cook and the carpenter. All hands. The necessity for calling all hands almost never occurred on this trip, for the mates were watchful of squalls and we never had a real storm that required any prolonged work on our part to save the ship or canvas.

The cook was of next importance in the eyes of the sailors, as we all tried to stand in well with him, though it did not do us any particular good. We got our rations and we got no more. But he was a good sea cook and our rations were ample, so that we were a well fed and contented crew.

Actually, the carpenter was next to the boatswain in authority, for he occasionally had use for some of the sailors in his many tasks. On the Chilcott, the carpenter was also the donkeyman (engineer) and sail maker. So we had to help him repairing and making sails and spare spars, and dig out supplies hidden under sacks of coal piled in the donkey room. The "donkey" was, in the language of the landlubbers, the steam winch and boiler which were used to hoist the anchor when there was any hurry to get it up, hoist the heavy yards when setting sails, and to load and unload cargo. But on this trip, so far as I

remember, we never even got up steam in the boiler, but performed those tasks to the tune of old-time deep-sea "chanties." These chanties are one-line verses sung by some old-time sailorman with the crew taking up the one-line chorus with the rhythm emphasized by lusty pulls on the ropes. We had a stocky built good natured negro sailor in the starboard watch who usually led off with those chanties.

I'll never forget the first day out when we were getting the sails set before casting off from the towboat. Our mate, when we had the first halyard stretched out, with all of us ready to pull, spoke up with: "Well, let's have a chanty if any of you know one." This negro started up with his deep, clear, melodious voice: "Oh whiskey is the life of man," and we joined in with "Whiskey Johnny," giving a hearty pull with the first syllable of each word. Then again: "Oh whiskey is the life of man," and we in chorus "Whiskey for my Johnny," with three good long pulls on the rope. It was slow work raising the yard to the tune of the song, but then it was hard work, and the pauses between choruses gave us a chance to catch our breath and strength to finish the task without exhaustion, besides raising the morale of the crew. This chanting was also something I never heard, or even heard of, on the Topeka. It is something that will pass into dim history with the passing of square-rigged ships. Forgotten before even the ships are. There were many of these chanties, some with words no worse than "Whiskey Johnny" and some with wording not intended to be recorded in any history, But even were the best of the songs with their music recorded faithfully, they could never be sung ashore with any thing like the effect they had in the early morning watches at sea, when, with day breaking and the ship rolling and the men in their oilskins straining at the ropes, these weird chants wail and roll, swell and subside. No dotted lines on paper could give the singers ashore the same inspiring, thrilling voice the chanty men have at home on the sea. Imitation of the chanty is no more possible than imitating the glorious coloring of a sunset on a painter's canvas is possible. You just can't quite catch the deeper tones that are not human-made.

Then the steward made up the last of the petty officers. Our steward was a Japanese boy whom we called "Kobe," that being the name of the town he hailed from. I never knew his name, and as his duties were in the officers' quarters, we in the crew did not get acquainted with him.

The Marion Chilcott was a three-masted, full-rigged ship with a steel hull, steel masts and lower yards. As staunch a hull as ever floated at that time. She was water-tight, so we never had the labor of manning the pumps to keep her dry, but we did have the job of scraping off paint and rust above the water-line when we were in port. Also, when short of other work at sea, we chipped off rust from the anchor chains and painted them with red lead. This meant hauling those heavy chains up out of the chain locker on to the deck and stowing them again, and as those links were made of steel about an inch and a half in diameter, with equally heavy steel braces through the center of all the links, and each link about five inches wide and eight inches long, the task was no light one. Another job we had when we were not needed to handle the sails, was to braid sennet out of the strands of worn rope. Even the toughest and most calloused ringers would soon get sore with the handling of those tough and scratchy strands after a few hours. This sennet was used to make mats and chafing gear. Nothing was thrown away on the ship, but some use was found for all worn equipment.

Always there was some kind of work to do to keep the sailors busy and contented. Sometimes it was stripping off old chafing wrapping from the wire cable rigging and then painting the exposed cables with greasy tar. Then they were re-wrapped again, first laying cord in the low places between the strands, — "Worming," that was called. Then

wrapping burlap around the cable, --parceling--, then wrapping the job with strong, large twine, —"serving." The order of this work was laid down in a jingle: "Worm and parcel with the lay, turn and serve the other way." Then over all this binding, more slushy tar was worked on. The shrouds were thus protected from chafing and weather, from the dead-eyes up as far as there was any likelihood of the running-gear coming in contact with them.

The dead-eyes were hard wood, thick circular blocks grooved on the edge and with three holes drilled in them. Those were fastened in spliced loops at the end of the shrouds and in iron loops bolted to the hull of the ship. A strong rope about an inch and a half in diameter was rove through these holes in the deadeyes, the same as though they were pulley blocks, and drawn tight until the shrouds were as tight as fiddle strings. All these shrouds had to be tightened occasionally: —"setting up the rigging," it was called.

All the steel cables, shrouds and stays had to be painted where exposed above the wrapping, to protect them from rusting. A great deal of this painting fell to me, and I enjoyed the work aloft much more than I did the drudgery of the work on deck. Apparently the mate felt that I was a reasonably safe hand in the rigging. One day I was put to work painting the stays that run between the upper masts. The sea was calm. A light breeze on the beam served to hold the ship steady and I was rigged up in a boatswain's chair with lines running to both masts, then through sheaves and down to the deck where they were fastened to belaying pins. Then I had a light line with which to lower the paint can for refilling when necessary. The sun was warm, the ocean wonderful, and the view of the ship 'way down under me, heeling over with the breeze, with wavelets curling away from the bow, made a picture never to be forgotten. Every few minutes I would sing out: "Lower away!" to the boatswain who was tending the lines that shifted me along the stay, and I don't doubt but that I put my soul in my song, for the boatswain became slightly irritated. Perhaps the frequency of my song griped him, for I was working fairly fast and had to be moved often. At any rate, he once called back fretfully: "All right, all right, but don't make a damned song about it."

Another time when I was aloft, this time painting the spars, I came to grief. Just at eight bells, when I started down for lunch, I managed to spill most of the paint remaining in my can. The paint was yellow, and it splashed sails and spars impartially. Not nice to look at, for an officer who took pride in the appearance of his ship, though not really serious, for the bucket was more than half empty and with the enormous sails to get besmirched, the few small spots were hardly noticeable. It was customary for the mate on such ships to be at the rail by the rigging that the sailor came down on, when some offence had been committed, and to greet the luckless salt with a punch.

Although I knew this custom, and although the mate was standing by the rigging as I landed on deck, I never gave a thought to any possibility of physical punishment, but swung down to the deck with a rueful look on my face. The mate stepped up close to me and told me of the usual methods used for making sailors more careful, the least of which was to deprive the culprit of his watch below, compelling him to remain aloft cleaning and scrubbing off the smears.

However, instead of receiving severe punishment, I was given rags and sent back aloft to wipe off all the splashes and spatters that I could reach, and then sent down to a belated dinner which my shipmates had set aside for me and which the cook had kept warm.

This was a fair sample of the type of treatment the crew received on this ship from our officers. Not once was there any abuse of the men. The only time there was even a

threat that violence might be used, during the entire trip, was one time when a sudden squall struck us with too much sail on, and while aloft one of the sailors mistook an order. He had a heavy cap pulled down over his ears, and anyway there was plenty of noise to drown the mate's orders. Nothing serious happened as a result of the mistaken order, a little confusion and some unnecessary flapping of the sail, but the error was soon corrected. However, the captain came on deck just as we were getting the tangle cleared away, and hearing the mate's report on the cause of the confusion, promptly said: "Why didn't you punch him?"

After the Tatoosh lightship off the entrance to Puget Sound faded from sight to the northeast of us, we shaped our course to a southerly direction. With very light winds, the ship was carrying every sail she had room for, and a beautiful sight she must have made. Just enough wind to fill every sail full and drawing and make her lean slightly. The ship was bright with fresh paint, the sails new and white, a perfect symphony of color and motion.

The weather was rather hazy about the fourth day out, almost a fog but not really thick. About noon a sailor heard a fog-horn, deep and resonant but far away. He thought it was the fog-horn on the Farallon Islands, off San Francisco. It may have been, but our rate of travel had been so slow that it seemed to me we should be too far north and west to be near those islands. We never knew, at any time, just where we were, for the after watch gave out no information as to our location. From that time on we neither heard nor saw horn or ship until we raised the island of Molokai, of the Hawaiian group.

A few days after we heard the fog-horn we picked up a fresh breeze which took us farther west and held until we came into the path of the trade-winds blowing from the northeast, which sent us a-howling along our way. The ship was fairly fast and her hull clean and free of barnacles and grass, and frequently the log showed that we were making thirteen knots through the water. The sky was clear and the air was fresh and cool, the days full of interesting work, and I began to feel at home on the ship. The routine work made the days seem short and pass so quickly that I would lose all count of time until Sunday came with a relief from the less pressing work and with extra good food for our dinner. We would be allowed to wash and repair our clothes during our watch on deck if not engaged in some essential duty. As my togs showed signs of soil and needed washing, I tried to make them clean with salt-water soap and sea-suds, but the result seemed to be more like I had dipped them in varnish than water, so I had a brilliant inspiration. I would clean them with a minimum of labor and at the same time make a very thorough job of it. Then after I had demonstrated how easy it was, to get them really clean, I could boast all I wanted to. But I did not wish to tell any one of my method before I had tried it out, so as to show results rather than to expound a theory. The ship was moving fast through the water and had no propeller to get fouled with a line.

Wisely, I took my poorest overalls for the trial and tied them on the end of a light line, and in the dusk I made the other end of the line fast to a belaying pin and hove my laundry overboard for Father Neptune to put some of his crew to work for me, and went to my bunk confident that I would have clean dungarees for the next day. We came on watch again at midnight and I soon had a chance to take in my laundry. The line came in easily; too easily, it seemed to me. The end of the line soon appeared, and in the knot I had a few shreds of cotton fabric left of my good dungarees. Father Neptune evidently was not in the laundry business, and had been insulted by me. Well, that was another lesson not learned on the Topeka. What had happened to the clothes? Were they just worn off by the rushing water, or were they bitten off by a shark? I never found out, but I

suspected the latter, for about this time someone noticed long, shadowy shapes coming out from under the waist of the ship when the cook threw slops overboard after mealtime, and disappearing again after the feast. These shadows stayed with us for many days, during which time I noticed that my dolphins did not play around the bow of the ship for me to watch at night when I was on lookout. So I concluded these shadows were sharks and blamed them for destroying my laundry and spoiling my plan for easy washing. Anyway, I abandoned the plan and kept quiet about the experiment.

One day when it was my trick at the wheel, the captain came on the poop with a small calibered rifle and proceeded to do some target shooting. He threw bottles overboard, and when they had drifted some distance astern he would shoot them, or at them. A bottle that is bobbing around on the waves is not an easy target, and most of the captain's bullets struck the water only. But occasionally he would make a hit. Then his face would glow with glee. I had done some target shooting myself, and itched for a chance at those bottles, for that kind of a target was new to me. But of course I did not express any such desire, nor even thought of making any remarks. My job was right then to steer the ship and not say a word.

Some of the sailors thought that the captain was doing the shooting for the purpose or impressing the crew with his ability to use a gun, but I believed it was only sport to the skipper.

As we passed Molokai, we speculated on whether the captain would run in to Honolulu or not, but he appeared to be well satisfied to hold the course and howl along with the trades, without any unnecessary loss of time. And travel we surely did. Hour after hour and day after day. The wind held wonderfully. I would like to know our record day. I knew the speed we were making when the log was heaved and read, but that was all. The records were in the ship's log-book for the after watch to see. This wind held until we were well past Guam.

During the time we were in the trades the routine on the ship was quietly monotonous: work, eat and sleep, with no break in the watches; but after we left Guam we had light, variable winds that gave us more work with the sails. We hove to off Guam and reported by signals, but to our mild disappointment we did not put off a boat to go ashore. Our captain said it was too late in the day to send a boat ashore and get it back in the evening, so we hurried along.

It was just as well that he did not delay, for we soon ran out of the favorable winds and slowed down from our breakneck speed. Nor did we again get any amount of good winds. Now we would have every stitch of canvas set and only have bare steerage-way. The mate on watch would pace the poop deck watching the wind direction and study the sky and water for squalls. Every little while we would have to trim the sails to catch a shift of wind, or else we would be sent scurrying aloft to shorten sail as a black squall bore down on us. Then, the instant the puff was past, up and shake out the sails again. Our mate learned to gauge to a minute the time it took to stow the sails necessary to ease the ship of too much canvas, and we had to work lively or we would have a hard task handling the bellying sails as the puff caught us. As the royals were the first sails to be taken in, I was lucky, for I always had the mizzen royal furled before the blow hit us, but if the puff was a really stiff one I then had to give a hand with the larger sails. It was quite a trick to stand on the footlines and reach over the yard and grab the heavy canvas and haul it up hand-over-hand to the gaskets to be tied in safely, for when the halyards were slackened, the sail would sometimes fill like a balloon and curl up over the yard and us also. Then it was: "One hand for the ship and one for yourself," and we would grab the

jackstay and duck down close to or under the yard until the sail rolled off of us, when we would again haul it up to be made fast. Probably, because of continuous fair weather and carefulness of the officers, we never lost a man nor even had an accident that threatened to be serious. Our topgallant spars were made of wood, and one of them weakened, but before it broke we made a new one and had it in place with no damage done.

That was an interesting job. We had the material for the spar on deck and "Chips," the ship's carpenter, set to work to shape it up to measurements. We had another carpenter working his passage with us and he had to help on this job. He was really a cabinet-maker, and had been making fancy grills and gangplanks, which work just suited him, and he grumbled quite a bit at having to give a hand at this heavy work.

When the spar was ready to be put in place we went aloft and stripped the sail and gear off the weakened old spar and sent it down. This work required experienced seamen, and while I lent a hand, the careful work was done by several of the older sailors. When the new spar was in place and the sail set and drawing again, I was given the job of painting it. I began the painting at the outer end of the spar and worked in to the center, sometimes sitting on top of the spar and sometimes hanging upside down to reach the under part.

Then I was sent up to gild the trucks, --the round balls on the top of the masts. The rigging ended about ten feet below the trucks and the bare poles were greased, so a sailor was sent up with me to stand on the rigging while I shinned up over him and stood with one foot on his shoulder and one leg wrapped around the mast to steady myself and ease the weight on his shoulder. He complained that my carcass weighed more up there than it did on deck. When I got up in place and balanced, he passed the paint pot up to me and took his chances on getting gilded by a splash from my brush. The gilding done, he would replace the paint pot with a pot of "slush," which is a mixture of grease and oil, and I would wipe that stuff on the pole as I slid down, being careful not to leave any "holidays," --untouched spots--for it would have been a job to get back up to reach them.

As I look back on those days I can hardly believe that I could have done such work, more than a hundred feet up in the air with the ship heaving gently with the ocean swell, not as I remember it, no thought of danger or dizziness bothered me. It was just all in a day's work. I would hate to have my life depend on my even getting up that high, now.

As we neared the straits of San Bernardino, which penetrates the Philippine Islands, we ran into unfavorable breezes and calms that baffled us for days, causing us to beat back and forth trying to get into the channel. Finally the captain gave up hope of getting a favorable wind and ordered the ship squared away for the north with the intention of going around Luzon where we could have plenty of sea room. After only a few hours on this course to the north, the wind again changed and blew us nicely into the straits, holding favorable but light for hours and late in the evening dropping to a flat calm.

Then we drifted at the mercy of tide and currents amongst the islands. Our captain spent an anxious night with worry over the drift of the ship and the possibility of pirates. Several times through the night he had flares burned when passing steamers were in sight, but none of them answered our signals. Why, we never found out, but Captain Weeden thought possibly the steamers were equally afraid of pirates. Morning found us becalmed not more than a mile off the shore of one of the islands lying south of us with curly haired black men in sight on the beach. Then the captain considered arming the crew, just "in case," but about eight bells a fair breeze sprang up and sent us gliding along

on our way. With no more worries or trouble we threaded the islands and in a few days we awakened one morning to find ourselves off the entrance to the bay of Manila. A good breeze took us through the "Boca Grande," past Corregidor Island, and a few hours more time brought us close to Manila, where we dropped anchor. About sixty days out from Seattle, as I remember it. Not bad time those days for any kind of a ship or steamer to make the run across the ocean.

I was told that the deckload of hay was damaged by the rain, salt spray and damp air. It was moldy and probably a total loss, but that was no fault of the captain or crew, for we had spent much time and labor dragging off the heavy canvas covering and breaking out the bales to air and dry after nearly every shower of rain and then stowing it away and re-covering it again. We sure hated that deck load. The cargo below decks, however, was delivered in good condition and with no great cost for transportation. Probably much more cheaply than a steamer could deliver the same amount for.

Early next morning we were busy straightening out the rigging and furling sails shipshape for harbor. All the sails that were to be left on the spars must be rolled up neatly, with smooth outer canvas and no clumsy bunches. Some of the sails were sent down to be out of the way when we should start unloading. The lower yards would be used to carry tackles from the hoist to the cargo slings, and if the sails were not removed from those yards the canvas might get chafed and damaged.

While we were aloft we heard some heavy cannonading, and looking south of us toward Cavite, we saw Admiral Dewey's fleet cruising slowly back and forth over a crescent shaped course and throwing shells inland. We were told that the American Army had rounded up about five thousand insurrectos in a small town near the bay. Bacoor was, I believe, the name of the village, and it lay only a short distance from the shore line of the bay. The water was shallow out quite a distance from the shore, but the village was within easy range of the ships farther out in the deeper water. The bombardment did not last very long, maybe an hour or so, was no more than target practice for gunners, for there was no retaliation from the shore. Not that the fleet needed much target work. Their marksmanship was very plainly shown by the perforated superstructures of the Spanish fleet's ships, which still showed above water where they were sunk in the shoals near Cavite. Of the battleships there was not a square yard of metal showing above the water that was not perforated like a sieve.

A steamer, either a transport or merchantman, had tried to sneak away towards Manila while Dewey was working on the Spanish fleet, but it had not gone far, not much more than a mile from Cavite and close to the shore, when it got plugged. The shell hit that ship just in front of the propeller and made a hole that a small launch could be steered through without getting any paint scraped off. She was evidently empty of cargo and was riding high in the water when she was hit. With no more than a foot of water under her, she did not have far to sink before reaching bottom, and there she was when we came in, high enough out of water so that one might think she was afloat until the great gaping hole was seen in the stern.

We were of course too late to see that historic battle. The bombardment of Bacoor was the only active phase of warfare that I witnessed, although I was at the fighting front overnight once, and was even outside of the American lines in enemy territory.

We were not left out in the open harbor very long, for our cargo was needed ashore, so, soon a little toy towboat came after us and we pulled up our anchor and were towed inside the breakwater where we were sheltered from storms. There were a number of other craft of many types behind the breakwater, either waiting for room in the Pasig

River if they were of light enough draft to get in or else lightening off their cargo if they drew too much water to float in the shallow river. The Pasig River was not deep enough to permit any of the larger vessels to be docked at the wharves, and much of the freight arriving at Manila had to be unloaded on to native barges, Casco or Lorcha.

In fact, the water behind the breakwater was so shallow that the large steamers had to anchor far out in the open bay and take their chances on storms while unloading.

The local shipping being handled by small types of craft was brought to the wharves lining both sides of the Pasig as far up the river as it was navigable, which was not very far, for only about halfway through the city it was bridged by a low structure that was only high enough to let small launches pass under.

Consequently there was always congestion of docking space, every berth being always full with sailing ships and small steamers. A common type of vessel used in the inter-island trade was the smallest full-rigged ship afloat, tiny little brigs about the size of our small schooner yachts, but doing duty as bravely as do our coastwise sailing fleet. Manned and officered by natives, who made really excellent sailors, these little ships and small steamers carried on trade in fair or foul weather, often encountering storms that would try the seaworthiness of the largest of modern ships.

The morning after we had been towed in behind the breakwater, along about six bells, I was called with some other sailors for boat duty, and was told to get on my shore togs if I wanted to. Together with the boatswain and two other sailors at the oars, and with the mate in the stern sheets, we headed for the Pasig River through the entrance behind the breakwater and up to the Army Quartermaster's landing.

One of the sailors, old Hans Jacobsen Rowe, claimed to be able to talk Spanish, so I went with him to the nearest shopping district, where we made a few purchases of clothing and knick-knacks of use to us and then went back to the wharf to wait for the mate. After an hour or so he joined us and we rowed back to the ship. Our shore leave was limited, so we did not get to see hardly any of the city, but I did not object, for we four sailors were the only ones favored with any liberty at all, and besides, I expected to have other opportunities to go ashore before we sailed back to the States. Little did I suspect that it would be many months before I left the city of Manila, or that I would ever get to know the place as a resident.

The United States Army transports were much too large to enter the river or get behind the breakwater, and so were compelled to anchor several miles out in the bay where there was deep water, and the soldiers and officers were loaded on to cascos and towed up to the Quartermaster's wharf in the river by small towboats. These towboats were in charge of white captains taken from the ranks of the Army, and were chosen for their seafaring experience if they had any. The transports having to anchor so far out, made good business for the small trading boats which swarmed out to every newly arrived vessel with tropical fruit to sell to the soldiers and passengers who were always eager to sample the tropical products as soon as they could get them.

The captain of one of the Army launches came aboard of the Chilcott the first day we were behind the breakwater, and while his passenger was in the cabin with our captain, came forward to talk with us. He told me that the Army Quartermaster, Major Davol, needed more men with some experience on boats to run these launches, and that gave me an idea. Why couldn't I get on one of these Army launches? I had had considerable experience handling small boats. Perhaps I could if I applied to the Major. Anyway, I would try if I found the opportunity to see him.

After a couple of days of deadly routine, scraping paint and rust from off the outside of the hull or turning the grindstone for the boatswain to sharpen the scrapers until my arms ached and finally lagged hopelessly, when he would again send me over the side to scrape more paint and rust, I began to long for another trip ashore. Crank or scrape or scrape or crank, just no end to it until the mate came to my relief with another shore call and instructions to put on my shore togs again. This time Mr. Warren and I went alone, expecting to stay ashore overnight.

I was acquainted with a Seattle boy who was in the Washington Volunteers and was stationed at the town of Pasig, about fifteen miles up the river, and I requested the permission of the mate to visit this friend, which request was readily granted. The services of a native cab driver who knew the road to Pasig were not hard to secure, and I soon found myself a passenger in the most curious vehicle I had ever been in. A closed baby-carriage with a stallion not much bigger than a rat for power, gave me doubts of ever getting anywhere but in trouble. The animal was so small that, astride of him, a tall Yankee would have to hold up his foot to keep them from dragging on the ground. And I believe such a man could have stood up and let the horse walk out from under him. These small stallions were the only power used for cartage in Manila at that time, and I was well content to sit back and watch the landscape drift slowly by and let my cab driver do all the worrying.

For hauling freight, the water buffalo, carabao, were used, hitched to just about any kind of a vehicle. They were about the best animal the native could have had for the various kinds of work required of them. I've seen them hauling carts on the roads, and I've seen them dragging plows when they were more than belly-deep in water and mud, working in the rice paddies.

Those that were working on dry ground had to be unhitched about every so often and allowed to submerge in water. Otherwise they were apt to become unmanageable and go wading anyway, without the driver's permission and possibly to the detriment of the freight they were hauling.

My gloomy thoughts and evil predictions of trouble were unfounded, and after jogging along for several hours, I was unloaded near the town I was heading for. A request of the first sentry I encountered set me on my way to the regiment to which my friend was attached, and he was soon found and greeted me with joy as a messenger from his home.

My friend's company were quartered in an old church, a huge adobe building, as I remember, similar to some of the old Spanish missions in California. All the inner furnishings had been removed, leaving the interior bare and barn-like. The soldiers were all glad to see someone recently arrived from the states, and I was bombarded with questions until the call for mess diverted their attention.

Someone dug up an extra mess outfit for me and I was served with a good supply of good wholesome food.

After our meal was stowed away and we had indulged in a smoke, my friend suggested a trip of inspection, promising me a chance to see some real natives. A party of four of us started out on this trip, which unbeknown to me was to be outside of the American Army lines and into enemy territory. How we got past the U.S. sentries I never knew, for I saw none of them, although I did hear some conversation to the effect that we were going to visit some certain district. Only a short distance from the front we entered a grove of trees which sheltered a few native houses. Native nipa huts built on stilts with the floor some seven or eight feet above the ground. We scrambled up a ladder-like

stairway into a light, airy room, where there were a few native females engaged in their housewifely duties. Most of them showed age and could not by any stretch of imagination be called even attractive, but there was one young lady who caught my appraising eye, and for the only time during my entire stay in the islands I saw a native girl with regular and attractive features, who would have been classed as a beauty had she been given a white skin. But even with her light coffee-color she made a very pretty picture.

The women were all rather shy and quiet, and our visiting was mostly inspection on our part and indifferent tolerance on the part of our hosts. The other boys talked a little and asked a few questions, but I was simply a tongue-tied spectator, even more shy than the females. A little apprehensive, too, for I couldn't but wonder if we might not be joined by some irate males of the rebel camp. So when one of the boys asked me if I had seen enough, I was quite sincere in my statement that I had seen quite enough, and I was well pleased to return to our barracks. I don't remember any sentry challenging us as we returned to our lines, so I suppose the expedition was all arranged for as we went out.

A good night's sleep and a good breakfast made me feel that perhaps I might prefer to remain in the islands for a while rather than go back on the ship to the states with a fair chance of encountering some rough and stormy weather en route.

My cab driver with his toy cab and animal was waiting for me according to my instructions of the previous evening, and I landed back in Manila before noon. With time on my hands, waiting for the mate, who was not to appear for some hours. I thought I might look into the possibilities of getting on one of the Government boats. An inquiry at the wharf gave me directions to the uptown office of Major Duval, head of the Army Quartermaster's Department.

He was not in his office, but was supposed to be on foot between the office and wharf, some blocks distant. He was described to me and I started back to the wharf, hardly hoping to meet him before time for one to meet the mate. However, I saw a man in military uniform coming toward me who I thought might give me more information of the Major's whereabouts, and I stopped him and put my inquiry to him, a request regarding Devol's location. Much to my surprise, I found that I was talking to the major. I was a little bit worried, for I had addressed the Major as a man, when maybe I should have studied how to salute an officer of high rank. But the Major replied to me as a man and instantly put me at ease, although I felt that his time was not to be taken up by me for anything but the matter at hand, and I stated my business briefly. To my joy, he told me that he could use me, providing the captain of my ship would give me an honorable discharge.

My talk with the Major was interrupted by a beggar, as disgusting a specimen of humanity as I ever saw, a weazened hobgoblin of an old crone with a cigar sticking out of the corner of her mouth and carrying in her arms a very young baby of decidedly pale skin and features that left no doubt as to its parentage. She spoke in a Spanish jargon which the Major interpreted for me. Although he made no comments whatever on the matter, his face showed plainly a deep disgust of the situation, for her request was: "Senors, un peso medio, Senors, mucho pobre, Senors. Esta poquito Americana soldado nino." By which she meant: "Sirs, give us half a dollar, Sirs, we are very poor, Sirs, we need it to raise this poor little American soldier baby."

That incident made a lasting impression on me. I found later on, that some of the poorer native families invited familiarity from Americans for the sole purpose of

begging, using the unfortunate fruits of such an affair for bait when soliciting alms from whites. Apparently it must have been a fairly lucrative business for a while.

That the Army officers frowned on laxness of morals of the soldiers was so well known that any of the men who overstepped the boundary were extremely cautious. And well they might be, for stiff punishment was meted out to the offender where guilt was established.

On our way to the ship, I told the mate of my desire to leave the ship to go to work for the Quartermaster's Department, and that major Devol had agreed to put me to work if Captain Weeden would give me an honorable discharge. Mr. Warren raved when he heard my story, and gave me some good advice which I was too young to heed, telling me that I was well liked on the ship and that I would be advanced in sailorizing as fast as I could prepare myself, and that a few years of service would give me his job. But I had told the Major that I would apply for a discharge and I felt that I must adhere to that statement, and anyway, the new job looked good to me and so I stood my ground. So Mr. Warren agreed to plead my cause to the captain. That his plea was successful was evidenced in a few days, when I was informed that if I would help on ship for a few more days, my request would be granted and I would be given the coveted discharge.

The next three or four days were long ones, but like all other days, they passed, and I was sent ashore with my dunnage and discharge. I also had some money with me, for the captain had paid me in full, all my wages, which did not amount to very much although I had not drawn on the slop chest nor taken any advance money as was the custom when signing on for a cruise. Most sailors on being discharged in any port soon spend all their money one way or another and are gathered in by some sailors' boarding house where they are fed and lodged until the boarding house master ships them on some ship, collecting from the captain or ships' agent a month or two of wages, advanced to pay for board and a new supply of sea togs.

Usually the new clothes were of very poor quality and at best insufficient for a long voyage. Then the sailor had to purchase from the ship's slop chest more clothes, which would be charged against his wages together with the advances already given. At the end of that voyage the poor sailor would go ashore with but little money due him.

Immediately upon the arrival of a ship in port, a boarding house runner, -- "crimps," they were called-- would board the ship and make himself a good fellow with the sailors and arrange to be on hand when they were paid off. As soon as the Commissioner had paid them off, the crimp would round the sailors up and steer them into some saloon where he was known and buy a round of drinks for them. Of course it was etiquette for them, one and all, to return his favor, and by the time they had all set up their rounds, some were nearly broke and all were mellow and easily led to his boarding house, and the landlord had new guests which he could keep until another ship wanted a crew. It was good business for the boarding house keeper, ship captain or owner and saloon keeper, but it usually meant no money for the sailor at all.

My wages were fifteen dollars a month, so with all that I had coming and some change I had brought along with me, I had a little over thirty dollars in my jeans. It doesn't sound like much now, but at the time it appeared adequate to me, for I was going right to work and did not need much money to live on until pay day. I was to be paid two hundred dollars (Mex) a month, with some grub as well. This meant one hundred dollars in American coin, as the Spanish peso was accepted at a fifty cent value, and besides, I would receive some provisions.

A room to sleep in was my next consideration, and I found one that would suffice fairly well, only a few short blocks from the wharf that would be my landing place with my boat. The room was the barest of furniture imaginable, having a bed with cane matting for springs and no bedding at all, but it did have a tent made of mosquito bar over it that could be hoisted up to the ceiling by a lanyard through the day and lowered over the bed at night after it had snared most of the hungry hordes of insects that were waiting in the room for a feast of nice, white, tender skin. A bench completed the furnishing of the room, with a wash basin on one end of it, the other end to be used as a chair.

As I did not expect to use the room except to sleep in, I was well satisfied with the accommodations at the price, which was only a few Mexican dollars, or rather pesos, per month. The stairway in that house attracted my attention, for it would be worth more in the States than any but the most elaborate of hotels could boast. It was made of rosewood, each step being chopped out of a solid block and measuring about seven inches thick by twelve inches wide, and maybe five or six feet long. A fortune in wood in that one stairway. The Chinese carpenters who built that house used only hatchets for planes and did a remarkably good job of smoothing and fitting the steps in their places.

Later on during my stay, I made inquiries regarding the native trees, and was told that there were over a hundred different kinds of hard wood growing in the islands, many of which were so close grained that they would never float on water no matter how dry they were. This fact suggested a line of thought along commercial lines, but I learned that others had had the same thoughts and soon there were constructive efforts being made to harvest some of this hard wood for shipment.

What I found to eat that evening I don't remember. It didn't matter much, for my appetite was not finicky in the least, and I wandered into some small eating place and managed to make out a meal from the food that the place had to offer. A brief stroll along the waterfront and I turned in for the night and slept like a dead man, with no care for the morrow. That would take care of itself, and why should I worry? Neither the heat nor the insects kept me awake.

Next after a visit to my eating house, I reported to Major Duvol with my discharge. He seemed just a little surprised, as if he had forgotten my application. But he was as good as his word, and I was told to report to Sergeant Wilson at the office on the wharf for duty, and given a note to deliver to that gentleman.

I lingered around the wharf and office that day, seeing a lot and saying but little, for it seemed to me that I was supposed to be a man of some understanding, to be given a job of such importance, and I was afraid to say anything or ask any questions, for fear that I might betray my greenness and ignorance. I heard orders given to several launch captains to whom Sergeant Wilson introduced me, and went out on a trip with one of the men, a Mr. Dempsey, who took me under his wing and gave me all the information that I could need regarding the carrying out of the orders we were given for our work. It didn't really require much brain to do our work, for, as Dempsey made clear to me, all the launches and steamers had their regular crews of natives who were well trained for the most part and were in charge of native patrons, who were almost always competent captains. All we had to do was to give the captain of whatever launch we were sent on, our orders, and he would attend to the rest. We had only to see that the orders were understood and obeyed, and that there should be no chance of the boat being stolen. When we left the river we were the only white men on the boats and their safe return was our main responsibility.

The crews all seemed to be so willing and quiet that I felt no fear that I would ever have any difficulty with them, even were I sent to the farthest part of the bay, which was covering quite a bit of territory, for the bay was a good thirty miles across and bordered many towns of doubtful loyalty.

Late that day my first assignment came. It was to take charge of a small launch used for errands on the river only, and I made a short run up stream, delivered a message and returned to the wharf feeling that I was going to have no trouble in making good on the job.

The patron on the launch handled the boat well and the crew seemed to be quite competent, and I found that I had nothing to do but to be watchful. This crew were typical of most of the boat crews, and there was hardly ever any need for me to take charge of the management of the boat. Occasionally, in times when the traffic became congested on the river, I would demand caution and keep the boat out of the jam until the way was fairly clear.

Small steamers that did not draw too much water for the river were often too large to be handled quickly, and worse yet were the small sailing ships being towed up or down stream. They had to go in a straight line with the river, and any craft crossing their bows must keep clear or tangle with them. I saw one such tangle occur when a ferry boat, which was only a large, covered canoe propelled by natives with paddles, with several Chinese for passengers, ran afoul of the gangway hanging over the side of a brig being towed downstream. The canoe overturned, drowning two of the Chinese. I rescued the other two, and other boats rescued the crew of the canoe. The native boatmen would take a chance in traffic that they should keep out of, and I learned to watch carefully for that danger.

The little errand boat did not have many calls in a day, and I was glad when a new man was employed and given that boat. I was then advanced to the job of extra man, substituting for other captains during their absence. This post frequently put me on larger boats, and occasionally sent me out on the bay.

One trip was made in an old side-wheeler that would never have survived a rough sea, but just the same I was sent over to Cavite with her for some cargo. Her patron was an old native ship captain all dressed up in a dingy uniform, who smoked a huge pipe much too large for him, and who talked and gave his orders in a gruff and important voice. A regular caricature of a deep-sea captain.

When we warped away from the wharf I watched him rather carefully, for handling a paddle-wheel steamer is quite different from handling a sailing ship. However, he got away from the wharf quite safely, though he did a lot of bawling to his crew. Once out of the river and into the bay, he seemed to feel more at home, and paced his bridge and puffed his pipe quite contentedly while the boat rolled gently in the swell of the bay. The bay was just a little too calm for me, for I would have thoroughly enjoyed seeing enough chop on the water to make the old fellow strut and fume. It was just as well, though, that we had a flat sea, for the old boat was pretty loose in her joints, and besides, as I learned later, some of the natives were poor sailors in rough weather, and easily lost their nerve and judgment.

Usually there was one native in each boat crew who could speak a few words of English, but I soon saw that I would need a better medium of understanding if I wanted to get the best results from my crews, and set to work to pick up what I could of the poor Spanish spoken by some of the men and understood by nearly all.

Then, one evening, I was shown a boat, newly acquired by the Department, tied up to the wharf. She was a beauty, a yacht-like steamer of maybe fifty or sixty tons. If she was not new, certainly she was as good as new, and I was told to take charge of her and to live aboard of her, for she was to be on call at all hours of the day and night, primarily at the service of Army officials going out to and back from the transports in the bay, and to be used for any other work of the Department when not needed for the transporting of officers.

A native crew were already assigned to the boat, which was named the "San Francisco," and I went up town to my room to move my belongings down to the boat. I moved aboard after dark and started to fasten my hammock to the ridgepole that held up the awning over the foredeck, when I accidentally aroused a big native, who, with his wife, was sleeping on a box-like structure over the cabin. I guess he had orders to keep beach combers off the boat, for he proceeded to put me off. This he nearly succeeded in doing, for I was not inclined to use any violence, and he could not understand what I was trying to tell him, since he understood neither English nor Spanish – at least, any Spanish I could muster. I was only one white, and the entire crew were natives, and I had just about made up my mind to go ashore and wait for morning without attempting to demonstrate my authority, which might not make the impression I wanted to make with my future crew. But we had made enough noise to arouse other members of the crew, one of whom could understand a few words of English, and with his aid I made my position known to the big fellow and was allowed to sleep in peace.

That same big native became my most abject slave after a few days, and insisted on waiting on me hand and foot as long as I remained in the service, and when I talked of going back to the States, he would beg me to take him with me as my servant, with or without pay. Of course he would have to leave his wife, but she could wait for him until he came back or sent for her, which for all he knew might never be. And he certainly was of use to me in many situations where loyalty and strength were of value.

For a few days I made trips to and from transports for officers only, following the quarantine launch out to the newly arrived steamer, where I stood off waiting until signaled that I should come alongside.

I permitted a couple of little Filipino girls with their baskets of fruit to sell, to go with us out to the newly arrived steamers, which not only gave them the first chance to sell their fruit, but which was about their only chance, for they could not get on to any of the small trading boats, and business ashore was mighty poor for them, as, being so tiny, they were easily crowded out of the way by larger and more aggressive peddlers. You may be sure I had all the fruit I wanted for myself and to give to any passengers I had who wanted to sample native products.

I made it my policy to distribute dimes to all my crew if I was ordered out in bad weather. This was an unusual procedure, never having been done by any of the other boat captains, and it gave me a big advantage, for, as the news spread that on my crew extra money could be made, I had many applicants for work, and my patron would manage to get rid of the less reliable members of the crew and pick the best workers on the whole river. Manuel, my big servant, told me after we got so that we could converse after a fashion, that some of the other captains made their crews donate dimes for the privilege of working on the Government boat, as the pay was much higher than they had ever received before. This may or may not have been true; I never tried to verify it; but I feel sure it would have gone hard with the captains had our Major known of it. For my part, I

thought the Filipinos' pay was small enough without having to pay any graft, and besides, I wanted good, willing and intelligent boys with me, and wanted them contented.

Really, my plan repaid me with interest for the few dimes I put out. First, in the loyal service I received, and then in many other ways did the bread I scattered on the water return to me. I had on a shelf in the cabin locker a box of American-made cigars which I drew on fairly frequently. One day one of the boys persuaded me to try some cheroot-like cigars he had with him. They were excellent, mild and just the size to suit me, and I praised them to him and asked him where he obtained them. He claimed that his wife made them, and thereafter my cigar box mysteriously remained full, nor could I ever get the boy to accept any pay for those cigars. Also, my soiled laundry always disappeared long before I was ready to send it away, and always there was neatly piled laundry in its place on the shelf.

One day when things were quiet in my line, Sergeant Wilson asked me if I could go out on the bay and bring in some cascos adrift on the bay near the end of the breakwater. They had been abandoned by another boat because of a bad wind blowing on the bay. Storm signals were out and it looked bad, and I was told to use my own judgment as to whether I should try it or not. I learned that the cascos were about a mile from the breakwater and about three miles from the river mouth when they were abandoned. They had their crews and families aboard, as was the regular custom, the crews and families living their lives on cascos and lorchas. I knew that the natives had poor reputations as sailors in bad weather, but I had a picked crew that I felt sure would stand by me in any emergency, and I agreed to make the try.

The sea was pretty rough, but the "San Francisco" took the waves like a duck. My patron was at the wheel and I stood right beside him as he bucked into the waves, breaking at the mouth of the river. He seemed to have his nerve, all right, and I did not notice any fear shown by any other member of the crew, so we held on our course, angling across the waves until nearly to windward of the cascos, which we could see were getting uncomfortably close to the breakwater over which the waves were washing wildly. There was still plenty of room between the cascos and breakwater for us to maneuver our boat, and time enough to tie on to them if we did not have too much bad luck. But if we failed, neither the cascos nor their crews would last long when they struck that rock wall.

We headed down-wind for them at the first chance we had to turn, and passed in front of them, turning to the leeward of the string of three cascos, still fast to each other with their tow-ropes. We missed getting close enough to get a line to them, and my patron said it was much too dangerous to try to get any closer, and advised that we lie to behind them, and let the people try to drift down to us on floats they could improvise with large bamboo poles that were on the sides of the cascos. It looked pretty bad to me with those cascos wallowing in the troughs of the waves, and I did not believe the people would nearly all get to our steamer even should they have the courage to make the try. I wanted to make another attempt, so the patron gave me the wheel and he stood by to give help wherever needed. We circled again, and this time I passed astern of the cascos, even though that headed us away from the river, and turning, came up pretty close in front of the nose of the leading casco. But the boys again failed to get a line to the derelicts, and I began to feel discouraged for fear that I had no man that could throw a line at all accurately in the wind.

Then my big Manual came to me and volunteered to swim to the cascos if I could hold the San Francisco fairly close to windward of the front barge. I was game to try this,

and told the boys of the danger to us if the line fouled the propeller, If this should occur, we would join the cascos in the drift and we would all be drowned.

But the boys were game, and I slid the boat slowly quartering the waves, past the first casco. Manuel calculated his time nicely and jumped in with the light line fastened around his waist, the boys paid out the line carefully, and although it did not seem to me to be humanly possible for Manuel to get aboard that rolling, plunging casco, he made it without harm, being grabbed by strong hands as he reached for the boat rail and was fairly lifted aboard. It was a small matter then to get the tow line across, and soon we began gently to strain on the hawser and nose into the wind and waves.

Those cascos sure made an awful fuss as they took the seas, their broad, flat bows rising high on a wave and smashing down on the water with a blow that sent spray high and flying through the air. I'll bet they were wet boats and crews. I had to go slowly for fear the jerks would part our hawser.

Edging slowly towards the river, we made almost imperceptible progress, and even with all that precaution we lost one of the string and had to circle around again and let Manuel swim to it with another line. We got in just before dark, and did the boys feel proud! I was mighty well pleased with them, for never once did any one of them show a white feather. I never knew how the Department felt about the salvage. I was never told. Wilson said it was good work. But I did know that if there was another pill like that to swallow, I would next time be expected to go out and swallow it.

Oh, well, a little glory gives us poor mortals a big feeling, and that was my reward, nor did I want, expect or even think of any other reward.

It was from the deck of my "San Francisco" that General "Joe" Wheeler had his first close view of Manila when he came over from the States to take over the command of the American Army in the Philippines, replacing General Harrison Gray Otis. With him came his daughter and her companion maid. These two women showed not the slightest interest in any of the sights or people that must have been new to them, but busied themselves in very engrossing conversation between themselves.

General Wheeler, however, was very much awake to all that was going on, and showed a lively as well as democratic mind, grasping at all details of scenery and activity. He accepted a cigar from me and I watched to see if he made a face over it, as it was one of my native supply. He never batted an eye, though, so I suppose he was satisfied with the results it produced.

As the San Francisco was on call at all hours, I gave permission to the crew to allow their wives to sleep on the boat if they wanted to, with the understanding that the women would go ashore whenever we were called out at night. Some of the boys accepted this privilege, but the most of them, having families, went home at nights, but were always where they could be found quickly when wanted.

Whether the natives were moral according to our standards or not I never found out. One of the other captains in our fleet claimed that they were strictly moral, for he had had eyes for the wife of one of his crew but found no favor in her sight. But then again I will never forget the old begging crone with the little "American Soldado."

Among the crew of the San Francisco I heard no stories of scandal and I assumed that they had no worries along that line, so I did not bother my head to make inquiries into that phase of their lives. The crews of the cascos lived on their scows under matting roofs over the ends of the boats, with no arrangements for privacy whatever that I could see, for sex or family, and I concluded that there was no thought of false modesty, but that all acts of natural life were accepted on an equal footing.

Although I had at first carried a gun wherever I went, I soon oiled it up and laid it away in the cabin as too cumbersome a nuisance to be bothered with. I never had any fear at any time of any of the natives, nor did I ever see or hear of any act of treachery. I was told that one string of lighters that I picked up in the bay and brought into the river had a number of insurrectos on board, and on that occasion I sat in the bow of the boat with my gun handy, but I did not see any uniformed boys on the cascos, and so I supposed those with uniforms on remained hidden and only those not so appareled appeared on deck to work the boats. As the boats were adrift in water too deep for the long poles used in propulsion to reach bottom, I gathered that all on board were willing to be taken to any port of safety.

About this time Sergeant Wilson was replaced by Captain Butler as the head of our fleet. I could not see that the change made any difference to us. I had always liked Wilson, but I found Captain Butler just as good to get along with as Wilson had been. I did not make a practice of hanging around the wharf office anyway, and so was not on terms of close intimacy with any of the office force. I much preferred to be on my own ground, the ship, and let my work win what friendship for me the directors of our department should feel, instead of hanging around them, hoping to gain favor in their sight by familiarity. I didn't notice that those who were most assiduous in cultivating the bosses' good favor were being given any special consideration, but on the other hand I believe that they finally won a measure of contempt instead. Apparently neither Wilson nor Butler were the kind of men who were susceptible to pandering, but preferred to keep their judgment unbiased by anything but the value of the men's work. That attitude on the part of both Wilson and Butler won from me my sincere respect, and I felt a stronger desire to do good work under them than I could possibly have felt had I noticed in them a tendency to be partial to a pet of theirs.

One Sunday morning Captain Butler gave me an assignment to go to Cavite, load three cascos with supplies and get them over to Manila that same day. I was not told that no arrangements had been made to get the supplies loaded for me. When I arrived at Cavite I found where the supplies were stored and that the tonnage was considerable. Time was short. Orders were to deliver that evening, so I assumed that I had the right to employ shore labor to do the loading, and I employed a gang of Chinamen. The loading was done and I gave each Chinaman a slip ordering payment from the Quartermaster's Department. The lighters were delivered in good time, and I turned in for a well-earned rest after a regular day's work. Whether the Chinese laborers were ever paid or not I don't know, but I do know that Captain Butler advised me to stay away from Cavite for a while, as there were near a hundred Chinaman looking for me with their knives.

Whether I consumed too much tropical fruit, or whether the water I drank was polluted, I do not know: probably the latter, for I did not know enough to drink only boiled water, but used the same water to drink that my crew used. But I acquired the typhoid fever and dysentery. I did not know anything serious was wrong with me, although I did not feel very active one day when I reported to captain Butler. I must have been delirious and rambling in my talk, for the captain looked keenly at me, put his hand on my forehead, and immediately gave another man an order to take me to the First Reserve hospital. I just barely remember arriving at the hospital. Then I went to sleep, perfectly unconscious. When I awakened I was a little dazed at first. Then I saw a pleasant-faced man sitting near my cot, looking at me; I felt a raging thirst, and after a word or two with him as to where I was, for what reason, and how long I had been there, I asked if it were possible that I might be allowed a drink of cool water. He pointed to a

bowl of cracked ice and water on the stand by the head of my bed and told me to help myself. "How much may I have?" "All you want, my boy." How grateful I felt! I tried to drink moderately, but soon all the water around the cracked ice had disappeared, and I went peacefully to sleep. When next I awakened I looked for the pleasant-faced man, and soon he appeared. He was a nurse, and of course was busy, but he took time to tell me that I had been there for four days and that for a while it looked like I would never wake up. The fever was soon eliminated, but the dysentery was not cured as long as I remained in the Islands, and I was greatly weakened by its debilitating effects.

It was then that I appreciated the services of my kind Manual and other members of my crew. In the morning after the deck crew had finished washing down the decks, Manual would bring a stool for me to use as a step from my hammock to the deck, and while I was washing, the hammock and blankets would disappear and I would find a large, comfortable chair placed for me in front of the wheel-house. Should I feel too languid to go uptown for my breakfast, then a nice meal was placed at my side by the chair so that I need not exert myself.

Every suggestion that the boys could think of for my benefit, including many of their rather peculiar remedies, were urged on me most solicitously.

I stuck to my work as long as permitted, but I was finally shipped to the States on the transport "Ohio." I should have said "towards the States," for I left the Ohio at Honolulu, hoping to build up in strength before returning to a more strenuous climate.

The Ohio went by the way of Hong Kong, and at this port I was privileged to go ashore while the steamer was being fueled. I was accustomed to seeing steamers tied up to coal bunkers and the fuel poured into the hold through chutes. In Hong Kong harbor we anchored out in the stream and lighters loaded with coal were tied alongside of us. Strings of Chinese coolies formed from the lighters into the ship's bunkers, and baskets filled with what I guessed to be about thirty pounds of coal were tossed from one coolie to the next along the line. This made a steady stream of fuel; six or eight of them, in fact, pouring into the steamer.

But it was slow work at the best, and about thirty-six hours were required to fill our storage space.

The afternoon was spent on shore prowling around the shopping district, where some fancy trinkets were purchased to be distributed to friends and relatives in the states. I soon found that most of the merchants on the street where I was shopping understood English quite well and some spoke our language fluently. I was about to leave the shop where I had made most of my purchases, when a rather boastful countryman of mine who claimed to be a salesman stopped at the place and spoke a few words to me. He spoke in pigeon-English to the proprietor, who answered gravely in perfect English. This should have been a warning to my superior compatriot, but some of us never learn except by hard knocks. Our American friend said proudly that he was employed by a firm in the States that had been in business many many years, Oh, maybe seventy or more. Our merchant nodded, evidently impressed, as he was expected to be, and the salesman sailed bravely along in his conceit with more good sales-talk. Deprecatingly he said: "I expect you have many establishments over here that are pretty old, too." "Yes," replied the merchant, "this store has been in our family for over seven hundred years." I thoroughly enjoyed the mental antics of our salesman as he endeavored to cover his chagrin and make a graceful retreat. He had lost face, and I knew it and felt no sorrow for him. He had it coming to him. I only felt ashamed that one of my own race should so completely fail in common sense and consideration.

In the evening I was joined by some friends from the Ohio who desired to sample some of the cheer purveyed by indigenous denizens and we followed the Queen's Road down to the vicinity of some popular haunts of sailors. In one of the shops some German sailors were getting pretty well loaded, as were some English tars. An argument started between the two factions that promised to be interesting. Just as the beer mugs began to fly and I began to wish that I was well out of there, a group of American gobs barged in to see what was going on. What they saw just suited them, and they promptly joined forces with the "Hinglishmen," and together the two gangs herded the luckless Germans down to the wharf to be loaded on barges and shipped to their boats for the night.

While in Hong Kong I purchased a wickerwork lounge chair and spent the most of my time from then on in that chair, sleeping in it at night in preference to sweltering in the stateroom.

An uneventful trip from Hong Kong by the Ohio brought us to Honolulu, where I decided to remain for a while to recuperate from my tropic weakness. Christmas had passed just before I left Manila, un-thought-of by me, but my sisters in Seattle had not forgotten me, and had sent a package of things that were of use to a boy wandering around in strange lands. The package followed me to Honolulu, and then I remembered that there is a time of year when we, who have relatives and friends, should show that we value their regard.

A few days of idling around Honolulu gave me a chance to see the most well known features of the locality that all tourists are supposed to see and visit. Of course I tried out Waikiki Beach, and climbed the crater at Diamond Head, but the thing that I enjoyed more than any of the sights was spending hours leaning against a telephone pole that was near a building, the second floor of which had a hall used for a band to practice in. I was told that the band was the famous Hawaiian Band.

I did not try to gain admittance to the hall, but was well content to loiter near the entrance and enjoy the music in its making.

But why be idle on shore when I would rather be on the water, and besides I needed the money to exist on. The inter-island steamer Niihau needed a quartermaster, so I shipped on her. She was commanded by a Captain Thompson, with a Mr. Burns for first mate. I remembered the old City of Topeka with another Thompson for skipper, and another Burns for boatswain, and I felt quite at home again.

The Niihau was engaged in inter-island shipping, running to the islands of Hawaii, Molokai, and Niihau. A steam schooner, so called, with engines, boilers and cabins all placed as far in the after-part of the boat as possible, leaving the midships and forward part of the vessel for cargo. The sailors' fore-castle, however, was in its usual place up in the bow of the ship under the fore-castle-head, giving the boat a very high nose when the hold was empty of cargo.

As many of our ports of call were without wharves, necessitating the use of surfboats to land our cargo, we carried a crew of natives, Kanakas, to handle the boats and do the work of sailors aboard the ship, and a more capable crew would be hard to find. The officers, however, were all white men, with the exception of the Chinese cook.

Our steamer observed Sundays wherever we were, and if at any of the island ports where we were anchored close to shore, all the crew went overboard for a swim. This was where I learned to really swim, for I always jumped in with the crew. Almost always, I should say, for on one occasion, just as I was ready to plunge into the water, someone yelled "Shark!" I had been told that sharks liked white meat better than brown, and with that in mind I decided to postpone my bath for that day.

With the cry of "shark," one big Kanaka came running out of the forecastle, saying "Where shark? Show me shark?" and he grasped a big knife in his teeth and climbed up on the rail ready to plunge into the water. But the shark had disappeared, much to my disappointment, for I had hoped to see a combat between man and shark such as I had heard of, but about the truth of which I had always been skeptical. The Kanaka claimed to have killed a shark before, and was eager to try again and I could not very well dispute his willingness and ability in face of the evidence he had just offered.

This big native was one of the finest and most powerful swimmers I ever saw. An immense length of irrigating pipe, part of a cargo we were lightering ashore at one port, slipped out of the sling as we were trying to fasten it between two of the surf boats to be sent ashore, and sank in about forty feet of water, where it rolled with the surge on the bottom. A couple of the boys went down to try to put a sling under it, but on account of the weight and motion of the pipe they failed after several tries. So then our big boy made a try at it alone. He fastened one end of a long, light line to a large rope, and with a coil of the small line in his hand he dove overboard and down to the bottom. Immediately we felt a pull on the line, and we paid out rope as he pulled it down. Then a pause for a few moments, and again the rope was pulled down for a while. Then up came the man with the end of the light line in his teeth, and we helped him aboard and pulled up the slack of the line until the end of the long rope came aboard. The man had gone down to the bottom at the end of the pipe, pulled down enough of the large line to suit his purpose, and crawled through the rolling pipe, pulling the rope after him, and brought the end up to the surface. It was a simple matter then to lift the pipe to the surface and secure it properly.

Our cook was a Chinese, rather a progressive Chinaman for those days, as he had had his queue cut off, which classed him apart from his countrymen but did not make him white. And he was a rather wicked Chinaman, also, as he showed himself to be one evening. A couple of firemen, the second mate and this chink were enjoying a game of poker in the cabin this evening, and one of the firemen drew a good hand. A friend was standing behind this fireman, and observing the good hand, slipped a pile of money into his lap. The cook also had a good hand, and bet high. The fireman raised the bet, and back and forth the betting went until the cook had about all his money in the center of the table. At the showdown the fireman's hand was the best and he gathered in the money. The game broke up and the cook went to the galley where he slept. We supposed the evening was over. But as the fireman went forward to his quarters, passing the galley on his way, the cook reached out of the door and slashed at his enemy with a wicked knife. Some of us saw the cook step out of his door, and we yelled just in time for the fireman to jump out of the way. He didn't get a scratch, and the cook ducked back into the galley. We forced the door open, but none of us cared to face the knife, so we threw everything we could find in at the cook and were satisfied. Nobody got hurt, but our captain forbade any more poker on the ship after that.

I kept a room in a boarding house in Honolulu, using it when in port, and also as a storage place for my possessions when I was at sea. As a result of this I was marooned ashore for a while during an epidemic of bubonic plague. The hotel was run by a Mr. Bascom, and the dining-room by "Frenchy" De Jere and his wife Annie.

One of my nights ashore I stayed as usual at the hotel, and was aroused about five in the morning by someone who said that Frenchy wanted to see me in the kitchen. I dressed and went down to the kitchen, where I was informed that through the night the health authorities had quarantined the Chinese quarter of Honolulu, where Frenchy's help

all lived, leaving him without any help to run his business, and would I turn to and give him a hand in the restaurant? Anything to help a friend, but I belonged aboard the Niihau and must report for duty. On arriving at the wharf, I found her in quarantine too, so I was at liberty to help serve the hungry hordes.

Frenchy did the buying and cooking, while his wife and I slung the hash and took the cash. A few days of this, and the quarantine was lifted and I again reported for duty on the Niihau. Free meals for the remainder of my stay in Honolulu, and Frenchy's everlasting gratitude well repaid me for my services. We were no more than out of port when the quarantine was again clamped down, but this time Frenchy was not caught napping, for he had kept his help in the hotel and so was not shorthanded.

Our Kanaka crew were all likeable boys, and one of them –I called him Frank – was an ambitious and intelligent fellow and I took pleasure in talking to him and listening to his accounts of life and adventure.

He wanted to get more knowledge of steamboat work, so I undertook to train him in all I had learned of knots, splices and general work on board wind ships as well as steering and boxing the compass. He learned readily and showed genuine gratitude for my companionship and instruction. One day as we were nearing Honolulu he asked me if I had ten dollars that I could spare. I thought: "Now here is the result of my befriending Frank," and I made a rather cautious reply to his request.

I had the ten dollars, all right, but what kind of a jam was he in that required him to take a loan? He did not want a loan, but as some time past I had expressed a desire to see a native hula dance, he had been keeping this desire of mine in mind, and there was to be a dance that evening, and if I had enough money on hand to keep the crowd supplied with all the swipes they wanted, he could get me in, even though there were to be no other whites present. I found out that "swipes" was a kind of beer, and not expensive when bought by the bucket-full. The crowd would be orderly, according to Frank, and I gladly accepted his invitation. Shortly after dinner we went uptown into a rather quiet and apparently old, obsolete business part of town, upstairs in a rickety building, to a hall on the second floor. The hall had windows opening over a lean-to at the back of the building, a fact which both Frank and I noted. I felt a little bit nervous, for I knew I was to be the only "Haoli" in the gathering, and uninvited at that, and only my trust in Frank kept me from bolting, although I did want to see these natives enjoying themselves without the restraining influence of white visitors.

Frank and I arrived early, and he got busy squaring himself for inviting me, and arranging for me to be allowed to remain. He soon located the boy with the bucket, and I willingly furnished the money for the refreshments and the crowd accepted me as one of them. I couldn't stomach the brew, so I left it alone, preferring to have my perceptions entirely unclouded. Maybe a couple of hours after our arrival the hula dancers appeared from somewhere, and the chanting and dancing began. At first I was disappointed, for the hula girls were all rather fleshy, and seemed to me they were much older than I had expected they would be. Soon, however, I forgot their fleshiness, age and avoirdupois and was lost in admiration of their ability to interpret the themes expressed. To me there was none of the vulgar suggestiveness of the American version of the hula, but instead, there was wonderful grace and rhythm to their work, and for a while I was completely lost in the scenes presented. Frank was awake, though, and when there was a disturbance at the door at the foot of the stairs, he listened for a minute and then quietly tipped me over backward and off the window-sill we were occupying at the rear of the hall, and joined me on the roof of the lean-to. We lowered ourselves to the ground in the alley and

silently faded into the night. He explained to me that some uninvited guests were trying to force their way into the hall, and fearing a rumpus that I might not relish, he had wisely assisted me in escaping from a potentially embarrassing situation in a very unobtrusive manner. It had not cost me much over half of the ten dollars I was prepared to spend, and I felt that I was unusually lucky in being able to see the native dances, which I expected would soon lose their primitive charm in sordid commercialism.

I had been in the Hawaiian Islands now for some time, and the winter was over, so I decided to return to Seattle. While my distressing ailment had abated somewhat, it was still with me, and I thought that at home in Seattle I would be able to get the necessary treatment required to cure me. So I was planning to quit the Niihau and look for a ship bound for Puget Sound. I had this in mind on this return trip from the other islands, when an incident occurred that nearly caused me to change my plans. Off Pearl Harbor we were peacefully plowing along through a calm sea, with me at the wheel and the second mate on the bridge. The Niihau had no cargo, and her nose high in the air, completely cutting off my vision of the water ahead of us, and I was steering by compass and clouds, when I felt a slight jarring of the Niihau, and maybe heard a slight bump. The second mate was reading a magazine at the time, and had failed to see a Chinese sampan and we had run it down. The crew came pouring out of our forecabin, and Captain Thompson was on board in a second. We picked up the Chinaman, but his boat and gear were lost.

When we left port next time we were shorthanded, for we had not had time to secure another second mate. I had made a study of our captain's landmarks and courses when we entered all the island ports of call, and frequently had changed the course without orders from the captain, though with his close supervision, and felt that I could safely bring the boat into most of the ports. The rest of the ship's work I felt that I knew pretty well already, and so I asked Captain Thompson if I could relieve him on the bridge, telling him that I had Frank so well trained at the wheel that I could feel safe in the open sea with him at the wheel, and also saying that Captain Thompson could be sure that I would be on the job every second, and that in case I saw even the slightest reason for apprehension, I would immediately have him called. Captain Thompson put me off with no very reassuring comments, but the next time I was at the wheel I had Frank with me and turned it over to him, and while watching his work I was called up on the bridge by the captain. He turned the bridge over to me with almost no comment, but remained with me until we had to change our course as we passed the end of an island, watching both Frank at the wheel and me on the bridge, and then went below for a rest. We would be busy as soon as we arrived at our first port of call, and at sea there was not much that could happen that I could not take care of fairly well. I took the second mate's trick for the rest of the trip, and should have applied for the job when we came back to Honolulu. I have no doubt that I would have been advanced by the ship's owners as fast as I was able to go, for there was a shortage of officers in the islands at that time. But I was fully determined to get to Seattle, and so quit the Niihau upon her arrival at Honolulu and started prowling the waterfront in search of a chance to ship for home.

An English ship, the Errol, of Dundee, was loading ballast preparatory to sail for Puget Sound, and I applied for a chance to ship on her as a sailor. I had heard that English ships did not furnish the best of food for the sailors, but as the Errol was taking on a crew just to work the ship to the Sound, a short run, I supposed that the food would not be too bad. I was accepted and took my dunnage aboard the day the ship was to sail. It is customary for sailors to sign ship's articles when hired, but this I was not asked to do.

"Signing on," it is called. This was not asked of me, and I never gave a thought to the oversight.

We towed out of the harbor in the afternoon, and as soon as we had sufficient sea-room we made sail and dropped the tug. I felt well contented, for here I was, headed for home and being paid for the trip. This contentment was bred of ignorance, for I had never been on an ill-found snip before, nor did I know this was to prove to be such a bad one.

So I arranged my belongings in the berth and viewed my surrounding accommodations and shipmates. The forecabin was a dark and dirty hole, but I took little thought of that, for I would be out of it in a very few weeks. The crew, again a fair-weather crew, numbered before the mast, only seven sailors. Four Scandinavians, one Belgian and two Americans, including myself. Four apprentices and the boatswain, quartered in the half-deck, a small cabin just abaft the mainmast, made up the working members of the ship's crew. True, there was very little routine work done except the handling of the sails, steering of the ship and lookout duty.

The watches were told off, and I again found myself in the mate's watch. Our captain, Captain Henderson, stayed on deck just long enough to see the ship safely clear of the land, and then he went below. We did not see him again until we neared the Washington coast. The mates were apparently in full charge of the deck all the time, except perhaps when boatswain was left to stand watch for one or the other of them.

The *Errol* was a three-masted, full-rigged ship, the same arrangement of sails and rigging as the *Marion Chilcott*, but the rigging and spars were not in as good condition as were the *Chilcott's*, possibly because the *Errol* was a long time out of her home port, and also because she had not been kept up in as good condition as the *Chilcott* had been.

We had shipped for a cook a miserable specimen of beachcomber who, if given good material, would have ruined it for eating. Since the material given him was not good, the result of his cooking was an awful mess for us to take. With my persistent dysentery still bothering me under the best conditions, that food soon had me so weakened that I could hardly perform my duties. One day when I went below after having been soaked and chilled in a heavy rain, and needed some good warm food, I found only a cold, messy canned meat, and dry, wormy sea-biscuits, with luke-warm coffee that tasted like it had been re-boiled until it was a bitter, acid poison. I don't know how many worms I had eaten before I discovered the first one, but they were so thick that I have no doubt I had put away quite a few maggots, for my meal was well begun. After that, I always crumbled those biscuits before eating them, and removed all the live food that I could find.

Our canned beef was called "Harriet Lane" by the sailors, the origin of the name dating back into mythology. It seems that early in the history of preparing foodstuffs for sailors' consumption there had been a packer by the name of Lane. The story has it that Mr. Lane's daughter disappeared, and that human bones were found in the vat that the meat to be canned was cooked in. The bones were supposed to be the last sad remains of poor Harriet. Then we had salted meat that was called salt horse, I don't doubt rightfully, for it was very coarse, stringy and tough. But as we were perpetually hungry because of insufficient food, we had to eat what there was and like it. The ship was living up to the reputation English ships had at that time acquired among sailormen. Light work and lighter food. "Hungry ships." Nearly all sailors preferred to work on American vessels. "Bloody workhouses," they were called, but with all the work, the sailors were pretty sure of plenty of food, wholesome food.

As a result of this diet our crew became very quarrelsome, and a word would start an argument. The other American sailor, Tom Peacock, was a pretty level-headed fellow, and we two managed to keep out of any real trouble.

Our boatswain at times claimed to be American, but not always, as he was English if it seemed to be to his advantage. His claim to American citizenship was somewhat discounted by Peacock and myself, for it seemed to us that he was not much in sympathy with us two, but gave us the worst of the work to do, often giving us the most dangerous jobs in bad weather. A weakling has no place on a sailing ship, and as I was weakened by my ailment, aggravated by the miserable food, my life on that ship was wretched enough. The main topgallant sail yard was weak, and had been strengthened by bolting reinforcements in the shape of light timbers on both sides. One afternoon when, in a rainy squall, the yard was bending under the strain of a wet and full drawing sail, I was ordered to go out to the extreme end of the weak yard, past the break, and reeve a new gasket to replace a worn one. It is my opinion that the boatswain believed the spar might break when my weight was added to its already overloaded strain, but I made the trip and the repair successfully and came down ready for the next task. When I came down, one of the other sailors said to me in an undertone: "It was nothing but bloody murder to send you up there."

One cold, rainy night, when I was standing my trick at the wheel, I had my hands drawn up inside of the sleeves of my oil-skin jacket. The boatswain was standing the mate's watch that night, and observed he trying to protect my hands, profanely ordered me to pull my hands out from their protection. The ship was steering easily and I was having no difficulty in holding her on her course, so I could only conclude that the fellow was just over-anxious to exercise his authority. He seemed to delight in causing both Peacock and myself all the trouble and suffering he could think of.

But after all, perhaps I was not the worst-treated member of the crew, for our big Belgian, who was a big bully at best, got into an argument with the boatswain one night and got knocked down. I did not know what it was all about, for I was standing lookout on the forecastle-head at the time, and the altercation took place back by the half-deck. But I heard loud words, and the smack as the boatswain's fist hit the Belgian's jaw, and heard the Belgian hit the deck. He jumped to his feet and came running forward, calling "Come on, fellows." The boatswain ran into the half-deck and came out brandishing a gun. "Yes, come on, you sons of bitches, I'm ready for you!" he said; but none of us came on. We were not looking for trouble, and besides, we were not any too sympathetic with the Belgian, because he was so disagreeable to get along with in the forecastle. Apparently Waton, the Belgian, got just what he needed, for after that fracas he became chums with the boatswain, and a precious pair they made.

We had some pretty stiff winds, and with heavy seas, it was a wonder that we came through as well as we did, but we never lost a spar or sail. We always shortened sail whenever there was any prospect of a blow, sometimes running under lower topsails and foresail only. With the rain, the cold, and the heavy seas, we were pretty miserable, especially when we had to go aloft in the night to make or shorten sail. The canvas was wet, heavy and stiff, and our hands were raw and bleeding before we got our sails safely stowed or stretched and came down to the deck again to turn in to wet bunks for what naps we could catch between squalls.

I had heard English ships called "lime-juicers," because of the crew being given lime-juice to ward off scurvy, and the old Errol lived right up to tradition. The trip was dragging slowly on, due in part to unfavorable winds and in part to the fear of our officers

to carry much sail lest it should be blown out and lost. The rations became worse and worse and the crew were hungry. Then the lime-juice was portioned out to us, and we had to drink it whether we liked it or not. I suppose, because of the filthy stuff we had become accustomed to, the lime-juice was about as acceptable to us as was the dirt called coffee.

But all voyages come to some kind of an end, sooner or later, and ours must eventually wind up. So, finally, after nearly forty days out from Honolulu, we came near the straits of Juan de Fuca.

The sailors knew that land was near, two or three days before land was sighted, for our food improved in quality and increased in quantity. This increasing of the rations near the end of a voyage was universally practiced by all ill-found ships, and was designed to appease the wrath of the crew and make them forget the worst of the treatment they had received, so that when they were discharged in port they would give the ship a good name, or at least not too had a name.

Now, I was called aft to sign the ship's articles, that oversight having been discovered during the trip. Had I only known what was in store for us, I would have refused to sign, even though no doubt I would have felt the effects of force being applied to me to persuade me to sign. The articles called for the sailors to ship for the voyage to Puget Sound, – "By the run," it is called –, where we were to be discharged if we so desired. The question was, where was Puget Sound?

We sailed into the straits in fair weather, though with slight head wind against which we had to beat. Now we saw Captain Henderson for the first time since leaving Honolulu. He took command and worked the ship up against the wind. We tried to tack, but the wind was much too light for that so we were forced to "wear ship" around. To tack, the ship is turned into the wind and off on the other course. She must have good speed, for as she comes up into the wind, all the sails are holding her back, and she may be "caught in irons," lose steerage-way, and fall off again on her old course. "Missing stays," so called. But to "wear ship," the ship is turned away from the wind, and so around, keeping the sails full all the time. This takes lots of sea-room, especially in a light wind, for every time the ship is turned that way, the loop loses much of the distance gained against the wind.

So we went into Port Angeles, which is just a short distance up the straits from the bay, and anchored there. When our anchor was down, we sailors supposed that our contract was completed, but our captain insisted that we work the ship in to her port of destination.

In a day or so a tug took us in tow and we were taken farther up the straits, and again we anchored, this time near Esquimault for quarantine and fumigation. Now surely we are through. But no. Before the ship could be fumigated our ballast must be discharged, and the captain ordered us to work to get it overboard.

This time some of the older sailors refused duty, claiming that we were entitled to longshoremen's wages for any more work, and we all stood round and watched the officers and apprentices toiling in the hold to get the ballast out and dumped in the bay. Some of the boys were inclined to gibe the men in the hold, but I preferred to keep silence. Perhaps I was just too numb from the miserable experiences I had had to endure to be but little more than just conscious of my existence.

In the meantime the captain had gone ashore, and soon a police boat came out to the ship and we were bundled off to the gaol in Victoria. The captain had sworn out warrants for our arrest as mutineers.

It was a clever move, that we did not understand at the time, for we knew nothing of law. Certainly my wits were not sufficiently keen to appreciate much of anything, and I moved and acted as though in a daze. Later on, after it was too late to seek proper remedy, we saw through the scheme. It had worked to the advantage of either the owners or the captain, we never knew which.

Evidently, we were not considered desperate criminals by the jailers, for we were allowed the run of the whole gaol excepting during mealtimes and at night, when we were locked in cells, to keep us separated from the bad ones, so we were told. In the gaol we were well fed and given plenty of bedding, so that after the hell on the Errol this visit to the lock-up seemed almost like a holiday affair.

Of course our persons were searched, and to the surprise of all present a belt which I wore next to my skin was discovered, and found to hold some money. Right then our jailer suggested that the crew be taken out to a restaurant to be treated to a real meal, and I saw my hoarded wealth begin to melt away. We were not detained long in the gaol, and the day we were brought to trial I had a surprise.

An impecunious Scotch attorney was assigned to represent us before a Scotch Judge, and as our captain was Scotch I saw that we were likely to be "scotched" in the fullest sense or the word. I had never in my life been foul of the law in any way and knew absolutely nothing of how to look after my rights, for I had always dealt with scrupulously conscientious and honest employers.

Well, the trial was a farce and we were "scotched," all right. We were rifled an amount that took almost all of the small wages due us, and ordered back aboard the ship. The court decided that Puget Sound began at and lay south of Port Townsend, and since we were not going there, as the captain had received orders to proceed to Vancouver for cargo, he was to pay our fare as far as the first part in the Sound from Vancouver, where we were to be discharged.

So we were taken back aboard the ship and prepared her for fumigation. This was started in the morning and the hatches were carefully caulked and battened down and the hold was left closed for more than twenty-four hours. Then the hatches were taken off and the hold allowed to air out overnight. By morning the air was clear and sweet down below decks, and I went down to the 'tween decks on some errand. What a sight! Millions of spiders, distressed by the rising fumes, had started to lower themselves on their thread-like webs and had been overcome when about halfway down between the two decks. A regular curtain of spiders, thoroughly gassed. Rats and bugs of all kinds and descriptions had to be cleared out. Would we ever get free from that terrible ship? The end of our servitude was near, however, for we were soon towed over to Vancouver and taken ashore to be paid off and formally discharged.

While we were anchored at Esquimaux, a boarding-house crimp had located us and has been busy ingratiating himself with officers and crew, for the crew he had many vulgar, rotten anecdotes and a genial friendliness. Whether he furnished liquor for the officers or not, I do not know. He brought a female companion aboard the evening we tied on to the towboat to be towed to Vancouver, and during my trick at the wheel that evening, the captain paced the poop with this female, in close order. In the morning the crimp went ashore with us, sticking close while we were in the Commissioner's office.

When we asked for our fare to Port Townsend, the Commissioner blandly told us that as we were already in Puget Sound, we were not entitled to any fare whatsoever. I guess we were all too glad to get away from that malodorous ship to waste any breath in futile argument. At any rate, we accepted what few dollars were given us, and left the

office. The crimp promptly took in tow those of us whom he could garner in, but Tom Peacock and I elected to go our own way and sailed off uptown by ourselves. I soon found the ticket office of one of the Puget Sound steamer lines, and in just a few hours was on my way to Seattle. I imagine the rest of the sailors were broke and safely in the boarding house that evening, as is usually the case if they fall in line with the boarding house crimp's plans.

I intended to idle for a while in Seattle, but the trimming I had received in Victoria and Vancouver from the ship captain and court and shipping commissioner left me with but little capital, and when I was offered a berth on the steamer City of Seattle, which covered the same route that I had travelled on the old Topeka, I gladly joined her and was off again, this time for a longer stay away from my home port than I had ever made before.

Alaska, the land of promise, beckoned me, and together with another young sailor, we left for Skagway. At that port, the gateway to Alaska, we, with the captain's consent, quit the steamer and the sea forever, as we thought, though he did return to that life later on.

The experience on the Errol had so soured me that I gave up the sea forever, to become one of the many seeking adventure in the far North. I had heard wild stories of the terrible cold and hardships experienced by travelers on the coast who had not had the heart to penetrate the interior of Alaska, but I was young, and the reports of big wages outweighed the stories of hardships, and as it was now spring I determined to see the interior of the promised land, and if I chose I could come south in the early fall and probably bring out with me sufficient money to afford a vacation and at the same time take treatment for my persistent bowel complaint. And so with all this in my mind I quit the sea forever to become one of the many seeking quick wealth in the fabulous frozen North.

THE KLONDIKE. What magic those two words held for the world in '98 and for many years after! Colorful stories of wealth to be had for the taking by those who were early on the ground suggested the days of '49 in California, when fabulous fortunes were made by many of the pioneers who had no knowledge of mines or mining. Just courage and perseverance was all a man needed to gather enough gold to make him independent for the remainder of his days. The fame of the luckier ones spread and lasted. The hardships of the less fortunate ones were made light of or forgotten entirely.

Of the days of '49 much has been written. Stories founded on fact and first hand tales of adventurers who participated in those wild, stirring times. Of those days many books have been written vividly describing the soul-searing efforts of many to reach the country, stories of struggles to live, to avoid deathtraps, often of failure.

But the KLONDIKE, that could be reached with but little expense or hardship. One short struggle, one grand effort, and the worst of the adventure was over. Civilization had already surrounded that country with most of the necessities of life, dear to be sure, but what of that? Wealth also was there. Why count the cost? Prudent minds would consider carefully and hesitate too long. Impetuous youth would not, but rushing in would stand to win and give no thought to losing.

The gold fever which had swept the country with the first reports of the Klondike had cooled by 1901, but had not yet died entirely. I was just back to Seattle from the Philippines, and while not in the best of health, having been a victim of dysentery acquired in the islands, still I was recovering my strength and ready to heed the call for more adventure. Especially if nothing more promising was at hand.

I had tried the life of a sailor and had some glorious experiences. Also some very bad ones, which overshadowed the whole life of the sailor, and I was ripe to try some other way of living. Alaska offered youth a chance to be independent.

I was joined in this venture by Charlie Moritz, another young sailor seeking new experiences, who was working with me on the steamer City of Seattle, plying between Seattle and Skagway.

Neither of us were experienced miners. In fact, we were as ignorant of that life as new-born babes are of fire, and just as willing to get our fingers burnt. We had never experienced such cold as was reported by some of the returned adventurers, but we had youth's spirit and optimism, and we discounted all stories we heard of hardship. We knew that many hardy souls were surviving the climate and were either acquiring or in position to acquire their share of the wealth that was available to those who were strong of heart and diligent in their efforts. Youth with its optimism was our sole capital, and we must make it do for our adventure, for time was slipping by and tomorrow might be too late.

So, with the permission of the officers, we two quit the boat at Skagway, and taking our dunnage ashore we moved into the leading hotel. But before we could receive our wages from the steamer we had to help unload her cargo, This seemed no hardship, for a few hours, a day at the most, would complete that task and give us a few more dollars. Unfortunately, I sprained my back at the task and had to suffer during several days of enforced idleness, which dug into our small capital quite seriously.

For about five days we lingered at the old "Fifth Avenue," my partner seeing the sights in the town while I rested. Charlie reported that the new railroad was built as far as Lake Bennett, about 37 miles from Skagway, mostly up hill, but that the fare was rather more than we felt we could afford to pay. We decided we would walk that distance, as the weather was ideal, and by shipping our baggage we would have no load to burden us and slow us down. So early one morning we started to count ties over the famous White

Pass. We were able to make one or two short cuts, and pulled into Bennett that evening. But as we were not used to tramping, that walk seemed to us to be many more miles than it actually was, and served to dampen our enthusiasm for frontier life if we were going to have to use our legs for transportation. At any rate, my back went bad on me again, and finding an abandoned tent, we moved into it and again laid up for a while.

After a day of nursing me, Charlie scouted around and got a job helping load scows with cargo for down-river. Then after three or four days, when I was again able to get around and was well on the road to recovery, he shipped on the river steamer Bailey. The owners wanted to move the steamer down below the White Horse rapids, as the railroad would soon be completed to that point, and there would be no more business for steamers on the upper river.

Taking the steamer through Miles Canyon, the Squaw and White Horse rapids was going to require some skilful navigating and a lot of good luck. It would be the largest boat to run through this dangerous stretch of water up to that time. Bales of hay were rigged outside the guards of the steamer to act as bumpers if the boat got too close to the canyon walls, the engines were carefully looked over and the steering-gear carefully tested. With all precautions taken, she was ready to go. Charlie told me afterwards that the trip was fairly exciting while it lasted, but it was over so soon that he hardly realized the danger part of it. The trip down the lakes and river to the head of Miles Canyon was tame enough to those who were expecting to make an epochal trip, but served to accustom the crew and captain to the working of the boat in currents. As the river narrowed down just above Miles Canyon, the increased speed of the current put all on their toes. The captain rang for full speed ahead to give the boat her best steerage-way, and they shot into the canyon at a breakneck rate. Charlie said that even had they shut off the power, the boat would have ridden the center of the stream without any steering, as logs do when turned loose in that channel. The current is so strong that the center of the stream is a couple of feet higher than the edges are, and all floating objects are pushed to the middle with an irresistible force. That lasts however only through the canyon. As the water emerges from the lower end it spreads out over a rocky bottom and the deep water shifts to the right before it enters the White Horse. This stretch is called the Squaw rapids, and is sufficiently bad to wreck any boat which fails to steer into the deep part. When the Bailey made this crossing and squared away for the White Horse, she got a little too close to the right bank, and like a flash the bales of hay hung over that side of her were ripped off. That was the one really exciting moment of the trip and took the breath out of the entire crew. But the boat made the passage with no damage done.

It was a narrow squeak, for had she hit any rock, all hands would surely have been lost with the boat, for no one could have survived those terrible, swirling waters. A few more graves would then have been added to the graveyard just below the rapids. That graveyard already had many victims buried there, victims of that uncontrollable, angry torrent.

As soon as I was able to get around, I went down to the waterfront in Bennett, where many scows were being built for transporting cargoes down stream. I located one outfit that were just about loaded with mining machinery and provisions. It was a company that had been organized in Peoria, Ill., to mine some gravel banks on the Seventy-Mile River, about a hundred miles below Dawson. This outfit had two scow loads and needed another man, so I shipped with them.

They were rather typical of many of the outfits that went into the interior of Alaska during the exciting days of the gold rush. Ignorant of conditions to be met, and ill

advised at best. Headed by Dexter White as manager, the personnel of the expedition consisted of Walter Clark, representing some of the moneyed interests, another man for engineer who I believe was an instructor of mechanics in the schools of Peoria, a lawyer, and one or two more who had come along for the adventure from the outside. The rest of the outfit was composed of such as myself, members recruited at Bennett who wanted to work their way down river. One who had shipped as pilot was described to me as a "tin horn gambler," and that is what I think he was, for he dressed the part with his broad brimmed hat and rather fancy clothes. Certainly he was no pilot, for he soon showed that he had no knowledge of the river, nor had he any knowledge of the handling of any kind of water craft. He was useless. For cook we had shipped a woman who, with her two young daughters and a rather aged and helpless husband, an ex-missionary, drew the highest salary of any of us, for she earned four rations of food to one of any of the rest of us. About the best man in the crew was a middle-aged logger. An active and willing worker, who one day proved to us that he was a real logger by jumping on a small log while we were drifting in mid-stream and making that log carry him just wherever he wanted it to. He would dance a jig while making the log spin under him, sometimes stopping its spinning and reversing its motion. He was good.

Because I was a sailorman, I was put to work rigging up a mast and sail for one of the scows. We intended to sail that scow and tow the other down the lakes. The scows had short decks at the two ends, with long open cockpits for the stowing of cargo. One scow had a tent rigged up for the cook and her family to sleep in, and also to be used as a kitchen. Wooden pumps were rigged to pump out any leakage or water shipped over the side in rough seas. The pumps were good enough, and did all that was required of them. For power, when power was needed, long oars – sweeps – were rigged, and a place left in the cockpits for men to stand in while working them. Also, longer sweeps were rigged over both ends to move the scows sidewise in places where the channel required a quick shift. The rear sweeps were used ordinarily as rudders to steer with when sailing or rowing down the lakes and in slack water.

The scows loaded, the sail rigged, the extra crew hired, and we were ready to go. So we turned in early, hoping to be called early in the morning in case of a favorable wind. But the next morning the wind didn't blow, so Mr. White tried to employ the services of a tiny stern wheel steamer to tow us down the lake. She couldn't take us down Takou Lake, for she couldn't get back up the stream between the two lakes. She hadn't the power. However, she agreed to take us down Lake Bennett.

And so next morning, after some more delay for some unknown cause on our towboat's part, we started down the lake. There was a breeze blowing now, though from a direction we did not like, for it was blowing across the lake, while we wanted to go down it. The steamer captain was afraid to take us in tow for fear the breeze might blow us all on the rocks, but Mr. White was firm in his determination to brook no further delay, and reluctantly the captain agreed to make the try, exacting, however, a promise from Mr. White to cut adrift from the towboat in case the wind proved too strong. Well, of course the wind did prove too strong. The little steamer had scarcely power enough to move itself against the wind, let alone pull two loaded scows, and so we found we were edging closer and closer to a jutting point of rocks, with a mighty slim chance of getting past. It looked like the end of our expedition right there on that rocky reef. The steamer captain was signaling frantically for us to cut adrift as he turned more and more against the wind and still kept losing ground, and White was holding on grimly. So the steamer captain let

us know he was going to cut us loose and lose his towline if we held on. He did not intend to be dragged on to the rocks.

Then Walter Clark showed his spirit by urging that we release the tow boat and try our sail. What did we have a deep sea man for, anyhow? So we set our sail, cast off from the towboat, and right then we began to draw ahead under our own power. We were crabbing sidewise pretty badly on the tack, so we rigged a couple of one-by-twelve boards over the lee side of the scows to act as keels to check the side drift, and sailed bravely past the dangerous rocky point, but with not much room to spare.

I had signed on as deck-hand, laborer, roustabout, anything, giving for recommendation my ability to handle boats, tie knots and splice ropes, and now my stock went up high, and Walter and I fell to mentally congratulating each other. We had met and beaten the first dangerous situation with his idea of having a sail rigged, and my ability to rig the sail and handle the clumsy outfit. A few nights later I was left alone on watch as we were drifting down the Takou lake with almost no wind, went to sleep, forgot to call the relief, and in the morning we were headed the wrong way and I did not know it. The rest of the crew had a merry time at my discomfiture.

After we were safely clear of those rocks in Lake Bennett, we had no further serious or even exciting adventures until we came to the White Horse rapids. The drift down through the stream connecting Lake Bennett and the Takou lake was easy, but afforded us some experience in running water. I can't say swift water, for there really was no swift water in that stretch, but it was good preliminary training, and also showed up our tinhorn pilot in his true light, so that Mr. White put no more reliance in him for the rest of the trip.

We had light winds on the Takou lake, but managed to drift along down in the right direction, and so negotiated it in fair time, and Mud Lake, or Marsh Lake, was just like Takou to us, only smaller, and so was put behind us with but little lost time. But as we approached the much-dreaded White Horse our interest began to increase and our pulses to quicken. Would we get past this hurdle safely? If so, nothing to come after could possibly daunt or stop us.

As the current began to increase we scanned the shores anxiously for a landing place, and pulled with a right good will when the regular landing appeared, and tied up safely enough. Mr. White went to see about getting a pilot to take us through the rapids, and secured the services of a man, I believe his name was Ed Smith – who was well recommended. He proved to be cool and competent, the result of much experience.

There was a tramway built around the rapids for the transporting of cargo, and Smith told us to unload quite a bit of our load, as the scows were too deep in the water for quick handling. We moved the unloaded cargo down to the landing below the rapids, and were then ready to attempt to run through the dangerous channels. I do not think very many of us felt much apprehension at the thought of the possible dangers, as Smith did not seem to think the run was much more than just part of a day's work, even though many lives had been lost in this place. However, the more timid ones walked the distance around rather than take the chance, and certainly we did not wish to be encumbered with them.

As soon as we cast off from the bank we felt the pull of the increasing current. Smith had us pull the scow out into mid-stream as fast as we possibly could, and soon we were shooting downstream with rapidly narrowing walls which now rose high above us, locking us into this terrifying canyon, which was only the first of three battle-grounds through which we must fight our way to safety. There was no way to escape the combat

now, had we lost heart. I was much too interested to even think of the danger, or to notice whether any of the crew were looking or acting scared. And no one noticed me, which was lucky for me, for I don't doubt the excitement may have changed the color of my face. But soon we fairly shot out of the canyon into the Squaw rapids, out of one bad mess into another without a second's respite, and now we had to pull the scow away from some foam-covered rocks that the current was pushing us towards. Now we squared away for the final test, and for a moment rested on our oars, although we were travelling at a fearful speed. With fascinated eyes I watched the frothing channel as we approached it. I guess the other men at the oars were likewise spellbound, for we none of us heard Smith telling us to pull, not until either Smith or Walter reached me with a toe of his boot did I hear the order telling me to. Then I woke up with a yell that could be heard above the roar of a Niagara. I fairly screamed PULL, and swung on my oar with every ounce of my strength. That yell brought instant response from the rest of the oarsmen, and we gave steege way to the cumbersome scow and shot into the narrow chute through which all the water of the mighty Yukon was now pouring, rushing and roaring. Boom, Boom, Boom, we hit three mighty waves in the channel, and a minute later were out of danger and in quiet water. A short pull brought us to shore and we tied up safely at the landing by the lower end of the tramway. Now we went back for the other scow, and Smith piloted it through just as easily as he had the first one, and we of the crew were now seasoned swift-water men, and did not get nearly as excited as we had been on the first trip.

One would think after the danger of shooting the channel was past, nothing that might come after could seem difficult, but some have found that excitement leaves the mind slowly, and that the brain does not function normally for some time. Earlier in the running of these rapids, one man lost his leg just because he got tangled up in the line he used to tie the scow to the bank. The excitement of coming through the rapids had him so badly rattled that he was not a safe man to trust with the simple task of tying up the scow. The current is still fairly strong below the rapids, and when the line was tied ashore the man's leg was caught in a coil of rope around the snubbing post on the scow, and was simply ruined as a prop. Smith told us of this accident and warned us to look out for that danger, so we, properly warned, suffered no casualty.

Life on the scows, after the White Horse was safely past, soon became routine, for the river was fairly high now, and rising steadily, which made the lower rapids, the Five Finger and the Rink, just no problem at all. The Rink rapids are shallow in low water, and care must be taken to get into the deepest part, but when we went through we had room to spare. Little incidents now made more impression on our minds than had the problems of navigation. The quality of the food became a subject of major importance. Our logger was accustomed to first class camp fare and plenty of it at all times, and found our cook deficient both in preparing the diet and the allowance dished out as well. She and her family ate their meals in the tent down in the cockpit, and handed up ours to us on the after-deck. One day our logger friend, feeling hungry and not satisfied with the quality of the hash we were eating, noticed our cook eating some canned corn and passing it around to her family. Mr. Logger passed his plate in to the tent with a request for some corn. There was no more. He complained, and the poor woman, when taken to task by Mr. White, burst into tears with the explanation that she could not eat the fare she was passing out to us.

We went through the Rink rapids with one scow at a time, and left our engineer with the first scow at the foot of the rapids. As we went away from the scow, headed up

stream, we heard some shooting, and concluded that the sportsman was practicing some, exercising his eye and trigger finger. But when we brought the last scow down and tied up alongside the other one, our hunter had over a dozen bunnies stacked up on board, and claimed that he could have filled the scow, given a day ashore. The rabbits were big fellows, larger than our largest jack-rabbits. They were the Arctic hare or snowshoe rabbit, and had nearly all lost their white winter coat of fur and were just ordinary brownish gray in color, though a few of them still had some white left on their pelts. A couple or months earlier they would have been so white that unless the beady black eye was noticed, the rabbit would not be easy to see on the snow. The meat was delicious, and we fared well for a couple of days, with no complaint from any of the crew.

Drifting around one big bend of the river that was several miles long, we noticed a small pack of wolves. Maybe five or six in the pack, and headed towards us, trotting along single file on the edge of the high bank. Our engineer got his gun ready and cautioned quiet. This was too good a chance to get a wolfskin and he did not want to take any risk of posing out. Maybe if we kept quiet and motionless the wolves would not pay any attention to us, But he did not know his wolf. Just before we were in long rifle range of them, the beasts trailed off into the bushes out of sight, and they kept safely out of sight until we were well past them and again out of rifle range. Then they again appeared on the bank upstream, and trotted along as though their trail had been in the bush for a mile and that we had not been in sight at all. I am inclined to believe that the wolf, at least the Alaskan wolf, is the wariest and smartest four-footed animal of its size in the whole world. If you don't believe that, just ask professional trappers and you will find without exception that they will tell you that to trap these fellows the utmost care must be used to eliminate any evidence that man has ever been near the traps. Crossed with a good dog, the offspring will make the smartest as well as the most affectionate work-dog that can be found or bred, besides being strong and tireless on the trail. They instinctively know how to take care of their paws, too, in snow and ice, and every time the team is stopped they immediately begin to dig the balled-up frozen snow from between the pads on their paws. An outside dog does not have this instinct, and so will soon go lame unless the driver attends to the paws for the dogs.

Dawson was our first port of call. We had to stop there to go through customs formalities, and we took time to purchase some few provisions and give a casual once-over to the town. I saw nothing of interest in the sights, for at that time Dawson was just another town, and I had seen many frontier towns that were much wilder, and so, much more interesting to an adventurer. Here Mr. White let all go who were not members of the company excepting our cook and family and myself. The river from here on down would present no difficulties, and only a couple of days would be required to cover the distance. Besides, Jack Hayes now joined us, and he was good as a pilot and strong on the oar. He was the prospector whose claims on the Seventy-Mile this company had purchased an interest in.

The customs officials were courteous and prompt, and no difficulty or unnecessary delay was caused by them, so we were soon on our way again. We had to stop again at Eagle City, where Fort Egbert is located, just over the line between Yukon Territory and Alaska, to pass through the U. S. Customs. Here we again were treated courteously and had no trouble and no unnecessary delay. The next day we tied up at Star City, a ghost town near the mouth of the Seventy-Mile. We had completed the river run without any accident or trouble, even though we had had no pilot or guide of experience to direct us for almost the entire distance.

Now we laid over for a day while we examined the Seventy-Mile and deciding that the scows could be dragged up to the first bar we were to operate on, we rigged the tow lines and windlass and next day tackled the job of moving upstream with one of the scows. A hard day, for each scow put them both up by the bar, and then it was just routine work getting the machinery ashore and set up ready for operation. It took but very few days to test that gravel bar and determine that there was insufficient gold content in the gravel to pay the cost of operation, let alone making any fabulous profits. So the machinery was abandoned, camp was broken, and we moved upstream about fifty miles to another group of claims that Hayes had located.

This time we travelled light, using two poling boats to transport the light prospecting outfit. These we towed with ropes over our shoulders when the going was good, wading in the shallower water and frequently submerging our hands to wash off as many mosquitoes as were not too securely attached. Both Walter and myself were in the crew towing the first boat upstream, and once when we paused to blow for a minute, Walter upon looking back to see how Mr. White and his crew were making out, saw a pretty sight. Downstream only a little way below White's boat, a moose was standing in midstream, drinking. Walter motioned frantically to White, who did not understand the gesticulations. The moose, however, seemed to understand, and just as White turned to look, the moose turned toward the bank. White rushed for his gun, which was in the bow of his boat, but with just a few strides the animal ambled ashore, across the sand bar and out of sight before White could get to his gun and drag it out of its case. I would rather have had a picture of that scene than all the meat the moose would have furnished. The river here was fairly placid as it swung around a long curve between its well-wooded banks, but with a sand bar projecting well into the stream from one side. Standing in the center of the stream facing us, that huge animal with its enormous antlers, the rippling water, the blue sky, all together made as beautiful a picture as ever was painted. But we got neither moose nor picture.

The day we arrived at the upper bar Mr. White paid me off, for now there was no more work than the company men could easily take care of, and expenses must be cut down. I was given a check written on a large chip that Jack Hayes cut out of a dry tree, and when I presented it to the bank in Dawson it was honored for its face value.

A roll of blankets, an alarm clock, a six-gun and a couple of loaves of bread made up my travelling equipment, and with this pack on my back I headed downstream. I made for the top of the divide between the Seventy-Mile and Charlie River, for up there I would be away from the terrible swarms of mosquitoes infesting the river bottom, and also have fairly clear ground with smooth animal trails to travel on. About eleven o'clock I dropped down into Trail creek, where Lee Frolick and Truxton were sluicing out some placer gold. I stopped for a few minutes to visit with them, and then at their request I went down to their cabin and started to prepare dinner for them and myself. On the window-shelf over the table I noticed several small bottles containing gold-dust, some nuggets and some specimen rocks heavily loaded with gold. One glance told me that there were many dollars' worth of gold on that shelf, so I simply made a point of keeping as far away from the fortune as I could conveniently. I preferred for the owners to be present when I inspected the stuff. Then I would have no explanations to make to account for my curiosity, and anyway, I wasn't a bit curious. I didn't want the miners, when they came in, to find that I had even fingered the stuff. It was their property, and was the stuff that had caused many a murder and untold suffering.

A Dinner was ready when they came in, and we immediately sat down to eat. Then one of them asked me if I had seen the nuggets, and invited me to look at them. I admitted that I had noticed the display, but told them that I thought it would be time enough for me to examine the gold after they came in. They told me it would have been all right for me to look the stuff over before they came in, but I know they were better satisfied that I had waited. They would have noticed if I had been fingering the gold, and naturally they would take stock to see that nothing was missing. And had there been anything missing, it would have gone hard with me. When they saw how particular I was about not handling their wealth, they recounted an event that had happened some time before I came into the country. It seems that it was common practice to leave your belongings on the table or shelf and not lock the cabin. Visitors were few, and supposedly scrupulously honest, but one weakling suspected of pilfering was caught in the act. A meeting of the miners in the vicinity was called, and plenty of convincing evidence was given to prove the culprit's guilt. The sentence was terrible. The man was stripped of his clothes and turned loose in a mosquito swamp. That was as far as the story went, but since I had been in those mosquito swamps and been nearly crazed when I was fairly well protected, I knew that I would go stark mad in a very short time if subjected to such torture. After that episode, no more thefts were heard of for many years. At least, not in the outer settlements. Of course, in the larger towns there were always some small characters who had to be guarded against.

That night I made camp on top of the divide, and as I was tired, and also was an excellent sleeper, I set my alarm to arouse me at five in the morning and went sound asleep at once. Along about one o'clock the alarm went off with a good loud clatter. I reset the thing and went right back to sleep. In another hour or so it rang again. I am a patient soul, but my patience was being tried, for it was not yet daylight. So I again re-set it and again went to sleep. Again in about an hour it clattered just as noisily as ever. This time, day was breaking, which meant that the time was about half past three, and I could see a little bit. Still it was much too early for me to wake up, and I was as sore as an irritated tonsil. I didn't bother to crawl over to where the alarm was busily jangling, but just reached under my coat that I used for a pillow and drew out the six-gun. One plop and the alarm was stopped for all time, with a bullet right in the center of the pest's face. I left it there for posterity to find.

About noon I dropped down off the divide to the creek and had a good drink, then lunched on bread and blueberries. All the blueberries I could eat were easily gathered, and with another hearty drink I again hit the divide and came in sight of the Yukon fairly early in the evening. A few days later I caught a steamer going up to Dawson.

This ghost town of Star City, near the mouth of the Seventy-Mile, had, of all the people who once made the place boom as a mining town, but one resident remaining. This man cut cordwood for steamers in the winter time, and also carried a small stock of provisions to sell to any prospector who might be short of some line of food. I boarded with him while I was waiting for the steamer, and spent some time wandering around through the district just out of idle curiosity and to kill time.

I did not think of taking my gun along with me on these trips, and if I had I might not be going strong today, for on one occasion I would have been tempted to use it had I had one with me. But this time I did want it, though, if I ever wanted a gun. It happened this way. I was heading toward the store from the Seventy-Mile river, leisurely, after one of my prowls. The trail led through timber for the most part, but about a mile from town a glade of an acre or more was open and full of huckleberry bushes which were nearly as

high as my head. Anyway up to my shoulders, and crowding the trail so that I could see the ground only a few feet in front of me. I was ambling along, snatching a berry here and there, and then, with no thought of danger, I nearly stumbled over a cub bear. Brown. I stopped, and began panning myself out for not having my gun with me. Maybe the mother bear was near, and grunt from the cub would bring her, full of wrath to the protection of her baby. I wanted to go home to the store, but the cub was in my way. I backed up carefully, hoping I would not meet Mama coming along to her offspring. She must be near, either on the trail or in the bushes near at hand, so I decided to get back to the timber and skirt the glade, and at the same time have a tree handy in case of emergency. About forty steps back, and I saw another brown body. I couldn't see whether it was another cub, or a grown bear. No time to pray, or curse my luck, or even wish for a gun. I had to get out of that berry patch, and get out as quickly and as noiselessly as possible. Maybe the whole patch was filled with mama bears and their families. Anyway, I worked myself as quietly as I could through the bushes towards the timber, ready to yell and run if I stepped on anything soft and alive. But luck was with me and I made the timber with no meeting of bear, cub or other beast. I went over or under logs and through thickets with no trouble at all, just like I was born to travel through that kind or going, and soon made the store.

I was rather reluctant to tell the storekeeper of my encounter, for fear he would tell me just what kind of a fool I was to go unarmed through that wild country, so I made a diplomatic approach to the subject. Were there any wild animals in the country that might possibly harm one? A contemptuous no was the answer. Then a fellow would not need to carry a gun? But what if you saw a bear? Or even a cub? Then I was told that if I ever saw a cub and not the she-bear, I had better leave that cub severely alone, for the she might be close at hand, and no gun that I owned would stop a mad she for a second. Had I had my gun with me, I would have tried to shoot my way out of that glade. I would probably have stood less chance of getting out whole out of that glade than I would have stood shooting my way out of a cordon of Chicago police.

Ordinarily a brown bear is not to be feared at all, but a bawl from a wounded cub is a call to action that will [give] plenty of courage to the parent and make of her a thing of fury to be reckoned with.

I had been in Dawson only a day or two when I met my partner Charlie Moritz again, and we decided to make a run down to St. Michael's as deck hands on the steamer Sarah. That trip netted us nothing but wages, unless new country was counted. The Yukon is a big river, throwing as much water as do many of the larger and better known streams. I doubt if the Mississippi has a much greater volume. But the Yukon from its beginning on down to Circle City is confined to a comparatively narrow channel, which results in a far swifter current than one would expect to find in such a large stream. Four miles an hour is, I believe, its average speed, though in places it speeds up to seven miles. But from Circle City on down nearly to Rampart, the river spreads out and is divided into small channels with myriad islands between them. I have been told that at the widest parts of the flat the mainland banks are forty miles apart. Here the current is almost sluggish, and the deep channels are constantly shifting, so that every year the steamer captains have to feel their way through.

To us, the flats were a picture of Paradise, what with the many islands all covered with green trees, the gentle current and the prospect of plenty of game animals. Countless immense flocks of water fowl were seen lining the banks. Flocks of geese, brant, pelicans, swan, as well as ducks and gulls. I guess about every variety of water fowl that

migrates to the north was represented. The daylight was long now, and when Charlie and I were not at work we would sit and gaze at this wonderful scene. Out of the flats below Rampart the river again narrowed and looked too tame to us, and we made up lost sleep until we came to the river delta. Again the stream spread out wide and shallow as it poured its mud and water into Norton Sound.

St. Michael's was very quiet and uninteresting to us, and as Nome was far away to the north of us, we saw no reason for remaining any longer than the steamer did. The trip up to Dawson was marked to us principally by the enormous amounts of wood and coal that fuel-hog could consume. It all had to be taken aboard by hand, wood on our shoulders and coal in litters carried by two men. Hours of painful labor. So we quit the Sarah cold when we got back to Dawson and looked around for something else which might yield a morsel of adventure along with some good money. Some odd jobs around Dawson that were just barely good for expenses served to disillusion us about the easy money we had hoped to find, and the summer slipped away.

One evening I was visiting with the proprietor of a small second-hand store, and expressed my longing to hear some good music. I didn't want popular music; classical preferred. He told me to come with him down town and he would guarantee that I would hear what I wanted, together with some popular. "I'll go and buy the tickets," I volunteered. "How much will it cost?" "It won't cost you anything to get in, and only what you want to spend, to get out." So down the main street we went, and turned into an entry-way marked "Orpheum." Straight ahead of us was a stairway, which my pilot steered for. A double door at the foot of the stairs opened into the back of this supposed theater, and I noticed a crowd of men standing around. Upstairs we turned on to a balcony with seats, and my friend took me to the front row. Only two or three other men were up here, almost all seats being empty. Now I saw what kind of a place I was in. It was a dance hall, and I never knew there was one in town. I had never even thought of there being one. But this was IT.

The music was furnished by a piano and violin. If there were more instruments I did not notice them. The violin and piano were played by excellent musicians. I didn't get the name of the pianist, but Ernest Bergen was the violinist. Between dances he would often play some classical numbers, and I just about wept as I listened. He was good, though just how good I can't say, for my ear had not heard good music for so long that I was too carried away with his playing to judge quality.

The dancing ladies appeared to be all good dancers, and well dressed, well-behaved women. Their partners on the floor were some of them in business clothes and shoes, but many of them were dressed in cold-weather outfits with moccasins or mukluks. However, the girlies didn't seem to mind how their partners were dressed, so long as money was plentiful.

This hall was the tony hall of the town, and had on its list of entertainers many a proud and haughty dame who boasted that she had nothing more personal to sell than her smile and company on the dance floor. You could dance with a darling dame for three minutes, then walk over to the bar and pay the bartender-cashier a dollar, of which the dame would eventually get half. Then you could awkwardly stand by the bar and wait for the next dance to start. And if you were standing there waiting, you might have a fairly long wait, so to pass the time you might buy your lady and self some refreshing and invigorating beverage at twice what it would cost you at any other bar. Or else you could just abandon the field to fate and embarrassedly make your way across the floor towards the gang of rubbernecks standing near the door or by the stove. We went to another place,

now that we had seen all we cared of this one and I had had a temporary fill of Bergen's music. What a difference! There was no balcony here where one could sit and not be bothered. The entertainers were much more flashily and scantily dressed, and were busy all the time trying to persuade every male prospect to dance or buy the drinks. This was purely a get-the-money place, and a lot rougher than was the other one. Nor did these girls make any pretence to even a semblance of respectability. The two dance halls were catering to two different classes of patrons, but both were after all the famous Dawson Dance Halls.

With fall approaching, Charlie and I began to wonder where we would pass the winter. A trapping trip on the Seventy-Mile was suggested, and another man who had expressed a desire for just that kind of a trip attached himself to our party. We secured an old skiff, some traps, a sled and a stock of provisions, and then began to make some inquiries about trapping and prices of furs. It seems that we didn't need any training to learn how to trap. Just some little instruction and we would soon catch on to the trick. Three more ignorant trappers were not to be found in the whole world, but that did not bother us, for we had the optimism of youth and supposed that we could easily overcome such a small obstacle as the lack of finer points of outwitting dumb animals. Besides, we heard glowing accounts of valuable catches of furs, and felt sure that even in our ignorance we could make a fair winter's grubstake.

We laid in a fair supply of ammunition and clothes, and cast off from Dawson once more and again headed for the Seventy-Mile River.

On our first day out we were lucky enough to catch a large King salmon. Enough fish meat for several days, even though there were three hungry mouths to feed. This bit of luck gave us confidence that we would get plenty of fresh meat to supply us for the winter. I suppose we must have thought that game animals would walk right past our camp and give us notice that they were coming. That would allow us time to collect our wits and prepare to give them the reception they had a right to expect. One moose did trot past our camp early one morning, but he did not give much warning of his approach, and I was so completely surprised that I just stood frozen in my tracks and made no move to pick up my rifle, though it stood not ten feet away from me.

That was my first lesson in what to expect from wild animals. Evidently they were not only guided by instinct, but some of them had some reasoning ability as well. At least, where their safety was concerned.

We made the Seventy-Mile the second day out from Dawson, and ascending a couple of miles we made camp on a bar for the night. Threatening weather decided us to put up our tent to protect our provisions, and to sleep in it if we had room. After stowing our supplies in one end, we found not too much room left to accommodate the three of us under cover, unless we packed in pretty tight. That didn't bother us, and we slept soundly. So soundly that we never knew that snow was falling until in the morning, when we found our feet sticking out from under the side of the tent and covered with snow. That was our first taste of an Alaskan winter, and we hurried to move to our winter quarters.

We chose an abandoned cabin up on Fox Creek, a short way up the river, and set about getting a winter's supply of wood cut and stacked by the door, cleaning out the cabin, and making necessary repairs. From this location we could run six lines of traps so arranged that they could be visited once every three days by walking not more than twenty-five miles each day.

But which one of us was to cover the longest line? That we decided by taking regular turns at all chores, even including the housekeeping. Needless to say, a few of

those trips around our lines, that netted us nothing more than a frost-bitten nose, not even a track near our traps, were so discouraging that we soon shortened the runs and made fewer trips. We found that the animals were just too smart for our inexperienced efforts.

Then one evening we had a visitor, Harry Aldyce. He was surprised to find us there. He had planned to use the cabin himself and run his traps over practically the same routes we had chosen. Well, it seemed to us that he had a better right to the district than we, and we offered to move out. He was a good trapper and an agreeable fellow, and wouldn't hear of our moving out at first, but when he found that we really were willing, then he told us of another location farther up the river where we would find a good cabin and just as good a district for our purpose. All of which was very true, as we found out after we had moved.

But Aldyce would not hear of our moving until the ice was safe, and he slept in a small cabin near ours while waiting for the hard freeze. He had a dog, Sport, which would lie under our bunk in the evening until Harry was ready to go to his sleeping quarters. Then as soon as Harry began to talk of going, Sport would very quietly creep way back under the bunk, trying to hide. When he at last gave up and came out from under, he would fairly crawl over to the door, the picture of most abject misery. He did not like the cold one bit.

One day while we were at Fox creek, waiting for the river to freeze, we had for a visitor a prospector who went by the name of the Nimrod, for he posed as a mighty hunter, and he did have the reputation of being a dead shot. My rifle, through misuse, had had its fore sight knocked to one side, and I asked our visitor if he would adjust it for me. This he did with the expenditure of but very few shots, and made a perfect job of it. I went back with him to his cabin, and as we were walking up stream we took our turns at shooting. His was the first shot. I don't remember what his target was, but I do remember that the shot was executed perfectly, and I hoped that no game would show up for me to shoot at, for I doubted if I could make much of a showing in comparison with his marksmanship. But in just a few minutes a pheasant took wing and lit in a low bush in an open place. A fair target, but I started to edge up closer to the bird, for I wanted to make sure of my shot. Friend Nimrod told me that I need not work closer to the bush, for my gun would shoot where I pointed it; so I just had to draw a bead on the bird. I knocked the top of the head off perfectly. I went over and picked up my game and showed it to my friend with the remark that the gun was better than ever it had been before. I didn't say a word about my shooting, hoping that I would not have to shoot again. Luck was with me and I was able to keep my record clean. Nimrod did not make any remarks about lucky shooting, but just pointed his nose to the ground and walked on. The next shot was at a duck out in the river edge. Not an easy mark, but he took the head off clean, and that ended the shooting for the trip, much to my relief.

Now that shot of mine was not just a lucky shot; it was just not an unlucky shot. We always tried to make every shot tell, for cartridges not only cost ten cents each, but we would have to travel a full hundred miles to get more, so we must not waste any on chance shooting.

This reminds me of how we procured the best marten skin of the trip. Charlie was out one day, and as good luck would have it, had his gun with him. His eye caught a fleeting glimpse of some fur animal that was within range if only it would show itself. He raised his gun and watched hopefully. The animal raised its head up over a log to investigate, and was right in the line of Charlie's sights, so he pulled trigger and got the animal through the head. It proved to be a marten with excellent fur of very dark color,

and sold for thirteen dollars, which was six dollar more than any other fur we had brought us.

Up on Deep Creek we found just as good a location as we had at Fox Creek, and we settled down for the winter. We put out a few traps and set a few deadfalls, and then when it was not too cold we would hunt for some kind of meat. For some time rabbits were our only fresh meat, but one day when I went a ways down the Seventy-Mile I ran across some fresh caribou tracks on the snow-covered ice. Well, I had left my gun at the cabin, so without any attempt to find where the animals were, for fear I might scare them, I hurried back to the cabin, luckily only a couple of miles at the most. The boys were both away, so I left a note telling them of my discovery and where they should find me, and started back to get our winter's supply of meat. I met the fellows near the mouth of our creek and together we headed downstream to round up this herd. We were going to corner them in a bend of the river and take as many as we needed as they went past us on the ice. That scheme didn't work, for although we got near them, they easily gave us the slip and we never got a shot at them.

It was getting late, so we went back home for the night, planning to spread out next day and try once again to get a shot, hoping that we had not scared the band away from our locality. In the morning my two partners went over the hill below the cabin, expecting to head off the band while I went downstream to again pick up the tracks and follow them, but before I came to the place where I had seen the tracks the night before, I came across some fresh ones. These animals had evidently just left the ice and climbed the bank headed around the hill the boys were coming over. I climbed the bank very carefully, for while it was an easy slope, it had small willows and I was afraid I might scare the game if I made much noise. I believe that band was not one hundred feet away from me when I looked over the top of the bank. I could only make out some patches of fur through the willows, and so I took a chance on the nearest bunch and shot at what I could see of the animal. A 30-30 caliber rifle with a steel-nosed bullet at such close range ought to get my meat, and so it did. A young cow and her calf. The bullet passed through the calf's throat and into the body of the cow. The calf dropped in its tracks, but the cow, only wounded, ran away. I did not see it at all and had no idea I had wounded it. However, after I had skinned the calf and was carrying the meat to a small tree where I could put it up out of reach of possible wolves, I noticed blood on the snow, besides tracks, and then decided that I had wounded another animal. Then I was excited, but I finished putting the calf up in the tree before I followed the cow.

She had headed into a thicket fairly close to where I had first seen the band, and by the time I came lumbering after her she was too stiff to get away and I had another job of getting her cut up, and as she was too big for me to put up in the tree alone and dusk was rapidly changing to night, I made camp for the night near my kill, expecting the boys to come after me in the morning. The skins made my bed and a couple of fires kept me company as well as guarding me safely, and I caught several good naps before the morning, although the night was pretty cold. I fancied I heard wolves howling several times through the night, but as I kept good fires burning and as there was plenty of other fresh meat for them, even though it was on the hoof, if they were very hungry, I did not really feel nervous, though the night did seem pretty long.

The next morning I again took up the trail of the band, but soon ran across more tracks and found that I was in the midst of a large herd of caribou, which were divided up into many small bands and spread over the rolling hills as far as I could see. The animals were fairly tame and would let me approach quite close so long as they did not smell me.

Apparently their vision was poor but their noses were keen. So we had no trouble getting in our winter's supply of meat. And was it good meat! I know of no meat equal to a frozen steak from a young caribou, fried in bacon fat. How we craved fat that fall! We fried everything in bacon fat and even used it for butter on our hotcakes.

Aldyce paid us a visit one day, much to our surprise. We supposed he was much too busy with his traps to come so far, but it seems that he had shot and wounded a caribou, and after giving it time to hunt a thicket and lie down, he had followed it, but found that some other hunter had picked up the trail, so he came on to our cabin to see if we had secured the animal. I it was who had seen the blood-marked trail, and I started right after the animal. The trail was too fresh, and I only succeeded in running the animal away so that nobody could get it. I didn't know that if the animal had been allowed to lie down for a while it would stiffen, as my cow had done, and then would be easy to approach. Harry was nice about it, though, for he knew that we were just too green to know much and that we had to learn from many sad experiences before we could be held responsible for our acts.

He told us of a fellow named Yost who was on the lower part of the Seventy-Mile with a fine team of Malamutes and was expecting to come up river soon. Only a few days after Harry's visit to us, I was coming up to camp in the late afternoon when about a mile below Deep Creek I saw what I thought might be a malamute sitting on the trail in front of me.

He looked like what I thought a wolf would look like, but no wolf would ever let a man get that near to him in the open. So I concluded he was one of Yost's dogs, and as he did not seem friendly, I carefully broke a trail around him, keeping perhaps a hundred feet away. He just watched me and did not offer to approach or run, but after I was past he leisurely trotted down the trail. I was so sure he was one of Yost's dogs that I never once thought of shooting him. A good dog at that time was worth on the market about one hundred and fifty dollars, but was simply priceless to a man on the trail. Yost came up to our camp a week or so after this incident, and I asked him if one of his dogs had been loose about that time. He said absolutely not, and asked me why. I then told him of meeting the dog on the trail. There were no other malamutes in many miles of us that he knew of, so he said my dog had been a wolf.

Just my luck. No one had ever heard of a wolf having been seen at such close range before, and I did not know one when I saw him. A wolf skin was valuable when the fur was good and prime, as this fellow's was. I did not see him again, but I saw his tracks several times afterwards, and once as I turned up Deep Creek from the Seventy-Mile in the dusk, I surprised some animal who was just over my head on the high bank. Or did I surprise him? He certainly surprised me. He must have been aware of my approach but got nervous when I came so close. I know I was nervous. I heard him scramble away, and some snow was thrown down from above on to the trail near my feet. It was too dark for me to see much, but I fancied that I heard him following me to within a quarter of a mile of the cabin. I kept my gun cocked and held ready for instant action, and if a hoot owl had said BOO to me I would have started shooting.

Along in February we decided that we were too dumb to try to compete with the so-called dumb animals, and gave up. The weather should be moderating soon, so we packed up and headed back towards Dawson. We had no dogs and our sled was pretty heavily loaded, so we had to figure on short days and many of them to make the trip. Two of us strung out ahead of the sled to pull and one stayed behind to push. It was usually Charlie and I who were in the lead, for our partner found it was not so hard behind where

we could not watch him. He was no physical or mental giant, so he preferred to conserve what strength of body he had by using his head.

I had a rather bad time one day when we were dragging through a rather narrow part of the Yukon against a slight draft of wind. Our partner was about played out and claimed he could not even push any more, and Charlie and I were both tired. My clothing was too open and I began to get frostbitten in spots, so we abandoned the sled and made for a roadhouse we could see only a couple of miles upstream. We made it, all right, but I was thoroughly chilled and had a number of frostbites on my face and hands. I won't forget the sensation I caused when we came into the cabin and I headed for the stove where there was warm water in a can. I thrust my hands deep into that water and put some of it on my face on the frozen spots. Did it hurt! But the frost was taken out of the flesh at once and the pain soon left. After that I became convinced that for a moderate case of frost bite the easiest and least painful way to thaw out the frozen parts was to use water that was as hot as one could bear. I've used that idea ever since, and find it less painful than the time-honored custom of torturing oneself by rubbing cold snow on the already cold skin.

In Dawson we moved into an empty cabin. We did not know the owner, but we were too short of money to go to a hotel, besides, we had our outfit to guard. We found quite a bit of plunder in the cabin and so the next morning I set out to find the owner. He lived very close, but that we knew nothing about, but inquiry disclosed that he was the claim agent for the White Pass and Dawson steamer line, Mr. Sims. I told him what we had done and offered to make amends, but he was a true Alaskan and gave us the free use of the place as long as we needed it. Later he proved to be one of the best friends I ever had the luck to have.

Our provisions and capital were low. The few skins we had would not bring us much in the store. The little money we did have would not carry us through the rest of the winter, so one suggested that we pool our capital and try gambling. One of us was appointed to make the play and the others selected the place and game to be played. Well, the allowance was quickly used up without winning one bet. Evidently gambling wouldn't do. Our partner solved his dilemma by going down to some saloon and taking a job cleaning out cuspidors for his eats, and so passed out of our lives. Charlie thought up a way that suited us two much better. He got a crosscut saw from a dealer who had faith in us and we began sawing wood for our living. We found plenty of wood to saw, for we would watch for a load to be delivered and then would strike a bargain with the purchaser. We soon had capital again.

One day we found a good buy in a grocery store. The grocer had some frozen eggs on hand that he was offering at two bits the dozen. He would sell only one dozen to a customer, so Charlie brought home a dozen and I promptly went to the store and purchased another dozen.

The spring was near and as soon as the eggs thawed out they would quickly spoil, for the frost had cracked the shells, but we soon used our supply; they never had time to spoil. We had purchased eggs at about two cents each, and only a couple of years before a man had bought all the eggs in town at that time for one dollar an egg. Quite a difference.

Now that we had travelling expenses again, Charlie took enough from the pot to pay his way out to the mines on the creeks, and soon found a job at good wages. After his first payday he sent for me, and I too became a miner. It was hard work but I enjoyed it. However, Charlie soon became restless, and with the opening of the river he migrated to

the south to go back to sea. I remained and followed mining for a couple of years more, sometimes working for wages and sometimes working a lay on leased land. Several times I staked some ground for myself, but I had no luck in locating a good claim. They had all been staked long before I came into that district.

The first mining that I did for myself was on Count Charbonneau's claim on the lower end of Gold Run. His wife, Belinda Mulrooney before she married him, had owned a very rich piece of ground on Eldorado. The name of her claim was Three, a small fraction wedged in between two claims, and proved to be about the richest piece of ground in the district. It produced enough gold to satisfy any ordinary person, but when she took on this Count Charbonneau (if he was a Count, which many people doubted, saying Belinda had bought a bogus Count), she had to dig up lots of pelf to support him in the style he felt belonged to a man in his station in life.

She was the business head of the pair, and it was from her that I secured the lay. Instead of employing help, I took in as partners four Norwegians and two Italians. They were all mighty good workers and we made the dirt fly that winter. I could not nearly equal them working with the pick and shovel and wheelbarrow, so I did the surface work. I fired the boiler and ran the hoist daytimes, and did the blacksmithing work evenings. We employed a Norwegian woman, Signe Pederson, to cook for us, and we gave the world an example of practical socialism in that we were all equal and all worked to the best of our ability for the common good. Right at the start the question rose as to who was to be the boss. That job I didn't want, for I knew but little of the underground work of mining, but all the rest of the boys would be willing to take the lead. They finally selected one of their number for the job and we buckled down to business.

Our boss started us out in good style and we would have been well contented and satisfied with him, but he couldn't stand the feeling of authority. It soon went to his head, and one night up the creek he got pretty boastful and very full. The hangover next day made him lazy and intolerable, so he was voted out. Things were running smoothly by now, with every man knowing the work he should do and doing it very well, so we did not need to appoint a new boss and got along just as well.

There were two other lays working on the claim, but the gangs did not see much of each other, for we were all much too busy to spend time visiting, but we did lend a hand to each other when needed. Joe Bernier, a French Canadian, had the lay next to us if I remember rightly. One day he had to put up a high gin pole and he did not have enough men to handle it, so we all went over to help him right after our dinner. The pole was green and very heavy and it took all our combined weight and strength pulling on the ropes to start it to going up. With the first pull it didn't budge, so Joe yelled out: "PULL! Pull lak Hell! Brak sommethin! Geeve us soome satisfy!" and with that incantation the log rose grandly.

As I was alone on top of the ground, the business end of the venture was just naturally left to me, and the boys below handled the tunneling and drifting very skillfully. But the pay dirt was very poor and some of the gang got very discouraged and began to look for a chance to get out, so we found that we had some new members to replace the disappointed ones and the work went on as before.

Mrs. Charbonneau wanted us to take in her father as a partner, and as we needed a night fireman and watchman, we accepted him. Old man Mulrooney was a hot partner. I stood his watch more than once while he was up the creek on a toot. His daughter used to try to hold him in line, and they had some merry arguments as a result of his efforts. One night when I was standing his watch at the boiler, I heard them mix, out by the corner of

the boiler-room as he came home from up-creek. She evidently was waiting for him and taxed him with neglect of his job.

Some hot words passed between them and then I heard a smack and knew that one of them got slapped. I did not see Mulroony for he went into the bunkhouse where it was dark and changed clothes ready to take over the boiler, and I followed him in and went to bed. In the morning Mulrooney slept in, and while I was getting the hoist warmed up Mrs. Charbonneau came over to the engine house and I noticed a black eye and broken glasses.

"Good morning, Mrs. Charbonneau," I greeted her; and "Why, what has happened to your glasses?"

"I struck a log that sticks out of the corner of your engine house last night and I came over to ask if you would have it cut off."

"I certainly will," I replied. "I don't want that to happen again. I am so sorry"; and that incident was closed.

I don't know why she placed so much confidence in me, she certainly was not fond of me, but when she wanted to be lowered down into any of the other shafts she always insisted that I should be at that hoist. After we had cleaned up our dump and were through with our lay, I remained with her as engineer for the rest of the season until the other laymen were finished and she shut down for the rest of the summer. It was just the same then as it had been. I had to leave my hoist and go to whatever shaft she wanted to visit, and replace the man on the job while she was down in the drift. I complained once to her, saying that the other men were just as good hoist men as I was, and that it was not fair to them to have me replace them at their own hoists. Then she told me that she did not trust them, but was afraid that they might try to give her a scare, and perhaps carry the joke too far and at least injure her.

Well, we had another fight right then, for I wondered why she should treat them, or rather us, so rough as to give us cause to be vengeful. She could express herself in the most approved miners' language, and I was promptly told that it was none of my damned business how she treated her men, and that all I needed to do was to run my little hoist as I should. Still I wanted to know why she should choose me to trot around with her on these trips, and why shouldn't I drop her some time. She sure had it coming. But my protests were of no avail and I was still elected to engineer her into and out of the other pits whenever she wanted me to.

Our dump did not clean up very big. After all bills were paid, I had only about seven hundred and fifty dollars to pay me for a hard winter's work. The richest claims in the district were all pretty well worked out, and cheaper dirt was being worked as long as it would pay expenses. After Mrs. Charbonneau shut down for the season, I went to work for the owners of the claim just above where we had been working. It belonged to Chute and Wills, who owned several other claims on the creek and also owned the biggest store on the creek. That store paid well, for the men working for the firm could always draw an order as part pay on the store for any goods they were in need of, and so returned their wages to the company. I was firing a boiler at night time, and one of the night workmen whom I knew quite well was always looking for a chance to play a joke on me, often to my discomfiture. We both slept in one of the cabins used for sleeping quarters. This fellow had a beautiful long moustache that he took exceptent care of. One morning I was a little late in getting ready to turn in, and my friend was lying on his back in his bunk, dead to the world. The chinking between the logs at the head of his bed had crumbled and opened quite a crack through to the outer world. I had an unfortunate inspiration right

then. If only it would work, I could collect fully for all the debts he owed me in the shape of jokes. Anyway, I would try. He seemed to be pretty sound asleep. I had a couple of fairly strong straps around my valise and some strong thread in my sewing kit. My first job was to get the straps fastened in place. I made them into slip-loops with their buckles and then tied each of them to the poles under each side of my victim. Then with care I slipped his hands through the loops and was ready for the most ticklish part of the job. I cut a couple of threads about six feet long and passed an end of each out through the crack in the wall. Then with slip nooses on the inside ends, so made that they would not loosen easily when drawn tight, I with greatest care fastened a thread to each end of the moustache. Now all was ready, I went outside and drew up the threads, and with a yank on one I would yell "Haw!" Then I would slack that one, draw on the other one and yell "Gee!" I got a yell out of him every time I pulled, and in between pulls I got the most gosh-awful cursing that any man has ever heard. Several other men in reach of our voices came over to see what was going on. They stood in the doorway and watched the man's head jerk to first one side and then the other, while all the time he was making frantic efforts to break the straps which held his wrists so firmly, and yelling his maledictions at me all the time. Finally I wearied of the noise and tied the threads outside and departed silently up-creek, where I hid out for the remainder of the day. He was too big for me to face when he was on a rampage. He had done just as bad to me, though, or worse, so when he was cool again he simply let me off with a promise of still worse torture for me in the future. Thank heavens that time has not yet come.

I put in the summer working for other miners, and again in the fall I joined up with a couple of miners on another lay for the winter. It didn't pan out much better than had the one on Mrs. Charbonneau's claim, so I quit mining and looked for something else that would not be so hard work unless it promised better pay.

The fact was that the time had come for finance to step in with expensive machinery that would handle large quantities of low-grade gravel rapidly and with very low operating costs. A few of the richer claims had not yet been entirely stripped, but for the most part they were being worked by their owners and there were but few profitable lays to be had, with many lay-men bidding for them.

One of my last partners, a man named Loney, stuck with me through the summer. He was a good carpenter, and I was looking for an engineer's job, so we went over to Dominion Creek and travelled down pretty well towards the lower without finding anything for either of us, and put up at a roadhouse for the night. After we had been asleep for some time, we heard a noisy man in the bar-room, boasting as most miners may do when lit up. He was the CHIEF engineer for the Dominion Gold Mining Company, which was starting up farther down the creek. In the morning Loney and I discussed the situation and decided that I had better go down to see the foreman of this company and see if our engineer had showed up for duty. Loney would go back to Gold Run, and if I found an opening for him, he would come right over and this time bring his tools along.

I came to the company's cookhouse about noon, and was told that the foreman was at the diggings but would soon be up for dinner. I had to sit down with the crew to eat while waiting for the boss, Mr. Hill. I didn't object, for I saw that the boys would be well fed.

After dinner I made myself and wishes known to Hill, and he could hardly believe that his engineer would get so drunk as to leave the job. Would I take a pick and shovel until another engine was ready for me? You may bet I would. Hill needed a carpenter,

and so I sent for Loney. In the morning after, as we went to work, Hill pointed to a machine standing in an open cut and asked me if I knew what it was. It was a steam shovel, the first one I had ever seen at close range. Hill asked me if I thought I could handle it. Well, I certainly thought I could, and stepped up on the thing with all the confidence in the world. The job was to dig out a cut and pile the dirt alongside for a while until the Gold machine was ready to run. That was just what I needed for practice, and by the time the sluicing was started I had completely mastered the shovel and was thoroughly enjoying the job.

That camp had for a cook a fellow called Hungry Mike, a slim, cadaverous looking fellow. Claimed that he was starving on his own cooking, but the men didn't. He was about the best camp cook I ever met.

Sorry to say, the gravel was poor and the mine shut down early, and Loney and I found ourselves again adrift. So I put in the winter spending most of my time around Dawson. I had some money owing me from several people, and I collected it in the form of board and lodging and occasionally small amounts of cash to use when opportunity offered a chance to make a profit on speculation. I dabbled a little in mining machinery and did a little work, and came through the winter with more cash on hand than I had had either of the two previous winters, besides not suffering any hardships from cold or grueling labor.

But inactive life did not have any appeal for me, and in the early spring I went to work for the Klondike Lumber and Milling Co. as fireman and engineer. The pay was small, but I was well satisfied, for the job was just a stopgap to keep me occupied until the river should open, when I intended to move to new ground. Fairbanks district was just opening up, and I wanted to see that place and planned to go there as early in the spring as I could get a chance, and with that in mind I was just putting in time while I worked for the mill. But some of the other employees came to me and told me that they were all going to strike for higher wages. I objected to being asked to join them, saying that under the circumstances I would rather quit, but they were insistent that I join them in their demands. I reluctantly consented, for I didn't exactly blame them for wanting better wages if they wished to remain with the job through the summer, and unless all hands demanded a raise there was not much chance of any of them getting one. But I joined them with the understanding that we all quit, and also that no one should go back to work unless all were re-employed. This was agreed to, and the next morning the mill was shut down and we took turns standing on the bridge leading to the mill and informing all persons of the situation. Peaceful picketing was what it really amounted to. I had my turn at the noon hour, but I was not stopping anybody, for I saw no workmen during my shift. But I did see the manager, Mr. Wells, drive across the bridge.

Well, I waited until one o'clock for my relief, but imagine my feelings when, instead of relief coming, I heard the whistle blow and the mill start running. Instinctively I knew the story. My place had been filled by one of the other boys and they all had left me out in the cold in spite of their promise of standing together. One of them told me later that Mr. Wells, seeing me standing on the bridge, had assumed that I was the one responsible for the strike, and had seen fit to make me the goat, and not one of the boys had the guts to defend me, but had meekly agreed to see my head cut off so long as they could go back to work. That affair had a lasting effect on me, and I never again had much sympathy with unions or strikers.

Later, I had another experience, this time with an established union that I joined to protect me in my work in Seattle. This was another disappointment, and served to

confirm my poor opinion of unions, or rather, of their management. I always felt that I had an individual right to work wherever I wanted to if there was a job open to me, and that I had the privilege of quitting if I was not satisfied with wages or treatment. I also felt that I should try to make a profit for my employer so that he could keep me employed. I have quit some pretty good positions, simply because I found that I was out of my line, feeling that I would never make for my employer the profit that he had the right to expect me to produce for him. The union I joined in Seattle did not want me to work fast. As for wages, I seemed nearly always to get the best there was going at the time. But after I joined the union my jobs never paid as good wages as I had been getting before in the same line of work. And today I have no more sympathy with the union idea or soaking the rich than I ever did. But I do feel sorry for the individuals who are forced to follow the dictation of union heads and lose many dollars of wages to help further the profit and political ambitions of unscrupulous and avaricious but glib-tongued labor leaders.

That is not to say that I don't see any wrong with any employers. There are plenty of them who take a most unfair advantage of labor and should be disciplined severely. But many of them are in small establishments or businesses where strikes cannot reach them. That is where a just Federal Labor Relations Board would serve a useful purpose. It would have to have power to ferret out such gross unfair practices without involving the employee in any way, and power to punish the offenders. Such a board would necessarily have to have a head who was non-political and not subject to any discipline from any prejudiced political party head. He would have to be fearless, for he would have to punish some powerful corporations as well as many small malefactors. And when this board stepped in to settle a dispute where there was much influence on either side, it would have to be assured of no political interference. That board could do more to benefit the laboring class than all the unions of today are doing, and could do it with no direct financial help from the laborer in the form of dues and strike benefits, which, as matters now stand, are used largely for the personal profit of labor leaders and walking delegates. At the same time it would greatly benefit employers as well as employees, for it would save the losses caused by wrongful strikes. However, that solution is not desired either by labor union heads who would have their easy pickings cut off, nor would it appeal to the type of employer who now is able to exploit labor selfishly.

A few days only were lost to me as a result of the Klondike strike, for I soon went to work on one of the river steamers that was loading for Fairbanks. However, I had only worked on that steamer a few hours when the mill superintendent came aboard, and seeing me at work, talked to the steamer's officers and I again found myself out of a job. I walked off that steamer and on to the steamer *Monarch*, and signed on as fireman for the round trip to Fairbanks and back, or at least as near to that town as the boat could safely approach. That was the way all freight and passengers were booked, and at that the steamer's space was all sold out.

I regretted to agree to make the round trip, but I saw the logic of the request, for had many of the crew quit the steamer at Fairbanks, she would be too short-handed to make the return trip to Dawson. So with no spoken or mental reservations I agreed to stay with the steamer. I expected to be able to see Fairbanks and to get first-hand reports as to the value of the district, and I could again come down it I thought the camp was going to be good.

I was firing under the second engineer, Mr. Howse, whom I liked very well. The other fireman, whose name I don't remember, claimed to have an engineer's license, and

also a union card, neither or which I saw. He was a discontented soul and was looking for any chance to make trouble. After my experience at the Klondike mill I didn't have much use for him, and so did not cultivate his acquaintance for fear he might arrange to get me into some more trouble. A chance for him to make trouble came very soon and he was not slow in taking advantage of the situation which he hoped would prove to be to his personal benefit. The fact that he resorted to unfair practices did not bother his conscience one bit, but that his plans miscarried to his detriment did peeve him considerably.

Shortly after we left Dawson our chief engineer suffered some kind of a stroke which temporarily incapacitated him mentally, confining him to his stateroom, and our second engineer, Mr. Howse, took his place as chief, putting me in as second engineer. Then our other fireman saw his chance and protested that Mr. Howse did not have a chief's license and should give up his berth to one who did have such a license.

Mr. Howse sat tight and I stayed on as second. But our trouble-maker was not yet through, as we later found out.

We made the trip to Chena, which was a town about ten miles below Fairbanks, with no trouble, and I walked up to the city the next morning, where I met several Dawson acquaintances who spoke rather disparagingly of the prospects of the district. I was told that I could locate on Esthe Creek if I wanted to, but I was suffering with a slight attack of rheumatism in my leg and did not feel that I wanted to make the trip and so went back to the boat to rest up for the return to Dawson.

When we got back as far as Eagle City, our engineer, Mr. Howse, was arrested and taken ashore to answer to a charge of smuggling. The charge had been trumped up by the disgruntled fireman who now hoped to get into the engine room. But as we were only a few days away from Dawson the owners of the boat decided to have me stand both watches to bring the steamer in, and fired the fireman off the boat.

Well, that was quite a full month for me. I was fireman when I left Dawson on the first trip, and had been second most of the time, but returned as Chief engineer. I had no license allowing me to hold the job as engineer, so I again went with the boat as fireman, this time coming back as an invalid, for I had tried to work the rheumatism out of my joints and succeeded in making them much worse. So this next trip I went down as watchman and came back part owner, having bought out one of the three partners, who was not agreeable to the other two.

On this third trip, as watchman, I caught our steward going ashore at Eagle with a quarter of beef on his shoulder. Of course he was fired, but on our return he begged to be taken back as steward, offering to work for no wage, taking as recompense for his services the tips he could collect. While the rush for Fairbanks was on, the boat was always loaded to capacity with freight and passengers, even though there was no guarantee of delivery at Fairbanks. Plenty of small change was easily picked up on these trips, as tips were frequent and of generous size and amounted to far more than the wage.

On the next trip down we carried a crowd of dance hall artists with their spieler. Eagle City had not had a dance of any kind for many a moon, and as the steamer had to lie over there for customs inspection for several days, the crowd thought some money might be made by giving a dance. There was a good large dance hall in the rear of one of the saloons, admirably suited for this type of dance, and the crowd moved in. That dance was a huge success from every standpoint, even including a good fight at the end of a perfect night. A fight was just in line with what was to be expected of such an affair,

where ladies' company could be bought for a dance or two. Especially as these ladies were willing to smile very sweetly on any man willing to spend his money freely.

All the unattached males in the town and the adjacent fort, as well as all the miners and prospectors for miles around dug up their accumulations of cash and borrowed as much as they could, or drew as much wage in advance as possible, and they gave the girls a warm and rousing welcome. So well were the girls rewarded that they gave a repeat performance the next night. But this second night was a dismal failure, for the boys, not knowing there would be any second chance to spend their money, had drained their pocketbooks good and dry and could now only stand around and watch a few men who were able to rake up the price of a dance or two enjoy the few moments their small sums would buy for them.

And the bar took in just no money at all that night. Nor was there enough enthusiasm in the entire crowd to start even a feeble scrap. There wasn't a single thing to scrap over, since there was no money to buy the kind of poison needed to warm up the fighting spirit.

My rheumatism finally got me down so that I was not able to make another trip and had to lay up instead. So I offered my interest in the boat for sale and unloaded her at a fair profit and came outside to try to get some relief. A winter fixed me up all right, and the next spring again found me drifting down the Yukon, headed for Dawson. This time the start was from White Horse, which was now the terminus of the railroad as well as being the head of navigation. Three scows were needed this time to transport the cargo we took down with us, the most of the cargo being almost all groceries of a sort that would not keep indefinitely. Potatoes and the like, which the owners hoped they would be able to put on the market before the steamers could get through to Dawson.

The main point of interest in that trip was the food. That was excellent, and was supplemented by game shot as we drifted along. We had for cook a man who knew how to shoot as well as he knew how to cook. Ducks were frequently flying low over us, and we soon got to grumbling if our cook made so poor a shot as to let the bird fall in the water and so make one of us pull off a few strokes in the skiff to retrieve the game, instead of dropping it on one of the scows. We had the three scows lashed together side by side, and it was not too hard to pot the bird as he flew toward the scows, and so time the shot as to drop it on or near our floating palaces.

We brought the scows with their cargoes through to Dawson in good time and I put in most of the summer around the mines waiting for the freeze-up. One day I noticed a fair-sized watermelon in a market in Dawson. Well, I was watermelon-hungry, this one was offered for only \$3.75 and weighed about fourteen pounds. I thought I could afford it. So I took it to my room, locked the door and had my fill of melon. I cleaned it up at the one sitting, and I thought and still think I never tasted a finer melon at any price.

There did not seem to be much left for me in the Klondike district, and I began to consider a change of locality. So when I was offered a chance to go down the Yukon to Woodchopper Creek, which enters the stream about fifty miles above Circle City, I took it up. I was to pilot a scow-load of provisions and mining machinery down the Yukon to the creek, and then if the claim looked good I was to set up and run the machinery.

We left Dawson Saturday evening Sept, 24, 1905, and drifted ten or more miles before tying up for the night. We ran from half past five in the morning until about seven in the evening, and as the two men with me had no experience on the river, I stood the most of that time at the steering oar, but we made Eagle the evening of the 28th, and with but little delay for customs we hurried along.

Wood Chopper Creek did not look at all good to me after I had tramped over the entire district. In fact, there was not a claim that I would have accepted as a gift if I had to mine it, so, as I saw no good opening, I dropped on down to Circle in a skiff. I laid over in that town for several days looking for some place to head for where I could find something worth while. From here I could go to the Fairbanks country by travelling overland about one hundred and eighty miles; or I could drop down to Fort Yukon and go into the Koyukuk across country about two hundred miles. I wanted to go into the Koyukuk country to look up a prospect for freighting on the upper part of that and the Chanadelar Rivers. I could not get in very well until cold weather froze ground and streams as well as providing snow enough to make it possible to use a sled, for I would have to haul along provisions and supplies for the trip in and maybe out again. And then the two hundred mile trip seemed to me to be too long for one to undertake alone.

What finally decided my course was the accidental meeting up with a man who had a claim below Coldfoot on the Koyukuk and who wanted to get in there as soon as possible. So on the eleventh of October we left Circle in a skiff, and drifting or rowing we made Fort Yukon in just forty-eight hours. We had shot some game as we came down, and we felt that we could well wait for the final freeze, which was unusually late that year, 1905. In fact, I note that on the thirteenth it was "thawing faster than it does in the spring." And Fort Yukon is right on the Arctic Circle. It was the jumping-off place for all who went into either the upper Koyukuk, Chandelar or Porcupine rivers in winter.

Dan Cadzow had a trading-post about two hundred miles up on the Porcupine, at a place called the Ramparts, and he shipped in each year a considerable tonnage of supplies. He was compelled to use poling boats to move his freight up the river, which made the haul very expensive. Then Jack Nelson had a store at Coldfoot on the Koyukuk, and his freight was hauled up from Bettles sixty-five miles below on poling boats in summer, and in winter on sleds. I believed that a small power boat could be built that would navigate these streams and carry a fair cargo. The freight rates looked attractive, and these two stores would total enough tonnage to make better than expenses, and any extra tonnage, or perhaps some trading or purchase of skins should make a fair profit for the venture.

I thought that winter would be an excellent time to examine the country and streams. The water would be at the lowest stage and rocks and bars would be exposed.

At Fort Yukon we put up at Jim Haley's roadhouse, where I found a number of other men en route to Coldfoot, waiting for the freeze to make the travel possible. There were just three white women in the town, and they were far above the average women you usually meet in such out-of-the-way places. Mrs. Carr, the wife of the U. S. Mail contractor and store keeper was a very nice, neat homebody. The kind of a woman you know at a glance is "right." Miss Woods was teaching the little Indian school-children and was herself a heroic soul. Mrs. Beaumont, the wife of another storekeeper, was new to the country. Only three months in the North. The rest of the population were eight transient white men or full-blooded Indians, of which there were at least a hundred. My partner, Mr. Collings had no dogs, claiming that he had no need of them, when on his claim, and as he was travelling light, he would have no real need of them on the trail. I had no dogs either, and did not wish to buy any. We were of one mind on the dog question. We didn't want to be bothered with any dogs.

As he claimed to know the trail, I felt fortunate in having him for a companion, even though I did dwell on his personal appearance with some misgiving. In that country so many of us looked, to say the least, like we might be doubtful characters that I did not

let his appearance bother me much. I had seen pictures on old magazine covers of anarchists and nihilists who invariably had black, kinky hair, corrugated forehead, black, bushy eyebrows, red cheeks, slightly bulbous nose, black moustache, thick red lips, and a short, kinky and bulky beard. And this was an exact picture of my companion. But he claimed he knew the trail, and I was content, even though he was an inveterate "argyfier."

All the bunks in the roadhouse were full, so my partner and I had to bunk down on the floor of the store-room, where lots of case goods were piled against the wall. We made our bed down in one corner of the room, right next to the pile of cases, stowed our supplies out of the way as best we could, and prepared for a quiet night. But what a night! I had no sooner put out the light and covered up than rats began chasing each other around the room, climbing up on the cases and jumping off on to the bed. One of them lit on my face, and I went to war. I had with me a number of small steel traps the size used for muskrats, certainly big enough for these rodents. So I lit the lamp and dug out a couple of dozen of them, and without baiting them at all, I set them in strategic places and again put out the light. We didn't have long to wait. Soon a trap snapped and a prolonged weeekeeek told us that one was caught but not killed, so we lighted up and put that fellow out of his misery, re-set the trap and doused the light. Only a few minutes and we had another fellow to eliminate. This soon got tiresome, so we got to waiting for two or three rats to report before getting up. I don't know how many varmints we liquidated before morning, but I know there were plenty left in spite of all our traps, for we caught several more the nights following, and even then we still heard others rampaging around loose.

Our landlord was a genial host, and our waiting time passed fairly well, but not without some monotony, so some restless spirits just had to think up some scheme to break the routine and relieve the strain. It seems that when our host imbibed too freely, which was seldom, if reports were true, he was apt to work on his good wife, who, being a good Indian, was not brought up to stand up for herself. She was a strong woman, and heavier than her lord and master, so some thoughtful spirits impressed on her mind that she should assert herself the next time the boss started a rough-house. Then we waited. But being restless, these fellows could not wait indefinitely, so one morning they got liberal and started treating His Honor, taking turn and turn about so as to keep their own heads clear for the fun later. But towards the close of the day hope was abandoned, as good fellowship costs much money and apparently the desired result was not going to develop, and we retired for the night.

Some hours later in the night we were aroused by mighty yelling, accompanied by an intermittent booming as of a rather hard object banging on the floor. It sounded like murder was being done. So serious, in fact, that we all jumped up and without dressing at all we rushed in to save a life if necessary. We found him pinioned on the floor, with good Mary sitting on top of him, and what she was telling him he had to listen to and like it, and to emphasize her remarks she with her hands in his hair would often raise his head and bang it down on the floor, and get a yell out of him every time. She was as full of enthusiasm as he had been of hooch. He begged the fellows to take her off, but no one seemed to be inclined to interfere between man and wife in just a little family argument, so Mary was encouraged to make a good job of it while she was about it.

The evening before we left Fort Yukon, a fellow came into the room where the rest of us were sitting around reading or playing cards, and asked if there was anyone among us who played chess. No one else answering, I stated that I enjoyed the game but could not truthfully say that I played the game. However, he took me on, and I won. He

quietly put up his chessmen and stated that he would see me again in Coldfoot. He did. We teamed up in that district for several months. He had frozen his feet on the way in and was more or less of an invalid for a couple of weeks.

As soon as he was able to sit up at all, he had me get out his chessmen, and then he gave me an exhibition of what chess-playing was. He swept off nearly half of his men and then beat me. Try as I would, I could not fathom his game for months. I once asked him how come he let me beat him the first time, and his answer was not very flattering to my ego. He said that I played such an eccentric game that he could not guess what I would do next. All our leisure time while I was with him, we played that game. As soon as we were dressed in the morning we would play a game to see who would cook breakfast. That over, we played to see who washed dishes, and so on through the day.

The man's name was Hill, E. Coke Hill, an attorney who became U. S. Commissioner and was stationed at Valdez last I heard of him. He was about the best partner I ever did have. He and his books. He had brought into that country with his other supplies a full set of Shakespears, Cyrano de Bergerac, and other classics.

At Fort Yukon the snow was getting deep enough to travel on, and the small streams were frozen nearly solid, so on the 17th my partner Collings and I set out on our long trip. We figured that as we had no dogs, and so would travel slow, we would not need such a hard trail as those with dogs would want. It would cost us less on the trail than it would staying at the roadhouse, and soon we would have company on the trail, for there were several other parties ready to start. They were just waiting for someone to break the trail. Friend Hill hitched his dogs on to our sled and hauled us out the first five miles and across the Porcupine River, where we camped for the first night with no sign of a trail. Next morning three Indians came along, and we hired one of them with his dogs to take us one day out on the Coldfoot trail. When we hit the trail it was nicely broke, and we made twenty miles for that day. From now on, the travelling would not be so easy, for we must put our tow ropes over our shoulders and do our own pulling, Our sled load weighed about four hundred pounds, for we had besides our food and clothing, bedding, a camp stove, a tent, two guns and some tools, shovel, pickaxes and hammers. A fairly complete little outfit, not too heavy to haul by hand, and we made only ten miles that day. Now we tried double-tripping, but found that too slow, for we had too many miles to travel in one day. Seven miles of distance cost us twenty-one miles of walking.

Now, we found that we were on the wrong trail; at least I claimed that we were heading too far to the north, but Colling thought we were heading all right, and after we had argued till I was disgusted, we camped for the night, and next day went on. About noon we came to a river which could only be the Christian River, and that ended the argument. We headed down it to try to pick up the right path. I began to have my doubts of my partner ever having been over that route, or if he had been it must have been with a good guide and Colling had forgotten all landmarks.

That evening we picked up the right trail and felt much better. We now had established a regular routine of the day's work. Up at 5:30 and thaw out water for all purposes and start breakfast. Then call the old man, who gets up and rolls the bedding into a compact bundle and gets the sled ready to load. Now breakfast, of mush, tea and sourdough hot cakes. Strike the tent, load up and hit the trail between eight and half-past. One o'clock we stopped for some hot beans, and again travelled on until about four, when we would look for a fair camping-place where dry fuel would be conveniently at hand. We would chop down a small tree that had plenty of Alaskan feathers (spruce boughs) to make our bed. Cut down a dry tree, and up tent. Pack our supplies up off the river and to

the tent, and while the old man cooked supper I cut firewood for the night and morning. He could cook sitting by the fire and resting his bones. Supper of fried bacon, baking-powder bread, brown gravy and rice pudding with raisins or dried fruit. Sometimes I would shoot a rabbit or grouse, and then we would have a feast. Colling was just a little bit religious and objected to killing wild animals, but I noticed that he was not a bit reluctant to eat them. And so to bed.

We usually found just the place we wanted for our camp early in the evening, and had our tent set up before dark. Once in a while we had to stretch out the day before a good camp site was found. But once located, we lost no time in making ourselves comfortable for the night.

We carried a starter of sour dough with us which we hung up in the top of the tent for the night, and used this for our morning hotcakes, and also for biscuits when we laid off for a day. We had canned butter with us, but of that we had brought only a limited supply. My partner liked butter. Liked it so well that he would scoop out a large chunk of it, a chunk half as big as a hen's egg, and gulp it down without even thinning it down with bread or hotcake. Then he would use a liberal supply of it on bread. I also liked some butter, but I soon saw that there would soon be no butter for either of us unless something was done to curtail the output. So I insisted on a division of the commodity and let him eat his just as fast as he wanted to. Then when his share was all gone I would dole out portions of mine to both of us in small quantities. Even then our butter did not last us through to Coldfoot, and we had to resort to using bacon-grease instead.

I first noticed that we were on the wrong trail just shortly after we left camp where the Indian had left us. The trail we were on seemed to be good, but I didn't like the direction it was taking us, and then I couldn't see any landmarks to go by, but Colling was confident we were all right and we went on until late in the day, when we met another party of Indians who told us that we were on a trail they had broken for a trap-line, but that the Christian River was just a little ways further. We thought the river would be better to travel on than the trail had been, so we pulled a ways further and soon struck the stream, where we camped for the night. The next day we started downstream.

The ice was firm and covered with a light coat of snow, not enough to impede the sled seriously, but quite enough to give us a good footing, so that we made fairly good time. Glare ice is the most impossible kind of footing to travel on, for one's leg muscles have to be constantly tensed to stand up and move at all. But we were going downstream and the going was good, so we made very good time and struck the Coldfoot trail just six miles further on than where we had lost it. We had travelled a little over thirty miles, dragging four hundred pounds, to make six. We had seen bear tracks that were simply huge, and I hoped Bruin would hole up and not meet us. Then we saw caribou tracks that were fairly fresh, and I would have liked to meet them. Also plenty of wolf, fox, mink and rabbit tracks which told us we were in a good hunting and trapping country. Through the afternoon we stopped occasionally to catch our breath and thaw out any frozen spots on our faces.

During one of these rest periods we heard the howling of a pack of wolves in the distance. My partner at once suggested that we leave our sled and hunt for those wolves. That didn't sound very practical to me. I thought that if the wolves wanted to see us I would rather they wouldn't, and if they did not want to see us I doubted if we would ever see them. I had learned from experience that wolves and other wild animals of the North had enough brains to keep out of the way of men with guns.

Unless it was the poor rabbit. We saw them frequently, and we caught one and shot another. Meat for two days. And those two days now on the right trail brought us to the Chandelar, where I thought my troubles were over. But only one day with Colling in the lead and we again were off the trail. We frequently had to leave the river and cut across big bends, and it seemed Colling could never even guess where we should take to the timber. I still said nothing, but when we went about five miles up a blind slough and the old man again started globe-trotting, hunting for the trail, I got disgusted. I let him go off, with a warning not to lose another two hours. I waited perhaps a half an hour, too hot under the collar to feel cold, but finally started back down with the whole load. I went back about three miles and then made camp. In another hour he came in. He still thought we could look out a trail overland, but I preferred travelling on a broken trail to breaking one through timber.

That night we changed pilots. It seems that Mr. Colling went into the Koyukuk in the summer, and had lined a boat up the Chandelar and expected to recognize the river when we got to it. Failing to see any familiar landmarks, he was trusting to a map, which of course showed not one sign of a trail.

We both felt better next day, for we soon picked up the trail and made fifteen miles upstream before night. Never again did my partner offer to act as pilot, for his ineptness as a voyageur was getting to be all too noticeable. But he was not quarrelsome, so we got along well enough. One time he told me he had been a Mormon for a while, and later joined the Seventh-Day Adventists' church, then going to some other religion, which one it was I can't remember, but just then he had abandoned all faiths and was getting along as well as he could without any staff to lean on. He did hope we might meet some Indians along the way, and if there were any unattached and presentable squaws in the party, he did not want any religious scruples to trouble his conscience.

One night he evidently had a nightmare and I had to awaken him to quiet him, he was raising such a hullabaloo. In the morning he told me that he had dreamed he was trying to cut off my head with a hatchet but that the blade was too dull and the neck was too tough, so that he could not make any impression. Maybe it was lucky I awakened him before he tried using a sharp butcher-knife we had in our kit.

The ice was new, and we either had to keep close to shore or else take to the bank, for the ice in the center of the stream was dangerously thin. Occasionally we had to cross sloughs or tributaries. These were the real danger places, for then we had to trust to the center ice. I was not inclined to take any unnecessary chances, for I knew ice pretty well and knew that it is apt to be treacherous and break without warning. We came to a slough which, while it had ice clear across it, still looked rotten to me. To go around that slough would mean a mile of hard sledding, but I was arguing for going around just the same. My partner wanted to head right straight across, and to illustrate his contention that it was safe, he walked right out on the ice, intending to go clear across. He was not twenty feet out when I saw the ice sagging dangerously. The way I yelled to him to keep moving and circle back to shore convinced him that he was in a predicament, and he lost no time in getting back. When he got to shore water was appearing on the ice out where he had turned. What would that ice have done with the combined weight of us both plus the sled if we had tried to cross it?

Then we had our troubles with glare ice. Trying to pull a heavy sled upstream on ice so slippery that it was difficult to stand still on. We tumbled down very often, I note in my diary: "I had to laugh to see the old man sit down hard, but I had to cuss when I sat down." That seems to be one form of American humor. Other people's misfortunes will

get a laugh from us every time. Like the winter I was loafing in Dawson. "Stubby" Stubblefield, who was quite rotund, slipped off the sidewalk one day right in front of a bunch of us and sat down so hard that he fairly bounced. How we did laugh. Stubby was slow in getting up. In fact, he had to be helped up and helped away. He went around on crutches after he got out of the hospital, for some time.

It was only a day or so after our adventure with the rotten ice that as we were working upstream on shore ice we ran across footprints of a large man. At least we guessed that the man was large because the footprints were prints of large felt boots. Many of us used these felt boots in preference to moccasins, as our feet were more accustomed to the support of the heel of a shoe, which is lacking on the moccasin. The tracks were leading DOWN stream and appeared to be fresh. Thinking the man might be near, we dropped the sled and followed the tracks around a bend in the river, hoping to meet a human with whom we might converse. We had not seen a white man, nor even a native, for many days, and as humans are essentially social, any opportunity to visit in such an out-of-the-way place is well worth some effort and loss of time. Time didn't mean much to us anyway up there, for there another day always followed the day we were living in with assured regularity.

Around the bend the tracks slanted out from the shore and headed towards an open spot in the river ice. I trotted along on this man's trail until I came near to the water. Then I noticed that the edge of the ice showed that it had been broken recently, and with dread of treacherous ice I stopped before getting too close to the break and studied the situation. I couldn't see from where I stood any tracks leading away from the hole, so I skirted the broken zone, going clear around. The ice WAS broken, and NO tracks led away from the break, so I just felt a cold dread that the man had broken through the thin ice and was hopeless gone.

I joined my companion and we went on upstream, following the man's tracks up to the mail carrier's cabin on the east fork of the river, where we stayed for the night. We found a note on the window-sill, addressed to one Argo Bill. I did not copy the contents of that note, but I remember clearly that the note stated that the writer had cached a quarter of horse-meat on the roof for Argo Bill to use, as there was no feed left for the animal and it had been killed for the meat. He was lost, and so confused that he had no sense of direction left. Shot away all his ammunition and threw his gun away. He wandered into the mail carrier's cabin at East Fork and there killed his horse for food.

The mail was not running yet, so he put a pack of meat on his back, and after putting a note for Bill on the window sill saying he had gone UP to Arco Bill's, wandered DOWN stream. It was about ten miles below this cabin that we first saw his tracks, and only a short way below to where the tracks ended at the broken hole. The note was signed "Jack Erb."

Early next morning we dug out, heading for Trail Creek to leave word for Argo Bill, but before noon we met Bill and his partner coming down to look for Erb. When we told him of the contents of the note and described the tracks, Bill asked me if I would be willing to go back with him to the cabin. This I was more than willing to do, and Bill and I started to back-track my trail while our partners went on up to Trail Creek. Bill and I were now travelling light, and so we made good time to the cabin. After Bill had read the note, he wanted me to go on downstream with him. The event was not discussed by us as we went along, but I felt very sure that Bill couldn't help but hope against hope that I might have overlooked some tracks, or that maybe there was another opening in the ice below the broken hole and that Erb might have gotten out. We followed the tracks down

to the hole and around it and then went far enough downstream to satisfy ourselves that there was no chance of the man ever living long enough under the ice to get out, even if another hole had been open, which there was not.

This Argo Bill was reputed to have belonged to Quantrell's band of guerrillas in the Civil War, and was known as a first-class frontiersman. His verdict of the Erb tragedy was that Erb was not the type of a man that could take care of himself in a strange country, and that he had no business trying to get around alone. Bill had left Erb some time before with instructions to remain where he was until after the freeze and then Bill would come after him and put him on the trail to Coldfoot.

This delay permitted some more men headed for Coldfoot to overtake us and we had a broken trail for a day or so. The north wind was blowing now and it was bitter cold. Forty-two degrees below zero. The next day we came to where the men ahead of us branched off from what I thought was the right trail, and again we had to break down new snow. We made a small cabin that night, and later the other men came straggling in. They had guessed wrong on the trail and lost a couple of hours and much energy before getting back on our trail. We had had such hard work getting our heavy sled up the grade we now were on, that we took a few hours off repairing our gear and resting up, while the others went on ahead and broke trail for us.

Now we had to double-trip, for we were going up over the divide between the Chandelar and the Koyokuk and it was pretty steep, but once over the top we again made very fair speed and again caught up with the others. Again they were lost and just milling around. We struck the right trail and again we had to lead. Again they caught up with us in the evening and there were eight of us camped that night in a cabin only ten feet square, near the head of Boulder Creek.

I felt ill that night. Had no appetite for supper and felt the need of some kind of stimulant. Strange but true, some previous wayfarer had left a bottle of Tabasco sauce in the cabin and I proceeded to dose myself up with that fiery stuff for a tonic, with excellent results. A teaspoonful did the work and I slept on the floor like a babe and awakened in the morning feeling as fit as ever.

Now that we were over the divide and going downstream, all hands felt cheerful and made good time. Cabins were fairly close together and some were occupied, so we need not worry about the trail, but we did have to exercise caution to avoid water, which was beginning to break through and flood over the ice. The snow was about a foot deep and the water running under it would not be noticed until we were wading, if we were not watchful. Wet feet would quickly freeze, and there was only one thing to do in that emergency. Stop at once and build a big fire, then yank off the wet garments and dry the skin, then pull on dry clothing. The safe thing then to do was to stay right there by the fire and dry out the wet clothes ready for the next wetting. It seemed like time lost when a cabin might be only a few miles farther on, but more than one man has neglected to observe this caution and lost some toes as a result.

I note that we reached Coldfoot on Monday, October 13, twenty-seven days en route. We had allowed ourselves twenty days when we started, and but for the fact that I frequently killed rabbits, our grub would have been out before we finished the trip. As it was, we still had plenty left, and besides we were in excellent condition.

For a couple of days we washed and dried our clothes and divided up our supplies, and then as my partner wanted to get down to his claim on the Twelve Mile, we packed his stuff on a sled and started again on the trail. It took us two days to get him to his location, and there I left him, and in the morning, after I had cut some wood for him

and helped get the cabin cleaned out, I went back to Coldfoot. It was six in the evening when I got back to my cabin, and if I hadn't been a dandy at smelling out a trail I would have had to Siwash it. That is, build a fire and try to keep warm till daylight. The snow was about six inches deep on top of the path and completely hid it in the dark, and I just trotted along with my knees limber and felt for the trail with every step.

A day's rest and I again made the trip to Collings' claim with a light sled-load, left it there and returned, again getting in rather late this time with my legs both wet up to my knees as a result of getting into an overflow in the dark. Now I thought I had finished paying any obligation that I might be supposed to owe to a partner BUT just a few days and back he came. Just about midnight I heard someone at the door and in he came, all covered with snow, looking like Santa Claus. He had given up trying to do anything on his claim, as the water was drowning him out of his shaft. He had left his cabin early in the morning with a light load on his sled and had lost the trail about three miles below my cabin, where he abandoned the sled and had spent nearly six hours stumbling around when he just accidentally found my cabin.

Well, I had to give his poor legs several salt rubs through the night to relieve him of severe cramps. And the next morning I went down and found where he had left the trail, and following his erratic tracks soon picked up the sled and brought it in for him. In a few days he pulled out for Swift Creek and that WAS the last I ever saw of him. Poor fellow, he was just unfortunately made up. He often said that I was the only person he ever could get along with. His unfortunate habit of endlessly arguing, together with his vary apparent helplessness, made him a hard man to get along with under the best of circumstances, and when one's very life is at stake one's temper is apt to get short.

The man Hill, who had been so kind as to start us out of Fort Yukon, had arrived in Coldfoot in good shape with part of his equipment, and then went pack for the rest, which he had cached near the summit on the far side. In coming back with that load he met with misfortune.

The mail carrier came in with the mail and brought a note to me from Hill, telling me that he was at Boulder Creek cabin with both feet frozen "pretty bad," and requesting me to get a dog team to haul in his load, for me to handle the Gee pole for him. Also, "bring with you about eight pounds of dog rice and some flour – have used up even my sour dough, fed the dogs pancakes one meal." The mail carrier reported that Hill had been out of food for man and dogs before he arrived, and that he had left all he had with him, but at best it would be for a scant day.

The case was urgent, for unless Hill got dog feed soon, he would either have to eat the dogs or be eaten himself. He was pretty helpless. I hunted the camp over and secured an Indian with a team of very young dogs. Really just puppies, but they were the only team to be had just then and I was mighty glad to get them, for I was not much good at packing, and I would need my robe besides the provisions and dog feed.

Early next morning, as soon as I made sure the Indian was on the trail, I lit out and made the twenty-two miles to the Boulder Creek cabin half an hour before the dog team arrived. I found Hill in the cabin all right, safely stowed away in his sleeping bag, with his dogs under the bed. One of them was missing, and Hill told me that that dog, Jumbo, had frozen and died in spite of all Hill could do to save him.

By the time I had plenty of wood cut and a fire built the Indian came, and though I was mighty tired I set about cooking a big feed for the dogs and a dinner for us. Then with the dogs fed, we could turn them outside. Hill had kept them in with him for fear they would run away when hungry. In the morning we gave them a light feed, as they

were rather weak from short rations, and started the Indian off with Hill's load, while I harnessed myself in with the dogs and we set out for Coldfoot and comfort.

That was a long ride for Hill. The dogs were weak and I was irritable. Whenever we came to a hill that was too steep for the dogs to drag the sled easily, I would have to get down on my all-fours and dig my toes in to get a hold and drag that sled up the grade practically alone, though Hill would do his best to urge and encourage the dogs to pull. Then he would have to listen to my abusive language. I cursed his dogs, although he knew they were doing their weak best. He was wonderfully patient with both the dogs and myself, and his courage never faltered once, although his feet must have pained him severely at all times, and especially when he would have to move any on the sled.

We made Coldfoot at eight in the evening and I put Hill to bed at once, and I'll bet he slept the best that night that he had for many a night before. I called Dr. Conley and he came over the next morning and dressed Hill's feet and started him on the road to recovery.

I had had to call in Dr. Conley's services also on my arrival at Coldfoot, for I had developed a bad ingrowing toenail that had festered until it was as sore as a boil. Dr. Conley had me poultice the toe through the night, and in the morning he went to work on it. He had had a fire just the night before I arrived, and had lost all his medical supplies, including anesthetics, and all his tools except a pair of snips and tweezers.

With these he set to snipping the nail at intervals and pulling out by the roots the parts he snipped off. The pain was severe, and might have been well-nigh unendurable except for one reason. He had called in a big Belgian to hold my leg while he worked on the toe, and I recognized the Belgian. That bird had stolen some money and gold dust from me while I was on Gold Run in Dawson, and also he was accused of acting as stool pigeon at times. Altogether he had a rather unsavory reputation. I had no evidence to prove his theft so I had not taken any action against him, but now that I recognized him I saw a chance to scratch off one item of the score I held against him.

Dr. Conley had my leg laid across the corner of the table and had this big bug sitting astride of my shin, holding my foot with both his hands. My right leg was free, and every time Conley would cut or pull I would kick the Belgian with all I had. Sorry to say I had a moccasin on that right foot instead of a leather boot, and so could not do the damage I wanted to inflict on his carcass, but I did my best to cave in his ribs. And I might have accomplished that worthy object had it not been that I was in no favorable position to kick and had only a short stroke with my leg, but I sure did get a grunt every time I landed on his ribs. With all that as an anesthetic I hardly suffered at all as Conley drew out the offending parts of the nail.

As Friend Hill's feet began to heal he rigged up some crutches to hobble around on and soon got out his chess board. "Just to help pass the time," he said, but I have a suspicion that his motive was not entirely disinterested. He had, I believe, a burning desire to give me such a beating at that game that I would never boast about my game in his hearing. I didn't blame him, and was willing to give him a chance to revenge himself, IF he could. He did, and HOW! After that first game in Fort Yukon I had felt fairly confident that I could hold my own, but after the first game in Coldfoot I knew my master. But the chessmen did help to pass many a weary hour while his feet were healing, and in fact, as long as I stayed in the district.

I took in the entire district around Coldfoot up as far as Nolan Creek and down as far as Twelve Mile. There was not much work going on in the mines, for the weather had turned from a mild fall to a bitter winter, much of the time around sixty below zero, and

even dropping to around eighty below, a morning or two. Eighty-three below, one morning. It was one of the coldest winters Alaska ever knew. It was just too cold for a man to stay out of doors for more than a few hours at the most, and then one must not get to breathing too hard.

Just at the beginning of the really cold weather Hill and I moved up to a cabin about six miles above Coldfoot at the mouth of Marion Creek, near the main trail leading to the diggings farther upstream. He wanted to prospect Wiseman Creek, and as I had found out about all I could that was of interest to me, I was glad to go with him. I put out a line of snares for rabbits and made a point of either going the rounds of the snares or else cutting some wood, so as to get out in the fresh air and have some good exercise every day. The snares netted us some fresh meat, and some fur for socks as well. But I note that during the extreme cold snaps the rabbits were not moving around much.

Hill had a beautiful pair of snowshoes which I used for these excursions. They were so light that I could hold them both up with one finger, yet they were so strong that I have carried a heavy log of wood on my shoulder while walking on them. They were long and narrow and were ideal for working in timbered country. The top snow was so very light that a breath of wind from a child would lift it in a cloud. Yet these snowshoes did not sink more than four or five inches into this light material.

One day as I was making my rounds of the snares, I noticed footprints of a bird in the snow. The tracks were large enough to be made by a grouse, and I had no gun. I seldom carried a gun, as I had no need of protection and hardly ever saw game to shoot at, and cartridges were hard to get.

But these tracks intrigued me, for they ended abruptly, with no wing-marks on the snow, such as the bird would make as he took flight. Nor were there any animal tracks to show that some predatory varmint had caught the bird. I did notice a slight round depression in the snow at the end of the trail, and with the idea in my mind that the bird might be under the snow, I clapped my snow-shoe-clad foot down over the depression. Immediately a flurry of snow right by my side startled me. The bird had burrowed down through the snow to get the last summer's crop of berries from the ground bushes.

As the bird came up through the snow I made an instinctive grab and my hand closed around its neck. A quick whirl broke its neck and we had a delicious meal of grouse ready for the pot. I hurried back to the cabin with my game, and as I laid the bird on the table Hill asked me if I had caught it in a snare. "No," I said, "I caught it on the wing."

"Now I have always found you to be a truthful fellow," said Coke, "but just how did you get that bird? Did you make a lucky throw of a stick? You didn't have your gun with you, did you?"

"No, no, no. I told you I caught it on the wing."

Then, maybe I did stretch my reputation for veracity a little. "You know I've always claimed that I could walk on a good thick fog with these snowshoes, and this time I had a good chance to test them out, for when the bird took wing I just took out after him and followed him wherever he flew, and finally grabbed him in the air."

I'm not just sure that my explanation carried conviction, but the bird was acceptable; perhaps more acceptable than was the explanation of its capture. But Hill let the subject drop and helped eat the bird.

It was not long after this when I brought in a young snowshoe rabbit that was very much alive, and again I had a rather hard time persuading Hill that it was his magic snowshoes that were responsible for the capture of the animal alive. These rabbits trust

much for their safety to their protective white coat in the winter time and will remain immovable though watchful when a hunter is fairly close. And they are hard to see on the snow, though once seen, their white fur does show slightly muddy against the white background. It is their beady black eyes that really give them away. But if they take alarm and run, they seldom stop again until well out of sight, and will not again let the hunter come close. The rabbit that I brought in alive saw me plainly enough, for twice it hopped away from me, but rather sluggishly. The second time it stopped it was behind a clump of willow-tops sticking out of the snow. I moved up close to the opposite side of the willows and reaching over them I picked up bunny by the ears. He hardly kicked at all. Whether he was sick or freezing I didn't know, but I tucked him under my arm and brought him to the cabin and laid him down by the stove.

We concluded that he was about frozen, for as soon as the warmth penetrated his chilled body he took alarm and just buzzed around the room, finally hiding under one of the bunks. We let him alone the rest of the day with the kindest of intentions, but when through the night he had nibbled our noses a couple of times, we got up and committed murder, and like a couple of cannibals, we dined on him with relish the next day. His fur was in excellent condition, and I saved it for years.

Again my explanation to Hill on to how I caught the game was not accepted entirely. Hill thought I must have found him caught in a snare by a leg; but "No," I told him, "I saw him running in open snow and I just took after him, for with these snowshoes I could go over the top of snow that the rabbit was floundering in, and so I had no trouble in overtaking him on his own ground."

"All right," said Hill, "I can't produce evidence that you didn't catch him that way, but I claim I am entitled to my own opinion as to the truth of your claims."

About this time our provisions were running low and Hill harnessed up the dogs and started off for Bettles, where he had had some supplies consigned to him before he came into the district. He had been away only a few days, barely long enough to have made the trip to Bettles, when the country was gripped by another cold snap, the thermometer dropping far too low to be safe for travelling, 68 below, so Hill just holed up in Bettles and waited for the weather to moderate. He told me on his return that he had no worries about my getting enough to eat, as I had proved my ability to catch food on the wing or running over the snow.

When he left there was just enough food left in the cabin to last me about a week, so when the cold snap caught Hill at Bettles, I was faced with the job of stretching out my supplies for some time longer than we had anticipated I would need to. That did not bother me, for Coldfoot was only two miles away, and besides there was another cabin within two miles of us where a couple of miners were staying who would gladly have given me a square meal in case I was in need. Well, I finally cooked up the last of my rations, which were now reduced to beans only, not even any salt left. I kept them one day too long, for I caught a rabbit, which I used first, thinking the beans, being cooked, would keep better. But when I ate the last of the beans they had soured, and as a result I got a good scouring out, but had no other bad effects from eating them. I had a wonderful digestion those days, as well as a fearful and wonderful appetite, and I don't doubt but that I could have eaten my moccasins with relish had I been reduced to that necessity. Then I caught a couple more fine rabbits, and so faced the near future with no fear and did not even think of or worry about the possibility of Hill not being able to get back fairly soon.

Shortly after the cold snap eased up Hill arrived with the new supplies. I was glad to see him, but was not in a starving condition by any means. Not even starving for a change of the meat diet I had been on for the last few days. I was well fed and content.

Friend Coke was a resourceful fellow in most any emergency, and well adapted to living the life of the country. He had been through enough already in there to have discouraged anyone not able to take care of himself, and now he had the opportunity to help out a native who did not have the brains Hill had. An Indian, Ongarok, reported to us that his wife was very ill. Close questioning by Hill gave us the idea that the woman was either seriously afflicted with a stoppage of the bowels, or else just plain constipated, though bad off in any case. If the former diagnosis was the true one we could do nothing for her, but the probability was that the distress was mainly caused by the latter trouble, so Hill proceeded to mix up a compound of whatever supplies he had that would help her. He had some prunes, some syrup of figs and some Indian Root pills. These he boiled together, carefully watching the decoction until it boiled down to a very thick syrup, and then gave Ongarok instructions to see that the lady took the entire dose. Kill or cure, Hill said, and waited anxiously for the report. When Ongarok next showed up the question was should he be greeted with a gun in case the patient had succumbed to the treatment, or would the visit prove friendly. A Glance at the man's face was reassuring, however, for he wore a broad grin. The medicine had proved efficacious in the extreme, and the lady, though weak, was well relieved.

Late in January I began to think of getting out to the States. I was satisfied that there was a chance to develop quite a freighting business on the small streams tributary to the Yukon, and I wanted to get started on that line as soon as possible. The weather would soon be moderating to a safe temperature for travelling, and I began watching the thermometer with a different interest from that which I had before felt when observing its fluctuations.

So, after a cold snap (only fifty below) which was less severe than the previous ones had been, I packed my sled and prepared to light out when the temperature should rise sufficiently. Hill deeded me the magic snowshoes. He claimed that no other person lived who could perform such miracles on these shoes, and thought they should belong to me in consequence. This I knew was just a graceful way of getting me to accept what I considered a very valuable gift. Of such men as Hill was the North for the most part peopled.

So, on the 29th of January, when the thermometer showed about zero, I bade Hill goodbye, and for my first day's work I pulled down to Coldfoot. Again the weather turned cold and I laid over for a day or so. I was offered the use of Judge Howard's office to write some letters, and so had the good fortune of meeting both him and his courageous wife. They seemed out of place in there, but appeared well satisfied. They lived in a little two-roomed cabin with cotton cloth on the walls. He wore moccasins practically all the time, and in the summer "puttered around at carpentering and gardening" for his recreation. A couple not at all proud, but simple in their tastes and very sociable. They had come in over the same trail as we had. Just the two alone, and Mrs. Howard said she was not only not afraid, but that she actually enjoyed the trip far better than she would have enjoyed letting him come in alone while she stayed behind, separated from him for so long. He said that more than once he had had to catch rabbits for meat. In the market it cost too much.

While I was there, meat was fifty cents a pound. Flour, nine dollars for a fifty pound sack. Butter, one dollar a pound. Sugar, twenty-seven cents a pound. Candles, a

dollar a dozen, and so on. It was good sense to catch your own meat and use as much of it as possible.

My load was light, for I expected to make the trip to Fort Yukon in two weeks or less, but just the same I had on twenty days of provisions. From that point on I would have a well-packed trail, and could not only travel fast, but could get additional provisions as I needed them. My outfit now had only my robe, a wolf robe lined with blanket, eight feet square, a piece of canvas the same size, light canvas valise with all my treasures in it, then just the necessary cooking gear with the provisions. Then an axe, a gun and extra clothing filled the basket of my sled full enough for one man to pull. I really expected to make the run in ten days, providing the trail was not too bad.

Before I pulled out in the morning from Coldfoot, I went into the store to see Jack Nelson to settle whatever account I had there. Nelson was not in at the time, but one of the soap-box warmers said the boss would soon come. While I was waiting around rather impatiently, my eye fell on some large cakes of maple sugar. Two-pound cakes they were, and as I had been on short sugar rations I felt an overpowering craving for some sweets, and boldly went back of the counter and took one of the cakes. I had eaten it all before Nelson came in, and was only just temporarily satisfied, even though I had consumed two pounds at one sitting. Nelson's price for the sugar was easy, and I would have cheerfully paid twice the price he took from me, even though I was very short of cash.

Nelson told me that Archdeacon Stuck was expected to arrive in Coldfoot that evening and that he would hold services the next day, and suggested that I stay over the day. My cabin to sleep in cost me nothing so I accepted his suggestion, and by doing so I met a very worth-while man. I did not then know what a heroic man the Archdeacon really was, nor did I know the truly great work he was doing in the North, but I did know, after meeting him and attending the services, that I had met a man that literally "feared neither God nor the devil," but instead, one who loved his Creator and the work He had assigned to His servant.

Hill had already met the man while in Bettles, and had told me much about him, but personal contact gave me a much more vivid impression of him. I marveled that man would take so much trouble and work as to pack his robes and the altar drapes and many other articles used to make a suitable place of worship of whatever place he found to hold his meetings in.

I've forgotten his talk, but I well remember that I thought at the time that it was well suited to the time and to the class of people he was addressing. Nothing bigoted nor above the level of our understanding, but instead, just a simple, plain, man-to-man talk full of good common sense with comprehensible references to religious principles.

Later in the day I had a chance to meet the Archdeacon, and naturally I questioned the man regarding the condition of the winter trails. The only part of the trail I was to follow that he had been on was a stretch below Circle City. He had been over this stretch about a month earlier. He said it was pretty bad but not really dangerous. He told me that when he was about two days out below Circle he met the mail carrier on the way into Circle. Of course they stopped to talk. The Archdeacon would be sure to recognize the craving of every man on the trail to visit another human, and he could be counted on to try to satisfy such a natural longing. Joe Williams was the mail carrier, and while he was a really good-hearted soul, he was none the less a rough-spoken man with a voluble flow of pointed epithets to suit every occasion when he was talking earnestly.

As they were ready to go their ways, the Archdeacon inquired, as all men do on the Northern trails, as to the condition of the trail in front of him. That section of the trail required nearly all of Joe's vast vocabulary most vigorously put to express his opinion of its diabolical condition. Joe then asked how the trail was from there on in to Circle, to which the Archdeacon replied: "Just the same, brother; just the same." Then introducing himself and shaking Joe by the hand, he swung off down the trail, leaving Joe for once absolutely speechless.

The Archdeacon told me this story in the afternoon with a merry chuckle, and later, when I came to Circle, Joe told me the same story, filling in many of the expressions that Stuck had necessarily omitted. While Joe was somewhat amused at the incident, he felt very, very sorry that he should have been guilty of using such language in the presence of such a thoroughly good man as the Archdeacon had already proved himself to be.

But that was the kind of a man the Archdeacon was; he met you on your own ground without any squeamishness at all, and if you were evidently standing on the wrong foot, he would put you right and do it in a way that not only would not cause the least offense, but – and this was a most wonderful gift – he would make an indelible impression on your mind, so that forever after you would prize the thought that this truly big man had met you on your own ground and had been so interested in you that he had taken the trouble to show you the way to better yourself.

Here was a man who was not seeking the easier life, but who instead was willing to face the most incredible hardships and dangers, so that he could bring words of cheer and encouragement to men inhabiting the out-of-the-way places, and who loved his people so much that work was nothing to him, hardship just something to be met and endured. Life was good.

The first day out I followed a well-beaten trail up Slate Creek, to Charlie Winer's cabin. The trail, I should have said, had been well-beaten, but this day I note it was frightful and the wind blowing a gale. The trail was so full of snow that I simply put on my snowshoes and forgot to pay any attention to sticking close to the old track when I couldn't see it. Winer was very cordial and insisted on my spending the night and sharing his supper with him. After the meal I noticed that he had an alarm-clock which was not running. He told me that he felt very lonesome with his clock out of commission, so I asked him if I might open the thing up and see if I could find out what was wrong. Well, it was no good to him as it was, so he encouraged me to look at it. I found that a small spring holding the winding ratchet was broken, and as the man had a file, I made a new spring out of a piece of a steel table-knife. It worked, and my host was so delighted with it that he absolutely refused to take any money for keeping me and feeding me that night.

A few nights later found me near the top or the divide between the Chandelar and Koyukuk watersheds, and in an old mail tent that had a kind of a stove in it. I made myself comfortable as possible in it for the night, glad that I did not have to make camp in the open. The tent was in timber just below the barren hill top. In the morning I had gone but a short way up when I left the protection of the woods and encountered a hard biting wind and rough snow which was packed in regular waves with the crests pointing down hill. Sastrugi. The tops of these waves were hard but the crust between them was thin and I would break through if I stepped or slipped into these troughs. The waves were so far apart that I feared I would break my precious snowshoes if I wore them, and so with them loaded on the sled I strode, slipped and stumbled slowly up the ridge and over the top. Two hours and a half to make two miles.

The going was much better as I went down the other side, but I soon had another ridge to climb, which, though not so bad as the first, was nevertheless trying to one's very soul. Over that one, I soon reached some small, scrubby timber, and selecting a dry bush for fuel I stopped to eat a warm bite. I had had such hard work getting up and over those ridges that it was near two in the afternoon when I reached the timber. Now, as I had to go only about six miles more to get to another tent, and I could see that the snow was in good condition around the head of the draw I was in, and looked fair enough up over the next ridge, I felt that I could spare the time for a hot bite. I would be so refreshed by the lunch and rest that I could more than make up for the lost time.

I turned to the sled for my axe, and felt a genuine chill as I saw that the axe was not on the load. I knew I had lost it somewhere back on the trail, for I remembered well that I had loaded it in the morning as usual. I did not dare go on without it, for in that cold winter I would probably perish unless I could build a hot fire when I needed it. It was getting late, and soon I would not have enough daylight to see my tracks. I must find that axe before three o'clock if possible. So I took a frozen flapjack off the sled to nibble on as I went, and with gun and snowshoes I started to back-track my trail, leaving the sled with its contents as well wrapped in canvas as I could. Without the sled to hinder me I could use my snowshoes and make fast time, but with all my haste I soon found it too dark to see the faint marks of the sled on the hard snow waves. I held my direction as best I could, and as I went down over the rough snow waves I took off the shoes and sat on them, using them as a sled. It is strange how one will notice very insignificant objects without consciously thinking of them. As I coasted down the hill heading toward where I thought the tent ought to be in the timber, I noticed off to my left about fifty feet, a scrub stump of a small tree that it seemed to me I had not seen as I came up in the morning. Could that be my axe? I was too far up the hill to be getting to the timber. But it was quite dusk now, although only about half past three, and I might be easily that far off my trail. Anyway I had better investigate, and so stopped my sliding and made my way over to the object. What a relief! It was my axe.

It was much too late now to go back to the sled, so I found my way down to the tent in the timber and built up a good fire. I found some tea stored there, and some old cans, and I soon had near a quart of hot tea for my supper. I lay on a caribou-skin rug on the floor for my bed, and by occasionally building up the fire through the night I passed the time until daylight fairly comfortably.

With another quart of tea for breakfast I made an early start. Six-thirty I thought I could see enough to keep my general direction to the top of the ridge and then I could soon pick up my old trail. This was easy enough and I came to my sled about nine-thirty. Now I stopped and made a good meal, for I felt wonderfully safe with my good axe. I had plenty of time to make the next tent, and I was good and hungry.

All through these two days the wind was the heaviest I had ever seen in that cold country and I found it very searching, but suffered no damage.

With a good meal under my belt and a light heart I soon covered the six or seven miles to the next tent, arriving there about one-thirty, and there I stopped for the rest of the day and night. And was I disgusted when on entering the tent I found several axes, old and battered to be sure, but in a pinch still serviceable. All my heroics and a day lost. This tent was in a gap in the range I had been heading for, and was on the Chandelar side, with no more ranges of hills to cross, so from now on I would be going downhill for the most part, at least on the level. The snow was deeper and softer now, with no places left that I could take off my snowshoes for even a few minutes, and my ankles were getting

sore and swollen. Twenty miles a day is valued a fair average day's travel on snow, but because of bad trail and wind I found I could not make that average. One thing that cut down my speed was that affair of losing the axe, taking two days to gain one day's travel. But several times I made a good twenty-five miles for the day's work. If I knew that I could make a tent or cabin by adding a few miles to the day, I would crowd through without stopping to warm up a meal at noon. But when I expected to camp in the open I would not drive myself so hard and would stop before dusk so as to make my camp as comfortable as possible.

I would cut down a fairly large green spruce tree and use the top and small branches for my bed, which I would lay close to the middle of the tree. Then I would cut three logs about three feet long and lay them close together on the snow near my bed. Then with three or four smaller and longer cuts laid near by, I would be ready to build my fire of dry wood on top of the green log platform. I would have a fair pile of dry wood left when I crawled into my robe and rolled up for the night. As the last act I piled some of the smaller green wood on top of the fire to smolder and keep the fire burning slowly. From time to time through the night I would awaken and replenish the fire with dry wood and put more green wood on top, and so would pass a very comfortable night. So comfortable in fact would I be that I would hate to crawl out of my bed in the morning even though I had a nice fire to pull on my shoes by. I thought and still maintain that it is better to spend some time and effort to make oneself comfortable and safe in such an extremely cold and dangerous climate. I know I stood the hard days much better and more cheerfully by taking the pains I did for comfort's sake.

Down on Trail Creek, where Argo Bill and his partner were staying when I went into the Koyukuk, I found the cabin empty. They had moved up on a pup and left a note telling where they were. I was too tired to go up to see them, although I wanted to, but Bill came down in the morning before I left. That was the last I ever saw or heard of that interesting man. That day I made the cabin at East Fork where I had found the pitiful note written by Jack Erb. I had just about played out before reaching the cabin, and had I not recognized the land around there and known where the cabin was, I would have stopped and camped for the night before dark. I was so fagged in the morning that I made a very short trip for the day. Only about seven miles brought me to another cabin that I note I called the Three Swedes' place. There I found a man, Mr. Edwards, still an invalid from having three of his toes frozen so badly that he had lost them. Then another six miles brought me to a mail carrier's cabin where I laid up for the night. Here I had a rather unusual experience. I had been outside the cabin about six in the evening and had noticed the brilliancy of the Arctic night. A large, glowing moon and millions of stars adding their lights made the snow covered land nearly as bright as day. It was a beautiful night. I was looking for a display of the Northern Lights, but they were not showing at all. About nine in the evening I put some green wood on the fire in the stove and made ready to turn in. But before I rolled up I went outside to take one more look around. It was cold in the cabin; what must it be outside? I stepped out into a fairly crackling air. If I would blow my breath through pursed lips the breath would sound exactly like I was holding a stretched sheet of paper close to my lips while blowing on it. My breath would not make this noise if the temperature was above forty-five below zero, and tonight the breath fairly roared, so although I could not see the thermometer, I knew the air was very cold. But my attention was distracted from the temperature by the fact that it was quite dark. The moon should be nearly overhead. I was puzzled for only a moment, however, for I soon saw a shadowy trace of it. It was nearly an eclipse, and as I looked at it the eclipse

became total. This was about nine o'clock the night of February the ninth, I believe. I was probably in the only place in the world where the eclipse was total, and also I was probably the only person in the world to see it. Such is the luck of chance.

A day or so further down the river I passed a camp of Chandelar Indians. Their camp was a few hundred feet away from my trail, so I did not stop to visit them. I was just a little distrustful of them. I imagined that they might covet some of my scanty outfit, and I felt that I could not spare one single item, so I hurried along, simply waving to them as I passed. I was somewhat surprised to notice that some of the very young children came out of the tents and stood barefooted while watching me pass.

A few miles further on I came to the cabin of R overt and Anne, whom I had met when going in, and they greeted me as an old friend and made me comfortable for the night. Although they were full-blooded Indians, I hardly realized that such was the case, for by their friendly actions they appeared white to me. They didn't remember my name, if they ever knew it, but used the name the Indians had given me when I saw them in October. I wish I could remember the name, but I remember only the meaning of it, "Red Fox" was what it stood for, and I had been given it because of my beautiful pink whiskers, which were just the color of the red fox fur with all its delicate shadings.

From now on I had comparatively easy going, for although I had to use snowshoes when off the river, I was frequently on the ice and could dispense with the shoes and make excellent time. The strain on legs and hips was severe when I was on the ice, for it was so very slippery at times that I had all I could do to stay upright.

After leaving the Chandelar to cut across the flats to Fort Yukon, I had level country, and frequently I found so light a cover of snow on the trail that I could get along without snowshoes, and so I began to make up some of the time I had lost in the mountains. The day I arrived in Fort Yukon, February twelfth, I covered a good twenty-eight miles, starting at half past eight in the morning and getting in at eight-thirty in the evening. I note that I was too tired to cook myself a supper, so went to the road-house for my meal. And no wonder. Twenty-eight miles, part of the time on snowshoes and all the time dragging a sled-load, besides being loaded down with clothing, was a good day's work for a better man than me. I was pretty sore, but still going strong. I had gone lame the day before, but a good night's sleep and rest had fixed me up in shape to push through this day without stopping.

I had been fourteen days on the trail from Coldfoot, which is about one degree above the Arctic Circle, and had made about two hundred miles, seeing two parties of white men and the band of Indians on the Chandelar. But I had never felt lonesome, nor had I at any time felt any fear. There was no real cause for fear, for at no time did I take any unnecessary risks, nor was I ever in any real danger. Hair-breadth escapes, long-drawn-out agony and such adventures were not absolutely unavoidable if one preferred to play safe and was not in too much of a hurry to observe proper caution.

I found a pile of mail waiting for me at the town, and so laid over for a couple of days to catch up on my correspondence and also to rest up a bit. The day I arrived at the Fort from the North, another traveler arrived from the Southeast. Roald Amundsen and his Eskimo companion Jimmie. Amundsen had completed his trip through the Northwest Passage in the Gjoa, and leaving the boat at Herschel Island, I believe, had come down overland to Eagle City, where at Fort Egbert he had telegraphed his news to the outside world and was now on his way back to his ship. He stayed overnight at Fort Yukon and the three of us shared a cabin together. He was a big, strong, fine man, as of course he would have to be to complete such a wonderful undertaking, but so full was he of the

achievement at the time that he was not very communicative. I knew he desired to save every item of interest for his sponsors first to hear and profit by and as I would be in the States long before he would, I felt that it was only natural that he would not care to tell me or in fact anyone else of his adventures, and so I did not ask him even one leading question, although I was full of curiosity and interest. I contented myself with trying to master the pronunciation of the Gjoa's name, and inquiring about the trail on the Yukon. I never did learn to make anything out of the name, and I soon found out all there was to know about the trail to Eagle, so one might think my meeting with the man did not net me much. However, one cannot rub elbows with such a man and not be the gainer, and I have always felt that I was fortunate to have met and observed Amundsen and add his personality to my store-book of recollections.

After a couple of days resting at Fort Yukon I again hit the trail, this time travelling lighter and so much faster, for I now had a beaten trail and so had no need of snowshoes. The first day out, however, I was deceived by a good trail which proved to be the wrong one and I found myself miles off my route and at a woodchoppers' camp, and so lost a good day. After that, each day became just a repetition of the one before. Up fairly early and plug along with as much speed as I could make with the sled, usually nibbling at a frozen flapjack about noon while on the move, so as not to lose the time required to fix up a lunch. Crowding through to a cabin or old tent for the evening.

One night while I was still in the Yukon flats I came to the camp of some trappers who gave me the use of an old tent that had stood near their cabin for years. I visited with them in the evening and looked over their accumulation of furs. Mostly lynx, and some beautiful skins amongst them. The men gave me detailed information on their method of trapping the lynx, and offered me my pick of skins for only five dollars each.

Of course I was too short of money to avail myself of that opportunity. Had I had the money to spare I could have selected some well-matched skins that would have brought a handsome price on the market.

The men gave me some fresh meat. They told me it was good meat, although rather tough. The steak they gave me looked like veal, so I just pretended it was that and enjoyed it, although I knew it was lynx. Lynx is distinctly CAT, so I've claimed ever since that I've eaten and enjoyed cat-meat. If you are to trap in the Yukon flats you must learn to eat lynx and like it.

That night in the tent I rolled up in my robe as usual on the floor by the stove. There was no cot nor even spruce boughs to keep me off the hard floor in that tent, but I was so dead tired that I slept heavily most all the night. I did notice that I was a bit restless occasionally through the night, as though the floor was not very smooth, but I would twist around and find some better position, and with renewed comfort I would again go back to sleep. In the morning when I rolled up my robe I discovered an old frying pan with the handle broken off and half buried right side up in the floor where my hips had rested. Well, I had spent the night in the frying-pan, so now all that was lacking was for me to jump into a fire. But I had had enough experiences in that camp and luckily I managed to avoid the fire.

I had hoped that the winter was pretty well over, but I note that in the morning of my frying-pan sleep the thermometer stood at 46 below zero. That winter was one of the coldest ever recorded in Alaska and caused much hardship and several deaths. I remember comparing notes on temperatures with Amundsen, for he too had had unusual cold to contend with. However, he said that the interior of Alaska was quite a bit colder

than was the ocean to the north, and his temperature readings, while low, were not so low as we had experienced in Coldfoot.

Feb. 20, 1906, my notes show that I pulled into Circle City and spent some time before I could find a place to sleep. The town was full of people headed for the Tanana and other new diggings, and I had to content myself with a miserable room for the night. But it was much better than sleeping out under the frosty stars, and I was able to put in a fairly restful night, much needed, for I was getting pretty well run down from hard days of travel, and I still had many miles left before I would be at my journey's end. I couldn't spare more than a day, though, for I was getting short of cash and I wanted to get to Dawson before my funds gave out entirely.

A day of resting and visiting with friends was enough, I thought, and early the second morning found me again on my way, still stiff, however. Sixteen miles brought me to the first roadhouse, and although I now was travelling light with neither sled nor pack, I laid over for the night.

Next day I reached the first roadhouse further on by eleven, which was much too early in the day to lay up, I should have been there the night before. So taking a cup of coffee and a whole pie, I went on. Woodchopper Creek was the next roadhouse, and it was about thirty-two miles away with no stopping place nearer. Some said it was only thirty miles, but I found it a mighty long thirty miles. I had a light hand-axe in my belt, some matches in a water-proof cartridge, and a short piece of candle. With these necessary articles I could always build a fire in case of emergency, and I had no fear of not getting through all right sometime.

About three miles below Woodchopper I could see in the gathering dusk the gleam of light in the cabin I was heading for. Here the Yukon makes a long bend, so that there was no land to hide the light. The trail now angled across the Yukon to shorten the distance. The ice in the fall was floating in cakes before it stopped moving, and some of the cakes were tilted when they finally froze in. These tilted cakes made it rather difficult to keep from slipping. Too difficult for a leg-weary traveler, in fact, and I finally slipped and fell. With all the mass of clothing I had on, I fell easily without a bruise, but I was just too tired, so I lay there as long as I dared before getting up and going on my way again. I did not dare to lie there too long, for I knew I would stiffen and be absolutely helpless unless I soon moved again. Possibly ten minutes, probably less, was all I allowed myself, and I was up and going again. By now my muscles were drawing up and I had to travel in a slightly stooping position. The same thing happened again as I re-crossed the river near the roadhouse. This time after I got on my feet I could not move except in a very clumsy stoop, but I could still trot along if I remained doubled over.

All this time I had absolutely no fear of not getting through all right. I could still move, and besides, the cabin light was not only in sight, but was getting closer with every step I made, and anyway I was prepared to Siwash it for the night if necessary. I am afraid I would have had a hard time of it if I had stopped after I became so nearly exhausted. I might not have had the strength to gather sufficient wood for build a safe campfire. Anyway I thought I might as well use what strength I had left in travelling as in cutting wood.

The roadhouse was up on a rather high bank off of the river, and the road to it was steep and icy. I couldn't make the grade. I tried twice, and twice I fell. I could have called out for help, but that thought never crossed my mind. I knew I could make it alone some way. The second time I fell I started to crawl up over the worst or the icy slope. That

seemed to me to be the way to solve the problem of the climbing the hill, so I just crawled up to the top of the grade.

The cabins were only a couple of hundred feet back from the river bank, and in that distance I managed to get my legs to functioning again, and when I came to the door of the main cabin I made a last effort to stand erect. The pain it caused my drawn leg muscles was well nigh too much to endure and it kind of sickened me, but pride urged me to conceal as much as possible my condition, and I walked in on the proprietors as though I was still going strong. I asked for a bed and told where I had come from that day. The boys could hardly believe me, for on foot over that slippery trail the distance was too great for a one day's trip.

I was urged to have supper, but I was in too much of a hurry to stretch out, and so refused their generous urging. I was taken to the bunk house and assigned a lower berth at the back of the room, and immediately I sat down on a bench near the stove.

The cabin had a large heating stove in the center, with a rack around it that was suspended from the ceiling and intended to hang wet garments on. Two tiers of wide bunks built against the walls covered three sides of the room and had a broad shelf-seat in front of them. A table in the front of the room had three or four card-players passing the evening.

I began removing my moccasins, socks and outer garments, and as I took them off I tossed them on the floor towards the stove. I could not get up off the bench to hang them up. One of the men asked me: "Aren't you going to hang up your socks to dry?"

"No," I said, "they can stay on the floor for all I care, and be damned to them." And I meant just that.

To get into bed, which was some distance from where I sat, was the next problem. I couldn't straighten up even if I got on my feet, so I just hitched along the bench to my bunk and rolled over the side board into and with a suppressed groan I turned my face to the wall and covered up. One blessed ability I possessed those days was to be able to sleep under most any condition, and this time I was favored well by that trait, and almost immediately I lost consciousness in spite of my aches and pains.

Upon awakening next morning I found that my kindly roommates had carefully hung my clothes near the stove and that they were nice and dry. Also they had let me sleep my nap out, Breakfast was over when I went into the dining room, but a substantial meal was waiting hot on the stove for me.

My youth had carried me through the day before, and a good night's rest, together with a hearty meal this morning, made me feel fit for another hard day, and immediately after breakfast I set out to put as many miles behind me this day as I could. Thirty-six miles on, there was another good place to stay, and I started to get there if I could. Another light lunch at a halfway stopping place seemed to brace me up well enough, and again I plugged along, this time not having quite such a slippery trail and I pulled in about six in the evening, not quite so done up as I had been the previous evening. This time I tried to eat a meal. I succeeded in stowing away a fair amount of food, but it did me no good for I soon lost it all. I was just too tired to hold it on my stomach.

After those two stretches the roadhouses were a bit closer together, and I could stop with a fair mileage accomplished for the day and still not be so completely fagged that I could not eat and digest the meal. But nevertheless, when I reached Eagle city, which was on the 27th of February, and still had more than a hundred miles to go, I was glad to take advantage of the telegraph service and send to Dawson for stage fare and then lay over, waiting for a ride.

I was a little too stingy, however, and started walking along after a day of waiting. In the next three days I made seventy-seven miles and had about made up my mind to walk on through to Dawson, which was only twenty-six miles further on. But when the stage drew up alongside of me after lunch and offered me a ride, I gratefully accepted it and luxuriously relaxed while watching the miles slip past. That evening was the 4th day of March, 1907, and I had been on the trail since January 29 and had covered approximately 600 miles.

Dawson was home to me and I saw many familiar faces. Of course, in our winter caps there was not much face to be seen, so I was not much surprised that no one recognized me immediately, and when one well-known friend started to pass me without speaking, I hailed him. He thought the voice was familiar, but I had to tell him my name before he knew me. Then he began to laugh. Of course I wanted to know what was so funny, and he took me into a house where there was a large looking-glass. Then I saw why no one had recognized me. I hardly recognized myself.

Was this hairy veteran the fresh-faced young fellow who that had left Dawson only a few months ago? I had a dandy growth of pink whiskers, a black-tipped nose, and large black spots on both cheeks. The black skin told of repeated frost bites, but while not hurting, they helped to disguise me. No one in Dawson, nor anywhere else for that matter, had ever seen me fully be-whiskered before, This was my first beard and I was pretty well pleased with it. I had not shaved once since I left this place.

Now, I had an idea. I had sent my telegram asking for money from Eagle City to Jack McNeely, who ran the "Principal" Hotel and restaurant. I knew him very well and he had responded promptly and willingly. So I now went into his restaurant, untied my cap but did not take it off, and climbed up on a stool at the lunch counter. The waiter came to me, bringing knife, fork and napkin, and asked for my order. I boldly asked for my meal to be charged, before ordering. He said the Boss would have to be asked, though he guessed it would be all right. McNeely was at the farther end of the counter, and when the waiter told him that a fellow wanted a meal on the cuff, Jack took a look in my direction and then as soon as possible came down to me and asked me a few questions.

"Where are you from?"

"Down the river a ways," I responded.

"Have you any friends in town, any place to go where you can get some money?"

"Oh, yes," I said, "but I may not bother them to get money to pay you for this meal."

Jack took a keen look at me, then swept off the counter clean in front of me.

"Get out of here and get out quick," he ordered. "There's a barber shop across the street that is still open. You can't have a bite to eat till you get those whiskers off."

Alas, my beautiful pink whiskers.

Well, I wanted a meal, all right, and I figured that if I took time to get a shave I would probably get a better meal at this restaurant than anywhere else, so I went to the barber shop and asked for a shave. The barber had been slightly acquainted with me, and when I took off my cap and showed my curly red hair he recognized me. I would rather he had not known me, for now he saw a chance to make an honest penny, and he shaved me and trimmed my hair and charged me for TWO haircuts and likewise TWO shaves. Needless to say, when I went back to the restaurant Jack had a real meal ready for me, and instead of sitting at the counter he spread a table in a booth and sat down to eat with me.

That meal lasted a full hour, and I was filled to the ears with good food and also pumped dry of all information I had of the lower river conditions. As I was the first man to arrive in Dawson that spring from the district where I had wintered, I was questioned by many who were eager to hear of conditions in some other district where there might be another chance to develop new mines, for nearly every one felt that Dawson would soon be practically deserted, only those remaining who were employed by the dredging and trading companies, and some of the old camp followers who are always to be found hanging around town as long as a town exists, always hoping that some good ground in the district has been overlooked, and that when it is opened up the camp will be as good as ever.

I was in a hurry to get down to Seattle, so I planned to leave Dawson just as soon as possible. Also, I needed to conserve my funds. The stage fare to White Horse on the Cleveland Stages was one hundred dollars, and more on the Orr and Tukey line, which travelled faster. Cleveland stages took four days to make the three hundred and thirty miles and the passengers had to pay extra for meals and lodging en route.

So I purchased a bicycle, used, to be sure, but in excellent condition, for the sum of forty dollars. It was a Columbia chainless, a type that I believe is now obsolete, but it was just as good as new and ran easily. The stage road did not follow the winding river, but cut overland across hills and through valleys. The horses and sled runners had beaten down and packed tracks about two feet wide, with a ridge about two feet wide between them, just the same as the old country roads used to be before the auto replaced the horse and buggy. The tracks were flat, hard and smooth, and made excellent bicycle paths. I gave my baggage to Bill Adams, the stage driver, to haul for me to White Horse, and set out about an hour before he would start with the stage.

My long tramp had put me in excellent physical condition, and the bike fairly flew along the trail. At least, while the road was level. But the first steep hill that I came to checked my speed effectually. I made a sprint as I came to the grade and climbed nicely for a ways, but before I was near the top I came to a standstill, although I was still pedaling. The driving wheel lost traction and just spun on the icy trail and I had to jump off and trundle to the top.

Several times I would find the head of one of the leading horses nearly over my shoulder as I topped a hill and jumped on to the wheel again, but I would get a nice lead again as I flew down grade. I never thought of using the brake. I would get up as much speed as I could wiggle my legs, and then coast as fast as the thing would go. I figured that if I should spill I would have soft snow to land in, so excessive speed was just what I wanted. I would get to our noon stopping place about the same time as Bill would with his stage, and after lunch I would let him start out first and then chase him through the afternoon, usually getting to the night's stopping place inside of an hour after he had arrived.

Anyway, counting days of travel, I made the trip to White Horse in stage time, and counted myself winner by nearly sixty dollars for the trip, and besides, I still owned a good bike, which, to be sure, I now had no further use for. While in the railroad office getting my ticket I mentioned to one of the men that I had ridden from Dawson on a bike, and he asked me what I would sell the wheel for. "Forty bucks," I replied, and the deal was made. So then I could count my cost of fare to White Horse as only what I had paid for expressing my baggage that far. Nearly a hundred dollars saved in four days.

I stayed just overnight in White Horse, and the next morning I was on the train bound for Skagway. The railroad is a narrow-gauge track and the road is steep and

crooked. I had not been on such a vehicle for some time and I found myself getting almost frantically nervous for fear we would get to rolling too fast downgrade and tip off that narrow track. It took several hours for that fear to wear off. At times I would have been willing to get off and walk. I would have felt safer.

We pulled into Skagway fairly early in the afternoon, and as I climbed off the train in a town that I had had but just a glimpse of in four long years, I was greeted by the hotel clerk who was our host in the same hotel that Charlie Noritz and I had stayed in when we passed through on our way in. The clerk, who was also manager, and for all I know, the owner as well, called me by name as soon as he saw me. That, I thought, was strange, for he had accommodated many hundreds of guests since we were there; but stranger still, as soon as he spoke to me I replied with his name. I asked him how he could ever remember a casual acquaintance for so long a period. Mr. Van Zandt, for that was the gentleman's name, told me that he never forgot a guest's face or name. Needless to say, he got my business, for it seemed mighty nice to be remembered by name in a town that was now quite strange to me.

The trip down to Seattle by steamer was entirely uneventful, and after it was behind me and we were docked safely in port, I walked leisurely uptown after having seen all that was the wildest in what was left of the frontier of America.

I had not seen or heard of any gun play. I had not seen even a real fight, except a few prize fights staged in Dawson. I had seen gambling, all right. From fifteen hundred dollar jackpots down to white chips, all won or lost without a quiver of an eyelash, with never one complaint of crookedness. Bad men were just not known while I was up there. In Dawson the Canadian "Mounties" had perfect control, and down stream I had not been in the boom cities, and on the creeks there was no use getting bad, for the miners would make life a burden for any who tried to.

As I look back now on the country, I marvel that I could have been so blind to the many excellent opportunities that were all round me. The country was full of chances for a young man of brains and energy and EXPERIENCE to make money, without digging it laboriously out of the ground. The only thing the young fellows lack is experience. That was where my youth was against me. I might have developed the brains, but I did not have the experience needed to show me the openings all around me ready to be used, and the few that I did recognize I did not know how to make use of to the best advantage.

The life was hard, and I could not see the way clear for me to get into any permanent occupation. I feared that the best of the gold-bearing ground was worked out and the gold taken out of the country. I would simply be losing time to go back without having a definite goal, and so I bid goodbye to adventure for all time.

Would I like to go back?

YOU BET I would.

END.

Hill's note.

Boulder Creek. Dec. 1, 1905.

Dear Abbott.

I am down with frozen feet, (fairly bad,) and Jumbo froze to death. Will you come out and handle Gee pole with me for load to town, and if you can get a cheap Indian or white man to come for some or all of my load, perhaps best do that – but not unless cheap because I haven't it. Bring with you about 6# of dog rice and some flour. Have used up even my sour dough – fed the dogs pancakes one meal. Better bring a bean and a rice also. Get the provisions from store and tell Nelson I will pay him immediately upon getting back to town. This is the most serious mishap I have had among the many of this trip. If you can't come, send some one.

Very truly,

F. Coke Hill.

Excerpts from letters by N.S.A. to W.K, (A)

Forty Mile, Sept. 25, 1905.

I have only time to strike off a few lines as we want to go right on. Three of us are drifting down in a scow headed for Woodchopper Creek, sixty miles above Circle City. We left Dawson Saturday evening and I have been so busy since that I have not had time to drop a line to you.

I made up my mind to join this party Friday evening and was so busy buying my outfit that I didn't even drop you a postal. I understood that the scow wouldn't start until Sunday morning, so thought I would pack up Sat. and write you in the evening, but the man who is taking this outfit down was ready Sat. afternoon at two, so he told us to get our stuff on board and we would drop down ten miles before dark and get an early start the next morning.

‘ ‘ ‘ There is no post office at the creek, but I think there will be one this fall, as there is quite a rush on to that creek. This party I am with is taking a steam plant and I guess I am to be Engineer for him. At present I am pilot, as neither of the other two know the river. This man who is taking this outfit down, Harry Richards, came in with me this spring. He dropped down to the creek three months ago and was lucky enough to secure himself a claim.

Eagle City Sept. 26, 1905.

We just past Boundary Creek one hour ago and will be in Eagle in about two or three hours. I've put the cook at the steering oar and Harry is asleep so I'll have a good chance to scribble off a few lines to you. . . . I am thoroughly enjoying this trip, though it is rather cold and uncomfortable. I have to be out at the steering oar most of the time. In fact, this is really about the only rest from steering I've had except to eat and sleep. We run from half past five A.M. until about seven P.M., so you see my mind is kept pretty well occupied.

I can already feel myself fattening. I'll come out this spring as strong as an ox. . . . I've been called out twice since I started this letter and just now there is fair prospects of my having to go on deck again, and so not finish this until we reach Eagle.

Circle City, Oct. 6, 05.

Notice the heading. It isn't Woodchopper, after all. I went in there with that party all right, but I found out that he had no ground of his own and that he was expecting to jump a claim. At any rate, he was an uncertain proposition, so I went all over the various creeks in the vicinity. I found them just a grubstake proposition throughout. I did not see or hear of a single claim, either possessed or un-possessioned, that I would have for a gift if I wanted to work the ground myself. So I got into a rowboat and dropped down here two days ago. From here I'll either go into the Tanana country or the Koyukuk country. I can get into the Fairbanks (Tanana) country very easily from here. It is only one hundred and eighty miles across (country). Or I can get into the Koyukuk country by dropping on down to Fort Yukon, eighty miles below here, and going across country there. Two hundred miles. . . . I guess winter has set in all right. The country is covered with snow and the nights are very cold. It still thaws a little at noon, but not enough to amount to anything.

Fort Yukon, Oct. 14, 05.

It will be a long time before you get this letter. It probably won't leave here for a month. But I may leave town tomorrow or next day. We arrived here yesterday at four o'clock and left Circle two days ago at four, so that it figures up just an even two days on the road. Cold and miserable this travelling on the river in a small boat in the late fall, but even then I enjoyed it. I shot two ducks and in the evenings rabbits, and so we had fresh meat all the time. Mr. Colling is somewhat religious and doesn't like to kill game very well, so that work fell to me. I don't mind in the least hunting for my dinner, and I notice he doesn't mind eating what I would kill. Today we will have a rabbit mulligan. . . . Just think—I am inside the Arctic Circle now and will soon be two hundred miles farther north. Stranger still, yesterday it thawed faster than it usually does in the spring. How different a country appears when seen at close range, to what it looks like from a distance. I expected to find this spot far colder than Dawson, but instead, I find it warmer. I suppose Dawson is having a warm wave too.

There are just three white women in this camp and strange to say they are all three far above the average frontiers woman. Mrs. Carr, the wife of the U. S. Mail contractor and store keeper, is a very nice, neat home woman. One of the few women that I consider right. Miss Woods teaches the little Indian children. Mrs. Beaumont is the wife of another storekeeper. She is only three months in this country. There are two whites here, at least, who are married to squaws and have half-breed children. The balance of the population are either transient whites or full-blooded Indians, of which there are at least a hundred. Tomorrow, probably, we will start for Coldfoot. We will not be very lonesome on the trail, for there are at least four other parties that will be starting out about the same time. They are just waiting for some one to go ahead and break trail. I expect it will take about ten days to go through.

On the Chandelar river at the mouth of Granite Creek.

We have taken a half day off to do our writing. It is possible that the mail carrier will be coming along in a day or so and I don't intend letting him pass me without sending another note to you. . . . I've got a great travelling companion with me. A sort of a religious crank. I took up with Mr. Colling at Circle. He was coming in here and I wanted to come but would not attempt it alone. He is all right in a way. Fairly good-natured, but a regular "argyfier," if you know what that is. I understood that he knew the trail and thought I was in luck to get to go with him. Well, this will give you some idea of what I am up against. When we got loaded we had about four hundred pounds on our sled. A man named Hill hitched on to us with his dog team and took us out about five miles out and across the Porcupine River. We camped that night on the bank of the river with no sign of a trail. In the morning three Indians came along and we hired one of them with his dogs to take us one day out on the Coldfoot trail. When we got on the trail, it was nicely broke and we made twenty miles nicely. There the trail apparently ended, but we picked up what we thought was the mail route and started off bravely. Well, we got about fifteen miles on that trail and met a party of Indians again who told us that the trail was simply a trail that they had broke up to their trapping grounds. We went a little farther and struck the Christian River (or Little River). Then we followed that down to the mail trail. We struck the trail just six miles further than where we had lost it, and we had spent seven days dragging four hundred pounds and breaking new trail over half the distance. We had travelled thirty miles to make six. It seemed that Mr. Colling went into the Koyukuk in the summer and had lined a boat up the Chandelar. So I hoped he would

prove of service when we struck the river. Two days after we got on the right we struck the Chandelar and I thought my troubles were over. We had smooth ice for the most part of the day we hit the river. On the next day we started off with the old man in the lead. At ten we found we were off the main channel. Also off the trail. We lost two hours getting started right again. I still said nothing, but when we went about five miles up a blind slough and the old man started globe-trotting again, looking for the trail, I got disgusted, I let him go off with only a warning not to lose another two hours trail hunting. I waited perhaps a half an hour and then started back down with the whole load. Mr. Colling didn't want to go back at all, but he wasn't there when I started. I went about halfway back and made camp, and in two and a half hours from the time he left me he came back. I guess he was a little put out about my starting back to the main river, as he thought we could look out a trail overland, but I preferred pulling the sled back on a good trail in say an hour's time, to spending two hours hunting a new trail and another hour yanking the sled through timber. The next day we started out with a new leader and made a good fifteen miles up river. Now we are about one hundred and twenty miles from Fort Yukon, with about eighty miles yet to go. We are camped about three miles below the mouth of Granite Creek. We were up the creek three miles this morning with half our sled-load, fresh snow making the trail too heavy for us to take the whole load. We left camp this morning about a quarter before nine and made Granite Creek at ten and then went on until eleven-fifteen, about six miles from camp all told. We came back in an hour and three quarters, and instead of breaking camp and moving up to our cache as we should do, we took the rest of the day to do our sewing and writing.

This is the first rest we have taken so far, usually getting up at half past five and working until seven or eight. I'll just sketch you an outline of our day's program. I stick my arm out of the bed when the alarm rings and kindle the fire. When the tent gets warm I get up and thaw out enough water to wash in. Then I thaw out water for general purposes, and at the same time thaw out my sour dough for pancakes. When breakfast has gone this far I call the old man and he gets up and rolls the bed up. Mush, tea and hot cakes for breakfast. We usually get the camp broke about half past eight and get on the trail. Mush along until one, and then beans for lunch. We just build a little camp fire and warm up some beans in a fry pan and then trot along. That takes perhaps a half an hour. At four we stop and start in to make camp. We select a spot where the ground is fairly level and cut enough spruce boughs for our bed and carpet, Then up tent and pack up our goods off the river. The bank is too abrupt to get the sled up. Then while the old man gets supper I cut wood. He can sit down alongside the stove and rest while he cooks, and I don't want to stop for a minute until I am all through, because my feet swell and stiffen as soon as I give them a rest. When the supper is cooked I come in. Fried bacon, baking powder bread, brown gravy and rice pudding with raisins or dried fruit for supper.

Sometimes I manage to shoot a rabbit or grouse. Then we have a feast. Tonight we will have fried mush, bacon, bread, beans and gravy. Our syrup has run out, we are on our last can of milk, also butter, and the tea is nearly gone. But we figure on being in Coldfoot in six days now. The queer part of all this is that I am actually enjoying myself.

Nov. 2, 05. Coldfoot.

Here we are sixty or seventy miles north of the north pole (Arctic Circle) and the weather mild. Only about zero. It should be down to about forty below. There is plenty of time yet, though, for it to drop, and I am afraid that just about time that I have to be out in it, it will go down to eighty.

Nov. 15, O5. Coldfoot.

About Judge Howard and wife. They seem out of place in here but appear to be very well satisfied. They live in a little two-roomed log cabin with cotton cloth on the walls. He wears moccasins and putters around at carpentering and gardening for his pastime. They are not at all proud but simple and very sociable. They came in over the same trail we came over and the Judge has had to catch rabbits for their meat many a time. Didn't have money to buy any. By the way, meat is fifty cents a pound at present. Flour is nine dollars a sack (fifty pounds). Butter, one dollar a pound. Candles, a dollar a dozen. Sugar, twenty-seven cents a pound and so on. The only meat we have here is caribou, moose, rabbit, ptarmigan or grouse, Moose meat is just exactly beef. You couldn't tell the difference if you did not know beforehand. Judge Howard's wife came over that trail with just him alone, and she says she not only was not afraid but actually enjoyed the trip far better than she would have enjoyed letting him come alone and she have to be separated from him so long.

Coldfoot Nov. 22, 05.

I have dated this letter the twenty second but it is after midnight and I am sitting by the fire in an easy canvas chair with my feet on a stool beside the fire and with a candle on top of two boxes beside me. I guess I'll sit here the rest of the night and write. Why? Because the old man (Mr. Colling) just got in from Twelve Mile, cold and miserable, and I have put him in my bed. I left him Sat. noon and came back up here because I figured that nothing could be done down there this winter on account of snow and warm weather preventing the gravel from freezing. You couldn't tell old Colling so, though. I left here at eight in the morning and got to his cabin at twelve forty. He was not in, so I took a light lunch and came back that evening. I thought I would get back before dark as it was snowing and blowing, but it turned dark at four and I got in at six. Well I am a dandy at following a trail or else I would have Siwashed it. That is to say I would have built a fire and cut a few fir boughs and so made myself miserable until daylight. Well, the old man left the cabin, it seems, at eight this morning and arrived here at twelve tonight. Taking him sixteen hours to do what I did in five: He wishes now that he had camped at dark for he is a very poor hand on the trail and the river is dangerous to travel on after dark. He left his sled about two miles below here. That was also bad policy, for after that he had to keep going. I guess he will never again try to travel after four in the winter alone. I have been trying to impress the foolishness and danger of doing so on him but so long as he was with me he couldn't see the danger. Well at a quarter before twelve I heard someone at the door. I got up and let him in. He looked like Santa Claus all covered with snow so I made him a lunch and gave him dry clothes and have put him to bed under the pretense that I have had all the sleep I want and would write the rest of the night. And he is snoring already. The old fellow said he was never more thankful in his life than when he saw my sled at the door and so knew I was here. He has been floundering about in three feet of snow for the last eight hours trying to make about six miles. Now the poor fellow is grunting and groaning with a cramp in one of his stilts and I guess I'll have to stop and fix him some salt water and rub him.

He thinks I am a dandy to get along with. He can't get along with his wife or his boys, or in fact anybody at all hardly, and I lay the blame to his "I told you so" way. . . . More cramps and more doctoring. It is now a quarter before four. Guess I'll make a night of it all right. Both stilts this time.

Friday, 24.

There is a regular blizzard on. I went down after his (Colling's) sled yesterday. The trail is completely obscured. I spent an hour hunting it out. I found his sled quite a way off the trail and his tracks went still further from the trail. Well it took me two hours to come back against the storm. The wind would drive the snowflakes straight into one's eyes. Snow is about four feet deep now and still falling. In front of our door where the wind is drifting, it is piled up almost to the top of the cabin. Still it is not cold, not more than ten below zero, and we have plenty of provisions in the cabin.

Coldfoot, Dec. 17, 05.

I had to go out for Hill on one of our stormiest drays. I hired an Indian with his dog team to take my robe and some provisions and dog feed and then I hot-footed. The cabin that Hill was in was twenty-two miles from here. The mail carrier found him in this cabin out of provisions and wood and feed, and though he left all he had and made a run through, I knew the case was urgent. I found Hill in the cabin all right, safely stowed away in his sleeping bag, with his dogs under the bed. By the time I got some wood cut and a fire built my Indian came, and though I was mighty foot sore I set about cooking a big feed for the dogs and a dinner for us. Next morning I brought Hill in on the sled and the Indian brought in the load. It was a rather interesting trip over the hills and through the deep snowdrifts, and though it took us until eight to get in and I was pretty tired, I don't think I will ever regret having done the good turn. In this kind of country everyone has to help out whenever needed. Hill is already hobbling about on a stilt and in a month will be able to use his foot as good as ever. A sadder but wiser man.

He is thanking his stars that the case is not any worse than it turned out to be. He had a valuable dog freeze to death the day he froze his feet so you may see that he was really in serious danger.

Coldfoot, Dec. 30.

Immediately after having written you (my letter before last) that we were having such an exceptionally warm winter . . . well the following day it turned colder and colder and in three days the thermometer stood at sixty-eight below zero . . . the coldest winter we have had since the winter of nineteen hundred.

Coldfoot, Jan. 6 06.

It is fifty-five below today and I like it not. So I stay indoors all day, having nothing of importance to do. But the worst of it is that it may turn colder and I have to go out tomorrow . . . for there is only enough food in the house for two more meals. Supper and breakfast. Hill is three days overdue from Bettles with our supplies and he may get in this evening but I don't expect him as it is too cold to be moving.

Jan. 15

I went out yesterday to look at my rabbit snares. I did not take any gun along because I did not expect to see any living thing BUT I brought home a grouse with his head wrung off and I caught the fellow on the wing. I have Mr. E. Coke Hill as a witness to my story. Men have been known to hit birds with a stone or club but I don't believe any have ever been good enough flyers to catch a bird on the wing. Hill says he never heard of one. . . . I was going through some rather deep snow on my snowshoes when I noticed a bird's track, fairly fresh. I followed them up for if they were grouse they would

take wing to the trees and I could get time then to go back for a gun, There happened to be only one bird and his tracks came to an abrupt end. I couldn't see the marks from his wings in the snow but I did notice where the snow had been disturbed and settled for a space of about six inches square, also a round hole about the size of a mouse-hole. The idea struck me that maybe Mr. Grouse had gone down into the snow so I clapped my snowshoe right over the depression and out popped Mr. Grouse and as he rose I grabbed him. He certainly was a surprised bird but he made an excellent roast.

Jan 28. 08. Coldfoot, Dept. of Justice. Frank E0 Howard Commissioner'

Observe the heading. I am sitting at Judge Howard's bench, using Judge Howard's quill and smoking Judge Howard's excellent tobacco. Tomorrow I start for Dawson via Fort Yukon. This long cold spell has at last broken and the thermometer now stands at about zero. I thought to start about five days ago but the weather stayed too cold, about fifty-five below, which is too cold for safe travelling. I figure on making Fort Yukon in ten days. I am well prepared for the trip, excellent clothing, good snowshoes and about twenty days provisions with good health. Old Sol was staring me in the face as I came down from my cabin at the mouth of Marion Creek and he certainly looked pleasant. The days are considerably longer now than they were a month ago, daylight breaking about seven thirty and night falling about five.

North Fork cabin on the Chandelar. Feb. 6, 06.

Six days from Coldfoot and I have made only sixty miles. I expected to be here three days ago but the trail has been frightful. I expect the trail will be much better from here on for the mail carrier is here from Fort Yukon and he says it is excellent. I am pretty sore in the thighs and ankles from using the snowshoes. I have had to wear them all the time since I left Coldfoot.

Fort Yukon, Feb. 13, 08.

As usual, observe the heading, also the date. Fourteen days from Coldfoot. A hard old trip. . . . I am in the roadhouse tonight with Frenchmen, Scotchmen and Indians all talking at once. I got in about eight-thirty last night, leaving the mail tent twenty-eight miles from here at six twenty yesterday morning. I got very lame the day before.

Feb. 14.

We had a long cold spell in Coldfoot during which one man lost his life and a number of others froze their feet and fingers, one man losing four toes from one foot and badly damaging his other foot. Jack Erb also lost his life on the Chandelar about the time we went in. He got lost on the river and went down stream instead of up. Shot away all his shells and threw away his gun. He wandered back to the mail carrier's cabin at East Fork and there killed his horse for food. The mail was not running yet so he put a pack of meat on his back and started out again. We saw his tracks about ten miles below the cabin. He left a note saying he had gone UP to Argo Bill's, and wandered down stream. Presumably he fell in and drowned. I have not told you any of these things for fear you would feel a little uneasy about me, but now that I am safely out of there I can tell some strange stories of hardships. But don't think that I ever took any desperate chances. I have been extremely cautious and have come off entirely unscathed. I had a day's provisions left when I arrived here. I'll make Circle in three or four days. Then about ten or twelve days to Eagle. Eagle, by the way, being the first telegraph station that I'll pass.

Circle City, Feb. 21, 06.

. . . I expect I'll arrive at Woodchopper Creek in three days, starting tomorrow morning. I was six days coming from Fort Yukon up here. A heavy snow fell and delayed me and then my poor feet failed me. From here on I am not going to take my sled but send my valise up by a freighter that is going up in a few days. I'll have to get in and dig now so as to get through before my cash runs out, for this thing of stopping at roadhouses and paying one-fifty for a meal is very debilitating to one's purse. . . . I don't have time to dream. I am too busy sleeping, for I find I require eight hours sleep when I have a hard day before me, and nearly all my days have been pretty well filled since leaving Coldfoot. You see, I have to get up early, (four or four thirty) and cook my own breakfast and wash up dishes so as to get started a little before daybreak. And then I have to cut wood in the evening before dark and I simply must get to sleep by eight or nine. And how I do sleep! Last Friday night it was forty-six below zero and I had only a shelter tent over me. My entire bedding consists of a fourteen-pound robe and with my coat for a pillow. Yet I slept really good. Warm enough, quite. . . . I laid down with my head close to the stove so that when it came time to get up I simply stuck one arm out and kindled the fire and then waited until the stove was red hot before getting up.

Dawson, March 5, 06.

Observe (as usual) the heading. . . . I arrived last evening "all 'ail and 'arty." The trip from Circle was uneventful and very wearisome.
