

to be well kept - I've made
to please you - old fellow and
black -
I hope you found
Richard's letter

My dear Walker,

was rec'd a few days ago and I hasten by
return pleased to thank you both for your letter
and the news, I think you will find me a pretty
fair correspondent.

Your welcome letter of Jan's
was rec'd a few days ago and I hasten by
return pleased to thank you both for your letter
and the news, I think you will find me a pretty
fair correspondent.

Ship letter from Alaska.



March 11, 1869

Commander John G. Walker
U.S.N.

U.S. Naval Academy
Annapolis - Md.

U.S. of America.

and made rough surveys of the same which I have
sent off to Admiral Green - I have visited the Chilkat
country and river lat 59° 15' N Long 135° 34' W
and "talked" to the Chilcat chiefs - They are very
friendly, apparently, but I think we shall have to
show them our power ere long. The Russian policy

[Faint, mostly illegible handwritten text]

W. S. Wachusett,

Sitka, Alaska, Den.

Sunday evening 19th Mar. 1882

My dear Mother,

Now that the steamer has
gone there is nothing left for me to do but

U. S. Stmr. Wachusett,



MRS. H. H. WHITE,

1816 Wallace Street,

PHILADELPHIA,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PENA.

longer and then ho! for the east and the
a God send as it gave us something to talk

March 19. 1882

THE WESTERN MAILS

U.S. Steamer RESACA off Mazatlan, Mexico May 13, 1868. Geo. H. White writes home: "We left Guaymas on the 25th of last month and stopped for over a week on the way, off Ajiabampo. This is only the port of the city of Alamos distance some 70 miles. I went up to the landing about 20 miles off to meet the silver train coming down for us. We were gone all night sleeping in the boats and brought back one hundred and twenty thousand dollars. As far as the country went there was nothing to see and the trip only paid in so far as it was a change and we got clear of the ship for a while. The money was brought down in three large wagons drawn by 12 mules and guarded by 40 as hard looking soldiers as I ever saw. They had walked the distance in less than two days keeping up with the wagons - it is said that they will travel more miles in a day than a mule. They certainly did not seem to mind their tramp for as soon as the money was turned over to us they started back on a jog trot, The revolution that has been going on in this state has been broken up, and the proper authorities are once more in charge, they had quite a little fight some twenty miles out of town in which 150 were killed. Last Monday several Officers accompanied our Captain to call on the Governor Genl. Robea and Genl. Caroua the Genl. in comd. of the forces here, which consists of some 4000 men. He is one of the few that made a name for themselves during the French occupation of the country, he is about 30 years of age, rather good looking and has an American wife, who did most of the entertaining - I think I shall call on her again before we leave. Mazatlan has been very gay since our return, one of their anual feasts has been going on and the city is crowded. In addition to this a really good circus is here and every body goes there to see every body. The way a Mexican enjoys himself the most is by gambling and the town is full of all kinds of devices for indulging in this manner, strange to say only two murders have been committed since its commencement. I suppose they do not like the way the Genl. treats them, for in both cases the perpetrator has been shot in less than 24 hours. They certainly are a hard set and put as small a valuation on human life as any people that I ever met, in fact they speak of taking life as a mere matter of cour e. Religion is at so great a discount that this is not to be wondered at, and there can be no improvement no matter under whose control the government of the country may be as long as the standard in this particular is so low." White then complains of not receiving letters and how much it means to hear from home. "Just before leaving GUAYMAS I went on shore and while waiting for a boat made a sketch of one of their principle Public Works which I enclose [not present]. The water is carried about 1½ miles in this way in leather bags and is drawn off through a hole in the bottom closed by an inverted cows horn - of course it has to be held up while the buckets are being filled and the water of course runs over the dirty hands of the driver, nasty people these Mexicans - here [Mazatlan] they have a much cleaner way and load each donkey with 4 large earthern jugs. As our decks leak in a number of places we are having them caulked - this will keep us about a week longer and then we go down the coast to San Blas, from there we will go to lower California to spend the next two months which are the worst during the year for gales of wind, the Captain is afraid of these now and we are anchored so far out that we are rolling constantly and we shall be glad to get away on this account....Geo. H. White."

STORIES BEHIND THOSE COVERS: 'THE SITKA, R.A., COVER'

By N. Leonard Persson

Over ten thousand dollars for one Alaska cover! If there ever was a doubt as to whether good Alaska covers are real classics or merely interesting pieces of postal history, that issue was settled in a recent Frajola auction when a Sitka manuscript postmark from 1867 -- the earliest recorded marking -- broke into the five-figure category.

Not only is the cover significant, being one of still only four recorded manuscript postmark examples, but also this specific item has been the focal point of a good deal of both controversy and scheming by dealers and collectors alike for ownership and profit.

I first became aware of this "Sitka, R.A." cover when it was pictured and described by Joseph Cavagnol in his fine pioneer work on Alaska postal history, *POSTMARKED ALASKA*. Ownership credit was given to Noble J. Hethrington. In the little membership address book of the Western Cover Society Mr. Hethrington's Pasadena, California, address was given, and his collecting interest listed as "Bicycle Mail and Kicking Mule". After deciding that I just may be interested in his Sitka cover, and that perhaps it would be available, I called him; and he indicated that he indeed would sell it. This was about 1959 or 1960. I had a business trip coming up, but made a date three weeks hence to visit him and hopefully buy the cover.

When I returned to my home, which was only a few miles from Mr. Hethrington's residence, I called his number. His younger brother, Dean, answered the phone and promptly informed me that his brother had died, and that he was in the process of shipping all philatelic material to his home in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Throughout the ensuing years many attempts were made by collectors and dealers alike to purchase not only the Sitka cover, but much other powerful material from the estate, with but relatively small success. Numerous trunks including one Wells Fargo strong box had been shipped from California, and these had been filled mostly with covers and stamps.

One person who did purchase some material from the Hethrington hoard was a knowledgeable collector and part-time dealer from Okmulgee, Jay Hargett. He bought some Indian Territorials for his fine personal collection, and some better covers for other collectors. On Mr. Hethrington's behalf he ran a "xerox auction" -- that is he would photo copy certain items and mail these to collectors who he thought may be interested in bidding on them. Eventually, word got around regarding these covers. One prominent Texas collector and the late, well-liked dealer, Alan Atkins of Ohio, were among the few who were able to buy some Hethrington covers. However, the Sitka was still not for sale.

Then in 1979 a Missouri cover dealer, who took bourse tables at many Midwest stamp exhibitions, began buying from Dean Hethrington. It is not completely clear what

of payment Hethrington received from this man, but it probably was not cold cash on the barrelhead. Meanwhile, Hargett had begun to liquidate his choice Indian Territorials to Atkins and others. The Missouri dealer was then given the opportunity to buy Hargett's remaining collection for \$22,000. He bought it, and paid by check, never questioning the price or hardly examining the collection. He also went back to Hethrington, and gave him a check believed to have been either for \$3000 or \$5000 for the Sitka cover. Neither Hargett's nor Hethrington's checks proved good. Hargett eventually received his money, but sources say Hethrington, today in his early 80's and in very poor health, never did manage to collect on the bad check.

None of the "Sitka cover watchers" seems to know exactly under what financial arrangement Atkins obtained the cover from the Missouri dealer -- whether it was in whole or partial debt payment, or for cash or trade. However, his Alaska gem found its way into the generously-priced Atkins stock.

A well-known New York collector and connoisseur of gem-quality postal history covers received an offering letter from Atkins stating that, although the cover was priced at \$80,000 in his stock, he could have it for \$55,000 cash. Now Atkins had arrived at these prices is a mystery, but it could have been related to some unsatisfactory transactions he had had with the Missouri dealer.

Later, I personally saw the cover at an Atkins bourse table. It was neatly packaged and priced at \$27,000. Still later, the New York collector, ~~sent me~~ received a phone call from another well-informed cover collector who has been known to do a little "vest pocket" dealing. He offered the cover for "seventeen". After all the strange pricings, \$1700 seemed fair for this cover, so a potential sales meet was arranged. But, you guessed it, the potential buyer and seller were apart by a factor of 10! -- \$1700 bid; \$17,000 offered -- no sale.

After Alan Atkins' death, and under expert advice, the "Sitka, R.A." was consigned to Richard Frajola for auction. The rest is history.

For many years there has existed some persistent talk questioning the genuineness of this cover and the other cover known to have been postmarked "Sitka, R.A." One highly respected postal history authority, with more than a passing interest in Alaska, pointed out to me in 1966 the fact that both covers bearing the "R.A." (for Russian America) notation were addressed to the same party in San Francisco, and were posted over 4 and 1/2 months apart (the dates being Nov. 8, 1867, and Mar. 25, 1868). The two other manuscript Sitka covers which have come to light are dated Jan. 24, 1868, and Nov. 29, 1868, and are addressed to different parties in Penyan, N.Y., and Washington, D.C., respectively. These two postmarks in corporate the initials "A.T.", obviously standing for Alaska Territory. The earliest known handstamp postmark reads, "SITKA/ALASKA T.", and is dated May 12, (1869). This postmarking device probably was ordered a good many months prior to the

day usage. It then seems rather strange that the two "R.A." postmarks occur at such relatively distant datings, and "straddle" a "Sitka, A.T." postmarking. Also, the only two "R.A." markings are found exclusively in the Martel Correspondence. But then similarly strange happenings are not without precedent during developmental stages of frontier post offices and routes.

Having most of this data and information available, another early Alaska history buff and collector, flatly declared the two "R.A." covers fakes. Such comments and declarations, whether scholarly observations or dogmatic denunciations, deserve and demand examination. Both gentlemen, who made these observations, were important consultants to Sgt. Cavagnol, and their names appear frequently throughout his book. Each has been deceased for well over a decade.

There are at least three reasons why I believe both "R.A." covers to be as good as Yukon gold.

First, the land called by some "Seward's Folly" was referred to for a time in Post Office Department records as "Russian America". Note the excerpt from the "list of Post Offices in the United States" revised and corrected to October 20, 1867 (below).

In the same publication the alphabetical listing notes: "Sitka, Russian America", and

adds John N. Kinkead as the current postmaster.

Secondly, both "R.A." covers bear three different sets of manuscript penmanship; the postmark, the address, and the docketed receiving information. Upon careful examination by several experienced collectors, including at least one man who is an authority on both early penmanship characteristics and inks, without exception it has been concluded that all three sets of handwriting are contemporary with usage dates. There seems to exist not even a hint of modern cover tampering.

Thirdly, when Noble Hethrington was amassing his covers, perhaps as early as the 1920's, manuscript postmarks were neither popular nor expensive. There was no monetary incentive for a faker, and little recorded data available for any counterfeiter to produce such a complicated product flawlessly. Moreover, the elder Mr. Hethrington was known not to be a liberal or excited buyer. It is known that one of his regular techniques of accumulation was to buy remainders of unsold auction lots "if the price was right". Wouldn't those prices of the 1930's look mighty nice to us today?

So I do not hesitate to congratulate the new owner of the earliest known cover from Alaska, and thank him for pushing the image of Alaska up another rung of the ladder of classical collecting.

TABLE OF DISTANCES.

RHODE ISLAND.

County.	County-seat. Post Office name.	Distance from	Distance from	County.	County-seat. Post Office name.	Distance from	Distance from
		WASHINGTON.	State Capital.			WASHINGTON.	State Capital.
		Miles.	Miles.			Miles.	Miles.
Bristol.....	Bristol.....	439	16	Providence....	PROVIDENCE.....	423	—
Rent.....	East Greenwich.....	402	14	Washington....	Kingston.....	394	27
Newport.....	NEWPORT.....	402	28				

☞ Distances reckoned from PROVIDENCE.

RUSSIAN AMERICA.—(ALASKA TERRITORY?)

Sitka.....	Distance from WASHINGTON. *4,770 miles.
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* (Statute miles.) Via SALT LAKE CITY, Utah Territory, and SAN FRANCISCO, California.



THE ALASKAN PHILATELIST

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THE WESTERN MAILS



SITKA ALASKA TERRITORY



Cover above was postmarked at SITKA on August 8, 1889. The postcard shown below was postmarked as per illustration, on July 11, 1909. It portrays a handpainted photograph of Sitka as it looked around the turn of the century.



THE WESTERN MAILS

POST CARD

THIS SIDE FOR THE ADDRESS



*Bernice Heals
Minneapolis*



*Tells you
little rat
Papa and
Mama are
up with
the Indians
Will be
home soon
Papa*

METLAKATLA, ALASKA

Post office established 1904, on Annette Island, about 20 miles airline south of KETCHIKAN. The post card bears the type I postmark. See map below



*Will be home Tuesday or
Wednesday - Papa & Mama*

SITKA, ALASKA

Post card bears the type VII handstamped postmark **SITKA ALASKA JUL 24 1906**. Both cards addressed to Minneapolis, Minnesota



THE WESTERN MAILS

FORT WRANGELL

ALASKA

The post was established in 1868-70 and the post office Oct. 6, 1869. Name was changed to WRANGELL February 19, 1902.

It is located in the southwestern part of Alaska, on the inland passage half way, between Ketchikan and Sitka.



JAN 25, 1880

JUN 25, 1883



Post card postmarked WRANGELL, ALASKA AUG 18 1909.

THE WESTERN MAILS

St. Pauls Island Alaska
July 19th 1881
Wm. Hooper

FORWARDED BY
ALASKA COMMERCIAL CO.



Above on reverse
of cover



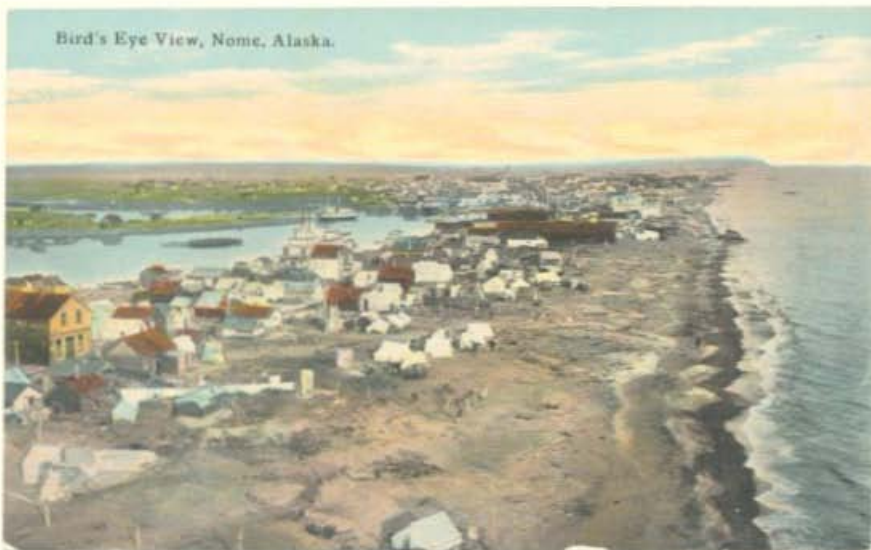
ST. PAUL'S ISLAND ALASKA.

Located in the PRIBILOF ISLANDS in the BERING SEA. There was no post office on the Island and all the markings on the cover are those of the ALASKA COMMERCIAL CO., who had exclusive rights, including the taking of fur-seals, of which the killing of was controlled by the government. The cover shown was carried by the Company, via OUNALASKA TO SAN FRANCISCO where it entered the mails-SAN FRANCISCO CAL AUG 16 12M 81. The following is from the letter under date of "July 19th 1881."

"We have got nearly through with the Sealing for this year - probably finish day after tomorrow as they only need about 3000 more to make up the 100,000 to which the years catch is limited - Just now there are millions of Seals old and young upon the Island and the roaring from the rookeries never ceases day nor night - but it will be quiet enough next winter when every Seal & Sea Lion & almost every bird will be gone and the Sea covered with ice so that even the surf ceases to roar on the beach - I expect the Steamer will not leave so soon by a week or ten days as last year for she has not returned from St. Michael yet... I presume our last chance to write will be by Government Steamer CORWIN which is now in the Arctic looking for Bennetts Arctic Explorer JEANNETTE - Capt. Hooper of Corwin told me he expected to stay in the Arctic this winter... July 30th Steamer leaves to day ...Liman"

The JEANNETTE was caught in the polar ice pack, crushed and sunk, with the loss of Commander Geo. W. DeLong and most of the officers and crew, on June 13, 1881. James Gordon Bennett of the N.Y. Herald, financed most of the expedition, although it was Commanded by U.S. Naval personal. It is one of the epic voyages of Arctic exploration. At the time this letter was written the fate of the expedition was not known. Not until Dec. 19, 1881 was the tragic news flashed to the world.

THE WESTERN MAILS



NOME, ALASKA TERRITORY. Post Office established June 8, 1899. On Sept. 22, 1898 a discovery claim was staked on Anvil Creek in what was to become the Nome Mining District on Cape Nome. By November the strike had become known to the world and the RUSH to Nome was on. By 1899 Nome, which was first named Anvil City, had become a booming mining camp. The cover shown bears the type II postmark and is the latest known usage.



THE WESTERN MAILS



ALASKA COMMERCIAL CO., ST. MICHAEL ALASKA TY. APR 18, 1895. Entered the regular mails at SEATTLE JUL 21 1895, three days short of three months in transite. Probably held up at St. Michael because of ice. The Post Office was not established until 1897. Received at GLYNDON, MINNESOTA July 25, collect 2 cents.

STEAMER "HUMBOLDT."

Humboldt Steamship Company marking. Entered the mails at OUNALASKA, ALASKA OCT 16, 1897 as a Ship Letter Due 4 cents - 2¢ ship fee and 2¢ postage - all collect. It was eight days in transite to SEATTLE OCT 24, with arrival at GLYNDON, MINN. OCT 28, 1897. One of only two recorded examples of this boat marking.



THE WESTERN MAILS

HOW TO REACH THE GOLD FIELDS.

Yukon River Route, 4069 Miles.

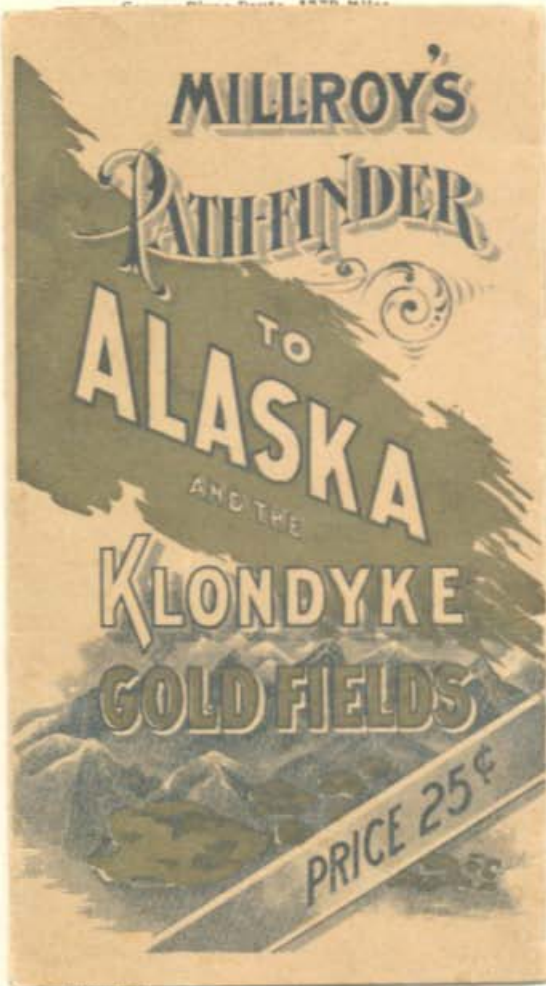
	Miles
By Steamer from Seattle to St. Michael.....	2174
St. Michael up the Yukon River by boat to Dawson.....	1895

This is the easiest but longest and most expensive route, as it is necessary to buy your outfit after arriving at Dawson.

Stikine River Route, 1508 Miles.

	Miles
From Seattle to Ft. Wrangel by Steamer.....	748
Ft. Wrangel up the Stikine R. by boat to Telegraph Cr. 149	
Telegraph Cr. overland to head of Lake Teslin.....	90
Head of Teslin Lake by boat to the Yukon River.....	350
Down the Yukon River to Dawson.....	180

Undoubtedly this is the shortest, safest, and best route so far discovered.

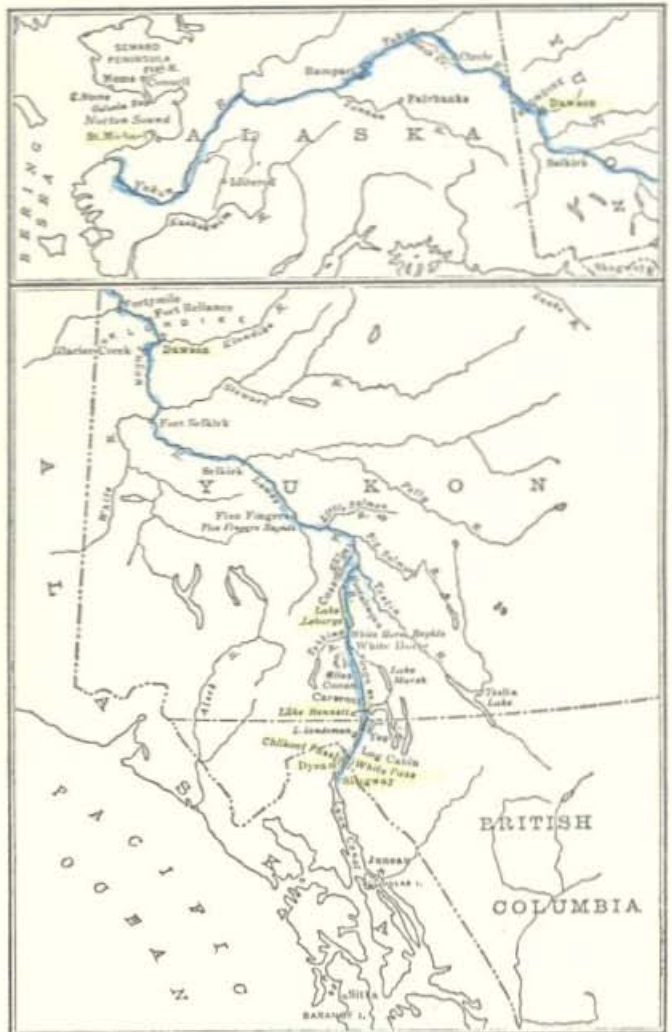


Chilkoot Pass Route, 1392 Miles.

	Miles
From Seattle to Juneau.....	599
Juneau to Dyea.....	100
Dyea to Summit of Chilkoot Pass.....	15
Summit of Chilkoot Pass to head of Lake Linderman.....	9
Head of Lake Linderman to head of Lake Bennett.....	5
Head of Lake Bennett to foot of Taku Lake.....	54
Foot of Taku Lake to the Foot of Marsh Lake.....	25
Foot of Marsh Lake to White Horse Rapids.....	24
White Horse Rapids to Head of Lake Le Barge.....	26
Head of Lake Le Barge to Teslin River.....	64
Teslin River to Yukon River.....	180
Down Yukon River to Dawson City.....	174

This route is used by 85 per cent. of the travelers, it being the oldest overland trail; but the hardships that have to be endured in crossing the Chilkoot Pass are sufficient to condemn it.

The little guide to the Klondike gold fields was carried by John Strickland on his journey to the Yukon and Dawson City in 1898. It contains a map and information and instructions, including the two main routes as illustrated. The Chilkoot Pass started from Dyea and the White Pass from Skagway. The C.P. was steeper and the W.P. was rougher. The White Pass & Yukon R.R. was built over the White Pass in 1899. The map shows the steamboat route from St. Michael to Dawson via the Yukon River. The larger map the route from Skagway and Dyea.



THE YUKON AND ALASKA

THE WESTERN MAILS



WHITE PASS & YUKON R. R.

This post card is an early view, showing the wooden trestle around the granite cliff of the mountain, before concrete abutment was built. See other post card and FORT YUKON.

DAWSON XMAS 1907. "Much Peel River Indians here... A lot of Indians came in the other day with 100 dogs all rigged up with sleigh bells - quite a sight".



THE WESTERN MAILS

Brant Yukon Mining & Investment Co. LIMITED.

AUTHORIZED CAPITAL, - \$50,000.

HEAD OFFICE:
PARIS, - ONT.

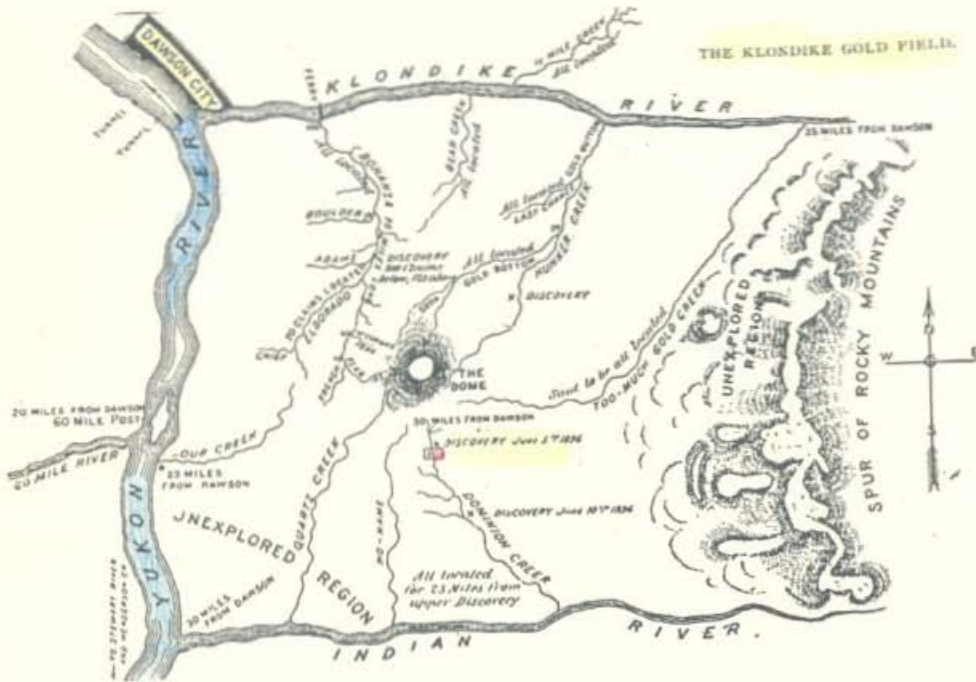
H. STROUD,
PRESIDENT.

18 Oct.



*A. H. Baird Esq.
Secy
Paris Ontario*

KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH. Cover was mailed from DAWSON N.W.T. CANADA SP 14 98 to Paris, Ontario via VICTORIA B.C. as per backstamp. The stamps of both countries were used not knowing if both were needed? There is no evidence that it passed through the U.S. mails.



THE WESTERN MAILS



THE WESTERN MAILS



TREADGOLD'S COLOSSAL MONOPOLY OF MINES AND WATER.

" Dawson Y.T. FEB 18- 1902

My Dear Mother.....I was down town last night attending a mass meeting of Bankers Lawyers Doctors Merchants Miners & a mob in general to see if we could stop this concession - If it goes in to affect it will ruin the miner as well as every one else - As it is It has knocked me out of a good piece of ground which I went to relocate the day after the ground was closed. By the concessionian The ground had gone back to the government - The one who located it thought it would not pay him to do the assessment work. I spent a day or two Prospecting it & found that I could make it pay but when I come to relocate it the ground was closed - I will mark the Place where it is on the map - It is at 67 pup on a bench - I will also mark where my claim is on Adams creek and where my cabin is where I am now - My claim on Montana creek is not shown on this map - It is a way beyond Quarts creek on the other side of Indian River and heads in another range of hills - Quartz runs into Indian - so does Mustang - Gold Run is not shown on this Map - It lies South of the Dome 25 miles where it empties into Dominion a tributary of Indian river - The shaded as lined part of the map a long the creeks show where the gold is taken from - also in the creeks adjoining the hills marked - I will draw a straight line a cross the creek where the richest parts are.....Say did you ever get a letter with a little piece of gold in it - I sent it last Aug...John"

The above was written on the back of a 15 by 20 inch broadside, reprinted from the DAWSON DAILY NEWS of February 13th and 14th [1902]. It is folded, making four letter size pages.

The red X on the map of the Treadgold Colossal Monopoly, marks the location of George Carmack's Discovery Claim, on Bonanza Creek, between Little Skookum and Skookum Gulch. This is where it all began. Note Strickland's claim not too far away on Adams Creek.



THE KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH

"Porcupine Hill Alaska

Feb 6 - 98

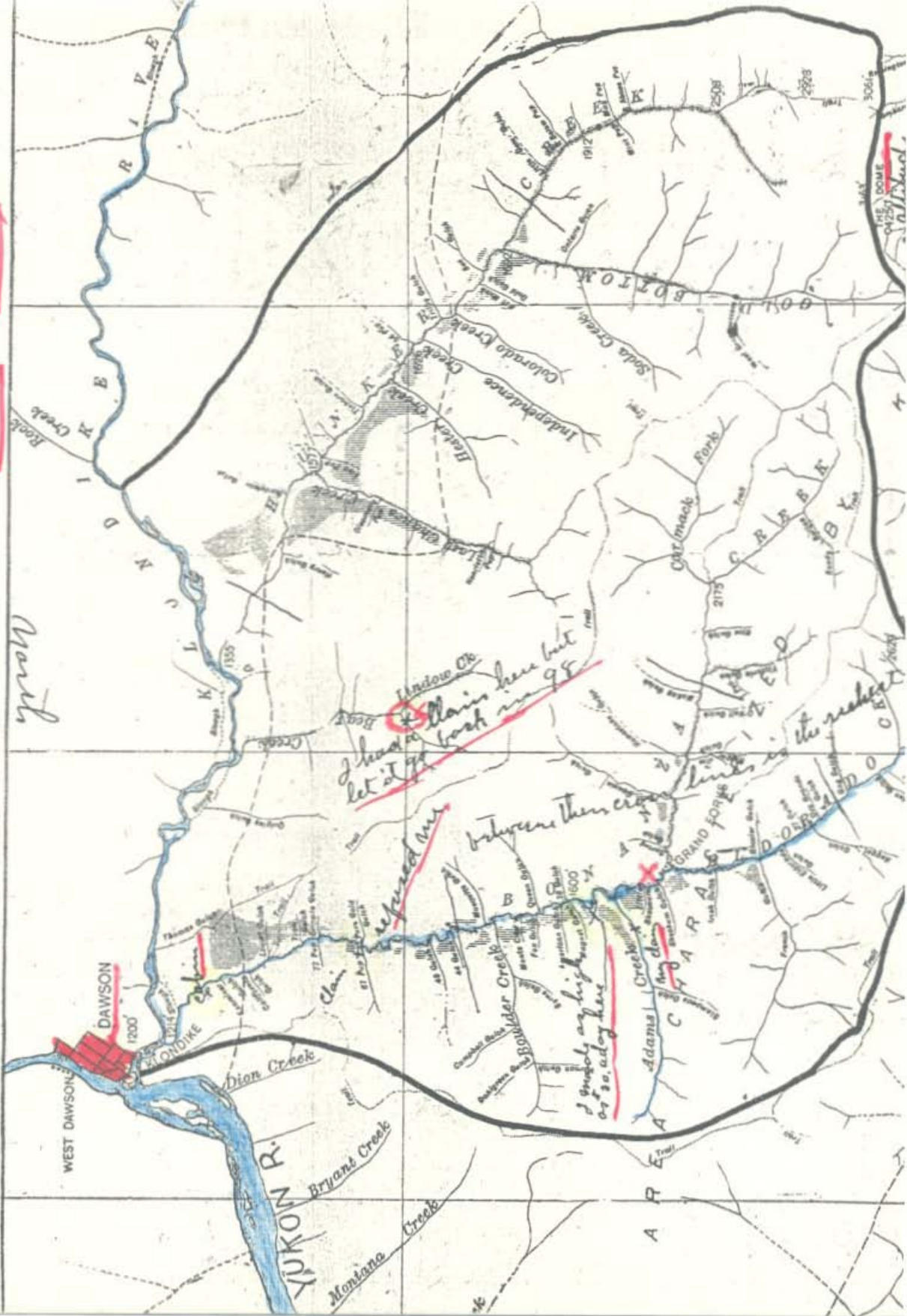
Dear Sister This is Sunday morning & I will write you a few lines. I wrote Mother a letter before we left Skagua [Skagway, Alaska] - you ought to get it in a few days. Well I am O.K. We have just got through breakfast - We had Buiscuit - butter - honey - meet - beans. fruit & coffee - We are geting along nicely - We had to buye a 1800 lbs more Provisions before we could get through the N.W.T. - We pass the [Canadian] Customs at Lake Labarge* - They wont let any one in unless they have 1000 lbs of Provisions - We have to buye more yet for we will eat up lots before we get there. We have at least 2600 lbs of luggage & you see it is slow traveling to pull it on a sled - Some places we cant Pull but 100 lbs - Some places more. From here to the Montana Cabin [Log Cabin?] we take 200 - it is 6 miles there. We make two trips a day. We have 1500 lbs there now. Will have all our stuff there in three days more - Then we will be at timber line. From there we will go over the Pass [White Pass] which is 50 miles. Then down to the lake Bennett, where we will build our boat & wait until the Ice brakes - Porcupine Hill is only 7 miles from Skagua. I wish I had tole you to direct to Skagua then I could have sent back for my mail - You can Direct to Skagua after this.....I have met lots of fellows I am acquainted with - Two Boys who fired [railroad firemen]* for Frank & I in Nebr[aska] & you bet they are good friends to. Oh you ought to See the men going over this Trail all pulling sleds. Flour is worth \$40 a 100 lbs at Lake Bennet just 32 miles from Skagua. We will be Making big money if we sell our outfit there. As soon as the Ice brakes then it is almost impossible to get over the trail to the lakes - Oh such sights as one will see here. I wish I had known what I know now. I would have brought a big fat cow & Enough feed to last the cow until I got to the Lakes - I would have made the cow pull the stuff over there - when I got there I would have made beef of the cow.the work isn't half as hard on me as running an Eng [R.R. locomotive]* - The cold isn't any worse here than in Iowa & Nebk.I have pulled my sled all day in my Shirt sleeves, and we are very comfortable in our heavy army tent....good by written from second camp going over White Pass. John". [Strickland].

*THE CREMATION OF SAM MCGEE BY Robert W, Service, helped make this lake better known to history. To quote from the poem "The Northern Lights have seen queer sights; But the queerest they ever did see Was that night on the marge of Lake Labarge that I cremated Sam McGee."

*John Strickland was an engineer on the Sioux City & Pacific R.R. in 1890. He operated Engine No. 90 on the Missouri Valley run.

division of Dawson district and cripple the commercial interests of the city in proportion.

The Heavy Black Line Indicates the Concession Boundary.



the sale of water. This iniquitous monopoly will prevent development of the Bonanza district and cripple the commercial interests of the city in proportion.

TREAD COLOSSAL OF MINES A

It means that Bonanza, Eldorado, Hunker, Bear, La to each closed to location. Every lapsed claim within of an order in council. Existing water rights supersede 2,500 miner's inches. Miners may no longer divert water from the Yukon River. This iniquitous monopoly for the sale of water. This iniquitous division of Dawson district and cripple the commercial

The Heavy Black Line Indicate



THE WESTERN MAILS

"At the foot of White Pass Third camp from Skagua/
Sunday Feb 12 - 98

Dear Folkswe are doing nicely and are comfortable. Such a sight as one will see here. I cant discribe it. Last Thursday as we were moveing our camp from Porcupine Hill, comeing up the [trail] about 25 men all in a string pulling their sleds winding around big bolders - It was a nice morning. I hurd a Melodious Voice & I looked back & there came a woman bringing up the rear & She was singing Tramp Tramp Tramp the boys are marching to the Gold fields of Alaska. It is worth a mans life to witness the things to be seen along this trail - - It snows every few days - The trail is kept packed hard but if you step out of the trail you will nearly go out of sight in the snow. It is nothing uncomman to see a horse break through the Ice & go into the river but the R- is not deep - The Ice some places is 20 feet thick other places not 2 inches thick. I have met several Friends on the trail. Just had a wreck in front of our 2 tents - brake a sled all to pieces. Sleds are worth \$ 7.00 -



The water will gorge & heave the Ice. Lots of men get discouraged after they get their stuff up this far & sell out. We bout 100 lbs of flour yesterday from a fellow who was tired of his job. We will make it all right I am sure. I am getting fat and I can feel myself get strong. . . . I can pull my sled where any of them can. . . . The first thing I see to when we move camp is to get a good place - take the snow off - Pitch our tent - Put up our little stove - Then cut down a big fur tree - take the boughs & cover the bottom of our tent & make it about a foot thick where we sleep and you would be surprised what a good bed it makes - I sleep warm & sound every night - We light our fire from the bed in the morning & in a few minutes the tent is warm - our German socks are warm & dry - we get up cook a warm meal. . . . Then we are off with our sled with a load - The cold here isnt as disagreeable as in Iowa & it dont change much. There is two of Millers friends, from Looking Glass [Oregon] going to pull us from here to the lakes - They have two Horses. They are camping with us now - one of the men & I have just finished puting up the Horse tent - The other two boys went to Skagua last night for the mail & some articles we needed - If all accounts are true we will get at least \$ 1,500 for the stuff we are taking in when we get to Dawson City - I expect you are reading in the papers about the hardships men are going through up here & about men geting frozen and dying at Skagua, and about water they are drinking - of the dead horses along the trail. It makes me laugh to hear some men talk. There has been a few Drunken bums died in Skagua, but it was from drinking bad whiskey - I know it wasnt from bad water and a fellow will freeze in this country if he lays out without any thing to protect him. . . . I hope my partners bring me a letter. John"

THE WESTERN MAILS

① April 3rd - 98
 Camp No 9 In the North West Territory 15 miles below Bennett on Lake Bennett Camped in a small grove of Balsam Pine on the west side of the lake where we will build our boat. Lake Bennett is 28 miles long & on either side great high Mts almost touch the skies - The Lake is from a 1/2 to 1 1/2 miles wide & reminds one of a wide river all covered with Ice & snow over which there is continually a string of men & sleds going all the time - I have seen a few women pulling sleds. Last week as I was going up to Bennett for a load I met a man & woman - He pulling she pushing - Just before I got to them the man said let us rest & lent up against the sled & asked the woman if she didnt wish she was at home - She cut him short with no I dont wish I were at home - Oh! what sights one will see on a trip of this kind. Well my Partner J.H. Miller & a man by the name of L.G. Smith from N.Y. have gone to the big Salmon Excitement [Big Salmon River about 200 miles North of Lake Bennett] - Smiths Partner stayed with me & we are to build the boat & take down the two outfits when the Ice brakes - My Partners name is A. Williams a cod fisherman from Newfoundland & a very nice fellow & very religious in his beliefs - He has built boats & I have no fear but that we can build one that will take us down safely - Well we were 65 days on the trail from Skagua here about 57 miles & the sights I have seen would make a big chapter in a good novel. We have been very fortunate - didnt loose a thing nor get any damaged by geting wet. We will now build a log Pen & store it [cover] with the tarpolian & if a Bear dont get into it we are all O.K. But we will make it hot for Mr. B. for we have two big guns. I have stood the trip nicely but Oh how tanned I am - I look like an Esquemou or Siwash Indian. The Sun shines on the snow does it. We made our last move on April 1st & comenced falling fur trees for our boat - We have the trees all down - We will now put up a saw Pit - Saw the lumber & build our boat - We will have at least a month & a half to do it in. Oh! yes I must tell you about our snow Ship - You see when our Partners left for big Salmon River we had all our outfits at Bennett - about 5000 lbs in both [outfits] and we were to pull it down to where we could get trees to build the boat - My Partner is a sailor so we Just riged our sleds together - Put a mast 5 inches in diameter at base - 4 at top & 15 feet high - main yard 12 feet, top 6 feet - main sail 7 by 14 - top sail 6 by 8 - Everything was put up in ship shape with gib sale in front to guide her. We loaded her with a ton right near the trail & waited for a wind from the south - The next morning when we got up the wind was going down the lake - after we had breakfast we went out hoysted sail & away our snow ship went & such a ride I never got before - When we got her stoped we were on the West shore of the lake 10 miles away - We unloaded our cargo - took down the sail & Pulled the ship home - The next day we did the same thing & the third day we moved camp - You ought to have seen people get out of her way - She looked just like a fishing smack a little way off. I would have given lots to have had her Photo. I am chief cook. I know what I am eating. I am going to do my washing tomorrow - Oh! if I only had a letter from home & knew you were all well - I hope & Pray you are & that I will soon get a letter. Now Mother dont get uneasy about me for I am enjoying this trip fine & I Pray God that he will spare our lives until we meet again. Good bye for this time - Direct Skagua Alaska John"

"April 3rd - 98/Camp No 9 In the North West Territory 15 miles below Bennett on Lake Bennett camped in a small grove of Balsam Pine on the west side of the lake where we will build our boat. Lake Bennett is 28 miles long & on either side great high Mts almost touch the skies - The Lake is from a 1/2 to 1 1/2 miles wide & reminds one of a wide river all covered with Ice & snow over which there is continually a string of men & sleds going all the time - I have seen a few women pulling sleds. Last week as I was going up to Bennett for a load I met a man & woman - He pulling she pushing - Just before I got to them the man said let us rest & lent up against the sled & asked the woman if she didnt wish she was at home - She cut him short with no I dont wish I were at home - Oh! what sights one will see on a trip of this kind. Well my Partner J.H. Miller & a man by the name of L.G. Smith from N.Y. have gone to the big Salmon Excitement [Big Salmon River about 200 miles North of Lake Bennett] - Smiths Partner stayed with me & we are to build the boat & take down the two outfits when the Ice brakes - My Partners name is A. Williams a cod fisherman from Newfoundland & a very nice fellow & very religious in his beliefs - He has built boats & I have no fear but that we can build one that will take us down safely - Well we were 65 days on the trail from Skagua here about 57 miles & the sights I have seen would make a big chapter in a good novel. We have been very fortunate - didnt loose a thing nor get any damaged by geting wet. We will now build a log Pen & store it [cover] with the tarpolian & if a Bear dont get into it we are all O.K. But we will make it hot for Mr. B. for we have two big guns. I have stood the trip nicely but Oh how tanned I am - I look like an Esquemou or Siwash Indian. The Sun shines on the snow does it. We made our last move on April 1st & comenced falling fur trees for our boat - We have the trees all down - We will now put up a saw Pit - Saw the lumber & build our boat - We will have at least a month & a half to do it in. Oh! yes I must tell you about our snow Ship - You see when our Partners left for big Salmon River we had all our outfits at Bennett - about 5000 lbs in both [outfits] and we were to pull it down to where we could get trees to build the boat - My Partner is a sailor so we Just riged our sleds together - Put a mast 5 inches in diameter at base - 4 at top & 15 feet high - main yard 12 feet, top 6 feet - main sail 7 by 14 - top sail 6 by 8 - Everything was put up in ship shape with gib sale in front to guide her. We loaded her with a ton right near the trail & waited for a wind from the south - The next morning when we got up the wind was going down the lake - after we had breakfast we went out hoysted sail & away our snow ship went & such a ride I never got before - When we got her stoped we were on the West shore of the lake 10 miles away - We unloaded our cargo - took down the sail & Pulled the ship home - The next day we did the same thing & the third day we moved camp - You ought to have seen people get out of her way - She looked just like a fishing smack a little way off. I would have given lots to have had her Photo. I am chief cook. I know what I am eating. I am going to do my washing tomorrow - Oh! if I only had a letter from home & knew you were all well - I hope & Pray you are & that I will soon get a letter. Now Mother dont get uneasy about me for I am enjoying this trip fine & I Pray God that he will spare our lives until we meet again. Good bye for this time - Direct Skagua Alaska John"

THE WESTERN MAILS

Dear Folks April 8th - 98
 all fixed for living in good
 Shape. We have our supplies in
 a pen built out of fur trees
 nicely stored with a rig pole
 & the tarpaulian stretched for
 the roof there on top. We have
 two water proof sails. So we
 think the grub is all right
 due to

"Dear Folks - April 8th - 98/Camp No - 9 and all fixed for living in good Shape. We have our supplies in a pen out of fur trees nicely stored with a rig pole & the tarpaulian stretched for the roof there on top - We have two water proof sails so we think the grub is all right - We are finly fixed in our tent - Have just had our suppers - I am the cook - This is what we had - Bread, Butter - coffee - cod-fish mixed with flour & rice Bacon Beans & gravey. Since supper I have cooked Dried apples & rasins mixed they go fine. You bet I am going to live right on this trip & I have got the appetite for it. Well we have been sawing lumber today - We have 140 ft sawed. It will take 300 ft for our boat. We take our time as there is no hurry. I wrote you a letter last Sunday but havent got a chance yo send it away. One of the party in the tent below us is going to Bennett Sunday & said he would take out mail up for us so I thought I would write again. I suppose you have before this hurd of the big snow slide at Chilcoat [Chilkoot Pass] - They tell us it was awful. You bet I watched out for them [slides] when we were coming over the Pass [White] - But there is no danger in cold weather - It is when the snow begins to melt that they start. Many an Eager gold hunter lost his life Sunday - I suppose they were all working the same as a week day. I do Enough in 6 days for me. They all ought to take warning from last Sundays reveng for breaking the comandment - Well I just went down on the lake where we have a hole cut in the Ice to get a bucket of water. 8-30 and the Sun had gone out of sight behind the high mts at 5 but had only set but a short time. What a Grand sight it was. Every thing as still as could be. The long stretch of lake to the North - the same to the South but stoped by the Chilcoat [mountain] which towered high in the Southern heavens which looks very dark as also the Eastern heavens. On Either side of the lake a mamath rang of Mts - over the Western range the fading twilight - to the North it looks as though the Sun was about [to] arise & nothing but a field of Ice & snow.* I wish you all could see it - I looked until I fixed it in my mind to remember. Many sights have I seen that I will never forget..... Now when you write again Direct to Dawson City Northwest Territory.....good night John"

John's description of the twilight over Lake Bennett reminds the Editor of the same experience he witnessed in Alaska in 1944. The high snow covered mountains and the beautiful purple sky laced with silver, gold and red. Unlike John I have color slides of such a scene. FER.

"Claim No 22 - On Gold Run 55 Miles from Dawson City"

Dawson City N.W.T

Dear Folks at home Oct 23 - 99

I will write a few lines this even you see I have moved. I came over here two weeks ago got a promise of work for the winter & a cabin to move into when I got here I went to Dawson bought an outfit & winter's clothing & packed

"Claim No 22 - On Gold Run 55 Miles from Dawson City"
Dawson City Oct 23 - 99

Dear Folks at home.....You see I have moved. I came over here two weeks ago - got a promise of work for the winter & a cabin to move into - when I got here I went to Dawson - bought an outfit & winter's clothing & packed & hauled it over here, which was no easy job. Left an order with a Teamster to bring the outfit over by the first of November. The man who hired me said he would give as much an hour as any one on the creek but now he is trying to hire men for 80¢ an hour when other men are paying \$1.00 an hour. Just my bad luck. I hope this bad luck of mine will soon run out.....I would have saved myself lots of work if I had stayed on Bonanza [creek] but I couldn't get a promise of a job over there...Now I must let the Hide & Tallow go with the Tail - Then on top of it all I have got gray backs [body lice] which keeps me lots of company - The first I have had since I left Mexico - I think I am red of them for I have given them a good boiling. Such is the life of a gold miner.We are having fine weather about 6 in of snow & the Thermometer has been down to 26 below. The Sun is fast sinking to the South. Oh! beautiful Artic Moon So full & bright that it hurts my Eyes to look at it. Nov 10th - 99. Well I hear that the mail will leave Dawson next Thursday [16th]....I recd your letter of Sept 17th some two weeks ago, but I dont expect to get another one until the mail comes in over the Ice. The last Mail Steamer coming down the river got in an Ice jam & went to the bottom of the Yukon with all the mail. I am sure there was one for me in it. The passengers were all saved but every thing Else went to the bottom of the mighty Yukon. Well I am at work at last - have in 10 days at 80¢ an hour...I think the wages will be at \$1.00 an hour before Spring - Every body here has the Cape Nome fever & some are going over the Ice with dog teams - that will be a long trip 1800 miles - Some crazy people will suffer before they reach St. Michels* - I hope they will all leave so wages will be \$ 2.00 an hour.....John/Dawson City N.W.T."

*St. Michael on Norton Sound on the Bering Sea. They traveled on the ice of the frozen Yukon.

THE WESTERN MAILS



" Dawson Y. T. / Dec 11th 1901

I hurd this morning that the mail arived yesterday at Dawson - So I came down this afternoon as far as my cabin & have got it thawed out - it was frosty for there hadent been a fire in it for two weeks - But by the time I got my supper it was comfortable & now it is good & warm. we are having a fine winter - 42 is the coldest it has been....I am sinking a shaft on my claim - I am down 19 feet - I expect to go 30. I have an old Frenchman helping me He has a claim next to me - I am helping him to sink. He is 62 years old & he still expects to make a fortune. To sink a shaft in this country it costs \$ 5.00 a foot for the first 10 feet & \$ 10.00 from that on down....I expect to be at bedrock by Xmas. I think I will have an Old hen for dinner that day. I suppose you will have a Turkey of course.....The days are very short now & a fellow has to hustle if he travels 15 or 18 miles while it is light. I havent seen the Sun for two weeks but I can see where it shines on the Mts at 12 noon for about two hours but it wont be long until it will begin to come back - This country is full of Rabbits this winter - My Australian friend gave me one to night to take back with me...Some how I dont fancy Rabbit like I once did.....I dont have such a wonderful apetitie - I use lots of milk & roaled Oats (The worlds breakfast). It is going to be cold to night - it may touch the 50 [below] mark by morning - it is nice to have a good warm cabin....I have grain sacks for a carpet.....John"



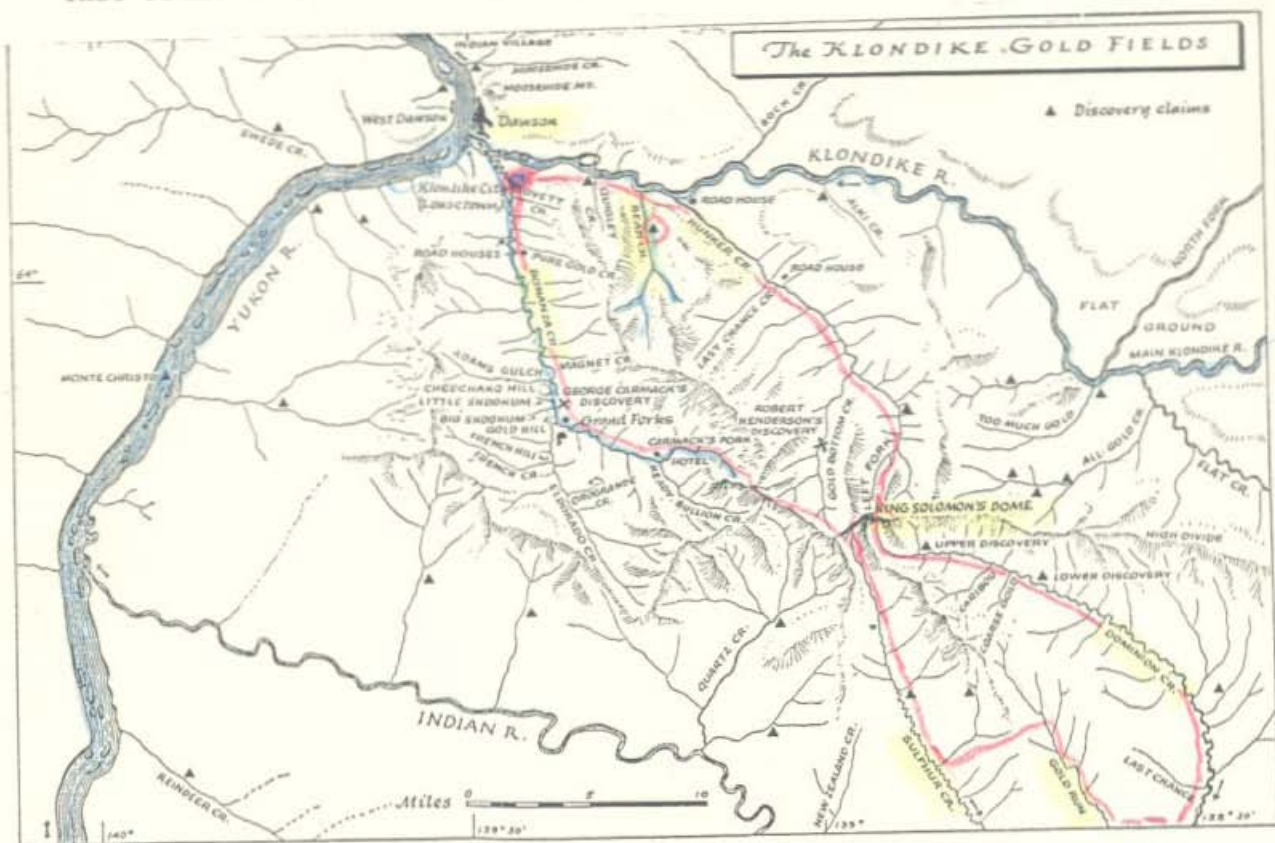
BEAR CREEK Y.T.

See map for location of Guggenheim mining operations on Bear Creek as per post card. John's 100 mile trip is marked in red - creeks in yellow.

This is one of the Guggenheim dredges, they now have others.

One week later he writes from "Dawson Y.T. Feb 27 - 1902".....I have just returned from a trip to the Creeks - I went up Hunker - down Dominion - up Gold Run - over into Sulphur - up Sulphur to the Dome [King Solomon's] - then down Bonanza to my cabin....I was looking for a job for the summer....I was gone 6 days & traveled 100 miles.....I washed [bath] yesterday. I was a fraid after sleeping in the Roadhouses on my trip that I might be inhabited [Graybacks - lice].I will go down town this after noon & see what is going on.....John"

That is all he has to say about Treadgold's Colossal Monopoly.



THE WESTERN MAILS



Post Card



Miss R. Storm
 care of Mr. C. C. Prater,
 Sioux Falls
 South Dakota
 U. S. A.

THIS SIDE IS FOR THE ADDRESS

THE WESTERN MAILS



*This is the way a party of us went April 10/1907
a sleigh ride last night. There about twenty feet
a fine night.*

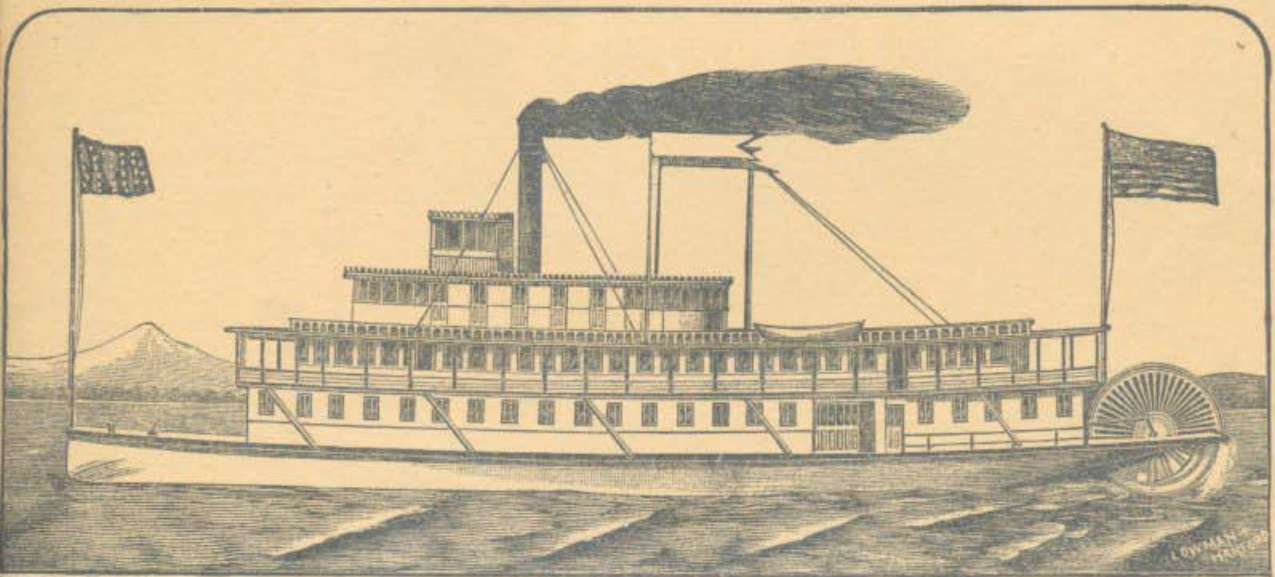


TRANS-ALASKAN SIBIRIAN SEAWAY SURVEY PARTY LEAVING
DANICOM, JANUARY 1907

12572

HO MINERS!

No More Starvation in the Yukon Valley.



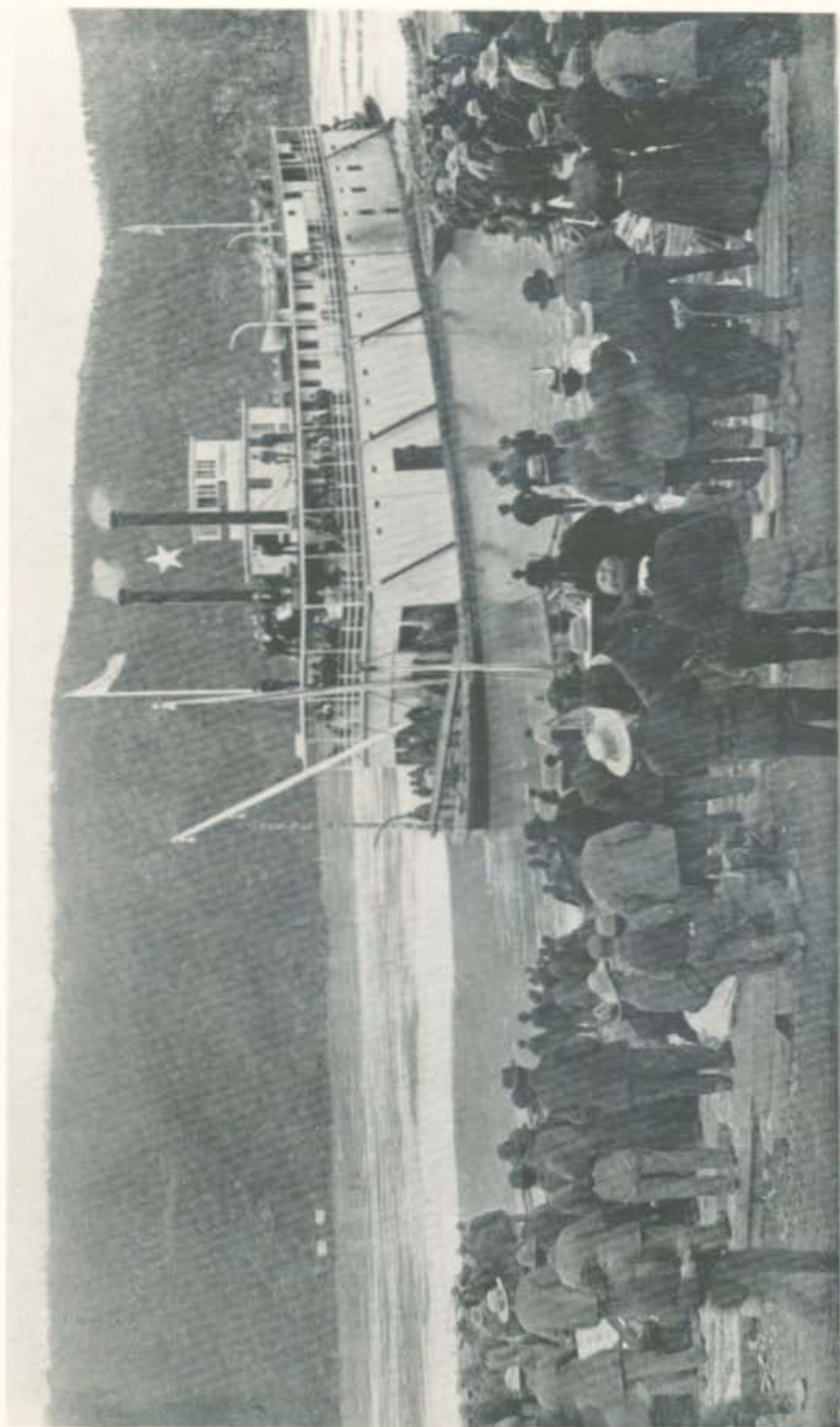
Capt. J. C. Barr - Steamer PORTUS W. WEARE - Comdr E. H. Hamilton

The North American Transportation & Trading Co's New Steamer will leave

ST. MICHAELS ABOUT AUG. 10, '92

for the head of Navigation on the Yukon river, loaded with Miners' and Traders' supplies. \$75,000 worth of Merchandise. Save your Dust and Furs until we arrive. Goods New, Fresh and First-Class. Fair prices for good service is all we ask. We are coming to stay.

Will Sail from Seattle, June 15th. for St. Michaels Direct.



S. S. "JOHN C. BARR," ARRIVING AT DAWGON CITY—NORTH AMERICAN TRANSPORTATION & TRADING CO.

THE WESTERN MAILS



FOR ADDRESS ONLY

SKAGWAY, ALASKA

P.O. was established Nov. 10, 1897, near the foot of the White Pass, on the White Pass and Yukon Railroad. It was over this pass that the R.R. was built in 1899.



FORT YUKON, ALASKA. P.O. was established July 12, 1896 at the great bend of the Yukon River, just inside the Arctic Circle. The stamp on cover below is tied by the Type II postmark. See Alexander H. Murray letter of 1849 in this collection.



THE WESTERN MAILS



FORT LISCUM, ALASKA MAY 27 1909. Located on the northeast shore of Prince William Sound, about three miles from Valdez. The post office was established in 1900 and discontinued in 1922. The post card bears the type III postmark of that office.

No. 801B Paid by Forward Post Card Co., Portland Ore and Seattle, Wash. (Made in Germany)

POST CARD



5-29-09

I am pretty well acquainted
around here I was raised in
Washington D. C. & Indiana
I would be pleased to hear from
you again as I haven't had any news
from there for a long time

Truly

James O. Devine
P. O. 2278 Liscum
Alaska.

Miss Marie Queen

1457 W. 4th St.

Davenport

Iowa

Write here

THE WESTERN MAILS

DISTANCE TABLE

Miles.		Miles
0	Fairbanks	300
8	Whittington's	302
16	Johnson's	344
18	Byler's	343
28	Pile Drive	353
40	Munson's	370
41	Clark's	370
50	Overland	410
60	Washburn House	300
60	Martin's R. H.	300
71	Geoughan's	280
80	Sullivan's	171
80	Gordon's	351
113	Donnelly's	243
127	Rapids R. H. (Parker's)	233
140	Miller's	220
142	Casey's Cache	218
152	Yost's	208
172	Paxson's	188
188	Meiers	172
198	Our Home	162
210	Sour Dough	150
211	Poplar Grove	149
222	Gulka's	128
242	Dry Creek	118
250	Tazlina	110
254	Copper Center	102
270	Willow Creek	86
273	Wayside Inn	83
282	Toussine	74
300	Ernestine	66
305	Taroma R. H.	55
312	Tiekhel	48
321	Dever Dam	39
329	Paradise Inn	31
332	Thompson's Past	28
338	Kennedy's	21
350	Wortman's	9
350	Camp Comfort	10
360	Valdez	0

ALASKA 1909. This photograph post card shows Mr. & Mrs. Miller, with their dog Fritz, in front of Miller's Roadhouse, on the Big Delta River, in the Alaskan Range. It was a stage station on the Fairbanks-Valdez road, as proclaimed by their business card above. MILLER HOUSE was a post office from 1908 to 1964

FAIRBANKS 140

VALDEZ 220

MILLER'S ROADHOUSE

WILSON MILLER, PROPRIETOR

ROOMS AND BUNKS FOR 65 PEOPLE
STABLES FOR 45 HORSES

OUR & CYS. STAGE STATION

KENNEDY STAGE STATION



THE WESTERN MAILS



TOTEM POLES - SEWARD, ALASKA



SEWARD, ALASKA "JUL 24 1926". The Post Office was established in 1903. Post card shows the dock at the foot of main street - about the way it looked, when I landed there 18 years later, on my arrival with the U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey - F.E. Risvold.

THE WESTERN MAILS



TREADWELL, ALASKA. Located on Douglas Island across from Juneau in the inland passage. It was at the site of the Great Treadwell Gold Mine. The post office was established in 1901 and discontinued in 1926. The postmark shown is the Type I - April 23, 1906.



The Great Treadwell Gold Mine, Alaska.

4-22/06.
Would like to exchange postals
with you.
No. 2036. Lowman & Hanford S. & P. Co., Seattle

Hazel M. Welles
Treadwell,
Alaska.

THE WESTERN MAILS



Front Street, Eagle, Alaska.

What do you think

EAGLE, ALASKA
YUKON RIVER

Post Office established June 24, 1898. The post cards show Front Street which faces the river and thus gets its name. Upper card is postmarked KETCHIKAN ALASKA JUN 8 1909. Colored post card shows the ice going out on the Yukon River and it is postmarked EAGLE ALASKA FEB 18 1909 as illustrated - Type II. Cover below bears the Type I postmark and on Official Business. No year date. The mail was carried by steamboats during the summer and dog sled teams in the winter to Dawson, Y.T. Thence to Whitehorse.



Eagle, Alaska.

C. L. Anderson Photo. 1000 ft. above sea level.

What do you think



*Official Business
Post Office Dep.
Eagle, Alaska*

*Post Master,
Dawson
Y. T.*



Hotel Anchorage

F. I. REED, PROP.

II II

Rooms with Bath, Single and en Suite
Steam Heat Hot and Cold Water

Dear People:

Chickaloon, Alaska, April 3, 1921,

I will have been at Chickaloon one week tomorrow. It is decidedly winterish here still. The thermometer was 5 degrees below zero this morning, and snow is 3 to 4 feet deep. We are hoping spring weather will come before many days or weeks at the longest. They have

opened
it will
field w
fall. I
when the
planning
holes in
how far
creek extends,

T. E. Savage,
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA, ILLINOIS
Chickaloon, Alaska.



Mr John Savage,
Salem,
Henry Co., Iowa.

The mean time I go through this mine at Chickaloon each day, so as to advise them in what direction they should go for the coal after it has been cut out by a

HOTEL SEWARD

M. A. Horner, Prop.

EUROPEAN PLAN

Seward, Alaska. March 24, 1921

Dear People:

We reached Seward last evening, and you may be sure it seemed fine to sleep in a bed that is not moving under one all of the time. All in all we had a good trip up here. Was surprised to find the boat crowded, and to hear that the other boats had

the way
ing up to
ly for
large pan
is not yet
in southe
Salmon, a
The red so

J. E. Savage.
HOTEL SEWARD
M. A. HORNER, Prop.
SEWARD, ALASKA



Mr. John Savage,
Salem,

Iowa.

Henry Co.

price, and ~~and~~ fish is most abundant in southwestern Alaska. We get a train for Anchorage tomorrow morning, and must wait there till Monday before we can go on to Chicago. Will be glad to get up there and get to work. While on the boat for 8 days, I was not really sea sick much of the time, but

might happen, and it would be a month before word could get to me and back again, I was sorry to be obliged to leave before the building was completed. I was afraid the might be worried over some part of it. I will make it up to them abundantly when I get home. I just can't help it if it is needed in any other way. I will keep it with love and best wishes to each and all, I am yours - J.E. Savage

HOTEL SEWARD

M. A. HORNER, Prop.

EUROPEAN PLAN

Seward, Alaska.

Sept. 24, 1920

Dear People!
 It seems like I am a long distance from home. Was on the steamer 8 days from Seattle. I did not think there was so much water between Seattle and Seward. We stopped at Ketchikan, Juneau, Cordova, Valdez, & Tatouche on the way up here. Saw a school of whales the last day out. It was pretty good. I had 3 meals and ate. The crew were all the way from Seattle. It seemed odd to see a few other towns. The towns are built on a hillside. It would seem as if scarcely half a dozen blocks that a machine could be driven. The chief industries are Salmon canning, and saw mills at Ketchikan, Mining at Juneau, Copper mining at Cordova and Tatouche and Canneries, and Herring oil and fishing in other places. Cordova is the terminus of the Copper River and

T. E. Savage
 HOTEL SEWARD
 M. A. HORNER, Prop.
 SEWARD, ALASKA



Mr. John Savage,
 Salem,
 Iowa

Henry Co.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY

URBANA, ILLINOIS

Dear People:

Chickaloon, Alaska,

Oct. 7, 1920.

I have been at Chickaloon one week, and find the country very interesting. The geology is unusually difficult because of numerous faults and dikes and other igneous intrusions. Have had nice weather to get over the trails and see different localities, until last night when it snowed and at 11³⁰ this P. M. it is still snowing, but there is no wind. It froze considerably—about 20° or lower before that, but unless this snow melts again we can't do much more field work above ground. We will work in the mine going through it each day noting the behavior of the strata in each day's development and from that try to discover the structure and what the men will encounter the following day, or, I very much hope we will have a few more days for surface work before the snow is in for keeps.

Am comfortably located. Have a cabin with one other man, who came from Bloomington, Ill. Eat at the camp mess, but the cats are principal food with and consist of a abundance

Dear People

Chickaloon, Alaska,
Oct. 31, 1920.

I was very glad for a letter from Nellie a few days ago, saying that all of you were as well as common. I hope so much that Pa and John won't overexpose themselves to the cold or bad weather, and that Nellie and Jennie will take good care of themselves and get lots of time for sleep. Hope John C. and Wilma are enjoying their school work, and ^{that} Donald and many are, too.

J. Savage
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA, ILLINOIS
by Alaskan Coal Com.
Chickaloon, Alaska.



Mr. John Savage,
Salem,
Henry Co., Iowa.

... of snow
... temperatures
... the mid-
... that moose
... th of hem,
... ly to chick
... brown-are
... a black bear

... full common
... from the window of his house. Mountain sheep
and goats are hunted within a days walk from

THE WESTERN MAILS



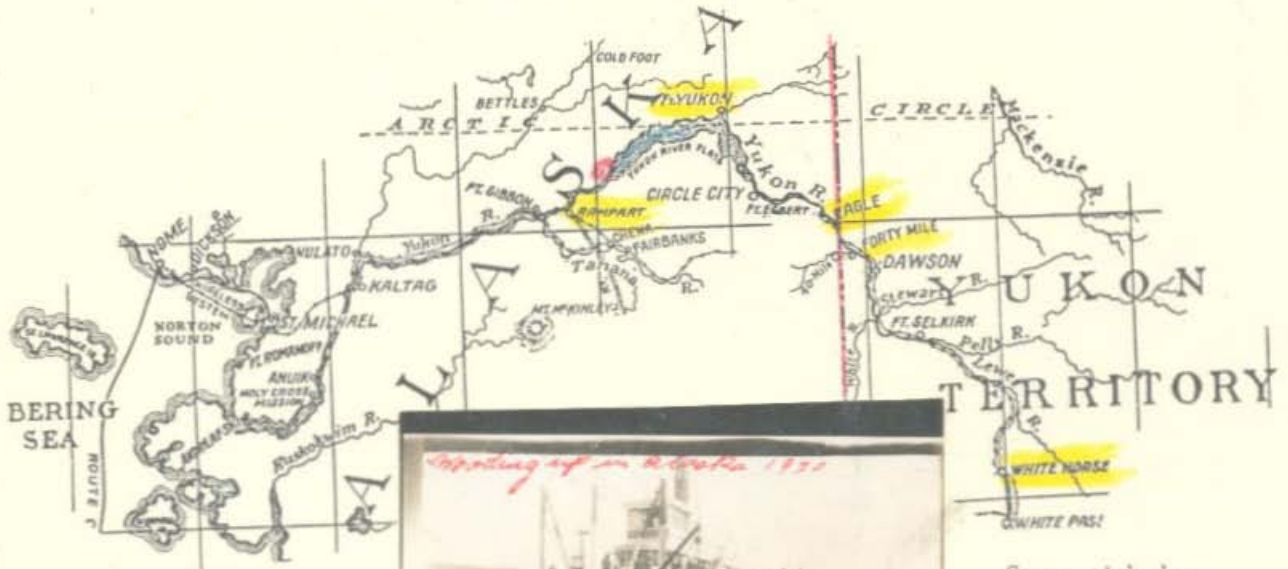
Island of Kodiack / Alaska .Ty [Oct.13,1869].

The Post Office was established on January 29,1869.
The above is the second earliest postmark from this
office.



UDAKTA ALASKA AUG 21 1901. Located at Dutch Harbor on
Island of Unalaska in the Aleutian Islands. The Post
Office was established April 24,1899 and discontinued
in 1910. The cover is from the U.S.S. Wyoming lying at
Dutch Harbor on the 20th. It is backstamped at SAN
FRANCISCO SEPT 2 1901 and at ALLEGAN MICH SEP 7 1901.

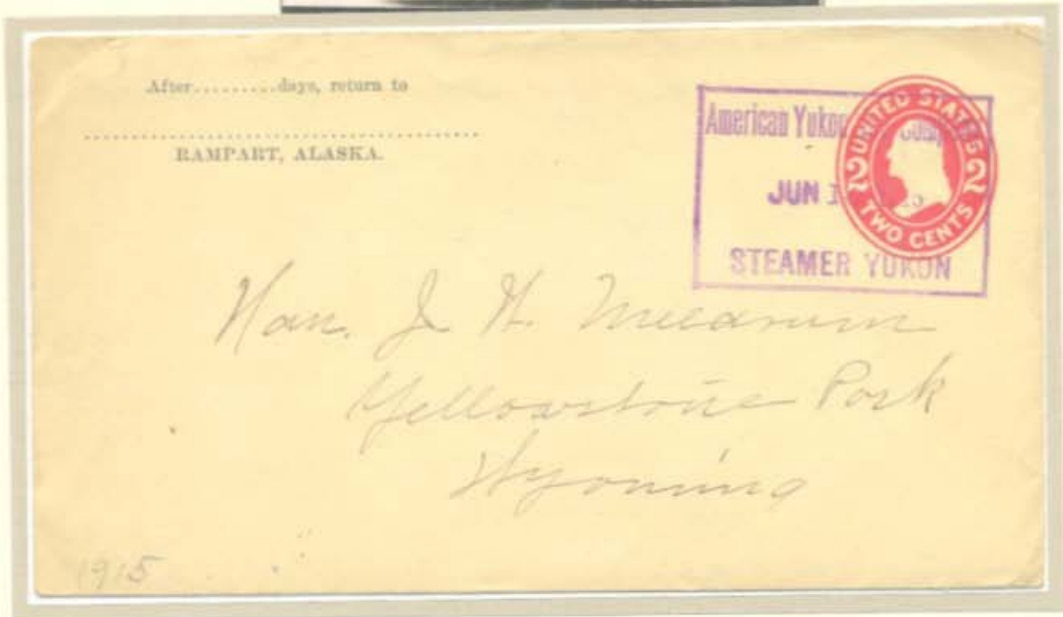
THE WESTERN MAILS



YUKON RIVER 1915
Picture post card showing the YUKON taking on wood in 1920.



Cover picked up by the YUKON at Stephens Indian village, which is located about 50 miles airline, up river, N.W. from Rampart, Alaska.



STEAMER YUKON. This river boat was built for the WHITE PASS & YUKON R.R. COMPANY in 1913. It was a large stern-wheeler of 1067 tons and was operated by the AMERICAN YUKON NAVIGATION COMPANY for the W.P. & Y.R.R. She was a sister boat to the ALASKA which was built at the same time. The YUKON was sold to the Alaska Railroad Co. in 1942 and ended her days when she was crushed in the ice break-up in 1947.

THE WESTERN MAILS
YUKON RIVER, YUKON TERRITORY

The levee at White Horse, Yukon Territory with four steamboats in the river and three in dry dock. Post card is postmarked at Dawson in August of 1908.



Enclosed letter, on stationery of the Regina Hotel at Dawson, is dated "July 22/10". It mentions the arrivals and departures of other boats, "I sent letter yesterday on SELKIRK . . . The CANADIAN has just whistled . . . Hope to get some more tomorrow."



The cover was carried by the steamboat CANADIAN from Dawson to White Horse, Y.T. On arrival at White Horse it was cancelled BRITISH YUKON NAVIGATION CO. Ltd./AUG. 5, 1910/STR CANADIAN and placed in the Post Office. From White Horse it was forwarded, via the WHITE PASS & YUKON RAILROAD to Skagway, Alaska. Thence by ocean steamer to San Francisco and destination.

THE WESTERN MAILS



A. P. Hunt

NORA Youkon River steamboat operated by the British Youkon Navigation Company. Picture post card shows the NORA at a river landing. Postmarked AT JUNEAU, ALASKA NOV 21 1907.

POST CARD

This space may be used for Correspondence

This space is for the Address only



*Miss Mary Hibbard,
Northfield,
Maine,*

*YUKON RIVER
STEAMBOAT NORA
0.20*

THE WESTERN MAILS



STEAMBOAT DAWSON - YUKON TERRITORY

The DAWSON was a sister ship to the CANADIAN which is shown on the opposite page. The cover originated onboard the boat or was picked up along the way on September 8th, arriving at WHITE HORSE, YUKON on SP 10 1904. Only two examples known of this boat marking.



THE WESTERN MAILS

Stephens Village

June 13, 1915

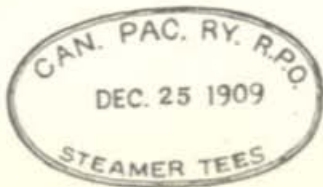
Dear Mr. Meldrum,

Your card from Santa Barbara & J.J. and the copy of the church paper came by the last boat. I am glad that

STEPHENS INDIAN VILLAGE YUKON RIVER

Letter written by an Episcopal missionary to the Indians from Stephens Village on the Yukon river: "Stephens Village June 13, 1915." It is addressed to the "Hon J.W. Meldrum, Yellowstone Park Wyoming".....Our chances to get letters out come so seldom and unexpectedly that I had to keep some in cold storage weeks before I could send them out and now, the boats go by so many times on the other side that I cannot tell when they will go. But - now at 11:30 P.M. I hear the whistle screeme miles below and as the boat has freight for us I am reasonably sure that you will get this. Perhaps by the "Fourth" - I am very rushed just now. My cabin is at last started and I hope to be in it before the winter closes down upon us again. Ten men will be at work on it tomorrow - 2 on foundation - 2 peeling logs - 2 getting moss for chinking - 2 rip sawing the logs - and 2 on the cellar. I have a splendid big ridge pole, and altogether have reason to hope for a comfortable if not luxurious home. My furniture will consist largely of boxes I am afraid for the Bishop (Bishop Bompas?) is so pressed for funds to carry on his work that I shall reduce my demands to the very lowest figure. I think he will be back this week in the launch. He was here for a hour two weeks ago and gave me authority to get the building on the way. The men went out for logs and brought them down in rafts last week. So he will see we have not waited on our oars. I am tired to-night as I always am on Sunday night. I have had three service and a reading in the native prayer book. I can read most of the evening service now in the native language - and have a class of fifteen women every night. The Bishop promised me a reflectoscope and I am going to ask you to send me a number of the interesting Park pictures of game and geysers. The people love pictures....and I think I can plan many entertaining evenings for them next winter and hope I can break in on the gambling evenings at the trader's store. There are two traders. One is good, trustworthy and helpful - The other every thing that is bad. He is away now for a few weeks and I can see a difference in the atmosphere. I am not sending any money for the cards. For one reason I have no paper money. Another is that missionaries are supposed to do a little begging. I hope one picture will be of you in silver gate. Is there not a small size of that? I would like it to put on my wall to show that I once associated with prominent people. I suppose you know we have no darkness now. The sun set a few minutes ago and by the time I seal this and get it down to the store it will be coming up again. I have set bread for to-morrow - I have quite a reputation as bread maker and want a supply when the Bishop comes so I can stock his Pelican. I send a copy of the Alaskan Churchman. This I thought might interest you. Now I must stop for I think I hear the chug of the boat. Lovingly Jack"

THE WESTERN MAILS



THE WESTERN MAILS



THE WESTERN MAILS



R.P.O. [Railway Post Office] markings used on Pacific coast steamers. They were authorized by the Canadian Railway Mail Service Division, although they had little to do with railroad mail. Most of them contained the ship's name and owner as well as the route.



THE WESTERN MAILS

CAN PAC. RY. CO
 B.C. COAST SERVICE
 SEP 5 1935
 PURSER
 S. S. PRINCESS LOUISE



R. P. O. PRINCESS LOUISE
 AUG 27 1937
 VANCOUVER - SKAGWAY

ANTIQUES

FEBRUARY 1975

TWO DOLLARS FIFTY CENTS





TOOKOOLITO, CHARLES F. HALL, AND ESKIMOS.

CHARLES FRANCIS HALL ARCTIC EXPLORER

Born at Rochester, N.H. in 1821; died Thank God Harbor, Greenland, Nov. 8, 1871. Hall went to the Arctic on the Whaler GEORGE HENRY in 1860. When he reached the Arctic he set out alone and lived for two years among the Eskimos, learning their language and way of life on the polar ice. He brought back to the U.S. the Eskimo Ebierbing and his wife Tookoolito commonly known as "Joe" and "Hannah", and many relics of Martin Frobisher's voyages in the 16th century. The pair were Eskimos of unusual intelligence, both speaking English, Hannah fluently. Seven years before they had been brought to England where they were received by Queen Victoria. They were with Hall on his second expedition in 1864, as well as his third on the POLARIS in 1871. On the second expedition he learned much about the John Franklin expedition which had been lost 15 years earlier. After Hall's death, the POLARIS was caught in the ice and part of the crew had removed to the ice floe some stores and two whaleboats, when the ship became separated from the ice and drifted away, leaving those on the ice stranded. Eventually the ship was beached and the 14 men on board were later picked up by the steamer TIGRESS. The 19 persons on the ice floe were picked up by the whaler RAVENSCRAIG. Despite the loss of the Polaris and the tragic circumstances of the voyage, the only death was that of Charles Francis Hall. His grave, at Thank God Harbor, on the western shores of Greenland is marked by a brass tablet. SEE opposite page.

THE WESTERN MAILS



- Robeson Channel - HIGHEST POINT
- Route of POLARIS
- POLARIS BAY
- CAPE BREVOORT
- UPERNAVIK



ARCTIC VOYAGE OF THE POLARIS

U.S. STEAMSHIP "POLARIS"/C.F. HALL, Commanding/Upernavik, Greenland. Cover bears the signature of the famed Arctic explorer Charles Francis Hall, with additional "Ship Letter", also in his hand. Carried to London and turned over to B.S. STEVENS/UNITED STATES DESPACH AGENT/OCT 23 1871. This was Hall's third expedition and the first such authorized by Congress. The POLARIS left New London, Ct. July 3, 1871. On Aug. 29th the ship was in latitude 82°11' N, the highest point, at that time, ever attained by any vessel. A month later the Polaris was in winter quarters at Thank God Harbor, Greenland. On Oct 10th Hall made a sledge journey to Cape Brevoort, but after returning on Oct 24th, he died of apoplexy on Nov 8th. This cover undoubtedly was sent just before his Oct 10th journey.

FORT CHIMO
RADIOSONDE STATION
U.S. & CANADA
DEW LINE (DEFENSE EARLY WARNING)

58° 06' N.
68° 25' W.



FROBISHER BAY
GUARDIAN OF NORTH
AMERICA DEFENSE EARLY
WARNING RADAR STATION
DEW LINE

68° 33' W. LONG.
63° 45' N. LAT.



DEW LINE EARLY WARNING STATION
AGAINST RUSSIAN ROCKETS OVER
THE POLE



CLYDE J. SARZIN
Port Washington, L.I.
New York, U.S.A.



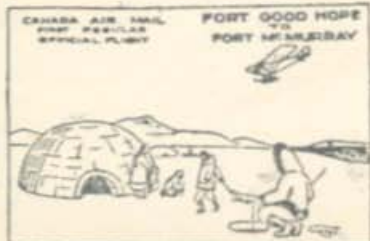
*Arthur S. Hamilton
Capt. A.C.*



VIA AIR MAIL

Mr. L.S. Clark
3127 Nicollet Ave.,
Minneapolis, Minn.

VIA AIR MAIL
Fort Good Hope-Fort McMurray



VIA AIR MAIL

Charles F. Cornish
16 Federal Street
Claremont
New Hampshire
U. S. A.

*Paul Macabe
Capt. A.C.*



VIA AIR MAIL

Mr. L.S. Clark
3127 Nicollet Ave.,
Minneapolis, Minn.

VIA Fort McMurray - Fort McPherson

THE WESTERN MAILS



PEACE RIVER
10
JAN 31
ALBERTA

PEACE RIVER
DE 8
30
ALBERTA



VIA AIR MAIL

FORT VERMILION
16
JAN 31
31
ALBERTA

Backstamp

Louis F. Prews



VIA AIR MAIL
ARCTIC RED RIVER - FORT M'CMURRAY



Louis F. Prews
2510 McMain Ave. N.
Minneapolis
Minn.
U.S.A.

Harry P. Connor
"Columbia"
29 June 1930 - 9-10 Oct. 1930



ARCTIC RED RIVER
16
DEC 29
1930

ARCTIC RED RIVER
DEC 30
29
N.W.T.

EDMONTON
JAN 10
5 PM
1930
ALTA.

Backstamp



VIA AIR MAIL

PAR AVION

THROUGH AIR MAIL
"From Pine to Palm"

ANKLAVIK, N. W. T., CANADA
TO
MIAMI, FLORIDA, U.S.A.

ANKLAVIK
MAR 14
31
N.W.T.



Mr. A. E. Colburn,
c/o General Delivery,
MIAMI, Fla. U.S.A.

W. Colburn
P. M. Colburn



AIR FEE stamp
tied on the
reverse by
MIAMI, FLA.
APR 2, 1931



**R. M. S. NASCOPIE
ARCTIC MAIL**

Cover was postmarked on board the ship at PORT BURWELL, LABRADOR, July 19, 1939. See map for location. See opposite page for cover postmarked at CLYDE RIVER, N.W.T., above the Arctic circle. Also FROBISHER BAY, N.W.T. & FORT CHIMO, QUEBEC. See map.



The 'Nascope' leaving Montreal for the Arctic, July 1939.



lowing in the foot-steps, each on Circle City, Alaska, Nov. 10th, 1896. bag or basket, and all counting the time of a railroad, three miles of which they had to walk before reaching their destination.

On leaving Berner's Bay we had supper, and I enjoyed that much more
 My dear Father: There were now only about fifteen or twenty men

On the 22d of April, 1896, I left Juneau on the steamer "Rustler", for Dyea. At that time the rush for the Yukon was virtually over, but there are always a few travellers for Berner's Bay, where there are large quartz mines, and for Dyea at almost any time throughout the spring or summer. The "Rustler" is a small steamer about fifty feet long, heavily built, and able to carry about fifty tons. There were about forty passengers when we left Juneau, the most of whom were miners bound for Berner's Bay. The route of the steamers to Dyea from Juneau is directly south, to the southern part of Douglas Island, and then northwest to the entrance of Lynn Canal, where the route changes between the islands, and in different channels, according to the tides and winds. We left Juneau about 9.30 A.M., and had a very comfortable trip until we reached the channel between Admiralty and Douglas Islands, and then the sea became very rough. I have never been sea-sick up to the present date, but must confess I was very near the ragged edge then, and the inducements were of the strongest and most pronounced type. The water was very rough, the boat dirty, and the majority of the passengers may answer to the description of the boat.

About nine o'clock "lunch was served". It consisted of tea, bread and canned beef; each man waited on himself, and ate standing, or wherever he was lucky enough to find a seat. We were all huddled together in the stern of the boat, and the food and dishes were brought to us in two large baskets. I was pretty hungry, and for that reason was able to overlook the deficient table service. One can hardly be particular any way, regarding the inconveniences to be met in transportation to Dyea, as there are only three or four small boats able to carry passengers, and these are almost unfit to be called passenger boats. The poor Yukoner has only one way to get to Dyea, and so he must make the best of it. After lunch everyone tried to sleep, or make a comfortable place to lie down on the bags and freight piled on the boat, or, at least, tried to make himself believe that he felt better, but I think each one felt worse. I enjoyed the trip myself as I became quite chummy with the captain and spent most of my afternoon in the cabin with him where he was at the wheel. In the course of our conversation I found that Bishop Rowe was on board, and soon found him. I found him very pleasant, and presented my two letters of introduction, which made him more cordial still. I learned from Bishop Rowe that he had been at Sitka quite a time, and in various small towns and settlements about Juneau, so that accounts for my inability to discover his whereabouts and make his acquaintance at Juneau. The Bishop is a young man, about 35 or 40 years of age, I should imagine; and was travelling with a Mr. Wilson, who is superintendent of the Alaska Commercial Company, at St. Michaels, near the mouth of the Yukon. He is a man of about the same age. In the course of the afternoon I had a