

THE

YUKONER

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MAGAZINE

- **A Great Boxing Story**
- **Moving the SS Klondike**
- **Robert Campbell, Part 1**
- **A Rob Alexander Short Story**
- **Photos**



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**Issue
No. 5**

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THE YUKONER MAGAZINE

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August, 1997

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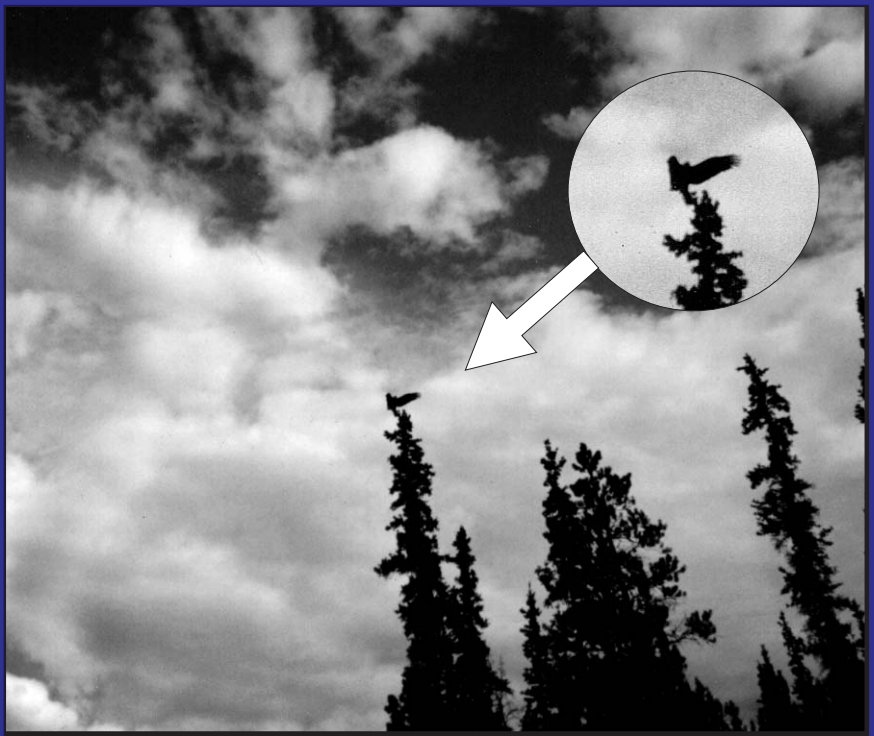
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Cover: Alanah McLaren Cousins, with her first fish. Photo taken beside the Yukon River near Whitehorse by her father, Rick Cousins. See Page 4.

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An eagle takes off from a tree, above. Our cover girl (at her father's suggestion) had thrown her fish into the river and the eagle swooped down to grab it. This was her first cast and her first fish. Note the dog paying close attention. [photos by Rick Cousins of Whitehorse]





From the Editor's Desk

This is the second editorial I've written for this issue. In the first one I bragged about the magazine coming out on time. But, as you can tell, it's about three weeks late.

My computer/platemaker broke down just as I was about to start printing. After five days of fiddling with it, I went shopping for a new one and for the money to pay for it. While the loan applications were being processed, I kept trying to make the one I had work.

By changing one chip and disabling Bill Gate's little program called Smartdrive, the whole operation went smooth as silk. I cancelled the loan apps and made all the plates for this magazine, except for this page. I'm going to print it right now, so the rest of the editorial is the same as before.

Since the last issue, what has happened? Well, I was Poet Laureate at the Peter Gzowski Invitational Golf Tournament a few weeks ago. This event raises money for literacy. As far as I could tell, they thought my poem was okay, mostly because they couldn't understand it. I just wouldn't want to see it in print anywhere.

You'll notice this issue is somewhat bigger than before. I still couldn't get everything in that I had planned. (I'd like to serialize another novel, like I did with *The Bushman*.) So we'll have to keep getting bigger and bigger and hope the money rolls in to cover it all.

Don't get me wrong: Every issue so far has made a profit and I'd rather do this than take a real job. With the unemployment rate in the Yukon at about 15 percent, real jobs are hard to come by. Back in 1983, I had a job for three weeks at the airport in Whitehorse. It was supposed to be temporary.

Then the boss came along and said, "Sam, we like you. How would you feel about becoming permanent?"

"Permanent?" I said. "You mean, like, steady?"

"That's exactly what I mean," he said.

Well, old Dodgie made a cloud of dust getting out of there. Besides, I had good prospects in the goldfields that year.

Just think of this way: if I had been a faithful cog in the wheel all these years, you wouldn't be reading this magazine!

Till next time,
Sam

Last Journey of the S.S. Klondike

By Sam Holloway

In 1959, some directors of Parks Canada had a meeting in Ottawa at which they decided to preserve one of the Yukon sternwheelers. Some years passed until they decided to re-locate the S.S. Klondike, choosing a contractor called Kunze & Olson of Whitehorse. Chuck Morgan was in charge of the move. All these years later, he still recalls this job as the most difficult and memorable task he ever worked on.

If you look at the photo on pages six and seven, you can see how Chuck and his crew moved the *S.S. Klondike*.

Under the boat were wooden pallets called “butter boards” that were coated with dampened Palmolive Princess Snow Flakes. Chuck found that the soap didn’t squash out like grease. Altogether they used eight tons of soap, hoping it wouldn’t rain!

The boat itself rode on a carriage made from long steel rails that came from the Peace River bridge (which collapsed in 1956). These rails slid over the butter boards.

In front were three TD-24 tractors and a Caterpillar D-8. The lead tractors anchored the other two which used their winches to drag the boat along.

Under the tractors, tires were placed as they moved along to protect the pavement.

The big move started on June 10, 1966. The *S.S. Klondike*, along with several other river queens, had been retired to the shipyards beside the



The S.S. Klondike, donated to Parks Canada by White Pass, leaves her old home at the shipyards.

Yukon River. Transients from the south often took a stateroom on the *Klondike* until they found more permanent quarters. They used the hatches for toilets and often lit fires aboard for cooking. Later, in 1972, the two remaining riverboats in the Whitehorse shipyards were destroyed in a fire.

But at the time, many folks didn't want this move to happen. There was so much opposition that Chuck had the boat hosed down with water to prevent somebody setting fire to it. People complained about the change in location and about the cost of the move. The money would be better spent restoring Dawson City, they said. (At the time, Dawson had just started trying to save the old buildings there.)

However, the contract had been awarded. The move took 14 days plus a month of preparation. On five of those days, when power and phone lines had to be taken down and restored, Chuck and his crew worked 24 hours to keep the boat moving.

Indeed, it was a heavy load. The boat weighed 1042 tons, the carriage 100 tons, and the soaking they gave it added many more pounds. The *Klondike* is 247 feet long, 49 feet wide and reaches 70 feet to the top of the wheelhouse.

She was built by the British Yukon Navigation Co. (a division of White Pass) in 1937 to replace a boat with the same name that had sunk. The *Klondike* was the largest sternwheeler afloat on the Yukon River and ran mostly between Whitehorse and Dawson City. Road networks started to kill the riverboat industry and in 1954, CPAir leased the *Klondike* and re-fitted her to haul sightseeing passengers. This didn't pay off and she shut her engines down for the last time in 1956.

And so the *S.S. Klondike*, saved from almost certain destruction, has become a tourist attraction and is called the centrepiece of Whitehorse.

Chuck Morgan received a citation for his job of engineering the last voyage of the *S.S. Klondike*. Even though the journey was over land instead of water, he was also awarded the title, Captain Morgan.

Parks Canada declared the *Klondike* a National Historic Site in 1967 and restored the boat to her original state. Over the years since then, many a bureaucrat has spent sleepless nights worrying about the *S.S. Klondike*.



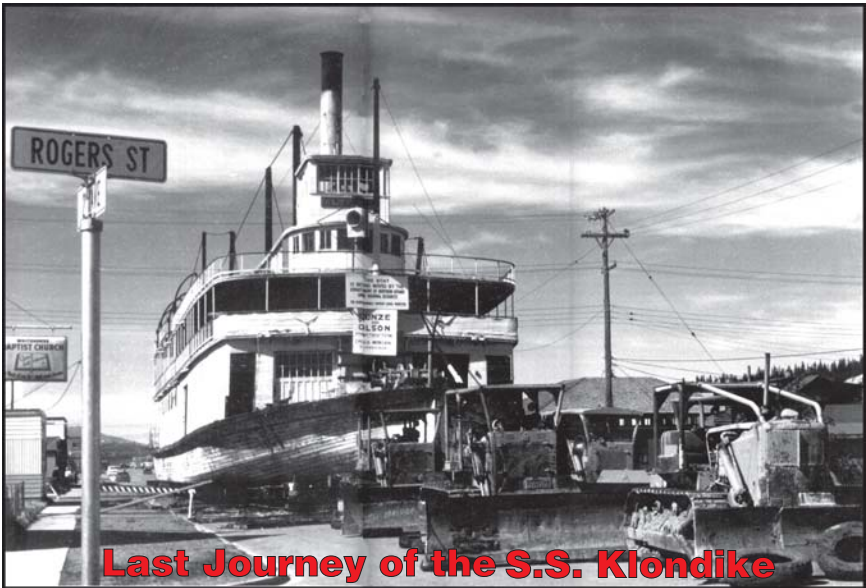
The S.S. Klondike nosing past the White Pass train station.



The mayor of Whitehorse, Howard Firth, (who also had been mayor of Dawson) presents Chuck Morgan with a gold replica of the S.S. Klondike, July 16, 1966. The man with the white beard is "Yukon Bud" Fisher. [CBC photo]



In this photo, Graham Lee of CBC holds the mike, and Cal Miller (owner at the time of the Capital Hotel) presents Chuck with some beer and a bottle of Captain Morgan Rum. Cal supplied beer to the crew every day as they dragged the boat along the streets of Whitehorse. [CBC photo]



Last Journey of the S.S. Klondike



Chuck Morgan astride his 1972 Harley-Davidson. In the background is his machine shop on the Alaska Highway where he does maintenance work on buses. If you wanted to talk to him about the move of the S.S. Klondike, you'll find him having lunch every day at the Carcross Cut-off restaurant, also known as Annette's Country Kitchen. [S.H. photo, July, 1997]



The first S.S. Klondike, which sank in 1937.



The Whitehorse shipyards in the early 1900s. In the foreground are the *Whitehorse* and the *Aksala*. The boat on the left, tied up to the dock, is the original *S.S. Klondike*.

Margaret and Marie

By Darrell Hookey

You would think they would have been friends.

Marie Joussaye Fotheringham was an eloquent champion of women's rights who had come to Dawson in 1903 to shed light on the turmoil of the working woman.

Margaret Mitchell had already assumed those rights and asserted them over any other miner who tried to best her in the rough and ready trade of mining claims. She once spent a night in jail after asserting a lantern upside the head of a male colleague.

Marie boasted of royal connections in London and the elite of Toronto and Vancouver. It was rumored she was a cousin to Lord Strathcona and a successful author of a book of poetry.

Margaret was one of the first and most successful women gold miners in Dawson history. She arrived via the Trail of '98 and earned the title of "The Quartz Queen".

Yet Marie found Margaret to be as crude as a ... well, as crude as a miner. And Margaret found Marie to be wanting in character.

It was Marie's less-than-legal financial dealings that earned the ire of Margaret. And it was Margaret's amazing ability to feed and hold a grudge for four years that found one of these pioneer women chasing the other through a dark Dawson City street in 1908. The intended weapon was a lantern.

Our story begins with Mary Josey, a daughter to a working class family in Belleville, Ontario. She changed her name to Marie Joussaye upon moving to Toronto to pursue a writing career.

The labour movement of the day recognized the potential to get its message out through Marie's poetry. "Only a Working Girl" was published in the Journal of United Labour in 1886. She was 22 years old.

Marie was identified as an important leader in the formation of the Working Girls' Union, of which she was president in 1893. In 1895, "Only a Working Girl" was published in her first book, "The Songs That Quinte Sang". The book announced her "allegiance to the Knights of Labour and her defence of working women against the sneers of their social superiors".

Yet her signature poem was not a mature piece of work. It drew paral-



Marie Joussaye Fotheringham

els between God, Jesus, royalty and “working girls” and did not promote equality. Instead, it suggested women should respect themselves and be proud of the jobs they do, regardless of how trivial, and just keep working.

Never having made an appreciable impact within labour or literary circles, Marie moved West. All that is known of these some five years before she travelled to Dawson City is that she wrote three letters to Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier.

Her first letter dripped of sincerity and humility as she asked that he pass along a special poem to the Monarch.

Her final letter was impatient in tone and bragged of her poems receiving favourable reviews from Mark Twain and Rudyard Kipling. She claimed even of receiving a “kind and gracious” response from King Edward VII.

History next records her arrival in Dawson City with the stretched reputation as a “special writer.” However, she told some people she was a journalist writing for Toronto World newspaper and she told others she was gathering material in order to deliver “a course of fully illustrated lectures in London”.

As a writer, she was assured a high position on Dawson City’s social ladder.

She was shown around town by David Fotheringham, a three-year member of the North West Mounted Police and veteran of the Boer War. He resigned his position to marry her November 16, 1903. Marie was 39 years old and David was 29.

Money was tight for the newlyweds. Yet Marie had secured 35 mining claims on Clear Creek that could be quickly resold to a London syndicate at a considerable profit. All she had to do was to raise \$1050 to survey the property to complete the sale.

Shortly before her wedding, Marie had borrowed \$100 from Hannah Muir and had sold a one-eighth share in the venture to Caroline Meredith for \$250.



Marie and David Fotheringham in Dawson City. They had no children of their own [From McLaren-Swensen collection, reprinted by from the book, *Gold & Galena*, published by the Mayo Historical Society]

Just after the wedding, Marie was given two diamonds by Rose Kirkpatrick. It was agreed Marie would sell them and the funds were to be paid to George White-Fraser, the Dominion Land Surveyor.

George was never paid and so he never conducted the surveys. Only Rose saw any kind of return — just \$75 for her \$600 diamonds — although Mr. Justice Dugas heard testimony from John Sale that he bought them at a price of \$450.

Both Marie and David testified the entire incident was a misunderstanding. To their profound embarrassment, the jury of six men deliberated only 20 minutes before deciding they were liars.

Marie staggered with faint as she was sentenced to two months at hard labour for her crimes.

And on that day, as on most days when Marie appeared in court, Margaret Mitchell was on the front steps of the court house laughing and jeering at her.

Very little was known of Margaret, or “Stampede Maggie” as some called her. It wasn’t until her death in 1920 that it was learned she had a son from a common-law marriage in Ottawa, Kansas. Her son was 42 when he attended the funeral of his “Aunt Maggie” and was told at the coffin, “There lies your mother”. Shortly after, a daughter, too, was found.

Margaret didn’t earn her fortune the ol’ fashioned way. Instead, she would study all the records at the mining recorder’s office and uncover valuable properties forfeited through non-representation or non-assessment work. Often her profit would run several thousands of dollars.

She made it her business to know the mining regulations inside and out just as she knew who had staked claims and who hadn’t.

This is how Margaret knew Marie had never staked any claims on Clear Creek. It wasn’t a “misunderstanding” at all ... Marie Joussey Fotheringham was a thief.

Although Marie and David moved to Indian River to homestead and operate a profitable road house, Margaret was always there when she returned to town. Margaret would make faces at her and make loud comments to no one in particular about a certain “diamond thief”.

This behaviour carried on for four years while Marie stubbornly ignored it, hoping to carry on with her new life. England and Toronto World newspaper were no longer mentioned.

But it happened one night, January 25, 1908, that Margaret went too far.

From the street she saw Marie sitting at a table in the Thistle Restaurant. Since the restaurant was empty, Margaret went to the window to make faces at her and was routinely ignored once again.

When Marie thought she was gone, she went to the door and opened it to find herself less than a metre from Margaret’s face and below an upheld lantern (the very same lantern that landed Margaret in jail once before).

Marie slammed the door. Again she waited until the coast was clear and ventured out to find Mrs. Ericson at the home of Mrs. Sutherland. Once she got to the middle of the street, Margaret could be heard running toward her with the lantern. She found safety in Harrington’s Grocery.

Finally, she made it to Mrs. Sutherland's house only to find Margaret was inside bragging of giving someone a "chase for their life".

Three days later, both were in court before Mr. Justice Craig as Marie was seeking a bond to force Margaret to keep the peace.

As both women were not well liked in Dawson City and their hatred for each other was intense, the court session bordered on the ridiculous. Marie exercised her right to question all witnesses (including Margaret) and the resulting exchanges caused the court spectators to be "convulsed time and again in laughter".

The Dawson Daily News called the hearing a "serio-comedy" and went on to report: "The dramatic personae in the court this morning was quite varied, and of the proper size for the presentation of a drama of quick action and bright and intense dialogue and they provided it for more than an hour."

Margaret was placed under bonds for \$200 to keep the peace for one year. Yet both women were given a lecture and "some wholesome advice" that was not recorded in the court transcripts.

Until her death 12 years later at the age of 72, Margaret remained mentally and physically spry and active as she continued to collect wealth.

Margaret and David ended up in jail for a month in 1912 for failing to pay their debts. They had argued they were unfairly assessed for taxes as they planned to refurbish a Dawson hotel.

Marie published a second book of poems, "Selections From Anglo-Saxon Songs" in 1918.

In 1924, they moved to Mayo where David built a steamer called Klondyke. Money was still tight and it affected his new business as a five-day trip would sometimes take two weeks to complete since he couldn't afford to buy pre-cut wood along the route.

Marie published the Mayo-Keno Bulletin, a semi-weekly newsletter that was as outspoken and unpopular as she was.

She moved to Vancouver in 1929 while David remained to work in the mine at Keno Hill until his death in 1936. It is recorded that Marie was present. It is the last piece of information available on her until her own death in a Vancouver rooming house March 24, 1949.

Her life was full of disappointments. Marie was an eloquent and passionate speaker and she was given every opportunity to shine and yet she never quite did. She had dear and close friends who described her as very giving and concerned about those disadvantaged; and yet she had some nasty enemies, too.

Margaret saw Marie's fall from the favours of Dawson City's social elite and stubbornly refused to allow her to join the company of the working class.

As a fervent Imperialist and admirer of anything British, Marie should have known one does not easily jump social classes. She should have stayed true to the working class she professed to admire and support. Despite a false start in Toronto, she could have been a powerful voice for both the women's and labour movements.

Perhaps today we would have had a road named after her ... perhaps Margaret and Marie would have been friends.

The Sluggers of Dawson City

By Darrell Hookey

Round 1

They shake hands at 11:28 p.m. in the centre of the ring. Burley standing tall and thin and Woods short and powerful. It's Friday night, July 29, 1904. Burley hits left to the jaw but is blocked by Woods who keeps back to study his opponent. Woods is surprised by a right to his jaw, but he quickly recovers and retaliates with a left to Burley's jaw staggering him. A hot mix up follows and they clinch. Both fighters trade hits to the head and then Woods finally tries for the body and lands a punch low causing Burley to yell "Foul". Woods left to the head, Woods right to the head, Woods left and right to the head. Even the blows that Burley blocks sends his own gloves crashing into his face behind Woods' power. The Dawson City crowd forgets they should be cheering on the local boy as Woods' performance leaves them in awe.

It was the most exciting fight ever contested in this city that loved the manful art of boxing.

It was 1904, and Dawson City demanded the best in boxing entertainment. It wasn't necessary that the pugilists be championship contenders, but they did need to be world-class and the fight had to be a real contest between two men of equal abilities to put on a really good show.

Top-calibre boxing matches were how the Dawson Amateur Athletic Association raised money to afford the only enclosed rink surfaces west of Winnipeg. It was the summer of 1902 when the three-storey building was erected. It was 100 feet by 40 feet and housed a regulation hockey rink and a two-sheet curling rink. It featured steam-heated dressing rooms, a well-appointed lounge room and an upstairs private club with modern bar.

Admission was very inexpensive and the volunteer directors were de-

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terminated to keep it that way. The youth of Dawson City needed a sheltered rink as a place to burn off energy instead of getting into trouble downtown.

To raise money, the DAAA hosted three major ring attractions. One each year starting in 1903. The world press was eager for news of these events and ran with photographs of the winners receiving their purse in the form of a gold brick.

This fight between Woods and Burley, however, was not one of the premiere events. It was poorly attended, but it had all the elements of an epic battle.

Billy Woods was a contender from Los Angeles with 26 fights against the best on the west coast and only two losses, both on fouls. Nick Burley was the pride of Dawson City. The famous “Chrysanthemum” Joe Choynski was brought to the Yukon just the year before to test the local favourite and was beaten. It was the first of the premiere events.

Billy Woods was just 21 years of age and weighed in at 154 pounds on a five foot, seven inch frame. He made double use of his short stature by crouching even lower and drawing his stomach in giving his opponents nothing to aim for. His head was protected behind massive shoulders and 13-inch forearms.

Nick Burley was a mature 29 years when he faced Woods. He was five inches taller and six pounds heavier. He was a big man who fought a big man’s fight by standing up straight and exchanging blow for blow.

Looking at the differences of the two men offered small promise for an exciting fight. Only 400 people sat to watch the fight at the DAAA venue. You see, just two months earlier, Woods had stymied another big man in the ring before a Dawson crowd. That fight, with another contender Joe Millett, was supposed to have been 1904’s fight of the year. Instead, it was a pathetic display of what can happen when two fighters of equal ability are mismatched in size and style...

Round 2

It is Burley who strikes first with two hard lefts to the face and then a left hook to the body before they clinch. A clean break and Woods takes control with a hard right to the face followed by three more lefts to the face leaving Burley’s mouth bleeding. Woods’ tactics are now obvious to the crowd. He’s trying to confuse his opponent with a barrage of blows to the head. Four more hits to the face and Woods finishes the second round by standing still in the centre of the ring and blocks every punch thrown at him. Woods is smiling; Burley is puzzled as he finds nothing to aim for; and the crowd laughs.

...and the wrong man wins.

Millett was the Pacific Coast Amateur Champion and was the top light heavyweight fighter on the West Coast. “Klondike” Joe Boyle lured him to

Dawson City to put his skills on display. If he won this fight against Woods, as was expected, he would be in a position to challenge Kid McCoy for the national honours.

It was a challenge to find somebody of equal talent to make a contest of it. Boyle talked Woods' manager, Biddy Bishop, into accepting the fight. Bishop had turned down a match with Millett the previous fall since his fighter was a middleweight. But he reconsidered thinking that at least 35 percent of the gate receipts for the loser would be easy money.

Boyle, the King of the Klondike, always got his way it seems. Woods and Millett left San Francisco three days apart, but ended up together on the Selkirk from Whitehorse to Dawson City.

Dumbbell training, skipping rope and light sparring on the hurricane decks of the ocean and river steamers kept the fighters in shape on their trip. Their trainers found gymnasiums in Seattle and Skagway during layovers for more workouts.

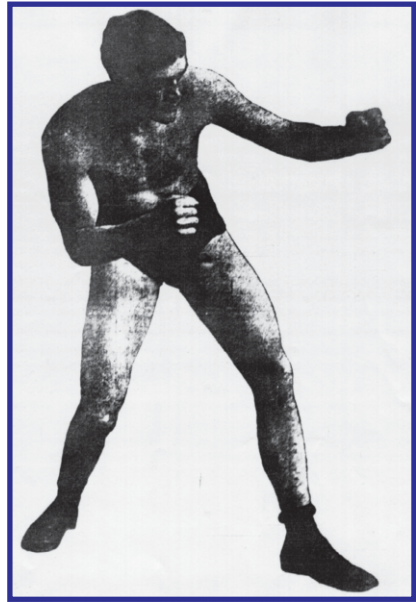
Reporters covering this big story regretted that the Selkirk didn't hit any sandbars on the way. They could have benefitted from further training by shifting the cargo and wood and helping pull the steamer over. But as uneventful as the trip was, they both arrived in excellent shape. Respective trainers hustled them off to bed since their workouts would begin early the next morning.

The Japanese-Russian war and gold output had to share the front pages with these two new visitors. All people seemed to care about was what Woods and Millett ate, thought, said and did.

Millett trained at Grand Forks and impressed everyone who watched. For a 170-pound man, he boxed with amazing speed. He built his endurance with a fast 10-mile run each morning and his workouts were non-stop. With his longer reach and impressive credentials, the Grand Forks people were confident enough to put up huge sums of cash and favourable odds to anyone gullible enough to bet on Woods.

But Woods was not without his own admirers. He trained in Dawson City and proved to everyone that he was going to do more than just put up a good fight for the sake of the show ... he was going to beat Millett.

Being a black man in America in the early 1900s, Woods had been refused many fights. He was determined to make the most of this high-profile bout. He trained intensely and would pass out two-ounce gloves to the biggest men in the ever-present crowd to lay a beating on him as he blocked with eight-ounce gloves.



Joe Millett

But he didn't brag. He barely talked to reporters causing one to comment that Woods "was much less afraid of a man with boxing gloves on than one with a pencil."

As the fight day got closer, so did the odds. On July 4, 1904, the rivalry between Grand Forks and Dawson City was as intense as the rivalry was to be inside the ring. So imagine the disappointment of the 600 fans...

Round 3

They clinch immediately at the gong and Referee Barney Sugrue calls for a clean break. Woods lands a light left and a hard right to the head and neither is blocked. Burley is moving more now to dodge blows that are breaking down his guard and lands his most effective punch to the jaw. Woods retaliates threefold before going into another clinch. On the break Woods slips and appears defenceless. He sticks out his tongue at Burley enticing him to strike. Burley senses a trap and goes into a clinch instead. He pushes Woods' chin up for something, anything, to hit at but is instantly rebuked by the home crowd. "I didn't mean that, old pal," he is heard to say. "No sir, I didn't mean it."

...when the fight is called in the third round on a foul.

Joe Boyle's gift to the boxing fans of Dawson City lasted only three rounds. It was called the "most unsatisfactory fight on record" and paled in comparison to the dressing room confrontation that followed between Millett and Boyle.

At the beginning of this fight, Referee Sugrue had announced to the crowd that half clinches were allowed. Being able to hit with one arm free favoured the shorter Woods who was powerful enough to master this style of in-fighting. Millett was rattled by Woods' quickness and his stomach was pink from the relentless pounding it took.

Milletts cried "foul" over and over, but Referee Sugrue saw none of it. Finally, in the third round, Millett flailed wildly hitting Woods three times in the right groin.

Sugrue placed himself between the fighters and cried out, "The decision goes to Woods on a foul!" The crowd was dumbfounded, but they had to support Sugrue's call as it was obvious.

Shame-facedly, Millett climbed through the ropes as the crowd hissed and jeered and hooted. Woods yelled at him, "Come back and fight!"

Joe Boyle stood and called for quiet. He announced that the DAAA was satisfied that a decision was rendered that decided all bets. But, he continued, he was not satisfied that the crowd received its money's worth and was going to do something about it. He turned and followed Millett into his dressing room while Woods waited in the ring.

Boyle found Millett with his ring togs already off. He told him that he would not receive a dime for his performance that night. Millett argued

that he fought and lost and there was no precedence for not paying the agreed sum to the loser.

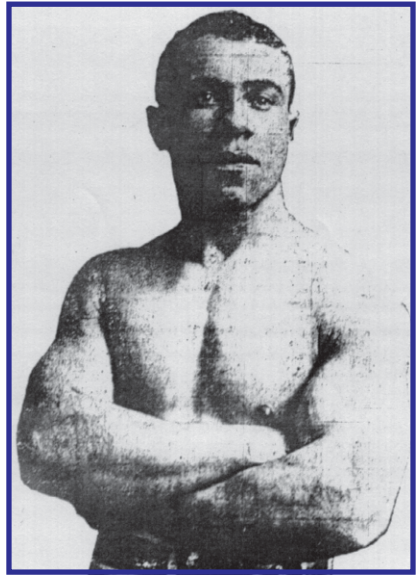
But Millett wasn't in San Francisco that night. He was in Joe Boyle's town and he had embarrassed his host. The DAAA facilities were top-notch and the interest in boxing was keen. If Millett thought he was dealing with a back-woods club he was about to get a re-education he would not soon forget.

Boyle was relentless. He told him blankly that he had not fought fair and the DAAA would not pay him unless he resumed the fight. "He's down there waiting for you," Boyle pressed. "I'll give you just ten minutes to get back into the ring."

Millett returned in the allotted time refreshed from the break and in a cooler frame of mind. It was announced that this second contest was "merely to determine the relative merits of the two men."

The crowd knew that Millett was at a disadvantage from the drama of the occasion and cheered him whenever he made the slightest bit of a showing. But the hits he landed could be counted on one hand. He was roundly beaten, but stayed on his feet the entire 20 rounds although he could have feigned a knockout from one of many convincing blows to his head.

For his effort, Millett earned close to \$1100. And Joe Boyle maintained his integrity in the world of boxing that he loved. All the more important to him since if it weren't for boxing...



Billy Woods

Round 4

Burley is frustrated as the crouching Woods shows only gloves before massive shoulders. His head is tiny in comparison and his stomach is drawn in beyond reach. Woods is frustrated because he can't land a knockout blow. The mutual respect slows the pace as they spar for an opening. Burley leads with a right but it's a left that is sprung to the body followed by a right and left punch to the face. Woods proves the hits had no effect as he allows a smile to cross his face. Burley's head snaps back from a Woods' jarring left. A second swing misses, but Woods is pumping wildly now aggravating Burley's bleeding mouth. With defence forgotten, only momentarily, Burley sends an uppercut to Woods face, bloodying his nose and ending the barrage. Many more swings and many are blocked. It's going to be a long night.

....Boyle may never had made it to Dawson City.

He was sitting in Seattle in 1896 with very little money. He had with him a friend, Frank Slavin, the former Australian boxing champion and until recently, a placer miner in Australia. Yet he had less money than Boyle.

It was Boyle, as was usually the case in this friendship, who said their destiny was in Alaska. So they bought passage to Juneau leaving \$10 between them and scanty personal belongings.

By now, they knew they must make it to Skagway and further north to Dawson City. That would take more money. Boyle had an idea and he acted on it quickly. He rented the only hall in town and enlisted the services of a printing office. He advertised Frank Slavin, the world-famous pugilist, would give a "red-hot boxing exhibition". The challenger would be Boyle himself.

On the afternoon of the fight, 100 tickets had been sold at \$5 each to the entertainment-starved miners about town. Boyle's and Slavin's tickets to Skagway were assured. All they had to do was fight in the ring and catch the next steamer.

But no good story is complete without an antagonist...

Round 5

Burley throws a left to the body and is blocked, but not the right to the head. Woods delivers a left to Burley's head and then feints another left only to bring a near devastating right to the head. The ruse is appreciated by Burley nonetheless as he smiles to his formidable opponent. Another right from Woods spoils the moment and Burley misses with an undercut. They spar cautiously, the small man can't be hit and the big man can't be knocked down.

...and this story now features a stick-in-the-mud soldier.

Alaska was a territory controlled by Washington and was administered by the military which had instructions to condone no disorderliness. The military commander of the area brought a file of men into the hall at the hour of the fight and announced that he considered boxing, bare fisted or gloved it didn't matter, to be disorderliness and he would not allow it.

The rough and ready miners booed but could not dissuade the strict commandant.

Boyle owed money on the hall and the printing and was facing financial and possibly physical ruin. He stepped out in front of the stage and announced:

"Gentlemen, you have all heard what the commandant says. I didn't know that there was any regulation against boxing in this camp or I wouldn't have sold you the tickets. It is clear that there can be no exhibition, but I see a piano in that corner, and if you will kindly excuse me a few minutes, Mr. Slavin will give an exhibition of bag-punching. After that, it will be up

to me and the piano. And I beg to state that if any gentleman desires to have his money back, he can get it."

With that, Slavin went to work on the bag and Boyle changed into his street clothes. He was back with the piano and rolled it into the footlights and sat down to play, tell stories and jokes and sing with a rich baritone voice. The miners laughed and applauded from the first key surprising nobody more than Frank Slavin, who didn't even know Boyle could play the piano.

Slavin found a seat in the audience and enjoyed the 90-minute performance knowing within the first couple of minutes that they would make it all the way to Dawson City.

At the end of the performance the miners stood and, to a man, offered to pay another \$5 if he would keep playing. Boyle refused to take another cent, and sat down to perform another 20 minutes.

Considering the goodwill these men could garner in just a scant few minutes on the strength of their personalities, it should have been obvious to Nick Burley not to make an enemy of them. But a year before his big fight with Billy Woods, he made the biggest mistake of his career...



Nick Burley

Round 6

Burley is tired but showing terrific spirit. Lefts and rights are delivered by both ... some land yet most are blocked. Then Woods sends a hard left to the stomach, the first body hit for some time. "A little low," Burley comments. "Didn't mean it," says Woods as he sends a punch to his jaw. "All right, old pal," Burley replies blocking the swing.

...by questioning the integrity of Joe Boyle.

As a director of the DAAA, Boyle was involved in bringing Choynski to

Dawson City to fight Burley in the very first major fund-raising fight for the club in 1903. Personal funds were thrown in with the the DAAA's budget to help promote this fight which would draw the world's attention to Dawson's own Nick Burley.

It is difficult to understand why Burley would then refuse to allow Boyle to be the referee in this fight with Choynski. And he chose to object while in the ring before an audience of 2,500.

Boyle's brother, Charley, was helping with Choynski's training at his Gold Bottom camp. Burley thus accused Joe Boyle of not being able to be an impartial referee.

It was pointed out to Burley that no other qualified referee was available and so, after discussing the matter with his financial backer, Burley decided to accept Boyle.

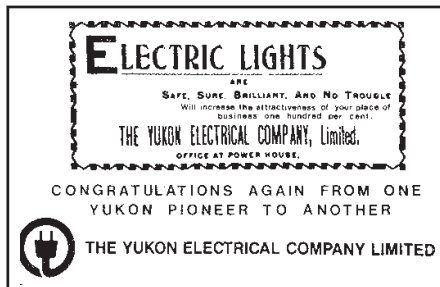
Even so, Burley defied the 2-to-1 odds and handily beat Choynski in the second round. It may have been a hard left to the jaw that signalled the beginning of the end, but nobody considered it a lucky punch.

It was plain to see that both fighters were evenly matched, but Burley's youth and hard punches gave him the edge quickly. They traded hits, but Burley's punches hurt more.

After a clean knockout, Burley waited several minutes for Choynski to recover enough to shake hands. Choynski was carried to his dressing room where he was heard to complain he didn't have enough time to acclimatize to Dawson's Spring weather (the fight was June 25). Yet he was gracious in receiving Burley's wife when she visited with Frank Slavin to express her sorrow.

A Period of Growth

Through all the economic ups and downs, Yukon Electrical managed to keep functioning, supplying power at rates which were rather charitably described by NWMP Superintendent Snyder as being as "reasonable as could be expected." By 1906, Yukon Electrical was in a position to announce a reduction. Starting June 1st, the meter rate of electric light was reduced from the maximum rate of 90 cents to 50 cents per kilowatt hour.



THE YUKON ELECTRICAL COMPANY LIMITED
An **ATCO** Company

Choynski retired from boxing the next day. A thumb that he had sprained previous to the fight would take too long to heal and he was already too old.

Questioning Boyle's fairness was the only misstep Burley made that night. Boyle probably accepted this challenge as just theatrics and mind-games going into an important fight. But he could be forgiven if he was frustrated since he was involved in another controversy just 10 minutes previous.

While officiating a preliminary bout between two Dawson "scrapers", Boyle allowed hitting in a clinch, which was a serious and fundamental breach of the Queensbury Rules.

The offended fighter refused to continue and lost by default. He gave a speech blaming Referee Boyle and was cheered. However, the sports writers for the local newspapers, having more knowledge of such things and a night to research further, supported Boyle 100 percent. Queensbury Rules do allow punches in a clinch when the other fighter is obviously trying to avoid a beating.

Strict adherence to the Queensbury Rules helped dignify the brutal sport of boxing in Dawson City...



"Biddy" Bishop, Wood's manager.

Round 7

Woods left and right for the head landing the left. Woods left to head and Burley left to the jaw. Woods left and right to the jaw. They spar with little effect, both chaffing. Woods left to the face. Woods left and right to the face. Woods left to the face. Woods left to the face. Burley sends in a left to Woods' nose to make it bleed even more. It is going to be a very long night.

...which is exactly what the Marquis of Queensbury had in mind.

The sport of boxing is at least 6,000 years old. Murals of ancient Egypt show "rings" that were either circular or squared. From there the sport spread to Crete and then to Greece where boxing gloves and rules were introduced and it joined the 23rd Olympiad in 688 B.C. as a regular sport.

The Roman Gladiator Period brutalized the sport and it was abolished along with the Olympics by Roman Emperor Theodosius after the 291st Olympiad in 393 A.D.

It wasn't until the 1700s in England that boxing was revived by James

Figg, the “Father of Modern Boxing” and by Jack Broughton, who established rules against fouls.

About 50 years before Dawson City was to embrace this “British” sport, the Marquis of Queensbury modernized the rules and re-introduced the padded glove. Boxing had gained a new respectability and, in the same year of 1904 when Nick Burley and Billy Woods met for the big fight, boxing was again accepted as an Olympic sport.

Once it was too warm for the skating rink in the DAAA arena, which stood where the parking lot behind Diamond Tooth Gertie’s is now, the boxing programmes would commence.

Before each fight, the referee and both fighters would declare their acceptance of the Queensbury Rules. The referee would then declare his understanding of the latest interpretations of the rules as per pre-fight negotiations. One referee, by the name of Leroy Tozier, would go as far as to admonish the audience against offering its own interpretations throughout the fight.

If it weren’t for the Queensbury Rules, boxing would be bare-fisted, impromptu events between drunken patrons of rough drinking establishments. Instead, they had gentlemen, like Burley, who could afford to identify themselves to the Dawson City census takers as...

Round 8

They spar with little effect. All momentum is gone as they settle into a routine looking for that one knockout punch. Finally, a Woods’ left lands on Burley’s face and Burley responds with a left and a right to the head. Woods left to the face and Burley comes up with another two rights on the face. Burley is kept in his place with a staggering left to his jaw but manages a light right to the face and two hard lefts. Woods ends the round with two lefts to the body.

...”pugilist.”

Burley was born in Austin, Nevada, May 17, 1875. (see story following this article) As a 20-year-old novice, his manager put him up against first-class fighters and he never stood a chance.

It wasn’t until he moved to Dawson City that his boxing career progressed at a more appropriate rate until he was within striking distance of a championship fight that would give him the middleweight title.

We also know that he never drank anything at breakfast, drank ale with dinner, went to bed at 11 p.m. and took an hour nap before lunch.

And we know he was good friends with Frank Slavin.

He and Slavin fought many times and Burley won many times against the former champ. Slavin was getting on in years and even in his prime was known as “too affable and easygoing” to win the important fights.

It was Burley who had beaten Slavin in a fight July 3, 1902, that con-

vinced him to retire. Although he knew he was roundly beat by the first round, Slavin stayed on his feet until the fifth round “only for the purpose of giving the patrons of the contest the worth of their money.”

There was bad blood between them the last time they fought, but all was forgotten as both paid tribute to the other in centre ring.

Slavin and Burley would meet in the ring again, however, in exhibition fights in Caribou and Grand Forks a year later. These two fights were one month before Burley’s career-making fight against Choynski, the first of the premiere fights, but Slavin didn’t defer to him one bit. Both friends took a serious beating and were dead on their feet at the end of the five-round bouts. After the first fight, they even charged at each other to settle a score over a comment Slavin had made.

Yet after Burley’s fight with Choynski, it was Frank Slavin who seemed the proudest. He told anyone who would listen that he was going to organize a trip to the birthplace of modern boxing and challenge the British champion as Burley’s manager. But Slavin couldn’t afford it and interest in Burley was never the same after slurring Joe Boyle’s good name.

In fact, it took a lot of negotiations to get into the ring with Woods the following year. Goodwill for the local boy was gone and now it was...

Round 9

He has taken enough hits to destroy a lesser man, but Burley keeps taking the punches while avoiding even more. His own jabs into Woods’ face draws more and more blood. His boxing shorts are now red with it. This is Burley’s round: He neatly blocks a jab to the head and a swing for his body. He teases a left toward the stomach and quickly changing positions delivers a blow to the head instead. He ducks and comes up to effectively block another thrown punch. A reporter covering the fight for the Yukon World calls the sparring “pretty.”

...all business.

Nick Burley made sure everyone knew he wanted to fight the winner of the Woods-Millett mill in that second premiere fight in 1904. He was there at ringside challenging Woods who stood alone after only three rounds of boxing that ended in Millett’s flight to his dressing room in disgrace.

Woods’ manager, Bidy Bishop, was prepared for the challenge and authorized Referee Sugrue to announce acceptance.

But it would not be so easy. Hours of tough negotiations were ahead for the DAAA, Bishop and Burley. Clearly Burley would be at a disadvantage managing his own fight while going toe-to-toe with the most savy and successful manager of the day.

Burley had to concentrate on protecting himself as if he were actually in the ring. One major contention was imposing clean breaks from the clinches. Burley knew that Woods had trained his quick powerful arms to pump immediately on breaking from a clinch. Bishop knew that his fight-

er's short stature and his skill hitting after a clinch was a devastating tool that he didn't want to give up.

Burley also demanded a 60-40 split of the winnings, which the aggressive Bishop considered little incentive to fight hard.

In the end, the legendary manager gave in to all of Burley's demands. He had an eye on an offer to travel to Fairbanks to fight Tanana's best boxer, but decided to stay put.

Once the DAAA got involved, after the two fighters arrived at an agreement, matters changed significantly. First, the prize money would be split 75-25 to ensure good entertainment for the audience. As well, the loser would receive nothing if the fight was not decided on merit. Second, each fighter had to put up \$500 to assure they will show up ready to fight at the appointed hour. The DAAA also put up \$1,000 in case it didn't hold up its end.

The DAAA wanted to ensure that this fight would not disappoint the boxing patrons as the last Woods - Millet fight did. Biddy Bishop sensed the mood and put up another \$1,000 of his own money guaranteeing Woods would not lose on a foul.

Besides back-room dealings, boxing fans were making deals of their own...

Round 10

Burley leads with a light left to the head and Woods comes back with a hard right swing to the head while a followup left is blocked by Burley. Woods cleverly ducks hard left for the head then steps in with a right and left to the face. Both are blocked yet a left, right, left to the face has considerable effect. Burley takes even more punishment but stays clear headed as he lands several punches on Woods' nose causing even more bleeding.

...to replace Woods with Millett.

After all, they started to ask the morning after, why should Burley automatically challenge the winner of the fight? Shouldn't his main concern be finding the most interesting opponent?

They all remembered the excitement leading up to Woods' last fight with the west coast champion and the disappointing finish in the third round as Millet lost on a foul.

Surely the results would be the same if Burley, being a big man, fought the smaller Woods. And besides, it must be tough on Woods to fight a taller opponent since it would be too easy to hit below the belt and find himself losing on a foul.

There were other forces at play as well. The Grand Forks residents had not lost faith in Millett and pulled together \$1,000 for side bets against Burley. Burley may have been the local boy, but they had all seen Millett train and knew he could win.

Then there was Millett, himself, who was desperate to clear his name.

He wanted to go back to San Francisco with a win under his belt to prove his loss to Woods was a fluke. He liked his chances with Burley since they were both fighters who stood up straight and hit high.

As for Burley, he liked the idea of pocketing the \$1,000 side bet he knew he would win from the "Forks Sports."

On July 7, just 30 minutes after signing with Woods, Burley and Millett agreed to meet in the ring September 27. But first, Joe Boyle had to be satisfied with one thing...

Round 11

Both fighters are as fresh as when they first stepped into the ring. Woods plays a tattoo on Burley's head but partial blocks limits the effect. Jabbing, Woods lands left after right after left on Burley's increasingly reddened face. Burley tries for a jaw but misses. Woods comes back with an uncharacteristic wild swing that is easily avoided by Burley as he steps back allowing the gloved fist to whistle by.

...was Millett a man of Burley's class?

Despite the enthusiasm between Grand Forks and Dawson City to see Millett and Burley mix it up, the DAAA wanted to make sure Millett wasn't going to embarrass himself and the club again.

Millett told Boyle he would go four rounds with anyone in the Yukon to prove his measure. Boyle proposed George Paris, Woods' trainer, and Millett accepted.

But then people close to Millett told him a fight with Paris would be the same as fighting a "preliminary", which is something no fighter of Millett's class would do.

When Boyle came around with the papers to sign, Millett refused.

How this matter was resolved was never recorded. Paris had left town with Biddy Bishop and Billy Woods after the big fight never to return. But there was Millett, on September 27, ready to fight. But alas, Burley was not able. He had an inflamed eye that needed to be lanced.

Entering the ring with Dr. Lachappelle to back up his claim, Burley announced that he was willing to fight anyways. However, he begged that all bets be called off.

Millett stepped forward offering to wait three days so that an honest and fair match could be held. Referee Frank Slavin thanked both fighters and announced that all in attendance could stay to enjoy the preliminaries and then come back for the main bout in three days.

The well-orchestrated cancellation was accepted warmly.

When Millett and Burley did meet, it was Burley who was victorious. Although Millett had the better technique, he was predictable and lost his energy quicker. Burley just waited until he repeated his left swing-duck-short right hook routine and laid him out with a powerful and measured

right hook with a beautiful follow through landing Millett on his back covered in blood.

That final punch was typical of the fighting styles of the day. Strong men who left themselves unprotected as they wound up for a knockout blow. But it was the intelligent fighter who would soon dominate these dinosaurs and the sport of boxing.

With limited opportunity to fight Outside, Burley would soon be a victim...

Round 12

Burley takes the initiative with a light left to Woods' face and blocks his retort ... twice. Woods is three-times lucky as a good, hard left lands on the jaw. Burley lands a left to the face, but at the same time he is caught by a hard right to the nose. More punches to Burley's face leaves his mouth bleeding badly.

...of science.

Biddy Bishop, as an example, was always looking for improved methods in fighting. He schooled Woods in the proper stance, the innovative punch, the appropriate combinations.

During this fight with Burley, Bishop introduced his new invention to the world: The spray bottle. In an interview before the fight he claimed all fighters would soon be sprayed with a fine mist of cold water as they returned to their corners ... and he was right.

A year after this fight, in 1905, Burley met his match in Jack "Twin" Sullivan in the third yearly premiere fight. Sullivan was thinner, shorter and didn't have the reach Burley had, but he beat him with all the latest tricks.

Sullivan's elbows would be pulled in to protect his body and then the forearms would shoot out to strike a blow with all his weight behind it. He would land punches on a rush, plant his feet, stand straight and let off a volley of jabs to the ribs from close quarters. Just when Burley had figured out his style, Sullivan would become a different fighter completely.

The Yukon World newspaper lamented the passing of an era when Dawson City boxers had a chance of being contenders. By far these Yukoners had more stamina, more strength and more pluck than the big-city boxers who came up to try them on.

But Joe Boyle and the DAAA, ever attuned to what the fight crowd wanted, scored a coup by hosting...

Round 13 to 16

Burley settled into a patient defence to survive all 20 rounds. Woods kept hitting him in the face and Burley kept taking the punishment. Be-

tween rounds, Burley no longer spoke to his seconds in his corner. Still standing at the sound of the twentieth bell would be the only victory he could hope for.

...the Middleweight Championship of the World.

The Dawson Amateur Athletic Association needed one more high-profile fight to earn enough money to keep the club running for another winter. Why not bring the middleweight champion of the world to Dawson City?

"Philadelphia" Jack O'Brien agreed to meet Jack "Twin" Sullivan and Dawson City nearly burst with the anticipation. Nick Burley, however, would have been crushed to learn that he came within one win of being the one to step into the ring with the world champ to fight for his title.

Three weeks before the fight, fans met O'Brien at the docks and found him to be extremely quiet and withdrawn and full of praise for his opponent. He had met Sullivan twice before and won one on close points and the other was a draw.

Yet he took great pains to point out that a Sullivan win July 4 may strip him of the world title, but Sullivan would have one more fight before he could rightfully call himself the champion.

As well, he brought news that the winner will be encouraged to meet Los Angeles' Marvin Hart for the heavyweight title. These exciting developments had made Dawson City the centre of the boxing world's attention for the next three weeks.

The day of the fight arrived and all of Dawson City was there. The camps on the creeks were half empty as everyone wanted to savour this world-class entertainment.

And entertaining it was.

It was boxing at its most perfect. Perhaps not as much drama as the fight between Woods and Burley, but the skill and latest techniques demonstrated was an education for all in the sellout crowd.

But what amazed the usually sophisticated Dawson crowd more was the pace. The hits, blocks, side steps and weaving came blinding fast and no more than one clinch per round stalled the action. Side bets were placed among those in the crowd that both fighters could not last past the tenth round. Then the fourteenth round. Then all twenty.

Yet O'Brien and Sullivan were just as fresh at the sound of the bell at the end of the fight as when they first entered the ring. The crowd had been eerily quiet throughout the fight as nobody knew who was ahead on points. The concentration of the crowd was broken at the end as an ovation exploded in praise for the stamina and skill of the two athletes.

As the crowd had guessed, the fight was called a draw. The two boxers agreed to meet again August 8 to determine the winner. The DAAA could not have been happier. They were assured another sellout crowd and finally an end to its money problems. But then...

Round 17

Burley's face is swelling rapidly. His lips are opened and bleeding in several places. Woods lands several hard rights and lefts to the face and Burley spits out blood. More hits to the face, all of them hard. Burley looks tired but is unwilling to allow Woods a knock-out punch. But finally a vicious, hard right to the jaw drops the big man. The fight would have been over had it not been for the sound of the bell as the referee counted "nine".

...the fight was cancelled.

A city clergyman informed the DAAA he would press charges under the criminal code of Canada if it proceeded with the fight. The best lawyers in town offered their free advice saying, as one, that boxing was legal in Canada.

But the directors felt they could not afford a legal fight. The match was cancelled and \$860 was paid to O'Brien and Sullivan in forfeit. Its expenses to that date were unrecoverable and the anticipated \$2,000 profit would never be seen. The DAAA's financial problems were now worse than ever and its future was in doubt.

The townfolk were depressed, and not just the fight fans. Everyone realized how important the DAAA was to the young people in town. Whenever the curling and ice rinks were closed for a day or two, there was a marked increase in numbers of youth hanging about the dance halls and saloons on First Avenue.

The DAAA did survive into the winter for inexpensive, wholesome fun. And it survived, barely, for many years to come. And there were boxing matches held there again, but never again would it see the prime, world-class entertainment of the past three years. The DAAA was shy and its reputation damaged.

Local boxers with any ambition left town. Dawson City was just too far away from the everyday improvements in the sport. The innovators and risk takers were fighting two and three times a week to hone their craft against the best in the business.

Frank Slavin left town with Sullivan to travel the world. Slavin would lecture on the Yukon and Sullivan would speak on the importance of physical fitness. Then they would give a boxing performance and then on to the next country.

Nick Burley left Dawson City for Fairbanks where he was to meet the Alaskan champ, Billy Bates. He lost when he broke his ankle in two places.

His last correspondence warned other fighters away from Fairbanks. The boxing arena would only sit 500 people and it was impossible to cover expenses. He was on his way to Nome and then points south to take one more crack at his career, which was getting short at the age of 30.

Despite the numerous fighters he taught and entertainment he provided to the folks of Dawson City, his parting didn't even rate a mention in the Departures feature of the local newspapers.

Round 18

Woods started where he left off... a left jab to the jaw. A left and right to the chin sends Burley to his knees clutching Woods around the waist. He rises weakly and tries just one more punch. A flurry of hits to Burley's face sends him down for a three count. Impossibly, Burley rises again. A left, right, left to the jaw finishes the proud athlete. He drops helplessly to the mat and lies on his left side as Referee Sugrue counts to ten. All eyes are on the victor. Will the bloody taste of violence boil his success in adrenalin and spew forth in a triumphant cheer? No.

Just moments before, these two men were committed to the destruction of the other. Now as the crowd watches, Woods kneels beside his fallen opponent and, with a respect only the two gladiators could know, picks him up and carries him to his corner.

Editor's Note:

If this story were published in a national magazine, it would likely attract a literary prize.

The story of Joe Boyle, King of the Klondike, was published in Yukoner #4.



Old hardware store in Dawson City, in 1981.

On Becoming a Fighter

By Nick Burley

* Reprinted from Yukon World,
May 20, 1904.

I was born on the 17th of May, 1875, so will be 30 years old this month. The way that I started in the fighting business was through baseball playing. When a boy about 15, I played ball at San Jose, Cal., my home. And after almost every game of course there was someone pretty sore over losing, then there would be a fight, and of course I had to mix in it too.

One Sunday afternoon my team, the first wards, were to play the Goosetown team. There was a fellow by the name of Maranda, who played second base with the Goosetowns. He was considered a pretty tough Mexican and had licked most all the fellows who had mixed up with him. Well, he and I hadn't much use for each other, and every time I got near second base, he would want to pick a fight.

I got to the bat in the eighth inning. There were two men on bases, one on first and one on third. The first ball that came to me, I swung the bat and hit it for a three-bagger. When I came to second on a dead run, Naranda put his foot out and I started to roll. I don't think I stopped rolling till I got to third. It was the first three-bagger and the last I ever made.

We lost the game but I won a fight that day. Maranda and I fought for about an hour. Blood? Why, a bullfight was like a pink tea affair alongside of that fight. I guess my eyes were shut when I landed the punch that won. I was pretty glad when it was over, and proud as a peacock over the two dandy black eyes I had.

I was then champion of the first ward. I had the swell head, too, and was running around with a chip on my shoulder just begging some kid to knock it off. My sole ambition was to be a pugilist. If at school the teacher would ask who was the greatest general, I would snap my thumb. When she would say, "Well, Nicholas, who was the greatest general?" I would say, "Jack Dempsey," or else "John L. Sullivan." So you see I had the fighting fever pretty bad.

I then left home, after causing my folks all kinds of worry over my fighting for a couple of years around San Jose. I went to Honolulu in 1893 to work for the Ewa plantation as a foreman. It was just my luck that after I was in Honolulu about a week two men, one from the cruiser Boston by the name of Norcott, and another sailor by the name of Williams, were to fight to a finish. When the crowd was at the armory hall to see them go, Williams did not show up. So the manager introduced Norcott and said that if there was anyone in the house who would take Williams' place he would get 75 per cent of the house if he won, or 10 per cent if he lost.

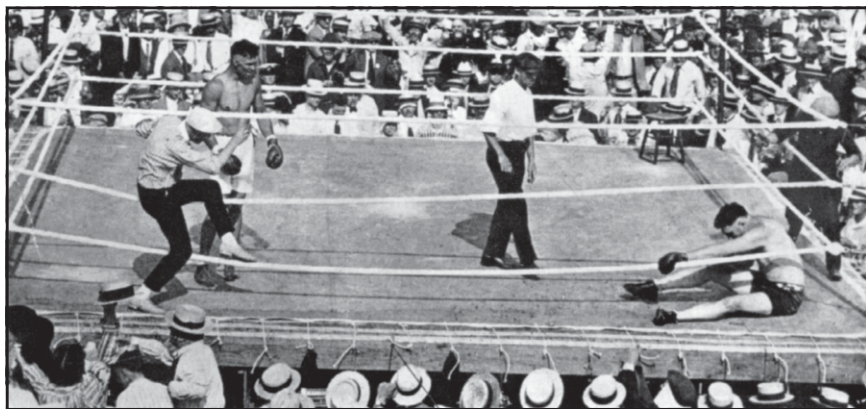
I said I would go on, and the man sitting next to me said, "What's the matter with you kid? Do you want to get killed?" I was only 18 then and weighed about 160 pounds. Norcott was about 25 and weighed 175.

Well, I won in one round and got \$265 for my share, and of course I didn't go to work on any plantation. I wanted to be a sport.

But now when I look back to those bygone days I only wish that I had taken the job on the Ewa plantation. But still, I had a lot of fun. And then again on the other hand I have had lots of things that were anything else but fun. Good luck one day, bad luck the next. But I suppose in this world we make our own good luck and bad luck. We make our own happiness, and misery, and to be successful, we must believe in success. And in this fighting business, to have those things we must live a life far different than most people, namely, to keep sober, take exercises, be early to bed, early to rise, and to keep in good spirits - always, let nothing worry you.

In this business one does not know who your friends are. When you are a winner, it seems that everyone is your friend. But if you lose, the best you get is, "Well, old pal, we're sorry," then they leave you and go to the one that won. And here is what they say to him, "Great fight! Glad you won. I knew it all the time. Why, he wasn't in it for a minute. You could have beat him in a round. Say, he ought to get a job on an ice wagon." So that's how a loser and a winner stand all over the world.

I have fought 146 fights since 1890 and have won and lost. I do not claim I can beat anyone. I only try my best. People have asked me about how I thought I would come out with Sullivan on the 24th. I only say as I say now, a little thing I learned from my wife, "I am success. I will be success. I will box fair. I will box square, as I have always done since I began. If I win he will have my best wishes. If I lose I will wish him success and say he is the better man.



Dempsey v. Willard, Toledo, Ohio, 1919. [United Press International]

Loading Barges at Mayo, 1932



12,000 sacks of ore from the Keno Hill Mine, piled up at Mayo, awaiting shipment to Whitehorse by barge and sternwheeler.

Photos by Gordon A. McIntyre



A cable that ran through a pulley on the dock enabled the man coming up the ramp to be pulled along by the man going down. Also, the man coming up could help brake the loaded dolly.



Loading silver/lead ore sacks. Left, George Corduroy, right, Alec Prophet.

THE SILLY SEASON

By Rob Alexander

In a small Yukon community where everybody knew every-body, it was strange that nobody noticed what was happening. At least, they did not *seem* to notice. Perhaps people were simply trying to ignore all the curious events that were occurring, or perhaps because at first the incidents themselves were insignificant, they were not sufficiently strange enough to attract much attention, and certainly not important enough to cause any major alarm. By midwinter, however, the entire community was aware that some very odd things were going on.

It began in the early winter with little intangible things that you could not quite put a finger on. People would forget their own names, or look at a watch to see what the temperature was, or look at a temperature gauge to see what time it was, or drive halfway to Whitehorse then turn around for no reason and drive back home. Then they began to see things that were not there, or to talk to themselves.

Some people were too embarrassed or afraid to speak about their experiences for fear of being considered stupid or weird. But as more peculiar events occurred, people needed to talk about them; usually about what had happened to somebody else. Like what happened to Joe Walters. For several days he had been running all over the community looking for his dog Rover. Joe has never owned a dog.

Then they talked about old Jack. He was a lifetime bachelor in his early sixties who awoke one morning with the oddest feeling that he was married. He guessed he had been dreaming, and he tried to put it out of his mind, but it would not go away. A few days later he became convinced that his wife's name was Jane. When he finally talked about it, to some of his bar-room buddies, they told him old age was creeping in. Others, more concerned, suggested that he should see a doctor because they were afraid it might be Old Timers disease or something. Some people kept their mouths shut because they had been having similar problems.

Marylou Ryder, a young single woman, insisted that she was married to Pete Kovacs, who was also single, and she pounded on his cabin door to be let in. Marylou had one of those bodies that priests like to describe as 'remarkably healthy,' and Pete, never one to refuse those in need, let her in.

More and more the oddities increased. Certain lazy people went to town and found themselves a job, while a number of very industrious people quit theirs. Others locked themselves indoors and hid for the rest of the winter. One poor soul was thrown out of the bar by the patrons for making the bizarre statement that maybe Mulroney and the Conservatives had not been that bad after all.

Jed "Scrooge" Curtis, who had never bought a drink for anyone in his

life, rang the bar bell three times and purchased drinks for everybody, and then left a tip. Mind you, to give him his due, at the time there were only three people in the bar. Still, everyone agreed it was a bit unusual. On the same day, Harry the Hippy, within a span of four hours, did two ounces of coke, killed off a flat of beer, and drank the entire contents of his private still. Everyone agreed, however, that this was **not** unusual.

Things got a whole lot worse. People became depressed, bored, tired, and argumentative. Several couples argued, separated permanently, then shackled up with another partner within hours. People tried to take their minds off things by throwing parties, going ice-fishing, or just tearing madly across the hills on a snowmobile, but the problems continued.

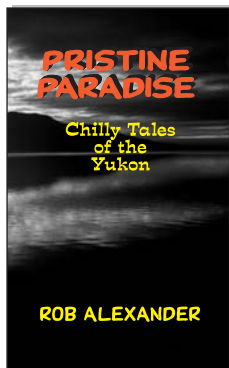
Jim Watson skied down a mountain slope, without skis. Gary Henderson drove down a snow-covered hill on his snowmobile and tried to drive across the lake, before it was frozen. Bill "Wino" Johnston quit drinking. Joe Barnes burned his cabin to the ground because he was cold. Martin Small put his entire dog team inside the basket of his sled, put a dog harness on himself and hitched himself to the sled, then took off into the bush and was never seen again. Ivan Slovenko met with phenomenally rapid success when he decided to commit suicide, by telling some out-of-town bikers in a local bar that they were a bunch of pansies.

Around mid-May, when the lake ice broke, things seemed to settle down and soon everybody was back to normal, except that most of them were now living with new partners.

One of the first tourists to arrive, stopped in at the bar and overheard the locals discussing all the events that had occurred during the winter, and he asked why they had not alerted someone or called in some experts for help.

Old Jack frowned and shook his head, and stared at the tourist as though the man was completely mad.

"It's perfectly normal behaviour," said Jack, "exactly the same things happen every winter in the Yukon. It's the long dark nights and the confinement. We call it Cabin Fever."



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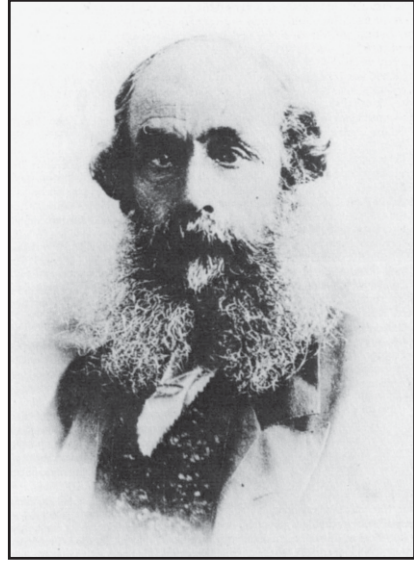
The Yukon's Greatest Explorer: **Robert Campbell**

Part One of Four

By William J. Betts

The Early Years

He was young and he was ambitious. He was a Campbell. How many times had he heard of the Campbell Clan, how members of the clan had been great warriors. But Robert Campbell would never know such an adventurous life working on his father's farm. He would dream of adventure as he took care of his father's sheep. But that was something to put out of his mind. He would live and die right here forever taking care of sheep. Not that he didn't like the work or was lazy. He gave everything he had to the work on the farm, a hundred percent and then some.



Robert Campbell

Robert Campbell was born on the 21st of February, 1808. When he was 17 he lost his beloved mother. She had given her son her even temper and steadfastness. It was a sad blow to Robert as well as to his father but they had to go on with life. From his father the young lad got his rugged frame and dark, raven hair. He was a broad shouldered man. A very religious man and kind. And for the times he was well educated. His mother had seen to that.

He had heard his father talking about Lord Selkirk and his Red River colony for years, ever since he was a lad of five. It was Lord Selkirk who thought out and began the first settlement on the Red River in far away Canada. In 1813, Lord Selkirk had finally been able to send a contingent of settlers to Canada. He had been able to recruit some 80 young men along with a few families to sail from Stromness in the Orkney Islands for their new home on the Red River in Rupert's Land.

Robert Campbell knew that the colonists sailed on the PRINCE OF WALES, on the 27th of June, 1813. He also knew that some of the passengers died on the long voyage to the New World and that in the end the

colony failed, not even reaching the Red River. It wouldn't be until the two large fur companies, the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, merged that a settlement would be successful.

The original colony was near Pembina on the Red River, but when the Company determined that this was United States territory it was moved farther north near the present city of Winnipeg.

Was it possible to go to Canada someday in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company? After supper and the evening chores were done, Young Robert often talked to his father about going to Canada. They would talk long into the night about the Hudson's Bay Company and what it meant to be an employee. Robert had a cousin, Chief Factor James McMillan, who had been employed by the Company for many years. Campbell would surely ask him all about the fur trade and Canada the very next time he had a chance.

And that chance was to come sooner than he had hoped. His cousin was on furlough in England and planned to visit family members before he went back to Canada. Chief Factor McMillan did visit the Campbell farm much to the delight of young Robert. McMillan had a knack for story telling and regaled his cousin with tales of the Fur Trade. How they often travelled by canoe on rivers and lakes, portaging around dangerous rapids, to trek for hundreds of miles into Indian territory. Forts were established from which the Company traded with the Indians for furs, fish and dried meat called pemmican. The young Scot was spellbound by the tales of his cousin. His desire to go to Canada burned even deeper. He wanted to know the dangerous life of a trader.

When McMillan left the Campbell home to return to his duties with the Company in far off Canada, he promised the young Robert that he would see what he could do about getting a position for him with the Company. Robert wondered if such an opportunity would ever come, would he work forever on the family farm tending sheep? His father, perhaps, hoped that his son would stay on the farm but should the opportunity arise that he would find employment with the Company he would not stand in his way.

Later the opportunity would come for the young Scot. He learned that a sub-manager was wanted for the Red River Farm settlement. The Hudson's Bay Company had decided to expand the Colony so that retired men in their service would have a place to retire and at the same time produce grain and cattle to be used to help supply the far flung outposts of the fur trading giant. Campbell applied for the position by letter to company headquarters in London.

Campbell waited for what seemed like months but it was actually only a matter of weeks when word reached him that he had been chosen for the position. The young Scot was impatient to sail for the New World and his new adventure. But there were, of course, papers that he would have to sign, a contract of sorts, between him and the Company. He would have to: "Faithfully serve the said Company as their hired servant in the capacity (in Campbell's case, sub farm manager) and devote the whole of their time and labour in their service and for their sake and benefit_by day or by

night and obey all the orders which he shall receive from the Governors of the Company in North America or other officers or agents."

Every night while awaiting orders to leave for his new job Campbell and his father had long talks in the evening while smoking their pipes and drinking a glass of whiskey. Campbell must have realized that it would be a long time, perhaps years, before he would see his home once more. But they didn't talk of that, rather of what the young Scot planned to do. Now he was determined to devote as much time and labour to his new job as he had been doing for years on his father's farm.

Campbell's orders finally came. He was to proceed to Stromness in the Orkney Islands where he would board the company's ship the PRINCE RUPERT. The time had finally come to say goodbye to his father and the farm on which he had grown up.

On the 22nd of June, 1830, he shook his father's hand for the last time, fighting back the tears.

"Work hard, lad," his father cautioned him, "and one day you'll become a chief factor like your cousin.

"I will, father, I will."

Although Campbell didn't know it then, it would be almost two decades before he would see his beloved Scotland again. It was sad for him to leave his birthplace yet the young Scot was looking forward to the long voyage across the Atlantic to his new adventure. He was about to embark on years of work that would one day bring him to the pinnacle of success.

The young Scot left for Stromness with mixed feelings, sadness on leaving his birthplace yet glad to be going to an unknown adventure. At Stromness he boarded the PRINCE RUPERT to join the other passengers headed for the New World. There were fifty other passengers, some of them returning Company officers to their posts in the vastness that was Canada. The majority of the passengers were workers like Campbell.

In the hold of the PRINCE RUPERT were the trade goods for the far flung outposts of the Hudson's Bay Company. There was gunpowder, bullets and shot, many cases of the trade gun, the company flintlock. There was twine for making fishnets, traps, files, knives, needles, frying pans, copper kettles, flints and steels. There were bales of the famous point blankets with the marks on them designating the number of beaver pelts each was worth. There was clothing, not only for the servants of the Company but for the Indians as well. Since the natives traded away their furs, clothing had to be substituted for them. There were also supplies for the Red River Settlement, nails and even brick. There was mail and packages from home. There was some flour, biscuits and salt meat for the posts and Company servants, although the employees were expected to live off the country as much as possible.

On July 1st, the PRINCE RUPERT set her sails and slowly left the harbour bound for the New World. Campbell stood on deck and watched the land slowly disappear. By day's end Scotland had long since been lost to sight and the young Scot wondered if he would ever see land again as the North Atlantic is dangerous even in the summer time.

Campbell, always inquisitive, wandered about the ship watching the crew work about the deck or scrambling aloft to take in sail or let it out. He would stand for hours in the bow watching the ever changing ocean as the ship scudded through the swells under full sail.

Eventually Greenland was sighted, as were ice bergs, the scourge of ship's captains. The ship crossed Davis Strait in about seven days. A watch for ice was kept as large chunks of ice could very well stove in the ship's side. They sighted Cape Resolution and entered Hudson Strait. The ship slowly made its way until it was abreast of Savage Islands. The crew sighted many seals and walrus and (if it wasn't a Sunday) would shoot at these sea mammals.

Big Island was reached and the PRINCE RUPERT hove to as sometimes Eskimos would come out to ships in their kayaks and skin boats to barter for trade goods. The Company never missed a chance for trade. Fur was like gold and they were in business to make money.

From North Bluff, on Big Island, the ship proceeded across the southern end of the Strait heading west to Charles Island. They rounded Cape Wolstenholme where Henry Hudson had gone ashore for fresh water in 1610. The PRINCE RUPERT passed Diggs Island and slowly approached Mansel Island. This was a dangerous area where many ships had been wrecked.

They rounded the north end of Mansel Island and sailed into the Bay proper. With a favorable wind they would soon be dropping anchor in York Roads. Here they would meet a schooner with a pilot to take them to another anchorage in the channel of the Hayes River, about seven miles from York Factory. They reached their anchorage on the 14th of August.

There was now feverish activity aboard the PRINCE RUPERT. Boats, manned by voyageurs, came out to meet the ship, and cargo from the hold was loaded into these lighters. Swiftly they rowed back to York Factory to off-load and return for more goods. When the cargo destined for York Factory was off-loaded they began the loading of large bundles of furs for the return voyage to England. This was the "gold" that made the Company rich.

On the 15th, a day after their arrival, the passengers were allowed to go to shore. Once more they were on solid ground but walked with sea legs until they again became used to land. Campbell had finished the first leg of his journey and perhaps wondered when he would ever sail again from Canada. But there was too much to learn at York Factory for the young recruit to have time for such thoughts. In the time he would remain at York Factory he wanted to learn as much as possible about the trade.

York Factory had been established as a trading post as well as a supply centre for the trading posts scattered throughout Canada as well as the far off post on the Columbia, Fort Vancouver. These far flung trading posts were supplied by means of large birch bark canoes manned by French Canadians called voyageurs. They were a rugged lot and could paddle all day and then sit around their fire at night spinning tales or singing songs. Campbell was to learn the ways of these men in the years to come.

Even in the short time that Campbell was at York Factory (he was there ten days), he absorbed much of the routine of the base. And there was much to learn. He began to see what was in his future as he watched the men in the employ of the Company go about their duties. Many of the employees were away from the Post on wood cutting jobs as the supply had become farther and farther from York Factory over the years. Firewood as well as wood for lumber had to be cut. Whether Campbell went out on any of these forays is not known, but he was an individual who wished to experience every detail of the Company's work so he may have visited some of these summer camps.

Another thing that Campbell never wrote about was the hordes of insects that plague the northern people. Just coming from a long sea voyage where there were no such irritations, he must have felt the country was not for the light of heart. And York Factory was situated on a swamp where the mosquitoes were noted for their ferocity.

Probably Campbell did take advantage of hunting for much of the food was supplied with trap and gun. Since he was there in summer he would not have experienced goose hunting. In the fall or spring huge numbers of geese were taken to eat both fresh and for salting down for winter's use. Or he could have gone on one of the many fishing expeditions that were conducted throughout the year. Fish were one of the foods employees were given as a mainstay of their diet.

Campbell, being a lowly clerk, would have eaten with other employees of his status, usually a group of four employees who would prepare their own meals. The chief factor as well as his traders would have their own dining room as well as a cook who prepared their meals. The meals served in these dining rooms would have at least three dishes, sometimes many more. And they were served from fine dishes on tables shipped over from England. But one must remember, that these luxurious items often were purchased by the chief factors themselves.

Campbell left York Factory on the 25th of August. With him were three other company employees who had sailed with him on the PRINCE RUPERT. They embarked in two York boats, as they were called, manned by eight voyageurs in each. They traveled up the Hayes River to Oxford House, where two of the passengers were left along with the trade supplies from York Factory. Campbell doesn't say in his memoirs whether both boats proceeded on or just the one in which he was a passenger. He did proceed to Norway House at the head of Lake Winnipeg. Here the other passenger disembarked. Campbell proceeded on down the lake to the Red River. They arrived at Fort Garry (at the juncture of the Assiniboine with the Red River) at 2:00 p.m. on the 22nd of September, 1830.

What a far cry this settlement was from his native Scotland. Although there were many settlers who had come for the promise of land of their own, it was still wilderness. At least to the young Scot it appeared so.

Campbell had his work cut out for him. There was much to do. New plots of 50 acres each had to be surveyed. There were barns to be built as

well as cabins for the new settlers. Fences had to be built, gardens planted and animals cared for. The young Scot often worked from sunup to sundown.

Although Campbell worked long and hard as sub-manager of the farm settlement, he still wished for the work of a trader. At least something that would give him the adventure he sought. At times, when the work was slack, Campbell took his gun and went hunting. Sometimes he went fishing.

When he had been at the Red River Settlement for two years he was given an opportunity for the adventure he had dreamed about for so long. The Company had decided the Settlement needed sheep to supply wool and meat for the settlers. Individual farmers were given the chance to buy as many sheep as they could afford, although the sheep yet to be procured by the Company.

Campbell and several other employees, under the leadership of William Glen Rae, were given the task of trekking to far off Kentucky to purchase these sheep. They left in November, 1832. Although Campbell in his memoirs never told of the hardships they encountered, the trip was dangerous. Hostile Indians still posed a threat. This adventure was what Campbell wanted and he was delighted to make the journey.

The party reached Kentucky in April, 1833. They were able to purchase some 1400 sheep but not all in Kentucky. Some were found in neighbouring states.

The trek back to the Red River Settlement was fraught with danger not only from hostile Indians but from wild animals as well. It was only natural that they would lose some sheep. But even Campbell was not ready for what happened. The sheep got into a plant called "spear grass." The grass, as its name indicated, penetrated the skin of the sheep causing irritating sores that became infected. The sheep gradually died and by the time they reached the Red River Settlement only about a seventh of the flock was left alive. The Company realized the remaining sheep would cost far more than the farmers had paid so gave their money back to them. The small flock, however, did multiply over the years so Campbell's first adventure with the Company wasn't a complete failure.

During the time that Campbell was the sub-manager of the farms, there were vast herds of buffalo still roaming the plains. Every spring and summer the "freemen" (those individuals who were not under contract to the Company, usually French-Indian or Metis, as they were called) formed large companies for buffalo hunts. Although Campbell never went on such hunts, he was well aware of them and wrote about them in later life.

The Metis used a two-wheeled cart for such hunting expeditions as it was much easier to transport supplies and bring back the rewards of the hunt. The wheels for these carts were at first made from the sawed rounds of trees, but over the years they used regular spoked wheels. However, the axles and hubs were wood and no grease was used on them as the dust would collect on the grease and wear them out. Wood rubbing on wood produced a high pitched sound that must have been very irritating to those in

the hunting party. Certainly Indians as well as buffalo would hear the noise long before the carts could be seen.

The carts were drawn by a single horse. Other horses were used as well. Buffalo ponies that were trained to ride into a herd while the rider, the hunter, shot quickly and reloaded on the run. Oddly enough when the hunt was over the individual hunters seemed to know which slain buffalo belonged to whom.

Before the buffalo herds were found, scouts were sent out in single file from the main party. Each would keep in sight of the man to his rear and the one behind in sight of his following scout, until they were strung out for a mile or more. If the leading scout saw either Indian or buffalo he would signal to the scout behind him with a prearranged signal. The signal would be passed back until the main body of hunters was alerted.

If it was a herd of buffalo the hunters would gallop toward the head scout and the hunt would begin. When the shooting was over the carts would be moved up to where the carcasses lay and the butchering would be done. After the butchering, there would be a feast and everyone would sing and dance around the many fires. Huge amounts of the meat would be dried for pemmican, the mainstay of the diet of the voyageurs and fur traders. If the scouts saw Indians the signal would be passed back to the main party who would stop and make preparations to defend themselves if need be. But usually the Indians left the hunting parties alone although they resented the intrusion on their hunting grounds.

At night the carts were drawn into a circle to form a corral and the animals were herded into the circle for safe keeping. The circle of carts became a sort of fort in case of Indian attack. There was a leader who was called "The Warden of the Plains". His word was law. Discipline was strict and if the hunter's code was broken there would be swift retribution. If the rule broken was bad enough the culprit's cart was broken up and his harness cut to pieces. Perhaps harsh rules, but the hunt was critical for the winter's meat supply.

As time went by, Campbell became more and more dissatisfied with his position at the Settlement. He wanted the life of a trader that he had heard so much about. He requested a transfer to the Fur Trade as Governor Simpson had suggested. His request was granted.

Campbell started his new work at York Factory where he helped sort and pack furs for shipment to England. Here he saw Governor Simpson and the two talked about the fur trade and where Campbell would be stationed. It would be the MacKenzie River District. Campbell recalled that the last words that Simpson spoke to him were: "Now, Campbell, don't you get married, as we want you for active service." What did Simpson mean by that admonishment? Men in the service often "married" Indians called "country wives," sometimes to the detriment of their work. Simpson himself had a country wife and a couple of children by her. He was to later shove her aside to marry his attractive cousin, Frances Simpson. Perhaps he didn't wish upon the young Campbell the trouble he would have to go through.

Or perhaps Governor Simpson saw in the young Campbell a man who would be dedicated to the Company, a man that he could depend on to go that extra mile. He must have known that Campbell would be a man who could take privation in his stride and seek out unknown rivers and lakes to extend the Company's trade with the Indians.

The vast land that lay to the west and north of the MacKenzie River and Fort Simpson (where Campbell was to be stationed) called the Sub Arctic, was peopled by the linguist group of Indians known as the Athapascans. There were many tribes who called this vast territory home: the Beaver, Slave, Kaska, Thaltaan, Dogrib, Tagish, Tutchone, Mountain and on the coast, the dreaded Tlingit. The Tlingit traded with the inland tribes under the auspices of the Russian American Fur Company. The Russians never went inland, leaving the trading to their Tlingit partners.

The inland Indians were a nomadic people, hunters and gatherers, roaming across this vast wilderness, living on the animals they hunted or the plants and berries they gathered in season. They were skilled hunters as well as trappers. They hunted such animals as the caribou, moose, deer and even the fearsome grizzly. They trapped the smaller animals such as beaver, mink, otter, fisher, hare and porcupine. All animals were used for food and the skins made into clothing and footwear. This country for the most part was untapped by the Hudson's Bay Company. Many of these Indians had never seen a white man.

This vast area of land was in the MacKenzie District, which covered almost half of Canada at the time. The main depot was at Fort Simpson, situated on the MacKenzie River at the confluence of the Liard River. There were two forts on the Liard River, Fort Liard and Fort Halkett. Like all Hudson's Bay Company forts and depots, they were supplied by routes on the rivers and lakes that became the highways of the fur trade.

The Liard River was very difficult to traverse as there were many rapids that required frequent portages. The water was so swift that canoes would have to be pulled upriver against the current. Men in the employ of the Company tried hard not to be sent to either Fort Liard or Fort Halkett as it was the roughest work one would encounter in all of the MacKenzie District. The man in charge of Fort Halkett was chief trader John M. McLeod.

In the summer of 1835, McLeod went on an exploration trip to see what the country to the north and west of Fort Halkett was like and if the Company could expand into that territory. He discovered Dease Lake and explored and followed the Tanzilla River to the Stikine River. In his report to Governor Simpson he described the area and said he thought it would be possible to boat down the Stikine to the Pacific. Governor Simpson wanted to establish a fort on Dease Lake and sent a letter to McPherson, the factor at Fort Simpson, requesting that an expedition get underway as soon as possible. McPherson then sent a letter to Mr. Hutchison, who had taken over Fort Halkett from McLeod. He asked Hutchison to take several men and proceed to Dease Lake and establish a new fort. They were to follow the map that McLeod had made.

In the meantime, Campbell had arrived at Fort Simpson to begin his duties. He spent a busy spring of 1835, packing the fur returns in readiness to ship out on the brigades coming from York Factory. Later came the sorting out of the trade goods and re-packing them for the outlying posts.

In the summer he was sent to Fort Liard where he was put in charge. The following winter he returned to Fort Simpson where he planned to learn more about the fur trade business.

In the spring of 1836, McPherson went off to Portage La Loche with the spring brigade, leaving Campbell in charge of the depot. As Campbell wrote later, "Nothing unusual happened other than the routine of the depot." But that was to change...

In August he was surprised to see Mr. Hutchison arrive with his men from Fort Halkett. Wasn't he supposed to have gone to Dease Lake to build a new fort?

Hutchison had started out with several men to do as he was instructed, to establish a fort on Dease Lake. They had not proceeded far when they were alarmed by a large group of "Russian Indians" (Nahannis) who were in the vicinity. Scouts had seen as many as 60 warriors, faces painted in black war paint and heavily armed. The scouts ran back to inform Hutchison that they would be slaughtered should they continue.

According to Hutchison's report, the Nahanni Indians had threatened to massacre them following the establishment of Fort Halkett, but, he was determined to fulfill Governor Simpson's orders to build the new fort and proceeded despite the danger. When his scouts reported the hostile Indians were ready to attack he thought it wise to clear out. Before Hutchison's party could load all of their gear into their canoes, they observed a large contingent of Indians advancing toward them. The men dropped their gear, jumped in their canoes and quickly paddled downstream. In his report Hutchison wrote, "Ocular demonstration then convinced me of the narrow escape that we made and that our young scouts had by no means exaggerated their numbers, but to the contrary."

Whether McPherson believed the report or not he sent it on to Governor Simpson. He also wrote a letter saying that he would persevere in establishing a post on Dease Lake the following summer. This expedition would be lead by Robert Campbell who had gladly volunteered his services. Hutchison would be passing the winter at Fort Simpson but had put in for retirement. Evidently he'd had enough of the frontier.

They met no Indians.

Soon after crossing the portage, they were at Fort Halkett which was situated on the Smith River at its confluence with the Liard. The fort was deserted and it appeared that not a single soul had visited it since Hutchison and his men had left it. Certainly no Indians.

*Continued in the next issue.

From the Publisher

“Are you still at Marsh Lake?”

I hear this question often when I am in Whitehorse and bump into people I haven’t seen for a long time. It’s as though they expect me to move back to town, get a real job and get over this romantic notion of living in the bush. Or maybe it is just a polite way of greeting someone who disappeared years ago from life as they know it.

I moved to Marsh Lake from Whitehorse ten years ago. I wanted to cut my expenses down so I could live off my writing and enjoy the things that are important to me. With some help from my family, I was able to buy and move into a tiny beachfront shack built of odds and ends left over from World War II. I planned to build an addition but soon grew discouraged. Learning carpentry seemed beyond my reach.

Enter Sam. Sam is no dummy. He knew right away that no amount of romancing could separate me from my half acre of paradise. At 300 square feet, my cabin was much too small to house two people, so he started building.

First he found some bridge timbers which he used to prop up the sagging floor. He raised the cabin six inches in front and 18 inches at the rear. Then he hauled some building materials from a torn-down house in Whitehorse. Over the years he has used the salvaged logs and lumber to build a kitchen, dog pen, woodshed, storage shed, greenhouse, an office for me and the cabin where this magazine is produced.

The house and its assortment of out buildings will never be completed in our lifetimes, but the closer we get to finishing and the more valuable the property becomes, the more we talk about moving to Whitehorse.

The move would make sense for a lot of reasons. We’d make more money. Sam would get more jobs for his printing press and I’d get more freelance writing jobs.

We wouldn’t have to make lists all the time because we could go to the store whenever we needed something.

Our dog Pooper wouldn’t be bothered with arthritis so much because we would no longer live next to a lake.

We’d live on a flat piece of land so Sam could quit complaining about the difficulties of building on rolling sand dunes.

Sam could quit building.

But we’d miss seeing eagles on the beach in summer and hearing wolves howling over by Michie Mountain on a winter night. And, without the company of misfits and ne’er-do-wells camped out here on the fringe, like us, Sam wouldn’t have as many colourful characters to write about nor stories to tell.

So, yes, we’re still here at Marsh Lake.

