NATIONAL HISTORIC PARKS
AND SITES BRANCH

DIRECTION DES LIEUX ET DES
PARCS HISTORIQUES NATIONAUX

MANUSCRIPT REPORT NUMBER 203
TRAVAIL INÉDIT NUMÉRO 203

THE CHILKOOT: A LITERATURE REVIEW

by

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(1977)

PARKS CANADA
DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN
AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

PARCS CANADA
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES
INDIENNES ET DU NORD

The Chilkoot: A Literature Review

by Richard J. Friesen

March 31, 1977

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Illustrations

The Historical Background

Introduction

To 1896 the history of the Chilkoot and White Passes was a rather prosaic story of exploration and discovery. After gold was discovered on Bonanza Creek, however, it became infinitely more exciting, for virtually everyone and everything bound for the Creeks and Dawson had to be funnelled through the arduous passes. It was another Canadian transportation epic in the most classical sense.

News of gold reached the West coast of America in the spring of 1897, and by April and May, Alaska-bound ships were crowded with would-be argonauts. They were dumped at either Dyea, a trading post at the foot of the Chilkoot Trail, or at the mouth of the Skagway River, the beginning of the White Pass Trail. Most then wound and clamoured their way to the frozen shores of Lakes Lindeman and Bennett where they built all manner of leaky craft, in anticipation of break-up, to carry them, so they thought, to Dawson. The second, larger wave arrived in the summer and fall of 1897 and did not make it to Dawson until the early spring of 1898.

Early Exploration

Before the discovery of gold, even before the subtle initial incursions of the prospectors, the coastal Chilkat and Chilkoot Indians claimed the Chilkoot Pass at the head of Taiya Inlet and the Chilkat Pass at the head of Chilkat Inlet as theirs exclusively in order to monopolize the fish oil for furs trade with the Stick Indians of the interior. Increasingly alarmed

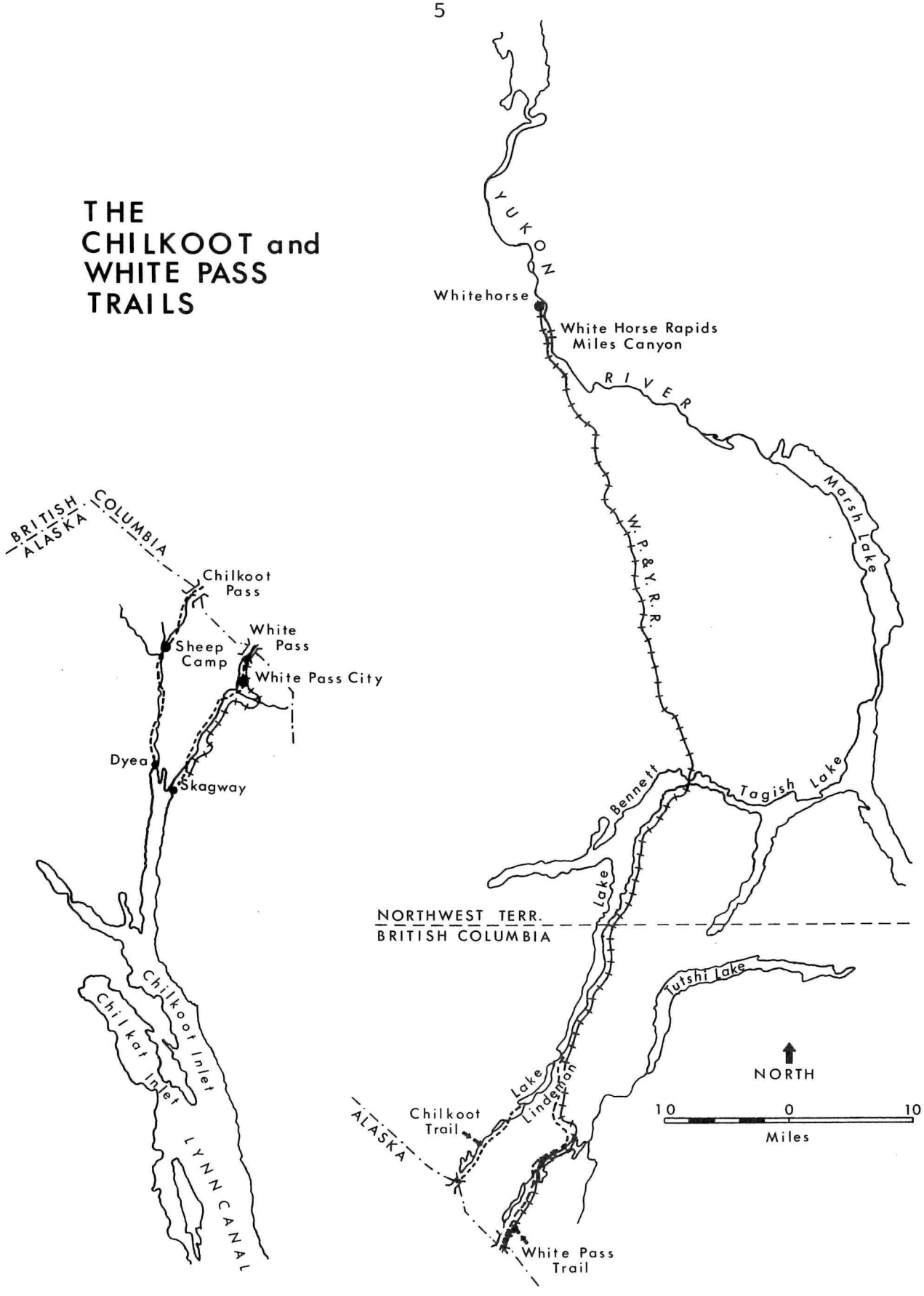
at the invasion of their domain, they burned the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Selkirk in 1850. When, in the 1870s, the slow and methodical northward search for gold focused the attention of the prospectors on the Yukon River and the Chilkoot, trouble seemed inevitable. A prospector named George Holt became the first white man to ascend the Pass into the Yukon River Basin in 1875 or 1878. He thought he had found gold over the pass and spread the news to his friends.

The Pass was opened, surprisingly enough, without major conflict. In the summer of 1879, internal problems among the Chilkats threatened to break into a major conflict. The senior United States naval officer at Sitka seized the opportunity to secure access over the Chilkoot. He contacted Klotz-Klutch, a prominent Chilkat chief, offering to restore order with a Tlingit Indian police force in return for transit rights on the Chilkoot. Klotz-Klutch agreed and in the spring of 1880, nineteen white miners led by Edmund Bean signed a statement which bound them to a code of conduct which included a prohibition on trade with the Indians and on the importation of "spirituous liquor". The negotiations were successful. In fact, the miners hired Chilkat Indians to pack their goods over the Pass. The opening of the Chilkoot Pass by the diplomatic Captain Beardslee marked the beginning of increased activity in the Yukon district. The trickle of gold prospectors grew, until in 1897, this trickle of humanity became a torrent.

The first survey of the Chilkoot Trail was made by Lieutenant Schwatka of the United States Navy. Schwatka, under orders from Brigadier General Nelson A. Miles, was to complete a military reconnaissance of Alaska including observations on the number, character and distribution of the Indian tribes, their methods of communication and the quantity

Chilkoot and White Pass Trails.

THE CHILKOOT and WHITE PASS TRAILS



and character of armaments. The information was to be used in the event of an Indian war.[1]

In the spring of 1883, Schwatka and his party of six men arrived in Alaska and hired Indian packers at Pyramid Harbour to transport the expedition's supplies over the Chilkoot Pass to the head waters of the Yukon River. Schwatka was astounded by their strength and endurance as they walked and crawled up the precipitous ascent of the Chilkoot Pass with packs of one hundred pounds or more.[2] On June 11, 1883, Schwatka and his party arrived at the summit of the Chilkoot Pass, which he named Perrier Pass for Colonel J. Perrier of the French Geographical Society.

The descent from the Summit to Lake Lindeman was made easily and rapidly. A raft was constructed "...of the somewhat formidable dimensions of fifteen by thirty feet, with an elevated deck amidships."[3] This raft was later lengthened and modified to withstand the rigours of the voyage, but was essentially the same craft that arrived at the mouth of the Yukon River. The experiences of this first survey expedition were used by Schwatka in a number of publications to inform the world of the existence of this remote trail and one of the world's mighty rivers.[4]

The Canadian government, annoyed at the American incursions, also authorized an expedition in 1887. The duties of the expedition included the determination of the international boundary between Alaska and the Northwest Territories. To accomplish the survey, a three-pronged attack was organized. George M. Dawson, director of the Canadian Geological Survey and in charge of the expedition, would lead one party from the Cassiar district in British Columbia into the Yukon, R.G.McConnell would survey Stikine River eastward to the Liard River, while William Ogilvie would lead an expedition

to the head of Lynn Canal and over the Chilkoot Pass to the Yukon River.[5]

Ogilvie's party was to run a survey line from Pyramid Harbour over the Chilkoot Pass to the 141st Meridian in order to determine the location of the international boundary. Ogilvie's published observations would provide the factual basis upon which the thousands of 1897-98 would prepare for their travels to the Klondike gold fields.

While Ogilvie was primarily concerned with the Chilkoot Pass, he followed up rumours of a second pass, lower than the Chilkoot, by sending Captain William Moore, a 65-year-old adventuresome entrepreneur who had been involved in various aspects of West coast transportation, to explore it. Moore's account convinced Ogilvie that, unlike the Chilkoot Pass, a road or railroad might be possible there.[6] Ogilvie named the new pass for Thomas White, the Minister of the Interior.

By 1888, the stage had been set for the Klondike gold rush through the Chilkoot and White Passes. The Chilkoot Pass, opened in 1880, had become a well-established route to the headwaters of the Yukon River which in turn gave access to the interior of Alaska and the area that would become the Yukon Territory. By 1888, Moore had established his homestead at the mouth of the Skagway River, built a cabin and a wharf and named these rude beginnings of a settlement Mooresville.[7] His optimism for the future development of what would be renamed Skagway was based on what he and many others, including Ogilvie, considered inevitable, the discovery of significant quantities of gold in the Yukon River basin.

In the summer of 1896, gold was discovered by Skookum Jim and his friends on Bonanza Creek, a tributary of the Klondike River. The news of the find spread rapidly throughout the territory and Alaska and by the winter, hundreds of claims had been staked. The first wave of outside miners came in

1897 and waited out that winter on the shores of Lakes Lindeman and Bennett. The real rush was touched off by the arrival of the gold-laden Excelsior on July 15, 1897 in San Francisco and the Portland on July 17 in Seattle. The news of the Portland's "ton of Klondike gold" flashed throughout the world. The rush was on!

Routes to the Gold Fields

For most of those who dropped everything in expectation of instant wealth, the immediate and obvious problem was how to get there. A number of routes were promoted through newspapers, pamphlets and guide books, with the choice dependent largely on the factors of cost and speed. The rarely used all-Canadian route consisted of various trails which started at Edmonton, followed the Athabasca, Peace, Liard and MacKenzie Rivers northward, and finally after an arduous trek, connected with the Yukon River. The journey was not only unpleasant but just barely feasible.

> From Edmonton a wagon-road of 96 miles to Athabasca landing; thence by small boat, 450 miles, to Lake Athabasca; thence down Slave River, across Great Slave Lake, and down the MacKenzie River, 1,376 miles, to the neighbourhood of Fort McPherson, near the mouth of the MacKenzie; thence up Rat River and over an all-water connection at McDougall's Pass into the Porcupine; and thence down the Porcupine to the Yukon, 496 miles--a total distance from Edmonton of 2,398 miles (Mr. Ogilvie's figures). There the would-be Klondiker, 303 miles below Dawson and against a hard current, is practically further away from his destination than if at Dyea or Skagway.[8]

Few using this route reached the gold fields in time to be anything but worn and disappointed.

The all-American route involved taking a steamer from the west coast of continental United States to either Yakutat Bay, Valdez in Prince William Sound or the head of Cook

Inlet in Alaska. All entailed a burdensome trek through the Alaskan interior to the Tanana River which flowed west into the Yukon and which necessitated a laborious trip upstream to Dawson. The Valdez, the most popular of the all-American routes, was attempted by thirty-five hundred men and women in 1897-98.[9] All had to struggle over the treacherous Valdez Glacier, establishing a horrible record of endurance.

The easiest, most expensive and time consuming route, was the all-water one through St. Michael, Alaska, near the mouth of the Yukon River. A passage could be obtained for that port from any Canadian or American city. Once there, river steamer transport was available for the remaining seventeen hundred miles to Dawson. The navigation season on the Yukon River was short and the boats were often ice-bound far from the gold fields. Only a few of the wealthier goldseekers used this route. Most chose one of the less expensive, shorter routes.

The shortest routes to the Klondike began in the Alaska Panhandle and consisted of portages of various lengths from the Pacific coast to the head waters of the Yukon River. Those convinced that this was the best route made their way to Juneau, Wrangell or to the various other ports on Lynn Canal by coastal steamer. Those landing at Juneau or Wrangell worked their way up the Taku River or the Stikine River, proceeding overland through British Columbia to the head waters of the Yukon River at Atlin or Teslin Lake. Those starting at Pyramid Harbour, on the west side of Lynn Canal, took the Dalton Trail northward, overland to the Yukon River near Carmacks, Yukon Territory.

The majority of travellers, however, chose the more strenuous, but shorter routes over the coastal mountains to the Yukon River via either the Chilkoot or White Passes. However, the trails, beginning at the settlements of Dyea and Skagway,

presented formidable obstacles which grew increasingly difficult through 1897 and 1898. The trek, especially over the Chilkoot Pass, has come to symbolize the madness that seized the world in 1897-98, as well as the hardship that was the entrance fee to a chance on the Dawson gold creeks.

The White Pass Trail

The invasion of 1897 and 1898 created a demand for services at the base of both the Chilkoot and White Passes. Two rival communities, Dyea and Skagway, were thrown together virtually over night and did all they could to ensure that their pass was the one selected by the prospective miner.

The site of Mooresville at the mouth of the Skagway River had been chosen by Captain William Moore shortly after he had determined the existence of the White Pass. His legal claims were however, ignored in the rush and greed of '98. By August of 1897, eleven hundred entries had been made on the newly-surveyed lots in the renamed townsite of Skagway. Its three thousand inhabitants lived for the most part in tents - there was little lumber. All were waiting for conditions on the White Pass to improve - it was impassable. But waiting could be congenial if one had enough money, for Skagway boasted 12 hotels, 35 restaurants and innumerable saloons and gambling halls. By mid-winter of 1897, Skagway's population was swollen to five thousand.[10]

In 1897, the White Pass trail was started on the beach in front of Skagway. The initial four miles followed a wagon road built by Captain William Moore and his son. The somewhat deceptive beginning to the trail bridged the Skagway River and immediately narrowed to a muddy, boulder-strewn path that wound and twisted its way past Black Lake, over Devil's Hill and over Porcupine Hill, names that would be etched painfully

in the memories of those who experienced them. It meandered through a swamp where it crossed and recrossed the icy Skagway River in a matter of a few miles. Chocked with perilous slimy mudholes and struggling, sweating horses, it continued to the foot of the White Pass. In 1898, White Pass City was established there, only four miles from the Summit. The distance to the Summit rose 1000 feet in a gradual slope where rain, mud and gigantic slabs of rock conspired to halt the struggling men. Once the Summit was attained, the trail descended to Lake Bennett through difficult but not impassable terrain. The trail skirted two small lakes, Summit Lake and Bernard Lake, where enterprising travellers had established a ferry service. For those who could afford the price, it provided welcome relief from their Sisyphean labour. The monstrous portage was ended at Lake Bennett where timber was whipsawed into boards for the hand-built boat which would carry the miner and his provisions in relative comfort to the gold fields.

The White Pass Trail was not initially difficult, but became so after traffic increased. The endless line of heavily burdened men and horses ground the trail into a series of slippery slopes and murderous mudholes which taxed both to their limits. The bodies of thousands of dead horses littered the way, making travel even more difficult. By September, 1897, the pass was all but closed. Of the estimated five thousand men who had started for the Klondike via the White Pass, only one-tenth were to make it to Lake Bennett in the fall of 1897.[11]

Only a few improvements were made to the White Pass trail. George A. Brackett and a few others formed the Skagway and Yukon Transportation and Improvement Company to construct a wagon road over the Pass. Construction of the road, which Brackett hoped would eventually become a railroad, began in

November of 1897 despite the usual financial trouble surrounding such projects, and was soon completed to the summit, permitting the use of horse- and man-drawn sleds through the winter of 1897-98.[12]

Plagued by recurrent financial problems and deserted by his fellow investors, Brackett sold his road to the Pacific & Arctic Railway and Navigation Company in June of 1898. This company began construction of a railway in May of 1898 and completed the line by July of 1899. If there was any doubt before July, 1899 as to the best route, there was no doubt after - take the railroad over the White Pass.

The Chilkoot Trail

In the summer of 1897, Dyea consisted of a single building, John Healy's trading post. By the spring of 1898, Dyea had become a full-fledged boom town with a transient population of 3500 to 4000. Hotels, saloons and cafes, as well as real estate offices, were springing up overnight.[13]

The Dyea or Chilkoot Trail experience began as soon as supplies were transferred to the beach, and packed above the high tide mark. The miner could then begin to relay his goods, through bustling Dyea, along the Chilkoot Trail. He could pack them or have them packed as far as the head of navigation on the Taiya River, five miles north of Dyea, by canoe or boat. A wagon road followed this portion of the river. The trail continued as a foot path through the Chilkoot Canyon to Pleasant Camp where the rudimentary beginnings of a settlement, the inevitable saloons and restaurants, existed. Another two miles and there was Sheep Camp, 1000 feet above sea level, where many miners made their first camp after leaving the coast. Sheep Camp became one of the major temporary

"towns" on the Chilkoot. The trail rose more steeply for one mile to Stonehouse, a remarkable geological formation, 600 feet above Sheep Camp. From Stonehouse to a small plateau called the Scales, the ascent was steady. The Scales were 3000 feet above sea level and marked the last stop before the Summit. The final ascent was 600 feet up a very steep slope, virtually perpendicular. In the summer the loose scree made travel exhausting, while in the winter steps had to be cut in the snow and ice for that single line of men that struggled to the summit of the Chilkoot Pass. After the Summit, there was a sharp drop to Crater Lake. The remainder of the trail to the head of Lake Lindeman was a gradual descent winding along a chain of lakes which could be ferried when boats were available. A great many relayed their goods to Lake Lindeman just as they had done on the south slope. From Lake Lindeman the equipment had to be packed or ferried to Lake Bennett where the Chilkoot and White Pass routes converged in a flurry of boat-building activity.[14]

As the multitude of personal accounts attested, the trek over the Chilkoot Pass was not easy. The transfer of an average of more than 1000 pounds of provisions and equipment per person over the mountains required all the strength and endurance a man could muster. In addition to the physical struggle against the natural elements, the rain, the snow and the topography, there was natural catastrophy. In September of 1897, a portion of one of the glaciers overhanging the surrounding ridges broke loose, sending an accumulation of ice-dammed water onto the trail. The wall of water carried debris and those camped above Sheep Camp down the Taiya River valley. Although only one man died, the loss of supplies was nearly as disasterous.[15]

A second more serious disaster occurred on April 3, 1898, when after several heavy wet spring snowfalls, an avalanche

engulfed a party of travellers descending the trail in an area about 1000 feet below the Scales. They had, ironically, vacated their camps to avoid just such an occurrence. Of the 200 people in the party, between 50 and 70 perished.[16] Skagway took advantage of this disaster to boost the White Pass as the safer route, much to the displeasure of Dyea. Traffic was, however, halted only long enough to clear the trail.

Unlike the White Pass Trail, the traffic on the Chilkoot kept moving in a steady stream. The trail was steep, narrow and rocky. Most of the packing was done by the miners themselves or by Indians who demanded extortionate wages. The tremendous demand for packing services and the competition between Dyea and Skagway forced the mechanization of packing on the Chilkoot.[17] The first tramway was built by Archie Burns in December of 1897. It was powered by a gasoline engine and consisted of a 1500 foot drum cable which pulled loaded sleds to the Summit at a fraction of the cost of hired packers. Other tramways, more sophisticated than the Burns tramway, were constructed by the Alaska Railway and Transportation Company, The Dyea Klondike Transportation Company and by the Chilkoot Railroad and Transportation Company in the spring of 1898. The last mentioned, the most advanced of these areal tramways, consisted of two loops of tower-supported cable running from Canyon City to Sheep Camp and from Sheep Camp over the Summit. The goods were transported, 400 pounds at a time, in rectangular boxes suspended on the cable. The joining of the three areal tramways into a single operation lowered price and increased the speed with which goods could reach Lake Bennett. The Indian packers now spent most of their time moving goods on the Crater Lake - Lake Lindeman section of the trail.

Conclusion

The story of the Chilkoot and White Pass Trails is a classically Canadian saga of the development of transportation to search out and exploit a primary resource. The Chilkoot Trail had been an ancient trade route controlled by the Chilkat Indians who acted as intermediaries in trade between the Indians of the coast and the interior. Early explorers used the Chilkoot as a major route into the interior of Alaska and the Yukon and publicized it through their writings. The Klondike Gold Rush saw a tremendous increase in the use of both the Chilkoot and White Passes in an urgent and unreasonable dash to the gold fields. The increased traffic made improvement of the trails not only desirable but practical. Out of the demand for transportation, a rivalry grew between Dyea on the Chilkoot and Skagway on the White Pass, which spurred the necessary investment. The lower, more gradual ascent of the White Pass allowed the use of horses which could carry more for less money than could the human packers on the Chilkoot. The development of areal tramways reduced the effort and expense of getting goods to the shores of Lake Bennett as the deteriorating White Pass Trail claimed the lives of thousands of horses that had been used to such great advantage. The ingenious Chilkoot tramways were soon over-shadowed, however, by the development of the Brackett wagon road on the White Pass Trail in 1898. The final blow in the rivalry between Dyea and Skagway occurred with the completion of the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway to Lake Bennett in 1899.

By 1899 the gold rush was over for all intents and purposes. Dyea had faded to a ghost town and would eventually all but disappear. The flurry of activity on the Chilkoot Trail was but a spectacular flash in the history of Alaska and the Yukon Territory, while Skagway and the initially undesirable White Pass endured in the developing North.

The Literature

Introduction

The Klondike Gold Rush of 1897-98 focused the attention of a depression-weary world on the remote and mystical Yukon River. The thirst for immediate knowledge was insatiable. Would-be prospectors and armchair adventurers devoured everything in print. The total number of volumes, including diaries, personal accounts, guide books and monographs, counted to over seven hundred.

While most of the material was published after 1897, pre-Gold Rush accounts of the Chilkoot and White Pass areas appeared as early as the late 1870s by such men as Frederick Schwatka and William Ogilvie. A torrent of print flooded the market -guide books in 1897 and a year later, the first of the "I was there" books. Not unexpectedly, in the early 1900s, public interest waned, not to be rekindled until the 1930s when the second generation offspring of the wave of '98 revived long buried tales of the gold madness that had gripped their elders.

Of the seven hundred items, about three hundred relate directly to the Chilkoot and White Passes, and of these, few are devoted entirely to the two trails.[1] The routes to the Klondike were generally considered part of a larger problem. As is the case with the general literature on the rush, the bulk of the writing on the two Passes is in the form of diaries, with a smaller quantity in the form of guide books. Historians have not troubled to

write many monographs on the Chilkoot or White Passes and only incidental references exist in relevant biographies.

Personal Accounts

The personal accounts of the trek to the Klondike are varied; everyone thought his experience unique and particularly worthy of publication. On one extreme, there were the tourists and gentlemen adventurers who travelled in comparative luxury even by today's standards. Equally well-prepared, but more pragmatic, were the professional prospectors. Keeping company with these two groups was a very small number of service personnel, entrepreneurs, the clergy and government officials. The ordinary and the extraordinary who crowded the passes saw the Klondike as the fabled chance to "get rich quick" - to end their worldly troubles. These were the "goldseekers," the "'98ers," the "argonoughts" and the "Klondikers" of legend.

Goldseekers' Accounts

The accounts of those who were rushing for a share of the gold that lay waiting are not literary masterpieces nor are they necessarily the best accounts of the rush to the Klondike. They are repetitive in adventure, detail and advice. In general, most begin with provisioning in one of the West Coast cities, usually Seattle or Victoria. Full of advice and burdened by his ton of provisions, the miner story-teller was transported via steamer to Lynn Canal, disembarking either at Skagway or Dyea. Generally, the vignettes of Skagway are more colourful than those of Dyea, largely because Skagway had more exciting and dangerous criminals. Usually the first transportation available was hired to convey

goods inland. If the miner was strong or poor, as was often the case, he packed his own goods.

The White Pass literature is less interesting and less abundant than that dealing with the shorter, higher, more spectacular Chilkoot. Invariably, the White Pass travellers are amazed by the shell games, gamblers and open crime along the trail, by the harshness of the land, and by the dead and rotting horses. The Chilkoot travellers, for their part, are concerned with the climb up the steeper pass. Scenes of hardship and heroism are frequent.

Once the summit was achieved, all expressed profound relief. All were equally happy when their provisions finally reached the lake's edge where a boat or skow was constructed. On the water portion of the route, tales of bad weather and rough water were recurrent. None of the Klondikers forgot the White Horse Rapids and Miles Canyon, for all intents and purposes the terminus of the trail. These first person accounts are in effect the written "oral" history of the White and Chilkoot Passes.

Typical of the approach just described is William Stanley's A Mile of Gold.[2] His experience with the Chilkoot is offered in a detailed narrative.

> From Dyea it is twenty-seven miles in a northerly direction to Lake Lindeman. It is, however, the most difficult road that I have ever traveled. I doubt if there is another such trail on the American continent. It is by far the roughest part of the journey. A canoe or boat may be used for a distance of about six miles from Dyea, which reduces the distance over which supplies must otherwise be hauled or packed to twenty-one miles. These twenty-one miles, however, are in places almost perpendicular and the trail resembles an immense, disorderly stone quarry set on edge.[3]

Stanley and his companions made the trip packing most of their own goods, although they did hire some help, which at the price

of 15 cents per pound, induced them to rid themselves of all but the most necessary items. Methods of packing, as well as the other trail activities, are described in detail. He started his trek immediately after arriving at Dyea.

> When we had brought the last of our outfits forward to 'Stone House', we commenced to put it ahead through Dyea Canyon and on to Pleasant Camp, a strip of woods about three miles long, and cached them here. This we did by sections as before, which in miner's parlance is called 'double tripping'. Here the incline was too steep for the use of sleds and we had to pack everything on our backs.[4]

The trail was crowded with the heavily burdened men stopping to rest. Too often the narrow "free highway" became blocked for long periods of time.

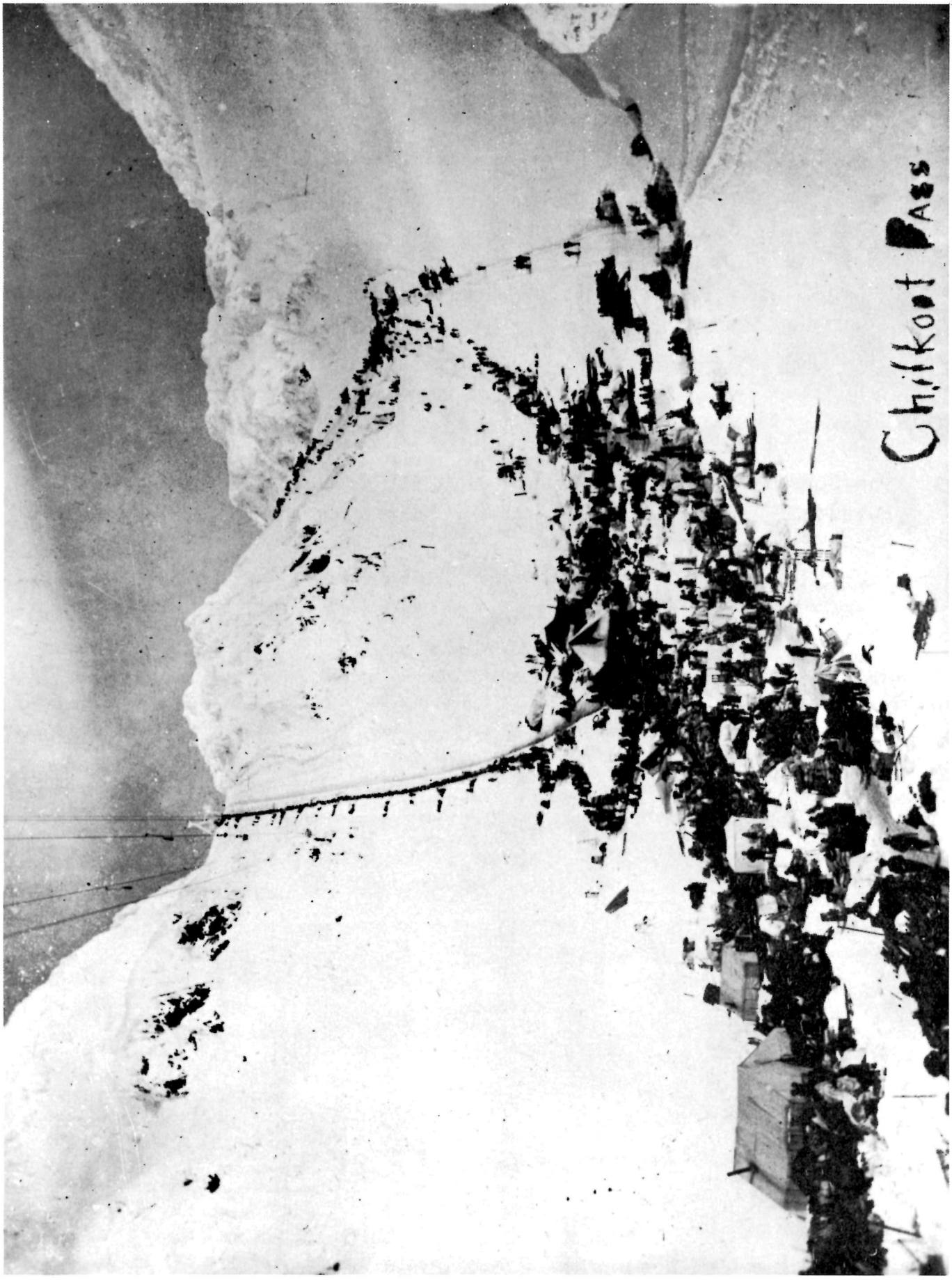
> It is here where many people give up the struggle and turn back. At times, the trail is full of men, with sore backs and feet, lying on the snow in utter despair. Many even weep with disappointment.[5]

The Stanley party continued through Pleasant Camp, Sheep Camp and onto the "Scales."

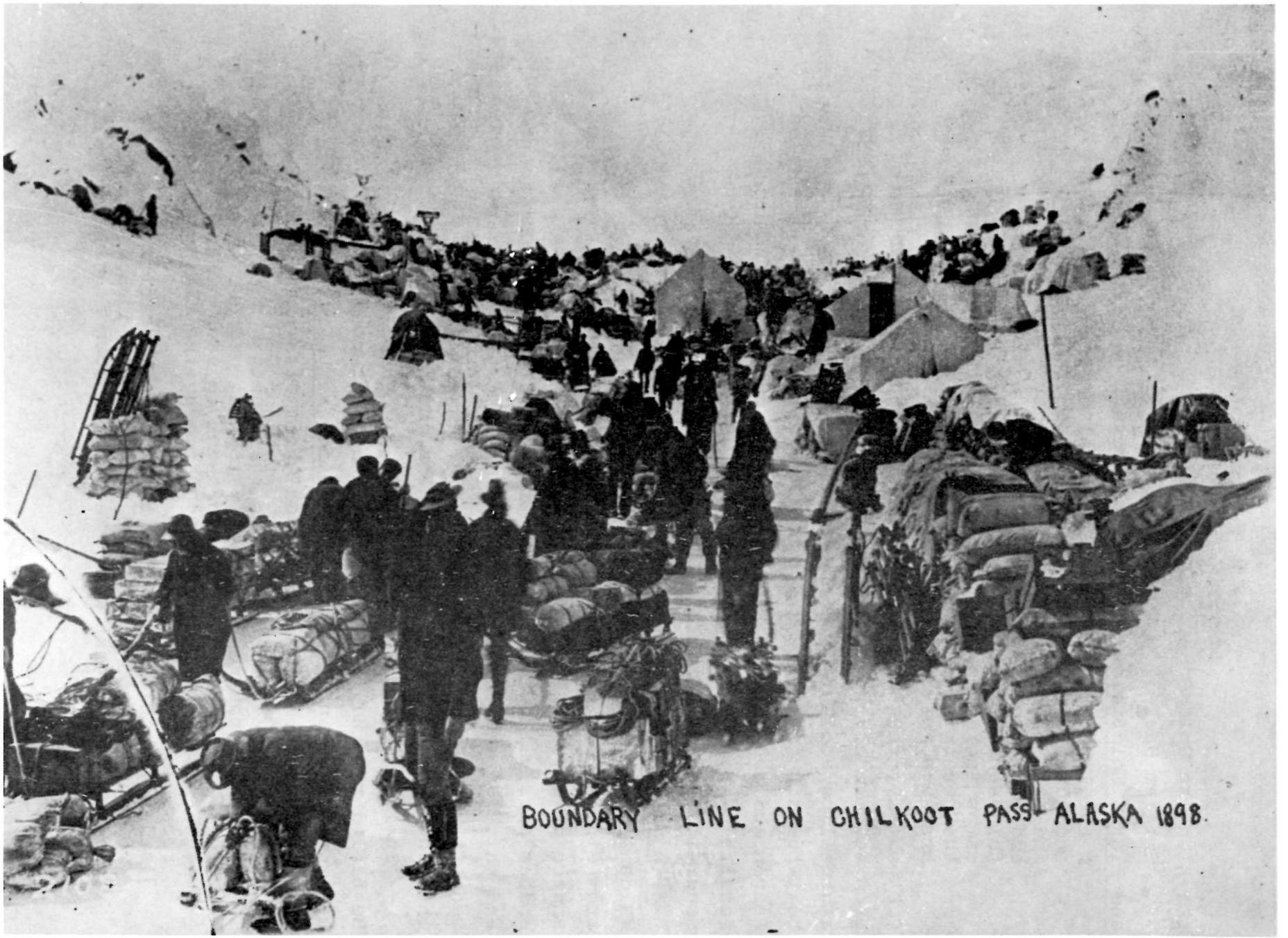
> Our next move was an ascent of seven hundred feet that is almost perpendicular. We looked at our burdens and then at the obstacles beyond and grew faint-hearted. Steps had to be cut into the snow and ice all the way to the top and the obstructions mounted as by a ladder. Seven hundred feet of actual climbing with only ice and snow to grasp and with a pack of fifty pounds dragging us back seemingly determined to plunge us to the bottom, was a task we could not accomplish. We made a contract with the Indians to have our outfit taken from here to the summit for $1.50 per hundred.[6]

Fortunately for Stanley and his companions, their resources allowed this option; for many such was not the case and they either endured or gave up their quest for gold. The Stanley party made it over, built their boat on Lake Lindeman in 1896, and went on to be one of the successful groups involved in

2 The Final Ascent, Chilkoot Pass c.1898-99 (Public Archives Canada C-4492).


Chilkoot Pass

3 The Summit, Chilkoot Pass 1898 (Public Archives Canada C-14474).


BOUNDARY LINE ON CHILKOOT PASS ALASKA 1898.

the Klondike Gold Rush.

William Haskell's most readable Two Years in the Klondike and Alaska Goldfields, a similar account, promised:

> A thrilling narrative of personal experiences and adventures in the gold regions of Alaska and the Yukon, portraying the dangers, hardships and privations of a prospectors life with faithful descriptions of the life in the gold mining camps including full and authentic information of the countries described, their underground treasure and how to find it.[7]

Fortunately, the book manages to live up to its elaborate promise, one of the few to do so. The reader is treated to a gruelling account of forty trips over the Pass, a detailed boat-building sequence and a down-river run to Dawson. Miles Canyon and the White Horse Rapids were run with disastrous results. The volume is one of the best detailed accounts of conditions on the trail.

A Dog-Puncher on the Yukon,[8] written by Arthur Treadwell Walden, a dog sled mailman in Alaska whose route took him from Circle City to Dyea on the Pacific Coast, is also a good source of information. Walden knew the Yukon and the Klondike and as a result, gives a perceptive account of the Chilkoot and White Passes. The days spent on Lakes Lindeman and Bennett are especially well-covered, giving some insight into social conditions, partnerships and diet.

In 1897 and 1898, Robert B. Medill went to the Klondike. He failed to find the elusive gold and returned with only his memories printed in his book Klondike Diary[9]. Although brief, his descriptions of the Chilkoot Pass are worthwhile.

> As we reached that notch in the mountain rim, the Pass, the roaring nearly took us off our feet! It was impossible to speak to each other even though we shouted. By watching the slippery rocks as we passed through and down the other side, we could follow the trail by the scarified tops of the rocks, made so by many nailed shoes having passed that way. We went on down nearly

4 White Pass Trail (Public Archives Canada C-18208).

LOOKING DOWN CUTOFF CANYON SHOWING WHITE PASS AND YUKON R.R. ON THE MOUNTON

> a quarter of a mile, when we heard the waves lapping on the shores of Crater Lake...we cached our packs and covered them with a canvas we had brought for a sail on our future boat.[10]

The wind and the snow of the fall of 1897 plagued the Medill party from Dyea to Lake Lindeman, although there was little novel in their miserable experience.

A rather unique record of a trip over both the White Pass and Chilkoot Pass in 1897 is given by Robert Kirk in Twelve Months in the Klondike.[11] The trip over the White Pass was typical of many, containing all the "classic" descriptions, including that of the dead horses.

> By actual count there were two thousand dead horses on the last stretch of ground in September 1897, and it was possible at that time to walk half a mile over the swamp without stepping from the carcasses.[12]

Kirk emphasizes the dismal condition of the Skagway or White Pass trail.

> But the Skagway Trail was a total failure as far as the summer of 1897 was concerned, and scarcely 10 per cent of the men who started from Skagway ever reach Lake Bennett.[13]

The inability of men to pack their goods over the Pass and their inability to sell what they gave up resulted in great piles of abandoned provisions, but not for long, as some of Skagway's enterprising merchants took quantities and resold them to the unsuspecting new arrivals.

Kirk experienced both Passes first hand and as a result was able to give a comparative evaluation of their condition in 1897.

> ...the trail [Chilkoot] was very much easier and shorter, and the number of Klondikers who chose this last route in preference to the other [White Pass], and who finally succeeded in reaching the lake, was very much larger.[14]

This viewpoint was curious, considering the more gradual nature of the slope of the White Pass and its overall lower elevation.

Like many others, Kirk was particularly impressed with the strength and endurance of the Indian packers on the Chilkoot.

Walter Storr, fresh from the "class of '98" of the University of California, offers the unique perspective of the student.[15] His family had lost all in the panic of 1893 so Walter, facing gloomy prospects, risked what he had in his Yukon venture. His book is directed toward his grandchildren and is neither sophisticated nor academic.

Some Klondikes were not satisfied with one published account. Edward B. Lung published not only Black Sand and Gold,[16] a personal history of the rush which includes a climb over the Chilkoot, but a sequel entitled Trail to North Star Gold[17] and a series of articles in Alaska Sportsman.[18] He ensured complete over-exposure for his rather unremarkable story.

Alexander Macdonald's account was infinitely more exciting and is, in fact, in a class by itself.[19] Macdonald found Skagway quite undesirable in appearance. After disembarking from the steamer and before he could clear the wharf, he encountered Soapy Samuel (Soapy Smith), Skagway's most notorious criminal. He narrowly escaped death in a face-to-face showdown. The satisfaction of Skagway's citizenry is duly if not modestly noted.[20]

His crossing of the Chilkoot was as spectacular as his landing at Skagway.

> The Chilkoot Pass has presented an almost impassable barrier to our advance; a light film of snow clung to the bare rocks and filled the numberless crevices of the 'Summit' - that last grim climb, where the Dyea trail mounts all but perpendicularly upwards to the blizzard-swept glacier cap of the pass - and no room for foot-hold could be traced. It would seem impossible to describe that frightful climb. When we reached the top and saw below the twisting line of

> Indian 'packers', who seemed to stick like flies to the white wall, we could not understand how the ascent had been accomplished.[21]

Alexander Macdonald viewed the trek to the Klondike as an adventure in which he was the hero. While the veracity of his sensational account may be questioned, he does tell of a remarkable adventure.

Once the summit of the Chilkoot was reached and the provisions transported to the shores of Lake Bennett a respite from the arduous labours of the Pass could be enjoyed as the traveller drifted or sailed down the Yukon River. On the river the major concern shifted to Miles Canyon and the White Horse Rapids near the present day site of Whitehorse. Although not as exciting as Alexander Macdonald's account, the experience of J.H.E. Secretan, a Canadian from Ottawa, is perhaps more typical.

> I tried hard to get some sort of an intelligent description of the much-dreaded 'White Horse', but in vain. I met many men who had seen the monster, and many more who said they had.....I used to get them to draw plans of the locality in the sand, which developed a good deal of hidden artistic talent, but failed most dismally to convey the slightest idea topographically to my brain. And now I was face to face with the real thing....Miles Canon is five-eights of a mile in length, and one hundred feet high. Through this gorge the whole force of the river is driven with alarming rapidity. The water in the centre is piled up four feet higher than that on the sides.[22]

The formidable Miles Canyon was successfully run and "At two p.m., the Eva, once more dismasted, and everything covered with tarpaulins, was cut loose, and at 2:02 or thereabouts she was safely moored below the much respected 'White Horse.'"[23]

"The Klondike Gold Region, Account of a Six Months' Trip Through the Yukon Gold Fields,"[24] a "how to do it" account by Robert Oglesby, emphasizes the journey from Lake Lindeman

onward. "The Real Klondike"[25] by J.S.Easly-Smith and Frances Lloyd-Owen's Gold Nugget Charlie[26] present less detailed accounts. Neither are outstanding. The son of the unfortunate founder of Skagway, Bernard J. Moore, authored Skagway in Days Primeval[27] which deals with the White Pass. There are also items by Murry Morgan,[28] Walter R. Hamilton[29] and Patsy Henderson[30], the companion of George Carmack, that like the above, are only marginally informative.

Newspaper Correspondents' and Photographers' Accounts

The newspaper coverage of the Klondike Gold Rush was good; Pierre Berton called it the "best-covered" event of the 19th century.[31] All of the major North American publications had correspondents on the spot, as did some of the leading British press, as well as magazines such as Harper's, Scribner's and The Century. Each sent back on-the-spot reports of the exciting adventure. Some even turned their experiences into books.

Probably the best of these was Tappan Adney's The Klondike Stampede of 1897-98, first published in 1899.[32] The book received an initial poor reception because it was somewhat late getting into an already saturated market.[33] The book is significant and a recent reprinting is indicative of its finding a place in gold rush history. Adney went into the Klondike over the Chilkoot in the summer of 1897. He began sending out articles which were published by his employer, Harper's Weekly, beginning in the fall of that year.

The abilities and outlook of the newspaperman were quite different from the rest of those on the trail. In true journalistic fashion, Adney ferreted out the Managing Director of the Alaskan and Northwestern Territories Trading Company and from him obtained very optimistic plans for the

White Pass.

> We have cut a trail over the summit from Skagway, at a cost of $10,000. We own the town site of Skagway, and are building wharves, etc. We cut the trail mainly to prospect for the railroad. I went over the trail on the 15th of July and came back on the 16th. Then the trail did not go beyond the summit, but we had men working there right along since. It is a private trail: but we are about the only people who are not taxing the miners, and we don't want to do so at any time. We expect to get a few miles of the railroad built this fall; but even when the railroad is done there will be many who will go over the trail. It may be that we shall charge a small toll. One of my present purposes is to try to reduce the price of packing, which is now 20 cents a pound, and we mean to see that the miners get supplies at a reasonable cost.[34]

With meticulous attention to detail, Adney relates the character of those who shared the passage to Skagway, the land and first impression of the boom town, and a unique description of the formation of a committee of passengers to organize orderly unloading of provisions from the ship and to guard against theft while on shore. Adney was off and up the trail almost immediately, but its poor condition and eventual closure for repairs forced him to abandon his plans of crossing the White Pass. He returned to Skagway. The Chilkoot was his only option.

Through Adney's studious observation, the settlements at Sheep Camp, Lake Lindeman and Bennett Lake were captured in vivid pictures. The activity in these camps was ceaseless, especially at Bennett City where the first-time shipwrights worked feverishly in a race against the "freeze-up."

> Every one is in a rush to get away. Six to ten boats are leaving daily. They are large boats, with a load of five to ten men each. The boats are of several kinds. A fleet of seven large bateaux got off as we arrived, but the favorite and typical

> boat is a great flat-bottomed skiff, holding two or three tons; in length over all, twenty-two to twenty-five feet; beam, six or seven feet; sides somewhat flare; the stern wide and square; drawing two feet of water when loaded, with six to ten inches freeboard; rigged for four oars, with steering-oar behind...Well forward, a stout mast is stepped, upon which is rigged, sometimes, a sprit-sail, but usually a large square-sail made generally from a large canvas tarpaulin.[35]

Once the boat was in the water and its owners were assured that it would float, only one serious obstacle remained - Miles Canyon and the White Horse Rapids. All who encountered them, including Julius M. Price,[36] special artist-correspondent for the Illustrated London News, feared trouble.

> Miles Canon, as the first of them is called, is a deep, narrow gorge, about 600 yards in length, through which the river rushes at a terrific pace, a mass of foaming, swirling water, and an awe-inspiring, roaring sound which is heard a long way off. There were quite a number of people waiting to see boats come along, so we sat down and watched for a few moments. We saw several good-sized ones go through, and although they certainly did so without accident, I felt I should not have cared to do it in our canoe. Several empty boats passed, and they appeared to run less risk of being smashed against the sides of the canon than when there were occupants in them to steer their course.[37]

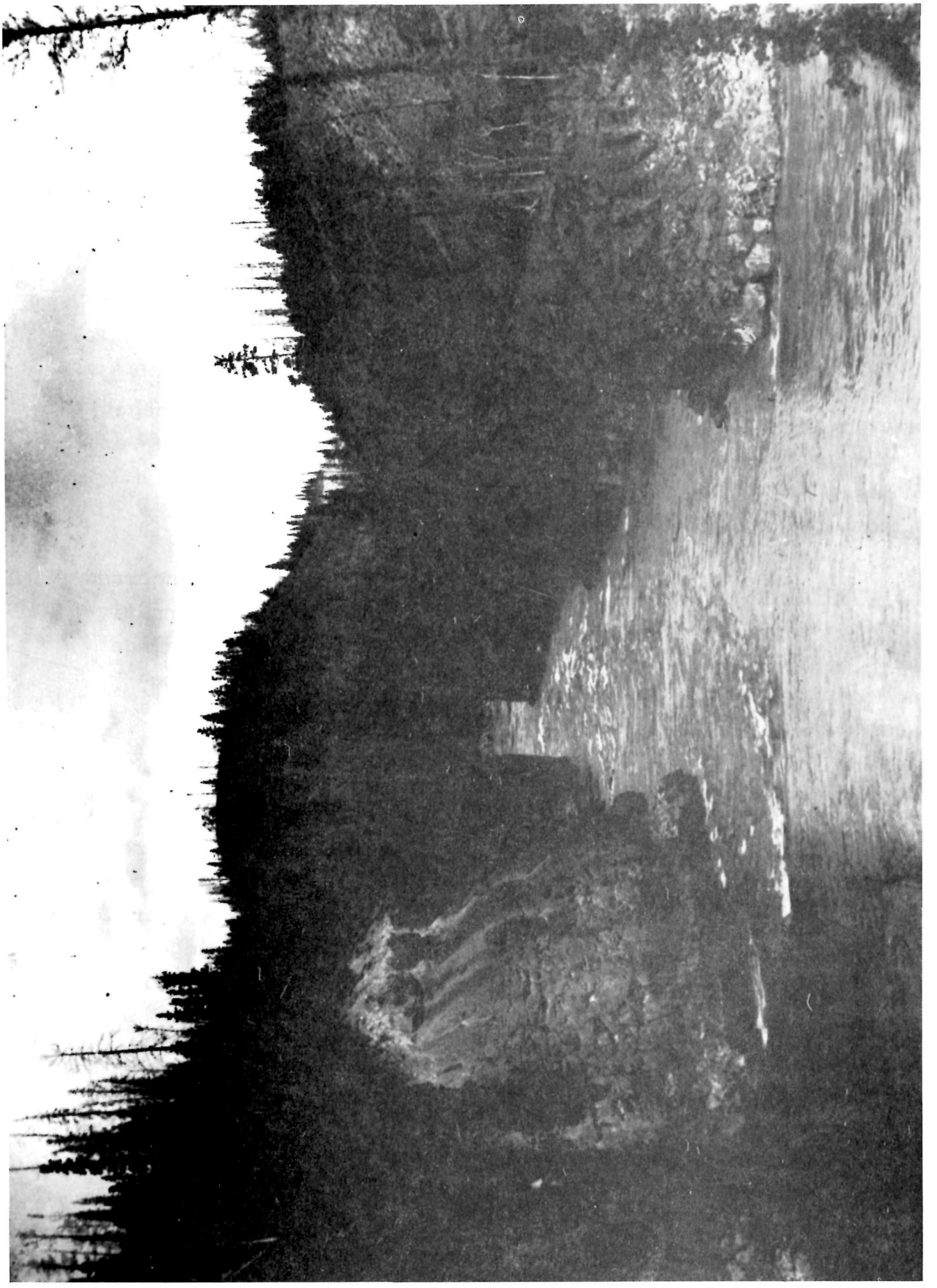
Price's sensible approach to Miles Canyon lacks colour. Many more less cautious accounts do exist and they seem to be in the majority, as exemplified by the account of Alexander Macdonald.[38] The White Horse Rapids follow almost immediately after the Canyon. The straightforward style of Price gives a factual if unexciting view of the second part of the obstacle.

> This was the dreaded White Horse Rapids, of which one had heard and read so much. At first sight it does not impress so much as the canon, as the river here runs through rocky banks,

5 Lake Bennett, B.C. c.1898 (Public Archives Canada C-8258).


2144
LAKE BENNETT B.C.

6 Miles Canyon c.1898 (Public Archives Canada C-13325).



> which though steep, are not formidable. The actual rapids are nearly a mile in length, in one part the river plunging through a narrow passage of rocks, over which there is a very steep fall of several feet. This is the most dangerous part, and at the point, on our arrival, was gathered quite an audience to watch the boats come down, waiting possibly for something to happen, though had an accident occurred, not a soul could have done anything but look on as no help was possible.[39]

Completely intimidated by the roaring waters, Price, his canoe and baggage were transported around the danger on a tramway for the cost of three cents per pound. The manager of the service, Mr. Maculey, was optimistic that people were beginning to realize that the charges were small when compared to the possible total loss of boat and supplies.

Frederick Palmer was a special correspondent for Scribner's. His book, published in 1899, was more concerned with the gold diggings, but he did provide a brief narrative of his encounter with the Chilkoot. The crossing was made without trouble, allowing Palmer to observe the toiling miners. Strength and endurance were tested everyday on the trail while hardship and utter frustration were commonplace. Palmer portrayed it all with equal sympathy.[40]

The "poet of the Sierras" and special correspondent for the Hearst newspapers, Joaquim Millar, was also there. He had been a gold miner in California, Idaho and Oregon. Even though he was sixty years old, he was eager to participate in the initial rush to the Klondike. Millar's "Stampeders on the Klondike: how I missed being a millionaire" is a poetic look at the stampede and the crossing of the Chilkoot.[41] An unsigned article, "To Chilkoot Pass, 1897, An Uncollected Eyewitness Report," gives further insight into Millar's unique perception of the rush.[42]

The photographic coverage of the Klondike Gold Rush was abundant. Of the thousands of photographs taken, the

one of the heavily burdened men struggling up the snow-covered steepness of the Chilkoot has come to symbolize the rush of '98.

Many photographers braved the unbelievably adverse circumstances to photograph the historical event with their cumbersome equipment. The story of these men has yet to be written. A great number of photographs were preserved in archives, museums and libraries, but only the La Roche[43] and Hegg[44] collections were singled out for special pictorial publications. Both of these works portray, in an indisputable fashion, the essence of the Klondike and the conditions under which the Chilkoot and White Passes were crossed. James Blower[45] does the same thing for the men who chose the "all-Canadian" route.

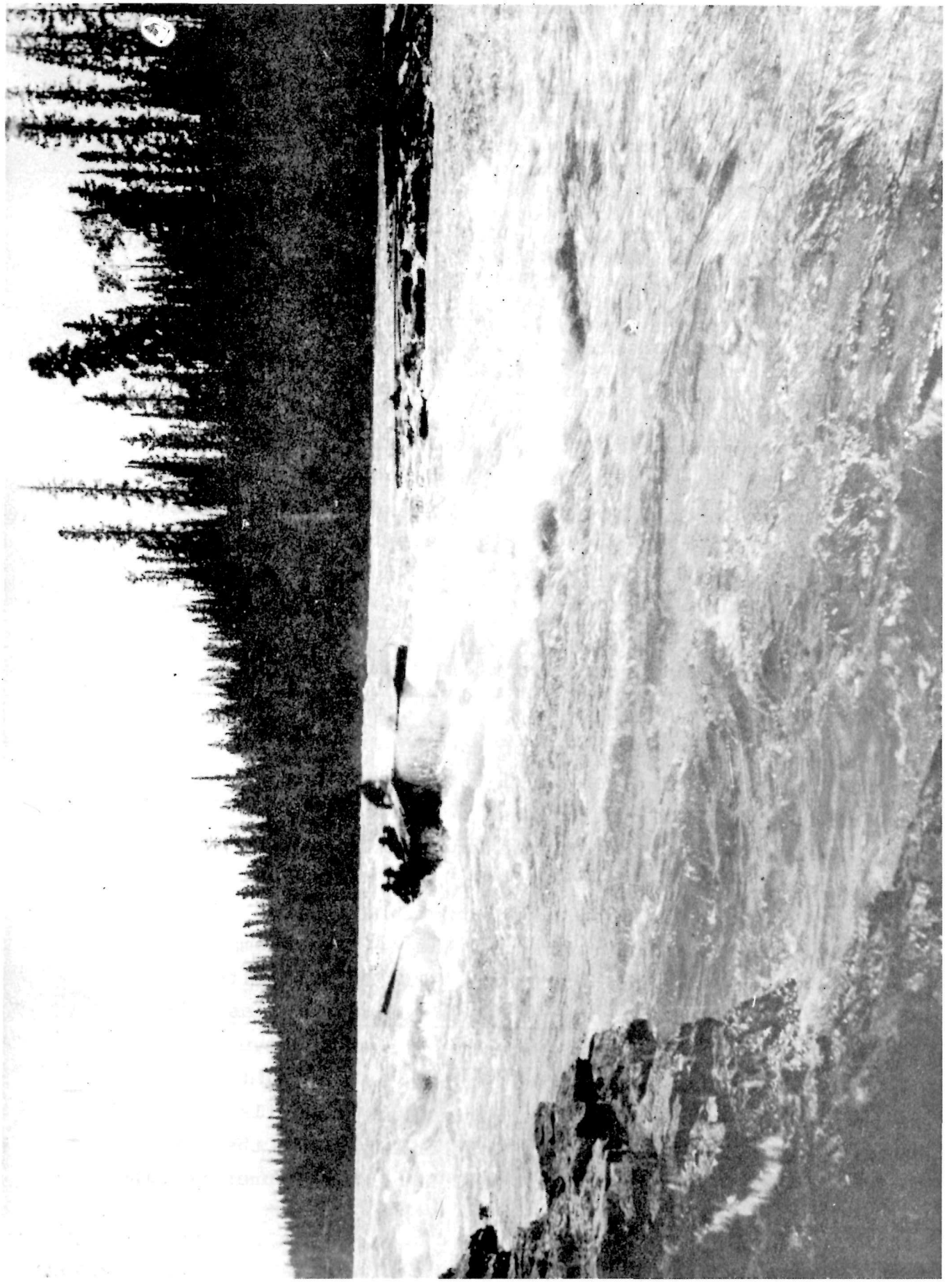
Harry Suydam,[46] in the fifth of a series of articles of the stampede, explains the dilemma of the photographer and the strange sights seen on the trail. The photographer A.E.Hegg was not without his problems while recording this epic struggle of man. Murry Morgan has shed some light on the conditions Hegg had to endure.[47] The published accounts of the professional writer and expecially the photographer provided a source of some of the most objective descriptions of the rush.

Gentleman Adventurers in the Klondike Gold Rush

For most the Klondike was a source of wealth, yet there existed, at the time of the rush, a very small minority who climbed the Chilkoot because it was there, and consequently could observe the stampede from a unique and comfortable perspective.

A.A.Hill provided "an unvarnished account of a Klondikers experiences" in "The Klondike."[48] Hill lamented the coming of the railroad to the White Pass, for he was of the opinion

7 The White Horse Rapids 1898 (Public Archives Canada C-6804).



that travel by rail "gives neither education, experience, nor character." The upshot of this is reflected in his account.

> The difference between the journey to Dawson as it was last year, and the same trip as it will be this season, will be almost like the change from the age of romance to that of science. For there was romance, pathos, comedy, tragedy, and burlesque in the gold exodus of a year ago. The struggle brought out the best in men as well as the worst. It tempered character as the forge tempers the finest steel, or shattered it as if it were glass.[49]

This very romantic attitude would hardly have been shared by the pragmatic miner, struggling with his heavy burdens over the Chilkoot and White Passes. Hill had time to appreciate the Chilkoot's beauty near Sheep Camp.

> Between two lofty granite peaks there rests a great glacier, suspended so insecurely, apparently, that a touch of a finger would send it crashing into the valley below.... When the weather is dull, it is a turquoise blue, on sunshiny days it flashes like a huge diamond.[50]

The ostentatious description of the trail from Dyea to Dawson is informative, obviously written by one free of the drudgery of the miner, whose presence he seems to ignore.

Harry DeWindt, a gentleman explorer of some reputation, went through the Klondike in 1897. New York to Paris by land was the original goal, but unfortunately for Mr. DeWindt, something went wrong and the trip was completed only as far as the Bering Straits. The record of this journey was left in Through the Gold-fields of Alaska to Bering Straits,[51] a graphic step-by-step narrative of the rush over the Chilkoot. Other routes, including the White Pass, were mentioned, but the choice for the Chilkoot was made because it was shorter. He probably chose the more spectacular route because it would have made better reading. His descriptions suggest as much.

> We soon reached the actual base of the Chilkoot, and here hard work commenced in grim earnest up the granite face of the mountain. The distance from our camping-ground to the summit is barely 1000 feet, but the ascent occupied nearly two hours. There is of course, no path, nor would it be possible to make one; for the rocks are loose and insecure, and the passage of a man will often send a boulder crashing down, to the deadly peril of those below....The last 300 feet was scaling the walls of a house....I more than once had serious thoughts of turning back.[52]

Once the Summit was achieved, DeWindt and his party followed the crowd. A boat was built on Lake Lindeman and after some difficulty, they reached the Yukon River. The description of the trip through the stormy and ice-filled lakes is not unlike other writers' stories, but the literate clarity with which it is related is unusual. A hint of the dramatic is always present as the trip through Miles Canyon and the White Horse Rapids would suggest.

> Midway down the rapid is broken by a perilous whirlpool caused by a circular enlargement of the channel. The bodies of those drowned here are never recovered.[53]

Despite the melodramatics, DeWindt's book, as well as that of A.A.Hill, allow a glimpse of the Klondike that differed markedly from that of the miners.

Government Officials' Accounts

Prior to the spring of 1880, the Chilkoot Pass was the closely guarded domain of the Chilkat Indians. As was discussed earlier, only the careful negotiations on the part of officials of the United States Navy succeeded in changing this. The agreements arranged by Captain L.A.Beardslee[54] opened the way for increased prospecting activity and eventually a mass invasion of the passes.

One of the earliest accounts of the Chilkoot Pass was provided by Lieutenant Schwatka of the United States Navy. A Summer in Alaska[55] published in 1894 and Along Alaska's Great River,[56] the same book with a different title, were popularizations of his military reconnaissance of the Yukon River. The narrative was dramatic, especially the final ascent of the Chilkoot.

> Up bank, almost perpendicular they scrambled [Chilkat packers] on their hands and knees, helping themselves by every projecting rock and clump of juniper and dwarf spruce, not even refusing to use their teeth on them at the worst places. Along the steep snow banks and the icy fronts of glaciers steps were cut with knives, while rough alpenstocks from the valley helped them maintain their footing. In some such places the incline was so steep that those having boxes on their backs cut scratches in the icy crusts with the corners as they passed along, and oftentimes it was possible to steady one's self by the open palm of the hand resting against the snow. In some of these places a single mis-step, or the caving in of a foothold would have sent the unfortunate traveler many hundred feet headlong to certain destruction. Yet not the slightest accident happened, and about ten o'clock, almost exhausted, we stood on the top of the pass, enveloped in a cold drifting fog, 4240 feet above the level of the sea (a small portion of the party having found a lower crossing at 4100 feet above sea level). How these small Indians, not apparently averaging over one hundred and forty pounds in weight, could carry one hundred pounds up such a precipituous mountain of ice and snow, seems marvelous beyond measure...[57]

Schwatka's exciting exploration did much to publicize the dreaded Chilkoot and the mighty Yukon. His colourful descriptions were later used by other writers to create ominous reputations for natural obstacles, such as Miles Canyon, which Schwatka referred to as the "Grand Canyon of the Yukon."

The need for accurate information about the Yukon territory and the desire to assert Canadian sovereignty over the district led to the formation of the Yukon Expedition. As was discussed earlier, a three-pronged survey of the western Northwest Territories was undertaken. A number of publications resulted.

William Ogilvie's work is of special note in that he surveyed over the Chilkoot Pass and down the Yukon River. The information concerning his explorations is scientific and detailed. Apart from his report to the Department of the Interior,[58] Ogilvie published a guide to the Yukon district for intending prospectors.[59] In many cases, when guides, discussed later, referred to "Official Reports" as authorities, they quoted freely from Ogilvie's report of the Yukon Expedition and, to a lesser extent, from George M. Dawson's similar work.[60] Ogilvie became a noted Yukon expert. He gave numerous lectures on the Gold Rush, two of which were published in 1897.[61] In 1913, he published Early days on the Yukon and the story of its gold fields,[62] which popularized his earlier books. The publications of Dawson and especially Ogilvie were unsurpassed regarding reliable information about the routes into the gold fields, as is indicated by their adoption by contemporary guides.

J.E.Spurr and W.H.Dall produced reports drawing on geological explorations of Alaska and the Yukon River made for the United States government and concerning the possibilities of gold discoveries. The Yukon Territory[63] deals with Dall's expedition via St. Michael, Alaska, in 1866-68. Excerpts from the earlier-mentioned works of Dawson and Ogilvie were included to complete the survey of the Yukon. The contribution of J.E.Spurr, Through the Yukon Gold Diggings,[64] dealt in some detail with the history of of the Chilkoot Pass and included a narrative based on his

personal travel of 1896. The information was interesting but not unique, while his discussion of Chilkat Indian culture and language are unique, but fail to throw any light on the prehistoric and historic use and control of the Chilkoot trail.

Colonel S.B.Steele of the N.W.M.P. was in command of the Yukon detachment of this Canadian police force during the Klondike Gold Rush. His autobiography contains material on the rush as well as on his numerous other police assignments.[65] Steele's account was most interesting for the illumination of the adverse conditions under which the police had to work, collecting customs duties and maintaining law and order among the incoming hordes. The Avalanche of April 3, 1898, was of significant consequence to merit mention in the officer's memoirs. The dispatch with which the N.W.M.P., under Steele's command, handled this emergency could only build respect for the Canadian "Mounties."[66] George A. Pringle, a member of the Force present during the rescue operations, left a record in print. The article "Tragedy on the Chilkoot Trail" relates Pringle's version of the incident and subsequent events.[67]

These are the only two published personal accounts that exist concerning the experience of the N.W.M.P. on the mountain passes. An overall view of their history in the Yukon with a considerable discussion of their duties during the Gold Rush is available in Morrison's "The Mounted Police on Canada's Northern Frontier, 1895-1940," which will be discussed in detail later.[68]

Women in the Gold Rush

While women in the Klondike Gold Rush were not unknown, they left few accounts. Martha Louise Black wrote My Ninety

Years[69] on the occasion of her ninetieth birthday, essentially her My Seventy Years[70] written twenty years later. The book told the story of her trip to, and experiences in, the Klondike with her husband, George Black. Unlike her male counterpart, Mrs. Black had the good fortune of having a "gallant" partner willing to walk both trails to ascertain which would be more suitable.[71] The Chilkoot was chosen even though it was judged the more difficult climb. Mrs. Black, with her 19th century femininity, adds a touch of humanity or sentimentality to her description of the trek, which in other aspects differs little from previously-discussed narratives.

> For the first hour we walked over the trail of the recent slide. In the melting snow I saw a bit of blue ribbon. Bending down, I tugged at it and pulled out a baby's bootee. Did it belong to some venturesome soul who had come to seek a fortune for a wife and baby? Would those who were waiting for him wait in vain? Was this one of the hundreds of tragedies of this mad stampede?[72]

Mrs. Black's experience was one of gruelling physical exertion, interspersed with appreciative views of the natural surroundings. After one day of particularly strenuous climbing, Martha Louise tells her readers the following:

> My brother, put his arm around me and carried me most of the last mile, Captain Spencer hurried into the village, to the Tacoma Hotel, to get a bed for me.[73]

Being a woman on the trail would appear to have had its advantages. Black's account is excellent.

A school teacher from Saint Joseph, Missouri, went to the Yukon in 1898. Her name was Lulu Craig and her experiences were recounted in Glimpses of Sunshine and Shade in the Far North.[74] Lulu Craig made her ascent of the Chilkoot in March of 1898 in the company of her brother, his wife and

their nine year old daughter. The account is not as informative as that of Mrs. Black. In general, the impression was of a group of tourists sauntering along a "holiday trail" which, by chance, happened to be crowded with gold-crazed men. Although the trip was arduous, they "...had quite a few luxuries, which the ordinary camper had not; such as china, silver, table-cloths, doilies and napkins...."[75] While Lulu Craig thought the sight of the men toiling like beasts of burden "terrible" she found, of all she had seen,

> ...there are three visions which in delight shall be most often recalled and they are the gorgeous sunsets of an Arctic sky, the brilliant Aurora Borealis of the North, and Dutch Harbour, the cyclorama of marvelous beauty of mountain, of sky and sea.[76]

There are a number of contributions from the female point of view that are outstanding. Flora Shaw, in a published address to the Royal Commonwealth Society of London, presented an account of the ascent of the Chilkoot that is obviously tempered by the passage of time.[77] M.C.Shand[78] related a trip over the Chilkoot with her husband in the vanguard of the rush in 1897 in which they were part of most of the major events on the trail. Because of poor health, David and Peggy Shand were forced to stop at the Stewart River junction where they operated a stopping house for many years. An account written in a secondhand fashion by Katherine Sleeper from letters she received from the Yukon emphasizes the difficulties of hauling supplies over the Chilkoot.[79] The "rambling" and "descriptive" article draws an interesting analogy, comparing the ascent to pulling a heavily-loaded sledge up the side of Mt. Washington. This was a warning to the faint-of-heart.[80]

There are a number of items published after the rush

that, from their titles, appear interesting. Cameron's A Cheechako in Alaska and the Yukon[81], Patchell's My extraordinary years of adventure and romance in Klondike and Alaska[82], Kelly's "A Woman's Trip to the Klondike"[83] and Bloundt's North of 53, An Alaskan Journey[84] are initially of interest. On closer examination, however, they prove to be accounts of post-gold rush trips to the Yukon via the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway with unoriginal surveys of Gold Rush history.

The personal narratives written by women differed very little in content from those written by men. They did, however, add a different perception of the "trail of '98."

Guides to the Klondike

Introduction

During the years 1896 to 1899 when gold rush fever was at its zenith, the thirst for information was insatiable. The thousands eager for easy instant wealth provided a ready market for information about the Klondike and Yukon gold diggings. The principal questions that needed answering were: Where was the gold and how did one get there? What were the costs involved in getting to the gold fields? To satisfy the sudden market, would-be Klondike and gold-mining experts bent to the task of producing guide books. The authors were from diverse backgrounds; some had actually been to the Klondike via the routes they recommended and sincerely tried to put their experience in print to guide the masses "rushing" for the riches. On the other extreme were those who saw the potential for a private eldorado

through the printer's press. Often these unscrupulous or simply ignorant people had not the slightest idea of the conditions or hazards of the trails.

The quality of the publications varied tremendously. Many were "step-by-step" descriptions of the author's trip into the Klondike. In most cases, these were personal accounts of the individual's search for gold with a liberal sprinkling of advice on history, geography, routes and preparation. Others were secondhand summaries based on interviews, official government expedition reports, and already-published sources. The worst and most unreliable "guides" were those made up of excerpts from the highly sensationalized newspaper articles that dealt with the spectacular gold discoveries. They rarely contained anything practical about the Yukon, but were worth their weight in optimism.

This type of literature, sizable in relation to the total volume concerned with the Chilkoot, provides an interesting view of the rush and perhaps more important, a real insight into the mood and enthusiasm of the times. It was for this reason that a detailed examination of the available material was made. It is necessary to emphasize that the focus of this inquiry was the Chilkoot and White Passes, for the guides often dealt with access to the Klondike by a multitude of routes. The advising authors generally deal with all aspects of the proposed adventure from preparation to gold mining.

The Guides

Miner W. Bruce's Alaska Its History and Resources, Gold Fields, Routes and Scenery, appeared in 1895 and is an example of one of the earliest guides.[85] Bruce never

actually names the route he described as over the "summit" beyond the Chilkoot Inlet, although it was readily apparent from his description of the Ty-a (Dyea) trail landmarks that the pass described is the Chilkoot. His information and advice were explicit concerning the time best suited to crossing, methods of packing and suggested provisioning lists. In 1895 only a few prospectors went over the Chilkoot in comparison to the years 1897 and 1898, and as a result, the conditions on the trail were excellent. A quantity of advice about the trip beyond Lakes Lindeman and Bennett was given, cautioning the would-be traveller about Miles Canyon and the White Horse Rapids on the Yukon. Veazie Wilson's concise 72-page guide contains 90 sections on ways into the Yukon.[86] Like Bruce's book, the pamphlet was not clouded by the sensationalism of the reports published after the gold discoveries of 1896. Both books, even though they preceeded the strike on Bonanza Creek, exuded confidence in the potential of the Yukon River valley.

Many of the guide books that appeared in 1897 were merely compilations of material from various other sources. Advice was based on collections of newspaper accounts, personal accounts of returned miners, and government reports. One of the good examples of this type of information summary was Yukon Gold Fields by C.H.Lurgin.[87] His descriptions of the major routes to the Klondike were preceeded by an abridgement of mining regulations and an excerpt from William Ogilvie's report. The sections on the White Pass and Chilkoot routes, although short, do show that the work must have been of some value in 1898. The White Pass trail is described with clarity.

> The first four miles are in the bed of the river and the ascent is gradual. At four miles the canyon is reached, and here the route becomes more difficult. For seven miles the trail works its way along the

> mountain side rising steadily for almost the entire distance. This is the only hard part of the route. The next three miles is a gentle rise, and they carry the trail to the summit, an elevation of 2,600 feet above the sea level. The country here broadens out into a valley five miles wide, having a gentle slope to the east. In the twenty miles between the Summit and Windy Arm on Tagish Lake, the total descent is only 340 feet. From the summit valleys also extent to Lindeman Lake and Taku Arm on Tagish Lake.[88]

Lurgin estimated an optimistic six hours to reach the Summit and two days to finish the trip to Tagish Lake. If this was ever possible, it was only before the rush deteriorated the trail and congested the facilities.

The Chilkoot Pass was similarily examined.

> For six miles from Dyea the route lies up a river valley, the stream being navigable for canoes, in the summer. The canon is then reached, and here begins a sharp ascent to Sheep Camp. From Sheep Camp the trail extends for eight miles up the rugged sides of the mountain and is impassable for horses. From the Summit to Lake Lindeman, nine miles, there is an easy descent, that is easily traversed when the snow is on the ground, but is very rough in the summer season. The total distance from Dyea to Lake Lindeman is twenty-seven miles. The lake is five miles wide, and at its foot a short portage is necessary. Lake Bennett is reached at about a mile and is twenty-four miles long. From this point the route is by water down the Lewis River, being the same as that at present taken from Tagish Lake by the British Yukon Company's route.[89]

This description, like many others, failed to anticipate the difficulties resultant from the hordes of men who would swarm onto the trails in 1898 as a result of the publication of many similar books.

A.E.Ironmonger Sola's Klondyke: Truth and Facts of the New Eldorado was perhaps the most accurate and realistic book published as a guide to the Yukon in 1897.[90] A sober

warning that every foot of ground in the "Klondyke" region had been taken up by June of 1897 was given in the introduction to the concise 92-page book. The multitudes planning their trips were advised to strike out for new places as Sola judged the chances of finding a paying claim as hopeless. Sola based his advice on his experiences in the Yukon from 1894 to 1897, although he draws on Ogilvie's reports for "official" information about the country. The guide contains an unusually exhaustive discussion of routes, prospecting, mining regulations and methods, weather conditions and even agriculture in the short Yukon summer. However, Sola's realization that the expected influx of miners would tax the routes and facilities made the book unique. This farsighted revelation was taken into account in the presentation of the information.

William Ogilvie, upon whom many relied for "official" information, wrote The Klondike Official Guide.[91] Based on his Yukon exploration and vast knowledge of the Klondike area, it was not published until 1898, perhaps too late to be of practical use to the main body of the rush. Routes to the Yukon Gold Fields, Comparative advantage of all possible routes fully set forth by a U.S. Government Official was published by the United States Geological survey in 1897.[92] The author, William C. Hayes, was convinced that a railroad joining navigation on the Pacific with that on the Yukon via Wrangel and the Stikine River valley was the only solution to the Klondike's transportation problems. A very discouraging assessment of the Chilkoot and White Passes was given in support of his theory. The Hayes guide is not unbiased.

Among the first to publish guides in 1897 were the various commercial concerns which had a vested interest in the size of the rush. Joseph Ladue was a prime example.

The founder of Dawson was one of the first men to scale the Chilkoot, having followed "new strikes" through the United States into British Columbia and finally to the Yukon. Pierre Berton calls him "a confirmed optimist, wiry, keen-eyed and cheerful," a "born booster" and a "promoter,"[93] When Ladue failed to find gold in the Yukon, he established himself as a trader. In 1896, his presence on the future site of Dawson allowed him to reap the benefits from the real estate bonanza that was part of the Stampede.[94]

Klondyke Facts; Being a Complete Guide Book to the Gold Regions of the Great Canadian Northwest Territories and Alaska, a book consisting of 205 pages of advice, was published in 1897.[95] The guide's epitome, Klondike Nuggets, A brief Description of the Great Gold Regions in the Northwest Territories and Alaska appeared in September of 1897 and sold for ten cents a copy.[96] There can be little doubt that Joseph Ladue sought to capitalize on the activity generated by his and other books. He never intended to make his fortune on book sales. A later article by the Ladue Yukon Transportation Company is a four page testimonial to the all-water route via St. Michael, Alaska.[97] This article appeared in 1898, when it became apparent that the author's commercial ventures had taken a new and expanded turn.

An interesting contribution to the literature guiding men to the Klondike is Edward Holland's book which promised:

> The most complete and reliable work of its kind published giving in detail official reports, correct maps, routes of travel and supplies needed and all the information required by those intending to go to the Northern Gold Fields.[98]

However, Holland delivered nothing more than Ogilvie's report with additional advice on provisioning, duties to be paid or

avoided and regulations on mining and claim registry in Canada and the United States. As the proprietor of the Commercial Hotel in San Francisco. "...headquarters for Yukon miners for the past ten years...," Holland had very obvious allegiances to his own accumulation of wealth. A good number of the book's 56 pages were devoted to advertising the goods and services required by the miners to the extent that the "guide" appeared to be little more than a provisioner's catalogue with a minimum of advice. Holland and Ladue were typical of the majority of those who wrote guides.

The Official guide to the Klondyke Country and the Gold Fields of Alaska with its "Official Maps,""profuse illustrations," "vivid descriptions and "thrilling experiences" characterized the worst of the advisory literature.[99] Advertised as "The most complete and thoroughly exhaustive collection of every known information necessary to a full realization of the immense resources of the Gold Fields of Alaska, and replete with authentic instructions regarding how to get there, when to go, and what to do when the new eldorado of the great Northwest is reached,"[100] the guide fails completely in its claims. The book promises great and wonderful riches for those who would go to the Klondike, but gives very little practical advice to his charges. For example, the Klondike gold fields are placed in Alaska rather than Canada.

> The United States Government in 1867 paid Russia $7,200,000 for the Territory of Alaska.
>
> Alaska has paid back her purchase money in gold four times, having produced during the time it has been a part of the United States about $30,000,000 of the precious yellow metal.
>
> Today the eyes of the world are turned toward our frozen acquisition in the North, for within its borders has been

> discovered an Eldorado, seemingly 'richer than Plutos mine...[101]

Ogilvie forwarded a reason for this very common geographical misunderstanding in his book of 1913.

> Perhaps the reason for the confusion regarding the identity of these two territories is the fact that many of the earliest gold discoveries were made in the vicinity of the International Boundary Line, and their accompanying settlements and camps being largely made by citizens of the United States, there was a disposition to call all the region so occupied 'Alaska', until the boundary line was marked, but the habit was formed then, though it was only two or three years after the earliest diggings. In those days as most of the miners had to go out in the fall and while out always refered to the region of their labours as Alaska, it came to be all so called, and that habit being thus formed, it is generally yet refered to by that title.[102]

The"official" guide is littered with hundreds of undocumented newspaper accounts and interviews extolling the material rewards of those who accept the challenge of the Klondike.

> Henry Tamprecht writes from the Klondyke to say that there are miles of rich pay dirt all through the region. Men have taken a tub of water into their cabin and with a pan 'panned out' $2,000 in less than a day. This is said to equal to about $40,000 a day in the summer with sluice boxes. They get from $10 to $100 a pan average and a choice or picked pan as high as $250, and it takes about thirty minutes to wash a pan of dirt.[103]

The implication through the book is that wealth and success are assured for all.

Of the Chilkoot Pass, little is said. The other routes into the Yukon are handled in a similar way. What the book lacks in realism it makes up in enthusiasm and insight into the gold greed that gripped the world in 1897-98.

While the guides did provide some detail on the nature of the trek, for the most part they were written by poorly-

informed authors. The publications were rushed into print immediately after news of the gold discoveries in order to meet an urgent demand. In general, they had little to offer the thousands who needed advice and information so desperately.

Interest in the Chilkoot Trail has been rejuvenated in recent years, partially as a result of the dramatic growth in the popularity of hiking and backpacking. Along with the general rise in activity on the historic gold rush trail, several modern-day guides have appeared. Like their historic counterparts, the recent hiking guides outline the history of the trail, the detail of the trail's present-day course and offer advice about equipment and preparation needed for the still strenuous trek. J.R.Lotz's The Chilkoot Trail To-day, Dyea to Bennett[104] and Paul Lucier's The Chilkoot Trail, A Guide to the Gold Rush of '98 provide the hiker with a detailed examination of the trail and its historical significance. Both guides are pragmatic and concise.

A longer, similar treatment is provided by Archie Satterfield, a Seattle newspaperman. The Chilkoot Pass, Then and Now[106] is an undocumented history of the Chilkoot and its role in the Klondike Gold Rush. This popularized history relies heavily on the personal accounts of the Klondikers. An emphasis is placed on the difficulties of 1898, comparing the past with observations made by Satterfield in recent trips across the Chilkoot. He advises the modern weekend "'98er" on the hazards of the trail, preparations required and the route itself. A striking similarity exists with the guides of 1897, with the exception that the focus today is on the historical rather than golden riches.

Monographs

Introduction

Although there are few monographs, they are so diverse as to defy categorization. While the Klondike Gold Rush has attracted a few analytical historians, the Chilkoot and White Pass have attracted none. Most material is biographical - a result of the fact that the Chilkoot experience was a very personal one. Even the volumes on the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway tend to centre on personalities. There does however, seem to be an increasing concern with the Gold Rush period on the part of historians and with the approach of its Centennial, the interest will certainly increase.

Major Monographs

The histories of the Gold Rush and the Yukon, while indispensable for placing an event as specific as the rush over the Chilkoot and White Passes into the general setting of the Klondike history, provide little detail on the passes themselves. The single-minded concentration on the Klondike Gold Rush as a whole does not allow the author to deal with a small portion like the rush over the Chilkoot in as much detail as do some of the earlier personal accounts.

Kathryn Winslow wrote the earliest Gold Rush history, which she entitled Big Pan-Out.[107] In this discussion of the Chilkoot Pass, Winslow presented a very general undocumented summary of the history of the rush, drawing examples from several well-known personal accounts to elucidate the nature of hardships on the trail. Major events, such as

the avalanche of April, 1898, were elaborated to unfold the drama of the trek. The White Pass receives less attention. From William Moore's discovery of the pass in 1887 she outlined the agonizingly slow development of a viable transportation system from Brackett's crude wagon road to the completion of the W.P.&Y.R. Railway. The narrative continued, describing the flurry of boat-building activity on the shores of Lake Bennett in 1897 and 1898. Like most authors, Winslow wrote of the dreaded Miles Canyon and White Horse Rapids, with discussion centering on the reputed loss of life. There has been little agreement as to the number of people that were actually killed in the treacherous section of the Yukon River, but Winslow indicated that in 1897, nineteen boats and more than 200 people were lost.[108] Whatever the loss of life, Colonel Steele of the N.W.M.P. was forced to regulate passage through the rough waters to minimize it. Until recently, Big Pan-Out was the only attempt to treat the Gold Rush as a whole.

The name Pierre Berton and the Klondike are virtually synonymous. Berton's Klondike; The Last Great Gold Rush 1896-1899[109] has done more to popularize the "Great Gold Rush" than any other single item. Apart from Kathryn Winslow's contribution, Berton's book is perhaps the only significant attempt to write a general historical account of the rush to the Klondike. The Chilkoot Trail is given special attention. It is portrayed as an exciting flurry of unbelievable activity during 1897 and 1898. The town of Dyea, at the outset of the trail, sprang up almost overnight in the summer of 1897 and was all but deserted in a little over one year, because the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway was completed over the White Pass.[110] It is also portrayed as a nightmare of utter desperation and

failure. The tide was the first of the stumbling blocks as men and provisions were dumped on the beach at low tide. The goods had to be packed to higher ground before the salt water destroyed the one chance of getting to the gold fields. "'We saw grown men sit down and cry when they failed to beat the tide.'"[111]

Berton's focus is the stream of humanity on the trail of '98 and the drama of their tremendous effort. The most striking feature of the trail was the endless line of men on the final ascent to the Summit.

> Poorly attired in heavy furs and wools, rather than in the light hooded parkas which were far more practical, the novices sweated and froze alternately. Unable to disrobe or bathe, seldom free of the winds that were the terror of the trail, bent double under their packs by day and by the need to curl up for warmth at night, half nourished by cold beans and soggy flapjacks, plagued by the resultant dysentery and stomach cramps - filthy, stinking, red-eyed, and bone-weary, they still forced themselves upward.[112]

Klondike is about the people in the rush and on the Chilkoot, the goldseekers, the "Mounties," the men who built the tramways, the dead in the avalanche of 1898, and the men who built the Lake Bennett "Armada."

The description of the White Pass is dramatic. The trail "...brought out the worst in men." They mistreated each other and worked their horses to death.[113] In 1897, five thousand men attempted the crossing of the White Pass to the Yukon and Dawson. "One man who succeeded compared the slow movement over the White Pass with that of an army in retreat, those in the forefront struggling on against hopeless odds, followed by a line of stragglers moving forward like beaten rabble."[114]

Berton does not examine the Klondike Gold Rush in terms of the Canadian transportation thesis, but illuminates the effect of this chapter of classically Canadian history on

the thousands of men who endured and fostered the early development of the Yukon. The horrors of the White Pass and the individual successes and defeats of the Chilkoot are solidified into a tale of the rush for gold in Berton's Klondike.

The Klondike is part of the Berton family; Laura B. Berton wrote I Married the Klondike[115] to tell of her family's life in the Klondike after the rush. In 1955 Pierre Berton's Stampede for gold, the story of the Klondike[116] was published for young readers. The Klondike Fever[117] appeared in 1958 in the United States while its revised edition, Klondike,[118] was published in Canada in 1972. More general in character, The Mysterious North[119] set the Gold Rush in the history of the North. The culmination of Berton's writing occurred in Drifting Home[120] in which his family relived the trail of '98 via the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway and motorized boats on the Yukon River. The latter is indicative of the renewed activity on the trails in recent years.

Earlier it was mentioned that the Yukon and the Klondike were often referred to as the gold fields of Alaska. The entrenchment of this nomenclature seems unabated in David Wharton's The Alaska Gold Rush,[121] a general history of the Klondike Gold Rush published in 1972. This summary of various personal accounts of trips over the Chilkoot and White Passes lacks what Winslow and Berton have given the Klondike. The approach is anecdotal and as such, interesting.

Allen E. Wright in his Prelude to Bonanza,[122] published in 1976, has provided a detailed and documented account of the history of the Yukon from early Russian exploration to the dawn of the Klondike Gold Rush. Drawing on primary documents relating to major and minor explorations of the

Yukon, he examines the historical use of the Chilkoot and White Passes before the invasion of 1897-98. This unique approach to Yukon history has the potential to become a major reference work.

In addition, there are three northern histories that deal generally with the Chilkoot and White Pass access to the Klondike. M. Zaslow's The Opening of the Canadian North 1870-1914[123] treats the Gold Rush and the passes as vital factors in the initial development of the Canadian North. A. Brook's Blazing Alaska's Trails[124] and to a lesser extent, Wickersham's Old Yukon,[125] deal with the Klondike Gold Rush as part of the general Yukon or Alaskan history.

Of the more specialized monographs, Gordon Bennett's "Yukon Transportation: A History"[126] stands out because of its analysis of the role of the Chilkoot and White Passes in the development of Yukon transportation. Of the six trails leading from the Alaska Panhandle into the Yukon gold fields, the Chilkoot and White Pass routes were the most popular.[127] When the Gold Rush occurred on the Yukon, the transportation facilities were hopelessly inadequate, consisting of a roughed-out road between Dyea and Sheep Camp, a horse-packing outfit organized in 1894 by trader John J. Healy and a human-packing service comprised of Indians.[128] Bennett outlines the development of the transportation system in the Lynn Canal area from its humble beginnings to its vital role in the development of Yukon transportation generally.

The rush for gold not only necessitated the development of transportation and service facilities, but required the establishment of a law enforcement network as well. With news of the strike, the North West Mounted Police were reinforced from the south and new posts were opened on the passes in 1898.[129] The N.W.M.P. performed all of the

regular police duties, acted as customs officers and provided a source of general assistance to those on the trail.

The positioning of men on the summits of the Chilkoot and White Passes on the orders of Clifford Sifton had the effect of drawing the boundary between Canada and the United States. This point is raised but not pursued by Morrison in "The Mounted Police on Canada's northern frontiers."[130] During the rush, there was a marked difference in illegal activity between nearly-lawless Alaska and the comparatively law-abiding Yukon. This is not explored in any detail. Apart from these unanswered questions, Morrison fills a vital gap in the history of the rush over the passes.

In a report prepared for the United States National Park Service, Edwin Bearss provides a thorough and detailed history of the Chilkoot and White Pass trails. Bearss' Proposed Klondike Historical Park Historic Resource Study[131] deals with the early exploration of the passes through the Gold Rush to the development of the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway. The emphasis of the Bearss report is the competition between the towns of Dyea and Skagway, as both tried to win the patronage of the sudden influx of men. The key factor in this competition was the mechanization of the transport of goods over the passes. The White Pass and Yukon Route Railway, built through the White Pass in 1898-99, proved the undoing of Dyea, which disappeared into obscurity while Skagway and the railway prospered.

National concerns of the United States Park Service limit Bearss to discussion of the history of the American sections of the two trails. With the exception of the W.P.& Y.R. Railroad, Bearss does not venture across the International Boundary in his presentation of material.

Minor Monographs

The literature discussed so far can be conveniently categorized. There are, however, several items which do not readily submit to categorization; these include postal and railroad histories and biographies.

The postal service was of great concern to both the men on the trail and those who waited at home. R.G.Woodall deals with the history of the Yukon postal system from its inception by private carriers through the expansion of the service in 1897 by the government and the construction of the W.P.&Y.R. Railroad in 1898-1900.[132] Reference to the Chilkoot and White Passes is limited to mention of the establishment of post offices along the routes.

The economic impractability of the Klondike Gold Rush was mentioned by several authors, but none attacked the notion of easy wealth with as much vehemence as Jack London. According to his article in Review of Reviews, the gold fields yielded $22,000,000 while $220,000,000 was spent in pursuit of the elusive gold.[133] While on an individual basis this represented an often disastrous loss of investment, the economic benefit for the Yukon and the western seaboard of the United States and Canada was enormous. It was the sudden cut-off of money that spelled the collapse of a boom-time infrastructure and thus the demise of the elaborate transportation systems along the Chilkoot, White Pass and other routes.[134]

The construction of the White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad brought to an end the physical struggle of heavily-burdened men over the mountain passes. As the railroad was completed, the gold rush faded, and 1899 saw only a fraction of the activity of 1897-1898. Men intent on prospecting continued to trickle across the mountain barrier in search of another "bonanza," but these later

arrivals used the railway. A difficult, often tragic, yet intensely romantic moment in the history of the Yukon and Alaska was ended.

A satisfactory history of the W.P.& Y.R. Railroad has not yet been written, but there are numerous attempts to relate the story. Perhaps the best is Whiting's Grit Grief and Gold,[135] which despite its title, is essentially a biography of Michael J. Henry, the chief engineer on the project. Whiting, chief surgeon during the construction of the railroad, writes from firsthand experience. The book is a tribute to the personal and administrative accomplishments of Henry. While the descriptions of his fair and just dealings with his men shed light on the organizational problems of building the railway, an examination of the engineering accomplishment is almost ignored.

The first president of the W.P.& Y.R. Railroad, S.H.Graves, wrote On the "White Pass" Pay Roll[136] to document a remarkable achievement. After a brief history of the Gold Rush and Skagway, the narrative continues through the surveying of the "line," the problem-plagued construction period to the golden spike ceremony in Whitehorse on July 29, 1900.

Several less-detailed accounts were produced. "Building a railroad into the Klondike"[137] by C. Warman outlined the major characters involved in the organization of the railway as well as the problems of getting the whole project underway. The construction of Brackett's wagon road and its subsequent sale to the W.P.& Y.R. Railroad were related in "A Railroad to the Yukon,"[138] Written immediately after the railroad's completion, it exuded optimism. "A railway to the Klondike"[139] by W.M.Sheffield and "The Yukon and White Pass Railway and the Atlin District," an unsigned article in the British Columbia Mining Record,[140] were

both written in 1899, heralding the railroad's completion and the great expectations of all concerned. Overall, the railroad proved practical but lacked the romance associated with the rush of '98. As a result, it seems to have generated little interest in the literature.

The Klondike Gold Rush created heros and noteworthy villains, both of whom have been favoured with biographies. Some of course, were associated with the Chilkoot and White Passes. Colonel Sam Steele was such a man. He was in command of the North West Mounted Police in the Yukon during the Gold Rush. While on duty, he gained a reputation for justice and endurance. Harold Fryer[141] wrote a four-part magazine article of which the final part deals with Steele's exploits in the Klondike, although there is little mention of his activities on the mountain passes.

Joe Boyle is perhaps the most fantastic character to have been connected with the Klondike. A summary of his activities is provided by one of his biographers, K.Beattie:

> After settling a mutiny on the Indian Ocean at the age of eighteen, Joe Boyle becomes a figure in the sporting world of New York; manages a prize fighter; goes broke and explores the Yukon for gold, fights against incredible odds in the carry over the Chilkoot Pass; masters men by a word or a clip in the jaw; cleans up some thirteen million dollars by his astute improvements in engineering technique; serves as a British agent in Russia before and during the Revolution;...[142]

The amazing Joe Boyle went over the Chilkoot in a typically dramatic fashion. His biographer, on the other hand, has mixed-up the geographic nomenclature so the end result is confusing. This second biography, entitled Joe Boyle: King of the Klondike,[143] deals mainly with his Dawson City exploits.

Klondike Mike, An Alaskan Odyssey[144] is the biography of Mike Maloney who is credited with hauling a piano on his back over the Chilkoot Pass. The account provides a great

deal of anecdotal material about Klondike Mike's feats on the trails of both passes. Mike spent his life as a Klondike celebrity, having claimed to be the inspiration for several Robert Service poems. His loyal biographer provides an amazingly interesting if not sound factual defense of this claim.

Of all the biographies of the now-famous novelist Jack London, F. Walker's Jack London and the Klondike[145] is the only one that deals with the writer's period in the Klondike. Walker looks at London's Klondike experience through his fictitious accounts of adventures in the gold fields and on the Chilkoot.

Joseph Ladue,[146] founder of Dawson, has his biographers, as do the "legendary Mizners,"[147] Eugene C. Allen[148] of the Klondike Nugget, and Scotty Allan,[149] the world's greatest musher of dog teams.

Captain Billie Moore, founder of Skagway and enthusiastic supporter of the White Pass route, has numerous biographers. Captain Moore had been active along the Pacific coast of the Western Hemisphere, engaging in various transportation ventures when interest began to grow in Alaska and the Yukon. Norman Hacking, in his five-part article published in British Columbia Outdoors[150] deals with Moore's preoccupation with the White Pass route. His other two biographers, Will H. Chase[151] and Clarence L. Andrews,[152] were not as thorough as Hacking, although Andrews does document his account.

Overall, the biographies do not provide useful insights into the history of the mountain passes although they do contribute to its romance by detailing individual struggles and triumphs during the Gold Rush.

Conclusion

This survey of the literature concerning the Chilkoot and White Passes has been somewhat selective. Not all the entries that appear in the following bibliography have been discussed. An attempt has been made, however, to choose typical examples to emphasize various points, while the most important items in each category have been singled out and discussed.

The literature constituting guides to the Klondike or the gold fields of Alaska and the Yukon as they were often titled, were invariably published in 1897 and only rarely shortly before or after this date. These guides contained advice on the location of the Klondike gold fields, on routes to the gold fields, on provisions and equipment and on regulations and methods concerning the actual mining operation. It is impossible to judge how the individual guide was received or what distribution it achieved. One can only examine the information they contain in light of the current knowledge of the Klondike gold rush and its consequences.

The guides do provide the researcher with an understanding of the way in which the public of the 1890s considered the Yukon and Klondike. The wealth of gold was seen as a panacea for individual as well as national economic problems brought on by the "panic of '93'." Viewed as a great adventure, the Klondike generated a desire to participate, a fact supported by the number of often sensationalized personal accounts which appeared during and immediately after 1898. The more pragmatic guides

provided lists of goods to be taken into the Klondike gold fields and were often crammed with advertisements of the commodities available to the "Klondiker." Most importantly, the guides, when written from personal experience by men who had been over the routes they discussed, gave detailed descriptions of the trails before and often during the early stages of the Klondike Gold Rush, allowing comparison with conditions during 1898.

The personal accounts of the various men and women who went to the Klondike over the Chilkoot and White Passes hold the greatest potential for historical information. As has been demonstrated, these accounts provide graphic descriptions of the conditions endured by the miners on the trails, of various key events, and of a multitude of other facets of the rush over the mountain passes. The personal accounts were written by people from different segments of society and at different times during and after the rush itself. The information basis of these personal accounts was first-hand experience on the trail, often recorded in the form of diary records, but more often only in the memory of the participant. It must be noted that as the source varies, so does the detail, reliability and factual accuracy.

Generally, the personal accounts were descriptive of the individual author's experience, with only the occasional look at other than this personal concern. Two exceptions to this generalization are the books by Tappan Adney and Colonel S. B. Steele, who viewed the gold rush over the passes from an almost objective point of view as they were not actually caught up in the rush for gold. Essentially, the personal accounts are not far removed from primary source "oral" history and thus are in need of synthesis

and consolidation.

The relatively small number of historical monographs on the Klondike Gold Rush tend to emphasize the apparent lack of interest shown by historians towards the Klondike phenomenon. On the other hand, the relatively recent appearance of the majority of these monographs would indicate a growing interest in the Klondike Gold Rush. Although a number of general histories were discussed earlier, only those of Winslow and Berton were significant. Both of these authors dealt with the Chilkoot and White Passes as an integral part of the total Klondike experience. A number of more specific monographs outline the development of transportation and the role of the Mounted Police during the rush through the mountain passes. Indicative of the growing interest are the research commitments made by the Canadian and American governments in relation to the establishment of a Gold Rush Park. The direct result of the American involvement was the Edwin Bearss resource study which details the history of both trails in the Alaskan Panhandle in relationship to the proposed park. In addition to the above, a number of biographies of individuals connected with the trails and a number of histories of the White Pass & Yukon Route Railroad will prove useful in the necessary compilation of a history of the Chilkoot and White Pass Trails beyond their respective summits.

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