

THE AMERICAN SIDE OF THE LINE

Eagle City's Origins as an Alaskan Gold Rush Town

As Seen in Newspapers and Letters, 1897-1899



National Park Service
Edited and Notes by Chris Allan

Acknowledgments

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Front Cover: Buildings in Eagle's historic district, 2007. The cabin (left) dates from the late 1890s and features squared-off logs and a corrugated metal roof. The red building with clapboard siding was originally part of Ft. Egbert and was moved to its present location after the fort was decommissioned in 1911. Both buildings are owned by Dr. Arthur S. Hansen of Fairbanks. Photograph by Chris Allan, used with permission.

Title Page Inset: Map of Alaska and Canada from 1897 with annotations in red from 1898 showing gold-rich areas. Note that Dawson City is shown on the wrong side of the international boundary and Eagle City does not appear because it does not yet exist. Courtesy of Library of Congress (G4371.H2 1897).

Back Cover: Miners at Eagle City gather to watch a steamboat being unloaded, 1899. The man on the ramp is shouldering a box labeled "Ivory Soap." University of Alaska Fairbanks, North American Transportation & Trading Company Collection (1995-190-41).

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Gold-seekers hauling supplies over Chilkoot Pass to reach the headwaters of the Yukon River, 1897. Many of these aspiring miners failed to find fortunes in the Klondike and turned instead to gold fields on the Alaskan side of the border. Alaska State Library, Winter & Pond Photographs (P87-700).

Introduction

Eagle, Alaska is a picturesque rural hamlet on the south bank of the Yukon River and just twelve river miles from the U.S.-Canada boundary. The town is upstream of the mouth of Mission Creek and a dramatic rock outcropping called Eagle Bluff. A three-mile road links Eagle to the nearby Han Athabaskan community of Eagle Village. The birth of Eagle (or Eagle City, as it was known during the Klondike gold rush) is a topic that has been little examined by historians. This is largely because past researchers lacked reliable primary sources. Today, historical newspaper indexes and online databases make the search for sources much easier. The volume you hold in your hands is a collection of articles from American and Canadian newspapers that explains who established Eagle City, how they lived during their first year, and why American gold-seekers wanted a town on what they called “the American side of the line.”

The place where Eagle sits has drawn people for perhaps thousands of years. The Han people camped there, taking advantage of the water from Mission Creek and a rise in the land that provided good views of the vicinity and a reduced risk of seasonal flooding. In the 1870s, it was home to a small Episcopal mission and by 1882 both the Alaska Commercial Company and the Western Fur and Trading Company had opened temporary trading stations there. According to the trader François Mercier, the post was located close to the Han community of David’s Village and was known as Belle Isle. In 1883, when the explorer Frederick Schwatka passed through, he described what he called Johnny’s Village, or Klat-ol-klin, and the skillful dip-netting techniques of Han fishermen.

Gold-seekers had been working along the Yukon River’s upper reaches since the 1880s, entering the country over the Chilkoot Trail or by steamboat from the river’s mouth. In 1895 they found what they were looking for on a tributary of Mission Creek that the patriotic prospectors called American Creek. Within two years, even richer deposits of gold were discovered 100 miles to the east on Canada’s Klondike River, and thousands of stampedeers rushed to that location. In many cases they arrived too late to stake claims in the Klondike and they turned instead to waterways in Alaska that had been worked before and showed promise. In addition to American Creek and Mission Creek they began working along branches of Fortymile River, Seventymile River, Charley River, Fourth of July Creek, Coal Creek, Woodchopper Creek and others.

What these determined miners wanted was a convenient camp where they could live and buy supplies that was not in Canada and not as far away as Circle City, which was 150 miles downriver from the border. There was already a log cabin, called Bear Cabin, at Mission Creek and a group of forward-thinking gold miners decided to survey the vicinity as a townsite and advertise to attract settlers.

One of the challenges of documenting the history of small towns is locating sources like letters, journals, photographs, and descriptions of early town-planning and town-building. In the case of Eagle, we are lucky for two reasons: first, because the Eagle Historical Society created an archive to preserve such documents, and second, because the town’s early formation was documented in newspapers like Dawson City’s *Klondike Nugget*. In addition, early residents wrote letters describing their lives to family and friends, and many of these letters ended up in their hometown newspapers. The result is a batch of eyewitness accounts relaxed in tone and packed with unexpected details.

One of the obvious themes that emerges in these accounts is the tension between American gold miners and the Canadian authorities. From the beginning of the Klondike rush, the majority of the stampedeers were American and they often chafed under the restrictions placed on them by their host country—for example, the Canadians charged a 10% tax on gold and seized every second gold claim for government purposes. Some Americans also resented the North-West Mounted Police who arrested troublemakers and enforced mining regulations. In Eagle City, the disgruntled miners could live under the Stars and Stripes and follow their own ideas about law and order.

A second theme involves the Eagle City townsite and the companies that formed to profit from the development of the new community and surrounding properties. Angry settlers and observers in Dawson City judged them to be unscrupulous schemers with plans to cash in and leave their customers hanging. Because early Eagle had no police or courts, the residents used “miners’ meetings” to establish mining laws and to settle disputes. When the truth emerged about real estate scams, the perpetrators were told to get out of town or else. This example of frontier justice also caught in its net an entire group of twenty men from Sandusky, Ohio who were only secondarily involved.

Each page in this collection begins with an “Editor’s note” identifying the author and the meaning of obscure references or vocabulary. In most cases, the articles are excerpted, leaving out portions not related to Eagle or its vicinity. Spelling and capitalization are left unchanged. In-text notes in brackets are used to guide the reader where necessary. My hope is that this collection will interest local residents and anyone curious about the origins of the town and how the Klondike gold rush spread into Alaska and through what is now Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve.

— Chris Allan



“Discharging cargo at Dawson City”—Three paddlewheel steamboats docked near stampede’s tents and examples of the small boats they used to descend the Yukon River from lakes at its headwaters, 1898. The steamboat in the foreground is the *Charles H. Hamilton* and at the rear is the *Columbian*, which features in one of the accounts in this collection. Alaska State Library, P.E. Larss Photograph Collection (P41-212).

Editor's note: One of the first things that Klondike stamperders noticed was that the Canadian government was not about to let them run wild. The North-West Mounted Police enforced the law and demanded that each would-be miner bring enough supplies to survive a year in the Far North. The Canadians also imposed a 10% royalty on gold, implemented a system of fees and regulations, and requisitioned every other claim for the benefit of the government. The majority of the stamperders were Americans and most of them regarded this as petty tyranny. They soon began looking across the international border to Alaska where mining regulations were less strict. The following articles reflect this anti-Canadian feeling and illustrate the miners' interest in American Creek where Eagle City would soon take root.

ENGLISH AVARICE

Canada has departed from all precedent in its actions regarding the Klondyke gold diggings which are located within British territory. The United States has allowed Canadians and Englishmen to come to the United States and dig for gold without levying tribute. In California where millions in gold has been taken out the Englishman had the same opportunity and protection as the American.

Canada is dazzled by the reports of the richness of the Klondyke region and is determined to have a share, and a large one. The Dominion Cabinet, after mature deliberation has decided to impose a royalty on the output of the placer diggings. The following "draw-down" is demanded:

For registering claim, \$15; annual assessment, \$100; ten per cent of the output of all claims yielding \$500 a month, and twenty per cent of all yielding over that amount. In addition to this, every other claim will be retained for the Government.

Canada appears to want all the traffic will bear and a little more. If gold is discovered on the Alaskan side of the line, as it is likely to be, the United States will have a chance to retaliate, but it is not likely to do so. This country has not been in the habit of dabbling in these small matters. If a man from Canada or any other country wants to come into the United States and dig gold he can do so.

[*Santa Cruz Sentinel*, July 31, 1897]

CANADIAN MINING POLICY

The Canadian cabinet has decided not only to levy a heavy royalty on all gold mined in the Yukon district but also to reserve each alternate claim on placer ground and work or sell it for the benefit of the public revenue in English and colonial contexts. . . . One effect of this policy will be to stimulate prospecting on the American side of the line. A man can make more money in American ground that is considerably less rich in gold, and will be less hampered by officialism.

It will not be surprising if the attempt to enforce this Canadian policy should result in some difficulty with the miners that are thronging to the Klondyke. The Canadian police are already on the ground, but the Yukon is a long way from Ottawa, and in some cases force might be invoked to supplement craft in avoiding the collection of the government royalty. The border is near enough to encourage lawlessness in the presence of oppressive law.

[*San Jose Herald*, July 31, 1897]

THE AMERICAN'S GOLD

The American side of the Yukon gold region flashes out briefly but promisingly in a letter written from Circle City, under the date of May 10, [1897] to M.J. Lidston by a friend who has been mining for two years in that country. The writer knew all about the Klondyke, but amid the rushing there from all the diggings on the American side he was planning to return to his own rich claim on American Creek, a tributary of Forty-mile Creek. The portion of the letter not dealing with personal affairs is the following:

"If he is not home tell him that anything he hears about the country he may believe, the Klondyke in particular. She is a world beater. You cannot hear too much about it. Tell him also that I expect to make a homestake on the American Creek. I am now waiting for the river to break up. I shall go up the river on the first boat. I am going to get my ground in shape to open up. We have \$12 to the pan. Of course that was the biggest prospect."

The many fairly paying placers scattered for 300 miles along the Yukon from the boundary to the Porcupine River had drawn to that region a population of nearly 3,000 when the Klondyke discovery on the Canadian side was made and those mines were nearly all abandoned in the excitement. All of the great army of prospectors rushing in this year will have to prospect elsewhere than in the Klondyke, which was staked out months ago. A great many will go on up the headwaters of the Yukon in British territory, to the Stewart, the Lewis, the Pelly, etc., and their tributaries, but a great many will turn their attention to the American side of the boundary, where untold millions in placer and gravel deposits unquestionably await discovery and development. It was recently learned, by the way, that the richest gold, ounce for ounce, yet found in the Yukon country came from American Creek. So little silver was in the gold that it was worth unrefined over \$19 an ounce.

[*San Francisco Call*, August 4, 1897]

Canadian police escort \$400,000 in gold from Klondike gold fields, 1898. University of Washington, Eric A. Hegg Collection (496).



No. 2

Editor's note: Joaquin Miller was an American poet and journalist who earned the nickname "Poet of the Sierras" for work conveying a sense of the majesty and excitement of the Old West. His best-known poem is "Columbus" with its refrain, "On, sail on!"—once familiar to millions of American schoolchildren. When Miller came to Alaska to report on the Klondike rush, he lost a big toe and part of an ear to frostbite while travelling between Circle City and Dawson City. When the *Chicago Tribune* printed parts of his journal, the entries included his interest in sled dogs, his belief that the government should build roadhouses on the Yukon, and a rare description of a cabin on Mission Creek (the future site of Eagle City) that he called a "palace" because it was clean and stocked with firewood, candles, and matches. Miller also mentioned a cabin at Coal Creek, likely the same location that Slaven's Roadhouse is today.

MILLER'S GREAT TRIP

November 6, 1897: We decided to rest, and repair and dry our bedding. You see, icicles form from the breath when we sleep; then we roll up the ice in the warm furs and blankets, and this melts and they begin to smell, besides the weight is double in a short time.

We made sixty-five miles in a short time [since leaving Circle City]. The stove is red hot, and skins and furs and the food are smoking and steaming; the two lame men are asleep on the boughs of spruce, and Captain Ball is out with his gun; the dogs are sleeping or pretending to sleep, but they don't sleep half as much as they seem to. They are a continual puzzle and study to me; they curl up in a knot, the nose on the toes and the tail tossed over the nose; they are very, very small, the lightest of them tipping the scales at 49 pounds, the heaviest at 75 pounds. I am told that a good dog should not weigh more than 75 pounds; they are not driven by lines.

If a man wants a dog to go he yells "Mush, mush, mush!" But an Indian puts all accent on the last two letters, making a long, sharp hiss. These Indian dogs have learned in a few days to obey "gee" and "haw," and so on, as if they were trained horses on a farm. They are fed once a day—dried salmon in the evening, all they will eat, about three pounds each, so that each dog in a thirty days' trip must have about 100 pounds, that is, if fed as Captain ball feeds—all they want. . . .

One of the men is out of bed, whistling as he prepares the beans for dinner. My hand is lame from a sprain got on the first crossing of ice. I have not mentioned it. We have too many sprained men already. But it pains me much at night, and has a tendency to shorten these notes. I am certainly thankful that the hurt is in the hand rather than in one of my feet.

November 7: We left the pleasant little cabin on Coal Creek this morning in a snow-storm. Captain Ball had lost much dog feed from prowling wolves and was eager to get on. It was hard work. The wind blew cruelly. We had to wear double mittens and keep our faces covered to the eyes. Captain Ball put on his snowshoes, took the lead ropes of our little sled, and I took the tongue rope on my shoulder. The other two men came on behind with the dog sleds, and thus, silent and wearily, we tramped and tramped for ten hours. . . .

November 20: After five hours of ice and driving frost and snow we reached the cabin on Mission Creek. The dogs refused several times to face the storm and snow, and laid, whining, behind

blocks of ice till dragged into the trail made by the Indian Paul on his snowshoes and beaten till they were made to go forward. One of our men had an ear frozen.

November 21: This cabin at the head of Mission Creek is a palace. No table was ever so perfect. We found kindling wood, stove, candle on the table, water at hand, a book on the table, a broom in the corner. Was ever such practical comfort? Were ever men so grateful? This is a mining creek; good claims; several men at work miles up the creek. A letter box at the door receives their mail from passing strangers, although they must have meager mail, as we are the first to pass this way for more than sixty days. We shall learn more as custom and common sense dictate, a clean swept floor, a candle and matches at hand, and plenty of wood—this is the idea: a roadhouse as provided by the miners of the Yukon. Is it not clear that we must have many such along this river, so soon to be one of the world's great highways? Do not talk folly about men not coming here at perilous times. Men will come and men will go along here as long as gold is found to lure them forward. Aye, duty too will lead them this way. This is an old mission spot. Here the Bishop, now of Forty-Mile Mission, had one of the first missions and found a milder and better spot and took his 200 wards there. Paul, our Indian, was born here.

November 22: Camped at some old cabins built by Lieutenant Schwatka, U.S.A., long ago, and rebuilt by Oglesby [William Ogilvie] of the Canadian survey ten years back. Still stormy. My eyes suffer from snow blindness, and I write almost in the dark and, of course, briefly and bluntly. . . .

November 25: Found a small cabin by the way, built a fire, and tried to keep warm, but we could not sleep, for the sleds with our beds broke through the ice and all our clothes were stiff as boards. We tried hard to make Fort Cudahy or Forty Mile Creek, but a bitter storm made our progress slow. We left a sled-load of goods on the trail and tried to get on with our sleds to the fort. The other men left one sled after another as the night came on. At last they cut loose their dogs and went on in the night. Let us hope they got through, but it is dangerous to leave your outfit and all things and make a desperate battlement with the elements like that. Still, they have skills and the good sense to stick together. As for us, we stopped as it grew dark and built a big fire on either side of the sled to thaw out the ropes so as to unpack and get at our coffee and food. A most miserable night. . . .

November 26 and 27: We got to the [Forty-Mile] trading post, mission, and fort yesterday, more dead than alive. The North American Transportation company set us a big dinner at once. We dined like lords, and at night we had a grand reception. We were the first party from down the Yukon for nearly ninety days. Think of it! Think how desperate has been our march, without shelter, almost without food. We reached here very hungry, without so much as a biscuit, yet here is plenty. This prosperous mining center is well supplied. There will be no hungry men here.

November 28: With the end of this journey ends this journal. I am too worn to march further or say much more: besides, I write only in great pain. My eyes are affected with snow blindness. But this much we have to say at the end of it all, there is no suffering or loss of life in the hundreds of miles behind us.

[*Chicago Tribune*, February 7, 1898]

No. 3

Editor's note: One of the main reasons for founding Eagle City was to supply miners working on nearby rivers like the Fortymile and the Seventymile. This article explains how the Seventymile had been the focus of gold miners for years before the Klondike strike and how they used dift mining techniques that relied on winter weather. If you are digging straight down to bedrock and horizontally through a gold-rich layer, you want frozen ground to keep the tunnels from collapsing or filling with water. The author is writing from a short-lived mining camp called Seventy-Mile near where the river meets the Yukon.

ON THE AMERICAN SIDE

Seventy-Mile, February 19, 1898:

That Seventy-Mile will probably be a fairly prosperous camp for some years to come is an assertion warranted by the results from prospecting on the creek thus far this winter. Though the work of sinking has been limited, rendered difficult, and often ineffective by lack of frost, the season having been too mild, yet there have been a considerable number of new discoveries out on creeks already known to pay, restored encouragement.

In addition to the already famous Flume, Barney and Broken Neck creeks, authentic reports of good prospects are now making Crooked, Nugget, Arctic, Left Fork of Barney, Alder and Pleasant creeks subjects of much interest. Bedrock is found generally at a shallow depth and the ground is largely suitable for summer work.

Had the Dawson strike not occurred when it did, it is probable there would have been a stampede of the old-timers to Seventy-Mile two or three years ago. Ever since 1896 a small company of miners has been quietly and steadily at work on this stream. The news of the Dawson strike reached them, but never disturbed them. They said they "guessed they were doing well enough where they were." The season's clean up from some of their properties at the mouth of the river, last fall, and the recorder is authority for the statement that the amount was over \$11,000.

The principal claim owners on Barney have announced that they will probably put about forty men to work during the coming season. The most reliable authorities estimate the product of the best known claims now being worked at two and a half to three ounces to the shovel; that is, from \$40 to \$50 a day to the man; and there is undoubtedly a vast amount of ground up Seventy-Mile that will pay to work, but on which little or nothing has been done.

It is in the possibilities from hydraulic mining that many predict an extended future for Seventy-Mile. There are a large number of huge gravel bars that prospect well—very well, it is claimed—from a hydraulicker's point of view, but which in this region would never pay to work by the rocker or the ordinary sluicing method. It is asserted that hydraulic mining is entirely feasible in Alaska, the system being to merely rip off the moss covering and the almost constant sunshine of summer will thaw the gravel as fast as needed. A movement is said to be on foot with the object of gathering all the hydraulic propositions on Seventy-Mile into one combination, machinery to be secured and operations expected to be commenced next year.

Superintendent Wilson and Assistant Superintendent Hansen, of the Alaska Commercial Company, have each stated their belief that Seventy-Mile is the most promising point between Dawson and Circle City, and it is announced that, with the opening of spring, the company will proceed to erect a more commodious post here, with warehouse and other buildings. The Alaska Exploration

Company has secured land and had it cleared for the same purpose, and other companies are likely to follow suit.

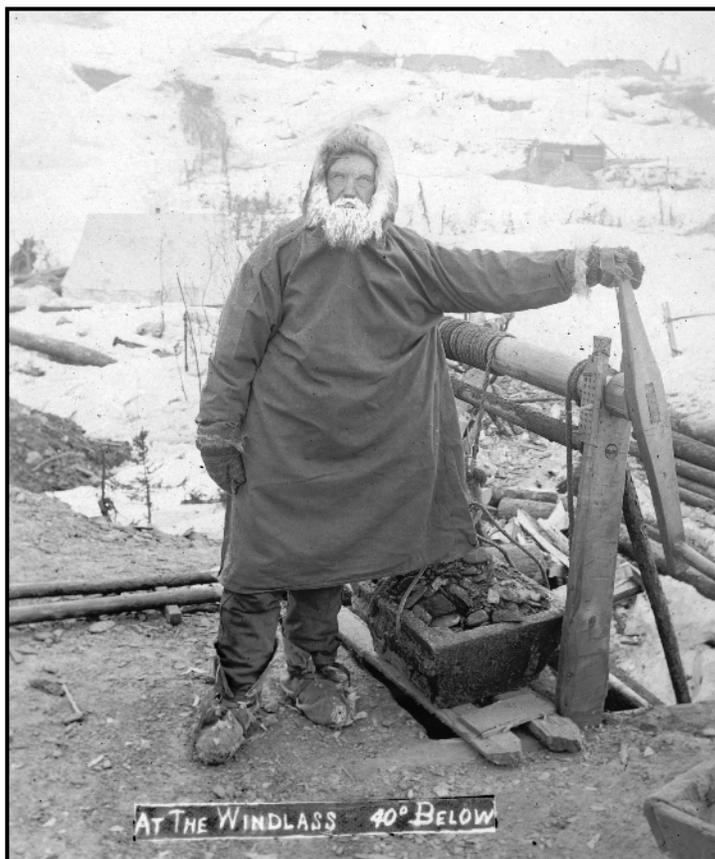
On Nation river, below Seventy-Mile, a force of men has been employed all winter at \$6 a day and board, developing a coal mine. The news has lately arrived that they have got at the main ledge at last and find it is twenty feet wide, of good, soft coal. Horses are used to haul the product, and Agent Heath, of the Alaska Commercial Company, owners of the property, has stated that 3,000 tons or more will be ready for the steamers this season. It is said that the company paid \$10,000 for the mine.

At the beginning of the winter much was expected from Fourth of July creek, owing to the reported rich strike on No. 12 during the summer, but prospecting there has thus far been quite disappointing. Results from work on Trout, Washington, Charlie and several smaller neighboring streams has been equally disappointing. From Sam creek, about forty miles below here, come very favorable reports of gravel running 10, 15, and 20 cents to the pan. . . .

At Eagle City until very lately life has been very quiet since the fall epidemic of miners' meetings. Now there is a mild stampede from Eagle over the divide to Slate creek, on the north fork of Forty-Mile. An unkind Seventy-Miler is authority for the statement that the stampede was caused by a thoughtful man who wanted to go to the Tanana, and started the Slate creek excitement in order to get the trail broken for him over the divide. Another account has it that some time last summer several men rocked out several dollars in several hours from a Slate creek bar.

[*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, April 2, 1898]

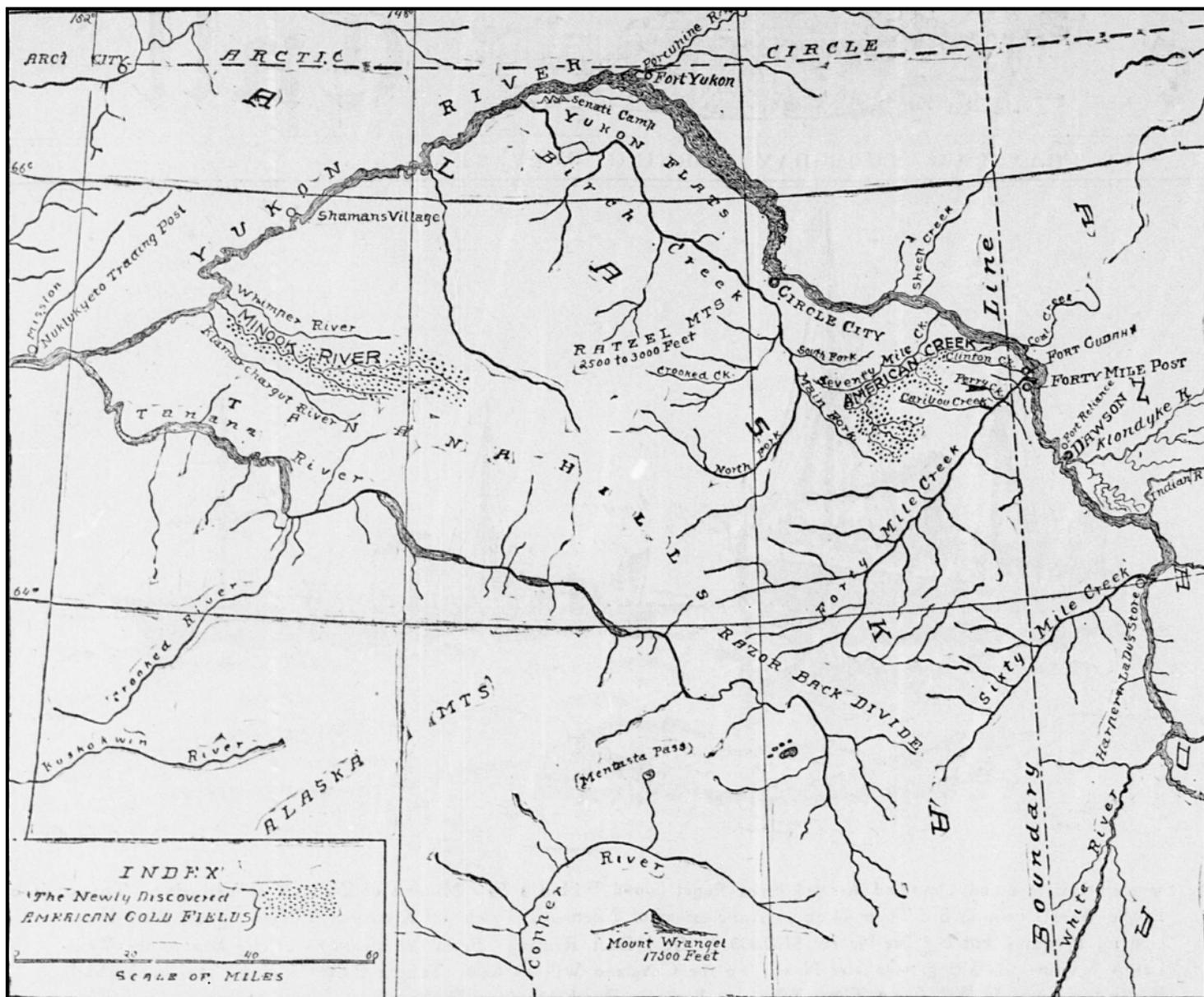
At 40 below zero, a sourdough miner in the Klondike uses a windlass to hoist buckets of thawed gravel to the surface, 1898. University of Washington, William E. Meed Collection (UW21256).



Map and caption from *San Francisco Call*, July 22, 1897:

Map of Part of Eastern Alaska, Showing the Position of the Newly Discovered Gold-bearing Streams, Minook River and American Creek, and Their Relation to the Klondyke Field

American Creek, which empties into the Yukon some twelve miles below Forty-mile Post and three miles west, or on the American side of the National boundary line, takes its rise in the same range of hills which head to the main fork of Birch Creek on the west and Caribou and other branches of Forty-mile Creek on the east. Minook River is several hundred miles further down toward the mouth of the Yukon. It rises in the Tanana Hills, just north of the river of that name, and flows into the Yukon between Whipmer [Whymper] and Klamarchagut rivers, just west of the 150th meridian. It is a fresh field, but little prospecting has ever been done in that vicinity.



No. 4

Editor's note: In these letters, Verne Bevington of Jewell County, Kansas tells his family about leaving Dawson City and arriving in Eagle City where he staked mining claims and became one of several men selected as land recorders. Recorders documented local mining claims and collected fees; later the reality of multiple recorders with overlapping jurisdictions would become a major legal problem. Bevington also describes his cold-weather outfit and the crowded conditions in the cabin where he was living.

A LETTER FROM KLONDIKE

Eagle City, Alaska, February 15, 1898:

My Dear Parents, Brother and Sister,

I do not know whether you have heard from me or not since I left Seattle, but I have written you several letters. I am well and have plenty to eat.

On the 25th of January I left Dawson to take a claim on American creek, a tributary to Mission creek. I staked and recorded two claims there then went to Wolf creek, another tributary of Mission, where I also staked and was elected recorder for Mission creek and tributaries. Recording fee \$2.50, claims 660 x 1,320 ft. Then a town site was laid out at the mouth of Mission creek and named Eagle city and I was made recorder for that also. Recording fee \$5.00. Many hundreds of people will be down from Dawson this month and next to take property on this side of the line. It is 104 miles from here to Dawson, 52 to Forty-Mile and 10 to the Canadian boundary line.

I have several claims near Dawson all of which I expect to sell this summer—one on Sulphur, three half interest on Domino, a full claim on Hunker and a bench claim on Eldorado.

We hear that many thousands of people are on their way to the Klondike this spring and as all the placer ground in that vicinity is taken now they will either go back up the Yukon to the Stewart or Pelly rivers, where they have found nothing, or come down the Yukon to the American side where they have many hundreds of streams yet untouched by pick and shovel and also where fine prospects have been found in others. I now expect to stay on this side of the line while I am in this country. I have never seen a nicer winter than this has been. The thermometer shows from 20 to 40 degrees below every morning but we do not notice it more than 15 to 20 above. There is a great deal of water on all the streams here and it has injured the miners millions this year [because flooding makes placer mining difficult].

A man passed here a few days ago who had walked all the way from St. Michael's—2000 miles—and had yet 700 miles to go to Juneau. He was the famous [Yukon mail carrier] Jack Carr.

This is the year to make money on the Yukon. I wish Frank was here with me as I think we could make some good money but I cannot advise him to dispose of or jeopardize his business for such an uncertainty.

There are now about 18 men in the cabin and I cannot write. I will send this letter out to Juneau by a man on his way out. Will put it in an envelope and send it to Professor Stafford and he will send it to you. They cost \$1.00 each to send. Hope you are all well. Give love to children.

Verne

[*Jewell County Monitor*, April 27, 1898]

A JEWELL COUNTY MAN IN KLONDIKE COUNTRY

Eagle City, February 23, 1898:

The following is my winter's clothing worn at one time when out on a stampede: 2 heavy undershirts, 1 flannel shirt, a vest, sweater and mackinaw coat and trousers, pair of drawers, heavy and if very cold a pair of overalls outside, three pairs of heavy wool socks and a pair of the warmest German socks, coming to the knee where they fasten with a leather garter, with trousers inside, over which is a pair of moose skin moccasins with sheepskin insole—wool turned down—a light fur cap coming well over the face with a nose piece, the back of cap forming a hood to protect the neck. On the hands a pair of light wool mitts over which is a pair of heavy moose mitts lined with heavy flannel—usually blanket cloth—and gauntlets reaching nearly to elbows and fur at top of gauntlet to keep wind out. Fur coats are not used to work or travel in as they keep the perspiration in, which will finally freeze. No kind of leather or rubber boots or shoes are worn as they are too hard and hold sweat. Moccasins are soft as cloth and porous. . . .

My paper is limited so will close with Dawson and the Klondike, and take up my present location. Forty Mile is 50 miles down the river from Dawson, from this point to Eagle City, where I am located, is 52 miles. I am 10 miles over on the American side at the mouth of Mission creek. This country will have a great boom this summer and I will try to take advantage of it. I am recorder for Mission creek and tributaries and for a town site here. I am also recorder for Eagle creek and 70 Mile river. At these two points there is no one residing to record and I am the handiest. Also recorder for Star City at mouth of Seventy Mile river. We have very rich diggings here and I am getting several claims. . . .

We hear that many thousands are coming to the Yukon country this coming summer, and as there is nothing for them at Dawson they will simply drift down this way, and having good diggings here we see no reason why they should not stop with us. I am the only permanent resident of Eagle City, stopping in a cabin built by the miners until I can get one erected of my own.

Your brother,
V.L. Bevington

[*Jewell County Republican*, April 29, 1898]

No. 5

Editor's note: Mr. L. Schley of Montana describes to his friend how a man with very little money but plenty of ingenuity could make his way to the Klondike, cross the international boundary on the Yukon River, and manage to come out ahead. For this reason, Alaska was regarded as a "poor man's country" because staking claims and small-scale placer mining did not require a large investment. Normally each town or mining district had only one land recorder, but Schley became one, as did Verne Bevington from the previous account. Like most of the stampedes who ended up in Eagle City, Schley predicted that thousands would soon arrive and make his town a wild success.

ON THE AMERICAN SIDE

Eagle City, Alaska, June 7, 1898:

Joseph Van den Heuvel of Geyser [Montana] has received the following optimistic letter from a former resident of this county, now seeking and apparently finding his fortune in Alaska:

My Dear Joe: Well, I made it. I am now in the land of gold, and she's all right. It is not quite as plentiful as I imagined, but is good just the same, and you may believe me when I say that in 10 days I have made about \$50 per day. You see, we jumped this town, and I am city recorder and I locate 15 to 20 men a day. This town is 100 miles down the river from Dawson and by spring will be a larger town. It is on American ground and is wide open. Ted and Jim are both located here; they have made quite a pile and at present are out prospecting. We all three figure on showing up in Montana in about a year.

I'll tell you a few things to kind of strike you blind. I wanted a two-pound can of butter, a can of milk and a 10-pound ham from the store. I got it and paid \$32 for it. A man got 10 lots here and wanted them cleared off. I took the contract for \$500. In six hours I had 10 men on them and they were through. I paid them \$25 each. Made a little whiskey money by selling a plug of tobacco, one-half pound. I got \$5 for it. This is the way matters go here. Any kind of a man can save \$2,500 a year here and not hurt himself but hard—well, of all the tough propositions I ever struck, it is to get in here.

I left Montana broke, you might say, but there were only six men got down the river to Dawson ahead of me. I and three more were in the third boat that got to Dawson in the spring. When I left the Falls [Great Falls, Montana] I had about \$300. I got to Spokane and dropped it all gambling. I went to Tacoma, tried to get grubstaked to Alaska, but failed. Too many were after such lays [a loan or stake in the mining effort]. I worked my way to Dyea on the *Dashing Wave* and got off her with just a couple of dollars. I went up to Sheep Camp [on the Chilkoot Trail] and in two days made \$50, got tired and pulled out for Lake Bennett; worked there for 10 days and made \$50. This was too small, so I found a party to stake me to Walsh Creek, got a permit to go in with 450 pounds, but I could only get 200, yet I went in, and by standing hardships I got to the foot of Lake Leberge.

Here I found five fellows who wanted one more to help build a boat. I joined them, we built the boat and struck out for the Hootalinqua River, got there, passing nine wrecked rafts and boats on the way. The river was full of ice, so we waited for three days, then we started again and never stopped until we reached Dawson. We got in third. How's that for a record for a busted man? I really think I am all right. Well, at Dawson I found that Ted and Jim had

gone down to Eagle City, so down I came in the same boat with one of my partners, Tex McLain, an old-timer here, found Ted and Jim the same as ever, told them I had grub for a month only and was broke. They told me I could get \$100, \$200 or \$300 if I needed it for grub. I rustled around and found the town wanted a recorder, had an election and got it, and am now fully \$600 ahead, besides having a lot worth as much more. That's the way things go here. Ted and Jim each carry a sack holding \$1,000 or \$2,000 and are to get between \$3,000 and \$4,000 in July. They made considerable on the Klondike last winter.

Fred Madden is down the river somewhere. I don't think he is much ahead. We expect an awful rush to this town from Dawson. The town was flooded a few days ago and many will leave there on account of sickness. They can only come down the river, and we have the only town to catch them, so we figure on having a booming time soon.

I will give up my job soon and locate a few placer claims. They sell like wild fire and vary from \$250 to \$10,000. That's quicker than \$500 or \$600 a month, even if it is easy. Well, I must stop. I could say lots more, but paper is scarce and time also. So, with regards to all, I close.

Yours,
L. Schley

[*Great Falls Tribune*, August 20, 1898]

Miners on the Eldorado Claim in the Klondike excavating a drift mining tunnel by thawing the frozen ground and then hoisting the gold-rich gravel to the surface for processing. University of Washington, William E. Meed Collection (MEE100).



No. 6

Editor's note: In this letter, Joseph Howard of Barton County, Kansas explains how flooding and high prices drove him out of Dawson City and how he ended up in Eagle City. His primary concern seems to be commodity prices and his ability to adapt to new challenges like hiking in boggy terrain, mosquitoes, and sleeping through the Midnight Sun. By the end of June 1898, Eagle City had around 500 residents, most of them living in tents, but Howard seems to have been skilled enough to build a cabin for himself and to work on others in the nascent community. His use of the term "doubled and twisted" comes from whiskey distilling, meaning the most powerful or potent product.

ALASKAN NEWS

Joe Howard, an old-time Barton county citizen, wrote a letter to Ira Brougher, dated at Eagle City, Alaska, June 28th, 1898 from which we extract the following:

Everything was very high when we reached Dawson (the river not excepted) and, after I had divided up with the parties who came in with me, I sold the principal part of my supplies, knowing that I could buy cheaper later on. I sold my butter for \$2.50 per pound; sugar for \$1.25 per pound; granulated potatoes for \$1.25 per pound; dried beef for \$1.25 per pound; socks for \$2.25 per pair; eggs for \$15 per dozen, etc., etc.

I did not like Dawson, for it was nearly all under water when I was there. It is a regular swamp and is very unhealthy; but it was a very rich camp and I saw gold dust carried in there by the thousands of pounds. A man without dust is out of luck. I was offered an ounce per day for working and promised work all summer, but I bought lumber and built a poling boat on which I came down here.

I landed here on June 2nd. I took up a lot and bought one and have a good cabin built on my lot. I made a trip out in the country on American creek, Mission and their tributaries prospecting and locating a couple of mining claims. I returned to town and have since done carpenter work for which I received \$92.50 cash. I have bought supplies that will last me a year, getting sugar for 35c, bacon for 15c, butter for 50c, potatoes for 25c, socks for 50c and other things in proportion.

This is a new town and was just starting when I came here. It is 6 miles west of the boundary line between Alaska and the Northwest Territory and now has a population of about 500 (including three married women) and still they come. It is a fine location for a town and I think it will have a population of four or five thousand this fall. With the mining country that is tributary it should make a good town. There are three stores, three saloons and one restaurant here now and all seem to be busy. There has been no drunkenness so far owing to the fact, no doubt, that there is no whiskey in town.

Many of the newcomers are selling out and going on through to St. Michael and back home, which will make it all the better for those who remain in the country, as it will make supplies more plentiful.

The weather has been very fine since spring opened. There has been but little rain and vegetation seems about as far advanced here as it usually is in Kansas or Kentucky at this season of the year. We have had no darkness here since May 16th when we reached Dawson. The sun rises at about 1:30 a.m. and sets about 10:30 p.m.,

being below the horizon only about 3 hours. It was hard for me to get so I could sleep, but I can rattle it off now in great shape with the sun shining bright. The mosquitoes have been doubled and twisted h—l [hell] for the last month, but they will not last more than another month and then we can have some comfort again. When there is no wind everyone has to wear mosquito-bar [netting] about their heads and faces to do any work in peace.

I have not had any time to do any hunting yet, but I am going out tomorrow to be gone three or four days and shall try to get a moose or caribou. There are some on the headwaters of American creek, about 25 miles out, and I think I can get one if they are to be found at all. The meat is worth \$1 per pound here and they kill moose in this country that sometimes weigh 800 pounds and over. It is very hard walking in many places owing to the moss and [tussock] grass which grows on all low lands and on the lower slopes of the mountains.

The timber here is fir, birch, cottonwood, quaking asp, balm of Gilead, willow and alder, with a little pine in the river and creek bottoms, but a tree 18 inches in diameter is a large one for this country. The grass is fine all over the country and blue grass grows all along the rivers and creeks. There is but little small game but plenty of fish. The salmon season is just commencing and the Indians will keep us fat on them as long as our sugar lasts.

[*Great Bend Register*, August 20, 1898]

Mining camps on American Creek near Eagle City, 1903. U.S. Geological Survey Photographic Library, Louis M. Prindle (129).



No. 7

Editor's note: George Miller, who arrived in Eagle City with a group of men from Sandusky, Ohio, writes to his wife Rosa about Alaska's mosquitoes, prospecting, and the revolving door of land recorders. When he mentions that "every lot is a fiver for our company," he is referring to the Eagle City Land and Improvement Company formed to profit from the sale of town lots and the registering of mining claims. This is an early hint of the disruptive influence real estate schemes would have on the lives of residents.

AT EAGLE CITY

Eagle City, Alaska, July 1, 1898:

Rosa C. Miller, Sandusky, Ohio—Dear Wife—I received two letters at Dawson from you and George, after laying there for a week. I sent you letters every week and I hope you received them all. You need not send any papers because they won't handle them out here, but if there is anything of importance in the paper cut it out and send it. . . . It is a hard matter to get mail out here; they keep it in the office for months before they try to distribute it. I have seen men get letters out of the Dawson office that had lain there over a year.

We went out prospecting, that is, Howard Huntington, Cowan and myself, and staked 13 claims on Last Chance Creek and we look now as though we had been out fighting Spaniards and that they had peppered us with bird shot "all mosquito bites." I used to think that I had seen mosquitoes but I found out my mistake when here I walked through water and brush and moss very near two feet thick. I tell you it was a tough proposition; it was the hardest walking of all in the moss; you would have to pick your feet up for keeps if you wanted to get over it or you would get tangled up in it. Howard Huntington called the brush the jungles and the only thing missing therein are the animals, such as lions, tigers and panthers, but we see bear and moose and more than enough of the before mentioned mosquitoes. If I have seen millions of mosquitoes in the states, I have seen here in the last eight days a million for each one seen there. I had a notion of clinching their bills when they drove them through the blanket, but on second thought I changed my mind for fear they would fly away with my blanket, leaving me exposed to their bills and I don't like to be billed like that—not by a long bill.

We are now about 10 miles across the lines [of] the N.W. Territory. Eagle City is 112 miles from Dawson City. We haven't seen any rain from the time we left Alaska, before we got to the White Pass until we got into a little sprinkle of half an hour's duration. Tuesday and Wednesday of this week we had heavy thundershowers. On Tuesday it was on the mountain and we thought it was a land slide, but later on we found out that it was thunder, and the next evening got it, accompanied with rain and hail and it kept up for quite a while. We returned to the scow last night at 10 o'clock and were pretty hungry. We have 12 town lots laid out here. Dell Deyo is recorder of Eagle City. He was elected after being here two days. There was some dissatisfaction with the other recorder and they bounced him. They keep a man in office until they get tired and then they give him the g.b. [goodbye?]. They took the mast out of our scow and planted it before our tent, or rather the recorder's office, and old glory floats in the breeze.

Deacon Widman has gone up the river with Thiem, Fottel, Zurcher and Hutchins to cut logs for our log cabins in Eagle City. I believe they are going to build two of them. We have a nice view

of the mountains from our camping place. Everything looks so fresh and green just like "we Klondikers green." Well, we are past being called tenderfeet. I believe that some of us could walk on carpet tacks by this time. Yesterday forenoon as I was coming down Last Chance with three beds, filled with clothing and shoes, on my back, I happened to step into a hole and both feet slid out from under me and I lay stretched at full length in the cool ice water and my bundle went on the bank without a drop of water on it. I called for Howard to pull the bundle away before it could roll into the water If [he] could have caught a snap shot of me he could have sold the pictures to some comic paper. . . .

All claims on different creeks are taken up. Six of our boys are working twelve of them [in the Klondike] at Bonanza and Eldorado creeks.

Our flags attract a great deal of attention and many a cheer was given the scow *Buckeye* with the flags floating overhead. But the flags are on the scow no longer but wave over Uncle Sam's soil.

Captain Snevely started out prospecting this morning taking with him Sanderson, Koegle, Shay and one or two others. There are quite a number of fellows from different states that are getting homesick and are selling out. Dell Deyo has a double job cooking and entertaining visitors. We, of course, wish to swell our town or Louse [possible reference to Lousetown across the river from Dawson City] will get ahead of us and every lot is a fiver for our company.

I forgot to mention that when we went out prospecting we could have caught a lot of game if we would have left our frying pan and shovels at home. They make a lot of noise when they come in contact with trees and scare the game. If I went out with a party of Sanduskians and we carried anything of that nature along with us all we could find would be the tracks of animals.

We had some fun staking claims, staking five as we were going up the creek into the mountains only to come across claims with the very same number as our own, then we had to retrace our steps and chop the names off again from the trees. We did that three or four times, then we followed up the mountains and found it all staked all the way. We must have walked 25 miles and gained nothing upon the creek but we found several below Discovery claims and staked them. We dug down about 11 or 12 feet only to have it cave in on us; then we packed our goods on board the scow and went to headquarters.

Cowan has long legs for so small a man and keeps up with Huntington admirably but I, although somewhat taller than Cowan, have smaller legs than he and it keeps me hustling to keep up with them.

I don't know why I don't get more letters, as I have written to several men about town but had received no replies. But I expect they don't like the nonsense that I write.

I believe they call the Indians [indecipherable] or some such name. They catch trout, white grayling, suckers and pike in the river, but I have not seen many fish up to date; old timers say there will be plenty of all kinds in August and that may give me a chance for some tall yarns.

Well, I must close as I have no more news; give my best to Kate, Albert and Lydia. Tell Spencer to send them red hot decoys to Sanderson and Koegle. Well, goodbye. My love to yourself, George and Grace.

I remain your husband,
George

[*Sandusky Star-Journal*, August 18, 1898]

No. 8

Editor's note: This report from the miner Harry Hunt points out that "claim jumping" is common—that is, moving in to work a claim that had already been staked by someone else. To resolve this sort of dispute, Eagle City residents fully embraced the "miners' meeting," an extra-legal form of conflict resolution developed in mining areas that lacked police or courts. Miners' meetings were democratic in that each attendee got a vote and the majority ruled. Violations of the miners' code included theft, assault, fraud, and of course, claim-jumping. Hunt describes the extraordinary lengths miners go to for gold and ends with a warning that Alaska is a "hard country" that is best avoided.

BOOMERS AT EAGLE CITY

Eagle City, Alaska, July 6, 1898:

Eagle City is a new townsite staked this spring at the mouth of Mission Creek, on the left bank of the Yukon, situated about 100 miles below Dawson City and seven miles from the boundary line as at present defined. There is not much of a town at present, but desirable lots on the water front seem to have an exorbitant value. There are really two towns. The first was staked some three or four years ago, when gold was first found on American creek, one of the tributaries of Mission creek. This was restaked this spring and the original locations were, for the greater part, ignored. Later, with the first waters came large numbers of prospectors, who with the knowledge of the rapid strides in value of Dawson's real estate, and finding no El Dorado to strike, determined to stake town lots. As the river front was staked they moved up stream some two miles or more and laid out a new town, the site of which is in no way as desirable as the first.

Claim jumping is the order of the day and miners' "meetings" are of daily occurrence. These meetings are the law courts of this territory at present, and by them all questions and disputes as regards the ownership of claims are settled. The meetings are all right in their way, but after one is called and a decision rendered it seems quite ridiculous to call another the next day to reconsider its action especially when no new evidence can be adduced. I have seen this thing done two or three times since my arrival, and now no one, unless he orders a Recorder's receipt, showing that he has paid the necessary fee for recording a lot, can vote or take any part in the meetings. This course was taken for the reason that the miners proper outvoted the citizens or lot owners upon two or three occasions in matters regarding the welfare of the township.

Whether the town will amount to very much depends, of course, upon the quality of the diggings. These are found upon Mission creek and its tributaries. Gold was found here in the spring of 1894, but with the exception of three claims on American creek, little work was done at that time, as the news of McCormack's [George Carmack's] discovery in August, 1896, on Bonanza, came the big stampede, and the country has been quiet ever since. Last winter, however, parties were sent here from Dawson with powers of attorney to stake claims for others, and the whole country is now staked for speculative purposes. It is impossible at this time to find a single piece of ground on any portion of the Mission creek system that is open to location. Some persons staked as many as one hundred claims in one district, and as each claim here is 1,320 feet in length, it will be readily perceived that it does not take a great while to cover a large slice of territory.

In due course of time these claims will have to be represented, and as the present holders cannot cover the whole ground nor hire men to do the requisite amount of assessment work, some will be open for relocation.

By the way, herein lies a big difference between this and the other side of the line. There, when a claim is once staked and recorded, it is withdrawn from subsequent location, and should the locator fail to comply with the requirements of the law, the claim is sold to the highest bidder at the discretion of the gold commissioner.

The one great exception to the lack of enterprise and push that has pervaded this place to the present, is to be seen in what is known as the canyon on American creek. Four years ago this spring three men, names Styles, Bushnell and Roberts, located claims 3, 4 and 5 above discovery. The creek here is very narrow, not being more than from twelve to twenty feet in width with huge boulders in the creek bed, the sides being almost inaccessible cliffs. Gold was found in the bottom of the creek and the problem was to get it out. There was no means of ditching or diverting the water in any other way than by a long flume. These three men pooled issues, built a large roomy cabin on No. 4 and went to work to get out sufficient lumber to make a flume 1,320 feet long, six feet wide and three feet in depth.

When I tell you that all the planking used in its construction is of 2-inch material, that it was all whipsawed by hand and most of it hauled by hand a distance of six or seven miles, you can perceive something of the stupendous task these men undertook. There were over 35,000 feet of lumber used in the construction of that flume and for workmanship it cannot be excelled anywhere in the States. Let those who think the old-time Yukon miner does not understand his business and is afraid to work ponder over this. This is by far the greatest undertaking I have yet seen, and I am glad to be able to state that these men have been amply repaid for their expenses and labor. No. 4 is nearly worked out. Nos. 3 and 5 are untouched, and as the flume is made with a view of removing it when necessary, it will not be a very expensive undertaking to place it on either of these claims.

Near the mouth of Mission creek, some five miles from the Yukon, is a very fine cropping of coal in which I am interested. The ledge as exposed does not show a very high-grade article, but I have no doubt it will prove of some value. I expect to do a little development work upon it next week. There is also some pretty fair-looking quartz in this district; but it takes time to look into these things here, as when one travels it is necessary to take provisions, and a tramp of from 200 to 300 miles is quite an undertaking. I expect to start out this evening and will be gone for a week or two. I will write again when I return.

People are leaving Dawson by the score daily. They come to Forty Mile, find the country staked, drift to Eagle City with the same result, sell their outfits and drift on toward Circle City, en route to St. Michael and the outside world. This is a hard country and I would earnestly advise all to keep away from it. The gold taken out this spring should excite no one, for the greater part of this yellow metal was taken from El Dorado and Bonanza last summer and this spring.

Harry Hunt

[*San Francisco Chronicle*, August 5, 1898]

No. 9

Editor's note: George Miller is one of the Sandusky, Ohio men who formed the Alaska Co-operative Mining Company to represent their interests in mining and real estate. Here he writes to his nephew about the daily realities of prospecting and of hunting for caribou and moose. The headline of the article refers to an ongoing battle with the manager of the company, James E. Snevely, who the other members believed was incompetent and a cheat. This situation left them feeling increasingly "discontented."

DISCONTENTED MEN

Eagle City, Alaska, July 27, 1898:

Mr. Al. Bergmoser, Sandusky, Ohio,

Dear Nephew—I have not received a letter from you, although I have written twice; maybe the letters were never received, as I think most of my mail gets lost. We are working hard now, whipsawing lumber and slabbing logs for our log house, which will be quite an extensive one. The boats are coming up now from St. Michael's at the rate of two or three a day, but there has been no mail to date. The United States government has let a contract to deliver mail on the Yukon to a steamboat company at an enormous price. The mail is to leave here every two weeks. Circle City mail goes out by way of St. Michael's, and Eagle City mail goes by way of Dawson City, northwest territory.

Six of our boys are at Dawson, working 12 claims to see if there is anything in it; our captain took the steamer Sunday for Dawson to see what the boys are doing.

I went out prospecting with a party of six. Four of us held out for 16 days, the others returning about 9 days after we started. We went to the north fork of Forty Mile creek, and there they named a creek after me, and about 10 miles further on they named one Fresno creek. I staked out a claim on both of them. We will soon be to work digging out gold on Buckeye creek and Lake Erie springs, which I think will show up good, as we get the right color in nearly every pan. We are now making sluice boxes to work with.

Dell Deyo and George Gleckney went out to represent two claims on American creek. Jim Sanderson accompanied them with his gun and said he would not return without some game, but so far he has not showed up, so he could not have been very successful in his hunting expedition. Koegle and myself have lost considerable flesh. I weigh about 210 pounds. I wore my rubber boots on a trip across the mountains and they wore out and my feet got wet, then the sun came out and blistered them. I also cut my foot on a sharp rock, but now I am all right again and ready for another trip to Tanana or Copper creek, and if it is possible will go out with the boys next week Sunday.

You ought to see the mountain tops here covered with green grass, flowers of all varieties (forget-me-nots and bleeding hearts), but also many others that are not found in civilization. Once in a while we see a caribou and if we are out of meat all we have to do is shoot him. The caribou comes close to a person and is easily shot, but with a moose it is different, you must get on the side of the moose where the wind is not blowing, for if he smells you he runs away. We shot a caribou the other day, who had been chased close to us by a wolf. We were out of meat and thought we would give him a bullet. There was a rag in the barrel of the gun and that entered the body of the animal also. We gave him four shots and then followed his trail for three quarters of an hour before we found him stiff in the woods. We then followed the wolf's trail and I think he must have been very large by the size of his paws. Well I must close as I am very dull and can't write any longer. Best regards to all and I still remain as ever,

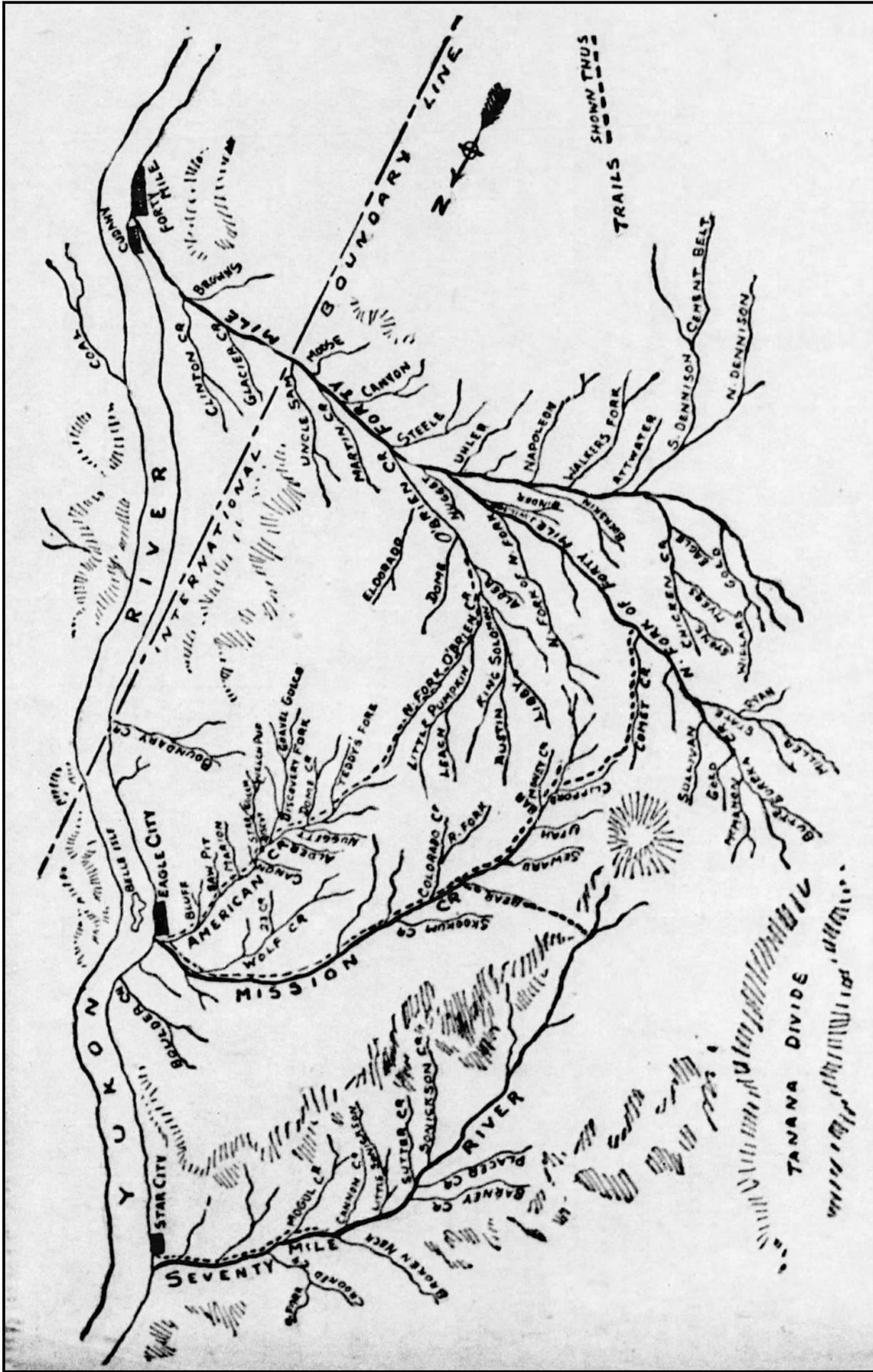
Yours,

George J. Miller

[*Sandusky Star*, October 4, 1898]



Placer miners shoveling gravel into a sluice box on Ben Creek, ca. 1910. Courtesy of Eagle Historical Society.



"All the Creeks Prospected in the Forty-Mile, Eagle City and Seventy-Mile Districts in American Territory of the Yukon"—This map shows the location of Fort Cudahy, Fortymile, Eagle City, Star City, and labels the island in front of Eagle City as Belle Isle. Fort Cudahy housed a small detachment of Canada's North-West Mounted Police. *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, January 27, 1899.

No. 10

Editor's note: The episode described below is remarkable because it upset an understanding between Canadian and American authorities along the Yukon River—that police from either country could follow fugitives across the boundary. When Alaska's Collector of Customs Joseph W. Ivey threatened a member of the North-West Mounted Police and demanded the release of a prisoner, it caused an international incident. Soon Frederick Wade, the Crown Prosecutor in Dawson City, predicted a crime wave as miscreants fled down the river to evade prosecution. Collector Ivey did not care—he felt it was his patriotic duty to face down agents of a foreign power. After he set Arthur Perry free in Eagle City, Ivey went downriver to stake mining claims and also founded a short-lived mining camp called Ivey City near the mouth of Fourth of July Creek.

A GOLD THIEF SET AT LIBERTY

What promises to become a very serious problem for this sparsely settled country west of the Rockies occurred within a few days. It is international in its character and opens up an avenue of escape to Dawson's criminals. Arthur Perry worked a claim on French gulch last winter for Alex McDonald. When the wash came up this spring Alex went up to get the returns. Perry was there but told McDonald he had shipped the gold down town to his (McDonald's) office. The big mine owner walked back to town but found no trace of the gold. Hurriedly he dispatched a man back to the claim, but the bird had flown. A little work along the water front revealed the fact that Perry and the gold—how much could only be estimated—had gone down the river in a small boat. The police were appealed to and Constable McPhail was started out in pursuit. Accompanying the policeman was D.W. Chisholm to identify the thief and aid in any way in bringing him to justice. As is well known the custom has always been for the proper officials of either Alaska or the Northwest Territory to cross the boundary in pursuit of criminals without hindrance from the officials of the visited country. McPhail had instructions to report to the various U.S. commissioners as he went down the river, which he did and they wished him luck and let him depart.

The two thief-chasers left here on the steamer *Monarch* and overhauled the small steamer *Governor Stoneman* somewhere between the Koyukuk and Tanana rivers. The *Monarch* hove to while the *Stoneman* was searched. On the little steamer was found the much wanted Perry with his sacks of ill-gotten gold accompanied by his wife. Perry was made a prisoner and taken aboard the *Monarch*. The wife followed the husband. Near the mouth of the river, at Nulato, was found the steamer *Columbian* headed up the river to Dawson. Upon attempting to transfer Perry to the *Columbian*, it was found that he and his wife had been doing a large amount of canvassing among the many passengers and they were very much disposed to demand extradition papers before they would allow him to be taken aboard the up-coming steamer.

However, the captain of the *Monarch*, supported by his officers, took a very firm stand in the matter, arguing that if Perry was a thief Dawson was the place for him, and if he was innocent of crime he had nothing to fear here. The result was the transfer was made. Coming up the river the *Columbian* stopped to get another boat off a bar and in so doing got on herself. Mrs. Perry in this way reached Circle City ahead and had worked up a case of sympathy, for when Circle City was reached by the boat the *Columbian* was boarded by

J.W. Ivey, U.S. collector of customs for Alaska. Between Circle City and Eagle City the collector declared himself and demanded of McPhail that he release the prisoner.

The constable protested and so did some of the officers and passengers, but Ivey declared he was prepared to use force and at once McPhail asked that at least the man be held until the extradition paper could be secured, but Ivey refused and demanded the money also. There was \$15,500 in the gold sacks, but the receipt which Ivey gave McPhail for the man and the money contained no mention of the amount. Ivey and Perry got off at Eagle City. McPhail reported at Dawson as soon as he arrived and the captain and purser of the *Columbian* made affidavits. Captain Starnes informs us that McPhail has again been dispatched after the man, armed with fresh papers, and is accompanied by Mr. Chisholm for purposes of identification and Crown Attorney Wade to give the necessary legal advice. If found necessary the man will be followed to Seattle.

[*Klondike Nugget*, August 20, 1898]

HOW IVEY CALLED DOWN THE CANADIAN POLICE

Ivey has acquired two claims on Fourth of July creek, forty miles below American creek, which he says will make him a rich man. Since leaving the north he had had advices that the claims have panned out wonderfully well.

Asked for a statement of the reason for rescuing Arthur Perry at Eagle City from the Canadian mounted police, who were taking him back to Dawson for alleged robbery, Ivey said:

“It is true I rescued Perry. The Canadian police came into American territory, took Perry, and without extradition were attempting to remove him to a foreign land. That is contrary to law. It is true I threatened the police with violence unless they surrendered the prisoner. I meant what I said. I was armed with a Winchester and had a revolver. If they had taken Perry it would have been over my dead body.”

[*San Francisco Chronicle*, October 21, 1898]

No. 11

Editor's note: Bob Boyle of Louisburg, Kansas found the Klondike to be "the most grossly misrepresented country I ever saw" and the area around Mission Creek to be worse still. He liked the look of Eagle City, but it was too healthy an environment to support his real occupation—selling patent medicines. Maybe winter colds would help? He was thrilled by the chance to find "snaps," which in the 1890s meant an unexpected bargain. Note that Bob's companion "Lou" is likely Lou Cooper who later shot Eagle City resident and *Eagle City Tribune* editor Charles Carruthers during a disagreement (see #16).

FROM BOB

Eagle City, Alaska, July 27, 1898:

We left Dawson about two weeks ago and came here. This is about 12 or 15 miles below the Canadian line on the Yukon. Park concluded to go back home on account of one of his eyes troubling him, effects of an old blast in mining years ago. Lou and Charley split up at Dawson, Charley going to Circle or St. Michael's and then back to the states. He did not like the layout here. Lou came down with Vance and I and he is still here and feeling fine. Vance and I just returned from a prospecting trip of eight days. We walked about 125 miles and carried packs of 50 pounds each to start on. We located four claims about 30 miles from here on the north fork of the Forty Mile, one each for ourselves, one for Lou, and the fourth for a man who went out with Lou on the other side of the Yukon. Of course we don't know whether they amount to anything or not. American Creek is greatly overrated, as is all this country. Any one thinking of coming here, advise them to stay home by all means. If we don't strike it in a year we will leave here next summer for the states.

It is too hard a proposition for me. I can stand it all O.K. But I don't have to. We are going to be fixed nice and comfortable for the winter and we have plenty of grub and medicine, so we have nothing to fear. You would be surprised to see how well Lou holds up, both in health and spirits. The only thing that has troubled him yet was a bad case of diarrhea. I had to take him in hand before he got over it. He is all O.K. now.

Eagle City, Alaska, August 21, 1898:

The chief custom officer for Alaska [Joseph W. Ivey] is here now and will leave for Seattle in a day or so. He is going to take all the mail from the post office and post it in Seattle, so we feel pretty sure of its getting out. Everybody is writing on the strength of it anyway. I am feeling fine, have not been blue a day since I have arrived. Vance has never shown any signs of the "blues" yet. Lou is blue as indigo one day, and all sunshine the next. Charley has gone down the Yukon, I think probably, gone home on a steamer. He with thousands of others was sadly disappointed. I was badly disappointed myself but that was nothing new to me, so it did not worry me any.

We have not yet made a fortune, but I do believe we stand a good chance to make some money this winter and next spring. I want to go home next summer anyway whether we make anything or not, as I now see where the avenues are open for making money, not in mining, however, but in a commercial way. I could have cleared \$15,000 on \$1,500 investment had I known what I know now. Many will make a stake mining but the greater will fail to get even. It is the most grossly misrepresented country I ever saw, all a transportation and booming scheme. The best of mines around Dawson had the "cream" taken out of them this past winter.

Dawson has seen her day of glory. The largest mine owner there, Alex McDonald, is only paying \$100 per month and board, in his mines. A few are paying \$8 to \$10 per day and board themselves. This won't last long. Very few of the mines will work this winter at Dawson. Stewart river has turned out N.G. [no good?] so far; Indian river is not much good; Dominion and Sulphur creeks can only pay small wages and work.

On this side American creek, coming into Mission creek about one mile above its mouth, is the worst overrated country so far. Very little development work has been done on it yet, so it may turn out better than I expect. Eagle City is situated at the mouth of Mission on the Yukon; the prettiest town site in Alaska, beautiful scenery and a high, dry, sandy beach, 20 to 30 feet above high water mark; a fine healthy spot, too much so for us to sell many drugs. We of course profit by being in a fine state of health ourselves. I never felt better. Lou, Vance and I have each three claims of 20 acres each. Each one of us have one that I don't go much on but the other two I look for something good coming out of them. We have one each on three different creeks. We will not know before winter what we have in them. Vance and I have one of the best located business lots in Eagle on Front street.

We are now working on our house or cabin. It will be a little over 14x16 inside; logs hewed outside and inside, making nice clean walls. We lay a layer of nice clean moss on the top of each log before laying the next one, making an absolutely wind and frost proof wall. We will have to whipsaw lumber for floors, doors, etc. The actual work and material in our cabin will represent at least \$700 to \$800. We purchased the lot, a "snap," for \$50.

I feel pretty sure of a good boom here this winter or next spring when we expect to sell. We have just gotten hold of two lots on second block from the river; will probably build a cabin on one to have it to move into if we sell the business. We will probably open a commission store when the cabin is finished, selling outfits for parties going out; will get ten percent for this. Then we have our drugs out on shelves now and sell some occasionally. Scarcely any one sick here, will be lots of colds in winter I think. We buy "snaps" occasionally, such as sugar, bacon, tobacco, etc., and sell again; sugar at 25c and sell at 35c; bacon at 15 to 20c and sell at 25 to 35c; tobacco at \$1 to \$1.50 and sell from \$2 to \$3 per pound. One thing sure, we are going to be comfortably situated this winter, and we have oceans of grub. We have bought considerable and added to our grubstake. This we won't sell before next spring. Should prices go away up again we have plenty to last us 13 to 15 months. Will probably have from 200 to 400 pounds flour to spare next spring. What we buy for speculation we keep separate from our individual property. We bet we will keep it up so we won't run short this winter. Vance and I work schemes to get our claim prospected without much work ourselves, as I think our chances are better speculating here in town. We are going to give a divided half of one of our claims on Quartz creek to three men to get them to sink to bed-rock and find out if there is any pay gravel in them. We will still have plenty left. I doubt it very much whether we will get any mail out this winter as there are so many in here that they can't carry it out. If you don't hear from us don't worry any. We are in the healthiest country on the globe, I believe. There are perhaps 20 women here now and more coming every day or two. I look for a big rush here about a month later from Dawson. I also look for some good strikes being made close to Eagle this winter (we call 25 to 35 miles close).

Bob Boyle

[*Louisburg Herald*, October 14, 1898]

Editor's note: In this article, Emile B. Wishaar discusses the history of the Fortymile mining district before turning to recent events in Eagle City. Wishaar spent 9 months investigating the Klondike and Alaska as a correspondent for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. He then became editor of Skagway's *Daily Alaskan*. Here he outlines the need for an all-American route between Alaska's southern coast and the Fortymile so that miners might avoid Canadian customs and inspections and enjoy "the liberal mining laws of Uncle Sam." Eagle City, in his estimation, was ideally situated as the northern terminus. An easy route from Valdez to Alaska's Yukon River gold fields was only a dream until the construction of the Richardson and Taylor highways.

FORTY-MILE REJUVENATED

Dawson City, August 2, 1898:

After the practical and very satisfactory experience in the Klondike of burning holes to bedrock became a recognized factor in the mining operations of this frozen region, it became apparent to many familiar with the Forty-Mile district that the same system there would give equally good results, and many of those failing to secure locations in the Klondike district returned to the Forty-Mile district, and with full faith in the hills on the American side, soon pulled out pay dirt enough to prove the richness of Uncle Sam's dominion. Positive proof of rich finds was sent up here over the ice about the middle of last January, and was followed by a general stampede, which up to present writing has depleted the mining camp in Canadian territory by a number exceeding 1,000. This number is being added to now daily, especially from the ranks of the new-comers, who, seeing nothing in sight here, are wisely looking to the American side for a field of operation.

The British boundary line crosses the Forty-Mile river about twenty-three miles above its mouth. It soon became apparent to the American miners here that owing to the extortionate mining laws passed by the Dominion government, something should be done to control and confine operations on American territory entirely within American lines, both coming into and going out of the country, in other words, to make an all-American route to and from the States. To this end it was found that an American town on American territory was absolutely necessary as a base of operations. Hence a party of energetic, intelligent miners went to the mouth of Mission creek, on the American side of the Yukon, and platted a townsite which has been named Eagle City.

This townsite, which, on the government maps of the United States coast and geodetic survey is known as Belle Isle, was laid out the latter end of last January, and the growth of the new American city is said to be wonderful. Lots that sold for \$50 and \$100 now command \$500 and \$1,000, with every prospect that prices will continue upward all summer and next winter. Buildings are in process of construction on all the principal streets, and business is said to be lively and flourishing. New-comers are at present living in tents, which dot the whole townsite, and from the number of boats that are daily leaving here with "chechakos" for the American side, it will not be long before Eagle City rivals Dawson. As predicted by many, it will outgrow it.

The platting of Eagle City took place the latter end of last January, after the stampede had proven the general interest in the matter and the anxiety of Americans to get back to American territory in order to work under the liberal mining laws of Uncle

Sam. The stamperders had staked everything in sight, individually and by proxy, or power of attorney, as permitted by the general mining laws of the United States; also had restaked all old claims that had been practically abandoned.

The very latest reports received from the Forty-Mile district are to the effect that rich mines are being worked on Chicken, Napoleon, Miller, Dominion and Alder creeks, including Nugget gulch, while promising prospects are being made almost daily.

The wisdom of choosing Eagle City as the center of operations for an all-American route to and from the United States is now admitted by all. In coming by way of St. Michael the miner, bound for the American side, by going to Eagle City, is never once brought in contact with the Canadian authorities, hence his outfit is not subject to duty or inspection. An overland winter all-American route has also been mapped out from Eagle City via the Copper river, over the divide from the Yukon south to the seacoast in the Gulf of Alaska. This overland route is said to be feasible and practical, besides being shorter than the Yukon and lake routes, and will remove many of the dangers and difficulties that beset the pilgrim on his trip from either Dyea or Skagway over the trail and down the river and lakes over Canadian territory.

The new route over which a trail has already been blazed from Eagle City goes along American creek, around Mount McQuestin, down Dome creek to O'Brien creek and down the latter to the Forty-Mile and its south fork. This will open up the head of the Tanana country as well as the upper Copper river district, and must, perforce, control all of that vast and probable rich mining region entirely through American territory clear down to the coast.

E.B. Wishaar

[*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, August 22, 1898]

Men, children, and sled dogs in front of the store and post office at Star City, a mining camp near the mouth of Seventymile River, ca. 1898. Courtesy of Eagle Historical Society.



No. 13

Editor's note: The residents of Eagle City, those who weren't entirely occupied with digging for gold, tried to design their town as a commercial and administrative hub. In June 1898, Alaska's postal inspector, John Clum, opened a post office in the town, and a customs office also seemed a good idea to Eagle City's boosters. And, rather than wait around for the government to provide one, they started felling trees and peeling logs. The woman called "Mrs. Woods" was indeed a famous character for leading a group of New York women to Dawson City and for her wheeling and dealing in gold claims from the Klondike to Nome. As the cold approached, this anonymous writer also seems to appreciate what a Far North winter meant to residents of the newly founded town.

UNCLE SAM GIVEN A CUSTOM-HOUSE

Eagle City, Alaska, August 10, 1898:

Eagle City, which is ninety miles below Dawson, on the American side, is nothing if not patriotic. Realizing that the Government has been put to heavy expense lately, and being desirous of having a custom-house located here, the citizens have donated a lot and are now at work with a vim which is surprising, getting out logs and building a house and office for the officer. They claim that Eagle City will enjoy the unique distinction of being the only city in the United States that has presented to Uncle Sam a building in which to conduct his business.

We received a visit this week from one of the most noted characters at present in the Yukon. She is a female stamper by the name of Mrs. Woods and is well known on Puget sound. She is a woman of 50 years or there about and spent nearly the whole

of last winter stampeding to creeks and staking claims. There is nothing of the simpering miss about the woman. She can drive a team of dogs, make herself at home anywhere, and does not hesitate to sleep in a cabin crowded with men and dogs. She can shoulder a small pack, wear overalls and walk as fast and as far in a day as the average man. As a result of her activity last winter she has sixty-two claims recorded in her name, and her persuasive powers are so great that she is getting the greater part of them represented for nothing.

Things are dull here now. Quite a number of people are building cabins, but there is no money in town. The few claims on American creek now being worked are the only mines contiguous to the town at present. Winter is approaching and there is a cold wind blowing, which makes one think of winter quarters. The trees are shedding their leaves and soon the snow will come. What this winter will be to many I cannot foretell, but it would soften a harder heart than mine to see the poor innocent children and delicate women that one meets here, with a far-away look in their eyes, and the pinched faces that already show that the weather is too cold for camping comfortably.

[*San Francisco Chronicle*, October 2, 1898]

New construction on Eagle City's B Street, including an Alaska Commercial Company office (second from left) and the Eagle City Saloon (after the tent), 1899. Alaska State Library, Fort Egbert Construction & Activities Collection (P245-51).



Editor's note: William Thiem was one of the Sandusky, Ohio miners, and in this article he describes evening concerts with President William McKinley's nephew, who was on a trip sponsored by the U.S. Geological Survey, and lively dances where the gender ratio was fifty to one. Thiem notes that the weather was not good for hunting—the heat would spoil the meat—and that salmon was cheap and plentiful.

GOOD "HOT" CABIN IN COLD KLONDIKE

Eagle City, Alaska, September 1, 1898:

Dear Mother and All—I received your welcome letters and the Bible. The box arrived August 25. I was very glad to hear from you all for every one of our crowd looks for letters on every boat. Thanks for the Bible; it will be a good friend this winter. The summer here was warm and very pleasant, that is if the mosquitos wouldn't bother us so. Now the days are getting short—daylight at 5 and night at 8.

Our cabin is nearly completed and is by far better than any cabin I have seen in this country. The roof, floor and ceiling will be of whip sawed lumber, the logs of the house are ripped in halves, and in this way the whole interior is a flat surface.

Eagle City is a pretty place, located on the south bank of the Yukon and surrounded by sloping mountains. It has all prospects of being a good town, all creeks of importance empty into the Yukon near this point, and miners interested on creeks will certainly trade at the nearest post: Eagle City. Several transportation companies are building stores here which gives employment to quite a few men.

Mr. Barber, President McKinley's nephew, is in this country making a government survey. Their party is stopping near us and they visit our camp evenings and then we have concerts every night. Mr. Barber is a fine mandolin player and Howard Huntington accompanies him on the guitar.

We had a dance a week ago and there were only four women to about 200 men. I fared pretty well by getting four dances out of

15. We had a violin, mandolin, guitar and mouth harp for dancing music, and the dance went on as smooth as any at home in the halls.

I have changed somewhat since I left home. I seem twice as old, but look younger. I have gained in weight and my hair is six inches long and as curly as it was when I was a little boy. I am well and have been all the time. There is no sickness at Eagle City but Dawson is troubled by some kind of fever. The work is hard but none of us have seen anything that we couldn't do.

Part of the boys are out prospecting claims we have staked. We have not heard from them yet, but we know some are good as the claims above and below are paying well. This country is healthy, the climate is dry, except the rainy season, which is now on. When it freezes up in the fall it stays frozen until spring. Winter is the best season in this country, so the old miners say. The real cold weather, such as 70 degrees below zero, only lasts a few days and the general average is from 25 to 35 below, and they consider zero thawing.

There are a couple of fishermen camped on the other side of the Yukon opposite us and they are catching a great many fish which are from two to four feet in length. They furnish us with 80 pounds a week at 5 cents a pound. That is as cheap as can be bought in this state. Game is also very plentiful, but there isn't much shot just now for the warm weather would spoil it before it could be brought to camp.

I suppose everything is lively at home with a house full as you have now, and everyone enjoying themselves. I thought of the family picture several times and I wished I could have been home to have it taken since all were home, but hope we can have it taken when I return. Does mother still like to cook? If she were to cook for us 20 men with our big appetites she would tire of it in one day. All the mountains were full of berries and we had some fine berry pie.

Tell little Clarence and Rolland I haven't found that big nugget yet, but they can gaze on the gold I sent in the letter until I find theirs. I will close, hoping that you are all well and all will write soon. Give my best regards to all. With love,

William Thiem

[*Sandusky Daily Register*, October 14, 1898]



A placer miner on Bonanza Bar of the Fortymile River uses a hydraulic cannon to push gold-rich gravel into sluice boxes, ca. 1915. University of Alaska Fairbanks, George King Collection (19898-131-46).

Editor's note: This assessment from Angus Smith of Portland, Oregon reflects all the changes going on in Eagle City at the time: rising property prices, rising population (though 5,000 seems exaggerated), and surging confidence in the town's future.

RUSHING TO EAGLE CITY

Steamer *Cottage City* arrived early yesterday morning from Lynn canal with 200 passengers and 420 tons of freight. There was a comparatively large amount of gold brought by the passengers. The greatest individual quantity is said to have been held by A.B. Stafford, of British Columbia, who is credited with \$40,000.

The *Cottage City*'s passengers from the Yukon bring reports of new discoveries on Mission creek, twenty-three miles above Eagle City, and a great rush from Dawson and other parts of the Yukon to that locality. There are 5,000 people at Eagle City, as against 1,000 three months ago, and it is believed that town will develop into a thriving center of a great district. Town lots that sold for \$500 when staked out now bring \$5,000 and more. Many substantial buildings have been erected, and the North American Transportation & Trading Company has built a fine landing place for river steamers. Eagle City is located on high and dry ground, with excellent springs of water back of it, which accounts for the great influx from Dawson.

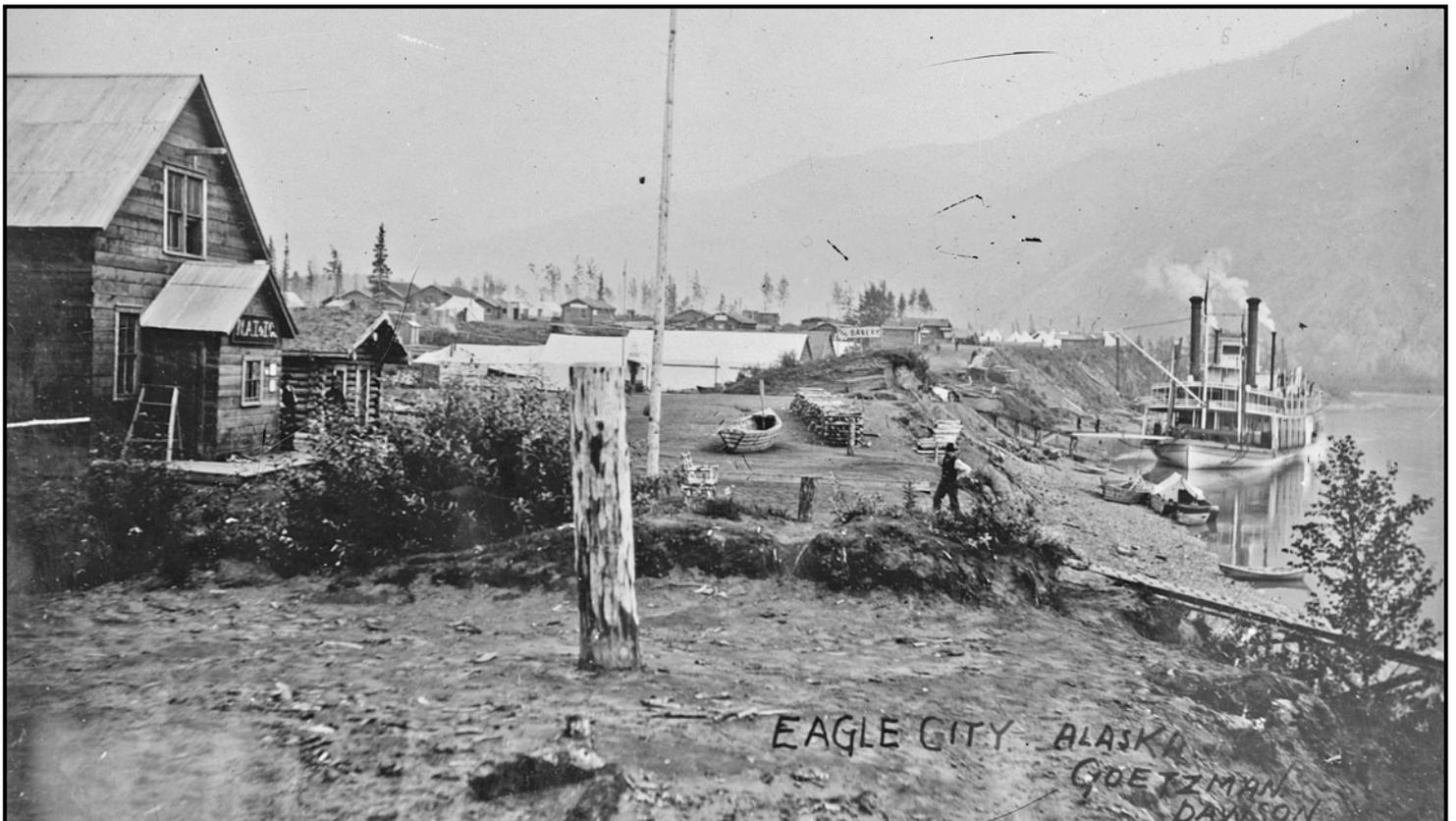
The recent discoveries were made on claims 2A and 4A, near the mouth of Cripple creek, a tributary of Mission creek, by men named Ailes and Ross. Shortly afterward one of these sold a half interest in his claim for \$33,000. Angus W. Smith, formerly of Portland, whose folks now live at White Haven, Pennsylvania, was one of the passengers on the *Cottage City*, who came direct from the new diggings, which he left September 10. He has been in

Alaska a year and a half, representing an Eastern syndicate, and says he believes the Mission creek district will develop into one of the richest parts of Alaska. He knew of the new discoveries there, and in speaking of them to a *Post-Intelligencer* reporter last night said they only went to confirm his belief in the wealth of that locality:

"I have been all through the country," he said, "and after having investigated other parts of Alaska, including the Klondike, am well satisfied that it will be one of the wealthiest portions of the north. It is good placer ground, with three to five feet of gravel to bedrock, and is summer diggings. Eagle City has all the requirements of a thriving place, and I believe is destined to become a great center. I own a lot there, which I would not sell. One reason why I believe that district will have a healthy future is that it is on the American side, and therefore entirely free from the machinations of Canadian officials. The ground seems to be rich along all the tributaries of Mission, including Clipper, Wolf and American creeks."

[*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, October 1, 1898]

A paddlewheel steamboat docks at Eagle City, 1899. The North American Transportation & Trading Company has an office in the foreground; other commercial companies have warehouses on the waterfront. The photograph was taken by Henry J. Goetzman who had a photography shop in Dawson City. University of Alaska Fairbanks, Selid-Bassoc Collection (1964-92-228).



No. 16

Editor's note: Charles G. Carruthers was described as a surveyor and he made maps of the Yukon River gold fields. He also founded the short-lived *Eagle City Tribune*. Lacking a printing press, Carruthers wrote out the newspaper by hand and used something called a "hectograph machine" to make copies. His endeavors were also notable because he was recovering from a gun-shot wound and maintained a sense of humor about it. He writes about the newly formed Eagle City Mining and Development Company, which he will buy into and which will soon become highly controversial. Only one issue of the *Tribune* exists today and it appears only three issues were ever created, making this one of Alaska's rarest newspapers.

CRIME ON THE YUKON

According to passengers on the *City of Seattle*, Lou Cooper, formerly of Dawson, shot and probably fatally wounded Surveyor Carruthers recently in Eagle City. Cooper and Carruthers were having a friendly argument when, without any reason whatever, Cooper pulled his pistol and, placing it against Carruthers' abdomen, fired. Cooper was placed under arrest, and should Carruthers' wound prove fatal there is strong talk of lynching Cooper. The news was carried to Dawson by Billy Stanton, well known in the Yukon valley and Southeastern Alaska.

[*San Francisco Chronicle*, October 23, 1898]

EDITOR CARRUTHERS SPEAKS

[Excerpts from *Eagle City Tribune*, October 8, 1898]

The Editor sincerely thanks his kind friends and sympathisers for their many kind wishes. He was certainly shot, and is still certainly loaded but goes about with his load just the same.

Mr. Thompson of American Creek called at the *Tribune* office today to present his congratulations on the Editor's recovery and the Sporting Editors thoughtful care of the deceased dead. This gentleman speaks highly of the future of American gold at this office.

Among the new arrivals to Eagle City this week are: Mr. William H. Smith of San Francisco, George F. Hall of Seattle, & Mr. J.E. West. These gentlemen have both money & brains, and finding that in Canadian Territory they had to endure so much tender mercy from the officials, that had they stayed in Dawson any longer they would have been ostracized very soon from anything they had. They have every faith in Eagle City and its future and are sanguine as to the ultimate development of good quartz properties here, which will insure the permanence of this Camp.

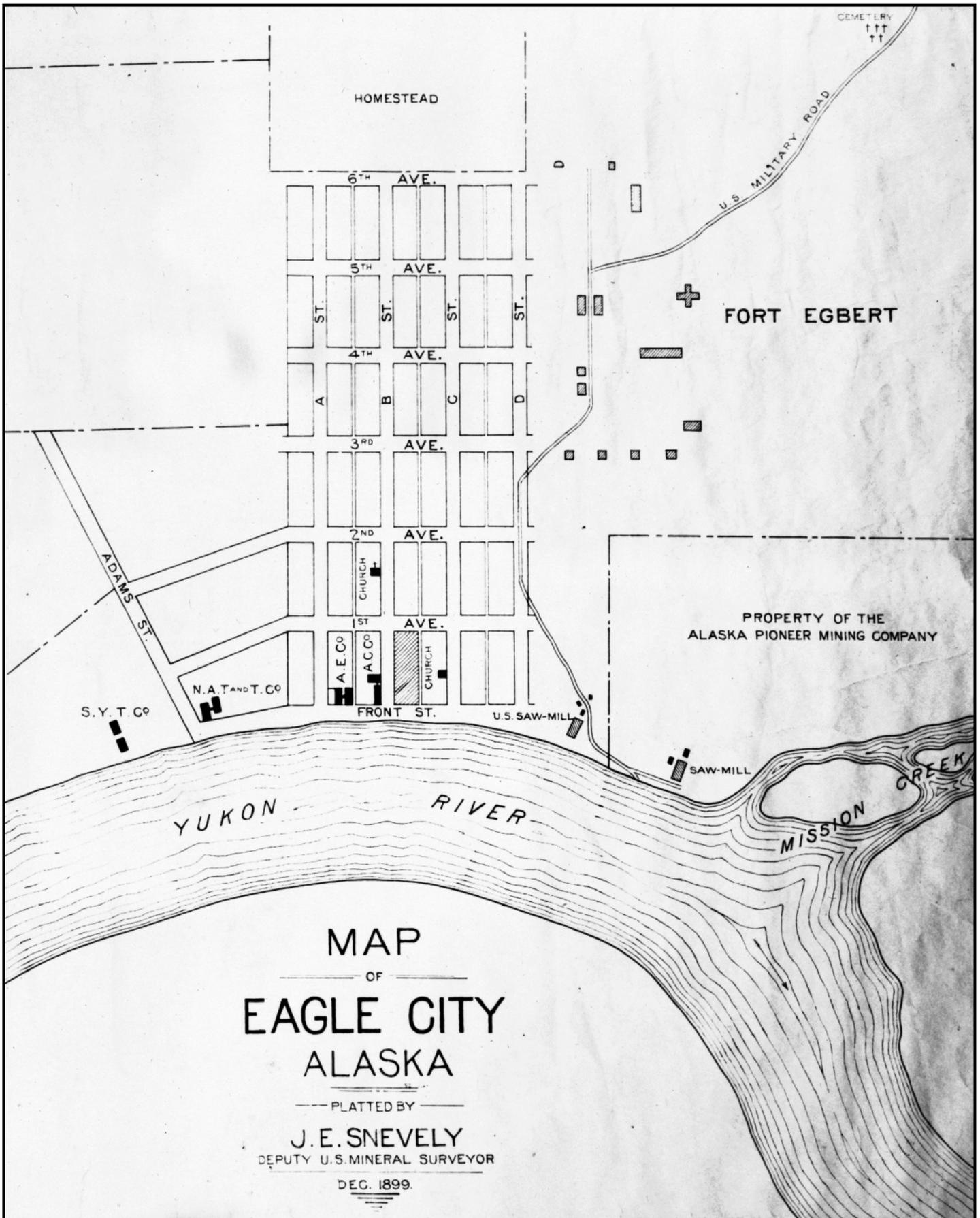
A new Company has been formed in Eagle City during the past few days, known as the "Eagle City Mining and Development Co." It appears they are conducting their business upon a most orthodox basis: this is the first company to incorporate under the above heading in Alaska. The papers to obtain due title etc. are now on the way to Sitka, having been compiled under the surveillance of a competent mining lawyer. They have capital to work on, and brains to work with & we wish the promoters of this Co. every success in their project to develop the interests of this City.

AN ALASKAN NEWSPAPER

One of the most interesting newspapers published on the face of the earth is the *Eagle City Tribune*, published at Eagle City, Alaska. Three copies of this paper have lately been received by Mrs. Anna Fuller of No. 413 Chicago Street in this city. They are like what news letters were before the discovery of printing. They are simply sheets of letter papers on which news matter and miscellany is set down in handwriting by some copying process. Each copy of the paper consists of two such sheets. Charles G. Carruthers is editor and F.L. Lowell is his associate. The paper bears at its head the motto, "One truth is clear; whatever is, is right"; which is a good deal for people to acknowledge who live in Alaska weather. The handwriting is very good, and almost as clear as print. How many copies compose the edition is not stated, but the faintness of some of the pages shows that a considerable number of papers must be copied at one writing.

Alaska cold and the gold fever have no effect upon patriotism, evidently. The *Tribune* for October 1st starts off with a long item relative to the Spanish War, and contains two pieces of poetry about Dewey and "Yankee Reuben Blue." There are several advertisements, one of "meals," another of "freighters and teamsters," and a third of "real estate, mines, etc." The news in these papers consists mostly of mining gossip. As a whole the *Tribune* is exceedingly entertaining.

[*Buffalo Morning Express*, February 19, 1899]



Townsite map of Eagle City by James E. Snevely, 1899. This map from December shows that the town already had four commercial company offices and warehouses, two churches, and two sawmills. Also, the U.S. Army had begun building Fort Egbert. Snevely was the manager of a mining syndicate from Sandusky, Ohio, and this same year his partners found him guilty of fraud and forced him to leave town. University of Alaska Fairbanks, Rare Maps Collection (1986-34-3).

No. 17

Editor's note: Dawson's *Klondike Nugget* often carried stories about the early days of Eagle City. As people traveled up the Yukon River, their reports landed in the newspaper, including news about the 'Eagle City Mining and Development Company' and the 'Eagle City Land and Improvement Company.' Some Eagle residents invested heavily in one or both of these companies, like Dr. Heimlich who quickly assessed the town's growth and believed in its future. Meanwhile, the 'Eagle City Land and Improvement Company' was advertising in the *Klondike Nugget* and promoters were waving a banner in the streets of Dawson to attract customers to a property auction. Also, Lt. Wilds P. Richardson (of Richardson Highway fame) had arrived with the first company of U.S. Army soldiers to occupy the newly built Fort Egbert.

FROM EAGLE CITY

Dr. A. Franklin Heimlich returned from Eagle City over the ice a few days ago. Owing to the condition of the river some 12 days were consumed on the trip. The third day out the party unfortunately lost their blankets by fire. Then the unexpected length of the trip resulted in their running out of food. Luckily enough a cache was seen upon the bank at the mouth of some stream, and a small stock of supplies was secured from it.

Mr. Heimlich is an energetic citizen, and is largely interested in the Eagle City Mining and Development company which owns some 160 acres of placer claims on near-by creeks. They also own some quartz claims, specimens from which readily assay from \$18 to \$80 to the ton. The company further has secured the right to furnish Eagle City with a water system in the near future. Besides the foregoing the company has secured some 820 acres of coal fields which is to be opened at once.

Mr. Heimlich is quite confident of the future which awaits Eagle City. He says there is already a population of 2,000 people and 700 cabins, where there was only one last June. Eagle City has now a U.S. post office, a U.S. marshal, U.S. commissioner and 50 boys in blue. There is a report down there that a nugget weighing \$95 has been taken from American, but the gentleman does not vouch for the story, though \$30 and \$40 nuggets are to be seen every day. Eagle City is booming and prosperous, with real estate bringing good prices and rapidly advancing.

[*Klondike Nugget*, November 9, 1898]

EAGLE CITY LAND & IMPROVEMENT COMPANY

This company has gone to a great expense of purchasing land within the Eagle City townsite for business and residence purposes. On account of the large expenditure of money necessary for carrying out developments within their ground and for further improvements such as securing a sub-lease of the water rights for supplying water from the spring situated near the headwaters of American creek, grading the streets, cutting sanitary ditches, the company is going to offer for sale a few of its choice lots in the central portion of the townsite at public auction, commencing Monday, December 26,

and continuing for the rest of the week at the Mine Exchange, Monte Carlo theatre. Sales every afternoon during the week from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Terms one-half cash, balance in 60 days. A fine map showing townsite, location and buildings and railroad as staked by the government survey will be on exhibition.

LeRoy Pellitier, Auctioneer

[*Klondike Nugget*, December 21, 1898]

GOLD HARVEST IN THE KLONDIKE

Eagle City, on the American side, is being hustled forward to the position of an important mining center, with all the characteristic Yankee ingenuity and energy. A local government is in operation, a set of municipal officers and Aldermen and Justice of the Peace having recently been elected. Dawson has been forcibly reminded of the existence of Eagle City by the advertising methods used to boom town lots in the latter place. The Dawson papers have of late contained notices of an auction sale of Eagle City town lots to be held here. A banner carried through the streets of Dawson also announced the forthcoming bargain sale of Eagle City real estate. "Gilt-edged bargains" and "genuine snaps" were accordingly auctioned off for two days at the Yukon Mining Exchange in this city. Only two lots were sold, to be sure, and at moderate figures, before the sale ended, but one great purpose was accomplished, attention was called to Eagle City and its possibilities.

Captain Richardson, in command of the American troops at Fort Yukon, has located permanently at Eagle City, where a garrison has been established.

[*San Francisco Chronicle*, February 13, 1899]

Editor's note: Sensing that the Eagle City Land and Improvement Company might be a criminal enterprise, the *Klondike Nugget* launched an investigation in the name of journalistic responsibility while also being careful not to accuse one of the paper's advertising customers of wrong-doing. The result is a remarkable insider's view of how company representatives responded to questioning, including Philip Sheridan who is described as a former Canadian prosecuting attorney. Within a short time, most of the people involved in the real estate scheme were found guilty of fraudulent practices and would be banished from Eagle City by their peers.

THE TOWNSITE OF EAGLE CITY

Attention has been called during the past week to public announcements in the press of this city that townsite lots in the townsite of Eagle City, Alaska, in American territory, would be offered for sale at public auction to the highest bidder. These advertisements, as well as a banner carried upon the streets of Dawson referred to the "Eagle City Land and Improvement Company" as the proprietors of the property, and as this appeared to be a peculiar proposition, viz., the endeavor to sell in Dawson, and at public auction, lots in the territory of Alaska was a sufficient matter for the *Nugget* to look the proposition up and report to the public the result of its investigations regardless of the fact that the Eagle City Land and Improvement Company was patronizing the business columns of this paper—a fact, however, also, that never stands between the duty the *Nugget* always feels it owes to the people. . . .

A company with so formidable a name, it would occur to the ordinary lay mind, would have its officials connected therewith set forth as a guarantee to the public, as is generally done to invite the investment of those seeking homes or otherwise. There was an absence of this in this case. At last the avenue of information led to the office of Mr. Philip Sheridan, who lately acted as crown prosecuting attorney, who arrived here in September, and who has since then been prominent in the promotion of several large deals in this territory, and appears to be a most successful organizer of schemes of large proportions, and organization of capital.

Following this avenue, a *Nugget* representative called upon Mr. Sheridan and seeking an interview the reporter proceeded to inquire of Mr. Sheridan as follows:

"Mr. Sheridan, will you tell what you know of the Eagle City Land and Improvement Co.?" to which Mr. Sheridan replied, "Is this for publication?" and he was informed in the affirmative. "Well," said Mr. Sheridan, "the Eagle City Land and Improvement Co. is a company owning the townsite of Eagle City, and now placing its lots upon the market."

To economize in space and avoiding the queries and answers, Mr. Sheridan's information to the newspaper man was, that connected with the scheme were Nels Peterson, W.H. Bard, McConnell & Parker, D.H. Pingree, and Crawford, Edwards & Whittren, and the company owned 470 lots in Eagle City. Noticing that Mr. Sheridan had omitted his own name he was asked "Are you not connected with it too?" Mr. Sheridan replied that he was. "Is your company incorporated, and if so who are its officers?" "No, it is not incorporated, [it is] simply an association of partnership." "What kind of title does a purchaser get for his lot?" was next asked. "We can give no title directly but we have a placer claim title to five placer claims, the assessment work on which

would be \$500 for five years, and a patent has been asked for, which when we secure it, will enable us to give titles to each purchaser from us." "What then does he get now in case he invests?" and Mr. Sheridan continued, "We simply give him a receipt for his money, and at the end of 30 days if we have received our title, a deed to the property." "Who furnishes these receipts?" was the next question put. "Well, Mr. Whittren will do that," replied Mr. Sheridan. "Have you sold any lots yet?" was asked by the scribe. "Not many, four or five," was the reply. "What did they bring?" followed the pencil pusher. "Oh, one \$95, another \$100 and up to \$115, I think," said Mr. Sheridan. Eliciting no further information the scribe departed.

Monday and Tuesday auction sales were held at the Yukon Mining Exchange, and thither the *Nugget* man wended his way later [to ask more questions] . . . "Didn't the purchasers wish to know anything about their titles in buying property?" was inquired. "We only gave them receipts for their money, and although the receipt given did not so state, the terms of sale did, that in 30 days if no title passed, their money would be refunded." "Who are the officers of the Eagle City L. & I. Co. or to whom would the purchasers look for a return of their cash in case of failure to receive title?" was the next question and it was replied "that they did not know; they were only auctioneers in the matter but presumed Mr. Whittren to be the manager of the company."

The sales of lots at auction was discontinued on Wednesday last for reasons best known to the company probably and when they will be resumed is not announced but of course will be undoubtedly.

Eagle City, it is likely to prove true, will have a future before it as an important point on American territory, and it is only justice to Mr. Sheridan to say that he has been connected with some large enterprises since coming here, and his services gained in a number of large deals, such as the Pioneer Tramway company operating on the Bonanza trail. The Eagle City is no diminutive proposition when one stops to consider that with 470 lots at a low average of only \$200 each would amount to nearly \$100,000, which should the place prove of much consequence, many would bring ten to twenty times that sum. As far as stated, the *Nugget* places the above information before the public for its guidance.

[*Klondike Nugget*, December 31, 1898]

Editor's note: When the activities of the Eagle City Mining and Development Company came to light, the company's founders were sent packing and were threatened with violence should they return. Others were warned to "mend their ways" or face the same punishment. The crew from Sandusky, Ohio was also investigated for their habit of claim-jumping on Mission Creek, and they were told to leave town. As far away as Los Angeles, California, the call went out to avoid real estate scams on that section of the Yukon River.

The other directors of the company, Deputy Customs Collector A.J. Cody, Fred L. Lowell, John Wood, John E. West, Dr. N.F. Heimlich and E. Emerson were ordered to mend their ways under penalty of banishment. Hall, Smith and Carruthers intend appealing to the authorities at Sitka for an order maintaining their alleged right in the ownership of the 160 acres back of Eagle City.

A Mr. Selbert at the head of twenty boys from Sandusky, Ohio, became rather rapid in jumping claims on Mission creek, and at a miners' meeting he and his companions were given short notice to leave Eagle City. They scampered for Circle City.

[*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, January 6, 1899]

EAGLE CITY MEN DRIVE OUT MANY BAD PROMOTERS

Dawson Yukon Sun, December 9, 1898:

George T. Hall, Charles G. Carruthers and William H. Smith, stockholders and officers of the so-styled Eagle City Mining & Development Company, have arrived in Dawson on their way to Seattle. The encroachments and area-expanding proclivities of this octopus-grabbing concern alarmed the peaceful miners and residents of Eagle City until they worked themselves into a frenzy and called a miners' meeting.

The 160 acres staked by the directors and recorded by Carruthers was the bone of contention. J.C. Brown, one of the leaders in the indignation meeting, maintained that the ground had been illegally secured, and that Carruthers had no right to record it. The placer ground is back of the town, bordering on Mission creek. A miners' committee appointed to look into the affair made a report of which this is a portion:

"That Charles G. Carruthers, George T. Hall and W.H. Smith be required and forced to leave Alaskan territory within three full days from the adoption of this recommendation, and that the people of this community will not be responsible for their safety should they or either of them return."

ADVICE TO INVESTORS

United States Consul McCook, writing from Dawson City, says: "Investors should be careful of mining properties offered for sale, particularly in some sections of Alaska. Of the many who came here last spring and summer, hundreds drifted down the Yukon and located at Forty Mile, Eagle City and Star City. I am informed that there are many schemers there who get up miners' meetings, elect their own recorder, jump claims already recorded, get their men to give them receipts as record papers and issue prospectuses of water rights, all apparently in conformity with United States mining regulations. They have organized companies, their scheme being to sell their so-called water rights to the public. No one should buy anything until perfectly satisfied. There will be any number of valueless claims offered by promoters."

[*Los Angeles Times*, March 22, 1899]



A missionary [right], Army soldiers, and a Han Athabaskan man with a dip-net for catching salmon (cut salmon are drying on racks to the left), 1902. This photograph was captioned "Indian Village, Ft. Egbert." Alaska State Library, Ark A. Tower Collection (P334-11).

Editor's note: The following is a rare glimpse into the miners' meeting and the sentencing that followed an investigation of the Eagle City Mining and Development Company. The chief company officials—Charles Carruthers, George Hall, and William Smith—were told to leave town within three days or “this community will not be responsible for their safety.” Others were simply admonished and told not to associate with dishonest men. It became clear during the investigation that the job of land recorder was a critical one, and that this conspiracy to defraud depended upon putting Carruthers in that post.

AS IT IS DONE IN ALASKA

The first authentic news of the miners' meeting at Eagle City last November which ordered Charles G. Carruthers, George T. Hall and William H. Smith to leave the city, has been brought out by Thomas McMahan, chairman of the meeting. He conveyed to the *Post-Intelligencer* the original signed copy of the report of the investigating committee which recommended the expulsion of these three men and which was unanimously adopted at a very large meeting on November 16.

Mr. McMahan is a resident of Arlington, Snohomish county, and he has been in the Yukon country for two years. He is at the Hotel Northern now with his family. The story which he tells of the cause of the action of the mass meeting is one of considerable interest.

It seems that these three men, with others, organized the Eagle City Mining and Development Company last July, also the Eagle City Mining district, appointing Carruthers as recorder of it. This gentleman was, it is alleged, the Pooh-Bah of Eagle City. He was secretary of the company as well as recorder of the district. Then he became an editor, publishing the *Eagle City Tribune*. This was written with a pen and ink and about 100 copies per week struck off from a hectograph machine were sold for 50 cents each.

“It was the purpose of these three men to work the same graft that was in operation at the recorder's office at Dawson,” said McMahan yesterday. “They expected a big rush to Eagle City and many locations of mining claims which would have made them rich in fees paid. Then, as in Dawson, they would have had inside information of big discoveries. They might have kept men waiting to record fine claims while their henchmen went out and located on them or gathered up all the rich ground near by.

But what makes it the more daring was the fact we already had mining recorders on all of the creeks—American, Mission, Boulder, Boundary and Comet—some of whom had been doing their business for two years. Carruthers wanted to usurp the offices of these men and he actually did issue certificates for claims within the districts of the legal recorders. The purpose of this gang was to drive the other recorders out of business.”

The first meeting was held at the store of the Alaska Exploration Company on November 12, at which McMahan was chosen chairman. There were about 300 miners present from Eagle City and its vicinity. A committee consisting of McMahan, chairman; Thomas W. Alsbitt, secretary; S.B. Bellow, F.D. Wells and George Dreibelbis was, on motion, appointed by the chairman of the meeting to investigate and report on Wednesday, November 16. The report, after reviewing the history of the alleged dishonest concern, says:

Your committee find and charge first: That Charles G. Carruthers improperly, maliciously and illegally assumed the mining recordership of a vast scope of territory, as if under the United States laws, and by reason of such assumption of authority, has and is obtaining money under false representation and is thereby endangering the lawful rights of American citizens, their heirs and assigns, as to title vestments of mining property within Alaska. That the business methods of said Carruthers are unworthy the countenance of honorable men, and that he is an undesirable personage in this Alaskan territory.

Second: That Fred L. Lowell is a dupe of the aforesaid Carruthers, completely under his direction and control and deserves pity rather than censure.

Third: That George T. Hall is an unscrupulous schemer, well known as such previous to his inflicting this community with his presence, and a dangerous adjunct to the mining interests of this community, and honorable men will shun his company.

Fourth: That William H. Smith is a competent diplomat in furthering and executing the interests of the aforesaid Carruthers-Hall-Lowell party and is an improper person to remain within the confines of this territory.

Fifth: That the creation of the Eagle City Mining and Development Company, its object and intent, is to perpetuate fraud upon the outside public, thereby jeopardizing the mining interests of Alaska.

Now, whereas, your committee verily believe the aforesaid facts, it feels incumbent upon it for the best interests of all concerned and the mining interests of this territory, and as a protection to the outside public at large, to assume to make you the following recommendations for your consideration:

First: That the people of the States be fully advised and warned through the press of the existence of the Eagle City Mining and Development Company, its purposes, objects and methods as found by this committee, with a full list of the members and association.

Second: That the same information be furnished the officials of the Alaskan territory.

Third: That Fred L. Lowell, on account of his age and disposition be and is hereby severely censured for his connection with said company, and is admonished that his continuation of such associations will call for more severe action from the miners of this community.

Fourth: That Charles G. Carruthers, George T. Hall and William H. Smith be required and forced to leave Alaskan territory within three full days from the adoption of these recommendations, and that the people of this community will not be responsible for their safety should they or either of them return.

Fifth: That the remaining members of the Eagle City Mining and Development Company be permitted to explain their connection with said scheme, and advise the meeting of their present intentions and attitude towards sustaining and furthering its objects.

Carruthers, Hall and Smith did not linger long at Eagle City. The *Tribune*, the Eagle City Mining and Development Company and the recorder's office died altogether. When Saturday had come, the end of the three days of grace given to the trio to wind up its affairs, they were on the trail to Dawson. Nothing has been heard of them since.

[*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, January 11, 1899]

Editor's note: A special correspondent for the *San Francisco Call*, Sam W. Wall, reported that Eagle City had turned a corner. With most political scandals behind it, the town had elected a municipal government and had even submitted a successful bid to make Eagle City the headquarters of Alaska's new Third Judicial District. The U.S. Army soldiers were arriving, the buildings of Fort Egbert were under construction, and business was brisk. In many ways Eagle had become the American town and mining center its founders had envisioned.

WINTER WORK OF THE KLONDIKERS

Dawson, April 7, 1899:

Eagle City, a town of 800 people, has, since the ice went out last spring, risen up at the mouth of Mission Creek. Not exactly under the shadow—as every man writing about it will probably be tempted to say—but shouldering up against that great rock that marks a point in the landscape at the mouth of Mission Creek. But Eagle City is not in or under the shadow of a great rock or any other shadow. Its people are very proud of it and believe it will grow to be a big and permanent city.

It has its parties and its politics, and each man in his bonnet has some sort of a bee or other. A short time ago it was violently addicted to the miners' meeting, but with that craving for variety and yearning for office that marks the true American it has now elected for itself a civil government of its own out of which it may enjoy an annual election. These are as exciting in their small way as was ever an election anywhere.

As the result of the last one, after much hustling for votes, some of which were even dragged in with dogs and sleds from distant creeks, they have a Mayor or president of a Council of five, W.M. Woody; and the Council—A.J. Kelsey, J.H. Robinson, S.B. Fallou and Thomas Aisbitt; a Judge, A. Beavens; a Recorder, Thomas McMahon; a Treasurer, P.J. Meyer, and a Marshal, M. Mather, and the Marshal has twelve deputies. A code of civil, sanitary and criminal regulations has been adopted. The townsite, containing eighty-seven acres, has been surveyed and streets laid out. The

town contains 560 cabins, while at the same place this day of the month last year there was just one cabin, one of those "miner's cabins" built by the pioneers as a common, free-to-all stopping place for travelers. The people have petitioned Sitka or Washington to have Eagle City made the capital of a new judicial district and to have a land office opened there, and they hope their wishes may be fulfilled this spring.

Captain Richardson, United States military commandant on the Yukon, has had ten acres above the town on the river front set aside for barracks. A detachment of the soldiers now stationed at Circle City will be sent up on an early spring boat and the barracks will be built. The Alaska Exploration Company and the North American Transportation and Trading Company have built large warehouses, and the Alaska Commercial Company, now renting a storehouse, has let a contract for a big building, work upon which will commence at once. There are half a dozen smaller stores, with a complement of saloons, restaurants and the like. Without one public dance hall they have a circulating library and a literary society.

The town is about fifteen miles from the boundary line on the American side, and this fact gives its people the hope of securing much more of the trade of the miners of the Forty Mile district than would otherwise fall to them. For, by taking goods over the trails that lead away from Eagle City into that country, the national line need not be crossed and the necessity of paying duty will be avoided. The winter trails lead up American and Mission creeks and by the crossing of a low divide drop down into the tributaries of the north fork of Forty Mile and thence any division of that creek may be reached. The diggings on the South, Dennison and Mosquito forks are of course more easily reached from and more naturally tributary to the town of Forty Mile, but they are nearly all in American territory while the international boundary line, to cross which is to settle with a customs collector, stretches between them and the town. Forty Mile, to be sure, may find a means of overcoming this difficulty, but if she cannot Eagle will certainly build some more log houses upon the trade of the South Fork.

[*San Francisco Call*, May 19, 1899]



"Game Coming to Market"—Eagleites pose with caribou and Dall's sheep after a hunt, 1900. The man at center has a box camera and tripod in the crook of his arm. Alaska State Library, Wickersham State Historic Site (277-4-52).

Conclusion

In Eagle City the scandals and angry miners' meetings did not end once Carruthers, Hall, and Smith were sent away. Within weeks, two more prominent Eagleites were living under a cloud. Thomas McMahon, the town's postmaster and chairman of the meeting that broke up the Eagle City Mining and Development Company, and Deputy Customs Collector Al Cody were both accused of malfeasance. Cody abused his position by selling a batch of confiscated whiskey to local saloonkeepers for \$30 a gallon. McMahon was said to have helped Cody by offering the post office as a storehouse for the stolen goods while also acting as "agent or go-between" for the illicit deals. When news got out of their crimes, both men left town in a hurry.

Meanwhile, Carruthers and Smith traveled to Dawson City where Smith was arrested by the Canadian police and held for three weeks. When he was released, the men first traveled to Sitka, which was Alaska's capital at the time, to argue that they were unjustly evicted from Eagle City and should get their property back. This was not successful. Next they went to Tacoma, Washington where they again appeared in the newspapers for all the wrong reasons.

On January 15, 1899, a violent storm sank the British cargo ship *Andelana* near Tacoma's harbor and seventeen sailors drowned. By February, Carruthers and Smith were advertising that they could "cheaply and quickly" raise the sunken ship and convinced the British vice-consul John B. Alexander, who was stationed in Tacoma, as well as some local businessmen. The vice-consul signed over a check for \$400 on the strength of Carruthers' claim that he would reap enormous profit from the salvage operation. All of the scheme's investors lost their money, and the two men skipped town after running up bills in hotels, restaurants, and a haberdashery or two.

By the turn of the century, Eagle City had entered a new era—the town had a municipal government and was a northern stronghold for both the U.S. Army and Alaska's Third Judicial District. Judge James Wickersham was building a handsome two-story courthouse and the presence of two hundred Army troops helped to stabilize the regional economy which ebbed and flowed with each new gold stampede. The discovery of gold in Nome, on Alaska's western coast, lured many of Eagle City's miners away, but the town persevered. By 1903 Eagle had become an important station in the Washington-Alaska Military Cable and Telegraph System, and in 1905 the Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen arrived from the Arctic coast by dogsled to send a telegram announcing to the world that he had conquered the Northwest Passage.

One question that remains less clear about the early years of Eagle is the influence of the newcomers on the Han Athabascans who considered the townsite part of their homeland. Archeological studies conducted around present-day Eagle indicate that the Han had long built dwellings near the mouth of Mission Creek, and that when stampedeers arrived in 1898, they continued to live nearby, selling salmon and trading for Western goods like flour, cloth, firearms, and tobacco. While building Fort Egbert, the Army annexed a number of stampedeer cabins and also, presumably, displaced the Han from that location. Before long, the local Han families established Eagle Village on the banks of the Yukon about three miles upstream.

Historical newspapers contain a great deal of information about Alaska's past, and online databases make research of this kind relatively easy. Combining newspapers and other historical materials allows us to resurrect forgotten events and to listen to the voices of the past. However, like any source material, newspapers must be approached in a critical manner. We must ask, "Who is speaking here?" and "Do I trust what is being said?" In this collection, we mostly hear from reporters and stampedeers who offer their own perspectives and prejudices. They see the world with their own cultural filter, which means, for example, that they largely ignore the Han people living nearby. It is also important to keep in mind that this collection is just a sample of the articles available to researchers—there is always more to discover!

Today visitors to Eagle have a chance to see much of the town's history on display. They can visit historic buildings like the Wickersham Courthouse, the Customs House, and surviving Fort Egbert buildings, which also serve as museum spaces telling the story of the Army fort, Judge Wickersham's court, and life in a frontier community. These facilities are managed by the Eagle Historical Society and the Bureau of Land Management. Eagle's historic district has also been designated a National Historic Landmark on the National Register of Historic Places, which documents and helps to protect the nation's most important historic properties. Eagle residents take great pride in their community's past, and the town's first year as an Alaskan gold rush town is an important part of that complex story.

SOURCES

All of the newspaper articles used in this collection came from these online databases:

Library of Congress's Chronicling America
California Digital Newspaper Collection
Newspaperarchive.com
Newspapers.com

For more information about Eagle, Eagle Village, and the surrounding region, see:

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Scott, Elva R. *Jewel on the Yukon, Eagle City: Collections of Essays on Historic Eagle and Its People*. Eagle City: Eagle Historical Society, 1997.

Webb, Melody. *The Last Frontier: A History of the Yukon Basin of Canada and Alaska*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985. Also titled *Yukon: The Last Frontier* from University of British Columbia Press, 1993.

An index exists for the *Klondike Nugget* at the University of Washington's Special Collections and it is available online. It takes the form of scanned library catalog cards, and it is very useful for finding information about the origins of Eagle City and other Klondike gold rush topics. The University of Alaska Fairbanks holds a full collection of Alaskan and Alaska-related historical newspapers on microfilm, including the *Klondike Nugget*.

For an entertaining account of an entire Klondike gold rush experience, see *Klondyke: M.D.K Weimer's True Story of the Alaska Gold Fields* (1903). This self-published effort begins dramatically with: "The spring of 1898 witnessed one of the grandest rushes to Alaska and the northern gold fields of America that has ever been known in the existence of man." Weimer was a miner and a journalist, and Chapter 2 offers his observations on Eagle City's first year of existence. The book is available online.

