

**YUKON TOWN THAT LEFT IN ONE NIGHT**

Town Booming at Bedtime is Abandoned Before Break of Day.

I am going to open this story by telling a story—one of the most unusual that ever came out of Alaska. It is an absolutely true tale, and I got it directly from the main actor in the silent drama—as we sat on the bank of the Yukon one night, smoking and fighting mosquitoes.

He was a watch repairer and kept a few clocks and a little jewelry in the little river supply town for the mines back in the hills.

Spring was breaking (the spring of last year), daylight had returned, the ice was going out and everybody was looking forward when the first boat would come in and new faces and new grub could be met.

"It was a bright, warm Sunday," said my friend, and then I wondered if the story would be as vexatious as the mosquitoes.

A friend hunted him up, he said,

and told him it was his birthday and he proposed that a few of the A. B. (Alaska Brotherhood) boys gather at a cabin and celebrate both the birthday and return of spring by seeing how much booze they could drink in a given length of time—a sort of a capacity and endurance contest.

I will cut the details short. My story-teller said that at supper time he realized he would soon be among those "laid out," so he slipped out, to his bachelor cabin and went to bed.

During the night there was an alarm at the outer door, and the men called on him to get up and come out. He answered he would in a few minutes and they went away. Then he went back to sleep. He awoke at daylight. His head throbbed and his stomach was on a strike, so he rolled over and slept again. At noon he again awoke, washed and beat it for the nearest saloon, but the saloon was closed, the door locked and no one around.

"I couldn't make it out," said the

man. "Certainly this was Monday and the saloons were never closed on this date. So then I went across to the store postoffice to find the reason for this strange condition. The postoffice was closed. I looked up the street—not a living thing. I looked across to where a bunch of dogs had been tied for a month and they were gone. Then I thought I had it. A new strike had been reported and the whole town had stampeded. But on closer investigation I found the harnesses, sleds, packing outfits, etc. had not been taken, so it could not have been a rush. I must be crazy or dreaming. I went to my shop. The clocks were ticking. To be certain that I was awake I opened one and stopped the swinging pendulum. It stopped. When I started it again the clock resumed its ticking.

"Say, friend, you can't imagine the fearful thoughts that came over me—I was crazy. The town was there, so were the people, but I could not see or hear them. I had 'gone bugs' and would go out on the first steamer for the crazy house at Portland. Lord, how I was frightened.

"I went outside and looked around. Not a sign of life. I went down the hill to the river bank. Everything was fearfully quiet. The river was very high, but as the town was on a rise far above it, certainly no sane person could be alarmed at the hissing stream. Then I went back of the town, looking for something stirring, listening for some sound, when I heard a shout, and looking up the hill I saw a man waving his arms, yelling and beckoning me to come.

"He need not have beckoned. I tore for him. A malamute couldn't have passed me. As I neared him, he disappeared over the hill. I followed and when I reached the top I was so exhausted and scared that I fell and could not get up.

"When I got my heart action slowed down and my senses began to work, I saw the whole population of the town was behind the hill, with dogs, food, etc., each family with its few belongings."

Now I will shorten the narrative and anxiety and tell you the rest in short meter. The Northern Commercial Company had a large warehouse on the river bank. The ice had gorged in the river, held back the flow and the water had surrounded the warehouse. The company manager came in from the mines that night, had one look at the rising river and spread the alarm:

"There is carbide, dynamite and giant powder in the warehouse. If the water reaches the calcium, up goes the town. Run for the hill."

It didn't reach it. The ice dam went out and the river went down, and none too soon. Three inches higher and the carbide would have exploded and as the story-teller said, "The berg would have went to where there is no nine months' winter and the map of Alaska would have lost another dot."

(Continued on Page 7)

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American moleskins, particularly those from the Pacific northwest, are superior to the moleskins of Europe which largely make up the world supply for industrial uses, according to biologists of the United States department of agriculture. It should be profitable, therefore, the biologists declare, to trap these animals for their pelts and so establish a new American fur industry. This is true particularly in the northwest, where the animals are large and plentiful, and where it is often desirable to keep their numbers down to prevent injury to fields and lawns. Such a new industry should be especially desirable for farmers' boys as a side issue, it is pointed out.

The habits of American moles are described and methods of capturing them and treating and marketing their skins are outlined in a Farmers' Bulletin, "Trapping Moles and Utilizing Their Skins," recently issued by the United States department of agriculture. The publication also offers suggestions for the tanning of the pelts so that they may be made locally into women's neckpieces, muffs and coats. Copies of the bulletin may be had free so long as the supply lasts on application to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

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