

Placing Responsibility For High Prices of Iowa Coal

The League of Municipalities met in the Governor's office in the early part of November, and arranged for a hearing before the Governor, assisted by a committee of Mayors for the purpose of determining the cause of coal shortage in Iowa and whether the high prices which were being charged were justified. This hearing was an open one, and the mine owners were given an opportunity to be heard and some appeared and testified. Clifford Thorne appeared and conducted the investigation, and at the close of the examination, the Governor and committee of Mayors sent the following telegram to President Wilson, which places the responsibility for the high prices of coal which is the cause given by the utilities for the advances in rates for which they are now applying:

Des Moines, Iowa, Nov. 27, 1917.

"Hon. Woodrow Wilson,
"President of the United States:

"Public hearing on the coal situation in Iowa has been conducted before the Government and three Mayors representing the League of Iowa Municipalities.

"The investigation covers cost of producing coal at the mouth of the mine, the amount of coal in the state and distribution.

"Coal operators, miners small and large users of coal, railroads and retailers were invited to appear and present their views and such facts and information as they had, and all responded, except a few coal operators, who banded together, refusing to give information. Evidence, however, was produced by large and small operators, representative of the state.

"The hearing lasted four days. Every phase of the subject was covered, and information formerly secured was also made a part of the record in the case. All this information is in shorthand and will be forwarded to you and the Federal Trade Commission, if desired.

"From the information before us, we find that the extreme cost of production at the mouth of the mine is \$2.25 per ton at the present time, mine run. Operators appearing before us testified to costs at the present time, ranging from \$1.90 to \$2.25 per ton. This includes labor supplies, depreciation and all other operating costs.

"The record also shows that under normal conditions operators have been satisfied with a profit over cost of production at the mouth of the mine, of from ten to twelve and one-half cents (12 1/2c) per ton; whereas, the present maximum fixed price does permit of profits aggregating more than 100 per cent on the investment in these properties. This was conceded of record by actual operators, under oath, on the witness stand.

"In view of the above finding of facts and the intense public interest and feeling aroused because of the great increase in the price of coal since August 1st, 1917, we recommend that the prices for Iowa coal in the various districts be based upon the above information, and that the present excessive prices be reduced at the earliest possible moment.

"We find there is no substantial shortage of cars in the state; that the mines are operating to their full capacity, so far as labor conditions will permit, and that labor is cooperating in every possible way.

"If this information is questioned from any source, we pray for an opportunity to hear and answer such objections.

"W. L. Harding, Governor of Iowa,
"John MacVicar, Mayor, Des Moines,
"M. B. Snyder, Mayor, Council Bluffs,
"R. S. McNutt, Mayor, Muscatine,
Committee."

Iowa Electric Co.

SERVICE



Put Your Car in Good Hands

No matter what work you may want done on your car, you can rest assured that it will be properly done if it comes to us.

Only the most capable men are employed by us, and carefulness is our motto. We treat every car we work upon exactly as though it were our own.

We will gladly quote you prices on storage with full service or part service. Or we can give you service without storage if you prefer.

Why not give us a trial and let the results determine future relations between us? Pay us a call and we can talk it over.

Manchester Auto & Supply Co. Central Garage

SUBSCRIBE FOR THE DEMOCRAT



The YUKON TRAIL

A TALE OF THE NORTH
BY WILLIAM MACLEOD RAINE

Copyright, 1907, by William MacLeod Raine.

CHAPTER I.

Going "In."

The midnight sun had set, but in a crotch between two snow peaks it had kindled a vast cauldron from which rose a mist of jewels, garnet and turquoise, topaz and amethyst and opal, all swimming in a sea of molten gold. The glow of it still clung to the face of the broad Yukon, as a flush does to the soft, wrinkled cheek of a girl just roused from deep sleep.

Except for a faint murkiness in the air it was still day. There was light enough for the four men playing pinochle on the upper deck, though the women of their party, gossiping in chairs grouped near at hand, had at last put aside their embroidery. The girl who sat by herself at a little distance held a magazine still open in her lap.

Gordon Elliot had taken the boat at Pierre's Portage, fifty miles farther down the river. He had come direct from the creeks, and his impressions of the motley pioneer life at the gold diggings were so vivid that he had found an isolated corner of the deck where he could scribble them in a notebook while still fresh.

But he had not been too busy to see that the girl in the wicker chair was as much of an outsider as he was. Plainly this was her first trip in. Gordon was a stranger in the Yukon country, one not likely to be overwelcome when it became known what his mission was.

From where he was leaning against the deckhouse Elliot could see only a fine, chiseled profile shading into a mass of crisp, black hair, but some quality in the detachment of her personality stimulated gently his imagination. He wondered who she could be.

A short, thickset man who had ridden down on the stage with Elliot to Pierre's Portage drifted along the deck toward him. He wore the careless garb of a mining man in a country which looks first to comfort.

"Bound for Kuskak?" he asked, by way of opening conversation.

"Yes," answered Gordon.

The miner nodded toward the group under the awning. "That bunch lives at Kuskak. They've got on at different places the last two or three days—except Selfridge and his wife; they've been out. Guess you can tell that from hearing her talk—the little woman in red with the snappy black eyes. She's spilling over with talk about the styles in New York and the cabarets and the new shows. That pot-bellied little fellow in the checked suit is Selfridge. He is Colby Macdonald's man Friday."

Elliot took in with a quickened interest the group bound for Kuskak. He had noticed that they monopolized as a matter of course the best places on the deck and in the dining room. They were civil enough to outsiders, but their manner had the unconscious selfishness that often regulates social activities. It excluded from their gaiety everybody that did not belong to the proper set.

"That sort of thing gets my goat," the miner went on sourly. "Those women over there have elected themselves Society with a capital S. They put on all the airs the Four Hundred do in New York. And who are they anyhow?—wives to a bunch of grafting politicians mostly."

"That's the way of the world, isn't it? Our civilization is built on the grip system," suggested Elliot.

"Maybe so," grumbled the miner. "But I hate to see Alaska come to it. Me, I saw this country first in ninety-seven—packed an outfit in over the pass. Every man stood on his own hind legs then. He got there if he was strong—mebbe; he logged down on the trail good and plenty if he was weak. We didn't have any of the artificial stuff then. A man had to have the guts to stand the gait."

"I suppose it was a wild country, Mr. Strong."

The little miner's eyes gleamed. "Best country in the world. We didn't stand for anything that wasn't on the level. It was a poor man's country—wages fifteen dollars a day and plenty of work. Everybody had a chance. Anybody could stake a claim and gamble on his luck. Now the big corporations have slipped in and grabbed the best. It ain't a prospector's proposition any more. Instead of far banks we've got savings banks. The wide-open dance hall has quit business in favor of moving pictures. And, as I said before, we've got Society."

"All frontier countries have to come to it."

"Hmp! In the days I'm telling you about that crowd there couldn't 'a' hustled meat to fill their bellies three meals. Parasites, that's what they are. They're living off that bunch of roughnecks down there and folks like 'em."

With a wave of his hand Strong pointed to a group of miners who had boarded the boat with them at Pierre's Portage. There were about a dozen of the men, for the most part husky, heavy-set foreigners. Elliot gathered from their talk that they had lost their jobs because they had tried to organize an incipient strike in the Frozen Gulch district.

"Toughnecks and booze fighters—that's all they are. But they earn their way. Not that I blame Mac," he said for firing them, mind you," continued the miner. "His superintendent up there was too soft. These here Swedes got gay. Mac hit the trail for Frozen Gulch. He hammered his big fist into the bread basket of the ring-leader and said, 'Git!' That follow's

the men together and read the riot act to them. He fired this bunch on the boat and was out of the camp before you could bat an eye. It was the cleanest hurry-up job I ever did see."

"From what I've heard about him, he must be a remarkable man."

"He's the biggest man in Alaska, bar none."

This was a subject that interested Gordon Elliot very much. Colby Macdonald and his activities had brought him to the country.

"Do you mean personally—or because he represents the big corporations?"

"Both. His word comes pretty near being law up here, not only because he stands for the Consolidated, but because he's one man from the ground up."

"Do you mean that he's square—honest?"

"You've said two things, my friend," answered Strong dryly. "He's square. If he tells you anything, don't worry because he ain't put down his John Hancock before a notary. Don't waste any time looking for fat or yellow streaks in Mac. They ain't there. Nobody ever heard him squeal yet and what's more nobody ever will."

"No wonder men like him."

"But when you say honest—No! Not the way you define honesty down in the States. He's a grabber, Mac is."

"What does he look like?"

"Oh, I don't know." Strong hesitated, while he searched for words to show the picture in his mind. "Big as a house—steps out like a buck in the spring—blue-gray eyes that bore right through you."

"How old?"

"Search me. You never think of age when you're looking at him. Forty-five, mebbe—or fifty—I don't know."

"Married?"

"No-o." Hanford Strong nodded in the direction of the Kuskak circle.

"They say he's going to marry Mrs. Mallory. She's the one with the red hair."

It struck young Elliot that the miner was dismissing Mrs. Mallory in too cavalier a fashion. She was the sort of woman at whom men look twice, and then continue to look while she appears magnificently unaware of it. Her hair was not red, but of a lustrous bronze, amazingly abundant, and dressed in waves with the careful skill of a coiffeur. Slightest shades of meaning she could convey with a lift of the eyebrow or an intonation of the musical voice. If she was already fencing with the encroaching years there was little evidence of it in her opulent good looks.

The whistle of the Hannah blew for the Tatalah Cache landing while Strong and Elliot were talking. The gangplank was thrown out.

A man came to the end of the wharf carrying a suitcase. He was well-set, thick in the chest and broad-shouldered. Looking down from above, Gordon Elliot guessed him to be in the early thirties.

Mrs. Mallory was the first to recognize him, which she did with a drawing little shout of welcome. "Oh, you, Mr. Man. I knew you first. I speak for you," she cried.

The man on the gangplank looked up, smiled and lifted to her his broad gray hat in a wave of greeting.

"How do you do, Mrs. Mallory? Glad to see you."

The miners from Frozen Gulch were grouped together on the lower deck. At sight of the man with the suitcase a sullen murmur rose among them. Those in the rear pushed forward and closed the lane leading to the cabins.

One of the miners was flung roughly against the new passenger. With a wide, powerful sweep of his arm the man who had just come aboard hurled the miner back among his companions.

"Gangway!" he said brusquely, and as he strode forward did not even glance in the direction of the angry men pressing toward him.

"Here. Keep back there, you fellows. None of that rough stuff goes," ordered the mate sharply.

The big Cornishman who had been tossed aside crouched for a spring. He launched himself forward with the awkward force of a bear. The suitcase described a whirling arc of a circle with the arm of its owner as a radius. The bag and the head of the miner came into swift impact. Like a bullock which had been poleaxed, the man went to the floor. He turned over with a groan and lay still.

The new passenger looked across the huge, sprawling body at the group of miners facing him. They glared in savage hate. All they needed was a leader to send them driving at him with the force of an avalanche. The man at whom they raged did not give an inch. He leaned forward slightly, his weight resting on the balls of his feet, alert to the finger tips.

"Next," he taunted.

Then the mate got busy. He hustled his stevedores forward in front of the miners and shook his fist in their faces as he stormed up and down. If they wanted trouble, by Jove! It was waiting for 'em, he swore in apologetic fury. The Hannah was a river boat and not a dive of wharf rats!

The man with the suitcase did not wait to hear out his trade. He followed the purser to his stateroom, dropped his baggage beside the berth, and joined the Kuskak group on the upper deck.

They greeted him eagerly, a little

curious, as if they were anxious to prove themselves on good terms with him.

"What was the matter?" asked Selfridge. "How did the trouble start?"

The big man shrugged his shoulders. "It didn't start. Some of the outfit thought they were looking for a row, but they balked on the job when Tre-lawney got his."

Gordon, as he watched from a little distance, corrected earlier impressions. This man had passed the thirties. He had the thick neck and solid trunk of middle life, but he carried himself so superbly that his whole bearing denied that years could touch his splendid physique.

Strong had stepped to the wharf to talk with an old acquaintance, but when the boat threw out a warning signal he made a hurried goodbye and came on board. He rejoined Elliot.

"Well, what d'you think of him? Was I right?"

The young man had already guessed who this imperious stranger was. "I never saw anybody get away with a hard job as easily as he did that one. You could see with half an eye that those fellows meant fight. They were all primed for it—and he bluffed them out."

"Bluffed them—huh! I was where I could see just what happened. Colby Macdonald wasn't even looking at Tre-lawney, but you bet he saw him start. That suitcase traveled like a streak of light. You'd 'a' thought it weighed about two pounds. That ain't all, either. Mac used his brains. Guess what was in that grip."

"The usual thing, I suppose."

"You've got another guess—packed in among his socks and underwear was about twenty pounds of ore samples. The purser told me. It was that quartz that put Tre-lawney to sleep so thorough that he'd just begun to wake up when I passed a minute ago."

The young man turned his eyes again upon the big Canadian Scotsman. He was talking with Mrs. Mallory, who was leaning back luxuriously in a steamer chair she had brought aboard at St. Michael's. It would have been hard to conceive a contrast greater than the one between this pampered heiress of the ages and the modern business berserk who looked down into her mocking eyes.

He was the embodiment of the dominant male—efficient to the last inch of his straight six feet. What he wanted he had always taken, by the sheer strength that was in him. Back of her smiling insolence lay a silken force to match his own. She too had taken what she wanted from life, but she had won it by indirection. Manifestly she was of those women who conceive that charm and beauty are tools to bend men to their wills.

The dusky young woman with the magazine was the first of those on the upper deck to retire for the night. She flitted so quietly that Gordon did not notice until she had gone. Mrs. Selfridge and her friends disappeared with their men folks, calling gay good nights to one another as they left.

Macdonald and Mrs. Mallory talked. After a time she too vanished.

The big promoter leaned against the deck rail, where he was joined by Selfridge. For a long time they talked in low voices. The little man had most to say. His chief listened, but occasionally interrupted to ask a sharp, incisive question.

Elliot, sitting farther forward with

found agony of no man underneath found expression only in the drumming heels that beat a tattoo on the floor. The spasmodic feet were shed in Oxford fans of an ultra-fashionable cut. No doubt the owner of the smart footwear had been pulled down as he was escaping to shout the alarm.

The runner hurled the two in his stride and plunged straight at the struggling tangle. He caught one man by the shoulders from behind and flung him back. He struck hard, smashing blows as he fought his way to the heart of the melee. Heavy-fisted miners with corded muscles landed upon his face and head and neck. He did not care a straw for the odds.

The sudden attack of Elliot had opened the pack. The man battling against a dozen was Colby Macdonald. The very number of his foes had saved him so far from being rushed overboard or trampled down. His coat and shirt were in rags. He was bruised and battered and bleeding from the chest up. But he was still slugging hard.

They had him pressed to the rail. A huge miner, head down, had his arms around the waist of the Scotsman and was trying to throw him overboard. Macdonald lashed out and landed flush upon the cheek of a man attempting to brain him with a billet of wood. He hammered home a short-arm jolt against the ear of the giant who was giving him the bear grip.

The big miner grunted, but hung on like a football tackler. With a jerk he raised Macdonald from the floor

Like a bullock which had been poleaxed, the man went to the floor.

Strong, judged that Selfridge was making a report of his trip. Once he caught a fragment of their talk, enough to confirm this impression.

"Did Winton tell you that himself?" demanded the Scotsman.

The answer of his employee came in a murmur so low that the words were lost. But the name used told Gordon a good deal. The commissioner of the general land office at Washington signed his letters Harold B. Winton.

Strong tossed the stub of his cigarette overboard and nodded good night. A glance at his watch told Elliot that it was past two o'clock. He rose, stretched and sauntered back to his stateroom.

The young man had just taken off his coat when there came the hurried rush of trampling feet upon the hurricane deck above. Almost instantly he heard a cry of alarm. He could hear the shuffling of footsteps and the sound of heavy bodies moving.

Someone lifted a frightened shout. "Help! Help!" The call had come, he thought, from Selfridge.

Gordon flung open the door of his room, raced along the deck and took the stairs three at a time. A huddle of men swayed and shifted heavily in front of him.

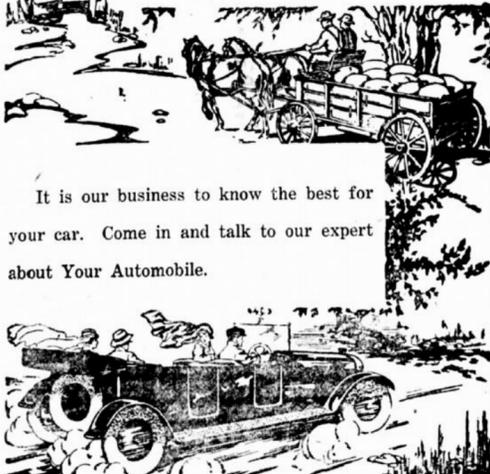
Even as he ran toward the mass, Elliot noticed that the only sounds were grunts, stertorous breathings, and the scraping of feet. The attackers wanted no publicity. The attacked was too busy to waste breath in futile cries. He was fighting for his life.

Two men, separated from the crowd, lay on the deck farther aft. One was on top of the other, his fingers clutching the gullet of his helpless opponent.



Make your Trips Joyous

by freeing your mind from the fear of breakdowns. This can only be done by using the best oil, Gasoline and Supplies on the market.



It is our business to know the best for your car. Come in and talk to our expert about Your Automobile.

HAUG & SON THE HAWKEYE GARAGE

Lump Soft Coal

I will have on track December 6th, a car load of

Old Ben Lump Coal

F. B. JOHNSON

PHONE 171

Manchester, Iowa

Dr. Wilbert Shallenberger

The Regular and Reliable Chicago Specialist will be at HOTEL CLARENCE, Manchester, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28. Hours from 9:30 a. m. to 5 p. m. (One day only) and return every Twenty-eight Days.



Dr. Shallenberger is an eminently successful Specialist in the treatment of Chronic Diseases. He has a long-established reputation, resulting from his large practice and extensive hospital experience, which have made him so proficient that he can name and locate your disease in a few minutes. He has successfully treated many of the most difficult cases of Chronic Diseases of men and women. That is why his reputation has spread—why he has continued his visit year after year, while other doctors have made a few visits and stopped.

Dr. Shallenberger treats Diseases of the Eye, Ear, Nose, Throat, Lungs, Heart, Blood, Skin, Nerves, Liver, Stomach, Intestines, Kidneys and Bladder. Consumption in its early stage, Catarrh, Ringing in Ears and Deafness, Paralysis, Neuralgia, Epilepsy, Sick Headache, Gout, Rheumatism, Sciatica, Appendicitis, Gravel, Rheumatism of joints and muscles. Also treats diseases of women scientifically.

FILES CURED WITHOUT KNIFE. Fistulae, Piles and other rectal diseases treated without surgical operation.

Surgical Cases and Rupture Given Special Attention.

NERVOUS DEBILITY. Are you nervous and despondent; easily excited and irritable; weak and debilitated; tired mornings; without ambition, energy or strength; lifeless, easily fatigued; distrustful, and without confidence in yourself; prepared to give you the best results, and if you are sick, you need scientific treatment.

Dr. Shallenberger spares no effort to cure his patients. He knows that good results mean as much to him as to the patient. Most of his new patients come through the recommendation of others whom he has treated.

He prepares nearly all his medicine from his own special formulas, and uses nothing but pure drugs.

Consultation and Examination Free and Confidential.

REFERENCE: Dressel State Bank, Chicago. Address letters to DR. WILBERT SHALLENBERGER 186 Oakwood Blvd. CHICAGO, ILL.

Find Out First. Study to conserve your steps. When you spend an hour looking for something because you do not know where it is, you have wasted that many steps.



The Rail Gave Way.

just as three or four others rushed him again. The rail gave way, splintered like kindling wood. The Scotsman and the man at grips with him went over the side together.

Clear and loud rang the voice of Elliot. "Man overboard!"

The wheelsman signaled to the engine room to reverse and blew short, sharp shrieks of warning.

"Men overboard—two of 'em!" explained Elliot in a shout from the boat which he was trying to lower.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)