

## **MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – 173rd Edition – September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006**

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To use an e-mail address from the MocTel, replace the \* with @.



**Fox Kit**

Photo courtesy Doug Bell [dougbell@yknnet.ca](mailto:dougbell@yknnet.ca) (In Whitehorse)

Remember last years fox on our friends back step, well here's one of her young ones. She was staring intently at the family cat - Mom was with her and doing the same. I haven't been there at the right time to see all five of her kits, but who knows my timing may be lucky before they go on their own.

Doug

*Gus Barrett sent the following poem after this years Island Yukoners Picnic.*

Hearing all the old Yukon stories again inspired me to write the attached. Unlike most of my efforts, it is not based on any factual but is a combination of a number of stories that I have heard about the Crib ladies of Lousetown. Hope you enjoy it.

Gus

### **THE CAPTURE OF PORTERHOUSE PETE**

By Gus Barrett [sourdoughs2@shaw.ca](mailto:sourdoughs2@shaw.ca) (In Qualicum)

Miss Molly Maguire, was a lady for hire,  
In a crib down in old Klondike City.  
On Prostitutes Row, she was star of the show,  
She was tall and quite slender and pretty.

In the Klondike back then, there were thousands of men,  
On the prowl for young ladies to meet.

But while Molly had eyes for a number of guys,  
She yearned for young Porterhouse Pete.

Now Porterhouse Pete, he was clean-cut and neat,  
His appearance would please any maid,  
Just one problem he had, or so it was said,  
Of the girls her was deathly afraid.

As Pete roamed around in the streets of the town,  
In search of his own hearts desire,  
In her crib all alone, like a queen on her throne,  
He spotted young Molly Maguire.

Well his heart skipped a beat as he eyeballed this treat,  
From his hiding place under a tree,  
Then his face turned quite red as he spotted the bed,  
And he turned, in his terror, to flee.

But Molly saw him hiding under a limb,  
This bashful young light of her life  
And she knew in her heart if she let him depart,  
There'd be no chance for her as his wife.

With a scheme in her head, to the window she sped,  
And there, as he turned to go by,  
His glance locked with hers, and for better or worse,  
She playfully flashed him a thigh.

Porterhouse Pete, was now feeling the heat,  
As he trembled and stared at the hut,  
While enjoying the fun, he still wanted to run,  
But then Molly wiggled her butt.

Porterhouse Pete, turned aside in defeat,  
And he quietly rapped on the door.  
As she ushered him in with a smile and a grin,  
Molly wiggled as never before.  
That is the end of the story, my friend,  
At least that's the story I got,  
Miss Maguire quit cold, her bad habits of old,  
And abandoned her crib for his cot.

So Molly, enraptured with the man she had captured,  
Would be happy for decades to come.  
And Pete never mentioned how she got his attention,  
When she playfully wiggled her bum.

## **Pack Dogs to Helicopters**

Author Pat Callison – copyright.

Percy Peacock had arranged to sell the property to the Barrington Transportation Company who ran the river boats on the Stikine, and this would be Percy's last season to get gold out of the property. His offer to the 40 of us was that if we would set ourselves up in 4 man teams we would split the gold cleanup 50-50 with Percy who would supply the food and equipment. We had reason to believe there was still a lot of gold in the ground so decided to go along with the plan.

My brother-in-law, Bud Simpson, and my friend Rene Dehnin had been at the camp all summer, so with Charlie Raine and I, we would make up a 4 man crew.

It was all pick, shovel, and wheelbarrow work. Pick out the rock and dirt, and shovel it into a wheelbarrow (not one of those rubber wheeled, 10 speed plastic handled numbers, this was a big, heavy, iron-bodied, iron wheeled, rusty, wobbly critter) trundle it down to the sluice box, dump it into the box and go back for another load. Spelling one another off just meant you got the same backache from doing a different job. We hustled from dawn til dark and the big thing was the cleanup at the end of the day when we would divide up the gold.

The first snag of course was who was going to take time off from mining to do a stint in the cooktent. There sure were no volunteers.

We talked it over and decided that each gang would, in turn, supply a cook for one day. You can imagine the kind of meals we had - actually I doubt anyone has that kind of imagination. It was just that some days the meals were worse than others.

I remember one morning I looked toward the cooktent and saw smoke pouring from every opening and billowing 15 feet in the air. When we got the smoke cleared and found the chef of the day in the midst of it, he told us he had tried to make hotcakes, using the usual ingredients which included powdered milk from a 10 gallon drum which was beside another 10 gallon drum holding flour. He hadn't been able to tell the difference between flour and the "tru-milk" and used all powdered milk in the batter which promptly went up in smoke when it hit the hot griddle.

We were young, had strong stomachs and were making money, but everyone was happy when we broke camp at the end of the two weeks. When we divided the gold at the end of the two weeks we each had cleared between \$400.00 and \$500.00 which was very good money for two weeks work in those days.

\* \* \*

The man who discovered the gold mine was Percy Peacock, born in England in 1900, his family migrated to Canada in 1902 and settled in the Okanagan country. When Percy was 19 he decided he was going north, and he did, on foot with dogs as companions.

He followed the rivers, used stage coach roads and the trails until he reached Hazelton, then he set out over the Yukon-Telegraph Line, a trail hacked out through the timber and over the mountains so linemen could service the telegraph line which was the communication between the Yukon and the outside world. When he reached Telegraph Creek he teamed up with Earl Faulkner and they travelled 125 miles to the head of the Turnagain River and there Percy built a cabin on Boulder Creek, a tributary of the Turnagain and Earl built his a few miles down stream on the Turnagain.

It was good game and fur country and for 18 years Percy was a trapper. In 1937, he told me, his sod roof cabin had sprung a leak so he got out his shovel to dig up soil to patch the roof. As he was digging the trench around the cabin and throwing the soil onto the roof he noticed the gravel was a light brown colour. Like everyone else in the country he had a gold pan amongst his equipment and took a pan full of gravel down to the creek and panned it out - \$1.00 worth of gold in one pan, an excellent showing. He staked a claim on which his cabin was sitting, and several others besides, and set to work developing the Boulder Creek gold mine. Many of those who came in and staked did very well.

An American couple from Alaska, Vern and Alice Shay, worked a claim on a small creek about 4 miles from Percy's cabin. They didn't get large quantities of gold but what they did get was very coarse nugget gold which is very valuable. They worked on their ground for several years and averaged about \$5,000 a season, good money in those days. About the third year they were there Alice found a 52 ounce nugget. They stayed over at our place when they came through on their way to Vancouver where they had to sell the gold to the Dominion of Canada Assay Office. The nugget was a beauty and we heard they were paid \$1,500 by the B.C. Government who placed it in the Victoria Museum and as far as I know it is still there.

To get back to Percy Peacock. . . Percy mined his property until the fall of 1938 then sold it to Barrington Transportation Company who brought in a dragline and mined there for 3 months each summer for about 10 years. Altogether about \$3,000,000 in gold was taken from Boulder Creek. Percy was a well to do man when he sold his property.

Percy was a strict teetotaler, had never used tobacco, at all times a very proper English gentleman. He was the most patriotic individual I have ever seen. He was also the most honest man I've ever known; I would have trusted him with my last dollar. His word was all that was needed to close any sort of deal. His love for his dogs was known throughout the country. It had been often told that Percy fed his dogs first and if he had run out of food he wouldn't eat if there weren't enough for the dogs too.

When he sold his property he decided to make his first trip "Outside" - he was 38 years old and had never been in a community larger than towns between the Okanagan and

Telegraph Creek. He left on the last boat of the season from Telegraph Creek, transferred to one of the coastal Princess boats and arrived in Vancouver about November 15th. Before I left Dease I had given Percy our Vancouver Address.

So Percy, accompanied by four big dogs which must have been crosses between St. Bernards and a Newfoundland weighing at least 100 pounds each landed on our door step.

Ethel will never forget her introduction to Percy Peacock; he whipped off his hat, bowed low over her hand, if I'd been listening, I'm sure I would have heard his heels click. He was the absolute gentleman and all those years in the bush hadn't changed his innate good manners.

However, there was the matter of the four big dogs waiting outside. I loaded Percy and the dogs into the car and off we went to find a kennel. It took a lot of convincing that the dogs would be treated kindly and would be happy there. Next we had to find accommodation for Percy and he was most emphatic that it had to be a hotel where there was absolutely no alcohol sold.

Our choice was the Grosvenor Hotel on Howe Street and Percy made his home there for at least 4 years. We kept in touch and soon he showed me the very nice cruiser he had bought, then he bought a car, a new DeSoto, he even struck up an association with a lady at the hotel, but nothing serious appeared to have come of that.

When war broke out Percy had one reaction - get into uniform and fight for his country. The 40 year old expatriate was told the best he could do was to join the Home Defence. Fired up with indignation Percy just refused to accept the fact that he wasn't wanted and kept up the pressure on various agencies until finally, about a year before the war ended he enlisted in the infantry and went overseas. A few days before the end of the war Percy Peacock was killed in action.

The country lost a good citizen and we lost a good friend.

To be continued....

## **FLYING IN YUKON & MAYO**

Hi Sherron, I think you have everything well in hand with regard to flying. The jets are OK to get somewhere a long ways, but I think like Donna that the fun of flying is in small airplanes where you are part of things around you. Guess that my love of smaller planes stemmed from the days of Everett Wasson and the Fairchilds. In my mind's eye, I can still see him fuelling at Mayo when he was on floats. Jack Bellerby always pumped the gasoline from 45 gallon galvanized drums. Everett was very particular and carried his own funnel with water screens and used to line the funnel with chamois for fine filtering.

He used to do his own servicing, and I never knew of him to have engine or fuel problems.

The only problem I have seen was where he tried to take off on floats in the late afternoon of a hot day. He could not get enough lift to break the seal between the water and floats. He sometimes made waves himself to get off, or have a power boat make some waves for him. At times he even had to hold off till evening until it cooled off. I have seen it 115 degrees 'F' on the Mayo water front and not a breath of any breeze. My shirt was soaking wet and felt like it was boiling. All you could do was sit in the shade and swelter! I was still on the boats and it was good that shortly after we were heading out down river where we would get a breeze. As they say about Mayo, "The hottest and the coldest". I personally have seen it +115 degrees "F" in 1949 and -80 degrees "F" in 1947 at Mayo. Cheers

Henry Breaden [hjbreaden\\*shaw.ca](mailto:hjbreaden*shaw.ca) (In Nanaimo)



### **Rare Occurrence - Fire Rainbow**

E-mail forward from Fred Aylwin [fbaylwin\\*shaw.ca](mailto:fbaylwin*shaw.ca) (In Vernon)

**THIS IS A FIRE RAINBOW - THE RAREST OF ALL NATURALLY OCCURRING ATMOSPHERIC PHENOMENA.**

**THE PICTURE WAS CAPTURED THIS WEEK ON THE IDAHO/WASHINGTON BORDER. THE EVENT LASTED ABOUT 1 HOUR.**

**CLOUDS HAVE TO BE CIRRUS, AT LEAST 20K FEET IN THE AIR, WITH JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF ICE CRYSTALS AND THE SUN HAS TO HIT THE CLOUDS AT PRECISELY 58 DEGREES.**

*This and other exceptional photos at*

<http://www.snopes.com/photos/natural/natural.asp#firerainbow>

Hi Sherron

I had a wonderful visit from a former Yukoner who is now living in Edmonton. I first met Roger [Wilding] through Jim Robb and was eager to get together with him and reminisce about the north. Spent three hours with him exchanging stories. He has a wonderful new website that he is beginning to build on. He is the agent through which Jim sells some of his artwork that includes beautiful “Sourdough Tapestries”, pillows and prints. I first saw one of the throws at Gillian Campbell’s home last Christmas and wished at the time I had one. Now that I’ve found a source I’ll be giving a couple of items new homes. I thought the MocTel readers may be interested in looking at some of the items on the website: <http://www.klondikeart.ca>

Below is a picture I took of one of the Sourdough Tapestries. If anyone is interested Roger’s e-mail address, etc. can be found on the website. Roger has a wealth of stories to tell and has promised to send some in to the MocTel.

Donna Clayson [ytdogteam@telus.net](mailto:ytdogteam@telus.net) (In Ardrossan AB)



Jack London’s Cabin  
“GOLDMINE IN THE SKY”

A beautiful 68” x 51” woven sourdough tapestry. Jack London ventured north in 1897 during the Klondike Gold Rush at the age of 21. This cabin, portrayed here in its original

location on the left fork of Henderson Creek, was his home for a little more than a year in the Stewart River country. He did not have much luck finding the elusive gold, but inspired by the land and the characters around him, he would go on to be the foremost writer of his time, capturing forever in his prose the spirit of the North. Two of his most famous works feature Klondike dogs; "The Call of the Wild" and "Wild Fang." The cabin, long forgotten, was re-discovered in the '30s by two prospectors who found London's signature written on the wall. In 1968 the cabin was divided in half and moved. Two separate cabins were created for museums erected in Jack London's honour; one is in Dawson City; the other in Oakland, London's home town in California.

### **DAWSON SCHOOL FIRE – 1957**

Dawson School Fire, I was getting ready to take my grade 11 final exams in 1957, when my Mom woke us up to see the school burn down. As we lived on 8th Avenue about 3 blocks from the School we had an excellent vantage point. However the burning down of the school did not stop us from taking departmental exams as the Principal had new exams sent down from Whitehorse, and we took them later on in the summer. The fire was said to be caused by spontaneous combustion from years of the use of coal as a heat source, although the school was by then burning oil, there was still a build up of coal dust over the years. That was the first time in my life that I stayed up for 24 hrs as it was too late to go back to bed and then we had to see the midnight sun. Those were the days.

Myrna Butterworth [myrnab\\*northwestel.net](mailto:myrnab*northwestel.net) (In Dawson)

### **ALF BILTON'S POEMS ENJOYED**

Just wanted to let you know how much I enjoy Alf Bilton's poems. This gentleman certainly knows the north and it shows through his writing.

Donna Clayson [ytdogteam\\*telus.net](mailto:ytdogteam*telus.net) (In Ardrossan AB)

### **YES GILLIAN SEND US YOUR ENGLISH TRIFLE RECIPE - PLEASE**

I LOVE MAKING JAM, AND I HAVE JUST READ THE M.T. VERY INTERESTING AS USUAL.. Thank you for all your hard work.....AND I AM THRILLED TO FIND ANOTHER WAY OF MAKING JAM..AS WE HAVE A LOT OF RHUBARB IN THE GARDEN. THANKS SO MUCH.....has anyone ever given you an English Trifle recipe...??? I have one... glad to send it you if you would like me to. Big Hugs Gillian Gillian Campbell (Klondike Kate) [gillianklondikekate\\*shaw.ca](mailto:gillianklondikekate*shaw.ca) (In Burnaby)  
Web: [www.gilliancampbellshow.com](http://www.gilliancampbellshow.com)

## THE VEINS OF VENUS

Ken and Maureen Jones were up to Vernon for a visit this week and spent an evening with us. Ken as a lot of you know is Millie (& the late Don) Jones son. Ken is glowing after just retiring from the RCMP. Maureen also grew up in Carcross and is the daughter of Doug Smith. The following story is about Doug's great grandfather Jack Stewart. Thank you Maureen, for sharing a copy of this part of your family story with the MocTel group.

I will split this booklet over the next few weeks. Bill and I have found it very interesting and we hope you will too. It explains more key pieces of Yukon history.

## THE VEINS OF VENUS

By Dixie Read

as told to her by Jack Stewart

\* \* \* \* \*

**This is the story of those men who blazed the trail of '98, when Alaska and the Yukon Territory were nothing but vast wildernesses of ice and snow, treacherous glaciers and dangerous rapids. It is the story of their rugged lives, their courageous lives, and of some of them, sudden death. Particularly, it is the true story of Jack Stewart, Prospector.**

\* \* \* \* \*

Somewhere in the old family Bible, his official name is listed as Josephus Muir Stewart. It is understandable why he chose the name of Jack, which has stuck with him until this day. Jack was born in 1872 in St. Stephens, New Brunswick, Canada, across the St. Croix River from Maine. Until he was twenty-five years old his life pattern wasn't a great deal varied from any other boy of his day. In his early teens he left home for the States, and got his first job with an ice company in Manchester, New Hampshire. After a short time, he changed jobs to go to work for the American Express Company, and again soon changed jobs to go to work for the Morris beef company which held him longer than any other. He worked for this company for five years, when they transferred him to Providence, Rhode Island, where, at about the age of 21, he became City Salesman. They later transferred him to Marlborough, Massachusetts, and from there to Portland, Maine.

After working in Portland for two or three years more, he reached his twenty-fifth birthday in 1897, about the same time the Gold Rush started in Alaska.

He had had a steady job for a long time, but deep inside was the spirit of adventure which was to take him for many thousands of miles, and through many years. Over the nation the excitement of prospecting stirred in the hearts of the adventurous, and he was one of them. The Gold Rush was a challenge which he could not refuse.

With five other men from Portland, one a young man like himself, the other four well into middle age, he began planning and scheming for a way to "strike it rich". At first they toyed with the idea of buying a boat with an electric lighting plant to take up to sell. But boats were at a premium, and what few had not already been snatched for the gold rush were far beyond the purse of the group as a whole. Time, however, was wasting, and gold was being found. The six men decided to buy tickets to Valdez, Alaska, and make out from there as best they could. Jack Stewart had about \$400 with which he purchased a one-way ticket. One of the older men was old Mr. Varnam, who was a man whose family had been at one time well-to-do in Portland, but only a skeleton of that wealth remained, and he, too, sought to recapture it in the promising land of Alaska and the Yukon Territory in Canada.

"Now you be sure to look out for Mr. Varnam," the old man's family cautioned, and Jack Stewart's promise to do so was to ring a bell in his conscience a long time later.

After buying his ticket, he took a quick trip back to New Brunswick to bid his parents good-bye, for he had no idea when he would see them again. After discovering that he had already bought his ticket to Valdez, his father and mother knew they could not dissuade him, though they hated to see their boy strike out for the unknown wilderness so far away.

Early in 1898 the party was all ready. They went to Seattle by train. There they bought all their provisions and outfitted themselves for the excursion into the interior. Each man had 1300 pounds, including hardware, cooking utensils, sleeping bags, dried fruits, saccharin, flour, rice, beans in double canvas sacks, crated canvas boats, small stoves and clothing. All in all, there was enough for each man for 18 months.

From Seattle the party pulled out by the ship Valencia for Valdez. Alaska, with perhaps two hundred others. Steamship operators had sent salesmen back to the East to sell tickets to Valdez landing, but it was a completely surprised group who first looked on the shore of Valdez. There was no dock. The ship pushed up to the mud flats and then pushed a flat cannery scow, which they had picked up at the Wrangell Cannery between Seattle and Valdez, up to within a hundred yards of the shore. Provisions and supplies were loaded onto the flat cannery scow, and the men got off the boat and into waist-deep icy water, and pushed the scow by hand to the solid block of ice which was the shore., After unloading the scow, a disappointed band of men looked over Valdez. Valdez! There was nothing in sight but ice and snow and one little cabin. This cabin belonged to a woman called "Valdez Annie" who had preceded the prospectors in view of starting up a business and making her own "gold mine".

Many in the group of two hundred turned back immediately and went out by the same boat on which they had come in. However, Jack Stewart's little party of six pitched their tents, crawled into their sleeping bags, and rested for the long journey ahead, which they would probably start the next evening. It was essential to travel most of the way by night, since the crust of snow melted in the daytime, and they intended to travel by sled. He became the natural leader of the party because, though very young, he seemed to have the ability of adapting himself quickly to whatever situation arose, and because he kept the others encouraged by his enthusiasm, and because he used good judgement and common sense.

Their final goal was Dawson City, where the first strike was spreading like wildfire. They realized that it would take many months over ice and snow to go overland to Dawson, and their plan was to get to Copper Center, a camp on the Copper River, 105 miles from Valdez inland, and stay there for the summer, and then go on to Dawson the following fall. They also intended to prospect the streams along the way.

The next morning they got up and took a look at the huge Valdez Glacier. It was a mammoth mountain of ice and snow, 4900 feet above sea level. The foot of the glacier was five miles a way, and they started out right away to get as far as they could while there was still ice and snow. In fact, they were going to be fighting time in order to get over the glacier before the spring thaws melted the ice. Once over the glacier, they had to cross Clutina Lake and then shoot the Clutina River Rapids before getting into Copper Center.

Amongst them they had three sleds, double harnessed, with two men to a sled. They had 6500 pounds of provisions, and each sled could only take a few hundred pounds at a time, so they would have to make three trips with supplies to move them all each day. They started out from Valdez, after caching in the snow all the supplies they couldn't take on the first load, and travelled only as far as they could to make three trips that day. There they cached their first load and went back for the second, and then for the third. With all the retracing of the trail, their progress was indeed slow. After several days they reached the foot of the glacier, and here was where the real work began. To reach the top of the glacier four grades, called benches, had to be climbed, and then the final summit. There were many other parties along the trail, too, and upon reaching the foot and looking up the feet of steep incline where they had to pull the sleds loaded with hundreds of pounds of supplies, again many men turned back. It seemed impossible. Jack Stewart and his party devised a very good system for getting their supplies up each bench. They tied a long, strong rope to each sled. Then they climbed the bench and drove a pole fast into the snow. Around this pole, they looped the rope, and as they walked back down the bench pulling the rope, they pulled the sled of provisions up, which made it a great deal easier than pulling the sleds hand over hand. Friction and irritability was prevalent in most of the parties as tired and hungry, cold, despondent, and unused to such desolation, they argued amongst themselves over ways to get their provisions to the top. One quick-tempered man whipped out his gun to kill his partner in a heated argument over which method they would use. Others nearby quickly jumped to stop him, and after cooling off, he realized what his temper had almost cost. This rugged life had gotten the best of him, and he knew it wasn't worth it, so he turned back. It took them four weeks of climbing,

going back for another load of supplies, climbing a little more, going back, grinding on and on, up and up, before they finally reached the summit. It was a tired but happy group that finally started down the other side. The going was much easier then, and they didn't have to go down as far as they had come up since they had come up from sea level. There was danger in going down, too, however. They had to keep slowing down with their Gee poles, which they would stick deep in the snow to break their speed, for if they went too fast and gained too much momentum, their sleds would get away from them. They hit timberline and went on down, and the creeks were beginning to thaw. When they hit timberline above Clutina Lake, they decided to make a saw pit and cut logs to build a solid boat. After looking at the surveyor's map, they knew they would have to go down the Clutina Rapids after they left the lake, and would need a solid boat for that purpose. They had brought with them a seven foot whipsaw, and with this they made boards from the logs and built themselves a good, strong boat.

By the time the boat was finished, however, most of the men in Stewart's party had become discouraged. It had taken them weeks and weeks to get their provisions over less than a hundred miles. They had the rapids yet to shoot, and it wasn't an inviting thought. Even after reaching Copper Center they would have to wait until winter again to go on to Dawson, and that was hundreds of miles farther. They were tired and homesick. The country was desolate and they had had enough. They had prospected a stream or two, and found nothing. They were ready to go back "outside". Jack Stewart remained steadfast in his aim, however. He told them they could go back if they wanted to, but he was going on to Dawson City the next winter. He was going to find gold! They tried to discourage him, but it was impossible. One of the older men in the party, George Hatch, caught some of Stewart's enthusiasm and decided to stick with him.

The other three older men and the young man Jack's age got ready to go back. Old man Varnam asked Jack if he would take them back over the glacier. He was the leader in the group, and they were afraid to try to make it without him. He didn't want to make the trip back over the, glacier, but the spring thaws had melted the snow and ice except on the glacier itself, and he figured that without sleds and provisions except a back pack, they could make the trip over in a day. Besides, he remembered his promise made long ago to 'take care of Mr. Varnam', and his word was good. Therefore, it was a job to be done.

Somewhere along the streams they had taken up with a young fellow by the name of Pete Cashman. Pete told Jack he would go with him on the trip, and George Hatch was to stay there and wait until Pete and Jack got back, when the three of them would go on to Copper Center.

Jack told those going back to leave everything they didn't actually need, in order that their packs would be as light as possible and therefore allow greater speed and less effort. They couldn't take camping equipment, and it would be bitter cold on the glacier at night if they didn't make it over in one day. But old Mr. Varnam had purchased souvenirs from the trailers along the way, which he wanted to take back to his family. Among them was a handsome fur rug, but a heavy one, and a beautiful gun of which he was very proud and which also was very heavy. Jack tried to get him to leave those non-essentials behind, but he insisted he could carry them in his pack.

By the time they had reached half-way up the glacier, Mr. Varnam was tiring rapidly and had to stop and rest every few minutes. He was slowing them up, and they kept prodding him on. Eventually he began discarding his pack, little by little, until when they finally neared the summit, late in the afternoon, he even offered Stewart his beautiful gun.

"It's a beauty, and I'd like to have it, but I wouldn't even carry it myself," said Jack. "I'll cache it here in the snow, and pick it up on my return trip." So even the gun was lost to the old man, and as it turned out, he would have been much better off if he had taken Jack's advice in the first place. Darkness and weariness overtook them on the first bench going down, and they were forced to stop. One reason Jack had wanted to get down to Valdez before dark was the fear of the crevasses all over the thawing glacier which made travelling after dark virtually suicide. Varnam was so worn out they made him a bed of ice rocks to rest on, and it was a weary night they spent. They made it on into Valdez the next day.

When they reached Valdez, Varnam and the other men paid Jack and Pete \$20.00 for the trip, but pleaded with the two to come "out" with them while they still could. Nothing could be said to change their intentions, however, and Jack and Pete bade them farewell and headed back over the glacier.

They picked up George Hatch at the old camp and went on their way to Copper Center. They made it over the rapids without too much trouble in their strong boat and landed in Copper Center in the early summer. There Jack and Pete got together and decided that as long as they had to spend the summer there anyway before going on to Dawson, they might as well do something to make a little money. Jack Stewart had been broke since he bought his first provisions. They knew the way over the glacier, and the trip over with Varnam gave them an idea. Consequently for the rest of that summer the two of them took the weary-worn and homesick, in camp at Copper Center, and along the trail between Copper Center and the foot of the glacier, back across the glacier to Valdez at \$20.00 a trip. While they were in Valdez each time, they would pick up items to sell to those back in the camps.

In between trips they prospected on the streams, and while they never hit any "pay dirt", or real gold, that summer, they were still encouraged by the colours of the "flour gold", and they knew someday they would really "strike".

Once while Jack and Pete were camped at the foot of Clutina Lake, they met a fellow by the name of Powell. This man had received an order from the government to go down the Copper River to Orca and pick up the registered mail which had been collecting there for months for the people in the Copper River country. After picking up the mail at Orca, he was to take a steamer around to Valdez. He asked Jack and Pete if they would meet him there, and guide him back over the glacier. From Copper Center to Orca, and on to Valdez and back over the glacier was a geographical triangle, but still the easiest way to go to Orca and get back with the mail. At the same time, a doctor by the name of Quick was taking a man who had been badly mauled by a bear down the river to Orca to be taken out to a hospital. He, too, planned to go by steamer to Valdez and meet the guides there for the return trip across the glacier.

Trips like these were common to Jack and Pete, and they made them pay. They took over several people who wanted to go out, and when they got into Valdez, which had since grown into a small town with general supply stores, they bought whiskey, tobacco, playing cards, spices, and other sundries to take back to Copper Center to sell. They met Powell and Dr. Quick and found that there were also several others who wanted to cross the glacier under their guide. In fact, altogether, there were thirteen men and a dog in the party. They all joked about it! Little did they know the old superstition would do an "about face" and smack them squarely between the eyes. Another of the men in the party was Charlie Wolff, who, incidentally, later became the editor of the Valdez paper.

Each, with his pack on his back, was tied to the man in front of him by a guide rope, and they started out on the one-day trip across the glacier. Jack led the procession and Pete brought up the rear. That was an arrangement they always made, since one had to be in front to guide, and the other had to be in the rear to watch out for the others, see that they were all together, and prod the weary along. As they neared the top of the summit, a big storm blew up, and the going became very tough.

The first to lag was Charlie Wolff, who became quite weary and kept halting. Pete began helping him along and encouraging the rest, while Jack used his ground stick now every foot of the way, as the danger of falling into a crevasse became more and more dangerous. The snow was blowing and drifting, and a crevasse would easily be covered over enough that it wouldn't be visible.

Soon everyone became very, very weary, fighting the storm and trying to keep moving upward. They had to go on because they had no idea how long the storm would last, and they didn't have provisions for staying any length of time.

Powell had forty pounds of registered mail he had signed for, and for which he was responsible, and this was indeed a heavy load. He, too, kept lagging. Soon, he began to ask others to take his burden, and promised all the wages he would receive for taking it. But each had his own pack, and each was tired and worn, and no one wanted additional weight for any amount of money. Powell finally said he just couldn't carry it any farther. A huge boulder had rolled down from the top of the mountain, and he decided to cache the mail there under that boulder. He hated to do it. He didn't know what the outcome would be for having lost that registered mail, but he could not carry it on in that storm. To this day there is probably still somewhere in that moving glacier forty pounds of registered mail, worth how much--no one knows. He never recovered it.

Their progress got slower and slower, and the storm became worse, but they had come into view of the summit, and at the rear, Pete kept urging them on, against protest after protest. Step by step Jack poked his ground stick, took a step or two, poked his ground stick, stepped again, slowly moving on. Suddenly, without warning, never knowing how he missed it with his stick, Jack stepped and there was nothing under his feet. So quickly and abruptly did he fall into the crevasse that the rope by which he was tied to the rest, snapped. He stopped falling about thirty-five feet down and was wedged, in the crevasse, the snow piled up around him. What really scared him was that when he looked on either side he saw that the crevasse widened and dropped to an unknown depth. As he fell, he

thought his time had surely come, but once he was lodged down there, he felt the hope of rescue, and a deep gratitude that he had fallen into the narrow point of the crevasse, otherwise he would have hurtled to certain death.

The men, of course, were terrified. They untied their guide rope and sent it down, but it wasn't long enough to reach him, and they felt no reassuring tug at the other end. They couldn't see him, as he had landed so that the ledge of ice protruded over the spot he was in, and they couldn't hear him because of the noise of the storm. One of them took off his pack strap, which was one-half inch lacing, tied it to the end of the guide rope, and sent it down. Jack jerked on it when it reached him in order that they would know that he had it. Slowly wriggling and working, he managed to tie his own pack to it first and sent that up. The rope held. They untied the pack at the top and sent the rope down again with a noose in it so that he might slip it over his body. That was a slow procedure, for he had nothing to brace himself against. With each movement, he sank farther into the snow. However, after several minutes and many frustrated efforts, he managed to slip himself into the noose and tugged for them to pull him up. Because he was back under the ledge of ice, they had to pull very slowly in order not to cut the rope with the ice, but it held safely, and they finally brought him to the top.

This incident, along with their increased tension and weariness, was too much for Charlie Wolff and Powell. Charlie said he would not go on, and Powell was only too ready to stay with him. The party dug a large hole into the side of the mountain of snow, and the others left their food with the two and covered the hole with snow to keep them protected from the storm. The rest of the men proceeded on down the glacier, wondering if they would ever see Wolff and Powell alive again, or if their fate would be that of so many others, buried alive in the snow, or death from starvation if the storm lasted any length of time. A weary group at last reached timberline through the vicious storm, and the cabin of Dr. Logan there at the edge of timberline was indeed a welcome sight to them.

Dr. Logan was a strange, handsome young man who dressed like the Indians, and maintained his cabin there at timberline all alone to minister to the sick along the trail. Scurvy was a prevalent disease among those on the trail because of their lack of fresh vegetables. No one knew just why the young doctor chose to live in that desolate outpost all alone, but everyone liked him very much. That night he gave food and rest to the tired men.

The next morning the storm was over, and Jack Stewart knew that he had to go back up for the two men they had left holed in. But Pete Cashman felt different about it. He was thoroughly disgusted with the quitters, and was adamant in his refusal to accompany him, and Jack had to get someone else to go with him. They found Charlie and Powell safe and sound and very grateful, and brought them on back down.

To be continued . . . . .

## ARTISTIC TALENT



Photo courtesy Heinrich Lohmann [heinrich\\*lohmann.ca](http://heinrich*lohmann.ca) (In Airdrie AB)

## OBIT

**BANKS, Jean Elizabeth** - September 28, 1921 - August 27, 2006. Born at Sec. 8/TP27/Range 11-W3 in South Saskatchewan, passed away peacefully at "home" in Tatamagouche in Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital. She was truly a Canadian who left her mark in many parts of this country; Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, Yukon and Ottawa. She was educated in Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia before marrying and devoting her life to her two sons, Thomas (Tammy) and their son Paul, and Donald, all of Yukon Territory; her parents, Marjorie and Thomas Grant, who resided in Tatamagouche. She had a long history in Tatamagouche, being a descendent of the Currie and Waugh families. These same families gave her a connection to the Yukon. Jean was a great oral historian for her family and the areas in which she lived. Through Ingram Banks, she had family ties to the Spicers of Spencer's Island. Jean was also civic minded and a great volunteer wherever she lived. Many people will mourn her loss and cherish and celebrate their connections to "our Jean". Funeral service will be held Friday at 10:30 a.m. in Sedgwick Memorial Presbyterian Church, Tatamagouche, Rev. Mary Anne Grant officiating. Interment will be at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to North Shore Health Services Foundation Renovations Project. Arrangements have been entrusted to Coulter's Funeral Home, Tatamagouche (657-3288).

## NEW ADDITIONS

Friday we are going back to Whitehorse by car after going out in 1952!

My wife Elizabeth Copland, went to high school in Whitehorse her father (William) was with Taylor & Drury!

I met Liz in Whitehorse in 1950 and worked as a printer at the Whitehorse Star!

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Just received a forward of the Vancouver Island Yukoners picnic and recognized a lot of the folks there looked like everyone had a good time. Have received the odd forward of the telegraph before and enjoyed it and would like to be included in your e-mail list [mhmcgeachy@northwestel.net](mailto:mhmcgeachy@northwestel.net) . As I grew up in Mayo and my wife in Dawson it is always nice to know how other Yukoner's are doing. We have just returned to the Yukon after living in Surrey for the last 30 years we now call Tagish home.

Thanks again  
Mike McGeachy

Hi Sherron in reply to your request Heather's maiden name was Berg also known as one of the twins. Born and raised in Dawson and for myself was taken to the north in 1944 at the age of 2. We were married in Whitehorse and had a son and daughter born there and left in 72 returned in 75 left in 77 and returned probably for good now in 06.

Regards  
Mike

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*Experience is what you get when you don't get what you want.*

## RECIPE OF THE WEEK

From *The O.E.S. COOKBOOK*, compiled by Pat Rogers and Zoe Cousins, assisted by Bea Marr and Trudy Wilcox, a combined project of Dawson Chapter #1 and Whitehorse Chapter #2, published at Whitehorse in the early 1950's.

Submitted by Maribeth (Tubman) Mainer [mainerml@shaw.ca](mailto:mainerml@shaw.ca) (In Burnaby)

### ***Raspberry Shrub or Vinegar***

Cover the berries with cider vinegar, just enough to cover top of berries, let stand overnight. In the morning, strain through a cheesecloth as for jelly. To each cup of juice add 1 coup of sugar and boil not over 10 minutes. Bottle. Makes a refreshing drink served with ice cubes in a tall glass: 1 tablespoon juice or more, according to ones taste, to a glass of water.

Della Simmons

## **SIGN UP TO RECEIVE THE MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH**

If you have received this copy of the Moccasin Telegraph from a friend and wish to sign up to receive future editions yourself, the criteria is that you **are or were a Yukoner**. The goal of this project is to provide an opportunity for folks to reconnect.

– Sherron Jones [sherronjones@shaw.ca](mailto:sherronjones@shaw.ca)

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