

The Trail of '98

A Northland Romance

by Robert W. Service

Illustrations by Irwin Myers

WNU Service

STORY FROM THE START

Athol Meldrum, young Scotsman, starts out to seek his fortune. He arrives at San Francisco practically broke and meets a fellow adventurer whom he dubs the Prodigal. With Jim Hubbard they join the gold rush to Alaska. On the boat Athol meets Berna, a young woman traveling with her grandfather and a hard looking couple named Winklestein who figure as her aunt and uncle. The grandfather, Berna says, is obsessed with the idea of gaining wealth in Alaska. Landing at Skagway, Athol's party at once takes the trail. In a snow-belt on the Chilkoot trail, which Berna and her companions had taken, hundreds of lives are lost. Fearful for Berna's safety, Athol hastens to the scene. He finds the old man dead and learns that Berna is prosecuted to let him see the girl, but he leaves a letter for her. At Bennett, Berna comes to Athol, confesses her love, and begs him to marry her, to save her from the harsh fate she foresees. He is unwilling to take such a decisive step, and tells her they must wait. Some days afterward Berna tells Athol Madam Winklestein plans to sell her to "Black Jack" Locasto, millionaire miner of evil reputation. While realizing how greatly he loves the girl, Meldrum, in a mixture of emotions, fleeces from the idea of immediate marriage, and they agree to wait a year, though Berna is fearful. Reaching the gold fields, Athol and his party find the claims all taken and the camp crowded with idle men.

CHAPTER VI

I will always remember my first day in the gold camp. All was grotesque, makeshift, haphazard. Back of the main street lay the red-light quarter, and behind it again a swamp of nigherheads, the breeding place of fever and mosquito.

Midnight I wandered up and down the long street; but there was no darkness, no lull in its clamorous life.

I was looking for Berna. My heart hungered for her; my eyes ached for her; my mind was so full of her there seemed no room for another single thought. But it was like looking for a needle in a strawstack to find her in that seething multitude. So with spirits steadily sinking towards I waited.

After a session of debate, we decided to reserve our rights to stake till a good chance offered. It was a bitter awakening. Like all the rest we had expected to get ground that was gold from the grass-roots down. But there was work to be had, and we would not let ourselves be disheartened.

The Jam-wagon had already deserted us. He was off up on Eldorado somewhere, shoveling dirt into a sluiceway for ten dollars a day. I made up my mind I would follow him. Jim also would get to work, while the Prodigal we agreed, would look after our interests, and stake or buy a good claim.

The country was at the mercy of a gang of corrupt officials who were using the public offices for their own enrichment. Franchises were being given to the favorites of those in power, concessions sold, liquor permits granted, and abuses of every kind practiced on the free miner. All was venality, injustice and extortion.

"Say, boys, I've done a slick piece of work," said the Prodigal with some satisfaction, as he entered our tent. "I've bought three whole outfits on the beach. Got them for 25 per cent less than the cost price in Seattle. I'll pull out 100 per cent on the deal. Now's the time to get in and buy from the quitter."

"It's too bad to take advantage of them," I suggested.

"No had nothing! That's business; your necessity, my opportunity. Oh, you'd never make a money-getter, my boy, this side of the millennium—and you Scotch, too."

I roamed the long street with an awful restless agony in my heart. Where was Berna, my girl, so precious now? It seemed I had lost her? I visioned evils befalling her; I pierced my heart with dagger-thrusts of fear for her. Oh, if I only knew she was safe and well! If I could only find her! The land was a great symphony; she the haunting theme of it.

I bought a copy of the Nugget and went into the Sourdough restaurant to read it. As I lingered there sipping my coffee and perusing the paper indifferently, a paragraph caught my eye and made my heart glow with sudden hope.

Here was the item:

"One of the largest gambling plays that ever occurred in Dawson came off last night in the Malamute saloon. Jack Locasto of Eldorado, well known as one the Klondike's wealthiest claim-owners, Claude Terry and Charlie Haw were the chief actors in the game, which cost the first-named the sum of \$19,000."

"Locasto came to Dawson from his claim yesterday. It is said that before leaving the Forks he lost a sum ranging in the neighborhood of \$5,000. Last night he began playing in the Malamute with Haw and Terry in an effort, it is supposed, to recoup his losses at the Forks. The play continued nearly all night, and at the wind-up, Locasto, as stated above, was over to the amount of \$19,000."

Jack Locasto! Why had I not

thought of him before? Surely if anyone knew of the girl's whereabouts, it would be he. I determined I would ask him at once.

So I hastily finished my coffee and inquired of the waiter where I might find the Klondike king.

"Oh, Black Jack," he said; "well, at the Green Bay Tree, or the Tivoli, or the Monte Carlo. But there's a big poker game on and he's liable to be in it."

Once more I paraded the seething street. Women were everywhere, smoking cigarettes, laughing, chaffing, strolling in and out of the wide-open saloons. A libertine spirit was in the air, a madcap freedom, an effluence of disdainful sin.

I found myself by the stockade that surrounded the police reservation. One of the constables, a tall, slim Englishman with a refined manner, proved to me a friend in need.

"Yes," he said, in answer to my query, "I think I can find your man. He's downtown somewhere with some of the big sporting guns. Come on, we'll run him to earth."

After a short walk he pushed his way through a crowded doorway and I followed. It was the ordinary type of combined saloon and gambling joint. In a corner, presiding over a stud poker game, I was surprised to see Mosher.

My companion pointed to an inner room with a closed door.

"The Klondike kings are in there, hard as it. There's Black Jack and Stillwater Willie and Claude Terry and Charlie Haw."

Eagerly I looked in. All but Locasto were medium-sized men. Stillwater Willie was in evening dress. Haw was a sandy-haired man with shifty, uneasy eyes; Terry of a bulldog type, stocky and powerful. But it was Locasto who gripped and riveted my attention.

He was a massive man, heavy of limb and brutal in strength. There was a great spread to his shoulders and a conscious power in his every movement. He had a square, heavy chin, a grim, sneering mouth, a falcon nose, black eyes that were as cold as the water in a deserted shaft. His hair was raven dark, and his skin betrayed the Mexican strain in his blood. Above the others he towered, strikingly masterful, and I felt somehow the power that emanated from the man, the brute force, the remorseless purpose.

Then the waiter returned with a tray of drinks and the door was closed.

"Well, you've seen him now," said my friend. "Your only plan, if you want to speak to him, is to wait till the game breaks up. By-by."

Oh, the weariness of that waiting! It was in the young morn when the game broke up. The inner door opened and Black Jack appeared.

In a moment I had followed and overtaken him.

"Mr. Locasto."

He turned and gave me a stare from his brooding eyes.

"Jack Locasto's my name," he answered carelessly.

I walked alongside him.

"Well, sir," I said, "my name's Meldrum, Athol Meldrum."

"Oh, I don't care what the devil your name is," he broke in petulantly. "Don't bother me just now. I'm tired. What do you want, work?"

"No," I said, "I just want a scrap of information. I came into the country with some Jews by the name of Winklestein. I've lost track of them and I think you may be able to tell me where they are."

He was all attention now. He turned half round and scrutinized me with deliberate intensity. Then, like a flash, his rough manner changed. His eyes were bland, his voice smooth as cream.

"Winklestein," he echoed reflectively, "Winklestein; seems to me I do remember the name, but for the life

of me I can't recall where. Was there a girl with them?"

"Yes," I said eagerly, "a young girl."

"A young girl, ah!" He seemed to reflect hard again. "Well, my friend, I'm afraid I can't help you. I remember noticing the party on the way in, but what became of them I can't think. Well, good-night, or good-morning rather. This is my hotel."

He had half entered when he paused and turned to me. His face was urbane, his voice suave to sweetness; but it seemed to me there was a subtle mockery in his tone.

"I say, if I should hear anything of them, I'll let you know. Your name? Athol Meldrum—all right, I'll let you know. Good-by."

He was gone and I had failed. I cursed myself for a fool. The man had baffled me. Nay, even I had hurt myself by giving him an inkling of my search. Berna seemed further away from me than ever. Home I went, discouraged and despairful.

Then I began to argue with myself. He must know where they were, and if he really had designs on the girl and was keeping her in hiding my in-



"Oh, I Don't Care What the Devil Your Name Is," He Broke in Petulantly.

terview with him would alarm him. He would take the first opportunity of warning the Winklesteins. When would he do it? That very night in all likelihood. So I reasoned; and I resolved to watch.

I stationed myself in a saloon from where I could command a view of his hotel, and there I waited. I was beginning to think he must have evaded me, when suddenly coming forth alone from the hotel I saw my man.

He was walking swiftly and he took a path that skirted the swamp behind the town. I had no doubt of his mission. My heart began to beat with excitement. I followed breathlessly. There were few cabins hereabouts; it was a lonely place to be so near to town, very quiet and thickly screened from sight. Suddenly he seemed to disappear, and, fearing my pursuit was going to be futile, I rushed forward.

I came to dead stop. There was no one to be seen. He had vanished completely. Blindly I blundered forward. Then I came to a place where with deliberate intent, I had overlooked, and, if it meant death to me, I must again try conclusions with the brute.

He was accompanied by a little bald-headed Jew named Spitzstein, and were almost abreast of them when I stepped forward and arrested them. My teeth were clenched; I was all a-quiver with passion; my heart beat violently.

He was dressed in that miner's costume in which he always looked so striking. His mouth was grimed as granite, and his black eyes hard and repellent as those of a toad.

"Oh, you coward!" I cried. "You vile, filthy coward!"

"Get out of my way," he snarled; "I've got to teach you a lesson."

Once more before I could guard he landed on me with that terrible right-arm swing, and down I went as if a sledge hammer had struck me. But instantly I was on my feet, a thing of blind passion, of desperate fight. I made one rush to throw myself on this human tower of brawn and muscle, when some one plucked me from behind. It was Jim.

"Easy, boy," he was saying; "you can't fight this big fellow."

Spitzstein was looking on curiously. There was a breathless pause, then, at the psychological moment, the Jam-wagon intervened.

The smoldering fire in his eye had brightened into a fierce joy; his twitching mouth was now grim and stern as a prison door. For days he had been fighting a dim intangible foe. Here at last was something human and definite. He advanced to Locasto.

TO BE CONTINUED

irony. I was startled I admit, but I tried to put a good face on it.

"Hello," I said; "I'm just taking a stroll."

His black eyes pierced me, his black brows met savagely. The heavy jaw shot forward, and for a moment the man, menacing and terrible, seemed to tower above me.

"You lie!" like explosive steam came the words, and wolf-like his lips parted, showing his powerful teeth. "You lie!" he reiterated. "You followed me. Didn't I see you from the hotel? Didn't I determine to decoy you away? You would try to cross me, would you? You would champion damsels in distress? You pretty fool, you simpleton, you meddler!"

Suddenly, without warning, he struck me square on the face, a blinding, staggering blow that brought me to my knees as falls a pole-axed steer. I was stunned, swaying weakly, trying vainly to get on my feet. Then he struck me again, a bitter, felling blow, not so much on my face as on my neck, and he showed me none. He was like a fiend. Rage seemed to rend him. Time and again he kicked me, brutally, relentlessly, on the ribs, on the chest, on the head. Was the man going to do me to death? I shielded my head. I moaned in agony. Would he never stop? Then I became unconscious, knowing that he was still kicking me, and wondering if I would ever open my eyes again.

"Long live the cold-foot tribe! Long live the soreheads!"

It was the Prodigal who spoke. "This outfit buying's got gold mining beaten to a standstill. Here I've been three weeks in the burg and got over ten thousand dollars' worth of grub cached away. Every pound of it will net me 100 per cent at this price."

He was very sprightly and elate, but I was in no sort of mood to share in his buoyancy. Physically I had fully recovered from my terrible mauling, but in spirit I still writhed at the outrage of it. And the worst was I could do nothing. The law could not help me, for there were no witnesses to the assault. I could never cope with the man bodily strength.

Yet how bitterly I brooded over the business. At times there was even black murder in my heart. I planned schemes of revenge, grinding my teeth in impotent rage the while; and my feelings were complicated by that awful gnawing hunger for Berna that never left me. It seemed to me as if I saw all the world through the medium of my love for her, and that all beauty, all truth, all good was but a setting for this girl of mine.

"Come on," said Jim; "let's go for a walk in the town."

The "Modern Gomorrah" he called it, and he was never tired of expatiating on its iniquity.

We met the Jam-wagon. He had mused in from the creeks that very day. Physically he looked supreme. He was berry-brown, lean, muscular and as full of suppressed energy as an unsprung bear trap. Financially he was well ballasted. Mentally and morally he was in the state of a volcano before an eruption.

You could see in the quick breathing, in the restlessness of this man, a pent-up energy that clamored to exhaust itself in violence and debauch. His fierce blue eyes were wild and roving, his lips twitched nervously. He was an atavism; of the race of those white-bodied, ferocious sea kings that drank blood and died in the din of battle.

As we walked along, Jim did most of the talking in his favorite morality vein. The Jam-wagon puffed silently at his briar pipe, while I, very listless and downhearted, thought largely of my own troubles. Then, in the middle of the block, where most of the music halls were situated, suddenly we met Locasto.

I had thought much over this meeting, and had dreaded it. There are things which no man can overlook, and, if it meant death to me, I must again try conclusions with the brute.

He was accompanied by a little bald-headed Jew named Spitzstein, and were almost abreast of them when I stepped forward and arrested them. My teeth were clenched; I was all a-quiver with passion; my heart beat violently.

He was dressed in that miner's costume in which he always looked so striking. His mouth was grimed as granite, and his black eyes hard and repellent as those of a toad.

"Oh, you coward!" I cried. "You vile, filthy coward!"

"Get out of my way," he snarled; "I've got to teach you a lesson."

Once more before I could guard he landed on me with that terrible right-arm swing, and down I went as if a sledge hammer had struck me. But instantly I was on my feet, a thing of blind passion, of desperate fight. I made one rush to throw myself on this human tower of brawn and muscle, when some one plucked me from behind. It was Jim.

"Easy, boy," he was saying; "you can't fight this big fellow."

Spitzstein was looking on curiously. There was a breathless pause, then, at the psychological moment, the Jam-wagon intervened.

The smoldering fire in his eye had brightened into a fierce joy; his twitching mouth was now grim and stern as a prison door. For days he had been fighting a dim intangible foe. Here at last was something human and definite. He advanced to Locasto.

TO BE CONTINUED

Wildcat Swap Brings Hunter Heavy Fine

Harrisburg, Pa.—The difference between three wildcats killed in Pennsylvania and three killed in Louisiana is \$145 in U. S. money, at least so far as the bounty division of the board of game commissioners is concerned.

Despite the similarity in size and color of three pelts offered recently to the bounty board for payment, members of the board easily detected the difference between a Pennsylvania cat and one from the brakes of a southern state.

Investigations disclosed the cats had been killed in Louisiana. Instead of collecting \$45 in bounties, the hunter paid \$100 in fines.

BECOMES COUNTESS; FLEECED BY CROOK

Kansas Woman Comes to Grief in France.

Paris.—Things have happened quickly since the day Mrs. Pearl Hussey Flanagan, a music teacher and wife of an undertaker in Wichita, Kan., walked up the steps of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, in Paris, France. Events have followed each other almost too quickly, for when Mrs. Flanagan walked down the steps she was Countess de Taurine and owned the Chateau de Taurine, a massive old structure of rough hewn stone.

Now Mrs. Flanagan owns nothing. She plans again to take up the teaching of music where she left off, and she must begin soon, for the law took away from her her fur coat, dresses, stockings, and even underwear. Besides, her husband is suing her for divorce.

When she entered the cathedral in Paris, Mrs. Flanagan met the Abbe Loubiere. She told him of her ambition to establish a school of music in France, and her seriousness so impressed him that he asked her to accept the chateau as a nucleus about which to build the school. The abbe had served in the World war, among American troops, and was not averse to paying some tribute to America. Mrs. Flanagan then learned she had become Countess de Taurine under French civil law.

Seeking to obtain a manager, Mrs. Flanagan in Kansas City hired Charles F. Faye to conduct the business end of her music school abroad. Faye, given a free hand, began the floating of stock, stair-stepping the price. He had been arrested before for raising a check, but Mrs. Flanagan did not know that. When the crash came Faye went to jail and the countess was in debt \$5,000. Besides, there was a tax of 60 per cent on the chateau in France. Constables left the "countess"—or Mrs. Flanagan now—with the house dress she was wearing when they departed from the music school.

Scientist Would Study Sun at Close Range

Brussels.—Working closer to the sun than has any human being before him, so far as is known, Prof. Andre Piccard of Brussels university and an assistant hope to study the cosmic rays at a height of nearly 50,000 feet. The professor plans to reach this dizzy height in an especially made balloon with a closed cabin.

Professor Piccard says the cosmic rays are the key to the atmospheric conditions of the earth, and that his initiative may lead to all commercial airplanes using the upper layers for travel rather than the stormy regions close to the earth.

King Albert's \$13,800,000 fund for scientific research will finance the venture, which will cost about \$15,000.

Woman Ends Life After Her Pet Cat Is Killed

Charlotte, N. C.—Despondent over the death of her cat, Mrs. Dorothy Davis, forty years old, of this city, leaped to her death from a hotel window.

Police say she told them she had nothing to live for after her pet Persian cat, "Fan Tan," had been poisoned.

Musician Will Son Nothing but Remorse

Lincoln, Neb.—That his son, "may reflect in remorse forever upon the wrong he has done me," Edward H. Schafer, Lincoln musician, left him in his will a photograph and a penny. He left an estate amounting to \$16,500.

Saw Slate With Wire

Washington.—Wire and sand were introduced by scientists of the bureau of mines two years ago as a saw for slate quarrying. Now Oliver Bowles, supervising engineer of the bureau, believes that wire saws, which already have revolutionized the quarrying, soon may supplant the expensive circular saws of the finishing plant.

Steal Motorless Car

Newark, N. J.—A car belonging to Thomas Macknany, of this city developed engine trouble. He had the motor removed and parked the car on the street all night. In the morning it was gone.

POULTRY

VITAMINE NEEDED IN CHICK RATION

Liberal Use of Milk Quite Essential for Chickens.

A vitamine required by poultry and hitherto unrecognized, has been discovered by L. C. Norris, G. F. Heuser and H. S. Wilgus, Jr., of the Cornell university agricultural experiment station. This vitamine which is contained in milk is essential for the growth of chicks and for the prevention of a peculiar type of paralysis which may result in incurable deformities.

The discovery was in part accidental and resulted from an attempt to get a chick ration low in calcium and phosphorus, which would be suitable to study the requirements of chicks for these minerals. Casein, a purified milk protein, was used as the main source of protein in the experimental ration. When it was used in place of milk the chick ration was found lacking in this vitamine which prevents paralysis.

The experiment demonstrates that the use of liberal quantities of milk is essential where chicks or mature birds are confined indoors and are not provided with succulent green feed. To conclude from this experiment that milk should invariably be used in all poultry rations would be unwise, they say, as good chicks have been reared in the past with little or no milk and good winter egg production has also often been obtained with rations which contained no milk. It is probable, therefore, that this unknown factor is present in slight amounts in meat products, cereals and cereal by-products, and in large amounts in succulent leafy green feeds.

Barred Plymouth Rock Favored to Caponize

One of the best breeds of poultry for caponizing is the Barred Rock as the sex can be determined at an early age. The cockerels will be light and the pullets dark and when the chicks are about six weeks old and weigh close to one and a half pounds each, the poultryman can go into his colony houses with a spotlight and collect cockerels as fast as he can pick them up.

In caponizing such breeds as Rhode Island Reds or White Wyandottes, it is more difficult to pick out the male birds at an early age, says a writer in the Michigan Farmer. Considerable accuracy is possible by studying the heads. The male birds soon appear more coarse and have a harsher voice than the pullets. Pullets of any color soon develop what might be called the feminine type of head. It is smaller and more refined than the head of the male bird. The heads, beaks, and even the undeveloped combs on male chicks have a different appearance from pullets.

Some breeders caponize White Leghorn cockerels and make them weigh as much as six pounds but in general the caponizing is confined to the heavier meat breeds like the Barred Plymouth Rock, Jersey Black Giant or Light Brahma.

Various Good Points of the African Goose

The African goose has had at different times several names, among which were China goose, swan goose, Chinese swan, Guinea goose, Spanish goose and others. Its origin is unknown, but it is quite probable that it originated in a cross between the goose we now call the China goose and the Toulouse, and from this cross was perfected up to it is now an enlarged kind of a Brown China goose.

The African goose lays better than any of the other larger breeds and it grows to be as large as any other. Specimens that were given the best care have grown to weigh 25 pounds, but the standard weight for a full-grown African goose is 20 pounds. They are very hardy and easy to raise. They are very watchful and know strangers from those whom they see every day. When a stranger comes among them they set up a clamor that notifies every one within hearing that something out of the ordinary has happened.

Plenty Good Features

Poultry houses that are built today are sensible; though they have plenty of fresh air, they have no draughts, though they contain more hens to the square foot, there is no dampness which is so fatal.

Two essentials that can be had for the taking are provided—sunlight and fresh air—and with these there is no reason why we should not have the healthiest race of fowl found on the face of the globe, and as a result an increased production of eggs.

Ventilation Essential

Ventilation is another essential of modern poultry housing. A good ventilation system supplies fresh air in the poultry house without making it subject to sudden temperature changes. Ventilation removes dampness and eliminates foul odors, making the flock healthier and more comfortable. Automatic ventilation systems are now on the market which consist of intake flues in the back of the house and a cupola on the roof to carry out foul air.



Makes Life Sweeter

Too much to eat—too rich a diet—too much smoking. Lots of things cause sour stomach, but one thing can correct it quickly. Phillips Milk of Magnesia will alkalize the acid. Take a spoonful of this pleasant preparation, and the system is soon sweetened.

Phillips is always ready to relieve distress from over-eating; to check all acidity; or neutralize nicotine. Remember this for your own comfort; for the sake of those around you. Endorsed by physicians, but they always say Phillips. Don't buy something else and expect the same results!

PHILLIPS Milk of Magnesia

Necessary
Shoe Clerk—Here is a pair of good, heavy, durable shoes.
Customer—That is just what I want. I'm going out to hunt a job.

For Foot Rot in Sheep and Fovls in Hoofs of Cattle

HANFORD'S BALSAM OF MYRRH
Money back for first bottle if not suited. All dealers.

NERVOUSNESS

To save the millions of nervous wrecks of the Great War French Scientists developed a simple and safe home treatment that has produced almost miraculous results in cases of nervous ailments including shell shock. Every man and woman should read our FREE pamphlet on this remarkable discovery.

THE Pioneer

410 STUART ST., BOSTON
Permanent or transient rooms with or without bath.
Write or telephone KEMVINE 3496 for reservation.
Dining room and cafeteria.
Membership not required.

Total Loss

"Yes, I studied eight languages in college," admitted the henpecked man. "Been any help to you?" asked the other.

"No," he sighed. "I have to do all my listening in one."

Indiana's navy population reaches the 3,000 mark for enlisted men and 219 officers now in active service, most of whom are native born Hoosiers.



ADDOZEN different things may cause a headache, but there's just one thing you need ever do to get relief.

Bayer Aspirin is an absolute antidote for such pain. Keep it at the office. Have it handy in the home. Those subject to frequent or sudden headaches should carry Bayer Aspirin in the pocket-kin. Until you have used it for headaches, colds, neuralgia, etc., you've no idea how Bayer Aspirin can help. It means quick, complete relief to millions of men and women who use it every year. And it does not depress the heart.

ASPIRIN

Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacturing Co., Elberfeld, Germany.

ASTHMA

DR. J. D. KELLOGG'S ASTHMA REMEDY for the prompt relief of Asthma and Hay Fever. Ask your druggist for it. 25 cents and one dollar. Write for FREE SAMPLE.

Northrop & Lyman Co., Inc., Buffalo, N.Y.

DR. J. D. KELLOGG'S REMEDY

By PERCY L. McCure

FINNEY O

DAD, I THINK I'M GOING TO A FOR MY HAND



THE FEAT

WHAT'S IN THE BOX, FANNY?

