

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF CAPTAIN
WILLIAM D. MOORE*

Captain William D. Moore is a son of the Captain William Moore whose life story has appeared in the last three numbers of this *Quarterly*. He was born in the city of Callao, Peru, in 1854, and came with his father to British Columbia in 1858, where he spent his boyhood in the adventurous life of the new province from Victoria to Quesnel and Barkerville. Among his early recollections are those of a stage coach journey through the Fraser Canyon, and a year near Kamloops on a ranch.

In 1866, he went with his father's family to Quesnel and later to Barkerville which was one of the important centers of the Caribou mines. There he lived among the exciting scenes of the rich and growing mining region during his years of development and as a young man went on to the Omineeca mines, serving his apprenticeship in the training of a river-man in lining up boats on the Skeena and others of the turbulent northern rivers.

The material of this sketch is nearly entirely from his voluminous notes of his experiences which he has filed with the University of Washington Library, and which form a thread running through the life of the northern mining camps from the Fraser River to the Nome Coast covering more than sixty years.

We find an interesting description of his sled journey up the Stikine River in 1874, over the snow trail on the ice of the river to reach the mine that they were working in the Cassiar. He says: "The latter part of January, J. W. and W. D. Moore ordered hand sleds to be made and making up of what goods they should take along, selecting the best of provisions, and nails and rope which they needed to hold logs in the creek while making a wing dam. A couple of shovels, one pair of gum hip boots each, besides shoes, moccasins, etc." . . .

They were accompanied by E. Lening, an experienced miner. They took passage on the Hudson's Bay Company Steamer *Otter*, leaving Victoria February 15th. They were eight days in reaching Wrangell and found about 250 men still there who had come on the steamship *California*. About fifty had left a few days before. The

*C. L. Andrews, author of this article, has had access to abundant manuscript and printed materials about Captain William Moore and his son, Captain William D. Moore, who is a pioneer of the Caribou, Omineeca, Cassiar and Yukon. In rounding out this record of the Captains Moore, he begins with "Mining and Steamboating in British Columbia." With Mr. Andrews it is a work of love, through his warm personal friendship with Captain William D. Moore.—EDITOR.

Otter landed 300 men with their supplies. The natives got busy with their fine, large canoes, transporting men and goods to the mouth of the Stikine River, which is about eight miles from Wrangell. The canoes landed everything on the ice. The miners loaded up their sleighs and hurried to the first camp ground, finding six feet of snow on the ground. Not many had dogs, as they would not be able to procure food for them on the way. Jack Feigh and Jimmie Burns employed a number of half-and quarter-breed Russians, who had come from Sitka, to work hauling a quantity of whiskey in kegs.

The Moore boys employed two natives to haul a load for them, so that made five in their party, and about 400 pounds to each sleigh which was quite enough. There were more than 650 men all with their sleighs, so the road was made very good for the last ones. The Moore party had no occasion to hurry as they had claims already. Starting early and getting to camp early, gave them plenty of time to make camp, get wood etc. They found the snow getting deeper, so concluded in the future to lay the brush for beds on top the snow. After they had tramped it hard all around with their snowshoes they would stick five or six poles slanting into the snow and then would pull their fly as they called it (a piece of drill sixteen feet square) over the poles tied on top and corners and put a lot of boughs down for beds. Then they would cut green logs about eight or ten feet long, lay them close together in front of the fly and build their fire on top of the logs, then put green brush for a carpet from their beds to the logs. It sometimes happened that the logs would not be laid close together and the snow melt, so that their fireplace would be several feet down in a hole in the morning.

Many were throwing away provisions, tools, etc., in order to get ahead to stake claims. The men ahead were getting more excited every day. The Moore party were passing goods thrown away. The Moore party and others who had claims had a very good road. They were glad when they got through the coast range, the snow was not over two or three feet deep. They followed on the Stikine River, up past Telegraph Creek through the Canyon for about forty miles. This canyon is not more than fifty feet wide in some places and the wall rock is sometimes 500 or 600 feet high, and seems to overhang in places and is very dark. There were a few places where the strong current kept it from freezing over, but left a shelf of ice hanging to the side walls of rock. Two men fell off this into the water and were drowned.

Where they had to leave the Stikine River, they had to pack

their goods and sleighs on their backs, up a very steep hill which took them two days, and in about two miles lowered down the sleighs with ropes onto the Third North Fork¹ which they followed until within eight miles of Dease Lake. It was comparatively level ground. This was the divide between the waters running into the Arctic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. On arriving at the mouth of Dease Creek there was quite a little town of tents. Some were laying out a town and lots of others up the creeks were staking claims. Feigh and Burns were doing a good business, selling whiskey. Some said they had more whiskey when they arrived at Dease Creek, than they had when they started from Wrangell, although they had sold quite a large amount on the way. There were two men drowned in the Canyon; a man cut himself with an ax, got blood poison and died; one man was drowned at the mouth of Stikine River; another man got sick and died. Three men were badly frozen. This happened between the time the Moore boys left the mouth of the Stikine and their arrival at Dease Creek. They had hauled their hand sleighs and packed 260 miles.

For the next ten years William D. Moore followed the frontier life of miner and steamboat captain, commanding boats of his father's company on the Stikine.² The decrease of the production of the Cassiar mines and the consequent decline of the transportation on the river caused him to look northward toward the almost unknown Yukon. It attracted him with the lure of the wild lands which had its appeal to all the bold spirits of the frontier. We find him in 1886 making his way across the Chilkoot, or Dyea, Pass, on his way to the great valley of interior Alaska. His story is an apt illustration of the trials of the trail at that early day. It is extracted from his manuscript.

To the Yukon Valley

"W. D. Moore arranged with a man, Holmes by name, to go into the Yukon country together, buying their outfit in company. They took passage in a schooner owned by J. J. Healy, left Juneau for Dyea, head of Lynn Canal, arriving there in good shape. At this place there was a store owned by J. J. Healy and Wilson.³ Three

¹ This is near where Robert Campbell found the "Terror Bridge" on his exploration of this region in 1838, and in the region where he met the Chieftainess of the Nahanies. He also met Chief Shakes of the Stikine Indians from Wrangell near here. See *MS Robert Campbell* in Victoria Provincial Library. The "Terror Bridge" was probably on the Tuya River, called the Second North Fork in MS of Capt. Wm. Moore, *Washington Historical Quarterly*, October, 1930, p. 278.

² *Ibid.*, January, 1931, p. 36.

³ Edgar Wilson, of firm of Healy & Wilson. John J. Healy, of this firm was afterward manager of the N. A. T. & T. Co. at Dawson, Y.T., during the gold rush of 1897-8.

days after, Jack Wade,⁴ John Burke and Joe—arrived in a canoe. They had made arrangements at Haines Mission with natives to pack their goods. But the natives, on getting to Dyea, demanded more pay, they wanting \$13. per pack instead of \$10.00 as they had promised. Wade and party would not pay that. Moore and Holmes were of the same opinion. The natives got into their canoes and left them. Two days after, Bishop Sehgers,⁵ Father Tosi, and Father Ribaut, Catholic Missionaries, arrived with two men who were working for them. The natives came again from Haines where their mission is situated. The natives had arrangements for \$10 per pack but again raised their prices to \$13.00. There was quite an argument, the chief showed a recommendation with large green and red seals on it given him by Captain Nicols of the U.S. Steamship *Pinta*, proclaiming him to be a good, reliable man, etc. . . . The Bishop told the chief that he would tell Captain Nicols that he was not a good man, that he lied, etc. . . . At this the chief got angry, went close to the Bishop and chucked him lightly under the nose with his hand. At this Wade and his party got close to their guns and pistols. Healy called Moore over to the store saying: 'Do not allow the natives to go around you, go tell the whites and then come back with your partner and arm yourselves. I think it is likely we are going to have trouble.' There were 108 natives and 11 whites. The natives all had knives and a few had pistols, they did not seem to have more than two or three rifles.

"After some very loud talk they all went off a short distance, and sat down. All the whites then went into Healy & Wilson's store, with the exception of two who watched on the outside. In about two hours the native chief came alone and said that they would take the packs for \$12.00. The whites agreed on this price. The native chief went to his friends and all came, made up their loads and got away from Dyea, making Sheep Camp after a hard day's work. All the whites had packs. It was tough going up hill and crossing Dyea River up to their middles in a very strong current.*** However, they had a very good camp for the night. The next day they had gone only a short distance till they were above timber line climbing up the mountain over the Chilkoot Pass.⁶ They had to rest

⁴ Jack Wade Creek in the Forty Mile mining region was named for this man. He afterward killed a Chilkat Indian on the Chilkat River in a drunken row in 1892. *Boundary Tribunal, Case of U.S.*, p. 487.

⁵ Archbishop Sehgers was killed at what is now called Bishop's Mountain, on Nov. 15, 1886, by his attendant, Frank Fuller. See *Sitka Alaskan*, Sept. 10, 1887. In the Gold Rush of 1897 the rates for the same service were put up to \$1.00 per pound.

⁶ This is the pass made famous by the stories of the Trail of Ninety Eight. This crossing was twelve years before the great Stampede of that year.

quite often using both hands in places, taking very good care not to slip. If they had slipped they would surely do themselves much harm. When they got to the top of the summit, they slipped out of their packs and had a bit of lunch with water, no fire to be made as there is nothing but stone and water, large patches of snow in places. It was bad getting down from the summit for a few miles, then it was fair going. They got to timber a few miles before reaching Lindeman. They built a fire and had a cup of tea. There is no more hemlock timber, it is now stunted spruce, some of it dry."

The next day they commenced building rafts from the dry trees which they cut.*** "After getting rafts completed they loaded them, poled along the shore to the foot of the lake about six or seven miles. They packed their outfit over the one mile portage to Lake Bennett. They then ran the rapids, the short rapid, rocky river to Bennett Lake, loaded their goods, poled, paddled, sailed and towed along the shore of Lake Bennett for about fifteen miles where they found suitable timber. They made camp and at once built saw-pits, cut the trees down into right lengths and rolled the logs onto the saw-pits after lining them out they began sawing and trouble began.⁷ Holmes had never sawed before. He thought he was doing all the work. After changing from the top of the log to the bottom, trying both ends of the saw he came to the conclusion it was hard on both ends of the saw, they almost came to blows before they finished sawing their lumber. The mosquitoes helped to make them angry as well as the wind blowing sawdust in their eyes.

"Wade and partners, also Moore and Holmes sawed lumber for the Bishop's boat and got the boat completed. The Bishop started on his way. Moore and Holmes finished their boat, so did Wade and partners. Both boats started away together.

"They passed over the remaining fifteen miles of Bennett Lake, thence down a short river into Tagish Lake, which is about twenty miles long, then down Six Mile River into Marsh Lake, then down the Sixty Mile River to Miles Canyon which they ran without any trouble and landed at the head of White Horse Rapids. Here they packed their goods to the foot of the rapids. They shot the rapids which is a bad place and had a wild ride over it all right.⁸

⁷ This is what is called whip-sawing lumber. Either a pit or a platform is used, one man above the other below the log. It is one of the most fruitful causes of bad feeling in northern pioneer life. Every follower of the trail knows how some things get under the skin on rough places on the lone trail.

⁸ The White Horse Rapids are the worst on the Yukon River, and the town of White Horse is just below them, the head of navigation on the Yukon, 2560 miles from St. Michael at the Mouth. A steamer of five feet draft can run from the mouth of the Yukon to White Horse.

"They came to Cassiar Bar. Here Moore met friends he had known in Caribou, Omineca and Cassiar mining camps. They had rocked out \$700.00 to each man in thirteen days but were now lying off, as the river had risen so high as to cover a bar they were working. They passed the Little Salmon. While they were camped here three men were poling out of the country in their boat. Moore decided that if they would take him, he would return as he had trouble with Holmes. The men were Billy Leak, Oscar Ashby and Tom Ashby. They told Moore he was welcome to come with them. Moore took a month's provisions, then shook hands. After five days poling, towing with line etc., arrived back at Cassiar Bar. George Ramsey, Jack Boyle, Tom Wilson and Jim Cain were partners. They told Moore that if he wished he could work with them till they were ready to go out to Juneau, and receive an equal share of the gold. Moore accepted.

"They worked 18 days. It is now the middle of September and time to get over the Chilkoot Pass before there is too much snow. They divided the gold equally, which was 900 dollars each, for the 18 days work.

"After getting to Lake Labarge, Cain was compelled to lie down, unable to work longer. On getting to White Horse Rapids they dragged the boat around on poles. At Miles' Canyon they hauled the boat out and up quite a steep hill, and down the hill at head of the canyon. They carried Jim Cain over the portage. On getting to the head of Lake Bennett they pulled the boat through the small, short, rapid creek to Lake Lindeman. Two natives were hired to carry Cain over the Chilkoot Pass to Dyea for \$50.00 each, the natives taking turns at packing him. At Dyea they stopped for a day, then hired a native to take them to Juneau in his canoe. At Juneau Cain was taken to the hospital where he died 10 days later."

In March of 1887 we find William D. Moore on his way to the Yukon again, leaving Dyea with his outfit on a sled on the 5th. arriving at Sheep Camp seven days later.⁹ Of his journey he records, among other things:

"A native from the lower Yukon country came into a camp and reported a white man back on the trail a few miles who had become exhausted and gave out. The miners at Sheep Camp went up close to the summit and found him. He was still alive so they took him to camp where he took some hot soup which revived him some, and

⁹ Sheep Camp was the scene of the great snowslide of April, 1898, when fifty-six persons were killed.

he informed us that his name was Tommy Williams, that he was on his way to San Francisco and had letters from Harper and Mayhue (Mayo), who were at Stewart River, to their partner L. N. McQuesten who was in San Francisco, informing him of the coarse gold discovery being made on the Forty Mile Creek, 40 miles down the river from Fort Reliance.

"Moore packed his outfit from Sheep Camp to the Summit, sometimes making the round trip in a day.¹⁰ If the weather happened to be stormy he generally left his pack at the foot of the steep pitch leading up to the summit. He was obliged to stop in Sheep Camp eighteen days on account of bad weather. Some of the others were there a month, many were snow-blind and compelled to lie in camp. After getting his outfit assembled he started down Lake Lindeman making from ten to thirty miles a day. When he got to the head of the Thirty Mile River, at the foot of Lake Labarge, they found it was breaking up so they went down the river a few miles and finding suitable timber built a boat.

"About fifty miles below the Big Salmon, a lone man, Missouri Bill, was going to rock out a little gold and 'go outside,'¹¹ and as he was short of provisions they let him have some."

"They arrived at the mouth of the Forty Mile River and lined up to the diggings. At the Canyon they saw an Indian woman and she was crying. There were three families who had been together up Forty Mile River, and had constructed skin boats in which to return. Two of these boats passed safely through the Canyon, but the third had run on a rock and rent a large hole in the skin. The man got on the rock, while his family managed to cling to the wrecked boat and kept their heads above water till the other two boats picked them up and got them to the river bank. They then went up the stream to try to get the husband off the rock, but found he was not there. They spent a couple of days looking for him, and at last found his body. He must have committed suicide as there was a knife wound over his heart. It was supposed that when he got on the rock and looked around, not seeing his family, he thought they had lost their lives in the canyon, and so decided to join them."

Captain Moore describes the methods of mining in an interesting manner, then says of his ventures: "As they could make only about \$10.00 a day, they moved up the Forty Mile, about sixty miles from the Yukon. They passed a good many miners. Some of them

¹⁰ Backpacking is hard work at best, but over the summit, when few are traveling it was specially trying, continually breaking trail.

¹¹ Meaning to go to the States, a common expression of the Yukon.

had been in the country the previous winter, who were all busy with their rockers.¹² At Bonanza Bar, the richest spot so far found, they were just cleaning off the bed-rock and making from \$20.00 to \$60.00 per day to the man. Bonanza Bar afterward being worked intelligently paid as high as \$250.00 a day to a man. Moore and his partners located on a bar and started to work, realizing \$16.00 to \$30.00 each, per day."

Later Captain Moore had occasion to go down to Forty Mile town. He relates an incident as illustrative of a miner's life. He stopped one night with Billy Lloyd. Moore asked him; "Why are you not at work?"

"Can't you see it is too far to pack dirt to the creek where the rocker is? I suppose that I'll have to lay off another ten days. You know that freshet we had some time back which swept Tom O'Brien and Skiff Mitchell's wheel away? Well, I lost ten days that time. The water was over my diggings, and between mosquitoes, freshets and cranks I am getting disgusted. I'll tell you something about cranks. I saw two go past here, they had cut their boat in half, each one with a half a boat. I can't see how they got up the river. Each one swore that if he ever saw the other again he would fix him."

As an example of miner's luck, Captain Moore relates that by the latter part of September they had realized \$1200.00 each during the season. True to form as seasoned miners they went down to the town to winter. He describes running the river, and after telling how to take the big swells of the rapids he says: "We passed over the Cleghorn Rapids in safety, here a man named Jones was drowned the previous June, his boat capsized. We then ran the Moose Creek Rapids without mishap but the boat took a little water. Two men lost most of their outfit, this same season, while going up this creek. Their boat sheered out into the strong current and upset. The next rapids are in the Canyon. Three men were drowned here this season.

"Moore and his partners entered these rapids to find that the river was pretty high, the rocks at the upper end being submerged and the water covered with foam tossing and whirling in every direction, at the same time going down stream about twelve miles an hour. Here and there were perpendicular rocks, called walls, on either side, against which one would think the boat was about to be

¹² The rocker is the next development after the pan in appliances for facilitating the saving of gold.

dashed, when she would be thrown away from it. At the lower end there is a large rock almost in the middle. The channel is down the right hand side. The current runs against this rock and takes the boat very close to it, when all of a sudden the bow of the boat is thrown to one side, and it requires the combined strength of all to keep the boat straight, then it seems to drop from under you and is in a tossing sea, the current running strong and the boat making a noise as though she was breaking up.

"We landed, and baled out the water which was about a foot deep, wetting the blankets, etc., then went on down to McQuesten's where the next day Moore and his partners dissolved partnership."

The Captain built a cabin below Forty Mile Town where he spent the winter. A man named Walsh occupied the cabin with him but soon sickened and died. He describes life in a mining town in winter from which brief quotations will be made:

"A little straight poker was also indulged in, and while the stakes were not high, a man could lose a hundred dollars in an incredibly short time. Cheating was unknown, but bluffing was indulged in.

"Sourdough Island, about six miles up the Forty Mile, was a noted place in those days. There were also a few noted cabins down at Jack's (McQuesten's) store, as the settlement at the mouth of Forty Mile was called. One of the famous characters, named Hootch Albert, manufactured hootch and sold it at 25c per glass, the ingredients being syrup, sugar, dried peaches or apples, some flour and a little hops to start fermentation. After being fermented the mixture was then distilled, and made a very fair substitute for whiskey.

"L. N. McQuesten and [A] Harper were at Forty Mile this winter, managing their store, while A. Mayhue [Mayo] was attending the Stewart River Post. They had employed J. Ladue to manage their store at Fort Grant [Eagle?] thirty miles down the river from Forty Mile. These men were the only ones operating stores on the upper Yukon, their goods being furnished them by the Alaska Commercial Co., of San Francisco.

"The prices of goods for 1887 and 1888 were as follows; flour \$12.00 per 100 lbs. Sugar 30c per lb., tea \$1.00 per lb., bacon 50c per lb., coffee 75c per lb., rice 30c per lb. . The butter was divided, so that each man would have 30 lbs, the milk was divided, 2 doz. cans to each man @ \$6.00 per doz.

"The boys would go to see Harper and he would use more matches lighting his pipe than ten other smokers would, especially when he would tell of a fence near Tanana River the natives had built. It was 75 miles long, an opening every 50 to 100 feet, where the natives would set snares to catch the deer when they migrated toward the south and when they returned. He had seen as many as 5000 deer in one drove.¹³

"Bob Lowery, Napoleon, Fred Boulie and Henry Willett came in during the last part of January [1888], from Bonanza Bar, where they had built their cabins. They intended to haul their supplies for the next summer up to their claims. They had a moose that they named Jerry. He worked very well, and was as gentle as a well broken horse but was very mischievous, and nothing pleased him better than to find the door of their cabin open, when he would proceed to make a tour of investigation, whatever he found in the line of food he always appropriated to his own use.

"One morning Bob Lowery went down the river to get some water. He chopped through the ice and struck the gravel underneath. He thought a moment, saying to himself; 'I believe I will take some of this gravel up to the cabin and thaw it out. Who knows but there might be gold in it.' He acted on the suggestion, carried a piece of the frozen gravel up to the cabin where he thawed it and washed it out in the presence of his partners, and as he expected, found considerable gold in it. 'Holy Smoke,' says Boulie, 'I'd like to have a pan of that dirt.' '....,' says Henry, 'we can get it easy enough, all we have to do is to make the hole bigger, and build a fire in it and we will get your pan of dirt pretty quick.' So they acted on Henry's suggestion, procured a pan of gravel, and washed \$1.00 from it. This is the first time that the idea of thawing the ground by wood fires occurred to miners in the Yukon country. This was the beginning of what was known as winter camps in the Yukon country. The moose and the dogs were utilized for hauling wood for thawing purposes. Miners camped below the Canyon on the Forty Mile heard of the methods employed by Bob Lowery and his partners, and followed their example, finding rich prospects in the bed of the stream.

"Everybody in the vicinity began building sleds and employing

¹³ These fences, or the remains of them, may yet be seen in the Ketchumstock Hills, between the Yukon and the Tanana. Harper was the first pioneer into that region.

natives to haul grub up the Forty Mile. Jack McQuesten's¹⁴ two famous moose Kate and Susan, were pressed into service, hauling large sleigh loads of provisions up to the camp. One of these moose was shot by a miner, he thinking he had run across a wild moose. He felt very bad about making such a mistake, and offered to pay twice as much as the moose was valued at, but Jack, with his good nature would accept nothing, saying; 'Oh no, you boys take the carcass home and use it.'

"The boys joked their moose slaying companion for a long time afterward, saying his story was too thin and that it could clearly be seen that he wanted to be able to say that he had killed a moose in the Yukon country, and that he knew all the time that it was a tame moose."

Captain Moore remained at Forty Mile until the river opened, worked at his claim on the Bonanza Bay until the high water stopped their operation, when he heard of a discovery on Beaver Creek by Mickie O'Brien, who showed a poke of gold dust and indicated that he got it on the Beaver. True to the Prospector's instinct a stampede was started for the new location. In company with Dan Dougherty, Moore went down the Yukon, found 150 men already on the creek and nothing more than a few colors to a pan in any place.

They were four hundred miles down from their claims and Mickie was still at Forty Mile or it would have gone roughly with him. To pole or line back against the current was a grievous task.

Four small steamers were on the Yukon, the *Yukon*, with a passenger capacity of forty or fifty; the *New Racket* could take twenty-five or thirty; the *Explorer*, thirty or forty; and the *St. Michael*, which was distributing men and supplies below the mouth of the Tanana River. Captain Moore, Jim Chaplin, and . . . Chapman went down river in their boat to New Klukayette,¹⁵ the old trading post at mouth of the Tanana River. Here they met the *New Racket*¹⁶ coming up, and applied for passage up the river.

A half breed Russian, named Minook, reported that John Bremner, a prospector who came into the country with Lieutenant Allen in 1886, had been murdered by the natives on the Koyukuk. A miner's meeting was at once held and the boat was commandeered

¹⁴ L. N. McQuesten was one of the first pioneers of the Yukon after the United States occupation. He came from the Peace River country of British Columbia where he had been prospecting, mining, and trapping. With him came others, Al Mayo, Arthur Harper, and others. *MS Letter*, McQuesten; *MS Notes*, Geo. Marks; *MS Stewart Menzies*; *Early Days on the Yukon*, by Wm. Ogilvie. McQuesten reached Fort Yukon in 1873.

¹⁵ Nuklukayette was the old post about fourteen miles below the mouth of the Tanana River, where the first trading station was established. It is mentioned by Schwatka and other first explorers, but its site is almost lost.

¹⁶ The *New Racket* was the little steamer brought by Ed. Scaffelin to the Yukon in 1883. He sold it to McQuesten.

to capture the murderers. A party of thirty men was formed. All armed with winchester rifles, and under command of a man named Blackburn, they took the *Explorer* which arrived a day later, went down to the Koyukuk, then 140 miles up that stream, captured the natives who killed Bremner, burned some caches of food belonging to the natives, and held a miner's meeting to try the two captives, Silas, and his uncle Trenenion. The court found Silas guilty. Some were in favor of hanging the uncle also but others objected. They took the captives to the mouth of the Koyukuk, hanged Silas, took Trenenion up to a fish camp and put him ashore.¹⁷

Moore did not find passage on the steamer so went down to St. Michael where the Revenue Cutter *Thetis* came for the body of Archbishop Sehgers, and on that ship he secured passage to Sitka.

In the spring of 1889, Captain Moore, with the irrepressible spirit of the prospector and the lover of the open places, was on the trail across the Dyea Pass again, in company with Howard Hamilton, another of the ubiquitous gold seekers of the north. He ran the White Horse Rapids again, reached Forty Mile Camp, formed a partnership with Henry Lewis and F. Lamore, rocking on a bar above O'Brien Creek, and went to whipsawing sluice boxes. He says:

"They were just about to go down to the store at Forty Mile, to boat their winter's outfit up, being about 50 miles, when a native came to their camp with a letter from McQuesten, notifying all the miners to get down to the post as soon as they could as there would be no more goods arrive at Forty Mile this fall, so, as they could try to get out of the country everybody dropped their work, got into their boats and went down the Forty Mile River to the store where they were told that the new steamer *Arctic* which the A. C. Co. had built and loaded with goods for Forty Mile, was wrecked on the rocks between St. Michael and the mouth of the Yukon River. This being the 7th of October, it was impossible to get out of the country up the Yukon and Lewis Rivers. He went down the Yukon on the *New Racket* as far as the post at Nulato where the ice stopped them on October 18th. He then walked over the portage to Unalakleet, then to St. Michael, where he spent the winter in a log house belonging to the A. C. Co., in company with other miners who were caught in the same dilemma."¹⁸

¹⁷ This is probably the first publication from an eye-witness of this lynching, one of four only that have occurred in Alaska.

¹⁸ Henry Newman was the A. C. Co.'s Agent at St. Michael. Among the old timers named by Moore at St. Michael are Bill McPhee, Skiff Mitchell, Mickie O'Brien, Fred Boulie, Frank Bowker, Bill Jochie, Jim Bender, George Carry, and ———— Pickarts. The N. C. Co.'s Bookkeeper was ———— Greenfield, and his wife was the only white woman there.

In the spring of 1890, Moore went up to Forty Mile again, but not striking pay he went to the Seventy Mile River, below Eagle, where he went to work on Barney Creek with Barney Hill. Luck was not with him so the next year he went down to the mouth of the Yukon, wintered, then in company with Goodon Bettles he bought the Steamer *Cora* loaded a barge with goods and went up the Koyukuk to Takakakat, 300 miles from the mouth, and established a trading post. Two years later, with the ever present hope of making a "stake," he bought an interest in a claim on Tramway Bar on the Middle Fork of the Koyukuk, 150 miles above Arctic City. It was another light that failed, so he dissolved partnership with Bettles and went back to St. Michael where he went into the service of the Alaska Commercial Co., as master of the Steamship *Bertha* and other ships, working in the harbor.

For nearly twenty years after this, Captain William D. Moore was employed as master of river steamers on the Yukon River, on the vessels of the Alaska Commercial Company, and other companies, with intervals of trading and prospecting.

In 1899, he mined at Nome, in a company which had claims on many Creeks from Norton Sound to Teller, but the ventures were unsuccessful and the Captain says that he lost \$9000 in the operations.

During his service as a river captain, he was on the *Arctic*, *Yukon*, *J. P. Light*, *Lavelle Young*, *Oil City*, and others which are well known to travelers on the Yukon in pioneer days. For ten years or more he was in the employ of the Alaska Commercial Company, and the American Navigation Company at St. Michael. Then, his health failing him, he retired to Kotlik, near the mouth of the Yukon River, where he is spending his declining years with his faithful wife, Mary, who has for many years shared his fortunes, and misfortunes, equally. His only daughter, Wilhelmina Gertrude, was born December 31, 1896, and died April 29th 1919, at St. Michael. She was educated at Holy Cross Mission on the Yukon, and her early death was a severe blow to the old Captain.

Captain William D. Moore was a typical prospector, miner, and Steamboat captain of the pioneer days, one who knew every detail of his work from hard experience. No hardship daunted him, and he went through life with the unflinching faith of the real prospector who looks for a strike in the next gulch that will give him a "stake" for life.

C. L. ANDREWS