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# ALASKA WHEAT STORY.

## LATEST FROM SECRETARY WILSON.

### Warning to Farmers—Reminder of Seneca Chief Wheat and Hulless Oats Days.

(Farm and Fireside.)

"Out of the North the wild news came." Now out of the city made famous by flour comes a wild story of a wonderful wheat christened "Alaska." It tells of a new (?) variety, "discovered" and "perfected" in the "secret and far-away fields of Idaho," that will yield under average conditions two hundred bushels of wheat to the acre." It comes in neat, imitation typewritten form as a news story from a "special correspondent." Its multitudinous copies come to daiily newspapers, weeklies and farm papers far and wide over the Union. And, we regret to say, some of the papers are gullible enough to publish it, even though the earmarks of free advertising stick up out of the paragraphs. There are two parts to this Alaska wheat story—first the story, then the wheat itself.

The story is a good type of modern yellow journalism—newsy, breezy, catchy, imaginary, sensational, mendacious and avaricious. Its first object is to beat publishers out of advertising space; its ulterior purpose is to rake shekels from unwary farmers by selling a seed-wheat novelty which may or may not be worthless to them. In its campaign of exploitation it is repeating the history of the Spencer seedless, coreless, bloomless, wormless apple, and the history of nitroculture, the vest-pocket fertilizer that was to send manure spreaders to the fence corner.

The story is told cleverly—that is, trickily—but the "special correspondent" gets into serious trouble by fault of superficialty when he attempts to handle facts. Lack of knowledge and too much "play up" give this scheme away. He starts out brazenly:

"If some one were to tell the average wheat farmer that it was possible to raise a wheat crop on United States farms in one year of five billions of bushels, he would brand his informant as a liar pure and simple, and yet had the farmers in America planted a wonderful new wheat seed that has been perfected by (some good, old father Abraham farmer in Idaho) that is just what the yield would have been this season, based upon the probable crops of the year.

"Connected with this assertion is the greatest wheat story that has ever been told, far greater than the wildest dreams of the wheat king in the security of his vast domain and the demand for his golden harvest. The United States paid eighty millions (sic) of money for Alaska, and yet the great gold payment Alaska has returned sinks into insignificance when compared with Farmer——'s Alaska wheat, which in the secret and far-away fields of Idaho he has gradually brought to perfection until he has given to the world a wheat that will grow under average conditions two hundred bushels to the acre."

In the first paragraph a full name and the address were given, in order to let the credulous know where to get some of this wonderful "wheat seed."

Of course every school boy ought to know that the purchase price of Alaska was $7,200,000, but this bright and breezy press romancer of advanced, commercialized journalism "plays it up" to the more catchy sum of eighty million dollars to impress the "average farmer."

In his so-called 'history of this almost miraculous seed' no case is given of an actual yield of two hundred bushels of wheat from an acre of ground. That fancy claim is an estimate based on a reported yield of 1,545 pounds from seven pounds planted by the originator. The claim of two hundred bushels of wheat to the acre under average conditions involves about the same ratio of exaggeration found in the statement that the United States paid eighty millions of money for Alaska.

This Alaskan story has other Munchausen wonders to relate. It says:

"The yield is only a part of the great discovery, for this Alaska wheat is both a winter and spring wheat, and when planted as either is a hard wheat that will grade as No. 1. Imagine a hard winter wheat for the great soft-wheat belts of the country which with the new wheat can compete with the hard-wheat lands of the great Northwest.

"California, where so much soft wheat is grown, is beginning to take up the Alaska wheat, for they see the opportunity of a hard-wheat yield. Farmers in Missouri and in the East and in the South, where soft wheat is all that can be raised with success, are beginning to think of what is in store for them when some neighbor convinces them, by making a first trial, that the wonderful Alaska wheat story is not so much a fabrication as the first story of seedless oranges was thought to be. The wheat world is trembling on the verge of a new era, one in which the man with a hundred acres suddenly finds his farm increased to a thousand acres by the discovery of one old farmer away out in Idaho."

Well, if "the wheat world is trembling," let it grab hold of something quick that money will not be shaken out of the wheat growers' pockets.

Of course all this stuff about this winter and spring Alaska wheat growing in all the different wheat regions of the United States and yielding two hundred bushels of No. 1 hard to the acre is simply the preposterous fabrication of a faulty imagination. This wonderful wheat story is one of the kind we frequently see nowadays in the Sunday supplements of the big dailies, in sensational newspapers and even in some of the better-class magazines. These fake stories are turned out by a busy brood of ill informed space writers. Not all of them, however, are adv rtisements of novelties.

Now, as to Alaska wheat itself. The story says:

"In appearance the standing wheat is strong and vigorous, with a corn-like growth. Its head in the earing part is about four inches long to over that, and an inch to an inch and a half broad at its broadest part. The kernel is about four times the size of hard wheat, and a clear, light cream color without a dark spot, as clean as hulled peanuts."

Accepting this description as approximately correct, there is not much difficulty in locating Alaska wheat. In answer to a request for information about it, Prof. W. S. Moore of the United States Department of Agriculture says:

In the course of the investigaion of this department on wheat we have not come in contact with this particular variety and know nothing about it. From specimens sent in and from what we can learn otherwise it appears to be a variety of the poulard group of wheats which is commonly known as Miracle or Seven-headed wheat, and has often been reported from the inter-mountain districts."

In other words, Alaska wheat is cousin german to "Corn-Wheat," made famous about six years ago by some wonderful stories sent out from the Far Northwest. Investigations showed that in certain localities in the inter-mountain region, where the climate and soil were unusually favorable to it, this odd variety produced large yields of fine quality. But practical tests with Corn-Wheat in South Dakota, Ohio and elsewhere, both in spring-wheat and winter-wheat belts, proved that it was absolutely worthless. In 1903 Prof. J. H. Shepard of the South Dakota Experiment Station, referring to the various names under which this curious wheat then masqueraded, said:

"From Idaho our elusive friend 'Corn-Wheat' is simply Polish wheat, or 'Triticum polonicum.' This variety of wheat is an odd-looking product, and is easily the king pin of all 'corn-wheats.' We have experimented with this grain now for three or four years. . . . "It is not a drought resister on our grounds. It succumbs easily to attacks of rust. It is the poorest yielder of all the wheats with which we are experimenting. For example it gave a yield of seven bushels an acre of miserable shrunken grain, while macaroni wheat in a contiguous plot gave a yield of twenty-seven bushels of good grain.

"If it has any value anywhere, it is not in the Great Plains region. I am sorry to say, many farmers have been swindled with so-called Corn-Wheat, many to our knowledge having paid as high as ten cents a pound for it. . . . I wish again to emphasize the fact that Poilsh wheat is without value in conditions similar to ours, and consequently in the semi-arid wheat-growing regions."

An experiment made in Ohio in 1903 under my personal observation gave the same results stated by Professor Shepard. The coarse-grown, "corn-like" plants were severely attacked by rust, and the heads were badly affected by the scab, consequently there was a yield from a half-acre plot of less than four bushels of shrunken grain. In comparsion with samples of grain and heads grown in Oregon, the Ohio product showed great deterioration. The accompanying cuts show a deteriorated head of "Corn-Wheat" grown in Ohio from Idaho seed, and grains from a magnificent sample sent from Oregon. I have no hesitation in saying that as a crop for the winter-wheat belt Alaska wheat, even if it does not turn out to be the same thing, will prove to be as big a fake as "Corn-Wheat."

The moral of all this is not so much a warning against buying fake novelties as it is a warning to be on constant guard against such newspapers, magazines and even farm papers that carelessly publish such wonderfully wild stories and freely advertise such arrant humbugs. "Let the buyer beware" is an old adage; now let the reader beware whenever he picks up such utterly unreliable papers.

(On Saturday last, September 5th, Secretary Wilson, of the Department of Agriculture made the following announcement:—

"An agent sent by the department to Juniata, Idaho, to investigate the present status of so-called Alaska wheat, said to yield over 200 bushels per acre, has made the following report by wire:

"Alaska yielding 25 bushels per acre. Badly mixed. Grain inferior. Quality soft and white. Ordinary wheat yielding fully as much. Best varieties more.

"Analyses recently made by the department show that Alaska wheat contains only a little more than 9 per cent. protein, while soft winter wheat averaged 10 per cent., and hard winter wheat 12 per cent."—Editor SENTINEL.)

# Westminster Wins From Westwoods.

## SCORE TWELVE TO TWO.

### The Fourth Victory—Jenkins Strlkes Out Ten in Four Innings. Big Crowd of Rooters Present.

FOUR STRAIGHT—That's the record. Westminster found the "strong" Westwoods easy meat on Saturday afternoon but could not keep the visitors from scoring twice. In the first four innings Jenkins performed the wonder of striking out ten of the twelve men who went down, though three of the seven hits made by the Westwoods occurred in these innings and one of these, that of Leach in the second, would not have been a hit if the ground had not been so uneven. There was some mystery about Addler's delivery for some of Westminster's best batters found it difficult to make the connection, Bankert particularly being fooled by his slow delivery, but every now and then they found him and did not do a thing to him but swat him good and hard. If he had received better support the score of the home team would have been smaller. The visitors arrived on the 3.35 train, got off at the athletic field and were ready to play in a few minutes having put on their suits in the baggage car. A large crowd was good naturedly waiting, but soon became a little impatient when it was found that the "Sons of Ham" had failed to return the bags that had been loaned them for their game a few days previous. Just as the missing articles were found a little rain began to fall, but this did not dampen the ardor of perhaps the largest crowd that has gathered on the diamond this season, and a cheer went up and shouts of encouragement to Jenkins, when Heid, the first batter of the Westwoods, faced him in the

FIRST INNING—the story of which is briefly told. Heid, Bolgiano and Addler went down in one, two, three order. Each used the same bat and there was a hole in it.

Heird took his place with an air of determination to do or die, and Addler did his best to help him to the latter stunt by punching him hard in the short ribs with the ball. Heird says he would rather not get to first by that method. Bankert found the ball, but it got to second ahead of Heird; Danner gave Addler a chance to throw him out at first and he did it, but Bankert landed on second. Ashmore made a great single far out into center, and reached second but through miscalculation the distance of the throw and the skill of the throwers was misjudged and Bankert was caught out at home.

SECOND INNING—Hooper landed on Jenkins for a three-bagger. Williams set his own pace by striking out and maintained it except in one instance to the close of the game. Leach found the ball and hit it hard, Loveall was there to gather it in but a depression in the ground caught it and deflected it from its course so that he could not reach it, and Leach arrived in safety at first, as Hooper seored the first run in the game. Botts sent a hot one to Jenkins, who stopped it all right, but as he turned to throw it to first, his foot slipped and he fell, so that both runners reached the bag without interference. Clein gave Jenkins a chance to retrieve his misfortune, and Jenkins took it, throwing him out at first, and he more than made up for the mishap by striking out Watts.

Loveall gave Heird a chance to throw him out at first, but the latter fumbled the ball and it got across too late; Spencer made a sacrifice of himself to advance Loveall and was thrown out at first. Flater sent a beauty into the air to please the center fielder but Clein made a foozle at it. Jenkins' two-bagger brought Loveall home and put Flater on third. Barnhart sent a foul fly which was caught by a fine run by Hooper. Heird made a short hit that landed just in front of the home plate; Flater was playing well off third watching his chance to come in; as Heird hit the ball Williams leaped forward about three feet in front of the plate and the ball bounced back between his feet; by this time Heird was well on his way to first. Hooper, Heid and Addler had all advanced so that they were pretty well bunched together, and before Williams could get his hands on the ball Flater had performed the strange stunt of stealing the home plate from under the very eye of the catcher and Heird also was safe. Bankert's hit brought Jenkins and Heird home and while the Baltimore aggregation was passing round the ball to head off one or the other of them Bankert kept going for second, overrunning it but with fine presence of mind reaching backward while lying on his back and placing his foot on the sack just as Heid got the ball into his possession too late. Danner sent the ball straight to first.

THIRD INNING—When Heid hit the ball, it went sailing just inside the foul line and every one applauded what looked like a clean safe hit, but Ashmore was there and reaching up punched it with his mitten and caught it with the other hand. Bolgiano and Addler struck out.

Ashmore was thrown out by Bolgiano at first; Loveall gave Botts a foul fly, and Spencer sent a grounder to the same individual at first.

FOURTH INNING—Hooper made another hit. With Williams at the bat, Barnhart tried to catch Hooper napping at first, but the wet ball slipped as he made the throw and went out of Ashmore's reach so that he sprinted round to third. But Jenkins was all there and down went McGinty, Williams, Leach and Botts striking out.

Flater made a hit; Jenkins gave Hooper a floul fly; Barnhart did the same for Leach. Once more Addler hit Heird with the pitched ball and in about the same place. Bankert struck out with two men on bases.

FIFTH INNING—Houck, who had taken Clein's place, struck out; Walter followed suit and Ashmore took Heid's foul fly.

Danner went out on a foul fly to Williams. Ashmore found the ball again, and Hooper made a poor throw to first. Loveall sent a long slow fly to left, Leach juggled it, but had it in the infield as Ashmore reached, Botts tried to catch him but overthrew and Ashmore kept on going until he reached home and Loveall who had his eye on the ball got to third before Addler got a chance to pitch it again. Spencer drove a fine single into left and brought Loveall home. Flater by another bad throw of Hooper was enabled to get to first. Jenkins punched the leather for another two-bagger far over Leach's head and helped Spencer and Flater add two runs to the score, himself reaching third. Barnhart struck to Addler, Jenkins expected him to throw it to first, but Addler had his eye on him and turning threw to Hooper instead, catching Jenkins off third. He tried hard to reach home working backward and forward but it was useless and he was finally run to earth. Barnhart worked down to second, but Heird struck out.

SIXTH INNING—Bolgiano who had tried bunting without much success in previous innings made a good clean hit. Addler sent the ball spinning between first and it looked safe, but Ashmore was there, got the ball and beat him to first. Hooper went out on a fly to Spencer. With Williams at the bat, Bolgiano tried to steal third, but Barnhart by a splendid throw to Loveall, who was wide awake and waiting, marked him 23.

Bankert struck out; Danner gave Addler a chance to put him out at first but the little pitcher made a wide throw and Danner got to second; Ashmore walked and it looked as if there would soon be something doing, but Loveall fanned and Spencer sent one straight and high into the air for Williams to take in as it came down.

SEVENTH INNING—Williams found the ball this time but should have known better than to send it up in the air to Ashmore. Leach struck out and Botts went down on a foul fly to Barnhart.

Flater and Jenkins had bad luck or Addler was improving in his pitching for both struck out. Barnhart sent the ball to Hooper who not only got it this time but successfully threw it to first.

EIGHTH INNING—Houck made a hit. Walter sent the ball in the path marked out by Addler in the sixth inning, to meet the same fate, for again Ashmore managed to get in the way and to get back to first in time to arrest the runner, Heid's hit brought Houck home and he reached second. Bolgiano sacrificed to Jenkins who threw him out at first while Heid advanced to third, but there the latter died when Addler struck out.

Heird made a hit; Bankert's sacrifice advanced him to second and Danner's fine single to far left center brought him home. Ashmore made a great two base hit and stretched it to three by proving himself as fine a sprinter as he is a base ball player, but Danner was caught at home. Loveall's fly muffed by Leach, enabled Ashmore to score. Spencer found Addler this time for good and keeps and his three-bagger added Loveall's run to the score. Flater's hit brought Spencer over the plate. Jenkins fanned.

NINTH INNING—Hooper went down on a fly to Flater; Williams struck out. Leach made a single but a bad bound of the ball in the uneven center field stretched so that he landed on second, but Botts gave Ashmore the ball at first and ended the agony.

THE OFFICIAL SCORE IS AS FOLLOWS:

| WESTMINSTER | AB | R | H | O | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Heird, l. f. | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Bankert, c. f. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Danner, s. s. | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Ashmore, 1b. | 4 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| Loveall, 3b. | 5 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Spencer, 2b. | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Flater, r. f. | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Jenkins, p. | 5 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Barnhart, c. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 1 |
| | 39 | 12 | 11 | 27 | 2 |

| WESTWOOD | AB | R | H | O | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Heid, 3b. | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Bolgiano, 2b | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Addler, p. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Hooper, s. s. | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Williams, c. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 |
| Leach, c. f. | 4 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Botts, 1b. | 4 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 |
| Clein, c. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Houck, r. f. | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Walter, l. f. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 34 | 2 | 7 | 24 | 9 |

SCORE BY INNINGS:

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Westminster | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | x | —12 |
| Westwood | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | — 2 |

Earned Runs.—Westminster 5, Westwood 2. Three base hits, Spencer, Hooper. Two base hits, Jenkins, 2, Left on bases, Westminster 8, Westwood 4. Struck out, by Jenkins 15, Addler 7. Umpire, Wilson.

## The Black Sheep.

At the age of 28 Tom Morgan had acquired the unenviable title, "The Black Sheep." He drank heavily, played poker night after night with reckless abandon, bet on horses, ran himself and his father into debt, and in fact indulged in all sorts of dissipation to such an extent that finally he was ordered to leave the big, palatial house on Fifth avenue.

The West had always a great fascination for him, and now, after the final crash, which had been threatened for the last five years, he boarded the train for Colorado.

Then Annabel came into his life and he viewed the world with different eyes. She was a mountain-bred girl, typically western, and gifted with wonderful beauty and sweetness of character. And somehow from the very first he felt that she cared for him, but he uttered no word of love to her. He realized his unworthiness and in the presence of her sweet purity he was ashamed of his past life.

They were sitting together on a big boulder one day and the sunlight streamed down upon them, changing the loose tendrils of her hair into strands of gold, which glistened as the breeze stirred them. To the west stretched a long, unending vista of purple hills; at their feet a brook with lights and shadows murmured enchantingly of life and its possibilities.

"Look!" The girl was on her feet, pale and trembling, her arm stretched towards the distant horizon. A long, thin, circuitous line appeared in bold outline against the hills, and Tom turned to his companion, with questioning eyes.

"Indians," she said, slowly. "They have been threatening us for the past year, and now they have taken the war-path. They will reach here tomorrow morning—possibly by 12 tonight—and we are caught like rats in a trap."

"There are how many men in the settlement?" Tom asked, sharply.

"Fifty!" She clasped her hands together, nervously, and paced back and forth, her eyes ever on that distant threatening line.

"Fifty whites against possibly 500 Indians!" Tom muttered. Then his mouth settled in a firm, grim line, and his eyes shone, with a sudden resolution. "How far away is Colonel Snow?"

Annabel turned to him with grave eyes. "Twenty miles—but it is useless to speak of him. No one would attempt to reach him; it would be impossible. Every bush along the roadside might be concealing one of those red fiends, and 20 miles here in the West is the same as 30 miles of your clean, level Eastern roads."

Fifteen minutes later a solitary rider was urging his pony over the dangerous, unfamiliar path which led to the fort. The sun beat down on him, remorselessly, and, after the first 10 miles had been covered, his head ached cruelly, but ever before him was a sweet, laughing face, and his heart contracted with fear as he realized the danger which threatened the one he loved.

He turned his head to the west—then bent over the pony and cried, sharply: "Do you see those indistinct figures over on the hill, Marigold? Red devils, little girl, and if they catch sight of us, we're lost!"

The horse snorted, as if already scenting danger, and Tom patted her neck encouragingly. "Steady, girl, we'll keep out of their sight if possible. Let your legs fly over the ground now and—God! Marigold, they see us—they're after us! Now show your fighting blood, baby; we'll win yet!"

Blinding, suffocating clouds of dust rolled by them and Tom closed his stinging eyes. Marigold was reeking with sweat and snorting wildly. Two, three, five miles were covered, and then Tom looked behind once more.

"They're gaining on us, Marigold," he whispered, "a little faster, girl, or they'll overtake us." Three more miles were left behind them and only two remained. Without turning his head Tom knew his enemies were gaining on him, and now the wind wafted to his ears the unearthly cries of the Indians as they relentlessly pursued him.

His eyes gleamed and he clutched his revolver still tighter. Death would be preferable any time to falling into the hands of those eager brutes. Only one mile remained now and still Marigold held her own against the pursuers. A quick, sizzling sound through the air, a sharp stinging pain in his arm and Tom swayed for a second in the saddle with closed eyes. Then he saw again the dear face he had learned to love so well, and the sight gave fresh courage. The pain in his arm was growing intense and he was conscious that a dull numbness was creeping over him. Almost unconsciously he turned his head—and nothing but the purple hills met his gaze. The Indians had disappeared as if by magic.

Still he urged Marigold on, and at last the outlines of the big gray fort were visible.

He swung from the saddle, half dead with fatigue and pain, and in a few broken, gasping sentences delivered his message. He was conscious that many men were crowding up to him, almost knocking each other down in an attempt to grasp his hand—that they were growing more indistinct each second—then oblivion came to him.

* * * *

"You mustn't try to make a hero out of me, Annabel. They call me 'The Black Sheep' at home and I guess they'd think you were unbalanced if they heard you say I had done something worth while. They said I was a good for-nothing back there in the East."

The great dark eyes were suspiciously wet, and she put her arms around about him with an infinitely sweet, protecting gesture.

"Didn't you risk your life to save us, when no other man dared to stir? You're a hero, Tommy Morgan, and I'm just that proud of you!"—Boston Post.

## Oyster Shells as Medicine.

Ground oyster shells were given by the mediaeval doctors to children suffering from rickets and scrofula. Now it appears that they were right. The shells contain lime, nitrogen, iron, sulphur, manganese, magnesia, flour, bromide, phosphoric acid and iodine, all excellent for feeble children. They say that if growing children were to take powdered oyster shells in their food the teeth would be improved.—London Answers.

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