Men of the Mounted

by Captain G. Elliott-Nightingale

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REDCOATS GUARDED TRAIL OF '98

VOLUMES have been written on what happened here and there during the Klondyke gold stampede, but very little has been said about the handful of Men of the Mounted who brought law and order and decency to many an outlaw camp. The first steps along the historically famous "Trail of '98" were taken two years before, in 1896, when Carmack's discovery just about electrified the whole world, and when thousands of men, and a few hundred women began converging upon the Yukon from all corners of the earth. Eighteen months after the Carmack discovery the population of Skagway had been increased by more than 30,000 newcomers, goldseekers taking a breathing spell there before heading north into the Yukon goldfields.

The majority of the newcomers were Americans, and whatever they might have been before they hit Skagway, they cast off all desire for law and order. The decent law-abiding element, being in the minority, laid low, outfitted their two or four - man expeditions, and mushed silently away toward the Yukon, while the outlaw element hung around Skagway, living on their wits.

From Skagway, the rallying point, the stampeders, tugging and carrying their outfits, headed for Lake Bennet where they built their boats and pushed off to the north and into the Lewes river that flowed north through the rugged but rich Yukon goldfields. That is, they pushed north provided the two or three Men of the Mounted stationed on the sixtieth line of latitude were satisfied that the stampeders were properly outfitted, had sufficient food, and were not criminals or outlaws or bad characters. During the early days of the rush, the American stampeders kicked up quite a row because they were asked to pay customs and duties at Line 60 and they demanded to know what the Mounted were doing there, on American territory. Although the one hundred and forty-first parallel had not yet been decided upon as the dividing line between American Alaska, and British Canada, the Yukon territory, nevertheless, had been under the British or Canadian flag and government for some time. Most of the stampeders really thought they were heading for their own American Alaska, and it was quite a startling discovery for them to find the Northwest Mounted Police on guard on what the stampeders thought was American territory. When the vanguard of the '98 hegira were stopped by the Redcoats, there was, of course, considerable argument, a bit of nose punching, and a few shots exchanged. As the crowd grew larger, indignation meetings were inaugurated at which it was voted that the only way out was to tie the Northwest Mounted Police into a bundle and throw it into the lake or some roaring river. One group of foreign - speaking Americans (?) staged a bloody riot, then voted to gather the redcoats, place them aboard a barge or raft, and anchor said barge or raft in the middle of the lake. One Yank climbed to the top of his outfit and called for a thousand men to help him wipe the Mounted off the face of the earth forever. But, he shouted in vain, for in that mob were scalawags and cutthroats and criminals who, while they did as they pleased in Skagway, were now willing to impress the Redcoats that they were decent, law-abiding miners eminently qualified to take their places beside law-abiding Canadians. Reason was again enthroned as these wily lawbreakers did everything possible to appear to the best advantage to the half dozen men of the Northwest Mounted Police who, during all the rumpus and riot, had stuck to their post on the sixtieth line just a few yards away, watching and listening, and realizing, no doubt, that the several thousand stampeders could soon eliminate half a dozen redcoats if they ever set out to do it.

But, they never set out to do it. Those who came to destroy remained to childishly beg the Men of the Mounted to pass them through into the gold-filled Yukon territory. The human jackals and rascals that had terrorized Skagway, now turned into soft-spoken, well - mannered, sensible and very obedient children as they stood by to be examined by the Mounted. Thus it happens that thousands of bad characters who claim that they were in the Klondyke gold rush really never took one step past the half dozen redcoats that held the Chilcoot and White passes. Half a dozen against thousands. Truly the Redcoats were the Daniels in the lions' den in the Klondyke gold rush of 1898.

Long Run for Fire Department

One of the longest "runs" of fire apparatus on record occurred in February, 1904, when the New York fire department rushed nine engine companies and one hook-and-ladder company, on flatcars, to the great fire in Baltimore, a distance of 180 miles.

Fun for the Whole Family

THE FEATHERHEADS

By Osborne

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Asleep at the Switch

Uz Quak

S'MATTER POP— Pop, He's in a Fix!

By C. M. PAYNE

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MESCAL IKE

By S. L. HUNTLEY

They're Both Right

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FINNEY OF THE FORCE

By Ted O'Loughlin

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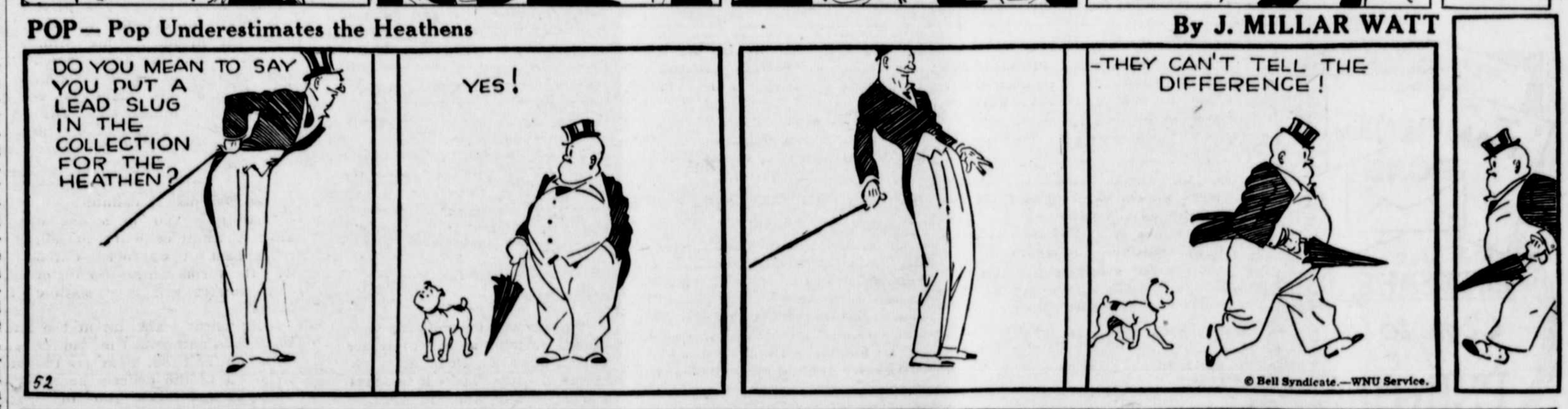
Cutting Wit

Phoolossifer Finney Says

POP— Pop Underestimates the Heathens

By J. MILLAR WATT



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COMING!

A colossal, cyclonic comic of circus life

BIG TOP

by

Ed Wheelan

It's going to be one of the Greatest Shows on Earth!

Watch for it in this newspaper!

CHANGING COLOR

"Isn't 'dun' a brown color?"

"Yes."

"And yet whenever I'm dunned I get blue."

AROUND THE BASES

Bug (in disgust)—We'll have to call the game on account of darkness by the time that snail player reaches base.

WISE CRACK

Johnny—Yah! A little bird told me the kind of lawyer your pa is!

Tommy—Yeah? What'd the bird say?

Johnny—Cheep, cheep!

Tommy—Huh! Well, a duck told me what kind of a doctor your father is!—Washington Post.

Soon Over

Lily—So yo' done mortgaged our home?

Mose—Jes' tem-rarily, honey, till de mortgage am foreclosed.

Had Him Marked

Mother—Don't cry, dear. Which one of the naughty boys hit you?

Tommy—The one with the black eye.

REASSURANCE NEEDED

A Chinaman was worried by a vicious-looking dog.

"Don't be afraid of him," said the owner. "You know the old proverb, 'A barking dog never bites.'"

"Yes," said the Chinaman. "You know ploverb, and me know ploverb, but does the dog know ploverb?"

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