



TROUT LAKE'S NARROW ACCESS near Blowing Rock is barred from winter visitors, but given a little sunshine, and the first Saturday in April, will open to hordes of fishermen. The lake is one of the most beautiful in the mountain area. (Staff photo)

## Rugged Chilkoot Trail Opened Way To Mad Rush For Yukon Gold

Washington—The shooting of Dan McGrew got all the publicity, but the epic of Chilkoot Pass endures vividly in the annals of Klondike gold.

In 1898, thousands of men swarmed over the snow-covered pass like long lines of black beetles in their mad rush to reach the fabulous gold fields of Canada's Yukon Territory.

The grade to Chilkoot's summit was 25 per cent, and up the last half mile, 35 per cent. "Heaven to look at," the stampers said, "and hell to navigate."

The Chilkoot Pass, looking and navigated the same today as 68 years ago, is featured in the new National Geographic Society color television special, "Alaska!" The hour-long program, produced in association with David L. Wolper, will be shown over the CBS Television Network on Tuesday evening, February 7.

### HIKED HISTORIC TRAIL

W. E. Garrett, of the National Geographic staff and co-sponsor of the special, hiked the Chilkoot Trail with his family last summer. Their trek was filmed for the program. Mr. Garrett's account in the National Geographic of an earlier hike has stimulated many hardy visitors to seek out the historic trail and trudge into its colorful past.

Many gold-seekers took the Inside Passage along the Alaskan coast to its terminus at Skagway. The Chilkoot Pass Trail starts at Dyea, now a ghost town near Skagway; crosses the Coast Mountains, and ends 35 miles away at Lake Lindeman in British Columbia.

Gold lured many tenderfeet to the rugged trail. In Tacoma, Washington, streetcar conductors staked nine of their co-workers, Clairvoyants in Chicago dispatched a medium to dig where the spirits directed. Within two months after graduation, half of California's fledgling doctors had left for the gold fields.

Soft city dwellers had to pack a ton of supplies over the Chilkoot Trail. The Canadian government required each fortune-hunter to bring 1,100

pounds of food as insurance against starvation. A prospector had to relay his outfit, carrying 50 to 100 pounds at a time, often taking months to get all his gear over the 3,600-foot summit.

Marshy and boggy stretchers soon became sinkholes, and men sank up to their knees in freezing water. In summer, Chilkoot was a precipice of sliding rock; in winter a monster of ice. Men followed man, inch by inch, fingerhold to fingerhold, crawling difficult stretches on hands and knees, lashed by icy winds.

### 505-MILE WATERWAY

Once over the pass, it was relatively easy to coast down to Lake Lindeman or Lake Bennett. There the prospectors built boats to paddle down a waterway of lakes and river 550 miles to the Klondike. Their hardships were not over, though.

One young man packed his complete outfit over Chilkoot Pass to Lake Lindeman, where he built a boat. Shooting the rapids to Lake Bennett, he hit a rock and lost everything. He trudged back to Skagway, bought another outfit, struggled over the pass, built another boat, shot the rapids, and was wrecked on the very same rock. He shot himself.

Prospectors also could take the White Pass Trail, directly out of Skagway. It was longer but not as steep as the Chilkoot Pass Trail, starting at Dyea. The two towns were bitter rivals for the gold trade.

In April, 1898, when an avalanche killed more than 60 people on the Chilkoot Trail, a writer for the Dyea newspaper slapped the Skagwayers for taking "advantage of this sad calamity by advertising their fever-stricken hole of hell. Skagwayans have no shame. They are ghoulish enough to wish that there had been 5,000 buried if it only happened on the Chilkoot Trail."

Women also traversed the trail. Outnumbered by men, they were more than welcome. "Any woman, innocent or full of guile," a miner said, "can become a bride within 30 minutes after she lands..."

Others went, too. "When the rush first started," a historian recalled, "every card sharper, thimble-rigger, fast operator, and con man headed north, accompanied by a full crew of bartenders, pick-pockets, doxies, lush rollers, and tavern bullies."

### KING OF CON MEN

They found a paradise in Skagway. Law was practically non-existent, and the streets were crowded with greenhorns. The king of Skagway con men until he was shot was "Soapy" Smith, who charged newcomers "official fees" for walking on piers and for every parcel they carried.

Even legitimate prices were high in the Far North. A prospector who caught four fish in Lake Lindeman offered to pay \$5 for a pinch of salt to sprinkle over them. He was refused. One entrepreneur

threw a log across a stream and charged 50 cents for a dry crossing.

Another Klondiker bought a newspaper for 50 cents at Lake Bennett. It contained an account of the naval battle at Manila. When he reached Dawson City, he sold the paper for 10 ounces of gold, worth \$160.

The transaction seemed a steal until the Dawson purchaser rented a hall and charged \$1 admission to hear him read a description of Admiral Dewey's great victory. He made more than \$1,000.

Gold production in the Klondike reached a peak in 1900, but declined rapidly thereafter. By 1910, most of the rich gravels were played out. Skagway, which had housed a transient population of 15,000, dwindled to its present 750. The Chilkoot Pass Trail became overgrown.

## Way Of Life Sets Tone For Family's Kitchen

Most of us spend a great deal of our time in the kitchen. When we build a new home or remodel an old one, the kitchen usually has more money spent on it than any room in the house.

Your way of living determines what your kitchen should be like. For this reason planning or rearranging it is a very personal matter. Not every old or middle age kitchen needs extensive remodeling. In many cases, one or two small changes will work wonders in increased convenience and general livability.

One thing we all agree on is lots of light in the kitchen. Daylight and sunlight give a cheerful feeling to the room. Give artificial light careful attention. General lighting throughout the room and concentrated light over work areas such as the stove and sink.

The materials used in the kitchen must be easy to care for. Natural wood cabinets have become very popular for this reason. They are finished with a sealer and then are given a

hard clear surface that only needs a damp cloth rubbed over it to clean.

The kitchen is being combined with the family room to make things more pleasing for mother. She can cook and still join in the family conversations.

### Physical Asset

The elderly clerk approached the personnel manager with some reluctance.

"I suppose I'd better retire soon," he began. "My doctor tells me my hearing is going fast and I notice I don't hear what some of the customers say to me."

"Retire?" beamed the executive. "Nonsense, I'll put you in the complaint department."

President Johnson has indicated that excise taxes on telephones and automobiles will be cut as scheduled April 1, 1968. The proposal is to cut excise taxes on telephones from 10 per cent to 1 per cent and on automobiles from 7 per cent to 2 per cent.

## Garden Time

Get your seed orders in. You have in mind many flowers and vegetables that have done well for you or that you might have observed in the gardens of friends. Stick pretty closely to those varieties which have proven themselves, but do not hesitate to try a few new ones.

If you are landscaping a new home, or "sprucing-up" a bit around the established home, check with your nurseryman. He will have suggestions about plant materials suitable for all locations in your landscape plan.

If you have a small greenhouse, you can expect improvement in growth from now on as the days are getting longer. Over-watering is a common error. There is no rule-of-thumb. One must use good judgment. Plants need more water on a bright day than on a cloudy one. Regulation of the night temperature is important during cold nights. This is especially true if you have tomato plants.

Now is a good time to plant apples, peaches, plums, cherries, pears and grapes. When planting, dig a hole large enough to accommodate the root system without crowding. Separate top and subsoil and place the top soil around the roots. After the roots are well covered, pack with your feet to within about 4 inches of the top of the hole. Finish filling with loose soil. Set plants as deep as they stood in the nursery row. You can easily identify this soil line at the base of the plant.

Don't overlook the dwarf type fruit plants. They are well suited for areas where space is a problem.

Have your soil tested. If a need for phosphorous, potash and lime is indicated, it is better to work these materials into the first six or eight inches of soil before planting. If applied to the soil surface, these materials do not move to the root area as does nitrogen. Band placement, to the side and below the seed, is all right for shallow rooted crops but will not provide the nutrient balance for those plants which have deeper root systems.

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