

Announcing the publication of

The Klondike & Alaska Gold Rushes

A Descriptive Bibliography of Books and Pamphlets
Covering the Years 1896–1905

By Gary F. Kurutz



THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA
SAN FRANCISCO 2021

THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA is pleased to announce the publication of a monumental reference work titled *The Klondike and Alaska Gold Rushes: A Descriptive Bibliography of Books and Pamphlets Covering the Years 1896–1905*.

Gary F. Kurutz, the author of the highly acclaimed *The California Gold Rush: A Descriptive Bibliography*, published by the Book Club in 1997, has produced this essential reference work as a companion to his impressive earlier tome.

The Klondike and the Alaska gold rushes covering the years 1896 to 1905 are considered the last of the great gold stampedes driven by individuals when much of the economically depressed world was feverish to head to the remote wilderness of Canada's Yukon Territory and the Seward Peninsula of Alaska. It is befitting that the Book Club of California is the publisher of this work as many of the gold seekers came from the Golden State and San Francisco ranked as one of the primary outfitting and jumping-off points to this new land of mineral wealth. Ultimately, too, this frenzy solidified the U. S. interest in claiming Alaska as American territory and Canada's strong effort to ensure that the Yukon, which was dominated by American miners and capitalists, remained as a Dominion province. Moreover, it has been heralded as the last gold rush populated by individual miners rather than corporate mining companies.

These two gold rushes became even more noteworthy by attracting such famous future businessmen as Alexander Pantages and Sid Grauman of theater fame; E. J. "Lucky" Baldwin, the eccentric hotelman and owner of Rancho Santa Anita; gambler and lawman Wyatt Earp; and Wilson Mizner, the future founder of Hollywood's Brown Derby Restaurant. As is well known, one of California's most celebrated authors, Jack London, failed to make his fortune in the Klondike but he did discover literary inspiration that led to such masterpieces as *The Call of the Wild* and *White Fang*, along with scores of riveting journal and newspaper articles.

Douglas Fetherling, in his book *The Gold Crusades: A Social History of Gold Rushes, 1849–1929*, wrote: "Perhaps more books have been written about the Klondike gold rush than about any other." If you add to this the literature about the rush to Nome on the Seward Peninsula in Alaska, he makes a valid case. Kurutz, in researching this descriptive bibliography, visited over thirty institutional and private collections from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks to Yale University's Beinecke Library.

The work is devoted to published diaries, journals, collections of letters, reminiscences, guidebooks, reports of mining and transportation companies, regional directories with narrative accounts, and Canadian and U.S. government reports. All routes followed by the gold stampedes are covered ranging from treacherous journeys over the frozen golden stairs of Chilkoot Pass; harrowing trips down the rapids of the Yukon River in fragile, amateurishly made log rafts; and long ocean voyages to the isolated mining town of Nome whose shoreline was awash with golden sand. Never were gold fields more difficult to reach than those bordering the Klondike River and the beaches of Nome and yet it inspired a publication frenzy unlike anything since the "Days of 49." As so powerfully explained by historian Graham Wilson, "In many ways the greatest riches to come from the Klondike valley were its stories."

A decade in the making, Kurutz's bibliography consists of detailed descriptions of 650 titles and an additional 279 editions and issues following the same format

as his California Gold Rush bibliography. Each entry features line-by-line transcriptions of title pages; gives the collation, pagination and size; and describes bindings, maps, plates, and illustrations. References to appropriate bibliographies, works of reference, and antiquarian bookseller's catalogues are given along with library locations. [Except those titles where a large number of copies are preserved in libraries.] A summary of each title includes important information on its publishing history as well as narrating the stampeders' experiences in the far north. The summaries alone will provide the reader with a sense of the extraordinary challenges endured by the men and women who braved this remote land in search of riches when much of America was mired in an economic depression brought about by the Panic of 1893. Sprinkled throughout the summaries are colorful quotations by the participants, demonstrating their extraordinary eloquence and their awareness of witnessing a time of historical importance.

Bibliographer Gary F. Kurutz is the retired director of Special Collections of the California State Library and retired executive director of the California State Library Foundation. Previously, he held positions as library director of the California Historical Society and bibliographer of Western Americana at the Huntington Library. He is the author of several books and scores of articles including three books published by the Book Club of California. Kurutz is a past president of the Book Club and recipient of its prestigious Oscar Lewis Award.

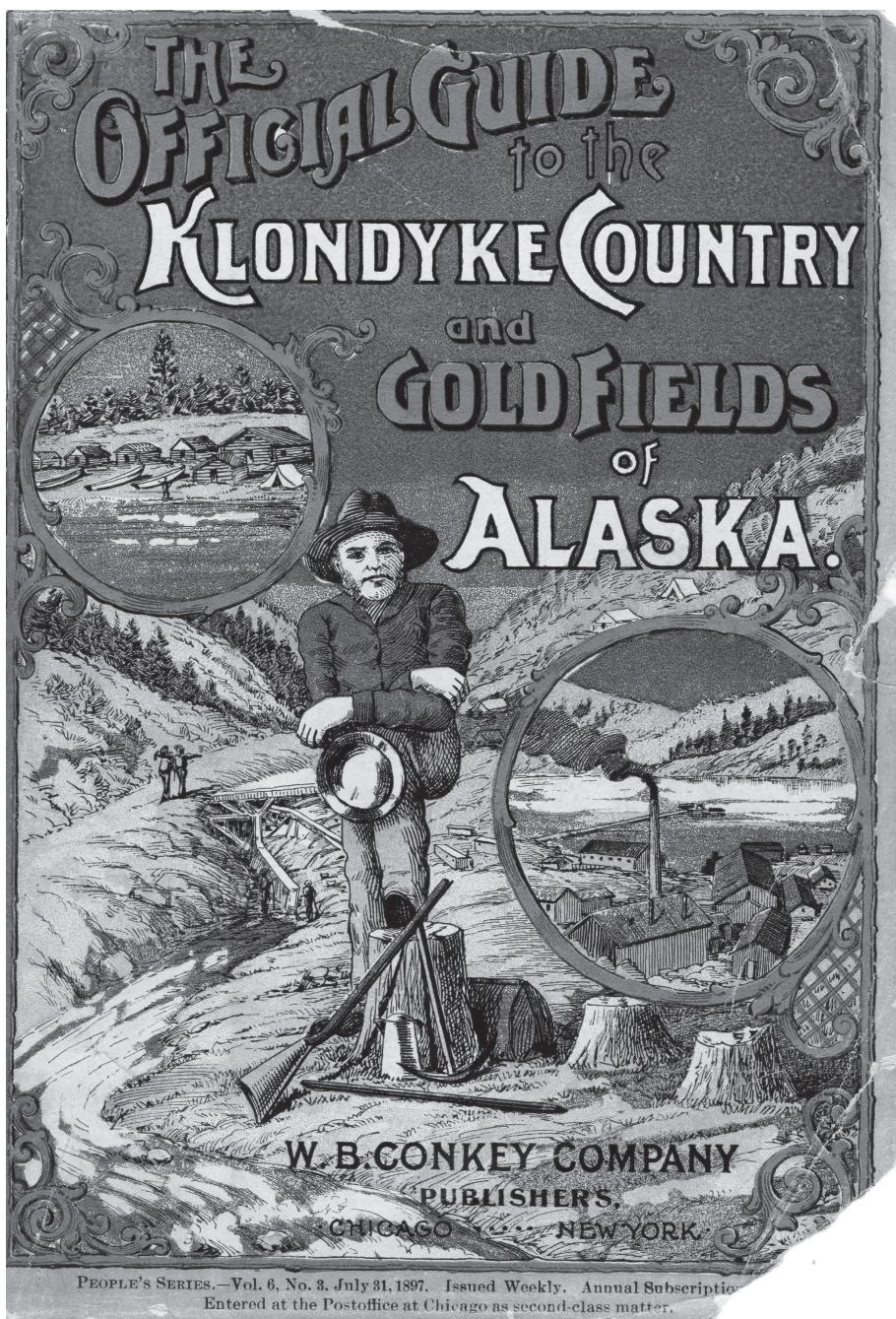
The Book Club of California will publish two editions of *The Klondike and Alaska Gold Rushes: A Descriptive Bibliography of Books and Pamphlets Covering the Years 1896–1905*.

The standard edition, of 500 copies, is clothbound by Universal Bookbindery in San Antonio, Texas, and features a full cloth binding with gold foil stamping on the cover and spine. The book measures 6.75 x 10.5 inches and is 688 pages. \$285

The deluxe edition, of 25 copies, features a full cloth binding with a gold foil stamped leather label inset on the spine. It has a slipcase with a cloth edge, paper sides, and a foil stamped paper label on the closed side. This edition was bound by Cloverleaf Studio in Austin, Texas. A digitally printed poster and a letterpress printed reproduction of the author's January 2018 essay from volume LXXXIII of the Book Club's *Quarterly* are included. The book measures 6.75 x 10.5 inches and is 688 pages. \$725

Both editions are set in Adobe Caslon and LTC Caslon 337 and printed on Mohawk Superfine by Bradley Hutchinson at his letterpress workshop in Austin, Texas. Original illustrations on the book cover and title page are by Molly Dedmond.

Book Club of California members may pre-order the book until October 18, 2021. After members' pre-publication orders have been filled, member requests for second copies and non-member requests for first copies will be honored in the order in which they were received.



Number 139a. W. B. Conkey Company.
The Official Guide to the Klondyke Country and the Gold Fields of Alaska.
1897. California State Library.

[sample entry]

75. CHARLES A. BRAMBLE

KLONDIKE | A MANUAL FOR GOLDSEEKERS | BY | CHARLES A. BRAMBLE, D.L.S. | Editorial Staff and Engineering and Mining Journal, late | Crown Lands Surveyor, Dominion of Canada | [publisher's device] | New York | R. F. Fenno & Company | 9 and 11 East 16th Street [1897]

COLLATION: [1]², [2]⁸ (2₅+c1), [3-20]⁸; consisting of: [i-ii] advts., [iii] title, [iv] copy-right (1897), [1] contents, [2] advt., [3] A Word to the Reader, [4] advt., [5] 6-9 introduction, [10] advt., advt. leaf, [11] 12-3 13 text, [3 14] publisher's advt., fold. map. 7.5 x 5.25 in.; 13.5 x 9.5 cm.

Another copy: Same as above except pp. [2, 4, and 10] are blank.

BINDING: Dark green cloth. Front cover gold-stamped: [snow covering top of first word] KLONDIKE | A MANUAL FOR | GOLD SEEKERS | BY | CHARLES A. BRAMBLE. Spine gold-stamped: KLONDIKE | A MANUAL | FOR | GOLD | SEEKERS | [illus. of miner's pick] | BRAMBLE | R. F. FENNO | & COMPANY. Beige endpapers, all edges trimmed.

Another copy: Marbled edges.

Another copy: Yellow pictorial wrappers printed in black. Front cover: [title within double ruled frame] [snow covering top of first word] KLONDIKE | A MANUAL FOR | GOLD | SEEKERS | BY | CHARLES A. BRAMBLE | WITH DRAWINGS BY | KNIGHT & NOBLE-IVES | R. F. FENNO | & COMPANY | 9 & 11 | East 16th St. | New York. [left side: illus. of miners climbing snow-covered trail]. Spine: [top] No. 25 | Fenno's Illustrated | Series | Issued monthly | Sept., 1897 | \$6.00 per annum | Entered at N. Y. Post Office | as second class matter | [rule] | KLONDIKE | BY CHARLES A. BRAMBLE | [rule] | 50 Cents. Advts. verso of front wrapper and recto and verso of rear wrapper.

MAP: Fold. Untitled map of central Alaska and the Yukon. 16.25 x 15 in.; 41.5 x 38 cm.

ILLUSTRATIONS: 11 full-page illus. These are not included in the pagination but are conjugate with text leaves.

REFERENCES: Lingenfelter AK: 505; Lingenfelter YU: 395; Ricks, p. 51; Smith 1023; Tourville 642; Wickersham 3895

COPIES: ACG; AEUS; AkU; BVAUS; BVIPA; C*; DLC*; WaU

Bramble wrote this book in part to counteract the "flood of cheap, unreliable 'Yukon' literature that [has] been put on the market." A man of considerable experience in mining and travel in the Northwest Territories and Alaska, he offered a comprehensive overview of what to expect in the hunt for "the virgin gold of the North." He readily admitted that his text included little that was original and instead incorporated long passages from scientists, experienced travelers, and miners. The volume is packed with matter-of-fact advice on routes, what to take and wear, life in the diggings, mining methods unique to the Klondike region, Canadian laws and regulations, climate, and diseases in the region. Game is scarce, he warns, and the "sharp" air increases hunger. He advises gold seekers to avoid alcohol, drink hot tea in quantity, and bring a bottle of lime juice to prevent scurvy. Most of all, prospective miners must be strong, healthy, hardworking, and possessing a positive attitude.

Advance praise for
The Klondike & Alaska Gold Rushes

“Gary Kurutz, the premier bibliographer of the West in our lifetime, has done for the history of the Klondike what he did for the California Gold Rush. His Gold Rush Bibliography is one of the most important bibliographies ever published in the field of Western Americana. As with that work, in ‘The Klondike’ Kurutz provides detailed physical descriptions of the books, pamphlets, and ephemera listed, and gives excellent summaries of the contents. This is the kind of reference work every bookseller, collector, historian, and librarian longs for. ‘The Klondike’ will rank as one of the great achievements in the history of Western Bibliography.”

John Windle, antiquarian bookseller

“Gary Kurutz’s descriptive bibliography of the Klondike and Alaska gold rushes is a towering achievement in the genre of writing that investigates the physical characteristics and production details of books and printed objects. One can easily imagine that Kurutz spent a lifetime poring over thousands of items, noting their measurements and distinguishing physical properties, but also narrating the fascinating history of their production. He succeeds brilliantly in the dual role of bibliographer and storyteller. Congratulations for writing such a fine work of scholarship!”

*Robert Desmarais, Head of Special Collections,
Bruce Peel Special Collections, University of Alberta, Canada*

THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

312 Sutter Street, Suite 500

San Francisco, CA 94108

(415) 781-7532

BCCBOOKS.ORG