



"WATER DOCTOR" is what natives of Yukon call hydrometric surveyor Monty Alford who uses dog teams in the winter, canoe and planes in the summer to gather needed statistics of the

hydro potential of the mineral-rich far north. Alford's main instrument is the Hydrometer which is seen packed on the dogsled as he begins his mush over snow and ice.

## 'WATER DOCTOR' USES DOGS

# Year-Round Search for Hydro Keeps Yukon Surveyor Busy

Whether by canoe, packhorse or plane in the summer or in the winter by snowshoes or mushing behind a dog team, the work of Yukon's "water doctor" is a year-round "must" assignment.

Much of the Yukon's future may depend on the findings of Monty Alford who is looking continuously for sources of hydro-electric power throughout this mineral-rich territory of 207,076 square miles.

Hydrometric surveyor for the water resources branch of the federal department of northern affairs and national resources, Alford has been labeled the "water doctor" by native Indians and prospectors who have watched him for the last three years working the rivers, creeks and lakes with his instruments.

As a personality, Alford himself is unique—a buoyant, effervescent Englishman of 30 whose love for the rigorous outdoors causes him to boom:

"I wouldn't trade the Yukon for anywhere on earth. I jolly well love this country as well as my work."

"We get nipped around the edges a bit now and then when the bottom falls out of the thermometer but, by Jove, that's living!"

Basically, Alford's job is to keep a summer and winter record of the amount of water which flows through the hundreds of streams and rivers of the Yukon which may hold a potential source of hydro-power. He considers it a lifetime project.

His chief instrument is the hydrometer which measures the speed of water current. These measurements, he explained, must be taken at about 20 intervals across a given river at different seasons of the year.

In the winter Alford moves around the country on skis, snowshoes and by dog team. With an Indian assistant, usually the owner and driver of the dogs, he digs holes through the ice to get his readings.

At times the ice is very thick—up to seven feet, and much physical energy is needed to reach the water, even with specially-made ice chisels.

"It keeps us in shape," Monty sounds off.

This was Alford's first job in the Yukon, but he came better equipped than most cheekakos who press north to find a future. Although he had only \$100 in his pocket and a wife straight out of Paris, France, both had a background of mountaineering in the Alps of Europe.

Besides, Alford also spent two years facing the outdoors in Canada and the U.S. and felt ready to "take whatever the Yukon could dish out."

Five years ago, the young Englishman turned to his chum working with him in an aeronautical tool designing plant in Plymouth:

"How about nipping over to Canada for a bit of a trip?" His friend agreed and the pair landed in Halifax a month later. After several government survey jobs, they found themselves in the Rocky Mountains of B.C. where a novel idea was born.

It culminated in a daring undertaking unparalleled in history. With a 16-foot canoe, the pair set out from Castlegar, B.C., in March, 1950, and ended

their widely-publicized 10,000-mile voyage at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in November, "after 137 campsites and 43 portages that almost broke our backs."

On the Yukon job for three years now, Alford's records are of great interest to the federal government and to major indus-

trialists who look upon the territory as a latent source of mineral wealth.

But principally interested recently has been Frobisher Ltd. in their survey of the Atlin Lake-Yukon River watershed for a proposed multi-million horse-power hydro development.



SO DEEP it will almost hide the digger is the ice at times covering Yukon rivers and lakes. A series of holes have to be dug through the ice cover in order to take the necessary measurements of the flow of current. Digging here is a native helper.

## RIMROCK RANCH

(Rich Hobson Jr., one of the Nechako's most celebrated personalities even before his book, "Grass Beyond the Mountains," was published a few years ago, operates the biggest ranch in the area, Rimrock Ranch. Hobson and his partner pioneered ranching in the Chilcotin Valley to the south in the 1930s, then moved north. Following is a poem composed on his ranch by Hobson's close friend, Dr. Harry Dietrich of Hollywood. Dr. Dietrich recently acquired some property of his own in the Nechako.)

Far, far to the fabled north  
Where "frontier" rightly names a line that can't exist  
Where strong men lightly mouth the names  
Of Batuni, Vanderhoof and old Quensel.  
There is a valley—as few valleys ever were . . .

Hard rock hills around it rim  
And then, as if relenting, into its bowl they dip  
Permitting at their feet green spruce and pine and birch,  
To shelter deer and moose and bear.

The valley floor, a thousand acres more—  
Flat and green and fertile  
A melting pot of grains and grasses—  
Of Timothy and reeds, or red top clover, brome and oats,  
Enlivened timidly by flowers wild  
In small bouquets of  
Yellow, blue and white and red and  
Patchy purple fire weed.

Threading through this verdant bottom land,  
Clear, cold, and trout infested,  
Willow lined and leisurely amove  
Greer Creek flows . . .

Snug cabins send their blue grey smoke aloft  
To test the wind—  
And on that wind is softly born a symphony . . .  
A symphony of sound to stir, yet quiet, restless man.  
A crow's most strident chiding  
The jackass bray of penned up Lionheart bull  
The mowers, banders, tractors working,  
The whirr of grouse, mosquitoes buzz  
The munching of contented cattle  
The mournful moo of mislaid calf  
The ducks and geese aloft that call  
Without the answering crack of guns;  
The loony cry of spooked up loons,  
The busy bark of dogs,  
These sounds bewitch the ear of man  
Till suddenly—a crescendo of silence—  
So pure, so absolute,  
That mortal man must bow his head in reverence.

But "this is Paradise" you say  
And in all truth it may now be—  
If Paradise be sweating, stinking years of work,  
Of too soon frost and too much rain  
Of crackling, snapping bone ache cold,  
Of ice and snow and raw edged wind  
Of killer wolves and frozen calves  
Of love of land and hope  
And deepest pits of black despair.

This may be Paradise indeed . . .  
No scales are known, nor yet devised,  
To measure keenly as they should  
The size of beauty or of guts.  
As puny man I cannot judge  
But only see . . .  
For this is Rimrock Ranch, B.C.

## Alaska Highway Bus Driver Operates Longest Mail Route

MILE POST 155, Alaska Highway—Thirty-two hours and 764 miles ago, bus driver Donald Ferguson had looked at the thermometer, at his watch, then at his few hardy passengers, and said:

"Let's go! We've got this thing on the road." Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, fell away in the white distance and ahead lay 919 miles of the famous Alaska Highway and at Mile 0, Dawson Creek, B.C.

But besides wheeling passengers winter and summer along that mighty road, Ferguson also tends to what he believes is the longest rural mail delivery route in the world.

At Mile Post 155, he ground the bus to a stop. Only two passengers were still with him, headed for the outside. "Fergie," as the driver is known along the Alcan, rifled quickly through a mail pouch, picked out a couple of letters and hopped to the snow-packed road. Nearby was an oil drum where he deposited the mail. Then he righted a long pole with a flag on the end.

There was no dwelling in sight from the road, but Fergie said:

"There'll be somebody along pretty soon when they see the flag."

The bus, which makes one return trip a week between Whitehorse and Dawson Creek in the winter and two in summer, makes 42 regular mail stops to serve the 1,000-odd residents along its route.

Most of the people along the highway are members of the Northwest Highway System's maintenance crews. The stations, located about every 100 miles along the route, are operated by the Canadian army. Near these sites also are located telegraph and telephone repeater stations where operators maintain the only direct communication between Yukon and northern B.C. with the rest of the world.

Others getting mail are the homey folk who operate tourist cabins, hotels, restaurants and other highway services. All of them anxiously await the weekly mail.

"But besides delivering and picking up mail, I also sell money orders, stamps, collect for COD and express parcels. Often I carry messages on paper or by word of mouth from one party to another, or send and deliver telegrams."

"I don't mind doing these things. I know that any of these people would do anything for me anytime."

Fergie loves the Alaska Highway. He knows about every inch of its surface. He turned to point to a line of outbanks to the east.

"That used to be the way the highway first ran, just after it was built. But the hill was too steep. Many a trucker lost his life on that hairpin turn. They called it Suicide Hill."

Winter traffic is slow, yet an average of 200 vehicles will be found on the highway daily. They'll probably be about 50 trucks, passenger cars bearing license plates from any state of the U.S. and the balance a mixture of Alaskan and Canadian cars.

"But in the summer, this

road gets pretty busy, many times the traffic that we have in the winter," said Bill Anderson who, with his wife, operates a lodge and dining service at Blueberry, Mile Post 101, where the bus stopped.



LONGEST RURAL MAIL route in the world is serviced by Don Ferguson, driver of the Whitehorse to Dawson Creek stage along more than 900 miles of the Alaska Highway. Actually, the rural mail route is still longer, stretching beyond Whitehorse to the Alaska border, which is serviced also by bus, but on another schedule.

## GUEST EDITORIAL

# Yukon Forgets Past; Looks to Big Future

By THOMAS BAIN

Publisher, The Whitehorse Star

The tourist visiting Whitehorse today, comes with the hope of seeing evidence of the Yukon's past history. The people of the Yukon and particularly Whitehorse, are endeavoring to wipe out the past and bring about a modern, sanitary community by installing sewer and water, clearing away the log shacks built 50 years ago, paving streets in place of a mixture of gravel and volcanic ash with its billowing dust, and bringing the north up to a standard found in southern cities.

New, modern, well-planned homes are now being built, concrete buildings are being erected and modern oil heating units are replacing cord-wood heaters. The thought of a fast stake is vanishing; people are coming to look on the north; they now want to settle in an area they know will prosper and still offer vast outdoor valleys and lakes for recreational purposes, not found in the cities.

The North, on the other hand is looking for people. The Yukon population could double and the populace would still have an abundance of space. As mining is developed, more and more jobs are created. More jobs bring people and the people demand services, and as the ball rolls the strength of the Territory gradually becomes greater. New cities are built and facilities extended.

This is not a dream, for the ball is starting to roll and within the next 10 years, if wars do not interfere, the development in the Yukon will be tremendous.

The Probisher interests have already announced publicly that they expect to spend close to \$300,000,000 in the Yukon, developing power and mining. Surveys have now started and industry is snowballing—slowly now, but it will gather speed as the years pass.

## Fisheries Tag B.C. Grey Cod

VANCOUVER (CP)—British Columbia leads all Canada in insurance coverage under the new fishermen's indemnity fund.

The Department of Fisheries announced here Wednesday that last week's coverage of \$21,000 worth of insurance pushed the B.C. total past the \$1,000 mark.

Total protection for Canada is \$2,700,000 of which \$205,000 is subscribed by Newfoundland.

In B.C. more than 271,000 are insured against loss or damage under the scheme. Fisheries department researchers now are sewing tags on grey cod to record their migrations.

## HIGGS

Electric Motors

Built in Britain, these high quality motors cost 25% less than competitive makes. Contact—

CROSSMAN

MACHINERY CO. LTD.

806 BEACH AVE.

VANCOUVER B.C.



## the Civil Engineer and FAIRBANKS-MORSE

The Civil Engineer:: builder of roads, railways, bridges, dams... builder of a greater Canada. Through his skill and knowledge Canada's power and transportation facilities are constantly expanding—pushing back our frontiers in the development of a great treasure chest of natural resources.

In the twentieth century's mechanization the engineer is a key figure... member of a profession that is working steadily and successfully to extract the greatest value from our natural resources—to improve manufacturing techniques—to increase

knowledge and in so doing contribute to a better way of living.

Fairbanks-Morse has been privileged to work with the engineer in Canada for over 50 years. This is chiefly due to the engineering products and services available at our sixteen branches across Canada... equipment such as Fairbanks-Morse Diesel Engines, Generators, Pumps, Scales, Machine Tools and Materials Handling equipment, as well as a wide range of supplies for contractors, railways and general industry.

THE CANADIAN FAIRBANKS-MORSE

COMPANY LIMITED

Sixteen Branches Across Canada



The Pneumatic Tools for mining and construction work



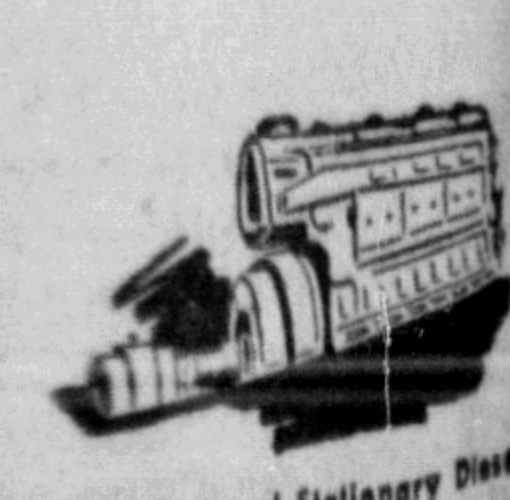
Fairbanks-Morse Centrifugal Pumps at work in this field



Yale Hand and Electric Hoists for every industrial requirement



F.M. Portable Electric Plants for operating tools and flood lighting



Marine and Stationary Diesel Engines and Electrical Equipment