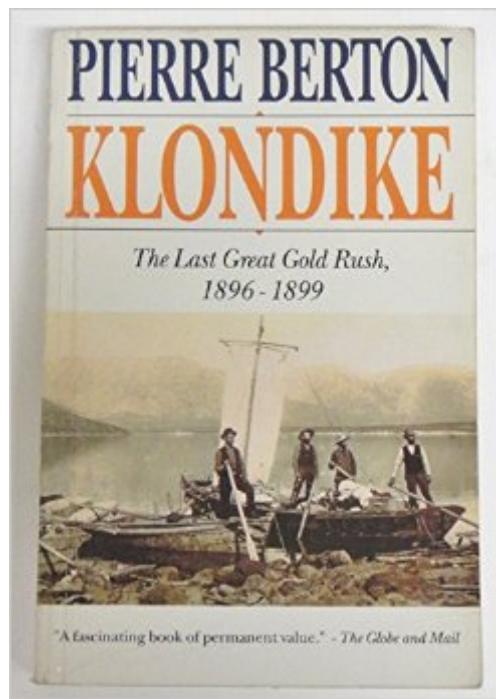


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Klondike: The Last Great Gold Rush



Synopsis

With the building of the railroad and the settlement of the plains, the North West was opening up. The Klondike stampede was a wild interlude in the epic story of western development, and here are its dramatic tales of hardship, heroism, and villainy. We meet Soapy Smith, dictator of Skagway; Swiftwater Bill Gates, who bathed in champagne; Silent Sam Bonnifield, who lost and won back a hotel in a poker game; and Roddy Connors, who danced away a fortune at a dollar a dance. We meet dance-hall queens, paupers turned millionaires, missionaries and entrepreneurs, and legendary Mounties such as Sam Steele, the Lion of the Yukon. Pierre Berton's riveting account reveals to us the spectacle of the Chilkoot Pass, and the terrors of lesser-known trails through the swamps of British Columbia, across the glaciers of souther Alaska, and up the icy streams of the Mackenzie Mountains. It contrasts the lawless frontier life on the American side of the border to the relative safety of Dawson City. Winner of the Governor General's award for non-fiction, Klondike is authentic history and grand entertainment, and a must-read for anyone interested in the Canadian frontier.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For those of us whose knowledge of the Klondike Gold Rush comes mostly from the 1950s radio drama, "Sergeant Preston of the Yukon" this is a fine book to read. (Trivia question: What was the name of Sergeant Preston's preternaturally intelligent huskie?) This is a revised and updated version of the book "Klondike Fever" published in 1958. Read "Klondike" if possible, although the earlier "Klondike Fever" is still perfectly readable. The maps are much better in this edition. This Gold Rush, named after the Klondike River in the Yukon territory of Canada, was the last great

scramble for gold in the old West. One hundred thousand persons, mostly from the U.S., set out for the Klondike in 1897, 30,000 or 40,000 got there, after an arduous journey through killing winter snows, and a few hundred found gold. The stories of the long, hard journey into this Arctic wilderness are often horrific. In one party of 19 men, 15 died or were killed along the route and the other four had eyes damaged by snow blindness. The gold seekers included author Jack London, Wyatt Earp, and poet Joaquin Miller. By late-summer 1899, "one of the weirdest and most useless mass movements in history" was over. Most of the gold seekers went home to live normal lives, although a few moved on to the beaches of Nome, Alaska where gold could be picked up among the grains of sand. The author tells a compelling tale of the men and women who participated in the Klondike Gold Rush. It was indeed a fever.

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