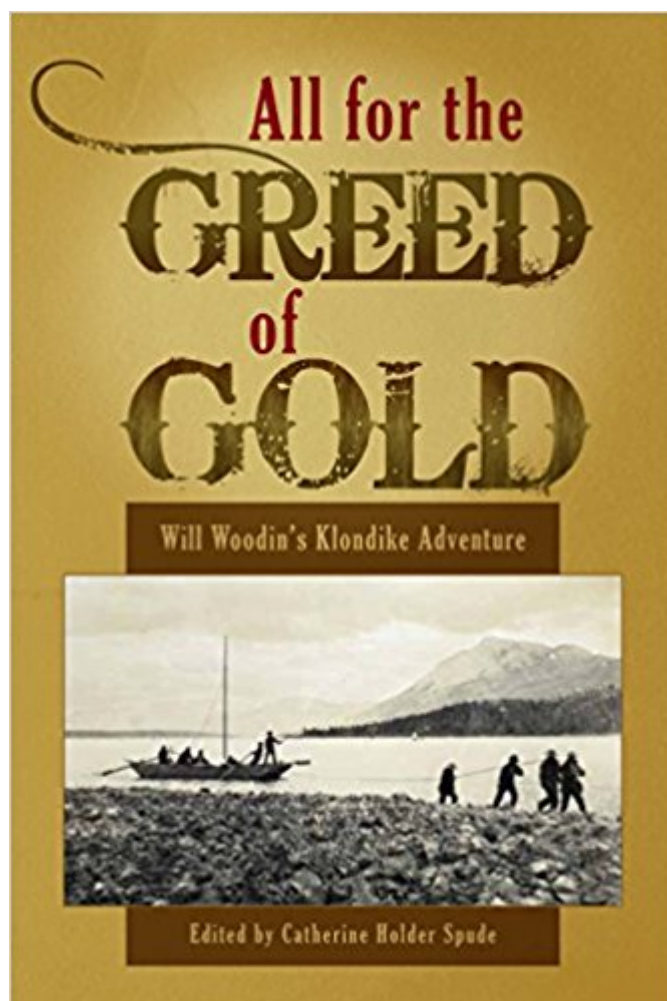


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All For The Greed Of Gold: Will Woodin's Klondike Adventure



Synopsis

Enhanced with family photographs and skillfully edited, Will's diaries, short story, and candid 1910 memoir describe the travails of taking an uncommon route to the Yukon over the White Pass and Tutshi Trails. This narrative highlights the camaraderie and cooperation among working-class men. When the steamship Cleveland left Seattle's docks on March 1, 1898, William Jay Woodin was on board, traveling with his father and several others. It was the nineteenth century's last great gold rush, but rather than mine, they planned to earn their fortune by providing supplies. Unlike many stampedeers, Will's party chose to take both the White Pass Trail and the Tutshi Trail, and his story offers a rare glimpse into ordeals suffered along this less common, seldom chronicled route. In another unique aspect, Will's experiences epitomize the story of how working-class men endured a grueling Yukon journey. Most published gold rush memoirs, letters, and diaries were written by middle- or upper-class adventurers, but Will was part of an emerging middle class who, with minimal formal education, left farm life to seek urban employment. Whether packing tons of goods on their own backs or building boats at the Windy Arm camp, his accounts bring to light the cooperation and camaraderie necessary for survival, and his simple yet perceptive observations reveal much about how the average Klondike stampeder lived, worked, and struggled to overcome hardships. Enhanced with family photographs and skillfully edited, Will's writings-- including diaries, a short story, and a candid 1910 memoir--record events, emotions, and reflections, as well as his youthful wonder at the beauty surrounding him. He provides specific descriptions of trail conditions, extreme weather, travel hazards, and social relationships as the horde of thousands climbed the White Pass and floated down the Yukon to Dawson. He describes the workings of the gold fields and the economics of minimizing risk. Editor Catherine Spude's expert integration of the autobiography and selected journal entries places the young stampedeer's views within the context of the era's value systems, economics and social structures, and also illuminates what memoir writers sometimes fail to discuss when crafting personal narratives. A historian and archaeologist, she has written popular history for magazines and newspapers as well as numerous journal articles. Her book about the legend of Soapy Smith was a finalist for a Western Writers of America Spur Award.

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Customer Reviews

"This memoir is, indeed, one of the only extant accounts of the White Pass Trail and is an excellent and representative example of the Klondike experience. He is both representative and unique." --Charlene L. Porsild, Ph.D., President /CEO, Montana History Foundation "Despite the numbers of stampeders who went over the White Pass Trail on their way to the Yukon, very few left any kind of written account of this route and for the Tutshi Trail, none."--Dennis Larsen, independent historian and author of *Slick as a Mitten, Ezra Meeker's Klondike Enterprise*

Catherine Holder Spude is author of *Saloons, Prostitutes, and Temperance in Alaska Territory*, *"That Fiend in Hell": Soapy Smith in Legend* and *Sin and Grace: A Historical Novel of the Skagway, Alaska, Sporting Wars* as well as coeditor of *"Eldorado! The Archaeology of Gold Mining in the Far North"*.

Spude did a first-rate job of editing. Her introductions to each chapter were exceptional and her front matter to the book is a joy to read. She puts the Klondike experience into context and she provided a terrific profile of Will Woodin. Anyone interested in the mining experience and history not only of the Klondike but also the entire Western mining experience will see this as an essential publication.

One of the best books on the White Pass trail in the 1897-98 gold rush. So little is written about the White Pass trail or the Tutshi route; this is a gem. Catherine Spude has done a marvelous job editing this book, which has both diary entries and a later written memorial. I live next to the Chilkoot Trail, and have read everything written about it that I can find. This is a must read for anyone interested in Gold Rush history.

Very interesting first-person account of the Klondike gold rush. A bit of an anti-climactic ending but a worthwhile read nonetheless.

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