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THE FIRST MAN HANGED IN THE KLONDIKE.

(By H. L. M. in the *New York Journal*.)

JUNEAU, September 3, *via* Seattle, September 8.—Among the pines on the shores of Lake Bennet, on the Klondike trail, the dead body of a man is swinging at a rope's end, and next to his cold breast is a faded photograph and a lock of baby hair.

The body is that of William G. Martin of Missouri, the first victim of lynch law in the new Eldorado.

A hundred miles away his former companions are toiling along with stern eyes and mirthless hearts towards the goldfields. They banded poor "Billy" Martin, left him and forgot him.

The body swings and twists in the mountain winds. It gazes with stark eyes upon the long, stony trail its companions have taken. It turns again and looks far across the pine hills toward Missouri, where a wife and little boy are awaiting a happy return.

Yesterday a steamer captain brought the news of the lynching of Martin, and an explanatory note from John Hogan and Bernard Giers.

Nobody who knew "Billy" Martin when he was here ever dreamed that he would gain the dubious distinction of being the first man lynched in the Klondike.

He arrived in Juneau late in August with an outfit weighing about 1,000 pounds. He was anxious to start at once for the goldfields, but was obliged to wait for the arrival of a belated party. He seemed a quiet, thoughtful sort of a man, with nothing radically wrong about him.

There were about thirty in the party. All but one of them were stern, broad-shouldered, bearded men, with stout hearts and iron muscles. The exception was a pale-faced, studious-looking boy named Ferry. He had a cough, and whenever he became overtired one of the big, whiskered giants would swing the boy's pack a-top his own with a good-natured laugh and carry it for a mile or two.

It took the party five days to get across the pass. In the meantime Martin had evidently discovered that he had made a miscalculation in the matter of provisions. His stock was running low, and it was only a matter of a few days before he would either have to return or starve.

His light outfit had already attracted some attention in the camp, and his solitary and preoccupied manner was commented upon. "He's a little daffy," said one. "He's in love with his wife," said another, who had seen Martin kissing a small and dinky photograph.

Camp followed camp in monotonous succession. There were the long daily tramps over the difficult trail, the hours of dogged, desperate silence, the stolid dreams of gold, the twilight of awful

mountains, the glimmering campfires, the troubled slumbers, and again the sunrise and the long march.

So it went, until the little party, plunging deeper and deeper into the wilderness, came upon the shores of Lake Bennett.

On the margin of the lake the camp was made, and the evening fires were lighted. Then, when the miners were preparing to cook their frugal repast, Abner Davis discovered that somebody had stolen a side of bacon from his outfit.

Davis strode over to the camp of John Hogan, who was regarded as the leader of the party, and made known his loss.

"Don't say anything about it till after supper, Abner," advised Hogan. "Then we'll hold a meeting. If we've got a thief in the outfit we must clear him out d—quick."

After the supper of bacon and bread and black coffee the men gathered around Hogan's camp fire looking very serious. "Where's Martin?" somebody asked. "He's out on the lake fishing," replied Ferry, the sick-looking boy.

Then Hogan got up and made a sort of a speech. "Men," said he, "there's a thief among us. Abner Davis has missed a side of bacon he had when we camped here this evening. There ain't no wolves about so early in the night. Now, what I propose is that every man of us have his outfit searched."

"And, men, I ain't sayin' this to any particular persons, but to all of us, myself included; the one that stole Abner Davis' bacon is in a mighty unhealthy locality. That's all I've got to say."

Hogan's plan was agreed to. A committee was appointed, and the search was prosecuted with vigour. Outfit after outfit was inspected, but nothing suspicious was found.

"What's Martin's camp?" suddenly asked one of the committee.

"That's so," exclaimed another. "He's camped up thar in the brush. I saw him fixin' around his fire this evening."

The committee clambered up the hillside to the solitary camp. It was built in the lee of a dense clump of chaparral and mountain gorse. Martin was still absent. The fire was burning low.

Everything was thoroughly searched. In a small flat knapsack the committee found a faded photograph, mottled with much handling, and a long tress of yellow hair that had been clipped from a baby's head. The two were tied together with an old leather shoestring.

Martin's provision bag was opened. Two pieces of bacon were found. One was small and thin and scrawny. It was Martin's. The other was large and streaky and good to look upon. It was Davis'. It had been marked "A. B.," but the letters had been clipped away with a knife.

Another meeting was called at Hogan's tent. The men gathered around it one by one, silent and determined. Wood was piled on the fire until the surroundings were as bright as day.