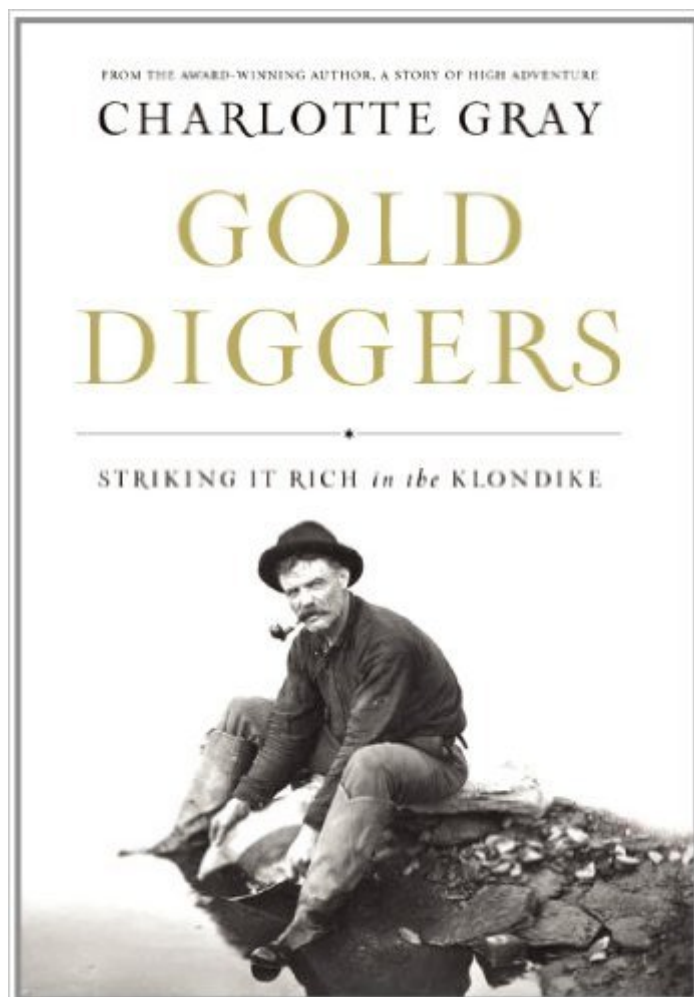


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Gold Diggers: Striking It Rich In The Klondike



Synopsis

Between 1896 and 1899, thousands of people lured by gold braved a grueling journey into the remote wilderness of North America. Within two years, Dawson City, in the Canadian Yukon, grew from a mining camp of four hundred to a raucous town of more than thirty thousand. The stampede to the Klondike was the last great gold rush in history. Scurvy, dysentery, frostbite, and starvation stalked all who dared to be in Dawson. And yet the possibilities attracted people from all walks of life. *Gold Diggers* is the remarkable story of the Klondike Gold Rush told through the lives of six very different people: the miner William Haskell; the saintly priest Father Judge; the savvy twenty-four-year-old businesswoman Belinda Mulrooney; the imperious British journalist Flora Shaw; spit-and-polish Sam Steele of the Mounties; and, most famous, the writer Jack London, who left without gold but with the stories that would make him a legend. Brilliantly interweaving their experiences, Charlotte Gray presents a fascinating panorama of a subarctic town, drawing on letters, memoirs, newspaper articles, and stories and handsomely illustrated with more than sixty original photographs and maps.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In *Gold Diggers*, published in 2010, author Charlotte Gray crafts a fascinating history of the Klondike Gold Rush. Covering the period from June 1896 to the Summer of 1899, Gray charts the trajectory of gold fever in the Yukon Territory from its boom to its bust. I first became aware of this book through the television miniseries *Klondike*, a highly fictionalized adaptation produced for the Discovery Channel (which is very good, by the way; rent it if you haven't seen it). It's a huge

fan of the author Jack London and his stories and essays about the Klondike. I was eager to learn the truth behind the fiction, and Gray's account does not disappoint. The real history that she presents in *Gold Diggers* is every bit as exciting, fascinating, and incredible as London's wildest literary interpretations. Gray approaches the subject as a group biography, intertwining the lives of six diverse Gold rush participants: prospector Bill Haskell, author Jack London, entrepreneur Belinda Mulrooney, Jesuit priest Father William Judge, British journalist Flora Shaw, and Officer Sam Steele of the North-West Mounted Police. Although these six larger-than-life personages get the most attention, there are plenty of supporting characters that stand out as well, from government bureaucrats to newspaper editors to dance hall girls to "Klondike Kings" who struck it rich. In fact, it's often difficult to remember who Gray's six primary subjects are, because what really comes through is the story of a community. *Gold Diggers* is first and foremost the biography of a town: Dawson City. Gray relates the life of this remote mining outpost from its origins as a mud flat at the confluence of two rivers to its dubious distinction as the "Paris of the North" to its eventual mass abandonment in favor of the next big score.

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