

2027 Rogers Way
Santa Rosa, California
September 1, 1954.

My dear Alma:-

It has been some time since I received your welcome and newsy letter of August 17 and I have no excuse for tardiness in reply except that as the days go by one of my age dodges all the duties possible. Living alone, as I do, is no snap, believe me, and I am now cudgeling my brains, or rather what are left, to come to some reasonable conclusion as to the future, which, of course, may be very brief. Time goes on inexorably and, luckily, as it ticks on, those things we once considered essential in life, lose their joy and attractiveness. It is so with me, and yet, one thing certain, one clings to old days, old friends and news of them. Daily news in newspapers lose their appeal, even for one, who, like me, has written millions of words of this or that mine or district, or of this or that oil field. Much of my idle hours ~~are~~ now spent in browsing through old records, contained in no less than seven big packing cases around me. Tales of every western mining state; of every province in Canada, way up to the Arctic Circle, the Canol Project and Alaska Highway. Tales of old friends long gone, met in the very best and most interesting period of development this continent will ever see again. I cannot complain. I have had a long and interesting innings in this game we call life.

Your newsy epistles of the old Slocan, where I cut a few eye teeth and raised hell now and then, will always be most interesting to me. I often wish that I might yet be allowed to make old Sandon one more visit; to see those old peaks I used to know so well and scratch around on those hillsides that are straight up and down. I should even like to look in upon our old friend, the expert from Colorado, who, like a second Messiah, is going to bring the old camp back to virulent life. Personally, I don't think he is scheduled to raise any particular hell in that direction. Slocan has had its day and the curtain has been let down on the old scenes, almost to oblivion. I notice that Cody-Reco is now listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange and I have watched its market action, or rather lack of action, with interest. Last paper received shows small trading at around \$1.10, every succeeding sale a little lower from the opening price of \$1.25. As a market manipulator, I would'n't think our good friend would shine effulgently and so I expect to see the quotation below the dollar mark in but a few days. That Toronto Exchange is one deadfall, to be sure. My experience there taught me a lot. I sold out every mining stock long ago, except one called Barima Gold Mining Co. (Canada), of which I hold around 15,000 shares and for which there has been no market since I acquired it nearly ten years ago. The property covers a large concession in British Guiana and just a few months ago, the right to mine manganese on the property was sold for \$625,000, of which \$125,000 has already been paid and balance is due just as soon as titles can be perfected and turned over. The buyer is a subsidiary of big Union Carbide, of New York. Barima still retains the right to mine gold or other values, so it looks like a nice little pick-up. From nothing, the quotation has gone up to around 25c and should go higher when the transfer has been completed. Whether the money will be spent upon development of gold showings, or partly distributed to long-hungry shareholders, I do not yet know, but since my speculative days are over, the windfall has been keenly welcomed.

I shall be keenly interested in developments in your

affairs. In Jim Garland you have a most excellent adviser and I am sure he will guide you safely along the crooked and narrow path of law. Certainly, if there is any justice to be found in the books, you will have some tardy reward for the loyalty to Johnnie's interests of the past twenty years. Your news about Sandon looks quite ominous to me and I cannot imagine any possible return to the good old days. That is why I would advise you to take the very first opportunity that presents itself to turn over the Reco property to anyone who has money enough to open it up once more and see what is there. I loved the old country and its grand old peaks, but every mining area has its day and I feel in my bones that Slocan days are over, except possible for spasmodic leasing on such new surface showings as may be found. And they, I think, will be few and far between. The country has been scoured over now for over 60 years and our old prospecting and mining friends of the days that are gone were no fools, believe me. How long is it since the last work of consequence was done upon Reco ground? Must be 30 or 40 years anyway.

I should be very much interested in the legal papers that will be filed in your case and should like a copy if it is in any way possible. It is too bad, of course, that Johnny's heirs will not be able to realize their fondest hopes, but I am pulling for the one who has been his faithful working companion for so long. Your idea of a little place near good old Nelson seems most sensible to me, but I suppose that your final decision must rest upon the health of your own folks. You have served that country long and faithfully and are entitled to first consideration as to disposition of what may be left.

I suppose you may have read of the passing of dear old Uncle Billy--William Sheppard Norman--a real pioneer of Spokane. He died on August 12, at the age of 96 years and seven months. Since he was married in 1889, he had lived in the same house up on the south hill. In the early 80's he was purser on a boat that plied between Kettle Falls on the Columbia and Revelstoke, during construction of the Canadian Pacific, at the same time Uncle Ben Norman, who passed away 20 years ago, was employed as timekeeper on the C.P.R. on a section west of Revelstoke. Uncle Billy went to Spokane in 1884 and for some time was a court stenographer, having learned that art as reporter on my own father's paper, the Examiner, published at our birthplace in Cheltenham, England. Later, Billy became secretary-manager of Washington Water Power Co in its early days; put in the very first telephone system in Spokane and about the beginning of this century organized, with his brother, Norman Hotels, which owned the Portland, Tacoma, Spokane and Yakima hotels. Of late, he had been interested in mining, particularly in Montana. And, by the bye, he was one of the very earliest investors in the Slocan country, being part-owner of the Bluebird group, with D. C. Corbin, the railroad king; Major Montgomery, who later was one of the owners of the Washington mine, where I put in my first shifts as a miner; and a man named Potter. Uncle Billy left two daughters, six grandchildren and 14 great grand-children. He was a close pal of mine, though 12 years older. His mind continued active and lucid until a few days before he died. And, by the bye, my lone sister, Mrs. E. K. Moy, still living in Cheltenham, was 87 last June. She is a wonderful woman, a perfect beauty when she was younger and still beautiful for her age, but of late she has not been well and I am fearful of the future. She is anxious for me to make one more trip over there, so that "she can look after me", but I fear now she will not be long with us. And I hesitate to make another trip at my age.

Your mining camp news is not exciting, is it? But every camp, like every dog, has its day and I fear there will be little future excitement to be found there. The old-timers are passing on and new fields are now the attraction, especially the lead-silver-zinc showings in New Brunswick and the important recent discoveries of the same kind in northwest Ontario, plus the uranium discoveries such as Gunnar and the tremendous possibilities of Labrador and Northern Quebec, now served by rail. In the new rushes, old camps will be forgotten, perhaps to emerge once more among the prosperous in the years to come, but now neglected. I have watched the developments re Yale Lead & Zinc with interest of late, but my guess is that the recent increase in capitalization marks the beginning of the end,—get-away stakes for those who are in control. There never was such a game as is played to perfection by the insiders of Toronto, but why and how the public stands for these moves, time after time, is beyond me. Ainsworth has never been a big-mine camp and in my opinion never will be. In the days of Ferdinand Wolfle I used to spend many a week-end at the mine with him and knew it from stem to stern. But orebodies there are very irregular and, besides that, silver values are relatively low.

Your letters to me, Alma, are surely a tonic for this poor old has-been. Many of the happiest days of my life were passed when the Slocan was young and when youth met all set-backs and obstacles with a smile. But them days have gone forever and I now sit here like a blinking old sphinx wondering when the next and final call will come. Mental reminiscing is about all that is left, but I am still thankful that I have a little of this world's goods left, possibly enough to see me over the last hump, with something left for the children to remember me by.

That will be all for now. Thanks once more for your trouble in keeping me posted. No letters I receive now interest me more. Since I see little chance of Mrs. N. ever being better, I am wondering now what to do next and cannot make up my mind. Certain it is that I cannot rely upon bodily strength enough to see me through many more moves. While the climate here is wonderful, it is not enough to satisfy a man who has lived a life such as mine. My dear love to you, Alma and best to Teddy. He certainly has stuck through thick and thin. Happy landings wherever you may be.

SIDNEY.

2027 Rogers Way

Santa Rosa, California

March 14, 1956.

My dear Alma:-

I was simply delighted to get your most welcome letter of March 5, through my dear son, Dr. Frank, last night and am answering it at once. I have reached an age when I cannot afford to lose contact with old friends such as you. But, you seem to have forgotten that in your last letter to me, of date December 14, 1954, you said you were leaving for home in Saskatchewan to spend Christmas and the winter. I naturally supposed you were still there, especially as I received no answer to my letter of December 28, addressed to you in Sandon. In your last you said you would see I got a copy of the court petition and as nothing came I supposed you had shaken the snow and dust of good old Sandon from your tootsies and taken up your abode in Sask. I don't know where you got the idea that I was making another trip to England. If I told you that, it was wrong, or I must have changed my mind. Anyway, whatever has interfered with our correspondence, let me say that I am simply delighted to resume it. I can never forget the old town in the gulch, or you, or Teddy, or the memory of dear old Johnny. We are all getting along in years, though you are still a mere youngster, as compared to some of us; for instance, this poor old guy, who is now battling along to his 86th birthday next July. So far, I am doing all right, though I had a rough time in hospital last June, with a bad case of ptomaine poisoning, contracted in a restaurant in this lousy town. Then, too, family troubles have beset me. My wife has been in rest homes for over two years at heavy expense and now my daughter, living in Oak Park, Ill., with her daughter, has had serious domestic trouble, which means that the old man has to

shell out. Only to-day, I am sending her a cheque for \$1000, to help her along in her trouble. Eventually, I suppose they will have to join me here, but, in a small house, with an old man who is far from a good life risk, the outlook is not too bright for me. Nothing but trouble seems to lie ahead, except with regard to my sons, Winston and Dr. Frank. They are both fine and a great source of pride to me. Frank has a wonderful practice here and a lovely home, with fine wife and three little ones, the oldest nine, and the others five and three. Winston re-married just about two years ago and is doing well with a prominent firm of advertising in the city. I am sticking it out alone, but have reached the point where I just simply cannot cook for myself. So, a woman comes in every afternoon; makes my bed, tidies up the place and cooks a good meal for herself and me. It is not an ideal existence, but the best I can do. And, believe me, it is expensive. My little pile has been seriously attacked and, if I live much longer, there is no knowing what will become of me. You might be interested in knowing that my Uncle Bill Norman, of Spokane, passed away year before last at the age of 96, while my lone sister, in England, will be 89 in June. Sad to say, she has lost her eyesight and I am now deprived of her wonderful letters of old. She has a wonderful helper to cook for her and otherwise look after her, and a young woman comes in now and then to write brief letters for her to me. But they are nothing like those she used to write herself. And so it goes, dear Alma, nothing but trouble all around, with the timekeeper about ready to count me out. But, taking it by and large, I have had my moments and my thoughts turn ever to the old mining districts I have known, all over this continent, clear up to Norman Wells, The Canol Project and the Alaska Highway and every mine worthwhile in all this West.

That's my story in brief, dear Alma. Now tell me yours. What are you doing still in Sandon? I thought the curtain had been dropped upon it for good. What's become of the Reco Hotel and the Reco mine? Who's there yet and who is'nt? Where is our good friend Duane an all the mix-up? I noted that Cody-Reco had a serious sinking spell~~s~~ and is now very inactive. But what'~~s~~ doing there. Is the mine closed down or muddling along as usual? What of the Reco? Have you sold it to Duane or what plans have you in mind. Whatever they may be, I wish you all the luck in the world. And how's Teddy? Give him my very best. I suppose by this time he is at least Mayor of Sandon. In short, dear Alma, sit right down and tell me all the news and if ever you should take a notion to visit California, please remember there is a spare room for you here and as good a meal as I can command. I can never forget the good old Slocan, or the dear friends of the days that are gone. May good luck and riches be your portion before it is too late. Long ago, when you were the busy and gracious telephone operator in the old days! But you did a grand job with my dear old friend, Johnny and whatever size your eventaal reward may be, God knows you have richly earned it. This is just a sample initial letter. I want to keep track of you always. My dear love goes to you, as ever and my very best to Teddy and anyone else there who may remember an old inhabitant of the good old days. Once more, my love Alma. I shall be anxiously awaiting your reply. Dñnt delay it. Once more, my love and very best wishes.

SIDNEY.