

# Ring Reminiscences

— Fights and Fighters —  
(By JAMES PENDERGAST)

The Tanana was a much shallower river than the Yukon. Sand bars are constantly shifting. Good steamboat men have an almost uncanny knowledge of the whereabouts of bars by close observation of ripples, currents, floating debris, etc. A captain gets his appointment by his powers of observation and judgment in that respect. It is not necessary that he have a "deep sea" captain's papers. If a boat strikes a bar going down stream, it is a serious affair. If left even for a few minutes, the swift current digs the sand away from under and the boat is forced farther on the bar. A long log "sweep" is attached near the stern and let out at a right angle, secured by wire cable. The pull of the swift current on the boat off will gradually tow the boat off the bar. If she gets in too far on the bar and the sweep is ineffective, a wire cable must be run to a tree or "dead man" on shore as early as possible directly astern. Then the steam captain aboard will gradually pull the boat clear. Striking a bar going up river causes little trouble. The current soon drives the sand from underneath and the boat floats off.

Nearly all the officers were formerly steamboat men from the Mississippi and Fraser rivers. They were past masters in river navigation. By reason of their perspicacity they could navigate any and all rivers. During World War I the British Government took several to the Euphrates river in Asia Minor to transport her Indian army up the river to fight the Turks. Turkey was an ally of the Kaiser at that time. It was quite an object lesson in the resources of the Empire at that time. One of our own "native" sons in the person of Capt. Orr, a steamboat captain on the Fraser, made a visit to his home in French River, P.E.I. while en route to the Euphrates.

I had a bit of experience on a bar on the last trip out from Dawson, Oct. 15, 1911. The Barrington brothers, formerly of Seattle had a smart steamboat

named the Vidette—a former N. W. M. P. craft. They carried freight up and down the river during the summer, and just before their last trip to White Horse they announced that they would take passengers. She could take forty or fifty. Immediately the White Pass Co. which had a monopoly of passenger transport announced a cut in passenger rate from \$50.00 to \$1.00. Naturally the Barrington boys had to meet the "cut"—about thirty or thirty five went on the Vidette. We pulled out at 12.30 a.m. They planned to go up river two or three miles and tie up till morning. About six o'clock in the morning I was awakened by a heavy thud and a scraping sound. There was quite a commotion. Some one shouted "We're on a bar". Daylight was just breaking. I dressed quickly and went down the companion way to the lower deck. I met Syll Barrington on the lower step of the stairs. He asked "what's the matter?" I told him we were on a bar. His face blanched white. My first thought was that it was a plot to wreck the ship and collect insurance. It looked suspicious—but one glance at Barrington's despairing face changed that idea. A deck had had made a careless insecure tie of the cable to a tree, and it had worked loose with the motion of the boat in the wind during the night, and it drifted silently down stream about a mile till it struck the bar. Several "lines" were run to the bank and "dead men" sunk, but the pulls were too diagonal—a more direct fore and aft pull was required—and the boat was being pushed farther on the bar every minute.

Everyone was getting anxious. We were supposed to get to the polling booth at White Horse (430 miles) in five days. The Yukon Territory election at that time was deferred a month after the general Federal election. About twenty of the passengers went ashore to scan the situation and see if we could help. There was a small piece of rock beach in direct line with the boat. It was impossible to dig into it to place a "dead man" to which to attach the cable leading from the capstan on board. For those not familiar with the operation I might explain that it is put in by digging a trench about 6 or 8 feet long and two feet wide and putting in a fair sized log, strong enough to stand the strain, and attaching the cable around it at its centre, then driving stakes obliquely above the log and filling the trench with earth or rock.

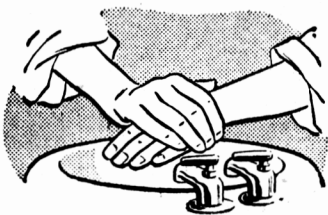
Chances for a modus operandi looked pretty poor, but I happened to look closer to the river bank and saw a bunch of flat porphyry rocks of all sizes—many tons of them, which gave me what must have been a new idea for the experienced river men. I told them, "boys we can lay our log on the flat rock bottom," many hands make light work, we can carry ten tons of rock and place it over and in front in a short time." Night was coming on and everybody worked with willing hands and hearts. Capstan, cable and "dead man" stood the heavy strain and the Vidette was off the bar at 6 o'clock a.m. with full steam for White Horse after 24 hours on the bar. When the boat goes free with cable slack, it is cut as close to the "dead man" as possible and the short piece left. Only a few feet of cable are lost and the cable cutters man their small boat and get aboard. I have been told that the big mound of rock still remains intact and is called by the name of yours truly. It is strange that the spring break up of ice, or high water from the mountain tributaries in July did not scatter it. The remaining part of the trip was serene and lovely.



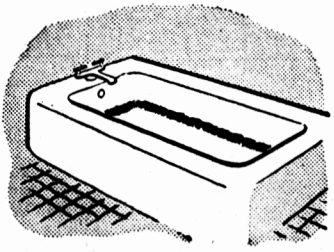
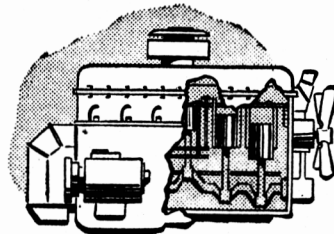
# PEERLESS HEAVY DUTY MOTOR OIL CONTAINS DETERGENTS JUST AS MODERN SOAPS



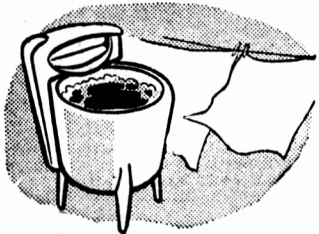
Modern washday detergents have successfully washed clothes cleaner and have done away with "soap scum". Now, detergent additives have been added to motor oil.



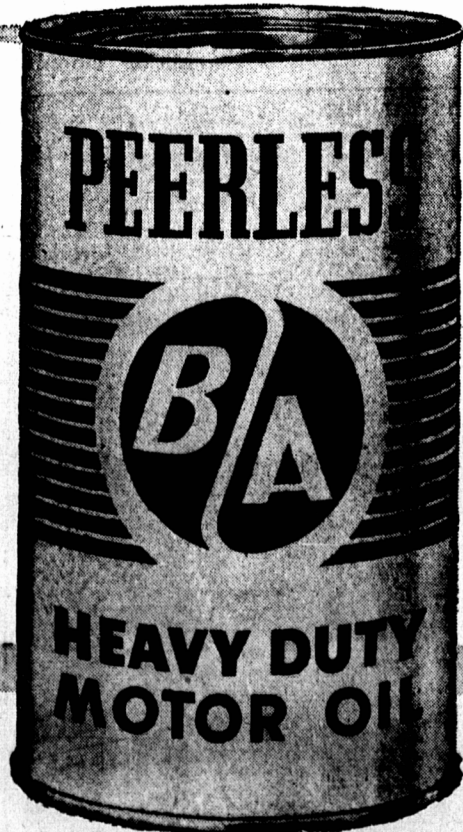
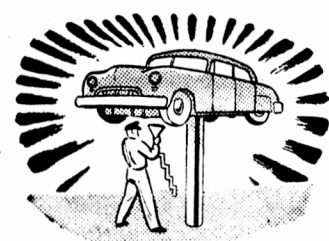
You could actually wash your hands with the detergents that have been added to the new Heavy Duty Motor Oils. Just as these detergents free dirt from your hands, they free sludge, carbon and varnish from vital engine parts.



You have noticed how a non-detergent soap leaves a ring around the bathtub in hard water! So too, a motor oil without detergent additives allows harmful deposits to accumulate on cylinder walls, piston rings and other engine parts.



After using a modern washday detergent in your washing machine you have seen how the dirt is drained off in the water when the tub is emptied! In the same way, sludge, carbon and varnish are held in harmless suspension in the oil and drained away when your crankcase is emptied... leaving a cleaner motor.



Today's high compression motors must be kept clean internally for peak performance. New Peerless Heavy Duty Motor Oil is B-A's answer to the lubricating demands of these motors. Peerless Heavy Duty contains special detergent-dispersant properties that actually "wash your motor while you drive". And it lubricates completely. For late model cars, heavy duty oil is a must. In all models, Peerless Heavy Duty Motor Oil means finer engine performance, longer engine life.

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