

[Printed letter head struck through]

316 West 126th St
New York, Mch 13th

Dear Papa,

I will send you my copy of Summons and Complaint as soon as I can get a large envelope. As yet nothing in view. But few of the fellows who had any sort of a job at M & P's are placed as yet. Just now it seems very hard to get any sort of a position. I am now going to set forth a proposition to you which I have been thinking seriously of for a couple of weeks and about which I have inquired among people thoroughly qualified to give a sound opinion. As you are aware, for the last two years but most especially for the last six or seven months the Alaskan gold discoveries have created a profound agitation in financial and buisness [sic] circles in both America and England. On talking over the matter with a man who is thoroughly well posted on the subject and who also has invested largely in Alaskan enterprises mining, transportation etc [sic] ~~and~~ extensive experience in both new and old countries was strongly advised to go. Judging from reports from the best authorities a young man with good health, intelligence and habits can go to Alaska and from the start make at least a large excess of wages over and above expenses and by remaining there and watching his chances for one, two, or three seasons can be pretty sure returning home with very considerable savings. Of course there are several ways of accomplishing this. The one most generally followed getting it out of the ground by hard knocks. There by taking advantage of the peculiar conditions of buisness [sic] at the seat of a mining craze or by acquiring titles to mining claims and subsequently disposing of them. Under United States laws a claim of twenty acres can be taken up at a time and a title gained by doing the assessment work upon it which in practice is almost nominal. The Alaskan gold excitement has only begun to be felt in financial circles in New York and London within the last six months yet today there are scores of people here and elsewhere snapping up Klondike property in the interest of London capitalists who will subsequently bring them out as companies there and in New York City itself every week one sees new Klondike properties put into companies and offered to the public.

The board [sic] of directors of many of them include the most conservative and important financiers and buisness [sic] men of the United States. Many of the companies organized are no doubt fakes in which the public are fleeced. One thing is certain and that is that the Alaskan gold

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fields are generally demonstrated to be so rich that all unite in saying that the dealings in these properties and the excitement pertaining [sic] to them must increase year by year for several years. By every prediction we feel forced to the conviction that the present finds will prove to be greater than that of 1849 in Cal, 1856 in Australia or of the later gold and diamond rush to South Africa. Such extraordinary events happen but once or twice in a man's lifetime and I intend, if it is in any way possible, to avail myself of the present opportunity. I can at least go there, work for someone else, perhaps, for a time until I become familiar with the country and its conditions then set to move to secure a good claim. Of course we all know thousands will go and fail but it will be for the same old cause which keeps most miners poor. Drink and cards as soon as they make a decent stake. I am quite willing, to put up with two or three years of hardship in order to make a fair start in life, even more so since I have seen enough of New York to know that it can't be done here with any certainly whatsoever without either large means or powerful influence. Buisness [sic] here is every day concentrating more and more into giant [consoms?] where great capital is required and even if one by painstaking work with a buisness [sic] house for a number of years gains a good position he might easily loose [sic] it in a week by the buisness [sic] being [?] into a corporation whose new men would control or even as poor Joe did with the brutal Reserve. The cost of transportation to the Klondyke [sic] with suffient [sic] stores etc. will amount to about \$700 and people who have already been there tell me that \$1000 will over all expenses from New York. One old miner, an old 49er told a friend of mine "Go there as soon as you can, keep your eyes open and mouth shut, keep away from gambling and drinking saloons, work and you can't fail to come home in 2 or 3 years a rich man." It is but natural that in an undertaking like this I should first go to you for help and approval. I will make a clean buisness [sic] proposition to you. If you supply the money necessary on my return the first use any money in my possession would be put to would be to pay [sic] the money loaned and 10% of all profits or (Proposition 2) On my return the first use any money in my possession would be put to would be to pay [sic] back the money loaned and 25% of all profits until the total amount should amount to five times the amount loaned. The money loaned to be in either case guaranteed by my share in the New Orleans property. Hoping to have an early reply to my letter as I want as much time as possible, should you not care to do this, to make other arrangements.

Your aff. son

Rob

P.S. Please remember me to the Richardsons and tell Mrs. Richardson I'll answer her letter very soon.

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