1. **[Whitehorse Daily Star](https://www.whitehorsestar.com/)**

<https://www.whitehorsestar.com/History/the-dalton-trail2>

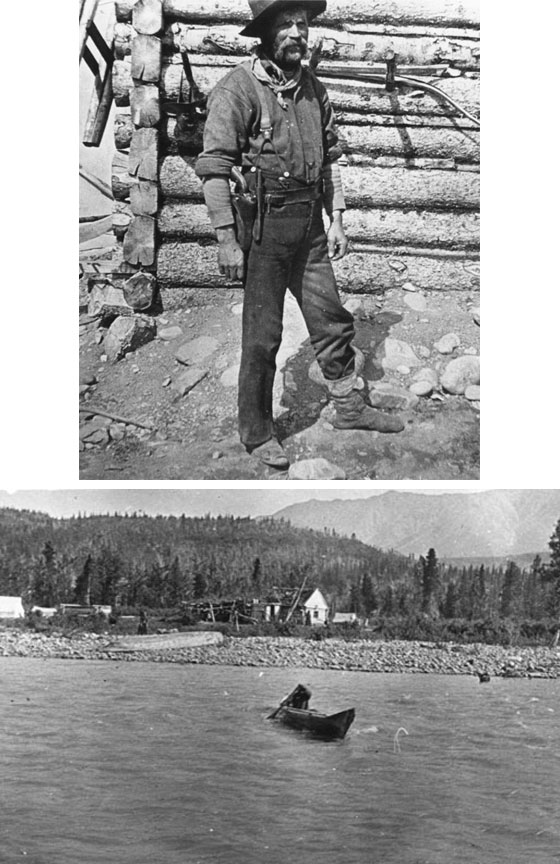


Photo by Yukon Archives

Above: A rare photo of Jack Dalton, taken in March, 1898 at Dalton Post. Below: Part of the Dalton Trail, 1898. The trail passed over all kinds of terrain, from "good hard road covered with reindeer moss" to mosquito infested swamps. The overall opinion was that Jack Dalton showed good judgement in laying a trail that was easy on horses and cattle. MacBride Museum photos

**The Dalton Trail**

Visitors to the Yukon and Alaska are always interested in the history of the areas through which they travel.

By **Whitehorse Star** on **June 1, 1966**

THE DALTON TRAIL

305 Miles from tidewater to the river

By William D. MacBride

Visitors to the Yukon and Alaska are always interested in the history of the areas through which they travel. One of these is the route traversed by the Haines Highway, which follows to some extent "The Dalton Trail" of gold rush days - 159 miles from tidewater at Haines, Alaska, to Haines Junction. Mile 1016 on the Alaska Highway in Yukon Territory.

From the Archives of the Alaska Historical Library and Museum at Juneau, the Northwest Mounted Police, and photo albums and documents of Henry Dow Banks of Springfield, Mass. on a journey over the Dalton Trail in 1898, a brief history of Jack Dalton and his famous trail has emerged.

In 1898 the trail used early in the spring and late fall commenced from Haines Mission, and all freighting at that time could be done with wagons or carts to within three miles of the foot of Chilkat Summit.

The road passed through the Indian village of Klukwan and up the Chilkat river about three miles to its junction with the Klahena river and continues to Dalton Post. Both rivers had to be crossed and recrossed about forty times and as the wagons travelled only when the rivers were breaking up in the spring and just before they started to freeze up in the fall, nearly every crossing made was dangerous to man and beast.

In the spring the edges of the rivers were solid masses of ice, and in the centre a swift running stream, nessitated the wagons dropping several feet or more from the ice to the river bottom, and constant quicksands were also prevalent.

The poor condition of the trail induced Mr. Dalton to cut out and build a good trail for pack horses, from Pyramid Harbour to the top of the first summit a distance of about 60 miles. It was a trail which could be used from the time snow melted until very late in the fall.

About ten miles from Pyramid Harbour, the trail cut off to the south and entered a range of mountains, keeping away from the Chilkat river until opposite Klukwan at the mouth of the Salmon river. The crossing there was deep but not swift accept on very warm days when the water rose rapidly. Two men were drowned there in 1898.

The climb to Chilkat Summit, (not to be confused with the Chilkoot), was about 1700 feet of steep zig-zag trail, and was the only steep climb on the entire route. In general the road was free from rocks over firm sand, and easy on horses and cattle. All swamps or boggy places (and there were numerous) were corduroyed with small logs, and a good many substantial bridges built.

The laying out of the trail showed very good judgment. there were few steep grades and wherever possible a gradual incline was followed even at the expense of circling instead of climbing over a hill.

A toll of $2 per head was levied on all cattlemen going through, although having to pay the toll, gave Jack Dalton great credit for his trail job.

Dalton employed an American surveyor and his staff during the month of July, 1898, to make a survey of the trail and map out the route. He also applied for a charter under the Oregon laws, which then applied to Alaska Territory.

Boulder Creek is where he and other Americans claimed the international boundary to be, and it was where they ended the survey of the road. This creek is between eight and ten miles below the Dalton Trail Post. (A road to Dalton Post leaves the present Haines Highway about Mile 106. Nothing is left there now except a number of log cabins and a grave-yard.)

There were a large number of people in and around Shorty Creek Mining District (a few miles west of Dezedeash Camp, Mile 125 on present Haines Highway), but no policy near that point to intercept liquor being brought through British Columbia into the Yukon Territory. Police detachment was therefore placed at Dalton House, at the Crossing of the Alsek river, and a barrack was erected there in August 1898.

On Oct. 4th, 1898, a census of the inhabitants in and around Dalton House revealed a population of three white men and over one hundred Stick Indians. There are several lakes in the vicinity of Dalton House such as Klukshu, Dezedeash and the Kathleen lakes. Several families of Stick Indians were camped around these lakes.

The trail from the first summit led on over a good hard road covered with reindeer moss to Rainy Hollow, about eleven miles from the Summit. At this place there is a slope of over one hundred acres covered with a grass similar to Wild Timothy.

At Glacier Camp, twenty miles further on there were 26 glaciers in full view. The next stop was Bear Camp, 25 miles from Glacier.

The trail was fairly good, crossing over a large area called "Mosquito Flats," so named because of the ferocity of the insects infesting that sections. Bear Creek today is a small shallow stream emptying into the Alsek River used by the coast salmon coming up to spawn in the lakes. The trail crossed this creek to a point two miles further on, the first crossing of the Alsek river.

It continued through timber up a rather steep hill to where the British Columbia line (60th parallel) separates the Yukon Territory; thence on over a good trail to the second crossing of the Alsek, where Dalton House was situated, fifteen miles from Bear Camp.

Leaving Dalton House, the trail continued along a very steep hill for one mile from the detachment, then over a very good road to Klukshu Lake, a distance of twenty miles. Here another trail branched off to the left in the direction of Shorty Creek. (This trail is now followed by the Haines Highway along the west side of Dezedeash Lake.)

The next camp was Pennock's Post about thirty miles distant, then Camp Storey, eighteen miles. Pennock's Post, Champagne Landing and Camp Storey were points where Lieut. Adair's party built cabins for prospecting purposes.

The old trail continued to Hutshi Lake, head of the Nordenskiold Lake. (The Alaska Highway crosses the old trail near the settlement of Champagne, Milepost 974). It then followed the Nordenskiold river to near Five Finger rapids and Rink Rapids of the Yukon River, a point 235 miles from Dawson City.

The total length of the original Dalton Trail from Haines to the Yukon River was approximately 305 miles. The trail was used by a number of cattle drives. The cattle were shipped from Seattle, Washington or Vancouver, B.C. by ocean steamer, approximately 1000 miles, then driven over the Dalton trail to the Yukon river, and taken by scows down to Dawson City.

It was also patronized by pack trains, and by individuals on horse back. Dalton kept a number of horses at each end of the trail. An old Dawson newspaper stated that: "The Barringtons of Stikine river fame had a small steamer called the "Willie Irving", which operated from Dawson upstream to Rink Rapids, connecting there with transportation over the Dalton to Pyramid Harbour on Lynn Canal, 17 days Dawson to Seattle."

Dalton charged $150.00 for the trip from Rink to Haines including horse and maintenance, but the majority of the travellers elected to use the route to Skagway, Alaska.

After completion of the White Pass railroad from Skagway to Whitehorse in 1900, the Dalton Trail gradually faded away. The area it traversed became again an untravelled wilderness, except for some continuing mining operations, until the construction of the Haines Highway by the U.S. Army in 1943, at an estimated cost of $10,000,000.00.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF JACK DALTON'S CAREER

1855 - Jack Dalton was born in the Cherokee Strip, probably in the present state of Kansas.

1874 - He worked as a logger at Burns, Oregon.

1882 -Spent some time as a cowboy on the Hadley Ranch in Baker, Oregon. Left to avoid prosecution for "shooting scrapes".

1883 - Went to San Francisco and shipped out as a seaman on a sealing vessel which wintered at Herschel Island, at the mouth of the Mackenzie River.

1885 - He was hired at Sitka by Fredrick Schwatka to accompany the New York Times expedition to Mt. St. Elias.

1890 - Accompanied the Frank Leslie Exploring Expedition from San Francisco to Chilkat country.

1891 - Was engaged for a private exploration of the Chilkat Pass by E.J. Glace, a writer for Century Magazine.

1892 - It is believed that he operated a small trading vessel in the Juneau area.

1893 - Was tried and acquitted for the shooting of Jack McGinnis, a cannery worker.

1894 - Leased a parcel of land and a warehouse at Haines Mission for the purpose of conducting a trading business with the Indians.

1896 - Established a trading route from Pyramid Harbour to the Yukon River near Rink Rapids, which included Pleasant Camp and Dalton Post.

1897 - Was hired by Goodall, Perkins & Co. to drive their cattle to the interior.

1898 - Guided parties over his Dalton trail.

1899 - Mining activity commenced at Porcupine Creek and continued until a flood in 1906 destroyed the flumes.

1903 - He built the Lindsay Hotel at Porcupine. Gold output on Porcupine Creek reached about $150,000 per year.

1905 - Made a financial settlement with Guggenheim interests in the Cordova Bay region for the construction of a copper ore loading terminal on his land. The amount paid was rumored to be upwards of $10,000.

1919 - Sold his Haines Hotel property to Steve Sheldon.

1921 - Went to the diamond diggings in British Guyana to investigate the interest of a group of Yakima, Washington business men.

1922 - Took up residence in Yakima, Washington.

1944 - Jack Dalton reached the end of the trail in San Francisco at the age of 89.

B. Yukon News

<https://www.yukon-news.com/letters-opinions/the-dalton-trail-followed-many-different-routes/>

## **the dalton trail followed many different routes**

In July of 1896, Willis Thorp, a butcher and business man from Juneau, Alaska, decided to try something new. He would take a herd of cattle into the Yukon and down the Yukon River to sell at the mining town of Circle City. He never made it.

* [MICHAEL GATES](https://www.yukon-news.com/author/michael-gates/)
* Feb. 12, 2010 9:00 a.m.
* [LETTERS](https://www.yukon-news.com/letters-opinions/)

In July of 1896, Willis Thorp, a butcher and business man from Juneau, Alaska, decided to try something new. He would take a herd of cattle into the Yukon and down the Yukon River to sell at the mining town of Circle City. He never made it.

Thorp’s herd of some 40 head of cattle arrived in Juneau in June, and departed some time later for Haines, Alaska. The herd landed there and Thorp moved the livestock up the Chilkat Inlet. The trail first went for more than a kilometre and a half through thick timber, then crossed a bad swamp, which was sometimes covered with tidewater, and then for three kilometres skirted the edge of the hills. That part of the trail was covered with big boulders.

They likely crossed Chilkat Inlet at this point and made their way up the valley of the Chilkat River, criss-crossing the meandering channels, spending considerable time in the icy river.

The cattle arrived in the Chilkat Tlingit village of Klukwan, without losing any of the herd, but all were footsore and lame.

They camped a day’s travel beyond Klukwan, on the trail being improved by Jack Dalton. Willis Thorp called his herders together and told them that they could expect trouble from Dalton. They must stand up for their rights, he said, and be ready to give the famed pathfinder a warm reception should he come within shooting distance.

Thorp told them to have their weapons cleaned and loaded and ready for instant action.

Nothing happened that night, but early the following morning, a single horseman rode rapidly up the trail. The newcomer came into camp and stopped alongside Willis Thorp who stood motionless, staring at him.

It was Jack Dalton, and he had a revolver prominently strapped in a belt around his waist.

“Thorp,” he said, “I want you and your crowd to get off this trail, and I want you to keep off of it, and I want you to be damn quick about moving.” Despite the defiant speech rendered by Thorp to his crew the night before, the cattle men submitted meekly.

Dalton had a reputation for a quick temper and the use of deadly force and was ready to follow them all the way to the Yukon River if necessary, to keep them off his trail. Thorp and his party turned off Dalton’s trail and instead herded the livestock up the Chilkat Valley and over the mountains to Kusawa Lake, which was then known as Lake Arkell.

From Kusawa they proceeded north, probably joining Dalton’s trail somewhere between Braeburn and Carmack’s Post, but by then, Dalton had made his point.

The Thorp party eventually arrived at the Yukon River, where they floated the herd downstream, but they only made it as far as the mouth of the Klondike River where they landed and sold their stock to the rapidly growing crowd of prospectors who were stampeding there to get in on the staking frenzy on Bonanza Creek.

The Thorp herd sold for a healthy sum and Thorp’s son Ed brought out $13,000 with him the over the Dalton Trail following summer.

The route they took over the mountains by way of Kusawa Lake soon became known as the Bounds Trail, named after George Bounds, a relative of Thorp, who was a member of the 1896 party.

In the ensuing years, thousands of head of cattle, sheep and horses were brought in over Dalton’s Trail. The Bounds Trail found its way onto maps but it was never used again for herding cattle to the Klondike.

The following summer of 1897, thousands of people were on the move to Dawson City. Several cattlemen brought herds north to make a profit feeding the insatiable demand for beef in the rapidly expanding gold rush town. The Dalton Trail proved to be the most successful route by which to bring them in.

Early in the summer Jack Dalton departed Pyramid Harbour on Chilkat Inlet with 60 Herefords, 40 oxen and two milk cows and headed up the Chilkat valley, then beyond that, the Klehini, before ascending and crossing over the Chilkat Pass.

From the summit, the herd followed the trail north, along the west side of the Tatshenshini River. This more or less parallels the route followed by the current Haines Road. At Dalton Post, which was about two kilometres up river from the First Nation trading village of Neskataheen, they forded the river. From there, the herd was moved north to Klukshu, along the Dezadeash River then up Mendenhall Creek to Hutchi, which was another Southern Tutchone settlement.

At Hutchi, rather than follow the traditional route down the Nordenskjold river to its confluence with the Yukon River, Dalton redirected his herd and moved them to the west side of Aishihik Lake. There they turned north and moved over high terrain to the north end of the lake.

From the settlement of Aishihik, he proceeded north with his animals, crossing the Nisling River and eventually meeting the Yukon River at Fort Selkirk. The cattle even gained weight during this 480 kilometre trek.

A Canadian surveyor named J.J. McArthur accompanied Dalton on the cattle drive and recorded the route, which subsequently appeared on many maps as the Dalton Trail. This was not the case, however.

The following year, according to Inspector Jarvis of the North West Mounted Police, “Mr. Dalton once did go through to Selkirk but says he will never attempt it again: he had to cross over a range of mountains 5500 feet (1675 metres) high, and the trail, or what was called a trail was something awful.”

Heading north from Hutchi, the Dalton Trail actually followed the Nordenskjold River until it joined the Yukon. Some of this section parallels the modern day Klondike Highway from Braeburn to Carmacks.

Upon reaching the Yukon, there was a sink-or-swim decision to be made. Some herds followed along the western side of the Yukon to points between Five Finger Rapids and Yukon Crossing. Due to the number of herds being moved north in 1897 and 1898, camps were set up all along this stretch of the river, and crews were busy slaughtering the cattle and building scows to transport the beef to Dawson City.

Other herds swam the Yukon River at Carmack’s post or else below Five Finger Rapids, and trailed down the eastern side of the mighty river, some reaching a point opposite Fort Selkirk, known as Slaughterhouse Slough. Here, these animals were also converted into carcasses that could be floated to Dawson on scows in the cool autumn season when the meat would stay fresh en route.

The Bounds Trail and the branch route from Hutchi to Fort Selkirk were interesting historical footnotes, but only confuse the matter of where the trail was actually located. To further confuse the matter, when the trail reached the Yukon, it forked and branches followed along both shores of the Yukon River.

Next week, I will write more about some of the interesting places found along the Dalton Trail.

<https://www.yukon-news.com/letters-opinions/places-on-the-dalton-trail-tie-two-cultures-together/>

## **places on the dalton trail tie two cultures together**

The route that became known as the Dalton Trail was long used by the Chilkat people from the coast of Alaska to trade with the people of the southwest Yukon and beyond.

* [MICHAEL GATES](https://www.yukon-news.com/author/michael-gates/)
* Feb. 19, 2010 9:00 a.m.

The route that became known as the Dalton Trail was long used by the Chilkat people from the coast of Alaska to trade with the people of the southwest Yukon and beyond. It was first captured on a paper map, drawn by Chilkat leader Khoklux in 1869 for American geographer George Davidson.

By the late 1890s, the traditional control of the trading rights on the Chilkat Pass by the Tlingit people had been usurped by American pathfinder and entrepreneur, Jack Dalton. For a brief period, during the gold rush, this trail was an important route to the Klondike and was re-named the Dalton Trail.

To the long-time First Nation residents of the country, however, the place is still imbedded with stories and traditions.

Dalton’s trail started at Pyramid Harbor, on the west side of Chilkat Inlet, where ships and barges from southern Canada and the United States disgorged their cargoes and cattle headed for Dawson City. The settlement included a salmon cannery, a small cluster of cabins and tents, and a Chilkat village. Corrals along the shore sometimes held hundreds of animals while they were waiting to be moved into the Yukon.

The trail north first led below the mountain face along the tidal flats to the broad flat flood plain of the Chilkat River. Jack Dalton invested a considerable sum of money laying corduroy on the trail, clearing brush and building bridges, and he charged everyone who used his trail a fee, including the Tlingit people who had used this route for centuries.

Dalton placed a toll booth on the east bank of the Takhini River, then later at a place called Murphy’s Flat. A toll was charged for every head of livestock and pound of freight carried over the trail.

The station consisted of a pole extending across the trail, and a shack beside the trail with one of Dalton’s henchmen waiting to collect the fee. According to one account, there was a big sign hanging there, stating the prices charged for each horse and head of cattle that went over the trail. To make a point, a gun cartridge was driven into the sign to punctuate one of the sentences.

Beyond that place were a number of stopping points along the trail that were born overnight and abandoned almost as quickly: Walkerville, a sawmill and small cluster of tents; Camp Sunshine (or Sunrise), which was shaded from the sun by the surrounding mountains, and Salmon City, with its temporary sawmill.

Porcupine, on the gold-bearing creek of the same name, proved to be the most productive and long-lived settlement on the Alaskan side of the border. Then the Dalton trail snaked across the gravelly meandering flat valley bottom, eventually crossing over to the eastern side of the valley.

Just up river from the Tlingit village of Klukwan (which was the traditional Tlingit starting point of the trail), at the confluence of the Chilkat and Klehini Rivers, was the settlement of Troy, and a short distance from it on the Chilkat River was the North West Mounted Police post of Wells. For a few years, Wells was the tentative international boundary point on the trail.

Pleasant Camp, located at the modern-day border crossing, which consisted of a quadrangle of impressive log buildings, was the headquarters of the North-West Mounted Police on the trail. This place has now disappeared into the dense coastal rain forest.

Dalton Cache, which was operated by Jack Dalton, was within spitting distance of the Mounties’ post and has been restored in an attractive setting behind the US Customs station.

Another Mounted Police Post was established 100 kilometres to the north beside Dalton’s trading post and warehouse on the Tatshenshini River, at the mouth of Klukshu Creek. Dalton established it a short distance from the seasonal Southern Tutchone trading settlement of Neskataheen, which consisted of a cluster of two dozen or so impressive log structures built in the fashion of the coastal Tlingit long houses. This was the most impressive settlement along the 450 kilometre-long trail.

Kluskshu village lay at the point where Kluskshu Lake empties into the creek of the same name. Diverging from the main trail here was a side trail that led to gold prospects on Alder Creek that were tested during the height of the gold rush in 1898.

According to oral tradition, a long time ago, a man named Akh Jiyish was hunting a moose and it got away, so he followed it until he came to a small stream, in which he saw a new kind of fish – salmon. He took the news back to his people and in the morning they returned with him to the location he had just discovered.

There, they found the fish were in such abundance that they moved their camp and the village of Klukshu came into being.

According to another traditional account, Akh Jiyish was a member of the Wolf moiety, and this creek belonged to the Wolf people, until, on a hunting trip, he killed his brother-in-law for killing all the game in the area.

To balance the ledger in this matrilineal society, the son of Akh Jiyish was to kill his father to avenge the death of his uncle, but seeing the grey hair on the older man’s head, he couldn’t do it. He killed a slave instead, and then, in partial compensation, Akh Jiyish transferred the fishing and hunting rights in the Dezadeash River and Klukshu area to the Crow people.

In a culture through which knowledge and social traditions are passed on by word of mouth, stories like those above, recorded from elders Johnnie Fraser and Jessie Joe by anthropologist Catharine McClellan, contain great value and importance.

They were told before Europeans arrived, and are retold to the present day.

The main trail led along the Dezadeash River, then north to the village of Hutchi. Between the two points were a number of log buildings constructed by a prospecting syndicate that explored the region in 1898. These buildings included Pennock’s Post, and Camp Storey, which have long since been abandoned, and Champlain’s Landing, which later became Champagne, and the site of a trading post and village on the trail from Whitehorse to Kluane Lake.

Hutchi, situated beside the third of a string of small lakes, consisted of a number of native houses, a cemetery, and a poorly-stocked trading post operated by Jack Dalton out of a tent. The First Nation population here in 1902 was estimated to be two hundred people.

The last developed stopping point along the trail, and the north end of the route was the Mounted Police Post at Five Finger Rapids, which consisted of a small cluster of buildings, and a sawmill.

Most of these sites have long since been abandoned and have returned to nature. A few of them, however, survive and flourish to testify to life and activity along a route once important for trade and commerce, both to Europeans and First Nations.

Michael Gates is a local historian

and sometimes adventurer

based in Whitehorse.

* 1. Sheldon Museum, Haines, Alaska

<https://www.sheldonmuseum.org/vignettes/jack-dalton-dalton-trail>

# Jack Dalton & the Dalton Trail

*  
Jack Dalton was either a "dapper, well-dressed ladies man" or a "scoundrel" depending on who you asked.*

The [Chilkat Tlingits](http://sheldonmuseum.org/Vignettes/tlingithistory.htm) controlled the three main trade routes to the interior over the Chilkat, Chilkoot and White Passes, thus monopolizing trade with the Athabascan Indians. The name "grease trail" was given to these routes, as the most important trade item carried over was[eulachon](http://sheldonmuseum.org/Vignettes/tlingitfishing.htm#EUL) oil extracted from the tiny candlefish that still run area waters each May.

The Ganaxtedih Ravens and the Deklawedih Eagles of Klukwan owned the route over the Chilkat Pass and the Tluknahadi Ravens of Chilkoot and Yendustucky owned the trails over the Chilkoot and White Passes. Other clans were allowed to participate in the trading, but the chiefs of the owning clans organized the trips and conducted the formal trading operations. Each Tlingit chief had an Athabascan trading partner with whom he dealt exclusively. Traditionally, Tlingits returned with furs, hides and copper nuggets traded from the Athabascans. Trading parties, lasting a month or more, often consisted of as many as 100 men, each of whom would carry 100 plus pound loads. Upon the arrival of white traders, the Chilkats acting as middlemen between the traders and Athabascans became quite wealthy.

*  
Chilkat Tlingits at potlatch hosted in Klukwan in 1900.*

This trade monopoly was not broken until 1890 when E. J. Glave, John (Jack) Dalton and several others were hired by Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper of New York to "explore the Interior of Alaska and discover the headwaters and tributaries of the Yukon, Copper, Alsek and Chilkat Rivers.

*  
“The Tlingits managed perfectly astonishing loads of 100 pounds and more on steep mountain trails and across broad snow fields...  In winter almost the whole trip is done on snowshoes, which are especially large to prevent the packer, who carries, in addition to his load, a gun and axe, from sinking into the snow under his weight.  Sleds were seldom used and the numerous wolflike dogs were nowhere pressed into service as draft animals.” Aurel Krause, Die Tlinkit-Indianer, 1885 (translated 1956 by Erna Gunther).*

*"...Dalton and I decided to stay to see the last of the caravan and pick up any odds and ends that might be left behind; we found plenty of this material with which we brought up the rear of the procession, loaded with a curious assortment of property. Dalton carried three pairs of snowshoes, one gold pan, one bread pan, four saucepans, (all about the same size, strung around his waist on a belt), besides which he had a rifle, revolver, ammunition, etc. I was loaded with one bucket, one big kettle, teapot, blankets, sack of books, camera, overcoat and a wild duck. We had pots and pans, whose musical melodies might have aptly served as the heralding strains of the Salvation Army; but the climax of our eccentric march was reached when Dalton packed me and my load on his back across a stream. How glad I was that no camera fiend was nigh to have taken that perambulatory mass of grotesquely, smothered humanity!"* Interior Alaska in The Alaskan 13 Sept. 1890.)

**

Jack Dalton "the scoundrel," who took over the Chilkat Pass trading route from the Tlingits and kept a shotgun loaded with rocksalt under the bar of his saloon to deal with unruly patrons.

Dalton and Glave, seeing the potential of a trade route, returned in the spring of 1891 to check the feasibility of taking packhorses over the Tlingit trails. *"Fearing that we might have a lot of soft snow to cross on the summit, we constructed sets of four snow-shoes for our horses... The horse’s hoof was placed in a pad in the center of the shoe, and a series of loops drawn up and laced round the fetlock kept it in place. When first experimenting with these, a horse would snort and tremble upon lifting his feet. Then he would make the most vigorous efforts to shake them off. Standing on his hind legs, he would savagely paw the air, then quickly tumble onto his forelegs and kick frantically. We gave them daily instruction in this novel accomplishment till each horse was an expert...."* E. J. Glave. Pioneer Packhorses in Alaska in Century Magazine Sept. 189

*  
Pyramid Harbor in 1885. This small settlement located across the mouth of the Chilkat River opposite present day Haines, grew up around a cannery and as quickly vanished when the cannery closed. The "harbor" has since filled in with silt.*

This journey was important to Alaska history in that *"It proves a possible transport where none before existed... The inaccessibility of the interior of Alaska has barred the miner and the prospector; but now the road is open."*Alaskan Sunlight and Shadows in The Alaskan 21 Nov. 1891.) Glave died a few years after this trip, but Dalton remained in Chilkat country. He developed trading posts and a toll road into the interior along the Chilkat "grease trail."

*  
Dalton Cache restored in the 1990s. This building can be seen at U.S. Customs at about 40 mile on the Haines Highway.*

At this time, Pyramid Harbor (west, across the Chilkat River from Haines) was the deep-water port for this region and the beginning of Dalton’s trail. By 1896, Dalton had established trading posts at Dalton cache (the building can still be seen at U.S. Customs 40 Mi. up the Haines Highway), Dalton Post (just off the highway at 106 mi. in the Yukon) and Champagne (on the Alaska Highway). Miners, prospectors, cattle drives and even a reindeer drive followed this trail to the interior. Approximately 300 miles long, the Dalton Trail led from Pyramid Harbor to Ft. Selkirk on the Yukon River. From Ft. Selkirk, log rafts floated men, horses and cattle to Dawson City. Dalton hired out to guide groups over his trail and in 1898, he established a short-lived pony express to carry mail and people between the Yukon and Pyramid Harbor.

*  
Travelers on the Dalton Trail. Using the toll chart below, calculate how much these people would have paid to use the trail (excluding the cost of "merchandise.") Email us the correct answer and get a prize! U.S. residents only please.*

Many fortune-seekers walked the Dalton Trail including the "Mysterious Thirty – Six." On March 9, 1898, 36 men arrived at Pyramid Harbor aboard the SS Farralon. Sworn to secrecy as to their destination and intentions, these men created quite a stir of speculation. Unofficially it was learned that ex-Lt. Adair of the U.S. Calvary represented the Standard Oil Company as he led these men, gathered from all over the country, in search of gold. They traveled up the Dalton Trail as far as Champagne and established Pennock’s Post. Finally, in April 1898, they arrived back at Shorty Creek where they staked and worked some 40 claims. Like most gold seekers from the days of ‘98, they returned with many memories and little gold.

By 1899, Dalton received official permission from the U.S. Government to charge a toll for the use of his trail. "*The trail did not become a toll-road until the spring of 1899, then by license of the United States Government, tolls were authorized on March 9th and April 10th to be levied as follows:*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cattle, horses, mules, burros** | $2.50 |
| **Goats, Sheep, Swine** | 50¢ |
| **Single horse with sled or wagon, unloaded** | $2.50 |
| **Two horses with sled or wagon, unloaded** | $5 |
| **Four horses with sled or wagon, unloaded** | $10 |
| **Dog team, two dogs** | $1.50 each (25¢ each additional dog) |
| **Merchandise of all kinds** | 1¢ per pound |
| **Foot passengers with pack of more than 25 pounds** | $1 |
| **Natives of Alaska with pack of 25 pounds or less** | free |
| DALTON TRAIL TOLL FEES | |

*No tolls, of course, could be collected under this license in Canadian Territory.*" Martin, Archer. Porcupine-Chilkat Districts. Report under the Porcupine District Commission Act 1900. Victoria, B.C. 1901.

The discovery of [gold at Porcupine Creek](http://sheldonmuseum.org/Vignettes/porcupine.htm), 36 miles up the highway from Haines, and of course the Klondike Gold Rush in 1898 caused brief flurries of use along the trail. By 1900, the White Pass and Yukon Railroad and the construction of new trails from Porcupine to Haines by miners wishing to avoid the toll, caused a decline in the use of the Dalton Trail. After a many thousand dollar and several year investment, Jack Dalton moved on to other projects. In the 1920s a road was cut to the Canadian Border along the east side of the Chilkat River. The [Haines Cutoff Highway](http://sheldonmuseum.org/Vignettes/haineshighway.htm), built in the 1940s, follows the general route of the Dalton Trail. Today, the old Tlingit "grease trail" provides an important road link to the interior of Alaska and the Yukon.

Cynthia Jones, 1988  
Updated by Blythe Carter, 2013

* 1. Alaska Mining Hall of Fame

<https://alaskamininghalloffame.org/inductees/dalton.php>

## *Jack Dalton*

#### (1856-1944)

  
Photo courtesy of Kathleen (Mike) Dalton.

Jack Dalton's life of nearly ninety years spanned an era of almost unparalleled change. In his role as Alaska's premier freighter during the Gold Rush days in the Klondike and Alaska he observed, directly, the replacement of men and horses by machines. In his old age, Dalton saw the encroachment of aircraft on railways and steamships, the earlier prime-movers.

Accounts of Jack Dalton's early life are sketchy at best and sometimes misleading. His birth has been variously placed in Oklahoma, Kansas, or the Cherokee Strip in 1855 or 1856. Most probably, he was born in Michigan about June 25th, 1856, the place and date of his birth given on Dalton's California death certificate. Published accounts of Dalton's life indicate that Dalton had only one or two years of formal education. The same accounts often describe him as a self-educated man who enjoyed reading and writing. Moreover, Dalton had many valuable pioneer skills. It is perhaps universally agreed Jack was not a man to cross as he had a hair-triggered temper, and strength that belied his stature. He was a good shot and was usually armed.

Dalton began his travels as a late teenager when some scrape caused him to move to Texas and change his name, temporarily, to Jack Miller. Under that name, he worked his way north and west and gained a reputation as a hard working and versatile ranch hand, but also as a formidable fighter. In about 1882, Jack moved to Burns, Oregon where he ran a small logging company. Trouble began when Dalton fired his cook. The cook returned to camp and at first opportunity pulled a concealed pistol on Jack who grabbed the cook's arm deflecting the shot. The two men struggled; Jack pulled his own pistol, and in the ensuing fight, the cook was shot fatally. The cook had numerous friends in the area, and Jack thought it prudent to leave the country for San Francisco, where he shipped northward on a sealing ship bound for Herschel Island and other points along the Siberian and Alaska coastlines. Trouble followed Jack, as the entire crew was arrested for illegally hunting fur seals and jailed in Sitka.

Dalton gained his freedom in the mid 1880s and immediately began to augment his earlier reputation as a man of great ability, but dangerous. At that time Dalton, about thirty years old, was an expert at anything related to horses, a skilled hunter, excellent rough cook, and adept with small boats of any type. He made a reputation as a negotiator with the southeast Indians. Dalton quickly learned "the Chinook Jargon," the trade language used along the north Pacific coast and he used it effectively. Although lacking in formal education Jack wrote well. His virile good looks made him attractive to the opposite sex. A Haines pioneer who first met Jack in 1906 described him, whom she had known as a frequent guest at her girlhood home, as a "dapper, well-dressed, ladies' man."

In the late 1880s and early 1890s, Dalton participated in several noteworthy expeditions. In 1886, Jack signed on as roustabout and camp cook with the Schwatka-New York Times expedition to climb Mt. St. Elias. The party began their ascent at tidewater in Icy Bay on July 17, 1886. They traversed rugged terrain for twenty-five to thirty days, crossed fast coastal rivers, and reached an elevation of about 5,700-feet before Schwatka's health failed, which terminated the first recorded attempt on the difficult mountain. At the conclusion of the trip, Dalton elected to stay in the Yakutat vicinity prospecting for coal, possibly for Sitka businessman Edward DeGroff. In one later evaluation, pioneering ethnologist Fredricka DeLaguna believed that Dalton was the premier explorer of the coastal region near Disenchantment Bay. In 1888, Dalton discovered a coal deposit not far from Bancas Point.

In 1890, Dalton joined the "Frank Leslie Newspaper Expedition" which was formed to explore the largely unknown land between the Alaska Coast and the Yukon. The expedition was led by E.Hazard Wells, and included E. J. Glave, A. B. Schanz, F. B. Price, and Dalton. Jack used both negotiating and practical skills for the expedition. Access to the interior over the so-called "Grease Trails" had always been controlled by the Chilkat band. In his earlier years the Chilkat chief, Kohklux, adamantly opposed the whites and had been in the party that burned the post at Fort Selkirk in 1852. By the late 1880s, Kohklux realized that the military power and sheer numbers of invading settlers could not be opposed. At odds with some of the Chilkat leadership, Kohklux proposed that the Chilkats open the trails and act as packers. With agreement on access and payment of considerable fees, the Leslie expedition began to make the ascent of Chilkat Pass. Each Chilkat packer carried about 100 pounds, ascending the Chilkat to its headwaters, snowshoeing across a glacier at the head, and then descending downstream to Kusawa Lake. Except for one Chilkat Indian, who remained as guide, the rest of the Chilkats returned to the coast.

The remaining expedition divided near Kusawa Lake. Most of the expedition continued to the Yukon on a raft. Dalton and Glave, however, went westward on foot until they encountered Lake Klukshu, south of Dezadeash. They then followed the Tatshenshini, the main tributary of the Alsek, to the settlement at Neskataheen, the principal trading center on the Alsek. At Neskateheen the local Indians were Athabascan; usually called the Stick Indians. Glave and Dalton left the village and walked sixty miles downstream to a fish camp where they bought a dugout canoe and hired Shank, a local guide. Later Glave wrote, "Dalton and an Indian called Shank are the two best men I ever saw handle a paddle." Today the one-hundred mile stretch of the Alsek River from the fish camp to the mouth at tidewater is considered a major white water challenge. Dalton and Glave were the first white men to boat the lower Alsek. Detailed accounts of the expedition in popular articles greatly increased interest in Alaska. Israel C. Russell, who headed the National Geographic Expedition in 1890-91, recognized Dalton's local prominence, naming the large glacier into Disenchantment Bay as Dalton Glacier.

In the spring of 1891, Dalton and Glave returned to the Haines area determined to try a new way of freighting. They brought four sturdy pack horses, each of about 900 pounds. The party arrived at Pyramid Harbor near modern Haines in May 1891 and found pasture near Klukwan. The consensus of other freighters, Indians, and miners was that horses would fail. Glave and Dalton, each leading two horses with 250-pound packs, followed the traditional trail to Neskataheen, where the Stick people had never seen a horse and doubted their practicality. At first, the Sticks showed no interest in helping Dalton and Glave. But after watching Glave and Dalton handle the horses, a leading Stick elder proposed that they use the horses to haul their trade goods and equipment northward toward the Yukon. Dalton and Glave agreed to haul the goods, and the Sticks were soon converted when they saw how easily and quickly the horses moved loads.

Dalton spent most of 1892 and part of 1893 in finding and improving a trail to the Yukon that could be used by his packhorses. Starting from Pyramid Harbor, Dalton's trail crossed the coastal mountains at the head of the Klehini and continued northward near Dezedeash Lake and within a short distance of Neskataheen. Dalton Post was established some eighteen miles south of Dezadeash and Champagne near Neskataheen. A post called Dalton Cache was established near the Canadian border near where the trail divided. One branch followed the Nordenskjold drainage to the Yukon then along the Yukon past Five-Finger and Rink Rapids to Fort Selkirk. Another branch went from Champagne to Aishihik Lake to Selkirk. Dalton found that the tough little pack horses could winter over near Dalton Post and Champagne.

The Dalton Trail was completed and in operation when the Klondike was struck in 1897. It remained in constant use until the Yukon and White Pass Railway was completed in 1900 and had some use for the next decade.

In its early days, the trail, sometimes with as many as 250 pack horses in a train, was not universally popular. Storekeeper Don McGinnis tried to stop Dalton by appealing to the Chilkat Indians to deny access. Matters came to a head on March 6, 1893 when Dalton went to McGinnis' store. In a fight, probably over the possession of Dalton's pistol, McGinnis was shot and died the next day on the way to the hospital at Juneau, where Dalton was jailed. On June 18, 1893, a jury held that the shooting was accidental and acquitted Dalton. Deputy Marshall Sylvester commended the jury, but a large group of Juneau citizens were dissatisfied and denounced both Sylvester and the verdict. Dalton paid little attention to a written notice from the group to leave Alaska or face the consequences.

Jack did have a circle of friends in Juneau. Probably the most influential, and a business associate for decades, was attorney John F. Maloney. The two men, often with other partners, established several businesses, usually with Dalton as operator and Maloney as part owner supplying management, legal, and accounting services. In order to keep expanding, Dalton typically would find someone that he trusted as manager, give him necessary start up supplies, then leave the manager to operate the business.

Dalton and Maloney were notably successful in the Haines area. In 1894, Dalton, with Maloney's backing acquired land from the widow of George Dickinson, the first trader in the area. Dalton built a warehouse, a store, and later the Hotel Haines on the Dickinson tract. Dalton continued his freighting business leaving hotel management to Jack Lindsay and later Charley Hackett.

In the summer of 1894 Dalton and Joe Kinnon, on speculation, assembled mining equipment and supplies to sell in the thriving Forty-Mile placer camp in Alaska. The men found a buyer long before reaching the Forty-Mile; the entire outfit was sold at the Pelly River. Kinnon elected to return to Haines; Dalton decided to visit interior placer camps in Alaska and return via the lower Yukon. He visited Forty-Mile and Circle then continued down the Yukon to St. Michael where he expected to gain passage to Seattle on the Revenue Cutter Bear. The vessel's legendary Captain, Michael Healy, recognized Jack from his illegal fur seal operation back in the mid-1880 and refused him passage. By January 1895, however, Jack was in Seattle where he acquired fourteen more horses for his freighting business.

Operations on the Dalton Trail were formalized when Dalton and Maloney signed articles of partnership under the name of J. Dalton and Company on March 9, 1895. They also set up the Dalton Trail Company (active from 1895-1903), at Pyramid Harbor, the Dalton Trading and Transportation Company, and, in 1898, the Dalton Pony Express Company. The first recorded herd of cattle was driven over the trail in 1896, when the Willis Thorpe party drove 40 steers, each with a pack load, to Carmacks from there they were rafted to Dawson. With the discovery of the Klondike, the trail became very busy in 1897. In June 1897, Dalton delivered forty oxen, two milk cows, and sixty white-face Herefords, of which forty head belonged to the North American Trading and Transportation Company, and the rest belonged to Dalton. On the trip north, only one animal died; the rest were delivered in good shape to Fort Selkirk on the Yukon. In the same year Dalton advertised pack horse and saddle horse service from the coast to Fort Selkirk in ten days; the trip from Selkirk to Dawson by steamboat added one more day to the trip to the goldfields.

Dalton had the part of the trail in United States Territory surveyed in June 1898 from Pyramid Harbor to the approximate Canadian boundary which was marked by a post as the Dalton Trail International Boundary Line. The surveyors noted some bridges and trail improvements, but otherwise the trail followed the stream beds. Dalton received U.S. government approval for charging a toll with the stipulation that the Chilkat people need not pay. Canadian historian Robert Coutts summarized Dalton's venture:

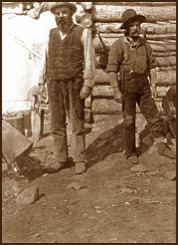
*"The only man to control a major transportation route into the Yukon and Klondike, Dalton ran pack trains and delivered livestock to the miners, he allowed others to use his trail on payment of a toll and backed his authority with his reputation and a gun. One group that refused to pay was accompanied for the whole journey by Dalton who kept them well away from his route . . . They lost most of their stock. No one else tried to travel without paying."*

The peak year of the trail was 1898, when thousands of head of cattle were delivered to Yukon destinations. The use of the trail as a major transportation route was doomed with the completion of the White Pass railway to the summit in February 1899 and to Dawson in 1900. The trail, however, continued to be used for several years, especially for livestock. The last recorded use of the trail was in 1906 when Dalton, E.B. Hanley and six cowboys drove 200 head of cattle to Ft. Selkirk.

Dalton had an inventive streak; he made improvements to the sleds used for commercial freighting, working with the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company. By 1897, the improved sleds were widely advertised along the Pacific Coast, as in the Weekly Examiner in Dawson: "The Studebaker Jack Dalton bobsled built to stand the rough hard usage over the almost impassable Alaska trails."

Perhaps because he was so tough, Jack was continually challenged. As the Klondike traffic increased, a notorious tough proposed to build a bar near a Dalton business. He told Jack that his proposed drinking establishment was legal and there was nothing that Dalton could do about it. Jack beat the man so badly with his fists that the tough decided to take his business plan elsewhere. In the winter of 1896, Jack and one 'Stick Indian' packer snowshoed to Dawson Post, caching supplies for the return trip along the way. The caches were necessary as men on foot could not carry enough food and supplies to survive. Some of Dalton's enemies among the Chilkats followed the men and removed all the caches. Dalton had anticipated this and had made a secret cache. He still had to make a fifty mile snowshoe run to find the cache, but on his return to the Haines area, Dalton casually remarked that he was a bit hungry because he could not find his caches. He accused no one and did not reveal the location of the secret cache for years. One Chilkat chief known as Cutewait or 'Indian Jim' shot Dalton but only nicked a finger.

In 1898, Jack commenced an important surveying job for Bratnober and Onderdonk related to the London Exploration Company, then active in Juneau. Bratnober's aim was a railway into the interior. Dalton found a good route that followed the present Haines Cutoff and Alaska Highway, which may have been superior to routes adopted latter. However, Bratnober could not find sufficient ore to justify the project and the venture died.



*Bratnober (left) and Jack Dalton (right), circa 1898.  
Photo courtesy of the Alaska State Library.*

In 1898, prospectors Mix Silva, Edward Findley (sp?), and Perry Wiley, grubstaked for Dalton, discovered placer gold on Porcupine Creek north of Haines near the Dalton trail. Subsequently, the Porcupine mining district was organized on October 22, 1898. On November 5, 1898, Dalton and his three prospectors located the Discovery Claim; additional claims were located by Dalton and his business partners E. B. Hanley and John Maloney. The district was stampeded in 1899 and prospectors found gold in the nearby creeks and gold or copper in areas as much as sixty miles distant, including the Rainy Hollow district in Canada. The first-years gold production was reportedly worth $50,000, of which about $40,000 came from Dalton's Discovery Claim.

The deposits in the district were rich but fairly deep and needed complex infrastructure. Miles of ditches and flumes were built to supply water to hydraulic lifts, sometimes called gravel elevators, where miners recovered the gold. Commercial support to the new district was conveniently supplied by the Porcupine Trading Company which was organized by Dalton, Hanley, and Maloney on August 1, 1899. The company brought in mining equipment and extended liberal credit to other miners. In 1900, Dalton and party shipped in 300 tons of equipment and supplies. The mines operated profitably until about 1905 when a major flood washed out a considerable amount of the mining infrastructure. Recognizing that they had probably extracted most of easily won gold, Dalton, Hanley, and Maloney sold their interests, profitably, in 1907.

The discovery of rich copper deposits in the Wrangell Mountains in 1900 led to a major move for Dalton and his operations. In 1901 Michael J. Heney, the legendary rail builder of the north, undertook a reconnaissance survey for a railway from the south Alaska coast to the interior. He found a rough but useable route up the Copper River, beginning near modern Cordova. Heney, however, knew of nothing rich enough to justify the construction of a railroad which would need three major river crossings and butts against two advancing glaciers.

In 1905, Heney was at the London office of Close Brothers, a major financial house. The financiers had quite good information about the richness of the Wrangell copper deposits and promised to finance the road if it was feasible to build. Heney thought of his earlier survey and immediately wired his New York office to engage Dalton and Sam Murchison to reexamine the Copper River route. The route was particularly controversial as engineers for rival routes starting from Valdez and Katalla had stated that the Copper River route was impossible. Furthermore, Stephen Birch of the newly constituted Alaska Syndicate had already begun construction from Katalla.

In September 1905, Dalton, Murchison, and surveyor J. R. McPherson undertook a new evaluation of the Copper River route and pronounced it feasible. The men returned to Valdez in late October of 1905 and sent their conclusions to Heney via a coded telegram. Heney met Dalton and Murchison in Juneau and filed a right-of-way application with the General Land Office. The Copper River route had no competition and was approved. Heney and Murchison went to Seattle to purchase supplies and equipment for the railroad. Dalton, McPherson, chainmen, and several of Dalton's Chilkat natives from Haines immediately began the detailed survery. Secretly they bought an abandoned cannery in Cordova for the south terminus of the railway line. Construction on the Copper River and Northwestern Railway (C.R. and NW) began in the winter of 1905-06. It soon was apparent that Close Brothers could not finance the line but the Katalla-based route initially favored by Birch and the Alaska Syndicate proved impossible, and the Syndicate bought Heney's group out and proceeded to construct the line which was completed to the mines in 1911.

Dalton and Cordova prospered in the construction years of the C. R. & NW Railway. Steel, gravel and other construction material had to be delivered timely to the 3,000 men working on the roadway and bridges. In 1907, after the sale of the Porcupine gold claims, Dalton moved his operations to Cordova and set up sawmills, trading and transportation companies that largely duplicated those that he had operated out of Pyramid Harbor and Haines.

Dalton's later ties to the C.R. and NW project are clouded by controversy. He staked three lode claims which, in part, underlay the Cordova terminus of the railway and docking facilities. In 1911, a court held that Dalton's claims were valid, but granted right-of-way to the C.R. and NW Railway

Dalton's later work also extended westerly into the Cook Inlet area. The U.S. Navy had searched the west coast for steaming coal with little success. In the summer of 1913, Dr. Holmes, chief of the U.S. Bureau of Mines and George Evans, a mining engineer consultant to the Navy went to the abandoned Watson Mine near Chickaloon at the east limit of the Matanuska coal field, Cook Inlet region. Dalton provided guide service and transported Holmes, Evans, their helpers, equipment and sampling gear to the site where Holmes and Evans concluded that a sufficient amount of coal could be mined from the Watson workings for the naval test shipment of 900 tons. Dalton took Holmes back to the coast and signed a cost-plus contract to deliver the large sample to a site near Knik, Alaska, where the coal could be loaded in boats.

The haul distance from Chickaloon to the coast was only about seventy-five miles but there were no roads to follow. Dalton went to Seattle to hire workers, buy supplies and equipment, and charter a steamboat since there were none available in wintertime on Cook Inlet and Dalton had concluded that the sample should be sledded out in the winter. He purchased 500 tons of bob sleds, harness, forage, tents and other supplies. Dalton hired nine men in Seattle and about twenty-five more as the expedition passed through Ketchikan, Juneau, and Cordova on the voyage north. The party offloaded at Knik, where he hired every available man and horse, on November 17, 1913. Sample bags were no small part of the off-loaded freight. Each sample bag, 800 in total, would be loaded with somewhat more than a ton of coal (nominally 1.125 tons).

Dalton commenced work immediately. To expedite road construction, Dalton took a small party with supplies to Chickaloon and began to work back toward Knik. A hired teamster and most of the crew and supplies began to work easterly from Knik. By the end of December, 1913, the last batch of forage and supplies had been cached along the route. January of 1914 was devoted to sampling the coal and road construction. By February 21st, 1914, Dalton's horse-drawn No. 5 Bob Sleds delivered 100 tons of coal every three days to the coast, and all 900 tons of coal were at tidewater by March 4. The crews had constructed about forty-three miles of road and numerous bridges.

Beside physical difficulties, Dalton's task was made difficult by bureaucratic interference. An auditor appointed by the Navy, a Mr. Swift, would not approve expenditures for wages and for supplies at Knik. Swift was appalled at Dalton's expenditures and operation. Dalton dispensed with Swift, who wasn't overly quick with his fists, and paid wages and bought supplies out of his pocket. Knik businessmen interceded on Dalton's behalf with the Bureau of Mines and Navy. At the final analysis, Dalton completed the job for $63,000, a job that the Navy had estimated would cost more than $80,000.

Chickaloon coal passed all steaming tests on the battleship U.S.S. Maryland. Coaling facilities were built and a narrow gauge railroad was constructed at Chickaloon. Some 8,000 tons were mined, but the coal was badly faulted and folded, and the mine proved too expensive to operate. Most of Dalton's trail work, however, was not wasted. The coal twenty-miles to the west at Eska and Wishbone Hill proved satisfactory in quality and existed in mineable quantities. A spur rail line from the Alaska Railroad to the mines at Eska and Jonesville on Dalton's route operated successfully until 1970 supplying coal to Anchorage, the railway, and to Anchorage military bases.

When the Chickaloon contract was completed, Jack returned to his work as chief freighter for the Alaska Engineering Commission, then beginning work on the construction of the Alaska Railroad.

Dalton also maintained his operations at Cordova until about 1915 when the Alaska Syndicate, forerunner of Kennecott Copper Corporation, purchased all his Cordova interests, including his fine home on Three Tree Point, which became the Kennecott manager's home. Dalton was out of Cordova by December 1916 as partner E. B. Hanley's wife Elizabeth wrote to attorney John Malony in Juneau: "Dalton sold out at Cordova and is now a Capitalist. Jack feels pretty big."

Dalton, earlier described as a ladies man, married twice. The first marriage, during the Porcupine boom at Haines, ended in divorce, after the birth of Jack Jr. and Margaret to the couple. In 1911, Jack married Anna Krippeahne in Cordova, and Anna bore two children, James in 1913 and Josephine, in 1916 about the time the Daltons left Alaska for the Seattle area. At least three of the children from the two marriages were notably successful. Jack Jr., from the first marriage, was a long-time General Motors executive. Josephine married U. S. Grant, a descendant of the Civil War general and President of the United States and became a well-known citizen of San Francisco. Dalton's second wife, Anna, died in 1929.

Dalton's second son, James W. Dalton, followed his father's career and earned his own Alaska fame. Jim returned to Alaska in the 1930s and earned an engineering degree from the University of Alaska in 1937. During World War II, young Dalton first worked for the Army Corps of Engineers in Fairbanks. James served with the Naval Construction Battalion (SeaBees) at Dutch Harbor and other locations in the Pacific theater of war. After the war (1946-1953), Dalton worked with the quasi-government Arctic Contractors on exploration of oil reserves held in trust for the U.S. Navy, then called Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4, on Alaska's North Slope.

James W. Dalton married Kathleen (Mike) Fitzpatrick in 1950 in Barrow. The Daltons had two children, George and Elizabeth (Libby). James Dalton had a fatal heart attack on May 8 1957 in Fairbanks. The North Slope haul road from the Yukon River to Pt. Barrow was named the Dalton Highway in Jame's honor. James Dalton's widow continues to live in Fairbanks, where she is a well-known civic figure.

Jack Dalton himself lived a long life. His adventures continued after he left Alaska, as he prospected for diamonds in British Guiana in the early 1920s. In 1929, Jack's long time physician and friend Dr. F. B. Whiting wrote, paraphrased, that Jack, although about 75, looked 55, and if attacked, the attackers would think that he was 25. Jack Dalton died in San Francisco on December 16, 1944 at the age of eighty-nine. In 1942, the U.S. Army reopened the Haines Cutoff part of the 'Dalton Trail' and completed it as part of Alaska-Canada (Alcan) Highway system, originally built as part of the U.S. Lend Lease Program.

*by the late John Mulligan*

*Jack Dalton's biography was abstracted from a well-researched and documented manuscript by John J. Mulligan of Juneau titled, Jack Dalton: The Pathfinder. Mining Engineer Mulligan, a member of the Honor's Committee of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation, in turn, particularly credited help that he received from Katherine (Kay) H. Shelton, Gladi Colp, and Anne Laura Wood of the historical section of the Alaska State Library in Juneau. Mulligan also noted research at Whitehorse in the Yukon, and aid from historical scholar Mark Kirchoff of Juneau, long interested in Dalton. Mulligan's original manuscript is in the files of the Foundation and the State Library.*

Today is Monday, 23-September-19.

E. Hougen Group, Whitehorse

<http://hougengroup.com/yukon-history/yukon-nuggets/the-dalton-trail/>

#### The Dalton Trail

The trail was known to the Chilkat Indians for centuries, and it was jealously guarded. So much so, that few gold-seekers used this route to the Klondike. That is until Jack Dalton came along.

The Chilkat called it the Grease Trail because they used to carry fish oil or grease, along with other trading goods, to the interior. In 1869, a senior officer with the US Geological survey in Alaska, convinced the Chilkat chief, at what we now know as Haines, to draw a map of the route. In 1882, Dr. Alfred Krause of the Bremen Geographical Institute, was the first white man to enter the interior over the "grease trail" as far as the Tatshenshini River.

Not much happened until 1890 when Jack Dalton arrived. He was part of a four-man expedition sponsored by the owner of the Frank Leslie Illustrated Newspaper out of New York. The paper's owner, W.J. Arkell, paid for the expedition to cash in on the reports of gold being found in the Yukon district. The four-man party made it to Kusawa Lake which they promptly renamed Lake Arkell. Here, the party split in two with Jack Dalton and E.J. Glave returning down the Alsek River to the coast. Dalton returned the following year and began building trading posts and gradually upgraded the trail, which he renamed Dalton Trail.

By 1896, Jack Dalton had his operation well organized. He built a home and a trading post at Pyramid Harbour, a post at what is now Pleasant Camp, and a main trading post at Dalton House, where he wintered his many horses. Dalton was thoroughly in charge of the Dalton Trail. In 1898, he brought in a herd of nearly 250 Oregon horses and started the Dalton Pony Express, the fastest service for mail and passengers between Pyramid Harbour and Fort Selkirk. A railway was proposed along the route, but the backers of the White Pass Railroad won the race to build the rails.

Still, the Dalton Trail was the only route to the Klondike suitable for driving cattle - or reindeer. Both these livestock were delivered to Dawson over Dalton's trail - for a fee paid to the trail's owner, Jack Dalton. This pioneering business-man stayed in the country until the late 1920s, when he retired and moved to Oregon. Jack Dalton died in San Francisco in 1945.

A CKRW Yukon Nugget by Les McLaughlin

1. Wikipedia

<https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dalton_Trail>

**Dalton Trail** est une route du [Yukon](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yukon) au [Canada](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canada) et d'[Alaska](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alaska) aux [États-Unis](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89tats-Unis). Elle est située entre Pyramid Harbor, à l'ouest de [Haines](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haines_(Alaska)) en [Alaska](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alaska) et [Fort Selkirk](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Selkirk) au [Yukon](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yukon). Elle fait 396 kilomètres (246 mi) de long.

À l'origine, le peuple Chilkat, qui est un groupe faisant partie des [Tlingits](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tlingits), contrôlaient ce passage, qu'ils utilisaient pour leur commerce avec les [Athabascans](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Langues_athapascanes" \o "Langues athapascanes). Ils avaient nommé cette route, la route de la graisse, à cause de l'huile qu'ils extrayaient des [poissons eulakanes](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thaleichthys_pacificus), principale source de transaction avec les autres peuples. Les [Tlingits](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tlingits) apportaient leur huile et la troquaient contre les fourrures, et pépites de cuivre que les [Athabascans](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Langues_athapascanes" \o "Langues athapascanes) apportaient. Le marché pouvait durer plus d'un mois, et réunissait une centaine d'hommes, chacun transportant 45 kg de marchandise.

Le système a perduré jusqu'en [1890](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/1890) quand E.J. Glave, John Dalton et quelques autres, mandatés par un magazine de New-York appelé *Leslie's Illustrated Magazine* pour explorer l'intérieur de l'Alaska, découvrirent que ce passage pourrait devenir une importante voie de commerce. Dalton et Grave y retournèrent en [1891](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/1891), avec des animaux de bât pour étayer leur hypothèse. Glave mourut quelques années après, mais Dalton resta dans la région, et développa plusieurs comptoirs, et établit un péage pour la circulation sur la route, que les prospecteurs ne tardèrent pas à appeler *Dalton's Trail*.

Pendant la [Ruée vers l'or du Klondike](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ru%C3%A9e_vers_l%27or_du_Klondike), de nombreux chercheurs d'or l'empruntèrent jusqu'à [Fort Selkirk](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Selkirk), tandis que des radeaux acheminaient animaux et bétail vers [Dawson City](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dawson_City).

En [1900](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/1900), la ligne de chemin de fer de la [White Pass and Yukon Route](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Pass_and_Yukon_Route) arriva à [Skagway](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skagway" \o "Skagway), ce qui entraîna une très importante diminution du trafic sur le Dalton Trail. La partie ouest de l'actuelle [Haines Highway](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haines_Highway) emprunte le même trajet que le Dalton Trail.