

## Gold Discovered!

by Sarah Collinge

On August 16, 1896, two **prospectors**, Skookum Jim and George Carmack, discovered gold nuggets while panning on Rabbit Creek. Their discovery pan yielded more than ¼ ounce of gold. The two men staked their **claim** and were instantly rich!

Within a matter of days, Rabbit Creek was renamed “Bonanza,” and the creek was staked by local prospectors from end to end. These local **prospectors** became known as the “Klondike Kings” because of the tremendous amount of gold they found over the next year.

During the time of the Klondike gold rush, many people were experiencing tight times as a result of the **economic depression**. This was a time when Americans experienced low pay and high unemployment. The depression that lasted from 1893 to 1897 had people praying for a miracle.

A year after the discovery of gold on Rabbit Creek, the people of Seattle believed they had been given their miracle. On July 17, 1897, the *SS Portland* docked in Seattle carrying at least two tons of gold. That same morning, people quit their jobs and began buying **provisions** for their journey to the Klondike. Within ten days, over 1,500 people would leave Seattle for the Klondike—they had **gold fever**!

**Claim:** a plot of ground staked by a miner to show where he or she can mine

**Economic depression:** a period of decreased business activity and high unemployment

**Gold fever:** greed and excitement over the possibility of finding gold

**Prospectors:** people who are looking for gold or other mineral deposits

**Provisions:** a stock of necessary supplies—especially food

### References:

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