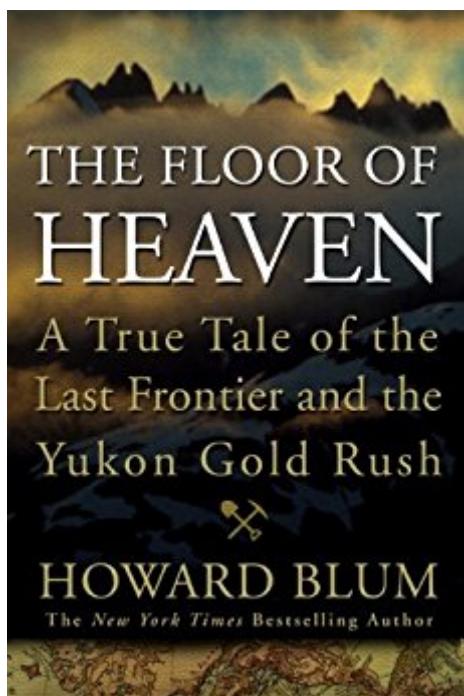


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The Floor Of Heaven: A True Tale Of The Last Frontier And The Yukon Gold Rush



Synopsis

New York Times bestselling author Howard Blum expertly weaves together three narratives to tell the true story of the 1897 Klondike Gold Rush. It is the last decade of the 19th century. The Wild West has been tamed and its fierce, independent and often violent larger-than-life figures--gun-toting wanderers, trappers, prospectors, Indian fighters, cowboys, and lawmen--are now victims of their own success. But then gold is discovered in Alaska and the adjacent Canadian Klondike and a new frontier suddenly looms: an immense unexplored territory filled with frozen waterways, dark spruce forests, and towering mountains capped by glistening layers of snow and ice. In a true-life tale that rivets from the first page, we meet Charlie Siringo, a top-hand sharp-shooting cowboy who becomes one of the Pinkerton Detective Agency's shrewdest; George Carmack, a California-born American Marine who's adopted by an Indian tribe, raises a family with a Tagish squaw, and makes the discovery that starts off the Yukon Gold Rush; and Jefferson "Soapy" Smith, a sly and inventive conman who rules a vast criminal empire. As we follow this trio's lives, we're led inexorably into a perplexing mystery: a fortune in gold bars has somehow been stolen from the fortress-like Treadwell Mine in Juneau, Alaska. Charlie Siringo discovers that to run the thieves to ground, he must embark on a rugged cross-territory odyssey that will lead him across frigid waters and through a frozen wilderness to face down "Soapy" Smith and his gang of 300 cutthroats. Hanging in the balance: George Carmack's fortune in gold. At once a compelling true-life mystery and an unforgettable portrait of a time in America's history, *The Floor of Heaven* is also an exhilarating tribute to the courage and undaunted spirit of the men and women who helped shape America.

Book Information

File Size: 7002 KB

Print Length: 434 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0307461726

Publisher: Crown (April 26, 2011)

Publication Date: April 26, 2011

Sold by: Random House LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B004GTLFLO

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #270,041 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #11
in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Americas > Canada > First Nations #13 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Canada #15 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Americas > Canada > Post-Confederation

Customer Reviews

As a lifelong Alaskan, I grew up with Alaska and Klondike gold rush stories. This book really adds a new dimension to the conventional stories about the Klondike strike. Its really nice to know a lot more about the people involved, Carmak, Jim and Charlie. I found that fascinating. I'd never heard of Charlie Siringo. WOW - a REAL super hero if he did all as described. And the thorough coverage of Soapy Smith's career really filled out my understanding of him. Maybe I was a bit shallow in that much of my reading was when I was 10 to 18 and before I could appreciate some aspects of Jeff Smith's career. Overall I really enjoyed this book. However I have some criticisms: There was some POOR editing in a few places. I can't imagine an editor that allows an author to write: "more then" when it should be 'more THAN', not once but at least twice in the book (a pet peeve of mine). In the last few chapters of the book, the language or sentence structure deteriorated somewhat.

Apparently the author chose to switch to a style imitating actual conversation and vernacular of the time, starting numerous sentences with: "Course" when ' Of course' was meant. That's all fine but I found it a bit distracting and a noticeable, almost annoying change in style from the initial chapters. Again, overall I really like this book for the depth of information he provides on some of the Klondike period's most colorful characters, including references. Thank you Mr. Blum.

Blum has the rare ability to write a history that reads like an adventure, using 3 men, one a cowboy turned Pinkerton agent, another a clever, creative, rascal of a con man, and the third, an AOW Marine whose discovery started the Yukon gold rush. The 3 men's lively back stories are independent of each other, but their lives intersect in strange, exciting, and big adventures that change the course of the history of the 2 regions. I enjoyed this work so much that I've gifted other readers--both adult and HS readers. I've also enjoyed the audio version which is very well narrated.

This true story that focused on 3 men who were involved in the Yukon gold rush was riveting. It was well written, fast paced and read like a novel rather than non fiction.

Blum is a history buffs author. Great details moves the sometimes confusing story tracks together.

If you read Howard Blums "American Lightning" then you are already familiar with the structure of this book. It follows the lives of three different individuals from the American West to the Alaskan frontier. The story lines are intertwined. BY mining a tremendous amount of personal information on the characters (and what sets this book apart) is Mr. Blum gives you what the characters were feeling whenever possible. This gives the book the feel of a novel with a good a old fashion who done it mixed in. The writing is clear, crisp, and keeps you flipping the pages. From criminals, prospectors, Indian tribes, and millionaires the feel of the times are brought forward. I noticed in one review there was some quibbling over factual information on geography but given the times, maps, place names were not as precise as they are now. I don't this detracts from the story one bit. If you enjoy good western stories. I would recommend this book.

Great read. Loved it.

I'll never travel to Juneau again without thinking about the story told in this book. A delightful and fascinating story

Blum weaves three stories together to paint a vivid picture of a fascinating period of North American life right at the turning point from wild West to settled America. I have read enough history of Alaska and the American West to appreciate the accuracy of his portrayal of three "types" of characters: the cowboy turned lawman, the perpetual con artist and thug, and the ambitious young man who becomes less admirable the richer he gets. If someone wishes to learn about life in the West and in the Last Frontier, this is a good book to read.

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