

Hank Snow

"THE BALLAD OF HARD LUCK HENRY"

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Artist Lyrics: Hank Snow

Lyrics for Song: The Ballad Of Hard Luck Henry

Lyrics for Album:

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Now wouldn't you expect to find a man an awful crank
That's staked out nigh three hundred claims, and every
one a blank;
That's followed every fool stampede, and seen the rise
and fall
Of camps where men got gold in chunks and he got
none at all;
That's prospected a bit of ground and sold it for a song
To see it yield a fortune to some fool that came along;
That's sunk a dozen bed-rock holes, and not a speck in
sight,
Yet sees them take a million from the claims to left and
right?
Now aren't things like that enough to drive a man to
booze?
But Hard-Luck Smith was hoodoo-proof--he knew the
way to lose.

'Twas in the fall of nineteen four--leap-year I've heard
them say--
When Hard-Luck came to Hunker Creek and took a
hillside lay.
And lo! as if to make amends for all the futile past,
Late in the year he struck it rich, the real pay-streak at
last.
The riffles of his sluicing-box were choked with
speckled earth,
And night and day he worked that lay for all that he
was worth.
And when in chill December's gloom his lucky lease
expired,
He found that he had made a stake as big as he
desired.

One day while meditating on the waywardness of fate,
He felt the ache of lonely man to find a fitting mate;

A petticoated pard to cheer his solitary life,
A woman with soft, soothing ways, a confidant, a wife.
And while he cooked his supper on his little Yukon
stove,
He wished that he had staked a claim in Love's rich
treasure-trove;
When suddenly he paused and held aloft a Yukon egg,
For there in pencilled letters was the magic name of
Peg.

You know these Yukon eggs of ours--some pink, some
green, some blue--
A dollar per, assorted tints, assorted flavors too.
The supercilious cheechako might designate them
high,
But one acquires a taste for them and likes them by-
and-by.
Well, Hard-Luck Henry took this egg and held it to the
light,
And there was more faint pencilling that sorely taxed
his sight.
At last he made it out, and then the legend ran like this-
-
"Will Klondike miner write to Peg, Plumhollow,
Squashville, Wis.?"

That night he got to thinking of this far-off, unknown
fair;
It seemed so sort of opportune, an answer to his
prayer.
She flitted sweetly through his dreams, she haunted
him by day,
She smiled through clouds of nicotine, she cheered his
weary way.
At last he yielded to the spell; his course of love he set-
-
Wisconsin his objective point; his object, Margaret.

With every mile of sea and land his longing grew and
grew.
He practised all his pretty words, and these, I fear,
were few.
At last, one frosty evening, with a cold chill down his
spine,
He found himself before her house, the threshold of
the shrine.
His courage flickered to a spark, then glowed with
sudden flame--
He knocked; he heard a welcome word; she came--his
goddess came.
Oh, she was fair as any flower, and huskily he spoke:

"I'm all the way from Klondike, with a mighty heavy
poke.
I'm looking for a lassie, one whose Christian name is
Peg,
Who sought a Klondike miner, and who wrote it on an
egg."

The lassie gazed at him a space, her cheeks grew rosy
red;
She gazed at him with tear-bright eyes, then tenderly
she said:
"Yes, lonely Klondike miner, it is true my name is Peg.
It's also true I longed for you and wrote it on an egg.
My heart went out to someone in that land of night and
cold;
But oh, I fear that Yukon egg must have been mighty
old.
I waited long, I hoped and feared; you should have
come before;
I've been a wedded woman now for eighteen months or
more.
I'm sorry, since you've come so far, you ain't the one
that wins;
But won't you take a step inside--I'll let you see the
twins."

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