

THE MALAMUTE

When the stars from the skies have fallen
And the smoke of the world's cleared away;
When Saint Peter marks "30" in Life's Book
And we meet there on Judgment Day;
When our trials and troubles are ended
And we're wise to the best and the worst;
When the time has arrived that the wise ones
Have told us the last shall be first;

When the men who've made good are
rewarded
And the losers are turned loose in Hell;
That's the time that a lot will be learning
The true reason and cause that they fell.
And I wonder when Peter gets busy
As he works out the tenement plan,
And when Heaven's thrown free for location
Will he confine the locations to man?

If he does, my claim's open for jumping
For I can't figure Heaven complete,
If the dim distant trails of the sky land
Are not pattered by malamutes' feet.

Cause I know it would never seem home-like
No matter how golden the strand,
If I lose out that pal-loving feeling
Of a malamute's nose in my hand.

And it's that way with lots of Alaskans
These men of our own last frontier,
Who tear into nature unaided
And who scarce know the meaning of fear.
Who live on lone creeks all alone here
Where the living and dying are hard,
And where oft times their only companion
Is a malamute pup for a pard.

He's a real chum with things coming easy,
He's a pal with things breaking tough,
He's a hell-roaring fighting companion
When somebody starts something rough.
He's a true friend in sorrow and sickness
And he doesn't mind hunger or cold,
And he's really the only one pardner
You can trust when you uncover gold.

He's a guard you can trust at the sluice box,
And he'll watch by your cache thru the night,

And if some cheechako tries to molest it
That cheechako's in for a fight.
As a pardner he's silent, but cheerful
With never a kick 'bout the trails
And if it wasn't for him in the winter
There never would be any mails.

He pulls on our sleds in the winter
He's first in the rushing stampede
He goes where a horse couldn't travel
And besides that he rustles his feed.
He takes a pack saddle in summer
And follows us off thru the hills
And when we go short on the grub pile
He shares up whatever he kills.

'Twas a malamute first scaled the Chilkoot
At the time of the great Klondike charge;
'Twas a malamute first saw Lake Bennett
And left his footprints at La Barge;
They hauled the first mail into Dawson,
That Land of the Old Timer's dream,
And when Wada first drove in from Fairbanks
He was driving a malamute team.

They broke the first trail into Bettles
With no guide save the lone Northern Star;
They freighted next year to Kantishna
And from there to the famed Chandelar.
They know the long trail to Innoko,
Tacoyna and Iditarod too,
For there's never a Camp in the Northland
But what these same malamutes knew.

They brought the first sport to the Nome
Beach
Where they showed up in action and deed
That the North dog is game as they make them
And besides that has plenty of speed.
He came home with the bacon from Candle
Like a bat out of Hell, thru the snow,
And the plunger that cashed in his "out tab"
Was his pardner, the Old Sourdough.

So it seems to me kind of unfair now
As we drift toward that permanent Camp
Where the angels are running a dance hall
And a millionaire grades with a tramp;
Where the trails are located on pay dirt
And a grub stake can never expire—

Well, if they shut out my dog, they can keep it
And I'll "siwash" it, down by Hell's Fire.

They herald the growth of the Northland
And progress is marked by their trail;
A railroad now goes where they brought out
The Seward-Iditarod mail.

He's first in the growth of Alaska
And without him this land would be lost,
For there's never a stream in this country
That the malamutes' trail has not crossed.

But you can't tell me God would have Heaven
So a man couldn't mix with his friends;
That we're doomed to meet disappointment
When we come to the place the trail ends.
That would be a low-grade sort of Heaven
And I'd never regret a damned sin
If I mush up to the gates, white and pearly,
And they don't let my malamute in.

Taken from: Rhymes of a Roughneck by Pat
O' Cotter
