

Don't Hurry to Hootalinqua

Quips the sourdough on Lake Laberge.
The current fast, four, five miles an hour.

Be sure to pull off and look:
trappers' cabins, rusted cast irons,
moss-chinked logs carved with names.
Don't rush the Thirty Mile to get
to Dawson. So many have.

Gold-era ghosts rivering the aspens
ask us what are you chasing so hard
that you're willing to miss U.S. Bend?
Don't hurry to Hootalinqua

past the high honey slopes, bore holes
of bank swallows. Wolf willows
line the shore. So quiet you can hear
bumblebees drunk on river beauty.

Don't hurry to Hootalinqua or
you'll miss the best part.