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Journal of the B.C. Historical Federation

F. J. Barnard

J. A. "Cariboo" Cameron

CARIBOO & NORTH

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Member Societies and their secretaries are responsible for seeing that the correct address for their society is up-to-date. Please send any change to both the Treasurer and Editor at the addresses inside the back cover. The Annual Return as at October 31st should include telephone numbers for contact.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL NEWS

Volume 25, No. 3 **Journal of the B.C. Historical Federation** Summer - 1992

EDITORIAL

How successful are theme issues? Readers occasionally mention them; friends of the magazine contribute works to them. We sought to attract new contributors, and to inspire writers by suggesting a favorite topic. The issues on "Women", "Education" and "Because of the War" drew many responses. A B.C. Historical News supporter in Kelowna assembled the manuscripts needed for the "Okanagan" issue. It took far more time and effort than anticipated to fulfil our objective. Some stories were already in hand when the theme "B.C.'s Coast and Islands" was announced, enabling us to present works from previously unknown writers.

The word "Cariboo" suggests many fascinating scenarios, yet our appeal for presentations by residents in that district was heeded only by Branwen Patenaude. Don Sale, with his vested interest in the Cariboo, made sure that at least two parts of the history were presented. Winston Shilvock, Marie Elliott and Tony Farr kindly prepared their look at happenings in the district in fairly recent years as well as pioneer times. We also introduce a new name, Lonna Kirkpatrick. Kirkpatrick, in Calgary, holds a wealth of well written material telling of her ancestors in the Cariboo; we look forward to sharing other episodes with you in future.

Readers – do you have suggestions/requests for future topics? Write to your editor, or write FOR your editor to share a favorite tidbit of history.

Naomi Miller

COVER CREDIT

Two names which are unmistakably woven into the fabric of Cariboo history are Francis (Frank) J. Barnard and J. A. "Cariboo" Cameron.

F.J. Barnard, left, was founder of Barnard's Express, commonly known as the Cariboo BX Express Company. At first Barnard, on foot, carried letters between Yale and Cariboo, a distance of 380 miles. Later he used ponies, and when a road was completed, stage coaches. He was a member of the legislature, sitting for Yale 1866-87.

"Cariboo" Cameron made a major gold find in August 1862, the site of which became Camerontown, near Barkerville.

Photos from the "Builders of British Columbia" series compiled for the British Columbia Centennial '71.

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A Tale Of A Packer

by Wm. Carle Jones

A Packtrain wearily plodded down a trail rough, narrow and steep,
A route pocked with many a hazard
Causing nightmares when the Packer sought sleep.

Sixty miles of that tortuous trail, from Quesnel to Keithley Creek -
To that goldrush camp where big nuggets lay
Like coconuts in a heap.

The Paniers and Sawbucks were loaded, tied with a Diamond Hitch,
Filled with the goods and belongings
Of those who would soon strike it rich.

Between two Mules a load was slung on poles strong, slender and green -
An old fashioned upright piano
To grace the abode of a Queen.

In a moment of weakened willpower he'd taken the job. She was sure
That such an adornment would add a great deal
To the lure of her 'Parlour d'Amour.'

As they inch down the stemwinder switchback the loose shale slips and rolls,
The Packer's heartfelt invectives
Must have seared those Mulish souls.

They sweated through mud and through sand till they got to their journey's end
Where the tinkling Honky Tonk tunes
Soon gladdened the hearts of the men.

The Packer's voice is boastful as he savors his mountain brew.
He has proven once more what Mule strength,
Mansweat and Savvy can do.

He's a vanishing breed though he lingers. As I watch him I wonder why
Till he says, "Gol Dang it, Sonny,
You know I'm afraid to die.

Only with age comes wisdom. A strong young man is a fool -
And, Sonny, I know where I'm going
That I'm sure to join them two mules."

The writer insists this is based on fact. He was a Packer in the Cariboo in the 1930s, and now resides in Creston.

The Cariboo Gold Rush

by T.D. Sale

The discovery of gold in the Cariboo first became known as far back as 1852 when some Indians came to the Hudson's Bay Company post at Alexandria. The young clerk Donald McLean supplied goods in return for gold that had been discovered in the Thompson River area near Nicomen. McLean reported the find to Governor James Douglas who tried to suppress the knowledge since the fur trade would be seriously disrupted by the inevitable rush of gold miners.

By 1857 Donald McLean had become Chief Trader at Fort Kamloops. Meanwhile sporadic gold finds had occurred by miners panning the Thompson and Lower Fraser Rivers. One particularly lucrative find was made by John Houston in Tranquille Creek which flows into Lake Kamloops. Approximately $600,000 had been taken from these river areas by the 'lucky ones' from among the estimated 30,000 miners who had flocked into New Caledonia by 1858.

Mass gold mining had begun on the sand bars of the lower Fraser River. In 1858 alone sixty-seven ships, many of which were unseaworthy, had steadily transported overloads of miners from San Francisco to Victoria where they hurriedly purchased a mining licence and supplies. They then arranged transport by canoes, rafts, and any other available means of conveyance to the mainland and up the Fraser River as far as Hope. For many months both the **Otter** and the **Beaver** were kept busy plying between Fort Victoria and Fort Langley with overloads of gold miners.

For countless centuries erosion on the Fraser River had carried many tons of soil in which much fine gold was located. Sand bars were built up at the many twists and turns of the Fraser River which made its final deposit by building up Lulu Island and Sea Island at its mouth. Some thirty sand bars had been built up between Hope and Yale and a further fifty sand bars were located between Yale and Kumcheen (now known as Lytton) where the clear waters of the Thompson River join the muddy waters of the Fraser River. It was on these sand bars that the gold miners first staked their claims and began panning for the fine gold.

On November 19, 1858 James Douglas became Governor of the mainland colony of British Columbia at Fort Langley in addition to his duties as Governor of the colony of Vancouver Island. To help maintain law and order a company of 150 Royal Engineers under Colonel Richard Clement Moody came from England and set up their headquarters at Sapperton (New Westminster). Their additional task was to use their expertise in surveying and road building. The arrival of Judge Matthew Baillie Begbie ensured that law and order would be enforced amongst the miners.

Most gold miners set out on foot with as little as one change of clothing, a knapsack containing a few essentials, a supply of bacon, beans, flour, rice, salt and tobacco. At the nearest Hudson's Bay post they may have purchased a pick, shovel, ladle and wire screen.

When gold was discovered in Williams Creek in 1860 the Cariboo gold rush moved to the headwaters of the Fraser River. Streams or creeks producing a good yield of the precious metal in the upper Fraser River of New Caledonia included such names as Antler, Keithley, Nelson, Lowhee, Lightning, California, Grouse, Goose, Salt Spring, Snowshoe, Jack of Clubs, and Last Chance.

A single mining claim was a square piece of ground 100 feet wide from bank to bank of a creek or stream. Each claim had to be registered with the District's Gold Commissioner and was subject to the approval of the Governor. Disputes were usually settled by the Commissioner who was also a Justice of the Peace.

Life amongst the miners in the goldfields was very rugged and most of them worked like slaves to eke out a bare existence. They jokingly referred to their everyday food of bacon as Cariboo Turkey and beans as Cariboo Strawberries. Fresh or smoked salmon was occasionally available from the local natives. Winter temperatures often dropped to 20 degrees below zero on the Fahrenheit Scale (-30 degrees Centigrade). Sometimes the reading dipped to minus 30°F (-35°C).

The climate as a whole was dry and exhilarating. A common treatment for fever was six grains of sulphate of quinine every day until completely recovered.

Unusually large "strikes" were made by 'Dutch' Bill Deitz in February 1861, Billy Barker in early 1862 and Cariboo Cameron in August 1862. The towns of Richfield, Barkerville and Camerontown mushroomed in size with Barkerville becoming the largest city west of Chicago and north of San Francisco. The actual yield of gold from this area of the Cariboo was close to 95 million dollars.

Meanwhile on orders from Governor James Douglas in 1861 the Cariboo Road was in process of being built by the Royal Engineers and other contractors. It was to be 18 feet wide and extended from Yale to Barkerville. The 480 mile project was completed in 1865.

Before long the famous Barnard Express Coaches (better known as BX Coaches) began travelling the newly

constructed Cariboo Road. These coaches were usually drawn by six horses (two leaders, two spanners, and two wheelers) specially selected for their task. Horses were changed on the average of every thirteen miles hence the numerous Mile Houses which were located along the Cariboo Road. In 1865 these coaches carried an estimated 1500 passengers and gold worth nearly five million dollars.

In addition mule trains plodded up and down the Cariboo Road at the rate of 15 miles per day. Each animal carried from 150 to 200 pounds of freight. Perhaps the most famous 'mule skinner' was Cataline (Jean Caux). It took a month to cover the 480 miles.

During 1861 inflation hit the cost of necessities such as follows: 1. Flour rose from 25 cents per pound to 70 cents, 2. Beef rose from 12 cents a pound to 50 cents and 3. Beans rose from 30 cents a pound to 90 cents. A mining pan which was worth only a few cents reached the 8 dollar price. Picks and shovels (without handles) brought 6 dollars each. With handles the price rose to seven dollars and fifty cents for each item. Gold dust could be exchanged for goods at the rate of 17 dollars per ounce or sold for a maximum of sixteen dollars and fifty cents cash.

Much of the gold located in the upper Fraser River area tended to be rather coarser and in the form of nuggets as compared to the fine gold recovered by pan washing on the sand bars of the lower Fraser River. Digging for gold down to bedrock handsomely rewarded such miners as Billy Barker, 'Dutch' Bill Deitz and Cariboo Cameron. Flumes, sluice boxes and rocker washers were often constructed to assist miners in surface mining while the bedrock miners resorted to raising the dirt to the surface of the hole by means of a rope and bucket.

The melting snow on the surrounding high mountains often caused the rivers, streams and creeks to rise and wash out such homemade devices. Even the primitive roads and trails were totally submerged during the run-off season in the late spring (end of May).

Broke, discouraged and hungry many of the unlucky goldminers were forced to hire themselves out as 'packers' for the lucky ones. Except for a few mules other pack animals were of no use for much of the year due to the rough terrain and frequent inclement weather.

In September 1868 Barkerville was completely destroyed by fire. Like a phoenix, within six weeks Barkerville began to rise from among the ashes. Life around Barkerville during the height of the Gold Rush was of a typical mining frontier type town with all the vices which included drinking, gambling, and sporting houses. By 1869 the Anglican Church minister, Rev. James Reynard, had persevered against great hardships and had built St. Saviour's Church which still stands today at the entrance to the restored Barkerville of yesteryear.

It only remains to state that many of the Cariboo gold miners took advantage of the Pre-emption Law of 1860. Thus these ex-miners became the founder ancestors of many of today's Cariboo Cattle Ranches. The main terms of the 1860 Preemption Law were:

1. Oath of allegiance to the sovereign.
2. Parcel of 160 acres of Crown Land.
3. Payment of two dollars recording fee to the nearest magistrate who issued a certificate of possession.
4. Permanent improvements were to be at the rate of two dollars and fifty cents per acre, or an overall total of four hundred dollars on the 160 acres (quarter section). (No time limit for the improvements was imposed - this was added at a later date).
5. First right to purchase at one dollar per acre.
6. Mineral rights were NOT included.
7. First right to purchase adjoining Crown Land at one dollar per acre.

The elusive search for gold in the Cariboo continues from time to time by lone prospectors and by big company operations down to the present day.

****

T.D. Sale was a teacher in the Cariboo prior to W W II. He is a B.C. history buff with a special interest in the Cariboo.

"Advertising" from the 1865 CARIBOO SENTINAL

courtesy of Barkerville Archives

"The Cariboo Sentinel."

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s JOHN BOWRON

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THE RATES FOR FREIGHT by the Stage from Yale to Richfield will be

6 to 25 lbs.	$1.00 ₱ lb.
26 to 100 lbs	90 ₱ lb.
over 100 lbs	75 ₱ lb.

THROUGH IN TEN DAYS.

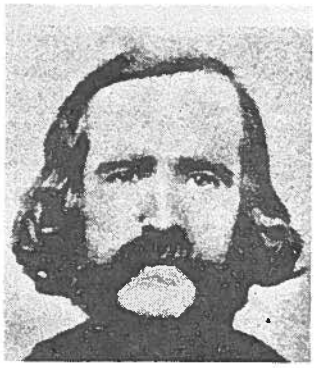
F. J. BARNARD.

The Chilcotin War

by Winston A. Shilvock

Alfred Waddington

Chartres Brew



Donald McLean

Compared with the United States, Canada had few bloody encounters with the red man as the white man inexorably pushed his way across the continent. However, in 1864 British Columbia experienced a deadly confrontation which became known as the Chilcotin War.

The story begins when Alfred Waddington commenced building a road from the head of Bute Inlet to cross the Chilcotin to Barkerville, cutting 175 miles from the current Victoria-Barkerville route via the Cariboo Wagon Road.

An initial survey-pack trail followed the Homathko River for 40 miles where a small ferry, manned by Timothy Smith, was required to cross the river. On April 29 three Indians approached Smith asking for food. Food was a scarce commodity in the whole region and the natives in general were verging on starvation. Smith must have refused them help for the trio assaulted and killed him. Taking only food they headed east along the trail.

Ten miles ahead was the main body of road workers – 12 whites and 16 Indians. Travelling during the night the three Indians caught up with the group shortly before dawn and while the white men slept the Indian workers were prevailed upon to join the first three. It took little convincing for they had been receiving meager rations and were hungry and in an ugly mood. At the first light of dawn a quick attack was made and nine men lay dead. In the half-light three escaped - Mosley, Petersen and Buckley.

In the meantime, four miles eastward, superintendent Brewster and three men were blazing a trail for the main gang to follow and were unaware of the massacre that had just taken place to their rear. The Indians soon caught up with them and it didn't take long to dispatch the four unsuspecting men. This time the Indians concealed some of the implements they captured but, as before, took only food with them.

News of these successful forays spread quickly via the "moccasin telegraph" and soon the raiding party grew to 30 men led by Chief Tellot. With all the whites in the area disposed of, the Indians headed over the Cascade mountains for Puntzi Lake. On the way they came on the home of a settler named Manning and finding him nearby killed him. The number of dead white men now totalled 15.

While all this was going on a supply pack train led by Alexander McDonald was heading from Bentinck Arm to meet the work crews at Puntzi Lake. He knew nothing of what had happened but an Indian woman accompanying the group learned, as only the Indians were able to do, of the events and warned that an attack could be expected. McDonald thought the warning a matter of hocus pocus and travelled on. It wasn't long until the Indian warriors, numbering 50 odd, attacked from ambush and in quick order killed the Indian woman, three packers and McDonald. Although wounded, five men escaped.

News of the first massacre didn't reach Victoria until May 14. The next day 28 volunteers under the command of Chartres Brew, Chief Inspector of Police, left on **H.M.S. Forward** for Bute Inlet intending to travel eastward into the Chilcotin. However, they found the route too difficult and after a fortnight returned to Victoria. This delay caused a rethinking of strategy and it was proposed to have forces advance into the Chilcotin from the Cariboo on the east and from the coast on the west and meet up at Puntzi Lake.

Accordingly 50 men were organized in the Cariboo under the command of "Judge" William G. Cox and left Alexandria on June 8. When Cox arrived at Puntzi Lake four days later he was dismayed to find that no forces had arrived from the coast and he was alone to face a multitude of hostile Indians. He quickly built a small fort on a slight rise and prepared for the worst.

He realized his main hope was to placate the Indians long enough for reinforcements to get to him so the next day he sent Donald McLean to seek out Chief Alexis and ask for a pow-wow. McLean was one time a Chief Trader for the Hudson's Bay Company at Kamloops, and while a rembunctious individual, was generally regarded as friendly by the Indians. Chief Alexis was

the most powerful and influential of all the Chilcotin Chiefs and if considered to be not entirely on the side of the white man was at least not unfriendly.

McLean found Alexis and his band at the junction of the Chilcotin and Chilko rivers and although the Indians were armed and restive he prevailed on Alexis to come to a meeting with Cox. However, before this good news could be conveyed, Cox stupidly attempted a foolhardy manoeuvre. He sent out a scouting party which a half mile from the fort ran into an ambush and had to retreat. This ended any chance for a pow-wow and Cox was obliged to hunker down and wait.

It wasn't until June 13 that the western party of 38 men was organized and, again under the command of Chartres Brew, left New Westminster on **H.M.S. Sutlej**, this time to take the Bentinck Arm route. The newly-appointed Governor Frederick Seymour accompanied the group to see things first-hand.

When the Arm was reached on June 24 the invading force ran into the five survivors of the McDonald massacre and learned for the first time of that event. This news caused Brew to make a slow, cautious advance and it wasn't until July 7 that he met up with Cox at Puntzi Lake.

The white men now numbered 90 and forays were made to attempt to locate and take on the Indians. On one of these, Donald McLean, although an experienced woodsman, briefly let down his guard and a camouflaged Indian killed him with a bullet through the heart.

No other encounters were made and when Brew heard that the murderers he wanted were hiding near the coast he left with his men to seek them out. When the search failed he returned to Victoria.

Cox held his position at the fort and gradually the Indians began to relent their hostile attitude. One day Chief Alexis presented himself to Governor Seymour and carried with him a message from the rebel chiefs Tellot and Klattasine who offered to cease hostilities and give themselves up. Cox said he wished to make friends and would guarantee the Indians safety if they came peacefully, so a meeting was arranged for August 11.

True to their word chiefs Tellot and Klattasine and six of their followers along with Chief Alexis and his band arrived in good faith. But all the wanted men weren't there. McDonald had killed one, two had committed suicide and ten had taken to the hills and vanished.

As soon as the meeting began Cox broke his word of friendship and guarantee of safety and ordered his men to surround the Indians who were commanded to lay down their arms and surrender as prisoners. The Indians were stunned by this act of treachery but in a stance of defiance and scorn, Chief Tellot is reputed to have smashed his rifle against a tree and standing with his arms folded across his chest exclaimed, "King George men are all great liars."

Thus, through duplicity, eight of the wanted men were captured. Under heavy guard they were taken to Quesnel Mouth (Quesnel) and kept in jail until September when Judge Begbie arrived to conduct the trial. Two of the Indians turned Crown witnesses, one was sentenced to life in prison but later escaped and five were hanged. The bodies were buried in unmarked graves on the bank of the Fraser River.

During the Chilcotin War which lasted from April 29 to August 11, 1864, 20 white men lost their lives. No count was kept of the number of Indians killed and it's interesting to note that while the Indians were labelled as murderers, no such appellation was attached to the white killers, none of whom were ever charged or brought to trial.

Opinions vary as to why the conflict started but historical evidence appears to favor that it was the unfair treatment of the Indians by the white invaders, culminating in near-starvation that brought things to a head. As the white invasion progressed into Indian lands their way of life and ability to live off the land rapidly began to disappear. Waddington's intrusion and his men's callous disregard of the Indians' need for food proved the final straw.

In every instance of a raid and massacre, it should be remembered that only food was taken and tools, instruments and money were left behind. It thus seems that indiscriminate plunder wasn't a motive. Starvation breeds drastic action.

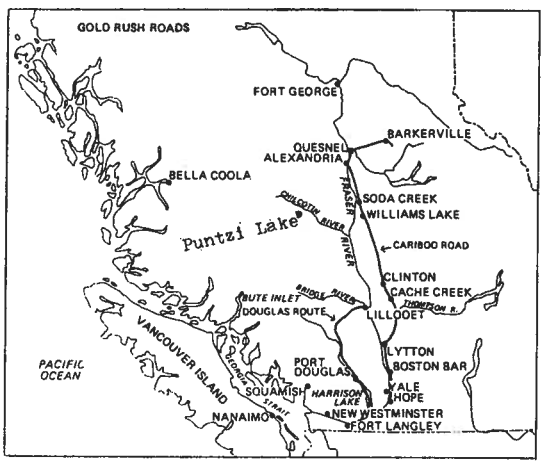
Although Judge Begbie hanged five of the Indians, he apparently felt for their situation for during the trial he stated, "The treatment of the Indians, employed in packing, received at the hands of Brewster and his party was at once calculated to arouse their cupidity and provoke their vengeance."

Only 40 miles of Waddington's road was ever completed and by a quirk of fate he died of smallpox in 1872 just ten years after the same white man's great killer had ravaged the Indians.

The Chilcotin War is now an almost forgotten event in British Columbia history but two reminders of it remain in the names of Mount Waddington and Alexis Creek.

* * * * * * * * * * *

We are grateful to Winston Shilvock for suggesting, then researching this topic for our Cariboo issue.



War Bride in the Chilcotin

by Anthony P. Farr

In 1793 Alexander MacKenzie was the first white man to see the 8000-square-mile Chilcotin Plateau, a region of forest, lakes and open range extending at an elevation of some 3000 feet from the Fraser River to the Coast Mountains.

This is magnificent country for fish and game. Paul St. Pierre, former Chilcotin MP and author of the 'Cariboo Country' series of TV plays, compares, not wholly in jest, a 6-in. long fish of eastern Canada with those found in his riding which also measure 6 inches - between the eyes. It is in this part of B.C. that the life of the pioneers comes closest to living memory and where the people of the mid-20th century faced conditions not very much changed.

Here is a glimpse of this life, seen through the pen of Mary, a war bride who left London to share the fortunes of a rancher - guide near Tatlayoko Lake - an Indian name meaning 'Rough Water' - on a 160-acre farm raising a hundred head of Herefords. Mary's story is in the form of selections from letters to another immigrant in Vancouver.

All measurements in the text have been retained in Imperial units or Fahrenheit degrees. The use of metric units would be an anachronism and deviation from the actual words of Mary's letters.

3 August 1958

We've had some hot weeks lately, close to 90°, though I can still see snow on the peaks from my kitchen window. Most summers we get frosts about once a month usually when the moon is full, but this year everything is early. Haying is almost over, when normally we have hardly begun.

I arrived eleven years ago in midwinter and did the last twenty miles by horse team and sleigh. At beef time the rancher drove their cattle to town on foot and it took seventeen days.

We lead a simple life, eat moose and deer meat, keep chickens, grow vegetables, have a cow for milk and do all our shopping by mail order. There is no electricity; our nearest store and telephone is 21 miles away and our nearest doctor is at Williams Lake, 180 miles east. We have three boys: Stephen, nine; Ross, six; and Glenn, 18 months. Our closest neighbours are 1½ miles down the Homathko River which runs right by our house. We have a little school three miles up the valley and three miles the other way is the north end of Tatlayoko Lake.

25 October 1958

A week ago Jenny down the road had a frightening experience. Her husband was away, on a guiding trip. It was still, peaceful weather. Suddenly Jenny heard one of their pigs squealing frantically. She rushed over to the pen and a big black bear jumped at her. Jenny scrambled up the nearest tree. Luckily it was a sapling about four inches through and too slender for the bear to climb. She began to scream every name that came into her head and the bear kept slapping at the tree, causing it to sway wildly with her in the branches. She tried to climb higher and the branch broke beneath her foot and left her dangling above the bear. From time to time it left her alone and went back to eating the stomach out of the pig, which remained alive and squealing for over an hour. Every time Jenny tried screaming, the bear came back to the tree; so she decided to stay quiet. She had no coat on and after a couple of hours it began to get dark. The bear by this time was so full of pig that he was panting, and he covered up the remains with leaves, then lay down to sleep. Jenny crept down the tree and ran to the house. Next day she looked ill with shock and her legs were an awful mess of deep scratches and bruises from the tree. Several people have since tried to climb the tree she was in, but no one can.

Jenny and I will have the job of making all the popcorn balls for the kids' Christmas party.

22 August 1960

The weather has turned cold and I'm afraid we shall have to make silage of the remaining three hay fields. We are not very expert at this silage business yet. It's messy looking stuff, and I can't blame the cows for not eating it. I decided that either our silage was spoiled or our cows are too fussy, as other farmers claim their cattle gobbled up their silage greedily.

30 December 1960

My husband Ken has to go to Vancouver. I'm not looking forward to being alone at this time of year, and I always feel a wee bit panicky when I see the frost inside the house, and the kids' clothes frozen to the wall, and us still frantically stoking the fires to drive it out again. He plans to start building a new house this spring.

We had forest fires all around us this summer. They spread for miles chasing all wildlife before them. Some visitors almost got trapped in the canyon by a fire, and they backed their car all the way out and came in on the old road, which is really just a boulder-strewn track. They said that living in the city they couldn't really picture how bad the fires are. One fire came a little too close for comfort. It began after dark and the whole mountain-side looked like a city at night. We got all ready to leave but the men managed to cut a firebreak just in time. The biggest lumber merchants in Williams Lake want to include Tatlayoko Lake in their work circle. There's only one consolation I can see and that is that we shall get forest fire protection.

Work on the new house is all in my head. Ken is too busy keeping the ranch going. Home is just a shelter.

Stephen has a small trapline this year to earn a few dollars. He has three lynx, a coyote and a lovely big mink. Glenn is his usual pesky little self, and this is the month of Knocked Over according to him

5 January 1962

My sister in England got married in October and from the list I sent her of possible presents she chose a wool comforter. I groaned - she can't possibly know the work involved - cutting the wool off a fleece, then washing, drying, teasing, carding and finally sewing it into cheesecloth. Now there's only the outer cover left to do.

1 October 1962

Ken has been getting very deaf this year and the doctor in Williams Lake sent him down to Shaughnessy Hospital. I can no longer mutter things under my breath to him, and he can't hear birds and squirrels when he is out riding, or horse bells or deer in the woods.

We were building a root cellar when he had to leave. We got the cement poured for it, and he gave the kids a list of jobs to do towards it. I helped by shovelling earth over a 6-foot wall all day yesterday, and my muscles are protesting today.

Well, I have to punch my bread down next. Are you planning on coming up this winter? Keep in mind our outside toilet - the torture rack.

29 December 1962

Ken can now hear again - thank heavens. The doctors did a complete cure.

The river froze over in a very unusual manner this year. It seemed to be covered with a sheet of clear glass, very frail, but upon examining it we found cracks and trapped leaves and twigs that indicated the ice was three to four inches thick. Yesterday we walked down the river on the ice and lay on it to watch little fish darting about in fear at the tribe of monsters staring at them.

16 January 1964

Last summer we camped beside the Atnarko River. We caught rainbow, Dolly Varden and coho, and then we saw huge spring salmon leaping right out of the water and sailing effortlessly over some rocks. They must have been three feet long and a foot thick. I hastily reeled in my line in case I caught one. I'd either have to let him have the lot or go with him.

The vicious mosquitoes also impressed me - enormous ones. All that swamp and muskeg is a vast breeding ground for those vampires. Too bad for anyone wanting to use the 'bathroom'.

Glenn's chief delight is the cat - a golden kitty named Leo, Goldie, Old Yeller and Mr. Needles.

I lose interest in the new house except when Ross's bed goes through the floor, or Glenn finds a toad hopping around the bedroom, or the so-called bathroom is black with ants.

24 June 1964

The other day Ken and I took a case of dynamite up the hill to blow out some lengths of ditch. Afterwards we both had blasting headaches - a common ailment when using dynamite. Ken, nervous of the caps, gave them to me to mind, and I had them in a breast pocket. When we got home, there were still five caps left in a screw of paper, and, unknown to me, Ken took them out of my coat and put them on the table. After a brief lunch we lay down to get rid of the headaches, and after a while I got up and made some tea. I called Ken and hastily snatched up all the odds and ends of junk and stuffed them in the fire - and, yes, those five caps went in too. We were sitting drinking our tea when 'BOOM!' the stove lids all flew off the stove and a great cloud of ashes and sparks and burning chunks of wood belched into the room. Ken leaped to his feet praying, at least I guess he was. I kept right on sitting there - I remember thinking 'Good job I wasn't standing there cooking'. It took a lot of elbow grease to clean the place up but the only damage was a hole in the grates. I don't think I'll forget that day though.

The house is progressing at last. We have bought a mountain of building supplies - pink plumbing and all.

12 January 1965

On 22 December in sub-zero weather I got my crew assembled and we moved into the new house. I felt a traitor leaving the poor old house to freeze up all alone after sheltering us for eighteen winters!

30 March 1965

While I was down in Vancouver, I had a letter from Ken to say that Glenn had taken his toy popgun up in the pasture to look at the traps he had out for squirrels. In one of them was a skunk, and Glenn cocked his trusty musket and was about to give him what for, but the skunk shot first and Glenn came home to tell Ken he had been sprayed by a skunk. As if Ken needed any telling. Ken said he used a 40-foot pole to get his clothes off, and I was nervous of finding the whole house still reeking, but he had managed to get rid of the smell. What became of the clothes I've never investigated.

11 October 1965

It got hotter than I've ever seen it this year, up in the nineties. I only went swimming once though, and once I fell in the river. I was helping that dopey husband of mine prime a pump that was mounted on the end of a couple of planks. They weren't fastened down and I teetered on the end that was slowly pitching me in the river and couldn't do a thing to save myself. Ken giggled like a maniac.

25 January 1966

Since Ken is chairman of the Centennial committee we had an invitation from Governor Pearkes to an old-time ball, but we had to decline. First, not enough spare cash, second, it's in Victoria - too far away, third, it's in April and we can't leave the place in calving time, and fourth, it would be too lavish for the likes of us country mice.

29 January 1966

Christmas was a one-day affair for us, as Ken had to go out to look for our lost bulls on Boxing Day. With two to three feet of snow on the ground, he had waited till then, hoping for a thaw. The thaw came, but then it rained and a frost followed, making the snow so solid and crusty that we could walk on top of it. Stephen went with him, and they found the bulls in fairly strong condition, but it took them three days to get them home, and the bulls' legs were badly cut by the snow crust.

Ken now has the job of postmaster for the valley, but with the ranch keeping him so busy, I do most of the mail work.

14 January 1967

If the kids all go away to school, Ken will be alone while I'm on holiday in September and then when I come back I'll take their place outside whenever he needs help, such as with the cowboying. I rode down the lake last spring but riding is not my favourite sport and I wish there was a more comfortable way of doing it.

One cold January morning (a mail day) Ken touched a turning power-take-off shaft with a wet mitt, and it froze instantly to the metal. He came into the house and said "Mary, I've pulled my thumb off," and he held up the evidence. There was a stump left from the second joint, but the skin had torn off clean from the base of the thumb. I wanted to shut my eyes and tell myself I was in a dream. With the aid of two people who had come with mail, we got the pick-up truck ready and his hand bandaged. I fed him a couple of 292's. In fifteen minutes he was on the road for the doctor's and then I got through mail day with a sick lump in my stomach. The doctor had to saw off the stump of bone as there was no skin to wrap around it. It is all healed now, and although he misses it a great deal (it was the right one), he is managing most things very well.

11 January 1969

Last week it was really cold, down to 42 below, and we had an endless battle to keep things thawed out, since we have gone all modern with the plumbing bit. When the pioneers just had frozen wild meat and dried foods and a water bucket, such extreme cold spells came and went with scarcely a ripple, but these days everything is thrown into chaos.

I see the south wind has begun to blow. The heavy snow on the trees will be shaking off soon and it will look less wintry.

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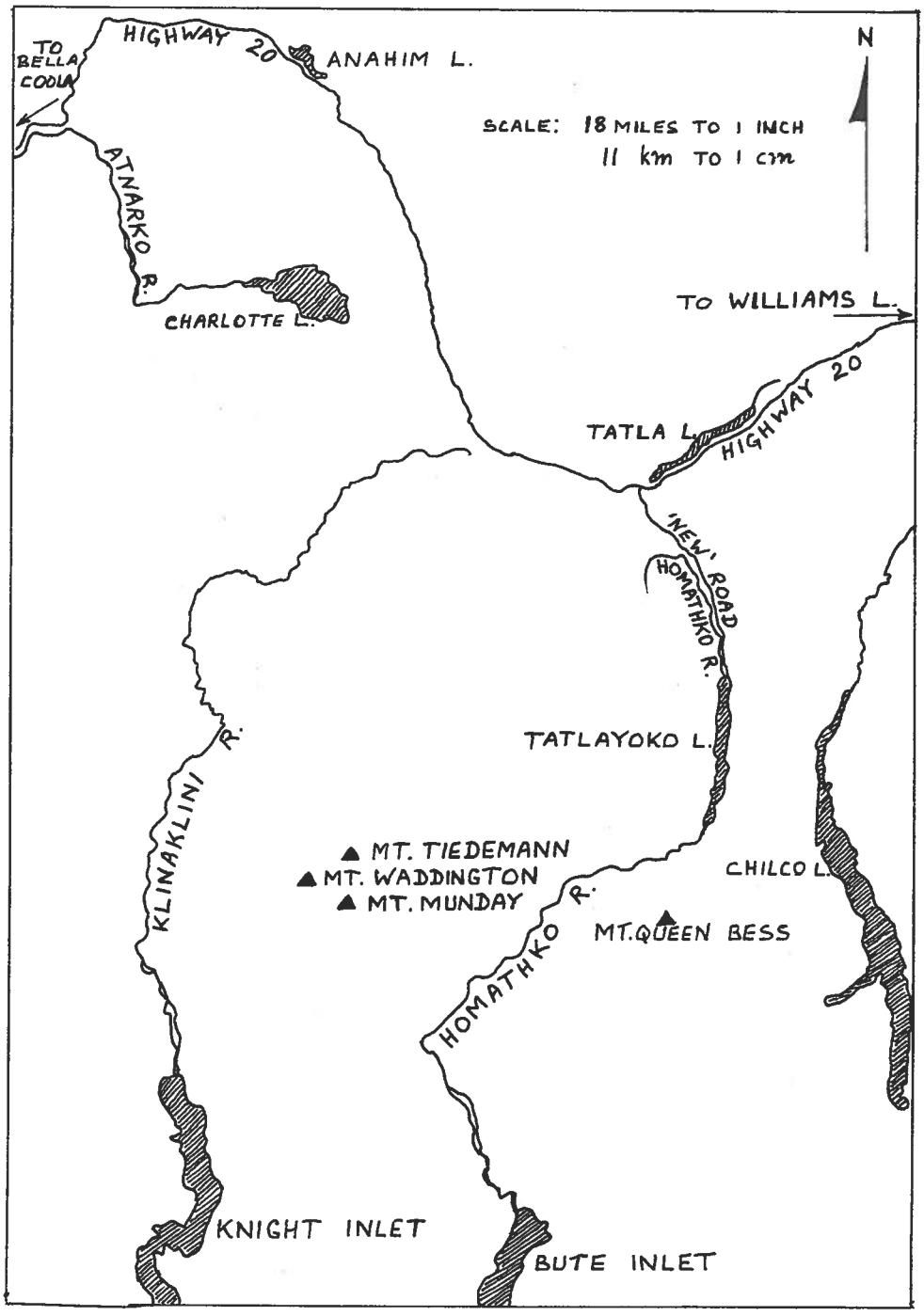
(Adapted from an article in the Winter 1971 issue of The Countryman and reprinted by kind permission of the editor).

Tony Farr is a hard working member of the B.C. Historical Federation and the Saltspring Island Historical Society.



Peace River Pioneer

by C.J. St. Cyr-Tompkins

Sgt. Philip F. Tompkins - 1915. Emily A. Budd - 1915

At age twenty-six, in November 1917 Emily Tompkins, a war bride, mother of two baby boys, ages 20 months and 3 months, successfully escaped the rationed conditions of England during the Great War only to settle in the unimaginable, primitive conditions of the Peace Region of Northern British Columbia.

It is hard to imagine the bustling sea port of Bristol, England, an important nerve centre for military supplies industries, where trams linked cities within hours, where variety shows were plenty and the mild climate lended itself to orchards, as a proving ground for a pioneer lady.

In 1891 Emily (Emilia) was born to Thurza and Fredrick Budd, a poor wheelmaker, in Bristol England. She was the eldest girl in a family of ten children, and due to depressed conditions at home, Emily was forced to work at the Imperial Tobacco Co. at the age of twelve.

Ten years later, still working at the same factory pasting cigarette packages, she met a Canadian soldier while on her way to a burlesque with a girlfriend. Philip Tompkins, a sergeant with the 9th Battalion from Edmonton, Alberta, was in town with a special detail for a military funeral and was instantly attracted to Emily.

"I didn't like his mustache, but I fancied him otherwise!" remembers Emily. "We wrote letters and when he returned with shrapnel wounds gained at the battle of Ypres, he proposed." Emily still recalls his exact words: "I will not return to the front a single man."

For an entire month, Emily chased all over town for the required signatures of prominent figures vouching for her character, and physical certification, requested by the military. "I had to take time off work," she said. "And at the end, the military moved too slow, we married without consent. Since Philip sent all his money to his mother in Canada, I even had to buy the wedding ring!"

On May 29, 1915, Philip and Emily were married by the Justice of the Peace in Bristol. When the military discovered his civil marriage, he was stripped of his stripes and returned to the front on the Continent.

Little mail was received from the trenches so Emily turned to the newspaper for grim reports on the battles, always checking the list of casualties. She continued her work at the factory until late in her pregnancy. On March 17, 1916, Eric their first child was born. During Philip's leave, telegrams were dispatched to Canada.

The Royal Navy kept the civilian population of Britain immune from direct attack except for the sporadic raids from zeppelins concentrated over the East Coast.

"We rarely saw any aircraft, and when we did, we went out in the streets to marvel at those cigar-shaped flying machines. They appeared to have little control over the winds and their aim was so poor they rarely hit a target. Most of their bombs exploded in far fields or the ocean," said Emily.

But the war at sea caused increasing hardships on Britain who relied on imports for a high proportion of her food and many essential raw materials. Emily had to deal with shelves in stores that were near bare with most of the cardboard boxes being dummies and lineups for merchandise getting longer every day. The food ration coupons purchased very little with the inflated prices and no choices.

On August 18, 1917, Emily produced a second son, Brian. While Philip was on leave he examined a live grenade with a faulty pin and accidentally set it off. Three of his fingers on his left hand were blown off and his right eye was injured. The military advised him of his impending discharge and return to Canada.

Though Philip was born and schooled in Brockville, Ontario, he had moved to Edmonton, Alberta, for work. While exploring the northern region of the province, he had fallen in love with the Peace River country. A farm boy at heart, his love for the land was ingrained and his vision of his return to Canada included a dream farm in a vast unoccupied territory where he would show Emily marvels of uncrowded and natural surroundings. He promised someday he would be a 'Somebody" important in the history of his country.

Emily, devoted to her husband, readied herself and the two babies for the 10 day sea voyage to an alien land where everything was plentiful. Armed with a bag of rags for diapers, she

boarded the troop ship while her husband was convalescing in a medical outpost.

Seasickness quickly took its toll and Emily could no longer nurse her baby. Beer bottles were sterilized and condensed milk was fed to the infant. The infirmary attendant on the ship helped the distressed mother.

"We were so sick," recalled Emily. "The dirty diapers went out the porthole . . ."

Late October 1917 Emily and the children, sick with dysentery, docked in Montreal, Quebec. As pre-instructed by her husband, they awaited his arrival at Sue and Tom McNish's (his cousin) home where they recuperated.

Three weeks later Philip joined them and the family boarded a train. Still frail from the sea voyage, Emily wondered if she would survive the interminable journey through an unending vastness of uncivilized wilderness.

"It took longer to get through the province of Ontario than it took to cross England from Plymouth to London," said Emily. "We were days passing few stations through rolling land. Across frozen prairies covering stubble fields, the train slowly, ever so slowly, made its way northwest through wooded areas with small patches of open plains."

When they arrived in Edmonton, Alberta, they were greeted by a cold snap where the British bride finally met her mother-in-law, Martha Tompkins. Emily's welcome was rewarding but her expectation of the city was a great disappointment. Compared to Bristol it was only a crude, small northern outpost with only one main street.

Her first introduction to primitive conditions was the outdoor privies lined up behind the houses like sentry boxes at Buckingham Palace. Hanging the wash outdoors in the winter was another shocking surprise. Clothes stiffened like boards had to be carefully pried from the line to avoid tearing where they were fastened with a wooden pin. Used to a temperate climate in Bristol where the thermometer rarely varied made this merciless weather cruel. Exposed to mercury drops to 60 degrees below zero virtually made her a prisoner in her own home.

Emily and Philip's stay in Edmonton was short. Philip looked to the 'last frontier' for his dream farm. The Peace Region in northern British Columbia was mostly a spill-over from the Alberta side and new settlers were attracted with land offers of $10/quarter section for homesteading. With the military grants and government loans offered after a tour of duty in the Great War, Philip enlisted the help of his brother Stuart to pool their resources. In August 1919, the brothers purchased a section of land at the junction of the Peace and Halfway Rivers, midway between Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope.

Those were the days when Fort St. John was still a trading post with the competing Hudson Bay and Revillon Freres. The fort had a government telegraph office and sub-land agency; a police post; and the usual complement of cabins, warehouses and Indian tepees.

It was a time when there were no roads, only trails for horses, a time of river travel by sternwheelers. From 1919 to 1929 the D.A. **Thomas** riverboat operating from Peace River Town, Alberta to Hudson's Hope carried 100 passengers and over 200 tons of cargo. It was not all clear sailing, often the boats encountered sandbars, changing water levels, ice and spring run-offs that could delay delivery for days, even weeks in extreme conditions.

Emily had married Philip for better or worse; she carried her burden in silence and loyally served him, though she must have questioned her sanity many times. It was a journey of 7 to 10 days from Edmonton to the Halfway.

Over swamps and bogs, the train crept and crawled as far as Peace River Town, then the riverboat went up the Peace River to British Columbia's Cadenhead's landing. Because of the shallow water sternwheelers could not land at the Tompkins farm. Boats of 20-30 feet with makeshift motors from car engines navigated the channel down the Halfway River with little freight and few passengers. The pregnant Emily, wary of the small vessel, chose the horse drawn wagon ride for the last mile to her new home. It proved to be an extremely bumpy and taxing trial.

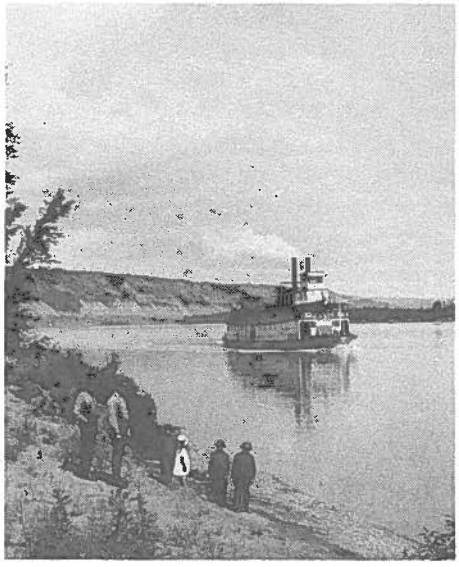
At the confluence of the Peace and Halfway rivers, the homestead was located in a land without habitation. Provision lists had to cover a six months' period because of the complicated travel to Edmonton. In those days of undeveloped wilderness in northern British Columbia, it was an ordeal of two weeks or better each way to reach Vancouver by rail via Peace River Town-Edmonton-Jasper-Yellowhead Pass, down the Thompson River past Kamloops.

Philip and his family shared a four room log house with Stuart and his wife Edna. That winter was the coldest on record with an unusual amount of snow, and cattle freezing. Soon the two brothers engaged in serious disputes and parted with heated words, never to reconcile.

The lack of medical services was a real concern. In January of 1920 Philip put an ad in the Edmonton newspaper for a domestic and mid-wife to help Emily with household chores and the delivery of her babies. Emma Jensen, a single mother from Sweden was interviewed and hired forsaking all previous ties.

Emily's first daughter, Alice, born on March 26, 1920 is believed to have been the first white baby born in the region. Emma was a godsend, an immigrant from 'The Old Country' and her company, confident manners, and even temperament proved indispensable through the years. According to Philip, Emily baked the best bread in the entire world but could achieve very little culinary delights. Emma taught her how to cook 'Canadian Style'.

Just when Emily thought she had been exposed to every cruelty of the back country – biting insects, extreme heat,



Emily leaves for Grande Prairie on this steamer - 1926. On shore are the hired hand, Philip Tompkins, Donald, Alice, Brian and Eric.

frost in July, poison ivy, and wild animals – she met Indians . . . savages on their land by the river!

In the summer, the Sikanni Indians hunted and fished; in the winter, they trapped and their yearly pilgrimage took them past the Tompkins farm, where for centuries they used the same trail to higher grounds for the summer. In England, Emily had learned of savages who massacred white people and for the first year kept herself and the babies barricaded in the house. How was she to know them from the peaceful tribes?

During lean years when winter had been exceptionally hard the wild game was scarce. The Indians were nearly starved living off the snowshoe rabbits, and babies could be heard crying while the squaws helplessly watched them die. Though Emily learned to keep a respectable distance between her and the camping Indians, she did from time to time leave bits of food that she could spare for the squaws to feed their children. Without a word spoken, the women communicated with motherly instincts.

"They were proud people and never as much as stole a chicken," Emily said of them. "And some years were very, very hard indeed."

While Philip and the hired hands cleared and broke new fields and tended to the beasts, Emily honed her skills in cooking, churning butter, sewing and darning. There was not a moment to spare and the days were not long enough.

Fall brought the canning of wild meat and vegetables to sustain the family for the winter. Emma was a great help as Emily had no experience in these areas. After years of rationing in Bristol, this abundance of food was overwhelming and she gratefully grated, peeled, cored, jarred and cooked as instructed.

Soon, dreaded winter was upon them again, making already taxing tasks almost impossible. The drying of clothes never ended. Once a batch was finally ironed and put away, it was time to start another. Breaking ice for water and melting snow was another daily burden. It took a pailfull of snow to yield approximately 4 inches of water. Socializing was not an issue; they were too tired to care.

In 1922 Emily lost a baby at birth. Later that year she received news of the death of her parents. They both died within a year of each other. It was impossible to attend either funeral as they were barely surviving – there was no money for a trans-Atlantic voyage. Her only visible link with Bristol was the occasional letters from her sisters and brothers.

In 1923, on May 25th, Emily was sowing the garden when she doubled over with abdominal pain. She went indoors to rest and James was born premature, only a few pounds. She suffered complications with the afterbirth and had to be sent to Pouce Coupe, the only medical outpost in the North established by the Alberta Red Cross in 1921.

Philip took his wife down river on a homemade raft of logs with a single rudder. "The river was swollen and the night was very cold. Philip rigged a hutch of sorts with wool blankets inside to keep me warm," she recalled. "At Rolla Landing we had to go by horse and wagon to Pouce Coupe. It was a terrible journey."

Emily received medical attention and was kept there ten days awaiting a boat to return home. It was the only vacation she had had since her marriage.

Emily never rode horses, leaving her with only two alternatives: walking or using a wagon with a team of horses. Roads, if any, were narrow, poorly kept and you risked your life on them. You had to clutch the seat and brace your feet against the front board to avoid being flung out as the wagon rattled and bumped. A wise traveler would keep a cushion handy to buffer against violence to be endured for hours as it was the only way to get around. Every time it rained, the road became an impassable mud trench.

On October 13, 1924, Arthur was born in Pouce Coupe. Eric was eight years old, Brian seven, and they were under the direction of their father learning farm chores and sampling his heavy-handed discipline. Emily never objected – he was the boss.

Emily went almost two years without having a baby, then made up for it. With the expected arrival of a baby at the end of October, in September she was forced to take the last sternwheeler of the season to Dunvegan where she transferred to ground transportation for her destination: the hospital at Grande Prairie, Alberta. On October 30, 1926, she delivered twins: Margaret and Bill.

She recalls that event well. "On the trip back home, I sat next to the mailman, Ed Anderson, in a truck with the babies bundled in a laundry basket next to the mail and we had our first overnight stop at the Cutbank. The Peace River was not frozen solid yet and we had to transfer to a boat to cross the river – to a sleigh, then stayed overnight at Fort St. John, at Mrs. Pickles the wife of the telegraph operator. The next day we switched mailmen; Douglas Cadenhead took us home with another overnight stop at Cache Creek, halfway to the farm."

1928 saw the opening of the first school on the Halfway. It was a small log dwelling the size of a chicken coop with a sod roof, and was named Forfar in honor of the settler from whom Philip had purchased the land.

After school the older boys helped their father with freighting down the Halfway River and met passengers off the sternwheelers. Philip turned Emily's home into a way-station, keeping abreast of progress and political events. The travelers stranded due to inclement weather or delays in secondary transportation stayed at the Tompkins farm until they could continue their journey. Some were settlers, others were looking for work; all were fed.

With one cake of yeast, Emily made a laundry tub full of bread batter. It took a hired man to mix it. (In Bristol, Emily used to take her mother's bread in pillow cases to the bakery down the street and picked it up after her shift at the factory. Their hearth did not have an oven and the Budds did not have a gas cooker until Emily was eighteen years old.)

On the farm, it took all day to bake the week's supply of twenty loaves. Controlling the wood stove's oven was a maneuver in itself with the correct combination of dry and green wood. "We had to cook for tables of twenty at a time," Emily recalls. "There were always hired men to be fed and bedded, our family of eleven, and travelers."

In 1929 Emma was plagued by terrible headaches which led to her early death on March 19, 1930, leaving the family

shocked and Emily devastated. In September 1936, Emily's first born, Eric, died of pneumonia.

1938 saw the construction of the bridge at the Halfway linking Hudson's Hope and Fort St. John by road. Philip's newly acquired sawmill, which meant more men to board and feed, supplied most of the lumber. It also introduced his sons to road construction with the filling of the approach to the bridge. Motor vehicles and road transportation revolutionized the area bringing in civilization, technology and gas explorations.

The Tompkins family prospered through the years with Philip's amazing ability to predict services and markets and did fulfill his promise to Emily to become a 'Somebody'. In the Peace Region of British Columbia, Philip became known as: "PFT the King of the Halfway".

Emily who enjoyed long walks to rid herself of stress, was forced to a wheelchair with a stroke that paralyzed her left side in December 1974. For months, she refused to speak or cooperate for recovery. No one could have blamed her for giving up but her sense of duty to her husband, to honor and obey, must have been overwhelming because she did eventually snap back to life.

Emily remained loyal to her husband even after his death in 1986, at the age of 95. This pioneer celebrated her 100th birthday on August 2, 1991 in the midst of loving family and friends, surrounded with all the modern conveniences. The lady who lived from horse and buggy travels to spaceships has no regrets and finds today's wife too spoiled and too impatient. She still has an excellent memory, loves shopping and dearly enjoys music and reading. Emily's advice for a long productive life is: "Keep busy and keep your mouth shut."

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The writer is currently researching WWI brides. She has won awards for earlier literary works, and is an inspiration to the Vernon Writers Group.

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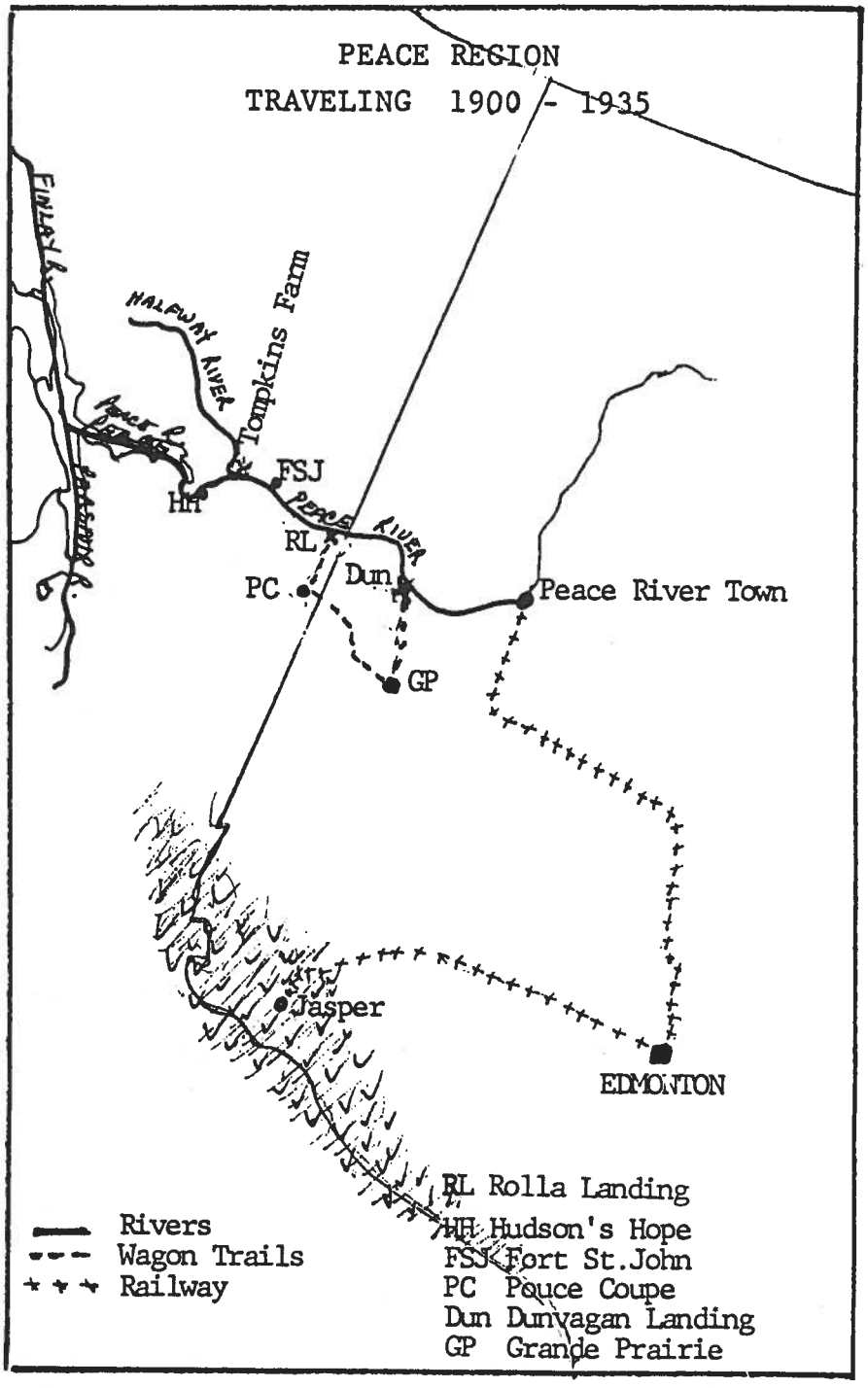
*** Most of the article was drawn from interviews with Emily and her family. ***



The Coastal Princesses

by Daphne Baldwin

There are no Princess ships on the British Columbia coast now. The B.C. Ferries have replaced them. Nor were the Princesses the first passenger ships there. However, as B.C. has always looked to the sea, been explored and settled from the sea, it was ships that brought settlers, provisioned and serviced the often tiny communities up and down the coast. Before the advent of Hudson's Bay men to trade and build forts, Indians moved freely by canoe throughout coastal waters. Later, miners, in search of gold, took ship up the Fraser and Stikine Rivers.

The actual date of the beginning of coastal shipping can be pinpointed as May 24, 1827, when the Hudson's Bay schooner **Cadboro** arrived on the Columbia River to inaugurate regular supply and trading voyages. In 1836 the Hudson's Bay Company expanded their service with the **Beaver**, a steam driven vessel which dominated the coast trade until 1883. It was in that year that the H.B.C. fleet combined with the Pioneer Line, which had operated a rival service, to form the Canadian Pacific Navigation Company with the H.B.C. retaining a controlling interest. Then, in 1901, it was announced that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company had gained control of the Canadian Pacific Navigation Company. The Company was wound up in 1903 and was succeeded by the B.C. Coast Service of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Three men dominate the history of coastal shipping service in British Columbia. They are Sir James Douglas, Capt. John Irving and Capt. J.W. Troup. However, it was H.B.C. Governor Sir George Simpson who conceived the idea to engage in coastal trade rather than simply transport supplies and trade goods to the forts. The **Cadboro** arrived on the Columbia whence Dr. John McLoughlin, in charge of the division, dispatched her to the newly established Fort Langley on the Fraser River. Conditions were hazardous, murder by Indians not unknown. Crews were hard to come by until the Hawaians, or Kanakas as they were called, were recruited. In his dispatches to Governor Simpson, Dr. McLoughlin repeatedly pointed out the hazards of coastal travel, the hundreds of war canoes carrying forty to fifty men each and the inadequacy of the **Cadboro** armaments for defense. However, in 1829, the Governor and Committee decided to pursue the maritime trade vigorously. From then until 1849, the **Cadboro** remained a fixture on the coast to supply the forts, provide disciplinary action and engage in active trading.

The **Beaver** arrived on the coast in the spring of 1836 having left England 225 days previously. From then until her somewhat inebriated crew ran her aground on Prospect Point, Burrard Inlet, in 1888, she traded throughout the coastal waters. Like all H.B.C. ships she was armed, always kept in shipshape fashion with plenty of spit and polish and naval discipline. This was a tradition which in large measure carried down to the Princesses.

By 1843, the decision to move H.B.C. headquarters to Fort Victoria brought the coastal vessels under the control of Chief Factor James Douglas. In 1853 the **Otter**, the first propeller-driven steamer, arrived to join the **Beaver** in providing transport for Douglas and H.B.C. officials for trading, exploring for coal, maintaining order and generally conducting Company business.

It is amazing to read with what apparent ease these small vessels, (Beaver 70ft. long and Otter 122ft.), travelled in all weather, often in the face of belligerent tribes. Douglas kept trouble to a minimum by strict law observance. He acted promptly and did not hesitate to call in the Royal Navy which, by 1850, was a presence on the coast. **Beaver** was actually under charter to the Admiralty for eight years as a survey ship. She was also a passenger vessel, albeit apparently not a comfortable one.

With the coming of the Fraser River gold rush in 1858-59, Douglas realized that there was a need for a passenger service to transport miners and freight to the Fraser from Victoria. There was also money to be made. By 1861 business was booming. Newspapers reported $1,500,000 in Cariboo gold dust was delivered by ship to Victoria between August 17th and October 31st. More ships were both needed and purchased. One of these ships was re-named **Princess Louise** and ran from Victoria to New Westminster. She was the first vessel to carry the title of **Princess** on the coast but, fifty years later there was to be a line of them.

The purchase of the **Olympia**, renamed **Princess Louise** was the result of the challenge made by Capt. John Irving to the H.B.C. for traffic on the Victoria-New Westminster run. Capt. Irving had up-river sternwheelers which had taken over all traffic from New Westminster to Yale. Now he wanted the trade from Victoria but the H.B.C. refused to co-operate. The fight was on to see who could provide the better, faster service. Both parties looked to purchase speedier vessels and, by means of a rate-cutting war, entice the passenger and freight trade. Eventually the Pioneer Line founded in 1862 by Capt. William Irving, father of Capt. John Irving, combined with the H.B.C. fleet to form the Canadian Pacific Navigation Co. Ltd. in 1883.

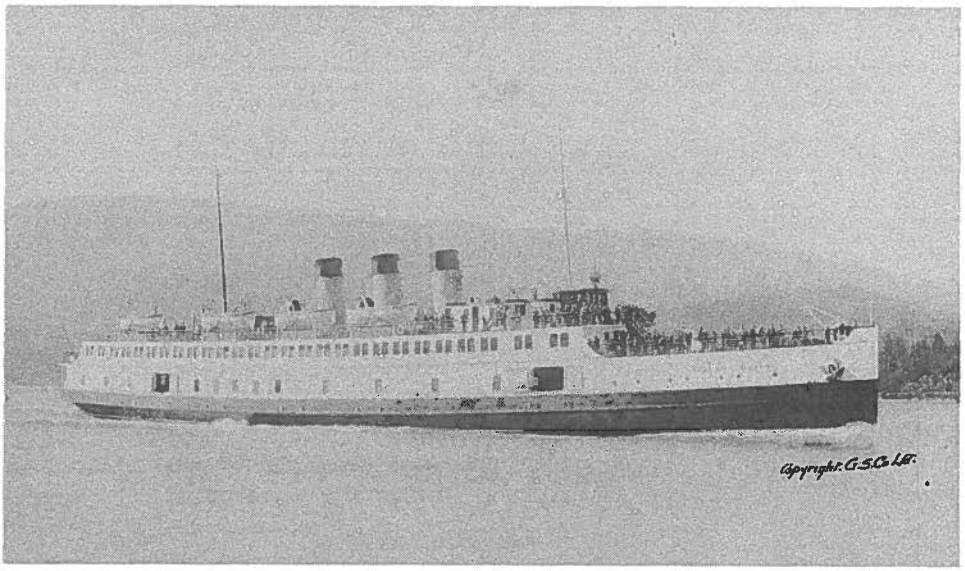
The river boat masters were a colourful lot who honed their skills on the rivers and straits of the north Pacific. Many gave their names to geographic features such as Brotchie Ledge and Walbran Park but Capt. John Irving was the most personally renowned. Six feet tall and with a naturally reckless disposition, he was already an experienced river pilot at seventeen. Self-confident, popular and generous, he became a leading figure on the B.C. coast for the next thirty years.

He loved a party and conceived the idea for coastal cruises which he captained himself. In 1873 he inaugurated a run from Victoria and up the Stikine in a shallow-draught steamer which he had had built in Victoria. This was in response to gold being discovered in Cassiar. At the same time he renewed his challenge for the Yale run. Cut-rates reduced fares to 25¢.

The incorporation of the Canadian Pacific Navigation Co. Ltd. in 1883 put an end to competition and allowed the company to profit from the great expansion of trade arising from the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It was a natural outcome to the rivalry between the H.B.C. and the Pioneer line. They had bested all rivals in the Fraser River trade. In a way, a connection with the H.B.C. remained as both Capt. John Irving and his financial advisor, R.P. Rithet, had married daughters of Sir James Douglas. The ships were kept busy on an almost non-stop basis until the completion of the railway in July, 1886, brought a drop in freight.

In 1887 the Canadian Pacific Navigation Co. decided to build two fine passenger steamers, the **Premier** and the **Islander** in response to the new passenger traffic generated by the completion of the C.P.R. It was also decided to enter the Puget Sound trade which was booming following the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railway in Tacoma in 1887. Herein lay the germ of the passenger service maintained by the **Princess** vessels in the next century. Again rivalry, this time with American interests, and not a little skull-duggery, ensued. Capt. Irving was never far from the forefront of battle to obtain passengers through rate reduction and excellence of service.

The **Islander** was a true forerunner of the **Princess** ships in design and appointments. She was used, in addition to her usual run, as a cruiseship to Alaska. However, when news of the Klondike strike arrived, she left Victoria loaded with four hundred miners and supplies bound for Dyea. The demand for vessels increased and more keels were laid as a result. Even the C.P.R. was enticed into providing vessels for the Klondike gold seekers. In so doing, they fore-shadowed the inception of their **Princess** fleet. However, when the Klondike rush subsided, ships of both companies lay idle at dock. On January 12, 1901, it was announced that the C.P.R. had acquired control of the Canadian Pacific Navigation Co. Ltd.



SS. Princess Elaine - postcard by Gowen, Sutton Co. Ltd.

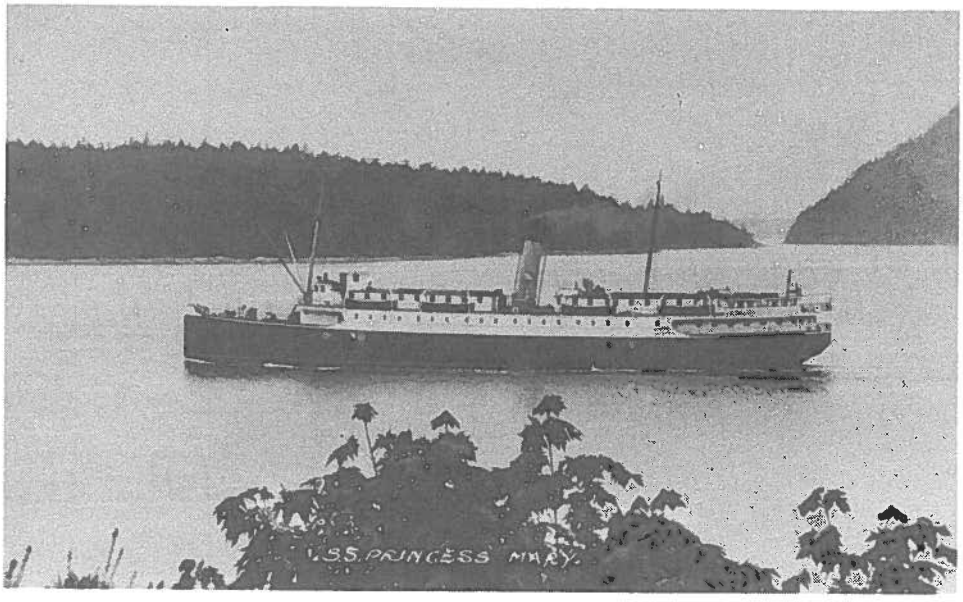
The man put in charge of the new company was Capt. James W. Troup who had been a river boat captain with Capt. John Irving. He had worked on steamers in Oregon, then after returning to work for the Canadian Pacific Navigation Co., had built a new fleet of sternwheelers for the Kootenay trade. It was he who in large measure designed the ships as well as managed the **Princess** fleet.

It is not the place here to go into the dimensions nor the history of each **Princess** vessel. Suffice it to say that in February, 1902, Swan-Hunter of Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, received an order to build a steamer to service the Victoria-Vancouver run. She was the famous **Princess Victoria**, perhaps the best known of the Princesses. Like all the subsequent steamers, she sailed from England under her own steam by way of Cape Horn. Later ships were able to use the Panama Canal. The **Princess Beatrice** soon followed her to the B.C. coast. Although Capt. Troup was not a naval architect, he had practical knowledge and a keen eye, a combination which produced a remarkable line of ships.

The Princesses were attractive ships with their lower hulls painted black, the main deck and superstructure painted white. Their funnels were yellow with a black band around the top and wore the red and white checkerboard emblem of the company. From the **Princess Victoria** onwards they were well-appointed vessels having caulked wooden decks worn smooth by the sea and by constant swabbing. The railings were of varnished wood, the brass bell and fixtures shone with vigorous polishing. The interiors were well-appointed, even opulent, with velvet hangings in the public rooms and comfortable berths for night travel. The dining saloons were supplied with fine linen and heavy silver cutlery. The service and food were exceptional. Each vessel was different and her character was identifiable by her funnels. The **Princess Victoria** had three distinctive upright funnels, narrower than any other ship, whereas the **Princess Beatrice** had only one.

By 1908 another rate war had broken out with the Americans to oust the **Princesses** from Puget Sound and capture the Victoria-Vancouver trade. Eventually both sides came to terms in order to benefit from trade engendered by the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in Seattle in 1909.

Meanwhile, Capt. Troup ordered a new flagship, the **Princess Charlotte**, a larger vessel with three stubby funnels. She did yeoman service on both the Victoria and the Nanaimo runs for many years. At the same time, the **Princess**



SS. Princess Mary - postcard. by Gowen, Sutton Co. Ltd.

May, formerly the **Hating** had the distinction of being the first ship to have wireless installed.

Three new ships, all having one funnel, joined the coastal fleet in 1911. The **Princess Alice** and **Princess Adelaide** were almost identical. These two ships had long service on the coast and, when they were retired after World War II, they, like the **Princess Charlotte** became cruise ships for a Greek line in the Aegean. The third vessel, **Princess Mary** was destined to sail B.C. waters for forty years, largely on the Gulf Islands, Powell River-Comox run. She built up such a loyal clientele that, when she was retired from service, her aft superstructure was bought and became a restaurant which is still popular in Victoria.

Later the two stack vessel **Princess Patricia** arrived on the coast to take over the Nanaimo run. She was a lightly built ship and was never intended for service beyond the Clyde. However, she sailed out under her own steam to undertake many years of service, latterly as an excursion boat.

The next to arrive was the **Princess Sophia** whose one funnel became familiar on the Alaska run. It was here, in Lynn Canal, that she met her tragic end on October 26, 1918. She foundered on Vanderbilt Reef in heavy seas and sank after a day and a half wherein rescue vessels stood helplessly by unable to take off any of the passengers and crew.

Shortly afterwards the **Princess Maquinna** came out to serve the west coast of the Vancouver Island run. Later she was joined by the **Princess Norah**. Both these one stack vessels were easily distinguished by the derricks attached to the forward masts to enable them to handle deck cargo. Between them they provided the only means of communication and supply for the many isolated communities up and down the coast of Vancouver Island.

By the time the newest **Princesses, Margaret** and **Irene** were ready for service, World War I had broken out. They were requisitioned and converted to fast minelayers, their beautiful fittings stripped from them. The **Irene** blew up in the harbour at Sheerness but the **Margaret** had a long and successful career in the Navy. Neither ship ever saw the B.C. coast.

The boom in passenger service following the War led to two new, up-to-date, commodious ships being ordered in 1925 at Clydebank. These were the **Princess Marguerite** and **Princess Kathleen** which became a familiar sight on the Vancouver-Victoria-Seattle run. One surprising thing about these three funnel ships was that they had space provided for only thirty cars yet in 1927, the **Princess Elaine** was built for car traffic and, in 1923, the **Motor Princess** had been built at Yarrows in Esquimalt as a car ferry.

In 1928 Capt. Troup retired after having built up a remarkable fleet of ships which were admirably suited for service on the rugged coast of British Columbia. They plied these often treacherous waters with surprisingly few serious accidents. Inadequate navigation aids, hazardous tides and currents and the vagaries of the weather, particularly fog, all presented potential danger to vessels on the coast.

Capt. Cyril D. Neurotsos succeeded Capt. Troup and it was he who ordered the **Princess Elizabeth** and the **Princess Joan** in 1929 to inaugurate the night run between Victoria and Vancouver. This proved a very popular service with passengers well into the 1950s. Rivalry appeared again, however, when the Canadian National Railway built their line of **Prince** ships to challenge the Canadian Pacific Coastal Service. They were used largely on the northern coast though and as popular cruise ships to Alaska.

When World War II broke out the **Princess Marguerite** and the **Princess Kathleen** were commandeered as troop ships. Service was maintained on the coast although it put a great strain on the remaining ships. After the war two new ships were ordered. These were the **Princess Marguerite** to replace her namesake which had been sunk by enemy action and the **Princess Patricia** to replace the first which had been sold. The **Princess Kathleen** had returned from her war service unscathed. After a full overhaul and refitting she took over the Alaska cruise service. Unhappily she met her end in 1952 on the rocks of Lena Point in Lynn Canal with some loss of life.

The days of these mini-liners were drawing to a close. They were becoming inadequate for the needs of post-war passengers most of whom wished to transport vehicles also. Although the **Princess of Nanaimo** arrived in 1951, her service in B.C. waters was short. She was moved to the Bay of Fundy and became successively the **Princess of Acadia** then the car ferry **Henry Osborne**.

The last ship to join the C.P.C.S. fleet was the **Princess of Vancouver** whose design allowed her to carry railway cars as well as motors. She continued in service between downtown Vancouver and Nanaimo even after the advent of the

B.C. Ferry Corporation fleet. The other ships which had grown old and were no longer either serviceable or profitable were gradually sold off as cruise ships for other lines, dockside restaurants or hotels, barges or scrap. The last, the second **Princess Marguerite**, was bought by the Stena line and operated on the Victoria-Seattle run as a casino. She is now out of service and for sale.

An era ended with the disappearance of the **Princesses** from the British Columbia coast. They had a proud bearing. They provided quality service, a touch of elegance, a sense of reliability which is unsurpassed to-day. The advent of air transport, labour demands and changing values made the **Princesses** in effect redundant. They were beautiful, leisurely and comfortable but their speed could not satisfy the demands of late 20th century living when people prefer to get to their destinations quickly, caring only that the vessel is reasonably safe but, first and foremost, fast.

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Mrs. Baldwin grew up in Victoria but has made her home in Prince George since 1954. She has been chairman of the Prince George Public Library Board, and served on the Provincial Library Development Commission.

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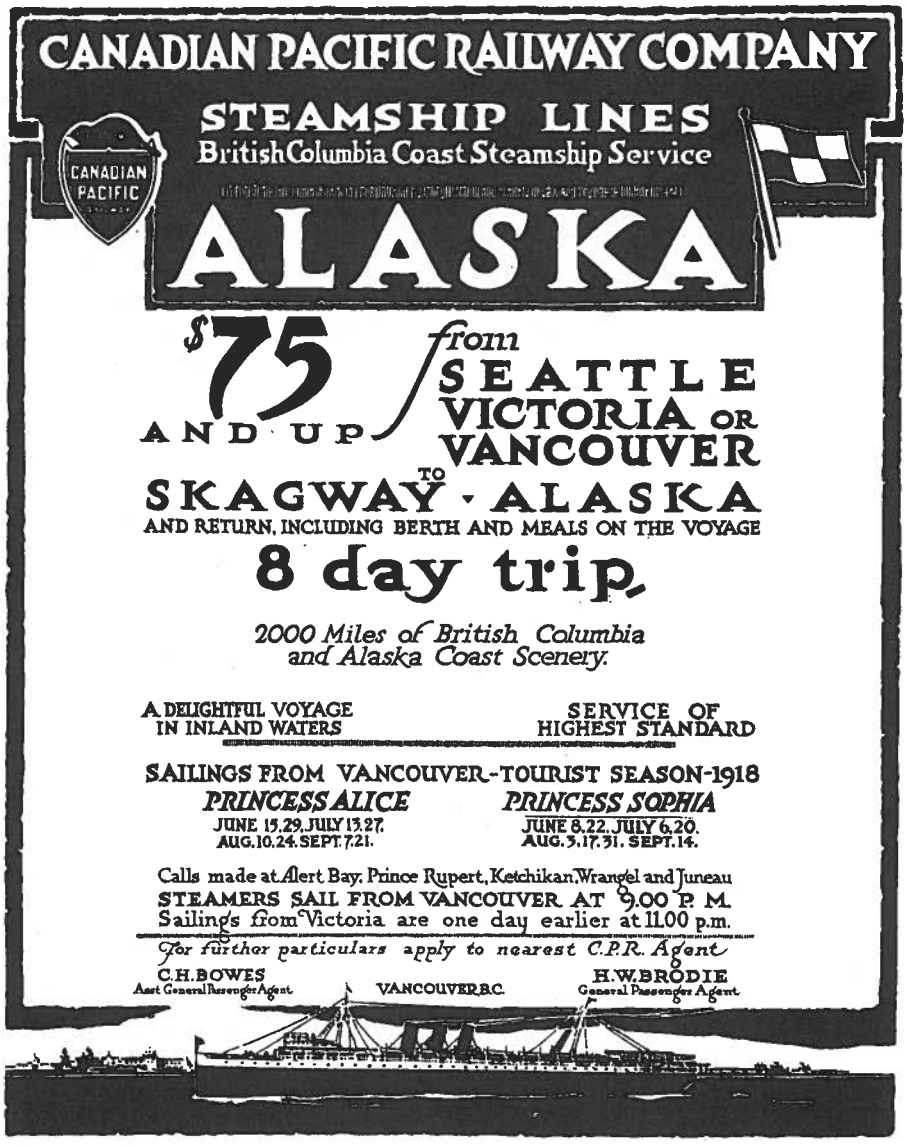


Poster $75 trip to Alaska from Seattle - Vancouver - Victoria.

Complimentary Dinner

to

Captain J. W. Troup

on the occasion of his retiring from active service as Manager

by the Officers and Employees of the British Columbia Coast Service

Complimentary Dinner

in honour of

Captain J. W. Troup

by the Officers and Employees of the British Columbia Coast Service

on board "Princess Louise" at Victoria

Saturday, September 15th, 1928

at 8 p.m.

Ticket $2.50

R.S.V.P. TO
J. H. TAYLOR, BANQUET SECRETARY
VICTORIA, B. C.

Menu & ticket courtesy of the Vancouver Maritime Museum.

Quesnel Forks

by Marie Elliott

On the morning of October 12, 1880, Jennie Stephenson watched in horror as, one by one, fire consumed the buildings in Quesnel Forks. The little village escaped a major forest fire in 1869 with only the loss of the lockup, but this time it would not be so fortunate. Jennie's husband, Government Agent William Stephenson, was a veteran of the Barkerville Fire Brigade and knew the dangers in a frontier town. Before leaving on his tax collecting rounds a few days earlier, he had made certain that the water barrels on the roof of their home were full. But this precaution and the fact that they lived on the outskirts of the village, near the South Fork toll bridge, were small comfort. She was alone with two little boys and a teenage nursemaid, while the residents of Quesnel Forks – mostly Chinese miners – fought to save what little they could. Eventually, sparks ignited the shingles of her home, and a Chinese neighbour made liberal use of the stored water. When it was all over, only the Stephenson's residence, the rebuilt lockup, and the South Fork Bridge remained standing.

Most of the destroyed buildings dated to the earliest days of the Cariboo gold rush. In 1859, miners, tracing gold up the Quesnel River, stopped to work the gravel delta at the Junction of the North and South Forks (now called the Cariboo and Quesnel Rivers). A number of entrepreneurs quickly applied for a toll bridge charter to connect the rapidly growing village with the trail to the Fraser River. Sam Alder and William Barry won out, and their bridge was in place by 1862, in time to serve the hordes of miners and the packtrains that came through that summer on their way to the gold fields.

From the very beginning, government officials were dubious about the future of the village. In his report to Governor James Douglas in 1860, Gold Commissioner Philip Henry Nind thought the town should be moved. There should be a better location ". . . than a flat lying between two swift rivers which can only be approached by terrific hills, is many miles distant from pasture, and forces the trail to the mines, on which it is principally dependent, over a country where no money or labour can ever make even a moderately good road."

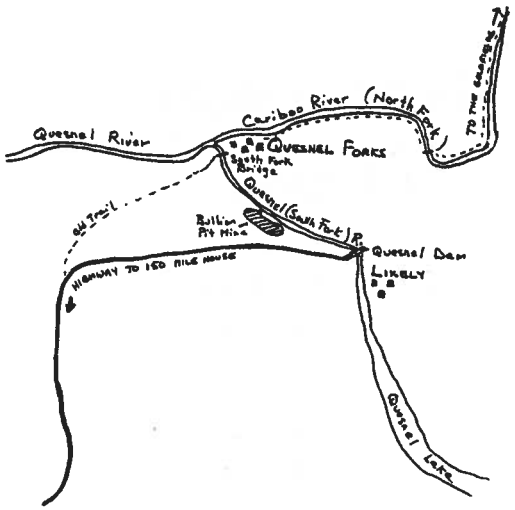
Col. Moody of the Royal Engineers refused to survey Quesnel Forks for a townsite, correctly predicting that the miners would eventually move on. The white miners did continue up the North Fork to Cariboo Lake, and from there followed Keithley Creek to the Snowshoe Plateau, then down the other side to Antler and Williams Creek. But in their wake, Chinese miners moved into Quesnel Forks, and this hard-working ethnic group were responsible for its longevity.

Oliver Hare, the first resident Government Agent, and a bachelor, found Quesnel Forks very lonely in the late 1860's. and 1870's. He was often the only white man in the town and seemed completely unable to cooperate with the Chinese miners. Eventually, his health gave out and he died in Victoria in December 1876. Like his friend John Bowron, Gold Commissioner at Barkerville, William Stephenson was Canadian born and married when he took over Hare's vacant position in May 1877. Hare had described the Government Agent's residence, with adjoining lockup, as "the best premises in town", and possibly this was a consolation to Jennie Stephenson as she settled in to await her first child, Henry Allen, that August. Her second child, Gillespie Elliot, was less than a year old when Quesnel Forks went up in flames in the fall of 1880.

If the 1881 Canada Census is correct, then the Keithley Creek/Quesnel Forks census area had the third largest concentration of Chinese residents, after Victoria and Nanaimo. Because Quesnel Forks was the supply centre for more than 250 Chinese miners and farmers, many of the cabins, stores, and warehouses were rebuilt after the fire. Two more fires in the 1880's did considerable damage to the commercial buildings, but the residents persevered.

The peaceful routines in the little village were badly shaken up in the early 1890's, when corporate businessmen invested thousands of dollars in the placer mines, creating a hydraulic mining boom. Executives of the Canadian Pacific Railway hired John Hobson, a mining engineer from California, to supervise development of the Bullion Pit Mine. By 1900 this mine was described as one of the largest open pit placer mines in the Commonwealth. Despite miles of ditches and pipelines, and the damming of numerous lakes, there was never enough water to operate for more than several months. Nevertheless, the mine produced $350,000 in 1900, putting the Quesnel Mining section ahead of the Barkerville section in gold production.

The increase in population forced Wil-



liam Stephenson to rebuild the lockup, and to request an assistant constable to keep order while he was "on the road". The floating population enlarged even more when MLA Joseph Hunter, working as engineer for a London based syndicate, dammed the outlet of Quesnel Lake in 1896. It was an idea that had been considered ever since 1860. Upwards of 200 men, working in shifts, managed to stop the flow of water in December 1897, in order that the bed of the South Fork River could be mined.

To support the renewed interest in hydraulic mining, the provincial government replaced the rough trail from Quesnel Forks to 150 Mile House with a wagon road, and rebuilt the South Fork bridge so it could carry heavier loads and teams of horses. Entrepreneurs moved into Quesnel Forks, building large hotels, securing liquor licences, taking a keen interest in the progress of mining companies. Although the dam project proved a failure – the river bed was mined for only one year – the mining at the Bullion Pit continued until June 1907 when it was shut down.

Quesnel Forks went into a decline, reviving slightly in the 1930's with the reopening of the Bullion Pit mine. But it never matched the activity of the 1890's, and after World War II the village ceased to attract residents except for a few hardy miners. In 1948, the year of the great Fraser River floods, the South Fork bridge was washed out and never replaced. A road had been cut through to Likely and Cedar Creek, using a bridge at the Quesnel dam site, in the 1930's. This also helped to put Quesnel Forks in a backwater.

Quesnel Forks – c. 1900. Photo courtesy of B.C. Archives.

In recent years, the Likely Cemetery Society has restored many of the graves in the historic cemetery. Here you will find markers for the pioneers who made Quesnel Forks a special community, including William Barry, the toll bridge owner, William and Jennie Stephenson, and their son Gillespie, and more than twenty Chinese men and women.

Wandering among the old cabins, or along the river bank near the toll bridge site, it is difficult to believe that in twenty years the ghost town of Quesnel Forks will disappear forever. After more than one hundred years of fighting the elements, the fragile buildings cannot hold up much longer, according to heritage experts, and yet . . . one wishes Quesnel Forks could be frozen in time. For here, history is not served up on a silver (golden?) platter, fully interpreted. Instead, the setting is the merest suggestion – a line drawing that your imagination and senses must fill in. Wondering how William and Jennie Stephenson or the Chinese residents coped with isolation, or the exciting events that occurred during their lifetimes, is a rewarding exercise, because your memories remain with you long after you have left "the Forks".

Quesnel Forks is easily accessible, approximately sixty miles northeast of 150 Mile House by paved road, and then ten miles by gravel road from Likely. A campsite is maintained by the Forest Service there, and you can spend as much time as you wish absorbing the sights and sounds of the Cariboo gold rush, limited only by the extent of your imagination.

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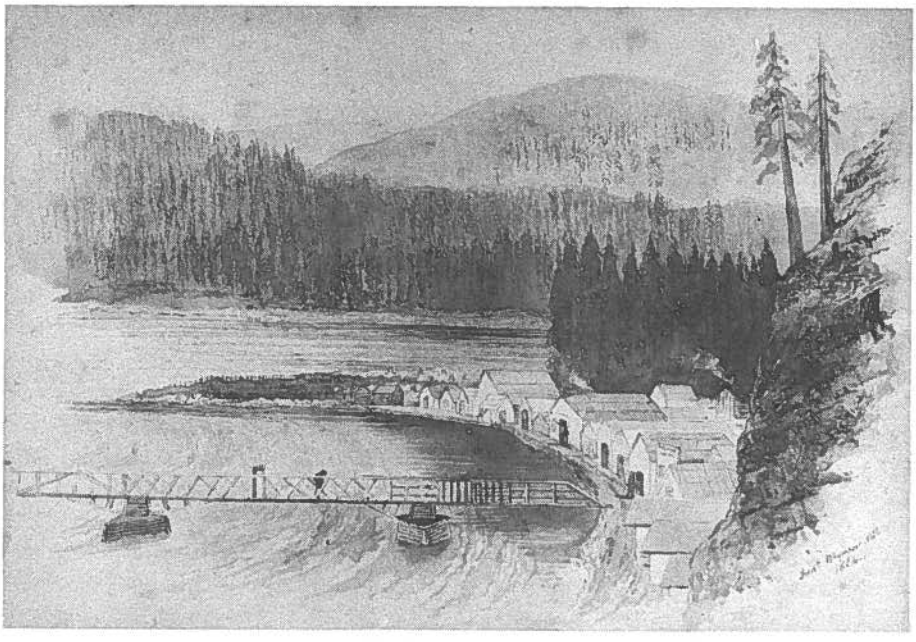
Marie Elliott lives and works in Victoria, and has done extensive research into the history of the Cariboo.



Quesnel Forks in 1864 – watercolour by Lt. F.W. Whymper. Photo courtesy of B.C. Archives.

Forgotten Cariboo Entrepreneurs

by Branwen C. Patenaude

108 Mile House in th 1880's. Picture courtesy Provincial Archives of British Columbia.

While most historians applaud the efforts of such early pioneers as the Harper brothers, Peter Dunlevy, William Pinchbeck or John McLean as being among the first to venture down the unknown trails of Cariboo, there were many others, now forgotten, who were just as early, or even earlier, just as daring, and equally enterprising. Among these were Charles Miles Beak, and Michael Costin Brown.

As a young man in his twenties Beak left England for California in the early 1850's. While mining along the Sacramento River, Beak also worked closely with a vigilante group, routing out cheats and outlaws, so prevalent in the gold rush camps. In the spring of 1862 Beak, with two other drovers, herded 300 head of cattle north to B.C., selling the beef enroute. Following this Beak, with a partner James Doyle drove a very large flock of sheep all the way to Barkerville, where he opened a butcher shop, selling mutton at 40¢/lb, and candles of mutton tallow at 50¢/lb. By 1866, and due to the depressed economy in the Cariboo, Beak closed his shop and returned to the United States. [1] In Oregon during the winter of 1867 Beak married sixteen year old Marie Johnson of Glencoe County. Returning with his bride to the Cariboo the following spring, he purchased the 108 Mile Ranch and roadhouse from William Roper, the first preemptor of the land there. [2] At this time Beak formed a cooperative movement with the farmers of the 100 Mile and Lac La Hache area, where they increased the beef herds and established large dairies at the 100 Mile, 105, 127 and 137 Mile ranches. To provide a market for these, Beak left the 108 and 105 ranches in charge of his neighbours, David Pratt and his step brother John Wright while he reopened his butcher shop in Barkerville in 1869. [3] Due to the great distance involved, cows driven to market from Lac La Hache were first rested and fattened on the alpine meadows of Bald Mountain, south of Barkerville. When marauding bears and wolves continually harassed and killed the cattle, it

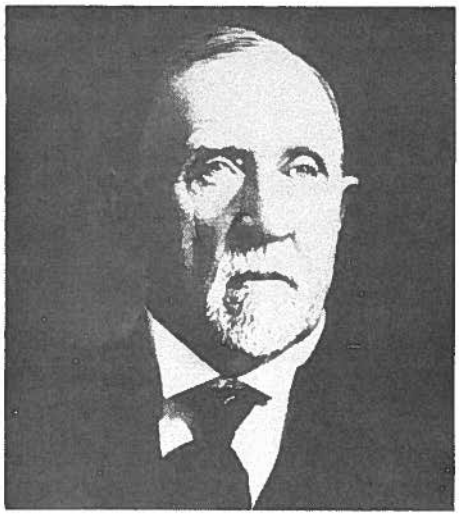
depleted stocks to such an extent that it forced Charles Beak, once again, to close his shop. For a few years Beak continued to maintain herds of cattle on various ranches that he owned in the Lac La Hache area. These were sold in Barkerville through the butchers Von Volcunburgh. [4]

Convinced by this time that conditions for raising beef in the Cariboo were far from ideal, Beak sold off his properties, and by the late 1870's relocated in the Upper Nicola River, where he became one of the founding members of the Douglas Lake Ranch.

Another very much overlooked Cariboo entrepreneur was Michael Costin Brown, miner, packer, hotel proprietor, and storekeeper in several gold rush areas of B.C. and the Yukon.

Leaving Ireland with his parents in 1850, Michael Brown, as a boy of eleven travelled across the seas to Ohio, where he continued his education in Cleveland. By the age of seventeen he was already showing a talent for business as the proprietor of a hotel in Oregon. A chance meeting with the leader of the North West Boundary Commission crew in Walla Walla, where Brown was about to open a second hotel, led him to the Similkameen country where gold had been discovered in British territory. Now thoroughly bitten by the gold bug, Michael Brown mined on the Thompson River in 1858, and on the Quesnel in 1859. In 1861 when he claimed to have been with William Dietz in the discovery of Williams Creek, Brown claimed not only to have named the creek, but also to have been the first to stake a claim there. [5]

In Oregon during the spring of 1862 Brown purchased a packtrain of forty two mules on which he transported 8000 lbs of provisions to Cariboo. In a store built at Richfield in 1863, Brown sold slabs of bacon to the miners for $1.00 lb. [6] After this it became a common thing to meet the packer Brown on the trail to Cariboo, and he became popularly known as "Bacon Brown", and his pack of mules the "Bacon Train". [7] During the Cariboo goldrush bacon and beans were the steady diet of the miners, and as a result many complained of suffering with inflamed mouths caused by the strong curing agent in the bacon.



Michael C. Brown

For many years during his long life Michael Brown continued to mine, in the Big Bend Country, the Omineca, the Cassiar, and at Lightning Creek in Cariboo. Leaving Cariboo for Victoria in the 1870's Brown was married, and settled down as owner of the Adelphi Hotel for the next twenty five years. But once a miner, always a miner, and when gold was discovered in the Yukon he had to go. There at Dawson City he operated a hotel, the Melbourne, for three years, before retiring for a final time to Victoria. [8]

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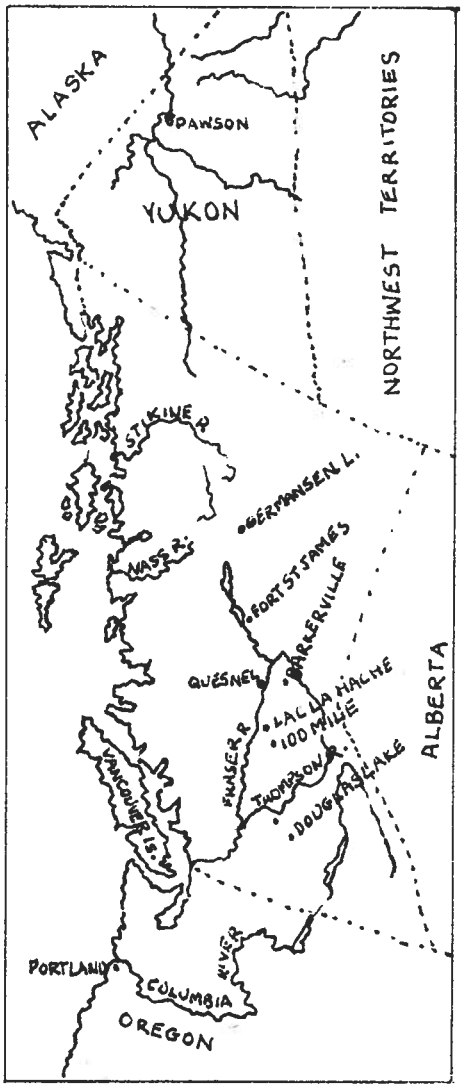
Branwen Patenaude is a Cariboo historian residing in Quesnel. She has published BECAUSE OF GOLD, and is preparing a history of the stopping houses.



"FORGOTTEN PIONEERS"
Branwen C. Patenaude, Quesnel, B.C.

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Old Time Cariboo Dances

by Lonna Kirkpatrick

The people of the Cariboo came from all over the world to join the native people in a unique community. The Road was a vital communication and transportation link that joined what would have otherwise been remote settlements. The sense of community was built with the Road but it was truly given life by events such as dances. Every dance brought an opportunity to meet, to visit and to enjoy.

My family were among the earliest settlers in the Cariboo. Both of my great grandfathers came to find gold and stayed to build large families with their native brides. Music played an important part in their lives. My great uncle Sam Kirkpatrick was a talented musician and, happily, a talented writer as well. He wrote two articles about the early dances for the Ashcroft Journal in the 1950's. He also wrote a history of our family in letters to my uncle. Following are three excerpts from those articles and letters.

The first dance in Cook's Ferry (now Spences Bridge) took place in the early 1860's. Native women were invited to come to be dancing partners with the miners. Tom Kirkpatrick was Sam's father and my great grandfather.

Winter was closing in at the Cariboo gold fields. All operations were suspended, and the big trek was on towards the Coast for the winter. Seventy-five percent of the miners were making the trip on foot. When they reached the ferry, a great many laid over for a few days or a week to rest and feed up, where provisions were plentiful, including liquid refreshments. It was during this period that some livewire suggested they have a dance. Well, the idea caught on like wildfire. They were all in favour.

So a ways and means committee was formed, and they approached Tom Kirkpatrick, who was proprietor of the hotel and store at the time, who willingly donated the use of his dining room for the occasion.

It was soon found out that the only musical instrument in town was a fiddle owned by Kirkpatrick. It was also learned that the only man that could play the fiddle was Tom himself, and he was agreeable.

At nine p.m. the fiddle was tuned and bow rosined and the MC declared the dance open for auction. There was a rush for partners as Tom struck up the Grand March, assisted by an old fellow named Hanse who had got a couple of table spoons from the cook to drum on the bottom of a wooden tub.

From then on the fiddler was kept busy with hornpipes, jigs and reels. There was no shortage of partners, in fact the gentler sex, who by the way were not so gentle, outnumbered the men. A great number of the women were on the heavy side, and not at all graceful in their effort to do the white man's dance. But the surplus avoirdupois sure helped to give the husky miners a lively time when it came to swinging on the corners which the men enjoyed immensely. There were many volunteers to call square dances, so they became the order of the night.

Everything was free but the drinks, and after many return trips to the barroom, the fun reached the altitude that could be described as inebriated hilarity, but it was all good natured fun, and everyone was happy.

But it seemed that it was too good to last, because at eleven o'clock BANG!! went the E string on Tom's fiddle and he had no spares. The local blacksmith who was fixit man about town, tried to splice it but to no avail. It broke again before it was in tune.

By this time the crowd was getting real restless. Finally the MC said "Three strings are as good as four for this crowd, bring Tom another swig of brandy, and let's get on with the dance!" So they did just that, with a little more speed and a little more noise. Apparently no one missed the broken string.

A short recess was called at midnight for eats in the kitchen, where the cook had provided a wonderful spread. For three days he had baked bread for this occasion, but after feeding everyone at six p.m. and again at twelve there was not a scrap of bread or anything else left.

Everyone was content, happy and raring to get going, so the supper hour was cut short and the dance continued. The spectators who did not dance were kept highly amused by watching the native girls in their attempts to keep step with the miners.

With Tom doing the best he could on three strings and everything rolling along so smoothly the happy time passed very quickly. Then just as the kitchen cook announced the hour of four, Bang went the A string on Tom's fiddle. The Master of Ceremonies lost no time in shouting "Bring Tom another jolt of brandy, and let's get on with the dance", which they did. Tom could not play a tune on two strings so he just sawed back and forward on the open strings, making a sort of harmonious sound, and left the rhythm to the tub thumper. This went on for over an hour, but Tom was not playing as loud as he did before, and they thought he was getting tired. The fact was he was worried about his bow, there were none too many hairs on the bow to begin with, and they kept breaking all night. So now he was nursing them along trying to make them last the night out. Another hour would do it but just as this thought struck him, Bang, went the last of the horse tail on Tom's bow, so Tom said "That's that!"

But an old Missourian with a flowing beard, stepped forward and said "My dad got in that fix one time down in Missouri, he just rubbed rosin on the stick and it worked". So a bit of experimenting went on and some time lost. Finally it was tried out and it did really make a sound.

"Just enough for our final square dance", shouted the crowd. They lined

up again and were away like a hurricane. Then half way through, just as the caller said swing your buffalo gal, Bang went the D string on Tom's fiddle. Well Tom quickly boxed fiddle and bow, then turned and said to the crowd: "Come on boys, we just have time for another good swig before we tackle the flap jacks!" [1]

When the sons and daughters of Tom Kirkpatrick grew up, they formed The Kirkpatrick Orchestra. Great Uncle Sam was a part of the orchestra from his earliest years. They were asked to play for a wedding ball in Clinton and the following story is Great Uncle Sam's remembrance of the event.

The day dawned clear as a bell at Ashcroft on November 22nd, as it usually does up in God's country, with a slight tang of frost in the air, then the sun burst over the sand hills to the east in all its glory, and soon the chill was gone and the morning was lovely.

A BX special, an open type carriage with three seats, drawn by four high-stepping bay horses, came down the main street and turned with a wide sweeping curve and slowed to a stop opposite the ladies sitting room at the Ashcroft Hotel.

That in itself, was a beautiful sight, something that is not seen today. A load of passengers were waiting on the sidewalk with their musical instruments. They were members of the Kirkpatrick Orchestra, who were to furnish music for the Ball at Clinton, consisting of myself, my four older brothers and three sisters. At about 9:30 we boarded the BX special and pulled out with a flourish that filled my boyish heart with pride.

The horses were held to a walk for the first few miles, but once we rounded the rock bluffs, the whip popped and we were away at a speed that was really thrilling. That trip through the Valley by horse stage was something you didn't forget in a hurry. A beautiful Valley, a picture of peace and contentment. The prosperous ranches adjoining one another from Cache Creek to 20 Mile House.

Our driver, as well as being an expert reinsman, was also quite an entertainer. He whistled reels and hornpipes in time with the steps of the lead team. He also took the lead in singing songs that were popular at the time, while we all joined in the chorus.

Then he told us jokes about the farmers along the way, as we passed each place he pointed out the buildings and told us who lived there then recounted some humorous incident concerning them. I might say here that it was quite the fad in those days to swap yarns about your friends and neighbors and to play practical jokes on them.

We passed many vehicles of various types that day, mostly two-horse rigs. There was always a lot of good natured banter and shouting when one rig passed another. A sort of rivalry existed between the drivers. They all took a lot of pride in the animals they drove.

We eventually pulled into Clinton, and were put up at the Dominion Hotel, where we had a real Cariboo-style supper, to which we did ample justice.

At a quarter to nine we started tuning up and the crowd came surging in, and in a very short time the place was overflowing with dancers. At nine sharp we struck up the grand march and the dance was on. The march was led by the bride and groom, who were a handsome pair. After the grand march came the circassian circle, followed by three round dances, then a quadrille and so on all night.

There were quite a few round dances performed during the nineties, those I recall now include the Waltz, Schottische, Jersey, Polka, Varsouvienne Heel and Toe, Polka Flying Dutchman or (Danish Polka), Seven Up, and Mazurka. Of course the waltz was done more often then than the others as it was the favourite then, as it is today. Once each night the Caledonia Lancers were put on in place of the common square dance.

One of the highlights of the evening was the waltzing of Mrs. Dougherty (mother of the bride) and Mr. B.F. English, the smooth gracefulness, the perfect rhythm and time with each other and the music, made it a performance of perfection. They were not the only ones. Ninety per cent of the dancers were good waltzers, in those days.

There was another couple that caught the eye of the many spectators, Bessie the bride and Jimmy Uren, they did a novelty number. While doing a waltz, Bessie held one corner of a large red handkerchief in her left hand, and Jimmy held the other corner in his right hand, and the large number of figures they went through was surprising. They dipped and dived, they whirled, they swayed and turned in opposite directions, then together they danced forward then backwards. One moment they were far apart and the next they were together, waltzing gracefully down the hall. I had seen it done many times, but this couple could do it just a little better than the average.

There were a great many individuals whose performance in the square dances was comical, some people having a gift of being able to do a bit of clowning in their own way that seems to fit in, and make an amusing spectacle for those who are looking on.

Volunteer fiddlers took over (while the band had supper) and no time was lost. When we got back to the hall, the step dancers had the floor, there were at least a dozen of them. They danced in pairs, facing each other, with intermittent walk-arounds, and believe me those boys could shake a wicked leg.

After we resumed playing there was an incident that amused me very much, being only a boy at the time. While dancing "pop goes the weasel", in the set near the Orchestra, a big young girl from down around hooked up with (an) old "dame" and went three hands round then popped, and the old "dame" also popped. The result was a head-on collision, it only staggered the girl a bit but the impact brought the old "dame" to her knees on the floor. She was helped up and the dance went on, and I only giggled to myself for about an hour. I do not know to this day who those ladies were.

Well the dance carried on to 6 o'clock, then we all hit the hay for the day as there was another big night ahead. The old timers can tell you that big dances in those days were two night affairs.

At 9:00 p.m. November 23rd, we were back on the job, raring to go, and the crowd showed as much pep as they did the previous night.

Well the programme was run through on the same pattern as the night before, with everyone having a whale of a time.

It also went till 6 o'clock, and strange as it may seem the ladies, young and old, were going strong to the end.

I had all I could do to keep awake that second night, but I managed to hold out till the end, but when we piled into the buggy for the return trip I was dead to the world in a few minutes and the next thing I knew we were pulling in at Cole McDonald's 12 Mile House for lunch.

It has been easy for me to remember the date, November 24th, 1894 as it was my birthday, and I was eleven years old.

And so ended a fine celebration, in honour of a very fine couple Mr. and Mrs. Mark Eagleson, and to my mind it was the grandest of all of Clinton's Grand Balls. [2]

In the long winter months when the ranch work was slow, small bands of minstrels formed and traveled around to friends and family for a visit and a dance. Great uncle Sam was part of one of these groups one year and the following story is about one such family event.

All the farms had growing families of young men and women, so they soon got acquainted. The community got together and formed dancing parties. Word was sent around and they danced at the farms, a different one each week. With a hay rack covered with hay and blankets, they traveled in large groups. They sang songs while the sleigh bells rang and had a whale of a time, so the winter passed quickly. It was near Spring when they got to Alkali Lake. The Bowes had not attended those dances as it was a long day's drive in winter from Alkali Lake to Dog Creek. When the crowd had visited the Meason ranch, they were about half way to Alkali Lake, so they decided to lay over for a couple of days and then spring a surprise party on the Bowes.

With six sleigh loads of dancers and half a dozen fiddlers, they arrived unannounced, just at suppertime, but they were made welcome by the Bowes as always with the pioneers of those days. Arrangements were put under way to feed the big gang. Soon the big front room was cleared, candle wax scraped on to the floor and the dance was on. They danced until day light and breakfast was announced by the voluntary cooks.

The second night Emma Bowe went to the Indian Village which was less than a mile from the ranch house. She invited the young folks to come down and take in the dance. They were all good dancers, as they had been dancing for years in their own hall, so they came eagerly and had an enjoyable time. There was no discrimination, they mixed and danced and had more fun than the previous night. But time marched on as usual and all too soon the Home was danced. Many had a sad feeling in their hearts, as they often do when an enjoyable time comes to an end and it is time to say Good Bye. [3]

My grandfather, Jim Kirkpatrick, and my grandmother, Emma Bowe, met and fell in love over those two days so I, for one, am very glad for the old time dances!

* * * * * * * * * * *

The writer has roots in the Cariboo but now lives and works in Calgary.

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KIRKPATRICK ORCHESTRA November 23, 1894

BACK ROW: Litta (Kirkpatrick) Stephenson, Ida (Kirkpatrick) Bowe, Mary "May" (Kirkpatrick) Felker, Jim Kirkpatrick.
MIDDLE ROW: Bill Kirkpatrick, Frank Kirkpatrick (16 yrs. old), Jack Kirkpatrick FRONT ROW: Sam Kirkpatrick (11 yrs. old the next day)
MISSING: Tom Kirkpatrick (7 yrs. old - at home)

Photo courtesy of the Glenbow Museum.

The Saga of Louis LeBourdais

by Winston A. Shilvock

There's a legend in the Cariboo Country of British Columbia that's almost 100 years old and has become a part of the historical heritage of our province. It's the story of the life of Louis LeBourdais, one of the most adored and admired of our early pioneers.

Louis LeBourdais was born in Clinton in June, 1888, the son of Adelbert LeBourdais from Quebec and Eleanor Connich from Ontario. This was a free-wheeling time in the Cariboo. It was only 30 years after gold had been discovered to the south on the Fraser River and only 26 years since "Dutch Bill" Dietz and "Doc" Keithley had created a stampede to the north with their fabulous gold strikes.

This was a time when the stage coaches of the BX Express skimmed over the Great North Road at a speed of six miles an hour and the massive, slower freighters, drawn by mules, horses and oxen labored north with supplies for the miners.

As a youngster Louis' first recollections were of horses and he was able to ride as soon as he was able to walk. At 13 he earned extra money by breaking wild stallions after school and from this he developed a love of horses that never diminished.

However, this wasn't a profitable vocation so by the time he was 15 Louis had learned to read and write well and, taught by his father, had become proficient in telegraphy, at that time the only means of transmitting messages. His first job was with the government telegraph as operator/lineman at Fort Alexandria. Besides operating the telegraph key he also had to keep in repair 60 miles of line. To a youngster of 15 this was a very arduous task and he soon gave it up.

The next few years in Louis' life were restless ones for his wasn't a nature to be tied down. For a year he worked in a store in Clinton; next he tried his hand as a cowboy and hostler for the BX stages; then he and his brother operated a small sawmill at Barkerville from where he drove six-horse teams to take out lumber and bring in supplies.

In 1910 Louis was 22, an age that in those days was considered mature, so he settled down and went back to the telegraph key, operating out of Golden for the CPR. Here he met and fell in love with Katie Pughe whom he married in 1912, shortly after being transferred to Grand Forks. This was followed with a stint at the CPR main office in Vancouver and then a transfer to Vernon.

Then, for the first of two times Fate made a move and Louis LeBourdais received a break that would determine the course of the rest of his life. The Yukon Telegraph offered him a job as operator/lineman at its office in Quesnel. Louis was about to return to his beloved Cariboo!

Katie was soon to have their first son, Jim, so she stayed in Vernon until the baby was born December 24. In February, 1915, she was able to undertake the exhausting trip ahead which required a week to travel by train to Ashcroft and then by stage coach to Quesnel. In the meantime Louis had established living quarters in a two-story frame house on Front Street situated on the bank of the Fraser River. This also housed the telegraph office and would be home to the LeBourdais for many years to come.

Considerable time was required to maintain the telegraph lines and Louis was away a lot making repairs. To fill in for him Katie learned to operate the telegraph key and was soon classed as a professional. Her real name was Katherine Elizabeth but the nickname "Katie" came from her key sign-off letters, "K.T."

It was just over a year later, on January 17, 1916, when, for a second time, Fate entered Louis' life. It was big news that night when, in -45F temperature, half of Quesnel was completely burned out. Louis realized the importance of the event and quickly filed a story on it to **The Vancouver Daily Province**. Although this was his first attempt at writing a story, it proved a huge success and demands soon came for more.

Louis LeBourdais
Photo courtesy of the Quesnel Museum.

Thus was launched the writing career of Louis LeBourdais and over the next 30 years he wrote dozens of stories about characters and events in the Cariboo. It was the fame generated by his stories that led me to him in 1934.

That year I was researching material for a film script on the history of British Columbia and the natural person to contact for the Cariboo segment was Louis LeBourdais. I'd been told he was "very approachable" and would be more than willing to help me. This was the under-statement of the year! Dropping everything he took me in tow and for two days we toured to Cottonwood House, Barkerville and for miles around Quesnel. He knew everyone and the number of introductions he gave me boggled the mind. One of my most poignant disappointments in life has been that I never again had the opportunity to visit with Louis before he died.

Louis never lost an opportunity to advertise his beloved Cariboo. In 1936 he organized the Cariboo Pageant section of a parade held in Vancouver to mark the Golden Jubilee Mining week. Van-

couverites marvelled at the vast array of bull teams, a six-horse stage coach, a ten-horse pack train and colorful cowboys on their ponies.

On one occasion after his election to the provincial legislature in Victoria in 1937, to advertise the Cariboo beef industry, he treated his fellow members to the largest, juiciest steaks ever seen on Vancouver Island. This put the finishing touch to assure the passage of his Beef Grading Act, the most advanced of its kind in Canada.

Louis looked on alfalfa (Cariboo alfalfa) as a great health food and he once served dozens of "Alfalfa Muffins" to his fellow MLAs to advertise the agricultural potential of the Cariboo.

When war broke out in 1939 Louis was 51 years old. Although he had twice been refused enlistment in the 1914-1918 conflict, his patriotsm rose once again and he offered his services. To his elated surprise he was accepted for the Royal Canadian Signal Corps and later transferred to the Army Press Relations. He was proud indeed that his son, Jim, joined the army and served in the Italian and European campaigns and that his second son, Jeremie, who turned 18 in 1943, was on convoy duty with the Royal Canadian Navy.

After his discharge in October, 1945, Louis went back to politics and as usual, was elected to Victoria with a very large majority. Time was beginning to run out for him, however, and this was destined to be his last election.

In 1946 Louis had to miss the Fall session of the legislature as his health began to rapidly deteriorate and in February, 1947, he underwent major abdominal surgery. He was still very weak in June but he mustered enough strength to travel to Williams Lake to lead the parade to open the annual Stampede. Three months later in September, 1947, Louis LeBourdais died quietly in his home at Quesnel.

His funeral was conducted by the Masons and the Royal Canadian Legion and during the service the song, "Don't Fence Me In" was sung at his request. This wasn't just a cowboy song - it was his philosophy of life. The grave site has no fence around it like other important people and the headstone, a large rock, is enscribed, simply, "Louis LeBourdais - 1888-1947".

Travellers to the Cariboo today can witness a pleasant reminder of Louis LeBourdais, for on the east side of Quesnel, hard by the highway, is a large, beautiful grassy knoll named LeBourdais Park, a colorful tribute to the memory of one of British Columbia's eminent pioneers.

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Winston Shilvock graduated from U.B.C. with B.A. 1931, B.Comm., 1932 and was working in Vancouver in advertising when he visited the Cariboo and met Louis LeBourdais.

A grateful acknowledgment is made to –

RUTH STUBBS – Co-ordinator of the Quesnel and District Museum for supplying historical data on Louis LeBourdais from -

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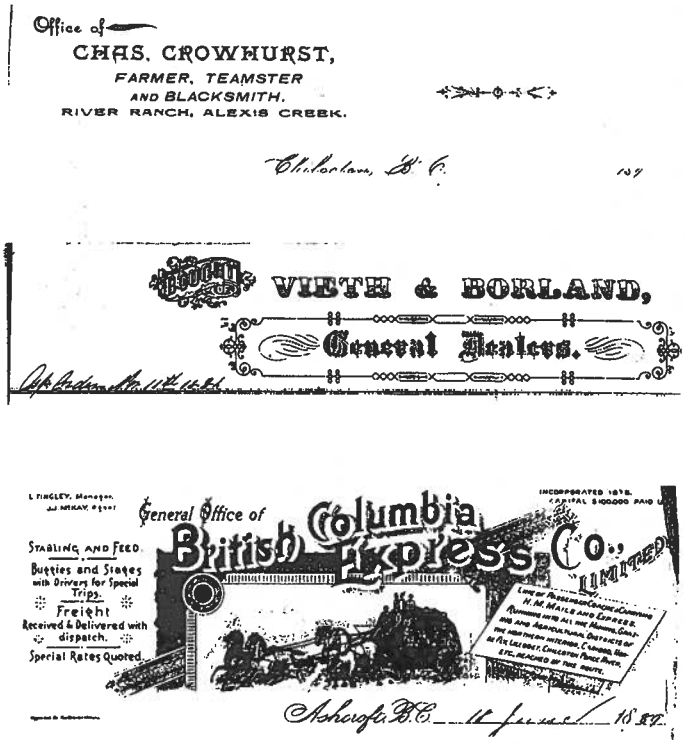
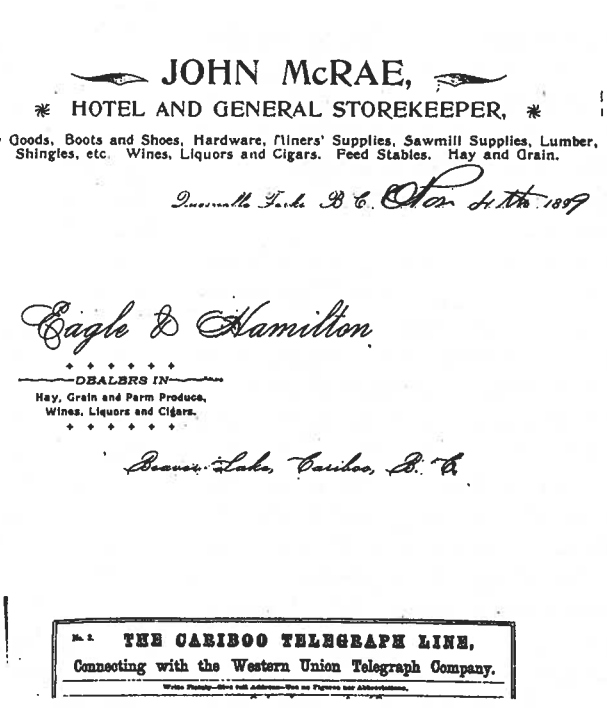
Letterheads from Pioneer businesses in the Cariboo.





"These letterheads are reproduced from the collection of Marie Elliott, Victoria, B.C."

Remembering the P.G.E. (B.C. Rail)

by T.D. Sale

At 10 a.m. on January 1, 1914 an early steam engine with two vintage coaches carrying 150 passengers left the station at the foot of Lonsdale Avenue in North Vancouver. It travelled west along Burrard Inlet past the Indian Mission, over the Capilano River and sixteen minutes later arrived at Dundarave in West Vancouver. Both Mayor Hanes of North Vancouver and Reeve May of the adjacent Municipality predicted a great future for the Pacific Great Eastern Railway which had been named after the Great Eastern Railway of England.

The P.G.E. was championed by B.C.'s premier Sir Richard McBride and his conservative government at the spring sitting of the Legislature of 1912. Various and sundry surveys and plans had been carried out prior to the awarding of the contract to Foley, Welch and Stewart. The terms of the contract were (1). B.C. held a first mortgage. (2). B.C. guaranteed $35,000 per mile. (3). Interest on securities was at the rate of 4 1/2% and was payable for not less than 30 years and (4) Only white labour was to be used. It was envisioned that the P.G.E. would carry all of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad's freight between Vancouver and Prince George.

Old discarded rolling stock was purchased from various sources. The day coaches had very uncomfortable seats. Antiquated heaters that had to be refueled constantly were located at each end. Coal oil lamps were used to light the coaches when necessary. Sudden stops or starts frequently splashed some of the liquid about if they had just been filled. Schedules were printed but rarely maintained in the early days.

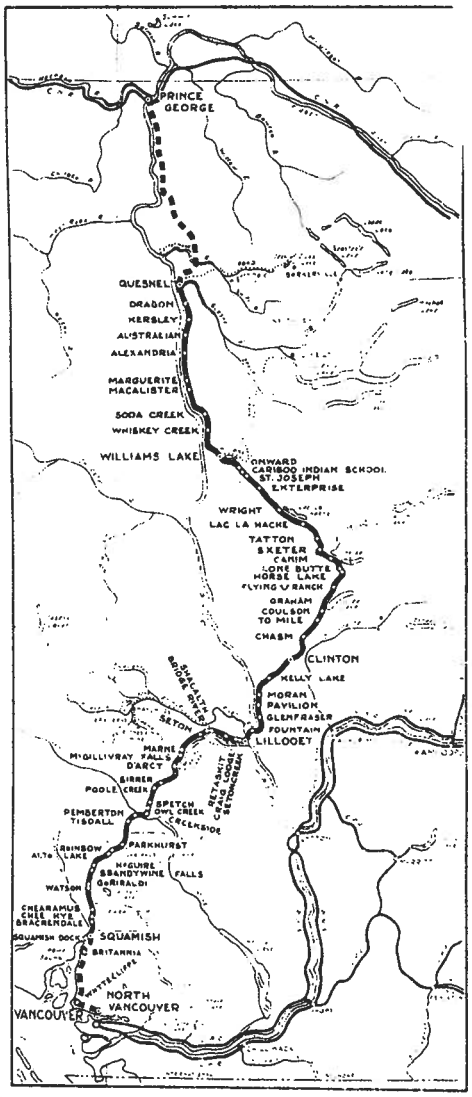
Prior to the end of 1914 the P.G.E. track was extended in West Vancouver to where the Gleneagles Golf Course is now located. My first train ride in early 1919 was on the P.G.E. from North Vancouver to West Vancouver and return as a birthday excursion.

With the approach of World War I in 1914 the boom that British Columbia had enjoyed collapsed. Banks had less money to loan. Unemployment saw the advent of the soup kitchens. Labour problems such as the Nanaimo strike increased. December 1915 saw the resignation of Conservative Premier McBride. The P.G.E. was in serious financial trouble.

Until 1914 Squamish was known as Newport. In this area and in Clinton all sorts of land development schemes were underway. On February 20, 1915 the first P.G.E. train ran from Squamish to Lillooet. By 1916 construction had reached Clinton and the Chasm. The railway contractors had run out of money. Premier Richard McBride had been succeeded by Premier William Bowser. Harlan Brewster was the Liberal Leader of the Opposition. It is interesting to note that the Lieutenant Governor was Frank Stillman Barnard who was the son of the founder of the famous Cariboo BX Coach Company.

The P.G.E. had become a political football during the World War I years. In the spring of 1917 an intensive parliamentary investigation was underway. Much accusing and cross questioning took place in the legislature especially in regard to money outlay and payment to individuals for services rendered. In February 1918 the Government of British Columbia took over the P.G.E. from the bankrupt firm of Foley, Welch and Stewart for the sum of 1.1 million dollars. Following the death of Premier Harlan Brewster in March 1918 John Oliver became Premier of B.C. He promised that the P.G.E. would be completed to Prince George as soon as possible and extended to the Peace River area.

In the beginning contracts had been let by sections and not always to the lowest bid per mile. No performance bid bond was required. Cost overruns were common. For material and horses supplied five and one half percent was



P.G.E. circa 1950

added. The government had appointed the Northern Construction Company as their chief contractor. Sub-contractors were in the picture with the parent company pocketing substantial sums with no accounting to the government.

The portion of the P.G.E. with which I am familiar is between Horse Lake, which was known as Fawn, and Williams Lake. In 1919 the railway was built past this area which included Lone Butte in April where there was a construction camp of importance, Canim, Exeter, Tatton, Lac La Hache, Wright, Enterprise, St. Joseph, Cariboo Indian School, Onward, and in September 1919 Williams Lake.

By the end of July 1921 Quesnel had been reached. In fact the rails had been laid as far as Cottonwood which is sixteen miles north of Quesnel. Following the Sullivan Report P.G.E. construction came to a standstill. The Report recommended a "hold the line" policy with no more money to be spent. Bonds were not selling at all well on the money market. The sixteen miles of rails to Cottonwood were ripped up and sold to Japan for scrap.

In 1924 a Royal Commission was held to investigate the high costs of construction and the apparent wastage. The result was that the government was cleared of all charges. By the end of 1924 the government loss on its P.G.E. investment was approaching thirty million dollars and was increasing substantially each year. Premier John Oliver was known to favour selling the provincially owned railway line along with a crown land grant partially free of taxes for a number of years to the purchaser.

As a cost saving measure the popular North Vancouver to Whytecliffe section of P.G.E. was terminated in 1928. The Horseshoe Bay to Squamish section was put on hold necessitating travel by Union Steamships from Vancouver to Squamish. The Company was left with a railway operating from Squamish to Quesnel often referred by the media 'from nowhere to nowhere.' The turning, twisting line received such jocular publicity as "Please Go Easy" "Provincial Government Expense" and "Prince George Eventually."

Following the death of Premier John Oliver in August 1927 his successor Dr. John MacLean continued the efforts to unload the ever increasing debt ridden P.G.E. The 1928 Provincial elections saw the defeat of the Liberal Government and the triumph of the Conservatives led by Dr. Simon Fraser Tolmie. Meanwhile the P.G.E. continued to cost the government over two million dollars each year. There was the humble beginnings of a slight reduction in the operating deficit.

The 1929 stock market crash heralded the onset of the Great Depression of the 1930's. There was a strong recommendation in 1932 to sell the P.G.E. and drastically cut back operating expenses.

In late 1933 the Liberals with Duff Pattullo as Premier became the governing party of British Columbia. Although he also wished to sell the P.G.E. to Canadian interests he was adamantly opposed to selling the government's railway to the Americans who were making tempting offers.

It was the 1934 to 1939 era when I was able to observe the workings of P.G.E. from my vantage point as a teacher in the Cariboo. Velocipedes for each section had been replaced by gas speeders so that section crews could be transported to and from the work site each day. Each section had a house for the section foreman and his family. Other hired personnel lived in a bunkhouse. Their task was to keep their section in good repair. Some of these duties included changing damaged ties by hand, spraying weeds along the track, reporting the weather, and clearing their section of track of any obstructions.

Many stations had large watertanks in order to supply water to the steam engines. Fairly frequently cattle or other animals would wander onto the tracks and would be hit or have to be removed. Many small stations were flag stops only. At most stations the train would at least slow down to drop a mail sack and pick up the outgoing mail sack. Roads to the small stations were very poor and some distance from where the local residents lived. For example – Exeter Station was two miles from 100 Mile House.

In the Depression Days local residents were able to secure 'tie contracts' from the P.G.E. Usually the contracts were for 200, 500 or 1000 ties. The contract recipient cut his ties during the winter and 'snaked' them out with the help of his horse. The ties had to be delivered to the railway track, inspected and counted before payment was made.

A trip to the Cariboo in the Depression Days was quite an adventure. It began in Vancouver by boarding a Union Steamship to Squamish. Delays were frequent and unpredictable. It was next to impossible to maintain a schedule. The coaches were uncomfortable. There were no facilities for sleeping or meals. Sleep was intermittent at best since the steam train stopped with a jerk and started with a jerk. Lighting was poor. Reading was almost impossible. On arrival at the destination the station was either locked for the night or if it happened to be opened it was "colder inside than out." One couldn't expect to be met at the station as the arrival time could not be foretold. The only alternative was to walk to the destination if the distance was at all reasonable.

In September 1939 World War II began and was to last for nearly six years. By January 1941 the P.G.E. debt had risen to nearly 80 million dollars. In December 1941 Duff Pattulo lost the leadership of the Liberal Party to John Hart who became Premier. Following the end of World War II, Premier John Hart had more surveys done with a view to extending the P.G.E. into the Peace River with a terminal at Fort St. John and another at Dawson Creek. The era of the steam engines was rapidly drawing to an end. The notation such as 4-2-2 is derived from the number of wheels in each group (1) 4 leading carrying wheels (2) 2 driving wheels and (3) 2 trailing carrying wheels. The nose cab type diesel - electric locomotives had by April 1949 replaced the old familiar steam engines on much of the P.G.E.'s main line in the interior of B.C.

Meanwhile the Coalition under the Premiership of Byron Johnson had been voted out of office and B.C. was now sampling the new Social Credit Party with W.A.C. Bennett as Premier. Freight consisting of cattle, logs and mineral ore was being hauled in box cars to Squamish and by tug and barge to Vancouver. Finally in September of 1952 the P.G.E. reached Prince George a distance of 80 miles from Quesnel. It

was exactly 40 years after the railway was started. Premier W.A.C. Bennett then announced that the B.C. Government would complete the Squamish to North Vancouver extension with a target date of June 11, 1956. By October 1958 (B.C.'s Centennial Year) the P.G.E. reached completion at both Dawson Creek and Fort St. John some 46 years after its inception.

Shop crews located at Squamish, Lillooet, and Williams Lake took pride in keeping the steam locomotives in top running condition. The distance from North Vancouver to Dawson Creek and Fort St. John was 729 miles. On Sunday April 30, 1972 P.G.E.'s Time Table Number 93 expired and British Columbia Railway Time Table No. 1 came into force. That same year the railway expansion was completed to Fort Nelson and begun to Dease Lake which was later abandoned. The final extension which was carried out in 1983 at the cost of five hundred million dollars was a distance of 81 miles to Tumbler Ridge.

In 1984 through government reorganization of the company's finances it was possible to trim $430 million from its $600 million debt. As it stands at present the B.C. Rail maintains 1388 miles of track and employs 2600 people. The corporation owns 120 locomotives and 10,500 freight cars. In the period 1986-1990 passenger tourists doubled. In 1990 it was necessary for the B.C. Government to subsidize the B.C. Rail by three million dollars. The assets of the B.C. Rail presently amount to 1.2 billion dollars.

Modernization of equipment continues. The diesel-electric nose cab type was followed by the road freight type. Budd car passenger units make comfortable travelling to the interior of B.C.

Memories of the steam train era are being kept alive each tourist season by the Royal Hudson No. 2860 with its notation of 4 - 6 - 4 as it runs on the B.C. rail tracks from North Vancouver to Squamish and return.

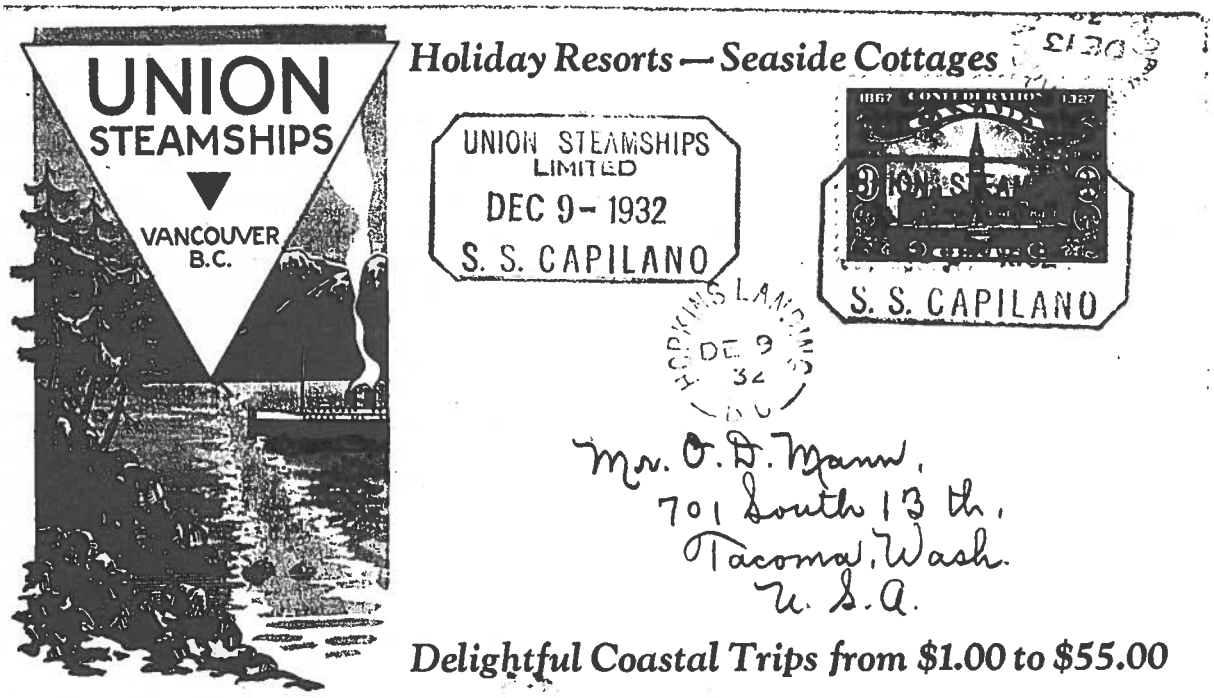
One final postscript in regard to the Williams Lake station house; in addition to serving the travelling public, the depot on MacKenzie Avenue has housed the "Station House Gallery" for the past ten years. Thus another building of the early P.G.E. era has been restored and preserved as a heritage location.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Don Sale is the Corresponding Secretary for the B.C. Historical Federation, and serves as a judge for the Writing Competition. He also keeps busy with many community organizations including the Nanaimo Museum.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. Information from Provincial Archives.
2. Information from Vancouver Public Library.
3. Information from Vancouver Sun Newspaper.
4. Sundry historical records kept by friends.



Reproduced courtesy of the Vancouver Maritime Museum.

The American Rush

by Gerri Young

It started out quietly enough.

In the early thirties it was just the occasional bush pilot flying overhead carrying mail and light freight. By 1937 Grant McConachie's Yukon Southern Air Transport acquired the mail route between Edmonton and Whitehorse which meant a regular stop in Fort Nelson. Yukon Southern operated ski and float planes, which meant that for six weeks of the year the plane couldn't land because the river wasn't frozen enough or thawed enough.

McConachie's dream was to have a first class airline operating on wheels all year long. He needed an airport in Fort Nelson. The Canadian government did have plans to build an airport there, since Fort Nelson was part of the Northwest Air Staging Route over which lend-lease aircraft were to fly to Russia. But by the time the government hired a contractor from Edmonton to put a winter road through from Fort St. John, McConachie had already scraped and ploughed a primitive runway out of the forest. Now he could land a 'big' plane - with about twelve passengers in it.

In 1941 Fort Nelson was an isolated fur trading post with a population of about one hundred people. Then the 'town' was at the Old Fort on the east side of the Nelson River, and the locals soon got wind of the airport destined for their back yard and the highway that was supposed to connect them to the south.

Their skepticism was fueled by stories they heard of the cat train that left Dawson Creek in February 1941. A bulldozer broke the trail and the cat train crept slowly north through the frozen wilderness bringing construction supplies and equipment. The cat train consisted of special sleighs with twelve-foot runners and an eight-foot spread. There were five freight sleighs consisting of a complete portable sawmill, blacksmith shop, mechanical equipment, one big grader, nails, tarpaper, miscellaneous building materials, gasoline, diesel fuel and food. One sleigh was loaded only with meat. And there were four sleighs with barracks for the crew. Five were pulled at a time by a D7 Cat. The bulldozer would plow the trees down and the D7 would pull five sleighs as far as the trail was broken, then go back for the other five.

They were plagued with mishaps and progress was slow. It took three days to go down the Sikanni Mountain. Bulldozing, clearing, blasting, making bridges, roughlocking on all hills. Sometimes taking one sleigh at a time, leaving the rest chained to trees, up the other side, winching, prying, cursing, then go back and repeat the whole procedure.

Dropping the cat through rotten ice was the most serious hardship. Fifty feet from the Sikanni River bank the cat slipped and plunged to the bottom of the river. It took three days to raise it up using a huge tripod made of logs and cables, then it had to be dried out under a large tent.

Sikanni was as far as they got by the end of April. They had to return south before spring breakup. It was impossible to drive bulldozers in muskeg, which was like quicksand and the cats would disappear into it.

They left the equipment guarded by two men. When the river had finished flooding in the spring a barge would be sent from Fort Nelson to haul it all north.

The rest of the crew headed south. They travelled day and night to stay on frozen ground. They found it difficult to sleep on the move and would sometimes wake up almost standing on their heads to find their bunkhouse chained to a tree on a steep hill.

By now crew morale was low, with a lot of threats and cursing. Three months of twelve hour shifts for forty cents an hour didn't always help them feel good about having a job. Even if it was the first job for many of them since the beginning of the depression.

Fort Nelsonites joked and doubted they'd hear much more about it. They were completely surprised by the arrival of US Armed Forces and Engineer Corps in the spring of 1942.

Pearl Harbor had forced the Canadian and US governments into building a road to Alaska as fast as possible. The Canadian government agreed as long as they didn't have to pay for it.

By the fall of 1942 there were 2000 US soldiers in Fort Nelson and more on the way. It wasn't a gold rush, it was an American rush. And the locals were overwhelmed. The Americans came and took over and built the road and spent millions.

George's Store and Cafe was the only one of either in Fort Nelson. Lodema George said, "...they took over. They had money and they spent it. We had the only place anyone could go for a meal...of course they were sick and tired of Army food...they just about mobbed us..." The Georges kept track of the meals per day. "I only had one table that would sit fourteen...we charged 75 cents for as much as you could eat...we did the cooking...it was hard work, but it was lots of fun...some of the soldier boys would have days off and I said if you want to do something there's the dish pan....and I had the Post Office, a little six by six room, which was fine when we got mail once a month, but soon the American Army had mail coming in seven times a week, twenty bags a day and I said, What am I going to do with all this? I had to pile it up all around the store."

The Americans even renamed the town. They called it Zero. On their maps it was the intersection of two roads, the beginning of one road north to Whitehorse and the other to Fort Simpson. The American Army started

the first service station with a sign that said: POSITIVELY NO GAS SOLD FOR CASH because it was for Army vehicles only. They opened another restaurant with a flagpole in front and set up a movie hall in a quonset hut. They even had big name entertainers, like the Andrews Sisters come and perform. They danced at George's and skated on the river.

When Earl Bartlett first came to Fort Nelson, in 1943, he said the letters USED were stamped on all vehicles. "I was surprised there were so many used vehicles, until I realized the letters stood for United States Engineering Division."

Lodema George said, "There were a lot of awfully nice men, a lot of awfully homesick boys in the bush...", who by the end of the year had completed the road. "It seemed there was a vehicle every five minutes, on that old road...that first bunch of boys that went through...they deserve a lot of credit."

By 1943 a lot of Canadians were moving to Fort Nelson to work for the American Army or to set up their own businesses. By 1946 the US Army transferred command of the highway to the Canadian Armed Forces. But the work on the highway continued, with largely civilian crews, to make it, and keep it, an all-weather road.

Now the highway is wide and straight with expensive sports cars and RV's from all over the continent joining the transport trucks and local traffic which use this route. It would be unimaginable to the freezing men who struggled a hundred and fifty miles through the forest with a lurching cat train in the spring of 1941.

****

Gerri Young came to Fort Nelson in 1952 with her husband and young family. In 1980 she published a history of Fort Nelson. She works as a librarian in Fort Nelson School District 81.

Muskeg causes problems for road builders in this area.

Photo courtesy of Michael Fraser.

U.S. Army Engineers dressed in full combat gear on the Alaska Highway.

Photo courtesy of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The First Convoy of trucks on the completed route, November 20, 1942.

WRITING COMPETITION 1991

Lieutenant - Governor's Medal

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MALASPINA AND GALIANO,
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$34.95 - 160 pp - hard cover.
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Douglas & McIntyre Ltd., 1615 Venables St., Vancouver, B.C. V5L 2H1

EMPRESS TO THE ORIENT,
by Dr. W. Kaye Lamb.
$19.95, soft cover -
$34.95, hard cover - 148 pp.
Vancouver Maritime Museum, 1905 Ogden Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1A3

NEWS & NOTES

HERITAGE AWARD TO BURNABY

Burnaby Historical Society recently received recognition from Heritage Trust for their hard work and many achievements in preserving local heritage. This award comes during Burnaby's Centennial Year but acknowledges the many projects completed during the past 35 years. Congratulations!

~

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME BICENTENNIAL EXPEDITION 1992

From May to October 1992 replicas of ships' boats will be moving along the B.C. Coast and around the islands to follow the paths of the crews exploring this area in 1792. The organizers are seeking:

1] donations to defray costs (Tax deductible receipts will be issued.)
2] participants to sign up for various stages of the journey.
3] audiences at each port of call.

For further details phone Malcolm F. Marshall at (604) 539-2923
or Write to *the Discovery Reenactment Society, Whaler Bay, Galiano Island, B.C. V0N 1P0*

There is also a commemorative display at Vancouver Maritime Museum until September 1992.

~

MASSACHUSETTS CONNECTION

A visitor in Victoria was researching his ancestors when a thoughtful librarian directed him to an article on "The Johnson Street Gang," in the **B.C.H. News**. The gentleman returned to Massachusetts, then phoned your editor to request a copy of this issue (Vol. 22 #1). He excitedly told of finding a bit about his grandfather with a longer item about his grand-uncle John J. Hart 'who was sometimes involved in less than legitimate business deals.' He found more details on JJ's wrongdoings in the archives. Our caller concluded, "It's fun to find an ancestor who was a scoundrel."

~

TAKING SECOND LOOK

The Winter, 1990-91 edition of British Columbia Historical News contained an article by Dick McMinn giving an account of his growing years in the Alberni area. It was illustrated by a photo of the "Uchuck III" one of the motor vessels which Dick worked on as it plied its way up and down the Alberni Inlet. As soon as he saw the photo Dick bristled slightly: "That's not the 'Uchuck III', someone has made a mistake".

The photo originally was in the collection of the Alberni District Museum and Historical Society which had been turned over to the Alberni Valley Museum who supplied the print. The donor had been quite specific: the ship was the "Uchuck III". Then we realized that there were only two photos on hand although four Uchucks had served up and down the Inlet – some gaps needed filling.

The request went out via Society members, the local newspaper and the local radio station – we need information about the Uchucks – all four of them – please share! Our own volunteers started reading microfilm of earlier papers and copies of "The Twin Cities Times" which had reproduced some excellent historic photos while it was in business. The record grew and early in 1992 came the piece de resistance – a visit from Dave Young whose father had owned the early Uchucks and now he himself is co-owner and piloting the UCHUCK III west from Gold River.

Dave brought along scrapbooks and other material for us to copy, with the promise that one day the originals would come to rest in our Community Archives. We now have photos of all four vessels – "UCHUK", the "UCHUK I", "UCHUK II, and "UCHUK III". Which ship was in the photo? It was the original "UCHUK", after it had been extended in 1938, so note the correction below the illustration in the "NEWS"

The big bonus behind this research is that we now have some first hand information about the four "UCHUCK"s and their role in keeping the little communities along the Alberni Inlet in touch with their neighbours. It was worth a second look!

Alberni District Historical Society,
Anne W. Holt, Volunteer Archivist

~

CHINESE HERBALIST DISPLAY

Workers are preparing a replication of the Man Yuck Tong store which served Victoria residents for 80 years. This new display area will be opening very soon in the Royal British Columbia Museum.

~

HBC HISTORY BUFFS-TAKE NOTE

A carefully transcribed ledger of 1863-64 has been incorporated into a book, **Fort Pelly Journal of Daily Occurrences**, 1863 edited by W.H. Long. 149 pp, plus biographical and explanatory notes, bibliography and index. Soft cover. These are selling at $10 plus $1.50 postage.

Order from:
Regina Archaeological Society
P.O. Box 931
Regina, Saskatchewan, S4P 3B1

~

ELIZABETH GRUBBE

North Shore Historical Society has lost its secretary and enthusiastic promoter. Elizabeth Grubbe, who attended many BCHF Meetings with her husband David, passed away in March after a lengthy battle with cancer.

~

MADGE (Wolfenden) HAMILTON 1893-1992

Madge Hamilton, an Honorary Life Member of BCHF, passed away April 28, 1992. She had contributed much to the functioning of the provincial archives, the Victoria branch of the B.C. Historical Association and to the Federation. Madge grew up in an age before the computer but she had a built in data base and retrieval system which functioned without crashing to the end. Past President John Spittle consulted her in February and was given a lengthy episode from her phenomenal memory.

~

NORTH VANCOUVER HISTORY?

Did you ever live in North Vancouver? If "yes" you are invited to jot down or type your memories of life and happenings in this community and send them to:

Robert Brown - Editor, North Shore Historical Newsletter
2327 Kilmarnock Crescent
North Vancouver, B.C. V7J 2Z3

~

FALL WORKSHOPS

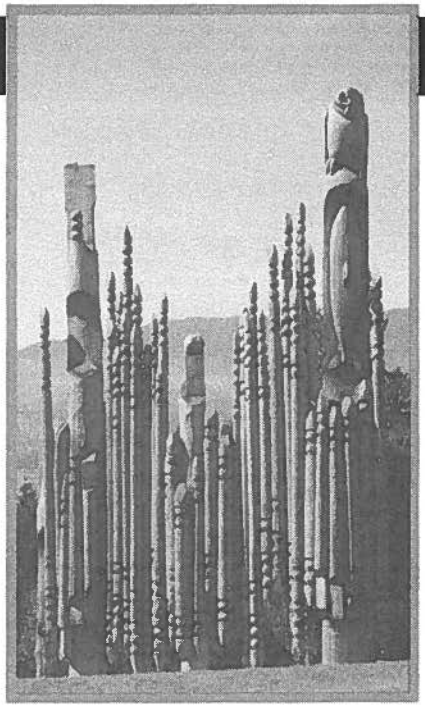
The University of Victoria is presenting a series of seven programs (averaging one week in length) on topics such as Desktop Publishing, Care of Old Books, Maritime Heritage, or Writing for the Heritage Community. For details contact the Program Coordinator, Cultural Resource Management Program, University of Victoria, P.O. Box 3030, Victoria, B.C. V8W 3N6 or Telephone (604) 721-8462

~

BARKERVILLE

The staff at this Historic Town take pride in the programs and displays they offer for summer visitors. They also present hands-on-history lessons to hundreds of schoolchildren during the spring and fall.

CONFERENCE '92 AT BURNABY



Ainu Totem Poles on Burnaby Mountain.

Brilliant sunshine and friendly smiles greeted the delegates to the Annual Conference of the B.C. Historical Federation held May 7 to 9, 1992. The Burnaby Historical Society planned and presented an excellent program. Thursday evening's reception, Friday's speeches, and the Annual General Meeting on Saturday were held at the Burnaby Sheraton Inn. Mayor Copeland and Centennial Committee Chairman Don Brown gave welcoming remarks before Don Wrigley spoke on the history of carousels, leading into the special story of the Parker 119 which is being restored for use in Burnaby Heritage Village. Jack Roff "fed" some alfalfa to the two carousel horses poised on their pedestals in the lecture room, then slides were shown explaining the carving and assembling of the beautiful wooden steeds of yesteryear.

A video was shown giving the life of Robert Burnaby as portrayed by high school students; this was introduced by the illustrious Michael J. Fox. Young Jim Wolf, Burnaby's archivist, presented an illustrated history of the evolution of this lovely area sandwiched between Vancouver and New Westminster. The original land speculators built increasingly extravagant homes with a view of Deer Lake and enjoyed a very elite circumstance. Then the interurban railway made it possible for the working man to move out there – if he could find a small plot of land with a clear title. Delegates were then whipped over to one of these pioneer estates where Hart House serves as a restaurant. Visitors took conducted walks through Burnaby Village Museum soaking up details about historical displays and modern computerized cataloguing.

Saturday's tour zigged and zagged through Burnaby, Confederation Park and Capitol Hill then to the viewpoint on Burnaby Mountain where the Ainu totem poles stand, a rose garden promises a wealth of blooms, and Indian Arm and Burrard Inlet extend from the narrow shore far below. Charming guides conducted delegates through Simon Fraser University. Then busses took all back to the Sheraton for the **Annual General Meeting.**

President Myrtle Haslam conducted the meeting efficiently and reports were concise with pertinent information. Eighteen societies were represented in the voting. The Treasurer's statements indicated comfortable financial reserves despite the downturn in interest rates. Archivist Margaret Stoneberg spoke on holders of Honorary Life Memberships in the span of our Federation. Pamela Mar explained the judging process and named the winners of the 1991 Writing Competition. Arthur Wirick defined the Scholarship selection committee. Trail's Chairman John Spittle drew attention to five Provincial Heritage Sites, and advised that 1993 would see anniversary activities on the Alexander MacKenzie Heritage Trail. B.C. Heritage Council, chaired by BCHF President Myrtle Haslam, is meeting with ministries preparing to enact revised Heritage legislation next year.

Jack Green of the Cowichan Historical Society proposed the following:

Moved that the BCHF arrange for publicity in Britain to seek out correspondence or diaries telling of early settlers in British Columbia.

Discussion indicated that this was a viable suggestion, and that material received would be directed to archives serving the community described in the correspondence.

Margaret Stoneberg of Princeton was accorded an **Honorary Life Membership** for her many years of work for the B.C. Historical Association/Federation, the Okanagan Historical Society, and the Princeton Museum and Archives. Margaret has also been Subscription Secretary for the **B.C. Historical News** and arranged to have the printing of labels computerized. Only one Honorary Membership can be awarded annually.

Election of Officers

The slate of officers was acclaimed, with the newest Member-at-Large being Wayne Desrochers of the new Surrey Historical Society. All other officers remain the same as 1991. (See inside back cover for names and addresses of the BCHF table officers.)

Highlights from Member Societies

Atlin Historical Society has leaped to a membership of 106. Arrow Lakes Historical Society is attempting to prevent demolition of the Court House in Nakusp. Burnaby Historical Society is actively involved in many parts of the Centennial celebration in 1992.

Chemainus is happily noting its 10th anniversary of its first Mural. District 69 and Qualicum Beach are already preparing to host the BCHF Conference in 1994, and have expanded their Museum.

East Kootenay Historical Association notes that the Wild Horse-Fisherville gold- rush area is now protected from future mining activity, but has yet to be defined as a Heritage property.

The Kootenay Museum & Historical Society is working on documenting the Walton boat works in Nelson.

Princeton Museum has had much patronage due to its fossil and mineral collection.

Salt Spring Island is making a concerted effort to collect archival material. Surrey Historical Society is protesting the closure of the Transportation Museum.

Sidney & North Saanich Historical Society have produced a video of district history. They present four scholarships to local students.

Kamloops Museum Society, represented by Elizabeth Murdoch, invited members and other history buffs to attend the 1993 Conference in Kamloops from April 29 to May 1, 1993.

Awards Banquet

The Awards Banquet, held at Burnaby Lake Pavilion, was MCed by Pauline Mudrakoff, Conference Committee Chairman. Florence Hart Godwin said grace then diners filled their plates at the buffet table. Charter member Fraser Wilson proposed the toast to the Queen.

Pamela Mar conducted the presentations to winners of the 1991 Writing Competition. The Lieutenant-Governor's Medal went to Geoff Meggs for his book, **Salmon.** Two first time writers were given a cheque and a certificate; Laurie Jones for **Nootka Sound Explored,** and Ellen Mackay for **Places of Worship in the Cowichan & Chemainus Valleys.** The winner of Best Article Award was Mary Andrews of Banff who wrote on Alpine Club summer camps in Vol. 24 No. 2.

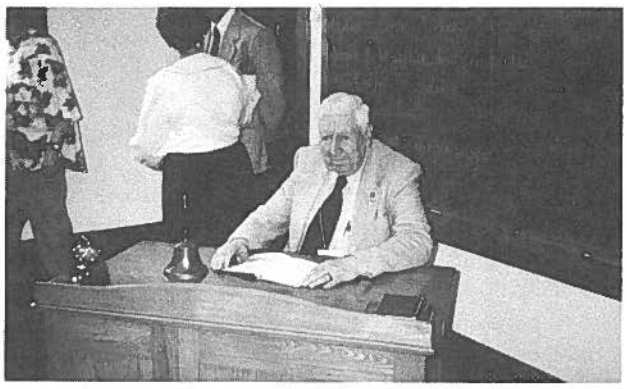
Labor historian Mark Leier gave a brief outline of the evolution of unions, especially the Industrial Workers of the World. He punctuated his narrative with songs which had buoyed up workers in adverse situations, and certainly proved entertaining to the audience at the dinner.

Many thanks to the hosts and hostesses in Burnaby, and a Happy Centennial Year to you!

CONFERENCE '92 IN PICTURES

Helen Brown, Don Brown (Burnaby Centennial Committee Chairman), Sharon Rakoff, & Pauline Mudrakoff (Conference Chairman).

Honorary Life Member Margaret Stoneberg with Past President John Spittle.



History Revisited! Don Sale at the teacher's desk in Seaforth School, Burnaby Village. Don took his practice teaching in this school!

The visitors at Burnaby Village Museum - May 8, 1992.

Editor Naomi Miller and Writing Competition Chairman Pamela Mar present the Best Article Certificate to Mary Andrews.

Four Burnaby ladies - Joan Bellinger, Florence Hart Godwin, Helen Brown and Winn Roff relax before the Awards Banquet.

On the bus to Burnaby Mountain & SFU.

President Myrtle Haslam conratulates Writing Competition Winner Geoff Meggs.

BOOK SHELF

Books for review and book reviews should be sent directly to the book review editor:
Anne Yandle, 3450 West 20th Ave., Vancouver B.C. V6S 1E4

Alex Lord's British Columbia; Recollections of a Rural School Inspector, 1915-1936

Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press,1991. 212 p., $15.95

When our esteemed Book Review Editor asked me to do this review and mentioned its highlights, I readily assented. My year at Vancouver Normal School, 1921-22 and four years teaching one-room frontier schools gave me a lifetime interest in such schools and high respect for school inspectors. The book is small enough for bedtime reading; an attractive one-room, rural log school adorns the front cover; the back cover gives an outline of Lord's career and his benign influence on rural education, his memoirs, and identifies the editor, John Calam, Professor Emeritus of Social and Educational Studies at UBC. The introduction fills 30 pages; Lord's narrative fills 90 pages, editorial notes follow in 40 pages, and the index is 17 pages long. Larger print and fewer notes would have made the book easier to read without increasing its size.

Alexander Russel Lord, one of five brothers, was born, 1885, in Nova Scotia. His parents were prominent well educated Presbyterians. He got a Teacher's Diploma in 1904 and a B.A. at Queen's in 1910. Then, responding to "the lure of the west", Lord became Principal of the Kelowna Elementary School. In four years there he won high repute and married Muriel McNair, one of his staff in 1914. His age was then 29.

After a year as Principal of Vancouver's Grandview Elementary School, he joined the cadre of B.C.'s school inspectors. He was based at Prince Rupert 1915-1919, back at Kelowna 1919-22, and in Greater Vancouver 1922-24. Lord became fascinated with B.C.'s geography and pioneer rural life. D.M. Robinson, head of the Vancouver Normal School persuaded Lord to join his staff to teach geography, 1924-29. (Robinson was my esteemed Principal there, 1921-22.) Lord then resumed inspectorships till 1936 when he succeeded Robinson. He held this position with distinction till 1950 when he in turn retired. He was active in public affairs. His many honours included a doctorate from U.B.C. He died in 1961, aged 75.

Lord has special interest in B.C.'s "Assisted Schools" in remote pioneer areas where money was scarce, settlement was sparse, and conditions primitive. I think they were unique to B.C. and spanned the period 1911 to 1930. The teacher's salary was paid by the Government from Victoria. The community provided the building and its maintenance. Salaries were higher for more remote schools. At least ten registered pupils and an average attendance of eight were required. Lord relates some interesting stratagems where children were "borrowed" from elsewhere to make up the minimum. Busy farm mothers were glad to send their 5 year-olds to school with their older siblings, where they remained all day. My annual salary at Big Bar Creek, about 30 miles from the railway at Clinton was $1,140. At Kelly Lake in the Peace River, 60 miles from the end of steel at Grande Prairie, Alberta, it was $1,320. The teacher's board money, about $30 per month, was a significant source of cash in the community, and, of course, jealousy where more than one family could accommodate her or him. I batched during those years.

Rural school inspectors were both feared and respected. For many teachers, mostly women, it was their first school. Some married local lads and made good pioneer wives. My inspector at Big Bar was A.F. Matthews. His reports, dated 30 May 1923 and 15 September 1925 were favourable. At Kelly Lake, G.H. Gower made only one visit. His report, dated 12 March 1924, is reproduced in my book **Metis Outpost.**

From the index I selected items relevant to Lord's narrative for reference to his own observations, experiences and reactions. He gives colourful accounts of the rigors of travel and accommodation. Roads were primitive in the extreme. He enjoyed warm and impromptu hospitality. There were few phones, no daily papers, mail was infrequent and radios were few and primitive. Visits of the inspector were supposed to be by surprise so that he could examine the school's normal routine. However, the "moccasin telegraph" kept remarkable track of his movements.

My knowledge of B.C.'s geography and history began with a summer job at Field in 1919, age 15. From 1920 to 1922 I commuted to UBC and Vancouver Normal School from East Burnaby. Absences at Toronto, 1926-30, postgrad studies abroad, 1933-34, and military service overseas 1940-45, all intensified my devotion to B.C. and broadened its base. Forest and air photo surveys, 1930-40, surveys and mapping 1946-68 took me to all parts of the province with unique facilities for seeing it from ground and air, and for making friends with local pioneers, Indians and trappers. I would have enjoyed talking to Lord about our mutual knowledge of many people and places.

Lord mentioned Charles and Ada Place at Dog Creek and the awful roads between there and the Churn Creek Bridge. We enjoyed their hospitality when we used the Dog Creek Air Field for early postwar air photo flying operations. He refers to Jesmond on the road from Clinton to Gang Ranch, but does not mention the Coldwells, Harry, Louise and children Pete, Elsie and Evelyn. During my time in Big Bar Creek they operated a small store and the Post Office. They also had a party line phone connecting Clinton to Canoe Creek and beyond, which was a source of local news and gossip (part of the "Moccasin telegraph").

Lord's travels to the Peace River Schools via the ED &BCR from Edmonton to Grande Prairie revive my memories of that route in 1923 and 1924 and fill in details I had forgotten. Lord enjoyed the huge Chilcotin country.

Lord travelled to all parts of B.C., often under most arduous conditions. He enjoyed the local folk regardless of race, colour or religion. His keen sense of humour is evident. Recently a grad-

uate of the Vancouver Normal School in 1939 told me how highly he was regarded there. I had not the good fortune to meet him. Thanks to this book, I have enjoyed learning about him. I apologize for including so much about Gerry Andrews, but it seems relevant. In preparing this review, Professor Calam's meticulous notes and index have been very helpful.

Gerry Andrews

Gerry Andrews, a Victoria resident, is a former President of the B.C. Historical Association.

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Mutual Hostages: Canadians and Japanese during the Second World War.

Patricia E. Roy, J.L. Granatstein, Masako Ino, Hiroko Takamura.
Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1990. 275 p. $24.95

Over the past few years journalists, novelists, dramatists, and even folksongsters, have been making the most of the Japanese evacuation, dispersal, and repatriation issues arising with and out of the Second World War. Most of those writers who relied mostly on emotion to gain their effects would have been considerably helped had they been able to read **Mutual Hostages**, subtitled "Canadians and Japanese during the Second World War", by two Canadian and two Japanese historians. Indeed, because, as the authors say, "human memory can be short", this meticulously written, meticulously documented and meticulously indexed volume would enlighten almost all Canadians, those who merely want to know the differences between **Nisei**, **Essei** and **Sansei**, others who might have forgotten or might never have known the background details on which they have been basing their biases, even statisticians who want to know about the numbers of people and the selling prices of properties and household goods, and especially British Columbians needing an explanation for their apparently built-in attitudes.

Also meticulously organized – chronologically, in general – the volume takes its readers through the arrival of the first Japanese in Canada to the 1988 settlement of the Japanese claims for compensation, all seven chapters neatly wrapped around by a "Preface" and a "Conclusion", the preface indicating the major themes and asserting that the authors "have sought to explain, not to condone or condemn", and the conclusion saying that the Canadian government "caved in to racist fears and to the opinions of journalists and amateur strategists", but also reminding readers that dictatorships are not "hampered by the rhetoric of democracy" as was the government of Canada, and pointing out that rough though the treatment of the Japanese in Canada might have been and in spite of what this nation has come to believe, only about 800 Japanese were really interned in this country.

Each chapter has a specific point to make and many of them highlighted through reprints of current political cartoons from the Victoria and Vancouver newspapers. Graphs, charts and maps, even a plan for a Tashme house, also help. The first two chapters lay out the background, from the arrival of the first Japanese in British Columbia in 1877, through the Anglo-Japanese Alliance with its resulting hostilities, the Asiatic Exclusion League and the Vancouver Riots, the continuing fears through the 1920's as British Columbians saw more and more Japanese people arriving while Japan itself, with its promotion of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, was becoming more aggressive toward China and increasing the fears of North America. One of the most telling cartoons in the book, by Jack Boothe for the **Vancouver Daily Province** of February 22, 1938, shows a panicking British Columbian trying to put his fingers, and feet, into the holes of the badly weakened dyke of Japanese Immigration Laws.

The second chapter explains the very early co-operation between the United States and Canada in the face of what might become Japanese attacks. Concentrating on the problems faced by Canadian missionaries in territories occupied by Japan, and then on the destruction of the Canadian troops at Hong Kong – many later taken off to desperate lives in camps in Japan – the short third chapter becomes the climax of this well organized drama.

This climax forces the resolution, explained in chapter four, "The Decision to Evacuate", which further defines the west coast fears driving the federal government to move the Japanese from the coast for the safety of those coastal Japanese themselves. This chapter leads naturally into the fifth which details the movement of the Japanese to the Interior of the province and the determination of the British Columbia Security Commission, an agency set up to do the job, "to treat the Japanese fairly". This hostage taking was therefore mutual: "throughout the whole evacuation and resettlement process, the Canadians in Japanese hands were the hostages who guaranteed at least a minimum standard of living for those of Japanese race in Canada." At the same time the Canadian government seems to have been held hostage by British Columbia and the BCSC held hostage by public opinion which would have been outraged had the feared and evacuated Japanese been treated better than the ordinary Canadian soldier in any regular military camp. The fifth chapter, "In Temporary Quarters" lays out the life of Japanese evacuees in various places in the province, describes living conditions, education, health, family life and morale.

In these first five chapters of **Mutual Hostages** the authors are as objective as they can possibly be while authoritatively presenting the required information – much of it through statistics – and leaving little open to questioning. Interspersed throughout is information obviously contributed by the Japanese scholars of the team. The technique was probably meant to be a balancing-off of what is happening in the two warring countries, especially after the Hong Kong disaster and the mess-ups with the missionaries, but these insertions do not really satisfy: more information is necessary for other than a token balance. That information well might have as easily come from returned missionaries and from some of the POWs who were finally sent home,

though many in physical and psychological tatters. The Preface assures us that the pertinent records in Japan are "thin" and that those in Canada are fairly full: one wonders, therefore, why the Japanese historians were necessary.

From this point onward, from chapter six, "The Dispersal and Repatriation of the Japanese Canadians", Mutual Hostages slips into some questionable editorializing. The ignorance and fears of Canadians have already been well developed, and some of the treatment accorded some of the Japanese has already been admitted. The authors have also established that in a democracy the government must act on the will of the people and that the government of Canada did act on that will. The extreme detailing of what was going on in Canada seems to cover, or reduce in importance, what was going on in the camps of Japan. Chapter seven, "Behind the Barbed Wire Fence", might compensate for that cover, but almost comes too late in spite of its reassurances: "The Japanese Canadians who were moved to the BC interior were not held behind barbed wire by armed guards and, though subject to strict controls and less than favourable conditions, they could move with relative freedom. Those in work camps had some freedoms restricted, though in specified circumstances they too could, for example, leave British Columbia to take employment in Ontario. The [800] internees at Angler [Ontario], in contrast, were held under armed military guard, their liberty severely constrained, their uniform dress prescribed."

Somehow the choice of word here suggests a comparison between Angler and Niigata or Sendai, or even, ironically, Oyama. The use of an exclamation mark at the end of one final sentence of a paragraph elsewhere similarly makes an editorial comment. When discussing the "defiant" attitude of some prisoners at Angler, 33 of them Nisei, the authors tell us that the prisoners' "toughness of spirit, that conviction that their rights had been violated, was wholly admirable". When making such comments at the end of an informative passage the authors not only cast doubts on the ability of their readers to draw conclusions, but also deny their own objectivity, contradict their professed statement that they are neither condemning nor condoning.

Nevertheless, readers can skip the editorializing and leave this book well satisfied. They will have learned much that they had never known and they might be reminded of much they had forgotten. Through watching the unfolding of this "time of tragedy", through watching the ins and outs and the complications of plot, they might even have a purging of their emotions. In a Greek tragedy no one on stage wins, only the audience.

Gordon R. Elliott

Gordon Elliott is a former president of the Vancouver Historical Society.

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Canadian Pacific Railway Stations in British Columbia

by Ian Baird. Victoria, Orca Book Publishers Ltd., 1990. 108 p. illustrated $16.95

This is a welcome addition to the literature on the history of British Columbia railways and has appeared at a time when much of our railway history is rapidly passing into oblivion, either through disinterest or abandonment.

The railways and their stations had an important role in the history of settlement in British Columbia but now, with their rapid disappearance, our past is gradually being eroded. Barrie Sanford's **Steel Rails and Iron Men**, also published in 1990, tells the story of the Kettle Valley Railway which no longer exists. Ian Baird's story tells of a similar fate for many of the railway stations of the province.

Baird, another B.C. railway historian, provides us with many moments of nostalgia as we read his text and examine the black and white photographs which form a major portion of his volume.

The photographs, unfortunately, are not as clear as they might be, due to the process and paper used for reproduction. Those in Sanford's book are much sharper and do not have the overall gray tones found in Baird's book. This does not, however, detract from their value, since they are of good size, one to a page, with identification, description and source accompanying each one.

A useful bibliography is included for those who wish to pursue further a study of railway history. There is also a page of the sources of references used in the text.

Some typographical errors which are scattered throughout the text are distracting, on occasion. **Wermer**, on p. 18, must refer to **Weimar** which is associated with the Bauhaus architectural movement. We are told on p. 15 that Macdonald's government resigned November 5, 1983 rather than a century earlier.

The index is not as complete as one might wish. No page references are given for the illustrations. Kamloops, Golden and Fort Steele are among those places which do not rate an index listing despite the fact that there are good reproductions of their stations with accompanying descriptive material. If a place name appears in the text of the book, it appears in the index but if there is only a photograph and no text reference there is no index entry which is unfortunate if one wishes to refer to the index for a specific place name.

Despite these limitations, Baird has provided much valuable information about the CPR and its stations in B.C., which has not been available previously. It was the building of the CPR which was largely responsible for B.C. entering Confederation and the railway station immediately became an important center of activity for the many communities along the lines. Their abandonment and neglect is to be regretted. Baird's book will help to preserve their memory and keep this aspect of our history alive.

Melva J. Dwyer

Melva Dwyer is Fine Arts Librarian Emerita, University of British Columbia.

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Writing in the Rain

by Howard White. Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing, 1990.
256 pp; $12.95.

I was startled when **Writing in the Rain** won the 1991 Leacock Award for Humor. I'd read about fifty pages of the book by then and enjoyed every word. But, I protested, this isn't humor; this is Real Life. Then I got to thinking about the various literary definitions of 'humor' and the relationship, philosophical if not etymological, between 'humor' and 'human'. I decided the award was appropriate. Besides, I'd been chuckling pretty steadily as I read.

So I finished the book and continued to chuckle, mostly in recognition of the west coast rhythm. It's partly the way people speak, and partly the way things happen, and Howard White knows how to capture it. He's made it the basic ingredient of his **Raincoast Chronicles** series and of the books he writes and publishes. He explains it at the beginning of "How It was with Trucks", his tribute to the early days of trucklogging:

*From the time I was a big-eared boy eavesdropping on bunkhouse BS in my father's logging camp I have been captivated by the power of common speech. Later when I studied formal literature I had often had pause to reflect that the memorable lines held up as examples of timeless genius were not that different from some of the good zingers I used to hear back in the bunkhouse. The more I explored the idea the more convinced I became that the speech of ordinary people concealed a world of linguistic accomplishment parallel to that of our written literature, a conviction which dovetailed with my belief that genius lurks unseen within much ordinary life, like the fire opal that hides inside a dull stone. This is the notion that led to the writing of many articles and three full-length books – **A Hard Man to Beat, Spilbury's Coast, and The Accidental Airline**, all using the vernacular technique which has since come to be known as oral history.*

Writing in the Rain is a collection of prose and poetry pieces, most of which have been previously published elsewhere. Sometimes this is a problem, as some people turn up in different stories with different names, and raise questions about White's borderline between truth or fiction. Maybe this doesn't matter. Howard White's writing is part of the process of mythology in the making, the mythology of loggers, truckers, fishermen, and working class poets – himself and others. A passage in the final chapter 'The Yellowhead' made me sit up and cry, "Whoa! that's not the way it was." But it refers to events of thirty years ago when a lot of us were still inventing the characters we wanted to be. Part of the same story turns up in the poem "For the Birds", and he has it right there – according to my mythology.

The core of the book is "Minstrel", a two-week odyssey from Pender Harbour to Minstrel Island in search of reassurance that the world he, "a half-assed historian of the coast", portrayed as special and unique really was special and unique. He finds what he is looking for while engaged in the trauma of tracking down parts and repairman for his boat's aged motor. The people he meets and the stories he records are indeed special, unique, recognizably real, and undeniably "humorous". The coastal historian's fact finding process itself becomes part of the story.

I noticed a couple of the most haywire crab traps I had ever seen lying out on the float. They were homemade out of plastic hose and fishnet.

*"Are there crabs around here?" I asked. We had a good trap on the **Beaver** and I'm thinking how nice it would be to have a feed.*

"Oh hell yes, up Cutter Creek. Lots of 'em." He pushed one of the traps with his toe. "You gotta pull these up fast because the crabs can get out." He looked around at his floating junkyard self-consciously. "Everything I got is haywire but I can't fix it because I'm too busy doin' nothing," he said.

"Doin' nothing" included talking for hours, telling stories, filling in gaps in other people' stories, giving White what he had come for . . .

Here is White's explanation of his book's title:

I've actually done that, write in the rain. I could tell you a lot about it, sitting out on a road grade on a spreading machine waiting for the next turn, hunched over a piece of writing paper folded down to vest-pocket size, scratching down thoughts in shorthand as rain drips off the end of your nose, raising a spongy welt on the paper and then the ballpen ink won't stick. At the end of the job I'd have this little pile of exceedingly dirty folded-up note papers covered with undecipherable chicken-scratch. I've got them from the Rainbow Lake oilfields of Northern Alberta and the muddy sidehills of Vancouver Island above Port MacNeill. I've got them from Delta dyke jobs and lots from the garbage dump detail in Pender Harbour. This is where writing has always been for me, wedged uneasily between the world of gravel, logs, ringing phone and the other, equally demanding world inside. Like all interfaces, all borders, it's a precarious place to set up one's shop, but it's also a place where interesting things happen, a frontier.

It's reassuring to know that Howard White is out there with his bulldozer and his pen, collecting our past and contributing to our present.

Phyllis Reeve
Phyllis Reeve is a resident of Gabriola Island

Helen Dawe's Sechelt

Helen Dawe. Madeira Park, Harbour Publishing, 1990. 152 p., $29.95.

Harbour Publishing is to be commended for the design of this book. The cover, highlighted by Henry J. De Forest's animated painting, **Sechelt in 1902**, is attractive and should draw the attention of many prospective readers. Alec Macaulay's editing of selections of Helen's work, shaping them into a diverse yet compact summary of the history of this area, is quite effective, in my opinion. The map of the Sechelt area, which appears on the table of contents page, should prove a valuable tool for those readers unacquainted with some of the details of local geography. The division of the text and images into seven categories should make the book more approachable to the general reader, who can choose a theme to review, rather than wade through a general and unbroken text on local history. For the interest of readers, the book reviews the opening of Sechelt, both on the sea and by road; resources; resorts; commercial and re-

tail development; public utilities, institutions and buildings; and churches and schools. The annotated photographs, as well as the highlighted anecdotal sections, are really enjoyable components of the book. I believe that its design, in addition to text and illustrations, should make this an attractive book, that will appeal to many readers.

I will not provide a detailed outline of the contents of the book. However, for someone who has been summering in the area since the mid 1950s, and whose family has been visiting the peninsula and Texada since around the end of the first world war, it provided some exciting perspectives of change. I had read of the role of the Union Steamships in opening up the coast, and heard my parents and others recount stories about travelling by the "Union boats" up the coast from Vancouver, pausing at various communities such as Robert's Creek, Selma Park, and Sechelt. Until I read **Helen Dawe's Sechelt**, however, I had never visualized the full role played by the Union Steamship Company in the development of Sechelt, Selma Park and the rest of the peninsula. By the time I arrived on the peninsula with my family, the coast highway was already paved beyond Sechelt, and was soon to be paved as far as Earl's Cove; once again, **Helen Dawe's Sechelt** provided me with the first real picture of the earlier importance of the "Union boats" and the big changes that the arrival of the highway, and connecting Black Ball ferry system, brought to the peninsula. There are many other themes covered in the book that attracted my attention; they included the pioneering role of the Whitaker family, the history of the ships **Sechelt** and **Tartar**, the history of the peninsula's worst recorded storm, local logging operations (several roads near our summer camp had originally been corduroy, used by loggers to slide logs to Georgia Strait around the turn of the century, so this part of the book was of special interest to me), and the story of Sechelt Inn, situated on the Sechelt waterfront, but now long gone. Others will find much else that is of interest.

While the book provides some useful insights into the lives of some of the native people, who had occupied the peninsula long before the arrival of the first Europeans, and of the impact of the white settlement, **Helen Dawe's Sechelt** not surprisingly remains a traditional history, emphasizing European settlement of the area. The appearance of publications by other authors relating the native perspective os Sechelt history will be a valuable complement to this book.

A statement in the book's conclusion summarizes my impression of the value of **Helen Dawe's Sechelt.**

Though Sechelt is a small community, its history is not irrelevant, for it reflects the development of the province. The community's settlement by sea mirrors the settlement of numerous communities along the northwest coast. And whether reflected by the early loggers above Selma Park or the tourists at the Union resorts, the economic development of Sechelt is a microcosm of how British Columbia has developed economically. The mixing of peoples of different race and background . . . is reflective of the cultural makeup of the province and country.

When I first reviewed the book, my only major criticisms were with its failure to provide photograph credits, footnotes and bibliography. Such tools, of course, prove invaluable for anyone assessing the book, for anyone simply wishing to read more about the coast, or for those simply wishing to acquire a copy of a photograph appearing in the book. While I still regret that the publisher chose to delete these essential and important elements, which would have enhanced the value of the book, time has provided me with further insight into the book and its publication. To dismiss this publication because of these unfortunate deletions would be wrong and to miss a key point about it. This book was generated wholly from the Helen Dawe collection, so that everything in the book could conceivably be traced back to the voluminous files in the collection, if a reader did want to confirm the basis for some statement. **Helen Dawe's Sechelt** is, furthermore, intended in my opinion to convey the stimulating story of this part of the coast primarily to the wider Sechelt community, something it does extremely well. I would just urge the publisher to consider including these tools in any future edition of the book, to re-enforce its value to readers, and so that this book may expedite the work of future historians. Despite the foregoing concern, I would stress that I believe the book achieves a major goal, in that it has brought the rich history of this area to a wider and appreciative audience.

Bill McKee

Bill McKee was formerly Director of the New Brunswick Provincial Museum.

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British Columbia Historical Federation
WRITING COMPETITION 1992

The British Columbia Historical Federation invites submissions of books for the tenth annual Competition for Writers of B.C. History.

Any book presenting any facet of B.C. history, published in 1992, is eligible. This may be a community history, biography, record of a project or an organization, or personal recollections giving a glimpse of the past. Names, dates, and places with relevant maps or pictures turn a story into "history".

The judges are looking for quality presentations, especially if fresh material is included, with appropriate illustrations, careful proof reading, an adequate index, table of contents and bibliography from first-time writers as well as established authors.

Note: Reprints or revisions of books are not eligible.

The Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing will be awarded to an individual writer whose book contributes significantly to the recorded history of British Columbia. Other awards will be made as recommended by the judges to valuable books prepared by groups or individuals.

All entries receive considerable publicity. Winners will receive a Certificate of Merit, a monetary award and an invitation to the B.C.H.F. annual conference to be held in Kamloops in May 1993.

Submission Requirements: All books must have been published in 1992, and should be submitted as soon as possible after publication. **Two copies** of each book should be submitted. Please state name, address and telephone number of sender, the selling price of all editions of the book and the address from which it may be purchased if the reader has to shop by mail.

Send to: B.C. Historical Writing Competition
P.O. Box 933
Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5N2

Deadline: December 31, 1992. **LATE ENTRIES** WILL BE ACCEPTED WITH POST-MARK UP TO JANUARY 31, 1993, BUT MUST CONTAIN **THREE COPIES** OF EACH BOOK.

* * * * * * * * * *

There is also an award for the Best Article published each year in the *B.C. Historical News* magazine. This is directed to amateur historians or students. Articles should be no more than 2,500 words, typed double spaced, accompanied by photographs if available, and substantiated with footnotes where applicable. (Photos will be returned.)

Please send articles directly to:
The Editor, B.C. Historical News
P.O. Box 105, Wasa, B.C. V0B 2K0