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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 the Editor at the addresses inside the back cover. The Annual Return as at October 31 should include telephone numbers for contact.

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EDITORIAL

Questionnaires, forms and check lists arrive intermittently for our magazine. Each is dutifully filled out and mailed back to the sender. One such form comes from Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory. Professor Bartholomew found an unusual bit of B.C. history, wrote it up, and mailed it to us using the address found in Ulrich's. This is the first submission from Australia. (Previously we had articles from authors scattered across U.S.A. and one based in London, England.)

Miss Esther Paulson, R.N., was Director of Nursing for T.B. Control when your editor joined her staff in 1951. The two were reintroduced through an alumni gathering a couple of years ago. When Miss Paulson heard references to Wasa and Cranbrook, memories of her years in the East Kootenay bubbled forth. The good lady was persuaded to put these memories on paper. Helen Shore, a nursing classmate of editor Naomi, turned written words to typed font - and we are pleased to present this look back at health and welfare services in the 1930s. (p 17)

We are approaching the season when the weather and early darkness keeps us at home. For many this is the ideal time to sit down and type that favorite historical yarn or neat research so that it may be shared with other readers of the **B.C. Historical News**. Please make this the year that YOU send in that tidbit of B.C. history to the Editor, Box 105, Wasa, B.C. V0B 2K0.

Naomi Miller

COVER CREDIT

Mary Leah De Zwart did considerable research while expanding on information in a young lady's diary of 1906. The Home Dressmaker page in the **Vancouver Daily Province** of July 16, 1906 gives readers a glimpse of the slim waisted, richly ornamented garments that were considered fashionable. Note also the gloves and hats. Thank you to Mrs. De Zwart for showing us what the heroine, Jessie McLenaghan, may have worn during her summer visit to Vancouver.

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Review by Susan Stacey

Manuscripts and correspondence to the editor are to be sent to P.O. Box 105, Wasa, B.C. V0B 2K0.
Correspondence regarding subscriptions is to be directed to the Subscription Secretary (see inside back cover).

Dr. George Sanson

by Esther Darlington

There is little on the surface that indicates the complexity of Dr. George Sanson's character. And certainly little in the strong, handsome features of this tall, burly, outdoors kind of man, that hints of the quality of his skills. Skills, by all accounts, that were formidable enough to have qualified him to practice in a large, sophisticated city anywhere. The fact that Sanson chose to spend the greater part of his working life in an area where climate and terrain was often harsh and unforgiving, among a tough, hardy people, most of them illiterate, reveals more about the man than meets the eye.

Sanson's story begins in the agricultural community of Petrolia, Ontario, in 1862. His family had been in Canada since the early days of that century, and had originally come from Scotland and France. Sanson's father raised thoroughbred horses.

It isn't known why Sanson chose a medical career, but it seems to have been a goal he established early in life, and

despite a severe bout of rheumatic fever during his high school years, he was not deterred from his aim. In fact, there was evidence of a single-mindedness in Sanson's character from his youth. An interesting story related by Sanson's daughter Margaret, about her father and a neighbourhood girl named Jennie McDonald supports this view.

One afternoon, as Sanson was seated beside his father on the veranda of their home, Jennie walked by. Sanson said to his father, "Some day, I am going to marry Jennie McDonald when I have become a doctor and set myself up in practice somewhere".

A surprising prediction from a lad of 17 about a little girl of 10!

The startled older Sanson peered down at the girl walking by, a stare that followed Jennie for years, for she told her children about it.

"I always wondered why old man Sanson used to stare at me like that."

Sanson was immediately introduced to

the work-a-day world after graduating from the University of Toronto. The Canadian Pacific Railway was completing the last lap of the track through British Columbia and hired Sanson as a company doctor. He was stationed at Donald, B.C. When the job was terminated about a year later, Sanson drifted into the Okanagan country and settled in the town of Vernon where he quickly set up a practice. He had only been in Vernon a few months, when he met a colleague named Williams. Williams had just returned from a sojourn in the Cariboo country and he was full of tales about his adventures. Intrigued, Sanson impulsively offered Williams his practice, and made off for the South Cariboo. It was a decision he never seemed to have regretted, despite a remark, much quoted in later years about the town of Ashcroft and its boiling summers, where Sanson practised for 30 years. That "Only a piece of brown paper separated Ashcroft from hell".

The interior plateau of central British Columbia was still, largely, a vast, unsurveyed wilderness when Sanson arrived there in 1886. Despite the fact that Hudson Bay fur traders had traversed the area by horse and canoe since the earliest part of the century, and gold seekers had flowed into the country since 1858, roads were the roughest of wagon trails, and the links between towns were tenuous and difficult.

After the railroads were built, pioneers came in a steady stream looking for land for ranching and farming. Towns began to mushroom along the Cariboo Road. Ashcroft, on the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway for points north through central British Columbia's Cariboo plateau, became a thriving hub of transportation and supply. In 1885, the town was desperate for a medical doctor and sent a delegation to Victoria with a petition to the government to help



Dr. George Sanson (left) with R. George Ward, owner of the Central Hotel, Ashcroft (right) and two friends after a good day's hunt - 1913.

Photos courtesy of the Ashcroft Museum.

them find one. Unfortunately, there was little the government could do. The few doctors who were available preferred the more populated centers on the coast. When the boyfaced Sanson stepped off the train at Ashcroft in 1886, he must have been viewed by the grateful populace with slightly less appreciation than the Second Coming.

Sanson looked over the three main towns of the South Cariboo, Clinton, to the north, and Lillooet and Ashcroft in the south. With an eye, perhaps on future plans, he chose Clinton as his town of residence. He later said he chose this town because it was less dusty than Ashcroft. Situated on rolling hills at a higher elevation, Clinton's summers were cooler and greener than the other towns. Founded in 1858, Clinton was born after the building of the Cariboo Road by Col. Moody's regiment of Royal Engineers. By the time Sanson had a house built on a knoll overlooking the town, Clinton could boast of having two blacksmiths, a handsome court house, red brick school house, general stores, Chinatown, and numerous saloons.

Lillooet, on the Fraser River, had become a thriving mining center for numerous ventures that had blossomed in the surrounding mountains. The largest gold mine was at Bralorne, with a sizable working crew at the time Sanson arrived in the Cariboo.

Sanson established offices with living quarters in all three towns. In Ashcroft, he chose a low, rambling bungalow on Brink Street, only a block away from the hurly-burly of freight wagons and blacksmithies, and the peaked roofed Ashcroft Hotel with its red brick chimneys, where he would spend a good deal of his leisure hours with cronies in the years to come.

In Clinton, he hired a capable carpenter, Bill Higgenbottom, to build a bungalow with gingerbread trim on the porch. A little creek curled pleasantly below the house. Sanson ordered a stable to be built to accommodate his numerous horses and dogs. He was very fond of animals. They were his closest companions in the years before his

marriage.

Sanson used a horse-drawn sleigh in winter, and buggy in summers. He always lavished great care on his horses, because his life literally depended upon them. Years after Sanson's death, a group of teamsters reminiscing about the early Cariboo roads which the doctor had travelled, told tales of landslides, and washouts, spoke of the "tilt" or cant on the roads between Ashcroft and Clinton, that caused sleighs, wagons and cars to slide perilously in the winter into snowfilled ditches. The famous "20 Mile hill" was particularly dangerous in those early days.

Though Sanson's first years in the Cariboo were undoubtedly arduous and difficult, there must have been compensations. One of them was the unique empty beauty of those lonely mesas along the Fraser and Thompson Rivers. And when it was possible for him to do so, Sanson slipped away to fish and hunt gamebirds. His favorite fishing spot was Pear Lake, near Clinton, where he angled for cutthroat trout. He didn't eat the fish himself, but gave it away to neighbors.

The lengthy journeys from town to town over the formidable winding trail over Pavilion Mountain to Lillooet from Clinton, and along the Cariboo wagon road of the Bonaparte and Hat Creek valleys, were punctuated by rests at several stopping houses along the way. Cole McDonald's rambling frame inn on the edge of the wild meadows of Hat Creek, and Hat Creek House, where meals were served on white linen covered tables, and at the top of Pavilion Mountain in the home of the Carson family, Sanson found comfort, ease, and fine meals, step-dancing guests, good conversation, and a few popular tunes of the day rendered on the piano. In the Carson home, Carson's pretty daughters probably vied for his attention. Eliza Jane Carson had financed the education of her sons and daughters by hand churning thousands of pounds of butter from her dairy herd, which her husband shipped to merchants to the north in his freight wagons.

Perhaps the presence of so much con-

centrated femininity on Carson Mountain prodded Sanson to finally seek the wife of his dreams. He'd been living in Clinton for 8 years when he decided to "Go back East" to Petrolia for a visit. He gave no indication of his intent. When he returned a few weeks later with a bride, everyone in town was surprised. She was, of course, none other than Jennie McDonald.

Jennie was now 25, hovering close to what was considered "old maid" in those days. Sanson himself was 32, well past the average age of marriage for men of that day. It was more than a little remarkable, in fact, that a girl described as being "The belle of the ball", and "Loving a good time" by a devoted younger sister, should still be "available" when Sanson returned to Petrolia. But there is some explanation. Jennie was the oldest daughter in the McDonald household. There were many children, and a mother who "Loved to gad". From the time when she was 13, Jennie had mothered the brood. Beatrice, or "Trix", Jennie's younger sister, told Jennie's children after their mother's death, that Jennie had been "The only mother she had ever known". Family commitments may have delayed marriage for Jennie and made Sanson's return to Petrolia a timely one for them both.

If Jennie felt apprehensive about moving to a frontier town thousands of miles from Petrolia, there is little indication of it in a photograph taken of the couple on their honeymoon. Jennie looks calm, even resigned. Yet the transition from her home in Ontario to the rugged frontier atmosphere of Clinton could not have been an easy one. And the character and temperament of the man she scarcely knew, a man dedicated to his profession, accustomed to life as a bachelor, with all the corresponding freedoms, was probably not the best introduction to matrimony for either of them.

The first evening in Clinton together may have established the realization in Jennie, that her husband's loyalties and priorities were already firmly fixed. Sanson startled her by suddenly announcing after supper, that he must leave

the house.

"I have to go down to Harry Horan's and fetch the dogs", he declared. "Dogs?" thought Jennie. "He must have two". When Sanson returned with five joyful canines vying for a place under his hand, Jennie was amazed.

George Sanson's dedication to his profession was always paramount. If he received a message that some one was sick in some remote spot, regardless of the time or the weather, he answered the call. One evening, in the dead of night during a snow storm, Sanson was called out to see a sick man living between Clinton and Lillooet. Seeing her husband putting on his coat and getting ready to leave, Jennie cried out in protest, saying, "The squaw man wouldn't pay him anyway", but Sanson replied quietly, that he had "Taken an oath".

It is unlikely that Jennie was the kind of woman who allowed herself to brood over her husband's prolonged absences from the family home in Clinton. She proved herself to be an extremely resourceful, capable pioneer woman, throwing herself wholeheartedly into the role of homemaker in the little community. She learned to bake bread, can and preserve, pickle and make jams. And she involved herself in all community events. When local native Indian characters came around asking to do small jobs, she hired them and became a friend.

Jennie and George Sanson had been married for two years when their first child was expected. Jennie returned to Petrolia for the birth of a son they named Campbell, after Sanson's good friend, Duncan E. Campbell, a Victoria pharmacist, who later married Jennie's sister, Beatrice.

By 1900, Sanson realized his practice in Clinton was shrinking. Ashcroft, on the other hand, was keeping him more than busy. He was spending increasingly longer periods in Ashcroft. He was also travelling to Victoria and Vancouver more frequently for professional reasons. His family couldn't have seen much of him.

In 1908, he told a reporter with the **Victoria Colonist** about the economic

developments in the South Cariboo, including an agricultural enterprise being built above the Thompson River at a place called Walhachin. He also noted the discovery of valuable copper deposits in Highland Valley, a wilderness valley above Ashcroft. Sanson and other businessmen of Ashcroft and Cache Creek had invested some money in developing the ore deposits.

It is amazing, in fact, that Sanson found time to answer the calls of his patients, when he was involved in so many interests, including an attempt to become a member of the Provincial Legislature, in 1909, when he ran as Conservative candidate against Charles Augustus Semlin, and lost. He was also an interested member of the newly formed South Cariboo Historical Society. His daily life was packed with activity, and his enthusiasms never seemed to have flagged, though, by 1910, it was apparent that the years had taken their toll. In a photograph taken in Ashcroft that year, he looked ten years older than his age.

Despite her resourcefulness and giving nature, the lonely, demanding, life of a rural country doctor's wife may have hardened an already spartan streak in Jennie. When Sanson urged her to buy herself "Some natty outfits", perhaps realizing Jennie needed a morale boost from time to time, and maybe, too, because he wanted to see his attractive wife look prettier, Jennie ignored the suggestion. She clung stubbornly to a practical wardrobe that bordered on dowdy. When Sanson noted enthusiastically, with great detail, the clothing worn by women he had seen getting off the train at Ashcroft Station and suggested Jennie get herself one of those big hats with feathers, she remained unmoved. Jennie appears to have travelled very little during her 15 year sojourn in Clinton.

She clung to a turban-style hat which Sanson particularly hated. One day, as she walked across the room wearing it, Sanson rose from his chair and tore the hat off her head and threw it into the fire.

Though Sanson had to spend many evenings away from his family, it is

doubtful that his evenings were lonely. He spent many hours with cronies tucked cozily in the lobby of the Ashcroft Hotel, where he played cards, gossiped, and speculated on business ventures. Week-ends were spent hunting and fishing, or curling with his Ashcroft friends, Jack Walker, George Ward, who owned the Central Hotel in Ashcroft, and Postmaster, T.J. Richards. He was a witty, gregarious man who liked to tell stories about his more colorful patients.

One of them, a nurse whom he employed occasionally in his Ashcroft office, more out of pity because she was elderly and needed the money, than because he needed her, helped herself to one of his shirts. Sanson had been to Vancouver where he had purchased several new shirts. One of them went missing, and he blamed the Chinese laundry. But one day, his elderly nurse assistant became ill and he was called to attend to her. When he went to examine her, he found his shirt. She was wearing it under a jacket which Sanson later described as having been, "Tied up with bailing twine and secured by safety pins".

Though Sanson was able to see humour in most situations, his feelings appear to have run too deep in matters closer to home. He seems to have assumed the traditional role of authoritarian father with his children. Though he "Never raised a hand" to them, his temper was quick and his sarcasm could bite to the bone. He teased his daughter, Margaret, unmercifully about her height. When she wrote away for a package of patent medicines which she would have to sell to qualify for a free photo album, Sanson found out about it and lectured her severely, asking what would people think about, "The only daughter of the only doctor" selling patent medicines. If there was humour in George Sanson's heart when he spoke, Margaret Sanson failed to feel it, 75 years after the incident. Yet Sanson's best friend, Duncan Campbell, the Victoria pharmacist, was famous for his manufacturing of such patent wonders as, Campbell's Sarsaparilla Blood Purifier, a Rose Leaf face powder, and a Japanese Hair Tonic!

The Sanson children were precocious and spirited. Jennie Sanson must have had her hands full. When she caught Campbell trying to make his sister drink some rubbing alcohol from a bottle his father kept in the livery stable, she spanked them both. Campbell liked to imitate the "slap happy" people he saw reeling out of the town's numerous saloons. He was 5 years old when he noticed a shotgun left imprudently lying against a tree stump in the front yard of the family home by one of his father's cronies, named "Boy Doxide". Campbell took up the rifle and invited his sister Margaret to watch "The big smoke" it could make. He went into the stable, climbed up on a chair, and withdrew some shotgun shells from the pocket of his father's hunting jacket. Loading the rifle, as he'd watched his father do, many times, he went out to a gully that ran alongside the house, taking Margaret with him. Campbell then ordered Margaret to help him lift the rifle, as it was so heavy. The little boy fired the gun. The blast brought a terrified Jennie and her sister Trix out of the house. Sanson, in the meantime, had been chatting with a group of men nearby. Upon hearing the blast, one of them quipped, "Sounds like somebody's taking a shot at your kids, Doc".

Sanson turned whitefaced to Boy Doxide and muttered darkly,

"That was your gun Doxide, and if anything's happened to my kids, I'll turn it on you!"

"We're shootin' cats and chinamans" piped little Margaret Sanson, as she saw everyone approach. But she took one look at her father's anxious face, pointed a finger at her brother and yelled,

"He nearly shot me dead!"

Sanson made his son promise not to use the gun again, and said he would get Campbell a rifle on his 10th birthday. A promise he kept.

Campbell taught Margaret to read before she entered school. At 13, Campbell was large for his age, and though a bright lad, he wasn't an exceptional student at school.

As the children grew older, the ques-

tion of their education had to be resolved. Jennie and George Sanson may have debated the question. There were no high schools in the area at that time. Most children dropped out of school after three or four years, though many stayed to complete the primary grades to grade 6. In 1909, when Margaret was 11, Jennie decided she and the children would move to Victoria. The decision may have been quite painful for all. The house in Clinton was boarded up, and finally, sold. Sanson moved into the Brink Street house in Ashcroft. And Jennie Sanson and the children moved to Victoria.

Sanson's cronies and animals must have become even more important to him after his family left the Cariboo. He had received a beautiful pair of matched Hamiltonian bays from his father as a wedding present. These faithful animals served him for many years. He was extraordinarily fond of Tommy and Dick and called them his "Boys".

After Jennie and the children left the Cariboo, or perhaps earlier, Sanson had begun to experience an ache in his chest and arm. Some time before, Sanson had experienced a traumatic accident on the Ashcroft bluffs. He was using only one of his horses, Dick, at the time. Dick shied at something on the bluffs, perhaps a falling rock. Horse, rider and buggy went over the cliff. Sanson sustained a blow to his chest from a broken shaft. The horse recovered from the fall, but Sanson was never the same after the accident.

Meanwhile, in Victoria, young Campbell Sanson enlisted. He was under age, but because he looked older, he was accepted. He was sent to France. As the long lists of the dead and wounded came back to Canada, George and Jennie Sanson experienced anxious hours worrying about him. But Campbell Sanson survived the war, with nothing more serious than a duodenal ulcer. He distinguished himself for bravery and received a medal.

By mid-summer, 1916, George Sanson's condition could not be ignored. The usually social, outgoing doctor now seemed to prefer his own company.

Neighbours noticed him sitting in his garden for hours, his painful arm propped up on a chair. He must have had ample time to think about his life, and worry about his son. Finally, he wrote to Jennie advising her that he was going to see his Victoria colleague, Dr. Jones, about the pain in his arm and chest.

That summer bode ill for the town, as well as for Sanson. Margaret Sanson was visiting her father that summer, was chatting in the yard with a friend, when they noticed a commotion on the roof of the Ashcroft Hotel. Men were chopping a hole in the roof, and as they did so, smoke began to billow out. In a couple of hours, the hotel burned to the ground. Winds whipped the flames through the rest of the business section. Margaret was quickly put on the train to Victoria, and not long after, Sanson followed.

Dr. Jones operated on Sanson. He found an advanced and incurable cancer. As Sanson lay dying in the Royal Jubilee Hospital, a young nurse came to relieve Sanson's regular nurse. She was Sybil Parke, of Cache Creek, whose great uncle, Philip Parke, had founded the Bonaparte Ranch in 1862. Sybil Parke's entry into nursing school had been helped by Sanson; when the girl wished to enter before the age of 18, the required age for entry. Sanson urged the Hospital to bend the rules. Now Sybil Parke sat beside her benefactor's bedside, and heard him speak nostalgically of his hunting and fishing days in the country he loved. They were his last words. A half hour later, George Sanson died. He was 54.

* * * * *

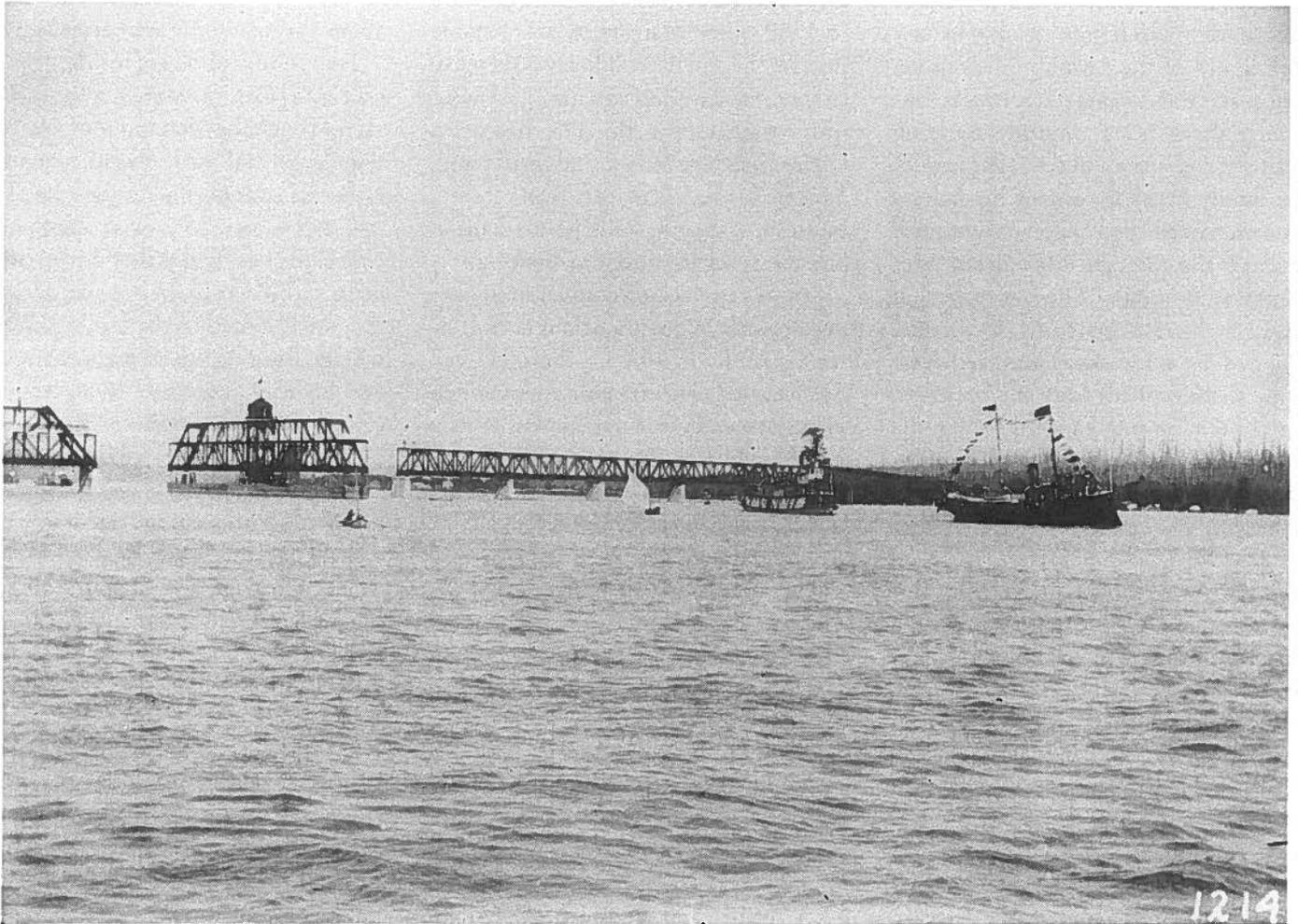
Esther Darlington now lives in Cache Creek enjoying outdoor activities as well as having time to add details to the research she has already done on the lives of Cariboo pioneers. Campbell Sanson, now in a nursing home in Victoria, keeps in touch with this lady in Cache Creek.

SOURCES

- Interview, S. Parke, Cache Creek, 1985.
- Interview, M. Sanson, Victoria, 1984.
- Halfway to the Goldfields, A History of Lillooet*, L. Harris, J.J. Douglas Ltd., 1977.
- Walhachin, Catastrophe or Camelot*, J. Weir, Hancock House, 1984.
- A History of Victoria*, H. Gregson, J.J. Douglas, 1973
- Ashcroft Museum
- Ashcroft Journal
- Looking Backward*, by Margaret Sanson, 1984.

Pitt Lake Outing 1906

by Mary DeZwart



Picture of the Beaver and the swinging bridge on the Fraser River. c. 1906.

Photos courtesy of Vancouver Public Library. No. 6938.

In 1906, Jessie McLenaghan, age twenty-two, her sister Jen, a year younger, and chaperones Mr. and Mrs. Hendry travelled by train from Portage la Prairie to Vancouver for a six-week summer holiday. The diary which Jessie kept during her trip provides an interesting social commentary and window into past events. In the following excerpt, Jessie's keen interest in water vessels leads to an almost eye-witness report of a long forgotten boating tragedy, as well as Pitt Lake excursion days gone by.

Train travel in British Columbia in 1906 included the **S.S. Moyie** which transported train passengers on the

Kootenay Branch of Canadian Pacific from Kootenay Landing to Nelson. Jessie found the trip enjoyable but the people were "very stiff". She and her party got off the boat at the Nelson city dock and went to the Queen's Hotel for dinner. They enjoyed it fairly well except for the reckoning: "When it came to settle up found we were charged 25 cents each way for bus and 50 cents for dinner. I can tell you nothing slow about Nelson" (July 3, 1906).

Once the vacationers had reached their summer home at 1352 Bidwell Street, Vancouver, Jessie recorded every activity of the Canadian Pacific steamships from

the **Princess Victoria** to the **Empress of India**. She commented on the remains of the Hudson Bay steamer **The Beaver** which had sunk in 1888 at the entrance to Coal Harbor. (This was reputedly because the skipper had to make a U-turn to get his supply of liquor and had misjudged the turning arc - not that Jessie would have had any comment whatsoever on the use of alcohol).

On July 21, Jessie reported her own nautical excursion in her diary, an outing to Pitt Lake sponsored by the Ladies Aid of St. Andrew's Wesley Church on a sternwheeler also named the **Beaver**. The day-trip cost Jessie 50 cents. Like the

other sternwheeler on the Fraser River, the **Transfer** and the **Favorite**, the **Beaver** was available for charter when she was not on her thrice-weekly run from New Westminster upstream to Chilliwack and way points. The second **Beaver** was the first steel-hulled vessel built in British Columbia, purchased by Canadian Pacific Navigation Company for transport on the Fraser River. Jessie and her party first caught the tram to New Westminster to get to the boat. On this particular day the New Westminster **Daily Columbian** reported that three extra cars had to be put on to accommodate the crowd. The **Beaver** was so crowded that Jessie had to fix herself a seat on the floor until space on a life preserver became available.

The boat travelled under the Fraser River swing bridge which had been ceremoniously opened by Premier Richard McBride on July 23, 1904. People had been petitioning the Dominion and Provincial governments for a bridge as early as 1880. Trains from the south ran into B.C. for thirteen years before there was a bridge across the Fraser to take them to New Westminster and Vancouver. The million-dollar bridge had a railway level and an upper deck supposedly just wide enough for two wagon loads of hay to pass. The sight of the hayfields along the Fraser made Jessie nostalgic for her childhood home near Perth, Ontario.

On the same day that Jessie and her party travelled to Pitt Lake, a boating tragedy took place off Brockton Point in Burrard Inlet. The excursionists on the **S.S. Beaver** heard the sad news upon their return to New Westminster. The **Princess Victoria**, a crack C.P.R. steamer, was fighting her way out against the tide and had failed to notice the Union Steamship Company's tug **Chehalis** until a collision was imminent. The accident was horrific even by modern day standards, witnessed by people both on the wharf and in Stanley Park, with the **Princess Victoria** literally splitting the **Chehalis** in two. The **British Columbia Weekly** reported that "those on the

**BEAUTIFUL
Pitt Lake**

The Steamer Ramona will leave Brackman-Ker wharf at 10 a. m. on Monday next for Pitt Lake, returning will reach New Westminster at 6 p.m.

Don't fail to see the noted Bridal Veil Falls and Echo Mountain.

Basket picnic, although limited number of meals can be served.

Tickets, 75 Cents.
On Sale at Office of
F. J. HART & CO., LTD.

Western Steamboat Co., Ltd.

This ad appeared in the Daily Columbian - July 26, 1906.

deck of the ill-fated tug were seen to be hurled through the air as the vessel fell into fragments and in about ten seconds she had disappeared beneath the water" ("Burrard Inlet", July 22, 1906, p. 2.). All those below deck drowned, including the wife of a prominent investor, an English oyster-bed specialist, a small boy on a holiday with his father, two unnamed Japanese firemen and one unnamed Chinese cook ("**Chehalis** cut in half", July 21, 1906, p. 1). Neither the captain nor the engineer went down with the ship, the latter rescued by the lighthouse keeper at Brockton Point. No blame was attached to the **Princess Victoria**, with her captain firmly denying that the **Chehalis** had been cut in two.

Excerpt from the diary of Jessie McLenaghan, 1906

July 21. Three weeks today since we left home. How time flies. For today we have planned a trip to Pitt Lake. Rose at nine. Had dinner at 10:30. Caught the tram at one. A very large crowd. Excur-

sion was given on behalf of Ladies' Aid of Westley Church. Reached Westminster in about three quarters of an hour but it was hustle for the boat, giving no time for a view of the town. Seats were not available for all the crowd so I seated myself on floor deck. Shortly after Mr. Baker came round and fixed us up a very comfortable seat out of a life preserver. He went for Mrs. Baker and we had to rise to make room for her and my thoughtlessness played me quite a trick as I unthinkingly arose letting my purse go to the fishes. Imagine my consternation when I first beheld it floating on the water and in it Miss Hall's ticket and my own. However nothing is so bad but might be worse as I happened to have no money in it. Mr. Baker said he would fix it alright for me. Told me I could tell the conductor he would get mine from my hubby at the back but I didn't seem to fancy passing off as a married lady. We sailed on **The Beaver** first through the Fraser River and then branched off into the Pitt River leading to Pitt Lake.

Shortly after we left Westminster we passed through a large swing bridge. How easily they seem to sway it round! Along the banks of the Fraser are dikes to hold the water back and then on the other side are large meadows. The farmers were busy hay-making arousing memories of Old Ontario. We wind this way and that so that we seemed to dodge the sun. The mountain scenery magnificent where you find one peak behind the other. Saw as many as seven peaks seemingly in a group.

Before passing into the Pitt River we pass through another swing bridge although much smaller than first. The muddy water of the Fraser now changes into the clear water of the Pitt.

We got quite hungry about 4:30 and ate our lunch which of course was getting rather heavy for carrying. We reached Bridal Veil Falls about six and disembarked for an hour which was spent very enjoyably. The Falls were lovely but water supply was less than usual. Jean thought she would like to take a bath and that very unceremoniously as she lay full

length on the water and rocks and quite inconsiderate of her white dress.

The trip home was much more enjoyable than the other as the sun was well on its downward path. We got quite intimate with Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Brown who had just returned from England. The sunset was the most beautiful I had ever seen, the water adding to the beauty. Words will not describe it.

We reached Westminster in the gloaming and the town looked beautiful situated as it is on the side of a hill. Just before entering the harbor we passed the Central Prison for B.C.

Of course it was rush for the car as some were certainly having to stand. We were quite fortunate in securing a seat. An old lady seated herself with me and then Mrs. Brown came in and no seat to be found. Mr. Hendry gave up his seat for Mrs. Brown and he found a seat with Miss Hall and Jean while we shared our seat with Mr. Brown. Just after we got started Mr. Brown lost his balance and was nearly measuring his length on the

floor. This gave rise to a good deal of mirth for a few minutes.

I failed to mention the sad news which reached our ears on reaching Westminster. The **Princess Victoria** going at the rate of thirty-six miles an hour ran into a small boat which was struggling against the tide in the Narrows. It split the boat in two causing the death of nine people, several being prominent citizens of city and who were out for the day pleasure-seeking.

We reached Vancouver about five minutes to ten so we girls hustled to the stores to do some shopping. We found, though, that merchants here are not so punctual as our Eastern ones on closing at ten. I bought a treat of bananas and the house furnished a box of plums. Just as we finished it started to rain. Concluded Mr. Brown was not a very trust-worthy prophet of B.C. weather. We rode home on car and were ready for supper. Put the fire on and had bread and butter, bananas and cream and tea all of which we thoroughly enjoyed."

Jessie and her sister stayed on in Vancouver until August 20, 1906. In her diary of that day she wrote, "We go away with pleasant memories of kind treatment which we received from perfect strangers."

The writer is a teacher in Kamloops who shared a part of Jessie McLenaghan's diary in Vol. 29 No. 3.

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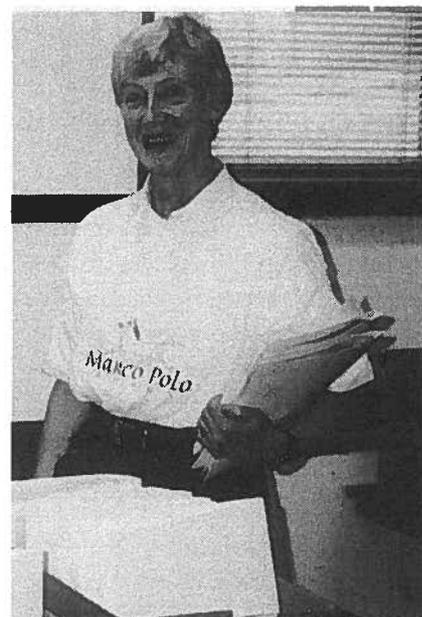
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1. Alicja Muszynski, ***Cheap Wage Labour: Race and Gender in the Fisheries of British Columbia***. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's Press, 1996).
2. Anne Yandle, Vancouver Historical Society, British Columbia, Historical Association/Federation.



The Chih-Kung T'ang in Barkerville: The History of a Chinese Secret Society in the Cariboo

by Erin Payne

The study of a secret society in any social setting is a challenging endeavor. The **absence of information** inherent in its secrecy makes research difficult and time consuming. In the case of the Chinese Triad organization which operated in Barkerville between 1862 and 1947, the problem is exacerbated because the dominant white society of the time had little or no interest in Chinese matters. For example, no effort was made by the **Cariboo Sentinel** to understand or report upon Chinese cultural events in Barkerville, much less a fringe group like the **Tang**. But to the extent that material does exist for the active period of the Triad in the Cariboo, it is an important window into understanding the Chinese community in Barkerville. In China, it was a politically motivated anti-establishment organization that also provided a degree of social assistance to poor Chinese, as demonstrated by its attractiveness to those devastated by social hardship in southern China in the nineteenth century.¹ In the Cariboo, despite changes reflecting the different social and economic conditions, the Chih-kung Tang also provided social assistance to the Chinese community. It provided an arm of authority that could protect the Chinese man from white racism, and from windows left open in English law to permit racism. It also assisted Chinese men in realizing their financial goals and returning home, and protected them from each other where existing laws were an inadequate reflection of Chinese values.

The society's origin is deeply rooted in the ethnic struggles between the settled agricultural Han of central China, and the warlike Man peoples of the northeast. In 1644, for the second time in 500 years, foreigners from the north swept down and conquered the Han peoples,

ruled at the time by the home-grown Ming empire. The Manchus, as these conquerors were known, established the Ch'ing dynasty, which lasted until Sun Yat-sen's Republican Revolution of 1911.² The Triad organization was formed by Han Chinese soon after the Ch'ing dynasty was established, and was directed from the outset by the motto: "fan-Ch'ing fu-Ming", meaning "Overthrow the Ch'ing and restore the Ming".³

Jean Chesneau, a prominent French historian of Chinese secret societies, suggests that the tradition and ideology of societies like the Triad reflect a religious, political and social dissent from the established order.⁴ The Triad society was not anti-Confucian per se, even though confucianism was the dominant philosophy of Chinese society and the Ch'ing rulers.⁵ They interpreted the meaning of Confucianism differently from the Ch'ing rulers - the Mandate of Heaven (an ancient Confucian concept legitimizing rule) did not empower the government but rather the people, who had withdrawn the Mandate of the Ch'ing.⁶ In addition, the secret societies were strongly influenced by a Taoist sense of personal salvation. They were also deeply influenced by Buddhist millenarianism and awaited the coming of Maitreya and the new cosmic era.⁷

The social objectives of the Triad are demonstrated by what Chesneau calls their "mutual-aid character", their sense of group solidarity and "utopian egalitarianism".⁸ The Triads called for "striking the rich and aiding the poor"⁹, and their dedication to robbing the aristocracy and government agents, and their anti-establishment ideology generally, made them a stench to the ruling Manchus. The Triad was made illegal with harsh penalties for members or any-

one associating with it. To the Manchus, the most repugnant aspect of Triad ideology was that the organization was not based upon the acceptance of traditional beliefs, nor traditional pillars such as the family, clan, village or guild, but rather an eclectic group of disfranchised men making their own personal choice to be a part of something potentially great.¹⁰

Dynastic China in the nineteenth century was under enormous social, economic and political distress, incurred by contact with Western powers. The Opium War with Britain, which lasted from 1839 to 1842, was a tremendous catalyst in the growth of Triad organizations. After China's loss in the war, her markets were forced open to all arms of British industry, and tens of thousands of Chinese lost textile and manufacturing jobs to the machines of Lanark and Sheffield. The dislocation and unemployment spawned by these modernizing forces spawned numerous rebellions against the Ch'ing government.¹¹

With increasing poverty and warfare at home, many Chinese joined Triad organizations because they blamed the Ch'ing government for losing the war. They also began to look abroad for a better life. Although emigrating from China was formally illegal until 1868,¹² news of gold strikes in California lured thousands of Chinese men to San Francisco in the early 1850's. In 1858, news of another gold strike on the Fraser River lured thousands more to North America, as well as experienced Chinese miners and businessmen from the United States. By 1862, there were numerous Chinese men settled on Williams Lake in the Cariboo of British Columbia.

But life in North America had its own problems. Virtually all of the Chinese who came to Gum Sahn (meaning "Gold



*The Barkerville Chee Kung Tong building still sits in the Historic Town. This picture was taken c. 1960.
Courtesy Barkerville Historic Town P639.*

Mountain”¹³ were men seeking a fortune to return home to families with. Very few women came, since mining was men’s work, and immigration laws and head taxes further helped to make Chinatown a bachelor society.¹⁴ Accumulating riches and returning home to support devastated families was the single most important objective of the Chinese men.

Barring their success in this mission were two primary obstacles. First, the land was dominated by the “foreign devils” who had helped to bring devastation to China in the last generation. The English language was unintelligible, the culture was strange, and the British government and legal system did not recognize them as important newcomers. Moreover, justice was often far from the place it was most needed, as white settlers often took advantage of the Chinese. Secondly, the Chinese men were poor and found it difficult to get outfitted for

mining after enduring an expensive voyage.¹⁵ They were also without the sort of social contacts necessary to make money except as expendable and exploitable manual laborers. Even once obtained, their wage was small when compared with that of white laborers, and though a high wage when compared to southern China, the cost of living was proportionally high. Just as there were numerous political, social and economic advantages to being a member of the Triads in China, Chinese immigrants to the Cariboo had similar reasons for establishing a chapter of the Triad in North America.

As a result of these hardships, and the current popularity of the Triad in China, a branch known as the Hung Shun T’ang was established in San Francisco in the early 1850’s by Chinese from Kwangtung and virtually governed the Chinese there.¹⁶ The first boat load of Chinese miners to Victoria was from San Fran-

cisco, and the first Chinese to come directly from China were also from the Triad hot spot of Kwangtung province, and both groups moved rapidly into the Cariboo after Billy Barker’s discovery of gold on Williams Creek on August 17, 1862.¹⁷ The Hung Shun T’ang was the native Triad branch of that province, and the T’ang may have been co-founded in Barkerville by Hungmen from San Francisco and China in that year or the next.

Unfortunately, the exact date of the T’ang’s establishment is difficult to pinpoint. Almost all of the local material collected on the Hung Shun T’ang in Barkerville (or Chih-kung T’ang as it was later renamed), is from the Chih-kung T’ang in Mouth Quesnelle or Forks Quesnel, and almost no material exists from the Barkerville organization.¹⁸ Building No. 84 in the townsite dates only to 1877,¹⁹ and although no other site of meeting has survived, we know from longtime Barkerville resident Bill Hong that the main hall was sold in 1932 and demolished in 1948.²⁰ The fire of 1868 may have destroyed evidence of earlier Hung activity.

Ying-Ying Chen, in her archaeological study of building No. 84 for Simon Fraser University, suggests three reasons why the Hung Shun T’ang was established – and very early on.²¹ First, most of the Chinese miners who came to Barkerville were poor and illiterate and did not speak English. They would have required the assistance of English speaking Chinese merchants. The need of these two groups to communicate with each other would have facilitated the establishment of a Hung chapter.²²

Secondly, there was a strong desire in most men to return to China as soon as they became rich, and buildings of the Chih-kung T’ang in other Cariboo settlements are decorated with slogans such as: “return to the East with honorable riches”.²³ Even the Chinese miners who would never return alive, and were buried in the Chinese graveyard like the one in Stanley, were later exhumed and sent back to China.²⁴ Their strong attachment to their homeland and ambition to return stimulated their desire to maintain

a high level of cultural continuity with China, which membership in a secret society would help facilitate.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the Chinese in Barkerville, as elsewhere, were not welcomed by whites for political, economic and psychological reasons. This had the effect of further isolating the Chinese community and giving them reason to form their own social institutions like the Hung Shun T'ang / Chih-kung T'ang.²⁵ Racism in Barkerville was likely an everyday experience for the Chinese. The **Cariboo Sentinel** simply ignores the Chinese in and around Barkerville unless the issues of mining licenses are addressed. In the law courts, discriminating sentences on the basis of race or culture was normative. Down in Lillooet, Judge Cox stated for the record in a case that involved a Chinese man:

I wish it to go forth now that Chinamen are coming here in great numbers that they must not use deadly weapons, if they do their punishment will be very heavy - the least I will give them will be six months imprisonment in the future; if there is another such case I will inflict the heaviest punishment." (Sept. 2, 1865, p.1)

The T'ang could permit the Chinese to try their own cases and present a united front against white racism and xenophobia.

The need for a society which provided social cohesion was also a necessity from the beginning of the Gold Rush. Membership in the T'ang seems to have been a way to enjoy large Chinese social gatherings where friends could be made and business deals struck. Bill Hong recalls that behind the main hall was a large pig roaster that could cook an entire pig in just one-and-a-half hours.²⁶ Little more was known about how the T'ang in Barkerville was addressing social needs until a major discovery was made in 1961 in Quesnel Forks by a Park Ranger searching for artifacts in the main Chih-kung building – a 10 foot long board inscribed with Chinese writing.²⁷ The

board turned out to be the rules of the Quesnel Forks Chih-kung T'ang, and are probably similar to the rules operating in Barkerville.

The purpose in forming the Chih-kung T'ang is to maintain friendly relationship among our countrymen and to accumulate wealth through proper business methods for the benefit of all members. Thus, those who do mental work and those who do physical work are devoting their strength to this common goal.

Rules of the T'ang

3. In case of disagreement on matters affecting the T'ang, a meeting will be called. All ceremonial procedures must be followed. Instruments for punishment must also be displayed. The officers will be seated in order. No noise will be allowed. Justice, not personal favour, will decide who is right and who is wrong.

7. If any member makes trouble in the brothels or gambling house and if complaints have been made to the T'ang, he will be brought back to the T'ang for severe punishment without clemency.

13. Members, no matter whether they are living in town, in mining areas, in ports, or in cities must maintain fair practices in business. Anyone who uses an advantageous position in business to oppress our countrymen will be brought back for punishment in accordance with the constitution if a complaint is made and evidence presented.

20. Any dispute or mutual suspicion among members should be settled in the T'ang in accordance with reason. Those who persist in quarrelling with one another or who appeal to the courts either create more trouble and expense or damage friendships.

21. Members who come to the T'ang for settlement of a dispute will be heard without prejudice. Right and wrong will be assessed by the T'ang. Any criticism of the T'ang outside the meeting will diminish the prestige of the T'ang.

24. Criticisms must only be made in the T'ang meeting. Anyone who makes criticisms behind the scenes or utters slander against other members outside the meeting will be sentenced to 21

stripes.

Regulations of the T'ang

3. A member who bribes outsiders to plot against his opponent in a dispute, thus causing physical harm to another member, will be sentenced, upon evidence, to losing both ears. Intercession by members will not be permitted.

7. Since the establishment of the chapter in this town, the regulations of the T'ang have been based mainly on the constitution of the Chih-kung T'ang supplemented by regulations adapted to suit local conditions. It has been decided that the regulations should be in writing on a board and should hang in the Hall in order that they may be known to members.

8. All money received by the T'ang is for conducting T'ang affairs. However, those members who are old or sick, or who have suffered disaster caused by either natural calamities or accidents, and who have no means nor anyone to look after them, may receive care from the T'ang.

9. Members who are either newly arrived in this town or just back from the mining area and who have no way of finding a place to stay may register with the chapter. Accommodation for sleeping and two meals will be provided. Beyond this the member must take care of himself. Members should not stay longer than necessary.²⁸

As one can readily see, a high degree of self government was of great importance. Although the death penalty does not seem to have been practiced as it was in China, (since the T'ang had no authority to implement it under English justice), they were prepared to lop off an ear or administer stripes if necessary. The T'ang was prepared to mediate disputes between Chinese men, and appealing to the English courts was strongly discouraged (Rule 20). This may be because the Chinese desired to appear as peaceful and industrious as possible, and not incite the whites to racial abuse. It is also likely that the Chinese community, led by the T'ang tried desperately to make a strong front to the white community; a bulwark to discourage them from attack.

It is also interesting to observe how the T'ang asserts itself where the prevailing white society was a poor reflection of Chinese values. The closeness of the family unit in China was sorely missed in the Cariboo, and where the elderly would have normally been cared for by the younger generation, the T'ang would provide assistance. For those who were old and poor and could not work, a collection was taken up to send them home to China. Those who had been beset by calamity or disaster could also appeal to the T'ang for help (Reg. 8). In a society where a family's hospitality to strangers was a social responsibility, the T'ang became a surrogate family, lodging not only T'ang members from other communities, but also new arrivals from China (Reg. 9).

It is instructive to compare the essential drift of the initiation ceremony as developed in China, with the Rules of the T'ang found in Quesnelle Forks as developed in the Cariboo. The first and most obvious difference is that membership with the T'ang in the Cariboo, Barkerville included, was not as much of a secret as it was in China. In fact they built their meeting places in public from at least 1877, and posted signs on the outside declaring it to be the Hung Shun T'ang (or Chih-kung T'ang as the case may be), as demonstrated on building No. 84 in Barkerville. On the inside they posted the rules of the T'ang, something probably not practiced in China (Reg. 7). It is of little surprise that they were less secretive of their existence since few whites cared what they were doing anyway.

The second major difference is that the activity of robbing the rich is completely abandoned in the Cariboo. Instead, good behavior outside in the community is a must, with stiff penalties for those who cause trouble in brothels or gambling houses (Rule 7) and give a bad name to the T'ang. The T'ang now depends upon legitimate business endeavors (Rule 6, 13) and member's dues to fatten its coffers (Rules 23). Also unlike the initiation oaths from China, there is no direct mention of religion, but only some proverbs

in a preamble at the beginning. Nowhere is the Triad slogan "Overthrow Ch'ing and restore Ming" even mentioned. Instead, the emphasis is on the need for money and greater financial accountability within the T'ang, suggesting accusations of embezzlement and the abuse of power. That this sort of thing could have occurred should come as no surprise since Triad organizations in San Francisco were involved in placing captured Chinese women in indentured sex-servitude in brothels, and smuggling opium.²⁹

The T'ang in Barkerville evidently had a roller coaster existence as membership fluctuated with the Chinese population, determined in part by mining technology and immigration laws. Just after the new building was built in 1877 it went into decline until the early 1880's. By 1885 there were over 40 Chih-kung T'ang chapters in the province,³⁰ and that same year Barkerville, enjoying some resurgence, became the Chih-kung T'ang Headquarters for the Cariboo.³¹ After approximately 1890, the T'ang was in steady decline with a brief interruption in the early 1930's. It is reasonable to assume that membership may have dropped after the Republican Revolution of 1911 eliminated its political motivation. In 1945, the Chih-kung T'ang Congress met in New York to change the name of the organization to Chih-kung Party, and the Barkerville's branch followed suit. In 1947 the name was changed again, but this time Barkerville's branch did not follow suit, suggesting that it had been abandoned in the interim.³² The absence of a large Chinese population in Barkerville, coupled with the increasing success of the Chinese in white society, and the establishment of a strong Chinese family base, reduced the social need for the Chih-kung T'ang.

The Hung Shun T'ang / Chih-kung T'ang was formed in Barkerville as a response to the difficult social and economic conditions that faced the Chinese community there. Just as its parent organization flourished as Chinese society experienced the trauma of warfare and modernization in the mid-nineteenth century, so did the T'ang in the Cariboo

when Chinese men were faced with racism, injustice, a language and cultural barrier, poverty and loneliness. While local conditions necessitated some changes, the Triad at home and abroad had important similarities: the very human tendency to cling to the familiar in times of stress, and to create order out of chaos at all costs.

* * * * *

The author wrote this essay for History 407 at University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George. His professors are Mary-Ellen Kelm and Robin Fisher. He did extensive research and some archaeological work at Barkerville Historic Town.

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Okanagan Historical Society

The OHS has from its inception in 1925 been keeping the written history of the Okanagan, Shuswap and Similkameen areas of Interior British Columbia. The driving force behind the creation of the Okanagan - wide society was Leonard Norris of the Vernon area who, as its first president and editor, put out the **First Report of the Okanagan Historical Society**. Denis Marshall of Salmon Arm, our current editor has just delivered the **61st Report** to the printers.

The **Report** is ready by mid-autumn, just in time for pre-Christmas promotion. An individual purchasing a copy of the **Report** becomes a member of the OHS for the ensuing year. A large percentage of a year's printing is mailed directly to repeat readers: Because the collection represents the principal historical reference for the Okanagan Region, many educational institutions, Canadian and International keep **The Report of the Okanagan Historical Society** in their reference stacks.

[* While the Society is 72 years old, there were some years - as during the Depression and the War Years when no report was printed.]

The Okanagan Historical Society has grown considerably in number of Branches as well as in number of active members. Each of the OHS' seven Branches, Salmon Arm, Armstrong-Enderby, Vernon, Kelowna, Penticton, Similkameen and Oliver-Osoyoos, contributes articles and is responsible for the sale of the Reports in that community.

Each Branch operates independently of the parent body in scheduling meetings, special events. Representatives from each make up the Okanagan Historical Society Executive Council which meets February, May (AGM), July and October. In addition to the publica-

tion of the **Annual Report**, the OHS has other concerns/activities:

- The proprietorship of the Fairview Lots north of Oliver, where a new information kiosk was erected this year;
- the administration of the Father Pandosy Mission, one of the most significant heritage sites in the B.C. Interior;
- watch dogging such locations/sites as the Brigade Trail and historic transportation routes through our region;
- input B.C. Parks plans for Fintry [on the Westside of Okanagan Lake] which includes heritage buildings and other remnants of a most colorful story;
- responding to such matters of concern as last year's proposed closure of the Provincial Archives;
- a summer picnic held in conjunction with the Boundary Historical Society; this year held in the Manager's Gardens at the Summerland Research Station.

In observation of the Okanagan Historical Society's having published its **60th Report**

and is nearing its 75th Anniversary, a special publication with the working title, "**The Best of the OHS**" is nearing completion by Jean Webber of Osoyoos, a former Editor of the **Reports**.

Hedley Heritage Society

This community group with 41 local members and about 60 former residents is registered as "Hedley Heritage, Arts & Crafts Society." They are a hard working group of people who are setting up an Archives in a new location, offering tours of the town and cemetery, and running a gift shop during the summer. One member keeps the cemetery neatly groomed and weed free.

The members of this organization actively lobbied to keep the Mascot Mine buildings. Their plea was heeded by Bill Barlee, then the Minister of Heritage, as the buildings were saved and stabilized. Now the community awaits development of a gondola lift which will turn the old Mascot into a major tourist attraction.



Dr. Adam Waldie is shown here at the BCHF Conference speaking to Vera Rosenbluth. Dr. Waldie's illustrated article on Alderman Corey appears in this issue. Waldie knew the Corey family when he was a student at UBC.

Photo courtesy of Melva Dwyer.

Alderman Corey's Autograph Collection

by Adam Waldie



Henry Lyman Corey

Henry Lyman Corey, gentleman, was a linotype operator by trade, and for the last ten years of his life was a very popular Alderman of the City of Vancouver. He won five out of the six elections he contested, topping the polls in each event. A solid tradesman by day, he was a skilled, patient and dedicated civic servant after hours. He did not drive a car, but travelled on the streetcar system, whether going to or from work, or attending a civic function in formal attire.

Born on a farm to a United Empire Loyalist family in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, he attributed his early interest in politics to watching his father poring over the parliamentary reports in the weekly **Montreal Standard**. In his early teens his father died, and he went to Oklahoma to live in the home of an older brother who was in the printing business. He apprenticed as a linotypist and following his marriage to Gertrude Huskey from Texas the couple moved to Vancouver in 1911.

He joined Local 216 of the Vancouver Typographical Union, and worked for the Vancouver Province from 1915 till his death in 1946. While he was first

elected under the old ward system, this was changed in 1937 and subsequent elections were "at large." It is difficult to say how active he was in his union, but he was always considered to be a *de facto* representative of labour on City Council. There is record that along with two well known trade unionists of the era¹ he did appear before the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council as a strong advocate of public ownership of transportation and energy utilities.

In his earlier years he was an avid hiker and outdoorsman, but as he settled into his own home in West Point Grey he became very involved with community horticultural activities. He grew prize chrysanthemums, gladioli and roses, often judging in local flower shows. His home was his castle, and in it he kept a modest collection of fine china and oriental rugs. His interest in civic politics grew out of his activities with a ratepayers' association in Point Grey, largely dedicated to the preservation of one-family residential housing. He was a persistent advocate of a national code of building standards, but his advocacy was strongly opposed by the Vancouver Real Estate Board and the Property Owners' Association. He repeatedly urged a distinctive flag for Canada, voting rights for wives of civic property holders, and measures to prevent foreclosures on homes of citizens on relief who could not afford to pay their property taxes. In many ways he was a man ahead of his time.

At various times in his career as alderman, he was the City's representative on the Parks Board, Art Gallery Board, Historical Monuments committee and the Public Library Board. At the time of his death one of the newspapers remarked that the City of Vancouver had lost its "ambassador of culture to the City Hall."

In his first term as Alderman, 1936-37, he served under the flamboyant

Mayor Gerald Gratton ("Gerry") McGeer at the time of Vancouver's Golden Jubilee celebrations which coincided with the opening of the New City Hall at 12th and Cambie. For two months McGeer orchestrated receptions for various visiting dignitaries, culminating with the unveiling of the statue of Captain Vancouver by Sir Percy Vincent, Lord Mayor of London.²

Two years later he was a guest along with Alderman Halford D. Wilson, Chairman of the Airport Committee, aboard the inaugural flight of Trans Canada Airlines Lockheed Lodestar service between Montreal and Vancouver.³ In 1939 Corey was involved with the rest of the City Council in the ceremonies welcoming their Majesties on the first Royal Tour, and at the same time attended the official opening of the New Vancouver Hotel, and the Lions Gate Bridge.

With the outbreak of World War II Corey, along with several other aldermen, enlisted in the local militia units, requiring two nights a week parade and training, and two weeks Army camp at Vernon every summer. Corey had become a member of the Reserve Battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders. During this time he was Deputy Mayor when Mayor J.W. Cornett was absent for a considerable period of time.

In the summer of 1996, fifty years after the death of Alderman Corey, his daughter, Ruth Corey Wilkins, donated to the Vancouver City Archives a collection of five leather-bound red scrapbooks and three smaller items containing clippings and memorabilia accumulated during his terms of office. One of these items is a small autograph album of the sort that most schoolgirls carried at that time.⁴

There are approximately 85 signatures in this little album, but the list reads like a Who's Who of the era. Some of the

names speak for themselves:

Crown Prince Olav of Norway, Lord Tweedsmuir, Governor General of Canada, Percy Vincent, Lord Mayor of London, W.L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister, R.B. Bennett, former Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition, William Aberhart, Premier of Alberta, Hon. C.D. Howe, Minister of Munitions and Supply, Angus MacInnis, CCF Leader, E.W. Hamber, Lt. Governor of B.C., A. Wells Gray Minister of Lands, Nellie McClung, writer and early Canadian feminist, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy(!) Gerry McGeer, Mayor of Vancouver, Archbishop Ailler dePencier, Dr. Lyle Telford, CCF Mayor of Vancouver, Hon. H.G. Perry, Speaker of the Legislature, Hon. H.H. Stevens, Minister of Trade and Commerce in the R.B. Bennett government, Norman Rogers, senior Canadian diplomat later killed in a wartime plane accident, Brigadier-General H.G. Crerar, leader of the Canadian Army in W.W.II, Hon. Ian Mackenzie, Minister of National Defense, Air Marshal W.A. Bishop, W.W.I Ace and head of the RCAF in W.W.II; Wing Commander Percy Gibson, leader of the "Dambusters," Max Baer, world heavyweight boxing champion(!), Earl of Athlone, Governor General of Canada, and his wife, Alice-Mary, daughter of Queen Victoria, and Gracie Fields, the famous English war-time songstress, who lived in Vancouver with her husband early in W.W.II.

Do people still collect autographs?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

We thank the Vancouver City Archives for allowing us to share some of the autographs with our readers. The Editor.

FOOTNOTES

1. George Bartley and Parmeter Pettipiece. See Leier, Mark **Red Flags and Red Tape**, University of Toronto Press, 1995.
2. David Ricardo Williams, McGeer's biographer, refers to him as "The Impresario of the Golden Jubilee," **Mayor Gerry**, Douglas and McIntyre, Vancouver, 1982.
3. One of the other passengers on this flight whose autograph also appears on the souvenir program was none other than G.W.G. McConnachie, later to be founder of Canadian Pacific Airlines.
4. Vancouver City Archives Document #AM 1268, 609 F7, 609 F8.



Henry Lyman Corey shown here during Militia training at Vernon - c. 1940.

Photo courtesy of his daughter, Ruth Wilkins.

*Margaret Florence McNeil
Vancouver, B.C.
April 27 / 1940.
1886*

Margaret Florence McNeil, April 27, 1886, was the first baby born in the City of Vancouver after its Incorporation. Mayor Telford set out to find her whereabouts when he became mayor, and when he located her in Portland he entertained her royally as guest of the City of Vancouver. Normally he did not wear his robes or chain of office, but he seemed quite happy to do so if she were being entertained. If she were indisposed and could not make the trip he would have flowers and a fine meal sent in to her home.

Gracie Fields

Gracie Fields, extremely popular English wartime singer who, with her husband, spent some time in Vancouver in the early part of the War.

Percy Gibson

Wing Commander Percy Gibson was leader of the RAF Dambusters who led an intricate bombing mission which knocked out the Mohr Dam, crippling the heavy industry in the Ruhr valley, and leading to an earlier collapse of the Nazi war effort.

Athlone.

April 14th 1941.

Alice Mary.

Viscount Athlone, Governor General of Canada, whose wife, Alice Mary, was a daughter of Queen Victoria.

Sincerely,
Max Baer

Gerry McGeer
Mayor of Vancouver 1936

G.G. ("Gerry") McGeer. The flamboyant Mayor of Vancouver who promoted the building of the New City Hall at 12th and Cambie in the depths of the depression. Many people thought this was in the suburbs at the time, and felt the design and furnishings were too rich for the City which was still suffering from the effects of the depression. The formal opening coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Incorporation of the City, in 1886, and the coming of the railroad.

Max Baer. World heavyweight boxing champion who defeated Max Schmelling.

Edgar Bergen
and
Charlie McCarthy

Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy: a very popular duo in the heyday of radio. Bergen was an expert ventriloquist and Charlie McCarthy the puppet-like foil on his knee, with whom he carried on a very humorous dialogue.

Air Marshal W.A. "Billy" Bishop. World War I ace and head of the RCAF in WWII.

Percy Vincent
Lord Mayor 1936

Tweedsmuir
27: viii: 3'6

Percy Vincent, Lord Mayor of London. At the invitation of Mayor Gerry McGeer, he and his entourage participated in the functions of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the City of Vancouver in 1936, and specifically he unveiled the statue of Captain George Vancouver which was commissioned for the occasion and placed on the north-facing steps of the New City Hall.

Lord Tweedsmuir, a famous British author whose name was John Buchan. Received a title when he was named Governor General of Canada. He was the first commoner to be appointed to the Vice Regal office. Accompanied by a large entourage, he visited the Bella Coola Valley and travelled by horseback up into the plateau and lake country which is now called Tweedsmuir Park.

Olav B.P.O.N. April 23rd 1942

Henry Lyman Corey.

Crown Prince Olav of Norway. Wartime residents of Vancouver may recall that a squadron of Blackburn Shark torpedo bombers belonging to the Royal Norwegian Air Force was stationed at Jericho early in the war.

Alderman Henry Lyman Corey, 1885-1946. Popular Vancouver City Alderman who collected the memorabilia for the five scrapbooks and the signatures in the autograph book.

W.L. Mackenzie King
June 30th 1941 Vancouver, B.C.

W.L. Mackenzie King, Canada's wartime Prime Minister who refused to send Canadian conscripts overseas if they did not wish to go. They were given the option of staying in Canada on non-combatant service. Identified by a white flashing on their forage caps, they were nicknamed "Zombies." Although his political decisions were unpopular with the military and with the many Canadians of strong pro-British sentiments, his compromises probably kept Quebec from opting out of Confederation in World War II.

East Kootenay Health & Welfare Service

1935-38

by Esther Paulson

The 1930s decade is remembered mainly for the widespread economic depression with the resultant aftermath of unemployment, low wages and income, poverty and hardships prior to WWII in 1939. Despite these conditions, significant progress was being made in B.C. to expand and develop programs and resources for health and social work service on a province-wide scale.

The instigator and leader was Dr. George M. Weir, elected in 1934, on a platform to introduce a system of Health Insurance. As Minister of Health and Welfare, he combined the two portfolios under one ministry to facilitate expansion and coordination of services for these two closely related areas of concern.

Dr. Weir recruited well qualified professionals and by 1936 special divisions were established for the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of major health problems, for example,

(1) Division of Tuberculosis Control under the leadership and organization of Dr. W.H. Hatfield. Tuberculosis was the leading cause of death with highest incidence among young women - ages 19 to 25. Many student nurses in that age group contracted the disease.

(2) Division of Venereal Disease Control

(3) Mental Health Division under Dr. A.L. Crease. Institutional services were extended to include psychiatric histories for new admissions and reports for patients discharged to local communities.

Expansion of social work services in 1936 evolved from existing legislation and resources that included:

(1) Mothers' Pension Act, introduced in the 1920's decade, provided financial assistance for the families when the breadwinner (father) had died or was incapacitated due to illness or injury.

(2) Child Welfare Branch services operated under three acts, (a) Infants Act for the protection of children, (b) Adoptions, (c) Unmarried Parents, known as the UPA Act.

The professional staff for the Health Division and the social agencies were based in the urban areas of Vancouver and Victoria. Obviously, trained professional staff would be required for the extension of health and social services to rural districts throughout B.C. A new venture, known as the Welfare Field Service, (WFS) was proposed in 1935 for this purpose.

Laura Holland, then Superintendent of Child Welfare, was delegated responsibility to plan, organize and recruit staff for the generalized WFS service. She was a registered nurse as well as a social worker and a recognized leader in establishing the legislation and services for Child Welfare.

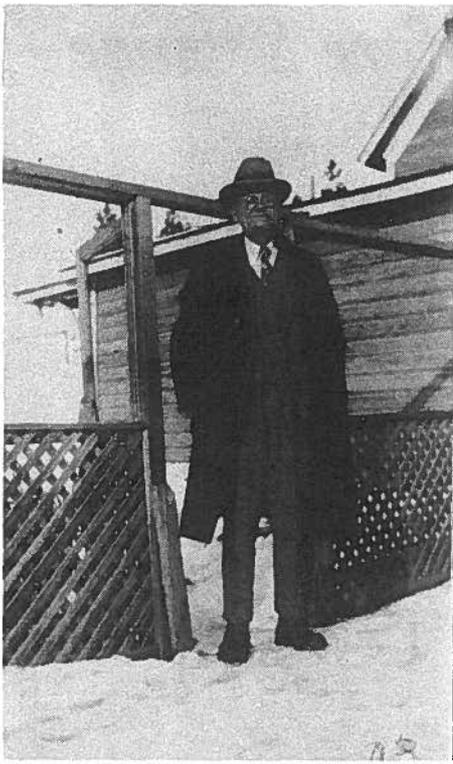
I met Laura Holland at the Annual Meeting of the Registered Nurses Association in 1935 where I had given a report on Private Duty Registries. After graduating in 1928 as a registered nurse, I had changed from private duty and hospital nursing to enrol in the public health nursing course at the University of British Columbia. On completion of the certificate course in 1934, there were no openings in public health nursing and I resumed private duty nursing again. Miss Holland approached me and asked if I would be interested in a new service of combined public health and social work. I was, of course, more than willing to consider a full time position, despite having only elementary preparation for social work. Miss Holland explained that applicants would be required to pass a written examination, and suitable applicants were to be selected on that ba-



Posed by a road marker on one of her summer trips up the valley.

sis. She said an orientation period for the new appointees would be arranged before assignment to a district. I wrote the examination and was one of a small number selected for the new Welfare Field Service.

The orientation program included time with the Health Division and social agencies for observation and instruction and a week in Victoria. We were accompanied by Laura Holland as supervisor for the WFS. There we met department heads, Dr. Harry Cassidy, Director of Health and Welfare and Dr. George Davidson, Superintendent of Welfare, two professionals recruited by Dr. Weir to develop his vision of MediCare for B.C. The Provincial Secretary, Mr. P.W. Walker explained about the Destitute, Poor and Sick (D. P and S.) work - a fund



Frank - in Cranbrook, wearing clothes donated by widows of prominent citizens

administered by the Provincial Secretary that provided financial assistance for the needy people, mostly elderly men who were, in terms of the fund, destitute, poor and sick. Despite that bleak inference, they were independent veterans who had worked as loggers, miners, trappers or railroad workers when the railroad was extended into B.C. in the later 1880s. Mr. Walker had met some of these pioneers and was interested in their welfare.

In contrast to the D.P and S services for the elderly would be our responsibility for the well being and protection of children. Our supervisor, as former Superintendent of the Child Welfare Branch for B.C., recognized the need for comprehensive orientation in the speciality so vital and far-reaching as the development and potential of children through childhood and teen years into adult life. She arranged for intensive instruction on the legislative Acts for child protection, adoptions and Children of Unmarried Parents, followed by supervised practical experience with Child Welfare agencies.

The orientation period also included instructional visits to non-governmental agencies, such as the Canadian Institute

for the Blind (CNIB) which provided assistance for children and adults with impaired vision. The Welfare Field Service was indeed to be a generalized service.

On completion of the orientation period of four months, I was assigned to the East Kootenay District, located between the Rockies and the Selkirks, extending from the International Border in the south, the Alberta border at Crow's Nest and Field, and included the cities of Fernie and Cranbrook, north to Invermere, Golden and Field.

Somewhat overwhelmed, I left New Westminster by train on Saturday November 25, 1935 and changed to the Kettle Valley line at Port Coquitlam. The route was dominated by high trestles over deep canyons from Hope through Princeton and Grand Forks to Nelson. After a three hour stop in Nelson, from 9 p.m. to midnight, I arrived in Cranbrook at 9 a.m. on Monday November 27, 1935 in bright sunshine after a heavy snowfall.

The government agent, John Kennedy, had been a strong supporter for the Welfare and Field Service worker in his district. He had an office prepared for me in the Court House/government building, a frame structure across the end of the main street. The office was on the ground level and had bars on the windows, having been the jail and former premises of the Provincial Police. The salary was \$125 a month with mileage for the use of one's personal car. I did not have a car and was dependant on public transportation, augmented by use of a government car arranged through the government agent in Cranbrook, Fernie, Invermere and Golden. The public transportation included a jitney service of two return trips a week between Cranbrook and Golden - and train service on the branch line - Kootenay Central. Fernie was reached by train or Greyhound bus.

Such mixed travel facilities were inadequate for my work and after a few months I acquired a car - a 1936 Chevrolet. The Provincial Police taught me to drive and after some intensive instruction by Constable John Henry, the

traffic officer, I had to demonstrate my competence (and nerve) for Sergeant Andrew Fairburn, who was in charge of the East Kootenay detachment. He selected a narrow bench road near Fort Steele where I drove forward and in reverse around the bends and curves until he was satisfied I would not drive "over the bank." Thanks to the Provincial Police for my accident-free record and to the Wheeler Garage whose mechanics took pride in keeping my car in prime condition - free from breakdowns or towing service on the roads.

The roads were gravel with only fifteen miles of blacktop in the Radium Hot Springs area. There were hazards in all seasons - snow and ice in winter, mud, water and deep ruts in spring thaw break-up and thick dust from passing traffic in summer and autumn.

I did not wear a uniform. A ski suit and warm clothing in winter and a suit, dress or slacks in other seasons was more appropriate for the work and travel by car and on foot up steep trails or in the wilderness and isolated locations in that large district.

Coordination of the various services was common practice in the Welfare Field Service. A first visit might be to a tuberculosis patient referred by the travelling chest clinic and waiting at home for a bed in one of the three tuberculosis hospitals at Tranquille, Vancouver or Victoria. Supplies would be provided from a stock carried in the car. Instruction was given on infectious disease precautions, both personal and domestic, and in proper use and disposal of paper hankies, bags and sputum cups and sterilization of dishes and care of bed linen. If the patient was the father and breadwinner, then an application for Mother's Allowance was completed and sent to the correct department.

A similar routine applied for patients referred from the Mental Health Division. A psychiatric history would be done and an application for Mother's Allowance completed as indicated.

Children and adults with impaired vision were referred by the CNIB or by school teachers. An eye test would be

done and a report submitted, particularly if the patient was unable to pay for the examination or eyeglasses. The CNIB arranged for examination by the Eye Specialist, Dr. A.E. Shore, from Calgary. He made periodic visits to the East Kootenays, driving the Crow's Nest road to Michel and Fernie, north to Cranbrook, Invermere and Golden and returning to Calgary by the Kicking Horse Pass border at Field. Now sixty years later, his daughter, Helen Shore and I are friends and associates in the History of Nursing Group.

The work was interesting, stimulating and demanding, exhausting at times when combined with driving on hazardous roads or on foot in isolated areas. Naturally there was an element of stress involved, helping people who were sick, handicapped with physical disabilities or mental problems and economic worries. Poverty was especially acute in the 1930's depression era. We were fortunate in having Laura Holland as supervisor. Her expert counselling, knowledgeable guidance and warm, friendly presence was much needed and appreciated.

As anticipated during the orientation program, I enjoyed meeting the D.P. and S. applicants described by Mr. Walker, having known older friends of my parents who were hardy pioneers with similar backgrounds. One of them had gone to the Klondike Rush in 1898 and survived typhoid fever in a tent. The pioneers I met in the Kootenays arrived at the turn of the century, or earlier, when the railroad was extended across Canada to B.C. and the coast in 1885. They worked as loggers, trappers, prospectors, miners and railroad workers. They lived in primitive cabins on their mining claims or homesteads in isolated locations or within sight and sound of the railroad. They were usually willing to talk about their early life and experience. They were the senior citizens of the 1930s, and Frank and Emmy were typical of these hardy, free-spirited pioneers.

Frank lived in a snug cabin, built of railroad ties, in the Cranbrook area where he was well known and respected. He had been disqualified for the Old Age Pen-

sion because of a break in the residence requirement of twenty continuous years in Canada prior to applying for the pension. Frank felt that he was entitled to the Old Age Pension and refused to accept the equivalent amount of twenty dollars from the D.P. and S. Fund despite Mr. Walker's approval and urging him to do so. I met him when he was in hospital, diagnosed with terminal cancer. He refused to remain in hospital or to go to the Provincial Home at Kamloops, the only facility outside of Vancouver, for single men. I drove him home from hospital and helped him with a simple procedure for changing and disposal of surgical dressings. He was meticulous in his personal habits and housekeeping and managed very well. He gave me a snapshot of himself. When I commented on his smart appearance, he said he was wearing "dead men's clothes." The widows of men, some of them prominent citizens of Cranbrook, donated their husband's clothes to Frank.

Emmy was a bent little person who had arrived in the East Kootenay in the 1890's and lived an adventurous lifestyle, herding cattle and breaking horses. When I heard of her, she had become mentally confused and physically unable to live alone in her primitive cabin in the vicinity then known as Rock Lake.

I visited Emmy and submitted a psychiatric history and report to the Mental Health Division. An alternate plan was also suggested, that accommodation be found where her adjustment to living in a different area could be observed and supervised. Dr. Crease agreed that such a free spirit would not adjust or be happy in an institution. Emmy agreed to the

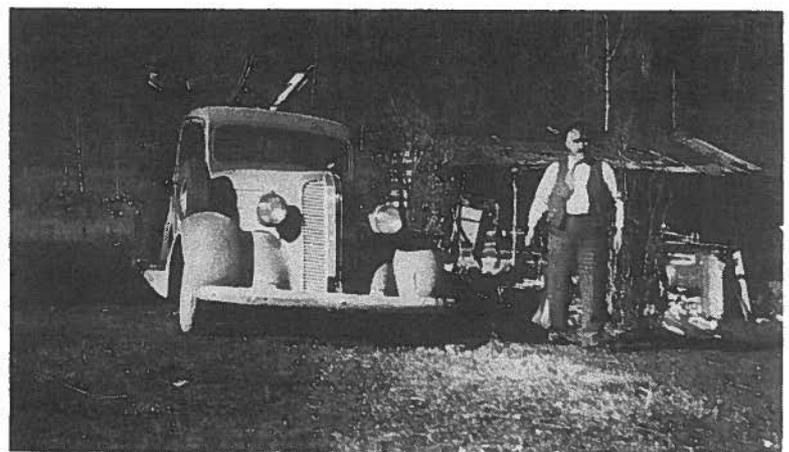


Esther Paulson poses beside her 1936 Chevrolet. She was taught to drive by a Provincial Police Constable, and put many miles on it before she was transferred from Cranbrook in 1938.

plan and moved to a cabin near Cranbrook.

Two trips were made, one with the Game Warden Ben Rauch, to help me bring as many of her personal effects that could be packed in my car, a coupe, along with Emmy and her three-legged dog, a faithful companion. Emmy showed a gleeful and childlike pleasure and interest in this move to a new home.

The cabin had basic essentials, such as



Government Agent John Kennedy with the Public Works Truck which was used to move Emmy from Rock Lake (now Lazy Lake) to close to Cranbrook.



Motorists exchange hints on how to negotiate a muddy stretch of road near Yahk. It is possible the closest vehicle had to be pulled out by a horse.

stove, bed and table. We helped her get settled. Mr. Rauch brought in fuel and got the fire going while I helped Emmy to make up the bed and unpack the small store of provisions and food. When I returned the next day, she had baked a cake, having decided it was her 45th birthday! I had tea with her to celebrate the event.

Another trip was made with Mr. Kennedy, the government agent, who had known Emmy for many years and was concerned for her welfare. He arranged with the Public Works Department for a truck to bring the remainder of Emmy's furniture and belongings. I administered the D.P. and S. cheque and Emmy was content with a spending allowance. The local food store agreed to

charge her purchases and to alert me if the orders were the least bit erratic. Emmy was able to adjust to her new life-style and keep her independence. When taken to see a Western movie at the local cinema, Emmy was both fascinated, amazed and amused.

Mr. S. presented a different problem because of physical limitations due to blindness and tremor in both hands. Well-meaning friends had taken him to the local hospital with possibility of transfer to the Provincial Home in Kamloops. Mr. S., of course, was opposed to that plan and determined to return to his cabin. Dr. Shore had said nothing could be done to restore his vision and local doctors, Dr. Green and Dr. McKinnon

were familiar with the stubborn independence of elderly pioneers.

Mr. S. was known to me through the D.P. and S. services. He agreed to remain in hospital to allow time to explore the possibilities of making his cabin safe and functional - and especially safeguarding the route to the usual outdoor facilities of woodpile, well and outhouse. It was obvious that ideas and practical skill were necessary. The Government Agent and the Sup't of Public Works were consulted and a plan evolved to extend guide ropes from the cabin to the outdoor facilities. Ropes were attached to spikes in the door frames, with one, two and three knots to indicate the direction for the three routes.

Mr. S. was eager to try the innovative arrangement and several return trips were made - some alone and some with my guidance. I was still skeptical and concerned for his welfare and warned him to concentrate and not be absent-minded. What if he were to follow the rope to the well instead of to the outhouse? What then? Mr. S. assured me that such blunders would not happen - and he returned home.

I had obtained the "Talking Books" service from the CNIB earlier. Despite his lack of enthusiasm and explanation that he was only interested in the writing of Swedenborg! On a return visit, I could hear music and laughter. Two friends had come to visit bringing their records of music and songs from the Victorian and early years of the century - the hit tunes of their younger years. I felt obligated to notify the CNIB, but pointed out the hidden benefits, social as well as practical, because the friends also brought wood for the stove and fresh water from the well. The CNIB agreed that such benefits justified their approval for continuation of the cultural service and equipment.

The senior citizens of the 1930's coped with the limitations and infirmities of aging and maintained mobility and independence in isolated locations with primitive housing, outdoor privies, woodpiles and water supply carried from wells or creeks.

In the 1990's, most communities, even

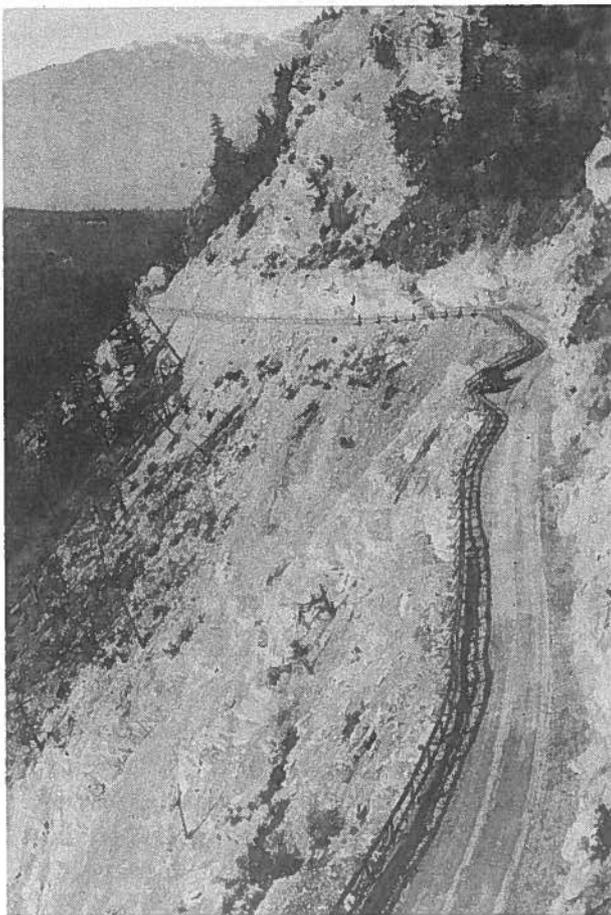


Emmy's cabin at Rock Lake, near Wasa. c. 1936.

rural areas, have housing with modern conveniences for sanitation, light, heat and water. Accessible transportation is usually available to facilities for medical care, shopping, recreational, spiritual, social and intellectual interest and activities. Aids to mobility, on foot with walkers and on wheels with motorized wheelchairs and scooters. Yet, the predominant concern of government and citizens is for affordable housing and personnel for delivery of adequate and safe HOME CARE, especially for senior citizens to reduce the cost of prolonged stay in hospitals for continuing care.



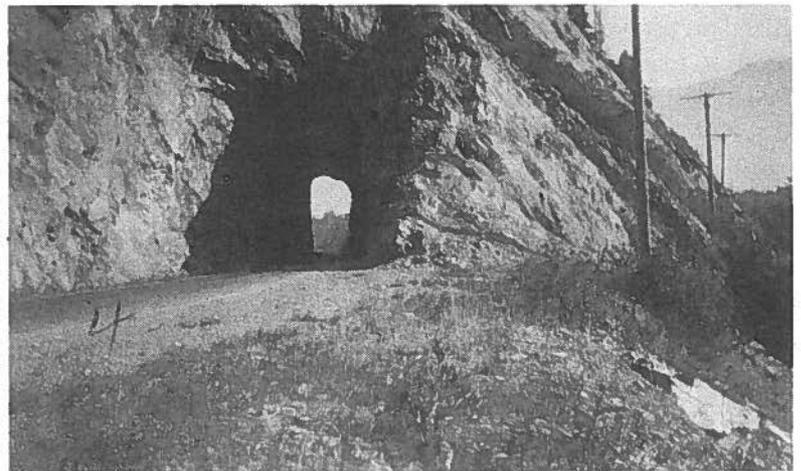
Near Radium Hot Springs.



Field - Golden Highway. 1938-39.



Cranbrook - Yahk road in spring.



Cranbrook - Fernie when the tunnel was new.

Now that I am an elderly senior citizen, the sturdy and courageous pioneers are my role models in maintaining mobility and independence to live a near normal lifestyle. My three years with the Welfare Field Service are now an adventurous and nostalgic part of a 41 year career in the nursing profession and public service.

Miss Paulson was an official Canadian delegate at the International Congress of Nurses meeting in Rome in 1957. She was an honored guest at the ICN meeting in Vancouver in June 1997. This lady was a Registered Nurse, public health nurse, Director of Tuberculosis Nursing for British Columbia (1943-1966), Past President of the Registered Nurses Association for British

Columbia (1951-1953) and is now an active member of the History of Nursing Professional Practice Group.

The pictures all were taken from Miss Paulson's photograph album compiled while she was here in the East Kootenay.

Murder at Christmas Hill: Sir James Douglas and the Peter Brown Affair

by Lindsay E. Smyth

Quite rightly, the Canadian people take great pride in the fact that their country was settled without recourse to the endemic Indian wars which characterized the opening of the American West. Nevertheless, there were a number of occasions when the stern imposition of British justice over what were then commonly referred to as the "savage nations" might easily have provoked a sanguinary war of the races.

One of the most notable of these myriad tragedies pertaining to the red man's collision with civilization commenced on November 5, 1852, when a shepherd in the employment of the Hudson's Bay Company arrived at Fort Victoria with the chilling intelligence that his co-worker, Peter Brown, had been murdered. A young Orkneyman who came out to the Colony of Vancouver Island the previous year, Brown had been residing together with the informant, James Skea, at a sheep station at Christmas Hill, located some four or five miles north of the Fort.

Taking personal charge of the investigation Governor James Douglas proceeded with haste to the scene of the crime, where he found the deceased lying in a pool of blood, having been shot twice through the chest. Suspicion focused at once upon two young natives who, together with their wives, had paid a "friendly" visit to the station earlier that morning. As one of the men had been previously employed at the same place, there appeared to be little cause for alarm when Skea had driven the sheep out to pasture, leaving Brown alone with the visitors. The atrocity had been discovered at midday, when the shepherd returned to find his companion sprawled lifeless before the door of their hut. It being evident that the assassins had carried away

some blankets and muskets, Douglas assumed that their sole motivation was "the desire of plunder."¹

Perceiving that there could be no security for life and property in the Colony under the present state of affairs, Douglas resolved to teach the indigenous inhabitants that they could no longer live beyond the pale of British Law. Accordingly, upon learning that one of the suspects resided at Cowichan, and that the other had fled to Nanaimo, he cut off the sale of ammunition to the implicated tribes, then sent word to the chiefs that unless the fugitives were immediately surrendered, he would send an armed force to seize upon them "in whatever place they may be found."² The answer was a refusal, together with an assertion that the murdered man had insulted the wives of the two young braves, "and had merited his doom."³

It was a trying hour for the fledgling Colony of Vancouver Island, with an immigrant population currently consisting of little over 200 souls. Douglas called upon Captain Augustus Kuper of the visiting warship *Thetis* to provide the necessary support to mount a punitive expedition, keenly aware that any action resulting in overt hostilities would initiate a war of revenge, and the imminent departure of the man-o'-war would leave the Colony in a defenceless state. For their part, the pioneer settlers were greatly alarmed, fearful that the populous and warlike Cowichans might ultimately annihilate them.

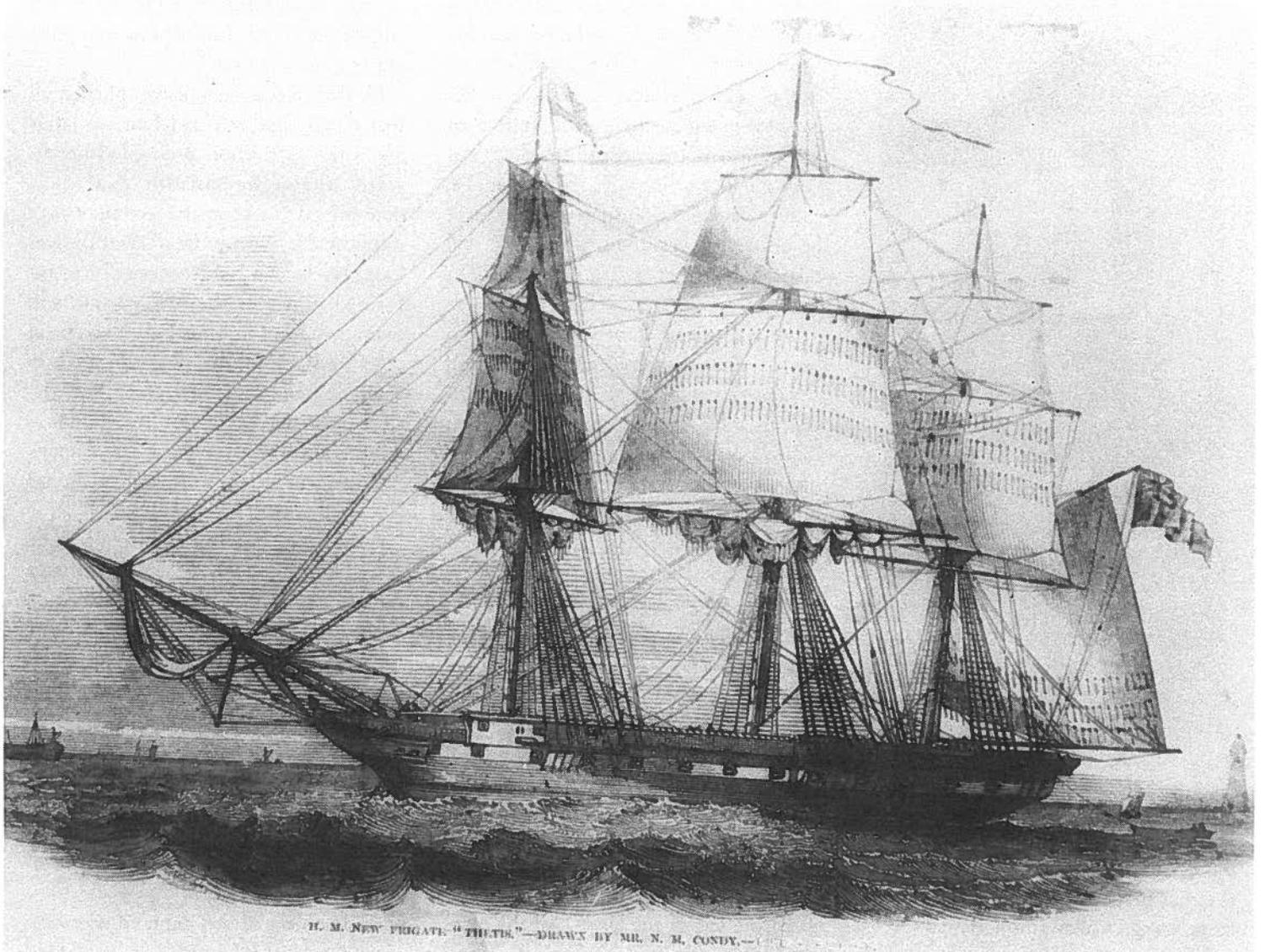
As the uncharted waters off the east coast of the Island were deemed unsafe for a large sailing frigate, it was decided that the HBC steamer *Beaver* would tow the troops aboard the schooner *Recovery*, together with the launch, barge, and pinnace from HMS *Thetis*. While anx-

ious to proceed without delay, the Governor was forced to await the return of the *Beaver* from a trading voyage to the North Coast. During the interim he continued negotiations with the leaders of the Cowichan Confederacy. Optimism over a promise by the chief to give up the offenders soon faded when it became known that they had been overruled by the friends and relatives of the two wanted men.

Force was now the only resort. Concerned that he might not return from such a dangerous mission, Douglas requested Dr. J.S. Helmcken to rush forward his planned marriage with the Governor's eldest daughter, so that there would be someone to care for his family in the event that he was killed.

After further delays attributed to inclement weather, the expedition finally got underway on the morning of January 4, 1853. In addition to the 130 blue-jackets and marines under Lieutenants Sansum and Moresby, the force was supplemented by a dozen or so members of the colonial militia - the Victoria Voltigeurs. Dressed in traditional voyageur garb consisting of tassled caps, blue blanket capotes, and buckskin trousers, the French-Iroquois mixed-bloods belonging to the militia were designated to act as scouts, and as a personal body-guard to Governor Douglas.

Two days later the expedition arrived at Cowichan Bay where it was known that one of the suspects, named Squeero, remained in the vicinity. Still hoping to prevail upon the native leaders to surrender the culprit quietly "and without recourse to coercive measures,"⁴ Douglas requested them to attend a conference aboard the *Beaver*. Should they refuse, he declared in no uncertain terms, he



H. M. NEW FRIGATE "THETIS."—DRAWN BY MR. N. H. CONDY.—

HMS THETIS came to the Pacific coast in 1852 to prevent American miners from annexing the Queen Charlotte Islands after a rich gold discovery there. The Captain of the THETIS on the 1852-53 cruise was Augustus L. Kuper

Photo courtesy of the B.C.A.R.S. #A-00271.

would then be under "the painful necessity of assuming a hostile attitude,"⁵ and marching against their villages with the forces under his command. The chiefs replied that they would meet the Governor at the mouth of the Cowichan River the following morning, promising to bring the murderer with them.

"Day broke wet and sullen," Lt. Moresby says of the events which transpired on January 7, "but in order to gain a choice position we made an early start and landed our forces, anchoring our boats so that their guns dominated the situation. A small tent was pitched for the Governor, where were deposited

presents for the tribe, beside his pistols and cutlass, the use of either to depend on circumstances. Then, guarded by the Canadians and marines, he and Lt. Sansum advanced to the front and waited."⁶

Soon the melancholy boom of war-drums was heard off in the distance, and as Moresby further relates, "far-off cries resolved themselves into war-songs, as a fleet of large canoes paddled furiously round a bend of the river and headed for our position at full speed." The young gunnery officer estimated the Indian force at about 230, "their height exaggerated with head-plumes, faces terrifi-

cally painted with red ochre, decked with loin-ropes of shells which met their deer-skin leggings, and clattered with every movement as they leaped from the canoes."⁷

James Douglas describes the long line of war canoes as having "a very imposing appearance as they pulled towards us," the hideously painted occupants "chanting their warlike songs, whooping like demons, and drumming on their canoes by turns with all their might." Although it was now obvious that the warriors were spoiling for battle, the iron-nerved white chief coolly lit the pipe of council and began to smoke, watching with feigned



James Douglas - 1863

Photo credit BCARS A-01228

indifference as they came rushing up the slope "in the state of the wildest excitement," their demeanour so hostile that the marines could hardly be restrained from firing a volley amongst them."⁸

Astonishingly enough, despite the fact that they were well armed with HBC muskets, the Cowichans also withheld their fire. Displaying a knowledge of tactics that alarmed the British troops, they took possession of the higher ground and completely outflanked them. "I desired to move our men," Moresby recalls, "but it would have been ticklish work just then, and permission was refused."⁹

Evidently bewildered by the Governor's stoicism, at the last moment before a collision the warriors faltered in their advance and stood before him, glaring ferociously. Three chiefs, each bearing a spear, stepped forward to confront the fearless leader of the King George men, as the British were yet known despite the fact that Victoria had ruled the Throne for the past 15 years.

Raising his hand in sign of peace, Douglas began to address those who were sworn to defend the criminal to the last extremity. "Hearken, O chiefs," said he. "I am sent by King George, who is your friend, and who desires right only between your tribes and his men. If his men kill an Indian, they are punished. If your young men do likewise, they must also suffer. Give up the murderer, and let there be peace between the peoples, or I will burn your lodges and trample out your tribes!"¹⁰

For a moment there was stunned silence. "Then a chief lifted his spear and advanced a step, all the warriors brandishing their weapons and rattling their loin-ropes, till the noise was as the crackling of a forest fire." About this time Squeero himself appeared, "armed cap a pie," and when the excitement died down a little the chiefs began to protest his innocence, reiterating the plea of provocation that had already been put forward. Douglas in reply "promised a fair trial and due acquittal if their case were proven" – and so the "great powwow" began.¹¹

Over the course of the next four hours the heated debate raged back and forth as Douglas endeavoured to inculcate the principles of British justice, while proclaiming that henceforth British Law was to be the law of the land. "All this time we were kept in suspense with the pleasure of seeing the long barrels of the Indian guns peering over the rocks and stones at us," Lt. Moresby goes on to say, "and you can fancy how our men longed to get at them for we all thought the talk would end in nothing."¹² At last, to everyone's surprise, "the murderer was surrendered, and in somewhat striking fashion, for the warriors all sank to the ground, the culprit alone remaining standing and abashed."¹³

It was conjectured that the Cowichans were "amenable to reason" as a result of their desire to maintain vital trade relations with the Hudson's Bay Company, under whose auspices Vancouver Island was first settled. In his dual role as chief agent of the Company, Governor Douglas was jubilant, professing that the peace-

ful surrender of a criminal by this most warlike tribe marked "an epoch in the history of our Indian relations which augurs well for the future peace and prosperity of the Colony."¹⁴

Having successfully accomplished all that was desired at Cowichan, on January 9 the expedition proceeded northward through Sansum Narrows, determined to capture the second suspect implicated in the murder of Peter Brown. Douglas' Indian "secret service" had informed him that the man's name was Siam-a-sit, and that his father was head chief over one of the villages located up the Nanaimo River. Anchoring off the river delta that same evening, the Governor once again invited those Indians "connected with the murderer" to attend a council aboard the steamer.

According to Moresby's account: "The tribe had agreed that the culprit should be given up on the following morning, and in the early dawn the canoes came stealing slowly down the current, the paddles striking the water in time to a rhythmic wail, the head-plumes white, and no war-paint, all these being signs of a peaceable intention. At the mouth of the river they came to a standstill, and not an inch farther would they venture until the Governor had publicly promised them a safe return.

"The object of this demand was soon clear, for the chiefs immediately boarded us, and without the man we sought.

"An angry palaver ensued, and doubtless they would have been detained as hostages but for the precaution they had taken.

"However, there was no choice but to let them go, detaining their fur robes as pledges of surrender on the following day."¹⁵

About this time it was learned that, as at Cowichan, the young warriors had pledged themselves to defend their comrade. Accordingly, it occasioned no great surprise when, on the morning of the 12th, 15 canoes arrived bringing a quantity of furs which the tribes offered as reparations for the killing, in accord with Indian custom. They were made to understand that no such compromise would

be accepted, and as they had not kept terms and delivered up the suspect as promised, Douglas detained the father, hoping by this step to induce the surrender of the son.

After two more days of tedious negotiations it was again agreed that the man should be given up. He actually came off in a canoe to within close proximity of the vessels, but on seeing the formidable figure of Governor Douglas approaching to meet him, Sian-a-sit bolted for shore and vanished into the forest.

His patience exhausted, Douglas ordered an immediate advance towards the villages, but the boats had scarcely entered the river before their progress was arrested by the shallowness of the stream. This was a serious setback, as he was counting upon the intimidating effect the cannon they carried would have upon the natives. Nevertheless, the troops were landed without delay, despite an attempt by the Nanaimo warriors to scare them away with "noise and bluster."

John Moresby, in a highly readable volume of reminiscences entitled **Two Admirals**, thus describes the events of the 14th:

"The expedition immediately started, the Governor and Canadians taking the head of the column; and after an hour or two we found ourselves in a beautiful open valley leading to a formidable stockade enclosing an unusually large Indian lodge. The stockade was built of split cedar, about 20 feet high, firmly sunk in the ground, and well braced together, with loop-holes for guns between the interstices. A spacious platform ran round the inside about 6 feet from the top, and this was manned by armed warriors.

"Lieutenant Sansum was for immediate attack, but the Governor refused, knowing that if we got the boats up, the place might be taken without bloodshed. Accordingly I was sent back to make the attempt, and after several hours' hard tracking by officers and men in the icy water, we got into the main stream and abreast the stockade.

"Watchful eyes had followed our every movement, and intense anxiety was at once apparent. Not a word was uttered,

but silently a heavy sliding-door was pushed up, and at this wordless invitation we entered upon one of the strangest scenes imaginable. We stood in the middle of the great lodge, and the early twilight had fallen, so that the chief illuminant was the flicker of several fires, which sent their dancing light and shadow over the dusky interior. As our eyes accustomed themselves, we saw the silent Indians standing in the gloom of the wide lodge, massively formed as it was, roofed and carved, with something majestic in its simplicity and perfect adaptation to its purpose.

"Four of us only had entered with the Governor, yet they laid down their arms and listened sullenly while he repeated his demand. Then one replied in their guttural dialect.'

"It is well,' he said, 'it is well. But what can the old men do? The young men have hidden our brother. They have taken him far away, and our eyes have not followed their track. We cannot do what we would, for the young men are strong and we are weak.'

"This brought us up all standing. It was evidently true, and the Governor himself was nonplussed. The winter night, with an icy splendour of stars and frost, was closing in, and there was nothing for it but to bivouac and await events.

"Our men were brought into the lodge, and under the influence of Jack's geniality even the Indian reserve thawed. Standing apart at first, they soon gathered round the fires, and supplemented our pork and biscuits with a welcome supply of salmon and potatoes. Bushels of the latter were cooked by heating large stones red hot in a pit and covering them with mats, when, after filling the pit with potatoes, water was poured in, and the steam confined with skins and mats over all. Oh, the comfort, the abundance of that meal, after the fatigues of the day! It stands preeminent in my gastronomic memories, and when it was over grog was not wanting, and the pipe and song went round, our hosts joining with their deep guttural where they could, and the Canadians singing the songs their ancestors had brought from the France they were

never to see more. It was strange to hear 'Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres' and 'Malbrouck' awaking the echoes of the Indian roof and startling the frosty silence! Satisfied at last, warm and dry, we slept till morning broke . . ."¹⁶

At daybreak on the 15th the Commander-in-Chief led his men further upriver to the main village, "consisting of many large houses and containing all their stock of winter provisions."¹⁷ This was the village over which his hostage, Siam-a-sit's father, was the principal chief. Perceiving that the inhabitants had taken their most valuable property and fled, Douglas assembled the few Indians he could find and then delivered his final ultimatum - unless the murderer was given up he would burn their villages and destroy their supply of provisions!

Simultaneously it was learned that the fugitive was hiding near a small village a few miles to the north, at what is now Departure Bay. The Voltigeurs were at once despatched in the pinnace with a party of seamen, to see if they could catch him. As fate would have it, a few inches of snow had fallen the preceding night, making ideal conditions for tracking. Discovering a fresh trail where the fugitive and his friends had fled into the forest, the "half whites" raced in pursuit, soon arriving at a recently abandoned campfire. "Their Indian blood leaped at the sight, and, like sleuthhounds, they followed the tracks, until one single trail separated from the others."¹⁸

Led by their Sergeant, Basil Battineau, the Voltigeurs traced the man's footprints to a stream - subsequently named Chase River on account of this incident - where they temporarily lost the trail. It was soon regained, however, when the trackers agreed that their quarry had fled upstream, occasionally swimming in a desperate attempt to avoid leaving sign. The fugitive very nearly escaped, in fact, for evening was falling and Sgt. Battineau was about to abandon the chase when he heard a sound of a flintlock musket snap as it missed fire, coming from a nearby pile of driftwood. "the scout followed the direction of the sound, but in the dark could not see the Indian, who tried a sec-

ond shot at him when the priming only exploded, but the flash exposing his hiding place, he was immediately discovered, knocked down and handcuffed."¹⁹

The young chieftain was taken to the stockade on Nanaimo River, where the main body of troops were then ordered to withdraw without inflicting further damage. "It was pitiful enough to see the splendid wild man captive among his own people," Moresby recounts. "What they felt I know not. What they evinced was the stoical indifference of their tradition. Not a sound was uttered, not a look showed pity or anger as we closed round our prisoners and set off on the return march."²⁰

After resting to observe the Sabbath a jury composed of officers of the Royal Navy and the HBC was impanelled, and on the morning of January 17, 1853, the first formal trial in what is now Western Canada convened on the quarterdeck of the **Beaver**. Upon examination the prisoners confessed the "whole particulars" of the crime, and as it was clearly ascertained that the story regarding their victim's attempt to violate their wives was a fabrication, they were condemned to be hanged that same afternoon.

Several chiefs were invited to attend the trial, while Siam-a-sit's mother and wife remained in canoes alongside, "beating their breasts and tearing their hair with an abandonment of grief very touching to witness."²¹ Indeed, the mother was so distressed she implored the court to take her husband the head chief and hang him instead, "as he was old and could not live long, the other was young, and one for one was Indian law."²² When these efforts proved unsuccessful she made a speech "upbraiding the tribe for not following her advice or raiding Victoria and getting possession of all the guns, powder, and blankets in the store, before the white men should increase in number."²³

Towards sunset the prisoners were conveyed to the south end of Protection Island - subsequently named Gallow Point - where the troops were formed up in a hollow square round the place of execution, ready to quell any last moment attempt at rescue. Simultaneously a large

number of Indians assembled to witness the white man's terrible revenge, which Douglas calculated would "make a deep impression on their minds, and have the effect of restraining others from crime."²⁴

Describing the final act, Moresby says: "Neither of the murderers appeared to care one bit for death; they walked unconcernedly to the gallows and stood at least ten minutes on the scaffold without a limb trembling or the least appearance of fear." While the on-looking braves remained stoical and quiet, when the drop fell and Squeero and Siam-a-sit were launched into eternity, the native women "uttered the most mournful yells and cries it has ever fallen to the lot of men to hear."²⁵

The piteous sequence came when Siam-a-sit's aged mother tottered to her dead son's feet, kissing and clinging to them, and imploring that the fatal rope might be given to her. "And when her prayer was granted," Moresby concludes, "she put it round her neck and pressed it to her lips, whilst her tears ran in torrents, and some of our own eyes were not dry. . . "²⁶

Immediately afterwards the expedition returned to Victoria, where Governor Douglas subsequently expressed his conviction that "the Almighty disposer of events favoured the just cause, and the land is now cleansed from the pollution of innocent blood."²⁷

* * * * *

This writer spends his summers prospecting near Telegraph Creek and winters in Victoria "prospecting" in the B.C. Archives.

FOOTNOTES

1. Douglas to Barclay, Nov. 5, 1852. **Letters to HBC on the Affairs of Vancouver's Island Colony**, PABC, A/C/20/V12A: 104.
2. Douglas to Yale, Nov. 8, 1852. Quoted by J. Strickland in **Vancouver Daily Province**, May 31, 1947.
3. Moresby, John; **Two Admirals**, John Murray, London, 1909: 127.
4. Douglas, James; Diary entry for Jan. 6, 1853. **Private Papers of Sir James Douglas** (2d ser.) Original in Bancroft Library, University of California.
5. Douglas, James; Quoted in B.A. McKelvie, **Tales of Conflict**, published by **The Daily Province**, Vancouver, 1949: 60.
6. Moresby, John; **Two Admirals**, op. cit.: 129.
7. *Ibid.*: 129-30.
8. Douglas, James; Diary entry for Jan. 7, 1853. **Private Papers**, op. cit.
9. Moresby, John; **Two Admirals**, op. cit.: 130.
10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*: 130-31.
12. Moresby to Father, Feb. 4, 1853. Ms., PABC, E/B/M81.
13. Moresby, John; **Two Admirals**, op. cit.: 131.
14. Douglas to Tod, Jan. 7, 1853. **Private Papers**, op. cit.
15. Moresby, John; **Two Admirals**, op. cit.: 131-32.
16. *Ibid.*: 132-34.
17. Douglas to Barclay, Jan. 20, 1853. Letter reproduced in **British Columbia Historical Quarterly**, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1942): 205.
18. Moresby, John; **Two Admirals**, op. cit.: 134.
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21. *Ibid.*
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23. Pearse, Benjamin W.; **Early Settlement of Vancouver Island**, Ms., PABC, E/B/P31: 13.
24. Douglas to Barclay, Jan. 20, 1853. Op. cit.: 205.
25. Moresby to Father, Feb. 4, 1853. Op. cit.
26. Moresby, John; **Two Admirals**, op. cit.: 135.
27. Douglas to Tolmie, Jan. 26, 1853. Microfilm, PABC, A/1360/3.

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Country
worthy of
a future
should be
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A Balloon Mystery of B.C. & Manitoba 1896-97

by Robert E. Bartholomew

During the nineteenth century, an intense popular interest in balloons and ballooning captivated Europe and North America. The most spectacular and ambitious ballooning exploit of this period, was the heroic attempt by Swedish scientist Salomon August Andree to reach the North Pole.¹ In the early 1890's, discussion of such a trip was met with considerable press skepticism, but as the scientific reputation of Andree was considerable, he was eventually able to obtain sufficient funds in 1893 to undertake the journey. Such a voyage to this vast, uncharted territory, was considered to be one of the last great adventures left on earth. Meticulous planning went into the trip and building the balloon, the Ornen (meaning Eagle). Andree's plans made headlines around the world from 1893 until he and his two crewmen froze to death in 1897 without ever reaching the Pole.

But this is only part of the story. In 1896, the year before his death, Andree and his crew had travelled to Danes Island on the northwestern tip of Spitzbergen, where he had constructed a giant building 95-foot long and 100-foot high, to shelter the balloon from the harsh elements, so that it would be in excellent condition prior to the attempt. Andree had originally intended to make his polar expedition in 1896. On June 30th 1896, he had the balloon installed inside the structure, and he and the crew waited for favorable weather conditions under which to ascend. The attention of the world focused on Andree, and governments with territory in the polar regions, were asked to inform their citizens of the event and render any assistance to the aeronauts should they later land there. The Canadian government and Hudson's Bay Company publicized to Native Canadian peoples, that "it was

probable the aerial voyagers might be driven southerly" and stray onto Canadian terrain.² The balloonists waited until mid-August, at which time they abandoned their attempt due to poor weather. However, the isolated communities in northern Canada did not know that Andree's expedition was cancelled, and they remained on the lookout for his famous balloon.

The reports of phantom balloon sightings began on the afternoon of July 1st, 1896, when numerous residents in the city of Winnipeg, claimed to see a balloon flying rapidly in the distance.³ Several residents expressed the view "that it was Andree's balloon," but they were subsequently informed that the latest reports had it that Andree had not even left. Once this was realized, there was some discussion that the sighting could have resulted from a "toy balloon sent up in honor of the Confederation holiday." The press report concluded by noting that, "Whether miniature or real, the passage of the mysterious balloon caused a good deal of talk among citizens last night." Toy balloons were also known as "fire balloons" during this period. These items were quite popular and commonly sold at shops which dispensed fireworks. They were comprised of paper with candles attached near the mouth and made buoyant through the generation of heat.

On August 12th, a sensational story appeared in the press, discussing an apparent sighting of Andree's balloon, as a telegram was received by the government office in Ottawa on August 11th, from the Superintendent of Indian Affairs in British Columbia, A.W. Vowell. It stated: "Credible information received by Agent Lomas from two Indian parties, separated by long distance at time of observation, that the Andree balloon had been sighted in latitude 55.15, longitude 127.40, pur-

suing a northerly course."⁴ The location described in Vowell's dispatch would have placed the sighting about 100 miles up the Skeena River, some 500 miles north of Victoria. At the time of the observation, local residents were unaware that Andree had not begun his voyage.⁵

The following day, August 13th, more details of the dispatch became public, being revealed that it was dated July 3rd, was sent from Hazelton, involving the observation of a boy who reported seeing a semi-circular black object near the setting sun, which soon disappeared about 40-feet above the timber line. The dispatch, sent to Superintendent Vowell by Indian Agent R.E. Loring, concluded by noting that "the boy's description of the balloon and its actions leaves no doubt as to its reality, and is no doubt Andree's balloon expected to have left Spitzbergen for the north pole" on July 1st.⁶ A second dispatch was also revealed in the same press account, sent by Indian Agent Loring to Superintendent Vowell, dated July 10th from Hazelton. He wrote that Ghali, chief of the Kitspioux, observed a balloon-like object while trapping with a group of Indians on Blackwater Lake, above the head waters of the Skeena on the evening of July 3rd. He stated that the object was brightly illuminated and was travelling almost due north. Agent Loring also noted that the Indians living along the Skeena "were made aware that they were liable to see during the beginning of this month, a balloon going north, and of the purpose of its occupants, etc., and to report to me anything noticed by them of that description."⁷

In late September, Englishman J. Melville Stoddard who was hunting with two Indians between Cross Sound and Mackenzie Bay at about the same time

the sightings occurred, told journalists that he and his Indian companions at first became convinced they were looking at a balloon, possibly Andree's. However, when he viewed the distant object through his binoculars, it became evident that the "balloon" was an unusually shaped cloud, and it eventually dissipated. Stoddard noted that the Indians did not use the binoculars, and remained steadfast in their conviction that it was Andree's balloon.⁸

The 1897 Sightings

Andree's second and final attempt to reach the North Pole transpired on July 11, 1897, when he ascended from Danes Island. The exact details of his demise were not known until 1930, when sailors visiting White Island, discovered the expedition's remains, including undeveloped film and notes describing the tragedy that befell them. Sixty-five hours after taking off, Andree was forced to land just 300 miles from his departure point after Arctic drizzle formed an ice coating on the balloon. He and his crew died on the arduous trek back to civilisation. However, it was not until 33 years after the event that the world learned his fate. In the days and weeks after Andree and his crew sailed into oblivion, his whereabouts again became the subject of intense press discussion, and those living in northern countries were told to keep a watch for his balloon.

The first sighting of the 1897 episode was reported in Northern British Columbia by Rivers Inlet fisherman W.S. Fitzgerald, who was salmon fishing with a companion on the morning of July 10th. At about 2.45 am they spotted a "great balloon-shaped body" that was "powerfully illuminated" floating about a mile above a mountain range, when "all at once the thought burst upon us that it was a balloon and none other than Andree's."⁹ The light appeared to drift southwesterly for about two hours, when it faded out of sight.¹⁰ On July 12, several residents of a nursing home at Kamloops, British Columbia, reported a similar illuminated object "fluttering" for over two hours before disappearing to the southwest.¹¹ Over the course of

several days between the last week of July and August 3rd, several sightings of a "mysterious balloon or pillar of fire" were recorded in Victoria, British Columbia, including three women camping at Sidney, who watched it drift northerly over Salt Spring Island.¹² On early Sunday morning, August 1st, three young men camping near Goldstream also reported what appeared to be a brilliantly glowing balloon.

On August 5th at Douglas, Manitoba, several residents observed an illuminated object about 11 pm, swaying in the sky and "resembling the shape of a massive balloon." It was travelling northward, disappeared after 45 minutes, and was assumed to be Andree's balloon.¹³ During the early morning hours of August 6th, two firemen on the Victoria city brigade, observed a bright aerial light hovering above Discovery Island for over two hours, moving in a general westerly direction. At one point, the pair thought they could discern "a dark body outlined behind the circle of intense light."¹⁴ When the observation was denounced as the likely misperception of a toy balloon,¹⁵ several local residents wrote in to support their claims.¹⁶ On August 8th, at 12:30 am, a family residing on the outskirts of Winnipeg, also thought they saw Andree's balloon shining a bright light as it disappeared to the northwest after 45-minutes.¹⁷ On August 13th at about 9 pm, "a very bright red star surrounded by a luminous halo" was observed for about 15 minutes by thousands of Vancouver residents, swiftly traversing the southern sky. This followed a sighting by several prominent citizens of Rossland, who watched it hover for some time before fading from sight to the south.¹⁸

In September, there were two final reports. The first occurred on the evening of the 17th at about 6 pm, as several farmers residing near Souris, Manitoba, "distinctly saw a balloon floating over them at considerable height" travelling southwesterly. It was in sight for 5 minutes and the farmers were certain that a flag was protruding from the top of the vessel, suggestive that Andree was mak-

ing a triumphant return.¹⁹ Coincidentally, at this time there was much press speculation that Andree may have already reached the North Pole and be heading back, although he planned to trek back. The last report was by William Graham of Honora, Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron, who stated that on September 11th at 10 pm, he and several neighbours observed an illuminated object change colours from red to white to blue, which was also seen at nearby Gore Bay. Mr. Graham suggested that the object was Andree's balloon.²⁰

It should be emphasised that almost certainly no one could or would have been able to fly in a balloon above Canada at this time, particularly under the observed conditions. Firstly, most balloons that were in use were tethered to a rope and used for show purposes. A so-called "free-flying" balloon travelling in such northern regions, and at night, would have been almost certainly suicidal, and have required considerable investment of time and money, and no attempt was ever recorded.

So what were people seeing? The most likely explanation comes from mainstream theories of social psychology. Human perception is very fallible and subject to error. The eyes and mind do not function like a video cassette recorder. The brain interprets information as it is received. A major influence on our perceptions depends upon our mental outlook or frame of reference at the time of the event.²¹ This is clearly evident in disputed referee decisions during closely fought sporting matches or in trying to judge distances across lakes. Within highly ambiguous situations such as people scanning the night-time skies for an imaginary but plausible balloon, "inference can perform the work of perception by filling in missing information in instances where perception is either inefficient or inadequate."²² This is not to suggest that the phantom balloon witnesses were fabricating stories, hallucinating or had vivid imaginations. Most-modern-day reports of unidentified flying objects are simply the result of redefining a tangible object at a dis-

tance, such as stars and planets, or a variety of other natural phenomena, reflecting the observer's expectations.²³ The Phantom sightings of Andree's balloon appear to be a classic example of this process.²⁴

* * * * *

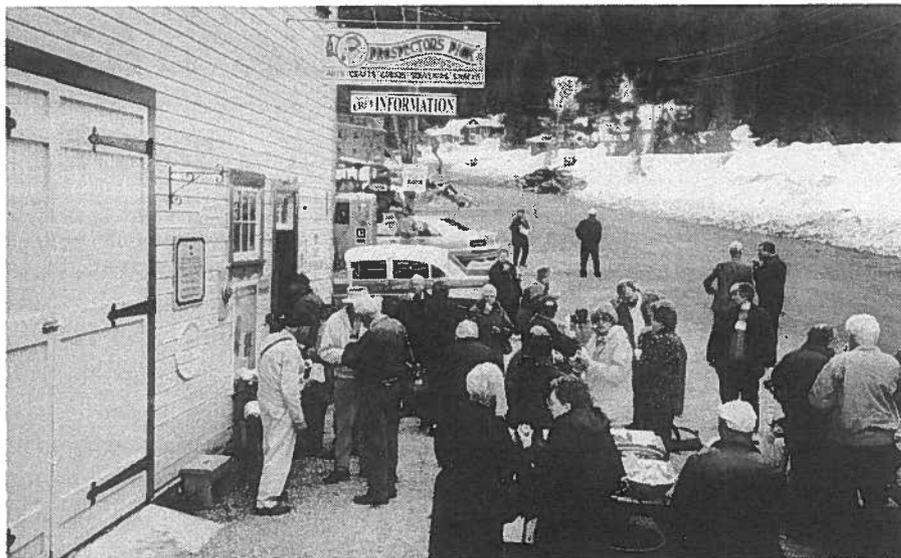
Or were they seeing UFOS? - The Editor.

The author grew up on a farm on the Canadian - U.S. border south of Montreal. He is now on staff at the James Cook University of Northern Queensland in Townsville, Australia.

FOOTNOTES

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BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL FEDERATION TOUR



BCHF tour group at the Nikkei Memorial Centre in New Denver, May 2, 1997

Photo courtesy of Ron Welwood



Picnic lunch at Sandon, May 2, 1997, showing some of the participants on the BCHF bus tour out of Nelson.

Photo courtesy of Ron Welwood



Ken Butler, one of the chief conservators, giving a conducted tour of the S.S. Moyie. On the far left is Jack Morris, former Mayor of Kaslo who has worked with the Moyie restoration for years.

Photo courtesy of George Thomson

A Trip Through the Fraser Valley by Interurban

by Ken Broderick

My first lesson in finance occurred on the same morning as our trip, on the Interurban, through the Fraser Valley and along Sumas Lake to Chilliwack. We (my mother, my two sisters and two brothers) were staying, for a few weeks, at a lodging house on Cassie Avenue, near Imperial in Burnaby, which was owned by a family named Krause. Our mother had given each of us four children, a coin and had sent us off to a corner store well known to my older siblings. She kept the baby with her.

Upon arrival at the store, the two girls and my older brother had, in turn by age, made their choices.

"I'll have one of those and two of those and one of those and one of those and three of those and three of those," my older sister said.

"I'll have two of those and one of those and two of those," said my other sister.

"I'll have one of those and one of those and one of those," said my older brother. The lady who owned the store handed over those purchases.

"I'll have one of those and three of those and two of those and two of those and three of those and one of those," I said.

The store lady, contemptuously, took one small candy out of a jar. "You'll have one of these and that's it!" she said.

I howled! I was being robbed. My siblings shooed me out of the shop and gave me that first lesson in economics.

"I," said my oldest sister, the brain, whose lofty logic had always stumped everyone, "had ten cents." "She," pointing to my other sister, "had five cents." Pointing to my older brother, she declaimed, "He had five cents." She let all this sink into my almost seven year old mind, "You," she pronounced, "had one cent! You get one candy. One little candy!" It was a lesson that I never for-

got.

That area of Burnaby was one that our father had finished logging and subdivided in 1908, shortly after leaving the Yukon Telegraph and with only a few business ventures in between.

During the Vancouver land boom that, like a forest fire, raged from the early 1900's until 1912, Belcarra was subdivided as far as Whisky Cove; Savary Island, off Lund, was surveyed into 50 foot lots and narrow canyons on the North Shore had been sold to eager buyers. He had a Real Estate office on Park Street, now Commercial Drive, in Vancouver. He became a Notary Public and Land Surveyor. During those intoxicating years, our father had sold lots and built and rented houses, some of which he still owned in 1921, the time of which I am writing. I don't believe the excitement of those years ever died within him.

A series of deals based, in most cases on bad judgement, but at times just bad luck, had left him as a spare board telegrapher with the C.P.R.

Our family of seven had lived in accommodation as cramped as a railway boxcar perched on the shoulder of Cathedral Mountain. But now, we lived in a grand, rented house in Rocky Mountain House, Alberta where he was second trick telegrapher. In the quiet of his four p.m. to midnight shift, he was able to occupy his quite brilliant mind with the schemes that would return to him, he was quite sure, the wealth that had been, so many times, almost within his grasp.

He was a farmer at heart and always had a garden. The old farm house we were living in was placed on several acres of land so he had, not only a huge garden, but a cow and should have been content.

His old, romantic concept of farming

rose up. "I am selling my farm." some hungry and disgruntled homesteader had mentioned. Our father had become extremely interested. His mind, I am sure, immediately placed this specific farm in the middle of his dream.

"How much?" he asked and made a deal for the first price mentioned. Now, here we were in Burnaby, selling off the last of his holdings, the few houses and lots that were his last chance to return to Vancouver and a business of his own.

He could not leave his job, so our mother, completely unversed in business, was delegated to sell off the remaining houses and to return, with the cash, to the disillusioning muskeg farm near Rocky Mountain House. Real estate deals take time to make and complete, so we were left, kicking our heels, in the boarding house on Cassie Avenue.

Our mother was a light hearted, gregarious and caring person who always made loyal, lifetime friends in our many ports of call. When we were living on a farm at Peardonville, near Abbotsford, where I was born, she had made close friends with the Buchanans, a neighbouring family. Having kept up a correspondence over the years, she knew that they now lived at Edenbank, near Chilliwack.

She decided to make the long journey by Interurban. The Interurban was simply two cars, each about twice the length of a streetcar, hooked together and manned by a motorman and a conductor. While we were down at the local store, she had been preparing for our departure.

Shortly after, we were at the McKay Interurban Station, and she was loading her little army aboard. In those days, a man would have preferred to have been seen barefooted than bareheaded and, as our mother boarded, every man in the car would have removed his hat and held

it in his lap while there was any lady on board. I do not remember this happening at this time, the excitement of boarding is my only memory, but this exact incident occurred in Calgary a few years later. My mother and I boarded a streetcar, the seats of which were entirely filled with men. As soon as my mother boarded, every hat came swiftly off; the man occupying the first seat arose and, with a little nod, offered it to my mother. As the tram arrived at stop after stop, other women boarded and, in each case, a man rose from his seat and offered it to the lady. Finally, there was only one man still seated and, when another lady boarded, he stubbornly remained seated. When she walked down the aisle to stand beside him, he pretended he did not see her and looked everywhere but in her direction. In a short time, he became aware that every person in the tram was staring at him, some of the men obviously angry. It was too much for him and, finally, with very poor grace, he stood up and offered his seat to her.

In but a minute, we passed a triangular lot that was covered by a clutter of chicken coops. These chicken coops had been constructed by our father in 1910, in another ill-fated venture, on this lot at the corner of Kingsway and Imperial and were, in fact, still there in the 1950's.

The seats of the old cars were of rough cane and chafed our young bottoms as the two creaky cars jolted and bucked their way down the steep 12th Street hill into New Westminster.

At the other end of Columbia Street, the trams swung onto the railway bridge. This bridge, built in 1904, carried the Great Northern Railway. The Great Northern, at that time, had two lines running into Vancouver from Washington State. One was from Sumas, through Aldergrove and the other was from Blaine through White Rock. The Interurban shared this bridge.

At the southern end of the bridge, the Interurban turned west along the Fraser, stopping at South Westminster, where the ferry to New Westminster had been. It was from the livery stable at this ferry that our father had, in 1916, late one

night after a long day concluding real estate deals, taken his trotters and hooked them to his buggy to make a fast, and futile, run along the Yale Road to his farm at Peardonville, to find as he had feared, 3,000 day old chicks dead under cold covers and the hired man asleep.

The Interurban climbed the hill from South Westminster, passing many stations such as Scott Road, Newton and Sullivan before stopping at Cloverdale. I likely fell asleep there for I remember nothing more of the trip until we reached Abbotsford.

Shortly after Abbotsford, with the Interurban running south towards the American Border at Huntingdon, we got our first glimpse of Sumas Lake. At that time, the entire valley from Sumas Mountain south to the high land along the border, was a large lake. It extended, in length, from the Vye Road, just south of Abbotsford, through what is now Yarrow and to the Vedder river, which had created it. Not too long after our trip in 1921, the lake was diked and drained to create land for a Soldier Settlement project.

The Interurban tracks turned east within feet of the border and followed the high ground that formed the southern shore of the lake, running through Upper Sumas, Arnold and Vedder Crossing. The sight of that beautiful lake with Sumas Mountain in the distance remains in my memory. It seemed to me that the Interurban clattered along high above its shores for hours.

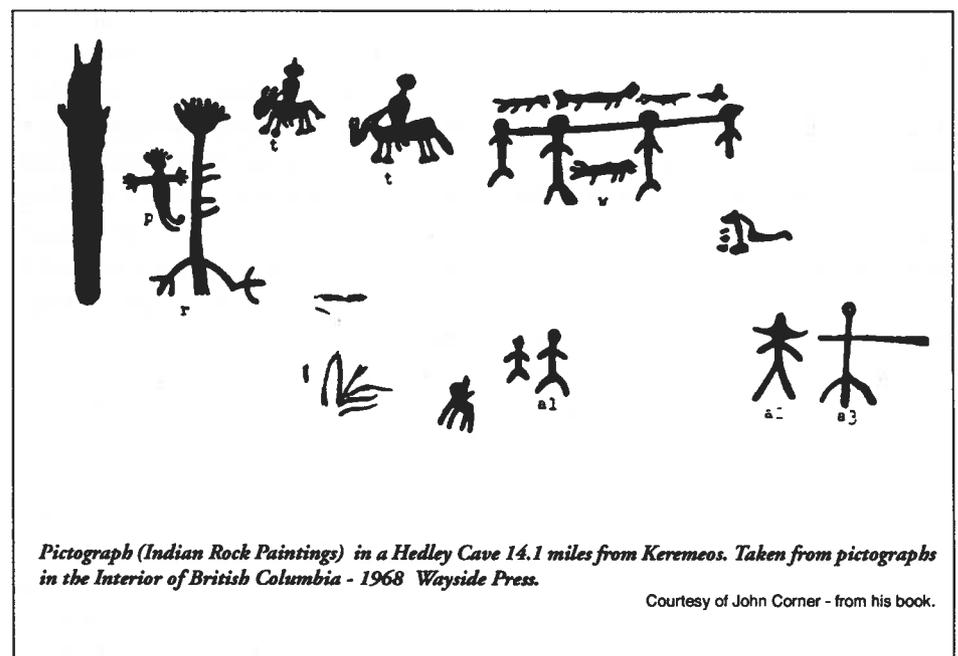
Then, we were past the lake and into the trees alongside of the mountain, to turn north at Vedder Crossing until, at Edenbank, only a few miles from Chilliwack, we left the train and were met by the daughter of our friends. She loaded us into the farm wagon to trundle slowly down the road to the farmhouse where we were to visit.

* * * * *

The author is retired and living in North Vancouver.

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Pictograph (Indian Rock Paintings) in a Hedley Cave 14.1 miles from Keremeos. Taken from pictographs in the Interior of British Columbia - 1968 Wayside Press.

Courtesy of John Corner - from his book.

Was There a Spanish Invasion?

by *Winston Shilcock*

In 1863 a discovery was made in the Kelowna area that created a mystery which, despite intense and prolonged research, has never been satisfactorily explained.

In that year Isadore Boucherie was wandering along what is now Mill Creek searching for gold when he stumbled on the decaying remains of an ancient log building large enough to have housed several men and horses.

Little interest was aroused among the few inhabitants in the vicinity (about 25, plus several Indians) and for the next 40 years that matter lay doggo. When a farmer was plowing his land near the site in 1902 he turned up an ancient Spanish-type musket and when the find was announced, the old log building was recalled and imaginations started the myth and mystery of a Spanish invasion of the Okanagan Valley. What facts are available, plus some speculation, tend to show that Spaniards could have come this far north. To discover when and why we must go back in history to California in the middle of the 18th century.

From the time Balboa crossed the Isthmus of Panama in 1513 and took possession of the Pacific coast for Spain, no attempt to explore northward was made until after 1763 when Great Britain and Spain divided eastern America and set the stage for western expansion.

In 1769 Spain built a mission at San Diego and later several others, but only as far north as San Francisco Bay. It wasn't until 1774 when the British and Russians were flexing their muscles in the area of Nootka on Vancouver Island that Spain realized that if she was to maintain her hold on the Pacific area decisive action was necessary farther north.

After three disastrous northern voyages of exploration ending in 1779, Spain made a final attempt to protect her interest and established a settlement at Nootka in 1790. However, the pressure

from Great Britain mounted and in March, 1795, Nootka was taken over by the British, ending forever Spain's exclusive ownership in the Pacific.

From this little bit of history we can deduce that if Spaniards did come to the Okanagan Valley it was probably some time between 1769 and 1795. This would be about right for the rotted logs which were found in 1863.

As to why they came, it could have been a group of renegade soldiers prowling northward or, more likely, a troop of men sent to explore by land and lay claim to the territory for Spain in conjunction with similar attempts being made by sea.

If the second hypothesis is true, it's strange that no record of an attempt at such exploration has ever been found in any Spanish archives. However, there does exist a record of sorts which has been found in the Similkameen Valley around Olalla and Keremeos.

The Indians of the Similkameen have a legend telling that about the middle of the 18th century, before the "King George Men" arrived, several white men wearing "metal" clothes and riding horses came from the south into their area.

The intruders took several Indian prisoners to act as carriers and then moved east to where Penticton is now. Turning north they followed Okanagan Lake to just past an Indian village near today's Kelowna. Here they wintered in a large log building and in the Spring retraced their steps southward and westward to arrive in the area where they had captured their slaves.

The Similkameen Indians had followed the intruders' movements and knowing their numbers had been reduced during the winter by disease and Indian hostility, attacked them in force as they came down the Keremeos Creek valley. After a sharp, bloody battle, the despised white men were slaughtered to the last man and along with their armour

and weapons, buried in an unmarked grave somewhere between Olalla and Keremeos. To this day the site has not been found.

What has been found, however, are Indian pictographs, painted on the wall of a secluded cave, showing horsemen wearing apparent Spanish headgear and herding roped Indians guarded by dogs. Spaniards usually chained their captives together and guarded them with dogs.

Indian legends generally contain a considerable element of truth so there's good reason to believe this one. If white men did come from the south and they did winter near Kelowna, and they were slaughtered and buried near Keremeos, who were they? What were they doing this far up the North American continent and about 300 miles from the Pacific Ocean in the mid-18th century?

This group of men were quite likely Spaniards but we'll never know for sure. The rotted logs and rusty musket found on Mill Creek will continue to cause wonderment but the true story surrounding the Indian legend will probably remain a mystery for ever and ever.

* * * * *

Win Shilcock has collected tidbits of Okanagan history for many years. He still contributes a column to a local newspaper and senior citizens' publications from his home in Kelowna.

Acknowledgement:

John Corner of Okanagan Landing granted permission to use the drawing from his earlier book, PICTOGRAPHS IN THE INTERIOR OF BRITISH COLUMBIA. He is currently arranging for the publication of a revised version of his book with 50 additional Indian Rock Paintings found since his first book came out in 1968. Corner is a retired inspector for the Department of Agriculture.

See illustration on the previous page.

Alder Grove Heritage Society

This youthful organization has been very busy. Their Museum of Telephones was opened in June 1996. They have catalogued a collection of photographs, participated in the Langley Heritage Advisory Committee, conducted a Christmas Carol Challenge for Youth, and had a series of speakers including their MLA who talked on the history of B.C.'s parliament buildings.

Arrow Lakes Historical Society

The Museum in Nakusp has registered a great increase in visitorship since it opened with regular hours from May 4 to September 28, 1996. Two students in the Secondary School Work Experience Program were involved for 30 hours each.

The Archives Committee is indexing early newspapers and cataloguing the oral histories collected by Milton Parent during 25 years of interviewing. The Archives recently acquired 10 School Registers covering Galena Bay School from 1912 to 1946 (the entire time the school was open.)

Retired nurses are compiling a history of local health care, while a retired tugboat skipper is working with archivists as well as oldtimers in log - booming and transportation from rivers to the various sawmills.

Vancouver Historical Society

This organization has established or improved liaison with other community groups including Heritage Vancouver, the Jewish Historical Society, the B.C. Genealogical Society, Black History Month Coalition, Vancouver Heritage Advisory Committee and the Southeast Vancouver Discovery Project. The Historical Hotline has been used by not only curious individuals, it has yielded calls from the **Vancouver Sun** and City Hall.

This Society now has a page on the World Wide Web as part of the Vancouver Community Network. We are all interested in learning how widely this page is consulted.

Guest speakers included Dr. Phil Nuytten, underwater biologist and inventor of the underwater gear - the Newt Suit.

Victoria Historical Society

President Shirley Cuthbertson noted that there are 28 Heritage related societies in Victoria with contrasting appeal to potential members. She named the Heritage Tree Society, the Heritage Garden Society and the Canadian Costume Museum and Archives as examples. There are also several small museums.

Their guest speakers are, for the most part, writers of recently published history books.

The Annual Christmas Dinner is very popular as is a summer outing.

The City of Victoria has completed "the brick project" which means that a visitor to downtown may now walk the perimeter of early Fort Victoria as outlined with bricks.

Boundary Historical Society

Residents and members of Grand Forks and Greenwood expect a very busy summer as both communities celebrate their respective centennial anniversary of incorporation.

Nanaimo Historical Society

President Gavin Halkett told of the regular programs plus the special ceremonies conducted every 27th of November as PRINCESS ROYAL DAY.

A simple but highly successful mode of fundraising has been a book raffle each month. Attendance at each meeting averages 45 people - out of a registered 85 members.

Cowichan Historical Society

Their museum and archives have prospered with over 2,500 volunteer man hours, successful fund raisers such as Bingo and two Casino nights, an admission fee during the summer, a Heritage House tour and a Summer Fete.

Priscilla Davis, curator of the Cowichan Valley Museum, has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria.

The Cowichan Historical Society had to assist the Canadian Legion restore the list of names on the cenotaph. The stone was sandblasted, a process which made the monument sparkle . . . but deleted the names listed thereon.

Surrey Historical Society

Vice President Kathleen Moore invited delegates to come to "The Fastest Growing City in Canada" for the B.C. Historical Federation 1998 Conference April 30 - May 3.

She wryly noted that, despite a petition that the Peace Arch be recognized by Canada Post on its 75th Anniversary, this was rejected in favor of Canadian Tire's 75th birthday.

This organization has requested essays from high school students wishing to apply for the Surrey Historical Society bursaries.

Qualicum Beach Historical & Museum Society

This society is very proud of their second building - a brick and steel structure similar to their first "home" for artifacts. The building,

which housed diesel generators in Port Alberni, was torn down and moved brick by brick and beam by beam to Qualicum Beach. B.C. Hydro has donated a collection of early electrical household appliances for display in the former power house.

A portion of the display therein is a paleontological collection owned by local resident Graham Beard.

A major addition to the archives held here are photographs from the estate of the late Senator McRae (1874-1946).

Trail Historical Society

The museum here is looking for a new home as space to store or display recent donations is extremely cramped.

Members have been assisting a group preparing a book on Trail's Heritage 1895 - 1945.

Kootenay Museum Association

The planning for and presentation of the BCHF 1997 Conference was but one of several major undertakings by this organization in Nelson's Centennial Year. On March 18 they provided flags and bunting for the re-enactment of the presentation of letters patent (1897) from Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney to Nelson City Council. They have provided displays for the Capitol Theatre, cooperated with the Opera Troupe, and produced a paperback publication 100 DAYS; 100 YEARS in conjunction with the NELSON DAILY NEWS.

Princeton & District Museum Society

This group has recruited the mayor and councillors as member of their society. This has opened many doors and gained access to city records.

Ken Pugh of the Canadian Geographical Survey worked in the Princeton Museum cataloguing the fossil collection here as part of the Canadian Inventory.

Princeton joins with Sedro Wooley, Washington, to publish and distribute tourist bulletins.

Princeton hosted the B.C. Naturalists Convention in May 1997.

District 69 Parksville

This branch of our provincial historical federation took its name from the geographical area they served, namely School District 69. With recent School district amalgamations is the number still applicable?

District 69 Historical Society has 100 members. Volunteers, plus paid staff, keep Craig Heritage Park open during the tourist

NEWS FROM BRANCHES

season. Other volunteers, led by Paddy Cardwell are accessioning artifacts and cataloguing archival material. A display window in the Community Hall holds changing exhibits and Marj Leffler puts articles on history in both local newspapers.

Kamloops Museum Association

President Wilf Schmidt drew smiles from listeners when he described the Murder Mystery at the Court House, bus trips "To Spuzzum and Back" and told of the new Fly Fishing Museum in Kamloops. This Society hosted our 1993 Conference but only recently became full fledged members of the B.C. Historical Federation. We are very pleased to have you in the "family".

Bowen Island Historians

This organization was formed in 1967. Its members have been conducting outreach tours called "People, Plants and Places." They are assembling archives and planning publications about the surprisingly diverse activities on Bowen Island.

North Shore Historical Society

This North Vancouver based group reaches out to citizens, and former residents of their side of Burrard Inlet. Their meeting places have changed several times until now they have been allowed to meet in the North Vancouver Council Chamber. Recently they have assisted the museum in acquiring considerable old fire fighting equipment. They have ten newsletters a year. Anyone with a North Vancouver story to tell should send it to: Newsletter Editor,

Robert Brown, 2327 Kilmarnock Crescent,
North Vancouver, B.C. V7J 2Z3
(Phone 604-987-2441).

North Shuswap Historical Society

Two residents of the North Shuswap attended the BCHF Conference in Nelson and brought greetings from their small group. Research is ongoing and a future edition of **North Shuswap Chronicles** should be out soon.

Burnaby Historical Society

Burnaby sent 16 delegates to the Conference, all eager, friendly people.

The president reported that recent fund raising has been directed to acquiring computers to better serve their archives.

AND HAPPY 40TH BIRTHDAY (June 25) to BURNABY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Salt Spring Island Historical

This group is sponsoring a publication of the history of their island which is a collection of

writings being edited by Charles Kahn.

Certain older buildings on the island are being honored and labeled with a plaque prepared under the supervision of Tony Farr.

East Kootenay Historical Association

This society has resumed its program of summer outings. In May they met with members of the Windermere & District Historical Society in the luxurious Fairmont Hot Springs Lodge for lunch and to hear Janet Wilder talk on the history of Fairmont. On June 20 they visited Elko.

Silvery Slokan Historical Society

President Webb Cummings participated in the bus tours of the BCHF delegates, acting as interpreter between his former worksite in Sandon and his home in New Denver. The main thrust of this organization is the stabilization and restoration of the 100 year old Bank of Montreal building which houses their museum. Excitement was aroused when recent coverings were removed revealing glorious oak panelling in the manager's office, and the embossed ceiling was cleaned and restored to the original attractive blue color. Work is ongoing and an official re-opening scheduled for August 1st.

Gulf Islands Historical Society

The 60 members of this society are scattered over Mayne, Galiano, Pender, and Saturna Islands. A new Galiano Museum Society, however, has signed up 60 people on their island. Fund raising plus heritage awareness comes at the Canada Day Jamboree and the Lion's August Festival. Several Gulf Island members attended the BCHF conference.

Chemainus Valley Historical Society

Delegates from Chemainus were Alex and Carole Galt, formerly of Nelson. They were voted "the best dressed couple" at the BCHF Awards banquet for appearing in turn-of-the-century formal attire.

Chemainus, City of Murals, has a new mural dedicated to Chinese pioneers.

Koksilah School, near Duncan, has its restored building open to the public during the summer.

Alberni District Historical Society

Volunteers within this organization concentrate on working within their extensive archives, opening this to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 am to 3 pm.

Alberni Historical held a tea to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the War Brides, and "Plywood Girls." Each War Bride introduced herself and noted where she had come from. The "Plywood Girls", with support of a photographic display, told a bit about their wartime employment in the Alberni Plywood Mill.

Alberni Historical is preparing to host the conference for the B.C. Historical Federation in the year 2000.

Atlin Historical Society

The prizewinning 1995 book **Atlin: The Last B.C. Gold Rush** has been reprinted and is selling well. The small northern society is now directing the rehabilitation of the Globe Theatre. Built in 1917 following a fire that destroyed the town core, the Theatre was identified as a Landmark Building in Atlin's 1990 Inventory and Management Plan. Another name is Pillman's Hall as it later operated as a movie hall under its owner builder Edwin Pillman. A central figure in Atlin's commercial history, Pillman, also a mortician, tended to drift off to sleep while hand cranking films. The calls of the children in the audience would quickly bring his attention back.

In 1995 the Society began a three year Globe Theatre Project with a budget of \$180,000. \$150,000 of financial support came from the Heritage Infrastructure Program with the British Columbia Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture. The Vancouver Foundation gave the Society a \$20,000 grant to assist with Interior Rehabilitation, and the Community of Atlin must raise \$10,000. Plans are for a Grand Re-Opening on August 1, 1998 in conjunction with Gold Rush Centennial Celebrations in 1998. Donations may be made by mail to: The Atlin Historical Society, Box 111, Atlin, B.C. V0W 1A0

Lantzville Historical Society

Members have been collecting information on the history of their community for several years now. This summer History Student Jon Roberts is collating and gathering material as he prepares to write the book for this organization. Each summer fundraising projects include costume competition and sales booth during Minetown Days in July.

NOTICE:

Other **News from Branches** - see page 13 for Okanagan Historical Society and Hedley Heritage Society.

Canadian Historical Association Award

Our own **Anne Yandle** was recognized by a national body. After years of work (always attempting to keep a low profile) Mrs. Yandle received the Certificate of Merit from the Canadian Historical Association for 1996 for British Columbia. We are extremely pleased to announce this. Anne extends her thanks to those who nominated her.

Stonebert Fossil Headlined

Princeton paleontological sites have been carefully documented by our Archivist Margaret Stoneberg. Recently she was interviewed by writers for **Beautiful British Columbia** magazine. In the Summer 1997 issue a picture of a fossil highlighted a short item on page 29. This described the item as ACER STONEBERGAE. When Margaret was congratulated she wryly noted that the name "Acer" (maple) is incorrect. The fossil shown is a rose leaf, so can scientifically be called ROSEA STONEBERGAE.

NB. In that same issue a picture and comments on page 16 feature Leo Rutledge, winner of the BCHF Best Article Award.

Robert Randolph Bruce Revisions

The Summer 1997 B.C. Historical News was barely off the press when a great-niece arrived in Invermere intent on doing research on her honored ancestor. She documents the birthdate of R.R. Bruce as "July 16, 1863 in Lhanbryde, Elgin." She states that Bruce's second marriage was to the widow of "R.B. Van Horne" not William Van Horne. R.B. was son of the railway magnate Sir William Van Horne.

Another caller informed us that while Mr. Bruce was Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia his niece Margaret Bruce served as his chatelaine. Margaret married Wm. Hobart Molson shortly thereafter and became mother of our new subscriber. R.R. Bruce married Hobart's sister Edith in 1932.

Ken & Mary Leeming's 60th Anniversary

CONGRATULATIONS! These two were honored at a small reception at the University of Victoria on the occasion of their wedding anniversary in June. Ken has been a supporter of BCHF and its Victoria Branch for much of his life.

Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Grand Forks

The arson attack which destroyed the Holy

Trinity Anglican Church in April left the community of Grand Forks in shock. Only two weeks before this heritage church, with the lovely stained glass windows, was open for touring in celebration of the Grand Forks centennial. The little wooden church was dedicated on June 25, 1901, but had its beginnings before that time.

Henry Irwin, Father Pat, paid his first visit to Grand Forks in 1896 and a lot was secured at that time for a church. The church building was finished by June 1898, and since that time regular services have been held there. Plans for rebuilding are in progress.

1997 BCHF Scholarship

The winner of the 1997 BCHF scholarship is Carol Grant Powell, a student at Malaspina College. Her essay, "Family Portrait Photographs: 'Putting a Face' on Mid-Nineteenth-Century Nanaimo Childhood" will be published in **B.C. Historical News** and a cheque for \$500 will be presented to her at the September meeting of the Nanaimo Historical Society. Sixteen essays were submitted for the May 15 deadline. The quality of all was high and the three judges recommended five, in addition to the winners, for publication in the **News**.

Greenwood WKP Building Saved

It was announced at the Greenwood centennial that the West Kootenay Power building in Greenwood is to become an interpretive centre for the mining and smelting heritage of the Boundary and Kootenay Region. Boundary Historical Society was one of several signatories to a letter of agreement for the transfer of the sub station to a community ownership group. This all brick building was one of six built as part of West Kootenay expansion into the Boundary in the early years of the century and is the only one still in existence. This type of architecture from B.C.'s early days is now all but lost. The agreement of transfer is one of the legacy projects of West Kootenay Power and Light Co. to mark its own centennial.

Burnaby Historical Society Scholarship

George Richard of Kelowna has been awarded the \$1000 Burnaby Historical Society Scholarship to assist him to proceed with fourth year studies at Okanagan University College. This mature student hopes to go on to teaching in the future. The **B.C. Historical News** will present his excellent research paper on Price Ellison fairly soon.

Remembering Old Friends

This spring has been a sad time for the Alberni District Historical Society. We have said farewell to three of our staunchest and most active members. All were far more than enthusiastic workers, they were friends.

Ketha Adams -

Ketha Adams passed away on March 7th, just short of her 91st birthday. She had come to Port Alberni with her family in 1927. Her father, Reverend Frank Pitts became the Principal of the local Residential School. Ketha taught at the same school and then in elementary schools in Port Alberni and Campbell River. She married Frank Adams in 1942 and settled in to raise a family here in Alberni. In the early 1950's she was instrumental in establishing the Alberni Valley's first English language courses for new immigrants and was the founding President of the Alberni Valley Citizenship Society which gave support and guidance to new immigrants and hosted welcoming ceremonies when they became citizens. Then came the most important step from our point of view. Ketha became a founding member of the Alberni District Museum and Historical Society in 1965 and was elected its first president. She also served as president of the Alberni Valley Parent Teacher's Association and was active in the founding and early operations of the Port Alberni Indian Friendship Centre. For many years she wrote the column "Katimavik" for the Alberni Valley Times. She wrote many letters to, and received replies from, world political and religious leaders. She spoke out against dogma and prejudice wherever she found it. When asked once about her ethnic background, Ketha replied, "I am a mongrel, a mixture of many things - in other words, a true Canadian".

Mark Mosher -

Mark Mosher passed away on April 29th at the age of 81. Mark will be remembered for his work on many levels. He came to the Alberni Valley as a two year old with his family. He left school early and worked in the woods to help support the family, as many young people did during the depression. In 1942 he and his wife Roslyn settled on a farm in Cherry Creek District where they raised 3 daughters. Sadly Roslyn died in 1978. For the past 18 years Mark shared his life with his loving companion and fellow historian Eileen Stevens. His strong sense of family has been passed on. The memories

are strong and good. He was a staunch member of the Communist Party and ran under that banner in a number of federal elections. He was a founding member of IWA Local 185, a member of the Longshoreman's Union and a member of the Port Alberni and District Labour Council. Mark also served on the School Board as a trustee and then as chairman for a number of years, on the Cherry Creek Community Association and Recreation Society and as a Director on the Regional District of Alberni-Clayoquot Board.

In less political ways, Mark served his community as a Boy Scout Leader, a member and president of the Alberni District Historical Society, a member and president of the Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society, he was an avid train buff and was instrumental in getting the 1912 Shay Locomotive "2-Spot" up and running. As long as his health would let him, he assisted in the train runs along the Port Alberni waterfront each summer weekend. A friend and fellow historian, George McKnight, is quoted as saying "There was nothing too small or too big for him to get involved in if he believed in it".

Helen Ford -

Helen Ford passed away on May 15 at the age of 91. She first visited the Alberni Valley in 1926 when her father, F.C. Manning, acquired an interest in Sproat Lake Sawmills and her parents and younger siblings moved to Sproat Lake. Over the years Sproat Lake remained her focus and her haven. She visited whenever she could and eventually settled at the lake. In the late '30's, Helen married G. Frank Hunt, a veteran of the First World War. Sadly this ended just 3 years later with Frank's death.

During World War Two, Helen served overseas with the Canadian Women's army Corps. She attained the rank of Major and in 1946 was made a Member of the British Empire for her exemplary service. In 1953 she married Armour Ford, a lawyer by profession who also had a distinguished military career. In 1958 they settled permanently at Sproat Lake. They dedicated themselves to making this valley an even better place. The whole community has benefited. The focus today is on Helen and her accomplishments, but they would not have been possible without the devotion and support of her husband, Armour.

Helen loved nature and became one of the four original "Tuesday Walkers" in 1963. This group still flourishes and roams the local hills and dales every Tuesday year round. As a

founding member, she put her many skills to developing policy for the Community Arts Council. She was also involved with the University Women's Club, the Sproat Lake Ratepayers Assn. and the Mt. Klitsa Garden Club. She served as a member of the School Board. As a member of the West Coast General Hospital Women's Auxiliary she cared for the library. Her love of books led her to become a member of the board of the Vancouver Island Regional Library. She also wrote a history of the Hospital Auxiliary, a history of Sproat Lake, contributed to "Place Names of the Alberni Valley", and edited "Tse Wees Tah".

Helen devoted much of her time to the Alberni District Museum and Historical Society. She served as president and was made a Lifetime Member for her efforts. Thanks to the determination of Helen, and Ketha Adams, the preservation of the artifacts and records in our area makes ours one of the best community museums and flourishing archives in our country. She must have spent hundreds of hours in the provincial archives in Victoria locating and recording material relevant to our community. Remember, this began in 1965, long before photo copiers! This sort of enthusiasm is contagious. After the museum and its artifacts and photo collections became a city responsibility, the volunteer branch continues to develop and operate the archives as the Alberni District Historical Society. In fact all these organizations that Helen was involved in, continue to flourish.

Helen and Armour had no children but youth and education were always an important part of their lives. Many people in the valley have benefited through scholarships and awards presented through the local high school, North Island College and the Community Arts Council. They also actively supported the Sea Cadets and the Friendship Centre.

In 1974, Helen and Armour donated 52 hectares (130 acres) of prime land to the province to become "Fossli Provincial Park". Fossli is a Norwegian word meaning "waterfall in a valley". This land had been given to Helen by her father and she loved it so much she wished to preserve it and share it in its unspoiled state.

Helen was a very private person and shunned the limelight. These are just some of the highlights of a very active and generous life. In 1983 she shared with Armour the city of Alberni's highest award of Citizen of the Year. Those of us who knew her will continue to enjoy the glow of her friendship. Those who did not can still be glad she was here and did what she did.

When it comes to people who are not afraid to roll up their sleeves and really make things happen, Port Alberni cannot be outdone. Ketha, Mark and Helen are prime examples of this. But they are more than that. All of them were committed to the betterment of their community and the keeping of an accurate historical record to be available for future researchers, be they relatives or fellow historians interested in the development of this truly unique area. They were our neighbours and colleagues but, most of all, they were our friends. We all benefited from our associations with them and will continue to remember and appreciate the time they spent with us.

Submitted by Valentine Hughes

Editors Note:

The good citizens from Port Alberni described above typify others who have been leaders and dedicated workers in our local historical societies. We are saddened when we see these old timers passing. At this time, however, we note that a new generation of B.C. historians is enthusiastically taking their places in our communities. Note the crop of 1997 Scholarship winners, and the various student essays which appear in our magazine.

Naomi Miller

Scholarship from Burnaby Historical Society

David Sandquist of Coquitlam received financial recognition by the Burnaby Historical Society to assist with further studies at Simon Fraser University. This young man is majoring in English and Canadian History, hoping to become a teacher at the high school level at the conclusion of his studies.

OPF Creative Services

A cemetery symposium took place in June in New Westminster, presented by "Our Forgotten Past" (OPF Creative Services; Archie Miller). The date for the next symposium has not been set yet but if you wish to be placed on a mailing list for the future contact: Archie Miller, Curator of the City of New Westminster, at 302 Royal Avenue, New Westminster, B.C. V3L 1H7; phone (604) 527-4639 or 527-4640; fax (604) 527-4641; email at vfrancis@city.new-westminster.bc.ca

BOOKSHELF

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

Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930. Rolf Knight. Vancouver: New Star Books, 1996. 397 pp. \$24.00

Ignoring the difficulties faced by all nineteenth-century prairie farmers, Robert Bell, one of Canada's most prominent geologists and scientists, argued before a Senate Select Committee in 1887 that for "an Indian to interfere with the ways of the Great Spirit by growing plants, seems something they cannot comprehend – they cannot do it – they will not grow potatoes." These comments reflect the Victorian Canadian belief that natives were inherently unable to embrace a settled, agrarian lifestyle, or to make the transition to industrial capitalism. Rolf Knight's *Indians at Work*, which has been extensively updated since it was first issued in 1978, repudiates this myth. Drawing largely upon anecdotal evidence, this self-styled 'informal history' argues that British Columbian natives had "a long history as wage workers and as independent producers within a broader economy", and that they were not economically marginalized by the influx of Euro-American settlers.

It was not only during the Victorian era that natives were seen as unlikely contributors to a 'modern' wage economy. Robin Fisher, in his award-winning book *Contact and Conflict* (originally published in 1977), argues that after the 1858 gold rush, natives became increasingly irrelevant and even obstacles to the designs of Euro-American settlers. Instead of the economic co-operation that had been crucial during the fur trade era, relations between natives and non-natives increasingly became marked by economic rivalry. Knight stridently rejects this view. Resource industries were central to the British Columbia economy and natives were active participants in the wage labour opportunities that resulted. Originally from Alert Bay, Charles Nowell travelled from Prince Rupert to work in the commercial fishery on the Fraser River; later Nowell landed a job as a stoker in a North Vancouver sawmill, worked as a commercial sealer, 'performed' at the 1904 St. Louis World Fair, and acted as a labour recruiter for a cannery. Others led a lifestyle that was less transient, but still dependent in large part upon wage labour: Ed Sparrow – who seems to have spent most of his life between Musqueam and Chilliwack – worked as a commercial fisherman, cannery worker, logger, farmer, and as an employee of the city of Chilliwack. His wife Rose also held a variety of wage labour jobs, including the knitting of Cowichan sweaters for sale to Vancouver stores. Like other workers, natives supported their interests through job action, and went on strike along side non-native workers during the Skeena and Fraser River strikes that marked the pre-Great War era. In addition, like other work-

ers (including some Safeway clerks in Alberta in 1997), some natives went back 'early' and helped to break work stoppages such as the 1913 Fraser River strike. Knight's central point is, of course, that native workers responded in much the same way as other wage earners.

The final section of *Indians at Work* examines Knight's thesis within the broader Canadian context. Knight concludes that while there was considerable difference in native wage labour across Canada, the experience of British Columbia was not unique. Instead, the Mohawk at Tyendenaga had, since the 1790s, maintained mixed farms, built local sawmills and grist mills, and, in general, established an economy not much different than that of the Euro-American settlers around them. Similarly, among other examples, the Micmac had a long tradition of commercial whaling along the Atlantic coast, and natives in Central Canada worked in some resource industries in the nineteenth century. Knight does acknowledge regional variation, however, noting that native wage labour was less prominent in the prairies where the economy of the family farm did not have much need or ability to pay for wage labour, and where the farmers themselves provided a seasonal surplus of labour.

Indians at Work is a lively and provocative work. Some will disagree with Knight's unwavering emphasis upon natives as workers and the corresponding lack of attention he gives to issues of race and ethnicity. Knight concludes his study in 1930 arguing that "the Great Depression wrote finis to much local and small-scale enterprise that had developed over the previous generations". Yet, as he makes clear, natives had already retreated from cannery work – a principal employer of native wage workers – and were largely replaced by Japanese-Canadian labourers. Even this single trend demands further analysis concerning both issues of race and the centrality of the Depression in hindering native wage labour. As Knight also notes, for example, it was during the 1930s that Rose Sparrow took to knitting Cowichan sweaters for sale in Vancouver. Although it is unfortunate that the photographs present in the first edition are not replicated in the second, Professor Knight and New Star Books are to be commended for once again making available this readable and affordable volume.

Brian Gobbett,

Brian is a graduate student at the University of Alberta

Kimsquit Chronicles. James Sirois. Hagensborg, Skookum Press, 1996. 161 p., illus. \$40.00 Box 310, Hagensborg, BC, V0T 1H0

Books about the central coast of British Columbia are few indeed. *Kimsquit Chronicles* is one of the few, truly a product of the country, published at Hagensborg in the Bella Coola valley and written by James Sirois who was born at Ocean Falls and now lives at Kimsquit at the head of Dean Channel. Sirois wrote the book to show that Kimsquit's history makes the place more than "just another dot on the wilderness map."

Kimsquit Chronicles is an informal narration of historical events along Dean and Burke Channels and their hinterland, beginning with Captain George Vancouver's exploration in 1793. The author neglected to mention another explorer in the area in 1793, namely Alexander Mackenzie, an astounding oversight considering the prominence of Mackenzie's Rock in Dean Channel just southwest of Kimsquit. Sirois admits in his introduction that he is not a historian.

The value of *Kimsquit Chronicles* lies in its excellent photographs, its unique history of a pioneer logging family on the central coast, and its detailed description of the development of the sport fish guiding industry on the Dean River.

The author is the grandson of Doc Gildersleeve, a pioneer logger on the central coast from 1916 to 1954, who followed the evolution of logging technology from handlogging to A-frame steamboats to railway logging and finally to truck logging. The logging history is largely confined to the Gildersleeve family and their relatives, the Owens family, and written in the style of a family memoir. An amusing detail is Doc Gildersleeve's moniker evidently assumed when the logger was the attending "physician" at the birth of his children at his isolated logging camps.

Because Robert Draney built Kimsquit Cannery in 1901 and hired Arthur Douglas, *Kimsquit Chronicles* has some of its best photographs. Douglas photographed whites and Indians, but apparently not Chinese or Japanese. Manitou Cannery was built across the bay from Kimsquit Cannery in 1907. Within a couple of decades the sockeye salmon run was depleted, and the canneries closed.

The decline of the fishery paralleled the decline of the Kimsquit Indians, a branch of the Bella Coola Indians. In 1877 the Royal Navy shelled the Kimsquit village and destroyed it - a mistake, it was later admitted. Disease, social conflict, and the decline of the fishery eventually finished the Kimsquit people as an independent group. Only 24 remained in the 1920's, and they moved to Bella Coola. One of them, Margaret Siwallace, received an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from the University of British Columbia in 1985.

The second half of *Kimsquit Chronicles* relates in detail the development of sport fish guid-

ing on the Dean River, starting from scratch in 1954.

The second half of *Kimsquit Chronicles* relates in detail the development of sport fish guiding on the Dean River, starting from scratch in 1954.

The book needed a better editor, preferably one familiar with Canadian orthography and usage. I prefer to not have to read about railroads and Indian reservations in Canadian publications. (They are railways and Indian reserves.) There are quite a few misspellings of proper nouns, and a few errors in geography.

Because I grew up at Bella Coola, I was intrigued by the stories behind the names I knew as a child. The detailed first-hand information about the central coast and the marvellous photographs make *Kimsquit Chronicles* a book I will keep.

Leslie Kopas,

Leslie Kopas is the author of No Path but My Own: Horseback Adventures in the Chilcotin and the Rockies.

Bright Seas, Pioneer Spirits; the Sunshine Coast. Betty C. Keller and Rosella M. Leslie. Victoria, Horsdal & Schubart. 232 p., illus. \$14.95

As I mentioned in an earlier review of Helen Dawe's *Sechelt*, I have a long term interest in and numerous connections with the Sunshine Coast, that part of the lower coast that extends from Howe Sound to Jervis Inlet. As a result, I greedily search for and devour every publication that appears, which has anything to do with the area. Having already enjoyed a number of Betty Keller's books on various themes, I was looking forward to settling in for a good read of *Bright Seas, Pioneer Spirits; the Sunshine Coast* which she and Rosella Leslie had recently co-written. I was not disappointed, and would recommend this little volume to anyone who would be interested in a readable summary history of the Sechelt area. However, it also provides a useful picture of the general process of development that occurred on the coast, both before and following the arrival of the Europeans, and is useful in comparing the experience on the Sechelt Peninsula with that in other coastal communities. I also felt the book provided a very useful outline of the experience of a local Coast Salish nation, the Sechelt or Shishalh, who occupied the area for thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans, and who having then experienced long years of oppression, once again occupy an important place in the community.

Bright Seas begins with a quick glimpse of Captain Vancouver's first impressions of the coast, a "dreary and inhospitable country", a statement that caught my attention, since it was at such odds with my own more positive view

of the "sunshine coast", gathered over many summers, but also over many windy and wet fall and winter visits. If the authors had intended Vancouver's bald, depressing summary to grab my attention, it did!

The introduction clearly places the Sechelt peninsula in its rugged coastal setting, each community isolated by, yet also dependent upon, the close coastal mountains, deep inlets and the periodically stormy Strait of Georgia. Reflecting the profound role that the coastal environment has played on human settlement on the peninsula, the authors begin their study by reviewing the forces of geology, ice-sheets and water that shaped the area, and gave birth to the rich forest and flora cover that occupied it.

An interesting chapter then outlines the late 18th century surveys by the Spanish and British, which produced the first modern charts and European names for features on the coast, many of which of course already had aboriginal names.

The most interesting chapter for me, however, addressed the sad experience of native people after the arrival of Europeans in the late 18th century. For centuries, the aboriginal people of the region had thrived in the mild environment, with its gentle climate, rich bounty of fish, deer, bear, berries and other food, as well as easily accessible sources of wood for canoes, clothing, utensils, habitations etc. The arrival of Europeans brought disease and death, and strangers who occupied their lands, ancient fishing, trapping and even burial sites. This invasion also brought people who took away their forests and fisheries, usually with little or no compensation, or even a recognition that these ancient communities had any claims. These are events that, having occurred across British Columbia, we have all heard of before; while that knowledge does not diminish the destruction that occurred, it was enlightening for me personally to learn more of the specific experience of the Shishalh people. Most moving for me was their account of the arrival of the Oblate Fathers in the latter half of the 19th century. This process, along with the creation of the Indian reserve system by the government, forced most of the Shishalh to abandon their ancient home sites and gather in a new community at Sechelt that was dominated by the Oblate Order. In that new environment, they were cut off more and more from their traditional culture, and forced to live on the impoverished periphery of the mainstream white society. Perhaps the most graphic statement summarizing the appalling system that was visited upon the Shishalh was made by Father Paul Durieu, who founded a very rigid system of control over them, which the authors recorded:

According to Bishop Bunoiz (in *Etudes Oblats*), on one return visit, Durieu called a meeting and learned from the watchmen that the young men of the village had bought a football and were trying to purchase uniforms so they could play the Nanaimos. Durieu forbade

the game and confiscated the football.

"You are poor, ignorant Indians," he told them. "You think only of playing, of squandering your money and time. The right tool for people like you is the pick, the shovel, the axe, the saw." (*Bright Seas*, p. 31)

This was not the happy summer community that I experienced, but the brutal reality for decades for aboriginal children and their families on the Sunshine Coast, and Keller and Leslie's account may, in its small way, help raise awareness among some residents of that terrible legacy. At the same time, the authors also look, if only briefly at the more recent pioneering accomplishments of the Shishalh people in achieving self government, undertaking a determined, well planned campaign of land claims, and in the diversification of the economic base of their nation.

As I noted previously, the book also provides an overview of the process of white settlement, shipping and other transportation links, and the development of the logging, fishing, canning, quarrying, mining and tourism industries on the Sunshine Coast. The introduction to the experience of the natives on the Sechelt Peninsula caught my attention the most; on the other hand, the accounts of the history of the various resource industries, as well as the story of the improvement in transportation services, both within the area and with Vancouver, were also well worth the read.

My only criticisms were minor. While I was pleased that the authors chose to include a single map of the entire region, I found it far too small to be of much use. I believe a few smaller maps, on the community of Shishalh itself, the reserves, the logging camps and booming grounds and other details would have enhanced some chapters, and made them more useful to the uninitiated. I also believe that some of the black and white photos were extremely "muddy", and lacking in detail, a pity in a book on a theme where the visual document could be such an important contributor to the story.

William McKee,

After living in Ottawa for four years and working as B.C. historian at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Bill McKee has just returned to British Columbia.

The Sunshine Coast; from Gibsons to Powell River. Howard White. Madeira Park, Harbour Publishing, 1997. 127 p., illus. \$29.95

One wonders why a book such as this on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia has been so long in coming. I can only conclude that residents of the area now realize the cat is out of the bag in regards to this most favoured part of our West Coast, so there is, at present, nothing to lose in spelling out its enchantment.

Snippets of everything are included: notes on

native Indian history, history since white people arrived, variance of weather patterns, rainfall and prevailing winds. Countless entertaining anecdotes chronicling the eccentricities of inhabitants - a bit of hyperbole in regards to these people? As one who knows the area, I do not think so. And while on the subject of the inhabitants, a major theme throughout the book is the eccentricity of the people. Yet, while life styles are spelled out throughout, even the economics of the region are not forgotten.

The introduction gives an overall view of the Sunshine Coast, and orients the reader, but the vast area of this coast itself has been divided into four separate sections. Many of the uninitiated might think these separate distinctions redundant, but in truth the coastal terrain dictates many aspects of Sunshine Coast life even today. It has imposed countless subtle variances in communities, which began early-on when access to other settlements was by boat only. Even today dealing with inlets and tides and ferries is a major factor of life. You cannot ignore Jervis Inlet, and Sechelt Inlet, and who could ignore an area called Desolation Sound?

Part One encompasses the Gibsons area, part Two the Sechelt area, part Three Pender Harbour, part Four the northernmost section, Powell River.

Whatever your particular interest is, you will likely find an answer in these pages. Having grown up in Lang Bay, in the Powell River area, I found it interesting to compare the population growth in that area - from nil when Powell River was founded in 1908, to 20,000 today.

Howard White arrived on the Sunshine Coast in 1950, more than half a century after white settlers first came, but he has done a commendable job of chronicling the early history, and for good measure has thrown in the odd fact which titillates. For example, I was unaware that James Shaver Woodsworth, the founder of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, was at one time a Methodist minister at Gibsons.

I have a sense this is but the first volume on the Sunshine Coast's history. Others must surely follow on this unique part of our province.

The photographs alone are worth the price of the book. They are beautiful, exceptional, capturing all the charm of the region. A whimsical map of the Sunshine Coast covers the first two pages of the book, and a factual map covers a similar space at the back. Both are excellent guides as one cruises through the pages.

I wonder how many more residents will this book bring to the hallowed shores of the Sunshine Coast. As I read I could almost hear belongings being flung into boxes, suitcases, backpacks, in other parts of Canada, indeed in the world, hear maps of British Columbia rustling, picture the information lines of B.C. ferries jammed, hear engines being revved up in preparation to the trek to Pender Harbour or Roberts Creek. Not to mention Lund, the end of the

road for the longest road in the world, which reaches from Terra del Fuego to Lund. The book contains a picture of the Lund residents' view of this. On the sign Highway 101 "End of the Road" has been crossed out and "End" replaces with "Start". Typical Sunshine Coast viewpoint!

Kelsey McLeod,

Kelsey McLeod is a member of the Vancouver Historical Society.

A Most Unusual Colony; Vancouver Island: 1849-1860. Maureen Duffus.

Victoria, The Author, 1997. 164 p., illus. \$18.95 (Available from Sandhill Book Marketing, #99 - 1270 Ellis St., Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 1Z4)

This early history of Vancouver Island from the arrival of Scottish immigrants in 1849 to the demolition of Fort Victoria buildings in 1860 draws on an impressive range of research materials including letters, diaries, journals, Hudson's Bay Co. records, Vancouver Island colonial records, and published histories. It tells the story of two Scottish female inhabitants. One is the newly wed bride of James Yates, whose recollections are fictionalized letters she might have sent back to her family in Scotland. The other side of the story comes from a young girl, Kate Dalglish, whose father answered the HBC's appeal for settlers to the area. Her recollections too, are fictional and are supposedly based upon her later reading of Mary Yates' letters.

Reminiscences by and about women, though increasing, are still rare on the historical landscape. This book goes a long way toward portraying the early B.C. pioneering experience of women and children, as well as the domestic side of entire families.

From Edinburgh through London, and by sea to Vancouver Island, writer Maureen Duffus tells the story of how the travellers adapt to more than six months at sea. The heartrending account of the settlers putting on their best clothes in anticipation of arrival in the colony, "I felt prepared to face all the company officers who would come to welcome us" Mary Yates writes, and their anticlimactic welcome is grim foreboding of the primitive circumstances the settlers would face in the months and years to come, beginning on the very first day. Mary Yates calls Fort Victoria an "ugly unfinished collection of wooden structures enclosed by a palisade of high pickets" adding that they were forced to "share space with no dividing walls in the upper storey of one of the barracks-like buildings." Despite this rudimentary lodging, however, the couple was forced to return to the ship for their first night because there were no beds. Such is the substance of this book, with enlightening details about coping with a trading post unequipped for family life, the power hungry machinations of the Hudson's Bay Co., and Governor James Douglas' attempts to keep the settlers' lives un-

der close control.

The reader learns about the women's attempts to bring light and beauty into the cycle of birth and death at the fort and beyond. Drawing on each other's knowledge and what precious items they had brought from Scotland, they worked to accommodate growing bodies and changing fashions and provide their families with some semblance of society and education. The ongoing responsibilities to tend the sick and suffer the trauma of dangerous homebirths, deaths, and yet another pregnancy fill the days and provide readers with the less glamorous side of history - no less heroic than the work and decisions going on beyond hearth and home, but certainly less publicly acknowledged.

A Most Unusual Colony is a vibrant and enlightening read with interesting images and footnotes to provide background in just the right amount. A word of caution to the reader, however. The fictional aspect of Kate Dalglish's recollections is brought into question with the placement of a fake frontispiece just inside the cover of the book claiming that they were first published in Edinburgh in 1902. This is fictitious, as is the person whose recollections it claims to present. The frontispiece was intended to be an interesting play on material, but ends up being an unfortunate distraction to the story. Otherwise, the author has done an exceptional job of portraying the life and times of early colonial women, ensconced in the political and economic history of Vancouver Island's earliest days.

Donna Jean MacKinnon,

Donna Jean MacKinnon is President of the Vancouver Historical Society

O-Bon in Chimunesu, Catherine Lang. Arsenal Pulp Press, 1996. 287 pp. Glossary, index, photographs. \$18.95

Catherine Lang's portrayal of a Japanese-Canadian community has won the Hubert Evans Prize for Non-fiction, and the choice is likely to be widely applauded. In 1991, during o-bon, the Buddhist festival for the dead, a reunion occurred in "Chimunesu", the town of Chemainus on Vancouver Island. Nearly fifty years before, these people had been forcibly removed from their homes, separated from their families, and sent to internment camps far from the coast. Lang recounts the story of those terrible times through the memories of individual members of the community, once nearly a third of the town's population.

Perhaps inadvertently, Lang shows not only the suffering of the Japanese-Canadians, but also the reasons why these innocent people were feared by their neighbours. Ties to the Japanese homeland were strong; many had been born in Japan, went to Japan to find a spouse, returned to Japan to die. They came to Canada for economic reasons, and more often than not were disappointed. As late as 1938, a teenager might be sent "home" to Japan; some were trapped

there for the duration. Canadians of English descent were willing to fight for an "Old Country" further away in space and time than Japan; wasn't it natural to think that Canadians of Japanese descent might want to fight for Japan? Even if they didn't want to help Japan, would their relatives in Japan be hostages? Such are the horrors of war. As Takayoshi Kawahara remarks, "Times change, and war is war. It's as simple as that."

Lang is least successful when she attempts to fill in the blanks in her story with fictional details, especially with thoughts and conversations she could not possibly have known. Occasional anachronisms jar, as when a young man in the mid 1940's is made to think, "No way is he going to build roads in this cold."

Most of the narratives need no embellishment. My favourite is the story of Shunichi the fisherman: a vivid account of the island fisheries before the war and the forced abandonment of a way of life, a poignant attempt to relocate to postwar occupied Japan, and a return to a home and career in central Canada. You may enjoy the scene in which Chiyo and Kaname dance Canadian style at the July 1st celebrations, 1941, a step forward soon to be checked by the nightmare that would last for years.

The nightmare disturbs all the more for its setting in quaint little Chemainus, now more famous for its murals than for its sawmills, salmon and desecrated graves.

Phyllis Reeve,

*Phyllis Reeve has recently edited
A Gabriola Tribute to Malcolm Lowry.*

Cactus in Your Shorts. George Matheson. Lumby, Kettle Valley Publishing Inc., 1996. G. Matheson, RR2, Site 2, Comp 19, Lumby, B.C. VOE 2G0 \$22.00

George Matheson's informal history of Osoyoos, *Cactus in Your Shorts*, does a superb job of rendering the character of the community while frustrating readers looking for hard facts. Matheson uses a storytelling format, and the reader is never certain when the documented episodes end and the fabrication begins. Some of his tales are rooted in archival records, some are depicted through dialogues he has created with historic figures, and some are seemingly authentic stories that end with a "gotcha" punchline. These tales flow in a meandering style, not organized by any particular chronology.

All this seems in keeping with the author's philosophy of sharing history through anecdotes. "I am very fond of history," Matheson writes in his biographical notes, "but unlike a lot of historians, I am not overly interested in belabouring my readers with exact dates and statistical minutiae. If I pick up an antique hammer or pickaxe, I don't really care exactly where it was forged . . . my imagination immediately begins to for-

mulate mental images of the people who handled the tool . . . Who were they? Farmers, loggers, Episcopalian ministers, or pickaxe murderers? It generally drives the purists nuts, but I am really happy with my sense of history."

Cactus in Your Shorts reads more like a travel book than a traditional history in that Matheson creates a strong sense of place. Readers learn that Osoyoos is the only desert valley in Canada, an area that had enough fertile soil, water, and abundant summer heat to make it ideal for ranching and for growing fruit and vegetables. Its position between mountain ranges may also have contributed to its population growth. According to one of Matheson's interviewees, "I suspect a lot of people stayed in Osoyoos because of outright fear of any more mountain driving . . . I'm sure that a lot of family cars simply died after the long mountain trek; the final killer was the last few miles down Anarchist Mountain." Its proximity to the U.S. border has produced entertaining community lore related to the American Indian wars, cattle drives and bootlegging.

The book is strongest when talking about events unique to the history of Osoyoos. Many of the anecdotes and jokes, however, seem interchangeable with tales from any number of Canadian communities. The runaway-wagon-hits-the-outhouse type of stories speak of rural experience, but don't tell the reader anything unique about what it was like living in Osoyoos. Fortunately these are balanced by descriptions that give a graphic idea of what it felt like to grow up in this particular town. Another interviewee recalled that "In the so-called good old days they let cherry trees grow to maybe thirty, forty feet high, took me a long time to get used to those tall ladders. Real scary. What was even worse was picking peaches. You'd be up there in those trees in one hundred degree heat, covered in that lousy peach-fuzz. Made you itch so bad sometimes I thought I'd go crazy. Used to carry a bucket of water with me all the time, to douse myself to cool off and stop the itching."

The authors of small town histories must work with the constraint of having a small cast of characters. Matheson has transformed this drawback into a strength, often "revisiting" historical personalities he has introduced earlier when some story about them will illustrate his current point. The book has the feel of a reunion attended by Osoyoosans living and dead.

Readers who value politically sensitive vocabulary will need to tranquilize themselves before attempting to read this book. Although Matheson's colourful language undoubtedly depicts the speech habits of Osoyoos residents, it is uncomfortable to see derogatory language in print. Some of the renditions of aboriginal speech in Matheson's imagined dialogues are embarrassing and language relating to ethnic designations should have had much firmer editing.

Surprisingly for a small town history, there are no photographs. The biographical sketch of the illustrator, Doug Strand, notes that most of the archival photographic material on Osoyoos is portraiture and old buildings. Not wanting to slow the pace of the book with these static images, Strand has produced drawings that convey the energy of daily life in the town.

Cactus in Your Shorts is a very expressive guidebook to the personalities and geography that have produced Osoyoos. Matheson's unorthodox historical style accomplishes his purpose in portraying how the unique character of this town developed.

Susan Stacey

Ladner's Landing of Yesteryear: Two Heritage Walks in the Historic Village. Gwen Szychter. Ladner, Gwen Szychter, 1996. Gwen Szychter, 5122 - 44th Ave. Delta, B.C. V4K 1C3 \$8.95

Ladner's Landing of Yesteryear: Two Heritage Walks in the Historic Village is a guidebook of a different kind. It is richly illustrated with photographs of old buildings because author Gwen Szychter, an historian who has served on the Delta Heritage Advisory Committee, has chosen the historical builtform of Ladner as her subject.

Inspired by Michael Kluckner and John Atkin's *Heritage Walks Around Vancouver*, Szychter has organized two easily followed walks that take readers through the early business and residential areas of Ladner, pointing out buildings with an interesting past and explaining what is known of their history. The centerfold is a map, clearly laying out the walks and labelling the buildings.

The 68 page volume is clearly and simply written, and is intended as the first in a series of user-friendly books on Delta's heritage. No footnotes intrude on the text, but the author's extensive sources are detailed at the end of the book for those who would like to continue the research.

Ladner's Landing of Yesteryear should prove valuable both as a reference for Delta history and as a guidebook for a tourist outing.

Susan Stacey,

Susan Stacey is co-author of Salmonopolis, The Steveston Story

Also Noted:

Beyond Ladner's Landing; two heritage walks south of the original village.

Gwen Szychter. Delta, The Author, 1997. 38 p., illus., maps. &\$8.95

Sequel to her *Ladner's Landing of Yesteryear*.

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