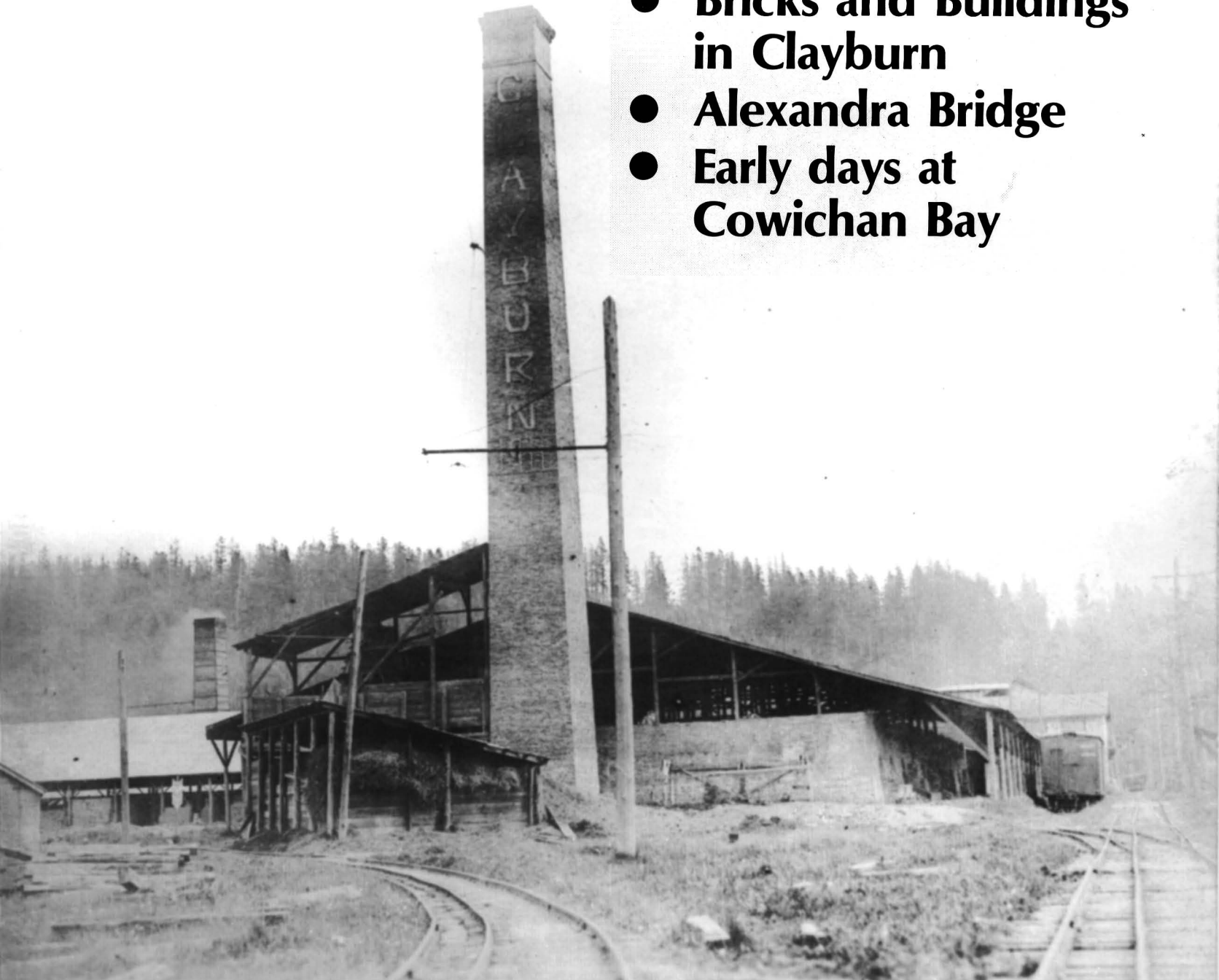


# BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL NEWS

VOLUME 16, NO. 1  
Fall 1982

- Bricks and Buildings in Clayburn
- Alexandra Bridge
- Early days at Cowichan Bay

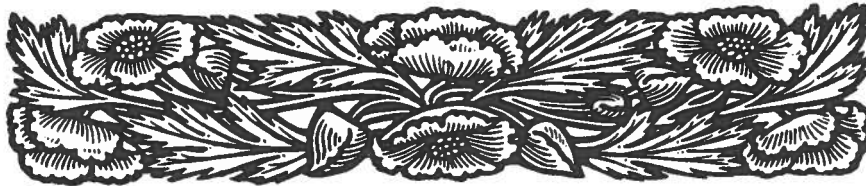


## On the cover ...

The continuous kiln of the Clayburn Brick Works was part of J.B. Millar's plant expansion in 1911. Such a kiln consists of several inter-connected chambers which allow the heat produced in one section to pass through all of the others before going up the chimney. This chimney, the highest structure in Clayburn, was a landmark visible for many miles until it was pulled down in the 1930s. On its face is written "Clayburn 1911" in raised, buff coloured brick.

PHOTOGRAPH courtesy Mrs. Lillian Ball Wilkinson

... story starts on page six.



## MEMBER SOCIETIES



Member societies and their secretaries are responsible for keeping their addresses up-to-date. Please enclose a telephone number for an officer if possible also.



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# BRITISH COLUMBIA

# HISTORICAL NEWS

Fall 1982  
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# To the Editor

The Editor:

We were pleased to receive another attractive issue of *B.C. Historical News*. We have a suggestion to make — that the list of member societies be expanded to include the place, date, and time of meetings for the benefit of people travelling around the province who might like to look in on a meeting of a fellow society.

Miss Dorothy Shields  
Vancouver Historical Society



(Editor's Note: here are two member societies we know information for.)

Vancouver:  
4th Wed. of every month 8 p.m.  
Auditorium of the Vancouver Museum  
1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver  
No meetings in December or from June to August.

Burnaby:  
2nd Wed. except July & August  
Studio 2, James Cowan Centre  
Burnaby, B.C.



## NEXT ISSUE

Deadline for submissions for the Spring issue of the **NEWS** is December 1, 1982. Please type double spaced if possible. Mail to the Editor, *B.C. Historical News*, P.O. Box 1738, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y3.

## Nominations Sought for Awards

The Regional History Committee of the Canadian Historical Association wishes to announce that it is soliciting nominations for its 'Certificate of Merit' awards. These annual awards are given for meritorious publications or for exceptional contributions by individuals or organizations to regional or local history. Nominations should be sent to Professor Robin Fisher, Department of History, Stephen Leacock Building, McGill University, 855 Sherbrooke Street W., Montreal, P.Q. H3A 2J7.

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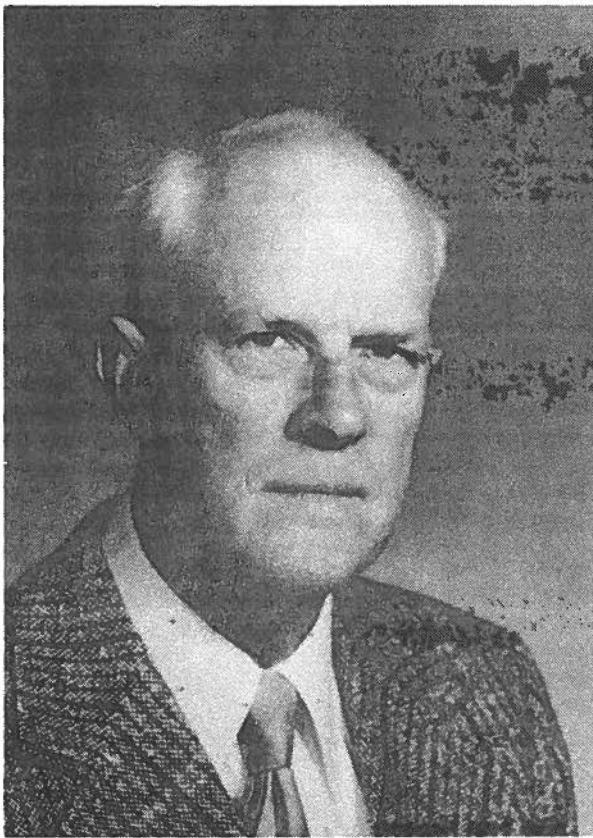
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## J. Rhys Richardson

(Editor's Note: Rhys is in his second term as treasurer of the British Columbia Historical Association)

The third son of teacher parents I was born in Wanganui, New Zealand, in 1910. Having completed secondary school I began teacher training in 1928 and then went 'Home' to England with my parents in 1929. There, I earned my B.Sc(Econ) degree at the London School of Economics and completed teacher training at the Institute of Education, University of London. I taught in Welwyn Garden City, Herts. until December, 1937.

I left England on January 1, 1938, for Singapore as Principal of a Government Aided, English Presbyterian Mission School, teaching in English. There, I met my wife, Kathleen who was born in 'old' Alberni, Vancouver Island. We were away from Singapore on furlough in New Zealand, when World War II began in the Pacific. In New Zealand, I taught school in Dunedin; served as an Education Officer, R.N.Z.A.F. under the Empire Air Training Scheme; taught in Auckland; and had a year's study at Knox Theological College, Dunedin. I returned to Singapore in February, 1946 (Kathleen and our children joined me in July) to resume my school duties there.

Our second furlough fell due near the end of 1949 and we came to Canada to visit Kathleen's family. The imposition of the sterling-dollar exchange control persuaded us to remain in Canada and I was accepted as a teacher by the Vancouver School Board as from January, 1950. I taught a variety of subjects at Carleton, John Oliver, Magee, and Lord Byng Schools, but Social Studies, especially Geography, was my main interest.

Of our five children two were born in Singapore, two in Dunedin, and one in Vancouver. The eldest, who has two children, lives in Wellington, N.Z.; the next, with two children, is in Greater Vancouver; our one boy with two children lives just north of Nanaimo, and the fourth and fifth live in Victoria.

I achieved retirement in 1975, joined the Vancouver Historical Society, and somehow, unexpectedly, found myself nominated as Association Treasurer in 1981. As a teacher of the old school I believe that any organization should be carried on "decently and in good order" with business affairs run accurately and kept up-to-date. I am trying to carry out that belief.



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John D. Adams

# Bricks and Buildings

## Clayburn Company and Its Village

Two noteworthy aspects of British Columbia's industrial and architectural history are connected in the early years of the Clayburn Company and the initial development and later evolution of Clayburn village. The Clayburn Company, or the Vancouver Fireclay Company as it was known initially from 1905 to 1909, was in the business of manufacturing bricks and other heavy clay products. It was a relative latecomer in the province's brick industry because bricks had been made on rare occasions by the Hudson's Bay Company during the 1840's and 1850's and from 1859 onwards on a regular basis in commercial brickyards, mainly in Victoria and the Fraser Valley. In spite of its late start, however, the Clayburn Company soon was the leading brick manufacturer in British Columbia.

The Clayburn Company had one major advantage over its established competitors. It had access to excellent deposits of refractory clay which could be used for making buff-coloured fire bricks, as well as access to deposits of blue-gray silt clay for making red common bricks. As described in 1910 by Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele of the Canadian Department of Mines, the clays were "one of the most interesting series of clay deposits in the Western Provinces ..."<sup>1</sup> The clays were the most influential factors in the company's early successes and its continuing existence until the present day.

Until 1905 the other brick yards in British Columbia had produced only red common building bricks. Fire bricks, necessary in the construction of boilers, fireplaces, stoves, blast furnaces, and other high-heat uses had been imported, primarily from Scotland and the United States.

Knowing the monetary rewards to be earned

from a domestic fire brick industry, John Charles "Charlie" Maclure devoted time in the early years of the twentieth century to searching specifically for fireclay in the vicinity of his boyhood home, Hazelbrae, overlooking Matsqui Prairie, between Abbotsford and the Fraser River.<sup>2</sup> His diligence paid off when he tested a seam of clay on Sumas Mountain in 1905.<sup>3</sup>

Within a short time after his discovery Maclure was instrumental in assembling clay-bearing properties on Sumas Mountain and at a location at the base of the mountain where a plant could be built, and in forming a joint stock company.

The fireclay on Sumas Mountain was accessible mainly by underground mining. The area where the mines were located became known as Straiton after the family of Thomas Straiton, a farmer of the area. Here the newly-formed company built a bunkhouse for some of the miners.

From Straiton the clay was transported about three and a half miles down Sumas Mountain's western slope along a narrow gauge steam railway. Deep ravines required high trestles on part of the route which had an average grade of about three per cent.

Clayburn village was the terminus of the narrow gauge railway. Its location was selected by Maclure on farmland that was high enough above Matsqui Prairie to escape the annual inundations of the Fraser River. From this agricultural base rose a community with a dual image: the smokey, noisy and dusty brick plant on the north and what one observer from England described in 1920 as a "quaint English village" with neat gardens on the south.

The plant buildings were mostly of red brick. Dominating the site were raised trestles upon



**Part of the Brick Works at Clayburn,  
circa 1912-15**

The trestle at the right brought the railway cars filled with clay from the mines directly into the covered bunkers at the plant. The tall wooden structure to the left of the trestles is the mill where the clay was ground up. Once the clay had been moulded or pressed into bricks they would be burned in kilns, some of which are indicated by the tall chimneys.

Photograph courtesy Provincial Archives, 74816(b)

which the rail cars filled with clay entered the bunker. Rising above the rooftops were the numerous smokestacks of the kilns from which the black smoke of burning wet slab wood or coal often belched forth obscuring the view of the mountains to the north of the Fraser River.

The residential part of the village was arranged in a grid, in contrast to the plant which appeared to be laid out in a haphazard manner. Clayburn Road running east and west was the principal thoroughfare into and through the village. From 1906 to 1911 permanent brick houses were built along it, directly across the street from the plant. The largest house was occupied by the Plant Manager; the second largest by the company's accountant; and a series of five small brick veneered bungalows were built for the foremen.

Armstrong Road ran south of Clayburn Road, parallel to it. Two styles of wooden houses, locally referred to by the descriptive names of "white houses" and "red shacks", were built after 1911 along this road for the new and lower-ranking employees. All houses at first were company-owned and in 1909 rented for from three to five dollars.<sup>5</sup>

After 1911 the company began developing the "new subdivision" on the block west of the existing houses by making lots available for

employees to buy, on a limited basis. Here properties facing the Clayburn Road were priced as high as \$350; those facing Armstrong Road were as low as \$200.<sup>6</sup>

Only two brick non-residential buildings were ever built in Clayburn village. In 1911 a two storey brick veneer store was built for the Cooper, Seldon Company in the centre of the townsite on the Clayburn Road at Wright Road. A brick Presbyterian church, the only known double-walled brick structure in the community, was opened in 1912.

Samuel Maclure, the well-known architect, was Charlie Maclure's oldest brother. In 1868 as a boy of eight he had moved to Hazelbrae with his parents and he always maintained a close bond with that place and with his family. A stylistic analysis of the first seven brick residences built in Clayburn between 1906 and 1909 points to his influence in their design.

Bell-cast roofs, fenestration, shingle work, use of texture, and interior design, including fireplaces, hallways and lighting fixtures strongly suggest his work. His penchant for utilizing vistas is also revealed in the arrangement of the houses along Clayburn Road, with the shorter houses to the west and the taller ones to the east, to take full advantage of the vista provided by the flank of

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Sumas Mountain which rises behind them when viewed from the west.

To date only one written reference has been found corroborating Samuel Maclure's involvement in the design of Clayburn's houses. That is part of an unpublished note written by the late Connie Cruikshank, a Central Fraser Valley historian, who knew the Maclure family well and wrote many items about them. "Sam designed homes for the office staff," she wrote cryptically, but did not divulge her source, although the article appears to have been based on interviews with Maclure family members.<sup>7</sup>

In 1909 the Vancouver Fireclay Company was reorganized and changed its name to the

Clayburn Company Limited. At this time Charlie Maclure seems to have had a falling out with the company and ceased being its secretary and *de facto* plant manager. To replace him John Brown Millar was brought from the Don Valley Brick Works in Toronto.

Under Millar's direction from 1909 until about 1911 the plant expanded and modernized, including the electrification of machinery and the narrow gauge railway. Until 1909 the Columbia Clay Company's plant on Anvil Island with a capacity of 30,000 bricks per day was the largest in British Columbia. The additions to the Clayburn plant, however, soon gave the Clayburn Company the distinction of being the largest producer



**The Company Bunkhouse at Straiton With Some of the Miners**

George Ball, Plant Manager, is seen posing (at right) with some of the underground clay miners wearing lamps on their hats. Behind them is the company-owned bunkhouse. circa 1920.

Photograph courtesy Mrs. Lillian Ball Wilkinson



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of bricks in the province.

Soon after Charlie Maclure left the employ of the Clayburn Company he founded a brick yard at Kilgard on the southern flank of Sumas Mountain. In 1918 the Clayburn Company bought out this company, the Kilgard Fireclay Company. Also in 1918 J.B. Millar retired and George Ball was hired as Plant Manager. He had formerly been with the Berg Machinery Company of Minico, Ontario. Under his management the Clayburn Company operated the plants at both Clayburn and Kilgard. The one at Clayburn was used for the production of fire and common bricks; the one at Kilgard primarily for vitrified sewer pipes. Company housing was located at both sites.

By 1920 the decision was made to close the plant at Clayburn permanently and rely totally on the Kilgard operation for the production of all products. The immediate reason for the change was the deteriorating condition of the narrow gauge railway to the village, particularly of the trestles. Access from the clay mines to Kilgard was much easier and cheaper to maintain. Soon after its abandonment, the plant buildings at Clayburn were razed.

Although the brick plant no longer existed at Clayburn the company-owned housing remained. All employees who lived there, including the Plant Manager, began to commute around the base of Sumas Mountain to Kilgard. During World War II, however, the company began to divest itself even of the houses in the village by offering them for sale to their occupants. Many houses and subdivided lots were sold at this time as a result.

For several years after World War II most residents of Clayburn still maintained connections with the Clayburn Company through its various reorganizations, name changes, and partial relocation from Kilgard to Abbotsford. But retirement, moving, or death slowly caused changes in the population and appearance of the village, until by the early 1970's no one living in Clayburn worked for the brick yards at Kilgard or Abbotsford. Many structures by this time had fallen into disrepair; others had been altered considerably, or been removed.

The passing of the *British Columbia Land Commission Act* in 1973 resulted in some owners of previously subdivided empty lots being offered attractive prices for them. Faced with increased tax assessments a few owners of lots sold them to developers who subsequently built infill houses and a row of residences unsympathetic in style to

the others along Clayburn Road.

By the mid 1970's, however, some area residents became concerned about heritage building preservation in the village. Under the auspices of the M.S.A. Heritage Society the Clayburn Church, long unused and then under the control of the Clayburn Athletic Association, was reconstructed during 1977-78.<sup>8</sup> Since then interest in the village about heritage preservation has not manifested itself in other visible ways, although some property owners have refurbished their homes, but usually without regard for their original character.

By 1982 only a handful of village residents could claim any former family connection with the Clayburn Company. Clayburn village had taken on the visual and demographic characteristics of a suburb of Abbotsford, rather than of a once-isolated and independent company town. The core of brick structures, some still with discernable Maclure detailing, alone bear silent witness to the community's former stature and uniqueness.

<sup>1</sup> Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele, Canadian Geological Survey, *Memoir 24E* (King's Printer: Ottawa, 1912), p. 125

<sup>2</sup> Maclure's father, John Maclure, had been a Royal Engineer and later a surveyor and engineer who settled at Matsqui in 1868. In 1905 Charlie Maclure lived in Vancouver, but members of the family still resided at Hazelbrae.

<sup>3</sup> Slightly different versions of the discovery are to be found in: *Vancouver Sun Magazine Supplement*, May 20, 1950, p. 3; Sylvia Robertson, "The Discovery of Fireclay in B.C.," in *Shoulder Strap*, December 1947, pp. 61-62; and "John Maclure Passes," in *Abbotsford, Sumas and Matsqui News*, November 2, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Mrs. Cairns, July 15, 1975.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Mrs. Margaret Millar Cooper, April 15, 1975.

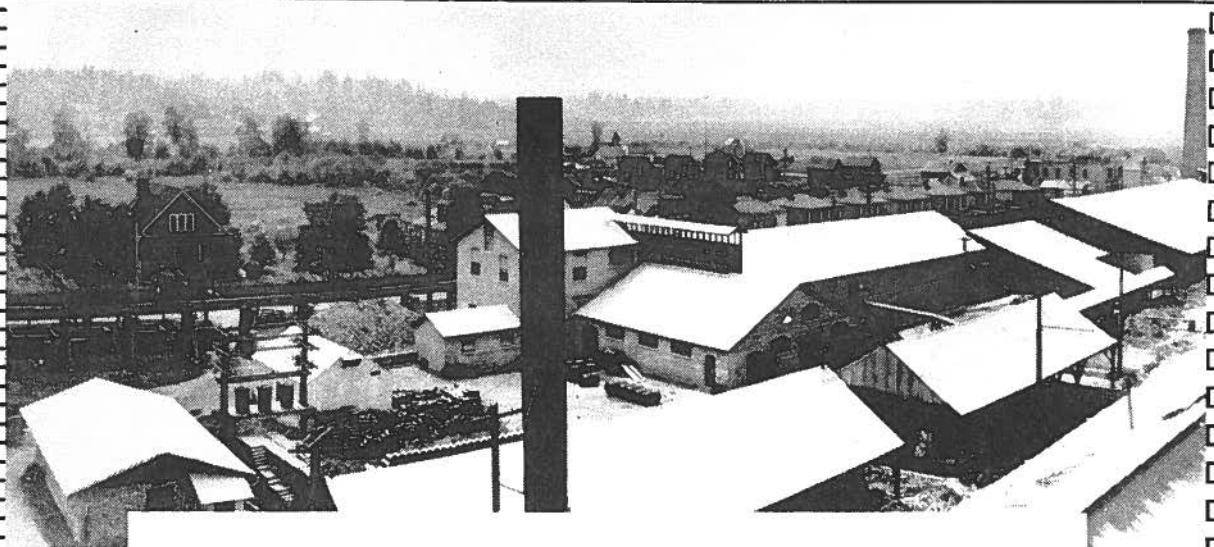
<sup>6</sup> R.W.W. Reid to J.L. Plommer, *Clayburn Letterbooks*, vol. III, February 8, 1912, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Connie Cruikshank, handwritten, unpublished article in the Cruikshank Files, MSA Museum, no date.

<sup>8</sup> The M.S.A. Heritage Society has since amalgamated with the Matsqui-Sumas-Abbotsford Museum Society.

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*John D. Adams is head of the Interpretation Section, Heritage Conservation Branch. He has been compiling information about brick manufacturing in British Columbia since 1970. The Clayburn Company was the subject of his Master of Museology thesis for the University of Toronto.*



### **Panorama of Brick Plant and Village at Clayburn, circa 1912-15**

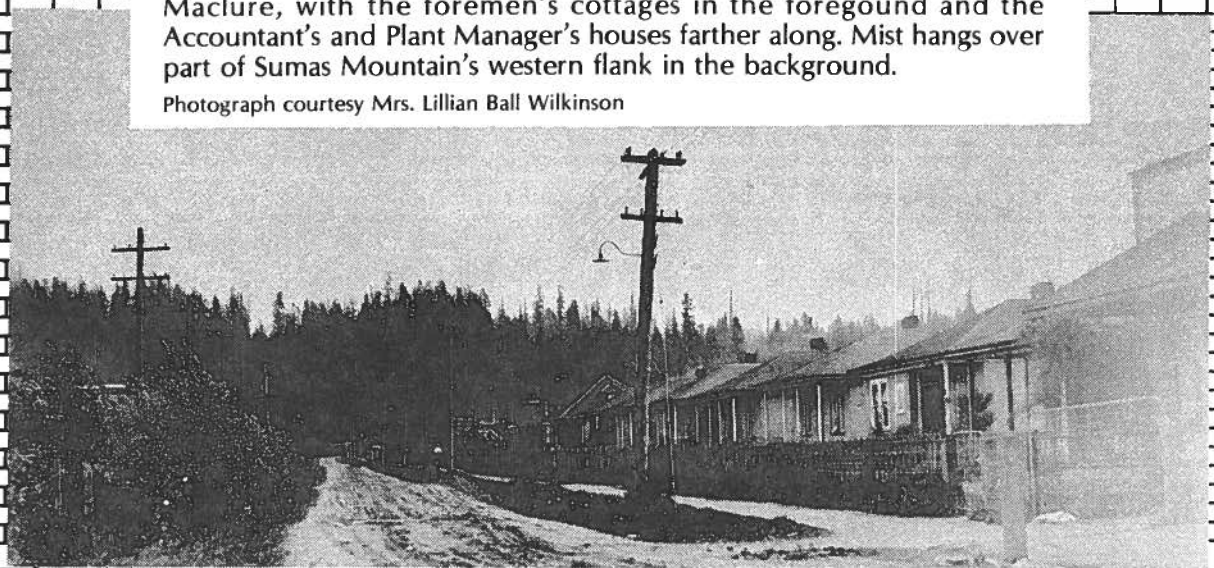
Taken from the height of the mill building, this photograph looks south from the brick works to the village. The brick houses facing the Clayburn Road are directly opposite the plant. Behind them are the wooden “white houses” and “red shacks”. Across the fields in the background and out of the picture would be Abbotsford.

Photograph courtesy Provincial Archives, 74836(b)

### **View Looking East Along Clayburn Road, circa 1920**

To take this shot the photographer stood on muddy Clayburn Road, with the plant hidden behind bushes on the left of the picture. On the right is the row of houses containing seven influenced by the architect Samuel Maclure, with the foremen’s cottages in the foreground and the Accountant’s and Plant Manager’s houses farther along. Mist hangs over part of Sumas Mountain’s western flank in the background.

Photograph courtesy Mrs. Lillian Ball Wilkinson

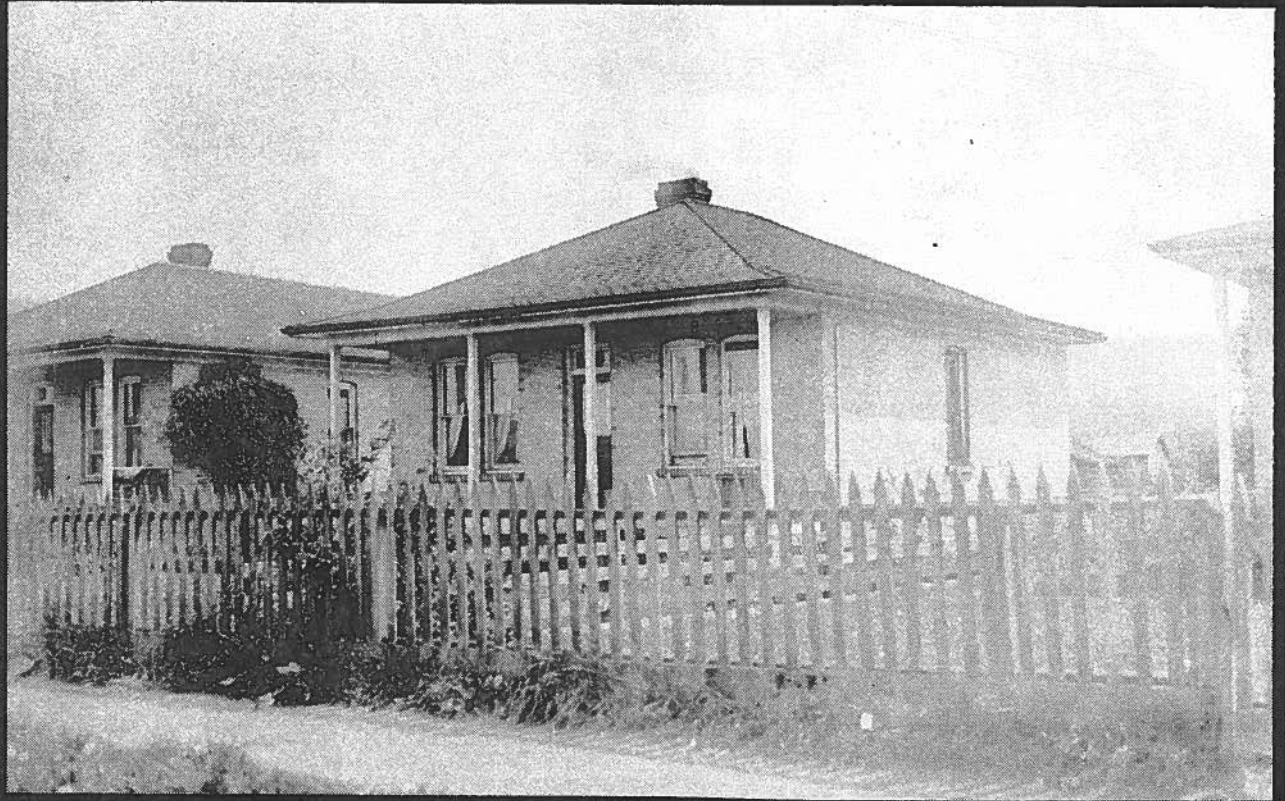




### **Plant Manager's Home**

The largest of the Maclure-inspired brick houses in Clayburn, the Plant Manager's house includes more clues to Maclure's hand than do the others. These include the shingle work, the roofline, the use of small, diamond-shaped window panes, the banding around the outer walls (in this case consisting of courses of flashed brick), plus interior detailing. The family of Plant Manager George Ball poses on the front steps. circa 1920.

Photograph courtesy Mrs. Lillian Ball Wilkinson



### **Foreman's Cottage**

Samuel Maclure likely influenced the design of at least seven brick houses in Clayburn, including five small, four-roomed ones popularly known as foremen's cottages.

Photograph courtesy Mrs. Lillian Ball Wilkinson



### **Presbyterian Church at Clayburn**

The church was built in 1912 and was totally reconstructed during 1977-78. The person standing to the left of the steps is Rev. J.L. Millar, brother of Plant Manager J.B. Millar; on the steps are Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Cooper, first couple to be married in the church. Margaret Cooper was J.B. Millar's daughter. In the background are some of Clayburn's wooden houses.

Photograph courtesy Provincial Archives, 74818.



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# Discovery: 1862

August 1862. The *Hecate* with Governor James Douglas and one hundred settlers aboard enters Cowichan Bay on Vancouver Island. No list of that party now exists, but its arrival is duly caired as marking the first official effort to settle the Cowichan Valley. Earlier than this, two young men in England had already completed their plans to emigrate to this same valley. They were Edward and Henry Marriner, clergyman's sons, not yet out of their 'teens.

"Diary commencing on leaving England for British Columbia August 5, 1862, by frigate *Bird* from Liverpool."

With these two lines nineteen year-old Edward Marriner recorded the beginning of the new life on which he was embarking. He kept his diary going, off and on, until his death by accident in 1884. Ten years later his eldest daughter, Mary, took up the task, and chronicled daily the events, mainly small and routine, which made up the lives of the family, until within a few years of her own death in 1928.

The dry, laconic recording by father and daughter of the tasks, and occasionally the pleasures, which filled their days provide what is probably an accurate picture of the average farm family's life as it developed through the first three-quarter century of Cowichan's history.

The *Bird* arrived at Victoria just after Christmas.

On December 29, the brothers rented a shanty rather than staying at an hotel, prudently conserving their capital. On January 7, Edward recorded with sober triumph that he had earned his first dollar. He'd found work aboard the *Bird* and continued to work on her until January 18. In his free time he called on friends, people he had

known in England and others to whom he had been given letters of introduction. One of these, it is safe to assume, was Dr. John Chapman Davie, the elder, for it was to the log cabin he had built in Cowichan that they headed on January 20.

"Travelled in canoe with Hunter to Shawnigan Castle." Castle? Obviously he had confused his geographical nomenclature and was referring to Cowichan Bay, and the "castle" would be a humorous reference to Sam Harris's log John Bull Inn. They proceeded by canoe as far as the waterways would take them, reaching Dr. Davie's farm after eight miles through brush.

In spite of the brevity of his style, Edward builds up for us a picture of the country and of the life he and his companions led in the first weeks — shooting grouse, hunting deer, learning the skills of cooking and baking bread on an open hearth. Like so many of North Cowichan's early pioneers, they had included books in their luggage, and Edward at least, spent his evenings reading by the light of the fire or a tallow candle.

"New church at Somenos begun to be built on Saturday 14 of March 1863". On the 18th, 19th and 20th, Edward worked steadily on this building (it was all, needless to say, volunteer labour), but on the Saturday that the job had begun he had gone down to Cowichan Bay, rented a scow, and gone across to Saanich to bring back oxen.

On March 24, despite the time taken out for such journeyings and for the building of the Somenos meeting house, he finished his own house and moved into it.

April 1863. Edward had his house, his oxen, and a few simple items of land-clearing and land-breaking equipment. He laid down his diarist's

---

pen and did not take it up again until April 1, 1867. In the interim he had moved from his original holding in Somenos, down to the more open lands at Cowichan Bay. Here is a sampling of his diary entries:

"Working at the cow shed, and finished. Got wild heifer up into shed."

"April 3. Wed. Went up to meeting at Parsonage and in church held by the Bishop."

"April 7. Went up to church at Parsonage and to Somenos in afternoon. Holy Communion."

"May 4. Rolling wheat with horse. Washing clothes, etc."

"July 1. Mond. Churning 14 lbs and sewing."

"July 2. Thurs. Fine. Putting rafters in dairy. H. (brother Henry?) brought shake blocks up river with Wisdom."

"July 8. Showery. Went to Victoria on HMS Sparrowhawk. Dougherty was drowned; fell off wharf."

*In four years Edward Marriner had progressed*

*from oxen to horses, from travel on foot to travel on horseback, but while he went to Victoria on this occasion by naval ship, he returned the usual way, walking out to Saanich and so home by canoe.*

*He was churning butter regularly and selling it at Giovanni Ordano's store at Cowichan Bay.*

*The occasional business-cum-pleasure trip to Victoria, the roof-raising, the twice on Sunday church services were the highlights of Edward's social life. It was a sober sort of socializing, perhaps, but there is certainly no suggestion of a grim struggle for bare existence.*

*"December 4. Inquest held over squaw. Verdict against Indian. Wilful murder."*

*"December 5. Murderer escaped."*

*The days were short now, and the rough trails that connected the scattered farms were hazardous in the dark. Edward, having called for whatever reason at a friend's, often stayed the night. Similarly he often kept a neighbour for the*



**It was hard work beginning in a new land.**

night at his own home. The cows of the pioneers had been educated to accept milking at odd intervals. In fact, in winter, for lack of fodder, they were often dried off. The farmer of the 1860s was no slave to his cattle.

On January 8, 1868, Edward gave a party. "Fine. Frost, bright sun. Busy at home cooking etc. for evening. Mr. and Mrs. Carswell, Mr. Reece (the parson), Wing, Lomas and Singe, Wisdom and Guillod at dinner. Jolly evening."

The diary for that year, and the last entry for many years to come, ends with a note dated June 29. "Monday, St. Peter's day. Fine. Went up to Alexander's with cattle to haul logs for bridge, came home and went up to evening service with King and Follett..."

It is now 1882. "Jan. 2. Churned and made up 15 lbs. butter. Paid to Gilmore on account \$2, leaving \$19.75 due."

Thus matter-of-factly does Edward Mariner recommence his diary, and the absence of any explanation of the long hiatus leads one to suspect that some volumes of the diary have disappeared.

In that interval of nearly fourteen years Edward's life had changed remarkably little in spite of his change of status from bachelor to married man. He still salts pork and beef, churns regularly, and bakes bread. Gussie Marriner, unhappily for her, was not cut out for the pioneer life. "Poor Mother!" the youngest daughter, Nettie, the only surviving member of the family at that time, said to me. "She always hoped she would return to England, but she never did."

Occasionally Edward misses a church service to stay home with the children while Gussie goes, and he is troubled with rheumatism from time to time.

The entries regarding labour hired and paid become frequent. Sometimes the labour is provided by white friends, sometimes by Indian, most often the latter.

"Tues. 24th. Mary Molock all day washing. Pd. \$1.87½ in full."

In October that year, "Lac's mother" is at work daily getting up potatoes or picking apples. Five men were employed for four days at \$1.50 per day to thresh wheat.

"Nov. 11. Drove to Somenos with wheat for mill." This is an interesting reference to a short-lived experiment in milling local wheat.

Now we have come to 1883. "Jan. 10. Sent to Mrs. Drinkwater \$2.25 for making children's clothes. Sent to Mr. Drinkwater \$1 for grinding 400 lbs of wheat."

Before that year was out Edward Marriner's team bolted, throwing him to the ground where he received a kick in the head. An old Indian told me how his people had found him unconscious in the road and taken him into one of their houses. They applied to the head wound the sort of dressing prescribed by their native medicine. It would have been some hours later before the white doctor could get there. When he came he removed the Indian dressing and applied the sort prescribed by his own medicine. "If he hadn't done that," said Canute, "perhaps Mr. Marriner would not have died." Perhaps. Who can tell?

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These notes on a pioneer's diary were provided by E. Blanche Norcross. She is the author of *The Warm Land: a History of Cowichan, Pioneers Every One: Canadian Women of Achievement, and other works.* She is presently working on *Our Mary Ellen*, a biography.





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R.C. Harris

# The First Alexandra Bridge Fraser Canyon 1863 to 1912

Early in the 1800s, the fur trade began to look to the Pacific Ocean for a supply route more effective than the long overland journeys from Hudson Bay and from Montreal then in use. Stage by stage, a new route was established from the west coast, up the Columbia and Okanagan river systems to Kamloops, thence northwest through British Columbia's interior plateau to Fort Alexandria and Fort St. James.

Transportation studies in the Fraser Canyon began with Simon Fraser's unexpected journey of 1808. Fraser deemed the Fraser Canyon unnavigable. His opinion was officially confirmed in the fall of 1828 by Governor George Simpson, who ran the canyon by boat.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, a portage, or land journey was required to bypass the Fraser Canyon. Just before Simpson's descent, Fort Langley had been built at the head of sail navigation on the Fraser River, in anticipation of the eventual Oregon settlement.<sup>2</sup>

When the international boundary was set at the 49th parallel of latitude in 1846, the Hudson's Bay Company had to relocate their main supply line, from the Columbia River to the lower Fraser River. Chief Trader Alexander C. Anderson undertook a series of explorations between Kamloops and Fort Langley to find a route, wholly within British territory, which would join the existing trail system at Kamloops.

Anderson's explorations resulted in the Hudson's Bay Company building the first horse road up the Fraser Canyon in 1847-48 to join an

existing Indian horse road running east from Boston Bar to the Interior.<sup>3</sup> As shown in Figure 1, right, taken from Anderson's map, the Hudson's Bay Company avoided the first section of canyon by the "Douglas Portage" which rejoined the river at Spuzzum.<sup>4</sup> Just above Spuzzum, the ferry to the east bank was established. The upper section of the Fraser Canyon was avoided by crossing the ridge to Anderson's River in a northeasterly direction. On Figure 1, left, the entire route from Yale is shown as "Old Mountain Trail".

At the start of their horse road, the Hudson's Bay Company established a storehouse, Fort Yale, at the Indian village of Shilquel. This was favourably situated on the west bank of the Fraser River just below the "Falls" at the foot of the canyon. In those days the "canyon" was taken as extending from Yale to Boston Bar. Apart from being at the head of practical canoe navigation, the Shilquel site had a plentiful supply of salmon, a flat at the mouth of Yale Creek, and a gentle eddy which stilled the river current along the bank. Its west side location, however, necessitated the crossing to the east bank, somewhere in the canyon.

The Hudson's Bay Company found their "mountain trail", or portage, from Fort Yale to be unsatisfactory, due to the steep grades, the lack of feed for the pack animals, and to a lesser extent, the ferry operation. In 1849, they replaced Fort Yale with a depot, Fort Hope, 12 miles downstream on the east bank. From Fort Hope, they built a more successful brigade trail eastwards to Fort Colville in

Washington Territory, and to Kamloops.

The Spuzzum ferry, in various configurations, ran intermittently for ten years, then actively for five more years, until superseded by the waggon road and the Alexandra suspension bridge upstream.

## Gold Rush

Though restricted by the annual snows to use in the summer only, the significance of the Old Mountain Trail from Yale increased as the needs of the gold rush spread up the Fraser River. First it was improved; then in 1860 a low-level all-season pack trail was built along the banks of the Fraser; finally, as traffic continued to increase, the government pack trail was superseded by the famous Cariboo Waggon Road in 1862 and 1863. The growing need for an improved road up the Fraser Canyon is evident from Douglas' despatches to London, beginning with Douglas to Lytton, 12 October 1858.

The ferry was not suited to heavy and frequent waggon traffic, and Governor James Douglas, aided by his Chief Commissioner of Land and Works, Col. R.C. Moody of the Royal Engineers, decided it would be replaced by a bridge.

There were two rival gold rush routes to the upper Fraser, which could have avoided the crossing in the Fraser Canyon. The prior Harrison-Lillooet route, which by this time had been converted at considerable expense into a waggon road, gradually fell into disrepute on account of the tedious freight transfers at the several lake

crossings. This road would still have required a bridge over the Fraser at or near Lillooet town.

Secondly, there was the less renowned Boston Bar Trail from Hope, mapped by Lt. A.R. Lempriere of the Royal Engineers late in 1859, and shown as "New Trail"; see Fig. 2, left.<sup>5</sup> Lempriere reported correctly that if the Cariboo Waggon Road were built north from Hope, a crossing in the Fraser Canyon would not be required. However, by this time, the revitalised route north from Yale was too firmly established. It is interesting to note that the C.P.R. followed a similar traffic pattern below the town of Lytton in the early 1880s, crossing from east to west bank at Siska.

Location of the waggon road between Yale and Boston Bar was supervised by Sgt. William McColl, R.E., with Sapper James Turnbull responsible for the field notes. Turnbull had located the horse trail built two years before.

Careful explorations were made by the Royal Engineers for the bridge site, aided by such interested citizens as the town council of Yale. Lt. H.S. Palmer, R.E., and Sgt. McColl produced reports identifying three sites:

Near Chapmans Bar:

a 250 ft. span suspension bridge

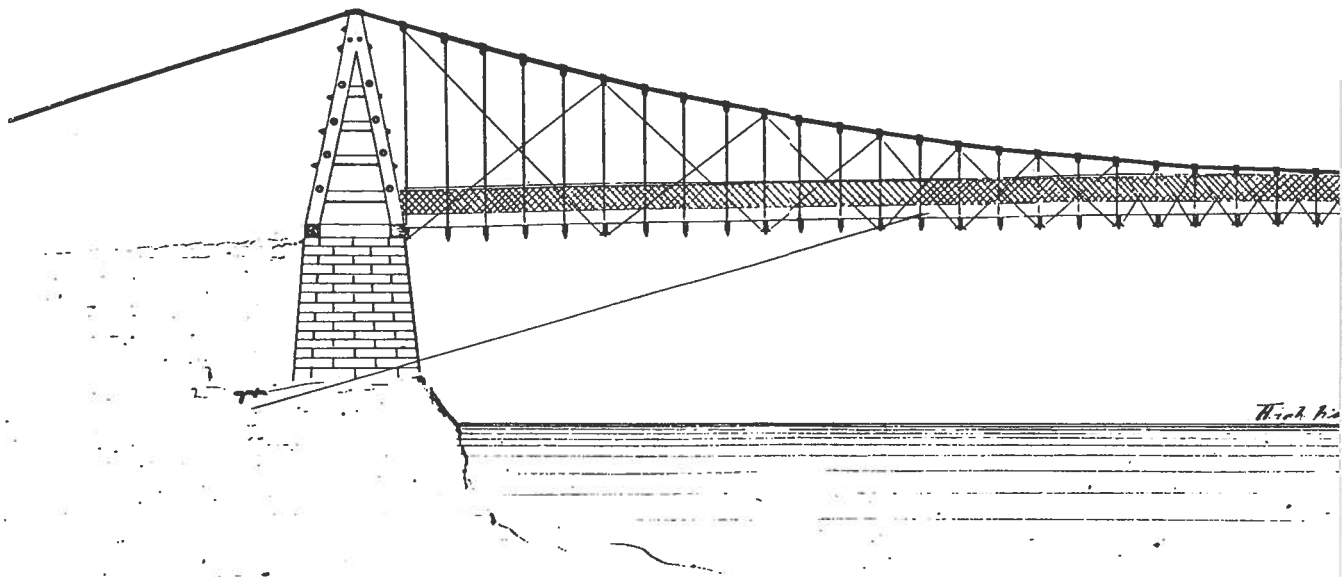
at Hells Gate:

a 150 ft. span trussed timber bridge

At China Bar:

a 280 ft. span suspension bridge

The bridge site was in the end determined by the estimated cost of roadbuilding along each bank to each site, and the space available for turning onto the bridge. The location near Chapmans Bar won. Prudently, Col. Moody had Capt. Jack Grant, E.R.,



“the greatest road-builder of them all”, call into the site on his way north to the Cariboo, for a final verification.<sup>6</sup> The location was almost the same as the 1926 bridge which can be seen today, but the span was 15 feet shorter, the deck was about 12 feet lower, and the approaches to the bridge had tighter turns.

## Suspension Bridge

Tenders for the suspension bridge were invited in the Government Gazette of 30 October 1862. The contract was awarded to Joseph Trutch, who sublet the design to A.S. Halladie of San Francisco. The resulting bridge had massive timber towers, each leg being framed from four 20 x 20 inch timbers sawn in the nearby woods.<sup>7</sup> The wooden floor system was supported by main cables of parallel iron wires laid up along the bank near the site and hauled over the gap. The floorbeams were hung from the cables by iron rods.

Bedrock on the west bank was built up with a pier of local “granite” to get above usual high water. Lime for the mortar was burnt about seven miles downstream, just below Spuzzum.

The terms of the contract had the bridge financed by the contractor, who was to recover his investment by collecting an agreed schedule of tolls for seven years.<sup>8</sup> There was no charge for foot passengers.

As often happens during a contract, the contractor extracted some concessions from the engineer.<sup>9</sup> The roadway was to have been 18 feet inside the handrails, but this was reduced, in stages, to 12 feet 10 inches inside the curbs. Along the way,

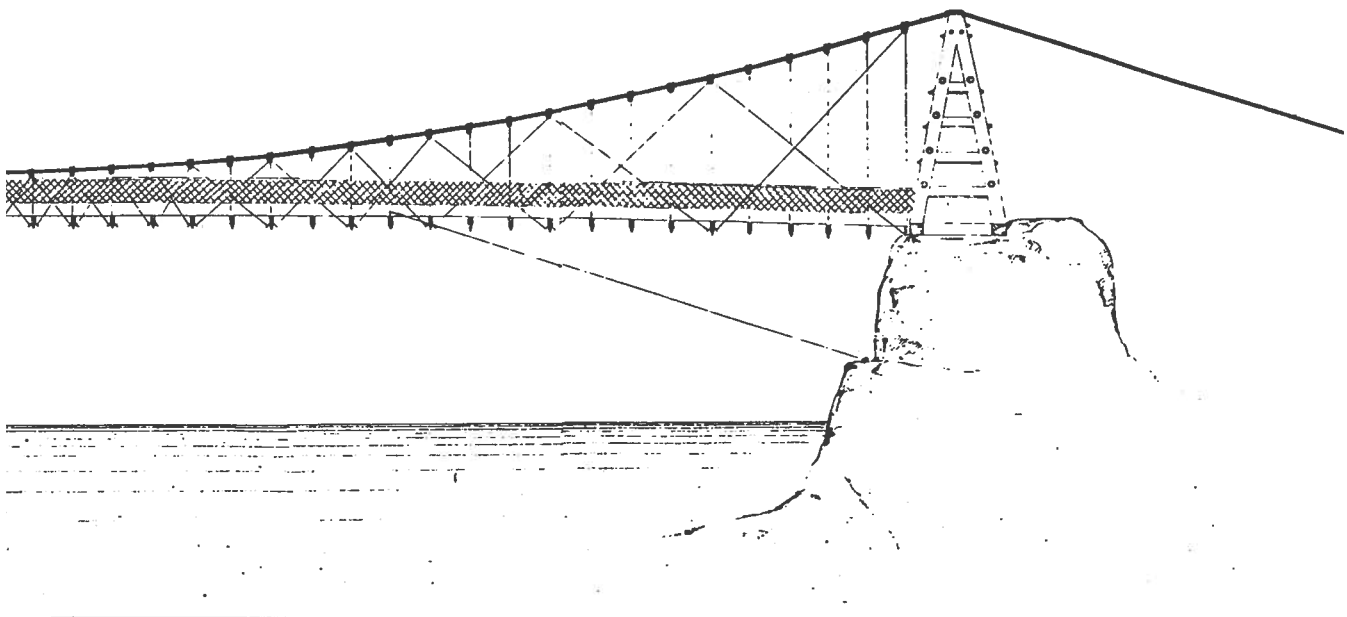
sidewalks were moved outside the main cables, then disappeared. These changes apparently justified reducing the main cables from 5½ to 5, to 4½ inches diameter, and the rods suspending the floorbeams from 1½ to 1¾ inches diameter.

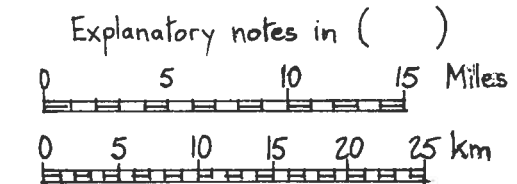
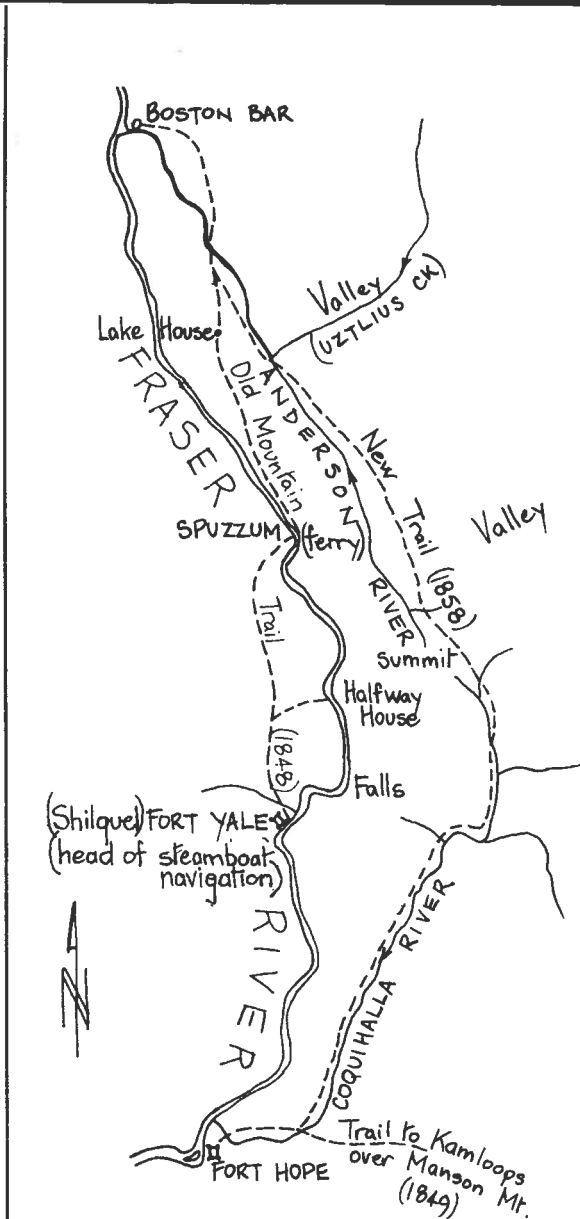
Despite these design refinements, the bridge withstood its load test satisfactorily, and, with regular maintenance, gave admirable service on the main traffic artery of the country until superseded by the Canadian Pacific Railway.<sup>10</sup>

A fair set of as-built drawings was almost completed by 2nd Cpl. J.C. White, R.E. in August of 1863.<sup>11</sup> These are now in the Map Room at the Provincial Archives. The bridge was often sketched or photographed during its 25 years of active life. There are dozens of illustrations in local libraries and archives.

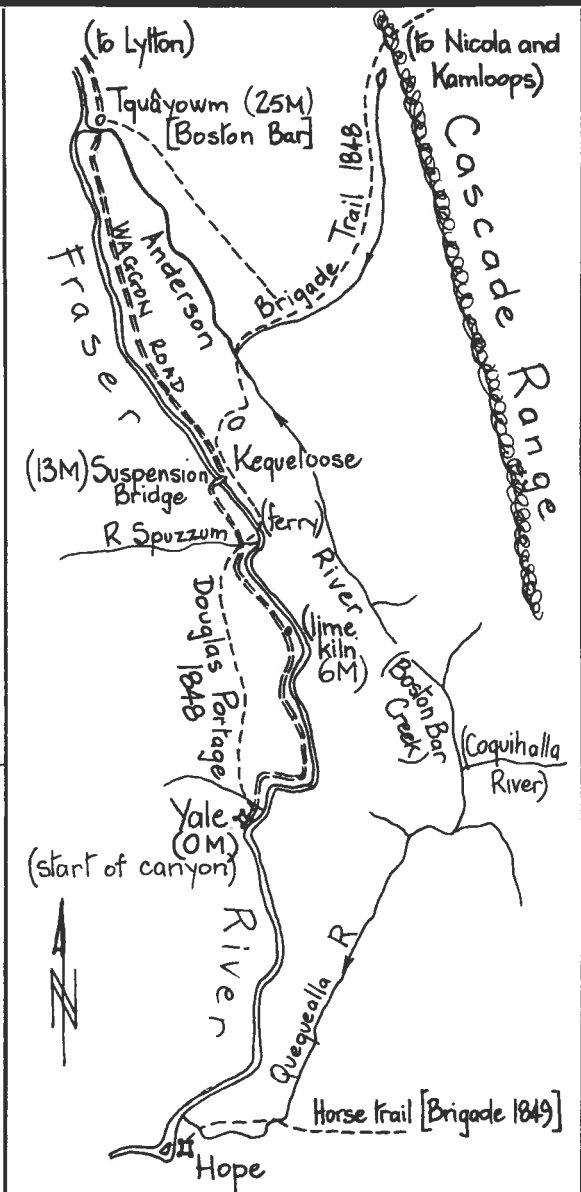
Interesting details of bridge maintenance may be found in Colonial Correspondence at the Provincial Archives, and later in the printed Reports of Public Works in the Sessional Papers of British Columbia.

Headroom under the bridge was limited by wind guys angling down from the quarter points to bedrock. Road superintendent Neil Black noted the roots of a tree caught on a wind guy in the freshet of 1879, but the tree was released without difficulty. However, during the “1000 year” flood of 1894, the water rose 90 feet from its usual low water level, damaging the bridge deck. Wheeled traffic had virtually ceased with the advent of the C.P.R., so thereafter the bridge was restricted to





Map taken from "Sketch of Trail from Hope to Boston Bar"  
 Lt AR Lempriere, RE 31 Dec 1859



Notes by Anderson shown [ ].  
 Brigade Trails and Waggon Road added to Lempriere's Sketch, from:  
 "Map of a portion of the Colony of BRITISH COLUMBIA"  
 Compiled from various sources including original Notes from personal explorations Between the years 1832 and 1851  
 Alexander C Anderson 25<sup>th</sup> May 1867."

**FIG 1 Two maps showing crossings in Fraser Canyon**

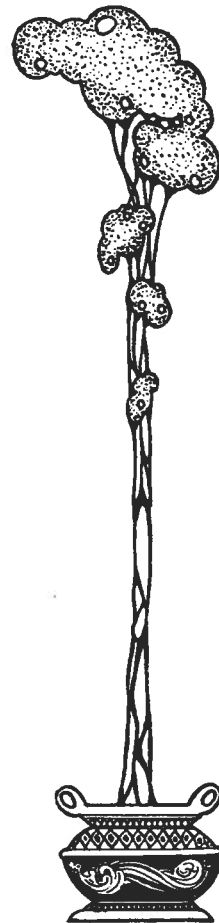


foot traffic until road superintendent Dan Sutherland cut the main cables in 1912, to protect the public.

During the 1920s, highway traffic in British Columbia increased to the point where the Cariboo Waggon Road was reinstated. The work was completed in 1926. While excavating on the east bank for the anchorages of the new main cables, the ends of the original iron wire cables were found. Some short sections were cut for souvenirs; one is held at the Provincial Museum in Victoria.

- 1 "Peace River. A canoe voyage from Hudson's Bay to the Pacific by the late Sir George Simpson in 1829". Edited with notes by Malcolm McLeod, 1872.
- 2 "The History of Fort Langley, 1827-96". Mary K. Cullen 1979. National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada.
- 3 "Map of Thompson's River District 1827 by Archibald McDonald". H.B.Co. Archives.
- 4 "Map of a portion of the Colony of BRITISH COLUMBIA ... Alex C. Anderson 23rd May 1867." PABC: 615 pPC A545m.
- 5 Surveyor General of British Columbia. Plan 15T1, Roads and Trails (1859). Lempriere's report 02 January 1860, which accompanied his sketch map, is filed in PABC Colonial Correspondence at F985a. Lempriere was promoted to Captain between preparing the map and the report.
- 6 PABC Colonial Correspondence CAB 30.7]. Letter book 3. Moody to Grant; Victoria, 06 April 1863. Grant to examine proposed site of suspension bridge, in passing north, p. 140.
- 7 PABC. Colonial Correspondence CAB 30.7]. Letter book 3. Moody's "Notes: 12 March 1863". [on design details for Alexandra Suspension Bridge]. pp. 127 to 129.
- 7 PABC Colonial Correspondence CAB 30.7 letter book 7. Moody to Colonial Secretary; Yale, 21 May 1863. Reports on visit to bridge under construction. The work has been placed under the supervision of Capt. R.M. Parsons, R.E.
- 7 PABC Colonial Correspondence F1900. Parsons to Woodcock; New West., 10 July 1866. Cpl. Woodcock to inspect the materials bring used in the bridge, and to bring back specimens.
- 7 PABC Colonial Correspondence [File No. missing]. "Notes on condition of the Alexandra Suspension Bridge". 05 September 1863. Lt. H.S. Palmer, R.D. A deficiency list prepared as the bridge neared completion.

- 8 PABC Colonial Correspondence F959 letter 9. The 3-page agreement with Jos. W. Trutch for construction of a Wire Suspension bridge. c. January 1863. (undated).
- 9 PABC Colonial Correspondence CAB 30.7]. Letter book 3. Moody to Trutch; New West., 14 March 1863. Moody approves reduction in size of main cables, p.130.
- 9 PABC Colonial Correspondence CAB 30.7]. Letter book 7. Moody to Colonial Secretary; Yale, 21 May 1863. Comments on further changes to the bridge design proposed by the contractor.
- 10 *British Colonist*. (Victoria) 12 September 1863, gives a detailed description of the completed bridge and its construction.
- 11 PABC Map Room. Plans-3 6.1.6 gmbf R88.8.6 1863. 3 linen tracings of Alexandra Suspension Bridge, August 1863.



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# News and Notes

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## In Memoriam

### Frank Street

Historians of British Columbia and his many friends throughout the province will be saddened to learn of the passing of Frank Street of Burnaby, at age 72, after a brief series of heart seizures.

Coming to British Columbia from Saskatchewan at an early age, Frank grew up on a Burnaby farm. His interest in natural history led to his skill in photography. His camera work supplied material for many television travel shows.

In his working career in timber and as timber technologist, Frank also developed his historical interests. He was an active member of the Burnaby historical society and was president for two years. One of the prime movers of the Burnaby Heritage Village, Frank was a member of that board and a tireless worker in organizing displays.

A faithful delegate to many annual meetings of the B.C. Historical Association, he became president in 1977 where he provided enthusiastic leadership. He was responsible in a very large part for having the Captain Cook Memorial established at Friendly Cove.

Frank's kindness and great zest for life will be missed by many. Our thoughts go out to Helen his wife and his sons, Sheridan and Ernest, and their wives and families.

— Jack W. Roff

## Archival Notes

The Mennonite Historical Society of British Columbia is to be congratulated on completing their first year of operation and is actively seeking to preserve the history of the Mennonites of this province.

The Archives of the Diocese of New Westminster announce the publication of *Echos Through a Century*, a 141 page illustrated centennial history of Christ Church, Surrey Centre, by the Most Rev. G.P. Gower, Retired Archbishop of New Westminster and Metropolitan of British Columbia. The book is available for \$10.00 from Christ Church, 6250, 180th Street, Surrey, B.C. V3S 4L6.

— Michael Halleran

## 1984 B.C. Studies Conference Invites Papers

The third B.C. Studies Conference will be held at the University of British Columbia in February 1984. Proposals for conference papers are now invited. Enquiries should be directed to R. McDonald, Department of History, University of British Columbia; Alan Artibise, Department of History, University of Victoria; and Hugh Johnston and Robin Fisher, Department of History, Simon Fraser University.

Suggestions for conference papers will be considered as they are received, the final deadline for proposal submissions is December 1, 1982.

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## JOIN!



Why not join the British Columbia Historical Association and receive *British Columbia Historical News* regularly?

The BCHA is composed of member societies in all parts of the province. By joining your local society, you receive not only a subscription to *British Columbia Historical News* but the opportunity to participate in a programme of talks and field trips and to meet others interested in British Columbia's history at the BCHA's annual convention.

For information, contact your local society (addresses on inside of front cover). . . . No local society in your area? Perhaps you might think of forming one. For information contact the secretary of the BCHA (address inside back cover).

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# News and Notes

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## Reports from the Branches

### Victoria

At dawn on July 7 a contingent from Victoria numbering 41 in all, well armed with loaded picnic baskets and steaming thermos jugs, gathered at a secluded corner of the Mayfair Mall and embarked on a bus headed for the Outer Islands, with Mayne Island as their objective.

It was a highly successful operation, the invaders being quickly overwhelmed by the warmth of the Gulf Islanders' hospitality. They skillfully retreated in the later afternoon, laden with memories, snapshots and not a few artifacts and souvenirs picked up as they combed the island.

The ferry was uneventful, with many of the Victorians clustered at or near the refreshment counter most of the way. Stops were made at several island landings on the way, including a fascinating side-trip to Montague Bay, a secluded cove on Galiano Island, before sailing through Active Pass to the landing at Village Bay. Here

they were met by a welcoming committee headed by Marie Elliott who boarded the bus as resident tour guide and described the many interesting places and features on the way to Mayne Inn on Bennett Bay. There a lunch stop was made, with some enjoying the Inn's hospitality and others seeking picnic spots nearby and on the beach not far away.

During the afternoon another tour on the island took place, with all disembarking at the Georgina Point Lighthouse at the far end of Active Pass. A pleasant hour was spent there, talking with the friendly lighthouse keeper who allowed those daring enough to ascend the 148 steps leading to the light chamber at the top of the tower. Here he explained the workings of that important light and described some of the history of the area as well as some personal experiences and adventures while there. It is estimated that 147 pictures were taken from the top of the lighthouse, while other members less inclined to tackle the narrow spiral staircase roamed about the attractive, park-like grounds.

The bus then took them to Miners Bay where



SANDERS HOUSE

M. ROBINSON  
Copyright NANOOA H.M.S.

the Victorians were offered the choice of incarceration in the historic Plumper Pass Lockup (now the Mayne Island Museum) or afternoon tea in the community hall across the road. It goes without saying that the visitors accepted both and thoroughly enjoyed the abundant and delicious tea, coffee and home-cooked delicacies provided by the ladies of the Gulf Island Historical Association.

There was plenty of time on this beautiful day to browse around, explore the museum, a nearby church, a fascinating country store, to chat with the residents, visit the docks and discover what a delightful place Mayne Island can be. In due course, however, the ferry arrived to pick up the retreating invaders and take them back to Vancouver Island.

Our sincere thanks to our Mayne Island hosts for their part in making this event such an unforgettable summer outing.

— Ted Belt

## Cowichan

We have had a very busy and fruitful year. Our speakers have been: Alf. Flett, Alderman of Nanaimo and a member of a pioneer family of Cowichan; Terry Malone and Carl Schlishting of the B.C. Forest Museum; Barbara Stannard, President of B.C. Historical Association; Doug Barker, Alderman of Duncan; Jack Fleetwood, Society Historian; and Will Dobson, retired editor of the *Cowichan Leader* and Anglican clergyman.

After much persuasion, we were able to realize our ambition of opening the Cowichan Valley Museum in the basement of the Duncan City Hall on August 29, 1981. It has been most successful with over two thousand visitors. Several school classes and groups have visited as well as the delegates to the B.C.H.A. Convention. The Museum has been shown on Channel 3 T.V. and we have had several radio broadcasts on C.K.A.Y.

The highlite of our year was the hosting of the British Columbia Historical Association Annual Convention. The Executive Council were of immeasurable help in the organization of this convention. The Directors John Cannon, Shane Davis, Dr. Gunn, Art Dawe and Eileen Beckerly worked hard with the Executive to make the convention so successful.

Thank you again for your help and support.

— Myrtle Haslam

## Golden

*In Loving Memory of*  
**ELLEN CAMERON**  
1907 - June 1982

First president of the  
Golden and District  
Historical Society.

Assistant editor of  
"Golden Memories" (1958),  
"Kinbasket Country 1972", and  
"Golden Memories Revised 1982".

## Vancouver

Regular monthly meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of every month in the Auditorium of the Vancouver Museum, 1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, B.C., commencing at 8:00 p.m. No meetings are held in December or from June to August. The meetings generally consist of an address or presentation on some aspect of Vancouver, British Columbia or even Canadian history; refreshments are served at the conclusion. Tours, seminars and other activities are also an integral part of the Society's program - as well as publications.

The Parksite 19 and Roedde House tour in June attracted an exceptionally large number of interested members. Robert Lemon of Randle, Iredale and Associates (consultants for the Vancouver City Planning Department) led us through all the buildings, ending at Roedde House for a detailed look at its potential, in part, as a headquarters for the V.H.A. After the tour refreshments were served courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. A. Bingham.

This summer's progress in collecting materials for the Vancouver Centennial Bibliography Project has been excellent, due in large measure to the enthusiastic participation of the project's assistants Dorryce Smelts and Colin Preston. The initial design phase of the crucially important computer file definition is not complete and trial runs are underway. By mid-September the programme should be debugged and ready for the inputting of records in the project's new Televideo terminal.

The New Westminster Historical Society will be hosting the B.C. Historical Association conference in early May of next year.



## British Columbia Heritage Trust

# Helping You

Roberta J. Pazdro



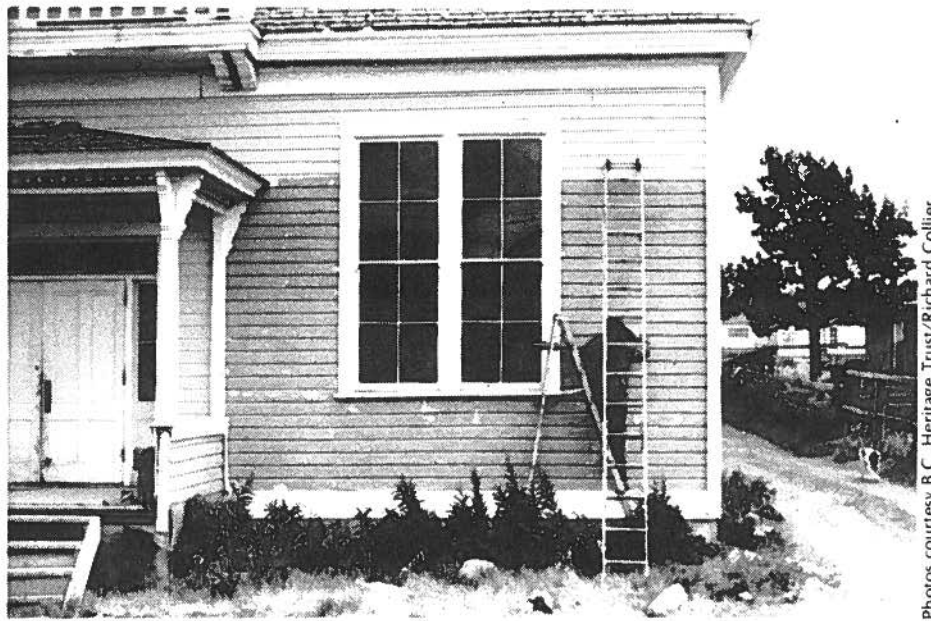
**The Atlin Courthouse in 1981 before the Atlin Historical Society began its major restoration project.**

The British Columbia Heritage Trust was established by the Heritage Conservation Act of 1977. Its mandate is "to encourage and facilitate the conservation, maintenance and restoration of heritage property in the province". The Trust's primary means of carrying out its goal is through seven grant programs. Three of these programs, Publications Assistance Program, Building Restoration Program, and Additional activities, have been the most beneficial to B.C.'s historical

societies.

The activities of many historical societies include the production of local and regional histories. These publications are eligible for grants of up to \$2,500 toward printing and production costs. (The Trust does not fund research.) The publications generally are in the form of books or pamphlets, but they may also take the form of oral histories such as the Atnarko Valley Historical Society's tape documentary, *Man in Nature: Lester*

**In June 1982 the building was prepared for painting in its original colours.**



Photos courtesy B.C. Heritage Trust/Richard Collier

Dorsey, Anahim Lake, B.C., which received a grant of \$600.

The Publications Assistance Program can also provide funds to assist with small displays or exhibits. The Bulkley Valley Historical Society received a grant of \$400 to assist with preparation of permanent photo display of the history of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway.

Some societies, such as the Atlin Historical Society, have initiated major building restoration projects. These projects are eligible for grants of up to 50 percent of the exterior restoration costs to a maximum of \$50,000. A \$25,000 grant was awarded to the Atlin Historical Society for restoration of the Atlin Courthouse. When completed, the Historical Society hopes to rent a portion of the building to provide much needed office space in the community. The Little Prairie Heritage Society has managed to save the oldest building in Chetwynd from demolition. The Little Prairie General Store, built in 1949, has been relocated and will be restored for use as a museum. Half of the moving and restoration costs have been provided for by a \$13,000 grant from the Trust.

More unique projects which do not fall within the guidelines of the Trust's established programs may be eligible for funding through the Additional Activities program. For example, the Nanaimo Historical Society received a grant of \$1,000 in aid of their symposium, "The Company on the Coast", which was held in the Spring, 1982. The Kootenay Lake Historical Society, in an effort to save the S.S. Moyie from vandalism, applied to the Trust for funds to erect a fence around the vessel's moorage site. The Trust awarded them a \$5,500 grant.

Another service provided by the Trust is a travelling photo exhibit, *Conservation British Columbia*, which consists of large panels of colour photographs of heritage sites from around the province. The exhibit is available for display, free of charge, to groups such as historical societies who may wish to have the exhibit shown in a museum, library, school or other suitable location in their community.

Information about *Conservation British Columbia* and other Trust programs is available by contacting:

British Columbia Heritage Trust  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8V 1X4  
387-3381

Roberta J. Pazdro is Project Officer with the British Columbia Heritage Trust.

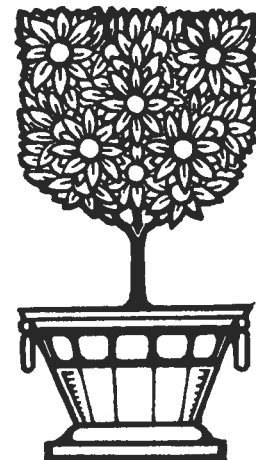
## Okanagan Society Honoured

The Okanagan Historical Society in Vernon has won an award of merit for "more than fifty years of publishing Okanagan history and stimulating heritage preservation".

The American Association for State and Local History conveyed the award at its Annual Meeting in Hartford, Connecticut in America's most prestigious competition for local history achievement.

Award recipients were notified in special letters of congratulations, in the form of "History-Grams", sent following two days of deliberations by a national selection committee. The committee, composed of leaders in the history profession, reviewed more than 150 nominations in its annual deliberations.

The American Association for State and Local History, headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee, has given awards to local historians and historical agencies since 1944. A nonprofit educational organization with a membership of more than 7,500 individuals and institutions, AASLH works to advance knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of local history in the United States and Canada. It publishes books, technical leaflets, *History News*, a monthly magazine, and holds seminars, workshops, and other educational programs for professional and volunteer workers in the field of state and local history.



# Campbell River - Home of Growing Archival Collection




**Willows Hotel and Annex, Campbell River, B.C. 1912  
Photograph #8248, Campbell River & District Museum & Archives**

Researchers interested in the history of Northern Vancouver Island from Black Creek north, including surrounding islands, will be interested in the growing archival collection at the Campbell River Museum. The collection consists of vertical files of newspaper and magazine articles, a small manuscript collection, tape recorded interviews, books, maps, and an extensive photograph

collection. Though work is still in progress much of the backlogged material has been catalogued including cross-referenced card indexing which makes the material easily accessible.

The museum began in 1959 as a small display of Indian artifacts put together by a group of local collectors. Soon afterwards the Campbell River & District Historical Society was formed to care for



*“The Willows Hotel, beautifully situated within a few yards of the sea, is all that a sportsman could desire. Clean, well-furnished bedrooms, a bathroom and quite a decent table, all for the moderate sum of 2 dollars a day. The drawback to the hotel was the logging camp in the vicinity. The bar of the hotel was about fifty yards from the hotel itself, in a separate building, and on Saturday night many of the loggers came dropping in to waste the earnings of the week.” From Sport in Vancouver and Newfoundland, Sir John Rogers, K.C.M.G., 1912.*

*“There is a hotel on the beach which I detest as there are such a lot of drunkards there...” From a letter written by settler Frederick Nunns in 1912.*

and administer the public collection. Space was provided in the City Hall building to house the museum. In 1967, a building was erected to house the museum, as a Canadian centennial project. In 1981, the name of the society was changed to Campbell River & District Museum & Archives Society to more accurately reflect the focus of the Society.

Since its inception the Society has been collecting archival documents. The archives were formally created in 1974 when the first of three successive Local Initiative Project grants were received to collect archival material. The bulk and diversity of what was collected encouraged the Society to form an Archives Committee in 1976 to establish collection policy and cataloguing procedures (registration, cataloguing and card indexing). Since 1976 permanent staff hired under grants from the Provincial Youth Employment Project and Museum and Archives Development have been cataloguing the collection. This work is still in process, with the manuscript and map collections yet to be completed. This summer, work on the collection of 12,000 photographs was completed.

Of special interest is the collection of historic and ethnohistoric photographs. A major focus in

the collection is northern Vancouver Island ethnography and logging. The vertical file provides quick reference to people and communities within the collecting area. The museum's growing reference library has an emphasis on Kwakiutl, Coast Salish and Westcoast (Nootkan) art and culture, local history and museology. Through a recent grant from the Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation, out-of-print and rare editions of anthropological and historical works have been purchased.

The archives are available by appointment only. Those interested in using the collection should contact Jeanette Taylor one week in advance.

We look forward to assisting with your research.

Campbell River & District Museum & Archives Society  
1235 Island Highway  
Campbell River, B.C.  
V9W 2C7  
Telephone: 287-3103

Contact Person: Jeanette Taylor, Assistant Curator



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**OVERLAND FROM CANADA TO BRITISH COLUMBIA.** Thomas McMicking. Joanne Leduc, ed. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980. Pp. x1, 121, illus., \$19.95

Thomas McMicking's narrative was originally published in the *New Westminster British Columbian* in fourteen instalments between 29 November 1862 and 28 January 1863 as a continuing letter to the editor, and was headed:

*An account of a journey overland from Canada to British Columbia during the summer of 1862, embracing a general description of the country, together with the various incidents, difficulties and dangers encountered, for circulation in the eastern British colonies, by Mr. Thomas McMicking, of Queenston, Canada West.*

Now, for the first time, the narrative has been published as a whole. Of the nine extant first-hand accounts of the Overlanders, only two others have been published and only one is still in print and readily available. *The Diary and Narrative of Richard Henry Alexander* was published in 1973 by the Alcuin Society who later initiated the project to publish this narrative by McMicking.

The editor is the granddaughter of the Schuberts' who were with the McMicking party, and who accompanied the group who chose the Thompson River route over the Fraser upon reaching Tête Jaune Cache. Mrs. Schubert had with her three small children and gave birth to a fourth soon after arriving at Fort Kamloops. The editor has used family papers and stories along with her other research.

The preliminary pages include a sixteen-page introduction, with an additional six on "William G.R. Hind: the 'Expedition Artist'," and three more for a note on the text. The appendices include "A Note on the McMicking Family" and "A Note on the Trail". There are lengthy and informative notes, a "Selected Bibliography", and an index. The book is well illustrated with twenty-one paintings and drawings, six in colour, by Hind who was with the Redgrave party which followed McMicking's group, and twenty-one photographs.

The only maps included are a small outline map of Canada showing the route and a sketch map based on Palliser's *General Map* showing the route as determined from McMicking's notes. It is a pity that a reproduction of Palliser's map, such as the one printed

in 1965 for the Champlain Society's edition of *The Palliser Papers*, could not have been used. It is a large map, however, and would have had to be folded in, or put in a pocket, or perhaps printed in overlapping sections in appropriate places in the text. Fortunately, the Palliser map is cited so that readers can look it up for further contemporary information about the route.

The index has some peculiarities that should be noted. Although the introduction and notes on Hind are included in the index, the appendices are not. The only entry to Stamford in the index, for example, refers to page two (which is an error for page one), but there is no reference to pages 57 and 58 of the appendices which contain further mention of Stamford. The lengthy "footnotes" have been indexed, but no reference is made to the page which is being footnoted. A reader looking for information about Alexander Fortune will find a reference in the index to "71n17," that is page 71, note 17, but he will have to search the introduction to find the passage (which occurs on page xix) about Fortune to which "17" is a note.

On the whole, little fault can be found with this book. The narrative is an interesting story, well written and well presented. It should appeal to anyone who enjoys travel and adventure stories, with the added benefit of additional information in the notes for those who are interested in pursuing history. The illustrations, particularly Hind's paintings, are an attractive feature and, with the note about the artist, provide an important contribution to the historical resources of the province. I would highly recommend this book as a worthy addition to anyone's library.

*Frances M. Woodward, the well known British Columbia bibliographer, is especially interested in historic maps and in the work of the Royal Engineers in British Columbia.*



Patricia Roy is the Book Review Editor. Copies of books for review should be sent to her c/o B.C. Historical News, P.O. Box 1738, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y3.

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*JOHN STRANGE'S JOURNAL AND NARRATIVE OF THE COMMERCIAL EXPEDITION FROM BOMBAY TO THE NORTHWEST COAST OF AMERICA.* (with introductory material by A.V. Venkatarama Ayyar, John Hosie and F.W. Howay). Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1982, Pp. 144, illus., \$12.00 U.S. (May be ordered from Ye Galleon Press, Fairfield, Washington, 99012).

Ye Galleon Press has established itself as a unique publishing venture. Its handsomely printed and bound publications, devoted to the early history of the Northwest Coast of the United States and Canada, can be purchased at an unusually economical price. Its policy would appear to be to make widely available materials which have long been out of print or difficult to come by. But as the publisher tells us in his colophon to the present volume that "this was a fun project", we must suspect that he has two loves he wishes to share with as many as possible: the printer's craft and the early history of this corner of our world.

Strange's voyage was essentially commercial in its purpose. It was directly inspired by the reference to the potentialities of the fur trade of the Northwest Coast in the official publication of Cook's third voyage. Though Strange was employed by the East India Company, the venture was an independent affair, financed by himself and his friend David Scott, also an official of the Company. Moreover, the Company furnished supplies, ammunition and men. (One of them, Alexander Walker, who was later to rise to the rank of Brigadier General, also kept extensive notes. His papers, recently acquired by the Scottish National Library, complement Strange in his more detailed description of the conduct of trade and his astute and perceptive observations of the Nootka. A microfilm of his notes has been acquired by the B.C. Provincial Archives).

No expense was spared to equip the expedition in the best manner possible. Two appropriately named ships, the "Captain Cook" and the "Experiment", manned by professional crews, were lavishly equipped for their journey. The planning as revealed by the formal instructions was excessively ambitious. A military unit was embarked to be left behind as an assertion of British sovereignty. It was also hoped that new discoveries would be made. Yet the result was commercially disastrous. Strange and Scott lost almost their entire investment and found no new lands. To add to his misfortunes, Strange later discovered that Hannah preceded him as the first European to visit Nootka Sound after Cook.

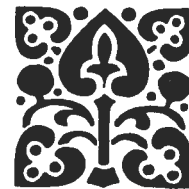
Nevertheless, his journal is of interest. Strange was a man of education and intelligence. His engagingly written account is important to historians and ethnologists alike. Not only does he amplify some of Cook's observations and confirm others; he gives the

first substantial account of how a commercial expedition was carried out. He gives insights into its financing, risks, and methods, its possibilities and limitations, and especially the Indian reaction to the trade. Ethno-historians will wish for more detail of Indian life in this very early post-contact period. But we can still be grateful for what Strange gives us.

This volume brings together under one cover the main published materials relating to the voyage. The Journal is introduced by a paper read by A.V. Venkatarama Ayyar, who published the original edition, before the Indian Historical Records Commission in December, 1928; John Hosie's "remarks" on the voyage which appeared in the Fourth Annual Report of the British Columbia Historical Association; and F.W. Howay's article written for the British Columbia Historical Quarterly, 1941, on Strange's sailing directions. The sources of this "introductory material" are not given.

Such a handsome edition of an important work, so long out of print and now available at an attractive price, should be on the shelf of all who are interested in British Columbia history.

*Freeman Tovell, a Victoria resident, is especially interested in Spanish voyages to the Northwest Coast.*



*SIMON PETER GUNANOOT: TRAPLINE OUTLAW.* David Ricardo Williams. Victoria: Sono Nis, 1982. Pp. 170, illus., \$12.95

Four years ago, when reviewing a book on Canadian outlaws that included the story of Simon Gunanoot, John Morgan Gray asked: "Is there a good reason for re-telling these stories unless the retelling provides a good deal of new information or they are supremely well-told?"<sup>1</sup> David Williams' book on the life and trial of Simon Peter Gunanoot proves that the story was worth one more airing. Using material "not available to earlier writers", Williams offers a factual approach to what he terms a "romantic episode".

The Skeena area was frontier territory at the turn of the century. Premier Richard McBride, who visited the region in 1905, was favourably impressed with the new British Columbia. Allowing for some inevitable racism, the white people of the area lived in comparative harmony with the Indian communities; the Indian uprising of 1883 that had been serious enough to

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warrant the building of a fort and the arrival of a gunboat from Victoria was in the far if not the dim past. Change was in the air with the 1902 proposal of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway to extend its line to the coast, the discovery of gold on the Igenika River, and the resultant increase in prospectors, settlers and speculators, but the affairs of the Skeena were unlikely to draw nation-wide attention.

This changed in 1906 when a Gitksan Indian, Simon Peter Gunanoot, apparently murdered two white men, Alex McIntosh and Maxwell LeClair, and fled into the bush with his wife, children, parents, brother-in-law Peter Himadam (also implicated in the murders) and Peter's wife, Christine. The group remained hidden from the law for thirteen years. With the passing of time, Gunanoot became something of a folk hero and both Indians and whites concealed his whereabouts from the law. In 1913, after arranging with friends for a good defense lawyer, Gunanoot gave himself up, stood trial and was acquitted of the murder of McIntosh; he did not stand trial for the murder of LeClair.

Williams strips away the romantic aura with which other writers had surrounded the life of Gunanoot. Using a variety of sources, including legal documents, diaries, reminiscences, newspapers, and interviews, he draws a portrait of the Indian that is far from heroic; Williams' Gunanoot was not a victim of the white invasion. The author reveals him a someone who took advantage of the white man's presence to compete successfully in the white man's world; Gunanoot was a man of property and prosperity.

Apparently, in either a jealous or drunken rage — one of the questions that remains unanswered — he shot two men in the back, threatened to kill his wife, shot at the child on her back and slaughtered his horses, one with a pick-axe. After retreating to the bush, an environment with which he was familiar and one which, according to the author, held few fears for him, he continued to trap and, with the aid of friends, sell his furs.

Before surrendering, he secured the aid of Stuart Henderson, possibly the province's best and most expensive lawyer. Williams, a lawyer himself, believes, and he is convincing in his arguments, that the prosecution was so inept and public sentiment so strongly in favour of the Indian that, although Gunanoot was declared "not guilty", the trial did not establish his innocence. Using evidence either not known or not presented at the trial, Williams argues Gunanoot was guilty — although he points out that there are the unanswered questions of Simon's continued protestations of innocence and Christine's deathbed confession of LeClair's murder — and these contradictions leave nagging doubts.

The book is highly informative on many points. Although Williams cannot entirely negate the almost comic-opera aspects of the search for the fugitives, he does reveal the unavoidable difficulties facing

conscientious law officers. He details the problems experienced both by the prosecution and defence lawyers and gives insights into the workings of the legal system as it was in the early decades of the century. The author briefly places his book in a wide perspective by tracing the rift in Indian/White relations in the Skeena area but he gives too much emphasis to what he himself considers a non-incident and ignores pre-1900 problems.

The book has several minor but irritating flaws. There is a marked tendency to repetition; perhaps not trusting to his readers to remember among all the detail, Williams describes the relationship between Gunanoot and Peter Himadam four times — once in a confused manner that obviously escaped the editor. There are contradictions. Williams seems unsure whether the Indian was a folk hero and legend or a forgotten man; and, having established that Gunanoot was not the heroic figure enshrined by both the press and, to some extent, by other writers, he sympathetically equates him with the "battle-scarred" veterans of Passchendaele. There is also an obvious error. When Williams argues that Ikey Moore "was hopelessly drunk before and after the killings" and could not therefore have been responsible for the murders, he is in error. According to an earlier statement, Moore was drunk at the *inquest*, a good twelve hours after the events.

But the book's major weakness is its lack of footnotes. Without documentation, there is no way the reader can distinguish the author's ideas, analyses and conclusions from those of the sources listed in the bibliography or from those supplied by interviewees upon whose information the author "relied heavily". The comments of government officials, so crucial to Williams' thesis, could be found in public records, private papers or even the so often erring newspapers. (And newspapers when cited are not always dated.)

It is particularly important to be able to assess sources when the author himself seems uncertain of them, or when uncorroborated sources are used to denigrate a character. Twice, in Chapters III and VIII, Williams expresses distrust of information supplied by Hazelton resident Sperry Cline; yet, in Chapter VII, the reader is told that Cline's account of the Indian trouble "cannot be improved upon" and his assessment of local officials clearly influenced the writer's opinion of them. Williams uses the unsupported letter of Charlie Barrett as evidence that the Indian Agent's wife, Margaret Loring, had created, through her "overheated imagination" an absurd situation. According to her daughter Constance Cox — who Williams cites, neither fully nor correctly, as one of his primary sources — Mrs. Loring was a stern, reserved individual, who, because of her calm nature and dependability, was in demand as both nurse and mid-wife; she travelled great distances in bitter winter conditions to perform these duties.<sup>2</sup> As Margaret Hankin, wife of Hazelton's founder, Thomas Hankin,

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she had lived through the threatened attack of 1883 and, both before and after her husband's death, had traded with the Indians for many years. In the case of apparent contradictions of this nature, assessment of source material is vital.

In spite of Williams' new "trial" of Simon Gunanoot, the arguments over the Indian's innocence or guilt will continue. Williams has presented a strong case for Gunanoot's guilt but some of the evidence remains inconclusive. There will be those who question the memories of old men who were but children at the time of the event; oral sources, like written sources, must be substantiated. Yet David Williams' book on Gunanoot can be considered the definitive work on the subject; definitely not only for the questions it answers but for the unanswerable questions it exposes.

*Margaret Whitehead is the author of The Cariboo Mission.*

<sup>1</sup> *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. LIX, No. 1, March, 1978, pp. 81-82

<sup>2</sup> Constance Cox and Eve McLean, "Seed of a Sourdough", Unpublished manuscript, family records.



**CANADIAN HISTORIC SITES: OCCASIONAL PAPERS IN ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY NO. 26: "Grubstakes to Grocery Store: Supplying the Klondike, 1897 - 1907", by Margaret Archibald and "St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Lake Bennett, British Columbia," by Margaret Carter. Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch. Parks Canada, 1981. Pp. 294, illus., \$8.00 (in Canada), \$9.60 (outside Canada) [This Occasional Papers... also includes two articles on the archaeology of the "Old Fort Point Site" on Lake Athabasca which are not reviewed here.]**

Those interested in the Klondike Gold Rush and the history of the Yukon will welcome Archibald's and Carter's monographs. The articles provide valuable insights into distinct and interesting aspects of the

rush.

Essentially, "Grubstake to Grocery Store" as Margaret Archibald suggests in the introductory "Abstract", "examines the Yukon trade in provisions and general merchandise during and immediately after the Klondike Gold-rush." Several basic elements moulded the system which developed. The Yukon region supplied little of the stamper's needs for foodstuffs or products. Most goods were brought in from the "outside". They had to be hauled over long distances; there were severe weather conditions to be combated; storage was difficult and expensive; and the credit arrangements generally used in Canada were not suited to the Klondike situation.

Archibald has provided a comprehensive treatment of the merchandising system which evolved in response to these, and other factors. The relationships which developed between suppliers, transportation organisations, and "inside" wholesalers and retailers are examined and clearly presented. Readers interested in the histories of New Westminster, Victoria, and Vancouver will find useful references and observations on the activities of businessmen from these communities.

In addition, Archibald carefully relates the activities in the Yukon to business conditions in the rest of Canada and the United States, and makes comparisons, for example, between grocery prices in Dawson with those prevalent in the rest of Canada. Some observations on the importance of brand-name products and the degree of their market penetration are most informative. Twelve detailed appendices give some good statistics and list firms and products to be found in the Dawson region.

Margaret Carter's article on the church at Lake Bennett examines a very different aspect of the gold rush. The settlement of Bennett was at the meeting of the White Pass and Chilkoot trails and at the head of lake and river navigation on the Yukon. In 1897 the Presbyterian minister in nearby Skagway, sensing the possibilities of the location, set about establishing a church in Bennett. In '98, '99 and 1900 it was a populous community. Completion of the White Pass and Yukon Railway in 1900, linking tidewater at Skagway with the Yukon River at Whitehorse, meant the demise of Bennett. In 1902, the last minister abandoned the church there.

In large part, "St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church..." is concerned with the fine church building, celebrated throughout Western Canada, which Bennett's third minister, the Rev. J.A. Sinclair, built in 1899. It remains one of the more picturesque remnants of the gold rush, its exterior, in Carter's words, "a curious but successful combination of frontier necessity and civilized taste."

The reasons for that necessity and taste are fully explored in the article. Carter lays to rest "the mystery of St. Andrew's Church," the oral tradition that the building had not been finished or used for religious

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services. Carter explains that, as was usual in frontier communities, the church building filled a role in the life of the community well beyond its religious functions.

The bringing together of these two articles is a bonus for the reader. Here are two separate and distinct aspects of the same great event. Interestingly, Carter points out that the railway rates charged by the White Pass and Yukon were "competitive" and therefore Bennett as a trans-shipping point declined whereas Archibald argues that Dawson merchants and residents repeatedly complained that the railway's tariffs were much too high: two contrasting, yet valid, viewpoints.

Photographs are important to both articles: in Archibald they number fifty-nine, in Carter seventy-four. They are reproduced clearly and integrated well with the text. Carter provides a simple, effective map. There are a few typographical errors, minor but irritating. The book is an unfortunate size, 21cm by 21½cm, and is inadequately bound; its size and limp cover make it awkward to hold.

*George Newell, a resident of Prince Rupert, has a long-standing interest in the history of British Columbia and the Yukon.*



**W.A.C. BENNETT.** Rosemary Neering. Don Mills: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1981. Pp. 63, illus.

*W.A.C. Bennett*, by Rosemary Neering, is a short biography written for use in high schools. Contained in this book is an account of the late Mr. Bennett's life and political career.

The biography commences in 1911, when Bennett was eleven years old and living in the town of Hampton, New Brunswick. This ambitious young man then moved to western Canada where, based in Kelowna, B.C., he began his political career. The book presents in a clear and easily understood fashion Bennett's long political struggle to attain the role of premier. His persistent nature earned him this position which he maintained for twenty years. The biography concludes with Bennett's death in 1979, six years after his party's defeat and his own political retirement.

The language used in this study is simple, and the style is quite factual, although a story line is maintained throughout. This style of writing is appropriate. It is much easier for a student to become involved in a book that contains a story line as opposed to a book of

only facts and dates.

Included in this biography are many well-chosen quotations from Bennett's years. These quotations allow the reader to develop an accurate image of Bennett's personality. There are also numerous photographs of Bennett's political supporters and adversaries.

The short length of the book works more as an advantage than a disadvantage if it is to be used as an exercise book for high school students. The length allows students to read the book quickly, still receive a good summary of Bennett's life and career. It also allows the book to be easily used for class discussion.

The book's point of view towards Bennett is definitely a positive one. In fact, I felt rather disturbed at the amount of glorification. From this biography one can conclude that Bennett was a faultless leader. The only mistakes that were present were those made by Robert Sommers, the Forests Minister, and Phil Gaglardi, the Highways Minister. Personally, I feel this is the book's only major shortcoming.

The information, style of writing, photographs and length all make Rosemary Neering's *W.A.C. Bennett* a worthy book to be used in high schools to provide average students with a basic understanding of the life and political career of one of British Columbia's most productive premiers.

*Jeff Wooley is a Grade 10 student at Esquimalt Senior Secondary School.*



**VICE REGAL MANSIONS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.** Peter Neive Cotton. Vancouver: Elgin Publications, 1981, Pp. 118, illus., maps, \$24.95

Peter Neive Cotton was British Columbia's "first serious restoration architect" and was one of the first in B.C. to advocate the preservation of heritage buildings. While working in Victoria in 1958 as provincial architect in charge of interior design for the restoration of Government House, which had been destroyed by fire in April 1957, Peter Cotton commenced to research and write the history of the province's vice regal mansions. Over the years various additions and amendments were made to the original draft, but at the time of his death in 1978 Cotton's "labour-of-love" remained in manuscript form. With the editorial help of friends and financial assistance from The British Columbia Heritage Trust, *Vice Regal Mansions of British Columbia* has now been published



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as a handsome tribute to one of the founders of B.C.'s heritage conservation movement.

Cotton's book traces the history of governors' and lieutenant-governors' official homes in British Columbia from the colonial period to the completion in 1959 of the present Government House. Short references to the backgrounds of appointed occupants and brief descriptions of political issues, particularly during the colonial period, set the stage for a fuller exploration of the buildings themselves. These are well illustrated in the many maps, drawings, and photographs that fill more than half the book.

Black and white photographs of both exteriors and interiors are superb. Reproduction of the vice regal mansions' floor plans are also excellent, documenting the social use of interior space characteristic of the upper portion of B.C. society.

Despite the successful presentation of its visual elements, *Vice Regal Mansions* in the end leaves the reader disappointed. The written text may on occasion be informative: for example, details of plumbing, lighting, roofing, interior furnishings, appliances and grounds provide intriguing glimpses into British Columbia's material history. But the book makes no attempt to account for the architectural design of B.C.'s Government Houses, so well portrayed in historical photographs and drawings. Nor does it explain the historical significance of the building materials used in, or the architectural styles adopted for, government mansions.

We are not told what influences shaped the architectural character of these buildings, nor are we informed of the effect they in turn might have exerted on other structures in the province. In short, the visual record of B.C.'s vice regal mansions is presented in an interpretive vacuum. One wonders if pictures in

themselves can fulfil The British Columbia Heritage Trust's large goal of expanding our understanding of the province's built heritage.

*Robert A.J. McDonald teaches British Columbia history at the University of British Columbia.*



*THE BOOM YEARS : G.G. NYE'S PHOTOGRAPHS OF NORTH VANCOUVER, 1905-1909.* Written and compiled by Donald J. Bourdon. North Vancouver, B.C. : Hancock House, 1981. Pp. 85, \$9.95 paper.

Using photographs taken by the late George G. Nye in North Vancouver, this book is a satisfying survey of life in the city and district at the beginning of the twentieth century. The "boom" referred to the fact that the population of North Vancouver climbed from 365 in 1901 to more than 8,000 ten years later.

George Nye was the area's first professional photographer, and his excellent photographs, discovered in an attic in 1970, were donated to the North Shore Museum and Archives. The book consists of 33 full-page pictures, with short explanations on the facing pages. The writer, Donald Bourdon, is now on the staff of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute of Calgary.

*David Grubbe is a member of North Shore Historical Society.*

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## **New Titles**

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Allen, Harold T. *Forty Years Journey: The Temperance Movement in British Columbia to 1900.* Victoria, 1982. 138 p., \$8.00. (Available from the author, 7850 Champlain Crescent, Vancouver, B.C.)

Boit, John. *Log of the Union: John Boit's remarkable voyage to the Northwest Coast and around the world 1794-1796;* edited by Edmund Hayes, specially illustrated by Hewitt R. Jackson. (North Pacific studies no. 6.) [Portland] Oregon Historical Society, 1981, xxxviii, 136 p., ill., \$12.95 US.

Bradshaw, Janice. *Heritage conservation in British Columbia: a selected bibliography.* Victoria, Heritage Trust, 1980. 71 p.

Brock, Peter *Fighting Joe Martin founder of the Liberal Party*

*in the west: a blow by blow account.* Toronto & Vancouver, National Press, 1981. 418 p.

Dunae, Patrick. *Gentlemen emigrants: from the British public schools to the Canadian frontier.* Vancouver, Douglas & McIntyre, 1981. 276 p., ill., \$18.95

Kershaw, Adrian and John Spittle. *The North Bentinck Arm route: Lt. Palmer's trail of 1862.* Kelowna, Okanagan College, 1981. ill., \$6.50

Pearson, Anne. *Sea-Lake: recollections and history of Cordova Bay and Elk Lake.* Victoria, Sea-Lake Editions, 1981. 120 p., ill., \$8.25.

Varley, Elizabeth Anderson. *Kitimat my valley.* Terrace, Northern Times Press, 1981. 229 p., ill., \$12.95 pa.

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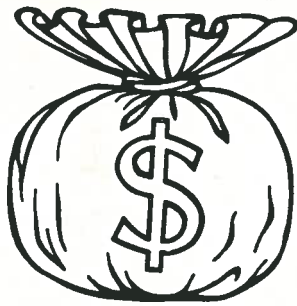
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**Please, can you send me a 1982/1983 membership list in your historical society. Be sure to include name(s), address and postal code.**

**Send it to:**

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**I'm looking forward to the same co-operation that I got from all the local groups last year.  
Thanks.**

*Catherine Henderson*

**P.S. Dues are still only \$3 per household!**