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Journal of the B.C. Historical Federation

"Alpine Club Summer Camps"

MEMBER SOCIETIES

★★★★★ ★★★★★★★

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 31st should include telephone numbers for contact.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL NEWS

Volume 24, No. 2 **Journal of the B.C. Historical Federation** *Spring - 1991*

Editorial

A Letters to the Editor Column appears on page 31 of this issue. We invite our readers to mail in their comments, addendums or questions when these arise.

The Summer 1991 issue will be on the theme "B.C.'s Coast and Islands". We have received contributions describing people and events up and down our western area. Some surprizing facts are revealed about happenings of years ago in settings on the Sunshine Coast, Queen Charlottes, Salt Spring, Savary, Kuper, Harbledown and Vancouver Islands. The theme was chosen to tie in with the 1991 Conference being held in Duncan May 9-12. [Deadline for registration is May 1st. Act now if you wish to attend. Obtain a registration packet from the secretary of your local historical society, or telephone 746-6612 (days) or 748-4650.]

Despite guidelines suggesting that there is an optimum number of words for items in this magazine, we have decided to share with you pieces that would be spoiled if condensed. "Passport to Paradise" started out as a small project and expanded to take almost a year of research. We thank Mary Andrews, and other contributors, for volunteering their time and effort for the benefit of readers of the B.C. Historical News.

Naomi Miller

Cover Credits

"A.O. Wheeler and Two Ladies at Yoho Camp, 1906". This is a picture taken at the very first Alpine Club of Canada's Summer Camps. The garb of the ladies shown here and in "Glissaders" on page 24 provoke amusement and amazement today. Similarly the males with white shirts and ties, and frequently a pipe in mouth, presented a contrast to later hikers and mountaineers.

Photo Courtesy of: Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Banff, Alberta.

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A Moon-lighting Adventure

by Frank Lightbody

It seems everybody is searching for something completely different to do for at least a part of each year - something exciting, venturesome, something attention absorbing. If this should also provide opportunity for financial gain - so much the better. For many the answer is being found in the moon-lighting of holiday time. When I decided to try it, too, little did I anticipate the very real perils that the first of my moon-lighting experiences was going to produce.

I had inherited, or so I thought, a natural inclination toward the sea. It had been with me ever since those early years when I raced bare-footed along the reddish sandy caked shore of the Bay of Fundy trying to outrun that cresting, tumbling wave - the tidal bore. Moreover, my uncles had all been sea-captains, building their sturdy wooden sailing vessels at Parsborro, Nova Scotia, and carrying their cargoes world wide.

Little wonder then that one summer I suggested to a friend, "J.D.G.", that we join in the purchase of a gill-netter, go to Rivers Inlet three hundred miles north of Vancouver, and make a fortune harvesting salmon.

Finding a boat for sale was no problem. For $1800 we acquired the **Melissa,** a twenty-eight footer which we were told had already been up the coast many summers and which should easily make the trip one more time. The deal also included two nets each one hundred fathoms long, plus floats and lead lines.

That we might enjoy and lavish attention on our **Melissa** we selected a small wharf near a sand-bar at the mouth of the Fraser River, where we tied her up. Diligently we scrubbed the little cabin, touched up the white paint, greased moving gears of the drum and by beaching the boat on the sand-bar examined the hull at low tide. Below the water-line we found seams in need of caulking and a soft spot over which we nailed an eighteen inch square of lead sheathing. Thinking we were now reasonably ship-shape and sea-worthy we stocked the larder with abundant provisions planning to set forth come tomorrow's dawn.

It was Thursday, June 28th, when two eager beavers rushed through the first breakfast aboard. As Jack had previously operated a lumber camp boat he naturally fitted into the role of Chief Engineer. With two hands he gripped the heavy iron fly-wheel of our old five-horse-power Fairbanks-Morse inboard engine and spun it around. There came a spit, a cough and then silence. On his third or fourth effort there came a steady rhythmical "chug-chug-chug". In high spirits I cast off, took the wheel and steered for the Fraser River mouth and the Gulf of Georgia.

Evidence of Jack's expertise became evident sooner than expected. We were just entering the open waters when he called, "Turn around, Frank, we have a leaking gasket!" Back again at the little wharf bolts were drawn and the faulty gasket removed. I was delegated to find the nearest marine shop, secure a replacement and return pronto.

Off I went to the riverside district of Marpole where I made inquiry from place to place. Just nobody had that size and shape of gasket. Finally one helpful suggestion came forth: "Go to the head-office of the company at the north end of the Cambie bridge. They will help you if anybody can."

His words did not sound too promising but I took the bus to down town Vancouver where I soon located a large concrete building marked 'Fairbanks-Morse Ltd.' Through a floor display of beautiful shining new engines I made my way up to the office counter and there explained my problem. The clerk was sympathetic as he returned from a search in the parts room, "I am sorry but we have nothing to match this gasket. However, I'll ask our manager."

Presently there appeared a quite elderly white-haired gentleman. "Can you tell me the year or model number of the engine?" he asked.

"I really do not know," I replied, "but it is the one with the heavy iron fly-wheel which you grip and try to spin in order to start the 'chug-chug-chug'."

That was no help. In his opinion it must be an older engine probably before his time.

"There may be one solution," he added. "Take the old gasket to a shipyard. They will copy the design and make one or two new for you."

A little deflated, off I trundled to a shipyard on False Creek. The good spirit of co-operation with which our predicament was received surprised me. I was positively cheered by the promise that two would be ready by noon the following day. As I hurried back to report progress to Jack I thought about engine gaskets being one problem my uncle did not have.

It was around mid-afternoon, Friday, that once again we put forth to sea. A stiff westerly was blowing. For two days we chugged along passing Texada Island, Powell River, Lund, finally reaching the entrance to the dangerous Yuculta tidal rapids by Stuart Island. There we joined some eight other fish-boats patiently waiting

for slacker water, the only time most gill-netters dared venture through.

We entered in single-file some fifty yards apart. As the channel narrowed and the sides became sheer rock the current raced faster and faster. The wisdom of moving as a pack soon became apparent. Those with the less powerful motors seemed to be at the mercy of the dark boiling swirling whirlpools. Several of the boats were unable to hold any kind of a straight course as the powerful currents swung them all over the place. Only one boat stalled! Immediately two others battled to close in on his sides, tossed lines and towed him slowly forward until safer waters were reached.

Our only damage was a cabin window. Through it I poked an elbow as I fought at one particularly hazardous moment to keep from crashing against the rocks. The drama was a little too exciting for comfort but the **Melissa** had made it through without help.

Once past the Yucultas each boat chose its own route and individual speed. For us progress was slow. We were still less than half way to Rivers Inlet when old faithful embarked on a miss-firing program. Was it dirty gas, a plugged line, a short-circuit in the wiring or simply age? We moved closer to shore where we spotted a fisherman anchored in a small bay. Jack explained our trouble to him. He came aboard and as he inspected our engine his attention settled on a small brass cup, the only shining, clean looking visible part. He removed the cap and on peering inside exclaimed, "Look, there's no oil in there, it's dry!"

Jack poured in a small quantity of good oil, we thanked him heartily and were off.

For an hour or so there seemed to be some improvement then the problem started all over again. As we struggled along the wilderness coast a small logging operation appeared in view. Once more we sought advice. Once more the shining brass cup became the focus of attention. This expert unscrewed the cap and looking inside, "You've got oil in there. Wipe out the oil and you'll be O.K." We did and believe it or not for a while there was improvement. To this day I do not know which man was right. That night, however, we carefully examined and cleaned all electrical connections.

Our route now took us away from the mainland side into the more open waters of Johnstone Strait. Jack continued to hover over the engine lest it cough, spit, and stop!

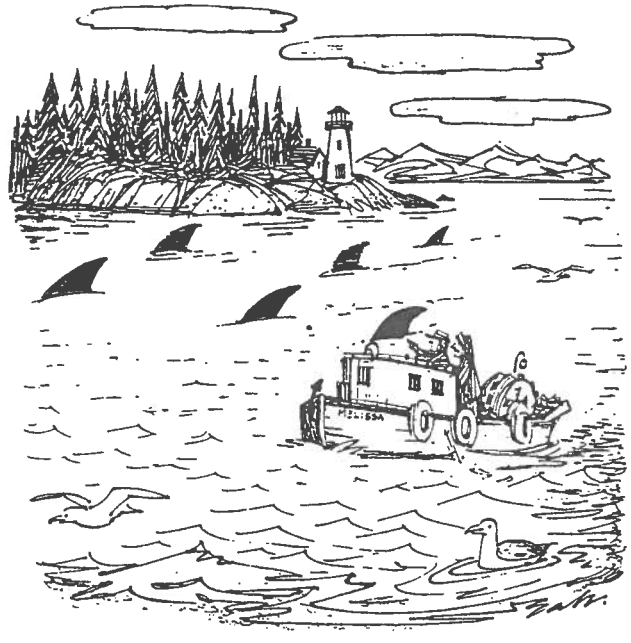
The weather was rapidly becoming nasty - a gale was brewing. And thus we were caught in an area of the Strait known for heavy seas and when a gale blows, beware!

Barely raising his head from the engine vigil Jack called, "Try to roll over them."

"Roll over them?" I muttered, "how in thunder can I roll over them when they are coming from all directions at the same time?" Probably I was too excited and too busy hanging onto the wheel with one hand and the cabin frame with the other to get scared or think about getting sea-sick. We pitched and tossed and rolled. Waves splashed across the deck from one direction then another. In the distance a larger boat which had passed by earlier, slowed almost to a stop waiting, I hoped, to see if we would make it! It must have been the better part of an hour that we battled the storm seeming to get exactly nowhere. And what a relief it was when finally I could detect a narrowing of the gap between us and the coast line of Vancouver Island where lay Kelsey Bay.

'Any port in a storm' might well have been our slogan. The floating wharves and sea-craft along them were quite unsheltered from wind and sea. Everything appeared to be moving, bobbing up and down, bumping around, rocking forward and back. We tried to get some rest but I doubt if even an old salt could have slept in that confusion of movement and melody of a hundred discordant noises. Wharf planking creaked and groaned - old tires used as bumpers squeaked and squealed when boats rubbed forth and back along them, gasoline cans, the dangling ends of ropes and chains - everything loose, added its personal note to the general din.

By morning the Strait had calmed some and it was deemed safe to head north once more. Late afternoon brought us to Alert Bay, wet. A new valve was added to the old-fashion pump for greater efficiency in reducing the bilge. A short walk took us to the village centre, the hotel, where we visited



"Melissa and escorts"

briefly the popular basement parlour. Although crowded, it was obviously a happy gathering place, lively and loud!

Up early we pushed away from the long boom of logs to which we were tied. The Queen Charlotte Strait, however, was running a heavy sea, so we anchored for the night near a lighthouse in Christie Pass. An hour's run the following morning brought us into Cascade Harbour where we joined some eight boats impatiently waiting several days for better weather in order to make the trip across from this northern tip of Vancouver Island to the mainland and to Rivers Inlet.

As weather reports were favourable there was general agreement that we should leave at dawn. One fisherman who had already made three starts and turned back decided to await a calmer sea. As we prepared for this last lap there was revealed, once again that genuine feeling of concern which fishermen, total strangers more often than not, have for each other whenever hazardous conditions prevail. The slower three of us were to go first.

While the open ocean was not as rough as Johnstone Strait it was no millpond. Big heavy rollers with deep wide troughs prevailed. White caps topped the rollers. Two boats faltered en route. We were one! As soon as this was observed another boat manoeuvred to each side, lashed on, then all three moved forward as one until the plugged gas line or whatever on the faltering motor was repaired. It took about nine hours, steady going, before the entrance to Rivers Inlet came into view. Only then did those boats with the powerful motors open up and disappear ahead into the long channel.

The following four or five days were spent rushing about anxiously and impatiently getting ready to fish. Rarely the sun broke through. Then the dampness disappeared, the green mantle of dense forest stood clear and beautiful on the mountain slopes. Soaring and swooping majestically around the tops of the highest older trees eagles broke the silence with their eerie cries. it was a vividly real portrayal of Tennyson's lines:

He clasps the crag with hooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

A few miles up the Rivers Inlet we located a small wharf with some marine services. There we had a net-guard installed. This metal frame around the propeller enabled us to pass across another's net without cutting it and thus avoiding wrathful arraignment for failure to observe a basic courtesy on the fishing grounds. A second hoisting of the stern was done to reinforce the caulking. Next the net was bluestoned and put back on the drum.

It was the evening of July ninth that we made our first set. Our net-end lantern was lighted, made secure on a small wooden float then lowered over the stern and as the boat moved forward the net rolled out. I stood beside the moving net in the well back of the drum to watch over and to carry out the various jobs associated with the fishing. Dressed in a long yellow oil-skin coat, hip rubber boots, pink loose rubber gloves and a rain-proof hat I soon learned what it was all about.

As the boat gained speed faster and faster the net slid past me into the water - that is, until something caught on the drum. Then suddenly everything - net, lead-line, and float-line, jerked taut. I pulled and tugged in vain at the lead-line which somehow became entangled in the nylon mesh of the net. Meanwhile, everything in the water was dragged along. My fingers were bruised right through the gloves but still intact as I yelled, "Stop" and Jack pulled the lever inside the cabin to release the engine clutch. This operation was to be repeated time after time. Finally we had all the net out beautifully in a line with the floats bobbing around and the faint glow of the lantern far back.

Next came the relaxation period as we waited for salmon to hook their heads through the net. As I made my way back to the cabin I noticed that my **new** oil-skin jacket was flapping loose. All three lower buttons were gone!

About an hour later our lantern seemed to be coming closer and closer to the boat. We figured the net was drifting into a circle so we started the drum to roll in the net and begin counting sockeye. The result was a zero! Out the net went again to remain there until dawn. This time there were seven beautiful salmon. We decided to fish around the clock especially since we were told our net was the wrong colour for the area. Catches of two, five, eleven, seven, forty and forty-one followed, each fish weighing about five pounds.

It was typical drizzly Rivers Inlet weather when we moved across the water nearer to Goose Bay. We set out the net. Both of us being short on sleep dozed off! About midnight we were wakened by waves splashing on the rocky shore. Rushing into action we started the engine and proceeded to haul in the net much of which now appeared caught up on the rocks. It was full of fish: some salmon, many cod!

The Company boat which called daily to pick up our catch did not accept cod. Perhaps it was just as well because to extricate each cod from the net it was necessary to cut it out. What a totally miserable job!

The needle sharp spines punctured my gloves and painfully pricked my fingers. Finally I settled for a pair of pliers and a butcher knife. Needless to say we ate cod several meals in a row. It was delicious - more especially so the first one!

Our net suffered several bad tears when pulled free from the rocks and a few more cuts when the butcher knife slipped. The bottom of the boat, however, became drier and drier as the surgery progressed. As

I worked on each cod under the one light at the stern, Jack stood by the cabin in semi-darkness. There he was constantly turning to rattle the pump handle up and down. Finally it dawned on me why he was repeatedly coughing, choking, belching and turning to work the pump again and again. Watching cod surgery for an hour would be difficult for anybody to stomach!

Saturday we tied up at a small wharf and strung out the net. In vain we sought to master the tricky fisherman's method of net repair. One way or another we managed to patch up a few tears before the cold night closed in.

To keep warm we found it necessary to wear more and more clothing. In addition to inner garments each was wearing two pair of trousers, a sweater, a woollen jacket, an oil skin coat and at times an over all overcoat.

As the days and nights sped by our catches of salmon waxed and waned. Sometimes there were fifty in the net; sometimes ten. Once a pod of blackfish passed so close I could almost reach out and touch one. To a passing boat I called, "Will these things bother us?"

Back came the answer, "You'll find out!" It was a little scary not knowing much about these graceful monsters of the deep but on they swam, churning up and down, completely minding their own business.

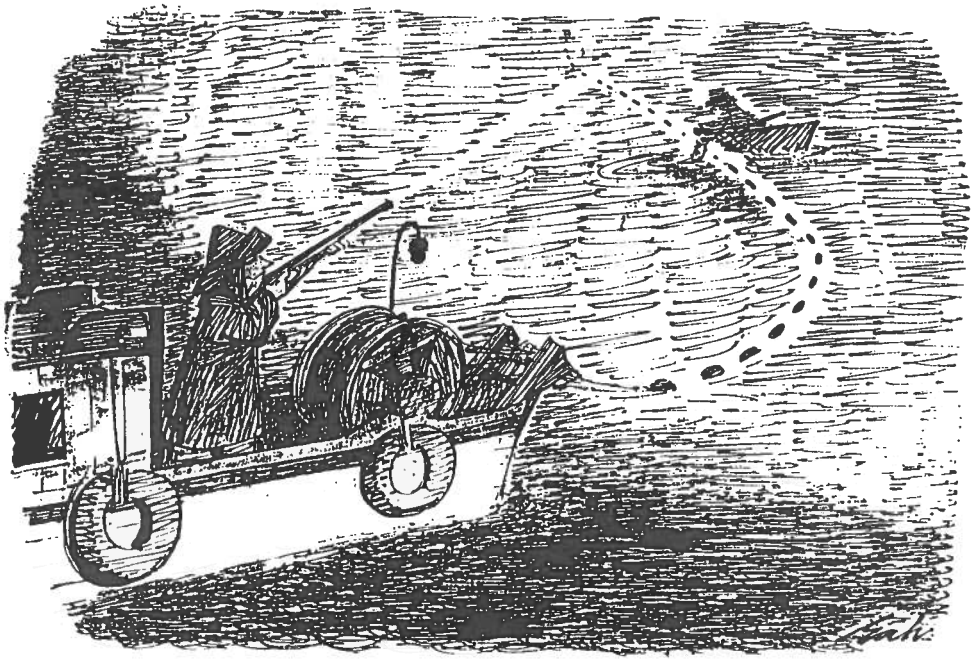
The atmosphere grew somewhat depressing, no sunshine, few fish, little sleep, monotonous canned meals. We decided to drop into Ducanby at the channel entrance. There we enjoyed our first "eating-out-dinner". It was there also that Jack reminded me of his commitment to be home the coming week!! But we were still waiting the so-called "big run" when almost everybody makes large catches. Since we had come such a long way it seemed a great pity not to be fishing there at the peak of the season. One of us should stay. I volunteered?

My emotions were a little confused. I was not exactly overjoyed to find myself suddenly promoted to Captain, Chief Engineer, as well as ship's Surgeon and net man. However, if resolution meant anything I would see it through come what may. After doing everything he could do to prepare me for the lonely command, Jack secured passage on a Packer leaving for Vancouver and was gone.

The **Melissa** really needed two people aboard in order to keep operating safely. Somebody should be on the night net watch while the other slept; somebody was needed in the cabin to disengage the clutch when the net snagged on the drum. The only solution I had if the net caught was to run along the narrow gunnel down the steps into the cabin, pull the lever disengaging the drum, run back to the stern, untangle the lead line, run back to the cabin down the steps, throw in the clutch, then back to the rolling drum, ad infinitum. In rubber boots over slippery wet decking I tried to move as sure-footedly as possible. Although a poor swimmer I felt I could make it to the net, there to hang on, should I slide overboard.

Each day brought some new adventure or some new problem. I deemed it best to stay well inside the inlet away from those net-tearing sharks reported active around the entrance. Fishing was fair, the top catch being sixty salmon in one set. Once the net was out, most of the time I sat leaning against an outside corner of the cabin, the better to keep an eye on things.

So it was that one misty morning just at daybreak while seated at my sentinal post I heard a quiet



"A warning shot and the salmon thief faded into the mist"

paddling coming closer. Presently I made out a man in a small dinghy or canoe moving stealthily along the net. His purpose soon became clear.

At each float which was lower in the water indicating a salmon there he paused, raised the net, and removed the fish! My first impulse was to yell at him but a better idea surfaced. I picked up the small rifle, inserted a bullet and let fly well above his head. The effect was instantaneous. Back into the fog he vanished. I could scarcely believe that which I had just witnessed.

It was also just as another morning dawned that my most satisfying experience occurred. For a change it became my opportunity to help somebody else. Faintly I heard a distant voice, apparently calling for help. Somebody was standing on the deck of the only other boat in sight frantically waving his arms. I got the message. I rolled the net and I hastened to his aid. When near enough to be heard I shouted, "Are you having trouble?"

"Our stove exploded," came the excited reply. "We put out the fire but the engine will not start."

"We were very lucky - not badly burned but the cabin is a wreck....my wife feels terrible about it all!"

As I tossed a tow-line I observed his good lady not stopping to nurse her own bruises - just very busy trying to clean up the mess.

"Yes, lucky indeed," I figured, "very close to being tragic."

Happy to have a chance to help, for two hours I towed them up the channel to a wharf where assistance was available.

It was while there that I caught up on the latest news. For Rivers Inlet the run was reported to be dropping off and that the place to be now was the mouth of the Fraser River, back in home territory. Five boats were readying to leave at midnight. I made it six.

One fisherman knew a short-cut to the open sea rather than going down the wider inlet itself, then south. He explained that at one point in this passage there was a big rock where it would be necessary to veer right. I was to go second in line. Once we were in this narrowest of channels tall trees along the steep sides added to the darkness leaving only the barest shimmer of silver to mark the route. Occasionally I could see the light on the lead boat. Constantly I watched for the designated "big rock". At some point about half way through I heard a distinct scraping noise ahead. I veered right. Up went the bow; down went the stern as the **Melissa** ground to a stop.

My first thought was for those coming behind. I grabbed a lantern and wildly swinging it sideways yelled, "Stop! Stop!" For the next few minutes there was utter confusion. Loud, highly descriptive fisherman language, echoed around in that dark wilderness as engines were thrown into reverse and each skipper battled to avoid heavy collision. When the shouting, splashing and banging finally settled down, one boat moved closer behind me, tossed a rope and pulled full speed astern. The **Melissa** would not budge!

"We must all wait for the tide," he called, as he backed away to join the other three boats.

Cautiously I examined my position. Fickle Fortuna must have been favoring me for about eight feet of the stern end were still balancing in the water keeping the boat upright. Moreover, the top of the big rock was reasonably flat and covered with many layers of slippery, spongy sea-weed thus preventing injury to the bottom. The tide was obviously low but was it still going out? If so the boat could soon roll on its side, slip off the rock, fill and sink. From the decking I secured four stout boards. Very very gingerly I leaned over the side, dug one end of each board deep into the sea-weed on top of the rock and braced the other end against the boat. Thus secured I sat quietly in a central spot until the oncoming tide covered the rock and refloated the full twenty-eight feet. We were still in the blackness of night when all set forth once again, Fraser River bound.

My thoughts turned to wondering if 'salmon fever' were akin to 'gold fever' after a reported new discovery. Clearly a stampede was on to get south for the expected big run there. Through darkness and daylight along the coast I chugged, fortunate to have left one lone slower boat as company and in communication from time to time. It was operated by a Swedish father and son who knew every navigation marker, every lighthouse, every treacherous reef along the way.

When we tied up for our last little meal, they treated me to home-canned moose meat. It was positively delicious! Then as we shook hands and embarked on the last lap, I felt deeply complimented by their suggestion we join up for the trip north next year!!!

I was not, however, home free yet, not by a long shot. As we travelled that evening across the Gulf of Georgia I became alarmed at the brightness of their light about a mile ahead. Could they be on fire? There was no visible smoke. I watched and wondered and watched. Finally it dawned on me. It was a chemical action in the water around their whirling propeller which produced an amazing fiery spectacle, phosphorescence.

Next came an awareness that the old Fairbanks-Morse was running slower than normal. A quick inspection indicated the cause could be low oil. To stop was to lose sight of the guiding light getting farther and farther ahead. It was then I made a decision of questionable wisdom: I resolved to add oil while the motor was running.

Off came the oilcap. So far no problem. I dumped in a quantity of oil. The resulting strong back-fired blast sprayed oil over the engine, onto the ceiling above and over me. With breakneck speed I grabbed the nearest item, my best sweater and sought to mop the oil off the hot engine lest fire start. Next I wiped

the ceiling and finally my face. Recovering from the latest shock I mused, "Ignorance may be bliss but only if one escapes becoming a casualty, or a statistic." With the situation finally remedied I took time to check my bearings. There was no other gill-netter in sight!

To enter the Fraser River for the very first time, in darkness, past that jetty of rocks would be folly. I decided to await daylight and to help pass the time let out a short portion of net. About one hour and exactly one sockeye later I had drifted within talking distance of another fisherman who said he was heading in.

To be safely and snuggly tied up on the Fraser River at long last was the answer to "Happiness is".... I must have slept until noon. Then I hastened to locate a telephone and call the dear ones at home. Next I gave Jack a ring and I am sure he was equally relieved to learn I had made it.

Never again shall I question the high price of salmon in the market place! A newspaper advertisement readily located a buyer for the **Melissa**, another would-be fisherman keen to moonlight during his holidays. We broke even; well, almost! But as for moonlighting experience, exciting, absorbing and different, I'd like to go again tomorrow - even though it is now forty seven years later!

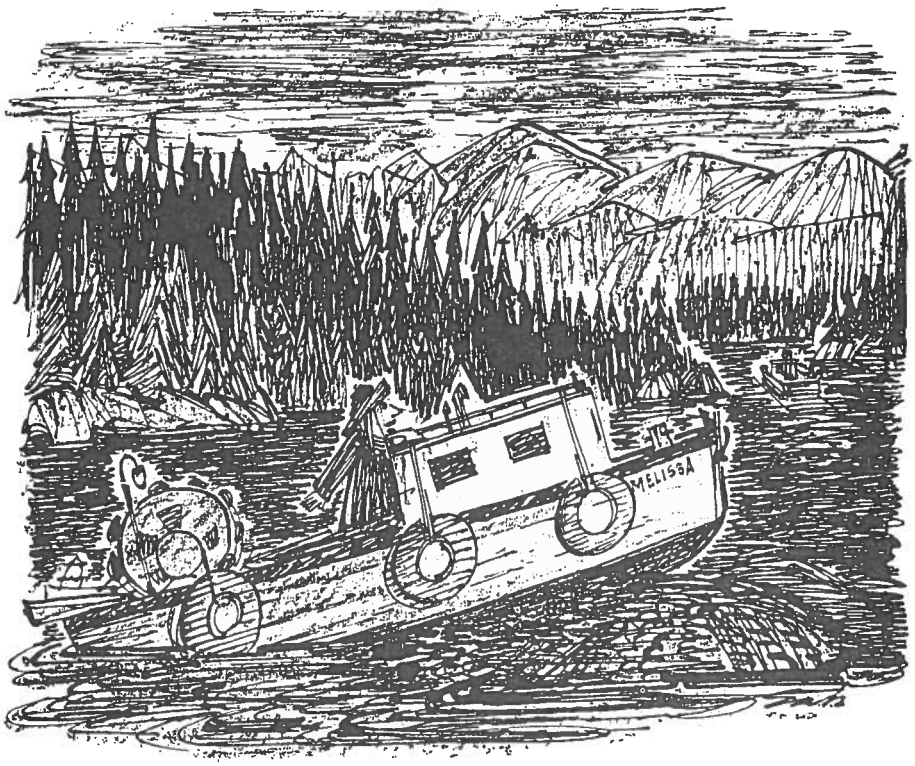
Author's Postscript:

Regulations governing commercial gill-net fishing to-day are radically different. Fifty years ago, anybody with a boat and gear could get a licence for a couple of dollars. Now the licence goes with the boat at around three thousand dollars per foot-length. For the **Melissa** that would mean three thousand times twenty-eight! The issuance of licences is carefully controlled and limited. At times, it is said, they are even willed from father to son or daughter going with the boat.

Historically, stories are still told of the big runs in 1897 and in 1901, the "every fourth year" principle applying. While the big runs are remotely predictable they are still precarious, affected seriously by floods (as in 1955), by heat waves (as in 1963), by pollutants, and a multitude of varying problems which the government and concerned agencies strive assiduously to eliminate. The opening of the new Hell's Gate Fishway, for example, was a major factor in the catch for 1951 increasing 500%. While the Fraser river operates as a leading route to the spawning grounds there are some 1300 spawning streams to watch over. From a publication by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans one learns of the global effort required to protect and perpetuate the industry. This concern has become even greater with the advent of Asian ocean drift-nets up to thirty miles in length!

The author has lived in B.C. since 1910 and now makes his home in North Vancouver. Jack Godfrey and Frank Lightbody were School Principals in Vancouver. Jack passed away some years ago.

Illustrations drawn by Ernest Harris.



"Melissa ground to a stop"

Maillardville and Millside

by Sharon LeClair

Maillardville and Fraser Mills were multicultural communities dominated by French Canadians and European Canadians, most of whom were employed by Fraser Mills. The development of this unique area has been documented from the late 1800's to the mid 1960's.[1] This paper presents an assessment of everyday life considering the aspects of racial and class distinctions within the communities, based on interviews with numerous people who lived in these townsites between 1920 and 1960. History of the area before 1920 should assist in providing a sense of how these communities evolved. Most of the figures, dates and information were from the book **Early Days at Fraser Mills** by J.R. Stewart. [2]

In the summer of 1890 the Mill, which was and still is situated on the Fraser River, northeast of New Westminster, began operation as Ross McLaren Mills, and continued as such until 1902. On March 5th, 1903, new owners took over the Mill and formed Fraser River Sawmills Ltd. A major goal of the new owners was to reduce the numbers of Asiatic labourers employed at the Mill. This was done in view of the growing racial problems in the Province at the time. In 1906, however, one of the Directors of the company expressed concern that they had 120 Hindus working at the Mill, (which is estimated to be about one-third of the total labourers at the Mill at the time), and they did not know what they would do without them because there was a general shortage of labourers in the Province. In fact, the labour supply became acute in 1907, and the Mill was threatening closure. In that same year, the Mill was taken over by an investment syndicate and the assets of the Fraser River Sawmill were transferred to the Canadian Lumber Company. They sought out ways to attract new workers. It was decided that management would recruit French Canadians from the lumbering villages in Quebec. These men were chosen because of their knowledge of the industry, their capability for long, hard hours of work, and because many possessed specific skills. The racial tensions evidenced in the Vancouver Riot of 1907 [3] served to support and reaffirm the Mill's policy of reducing the numbers of Asians they employed. French Canadian lumbermen were the solution to a growing problem. In 1909 Theodore Thereaux and Reverend Father O'Boyle went to Quebec to hire labourers for the Mill.

One hundred and fifty were recruited and they left Montreal on a special Canadian Pacific Railway Train. As promised, the Mill company set aside a number of one acre lots and free lumber for the recruits to build homes and a church for themselves. About one hundred and ten experienced millmen were in the first migration, which arrived on December 5th, 1909.

On June 7th, 1910, one hundred and sixty-six more French Canadians arrived in Maillardville, of which 73 were experienced millmen. Many were young and most were related to those members of the first contingent. The company brought in about twenty-five more French Canadians before Christmas that year, and the total number of recruits was estimated to be enough to replace most of the Asians at the Mill. "Reverend Father O'Boyle asserted that this was the solution to the Oriental labour problems in British Columbia. He declared that an effort would be made to create the same social and religious conditions for the French Canadians, to which they had been accustomed." [4] The construction of the first Roman Catholic Church, Our Lady of Lourdes, in 1910 was the first step towards this effort.

Life for these pioneering settlers was difficult. Settlers who built their own houses on the townsite in Maillardville had to clear their densely wooded lots without the benefits of electricity and running water. As well as working ten hours a day, six days a week, the men not only had to build their own homes, but also clear the land and build their church and school. As promised, the Company did donate the lumber for the buildings, but they charged the settlers for every other incidental such as cartage, supplies, powder, shingles and nails. Residents of Maillardville had to be self-sufficient as it was a two mile walk into the Mill Townsite and about a three mile walk from the Mill to the end of the tram line in Sapperton.

In 1908, the Fraser Mills Townsite had twenty houses. In contrast to the townsite in Maillardville, residents enjoyed streets that were well lit, and by 1910 it had a butcher shop, bakery, barber shop, pool hall and shoe store. At its height, the townsite consisted of seventy-two separate single family dwellings for white workers, located between Pitt River Road (now known as Brunette Street) and the railroad tracks to the south. Houses varied in size, from small bachelor shacks to multi-bedroom houses for larger families, and these houses bordered King Edward Street on both sides, running North and South from the Mill itself, up to Pitt River Road in Maillardville. Fraser Mills Townsite was completely self contained, and even had two resident doctors, although serious cases were referred to the Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster. Most babies were

delivered in the hospital as well. The Mill maintained the houses on this townsite. There was a crew of three or four men who regularly repainted the houses every five years and provided repairs and renovations as were necessary and approved by the Mill management.

In addition, separate boarding houses were provided for the Asians, which were located at the far end of the Mill, across the railroad tracks and very close to the river. These were large structures, designed with walkways in case of flooding, and with water barrels on the roofs in case of fire. This location was very close to the operating Mill, and constantly threatened by flying hot ash from the stacks.

The East Indian Community and the Japanese Community both had their own residential sections on the townsite as well. They too were situated close to the operating Mill by the river.

The Fraser Mills Townsite was located on 450 acres of land, and was a company town known as Millside. Rolf Knight, author of **"Work Camps and Company Towns in Canada and the United States"** [5] provides an explanation for the term "company town".

> Company town refers to communities where most of the housing and other basic services are owned or directly controlled by the company owning the single predominant industry for which the town was established. Not only the work scene but most other setting of social life are controlled by the company. In the classic cases, the company owned the land on which the community hall stood, all the housing, the stores and all community facilities. Class structure was vividly evident in the type of house in which one lived, the circle of friends and parties one attended. In some cases, virtually all public activities, schools, community organizations, hospitals and even churches were either directly, or indirectly subservient to company policy.

The majority of residents in Millside were Canadians of European origin, the balance made up of Chinese, East Indians, Japanese and a few French Canadian families. Rent paid to the Mill was very reasonable, and you were considered lucky to have a home in the townsite, mainly for economic reasons. By the end of 1910, the Mill had 515 men working and securing wages of $45.00 per month, a substantial increase over the monthly wage in 1907 of $25.00 per month. The 1911 Census indicated that at Millside and Maillardville, there were 877 people of all ages and nationalities, of which approximately 168 were Hindus, 57 Japanese, 20 Chinese and the balance, 632 people, were mostly French Canadians and Canadians of European origin.

By 1920, then, there were three quite distinct communities in Coquitlam; furthest from the Mill, above Pitt River Road was the French Canadian settlement of Maillardville, which was granted its own Post Office in 1912, and was officially subdivided from Coquitlam in that year; Millside, and the Oriental, the East Indian and Japanese Townsites. In 1913, Fraser River Sawmills Ltd. (this name was retained during the takeover in 1907) broke away from the District of Coquitlam, which meant a great tax saving for the Mill.

Mr. and Mrs. Locken, Mr. Boe, and Mrs. McBay, several of the people interviewed, indicated that the residents of Millside had a real sense of community. Everyone knew everyone else, the children all played together. Mrs. Locken remembers the townsite as a "kind of League of Nations." Olive McBay said "It was a great community to grow up in. If it hadn't been for the school system, though, problems might have arisen. I lived there as a child in the 1920's. I certainly remember we didn't play with the Orientals or East Indians as preschoolers, but once we went to school, we all played together."

There were at least six Norwegian families on the townsite, as well as Swedish and other Scandinavian families. The Scandinavian families were particularly quick to acquire their Canadian citizenship. Olive McBay's Father, John Stewart, was the company store Manager, and it was he who stood up with these new immigrants in front of the Judge in New Westminster, when they went to obtain their Canadian Citizenship. Mrs. McBay said, "I remember, with so many people wanting citizenship, my Father had to call the Judge and ask if he might stand for five people at a time because he was just too busy ..." He stood up for everyone, the Chinese, East Indians and the Japanese. He had several Japanese working for him as "Joe" boys at the general store. When these men were interned during World War II, they corresponded faithfully with Mr. Stewart and, in fact, one returned after the war to work in the store with Mr. Stewart once again. Mr. Locken remembers the internment of the Japanese during the War, and says that the residents of the townsite protested the actions of the government in relocating the Japanese.

The war brought back other memories to Mrs. McBay. She said, "I remember during the war when butter was rationed. The East Indians were finding it difficult to cook without enough butter and explained their story to my Father. He, in turn, wrote the chap in Ottawa to see if something might be done. Under the circumstances, their rations for butter were increased and this put my Father in a very good light with the East Indian community.

The Chinese townsite was very small, and Mrs. Wong's house was at the top of the street. She remembers a small store at the bottom of the street. "We moved to Fraser Mills when I was married, maybe I was 22 years old," she said. Mrs. Wong was born in 1909, in Vancouver, and spoke English

from a very early age. She remembers the big strike at the Mill in 1931, therefore she must have moved to the townsite just prior to the strike. "My house belonged to Fraser Mills, my house was not bad, it was a family house. You were lucky to have a place to live in those days and they [the Mill] took good care of everything." Mrs. Wong remembers the workmen repairing her home whenever necessary, and, in particular, when the indoor plumbing was put in. She said "I stayed home most of the time with the children, I would do the work at home always. I looked after people when they worked at the Mill." According to Elmer Boe and Hank Locken, Mrs. Wong was a wonderful lady and known by all at the Mill. Being one of the only Chinese to speak English, Mrs. Wong would take new immigrants into the Mill and set them up in the employment office with the payroll department. She would interpret for everyone. Elmer Boe remembers his years in the employment office (1950's) "when I was first in employment at the Mill, it was Mrs. Wong we dealt with, if we needed a crew for a special job, we could call her up and she would get us the very best men. She would even check up later to be sure we were happy with the men she had chosen. She was a very intelligent person."

Mrs. Wong was happy in her home on the Chinese townsite. "Everyone helped each other in the Chinese townsite," she said. When asked about money, Mrs. Wong answered "I guess there was just enough to go around, yes, I had to sew all the clothes. I had a little garden to grow vegetables, in the back yard." When asked about racial prejudices, and whether or not she remembered these sorts of tensions at Fraser Mills, she replied: "In the old days, we don't talk about all these things. I don't know how everyone felt, if they were happy." But for herself, Mrs. Wong indicated she felt comfortable in her role in the community.

With respect to racial prejudices on the townsites, Elmer Boe said, "I always felt things were very friendly and open - no problems. We'd go down to Chinatown all the time." Olive McBay's memories are slightly different, however, "I did go to Chinatown once with my Father, but we were not allowed to go down, too much gambling I guess. Most of the Chinese didn't have their families. I remember the fellows on the council decided they had to clamp down and they brought in the Mounties and they had a raid and they cleaned it up. So many of the Chinese would get their wage and then gamble it away so they wouldn't have enough money to live or any to send home." Mrs. Locken wasn't allowed to go to Chinatown either. She said, "There was gambling and corrupt practices and my Mother didn't allow us to go down, although the boys did anyway. They would go to Popeye's Dam and swim."

Those in the East Indian community kept very much to themselves. They were situated at the furthest end of the Mill and, again, most children were forbidden from going down there. The reasoning for this was that it was too dangerous an area to get to. Their church was the focal point, and it is remembered by all as being spectacular, comparatively speaking. Some braver children would hide and watch the religious ceremonies held in the church. Everyone interviewed mentioned the teasing the young East Indian boys had to withstand with regard to the turbans they wore. "It was nothing worse than calling a Frenchman a pea souper! It was all in fun." [6] This community slowly got smaller, until in 1959 "when I left the Mill, there were only two East Indians working in the Mill, as compared to 1979, when I returned, approximately 30% of the workforce was East Indian." [7] Unfortunately, no-one seems to have a logical explanation as to why the East Indian community dwindled from 168 people in 1911, to two in 1959, although the management's policy of wanting to reduce the numbers of Asiatic labourers could have been a contributing factor.

The French Canadian townsite of Maillardville was centered around Our Lady of Lourdes Parish on Laval Square. It is interesting to note that all attempts to incorporate Maillardville failed. The Province would not hear of a French speaking village and Maillardville, as a French cultural entity, got little more recognition by the Municipal Council of the District of Coquitlam.[8]

Denny Leclair suggested, "There was always one token Frenchman on the council. In the early days, these men were appointed. But even later, when these men were voted in, there was only ever one francophone on the council."

Olive McBay thought that "Maillardville had a very poor name in Vancouver and New Westminster. No-one admitted to living in Maillardville. Yet, they were delightful people, but were afraid of the outside. They were brought out for their cheap labour, they stayed together because of their language, but they were suspicious. When I was teaching, some of the children's parents were very suspicious, until they got to know me. Their only security was to stay together."

Denny Leclair remembers the kids from New Westminster calling Maillardville "Mudville". He remembers that "they would say, when you get off the bus in Maillardville, be careful because you will slip in the mud."

Social life in Maillardville centered around the church. Parishioners organized bazaars, suppers and card playing nights. The popular French Canadian custom in the winter was "La Soiree", the evening when someone would invite all of the French group to their house. Denny Leclair remembered "they would drink beer, play whist, tell stories, sing and dance. This would go on to all hours of the night. They would probably have four Soirees during the winter, and if you weren't invited, well, it was like a kick in the butt! Of course my Dad

would sing all the old Quebec and Ontario songs."

Up to World War II, the economic situation was good and it actually improved during the war. But, once the war ended the demand for lumber decreased as the competition increased. [9] The standard of living slowly declined. "Before the war we barely had enough money, so if you were struggling to eat, or struggling for whatever, it was a hell of a lot easier to be bitchy with your neighbour, or the guy you didn't recognize, than it was during the war when everyone had money in their pockets and you were just fighting about who would buy the beer." [10] When times got tough, it seemed people got together. There was prejudice in Maillardville, within the French people themselves. "Some of them were more cultured, educated and had more money and smaller families. Everyone knew who these upper class families were", suggested Denny Leclair. When everyone had enough money, the distinction between these upper class families and the rest were not as noticeable.

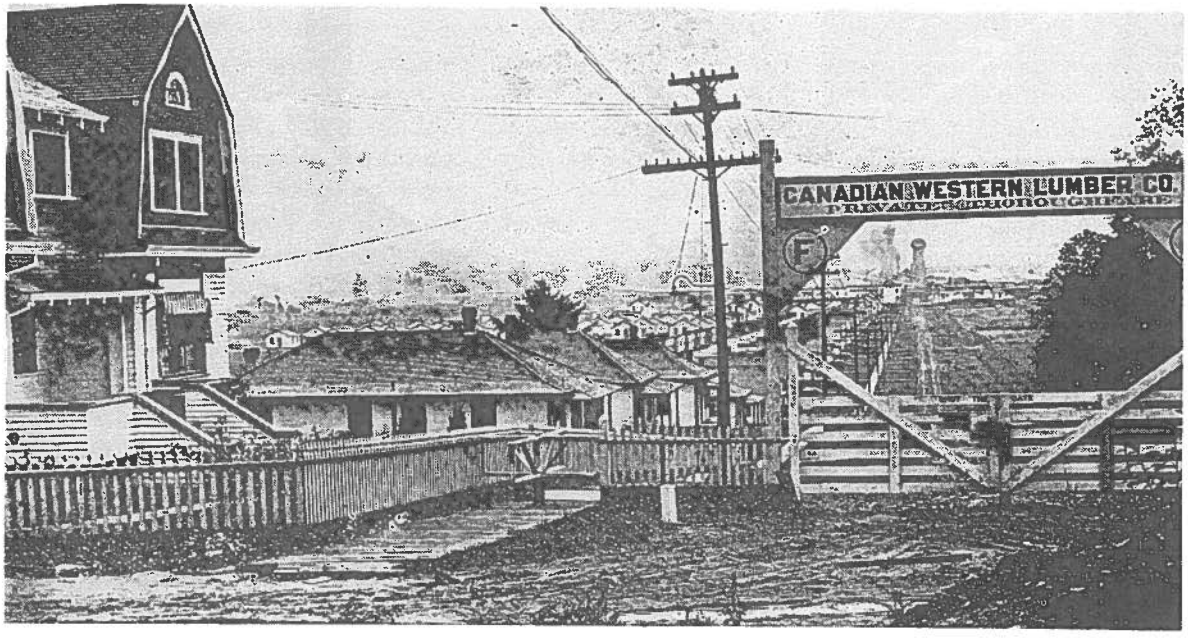
During the big strike at the Mill in 1931, the first men to consider affiliation with the Lumber Worker's Industrial Union were French Canadians. "The strike lasted three months and was marked by serious altercations between police and the strikers." [11] Mrs. McBay remembered this episode, "I can remember the morning of the strike. All the Mounties. All through the night we could hear the crowds of people gathering. In the morning my Mother said, 'John, you are not to go to work today, I will worry about you, there will be violence.' He argued, 'It is the Post Office, I have to open up.' The stairs to the store were full of men, and my Father joked with them, did they think it was 25 cent day! ! But he kept the store open, there were no mishaps. He was very careful during those strike months. He only let dependable people have credit, his good customers certainly should have credit."

Father Teck, the priest at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, tried to convince the workers of his parish to return to the sawmill. "His homily of September 28th, 1931 depicts the dangers of communism and of radical revenge. A prayer was then formulated to end the strike." [12] One of Father Teck's parishioners remembered that he was "a Belgian, from gentry. He treated Maillardville parishioners as subservient. He blacklisted many of the strikers during 1931, as he sided with management. Many parishioners never went back to Lourdes." [13]

On November 20th, 1931, the workers accepted the Company's offer (wage concessions only) without winning the recognition of their union. The tough years of the economic depression followed. During the depression, wages at the Mill were cut by 15% as the Mill owners declared they were operating on a non-profit basis. They cut back on hours to help relieve unemployment, and as a result most labourers were able to work an average of three days a week during the depression.

"My Father started in the Mill in 1936. He came from LaFleche, Saskatchewan. He was quite an IWA oriented person. In 1936, many Maillardville people resented people from the Prairies as so many had come during the strike - they broke the strike, so when we came in 1936, many people, French and English, called us scabs." [14]

Just living in Millside determined your middle class status. The very upper class, however, lived at the top of the street, close to the gates, in the biggest homes. The managers of the Mill lived in these two houses. Carrie LeClair said that her Father used to deliver and stack firewood at these houses, and her husband's Aunt used to sew clothes for the manager's wife. Olive McBay remembers that her Father would get annoyed with these men from the top of the hill as they used to help themselves to pieces of cheese when they came



Townsite in the 1920's. Residence of Manager of Manufacturing at left. Homes for predominantly white, English speaking families.
Photo courtesy of Mr. Henry Locken

into the store. Finally, Mr. Stewart decided to charge them for the cheese they had eaten. He added it to their monthly bills, and their wives were very upset about it.

Morris Leclair tells this story, "I remember Halloween falling on a Friday, and the Murrays would give out hotdogs. Mr. Murray was one of the Mills managers who lived at the top of the hill. Of course, we weren't supposed to eat meat on Fridays! Murrays were giving out hotdogs, so we were really getting away with something by eating these hotdogs on Friday. Everyone within several miles would go there. It was a hell of a deal in those days!"

The people interviewed all lived within the same community, yet there were some very different memories regarding racial prejudices and class distinctions. Some had vivid recollections and others felt these sorts of problems were not commonplace during the years discussed. Olive McBay suggested parental guidance was the key to the difference. "My Father was a well read man, although he did not complete his education, he could quote Shakespeare and Tennyson. He encouraged us and we were strongly motivated to get an education. He believed in keeping the boys busy, and we had a cabin up the hill, where the new firehall now stands, and the boys were given endless chores to do there." She also said her parents never suggested that she or her brothers should, or should not play with certain other children, and everything was very open within her family. Others, however, felt their parents influenced them in a negative way. "Yes, we picked up feelings of prejudice from our parents. My parents were always very proud Canadians. They never liked the term French Canadian. They always felt that when people talked about Frenchmen, that they were being segregated for no good reason. But, they were just as prejudiced as anybody else. My Mother was very prejudiced. My Mother insulted my own sweet wife so many times, being an anglophone. She felt English people were the worst people, without a doubt." [15] Helen Leclair said, "My Mother wasn't prejudiced, but being Ukranian and Polish - a Polak, in a French community wasn't easy. Father spoke French, and when we were growing up we spoke to him in French, or he would not answer. We talked to Mother in English. Father understood English, but would not converse in it. My parents came here in 1938, and Mother told us how many times she would sit and cry. No-one would say boo to her because she couldn't understand French. Many of these people spoke English too, but didn't speak to Mother. However, she learned to speak French in spite of them." [16]

Distinctions between the French speaking and English speaking people were parallelled with religious differences. Isabelle Chycoski remembers her Mother telling her "When I was young we didn't dare play with a Protestant, and the same with the French, they thought the Protestants were evil." Isabelle said she thought it was because of ignorance that the French and English didn't get along. "My Mother was raised a strict Catholic but when she got older she learned that it wasn't good. Father was a non-Catholic, Mother a Catholic - this was a big no-no. There was some friction. I was brought up nothing, baptised only because my grandmother took me against my Father's wishes and had me baptised. We were raised without any religion in the home. My Mother was disappointed. I did go to the Sunday School above the store - it was Baptist. Later, I went to the United Church in Sapperton, but never to anything else. My Mother's funeral was the first mass I ever went to." [17] Helen Leclair's Mother, a Catholic, didn't go to church because she couldn't understand French, and mass was conducted in French. Carrie Leclair, a Protestant, married a Catholic in 1949. This caused great distress for both sets of parents, to say nothing of the bride and groom. Carrie's Mother practically disowned her in the first year of the marriage.

Denny Leclair feels that kids from the French Catholic schools were very much an identifiable group because only a very few French kids attended Millside School. Everyone from Millside went to Millside School, including the children of the few French families living there, up until grade six.

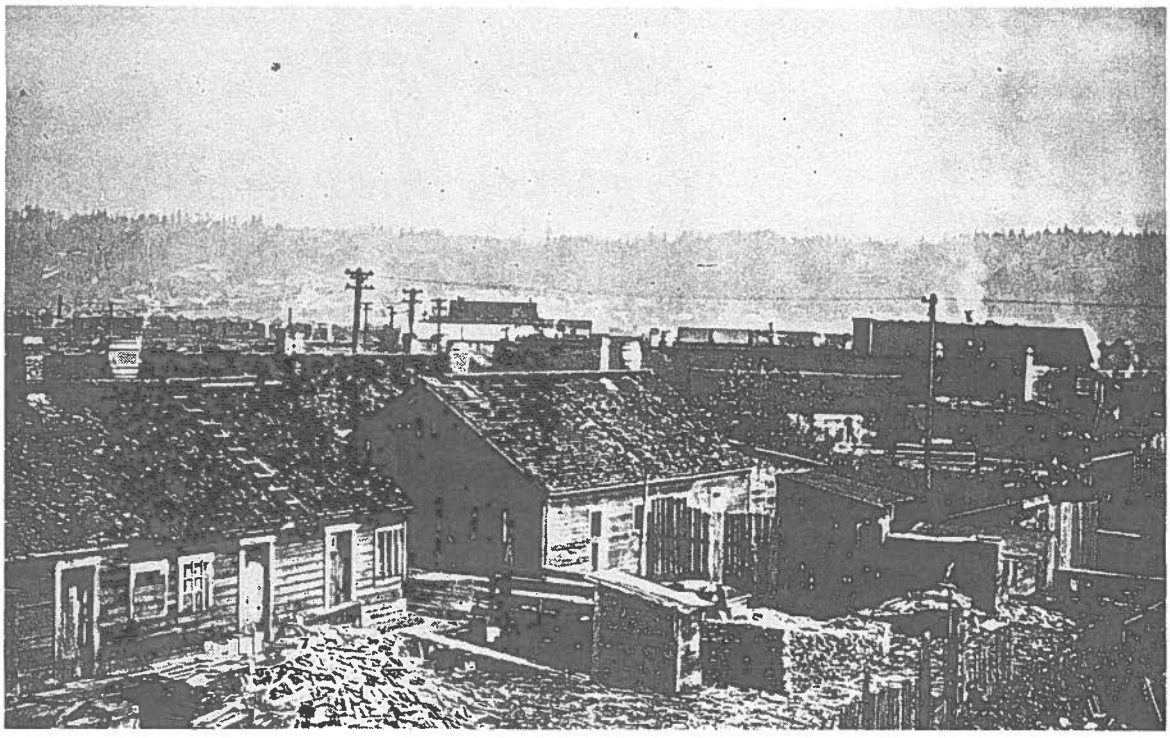
Our Lady of Lourdes was the separate school most of the Catholic children attended. It was suggested that the Catholic School did not have the high academic standards of the public school system. Helen Leclair recalled that while in Grade 12 at Our Lady of Fatima School, her instructor, a nun, was taking grade thirteen by correspondence at the same time!

Children attending the separate schools felt they were distant from the other children. It was a culture shock for any child, if they transferred from one school to the other. "My brother and I were having trouble with the nuns, so our parents decided to send us to Millside School for awhile. My teacher, Thelma Griffin, was a great person, a teacher well ahead of her day, and she was what made it easy for me to go from the separate school to public school without any problem. Other teachers were quick to identify French kids from the separate school, especially if you did something wrong. We were sure never to speak French at Millside School." [18] "I couldn't wait to get out of the Catholic school. But they kept adding another grade, year after year, and I eventually graduated there. There were only five girls in my graduating class." [19]

"But, at least you graduated. Many of the kids from Lourdes who went up to Central would quit after a few months - it was tough. Definitely a culture shock." [20]

Carrie Leclair remembers as a young girl walking through Maillardville to get to Millside School. She lived in an area referred to as Burquitlam. The French kids

would often throw rocks at them, so after awhile they were careful about what route they took to school. (Carrie is a Protestant born in Ireland.) Denny Leclair remembers being tormented by kids in the townsite at Millside. If you went to the Doctor at the townsite, all your drugs would be paid for by the Mill. Denny Leclair remembers having to go down to the dispensary to get pills for his Father. "I remember trying to get down there dozens of times, but there were guys down there, mean guys who might make you walk along the railroad tracks or whatever. If you didn't live on the townsite, they harassed you."



1920's-Chinatown residences at Fraser Mills townsite. (facing south - Surrey in the background) notice barrels of water perched on roof in case of fire - Chinatown located very close to working mill - sparks often flew out of the stacks.

Photo courtesy of Mr. Henry Locken

So, it seems that at Millside, from 1920 up to about 1960, people have pleasant memories of their lives. Predominantly white, English speaking working class people lived on the townsite. The European immigrants who came over during the early years became well integrated and felt at home on the townsite. The Chinese townsite was off limits to most, and the general impression is that because it was mainly occupied by single men, it was "unsafe" for various reasons. Mrs. Wong and her family were an exception. They were known by everybody and liked by all. The East Indian Community is more of a mystery, although to most it was an area of the Mill to avoid. The Japanese community was small, and not remembered by many because all were interned during World War II.

All interviewed can recall two class distinctions at Millside when they speak of the houses themselves, and when they refer to the people at the "top of the hill."

Within Maillardville, there were at least two class distinctions easily recognizable as well. The distinguishing factor was money which was ultimately reflected in the types of houses one had. The French Canadians in Maillardville did certainly recount numerous incidents of prejudice against them. They felt they were treated as inferiors with respect to the residents of Millside. The names "frogs" and "pea soupers" were common in those years.

Education rescued many from their predetermined inferior positions within the community. Others felt it was luck, just being in the right place at the right time. In any case, there is no doubt class distinctions were evident in both Millside and Maillardville between 1920 and 1960. All felt racial prejudices between whites and non-whites were not an issue in those years; however, some feel there were strong prejudices between the French speaking Catholics and the English speaking Protestants.

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The writer is a student at Douglas College - she was a stewardess with Air India, then C.P. Air. After her marriage she stayed home being a "mom" for ten years & now has commenced teacher training.

FOOTNOTES

1.-2. J.R. Stewart. **Early Days at Fraser Mills, B.C. from 1889 to 1912**

3. Margaret A. Ormsby, **British Columbia: A History** pp. 349-353

4. Society Maillardville Uni

5. Rolf Knight, **Work Camps and Company Towns in Canada and the United States**, Vancouver: New Star Books, 1975, p. 11

6. Denny Leclair

7. Elmer Boe

8. Society Maillardville Uni

9. Society Maillardville Uni

10. Denny Leclair

11. H.A.J. Monk and J. Stewart. **A History of Coquitlam and Fraser Mills**, Coquitlam, pp. 39-40

12. Society Maillardville Uni

13. Denny Leclair

14. Denny Leclair

15. Denny Leclair

16. Helen Leclair

17. Isabelle Chycoski

18. Denny Leclair

19. Helen Leclair

20. Morris Leclair

The Vancouver Bach Choir Celebrates Sixty Years

by Thelma Reid Lower

The Vancouver Bach Choir pictured in 1932, with Herbert Drost conductor; in The Vancouver Theatre at 765 Granville Street. In 1936 this theatre was renamed Lyric Theatre.

The Vancouver Bach Choir celebrated its Diamond Anniversary during the 1990-91 season with a series of special concerts, the first of which was the British Columbia premiere of Mahler's Symphony, "The Symphony of a Thousand" performed 8 and 9 November at the Vancouver Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

Mahler said of his own work: "It is the greatest thing I have done .... Just imagine the whole universe breaks into music. These are not human voices interweaving but the planets and suns."

Michael Scott, music critic, commented in the Vancouver Sun, 10 November 1990:

It felt like history in the making: a full house, a twittery sort of anticipation . . . . then once the performance began, the rare sensation of being drenched in music, of feeling the tidal pull in the chest and through the inner ear.

The Vancouver Bach Choir and all its party guests - the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the Vancouver Chamber Choir, the Vancouver Chorale, Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Amabilis Singers from New Westminster, the Capilano College Singers from North Vancouver, and the Vancouver Bach Children's Choir and conductor Bruce Pullan - left us an historic evening of music to treasure for years to come.

When people stepped into the hall and caught a glimpse of the stage they were stopped dead in their tracks. Who could blame them? Spread across the vast performing space were 650 musicians - Legions of black, white and red-costumed singers - more than 500 in all, a 110-piece orchestra, eight soloists - gathered to give this transcendental work its British Columbia premiere.

By its persistent endeavors spanning sixty years the Bach Choir has retained a pivotal presence in the history of choral singing in British Columbia. The Bach Choir was founded in 1930 by two lawyers, Herbert Mason Drost who became its first conductor and Harvey Wyness who became its first president.

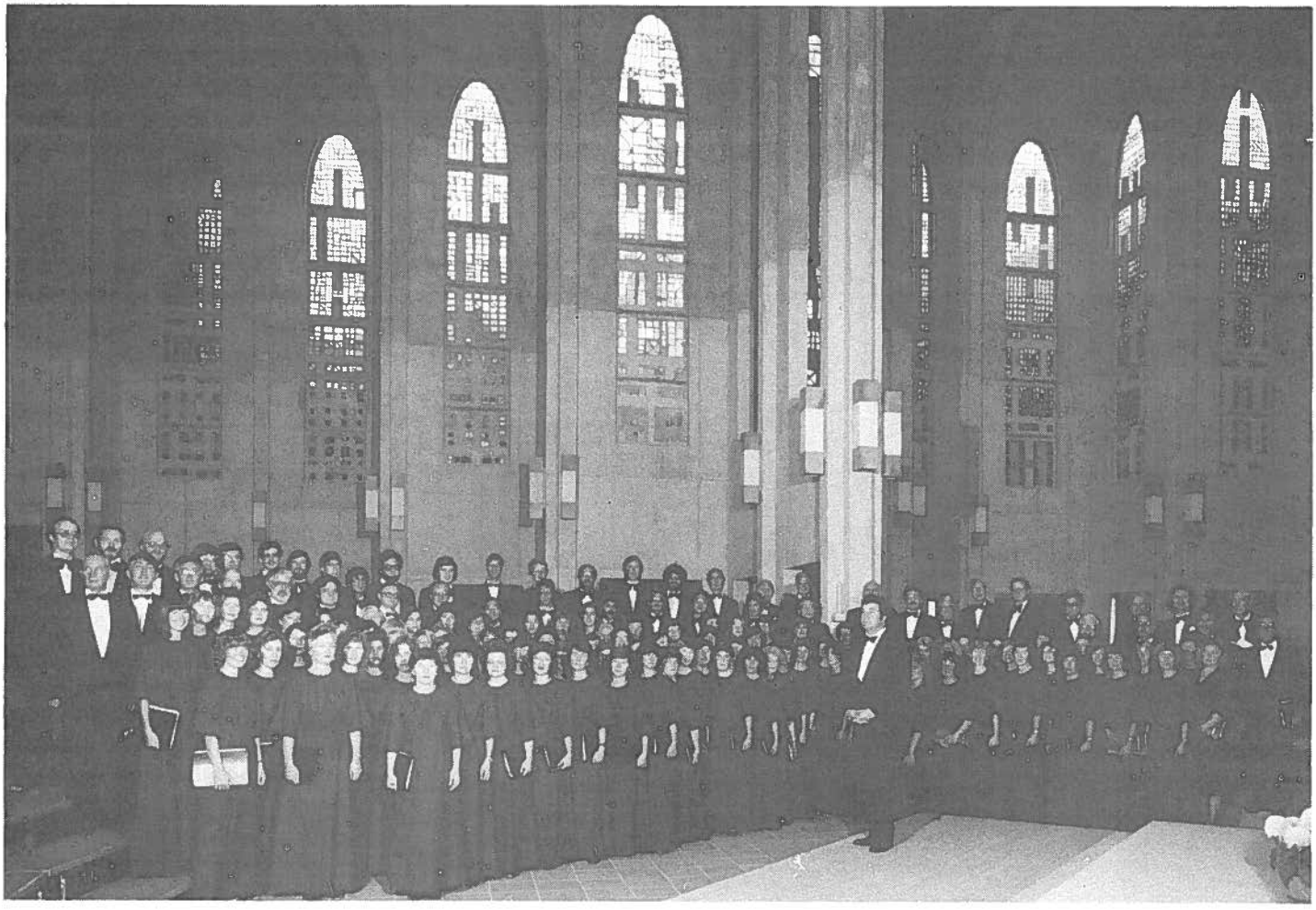
This initial checks and balances of power between the apppointed

musical conductor and the executive board of directors elected by choir members has been a continuing strength throughout the choir's sixty years of decision making. When Herbert Drost was taken ill in 1934 and had to resign from his conductorship it was the executive board who assured that the choir's activities would continue. Dr. Ira Dilworth was appointed conductor to finish the 1934/35 season and continued to direct the choir until 1941. During some of those years Dilworth was Manager of CBC's operations in British Columbia from 1938 to 1946. Later he was transferred to Montreal to become National Director of Program Production for CBC's English Network. It was a fortunate contact for the Bach Choir as Dr. Dilworth had personal knowledge of the choir's potential for radio broadcasts.

The formation of a large mixed-voice choir was a natural outcome of the optimistic western business boom after World War I. The Vancouver Bach Choir's first scrap book of newsclips is pasted onto a sample portfolio of gilt-edged stock certificates from Bulman Bros. B.C. Lithographing and Printing Ltd. The first entry is from the 1930 B.C. Musical Festival under the auspices of the Knights of Pythias certifying that "The Bach Choir has been awarded the highest marks in choral singing and is holder of the B.C. Electric Challenge Cup." signed by Arthur C. Tysoe and J. Frederic Staton, British adjudicators. The Bach Choir was described as "a large commercial choir" as against a large church choir of which there were many in B.C., some broadcasting weekly on Sundays. The 10-day B.C. Musical Festival was a barometer of musical enthusiasm. In 1930 its final evening in Vancouver Arena brought a record-breaking audience of 4,000.

Much of this enthusiasm was due to the impact of radio broadcasts. Companies in seaports like Vancouver, Victoria and New Westminster relied on radio communication for their Pacific shipping enterprises. The imagination of the general public also was captivated by radio. It was a fascinating way of escaping from the sense of western isolation. Dennis J. Duffy in his book **Imagine Please, Early Radio Broadcasting in B.C.** (Sound Heritage Series No. 38) states:

Until 1953 anyone in Canada owning a radio receiver was required by law to purchase a licence annually. The receiver licensing figures reflect the popularity of radio in British Columbia during the twenties,



Vancouver Bach Choir Westminster Abbey, Mission, B.C. October 3, 1982.

particularly in Vancouver. In September 1922, for instance, there were 103 licensed receivers in Vancouver to Toronto's 110. By April 1931 the Vancouver licences numbered 20,922.

The earliest licensed broadcasting stations were the products of competition among the city's main daily newspapers. The Vancouver Bach Choir's first public concert on 14 December 1930 in the New Orpheum Theatre singing Bach's Christmas Oratorio was in aid of the Santa Claus Fund sponsored by the **Province**.

Programming local choirs on B.C. radio stations had to meet the challenge of U.S. competition from the powerful KSL station in Salt Lake City which featured frequent broadcasts of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. The KSL signature tune "When It's Springtime in the Rockies" was heard throughout the Pacific Northwest. The rich tonal sound of the Mormon Choir when it sang its broadcasts of Handel's **Messiah** inspired other choirs.

On the afternoon of 23 December 1934 from the stage of Vancouver's Strand Theatre the Bach Choir sang the first Trans-Canada broadcast of the Messiah from west to east. Congratulatory letters poured in from listeners in Eastern Canada who, for the first time, realized that choral excellence could flourish beyond the Rockies. One enthusiastic listener wrote that she felt "The Messiah should be the national anthem of Canada." (At that time we did not officially have one.)

Recognition from Eastern Canada brought great satisfaction to the charter and early members of the Bach Choir many of whom had been required, after only two years at the University of British Columbia, to complete their degrees in the east, mainly at the University of McGill where, as students, they had sung in the McGill Glee Club, and heard the Bach Choir of Montreal and Toronto's well-established Mendelssohn Choir.

By the early 1930s Herbert Drost had become conductor of five choirs: Vancouver Orpheus Choir, Western Singers, Cathedral Singers, B.C. Electric Glee Club (male) and the Bach Choir. Also he had founded the Western Music Co. Ltd. a retailing firm to make available on the west coast a wide selection of printed music especially for choirs. For some years Western Music was the sole agent in Canada for British music companies such as Novello, J.B.Cramer, and others. When Drost opened branches in Winnipeg, Toronto and Victoria he kept Vancouver as his headquarters where he expanded its merchandise to include records and instruments. In 1937 Drost's company began to publish music. By 1960 over 450 pieces had been published, most by B.C. composers. (In 1970 copyrights and stock owned by Western Music were acquired by Leslie Music Supply, Oakville, Ont.)

The obsession with choral singing expanded flamboyantly during the 1930s and persisted vigorously despite the Depression. It only began to peter out when World War II so depleted tenor and bass sections that a musical balance in a mixed choir no longer became possible. Although several concerts were given under the Bach Choir's name in the 1940s formal operations were suspended until 1950 when Major R.E. MacBean returned to revive an executive board which invited Lawrence R. Cluderay, organist/choirmaster at St. Andrew's-Wesley Church to become the choir's first post-war conductor.

As word spread that the Bach Choir was to be revived many eager choristers sought an audition. Cluderay, a former British choral adjudicator set about selecting voices with that clarity of sound associated with English cathedral choirs. He was meticulous in choosing voices which would blend with one another and in his choirs each chorister had a definite location to create the blend he required.

Cluderay had an uncanny listening ear which could detect any ill-tuned faulty chorister. His discipline at rehearsals was often severe requiring the delinquent to

Simon Streatfield (at piano) and Jon Washburn (standing) audition a tenor of the Bach Choir.
Photo courtesy of: Archives of Vancouver Bach Choir

sing solo the faulted bars of music. It was an embarrassment to be avoided only by serious preparatory music at home. The resultant choir of about 100 devoted and disciplined singers earned its reward from glowing comments by Stanley Bligh, Sun Music Critic, for its concert 20 December 1950 in the Mayfair Room of the Hotel Vancouver: "clarity of diction.....precision of attack....fine blend and balance.....artistic treatment which reflected the conductor's sound musical understanding."

During the 1950s the Bach Choir consolidated its wide audience base with a series of eight Easter performances of Bach's **St. Matthew's Passion** at St. Andrews-Wesley Church; three concerts at the Vancouver Art Gallery; Sunday afternoon concerts at Stanley Park Pavilion; Christmas presentations of Handel's **Messiah** in the Georgia Auditorium; Vancouver Symphony choral concerts; Vancouver International Festival events; the acoustical testing and naming of the Queen Elizabeth Theatre by Her Majesty the Queen and CBC's Wednesday Night Trans-Canada broadcast of Elgar's **Dream of Gerontius** with Maureen Forrester, mezzo, Richard Lewis, tenor from England, and John Dunbar, bass, with John Avison conducting. With this broadcast the Bach Choir achieved one of its original dreams: to have a wide radio acceptance and national recognition across Canada. In 1960 the choir received its first Koerner Foundation grant of $1,000 and pressed its first recordings.....a joint concert with the Benedictine Monks Choir of Westminster Abbey, Mission. Socially in the summer the Bach Choir hosted popular Strawberry Festival Parties in some of Vancouver's most beautiful gardens.

An outstanding choral event of Canada's Centennial Year 1967 was the Western Canada premiere of Benjamin Britten's **War Requiem** composed to celebrate the rebuilding of Coventry Cathedral, bombed during World War II. The comments of Robert Sunter, **Vancouver Sun**, 3 April 1967 sums up the reaction of the audience to the "pity of war":

For a moment the last ethereal notes of the Amen faded. It seemed the audience might leave quietly in sombre and reverential awe. But finally they had to show their appreciation for a performance that at no point was ever less than magnificent. Once the applause started it went on for a full fifteen minutes. A special ovation was given to conductor Meredith Davies for his impressive skill in co-ordinating and balancing the forces he had on stage and for the passionate conviction with which he led these enormous forces.

In the 1970s the Bach Choir with its English Conductor Simon Streatfield set its goals on achieving an international reputation in Europe. With helpful contacts arranged by the choir's post-war immigrant Dutch members and the blessings from three levels of government but not much money the choir undertook a tour to Celebrate the 25th anniversary of the liberation of Holland by Canadian troops. Competing in the International Koor Festival, Scheveningen, Den Haag, its ladies choir placed first and its mixed choir third. An after-tour was marred by the tragic death of a soprano in a traffic accident near Gretna Green at the English/Scottish border. Afterwards the choir's first tour president Paul Birch remarked "The choir is eager to travel again. Once bitten we're no longer shy".

In 1974 an Eastern Canadian tour saw the Bach Choir singing to fine audiences in the National Arts Centre, Ottawa, and at the CBC's Summer Festival in Toronto. In Quebec, however, casual outdoor concerts attracted mainly tourists. Formal performances in St. Patrick's Church, Montreal and the Anglican Cathedral of Quebec City were so poorly attended as to be an embarrassment. Clearly even at this early date the lines of language had already been drawn.

In contrast the Bach Choir's two-week cultural exchange in 1977 with the choir of the Szczecin Technical University in northern Poland was a definition of hospitality. The visiting Bach Choir travelled on a tour prearranged by their Polish hosts, opening with a grand welcoming concert in the banquet hall of a medieval castle of former Pomeranian dukes. Then the choir continued to organ/choir festivals in towns along the south shore of the Baltic Sea, to the walled city of Torun, the site of the University of Copernicus, to the capital city of Warsaw where it made a recording for Polish National Radio and gave an emotionally appreciated concert to a crowded congregation in the Church of the Sacred Cross, the only building to remain standing after Hitler's demolition of the city. The heart of Chopin, beloved composer of the Polish people, is said to be encased in one of the church pillars.

The reciprocal visit of the Szczecin choir in the following year 1978 to British Columbia was welcomed by Polish communities and by the many towns and cities throughout B.C. where they performed in their colorful costumes. The Bach Choir frequently plays host to visiting choirs on tour in Canada.

As one of the founding members of the B.C. Choral Federation the Bach Choir often sings as a guest choir. Performances have been held at the University of Victoria; Westminster Abbey, Mission; Bellingham; Richmond Gateway Theatre; Chilliwack; Powell River and others.

Farther away the choir has sung twice as the guest of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra at Roy Thompson Hall and twice with the Calgary Philharmonic in the Jack Singer Arts Centre. On a tour of Britain and Wales the Bach Choir was the featured guest choir at the Llangollen International Eisteddfod.

In the megaopera **Aida** the Bach Choir formed the chorus in the production at B.C. Stadium and at

the Tokyo Dome, Japan, nicknamed in English "The Big Egg".

To ensure a continuing supply of experienced singers for the Bach Choir's numerous activities at home and abroad four training choirs for children have been established. The Bach Children's Chorus has recently achieved its own international stature having been invited to participate in a week-long festival at Nantes, France, honouring the works of Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer.

A Rhombus Telefilm which enjoys world-wide circulation titled "Whalesong" was made during B.C.'s Expo '86 when the Bach Choir sang beside the whale pool at Stanley Park Aquarium with a noisy and joyous accompaniment by the whales.

And so the Bach Choir with conductor Bruce Pullan (1982--) moves adventurously into the coming seasons knowing that 60 years of challenge have already been met with applause.

VANCOUVER BACH CHOIR

CONDUCTORS

1930-34	Herbert Mason Drost
1935-41	Ira Dilworth
1941-46	suspended during World War II
1946-48	Hugh Bancroft
1948-50	Sherwood Robson
1950-59	Lawrence Cluderay Chorusmaster: Beverley Fyfe
1959-61	G. Welton Marquis
1961-65	Karel ten Hoope
1965-68	Meredith Davis Chorusmaster: Beverley Fyfe
1968-81	Simon Streatfield Chorusmasters: John Washburn 1970-74 Bruce Pullan 1975-81
1982----	Bruce Pullan

VANCOUVER BACH CHOIR

ACCOMPANISTS

1930	Mrs. Harry Holden
1933	Dorothy Mileson
1935	Phyllis Ward
1947	Dorothy Mileson
1948	Hugh McLean
1949	Leslie Crouch
1950	Lawrence Cluderay
1959	Rachel Carr
1963	Betty Rose
1964 --	Joyce Maguire

GENERAL MANAGER

Gillian Wilder
5730 Seaview, West Vancouver
V7W 1P8, Tel. 921-8012

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Thelma Reid Lower is Archivist of the Vancouver Bach Choir.

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Russian America: The Forgotten Frontier

A superb exhibition on Russian America was shown recently in Tacoma, Wa., illustrating Russian activities along America's Pacific Northwest coast roughly from the Bering/Chirikov expedition (1741-2) to the Sale of Alaska (1867). A record attendance of visitors, school-children and enthusiastic Canadians attested to its success and to the lively interest in this historic subject, which encapsulated an area from the Aleutians and Alaska along the coast down to Alta California (Fort, Ross).

Over 600 exhibits of rare documents, art works and outstanding Indian artifacts were borrowed from renowned institutions, museums, and individuals in the US, USSR, Finland, Denmark and Canada (in particular, the Hudson's Bay Co.). To mention a few items among this unique display: the first known reference made to Russian settlements at Unalaska and Kamchatka by Captain Cook (1778); early Russian cartography of this coast and ships' models; native skin boats (baidarkas) and gut-skin garments; relations between the Russian American Company (RAK) and the Hudson's Bay Co.; memorabilia from the first wife of a Russian Governor to come from Estland/Estonia and live for 5 years in the Pacific Northwest (Baroness Elisabeth V. Wrangell - 1830-5); dentalium shells obtained from the Haida on the Queen Charlottes to be exchanged against furs with the native inhibitants north of Bristol Bay; the original cheque for A $7,200,000 for the Sale of Alaska; etc.

For Canadians in British Columbia and the Yukon the exhibition is of particular relevance, because of the lasting effects Russian America imposed on these two regions. It is to be hoped that the appropriate Western Canadian authorities will not permit the opportunity to slip by and have us miss out on an international exhibition which also relates to our own history. Once the displays have been shown in Anchorage, Juneau and Portland, and before they are taken east, surely Victoria or Vancouver deserve a claim to them.

Alix O'Grady - B.C. Historical Federation Victoria.

Editors Note: ***The exhibition will be shown at:***

May 3, 1991 - September 22, 1991:
ALASKA STATE MUSEUM, Juneau, Alaska

October 20, 1991 - January 12, 1992:
OAKLAND MUSEUM, Oakland, California

February 15, 1992 - April 30, 1992:
THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, Washington, D.C.

Passport to Paradise
The Alpine Club of Canada Summer Camps

by Mary Andrews

The best thing Canada got out of the Canadian Pacific Railway, apart from a link that welded together its diverse and far flung regions, was a national image. Many who had the good fortune to travel on the Railway testified, through letters and postcards home, illustrated articles in magazines like **Dominion Illustrated** and **The Graphic** (Britain), and books, to the breathtaking natural wonders the silver threads of steel made accessible in 1885, the year the latter were completed. Paramount among these wonders were the mountains of the West. Thanks to the Railway, Canadians could now claim these as their own.

Canadians, however, figured minimally among the first to respond to "the challenge of the mountains." [1] Most who did were well-to-do British and Americans searching for new worlds to conquer. In the late 1880's, two British clergymen: the Reverends William Spotswood Green and Henry Swanzy, detrained at Glacier House in the Rogers Pass to climb a few peaks in the Selkirks, and make their experiences known in the first book to be written about the region: **Among the Selkirk Glaciers**.

Throughout the 1880's, "scholar mountaineers" of the likes of Norman Collie, chemistry professor at the University of London and Yale University alumnae, Walter Wilcox and Samuel E.S. Allen, scaled peak after peak to put onto the map such marvels as the Columbia Icefield and the Lake Louise region.

It was his work among the magnificent peaks of the Selkirks that prompted pioneer surveyor A.O. Wheeler to conceive the notion of an "Alpine Club of Canada", similar to ones that already existed in Britain and the U.S. By this means, he hoped, Canadians would take advantage of one of their most valuable assets. The Railway notwithstanding, most found their country too big for them and their mountains "as remote as Afghanistan". [2]

In 1906, Wheeler met in Winnipeg with other like minded individuals to make the Alpine Club of Canada a reality and, in the process, become its first president. The Club's aims, as spelled out in its Constitution, were sixfold: 1) promotion of scientific study and exploration of Canadian alpine and glacial regions, 2) cultivation of art in relation to mountain scenery, 3) education of Canadians to an appreciation of their mountain heritage, 4) encouragement of the mountain craft and the opening of new regions as a national playground, 5) preservation of the natural beauties of the mountain places and of the fauna and flora in their habitat, 6) interchange of literature with other alpine and geographical organizations. [3] To promote aims 3 and 4, the Club instituted its annual summer camp.

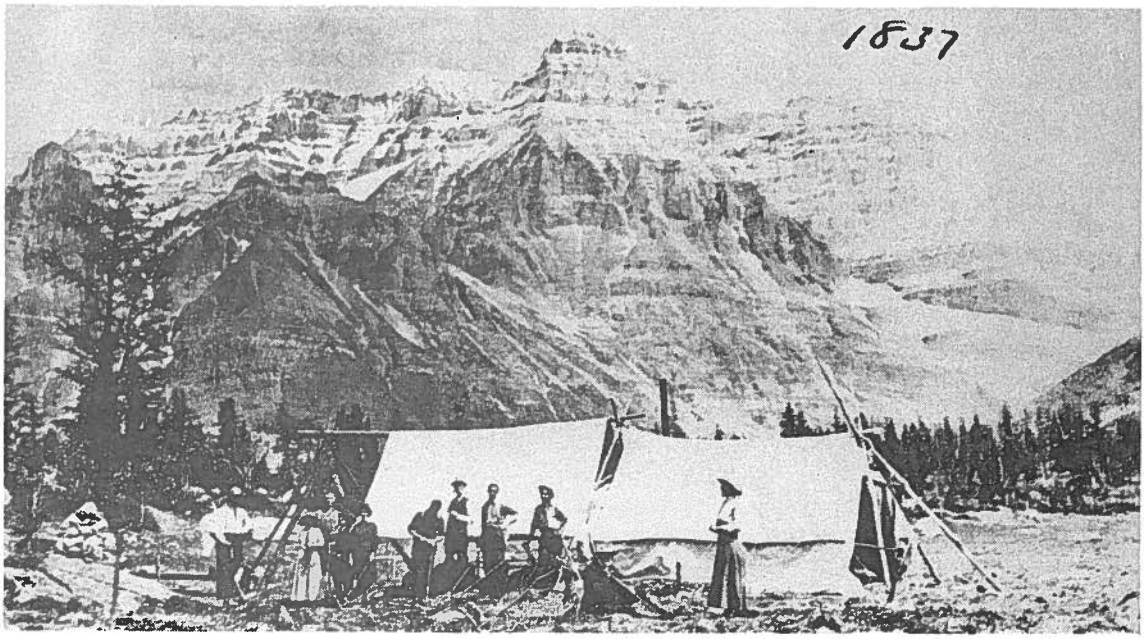
Over and above these aims, the Camp provided the only opportunity for members, along with specially invited guests from mountaineering organizations in the U.S. and abroad, to meet together. This "meeting together" took on formal expression in the Annual Meetings incorporated into the Camps' program.

The most important function of the Camp was to initiate new members. To qualify, prospective, or "graduating" members, as they came to be called, had to successfully climb, under the supervision of qualified guides, a glaciated peak at least 2500 feet above the tree line or 10,000 feet above sea level. Prior to this undertaking, they were given training in mountaineering skills by guides, and volunteers among experienced members.

This initiation of new members into the skills and rites of mountaineering had a broader social purpose. Raw recruits, by surmounting the difficulties, both physical and spiritual, involved in the conquest of a mountain, would be moulded into "the desired Canadian character." [4] This included such virtues as manliness, courage and endurance, all much touted by the British public schools of which so many of the original members were alumnae. A second aspect of this social purpose was the "democratization of climbing." [5] "It was almost as if the Club had a vision of enrolling the entire nation as members." [6]

To achieve this, Wheeler criss-crossed the country giving lectures, and currying favor from officials in government and the railways on the Club's behalf. Both federal and provincial governments, as well as the railways, saw in the Club's aims, given concrete expression in its summer camps, an opportunity to promote their own: tourism. Interest aroused in the country's more remote beauty spots would make feasible the infrastructures needed to access them, which in turn would generate more tourist interest to be translated into monetary gain. And so evolved a symbiotic relationship between the Club and the railways

and government which worked to the benefit of all parties. In return for the publicity the Club generated through its camps, the railways (both Canadian Pacific and Canadian National) provided tents and support staff, not the least being mountaineering guides imported from Switzerland. One year (1910), the British Columbia and Alberta Governments rallied to the cause of exploration by granting the Club $1000 each to open up the Mount Robson area. And, most important in terms of that cornerstone of the Club's philosophy: the "democratization of climbing", the railways offered, in the early years, substantial fare cuts to camp participants.



Cathedral Mountain Camp - 1913.
Photo courtesy of: Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

In her biography of Wheeler, Esther Fraser vividly depicts the magnitude of setting up the first camp at Yoho in 1906: "Thirty or forty tents, enormous amounts of food (each day's meals consumed fifteen sides of bacon, four hams, eighty loaves of bread, innumerable tins of produce and jams), and tools and utensils had to be hauled in by pack train . . . . grounds and paths had to be cleared, dining tent tables and benches constructed, poles cut, and tents set up with balsam bough beds expertly made for each one." [7] Such an undertaking required strong leadership capability, a commodity President Wheeler possessed in abundance. Fortunately, in his case it was mixed with a good dose of "bonhomie" which, in conjunction with the beauty of the surroundings, made the work less onerous. At the end of the day, to quote from Austrian guide Conrad Kain's autobiography: **Where the Clouds Can Go**, "we were almost dead from fatigue and suffered martyrdom from mosquitoes. We were cursing in five or six different languages." [8] Other concerns could involve water supply, ingeniously remedied at the 1908 Rogers Pass camp by running a water pipe from one on top of a snow shed to culminate in modern taps set up in various quarters of the camp. The sun warming the pipe on top of the shed made possible the unanticipated luxury of hot water during the day. A trail constructed by guide and outfitter Donald ("Curly") Phillips, with ingenious sloping bridges over the rough spots, greatly facilitated approach to the 1913 Mr. Robson Camp. And in 1939, preparations for that year's camp show concern for the logistics of transporting, by packhorse, an organ to be used at evening sing-songs and the Sunday church service.

The camps, staged during the month of July at a locale in the Rockies or Selkirks, lasted about two weeks. Members were notified by a brochure giving full details as to regulations, what clothes to bring, etc. All who decided to participate travelled by train to the station nearest the camp. From that point, they generally hiked what could amount to 18 miles through breathtaking scenery. (The less energetic had the option of a lift in a "democrat" or, in later years, a truck.) The scenery notwithstanding, the participants, wearied by their trek, welcomed the sight of the camp's first tents, and flags fluttering from flagpoles. After being assigned sleeping quarters from the Administrative Tent, they would proceed to the Tea Tent, where Wheeler's frail, ladylike wife, Clara, elegantly attired in "a large, softly draped hat, long skirt, shirt waist blouse and tie," [9] would ply them with tea and listen "with keen interest" [10] to what they had to say about their journey.

The "tent city" that was to be their home for the next two weeks is perhaps best summed up in the following extract from the account in the Canadian Alpine Journal of the 1908 Rogers Pass Camp:

"When all was finished the view from the top of the snow shed was an imposing one. On a level dip in the centre was the dining pavilion, an awning erected on a scaffolding of poles, a new one large enough to cover the entire assemblage, including the dining tables and cook tents, the ladies' tea tent, the official notice board, the post office, and still leave room for all to gather during storms. Beyond it, in the same dip, arranged in symmetrical order, were the campfire - the altar

of worship where the fire never quenched during the period of devotion to the white peaks surrounding it - the President's and Secretary's tents, the art exhibit tent and behind, on the hillside, the scattered tents of the various officials. . . . and of those who had brought their own canvas. On either side, on gently rising slopes, were the Ladies' and Gentlemen's groups of white bell tents set in commanding positions." [11] A similar configuration at the 1909 Lake O'Hara Camp has been described as looking like "a glimpse of fairyland - all green and yellow and white and blue" [12] in its setting in a mountain meadow. Pack trains operated by the Brewsters, the Otto Brothers and, at the Mt. Robson Camps, the Hargreaves', provided an "umbilical cord" to the outside world.

It is interesting to note that in the early years, when tourism and the revenue to be obtained therefrom were the primary concern of both governments and railways, a few voices were "crying in the wilderness" about the environmental impact of the camps, which often accommodated between 150 and 200 people. One belonged to Walter Wilcox, mentioned earlier as being one of the first to explore and climb in the Rockies and Selkirks. He was concerned that "the formation of a permanent camp on the shores of this lake [O'Hara] will necessitate buildings or tents which, if visible, will be an eyesore to the thousands of visitors who will come here in future years. It will mean the making of a trail, the tramping of hundreds of horses around the shore of the lake, the building of stables and consequent entire destruction of one of the most beautiful shorelines in the Canadian Rockies." [14] To which National Parks Commissioner J.B. Harkin replied: "If we adhere to the policy of keeping these large national Canadian parks in a strictly primeval condition this would mean no building of roads, no construction of trails . . . . consequently only the few would be able to enjoy the magnificent scenery."[15] The debate continues today.

Some of the British Columbia venues subjected to being spoiled this way but which nevertheless refreshed hundreds of souls with their beauty included, in addition to Lake O'Hara, Rogers Pass, Yoho Valley, Mount Assiniboine, Mount Robson, and, in later years, the Bugaboos, Lake of the Hanging Glacier, and Elk Lake. Lake O'Hara, declared by American painter John Singer Sargent to be "the most beautiful lake he had ever seen",[16] was one of the most popular. Yoho provided "interesting ground for the mountaineer of some experience who glories in a good, stiff climb."[17] Rogers Pass, in addition to the splendour and challenge of its peaks, offered interesting historical associations. Camp was more often than not set up on the site of the old Glacier House Hotel, point of departure for the first ascents in the Selkirks and, after its demolition in 1929, reduced to its cement foundations, grass, air, and, for some, a fond memory. Mount Robson, more remote and rough and ready, dazzled with its scenery. In later years, camps held at the Bugaboos, Elk Lake, and the Lake of the Hanging Glacier, opened up new delights and challenges.

Participants having "settled in" at any of the above destinations, I shall now conduct the reader through a typical day at camp. A case in point would involve a "graduating climb". Having been thoroughly schooled in state of the art techniques for moving about on both rock and ice, a prospective member would make the night preceding an early one. Without doubt, he/she would sleep little, perhaps anticipating the 4 a.m. wake up call sounded by Commander in Chief Wheeler. Then the effort to "break the ice" of a raw, cold morning, dress in the dark, and proceed to a breakfast of porridge, bacon and strong coffee. Then a roll call, "terse instructions" [18] from the Commander in Chief culminating in his blessing of a genial "good day" prior to setting off, single file, guides in the lead, into a frosty moonlight meadow. Then perhaps some slogging through underbrush, and up rocky trails, until arrival at the base of the selected peak. Then (heart in mouth) following the guide up "pinnacle after pinnacle. . . . each one loftier than the other",[19] until reaching "the highest point of the mountain".[20] At this "highest point", participants would scoop up stones and add them to a cairn laid down by hardy souls who had come this way before. Prior to the descent, the national anthem would be sung, ringing crystal clear in the cold air bathing a sea of ice and snow clad peaks.

Then the long trip back to camp which would begin by "glissading down steep snow slopes" [21] until "the glacial sheet was reached, with its dangerous crevasses and treacherous snow bridges".[22] Everyone, knowing a misstep might be one's last in this world and first into the next, obeyed the guide to the letter, in accordance with Wheeler's tireless instructions. Then came the rocky portions, where the rope "that made us one felt like a friend, steadying the nerve and giving heart to the timid".[23]

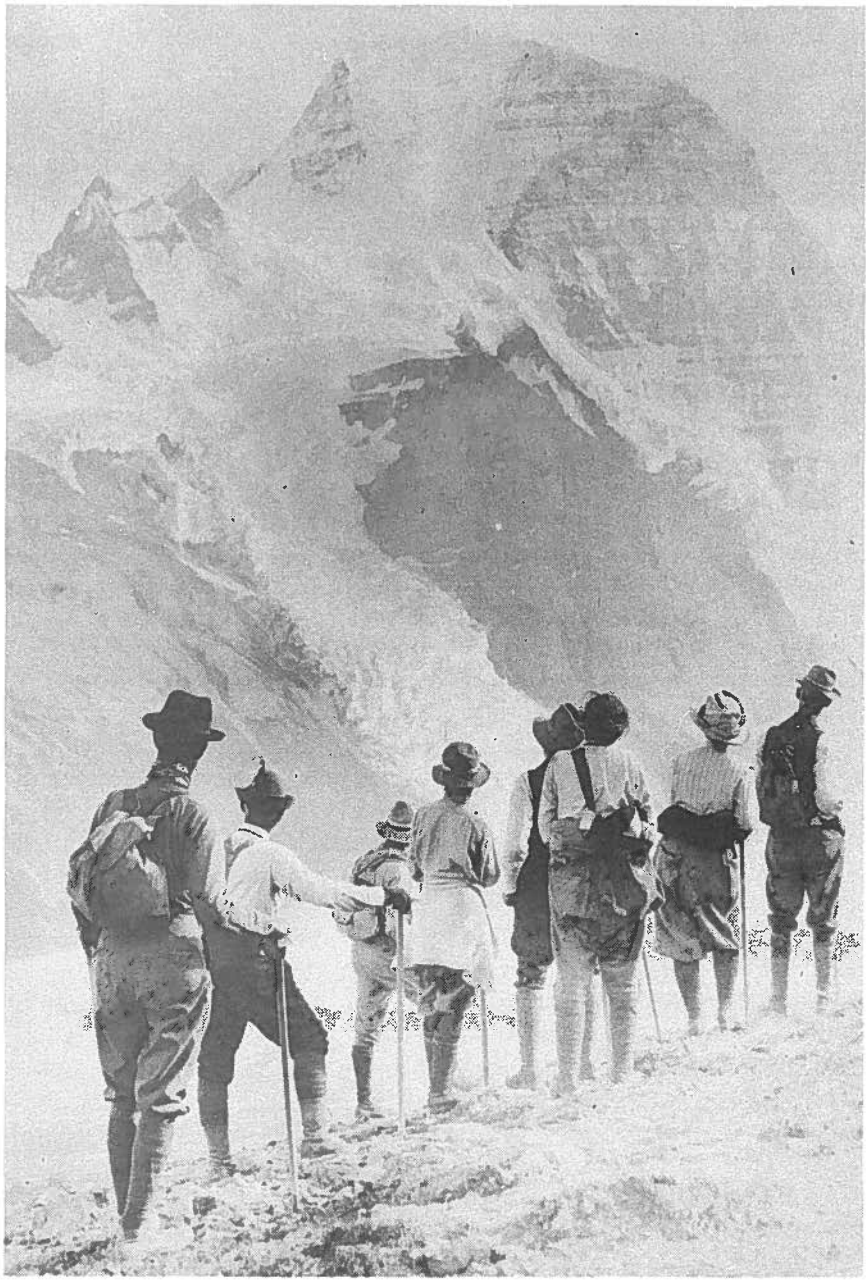
One of the "timid", Vancouver school teacher, Kate McQueen, describes her experience:

"And then, addressing me, he [A.H. McCarthy] said: "Miss McQueen, I have to do something I've never done before. I have to put you on the end of the rope. You'll have to go down first."

"Oh dear! When I looked down the snowy slope of Mount President I seemed to be looking into infinity. However, I've always been a cowardly person, but never letting people know. There we were up there, two helpless women with a very expert mountaineer. Well, there was nothing to do. I made no fuss. But by Jove I hope I'll never have to look in this life into anything that is so endless."[24]

Many like her survived such ordeals to savour consciousness of "having attained"[25] as they crossed verdant, flower strewn meadows resounding with the tinkling of bells round the necks of pack horses, to be welcomed into camp as "full fledged, active members of the Alpine Club of Canada".[26]

Those who had completed their "rite de passage" (placing them in the category of "active" members) had at their disposal a variety of options for spending their day. One could join any number of hikes/climbs to the countless beauty spots in the vicinity of the camps. From centre points such as Rogers Pass and Mount Sir Donald hikes went to the Nakimu Caves (closed since 1932) and the surrounding Cougar Valley. Many, afflicted with claustrophobia, preferred the latter: spangled with flowers, resounding with the whistling of marmots and presided over by glacier draped peaks traversed by flocks of mountain goats. Forming a tempting "back door" to the Yoho and Lake O'Hara venues were the peaks and beauty spots of the Lake Louise region. Favorites among these were Paradise Valley, Mounts Victoria, Lefroy, Hungabee and others. From Yoho, excursions went to places like Twin and Takakkaw Falls, Yoho Glacier and the fossil beds of Burgess Pass. On some occasions, members saw fit to fulfil the Club's scientific mandate by placing metal plates on glaciers to measure their advance or (more often that not) retreat.



Pondering the Odds - A group on the 1800 foot terrace on Mumm Peak, Robson camp.
Photo courtesy of: Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

The principal "raison d'etre" of the Camps being to climb mountains, it is it be expected that, over and above the graduating climbs, participants would do a great deal of that, sometimes adding to a growing list of first ascents. Of these, one of the most noteworthy was Mount Robson in 1913. U.S. navy captain A.H. McCarthy, B.C. Deputy Minister of Public Works W.W. Foster and their remarkable guide, Conrad Kain, accomplished the first technically proper ascent of the mountain in the course of that year's camp. (In 1909 Reverend George Kinney from Victoria and his guide, Curly Phillips missed the summit by only a few feet on account of bad weather.) When they reached the top, Conrad Kain laconically informed his clients: "Gentlemen, that's as far as I can take you",[27] a statement that would surely rank with Mallory's reason for climbing Everest: "Because it is there" in a compendium of mountaineering quotations. The second camp held at Mount Robson in 1924 witnessed another stunning achievement. Two women: Mrs. W.A.D. ("Phyl") Munday, of Vancouver, dean of Canadian women climbers, and Miss A.E. Buck from the U.S. vanquished that mountain a second time.

In 1959 the spectacular forms of the Bugaboos (Conrad Kain made a number of daring first ascents here) provided plenty of excitement. Camp chronicler Gail Taylor writes: "...there was news of yet another successful attempt on Marmolata, Pigeon, East Post or Crescent Spire, spoken of with affection as old friends now, for it had been found they were Bugaboos in name

only."[28]

The camp at Elk Lake in 1964, then a new area, offered many opportunities for first ascents, duly accomplished under the leadership of Peter Fuhrmann. Many of these peaks had yet to be "baptized".

Thanks to the Club's high safety standards - on one trip in 1909, "Wheeler insisted on calling the roll every hour in case someone had disappeared into a crevasse"[29] - few tragic happenings marred the happy occasions the camps generally turned out to be. One did happen the previous year, which may account for Wheeler's fastidiousness in the situation referred to above. A young woman from Lethbridge, Alberta, Helen Hatch, carried away no doubt by youthful enthusiasm mixed with a headiness induced by her rarified surroundings, took off after Oliver, A.O. Wheeler's son (destined to become Sir Oliver, Surveyor General of India), down a "shoulder" - to fall to her death, in spite of young Oliver's warnings and subsequent attempt to stop her. Any accidents that did occur often came about through this kind of defiance. An accident not resulting in death or injury could, in retrospect, be regarded with humor. A witness at the General Mountaineering Camp held at Mount Robson in 1974 records: "My dad was rescued by means of a pulley system - the rescuers were so eager that he shot, vigorously protesting, like a cork out of a champagne bottle, and almost went head first into the next crevasse."[30]

Participants at camp did not have to climb or go on a long hike every day. It was possible to spend an enjoyable and profitable "day off" pottering around camp: going on short walks to photograph, sketch, botanize, fish, take icy dips in a lake, if there was one, play bridge, or enjoy chit chat in the tea tent. A participant at the 1955 Mount Robson Camp passed a rainy day in his sleeping bag, "reading mountaineering and metaphysics, or chatting about the same with [his] tent mates."[31] Another thing one could do was watch others climb: one could train a pair of binoculars on a mountain and watch the little black specks of one's fellow campers inch ant-like across its snowy face. A participant at a number of camps in the '40's and '50's and who kept meticulous diaries has this to say about days off: "It is very pleasant to get up as late as one can, have as much breakfast as you want, and afterwards do what you like, taking plenty of time about it."[32]

After a day of hiking, climbing, or taking it easy, everyone got together for supper and, afterwards, the evening campfire. Supper, prepared in the early days by Chinese cooks, was served at tables frequently decorated with attractively arranged bouquets of wild flowers. (Given current concern for the environment, such bouquets would today be "verboten".)

Following upon dinner came the evening campfire: the heart and soul of the camps. The assembly of participants has been referred to by a number of writers as a "family",[33] and the fire itself as "an altar of worship".[34] People reminisced, planned and "dissected"[35] climbs, sang - and yodelled - in syncopation with packhorse bells tinkling in the meadows, listened to the likes of Captain McCarthy (first to ascend both Mount Robson and, in 1925, Mount Logan in the Yukon, Canada's highest), Sir Noel Odell, a colleague of Mallory's on Everest, and other giants of the mountaineering fraternity, describe their experiences and triumphs, and drink cocoa. Auctions taking "the form of a Siwash potlach"[36] were sometimes held. And the 1952 camp at Mount Assiniboine had the participants introducing one another by the person on their left, which "caused some amusement and provided a profitable evening."[37] Finally, when the fire began to die down, all got up - ladies first, to the tune of "Good Night, Ladies"[38] sung by the gentlemen - and "turned in" to spend the night on cushy balsam bough mattresses.

Sundays, church services were held in the same spot. To quote from Geoffrey Capes' 1947 diary: "....it was impressive, people grouped round the stone circle camp fire site; the dark trees and green sward, the brilliant sun pouring down the gleaming mountains of the Cheops group..."[39] Another year (1955) at Mount Robson, the service was held in an old cabin, decorated with evergreen branches and flowers for the occasion. The opening hymn was "Go Tell it on the Mountain". Through the window, Mount Robson exerted its powerful presence. Given such surroundings and such circumstances, it would not be difficult to stir up in oneself the necessary reverence.

To come down to earth, the Annual General Meetings were also held round the "magic circle" of the campfire. Such matters as construction of the Banff Clubhouse, acquisitions of books for the Library, and money, money, money, were among the items discussed. Animosities which apparently surfaced at one meeting were patched up afterward with a chicken dinner, which seems to have become traditional.

Leave taking appears to have been a matter left to personal initiative. When the two weeks were up at the 1959 camp held in the Bugaboos, "parties round the evening bonfires grew smaller, the last ascents were made, goodbyes were said and a few tents taken down here and there. Early on Saturday morning the last big truckload of campers started back down the road".[40] The termination of a 1971 camp in the same region is tinged with the regret that "so many new routes had to be left unexplored."[41]

What of the people who saw in these camps set in a primeval, pristine world far from the glitz of the railway hotels, an ideal vaction?

Nationality wise, Canadians from nearly every province formed the largest contingent by far. Gina La Force describes them as being primarily middle aged professionals

with urban background, and who had time and money for travel. Many had attended private schools or military academies. The values contingent on this type of background: British upper class leavened with New World democracy, set the tone of the camps for years to come. The second largest constituted similar types from the U.S. Finally, a smattering hailed from places like Britain, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, New Zealand, and, in 1937, one from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In 1965 six Japanese girls belonging to their country's alpine club delighted with accounts of expeditions in their homeland with their "gay shirts and jackets",[42] and origami (paper folding) demonstrations. The same also took care to voice enthusiastic appreciation for what the Canadian mountains had to offer.

Scholars of all types formed a substantial component, representing, in 1909, organizations as diverse as The Royal Society of Great Britain, the Royal and American Geographical Societies, the Entomological Societies of both Britain and the U.S., and the Linnaen Society. Last, but by no means least, come members of mountaineering organizations, both Canadian and foreign.

More often than not, the more outstanding representatives of these organizations were called upon to provide evening entertainment round the campfire. This generally took the form of recapitulations of their careers, achievements and travels. A full listing of these great names could go on and on. Of the mountaineers, some of the more noteworthy include the aforementioned Captain McCarthy, Professor Charles C. Fay of Harvard, a pioneer of mountaineering in the Selkirks, and Noel E. Odell, who has gone down in history as being the last to see George Mallory alive - as a black speck on the world's highest mountain, whose summit he may or may not have reached prior to tumbling to his death in 1924. Gracing the 1909 O'Hara Camp with his presence was Matterhorn conqueror Edward Whymper, voicing a litany of complaints about the Camp's food and drink - or lack thereof as far as his fastidious tastes were concerned - and the mosquitoes.

Scientific guests included the Vaux family of Philadelphia, who made the first glacier studies in the Rockies and Selkirks, geologist A.P. Coleman, botanist Julia Henshaw, whose books on wildflowers were among the first to spell out the flora of the Western mountains, and entomologist Dr. Emerton of Boston. An artist whose watercolors of the Canadian mountain regions are some of the finest and most interesting, appeared on the scene in 1914 to impress Kate McQueen as being "simply carried away by his own descriptions of the lovely colorings of nature up here....", and whose effusions along that line proved a little too much for some.

At the Upper Yoho Camp in 1919, soldiers returning from World War I were given the appropriate heroes' welcome. In 1942, with attendance diminished on account of World War II, then well under way, a battalion of soldiers was invited to use the camp as a base for mountain warfare training.

"Glissaders"
Photo courtesy of: Whyte
Museum of the Canadian Rockies

While perusing the lists of successful "graduates" that follow the camps in the Canadian Alpine Journal, I am struck by how many names are prefaced by "Miss". In contrast to its British counterpart, which finally condescended to admitting women in 1974, the Alpine Club of Canada from the beginning had in its membership a healthy representation from the fair sex. Already in 1907, one year after the Club was founded, this amounted to one third and, ten years later, increased to 40%. In **Mountain Climbing Guides in Canada**, Alison Griffiths and Gerry Wingenbach attribute this to the "pioneer spirit", one of whose aspects was men and women being required to participate equally in adventure.

At first camp, fifteen women gamely transcended the handicap of their "voluminous bloomers"[45] to complete the graduating climb. When it came to the descent, they must have presented quite a sight glissading down the slopes in "long skirts and frilly hats"[46]. At a later camp, the technological innovation of "knickerbockers" made quite an impression on one gentleman: "...very satisfying to the aesthetic sense for anyone who has once got accustomed to the natural grace of a healthy, athletic girl in garments which give every movement of the limbs free play."[47] Aesthetic considerations notwithstanding, they made climbing much easier. By the 1920's, they became mandatory and were incorporated into the dress requirements for camp. By the late twenties, "ski slacks" appeared on the scene

to get a five star recommendation.

The clothing described above might be fine for climbing, but "at the campfires," reports Kate McQueen, "you wore your skirt."[48]

To pursue the subject of clothing, in the early years the "derby hats and summer straws"[49] and "the white collar standard in sartorial finish"[50] fancied by a number of men proved as inappropriate to the mountain environment as some of the clothes worn by women.

"The ideal costume for climbing," as stipulated in a draft for the revision of the Camps information bulletin in 1939, "consists of knickerbockers made of some smooth, closely woven material, a warm flannel shirt and a soft felt hat. Rough tweeds [worn by the early Everest teams] are taboo; they hold the snow badly. The main point is to allow plenty of room for the knees..."[51]

What sort of panegyric would the author of this paper have come up with for gortex?

The report of the 1937 camp held at Yoho stipulates that "young people" were admitted to camp for the first time and "proved a valuable addition to all camp activities, including the camp fires."[52] Wise heads at the camp apparently saw fit to dispense lessons in "love and life"[53] along with mountaineering education. The same camp witnessed a considerable divergence in age among those completing their graduating climbs. A lady from Vancouver celebrated her 65th birthday on the summit of Mount Vice President. On the same day, John Wheeler, son of Oliver and grandson of A.O., also climbed the mountain.

Not everyone welcomed the presence of younger people. In the 1940 Club correspondence, the Secretary Treasurer complains "children eat twice as much as others"[54] (was he referring to teenagers?) and voices the opinion they should have separate tents, a commodity then in short supply.

At the "Family Camp" at Yoho in 1974 children of all ages seemed very much part of the picture. Their activities ranged from practising "belaying and climbing at the base of Isolated Peak [frequently painted by Lawren Harris] and playing boats in the river that runs through the meadow in front of the cabin."[55]

Camp chroniclers pay frequent tribute to the fine work done by the support staff, referred to in the early years as "the men in buckskin". Times were bound to happen when their ingenuity would be put to the test. Frank Yeigh mentions as occasion during one of the early camps when outfitter Jack Otto had to improvise a bridge and a dam to ensure safe passage for both horses and people round a landslide. Inconveniences of a more domestic kind included wood not igniting on account of dampness, running out of bacon, butter, or, in later years, propane to light the stoves. Cooks, however, managed to overcome these difficulties to provide a continuum of satisfying meals.

Not only paid staff but volunteers among camp participants performed many noble services. A.H. McCarthy, for one, instructed novice climbers and took them out among the peaks. And in the tea tent, the ladies ensured an unceasing flow of tea to refresh those returning from climbs or days out on the trail. Most notably, Phyl Munday, mentioned earlier as the second person and first woman to have climbed Mount Robson, provided first aid services, dispensing psychological balm along with the ointment and bandages she applied to wounds and blisters.

Forming the cornerstone of the camps' programs were the guides, one of the "perks" supplied by the railways. Among those lending their expertise to climbing parties were the three Feuz': Edward, Ernest and Gottfried, Mortiz Inderbinen, Christian Jorimann, Walter Schauffelberger and Rudolf Aemmer. One of the favorites, directly employed by the Club and an outstanding climber in his own right, was Austrian Conrad Kain. His good looks, courtly European manners and thoughtfulness went over especially well with the ladies. His kisses planted "on demure cheeks"[56] and stories told while storms raged robbed threatening situations of their terror. At the 1909 O'Hara Camp, by having the foresight one day to bring along extra pairs of gloves, he made it possible for the ladies in his charge to complete their climbs and not have to turn back on account of frozen fingers, as was the case with another guide. Such gestures made it easier for many a lady to fulfil her membership requirements.

Relations between guides and their clients were not always rosy, at least from the guides' point of view. Their pay fell considerably short of what they might have made at the hotels and, according to Edward Feuz, "Canadians were notorious for tipping very poorly."[57] Conrad Kain mentions how one elderly gentleman from Montreal whose mood had turned sour when returning from a climb, "made everything right with a five dollar tip and flattering words."[58] By and large, however, he did not find relations with his clients totally satisfactory: "...I saw that the Canadian tourists have the same attitude as so many European climbers: in the valley the guide is soon forgotten. In the mountains and in camp he is "dear friend".[59] The "democratization of climbing" appears not to have extended to the guides. At the 1947 camp, this may have been rectified in part by conferral, at the Annual General Meeting, of Honorary Life Membership on three of the guides: Rudolf Aemmer, Edward and Ernest Feuz.

What of peoples' behavior in general? It goes without saying the ambience of the camps was one where camaraderie, fellowship and good will predominated. However, all group situations from families to workplaces require that people learn to cope with the idiosyncrasies of their fellows. At the camps, this generally involved nothing more

than putting up with the strange "growls and groans that some people make at night,"[60] or the inconveniences of dressing and undressing in a tent shared with others. Egos are certain to rise and fall, knock and be knocked about, on both mountaintops and in valleys. Conrad Kain refers to the occasion of a meal being prepared after a storm: "It was interesting how everyone wanted to help and everyone understood the matter better than his fellow."[61] On one occasion, camp members employed a rather devious method to put one particularly obnoxious camper in his place: "...he was taken out for a day by some experienced climbers to some very precipitous rocky peaks. They took him up nearly to the top three of those peaks, but not quite to the summit, and so they gave him a good work out and tired him out, without giving him the satisfaction of having reached any summit."[62] Most bothersome to the authorities were infractions such as absconding with cups and other dining equipment and being careless with ropes. Mavericks in groups of climbers and hikers, such as a New Zealander who saw in "every rock outcrop and slight overhang a "beaut bivy"[63] must have given many a leader, responsible for bringing all his charges back to camp in one piece, a headache.

By and large, however, such things get forgotten in positive experiences like an evening campfire described by Conrad Kain: "That evening all the registered guests were present: more that two hundred people! Not in vain have so many pleasant stories been written about campfires in the Rockies! It makes a unique picture to see so many people grouped about such a huge fire, lying, sitting, standing. There are songs, laughing and joking. Recitations are given, in short, everything in the best humor."[64] Such images as this must be the ones that steal up on camp participants in the midst of a busy office day, long after they have left camp, and make them want to return another year.

What long term benefits did the camps confer? First and foremost, they were set up to turn some Canadians into mountaineers. According to Gina La Force, the best of the "fifty to ninety" .... "completely inexperienced men and women"[65] who completed graduating climbs every year prior to World War I "equalled any in England and the U.S."[66] More recently, Canadian climbers have twice succeeded at the "Olympics" of mountaineering: Mount Everest. The second expedition in 1986 placed on its storm buffeted summit the first North American woman, Sharon Wood of Canmore, Alberta. And yet another, Patrick Morrow, formerly of Kimberley, B.C. and also residing in Canmore, made the rounds of the highest mountains on all seven of the world's continents. His achievement is none the less remarkable for an American having "beat him to it". In the words of Cyril Wates, Club President in 1939, "mountaineering is not the trick performance of a gymnast but a sport for all who have good health and can enjoy a brisk ten mile walk without undue fatigue: a sport which takes you into scenes of untold grandeur and challenges to the full your skill, courage and endurance."[67]

Over and above mountaineering skills, the Club sought to inculcate in its members such Victorian virtues as "spartan athleticism", "endurance of pain" and "brotherly love",[68] in order to turn out "good citizens and patriots",[69] and to forestall "racial degeneration".[70] The rhetoric of these early years also makes out the tent cities that were the camps to be platonic utopias of "harmonious good will".[71]

Last but not least, diverse psychological benefits accrued to participants. The unadulterated nature to be found in mountain environments provided balm to spirits caught up in the hurly burly of city living. Women benefited in a unique kind of way. After her vacation, "the woman climber returns to her round of daily duties in the workaday world, but she had only to close her eyes for a second and she is transported to her mountain top. Brainfag? Nervous exhaustion? Asthenic muscles? They have lost their dreaded meaning."[72] Another writer, Frank Yeigh, speaks of the sense of achievement which makes the physical effort and courage required to vanquish a mountain well worth while. Perhaps the most moving testimony to the benefits of the camps is a description of their effect on W.E. Stone, Vice President of Purdue University in Indiana,

"A Sea of Ice": Robson Glacier
Photo courtesy of: Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

tragically killed in a fall from Mount Eon in the Assiniboine region in 1922: "One could almost see his transformation from a man of heavy responsibilities to that of a strong, vigorous boy."[78]

The Yukon Alpine Centennial Expedition in 1967 seems to have denoted a watershed in the evolution of the camps. The natures of both climbing and society had changed dramatically since the camp's inception in antebellum 1906. With so many peaks climbed at least once, passion for exploration and "bagging" first ascents gave way to mastering new routes. Technology made it possible to perform feats that would have once seemed superhuman. In some cases, humans, opting to relinquish technology, have quite kept apace with it. In short, climbing became no longer, in Conrad Kain's words, merely a matter of "putting one foot in front of the other and always the second a little higher than the first."[74]

Being beyond the scope I have set for this article to go into changes in the camps' format to any great length or detail, I shall do no more than hint at them. "General Mountaineering Camps" (extended to three weeks) are still operated each year to train novice climbers. Other camps have been instituted for highly trained and skilled mountaineers, such as one held at Fairy Meadows in 1968. At these, those who have made climbing a religion can go "all out" with technology, or keep it to a minimum, without being encumbered by the large numbers present at the earlier camps, which would include a considerable proportion of novices and the less adept. Such elevated levels of skill make guides no longer necessary. It goes without saying these smaller camps exert a correspondingly smaller impact on the environment. Then there are the "Family Camps", where children from toddlers to teenagers are welcomed with open arms. Happenings such as raiding the cook's quarters for pots and pans to scare off bears and picking blueberries to be made into pies at supper characterize these camps as occasions of spontaneous informality and good clean fun. Climbing is done but in a spirit of play. These format changes are perhaps the result of climbing having become truly democratized. Whatever shape the camps have taken over the years, they have provided Canadians an affordable means of acquainting themselves with their country's heart and soul: its wilderness.

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The writer is librarian at the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies in Banff.

FOOTNOTES

1. Title of one of the many pamphlets and brochures issued by the C.P.R. to promote tourism.
2. Fraser, Esther. **Wheeler**. p. 62.
3. Alpine Club of Canada. Constitution, 1906.
4. La Force, Gina. **The Alpine Club of Canada**, 1906-1929. p. 19.
5. Ibid. p. 7.
6. Loc. cit.
7. Fraser, Esther. **Wheeler**. p.63.
8. Kain, Conrad. **Where the Clouds Can Go**. 2nd ed. p. 215.
9. Fraser, Esther. **Wheeler** p. 64.
10. Loc. cit.
11. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.2, Pt. 1 (1909). p. 153.
12. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.2, Pt. 2 (1910). p. 212.
13. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V. 39 (1956). p. 117.
14. Getty, Ian A.L. **An Historical Guide to Yoho National Park**. p. 211.
15. Ibid. p. 214.
16. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V. 12 (1922). p. 200.
17. Getty, Ian A.L. **An Historical Guide to Yoho National Park**. p. 205.
18. Fraser, Esther. **Wheeler**. p. 64.
19. Yeigh, Frank. **Through the Heart of Canada**. p. 243.
20. Loc. cit.
21. Ibid. p.244.
22. Loc. cit.
23. Ibid. p.251.
24. **In the Western Mountains. Sound Heritage**. V.VIII, no. 4. (1980). p. 22-24.
25. Yeigh, Frank. **Through the Heart of Canada**. p.245.
26. Ibid. p.254.
27. Kain, Conrad. **Where the Clouds Can Go**. p.317.
28. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.43 (1960) p.117
29. La Force, Gina L. **The Alpine Club of Canada, 1906-1929**. p. 8-9
30. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.58 (1975. p.90.
31. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.39 (1956). p.116.
32. Capes, Geoffrey. [Personal diary of A.C.C. Summer CAmp, 1947, July 18 entry].
33. Yeigh, Frank. **The Alpine Club of Canada**. Article in **Canadian Magazine** 1907. p.256.
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35. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.52 (1969). p.102.
36. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.18 (1930). p.123.
37. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.38 (1953). p.174.
38. Fraser, Esther. **Wheeler**. p.65.
39. Capes, Geoffrey. [Personal diary of A.C.C. Summer Camp, 1947, July 20 entry]
40. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.43 (1960). p.119.
41. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.55 (1972). p.28.
42. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.48 (1965). p.175
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44. Griffiths, Alison and Wingenbach, Gerry. **Mountain Climbing Guides in Canada**. p. 97-98.
45. Fraser, Esther. **Wheeler**. p.65.
46. Loc. cit.
47. Ibid, p.76.
48. **In the Western Mountains. Sound Heritage**. V.VIII, no.4 (1980). p.24.
49. Fraser, Esther. **Wheeler**. p.63.
50. Herbert E. Sampson scrapbook.
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53. Op. cit.
54. Alpine Club of Canada executive papers. Letter from Secretary Treasurer to the President, August 6, 1940.
55. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.58 (1975). p.87.
56. Fraser, Esther. **Wheeler**. p.76.
57. Griffiths, Alison and Wingenbach, Gerry. **Mountain Climbing Guides in Canada**. p.92-93.
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62. Westmorland, H. Personal reminiscences. p.4
63. **Canadian Alpine Journal**. V.52 (1969) p.102.
64. Kain, Conrad. **Where the Clouds Can Go**. p.216.
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66. Op. cit.
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72. La Force, Gina L. **The Alpine Club of Canada, 1906-1929**. p.18.
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Kamloops' Heroes

by Tracey Devitt

The brave man is not he who feels fear,
For that were stupid and irrational;
But he whose noble soul its fear subdues,
And bravely shares the danger nature shrinks from.

Joanna Baillie
1762-1851

Bravery and heroism are two aspects of human nature that are extremely important to society. Bravery is the ability to endure danger or pain while heroism may be described as conspicuous bravery. In the strictest sense, to be a hero one must be noticed. Heroism is not based on race or sex.

As a group, these heroes do not seek to be admired. We, however, like to exalt them to near God-like status. We study their lives and deeds and ask ourselves, "Could I do that? I hope I could".

Modern Kamloops has an interesting history. At times it resembled the Wild West of the United States with gunfights and train robberies. However, our city has also had its share of people who have brought honour to Kamloops. During the First and Second World Wars some of our residents received awards and medals from other countries. Here are just a few examples of Kamloops' humble heroes.

➙ Joseph Thatcher Jones, the first school teacher at Cache Creek in 1874, was an ordinary man. He planned a visit to his son but ...his trip did not turn out like he expected.

In 1877 Jones took up farming in Westwold. His son, William, stayed in the Cache Creek area and started a freight business on the Cariboo Road. Five years later William decided to close down his business. He asked his father to meet him in Boston Bar for William's last trip.

On November 2, 1882 father and son left Boston Bar with four tons of blasting powder for the CPR. Five miles into their journey the powder exploded. William was thrown clear and left unconscious, his clothes in shreds.

Joseph was badly burned in the explosion. He struggled the five miles back to Boston Bar to get help. After gasping out a few details, he died; his son survived.

➙ In 1887 three Indian constables risked their lives trying to protect people from a mad man. One constable was killed, another was seriously injured.

That dreadful night in November, both Alex McLean and Phillip Thoma had been drinking in Kamloops. They returned to the Indian Reserve feeling extremely good about themselves, yelling and racing their horses. Constables Auxime and Williams, with the help of Phillip Thoma, tried to calm Alex down, but Alex would have none of it. He shot Constable Auxime above the left ear. He then shot another constable, Lazar Sikes, in the hand. The crowd that had gathered dispersed. Constable Williams refused to leave. He tried to talk Alex into turning himself over to the police. Instead, Alex shot and killed Constable Williams.

Alex McLean, grandson of Chief Factor Donald McLean and nephew of the infamous McLean brothers, was himself shot later that night when a bullet from an unknown gun killed him. The person who fired the gun was never brought to trial.

➙ Another Provincial Police Constable who proved himself in the course of his duty was William L. Fernie. His courage and quick thinking often saved his life. Fernie's most famous adventure was the Bill Miner incident of 1906. Bill Miner, with "Shorty" Dunn and Louis Colquhoun, robbed a train at Ducks near Kamloops in May 1906. Constable Fernie tracked the men into a wooded area of the Nicola Valley. Once he had them located, Fernie returned for help. Unfortunately, Fernie was not present when Miner's gang was captured but he did help bring them back to Kamloops.

The Bill Miner incident was not Fernie's most difficult case. For over a year Fernie had been tracking Moses Paul and Paul Splintlum, both wanted for murder. Finally in December of 1912, he convinced the Indians of the area to hand the two suspects over. They were tried and

hung in Kamloops.

In the 1912 CPR strike, this same Constable Fernie handled the angry strikers with commendable firmness and courage. Constable William L. Fernie devoted his career to protecting people. He felt that maintaining peace and order was very important and he was always ready to fulfill his duty, no matter the cost.

➙Ah Mee was a peaceful man. He first came to Kamloops in 1877. Fourteen years later he celebrated the first Chinese wedding in town when he married Cherry Jip Te Li.

Two years later, in 1893, Ah Mee was honoured by the **Inland Sentinel** newspaper for saving John Mara's house from a fire which destroyed many homes and buildings in Kamloops:

> It was a hard struggle, however, and the men who, notwithstanding the heat of the flames and the blinding and choking fumes of the smoke, held their posts on and under the roof and bravely fought the fire deserve the highest praise. Amongst these was a Chinaman, Ah Mee, who although but a small man, held his post from beginning to end in the most dangerous of positions and worked with a will and an energy equal to any white man.

Despite his heroism and ongoing contributions to Kamloops, Ah Mee never received the respect and acceptance he deserved from his fellow citizens. In September of 1897 Ah Mee was nearly trampled to death by his own horse and rig. A loud and belligerent drunk staggered over to Ah Mee and lifted and shook the small cart while Ah Mee was trying to get in. The horse bolted, throwing Ah Mee to the ground, gashing the head of the small man. The local newspaper responded with a terse editorial the following day. "An example should be made of this drunken man and it would probably deter others from scaring horses and interfering with the Chinese."

Ah Mee endured continuous discrimination because of his nationality. Even City officials tried to close his business down, citing numerous non-existent violations. Nevertheless, Ah Mee persisted. In December, 1903 he placed this ad in the **Kamloops Telegraph:**

> Have your washing done by Ah Mee, the whitest Chinaman in B.C. Clean and cheap and a good British subject. Will call. Laundry on Lansdowne Street.

Ah Mee's gentle life came to a tragic end July 2, 1926 when he was hit by a car while riding his bicycle. He died a few days later in hospital at 69 years of age. No blame was attached to the driver, Clair Dalgleish, because Ah Mee did not have a light on his bicycle.

His final tribute from the City of Kamloops appeared in the Inland Sentinel July 6, 1926: "Dressed sometimes in knickerbockers or riding breeches and stetson hat, his cheerful comings and goings during his long life have been part of the daily life of the town."

➙Another notable Kamloops hero was John "Moose" Fulton. He distinguished himself in World War II as an R.A.F. pilot. His early death was an unfortunate end to his hair-raising flying career.

Fulton's parents moved to Kamloops in 1889. His father, Frederick John Fulton, was an MLA for Kamloops between 1900-1909. His mother was the daughter of A.E.B. Davie, a former Premier of B.C. John was born in 1912 in Kamloops and he gained his nickname "Moose" in his childhood. He enlisted in 1934 in the R.A.F. in England in fulfillment of a long-time dream of flying.

In September 1940 he was decorated for courage in battle for a stunning feat near Brussels with the 149th Squadron (R.A.F.). He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. On December 21, 1941 he became the wing commander of a new squadron, the 419. This group eventually took the name "Moose" Squadron in honour of John Fulton.

On the night of April 28, 1942 while over the North Sea, Fulton's "Wellington was badly shot up and his rear gunner was wounded. The rear turret was put out of action, the hydraulic system was pierced enough to cause the undercraft to fall in the 'down' position and the bomb doors to fall open, a blade of the port airscrew was splintered and generally the kit was holed 'a la swiss cheese'".[1]

Ah Mee loading water barrels at Riverside Park in Kamloops

Fulton managed to fly his crippled aircraft back to England to the astonishment of the entire base. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

On July 29 of that year Wing Commander Fulton failed to return from a flight over Hamburg. His last communication was over the Frisian Islands. He was presumed dead in 1943.

His team never forgot him. They continued to call themselves after him and the "Moose" Squadron became known for their bravery. They are still a very active part of Canada's Armed Forces.

In January 1943 the City of Kamloops adopted the "Moose" Squadron as its very own. The next year the local airport was given the name "Fulton Field". John Fulton, who died at the age of 30, remains a beloved hero.

Wing-Commander John (Moose) Fulton, 1912-1942 DSO DFC AFC

→ From 1897 to 1899 young Alma Victoria Clarke and her family made Kamloops their home. In the short time they were here her mother and father became well respected members of the small community. Her mother, Elizabeth, opened a small music conservatory, while Walter was a very busy reporter for the Inland Sentinel. Alma was also well known as a child prodigy.

Alma Victoria Clarke was an adventurous and daring girl; each successive exploit was more exciting than the last. Because she came from a protective family, she was constantly testing the boundaries of the social constraints.

Alma moved with her family to Vancouver in 1899 until 1914 while Mr. Clarke worked for the Vancouver Sun. It was in Vancouver that Alma met her husband, Robert Dolling. When he went overseas to fight in the war, she followed him and lived in London. After he was killed in battle, she joined the Ambulance Brigade and was decorated for outstanding service by the French government.

Never satisfied, Alma became embroiled in a scandalous love affair with T.C. Pakenham, son of an admiral and a war hero himself. He quickly divorced his first wife of five years to marry Alma. Sadly, the marriage did not last long for in 1923 Alma moved back to Vancouver with a son by her second marriage named Christopher.

Alma earned a living as a pianist, commuting back and forth between Victoria and Vancouver. While in Victoria she met Francis Rattenbury, a famous architect. He was 56 years old and married. It did not take long for Alma to become entangled with Francis. Strange rumors flew about that Alma had bewitched Francis and that she had a cocaine addiction. The scandal rocked the conservative City of Victoria. Although Alma and Francis married in 1925, they were soon forced to flee.

They retired to Bournemouth, England hoping for a quiet life, however, it wasn't long before Alma became bored with her husband and home. Although a baby, John, was born, the marriage was beginning to stagnate.

In 1934 Alma took steps to improve her lot. She hired 18 year old George Percy Stoner as her personal handyman and chauffeur. The two soon became lovers. It didn't take long for the young and impetuous George to grow increasingly resentful of the shared privileges of Alma's husband, Francis. Driven to the point of distraction, George murdered the older man in a fit of passion.

Both Alma and George were arrested for murder, but George was the main suspect. As the trial progressed, Alma began to realize that her selfish life style was ruining everyone she ever knew or loved. Alma's regrets came too late for George, though. He was found guilty of murder and sent to prison. The broken Alma was aquitted and released. Later that year, in 1935, the unhappy Alma committed suicide.

Alma Rattenbury was a bold and daring woman. She endured the dangers of war and was recognized for her bravery. Yet the rest of her life was a dismal failure. Some may question whether she was ever a hero at all, but she does share many of the attributes of the hero.

Each one of our heroes possessed the determination needed to do what was necessary. They did not linger to count the cost or weigh the consequences; they simply acted. Their courage came from deep within their personalities and from a decided sense of themselves and their duty. When the need arose for selfless action and the question was asked, "Can I do that?", each one of our heroes, great and small, said "yes"!

* * * * * * * * * *

The writer grew up in Kamloops, attended Douglas College and the University of Victoria, married and returned to Kamloops with her husband. She works as a full time attendant at the Kamloops Museum and Archives.

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3. Reksten, Terry. **Rattenbury**. Victoria, B.C.: Sono Nis Press, 1978.

FOOTNOTES

1. 419 Tactical Fighter (Training) Squadron. **The Moose Squadron, 1941-45 The War Years of 419 Squadron**. (Winnipeg: CFTMPC, 1977) 22

Letters to the Editor

Women In Early Farming - Pre-emptions

Gwen Szychter's article (British Columbia Historical News, / Winter 1990-91) deals mostly with farming in the lower Fraser Valley and on Vancouver Island. This may be why the author has said that "the issue of free land ...is neither straightforward nor resolved." In fact, the pre-emption of land continued into the 1930's, under provisions spelled out in the Land Act. Until that time, the only maps of much of British Columbia were the pre-emptor's maps showing the land available for settlers.

There was a $2 fee for recording a pre-emption, and a $10 charge for a Crown Grant after the conditions of residence and improvement had been met. The fees were waived for a "returned British Columbia soldier." Returned sailors or airmen were not mentioned. At the cost of $12 for a 160 acre tract, this could be classed as "free land" even in the 1930's.

Land could be pre-empted only for agriculture, so the system disappeared on Vancouver Island when the E & N land grant gave virtually all the arable land to the railway. In the lower Fraser Valley, available land was mostly taken up before, I would guess, 1910. In other parts of the province, including the Cariboo, the Nechako and Bulkley valleys, and inaccessible lands to the north, land for pre-emption was available to the extent that surveys had been done. It was not possible to pre-empt unsurveyed land.

The system died out when the quality and accessibility of available land were reduced, and improved land could be bought for a few dollars an acre, or by paying a small sum of unpaid taxes for abandoned land.

Pre-emptions could be claimed by bachelors, heads of families, or anyone who was either a widow, a deserted wife, or a femme sole (a self-supporting female over eighteen years of age). At the time the Land Act was drafted, one presumes that the heads of families were male, so almost any adult was eligible except for a married woman.

John Kendrick
Vancouver

Important Dates In Lytton

In 'Intrepid in the Name of God' (Vol. 23 No. 3) it is claimed that the Rev. James Gammage and the Rev. John Good both held the first Anglican service in Lytton, one on June 5, 1859 and the other on June 16, 1867. Can Pixie McGeachie tell us which is right?

Anthony Farr, Ganges, B.C.

Answer from Pixie McGeachie

Taken in context, both dates are correct. A few added words would have clarified the confusion.

In a letter, Reverend James Gammage says: "We arrived in Lytton on Saturday, June 2, 1859 ...On Sunday, June 5, 1859 I held two services here .... We can fix Sunday, June 5, 1859 as the date of the first service in the Interior."

On Sunday, June 16, 1867 Bishop Hills noted in his diary: "Good [Reverend John Booth Good] held the first Anglican service at Lytton . . . . Two hundred people were present....."

Canon Cyril Williams, whose extensive research notes provided information for my article, explains that Bishop Hills was referring to the fact that this was the first Anglican service in Lytton in which a bishop participated. It was a big event for the Thompson Indians and the community.

My thanks to Mr. Farr for giving me the opportunity to shed light on what appeared to be conflicting information.

The Press Censorship' story has the U.S.A. entering the first war in 1918. The actual date was April 6, 1917.

Three Ships Carry a Noble Name

In Vol. 23 No. 4, 'Figureheads and Bow Badges', the Empress of Canada which was torpedoed in 1943 was not the only ship to bear that name. The Duchess of Richmond, built in the late 1920s, was re-named Empress of Canada after the war and served for a few years until she was lost by fire at Liverpool in 1953. I watched her unloading troops in 1945 at the same port, still as the Duchess. The third and last Empress of Canada (27,300 tons, cruising speed 21 knots) entered CPR service in 1961 and sailed the Atlantic route until 1971, when she became uneconomic to run and was sold to Carnival Cruise Lines in Feb. 1972. (The **Pacific Empresses**, by Robert Turner.) I saw her at Fort Lauderdale in 1989, re-named the Mardi Gras. In the photo she is passing the Ile d'Orleans in the St. Lawrence in Aug. 1962.

Anthony Farr,
Ganges, B.C.

The Empress of Canada in the St. Lawrence, Aug. 1962.

News & Notes

METEORS OVER B.C. IN 1913

At about 6 p.m. Pacific time on the 9th of February, 1913, there was an unparalelled display of meteors over much of southern Canada. A succession of groups of fireballs, each with a long trailing "tail", moved from WNW to ESE in an orbit 40 kilometers above the earth, and were visible for about 300 kilometers on either side of their course. They moved at about 12 kilometers per second relative to the earth's surface, and produced sonic booms that reached the earth just after the last group disappeared. The original Canadian reports came from Mortlach, a little west of Regina in Saskatchewan, and from numerous places in southwestern Ontario where they passed directly over the city of Guelph. Beyond that they crossed New York and Pennsylvania, where few saw them because of cloudiness, but they were observed from Bermuda and from several ships, south to a location off Brazil.

The best accounts of this display are in the Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada for 1913-1916, by C. A. Chant and W. F. Denning. More recently Dr. J.A. O'Keefe of the United States Aeronautics and Space Administration sponsored a search of newspapers in the United States and also in the three prairie provinces.

This extended the known track of the meteors backward to Didsbury, Alberta, about half way between Calgary and Red Deer. Dr. O'Keefe feels that a similar search in British Columbia might extend the known orbit even farther to the west. A projection of their track from Didsbury passes near Blue River, Williams Lake, Alexis Creek, Bella Coola, Bella Bella and out into Queen Charlotte Sound. They could have been seen anywhere within about 300 kilometers of this line, except where mountains or clouds obstructed the view. The noises, of course, would penetrate a cloud cover, but would be bounced off of mountains in the line of sight.

Anyone who has access to newspapers, diaries or ships' logs for 1913 is urged to check the date February 9, and for a week or two following, for reports of unusual lights in the sky or unaccountable loud noises. Reports from British Columbia would be of great scientific interest, helping to establish where the meteors first became visible, or audible. If sent to the undersigned, copies will be forwarded to interested parties in Canada and the United States.

W.E. Ricker
3052 Hammond Bay Road
Nanaimo, B.C. V9T 1E2

ALFRED GEORGE SLOCOMB -1906-1991

Slocomb was born in England, grew up in Prince Rupert, and attended high school and business college in Victoria. He held several forestry related jobs then became a B.C. Land Surveyor in 1937, doing his articling in Strathcona Park, and later the Rocky Mountain Trench, and Liard River. He served with the RCA as an officer from December 1941 to February 1945. Alf's work covered all parts of B.C., giving him a unique knowledge of its geography and history.

As President of the Victoria Branch of the B.C. Historical Federation in 1972, he was a member of its Provincial Council till 1979, and President in 1976-77. He passed away in Victoria on 2 January, 1991.

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PEACE RIVER WRITERS HONOURED

Shirlee Smith Matheson of Calgary, who joined with Earl K. Pollon of Hudson's Hope, B.C. to write **This Was Our Valley**, received the 16th Annual Non-Fiction Award from the Alberta Ministry of Culture and Multiculturalism. Their book on the history of the valley now under Williston Lake also won the Roderick Haig-Brown Regional Prize at the 1990 B.C. Book Prizes, declared "the book Published in 1989 contributing most to an appreciation of our province."

Shirlee lived in Hudson's Hope for nine years during the construciton of the Peace River (W.A.C. Bennett) Dam; she volunteered at the local museum. Her article "Learning Ledgends at Hudson's Hope Museum" won the first BCHF Award for Best Article in the **B.C. Historical News** Vol. 17 No.2

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BOUNDARY HISTORICAL'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

On January 29, 1991 a gathering was held at the United Church in Greenwood to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Boundary Historical Society. The Minutes of the first meeting were read observing "The cold weather (in 1951) prevented many from attending. The meeting was adjourned before the fire went out." Lois Haggen, that first secretary, joined Mildred Roylance to cut the large birthday cake.

Honorary Life Memberships were presented to Lincoln Sandner, Jim Glanville and Alice Glanville for their dedicated service over many years. Bernard Webber, President of the Okanagan Historical Society, expressed the desire to maintain the close relationship which has always existed between the two societies. Gladys Floyd entertained the audience with a humerous monologue. M.L.A. Bill Barlee completed the program with an appeal to continue to record and preserve our history.

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RENOVATIONS AT ROYAL BRITISH COLUMBIA MUSEUM

During 1991 and 1992 we will be packing and moving our anthropological, biological and historical collections to allow for removal of asbestos in our collections building. During this time some of our artifacts and specimens will be inaccessible.

We will meet all our existing commitments regarding loans and research access and will endeavour to meet any additional requests.

Our exhibits building will remain open to the public.

Royal British Columbia Museum
675 Belleville Street
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Loans and research contact:
Grant W. Hughes
Assistant Director
Collection Program
(604) 387-5706

For further details contact:
Tom Palfrey
Promotions Coordinator
(604) 387-2134

Book Shelf

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

40 Years On The Yukon Telegraph
Guy Lawrence. Quesnel, B.C., Caryall Books, 1990. 122p. map and photos. Originally pub. Vancouver, Mitchell Pres, 1965.$12.95

The Yukon Telegraph Line was constructed in 1900 and 1901 by the Government of Canada to provide telegraphic service between the Yukon and the "outside" world. It continued in operation until the 1940s. To maintain the service men were placed at stations situated at intervals along the line and Guy Lawrence, for a large part of his life, was one such employee.

40 Years on the Yukon Telegraph is not, as Lawrence makes clear in his "Preface", a history of the telegraph. Rather it is an autobiographical account of his life on the line, with a lengthy introduction outlining his coming with his father to the settlement of Atlin as a participant in the great rush to the gold fields of the Yukon River. After joining the telegraph service in Atlin in 1902, the author was in sequence at three of the stations south from Atlin towards Telegraph Creek, then for a time at Blackwater, north of Quesnel, and for his final twenty six years at the town of Stewart. This last period is given but fleeting treatment in a single chapter. "Illustrative episodes in the life of one who spent four decades at various locations on the line," is Lawrence's description in his "Preface", and that is an accurate summary of the book.

Lawrence was a lad of seventeen when he arrived in Canada in 1898 with his father, a London, England, portrait painter. Along the way to the Yukon they were decoyed to the recently discovered gold region near Atlin Lake, and his account of their journey makes up the first third of the book. Out of this comes a beautiful picture of the father who had led, in the son's opinion, "a very sedentary life", and yet who, while waiting for the ice to come out of the Stikine River, would refresh himself with a daily dip among the ice flows at the mouth of the river. "It did not occur to me then," Lawrence writes, "that my father was possibly not the type to endure the hardships." Nonetheless the two men do get to the goldfields, at least those of Atlin, and get there after spending a winter holed up with other stampeders in the wilds north of Telegraph Creek. When his father leaves a couple of years later to return to England Lawrence found that "It was a sad parting. In true Hudson's Bay style we had broken many sacks of flour together, and on the trail I had got to know him better ...than in all the years before. He would not return."

On his own in the town of Atlin Lawrence had "$37.00 in cash, two weeks supply of food, a log cabin, and Prince "the sleigh dog who was devoted to me." He worked at several jobs and when, in 1902, he fell into a job with the telegraph his friends tried to dissuade him by pointing out the loneliness of the work and that to join the service and go to live in the bush was to acknowledge that he was a beaten man. Lawrence was like many of the men hired for the telegraph who planned to stay only long enough to amass a grub stake and then came to love the wild and lonely life. He had, of course, his moments of doubt, and a few years later noted in his diary "I like the life, but do get lonely sometimes," and on one occasion, on returning from a lengthy vacation, "I almost dread the life here now."

All, however, was not drudgery. At the Pike River station, the first south of the town of Atlin and situated on a beautiful small bay of the lake, Lawrence spent much of his time sailing his small boat. Years later, at Blackwater, he and his lineman companion ran a stopping place for travellers. "When business was slow," Lawrence writes, "men three or four hundred miles apart would play chess or checkers over the wire." Most took up hobbies, played musical instruments, sketched or painted. The author, "never heard of any employee cracking under the solitude."

This is a short book yet there are many details and vignettes which give colour and immediacy to the story. One of the attractions is the matter-of-fact narrative style; Lawrence presents his story simply, minimizing the dramatics. The result is a warm, very personal, and very readable book.

The photographs, of which there are twenty-nine, are a useful complement to the text, though more careful identification would have enhanced their value. Most, the reader is informed, are the work of one J.W. Sutherland. Little else is said of Sutherland, and it is not made clear which are his work. Sutherland joined the telegraph in the 1930s and served in the Iskut River section south of Telegraph Creek and as Lawrence was at Stewart the two men would have met regularly. Photographs of the Iskut station and of Deep Creek, and others from the line south of Telegraph Creek were probably taken by Sutherland, and I suspect that identifications such as "October snow on the author's Iskut station" refer to Sutherland rather than to Lawrence since Lawrence, from all indications, did not serve at Iskut. One photograph with the caption "The author at Nablin, 1906" has two people in it but does not indicate which is Lawrence.

In spite of the shortcomings, and they are the shortcomings of the original Mitchell Press edition of 1965, Caryall Books of Quesnel is to be commended for reprinting this account of an interesting life in British Columbia's north.

George R. Newell
Victoria Historical Society

Timothy Eaton and the Rise of His Department Store.
Joy L. Santink. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1990. 318 p. illus. $35.00

One of the highlights of early winter during my youth in Brandon, Manitoba, was the annual Eaton's Christmas parade, an extravaganza of beautiful floats, delightful costumes, and familiar images that symbolized the rituals of Christmas in the age of mass consumerism. The parade had come from Winnipeg and was sponsored by Canada's largest department store. Joy Santink's book is not about Eaton's Christmas parades, or about Manitoba, but it does tell the story of how the store that created this imaginative form of advertising came about. Among its several achievements, **Timothy Eaton** makes clear that the parade I so fondly recall from the mid-twentieth century had emerged out of fundamental changes in the lifestyles and business practices of Canadians more than a half-century earlier.

Eaton, we are told, was "a typically Victorian businessman" (p. 7). Born the last of nine children, he grew up a God-fearing youth firmly committed to the values of self-reliance and hard work. Religion and family guided him through a life that started in Northern Ireland and passed through recently-settled areas of Canada West before becoming rooted in Toronto. After having apprenticed as a clerk in Ireland, Eaton spent the rest of his working life in trade. His greatest attribute was a willingness to meet the ever-increasing challenges of the marketplace by transforming customary methods of doing business. He did not invent the institution of the department store, says Santink, and he generally borrowed his ideas about retailing from others, including the great American retailers John Wanamaker and Rowland Macy, but his willingness to innovate did set him apart from the crowd. At death in 1907 he left two stores, the flagship giant on Yonge Street in Toronto (which opened in 1883) and another in Winnipeg (begun in 1905), and more than 8000 employees, approximately half in sales and half in manufacturing. The Toronto store covered 22 acres of downtown land and boasted more than 100 specialized departments ranging from notions and drapery to drugs, wallpaper, saddlery, sporting goods, tea, and dress patterns. For Canadians from coast-to-coast, however, the name Eaton meant catalogue, of which more than 1.3 million were mailed in 1904.

Santink succeeds best in documenting the rise of Timothy Eaton's department store and the evolution in retail marketing that it represented. When Eaton arrived in Canada in the 1850s shops were small and usually specialized in a limited range of products. Credit made the commercial system work, linking large merchant with small and retailer with customer in a way that placed a premium on familiarity and trust. Shopping was viewed as "an occasion of some dignity" (p. 49), and it was assumed that no one would enter a store except to buy something: shopping had not yet become a form of recreation! Brand names and other types of advertising lay in the future. Timothy Eaton saw this future and adapted his retailing methods to meet it. Once in Toronto he moved quickly to replace credit with cash sales and fixed prices. With prices set, clerks no longer had to be well trained, and young women who worked for relatively low wages and for short periods of time replaced men for whom retailing was a career. Profit now came from volume sales, and Eaton worked aggressively to market his products. His promotional innovations ranged from expensive window displays, "Friday Bargain Days", and Santa Claus parades to a variety of in-store customer services. The old custom that goods were to be replaced when outworn was giving way to the ethic that they be replaced when outdated, and Eaton exploited this increasing awareness of fashion to the limit. In particular, the variety of goods offered by a merchant was becoming an important source of attraction to customers, and Eaton's store ballooned in size to meet the demand. Reorganization into an increasing number of specialized departments resulted. Above all, says Santink, Timothy Eaton recognized that industrialization was creating more disposable income for working people, and he assured his success in the retail field by reaching out to this growing strata of consumers ignored by more traditional businessmen.

Timothy Eaton and the Rise of His Department Store is more a history of the store than of Eaton. To assess the significance of Timothy Eaton's career and to place the rise of Eaton's in comparative context, the author effectively uses recent literature on retailing in nineteenth-century Britain and the United States. By doing so she successfully challenges family-created myths about Eaton, including the idea that he was the first to introduce cash sales and fixed prices. He was not. Limitations of evidence leave incomplete her explanation of why Eaton was so much more innovative than other merchants, though her argument that as a newcomer to Toronto in 1869 he was not constrained by a network of credit obligations, and thus was able to break with tradition more readily than established merchants, is convincing. Her argument that working women were only too happy to accept low-paying jobs at Eaton's (p. 190) and that, protected by provincial legislation, working conditions at Eaton's factories "were uniformly good" (p. 202) is less compelling, in part because she tells us little about how Eaton's workers actually viewed their employment. The book also leaves essentially unexamined the company's management structure.

While it does not break new ground in the field of late-Victorian business history, **Timothy Eaton** does present a well-researched case study that is analytical, informative, and very readable, a business

history for both academic and non-specialist audiences. The book also reminds us of how little we know about the retail trade in British Columbia: similar scholarly studies of the west coast department stores founded by David Spencer and Charles Woodward are long overdue.

Robert A.J. McDonald
Department of History
University of British Columbia

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Assu of Cape Mudge: Recollections of a Coastal Indian Chief

Harry Assu with Joy Inglis; Vancouver, UBC Press, 1989. 184 p., illus. $29.95 (cloth), $19.95 (paper)

Assu of Cape Mudge is the personal memoir of Harry Assu, a Chief of the Kwakwala speaking Lekwiltok and an important Native leader of British Columbia. It is an account not only of the life of one man and his family, but also of the origins, development, hardships, adaptability, and accomplishments of a people and of one community in particular.

Drawing from the oral traditions of his people and from the teachings of his father and maternal grandfather, Harry Assu begins with the story of the Flood, the point of origin of the Lekwiltok. From here, he details the various migrations and settlements of the Lekwiltok and of his own band, the We-Wai-Kai, from Topaz Harbour Village (Tekya) on the mainland to its present location at Cape Mudge Village (Yaculta) on Quadra Island, where he was born in 1905.

Following further information on the history, geography, demography, and social organization of the We-Wai-Kai, Chief Assu introduces the reader to the memories of his childhood and youth. He recalls his early life on the water of Discovery Passage and Johnstone Strait, his first fishing experiences, and the essential relationship between his people and the sea. He recalls encounters with supernatural beings which inhabited the world of his ancestors and of his boyhood, and with birds and whales which were of special significance to him and his family. He recalls the important place that the ritual and ceremony of the potlatch have had in the social, economic and political way of life of his people, for it is through the potlatch that wealth, status and privilege are acquired, displayed, transferred and validated.

Harry Assu interweaves his early remembrances with the maritime way of life of his people and reminisces about his sixty year involvement with the commercial fishery. (In fact, the seiner pictured on the old five dollar bill belonged to him at the time the photography for the engraving was taken.) He recollects the old cannery days on the coast, the information of the Pacific Coast Native Fishermen's Association and the Native Brotherhood, and the achievements of his people in merging a traditional culture with the modern fishing industry.

Life in Cape Mudge is described and attention is paid to the community's missionary experience, the history of the Methodist Mission and United Church, and to the relations between the community and education and the Christian church.

The biography concludes with the renewal of the potlatch at Cape Mudge and with a detailed account of Chief Assu's own 1984 potlatch. Included here is his description of the events surrounding the seizure of potlatch regalia in 1922, the jailing of the leaders, the subsequent restoration of the confiscated treasures, and the opening, in 1979 at Cape Mudge, of the Kwagiulth Museum built especially to house this material.

Assu of Cape Mudge is an important publication, particularly as it provides a rare insight into Native life from a Native point of view. Its diachronistic format chronicles the story of a people, a community, and a prominent leader from legendary to present times. It gives detailed information on a wide range of subjects from the construction, in earlier times, of family houses, to the Native fishery, to the intricate workings of the modern potlatch.

This is not a book by an anthropologist, using Native respondents from whom valued knowledge is gleaned, and then re-contextualized and re-formatted into anthropological language for either the profession or a selected target group. Rather, it is a highly personalized account, an autobiography by Harry Assu in collaboration with the anthropologist, Joy Inglis. Written in a conversational style, it allows Chief Assu to tell his own story, and the recollections are as he presents them. It is well illustrated with numerous photographs, drawings by Hilary Stewart, and maps which greatly assist the reader in following the migration and settlement patterns of the Lekwiltok and of the We-Wai-Kai band. In addition, there are two genealogical charts of the Assu family, detailed chapter notes giving much valued annotation by way of further information and explanation, and a number of appendices which include: a linguistic key to the orthography, and an alphabetized, dictionary-formatted listing of the Kwakwala words used in the book, both prepared by linguist Peter Wilson; and several tales handed down through the oral tradition and told by the Lekwiltok. The book ends with a list of sources referenced throughout the text and an index. All of these additions do credit to the publication and give a valuable dimension to Harry Assu's own story. The overall result attests to a close, compatible collaboration between the authors.

While this undertaking has been well thought out and is full of detail, and while the authors have gone to considerable lengths to make it as comprehensive as possible, this reviewer has some concerns from the perspective of both the researcher and the general readership. The orthographic and anglicized transcriptions of words in the Kwakwala language are used interchangeably throughout the text, thus causing a confusion. Had one of the transcriptions (possibly the

anglicized for its readability and ease of pronunciation) been chosen for consistent, primary usage, then the other (in this case, the orthographic) could immediately follow in brackets. Both transcriptions would therefore appear together but with a consistency, elimination the need for frequent cross-checking between text and appendix. Similarly, orthographic transcriptions of Kwakwala words occasionally are used without anglicized equivalents so that reference needs to be made to both the linguistic key and the alphabetized list of works in the appendix. Another aid which would have assisted in clarifying the organization of peoples to which Harry Assu makes reference, would have been the inclusion of a chart delineating the various tribes, bands, and communities of the Kwagiulth Nation - a stratigraphy of terms often difficult to comprehend.

It is unfortunate that a full bibliography is not included. While many of the sources referenced throughout appear in full form in the appendix, many are not, and thus a comprehensive bibliography is needed. The inconsistencies, omissions, occasional ambiguity, and many small errors (some possibly typographical) mar an otherwise fine effort. The narrative style of the text, as spoken by Chief Assu, leads to some awkward phraseology and expression of thought; this, however, does not detract from the overall presentation.

In spite of these drawbacks, the publication remains full of valuable primary source material and is a welcome addition to the growing body of literature about our First Nations peoples. Both Harry Assu and Joy Inglis are to be congratulated on their work and their unique collaborative prowess. The book could well serve as a model for other, similar enterprises.

Lynn Maranda
Curator of Anthropology,
The Vancouver Museum

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People of Harrison
Daphne Sleigh.
Deroche, B.C., D. Sleigh, 1990.
278 p., illus. (available from Box 29, Deroche, B.C. V0M 1G0) $12.75

The watershed of the Harrison Lake and River, only sixty miles from Vancouver, is a vast but sparsely populated area that has been home to a variety of people.

The original people of the Harrison were, of course, native Indians - members of the Sto:lo communities of Chehalis and Scowlitz near the south end of Harrison Lake; and the Lower Lillooet communities of Quaatca and Lelachanat at the north end. Scowlitz and Chehalis were distinguished by their unique rectangular pit dwellings; and their powerful awareness of the spirit-world. A pre-historic culture in the area was notable for having built large burial mounds; unfortunately, little in the way of proper archaeological research has been undertaken there.

Port Douglas, a townsite at the north end of the lake, was established as early as 1858 to service the gold rush. The Harrison route to the goldfields was replaced by the Fraser Canyon route, and the port quickly became the first of B.C.'s many ghost towns. Still, a store and boarding house continued to thrive there until at least the 1930's.

The settlement at the mouth of the Harrison River - variously known as Garnarvon, Harrison Forks, Scowaltiz, Harrisonmouth, Harrison River, and Harrison Mills - was the next to be established. Eventually it thrived as a transfer point for Chilliwack-bound rail passengers; as a farming community; and especially as a centre of sawmilling. Today, Harrison Mills is best known for its general store, now a museum, which had been operated continuously by the Kilby family from 1903 to 1972.

The healing waters of Harrison Hot Springs guaranteed its importance as a resort. The St. Alice Hotel, established in 1886, was the dominant force in the community, as is its successor, the Harrison, today.

Several economic activities have contributed to the economy of the Harrison watershed at different times - mining, transportation, farming, tourism, and especially logging. The area has always had its ups and downs - as market values fluctuated, as resources became depleted, as transportation patterns shifted. Yet the area has always had more than its share of fascinating characters - audacious entrepreneurs, country gentlefolk, eccentric hermits, brilliant novelists. Sleigh is adept at bringing these people to life, and demonstrating how the history of the area was shaped by the personalities that had faith in it.

The last chapter of the book is devoted to one of the <u>really</u> fascinating inhabitants of the area - if he or she exists. The cryptozoologists among us will be interested in Sleigh's recap of reports of sightings of the Sasquatch. Admirably, she balances on the fence, showing no bias to either the skeptics or the believers. Her thorough research does show that sightings were almost never reported until certain newspaper writers began stimulating interest in them. This in itself should throw some light onto the debate.

Sleigh's book is well-written, but there are times when one wishes she would go a bit further and make some analysis of the area's history. For example, on page 103 she reports on the surrender and sale of part of the Scowlitz Indian Reserve in 1920, yet she makes no evaluation of this event - were the Indians ripped off, or did they benefit?

The book was researched thoroughly, although many of the bibliographic and archival citations are too brief to allow future scholars to locate some of the sources.

Still, **The People of the Harrison** is most enjoyable reading, and good documentation of a very interesting part of our province.

Jim Bowman
Chilliwack Archives

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

Any book presenting any facet of B.C. history, published in 1991, is eligible. This may be a community history, biography, record of a project or an organization, or personal recollections giving a glimpse of the past. Names, dates and places with relevant maps or pictures turn a story into "history."

The judges are looking for fresh presentations of historical information, (especially if prepared by amateur historians) with appropriate illustrations, careful proof reading, an adequate index, table of contents, and bibliography.

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3) Best History for Junior Readers.

Awards are given where entries warrant. (i.e. a lone entry in group 2 or 3 will not automatically be given a prize.)

Submissions are requested as soon as possible after publication. Please state name, address and telephone of sender, the selling price of the book, and an address from which the book may be purchased if the reader has to shop by mail. **Send to:**
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