

Recd by KLR
1930

MOUNT OLIE - NOW THE LITTLE FORT.

MURDER OF GEORGE ROSH - ALIAS SPOKANE.

Being among the early stock raisers in that country, I was always looking out for more hay, as my stock increased.

In 1889 I was told of the existence of a hay meadow on the North side, directly opposite of the Little Fort. I engaged an Indian who took me to the spot, sometime in the month of October. I there decided to take up the place, and staked off a 320 acre ranch. It was, however, too late that season to cut the hay. I had the hay cut in the summers of 1890, 1891 and 1892; stacking it each year, and held it as a reserve.

I did not have long to wait, however, as the winter of 1892 and 1893 came in severe. The first snow fell on the 4th of November 1892, with a low temperature, with a steady lowering of the temperature and a continued fall of snow until the middle of January, when we had a Chinook thaw. February came in with a blizzard, until 30 below was registered. Live-stock began to suffer; as the feeding began in November, hay by this time began to get scarce. At this time I had a fairly large band of cattle. My hay at and about Louis Creek began to get short, with no signs of a let up in the weather, or moderation. As I had then over 100 tons of this meadow hay stacked at Little Fort, I selected 250 head of the strongest of my herd, among them were my best cows-- about the middle of February, and had them driven to the feed, over the ice on the North Thompson River, and employed a man by the name of A. Lemeaux to care and feed them. The weather continued cold all through that month, ranging from 2 to 30 below Zero, until the early part of March. By the middle of March the cattle had tramped all the hay, they would not eat it, they simply tramped it, and laid down and died on it, notwithstanding I had shipped salt, and had the hay sprinkled with salt before laying it out for them. There was not enough nutriment in it to sustain life in the animals under such severe weather. Of the 250 head of cattle, 54 survived, that is, I brought back to Louis Creek in May 1893, 54 head. When I took the cattle away, I gave the place to Lemeaux, and this is now Mount Olie, at which the mysterious murder of George Rosh (alias) Spokane, took place in 1900, the perpetrator of which has never been discovered and brought to justice.

The fact of being the original owner of the place brought me in close touch with the Lemeaux family.

It happened that sometime in June 1900, I was out with Dr. M.S. Wade and Mr. Stuart Henderson, Barrister, on an exploration trip on the East side of Dunn Lake. We got stranded in the mountains, and being unable to return to our camp, we were compelled to bivouac in a clump of bushes at the foot of Dunn Lake, as the condition of Mr. Henderson made it impossible for us to retrace our steps. The next morning we headed for the North Thompson River, to reach which we had to cross Boulder Creek which we forded over to the North Side and gained the trail leading down to the South side again, where I struck my old trail down to the Little Fort hill. We reached this point about 11.30 a.m. Coming down to the flat opposite to Mrs. Lemeaux place, I hailed them, and she sent a boat over for us. Not having anything to eat (except wild berries) since we ate our lunch at 1.p.m., the day before, we were in right mood for spreading desolation to the pot of stew which was placed before us.

After we had done ample justice to this, to us, most delicious morsel, Mrs Lemeaux unburdened her troubles to me, as she was anxious to regain her husband who was then resident at Wrangle, Alaska, therefore was desirous of renting the place; and that James Fahey the hired man was anxious to rent the place but had no money with which to buy her live stock, which consisted of a team of horses, two cows, several pigs, chickens and numerous odds and ends, which had to turn into cash. She also mentioned that George Rosh (Spokane) a fur trader, who was always well supplied with ready cash, was also desirous of renting the place and paying her cash for all she had to dispose of. This fact had annoyed Fahey, who had become very abusive and ugly towards her. She asked me to speak to Fahey, and explain to him her situation, which I did before leaving that day. Some ten or fourteen days later, Mrs. Lemeaux came down to Kamloops with her effects in the boat, which was used for crossing, she having in the meantime rented the place to George Rosh (Spokane), and, about two weeks later, he was mysteriously and brutally murdered in the cabin during the night, while he apparently was asleep. The appearance of the cabin showed that there was a tremendous struggle, the walls being spattered with blood in the room which he slept, and the bed clothing and bedding all showed signs of the bloody

war. The marks of the dragging of the sack from the cabin door to the edge of the water was plain. The body was never recovered, and the real perpetrator has not as yet been brought to justice. A few Indians were arrested on suspicion, but the real culprit was never apprehended.

Maybe it is worthy of mention in connection with this murder that there were no roads on that side of the river, hence the only means of communication with that side of the river was by boat or canoe. The only boat available was one taken away by Mrs. Lemieux when she left. There was, however, a three log raft on this side of the river, but only an expert or river man could handle it. No Indian would attempt it, and the man Williams who was living on this side was reputed to be too big a coward to even attempt crossing on that raft. The only other person there was who would or could ride the raft over was a man by the name of James Fahey, who left immediately after and had never since been seen. Now, where is James Fahey?

John F. Smith.