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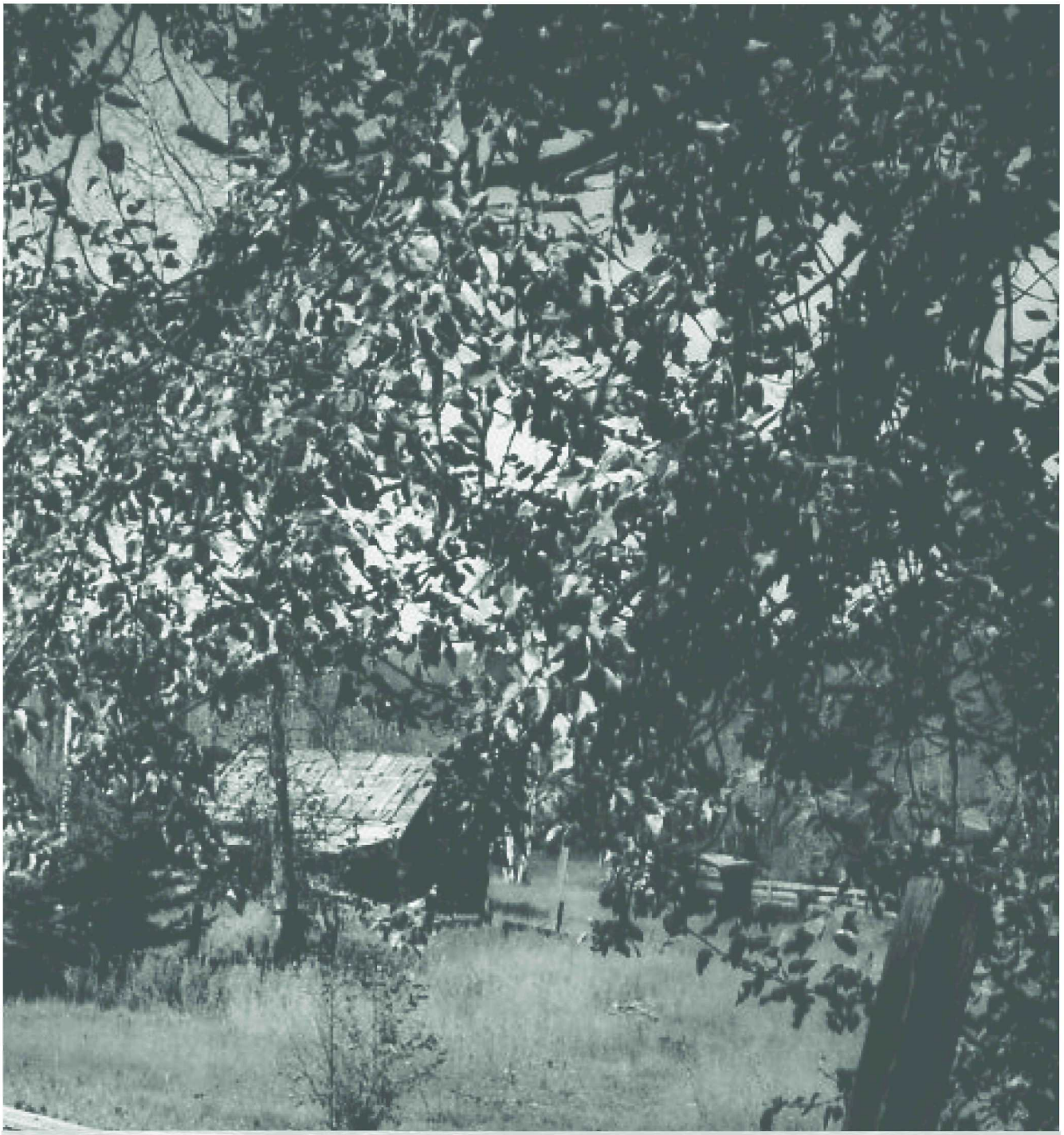

This Issue: Cinema BC | Taking Flight | Fielding Spotts | A Mine Hoax | Tokens | And more...

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British Columbia Historical Federation

2005

23nd Annual Competition for Writers of BC History
Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing
Deadline: 31 December 2005

The British Columbia Historical Federation invites book submissions for the twenty-second annual Competition for Writers of BC History. Books representing any facet of BC history, published in 2004 will be considered by the judges who are looking for quality presentations and fresh material. Community histories, biographies, records of a project or organization as well as personal reflections, etc. are eligible for consideration.

Reprints or revisions of books are not eligible.

Lieutenant-Governor's Medal
The Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing will be awarded to an individual writer whose book contributes significantly to the history of British Columbia. Additional prizes may be awarded to other books at the discretion of the judges.

Publicity
All entries receive considerable publicity. Winners will receive a Certificate of Merit, a monetary award and an invitation to the Awards Banquet of the Federation's annual conference to be held in Kelowna, BC on May 14, 2005.

Submissions
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Bob Mukai, Chair of Competition Committee
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phone 604-274-6449 email robert_mukai@telus.net

Books entered become property of the BC Historical Federation.

By submitting books for this competition, authors agree that the British Columbia Historical Federation may use their names in press releases and Federation publications regarding the book competition.

British Columbia HISTORY

The Journal of the British Columbia Historical Federation | Volume 38 Number 2 2005

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From the Editor

This issue of *British Columbia History* comes with the first edition of the BC Historical Federation's new Travel Guide. It's a great idea which Ron Hyde, the Federation's Secretary, has worked long and hard at. I hope that if you're taking to the road this summer (gas prices not withstanding) you take the guide along with you.

Also in this issue we have the winners of the BCHF Book Prizes, the Best Article Award and the Moti Prize.

This year I had the privilege to be asked to serve as an adjudicator for the Historica Fair in Vancouver. What a pleasure it was to be able to talk to so many kids who have a passion for history. Also impressive was the array of projects they brought to the fair.

And lastly, this issue has been delayed because May and the first part of June was a very busy month for me work -wise but we'll be back on track with the next issue.

Enjoy your summer.

BCHF Prizes | Awards | Scholarships

"Any country worthy of a future should be interested in its past"
W. Kaye Lamb, 1937

W. KAYE LAMB Essay Scholarships
Deadline 15 May 2006
The British Columbia Historical Federation awards two scholarships annually for essays written by students at BC colleges or universities on a topic relating to British Columbia history. One scholarship ($500) is for an essay written by a student in a first-or second-year course: the other ($750) is for an essay written by a student in a third-or fourth-year course.

To apply tor the scholarship, candidates must submit (1) a letter of application: (2) an essay of 1,500-3, 000 words on a topic relating to the history of British Columbia: (3) a letter of recommendation from the professor for whom the essay was written.

Applications should be submitted before 15 May 2006 to: Robert Griffin, Chair BC Historical Federation Scholarship Committee, PO Box 5254, Station B, Victoria, BC V8R 6N4.

The winning essay submitted by a third or fourth year student will be published in BC Historical News. Other submissions may be published at the editor's discretion.

BC History Web Site Prize
The British Columbia Historical Federation and David Mattison are jointly sponsoring a yearly cash award of $250 to recognize Web sites that contribute to the understanding and appreciation of British Columbia's past. The award honours individual initiative in writing and presentation.

Nominations for the BC History Web Site Prize must be made to the British Columbia Historical Federation, Web Site Prize Committee, prior to ***31 December 2005****. Web site creators and authors may nominate their own sites. Prize rules and the on-line nomination form can be found on The British Columbia History Web site: http://www.victoria.tc.ca/resources/bchistory/announcements.html*

Best Article Award
A Certificate of Merit and fifty dollars will be awarded annually to the author of the article, published in BC Historical News, that best enhances knowledge ot British Columbia's history and provides reading enjoyment. Judging will be based on subject development, writing skill, freshness of material, and appeal to a general readership interested in all aspects of BC history.

The Rise and Fall of Cinema, B.C.

Hollywood North Ahead of Its Time.

Branwen C. Patenaude

Branwen Patenaude has written several books about the Cariboo, including Trails to Gold and Golden Nuggets. She has published two historical novels and will shortly publish an account of the life of William Barker.

The small community of Cinema, located in the north Cariboo between Quesnel and Prince George, was described in *Wrigley's Directory* of 1925 as a "Post Office, general store, and motion picture centre."

A motion picture centre, you say?

It all began when a young American bachelor from Illinois, Lloyd Champlain, arrived in the north at a time when the Pacific Great Eastern Railway (PGE) line was first being constructed between Vancouver and Prince George, about 1912. "I wanted to be where there was an important project going on" Champlain later told newspaper interviewers. Hiring on with the railway as a veterinary surgeon, "Dr." Champlain as he called himself, was in charge of looking after the hundreds of horses used in the railway construction camps between Williams Lake and Prince George.

All that remains of Cinema, B.C. in the Fall of 2003. (above & opposite)
Photo: Branwen Patenaude

Northward from Quesnel, track was laid to the Cottonwood River, where it would meet with a track from Prince George, in the north. Construction at that time was not done with bulldozers and heavy equipment, but with the use of hundreds of horses employing metal scrapers and stone boats, which were the closest thing to any mechanized equipment.

In 1915, the PGE ran out of money, and abandoned the railway project. Champlain lost his job.

Full of optimism and believing that the project would soon start again Champlain remained in the country. While he waited for the railway construction to resume, he preempted land, nine hundred acres of good farming land adjoining the Fraser River, twenty miles north of Quesnel. To assist him in his recent acquisition, he invited his niece, a Miss Ella Maude Freeto to travel north from the United States to live with him, and help him to develop his property, which he described as the "Eden of the North."

In need of a source of income while they waited for the continuance of the rail line, these two worked hard to develop a large market garden, and also started a dairy with several cows and a bull. For several seasons the products from the garden and the dairy were transported to Quesnel from where they were delivered to railroad camps in the south. The returns were quite lucrative.

By 1918, under the Department of Railways, and a contract with the Northern Construction Company, work on the PGE rail line continued, and by 1921 the line had reached Quesnel.

Champlain had always been fascinated with Hollywood and the movies, and one year, after their market garden had produced a bumper crop netting them $800, they spent the winter in California. While there they visited the movie studios in Hollywood, and learned a lot about how movies are made. From this Champlain dreamed of making movies up in the Cariboo, which during the 1920's was fairly primitive, and not unlike the old wild west.

Back in the Cariboo that next spring Champlain, who was obviously well educated, and his companion Miss Freeto, set about planning a development of enormous proportions on Champlain's property. To begin with, a general store was built beside the highway, and at this same time an application was put in to start a post office that would operate from within the store, In filling out the application it was necessary to provide a name for the post office. The name chosen was "Cinema" and it is not hard to guess why.

On returning from California, and being all enthused with what he had seen and learned about movie making, Champlain began writing stories and scripts depicting frontier life in the Cariboo, and sending them to Hollywood. But this was only the beginning. From here he branched out to even more grandiose plans: Why not encourage families to move to the Cariboo where they could work on his property? Best of all, he would use these people in a movie he intended to make!

Putting his plan into action, he first advertised in various magazines. The *Winnipeg Free Press*, the *Western Home Journal*, and others as far away as Ontario and Manitoba. Here is a sample of his inquiries:

Cinema, BC. June 1st 1924. The Western Home Journal Winnipeg, Manitoba. Classified Advertising. For one insertion under the classification "Movies" I submit the following: MOVIE COLONY FORMING- Co-operative, industrial, educational. Will need men, women, children, for farm, dairy, garden, poultry, timber, building construction, cooking, laundry, sewing, typing, accounting,

teaching, milling, clerking, that they may participate in the movies. Enclose money order of $1.00 with enquiry to receive further information. Address to Secretary, Cinema PO, Cinema, BC

A shorter version of this ad. was also submitted with a cash payment of $1.00 to *The Farmer's Advocate*, and the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

To those who responded to this intriguing offer of employment, Champlain replied with a single page form letter outlining in imaginative detail the process by which he would be able to single out the talent and abilities of his applicants. The advertising went on for some time, and just how much money was received in money orders is not known, but must have been considerable.

It is known however, that between 1924 and 1930 Champlain had quite a number of men, some with families, who lived and worked on his land. These men erected numerous buildings , residences, and barns; built miles of fencing, cleared about thirty acres of hay meadow, and in particular constructed a roadside motel that opened to the public in 1927. The Post Office at Cinema began operation in 1924 with Miss Ella M. Freeto in charge.

That year the business directory listed only two inhabitants of Cinema, Lloyd Champlain and Miss Freeto, but by the next year there were twenty residents, and in 1928, fifty residents. Of course all the residents of the Movie Colony were expected to purchase their supplies at Champlain's general store. A welcome addition to the store was a coffee bar and lunch counter, where the men were forbidden to smoke. While Miss Freeto waited on the men, some flirted with her, and if Champlain was there, would get very annoyed. The men thought this was very strange, as Miss Freeto was said to be Champlain's niece.

Those who today remember Lloyd Champlain recall that he was a difficult man to work for; very tight fisted in money matters, and always very particular in the way any work was done, and very precise. He was also said to question the men very closely about their lives, and about their past, looking for ideas for movie scripts, which he was always writing and sending back to Hollywood. This was another indication, some said, that Champlain must truly have believed that some day a movie would be made on his property. While the 'Movie Colony project continued to function as late as 1931, no movie was ever made there.

As the years passed, and no movie was made, disenchantment took place, and his workers left the property in search of other work. Champlain, who by this time was in his seventies, continued to live and farm at Cinema where he and Miss Maudie Freeto were eventually married in 1945.

Today there are many descendants of those families who were so persuaded by Champlain's offers that they moved from Ontario, Saskatchewan, and many points west to work on Champlain's land.

For reasons unknown, by 1948 Champlain had lost the post office contract to Harvey Bryant, a local land owner. Champlain's property was later sold, and Champlain and his wife moved to Surrey, in the Fraser Valley. A decade before his death in Surrey in 1965, when he was in his eighties, Champlain was interviewed about the long awaited extension of the PGE to Prince George by newspaper reporter Roy W. Brown. Strangly enough, while he enlarged on his long wait, he made no mention of his dream of creating a movie colony at Cinema.

While Lloyd Champlain may have been accused of being a promoter and a con artist, he obviously did have sincere aspirations of making a movie about life in the Cariboo. He was a man ahead of his time. •

References:

1924 Cinema Polling Division.

Wrigley's BC Directory, 1925.

Donald Van Buskirke, New Cinema, BC, 1981.

Mrs. Vera Peever, Quesnel, BC.

Black Pioneer Fielding Spotts

School Trustee, Church Founder, Farmer

By John Fitch

John Fitch is Professor Emeritus at the University of Victoria's Department of Greek and Roman Studies

Fielding Spotts was a prominent member of the substantial group of Blacks who emigrated to Vancouver Island in the late 1850's. Through use of contemporary documents, in particular newspapers, it has proved possible to give a more coherent account of his life than was previously available. Such accounts of individual lives are an indispensable basis for understanding the role of B.C.'s black pioneers.

Fielding Spotts c.1900
The identification fits what we know of F. in view of the neat dress of the person portrayed; the book he holds is surely a Bible.
BCArhives F-00651

California

Born in Virginia c. 1827, Spotts first appears in the public record in 1852, when he was one of nine people who organized a Baptist congregation in a private home in San Francisco. This is believed to have been the first Black Baptist church established west of the Rockies. The church has a continuous and vigorous history, and is now Third Baptist, San Francisco.[1] An experienced local researcher in San Francisco might be able to uncover further records of Spotts' early life there: his marriage to Julia Ann White, who was about five years younger than he, perhaps took place in that city, and the births of their oldest children Charles (c. 1854) and Fielding William (13 or 15 March 1857) almost certainly did so.

It seems, at any rate, that Spotts was one of the thousands of Blacks who had moved west to California in the great trek of 1849 or shortly thereafter, drawn by dreams of wealth and by hopes of finding a less oppressive racial atmosphere. The latter hopes were dashed, however, since oppression of Blacks intensified in California during the 1850's. Consequently by the Spring of 1858 many of them were ready to emigrate, and an advance group arrived in Victoria on the *SS Commodore* on 25 April. Governor James Douglas, in need of both labourers and settlers, gave the newcomers a warm welcome. As a result of these various factors, it is thought that between 600 and 800 Blacks came to Victoria within a few months.

To Victoria

Spotts arrived in Victoria by 22 February 1859, when he purchased property. Though his son Fielding William, some seventy-five years later, dated his father's arrival to 1859, that was because he thought the whole black migration had occurred in 1859; his memory by then was poor, and he had no records.[2] All that is certain is that Spotts arrived between 25 April 1858, and 22 February 1859.

What he purchased was a house lot on Pioneer Street (now North Park Street) between Quadra and Blanshard.[3] His long-term intention was to farm, but he needed to work in town until he could realize that goal. He began to work as a cooper - perhaps a trade he had followed in San Francisco.

In 1859 a group of would-be farmers, represented by the lawyer John Copland, petitioned the government to allow "pre-emption" of unsurveyed land. Twenty-nine men were approved to settle on Salt Spring Island; the list includes the name of Fielding Spott (sic). His pre-emption was Lot 6, Range 2 , which lies northwest of Ganges. However, he did not hold it for long. On May 25, 1860 Henry W. Robinson requested permission to move to the land in question, since Spotts had abandoned the claim.[4] Perhaps Spotts soon realized that the island was too isolated a place to raise and educate a young family.[5]

In December 1859 Spotts was one of ten prominent "Electors of Salt Spring and Chemainus" who nominated Copland to represent that District in the Colony's legislative assembly. Later he was one of the signatories to a protest against the manner in which the election was conducted.[6] Since there was no postal service to the island, the fact that Spotts was in contact with other would-be electors suggests that he was not living full-time on the island at the time.

Perhaps as early as 1859, and certainly by November 1860, Spotts had a stake in the land in Saanich which was to become his home for more than four decades.[7] The price of "public" land had been £1 per acre until recently, but had now been drastically lowered to $1 per acre, a reduction of about 80%;

probably it was this reduction that allowed Spotts to purchase the acreage. Since the land was only some nine miles from Pioneer St., it was possible, albeit arduous, for Spotts to continue working in town, while riding out to clear land and build a house as time allowed,

In 1858 the whole Peninsula had been surveyed and divided into one hundred acre parcels. On the basis of this survey, the parcel purchased by Spotts was "section 18 of range IVE" (for short, 4E.18), which remains its legal description today. The property lies at the highest point now crossed by the Pat Bay Highway, a little south of Tanner Road.[8]

A House and a Church

A high priority for Spotts must have been construction of a house. He built a cabin "made out of hand-hewn logs, not a nail being used, the timbers being held together by dovetailing or wooden plugs." No doubt the logs were from trees felled on the property. Mrs. Ella Gait, who has lived in the area for many decades, "recalls the cabin's dirt floor and clay caulking between its logs, but claims the structure was absolutely wind proof. She has memories a of a party she and her husband once attended in the building."[9] According to my interview with Mrs. Gait on 3 May 1989, the Spotts' cabin was situated on what is now 6030 Pat Bay Hwy, and their orchard was on what is now the next property south, i.e. 6010 Pat Bay Hwy.[10]

When did Spotts move his wife and children from town to the new cabin and the farm? Alfred Waddington's note in July 1865 (see below), that there were three Spotts children of school age in South Saanich, is the first good evidence.

Spotts was soon involved in the establishment of the original Shady Creek Church. "Probably in 1862 or 1863, a community church, including Methodists and Baptists, was established through the initiative of [Charles] Alexander, a negro, with the co-operation of Spotts and other negro and white neighbours." The church was situated on the farm of Jesse McMillan, a black settler - not on the site of the present church. In addition to church services there was a Sunday School; there were also many social activities organized by the young people of the church, including no doubt the Spotts children.[11]

The Children: Schooling and Athletics

Spotts and Julia Ann had eight children. The oldest, Charles and Fielding William, had been born in California; the other six were born in B.C., the youngest in 1873. In order of age they were: James, Albert, Theodore, Wendell, Julia, and Frederick.

Where were they to be educated? In 1865 Alfred Waddington, Inspector of Schools, noted that Spotts and other black residents were willing to build a school house at their own expense; there were eleven children of school age in the district, "all colored," including three Spotts boys. But the offer was not taken up by the government. The nearest school was the Lake District School, opened in July 1865, four miles south of Spotts' place: so there the Spotts children went. We find a record of Spotts as Trustee there in 1870.[12]

In June 1873 the new South Saanich School opened near the East Road. The site was only about three miles north of the Spotts farm, so perhaps Spotts transferred his children there right away. An entry in the Visitors' Book, dated 5 November 1877, states "Mr. Spotts paid school a visit and expressed himself as pleased with the progress of the pupils." He was a Trustee of the school from the fall of 1879 to some time between 1884 and 1887.[13]

Julia was perhaps the most successful of the children in scholastic matters. In the closing exercises for the winter session in March 1883, the student newspaper *Scholars Effort* "was read by Miss Julia Spotts, the young lady acquitting herself very creditably." In June 1884 the Prize for Spelling was awarded (ironically) to Miss J. Spott (sic).

The biggest annual event on the peninsula was the Saanich Picnic, held on Dominion Day. At least in 1876 Spotts served on the "committee of management". Three of the Spotts children, James, Fred and Wendell, appear among the prize-winners in the athletic contests. In 1885, for example, Wendell took first in standing high jump, hop, step and jump (38'11"), standing long jump and seventy-five yard race, and second prize in running high jump and running long jump.[14]

Farming

A substantial portion of Spotts' income, particularly in the early years, must have come from felling trees and selling the cordwood. What did he produce as the land was cleared? He certainly had cattle, since in 1874 he won the prize at the Saanich Agricultural Show for the best three to five year old steer. He also had chickens, since he took the prize for "Best dozen eggs (single yolk)" in 1874 and 1875. Almost certainly he owned a horse, in view of his frequent travels to local churches and schools and to town. Since he would have

1 See www.thirdbaptist.org/history.htm; also Sue Bailey Thurman, *Pioneers of Negro Origin in California* (San Francisco 1952) 23-2 6.

2 Fielding William's account: *The Province* 29 May 1935, followed e.g. by Pilton 67. Poor memory: letter from Bertha Spotts in Saanich Pioneers' Society Archives (SPA) Spotts file.

3 Register of Absolute Fees vol. 1 no. 443.

4 British Columbia Archives(BCA) CAA/30.71/Sa3.1 File1 Thanks to Ruth Sandwell for the reference.

5 Pre-emptions: Pilton 130-31; Kahn 27-36 and 59-62. Difficult conditions: Kahn 41-54 6 British Colonist 20 Dec. 1859, 17 Jan. 1860; Kahn 69-71.

7 The Crown Land Registry's map "South Saanich O.M. 1859" identifies the purchaser ^ of 4E.18 as "J. Spotts" (sic). The Official Land Register for North and South Saanich (CLR) dates the payment by J. Spotts (sic) to 1 November 1860.

8 1883 F. pre-empted an additional 50 acres immediately to the west of his main holding, viz. the east half of Section 18, Range 3E.

9 Hand-hewn logs: *Victoria Daily Times* 21 March 1936, M6. Mrs Gait's recollection: *Times-Colonist* 30 Jan 1994, M3.

10 On the later history of the cabin see *Victoria Daily Times* 21 March 1936, M6 (also SPA F2005 S14); *Saanich Star* for Nov. 1 1951, in the Spotts file in Saanich Archives (SA).

11 Richards 31-2, Glover 4-6.

12 Waddington's notebook (BCA GR 1467, microfilm B4715), entries for 1 July, 11 July, 2 August. F. as Trustee: *Colonist* April 24, 26, 29, p.3 in each.

needed to haul cordwood, hay and produce, and since he did some hauling for South Saanich School, he no doubt owned a wagon also.[15]

We know from Mrs. Gait that Spotts had an orchard, but not whether it was on a commercial scale. The B.C. Directory for 1882-83 p. 114 indicates that the biggest crops on the Peninsula at the time were oats, wheat, barley and peas. In 1878 Spotts won the prize for "Best 12 schallots" (sic),16 but these were presumably grown for the family rather than on larger scale.

Spotts and Baptist History

Spotts' obituary, quoted at the end of this biography, notes that he was a charter member of First Baptist and Calvary Baptist Churches in Victoria, and of Saanich Baptist. When we link this record with his contribution to the establishment of the San Francisco church and of Shady Creek, we have a remarkable history of church-founding extending over nearly fifty years. On 3 May 1876 Spotts and Julia Spotts were among fifteen or sixteen charter members, half of them Blacks, who met to organize the First Baptist Church, Victoria. [17] An elaborate church was built on Pandora Street and opened in January 1877, at a cost of $6000. Spotts, who was elected Trustee and Deacon, must often have wished that the congregation, like that at Shady Creek, had opted for a less ambitious but more practical edifice. The mortgage, combined with the pastor's salary, proved too much for the membership to sustain. Unfortunately these financial difficulties led to divisions along racial lines.

During a visit from Rev. J.C. Baker of San Francisco in March 1881, the proposal was made that "The entire business and management of the church be given into the hands of either the colored members or the white members". In this atmosphere most of the black members withdrew from the church. They were then offered financial aid from the U.S. to found a separate church, but this was not accepted: clearly they had no interest in assigning themselves the second-class status which they had rejected in leaving California.

First Baptist was finally disbanded on 3 June 1883. However, on 5 June some of the former members met to organize a new Church, Calvary Baptist, whose covenant specifically condemned discrimination on the basis of race, colour or class. Spotts was a charter member of this church, according to his obituary. The new church was successful, in part through the energetic ministry of Rev. Walter Barss (1884-87). It is remarkable that Spotts was willing to make the difficult journey into town on a regular basis to attend meetings and services at these churches, despite his commitments as a father, farmer and school trustee in Saanich.

There were meetings of Baptists in South Saanich, in which Spotts was no doubt involved, from the mid-1880s, when Rev. Barss would ride out on alternate Sunday afternoons to conduct services. A church was officially organised in 1898, with fourteen constituent members. Though the early church records are lost, we have the testimony of Spotts' obituary that he was one of these charter members. Services were held at the Temperance Hall, which still stands on East Saanich Road.[18]

Though the early presence of black Baptists in Victoria has always been known, Baptist historians have traditionally treated John Morton, an Englishman who reached New Westminster in 1862, as the first Baptist in what is now Western Canada. Fortunately John Richards sets the record straight by acknowledging the priority of the black Baptists. Among them Spotts is the first whose arrival can be clearly documented, and his leading position is suggested by his election as Trustee and Deacon of First Baptist, His lifelong devotion to Baptism, and the fact that he was a founding member of no less than five churches, deserves more recognition than it has received.

Happiness and Sadness

Charles, Spotts' oldest son, married Mary Cecilia, daughter of T.W. Pierre, a successful tailor in Victoria. In 1884 Charles purchased fifty acres on the West Road. Since this was only some two miles from his father's farm, there will have been opportunities for Spotts and Julia to see Charles and Mary and their seven children. (These are, in fact, the only grandchildren of whom I have found record.) But in 1893 disaster struck, as Charles died on 29 March at the age of thirty-eight. Charles' brother James also died prematurely, probably in the period 1891-93. Then in 1896 Spotts' wife Julia died suddenly on March 21, at the age of sixty-four, of pneumonia after a few days' illness,

A happier aspect of the Spotts' family life in the early 1890s is recorded by the reminiscences of Stephen Deloume. The Deloume family had recently immigrated from France, and had moved to the property immediately south of Spotts'.

"The Deloumes' nearest neighbours were a large negro family of the name of Spotts, who owned the farm next to

13 South Saanich School District Visitor's Book 1876-84: BCA GR 2061.

14 The reports appear in the *Colonist* annually on 3 or 4 July, on p.3.

15 Show prizes: *Colonist* 7 Oct. 1874, 6 Oct. 1875. Hauling: the school accounts show payment of $5.00 to Spotts for hauling (SPA F3205 S13, perhaps c. 1890).

16 *Colonist* 2 Oct. 1878.

17 For the history of First Baptist and Calvary Baptist Churches see the useful website www.firstbaptistvictoria.org; also transcript of Minutes of church meetings 1876-82, held in the First Baptist Church office.

18 See Baker 268; Richards 33-8; entry for the year 1887 in www.firstbaptistvictoria.org; *Colonist* for 9 May 1936.

19 *Daily Colonist* 17 Dec. 1972, M4.

20 Sale to George W. Wynne (Register of Absolute Fees 7467-C); no price indicated.

21 *Victoria Daily Times*, 24 and 29 March 1902; *Colonist*, 25 March 1902.

22 The Spotts family plot, where Julia is also buried, is on the left shortly after one enters the cemetery through the white gate, immediately before the separate grave of Mary Spotts.

23 Vol. 6 (1902), p. 17. "Vancouver" is presumably an error for "Victoria". The brevity and language of the obituary is characteristic of obituaries in the Report.

24 *The Times-Colonist* 30 Jan. 1994 M3 switches the two, calling the standing figure Spotts Sr. and the seated man Spotts Jr.

theirs. The Deloumes could not speak a word of English between them, and it was the Spotts family who taught them the language... the Spotts were all musical, and every evening they would gather around to sing their old negro songs from the south. Pretty soon the Deloumes, who were also musical, started to join them, only they sang their old French part songs. What a time of music and harmony that must have been—the work of the farms over for one more day, and the two families getting together for an evening, to share their music."

Last Things

Spotts finally sold the farm on January 15 1902 and moved into town.[20] He died two months later, on Sunday 23 March at the age of seventy-four. While attending morning service at Calvary Baptist he was taken ill and removed to his home, 136 Yates St., where he soon afterwards succumbed. One report mentions heart failure. The funeral was conducted on the 28th by Rev. Vichert of Calvary Baptist,[21] and Spotts was interred at the "South Saanich cemetery," i.e. Shady Creek.[22]

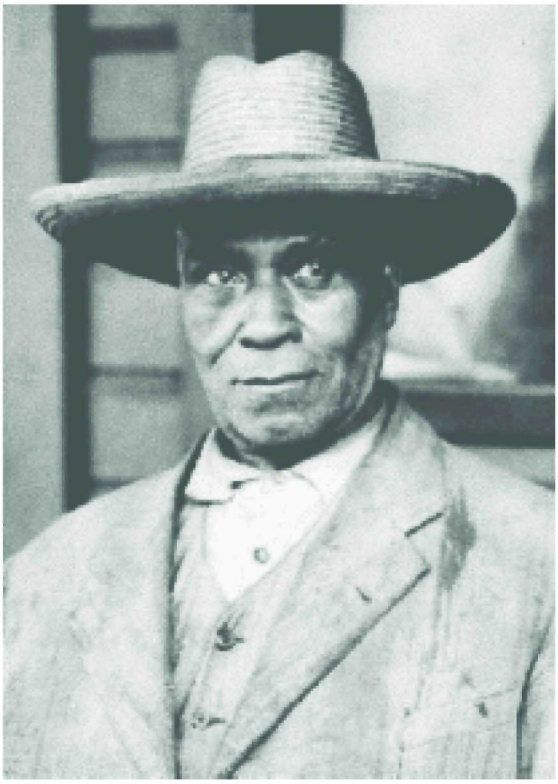
A brief obituary appeared in the *Report of the Annual Convention of Baptist Churches of B.C.*

"BROTHER FIELDING SPOTTS" A pioneer Baptist in British Columbia. A charter member of the First church, Vancouver [sic] and Calvary church of Victoria, and of the church at Saanich. A simple trusting consistent child of God, respected by all who knew him."[23]

Conclusion

Though there were manifestations of racial prejudice from white citizens in Victoria in the nineteenth century, that fact remains that Spotts as a black man was able to own land and to participate fully in the school and church systems alongside his white neighbours. This degree of racial integration is remarkable for its time. Credit is due to certain early leaders, in particular Governor Douglas and Bishop Cridge, for opposing any institutional segregation. But credit is also due to the calibre of black settlers such as Spotts, who were willing to commit themselves fully to the society which had initially welcomed them.

Despite Spotts's contributions to the schools and churches of his society, it is clear that the greater part of his life and energy was spent on farming, an occupation which yields satisfaction (at least when work is completed) but little social recognition. This, together with the fact that there are no surviving descendants, explains why he is now largely forgotten, Hence this attempt to reconstruct his life, so far as the nature of the evidence allows. •



Identified as Fielding William Spotts and dated 1935 this photo originally accompanied two articles about F.W., Fielding's second son, in The Province, *for 29 May 1935 and for 2 Feb. 1937. In part because of the similarity of names, some confusion has arisen between these photographs,and between Fielding the pioneer and Fielding William his son. Hence, for example, the pioneer is incorrectly called Fielding William in the files in the Saanich Archives and in the BCArchives Newspaper Index.*
BC Archives A-02475

Victoria's Birdman:

The Forgotten Story of William Wallace Gibson

Tristin Hooper

At the time of submission Tristan Hopper was a grade twelve student residing in Victoria.

He hopes to pursue a career in journalism. To that end he has been writing a column for the Oak Bay News. Tristan has an interest in Victoria history.

Victoria is a city ripe with history. A Victoria team won the Stanley Cup in 1924, Rudyard Kipling had Victoria as his favourite vacation spot while writing some of his most famous novels, and Victoria even lays claim to the worst streetcar accident in North American history. Still, amid this rich heritage, Victoria's history books seem to consistently forget the story of one of the city's most remarkable residents.

William Wallace Gibson is known to obscure trivia questions and aviation encyclopedias as the first man to build and fly a completely Canadian designed aircraft. It may seem a relatively unimpressive feat at first glance, but to truly delve into the life and ambitions of Gibson is to discover a fascinating tale of discovery, innovation and perseverance. He was definitely a man ahead of his time, and a true Canadian pioneer of aviation.

William Wallace Gibson of Victoria in an undated newspaper photograph.

Born in Dalmellington, Scotland in 1878, young Gibson was the fourth of six children, and was given the name William Wallace in honour of the great Scottish hero. Gibson's time in Scotland would be very brief, however, as before his tenth birthday, the Gibson family would set sail for Canada.

In 1883, the Gibson family landed in Canada and moved westwards, finally settling in the village of Moffat, in the District of Assiniboia, Northwest Territories (now a part of Saskatchewan). In the case of the Gibson family, the so-called "Last Best West" of Canada was truly a dream come true. The Gibson family patriarch, William Wallace Gibson Sr., often told young Billy that in Scotland the Gibson family were peasants, but in Canada they were free. He truly believed that Canada was a land where his children could reach their true potential.

Gibson's childhood in Moffat was to be a very rebellious one. He only received a third grade education, and he spent most of his time slipping away to find adventure. Gibson Jr. soon developed a love for the wide open skies of the Canadian prairies. And it was to be Gibson's early enthusiasm for flying kites in these skies which would kindle his lifelong dream to one day soar through them himself.

Wishing to fly was a very common thought for boys his age, there was even a local Moffat boy who broke his leg by jumping off a barn with home-made wings strapped to his arms. But Gibson truly took the notion of flight seriously, and worked hard to unlock its secrets.

As a result, kite flying for young Billy Gibson was full of experimentation. He was constantly toying with different kite designs and as he flew and tested each new design, Gibson began to build his own understanding of the principles of flight.

On windless days, Gibson would trail his kite behind his galloping pony to keep it aloft. One day, as he peered at the speeding kite from the back of his pony, it occurred to him that if his pony could give the kite the power to stay aloft, then it would also be possible to keep a kite aloft with its own on-board source of power. Quickly, Gibson's imagination envisioned an enormous self propelled kite that could one day carry him speeding through the skies.

As he became a young man, Gibson's childhood fantasies would temporarily drift away when he moved north to Balgonie to seek his fortune. It soon seemed that his mind for business was as ripe as his mind for aviation, and in only a few years, Gibson had established himself as a prosperous farmer and a successful Balgonie hardware dealer with branch stores in the neighbouring towns of Craven and Cupar.

Never the one to simply settle down, in 1901 William Gibson was the first man in the Northwest Territories to buy an automobile. It was even rumoured that when a second automobile came to the Northwest Territories, William challenged its owner to a race.

In any case, whatever aviation dreams remained in the back of William's imagination, they were suddenly rekindled in the winter of 1903. Will Gibson, like others, heard with amazement the story of the Wright Brothers historic first flight. To history, the Wright Brothers achievement would symbolize a new era of possibility, and it was this possibility that seemed no greater an invitation to William Gibson. With proof that flight was possible, Gibson himself soon set out to build his own flying machine.

True, in the "aero-mania" that surfaced after the success of the Wright Flyer, there were many others who hatched similar plans to William Gibson's. Still, while people the world over sought to build their own Wright Flyer, Gibson's aeroplane would be built from scratch. In the Northwest Territories there were no aviation publications or manuals, and it would be years before Gibson would even see a picture of the Wright brother's machine. Either by choice or by necessity, William Gibson's plane would be

completely a product of his own design.

Immediately, Gibson began testing small aircraft models powered by the spring from a roller blind, and launched from the roof of his Balgonie hardware store. Gibson would take great pains to keep his experiments a secret from the rest of the town. He feared that if the Balgonie towns folk were to learn of his bizarre endeavours, they would think he was crazy, forcing the bank to recall his loan. As well, in the Northwest Territories in the early 1900s, the North West Mounted Police had the authority to send any suspicious characters to Regina.

Consequently, all of Gibson's flight tests were done in the early hours of the morning. On Gibson's first such test, the model leapt into the air before even reaching the end of the ramp and sped across the street in level flight before smashing into a boxcar. The model was damaged, but Gibson knew that what he'd seen was a success. He now had visual proof that his designs could fly.

Gibson would continue to build and test many more models in the next few months. Yet, soon he would find that he wasn't the only early riser in the town of Balgonie. A neighbour, Jimmy Hicks, was overheard telling another man that he had seen a strange bird take off from the roof of Gibson's store. Balgonie's Doctor Kaulbfleisch confronted Gibson with similar news after returning home early in the morning from tending a patient, " Say, Billy, what kind of a funny looking bird was that you were trying to catch on your roof this morning?"

In spite of these near discoveries, Gibson continued his experiments mostly unnoticed, and by the end, he was building his models so stable that he could start them upside down and they would right themselves in flight. Encouraged by these successes, Gibson decided he was ready to start work on a full size, self propelled, man carrying aircraft. He began work on a four cylinder engine to power the craft, but he soon realized that the expense of an aeroplane was quite beyond his resources at the time.

A man named Currie frequently came into Gibson's hardware store to rave about the money that was to be made by taking contracts out to build the Grand Trunk Railway. In the view of financing his aircraft, Gibson quickly took out a contract to build twenty miles of track, and soon another to build an additional twenty-two miles.

Gibson may have been a successful farmer, hardware store owner and soon to be a successful aviator, but he soon discovered that he knew nothing about building a railroad. He lost $40,000 in eighteen months, the equivalent of $900,000 today. "When I had the banks cleaned up, or rather they had cleaned me, I had no stores and no farm, so with what capital I had left, I decided to go to the coast, and start anew," it was with these words that Gibson arrived in Victoria in the autumn of 1906 with his partially completed engine.

William Wallace Gibson's house in Victoria
Photo: Tristin Hooper

Victoria was closer to home for the twenty-seven year old Gibson, as he now lived in the same city as his parents and many of his siblings. He managed to quickly find a job driving a De Winton automobile for a friend of his from Regina. Soon, Gibson would have a reputation for reckless driving in the De Winton. On one occasion he lost control and slammed into a Douglas St. street car, sending it clean off the tracks and wounding several people. Local newspapers reported that Gibson arose from the wreck with his head bloody but unbowed. While fixing the damaged De Winton, it was also around this time that Gibson completed the engine he had begun building in Balgonie. Unfortunately, upon testing it, Gibson would find that the unstable engine "jumped around like a chicken with its head cut off."

He realized another engine would be needed, but once again, Gibson's capital had begun to run low. Luckily, another scheme came to Gibson in the form of a gold prospector named Locky Grant. Locky told of a claim that he owned at Elk River on the Northwest coast of Vancouver Island. As he was without means to work the claim, Grant said he was prepared to offer it to Gibson for $500.

In the spring of 1907, Gibson plotted out a

course on a map and bought a launch to sail to Locky's claim. Having absolutely no nautical experience, the voyage took him eight days, during which he lost twenty-five pounds. Later in life Gibson was to proclaim that his survival of the trip could only have been an act of God. Fortunately, Gibson's near death experience would pay off. After a quick inspection of the mine, he bought it from Locky Grant for his launch, a camera, binoculars, a rifle and $100.

Hurriedly, Gibson returned to Victoria (this time aboard a passenger ship) and procured a stamp mill and water wheel to run his new claim.

Locky would stay with Gibson until they had mined enough gold to procure a brick worth $1,200. With proof of the mine's value, Gibson immediately sold it off for $10,000 and returned to work on his aeroplane.

On returning to Victoria, Gibson drafted plans for a new engine and presented them to Hutchinson Brothers machinists. Amid complaints that Gibson's six cylinder two stroke design was impractical, the firm nevertheless set to work on its construction, unaware that upon its successful completion in March 1910, the aircraft engine would be the first of its kind produced in Canada. While the Hutchinson brothers laboured away on an engine they believed would never run, Gibson himself began work on the aircraft's structure in the backyard of his Victoria home. The project would take months of Gibson working seven days a week, and sometimes eighteen hours a day. But the more the aircraft took shape, the more Gibson could envision its completion.

Lansdowne Middle School, once the site of Victoria's airport and where Gibson's Twin Plane flew for the first and only time.
Photo: Tristin Hooper

Unlike the secrecy he had kept in Balgonie, the citizens of Victoria were quite aware of Gibson's aeronautical obsessions, which quickly earned him the name "Birdman". In public, Gibson constantly faced ridicule and scorn. There was one man who would flap his arms whenever he saw Gibson in the street, another would point at the sky and cover his face. Even Gibson's priest, on several occasions tried to persuade him to stop his work.

Victoria's newspapers, on the other hand, saw the Birdman as an immediate sensation. In an article in the *Daily Colonist*, McVittie, a neighbour of Gibson's, claimed that the Gibson flying machine would be able to fly from Victoria to Vancouver in twenty minutes. Still another article claimed that the Victoria flying man's ship would reach speeds of one hundred miles per hour, be resistant to gale, and would be able to carry fifty men.

While Gibson himself would never claim such things, he must have envisioned great things for the aeroplane that was taking shape in his yard. All told, the completed aircraft, soon to be dubbed the Gibson Twin Plane, would be constructed with spruce, cedar and fifty yards of blue silk. The craft's name would come from the craft's unorthodox design of having twin sets of overhead v-shaped wings.

When Gibson received the completed 210 pound, 60 HP engine from Hutchinson Brothers, Gibson worked to bore every one of the one hundred engine bolts hollow, so as to lighten them. As well, on the engine Gibson installed a revolutionary new idea to reduce engine torque. Engine torque would have caused the craft to veer to one side, or even to rip the engine loose from its housing. Gibson overcame this by installing a propeller on either side of the engine so as to counteract the effects.

Many other innovations would appear for the first time in aviation history on the Twin Plane. Every wooden component of the plane was given an airfoil shape, an unheard of concept at the time. As well, the streamlined fuel tanks on the plane would have baffles to stop fuel from surging back and forth, a technique still used on modern fuel tanks.

To control the aircraft while in flight, Gibson used shoulder harnesses to control the side to side motion of the plane, and a lever in front of him to control the pitch.

When the plane was finally completed in September of 1910, Gibson enlisted the help of his old friend Locky Grant and a man known only as "Dave" to dismantle the craft and secretly transport it to a grassy meadow on Dean's Farm, near Mount Tolmie. Coincidentally, the area chosen by Gibson on which to make his historic flight would later become the Victoria Airport - the area is now the site of Lansdowne Middle School. The proposed flight was kept in relative secrecy, and few spectators would show up. However, the first flight of the twin plane would be but a short hop whose rough landing would seriously damage the plane's undercarriage.

Gibson never considered the first hop of the

Twin Plane as an actual flight, and he laboured hard for the next two weeks to repair the undercarriage and give it another go. On September 24th at 5am, Locky Grant and "Dave" once again rolled Gibson's plane into position on the field. The plane's blue silk glistened in the morning sun as a thirty-four year old William Wallace Gibson took his place in the pilot's seat. His craft had half the weight and twice the power of the Wright Flyer, and unlike the Wright Flyer, Gibson's Twin Plane would be taking off without the aid of a catapult.

William started the engine, and when it had sufficiently warmed up, he signalled his helpers to let go. The plane sped off down the field and took off after running only fifty feet. Once in the air, a light crosswind started blowing the craft sideways. History soon proved that inventors may be born, but aviators must be made as Gibson's unfamiliarity with the plane's shoulder harnesses caused him to lean the wrong way to correct for the wind. Suddenly, the plane had swung further sideways as a result of his error and was now headed for a patch of Garry Oak Trees. Cooly, Gibson cut the engine and managed to make a level landing on the grass. However, in the final moments of the Gibson Twin Plane, William Gibson would reflect on his oversight in not installing brakes on the landing wheels of the plane. Carried on by the momentum of the landing, the Twin Plane surged forward and smashed into a sturdy oak tree. Gibson was flung from the wreck and would suffer two broken fingers and a cut above his eye. The Gibson Twin Plane would never fly again. All told, Gibson had flown 200 feet on his first flight, 80 feet further than the Wright Flyer's initial hop, and a few feet further than the first flight of the internationally acclaimed Santos Dumont, the first man to fly in Europe. Forgetting the significance of a mere 200 feet, many may look back and see the distance travelled by what is now deemed a primitive aircraft as a mere point of interest, rather than the accomplishment it symbolized.

William Wallace Gibson had worked towards a goal, alone and unaided, and amid the scorn of almost everyone he knew. He had built and flown a plane without any knowledge of the principles of flight, or even any idea of how an aeroplane should look. Gibson's concepts were entirely his own and completely isolated from outside influence.

Gibson would, in 1910, acquire a copy of *Artificial and Natural Flight* by Sir Hiram Maxim. It would be the first aviation manual he ever laid eyes on, and in 1911, based on the concepts of Sir Hiram's book, Gibson would complete his redesigned version of the Twin Plane; the Gibson Multiplane.

The Gibson Twin Plane ready for flight, 1910. (above right)

After taking the multiplane to Calgary for several tests, Gibson would once again find himself low on funds. Ever since his initial experiments at Balgonie, the aeroplane business had cost him $40,000. By this time, Gibson knew that he had a family to raise and money to make. In the end, Gibson would turn his attention back to mining, becoming a successful inventor and supplier of Gibson mining products. With almost one hundred mining patents to his name, William Wallace Gibson would become a millionaire in the 1930s. William Gibson would always talk about building another plane, and there were many times he came close.

Gibson would even manufacture aeroplane parts, but he never assembled them. He died in San Francisco, California in 1965 at the age of eighty-seven.

Orville Wright had once said that the Wright Flyer would not have been possible if it weren't for the partnership of his brother for, as he said, "the problem [of flight] is too great for one man alone and unaided to solve." William Gibson had fixed an idea in his head that many people at the time still thought was impossible, and carried it out with only a third grade education. In essence, a boy from the Canadian prairies had succeeded where so many, including telephone inventor Alexander Graham Bell, had failed. He was doing it not to make a profit, or even to gain national or international recognition. William Wallace Gibson accomplished the impossible and achieved the unthinkable simply because of a boyhood dream to fly. •

The Great Le Roi Hoax

Buying Back a Canadian Mine

By Bill Laux

Bill Laux passed away last year at the age of seventy-nine. A resident of Fauquier for forty-two years, Bill wrote a number of articles on B.C. history and submitted this piece last year for consideration.

It is a rollicking adventure, typical of the best of his writing.

The Editor

The purchase of the Le Roi gold and copper mine, high on the slopes of Red Mountain above Rossland, B.C., from its American owners in 1898 was hailed in B.C. as a victory for Britain and the Empire. Nevertheless, the murky and scandalous circumstances of the sale gave the Rossland mines an unsavoury reputation with British investors which lasted, according to one US authority, until as late as 1936.

The Le Roi Mine was reputed in the mining press of 1898 to be the "richest in the world." Perhaps, for a time, it was. The boast was based on the estimate that the Le Roi, in that year, was bringing up $84,000 of gold silver and copper ore every twenty-four hours.[1] Certainly it was paying dividends of $25,000 per month. The Le Roi and its associated smelter at Northport, Washington were owned by the Spokane Colonels, a group of American mining speculators who had bought it in 1891 from Col. Eugene Topping in Trail. The Spokane Colonels included Col. W. W. Turner, Judge (later Senator) George Turner, Col. Isaac N. Peyton, Col. William Ridpath, Major Armstrong, George Forster, Frank Graves and Billy Harris.

As a producing gold mine paying monthly dividends and well reported in the world mining press, the Le Roi got the attention of Whittaker Wright in London. Whittaker Wright, with his London and Globe Finance Company, was a flamboyant mining promoter. His speciality was organizing companies to buy reputedly rich mines all around the world, to capitalize them far beyond their actual worth and then offer stock in them to the British public. Dividends in each mine would be paid out of stock sales. Any shortfall would be made up by organizing another mine and selling stock in it. This scam could be maintained as long as there was a supply of new and spectacularly rich mines coming on the market. Wright's London and Globe controlled mines in Australia, South Africa, and the United States and Wright himself lived in a conspicuously opulent style.

When the London mining papers began to speak of the Le Roi as supposedly "the richest in the world," Wright had to have it. He organised the British America Corporation (B.A.C) to purchase mines in Alaska and British Columbia. The B.A.C. was capitalized at an astonishing £1,500,000 ($7,500,000) and Wright offered its stock at an unprecedented £5.00 ($25) per share to a fascinated and gullible British public. To decorate its letterhead he chose the Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, a former Governor General of Canada. For its resident Canadian Director, he picked an old school chum the Hon. Charles McIntosh, former lieutenant-governor of the Northwest Territories. Neither of these men knew anything about mining. The Marquess was there to inspire investor confidence in Britain; the ex lieutenant-governor to ensure that the B.A.C would be treated favourably by Anglophile politicians in British Columbia.

The company's prospectus stated that it was buying the Le Roi Mine as well as the Alaska Commercial Company plus other unnamed mines in British Columbia and the Yukon. This was irresistible to the gold-mad British public, investors fell over themselves to buy up £1 million ($5 million) of B.A.C. stock in a few weeks.

With a million pounds in the treasury, Whittaker Wright sent McIntosh to British Columbia to buy its best producing mines for the B.A.C. He arrived in the Fall of 1897 in a private railway car rented from the CPR. At Rossland, McIntosh bought the Great Western, the Josie, Columbia and Kootenay and Nickel Plate mines. He then pompously telegraphed to London:

> *The British America Corporation has secured and holds the key to the majority of the golden treasure houses in British Columbia. We will practically control the mineral resources of this Province.*[2]

This was pure moonshine. McIntosh was acknowledged as an able politician but he was wholly without mining experience.

The unexpected news in 1897 that their Le Roi mine was to be bought by a London company fell upon the Spokane Colonels like a golden thunderbolt, Col. Peyton observed:

> *To my mind it looks much as if the people who drew up that prospectus used the name of the Le Roi Mine to attract the attention of the English investing public.*[3]

The Spokane Colonels were mining speculators. They knew that their mine was to be used to bait the British investing public. The Colonels were perfectly willing to sell. And it seemed that they could now ask their own price since the B.A.C. had publicly committed itself to the purchase. But they also, as shrewd men, would want to remove and smelt what high grade gold ore there was in sight in their mine before consummating the sale. It was a simple case of milking your cow before selling her.

As McIntosh was leaving for Canada in the Fall of 1897, Col. Peyton and Judge Turner went to London

1 Estimate of the Rossland Miner, March 12, 1898.

2 *British Columbia Review*, January 15, 1898, p 171

3 *British Columbia Review*, February 12, 1898, p 224

4 See Clark Spence, *British Investments and the American Mining Frontier, 1860 - 1901*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1958) for an account of the outrageous swindles perpetrated on British Mining investors by American speculators.

5 The law prohibiting non citizens from holding property was enacted in the Territorial Period when miners and ranchers feared foreigners getting hold of their enterprises. These laws were repealed in all of the states affected some years later.

6 Figured from 350 tons of $40 ore shipped daily as the *Rossland Miner* was reporting

7 For similar hoax see Spence, British Investments, pp.139 - 190

8 McDonald's ant-union activities can be found in Richard Lingenfelter, *The Hardrock Miners: A history of the Mining Labor Movement in the American West, 1863 - 1893*, (University of California Press 1974), pp. 137-139 & 147.

to see what their mine might be worth. Col. Peyton went to the B.A.C. and was offered $3,000,000. He accepted pending ratification by the other directors in Spokane. Judge Turner, however, knew that the B.A.C. was capitalized at five million and taking that this represented the value of the Le Roi on the London market, he endeavoured to find a buyer at that price.

In January, 1898, with Col. Peyton and Judge Turner back from London, a directors' meeting of the Le Roi Mining Company was called in Spokane to discuss a sale of their mine. Lt. Gov. McIntosh came down in his private car to negotiate the purchase. At the directors meeting Col. Peyton presented a B.A.C. cheque for $500,000 to the directors as a down payment on the mine. But Judge Turner rose to claim he had been offered $5,000,000 for the mine in London, though he declined to say by whom. He insisted he would not, therefore, sell his shares at the offered price. The directors spilt, with Col. Ridpath, Major Armstrong, Bill Harris and Frank Graves siding with Judge Turner. They were determined to block any sale at $6.00 per share. Meanwhile, as both groups knew, Bill Harris, the mine manager, was "milking the cow." Harris had his miners abandon all development and exploration work and instead set them to stripping the mine of its high grade ore. While the Judge Turner group played for time their mine was paying both groups their usual monthly dividends.

These men, it must be remembered, were a group of minor western mining speculators dealing with what the New York and London Mining Exchanges believed was one of the world's richest

The Hon. Charles McIntosh, as Lieutenant Governor of the Northwest Territories. An affable and socially gifted man, by all reports, but no mining expert.
Courtesy, Rossland Mining Museum

mines. It was an unparalleled opportunity for posturing. And extravagant posturing had been a characteristic of western mining since the days of 1849. The Colonels were keenly aware that they had the British at their mercy. They were going to make the most of the opportunity and play their parts in the best theatrical manner.[4]

At a second meeting of the deadlocked directors in Spokane Colonel Peyton announced that he had already tendered the 284,000 shares of his group to the B.A.C. at six dollars per share. Since this constituted a majority of the shares, Charles McIntosh declared that under British law the B.A.C. as majority stockholder now controlled the company. However, Judge Turner got to his feet and reminded the directors that the Le Roi Mining Company was a Washington company and was governed by the laws of the state of Washington. State law, he explained, held that no alien could hold property in Washington State.[5] Since the Le Roi's Northport smelter was in Washington State, the B.A.C. could not own or control it although under Canadian law they could own the mine in Canada. The meeting broke up in a complete stalemate.

Judge Turner then got a court injunction restraining Col. Peyton from transferring any of his group's shares to the B.A.C. To enforce this injunction, deputy sheriffs were hired to station themselves at the Spokane city limits to stop all trains bound for Canada and make sure they were not carrying any of the directors or corporate papers of the Le Roi Mining Company.

The Peyton group felt their only recourse was to somehow get the entire matter to Canada and out of US jurisdiction. With great secrecy, L.F. Williams, the company secretary and a member of the Peyton group, gathered up all of the company papers and the Le Roi Company seal from its hook above his desk. Col. Peyton, avoiding the downtown railroad station, which was being watched, drove Williams out of Spokane in his buggy to the to the tiny station at Mead to catch the train which had already been inspected at the City Limits by the deputies. Six hours later Williams and the Le Roi Mining Company were safely in Canada free of Judge Turner's American injunction.

Williams, however, in setting up a new B.A. C. office in Rossland, discovered to his chagrin that the company seal he had brought with him was not that of the Le Roi Company at all. Bill Harris, in Spokane, had suspected the Peyton group would attempt precisely this and had slipped into the company office to remove the Le Roi seal from its accustomed hook and substituted another company's seal in its place. In Rossland without a company seal, the majority Peyton group could transact no company business until a duplicate seal could be obtained.

By this time Lt. Governor McIntosh had enough of these American legal obstructions. He invited the rest of the directors and trustees holding Le Roi shares to board his private railway car at the Spokane station for a trip to Rossland. The directors and trustees holding a block of pooled shares, joined him and he signalled his private train to depart. At that point, deputy sheriff A. Bunce climbed onto McIntosh's car, entered and displayed a copy of the County Court's injunction, telling McIntosh he could not proceed. Armed deputies, he told McIntosh, were stationed at the city limits with legal authority to stop all trains for Canada. McIntosh, firmly but politely, made a small speech to the deputy. As an officer of the court, he told Bunce, he must realize that according to the common law of both Britain and the United States, a man's home is his castle and cannot be entered without a warrant. And as this railway car was in fact his present home Deputy Bunce, unless he had a warrant to enter, was committing a trespass. The overawed Bunce, who was by occupation, merely a crier in Judge Edward's Court, backed out of the car and its door was locked against him.

Bunce then went to the locomotive crew and ordered them not to proceed. The engineer came down, went into the station and put the matter before Austin Corbin, the president of the line and a stockholder in the Le Roi. Corbin came down. looked at the injunction and told Bunce that it applied against foreigners, the B.A.C. Company of London, England and not against the railroad. Bunce could forbid the directors in the private car from leaving the US. but

the Spokane Falls and Northern Railroad was not named in the injunction and he could not prevent it from running its trains wherever it chose.

Deputy Bunce, who must have felt that the gentlemen were making a mockery of his office, had just enough time to swing up onto the locomotive as as the engineer opened the throttle and got under way. At the city limits, Bunce drew his revolver, pointed it at the engineer and ordered him to stop the train. The engineer laughed instead and opened the throttle wide. The assembled deputies on the track scattered for their lives and the little one car train roared out onto the open prairie. The grinning train crew invited deputy Bunce to consider how he could stop a speeding train if its engine crew were shot dead This was not a show of heroics. The US. had just passed through a bitter and violent railway strike. The Rail Brotherhoods were still defiant and full of hatred of the hired minions of the law whom they had learned were cowardly in a fair fight. Deputy Bunce realized he was up against militant union men and holstered his useless revolver.

Scorned by the men in the cab, deputy Bunce climbed back over the tender to the open platform of Mclntosh's private car. He knocked. Mclntosh would not admit him. Inside the gentlemen were sitting in wicker chairs smoking the Lt. Governor's cigars and sipping his best Scotch whisky. They had the windows open. It was a hot June day and they were enjoying the breeze. Out on the platform, his coat tails flapping in the wind and showered with cinders from the smokestack, Bunce clung grimly to the hand holds of the swaying car. He clung there for the 140 non-stop miles to Northport, Washington where a water stop had to be made for the steep climb to Rossland and Canada.

During the stop. Lt. Gov. Mclntosh descended from his car, offered the deputy a cigar and a bit of advice. The Canadian border was but eight miles ahead, he told the deputy. If the deputy persisted he would be arrested at the border for bringing a deadly weapon into Canada, an offence the Canadian law took quite seriously. The Governor gave him a friendly pat on the shoulder re -entered his car and locked it.

As the train got under way again, deputy Bunce remained on the station platform. He had done all he could, he believed. Judge Turner could ask no more of him.

At Rossland, with the Le Roi directors now in Canada, Mclntosh believed he could have the sale of the shares completed under Canadian law. A meeting of all directors was called for Rossland on July 3. Judge Turner and his minority group came up by special train. At the meeting Judge Turner again dominated the proceeding. He managed to have the B.A.C. cheque for $500,000 returned on the grounds that it was premature since the directors had not had an opportunity to consider other offers for their mine. Then the minority directors got into their one car train and went back down the track to Spokane.

Col. I.N. Peyton one of the original purchasers of the mine from Col. Topping of Trail, Peyton managed it through its early search for high grade ore. When the bonanza appeared to becoming to an end, he was the first to accept the B.A.C. offer.
BC Archives G-06328

A second directors' meeting was called for Spokane. The majority group came down in the railroad's single parlour car. It was wasted effort; the two groups were firmly deadlocked. Meanwhile Bill Harris was stripping the mine of its best ore, sending it to the smelter and having it converted into bullion on which the monthly dividends continued to be paid to both quarrelling groups. Since every day of delay was putting more money into the owners' pockets, it is clear that Mclntosh and the B.A.C. were being victimized by a deliberate charade.

Finally, Mclntosh was informed what the Colonels were doing. The mine he was buying was being depleted of its most valuable ore. This was intolerable. Still lacking a company seal, and unable to perform official acts, Mclntosh and Col. Peyton applied to Judge Spinks of the Kootenay County Court to have the Le Roi Company placed in receivership so they could get rid of Bill Harris and stop the stripping of the mine. The Judge agreed and appointed W. A, Carlyle receiver. This was irregular. Carlyle was already on The B.A.C. payroll as Manager of Mines. As an officer of the company, he should not have been appointed as its receiver. But the imposing and pompous Mclntosh had somehow convinced Judge Spinks.

Carlyle dismissed Bill Harris, appointed a new mine manager and instructed him to resume efforts

The Le Roi mine at the time of sale
BC Archives I-55662

to locate new pockets of ore. At the same time he was to reduce shipments to the Northport smelter to an absolute minimum to starve it of ore and end the flow of dividends to the Colonels.

Harris had been shipping three hundred fifty tons of the mine's best ore every day. Now it was reduced to one or two cars, sixty tons at most. The minority directors expressed great anger at this and when Judge Turner found himself occupying the same hotel, The Allen, in Rossland as his rival, Col. Peyton, a scuffle ensured with Judge Turner attempting to eject the Colonel from the hotel. Others intervened, the adversaries (or play actors) were separated and peace was restored.

Now the minority group decided they too, could use Canadian law. They sent their lawyers to Victoria to institute a suit against Col. Peyton, the B.A.C., McIntosh and Whittaker Wright to recover $750,000 for an alleged conspiracy to buy Le Roi shares for less than their actual value. While this suit was slowly winding its way through the courts, the minority group was able to get the irregular Le Roi receivership overturned. Bill Harris was re-instituted as manager and resumed stripping the mine of its best ore.

This was wholly intolerable to the B.A.C. They were desperate to conceal from the investing public the fact that their best ore was being removed from Canadian jurisdiction, smelted at Northport and the recovered bullion held in the US. The Colonels were making roughly $6,500 every day the sale was delayed.[6] The B.A.C. now made an attempt to reinstate the receivership under Washington law by sending a squad of lawyers to Spokane to put the matter before the courts there.

This time, however, on meeting the lawyers, the minority members completely reversed their previously hostile manner. They met their Canadian colleagues with profuse apologies for past incivility and demonstrated a solicitous concern for their comfort and well being. All this with a continuous round of toasts to international amity and co-operation. So alcoholic was the fellowship and so long continued that the B.A.C. lawyers, in a boozy haze, completely lost track of the time and missed their appointment at court. With their non-appearance the case was dropped from the docket and put over to the next year's session. The rivals were again plunged into teeth-gnashing rage, real or feigned.

These scandalous proceedings were gleefully reported in the US mining press and reached London where the effect was to depress the value of B.A.C. shares below par. Whittaker Wright could not afford this. His whole stock jobbing swindle depended on his mines being seen as premier investments. He would have to buy off the stubborn minority directors and complete the sale, cost him what it would. Judge Turner was reporting he had received an offer from Wright himself of $8.12 for his shares. The B.A.C. denied this absolutely. The Judge responded that an un-named British consortium had offered him $8.50. This was moonshine, of course, but these claims were reprinted in the papers and were seriously embarrassing Whittaker Wright.

Finally, on November 22, 1898, all the shares in what may have once been the world's richest gold mine changed hands at $7.40 plus payment for ore then en-route to the Northport smelter and copper matte stockpiled for shipment. The very last of the Minority hold outs, Bill Harris had to come down to Spokane to sign the agreements. He came, of course, by special train.

The Northport smelter, although included in the deal, had to be hastily reorganized as the Northport Refining and Smelting Co. with nominally American ownership to comply with the Washington Alien

Property Law.

For the one hundred thirty days while the sale was delayed, Bill Harris had removed $845,000 worth of ore from the mine, had it smelted, the bullion sold and monthly dividends paid. This amounted to $1.69 per share realized from the high-grading while the compromise with Whittaker Wright in the end added only an additional $1.40 per share. These figures powerfully suggest that the whole, protracted dispute, played out in the courts of two countries, on special trains and in hotel lobby scuffles, was another one of the many hoaxes perpetrated in those years on the gullible British by unscrupulous American mine owners.[7]

To celebrate the return of the mine to British ownership the Canadians in Rossland mounted an extravagant banquet at the Allen Hotel at which Lt. Governor McIntosh was guest of honour. Menus with his portrait engraved upon them sold for $2.50 and the partying went on until nine in the morning. Coming out into the crisp November dawn two of the tipsy merrymakers challenged each other to a horse race. Two milk wagons were commandeered and raced madly down the length of Columbia Avenue, milk cans scattering to the gutters. Those celebrants still able to stand, passed the hat to reimburse the dairies for the lost milk.

With that final agreement and sale, the B.A.C. got full control of the mine and the Northport smelter, but the scandalous look of the affair generated hostile comment in London. Whittaker Wright's companies now began to look dubious to investors. Wright, however, countered this with a further manipulation. Having bought the Le Roi and the smelter for $4,000,000 he set up a new company, the Le Roi Mining Company and had the B.A.C. sell the mine and smelter to it for $4,750,000. Thus he made a quick profit for the B.A.C., which restored the value of its falling shares and the confidence of nervous investors. He then issued 200,000 shares in the new Le Roi Mining Company. London investors, still mesmerized by the Le Roi name, bought up all 200,000 shares at $25 each in just three days. With the $4.5 million thus raised, the Le Roi Mining Company paid the B.A. C. for the mine and smelter. This left the new company with but $250,000 in its treasury with which to deepen the mine and search for new pockets of ore.

Le Roi mine at the time of sale. The power house and the hoist house are shown.
BC Archives I-55860

Experienced mining men thought that was insufficient to undertake a substantial exploration program and to make needed improvements at the smelter. With a shortage of working capital and its London investors demanding dividends at once, there was but one way operations could proceed: labour costs would have to be cut.

For that unwelcome task Wright picked a new and tough manager for the Le Roi. This was the former anti-union thug, Bernard McDonald, who had worked with Wright twenty years before in Wright's New Mexico mines.[8] Once in Rossland, McDonald was obliged to report the shattering news to Whittaker Wright that the Le Roi was actually operating at a loss. In 1899 the ore coming out of the Le Roi was netting $12.50 per ton, but mining costs were running $15.00 per ton. With this loss the mine could pay no dividends at all.

At the same time similar discoveries were coming to light in Wright's West Australian mines. A bear attack on his stocks began in London. Furious investors finding themselves to have been duped by Whittaker Wright's mines, lobbied the British parliament for redress. An official investigation of Wrights' mining empire began.

In Spokane, the Colonels congratulated themselves on having sold their mine just when it

was going barren. All of them built mansions for themselves and invested the money from the sale of their stock in Spokane real estate. Col. Peyton built the Peyton Block, George Turner built the Columbia Building, Major Armstrong and L.F. Williams bought the Hyde block.

Some of them invested their proceeds in other B.C. mines, notably the St Eugene at Moyie Lake. Perhaps the game could be played again. Col. Ridpath and Judge Turner bought the Sullivan Mine at Kimberley and planned a smelter there.

On the other side of the world Whittaker Wright went on trial in London for frauds unrelated to the Le Roi affair. He was found guilty and sentenced to seven years imprisonment. He did not, however, go to jail. Immediately after the sentence was read he spoke to his lawyers, then stepped into a side room and swallowed a capsule of cyanide. Returning, he collapsed on the floor and died; a loaded revolver was found in his pocket. The Rossland paper mourned his passing; he may have been a charlatan but he had been instrumental in the Canadianization of Rossland.

Lt. Governor McIntosh remained in Rossland for some years in a mansion the B.A.C. built for him in its locked and fenced compound above the Nickel Plate mine, though the fiercely anti-union Bernard McDonald seems to have made policy for the local operations. On retirement, McIntosh and his wife bought Halcyon Hot Springs on Upper Arrow Lake and built a spa and hotel there. From Halcyon they shipped its bottled lithia water back to Britain. It was presumed to have a calming effect on the nerves of investors who had lost heavily in B.C. mines. •

Le Roi Mine Tour

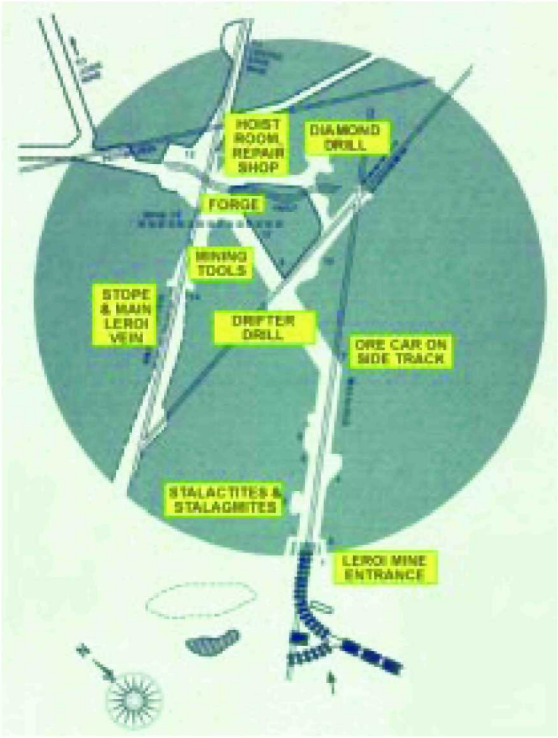
The Rossland Museum has a tour of a restored section of the Le Roi gold minewhich last operated in 1929.

The men that worked the Rossland area mines laboriously drilled, blasted and hand mucked the eighty miles (128 km) of underground workings in search for ore that averaged 0.5 ounces per ton in gold, 1% copper and 0.6 ounces per ton of silver.

The mine tour follows the spacious main haulage way eight hundred feet into Red Mountain to its intersection with the Le Roi shaft three hundred feet below the surface. At this point the shaft extends down fifteen levels below you. The tour then moves on into an underground hoist room and follows the twists and turns of the narrow exploration drifts.

Participants will see the overhead and underhand stopes where the ore bodies have been mined out. There are veins and dykes and a fault plane where in prehistoric time the rock has slipped - the movement which causes earthquakes. On display throughout the mine are displays of drills and other mining tools and a display depicting how blast hole patterns were drilled to advance the face of a drift.

Next time you're in Rossland check out this infamous mine. •



Map of the mine site courtesy of Rossland Mining Museum

CHALA-OO-CHICK

The First Fort George

Peter Trower & Yvonne Klan

Yvonne Klan passed away in 2004 her partner Peter Trower has kindly contributed this rememberance of her for *British Columbia History.*

From Peter Trower:

I am trying to catalogue Yvonne's voluminous research papers which Simon Fraser University is interested in acquiring. It is a formidable task but I undertake it gladly. The papers will be of great help to teachers and students of B.C. history.

The enclosed story and poem resulted from the last [British Columbia Historical Federation] conference we were able to attend, at Prince George in 2003. It is a companion piece to the article on James Murray Yale, published in BCHN a few years back.

Yvonne had always intended to write a full-length biography ofYale but sadly that project will never see the light of day now.

I should mention that I have submitted a manuscript to New Star Books who published Yvonne's book of pioneer poems *The Old Red Shirt* last year. It was very well received and gave Yvonne a much-needed morale boost in her final months.

The new book is entitled *Beating the Bushes of History* and consists of Yvonne's uncollected work plus several stories we either co-wrote or worked on together. With any luck this book should be out in the fall.

James Murray Yale's career as a fur trader got off to a shaky start. In 1815, Yale, then seventeen,became an apprentice with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) It was a time when that Company was embarking on its Athabaska Campaign - an aggressive attempt to wrest a share of the lucrative Athabasca -Peace River- New Caledonia trade from the powerful North West Company (NWC). Brother fought against brother; former colleagues were pitted against each other. In the brutal winter of 1815-16, 16 HBC men succumbed to the NWC's starvation system. Yale narrowly escaped the same fate and later survived a NWC plot to have him murdered. Hostilities ceased in 1821 when the two companies, realizing that the competition was ruinous in terms of money and men's lives, amalgamated under the banner of the HBC.

In the summer of 1821, an HBC brigade of six canoes, sixteen men and four officers including Yale, entered New Caledonia peacefully. With the amalgamation John Stuart, formerly a NWC partner, was made Chief Factor and assigned to take charge of this territory. No one was better qualified. Stuart had been trading along the Peace River as early as 1802, had been Simon Fraser's staunch lieutenant during the establishment of New Caledonia and had managed the territory's affairs for many years. Stuart had ruthlessly opposed the HBC during the Athabasca Campaign and had been complicit in the plot to have Yale murdered. Now Yale was obliged to work under his former enemy.

Yale's first assignment in New Caledonia was to take charge of Chala-oo-chick. The Norwesters had built this post in 1820, when Stuart ordered Clerk George McDougall to "establish at the Forks of Fraser's River, the natives of that place having been promised a Fort these several years past". For unknown reasons, McDougall did not build at the Forks as instructed but at a site some distance west of there known to the natives as Chala-oo-chick. (It should be noted that the post built by Simon Fraser at the confluence of the Nechako and Fraser Rivers "was temporarily established in 1807 for the convenience of building rafts to explore Fraser's River... . It was abandoned in 1808..." Dr. W.K. Lamb, who edited Fraser's letters and journals, uses the expediency of calling the location "Fort George" as it later became known.)

Chala-oo-chick prospered until Stuart sent McDougall downriver in 1821 to establish Fort Alexandria. He assigned a man named Thomas Hodgson to take McDougall's place. Hodgson was evidently unfitted for the job and the post's fortunes rapidly declined. Stuart was compelled to recall him and, with some misgivings, sent Yale to manage Chala-oo-chick.

Stuarts's misgivings arose not from his former clashes with Yale but from his appearance. Yale was short and slightly built with a boyish face that made him appear much younger than his twenty-three years. Could he command the respect of the Natives with whom he had to dea? Stuart hit on an ingenious solution. When reassigning Hodgson, he ordered him to introduce Yale as "my son".

Yale arrived at Chala-oo-chick November 7, 1821 and wrote Stuart: "On the interpreter telling the Indians I was your son, they appeared much pleased and declared that I resembled you very much."

It didn't take long for Yale to discover that the post's decline was due to Hodgson's fondness for liquor. He wrote in part:

...giving it to the men and Indians and getting intoxicated a number of times himself. In one of his frolliks he lost the key of the Store Door, got out of patience and broke open the door in the presence of all the Indians. On those rejoicing days he was very extravagant with the ammunition, giving it away gratis to the Indians merely to make them fire at nothing...

By the end of 1821 the post at Chala-oo-chick had been renamed Fort George. No reason for the change has come to light; possibly Stuart chose the name to honour Governor George Simpson.

Yale's trade during the winter 1821-1822 was disappointing. By spring, however, it picked up a bit and Yale was able to report that the Natives had, at long last, begun to work. Stuart replied that:

the Indians are more to be pitied than blamed, for disease has been prevelant among that much exertion could not be expected from them ... you may assure those of Fort George that if they do not work so as to deserve a post, theirs will be abandoned. I am fully determined to have no Establishment that either cannot or will not maintain itself...

In the spring of 1822 Stuart led a brigade to the Columbia to fetch supplies for New Caledonia. Enroute he stopped at Chala-oo-chick/Fort George and instructed Yale to move the present post to the forks of the Nechako/Fraser Rivers - the site of present- day Prince George. Yale's progress was slow and by late August he could report only:

I am really sorry to say it was impossible, situated as I have been, to build at the Forks. I have, however, got the

wood for a house squared and a spot for a Fort partly cleared.

Stuart received Yale's reports as he journeyed up the Fraser from the Columbia. His responses indicate that his confidence in Yale was eroding.

... I did not imagine much could be done in the way of building, but I am sorry that means could not have been found to remove to the point of the Forks, as many advantages would be derived from it, and I am still more sorry any difference should exist between you and the Indians... We will breakfast tomorrow at the point of the Forks, where if convenient, I would be happy to see you so as to determine whether the outfit or brought to the present establishment...

Yale's correspondence with Stuart reveals he was, indeed, having trouble with the Natives. Stuart's letters are full of advice. In September 1822 he reminded Yale that "affability to all, added to a little kindness and attention to the most deserving, will go a great way to gaining good will... " In October Stuart reminded Yale that "...it was an advantage to be known among the Indians as my Son and if on some occasions you have lost ground, it is not yet too late to retrieve it..." If Yale passed a winter with an experienced trader Stuart opined, he would find that "to form a Trader there is a certain Jen e sai qua (sic) that goes further towards gaining the confidence of Indians than either goods or words."

Yale acknowledged his shortcomings, "a number of which I have not experience enough to be aware of " and asked Stuart to "accept of my sincere thanks for the good examples you have been pleased to point out to me."

To add to Yale's troubles, relocating his fort to the junction of the Nechako Rivers was proceeding woefully slowly. Not until January, 1823 was he able to tell Stuart that his men had "erected a store at the Forks 23 ft by 17 in breadth, and the work appears to be well done."

Stuart urged him on:

It is... to your credit to have got a store built at the at the point of the Forks, you can remove at any time you think proper and when once the property is secured, a lodging is soon provided.

However by April, Yale had still not relocated. Stuart was unable to hide his impatience and he instructed:

The first thing that will occupy your attention will be to get the whole of the property remaining at the present establishment removed to the point of the Forks when a store is built and then erect the necessary buildings required. •

THE QUEST FOR CHALA-00-CHICK
In loving memory of Yvonne Klan

Ont that last sun-stmng morning we drive west
through colourless unpeopled country
time traveling happily once again
in search of another historic milestone

Chala-oo-chick, forgotten fur-trading post
that predated Fort George by two years
Yvonne, ever the insatiable researcher
had learned of the place from obscure untapped journals

Veering north, we reach the private land we have to cross -
Fernie, the owner welcomes us with coffee -
knocking ninety still active and clear-headed
regaling us with tales from his wild Prince George youth

Then he leads us past his barn hung with deer skulls
across an unmowed field to the trail mouth
down the rough path to the railroad tracks -
"Don't miss the raven's nest!" he urges

Sure enough, halfway over the trestle
we hear impatient cheeping sounds -
through the cross-beams we spot the nest
and three wide-open red mouths squalling lustily

The parents circle the nearby treetops worriedly -
we continue on our way - -
scramble down a steep bank from the tracks
and stumble off through the underbrush towards the site

Here at the confluence of the Nechako and Chilako Rivers
long-vanished Chala-oo-chick once sat -
not a trace remains of it now
only two weed-choked native food-pits from some later time

The entire area is a tangled gnaw-mill
of beaver-toppled logging slash
those buck-toothed industrious once-endangered rodents
have gladly reclaimed their ancestral territory.

Peter Trower October 19, 2004.

Smith's Iron Chink

One Hundred Years of the Mechanical Fish Butcher

Jo Scott B

Between the floorboards, water glistens far below; air flows freely through the high, vented ceilings. It's a naturally refrigerated building, cold even on the hottest summer day. The machines stand silent as footsteps echo through the empty site. There are fish scales on the ceiling and on the walls but absent, is the stinking odour of fish. This is the Gulf of Georgia Cannery, built in 1894, the last vestige of Steveston's once active cannery row.

Across town, on Vancouver's Burrard Inlet, the Gold Seal Cannery, this one noisy and active where fish and cans fly past too fast for the eye to see.

Both of these canneries still have a unique machine, invented over one hundred years ago by Canadian, Edmund Augustine Smith.

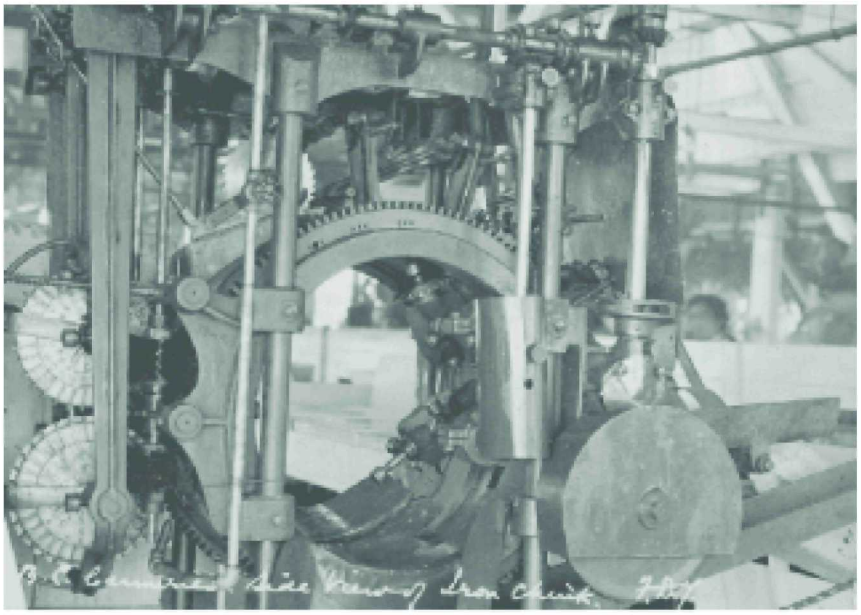
In the entrance to the Gulf of Georgia Cannery, there is a machine on loan from the Glenbow Museum in Calgary Alberta. The attached brass plate clearly shows the name:

The Iron Chink - Model G.
Patented Feb 7 1905 April 3 1906 Nov 6 1906
Dec 10 1907 May 18 1909 Oct 2 1917 July 14 1925
May 8 1929 Mar 20 1937
Smith Cannery Machines Co
Victoria BC

This is a "Do Not Touch" museum piece. While on the canning line they exhibit another Iron Chink, this one pieced together from a variety of machines. At the Gold Seal Cannery, three carefully maintained Iron Chinks or Smith Butcher Machines are still hard at work, essentially the same as the Gulf and Georgia's they do have some modifications such as, extra safety guards and additional computer controls.

E.A. Smith, born in 1878 in London, Ontario, was a large, intelligent, inventive man who loved practical jokes. His parents were farmers and moved to British Columbia when Smith was young. He started working life as a teen-age cook, at one time running a cookhouse in Cascade, B.C. Moving around in search of work was common in those economic times and he moved to the Puget Sound area in 1898, where he joined with several businessmen in starting the Harper Brick and Tile Company at Harper in Kitsap County, Washington. Besides bricklaying and terracotta pressing, Smith toyed with the idea of making reinforced concrete pilings to replace the wooden ones rotting in salt water but eventually abandoned this idea.

Selling his shares in the brick company in 1900, he invested in the Alaska Fishermen's Union, which had a cannery at Chilcat, Alaska. Despite the salmon runs being very good, he was disconcerted to discover his investment did not pay off due to labour problems. He was told the butcher crews could not clean the fish fast enough to earn a profit.



Side view of the Iron Chink in a Richmond, BC cannery
BC Archives E-05035

The problem was increased mechization of the canning line. Automation first came to the canneries in the form of more efficient can making systems at the end of the 1800s. Machines took over the canning process incrementally with steam closing machines, can fillers, steam cookers (retorts) and conveyors which sped up the whole process of putting fish into tins, though no one believed a machine could ever work as efficiently or economically as the Chinese butcher crews. But as the speed of the line increased these human butchers could not keep up. Gangs of thirty men had to process 1500 to 2000 fish in time spans of ten hours and more. Quality slipped, as the men grew weary.

The mechanization of fish butchering, using limited numbers of men to run and supply the machines with fish, was a challenge many at that time were trying to solve. Butcher machines were patented in Sweden, Britain and North America and between 1856 and 1905, twenty-one patents were granted in North America alone. However, early machines were bulky and very long requiring large areas of floor space. Plus speed seemed to equate with waste.

Smith now lived in Seattle, where he had a 10 x 12 workshop on a back lane and a company called Smith Manufacturing. He took up the challenge to

Jo Scott B has been researching and compiling information on cannery machines for an upcoming book.

She was inspired by the builder's plates found at the Gulf and Georgia Cannery in Richmond BC.

She is an artist whose subject matter frequently involves the history and heritage of BC.

If you have information you'd like to share please contact her at scottb@direct.ca

invent a butcher machine. He worked unsuccessfully for eight months, finally, $60,000 in debt, he admitted defeat to his wife and decided to get a job to repay all the money. That night he awoke with a flash of inspiration. His daughter recalls that at 3:00 a.m. there was no transportation available and he ran all the way to his workshop where he remained for ten days and nights emerging at last, wreathed in smiles.

Borrowing more money, he headed to Washington D.C. to register the patent for his "Iron Chink" machine. This name is written in the first patent and it stuck. In later years, the patented name changed to "Smith Butcher Machine" but "Iron Chink" was used on the manufacturer's plates on all machines for many, many years.

At a cannery in Fairhaven, Washington, Smith persuaded friends to test the new machine. His invention was in need of constant repair so Smith moved into the plant with the machine, sleeping in a canvas chair, keeping it operational and learning hands on about necessary modifications.

The ingenious feature of Smith's design was that the process of fish butchering was compact and circular, freeing up valuable floor space for storage. Two men were needed to work with the machine: one with a band saw to remove the heads, the other with a rotary knife to remove the tails, then to feed the bodies into the machine. This did mean more labour than required by other early butchering machines but it avoided the wastage the others generated.

Smith persevered, tackling wastage and maintenance. Reliable machines were essential to canneries, which could not afford down time during peak processing. His small workshop expanded into a manufacturing plant at First Avenue and Stacy. (This plant was demolished in the 1960s to make way for parking expansion for Sears Roebuck.)In 1904, he developed a new, smaller, more efficient model and this version was patented on August 8, 1905.

The Smith Butchering machine was suited for the salmon canning industry in British Columbia and Washington State since it was originally designed to fit sockeye and pink salmon, which were found in abundance in this area, but the early models could not clean the larger Chinook salmon.

An article in a 1906 *Pacific Fisherman* quotes Smith as saying: " If you want an exemplary instance of the success of the machine I have but to cite the work done by them at the Pacific American Fisheries cannery at Bellingham. This is the largest salmon canning plant in the world and they operated in the past season seven lines of machinery. The two [Iron Chinks] they had in use there supplied the seven lines of machinery which packed an average of 9,000 cans of sockeye salmon a day and two or three days ran over the 10,000 mark."

Not only speed but waste was cut: an average of one to one and a half fish per case. This went a long way towards payment for a cannery's investment.

In August 1906, the Smith Cannery Machines Company moved to its modern, well-equipped factory on the Seattle tide flats at 2416 Utah Street; built in anticipation of the company's growth. As soon as they were settled, they proceeded to remodel and improve the 1906 machine despite cannery men believing this machine to be ultra efficient. At great cost, patterns, jigs and templates were discarded. It meant constant study, continual endeavour and an added investment of over $65,000.

It was a fixed policy of the company to turn out the best and most perfect machine possible, irrespective of cost. To the cannerymen's benefit , a portion of proceeds from all sales was reinvested in development and research.

Smith, a personable man listened carefully to everyone in the fish industry, paying close attention to suggestions and criticisms. Thanks to this design input newer models continued to evolve and by 1907 the Smith machine cleaned the whole fish automatically, making it superior to any other competitor.

The 1908 Iron Chink was described in the 1907 edition of the *Pacific Fisherman* as "The Perfect Fish Cleaning Machine." It continued to have the same method of operation but was of different construction with several innovations. The automatic heading and tailing was now placed on the machine, taking the fish as it arrived from the water and putting it through an entire cleaning operation, meaning both the 'sliming' and butcher gangs were eliminated. Plus, the machine was reduced in size but not production, it could provide fish for two or even three canning lines.

The Model G manual foreword reads as follows:

The Model G Iron Chink is rapidly replacing the older models and since there are radical differences in design and consequently differences in adjustment it is felt that some simple instructions would be of value.

While there are many points in the instructions that are familiar to the large number of experienced Iron Chink operators it has been found that in many cases the machine

Iron Chink beheading salmon
BC Archives E-050536

has not been producing its best work through lack of familiarity with the changes in design. Again where the machine has produced work as good as the older models the operators have felt that the machine was doing all that could be expected of it and consequently made no effort to improve its operation. The Model G when carefully adjusted and kept in perfect condition is capable of producing work far in advance of the older models."

SET UP
In setting up the machine, choose a location preferably over a cap or as near to one as possible....It is advisable to place header between joists to aid in reducing vibration to a minimum.

Avoid a location in the center of a bent. The machine is invariably set up in advance of the canning season when no fish are on the floor or in the bins. A machine lined up at this time will be found to be out of line considerably when the fish house is full.

Instances have been noted where the vertical shaft has been found out of line two inches due to subsequent settling of the fish house floor. This misalignment is, of course, the cause of burnt out bearings, excessive wear on the gear teeth, and a hard running machine generally."

Another short quote illustrates the dangers of the job:

AUTOMATIC FEED

The automatic feed has been designed with two main points in view: Safety to the operator
A more positive cut and consequent reduction of waste...
Many feeders accomplish excellent results ...but they are men of experience; they must keep their eyes at all times upon the knife and they are constantly subject to the danger of accident to hands and arms from the knife.

In January,1902 Smith entered into an agreement with three partners, which proves his interest in developing an automatic weighing machine was long standing. (A document at the Museum of History and Industry -Seattle, WA.)

The agreement reads as follows:

"Between E.A. Smith of Seattle, Washington, to be hereafter known as the party of the first part, and F.E Barlow, B.R. Brierly and John Wallace, to be hereafter known as the party of the second part.

The party of the first part hereby agrees to spend his time in the perfection of a certain automatic weighing machine; a machine for removing fins from fish; and a machine for the gutting of fish; when so perfected is to secure a patent on same, if possible, both in the United States and Canada. The parties of the second part hereby agree to furnish all necessary money for the expense connected therewith, together with the sum of Ten ($10.00) Dollars per week for the services of the said party of the first part.

In consideration of the above, and the sum of One Hundred and Fifty ($150.00) Dollars, receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged. The said party of the first part hereby agrees to assign to the said party of the second part, after the patents have been obtained, as above set forth, a three quarter (3/4) interest in said weighing machine, and a one half (1/2) interest in each of the other two machines.

When patent on each has been secured and the proper assignments made by the party of the first part to the parties of the second part, this agreement shall be considered at an end.

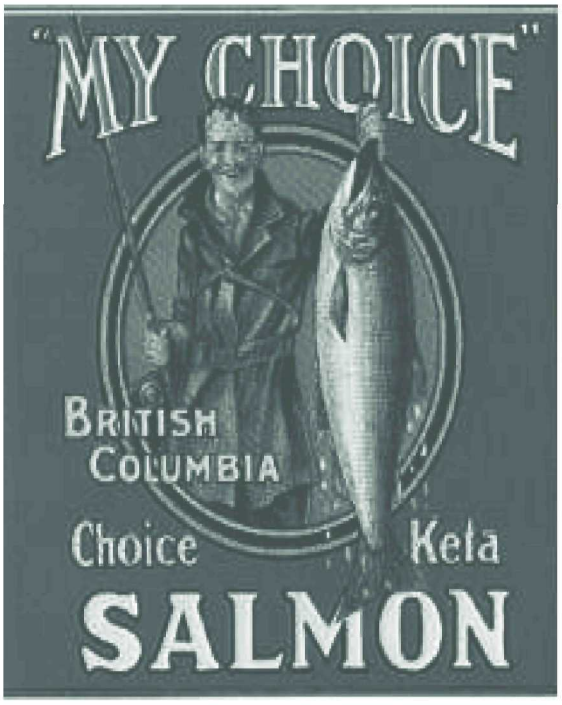
WITNESS our hands this 9th day of January, A.D. 1902
(The four signatures are here affixed)

Smith continued to invent machines for fish canning. He did develop an automatic weighing machine, which proved more complicated than he anticipated and took time to perfect, finally being produced after his death with the help of E.H. Waugh. It proved its worth and was used extensively for salmon, meat, fruit and vegetable canning.

By 1909, Smith had money and his butcher machines were in canneries all along the coast. To his delight, the Iron Chink was to be shown at the Yukon Alaska Seattle Fair. Determined not to miss any part of this exhibit, Smith took his sister with him for the opening on June 1, 1909. They spent two happy days there. Driving home, his car hit a rock and burst into flames. In saving his sister, Smith was badly burned and died two days later.

An extensive collection of Smith's original drawings is stored at the Seattle Museum of History and Industry.

The company Smith started continues to make marine hardware and salmon processing equipment, doing business as Smith Berger Marine Inc. at 7915 10th Avenue South, Seattle WA. •



Token History

Fernridge Lumber Company, Limited of New Westminster, B.C.

Ronald Greene

The Fernridge Lumber Company, Limited was formed in July 1909 to take over the operations of Charles William Tait and Clarence Hunter DeBeck who were carrying on business as the Dominion Shingle & Lumber Manufacturing Company. Dominion had a shingle mill in Surrey, buildings at Brownsville, a sawmill at Fern Ridge, and a shingle mill at Aldergrove.[1] There was also a new mill planned for Langley. In addition to Tait and DeBeck, there were several other subscribers in Fernridge; Edward A. Grant, J. Stilwell Clute, George Martin, Thomas S. Annandale,[2] and one name which was undecipherable. All were reported as "of New Westminster." Tait remained the majority shareholder, but later T. F. and W.T. Paterson became large shareholders, holding about one third of the shares between them.[3] E.K. "Ned" DeBeck, who was Clerk of the Legislature for many years, was a nephew of C.H. DeBeck.[4] He said that C.W. Tait was a son-in-law of C.H. DeBeck. Clarence DeBeck was one of twelve children, eight of whom had come to British Columbia with their parents, c. 1866-1867.

The Fern Ridge mill together with several million feet of lumber in the yard of the Fernridge Lumber Company, Limited was destroyed by fire in early August 1914. Had economic conditions been better the company might have overcome the loss and continued on after the fire, but construction had been cut back significantly during the depression that struck British Columbia in 1912 and the start of World War I had further complicated the situation. The financial statement of November 30th, 1914 showed a deficit of $113, 155.92.[5] On December 29, 1914, the company made an assignment for creditors. The assignee reported to the Registrar that all his "efforts had been centred in getting the various mills free from the creditors, and this is being accomplished by leasing the properties, and paying the rentals to the preferred creditors. We also have the Aldergrove mill free, and trust to have the Rosedale one free within the next few months."[6]

An itinerant traveller who ran ads in small towns buying old gold, jewellery and coins, Nick Lammle, acquired a match box full of the time checks, some twenty or so, about 1968 from an former logger whose name he did not disclose. The logger also had a $1.00 token. Mr. Lammle later interviewed J.L. Vaughan, son of an original homesteader in the Fern Ridge area.[7] Mr. Vaughan told him that their original homestead was contracted out to the lumber company to take the timber and the mill was built on a creek behind their home, on what later became 24th Avenue. The company records include a number of loans from the Bank of Montreal to pay for contracts in which the company purchased all the marketable timber on specific properties.

Mr. Vaughan recalled the immense heat from the fire. The family lost their home and barn in the fire. He said that there had been other denominations of tokens, but all that was found after the fire had destroyed the mill was a ball of molten aluminum. The brass time checks that we have seen show evidence of having been through a fire. No tokens of other denominations have turned up in the intervening thirty-six years. The obverse of the $1.00 token illustrated has been countermarked with a letter "N" for reasons unknown to the writer.

The company time checks are labeled "Jap," "Hindu," and the repugnant "Chink". The time check for the white employees was not identified as such. The open racial discrimination shown by the time checks does not meet current sensitivities, but was the prevailing situation a century ago. There were many biases against Asian workers. Another company, the Fraser River Lumber Company (Fraser Mills) brought out French Canadians to work at their mill. The French Canadians were reported as "active, steady and of good habits. ... The manager of this company said recently, 'Our experience with Asiatic labor has been far from satisfactory. As individuals, men of those races can not perform their work as efficiently as a white man. Recently we hired twenty-six Greeks at $2 a day. This is double the wage paid Hindus,[8] but they do twice as much work.'"[9] The

1 Registrar of Companies, GR1438, QE2529 (1897) microfilm B4430, Archives of British Columbia. The file includes the agreement between the company, Fernridge Lumber Company, Limited, and Tait and DeBeck to take over the Dominion Shingle & Lumber Manufacturing Company. The Surrey mill was located on Section 22, block 5, North Range

2 Together with shingles, bolts, logs, lumber machinery, tools, timber lease and agreements, etc., buildings at Brownsville, a sawmill at Fernridge [sic] also with shingles, bolts, logs, lumber, machinery, tools, etc., and an agreement with Wm J. Malcolm for a new mill to be erected on the North West quarter of section 14 in the Township of Langley. According to the 1910 British Columbia Directory, Fern Ridge was a post office and station on the Great Northern Railway in the municipality of Langley, 2 miles from Hazelmere, and eight miles from White Rock. Brownsville had been renamed "South Westminster" and was in Surrey across the Fraser River from New Westminster. Aldergrove was 23 miles east of New Westminster and eight miles west of Abbotsford.

3 Annandale was a prominent grocer in New Westminster and mayor from 1923 to 1926. (per Dr. Patricia Roy)

4 QE2529, folio 85, dated 1916 Interview with E.K. DeBeck, April 7, 1969.

5 QE2529, folio 86

6 QE2529, folio 92

7 Mr. Lammle wrote a long letter to Roger Newberry, to whom he provided a couple of sets of the employee or time checks. Roger passed the letter to me.

8 The people from India were generally called Hindus (or Hindoos) at the time, although they were most likely to be Sikhs

9 *Moyie Leader*, May 15, 1909, p. 1

10 The Chinese originally were brought into the country to build the railway because they would work for lower wages. Discarded when the railway was completed they were willing and had to work at a lower wage than whites in order to survive. They and other Asians were in a Catch 22 position. The whites complained about their inability to speak English, but wouldn't let them or their children attend school to learn the language. The white unions complained about them working for lower wages but wouldn't let them into the unions.

companies that provided housing to their workmen always kept the racial groups housed separately.

According to Lammle's source (who was not specified, it could have been either Vaughan or the unnamed logger) the time checks were handed to the workers in the morning. The checks were pierced so that they could be worn on a string around the neck. Each night they were turned in and the worker was credited with his day's wages. The source stated 75 cents was the day's wage, which presumably was for the Asian labourers. Also, if a time check did not get turned in the company assumed that the workman had met with an accident or had a problem and they would search for the him. The Asians (Chinese, Japanese or "Hindus", i.e. East Indians) were not allowed to work around the machinery in the mill.[10] The loggers were mostly Swedes and Finns and they would not work with the Asians. Thus the Asians were restricted to piling lumber, building roads and railway lines, working on the log boom or feeding the mill with logs. They were also paid in the aluminum tokens which would be only good in trade at the company store. This was a practice common in the United States, but rare in British Columbia as it was prone to abuse, workmen being charged higher prices and kept in debt to the company.

These time checks are uniface, incuse and very dark from the effects of fire. Consequently they do not scan or photograph very well. Rubbings (as above) provide the best images. The $1.00 token is aluminum, 39 mm in diameter. •

The Moti Prize

Local History Writng Competion for Elementary Students

The winner of this year's Moti prize is **Samantha Hansen** of Philip Sheffield, in Abbotsford. Thanks to Mr D.J. Langton the Grade 5/6 teacher for submitting Samantha's story.

The Candy Bar Protest of 1947

On May 1st, 1947, a protest was held in Abbotsford, British Columbia because chocolate bar prices were raised from five cents to eight cents. Two girls in grade seven protested because of the three cent difference in the price. It may not seem like a lot of money, but if it happened today it would be like raising a chocolate bar price to a dollar. Children were very angry because most of them only received five cents for an allowance, and now chocolate bars were eight cents a bar.

The protest wasn't large at first, there was only two girls involved. They wanted more people to join the protest, so they walked past Philip Sheffield to Abby Elementary and tried to get more children to join in. Children still didn't join in, so the grade seven girls bribed the younger children by telling them that the people would give them free candy if they protested. All the younger children got excited about that and joined the protest.

As they were protesting, a news reporter told them that he was going to write about their protest in the newspaper. The protesters smiled proudly and held up their signs high. The news reporter took their picture for the newspaper.

Later, police arrived and made all the children go home. Most of them got in trouble. They did not achieve what they were protesting for. Six days after the protest the reporter wrote a very negative report.

The Reporter's Views

The protest seemed productive to some people, but others thought that it was a waste of time. These cynics believed children should not be able to protest. That's what a news reporter who wrote for the Sumas, Mission and Abbotsford newspaper thought. He covered only the negative things that the protesters did. The reporter stated:

The protest was very disrespectful because the children wrote on theatre walls about not buying eight cent bars, protester put posters on a house and went into a store with signs that said WE WANT 5 CENT CHOCOLATE or DON'T BE A SUCKER AND BUY 8 CENT CHOCOLATE.

The reporter went on to say the store owner kept telling the children to leave over and over again. They refused and stood their ground. The store owner called the police. They told the protester to leave, eventually everyone left. The two high school students were accused of setting a terrible example for the younger children.

My Views

Lots of adults said the protest was good, others thought it was bad. The news reporter said negative things about the protest and added a couple of lies! I believe that some girls were bored so that they started a protest and lied to convince others to join the protest. (That wasn't the right thing to do.) A couple of girls, (The girls who started the protest) wrote messages on theatre walls about not buying eight cent chocolate bars. The same girls made a poster for their protest and put it on a house. After a while, all the children went into a corner store and started protesting.

Next, a news reporter came and told them that they were going to be in the newspaper! All the children got really excited. They smiled and held their signs high in the air when the photo for the newspaper was taken!

The store owner didn't want protesters in his store, so he told the children protesting to leave. The children stood their ground, so the store owner called the police. The police found out about other things they did (the poster on the house and writing on theatre walls) and they got in trouble for that. The first time the police told them to leave, a couple of children did, but most of the protesters stayed. Eventually though everyone left. They all got in trouble.

I think they should have been given the three cent decrease, they only didn't because they were children. They have rights too, correct?

Conclusion

This history was to inform you of a chocolate bar protest which happened in Abbotsford, BC. Students from Philip Sheffield and Abbotsford Elementary joined forces in 1947 to protest a three cent rise in the price of chocolate bars. I examined the true story of the protest, covered the reporter's views, and ended with what I thought really happened. It was pretty neat that in 1947 there was a chocolate bar protest that children created (not adults).

It is my opinion that the children have a right to have any type of protest they want. They may have gone too far on what they did, but the reporter criticized them too much. •

Moti our mascot c.1920s
Editor's collection

This is the first of our new annual competition for elementary students writing on local history.

The rules are simple: the competition is open to elementary school students in BC; the submissions must be on local history; the editor of this journal is the judge; entries must be submitted by May 1st of each year; and the winner may be published in British Columbia History.

The prize will be small - $50 to the winner and a subscription to BC History for the school library.

Book Reviews

Books for review and book reviews should be sent to:
Anne Yandle, Book Review Editor BC Historical News,
3450 West 20th Avenue, Vancouver BC V6S 1E4

Deadly Innocent; Tragedy on the Trail to Gold.
Bill Gallaher, Victoria, TouchWood Editions, 2004. 231 p. $18.95 paperback.

In a further exploration of his increasingly effective 'creative non-fiction' technique, Bill Gallaher transports us once again back to 1862, the year that was such a nexus in British Columbia's history.

From contemporary newspaper accounts and other historic sources Gallaher has drawn one of the grimmest and most bizarre occurrences of the great goldrush trek to the Cariboo. Deadly Innocent recounts the fate of the Rennie brothers, three optimistic young Ontario city dwellers who set out, with little wilderness experience, to find the B.C. goldfields and seek their fortunes there.

From the opening pages, the characters spring quickly and vividly to life: the Rennies themselves, three likeable innocents, the more mature but quite ambivalent John Helstone and the irrepressible priest Father Albert Lacombe. During the beginning phase of the brothers' expedition we are given a fascinating look at the personality and style of Lacombe, a major player in the history of the Canadian west. When Lacombe's route diverges from theirs, however, the Rennies begin repeatedly to encounter the consequences of their own lack of wilderness experience.

As in the author's previous books, we gain an almost virtual-reality view (and sound and smell) of the rough little pockets of 'civilization' in which travellers found infrequent shelter during the long gruelling haul across the emptiness of mid-nineteenth-century North America. Especially interesting is the crucial incident that takes place at Fort George, the Hudson's Bay Company post that was managed, in the winter of 1862-63, by Thomas Charles. Arriving there, starved, exhausted and frostbitten, two of the Rennie brothers meet with a less than hospitable welcome in the tautly-run, meagrely stocked fort. Gallaher derives his harsh depiction of this post from an 1863 Victoria British Colonist article that described Thomas Charles' treatment of the Rennie survivors as "a gross case of inhumanity".

The mounting toll of hardships that befall the adventurers is grim enough. But, as early as on page 2, Gallaher quotes a foreshadowing voice - at first we are not sure of this character's identity - that alerts us to expect a climax far stranger and more grisly than mere privation or mishap. Faced with disastrously severe winter conditions in the B.C. mountains, the expedition's morale plummets and dangerous weaknesses of character begin to reveal themselves. At critical moments during his narrative of these events, Gallaher shifts again briefly to the foreshadowing voice, someone speaking at the very end of the tale, who seems to be bracing us for something really dreadful at the end.

When I first acquired a copy of Deadly Innocent late one evening I decided to read just a page or two, before sleeping. At 2.00 a.m. I was still sitting bolt upright, biting my fingernails as the book drew me inexorably toward its shocking twist-ending. And unlike a thriller by, say, Ruth Rendell, this story is factual. Its startling conclusion, Gallaher, informs us, is a matter of record in the Victoria newspapers of the day.

Gallaher's approach to the rediscovery of British Columbia's past is wonderfully helpful. I find myself asking: why did teachers in my high school and college years fail to make B.C. history as compelling as this?

***Philip Teece**, a librarian retired from the Greater Victoria Public Library, is an eclectic reader when he is not idling*

Gold Rush Orphan.
Sandy Frances Duncan. Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2004. 278 p. $10.95 paperback.

Canadians have a fascinating history full of captivating rogues and heroes, and their tales need telling. Sandy Frances Duncan does just that in her novel, Gold Rush Orphan. Using her grandfather's journal as its basis, Duncan relates the ordeal of an orphan boy's 1898 trek to the Klondike. Her grandfather chronicled such information as dates, supplies, weather conditions, modes of travel, and misfortunes. Duncan creatively weaves that information into a fictionalized tale that vividly conveys the hardships and sufferings endured by those making their way to the goldfields. In the same way, she incorporates people and situations of the era into the novel. For example, the brutality and lawlessness of Skagway come to life through Duncan's portrayals of real-life characters such as Soapy Smith, whose thugs ran the town. (A small "Notes" section at the end of the book provides further facts and explanations pertinent to the story.)

Told through the eyes of fourteen-year-old Jeremy Britain, Duncan presents a unique view of this historic quest for bullion, especially the sufferings of the sled dogs and pack horses. This story also includes an often overlooked aspect of early life in Canada, the plight of homeless children. Raised in a Victoria orphanage until age eleven, Jeremy then apprentices with a farmer who often beats him. After three years of abuse, he runs away to Vancouver. There he begs for money and often sleeps, cold and hungry, on Carrall Street. Like other down and outers, Jeremy dreams that going to the Klondike will make him rich. While he does bring back some gold, Jeremy's real wealth is in the friendships he makes, in the maturity, confidence and self-esteem that he acquires, and in the realization of a career: he plans to study new mining technologies such as "hydraulicking."

Young readers will close this engrossing novel having learned much about the day-to-day rigours of the gold rush and Canadian life in the late 1800s.

***Sheryl Salloum**, a Vancouver writer, is a member of the Vancouver Historical Society.*

Healing in the Wilderness; a history of the United Church Mission Hospitals.
Bob Burroughs. Madeira Park, Harbour Publishing, 2004. 240 p., illus. $26.95 paperback.

This is a well researched factual history of the mission hospitals of the United Church of Canada, its forerunner churches and of the doctors and nurses who staffed the hospitals. People from many walks of

life and from other religious denominations should welcome this objective record of medical practice from frontier days to the present. The emphasis is on the western missions. The author brings under-standing and knowledge to this account. For years he was captain and minister of a BC coastal mission boat and has served urban and rural congregations. He has a doctorate from University of Toronto's Victoria College.

Generous use of photographs effectively complements the text. Gender balance is fair, with nursing and nurses well recognized.

With considerable justification in recent years, media coverage has emphasized child abuse and hypocrisy in the missions, but it was prevalent in society too. The media should also tell the record of dedication and compassion. My own associations with the church missions from childhood into adulthood are peripheral and desultory. After my reading I wondered if the media and the general public of today would respond to the book and understand the nature of the frontier or "wilderness" environment. Bob Burroughs records with fine objectivity cases of compassion and gentleness of mission staff; I could add many more. There was understanding of the "sub-culture" of cannery workers, the native women, the Chinese labour, the Japanese fishers, railway men and pioneering farmers. There was not just the immediacy of medical treatment, but trained doctors and nurses who adapted astonishingly well to new circumstances - learning to single sail Columbia River type fishing boats, visiting salmon canneries, making rounds of the sometime squalid housing rows, learning to throw diamond and squaw hitches on pack horses.

I recall how well doctors and nurses told us children, mixed native and Caucasian, homilies and stories in mixtures of the Chinook trade language, sign language, native and English words - not just biblical stories but stories about our immediate environment.

I know Bob Burroughs' book will not be on the New York Times best seller list, but I can wish that many will read and appreciate the important role played by church missions and staffs in the history of Canada and British Columbia.

***Dr V.C. Brink**, Professor Emeritus, UBC's Plant Science Deparemt, spent two summers many years ago, working with Dr Darby of Bella Bella.*

Maria Mahoi of the Islands. *Jean Barman. Vancouver, New Star Books/Transmontanus 13, 2004. 104 p., illus. $16 paperback.*

In her opening scene, the author stands in an orchard and munches an apple - an ordinary sort of British Columbia scene. But the orchard was planted nearly a century ago by Maria Mahoi, the subject of Barman's book and the culmination of a meandering trail of research.

Maria's islands were Hawaii, where her father was born; Vancouver Island, where he came to work in the fur trade, and where Maria was born, the daughter of this man and an Aboriginal woman; Pasley Island, where she went with her first husband, Abel Douglas, a Scots seaman and whaler; Saltspring Island, where she settled first with Douglas, and then with her second partner George Fisher; and Russell Island, which was her inheritance and her legacy to her thirteen children.

A question from Maria's great-grandson, Mel Couvelier, a provincial cabinet minister, sent Barman into the story of Maria and her circle, an ordinary story with an ordinary number of romances, murders, disappearances and endeavours. Barman often uses the words "ordinary" and "everyday" to describe Maria, but by the time she finishes the story, we know there is no such being as an "ordinary woman." While Barman is a masterly story teller and painter of vignettes (such as Maria manoeuvring her little sailboat), she is also a social historian adept at drawing out the tangled threads of our past. And she underscores the irony that, in order to be "respectable", Maria hid the Aboriginal roots which her great-grandson would set out to retrieve.

***Phyllis Reeve** lives on the shore of the Bay named for John Silva, who jumped ship with Portuguese Joe Silvey, who was in partnership with Maria and Abel Douglas in the whaling business, and who is the subject of another recent book by Jean Barman.*

No Ordinary Mike; Michael Smith, Nobel Laureate.

Eric Damer and Caroline Astell. Vancouver, Ronsdale Press, 2004. 264 p., illus. $24.95 paperback.

Michael Smith was awarded the 1993 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his fundamental contributions to the establishment of oligonucleotide-based site-directed mutagenesis and its development for protein studies - or, in the words of UBC President Martha C. Piper, "for his research into the mysteries of the gene".

The University of British Columbia boasts several Nobel laureates among its alumni - Mundell in Economics, Brockhouse in Physics - but these left Vancouver after graduation and went elsewhere to do their research. Smith's own mentor, Har Gobind Khorana, moved to Wisconsin in 1961 and won the Nobel in Medicine in 1968. Smith seems to be the first to have based his career at UBC, not considered an "elite institution" in the rarefied atmosphere of the Nobel community. This book is not "The Double Helix"; neither an adrenalin-charged account of the race for the Prize, nor a penetrating personal biography, although it does include as much as we need to know about Smith's private life. It is the story of how a poor but charming young genius came from northern England to western Canada, where he made himself into a world-class scientist, and swept or dragged, his university along with him.

Smith dedicated himself to "pure" science, driven by the curiosity of the scientist and limited only by the ultimately possible, not by the lesser constraints of the practical, the affordable or even the ethical. From the Fisheries Research Board laboratory to the Medical Research Council, from university to government and industry, he fought for the resources he required. He had to compete for funding with the needs of clinical health care, and while he always hoped his findings might facilitate cancer studies and other applied research, and was more than generous in sharing with and contributing to such inquiry, his basic motivation derived from his own questions.

He had necessarily to confront the

dilemmas of our time. When his longtime colleague David Suzuki warned about the spectre of human genotype manipulation and the abuse of biotechnology for private profit, Smith "recognised these concerns but was committed to the research and application of the new science".

Historian Eric Damer is interested in the ways in which university research and education influence the community, and from this perspective explores Smith's manipulation of academic politics and the directions in which he turned his attention after the Nobel award. His interactions with students and colleagues, are represented by co-author, Caroline Astell, who worked with Michael Smith for thirty-five years, as a doctoral student and then as a research colleague, and after her retirement from UBC joined the Genomic Sciences Centre at the B.C. Cancer Agency. The centre was co-founded in 1999 by Smith and Victor Ling as a tool for cancer research.

The keyword is "tool". Michael Smith's achievement, for which he received the highest recognition, is a tool, a methodology, a way for scientists to do things which they could not do before. Astell feels that Smith, who died in 2000 at the age of 68, would have been proud to know that in 2003 "his" centre was "the first to report the complete DNA sequence of the SARS coronavirus, allowing scientists around the world to begin devising diagnostic tests, methods to control the virus, and even a vaccine."

***Phyllis Reeve** worries a lot about biotechnology.*

Old Langford; An Illustrated History, 1850 to 1950.

Maureen Duffus. Victoria, Town and Gown, 2003. 191 p., illus., maps. $29.95 paperback. (Available from M aureen Duffus, 139 Atkins Road, Victoria, BC V9B 4W9)

Few would argue that local histories are important and useful, and that this is especially true in those instances where the author has a long and personal association with their subject. In that circumstance, a local history can both impart information and create interest, but can also, and this is significant, leave the reader with a feeling that they both know and understand the subject in a way that is almost 'comfortable and familiar': that is rarer than one might think. Maureen Duffus, an experienced researcher and writer/editor of three Victoria area histories, has accomplished this in *Old Langford*

Stories of individual families provide a solid base for a community history and the obvious starting point in this case is that of the Edward Edwards Langford family which arrived in the colony a mere eight years after the building of Fort Victoria. Langford travelled to the farthest point in the 'empire' to assume his duties as bailiff, or manager, of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company farm – a Hudson's Bay Company subsidiary.

The first section of the book includes an account of Langford's time at the farm he called "Colwood", and incorporates a description of what would today be termed `life style' over the succeeding decade while the family was in residence. Other families – including the author's who were early residents – are part of the record.

Important events are included, such as the only local gold discovery at a spot, optimistically termed Goldstream; although quantities found were not significant. Nearby Skirt Mountain later promised hope of other mining activity, but it too didn't quite 'pan' out. As is the case today Goldstream was popular and there was enough business to justify the construction of a hotel. Day-trippers from Victoria dramatically increased the number of visitors with the completion of the E & N – Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway..

The story of the region's roads provides a thread that effectively connects Langford proper to other locations within that area: Happy Valley, Florence Lake and Langford Lake. Langford was and is a key feature of the regional transportation picture of Southern Vancouver Island. One example is the transportation corridor over the Malahat. Extending a road and later, the highway, north, wasn't an easy task due to topography. The history of the Malahat drive is interesting, especially so because, at one point, the preferred route north was west of the mountains from Sooke to Shawnigan. Most surveyors felt that the present path of the Island highway would be impossible and one, A.R. House, in 1877, suggested that "no suitable line" upon which to build a wagon road could be found. He, like others proved to be incorrect.

All too often, the effect of two World Wars and the Great Depression on residents may not be included in a local history. In this case, in 'Langford', they are. Updating the story to the present in New Langford, 150 years later is also a good feature, and really serves to highlight the changes.

Maps, photos, material from interviews and well-chosen excerpts from primary sources such as diaries and journals give the narrative life and immediacy.

***Dave Parker** is Municipal Archivist of Esquimalt*

The Old Red Shirt; Pioneer Poets of British Columbia.

Yvonne Mearns Klan. Vancouver: New Star Books, 2004. 109 p; illus. $16.00 paperback.

Reading *The Old Red Shirt: Pioneer Poets of British Columbia* is like sitting on the back stoop listening to an old timer recount his most memorable experiences. Humour, hardship, pathos, awe, and frustration are some of the emotions conveyed in writings that portray life in the early days of this province. Selected from previously published and long forgotten creators, these poems come from those who toiled to earn a living in a rugged land: fur traders, loggers, miners, sealers, fishers, and farmers, to name a few. As one writer noted, they were "just home-folks, / Canadian pioneers! / They didn't know about Freud. / When they had a complex, they got rid/of it. / They didn't swing on the tail of a / theory".

Yvonne Mearns Klan does swing on the theory that these poems are a rich historical resource. While doing research over the years, Klan began to take note of these gems. Starting with traditional aboriginal and voyageur songs, she has strung them together with detailed background information and references. The

result is a spirited and insightful glimpse into the ordinary lives and concerns of the early inhabitants of BC. A number of pertinent photographs and illustrations accompany the writings.

Klan herself is also a 'pioneer': not only has she salvaged these forgotten works and their personal and revealing reflections on BC history, but she has reminded us that poetry was once an important aspect of everyday life. Doggerel or not, anyone could and did write poetry to amuse, comment on, or survive difficult days. This book revives those lost voices and allows the reader to share their "memories / Of dreaming moments". This unique book has a place on every home and school bookshelf in BC.

Sheryl Salloum
Sadly, Yvonne Klan died last October, a few months after her book was published: AY. (See page 19 for further information on Yvonne)

The Remarkable World of Frances Barkley. *Beth Hill and Cathy Converse. Victoria, TouchWood Editions/ Heritage Group, 2003, 224 p., illus., map. $18.95 paperback.*

In 1836 Frances Barkley decided to write her memoirs in a small notebook. While not yet twenty she had circum-navigated the world and she remembered magical names: Mauritius, Kamchatka, Sooloo Islands, Wickaninnish Sound. As the wife of Captain Charles William Barkley, master of a large trading ship bound for the Northwest Coast of North America, she had occupied the best quarters on board and had been treated with great respect at all ports of call. She remembered the tragedies, too: the death of her baby girl at sea, her husband defrauded of part of his interest in the trading venture and his charts and maps claimed by the unscrupulous Captain John Meares. Overall the tenor of her story was happy and thankful for a life well lived with a beloved husband and children. Women especially will identify with the feisty seventeen - year old bride who preferred life at sea to a lengthy vigil on shore.

Beth Hill developed these memoirs into the *Remarkable World of Frances Barkley* and it was published in 1978 just as BC women's history began to flourish. Commencing with Frances' notebook, discovered by accident at the British Columbia Archives, she pieced together the history of the two voyages made by the Barkleys to North America between 1786 and 1794. Subsequent research took Beth and her husband to England where she interviewed relatives and sorted out family trees, always hoping that the original diary on which Frances based her memoirs would turn up. Unfortunately, it has remained elusive to this day.

Twenty-five years after the first publication, TouchWood Editions has reissued the book with editing and additional material on marine history by Cathy Converse. Cathy made her contribution to B.C. women's history in 1980 by co-editing *In Her Own Right: Selected Essays on Women's History*. And so we have two pioneers in BC women's history presenting the story of the first white woman to set foot on British Columbia's shores.

Beth Hill faced life with the same bravery and curiosity as Frances Barkley and her cheerful encouragement for novice BC historians will always be remembered This reprint, with added material by Cathy Converse, is a wonderful reminder of another remarkable woman.

***Marie Elliott** has edited the journal of another woman - Winifred Grey; a gentlewoman's remembrances of life in England and the Gulf Islands of B.C., 1871-1910.*

Rivers of Change; Trailing the waterways of Lewis and Clark.
Tom Mullen, Malibu, Calif., Roundwood Press, 2004. 348 p., illus. $25.95 US hard cover. (Available from Roundwood Press, PO Box 6533, Malibu, Calif. 90264)

If you're looking for a book about Lewis and Clark or an elegantly-written travel journal, keep looking. If you want a well-rounded account of river management, check out this book.

After working for several years as an international water resources consultant, the author eased back into North American life by travelling along the Missouri, Yellowstone, and Columbia rivers, chatting up locals about their experiences living and working along these water systems. Although he roughly covers the route travelled by Lewis and Clark, the explorers have a very small role in Mullen's narrative, raising the suspicion that the author invoked their names to sell books during the bicentennial celebration of their trip.

Nevertheless, once Mullen settles down to his task, he leads readers on a thought-provoking search for the answers to three questions: 1) how changing a river's course affects the lives of people who live along it, 2) how these changes affect wildlife, and 3) what stories best portray how rivers and attitudes change each other.

Most of the book deals with the Missouri and how river hazards and the meandering nature of the river led engineers to force it into one swift and narrow channel. This solution freed up farmland and made river traffic safer, but destroyed woodland, meadows, and wetlands and the wildlife that used these habitats. Mullen includes accounts of how various interest groups have worked to remedy the environmental and political consequences of controlling the river.

One major theme is how river management priorities reflect a nation's worldview at a particular time. The U.S. Pick-Sloan Flood Protection Project of 1946, for example, mirrored the public perception that "wild rivers were inherently destructive, foes to be attacked with the same steel resolve that pushed enemy leaders.....to sit and sign documents of surrender."

Most of the book is about the United States policy, however. There are only twelve pages of Canadian content. The photos aren't very good, and the book would have greatly benefited from a professional edit.

All that aside, this is a book that will provide readers with an insider's view of river history and management - and perhaps even inspire you to investigate the life and times of a river system near you.

***Susan Stacey** is a Richmond writer, co-author of* Salmonopolis, *1994.*

Sobering Dilemma; a History of Prohibition in British Columbia.
Vancouver, Ronsdale Press, 2004. 190 p., illus. $21.95 paperback.

Douglas Hamilton's intriguingly, yet perfectly entitled, *Sobering Dilemma* is about the fight to introduce the prohibition of alcohol into the Province of British Columbia in the early twentieth century. A strange but understandable fight it was, that winning of prohibition in the election 1916, but by election time in 1920 voters had realised that the fight had really been lost. The government solution was to start over again with "never ending plebiscites and referenda".

Well-organized, the book has ten chapters, the last one explaining the setting up in 1925 of a "New Kind of Bar", three short appendices, ten pages of footnotes, a few photographs, some statistics, a bibliography and an index plus a half-page note about the author who has knitted his story together with such dexterity that readers might almost feel the book to be too simple.

By placing two extremely important topics shoulder to shoulder in his first two chapters, he subtly indicates the basis of his title. The first, about the social and religious roots of the Prohibition movement crossing the whole of North America, tells how and why various branches of the movement quickly though not always easily took root in frontier British Columbia. Because of its early fur trade history and its later goldrush history, that frontier was presumed to be a place where saloons and brothels were still the centres of social action, and as such were important in disseminating all social and political thinking - pro and con. The second questions why in 1854 the governing group prohibited native Indians from drinking alcohol. Were, in fact, the Aboriginals genetically unable to handle liquor? Were there other reasons? Can 1854 really be seen as "a dress rehearsal" to which people paid little or no attention?

Since about the 1880s the population of the province had been doubling every ten years, people being lured there by the great flow of English investment money making boom towns of both Victoria and Vancouver. Mostly from "civilised" English and Scottish cities, these people did not appreciate being surrounded by brothels, saloons and growing factories; women in particular wanted a more moderate society, one more regulated by law than by frontier custom.

The coming of war in 1914 further increased social differences, but the next attempt at creating a government control of alcohol would not come until the election of 1916. By then the major difference in society was that an overwhelming number of Anglicans and Scottish Presbyterians opposed the absolute prohibition of liquor, as promoted by the Social Gospellers. The election of 1916 carried two referenda, one on votes for women, one on prohibition. Both passed. Here too, Hamilton covers his subject matter speedily and gracefully. Just as he had elsewhere pointed out that all voters were male, British subjects, and over the age of twenty-one.

But had the Government honestly forgotten about some votes yet to be counted, absentee votes from soldiers overseas who had also become used to another way of life, a brutal one perhaps, but one accepting that drinking could also be a life-saver and was, therefore, not necessarily a "demonic rite"? Many of those same soldiers had comrades who, in spite of being Indians, were no more genetically incapable of handling booze than were their white sidekicks. Hamilton sees this forgetting as an overturning of democracy, but this overturning was itself overturned when in a few years secret files of the British Columbia Police came to light and the daily bar gossip concerned scandal and corruption.

In an October 20, 1920 plebiscite, only 55,448 voters supported Prohibition, 92,095 did not - as a surprise to all, the newly enfranchised women had gone "wet". The same electorate in December of that same year gave Premier John Oliver the mandate to clean up the mess. He created the Liquor Control Board, perhaps the longest-lasting of any BC government creation. But other problems quickly developed, problems about liquor stores, imported beer, smugglers and coastal rum runners. However, in 1925 a new kind of bar appeared - The Beer Parlour - but it too was soon seen as being over-regulated.

As problem after problem arose and seemed to be solved, or at least faced, still more arose over the next ten, twenty or thirty years - closer to forty. But to Hamilton, "Prohibition" is dangerous, and he warns his readers to think carefully about possible future implications whenever anyone suggests "the prohibition" of anything. Even of drugs.

***Gordon Elliott** is Professor Emeritus, Simon Fraser University English Department*

The Tofino Kid; from India to this Wild West Coast.
Anthony Guppy. Nanaimo, The Author, 2000. 208 p., illus., map. $17.95 paperback. (Available from A.W. Guppy, 11-2465 Oriole Dr., Nanaimo, BC V9T 3P2

Although not quite a community history, this engaging anecdotal memoir provides a revealing glance back at Tofino in the 1920s and 30s. When the Guppy family arrived in 1921 aboard the old coastal steamer 'Maquinna', they found a settlement extremely different from the bustling, upscale tourist destination that is the Tofino of the twenty-first century. Expecting an inn or hotel of some sort, and finding "little sign of settlement to be seen..." but only "land, roughly cleared in places", the family sheltered in the derelict house abandoned by a previous settler.

Describing the life into which his pioneer family settled in Tofino, Anthony Guppy takes us back to an era of upcoast characters such as the local builder 'Haywire Bill', and community pioneer Virgil Evans who was said to be the first white child born on Vancouver Island's west coast - at Sooke in 1881. We meet also the several Japanese families who were a large part of the tiny coastal settlement in the 1920s. The author described an isolated life, utterly dependent upon boats, including the Guppy family's own troller, 'The Tofino Kid'. In the author's own fishing years, in the era before sockeye seining had begun, 'The Tofino Kid' was

sometimes theonly boat in sight, where today commercial fishing boats carpet the sea.

In Guppy's telling of the stories of Tofino's early families we encounter much good humour and some tragedy as well. One forgotten episode in that isolated community's past is worth remembering as a cautionary tale nowadays when the 'problem' of street people is being increasingly debated. The author reminds us that "Tofino was the site of a harsh depression-era social experiment, a B.C. Government 'relief camp' that was in reality a sort of dumping ground for the homeless unemployed.

Sixteen historic photographs and the author's evocative pen sketches provide an inntriguing glimpse of the embryonic Tofino's appearance early in the last century, while that coastal village was still accessible only by sea. The book's hauntingly nostalgic reminiscences comprise a valuable record.

***Philip Teece**, for several years after his retirement as librarian at the Greater Victoria Public Library, Philip lived in an isolated upcoast community.*

Wires in the Wilderness. The Story of the Yukon Telegraph.

Bill Miller, Surrey, Heritage House, 2004. 336 p., illus., maps. $19.95 paperback.

The Yukon Telegraph, built "to connect the gold fields of the Yukon with southern Canada" and "to provide an essential public service for the police and other government officials, and for the people of the Yukon" has survived in the public memory of Northern British Columbia and the Yukon. It has acquired, as the author of Wires... points out, "an identity, a mythology, and a romantic image." That memory of the telegraph has, in large part been kept alive by the remnants of the telegraph trail which residents and visitors to B.C.'s north occasionally chance upon, and possibly more because the portion of the line between Quesnel and Atlin traversed a region lacking in a north-south transportation link. Miller notes that his own interest and "the genesis of this book dates to my finding remnants of the old Yukon Telegraph near my home in Atlin".

In *Wires in the Wilderness*, Miller (and Heritage House) have provided a welcome general history of the construction and the operation of the line and, since its abandonment in the 1930s and '40s, of the trail which accompanied the telegraph wire. The trail, of course, is now taking on its own life as a recreational venue.

Miller laments, justifiably, the lack of what he calls a "people's history" of the construction of the line: "Of the hundreds of men who worked on the (construction) project, from the axemen and wire stringers to the wranglers and foremen, not a single voice has been located to relate their experiences". For the story of the maintenance and operation of the line, we are more fortunate - possibly the linemen had more time, and inclination, to record their experiences. In particular, Guy Lawrence's book, *Forty Years on the Yukon Telegraph*, reviewed in the *British Columbia Historical News*, Spring, 1991, is a vivid personal account of life on the telegraph, and this history and Lawrence's complement each other.

The bibliography in *Wires...* will be of great value to anyone interested in searching out more about the telegraph. I suggest Imbert Orchard's CBC interview of Guy Lawrence, on tape, held in the Provincial Archives, might profitably have been included. There are numerous photographs and a very adequate index.

***George Newell** has spent several summers in Northern British Columbia.*

Wish You Were Here; Life on Vancouver Island in Historical Postcards.

Peter Grant, Victoria, TouchWood Editions, 2002. 179 p., illus. $24.95 paperback.

What a book for a lazy or rainy afternoon here on the west coast. Short on text and long on images, the photographic postcards in Peter Grant's Wish You Were Here are rich and thought provoking; potentially of interest to both the local buff and the academic scholar. Some examples: a 1902 photo of the recently completed Bamfield Cable Station which linked western North America, via 4,000 miles of underwater telegraph cable, to Fiji, New Zealand and Australia; a crew hard at work flensing a humpback whale at Page's (now Piper's) Lagoon at Nanaimo in 1908; the construction of Hatley Castle for James Dunsmuir at Colwood in 1909; armed militia marching in formation past the United Mine Workers of America office at Ladysmith in 1913; a ladies' egg-and-spoon race during the Victoria Day celebrations at Ucluelet in 1911; a panoramic picture of the Anglican Mission, the sawmill and the cannery at Alert Bay, taken by the local constable in 1914; a particularly haunting - perhaps fittingly undated - photo of a displaced First Nations man, alone and weary, on a bench in Victoria's Gorge park. What else could one call these photos but windows into the social history of Vancouver Island from 1900 to about 1914?

The critical reader will have questions regarding provenance. Who took these pictures and why? As postcards, what message did they carry and to whom? Were they, individually, components within larger sets of pictures? How did they come into the possession of those who now hold them? Why have they been preserved?

That said, these postcards are far more than mere historical trivia. Their very existence invokes many themes that historians confront daily. Indeed, Grant points out that, "the picture postcard emerged from the convergence of several social trends: mass travel; a cultural preoccupation with written communication; popular photography; cheap printing; public postal systems and steam powered transportation. For a time the postcard was as fresh and exciting a medium as digital imagery was in the 1990s".

The most effective history, academic or popular, compels readers to look further because they want to, not because they need to. In this Grant is successful; *Wish You Were Here* is the sort of book that stimulates an extra trip to the library for contextual information. Whether on the coffee table or in a university library this book is a welcome addition to the written history of Vancouver Island.

***Tim Percival** is a Graduate Student at the University of Victoria.*

Paddling to Where I Stand; Agnes Alfred, Qwiqwasutinuxw Noblewoman, as told to Martine J. Reid and Daisy Sewid-Smith.

Edited and annotated with an introduction by Martine J. Reid; translated by Daisy Sewid-Smith. Vancouver, UBC Press, 2004. 284 p. $85 hard cover; $29.95 paperback.

Three remarkable women created this book. Agnes Alfred (c.1890-1992), a matriarch of the people the rest of us have referred to as Kwakiutl, is the primary author. Her voice, personality and memories shape the text. Daisy Sewid-Smith, Agnes's granddaughter is a cultural historian and instructor in her mother tongue at the University of Victoria, She has written and lectured on a wide range of related topics. As she assists in the telling of her grandmother's story, she also tells her own.

Martine J. Reid is widely known as the wife of the artist Bill Reid, and, since his death, as Honorary Chair of the Bill Reid Foundation and promoter par excellence of West Coast Aboriginal art. It is time that we knew her also as a scholar and anthropologist, a student of Claude Levi-Strauss. This book marks the resumption of the work she engaged in upon her arrival from France as a graduate student in 1975, and set aside a few years later, as she says, "for personal and familial reasons." Like her co-authors, she began with a first language other than English. And like Daisy, while setting out the context for the conversations with Agnes, she reveals much about herself.

Reid and Sewid-Smith allow the chemistry of friendship and trust to show through the narrative. Reid writes, "The reader should know that, throughout these recordings, like a bright path through a dense woodland, there was always laughter." Sometimes the speaking stops because Agnes is laughing, often at herself or at perceived trans-cultural incongruities and improprieties.

Sometimes she falls silent with remembrance of past griefs. Agnes spoke almost no English and did not read or write. Her interlocutors have struggled to reproduce the conventional or ceremonial phrases and repetitions, and to preserve the flavour of her storytelling "as it moved back and forth from tribal history, to myths, and to personal reminiscences." Chapters "Myth Time" and "War, Conflict and Slavery" are followed by autobiography: "Childhood", "Becoming a Woman", "Marrying Moses Alfred", "Ceremonies and Rituals" and "Fragments of Recollections", giving way to eulogy and epilogue.

Throughout her long life, Agnes had many reasons to be angry. She has much to say about the potlatch and its suppression: "We were always having a bad time on account of our traditional doings." But even at the time she seems to have been too busy dealing with things to give way to anger or bitterness. At least once, she literally grabbed her husband Moses and dragged him from the Indian Agent's office before he could be interrogated. She could not always rescue him. At one wedding feast he was arrested "simply because he was getting apples out of the box and giving them to the guests. On that account he was taken to prison. He was kept in prison for two months." The term "heartbroken" occurs more than once in this section. She tells of informants who made lists of guests at feasts, and of people who avoided arrest by surrendering their masks to the federal authorities. And she remembers that her sister "really suffered" at Oakalla Prison because of the strip searches on arrival: "we don't do such things; we never, ever examine each other's bodies."

The White lawmakers and enforcers she found guilty mostly of massive ignorance, and she lived long enough to witness signs of improvement, for instance Ottawa's return of the confiscated masks and other paraphernalia, and the revision of the Indian Act to remove the prohibition of the potlatch. In 1978 she guided proceedings and danced at the potlatch celebrating Daisy's wedding; a transcription of that ceremony is given in an Appendix.

Besides this Appendix, we are aided by ample background documentation, including a section on orthography, which I make no attempt to apply in this review. In the preface, Reid and Sewid-Smith see the book as a contribution to "the fields of First Nations studies, women's studies, oral history and tradition, the anthropology of memory and cultural change and the sociology of aging" and as a chance to come to know Agnes Alfred and her culture "from within".

This is a very human scholarly work.

Phyllis Reeve

Surveying Northern British Columbia; a Photojournal of Frank Swannell.

Jay Sherwood. Prince George, Caitlin Press, 2004. 166 p., illus., maps. $29.95 paperback.

The operative terms in the title of this book are "Surveying" and " Photojournal" and they are succinctly exacting in their scope. Add in the term "Exploratory" and the list of such qualified professional surveyors shrinks from a cast of hundreds down to a mere two. Frank Swannell and G. B. Milligan were the only BC Government employed surveyors that had experience in triangulation surveys and were assigned to the Cassiar and Peace River Districts, respectively, to conduct "exploratory surveys" in large blocks of wilderness.

Frank Swannell with his attributes of photojournalism, physical stamina and companionable personality, was able to earn the respect and admiration of his crew and of the native peoples that he encountered during his seasonal fieldwork. The results of his work must have impressed his superiors in Victoria, as well; given their eagerness to continue employing his superlative talents to inventory the large blank areas in Provincial mapping coverage.

David C. Bazett, CLS, BCLS; in his fitting tribute on the back cover of this book: "This book is a tribute to a gifted land surveyor, Frank Swannell, who possessed a combination of the right skills and knowledge and was in the right place at the right time. He also had the foresight to record his exploits in journals and photographs. These photographs are not just snapshots, but were masterfully composed and technically excellent. They are all the more remarkable given the extreme conditions under which they were taken." The "right place at the right time" is especially insightful as the

Government in 1912, decided to return to triangulation surveys in northern BC after twelve years of block surveys in potentially agricultural flatlands of southern B.C. The remaining mountainous terrain lent itself to triangulation surveys from peak to peak and tying in lakes and rivers in the immediate vicinity.

The author Jay Sherwood, himself a former surveyor and outdoorsman, has done a masterful job of faithfully incorporating the archival journals into a spellbinding narrative. Travel adventures involved getting into the survey area in the spring with crew and supplies for six months; and getting the crew out again before freeze-up each fall. He has also added flesh and sinew to the bare bones of the daily work journal of the crew and the routine problems they encountered climbing mountains and traversing lake and river shorelines to tie in with other surveys. Many of the experiences were life threatening and many are treated with humor and camaraderie, but all serve to show that morale was usually high on Swannell's field crews.

The author is to be congratulated on a fine effort to bring archival journals and superlative photographs out of the misty past and into the light of modern day readership. The 1914 chapter on traversing the upper Finlay River ranks right beside R.M. Patterson's *Finlay's River* and Black's *Rocky Mountain Journal* as classics of dogged determination and perseverance on the headwaters of this remote wilderness stream. The finest compliment I can offer to Jay Sherwood is to beseech him to also do a companion volume on G.B. Milligan as well.

***W. Grant Hazelwood**, former Canada Land Inventory biologist, utilized journals in fieldwork for same areas. Lives in Terrace, B.C.*

First Invaders; the literary origins of British Columbia.
Alan Twigg. Vancouver, BC, Ronsdale Press, 2004. 229 p., illus., maps. $21.95 paperback.

A 1978 stamp commemorating the bicentennial of Captain James Cook''s arrival in Nootka Sound (Yuquot) was the first reference I recall hearing to the exploration of the British Columbia coast. It was also one of the last until I reached university and began studying Canadian literature.A similar experience prompted *B.C. Bookworld* publisher Alan Twigg to prepare *First Invaders: The Literary Origins of British Columbia*, a survey of the earliest visitors to British Columbia whose accounts of their experiences serve as literary antecedents to those who write about the province today.

Most of the material Twigg covers is familiar to scholars of early British Columbia. Rather than offer a formal study of early literature about BC, *First Invaders* introduces the general reader to the authors and their writing. Packed with references to the original documents and other sources, the book is a comprehensive overview of the writing that announced British Columbia to the world.

Twigg organizes *First Invaders* into seven sections with a chapter given to each of the sixty-five figures (all but one of them men) profiled. The first section presents the earliest accounts, fictional and otherwise, by Russian, Asian and European figures such as Vitus Bering, Hui Shen and Jonathan Swift. Subsequent sections survey contributions to the literature about BC by Spanish, French, English and US adventurers as well as mapmakers and traders.

The range of sources documented makes *First Invaders* a valuable resource by any measure, and Twigg''s style is readable. Don''t go looking for a single narrative, however; this is a book of biographies.

This said, the text could have benefitted from editing that would have streamlined and focused the several entries. Twigg trumpets such a weltering array of firsts and greatests that the actual significance of individual authors and their works is lost. By detailing how the various works contributed to a coherent understanding of what lay along North America''s Pacific Coast, Twigg would have given readers a better sense of the influence authors had on each other and the developing knowledge of the region. There are some notable exceptions in the first section, however, including the vignette of the use Cook made of *Purchas, His Pilgrimage* (1613). One could also take issue with the seven pages assigned to the fifth-century Chinese monk Hui Shen, who may not have even visited the BC coast. Yet the space accorded Hui Shen is testimony to Twigg''s passion for his subject and evidence of *First Invaders''* comprehensive scope.

***Peter Mitham** is a Vancouver writer.*

ALSO NOTED

Common & Contested Ground; a Human and Environmental History of the Northwestern Plains.
Theodore Binnema. University of Toronto Press, 2004. $27.95

Denny's Trek; A Mountie's Memoir of the March West.
Sir Cecil Denny. Surrey, Heritage House, 2004. $18.95

Mopsters & Rumrunners of Canada; Crossing the Line.
Gord Steinke. Edmonton, Folk Lore Publishing, 2004. $14.95

The Wild Edge; Clayoquot, Long Beach & Barkley Sound. *Jacqueline Windh. Madeira Park, Harbour Publishing, 2004. $34.95*

Website Forays

All Aboard!

Christoper Garrish

As we all know, to promote settlement of the Canadian West in the late 1800s, the CPR encouraged settlers from Europe, Great Britain and Eastern Canada through the offer of free land. A less common aspect of this story is the logistical challenge of actually moving so many people across our vast country.

The railways found they needed an economic way to transport these migrants and devised what came to be known as the "Colonist" car: a sleeper car that essentially comprised a former first class wooden car that was re-built at minimum cost for the sole purpose of people moving. These cars were characterised by their interior walls panelled in faux grained woods, oiled wood floor planks, wood slat seats, with gas lanterns providing the lighting and heated by coal stoves.

These cars did yeoman service for many years across the Prairies and British Columbia, even doubling as troop carriers during the World Wars before finally being taken out of service in the early 1950s.

Only two of the older wooden Colonist cars survive, with one can being found at the West Coast Railway Heritage Park in Squamish – and in cyberspace at www.wcra.org, the site of the West Coast Railway Association (WCRA). Interestingly, this Colonist car was moved to Vancouver Island for use on the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway in the late 1950s working on all the wrecks on the E & N until finding its way to Squamish.

According to their site, the origins of the WCRA go back as early as 1958 "when the steam engine was in its last days", with the Association being founded in 1961 as a registered non profit charity dedicated to the collection and preservation of British Columbia's Railway Heritage. The purpose of the WCRA is to preserve British Columbia's railway history through the collection, preservation and restoration of railway cars and related artefacts with the result being that they have now acquired the second largest collection of railway rolling stock and artefacts in Canada. Since 1994 the WRCA has also operated the Heritage Park in Squamish, and a web site devoted to their activities since approximately 1998.

The Association's collection consists of approximately sixty-five pieces of heritage railway rolling stock including the business car *British Columbia* (1890) and the aforementioned rare Canadian Pacific Colonist sleeping car (1905), and is representative of the major railways which have served British Columbia such as the Canadian Pacific, Canadian National, Pacific Great Eastern, BC Electric and Great Northern.

Royal Hudson 2860
Photo: www.wcra.org/royalhudson.html

The Association's Archive includes over 600 books and 2500 magazines, 3000 artefacts, and paper records, newspaper clipping files, and photographs that number near 6000 images – a number that is certain to almost double following the addition of the Peter Cox Archive of 6,745 photographs taken between 1920-1970. At present, there are no plans to make this collection available on the web site, however, there is other useful material available on-line.

One of the more interesting of these sections is the "Feature Articles" page, which may best be described as both a current events board as well as an oral history repository with Plowing Snow in the Coquihalla being an example of the latter:

"At 6 am we got two whistles, which meant it was time to start work so we started to move off the trestle. When just the plough, the locomotive and the first car were off the bridge, a snow slide came down on top of us. That was it. We couldn't move. The left side of the engine (the Fireman's side) was on the mountain side and with the window open I got buried in heavy snow. With my left arm stuck out of the window and my right hand on the Firing valve, I was stuck there and couldn't move. Gordon, the engineer, had to get the small sand scoop and use it to dig at the snow and get me out. With the help of the extra gang employees, the plough and locomotive also had to be shovelled out by hand - this took until about noon Tuesday."

Other interesting site features include an excellent Newsletter (although somewhat on the large size – I think the smallest one posted is about 4mb with a high of 10mb); and a number of interesting pieces on the Royal Hudson. It is also probably worth noting that the WCRA are the operators and custodians of the Royal Hudson #2860 (the only remaining operable Hudson) and are currently in the process of repairing the boiler and re-bricking the firebox of this engine.

So for all you train nuts out there, switch on over to www.wcra.org to see what is new and exciting in the field of heritage railways. •

Archives and Archivists

Doreen Stephens, Anglican Archives

Edited by Sylvia Stopforth,
Librarian and Archivist, Norma Marian Alloway Library,
Trinity Western University

Two Singles and a Double - -Archives in the Bedroom!

How did a nice church archives end up in the bedroom? This shocking turn of events came about as a result of the long awaited renovation of the Vancouver School of Theology's Iona Building, our home for the last fourteen years. The entire building had to be vacated and we joined many VST staff and faculty in what had formerly been one of their student residences, now to be our home until the renovations are complete.

The Archives of the Anglican Provincial Synod of B. C. & Yukon, which includes the records of the former Diocese of Cariboo, along with the Archives of the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster have been located somewhere within VST, or its predecessor colleges, since 1980 for the Diocese and 1956 for the Provincial Synod Archives. The archives have gone from building to building and from the basement to the top floor over the years. Along with the Archives of the United Church, B. C. Conference and VST itself, the big move of 2003 brought us back to VST's Chancellor Building, from which we had moved in 1989. However, this was the first time we had been assigned to bedrooms!

New and improved space for these archival repositories has been tantalizingly close on several previous occasions – only to end in dashed hopes. However, by June 2003, plans were definitely a go and we had to vacate our inadequate but familiar space. Those of you who have been involved in such a move will anticipate our pain!

Moving is never fun, but we had a few special challenges - - the archives' exit door was too narrow to allow most of our shelving to pass through it without unscrewing every little screw, only to have to screw many of them back together again in our bedrooms! There was no way to move our records or equipment that didn't involve going up or down at least one flight of stairs - and the elevator was only large enough to hold four (4) people – so an equally limited amount of non-human cargo .

All our document cases had to be loaded into big blue totes - - and each Archive had several destinations for different groupings of boxes and shelving! Our bedrooms were on the third floor and there was NO elevator at all, this time. But we and the moving company persevered and emerged relatively unscathed, but vowing never to be quite so "hands on" again!

Prior to the big move I had spent much time with little cut-outs of desks, shelving units, computers, tables and printers plus for anything else I felt I MUST have access to for the "duration". Each item to be moved, from document case to file cabinet, had to be labelled with its specific destination. Those items to be moved to the bedrooms had to have room numbers and floor plans in place, as well. It was with much relief that everything fit into its assigned space at the end of the last moving day!

All this is to explain our present situation and what you can expect if you want to access our records. While we are still open, it is particularly important that you phone first to ensure that the records you want are available. Our holdings include the official records of the Synod, its officers, committees and boards as well as records from individual parishes. Parish records contain registers of baptisms, confirmations, marriages and burials, as well as official records and historical material. Our reference library is not available but our many photographs and audio cassettes are. Parish registers are accessible via 35mm microfilm and our Canon reader-printer.

The Anglican Archives in Vancouver has one, part-time archivist and four excellent volunteers. Because of the faithful service of these volunteers archives researchers are able to get speedy, cheerful service in most cases. Currently, on-site researchers have to be prepared for a "cozy" work space close to the Archivist and the volunteers. We compensate by offering free coffee, cookies and interesting discussion during the morning coffee break!

Sometime in the late summer or Fall of this year we will be moving from the bedrooms into VST's by then vacated "old" Library space. The longer range plan is to have a new archives built behind the renovated Iona Building. In the meantime, I hope many of you will visit us this Fall when we will have our entire holdings in place. No more bedrooms!

For more information:
Anglican Archives,
6000 Iona Drive, Vancouver, B. C., V6T lL4

Archivist: Doreen Stephens
Phone: 604-822-9583 FAX: 604-822-9212
Email: anglican-archives@vst.edu

22nd Annual BCHF Book Competition

Books Submitted List

AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER
First Prize		
Nancy J. Turner	Plants of Haida Gwaii	Sono Nis
Second Prize		
Daniel Francis	Mayor Louis Taylor & the Rise of Vancouver	Arsenal Pulp Press
Third Prize		
Michael Dawson	Selling British Columbia	UBC Press
Honourable Mention		
Katherine Gordon	The Slocan	Sono Nis
Honourable Mention		
Martine J. Reid	Paddling to Where I Stand	UBC Press
Roger Stonebanks	Fighting for Dignity: The Ginger Goodwin Story	Canadian Committee On Labour History
Danda Humphrys	Building Victoria- Men, Myths & Mortar	Heritage House
F. Thirkell, B. Scullion	Breaking News- Images of G.A. Barrowclough	Heritage House
Frank Oberle	Finding Home- A War Child's Journey to Peace	Heritage House
Valerie Green	If More Walls Could Talk- Vanc. Is. Houses	Heritage House
Bill Gallaher	Deadly Innocent- Tragedy on the Trail to Gold	Heritage House
Sam McKinney	Sailing with Vancouver	Heritage House
R.G. Harvey	Head On	Heritage House
Jaon Rollins	Caves of the Cdn Rockies & Columbia Mountains	Heritage House
Sir Cecil Denny	Denny's Trek- A Mounties Memoir	Heritage House
Betty O'Keefe/I. MacDonald	Dr. Fred & the Spanish Lady	Heritage House
Bill Miller	Wires in the Wilderness- Story of Yukon Telegraph	Heritage House
Doug Cox	Ranching Now, Then and Way Back When	Skookum Publication
Chris Weicht	North by Northwest, An Aviation History of B.C.	Creekside Publication
Robert Hunter	The Greenpeace to Amchitka	Arsenal Pulp Press
Alan C. Elder, et al	A Modern Life- Art & Design in B.C., 1945-60	Arsenal Pulp Press
Grant Keddie	Songhees Pictorial	Royal B.C. Museum
Ken M. Campbell	Cannery Village: Company Town	Trafford Publishing
Betty G. Funke	Tweed Curtain Pioneers	Trafford Publishing
Cyril E. Leonoff	The Hebrew Ladies of Victoria, Van. Island	Jewish Historical Society of BC
Edythe Hanen, et al	Bowen Island – Reflections	Friesens, Altona, Manitoba
Jack Schofield	No Numbered Runways	Sono Nis
Jay Sherwood	Surveying Northern B.C.	Caitlin Press
Museum of Anthropology, UBC	Bill Reid and Beyond	Douglas & McIntrye
Roy Miki	Redress	Raincoast Books
Rex Weyler	Greenpeace	Raincoast Books
Eric Enno Tamm	Beyond the Outer Shores	Raincoast Books
Umeek(Richard Atleo)	Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview	UBC Press
Denis Marshall	Sawdust Cedars	Salmon Arm Branch, OHS

Miscellany

23rd Annual BCHF Book Writing Competition

Deadline: December 31, 2005

Books (non-fiction) representing any facet of BC history, published in 2005, are eligible for the 23rd annual Book Competition. This may be a community history, biography, record of a project or an organization, or personal recollections giving a glimpse of the past. Names, dates and places, with relevant maps or pictures, turn a story into "history".

The judges are looking for quality presentations and fresh material, with appropriate illustrations, careful proof reading, an adequate index, table of contents and bibliography. Note that reprints or revisions of books are not eligible.

Lieutenant-Governor's Medal/Awards

The BC Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing will be awarded together with $300 to a writer/author whose book contributes significantly to the history of British Columbia. The 2nd and 3rd place winners will receive $200 and $100 respectively. Additional Honourable Mention Certificates may be awarded as recommendedby the judges.

Publicity

All winners will receive publicity and an invitation to the BCHF Awards Banquet at the Federation's annual conference which will be in Kimberley, BC, in May, 2006

Submission Requirements

By submitting books for this competition, the authors agree that the British Columbia Historical Federation may use their name(s) in press releases and BCHF publications regarding the book competition. Books entered become property of the BCHF.

Authors and/or Publishers will be required to send/mail one copy of their book to the Chair as well as one copy to each of the three Judges.

For mailing instructions please contact:

Bob Mukai, Chair of the BCHF Book Competition
4100 Lancelot Drive, Richmond, BC, V7C 4S3
robert_mukai@telus.net Tel/Fax 604-274-6449

BCHF's Ron Hyde Honoured

On 25 February during Heritage Week celebrations, Mayor Malcolm Brodie presented our secretary and newsletter co-editor, Ron Hyde and his wife, Maureen with 2005 Richmond Heritage Awards. The citation read in part:

Both Ron and Maureen Hyde have enriched Richmond's heritage resources by their volunteer work. They give constantly of their time to projects at London Farm, Tourism Richmond, the Richmond Museum, Steveston Museum, Britannia Shipyard, and the Gulf of Georgia Cannery.

Both Ron and Maureen regularly assist with Heritage Week displays in the mall. Maureen has edited the BC Genealogical Society quarterly for seventeen years. As secretary and membership chair for the British Columbia Historical Federation, Ron has built federation membership from forty societies in the southern part of the province to 103 societies across the province. As co-editor of the BC Historical Federation Newsletter, Ron has promoted Richmond Heritage and brought interesting ideas from other communities to Richmond.

Together, Ron and Maureen Hyde have worked to get the historical and genealogical societies to lobby for access to the post 1900 federal censuses and the provincial Land Titles records.

We are proud of Ron and Maureen and grateful for their work. We extend our congratulations to them. •

Ajust Your Address Book

Wanda Mizner is the new Acting Curator / Administrator of the Boundary Museum. Contact her at:

Boundary Museum Society
7370 Fifth Street, PO Box 817
Grand Forks, BC, V0H 1H0
Tel/Fax (250) 442-3737

The BC Museum of Mining Receives Funding

The BC Museum of Mining will receive $2 million in funding from the Canada-BC Infrastructure Grant, which the Museum Society has been able to match with donations from private industry and individuals.

From the press release: Plans to turn Britannia Beach into a world-class innovative and interpretive attraction, dedicated to history, regeneration and sustainability, is a giant step closer to realization with today's announcement of $3 million in funding.

The private sector, together with the federal and provincial governments, have contributed funds earmarked for the physical restoration of the mill building, designated a National Historic Site by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1989. These funds will be used to preserve the cultural and historic significance of the building.

According to Kirstin Clausen, Executive Director of the Britannia Beach Historical Society, this funding means immediate execution to restore the exterior of this already important historic site from its current dilapidated state into a building that will reflect the significant contribution that mining has made to both provincial and federal economies.

"The funds for the mill building will create nine full-time positions and attract 40,000 more visitors to the BC Museum of Mining each year," says Clausen. "The economic spin-offs for the community will be significant as we prepare for the influx of visitors to the museum this summer."

The funding was provided through the Canada-BC Infrastructure Program - with the federal and provincial governments jointly providing $2 million, and several unnamed private sector donors contributing a total of $1 million.

"This is an exciting day where many committed stakeholders have come together to honour Canada's mining heritage," says Michael McPhie, Interim Managing Director of the Britannia Development Corporation and President and CEO of the Mining Association of BC. •

FORT ST. JAMES
200 Years 1806—2006

"Western Canada's Historic Capital"

In 1805 Simon Fraser of the North West Company led an expedition over the Rocky Mountains to investigate the fur trade potential of the Pacific Slope and to find a navigable route to the Pacific Ocean. In the winter of 1805/1806 Simon Fraser and his men wintered at McLeod Lake. Early in the spring of 1806 Simon Fraser sent a subordinate, James McDougall, to explore the surrounding country. During his explorations McDougall visited a Carrier village called Nak'azdli on a large lake that was later named Stuart Lake. On July 26, 1806 James McDougall returned to the large lake with Simon Fraser, John Stuart, and crew. Stuart Lake Post was established in 1806 – later renamed Fort St. James. Simon Fraser named the large trading area surrounding the post, New Caledonia. Soon the post would become the administrative center for the entire trading area of New Caledonia and was very significant in the quest for furs. The role of the Carrier nation in supplying the fort with furs and food cannot be understated.

Fort St. James was also the center of the Omineca Gold Rush in the 1860s. Manson Creek and Germansen Landing are just two of several gold rush towns within a relative short distance of Fort St. James that still exist today.

Modern day Fort St. James continues to celebrate its history and heritage, and in 2006 Fort St. James will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of Simon Fraser's arrival. The fur fort has been established as a national historic site and has been restored to 1896.

In Fort St. James and the Carrier communities in the area a number of other historically significant sites still exist such as Simon Fraser's signature rock, Chief Kwah's grave site, pictographs, fur trader burial ground, traditional first nation trails connecting communities in the Nechako region, and the second oldest church in British Columbia.

While Fort St. James is not on today's beaten path, over 12,000 visitors annually venture into Fort St. James to experience the heritage and history it has to offer. With the community's bi-centennial in 2006 we will be celebrating 200 years of heritage and history and invite everyone to join us in the fun.

You're invited to celebrate 200 years of history & heritage in 2006! Call the Bi-Centennial Office (250) 996-8233 •

Colbourne House Opens

The Marpole Museum and Historical Society celebrated the official opening of the newly restored Colbourne House on May 28, 2005. Numerous dignitaries, including former Marpole MLA Val Anderson; City of Vancouver Councillor Sam Sullivan and Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioner Suzanne Anton, attended.

The Society and its members are thrilled to achieve the milestone in bringing a "living heritage" to the community of Marpole. The restoration of the Colbourne House was achieved through the efforts of volunteers, grants and donations from members of the community and various levels of government over a period of ten years. Situated at West 71st Avenue and Marine Drive in Vancouver, the Colbourne House is a splendid visual sight. The William Mackie Park directly to the north of the house lends itself well to the overall impression of a time when Marpole was a rural neighborhood of woodland and dairy farms. The home, originally built in 1912, was fashioned in the Dutch Colonial style by Mr. T. Thomas, but derives its name from its longest residents, the Colbourne family.

Visit www.marpolehistorical.ca or call Jim Bulteel at 604-261-0131 for more information. •

Best Article Award

A Certificate of Merit and cash prize will be awarded to the author of an article published in *British Columbia History* "that best enhances knowledge of British Columbia's history and provides reading enjoyment." Judging is based on subject development, writing skill, freshness of material, and appeal to a general readership interested in all aspects of British Columbia history.

This year we're pleased to announce that for the best article of 2004 the winner is R.G. Harvey, for "The Crows Nest Railway," which appeared in *BC Historical News*, Vol. 36:4. Congratulations.

Editor's Note: A big thank you to Pixie McGeachie who served along with Jack Roff as the judges for the Best Article Award. Jack passed away in December 2004 and Pixie was the "panel of judge" for this year's choice. With Jack's passing, Pixie has decided to hand the judging duties to new volunteers and she noted "I'm sure there will be no difficulty finding BCHF members who would enjoy the job just as I have." And Jacqueline Gresko has been recruiting a new panel for 2005. •

Railway Heritage

submitted by Naomi Miller

The Canadian Museum of Rail Travel in Cranbrook hosted a gathering on January 28, 2005 in their beautiful Royal Alexandra Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to create recognition of nationally significant collections of railway artifacts, and possibly to open the door for federal funding. Bev Oda, Conservative Heritage Critic, intended to be present but weather cancelled her flight. Jim Abbott, MP for Columbia-Revelstoke, promised to take recommendations to the Heritage Committee in Ottawa.

Lyle Burge of the Canadian Council for Rail Heritage based in Calgary spoke of the twenty-seven volunteer groups who have saved railway heritage items in collections across the country. These very large artifacts are gradually deteriorating because they stand outdoors exposed to the changes in weather. To attempt a centralized railway museum in Ottawa would be impractical but surely federal funds could be channelled to assist with the high cost of maintaining conservation standards. One speaker noted that there is a Federal Arts Endowment which assists groups by matching funds raised locally to a maximum of $1 or $2 million. Perhaps it would be possible for the Federal Heritage Committee to set aside a pot of money similarly assist preservation of Canada's Railway Heritage? •