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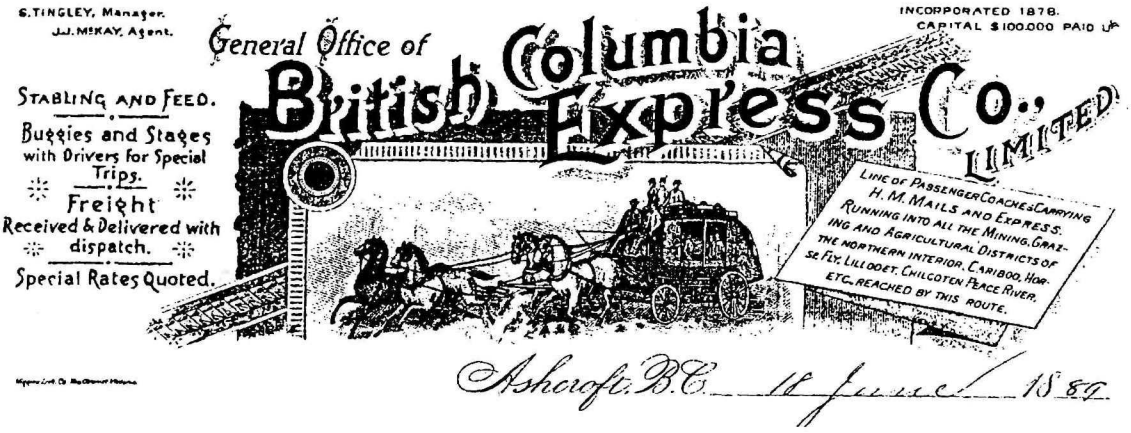
# British Columbia Historical News

Journal of the B.C. Historical Federation



## THE BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL FEDERATION - Organized October 31, 1922

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# British Columbia Historical News

Journal of the B.C. Historical Federation

Volume 31, No. 3 Summer 1998


## EDITORIAL

Is there a measurable increase in curiosity about our own history here in British Columbia? The appearance of many books on local provincial happenings suggest considerable community involvement. Subscriptions for our BCHN have risen by 15% in the last year. B.C. Heritage Trust found the 27 applications for scholarships so full of plans by graduate students that 5 financial awards were given rather than a single annual award.

Another factor contributing to public curiosity about and enthusiasm for local history are the centennial anniversaries being observed. Last year Nelson, Grand Forks and Greenwood had extended observance of their 100th year. In 1998 Hedley, the Crowsnest Railway, Ymir, Elko, Kaslo and other communities will be celebrating.

We wish them all ***Happy Birthday*** on the appropriate dates. And may all those celebrating carry on with researching *and enjoying* local history.

Naomi Miller

## EDITORIAL

The BX Express story is one that retains a "wild west" flavor. Pat Foster's presentation here takes us from a footslogging letter carrier to the earliest motorized vehicles in the Cariboo. The cover picture shows a four-horse stage part way along the Cariboo trail.

Below the picture of the utilitarian stagecoach is a reproduction of letterhead from the British Columbia Express Co. Limited after it moved to Ashcroft.

Photo courtesy of the Ashcroft Museum. #3190.
The letterhead is courtesy of Marie Elliot.

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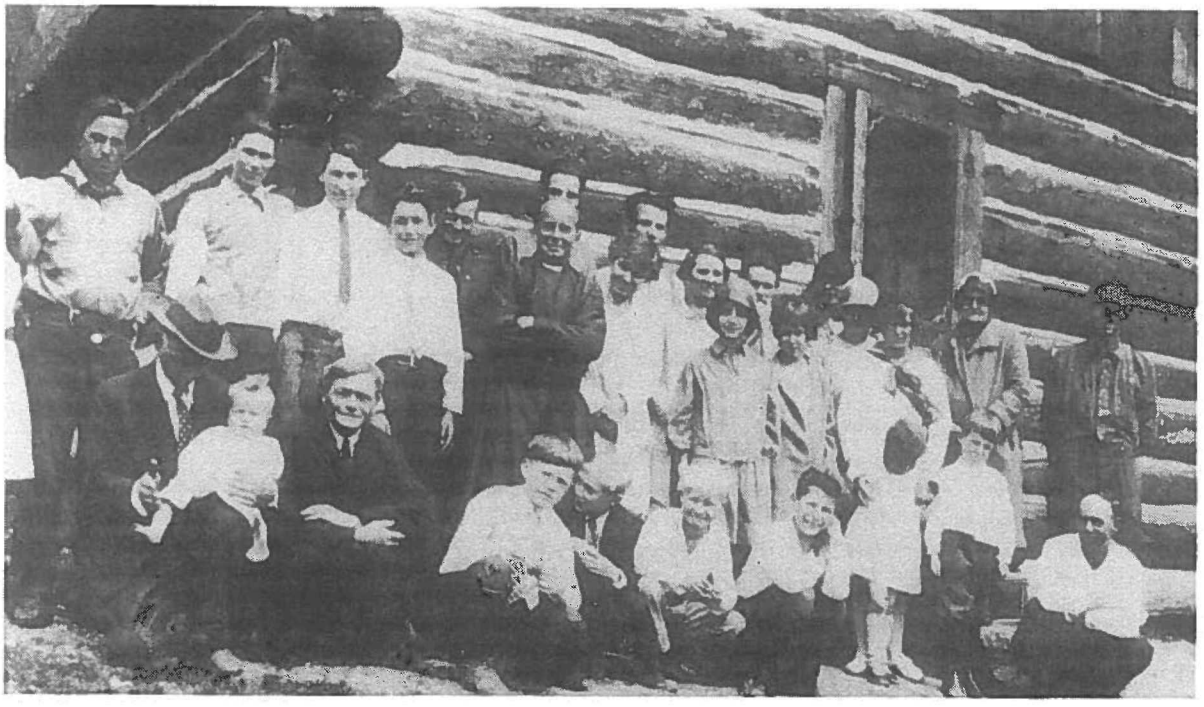
# *White Gloves & Parasols*

## *by Branwen C. Patenaude*



***A gathering of local residents of the upper Horsefly valley in 1930. Taken outside the Black Creek school, the occasion was a church service given by the Reverend Basil Resker, an Anglican Church Minister from Williams Lake. Annie Patenaude is seen on Reverend Resker's left. In the lower left is Albert Patenaude with his baby son Philip on his knee. Mr. L.C. Nelson is to his left. Most of the others are made up of the Albert Patenaude, Frank Jones, Charlie Goetjen and Ernie Williams families.***

Annie Moore Patenaude, a pioneer school teacher in the Cariboo region of British Columbia between 1910 and 1955 was a most remarkable woman. No doubt there were many who taught for just as long, but there were few whose careers were as diversified. With a natural talent for teaching, when fate handed her the role of a rancher's wife and she became a mother of five children, she managed to combine all three styles in a career that lasted for over forty years.

Born in Crookston, Minnesota in July 1886, where her father Arthur Moore, a tea merchant from County Cork Ireland was involved in the import and export business, Annie grew up being very proud of her Irish ancestry. Her mother Catherine had as her relative the Irish physicist Sir Robert Boyle. As the youngest daughter in a family of twelve children Annie's musical talents, especially at the piano, became evident at a very early age. It was said that she could read music before she learned to read books, and that she would rather sit and play the piano than go out to play.

Educated in Winnipeg, by the time Annie had graduated from high school the family had moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, where Annie's father was involved in the development of a slate mine, and in grain farming. On entering the University of Utah Annie studied to become a teacher and continued with her musical training, becoming proficient on the pipe organ and the classical Spanish guitar. Her boyfriend at this time was the son of a Mormon leader, and although the Moore family were strong Baptists, Annie was allowed to practice on the magnificent organ in the Mormon Tabernacle. Unfortunately Arthur Moore's business ventures in Utah were doomed to failure when the slate proved to be of inferior quality, and hail destroyed the grain crops. Following this the Moore family moved to Vancouver, British Columbia, where Arthur returned to the import-export tea and coffee business and where he was instrumental in the establishment of the Blue Ribbon Tea Company and the now famous Dickson's Coffee Company.

Armed with her Bachelor's degree from the University of Utah Annie applied to teach school, but was immediately faced with taking further training at Vancouver's Normal School where she received a First Class teaching certificate in 1901.[1] That September she began her long career as the teacher of the 6th Division at Central School with a salary of $40.00 a month.

While residing in Vancouver Annie had often visited her married sister Mary Galbraith on Bowen Island, and was persuaded to take the school there for a few years, which she did until 1907 when the Galbraiths sold out and moved to Vancouver. Both Mary Galbraith and Annie's other older sisters had large families, and in Annie's eyes, had committed themselves to lives of domestic drudgery; not what Annie saw for herself. For this reason she shied away from any serious love affairs.

For a year or two Annie taught school in Penticton where she lived with a distant relative and enjoyed her leisure hours riding her own saddle horse over the rolling hills of the Okanagan. By this time she had established a reputation as a

teacher who always expected the best from her pupils, and when it came to discipline, one piercing look from Miss Moore was enough to discourage anything to the contrary. This was not to say that Annie did not have fun with her pupils, for whenever possible she took them on field trips and picnics, believing that time spent outside the classroom was equally important. On one occasion after her pupils had played a prank on her, Annie cut up some soap into little squares and coated them with chocolate. When she served them to her pupils the children fell for the trick, chewing the "chocolates" with relish, until they got down to the soapy centres.

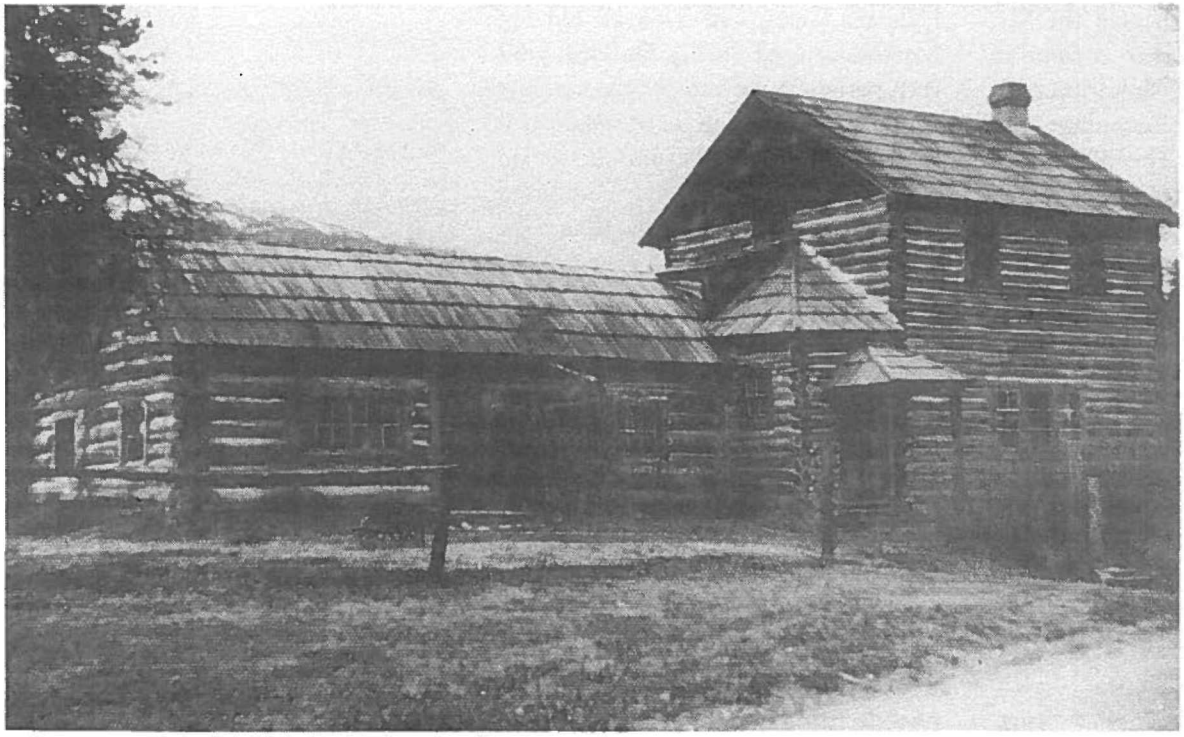
By 1910 Annie Moore had reached the age of twenty-four, and was in most people's estimations, on the brink of spinsterhood. In applying for another change in schools that spring she accepted a request for a qualified teacher to start a school in Harper's Camp, a mining town in the interior of British Columbia. Where in the world was Harper's Camp? At the C.P.R. Railway station Annie was told that it was not far north of Ashcroft, but as it turned out it was a four day journey from Vancouver. On reaching Ashcroft she took the stagecoach north to the 150 Mile House, a large, two storey hotel beside the Cariboo Road. Here she was told it would be another two days before a stage could deliver her to Harper's Camp, thirty five miles to the north east. The community of 150 Mile House was a very busy centre during the early 1900s with several stores, a Government Agent's Office, a gaol, and quite a sizeable population. While she waited Annie explored the hotel and found in the sitting room a piano, albeit badly out of tune, upon which she played much to the delight of other hotel guests.

At Harper's Camp Annie boarded at the Horsefly Hotel, operated by Harry Walters and his wife Alva Younker. While her accommodations were adequate, the hotel did not allow Annie a quiet place to prepare her lessons, or to entertain her friends. It was not long before she found herself cleaning out an old chicken house which she called home for many months. The schoolhouse at Harper's Camp had been an old log bunkhouse used during the local gold rush period at the turn of the century. Annie's ten pupils, none of whom had received any formal education, ranged in age from five to fourteen, composed mostly of the Walters family. Where the several big boys amongst them might have thought they could intimidate the little teacher, for Annie Moore was barely five feet tall and might have weighed 100 lbs., they found instead that they were falling over each other to please her. Annie also set several new standards of dress in the little village. Arriving with a parasol and gloves as part of her attire, it was not long before every female in the district had sent an order to Eaton's for similar accessories. Early that winter when things got very dull Annie organized a community band among a number of the local citizens, who proudly displayed their talents at the first Christmas concert.

Annie had taught school at Harper's Camp for less than a year when she became the bride of Albert Joseph Patenaude in January of 1911. The Patenaudes, Joseph Philip and his sons Albert and Ernst of La Chute, Quebec had arrived in the Cariboo in the late 1880s. Locating first in the 150 Mile hotel and store while his sons worked on the ranch; after this the family rented the Pinchbeck ranch at Williams Lake for five years before moving to Harper's Camp in 1898. There J.P. Patenaude bought the store and operated the mail delivery and telegraph office while his sons ran a cattle ranch nine miles up the Horsefly River Valley known as the "Woodjam". By 1914 Albert and a partner Billy Reid had established another ranch further up the valley at Marten Creek, where in 1916 Annie and their first child Ida went to live. Following this three boys, Albert Jr., Harold, and Wilfred were all born on the ranch, without the assistance of a doctor.

By 1923 Annie had returned to teaching school. At this time married women were usually considered ineligible to teach, but in Annie's case where she was able to include three of her own children to make up the required number of pupils to keep a school open, her application as teacher was probably welcomed. With four children in tow, she taught for a year at Miocene, a rural community halfway between Harper's Camp and the 150 Mile. With her own children, the other seven pupils were made up of the Wiggins family and one or two of the hired men. The schoolhouse at Miocene, an old log building across the road from the Wiggins house was hard to heat in winter due to the high ceiling through which the heat escaped. Annie and the children lived in a sod roofed shanty close to the schoolhouse where she and young Ida did their own cooking with groceries and supplies provided by Albert, who visited them fairly frequently. It must be realized that all through her career as a teacher, and wherever she lived during the time, Annie was without the luxury of electric lights, washing machines, or refrigeration as we know it today. Wilfred, who was only two when his mother taught at Miocene, was tended during school hours by an older woman who sometimes went to sleep on the job, leaving Wilfred to get into mischief. On one occasion when Annie was in a hurry

***Taken by the author at Horsefly Lake in 1952, Annie Patenaude is seen with two of her several grandchildren, Anne and David Patenaude.***



*The Albert J. Patenaude family residence at Marten Creek, 1914-1962.*

Photo Courtesy of BCARS 86163.

to make some biscuits, she found the baby had dumped a tin of syrup into the flour bin.

By 1925 several new families, the Hockleys, Jones, Goetjens and Williams had established homesteads at the top end of the Horsefly valley, bringing about an immediate need for a school. Living on the Patenaude ranch at this time was a Dane, Lars Christian Nelson, who had done well in the Yukon gold rush. He had wandered into the Horsefly valley in the early 1920s where he found his niche on the Patenaude ranch. When he found that the waters of Marten Creek agreed with his constitution he decided to remain there, as he did for the next twenty odd years. "Mr. Nelson" as the children referred to him, made himself very useful on the ranch. As a finishing carpenter and cabinet maker he was kept busy building and repairing constantly. When a school was needed at Black Creek, two miles east of Patenaude's ranch, the community, including Mr. Nelson, provided and put up the logs and roof of the building, but it was Mr. Nelson who did all the interior work, and a fine job he did. The floors were built of tongue and groove lumber left over from an old mine near Horsefly, the walls were finished with "Nametco" board, and there were lots of windows, well made cupboards for books, and a cloakroom. Annie Patenaude taught there for five years, until 1929, when her youngest son Philip was born.

In 1933 Annie was summoned to Likely where she taught for two years in a mining community beside the Quesnel River, at the foot of Quesnel Lake. During the 1930s while the rest of the world suffered from the worst depression ever, Likely was enjoying prosperity. Dependant on the mining industry, the community boomed when the price of gold doubled from $16.00 an oz. and the big Bullion mine was hiring dozens of men. This brought a large transient population into the area including married couples with children. The Likely school, a large building with a lean-to kitchen built on at the back, stood on a hill behind the town. To reach it one climbed a number of stairs to a small platform outside the front door. On alternate weekends the schoolhouse became a crowded dance hall, and unfortunately there were always a few who fell off the front steps during the evening. The Patenaude family who had all been taught to read music and play an instrument, played for the dances which often lasted until the wee hours of the morning. Most people in Likely made their own home brew which was usually stored with the vegetables in a cellar-like space under the kitchen floor. In the house where Annie and the children boarded a large supply of beet wine had recently been poured off, capped, and stored. It was not long after this, at about two o'clock one morning, when they were all awakened by what sounded like a small war for several hours while most of the bottles of wine blew their caps and broke. The cellar looked like an abattoir, the red wine splattered all over everything.

Following her two years at Likely, Annie taught at Dog Creek in 1936 and in 1940. To her it was like going to another world. Not only was the climate totally different, but also the way of life. Situated sixty miles south west of Williams Lake, where in summer the climate was hot and dry, Dog Creek was primarily a cattle ranching country close to the Fraser River. There the three families of Charlie, Joe, and Frank Place comprised the majority of Annie's pupils, with the addition of her own two sons, Philip age seven, and Wilfred who was doing his high school studies by correspondence. Both the schoolhouse and the cabin where Annie and her children lived were on the Charlie Place ranch. Annie found that social life at Dog Creek centred around the Charlie Place home, where Ada Place, Charlie's wife, had developed their home "Casa Grande" (Dog Creek House) into a holiday lodge where she entertained visitors from all over the world.[2] From time to time Annie was also invited to supper by the other Place families, who lived on separate ranches nearby. Annie's family from Marten Creek often visited her on weekends,

bringing news from home and taking advantage of the excellent duck and grouse hunting in the Dog Creek area.

To say that Annie Patenaude had a passion for teaching would be an understatement. It was obviously the most important part of her life, and her pupils adored her. However she was not one to shirk her other responsibilities, those of being a rancher's wife and a mother. While teaching seemed to stimulate rather than tire her, the real work came during the summer when the school year ended and Annie and the children returned to the ranch at Marten Creek. There her days were filled with preserving a garden full of produce for the coming winter, berry picking and preserving fruit and jams, cooking for the haying crew, and sewing and mending the family's clothes for the next year. Annie also made her own brand of potato yeast and home made bread, and when she had enough fat saved up would make a lye soap, which she used in the laundry. Accepting the work cheerfully, she would delegate many of the chores to the children or anyone else who happened to be around. In between the work were many joyous occasions in the ranch house at Marten Creek, around the dinner table where Annie fed her family and almost always a few visitors; at the piano where she played for community church services in the large sitting room; with neighbours who came to call; and with her own family around the piano in the evenings, when several of her children would accompany her on the violin, accordion or saxophone.

Between 1942 and 1955 Annie Patenaude taught at several other schools in the Cariboo district including another year at the Horsefly school, the 150 Mile school, and at the school in Beaver Valley, where she substituted for short periods of time.

Annie retired from teaching in 1955, a year after the death of her husband Albert, and was honoured as the first school teacher in a special ceremony for Horsefly's pioneers in October of 1961.[3] Prior to her death on July 15, 1966, Annie lived with her daughter Ida Zirnhelt at Beaver Lake.

Even today, many years after her death, former students of Annie Moore Patenaude fondly recall their teacher who would always insist that they "work hard, tell the truth, and enjoy life."

* * * * *

***Branwen Patenaude is an enthusiastic writer, specializing in Cariboo history. This Quesnel resident has published several books including two volumes of TRAILS TO GOLD describing the stopping houses on the old road to the Cariboo.***

**FOOTNOTES**

1. Sessional Papers, 1902. Public Schools Report, p. 1XV11.
2. **Trails To Gold**, Volume 1, p. 64, 65, by Branwen C. Patenaude. 1995.
3. **The Williams Lake Tribune**, October 18, 1961, p. 4. A lot of the information in this article was gleaned from a cassette tape entitled "The teaching career of Annie Patenaude", Aural Tape #3234: 2. of the Provincial Archives of B.C., made in May of 1973 when Ida Patenaude Zirnhelt was interviewed by Christine Houghton for the Horsefly Historical Society. Other members of the Patenaude family, Anne Patenaude Nilsen, Mary Patenaude, Albert J. Patenaude, and Wilfred H. Patenuade also contributed.

# Entries in the 1997 BCHF Historical Writing Competition

*** TRADING BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS** *by Richard Somerset Mackie - UBC PRESS*

**BEYOND LADNER'S LANDING** *by Gwen Szychter - SELF PUBLISHED*

**THE HISTORY OF PILOT BAY LIGHTHOUSE** *by Susan Hulland - THE FRIENDS OF KOOTENAY PARK*

(HM) **JERICHO BEACH AND THE WEST COAST FLYING BOAT STATIONS** *by Chris Weicht - SELF PUBLISHED*

**UNION STEAMSHIPS REMEMBERED** *by A.M. Twigg - SELF PUBLISHED.*

(HM) **FIRST ACROSS THE CONTINENT** *by Barry Gough - McCLELLAND AND STEWART INC.*

**A GLIMPSE OF RICHMOND SCHOOLS** *edited by Loma Robb - RICHMOND RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION*

**IMAGES AND VOICES OF LIGHTHOUSE COUNTRY** *by Leah Willot - locally sponsored*
**BRIDGES OF LIGHT** *by Cyril E. Leonoff - TALON BOOKS*

**BRIDGES OF LIGHT** *by Cyril E. Leonoff - TALON BOOKS*

**A CENTURY OF CARING** *by Daphne Thuillier - VERNON JUBILEE HOSPITAL*

**THE PROMISE OF PARADISE** *by Andrew Scott - WHITECAP BOOKS*

**OPENINGS** *by Laura Cameron - McGILL-QUEENS UNIVERSITY PRESS*

**HAMATSA** *by Jim McDowell - RONSDALE PRESS*

**DISCOVERY JOURNAL** *by John E. Roberts - SELF PUBLISHED*

**A PERFECT CHILDHOOD** *by Art Joyce - KOOTENAY MUSEUM ASSOCIATION AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY*

**WILD, WACKY WONDERFUL BRITISH COLUMBIA** *by Eric Newsome - ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS*

**REMEMBERING THE 50s** *by Lorraine Blashill - ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS*

**DEEP CURRENTS** *by Valerie Haig-Brown - ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS*

**IMAGES OF HISTORY** *by William Rayner - ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS*

**AROUND THE SOUND** *by Doreen Armitage - HARBOUR PUBLISHING*

**DANGEROUS WATERS** *by Keith Keller - HARBOUR PUBLISHING*

****PIONEER LEGACY: CHRONICLES OF THE LOWER SKEENA RIVER** *by Norma V. Bennett - HARBOUR PUBLISHING*

**GENESIS OF VANCOUVER CITY** *by Tomas Bartroli - SELF PUBLISHED*

**CHILCOTIN DIARY** *by Will D. Jenkins, Sr. - HANCOCK HOUSE PUBLISHERS*

**KLONDIKE PARADISE** *by C.R. Porter - HANCOCK HOUSE*

**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF GRAND FORKS** *by Jim and Alice Glanville - BLUE MOOSE PUBLICATIONS*

**STOLEN FROM OUR EMBRACE** *by Suzanne Fournier and Ernie Crey - DOUGLAS & McINTYRE*

*****MIGHTY RIVER: A PORTRAIT OF THE FRASER** *by Richard Bocking - DOUGLAS & McINTYRE*

**THE EMPRESS: IN THE GRAND STYLE** *by Terry Reksten - DOUGLAS & McINTYRE*

* Lt. Governor's Medal - ** 2nd Prize
*** 3rd Prize - HM - Honorable Mention

# *The Naming of Mount Lepsoe*

## *by David M. Balfour*

*Robert Lepsoe Jr., 1944.*

'Lest we forget'. The words appear on the document signed by the Honourable Glen Clark on November 11, 1996 naming Mount Lepsoe to honour Robert Lepsoe of Trail, B.C. killed in action October 18. 1944. The name and location were approved by the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names and will appear on future official government maps.

The newly named mountain is located on Highway 3B between Nancy Greene Lake and Rossland. It is the third highest peak in the Nancy Greene Recreation Area at 7141 feet. The highest, and best known, is Old Glory at 7795 feet. August is frequently the only month the upper reaches of Mount Lepsoe are free from snow.

The Lepsoe family came to Trail from Norway in 1925 when Robert Sr. was recruited by the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited; later known as Cominco. He was accompanied by his wife, Hjordis, and three sons, Gunnar, Christian, and Robert. Mr. Lepsoe was an outstanding electrochemist whose research played a major role in the technical advances of the company. Away from his laboratory he enjoyed the outdoor life at the family's camp at Robson.

On October 18, 1944 the Lepsoe family received word Robert had been killed in action. His squadron commander later confirmed that Robert's Spitfire had been hit by enemy fire while returning from an attack on the German held positions on the Schelde Estuary. The squadron, one of an R.A.F. fighter wing, were supporting Allied forces, including many Canadians, in the drive to open up the approaches to the port at Antwerp and allow use by Allied supply vessels.

Robert's sole ambition had been to study medicine. When he graduated from the Trail Tadanac High School in 1941, at a time when many of his classmates were enlisting, he decided he could contribute best through medicine. He enrolled in the University of Alberta and immediately joined the Canadian Officer Training Corps. However, with the air war expanding rapidly, he gave up his studies and enlisted in the Royal Norwegian Air Force, a choice that relieved the sorrow felt by his parents who had looked forward to a career in medicine for Robert. Initial training and early flying lessons were put in at Little Norway stations in Toronto and Muskoka and then on to the R.C.A.F. flying school at Camp Borden where he earned his wings at the top of his class flying single engine Harvards. He was posted overseas immediately for advance training on one of the outstanding aircraft of WWII, the Spitfire.

His quiet times were spent at his grand piano. Being the private person he was, few people in Trail realized they had a pianist of such note in their midst. Well known musicians from across the province came to hear him play.

When WWII came all three of the Lepsoe sons enlisted. Gunnar and Robert in the Royal Norwegian Air Force and Christian the R.C.A.F. Robert did not

itage he enjoyed exploring the shores of the Arrow Lake by sailboat. Membership in the 1st Trail Troop of Boy Scouts under Scoutmaster, Jack Gibson, made Robert a true woodsman with an appreciation and respect for the mountainous West Kootenay. As a Junior Forest Warden he shared in the toil of planting hundreds of trees at the start of the program to bring green back to the hills around Trail.

Winter meant weekends of skiing near Rossland with overnights in the Rossland Ski Club's log cabin high on the flank of Granite Mountain on the trail to Record Ridge. A huge rock beside that trail caught the eye of every skier. In the winter of 1940 Robert and his chum, Jim Kilburn, included a can of red paint in their supplies. The result let to a flurry of guesses as to who had painted the sign, 'WHERE WILL YE SPEND ETERNITY?'. Prophetic?

In 1946 Robert Sr. retired from Cominco and accepted the offer of a professorship at the university in Trondheim, Norway. He and his wife arranged to have Robert's remains moved to the family plot in Bergen where he had been born.

*Robert Lepsoe with his motto on a rock.*

Gunnar and Christian lived out their lives in their adopted homeland. Gunnar had a family of four sons, Robert, Derek, Christopher, and David and a daughter, Barbara. Gunnar taught school in Nelson, Grand Forks, and Chase where he retired. Christian, who never married, lived in Robson.

It was suggested, and the family agreed, the document should be displayed where it's significance would be appreciated; and where better than a Legion hall? The Trail branch of the Royal Canadian Legion agreed and on July 2, 1997, in a moving ceremony, accepted the document for display alongside others honouring citizens of Trail whose lives were lost in war. A second document was presented for display beside the first. The 'British Columbia Commemorative Place Name Remembrance Day List' dated November 11, 1996. Ten geographical locations and the names of those honoured are listed.

Robert's body may lie in far off Bergen but his spirit lives on in the Monashee Mountains he loved so dearly.

* * * * *

***David Balfour grew up in Trail, a close friend of Robert, together in Boy Scouts, highschool and Junior Forest Wardens. After serving as a pilot in WWII Balfour worked in various aspects of the Chemical industry - latterly as manager of exports to 60 countries. He is now retired in Vancouver.***

# CONFERENCE 1998

*← Naomi Miller & Jean Barman shown at the presentation of Heritage Trust Scholarships to (Lto R) Keith Carlson, Douglas Harris and Rudy Reimer.*

*Pixie McGeachie receives → an Appreciation Award from President Ron Welwood.*

*← Chuck Davis - after dinner speaker at the Awards Banquet, May 2, 1998.*

*Wayne and → Stephanie Desrocher - with our newest member, Emilie Joan Desrocher.*

*Richard → Somerset Mackie - winner of the Lt. Governor's Medal for his book. TRADING BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS.*

# *Price Ellison: A Gilded Man in British Columbia's Gilded Age*

## *by George Richard*

***Price Ellison***

British Columbia politicians in the late 1800s to early 1900s were some of the most corrupt in Canadian history. Price Ellison is one of these men. Despite this infamy, little has been written about the Okanagan Valley pioneer. The late Margaret Ormsby writes a passing note that at the turn of the century, he operated the largest ranch in the valley[1] and became a member in the McBride government where he ascended from backbencher to Finance and Agriculture Minister.[2] Two of Ellison's descendants are the only ones to describe his life in any detail.[3] Because of this, one must be critical of the mythical tone in which Ellison is depicted and how the controversies that surrounded this man are simply ignored. In eulogy, Bishop A.J. Doull described Ellison as "a man among men, a true spirit."[4] Much of this praise can be attributed to Ellison fitting the mould of the self-made man, who came to the country with nothing and through hard work made himself wealthy. There is no doubt Price Ellison made a major contribution serving Okanagan Valley residents as a community leader and politician.

However, Price Ellison should also be viewed as a man who manipulated his position as a community leader and politician for personal gain. In a sense, he was very much a man of his time; Price Ellison was a gilded man in British Columbia's gilded age.

Price Ellison was born on October 6th, 1852 in Dunham-Massey, England. As a child, he received basic schooling and an apprenticeship as a blacksmith. When he turned 21, he left for the United States in search of riches. After trying his luck in the Californian gold fields, he left for the Cariboo with nothing more than "blankets on [his] back."[5] Ellison and his partners decided to head to Cherry Creek in the North Okanagan when word of a find filtered through the Fraser Valley. After months of work, they found two nuggets worth 125 and 120 dollars each.[6] By 1876, Ellison started working for George Vernon at the Coldstream Ranch and two years later, he had saved enough money to buy 320 acres in Priest's Valley for 320 dollars. The locale later became known as Forge Valley. Ellison established a blacksmith operation in the vicinity where Vernon's Polson Park is today.

The "Smart Aleck" incident brought Ellison to the forefront in the community in 1882. That summer, Enderby Government Agent T. Lambly commissioned Aeneas (Enos) Dewer to collect a poll tax from Chinese gold miners near Cherry Creek. He went missing and by November it was strongly suggested Dewer succumbed to foul play. At that point, Ellison volunteered to "ferret out the cause of absence and if possible, arrest the party."[7] A couple of days later Dewer's body was recovered under the cabin of a Chinese miner named "Smart Aleck."[8] For the next two months, Ellison travelled parts of Montana, Idaho, Washington and as far south as Portland looking for "Smart Aleck". His determination is demonstrated in one telegram sent to Victoria from Missoula, Montana when he proclaims "there are 6000 chinamen. he may be here. will go through there again."[9] Ellison returned to the Okanagan Valley in January without "Smart Aleck"; however he did receive 300 dollars from the Attorney-General for his efforts.[10] His journey won him the admiration of the community. A couple of months later, the Attorney-General's Ministry endorsed a community petition of 54 names suggesting he become a special constable for the North Okanagan.[11]

As a community fixture in 1891, Price Ellison's name constantly appeared in the **Vernon News**, a media outlet he founded. Two years later, he gained controlling interest in the newspaper which he held until his death in 1932.[12] Ellison used this medium to effectively boost his profile and eventually perpetuate his image. One image both the **Vernon News** and **Inland Sentinel** cultivated was Ellison as the gentleman hunter and fisherman. One time in Kettle River country, Ellison and his companions came back with seven caribou "bringing home

*A Price Ellison orchard in Vernon c1910.*

Photo courtesy of Vernon Museum Archives.

have seen."[13] Ellison appeared to be quite the fisherman as well. On a trip to the Mission with William Postill, both men caught 36 trout, "principally of the silver species."[14]

Price Ellison also appeared to be an exceptional farmer, orchardist and rancher. One reporter commented on the bumper crop of hay grown on Ellison's land near the Shuswap, describing it as "very heavy [with] over 200 tonnes being put up in stacks."[15] One of Ellison's orchards in the Mission also seemed to be doing quite well as "all trees are thriving beyond expectation and the prospects for bearing orchards are something wonderful."[16] Eventually, that particular orchard helped produce an exceptional bounty as "red Bitigheimer apples 14 inches in circumference"[17] were housed in glass jars to be put on display at the Imperial Institute in London. Ellison also won prizes at valley-wide fall fairs for his wares. In 1891, Ellison took home 16 prizes in categories ranging from the quality of his horses and sheep to the grade of his fruit, jams and corn.[18] His biggest agricultural accomplishment occurred in 1893. Ellison's Barley won first place at the Chicago World's Fair. Before his family left by train en route to the United States for their first trip out of the district in nearly 15 years, his newspaper described how "a great many of their friends were out to see them off, and Vernon will be quite lonesome without them for a while."[19] They returned over two months later with stories of the fair and their brush with Illinois' upper class. Ellison and his family socialized with members of the American hunt club in Bloomington, Illinois and had an audience with U.S. Vice-President Stevenson. A reporter wrote that Ellison "obtained privileges we are safe in saying have not or would not be obtained by any other visitor from British Columbia."[20]

Price and Sophia Ellison hosted many people in their home and threw grand parties. One late winter night, Ellison threw a "necktie" party under the auspices of the Ladies Aid Society of the Presbyterian Church. Most people at the affair had been "unanimous in their verdict that it was one of the most enjoyable affairs of the season, which has been prolific in entertainments of this description."[21] Ellison frequently donated his services for social gatherings. One resident noted "when Kalamalka Lake froze during the winter of 1903, Price Ellison sent his team of horses to take the whole school skating every afternoon."[22] Their hospitality is equally noteworthy. One Okanagan woman felt quite comfortable when invited for the weekend to the Ellison farm. In her diary, Alice Barrett found them to be "so good and kind"[23] and believed she had never seen "a more truly generous man than Mr. Ellison and Mrs. Ellison seems to agree with all he says and does."[24]

Perhaps the fondest memories of the Ellison household belonged to his daughter, Myra:

I have later memories of my father as a wonderful host, sitting at the head of a long table and cooking [an] immense roast . . . and a table laden with fine fruits and vegetables, all products of the ranch. And what a good talker he was with his tales of early times . . . and a keen sense of humour.[25]

It was not just Myra that held Ellison

*Ellison Family 1895.*

Photo courtesy of Vernon Museum Archives.

in high regard. By 1892, community leaders had named not one street after him, but two.[26]

Ellison participated within the community and eventually turned his public work into a political career. Some of his positions within a two year period in the early 1890s included a directorship on the Kamloops Hospital Board and Chairmanship of the Vernon School Board.[27] By 1863, citizens wanted Ellison to become Mayor. A petition circulated throughout the community requesting he run to become the city's leading political figure.[28] However, Ellison declined as he had agreed not to run against his friend W.F. Cameron for the position.[29] That decision benefited Ellison.

By year's end, Vernon city council forwarded his name to the Provincial Government as a candidate for the position of Justice of the Peace. When receiving his commission, the **Vernon News** proclaimed his appointment was "an extremely good one."[30] Five months later, Ellison received a promotion to Stipendiary Magistrate after city council considered it a necessity "and an influential petition signed by a number of prominent citizens and by several Justices of the Peace in this district was forwarded to the Government."[31] In the same article, it was no surprise to find a newspaper reporter supporting his employer suggesting "we have no doubt that this will meet with general approval, as Mr. Ellison is known far and near as a gentleman who by virtue of his level-headed tact and judgement is eminently suited for such an office."[32]

He used his office and popularity to win the 1898 provincial election. For the next 18 years, he represented the constituencies of Yale and later Okanagan, winning five re-elections. Myra DeBeck credits his political success to his character:

He was a man of the highest integrity and great force of character. [He showed] principles, purpose and tenacity. In his private life, [he showed] generosity, kindliness, unselfishness and love of his fellow man.[33]

This is not true. He succeeded in politics by cultivating an image of integrity, purpose and kindness in the community through the media and public events. He sought political power, social status and influence to ensure that he prospered. If the community prospered as well, that would be a bonus. Ellison used his landholdings as a vehicle toward prosperity. Perhaps an incident in 1885 motivated the blacksmith and special constable toward his drive for power.

In October of that year, Ellison got into a land dispute with two neighbours and the local Indian agent. He had built a fence across a trail which had been "a well recognized highway from time immemorial."[34] Ellison did this to consolidate his property.

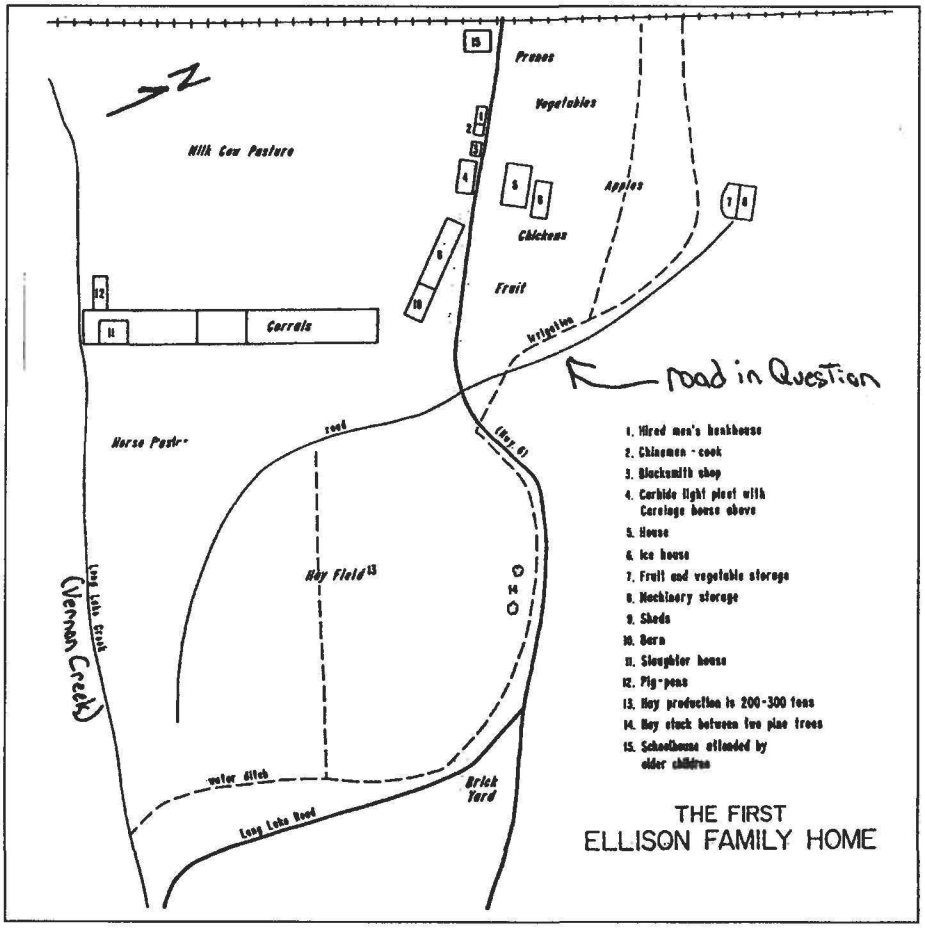
When Government Agent W. Dewdney tried compromising with Ellison by suggesting a gate allowing access to other properties in the east "he flatly refused to [comply] and not in a very becoming manner."[35]

Claiming that construction of a new road around Ellison's property would cost the government and residents around 2500 dollars, Dewdney brought the issue to a magistrate's court for a decision. The two Justices ruled against Ellison. Dewdney did not think much of Ellison's testimony to the court or his conduct after the decision:

I must confess that I never heard a man prevaricate more glibly than Mr. Ellison did when giving his statement. Some men appear not to have the slighest regard for the truth . . . Not finding himself successful in that direction, he turned on the two Justices and insulted them at the same time saying he would not comply with their decision. He became so violent in his language that I had to order him out of the office and he left as quickly as he came in.[36]

After being threatened with a court order to open the trail, Ellison built the gate. He lost this battle to his "avowed enemy"[37] but it would not be the last time Ellison was before the courts over land issues.

In 1891, Ellison received an early Christmas present from the courts when his action to recover land from a property owner named Campbell succeeded. The judgement went to the "plaintiff with costs."[38] During this time, Ellison



# ELLISON PROPERTY

## is now selling

The survey has been completed and three close-in subdivisions are being offered for the first time

### HILL CREST

This portion is back of the High School building and South of Barnard Avenue. Beautiful lake view. All in acre lots. A most attractive proposition.

### PINE GROVE

These lots join Mr. Ellison's grounds on the East. They vary in size from one to three acres. Overlooking the City and reached by an extension of Eleventh street. Ideal building sites.

### PARK VIEW

This is a subdivision of the forty acres of level land adjoining City Park and the new Hospital site. Seventh Street will be opened to it. The City is certain to grow this way. All acre lots.

**This is an Opportunity You Cannot Afford to Miss**

Prices and Terms on application to

AGENTS:

Dickson Land Co.——————Mutrie & Mutrie

*Advertisement in the Vernon News, August 27, 1908*

built a formidable land empire by gobbling up property from aged ranchers who purchased land in the 1860s. His newspaper reported frequently on purchases he would make in the valley ranging from buying 310 acres of land from P.C. Thurborn for 400 dollars cash[39] to taking control of the Simpson Ranch in the Mission for 11,000 dollars.[40] In one land auction, Ellison purchased four of the 17 lots available, grabbing close to 40 acres of prime land for over 1600 dollars.[41] By 1894, Ellison controlled over 11,000 acres which included lands from Lumby to Swan Lake and as far south as the Mission. He dedicated much of the land "to wheat, and he ran 2500 head of cattle and 300 horses on his own range."[42]

Ellison's grandson claims the pioneer did not want to be a land developer:

Price likely never acquired property with the idea of subdivision and profit. He saw the need for more land for the city (Vernon) and accordingly, let parts be sold to achieve this.[43]

This is simply not true. There were plenty of occasions between the 1890s and 1910s where Ellison purchased land and then sold it for profit. Sometimes, he would display the traits of a gilded capitalist by subdividing land and then cultivating an image through his newspaper of being a social custodian of the wealth. One example occurred in 1892 when Ellison staked off 45 acres of his land to the east of the city in residential lots. He insisted on selling only to people who were willing to build credible buildings, thereby discouraging speculation.[44] However, Ellison also used his influence to improve the value of his land for a future subdivision later developed by Sam Polson.

In the same year, Ellison met with directors of the Okanagan Land and Development Company. At the time, he sat on the Board of Directors of the Kamloops Hospital and had recently chaired a public meeting aimed at establishing a hospital in Vernon.[45] After the meeting, a newspaper reporter wrote:

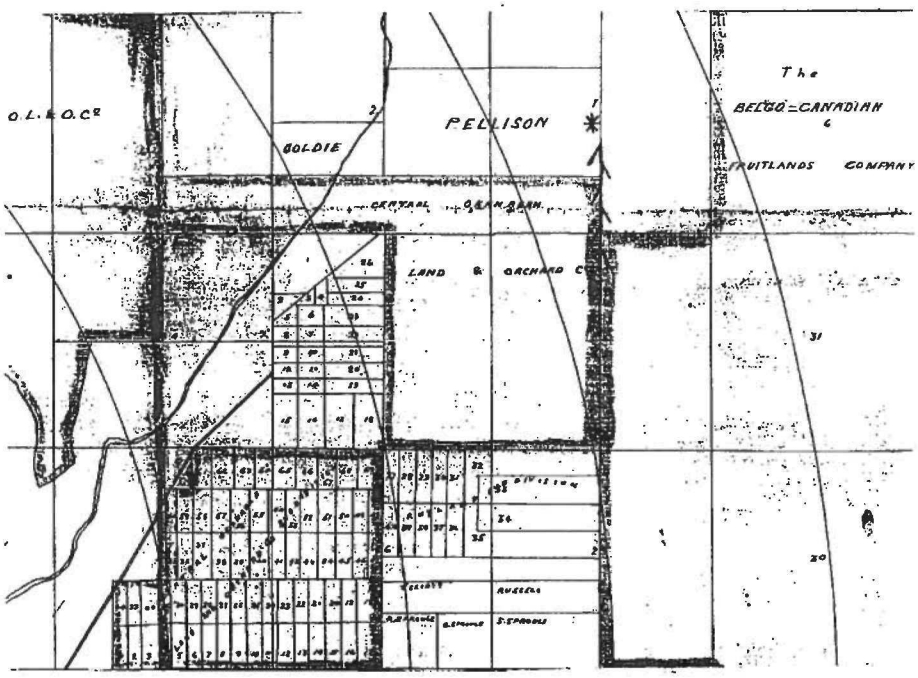
The Directors of the Okanagan Land and Development Company, at the insistance of Mr. Price Ellison, decided to grant an entire block . . . on seventh street, on the south side of Long Lake Creek, as a site for the proposed local hospital, in lieu of the three lots formally donated by them for the same purpose.[46]

The two-and-a half acre parcel in question is adjacent to Ellison's property to the east. However, Ellison did not stop there to improve his land value. One year later, his newspaper reported "the old school building was purchased from the government by Mr. Price Ellison who had it removed from the school grounds to a lot of his own adjoining it."[47] Ellison not only sat as the chair of the local school board at this time[48], but his wife, Sophia, initially ran the school when it was built ten years earlier.[49] Then in 1908, the Conservative backbencher convinced the McBride government to release funds to build a new high school at the same location as the old school.[50] Later that year, the politician sold his land to Winnipeg land developer Sam Polson. Two weeks after the sale to Polson, advertisements for the land developer's subdivided property appeared in his newspaper promoting the fact that the high school and hospital were located nearby.

Ellison used a similar ploy as a cabinet minister to further add value to his various other properties. As Finance Minister, he approved of and opened two new schools in 1912 in Rutland and the district that would later be known as Ellison. Ellison located both schools on his own property.[51] The map shows the approximate location of the Rutland school and the intended growth of the residential area after such a facility is constructed.[52]

A piece of tax sale property Ellison acquired in the early 1900s not only made him some money, but built for him a lasting memorial. Ellison purchased the 640 acres on the east side of Okanagan Lake, 16 kilometres south of Vernon in 1903. In 1911, Finance Minister Ellison decided to construct a new courthouse near one of his Vernon properties costing taxpayers 200,000 dollars and taking nearly three years to build. At the same time, Ellison created a granite quarry on his lake property as "a large quantity of cut stone was needed for the new courthouse."[53] Ellison "received a footage royalty on all stone removed."[54]

Ellison's greatest legacy to Okanagan valley residents dealt with his tenacious support of irrigation. Once again, Ellison had an interest in this scheme to make money for himself. Certainly he realized that the community could prosper converting wheat and rangeland to orchards. However, he also saw that he could increase his land value by having fruit trees




Legend

Map of Rutland c1910.
Courtesy of Kelowna Museum Archives

✳ Rutland School c1912

Where Rutland Road North runs in a north/south direction today

rather than cattle on his property.

Ellison committed to the fruit industry in the early 1890s by planting roughly 1000 trees on newly acquired property in the Mission and completing an irrigation ditch to the trees.[55] A reporter shared Ellison's enthusiasm:

The older orchards promise an enormous yield of fruit, and there is no doubt that in the near future an immense revenue will be derived from this industry. This is the opinion of an experienced horticulturist, who backs up his statements by largely investing here himself.[56]

By 1907, Ellison's eight years of lobbying as a backbencher in Victoria started paying off. The Provincial Secretary's office committed 5000 dollars toward a commission investigating different irrigation schemes. This occurred after a dramatic address in the Legislature when he showed off "a desk laden with Newton pippin yellows and Ben Davis reds"[57] from his orchard showing the merits of irrigation. Later that year, Ellison accompanied the Commissioners on their tour of the North Okanagan. Commission author Professor Louis Carpenter says they "drove down by Long Lake to Kelowna, noting during the drive thousands of acres of valuable land which are expected in the near future to be brought under irrigation."[58] Some of the land Carpenter saw on that valley trip belonged to Ellison. By this time, there had been plenty of growth in the valley's orchard industry. Central Okanagan Land and Orchard Company President Dr. W.H. Gaddes told a Vancouver newspaper there had been phenomenal growth in the industry within six years. He cited Dominion census information saying B.C. fruit-growing acreage ballooned from over 7400 acres and 650,000 trees in 1901 to 25,000 acres and 1.5 million trees in 1907.[59] Gaddes says "year by year, good orchard land is becoming more valuable as the settlers pour into the country."[60] In fact, while addressing the Western Canada Irrigation Convention in Vernon in 1908, J.M. Robinson said all orchard land in Summerland six years earlier had been worth 100,000 dollars but in that year, the same land with irrigation was assessed at two million dollars.[61]

Ellison also believed irrigated land was highly-valued property. While addressing the same convention, he told delegates "a few years ago, lands in this district were assessed at two dollars an acre; today under irrigation, they are assessed at hundreds of dollars an acre, and they stand at that enhanced value not only for today but for all time to come."[62] Ellison's newspaper covered the event yet astutely did not report his comments concerning land value.[63]

Critics of my argument suggest that if Ellison wanted to make money turning over most of his holdings to irrigated land from the pasture and wheat fields he possessed, he would have done so during this period. These critics could point to Osoyoos water district records from 1911 which clearly show that despite the amount of land Ellison owned, very little of it had waterworks.[64] There are several fundamental reasons why Ellison chose not to or could not transfer the majority of his landholdings to irrigable lands. They include the lack of powerful influence he had in the McBride Government, the cost of maintaining such works, the current labour situation in the Valley, the quality of labour service Ellison had at his disposal and the fact that one bad political move and an even worse business decision prevented him from reaping the rewards he tried to sow in his development career.

It took Ellison 11 years of service and winning re-election three times before Premier McBride gave him a Cabinet position.

While serving those 11 years as a backbencher, his only major accomplishment involved the 1908 Commission report on irrigation and the New Vernon High School. He often said "the government was going rather too slow in this matter [irrigation], and the Hon. Mr. Fulton had said that they would go slow."[65] Five years after the Commission report, Ellison held the portfolio of Finance and Agricultural Minister. Despite this, he had still not convinced McBride and other politicians in the lower Mainland and Vancouver Island to settle the irrigation question satisfactorily. He informed the Western Canada Irrigation Association Convention in 1913 that "the government has appointed a commission to inquire into

matters pertaining to agriculture in all its branches . . . and I have no doubt that it will depend very largely upon the recommendation of that committee what policy the government will adopt."[66] In other words, Ellison could not influence policy on his word alone. He took a chance the Royal Commission on Agriculture would support the concept of government paying for irrigation.[67]

Ellison wanted the government to pay for the total cost of surveying and constructing irrigation works and then to tax orchardists for the works for the first ten years. Afterwards, ownership of the system would revert to the orchardists with fees paid to a taxation district.[68] Ellison acknowledged "the initial cost if undertaken by the government might be greater than if performed by a private company, but the cost would be nothing compared with the extra taxes they would derive from that land after the water was put onto it."[69] In one way, Ellison probably felt his political peers discriminated against him because of the location of his riding. He said "the government of the day was spending thousands of dollars in dyking land [in the lower mainland] to keep the water off, and [added] they could very well afford to spend very much more in putting the water on the land, for the returns would be much greater."[70] In fact, by 1915, the Provincial Secretary's office responded to petitions from lower mainland farmers urging the province to maintain and administer dyking and draining infrastructure in their areas by doing just that.[71]

Ellison knew he had to get the government on board with this idea because he and other orchardists could not make money if they had to pay for and maintain the infrastructure themselves. Ellison told irrigation officials and farmers "the scheme is so large that private capital cannot take care of it [and] these companies have found it a greater undertaking than they thought."[72] Concurring with this would be the Kelowna Land and Orchard Company. It controlled the shares of the South Kelowna Land Company (SKL). SKL's irrigation system had been difficult to build and a tremendous cost. As a result, the land did not sell well. This caused problems for KLO directors such as T.W. Sterling. In a letter to another director Bob Pooley, Sterling outlined the predicament:

There is no way of the SKL continuing in business, nor can one see that there is likely to be any prospect in the near future of their being able to do so, except by the guarantors throwing sops to the bank and also finding the funds for the running expenses of the company. If we did this, we are almost certain to find ourselves after a period of time in just the same position as we are now but with our resources further depleted and less able to meet our obligation to the bank.[73]

Ellison probably saw this as a big obstacle in trying to convert his rangeland into orchards.

Another obstacle for Ellison dealt with the lack of available labour for a working orchard. Prior to and throughout World War I, limited farm labour existed in the valley. The 1914 Royal Commission on Agriculture report found "the difficulty in securing efficient labour was frequently assigned by witnesses as a reason, not only for failure to extend farming operations, but even for their curtailment, as where small fruit growing has been abandoned and dairying given up in favour of selling hay."[74] There would have been no point in Ellison converting his farmland to orchard when he did not have the available labour to help with the harvest.

Besides, the current farm hands on Ellison's land were not competent. In 1909, a neighbour north of Lumby successfully sued Ellison for 470 dollars in damages; a fire spread out of control from Ellison's hired men who were clearing land for the politician. Ellison appealed the decision two years later, saying "his men acted against his instructions."[75] Five years later, the fruit inspection department of the government conducted a special report on Ellison's orchard near Swan Lake. Sydney Dash reported most trees were in such a bad state that "any horticulturist, possessed of meagre intelligence, would remove [the trees] under any circumstance."[76] Many of the trees looked like small bushes because they were never pruned and they also were infested with insects like the Apple Leaf Hopper. Many farmers and irrigation experts must have felt Ellison's embarrassment at the 8th annual Western Canada Irrigation Association convention in Penticton when during a question and answer session, he shared a problem he had at another orchard:

The sheep got in by mistake last year and did great damage to 500 trees. My advice is to keep the sheep as far away from the orchard as you possibly can, for they trimmed the trees as clean as you could have done with a knife.[77]

Upon hearing this, Mr. Johnstone in the audience responded "I may say I kept my sheep all last winter in the orchard and fed them all the good hay on it, and certainly they never touched a single tree."[78]

Ellison's frustration over the quality of his workers bubbled up in a meeting with a bank manager in 1916:

I have had several managers or rather mis-managers during my tenure of office in Victoria, and I have found them to be very expensive & altogether incompetent, reckless and not able to handle men or know what a day's work is . . . I take pride myself in being able to handle men and get the best results. They know that I understand what is required of them.[79]

It's unfortunate Ellison's daughter did not attend that meeting. Myra DeBeck felt her father's "attitude to them was generous, fair minded and kindly."[80]

The beginning of the end for Price Ellison took place in the late days of February in 1915. At this time, he sat on the board of directors of Vancouver's Dominion Trust company. This brokerage firm dealt with mortgages, stocks, bonds, insurance and sold and purchased real estate. That month, Lands Minister W.R. Ross came under heavy fire for selling public lands at low prices to speculators, namely Dominion Trust. Additionally, an opposition backbencher in the Legislature asked Ellison about the sale of some cows and horses from the government's Colony Farm near Coquitlam in 1912. Ellison confessed he purchased the livestock, and later on, that he was associated with Dominion Trust.

Days passed, and Ellison refused to resign or explain his actions beyond the question asked in the Legislature. The Editor of the **Vancouver Sun** found this simply unacceptable:

Every day [Ellison remains silent] adds to the shame of British Columbia. They know that unless the Hon. Minister can clear himself of the grave accusations of graft that he is admittedly unfit to hold office . . . Every day poor men are being sent to prison for crimes infinitely more justifiable than the one with which Mr. Ellison is charged.[81]

The next day, Ellison stood up in the legislature to give a full explanation of the livestock purchase. He claimed he paid full market value for the animals, he bought the animals sight unseen from Victoria and, in the end, he sustained a heavy loss as the animals were in poor shape.[82] Presumably, Ellison chose to explain this scandal and not his role in the Dominion Trust Scandal because the former was less damning.

Myra DeBeck suggests that "although a strong conservative in politics, [Ellison] endeavoured to keep [the **Vernon News**] as unbiased as possible and to give his opponents a fair chance."[83] Ellison's local opponents certainly did not have a fair chance to explain their side in his paper during this scandal. Opposition claims in this incident never made the paper that week; only Ellison's explanation to which the Editor obliged his employer with the headline "A FULL EXPLANATION OF CATTLE PURCHASE: Hon. Price Ellison Vindicates Himself Completely of any Unworthy Motives in Connection With Colony Farm Transaction."[84] Ellison told the Legislature this "petty affair"[85] had been trumped up by the opposition to make political capital and suggested "the people of [Okanagan] would have the opportunity of saying whether they thought him guilty of any such things."[86] Despite those words, he then resigned as Finance and Agriculture Minister as Premier McBride dissolved the Legislature. The bitterest irony that Ellison had to live with happened two weeks later when the government ordered a Finance ministry engineer named A.R. Mackenzie to conduct a report on the physical and financial conditions of the irrigation projects of the province.[87] Mackenzie eventually recommended that the government pay for and maintain works through irrigation districts, something Ellison had always promoted and which would have, not coincidentally, made him a rich man.

As the election approached in the fall of 1916, much of Ellison's landholdings were in jeopardy. Ellison became President of Dominion Trust in 1916 and made a fatal mistake in pledging his landholdings "as security to the bank in order to keep the company going as the other partners were unable to come up with the money."[88] In November, a legal notice appeared in his newspaper stating that the banks seized most of his property as collateral from the bankrupt Dominion Trust Company.[88] Politically, the news was worse two months earlier. On September 14th, Ellison lost the election to Liberal Dr. K.C. MacDonald in the Okanagan as the Grits swept the scandal-ridden Conservatives under McBride. Ellison now only possessed his Vernon home and little more than 271 acres which was held under his son's name during the liquidation.

Ellison tried to make a political comback but did not succeed. He ran under the Conservative banner in the 1920 election, but disarray within the party caused Ellison to back out just before the election campaign. In 1924, he created his own party and ran as leader. His political opponents scoffed at his comeback saying the bankrupt Vernon resident "has not got a dollar and has not bread enough to eat?"[90] Ellison would counter making fun of his plump frame and question, "Do I look as though I have not bread enough to eat".[91] Despite having some support in Vernon, Ellison finished third in balloting.

Life became bleaker for Ellison. The next year he suffered a stroke from which he would never recover. In 1931, the upper portion of his Vernon house sustained sixteen thousand dollars damage in a fire and it "likely was a contributing factor to his death several months later."[92] On December 12th, 1932, Price Ellison died in Vernon Jubilee Hospital of bronchial pneumonia at the age of 81. His wife Sophia, along with seven of his eight children, could not attend the funeral service due to their contraction of influenza.[93] Probate records show Ellison's net worth, willed to Sophia in the height of the depression, to be over 14,000 dollars.[94] Part of that estate included shares in the **Vernon Daily News** where Ellison's daughter Myra had been employed as a reporter since 1929.

Certainly Price Ellison's contribution to the Okanagan Valley was immense, not just through his community involvement, but also in advocating lasting contributions such as government subsidized irrigation infrastructure for the valley. However, one must keep in perspective what motivated Ellison to do these things. He espoused how his actions benefited the community or Okanagan society; however, under examination, his actions mirrored that of other politicians of his time; men who used their office, whether at the local or senior level, for financial gain. Price Ellison, the Okanagan Valley pioneer is a symbol of self-interested politics in early British Columbian history.

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**FOOTNOTES**

1. Margaret A Ormsby, A Study of the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia, (MA Thesis: UBC, 1931), p. 54.
2. Margaret A. Ormsby, **British Columbia: A History**, (Vancouver: MacMillan, 1958), p. 356..
3. Myra K. DeBeck, "Price Ellison, A Memorial by his Daughter", **12th Report of the Okanagan Historical Society**, 1948, p. 48-58.
   Ken Ellison, **A Short History of an Okanagan Valley Pioneer**, (self published: Oyama, 1988)
   Ellison made 50 copies to give to family, friends, and museums. He is the grandson of Price Ellison.
4. **Vernon Daily News**, December 15th, 1932.
5. This is detail given by Price Ellison in a campaign speech held at the Empress Theatre in Vernon on June 4th, 1924. Vernon Museum Archives.
6. Ellison, **Price Ellison**, p. 5.
7. **The Inland Sentinel**, November 9th, 1882.
8. Telegram from Kamloops Government Agent G.E. Tunstall, November 11th, 1882, A-G Ministry files Box 1, File 11, Folios 168, 199, 159, 166, 202 & 198 (or "Smart Aleck" file), BC Archives. L193.
9. Smart Aleck file, November 30th, 1882, BC Archives.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.

12. Registrar of Company Records, BC Archives. It should be noted Ellison's wife, Sophia, was the principal shareholder in the newspaper for those 40 years. Ellison was Chairman of the paper in 1912 and stayed on as President until 1925.
13. **Kamloops Inland Sentinel**, October 20th, 1888.
14. **Vernon News**, July 2nd, 1891.
15. Ibid., November 5th, 1891.
16. Ibid., June 2nd, 1892.
17. Ibid., October 4th, 1894.
18. Ibid., October 15th, 1891.
19. Ibid., May 18th, 1893.
20. Ibid., July 27th, 1893.
21. Ibid., March 8th, 1894.
22. Phyllis A LaLonde, "The French Family - 1881-1966" in the **31st Report of the Okanagan Historical Society**, 1967, p. 130.
23. Diary of Alice Barrett, Vol. 4 Nov.18, 1891 - Mar. 22, 1892 (Unpublished: Courtesy Vernon Museum Archives), Feb. 23, '92.
24. Ibid.
25. Myra K. DeBeck, "Price Ellison, A Memorial by his Daughter", **12th Report of the Okanagan Historical Society**, 1948, p. 53.
26. Maps in the Vernon Museum Archives show in 1890, one of the roads was called "Ellison Avenue". Two years later, the town map showed "Price Avenue" had been added parallel and north of Ellison Avenue.
27. He also became fire brigade captain, a director of the Vernon Curling Club, trustee to the Presbyterian Church and First Vice President of the Okanagan and Spallumcheen Agricultural Association during this time.
28. **Vernon News**, January 12th, 1893.
29. Ibid., January 19th, 1893.
30. Ibid., November 9th, 1893.
31. Ibid., April 19th, 1894.
32. Ibid.
33. DeBeck, "Price Ellison", p. 58.
34. Letter from Hozier et al to William Smithe, October 26th, 1885, Price Ellison file, Vernon Museum Archives.
35. Dewdney's letter to the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, November 28th, 1885, Price Ellison file, Vernon Museum Archives.
36. Ibid., December 17th, 1885.
37. In a letter from Dewdney to his superiors, he writes about affidavits and counter-affidavits being filed by the parties involved before the hearing. Dewdney suggests in his phrasing from a pervious conversation, Ellison declared the plaintiff to be his enemy, Ibid, December 5th, 1885.
38. **Vernon News**, December 24th, 1891.
39. Ibid., July 30th, 1891.
40. Ibid., April 28th, 1892.
41. Ibid., December 3rd, 1891.
42. Ellison, **Price Ellison**, p. 23.
43. Ibid., p. 30.
44. Vernon News, March 31st, 1892.
45. Ibid., March 3rd, 1892.
46. Ibid., March 17th 1892
47. Ibid., May 18th, 1893.
48. Ibid., June 30th, 1892.
49. Ormsby, Okanagan Valley, p. 161.
50. Ellison, **Price Ellison**, p. 33.
51. Ibid.
52. This c1910 townsite map is the only one of its era available. Both the Black Mountain Irrigation District and Rutland Water Works confirm their oldest maps do not go beyond 1927. Map courtesy Kelowna Museum Archives.
53. Ellison, **Price Ellison**, p. 26.
54. David Falconer, "Hewers of Granite" **The 41st Report of the Okanagan Historical Society**, Nov. 1977, p. 60.
55. **Vernon News**, July 21st, 1892.
56. Ibid., June 2nd, 1892.
57. Unidentified newspaper article from Price Ellison file, Vernon Museum Archives, dated April 10th, 1907.
58. Report of the Irrigation Commission to the Provincial Secretary's Office, February 11th, 1908, BC Sessional Papers, 1908 Microfilm, p. 1.
59. Reprinted in **Vernon News**, Aug. 13th, 1908.
60. Ibid.
61 Ibid.
62. **Report of Proceedings from the 2nd Annual Western Canada Irrigation Convention in Vernon**, OUC Archives, p. 25.
63. Every speaker in the Report of Proceedings including Ellison at least talked briefly about increased land value through irrigation. The newspaper reporter wrote something about every speaker and each story at least alluded to land values with the exception of Ellison's speech. The omission of this detail by the reporter could well be innocent, but certainly is an interesting coincidence considering Ellison owned the newspaper.
64. Osoyoos Water District Records of the Kelowna Precinct, November 29th, 1911, Kelowna Museum Archives.
65. WCIA Minutes, Vernon, 1908. p. 25.
66. Ibid., 1913 minutes, p. 49
67. As it turned out, the Royal Commission supported the Government's stance to have private land companies construct and maintain works. This despite "the existence of a great deal of confusion with respect to water rights" as court battles between land owners and the government took place. The controversy of British Riparian water rights and new provincial water laws allowing private control could have been another factor why Ellison would have been tentative in converting most of his land to irrigation.
68. This would be the equivalent to how an irrigation district operates today in the Okanagan.
69. WCIA Convention, 1908, p. 25.
70. Ibid., p. 24.
71. Petitions and follow-up correspondence involved farmers around Dewdney and the Langley Drainage and Dyking District. Found in Provincial Secretary Archives, 1915, B.C. Archives.
72. WCIA Convention, 1913, p. 49.
73. Letter from Sterling to Pooley, December 3rd, 1913, cited in **Paying for Rain: A History of the South East Kelowna Irrigation District**, Jay Ruzesky and Tom Carter, SEKID, 1990, p. 47.
74. The Royal Commission on Agriculture Report, **B.C. Sessional Papers**, 1914, Microfilm, p. 23.
75. Ellison, **Price Ellison**, p. 28.
76. Sydney Dash's report on the Honourable Price Ellison's Orchard c1914, B.C. Archives, Box two, file four, p.1.
77. **Report of Proceedings from the WCIA Convention in Penticton** August 17th-19th, 1914, p. 90.
78. Ibid.
79. Ellison, **Price Ellison**, p. 27.
80. DeBeck, "Price Ellison", p. 58.
81. **Vancouver Sun**, March 6th, 1915.
82. **Victoria Times Colonist**, March 7th, 1915, B.C. Legislative Assembly Sessional Clippings, Microfilm J110.H6.
83. DeBeck, "Price Ellison", p. 58.
84. **Vernon News**, March 11th, 1915, p. 1.
85. **Times Colonist**, March 7th, 1915.
86. Ibid.
87. Ruzesky & Carter, **Paying for Rain**, p. 45.
88. Ellison, **Price Ellison**, p. 27.
89. **Vernon News**, November 22nd, 1916.
90. Speech by Price Ellison at Empress Theatre in Vernon, June 4th, 1924, p. 8.
91. Ibid.
92. Ellison, **Price Ellison**, p. 18.
93. Ibid.
94. Vernon Supreme Court Probate Records, 1932, B.C. Archives, Box 5, File 12.

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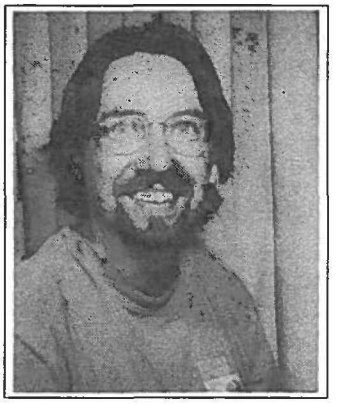


***George Richard, author of this essay - winner of the Burnaby Historical Society Scholarship.***

# *Booze Across the Border*

## *by Gary Montgomery*

*Thirst quenchers for Montana visitors near Fernie, B.C. c.1922.*

Along the 49th parallel that marks the International Boundary between the United States and Canada, there's a 100 mile stretch in the northwest corner Montana and the southeast corner of British Columbia, where there are only two places the line can be legally crossed. But, that's 100 miles as the raven would fly. Should one decide to follow the actual border, he or she would traverse a much greater distance and encounter along the way terrain that requires mountain climbing skills. It is safe to say, that except for the eight mile wide Tobacco Plains and the roughly mile wide North Fork drainage, the remainder is either impassable or passable only to a hiker or a pack train.

The span of the Tobacco Plains has been a place to secretly cross the International Border for as long as there has been a border. Even as early as the 1870s, whiskey and other contraband was smuggled north into what was at that time the Northwest Territories, where neither Indian nor white man could take a legal drink.

When work was completed on the Canadian Pacific railroad in the early part of the century and the Chinese workers were laid off, the Americans immediately passed the "Chinese Exclusion Act." Still, the Chinese managed an underground railway between the well established west coast Chinese in Vancouver with those in Butte and to a lesser extent in Missoula, where opium and refugees were commonly slipped across.

Indians treated the imaginary line with total disregard and on at least one occasion "Buffalo Soldiers" from Ft. Missoula were sent to quiet things at the border. Later, Canadian farmers casually drove tractors and trucks across the border to avoid paying a high duty.

As early as 1915, in the climate of World War I, which Canada joined in 1914, British Columbia began going dry. By 1917 they were totally dry and along with the gradual drying out came the steady increase in smuggling bootleg whiskey north. But now, the largely Protestant and family oriented grain farmers who were then and remain to this day a formidable force to be reckoned with at the polls, started agitating for prohibition in Montana. It came in 1919 and then Federal prohibition of alcohol followed in 1920. The Treasury Department jumped hard on the little border towns where enterprising men and women stood ready to profit no matter which way the booze moved. Ironically, Canada did not forbid the export of alcohol so warehouses of it existed in basements and barns near the border. Now the flow reversed as whiskey was moved out of Canada into the U.S.

The small towns of Rexford, just a few miles south of the border along the Kootenay River, and Fernie, nestled along the Elk River some-40 miles to the northeast, were also connected by a spur line that ran between the main east-west lines of the Great Northern and Canadian Pacific Railroads. And so, with full prohibition in effect and lots of Federal money to fund the project, extreme pressure came to bear on those who would flaunt federal authority to meet the demand for tax free alcohol. Not long after the end of World War I, the "dry squads" were becoming a potent force in northern Montana.

From the beginning, it was an uphill battle for the authorities and by the time prohibition had ended in 1933, an expensive lesson had been learned - **morality cannot be legislated**. Prohibiting the manufacture and distribution of alcohol did nothing to stem the demand. It merely took it from under the watchful eye of government and there was no shortage of people ready to step forward to meet the demand and reap the profits. The fact that the Canadians did not prohibit the making of booze for export only made enforcing the law south of the border that much more difficult.

One of the major players in southeast-

ern British Columbia was Fernie entrepreneur Emilio Picariello. From humble beginnings as an ice cream peddler, Picariello rose to become a major player in moving liquor across the border into the United States. He and his henchmen, who included his son, most commonly worked the border in the prairie country of western Alberta, but the Tobacco Plains saw more than a few of his liquor laden cars pass its way in the early 1920s.

***Gus Costanzo:*** *"Picariello went through here (Tobacco Plains) the odd times. There were quite a few roads and trails like between Gateway where the Great Northern came through and the customs here at Roosville. That's quite a space there and there's lots of open country they could go through."*

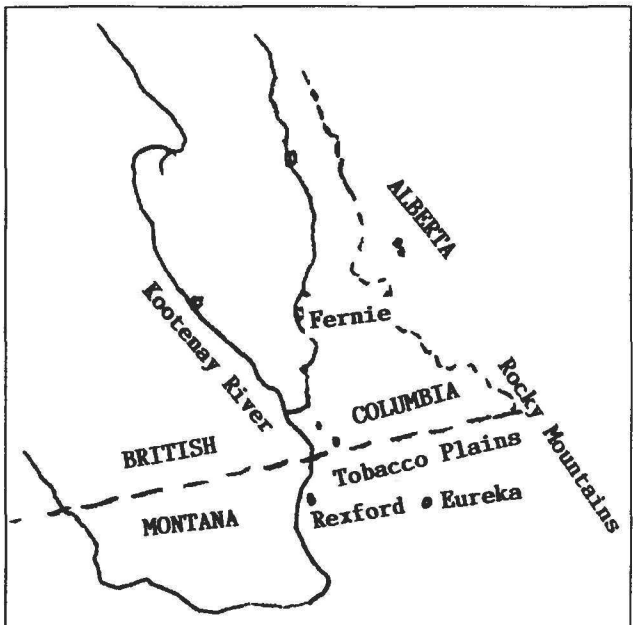
But, the money that Picariello accumulated did him no good when in a fit of anger he shot Alberta Provincial policeman and former chief of police of Fernie, Stephan Lawson. Picariello was ultimately hanged for his rash act. Unfortunately, a quiet and enigmatic young woman, Florence Lasandro of Fernie, was also caught up in the people's quest for retribution. She too was hanged one dark day at the provincial prison near Edmonton, Alberta, although it is unlikely that she had anything to do with the killing beyond the fact that it was her misfortune to be in the bootlegger's car at the time.

**Jim Costanzo:** *"Emilo Picariello used to come to our ranch. He was visiting all the time when he was in that bootlegging business. I think most of the supply came from Alberta 'cause old Picariello, he had a lot people making that moonshine. The cops there couldn't catch on to him. Either that or they didn't want to. I don't know which. The woman that got hanged with him - she was our cousin. But, she was innocent. What happened there, see old Picareillo, he was pretty well off and he figured he could buy his way out, eh? So he got her to take the blame for it. But, she never done the shooting. She said she did and the reason she said that was she figured that he'd be able to get her off, but it didn't work that way. They both were hanged."*

The spur line of the Great Northern Railroad that ran between Rexford and Fernie for the purpose of moving coal into the States was also a popular means of moving illicit booze. Specially designed sacks were used to prevent the bottles from breaking.

***Sid Workman:*** *"I know one guy who'd ride a coal train to Fernie and he'd get him a pack sack full of Canadian whiskey and ride the coal car back to Rexford."*

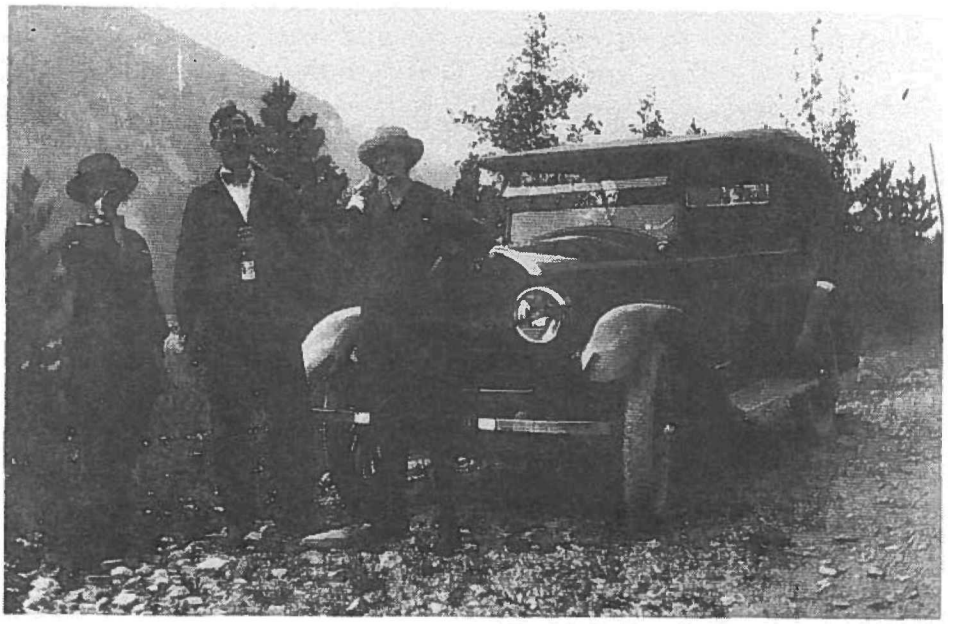
***Jim Costanzo:*** *"Us guys were pretty young fellows. We seen quite a bit of it though. Like the guys when they were hauling in cars and stopping trains and loading the booze into the coal cars. We knew some of the guys that were traveling around with it, eh? A guy by the name of Alabama Joe, he worked for Jack Wilson, Wilson was a bootlegger in this part of the country same as Picariello was for Alberta. They used to travel at night in big cars. One day we were going down to a place they call four-mile just out of Fernie and we saw the two cars at the crossing and this train was there and these guys were loading sacks of booze into the coal car. That was around 1926-27, something like that."*




***The Southeast corner of British Columbia.***

The coal train, though a popular means of transporting the untaxed alcohol, was far from the only way the booze was moved. The Kootenay River was also used.

***Mary Roo:*** (reading from the book, **Backtracking**) *"In the bootlegging days, Oliver Abbey (her father) built several large flat boats for a bootlegger, who would load them up with liquor and go down the Kootenay River with high water. The first load was lost when the boat hit the rocks in some rapids near Newgate, but after that many 'successful' trips were made."*



***Enjoying a trip to "stock up."***

Pictures from a pioneer collection owned by the author.

**Tyler Lindberg:** *"Me and another kid pulled a boat out of the river and a bootlegger bought it from us for $20. He loaded it with whiskey and turned it loose and met it on the other side of the line. And they'd take wire and tie two logs together and load the whiskey on and let them go. They bootlegged everyway you could imagine. Even airplanes come in here. Howard Brown was a big chief bootlegger. He used to have those big Hudson cars and that. So he bought a plane and got a pilot to bring it up and land it. They'd even get the Indians down there. One fella loaded up their wagons and then put their tents on top and the police wouldn't bother them."*

***Alec Gravelle:*** *"There was a few bootleggers that would get the Indians to pack it across the border. There was a guy named Jette Smith, he was a big bootlegger around Eureka. My dad had this Model T Ford. My mother would make it look like they were moving back down to the 69 Ranch. They were haying there. Any way we didn't cross the border at the legal crossing. We went around to Scott's Grade. Jette Smith met us there at the 69 in a big Buick and then would take it all the way to Missoula."*

The large touring cars of the day were the most common, and perhaps the most practical means for transporting bootleg alcohol, as sooner or later, no matter how it got across the border, the contraband liquor had to be distributed to "speakeasies" or "blind pigs," as they were sometimes called.

***Mary Roo:*** *"So you see the States was dry. The liquor all seemed to come in from Alberta to a licensed warehouse in Fernie. Then they had places down here where the bootleggers would come. They would load up with their liquor and away they would go across the line. 'Boots' Coombs, who was my husband's (Fred Roo) great friend, was a dry squad man down there. They used to catch them, take their liquor and have auctions every once in a while to sell off their cars. My dad (Oliver Abbey) got a nice Studebaker one time."*

***Tyler Lindberg:*** *"The road down to the states was just a ditch. They'd get stuck, bust a drive shaft, bust an axle, my father'd take the horses out. They'd unload whiskey and dad would put it in the barn and nobody'd know a thing about it. They'd pay him for it. The cops were comin' round all the time, they didn't know where it went. Some of the cars had big bumpers made out of railroad steel. Sometimes they'd wait around a curve and when the dry squad came along they'd backup and push them over the bank. There was Paul Bedner, he had a big Hudson. And Freddie Roo used to haul whiskey."*

***Vernon Uphill:*** *"The next time I went down to Grasmere was in 1924. And my father made arrangements for me to get this ride with this fellow from Grasmere. He had a Model T Ford with a Ruxall gear. When he picked me up, he had 40 to 46 cases of liquor. He picked it up at the export house in Fernie."*

***George Shea:*** *"My uncle had a big barn in the Flathead with an old shed behind it. A lot of times if it got too hot for one of those bootleggers so he'd park them in that shed for a few days 'til it cooled off. I knew a lot of those "dry squaders" around here. I don't know what they were, must of been Federal. There was a bunch of them around here. Oh hell, they had everything fixed. Those bootleggers knew what the dry squad were doing. They paid their dues. If they didn't, they'd catch em'. If people down here in town wanted to go to Canada and pick up a load of liquor, he'd stop down here in town first and talk to that guy and pay him his fee. Of course, part of that went to the dry squad and maybe the sheriff's office. Any way, when they come back the damn dry squad would be on U.S. 93 and the bootleggers took the next road over. Next time the dry squad would be on the other road and 10 or 12 or more of those guys hauling liquor run together."*

While many of the runners came from out of the area, some of them became local folk heroes as there was little sympathy for the government's effort, regardless of which side of the border one lived on, to stem the flow of alcohol. Besides, World War I ended just as prohibition began and many of the returning soldiers had nothing else to do as the Great Depression got off to an early start in this economically depressed part of the country.

***Mabel Leonard:*** *"Most of the ones making the runs weren't locals. The only way the locals might have been involved is they might have had a cache somewhere and load it for the runner. People just didn't want to get involved. My dad said, 'You don't want to say anything. Some of those bootleggers don't give a darn. If you turn them in, you're in trouble.' I know a lot of them down town here were helping them out too."*

***Darrell Roose:*** *"Maurine Thomas had a Model A and she used to haul us kids around in it and Ol' Webb Garey had one just like it and every now and then the "dry squad" would stop us and think it was Webb Garey, He was packing booze, you know? They tell about a time that Foster Hendrickon and his dad, Ed, helped Webb Garey out. They worked for the county and in those days they just had a grader and a Cat to smooth the road with. And on the old highway between where Smithers and the old brickyard used to be out that way, they were grading road and ol' Webb came by and yelled at them to turn that thing around. Webb went on to Foster, he turned that Cat around and, of course, that grader was way behind. It took Ed 15 or 20 minutes to turn that thing around and before he got it turned around the "dry squad" came along and they couldn't get by."*

It was Webb Garey who came up with what might have been the most novel means for transporting booze across the border.

***Darrell Roose:*** *"Out here at the Hollenbach place, that used to be the old Garey ranch. My uncle, he rented that ranch out there and 'ol Webb let him have it for nothing just to take care of the horse and the whiskey when he brought it down. This 'ol mare had a colt and they'd leave it in the barn and take the mare up to the line and load her down with booze and turn her loose. Of course, she'd come back to her colt."*

That the government was fighting an uphill battle is typified by the fact that bootlegging was often a family affair, thus proving that much of the populace did not consider the act to be a crime. Not uncommonly, children were privy to what was going on and were even used as cover in some cases.

***Darrell Roose:*** *"Some of them would take their cars and go up there - I won't mention no names - they'd take their kids with them and take the back cushion out of the old touring car. They'd go up and get a load of whiskey and come back with the kids in the back-end and they got by with that for awhile.*

Running the border wasn't always a lark and innocent people sometimes got caught up in the governement's effort to stem the flow.

***George Shea:*** *"There used to be some people up there by the name of Bedner. They had a party house. You could go up and get all the drinks you wanted. Even business people went up to have a drink. Don Bierly went up for awhile and come back. He was out here coming down 93 and the "dry squad" was after him and I guess he wasn't paying much attention. I suppose he had a few drinks, but they tried to stop him and he didn't stop. They unlimbered their guns on him and goddamn, he had half a dozen bullet holes in the back of his car. It's a wonder they didn't kill him. He stopped then and he didn't have nothin'."*

All the alcohol that was consumed in those tumultuous days was not legally Canadian liquor. Moonshiners operated on both sides of the border. More often than not they were small operators who worked their homesteads and supplemented their meager incomes with cash from the sale of still-made whiskey. This, even more than running the border, was commonly a family affair.

***Sid Workman:*** *"All the stuff that my folks ever made never poisoned anybody or anything and they'd get people to come back after it, you know, whoever their customers were. About that time it was selling for ten dollars a gallon - 85, 90 proof stuff. What my folks did wasn't big. They had just regular customers. A lot of people just come by and say, 'Well, it's time for my pint or quart of whiskey, some of them a gallon. That'd hold them over until they thought you had another gallon ready.*

*"It took the mash about two weeks to ferment. They called it - stop workin', 'Course, to run that is just one night's work or maybe half of one night cause this thing runs . . . if you get it to run one quart every few minutes you're doing real good. I can remember when I was 12 going and keeping the fire for the folks. Stayin' up a couple hours. I'd get ten cents a quart. I'd have to get that fine kindling early in the evening - burning steady there. You don't need very much fire. Once you get her going just keep everything burning steady and you gauge everything by how much is coming out.*

*"The neighbors would know what each other were doing and they'd swap stories and different methods and stuff like that. The best part about it we had a good sheriff in those days, ol' Frank Baney, and he'd just about like to let everybody know when he heard the revenue officers were comin' lookin' for a still. He'd get word to you some way and give you time to clean everything out and let'em come and go and not find anything.*

*"I wasn't quite going to school yet, I must have been five. My dad got word that there was going to be - they used to call it a 'revenue raid.' There'd be four or five of these guys come and search your house. My dad had this 30 gallon barrel goin' and he had a nice teepee tent that he always took hunting with him. One day he asked me, says, 'How would you like to play in the tent for awhile? First I gotta dig a hole.' So he and another guy got out there and they buried that barrel and then pitched that teepee tent over the top of it. I remember the revenuers comin' and lookin' around. Everything was underground so they couldn't smell anything. Otherwise, you could smell this stuff fermenting if you was around, say in the evening.*

*"My dad paid off a mortgage with whiskey at ten dollars a gallon. The guy was a judge, Judge Pomeroy. At one time, I think he was a representative or a senator. We were living in town at that time, 1929 or 30. My dad would bundle it up and put it on my sled and I'd haul it to town and take my sled right up the stairs. The judge would put it in the closet and give me a dime."*

The glory days of smuggling booze across the border ended in April of 1933 when the United States changed presidents. But, just prior to that, arresting the bootleggers had reached a fever pitch. Gary Wilson in his book, "**Honky-Tonk Town**," tells us that late in 1932 the dry squads made 180 arrests in one month alone and bootleggers who had been centered around Havre, Montana moved their operation to the west side of the Rockies. ". . . *Customs officers combined to catch a 'relief column' 25 miles west of Whitefish. The convoy consisted of eight men and eight autos with a cargo of 4000 quarts of scotch, bourbon, rye and beer from Canada. Four of the drivers were from different areas of Montana and the rest were Canadians. Hudsons, Cadillacs and Oldsmobiles were the favorite mode of transport."*

From its very inception, the border between the United States and Canada has been only a minor obstacle to those who were serious about moving contraband back and forth between the two countries. The spirit of cooperation that exists between businesspeople, friends and families that inhabit the border region has always been, and most likely will remain, the greatest obstacles for government enforcement agencies to overcome.

* * * * *

***Gary Montgomery was born in Pennsylvania, grew up in Florida, was educated in Colorado then moved to Montana in 1973. He now lives in Eureka, Montana close to the Canadian border. He publishes a small magazine The Trail (formerly the Tobacco Plains Journal) and interviewed all the quoted old times for stories in his magazines.***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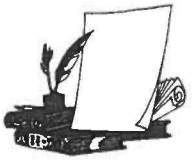


# The B.C. Express Company:

## Life Line to the Cariboo

### by Pat Foster

*Four horse stage in front of the old B.C. Express office in the 1890's A436.C*

In 1861, a solitary man walked from Yale to Soda Creek with a sack of mail, newspaper and parcels on his back. From Soda Creek he paddled an Indian canoe to Quesnel. Several times a year, in spring, summer and early fall, as long as the weather allowed, he made this difficult, seven hundred and sixty miles return trip, keeping the gold fields of the Cariboo in contact with the outside world. The charge for this service, two dollars per letter, one dollar per newspaper, a price readily paid by the lonely miners.

This intrepid man was Francis Jones Barnard. Born in Quebec City in 1829, he was a descendant of Francis Barnard who came from Europe to Deerfield, Massachusetts in 1642. His father Isaac Jones Barnard moved to Lower Canada in the early 1800's where he established a hardware business. Francis was only twelve years old when his father died in 1841, but he went to work and was able to provide for his mother and younger siblings. When he was twenty-five, he married Ellen Stillman, and two years later he and his wife and son moved to Toronto but he was unable to earn a satisfactory living there, so decided to seek his fortune out west. In 1858, he left his wife and son, went to New York, and sailed on a trading ship to Victoria. He survived the appalling conditions in third class steerage – heat, overcrowding, and rotten food – that caused the deaths of several of his fellow passengers.

He left Victoria and arrived in Yale with only a five dollar gold piece in his pocket. To earn money, he split fire wood and delivered it to homes and businesses in Yale. By living frugally, he saved enough to stake a gold claim, which he soon sold at a small profit. In 1859, he was elected constable, a dangerous job in those days when claim jumping (considered to be the ultimate crime) and disposing of the claim owner (almost as serious) were very common. His last duty as a policeman was escorting two prisoners to New Westminster by canoe. When they attempted to escape, Barnard, a powerful man, was able to subdue the convicts and get them safely to the penitentiary. However, he decided to find a less dangerous job, and hired on as purser on the newly built steamship **Fort Yale**, on which his wife and son arrived in 1860. On its very next trip, at Union Bar two miles above Hope, the ship's boiler exploded, not an uncommon event in those days. Five of the crew were killed, but Barnard, who was eating his dinner in the dining saloon, was thrown clear. He took this as a sign that he should again look for less hazardous employment.

He worked for a short time on the trail being built from Yale to Boston Bar, then he started packing mail to the Cariboo. In 1862, he was awarded the government postal contract and arranged with Dietz & Nelson to carry their express from Yale north. He bought a small mule, loaded the mail and express on its back, and led it up the trail to the Cariboo – the beginning of Barnard's Express.

In 1863, when the government completed the road to Soda Creek, Barnard expanded to two-horse light wagons which carried three passengers as well as mail and freight. In 1864 he put on the first four-horse, fourteen passenger stage connecting with the North Fraser canoe service at Soda Creek. In this year, his wagons and stages covered 110,600 miles, he employed thirty-eight men, not including agents, and used one hundred sixty horses. Fifteen hundred passengers were transported as well as four hundred fifty pieces of express, and other valuables, including gold, to a value of

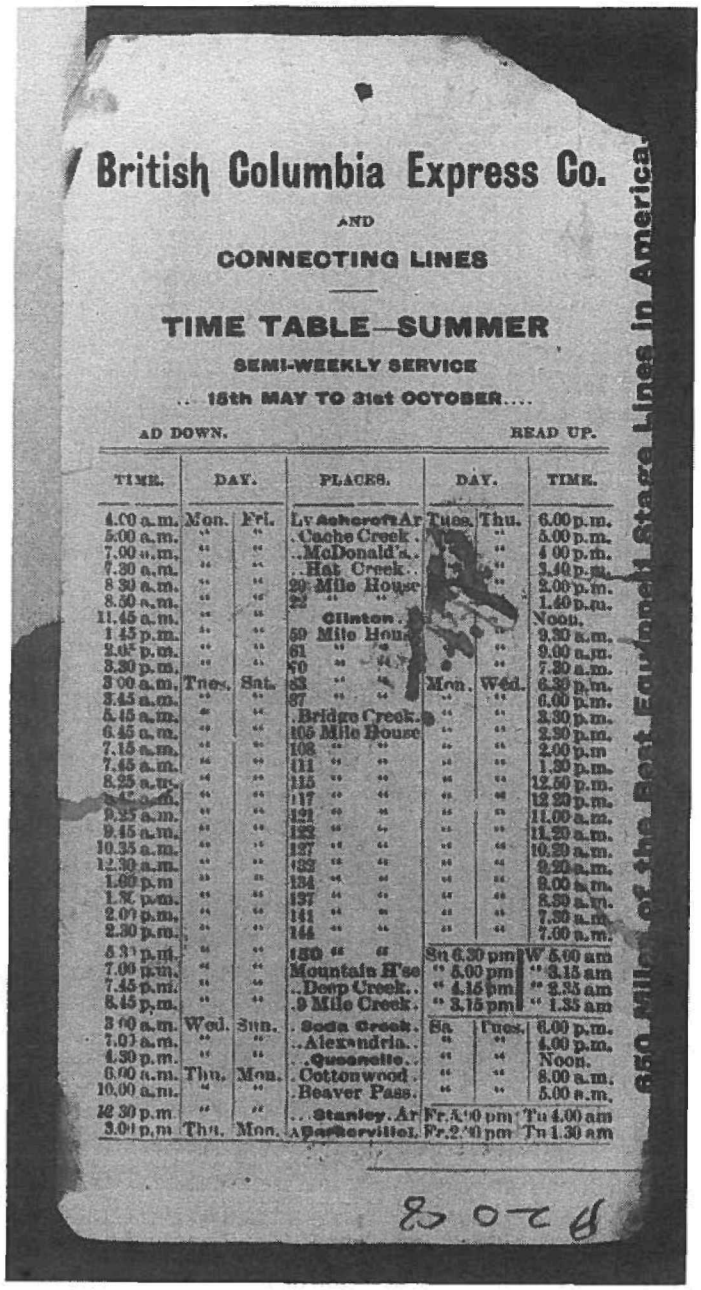
$4,619,000. On one trip alone a BX stage carried $600,000 of the precious metal from the Barkerville mines. By 1865, as the road was completed, he extended the service to Richfield, Barkerville and Camerontown.

In 1866 Barnard purchased the business of Dietz & Nelson of Victoria and gained control of the express and passenger business from Victoria to all points in B.C. By 1868 he had added six-horse stages and hired several more employees. Thus developed the B.C. Express Company, better known as the B.X. Company, the first established land transportation system west of the Rockies, and eventually, with routes covering over a thousand miles, second in size only to the legendary Wells Fargo.

The stage coach trip from Yale to Soda Creek, which took from forty-eight to fifty-two hours was made twice a week, and never a trip was missed in all the years that this route was in operation. Business men, miners, Indians, Chinese, dance hall girls, the whole spectrum of interior B.C. society, crammed the coaches on their way to make their fortune in the gold fields. Some lucky passengers were able to ride outside with the driver, listen to his stories, and enjoy the breathtaking scenery. Mind you, this was not for the faint of heart – the wheels just inches from the thousand foot precipices, the flimsy-looking trestles and bridges tenuously attached to the jutting rocks, all too easily seen from the outer seat could be terrifying.

Charles G. Major drove the first stage to Barkerville while Steve Tingley went ahead leaving extra horses at relay stations which he established at the "Mile Houses" which were approximately fifteen miles apart. Fresh horses were always ready, and hay and barns awaited the arriving animals, meals and lodging awaited the passengers. Enterprising residents, many of them road contractors, who lived where water was plentiful and vegetables and hay could be grown, established these stopping places. Because the original road came from Lillooet, most of the houses were numbered according to their distance from that town, although later some indicated the distance from Yale or Ashcroft, thus the apparent discrepancy in their numbering.

Some of them were noted for the quality of their food and lodging, some were not so good, but in general the traveler fared well on his journey. As the gold fever simmered down, prices stabilized, and a meal or a bed ranged from 50¢ a person as far as Quesnel to 75¢ beyond there, and generally would include all you could eat of at least one type of meat, several vegetables, pie, cake, fruit, milk and cream. Breakfast was substantially the same, except porridge might be added. Some of these houses still remain, Ashcroft Manor and Cottonwood House being two of the best preserved, as well as the very large stable at 83-Mile which was built in 1892-3 on property owned by Steve Tingley. These historic buildings are open to the public and well worth a stop by the history buff. Sadly, most of the houses have been destroyed by fire.



British Columbia Express Co.

AND

CONNECTING LINES

TIME TABLE—SUMMER

SEMI-WEEKLY SERVICE

... 15th MAY TO 31st OCTOBER....

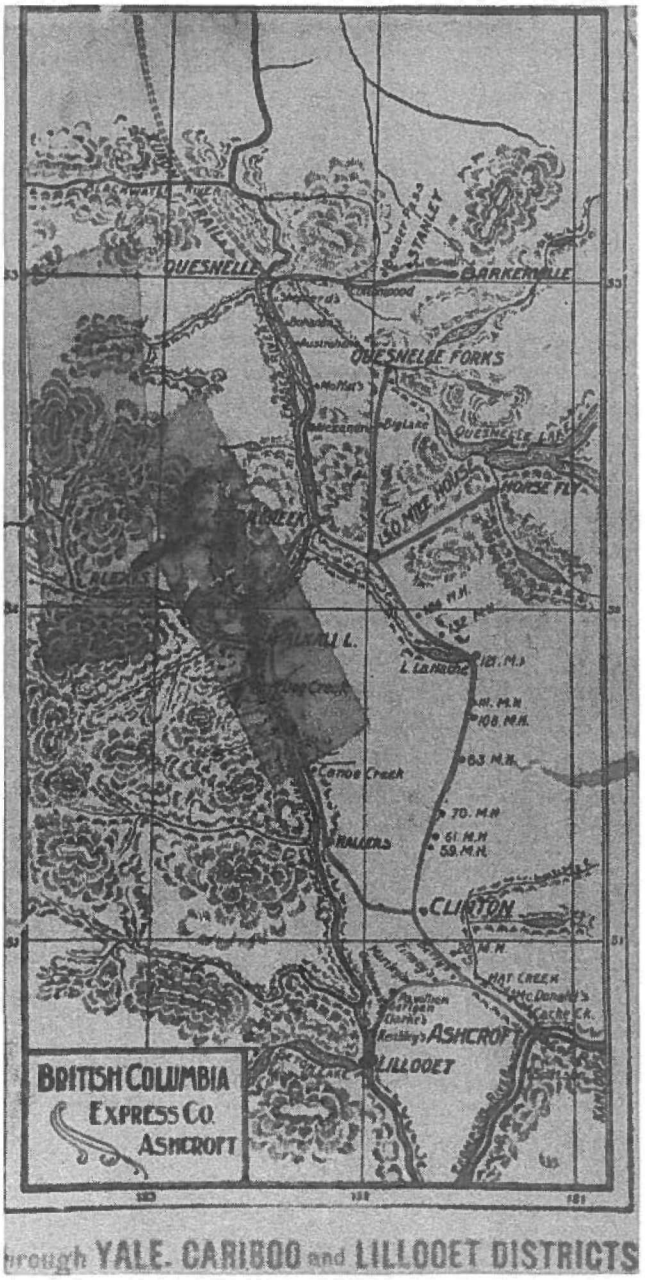
| AD DOWN. | | | | READ UP. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TIME. | DAY. | | PLACES. | DAY. | | TIME. |
| 4.00 a.m. | Mon. | Fri. | Lv Ashcroft Ar | Tues. | Thu. | 6.00 p.m. |
| 5.00 a.m. | " | " | Cache Creek | " | " | 5.00 p.m. |
| 7.00 a.m. | " | " | McDonald's | " | " | 4.00 p.m. |
| 7.30 a.m. | " | " | Hat Creek | " | " | 3.40 p.m. |
| 8.30 a.m. | " | " | 29 Mile House | " | " | 2.00 p.m. |
| 8.50 a.m. | " | " | 32 " " | " | " | 1.40 p.m. |
| 11.45 a.m. | " | " | Clinton | " | " | Noon. |
| 1.45 p.m. | " | " | 59 Mile House | " | " | 9.30 a.m. |
| 2.05 p.m. | " | " | 61 " " | " | " | 9.00 a.m. |
| 3.30 p.m. | " | " | 70 " " | " | " | 7.30 a.m. |
| 3.00 a.m. | Tues. | Sat. | 83 " " | Mon. | Wed. | 6.30 p.m. |
| 3.45 a.m. | " | " | 87 " " | " | " | 6.00 p.m. |
| 5.45 a.m. | " | " | Bridge Creek | " | " | 3.30 p.m. |
| 6.45 a.m. | " | " | 105 Mile House | " | " | 2.30 p.m. |
| 7.15 a.m. | " | " | 108 " " | " | " | 2.00 p.m |
| 7.45 a.m. | " | " | 111 " " | " | " | 1.30 p.m. |
| 8.25 a.m. | " | " | 115 " " | " | " | 12.50 p.m. |
| 8.45 a.m. | " | " | 117 " " | " | " | 12.20 p.m. |
| 9.25 a.m. | " | " | 121 " " | " | " | 11.00 a.m. |
| 9.45 a.m. | " | " | 123 " " | " | " | 11.20 a.m. |
| 10.35 a.m. | " | " | 127 " " | " | " | 10.20 a.m. |
| 12.30 a.m. | " | " | 132 " " | " | " | 9.20 a.m. |
| 1.00 p.m | " | " | 134 " " | " | " | 9.00 a.m. |
| 1.30 p.m. | " | " | 137 " " | " | " | 8.30 a.m. |
| 2.00 p.m. | " | " | 141 " " | " | " | 7.30 a.m. |
| 2.30 p.m. | " | " | 144 " " | " | " | 7.00 a.m. |
| 5.30 p.m. | " | " | 150 " " | Su 6.30 pm | | W 5.00 am |
| 7.00 p.m. | " | " | Mountain H'se | " 5.00 pm | | " 3.15 am |
| 7.45 p.m. | " | " | Deep Creek | " 4.15 pm | | " 2.35 am |
| 8.45 p.m. | " | " | 9 Mile Creek | " 3.15 pm | | " 1.35 am |
| 3.00 a.m. | Wed. | Sun. | Soda Creek | Sa. | Tues. | 6.00 p.m. |
| 7.00 a.m. | " | " | Alexandria | " | " | 4.00 p.m. |
| 4.30 p.m. | " | " | Quesnelle | " | " | Noon. |
| 6.00 a.m. | Thu. | Mon. | Cottonwood | " | " | 8.00 a.m. |
| 10.00 a.m. | " | " | Beaver Pass | " | " | 5.00 a.m. |
| 12.30 p.m. | " | " | Stanley Ar | Fr. 5.00 pm | | Tu 4.00 am |
| 3.00 p.m. | Thu. | Mon. | Barkerville Lv | Fr. 2.00 pm | | Tu 1.30 am |

850 Miles of the Best Equipped Stage Lines in America

*BX Time Table A208.C*

Tingley began his thirty-year career with the BX on that first stage trip, the start of an association which saw him rise from driver to partner in 1864, to director, to manager, and ultimately to sole owner in 1886 when the fifty-seven year old Barnard, after twenty-five years running the BX, decided to retire. Tingley had arrived in Yale in 1861, coming from New Brunswick via San Francisco. He tried his hand at mining in the Cariboo for two seasons, then, as did many novice miners, decided there was a better living to be made in business, so returned to Yale and ran a harness shop for a short time before joining Barnard.

Barnard was not totally out of the transportation industry when he sold the BX. In partnership with Beedy, he imported two steam coaches from Scotland for use on the Cariboo Road carrying freight from Yale to Soda Creek. Although these machines made much faster progress than horse teams on level




*BX Route map. A208.C*

ground, they had to make numerous stops to pick up the wood needed to operate the boilers. In addition, going up or down hill so affected the water level in the boilers that they became overheated and developed leaks – not too useful on this mountainous road. The first and only trip came to a sudden halt when the coaches were unable to climb up Jackass Mountain in the Fraser Canyon so Barnard abandoned the project and sold them to Jeremiah Rogers for clearing timber in Vancouver.

While still running the BX, Barnard had represented the Yale-Lytton riding in the B.C. Legislative Council, and at the Yale Convention of 1868, with De Cosmos and Robson, he was instrumental in convincing the delegates that union with Canada was both desirable and necessary. He was a member of the House of Commons from 1879 to 1886 and had contributed substantially to the development of British Columbia and Canada by the time he died in 1889. His sons carried on his tradition of service to the province and the country, (Sir) Francis Stillman Barnard as Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia and G.H. Barnard as Senator.

The CPR tracks had been laid through Ashcroft in 1884 and a bridge constructed across the Thompson River connecting Ashcroft to the Cariboo Road in 1886. When Tingley took over sole ownership of the BX, he moved his headquarters to Ashcroft. People, mail, and freight came to this point by train, then transferred to the stagecoaches and freight wagons. Ashcroft became the new gateway to the Cariboo.

As the BX prospered so did Ashcroft. One of the most important businesses with the office, freight and wagon warehouses, livery stable, and houses for employees right in town, barns, corals, and fields on the outskirts, the BX attracted many other private businesses: wheelwrights, blacksmiths, merchants, hotel and restaurants.

We tend to picture stage coach drivers as rough-hewn, hard-drinking fellows, but not so the BX employees. Chosen for their ability to drive and their reliability, they handled the horses and stage with expertise and took seriously their obligation to deliver the mail, express and passengers safely and on time. The horses were unhitched, fed, and bedded down as soon as they arrived at a stop, then the passengers were attended to. The driver was a good host, sitting at the head of the table to ensure everyone was properly cared for, and entertaining his passengers, often with stories of the Cariboo Road. Women, no matter what their station in life, from prostitutes to the wives of the gentry, were always given special consideration, offered the choice of places to sit on the stage, seated to the right of the driver at meals, and given the most comfortable room at the stopovers.

Just as the drivers of the stages were a special breed, so were the horses that pulled them. Never broken as were horses used for other purposes, they were useful only for pulling the stagecoaches, but at that they excelled. It was rarely that the driver needed to use the long whip that he carried.

To guarantee a safe departure, a specific routine had to be observed. First the mail, express and baggage were loaded and made secure, then passengers were asked to board. After the driver had taken his seat, the wheel-team was brought out, positioned, their harness and rigging adjusted to the satisfaction of the driver, and their reins passed to him; the swing team was brought out, and the same process followed. Only then was the lead team brought from the stable. This lively pair usually inspired some very colorful language from the hostler who had his work cut out for him to hook them up and get out of the way before the driver released the brake. Immediately they were off, rearing up on their hind legs once or twice and unnerving the more fainthearted passengers, before they settled down to a brisk trot to the next station.

The BX schooners, bright red with yellow trim, pulled by these high-spirited horses, were an awesome sight as they flew down the long hill into Ashcroft. In the 1860s, needing more horses to keep pace with his expanding business,

Barnard sent Tingley to Southern California to purchase five hundred head which he drove overland to Vernon to start the BX Ranch, which from that time supplied all the stage horses.

An old timetable advertises the BX as "650 miles of the best equipped stage lines of America". The average trip took four days each way. Special trips were frequently made in less time. All parts of the Interior were served by the BX, including Lillooet, Chilcotin, Alkali Lake, Horsefly, Quesnelle, 150-Mile House, Soda Creek, and Barkerville.

In winter, stages were replaced by sleds. The first to try this was Steve Tingley in January, 1867. Snow and intense cold made the going extremely difficult. At 150-Mile House, Tingley found a large sled, secured the bed of the stage to it and drove to 127-Mile. With more than two feet of new snow covering the road, they started for 83-Mile but by nightfall they were only at 100-Mile. More snow greeted them the next morning, but Tingley acquired two extra horses from the owner of the roadhouse and they finally arrived at 83-Mile at 6 p.m., taking three days to complete a trip that in normal conditions would take one. It was this tenacity that allowed the BX to be the only company that kept the Clinton to Barkerville road open in winter, transporting passengers, mail and express all year round.

When Lord and Lady Dufferin, the Governor-General of Canada and his wife, made an official visit to B.C. in 1876, the BX spent $1,200 to have a special vehicle built in San Francisco. It seated seven passengers, six inside and one outside beside the driver, and could be used as an open or closed coach. Steve Tingley himself drove the Dufferin Coach for the vice-regal visit. It was used for many years by the BX to transport prominent patrons, and it was often hired, at twice the rate of ordinary vehicles, by those who wished to make a big impression.

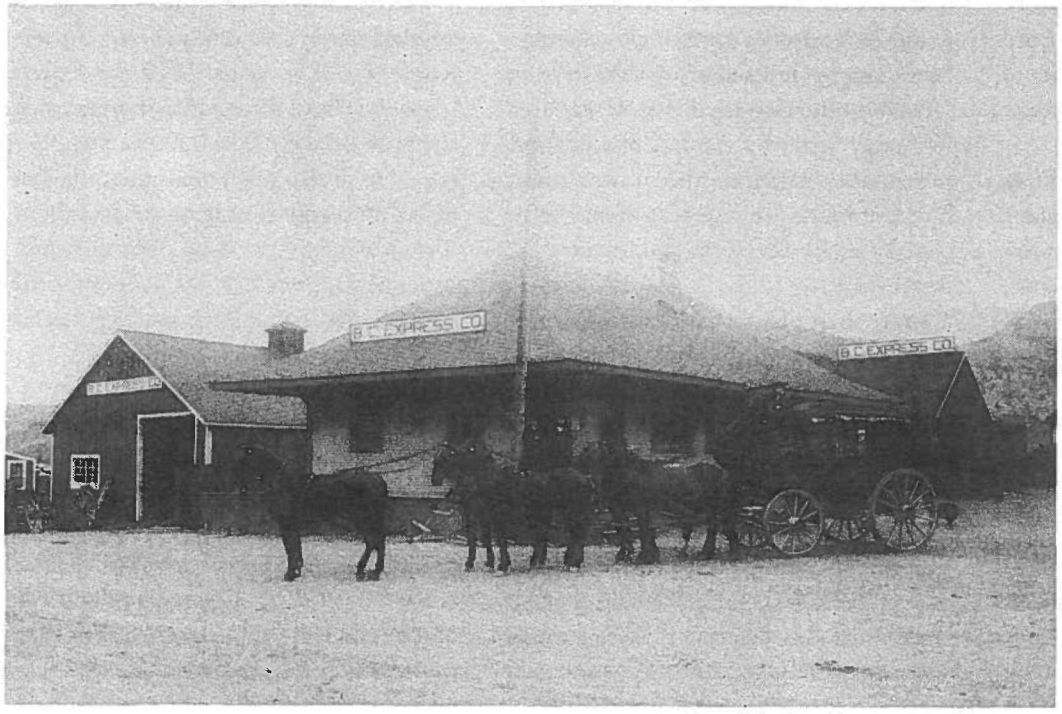
More than fifty years after it was built, the coach was still in use, although not with its original distinction. Al Young, a former stage coach driver used it as a hack in Prince George in 1914 and 1915, after which it came back home to Ashcroft for seven years. In 1922 it was sold to Bill Livingstone who carried mail and passengers between Quesnel and Barkerville. Livingstone traded it off to a rancher who replaced its elegant coach with a rack and pulled it behind a tractor to haul firewood. Its leather braces were sold to a Chinese shoemaker. Luckily a Quesnel citizen rescued the old vehicle before the braces became half-soles, and invested many hours and dollars to restore the Dufferin to its original appearance. It is now on display at Irving House Museum in New Westminster.

The cost of operating the stage line was approximately $50,000 per year. For example, in 1896, wages ($50 per month per driver) and feed for the horses came to approximately $20,000 per year. Repairs to the coaches, replacement of iron wheel rims, and shoeing horses cost about $30,000 per year. The mail contract brought in about half of the operational cost, the rest came from passengers and express.

The BX guaranteed safe delivery of gold from the Cariboo to Yale, something Governor Douglas, even with the Royal Engineers at his disposal, would not do. There were surprisingly few robbery attempts considering the miles of remote roads covered by the red and yellow coaches and the value of the cargo they transported. All coaches carried an expert shot to discourage any hold-ups and penalties for breaking the law were severe and immediate. In addition the only practical route away from the Cariboo was the railway at Ashcroft where any stranger would immediately be noticed and investigated.

In 1897 Tingley lost the mail contract to Ryan Kilgour and Charles Miller of

*BX passenger sleigh in Ashcroft, 1911 taking children for a Christmas ride. This normally held sixteen passengers, mail and hand luggage. B160*




*Unnumbered (This is Helen Forster's own picture) The last B.C. Express office which still stands on Railway Street in Ashcroft. Helen Forster lives in this building now.*

Toronto, and sold the BX to them. He lived in Ashcorft until about 1910, then moved to Vancouver where he died in 1915. His obituary called him "the pioneer whip of the Cariboo Road", an appropriate title of which he would have been justly proud.

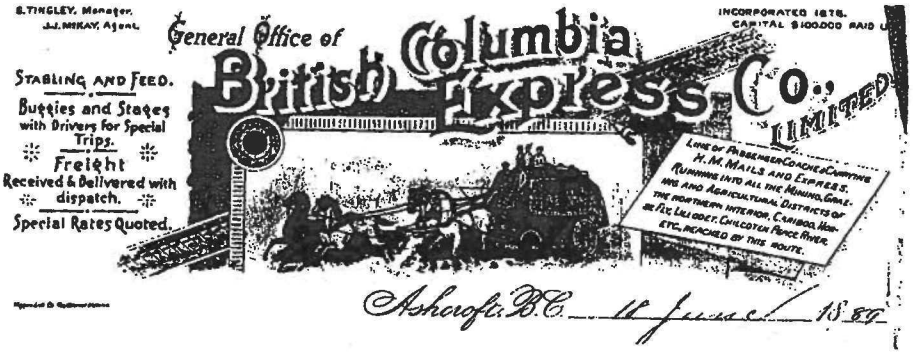
From 1896 until 1920, the BX operated a fleet of steamboats and smaller sternwheelers on the Upper Fraser from Soda Creek to Fort George. At its busiest it had three steamboats, and did a large business in freight and passengers, hauling supplies south for the PGE and Cariboo products north to be forwarded to markets in Edmonton and Prince Rupert.

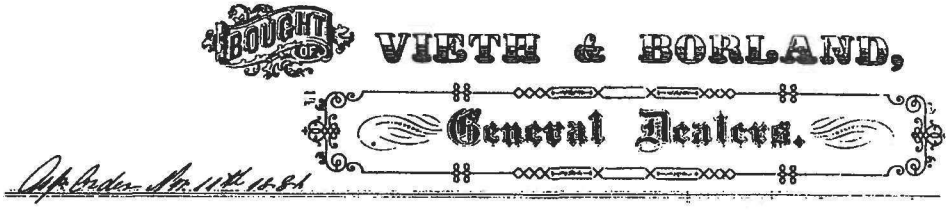
Between 1910 and 1915 the BX stages were replaced by red and yellow 60 hp Winton Six automobiles – fresh air taxis. A large garage to house them was built adjacent to the other BX buildings south of Ashcroft. Finally, in 1920, due to the completion of the PGE Railway and the advent of truck transport, the BX, after more than fifty years of service, closed its doors for the last time.

No company has been more closely associated with the history of this province than the B.C. Express Company. The BX was an important part of the development of the interior of B.C. and the Cariboo trail, and remains a part of Ashcroft where the office building still stands, and the "Welcome to Ashcroft" signs proudly display a BX stage pulled by a handsome six-horse team.

* * * * *

***Pat Foster was a teacher in Alberta who came to Vancouver Island to retire. She and her husband then moved to Ashcroft where they have energetically researched Cariboo history.***



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**Ashcroft Museum and Archives**

**Note- Many thanks to Helen Forster of the Ashcroft Museum for all her help.**

**Pictures - from Ashcroft Museum Archives**

# *Stanley Park: Tourism and Development*

## *by Eric Swantje*

On 29 October 1889 on the ancient Indian clearing of Chaythoos, i.e., "high bank," and of Pipe Line Road, First Narrows, Stanley Park, and in the presence of his worship David Oppenheimer, second mayor of Vancouver, and a small group of eminent citizens, Lord Stanley threw his arms to the heavens, as though embracing the whole thousand acres of primeval forest, and dedicated it (his words) "to the use and pleasure of peoples of all colors, creeds and customs for all time."[1]

A city that has been carved out of the forest should maintain somewhere within its boundaries evidence of what it once was, and so long as Stanley Park remains unspoiled that testimony to the giant trees which occupied the site of Vancouver in former days will remain.[2]

*Nothing in this, nor yet the next world would tempt a Coast Indian into the compact centres of the wild portions of the park, for therein, concealed cunningly, is the "lure" they all believe in.*[3]

*The totem poles, a*
*curious sight,*
*Stand, four together, in*
*a row,*
*Wrought with a patience*
*infinite,*
*By Indian carvers, long*
*ago.*[4]

Vancouver has the public image of a beautiful, exciting, booming, cosmopolitan city with Stanley Park as its outstanding landmark. Negative impressions of the city are rare. Stanley Park proved to be central in the formation of Vancouver's identity, because it gave the city a sense of place. During the early twentieth century, the park was seen as "high status, undeveloped, and large," and it was lauded as one of the finest parks in the world primarily because of its "one thousand acres of virgin forest."[5] Because of its size, a visitor to the park is able to escape the hustle and bustle of nearby downtown and perhaps even the values associated with a business-oriented world. In the world of Stanley Park, only towering trees take precedence[6] - they offer escape. However, despite the image of the park as a natural, unspoiled wilderness in the city, it was a human-modified environment. Bearing in mind that the concentration of human-made attractions is related to population density,[7] Vancouver was situated in an ideal spot. During the inter-war years as well as today, the overwhelming popularity of the zoo, the totem poles, and Lumberman's Arch attest to this fact. Thus, it seems fair to say that Stanley Park is an important dimension of our urban existence. Moreover, since society as a whole relies on visual perceptions to form opinions,[8] one could argue that tourist impressions of Stanley Park can be used as an indicator of one aspect of the city's livability.

The land which was to become "Vancouver's Eden" was acquired by the city of Vancouver through a certain amount of serendipity: it had been set aside as a military reserve in 1863 (which, incidentally, saved it from the interests of private loggers) with a plan to place artillery at Brockton Point in order to ward off a feared invasion by the United States. When the threat of an American invasion abated in 1886, the first act of the new City Council was to petition the federal government requesting the land for a civic park.[9] (The lessening friction with the United States was also an important factor in the transfer of lands for peaceful purposes.[10]) The request was granted by the Dominion government in 1887 for use as a public recreation spot,[11] and the park – Vancouver'r first – was opened one year later.

As one of the largest civic urban parks in North America, Stanley Park was officially opened by Vancouver Mayor David Oppenheimer on September 27, 1888 (under a 99 year lease from the federal government) in honour of Canada's Governor General Lord Stanley. At the opening ceremony, Lord Stanley dedicated the park "to the use and pleasure of peoples of all colors, creeds and customs for all time."[12] Lord Stanley's proclamation alludes to – perhaps unintentionally – the potential of drawing increasing numbers of tourists to the city in future years. However, at its birth the park "was still a dense forest relatively inaccessible beyond its shoreline fringes."[13] As McKee notes, the problem facing the city was how to administer and develop it for posterity. Obviously, the park was seen as an "irreplaceable civic asset" which played a key role in establishing Vancouver's identity: thus, during the twenties and thirties, the forest playground ever-increasingly transformed into a "tourist mecca" and "the centrepiece and pride of the entire civic park system." Its potential for tourist development using natural and historical resources seemed limitless.

The creation of the park resulted from a middle-class British notion in which local public parks were seen as "breathing spaces where citizens might stroll, drive, or sit to enjoy the open air."[14] It was obvious that parks were for passive, not active, recreation; hence, the transformation that Stanley Park underwent during the interwar years (from natural green space to tourist mecca) is significant for what it suggests about the changing perceptions Vancouverites had of this civic treasure. During the inter-war years then, the traditional paradigm of the character and role of the park as a natural urban green space was augmented with a new perception of Stanley Park as a booster for the tourist industry.

How Stanley Park was perceived by Vancouverites and visitors alike will be revealed through a discussion of the commercialization of the park; conservation efforts in the park, the Lions Gate Bridge

debate; relief work in the park; and the park's role as a symbol of Vancouver. As well, the white construction of the notion of "Indian-ness" will be examined.

**Commercialization of Stanley Park**

The commercialization of Stanley Park would prove to be an inescapable issue. Despite pre-World War I efforts to prevent the park from undergoing a metamorphosis into a "commonplace city park," the inter-war years witnessed increasing commercialization of the park – albeit not without opposition championed largely but not exclusively by the high-status educated elite of Vancouver.[15] Nonetheless, the Stanley Park of the twenties was somewhat modified as it combined "within itself something of the majesty and magic of the primaeval [sic] forest" in addition to tennis courts, putting and bowling greens, and other recreational facilities.[16]

The utilitarian version of the forest playground was not unanimously popular, however. The Local Council of Women were particularly vociferous opponents to the commercialization of the park, because they felt it would shatter the "old-time peace." For instance, the Council expressed their disapproval with the Vancouver Golden Jubilee Committee's plan to charge admission to the park during the celebrations in 1936. "The Council condemned the plan to transfigure the *natural* [emphasis added] grandeur of Stanley Park with cheap attractions of the Coney Island variety."[17] (The proposed attractions included dance pavilions, tea gardens, and other exhibits between the Pavilion and Lumberman's Arch.)

The temporary commercialization of the park opposed so vehemently by a particular group implies that many Vancouverites resented a challenge to the environmental integrity of *their* forest playground. Undoubtedly, they felt it represented a shift to the gaudy entertainment centres of the United States which were lacking in aesthetic appeal. The unpopularity of the Coney Island theme underscores the ethnocentricism of Vancouverites. After all, "what would not the Americans give for such a park near one of their busy cities?"[18] Precisely because of its priceless value as a natural charm – "a primitive virgin forest close to the city" – the desecration of the park through logging and commercialization of the park is also symbolic of the changing social and economic paradigm towards civic parks during the inter-war years: Stanley Park was destined (or doomed) to undergo a metamorphosis from natural urban green space to "tourist trap". (Despite the negative perception of the park evident here, it remained the premier tourist attraction in the city.[19]) The temporary commercialization (i.e., admission fee) which was to befall Stanley Park during the Vancouver Golden Jubilee Celebrations never materialized. In large part this was due to the fact that:

*The people of Vancouver have regarded Stanley Park with a sense of affectionate ownership for so very long that the experience of having to pay to get into even a small part of it will tend to make it seem like alien ground.*[20]

This comment appeared on the editorial page of the **Vancouver Sun** on May 11, 1936 before the celebrations took place. It interestingly illustrates that the feeling of "affectionate ownership" harboured by numerous Vancouverites would likely change to "militant affection" should an admission fee be levied, even temporarily. Greed, according to the writer of this editorial, is no excuse for the commercialization of Stanley Park. In light of the foregoing remarks, it is not surprising that the proposed admission fee (and the installation of mechanized attractions) was denied, since the policy of the Park board was to keep the park in its free and natural state.[21]

Although the park, by and large, was not distastefully commercialized during the inter-war years, modest development did occur. For example, Lost Lagoon was stocked with fish, and it was proposed by the Park Board that people wishing to fish in Lost Lagoon would have to purchase a fishing licence. (The licence would cost $1 per day to a maximum of 10 trout.[22]) Also, the proposal in February 1936 to construct a miniature railway "along the shores of Lost Lagoon to Second Beach, [and] the Board to share in the profits from such"[23] exemplifies the increasing development of "Vancouver's Eden" amidst conflicting interests. For instance, a "Save-the-Park Campaign" was started in February 1935 by a group of conservationist-minded citizens that transcended class boundaries.[24] The creation of a miniature railway, zoo, golf courses and tennis courts, bowling greens, and the Malkin Bowl (1934) can be seen as a sign that, during the thirties, Stanley Park was changing into a more user-friendly green space.[25] It should be noted, however, that the Park Board pursued a policy to keep the "[g]reatest part in the forest and made accessible by roads, trails, bridle-path, etc."[26]

Obviously, the Park Board had realized that the conservation of Stanley Park's natural qualities was inextricably linked to its continued tourist appeal. In this sense, it seems fair to say that although popular perceptions of Stanley Park during the inter-war years had progressed from a conservationist to a more utilitarian ideal. Vancouverites still saw the natural beauty of the park as the key factor in establishing Vancouver's identity. Here we see how the conceptual integrity and naturalness of the forest had remained intact despite large-scale changes in people's perceptions of Stanley Park. Commercialization had taken place in moderation; hence, the sublime nature of the park did not change.

**Conservation Efforts**

The issue of conserving the Stanley Park forest was the paradoxical result of the revenue-motivated effort to commercialize the park. Although substantial alterations were made to the park (i.e., human-made structures were added), a concerted effort was also made to conserve its wilderness character for tourists and visitors.[27] This environmentally friendly attitude, which was already prevalent in the beginning of the twentieth century, is significant for what it suggests about the sentiments of the people of Vancouver towards Stanley Park. During World War I, the city's "laissez-faire attitude" to the forest playground was gradually replaced by a more conservationist ethos. The result was the post-war emergence of a Vancouver identity premised on the *natural* beauty of the place – not on the city's commercial attractions. Nonetheless, the

changing role of Stanley Park represented the advent of the business of tourism in Vancouver as well as embodying the philosophy of "capitalizing the scenery." For example, efforts to beautify the "foul-smelling and unsightly" tidal flats around what is now Lost Lagoon began as early as 1908.[28] Thus, one could argue that these aesthetic improvements were rooted in civic pride[29] which attests to the perception of Stanley Park as "the finest natural park in the World."[30] Moreover, schemes for park beautification can be seen as a concerted effort by the city to attract tourists. The increased usability of the park was central to the construction of a Vancouver identity during the inter-war years. This eclectic notion saw the city in general and the park in specific portrayed as world-class destinations on par with Banff and Jasper National Parks aa nd Niagara Falls, for example. Furthermore, the changing perceptions of Stanley Park shed some light on the modicum of thought towards recreational space as such: parks were now being seen not only for their intrinsic nature value but also as potential sources of revenue for the city.

The changing perceptions of Stanley Park were a product of the Depression era, because the park was inexorably linked to prosperity. Although the inherent value of the land as a "noble forested area and as a playground and breathing space"[31] was never forgotten, its value as advertisement and as a tourist attraction dramatically increased. In light of the environmentally harmful side-effects of tourism, reform-minded, progressive citizens argued that "the word 'park' suggests conservation, the preservation of the beauties nature has created."[32] Hence, it seems fair to say that many upper-middle class Vancouverites realized that the intrinsic value of the park should be more important than its economic potential; therefore, it must be held sacred for posterity *and* for tourists. After all, "[w]e can not expect people to come far, or often, to look at our logged-off lands."[33] As perceptions of Stanley Park changed throughout the twenties and thirties so did the environmental impact on the park itself.

Employing the notion of development was central to the Park Board's desire to make the park accessible to all, thereby increasing not only the forest's but also the city's appeal as a tourist destination. Nonetheless, popular sentiment sought to maintain the integrity of the park which, it was hoped, would increase property values in the area and attract tourists.[34] Through the promotion of tourism by various agencies such as the Vancouver Publicity Bureau, the media, and Premier Pattullo. Vancouverites began to see the park "as a centre for games, amusements, [and] rallies . . ."[35]

Despite the feeling expressed by Alderman William Brown that parks were a waste of space, because "a man never got a square meal of scenery,"[36] further desire to conserve the urban wilderness of Stanley Park came after a brutal wind and snow storm destroyed large numbers of trees in the park during the winter of 1934-35. Under the auspices of the "Save-the-Park Campaign," civic-minded citizens "from those in high office to the man on the street" were called upon by the City Council "to expedite the urgently needed salvage job" before fire-season began.[37] Obviously, Stanley Park was considered such an irreplaceable civic asset that many Vancouverites felt compelled – out of civic duty and privilege – to assist in the clean-up.[38] Only "cold-blooded indifference" would prevent one from helping out.

**The Lions Gate Bridge Debate**

The controversy over construction of the Lions Gate Bridge is further emblematic of the struggle to conserve Stanley Park. The issue of a bridge crossing at First Narrows had been discussed five years after the birth of the park, but "the proposal to drive a roaring speedway through the heart of the Park" came to the forefront of civic business again in 1927. A plebiscite regarding its construction was held in June of that year but was emphatically rejected by the City Council[39] in an effort to defend the park from "injury and mutilation." (Similarly, a plan to build an Edwardian museum and art gallery at Lost Lagoon was introduced by city planners in the twenties but then shelved.[40]) The initial opposition to the construction of the causeway and bridge represented a "battle, albeit microcosmic, that had been waged between industrialists [i.e., pragmatic businessmen] and conservationists across North America over the natural heritage of this continent."[41] What then accounted for the 1937 construction of a bridge which was commonly portrayed in the media as an injury to the citizens of Vancouver?

Again, the decision can mainly be seen as a result of the changing social and economic paradigm. The economically depressed mind-set of the thirties probably placed less value on the environmental integrity of the park; therefore, the predominant desire to encourage British investment prevailed in the city's decision to approve construction. So, in the early thirties, "a privately financed project was welcomed as a means of opening the western section of the North Shore for suburban development and as a source of employment."[42] Simply put, the Lions Gate Bridge was paid for by the Guinness family of Ireland to allow automobile access to their real estate holdings known as the British Properties.[43] The fact that this major construction project was undertaken in the midst of the Depression interestingly illustrates Stanley Park's role not only as a popular destination where poverty-stricken citizens could momentarily escape reality but also as a potential source of employment in the building of the Lions Gate Bridge.

**Relief Workers in Stanley Park**

Even during the midst of the Depression, the park had not lost its pride of place. A plan was conceived by the municipal government of the day to bring the work that needs to be done in Stanley Park and the unemployed labour together. "The clearing of all dead wood and undergrowth and the cutting down of pest-infected and dangerous timber in Stanley Park . . ."[44] was especially popular, because it beautified the park for tourists *and* employed relief recipients. Construction of the Sea Wall and the improvement of Deadman's Island were affected by a similar strategy.[45] In a broader sense, the idea of employing relief recipients in the clean-up of the park is representative of a "work and wages" scheme (urged by the Pattullo government) rather than a relief system, and it also embodies the traditional concern that the work ethic would be eroded

by indiscriminate charity. Moreover, the employment of relief workers in the park bespeaks the pride that the citizens of Vancouver took in their "holy retreat." For this reason, it seems fair to say that Stanley Park – because of its unparalleled natural splendour – truly was instrumental in forming a Vancouver identity.

**Stanley Park as a Symbol of Vancouver**

The development of the park and the perception which visitors formed of it were inextricably linked to foreign models, especially Britain and the United States. Chicago's World Fair of 1893 displayed American urban park achievements and, in turn, greatly influenced the park system in Vancouver[46] (e.g., the City Beautiful Association.) Ironically, it was this "park plagiarism" that was central to the construction of a *Vancouver* identity.

As for the development of public recreation spaces within the park itself, the City Council was urged by Fred Crone, chairman of the Park Board, to increase its breathing spaces and provide for the future.[47] Public sentiment supported Mr. Crone's recommendations, because Vancouverites saw their park system as a "proud distinction" of the city. Not surprisingly, civic pride virtually dominated the Park Board's decision to add to the amount of recreation spaces. This exemplified the Board's desire to maintain Stanley Park's idyllic image. By 1934, additional facilities for large picnics appeared in the park,[48] and, by 1936, a proposal to introduce more recreation areas and to light the tennis courts at night on a "pay-as-you-play" basis had been accepted.[49] In the same year, $55,000 would be spent on giving Stanley Park a make-over (e.g., building Jubilee Fountain in Lost Lagoon) for the Vancouver Jubilee Celebrations.[50] Obviously, the perception that visitors and tourists had of Stanley Park was linked with the image they had of the city as a whole.

**White Construction of "Indian-ness" in Stanley Park**

Perceptions of the park and the city are, however, only a part of the overall picture of supernatural British Columbia. Images of the Indian have always been fundamental to Canadian culture. The Indian image has been constructed by the dominant culture to fit whatever mold it desired at the time. Consequently, the Native village at the totem poles in Stanley Park is a non-Native creation put there for tourist purposes – not to gain a better understanding of Native peoples. (What particular tribe or nation of Indians is actually represented at the totem poles is insignificant to most non-Native observers. In fact, non-Native tourists expressed an ambivalence to Indian culture so long as what they were seeing was authentic.[51]) Even though the totems themselves were carved by local Coast Salish Indians, actually seeing an Indian face at the site was (and still is) rare. This fact reflects the times: Indian culture was something to be marvelled at, but Indians as human beings were to be shunned. Simply put, their culture was part of Canadian society, yet they were not. As Daniel Francis notes, "the fact that the Indians were vanishing added an urgency to the tourists' quest for novelty."[52] They were seen as an "ancient and dying race," and,

*The fact that it will not be long before these interesting peoples have disappeared before our advancing civilization should make us eager to gather their story in permanent form in our art and literature.*[53]

The marketing of the Stanley Park totem poles was part of a "curious phenomenon." For example, during the twenties the provincial Liberal government of John Oliver (1918-27) had prohibited the erection of totem poles and other Native symbols, yet approximately ten years later the Liberal government of T.D. Pattullo was appropriating the totem pole as an unofficial symbol of British Columbia.[54] This simply echoes my earlier assertion that only the white notion of Native culture – rather than the Natives themselves – was part of Canadian society.

The city's claim to undisputed control over Stanley Park has been challenged by its original inhabitants throughout the park's existence. The Indians, members of the Burrard, Musqueam, and Squamish bands, who resided and buried their dead at several sites in the park[55] saw it as their permanent home. With the arrival of Europeans in Burrard Inlet in 1791, however, the Indian population was gradually displaced. Then, the setting aside of the park for a naval reserve in 1863 witnessed the end of Indian title to the area. As a result, the original occupants of the peninsula became squatters. Although no notable exodus of squatters occurred,[56] the displacement of Indians is significant for what it suggests about the white construction of "Indian-ness" in Stanley Park: whites wanted Indian symbols such as totem poles to remain in the park,[57] but no one wanted to see an Indian face beside them. Thus, the image of the Indian that (white) tourists desired was an inaccurate one constructed by the dominant majority – not by the Indians themselves. The case of Dr. Raley provides us with a poignant example. Dr. Raley, a local non-Native minister, was to supervise the erection of four new totem poles in Stanley Park. The purpose of the additional totems was "the need for a knowledge of totem pole legends so that questions by Jubilee visitors can be answered by local residents."[58] This comment embodies the notion of a *non-Native* construction of "Indian-ness": Jubilee visitors would probably be *white*, yet their queries about *Indian* totem poles would be answered almost exclusively by *white* residents. There was absolutely no Native representation on what were essentially Native matters (i.e., totem poles.) Here we see how the old-world view of the "noble savage" was perpetuated: the white image of the Indian was never challenged by an Indian voice – there was a total lack of Native agency.

To further illustrate this point, the case of Dr. Raley again provides a good example. In 1937, Dr. Raley published a history of the totem poles. He was given permission "to conduct the sale [of booklets] from the Board's booth at Lumberman's Arch and other booths as may be arranged, until the end of September, no commission to be charged by the Board."[59] Ironically, just four years earlier Chief Matthias Joe of the Squamish tribe was denied permission to sell curios at a booth near the totem poles.[60] Hence, one could conclude that Indians as such played no part in the creation of *their* image. Only whites were permitted to construct "Indian-ness" which undoubt-

edly affected the accuracy of the image itself.

**Conclusion**

While Stanley Park had once served primarily as a natural green space for rest and relaxation during the pre-World War I era, the inter-war years saw the forest playground develop into a proverbial gold mine as a booster for the tourist industry – a function which it serves to this day. The selling of the park resulted in a positive world view of the city itself. The perception that tourists had of Vancouver undeniably influenced such factors as immigration and trade in a positive way.[61] Through increased immigration from different ethnic backgrounds, the promotion of arts and cultural development also occurred. In addition, conservation of the natural and historical resources of Stanley Park works to maintain its status as an unspoiled natural setting thereby adding to its economic and social importance in an increasingly intergrated and diversified tourist industry.

One should, however, bear in mind that the acquisition of the park was a "fortuitous event," and because of this Vancouver developed a very unbalanced and unplanned civic park system.[62] Consequently, Stanley Park received preferential treatment from the Park Board while other natural green spaces were neglected.[63] This undeniably accounts for the overwhelmingly positive perceptions and unabating affinity that the people of Vancouver share for their forest playground. Even today, Stanley Park is still seen as a civic gem. To many people, it is the pride of Vancouver. Yet despite the park's ever-increasing role in bringing in tourist dollars, the federal government (i.e., the owners of the land) remains stalwart in its mission to protect the pseudo-sacred forest. When Vancouver Park Board chair Duncan Wilson was in Ottawa last week promoting the Board's proposal for a tunnel linking West Vancouver to downtown, Heritage Minister Sheila Copps expressed the federal government's desire to preserve "the environmental integrity of Stanley Park."[64] This comment suggests that maintaining the image of the park as "the finest natural park in the world" is as important today as it was during the inter-war years.

* * * * *

***The author prepared this essay for Dr. McDonald at the University of British Columbia. He completed his Bachelor of Arts in the spring of 1997. When an undergraduate, Swantje was employed as a tour guide with Gray Line of Vancouver.***

FOOTNOTES

1. City of Vancouver Archives (CVA), Additional Manuscripts (Add.Mss.) 54, Major Matthews Collection, file 282, vol. 13, Stanley Park Correspondence, "Stanley Park - golden anniversary," 1939.
2. **Vancouver News-Herald**, October 30, 1939.
3. Pauline E. Johnson, **Legends of Vancouver** (Vancouver: Privately Printed, 1911), p. 74.
4. Robert Allison Hood, **By Shore and Trail in Stanley Park** (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1929), p. 61.
5. Ellen Janet Nightingale Berry, "The Tourist's Image of a City: Vancouver, BC" (Master of Arts thesis, University of British Columbia, 1979), p. 106.
6. Ibid.
7. British Columbia, **British Columbia Tourism Development Strategy: An Opportunityfor the Eighties** (Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Tourism, 1980), p. 15.
8. Nightingale Berry, MA thesis, p. 277.
9. The petition was organized by three businessmen involved in local land sales. Park promoters realized the potential the forest had as "an attraction for tourists and visitors to the city." See Robert A.J. McDonald, "Holy Retreat' or 'Practical Breathing Spot'?: Class Perceptions of Vancouver's Stanley Park, 1910-1913" (**Canadian Historical Review**, vol. LXV, no. 2, 1984), p. 139.
10. Elsie M. McFarland. **The Development of Public Recreation in Canada** (Vanier, On.: Canadian Parks/ Recreation Association, 1970), p. 8.
11. McDonald, "Vancouver's Stanley Park," p. 127.
12. CVA, Add. Mss, 54, Major Matthews Collection, Stanley Park Correspondence, 1939.
13. William C. McKee, "The History of the Vancouver Park System 1886-1929" (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 1976), p. 36.
14. McFarland, Public Recreation, p. 14.
15. McDonald, "Vancouver's Stanley Park," pp. 133-34.
16. University of British Columbia, Special Collections (UBC-SC), Pamphlet File, W.S. Rawlings, "Vancouver, British Columbia, Its Parks and Resorts," (Vancouver Board of Park Commissioners, 1919.)
17. **Vancouver Sun**, May 5, 1936, p. 8.
18. **Vancouver Daily Province**, July 24, 1927, p. 12.
19. **Vancouver Daily Province**, July 5, 1938, p. 1.
20. **Vancouver Sun**, May 11, 1936, p. 6.
21. CVA, 48-A-3, Vancouver Park Board Meeting Minutes (VPBMM), file 2, March 20, 1931. (The Park Board is significant not only because it administers Stanley Park but because it acts as an arbitrator in the development of the park as a civic booster for tourism. It plays a tough role, because it has to represent "traditional principles, interests in beautification and a desire to incorporate some of the latest reform notions about the value of athletic activity for adults and of structured play for children." See McDonald, "Vancouver's Stanley Park." p. 129.)
22. CVA, 48-A-3, VPBMM, file 2, March 28, 1929.
23. CVA, 48-A-4, VPBMM, file 2, February 13, 1936.
24. **Vancouver Sun**, February 9, 1935, p. 1.
25. The creation of the miniature railway, zoo, golf and tennis courses, bowling greens, and the Malkin Bowl are discussed in CVA, 48-A-4, VPBMM, file 2, December 12, 1940. In addition, the unsuccessful proposal to construct a stadium in the park – which truly bespeaks the issue of commercialization – is discussed in CVA, 48-A-4, VPBMM, file 2, May 13, 1937.
26. CVA, 48-A-3, VPBMM, file 2, November, n.d., 1931.
27. McDonald, "Vancouver's Stanley Park", p. 127.
28. Ibid., p. 131.
29. Personal Contact (Eric Fulscht, Vancouver, January 31, 1997.)
30. The **Oakland Times** (California) dubbed Stanley Park "the finest natural park in the world." See **Vancouver Daily Province**, June 23, 1927, p. 1.
31. Vancouver Daily Province, June 11, 1926, p. 6.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Patricia E. Roy, **Vancouver: An Illustrated History** (Toronto: James Lorimer Company and Publishers, 1980), p. 49. The possibility of increasing property value is alluded to by Alderman W.J. McGuigan in 1899 with respect to the proposed sawmill on Deadman's Island. See McKee, MA thesis, 1976. However, the desire to maintain the park's integrity – its natural state – was espoused by the Park Board during the inter-war years. See **Vancouver Daily Province**, June 11, 1926, p. 6.
35. This comment is made by Robert A.J. McDonald with reference to the proposed Coal Harbour stadium; however, Stanley Park as such was likely seen in the same light. See McDonald, "Vancouver's Stanley Park," p. 34.
36. McKee, MA thesis, p. 47.
37. **Vancouver Daily Province**, February 8, 1935, p. 1.
38. This view is expressed by C.A. Cotterell, a local businessman, in Ibid.
39. CVA, Vancouver Park Board, Annual Report for 1927 (Office of the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, Vancouver), p. 4.
40. Robin Ward, **Robin Ward's Vancouver** (Vancouver: Harbour Publishing, 1990), p. 127.
41. McKee, MA thesis, p. 51.
42. Ibid., p. 41.
43. The bridge cost $6 million to build and was paid for by tolls of 25 cents per car until it was sold back to the city in 1955 for the cost of construction, $6 million. See Gray Line of Vancouver, "Tour Commentary Manual" (Vancouver: Gray Line of Vancouver, 1996), p. 72.
44. CVA, 48-A-3, VPBMM, file 2, December 30, 1931.
45. CVA, 48-A-4, VPBMM, file 2, July 13, 1933.
46. McKee, MA thesis, p. 32.
47. **Vancouver Sun**, July 6, 1929, p. 3.
48. CVA, 48-A-4, VPBMM, file 2, April 12, 1934.
49. Ibid., July 20, 1936.
50. **Vancouver News-Herald**, March 31, 1936, p. 11.
51. This argument is advanced, albeit with respect to attitudes of white writers to indigenous culture, by Terry Goldie, **Fear and Temptation: The Image of the Indigene in Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand Literatures** (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989.)
52. Daniel Francis, **The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture** (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992), p. 182.
53. **Vancouver Daily Province**, August 8, 1926, p. 6.
54. Francis, **The Imaginary Indian**, p. 184.
55. Mike Steele, **Vancouver's Famous Stanley Park: The Year-Round Playground** (Surrey, BC: Heritage House Publishing Company Ltd., 1993), p. 6.
56. McKee, MA thesis, p. 42.
57. The West Coast Indian theme is likely the most internationally famous cultural and historical resource in the province. Since the coastal tribes have "an interesting and dynamic lifestyle with a sophisticated and impressive level of material development," the tourist appeal of the Indian culture was not insignificant. See British Columbia, **Tourism Development Strategy**, p. 15.
58. **Vancouver Daily Province**, June 13, 1936, p. 5.
59. CVA, 48-A-4, VPBMM, file 2, July 8, 1937.
60. CVA, 48-A-4, VPBMM, file 2, May 11, 1933.
61. E.J. Hart, **The Selling of Canada: The CPR and the Beginnings of Canadian Tourism** (Banff: Altitude Publishing Ltd., 1983), p. 8.
62. McKee, MA thesis, p. 54.
63. H. Bartholomew and Associates, **A Plan for the City of Vancouver** (Vancouver: Town Planning Commission, 1928.)
64. **Vancouver Sun**, March 19, 1997, p. B1.

We inadvertently omitted the Bibliography. This may be obtained by writing or phoning the Editor.

# The Tie Hackers

## by Kelsey McLeod

*The Tie Hack - With a railroad needing 3000 ties per mile during construction and a steady supply of replacements, ties were a major component of a railway and the Tie Hacks role an important one. Here is a Bull river Tie Hack in typical dress with his full line of equipment, a one man crosscut saw, a scoring axe and a broad axe. Stamina and a natural dexterity were a must on this job.*

Throughout British Columbia, wherever a railway ran, ties were needed. From the Kootenays to the Coast, from Southern B.C. to the Skeena River where the Grand Trunk Pacific eventually cut through to Prince Rupert, the need for ties never ended. (It was estimated that 2800 ties per mile were used.) And there were always men willing to take on the task of providing those ties. – Gruelling winter labour it was, yet was welcomed by those involved, for it meant needed income.

The tie camps! Three simple words that cannot begin to tell the behind-the-scenes story. When you look at a railway track, or ride a train, little or no attention is given to the ties on which the steel rails lie. Yet without those ties the railway could not function.

What a wonderful vision brought-to-life the railways were! Because of them, vast areas of our province were opened up, resources discovered. Immigrants quickly followed to seek out, build, make new and better lives, and one of the ways they made money in their new land was hacking railway ties.

Our mountainous terrain made transportation difficult and dangerous till the railways came. And even after the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Railways opened up the eastern and southern parts of the province, long after the Cariboo Road cut through to Barkerville, northward nothing changed for many years. The Telegraph Trail did lead north and west from Quesnel, reaching Hazelton, but after its construction was stopped in 1866, the route became more and more hazardous. The entire area, with its resources of timber and minerals, remained largely unknown, and certainly untapped.[1]

The coming of the Grand Trunk Pacific, which was finally completed after many delays, on April 7, 1914, changed all that overnight. And when the Line became the Canadian National on January 30, 1923, nothing changed as far as the need for ties was concerned.

In the north, the pattern followed that already established in the Kootenays and elsewhere, and in all areas the fact that tie cutting was done in the winter, when most construction and other work opportunities slowed down or stopped altogether, made it all the more important economically. Winters were-and are– long, between the Rockies and the Pacific Ocean.

The term "tie camp" can be misleading, for it did not necessarily mean hundreds or even dozens of men gathered in a permanent location, housed in bunkhouses. "Most of the tie camps were just clearings in the woods with anywhere from two to a dozen men keeping each other company, each cutting his own ties. A canvas tent and an air-tight heater, a common wash basin and nails on the trees to hang things on, a cache on a platform, and all the mosquito netting the men could afford . . . "[2] However, judging from stories in **Ties To Water**, it appears that camps in the Kootenays tended to be somewhat larger than those in the north.[3]

Locally it was called tie hacking, and it was a difficult and dangerous occupation, aside from the primitive living conditions and the isolation. "Two serious accidents occurred in the CPR tie camps up river last week. One man cut his foot badly with an axe, but remained in camp. Another was in the way of a falling tree . . . and a pointed piece penetrated his side . . . He was carried on a stretcher . . . a distance of eight miles."[4] "It was a rough life. 4 men died in one accident, 2 in another. Eventually lost lives became common enough to receive casual mention in the back pages of the **Herald** . . ."[5] "At present four men are prostrate from accidents caused by axe and broadaxe . . ."[6] "Accidents happened sometimes and I remember hearing an injured man calling for help in the woods."[7]

Early on, the camps drew men eager or desperate for a job. In today's coddled world, it is easy to forget that in years past, each individual was in a sink-or swim situation, dependent entirely on his or her own resources. For example, Carl Strom of Prince George has stated that his father came to Prince George with the express purpose of getting employment in the tie camps. There were many like him.

The first step in becoming a tie hack was the obtaining of a contract from the railway for a certain number of ties. –

Ties that were to be hewed from comparatively small surveyed blocks of timber land. Once he had the contract, it was up to him.

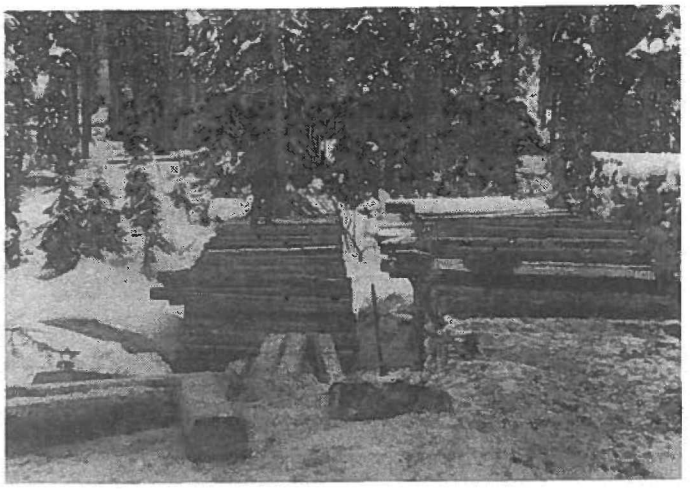
"Each of us had a 500 tie contract from George Ogston of Vanderhoof . . . We spent a happy carefree winter in the tie camp . . . we had a Spanish guitar, a mandolin banjo, and a banjo-uke . . ." "I decided to return to Ft. St. James . . . I collected my broadaxe, scoring axe, Swede saw, and bedroll . . . left for Chilco . . . had no problem obtaining a 500 tie contract . . ." "We then, each of us managed to get a contract to hew 250 ties . . ."[8] If he didn't have money at all, he could come north, ignore the rule calling for a license, cut ties, make money and get out . . ."[9]

The trees used for ties were Douglas fir, jack pine, lodgepole pine, larch. The work had to be done in the winter and early spring months before the sap began to flow.

Tools employed were: short, one-man crosscut saw, a large double-bitted axe, a broad axe which had a twelve-inch blade, and weighed eight pounds or more, a picaroon. The crosscut saw was short in order to prevent whipping on the unsupported end when used by a lone faller. (Sometimes a bow, or Swede saw was used instead.) The double-bitted axe was kept sharp as a razor, on both sides, but was filed thinner on one side. (The thick side cut off hard knots, the thinner was used on the softer wood in the trunk.) A draw knife or spud was also used.

The tree was felled, the limbs taken off to where the trunk would be too small to make a tie. This top with its halo of limbs, would help steady the tree while the hacker stood on it to do his hewing of both sides of the log with quick, even strokes of the broad axe. The remaining rounded sides were sometimes peeled with a spud or draw knife. Bark left on would break off in transit.

The ties had to be hewed to railway specifications. – A certain thickness and a certain width of faces. – This was accomplished by using the scoring axe, and the depth in which it was driven. "To watch an expert at this job was like watching a dancer, as he moved with graceful motion along the tree with his axe rhythmically swinging . . ."[10] Once the tree was scored the broad axe came into use to flatten the sides of the timber. Here a hacking motion was used, hence the term "tie hack." Much pride was taken in producing a smooth, flat surface, and some men's product looked as if it had been finished with a plane. Finally, the saw was employed to cut the tie into eight-foot lengths.



*Tie piles up the Tanglefoot.*

The last touch to each tie was its marking with the hacker's individual mark. This was done by a heavy hammer that had a man's own mark in raised letters. Thus did the tie loader keep tally of each worker's output. Sometimes a coloured crayon was used, but this obviously was not as effective or long-lasting.

For this labour, prices varied as to the quality of the tie, and to the year it was produced. In 1912 a tie paid the man 28 cents in the north. ". . . they would be paid from 12 cents to 25 cents a tie depending on the times and circumstances."[11] As the years passed prices naturally increased, and by 1953 a number one tie in the north brought in $1.70, a number two tie, $1.50, and a number three 90¢.

Once the tie was hacked, if the tie camp was remote from the railway – and most were – there was the problem of getting it to that railway. With luck it could be simple (though never easy). The ties were delivered by horse and sleigh over icy trails to the tracks, there to be stacked. Sometimes boxcars were left on a siding for this purpose. Helen Hagberg, who grew up in Finmore, out of Vanderhoof (the community no longer exists) remembers the stacks of ties all along the railway right-of-way. Her uncles and her husband all hacked ties, and she states how welcome the income those ties brought in was.

In the Kootenays the Bull River was used to transport ties. "In the winter of 1919 Carl and two companions cut ties and piled them on the banks of the Bull River. Come spring, the . . . waters would whisk thousands of . . . ties downstream."[12]

But the most ingenious, and dramatic stories of transporting ties come from the north, and centre around Isle Pierre. Isle Pierre is 20 miles west of Prince George, on the south bank of the Nechako River. Today it is the location of a stud mill owned by CANFOR, and as such mundane enough. But what a history centres around this island, when transport of ties is brought up. For here the turbulent Nechako separated the tie hackers from the railway, and so not only difficult terrain, but the river, separated the men from their market. The solution was an ice bridge, a seemingly impossible structure. The ingenuity of those pioneers who dreamed this up deserves special commendation.

As if navigating the trails from those north-bank tie camps to the river was not hair-raising enough! "It was a treacherous trail, not wide enough at any one point for two tie sleighs to pass. On the upward trip each driver paused as he rounded a bend and gave a lusty shout." If there was an answer from the trail above, the empty sleigh pulled into one of the spaces cut into the bank till the loaded sleigh passed.[13]

A ferry crossed the river at Isle Pierre, but as soon as slush and ice began to come down the river the ferry had to be discontinued. A heavy rowboat attached to a heavy cable was all that crossed the river till the ice bridge could be con-

structed.

The current on the Nechako's north shore, as well as in the river's centre was swift enough to prevent freezing in even the worst winter, and this was what led to the creation of the ice bridges.

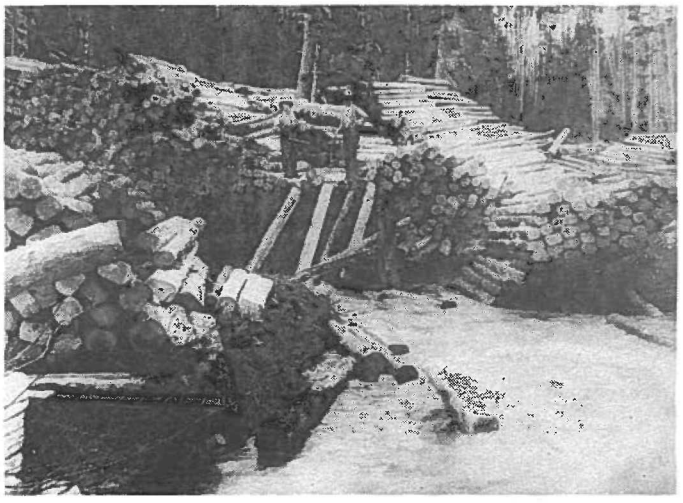
". . . two fin booms were thrown out . . . from the north bank . . . beyond the centre of the stream. A cable attached to the outer end of the boom was brought back and anchored . . . to the shore. This boom shot the . . . water toward the opposite bank and created a pocket to still water on its lower side." The still water quickly froze. "Logs were . . . cut on the south bank . . . and rolled to its edge. . . One end of a cable was attached to the log lying farthest downstream and the other end fastened to a log sunk into the ground back from the water's edge.

"Two men in a small boat . . . dragged the other end of the log into the . . river and the . . . current carried the log . . . and boat . . . across to the end of the boom where it was fastened with a cable. Four . . . logs were carried across in this manner and fastened to the boom. . . .Small poles were thrown across these timbers and brush placed on top. The water, slush and . . . ice pouring . . . over this . . . froze into a solid mass which extended all the way from the north bank to the south bank . . ."[14]

Predictably, there were many accidents when ties were being delivered in such conditions. Alvin Hagberg lost his team of horses, sleigh and load going down the frozen river near Finmore. The ice appeared strong, but water had backed up and weakened the ice; he was fortunate to save himself. But there were accidents even when the ferry across the river was operating. "Fred Ellas came down the coulee with a big load of ties. He had not been using the customary brakes on the back of his sleighs, but simply rough locks on the runners. As he neared the last steep pitch down to the ferry, he felt it would be a waste of time to stop to adjust the rough locks. . . As the horses rushed down the last pitch to the ferry the ring at the end of one of the hames snapped, letting the pole drop." There were five tons of ties to be stopped. "They raced across the strip of gravel, onto the ferry and plunged to their death. . . The driver jumped, and caught the rail."[15]

The overall picture becomes clearer as one reads accounts of the far-gone days of tie hacking. Men working in isolation and in primitive conditions, yet taking pride in turning out ties that were first rate.

A good tie hack in a good stand of timber could make forty or fifty ties a day. Excellent pay for days long ago. One young Norwegian man became a legend in the Kootenays for his superior ability at hacking. He stood over six feet, and weighed two-hundred pounds, which no doubt helped his record. While most men made thirty or forty ties a day, Gunnar Almie hacked from ninety to a hundred, and what was more, he made it appear easy, whistling and singing as he worked. Once, when inspectors from Calgary were present, he waded into a stand of trees, and cut and hewed thirty-three ties in one hour. A feat likely never equalled by any other hacker.



*"Ties to Water" with pickeroons and pike poles.*

The days of the tie hacker are long gone, though ties were still being cut by hand, at least in the north, in 1953. In three districts in the Prince George area in that year 83,000 ties were made by hand, though, as might be expected, many ties were by then sawn in the mills around Prince George, Vanderhoof and Fort Fraser. And, by this time, the ties were counted not as ties, but as board feet.

Still, though the romance of the early days of tie cutting has ended, with the Bull River no longer clogged with ties at spring breakup, with the ice bridge at Isle Pierre but a memory to those pioneers who are left, the record of this vital part of our history relating to the railways remains.

Tie hacking - tie cutting, whatever you want to call it, played an important part in the opening up of our province. Those hardy men who stacked their hard-cut ties beside steel lines along the banks of the Skeena and Nechako, lines that led to Prince Rupert and to Jasper, and those who worked farther south, for the C.P.R. and the C.N.R. whose rails wound through mountains, and over countless trestles, through tunnels, finally leaving the Dry Belt behind, finally reaching the Pacific with its ports and markets, are mostly gone, but their exploits remain a link in the chain of our railway history.

* * * * *

***The author did considerable research while in Prince George and northern B.C. She is now retired and lives in Vancouver.***

**FOOTNOTES**

1. Map of Early Travel Routes into the Vanderhoof Area.
2. **Cutting up the North**, p. 22.
3. **Ties to Water**, picture, p. 77.
4. Ibid., p. 74.
5. **Cutting up the North.**
6. **Ties to Water**, p. 83.
7. Ibid, p. 83
8. **Goldseekers.**
9. **Cutting up the North.**
10. **Ties to Water**, p. 73.
11. **Cutting up the North.**
12. **Ties to Water**, p. 75.
13. Tie Hacking in British Columbia.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.

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**Goldseekers**, Ralph Hall, Sono Nis Press.
**Cutting up the North**, Ken Bernsohn, Hancock House.
**A History of Prince George**, Runnalls.
**Yellowhead Pass and its People**, Valemount Historical Society.
**Ties to Water**: The History of Bull River in the East Kootenay, Verdun Casselman.

**SOURCES**

Article: **Tie Hacking in British Columbia**, by Nellie R. Campbell, in Family Herald and Weekly Star, May, 1953.
Helen Hagberg's personal memories.

Photos courtesy of the Casselman - Bjorn family.

# Conference 98 in Surrey

The pre-conference genealogy workshops co-ordinated by Melva Dwyer were much appreciated by almost 60 attendees from across the province.

A most pleasant welcome was created by the host society on the Thursday evening with a wine and cheese reception. A greeting from a Surrey City Councillor was followed by a delightful display by 15 teenaged girls trained in Irish dancing by the Steel School of dance. They alternated between soft shoe and clog numbers.

A slide show, "the Changing Face of Surrey" prepared by the Surrey Museum, gave viewers a condensed history of the 20,000 acres now defined as Surrey. Farming, logging, the expansion of trails into roads, railway building, early landmark stores, waterfront recreation areas, fisheries and canneries, ethnic settlers, community centres, schools, the combination railway/highway bridge, ferries and more were depicted on the screen.

The rest of Friday morning was given to "A History of the Fraser River" as told by Jacqueline Gresko of Douglas College. After lunch the speakers were Victor Sharman, a devotee of Inter-urban Railways local and across the continent, plus Jim Foulkes who gave an excellent presentation "Telegraph Trail" which depicted the entry of telegraph lines into southwestern B.C. from points in the U.S.A.. A fun evening reception, including a singalong, capped the day.

Saturday morning the Annual General Meeting was ably conducted to cover a large agenda but to conclude with sufficient time for those who signed up for tours to regroup.

A Sternwheeler took 60 delegates from New Westminster Quay to Barnston Island. Out-of-towners enjoyed the skytrain ride to the Quay from the hotel and return. Others opted for a 4 hour bus tour with stops at Historic Stewart Farm, the Surrey Museum and the clubhouse of Surrey Golf Course. The tour guide introduced passengers to the various subdivisions of Surrey, waterways, churches, schools, old highways and new ones, and the independent community of White Rock. The weather was perfect for these afternoon outings.

The Awards Banquet featured good food, good fellowship and interesting speakers. Pixie McGeachie spoke of the challenges faced by the judges then presented a cheque, certificate and the Lieutenant-Governor's medal to young Dr. Richard Mackie for his book **Trading Beyond the Mountains**. Runners up were Norma V. Bennett of Terrace for **Pioneer Legacy: Chronicles of the Lower Skeena River**, and Richard Bocking for **Mighty River: A Portrait of the Fraser**. Mrs. Bennett, 87, was represented at the banquet by her son and granddaughter. The Best Article winner, Erin Payne of Prince George, was not present to receive his award for the article "A Chinese Secret Society in the Cariboo."

A very special event was the inclusion of three winners of B.C. Heritage Trust scholarships. Chair of the Trust, Dr. Jean Barman, and former Trust director Naomi Miller welcomed Keith Carlson, Douglas Harris and Rudy Reimer to the banquet and described their ongoing studies. Each winner was accompanied by his wife and Carlson had his 7 month old son captivating nearby diners. Keith Carlson, from Powell River, is historian for the Sto:lo Nation and is writing his PhD thesis on aboriginal oral tradition and historical evidence. Douglas Harris, with a BA in Honors History and a Law degree, is working on the history of law pertinent to Fisheries regulations and native fisheries. Rudy Reimer is working on a Masters degree in archaeology at Simon Fraser University with a view to seeking prehistoric sites in alpine regions near his home in Squamish. (Previous searches have been limited to valley bottoms.) Two other scholarships, also for $5000 each, were awarded to Claudette Gouger at the University of Northern British Columbia to study aboriginal cattle ranching in the Kamloops area 1870 to 1930, and to Dorothy Kennedy who is presently at Oxford university in England.

The after dinner speaker Chuck Davis delivered a lighthearted description of his research and filing methods.

**Annual General Meeting**

The AGM ran smoothly chaired by President Ron Welwood. Treasurer Doris May gave her final report before turning over the books to Ronald Greene. Of special note were several donations ($600 in total) given in memory of Don Sale.

Reports from member societies were given crisply. Many groups are responsible for a museum, some concentrate on caring for archives, some members have assisted genealogical groups to catalogue old cemeteries. Specific activities will be reported in the Fall issue of the **B.C. Historical News**.

Tony Farr, Chairman of the **News** Publications committee reported on the change of subscription rates as required by Canadian Heritage. Beginning January 1, 1999 members of member societies pay $12 per year, individual subscribers $15, and Institutions $20.

Pixie McGeachie spoke briefly on the Writing Competition, noting that Shirley Cuthbertson will replace her as chair. E.L. Affleck resigned as a judge and was thanked profusely. The top essays submitted for the 1997 Scholarship have all appeared in the **News**. Entries for 1998 are due on May 30, 1998.

John Spittle noted that the Society for the History of Discoveries, founded in 1960, will hold its annual meeting in Vancouver in November. The Vancouver Maritime Museum and the Map Society of B.C. will host the gathering for members and non- members interested in the discovery, exploration and mapping of the earth's land and sea from earliest times to the present day – EXPLORERS AND THE EXPLORED.

Membership Secretary Nancy Peter reported that the BCHF currently represents 1865 members of member societies and 604 in affiliated groups. Organizations recently added to our roster include Anderson Lake Historical Society, Nicola Valley Museums and Archives Association, and Texada Island Historical Society.

Melva Dwyer thanked Canada's National History Society for funding a pre-conference workshop in 1996, '97, and '98. The free genealogy workshop on April 30, 1998 was well attended. Any future workshop will have a fee attached. Melva also reported on the provincial Heritage Council, with a representative from each of the provincial societies for Archaeologists, Heritage, Museums Association, Underwater Archaeologists, Archivists and the B.C. Historical Federation hope to meet soon with the recently reconstituted B.C. Heritage Trust Board.

Alice Glanville was created an Honorary Life Member of the BCHF. Leonard McCann accepted a further year as Honorary President. Appreciation Awards were given at the banquet to Pixie McGeachie, E.L. Affleck and Wayne Desrochers. Past President Alice Glanville conducted the election of officers. Ron Greene of Victoria is a new face on the executive.

Delegates were apprized about the change in management and supply of the book stores on B.C. Ferries. During the changeover the display of books by B.C. authors and publishers has vanished. A motion was made instructing the secretary to protest vehemently on the part of the Federation. Individuals and societies were urged to protest to the Ferry management and to individual politicians.

The meeting concluded with a hearty vote of thanks to the Surrey Historical Society, especially the team of five who planned and managed the weekend so well.

# NEWS & NOTES

## Mailing Spring Issue

Our apologies to subscribers who missed the Spring 1998 issue. A number of renewals, with postmarks ten or twelve days prior to reception date, came in after our mid-March mailing.

## Bowen Island Heritage Days

The February 20, 1998 HERITAGE SUPPLEMENT of the newspaper **Undercurrent** listed "Things to do at Heritage Days, Saturday, Feb. 21 and Sunday, Feb. 22.

1. Get a free souvenir Boarding Pass.
2. Learn how to tie a seaman's knot.
3. Tap out a message in Morse Code.
4. Shake hands with Captain Jack Cates.
5. Join in a rousing sea shanty chorus in the Ladies Salon of the **Britannia**.
6. Listen to Union Steamship tales from Purser Art Twigg.
7. Take a cruise to the past in a recreated Sannie boat.
8. Learn about the Maritime Museum from Len McCann.
9. Watch an authentic boat maker at work.
10. Talk to Mike, the scuba diver.
11. Visit the Coast Guard cutter at the Dallas dock.
12. Sink your teeth into a luscious Island made dessert in the Lady Alex dining room.

And lots more.

Our compliments to members of Bowen Island Historians for arranging a great programme.

## Nursing Home Gift

A director of Activities at an Intermediate Extended care unit takes the **B.C. Historical News** to read and discuss with the residents at Story Time. Do you know other care homes where our magazine would be appreciated as a gift?

## Our Parliament Buildings Celebrate 100 Years

The legislature was recalled on February 10 for one day only, to celebrate the centennial of the parliament buildings in Victoria. Ceremonies began at 10 am with the arrival of Lieutenant-Governor Garde Gardom. There was a salute by cannons, carillon recital, the 5th B.C. Artillery brass band playing in the driveway and a long lineup of visitors awaiting tours after 1 pm. The Arion Male Choir sang in the upper rotunda, as had their predecessors at the 1898 official opening of the Rattenbury designed building. Scores of former MLAs and other dignitaries made a point of attending this anniversary. John Rattenbury, son of architect Francis Rattenbury, remarked, "This is truly a place for people [of this province]"

## Thunderwater Map

Graphics designer Jan Perrier combined with Keith Carlson, a historian working with the Sto:lo Nation in Chilliwack to create a lovely 27" by 38" map in color which plots fur trade posts alongside Aboriginal language groupings. It covers the Pacific Northwest from Oregon to the Yukon border. This map is recommended for classrooms and areas where heritage displays will benefit from the information presented. These maps may be obtained for $17.50 (inc. GST) plus $5 postage from: Thunderwater Group, Box 1097, Fort Langley, B.C. V1M 2S4 Fax/Phone (604) 513-0227.

## Birth Announcement

Vice-President Wayne Desrochers and his wife Stephanie proudly announce the arrival of their first child on April 17, 1998. She is *Emilie Joan, 7 lbs. 1 oz.* Daddy Wayne is very proud of this newest member of the Historical Federation. We send congratulations and best wishes to this new family.

## Hedley's 100 Year Celebration

July 31 and August 1, 1998 will be very busy as citizens and friends have a big party to celebrate the anniversary of early activity on Nickel Plate Mountain. A parade in the morning is a prelude to demonstrations of mining and gold panning, vintage cars, music, dancing, helicopter rides to view the Mascot Mine, and kiddie contests. Both mornings start at 7:30 am with a pancake breakfast. The Upper Similkameen Indian Band has promised to make a presentation. Pre-registration is urged. Contact the Hedley Centennial Committee, Box 190, Hedley, B.C. V0X 1K0 Phone (250) 292-8422 or Fax (250) 292-8101.

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Hedley citizens have been buying the 1997 publication BLUEBELL MEMORIES by Terry Turner. Why? because the sister of S.S. Fowler, manager of the Bluebell Mine in Riondel, was married to Wm. Hedley, founder of their community.

## Dave Falconer 1944 - 1998

The tallest schoolteacher in the Cariboo died suddenly on March 19. Dave Falconer was a very heritage minded person who led his students and adult neighbours in the restoration of the Quesnel Forks / Likely cemetery. He led many summer tours over historic prospectors' trails, and put out a newsletter for history buffs keen on Cariboo stories.

### Qualicum's General Money

Brigadier General Noel Ernest Money visited Vancouver Island in 1913 for a 10 day fishing trip to Shawnigan Lake and land scouting which resulted in the purchase of six lots in Qualicum. He returned to Canada, from England, with his wife Maud when they bought and managed the Qualicum Hotel. When WWI broke out, this veteran of the Boer War returned to army service, while his hotel became a convalescent hospital for officers. Money returned to Qualicum in 1919, regaining control of the hotel in 1923. From then until 1940 Money's hotel entertained every Governor General of Canada, the King of Siam, and Hollywood celebrities such as Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Errol Flynn and Spencer Tracy.

Last winter a Victoria collector advertised Money's military medals for sale. The community of Qualicum Beach quickly raised funds to buy them ($7,500) and when these were unveiled at the local museum, a grandson, Gordon Money was present. Gordon has loaned his personal souvenirs from his grandfather to the Qualicum Museum for display during the summer of 1998.

## Golden Buildings Replicated

Twenty of Golden's earliest buildings have been recreated at the scale of 1/4 inch per foot. The first police station was built from 1903 blueprints. Buildings still in use are photographed, research done in the Golden Museum about their history, and construction done with scrap wood, glue, nails and paint. Stuart Soles of Parson was always keen on woodwork, making lamps from burls, and birdhouses and coffee tables. Now that Stuart is retired he prefers to challenge himself with projects that take about six weeks each.

## Trail-Tadanac High School 1941

This class held traditional reunions in Trail then met in 1995 in Vancouver. The organizer, David Balfour, prepared a review of what classmates had done since 1941. There were 98 in the class, 53 M and 45 F. Of these 26 M and 1 F enlisted; 6 were killed (all pilots), 1 became a POW, and 1 evaded capture and got home via the French and Dutch underground. Almost all took post high school education, 13 RNs, 2 MDs, 2 professors, 0 went to jail but 1 as a B.C. Supreme Court justice, sent a few.

The profit from the last reunion was directed to buy a metre of the Trans-Canada Trail for each of the classmates killed in WWII.

### Crowsnest Railway Route Centennial

The centennial of the building of the railway from Fort McLeod to Kootenay Lake will be celebrated in many communities along the line. Cranbrook has designated August 21 to 23 "Centennial Weekend."

There will be a receptions, displays, antique vehicles, activities for all age groups, contests, street actors, a pancake breakfast and church service on the Sunday and more.

For detailed information contact the CRRC office at 250-426-5138

# BOOKSHELF

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

**Bridges of Light:** Otto Landauer of Leonard Frank Photos, 1945-1980. Cyril E. Leonoff. Vancouver, Talonbooks, 1997. 208 p., illus. $39.95

Otto Landauer, of a similar Jewish German background to Leonard Frank, was the perfect successor to Leonard Frank. **Bridges of Light** is the companion volume to Leonoff's award-winning biography **Frank, An Enterprising Life** (Talonbooks, 1990). Leonoff and Talonbooks have produced another evocative album supported by an affectionate biography of Vancouver's most important postwar industrial photographer. Unlike the Frank collection which is split between the Vancouver Public Library and the Jewish Historical Society, the entire Landauer photograph collection is housed at the JHS, Vancouver.

Landauer, from Munich in southern Germany (Frank was from a small town in northern Germany), spent more than half his life in Germany, Liechtenstein and Switzerland, where he worked and played hard as the son of a successful businessman. Following their father's death in 1928, the brothers Otto and Albert carried on the carpet business Simon Landauer had established in 1887. A decade after his death, Germany's Nazi government legislated Jewish-owned firms such as Gebr/der Landauer out of business.

With the help of relatives abroad and through necessary subterfuge, the immediate members of Otto Landauer's family escaped the Nazi slaughter of non-Aryans. Otto fled on skis to Liechtenstein in 1937 and eventually moved to Switzerland, where he was reunited with his sister and brother-in-law. It was during the early years of the war, after befriending a Swiss Catholic Father, that Otto converted to Catholicism.

Because his German passport did not specifically identify him as a Jew, Otto was able to move from a sales job in Liechtenstein to Switzerland in April 1939, where he enrolled as an agricultural student. Through a friendship his brother-in-law had with a Canadian Pacific Railway agent in Lausanne, Otto's sister and husband emigrated to Vancouver, also in April 1939. Another friendship developed in Vancouver between Otto's brother-in-law and Bernard Frank, Leonard's brother. It was that relationship which ultimately brought Otto to Vancouver.

Landauer's luck at navigating wartime bureaucracies and transiting occupied countries was nothing if not extraordinary. Travelling through France and Spain, he and other refugees sailed from Bilbao to Cuba. With his younger brother already established in Portland, Oregon, Albert with the financial help of his mother's cousin obtained a United States Immigration visa for Otto. He reached Portland in mid-summer 1941. Following the entry of the U.S. into the war, Otto engaged in war work.

Otto, already a gifted amateur photographer and knowing of the void created by Leonard Frank's death in 1944, enrolled in 1946 in Portland's Northwest School of Photography with GI Bill of Rights aid. While still enrolled in the school and with a loan from his brother-in-law, Otto purchased Leonard Frank Photos on October 1, 1946. Following graduation from the school he moved to Vancouver as a landed immigrant in 1947 and became a Canadian Citizen in 1954. Otto also married in 1954 an English immigrant and school teacher, Barbara Graham.

Four years earlier Otto's budding reputation as a skilled industrial photographer nearly ended with a compound leg fracture on a skiing trip at Garibaldi Provincial Park. With his family's help and that of his darkroom assistant, Jack Bowman, Otto kept Leonard Frank Photos afloat while he recovered his mobility over several months. Though there were a few who did not appreciate Otto's perfectionism, assistants such as Bowman, Kelly Duncan and John Tincombe who doubled at times as photographers in addition to their darkroom activities under Landauer's guidance, contributed in their own way to the success of Leonard Frank Photos.

Landauer earned an unrivalled reputation over his 33 years at Leonard Frank Photos for attention to detail and dedication to his craft as a photographer's photographer. Like Frank before him, he believed in the staying power and beauty of large-format black and white photographs. Although his remained a vigorous outdoor enthusiast, Landauer did not roam as far afield as his predecessor. Landauer's customers were nearly all within in the Lower Mainland region. As Leonoff makes clear in his biography, large-scale construction projects throughout the region from the 1950s to the mid-1970s provided Landauer with a steady flow of comfortable revenue; Landauer would photograph practically every significant public building, downtown office tower, and metropolitan bridge built during this period (1946-1971), as well as many commercial and industrial complexes. His client base would become a who's who of Vancouver's architecture, engineering, and construction companies of the day. (p. 33).

Bearing the look and feel of Leonoff's tribute to Leonard Frank, **Bridges of Light** is distinctive in its own way. The typeface is different, the ink is lighter, the paper glossier and the duotone photographs printed in a subdued, often flat light gray tone. With more than 300 photographs, an index to image content, a feature also lacking in the Frank book, would have made the Landauer work even more useful. Both works also lack a bibloigraphy, but there are fewer footnotes to Landauer's life.

Many of Landauer's photographs are as distinctive as Frank's and the growth of the Lower Mainland is well represented in both books. Perhaps it is the photograph's age and wide-ranging coverage, but I found Frank's images more appealing than the often static and humanless industrial and architectural photographs by his successor. Leonoff comments on this spare aesthetic, partly reflective of the actual content; the client wanted a visual record, not an artistic impression. Landauer's visual legacy, however, will only grow in value as time increases its worth to anyone studying the past. Leonoff and Talonbooks are to be congratulated for their part in preserving and publishing this bridge to our past.

***David Mattison,***
*David Mattison, a reference archivist with the B.C. Archives, is a photographic and film historian, the author of two books and many articles.*

**Park Prisoners. The Untold Story of Western Canada's National Parks, 1915-1946.** Waiser, Bill. Saskatoon & Calgary, Fifth House Publishers, 1995. 294 pp. Maps, Illus. $27.95.

The title and sub-title of Park Prisoners are somewhat misleading. The author, in his chapter "Transients", states that the subjects of that chapter "were not in the strict sense prisoners"; and not all the activities described in the book took place within the boundaries of the national parks.

The prisoners of the title were the men "sent to Canada's mountain and prairie national parks between 1915 and 1946 as part of a general govemment effort to remove them from Canadian society. They were Canada's unwanted – unskilled foreign workers, the jobless and the homeless, pacifists, possible subversives and enemies of the state, and prisoners of war." The stories of their activities are not, as Waiser points out, well known – the subject matter is one of which people generally do not wish to be reminded.

Managing the various groups of men, often most unwilling participants, demanded administrative talents and abilities that were usually lacking. Much of the book is taken up with litanies of the problems which plagued the projects undertaken. Yet there was solid work achieved. The national park system profited from the projects. "While regular Parks funding was being reduced in response to war and depression," Waiser writes, "the national parks experienced one of the most intensive development periods in their history."

There are many good features to this book. The maps are kept simple: they show what needs to be shown and are easily read and understood. The photographs – over one hundred and twenty – are an essential part. In them are shown details which flesh out the text in significant respects – general and detailed views of the camps, buildings, both outside and inside, men walking through the snow to their daily jobs. Above all the photographs depict the men themselves, emphasising that people were at the focus of the projects. The extensive notes more than compensate for the lack of a bibliography; readers will find in the notes details which will enable them to pursue any particular aspect of the subject.

Overall **Park Prisoners** is a very adequate treatment of an intriguing subject. Anyone who has visited the prairie and mountain national parks will find much of interest, and not a few surprises.

***George Newell,***
*Victoria.*

**Deep Currents:** Roderick and Ann Haig-Brown. Haig-Brown, Valerie. Victoria, Orca Book Publishers, 1997. Foreword by Steve

Raymond. 216 pp., 80 photographs. $32.95.

Valerie Haig-Brown, the eldest daughter of Roderick and Ann Haig-Brown, states in her introduction that **Deep Currents** "is obviously and of necessity a very personal biography; it is my story of my parents and our family life." This describes the book well. In large part the author draws on the diaries and "great many letters that we have kept in the family." "Great many letters" is not exaggeration. Both Roderick and Ann Haig-Brown had a deep and life-long affection for writing and reading – it is appropriate that they should have met in the Seattle book store where she was employed – and the reader feels throughout **Deep Currents** the great enjoyment each received from writing the letters and the wonderful rewards for the recipient reading them. Few biographers have had such rich sources to draw on; clearly the author was faced with an "embarrassment of riches". The result, to her credit, is a rewarding read.

**Deep Currents**, while essentially about the private lives of the two principals, of necessity has much that will interest those aware of the more public aspects of Roderick Haig-Brown's life. There are, for example, some comments on his (usually private) feelings about the reception given to his writings. The author notes that "He . . . felt some annoyance at not being noticed by the wider literary community, in spite of his often-praised ability," a sentiment echoed by the critic George Woodock in his essay "Remembering Roderick Haig-Brown" which was published in **Raincoast Chronicles, no. 7**, in 1977. The suggestion in **Deep Currents** that "neither the essay form that came naturally to him nor the subject of fishing were particularly valued" in the literary community certainly has its merit.

Then there was the relationship which Roderick Haig-Brown developed with respect to the country which he adopted. It may well have been the personal pressures brought on by the Second World War which helped clarify for him his own feelings. In 1945, the author writes, "Roddy told Ann that, more than ever, being in England made him realize how much he was now a Canadian. The house, the garden, the river and fields in Campbell River meant everything to him in terms of place." He has a wonderful section in **Fisherman's Summer** telling of how he fished for grayling in the Arctic's Coppermine River. As much as about fishing, the account is about the country he was visiting and about the young Inuit boy who went with him and the history of the place. Haig-Brown writes that it was by "good fortune" that he was obliged to stay for a few days at the mouth of the Coppermine – "good fortune" for Haig-Brown being something that for most would be a most unwelcome imposition. It is interesting to consider the Haig-Brown response to his new homeland and those of other transplanted (and published) Englishmen such as R.M. Patterson (**Dangerous River, Far Pastures**) and T.A. (Tommy) Walker (**Spatsizi**).

The reader of **Deep Currents**, however, is not permitted to dwell exclusively on the life of the husband and father. This is very much a dual biography. "Ann was every bit his intellectual equal," Steve Raymond writes in his Foreword. "In addition to her traditional role as homemaker and mother, she was an activist and leader in community and church affairs, a teacher and a librarian." The record of her contribution over, not years but decades, a lifetime, deserves preservation. The communities of this province have been built in large part by the unsung Ann Haig-Browns.

The "balancing" of the two lives, one more public and acclaimed, the other more private, may represent this biography's most valuable aspect. The story which emerges is good social history.

*George Newell,*
*Victoria.*

**Enlightenment and Exploration in the North Pacific 1741-1805.** Edited by Stephen Haycox, James Barnett and Caedmon Liburd. Seattle and London, University of Washington Press. Published for the Cook Inlet Historical Society in the Anchorage Museum of History and Art, 1997. 232 p., illus., maps. $19.95 U.S.

It is a well known fact that the exploration of the Northwest Coast coincides with the Age of Enlightenment, but this is better known in the generality than in the particular. Spanish scholars have stressed this theme greatly, and less so British and French savants. Yet is fair to say that the overall theme lacks a full appreciation, and this book of essays is a fine attempt to bring European and Coastal themes into conjunction. Because the work consists of so many different contributions the examples, or case studies, are various and not always on the mark. Still, the chapters do have a common basis, and they are a great credit to the organizers of a conference held to commemorate the exploration of the Northwest Coast by Captain George Vancouver, RN., 1792-94.

Individual contributions are as follows: Iris Engstrand, "Spain's Role in Pacific Exploration during the Age of Enlightenment," Glyndwr Williams, "George Vancouver, the Admiralty, and Exploration," Robin Inglis, "Laperouse 1786: a French Naval Visit to Alaska," and Phyllis Herda, "Ethnology in the Enlightenment: the Voyage of Malaspina." These are clustered under the heading "Motives and Objectives." They nicely set the themes for specific analyses under the title "Science and Technology": John Naish "Health of Mariners: Vancouver's Achievement," John Kendrick, "Evolution of Shipbuilding," Alun Davies, "Testing a New Technology: Vancouver's Survey and Navigation in Alaskan Waters," Andrew David, "From Cook to Vancouver: British Contribution to the Cartography of Alaska," and Carol Urness, "Russian Mapping of the North Pacific to 1792." The third and last section is "Outcomes and Consequences," and included here are: J.C.H. King, "Vancouver: a Cautious Collector," Kesler Woodward, "Images of Native Alaskans in the Work of Explorer Artists," Anthony Payne, "Publication and Readership of Voyage Journals in the Age of Vancouver," Stephen Langdon, "Efforts at Humane Engagement: Indian-Spanish Encounters at Bucareli Bay, 1779," and Robin Fisher, "George Vancouver and the Native Peoples of the Northwest Coast." These are all brought together under an excellent introduction by James K. Barnett, "Alaska and the North Pacific: a Crossroads of Empires."

This publication completes a cycle of conferences begun with the James Cook Bicentenary in 1978, and it is possible that other such gatherings will address such themes of rich importance to historical scientific, and cross-cultural studies. Certainly the whole historiography of the Northwest Coast has been enriched by these many conferences, and by this one in particular. It has often been pondered "why celebrate centennials?" The answer in terms of historical love is obvious, though the scholarly rationale is often stretched to the point of view of a certain convenience, even opportunism. To this reviewer, judging this particular book, it seems as if all the great talents had been brought together for one last time. In the last analysis, the book is a treasure, and it should take its place as a classic acquisition for anyone collecting in the field of 18th century Northwest Coast history.

*Barry Gough,*
*Wilfrid Laurier University,*
*Waterloo, Ontario.*

**The Business of Power: Hydro-Electricity in Southeastern British Columbia 1897-1997.** Jeremy Mouat. Victoria, Sono Nis Press, 1997. 199 p., illus. $21.95.

Energy is central to almost all of our everyday activities whether it be used for work, recreation, comfort or necessities; and the most common form of energy in Canada is electricity (our reliance on electric power was graphically depicted by the chaos created when the severe winter ice storms in Ontario-Quebec in the winter of 1997-1998 cut off this power source to over a million Canadians in January). Although this book examines the history of electricity in southeastern British Columbia and describes the first hundred years of the electric utility, West Kootenay Power & Light (WKPL), Mouat successfully depicts the growth of this company in the context of the larger provincial (and national) landscape.

Formed in 1897, West Kootenay Power is one of a handful of B.C. companies to have operated for a century or more. Initially the company was formed to supply power to the booming mining industry in the Kootenays at the turn of the century. Fortunately for WKPL, the nearby Columbia and Kootenay Rivers provided an inexpensive and effective solution to the mines' constant demands for more power.

Both the history of the Canadian Pacific Railway's expansion into southeastern British Columbia and the history of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Trail (later Cominco) are woven into the fabric of West Kootenay Power's growth and development. In fact, the smelting company's success was largely due to its subsidiary, WKPL, which enabled Cominco to produce crucial commodities during both world wars (zinc during WWI and heavy water during WW2).

Jeremy Mouat's first book, **Roaring Days: Rossland's Mines and the History of British Columbia** (UBC Press, 1995 - BCHN review, Fall 1995), indicated the author's penchant for exhaus-

tive research and detailed analysis. This book is no different. Mouat has the uncanny ability to intertwine regional development within the context of the provincial and national scene. Although the text is replete with references to annotated endnotes, his writing style is far from pedantic. In fact, it is embellished and complemented with both photographs and quotations from primary sources (often displayed in a framed side-bar or pull quote). The book also includes a "bibliographical essay", appendices (WKPL related data) and a four page index.

Anyone who is interested in either the history of hydroelectric power in the province, or of a century-old corporation, or of the industrial growth and development of southeastern British Columbia, should definitely include this book on their reading list.

***Ron Welwood,***
*Ron Welwood is Librarian at Selkirk College, Castlegar.*

**Trading Beyond the Mountains: The British Fur Trade on the Pacific, 1793-1843**. Richard Somerset Mackie. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997. 420 pp., illus. maps. hard cover, $75.00 paperback. $29.95

Native and fur trade history have been productive areas of scholarship since the 1970s: A.J. Ray, Jennifer Brown, Sylvia Van Kirk, and others have examined the fur trade in the interior and northern regions of Canada, while Barry Gough and James Gibson have provided insight into British marine activity and the American and Russian coastal fur trades, respectively. There has been, unfortunately, little scholarship into the fur trade and commercial enterprises of the Columbia District, a region that had reached its greatest territorial extent by 1843 stretching from Sacramento to Stikine and Taku, and from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific coast. An excellent contribution to the field, **Trading Beyond the Mountains** serves to extend the historiography of this subject.

In 1832 the Boston merchant, Nathaniel Wyeth, lamented the Hudson's Bay Company's (HBC) control of the coastal trade. He spoke with admiration of "The more economical methods of the British", and suggested – prophetically as it turned out – that the HBC would be defeated only by diplomatic manoeuvres. This anecdote illustrates the economic domination of the lower Columbia by the HBC in a region where American traders had equal rights of access and trade. Mackie meticulously traces the origins and development of this superior position, and the emergence of the idea of a transcontinental commerce that sought to connect the Canadian colonies to the Pacific and beyond.

While the earliest commercial visions and ventures originated with Alexander Dalrymple, Alexander Mackenzie, and the North West Company, it was only after the merger with the HBC in 1821 that a more comprehensive commercial development began in earnest. Under George Simpson, the HBC expanded upon established resources, trade routes, and labour supplies in pursuing two goals: first, the extension of the fur trade, and, second, economic diversification and market development. The Company was successful on both counts. The intentional "scorched-earth" policy of trapping fur bearing animals to extinction on the "frontier" area of the Snake country brought the region under HBC control by 1828. The American retreat allowed the HBC freedom to experiment with new exports: salmon, lumber, wheat, flour, potatoes, and butter were exported to markets such as Hawaii, California, and the Russian settlements in Alaska. By 1841 the salmon trade at Fort Langley, for example, was worth about a third of the fort's fur trade. Further, Mackie discusses the transition of native labour from participants in the fur trade to more formal, explicit working relationships. Over these five decades, Mackie argues that the economic development of the region was dramatic: in 1793 commerce consisted primarily of a riverine fur trade; by 1843 the region possessed the rudimentary elements of a commercial economy, including established trade routes, export trades, local markets, and a large and cheap labour supply. Mackie maintains that such developments were a catalyst for the resettlement of the colony.

**Trading Beyond the Mountains** makes several contributions to fur trade historiography. For example, Mackie takes issue with James Gibson's contention that American interests withdrew from the northwest coast as the sea otter trade declined; in contrast, Mackie argues that extensive capital resources, assertive shipping practices, and experienced personnel allowed the HBC to out-compete Americans. Similarly, Mackie contradicts A.J. Ray's assertion that the HBC diversified its economic activities only after 1870 in the Columbia District, at least, this date is pushed back to the 1820s. This well-researched and important work is accompanied by a series of excellent maps and reproductions.

***Brian Gobbett,***
*Brian Gobbett is a graduate student at the University of Alberta.*

**A Woman of Influence: Evlyn Fenwick Farris**. Sylvie McClean. Victoria, BC. Sono Nis Press. 1997. 270 p. illus. $22.95.

Sylvie McClean has written a scrupulously detailed and absorbing biography of Evlyn Farris, a fascinating woman who evolved from being an idealistic young girl in the Maritimes to an occasionally formidable woman of considerable backroom power in British Columbia. Her influence on the development of B.C. in the early part of the century has largely been ignored by historians, perhaps because of her own self-effacement, which was characteristic of many women of her period, a period when brilliance and assertiveness were considered unwomanly attributes. Born at a time when not only men, but also women, believed that the sexes had been assigned to separate spheres by natural and divine laws, it is not surprising that Farris refrained from basking in the political limelight and preferred to stand in the shade of her husband's accomplishments.

The reconstitution of the life of a circumspect woman is no easy task. The author was originally inspired by four of Evlyn Farris's speeches which were contained in the J. Wallace de Beque Farris papers in the UBC Archives. As she recounts it: "Those speeches are so well written, rational, full of enthusiasm, at the same time modern and old fashioned that, when I read them, I felt compelled to get to know her" Getting to know Evlyn involved studying at length her upbringing and education in the Maritimes, following her life in British Columbia as reported in newspapers, minutes of clubs, University records, private material lent by relatives, and many archives. Six years of fact-gathering pose a danger to a biographer, too many facts can complicate unnecessarily, or add the smell of the lamp to a creation. Fortunately McClean has managed to convey the essence of the Farris character and work rather than just the simple facts of her life. And she has confined her more academic comments to endnotes which, in fact, are in themselves very enjoyable.

Evlyn Farris was born in Nova Scotia in 1878, a time of intellectual awakening and religious ferment in the Maritimes. The old Anglican, anti-democratic class which had formerly held office had long been banished by Responsible Government, which in turn was succeeded by Confederation. It was a climate in which education and literature flourished. Evlyn's father, a liberal Baptist minister, encouraged her to see women as important as men in God's eyes. Deprived by tuberculosis of his wife and son when Evlyn was only twelve, he treated his daughter as an intellectual equal and devoted himself to her upbringing. As a result, his pretty, precocious daughter entered Horton Collegial Academy at the impressionable age of fourteen and was exposed to the idealistic social evangelism and "women's pride" prevalent in that institution. Indeed, her graduating speech was entitled "dux femina facti" which she translated as "woman, the leader of the deed, or, a woman leads the way". In it she pointed out, in a tone which presaged her own future, that "We may fairly expect that with her enlarged privileges of education and her wise use of the ballot, she (the educated woman) will in future become the leader of the social life of the nations". This was pretty heady rhetoric for a sixteen year old. It is not surprising that she continued on to Acadia University where her father taught, and where she earned both a BA and MA with honours.

Like many women of her time her options after graduation were fairly limited. She temporarily chose teaching as a career, but, in fact, her real career decision had been made during her last year as an undergraduate at Acadia, when fate, in the form of the dashing J. Wallace de Beque Farris, crossed her path. Although he was not her equal as a student and was only a junior, he was a fine debater and the captain of the football team. It was not insignificant that Evlyn's graduating oration was entitled "The Welcome of its Heroes, the Truest Test of an Epoch." She was drawn to Wallace, an honoured athlete and budding politician, in spite of the reservations of her father and her friends. Though this was clearly a love match, doubtless she instinctively recognized in him an ambition

which equalled her own and in which she could play a role. Her concept of marriage was similar to Milton's "He for God only, she for God in him".

After a suitable wait in which Evlyn taught very successfully and Wallace finished his law studies, they married and came out to B.C. where they lived modestly and frugally in the West End. Evlyn was initially lonely, her upbringing in the Maritimes was different from the almost frontier life of B.C. and she was tied down with babies while her husband was out in the world. However, she gradually began to direct her considerable energies to improving the position of women in society. To this end she founded the University Women's Club of Vancouver, joined the Liberal party and began to use her husband, who had become attorney-general in 1917 in the Liberal government of B.C., to fashion legislation which could help women's causes.

Evlyn's main influence was to be in the area of higher education. Rallying members of the University Women's Club and the Liberal party and even her Baptist connections, she promoted the creation of a provincial university. As usual she worked behind the scenes and was particularly pleased when in 1908 the new University Act provided that women students should have equality of privilege with men students. She spearheaded a drive to get every woman in the University Women's Club registered as a voting member of the University Convocation and she herself was elected by the Convocation to be one of only two women members of the Senate of the new University of British Columbia. She was disappointed, however, when the government appointed only men to the Board. In spite of setbacks she began to take an interest in University politics. Seeing them as a segregation of women she opposed in particular the creation of courses in home economics and domestic science. By 1917, shortly after Wallace's appointment as Attorney-General, Evlyn achieved her ambition to become a member of the Board of Governors of UBC.

As a member of the Board she was able to extend her influence considerably, partly by promoting the University in speeches and in being a traditional hostess and partly by working behind the scenes with the Liberal government. She reached her zenith in this work, becoming a close friend to the University president Klinck and jealously guarding the rights of women to higher education. However, as time went by she became increasingly conservative, even to the extent of changing her Baptist values for those of the more fashionable Anglican church. Eventually she retreated into her family and retired from public office.

Sylvie McClean has created an absorbing exposition of the life of an extraordinary woman. McClean's analysis of the University politics of the twenties and thirties throws considerable light on the near disastrous period when the University nearly collapsed after atrocious cuts were made to its budget in 1932 and the various faculties were set at odds against each other. Her discussion of this period which was still making elderly professors weep in the 1970s is quite brilliant. I question only one of her conclusions. McClean casts doubt on the claim of Professor Henry Angus in his autobiography that Evlyn Farris had threatened to have him fired when he summed up the position of the Arts faculty during the Lampman hearing on the situation. She supports this with the fact that Angus was under the impression Evlyn was a member of the Board at the time when, in fact, she was only a member of the UBC Senate. However, she was more generally known as a Board member and was sitting beside the President during the hearing. Furthermore, the story was well known on the campus and Professor Angus, who was the soul of accuracy, once described it vividly to this reviewer "she *hissed* at me as I was leaving: 'I'll see you get fired'"

Aside from this quibble, there is very little to criticize about this splendid book except perhaps that is does not take Evlyn Farris to the end of her life. McClean is no muckraker. It is of course difficult for any biographer who has received the confidence and trust of relatives to record the less attractive side of her subject, and the last days of Evlyn Farris were sad indeed as she and her family coped with her growing loss of memory and rational thinking. However, since it is unlikely that another biography of her achievements will ever be written (who would dare try to improve on this competent book) it would have been more satisfactory to bring its subject's life to a conclusion.

The Sono Nis Press has made a splendid production of this important biography. It is handsomely printed by the Morriss Printing Company and it contains a number of appealing family photographs. Sylvie McClean is an accomplished writer and this biography enlightens us on the life of a Canadian woman of great distinction who contributed a great deal to the development of education in British Columbia.

***Laurenda Daniells***
*Archivist Emerita, University of British Columbia*

**Scalpels and Buggywhips: Medical Pioneers of Central B.C.** Eldon Lee, with Jack McKenzie and Al Holley. Surrey, Heritage House, 1997. 160 p., $16.95.

Books by or about doctors have had a spotty record in B.C., but it appears that Dr. Lee has a winner with this account of the early practitioners in north central B.C.

Dr. Lee is himself something of the *genre* he is writing about. Born in California, he moved with his family at an early age to a ranch in the Williams Lake area, and on completing his schooling joined the RCAF where he became a bomber pilot. On return to civilian life he studied medicine in Seattle and worked for a time at the Wrinch Memorial Hospital in Hazelton. He then did graduate studies in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K., and for thirty years was the only obstetrician and gynaecologist in Prince George, serving a vast area.

He is a man of omnivorous interest including recreational flying, classical Greek studies, fiction and non-fiction writing, and a continuing participation in the activities of his church. Despite his many accomplishments he writes with an earthy touch, betraying something of his roots in the land. It is interesting how often in writing of the early doctors he comments on their attending to both the physical and the spiritual needs of their patients.

He has set a commendable precedent in writing a chapter on the doctor's wife almost every time he writes about one of these early practitioners, and in several instances the women are more remarkable than their husbands. Two of the chapters have been given over to colleagues who knew the subjects better than the author did, and in two more he has shared the writing.

The Wrinch Memorial Hospital in Hazelton has been in existence for nearly a hundred years but the account in Dr. Lee's book is the best capsule summary I have read of the life of the remarkable man for whom it was named in the mid twenties. Horace Cooper Wrinch (1866-1939) was an honours graduate from the Ontario Agricultural College and a successful farmer when he decided to retrain as a medical missionary at the turn of the century. He opened the first Hazelton Hospital in 1904 complete with gardens and a dairy farm to support the enterprise. A training school for nurses operated for the next 28 years, by which time the second hospital had been built (1930). The third and present structure opened in 1977.

Stories of some of the early doctors are somewhat shadowy, but good mini-biographies are presented of Dr. Ross Stone of Vanderhoof, Dr. Carle Ewert and Dr. Edwin Lynch of Prince George, Dr. Williams Wright of Alexis Creek, Dr. George Sansun of Clinton and Ashcroft, and Dr. Dundas Herald of 150 Mile House. Of interest is a note that Dr. Sansun's sister in law, Trixie Campbell of Victoria, was an excellent singer and an annual visitor to Ashcroft where she always gave a concert. Later she would be known as the grandmother of Ian Tyson, of Ian and Sylvia fame.

By far the best portrait to emerge from this book is that of Dr. Gerald Rumsey "Paddy" Baker, in a chapter aptly titled "Quesnel and its 40 year love affair with Dr. Paddy Baker." Few small town doctors anywhere will depart this earth with their names attached to a hospital, an extended care unit, and a school in the same community. Dr. Alex Hawley, the Quesnel-born surgeon who spent his career practising in his home town, is quoted saying "Dr. Baker never tired. Never tired." Dr. Lee relates a series of anecdotes attesting to the legendary reputation of Dr. Baker in his profession and in his avocations of hunting and fishing. However, he gropes for words trying to explain away how this famous man could have cast aside an ideal Cariboo wife for a nubile upstart twenty-five years his junior. ". . . . Dr. Baker's reputation suffered only mildly since it was recognized that, after all, he was only human."

One assumes that any reviewer is going to indulge in a little nit-picking, but fortunately there is little for me to criticize. Every time I see the name "Mount Rocher Deboulle" it is spelt differently. For the record Akrigg and Akrigg use the above version. (page 46). There is an Albert College in Belleville, Ontario, where Dr. Wrinch took his premed studies, but I can find no reference to "Belleview" (p. 47). On page 27 the captions for the two photographs appear to have been reversed,

as the lower one shows typical Skeena smoke houses (with no smoke) and the upper one tiny cabins, albeit with lots of smoke. Throughout the book listing of temperatures in Fahrenheit below zero is awkward. (page 144). Perhaps the use of Celsius would be simpler nowadays.

These are minutiae. Most of us will find a new anecdote or two about an old doctor we have known or heard about. The book is an overdue volume in the annals of B.C. folk history, and popular medical history in particular.

*Adam C. Waldie, M.D.,*
*Vancouver, B.C.*

**Chilcotin Diary; Forty Years of Adventure**. Will D. Jenkins Sr. Surrey, Hancock House, 1997. 270 p. illus. $19.95

It is somewhat brave when a writer nearing the century-mark in age has his face on the front cover of a book. But the tough reflective face of the adventurer has stamped itself inexorably on Jenkins' patrician head, and I looked forward to reading this biographical account of life in the Chilcotin before clear-cut logging and the exercises of NATO forces broke the sound barrier in the hitherto vast silence of the remote valleys and mountains of a region that has become legendary.

God knows why some people want to stare down the wilderness. The same people climb mountains most of us are content to experience within the cozy confines of home and hearth, watching the Knowledge Network. But wilderness might be a misnomer in the case of the Chilcotin, and certainly in the present day Chilcotin, if adventuring purists like writer Edward Hoagland have anything to say about it. And Hoagland did say a lot about the wilderness in his book, **Notes From The Century Before**, a book some people feel is the best book about B.C. ever written, and Hoagland is from New York City. But if fights with grizzly bears, travel and travail over the roughest of mud roads with ruts and potholes more than a foot deep, and a few hamlets and ranches spread wide apart over a territory as large or larger than some European countries is sufficient evidence of "wilderness", the Chilcotin still qualifies.

Jenkins' book is filled with snapshots from the family album and numerous sensitive drawings of wild animals, birds, and the landscape around Little Eagle Lake, where the author and his wife Mildred settled in the mid 50's. The text is written in a spritely, professional style because Jenkins was a journalist and worked on the **Vancouver Sun** and other newspapers before retiring. He charts the family's discovery of the Chilcotin in the mid 30's, and the couple's eventual decision to settle permanently there in 1954. In those days, a party of Chilcotin Indians camped along the Chilcotin Road, hobbled horses nearby and a campfire cook-out was a common sight. The country was still as pristine a wilderness as one could imagine, before logging trucks roared up and down a paved highway every few minutes, and the Indians complained that the sonic boom of diving jet bombers was scaring away the game, ruining their trap lines, and depriving them of income.

Jenkins' descriptive writing is lyrical and his genuine love of the land is reflected on every page, even those devoted to the extrication of sundry vehicles from gumbo, ice and snow. His reference to the hearty characters who shared the Chilcotin experience with him, brought back old memories for the writer, who lived in Williams Lake in the early 60's and had friends in the Chilcotin. The country was so remote in those days, messages were heard daily over the radio, conveyed from town to the far-flung inhabitants of Nemiah Valley, or Chezacut, or some other outpost that a child was ready to be discharged from the hospital, or a part for a tractor was waiting for a rancher at so and so's, and so on. People in the Chilcotin depended upon one another, and everyone knew everyone as the saying goes. Those names on the radio became familiar. Like family members. Jenkins' mention of Olaf Satre brought back memories of that rancher's remarkable recovery of a derelict ranch near Tatlayoko Lake which he and wife Louise and family worked hard to make a Nordic style dream. Satre died some years ago, but a son, Sven, continued to live in the Chilcotin, and was killed by a grizzly only recently.

Jenkin's sense of humour emerges now and then. His description of herding some loons on Little Eagle Lake, for example. But the pathos is there too, when he describes the heart rending struggles of wildlife to survive the savage Chilcotin winters.

All in all, I found Jenkins' book a very interesting read. If I have any criticism at all, it is the questioning of the inclusion of the chapter dealing with explorer Alexander Mackenzie, and the chapter dealing with Mel Rothenberger's excellent book, **Chilcotin Wars**. In my opinion these sections detract somewhat from Will Jenkins' entertaining personal story.

*Esther Darlington*

**From War To Wilderness**. Cyril Shelford. Victoria, Shelford Publishing, 4210 Kincaid St., Victoria, B.C. V8X 4K6 1997. 250 p., illus. $19.95.

The present romance blossoming between the media and the public in the realm of personal journal writing and oral reminiscing is one of the most pleasant and illuminating circumstances we are experiencing on the eve of the millennium.

Cyril Shelford has published an extraordinary collection of letters written by his father Jack Shelford to family in England during the Boer War and the years that followed when Shelford took himself to the pristine wilderness of North America to help him forget the horror of one the bloodiest wars in the last century. The letters might be one of the finest accounts of life on the Alaskan frontier that has ever been published. If that seems a little hyperbole, consider that a good deal of material that has been written about Alaska and northern B.C. has been in the form of melodrama. Robert Service poetry, and the novels of Jack London come to mind. Jack Shelford's letters deal with the mundane toil of survival. They are written with matter-of-fact detail, but detail that springs to life as it unfolds the on-going learning and cathartic process of acquiring new skills, building shelters, trapping game, hunting to keep from starving to death, using his carpentry skills to supplement his income from trapping, fishing, and woodcutting. And there isn't a note of self pity in any of the letters. Jack Shelford was an extraordinary man.

Shelford's description of the death and destruction around him in the Boer War, including a photo of a shelter for wounded and dying men that was little more than a filthy abandoned building, the brief but telling description of campaigns waged in the style of the Macedonian phalanx against a wily Boer adversary with incredibly effective tactical skills, is told with subdued passion.

There are maps of South Africa, Alaska and northern B.C. to help the reader along, but I was a little disappointed that there weren't more photographs, particularly in the period of homesteading at Ootsa Lake, where Jack Shelford eventually settled with his wife Safie. They married in 1915.

The book is in two sections, the first being the Boer War period. The transition from War to Wilderness is smoothly edited.

Some of the sections of the book leave haunting images. A forest fire, for example, when stampeding moose, bear and terrified birds, some with their feathers on fire, flee from an inferno that threatened Shelford's building and possessions. Shelford explains to his father in his letters, how the Alaska government introduced reindeer farming to the Inuit, revealing a strong humanitarian concern for the indigenous people. In fact, Shelford's respect for the native Indian skills, some of which served him well in the years that followed, is evident and gratifying to read, when the prevailing prejudices of the day held native culture and peoples in much less respect.

I enjoyed the book. Even the meticulous account of building cabins, boats and a barge, clearly activities that challenged and brought out the best in young Jack Shelford. But perhaps the horror of the Boer War had prepared Jack well for the formidable challenge of survival in the North American Wilderness.

The letters cease about the time of Jack and Safie Shelford's forging of a ranch and homestead in the northern British Columbia wilderness. Arthur Shelford, Jack's brother, who accompanied Jack into the Ootsa Lake country when the brothers were looking for suitable land to ranch and farm, wrote a fascinating account of their pioneer life in the Oosta Lake country that in some measure, continues the Shelford wilderness saga. Arthur's story was published in Volume 2 of **Pioneer Days in British Columbia**, 1975, Heritage House Publications.

*Esther Darlington,*
*Esther Darlington lives in Cache Creek.*

**Klondike Paradise: Culture in the Wilderness**. C.R. Porter. Surrey, B.C., Hancock House Publishers, 1997. 173 p., illus. $19.95, paperback.

The book's title is misleading with the paradise Ben-My-Chree, Manx-Gaelic for 'Girl of My Heart,' located in northern British Columbia close to 400 miles southeast of the Klondike. Two stories are intertwined, that of the Partridges who established it and that of the author who first saw it in 1938, fell under its spell and would return in 1972 as the new owner of the then dormant property.

Otto and Kate Partridge, both born in England, had come north from California during the Klondike

Rush but had remained in the Bennett to Carcross region involved in shipping and lumbering enterprises. About 1911, a lode gold discovery made by Stanley McLellan, a miner and prospector they had grubstaked, would bring them to the head of Tagish Lake's Taku Arm, some 75 miles by water from the settlement of Carcross. Their Ben-My-Chree prospect lay high up on the mountainside and the equipment and supplies required to develop it were freighted to the landing below where the Partridges were living on a houseboat. The venture ended in disaster in 1912 when a slide destroyed the cookhouse at the mine killing McLellan and his wife.

Mining was abandoned but the Partridges stayed on, enchanted with the setting on the eastern flank of the glacier-draped Boundary Ranges. Living there year around they and Ludwig Swanson, an employee, worked together to develop the buildings and gardens. These plus the Partridges' hospitality soon became legendary and Ben-My-Chree drew visitors from all over the world. Among well-known names in the visitors book were those of Teddy Roosevelt; Edward, Prince of Wales, and Lord Byng of Vimy at the time Canada's Governor General.

The White Pass and Yukon Company with their transportation monopoly, an enemy in mining days, now became an ally in building up the tourist traffic. In later years their magnificent sternwheeler *Tutshi* would make three trips a week to Ben-My-Chree, leaving Carcross at noon and steaming up Tagish Lake to arrive in the early evening. Passengers not staying over were treated to a guided tour of the gardens and at the homestead offered refreshments including home-made rhubarb wine. Then, entertained by Otto's stories and Kate's organ music, they would reboard the *Tutshi* and arrive back in Carcross the following morning. After Otto's death in 1930 and Kate's a few months later, the White Pass purchased the land from the government, a detail that the Partridges had never got around to. The company continued to operate Ben-My-Chree, initially with the Swansons in charge, until it was finally shut down in 1955 and the *Tutshi* taken out of service the following year.

In 1971 the author purchased Ben-My-Chree from the White Pass fulfilling a dream that dated back to his 1938 visit as a teen-age steward on the *Tutshi*. The final pages of the book describe the family's trips to it, the building of a new cabin and relics from the past discovered in the decaying buildings. Reluctantly the property was sold again in the late 1980's after family conferences concluded that it would be a burden rather than a benefit to the younger generation.

The book is profusely illustrated, with photos from both the Partridges' time and later coloured ones from the author's personal collection, complementing the description of what was surely an unusual paradise.

***Lewis Green,***
*Lewis Green has spent many years in the north as a geologist.*

**Growing Up: Childhood in English Canada from the Great War to the Age of Television.** Neil Sutherland. University of Toronto Press, 1997. 327 p. Notes, index, illus. $21.95 paperback, $55.00 Cloth.

**Remembering the 50's; Growing Up in Western Canada.** Lorraine Blashill. Orca Book Publishers, 1997. 167 p. illus. $26.95.

It comes as a shock to find that one's own childhood has become a topic for history. Neil Sutherland was born in 1931, Lorraine Blashill in 1945, so they have written their own history as well as mine, and they have written it in two extremely different modes.

Sutherland deploys the scholarly apparatus appropriate to a Professor Emeritus of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia. While his title claims all of English Canada, his research focuses on two Vancouver neighbourhoods, Cedar Cottage and Kerrisdale, and on the rural community of Evelyn in the Bulkley Valley. With socio-historical theories to test, he insists on anonymity for his interviewees, erasing identifying details so scrupulously that they emerge on his pages as supporting quotations rather than personalities. Then, sometimes uncomfortably, he tests their comments against the published testimony of such well-known contemporaries as Mordecai Richler, Maureen Forrester, Roy Daniells and Stuart Keate.

Blashill takes the opposite tack, blithely eschewing editing, organisation or verification. The book has several sections, in which the same people comment on different aspects of childhood in the 50's. Unfortunately, without even a table of contents, let alone an index, this structure is lost amidst the rambling and often repetitious reminiscences. Her territory is Manitoba and points west.

Blashill at least seems to have enjoyed both living and reliving her childhood, "our good old days." On the other hand, I worried about Sutherland: he wonders if Richler exaggerates the importance of comic books or if this is an east/west variation, confuses the names of NHL teams (omitting Les Canadiens altogether!), and doubts the social significance of birthday parties.

But from time to time, Sutherland piles up his evidence so profusely that the reader may forget the theories and begin to add personal memories. "Was it quite like that?" Most of the time, Sutherland's account is close enough. Near the end, in the chapter "children in the Culture of Childhood," this reader was crowded with memories and almost ready to put myself in historical context.

In that experience lies the value of these books: as record, witness and stimulus. After reading my way through recognition, denial, vague dissatisfaction, and only a little nostalgia, I recalled childhood as neither the best of times, as Blashill's respondents would have it, nor the worst, as Sutherland may have wanted to prove.

***Phyllis Reeve,***
*Phyllis Reeve is younger than Sutherland and older than Blashill.*

**Postcards from the Past; Edwardian images of Greater Vancouver and the Fraser Valley.** Fred Thirkell and Bob Scullion. Heritage House, 1996. 176 p. Bibliography, index, illus. $24.95.

A visiting friend found this book in my living room and for the next half hour his conversation consisted of such exclamations as, "Fred Thirkell, eh? well, well" or "Look at this" or "I remember . . ." It was a delight to witness his obvious pleasure. Pleasure, the authors claim, was a major reason for producing the book: their pleasure "in researching, compiling and presenting the material" and the reader's pleasure "in reading about and viewing pictures produced during the years when Vancouver came of age as a city."

Eighty-four lithographed postcards, most dated between 1901 and 1910, have been enlarged to picture-book size. As the authors point out, a significant percentage of these pictures will not be found in any public archival collection. Each image occupies a full page, with the facing page devoted to facts and commentary. A map identifies sites of buildings, both the survivors and those which have been razed. For these latter, a thread of regret runs through the book. We have been careless with our architectural heritage. The second Hotel Vancouver, called here "Vancouver's most elegant building . . . probably the most sumptuous building ever built in Vancouver," was replaced after only twenty-three years. The authors lament, "Had the old Hotel Vancouver survived into our own times, it would probably be internationally regarded as one of the world's great hotels."

Everyone will choose their favourite vignettes. I like the picture of the St. Alice Hotel bus with an abandoned bicycle at the roadside; the description of the tramcar with two toilets and a watercooler; a vista of "my" beloved Hycroft as a gorgeous debutante of a building; and the view of the corner of Main and Hastings with the new Carnegie Library made of Gabriola sandstone on one side and in the upper opposite corner "the feet and legs of someone whom we can only suppose to be a B.C. Electric lineman."

The postcards came from New Westminster, Abbotsford and Squamish, as well as Vancouver.

This book is indeed a pleasure.

***Phyllis Reeve,***
*Phyllis Reeve sends postcards from Gabriola Island.*

**Also Noted:**

**Wild, Wacky, Wonderful British Columbia;** answers to questions you never thought to ask. Eric Newsome. Victoria, Orca, 1997. 128 p., illus. $9.95. Answers questions and provides scores of little-known facts about this province's past.

**Recollections of a Homesteader's Daughter.** Margorie (Barr) Pratt. Cobble Hill, B.C., The Author, 1997. 122 p., illus. $15.00 About homesteading days in Saskatchewan. Available from Marjorie Barr Pratt, 3697 Marine Vista, Cobble Hill, B.C. V0R 1L1.

**Orca's Family and More Northwest Coast Stories.** Robert James Challenger. Surrey, B.C., Heritage House, 1997. 48 p., illus. $9.95. A collection of Westcoast fables from Victoria.

## MEMBER SOCIETIES

Member Societies and their Secretaries are responsible for seeing that the correct address for their society is up to date. Please send any change to both the Treasurer and the Editor at the addresses inside the back cover. The Annual Return as at October 31 should include telephone numbers for contact.

**MEMBERS' DUES** for the current year were paid by the following Societies:

| | |
|---|---|
| Alberni District Historical Society | Box 284, Port Alberni, B.C. V9Y 7M7 |
| Alder Grove Heritage Society | 3190 - 271 St. Aldergrove, B.C. V4W 3H7 |
| Anderson Lake Historical Society | Box 40, D'Arcy, B.C. V0N 1L0 |
| Arrow Lakes Historical Society | RR#1, Site 1C, Comp 27, Nakusp, B.C. V0G 1R0 |
| Atlin Historical Society | Box 111, Atlin, B.C. V0W 1A0 |
| Boundary Historical Society | Box 580, Grand Forks, B.C. V0H 1H0 |
| Bowen Island Historians | Box 97, Bowen Island, B.C. V0N 1G0 |
| Burnaby Historical Society | 6501 Deer Lake Avenue, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 3T6 |
| Chemainus Valley Historical Society | Box 172, Chemainus, B.C. V0R 1K0 |
| Cowichan Historical Society | P.O. Box 1014, Duncan, B.C. V9L 3Y2 |
| District 69 Historical Society | Box 1452, Parksville, B.C. V9P 2H4 |
| East Kootenay Historical Association | P.O. Box 74, Cranbrook, B.C. V1C 4H6 |
| Gulf Islands Branch, BCHF | c/o A. Loveridge, S.22, C.11, RR#1, Galiano. V0N 1P0 |
| Hedley Heritage Society | Box 218, Hedley, B.C. V0X 1K0 |
| Kamloops Museum Association | 207 Seymour Street, Kamloops, B.C. V2C 2E7 |
| Koksilah School Historical Society | 5203 Trans Canada Highway, Koksilah, B.C. V0R 2C0 |
| Kootenay Museum & Historical Society | 402 Anderson Street, Nelson, B.C. V1L 3Y3 |
| Lantzville Historical Society | c/o Box 274, Lantzville, B.C. V0R 2H0 |
| Nanaimo Historical Society | P.O. Box 933, Station A, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5N2 |
| Nicola Valley Musuem & Archives | P.O. Box 1262, Merritt, B.C. V1K 1B8 |
| North Shore Historical Society | 1541 Merlynn Crescent, North Vancouver, B.C. V7J 2X9 |
| North Shuswap Historical Society | Box 317, Celista, B.C. V0E 1L0 |
| Princeton & District Museum & Archives | Box 281, Princeton, B.C. V0X 1W0 |
| Qualicum Beach Historical & Museum Society | 587 Beach Road, Qualicum Beach, B.C. V9K 1K7 |
| Salt Spring Island Historical Society | 129 McPhillips Avenue, Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2T6 |
| Sidney & North Saanich Historical Society | 10840 Innwood Rd. North Saanich, B.C. V8L 5H9 |
| Silvery Slocan Historical Society | Box 301, New Denver, B.C. V0G 1S0 |
| Surrey Historical Society | Box 34003 5790 - 175th Street Surrey, B.C. V3S 8C4 |
| Texada Island Historical Society | Box 122, Van Anda, B.C. V0N 3K0 |
| Trail Historical Society | P.O. Box 405, Trail, B.C. V1R 4L7 . |
| Vancouver Historical Society | P.O. Box 3071, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 3X6 |
| Victoria Historical Society | P.O. Box 43035, Victoria North, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3G2 |

## AFFILIATED GROUPS

| | |
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| Kootenay Lake Historical Society | Box 537, Kaslo, B.C. V0G 1M0 |
| Lasqueti Island Historical Society | c/o P. Forbes, Lasqueti Island, B.C. V0R 2J0 |
| Nanaimo and District Museum Society | 100 Cameron Road, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 2X1 |
| Okanagan Historical Society | Box 313, Vernon, B.C. V1T 6M3 |

## SUBSCRIPTIONS / BACK ISSUES

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# BC HISTORICAL FEDERATION
## WRITING COMPETITION

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

Any book presenting any facet of B.C. history, published in 1998, is eligible. This may be a community history, biography, record of a project or an organization, or personal recollections giving a glimpse of the past. Names, dates and places, with relevant maps or pictures, turn a story into "history."

The judges are looking for quality presentations, especially if fresh material is included, with appropriate illustrations, careful proofreading, an adequate index, table of contents and bibliography, from first-time writers as well as established authors.

**NOTE:** Reprints or revisions of books are not eligible.

The Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Historical Writing will be awarded to an individual writer whose book contributes significantly to the recorded history of British Columbia. Other awards will be made as recommended by the judges to valuable books prepared by groups or individuals.

All entries receive considerable publicity. Winners will receive a Certificate of Merit, a monetary award and an invitation to the BCHF annual conference to be held in Merritt in May 1999.

**SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:** All books must have been published in 1998 and should be submitted as soon as possible after publication. **Two copies** of each book should be submitted. Books entered become property of the B.C. Historical Federation. Please state name, address and telephone number of sender, the selling price of all editions of the book, and the address from which it may be purchased, if the reader has to shop by mail. If by mail, please include shipping and handling costs if applicable.

**SEND TO:** B.C. Historical Writing Competition
c/o P. McGeachie
7953 Rosewood Street, Burnaby, B.C. V5E 2H4

**DEADLINE:** **December 31, 1998.**

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There is also an award for the Best Article published each year in the *B.C. Historical News* magazine. This is directed to amateur historians or students. Articles should be no more than 3,000 words, typed double spaced, accompanied by photographs if available, and substantiated with footnotes where applicable. (Photographs should be accompanied with information re: the source, permission to publish, archival number if applicable, and a brief caption. Photos will be returned to the writer.)

**Please send articles directly to:** The Editor, B.C. Historical News, P.O. Box 105, Wasa, B.C. V0B 2K0