

British Columbia HISTORY

Journal of the British Columbia Historical Federation | Winter 2011 | Vol. 44 No. 4 | \$7.00

NANAIMO.
NANAIMO, Sept. 21.—Sir Richard Musgrave brought from Union a dozen or more salmon, averaging forty-five pounds each, which were caught with a rod and line in Campbell river. One of these weighed 70 pounds and measured about 4 feet 8 inches. It was landed in a canoe by Sir Richard after nearly two hours hard fighting.



This Issue: The Famous Fish | Rev. Freney | Yorke Island and more

British Columbia HISTORY

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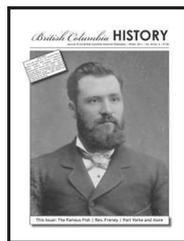
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Bert Parrott, Bud Garrett, and Dick Jenkins of the 15th Coast Brigade, clowning around on the Yorke Island beach, 1939. Read more about their story on page 28.

IMAGE COURTESY OF JOHN LAYTON COLLECTION



Cover Image: Portrait of Sir Richard Musgrave, circa 1895. Read the story on page 5.

IMAGE C-02828 COURTESY OF ROYAL BC MUSEUM, BC ARCHIVES

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"Any country worthy of a future should be interested in its past"

W. Kaye Lamb, 1937

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Andrea Lister, editor and author, tells the tale of a 1911 Chilliwack Hospital Auxiliary member's card that found its way home after 100 years.

Announcing

B.C. History Online

An exciting new project by the British Columbia Historical Federation

The BCHF is proposing to create an online encyclopedia of British Columbia History—all those facts about our history you wished you could find on Wikipedia but never can. It will also differ from the Encyclopedia of British Columbia currently available online in that it will have free access, and will concentrate on our history. We feel it will be a super resource for the general public and for schools and other educational institutions and encourage the dissemination of knowledge about the province's history.

In order for this project to work, we need contributions from you! To be useful, the encyclopedia has to contain a lot of information. It will have a search facility, but if that returns nothing useful, people won't use it.

This is what we need to get going:

A piece on every community—city, town, village, unincorporated area—in BC. So if you know something of your local history—here's your opportunity to tell others about it. From Spuzzum to Sicamous, from Surrey to Squamish, we want your history! You can also write about other places, features, or organizations, such as your favorite ski hill, golf course, club, etc., as long as you can discover something of its history—and if you don't know now—research it, it's fun!

If you are feeling more adventurous, we need articles on events in British Columbia history—all of the various gold rushes, for example, anything for which you feel you have a good knowledge. Or on topical items such as railways, coal mining, and so on, or companies that had an effect on our history like the Canadian Pacific, the Grand Trunk Pacific, Cominco, and so on. If it is BC history—we want it! The more the better, as it will make the encyclopedia database more comprehensive. If you have a previous article that you feel would work as part of the encyclopedia, please do send it in. We can also link to other sources. As long as it is your work, we can use it.

The name of the author will be attached to each piece, big and small. Revisions and additions will be possible and encouraged. Images are also allowed when you have them.

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You can be part of BC History Online!

Editor's Note

Canadian history as a thriller?



*"Ambition, hatred and jealousy drive rivals John A. Macdonald and George Brown in this political thriller as they struggle to secure power and forge a nation."¹ This was the promise of the CBC film *John A: Birth of a Country* in early September. After watching an American production on John Adams, producer Bernard Zukerman wondered why Canadians "don't revel in our own stories the way other nations do. . . . Don't we have stories to tell? Aren't our central figures as brilliant and scheming and noble and vicious?"*

Did *John A: the Birth of a Country* live up to the advertising? Yes, it did for me. I really enjoyed the film and it made me proud to be Canadian. I truly think our history is interesting and that we need to tell those stories in a compelling and engaging way; that is one of the goals of *British Columbia History*.

To further that goal, the winter issue brings you a fish tale, "The Fish That Made Campbell River Famous" by Dr. Diana Pedersen starting on page 5.

As our May 2012 annual conference is in Campbell River we also bring you an article by Catherine M. Gilbert the fort at Yorke Island. Both stories have a theme of outsiders leaving a lasting impression on the community. Let's follow in their footsteps and register for the conference May 3-6, 2012, and leave a lasting and positive impression of our own.

The stories by R. J. (Ron) Welwood, Ronald Greene, and Theresa Vogel are about three unique individuals who populate British Columbia's history. Read the tale of Rev. Thomas Patrick Freney, an unusual man-of-the-cloth, Billy Ingram, a Fernie entrepreneur, and Sister Mary Matthew McBride, commercial instructor at St. Ann's Academy.

Our Archives and Archivists column illustrates how our survey records are being preserved so we can continue to research and tell our stories.

This issue also includes the Index of Vol. 40 No. 1 to 40 No.4, 2007 compiled by the incomparable Melva J. Dwyer.

Finally, a story from my own cabinet. I was pleasantly surprised by a fellow historian who went out of his way to ensure that an historical object was preserved and returned home. Turn to page 48 for the full story. Small stories about objects are another way to tell British Columbia's story. I am always looking for anecdotes about historic items so take a look in your attic and send me your curious and thrilling stories.

Andrea Lister, Editor

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Manuscripts that have been published elsewhere or are under review for publication elsewhere, will be considered at the editor's discretion.

- Word Count 1000 to 5000.
- Electronic version, with file extension (either .doc or .rtf), will be required should the article be accepted for publication.
- Endnotes, bibliographies, and/or works cited should follow Chicago Manual of Style.
- Photocopies/scans of research material (pages from books, documents, or journals you have used) for fact checking are appreciated.
- Illustrations provided with article submissions are encouraged:
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 - Please provide suggested captions for the illustrations;
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 - Low-resolution images may be sent with initial submission in cases where images would need to be purchased from an institution.
- A two-three sentence biographical note about the author.

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1. <http://www.johnabirthofacountry.com/>

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Letters from Readers

Editor

I enjoyed the Fall 2011 issue of *British Columbia History* immensely because 3 of the articles triggered some personal interests. As a step-on tour guide in Vancouver I also guide longer tours into the interior every year. One I have undertaken for the last many years is a circle tour through the Chilcotin Region to Bella Coola and back to the Lower Mainland via Vancouver Island. One can easily grow to love the Chilcotin and *The Flying Vet* article brought alive names that we roll through every year. I well remember my first trip many years ago where our coach slogged along a muddy Freedom Highway for over 2 hours before arriving at Anahim Lake. And of course there was much more to come before arriving at the bottom of "The Hill" in the verdant Bella Coola Valley. With more pavement in various degrees of smoothness it is now easier and faster of course, and even more worthwhile for the adventurous traveler.

As a railway history buff the Van Horne article filled in detail about a person whose importance is well covered by many but rarely in such a personal or interesting fashion.

And finally, for me, notes on the Ft. St. James cemetery. While on tours I have visited the settlement a few times and appreciate its historical significance, but again, Elliott added depth to an otherwise slightly better than ordinary place. Keep up the good work.

William Johnston

Burnaby

letter from a reader

I am challenged by the blank space in the last edition!

I have attended every conference since Nelson in 1998 – I wouldn't miss one because of the terrific tours put on by every host centre, and these are

what attracted me to the conferences in the first place.

How else would we have got to Texada Island? The Prince George event is memorable because of the trip to Fort St. James, there being addressed by a granddaughter of Sir James Douglas. We also travelled to Penny up the north route, and to a First Nations church featuring the most beautiful French stained glass windows. This was also fabulous because the ingenuity of the driver of the chartered Greyhound, who put up "New York" on the header (destination board).

But best of all, are the great friends we have made at the conferences, some of whom have written BC history books that we have added to our shelves, to be able to re-read another year.

Yours – with great expectations for the upcoming Campbell River conference,

Tom Lymbery, Gray Creek

Send us your thoughts.

British Columbia History welcomes reader's letters and emails, while reserving the right to edit them. Email your story to: bcheditor@bchistory.ca, or mail it to: Editor, British Columbia History, PO Box 21187, Maple Ridge, BC V2X 1P7.

The Fish That Made Campbell River Famous

by Diana Pedersen

In 1896, news that Sir Richard Musgrave had captured a record 70-lb. salmon with a rod and line launched Campbell River to world fame as a sportfishing destination.

In October 1896, wealthy sportsmen in Britain and around the world were electrified by news from Victoria, British Columbia, that a salmon-angling world record had just been established in that remote corner of the British Empire. Off the mouth of an obscure river on the east coast of Vancouver Island, Sir Richard Musgrave had taken a 70-pound salmon (32 kg) with a rod and line—reportedly the largest salmon ever captured by that method. Even more remarkably, the record salmon was taken in an epic two-hour struggle in swift-flowing tidal waters, with Sir Richard in a dugout cedar canoe towed by the monster salmon and paddled by an Indian. To anglers accustomed to casting for Atlantic salmon from the banks of domesticated British streams and rivers, this fantastic account held more allure than any tale of lion hunting in Africa.

The news of Sir Richard Musgrave's record catch at Campbell River in 1896 travelled rapidly to every corner of the British Empire thanks to the existence of a thriving sporting press. Like many upper-class sportsmen, Sir Richard chose to write about his angling adventure, submitting an account for publication in *The Field*—a leading British sporting magazine. A gelatin cast model of the

70-pound (32 kg) “tyee” salmon,¹ produced at the British Columbia Provincial Museum, generated additional publicity when it was exhibited in London in 1897. By the turn of the century, the sensation created by Sir Richard Musgrave and his record fish had established Campbell River as an international sportfishing destination. Anglers from all parts of the Empire embarked for Vancouver Island, where they hoped to encounter their own monster salmon and to best the world record set at Campbell River in 1896.

In the late-Victorian and Edwardian periods, a long-established tradition of hunting and fishing as suitable recreations for elite British men, and as training in the many arts of war, found renewed expression on the imperial frontier.² Newly accessible by direct railroad and steamship connections, Vancouver Island in the 1890s was already known to imperial sportsmen as a destination of choice for anglers and big-game hunters. Given the over-hunting of big game and the destruction of salmon runs that had occurred on other continents, in the United States and in much of the rest of Canada,³ sporting tourists responded enthusiastically to the promotion of British Columbia's “wilderness” as a veritable

Dr. Diana Pedersen taught Canadian history at Concordia University for ten years. She is now an independent historian and editor living in Victoria. Her current research interest is the history of early sportfishing on Vancouver Island.

Gelatin cast model of the 70-lb. salmon at the British Museum (Natural History), 1899.

King Salmon or Quinнат. Salmo (Oncorhynchus) quinнат.

(Order Isospondyl. Wall Case 3)

Distribution—North Pacific, from Alaska southwards to California and northern China, entering rivers to spawn.

Locality—Campbell River, British Columbia.

Weight—70 lb. Length—52½ in. Girth—32½ in.

Caught by Sir Richard Musgrave, 20th Sept. 1896 and presented by His Grace the Duke of Wellington.



King Salmon or Quinнат.
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Caught by Sir Richard Musgrave, 20th Sept. 1896, and presented by His Grace the Duke of Wellington.

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sportsman's Eden that offered an inexhaustible supply of wildfowl, fish and game.⁴

British Columbia's abundant wildlife was also promoted as a perquisite of settlement.⁵ Land available for purchase or pre-emption on the south and east coasts of Vancouver Island attracted educated British immigrants from the landed and professional classes, whose rural aesthetic embraced not only farming but also the sporting pursuits of hunting and fishing. It was the presence of this "bush gentry,"⁶ as well as the promise of excellent sport in rivers teeming with salmon and trout, that drew Sir Richard Musgrave to Vancouver Island on the eve of his rise to international salmon-angling celebrity.

Sir Richard Musgrave (1850-1930) was an impecunious Anglo-Irish aristocrat, educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, who, on the death of his father in 1874, had inherited his title and 8,282 acres (3354 ha) in Waterford County, Ireland. As the fifth Baronet of Tourin, Sir Richard embraced the sporting life of the country gentleman, demonstrating little interest in estate management. Instead, he indulged his enthusiasm for shooting and fox hunting, and his particular passion for salmon angling. Leaving the management of his Irish estate in the care of his mother, he travelled extensively.⁷

Sir Richard likely learned of the sporting attractions of Vancouver Island through his paternal uncle. Edward Musgrave, fourth son of the third Baronet of Tourin, was one of many younger sons of the British nobility and landed gentry who embraced emigration as an alternative to reduced circumstances and limited prospects at home.⁸ In 1885, Edward Musgrave purchased a 7,000-acre (2835 ha) sheep farm on the relatively isolated western section of Salt Spring Island, becoming one of that island's few large landholders until he sold the farm in 1892. By 1891, more than 1,100 sheep roamed the slopes of what was then known as Musgrave Mountain, their wool being shipped to Victoria from Musgrave Landing.⁹

During the years of his uncle's tenure on Salt Spring Island, Sir Richard was a regular visitor, sampling the delights of Vancouver Island's unspoiled trout and salmon rivers. The settler community nearest to the Musgrave farm was the village of Cowichan Bay on

Vancouver Island; the Musgraves belonged to the Cowichan Valley Lawn Tennis Club.¹⁰ With the completion of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway line in 1886, the exceptional trout fishing of the Cowichan River became easily accessible to Vancouver Island's political, business and military elites.¹¹

By the 1880s, the more northerly and less accessible Campbell and Salmon Rivers were also attracting the attention of wealthy sportsmen, including parties en route to fall hunting trips in the interior of Vancouver Island or at the head of Bute Inlet.¹² Well before the capture of his record salmon in 1896, Sir Richard Musgrave was known to Fred Nunns—an Irish bachelor who, in 1887, became the first European settler to pre-empt land on the banks of the Campbell River. Nunns sometimes guided hunting and fishing parties. His diary entries reveal his acquaintance with sporting gentlemen, surveyors, and naval officers from Victoria, Esquimalt and Comox; in September 1890, Nunns recorded that Sir Richard had passed by in a party of four, bound for Salmon River.¹³

On Vancouver Island, Sir Richard Musgrave found not only an angling paradise but also the solution to his increasing financial woes. Beginning in 1885, poor crops had forced him to reduce the rents paid by the tenants on his Irish estate, resulting in diminished revenues. Then, at the age of forty, he married into the wealthy and powerful family founded by Robert Dunsmuir, who had transformed himself from an emigrant son of Scottish coal masters into British Columbia's leading industrialist. With Robert's death in 1889, control of the Dunsmuir enterprises passed to his wife, Joan, who devoted the family fortune to securing husbands and a place in society for her eight daughters.¹⁴

On September 23, 1891, the wedding of "Sir Richard John Musgrave, Bart., of Tourin, Waterford, Ireland, and Miss Jessie Sophia Dunsmuir, sixth daughter of the late Hon. Robert Dunsmuir" was reportedly "the most fashionable and brilliant witnessed in Victoria for many months." According to the *Daily Colonist*, Christ Church Cathedral had never been decorated "more artistically or more effectively." It was filled to capacity with invited guests—the elite of the provincial

capital—"while hundreds of ladies and dozens of gentlemen not so highly honored, crowded the side seats in the church, the aisles, the churchyard and the streets." During the afternoon, Sir Richard and Lady Musgrave lavishly entertained several hundred guests at the bride's home, "Craigdarroch," before embarking on their honeymoon voyage to the groom's ancestral home in Ireland.¹⁵ Caroline (Trutch) O'Reilly reported to her absent husband, Indian Reserve Commissioner Peter O'Reilly: "[Jessie] looked very well and the whole marriage arrangements were perfect, weather included...[E]ven Sir Richard managed to make the most of himself, and behaved very well."¹⁶

Whatever the reputation of "the Bart" among the social elite of the provincial capital, Joan Dunsmuir must have been pleased indeed to acquire him as a son-in-law. Her willingness to settle several hundred thousand dollars on her daughter helped persuade Sir Richard to renege on his promise to a fiancée in London. The phenomenon of transatlantic marital alliances between members of the cash-strapped British peerage and the socially ambitious plutocracy of Canada and the United States was widespread in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. Jessie, sixteen years younger than Sir Richard, was the first of the Dunsmuir daughters to marry a peer, and she found husbands for two of her sisters in the whirl of Dublin society.¹⁷

The Dunsmuir fortune financed both the maintenance of the Musgrave estate in

Ireland and the lavish lifestyle of Sir Richard and Lady Musgrave. His wife's money made it possible for Sir Richard to pursue his interest in salmon angling on Vancouver Island. The couple followed a seasonal round that allowed Sir Richard to remain a regular visitor to Campbell River during the annual Chinook spawning run. Spending the latter months of the year in England for the London season, Sir Richard and Lady Musgrave proceeded to Monte Carlo for the early months of the year and then to their estate in Ireland for the early summer.

In late summer, they returned to Vancouver Island, allowing Jessie to visit her family while Sir Richard indulged his love of salmon angling.¹⁸

Another benefit of marriage into the Dunsmuir family was access to the family's private yacht, fitted out for Sir Richard's brothers-in-law, James and Alex Dunsmuir, who were both keen sportsmen. In his account in *The Field* in October 1896, Sir Richard records that, thanks to the loan of a yacht by his brother-in-law, Mr. A. Dunsmuir, he and his friend, Mr. H.W. Gordon, were able to reach their fishing destination—"a river difficult of access."¹⁹

Certainly there was no regular steamer service or docking facility at the mouth of the Campbell River.

European settlement on Vancouver Island was just beginning to push northward as coastal land in the vicinity of Comox was either pre-empted or logged. "Campbell River" consisted of little more than a few stump farms, precariously established along the river and on the shore of Discovery Passage, with much of the surrounding land being covered by timber leases.²⁰ Adjacent to the estuary, and covering



Lady Musgrave, née Jessie Dunsmuir, circa 1895

IMAGE G-09534 COURTESY OF ROYAL BC MUSEUM, BC ARCHIVES

the Tyee Spit, was Indian Reserve No. 11 of the Campbell River Indian Band (now part of the Wei Wai Kum First Nation).²¹

The Campbell River estuary has been the site of a thriving salmon fishery for thousands of years, and it continues to attract sport fishers to this day. Although there are many salmon rivers along the British Columbia coastline, few others provide year-round fishing and access to all five species of Pacific salmon during the late-summer and fall spawning runs.²² As one of the largest rivers on Vancouver Island, the Campbell River was nourished and protected by a system of waterfalls and storage lakes and by vast stands of timber. With its bed of large cobble-rock gravel, it provided an ideal environment for the production of abundant runs of exceptionally large Chinook salmon.²³

In the tidal waters of Discovery Passage—the surging “river of salt” separating Vancouver Island from Valdes (now Quadra) Island²⁴—the Kwak’waka-speaking Laich-kwil-tach tribes perfected the technique of trolling with a handline from a cedar canoe. In the highly adapted and specialized aboriginal fishery of the Pacific Northwest, trolling (trailing a weighted hook and line behind a slowly moving boat) was reserved for tidal waters and was a method developed especially for taking Coho and Chinook salmon. It required excellent boat-handing skills, as well as extensive knowledge of the local waters and of fish behaviour and habitat.²⁵

In addition to being unfamiliar with the local waters and the various species of Pacific salmon, British anglers arriving in the Pacific Northwest—excepting those who had fished in the lochs and fjords of Scotland and Norway—lacked experience with fishing from boats and with the method of trolling.²⁶ In fact, trolling was widely regarded by “true anglers” as dull, lacking challenge, and best suited to men who had lost the vigour of youth. Upper-class Victorian British sportsmen esteemed fly-fishing above all other methods of fishing.²⁷

In British Columbia, however, British anglers discovered that migrating Pacific salmon generally refused the fly after entering their home rivers. News of this “unsporting” behaviour by British Columbia salmon was carried back to Britain and repeated many times in the piscatorial press. As “Silver Doctor”

lamented in 1898 in *The Fishing Gazette*: “...what other country can show to the same extent the enormous numbers of salmon which yearly ascend its chief rivers and their tributaries? And yet there is no region where they are so callous and indifferent to the attractions of the Jock Scott or other kindred allurements.”²⁸

Although a few determined anglers conducted experiments with the artificial fly and enjoyed limited success, it was not until the 1930s that fly-fishing for salmon was launched as a sporting attraction at Campbell River.²⁹ At the end of the nineteenth century, British sportsmen viewed the abundance of large salmon being taken by Laich-kwil-tach handliners in Discovery Passage, and began to rethink their prejudice against trolling as a form of sport fishing. The fact that skilled Laich-kwil-tach guides or “boatmen” were available for hire from the villages at Campbell River and Cape Mudge, along with their canoes that were designed for the local waters, made it possible for a troll-based sport fishery to develop rapidly.

By the 1890s, Comox was already well developed as a sporting destination offering first-class hotel accommodation. Fishing excursions to Comox were popular with naval officers, government officials, members of the judiciary, wealthy businessmen, and visiting dignitaries.³⁰ Those with access to steam launches and private yachts could continue north to the Campbell River where larger fish abounded and wildfowl were plentiful. Parties of surveyors and engineers sometimes made arrangements for unscheduled stops by passing coastal steamers serving the newly-established Union Steamship Company.

The comings and goings of private hunting and fishing parties to Comox, Campbell River and other destinations were often reported in the *Victoria Daily Colonist*, either as local news or on the society pages. The party’s “bag” of game, fowl or fish was recorded, particularly if deemed noteworthy in some regard. Thus the news of Sir Richard Musgrave’s return to Nanaimo from Campbell River appeared in a small local news item in the *Daily Colonist* in September 1896.

Nanaimo, Sept. 21.—Sir Richard Musgrave brought from Union a dozen or more salmon, averaging forty-five

pounds each, which were caught with a rod and line in Campbell river. One of these weighed 70 pounds and measured about 4 feet 8 inches. It was landed in a canoe by Sir Richard after nearly two hours hard fighting.

Clearly the *Daily Colonist* considered the sheer number of large salmon, all taken with a rod and line, to be newsworthy. The 70-pound (32 kg) salmon was singled out in this report, but there was as yet no mention of a salmon-angling world record.³¹

This small announcement in the *Victoria Daily Colonist* undoubtedly caused a stir among Island sportsmen, but it was a longer account in *The Field: The Country Gentleman's Newspaper* that brought Sir Richard Musgrave and his fish, now confirmed as a world record, to the attention of the international angling fraternity. *The Field* was one of the leading British sporting magazines, circulating throughout the Empire and publishing articles on topics ranging from natural history, agriculture, horses, and dogs, to rowing, shooting, hunting, and fishing. Tales of hunting and fishing adventures in Britain's colonies were especially popular features.

"A Seventy-Pound Salmon with Rod and Line," contributed by R.J. Musgrave, Victoria, British Columbia, appeared in *The Field* on October 24, 1896. In the late Victorian period, it was common for upper-class British sportsmen to publish accounts of their travels and exploits. These were consumed voraciously in the enormously popular sporting magazines that combined the forms of the adventure tale and the travelogue. Writers of sporting literature aspired to high literary standards and appealed to educated readers by providing detailed descriptions of people and places, peppered with observations on natural history, geography and ethnography.³²

Sir Richard Musgrave introduces his account in *The Field* as a tale of "some extraordinary fishing which my friend, Mr. H.W. Gordon, of the Royal Engineers,³³ and myself, enjoyed lately on a river in British Columbia." The party of two was transported by the Dunsmuir steamer to the Laich-kwil-tach village at Cape Mudge, opposite the mouth of the Campbell River, where they engaged "two canoes with an Indian apiece to paddle for us and gaff our fish."³⁴ Next, they were landed "on

the beach"—presumably the Tyee Spit at the mouth of the river—"with our baggage, tents, fishing rods, &c., and waited some time till the canoes, which we found very small arrived." Sir Richard and Gordon then spent the next eight days camped about a mile (1.6 km) up the river, which would have placed them on the property of Fred Nunns, with whom Sir Richard was already acquainted.

Sir Richard provides a day-by-day account of his and Gordon's activities during their stay on the Campbell River, with emphasis on the day's "bag." Beginning at six o'clock each morning, they trolled for several hours in the river, taking both spring (Chinook) and silver (Coho) salmon. After lunch, they varied their activities, with Sir Richard shooting several dozen duck over the course of the week and Gordon casting for trout. Several large salmon were included in each day's bag. As Sir Richard observes to readers of *The Field*: "Our nineteen spring salmon averaged 48.4 lb., which I think you will agree with me is a wonderful average."

On one day, Sir Richard and Gordon went down to the mouth of the river to observe the local Laich-kwil-tach people taking Chinook salmon with a beach seine. According to Sir Richard, 2,400 pounds (1,089 kg) of salmon were taken in one haul—fifty-four salmon averaging about 45 pounds (20 kg) each. There was, however, "not one as big as the 70 lb. fish I had landed on Monday. The net broke and a good many got away. It was a sight to see these huge fish dashing about as the net drew near land. Everybody was gaffing, shouting, or hitting the catch on the head."

In contrast to many of the angling authors who followed him to Campbell River, Sir Richard does not credit the boat-handling skills of his Laich-kwil-tach guides. Tyee fishing in a canoe required furious paddling in choppy, fast-flowing water to keep pace with the powerful rushes of a hooked salmon and to keep the line from breaking under the strain. Gaffing and boating the fish was a two-man task. As Sir Richard observes: "It is no joke getting a 50 lb. fish alive and kicking into a small canoe, which is made out of a single cedar tree." The visiting anglers were entirely dependent on the local men who knew the

water and who could handle a canoe and wield a gaff.

Victorian sporting authors—engaged in the demonstration of their own competence, resourcefulness and masculinity—were often discomfited by their dependency on other men in the wild, especially their presumed social inferiors. The “sports” frequently responded by disparaging their guides.³⁵ Sir Richard rejects as “most excruciating” the Laich-kwil-tach practice of dispatching a played-out salmon by means of a blow to the head with a wooden club. In recounting the capture of a 52-pound (24 kg) salmon, he complains that his gaff had “become almost useless, as it had been drawn out nearly straight by the weight of the fish and by the vigorous way in which Tom, my Indian, gaffed them. In the end I managed to teach him how to do his work a little more scientifically.”

Surprisingly little of Sir Richard’s account in *The Field* is devoted to the capture of the 70-pound (32 kg) salmon. Customarily, angling authors offered more extended descriptions of the playing of the fish in order to provide their readers with a sense of vicarious participation.³⁶ On the angler’s favourite subject of tackle, Sir Richard has little to say beyond referring to his reel as “a big Nottingham, with regulating screw,” and observing that both spring and silver salmon “according to custom here, were caught with the spoon, some of them in the river, and some of them at its mouth.”

Readers of *The Field*, however, were enthralled by a brief passage describing the day of Sir Richard’s encounter with the monster salmon. Evidently, trolling for salmon at Campbell River was not the “duffer’s delight” disdained by serious anglers; it offered, instead, the prospect of a mighty contest between man and fish.

Next day was eventful, as I hooked a real monster. I played him for an hour and three-quarters. He turned out to be 70 lb., which, I believe, is the biggest salmon ever killed on a rod and line and double gut. There was a very swift current, and he must have taken me nearly three miles down the coast. My back and arms were thoroughly tired, and my left was trembling so much that I could hardly put a cigarette in my mouth, owing to the long, continuous

strain. An old golf glove, too, was quite cut through by the line, and I had great difficulty in saving my fingers. I also got a 50 lb., a 47 lb., and two silver salmon of 10 lb. and 7 lb. After lunch I shot four teal, and Gordon got four trout of about 3 lb. apiece with the fly.

Curiously, this passage manages to convey the impression that Sir Richard was alone in the canoe. His Laich-kwil-tach boatman, Tom—surely exhausted too—remained responsible for the long paddle back to the river mouth; the victorious angler customarily collapsed in the canoe with his vanquished quarry. *The Field’s* readers could only dream of such a morning on a glorious day that included successful trolling for large salmon, fly fishing for trout, and shooting wildfowl, all at a single location. By late-Victorian British standards, this was a remarkable account.

Like the big-game hunters who came to British Columbia in search of trophy specimens of wapiti and mountain sheep, some wealthy anglers hoped for a tye salmon that could be mounted and displayed in their private den or men’s club. In 1896, fish taken in Vancouver Island waters could be sent directly by steamship to taxidermy studios in Nanaimo and Victoria. Special boxes existed for transporting trophy fish. Sir Richard had come to Campbell River prepared with such a box, although it proved inadequate for a 70-pound (32 kg) salmon. “I knew that we should probably get a big one, and brought up a watertight box 3 ft. 6 in. by 1 ft. 6 in., but I had to cut off the tail of the big fellow to put him in it, as he measured 52½ in., girth 32½ in., width of tail 15 in.”³⁷

Although there were at least four taxidermy studios operating in Victoria in 1896,³⁸ Sir Richard Musgrave’s record fish was destined to receive special treatment at the British Columbia Provincial Museum at the hands of its first Curator. John Fannin’s appointment in 1886 was due primarily to his reputation as a skilled taxidermist and to the network of wealthy contacts he had acquired while working as a guide for hunting and fishing parties. The new Museum had few staff and no specific mandate for collection. Fannin therefore encouraged the province’s sportsmen, many of whom were also amateur

naturalists, to donate significant specimens for the Museum's collections showcasing the province's wildlife.³⁹

Thanks to John Fannin's skill at fish taxidermy, the 70-pound (32 kg) salmon from Campbell River came to achieve international celebrity status in its own right. Most British anglers, of course, had never seen a Pacific salmon, let alone a record "tyee." Skeptics and curiosity seekers were informed by Sir Richard Musgrave in *The Field* that they would shortly have the opportunity to view the trophy fish in London. "Mr. Fannin, of the Museum at Victoria, is kindly going to make a gelatine model of him for me, and I hope to bring back next month a memento of one of the pleasantest weeks I think I ever spent. If any of your readers care to see this fish, he will be at Mr. Ward's, in Piccadilly, to be mounted."⁴⁰

Rowland Ward was the leading taxidermist of his day. His London studio was patronized by the elite of imperial sportsmen, and his authoritative publications stimulated the Victorian mania for the collection of trophy specimens and the competition for records.⁴¹ In *The Sportsman's Handbook to Practical Collecting, Preserving, and Artistic Setting-Up of Trophies and Specimens*, Ward advised his readers that the preservation of fish presented special challenges. Since the careful removal and chemical treatment of the fish skin was generally impossible in the field, few "foreign fish," he noted, reached his studio in any condition to be mounted in a satisfactory manner. A popular alternative in such cases was the production of a cast model of the fish using plaster of Paris that could then be left white or painted by an artist to simulate the fish's natural colouring.⁴²

Happily for Sir Richard Musgrave, his triumphant return from Campbell River to Victoria with his boxed trophy fish in September 1896 coincided with the adoption of a new process for preserving and displaying fish in natural history museums. This process, pioneered at the Smithsonian Institution, resulted in a cast model made from hardened gelatin, rather than plaster of Paris, which was judged to produce a much more lifelike and durable replica. The new method, described by the *Victoria Daily Colonist*, had been introduced to the Provincial Museum in 1895:

*First a plaster of Paris cast is made of a fish; then into this mould is poured the composition composed mainly of gelatine, glue and wax. This takes a very sharp impression and when it hardens is not unlike India rubber in appearance and nature. The minutest markers of scales or fins are wonderfully well brought out and color is all that is lacking. This coloring is being done in oils by Mr. Shrapnel, R.A., with a real fish as a copy and the result is that it would be hard indeed to tell the imitation from the real.*⁴³

Curator John Fannin had adopted the "Smithsonian system of preservation" in order to improve the Provincial Museum's display of British Columbia food fishes, intended for the edification of visitors to the provincial capital. In the creation of such a grouping, Fannin moved the Museum away from traditional approaches to natural history displays featuring random arrangements of discrete objects.⁴⁴ He also anticipated the modern trend toward the manufacture of replica fish mounts produced entirely from synthetic materials.

When Sir Richard Musgrave and his fish reached Victoria in September 1896, John Fannin had returned that very month from a three-month tour of museums in North America and England. According to the *Daily Colonist*, Fannin had "found to his unbounded satisfaction that the fish collection here surpasses in interest and value that of any other in the world."⁴⁵ In the case of Sir Richard's salmon, Fannin undoubtedly saw an opportunity to acquire a significant specimen that would attract visitors to the Museum. Since the employment of a piece mould made it possible to produce several mounts from a single fish, Fannin's use of the Smithsonian's new method of fish preservation also provided Sir Richard with a trophy to display before his angling confreres in Britain.

In the spring of 1897, the exhibition in London of a cast model of the monster salmon from Campbell River caused a sensation in sporting circles. In its March issue, *The Field* reminded its readers of Sir Richard Musgrave's report, in the previous October issue, of his capture of a 70-pound (32 kg) salmon with a rod and line.

So far as any living man knows, this is the largest salmon killed in that manner of which there is any authentic record. The cast of the fish, beautifully done, is on view at Mr. Rowland Ward's, 166 Piccadilly. The interest taken in the monster is proved by the fact that, since the promise in the *Field* of last October that it would be on exhibition at Mr. Ward's, there were continual callers before the cast arrived.

The *Field* also published a photograph of the cast model fish, provided by Rowland Ward.⁴⁶

According to T.W. Lambert's *Fishing in British Columbia*, published in London in 1907, the cast of Sir Richard Musgrave's salmon was also displayed "at Farlow's, in the Strand" in the spring of 1897, presumably after it had been mounted at Rowland Ward's.⁴⁷ Founded in 1840, Charles Farlow and Company was one of the leading London tackle businesses,

making rods, reels, flies and other accessories, and exporting a substantial amount of tackle to North America.⁴⁸ Where the model salmon made its home for the next two years is unclear, but in 1899 it was presented by Henry Wellesley, third Duke of Wellington, to the British Museum (Natural History), now the Natural History Museum, where it resides in storage today (BMNH 1899.10.9.1).

In the years that followed the sensational news of Sir Richard Musgrave's salmon-angling world record, every imperial sportsman who wrote an account of his trip to Campbell River paid homage to Sir Richard's tale of his encounter with the monster salmon. Typical was Sir John Rogers, author of *Sport in Vancouver and Newfoundland*, who travelled directly from Cairo to Campbell River in the summer of 1908. "From the day I read in *The Field* Sir Richard Musgrave's article, 'A seventy-pound salmon with rod and line,' and located

Gelatin cast model of Sir Richard Musgrave's salmon (lower left) at the Provincial Museum of Natural History and Ethnology, Victoria, BC, 1909.



IMAGE D-09784 COURTESY OF ROYAL BC MUSEUM, BC ARCHIVES

the river as the Campbell River, I determined that should the opportunity arise, I, too, would try my luck in those waters."⁴⁹

As a celebrity among imperial sportsmen, Sir Richard was sometimes consulted by visiting anglers. In August 1899, a twenty-one-year old Piscator from a wealthy Anglo-Irish family—identified only as "Dick" in a later account—arrived in Victoria, en route to the Cowichan and Campbell Rivers, with a letter of introduction to the Dunsmuir family. "Dick" recorded in his diary that he discussed the fishing at Campbell River with Sir Richard, who "was very kind and put me wise generally how to set about going there, and whom to get as guide."⁵⁰ At the end of Sir Richard's life, according to his obituary in the *Cork Examiner*, he recalled the taking of the 70-pound (32 kg) salmon at Campbell River as his proudest moment.⁵¹

The cast model fish continued to serve as an attraction at the Provincial Museum in Victoria.⁵² A 1909 visitors' guide to the Museum's collections recommended the fine "gelatine casts" of "the fishes of the Province," that included "a Tyhee or Spring Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*, [Walbaum]), weighing seventy pounds, caught in Campbell River with rod and line."⁵³ Deputy Fisheries Commissioner John Pease Babcock advised readers of the many editions of his internationally-distributed *Game Fishes of British Columbia* that a cast of the "magnificent fish" caught by Sir Richard Musgrave could be seen at the Provincial Museum.⁵⁴ The model fish was evidence, according to the *Victoria Daily Colonist* in 1908, of Campbell River's standing as "perhaps the greatest fishing ground in the world."

*The sport afforded his disciples, who flock there annually from all parts of the globe, would make old Isaak green with envy. The "tyee" salmon run away up in weight to between eighty and ninety pounds, one of the record fish, caught by Sir Richard Musgrave, of Victoria, being preserved in the provincial museum for the benefit of any "Doubting Thomas."*⁵⁵

The *Victoria Daily Times*, too, in a 1908 special edition on the attractions of Vancouver

Island, called Campbell River "the ideal fishing water of the world," and quoted the world-travelled sportsman and author, Captain Clive Phillipps-Wolley:

*I have...a fair share of imagination, but I cannot, if I would, tell a fish story about British Columbia. The truth would beat the most superlative liar. You can see Sir Richard Musgrave's seventy-pound salmon in the Victoria museum. I should blush to try and make it bigger.*⁵⁶

Sir Richard Musgrave and his 70-pound salmon introduced Campbell River to the international angling fraternity and established the tiny hamlet on Discovery Passage as a destination for imperial sportsmen. Campbell River's appeal was enhanced by Sir Richard's concluding reference to its idyllic setting and proximity to excellent hunting. "Grizzly, brown, and black bear can be got quite easily, while wapiti can be got with a little hard work, and deer, geese, and duck are very numerous... The climate is perfect, and the scenery beyond description in this happy hunting ground."

Most importantly, the tale of Sir Richard and his record fish demonstrated that at Campbell River—a location where suitable boats and skilled boatmen were readily engaged—monster salmon could be taken with a rod and line in waters that promised the most exciting salmon trolling ever encountered by world-travelled sportsmen. The prospect of a journey to Campbell River allowed each angler to dream that he would be the one to break Sir Richard Musgrave's world record of 1896. The tyee rush was on! ●

Endnotes

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1. *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha* is the largest and least abundant of the five North American species of Pacific salmon; it is known variously as Spring, Chinook, King, Quinnot, or Tyee. "Tyee" was the word for "Chief" in the Chinook trade jargon of the Northwest Coast.
2. John M. MacKenzie, "The imperial pioneer and hunter and the British masculine stereotype in late Victorian and Edwardian times," in *Manliness and Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940*, ed. J.A. Mangan and James Walvin. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 176-98.
3. John M. MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988); David R. Montgomery, *King of Fish: The Thousand-Year Run of Salmon* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003).
4. Karen Wonders, "A Sportsman's Eden: Part I, A Wilderness Beckons," *The Beaver* 79, 5 (October/November 1999): 26-32, and "A Sportsman's Eden: Part II, A Wilderness Besieged," *The Beaver* 79, 6 (December 1999/January 2000): 30-7; George Colpitts, "Wildlife Promotions, Western Canadian Boosterism, and the Conservation Movement, 1890-1914," *American Review of Canadian Studies* (Spring/Summer 1998): 103-30.
5. For example, J. Despard Pemberton, *Facts and Figures Relating to Vancouver Island and British Columbia Showing What to Expect and How to Get There* (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1860), 29.
6. Richard Mackie, "Cougars, Colonists, and the Rural Settlement of Vancouver Island," in *Beyond the City Limits: Rural History in British Columbia*, ed. Ruth Sandwell. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999), 126.
7. Terry Reksten, *The Dunsmuir Saga* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1991), 128-9; J.F. Bosher, *Imperial Vancouver Island: Who Was Who, 1850-1950* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Corporation, 2010), 521; *Cambridge University Alumnae, 1261-1900*, online database, Ancestry.com. Sir Richard Musgrave was never a military man, although he is sometimes erroneously identified as an officer in the Royal Navy.
8. Patrick A. Dunae, *Gentlemen Emigrants: From the British Public Schools to the Canadian Frontier* (Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1981), 48-65.
9. Charles Kahn, *Salt Spring: The Story of an Island* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 1998), 113-14, 179-80.
10. Kahn, *Salt Spring*, 137.
11. Art Lingren, *Famous British Columbia Fly-Fishing Waters* (Portland, OR: Frank Amato Publications, 2002), 51; Georgina Montgomery; photographer, Kevin Oke, *The Cowichan: Duncan, Chemainus, Ladysmith and Region* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 2009), 18, 92.
12. For example, Clive Phillipps-Wolley, *The Trottings of a Tenderfoot: A Visit to the Columbian Fiords and Spitzbergen* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1884), <http://www.archive.org/details/trottingsofende00philuoft>.
13. D.E. Isenor, E.G. Stephens, and D.E. Watson, *Edge of Discovery: A History of the Campbell River District* (Campbell River: Ptarmigan Press, 1989), 16, 51-4, 231-2; Museum at Campbell River Archives (hereafter MCRA), Diary of Fred Nunns, September 16, 1890.
14. Reksten, *Dunsmuir Saga*, 128-9; *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, s.v. "Dunsmuir, Robert," <http://www.biographi.ca/index-e.html>
15. "Fashionable Wedding. Sir Richard Musgrave, Bart, and Miss Lizzie[sic] Sophia Dunsmuir United in Marriage. Christ Church Cathedral Crowded by the Fashion and Beauty of Victoria," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, September 24, 1891, 5, <http://www.britishcolonist.ca/dateList.php>.
16. Reksten, *Dunsmuir Saga*, 129-30, 275; "James K. Nesbitt has Uncovered Letters of a Noted Victoria Family," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, "The Islander," September 17, 1961, 16. On Caroline O'Reilly as social arbiter, see Valerie Green, *Above Stairs: Social Life in Upper Class Victoria, 1843-1918* (Victoria, BC: Sono Nis Press, 1995), 72-9.
17. Reksten, *Dunsmuir Saga*, 129, 188; Maureen E. Montgomery, "Gilded Prostitution": Status, Money, and Transatlantic Marriages, 1870-1914 (London: Routledge, 1989).
18. Reksten, *Dunsmuir Saga*, 202.
19. MCRA, Clipping, R.J. Musgrave, Victoria, British Columbia, "A Seventy-Pound Salmon with Rod and Line," *The Field: The Country Gentleman's Newspaper*, Vol. 88, October 24, 1896.
20. Richard Mackie, *The Wilderness Profound: Victorian Life on the Gulf of Georgia* (Victoria, BC: Sono Nis Press, 1995), 186, 234; Jeanette Taylor, *River City: A History of Campbell River and the Discovery Islands* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 1999), 38-45.
21. Ian Douglas; photographer, Boomer Jerritt, *Campbell River: Gateway to the Inside Passage, Including Strathcona, the Discovery Islands and the Mainland Inlets* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 2010), 13, 54-8.
22. Robert H. Jones and Larry E. Stefanyk, *Island Salmon Fisherman* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 2008), 109-19.
23. Roderick L. Haig-Brown, *The Seasons of a Fisherman: A Fly Fisher's Classic Evocations of Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter Fishing* (New York: Lyon's Press, 2000), 97; Van Gorman Egan, *Tyee: The Story of the Tyee Club of British Columbia* (Campbell River, BC: Ptarmigan Press, 1988), 3-7.
24. Van Gorman Egan, *River of Salt: Tyee Fishing in Discovery Passage* (Campbell River, BC: Riverside Publications, 2004), 3-7.
25. Hilary Stewart, *Indian Fishing: Early Methods on the Northwest Coast* (Vancouver: J.J. Douglas, Ltd., 1977), 41-2, 62-3; Dianne Newell, *Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 33-4.
26. Haig-Brown, *Seasons of a Fisherman*, 127-8, 254.
27. For example, "Redspinner," "The British Angler," *Outing* VIII, No. 3 (June 1886), 281-90, http://www.la84foundation.org/SportsLibrary/Outing/Volume_08/outVIII03/outVIII03d.pdf.
28. MCRA, Clipping, "Silver Doctor," "Salmon Fishing in British Columbia," *The Fishing Gazette*, July 9, 1898, 23.
29. Les Johnson and Bruce Ferguson, *Fly-Fishing for Pacific Salmon II* (Portland, OR: Frank Amato Publications, 2008), 32-7.
30. Mackie, *Wilderness Profound*, 153; "Comox for Sportsmen," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, September 13, 1899, 7.
31. "News of the Province. Nanaimo," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, September 22, 1896, 2.
32. R.G. Moyles and Doug Owram, *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities: British Views of Canada, 1880-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 60-85.

33. Lieutenant H.W. Gordon of the Corps of Royal Engineers, nephew of British war hero General C. G. "Chinese" Gordon, was stationed at Esquimalt from 1894 to 1897 as a member of a detachment sent from Halifax to build new concrete-and-earth fortifications (now Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site) for the defence of Victoria and the naval base at Esquimalt. See Frances M. Woodward, "The Influence of the Royal Engineers on the Development of British Columbia," *BC Studies* 24 (Winter 1974-75): 30-1.
34. Although the identities of Sir Richard's guide, Tom, and Lieutenant Gordon's unnamed guide, cannot be known with absolute certainty, the most likely candidates are Tom Kwak-sees-tahla and another member of the family of Captain John Kwak-sees-tahla who lived at Cape Mudge and on the Tye Sp. According to Fred Nunns' diaries, Captain John "Quacksista" and his sons offered their services to visitors as hunting and fishing guides during the 1890s. Thanks to Linda Hogarth for consultation on this question.
35. Tina Loo, "Of Moose and Men: Hunting for Masculinities in British Columbia, 1880-1939," *Western Historical Quarterly* 32 (Autumn 2001): 311-15.
36. Compare an account of a subsequent trip on the Dunsmuir yacht to the same location. The party included Sir Richard Musgrave but the account was written by one of his companions, identified as "One of the Party." MCRA, Clipping, "The Big Salmon of British Columbia," *The Field: The Country Gentleman's Newspaper*, n.d., ca. 1897-99.
37. Musgrave, "A Seventy-Pound Salmon with Rod and Line,"
38. *The Vancouver City Directory, March 1896. Containing Provincial and Local Information with a Classified Business Directory of the Province*, (Vancouver, B.C.: Hodgson & Co., 1896), 238, http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1896/Vancouver_City_Directory
39. Peter Corley-Smith, *White Bears and other curiosities... The First 100 Years of the Royal British Columbia Museum* (Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1989), 18-28.
40. Musgrave, "A Seventy-Pound Salmon with Rod and Line,"
41. MacKenzie, *Empire of Nature*, 35.
42. Rowland Ward, F.Z.S., *The Sportsman's Handbook to Practical Collecting, Preserving, and Artistic Setting-Up of Trophies and Specimens. To Which is Added a Synoptical Guide to the Hunting Grounds of the World* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., 3rd ed., 1883), 25-6, 56-7, 79-81, <http://www.archive.org/details/sportsmanshandb00wardgoog>.
43. "British Columbia Fishes. To Be Exhibited in Natural Color in the Provincial Museum Collection. The Smithsonian System of Preservation—Experiments Prove Highly Satisfactory," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, February 13, 1895, 5.
44. Corley-Smith, *White Bears*, 38.
45. "British Columbia's Museum. Curator Fannin Returns from an Interesting Tour Productive of Much Valuable Information," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, September 13, 1896, 8.
46. MCRA, Clipping, "Sir Richard Musgrave's 70 lb. Salmon," *The Field: The Country Gentleman's Newspaper*, March 27, 1897.
47. T.W Lambert, *Fishing in British Columbia With a Chapter on Tuna Fishing at Santa Catalina* (London: Horace Cox, 1907), 97, <http://www.archive.org/details/fishinginbritish00lambuoft>.
48. A.J. Campbell, *Classic and Antique Fly-Fishing Tackle: A Guide for Collectors and Anglers* (Guildford, CT: Globe Pequot Press, 1997), 211-12.
49. Sir John Rogers, *Sport in Vancouver and Newfoundland* (Toronto: The Musson Book Co., 1912), 3, <http://www.archive.org/details/sportinvancouver00rogerich>.
50. An account of "Dick's" journey is appended to an angling memoir by his friend, G.D. Luard, *Fishing Adventures in Canada and U.S.A.* (London: Faber & Faber, 1950), 113-157; diary excerpt, 122.
51. Reksten, *Dunsmuir Saga*, 129, 275. The *Cork Examiner*, March 8, 1930, apparently placed Sir Richard's triumph at Salmon River.
52. According to this author's research, the model fish was on display at the Provincial Museum until at least the end of the 1920s; its whereabouts today is unknown.
53. BC Archives, Library NW 907 B862pr, *Provincial Museum of Natural History and Ethnology, Victoria, British Columbia* (Victoria: R. Wolfenden, King's Printer, 1909), 7-8.
54. John Pease Babcock, *The Game Fishes of British Columbia* (Victoria, BC: Bureau of Provincial Information, Bulletin No. 25, 1910), University of Victoria, McPherson Library Microform, CIHM No. 81996.
55. "Victoria City and the Island," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, May 3, 1908, 2. Izaak Walton was the author of *The Compleat Angler, or, The Contemplative Man's Recreation*, first published in 1653 and since reprinted in countless editions.
56. "Vancouver Island: The Happy Hunting Ground," *Victoria Daily Times*, May 2, 1908. On Phillipps-Wolley's career, see Peter Murray, *Home from the Hill: Three Gentlemen Adventurers* (Victoria: Horsdal & Schubert Publishers, 1994), 76-133.

Pat is Pat and That is That: Rev. Thomas Patrick Freney

by R.J. (Ron) Welwood

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Rev. Thomas Patrick Freney was not your ordinary, everyday man-of-the-cloth. In fact, he was cut from an entirely different and unorthodox fabric.

No matter their religious persuasion or denomination, clergymen are expected to act in a manner befitting their ecclesiastical vocation. Nevertheless, there have always been a few priests or parsons of the cloth who deviated from the norm; and there is little doubt, that Reverend Freney was cut from such an unorthodox fabric.

Thomas Patrick (Pat), the eldest child of John Henry Freney and Mary Catherine Gibbons was born on December 9th 1897 in Rossland, BC and baptized at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church just over one month later.¹ Pat attended Rossland schools and after graduation proceeded to Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, for three years (1916-1918). Following Gonzaga, he entered California's Saint Patrick Seminary at Menlo Park to study philosophy.

However, his philosophical education was short-lived and for the next eight years between 1920 and 1927, Pat continued to reside in California while he practiced "journalism, magazine writing and kindred pursuits."² Journalism, purportedly for Hearst publications, may have provided a steady income, but freelance writing for magazines freed his imaginative spirit. His fictional works focused on the West and prospector-mining themes — a familiar subject to one who grew up in Rossland during its heyday.

Red Book Magazine rejected Freney's first story in September 1924; but the very next month the Managing Editor of The Frank A. Munsey Company, NY, publishers of *Argosy All-Story Weekly*, offered him \$75³ for "Cheap Tools" to be published in the "Novelette and Short Stories" section.⁴ Although Pat received another dreaded rejection slip, a common occurrence for aspiring writers, for "Theories and Nuggets", success soon followed in 1927 when *Maclean's Magazine* published both "Footnotes" and later, "The Release."⁵

By this time Freney had moved back to Rossland and in September 1928 he entered St. Joseph's Seminary in Edmonton, Alberta, to begin theological studies. Nevertheless, his days as a fiction writer were not entirely over and in December he was informed that "Yellow Buzzard" had been sold to *Western Trails* for \$60. Shortly thereafter he was issued another "check for \$50 in full payment of First North American Serial rights to the 'Yellow Buzzard' appearing in *Golden West*."⁶ Surely his successes must have softened the blow of rejection when Napier Moore, Editor of *Maclean's*, returned his "Holesome Wreckreation" manuscript indicating that it "doesn't strike me in the right place."⁷

Half way through his studies, the Seminary Council questioned Pat's vocation to the religious life. His bishop, W.M. Duke, Archbishop of Vancouver, was informed and, not knowing Freney, asked his parish priest, A.K. MacIntyre (Father Mac) for his opinion. Fr. Mac's response to Rev. M.C. O'Neill, Director of St. Joseph's Seminary, was a cryptic note stating "Pat is just Pat, and there is no more to it than that."⁸ The director concluded that "Mr. Freney will do good work" but he also observed that:

he has [a] fine literary ability; he is very handy with tools, carpentry work, etc., and has been ready, at all times, to help out in any work of that kind around here.... Father MacIntyre of Rossland could probably give you [Duke] the

First 4 Freneys: Pat, Cormac[l], Jim[r], Mary [Betty Anne]



PHOTO COURTESY OF DIOCESE OF NELSON ARCHIVES

best information concerning Mr. Freney and his future.... I'm inclined to think he summed up everything in one reference to Mr. Freney – 'Pat is Pat—that's that.' In other words, he's not an ordinary every day individual.⁹

Father Mac replied, "I am very grateful to you [O'Neill] for your letter in Pat Feney's case. I am glad you [sic] own opinion of him is so good.... Pat does not make a very good impression on those who do not know him and it takes more than a casual glance to see through him."¹⁰

Perhaps seminarian Freney was under scrutiny because of his somewhat eccentric behavior, practical jokes and his extra curricular distraction to creative works of fiction although he wrote:

My inquiry as to whether I had given any reason or cause for doubt brought forth an amazing disclosure, namely, that I had given the impression that I considered myself a superior sort of person by having exaggerated my abilities as a ski-jumper, as an inventor, and probably other things, and that these exaggerations might — or might not — indicate the possibility of some future instability of character. I, of course, said that it seemed to me that there might be a kind of misunderstanding somewhere. At any rate, the rector told me not to worry about it.¹¹

Also, according to Rossland old-timer, Ray Keane, Pat had been reprimanded for reading western pulp fiction while in the seminary. Apparently, the authorities were not aware he also penned this popular genre! Although he may have scribed his stories while on summer vacation, Keane indicated that the revenue from these publications helped to subsidize his seminary tuition.¹²

Clearly, he was deemed worthy to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders and on March 12th 1932, Archbishop W.M. Duke, D.D., ordained Pat at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Vancouver. From then on he was referred to as Father Pat—Rossland's second Father Pat.¹³

Father Thomas Patrick Freney was assigned as Curate to the Cathedral until September when he was appointed rector to



The Golden West Magazine, March 1929 (featuring "The Yellow Buzzard")

the Revelstoke parish that included a small Ruthenian (Orthodox) mission. During his short tenure at Revelstoke, church attendance increased particularly among the Italian men; and when Freney was reappointed to Princeton, the Catholic Men's Club telegraphed the Archbishop expressing dismay that Father Pat was being relocated.¹⁴ This plea was unsuccessful and he served as Princeton's pastor until March 1934 when he was yet again reassigned—this time to Vancouver as editor of the *BC Catholic*.

Evidently Archbishop Duke wished to take advantage of the God-given talent possessed by his recently ordained priest when he appointed him editor of the diocesan paper. The weekly paper averaged about eight pages up to 1933 then, to cut costs, was reduced to four. During Freney's short tenure (March 1934 – October 1935), it was enlarged to about six pages for a short time. According to Ray Keane, it was filled with humour, depression survival stories, etc., but to lower costs the Archbishop asked Freney to reduce the paper's size. The editor dutifully trimmed the paper to its former four-page format and when

Archbishop Duke remarked that he missed the jokes Freney supposedly replied, "The whole paper is a joke!"¹⁵

By October 1935, Fr. Pat was again on the move.¹⁶ This time he was appointed pastor to St. Francis Xavier in Trail. While there the Diocese of Nelson was established (1936) and Fr. Pat was now responsible to the newly appointed Bishop Martin M. Johnson who was renowned for his active and energetic style of leadership.

One of Bishop Johnson's first projects was to encourage his clergy to raise funds to help the fledgling diocese become fiscally sound. In the Vancouver Archdiocese, the United Catholic Parishes' Bazaar was considered "the most practical and economical way of providing funds necessary to carry on the work of the Church in this Province."¹⁷ Bishop Johnson's tactic was to distribute "Diocesan Drawing" tickets to be sold by canvassers."¹⁸ Father Pat attempted to comply with his Bishop's zealous plan but with marginal success and in response to this scheme, submitted a handwritten, tongue-in-cheek list of excuses:

N. (Mrs.) Her husband is a Mason.... They have no revenue and no means but Mrs. N. might contribute prayers.

N. (Miss) Old age pensioner. A recluse since her fiancé died 47 years ago. She wouldn't be able to contribute anything financially. She probably wouldn't be able to contribute any prayers either.

N. (Mrs.) Old age pensioner. She is said to have received some money for her mining shares, but the church hasn't seen any of it yet.... Very tight. Her spine squeaks.

N. (Mr.) (pronounced Gyppo) Old age pensioner. Lives in a shack on the cliff above town.... used to come down to make his Easter duty until Mrs. N. hollered up to him that unless he came to church oftener he would go to Hell when he died. He hollered down to her to go to Hell right away.

N. Ed. Canvassers approaching this prospect should be athletic on account

of the ferocious bull which is almost as cantankerous as its owner.

N. (Mr.) Old age pensioner.... Sleeps with rosary in one hand and a rifle in the other. Very jittery. Canvassers should not go after dark.

N. (Mrs.) Old age pensioner and transient. Used to let on she was a Dogan¹⁹ because she liked Fr. Flynn's fuzzy hair. Doesn't go to church now. Present pastor lacks above equipment.

N. (family) No faith, no guts, no use.²⁰

During these formative years, one of Bishop Johnson's many goals was to establish a diocesan paper hence it was only logical to ask Father Pat to spearhead this project "because of his twelve years' experience in writing and publishing prior to entering the priesthood."²¹ Father Pat was relieved of his parish work in Trail. His first task was to visit every parish in the diocese,²² make contacts and "preach on the necessity of a weekly paper and the advantages to be derived."²³

After three months' preliminary work, the first edition of *The Prospector* was issued on November 12th 1937 at a \$1.00 per year subscription rate. According to Bishop Johnson, Kootenay mining people assumed it was an industry paper and eagerly purchased this first edition!²⁴

Father Pat's attention to detail in this inaugural issue did not go unnoticed and he received many accolades for his effort. *The Rossland Miner* produced the first issue and a veteran printer remarked:

It's a slick sheet, but I was disappointed. I didn't get the bang I expected. I've seen many a paper come out in the last fifty years and worked on several—especially here in the west. We always used to save the first editions ... mostly because of the mistakes it ran. The world's worst errors usually got into those first issues.... Outside of some linotype errors, which nobody can criticize in a first copy, your job had no thrillers.²⁵

Rev. Joseph R. Birch, O.M.I., the paper's first subscriber²⁶ wrote,

*As quondam editor I remember only too vividly the hustle and bustle and agony of getting the first issue out.... I read the paper from cover to cover—wondering the while who was your proofreader!!... The wiseacres undoubtedly shake their heads in dire prophesy but with such a Bishop to inspire it, such an Editor to guide it and so loyal a following to support it, The Prospector has as good a claim as one can find in the Dominion.*²⁷

Father Pat's previous experience with the fourth estate²⁸ proved to be a godsend for the fledgling weekly. However, his editorial work was inexplicably short-lived and only lasted to September 1938. Even before the paper's first anniversary it had reached almost 4,400 subscribers ranking it the second highest circulating weekly in the province.²⁹ Father Pat remained affiliated with *The Prospector* as a member of its Editorial Board until May 1939 even though he had spent the previous four months as a replacement in the Cranbrook parish following a colleague's death.

He remained in Cranbrook when Bishop Johnson appointed him resident chaplain at St. Eugene Hospital on May 16th. The bishop noted that "This office is not a permanent one but we feel this opportunity should be given you in the interests of your writing talent. We hope that within a year you will be able to help the Diocese by the income of your acknowledged talents."³⁰ Father Pat was now authorized to write and, by default, he also became the diocesan historian.

Little did he realize that he would continue with this Cranbrook assignment for the rest of his life! Later, Father Pat intimated that this temporary assignment became permanent because nobody knew what to do with him.³¹ Although chaplain at the hospital, he was also the pastor to the Moyie and district missions located 30 km south of the city. Supposedly these less onerous pastoral assignments afforded him time to write in earnest. Ironically, his proclivity for creative fiction was renewed when editing *The Prospector* where, without byline, he wrote 37

weekly episodes of "Ghost Camp" about "the early days of Phoenix [BC] in the Boundary country" between January 14th and September 30th 1938. C.D. Pearson of *The Nelson Daily News* recalled that Father Pat "would sit down at the typewriter in our editorial rooms, and without notes, would dash off a chapter for the ensuing issue. After several months he said to me one day, 'Charlie, I have come to the end of my story' and finished the serial."³²

Beginning in 1939, "Mr." Freney of Cranbrook corresponded with a literary critic in Arizona, a literary agent in New York and a literary consultant in Massachusetts. All offered encouragement and fee for service schedules. He submitted two stories, "The Wandering Baron" (1939) and "Showdown" (1947); a novel, "Ghost Camp" (1940) and enquired about a proposed, but untitled, novel concerning a deep-sea diver attempting to raise a fortune in placer gold from a volcanic hole under a California river (1946).

In contrast to his creative writing, Father Pat also began to delve into regional history. His best-known work concerned the "Flying Steamshovel" of Rossland. Father Pat had submitted the story and "In answer to your question as to where I got the minute detail describing the flight of the Flying Steamshovel," responded with a comprehensive four-page letter to a doubting

*The Prospectors,
Nelson, 1937-1938*



PHOTO COURTESY OF DIOCESE OF NELSON ARCHIVES

Scott Young of *Maclean's Magazine*. He further indicated,

My way of writing such an incident, either fact or fiction, is one I've been using over 25 years. After getting the general idea of the happening and enough facts to form a mental picture of it, I lined up the continuity for the narrative and asked questions for the specific details needed to fill out this continuity.... In this article, being a report on a helicopter of ancient and unorthodox design, the important thing to show would be how a contraption would perform having already implied that it flew.³³

Evidently *Maclean's* was not convinced; but to assuage future skeptics, Father Pat obtained sworn affidavits from several eyewitnesses. Later, the even more reputable "magazine of rotary wings," *American Helicopter*, published the story "back in 1902, when a boomer engineer, Lou Gagnon, raised a steam propelled helicopter off the ground in Rossland, British Columbia.... Bystanders later called Lou's creation 'The Flying Steamshovel' because of the resemblance."³⁴

In addition to secular writings, Fr. Freney had amassed information about the diocesan parishes to write his "Parish History" series for *The Prospector*.

Rev. T.P. Freney, former editor of The Prospector, and Diocesan historian, will contribute each week an installment on the history of various parishes in the Diocese.... Readers will find these articles from the pen of Father Freney interesting, informative and nostalgic.³⁵

Between March 1949 and October 1952, Father Pat contributed 38 articles about the parishes in Nelson, Moyie, Rossland, Trail, Cranbrook, Fernie, and Michel-Natal. This series also included information about some of the founding fathers within the diocese. After the sixth episode he hinted that more anecdotes were required as "many important parochial developments had taken place over the years, but to date, no record of them has been compiled. Here again, the cooperation of

contributors will be depended upon, largely for information to make the history of the parish complete."³⁶ Collecting these histories for the Diocese of Nelson was done in his spare time under the most trying circumstances because his chaplaincy was 24 hours per day with little pay and there was no travel assistance to obtain the necessary information.³⁷

Since Father Pat often talked about writing a book many people presumed he had. One researcher sought "advise with respect to the title, etc., of Father Freney's book" on the "history of the Oblates in the Kootenay country." The Bishop replied, "Father Freney never did get around to writing it. He had a wealth of information in his head but never got it even on tape."³⁸ As a writer and historian, Fr. Pat once remarked, "From the early twenties I've had the legal status in USA and Canada as 'established author' and 'professional writer' (including Hollywood experience); but after 25 years of writing local diocesan history, as a historian I am still a nobody."³⁹

During all this time Father Pat's pastoral duties were never neglected, nor did his writing sprees distract him for his primary responsibility at St. Eugene Hospital. He was chaplain 24 hours per day without substitutes despite his failing health. During the 1940s he had a difficult time with the Sister Superior who interfered with his duties as chaplain. Nevertheless he was popular and protective of the student nurses on the 3rd floor where he quietly defended them from "the dragon lady" who was particularly demanding. According to a graduate student nurse⁴⁰, Father Pat was "fair minded and always pleasant, personable with us—he was the student nurses champion."⁴¹ While chaplain, "not a single patient died in St. Eugene Hospital, of whatever faith, without his care and ministry. He was Father Confessor, Uncle, Brother, Devoted Friend and often Co-Conspirator to generations of student nurses at St. Eugene."⁴²

Much to the consternation of the staff it was almost impossible to clean his small, cluttered apartment at the hospital. This room (workshop) was littered with dismantled pianos, automobile parts or other paraphernalia undergoing restoration or repair; and his bathtub was used to store a massive stack of *The Prospector*! If not repairing or writing, he

was inventing as suggested in a letter from the National Inventors Council (his invention was neither named nor described).⁴³ Father Pat's fertile and inventive imagination must have been in overdrive all his life.

One Christmas day Father Pat's mechanical aptitude came in handy—at a price. His second Mass was at Moyie and the third at Yahk

*...where the jinx is. When I stopped in front of the Yahk church the gearshift handle broke off at the floor for no reason, making it necessary to do a lot of work after Mass in the cold to put the car in high gear by hand, involving unbolting the floor plate and the gear case. As a result the spine got twisted and the arthritis flared up promptly and was really violent.... In fact, out of control. But the Yahk church was crowded for the first time since I took over 14 years ago.*⁴⁴

As a clergyman, Father Pat was a "kind and remarkable man. He cared desperately for people, especially the poor, sick and dying." His habit of daily prayer and meditation as well as his wry wit, sense of humour and musical digression helped maintain a balance in his life although he remained independent and sometimes a thorn in the side of authority.⁴⁵ In fact, "there was never a more honest man nor one more definite in expressing his opinions."⁴⁶

He was a great storyteller and mimic. He would imitate Bishop Johnson's voice on the telephone and ask to be picked up at the train station. Later, when the real Bishop Johnson called, it would be dismissed as another Fr. Freney prank!⁴⁷ These imitations included Archbishop Duke and other clergymen. His talent with both piano and clarinet were musical assets he brought to the Cranbrook City Band as well as a Nelson group known as *The Prospectors*.

By the 1950s Father Pat's health slowly deteriorated. Acute pain from arthritis of the spine almost paralyzed his arm and fingers. He reported in 1953, "The arthritis of the spine is so severe now I don't know what's going to come of it, the arm being almost paralyzed" and in 1955, "I've had this terrible affliction

for over 3 years...and the painful sieges can become violent and lasting. The arthritis has crowded the vertebra out of place which has clamped off the brachial plexus of nerves, and the only remedy appears to be surgery."⁴⁸ By 1963, his health was seriously jeopardized after two coronary attacks badly damaged his heart. After being transferred to Victoria, a medical assessment at St. Joseph's Hospital revealed that he also suffered from extensive brain damage. Father Pat lingered on until coronary thrombosis took his life on Thursday, 29 October 1964.⁴⁹ His body was transported to Cranbrook where a funeral Mass was held at St. Mary's Church, followed by interment in the new Catholic Cemetery on November 2nd 1964.

Even in death complications ensued. As in life, nothing was straightforward with Father Freney. In August 1963 he had deposited a Will at St. Mary's Church, Cranbrook;⁵⁰ however it was revoked, just days before his death, by another Will drafted on October 20th 1964. This last Will included one controversial clause:

*PROVIDED that if in the sole discretion of my trustees the circumstances of my estate will permit I prefer and direct that the material comprising my research into the history of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Nelson be given to the Archives of The Bing Crosby Memorial Library at Gonzaga University in the City of Spokane in the State of Washington, U.S.A.*⁵¹

Earlier that month Rev. Wilfred P. Schoenberg, S.J., Archivist at Crosby Library, had written to Father Freney concerning "your fine collection concerning the history of the Church in the Pacific Northwest....It has occurred to me that as an old Gonzagan you might welcome the suggestion that your collection be placed here."⁵² This letter probably gave reason to Freney's deathbed alteration to his Will.

Two days after Father Pat's death, family members were in Cranbrook for his funeral and his brother, a Gonzaga graduate, telephoned Father Schoenberg and suggested he bring a truck to pick up the material bequeathed to the Crosby Library. When he arrived in Cranbrook, Father Schoenberg met Freney's sisters, Mrs. A.

Bregolisse and Sr. Mary Alena, executors to the estate. They presented the collection to Father Schoenberg who "took only what appeared to be the historical records, leaving, however, a bound set of *The Prospector*."⁵³

During this melancholic period, Bishop W.E. Doyle had been out of the country attending the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) in Rome and upon his return he probably was not fully aware of all details concerning the transfer of Freney's documents. However, he did take umbrage with Father Schoenberg's action suggesting that "before the burial took place" he had "confiscated" the papers. Moreover, he demanded "the return of these files, books and records, to the Diocese of Nelson, without delay."⁵⁴ In defense of his fellow Jesuit, the Provincial of the Society of Jesus wrote about Father Schoenberg's "good will and the propriety of his actions in accepting the historical documents" and that his "action was not tantamount to confiscation."⁵⁵

Later, Freney's executors admitted they inadvertently allowed his files to be taken to Gonzaga University and only then did they understand "that in fact the writings belong to the Diocese of Nelson."⁵⁶ Fortunately, the entire Freney affair was amicably settled when Bishop Doyle met with the Archivist, Father Schoenberg and the Jesuit Provincial, Father Kelley, at Gonzaga University and the Bishop reported, "both were gracious in our settlement of misunderstandings. All of the files and books were restored to me for the archives of Nelson Diocese."⁵⁷

The irony is that Bishop Doyle later acknowledged "the Freney Collection proved to be much less important than anyone imagined, because it had been talked about so greatly" but that "it remains practically all that the Diocese of Nelson possesses at present, hence its importance to us."⁵⁸ Father Pat probably would have seen the humour in this cross border dispute that could be perceived as an entirely different and exaggerated work of fiction. There is little doubt that Pat was Pat and that is that! ●

Endnotes

I am indebted to T.P Freney's niece, Betty Anne Meek of Vancouver, for graciously sharing her collection of "Uncle Pat's" correspondence, photographs, etc. as well as to Rossland old-timer, Ray Keane, for his anecdotes. Almost all citations are from Meek's collection, the Diocese of Nelson Archives (DNA) or the Archdiocese of Edmonton Archives (AEA).

1. *Baptismal Register*, Sacred Heart Church, Rossland, 16 January 1898. DNA. For some reason the entry was recorded as "Francis P. Freney."

2. Thomas Patrick Freney vita [Archdiocese of Vancouver]. DNA, Freney file.

3. CDN \$1.00 (1924) valued at \$13.31 (2011), therefore CDN \$75 (1924) would be worth approximately \$1,000 today. Bank of Canada (accessed 1 June 2011)

4. Thomas P. Freney, "Cheap Tools," *Argosy All-Story Weekly*, 7 February 1925, 544-552.

5. T.P. Freney, "Footnotes," *Maclean's Magazine*, 15 Jan. 1927 and "The Release," *ibid.*, 1 April 1928.

6. Author & Journalist, Denver, CO to Freney, Rossland, 12 Dec. 1928 and Harold Hersey, Editor, Magazine Publishers Inc., New York, NY to Freney, 15 Feb. 1929. "The Yellow Buzzard," *Golden West Magazine*, March 1929, 227-236.

7. H. Napier Moore, Editor, *Maclean's Magazine* to Freney, Rossland, 27 Aug. 1929.

8. A.K. MacIntyre, Sacred Heart Church to M.C. O'Neil [sic], Director, St. Joseph's Seminary, 22 Aug. 1930. AEA. Ray Keane, a parishioner and Rossland old-timer, had a slightly different version: "Pat is Pat and that is that."

9. M.C. O'Neill, to Archbishop W.M. Duke, Vancouver, 17 April 1931. AEA.

10. A.K. MacIntyre to M.C. O'Neill, 28 April 1931. AEA.

11. Pat Freney, [St. Joseph's Seminary] Edmonton to Monsignor MacIntyre, Rossland, 18 April 1931. DNA.

12. Ray Keane conversation with author, 12 Sept. 1996.

13. Reverend Henry Irwin (1859-1902) was also known as Father Pat because of his Irish origin. Irwin, the first Anglican missionary in the Kootenay region, was posted to Rossland in 1896. His life was chronicled by Mrs. Jerome Mercier in *Father Pat: a Hero of the Far West* (Gloucester: Minchin & Gibbs, 1909).

14. CP Revelstoke Night Telegraph [in Italian] to W.M. Duke from Catholic Men's Club, 3 September 1934. DNA.

15. Ray Keane conversations with author, 12 Sept. 1996 and 1 Nov. 2008.

16. It is common practice for a Bishop to relocate clergy to different diocesan parishes on occasion, but Freney's postings were more frequent than normal.

17. Archdiocese of Vancouver, Chancery Office. Circular letter to parish priests, 8 Aug. 1936. DNA. First year operation funds for the Nelson Diocese came from this source.

18. Bishop's Residence, Nelson. Circular letters to parish priests, 22 April, 8 May 1937. DNA.

19. Slang for Irish Catholic.

20. Photocopy, undated [1937?] from Ray Keane, March 2008.

21. "Priest to publish paper at Nelson," *Province*, 21 July 1937.

22. When Bishop Johnson arrived in 1936, there were 11 parishes with 62 missions scattered over 48,000 square miles (124,300 sq. km). When he left in 1954, there were 31 parishes with 75 missions.

23. Bishop's Residence, Nelson. Circular letter to parish priests, [1937]. DNA.

24. Fr. Mark Dumont, OSB, Mission, BC, email 16 Feb. 2011.

25. "Mistakes," *The Prospector*, 19 Nov. 1937.

26. Joseph R. Birch, O.M.I., Saskatoon, to Most Rev. Martin M. Johnson, D.D., 5 Jan. 1939. DNA, Prospector file. "I derive a certain joy from the fact that mine was the first subscription received by the editor, Fr. Freney. I still possess the receipt he gave me: it is dated Victoria, BC July 24th, 1937.... Fr. Freney told me, as he tore a page out of his notebook and made it into a receipt, that I had the honour of being the first subscriber."
27. Joseph R. Birch, O.M.I., Saskatoon, to Father Freney, 18 Nov. 1937. DNA, Prospector file.
28. The journalistic profession or its members; the press. Dictionary.com, "fourth estate," in *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Source location: Random House, Inc. [http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/fourth estate](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/fourth%20estate). Available: <http://dictionary.reference.com>. Accessed: November 13, 2011.
29. "Prospector on the go!" *The Prospector*, 7 Oct. 1938. According to this notice The Prospector's weekly circulation was 2/62 in BC; and *The Toronto Star* referred to it as "an outstanding Canadian paper."
30. Johnson to Freney, nd (card). DNA; "Important assignments are announced," *The Prospector*, 12 May 1939.
31. Fr. John Dulong, "Father Freney Remembered," *Catholic Mountain Star*, Advent 1998, 12.
32. "Prospector editors reflect on past experiences at desk," *Nelson Daily News*, 14 Nov. 1962; *The Prospector*, 14 Nov. 1962.
33. [Freney] to Mr. Scott Young, *Maclean's Magazine*, Toronto. 26 July 1946.
34. Thomas P. Freney, "Flying Steamshovel," *American Helicopter*, Nov. 1947, 15-16, 24-25. Abridged versions appeared in *The Cominco Magazine*, Jan. 1949, 6-8 and July 1966, 23-24.
35. *The Prospector*, 11 March 1949, 1.
36. *ibid.* 14 April 1949, 1.
37. Mary Biner, Calgary to Mary Begolis (Freney's sister), Kelowna, 7 Aug. 1966.
38. Ian G. Turner, Red Deer, AB to W.E. Doyle, Bishop of Nelson, 24 Oct. 1966 and Doyle to Turner, 3 Nov. 1966. DNA.
39. Ths. P. Freney to Bishop Thomas J. McCarthy, 18 Jan. 1958. DNA.
40. St. Eugene School of Nursing graduated 209 trained and certified nurses between 1911-1950.
41. Naomi Miller, Wasa, BC, email, 7 Sept. 2008; and Margaret Hutchison, Wasa, interview with author, 20 Sept. 2010.
42. Fr. John Dulong, *ibid.* According to Father J. Barnes, he was "friend, counsellor, adviser, mediator and father." *The Prospector*, 29 March 1957.
43. The National Inventors Council, Washington, DC to Mr. Thomas P. Freney, St. Eugene's Hospital, 10 Aug. 1944.
44. TP, Cranbrook to Dear Pere [Chancellor?], 14 Jan. 1954. DNA.
45. Fr. John Dulong, *ibid.*
46. Mary Biner, *ibid.*
47. Fr. Mark Dumont, OSB, Mission, BC, conversation with author, 15 March 2009.
48. Letters to Fr. Bob Anderson, Chancellor, Nelson, 6 Sept. 1953, 2 Oct. 1955. DNA.
49. Sr. Mary Alena, S.S.A. (Freney's sister), St. Joseph's Hospital, Victoria to Bishop Doyle, 16 Sept. 1963; Sr. Mary Angelus, S.S.A., Provincial Superior, Victoria to Bishop Doyle, 1 Oct. 1963. DNA. BC Dept. of Vital Statistics. *Registration of Death*, 1964.
50. Fr. Armando Maglio, Cranbrook to The Chancery Office, Nelson, 26 Aug 1963. DNA. This Will was made out on 21 August 1963.
51. Thomas Patrick Freney's Will signed in Victoria, BC, 20 Oct. 1964. DNA.
52. Wilfred P. Schoenberg, S.J., Archivist, Crosby Library to Father Freney [no address], 4 Oct. 1964. DNA.
53. John J. Kelley, S.J., Office of the Provincial, Portland, OR to Most Rev. W.E. Doyle, Bishop of Nelson, 22 Jan 1965. DNA. Fr. Maglio and Mary Bregolis recalled the "historical writings" taken by Fr. Schoenberg: a box of file-folders containing typewritten parish histories and clippings, several boxes of photographs and a few books. Rev. A.V. Maglio, Cranbrook to Most Rev. W.E. Doyle, 12 Feb. 1967; Mary Bregolis, Kelowna to Bishop Doyle, 11 Feb. 1967. DNA.
54. W.E. Doyle, Bishop of Nelson to Rev. Father Provincial, Society of Jesus, Portland, OR, 12 Jan. 1965. DNA.
55. John J. Kelley, S.J., Office of the Provincial, Portland to Most Rev. W.E. Doyle, Bishop of Nelson, 22 Jan 1965. DNA.
56. Filmore & Co., Barristers at Law, Kelowna to Bishop W.E. Doyle, 10 March 1965. DNA.
57. W.E. Doyle, Bishop of Nelson to Mrs. M. Bregolis [Executrix], Kelowna, 20 Feb. 1967. DNA.
58. W.E. Doyle, Bishop of Nelson to Rev. John J. Kelley, S.J., Provincial Superior, 18 Feb. 1967. DNA.

W.A. Ingram and the Club Cigar Store of Fernie, BC

By Ronald Greene

Ronald Greene is Past President of the BC Historical Federation.

From cigar club to barber shop, bowling alley to athletic club, lunch counter to candy shop, Billy Ingram did it all in spite of fires and personal tragedy.

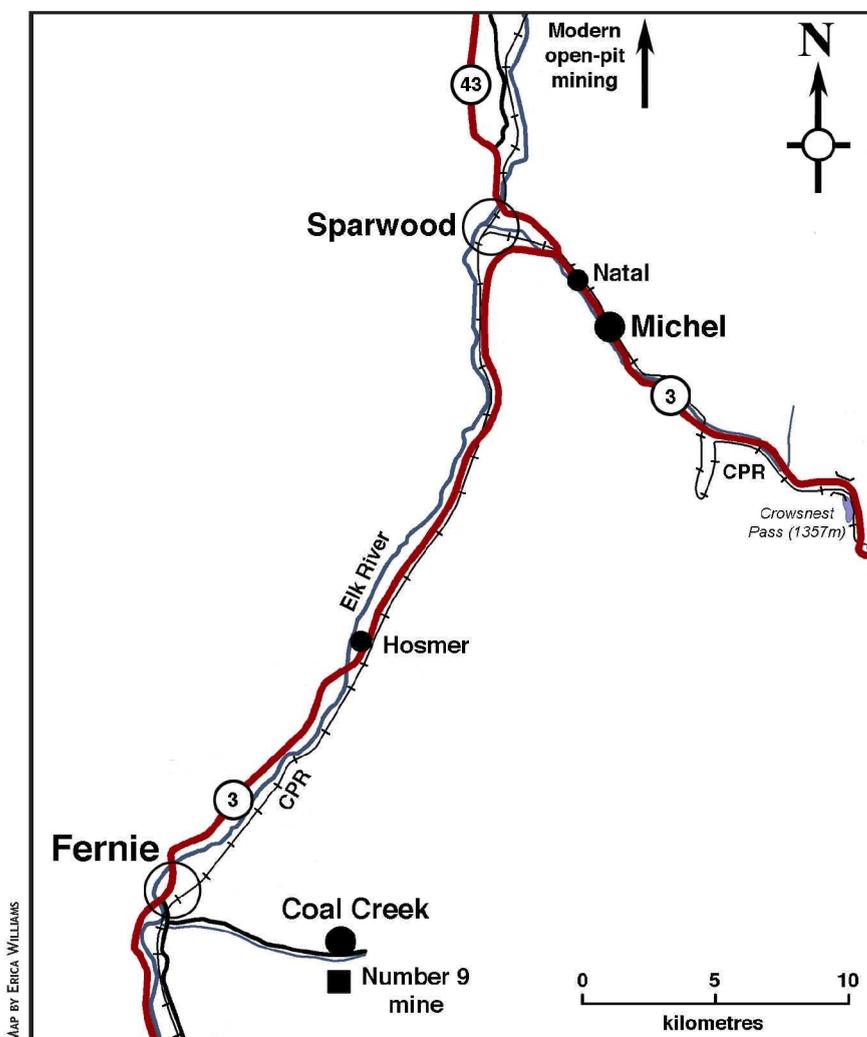
Fernie was founded in 1898, situated in the Elk Valley. It is located just 52 km (34 miles) from the Alberta border, passing through the Crow's Nest Pass. The City is named after William Fernie, a prospector, railway promoter and one of the organizers of the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company [hereafter The Company]. If there is one word to describe the reason for Fernie's existence, that word is coal. "The great coal fields of the Crow's Nest Pass are now being opened up in two places where the seams of high grade coking coal are each from

6 to 7 feet [2 m] thick. The work is in charge of Mr. Blackmore, M.E. who is opening up the properties so as to admit of a large production of coal on the completion of the railway and is also erecting coke-ovens, so that when the railway reaches the heart of West Kootenay coal and coke can be at once delivered at greatly reduced prices, at the smelting centre there. ..."¹

The Company opened up mines at two locations, at Coal Creek about 8 km east of Fernie, and at Michel, some 35 km north of Fernie. Fernie acted as the supply point for both mining communities. Coal Creek was shut down in 1958. Michel continued for a number of years afterward, but the residents were relocated to the new community of Sparwood in the 1960's and most of the buildings removed. Open pit coal mining is still going on in the upper Elk River valley and most of the coal is shipped in unit trains to Roberts Bank (south of Vancouver) where it is loaded for Japan's steel industry.

In the early days Fernie was called "The Pittsburgh of the West." Underground coal mining is a particularly hazardous business, and The Company went without a fatality for several years at a time on several occasions. However, a 1902 explosion at Coal Creek killed 130 men and another in 1917 killed 35 men. The city was incorporated in 1904, with a population of 3750, and still exists although with a population probably not exceeding 5000 people. The city suffered a major fire that destroyed several blocks at the end of April 1904, a lesser fire in 1905 and a third fire – which I call "The Great Fire" – in August 1908. This latter fire destroyed most of the business section of town and council ruled that buildings had to be built of fireproof material within the city core, in other words brick. As a result the city has a quite a stock of brick buildings.

William Alexander Ingram, "Billy" to his friends, who arrived in Fernie in April 1899², started his barber shop in either late 1899 or early 1900. In March 1900 he moved from the Victoria Hotel to the McInnes Block, which was on Cox



Street. Towards the end of the year he formed a partnership with John L. McIntyre who moved into the shop in the McInnes Block.

Ingram and his wife had some very difficult times in their lives. Their infant daughter died in early April 1902 and in May 1903 they also lost an infant son.³ The first of the Fernie fires April 29, 1904 burnt out the shop of Ingram & McIntyre. They lost no time in reopening in the cigar factory building.⁴ Within ten days of the fire Ingram had erected a double store on his lot, and he and McIntyre were going to occupy the south half.

That September, Harry Stonehouse opened up a cigar and news store in the other half of the building. This store was called the Club Cigar Store. The first ad read "Club Cigar Store, Ingram and Stonehouse, props."⁵ Ingram made a two month visit to Ottawa and when he returned in February he personally took over the management of the Club Cigar Store.

By March 1908 Ingram, had recovered enough that he decided to erect a brick building on the site of the cigar store and barber shop. The building was to occupy the full size of the lot, 9 m x 29 m and cost in the neighborhood of \$12,000. He obtained permission by the end of April to erect a small temporary building on the Tuttle (Royal Hotel) corner to hold the Cigar Store and the barber shop.⁶ A. Rizzuto, probably Alexander, purchased the old double store building and removed it. There is no official record but perhaps the strain of the

move and tight quarters contributed to the breakup; McIntyre and Ingram parted ways as of May 14th, 1908 with McIntyre moving to the Northern Hotel. Ingram's new building was destroyed by the Great Fire even before it was completed.⁷ But undeterred, Billy rebuilt. By the end of 1908 Ingram had installed a couple of very handsome baths in his new building and by February 5, 1909 was advertising very attractive prizes for high scores at his bowling alley. Ingram "purchased another new alley for his bowling room" in May and had the alleys re-opened in the third week of June.⁸ An ad stated, "Don't forget that the Club Cigar store bowling alley is running full blast every evening." In September of the same year Billy Ingram "fitted up his big basement with gymnasium appliances of every description

Left: Ingram's brass token is unusual for vertical orientation, size and shape

Right: Four men in front of Fernie brick store, circa 1908/09. Ingram is third from left



TOBEN COURTESY OF RONALD GREENE. IMAGE COURTESY OF FERNIE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Tokens for the bowling alley and lunch counter. The bowling alley only existed from 1909 until the end of 1911.

and offers for use of his patrons a gymnasium that would be a credit to any athletic society. A small fee is charged monthly for the privilege of the 'gym.' This will be a splendid place to spend a half-hour or an hour daily in the winter."⁹

In January 1912 Ingram tore out the bowling alleys over his store and was going to convert the space into offices and apartments. This gives us some clue as to the likely dates of the token that mentions the bowling alleys. The gymnasium offered some wrestling exhibitions. In August 1913 P. Sansum took over the management of the Fernie Amateur Athletic Club at Ingram's. In February 1914 Billy Ingram took some time off and Pat Lynch leased the barber shop. I have not found any reference that Billy Ingram returned to work as a barber after this date. The summer of 1914 saw Ingram start construction of a fine new residence on Victoria Avenue north. He liked to bring a telegraph wire into the store and pool room on special occasions, so that his patrons could follow boxing matches, round by round, or election results. During the war there were notes that Ingram would provide pipes, cigarettes or tobacco to soldiers from the Fernie Contingent heading off to training camps or going overseas. A September 1916 report stated that Thomas Andrew Ingram, the oldest son of Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Ingram had been killed in action, but by October there was speculation that he might have been captured. The speculation was erroneous.¹⁰ In 1917 W.A. was having some ear troubles and underwent what was called a "very dangerous operation" in Spokane. In October 1919 he went to Rochester, Minn., to consult an ear specialist at the Mayo Clinic. No reference was found for when Billy opened a lunch counter, but by June 1, 1917 he was awaiting a new range which would allow him to double its size.¹¹

In December 1918 Billy Ingram again changed his upstairs, converting it into a lodge

room. The Odd Fellows and the Knights of Pythias lodge had already agreed to occupy the premises. One of the Ingram daughters, Eva Blanche married Hugh McLachlan in September 1920. Another, Nettie, was studying music at Regina College. Billy retained his love of horses well into the 1920's.

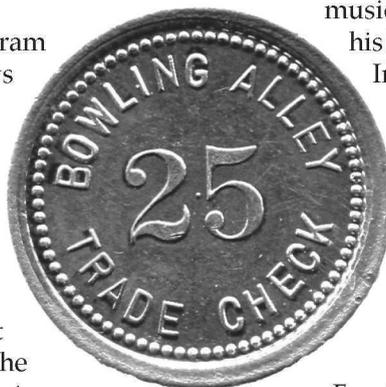
In August 1921 he spent a week in Calgary where he purchased a prize trotting horse. The next year he was noted as having driven "one of his fine horses to Cranbrook for the 24th of May celebration. In this age of automobiles Billy still plays the horse as favorite."¹²

In 1923, Nettie returned to Fernie and formed Ingram's Orchestra.

At the same time W.A. remodeled his upstairs once again, this time making it into a gymnasium although it could now be used for dances as well. He was very civic minded, and purchased two entire sets of uniforms for youth ball teams at his ball park. In 1930 he organized two lacrosse teams for boys from 10 to 15 years of age. By 1932 the gymnasium was in operation five nights a week.

Billy's son, Frank, joined his father in the business by 1933. That year W.A. did away with the barber shop, but retained the tobacco business and lunch counter. It was noted that, "There is one thing about Bill, he is showing confidence in the future of the town and is not afraid to back that confidence with his money."¹³ In early 1935 Ingram fitted up a candy kitchen in order to produce home-made candy of every variety. Frank went to Vernon to take a course in candy making. From this time onward Billy's advertisements were for Ingram's Candy Shop.

Close to midnight one night in November 1939 three young men attempted to rob Billy Ingram on his way home from work. The ring-leader was Roy Whitehouse, adopted son of William Savage of Fernie. The plan was for the other two to distract Billy while Roy snuck up from behind. Roy hit Billy over the head with an iron rod. He recognized his assailant who ran off, but the



TOKEN COURTESY OF RONALD GREENE

blow proved to be mortal as Billy suffered from a hemorrhage and died several days later.¹⁴ The two accomplices turned crown witnesses, but the first trial did not produce a verdict and a second trial the same day convicted Roy Whitehouse.¹⁵ He was sentenced to death, but a new trial was ordered by the Court of Appeal¹⁶ and in the third trial Whitehouse was acquitted.¹⁷ Billy's son, Frank, joined the army in 1941 but was killed in a training accident in 1942.¹⁸ A grandson, Donald Hugh McLachlan, was killed in action in Italy in May 1944.¹⁹ Overall it was a sad ending for a man highly respected in the community, and for members of his family. ●

Endnotes

1. Annual Report of the Minister of Mines, for the Year Ending December 31, 1897, Victoria, B.C. 1898, p. 524. Coke is a light porous form of carbon created by heating coal in sealed ovens to drive off the gases and volatiles.
2. According to an exhibit mounted by the Fernie Museum, although the earliest mention in the *Fernie Free Press* that I found was March 9, 1900 p. 5 when he moved his existing shop.
3. *Fernie Free Press*, April 12, 1902, p. 5 and May 9, 1903, p. 5 respectively
4. *Fernie Free Press*, May 6, 1904, p. 8
5. *Fernie Free Press*, September 23, 1904, p. 5
6. *Fernie Free Press*, April 24, 1908, p. 5 and p. 8
7. *Fernie Free Press*, August 13, 1908, p. 1 under losses, W.A. Ingram \$2,500, no insurance
8. *Fernie Free Press*, May 14, 1909, p. 5 and June 25, 1909, p. 5
9. *Fernie Free Press*, September 17, 1909, p. 5
10. According to the Canadian Virtual War Memorial, www.veterans.gc.ca, Thomas Andrew Ingram died on September 17, 1916.
11. *Fernie Free Press*, June 1, 1917, p. 5
12. *Fernie Free Press*, May 26, 1922, p. 5
13. *Fernie Free Press*, September 8, 1933, p. 5
14. *Fernie Free Press*, December 1, 1939, p. 1
15. *Fernie Free Press*, May 17, 1940, p. 1
16. *Fernie Free Press*, November 8, 1940, p. 1
17. *Fernie Free Press*, May 23, 1941, p. 1
18. *Fernie Free Press*, May 30, 1941, p. 1
19. *Fernie Free Press*, June 1, 1941, p. 1 and June 8, 1941, p. 1

The Fort at Yorke Island: Getting to Know the Neighbours

By Catherine Marie Gilbert

Catherine Gilbert has her honours bachelor degree in History, and a background in teaching. She has recently completed a book entitled *Yorke Island and the Uncertain War, Defending Canada's Western Coast during World War II* to be released by Ptarmigan Press in early 2012. Catherine has also been published in the *Western Mariner* and is a regular contributor to the *Island Word* and *Campbell River Mirror* newspapers. She works at the Museum at Campbell River as promotions coordinator.

The soldiers and sailors posted to Yorke Island fort during WWII were only temporary neighbours to the surrounding coastal communities but left a lasting impression.

The declaration of war... meant little immediate change in the lives of the people living on the remote West Coast of British Columbia... With the installation of guns on Yorke Island, said to offer protection from Japanese ships entering Johnstone Strait, the local people felt a tremor of concern. The war became more real when local boats on their way to Port Hardy were stopped and questioned by Yorke Island patrol.¹

Taken from Myrtle Siebert's book *From Fjord to Floathouse*, this excerpt aptly illustrates the sentiments of many of the inhabitants who lived in the small communities scattered throughout BC's west coast during World War II who were near enough Yorke Island to be affected by the presence of its fort. The building and manning of the Yorke Island fort was a major event in that quiet part of

the world, and although thought by some to be unnecessary, it was evidence that the military was taking the threat of Japanese invasion seriously.

Yorke Island is a very small and uninhabited island, just 55 hectares in size, and is situated in the Johnstone Straits where it meets Sunderland Channel. Local residents on Hardwicke Island, its nearest neighbour, and those who lived at the port of Kelsey Bay six kilometres to the southwest, were inevitably drawn into the activity of constructing and servicing the fort. With so many military personnel descending on the area, there was bound to be social interaction as well, and these communities were affected in a myriad of ways by their arrival.

Hardwicke Island has been settled since the late 19th century and in the 1930s and 1940s supported several families and a thriving logging industry. While it has a beautiful natural harbour on the west side, sandy beaches and



IMAGE COURTESY OF HAZEL BENDICKSON COLLECTION

Hardwicke Island
harbour, circa
1939.



First group enroute for Yorke Island, members of the 15th Coastal Brigade from Vancouver, onboard HMCS Comox, August 1939

IMAGE COURTESY JOHN LAVTON COLLECTION

large stands of trees, Yorke Island, by contrast, is rocky and windswept, sparsely wooded, with no source of fresh water, and a very small sand beach for landing on the south side. Although Yorke has very little to recommend it now, in 1937 it was perceived to be perfectly situated to intercept any Japanese airplanes, boats or submarines that might head from north to south with the intent of attacking Vancouver. Thus the decision was made to build a defence site there.

Logan Edward, who was 17 years old in 1938 and working for Salmon River Logging out of Kelsey Bay when work on the Yorke Island fort began, was astonished at the speed of construction. "They banged things together so fast..." he recalled. One of his co-workers was hired to operate the 'Cat' tractor and many local men and loggers were hired to help clear trees for roads and put up barracks. A substantial wharf was built and Yorke Island military personnel were taking delivery of building materials and supplies all being delivered by

boat. In the early records, the 172 foot freighter SS *Border Prince* (formerly a Union Steamship the *Chilkoot*) was often at the dock, bringing supplies and personnel, and as much as 8000 gallons of much needed water each week. The first troops arrived in late August of 1939 via HMCS *Comox*, a converted minesweeper, and over the years many more were to arrive at Kelsey Bay on the Union Steamships, to be transferred to Yorke by military launch.

In a letter written home to Vancouver in March 1943, Walter Torry described his trip to Yorke Island:

We arrived here alright with cheers from the boys we were relieving and also a snowstorm. Gosh what a sloppy mess it is right now – mud up to your knees at the camp, and snow and ice on the trails. It has snowed for two days now. And then turned to rain.

*Observation and
Communication
Post Yorke Island
circa 1941.*



What a trip we had on the way up here, there was so many men on board we could not find room to even lay down and the boat we came on had no staterooms, but we had 3 real good meals which helped a lot.

The transportation of troops was ongoing as the men were on rotating shifts generally from four months to ten months in duration and were brought from Vancouver, with some heading further up the coast to other sites like Prince Rupert. Eventually, the Union Steamship *Lady Rose* was commissioned for a short period to specifically transport military personnel to Yorke Island.²

If it seemed that getting to the island was an ordeal, getting off the island, especially in the early years, could be even more difficult. Dot (née Edward) Mann, who was nine years old at the start of the war, remembered very clearly how the soldiers would visit the Edward home on Hardwicke Island. Using ingenious means to cover the one kilometre of distance

between the islands, they built their own rafts and manned them with three fellows: two to paddle and one to steer. The Edward family enjoyed the visits and it was noted that the fellows always seemed hungry, and were thrilled to dine on canned venison. In Dot's autograph book, she still has the signatures she collected from some of these visitors.

Not all of the fellows posted there were anxious to leave. Bernie Smith, now a retired Vancouver policeman of Bernie "Whistling" Smith³ fame was posted on Yorke Island in the spring of 1941, and for the seven month duration of his stay, he didn't leave the island once. Unlike many others, Smith said that he didn't mind. He felt that the army treated him well, providing him with regular meals, (a luxury after years of the Depression) a uniform and good boots. He was grateful too for the training he received and felt that it prepared him for his stint overseas.

A revealing glimpse of the conditions at Yorke Island is found in a report written by the

Chief Medical Officer W.L. Boulter on January 9, 1940. He described the mud and rain, the lack of good lighting and sufficient fresh water, the difficulty of keeping clean, and he was concerned with the psychological needs of the men. He recommended that a recreation hut "supplied with tables, chairs, games, electricity, running hot and cold water, and toilets" should be constructed and "Row boats and or crew boats be provided for outside recreation."⁴

The recreation hut, remembered for its beautiful hardwood floor, was built about a year after Boutler's recommendation was made, and the Yorke Islanders (known as Yorkies to the locals) were able to invite non military personnel to their lonely outpost. Beverly Dingwall was a teenager during the war years, and remembered coming over from Kelsey Bay to attend dances. At the time she was dating a sailor named Dave Edwards who was in working in communications with the naval contingent at Yorke Island. Once when she arrived, a fellow was playing the piano; a beautiful piece called the "Warsaw Concerto". She was very impressed by the music as she had never heard anything like this before. The family radio was used for listening to war time news, not music, as people were concerned about using up their batteries.

By this time it was recognized that diversions were important to the soldier's mental balance and Beverley recalled that "they (the military) provided the music and sometimes a musical group would be hired to come up and entertain...to keep them sane."

Beverley's friends Joan and Betty Smith, whose parents ran the store at the Kelsey Bay dock, also went to Yorke Island dances. Still, the young fellows far outnumbered the young ladies, and Fran Hoolsema, Joan's daughter, heard that one of the officers advised her mother's parents to say that the girls had the measles — ostensibly to ward of too much undue attention from the lonely men!

Community dances were held weekly in Sayward (adjacent to Kelsey Bay), and Yorke Island soldiers would attend as often as they could. Fifteen year old Hazel Anderson from Hardwicke Island would attend the dances to see her boyfriend Len Schofield, a soldier who played the drums. Fred Lewis and Hugh Knudson, both eight years old when the war

came, were impressed with the talents of the Yorke Islanders who shared the stage with local musicians. Music was the common ground that united the soldiers who came from other parts of the country with the people of these small communities. An old favourite they all enjoyed was the World War I tune 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary'.

In *The Way It Was*, Len Crawford mentioned that several Yorke Island soldiers turned up at a social function in Shoal Bay

Beverly Dingwall and friend at Kelsey Bay, circa 1942.



IMAGE CREDIT: BEVERLY DINGWALL COLLECTION



Left: Edwards and his naval mates doing the jive in their barracks on Yorke Island circa 1942.

Eight: A group of sailors on Yorke Island, date unknown.



on East Thurlow Island, about an hour's boat trip away, arriving in one of the eighty foot navy boats. "The visit," he wrote, "was quite a novelty for all alike."⁵

They would also hop on the Columbia Coast Mission boat when it went south to the hospital at Rock Bay to attend social events held there.

Walter Torry wrote home about a trip of group of the fellows took up the coast to Port McNeill, where they played volley ball and dined with the loggers, and attended a town dance.

I went on a trip to Port McNeill and oh boy did we have a good time. We left York at about 12:30 Sat and got there 6:30 at night. We had supper in the logging camp and did we eat, it is a heck of a long time since I have seen so much good grub.

Then we had Sun. dinner with them and oh what a meal. They sure do feed them loggers good. On Sat we had braised short ribs, sauerkraut and

wieners and corn and lots of cake. For Sun breakfast we had all the eggs and ham we could eat and grapefruit, grapenuts and cream of wheat. For Sun dinner we had roast pork and dressing, asparagus and green peas and mashed potatoes and lemon pie and ice cream in piles. When we got up from the table we could hardly move.

It sure was a welcome break to get off the island for a while.⁶

Transportation by boat was the common method of getting around for the soldiers and for coastal residents. Even Kelsey Bay on Vancouver Island was isolated and reliant on its port. Small planes were used for medical emergencies, but weren't commonly used otherwise. The occupation of Yorke Island however, precipitated a major event for Kelsey Bay and nearby Sayward – the coming of a road! By 1943, the airforce was working on improving communications up and down the east coast of Vancouver Island and since it was deemed important that the Yorke Island

fort should have telephone service, a road was finally put through from Kelsey Bay to Campbell River. Logan Edward worked on the road alongside airforce and home defence crews, and they used the old logging rights of way, following the disused railway tracks. He also took one of the first trips to Campbell River over that road – an eighteen hour ordeal through mud, pot holes and over forty seven trestles that today is managed in just over an hour.

Although no battles were ever fought at the Yorke Island fort, the war still left its mark. The concrete buildings that were constructed on Yorke Island are still there, and many of the wooden barracks found their way over much of the coast, from Minstrel Island, to Port Neville, to Hardwicke Island and Kelsey Bay, and even as far away as Campbell River. But most importantly, many of the soldiers and sailors who were posted at Yorke Island became, even if briefly, neighbours to the people who lived in its vicinity, and left an indelible footprint in their memories. ●

Endnotes

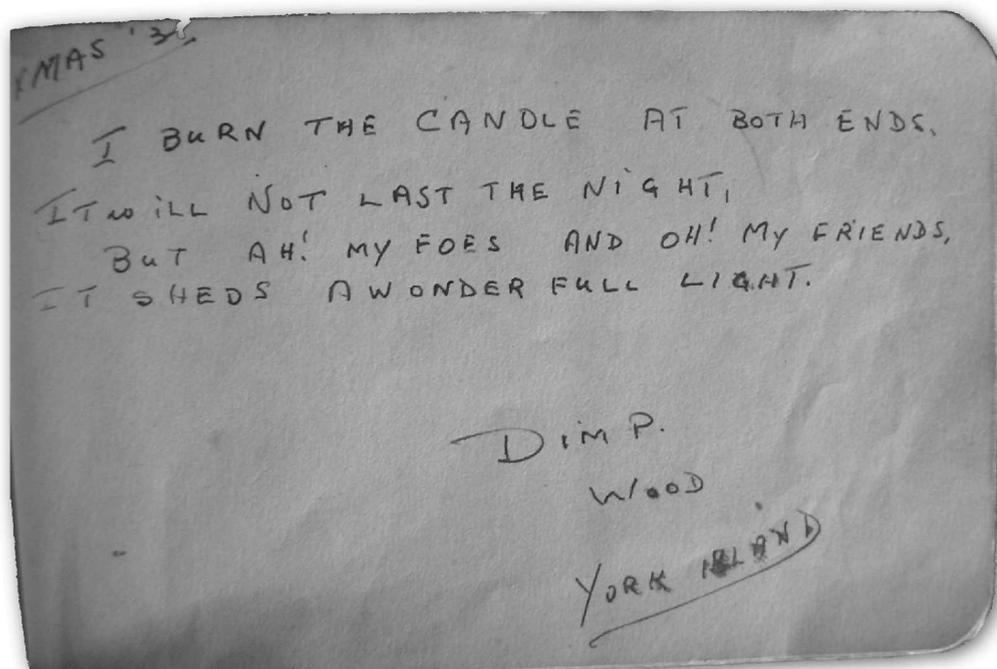
1. Myrtle Siebert, *From Fjord to Floathouse: One Family's Journey from the Farmlands of Norway to the Coast of British Columbia* (Victoria: Trafford Publishing, 2006), 115.
2. Gerald H Rushton, *Whistle Up the Inlet, The Union Steamship Story* (Vancouver: J.J. Douglas 1974), 141.
3. Bernie "Whistling" Smith was the subject of the 1975 National Film Board of Canada documentary *Whistling Smith*. The film received an Academy Award® nomination for Documentary Short Subject.
4. W.L., Major Boulter, RCAMC, M.O. York Island B.C. Report on Conditions as found existing on York Island. January 9, 1940. Robert Critchley Collection, 2
5. Len Crawford, *The Way It Was* (Campbell River: Ptarmigan Press, 2007), 110.
6. Peggy Torry Beukers, Walter Torry Letters March 1943 and April 1943.

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2. Duncan, Frances and Harding, Rene. Sayward For Kelsey Bay Printed by D.W. Friesen & Sons, Cloverdale BC 1979.
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4. War Diary 85th Hvy. Bty. RCA CASE, 15th Coast Brigade RCA. Yorke Island, Museum at Campbell River Archives



Page from Dot Mann's
autograph book.

A Useful and Practical Career

By Theresa Vogel

Theresa Vogel is the Executive Director of the Society of Friends of St. Ann's Academy, Victoria, BC a not-for-profit Society sharing the interest and dedication of the Provincial Capital Commission at St. Ann's Academy National Historic Site. Ms. Vogel edits a bi-monthly newsletter, SEQUOIA, chronicling contemporary events and historical vignettes at the site.

Sister Mary Matthew McBride, commercial instructor at St. Ann's Academy, was responsible for creating a program that combined practical skills with poise and refinement.

Sister Mary Edith Down, Sister of St. Ann (SSA), in her 1966 book *Century of Service*¹, refers to the profound impact made upon generations of girls and young women as a result of the influence of one Ann McBride, later Sister Mary Matthew McBride, SSA. Sister Down wrote:

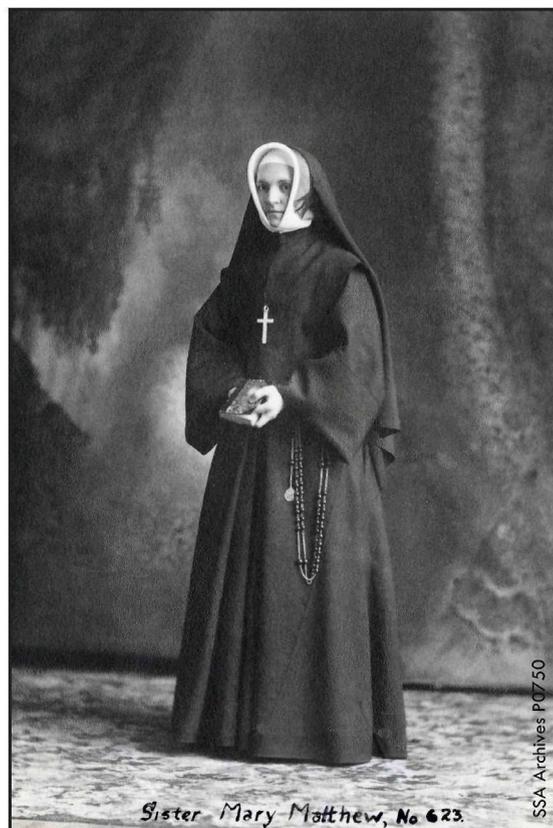
Together with full academic courses, a music department and an art department, St. Ann's Academy, Victoria, by 1892, maintained a progressive and successful commercial department. At this time the sisterhood was fortunate in having promising subject in Miss Ann McBride, who later became Sister Mary Matthew. This young lady, then in her nineteenth year, was born in Kilbourne, Wisconsin, but later resided in Ellensburg, Washington. Her education was advanced for a girl of those days. She had completed normal [teacher training] school, had taken a business course and was a court reporter. She was the first trained stenographer in the Institute in the west. In March of 1892, she began to give lessons in shorthand and typing at St. Ann's in Victoria.

Two hundred years have passed since the birth of the Founder of the Sisters of St. Ann, Marie-Anne Blondin, and over 150 years since the spirit of Mother Marie-Anne arrived on Vancouver Island. The religious 'daughters' of this humble mother inexorably changed, for the better, the social landscape of the Pacific Northwest. Mother Marie-Anne was an unlikely founder of a religious congregation of women dedicated to teaching, as she was largely uneducated herself until in her 20's. Regardless, she remained a passionate advocate for education, and maintained an abiding interest in the work of her Sisters in the west. The pioneer Sisters of St. Ann (to be more in tune with the principal language of the west, in BC the "e" of Anne was officially dropped.)

in Victoria were never far from her thoughts and prayers, and she noted in regular letters that she could not have "...forseen a time when her daughters would be doing such good in a faraway land."² The historical record shows that the 'daughters' of Marie-Anne Blondin not only carried her spirit to the west, but used it to form the better part of history in the regions of British Columbia, the Yukon, and Alaska. Sister Mary Matthew McBride's contribution to the history of the region is founded upon her skill and zeal at forming efficient and gracious young business-women at St. Ann's Academy.

Sister Down goes on to recount:

A certain gracious, old-time courtesy marked Sister Mary Matthew's intercourse with all visitors to her



Sister Mary Matthew, No. 623.

SSA Archives P0750

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Mother Mary
Matthew McBride,
SSA

department. In fact little rituals worked themselves out in the unfolding of yearly curriculum requirements. There was the procedure of opening bank accounts for the class, in the realistic banking section of the classroom; there was the monthly reading of reports with the solemnness of a hall of justice; there were the special examinations, presided over by special committees; there was the formal introduction to the class of the occasional lecturer or demonstrator; the floral offering that marked a special function; the hospitable cup of tea; the quiet conformity to social etiquette.

Sister Mary Matthew's influence extended well beyond the convent walls, carried outward by her students, as indicated in *Century of Service*: "This influence made Sister Mary Matthew well-known among business men of the city of Victoria. They recognized something distinctive about a St. Ann's girl, who, in addition to skill in the arts of her profession, always showed the culture and refinement that a convent education can give."

The 'Commercial Program' at St. Ann's Academy in Victoria, from its humble beginnings in 1892, grew in credibility and stature, and spread to programs at the Sisters of St. Ann schools in Vancouver (1899), Kamloops (1910), Nanaimo (c1938), and New Westminster (1907). The Victoria program received certification in 1897, though Elenore Madigan was the first program graduate in 1892. Eva Nicholson was the first grad to be employed by the Provincial Government.

As the 1960's drew to a close, the decision was made to close the Commercial Department at St. Ann's. While some might reflect that declining enrolment precipitated the

closure, others stress that it was the multitude of commercial, banking, leadership, and business courses offered in public schools that finally 'caught up' to St. Ann's after 75 years. ●

Endnotes

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*Commercial
Department, 1906*



Archives & Archivists

by Land Title and Survey Authority; edited by Sylvia Stopforth

Sylvia is a Librarian and Archivist at Norma Marian Alloway Library at Trinity Western University.

The Land Title and Survey Authority of BC (LTSA) is a statutory corporation responsible for managing the land title and survey systems of BC. These systems provide the foundation for all real property business and ownership in the province.

The LTSA's new state-of-the-art, climate-controlled records vault enhances the preservation of BC's historic hardcopy land title and survey records.

In the fall of 2010, the Land Title and Survey Authority (LTSA) of BC completed the consolidation of its two Victoria offices into a modern facility at the Atrium building located at 1321 Blanshard Street in Victoria.

The new facility includes a new state-of-the-art, climate-controlled records vault that enhances the preservation of BC's historic hardcopy land title and survey records. It provides better document storage and a document conservation laboratory for ongoing preservation and protection of the collection. The vault also includes a new, modern drawer system designed to safely hold very large and very old plans. Records such as Crown Grant Indexes, Absolute Fee Books, and Provincial and Dominion Field Books are now stored in acid-free archival envelopes or boxes which will help to preserve them for future generations.

In addition, Records Distribution staff work stations are now located in the central area of the vault, allowing staff to provide more direct assistance to registry agents, land surveyors, and others requiring access to the records. The development of the vault reflects input from various representative groups, including the BC Historical Federation.

An accredited professional archives and records management consultant ensured that due diligence was exercised during the relocation of the LTSA's records collection to the new facility. Over 4,000 Hollinger boxes were ordered, and a team of staff charged with organizing the move was helped by approximately ten subcontractors. The actual movement of boxes was done in accordance with recognized archival standards, which included indexing and accounting for all

The LTSA vault contains a number of mobile map cabinets which allow for better storage, conservation, and access of records.

IMAGE #1169 COURTESY LTSA



materials at their new location through a labelling and barcode-tracking process.

The move also presented an opportunity to perform some restoration work to ensure ongoing preservation and protection of the collection of historic records. As a result, the very large, historic Tiedemann Plan was cleaned and repaired, and over 1,000 bound volumes were cleaned, with repair work necessary for about 100 of those volumes.

The LTSA has a long-term commitment to its stakeholders and legislative responsibility regarding the preservation of and provision of access to the extensive collection of historic land title and survey records. During the fiscal year 2010/2011, 345 plans were conserved and 395 condition reports were completed for plans in Victoria and New Westminster.

Members from various representative groups — including the BC Historical Federation, University of Victoria Archives, and Royal British Columbia Museum — have participated in informative tours of the new

records vaults and conservation lab since November 2010. The LTSA intends to fully utilize the capacity of its facilities to conserve historically important documents and plans from the New Westminster and Kamloops Land Title Offices.

If you are interested in touring the LTSA's new facility in Victoria, please send your request to Brad Babcook at Brad.Babcook@ltsa.ca.



Image #1257 COURTESY LTSA

Above: Jean Topham, Paper Conservator, and the Tiedemann Plan.



Image #1273 COURTESY LTSA

Left to right: Michael Layland, BC Historical Federation; Andrea Lister, *British Columbia History* magazine; Sheila Lister, Chilliwack Museum & Archives; Robin Lister and Jacqueline Gresko, BC Historical Federation; Rob Gresko tour the LTSA's new facility.



Image #1363 COURTESY LTSA

Guests visiting the LTSA conservation lab look over the plans that have been cleaned and restored.

From the Book Review Editor's Desk

by K. Jane Watt



I learned a lesson this week about friendship and the importance of getting things right. When I substituted Stewart for Sherwood in my last column that mentioned Jay Sherwood's fabulous book, *Return to Northern British Columbia: A Photojournal of Frank Swannell, 1929-39*, I received - what seemed like immediately - a letter, not from Mr. Sherwood himself (who had ample grounds for annoyance) nor from his publisher, but from his friend. This self-described "stickler for getting names correct" assured me tongue-in-cheek that he had recently lunched with Sherwood and was certain he had not changed his name in the interim. Such mistakes should never happen, but us fallible humans make them all the time - and it's wonderful to know that our friends are looking out for us and leaping unsolicited to our defense in times of need.

Ronsdale Press in Vancouver has just released a biography of sprinter Percy Williams written by Samuel Hawley. Called *I Just Ran: Percy Williams, World's Fastest Human* (\$23.95), this book traces Williams' life from his early coaching at King Edward High school in Vancouver to his triumph at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics where he captured gold medals in the 100 and 200 metre

races. In 1930, Williams ran 100 metres in 10.3 seconds, a world record that held until Jesse Owens shaved a tenth of a second off his time six years later. Hailed by crowds as he returned to Vancouver after the Olympics in 1928, Williams was on the top of the world: he even had candy bars called Our Percy created in his honour. Williams retired from competition in 1932, dropped out of the sporting spotlight and became an insurance salesman. He received the Order of Canada in 1980. Two years later, "entirely alone" and with "no living relations with whom he kept in contact [and] no close friends," he took his own life. Hawley's compelling biography draws from Williams' private archives of letters, diaries and scrapbooks and traces his movement through the world of elite running in the 1920s and 1930s, to his life and death beyond the track.

Across my desk recently have come a number of books about the importance of place and the passage of time: Greystone has released a new edition of its popular *Geology of British Columbia: A Journey Through Time* by Sydney Cannings, JoAnne Nelson and Richard Cannings (\$24.95). It is a book about constant change in the world around us, a book that seeks to "bring together a brief, understandable history of the province's geological features and the history of its living creatures into one cohesive story."

In celebration of the centennial of parks in BC, Harbour has published *British Columbia's Magnificent Parks: The First 100 Years* (\$44.95) by James D. Anderson with a foreword by Stephen Hume. It is a look at a century of the BC park system through the eyes of committed park administrator, Jim Anderson "who was one of a team of patient, dedicated visionaries who built the BC Parks branch and the vast park

system it oversees against a backdrop of vacillating public and political support. It is truly an epic story of which every British Columbian can be proud."

On people less-known: John Schreiber's collection of stories called *Old Lives: In the Chilcotin Backcountry* (Caitlin, \$22.95) meditates on the encroachment of urban lives and sensibilities on the BC interior, and the pressures they put on old ways and knowledges. *Old Lives* "acknowledges and honours the region's backcountry elders, their way of life, and the wild liveliness of the great Chilcotin land where they have existed for centuries." It seeks to respect the importance of myth because, as Schreiber writes, "myth stories tell us who we are, where we have been, what we have done, and what is possible," but only if "we pay steady attention."

Historian Lynne Bowen's new book, *Whoever Gives Us Bread: the Story of Italians in British Columbia* (Douglas & McIntyre, \$32.95) outlines the enormous contributions Italians have made to British Columbia by tracing the immigration of sons and daughters of Italy to British Columbia after 1860 and their settlement in the "isolated valleys and cities of the province to pan for gold, raise cattle, dig coal, fell lumber, build railroads, smelt copper and refine lead." Far from being welcomed with open arms, Italians were welcomed grudgingly here even as they worked hard "for whoever would give them bread," raised families with pride, and sought both to build a good life in Canada and to maintain their ties to home.

Reprints of beloved books: Bertrand W. Sinclair's *The Inverted Pyramid*, originally published in 1924, has been released by Ronsdale Press as part of the City of Vancouver's 125th Anniversary Legacy Books

Project. Sinclair was born in Scotland in 1881 and immigrated to Canada with his mother at the age of eight before taking up many different jobs in his journey to becoming a freelance writer, best-selling novelist and commercial fisherman. Resonant with the failure of the Dominion Trust Company in 1914 the novel offers “a colourful account of British Columbia in the early twentieth century through the history of three brothers. Rod, Phil and Grove Norquay belong to an old BC family who have made their fortune from the forest industry.” Rod hopes to recapture his family’s past success in the forest industry, but his brother, Grove, invests the family fortune in a world of finance that is destined to fail. “As the world declines into a recession after WWI,” promises the book’s dustjacket, “Rod is forced to log much of his family’s timber holdings, but he remains hopeful that he and his family, working with their own hands, will be able to make a good life for themselves - even as the rest of the world slides into materialist excess.”

An elegant little reprint of Roderick Haig-Brown’s 1950 historical memoir, *Measure of the Year: Reflections on Home, Family, and a Life Fully Lived* with a foreword by Brian Brett has been released by TouchWood. (\$19.95). In prose described as “elegant” and “sinewy” by the *New Yorker* magazine, Haig-Brown immerses himself in the details of life around the home he called Above Tide. Now owned by the Province of British Columbia and leased to the City of Campbell River, Haig-Brown house stands, Brett notes, as “a living, thriving memorial to the glory days of Canada’s western wilderness - and one of Canada’s finest writers and conservationists.” In his musings on the turn of the seasons and the chores of the month of November, Haig-Brown writes of the connection of seasonal work to the stirrings of

memory and imagination. “I often wonder what kind of a mind it is that enjoys splitting wood,” he notes:

I can do it happily for hours, given a splitting block of the right height and my own short-handled four-pound splitting axe. I think busily of many things and often of the wood itself. Every block has character. The stove blocks are straight and clear and dull; they split away cleanly and easily in a rhythm of sound that is yield without effort. It is a relief to come upon a twisted, malformed monster and puzzle a way between the knots, across them or even through them. This is fireplace wood, better for it than any more standard yield of the tree; some of the knots are so distinctive that one remembers them all the way from the tree to the woodbox and fireplace and watches them burn with greater satisfaction for all that. I remember one old farmer who got caught by the kickback of a twisty, pitch-seamed fir one fall and broke several ribs. He swore through the rest of the winter he would recognize every stick that came from that tree and as he picked one up for the fire he would say, ‘That’s the son of a bitch that put me in hospital last fall.’”

A new edition of *Opening Doors – In Vancouver’s East End: Strathcona* edited by Daphne Marlatt and Carole Itter and with a new foreword by James C. Johnstone has been published by Harbour in celebration of Vancouver’s 125th birthday. Originally published in 1979 as part of the Harbour’s *Sound Heritage* series, *Opening Doors* celebrates the stories of Strathcona through the text of fifty interviews with local old timers and recent immigrants. Called “one of the best books about Vancouver you

couldn’t obtain for love nor money,” its reappearance is much welcomed.

Under the authorship of Nancy Oke and Robert Griffin, The Royal British Columbia Museum has produced a social history of local food production and distribution called *Feeding the Family: 100 Years of Food and Drink in Victoria* (\$29.95). Beginning with the founding of Fort Victoria in 1843, the authors trace the history of the many butchers, grocers, bakers, importers, and other suppliers who fed the growing demand of the city as it became the commercial powerhouse of the province in the late nineteenth century. Drawing from the photograph and artifact collection of the RBCM, the book explicates the intertwining of the domestic, economic and cultural spheres in Victoria --showing manor houses and their fledgling gardens, giant beets, cans and bottles for storage, and the interiors of shops and factories catering to various culinary requirements, including grocers, butchers, flour and rice mills, breweries. It outlines the public spaces of food exchange: public markets, grocery stores, delivery wagons, and the offices and warehouses of wholesalers. It notes the challenges of food preservation before the dawn of refrigeration – and reminds us of the necessity of ice, salt, preserves, and pickles. *Feeding the Family* is a fascinating retrospective.

New local histories: the Chilliwack Fire Department has published *Chilliwack Fire Department 1906-2006*, a celebration of its century of service to the area and of the hundreds of residents of Chilliwack who have historical connections to the department. A collaboration of four authors – Grant Ullyot, Wayne Green, Thomas Beer, and Bill Chambers - three of whom are past Fire Chiefs, the book is a community effort, composed and edited by Shannon Bettles of the Chilliwack Archives with assistance

Book Reviews

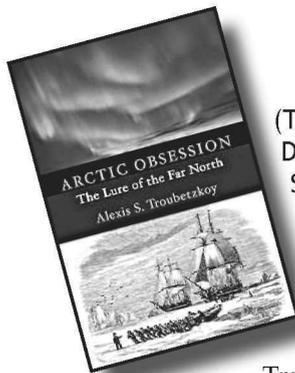
Books for review and book reviews should be sent to:
K. Jane Watt, Book Review Editor, *British Columbia History*
Box 1053, Fort Langley BC V1M 2S4

from Ron Denman and Paul Ferguson of the Chilliwack Museum. It is available for \$25.00 at the City of Chilliwack Fire Hall # 1 located at 45950 Cheam Avenue. The Chilliwack Museum is doing great things – check out its beautiful, informative website where bits and pieces from the Museum's collection are honoured along with stories from the city's past.

Small community histories like this one are threads in the rich fabric of history of British Columbia. They are often produced on shoestring budgets, or on no budget at all save the labour of volunteers. They are critically important to our understanding of this place – so don't be bashful. If your society has created a history book – either in paper form or as an ebook – please let us know so we can shout of your accomplishments to members across the province.

Until next time.

Arctic Obsession: The Lure of the Far North. By Alexis S. Troubetzkoy.



(Toronto: Dundurn, 2011) \$35.00.

Author Alexis Troubetzkoy, a Canadian, born in Paris and descended from Russian aristocracy, has as much affinity for the Russian as the Canadian arctic. He seems to have archival material from both countries and therefore includes a lot of little-known, fascinating arctic history. The international "obsession" his book title is based on was the quest

for an arctic passage to the orient, a quest with deeply historical roots that Troubetzkoy examines through a chronological review of international expeditions.

He starts this historical review with Pytheas being declared mad after returning to Greece and recounting that he had sailed to a place where the sun did not set. He continues with the Viking inhabitation of Iceland, Greenland and Canada between 870 and 1100.

In 1553 Sebastian Cabot (son of John) was iced in at Archangel in arctic Russia. From here Cabot was taken to Tzar Ivan the Terrible, who lauded him for demonstrating for landlocked Russia the sea access from Archangel. The Tzar sent the first Russian ambassador to England back with Cabot.

On his third arctic voyage, Dutchman Willem Barents in 1590 overwintered trapped in the ice at 71° N.

Henry Hudson, between 1607 and 1611, failed on three arctic voyages for England but got funding for a fourth from Holland. During this voyage, according to Troubetzkoy's narrative, he discovered Manna Hata (Manhattan) and the "Hudson" River and claimed them for the Dutch. He overwintered at Hudson's Bay, after which his crew mutinied and put him and four sick men in a small boat. He was never seen again.

A Danish man, Vitus Bering, was sent in 1740 by Peter the Great with twenty five sleighs and one thousand people on a seven year trip across Russia to the Kamkatchka peninsula. From here he explored the west coast of North America and the sea which came to bear his name.

Four Pomori, a people described as the Vikings of northern Russia, were stranded for four years on Spitzbergen Island, part of the Svalbard archipelago in the Arctic Ocean off Norway.

Through their incredible ingenuity, all four survived. Incidentally, the heritage Spitzbergen seed vault tunneled four hundred feet into the rock today contains thirteen million distinct global seed samples.

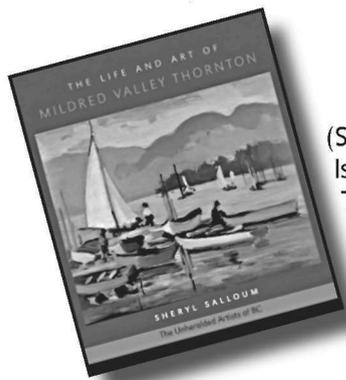
Amongst the other remarkable stories Troubetzkoy relates are those of

- De Long, a man stuck in the ice at 77° N, eight hundred miles from the north pole for two years who walked out after his ordeal;
- The Norwegian, Nordenskjold, who was the first man to traverse the North East passage from Norway to Japan;
- The incredible Fridtjof Nansen, thirteen times national Norwegian ski champion and professor of zoology, who skied across Greenland in temperatures as low as minus 50 degrees. He skied to 88° 14' N (nearly at the north pole), got stuck in the ice for three years on his way out and wrote a six volume book on the arctic. He became Norwegian ambassador to England and finally won the Nobel Peace Prize;
- Raould Amundsen, first explorer to the south pole, then the first explorer through the northwest passage; and
- The forty three expeditions mounted to look for the explorer Franklin's remains.

Today, of the ten million arctic inhabitants sixty-six percent are Russian, and four hundred thousand are indigenous people. This is a fascinating book that is well worth reading.

Reviewer Tony Anthony Kenyon is a retired Fort Nelson surgeon. He is currently working on a history of the Liard Basin.

The Life and Art of Mildred Valley Thornton. By Sheryl Salloum.



(Salt Spring Island: Mother Tongue Publishing, 2011) \$35.95.

The Life and Art of Mildred Valley Thornton, is the fourth biography in the series "Unheralded Artists of British Columbia." Author Sheryl Salloum lovingly portrays the unique life story of painter Mildred Valley Thornton (1890 to 1967) from her early years in rural Ontario to her unconventional married life in Vancouver. Accompanying the text are many of Thornton's masterful oil and watercolour paintings as well as family photographs.

Thornton's legacy includes more than 300 portraits, most of First Nations people. She befriended and learned from her subjects and came to advocate on their behalf. Asked why she chose to paint First Nations people over other groups, Thornton simply said she considered them more interesting.

Several male aboriginal leaders sat for Thornton, but she also painted aboriginal women and vivid scenes of reserve life. Thornton painted quickly, as the author explains, skilfully capturing the spirit of her subjects. She felt an urgency to document what she feared was a disappearing way of life. This conviction also compelled Thornton to share her paintings and knowledge of First Nations culture and traditions through writing and speaking engagements.

Thornton also painted Canadian landscapes. A few of these paintings are compared favourably to Group of Seven artist Tom Thomson. Indeed, Thornton was described by a critic as being as "Canadian as hard wheat."

She lived in a time of domestic conformity for women, yet histories (such as this book) continue to emerge to indicate exceptions. Thornton was supported by her husband, John, who shared in the raising of their twin sons Maitland and Jack, born in 1926. His support at home freed her to spend time to paint and to travel. She was also involved with the Vancouver literary community after her family moved here from Saskatchewan in 1934 and was an art critic for the *Vancouver Sun* from 1944 to 1959.

Another unconventional woman of the times was Maisie Hurley, whom Thornton befriended. Hurley began publishing *The Native Voice* newspaper in 1946 and Thornton was an occasional contributor.

Emily Carr was also a contemporary of Thornton's with a similar interest in aboriginal culture. A quality which separates these artists, Salloum notes, is Thornton's sociability and interest in other people. Perhaps because of this trait, Thornton, unlike Carr, portrayed people in her art to the end of her life. The male-dominated art world meant, according to Salloum, that Carr and Thornton, "the two most talented and independent female BC painters of the day never collaborated or celebrated their achievements; instead, they were forced to compete with one another."

A wealth of source materials, detailed in extensive endnotes, allowed the author to successfully trace much of Thornton's life, from her art school days in the mid-west of the United States to her final days as a widow in Vancouver's Kerrisdale neighbourhood. Interviews with family members including a son, Jack

Thornton, now living in Victoria, and two grandchildren Janet and John Thornton, enrich this story as well.

Salloum explores the reasons acclaim eluded Thornton, garnering viewpoints from members of the art community, past and present. Among her findings, Salloum notes Canadians tend to undervalue portraiture in favour of landscapes. The author also addresses the racial politics of Thornton's (and others) art in a sensitive and informed manner as she considers its impact on Thornton's legacy.

While in declining health in her final days, Thornton struggled to find an appropriate public space in Canada for her paintings. She didn't want her collection broken up or sold to private collectors. The outcome of her efforts is yet another compelling story revealed in the concluding pages of Salloum's biography. Ultimately, she suggests, the value given to Thornton's work reflects who we are as Canadians as much as it reflects the reputation of this accomplished artist.

Reviewer Janet Nicol is a freelance writer who teaches history at a Vancouver high school. She blogs at janetnicol.wordpress.com.

Note: the painting that graces the cover of *The Life and Art of Mildred Valley Thornton* is an undated oil on panel painting called *Boats, Kitsilano Beach*.

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Compiled by Melva J. Dwyer

* an article without illustrations

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Announcements, research notes, and advocacy

Vancouver Institute Lectures Given Second Life on the Internet

The UBC Archives is pleased to announce the creation of the Vancouver Institute Digital Lecture Collection. Dating back almost to the creation of the University itself, the Vancouver Institute has for ninety-five years sponsored regular lectures of general public interest to foster a liaison between "town and gown". These free lectures have featured prominent local, national and international speakers whose talks covered a significant breadth of popular topics including science and technology, medicine, environmentalism, literary and fine arts, history and politics. In fact, the efforts of the Vancouver Institute organizers represent one of the earliest examples of "community engagement," an element that features prominently in the University's current strategic plan.

Since 1975 the Vancouver Institute has recorded virtually all the lectures delivered under its auspices and these audio and video recordings have been transferred to the Archives for preservation and access. However, use of the recordings has been predicated first on knowing of their existence and then being able to travel to the Archives to access them.

Carried out in conjunction with the Vancouver Institute, this project has resulted in the digitization of over 500 of our approximately 740 VI recordings, and these are now accessible as streaming audio or video files in UBC's institutional repository, cIRcle at: <https://circle.ubc.ca/handle/2429/12708>.

*Christopher Hives
University Archivist
University of British
Columbia*

Anarchist Archive

From the *Globe & Mail*,
September 14, 2011

ANARCHIST ARCHIVE (by Tom Hawthorn): The University of Victoria library has received seven boxes of papers from Ann Hansen, who was sentenced to a life term for conspiring to rob an armoured car and for a series of bombings in Ontario and British Columbia in the early 1980s. The material, which includes pamphlets and prison correspondence, will be included in the Anarchist Archive, founded by art historian Allan Antliff, who holds the Canada Research Chair in Modern Art.

Mr. Antliff approached Ms. Hansen for the donation, for which she will receive no payment. Much of the material will be posted online alongside other anti-authoritarian materials in what is the only archive of its kind in Canada.

The most interesting contribution is a transcript of conversations recorded from a police bug placed in her bedroom before her arrest. Alas, a 70-year privacy restriction has recently been placed on the transcript, which will not be accessible to the public until 2081.

Ms. Hansen, 58, spent seven years in jail. She got permission from her parole officer to travel to the campus last week from her home on a farm west of Kingston, Ont., where she remains active in the prison abolition movement.

Call for volunteers: Historic Joy Kogawa House

We are looking for individuals interested in helping with all aspects of activities at Historic Joy Kogawa House—event hosting, home and garden maintenance, and project planning.

Historic Joy Kogawa House is the childhood home of the Japanese-Canadian author Joy Kogawa. The Historic Joy Kogawa House Society is a community-based group of arts supporters who operate a writer-in-residence program purely on a volunteer basis.

The author residency program is set in the former home of Canadian author Joy Kogawa (born 1935), and the 1912 house stands as a cultural and historical reminder of the war-time experience of Canadians of Japanese heritage, who were interned in remote camps and their property expropriated during World War II. Our writer-in-residence program celebrates the work of Joy Kogawa, which brought this experience to general awareness among Canadians in her novel, *Obasan* (1981), and in other novels, poems, and essays.

The writer-in-residence program has been under way since 2009 and during that time has enriched the literary community and fostered an appreciation for Canadian writing by bringing well-regarded professional writers in touch with a local community of writers, readers, and students.

Anyone interested in joining our group of volunteers is welcome to be in touch with me at the contacts shown below.

*Ann-Marie Metten
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www.conservancy.bc.ca*

Cabinets of Curiosities

Chilliwack to ANZAC and back

Andrea Lister, editor and author, tells the tale of a 1911 Chilliwack Hospital Auxiliary member's card that found its way home after 100 years.

At the end of September 2011 an intriguing email came through the Chilliwack Hospital Auxiliary website: "I am a Canadian born historian married to a woman from "down under"... been down here for 40 years. I provenance historical items and documents for a living and always keep an eye out for them little bits of historical "flotsam and jetsam" that doesn't mean much to most folks but a lot to others. In my travels I have picked up a vintage 1914 Chilliwack Hospital Auxiliary member's card in real nice condition. The member's name space is blank BUT the card WAS signed by the President — Carrie Eckert and the Secretary — Elva Grossman. I thought it might look pretty in your little cabinet of Auxiliary historical goodies. Free, gratis ... no strings attached — all I need is an address to post it to from far flung Australia. How did it come to BE here? probably through an ANZAC [Australian and New Zealand Army Corps] soldier being treated by a Canadian nurse — many wounded Australians were treated at Canadian Field stations- it may have just been given to him as a form of remembrance of the event ... the main thing is that this goes back "home". Regards Vince MacDonald"

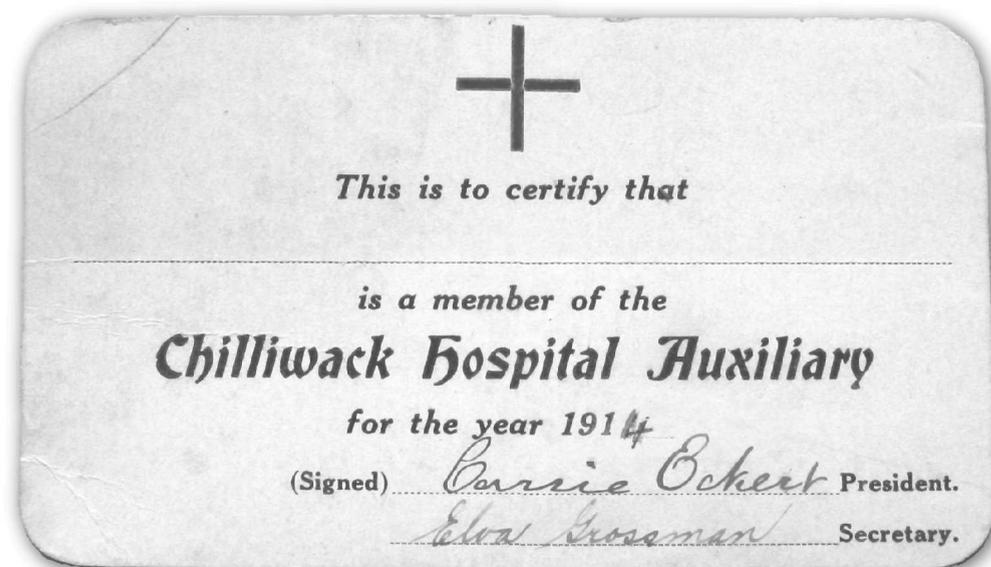
I shivered in excitement; having spent the last several years researching the Auxiliary's history for the book, *Commitment to Caring: Chilliwack Hospital Auxiliary's 100 Years, 1911-2011*, I knew that neither the Auxiliary collection nor the Chilliwack Archives had a member's card in their collection.

The Chilliwack Hospital Auxiliary was founded May 1, 1911 when the Chilliwack Hospital Board called a meeting of the women of the Fraser Valley. They asked the women to form a Hospital Auxiliary to assist the Board of directors in maintaining the Hospital. Mrs. Caroline Eckert was its first president and Miss Elva Grossman was first secretary.

Elva Grossman was a founding member of the Auxiliary, secretary from 1911–1913, president from 1922–1925, secretary from 1926–1931, and then president again from 1932–1933. Elva is also my great-grand aunt so this object holds both personal and historic value.

Vince MacDonald bought the card through an online auction system available only to Australians and New Zealanders. How did a Chilliwack Hospital Auxiliary member's card end up on a New Zealand online auction site? The women of the Auxiliary were involved in other organizations such as the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) that sent care packages to Canadian soldiers. Undoubtedly many members had family members and friends who served during the First World War. Was it a nurse at a Canadian Field Hospital Clearing Station who gave it to a soldier?

As the member's name is blank the mystery remains as to how the card ended up in New Zealand but thanks to Vince MacDonald the card will join the other objects in the Chilliwack Museum and Archives collection.●



The card is cream in colour with a red cross and black text. The 1911 has been altered with a blue pen to read 1914.

Do you have an object of curiosity in your cabinet?

- Send me 300 to 400 words with a high-resolution image of the object, telling me the story of the object. Email your story to: bcheditor@bchistory.ca, or mail it to: Editor, British Columbia History, PO Box 21187, Maple Ridge BC, V2X 1P7

Awards and Scholarship Information

for complete details go to <http://bchistory.ca/awards/index.html>

W. KAYE LAMB Essay Scholarships

Deadline: May 15

The British Columbia Historical Federation awards two scholarships annually for essays written by students at BC colleges or universities, on a topic relating to British Columbia history. One scholarship (\$750) is for an essay written by a student in a first or second year course; the other (\$1000) is for an essay written by a student in a third or fourth year course.

To apply for the scholarship all candidates must submit (1) a letter of application and (2) a letter of recommendation from the professor for whom the essay was written. First and second year course essays should be 1,500-3,000 words; third and fourth year, 1,500 to 5,000 words. By entering the scholarship competition the student gives the editor of *British Columbia History* the right to edit and publish the essay if it is deemed appropriate for the magazine.

Applications with 3 printed copies of the essay should be submitted to: Marie Elliott, Chair BC Historical Federation Scholarship Committee, PO Box 5254, Station B, Victoria, BC V8R 6N4

Anne & Philip Yandle Best Article Award

Deadline: To be eligible, the article must have appeared in the BCHF Journal British Columbia History for that year.

A Certificate of merit and \$250 will be awarded annually to the author of the article, published in *British Columbia History*, that best enhances knowledge of BC's history and provides reading enjoyment. Judging will be based on subject development, writing skill, freshness of material, and appeal to a general readership interested in all aspects of BC history.

BC History Web Site Prize

Deadline: December 31

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

Nominations for the BC History Web Site Prize must be made to the British Columbia Historical Federation, Web Site Prize Committee, prior to the 31st of December each year. Web site creators and authors may nominate their own sites. Prize rules and the online nomination form can be found on the British Columbia Historical Federation Web site: <http://bchistory.ca/awards/website/index.html>

Best Newsletter Award

Deadline: March 1

Newsletters published by member societies are eligible to compete for an annual prize of \$250. They will be judged for presentation and content that is interesting, newsy and informative.

- Only member societies of the BCHF are eligible
- Only one issue of a society's newsletter will be evaluated
- Submit three printed copies of this best issue from the previous calendar year
- BCHF reserves the right not to award a prize in a given year should applications not be of sufficient quality

Submit three printed copies of a single newsletter issue to: TBA, BCHF Recognition Committee, PO Box 5254, Station B, Victoria, BC, Canada, V8R 6N4

Certificate of Merit

Deadline: March 1

Group or individual who has made a significant contribution to the study, project, or promotion of British Columbia's history.

Certificate of Recognition

Deadline: March 1

Given to individual members or groups of members of BCHF Member Societies who have given exceptional service to their Organization or Community.

Certificate of Appreciation

Deadline: March 1

Individuals who have undertaken ongoing positions, tasks, or projects for BCHF.

Nominations

Any member of BCHF may nominate candidates for Certificates of Appreciation, Certificates of Merit or Certificates of Recognition. Nominations, supported by a letter explaining why the nominee is deserving of a certificate, should be submitted to the Chair of the Recognition Committee by 1 March of each year.

The Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing

Deadline: December 31

Each year, the British Columbia Historical Federation invites submissions for its Annual Historical Writing Competition to authors of BC history; and the winning author is awarded the Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing.

Eligibility

- To be eligible, a book must be about BC history and be published within the competition year
- Non-fiction books representing any aspect of BC history are eligible.
- Reprints or revisions of books are not

eligible

- Books may be submitted by authors or publishers
- Deadline for submission is December 31 of the year in which the book was published

Submission Requirements

- For information about making submissions contact Lieutenant-Governor's Award for Writing
- Authors/Publishers are required to submit three copies of their book
- Books are to be accompanied by a letter containing the following:
 1. Title of the book submitted
 2. Author's name and contact information
 3. Publisher's name and contact information
 4. Selling price
- Books entered become property of BCHF
- By submitting books for this competition, the authors agree that the BCHF may use their name(s) in press releases and in its publications

William R. Morrison Email: writing@bchistory.ca Phone: 250-245-9247

Judging Criteria

Judges are looking for quality presentations and fresh material. Submissions will be evaluated in the following areas:

- Scholarship: quality of research and documentation, comprehensiveness, objectivity and accuracy
- Presentation: organization, clarity, illustrations and graphics
- Accessibility: readability and audience appeal

Publicity

All winners will receive publicity and an invitation to the Award's Banquet at the Federation's annual conference in May following the year of publication.

Lieutenant-Governor's Medal and Other Awards

The BC Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing will be awarded together with \$600 to the author whose book makes the most significant contribution to the history of British Columbia. The 2nd and 3rd place winners will receive \$400 and \$200 respectively. Certificates of Honourable Mention may be awarded to other books as recommended by the judges.

Johnson Inc. Scholarship

Deadline: September 15

Canadian residents completing high school and who are beginning post-secondary education. 100 scholarships of \$1500 each for Canada.

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St. Eugene Hospital, Cranbrook. Freney's chaplaincy and residence, 1939-1963

Postcard courtesy of Diocese of Nelson Archives