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**THE MONETA AFFAIR**

by W. Young

**Part Two of Two**

In the last issue we were left with Captain Turpin's decision to flee Burrard Inlet in the patched-up sailing ship *Moneta* while Captain Stamp's steam tug *Isabel* was away in Victoria "fetching the sheriff." On the night of June 28, 1868 the *Moneta* slipped through the First Narrows and out of Burrard Inlet. Hearing of the escape, the faster *Isabel* began its search, hoping to overtake the *Moneta* before she reached the safety of American waters.

On July 29, 1868 the *Victoria Colonist* reported:

"A difficulty has arisen with the vessel (*Moneta*) in respect of salvage claimed. The *Isabel*, with the sheriff on board, was prepared last night to interrupt her in the Straits while on the voyage to San Francisco."

At four o'clock on the afternoon of June 30th, the *Moneta* was sighted in the Gulf of Georgia near Porlier Pass. Quickly overtaking the fleeing vessel, the faster *Isabel* pulled alongside. Shouting that he had a warrant to arrest the ship, Sheriff Elliott received an unexpected response. Replying that neither the *Isabel's* captain nor the sheriff had any such authority, the *Moneta's* Captain Turpin waved his sword and shouted to his crew: "Come on boys - defend the ship. Allow no man to come on board. Knock any man down who attempts to come on board."

The *Moneta's* cook now passed around packets of black pepper -- pepper that was to be tossed in the eyes of any boarding party. Some crew members dashed to the galley and heated iron bars to a glowing red, while the remainder armed themselves with handspikes, harpoons, swords and clubs.

As the *Isabel* swung alongside to close quarters, the first attempts to board were thrown back. In this encounter, both Sheriff Elliott and his assistant (Mr. MacMillan) were injured by the red-hot irons wielded by the *Moneta's* crew.

A second boarding attempt was then made. This time Sheriff Elliott was wounded by a red-hot kitchen fork that was thrust through his left hand. If this wasn't enough, he ran headlong into the most awesome defender of the lot -- Mrs. Turpin's maid, Susannah. Swinging a pair of blacksmith's tongs around her head, she brought down Sheriff Elliott with a well-aimed blow to the shins.

Threatened with being repulsed for the second time, the boarding party pulled revolvers and soon overcame the defenders of the *Moneta*. In the end, however, mid-nineteenth century chivalry prevailed. As was reported in the July 3, 1868 issue of the *Victoria Colonist*:

"We have since learned that Mrs. Turpin behaved most hospitable on board when the conflict was over, inviting all into the cabin to partake of her good cheer."

Following the battle, the *Moneta's* sails were furled and she was towed to Esquimalt by the *Isabel*. On arrival, Captain Turpin, his crew and the pilot were arrested.

The "Moneta Affair" was now before the courts. Both the New Westminster *Columbian* and the *Victoria Colonist* deplored the whole incident. In the latter newspaper a major editorial appeared on July 1st which said, in part:

"It is scarcely possible to tell yet how many suits will arise out of the matter before finally disposed of. In common with the true friends of the country we sincerely wish it had never occurred, or that it would have been prevented, for the commercial interests and character of the people will undoubtedly suffer, however the results. The outside world on reading the particulars must be unfavourably influenced against both. It will be thought strange that British people, who have been at the head of the world in colonization, should have deteriorated so far as to allow their Courts of Law especially to get into such a disgraceful condition."

In addition to this editorial, a series of charges and counter-charges appeared in letters to the editor of the *Victoria Colonist*. On July 14th the *Colonist* reported:

“The case against this vessel (*Moneta*) for salvage at the suit of Captain Stamp was before the court yesterday. The case occupied nearly the whole day but was not finished.”

Finally, the July 23, 1868 edition of the *Victoria Colonist* reported the decision of the court:

“A liberal amount of salvage was \$1,000.00. \$750.00 would go to the owner of the steamer (*Isabel*); half of the remaining amount to Captains Pamphlet and Deveraux (of the *Isabel*) - \$75.00 and \$50.00 respectively. - and the remainder to be divided amongst the crew in proportion to rates of wages.”

To Captain Stamp’s disappointment, the award of \$750 was far less than his original \$10,000 demand. It was even less than the original \$3500 offered by the *Moneta*’s owner as compensation.

With this court decision and the sailing of the *Moneta* for San Francisco, a short and exciting chapter of British Columbia’s forest history drew to a close. A short, one sentence notation tucked away in the July 27, 1868 issue of the *Victoria Colonist* finally closed the book:

“The *Moneta* arrived in San Francisco on the 24th of July.”



### A BIT OF ADVICE

“Upon a retrospect of half a century (to say the least of it) I am quite sure that enthusiasm and principles are delightful things to have and they are useful to the human race. After thirty however one should beware of taking one’s own enthusiasms too seriously. They are like the beautiful appearance of the Loved One not so really but only just seem so. Nature gilds them with pretty colours. Remember always the Great Philosopher who being asked what his religion was replied ‘That of all wise men.’ ‘And what is that?’ ‘Wise men never tell.’”

Extract from a letter written on December 28, 1935 by Martin Allerdale Grainger to Chief Forester Ernest C. Manning, appointed the previous day. Grainger was the second Chief Forester, Manning the fourth. From the folder on Grainger in the Special Collections Division, UBC Library.

## GRAINGER BOOK PRESENTED IN CEREMONY AT BCFS

An original edition of *Woodsmen of the West* by Martin Allerdale Grainger was presented to Chief Forester John Cuthbert during a ceremony which took place at the Ministry of Forests Executive offices on May 3. In making the presentation, FHABC member Ralph Schmidt told of Martin Grainger's life, how the book came to be, of Grainger's role in drafting the original Forest Act and helping to form the B.C. Forest Branch. Grainger's term in office as Chief Forester was from 1916 to 1920.

This first edition was originally given to the Honourable William R. Ross by Grainger as a Christmas present in 1909. Ross was Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works from 1910 to 1915 and Minister of Lands from 1915 to 1916. Later the book became the property of H.R. MacMillan, who passed it to C.D. Orchard. Ralph Schmidt obtained the book from the widow of F.S. McKinnon who suggested that a suitable home should be found for it. In conjunction with Les Underwood and Bill Aten from the Technical and Administrative Services Branch of the B.C. Forest Service, Ralph Schmidt, Bill Young and Bob DeBoo arranged to have a display case made, the costs to be shared with the FHABC.

The handsome display case, made by Rene de Jong, is of red alder and came complete with internal illumination, a glass front and locking side doors. Above the book, which is displayed on a stand, are copies of correspondence from MacMillan and Orchard along with some historical notes by Ralph Schmidt. Assistance with the display was provided by Paul Nystedt of the Forest Service's Research Branch.

Attending the ceremony were former BCFS Executive members Lorne Swannell, John Stokes, Ralph Robbins and Lois Dellert. The current Deputy Minister, Gerry Armstrong, and Deputy Chief Forester Bronwen Beedle were also present, along with about 25 others from the executive and other branches. A suitably decorated cake was eagerly shared and washed down with coffee.

*Woodsmen of the West* is available in paperback and well worth a read. It is partly based on Grainger's experiences on the B.C. coast just after the turn of the century. McClelland and Stewart published it in paperback form in 1964 as number 42 in their New Canadian Library. It has gone through several reprints since. The American paperback edition, published by Fjord Press of Seattle in 1988 as their Western Writers Series No. 2, is probably a better purchase since it contains reproductions of the original photographs. That edition is also available in Canada. No doubt Voltaire would have said of Grainger, had he known him:

If Grainger did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him."



## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Frith, Ellen and Peter Trower. 1993. Rough and ready times: the history of Port Mellon. Glassford Press, Gibsons, B.C. 136 p. Illus. \$29.95.

Grainger, M. Allerdale. 1994. Riding the skyline. Edited by Peter Murray. Horsdal & Schubart, Victoria, B.C. ISBN 0-920663-26-5. 128 p. Cloth. \$22.95.

Kootenay Museum Association and Historical Society. 1994. A life in the woods - oral histories from the West Kootenay forest. Volume 1. xi + 69 p. Kootenay Museum Association and Historical Society, 402 Anderson Street, Nelson, B.C. V1L 3Y3.

Kootenay Museum Association and Historical Society. 1994. A life in the woods - oral histories from the West Kootenay forest. Volume 2. xi + 94 p. Kootenay Museum Association and Historical Society, 402 Anderson Street, Nelson, B.C. V1L 3Y3.

Malaspina University College. 1994. Loggers, wives and sawmill workers - memories from the Cowichan valley. Cowichan Campus, Malaspina University College, Duncan, B.C. vii + 63 p.

M'Gonigle, Michael and Ben Parfitt. 1994. Forestopia and how to get it. Harbour Publishing, Madeira Park, B.C. ISBN 1-55017-096-1. \$19.95



## FHABC MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Dr. Peter Murphy, of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry at the University of Alberta, was recently elected President of the Forest History Society. The Forest History Society was formed in 1946 and has members worldwide. Based in Durham, North Carolina it is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing historical understanding of human interactions with forested environments. The Forest History Society publishes a journal (*Forest & Conservation History*) and a newsletter (*The Cruiser*). Dr. Murphy is also the current President of the Canadian Institute of Forestry.

Dr. J.A.F. Gardner was appointed a member of the Order of Canada in recognition of his outstanding achievements in science. Dr. Gardner, a fellow of the Chemical Institute of Canada and the International Academy of Science, concentrated his research efforts in the area of wood science and the utilization of various wood products. Dr. Gardner was invited to Rideau Hall in Ottawa to receive his award.

## ORAL HISTORY NEWS

### Kootenays

The Kootenay Museum Association and Historical Society has recently published two volumes of oral histories for the West Kootenays, as noted in the "Recent Publications" above. These oral histories are based on interviews with people who spent their lives working in and around the forests of the area.

The six people interviewed in Volume One are Russell Fletcher (lumberjack), George Lambert (sawmill owner), Oscar Schmidt (faller and buckler), Frank Hill (forest ranger), Bob Cunningham (logging truck driver) and Buster Ross (forest ranger). The interviews were conducted between 1985 and 1993. The editor of this volume was FHABC member Peter Chapman. Assistance with publication costs was provided by a Green Gold grant, Crestbrook Forest Industries and the Kootenay Lake Forest District office of the B.C. Forest Service.

Volume two consists of interviews with Leo Williams (Kutenai tribe), Mary Horton and Jeannette Carpenter (of a mill family), Jack Spiers (woodcutter and team handler), William Waldie (sawmill operator), Ollie Christie (forest ranger), Joe Wrangler (faller and logging truck driver), Bob Robinson (forest ranger), Don McCusker (foreman and superintendent with Bell Pole Co.) and Harry Forse (former Nelson Forest District Forester). This volume was edited by Joel Russ of Nelson. Financial assistance was received from the Vancouver Foundation, the Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation, Atco Lumber Company, B.J. Carney Company Ltd., Pope and Talbot Ltd., Slocan Forest Products Ltd. and Local 405 of the International Woodworkers of America.

Volume three is being assembled and will be published before Christmas if adequate funding can be obtained by that date. Volumes one and two were placed at no charge in libraries and museums in B.C. Individuals may purchase copies by sending a \$10 tax-deductible donation for each volume to the Kootenay Museum Association and Historical Society, 402 Anderson Street, Nelson, B.C. V1L 3Y3.

### Cowichan valley

The book "Loggers, wives and sawmill workers - memories from the Cowichan valley" was produced by 21 Adult Basic Education students taking the Fundamental English class at Malaspina University College's Cowichan Campus in Duncan. The project began in September of 1993 and was supported by a "Reading the Museum" grant from the Canadian Museum Association.

Interviews with Ruth Dickson, Gordon Dods, Roy Hopwo, Darshan Johel, Weldon Jubenville, Karm Manak, Jacques Marc, Lynda Marc, Fred Roland and John Skertchly are included. The book had its official launching at the B.C. Forest Museum in Duncan on April 14, 1994.

## THE “CHAIN SAW” OR “UNDERCUTTER” AXE

by Allan Klenman

The guess has always pointed to Vancouver Island as being the centre of the invention and introduction of the chain saw axe. Recently we have collected the supporting evidence to show that a faller named George Burns was the inventor, while he was testing the use of chain saws for Bloedel, Stewart & Welch at their Franklin River Division on the west coast of Vancouver Island around 1936. Quoted here is an excerpt from an address given to the B.C. Truck Loggers Association in February of 1949 by the late J.A. Addison, a forest company executive for many years:

“...of others, there was George Burns who first came up with the idea of the power saw axe, the single-bitted, with the flat, chisel-edge pick on the off-side, and which is now known as the ‘undercutter axe.’ At the beginning of the power saw use it was the custom to saw the bottom of the undercut in and then chop the rest out by hand, by angle, which was not too successful, a way was found of sawing two, three, or four horizontal cuts, depending on the size of the tree and then wedging the blocks out. To do this job of getting the blocks out, George Burns had the idea of what is the present ‘power saw axe’ or ‘chain saw axe’ or ‘undercutter.’ The two or three in existence were made at Bloedel’s Franklin River operation by the camp blacksmith, who used standard double-bitted falling axes. The pattern was turned over to the Walters Axe Company of Hull, Quebec, who fashioned the first power saw axes ever made anywhere. Fortunately, they never thought to patent the new axe.”

I have also confirmed these facts with Mr. Jack Bell of Qualicum, retired from the position of general manager of the Franklin River Division, whose term there covered the period referred to. Faller Olaf Fedje of Nanaimo also corroborated these facts. One further reference exists in “Working in the woods” by Ken Drushka (Harbour Publishing, 1992 - p. 227) which is one of the finest forest history books ever written. I am also indebted to Dave Challenger of Vancouver, who is perhaps Canada’s top authority on the history of chain saws. His collection of these early pioneer forerunners of today’s mighty and efficient power saws is known world-wide, as are his library and reference files. Dave, his father J.W. and his uncle Don have spent their lives in the logging industry of B.C.

While testing these early chain saws at the Franklin River Division, Burns had the camp blacksmith make, out of standard double-bitted axes, a few with the chisel edge to chop out the horizontal undercuts, which was all the early machines could manage. The company, recognizing an excellent idea, asked the Walters Axe Company of Hull, Quebec to make up a batch. Word got around quickly and soon, by 1940 certainly, all major axe manufacturers were offering these new axes and they became standard tools all up and down the west coast.

The writer has in his collection undercutters manufactured by Sager, Warren, True Temper, Collins, Kelly Flint Edge, Burgess of Aylmer (Quebec), Mann-True American and Welland Vale. Sadly, it has not been possible to contact or find out what happened to George Burns, the inventor. But we are indebted to him for probably giving us the newest form of axe in a long line which stretches over the entire history of mankind’s use of tools.

## FHABC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD

By all accounts, the 1994 annual general meeting was one of the best. Through the gracious hospitality of the North Fraser Harbour Commission a cruise up the Fraser River on the *M.V. Abitibi* followed the business meeting. A lunch and open bar permitted members to mingle with the other guests on the boat and swap stories about the history of the river and the forestry and lumbering activities which took place there.

The following consists of the current executive of the association:

Continuing their appointments until August 31, 1995

|                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Terry Honer (Victoria)    | Clay Perry (Vancouver)   |
| Edo Nyland (Victoria)     | Jack Robinson (Kamloops) |
| John Parminter (Victoria) | Harry Smith (Vancouver)  |

Edo Nyland will continue as Treasurer and John Parminter as Newsletter Editor.

Reappointments to August 31, 1996 were made for

|                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Bill Backman (Vancouver)   | Bob DeBoo (Victoria) |
| George Brandak (Vancouver) |                      |

Bob DeBoo will continue as President, with Bill Backman as Past President.

New appointments for a two-year term ending August 31, 1996 were made for

|                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Don Doidge (Williams Lake)    | John Murray (Cranbrook)  |
| Keith McClain (Prince George) | Ralph Schmidt (Victoria) |

This newsletter is the official organ of the Forest History Association of British Columbia. It is distributed at no charge to members of the association, libraries, archives and museums. Items on forest history topics, descriptions of current projects, requests for information, book reviews, letters, comments and suggestions are welcomed. Please submit newsletter material and send changes of address to the Editor: Mr. John Parminter, # 1 - 949 Pemberton Road, Victoria, B.C. V8S 3R5. Phone 595-0374.

Membership in the association is \$7.00 yearly, or \$30 for five years. Please send dues to the Treasurer: Mr. Edo Nyland, 8793 Forest Park Drive, Sidney, B.C. V8L 4E8. Phone 656-9276. The President, Dr. Bob DeBoo, can be reached c/o Silviculture Branch, Ministry of Forests, 990 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8W 3E7. Phone 356-6044.

