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**IN MEMORIAM – INVENTORY'S *ANNUS HORRIDUS*, 1955
by Gerhard Eichel**

Permit me to share some history of events I seem unable to forget. The massive province-wide forest inventory had been progressing and gaining momentum for several years without significant accidents or mishaps until disaster struck in 1955.

The year started badly right from the first day of field season when all crews left the Green Timbers compound in their Austin A-40s for points in the Interior. Barely out of the gate Hermann Volk's car lost a wheel, careened across the highway, tumbled into a soggy pasture and ejected Hermann, his wife, and all their goods out the back. Fortunately the car did not catch fire.

After some time in the hospital Hermann was able to resume his field season to completion. His advice was: "Don't slam on the brakes when you see a wheel passing you."



Recycled paper

For my assigned tour of duty that summer I worked out of a base camp on the Willow River, southeast of Prince George, under Party Chief Doug Morton. When I emerged from a long fly camp to the head of George Creek (a mini-disaster for the other three crews downstream who all got swamped in a flash flood), the first news I was told, was of the disappearance of a plane with two Inventory men on board. The float plane had left Bella Coola to take Chris (Langkilde-) Lauesen and Henry Jelinek to Kemano. Weeks of intensive search from the air and by sea discovered not a trace. The mood at camp was subdued as much of our work depended on transport by floatplane. I took advantage of a job I was offered in industry and quit.

Soon afterwards, the mysterious death by drowning of Galt Elkington occurred at the same location. Galt had first joined Inventory in 1952. It was obvious from the moment he walked off the *Cardena* at Stuart Island after graduating from an exclusive private high school that he had joined as a lark, not to earn some money for tuition. Jack Gibbs from Victoria, who was on my crew, told us that the Elkingtons were a prominent respected pioneer family, and that Galt's dad was a well-known eye surgeon with a considerable reputation. Jack thought that Galt had joined up because he couldn't stand the prospect of spending the whole summer with his two sisters with whom it was impossible to live. It was Galt who made the rest of us shiver in our sleeping bags every morning when we heard him plunge off the dock for a pre-breakfast splash in the ice-cold salt chuck.

Siegfried Tausendfreund, called Zeke, left on a two-week fly camp south of St. Maries Lake and arranged with Doug Morton for someone to pick him and his two men up so to save the arduous hike along the south shore of the lake through a dense alder and devil's club jungle. The road leading to base camp skirted the north shore. On the day Zeke planned to return it was Galt's day off and he happily volunteered to take a pick-up with an aluminum boat and outboard to get Zeke and his crew from across the narrow lake. It was getting dark when he heard a rifle shot signal, he unloaded the boat and headed across.

Zeke later who told me that he had been delayed and was worried that nobody would meet him. As soon as he reached the lake he fired his gun and started a bonfire as beacon to guide whoever was at the helm. He was relieved to hear the boat being launched and approaching. Suddenly the motor quit, they shouted and got a reply they interpreted as no problem, heard a splash, and nothing more. They resignedly pitched a tent and prepared a meagre meal with the little they had left after two weeks.

As the sun came up next morning they could see the boat in the middle of the lake and the truck on the far side. Of course, Zeke had no idea who it was that had come to pick him up. It took half a day to fight their way through the brush and trudge back to base camp to report. Doug drove up the road but had no other boat, so he continued into Prince George to report to the RCMP. To all who knew Galt it was simply incomprehensible and could not be explained why of all people he had to drown in a pee-warm, shallow lake right beside a boat. Thus ended a somewhat less auspicious year for Inventory.



AGM 2006 ANNOUNCEMENT

Our 2006 Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, September 16th at the Burnaby Village Museum, 6501 Deer Lake Avenue, Burnaby in the Deer Lake Park complex (near Canada Way and Kensington Avenue).

The program is as follows:

11:00 AM -- Noon	Business meeting
Noon -- 1:15 PM	Lunch, cost approximately \$10
1:15 -- 4:00 PM	Presentation on Frank Swannell, pioneer B.C. Land Surveyor by Jay Sherwood, author of "Surveying northern British Columbia: a photo journal of Frank Swannell." Caitlin Press Inc., Madeira Park, B.C. and then a tour of the museum.

Please confirm your attendance by contacting Stan Chester in West Vancouver, phone 604-921-9880. E-mail: stanchester@shaw.ca or John Parminter in Victoria, phone 250-384-5642 home or 250-356-6810 office. E-mail: jvparminster@telus.net

Car pooling will be arranged to the extent possible.



HISTORY OF WESTERN FOREST INDUSTRIES LIMITED, GORDON RIVER LOGGING DIVISION

In 1929 a company by the name of McDonald Murphy started logging just outside of Honeymoon Bay. They extended a railroad system to the upper reaches of the Gordon River where a camp was established. Timber was felled and loaded onto railcars whence it was pulled by steam engine to a log dump close to our present dump on Lake Cowichan at Honeymoon Bay.

These logs were towed to Lake Cowichan and then loaded on railroad cars at the old steam loading works on the site of the present Crown Zellerbach loadout. (This property is still owned by Western Forest Industries and is leased to Crown Zellerbach). The railroad destination was Crofton, where the old company operated a large booming and sorting ground on the foreshore which is now used by the BCFP pulp mill. From there the logs were towed to the Fraser River where they were sold on the open market.

In 1932 the camp was closed due to a poor log market and remained dormant until 1934 when the Lake Logging Company was formed by Rounds and Hunter. The name of "Rounds" was given to the now abandoned camp on the upper reaches of the Gordon River.

For about 8 years Lake Logging used the same facilities as McDonald Murphy to move their logs to Crofton, but now a change took place as to their final use. It could be partly because Lake Logging was one of the first, if not the very first company in the industry, to have a labour contract with its employees and the labour force in Australia being strongly organized had some bearing on it, but whatever the reason a very good market was found for some of their logs in Australia.

However, the Australians didn't want the bark, and consequently a large crew was put to work barking these logs in the water, mostly by hand, after which they were loaded on freighters and taken Down Under until Lake Logging built its own sawmill and went into the lumber business, becoming Lake Logging and Lumber Limited. The company symbol was the figure "4" over the letter "L" on a diamond-shaped background.

By 1942 Lake Logging had started to build truck roads to reach the timber inaccessible by railroad and employed some trucks to bring the harvested timber from the mountain tops to the railroad or re-load, where it was loaded onto skeleton cars for its journey to the lake. In the early forties Lake Logging expanded its timber holdings so as to have enough logs to supply the large sawmill it planned to build at Honeymoon Bay. Previously it had a small mill at Lake Cowichan near the loading works.

The largest tract of timber it acquired was in the Meade Creek watershed on the north side of Cowichan Lake. This was quite a good-sized operation for many years, finally finishing up in 1965. During the peak years up to 200 men were employed. There was a cookhouse and 6 large bunkhouses as well as a shop and other maintenance facilities located about 3 miles from the village. About half the crew lived in camp with the rest from Lake Cowichan and Duncan, travelling by company bus. Meade Creek was always a truck operation.

Another block of timber was purchased south of the village. This was a railroad operation known as the Ocean Timber Co. which was started by a Japanese concern. It was taken over by the Canadian government when Japan entered the war after Pearl Harbour. The name was changed to Hill Logging Co. (very appropriate) with the steam yarders and railroad remaining in operation until about 1947. The railroad was then taken up and the remaining timber taken out by contractors using trucks. Here again board and lodging facilities were provided for employees.

The first mill was built at Honeymoon Bay in 1942 and was completely destroyed in a disastrous fire in 1948. The new gang mill went into operation in 1949 and the present band mill in 1950.

In 1946 the Koerner brothers, who had mills and timber holdings in Czechoslovakia before World War II, and the Carpenter interests of Australia (who owned and operated a shipping line) acquired the Lake Logging operation and formed the new company, Western Forest Industries Limited. They continued to use the truck road feeder system to the railroad until 1958 when it was decided to convert to a complete road system. It is interesting to note that within 30 days, Capital Iron Works of Victoria had taken up approximately 20 miles of rail steel and at the time of the conversion the company employed 5 gear-driven steam locomotives, about 100 log cars and six speeders to transport the crew.

In 1947 an area of land situated at the fork of the Gordon River and Hauk Creek was cleared in preparation for a new camp to be called Gordon River. It was completed and occupied in 1948 and boasted to be the most modern camp in the country. The cookhouse was the first to be completely outfitted with steam tables and could serve 350 people at a sitting. There were 18 bunkhouses, each rooming 16 men, 11 duplexes for families, 16 individual quarters for the cookhouse staff and individual quarters for the camp staff over the Office and Commissary. Most of the buildings have now been moved out or sold. The Commissary is now the present offices at our Honeymoon Bay Lumber Mill.

The cookhouse closed down in 1957 and Gordon River became what is known as a drive-in camp. The company supplies a bus service to Honeymoon Bay, Lake Cowichan, and Duncan for its employees travelling to and from work.

The company, now part of the Rayonier Canada (B.C.) Ltd. and ITT complex, produces approximately 65 million board feet of timber a year and utilizes 14 log trucks including 6 contractors to carry the harvest to the water. Once in the water the logs are sorted by species and grade and then converted into lumber at the Honeymoon Bay Mill.

(Continuing with the story of Rayonier Canada (B.C.) Ltd., this history is from a company document, likely a handout to visitors and dating from the late 1960s or early 1970s.



THE PEMBERTON – SHEPPARD – SAYWARD INDENTURE

This Indenture made the first day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty one between Joseph Despard Pemberton Surveyor General of Vancouver Island and its dependencies of the one part and Horace S. Sheppard of Victoria Vancouver Island of the other part testifies that in consideration of the rents, covenants, and agreements hereinafter reserved and contained and on the part of the said Horace S. Sheppard to be paid observed and performed He the said Joseph Despard Pemberton acting on behalf of the Crown doth hereby devise and lease unto the said Horace S. Sheppard his executors administrators and assignees all that and those several sections of land situate and being in Mill Stream Bay District and known as Sections Three and Four Range Nine (9) Shawnigan District and containing in the whole 134 70/100 acres or thereabouts and also all ways water water-courses and trees and all the right easements and appurtenances to the same belonging or appertaining to have and to hold the same with their and every of their appurtenances unto the said Horace S. Sheppard his executors administrators and assignees for the term of Five (5) years from the date thereof yielding and paying therefore yearly and every year unto the said Joseph Despard Pemberton or others the Surveyor for the time being of Crown Lands within the Colony the Rent of Sum of Five pounds (£5) for the first year of the said term and the sum of Ten pounds (£10) for the second year of the said term and the sum of Twenty pounds (£20) for the third and for every subsequent year of the said term the sum of Twenty-five pounds (£25) without any deductions the first of such yearly sums to be paid on the Twenty-fifth day of December and the remainder to be paid half yearly on the Twenty-fourth day of July and Twenty-fifth day of December in every year and the said Horace S. Sheppard hereby for himself, his heirs executors administrators and assignees covenants and agrees with the said Joseph Despard Pemberton his executors and administrators and with and to the person who shall for the time being be the Surveyor General of Vancouver Island that he the said Horace S. Sheppard his executors administrators or assignees shall and will within Six months from the date herein erect a Sawmill upon the said hereby described premises and have the same in operation And further shall and will pay the several rents sum and sums of money upon the several days herein before appointed and also all taxes and other charges which may be imposed upon the said described premises or any part thereof Provided Always and it is hereby expressly agreed between the parties hereto that if the said Horace S. Sheppard his executors administrators or assignees shall make default in payment of the rent herein before reserved on any of the days herein before appointed for payment thereof or shall not have the said Saw Mill in operation by the time aforesaid it shall be lawful for the said Joseph Despard Pemberton or other the person who shall for the time being be the Surveyor General of Vancouver Island into and upon the said premises and every part thereof to re-enter and engage as in their first and former Estate Provided always and it is hereby mutually agreed and declared between and by the parties hereto that in case the said Horace S. Sheppard shall at the end of the time hereby granted be desirous of continuing the present case the said Joseph Despard Pemberton shall renew the same for a further period of Five (5) years upon such terms as the said Joseph Despard Pemberton shall deem expedient In witness whereof the said Joseph Despard Pemberton has here unto set his hand and seal the day and year above written

Signed sealed &
delivered by Joseph
D. Pemberton in
the Treasury

Joseph Despard Pemberton
Surveyor General V Id.

61 Government St.

Know all men by these Presents that I Horace S. Sheppard in consideration of the sum of five shillings (5 /-) to have in hand paid by the said William P. Sayward have assigned and transferred and by these presents do assign and transfer unto the said William P. Sayward his executors administrators and assignees one equal undivided moiety or half part or share of and in the above written Indenture or Lease and the _____ therein contained together with all erections and buildings thereon erected and built To hold the same unto the said William P. Sayward his executors administrators and assignees subject to the several provisions and conditions therein contained and by the Lessee his executors administrators and assignees to be paid observed and performed in witness whereof the said Horace S. Sheppard has hereunto set his hand and seal this 13th day of September One thousand eight hundred and sixty one.

Signed sealed &
delivered by
H.S. Sheppard
the Treasury

Horace S. Sheppard

Know all men by these presents that I Horace S. Sheppard in consideration of the sum of three hundred dollars to use paid by the within named William P. Sayward his executors administrators and assignees the one equal half part or share of and in the within written Indenture of lease and the premises and will therein contained and also all the right title interest claim and demand whatsoever both at law and in equity of the said Horace S. Sheppard therein or thereto to have and to hold the said moiety or undivided interest in the said lease unto the said William P. Sayward his executors administrators and assignees subject to the several conditions therein contained dated this seventeenth day of February, AD 1862.

Signed sealed &
delivered in
the Treasury

Horace S. Sheppard



The Pemberton – Sheppard – Sayward Indenture is considered by some to be the first written arrangement to establish a timber lease and sawmill on Vancouver Island, in the Mill Bay area, north of Victoria. The Surveyor General of Vancouver Island, Joseph Despard Pemberton, acted on behalf of the Crown. Much of the sawmill's output was used to construct buildings in the developing city of Victoria. Some words could not be made out from the longhand script and hence the blank spaces. This document came from the files of the B.C. Forest Service.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Carradice, J.H. and K. Grozier. 2005. 55 years in the Vancouver Forest District / Coast Forest Region of the British Columbia Forest Service – a collage of stories, facts and trivia. B.C. Forest Service. n.p. ISBN 0-9739944-0-1. ix + 213 p.

Rajala, Richard A. 2006. Up-coast: forests and industry on British Columbia's North Coast, 1870 - 2005. Royal BC Museum, Victoria, B.C. ISBN 07726-5460-3. \$49.95

Schmidt, Ralph and J. Parminter. 2006. An early history of the Research Branch, British Columbia Ministry of Forests and Range. Technical Report 36. Research Branch, B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range, Victoria, B.C. viii + 91 p.*
Online at <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfd/pubs/Docs/Tr/Tr036.pdf>

*To obtain a hard copy of this publication, contact John Parminter.



FHABC CHANGE OF ADDRESS

As noted below, our long-time treasurer, Edo Nyland has a new address. Please use it when sending in your membership dues and charitable donations.



This newsletter is the official organ of the Forest History Association of British Columbia. Please submit newsletter material and send changes of address to the Editor: John Parminter, # 3 – 130 Niagara Street, Victoria, BC V8V 1E9 Phone (250) 384-5642 home or (250) 356-6810 office. E-mail: jvparminster@telus.net

Membership in the association is \$10 yearly, or \$45 for five years. Please send dues to the Treasurer: Edo Nyland, # 102 - 9993 Fourth Street, Sidney BC V8L 2Z6 Phone (250) 656-9276. E-mail: edonon@islandnet.com

The President: Stan Chester, can be reached at 5686 Keith Road, West Vancouver, BC V7W 2N5 Phone (604) 921-9880. E-mail: stanchester@shaw.ca

