



Logging in British Columbia in the 'Early Days'

FOREST BRANCH NEWS LETTER

An entirely unofficial budget of news, nonsense, 'n' opinion, compiled from time to time by anybody who has the time, for the profit, amusement and annoyance of the staff. Nobody to blame but the contributors.

No. 13

Victoria, B.C., November 2nd, 1936.

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Our collective noses, one way and another, have been held so close to the grindstone this past month that No. 13 promised to be our Waterloo. We feel that if it, with all its unlucky implications, can be sent out without quite so much delay. On the top of the bundle of accumulated material we find a few notes from Percy Sweatman of Duncan following his Vimy trip which will make as good a starting point as any. Sweatman's letter follows immediately below. Don't overlook the camera case on the log deck.



"During my recent trip overseas and in the east I had the opportunity of making a few observations which I think might be of interest to readers of our News Letter. It was noticed in England that there is an intensive programme of building going on and the materials being used were naturally of interest. Whereas B.C. doors were in great demand and well known, our lumber seemed to be practically unknown, and a large amount of the timber being used in the construction work was material that would be confined to the burner and never leave the mill here. A little propaganda work was done in these cases. B.C. doors appear to be very popular and greatly admired for their wonderful grain and freedom from knots.

"An estate was visited in the west of England where there are 1,000 acres of woodland. This is so managed that it pays the expenses of the upkeep of the whole estate, with close utilization right down to the small limbs.

"One of the chief weapons for fighting fires (they get them too), outside of wet sacks, is a kind of a flapper, about two feet square, on the end of a stick (it looked like an excellent instrument to me for the fractious child) used for beating a fire out.

"In the Maritimes it was noticed that very few houses, new and old, are using shingles; patent roofing seems to be the vogue, and although I searched newspapers, local and provincial, I could not find any advertisements for them, and talking to the ordinary man not versed in building he seemed to think that the cedar necessary for making shingles was becoming non-existent!

"After visiting some small logging operations and mills in Nova Scotia I have come to the conclusion that we have NO scrub timber in B.C. Five cords of pulpwood to an acre is a good stand and 10 cords is excellent.

"Mills are cutting logs with 3 inch tops and putting through enough of these in a small mill employing 20 men, to produce 20 to 30 M.B.F. per day. Horses are used mainly in the woods, but trucks are doing the hauling to the mills in most cases. Small tractors are also being used. The lumber, even from these mills is in most cases superior to that being used in some of the construction work in England.



"Creosote Pines are being used to a large extent as telephone poles, also the N.B. cedar. It is not infrequent that you see them bent in beautiful curves before they reach the top. Crooks are almost general instead of being the exception. I am beginning to think our pole inspectors are far too particular, and the culls that sometimes litter our pole yards are really first-class poles.

"I am enclosing a photo taken of logs at a mill in Nova Scotia which I think might be of interest."



Our latest candidate for the Hall of Fame is George Auld Forbes, for long years past a pillar of the Prince George District which, we are creditably informed, was named in his honour. George was born and got his start on a farm near Wyoming in Lambton County, Ontario. Eighteen years later and after having obtained a good grounding in how to run a farm, he ran away from home, it is rumored, and met up with himself at Medicine Hat when he hired out as a cow-hand. George stuck this out pretty well as the next we hear of him is in 1907 when he again headed West with the first Grand Trunk Pacific survey party. It was at this time that he came to Fort George and is one of the reasons why he is this year President of the Old Timers' Association of Prince George. When the survey was completed he helped run the first sawmill in the vicinity of Fort George operated by the Northern Lumber Company.

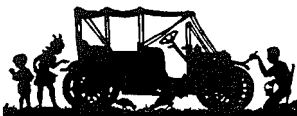
One job led to another, including running a rink in Quesnel in the winter of 1909, the work consisting chiefly of packing water up from the Fraser River. Later he was freight agent for the B.C. Express Company which ran boats from Soda Creek to Fort George.

It is said that in the early days George was to be found around the Hudson's Bay Company Post at South Fort George where the company was congenial and he could swap yarns and meet all those coming and going to and from the post. One day he was traversing the Indian Reserve, now the Prince George Townsite, when an Indian told him that he was out of bounds and to get off the reserve. George was always good at finding survey lines so he led several of the band to where he thought the line should be and a wordy battle ensued when the Indians found that they had been robbed of several chains of their reserve by the simple reasoning of George's offset line. It was getting hot for George when several whites arrived and both sides withdrew.

Our correspondent sends us two photographs, one a few years ago and the other very many years, we hope, in the future.



Figures are always interesting, and recently we have had occasion to delve into our car costs and mileage. Taking 84 of all makes and types of cars disposed of within the last four years we find that these units have covered some 3,218,789 miles. Quite a respectable mileage, equivalent roughly to 7 round trips to the moon, or 128 times around the world. We find that the cost per mile is 5.7 cents, which covers everything including depreciation. When disposed of, all they realized was about 14% of the original cost. With our large fleet (we now have 141 cars), we soon run into big figures. These 84 cars originally cost us \$67,123.00; they cost to operate \$124,825.00, and when sold they realized \$9,325.00. This shows a net cost of \$181,943.00. The average mileage per car for these years has been 38,259, which reminds us of the days, not so very long ago, when we used to be afraid of a Model T after it had done about 15,000.



And all of which reminds us of a number of things-- the old horse and buggy; and records of 30 or 40 miles a day in the saddle; and the first gear-shift car the Service ever owned. How we touched up the scratches on that one! And the kids had to sneak around behind to as much as put a finger on it. If our good friends the engineers will show us as much progress in the next 25 years as they have in the past 25--(We're getting into deep water. Finish this one according to your own fancy.

This year, as always, we have had the finest co-operation along the Border from the U.S. Forest Service. We have had lots of business contacts with our neighbours for many years past but it remained for the staff of the Nelson District to supplement these this year with a social event following the fire season, which they sponsored and at which they acted as hosts. Due to the organizing ability of Supervisor Brewer and Assistant Ranger W. H. Miller the affair was a complete success.

An old roadhouse some three miles south of the Border was the venue. This was fixed up for the occasion by the U.S. Forest Service, our people supplying the supper and a peppy dance orchestra of three pieces. It was a mixed party, and the longer it progressed the mixeded it got.

The supper table literally groaned under the good fare provided, the piece de resistance being fried oysters, and lashings of them, these being specially imported from Seattle by air for the occasion and the cook certainly knew his job. Incidentally there was the "odd drink or two."

In the absence of Mr. Polly, the local U.S. Supervisor, Mr. Sullivan, Superintendent of the local CCC Camp, made a happy little speech which was most suitably replied to by Bob Allen.

Dancing was kept up to the early hours of the morning and our Observer, who was a privileged guest, advises us how very appreciative the U.S. men seemed at this friendly gesture and in passing also adds that the whole cost of the entertainment was defrayed personally by the Nelson District staff.

Tommy Simmons took a busman's holiday last month, looking over the Interior. Extracts from his enthusiastic report to the News Letter follow. We haven't enough paper to publish all of it.

3,000 MILES IN 3 WEEKS

The above caption sounds like Eleanor Glyn's "Three Weeks" or that hoary old tale, "Ten Nights in a Barroom"--and strictly speaking it is not true, for the writer actually covered approximately 3,200 miles in 19½ days through the Kamloops and Nelson Forest Districts. This works out about 160 miles per day, so not much time was wasted.

My first objective was Kamloops and from there in the capable hands of "Geh" Ternan proceeded to Revelstoke, visiting Chase, Sicamous and Salmon Arm en route. While at Revelstoke a trip was made to Downie Creek over the much-talked-of Big Bend Highway. This road proves to be a very fine one, having a good surface and being wide, especially at the bends.

At Downie they have a new 32-foot flat-bottom river boat equipped with a 28 H.P. Johnson of which they are very proud. To a man from the coast she is a queer looking craft but in the fast water of the Columbia against the stream and with the throttle only half open she just "walks right along" and returning with the current makes wonderful time. She can carry two or three tons easily and will turn on a dime.

Returning to Kamloops via Canoe Cym Williams took me over and we proceeded through to Okanagan Valley to Vernon, thence under the wing of Bob Allen started for the metropolis of Nelson and way points, over the Monashee.

We here in Victoria often hear the Malahat spoken of as dangerous. To those who think that I would say, don't try the Monashee or you will arrive at Edgewood with a bad case of the jitters.

With Tom Brewer a trip was made through the Doukhobor country, and on to Tadanac and Trail and returning a side trip was made to the head of Sheep Creek, the home of the famous mines--Gold Belt, Reno, Kootenay Belle and Sheep Creek.

Kaslo was also on the visiting list but the Ranger was up the Lake cruising a T.S. and this being Sunday was proof positive that Sundays apparently do not interfere with Forest Branch labours.

My next pilot was Bill Holmgren and in his good company a start was made for Invermere--Creston, Cranbrook, Fernie and back to Fort Steele and then right through to Invermere where the roads "Aren't what they ought to be by a dam sight." Oh the dust! Radium Hot Springs gave the travellers a good excuse for a much-needed bath. It was well after dark when we got to the Springs, so much of the natural beauties of the place could only be imagined.

Leaving Invermere the next morning at 8 A.M. we arrived at Gray Creek in time to catch the last ferry at 4.30 P.M., finally arriving at Nelson at 6.15 P.M. and that same night accompanying the Nelson staff I had the privilege of being a guest at a social gathering held just south of Nelway where the Nelson District

staff were entertaining their opposite numbers of the U.S. Forest Service as a friendly gesture for the splendid co-operation received from our good friends south of the Line. A good time was had by all.

Now came the turning of the ways and our trek was towards Victoria--south to Trail and over the Rossland and Santa Rosa summits which are as bad as the Monashee (to the Vancouver-Islander). In fact they are higher. And so to Grand Forks, thence through that pathetic ghost town of Phoenix--Kelowna Vernon, to Kamloops, Vancouver, and Victoria--19½ days out and 3,200 miles behind us.

One thing stands out in my mind and that is the huge size of our Forest Districts. It must keep our district staffs stepping to contact all their men even occasionally.

All those fellows whom I met I now feel I know personally and I can only say how much pleasure it has given me. If I may be allowed to say so, I shall always think of you as my personal friends.

To those of you who did so much to make my journey interesting and instructive and who put up with my many damphool questions, I add my grateful thanks.

More pages have been written in western circles in recent years about selective logging than about any other one phase of forestry. D.B. Taylor recently had an opportunity, in company with the Chief Forester, to visit some selective logging operations in Washington and Oregon and gives us the benefit of his comments, as follows:

A solution to the ever important problem of insuring future forest crops is, I think, foremost in the minds of Foresters today. The answer undoubtedly is to be found in improved logging methods, controlled disposal of slash and adequate fire-prevention measures, supported by a more efficient detective and patrol system to insure detection of fires in their incipient stage, backed by an organization which includes a well-trained and efficient personnel, effective pre-organization plans, improved equipment, and other means which will insure prompt and effective action on any fires that may occur.

Of the many solutions offered for the improvement in logging practice I think "Selective logging" is the most abused. Considered in a general way it means nothing, but after witnessing the results of its application in Washington and Oregon I feel it can be applied in some form or other on some of our Coast fir stands, and the future will no doubt see some interesting experiments and progress in this direction. However, to attempt selective cutting generally on our Coast operations would be economically impossible.

During the course of Mr. Manning's and my visit to Washington and Oregon numerous operations referred to as "selective" were viewed but from my observations I would say the method as being practised is confined to the removal of all the high grade and better species and leaving a residue stand of inferior species, understory, and defective trees. If this is selective logging we don't want it. In my opinion the residual stand is a menace and almost certain of destruction by wind and fire. The general picture presented by areas logged in this manner is, to my mind, far worse than areas clear cut.

Operations were inspected which were being conducted on Federal timber sales on which 20% cutting is being practised. These operations are being conducted by way of an experiment and will undoubtedly be productive of information of value in planning forest practice in the future.

What appears to me to be the "ideal" in selective logging was inspected at Siltcoos Lake, Oregon. This operation is being conducted by the Crown Willamette Pulp and Paper Company for the removal of logs suitable for utilization in a spruce veneer plant situated adjacent to the operation. The stand is approximately 80% spruce and has been opened up with a system of permanent caterpillar roads. The slash hazard created is negligible and the residual stand left in such condition that blowdown should not be any greater than in the virgin stand. However, the chance offered here is one in a thousand and I know of no stand of timber in the Coast fir region that presents the same opportunity for such a "select" selective operation.

The main object in suggesting or attempting improved logging methods is of course to insure future forest crops and in the Douglas fir region this is a possibility provided proper consideration is given the two most essential measures; seed supply and adequate fire control. These I think can be obtained at relatively small cost and without radical change in present logging methods by adoption of a plan along the following lines:

Planning operations in a manner that will insure restocking after logging by staggered settings, leaving defective trees and long corners and stands of non-merchantable and immature timber along higher slopes and creeks.

Improved methods in fire control to prevent start of fires and their subse-

quent spread. Planned reduction of fire hazard in the manner of slash disposal and snag felling and adequate fire protection of cut-over lands on which slash hazard has been elementary.

Extract from letter of September 19th from the District Forester, Prince George:

"We have made some preliminary attempts at making a suitable base for Paramount Pumps on which will fit a crate for protection of the unit in storage and transportation. Due to the construction of the metal base of the pump we have found some difficulties. Probably some inventive genius in another part of the Province has been more successful than we have. We should appreciate sketches or photographs of something suitable in this line, or more so, we should like to have the bases and the crates made up and sent to us."

Any volunteers?

Extract from Workmen's Compensation report (Form 7.)

Name of injured workman, Alex. Dotnz. Question 2. Describe how accident occurred, etc.

Man mistook Dotnz for a tree stump, and went to stick his mattock in him.
Dotnz dodged and when he moved the other man seeing he was mistaken, pulled his blow, but Dotnz was struck on the head.

Moral - Look before you stick your mattock in a stump.

Requisition: 1 only 1½" nozzle hose size 3/8".

Jimmie Robertson (Research) resigned at the end of September to accept an appointment as Professor at Colorado State College, Fort Collins.

Braham G. Griffith (Research) has resigned and is teaching and studying at the University of Washington, Seattle.

Evan Thomas (Princeton) has been superannuated and his district is being taken over by Roy Eden, transferred from Squamish. Stanley Silke takes over Eden's district at Squamish.

Henning (Quesnel), we hear has been suffering from blood poisoning in his hand and Pearson (North Vancouver) is away on sick leave.

G.P. Melrose was married at Victoria on October 3rd to Miss A.V. Harris.

We have had several changes in the Victoria stenographic staff recently. One was occasioned by the marriage of Miss Evelyn Florence (Mr. Barclay's stenographer) to Bill Holman of the Lands Office on September 16th. The bride and groom were presented with a silver tea and coffee service by Mr. Cathcart on behalf of the staff.

Miss Clara Parson, one of the Management stenographers, resigned on September 30th to become a lady of leisure and will shortly be leaving Victoria to spend the winter in California.

The other Management stenographer, Miss Peggy Macdonald, is being married today to Mr. Arthur Rudge of Victoria and was recently the recipient of a silver tea service and tray.

New arrivals in the Branch are Miss B. Albhouse, (transferred from Lands), who is working for Mr. Barclay, and Miss P. Babington in the Management office.

Ray Sansom (McBride), says: "Spent my holidays in Edmonton and vicinity. Went duck shooting. Got two ducks and increased the average speed of about 200 others about 50 M.P.H. Returned home broke so will have to economize for another year or so in order to take another trip.

Bill Lowry (Pouce Coupe) on sick leave at Edmonton for six weeks owing to difficulty with his eyes has returned to his headquarters.

Looking back over the file we find a suggestion that a selection of books on forestry subjects be circulated during the winter months. Our library is not big enough to act on this suggestion but it is at the disposal of any forest officer. If you will let us know what subject you are most interested in--silviculture, mensuration, logging, forest history, ecology, planting--we will be glad to tell you what we have and loan a selection.

Selection from Publications Received in Forest
Branch Library, September 25th - October 17th.

- .477 Preliminary Report on the Pulp & Paper Industry in Canada, 1935.
- .718 Height Curves for Even-aged Stands of Douglas Fir - W.H. Meyer.
- .43 Wood-using Industries in Canada, 1934.
- .062 Kenya - Forest Department Annual Report, 1935.
- .01 Forest Bibliography to Dec. 31, 1933. Part 1.
- .31 Measuring Fire Weather and Forest Inflammability - H.T. Gisborne.
- .1413 The Study of the Soil in the Field - G.R. Clarke.
- .7182 Rate of Growth Survey Data, 1929-30 - Nova Scotia.
- .7182 Rate of Growth Survey Data, 1929-30 - Gatineau & Lierre Watersheds, Quebec.
- .221 Basic Considerations in the Management of Ponderosa Pine Forests by the Maturity Selection System.
- .439 Manual of Timber Connector Construction.
- .439 Modern Timber Connectors.
- .701 The Development of Unevenaged Stands of Engelmann Spruce, and Probable Development of Residual Stands After Logging. G.H. Barnes - 1935.
- Quebec Forest Products Commission - 4th Annual Report - 1935.
- .05 Monthly List of Publications - U.S. Dept. Agri., Aug., 1936.
- .05 Forestry - Current Literature - U.S.F.S. Library.
- Report of the Provincial Game Commissioner - for the year ended December 31, 1935.

STOP PRESS

Born:-

To Mr. and Mrs. W.G. Henning at Quesnel, October 19, 1936--a son. All reported well.