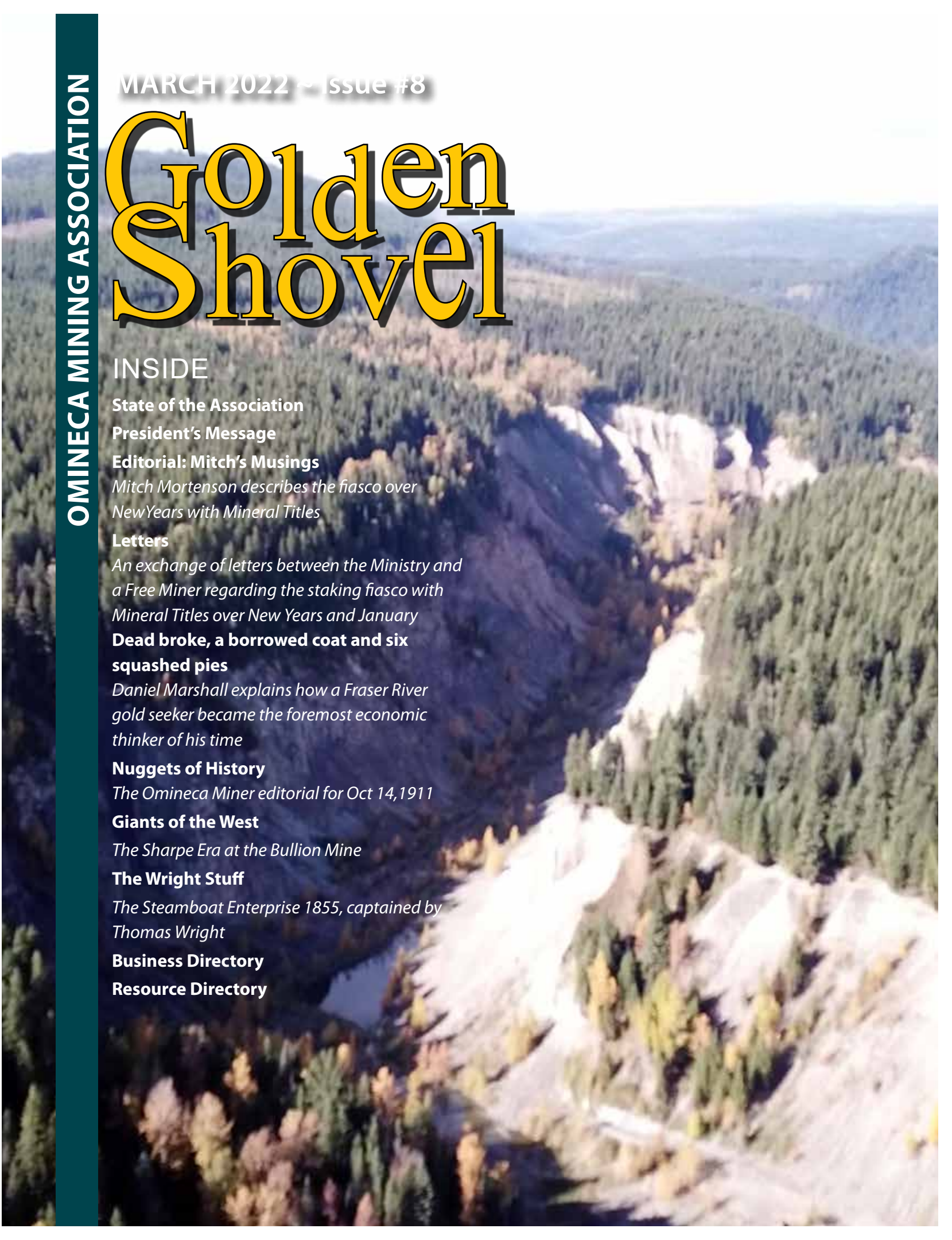
OMINECA MINING ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2022 ~ Issue #8

Golden Shovel



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Golden Shovel

ISSUE #8 ~ MARCH 2022

The *Golden Shovel* is published quarterly by the Omineca Mining Association, Box 948, Mackenzie BC, V0J 2C0.

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Mitch Mortensen, 250-988-1325.

ADVERTISING

- Display advertising: Contact Mitch Mortenson, 250-988-1325 for rates and availability.
- Business Directory listings are available to members only.
- Classified ads are free of charge, but we appreciate a donation to the OMA by non-members when your claim or equipment sells.

CIRCULATION

The *Golden Shovel* is provided to our members, to our Federal and Provincial Governments, including various Ministries and their representatives, and is available to the public online and at selected locations.

SUBMISSIONS

Send your related articles, stories, photographs, and letters to OminecaMiningAssociation@gmail.com. Text should be unformatted and images should be in high-resolution .jpg format.

MISSION

- Provide awareness and increase knowledge of mining, including various types of mines and mining practices.
- Promote the OMA objective of facilitating a balance where industry and the environment can prosper, where a governing practice of scientific fact is the law of the land, and development is tempered with reclamation.
- Feature stories about those who sought their fortune in mining— some made their fortune in gold, others found adventure, and the lucky ones found both.

DISCLAIMER

Opinions presented in the *Golden Shovel* are not necessarily those of the *Golden Nugget* or the OMA. We take no responsibility for errors or omissions in content.

STATE OF THE ASSOCIATION

New Horizons

Mitch Mortensen

Its been quite a ride into 2022 for all of us. I hope you have your permits submitted.

We have managed to complete and release our first episode of Free Miners on You Tube and also MineWorld.

You tube https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuwUTUOW1H2qaPolAu1qdCw

Mine World https://mineworld.io/channel/free-miners/

In this first episode we feature the science of passive seismic done on project Sunrise. We hired Westcoast Placers.

No Name City on Mugaha creek is in good standing and arrangements are being made to get another Crash the Creek organized. We are seeking donations to the event.

Members and non members are welcome at No Name City. Please keep your mining activities in good faith with update 38.

Moving into 2022, we're happy to report the good news that the OMA treasury is cash-positive. We are grateful for your memberships making this publication possible.

The clock is ticking to get your permits in and, because the Ministry is short-handed. Don't be surprised at delays.

If you haven't yet joined the OMA, remember, we're here for you.

The OMA lets us work together to better the industry for all of us. Collectively, we have the ability to make a difference

The OMA strives to correct and push back against public ignorance about our industry.

Through the OMA, you can consult and get professional advice on meeting the challenges of your project.

We invite you to voice your concerns about the industry, and to share your stories, letters, and pictures of glitter and gold.

In closing, from all of us here at the OMA... Stay warm, stay safe, and have a golden new 2022!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mark Oldenburg

Canadian freedoms are under attack from every angle. Massive spending by our Federal Govt will affect our ability to do the things we want. Restrictive policies on mining at the provincial level will soon end small scale mining as a way of life. Closing off vast tracts of land to public access will soon relegate us to city life. Its not just us as miners being affected but logging as well and many other industries. Canada is no longer the land of the free, slowly every part of our daily routine is being dictated to us. Just look at how often we have to ask the government for permission to do anything, how there's hardly anything left that we don't need a licence, permit or some sort of approval for. I need a licence to dig a hole, to put my boat in the water, buy a shotgun and on and on. Remember, buying a licence is asking permission, extracting money from us, and tracking us, all at the same time.

New on the provincial agenda is a fee to apply for a licence. Yes that's right, there will be a fee to apply for your NOW. The same NOW that used to take 2 months and now takes 6 months minimum to as long as a year or more.. Thats if the area you want to mine hasn't been taken out of the placer area, which is already happening with large areas, with the govt stating that they intend to remove many more areas.

This doesn't sound like a free country to me any more, its starting to feel like communism. I'm not surprised at the Federal level either, our Prime Ministers father was great friends with Fidel Castro, so I wonder how much of Fidel rubbed on Justin. Add to this the special interest groups dominating the medias attention, a tiny minority that has all the gov't attention when setting policy. Aboriginal protests with not an aboriginal in sight, rather tree huggers exploiting our aboriginal friends and neighbors for their own gain. When is it all going to stop ?

Not until we organize ourselves, not until the silent majority speaks up. I urge everyone to join groups that will fight for what's right, fight for our way of life and for freedom. I have attached a list of a few organizations that do just that. If you cant join the fight yourself, please consider contributing financially.

BCRC BC Resources Coalition
Preserving Our Jobs – Our Future – Our Environment

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Omineca Mining Association

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To Error is Human...

Mitch Mortensen

But to really foul things up requires a computer.

In the year of the Lord 1140, the King (Conrad III) laid siege to a city of Duke Welf of Bavaria, which was called Weinsberg, and accepted their surrender, whereas he allowed, out of his royal generosity, the wives and other women who were present to take with them whatever they could carry on their shoulders. Considering the loyalty to their husbands as well as the wellbeing of the others, they [the wives and other women] abandoned their household goods and descended, carrying the men on their shoulders. When Duke Friedrich protested that they should not be doing this, the King said, benevolent towards the deceit of the women, that it would not be appropriate to change the word of a King.

Back in around 2005 mineral titles went online resulting in drastic changes to an old system. Suddenly the days of hand drawn maps, posts and tags to manually stake a claim were gone. It was a huge improvement. The new system eliminated problems such as inaccurate post locations resulting in disputes over claim boarders. The rigidity of the cells staking system made it impossible to stake by topographic features which was the traditional staking method.

Already someone from another country could establish a company in BC, and free miners cert to stake claims. Now anyone/Company could stake a claim from the comfort of their own armchair in addition to a BCEID.

There was nearly a 1000% increase with online staking and a closure of mining recording offices throughout the province. This resulted in a significant increase of funds to the CROWN. The new system doubled the staking fees, assessment work requirements and the cash in lieu was increased by 400% too. The idea was to encourage claim owners to do more work on their claims that would lead to an exploration permit instead of paying "cash in lieu". The new system solved a lot of financial problems for the ministry but it has also created a beast of its own.

For example traditional claim stakers were put out of work overnight and in their place rose a form of speculation staking. This has become rampant where forfeited claims are staked at the daily 10AM rush where they are then advertised for sale an hour later on some website owned by someone who has never dipped a pan on it!

Our latest example of this beast is the Covid march 27/2020 extension orders from the ministry. Those extension were granted to give claim owners time to complete their assessment work at $20 per hectare. However, people were unable to get out to their claim to do their assessment work. In desperation, many decided to exercise their rights to abandon a claim. By doing so they were then able to re-stake the ground for only the cost of the $5 dollar per hectare staking fee's instead of paying $40 per hectare "cash in leu". It appears this was done throughout 2021.

In December representatives of the CROWN cried foul. Instead of honoring the loophole of abandoning and then restaking a claim, or simply granting everyone the two year credit on their claims, the ministry decides to declare an "error". They subsequently reversed all claims that had been abandoned and re-staked through 2021 and proceeded to demand cash in leu.

By this point many people were unable to get any work done on their claim and the cash in lieu amounts are punitively high. As of midnight December 31/2020. It is noted

Due to the number of claims that may be forfeiting, the mineral titles branch has chosen to alter the date when cells of the forfeited claims become available.

It is unknown exactly how much ground opened up for staking. However, there was enough that the ministry had to set up a schedule for staking specific regions in the province on specific days. The openings for staking were supposed to start on January 4, 2022 but there was one more "error"

As the world rang in the New Year at 00:00 January 1st, 2022, the staking rush began. It seemed impossible and contradictory to the announcements, but Mineral titles seemed open for business. There were claims that were not supposed to forfeit and were somehow forfeited. By late morning, hundreds if not thousands of claims were staked in a panic. In the early afternoon, mineral titles was finally shut down with a fitting "503 error".

It was like everyone had their fingers caught in the same cookie jar when someone turned on the light. No one had any idea what had just happened or what was valid. There was this universal stare across the room as all the claim stakers eyed each other holding their prize over cyber space. The tense wait finally giving way to an announcement by Mineral Titles rescinding all the claims staked on New Years Day, and a new schedule was created. You could almost hear the sigh of relief ripple through the industry when they also announced a refund of all staking fees and a reinstatement of claims that were not meant to forfeit.

While the siege from mineral titles upon the miner continues, I cannot help but reflect. Is it appropriate to change the word of a King? These may be government employees but they are also representatives of the CROWN. The CROWN may not be directly involved in the governance of Canada but the CROWN in itself set the standard for a sense of honor and fairness to all.

Perhaps it would have been more reasonable to have allowed the abandoning of a claim for restaking? Accept the error as is and fix it. Let the claim owners avoid the cash in lieu and work requirements. Let them Restake the ground at their own discretion rather then taking their chances at the 10Am rush following a forfeit? That may have been more reasonable then the heavy handedness displayed by Mineral Titles.

A Summary of Events as provided by a Free Miner

Chief Gold Commissioner issues protection an all BC claims in March 2020 to Dec 31, 2021

The MTO came up with a release schedule to release the dropped claims at different dates depending on the area

On Jan 1st 2022 they released every claim at 12AM by mistake and BC free miners staked over 14,000 claims that morning with staking fees alone totalling over $620,000 in a single day. That included individual prospectors and publicly listed mining companies.

The MTO, shut down the server for 7 days while they proceeded to cancel all 16,000 claims (that kind of mass cancellation had never been done since claims first started in BC in 1858)

Then MTO came up with a second release schedule

On January 24th, the designated date for South West BC, a number of prospectors complained to the MTO that they couldn't stake claims because the website was overloaded

Later that day MTO decided to cancel all the claims that were staked on January 24th, despite the exact same problems on all the other staking days

The MTO released a poorly thought out third schedule based on a smaller map areas and re-released the claims

The Omineca Mining Association is a non-profit organization.

THE OMA MISSION

- EDUCATE the public, government, and miners in the importance of mining;
- RAISE AWARENESS about problems and solutions in the mining industry and government in the Omineca; and
- PROMOTE responsible, environmentally sustainable, mining practices, and innovative mining methods and solutions.
- ASSIST, SUPPORT, AND ADVOCATE for our members.

OminecaMiningAssociation@gmail.com

GOLD NUGGET

Gold is where you find it. - Unknown

An Exchange of Emails Between Mineral Titles Branch

Concerning the canceling of claims. In some cases those cancelations of claim was done twice.

Dear Minister of Mines, Jan 24,2022.

I am writing to convey my disgust with the mishandling of claims by the Mineral Titles Branch. They totally mishandled the release of claims that lapsed under the covid protection order that they created. On January 1st the MTO released claims ahead of schedule and then rescinded them.

They re-released the claims once again with a new schedule and completely failed to manage it again.

Today I staked some claims in the 092 NTS map sheet area with the hopes of prospecting them this season. These are the same claims that I staked on January 1st that were rescinded. I have dedicated several days to prepare for this, taking the time off work and getting ready to stake the claims on the MTO website.

Today, after staking the claims in good faith, paying the fee, and receiving the confirmation once again I received an email from the Mineral Titles Branch stating that the claims are going to be rescinded a second time. Their reasoning is that their website wasn't functioning properly. Their website has never functioned properly. I have been a prospector using the MTO system since 2009 and it has failed repeatedly. Never before have they rescinded claims, now they have done that twice to me.

I also bought several claims off other miners that were staked today and the MTB's plan to rescind those claims is not going to satisfy the business transactions that took place. I could be facing a lawsuit due to this.

This is totally unacceptable. The Chief Gold commissioner should not have made the decision to rescind claims that were staked in good faith. Not on the 1st and not today. This is a black mark on the mining industry in BC that did not need to happen.

It's obvious that the MTB is catering to a small number of people who complained that they did not get the claims that they wanted. Yes, the system is dysfunctional and fails regularly but it is not unfair. The MTO website is equally bad for every user in BC. The only thing unprecedented is The Chief Gold Commissioner's decision to rescind claims that were legally and fairly acquired today.

As a result of incompetence by the MTB claim staking in BC has become an absolute nightmare. His actions are interfering with major mining operations including several publicly listed companies as well as numerous prospectors who are trying to develop mining properties in this province.

I am asking you to have Chief Gold Commissioner allow the claims staked on January 24th to remain in place. I invested a lot of time and money into claim staking in the last few weeks and so have a lot of other people. It is extremely unfair to rescind these claims for a second time. I hope that you are working towards making BC a fair and reputable place to do business in the mining industry.

Your support in standing up for fairness and integrity for BC's prospectors would be very much appreciated.

I just want to add something to my previous email. I do exploration in other countries as well as Canada. I just got off a call with some clients working in Sierra Leone. We're dealing with claim staking in that country. I just want to say that even in a third-world country in Africa with a corrupt government they do not cancel thousands of claims that were legally staked in good faith.

BC has a reputation for being a safe place to invest and a safe, stable place to do business in the mining industry. The actions of the MTB and Chief Gold Commissioner have put that in jeopardy. I urge you to correct this mistake.

Please stand up for the integrity of the mining sector in BC and have this erroneous decision by the Chief Gold Commissioner reversed. The claims that were staked on January 24th should not be reversed.

Sincerely,-Free Miner

Dear Free Miner

I have been asked to respond to your emails dated January 24th and 25th sent to Minister Bruce Ralston.

On January 1st, cells were released but shouldn't have been as they were supposed to be released according to the schedule that was published on December 6, 2021. MTO system updates that were made on December 31st to release the cells according to the planned schedule resulted in a number of failures and caused a number of claims to forfeit. Cells related to these claims became available for acquisition but shouldn't have been. In some cases, the claims legitimately forfeited due to the end of the COVID-19 time extension order. However, in this situation, the cells should not have been released

and a Free Miner

for acquisition until their scheduled date and time. The planned release was to happen between January 4th and January 10th.

In other cases, claims that had an additional time extension order applied also forfeited. These claims should not have forfeited as they had a time extension that expired past December 31, 2021. The cells related to these claims should not have become available on January 1st.

A number of free miners acquired cells between midnight of December 31st and approximately 1200h on January 1st . At approximately 1200h on January 1st, MTO access was disabled. The claims acquired on January 1st were cancelled and refunds were issued.

From January 1st to January 11th, MTO access was disabled to make several database changes to cancel the claims acquired on January 1st, implement a revised cell release schedule and reinstate the claims that should not have forfeited.

Cells were released according to a revised published schedule and acquired by free miners on January 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21st.

However, on January 24th, the MTO map selection function for cell acquisition was not working for many users. We had not observed this or received reports of this issue on any previous days of the cell release schedule. I realize that many users may not use map selection but it is supposed to be equally available for claim acquisition as entering cell key-ids. We are very aware that anyone who was able to register claims on January 24th was extremely frustrated with the decision that was made that day to cancel claims and issue refunds.

The issues with MTO map selection that occurred on January 24th would have persisted for the final day of the release schedule, and potentially would have been even worse. We did take several actions in MTO to prevent this from happening further. As you know one of the key actions taken was implementing a revised cell release schedule for mapsheets 092 and 093. This schedule increased the number of cell release times from two to nine to reduce the potential for issues with MTO map selection and provide more opportunities for free miners to acquire claims.

The decision made on January 24th to revise and re-run the remaining schedule was not taken lightly. It was made based on the evidence before us that indicated MTO failed to provide everyone who was logged on the same access to the two methods available to register claims. -Deputy Chief Gold Commissioner

To Deputy Chief Gold Commissioner

Thanks for getting back to me.

It sounds like you and the MTB are not taking responsibility for the poor decisions and mismanagement of the claims that have taken place.

First of all, you are insisting that the website issues, especially related to the map selection only existed on January 24th. I have screenshots and videos showing the same errors on January 20th during one of the mass claims drops orchestrated by the MTB.

The same issues and errors were commonplace on the other days that claims were dropped, specifically on January 26th at noon, January 27th at 8AM, and on January 28t at 3 PM.

Everyone knows that the MTO server has not kept up to modern web standards and is not up to the job. Issues are widespread and have been for years. The issues were not isolated to Jan 24th. Your insistence that the MTB only know about issues on that date is ridiculous and if that's true then it's evident that nobody in that office is actually monitoring the performance and use of the website.

The MTB decision to drop thousands of claims on multiple days at the exact same moment exasperated the existing website issues and caused the overloading of the server. That decision was made by your team. That is not a result that was foreign to the MTB staff that you had no control over. Your decisions directly caused the issues that the MTO users experiences and could have easily been prevented.

The decision to release claims by smaller mapsheet areas after the Jan 24th cancellation only increased the competition for those areas and did absolutely nothing to mitigate the MTO server issues.

You said that "The issues with MTO map selection that occurred on January 24th would have persisted for the final day of the release schedule, and potentially would have been even worse. " They did persist and they were equally bad if not worse. Again you seem totally ignorant to what is actually happening with the MTO website. It really sounds like you're not taking responsibility here. Just inthis last email you have used the following statements:

An Exchange of Emails Between Mineral Titles Branch

"Cells related to these claims became available for acquisition but shouldn't have been."

"These claims should not have forfeited as they had a time extension that expired past December 31, 2021."

The wording that you choose to use makes it sound like these things just magically happened on their own. As if it was inevitable and your office had no control over these events. That couldn't be further from the truth.

Both, you (Deputy Chief Gold Commissioner) and Chief Gold Commissioner made decisions to drop claims in mass numbers and subsequently to revoke hundreds of claims on two occasions due to mistakes that were made by your office. At the very least you need to own up to these mistakes and apologize to the free miners of British Columbia. That's at the very least.

What actions and policies are you and your team implementing to prevent such reckless decision-making in the future? The integrity of the claim staking process is important to the mining industry in BC and that includes free miners who only hold one claim all the way up to multi-million dollar publically listed companies.

Sincerely,-A Claim Owner

To Free Miner

While we understand your frustrations with the planned release of cells, it is important to remember that this release of cells was an unprecedented event and all of the errors were resolved as they occurred. There will be a further release of a small number of cells that were not released according to the schedule. The Branch will send out a notice prior to informe everyone of this cell release.

If you feel that the Province has operated outside its authority, or has acted in any way contrary to the legislation, I can only recommend you seek legal advice as to what options or remedies might be available to you.

-Chief Gold Commissioer and Executive Director

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The following is an email exchange concerning problems with buying/selling claims that were then canceled by the Ministry and monies refunded. This put the seller/buyer in the uncomfortable position of having to refund monies or potentialy face legal action. Can someone who staked and sold a claim be made responsible for the Ministry's actions following what was a legitimate transaction at the time?

Hi MTB,

We have a huge problem here. I see that you're intending to cancel all the claims that were staked on Jan 24th.

I purchased a number of claims from other parties that were staked yesterday. Here are the title numbers:

I paid a lot of money for these claims. If you cancel the claims and refund the original owner what am I supposed to do? How am I going to get my money back? I need answers.

Canceling the claims is the wrong decision. I hope you reconsider. This is a big mistake.

Sincerely,-Free Miner

Dear Free Miner

The notice has stated that all titles which were registered on January 24, 2022 are going to be cancelled and refunded.

I will forward your question to management for review and response.

Sincerely, -Natural Resource Specialist

Hi Natural Resource Specialist

If the claims are cancelled the original owner will be refunded. How do you expect me to get my money back?

These claims were staked fairly and in good faith. Canceling the claims and refunding people is not acceptable or appropriate.

The MTB needs to do better.

Sincerely, -Free Miner

Hi Free Miner

If you purchased claims from another party, once they get their refund you'll have to arrange that with the sellers.

Thank you,-Mineral Titles

To Mineral Titles

That is not an acceptable solution.

These claims need to be reinstated ASAP.

You have reinstated hundreds of claims and given time extensions for much lesser reasons. This issue was created

and a Free Miner....continued

by the MTB and the MTB needs to fix it.

I just called the seller who I bought most of those claims from. He says he's not obligated to give my money back. He says the claims were in good standing when he sold them to me and it's up to Mineral Titles to sort it out.

What do you explicit me to do? Am I supposed to sort this out in court? Who's going to pay for the lawyer fees?

Look, I know you guys are having a hard time at the MTB office. Please reinstate these claims. Otherwise, I'm going to have to spend a whole bunch of time and money to rectify the mistake that was created by the MTB in the first place.-Free Miner

To Free Miner

I have reviewed your request and I will not support a decision to reinstate the claims on the list below.

I note that: (several tenures) were staked by you.-Deputy Chief Gold Commissioner

To Deputy Chief Gold Commissioner

That's simply unacceptable and I will be appealing this.

Firstly, you didn't read the title information correctly.

Secondly, I can see the records in the MTO database that you have reinstated claims for reasons related to made-up medical conditions, people not filing their reports on time and various other factors.

You are picking and choosing who gets claims reinstated. That is the definition of unfairness. The whole reason that you canceled claims on Monday is that people phoned in and complained that they were not given a fair chance to stake claims.

I paid those owners for these claims and they were staked in good faith. These claims were staked legally and fairly and I bought them from the original owners.

You are not acting in a fair manner. I urge you to reconsider your decision. -Free Miner

To Free Miner

Thank you for pointing out my error in the title information. In my rush to get you a response, I did note the acquisition information incorrectly and I apologize.

In your first email you gave a reason for reinstatement as "I just called the seller who I bought most of those claims from. He says he's not obligated to give my money back."

We will consider reinstatement for specific situations. If you could identify the specific claims you are requesting a reinstatement for and provide details for each explaining why you are asking for those ones to be reinstated, we will consider your request.

As I said earlier, we will not be reinstating all claims that were deleted from the registry on January 24th. -Deputy Chief Gold Commissioner

To Deputy Chief Gold Commissioner

I purchased both these claims from a John Doe on January 24th. The claims were cancelled by your office on January 26th without reasonable cause. John Doe will receive a reimbursement and I have no claims. He's been paid twice for these claims and that is the fault of the MTB and nobody else. I request that these claims be reinstated to rectify the situation.

I purchased both these claims from John Doe on January 25th. Same story as above. He gets paid back, the claims get cancelled, MTB's fault not mine, not his. I request that these claims be reinstated to rectify the situation.

I purchased this claim from John Doe on January 24th. Same as above. I request that this claim be reinstated to rectify the situation.

I hope that you consider the facts presented above and reinstate these claims.

Sincerely-Free Miner

Dear Free Miner

I have reviewed your request and am unable to support a reinstatement of the claims as you requested based on the information you provided and also based on the fact the refunds have already been issued to the individuals who have acquired the claims.

Sincerely-Deputy Chief Gold Commissioner

Dead broke, a borrowed coat, and six squashed pies

Published January 30, 2021 in TheOrca.ca

Daniel Marshall

How a Fraser gold seeker became the foremost economic thinker of his time.

I remember the first time I had a good look at the fabled Golden Gate Bridge.

It was the mid-1980s and fortune struck when a friend invited me to spend the summer in California. There we were, on the beach below the historic Presidio in an immense crowd of San Franciscans celebrating the 50th anniversary of that hugely symbolic bridge – a gateway marking the entrance to a harbour jam-packed with gold rush history.

Legendary crooner Tony Bennett was there, just off the beach (singing, “I left my heart, in San Francisco. . .”), and the sky had been so warm and blue as to question Mark Twain’s observation that the coldest winter he ever experienced was the summer he spent in San Francisco.

That gorgeous long summer was my chance to explore firsthand the historic connection between British Columbia and the Golden State. Wandering around old San Francisco felt familiar – after all, the 1850s iron-façade buildings on Wharf Street in Victoria were manufactured in California.

A cartoon of Henry George when he ran for Mayor of Newy York in 1886 - Wikimedia Commons

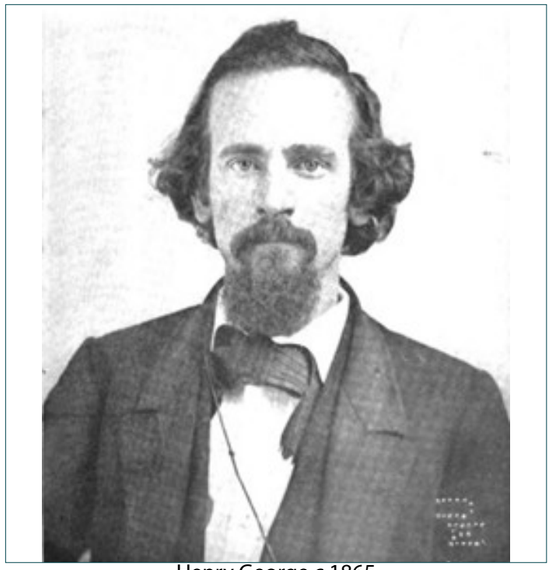
My mission was to locate two historic markers. First, the site of the Hudson’s Bay Company’s California headquarters established in 1841, when San Francisco was still known as Yerba Buena, and not part of the United States.

But more particularly, I wanted to see the location of a well-known hotel that once existed about 400 feet away from the HBC store, a hotel established in 1852 with the city’s first public library and reading room, known as the “What Cheer House.”

Standing there that day I wondered just how many gold seekers must have stayed here? Who read in this first library during the time of the Fraser River exodus (the 3rd great mass migration of gold seekers in human history)?

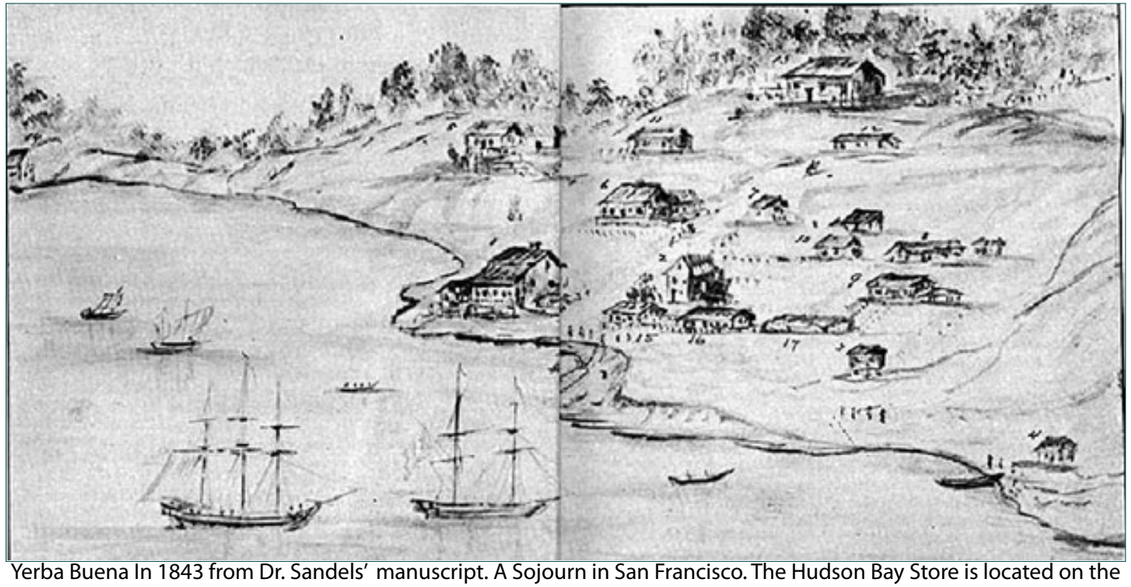
Here is the singular story of one such would-be miner: Henry George, subsequently “the most popular American economic thinker of the 19th century” – a populist before populism had a name. The word “populism” – coined in 1890 – meant opposition to a monopoly on wealth held by businessmen and bankers, and this is a rags-to-riches story of the gold rush of a very different sort!

A young 18-year-old typesetter, Henry George traveled from Pennsylvania via the Strait of Magellan aboard the USS Shubrick. He arrived in California in late May of 1858 after a journey of 155 days, and just as the Fraser River Excitement was peaking.

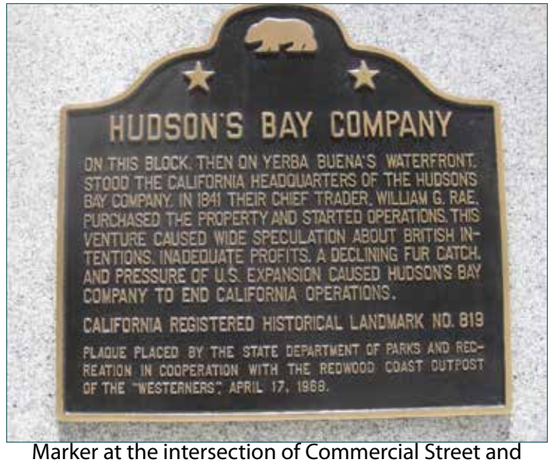


Henry George c 1865

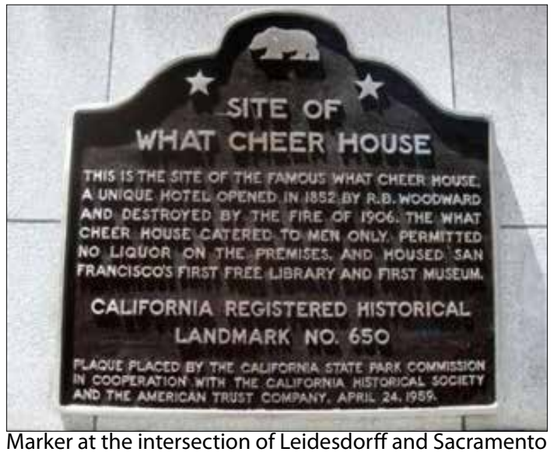
About an hour after the Shubrick anchored, the ship was visited by Henry George’s cousin, James George, a bookkeeper for the retail clothing firm of J. M. Strowbridge & Company, who had already traveled to California. Work prospects for young Henry were in rather short supply, and with increasing news of the Fraser gold



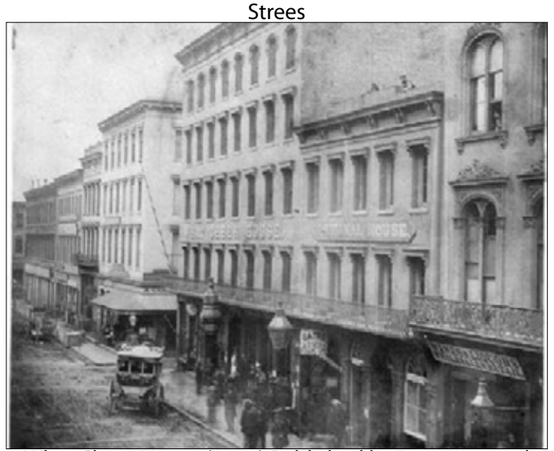
Yerba Buena In 1843 from Dr. Sandels’ manuscript. A Sojourn in San Francisco. The Hudson Bay Store is located on the shoreline, immediately to the left of the crease in the image



Marker at the intersection of Commercial Street and Montgomery Srteet.



Marker at the intersection of Leidesdorff and Sacramento Strees


What Cheer House (1886) Published by Lawrence and Houseworth

excitement, he made his decision to travel north and seek his fortune. His son Henry George Jr. (later a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from New York) wrote a biography of his famous father entitled The Life of Henry George (1900), in which he described that decision.

For in June [1858] had come the thrilling news of large gold discoveries just over the American line, in the British possessions, on the Frazer River, not far from its mouth. There was much excitement in San Francisco, especially among that multitude of prospectors and adventurers, who, finding all the then known placer lands in California worked out, or appropriated, and not willing to turn to the slow pursuits of agriculture, had gathered in the city with nothing to do. A mad scramble for the new fields ensued, and so great was the rush from this and other parts that fifty thousand persons are said to have poured into the Frazer River region within the space of a few weeks. Indeed, all who did not have profitable or promising employment tried to get away, and the Shubrick's log shows that most of her officers and crew deserted for the gold fields.

Though Henry's cousin had been doing well with the clothing house, like thousands of others got swept up by the Fraser Fever and "thought he saw a chance for a fortune in the sale of miner's supplies," entering into partnership to establish a store in Victoria.

In Henry's case the proposed plan was for him to head to the Fraser goldfields and, in the event of his mining prospects falling short, his cousin promised employment as a clerk in the new Victoria-based store.

"Henry George's hopes burned high," recorded his son, and he wrote home to Philadelphia, 15 August 1858, of his "golden expectations" that were met with dismay by his mother.

I think this money-making is attended with too many sacrifices. I wished it all in the bottom of the sea when I heard of your going to Victoria, but since it had been explained to me I feel better. . . I shall never feel comfortable until you are settled down quietly at some permanent business. This making haste to grow rich is attended with snares and temptations and a great weariness of the flesh. It is not the whole of life, this getting of gold. When you write explain about the place and how you are situated. Then we will look on the bright side.

Henry George sailed through the Golden Gate out of San Francisco, employed as a seaman aboard "a topsail schooner," landing in Victoria at the height of the rush north. The old HBC fort "suddenly swelled in population, until it was estimated that at times ten thousand miners, in sheds and tents, gathered about the more substantial

structures."

But George's arrival at Victoria was the most inauspicious time to continue towards the goldfields, as the "melting snows on its great mountain water-sheds swelled high its volume, came tearing down its long, twisting course and rushed through its rocky gorges like a roaring flood of destruction, earning the name sometimes given it – 'The Terrible Frazer.'"

The goldfields had come to a standstill, thousands of gold seekers left waiting for the river to drop before mining operations could resume. So George subsequently found employment in his cousin's newly-established miner's emporium on Wharf Street.

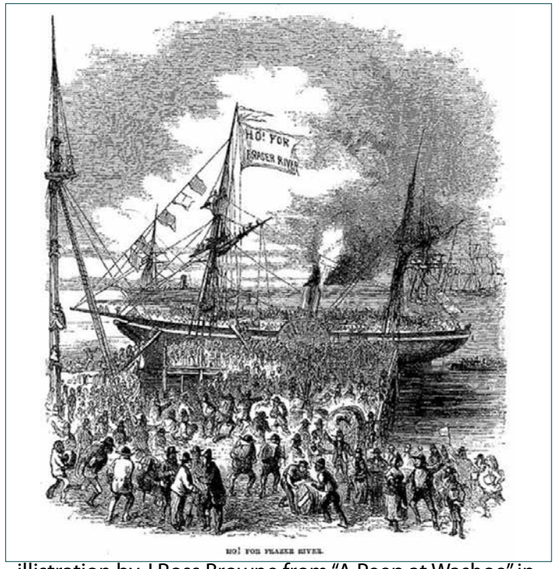
The store was apparently a one-story rough wooden structure with a makeshift loft situated beside the "Victoria Hotel" and facing the Inner Harbour. Henry George worked very hard there, sleeping in the loft during these tumultuous times. "He fastened a note outside the street door inviting customers who came out of the regular hours to 'Please give this door a kick.'" In a letter to his sister, 6 December 1858, he described further the conditions.

You innocently ask whether I made my own bed at Victoria. Why, bless you, my dear little sister! I had none to make. Part of the time I slept rolled up in my blanket on the counter, or on a pile of flour, and afterwards I had a straw mattress on some boards. The only difference between my sleeping and waking costumes was that during the day I wore both boots and cap, and at night dispensed with them.

After some months of hard toil it appears that George had enough of the place. He left his cousin's shop to go live in a tent with fellow San Franciscan George Wilbur who was determined to make a second attempt in the Fraser goldfields, "but before they could set off they were daunted by stories of failure that returning miners were bringing down." The lure of gold had tarnished and they abandoned the project.

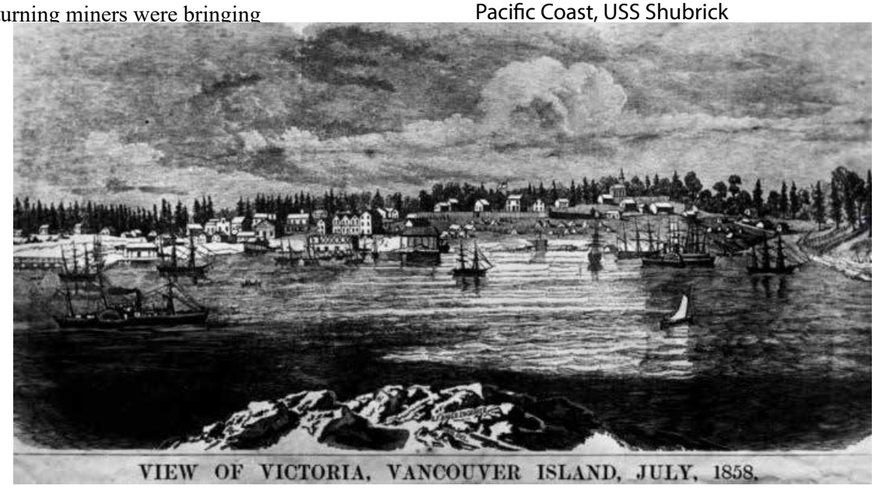
George's "golden expectations" were now dashed, and without employment decided to return to San Francisco, borrowing passage money from George Wilbur and others. Wilbur stated of his destitution that:

He had no coat; so I gave him mine. An old fellow named Wolff peddled pies among the tents, and



illistration by J.Ross Browne from "A Peep at Washoe" in Harper's Monthly Magazine December 1862

The first American vessel on light-house duty on the Pacific Coast, USS Shubrick



thinking that Harry would enjoy these more than the food he would get aboard the ship, we bought six of them, and as he had no trunk, we put them in his bunk, and drew a blanket over them so that nobody would see them and steal them. He wrote me from San Francisco when he got down that first night out he was so tired that he threw himself down on his bunk without undressing, and that he did not think of the pies until the morning, when he found that he had been lying on top of them all night.

George had left Victoria "dead broke" along with a borrowed coat and six squashed pies. It seems his northern adventure had not amounted to anything, but for some key facts. "Arriving in Victoria in August 1858, Henry George observed conditions which formed the genesis of his economic theories that would garner worldwide acclaim."

Having returned to California his own economic conditions, while improving, had been a mixed bag – even reduced to begging at one point in the 1860s – but for two key developments.

First, his experience as a typesetter landed him a job and started his career in newspapers and as a writer. Second, George's income now provided the kind of lodgings beyond the tent or shack he inhabited in Victoria.

The next letter home to his sister, 6 December 1858, announced his sense of prosperity after the hardship endured in British Columbia: "I am boarding now, and have been for the past two weeks in the 'What Cheer House,' the largest, if not the finest, hotel in the place. I pay $9 per week and have a beautiful little room and first rate living. I get $16 per week the way I am working now, but will soon strike into something that will pay me better."

GROCERIES AND PROVISIONS.

PER LATE ARRIVALS.

100 BBLS. GOLDEN GATE FLOUR,
40,000 lbs. Bacon,
5,000 lbs. Rio Coffee,
50 Firk. extra Butter, double packages.
100 alf bbls. Pork.
50 Quarter bbls. Pork.
50 chests Black and Green Tea.
20 barrels Billings' ams.
200 doz. Piper and Fields Oysters.

New Orleans Sugar, Candles, Soda and Sugar Crackers, Pickles in Kegs, Syrups, Vinegar, Codfish, Mackerel, Spices, Sweet Oil, Rope, etc., etc. For sale, wholesale and retail, 10 per cent lower than any other House in town. J. C. GEORGE AND CO.

Wharf street, near the Royal Hotel.

Victoria, Feb. 5. febom1

British Colonist Advertisment for George & Co. Store, Victoria, 12 February 1859

The What Cheer House advertised not only "an extensive library of choice works", but that "To be a man in the world" one must observe that "Economy is the only sure Road to Wealth."

Apparently, the What Cheer House had several hundreds of books in its library, including some economic works such as Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations. It was here that George's "solid reading was begun in this little library." In fact, when George continued to be down on his luck, he "spent much of his time when out of work in that little room and that he had read most of the books.

George made good use of this library even while experiencing a rather desperate poverty at times. By 1865 he had become a journalist and founded the San Francisco Daily Evening Post (1871-1875) where he became a critic "of speculation in public lands, the illegal actions of monopolies, and the exploitation of new Chinese immigrants in California." He proposed economic reforms, public ownership of utilities that included such industries as railroads and the telegraph system, popularized the "single-tax" reform movement, though never embraced the ideology of socialism.

His major work was *Progress and Poverty* (1879), which he infused with his strong moral passion for justice and his hatred of poverty, like he had experienced in British Columbia.

Progress and Poverty was George's first book, which sold several million copies, exceeding all other books sold in the United States except the Bible during the 1890s. In this volume George stated of the 19th century gold rushes:

1100 block of Wharf Street, looking north from Fort street ,ca 1865 - Victoria Archives

There is no mystery as to the cause which so suddenly and so largely raised wages in California in 1849, and Australia in 1852. It was the discovery of placer mines in unappropriated land to which labour was free that raised the wages of cooks in San Francisco restaurants to $500 a month, and left ships to rot in the harbour without officers or crew until their owners would consent to pay rates that in any other part of the globe seemed fabulous. Had these mines been on appropriated land, or had they been immediately monopolised so that rent could have arisen, it would have been land values that would have leaped upward, not wages.

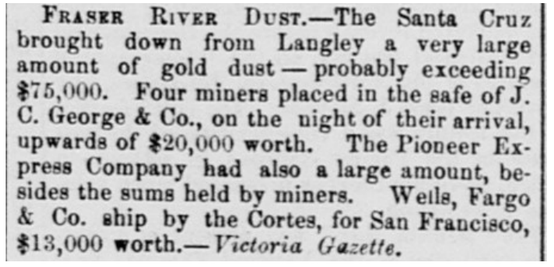
Progress and Poverty has been described as "a treatise on the questions of why poverty accompanies economic and technological progress and why economies exhibit a tendency toward cyclical boom and bust."

"We see it all over the world," stated George, "in the countries where land is high, wages are low, and where land is low, wages are high. In a new country the value of labour is at first at its maximum, the value of land at its minimum. As population grows and land becomes monopolised and increases in value, the value of labour steadily decreases."

Less well known was the inspiration for these social and economic theories: George's experience as a gold seeker in the Fraser River excitement of 1858. More than 30 years after his time in Victoria, George gave a speech in San Francisco (4 February 1890) that traced "the genesis of his thought on social questions."

"I came out here at an early age, and knew nothing whatever of political economy," stated George. "I had never intently thought upon any social problem. One of the first times I recollect talking on such a subject was one day, when I was about eighteen, after I had come to this country, while sitting on the deck of a topsail schooner with a lot of miners on the way to the Frazer River." George continued:

I remember, after coming down from the Frazer River country, sitting one New year's night in the gallery of the old American theatre – among the gods – when a new drop curtain fell, and we all sprang to our feet, for on that curtain was painted what was then a dream of the far future – the overland train coming into San Francisco; and after we had shouted ourselves hoarse, I began to think what good is it going to be to men like me – to those who have nothing but their labour? I saw that thought grow and grow. We were all – all of us, rich and poor – hoping for the development of California, proud of her future greatness, looking forward to the time when San Francisco would be one of the great capitals of the world; looking forward to the time when this great empire of the west would count her population by millions. And underneath it all came to me what that miner on the topsail schooner going up to Frazer River had said: 'As the country grows, as people come in, wages will go down.'"



FRASER RIVER DUST.—The Santa Cruz brought down from Langley a very large amount of gold dust — probably exceeding $75,000. Four miners placed in the safe of J. C. George & Co., on the night of their arrival, upwards of $20,000 worth. The Pioneer Express Company had also a large amount, besides the sums held by miners. Wells, Fargo & Co. ship by the Cortes, for San Francisco, $13,000 worth.—*Victoria Gazette.*

J.C. George & Co. Reprint in Sacramento Daily Union, 29 December 1858

It is said that during his lifetime, George became the third most famous person in America, behind Thomas Edison and Mark Twain. He was one of the most important voices of the Progressive Era; his supporters included Leo Tolstoy, Albert Einstein, Winston Churchill, and John Dewey. The ideology of "Georgism" dominated the social and economic thinking of the day – and many of his insights seem prophetic today. About 150 years ago, George spoke of a rising populism that had swept the country:

The most ominous political sign in the United States

To be a Man in this World!

YOU MUST OBSERVE

TWO VERY IMPORTANT MAXIMS!!

FIRST, THAT

"**Economy is the only sure Road to Wealth;**"

SECOND, THAT

"**Early to Bed and early to Rise.**"

You all know what that does for a man.

By the by, speaking of Economy, Beds, Early Rising, &c., reminds us of those magnificent **Patent French Spring Beds,**

AND THE

EXTRAORDINARY REDUCTION

IN THE

PRICE OF LODGINGS!

AT

Woodward's What Cheer House,

119 and 121 Sacramento street,

87, 89 and 91 (new addition) Leidesdorff street.

Lodgings, per night.....50 and 75 cents.
Lodgings in first class single rooms, furnished complete, per night.....75 cents.

If you cherish the least feeling of regard for the pressing wants of the "inner man," the exceeding low price of board at this establishment must convince you that this is the place.

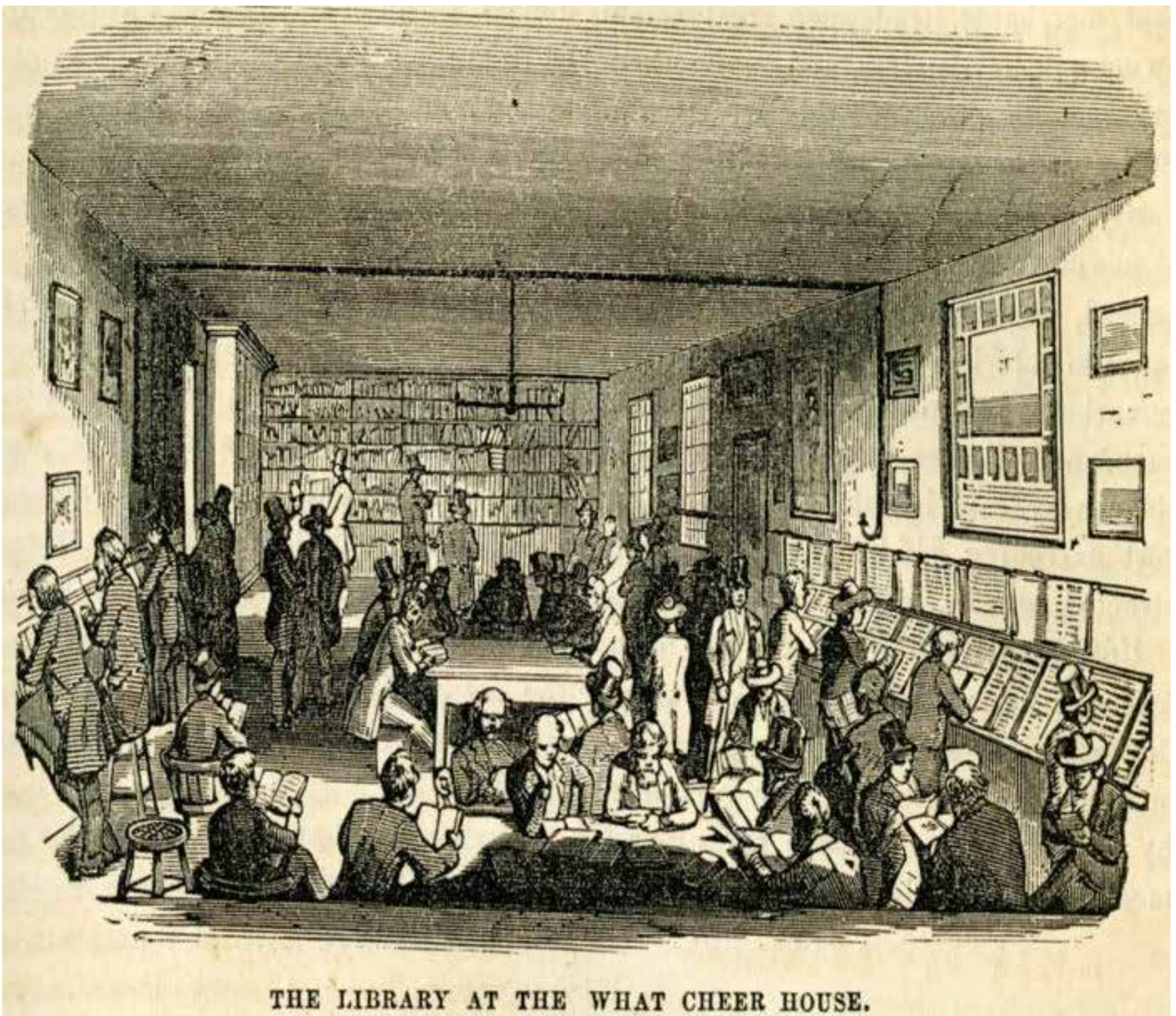
Meals, each.....50 cents.
Board, per day.....$1 00
Board, per week.....6 00

In order to furnish food for the mind, there is a splendid READING ROOM, abundantly supplied with Papers, Periodicals, &c., from all parts. There is also an extensive Library of Choice Works.

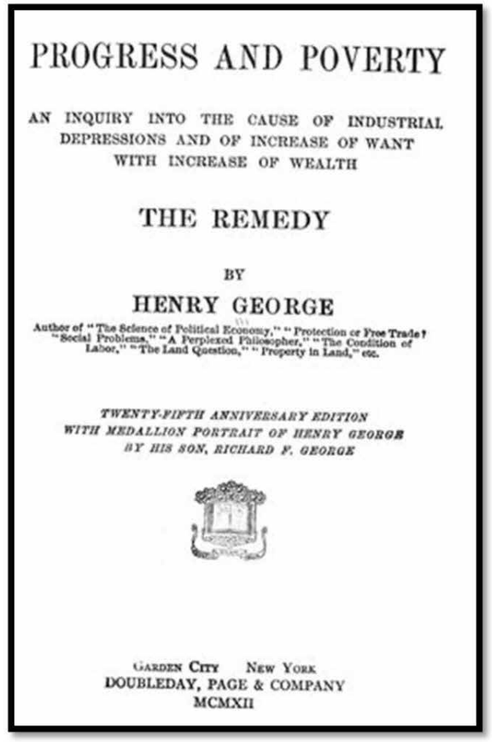
Advertisment for What Cheer House, San Francisco

today is the growth of a sentiment which either doubts the existence of an honest man in public office or looks on him as a fool for not seizing his opportunities. That is to say, the people themselves are becoming corrupted. Thus, in the United States today is republican government running the course it must inevitably follow under conditions which cause the unequal distribution of wealth. Where that course leads is clear to whoever will think. As corruption becomes chronic; as public spirit is lost; as traditions of honor, virtue, and patriotism are weakened; as law is brought into contempt and reforms become hopeless; then in the festering mass will be generated volcanic forces, which shatter and rend when seeming accident gives them vent. Strong, unscrupulous men, rising up upon occasion, will become the exponents of blind popular desires or fierce popular passions, and dash aside forms that have lost their vitality. The sword will again be mightier than the pen, and in carnivals of destruction brute force and wild frenzy will alternate with the lethargy of a declining civilization. The predication is all the more remarkable, considering its foundations came from a young lad who had experienced the chaotic, frenzied Fraser River Excitement of 1858 firsthand, followed by an informal education in the What Cheer House hotel. Clearly, this is a very different sort of rags-to-riches story! And more to the point, this is a story that once again places British Columbia's early history – before the coming of transcontinental railways – squarely within the North-South world of the expansive Californian mining frontier.

A fifth-generation British Columbian, Daniel Marshall is an author, professor, curator, documentarian, and researcher focusing on BC relatively untold but rich history.



THE LIBRARY AT THE WHAT CHEER HOUSE.



PROGRESS AND POVERTY

AN INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSE OF INDUSTRIAL DEPRESSIONS AND OF INCREASE OF WANT WITH INCREASE OF WEALTH

THE REMEDY

BY

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Our Great Mineral Resources Omineca Miner...

Oct 14, 1911

In all the world there is not today country which offers the opportunities that are to be found in the district tributary to Hazelton. To say nothing of the agricultural possibilities of our fertile valleys, or the multifarious industries for which railway construction is opening the way. Omineca district offers, in the development of its remarkable mineral resources, unusual opportunities to share in the making of millions.

Of no industry other than legitimate mining can it be said that the profits of the producer are won without a tax upon the consumer. In taking precious metals from the rocks, the miner adds to the wealth of the country. If it is enriched, nobody else becomes poorer in the process. There is truth in the declaration that the profit gained in mining is “the cleanest money in the world”

There are other promising mining districts in the west, but it may be declared in all seriousness that the country tributary to Hazelton has demonstrated its right to a foremost place among the prospective mineral-producing areas of the continent.

The developments and discoveries of the present season have shown to the satisfaction of all mining men interested that Omineca district has a great many deposits of ore which may be worked with profit.

In nearly every case the ore occurs in such form that the mines may be worked by small companies or individuals, without the enormous preliminary expenditures necessitated in many other camps. This means that the profits from the exploitation of our mineral resources will, in great part, remain in the district, instead of being distributed far and wide among the shareholders of a few big companies.

Many of the veins of our camps, carrying pay ore from the grass roots, can be worked at a profit from the very beginning, given adequate transportation facilities, which will be available on the completion of the Grand Trunk Pacific

It is not only our silver-lead and copper ores which will bring wealth to the district. The gold placers of the Omineca river and its tributaries, with the as yet unproved Ingineca and Finlay river district, will produce many thousands of dollars on the future, while the immense coal fields which are being proved in various parts of Omineca will in time surprise those who are unfamiliar with the vast resources of northern British Columbia.

The time has arrived for the news of our undeveloped wealth to be published to the world. We have the resources, awaiting only the application of energy and capital. Let everyone in the district help in the campaign of publicity which will bring the men and the money required to develop our mines

Bulkley River flowing into Skeena River near Hazelton British Columbia - wikipedia

Passionate about the Development of Natural Resources

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- ☑ Full access to all other Omineca Mining Association member services.
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Anne Sharpe returns to the Bullion Mine years after it closed

The Sharpe Era

By Mitch Mortensen

The first automobile to enter the Cariboo was in 1907. Gavin (Gavie) Hamilton recalls

“I rode on the running board, at Mr Perry’s invitation so I could see how she took the steep hill below the field. The old hill was about twice as steep as the present one, but the car took it without apparent effort.”

Gavie was accustomed to “freighters” having to drop their trail wagon at the foot and double up the steep hills with the aid of a companions horses.

It was reported in the Province August 25,1934

“He (Gavie) could scarcely believe his eyes.”

In the car was O. B. Perry, Chief consulting engineer for the Guggenheim interests in the west. Riding with him was Professor Newsom, from the University of California, J.A. Quick and “Happy” Fowler the driver.

It was July. Two steam shovels were building the 12 mile ditch from Spanish lake. John Hobson’s tunnel was within 90 feet of its objective.

Within hours, three hundred men laid down their tools. Gavin continued, “They left them just where they had been working. They called at the pay office and then hit the trail out of camp; the saddest sight I’ve ever seen and the hardest blow this country ever had”

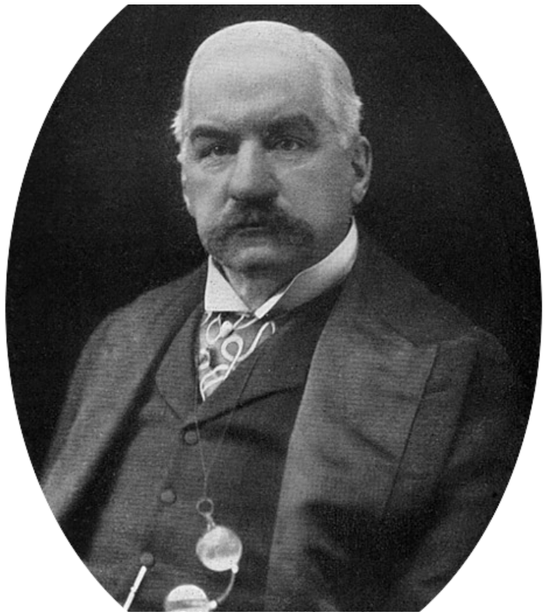
“Yes closing down the Bullion killed Hobson, the greatest mining engineer, in my opinion, this country ever saw. That mine was his baby for fourteen years. He believed in it; believed there was pay in paying quantities for close on three miles of channel from Dancing Bill Gulch to the South Fork pit; proved his theory and made others believe it. Just why the mine closed down is still a mystery to us in here.”

There were a number of factors believed to have influenced the Guggenheim’s to withdraw from a number of mining ventures throughout 1907 including the Bullion Mine.

In July 1906 the Hepburn Act became law in the USA. This act authorized the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to set maximum railroad rates and extended their authority to cover bridges, terminals, ferries, sleeping cars, express companies and oil pipelines.

This had a significant impact on railroad securities and was followed by a stock market collapse in March 1907. This carried through the summer with a collapse in the copper market in July.

F. Augustus Heinze- Wikipedia



J.P. Morgan - Wikipedia

The real panic didn’t begin until Oct 14 when a scheme to short squeeze backfired. August Heinze’s brother Otto and Charles Morse had turned to Charles T. Barney for financing. He declined to provide funding for the venture citing that they needed more money than he had to attempt the short squeeze. Otto went ahead with what he had and began purchasing shares on a Monday. In one day United Copper rose from $39 to $52 per share. He issued a call for the short sellers to return the borrowed stock but they were able to find plenty of shares to continue to sell short. The stock rose to nearly $60 before it crashed to $10 By Wednesday. August Heinze was ruined.

The collapse of United Copper created a panic that rippled through trust companies and banks. A depositor “bank run” on Knickerboker Trust Company resulted in 8 million dollars paid out in three hours and it closed at noon... Permanently. JP Morgan was instrumental in keeping Trust Company of America afloat with enough cash to survive the run depositors made on it. The Stock exchange neared collapse because the banks were reluctant to make the short term loans they typically provided to facilitate daily stock trades. Without the loans the prices on the exchange began to crash. It all came down to a crisis of confidence.

JP Morgan and other bankers formed two committees to communicate to clergy to calm their congregations and the press to describe the various aspects of a financial rescue package. By November 2 the panic was calming down. However, these events were significant enough that it in part led to the creation of the US Federal Reserve in December 23, 1913.

As reported in the Saturday Sunset Published in Vancouver October 26, 1907

There were 1200-1500 men employed on construction, installing bridges, building bridges, roads, railways, and in making other necessary preparations for placer mining on a large scale. Then one day came a pre-emptory order to cease work, and the entire industry came to a standstill and with it ceased a payroll of some $300,000 per month.

The belief that the Guggenheim’s were caught in an unprepared state for a squeeze in given color in the opinion of some, by the abruptness with which work ceased. In some cases the expenditure of a few hundred dollars more would have completed works, which, left in their present condition, will likely result in losses of many thousands of dollars. Fort instance, it is reported that a bridge which another twenty-four hours of work would have put into a safe condition, has been left standing

Charles T. Barney - Wikipedia

Charles Morse- Wikipedia

Saturday August 29th 1896

Weather Clear & fine
Thermom 45° 86°
Barom 27.25
All work going on same as yesterday.
Visit'd by Borland's Drover brought in
3 head of fine Beef Steers

(Veith & Borland's drover brought in 3 head of fine beef steers.)

Ditch Extension Report (6 M. 48 ch)
Pinched 628 Rods - for R. A. Ford
Ditch Excavated 5 ms 408 "
Gold Stubbert & Monkhurst - on new Wagon
Guards, Parker, Ballew & Alexander
Dr Underhill left for home at Mission

(Gold: Shipped on new wagon. Guards: Parker, Ballew & Alexander.)

Sunday Aug 30th 1896

Weather, Clear & fine
Thermom. 46° 87°
Barom. 27.00
Diego & Russello gangs at work on
old 5 M. Ditch, Slabbing & building Walls
McDonald's gang Stationed on Ditch Extension
Dave Young & Swan arrived at 9 PM
with load Provisions from Carp. Mtn.
A small crew of Miners & 2 Carpenters
working in Pit & setting Grants & Pipe Line
into new position in Pit #2.

Monday: August 31st 1896.

Weather: Clear & Windy -
Thermom 49° 75°
Barom 27.02
Truman Barker discovered a fresh Bear
at 11 AM. on Forks road & Cunningham's
Saw Mill before a string & Barker
saw it first in time, but having no help, he
worked at alone & finally contracted to get her
3 first class hind quarters. Meat for Dinner

Tuesday September 1st 1896

Weather - Fine but Smoky -
Thermom 34° 81°
Barom. 27.15
Ray & Sam Team arrived with Provisions for Capt Mtn. yesterday
Gold Guards, Alexander & Ballew & Knight
arrived from 150 Mile House, at 3 P.M. Yesterday
Jeff Keough left for Barkerville via Trail to see
his Father who is very ill in Hospital there.
Jno M. Buxton, Vancouver.
Geo A. Kelly & E. F. & Gaynor of New York
Geo B. Kittinger, Seattle, Wash
Col. C. F. Fishback & Wife " "
& the Misses Wilson & Farrar of Vancouver
arrived to day - After Dinner the party proceeded
the Mine & works, remaining all night
The above named gentlemen, from the
Syndicate that have brought from J. M. Buxton
the Maud Hyde Mine at 4 Mile Creek on
Quesnelle River - The Fishback claims on
North Fork & 20 Miles of River Claims, from
Forks down, are the properties, combined that
Col Fishback & Wells to the British North
West Mining Co. for £5.000.000 -
Incorporated in Seattle - It is said that
E. F. & Gaynor represents the Goulds (Geo & Jay)
Capital & Estate of New York -
Sept 1. H. B. Hobsons 50th Birthday
Wednesday - Sept 2nd 1896
Weather - Clear - 36° 74° (Sept. 1 H.B. Hobson's 50th Birthday)(1896)
Thermom - 36° 74°
Barom - 27.18
Buxton & Fishback's party left for Quesnell Forks
this AM. & thence to Maud Mine - by Trail -
Dave Young & Swan arrived with load Hay
from D. Lake & Big Lake -

Daily Operations Diary, 2

The Bullion Mine (then called the "Cariboo Mine")

December 1901 - January 1902

-Monday- December 23rd /01

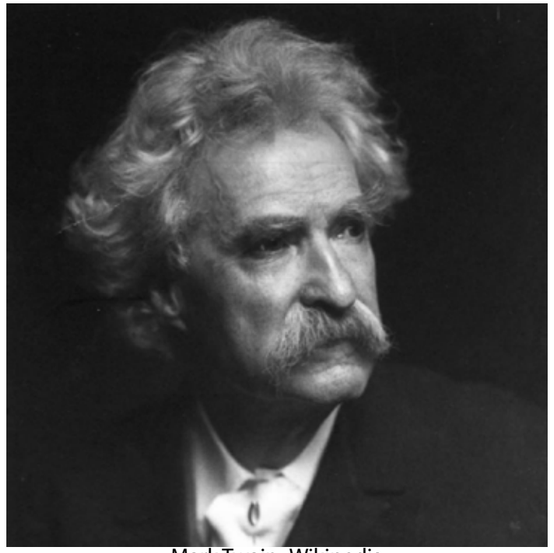
Polleys Lake telephoned for Dr Wilkins at 3 AM
Alec. Tingley left for Polleys Lake with Dr W.
at 3.15 AM
A daughter is born to Mr & Mrs Barton
China Charlie in from Quesnel Forks to see
Mr Hobson. He broke his sleigh so Mr Hobson
lent him the buckboard to go home in.
Joe Moore came up to see Mr Hobson
Rae Hamilton in with load of grain, on sleigh.

-Tuesday- December 24th /01

Nothing of importance to record.

-Wednesday- December 25th /01

Christmas day:
Employees did not work to day.
Snowed hard during the day.
Eagle & Rae Hamilton in from Beaver Lake
Dan Prior in from Little Lake
Christmas dinner a great success.



Mark Twain- Wikipedia

1907 Panic Wall Street- Wikipedia

Knickerboker Trust Company- Wikipedia

upon the false work, which will, to a certainty, be swept away when the ice goes out in the spring. Such risks, it is thought, would be assumed by men of the Guggenheim stamp only from dire financial pressure. The fear that the Guggenheim's will be unable to go on with their development work in the spring is causing no small apprehension in the Yukon as well.

In Dec of 1906 the Guggenheim syndicate abandoned their option on 400,000 shares of Nipissing Mining Company. All over a question of ownership. They had already paid 2.5 million dollars of what was supposed to be four payments to a total of 10 million dollars. However, over the potential for the ownership of the properties to be assailable and Nipissing refusal to allow the Guggenheim Syndicate time to investigate they walked away with 40,000 shares for their 2.5 million dollars at 62.50 per share. The original value of the shares was $5 dollars but rose to $34 dollars on word the Guggenheim's had taken an option on a third of the stock.

I believe it was losses such as these that harmed the Guggenheim's. After all even Mark Twain in that time described a mine as "a hole in the ground owned by a liar"

In 1925 The annual report to the minister of mines recorded the mine was "subject to investigation by engineers during the year". There is also the question of water rights. While the dam at Spanish Lake could feed a hydroelectric plant, the water rights were owned by the Bullion Syndicate.

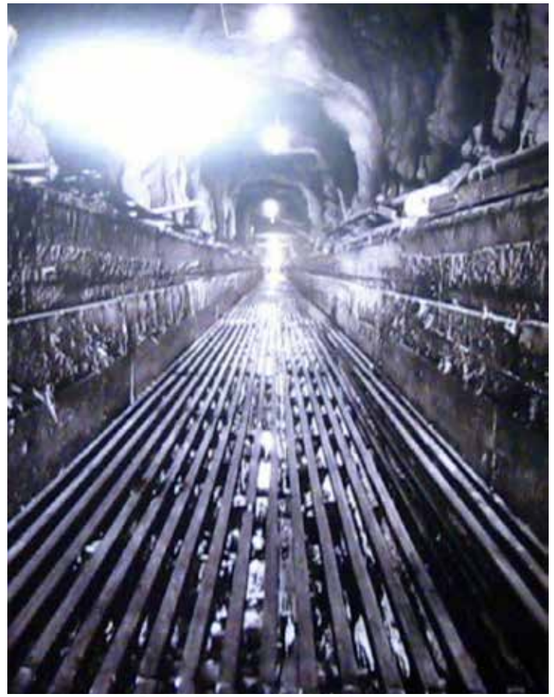
The following year, Ross, Holland and Ulch secured the property through an option. More repairs were made to the water system. Water from Bootjack lake was diverted into

Morehead lake. Plans were drawn up to building a running tunnel from Jawbone creek to "tap" into Morehead lake. This would eliminate a long portion of flume.

In 1927 they completed the tunnel from Jawbone creek to Morehead lake. By deepening the upper end of North Fork creek, it caused the water from Bootjack to flow into Morehead lake. The sluice flume in the pit was repaired, the pit cleaned out and 300 feet of bedrock gravels were "piped" (hydraulic raise) totaling 6000 cubic yards. The gravels were reported to average $0.30 per cubic yard.

Carinelle Placers Limited acquired the Bullion and the adjoining property of the Morehead mining syndicate in 1928. N.E. Meilicke, was the President of this company. Their priorities involved restoration work of the connection of the tunnel to the floor of the pit and restoring the water systems.

The total length of the tunnel is 1500 feet. It is connected at the face by a vertical 8x6 foot upraise 119 feet in height. The lower 32 feet are I bedrock and the upper 87 feet in gravel. The connection involved 165 feet of tunneling. While the floor of the pit remained dry, the lower gravels were water-logged, setting up quasl-fluid pressure conditions to overcome. With difficulty the connection was made.



Sluice Tunnel - Likely Museum

Morehead Lake Dam and Creek

Within the tunnel, a 6x4 foot sluice was built. It was lined with 14 inch spruce blocks. The first 900 feet ran a grade of 5.5% and for the last 600 feet, the grade was 4%. An emergency exit was also built in the form of a 6x4 foot raise which connected to the north side of the pit. The tunnel is lighted with electricity and a electric service car runs along the top of the flume.

Significant work had been done to the water systems. All wooden flumes had been replaced with Dutcher suspended metal flumes. The pooling reservoir was also reconditioned. Water delivery and pressure were back to historic standards.

All of this done in three and a half months. By mid October, 25,000 yards of bedrock gravels had been “piped” (Hydraulic raise). The old sluice flume was used and necessary until the bed rock gravels had been washed the 1000 feet to the raise.

“It is highly interesting to record the finding of perhaps the most authentic fossil remains of the record in the gold gravels of the Cariboo. This was found lying on bedrock in the course of advancing the raise from the sluice-tunnel to the pit. The fossil remains consist of the upper portion of the skull of a kid, With a portion of the convolutions of the brain also preserved. The whole appears to be petrified and conveys a suggestion of modernity. It is not known what was the result of expert examination of this fossil. It was understood to be the intention of the management to send it to the Geological Survey of Canada, Ottawa, for examination”

Carinelle Placers Limited carried through 1929 and changed hands in 1930. This time it was Quatsino Sound Mining Company, G.C. Bagley in charge of operations. 1931 records the newly Incorporated B.C. Hydraulics Limited as a subsidiary of Quatsino Sound Mining Company.

Up to 200,000 yrds were “piped” through a hydraulic raise that season. A thorough sampling program was also carried out on the face and rim rock gravels to determine average values for future plans.

The management was considering means for stacking large boulders and increasing the volume of water as a ground sluice in the face of the pit. There appears to be better efficiency by securing a greater volume of water as a ground sluice than has been employed. The idea was to cut the gravel bank with high-pressure water and effect rapid removal for the disintegrated gravels by means of a ground sluice of large volume.

In 1932 the Bullion again changed hands. This time it was Hireen Placers Limited under the management of W.T. Hireen. Their operations commenced late in the season and were successful until October when a “cave of significant proportions occurred in the pit”. This stopped the fall clean up but optimism from management projected a clean up early in the following season.

Then in 1933, those holding an option on the mine approached R.F. Sharpe to reopen the Bullion. It had been 27 years since John Hobson`s time of operating the mine. Those who had attempted to reopen the mine since Hobsons time either didn’t have the sufficient capital or possess the knowhow.

When Ray Sharpe inspected the mine, he found the tailings tunnel blocked resulting in a lake 100 feet deep in the bottom. Most of the water system had fallen into disrepair. However, he believed he could reopen the mine and agreed to do so. He set to work with a small crew to reopen the tunnel. The people who held the option had no credit so he used his own credit to pay his own men and buy the groceries.

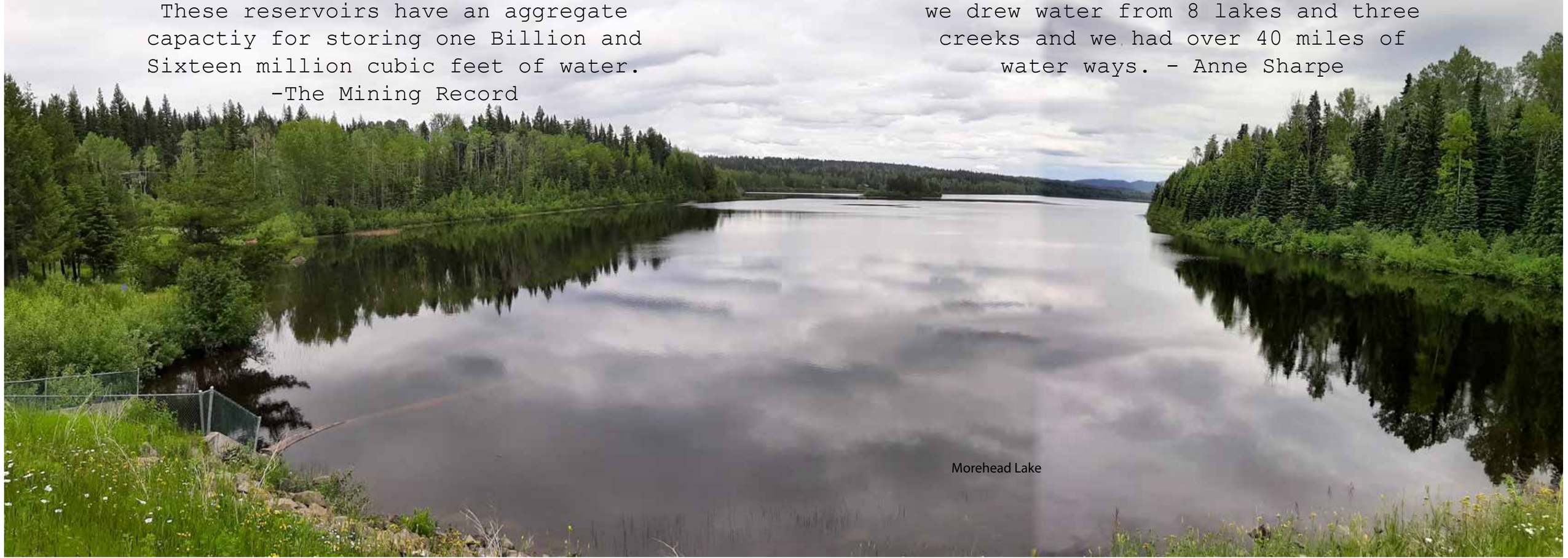
The following year those who held the option asked Ray what he was going to do. He told them he needed $200,000 to reopen the mine. They balked at that so Ray asked them to give him the option and they agreed. He was able to raise the money in England.

Ray Sharp rebuilt and greatly extended John Hobsons system of waterways. He dug new canals and built new waterways, bridged gully’s, and tapped new lakes for water. The several miles of water system including pumphouses, piping, flumes, channels were controlled by a series of water gates and an elaborate communications system. It took 30 min to start the system up and 30 min to shut it down.

The switching system was quite sensitive towards maintaining a specific flow and pressure to the monitors at the mine. Too much water could create excessive pressure and cause an accident. There was significant risk from any of the switching stations to overwhelm the water system. Locks were installed on the water gates to minimize the potential for a miscommunication.

These reservoirs have an aggregate capactiy for storing one Billion and Sixteen million cubic feet of water.
-The Mining Record

we drew water from 8 lakes and three creeks and we had over 40 miles of water ways. - Anne Sharpe



Morehead Lake

Once they had completed the water system upgrades, they started installing large pipe to bring water into the mine. For this they used a tram that extended across the mine to move the pieces of pipe into place. Next, they would perform the arduous task of assembling these pieces into place. It is said that Ray inspected the pipeline himself. The monitors were ready to operate.

Next was constructing the sluice box. Except for metal bars to separate and capture the gold bearing material, the sluice was made completely of wood. The material would then be washed through the sluice and the tailings would be swept into the tunnel and carried away by the Quesnel River.

Explosives were used to break up the boulders too large to go through the sluice boxes. The shooting crew started every morning at 11:30

At regular intervals the water system was shut down and the main sluice box was cleaned out. This would take time as the concentrates were washed through smaller sluice boxes and then mixed with mercury to form a gold amalgam. The amalgam would then be placed in a retort in the gold room. This room was located in the Sharpe`s house. In the tort the mercury would be vaporized and then condensed and recovered for reuse. The gold would remain in the mold. An average clean up would yield $30,000 to $50,000 in gold.

The annual report for 1937 summarizes the mine as using a 10-inch monitor on bed-rock gravels, and one 6-inch monitor on upper gravels in the main pit. One 10-inch monitor was in the south fork pit. Over a million cubic yards of material was “piped off” (hydraulic raise) in the main pit. Water use was 23.5 million tons.

“Water from Jacobie (formally Eight mile) lake now flows by gravity in a newly-constructed canal line to the Morehead Lake watershed. From Little and Prior (formally named Long Lake) lakes, water is now pumped by diesel-powered pumps...”

They also did significant keystone drilling to “delimit the channel up-stream, and airplane drilling in connection with bank-blasting to promote safety”. 130 tons of steel riffles were added to the sluice flume. and there were up to 60 men employed that season.

1938 saw another dry season limiting operations. However, they still managed to process over a million yards. Emphasis was put on the success of “keystone drilling revealing unexpected features, and enabling future operations to be planned with certainty.” They had also successfully holed through to the south fork pit from the Bullion pit.

1939 was another year where over a million yards of gravel were piped (hydraulic raise) during the 1939 season. Significant maintenance work was carried out on the ditch lines

In 1940 Tragedy struck. On August 7th, a large slide occurred in the drop-pit.

“The fatal accident was to Rennie A. Blais, a jackhammer driller. The slide swept him into the sluice which carried him over 1000 feet to the tailings dump, where he died within a few minutes after the other men reached him. The start of the slide was noticed and a warning shouted to deceased and other men on the floor of the pit. The other men were able to escape to the sides, but Blais had run in the same direction as the slide, which over took him.”

Three days later, another side occurred in the drop pit. The men working there had sufficient warning to get to safety but tools and equipment were buried.

The season had started in April but suspension of work in September was due to “labour trouble”. Still they managed to “pipe” a million yards of gravels from the South Fork Pit and half that much from the Drop pit. 150,000 tons of rock was removed to build a sluice channel.

The 1941 season caught an early start in March 26th with a skeleton crew in the Drop pit. The goal was to pipe off some remaining overburden to make the pit safer when working the lower gravels. By April a full crew was on site and they began washing the lower gravels. They extended the bed rock cut and sluice boxes as necessary. This monitor “giant” was fitted with a specially made 11.5 inch nozzle under a 400 foot head and they moved over 500,000 yards of material. However, this section of the channel was apparently glaciated and recoveries were so low that they moved to the Bullion pit to wash 100,000 yards of gravels previously abandoned by other operators. Here they used a 10 inch nozzle under 380 foot head.

The annual report for 1942 simply reads

“For the first time in many years this company did not operate. The present operation has come to the end of its life. The equipment has been removed and it is understood that most of it has been disposed of.”

Below are snap shots extracted from The Bullion Mine Silent Film 1930’s

Hauling PIpe

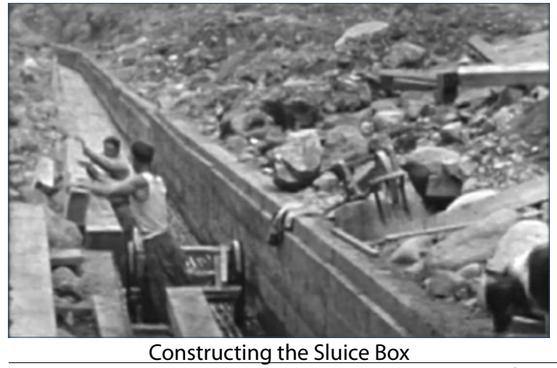
Skyline Moving Pipe

joining Pipe

Hundreds of Feet of Pipe

Excavating Canals

Constructing Flumes


Constructing the Sluice Box

Ray Sharpe Inspecting the finished work

Many years later Ray Sharpe's wife Anne took part in a black and white documentary on the Bullion mine in their time. The video describes Ray sharpe beginning a bold effort in 1941 by coming at the remaining gravels in the Bullion pit from the opposite direction. This would involve cutting a new channel through solid rock. Much of the profit from previous years was used up in this venture. His calculations showing high values.

Anne Sharpe describes that they "thought we had the bank of England sitting there. Maybe 2 or 3 million in gold and it should have been there. But after we took the overburden off, we saw something was wrong. The gravels didn't look the same. So, we took a trial clean up. We should have had at least 10,000 to 15,000 but we took only $700 dollars. It was a heartbreak. So, my husband said alright we will run for a week. We will make another cleanup. He knew something was wrong. The next clean up there wasn't a color. We didn't take a dollar. There was nothing. Absolutely nothing.

Then when it was exposed, you could see where the arm of a glacier had broken through and scoured out completely that spot where we thought we had a few million dollars.

Below are snap shots extracted from The Bullion Mine Silent Film 1930's

Anne Sharpe Cutting the ribbon at a ceremony to to re open the mine

Flowing sluice box

Tailings tunnel

Out flow into the Quesnel River

The mine was finished. It was bare."

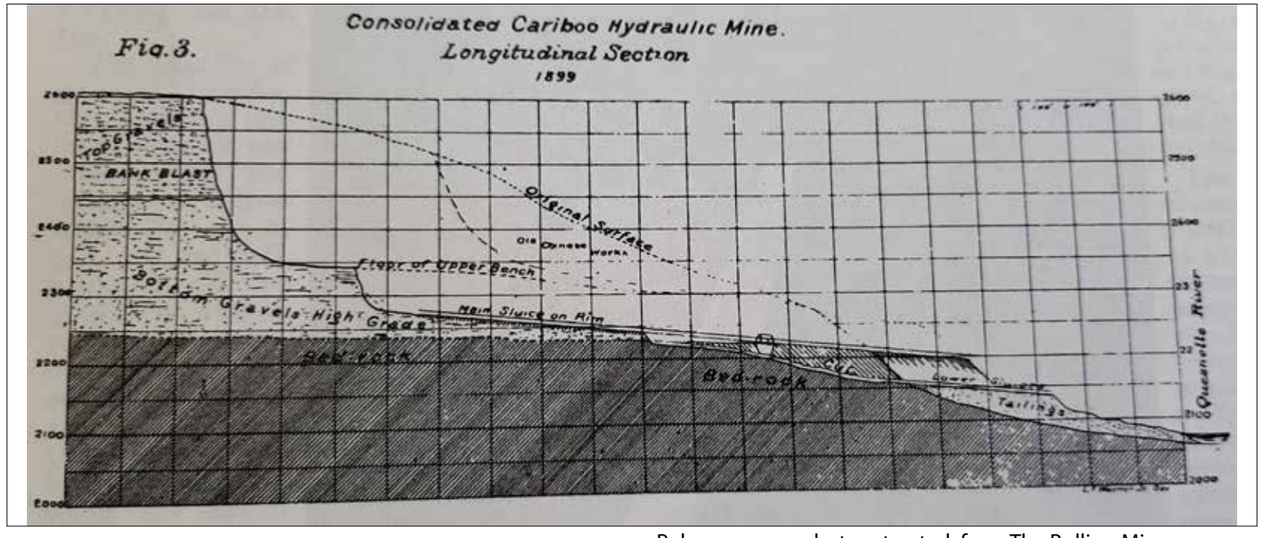
"I was afraid to come back to the Bullion. I hadn't seen it all in 14 years. Not since my husband and I left in 1950. I was afraid to go back. I was afraid to see what had become of it. I loved that mine. I loved the Bullion. I loved my house. And now I am glad I went back. By coming back, it sort of settled something in my own mind. You know, once a gold miner, you are a gold miner all your life and I'm a gold miner. You know what I mean" – Anne Sharpe

In the mid 1980's I visited this mine for the first time as a student of Dave Falconer's. I was attending grade school in Likely. I can remember looking out over this massive chasm having no idea what it was all about. In time my interest grew enough to ask my step father Art Woolsey about this mine. He was in his teens when he saw the Bullion operating during the 1930's.

He simply answered "they lost the channel. Then when the war broke out, they blew the shafts and tunnels to prevent anyone from claim jumping. All the miners went to war and a lot of knowledge was lost when many did not survive to come back."

"Dad, do you think there is more gold?" I asked

"Of course there is. The Bullion is just one small part of a massive river system that flowed through here millions of years ago."



Below are snap shots extracted from The Bullion Mine Silent Film 1930's

Monitors in the main pit

operateing a Monitor

Diversion Gate and Telephone

Clean up

Fred McFetridge - Foreman at the Bullion

Edmonton Journal Oct 10, 1974

...Fred was in a construction camp when Bullion Placers approached him to be foreman.

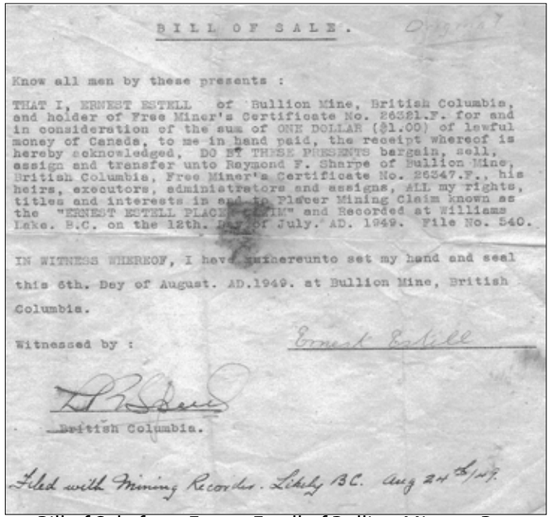
“The size of the dig and all those men scared me to death and I didn’t know anything about the mine except what I had read. Sharpe had four resident engineers there - he sure knew how to throw money around.”

“He purchased a big shovel that cost thousands and thousands of dollars and the mine had its own electrical plant and telephone.

The gold was really fine - about the size of a pin head - and I maintained that really fine gold was being forced out to the river through the pipeline. Sharpe had too much heavy equipment for such a fine operation”

In Hobsons time, Bullion Camp became a sizable community on the hillside above the pit. There was a sawmill, offices, warehouses, machine and electrical shops, barns, stables and a hospital. The foreman and the doctor had private residences and Hobson lived in a big gabled house at the top of the clearing. When Mr. McFetridge arrived, about the only building standing was Hobsons Hotel.

“It had two large dining rooms and a gigantic range but no water.” He recalled. The hotel burned down while I was there in 1935 and there was nothing we could do about it - the only water was for the cook house.



BILL OF SALE.

Know all men by these presents :

THAT I, ERNEST ESTELL of Bullion Mine, British Columbia, and holder of Free Miner's Certificate No. 26381.F. for and in consideration of the sum of ONE DOLLAR ($1.00) of lawful money of Canada, to me in hand paid, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, DO BY THESE PRESENTS bargain, sell, assign and transfer unto Raymond F. Sharpe of Bullion Mine, British Columbia, Free Miner's Certificate No. 26347.F., his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, ALL my rights, titles and interests in and to Placer Mining Claim known as the "ERNEST ESTELL PLACER CLAIM" and Recorded at Williams Lake, B.C. on the 12th. Day of July. AD. 1949. File No. 540.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 6th. Day of August. AD.1949. at Bullion Mine, British Columbia.

Witnessed by :

Ernest Estell

British Columbia.

Filed with Mining Recorder. Likely B.C. Aug 24th/49.

Bill of Sale from Ernest Estell of Bullion Mine to Ray Sharpe - Likely Museum

Mr McFetridge left the mine before it closed in 1942 and it is his opinion that Sharpe overextended himself, ran out of gold completely and spent more than he ever took out.

“Sharpe wanted to beat Hobsons’s record and he really thought he could do it but he just went too big and there wasn’t enough bullion to keep it alive.

Hobson house fire - Likely Museum

Titled - “Dads Residence” - Cabin at Bullion - Likely Museum

THe General Slocum disaster-wikipedia

The Steamboat Enterprise (1855)

Mitch Mortensen

In 1769, a Scotsman named James Watt improved on the steam engine design first conceived by Thomas Newcomen in 1712. The Newcomen steam engine was created for the purpose of lifting water out of a tin mine.

It took another 18 years before the first steamboat was built in the United States. This was done by John Fitch in 1787. He built a 45-foot steamboat that he sailed down the Delaware River while members of the Constitutional Convention watched. John Fitch built four more steamboats, but they were too expensive to build and operate.

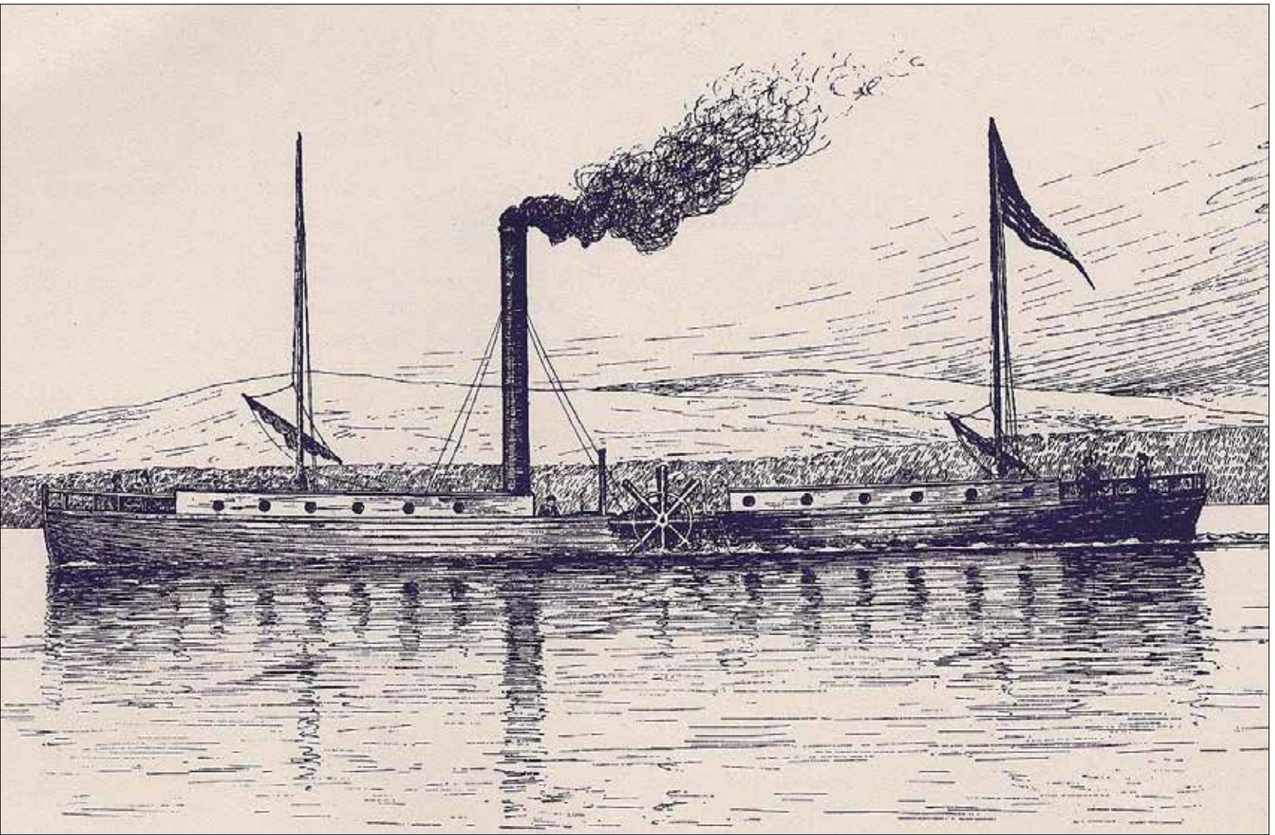
The first successful steamboat was the Clermont, which was built by American inventor Robert Fulton in 1807. He had partnered with Robert Livingston. On August 17 1807 the Clermont made its maiden voyage from New York to Albany in a record eight hours time. It was a huge success and the dawn of Steamboats had come.

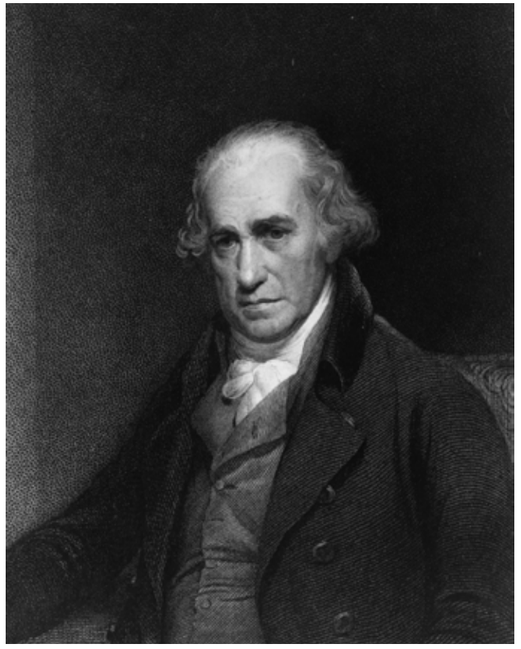
The early Paddlewheel boats built in the Southern United States were of a basic design. The hull was constructed of wood with a wooden paddle wheel attached. Later vessels had steel hulls. The paddle wheel had a circular center with spokes. Planks were then attached to these spokes to make the paddle. The paddle was either mounted on the side (sidewheels) or at the stern (sternwheelers)

The steam engine consisted of a boiler filled with giant copper tubes with two flues and a firebox. The boiler was filled with water and a fire was lit to make steam. The first fires were supplied by wood and later by coal.

While all steamboats shared a similar design, a variety of types of boats developed over time. Towboats moved barges up and down the rivers. Ferries carried people while Snagboats cleared the river of debris. There were Packets that freighted goods and people while Fuelers met other steamboats along the rivers. These vessels supplied other steamers with wood or coal. Finally there were the Showboats. These steamboats would travel the river towns bringing plays and music to its inhabitants. They were Luxurious and rare.

The Steamboat Clermont-wiki





Above, John Fitch. wiki Above right, James Watt. britanican. Below right , Robert Fulton. britanica Below, A late version of a Watt double-acting steam engine, built by D. Napier & Son (London) in 1832, now in the lobby of the Superior Technical School of Industrial Engineers of the UPM (Madrid). Steam engines of this kind propelled the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain and the world.wiki

The Steamboat Enterprise

The Packet steamboats carried crops up and down the rivers. They were so important that river towns were located near the large southern plantations. This made getting crops to the boats much easier. Packets also carried people with a first class deck. Anyone else bunked with the live stock the lower deck.

The Snagboat was invented in 1829. These boats were outfitted with a crane to remove debris from the water. Up to that time several vessels had been damaged while others floundered from an impact with sunken trees or stumps.

The greatest concern with steamboats were boiler explosions. Constant attention to the boiler had to be observed to maintain pressure. Too much pressure could cause an explosion such as the General Slucum disaster on June 15 1904.

The General Slucum was on a chartered run carrying members of St. Marks Evangelical Lutheran Church to a picnic. She caught fire and in the span of about 20 minutes, there was a deadly explosion killing a 958 and injuring 175.

From 1811 to 1851, Twenty one percent of Steamboat accidents were from boiler explosions. The life expectancy of a steamboat was three to five years. Anything after that was considered exceptional.

The paddlewheel needed only inches of water deep to supply its thrust. They were equipped with a block and tackle device called a “grasshopper” rigged on the bow. Vessels could hoist themselves over bars and shoals.

There were several vessels built carrying the name Enterprise. However, a few in particular were made famous by her Captain.

In 1855 a sternwheeler was built at Canemah Oregan. It was captained by Archibald Jamieson and operated on the Willamette River. Up to 1858 the Enterprise ran between the Oregan City, Canemah, and the Corvalis.

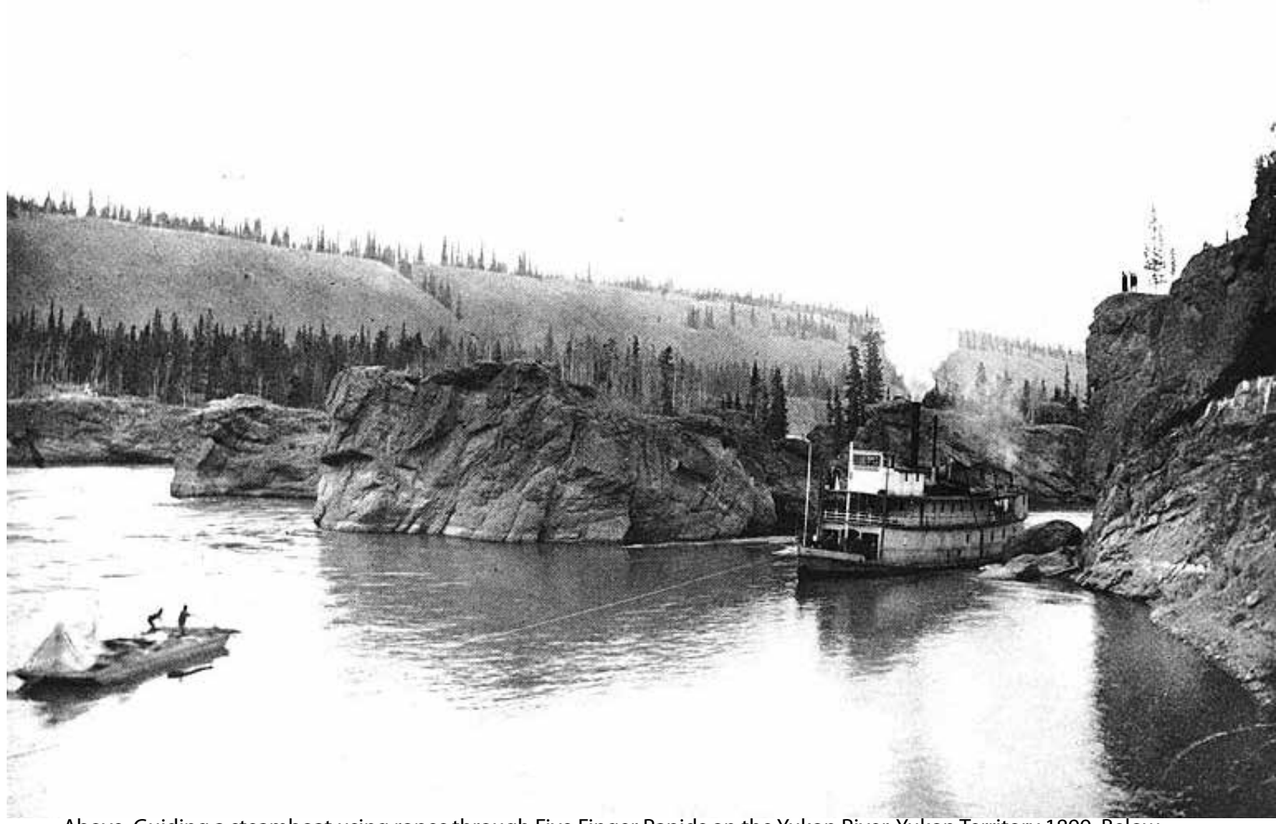
She was 115 feet (35m) long with a beam of 20 feet (6m) and was 115 gross tons. Installed were twin steam engines, horizontally mounted with a 12 inch bore x 48 stroke bringing a net of 9.6 horsepower.

In July 1858 Jamieson sold Enterprise to Captain Thomas A. Wright. Thomas was one of a family in the steamboat business. His father and two brothers owned and operated other vessels. Tom intended to take Enterprise to the Fraser River Gold Rush.

The first leg of this journey was moving Enterprise from the upper to lower Willamette River by lining the vessel over Willamette Falls.

Lining was a technique that used a running rope called a line or a steel cable to a secure point on shore. Then the cable was wrapped around a steam powered winch (grasshopper) on the boat that would either crank in the cable or let it out.

They went down the lower Willamette and Columbia rivers to Astoria Oregon. From there arrangements were made for an ocean going steamship to tow Enterprise to Victoria. While under tow the strong waves on the



Above, Guiding a steamboat using ropes through Five Finger Rapids on the Yukon River, Yukon Territory 1899. Below, Willamette Falls 1918.

Columbia Bar racked the vessel so fiercely that it began leaking. They barely made it back into the shallow waters at Astoria before she sank.

Wright managed to raise her successfully and repair the damage. They set out again that August under tow and arrived in Victoria later that month. She was to be the second stern wheeler to enter the Fraser River.

The earliest mention of the Enterprise in Victoria is printed in the Sydney Morning Herald for November 8, 1858. The article is titled Fraser River Gold Fields (From the Correspondent of the Alta California) Victoria September 5, 1858

Affairs in Vicotria I am obliged to say, have been growing from bad to worse for the last five weeks. Everything has been flattened out-subsided-wilked. We have a town of stores, filled with goods, and few to buy. Once in a while a boat starts out with a few newly arrived adventurers for the mines. The purchases of these men creates a temporary stir, which subsides, however, with their departure.

The greatest number of sea-going vessels at anchor, at one time, in this harbour was twenty-eight (of all sizes not including boats); the number is much less now. Therea are now in Victoria and environs about 3000 persons. Some estimate them at 5000, but perhaps 3000 is not far from the correct number. The trading and bartering population of San Francisco would be a fair sample of the class here, with a large mixture of miners and adventurers generally, most of whom (of the latter class) have an indefinite idea of going up somewhere to some undefined mining locality in the interior, but are not sure as to the when or where. Many are prevented by the conflicting accounts of the mines, and the dangers to be encountered in reaching them, but the greater part are deterred by the lameness which besets many a well laid plan – want of money. As for "distress, starvation," which the San Francisco papers have dilated upon in glowing colors, of late, nothing of the kind exists, though, in the first days of this extraordinary excitement, such was the case to some extent, owing to the exorbitant prices charges for provision. At present everything is low enough to allow the poorest to go well fed.

The first favorable news which reaches us from the mining districts will clear the place out of perhaps a thousand, which will render Victoria even duller than now.

By the word "dull" is here meant a general stagnation in business, Nothing is done but in sacrificial actions, eating and drinking, at the houses of public entertainment, and the unnatural excitement witnessed in the billiard and liquor saloons. On the recent arrival from Fraser River, with rather more favorable news from the mines, the panic was stayed and the thermometer rose somewhat.

Governor Douglas left Victoria on the 30th in the little steamer Enterprise, for Fort Hope. He intends visiting Fort Yale, and endeavor to arrange some sort of treaty between the miners and Indians.

The naval vessels at Esquimalt saluted him as he left. He is regularly saluted on leaving and arriving at this port, by the ships of war in the former case by the fort in the latter.

A considerable number of cattle have arrived here from the American ports along the sound. Quite a trade has sprung up between these localities.

Wells Fargo and Co and receiving small amounts of gold-dust but not enough to warrant their establishing a branch of their own at any place on Fraser River. At present Kent and Smith connect with them from Victoria, to all points above.

Renewed restrictions upon trade are announced officially by the H. B. Co. Oppressive and almost prohibitory duties are levied upon all goods going into the mines, and the naval vessel stationed in Fraser River, will rigidly enforce the "law". Merchants look blank at each other and wish ____ Deponent sayeth not what. By the last published regulations, boats leaving What come must first touch at Victoria, to obtain permits to pass up the river, and those not seeing this publication, after having struggled up the station of the Recovery, must start back and procure the required papers.

The weather has been cool and variable during the past week. Rain has fallen on three days. The thermometer ranging between 52 and 68 degrees from morning until sundown. Vegetation presents a singular contrast to the appearance of nature in California. Green grass and foliage are everywhere seen, owing, doubtless, to the considerable rains which have fallen this summer.

According to the book Paddlewheels on the frontier, freight rates rose from $4 - $7 a ton in the summer to $60 a ton by fall. Beans that cost 3 cents a pound in Victoria cost 75 cents in Lytton. There were rumors that Governor Douglas Planned to force a rate reduction but nothing happened. The Victoria Gazette did comment

"Though opposed in general to arbitrary action on the part of officials, there appears to be no other means of bringing rapacious steamboat owners to reason"

The next entry about the Steamboat Enterprise and the gold rush of the Fraser River was Dec 2, 1858. In the Hamilton Spectator.

The revival of confidence in the richness of the mineral resources of British Columbia which was evident on the arrival of the "Enterprise" on Tuesday last, was more manifest after her coming yesterday.

It seems to be pretty generally admitted that on several of the bars on the rivers where claims were thought to have given out, deeper digging has developed another stratum of "pay dirt;" that new paying bars have been discovered both above and below Fort Hope; that arrangements are being made at the "Fountain" diggings, on the Upper Fraser, sluice-washing, the dirt on the plateau in that vicinity prospecting two cents to the pan, and that rich dry diggings, several miles in extent, have been found on the Lower Fraser. We regret that, for most of these statements, we have no better authority than general rumor. But as general rumor, accompanied by large arrivals of miners from above, produced that late depression, it is not surprising that the same cause should create a reverse result, when back by the ascertained fact, that the "Maria" took up from Fort Langley more passengers than the "Enterprise" brought down from that point to Victoria.

The Steamer Enterprise arrived at Victoria on the 12th October, about 4 o'clock, Frazer River. She brought down one hundred passengers and a large amount of gold dust. A rich bar had been struck a little below Fort Yale, which was paying exceedingly well, and attracting a great deal of attention. A gentleman just down from above Fort Yale, estimates the number of miners on the river at between 8,000 and 10,000 and thinks the present rush for San Francisco about subsiding.

The Steamer Enterprise, Capt. Wright arrived October 18th, about 11 oclock, am, from Frazer River with but few passengers. The Pioneer express alone brought down 900ounces in gold dust, and there were several large parcels in the hands of passengers. The news, with he exception of the cold weather, is decidedly cheering. The mines are turning out much better than was anticipated a month ago; reported discoveries of rich diggings of coarse gold on Thompson river had reach Fort Yale and the miners were starting for the new diggings. Bank or flat diggings have lately been found in several places, where it is supposed the river once coursed.

Mr. Mclane and party had arrived at Deer Mountain, from Thompson River. He reports that there is forty miles of snow from the Siwlkimime River in toward the Frazer, and still snowing. The snow lies on the ground from ten to fifteen inches in depth. There is a great scarcity of provisions throughout the upper mining districts.

Shipments of Gold From Victoria – We have been favored, says that Victoria Gazette, by Mr. Lathan, agent of Wells, Fargo and Co, in this place with the following returns of shipments made through and by them since August 4th

The amounts totaled $92,378 dollars in gold shipments from August 4th to Oct 12th.

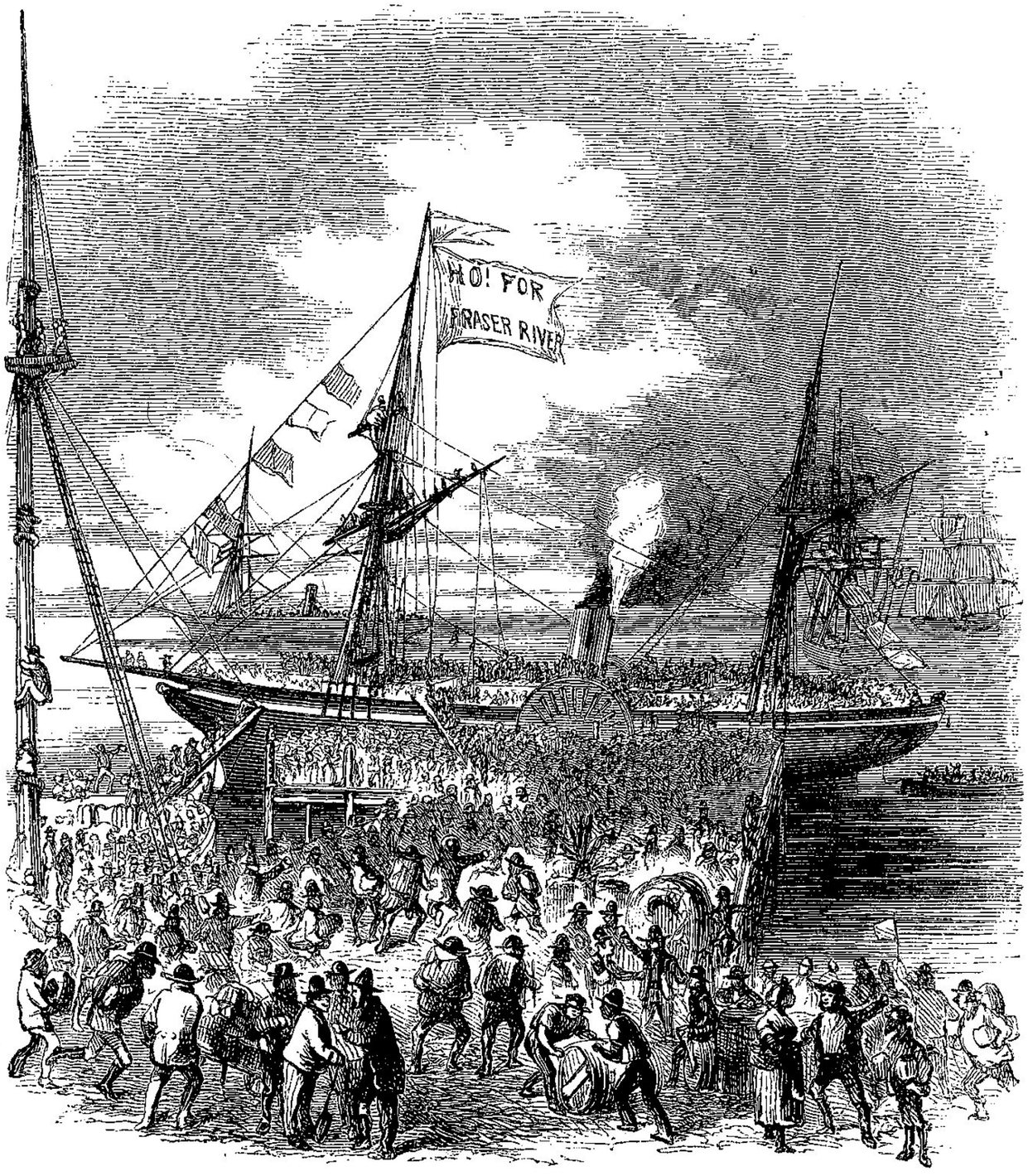
Later that month disaster struck. As reported by the Semi Weekly Spectator January 29, 1859

Captain Thomas Wright

The weather was intensely cold on Fraser River from the 6th to the 13inst. The river had been frozen over, and the people had bee suffered severely, many of them traveling to Langley, where they intended taking steamer to leave the country. The steamer Enterprise, while on her way to Langley from Fort Hope with 125 passengers, was frozen fast near the mouth of Harrison river, and many of the passengers who left her, intending to go by land to Langley, endured great hardships.

There being no provisions or accommodations on board for so large a company for any length of time, 100 passengers of the passengers and one or two of the officers deserted the steamer, determined to make their way into Langley on foot through the woods. Without food, in many instances poorly clad, with snow and ice on the ground, these desperate men commenced their sad journey. For three days they wandered through the woods, shivering, sorefoot, and almost starving, in rain and through the sleet and ice. In the meantime the weather had moderated a little, and the rain had softened the ice in the river.

The "Enterprise" got free again and run up and down the river, blowing her whistle and firing her guns to attract the attention of those on shore. Here and there she picked up a straggler who had wandered to the river banks, perhaps to die. On the third day, when about five miles from Langley, she came up with the great majority of her passengers,



HO! FOR FEAZER RIVER.

who, feeling it impossible to proceed further, had camped on the bank to await assistance from the town, for which they had sent by four of their hardiest men.

After taking up her passengers, the "Enterprise" continued on to Langley, where she arrived in a couple of hours. The men speak in the highest terms of the conduct of Capt. Wright, and attribute their being saved from a most horrible death to his ceaseless efforts to get his boat clear, and his running her up and down the river at the imminent danger of losing her. Many of the passengers had some of their limbs frozen - others have their feet and hands frost bitten, and all agree in saying that they experienced the most intense and horrible suffering it is possible to conceive.

Of these passengers it was known that then German and his wife above mentioned had died of the cold, and it was rumored that more had perished, but no definite number was fixed. The British Colonist of the 18th speaking of those who attempted to reach Langley by land, says :-

They then started for Langley overland, supposing it 15 miles distant. This distance was greater. A trail had to be made over high mountains, through ten inches of snow, wade sloughs waist deep, the cold was intense and the underbrush thick and passed with difficulty.

They had only one day's provisions. Many were frost bitten. A Dutchman and wife, name unknown, were frozen to death. Completely exhausted many sat down to die. Mr. Bryant, late superintendent of Lillouette trail, gave up four miles from Langley , and advised his son to go on. George French, a hardy pioneer, late Lillouette trail surveyor, formerly surveyor of Butte County, California, laid down, worn out with toil. When hope was waning fast the whistle of the steamer Enterprise, which had got out of the ice, was heard, and they were saved and carried to Langley. Rumors are conflicting as to the number of deaths.

From a writer on the Lower Fountainville on the Upper Fraser writes.

There are ten or twenty men of horse beef bar, making from $10 to $15 per day on an average, with rockers ; fifty on Fosters bar ; Fifteen on Fountain bar ; twenty on big bar ; twelve on Dancing Bill's bar ; fifteen on McMillan's bar, and two hundred on Bridge River.

From this statement we can infer there are five hundred miners on the upper part of the Fraser River.
-Paddlewheels on the frontier.

Enterprise was built for the Willamette River. She was not strong enough to regularly cross the often stormy Strait of Georgia. However, Captain Wright did successfully navigate the trip from Fort Langley to Victoria and back several times until he was able to put a heavier and more durable vessel (sidewheeler Eliza Anderson) on the route.

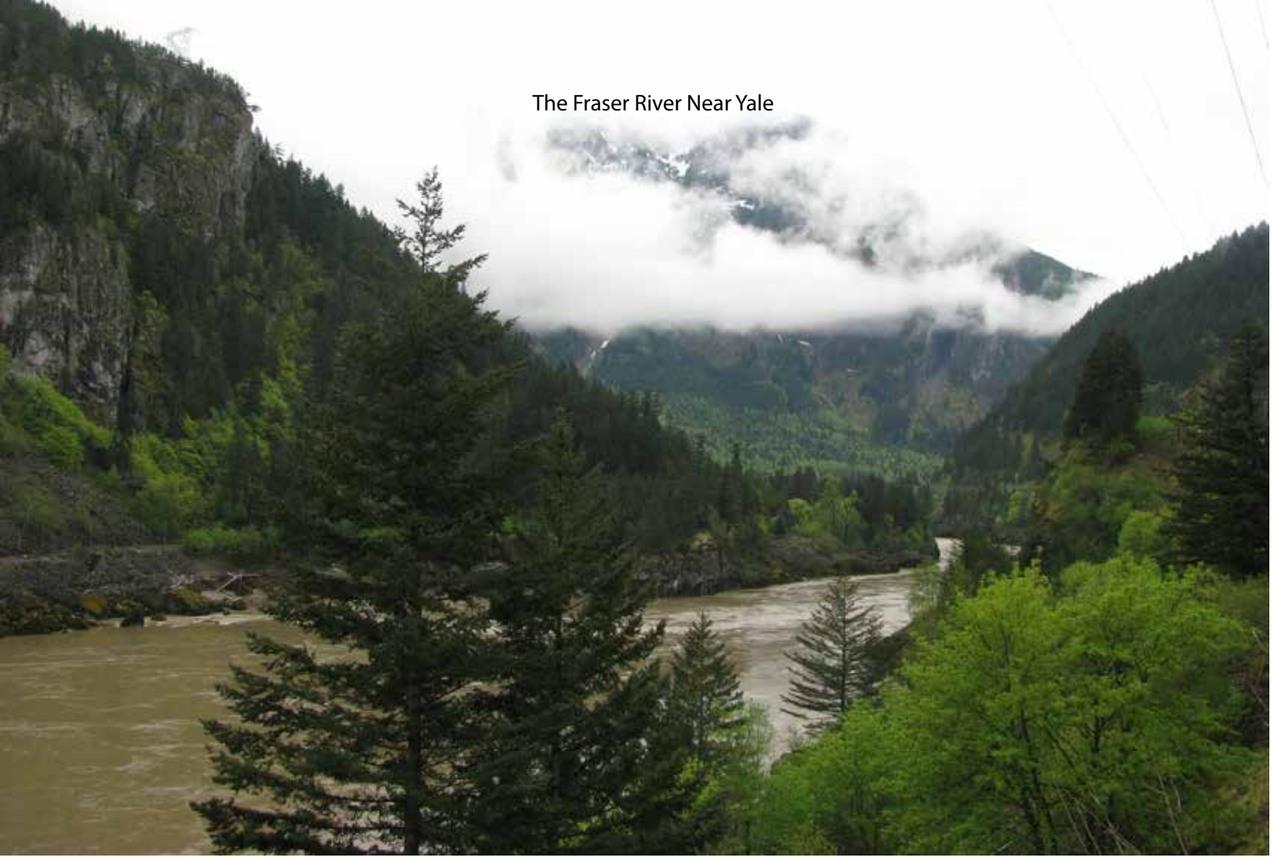
On March 30, 1859, with Captain Tom Wright in command, Enterprise set out upriver from Fort Langley (after meeting the Anderson). The river was rising high with the rapidly melting snowfall, and with a new boiler installed in the Enterprise Captain Wright hoped to take the vessel all the way to Fort Yale. Only one other steamboat had ever made it to Fort Yale, the Umatilla which by then was no longer on the Fraser River. This time, Captain Wright was unable to go further up than Fort Hope. Enterprise was not powerful enough to beat the strong currents forming whirlpools in the river. Another constant hazard were logs caught in the river bottom, forming "snags" which could damage or destroy a steam vessel

To command a steamboat at a time when there were neither roads nor railroads in the Pacific Northwest was to be in a spectacular opportunity to earn money. Tom Wright never became rich because he could never settle down to running a vessel on a particular route for a sustained period of time. As soon as he mastered one route, he would be looking for another one. In June 1859 Captain Wright was ready to make another change. Hearing of homesteading activity beginning in the valley of the Chehalis River, in the western part of what is now Washington, Wright determined to take Enterprise to the Chehalis. This would require the lightly built Enterprise to be towed, in this case by the Eliza Anderson west through the Strait of Juan de Fuca and then south down the coast line of the Pacific Ocean to Grays Harbor

"Fate protects fools, little children and ships named Enterprise" - Cmd. William T. Ryker, USS Enterprise

The Chehalis River flows into Grays Harbor on its eastern shore, near where the modern cities of Aberdeen and Hoquiam, Washington are now located. Wright begin this journey from Victoria on July 8, 1859 with Eliza Anderson towing Enterprise. In the Strait of Juan de Fuca Enterprise broke a shaft on her sternwheel, and the entire expedition was forced to turn back to Esquimalt, where Enterprise had to wait for a replacement shaft to be brought in from San Francisco.

Enterprise was repaired by the end of July 1859, and by that time there was a demand for steamers to carry troops to the San Juan Islands. At that time the boundary between the United States and British Columbia was in dispute, with both countries claiming the San Juan Islands. British and American garrisons were established on San Juan Island. At one point a soldier shot a pig belonging



The Fraser River Near Yale

to a partisan of the opposing country, and as a result the otherwise bloodless standoff became known as the Pig War. Steamboats in the area received contracts from both countries to move troops and supplies to the islands in connection with the dispute. Once Enterprise was repaired, Tom Wright postponed his plans to move the vessel to the Chehalis to take advantage of the increase in business, making a run on August 1, 1859 from Victoria to San Juan Island carrying passengers

Following the San Juan Island trip, Tom Wright was finally able to get Enterprise around Cape Flattery and south to Grays Harbor and the Chehalis River. Wright's plan had been to earn huge freight rates and passenger fares from what he had thought would be the booming population in the Chehalis valley, Wright worked Enterprise to the head of navigation on the Chehalis, sinking three times on the way. When he finally arrived at the headwaters, Wright found not a booming population ready to pay lots of money for steamboat service, but only five farmers who offered to sell Wright a few eggs, butter and vegetables for fifty dollars. Disgusted with the situation, Wright tied up the Enterprise and returned to Puget Sound

By the spring of 1860, Wright was able to arrange a government contract to transport troops down the Chehalis River to Grays Harbor, and so was able to recoup some of his losses. Once the government contract work expired, there was no further business in the Grays Harbor area. Unable to move the lightly built vessel again on the open ocean, Wright dismantled Enterprise at Grays Harbor, with the machinery being shipped to China..

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