

Memoirs of Walton Hugh Holmes¹
(1852 – 1940)

“A noble example was his life – one worthy of remembrance”²

Transcribed by Diane Sterne, Coalmont, B.C.

Introduction

I was born on March 20, 1852 in the town of Bury, Lancashire, England. My father was an architect and civil engineer. He was at the time of my birth, keeping what was called the Manor House situated on Holcombe Hill. I do not know what department was his business for I was rather young but I remember the beautiful house and grounds. I remember one incident that was always implanted in my mind. He had a visitor who came to see him on some business. He came from abroad of the name of Leal. I found out afterwards he was a Civil Engineer on the construction of (*sic*) Grand Trunk Railway. He came from Canada. He was a very dark man. The first coloured man I had seen. My father invited him to stay with us during he (*sic*) visit. He was a Portugee (*sic*). He came for some advice. After he left I could never get it through my head but that Canadians were black.

After I grew up my father’s business called him to Manchester. He was an architect for some of the principal buildings there. Later we moved to Liverpool. By that time I was getting big enough to take notice. We lived on the Cheshire side of the Massey. My father went into partnership with another architect Walter Scott, where there (*sic*) superintended some of Liverpool’s (*sic*) prominent buildings, such as Brown’s library and Museum, Time Street Station, and I remember a new wing on St. George’s Hall. One day he came home all excited and told my mother that during the dinner hour two of the men, stone masons, got into a fight. He explained to her how fierce it was. One of them was the well know (*sic*) Tom Sayers, who fought the American Champion, Henem. After his fight at the station some men in the crowd got Sayers to enter the ring. He was a short man. Henam was a big powerful man. He came from California, after a long fight Sayers whipped Henam. He was known as the Benita Boy.

I always in my early school days attended a boarding school. Till I went to Queen’s Collegiate School on Shaw Street at Liverpool I had to cross the Mersey on the ferry boat every morning and evening so I began to take great interest in the shipping. Nothing would do but I was to become a sailor much to the opposition of my parents. My mother and father differed. My mother wanted me to become a minister. My father a C.E. So my mother, being the boss, I was stuffed full of Latin and Greek, no use to me at all. My father, as I had a wanderlust, took me into his office. At that time he was a town surveyor of Liverpool. His office was in the Municipal Offices on Dale Street. I was put on a high stool at the dest (*sic*) with a window in front of me and all I could see was a brick wall of another building. I could not even see the street for we were on the second story up. All I had to do was tracings and write specification. A most monotonous job. I soon got sick of it. If he had taken me out on the surveys it might have

1 Memoirs are from Walt Smart, grandson of Walton Hugh Holmes.

2 Quotation from Walton Hugh Holmes’ headstone at Granite Creek Cemetery.

been different but he thought I was too young. He soon found out I was becoming dissatisfied and something was sure to happen so he got me a job in a Ship Chandlery (*sic*). I had to go to the different ships and get orders for supplies. That finished it. I got acquainted (*sic*) with a cabin boy on a Norwegian Ship. He promised to hide me away when the ship sailed and I could then join the crew. So one day I packed up my little bundle as the ship was going to sail but the Captain had found out all about it and my father was notified. He took me home as he saw I was determined to go to sea. He apprenticed me to a big shipping firm of G.H. Fletcher of Liverpool for five years. Then I was happy, proud of my brass buttons and gold lace and a badge on my cap. And when I first put on my uniform I thought I was somebody. I did not realize what I had to go through before my five years were up. My first voyage was to Bombay, India, on a packet ship, the Longwood, a three master, wooden but a fine vessel. I made two voyages in her, a year a piece. We lived on The Cheshire side of the Mersey at Birkenhead. Through my bedroom window I could look over the ship building yards of Carnmel, Laird's, where so many fine vessels were built, some war ships. One of the ships I will never forget. I saw the keel laid for the noted Privateer, the American Alabama, who caused so much destruction to the shipping hauling supplies for the Federals. I watched her till she was launched and saw her leave the Mersey on her trial trip from which she never returned. The British Government sent orders not to let her sail, but before the order was received, she was gone, her guns were waiting for her at the Azores. One thing I noticed, I was just a kid, was she was painted white on one side and black on the other. I was crossing on the Woodside Ferry boat at the time with my father. I asked him why she was painted that way. He told me that in the day time she showed the white side to the enemy and at night the black. Since I came to the conclusion he knew no more about it than I did. He just wanted to appear wise to his hopeful.

I have often recalled about the old wooden ship, especially The Old Majestic Guart ship anchored off Rock Ferry, The Conway, The The (*sic*) Indefatigable (*sic*), The Clarence. I remember The British Channel fleet visiting Liverpool, wooden ships with two rows of guns. The Black Pounce, The Warrior and several other (*sic*). A modern ship of today would knock them to a cocked hat in a few minutes, but those old ships were the foundations of the most powerful navy in the world. The Civil War in the United States was on at that time and us youngsters were eager for news of the great battles. We had our favourite sides and battles. England favoured the South, for we wanted the cotton. Several of our favourite boats were used for blockade running, the Manx Boats, the Douglas I. Snapell, with the three legs of Man on their paddle boxes. There was great rejoicing when they made a successful trip to Charlestown, and New Orleans for the northern war ships had those ports blockaded.

The two principal Atlantic liners at that time were the Persia and Scotia of the Cunard line, large paddle which were vessels. When they arrived several editions of the local paper were published with the latest news from the American War. Everybody rushed to get them, boys shouting the latest news and selling the papers.

I recollect the great 1864 fight between the Kearsage (*sic*) and the Alabama off the coast of France, Capt Sims (*sic*) of the Alabama and the captain of the Kearsage (*sic*) met at a dance in Paris. The Captain of the Kearsage (*sic*) took off his glove and slapped the captain of the Alabama across the face and challenged him to a fight the next day. It was accepted by the captain of the Alabama. She was a steel ship and much faster than the wooden Kearsage (*sic*) but

the Kersage (*sic*) got out of the harbour first and prepared for the Alabama. She looped her anchor cables over the side. She was to receive the Alabama who had the best guns. That protected her some, not quite iron clad, the Kersage (*sic*) was lucky she sank the Alabama. Capt. Sims (*sic*) of the Alabama would not surrender. He threw his sword overboard and when his vessel sank he was picked up by a British yacht, the Deerhound and ran off to England where he died, I think at New Brighton, some (*sic*) years later. There was a song about the fight; some lines went:

Capt Sims (*sic*), he takes his sword
 And drops it overboard
 He said it was to redeem his honour
 I think it is no disgrace
 For a man to know his place
 Even if he's captain of the pirate Alabama.
 Then the sneaking thief came round,
 Called the Royal yacht Deehound (*sic*)
 And stole the captain of the Alabama.

Another remembrance was the arrival of the Great Easter (*sic*), the larges (*sic*) steam boat at that time. She paid a visit to Liverpool after laying the first Atlantic cable. She had struck a rock and had a big hole in her bottom. She was beached on the beach at New Ferry. I paid some visits to her while she was being repaired. She had a double bottom which saved her from sinking. She was both a paddle and a propeller boat. A clumsy looking boat, she had very large machinery quite different from the engines of today. I also saw the machinery that was used in laying the Atlantic Cable. There was no dry dock large enough to hold her so they had to beach her. She was put up for auction. A number of business men of Liverpool got together and bid for her. She was seized for debt. My grandfather was one of those who bid. They were going to use her to haul the cotton from America to Liverpool. She was knocked down to them but before the money was paid the sale was cancelled. We wanted to know why my grandfather was interested in her. He said he wanted his boy to be captain of the biggest boat afloat as at that time I was apprenticed to the shipping firm of G.H. Fletcher. We just laughed at him. He thought it would only take a few voyages to clean the cotton out. She was such a big boat. Those were slavery days. The civil war was on about that time in the U.S.A. All us kids were greatly interested in news from the war. We all had our favourite general.

Sailing Days and Elephanta Bombay

My first voyage was to Bombay India in the ship Longwood. I made two voyages in her. She was a fine old wooden ship, a clipper. We carried passengers. It took nearly a year to make the trip to Bombay and back. 125 days for the voyage each way, round the Cape of Good Hope. There was no Suez Canal then. There was a war on then in Abbysinia (*sic*). I had two uncles and several cousins residing in India at that time so I got leave to visit some of them. They were in the Government employ. One uncle was in the Royal Engineers, when I visited him. I camped with them for a few weeks. Once they took me on a tiger hunt but they would not let me have a gun. I was just placed in a Mangrove tree. The officers were in another tree with their guns. The beaters were beating the bushes and drawing all kinds of game out of the jungle. The

last animal to come out was the tiger. That is what they were after. It passed under my tree. Just as soon as it had passed the shots began to go off and the tiger fell dead. We travelled on elephants. We went to several villages. There were lots of monkeys and parrots and a few peacocks. They gave me a small gune (*sic*) one day to shoot parrots. I caught (*sic*) a peacock and shot it, much to the disgust of my Indian servant. He made a great fuss about it for it is one of their sacred birds and if the natives of the village knew it they would kick up an awful row so they buried it and kept it a secret and told me not to do it again.

I did not stop much longer as I had to join my ship to return home (*sic*). We had several passengers mostly retired colonels from the Indian Army going home on leave. A bigger lot of cranks I never got mixed up in. Their insides were burnt out with curry. They led us middies a dog's life for they seemed to pick on us. We used to play all kinds (*sic*) of jokes on them. We had to be careful we were not found out or the captain would give us fits. On that last voyage I visited the wonderful caves of Elephanta in Bombay (*sic*) Harbour, all heaved out of the solid rock. Every cave 100 feet square and tombs of dead Indians. There were a hundred steps 100 feet wide from the sea to the caves. At the entrance of the caves there was a wild bee's nest that had been there for hundreds of years. We boys could not resist throwing a stone at it and those bees took after us. There was one of the priests with us so we all had to rush down the steps to the Bay and jump into the water to get away from the bees. There were thousands of them but we soon got our boat and rowed away and glad to. I don't know what became of the nest.

After two trips to India the third voyage was to Valparaso (*sic*), in a Barque, named the "Hermine". From there to several towns along the coast till we reached Iqueque (*sic*). I must say we visited now Antafagasta (*sic*), then Bolivia, now Chile. There was not even a house there at the time we took a lot of Chileans to open up a copper mine. Now it is a very large city. There was no fresh water. All the drinking water had to be condensed from the sea. Small schooners traded fresh water to the different towns from somewhere north and a Market boat came into the port once a week. We left there and went to Iqueque (*sic*) and loaded the Litre (*sic*) for Liverpool. All ships at that time had to go round Cape Horn for there was no Panama Canal and that was a rough trip.

My last trip was to Portland Oregon. I was so taken up with that country I concluded to quit the sea. I passed my examinations and after a short stay in England, much to the regret of my folks, my brother and I started to come west. We took passage on the National Line Steamer, Egypt, for New York, to continue our trip over land to Oregon. We each had a stop over ticket to San Francisco. We landed in New York and stopped at the Cosmopolitan Hotel on Broadway. A fine hotel. We met a Dr. Monkton (*sic*) who was returning to Canada with his family. I think the town of Monkton (*sic*) was called after him. That was where he was going. He wanted us to go with him to take the water route through the Lakes but we preferred the railroad as we would not have to make so many changes. We went and saw the sights of New York. They were laying the foundation of the Brooklyn Bridge. We went and inspected it. It was a big undertaking. We stopped about the (*sic*) then started for the West. There was only one railroad across the continent, the Central Pacific Railway, pretty rough compared with the trains of today, no sleepers, no dining cars.

We left New York. Now we were sure we were on the road to new adventures. The next place we calculated to lay over was Niagara Falls. On that trip we travelled sixty miles per hour. The telegraph poles looked like a fence. We arrived at the Falls. It certainly was a grand sight. The principal thing we found out was that the cab drivers were out to soak the visitors. They certainly made us pay.

We visited a number of towns on our way but did not stay long, such as Derwit (*sic*), Salt Lake City and Chicago. On leaving Chicago, the train was over crowded and seats were scarce. An Opera Troupe on their way to San Francisco, Madam Ristorci's troupe. They had a private car on. There was (*sic*) a couple of vacant seats not in use so the Conductor asked permission to let us use them till there was room in the other cars. We got permission. They were a fine crowd. There was (*sic*) over twenty in the company. The second day the con (*sic*) came and said there were some vacant seats now, but the actors and actresses said we were to stay with them. They were a jolly crowd, singing and playing all the time. We were sorry to leave them when we did. We just slept in the crossed seats. In the morning we would find our feet tied to the seats and all kinds of tricks.

We stayed at Chezema. It was the time of the Black Hills excitement. We were going to take in the excitement but there was great trouble with the Indians. The caravan that left before us was burnt by the Indians and the people killed. It was an awful rough town, shooting going on all the time, so my brother said "Let's get out of here and go to San Francisco," so we did with few short stoppages at some mining towns. We like (*sic*) San Francisco so we concluded we would reside there for a while. My brother got a place in a wholesale Photographic Supplies Co.

I was trying to find something that would suit me. One day I was sitting on the Oakland Ferry landing. An elderly gentleman was sitting beside me. He got talking to me and asked all about my past life. I told him of my seafaring life. He asked me if I could splice wire. I said I could. I though (*sic*) he meant wire rope. He said he had a friend up town wanted a man like me and asked me to sit there a while while he went up town. It was not long before he came back with another gentleman. I had told him my name so he introduced the other man as Mr. Urquhart. He was head of the fire alarm telegraph of San Francisco. The other gentleman then asked me if I could splice wire. When I said yes he took out a note book and gave me his office address. I was to meet him at 10 A.M. the next morning. When I found his office it was on the plaza, he took me into his office and had some plans. He told me they were running a new wire to the Hospital. I was almost struck dumb but I though (*sic*) I would see it through. I could last a day anyhow. Then he gave me an order to go to their Commissary for all supplies. Also an order to go to a certain stable where I would find a horse and buggy, and an order that I could go to any restaurant in the city as the city was responsible for my meals. He also took me up a story in the office building where there was a furnished room which was for my own use. I was never to go anywhere without leaving a note where I was to be found. I was beginning to get a little confused. I did not know anything about fire alarms or splicing telegraph wire. I still wanted to see how far I could go, so the first place I visited was the Commissary. When I arrived there I showed my letter to an elderly white haired gentleman who said he was the warehouseman. We sat down and talked for quite a long time. I was quite taken up with him, so I though (*sic*) I would confide in him my difficulty. He listened and smiled. When I got through he turned to me

and said there was nothing very difficult to learn. He had that position for a number of years and as he was not busy all he had to fill the order for supplies, he would go round with me for a few weeks and initiate me in the work.

The first thing he showed me how to splice the telegraph wire and how to solder the two ends of the splice. Then we went to the different fire stations. He described the part I had to look after. I soon got on to it. Then he took me out to the part of the city where the new line was to be constructed. There was a gang of men at work putting up poles under a good foreman so I had not much to look after there. He did the work and I looked wise. My principal work was if any interference occurs on the line I had to go where reported and have it fixed at once. If anyone was moving a house from one place to another I had to see that a wire was stretched so that the connections were never broken. It was a good job. I never let on I was new to the work and kept it for a year and a half. When (*sic*) Election came off, the present party in politics were defeated and a new one came in. We were mostly let out and friends of the new party took our jobs.

As soon as I found out I was out I concluded I would go to Portland, Oregon, the place I started from home to reach. My brother had too good a position to leave it at the time, so he stayed in San Francisco.

When I arrived in Portland I got a job right away in a Ship Chandlers and Wholesale Liquor Merchants, Messrs. Ewald and Moller, as selling agent. I stuck with them for a couple of years. Then I got in with the best friend I ever had, a Capt. Flanders, who owned a wharf on the river front. I was a wheat weigher. We weighed the wheat as the river stream brought it down the Willamott (*sic*) and transferred it in ships. Wheat then was all sacked. It was nice work only sometimes it meant long hours.

Then I had a chance to go railroading and my real western life began. I wanted to be a railroad man. The first job I got was work constructing a large bridge across the Willamette at Harrisburg for the Oregon and California R.R. It was Ben Holliday's (*sic*) road. He was well known for his Pony Express across the continent. After completing the bridge, the man in charge was Mr. Clark. He was roadmaster for the road, a man who was nearly rebuilt. He had some silver plated in his skull and other injuries through accidents. He was a fine old gentleman, almost too old to be working. The last I heard of him he was driving a hack on the streets of Portland. I went breaking on the railroad for a while but I went off on a trip up the river to Dayton in the Zarnhill (*sic*) country. I first got in with a survey gang. We had a lovely time. Some beautiful country. One place we went through was thickly wooded with Black Walnut trees. The head surveyors said to me, "Holmes, you are young. Take up this land. That timber will be worth a fortune in a little while." But I did not want to settle down. I did not see how I was going to make a living as I was no farmer. He said, "You see, this ground is nearly a foot deep in old walnuts, and there are bunches of scrub oak. All you have to do is get a few hogs. Turn them loose in here. They will fatten themselves and there is always a market for pork. Just put up a little log cabin and enjoy yourself. I did not take up the idea and I have often regretted it.

After getting through with the survey, I went to Dayton just to watch them thrashing wheat in the fields. Then I was going to take a boat back to Portland. I was starting to go on board when I met two gentlemen. They were coming from the boat. All at once, one of them said, "Here is just the man you want." I was surprised. Then I recognized the man. His name was Bert Thomas. We were on the Oregon and California R.R. together. Then they explained. The other man was named Mr. G. Ravett (*sic*). The little railroad that came into Dayton brining (*sic*) down the wheat was in litigation and this Mr. Ravett (*sic*) was the Receiver. He asked me if I was a railroad man. I said "Yes." Of course, I was open for anything. He took out a note book and gave me his name and address and I was to come to his office the next morning. Then he gave me an order to the Dayton Hotel to give me a room and I was to get my meals there at Mr. Ravett's (*sic*) expense. I noticed a funny twinkle in Bert Thomas' eye when he looked at me. He and Ravett (*sic*) were stopping in the same Hotel. I was very curious to find out where I had put my foot. I asked Thomas what it was. He told me I would soon find out and all I had to do was say yes and look wise as Mr. Ravett (*sic*) did not know much about railroading.

The next morning, I appeared in the office. When they explained the road was in a neglected condition and not quite completed to Sheridan, I got instructions what was wanted. I was told that a train would start out soon with workmen and forman (*sic*) to put the road in order. I was to distribute the different gangs where they were needed. There was a bridge gang as well. Each gang had a flat car with their tools etc. I found out the foremen were real railroaders and knew their jobs, so for a few days I kept very quiet taking notice and doing a lot of walking along the grade. So I saw where the work was most needed. The farmers were in a hurry to ship their wheat. Thrashing then was in full swing and there were very few warehouses. The wheat was just stacked beside the track. Some covered with canvas and some not. Oregon being a wet country it was risky to leave it too long.

It took us nearly a month before we got the trains running steady. There were only two trains on the road. It was called the Dayton Sheridan and Grand (*sic*) Ronde R.R. It also had a branch to Dalls (*sic*). It is now part of the Southern Pacific R.R.

I stayed with the road till the mortgage was paid up. It was held by the Pacific Rolling Mills of San Francisco, for rolling stock etc. As soon as we were through, Mr. Ravett (*sic*), Mr. Brooks, the superintendent and myself were taken to Portland to get discharged. I and Brooks were witnesses. We were held there about a month before anything was settled. Our expenses were all paid with a little spending money added. At that time, 1880, Mr. Andrew Onderdonk had taken the contract to build the western end of the C.P.R. in British Columbia, so we were asked if we would go to B.C. Brooks and myself were quite willing to go. Mr. Ravett (*sic*) was appointed as superintendent under Andrew Onderdonk. I signed for a five year contract. It was a Friday after we were discharged by the Courts, and on Saturday we started for B.C. I got charge of four find (*sic*) teams of horses for use on the C.P.R. construction with the aid of another man named Tyler. Mr. Ravett (*sic*) and Mr. Brooks went with us, they paying all our expenses. We sailed down the Willamette to the Columbia river as far as Kolama, then took the railroad from there to Tacoma. A lovely trip. There were only a few houses in Tacoma then, two hotels, one a high class one, the other one on a more reasonable scale. Tyler and I stopped at the cheap one on top of the hill. The other hotel was on the Wharf or Steamboat landing where the boats arrived from Seattle every other day. We just missed the boat. When we arrived we had to

stop over a day in the evening. Tyler and I took a stroll around. In passing a building we heard some nice music. It was in a second story and there was a stair way leading up to it. We climbed up the stairs and a door was partly open. We looked in and there was a dance going on. We were there a few minutes watching. When a lady came to the door and invited us in we accepted. Everybody came to welcome us. We danced till nearly daylight. We got acquainted (*sic*) with two nice girls. We invited them to take a buggy ride with us the next day. We would hitch up one of our fine teams and hire the buggy. They accepted. There was one girl in the room I knew from Portland. A Miss Caddy Ross. The (*sic*) said she and her beau were going to drive over in the morning to Stilicum (*sic*). It was a nice drive. If we went together they would show us the way. That was fine so the next morning we started. We got across the Stilicum (*sic*) plains allright. It was criss crossed with all kinds of roads. We got to Stilikum (*sic*) all right. Spent a little while there, had a dinner and fed the horses, then started back. As Miss Ross and her beau were not returning we had to find our own way and our girls did not know it, although they belonged to Tacoma. The consequence was we got lost. Night came on but we did not know which was the right road and our horses were strange too. We travelled all night. Just at break of day we heard the Seattle boat whistle so we made straight for the sound and struck Tacoma. We left one of the girls, Miss Laura Parker at her home on the top of the hill. The other left us lower down when we arrived in town the people were up in arms to lynch two strangers who took two of their girls out and kept them out all night. We tried to explain but they would not listen to us. It was beginning to look bad. When Miss Parker's father, who was a blacksmith, came running down he knew what was up. He explained the whole thing. The people took us from the hotel where we were at and put us up in the high class hotel and we were the guests of Tacoma. We had missed the boat again. There were three teams which had gone ahead so from there to B.C. we only had one team to look after and a big bale of Horse blankets. Ravett (*sic*) and Brooks had taken the other horses with them. Our teams, of course, were shipped through to Yale, B.C.

We were sorry to leave Tacoma. The people were fine to us and made our short stay very pleasant.

We had a nice trip up the sound to Victoria, B.C. We changed boats there for New Westminster, where our (*sic*) tickets ended, but the houses (*sic*) were cleared to Yale. As we did not have much money, we had to get to Yale somehow. So I went to Capt. Johnny Irvin (*sic*) and told him our circumstances and told him I would let him keep the bale of blankets for security. It was the first trip of the new boat, the William Irving, called after old Capt. Irving. He would not accept. We were standing by the rail of the boat. When I looked up I saw Brooks and Ravett (*sic*) coming to the boat with the rest of the horses. We had caught up with them. I told Ravett (*sic*) about what Capt. Irvin (*sic*) said. He told me to come along with him. He took me up to Capt. Irvin (*sic*) and introduced me and what a change. For at the time there was great competition between the rival boats for the C.P.R. trade. First thing was to go to the bar for a friendship drink. We were the best of friends evermore.

We had a nice trip up the Fraser Rive (*sic*) to Yale. The boat was terribly overcrowded. On board was a large company of Hudson's Bay Officials with their ladies. On their way to Harrison Hot Springs. They were given preference at meal times over the other passengers. They were called into the first tables. The other passengers at the second table. It nearly caused a riot, for the second meals were cold in some cases. But it only occurred the once. It was

changed after the first meal there was a special dinner given to the H.B. folks afterwards. A party of mining men, who operated a dredge at Hope were on board. They made things pretty lively. Our Mr. Brooks chummed up to them. When the dinner table was all set for the big fellows, they made up their minds to have some fund (*sic*) with them. An old Scotch Piper, Mr. Fraser, had his pipes with him. He fell asleep in the cabin. He laid his pipes on the seat beside him so Brooks stole his pipes. They watched the steward. After the table was all set for the banquet and when he went to call the H.B. folks for the feast, they sneaked into the dining room and sat down to the table. There were bottles of wine. I had to go with them. Mr. Brooks, who was a very tall man, placed me at the foot of the table and he took the head. As the people were coming he filled his glass and one for me. He roase (*sic*) up and said, "Mr. Holmes, I look towards you." I answered, "Mr. Brooks, I likewise bows." Then the steward rushed in with Capt. Irvin (*sic*) and put us out. Then Mr. Brooks said to us, "A banquet without music was not fashionable." So he seized the bag pipes and went outside the dinging (*sic*) room door and started the most excruciating noise. The captain sent the stewards out to stop that noise. Brooks would dodge from one side of the boat to the other. The staterooms on the boat had two doors. One on the inside and one on the outside. The passengers would open their doors for Brooks to run through so the crew would not catch him as he crossed from side to side. He kept it up for a while and old Fraser was chasing him all the time to get his bagpipes. There was no ill will. Everybody enjoyed the joke. It helped to pass the time away. The chief steward told old Tome (*sic*) Forrester, well known to everyone in New Westminster, he was a colonel gentleman. He and his wife were well respected. Ben Briggs was the Purser. I got acquainted with them later on. It was on this trip I met my wife. We arrived at Chilliwack. We were watching the people get off the boat. A lady was standing beside me. So I passed some remarks. She was with an elderly gentleman, Mr. Uriah Wilson of Yale, one of its leading merchants. He told her not to be speaking to strangers. I got well acquainted with him later on. He was a great Yankee, a very fine man but more about him later on.

I was greatly taken up with the old town of Hope. It looked so big in between the high mountains. I was told it was a very old town, Hudson's Bay post. From there we went on our last lap to Yale and what a change when we arrived. The beach where the boats landed was crowded with people for the construction of the C.P.R. was just started. The landing was piled with freight. Two other boats were there. When we went up town we went in search of a hotel to stop at but there was not a room to be got. I got a room, or not a room but just enough space to spread a bed on the floor, at a private house, and got board at the Revelstoke Hotel. Mr. Brooks and Ravett (*sic*) stopped at Mr. Understick's till Mr. Ravett's (*sic*) house was finished.

We landed our teams and some supplies we had brought. I was put in charge of the lumber and iron yard, loading supplies for the different camps being started along the line. There was a continuous string of teams carrying freight and such teams, big freight wagons with six and eight horses, mules and oxen hauling them, some with two wagons. The town was like a beehive. No. 1 Tunnel was just started when we arrived. About ½ a mile above the town the railroad had built quite a few building (*sic*) a large stable for their teams, and horse supplies, an office, a commissary, and Mr. Onderdonk had a find (*sic*) residence, which became All Hallows School after the completion of Mr. Onderdonk's contract, also some residences, one for Mr. Tilton, one for Mr. Ravett (*sic*), and one for Dr. Hannington.

Yale was a nice little town with two principal streets. There were a few nice residences. Mr. Openheimer, who had the principal store, the Government house and Jail, Mr. Tuttle, Mr. Bailey and some others. The front street was the business street, several saloons, stores, butcher shop, sadlery (*sic*), three good hotels, the Hudson's Bay store, Nelson's store, several Chinese stores. The stores were all shippers to Caribou (*sic*), Kimball and Gladwin, forwarding agents and some more smaller stores. It was a busy place. I must not forget the B.X. Express who run the stages to the Caribou (*sic*), managed by Steve Tingley and Dodd. Dodd later became Government agent. The residences from the town down were, Douglas, Tingley, (?)agne, Ward, How Joe Truck, Holloways, and Mr. Onderdonk.

The present railroad station was first built by the Railway Office, Mr. Cunningham as manager. Yale was a busy place at that time all in a rush. New camps starting around the office which at first was on the front street above the boat landing. Crowds of men waiting to be sent to the different camps, foremen getting their men together, drillers, carpenters, labourers, cooks, stewards and men for every different job. Teams loading up for the camps, officials running around giving orders. It was not long before the first office was burned down as well as the commissary. The office was moved where the station now is and a large building was erected at the mouth of Yale Creek for the commissary. A hospital was built. Mrs. Ward was the matron. She was a fine lady. A doctor, H. Harrington* (*Hanington), was got. After the contract was finished he moved to Victoria. It was a wild town along the front street was considerable drinking and fights every day. But I never heard of any killing or shooting. Gambling 24 hours a day among the saloons. In the front of the branch sallon (*sic*) on the other side of the front street there was an old cannon. I guess it was put there by the Hudson's Bay Co. It was on the edge of the river bank overlooking the river.

Dave and Ike Openheimer had the largest store in town, and a fine residence on the back street back of the store next to the Court House and jail. The Hotels of the town were the York, Ainsworth, Tattle (*sic*) on the front street, and the Revelsbeck (*sic*) Hotel on the back street. Van Falkenburg and Lawrence ran the Butch (*sic*) shop. The Police force consisted of two policemen, *Roy Craft (*Roycraft) and Jack Kircup (*sic*) of Rossland fame, a fine big man and a good officer. The railroad office had quite a staff, Mr. Cunningham, the manager, assisted by Frank Bell Kyle, head timekeeper, Mr. Ward Paymaster, Frank Jarvis, Bookkeeper, Havens, assistant cashier. Mr. Bacon commissary.

There were hundreds of Chinese brought direct from China. Later on it was a sight to see them travelling up the Caribou (*sic*) road to go to work on certain camps. They did not work on the rock work all day long. The road was full of them with their carrying sticks with all their possessions in a bundle on both ends of the stick. They had to walk for all the teams were employed at other work to keep the camps supplied. Some of them died on the road. If a Chinaman got sick, his comrades would take his belongings and just leave a little rice with him and leave him. Mrs. George Keefer found one nearly dead close to her house. She took him in, fed him, and looked after him till he recovered. They sent him up the line to the camp where his friends were located. When his comrades saw him coming towards the camp, they recognized hi.(*sic*) The whole camp ran away. They thought he was a ghost and it was some time before they could belive (*sic*) it was him.

Returning to Yale. When I first went up the Yale Road to where the works had started, about ½ way between Yale Creek Bridge, there was a toll gate and a constable in charge for all the teams had to pay (*sic*) toll. When I got to No. 1 Tunnel there were a number of drillers at work. There was a kind of oven used to thow (*sic*) out the powder used for blasting. A man was looking after it. I stood talking to him a while when I noticed some liquid leaking down the front of it. I pointed it out to him and told him it was glycerine. He said it would not hurt. I was sure if a drop from it dropped to the ground it would explode. I told him I was getting out of there. He laughed but I started so he walked down the road with me as far as the toll gate when the powder blew up. If we had stayed there nobody would have ever found us.

About a month after I arrived in Yale, I got married to Miss L.C. Lawrence. We were married by Bishop Siltoes, his fine wife was at the wedding. We were their (*sic*) first ones he had married in B.C.

I had a serious mishap in 1881. Yale was scarce of cord wood. Mr. Onderdonk had built a flume up Yale Creek to float ties down to Yale where the teams could haul. They had completed the tie contract so I hired the flume from the company and got a lot of Chinamen to cut wood for me and floated it down the flume to Yale. I did well. I had a hard job to hire teams to haul it till Mr. Nelson asked me why I did not get a team of my own. I told him I could not afford to buy one as I did not have the money. I was told by him that if that was all, he would procure me a team and wagon. I did not pay much attention as I though (*sic*) he was only talking but sure and behold one day a fine team and a new wagon arrived for me. I went to see Mr. Nelson about it and asked him what terms I was to pay him for it. To my surprise he told me to throw off a cord of wood at his house once in a while.

One day the cord wood blocked up the flume and washed out the approach of the railroad bridge across the wagon road at Yale Creek. They told me I would have to build it up again which would have been a big and expensive job for me. But Mr. Onderdonk told the superintendent to rebuilt (*sic*) it. I never heard anything more about it.

In about six month (*sic*) after my arrival in Yale some dispute arose between Mr. Ravett (*sic*), the manager. I came from Oregon with him. He either resigned or was discharged with Mr. Brooks, the purchasing agent. They left one morning and I was standing with Mr. Onderdonk watching the boat leaving. All at once I heard a heavy shot, then another. Mr. Onderdonk said, "I would not have that happen for anything." He told me Mr. Ravell (*sic*) and Brooks were leaving on the boat and as he was not popular with the people in the town, they were shooting him out of town, using the old guns opposite the branch saloon. As soon as I found out what was the matter I turned to Mr. Onderdonk. I said as I came there with Mr. Ravett (*sic*) and Brooks I had better resign. He told me he was quite satisfied with my work to keep on and from then on he would look after me. He sure proved a great friend. Mr. Tilton then became the manager in Ravett's (*sic*) place. After the railroad was completed, he established the firm of Marvin and Tilton, a business firm in Victoria, B.C.

When the camps had been filled up as far as Spuzzum, a new difficulty arose. The Yale Wagon road crossed the river and there was no road between Spuzzum and Cisco. They did not know how the camps were to be supplied so they had to build two boats to ferry the supplies

over. As soon as the boats were ready, they had to get someone to captain them. No one seemed to apply so I told them I was capable of handling one of them. They took me up right off so we put the boat on a wagon and I was sent up to camp 13, the biggest camp on the line. It was on the upper end of the Blue Canyon. We took up some supplies with us and a number of tents, and our crew of five men. Right at the crossing there was a large whirlpool. It looked bad. We launched the boat, then I found out I had a fine crew. I studied the crossing for a little time, then I was sure I knew how to run it. The men had oars and I had an oare (*sic*), whale boat fashion. We loaded the tents in the boat and supplies and started across. I took advantage of the whirl and put the boat on the outside circle which shot us almost across. We soon landed and started to put up a tent for ourselves. Then we put some more tents for the men who were to arrive the next day with us. We soon had a fine campe (*sic*) started. There were four tunnels worked from this camp and some heavy rock cuts. It was a great sight. Later on, men hanging on ropes drilling 30 or 40 ft. on an almost perpendicular bluff on the west end of the camp. The company had a store there and there were some other pedlars as well. There were quite a few serious accidents which was expected in such a large camp.

The supplies for the camps was (*sic*) hauled by teams along the Caribou (*sic*) road to the boat landing. Then it was shot down a chute to the water edge and transferred to the boat. We have send (*sic*) hundreds of cases of dynamite down the chute. We always had a bale of hay at the bottom of the chute for the boxes to bump against. If one of them exploed (*sic*) we would all be killed. All other supplies were done the same way. We never had a mishap, although we handled tons of material. We crossed all the men for there was no road on the west side of the Fraser. We kept pack horses on that side of the river to distribute the supplies. Just at the river side there was a bad cliff or rapid. If the boat pullers made a miss we were sure of being swept over it and it was quite a job to get back the crew had to take in a tow line and walk along the bank. I would stay in the boat with the steering oar to keep it off the rocks. If the boat took a sheer the current was so strong the men could not hold it. It would have dragged them into the river. One Sunday Bishop Siltoe accompanied by his wife cam (*sic*) to the camp to hold service. We were called out to bring them across. The boat had shot below the ripple. In hauling it up the boat got away from the men, so I was adrift by myself. There was no place to make a possible landing till I got through the Blue Canyon several miles. When the bishop saw what had happened they started to run down the Caribou (*sic*) road to see if they could help me. Mrs. Siltoe outdistanced the bishop but I outdistanced the both of them. The canyon was a foaming torrent. The men on construction were shouting good bye, and shaking their hands. No one expected it was possible for one man alone to run the rapids. In some of the whirls the boat was on end down in a hole, but I stuck to my oar. About two thirds down the canyon there was a flat rock with a tree on the inside. I saw I was going to pass close to it so I took the paniter or boat rope in my hand and jumped. I landed on the rock all right and ran with (*sic*) rope round the tree. The rope held and stopped the boat. If I had missed landing it was sure death for no man could swin (*sic*) that that (*sic*) water. As soon as I tied the boat up I started to find a way to climb up the bluff. It looked as if I could never get a foot hold or hand hold. I saw a place where it was cracked up to the tope (*sic*) so I started. I had several narrow escapes but I made it to the tope (*sic*). When I looked over the tope (*sic*) I saw a nice garden and a man doing something. I hollered at him. He started to run away but I stopped him by shouting. He took another look and saw who it was. It was a Mr. Rombrough who kept a wayside house on the Caribou (*sic*) Road. He was out gathering water cress. As soon as I rached (*sic*) him he rushed to his home, make

(sic) me take off my clothes and put me to bed for I was almost frozen and wet. He gave me several hot brandies. He said it was impossible for anyone to climb out of that canyon without a rope. He thought I was a ghost when I first hollered. That was the reason he started to run. I stayed with him till I got warmed up and well fed and dry clothes. Then I started to get back to the camp. I had to travel down the road till I reached the Spuzzama (sic) bridge and then go up the other side along the grade till I reached camp 13. It must have been 10 P.M. When I arrived in camp I went to my tent and found it full of people sympathizing with my wife. She was nearly crazy for they all thought I was gone. When I walked in what a difference. I was a hero. I would not like to make that trip again. I had a pretty rough time. In that camp we had no hours. Had to be always ready for a call. Mr. Andrew Larny was the divisional superintendent. He was a fine man although we had several quarrels. He did not like me not to be under his orders. Mr. Onderdonk told him I was only to take orders from Mr. Bacon, the head of the Commissary and himself. It was hard to get anyone to tackle the ferrying. I was to be left alone if anything did happen to my men and myself no one else was to blame. My crew had every faith in me and they knew the minute I gave an order for them to pull on the right oars to swing in the eddy. I never lost a man or a pound of freight. It was a very dangerous crossing. One time a lot of the officials were crossing. One of the head men was telling them what a fine crossing it was. Mr.

Larny (sic) was with them. He whispered in my ear to run her down the riffle. I saw the joke so I did and on the rapids the spray was splashing five or six feet in the air, and did not that bunch get a wetting. Larny (sic) patted me on the back later and said, "You did it grand Capt." The visitors had to go to the camp and get dried out before they could travel over the line.

There were a lot of accidents. Friday was the day for the ambulance to come up and take the hurt men to the Hospital and the dead wagon to carry those who got killed. I had to cross them sometimes. It was a nasty job.

There was one tunnel started, a short ways up river from the camp (sic). It was in about 50 feet and they quit working on it to finish the other tunnels lower down. We used it for a powder magazine. There was (sic) several tons of giant powder and tored (sic) in it one night a man was sent up to get some caps. First thing we noticed was a fire in the tunnel. Then it was all ablaze. We could see the man laying at the mouth of the tunnel on the ground but we dared not go near. All that powder burnt up and never exploded. If it had we will never know what would have happened. When the fire was out we found the man burnt to a corpse. How it started no one knows.

Camp 13 was the principal camp for a couple of years. Mr. Onderdonk concluded that the rest of the camps could be better supplied from here to Hell's Gate by a steam boat so he got a Mr. Dalton to build one at the big tunnel at Spuzzum. It was a strongly built one with a stern wheel. When it was launched they applied to Mr. John Irvin of New Westminster to send a capt. (sic) Insley to run it. He came up and tried to run it through the Blue Canyon but the current was too much for it. He took it back to where he started and left. Mr. Onderdonk was very much put out about it so he came up to me at Camp 13 and asked me if I could run it through the canyon. I told him I was quite willing to try but I had no papers for Inland waters. He could not get insurance if the boat was lost. I was not sure if I would be allowed. He said he was willing to take a chance so he took me down in his buggy to the steamboat. I went on board and saw the

engineer, Mr. Burse. I asked him if he was willing to take a chance. I said if he would stay in the engine room, I would in the Pilor (*sic*) House. We were to try the next day. So I made arrangements to tackle it. When I got news John Irvin had sent another captain up. Capt. Smith (*sic*) so my engagement was cancelled. I was notified to keep my boat and crew ready to give any assistance (*sic*) I could if necessary. If the boat got through the Canyon, such as running lines to pull the boat over the ripples. Capt. Smith started the Engineer (*sic*) tied down the safety valve so as to get a heavy pressure. The (*sic*) started up and made a good run through the canyon till she got to the rapid at Camp 13, where she could not mount it. It was short and steep. The boat would get nearly to the top when she levelled off. The stern wheel was not deep enough to force her through so I came in with a rope to a steam wind at the steamer's bow which pulled her over. The boat went to Boston Bar where she made her headquarters. She carried the supplies from there. Our great historical (*sic*) Louis La Bordeau was the telegraph agent there at the time. I have often wondered why he never mentioned the Steamer Skuzzy. The end of the Skuzzy. They tried to make a run up to Lytton we had a rough time getting her through Hell's Gate. She was flung against the rock first on one side and then on the other. I had gone through first and run some lines to assist in pulling her through. When we got her through she had no guards left on either side of the boat. She made the trip to Lytton but coming back she struck a rock which tore a big hole in her hull but as she was built in compartments she did not sink. They ran the boat as far as Keefer's and tied her up. The grade was built by that time up to Cisco where the bridge crosses the Fraser so I was sent up to Keefer's. All freight was run up to there for all the interior. It was crossed on a steel cable to Tilton Creek. I was to build it and to be agent on the end of track. I got Mr. Geo. Keefer to get me the length of cable necessary to reach across. He gave me 1600 feet so I sent the length to the General Office but Mr. Kyle the master of transportation told them he had measured it and it was not necessary to be that long. The cable had to go from San Francisco (*sic*). When it arrived it was over 100 feet short. In the meantime I had run a hemp rope over for to run the steel cable on so they had to send for another cable. The freight for the upper country was piling up. There was quite a shortage. Lots of teams on the Tilton Creek side waiting for their cargo. A couple of ball teams, Hudson Bay teams, of about 8 yoke of oxen. While we were waiting for the cable to arrive I got word to cross the Hudson Bay freight without delay. I had only a hemp rope to cross it on. I did not know they meant as soon as the cable was stretched. I started to send it over on the rope I had. There were some very heavy packages. Big barrels of Hudson Bay rum. I was afraid the rope would not carry them but orders were orders so I took the risk. I got it all over before the steel cable arrived. With it came an order to cross the B. (*sic*) Bay freight first. I wrote back to them and told them the H.B. freight was already on its way to (*sic*) Caribou (*sic*).

We had some amusing scenes happen. All the passengers were crossed on the cable. We had a good cage rigged. The cable was 1600 feet long and over 100 feet in the air. Some were scared to cross although we would send 3000 lbs. a trip. One day Judge Walkam came (*sic*) up with his wife. She told the judge she positively would not cross on that rope. I explained how safe it was. We had quite a time. I asked her to just step into the cage and she would see how safe it was. She did. As soon as she was seated I snapped off the catch and the judge said she was across the river before her squeal was started. It took about 9 seconds. We had lots of other experiences. In tightening the cable we had a large capstan built with long poles for handles and a bull team on each about 8 span. The tightening cable was run through 3 sheaved blocks. Then we could not take the saw out of the cable, but it was a great success. One time we lost 1000

pounds of T and B Tonacco (*sic*) in the river. It was in tins, for a long time the Indians used to dive in the river and get some tins but as they were not water tight they were much enlarged. They dried it in the sun.

I was agent at the end of track on the railroad side and W. Thompson on the wagon road side. Thompson was the brother in law of A.E. Howse of Princeton. He (*sic*) in partnership with Adam Ferguson, Hotel Keeper at Savona, (*sic*) in running a store at Granite Creek, Similkameen during the gold excitement. He died at Grand Forks.

To return to Keefers, one bad accident at the time. W.H. Evans went over the bank with his engine. It stopped at the edge of the river a few feet further both engine and driver would have been lost. Wonderful to relate, Billy Evans only got a broken leg. A track was graded and laid down. Another engine was on the main track with a cable to the one at the river and started to pull it up. It got it started when the lower engine started to pull the one on top down so two engines were on the bank. They were got out later.

As soon as the grade was completed to the Cisco bridge they concluded to move the cable from Tilton Creek to Cisco. I did not move with it. Thompson said it was not necessary for both of us to go there. He could stretch the cable and run both sides. In stretching the cable it got away from him and fell in the river. They tried to haul it out with locomotives but could not budge it. I think it still lays there. Another one was stretched. As soon as the bridge was finished there was no more use for cables or ferry boats. When the bridge was opened Mr. Underdonk (*sic*) stopped his train at Keefer's and took my wife with him and took across the bridge as the first woman to cross it. I think it was in the year 1883 as I did not keep the dates. I may be wrong. After the cable was moved I was put on the steamer, Skuzzy, till they took out the machinery and turned the hull loose to drift down the river by itself. It went nearly as far as Yale before it got smashed on the rocks. Part of it went ashore at Chilliwack. That was the last of it. The machinery was moved to Savona or at least to Van Horn. A new boat was built and called the Skuzzy. I was kept there to take her up to Kamloops Lake. If Mr. Mara who had a contract to carry all the railroad supplies to the head of Shuswap Lake should raise the rates (*sic*). She never turned a wheel. I know she was in Kamloops a long time after the completion of the railroad. Mr. Mara bought her.

At Van Horn I built a ferry boat to take passengers across Kamloops Lake to Savona's and took over the Van Horn Hotel and Livery from Adam Ferguson who owned a Hotel at Savona's in partnership with Jim Neilands (*sic*) till 1885 when the gold excitement started at Granite Creek, Similkameen. The Onderdonk contract had a large Commissary at Van Horn and as the railroad was about completed they were selling their over supplies cheap. Adam Ferguson, Thompson and Newland thought it would be a good plan to purchase a lot and ship them to Granite Creek and start a store there. They hired me to run the store for them. They hired about sixty pack horses to freight them in. I sold out all my holdings in Savona's cut as soon as the first shipment of freight started. Ferguson, Newlands, Shompson (*sic*) and myself got saddle horses and started over the mountains to Nicola. We took a couple of days going over and arrived at Coutlie's, now Merrit (*sic*). We stopped at the Coutlie Hotel, not being in a great hurry we put in a couple of days there, giving the pack train time to catch up with us. Alex Coutlie being a great friend of Ferguson and Newland, Coutlie himself got the gold fever and made up

his mind he would join us. He got a small pack train of his own and loaded it with his business stock as he thought (*sic*) the miners might be thirsty. W. Charters, a rancher, made another of our party. He had a ranch where Merritt now is. He was a jolly sociable fellow, full of fun. The first day we started from there to Granite Creek, Charters had some fine Plymouth Rock Chickens. As he did not start with us but joined us the next day he proposed we would kill and roast Alex Coutlie and myself, two of his prize chickens. We were to call for them as we passed his place, which we did. He gave me one and Alex another. We were to eat them for our supper that night. We camped on the top of Hamilton Hill at a small lake. When supper was ready Alec said we would eat his chicken first. When we started to eat it, it was so tough we could not bite it and the meat was dark so we threw it away and started on mine. It was a fine big bird and cooked to perfection. We had plenty of other stuff. In the morning when Charter caught up to us he asked Alec how he liked the chicken and Alec told him. Then Charles told him it was the largest chicken he had ever seen. We soon broke camp and rode through a beautiful range country. Hundreds of cattle and lots of game. When we passed Aspen Grove we had to go over a high mountain called Pike's Mountain. There was a man named Pike had started a road house. He was a friend of the bunch so we had to stay over a day and we had a lively evening. When we left Pike's we went over the Mountain Top. They call it Bald Hill. When we crossed the grass was six or seven feet high. We were on horse back. There was no trail and the grass was so high we could not see the man or horse ahead of us. I don't know if it was bunch grass or Rye for I never saw it that long again. Someone later had set fire to it. After crossing the Pike Mountain we could look down to Otter Creek Valley. There was no trail. We just followed the tracks of those that had gone ahead. We met some returning. We were pleased to meet them. We asked them all kinds (*sic*) of questions about the trail and the mining camp. From Pike's Mountain we could see over the valley (*sic*) several hundred feet below us. We could see the lakes and the snow clad Coast Range (*sic*) miles off. We had such fine weather everyone felt gay. We did not hurry for we knew our pack train would take some days to get to Granite Creek. It was rough going down the mountain but was not so bad in the valley. We followed a string of blazes on the trees. Our greatest trouble was fallen logs. We either had to jump them or work round them. I missed mentioning in the Otter Valley we came upon a fine open plot of land about 9 miles from Otter Creek townsite that had been cultivated for there was a fine stand of timothy hay growing. A man named James Scott I knew in Yale joined with us. As soon as he saw it he said to me, "Don't go any farther but just file on this land." He said it would beat the gold mine. But I was going. I wanted the excitement and would not do so. We found out it was where the Hudson's Bay Co. raised hay to feed their horses. It was taken up a little later by Arthur Thynne and Hugh Hunter. They started a road house which was a complete failure. Then Jack Thynne got possession of the finest ranch in the Valley, now owned by Matheson Bros. Jack Thynne and his wife kept a road house there for some years after the road was built to Nicola. That is where the stage stopped. Everybody was pleased to stay for you were sure of good meals and bed for Thynne was a perfect host. I built his house while he went east to be married. The house today is owned and operated by Matheson Bros. Who had added a lot more property to it. They are the leading cattle raisers in the Similkameen. They also have a store in Coalmont and Princeton.

Every year Mr. Thynne gave a party and dance. Everyone attended, that could get away. Sometimes it would last several days. The neighbours came by the sleigh road. Then all would start out to visit some other ranch, have an evening there. I must state that Mr. Thynne was an accomplished musician. His family are all musical. We would always end our pleasure trips

which some time took a week, at Princeton at Jim Wallace's Hotel. Mr. and Mrs. Thynne were beloved.

We finally reach what is now the town of Tulameen, then called Otter Flat, an old Hudson's Bay post, called Camp de Femme (*sic*). There was quite a town started. Two streets, saloons and hotel, butcher baker and several other business houses. All have disappeared now. But at present it is not the lively town it was in 1885. Several tried to take the land up for pre-emption but the Government reserved it for a townsite.

After leaving Otter Flat we were then only six miles from Granite Creek. We began to meet people between the two places but when we came in sight of Granite Creek it looked like an ant hill. Several hundred men of all sorts, saddle horses, and pack animals, tents on both sides of the river. Granite Creek was on the Western side of the river so we had to ford the river. What a sight! All available space taken up for tents. Camp fires everywhere. There was one small cabin built by Mr. Allison for a store but there were no supplies in it. Only some tins (*sic*) plates and iron knives and forks. No provisions procurable and they were badly needed. We found out our pack trains would be welcome when they arrived. The most of Granite Creek was already staked off for claims. They were only 100 feet long from high water mark to high water mark across the creek. There was no Government Office to record them so it was not long before we had to appoint a recorder, a Mr. H. Nicolson (*sic*), pro term, till a Government Agent was sent in the year following, 1886. Mr. George *Transtrate (*Tunstall) took the office assisted by Archie Irvin (*sic*) as recorder. By that time Granite Creek was quite a town, all log houses.

As soon as we arrived we set up our camp and then went to look for sits (*sic*) to put up a store for Thompson and Ferguson and a saloon for Alec Coutlie so as to be ready when our pack horses arrived. Nearly every man who intended to go into business was doing the same. The houses seemed to grow. Plenty of timber was available and a nice commodious store was built ready for business before our goods arrived. Coutlee did not build right away. He set up a large tent while waiting for the building. A party of five in all took a trip up the Tulameen to look over the country. We went as far as what is now called Bear Creek. It was a nice looking stream. These men with me were Caribou (*sic*) Miners. They though (*sic*) there ought to be gold in the creek. I must mention that after leaving Otter Creek, we did not meet a white man but lots of Chinamen were working on the Tulameen River. They had dams to turn the river from one side to the other to get to the bed rock for mining as far as Bear Creek. We worked on Bear Creek. It had no name then or any mining had been done on it till we started. We got down to bed rock but could not find any gold but the boys said they would like to do some further prospecting if they could get some more supplies so I volunteered to take a couple of pack horses in the morning and go to Granite and get some as we had taken only a small supply. That night it started to rain but as we had to have supplies I started for Granite Creek. I had not gone a mile before I met some men on horseback. They asked me where the new creek was. I asked them what creek. They said Bear Creek. I told them I never heard of it. They would not believe me so I went on. Then I met more men all asked (*sic*) me the same question. Then more and more on foot and horse back all in a terrible hurry. I got one of my horses mixed in a mud hole. He was down to his belly. I asked several men passing to help me drag him out but they were in such a hurry they had no time. At last a man came along on a saddle horse (I got his name afterwards. It was Strong. He was the butcher later at Granite Creek.) He threw his rope over

my horse and snaked it out. Then he went on to find the new creek. I only got a little ways from there when four men met me and stopped me wanting to know where the New Creek was. I told them I never hear (*sic*) of it. One of them drew a gun and pointed it at me and said if I did not tell them they would shoot me. I told them to shoot away for I did not know the creek but they changed their minds and went on. It was raining hard all the time. The Tulameen River was flooded every dam in the river was washed out and the Chinamen sorrowfully looking on. When I reached Granite Creek the bench across from the town was covered with tents. Men were afraid to cross the river. I looked at it a while. It was awful muddy and looked bad but I knew the boys had to have grub. I would have to take a chance at crossing so I started the horses and found that the river was not so deep as it looked. My horses never lost their footing. There was quite a crowd on the bank watching and as soon as they found out it was possible they rushed for their horses and by the time I reached the townsite there was quite a procession. Then I found out a man named Rice had gone up the river and reported he had found another creek and named it Bear Creek and got some money from some men to tell them where it was. The Creek he was referring to was the creek we were on so I told some we were working on it but could not find any gold. This man Rice was told what I said for I knew he had never done any work on it. He cleared out and was no more seen. If he had been in Granite Creek when the people came back from the rush he would have been lynched. When I went back there were nearly as many men there as trees and the whole creek was staked off but no one got gold. We soo (*sic*) returned to Granite Creek.

It was astonishing how quickly the town had built up in those few days. Business was rushing. Stores had started up and several saloons (*sic*) and hotels were well under way. Our store was nearly completed. We expected our pack trains the next day. Coutlie was all ready for business. The creek was full of water wheels making a terrific noise, as they were built with wooden axles on wooden bearings and no grease. Me (*sic*) whipsawing boards to make sluice boxes, some of the claims already started shovelling in. It was a busy sight. Pack trains arriving from across the line with flour, bacon and hams, cowboys driving in beef from Princeton or at least from Allison's as there was no town yet. John Chance, the discoverer, was telling how he found gold gambling going on the logs anywhere there was room to spread a deck of cards. You could see \$20.00 gold pieces on the tables. The pack train arrived the next day so we got our goods into the store as fast as it was unloaded but the most interesting was when Alec Coutlie's good (*sic*) were ready for sale. It was the first liquor and it surely was well patronized. Chance had the time of his life. There was no trouble till the next day when a big bunch of Montana cow boys rode into the town and started to paint it red. They would charge through the rows of tents shouting and shooting off their guns and challenging any Granite Creekers to come and fight. They put bullet holes in several of the miner's pots and would charge up to Alec Coutlie's bar and order drinks they did not pay for half the time. Alec's stock was getting smaller and smaller for he had a tremendous run. When it was about played out he asked me to look after the place for him as he had to go up the creek a piece to see someone. I found all he had left was on (*sic*) bottle of whiskey and a bottle of claret. The cow boys made another round through the town and came up for the drinks. I told them it was 75¢ per drink. They said all right but did not pay. They commenced to shoot the things from behind the bar. Then they called for more drinks. I told them all there was, was a bottle of Claret. So I had to hand that out. That was soon gone. They demanded more. I told them all that was left was the smell. That was ten cents a smell. They each took a smell then they handed me some money. They said they owed it to Alec before

I came. Then they all started of shooting and shouting. My partner, Jim Newland was standing looking and laughing when one of them shot him on the head. That changed things. Bob Hamilton roused the miners. They formed a vigilance committee, got their guns and started after them. I was standing beside Newlands (*sic*) when he got shot. An open tent was in front of me and I saw a gun laying on the bed. It was from Stots' tent. I grabbed the gun and went after the fellow who shot Newland. He whipped up his horse and rushed across Granite Creek. I was running after him with the gun but he soon out distanced me. He ran across the flat to the river and struck across the river. The other cow boys crossing above saw me chasing Shorty, the cow boy shooter, so they all started firing off their guns at me. I dodged behind a pine tree. I could hear the bullets hitting the tree. They soon were out of sight. When I looked at the gun I had there was not a cartridge in it.

The miners followed them down to Keremeos where Bill Schoomover (*sic*) caught Shorty and brought him back. The rest got away. There was no government representative then. Mr. Allison, being a J.P., he was taken before him. That was my first visit to Princeto(*sic*). He was sentenced to be tried at Yale so the prisoner was taken to Hope, then to Yale. I took Newlands (*sic*) to Nicola. He was off his head. I got him on a pack horse and led it as far as Nicola where he took a stage to him (*sic*) home at Taroncs (*sic*).

After the trial Jim Newland and I were invited to dinner at Mr. Allison's. We were surprised to see Mr. Allison's family. There were quite a few. Newland asked him how many he had. Mr. Allison started to count them on his fingers. I found Mrs. Allison a wonderful woman. Her word was law with the Indians. When they wanted to decide any dispute they took her word for law. John Allison was a good hearted likeable man. We missed him when he died.

Now to return to Granite Creek and the noise of the several water wheels. Now, our store being completed and our supplies installed we commenced business and it was a good one. Our daily sales would be the envy of the sotes (*sic*) today. Our pack train was sent back to get more goods without delay.

Other supplies were coming in from over the line. Pack trains of flour, bacon, hams etc. One pack train, I remember in particular. It came in with over a tone (*sic*) of bacon and hams, home cured of the kind not procurable today. They just unpacked on the street. At the start they could not unpack fast enough. They were grabbed up at once. Everybody buying, white men and Chinamen. They were nearly out the same day. They left the balance with me on storage to sell and rushed off. I think to Yakam (*sic*) to another load. The town was growing fast, cabins everywhere, saloons going night and day. Every kind of business was soon represented. There being no ladies, there were stag dances every night, several bands of musicians, everybody happy, the miners having worked as far as the north fork and farther all taking out gold. Our gold scales kept pretty busy.

The claims then were 100 feet in length from high water mark on both sides of the creek. 300 feet for discover claim (*sic*) which was John Chance's. He did not work it. He sold it right away. He had a partner who was mining with him before discovering, named Bill Jenkins who took up the adjoining claims in partnership with Bob Hamilton and some other Cariboo Miners.

They worked their claims and took out considerable gold. Good miners all of them. In a month's time Granite Creek had grown to a town of two streets with eight stores.

Stores

Blair and Allen
Thompson and Ferguson
Price's
McQuaw
Wards
2 China Stores
Alex Lindsay

Saloons

Coutlie's
Hawthorn and Lucia
Alec Lindsay
Sam Adler
Madden
Thompson and Ferguson
Septwish
Layton
Jamieson

and other stores, Comstocks Drug Store, McDonald and McBath salloon (*sic*), Baker shop and restaurant, F.P. Cook's baker shop later bought out Allen and Blair, Strong's Butcher shop, Government house and jail.

In 1881 (*sic*) there was over 2000 of a population, all lumber had to be whipsawed and cost \$150 per M feet. Wages ran about \$7.00 per day. Flour was \$5.00 per sack till Barrister (*sic*) Price began to bring it in and lots from the other side of the line reduced it to \$4.00 but take it right through the prices were very reasonable for a new mining camp. Gum boots were in great demand. We got in one trip, 12 doz. pair. As soon as the pack horses arrived they unloaded in the street. We did not have to take a pair in the store. At \$15.00 per pair. They were grabbed up right away.

Vegetables were very scarce on the start, except beans, but soon they began to come in from the lower Similkameen. One old couple who came from what is now Ashinola (*sic*), a man named Saunders who had a ranch there, later of his death it was called the Lamont Ranch. Saunders was married to an Indian woman known as Emma. When he died he left all his property to his woman. Then she went and lived with Angus Lamont. Saunders put his ranch into vegetables. He and his woman used to come up weekly to Granite with a pack train of vegetables. They did a good business.

In 1886 the Government appointed a Gold Commissioner, Mr. George Lunstall* (*Tunstall), a very fine man, and Archie Irvin (*sic*) for recorder, he did not stay long. There were a few mining disputes which Mr. Tunstall soon settled. Now Granite Creek was on its feet. I am told that then Granite Creek was the second largest town in B.C. according to the population so the politicians began to take notice. We had some very amusing meetings. The members first made themselves good fellows with the whole town. Jack was as good as his master. No discrimination as to sex or quality. They enjoyed themselves as much as we did though they were the principal spenders. No matter if there should be one of any party like Chas. Semlin and Martin, Dick McBride, it was hands across the sea. The miners would have voted for both parties if they could. They were all jolly good fellows.

The principal claim on the start was managed by a Capt. Sherbourne in partnership with a Mr. Rashdale. The latter put up the money to open up their claim in the Creek below the town. He did not operate himself. He left it to Sherbourne. Rashdale operated a flour mill in Spellmachine (*sic*). The claim was very rich but not rich enough to keep Sherbourne going. Any day he would clean up and it was always a good one before morning. It (*sic*) was about broke for he loved cards and good living. I think Rashdale's share was very small but there were lots inclined the same way. The town was full of black legs and others waiting for the spenders. I know after the claim was worked out Sherbourne had no money. I never heard what became of him.

Granite Creek was a good campe (*sic*) for about five years when it began to decline. Then the benches began to be worked. They could not work them before because there was no place to put the tailings. There were some very rich benches, some still working as they were scattered. The population was on the decrease. It was a good little creek as long as it lasted. Several of the miners took good care of their money and are in good circumstances today. Lots of them lost it in investing in other properties in other places. There were a few of the best properties which lasted for several years. The Mainland, Pogue, Gordon E. Anderson bench, the Frenchman's bench, Amberty, Swan which is still working, the largest of all. There is (*sic*) chances of valuable finds to be made yet but it will cost money to find them or at least open them up.

There are a lot of quartz veins on Granite Creek but they do not show very many values, either in gold or platinum. Granite Creek and the Tulameen river (*sic*) have the largest platinum deposits in B.C. or on the continent. In early days the miners used to swear at the platinum. It is always mixed with the gold in their clean up. It had to be picked out by hand and it was then thrown away as nobody seemed to know what it was. They called it white metal. The Chinamen called it white gold. No lead of it has been discovered yet. It (*sic*) it does come from a lead, the platinum in Granite is much purer than in the Tulameen.

We had some amusing things happen in the early days. It was nearly a year before any ladies came in. The first appearance of a lady caused quite a sensation. There was a dance on at Sam Adlers Hotel. It was a stag dance. While it was in session (*sic*) a knock came to the door. The mail carrier just arrived and he had with him a very pretty girl. They asked for Sam Adler and the lady wanted to know if he had a room for her. He said he had. The door opened into the bar room and the stairs started up to the bedrooms, from the bar room. The dance was going on in the inside room. You could see the other room from the door. Sam took the lady's grip and led her up the stairs. The dance stopped. You could have heard a pin drop, everything was so quiet. Then Adler came down stairs and everybody wanted to know who the lady was. He said he did not know. Pretty soon the dancing started again and the lady came down stairs and wanted to know if she could join them. Everybody wanted to dance with her. She took one or the other on till supper time. We had supperer (*sic*) everyone was on their best behaviour. Not a word spoken but a preacher could not listen to. As soon as supper was over, the girl jumped up on the table, threw off her dress, she was in men's clothes and it was Sam Adler's youngest son but he made a dandy girl.

Another amusing incident occurred. Mr. J. Thynne, well known in the Similkameen Valley, had a visit from his father, the Rev. (?)anon Thynne from Devonshire, England. After a visit to his son he concluded he would like to see a mining camp in operation so he came to Granite. He took a front room in the Adler Hotel. The day after he arrived a prize fight was staged between two ladies. They had a ring right in front of the Adler Hotel. The ladies were rigged out in (?)aper regulation clothes. They looked like business. When they were ready to be in I noticed Mr. Thynne open his window and look down upon them. I was on the sidewalk just below him. I could see and hear all he had to say about it. As soon as the ladies began to fight they got angry at each other and their expressions were not very savory. I watched Mr. Thynne to see what he would say or do about it but he watched every round but never took his head in, but I could hear him repeating "What blasphemy!" But he took it all in to the last. I was not surprised for most English clergymen enjoy sports, the Derby and riding to hounds, but Mr. Thynne was one of the best gentlemen I ever met and I saw a good deal of him in Granite.

In about 1882 (*sic*) or 3 Hugh Hunter arrived at Granite Creek. He was sent in by John Clapperton to be Government Agent but as Mr. George Lanstale (*sic*) had been appointed he did not get the position then so he became a member of the Thompson and Ferguson firm. He took my place as I was going to bring in my wife. When I returned, I concluded to go into business for myself and as so much freight was coming in by farmers pack trains from Washington they could not sell it right away. There was no place to warehouse it. I thought a commission business would pay and as the Lindsay's had the post office and wanted to give it up for a post office and salloon (*sic*) did not mix, so I took it. I built a good building. A saw mill had started and we could get lumber so I built it of lumber. I rented half the store to Comstock the druggist, so I did well for I had all the surplus freight I wanted to handle.

One morning I got up early and was looking across the creek there was a long bench. I noticed a Chinaman digging and sacking the dirt. I watched him carrying it away (a Chinaman could not file on a claim). I did not think much of it at the time but I went to see if he was there the next morning and sure enough he was. So my curiosity was aroused. So I took a pan and went across the creek to see what he had. The first pan I took was over six dollars worth of gold, so I lost no time instaking (*sic*) it and as the bench extended to a long flat for some ways down the river, the lead I had just struck must extend all the way through that flat. So I must get some one with means and take up the whole of it. The first one I asked to come in with me was Dave McBeth. He had a soloon (*sic*). He said he would not go into mining. He said he would sooner be a whipping post on a railroad than a miner on Granite. He was a railroad contractor on the C.P.B. (*sic*) before he came in. I soon got six men in with me. Dan McKay, Donald Carlston, Al Tregillis and myself formed the Mainland Company. All good men at mining but fond of their Jock and Doris.

Jim Turley was appointed foreman. He was a skilled miner. He'd been in the Caribou (*sic*) mining for years. He came to the conclusion the claim out (*sic*) to be opened from the lower end, which of course, was the proper way to work it. Especially if we had water to contend against. But we had no water to fight. The first season those who did not work had to pay assessments every week to provide for those who were working and pay for equipment as well. I contended that we should work where we knew there was good pay but I could not get them to see it. We were in debt some \$1600.00 to F.P. Cook at the end of the first season. One

day I would not pay any more assessments and called a meeting. It made Turley mad and he threatened to quit. At last he said if I knew so much about it I could take charge myself. I told him he had forgotten more about mining that (*sic*) I knew. Some of the shareholders said "Yes, Holmes, take a try at it." So it was put to a vote and I was elected. I started the next morning. I had an opening in the bank which would run \$7.00 to the pan. It was on the upper end of the property so I appointed Donald Bankin (*sic*) as foreman. He was one of the best men to construct what plant was necessary, like flumes, and water wheel, for we had to make our own machinery those days out of lumber which we had to whipsaw. We built a large dump house in the creek. Had the water running through the center and hauled the dirt out by cars from a tunnell (*sic*). In the first month we had paid all our debts and paid our workmen that were hired and declared a \$75.00 dividend. From then on every shareholder got the \$75.00 a week for over two years. When they worked they got wages as well. It was tunnell (*sic*) work. We hired quite a few men for whip sawing (*sic*), making laging, getting out timbers, shovelling and tunnel men. It was a very rich piece of ground. It was a sight to see the clean up. We cleaned up twice a week. We had seats round our dump house. When we cleaned up those seats would be full of men looking on. We had no bed rock. Our bed rock was a hard sand as level as a floor. We ran a tunnel 36 feet in width. We would run a 12 feet (*sic*) set so far then another 12 feet then another 12 feet. As soon as the first was run it was cleaned up then all rock (*sic*) from the next set were thrown into it so it saved running them out in the car and supported the tunner (*sic*). Take a candle and run along the face you could see gold anywhere. The pay streak was about 6 feet high. There was not abit (*sic*) of dampness in the tunnell (*sic*). A person could mine in there with slippers. The gold was flake gold, no nuggets. It was an overflow from Granite Creek. In Capt. Sherbourne's claim in the creek, the bed rock dropped off on the level of our tunnell (*sic*). In the Sherbourne claim most of the gold was coarse and very rich as far as he got the bed rock but was cut off there. We sank shafts to try and find how deep it was over the falls which there must have been thousands of years ago. We went down over sixty feet but no bottom. No one ever got there yet though several have tried with good machinery in later dates. There is lots of gold if it could be got at. There is only one way to bring a big drain up through the flat to allow the water to drain. It would be steam shovel work. We put in a large over shot wheel, 16 feet high and rigged up two 12 in. pumps, wooden ones, working on a working (*sic*) beam but we could not keep out the water so we could sink in a shaft. Some day some one will get there. One company put in a steam shovel to try and drain it but they started from the mouth of Granite Creek. The bed rock is higher there than the channel through the flat so it was a failure. Then another put in a floating dredge costing, I am told, some \$80,000.00. They started on the river level instead of keeping in an open drain behind them. They tailed behind them as they advanced. The consequence was a lake was formed. Instead of keeping on the river level everytime the dredge moved forward it would raise from 2 to 3 feet eventually it was up to the level of the bench so the work had to be abandoned, a complete loss.

Somewhere in the year 1897, Robert Stevenson floated a company to operate a property. They bought it from Alex Swan and Angus Lamont, called the Swan claim. They also bought John Amberty's property adjoining and took up two more claims, one from Pat Synon called the Gladstone claim, the other two claims they leased from the Government, one of which was the townsite of Granite Creek, and called themselves the Granite Creek Mining Co. It was to be worked by Hydraulic Mining process. First a flume was built 3 ½ miles long up Granite and brought the water from both the north and south forks high enough to get pressure for the

monitors to wash down the gravel into Granite. But first a short flume was built to take water from what was then known as Ward Creek, to run a turbine to run a saw mill to get the lumber for the long flume. It took a year to build. There were several high tressles (*sic*) and bridges to build to carry the flume costing in the neighbourhood of some \$65000.00. It was not known at the time if there was really an old channel. It proved to be very rich. I could not say how much was taken out by the company as the investors resided in Ottawa. I knew three of them, Mr. Alexander Lumsden, W. Carr Harris, and his brother W. Dale Harris. All wealthy men. There was another. I forget his name. They operated under the management of Robert Stevenson and Mr. Hagg. The (*sic*) operated for some three years. They were very much dissatisfied with the management. When Mr. A. Lumsden bought out the other three and took it over himself. He only operated for a short time when he got into litigation with some other mining company working on Granite Creek. The flume broke and caused a land slide which washed out the hill and buried the other company's work below. The case was tried at Vancouver. They got judgment for some \$2000.00 but it was to be expended in cleaning out the creek which (*sic*) not satisfy the other company. They never came back to Granite. We knew their claim was no good. They were only playing a game. So no more was done about it but Mr. Lumsden closed the works and let R. Stenson (*sic*) and Hagg out. They put me in charge of the property to keep up the flume and look after things. After about a year a bush fire burnt up the flume and Mr. Lumsden died. His son (*sic*) became heir for his estate. He was a millionaire. He wrote to me and sent me a deed of gift of the 5 properties, saw mill and all the plant as he did not want to be troubled with any mines in B.C. A firm (*sic*) of lawyers, Christie, Green and Greene of Ottawa made out a deed to that effect and recorded it in Princeton, B.C. for faithful services. It was too much of a property for me alone to operate so I had to look around for some mining men who would become interested. I had several offers but by people of limited means. I had a hard job to keep the yearly dues paid up for a number of years. Several parties took options but were too short of funds to put it back on a paying basis. First (*sic*) to E.J. Johnson of Spokane for one year. He never started work. In 1920. Then to the Hamilton Iron and G. Mining Co. of Seattle. They operated from June, 1923 to July 1929. They took out a lot of gold. I do not know how much. They went broke in Seattle. Then to John A. Hatton in April 1932 to 1933 who turned his portion to A.M. Manson of Vancouver who still holds it.

In the year 1885 at the trial of a cow boy they called Shorty for the shooting of Jim Newlands (*sic*), was the first time I went to Princeton. Then there were only two families, Mr. Allison and a family named Jameson and a Chinaman's Store at the mouth of China Creek. There were a number of Chinamen mining along the river from Chas Sip ranch. Mr. Allison had a store and was in the cattle business. The Princeton Range was a summer range used by several large cattle men from Keremeos and shipping place for cattle to New Westminster and Victoria. The cattle were driven from here to Hope where they were taken down the Fraser River to their destination. Where (*sic*) were weekley (*sic*) drives. It was quite an exciting time to attend the round ups. Lots of cows had calves. Some of them were knocked on the head with clubs so that the cows would get fat for market. A steer was not in condition then till they were three years old. It seemed to me to be a great waste hitting the calves and throwing their carcasses (*sic*) away. I think the main reason was there were so many cattle they did not cut enough hay to feed them in the winter for every winter lots died of starvation. Later when I took up a pre-emption there, I was given calves to take home for my use. I did this (*sic*) just carried them home in front of me

on the saddle. We all had horses. So I soon got cattle started. Used some for milk cows and some for beef.

I found the Allison family a most interesting one. A family of eight. They also kept the Post Office and Mr. Allison was a J.P. Mrs. Allison was a most intelligent lady. She used to read to her children for there was (*sic*) no schools. No chance for the children to get an education. One day one of them came to me and he surprised me, for he clearly knew Ingsolloy's (*sic*) Legends off by heard (*sic*). He said they all knew them for their mother used to read them to them. They must have had a lonesome time. No one but themselves, except a few cow boys Mr. Allison had on hire.

The second time I went to Princeton I was in company of the first constable who was sent to Granite Creek, a Mr. Swan he was down to collect licences from the Chinese miners. We rode up to Mr. Allison's house and went in when we were ready to leave Mr. Swan left his horse tied with his saddle bags and papers but it was gone. He never did find it. My horse was still there. He soon left this part of the county (*sic*).

I made several trips on prospecting tours. Did some mining up the Similkameen. Ran a runnel (*sic*) in on the west bank just across from the town for a man named Hope. We got some gold but not enough to pay. We found a few good spots up where Ashinola (*sic*) is. The best one was at the mouth of Whipsaw Creek but I did not stay long. My wife being taken sick had to go down to the coast. On my way back to the Similkameen we stayed a while with my wife's father in Yale. While we were there Mr. Jameson came out. I met him. He wanted me to come back with him and stake a pre-emption on a flat adjoining his ranch. So my wife and I thought it would be a good plan to take up some land and found a home. Before we left Yale we met a man who claimed to be a cow boy evangelist. Jameson and I told him of the gold in the Similkameen He got quite enthused. He said he could get up a company who would put up enough capital to work the ground by hydraulic system if it was as Jameson described it. So we all started back to the Similkameen. I took up the flat for a pre-emption four miles below Princeton. A beautiful piece of land. So I put up a home and lived there for four years or more. This was in 1890. I made a nice home there. The only thing lacking was a market for our produce as Granite Creek was on the decline. Money was scarce. I fenced the flat much to the disgust of the cattlemen. They did not want settlers on the range. They would knock down my fences and let the cattle into my crops, send the Indians to ride around my house shooting off their guns to scare me away but it did not work. They got tired of it after a while and some other settlers came in, J. Norman and T. Cole. Mr. Allison did not know that potatoes would grow in the Similkameen. Bill Bristol and Allison said they would freeze before they would be any good but I grew as fine potatoes as were ever grown. Tomatoes and beans. Mr. Allison used to ship his potatoes for the winter in by pack train. I sold the ranch later to Mr. W.H. Armstrong of Keremeos and returned to mining. The nicest time of my life was spent on that ranch. Money we did not need. Our produce supplied us with everything we needed for meat between the neighbours there was no scarcity. One would kill a beef or pic (*sic*), share it up with all around. We had lots of chickens, turkeys, ducks. Our eggs kept us in groceries. We took them up to the Chinaman's store at Princeton. They always wanted chickens and eggs and traded them for groceries. No money changed hands. If there were articles we could not purchase we would take a horse or steer to Granite and sell it to someone. Mostly F.P. Cook who had started a ranch up the Otter Valley in

partnership with a man named Myron. That wal (*sic*) also the way we bought dry goods. Our wants were small those days. The ladies did not dress up much or the men either. No powder puffs or fancy hair dresses. Just plain overalls and cotton goods. The country was full of game, grouse and deer, it was criminal the way the deer were slaughtered. Hundreds were killed for their hides for which they only got 75¢ a piece. Perhaps they could carry a hind quarter home, sometimes not. That carried on for a long time till I wrote to the sporting clubs at the coast and put pieces in the papers about it. They offered to have me appointed Game Warden. The Government never offered to take any hand so I told them if I was properly appointed I would accept the position but I had to have some pay for my time. I never got an answer so the game slaughter went on for a long time till the shipping of hides and mountain sheep heads were stopped. Some of the store keepers in Granite Creek made a lot of money on heads. They had the Indians hunting for them. Paid the Indians 75¢ a piece for Big Horn sheep heads they gave \$25.00 each. I could look out of my back door in the mornings and see a dozen or more deer on the hill back of the house. It was a pretty sight. No starvation those days.

One day I went to Mr. Allison's for my mail. On my way back I got as far as what was known as the Allison townsite. I was passing under a large tree when a large white (*sic*) owl fell to the ground. I looked at it and found it with porcupine quills sticking all over it. It was in misery so I killed it with a club. When a stranger rode up he was taken with it. It was a beautiful bird. He said if I could only get that to a taxidermist he would have it stuffed. I told him I could fix it so he could take it with him. I wanted to know what he wanted it for. He said he would present it to the British Museum in London. We rode down as far as the ranch together. He said he would like to spend (*sic*) a few days hunting in this part of the country. I told him he could stay with us and I would take him out in the hills and show him plenty of game. The only thing I did not like about him was he was a real dude. He used scented shaving soap and it was strong with scent and some dope he rubbed his face and hands and it was scented too. The next day I took him hunting. When we got a little way from the house we, at least, I, did see some deer. When he (*sic*) said, they were in plain view, he could not see them for a long time, I told him you had to have a cultivated sight to spot game in the bush so he started to get nearer to them for a shot but they ran away so I told him we would soon see some more. I told him to follow the hill side and I would go along lower down and if I started any they would run up the hill. We saw several but none would go up the hill near him. When we couldn't (*sic*). I said I can tell you. The deer are very keen on scent and they can smell you a mile off. He soon got his game sight and was much pleased with his stay. But just return a minute to the owl. I carefully skinned and cleaned the skeleton. I never expected to hear any more about it but I got about a year afterwards, a letter from the museum thanking me for it. I guess it is there now and it was a beauty even with porcupine quills in it.

Things soon began to pick up in the lower Similkameen. Several large hunting parties came in and wanted guides and pack animals. Luke Gibson, Shuttleworth from Hope and myself took up the business. We also took Indian Guides. We would take them to Ashinola (*sic*) for big horn that was the most prized game.

The first one I took up was Clives (*sic*) Phillips Wooley (*sic*), editor of a New Westminster paper. My house was the only place they could be accommodated. Allison's would not accept them. Wolley was accompanied by a Scotchman named (*sic*). We went to

the Ashinola (*sic*) before the Scotchman left. He asked Mr. _____ (*sic*) a particular friend of his what kind of a gun he should take in with him to shoot Big Horn as this friend was a big game hunter. He loaned him a gun he had used to shoot elephants with in India. A clumsy heavy gun. We had pretty fair luck as Wolley was a good shot but the Scotchman did not have any luck. He said this gun kicks so much I can not take aim. He said what shall I do. Not thinking I said to lean up against a tree next time you shoot. And sure enough he did and it was several days before his arm was well again. It nearly put his shoulder out of joint. I never thought he would do such a thing. While we were on that trip Mr. J. Thynne came up on a hunting trip with his brother Arthur Thynne. He camped with us. He arrived in the morning and after lunch (*sic*) he struck off to find some Big Horn. First thing we hear a volley of shots so we went to see what it was about. Thynne had got into a band of sheep. The first he had seen and shot five or six. There was another hunting party in the hills at the same time and they arrived at the same time to see what the shooting was all about. A Mr. Bullock Webster who had a ranch at Keremeos as soon as he saw the dead sheep he gave Thynne a bawling out for he had shot all does. Thynne said I could see the horns on them. He did not know does had horns. After our hunting trip with Mr. Woolley (*sic*), he got me to go with him through the valley taking in the country from Princeton to Rossland. He was writing up the country for the Nelson Miner. My job was to take care of the horses and when we got to a mine to take samples. Greenwood was just starting then. We took in Bonington (*sic*) Falls, Greenwood, Grand Forks. We followed the Dewdney Trail over the mountain to Rock Creek, Penticton, Okanagan, Camp McKinney.

From Christina Lake we took the steep Dewdney trail over the mountain till we struck the wagon road to Rossland. The boom was on. Great heavy ore wagons with beautiful teams hauling the ore to North Port (*sic*). It was a busy scene as it was evening when we struck the road, we concluded to camp. We saw a nice level spot with a heavy covering of moss. It looked a nice place to spread our blankets. The weather was warm and dry. We cooked supper at the camp fire then we lay down to sleep. It was not an hour before we commenced to feel cold and damp. When we lay down I suppose moving about the moss we were laying on was saturated with water so we soon changed camp.

The next day we arrived in Rossland. Scuh (*sic*) a busy place. Mostly tents. One good sized hotel with a long bar in it and the room was crowded. It was almost impossible to get to the bar. There were 5 or 6 bar tenders as busy as bees serving the men. First thing we wanted was something to eat. There was a large tent. A fine big woman running it. We called for a good beef steak each and we were served with a big fine Porter House steak. Big enough for two people and I enjoyed the finest meal I ever enjoyed. It might have tasted so (*sic*) I was hungry and tired of camp fare. We took in the mines first. The Tay Roy, then the War Eagle and I think it was called the Morning Star. I took in the town. Everybody was excited. In the evening there was a prize fight on in a building just being erected. It was so crowded there was no chance to get inside but the scaffolding was built on the outside. I climbed on to it and found a knot hole. I could see the fight plain but I soon found out it was a fake so started to climb (*sic*) down when a man hollered. He'd give me 50¢ for my know (*sic*) hole so I sold it.

I left Rossland the next morning and took my horses back with me leaving Mr. Woolley (*sic*) there and made for home. We had been six weeks on the trip. On my way home I went through Keremeos. I called into Mrs. Coulthards ranch to try and get some fruit to take home.

She said I could have all I wanted. She took me to a tree a little way from her house. It was loaded with beautiful large ripe peaches. The *(sic)* said I could have the whole tree. I just took a load for one horse. After leaving Keremeos I got a few miles out and met Bullock Webster. He had a place. He asked me to come over to his house and get dinner. When I was leaving he gave me a lot of tomatoes. I got home the same day. It was late at night and I was tired.

A little while afterwards a large hunting party came in and camped on my ranch. They were the Brady Martins of New York. The *(sic)* came to Spences Bridge in their own private car. Luke Gibson was their guide. They had a large pack train. They brought their own tents and supplies. One pack horse load of photographic plates one with candy and one with ammunition. Mr. Bradey *(sic)* was accompanied by his wife and another friend. Mrs. Bradey *(sic)* was a good shot. They camped at my place. She told my wife they went on a hunting trip every year somewhere. They stayed a couple *(sic)* of days then went on to the Ashinola *(sic)*. They travelled by easy stages. A few days after they left, Hugh Hunter, the Government Agent got me to go with him to their camp on the Ashinola *(sic)*. He went to collect the hunting licence from the Bradey's *(sic)*. A \$50.00 one. We were treated fine. While we were there Mr. Bradley *(sic)* offered \$75.00 if Gibson could find a bear for Mrs. Bradley *(sic)* to shoot so he set a bear trap in a bunch of brush. The next morning sure enough *(sic)* there was a large black bear in it. So they notified Mrs. Bradley *(sic)* that there was a bear in sight. They had told Mr. Bradley *(sic)* that the bear was in a trap but not Mrs. Bradley *(sic)*. The bear was standing on his hind legs looking over the brush. When Mrs. Bradley *(sic)* arrived she could not see the bear was in a trap. She raised her rifle and killed it with one shot. She was going to go and look at it but Mr. Bradley *(sic)* stopped her and said the men would bring it to the campe *(sic)* which they did. I don't suppose whe *(sic)* ever knew it was a trapped bear.

On their way back to their car at Spence's bridge they stopped at my ranch and left Mrs. Holmes enough candy for a long time. They said they would come back next year. They did but did not do any hunting. They got a telegram calling them back to New York. Their daughter was very sick so they went right back.

In 1897 one day a gentleman rode up to the house and said he was taking a trip in the mountains for his health and asked if we could put him up for a while. He said his name was Harry Whitney Treat from Chicago. We had been recommended to him as a good place for him to stay. My wife said it was quite satisfactory if he would put up with our living. We could see he was a man who was not used to roughing it. He liked to go riding and took a great interest in the mines. He took a trip one day to the Summit Mines up the Tulameen River. These mines *(sic)* were just started. Dan Ross, Amberty, Bob Stevenson, Lambert, H. Hunter and others. Not much work had been done on them but the showing was good. One day he got me to go up and see what the price the men wanted for their holdings. They wanted form *(sic)* \$20,000 to a quarter of a million except Hunter who only asked the modest sum of \$2,000.00. There was very little work done on them. The greatest work that I could see was a hole on the Amberty about 10 ft by 10 ft square but it was in ore. That was the lowest figure I could get. I told Mr. Treat. He did not say much. It was then I found out he was a millionaire. He was in partnership with another millionaire, Edward Blewett also of Chicago. It appears in his travelling around he had been looking for a proabable *(sic)* investment. He told me he had planned to build a smelter at Tulameen. He considered it was a good site for coal and there just for the mining. Also lime

dykes. But he was not prepared to pay such a price for the claims. He would take a years option on it at a reasonable figure. He would prospect the claims. He did not want to pay the full value of the property. He must make some profit. The prospecting was going to be expansive (*sic*) but the holders would not listen to reason. If they had, Tulameen would have been a different place today. Mr. Treat left here and went to Vananda Is. took up the mine and built a smelter there. He was killed in Seattle a few years afterwards.

We were sorry to see Mr. Treat go. He was with us about six weeks. He never forgot us a letter every Christman (*sic*). The trouble always has been in the Similkameen the miners have always asked exorbitant prices for their discoveries. They must think the purchasers cannot pay full value. He has to make a profit and it always has turned out the men that hold out die without a dollar and the property is still idle in the hills.

We had quite a few notables staying with us as there was no Princeton and no place for to get a meal and lodging. They had to come to us. Sometimes we were crowded no man was turned away. Survey parties, travellers of all sorts. Some going prospecting. Some going to the coast by way of Hope.

When Volcanic Brown staked Copper Mountain he started from my house. He put in the first stake. He was accompanied by Jim Jameson. It must have been 1896 not sure.

Many and many times Pinto Jack and other Indians tried to get me to go down to Hedley. Now they know of good rock. They would show me where it was. Long before Mr. Rogers took it up but I did not know anything about rock mining.

My ranch by this time was getting in good shape. My neighbours had tired of breaking the fences I had a beautiful field of wheat which I sold all to the other ranches for seed. I was getting a few cattle, and horses round me one time I had three mares in my field. It rained that night. I got up at daylight and missed them but as it was raining I did not have much trouble tracking them. I heard a sound in the night as if someone was running them. The tracks led over the mountain back of my house. It led into the Princeton range in a deep valley. After I got through the timber I saw a tent in the distance with a couple of horses tied to a tree. I rode up there. Of course I was armed in case of trouble and the horses were the ones I had lost. I could not see anyone around but the camp fire was burning so they must have seen me coming. I took them home and laid a complaint with Mr. Allison who was our magistrate. He said he could not do anything about it but the next day Mr. Allison found out his best team was missing. A posse was soon formed and we found out an organized gang was formed that stole horses from Washington and they were driven across the line to some place on the 20 Mile creek where members of the gang were stationed. We passed them on the Princeton range. From there they were taken to Hope and sold on the return trips the horses were taken from here to Washington and sold there. We soon broke that bunch up. Princeton was growing up about that time. About this time a bunch of men came over from the American side and robbed a store in Granite Creek and on at Princeton. Hugh Hunter was the Government Agent at the time. He swore in some miners from Granite. Most conspicuous was Judge Murphy. A few of us in the lower valley joined them to hunt them up. I joined the posse with Samuel Sands. He and I spotted their camp on an island close to the Jameson place. It was heavily covered with brush sands and he and

myself were searching the Island when I got a glimpse of something red in the bush. I told Sands we had better not go any further till we notified the rest of the posse as they had the drop on us. So we reired (*sic*) across the river to the Jamieson Ranch. Sands went to call the rest of the men and I stayed to watch the Island. Eddy Allison joined me. The men on the Island must have seen hands riding away and guessed what he was going for and that they were spotted for they made a rush to get away. One of them named Metlock came out first leading his horse. In getting on his horse he stumbles and fell into the river with his rifle in his hand. When he picked himself up I told him to drop his rifle as I had him covered. Instead he laid his rifle across the cantle of his saddle and took a sight at me. I dodged behind a tree and told him I would shoot him if he did not drop. He pulled the trigger of his rifle but it misfired. He snapped it twice so I fired and shot him across the stomach. As he was side ways to me he dropped. The other man Brown, that was with him, crossed down lower and ran away. We went and made a prisoner of Metlock. He was badly wounded. Just then Hunter came along with some more men. Hunter wanted to put hand cuffs on him but I said no that could do no more harm. We looked at his rifle and found that in falling in the river the lock had filled with sand or I might have been shot instead. We went into where we had seen their camp and they had a lot of stuff. They must have stolen it from the American side to try and sell here, dress suits, ladies shoes and a lot of things.

We took Metlock to my house and my wife nursed him till he got well then he was taken to Kamloops for trial. He got a short term and was deported. On our way Hunter and I took him out as far as Nicola. We found another of the gang in a road camp on the top of the Hamilton Hill. He was standing in front of an open tent. Hunter told him he was under arrest. He did not see me coming up leading a horse with Metlock coming hand cuffed to the saddle. He jumped into the tent and seized a gun to use against Hunter but I saw him and covered him with my rifle and Metlock called him by name and told him to drop it or he would get what he had got so he dropped his gun and Hunter put the handcuffs on him. We took them both to Nicola and put them in jail. Then the Nicola Police took them to Kamloops and we returned home. The rest of the gang got away although we had the trails guarded. About a year after Metlock left B.C. for his home I got a letter from him saying that shooting was the lesson of his life. He was just a young boy got into bad company. Later he became a sheriff. After this affair I was appointed special constable of the Similkameen. There was some horse stealing going on that soo (*sic*), was cleaned up but cattle stealing still kept on. There is always that in a cattle country.

It was in the year 1890, I met G. Rsure (*sic*) who was leturing (*sic*) in Yale. He was a very fluen (*sic*) talker. In all his meetings he drew a large crowd. His wife and sister travelled with him. They were good singers. I got quite intimate with him. I told him about the mines in the Similkameen. He got quite interested and said he would like to go in with Jamieson and myself. He said he could get up a company who would finace (*sic*) a good mining proposition so we took him in with us. By way of the Hope trail we had our horses in Hope, in following down the Whipsaw Creek Jamieson told him there was (*sic*) good prospects at the mouth where it entered into the Similkameen. When we got to where Ashinola (*sic*) now is we camped and Jamieson took him up to the mouth of Whipsaw and got some good prospects. After a brief stay in the Similkameen he went back to New Westminster and started a company and got enough capital to put in a ditch to bring the creek on to a bench of the Similkameen. It was then Saunders Ranch. He got Jamieson to survey the ditch and put me in charge of the works. I did not like Jamieson's survey and told Rasure I was sure that the grade was the wrong way but he

said he had every confidence in Jamieson and I was to dig the ditch according to his stakes. It did not make much difference to me for I was not interested in the property. In digging the ditch along the hill side just above where the Capt. Scott house is built we cut through a lead of coal for some distance. Now I believe that coal is being mined. Rasure (*sic*) had a bunch of Chinamen digging the ditch. One day a very heavy rain came down. The Chinamen were working at the mouth of the ditch at the creek when the water from the ditch ran the wrong way and flooded them out. Rasure never did start mining. His backers quit him. Rasure left the Similkameen owing some bills. He went to Nicola Lake and got into the confidence of a lot of the ranches (*sic*). The (*sic*), one Sunday he asked Mr. Murray to let him preach a sermon on temperance in his church. Mr. Murray consented. He was congratulated by everyone after he was through. He stopped at the Hotel. A lot of the farmers followed him and Rasure treated the whole bunch at the bar. Some of them thought he was a fine fellow. Before the week was over he got the farmers to get a car load of horses together and he would take them to New Westminster and sell them at a good price. He even got them to pay the freight to New Westminster. I don't think they ever got a cent for their horses. Rasure cleared out leaving a lot of unpaid bills there. The last I heard of him was he was in the pen somewhere in Ontario for forgery.

A short time afterwards a sea captain named Scott in company with some other sea faring men formed a company to work Whipsaw Creek.

A little while after Rasure, the Cow Boy Evangelist, abandoned his claim at Ashinola (*sic*) a Capt. Scott, a fine and very powerful man, took the property up as a mining claim. He had been captain of the Steamship, West Indian, who was lost on the rocks on the B.C. coast. He formed a company of some other sea fairing men to work the benches at Whipsaw Creek by hydraulic system. He brought in some heavy machinery. The monitors were very heavy and all his equipment was brought in from the Nicola Lake. There was no road. Only a very crooked trail along the One Mile Cr. from Aspen Grove. In some places no trail that was passable. The machinery had to be handled with ropes and blocks. Sometimes the side hill was so steep the machinery had to (*sic*) carried along by ropes. He hired a lot of sailers (*sic*) from the coast who handled it by ship rules. The capt. would stand on the hill giving orders. Such as slack forward, haul it aft. I'm not sure if they did not sing some of the ship chanties (*sic*) when they were pulling on the ropes. It was a good show but they got through all right. He even brought in the first piano that came into the Similkameen. There was an organ brought in before by Hugh Hunter. He had Chinamen pack it from Nicola to Granite Creek. Talking of music I will state that the first phonograph to come in Jim Wallace brought and the first radio was got by the Chief of the Power house at Coalmont. I got the second pretty crude affairs compared with the radios of today but these worked by battery sets.

As soon as the machinery arrived at its destination work of construction was commenced. A pipe line and look (*sic*) the water from Whipsaw Creek. It led to the monitors. He also started building a large log house on the lower bench for (*sic*) the mouth of the creek. It was a well built house. It is still there. When everything was ready to turn on the water a lot of visitors arrived from New Westminster and Victoria and among them was Governor Dewdney. The water was turned on. The monitor man played it a little while to demonstrate its power. It snapped off ties (*sic*) 12 and 14 inches and more in diameter and snapped them off like matches. All at once the monitor got out of the control of the man. It started to spin. The stream had just elevated to clear

the head of the crown (*sic*) looking on. There was no way to stop it spinning only to shut the water off at the head. As no one had stayed there there was a lot of time used up to get up the hill to the head but as luck would have it the pipe bursted (*sic*) which most likely saved the lives of the who (*sic*) crowd. If the elevation of the monitor had fallen one foot it would have caught the whole crowd. When the pipe burst the whole flat was a muddy lake. The engineer, foreman and some more men rushed in to see the damage. All at once they disappeared. In the mud for the pipe had washed out a hole 10 feet deep but no one was hurt. After the claim was working they found there was no dump. There was no way of recovering the values. So it was abandoned. Capt. Scott was later killed by an engine in Astoria, Ore. He made a bet he could cross the track in front of a train but it caught hi (*sic*).

There are some funny things occurred while Capt. Scott was there. One day a man asked for work. The Capt. put him on. He never asked or was told what wages he was to get. He worked a while then asked for his time. He was sent to the paymaster who paid him and he went off. He got as far as Keremeos. In the interval Capt. Scott came in. He asked the paymaster how much he had paid the man. He found out he was paid more than he ought to have been. Capt. Scott, being a J.P., swore in a special constable to go after the man, arrest him and bring him back which was done. The man claimed he asked no questions but just took what was given him. Capt. Scott tried his own case and gave judgment against the man and costs.

Samuel Sands came to the Similkameen. He lived with me for a little while. He was a nephew of Sir S. Baker. I think Mr. Baker was a member for somewhere in the Okanagan. Sands became acquainted (*sic*) with the Allisons, eventually married Rose Allison and took up the townsite of Princeton. I think he moved to Van Anda Island after seeing (*sic*) the townsite of Princeton to the Vermillion Forks Mining Co. His wife was taken sick and on the way from Victoria she died on the boat. After her death he left B.C. and went home to England then went to settle in South Africa. He had a son. I have lost the run of him which I am sorry because I thought a lot of Sands. The Allisons know more about him than I do.

James Wallace erected the first Hotel in Princeton. A most original character. He prior had a hotel in Granite Creek sold out to Chas De Barro a mill was built on China Creek to cut the lumber needed for the building. I had a couple of gang saws at Granite which were used. It was built in a frame the motion was up and down. The lumber cut was of a poor quality. Boards were thicker on one end than the other. The main building was logs, the (*sic*) John Henry Jackson built another hotel on the corner where the bank now stands.³

³ This is the end of Walton Holmes' Memoirs. It would appear he had planned to write more. Unfortunately for the reader, his story ends here.