

# British Columbia



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T.S. HIGGINSON - CROWN TIMBER AGENT, NEW WESTMINSTER

"Mr. Higginson who had been engaged since 1884 in exploring and reporting upon the timber resources of the Railway Belt in British Columbia, has been appointed Dominion Crown Timber Agent for the Province, for which his previous long experience in the lumber business qualified him well." Thus wrote A.M. Burgess, Deputy Minister of the Interior in his Annual Report of 1886. He went on to say:

'The system of disposing of licences for timberlands by public competition has now been in operation for about two years. The Regulations in force in Manitoba and the North West apply to all timberlands in the railway belt in British Columbia as far west as the 120th Meridian which intersects the railway belt halfway between the western end of the Shuswap Lakes and Kamloops, this being the point west of which any timber cut and manufactured is likely to find its way for export to the Pacific Ocean rather than eastward.'

West of the 120th Meridian the Regulations are framed with a view to meeting the requirements of the trade: those in force in regard to lands along the Pacific Coast being practically the same as the provincial timber laws, which were framed to meet the exigencies of the export trade to South America.'

Higginson's job was spelled out and all he had to do was sell timber and collect the dues:

'...after exploring the resources of the 40 mile railway belt during the years 1884 and 1885, I opened an office here (in New Westminster) on the 1st of May 1886 and immediately proceeded to collect the dues on timber cut since the 19th December 1883, the date

of the Act known as the Settlement Act between the Province and the Dominion. The dues (having been established by request of the representatives of the Provinces at a very low rate so as to conform with those of the Local Government) were paid without hesitation.

The fact of some of the largest mills having limits from the Local Government at or near the coast prevents me from giving anything like an actual statement of the lumber manufactured in the Province; suffice it to say, that the trade is rapidly expanding - that of export not being confined alone to the markets of China, Japan, Australia and the South American Provinces, but, since the opening up of direct railway communication with the eastern portion of the Dominion early in July last, considerable of the better grades of Douglas pine, spruce and cedar have found a market as far east as Montreal.

The entire belt from the summit of the Rockies to the coast, a distance of the coast being heavily timbered with those softwoods has, as was expected, suffered considerably from fire during the past season, but, fortunately, the damage did not extend any great distance from the line of the railway.

The annexed statement does not include the lumber cut by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, amounting to about 75,000,000 feet.

Sawmills cutting timber on Dominion Lands during  
the year ending 31st October 1886

The Royal City Planing Mills Company	11,994,798 feet
The Dominion Sawmill Company	3,920,000 "
W.C. McDougall	1,126,885 "
J.B. Tiffin	874,750 "
William Jones	350,000 "
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	18,266,433 " '

This concluded the first 6 months of T.S. Higginson's duties as British Columbia's first Crown Timber Agent. He hadn't done too badly - having collected \$4,605.39 for permit fees and dues; \$3,247.77 for seizures and fines; \$40.00 for ground rent; and bonus funds of \$1,263.50 for a total of \$9,156.66. The efficient arm of the Department of the Interior had extended all the way to the Pacific and had found a lucrative source of revenue.

Questions and contributions regarding the federal involvement in forestry affairs in British Columbia are invited.

Mr. Edo Nyland, 8793 Forest Park Drive, Sidney, B.C. V8L 4E8

CURRENT PROJECTS

Work is progressing on two manuscripts regarding forest resource policy in Canada and British Columbia. Mr. Peter R. Gillis of the Public Archives of Canada and Mr. Thomas Roach, also of Ottawa, are collaborating on a history of forest resource policy in Canada, to be published by Butterworth Press. The latter author is developing a history of British Columbia's forest policy from 1858 to 1976. This work is concentrating upon the interaction between the ideas of the progressive era and the conservation movement (and later scientific forestry) the desires of industry, and the need of the governments for income.

Inquiries regarding these projects are welcome.

Mr. Thomas R. Roach, 221 Cowley Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 0G8

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The Forest History Society of Santa Cruz, California has embarked upon the preparation of a work which is tentatively entitled the Biographical Encyclopedia of North American Forest and Conservation History. This reference work will offer expanded and comprehensive coverage of the men and women (living as well as deceased) who have made notable contributions to the forest and conservation history of the United States and Canada. It will provide ready access for students, scholars, journalists, industry communicators, and indeed anyone to reliable biographical information.

All FHS and FHABC members and other readers are invited to suggest figures for inclusion in the work. Additionally, it would be appreciated if biographical information on lesser-known persons who should be considered for inclusion could be provided. For example, photocopies of newspaper obituaries or magazine articles on lumbermen, foresters, conservationists, and others of regional reputation would be helpful, as would suggestions of potential authors of biographical articles and sketches.

Contributions of materials and other inquiries should be addressed to Mr. Pete Steen or Mr. Ron Fahl, Forest History Society, Inc., 109 Coral Street, Santa Cruz, California 95060, U.S.A.

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One of the primary functions of the Forest History Association of British Columbia is to promote an awareness, appreciation, and preservation of the forest history of the province. As part of this, the Association will strive to act as a clearinghouse and as a vehicle for information exchange between its members and any other interested individuals or organizations. To this end the Association will maintain a list of ongoing forest history research projects in and related to British Columbia in order to assist with such inquiries as may be received by the Association, its membership, and others. To facilitate the compilation of such a list, and its maintenance, it is requested that summaries of current projects be sent to the Editor of this Newsletter, if such projects are not already known to him or the Association.

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OTHER NEWS

A reunion of Camp 3 (Nitinat - Youbou) will take place on August 1st at the British Columbia Forest History Museum at Duncan. Those attending will span a period of over 50 years of logging in the Lake Cowichan area. It appears that there will be several hundred people at the reunion.

Further information may be obtained from Mrs. Margaret Morrison, 10735 Chemainus Road, R.R. # 4, Ladysmith, B.C. V0R 2E0.

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Artist Frank Lewis recently completed the first of four wall murals in downtown Chemainus - this one on the side of the Chemainus Coffee House. Depicting woods workers yarding a log with a steam donkey, the mural is done in the subdued colours of the coastal forest and with attention to lighting. The result is dramatic and powerful. Work is presently underway on the side of the Caprice Theatre where Lewis will depict a trainload of logs destined for tidewater at Chemainus and the loading of timbers onto a sailing ship. The sailing ship scene is based on an historical photograph from the turn of the century. The remaining murals will be painted on the North Cowichan municipal building and the fire hall tower.

(Adapted from the Cowichan Leader of April 8, 1982, submitted by B. Volkers of Lake Cowichan)

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Druska, Ken. 1981. Against wind and weather - the history of towboating in British Columbia. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver, B.C. 258 p.

Young, William A. 1982. E.C. Manning, 1890 - 1941, his views and influences on British Columbia forestry. Unpub. B.S.F. Thesis, Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia. 45p.

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The purpose of this Newsletter is to act as the official organ of the Forest History Association of British Columbia and specifically to provide a means of keeping the membership and other interested persons informed and up to date; to publish items of historical interest; to provide notice of upcoming functions; and to generally popularize the realm of forest history in the province. Submissions of the following nature are welcome;

- items on forest history topics and descriptions of current projects
- requests for information
- book reviews, letters, comments, and suggestions

Publication is thrice yearly (Spring, Mid-Winter, and Fall) and is free of charge to members of the Forest History Association of British Columbia, to libraries, and certain institutions. Please address all correspondence including changes of address to the Editor: John Parminter, c/o Protection Branch, Ministry of Forests, 1450 Government Street, Victoria, B.C. V8W 3E7.