

# British Columbia



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## THE COLONY OF VANCOUVER ISLAND - THE FIRST MAJOR TIMBER ALLOCATION

In the last newsletter I wrote of the legislation enacted by the House of Assembly to provide for the allocation of the Colony's timber. In this article I will trace the oft-controversial legislative discussions pertaining to one of these proposals - Captain Stamp and Barclay Sound.

Thursday, the 1st day of March, 1860

(Excerpts from Governor Douglas' Address to the First Session of the Second House of Assembly - Colony of Vancouver Island)

"We have also to consider how the colonization of the country, and the development of its resources can best be promoted.

"With a pleasant, and healthy climate, which on the whole may compare favourably with that of any other country, Vancouver Island also possesses a fertile soil; forests of vast extent; a sea coast abounding in fish, and studded with safe and convenient Harbours; extensive coal beds; and the unoccupied lands of the Crown form a wide and varied domain, and we have to consider how those sources of wealth are to be developed and to be made of value to the colony.

"I will, hereafter, lay before you the copy of a correspondence with Captain Stamp, a gentleman representing a highly respectful English association which proposes to form a settlement at some eligible point on the West Coast of Vancouver Island for the purpose of establishing fisheries, and of entering largely into the manufacture and export of deals and ships spars.

"If the results obtainable through those industrial pursuits may be estimated from the number of ships employed, and the amount of capital invested in the fisheries and timber trade in the British Provinces of North America, we shall at once perceive their extraordinary value and importance."

Monday, the 5th day of March, 1860

(House of Assembly)

"Mr. Waddington, moved as an amendment to the Address." (i.e. of the Governor) (excerpts of Waddington's amendment follow)

"Measures to attract immigration and form settlements for the development of Agriculture, the fisheries and the lumber trade, will meet every encouragement on our part; we cannot but view the granting of land in large quantities either to individuals or Companies, as injurious in its tendencies both socially and politically. Therefore we would recommend that before any final settlement be made to Captain Stamp and his associates, the entire scheme be laid before the Assembly for its concurrence."

"Mr. Cooper seconded the Amendment."

"Mr. Crease did not agree with either the Address or the Amendment."

"The Speaker put the motion..."

Ayes: 7                      Noes: 2

(Comment: And so began the province's first - but not last - legislative debate on timber allocation policies.)

Wednesday, the 21st day of March, 1860

(House of Assembly)

"Mr. Speaker read message from His Excellency the Governor - correspondence from Captain Stamp to the Colonial Secretary detailing the conditions on which Captain Stamp has agreed to form a settlement on the West Coast of Vancouver Island.

"Ordered to lie on the Table."

Monday, the 2nd day of April, 1860

(House of Assembly)

"On the motion that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair, The House went into Committee.

"Mr. Coles in the Chair.

"Mr. Foster brought forward his Motion of which he had given previous notice, 'that this House do resolve itself into a Committee of the whole to consider and report on the application of Captain Stamp to His Excellency the Governor for permission to cut timber, establish saw Mills and to purchase farming lands in the vicinity of Barclay Sound on the West Coast of this Island.'

"Mr. Waddington seconded.

"The House then adjourned until 1 o'clock on Tuesday, 3rd of April."

Tuesday, the 3rd of April, 1860

(House of Assembly)

"The House went into Committee.

"Mr. Foster brought forward his Motion regarding Stamp correspondence, after a long discussion Mr. Foster proposed an amendment.

"That Captain Stamp be allowed to purchase 2,000 acres of farming lands in portions at different points on one side of Barclay Sound, or the other.

"The extent of Timber lands shall be defined for maintaining Captain Stamp's Saw Mills for 20 years at a rate per mile square - Licensed.

"That timber right shall be maintained to Captain Stamp but no Land except the farming lands shall be shut out from the settlement.

"That the Government shall make the most liberal terms of purchase to the Colonists introduced by Captain Stamp after completion of their contract with Captain Stamp.

"Which amendment was carried by a vote of 6 to 4."

Saturday, the 7th day of April, 1860

(Council)

"His Excellency proceeded to lay before Council...A Correspondence which has passed between Captain Stamp and His Excellency on the subject of a Contemplated Settlement on the Western Coast of Vancouver's Island.

"The Council having read the Correspondence with Captain Stamp, and having seriously considered the subject to which it relates, unanimously approve of His Excellency's action thereon; the Council being of the opinion that the carrying out of the proposed enterprise will be of the highest benefit to the Colony, and it deserving of every encouragement."

(Comment: Although the elected House of Assembly had been in existence since August 12, 1856, the Council, appointed in August of 1851, was still in existence.)

Tuesday, the 24th day of April, 1860

(House of Assembly)

"The Speaker read messages from his Excellency the Governor (3)."

No.2:

"Gentlemen: I have to acknowledge the receipt of your Speaker's communication of the 3rd inst. conveying the Report of a Committee of the whole House on the subject of the settlement about to be formed by Captain Stamp on the West Coast of Vancouver Island and I have to thank the House of their opinion.

(sgd.) James Douglas  
18 April 1860"

"Mr. Foster: I give notice 'That I move for any further correspondence existing between Captain Stamp and the Governor regarding the lands desired to be purchased by him on Barclay Sound on the West Coast Vancouver Island which has not already been laid on the Table of this House.'

Thursday, the 26th day of April, 1860

(House of Assembly)

"Mr. Foster moved for any further correspondence existing between Captain Stamp and the Government regarding the lands desired to be purchased by him on Barclay Sound on the West Coast Vancouver Island which has not already been laid on the Table.

"Mr. Cary informed the Honourable Member in reply that there did not exist any more correspondence than that already laid on the Table."

Friday, the 22nd day of June, 1860

(House of Assembly)

"Mr. Speaker read messages from His Excellency the Governor."

No.1:

"Dispatch from the Duke of Newcastle to Governor Douglas relative to Mr. Edward Stamp erecting Saw Mill and other works in Vancouver Island."

(Comment: So ends the legislative proceedings pertaining to the first major allocation of timber resources in the province. Simultaneously, we have witnessed an elected Assembly increasingly wresting the reins of power from a Governor who, only ten years previously, was the undisputed authority in British Western North America.)

Contributed by W. Young, Ministry of Forests, Victoria.

[Part Two of Three on 'Colonial Legislatures of B.C. and their Forest Legislation (1851-1871)']

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Editor's note: In the previous article (which appeared in Newsletter Three) the symbols for Pounds Sterling were inadvertently left out of items 2 and 3 at the top of page 2.

### EARLY LOGGING DAYS ON DENMAN ISLAND

All this is possible providing you have a well-greased skid road. The grease used in those early days was dogfish oil. Once or twice a year the smelt would 'come in' on the east side of Denman. Not only would the settlers get bucketfuls of smelt but they would get a go at the dogfish because they would be right in there in the shallow water where the smelt were spawning on the gravelly beach. This would all happen around nine or ten o'clock at night on the high tide. We would be alerted because the seagulls would be following the smelts in during the afternoon and you could hear them squawking for miles. The farmers must have had use for dogfish oil because they would be out there in gumboots with a pitch fork spearing dogfish along with the skid road loggers, heaving up the dogfish on the beach above the high tide mark. The next morning they would build a big fire and render down the livers into dogfish oil then store it in wooden barrels for future use.

Getting back to horse logging again, the teamster had a helper. This fellow had numerous duties, not only did he have to hold up the spreaders while the team was moving or backing in for a trip but he had to grease the skids in front of the trip on the way to the beach. He also had to sweep the skids on the return trip, help dog up the turn, tend the horses, and like the whistle punk on a donkey show was bossed and pushed around by the rest of the crew. Usually the skid greaser was a young fellow on his first job.

In greasing the skids he was equipped with a coal oil can which had the top cut off and two sides cut down half way. A short pole or stick nailed across the top formed a carrying handle. This can would hold about two gallons of dogfish oil. He also had a stick or a piece of broom handle with a blob of rags tied or nailed onto it to dip into the oil and then dab each skid as he scurried ahead of the team. Extra skid grease was stationed along the route so he could replenish his supply.

The greaser had another duty in that he had to look after the 'pig.' This was a small sleigh about twenty feet long formed by tying two peeled saplings together at the small ends, spreading them apart to about three feet and then building a deck or box on it towards the back end. The sleigh had to be at least twenty feet long so as to reach across two skids. This contraption was designed to carry the dog chains, grease can, and maul (among other things) on the return trip from the beach, hooked behind the wiffle-trees. The teamster usually did not ride - probably because the reigns were not long enough and he would have to stand on the back end of the pig. The pig had a little piece of cable or rope with a dog on it to hook onto the last log on the trip to the dump. The greaser could ride the pig if he could invent some way to sweep the skids. This was always tried but he usually ended up walking.

A maul was always used to drive the dog into the logs. The maul was made out of a piece of hardwood, usually crabwood. It would be a round piece of wood about fourteen inches long and four or five inches thick with a steel handle through the centre and a steel nut screwed down tight against the wood. The other end of the handle had a chisel end on it to pry the dogs loose from the logs. A sledge hammer was never used because it damaged the logs. The dogs were designed so the hook end cut into the log and the back of

the dog was flat so you could pound it in with the maul. The other end of the dog where the chain was attached stuck up so when you wanted to loosen the dog from the log all you had to do was hit that end hard with the maul and the dog would fly loose.

The maul had a couple of iron bands burned on just back of the driving face so the maul would not wear out so fast. They tell the story about the old hooktender finishing dogging up a turn for a bull team and having the maul in his hand and nowhere to lay it down - being close to Brandy (the left wheeler bull) he just nonchalantly lifted the bull's tail and stuck the maul handle up the bull's rear end, saying "I'll know where to look for that the next time I need it."

Getting back to the skid greaser, my Dad hired a young Englishman by the name of Dundas Twaithes. He was Dad's old batching partner Harry Beadnell's brother-in-law and Harry and old Dad decided that greasing skids would be a good job for this fellow to break in on as his first job in Canada. He boarded at our place and the very first day as he was returning from his duty of greasing skids my Mum must have smelled him coming because she met him and made him shed all his clothes in the woodshed and put on other clothes before he was allowed in the house. I neglected to tell you that this dogfish oil was runny, black, and stunk like hell and this was what he had been wrestling with all day and he had it all over him. Dad and Harry had many a good laugh retelling that story. That same young man did all right in Canada - he ended up in the real estate business in Parksville and his family are still in the business. I met Mr. Twaithes at a horse show in Qualicum about thirty years ago when my daughter was competing and he still had not forgotten his experience greasing skids for Willie Baikie.

Contributed by W. Baikie, FHABC member, Campbell River.  
(Part Two of Three on 'Early Logging Days on Denman Island')

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#### RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Lembke, Jerry and W. Tatum. 1982. One union in wood: a history of the International Woodworkers of America. Harbour Publishing, Madeira Park, B.C. 200 p. \$9.95

MacKay, Donald. 1982. Empire of wood: the MacMillan Bloedel story. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver. 416 p. \$24.95

Sela, Shane. 1982. Kelowna logging. (Available from The Kelowna Centennial Museum, 470 Queensway Avenue, Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 6S7 Phone (604) 763-2417

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#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The first Annual General Meeting of the Forest History Association of British Columbia will begin at 1:30 PM on Saturday, May 14 at the British Columbia Forest Museum at Duncan, on Vancouver Island. An afternoon business meeting will be held as well as activities and an evening dinner. Further details will be forthcoming in the next newsletter.

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The Canadian Oral History Association's Annual Conference will be held on June 2 and 3 at the University of British Columbia. Additional information can be obtained from Allen Specht at the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, Legislative Buildings, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4 Phone (604) 387-6748

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The Canadian Institute of Forestry is looking for an historian to coordinate the assembly of the Association's national history. For information please contact Bruce Devitt, Pacific Forest Products Ltd., P.O. Box 10, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2M3 Phone (604) 386-2171

#### OTHER NEWS

The Ministry of Forests intends to designate the Mesachie Lake cookhouse (Cowichan Lake Forest Experiment Station) as a Forest Service Heritage Building. The cookhouse has been in continuous use since 1934 and is one of the last old style cookhouses left in B.C.

The intention is to display cookhouse memorabilia and photographs in the building which will continue to be a functional cookhouse. The Ministry is welcoming donations of memorabilia and photographs for display and has already received donations from companies such as Western Forest Products Ltd. and B.C. Forest Products Ltd. In particular, B.C.F.P.'s donation of memorabilia from the company's cookhouses at Caycuse and Port Renfrew will be of interest.

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Historical artist Louis Englehart's project was to sketch and paint the sawmill beehive burners of British Columbia. Louis believed that these burners were part of British Columbia's heritage and that some record should be kept for posterity.

After ten years of sketching in watercolour and painting in oils the project is finished - over two hundred burners artistically rendered.

Mr. Englehart can be contacted at 12637 - 25A Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V4A 2K4 Phone (604) 531-3243.

FOREST HISTORY ASSOCIATION NEWS

Sixteen people participated in an instructional workshop on oral history on January 21, 1983 at the University of British Columbia. The course was sponsored by the Forest History Association of B.C. We were fortunate to obtain a high quality instructor in Allen Specht from the Sound and Moving Image Division of the Provincial Archives of British Columbia.

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The Association recently constructed and manned two displays at the Annual Meetings of the Truck Loggers Association in Vancouver and the Association of British Columbia Professional Foresters in Kamloops. Several new members were signed up as a result.

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The Association is now registered under the Societies Act of British Columbia and work is underway regarding tax exemption status.

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CLASSIFIEDS

For sale or swap - one unused copy of the "Carleton Saga" by Harry and Olive Walker. This 571 page book is an excellent reference on the settlement of Carleton County along the Ottawa River. Many illustrations, good coverage of the era of the lumber kings, timber slides, and white pine lumbering.

Contact Bob DeBoo, 410 Raynerwood Place, Victoria, B.C. V9C 2B3 Phone (604) 478-7446 (home) or (604) 387-5965 (office).

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This newsletter is the official organ of the Forest History Association of British Columbia and is distributed thrice yearly at no charge to members of the Association, libraries, and to certain institutions. Items on forest history topics, descriptions of current projects, requests for information, book reviews, letters, comments, and suggestions are welcome. 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.

Membership in the Association is \$5.00 yearly. Should you wish to join or obtain further information please write to the Treasurer: Mr. Edo Nyland, 8793 Forest Park Drive, Sidney, B.C. V8L 4E8.

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