

The 1874 Port Moody Survey

Researched By: Ralph Drew, Belcarra, BC, April 2024.

Source: 'Royal B.C. Museum & Archives', RBCMA File GR-0868.1.8.13.

Port Moody
May 24th, 1874.

The Honourable Robert Beaven
Chief Commissioner of Lands & Works

Sir,

"I have the honour to inform you that I have completed surveying that portion of land situated to the East and West of the Government Reserve on the North Shore of Port Moody [Naval Reserve at loco] having found it available for agriculture and other purposes."

"The land on the West side of the Government Reserve, although broken and rocky in places, abounds with some very fine timber, but that portion to the East of the Government Reserve not only possess very fine timber but some good land fit for agricultural purposes although not extending any great distance to the East of the Reserve. I may here mention that to the North of the Reserve there exists a lake [Buntzen Lake], about a mile and a half [2.4 km] back."

"In the meantime, I have inspected that portion of land situated to the South and East of Lots 202, 201, 190 & 191 [today known as 'Port Moody'] and found that it was scarcely worth settling or agricultural purposes on account of its soil which is rocky and gravelly and its timber which is all burnt and dead, with many fallen logs and a very thick and dead underbrush, although in places you meet with small patches of Vine-Maple but only towards the southern portion and near the Pitt River Road."

"Therefore, unless I receive orders to the contrary, I shall not cut the same into sections of 160 acres, but after having completed surveying John Hall's [Lot 229, today known as 'Belcarra'] and Robert Millman's claim on the North Arm [of Burrard Inlet], which I hope to have done by next Tuesday or Wednesday the 26th & 27th instant [May 1874], I shall proceed to Pitt River in order to survey John Shaw's and Alexander McLean's claim and where I hope to have the honour of receiving further instructions from you."

"I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your Obedient Servant
William George Pinder"



Robert Beaven
(RBCMA A-01990)

William George Pinder, BCLS

William George Pinder (1850–1936) was born in London, England, in 1850, to Emily (*née* Trutch) and Captain George Rideout Pinder of the 2nd Madras Light Infantry. Pinder grew-up for a time in India as his father was there during the Indian Mutiny of 1857 but about 1860 Captain Pinder brought his son back to England on a troopship by the old sea route around the Cape of Good Hope. Pinder was educated at Blackheath Preparatory School, then at Corsham, a small medieval town in northwest Wiltshire, and later studied in Heidelberg in Germany. While there he made a walking tour with two fellow students through the Black Forest and Switzerland to Lake Como in Italy and back.



W. G. Pinder
(RBCMA I-78997)

In 1871, he was given an appointment on the survey staff of the C.P.R., reporting to Sir Stanford Fleming in Ottawa, who sent him West to join a party organizing to start surveying a trail line for the proposed C.P.R. railway from Lytton to Shuswap Lake. At the end of the year, the party returned to Victoria to plot their field notes.

Pinder's uncle, Sir Joseph Trutch, the Governor of the 'Crown Colony of British Columbia', was also in Victoria at the time. In 1872, he worked as a leveler, and for four years was employed on trail lines and locations up the North Thompson to Albreda Lake and Tête Jaune Cache, and from Hope on the Fraser River, up the Coquihalla River to the Summit. Later, he was employed by the C.P.R. on trail lines from the head of Dean Channel up the Kimsquit River and Dean River. When construction of the C.P.R. railway was commenced at Yale in 1880, Pinder was appointed Assistant Engineer and spent two years on that assignment.

In addition to his railway work, Pinder was engaged on the 'International Boundary Survey' of the 49th parallel at Point Roberts; was employed on the construction of the 'E. & N. Railway' from Esquimalt to above the Malahat, and the extension from Esquimalt to Victoria. After the completion of the railroad, Pinder had charge, including location, of the line from Nanaimo to Comox in connection with the Dunsmuir Collieries. He was then in charge of this line for sixteen years after its completion.

After severing his connection with the Dunsmuir Collieries on Vancouver Island, he went into general practice as Engineer and Land Surveyor, doing work all over the province. He made surveys at Kitsalas Canyon in 1904 for the Lands and Works Department, and also at Fort Simpson, Work Channel, Portland Canal and Graham Island, and in the Northern Interior.

In 1876, he married Anne Marie Henrietta Devereux, daughter of Captain John Devereux, the dockmaster at Esquimalt, and they had four children. Upon his retirement in 1923, he moved in with his son Frank and remained with him until his death in May 1936, at the age of eighty-six. Pinder was a member of the 'Canadian Society of Civil Engineers' and his name first appeared on the first published list of 'Provincial Land Surveyors' in 1891. In January 1936, a peak formally known as 'Province Mountain' by 'The Province Exploring Expedition of 1894', was called 'Pinder Mountain' after William George Pinder, but in 1950 the name was changed to 'Pinder Peak'.

Source: Biography, Corporation of Land Surveyors of the Province of British Columbia, Report of Proceedings of the Thirty-Second Annual General Meeting, 1937, Victoria, BC, pages 62-63.