

## References Transcribed and Compiled by Ralph Drew, Belcarra, BC:

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### “Working on the Old Lillooet Trail”

*Vancouver Province*, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1936, Magazine Section, page 5.

Sixty years ago last summer [1875] there was great activity along Seymour Creek at North Vancouver. In June of 1875 the old steamship *Beaver*, famous in British Columbia's history, had steamed into Burrard Inlet from Victoria with a party of fifteen men, which she landed on the north shore. Sent by the Provincial Government, these men were to make a trail up Seymour Creek as part of a projected trail between Burrard Inlet and Lillooet, via Squamish and Pemberton Meadows.



*City of Vancouver Archives (CVA Out. P358)*

### **Seymour Creek Milk Ranch 1892 — Landing location of the SS *Beaver* in 1875 with the work party to construct the cattle trail up the Seymour River valley**

The purpose of this trail (known as the *Lillooet–Burrard Inlet Cattle Trail*) was to bring cattle from the Lillooet and Cariboo ranges to the sea coast for market, thus avoiding the greater part of the Cariboo road. It was argued that the advantage of a trail especially for cattle with a much shorter distance to the coast markets and a greater supply of feed *en route* would be a great boon to the cattlemen as it would enable them to market their cattle in much better condition and at less expense.

The chief promoter of this trail was Hon. Thomas Basil Humphreys, member of the Legislature from Lillooet, and he made it a strong plank of one of his election platforms. An orator of considerable ability, he sat in the House from 1868 to 1890 and for a time as minister of finance and agriculture. The trail was

begun from the Lillooet end in 1873 and continued the next year, great difficulty being encountered along the rocky and precipitous shores of Seton and Anderson Lakes. The whole of the distance between Lillooet and Burrard Inlet, 164 miles, was new work, excepting a few miles and excepting twenty-four miles between Anderson Lake and Lillooet River where use was made of the Pemberton portage of the old Douglas route to Lillooet and the Cariboo from the head of Harrison Lake via Lillooet, Anderson and Seton Lakes. (This route had been abandoned in favour of the Cariboo Road from Yale via Ashcroft and Clinton.)

In the spring of 1875 it was decided to put two gangs of men at work on the trail, one at each end, hence the party sent from Victoria to work up Seymour Creek. Alex Jack was the foreman.

Probably the only member of the party who remains alive is Mr. Ahster Havelock Cameron, now living in Vancouver. A real trail blazer, he struggled through the woods ahead of the other men, clambering up the steep hillsides to locate the best grades and frequently fording the stream, and laid-out the route of the trail by gashes made on the trees with his axe. This was Mr. Cameron's first job in British Columbia, having just come to Victoria from the East. His first visit to what is now Vancouver was on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1875 when he examined the coal deposits at Coal Harbour. Finding the coal of poor quality, he returned to Victoria and was engaged by the Provincial Government to blaze the southerly end of the Lillooet-Burrard Inlet cattle trail.

At that time there was little of civilization and commerce on Burrard Inlet, compared with today's metropolis. On the south shore was the village of *Granville* (Gastown) and the *Hastings Sawmill*, while about three miles east, where the road from New Westminster reached the Inlet near the foot of the present Windermere Street was the *Hastings Hotel*.

Over at Jericho on English Bay was Jerry Roger's logging camp. The present west end of the city was in the process of being logged-off. A logging outfit was falling timber about where the *Hotel Vancouver* now stands and was hauling it to the *Hastings Mill*.

The largest settlement was on the North Shore, around the sawmill of Messrs. *Moody, Nelsen & Co.* and was known as Burrard Inlet or *Moodyville*. At the mouth of Lynn Creek, John Lynn [*sic* Linn] had his preemption and lived with his family. It was here that workmen for the trail landed.

For part of the way up the Seymour Mr. Cameron was assisted in the trail-blazing by John Hall. However, Hall cut himself so badly that he had to be taken to the hospital in New Westminster, and Mr. Cameron went on alone.

### **John Hall – Accident at Burrard Inlet**

*Mainland Guardian*, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1875, page 3.

John Hall, while cutting brush on the trail between Burrard Inlet and Lillooet, received a severe wound from his brush knife, which severed the main artery in his wrist. He was about three or four miles from the Inlet, and alone. He attempted to reach aid, and he travelled two or three miles towards Moodyville. Dr. McInnes was telegraphed for and was soon beside the sufferer, whose wound he dressed. The patient is very low from loss of blood.

### **Civil Engineer Called In**

Work on the trail ceased in the fall, owing to the rainy season and the expenditure of the year's appropriation. During the three years over \$23,000 had been spent, but the trail was nothing like finished. Next year a civil engineer was sent over the whole route to size-up the situation — something which should have been done in the first place. As the result of his report and the continued public clamour for opening the trail, the government pushed the work vigorously in 1877, and after spending another \$14,600 the trail was declared finished.

Accordingly in the fall of 1877 the late Mr. Robert Carson, well known Pavilion Mountain farmer (father of Mr. R.H. Carson, M.L. A. for Kamloops, and Mr. C.E. Carson, former M.L.A. for Lillooet), assisted by a Mr. Hoey of Lillooet, since deceased, ventured down the trail with a band of cattle and succeeded in getting

to Burrard Inlet. They had a great deal of difficulty, especially on the very rough and steep portion of the trail above Cheakamus Canyon, and there was a shortage of feed. They were met a few miles up Seymour Creek by John Murray, an employee of George Black, butcher, of *Granville* townsite, to whom the best of the cattle were sold. Mr. Murray, now of Port Moody and a son of one of the Royal Engineers, well remembers the arrival of the cattle. The remainder were taken by Carson to the late Fitzgerald McCleery's ranch on the Fraser River, to be fattened during the winter and marketed in the spring.

The difficulties of Carson's trip led to a special committee of the Legislature being appointed in the spring of 1878 to investigate the condition of the trail. After several sittings and examining a number of witnesses, including Carson, the committee reported that although over \$38,000 had been spent, the trail was not fit to drive cattle over and that the southern terminus should be at Howe Sound, owing to the lack of feed between there and Burrard Inlet. It was suggested that as the evidence had been conflicting the two members of the Legislature from Lillooet should return home by the trail and see for themselves its condition and report to the chief commissioner of lands and works. Apparently these gentlemen did not adopt this very practical suggestion, for no reports from them are on file.

## Railway Instead Of Cattle Trail

Quite likely their interest shifted from the problem of the unfinished cattle trail to the prospect of a travel route of the most modern kind: for it was in that year (1878) that an announcement was made that the *Canadian Pacific Railway* would be laid down the Fraser to Burrard Inlet. Instead of a cattle trail, Burrard Inlet was to have a railway; and instead of driving their animals to the sea coast, the Cariboo ranchers could entrain them at Ashcroft. Moreover, with the commencement of railway construction in British Columbia there would be an immediate market in the construction camps. This proved to be the case, for when the construction contracts were let in the following year, buyers went through the upper country to obtain all the available cattle for the work camps.

Although the coming of the C.P.R. removed the necessity for the cattle trail, the part between Pemperton and Squamish continued in use, later being widened to a wagon road which lasted until construction of the *Pacific Great Eastern Railway* in 1914. Remains of the old trail still may be seen from the train. The Pemperton Portage road continues in use.

Carson's cattle were the first, last and only cattle to come all the way down the trail to Burrard Inlet. For some years the portion of the trail between Squamish and Burrard Inlet was frequented by miners and prospectors. Even until a few years ago occasional parties of hikers from Vancouver made their way to Squamish by it, but with considerable difficulty, owing to the overgrowth of bushes. In recent years it has been closed to the public to avoid contamination of the water reservoirs formed by damming Seymour Creek, which have been constructed by the *Greater Vancouver Water District*. In fact, parts of the old trail are now under water owing to these reservoirs.

(In the preparation of the foregoing article, information has been given by Mr. Cameron and Mr. Murray, and also by Mrs. E.W. Morris, daughter of Robert Carson; Mrs. A. Macey, daughter of John Lynn [*sic* Linn]; Mrs. H. Logan and Miss. M.E. McCleery, daughters of Fitzgerald McCleery; Mr. G.W. DeBeck, Mr. F.C. Perry, and Mr. R.L. Reid, K.C.)



**Lillooet–Burrard Inlet Cattle Trail —  
Old Tree Blaze in the Seymour River Valley**

## **Exploration of the Lillooet Cattle Trail from Howe Sound to Indian Arm**

**In October 1873 William Sampson, a contractor working on the *Lillooet–Burrard Inlet Cattle Trail*, became the first white man to explore the overland route from Howe Sound up the Mamquam River valley, across the Mamquam Pass and down the Indian River valley to the North Arm [Indian Arm] of Burrard Inlet. <sup>(a)</sup>**

**The following is the report received from William Sampson who was dispatched to explore the route from Pemberton Meadows through to Burrard Inlet: <sup>(b)</sup>**

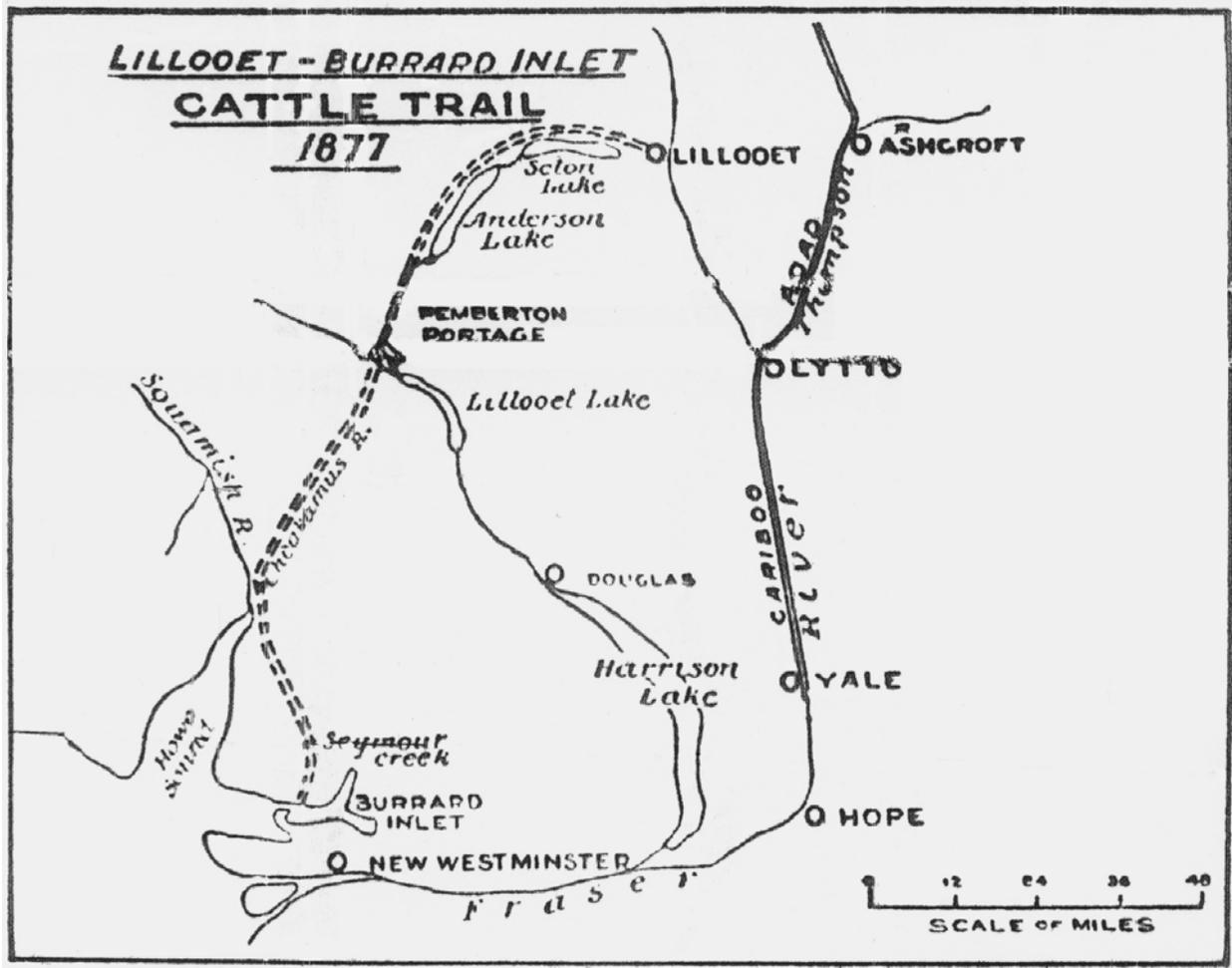
“On the 16<sup>th</sup> [October 1873], I left the ‘Meadows’ [Pemberton Meadows], reaching the north end of Green Lake, a distance of about 14½ miles, where I camped. The country consists of rolling hills, with some heavy timber. Two creeks will have to be bridged in this section, measuring respectively 100 feet, and 120 feet, wide. Feed abounds hereabouts, with good timber on the creeks for bridging purposes. The 17<sup>th</sup>, I made 6 miles, over rolling hills, intersected by flats, and covered with heavy timber. This brought me to the south end of Green Lake, where I camped. On the 18<sup>th</sup>, I travelled 12 miles, to Daisy Lake, where I camped. The country is here more level, but very heavily timbered. The east branch of the Tchiarkemish [Cheakamus River] will require about 100 feet of bridging. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, I made the mouth of the Tchiarkemish [Cheakamus River], the distance being 13 miles. The first five miles of this section are very rough, passing mostly over rocky slides, or bluffs of solid rock; there will also be two streams to bridge, wide, respectively, 60 and 120 feet each. On the 20<sup>th</sup>, I made 10 miles, and reached the mouth of the Squamish River, at Howe Sound. This section is for the most part level; heavily timbered; covered with underbrush; and considerably cut-up with sloughs. The 21<sup>st</sup>, I laid-over for the purpose of obtaining Indian guides to take me to [the North Arm of] Burrard Inlet, which I failed to accomplish. The 22<sup>nd</sup>, I retraced my steps for about two miles, when I branched off in a south-easterly direction, following upstream the Mauquiem River [Mamquam River] for about 8 miles. The country, through which I travelled, is heavily timbered; covered with dense underbrush; and offering steep side-hill grading, but through excellent ground for road making. On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, I left the Mauquiem [Mamquam River], and went through a low mountain pass [Mamquam Pass], reaching the head of a creek [Chief George Creek], which flows [via Indian River] into the North Arm [Indian Arm] of Burrard Inlet. This stream I followed for six miles, and camped. The country, for the first 2 miles, is almost level to the sources of the creek, and covered with underbrush and plenty of feed. The remainder of the distance is cut-up by steep side-hills. The direction is east by south-east. The 24<sup>th</sup>, I camped at the head of the North Arm [Indian Arm]. Side-hills here alternated with flats, covered with timber and thick underbrush. A big rock slide bars the way at the rapids, three miles from the mouth of the creek [Indian River], and is about half a mile long. The 26<sup>th</sup>, I reached Messrs. Moody, Dietz and Nelson’s Mill [Moodyville Mill on the North Shore] at the Inlet [Burrard Inlet], per canoe, whence I came on to Victoria.”

“I may here state that, from information obtained at the Mills [Moodyville Mill], I learned that a better route exists by leaving the pass I crossed on the left, and keeping up the Mauquiem River [Mamquam River] to its sources; when by going through another mountain pass, equally low, the head of Seymour Creek is reached, by following which latter stream, an easy grade is obtained the whole way through to the Inlet [Burrard Inlet].”

### **Sources:**

(a) *British Colonist*, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 1873.

(b) Report of the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works [Robert Beaven] to [The Honourable Joseph William Trutch, Lieutenant-Governor] of the Province of British Columbia, Dominion of Canada, Victoria, BC, from the 1<sup>st</sup> day of January until the 30<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1873.



Vancouver Province, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1948, Magazine Section, page 3.

**Lillooet-Burrard Inlet Cattle Trail — 1877**



Lillooet-Burrard Inlet Trail, south of Mount Garibaldi, 1952. A.H. Cameron, in "Early Vancouver", Matthews, Vol. 4, p.106, states that in the summer of 1875 he worked on the building of this trail at a point 20 miles up Seymour Creek. It was twelve feet wide, graded three feet in the centre and the centre covered with "mattox" to walk on. Cameron relates "but only four bands of cattle about three hundred to a band, ever came out that way". This photo was taken after the B.C. Electric power line was built from Bridge River and improved it. This photo is south of Garibaldi, and was taken in August, 1952, by Captain H. L. Cadieux, 1048 Esquimalt st, West Vancouver, and by him presented to the (see companion photo) City Archives, J.S.M.

Source: City of Vancouver Archives, Early Vancouver, Vol. 7, Item 0046.

### Lillooet-Burrard Inlet Cattle Trail — South of Mount Garibaldi in 1952

## Report on the “Lillooet–Burrard Inlet Cattle Trail” —

Sessional Papers of the British Columbia Parliament, 2<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1876, pages 430-431.

**To the Honourable the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works: —**

**SIR,** — I have the honour to inform you that according to your instructions I proceeded with party to Burrard Inlet, to commence opening a trail from that place to Lillooet. After exploring for some miles around, we commenced at the mouth of a creek one mile from *Moodyville*. We found the country very heavily timbered, with very thick underbrush, and boggy for the first mile, which caused considerable corduroying and bridging; the ground got better as we proceeded. We got a very good grade for a road for about eight miles, with a gradual ascent. We kept on a ridge between two creeks; as the ridge fell-off suddenly we were obliged to make a descent rather steep to strike Seymour Creek. This is the worst grade in the road as far as we have made, but it could be improved easily. We had here to cross some soft ground, which we had to corduroy for one hundred and thirty yards. We then struck the creek; the banks here are low and very densely covered with berry bushes; the soil is composed of fine granite sand and vegetable matter deposited by the river, which overflows at times; these flats in some places are from fifty yards to three hundred wide, and extend along the river from one to three miles, but greatly cut-up by small creeks from the mountains, which caused a great number of bridges. The greatest difficulty here was caused by spurs of the mountains running into the river and causing what we call slides, which caused a great deal of labour to pass some of those composed of boulders of several tons; we had to corduroy and bridge these places. Some places we had to strike-off from the river to avoid these, and cross side hills; we had to explore the ground well, to find the best and least expensive way of making headway. We sent a man named Hall through to explore the country. When he returned he reported the distance from Burrard Inlet to the summit or water shed, to be about thirty-two miles, and from there it took him two days' travel to strike the line from Howe Sound to Lillooet. We built a hut about sixteen miles from the Inlet, for the purpose of stopping when packing horses, as there was a small beaver meadow there, and it would be about half-way to the divide, which would take two days to reach. Our greatest difficulty was the want of horse feed; there is not an acre of open ground as far as we have gone, except small beaver swamps of sedge grass. We had to send the horses back to the Inlet when we were not packing them. When we were using them in moving (which we did about every four days) we had to cut grass out of these swamps, and pack it some places two miles. We managed to get along very well as long as the dry weather lasted, but about the middle of September the rain set in, and then our difficulty commenced. We had then about twenty-six miles of trail completed; we had struck a beaver swamp which would have supplied us with horse feed for some time in dry weather. I tied the horses there one night on what was dry ground, and in the morning we found them standing in water up to their bellies in a lake. We had to wade up to the knees to get them out; we had to send them off to the coast to save their lives. We pushed the trail on for a few days by the men taking lunch along, and coming back to camp at night, sometimes with the water running out of their clothes. The trail that was made in the wet weather would not bear the horses. We had them swamped on the trail where in dry weather it would be a good road; the brush is so dense here, that once the rains set in it will not dry for the season, and it is almost an impossibility for men to work there in the rainy season. The men got discouraged and discontented, some of them left — some would have left before, but we induced them to stop by giving them an advance of wages and promising them full time whether they could work or not. We were very anxious to make the divide, if possible; we got the horses up once more, and took them over the trail to try if we could move camp, but they would bog to the belly without any pack. We worked on in the rain for about twelve days, and finding that we were making no headway, we came to the conclusion that it would be better to stop for the season. We made more road in one week in good weather than we could in three when raining. I considered it was throwing money away to stop any longer; we then built another hut to store the tools in, which we did, and left. We had left a piece of trail unfinished at the Inlet between *Moodyville* and the mouth of Lynn Creek, which we finished, and also improved part of the trail where we commenced. We stored the remainder of the provisions and tools at Moody's mills, which I give a list of accompanying this report.

I have, etc.,

(Signed)

GEO. JENKINSON.

Victoria, British Columbia, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1875.

## Report on opening the "Lillooet-Burrard Inlet Cattle Trail" —

Sessional Papers of the British Columbia Parliament, 2<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, 1877, pages 296-298.

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### Lillooet Electoral District

#### ROADS AND BRIDGES – HOWE SOUND TRAIL

A. J. McLellan, Foreman.

Trails, 126 miles, 3 feet wide.

Forest clearing, 1431 miles, 12 feet wide.

Grading, 74 miles, 4 feet wide.

Cribbing, 1,038 feet, 6 feet high.

Blasting, 1,377 feet, 6 feet wide, 7 feet deep.

Stone wall, 356 feet, 7 feet high.

Corduroy, 556 feet, 8 feet wide.

Brushed and gravelled, 300 yards.

400 yards of heavy slide removed.

2 bridges, each 100 feet long, 12 feet wide, 9 feet high.

2	"	"	40	"	"	12	"	"	5	"	"
14	"	average	23	"	"	12	"	"	5	"	"
1	"		269	"	"	7	"	"	16	"	"
1	"		61	"	"	6	"	"	12	"	"
8	"	average	19	"	"	6	"	"	10	"	"
1	"		96	"	"	8	"	"	5	"	"
3	"	average	22	"	"	7	"	"	4	"	"
1	"		120	"	"	9	"	"	11	"	"
2	"	average	41	"	"	9	"	"	4	"	"
1	"		100	"	"	10	"	"	12	"	"
1	"		175	"	"	10	"	"	11	"	"
1	"		80	"	"	9	"	"	10	"	"
6	"	average	26	"	"	8	"	"	5	"	"
1	"		58	"	"	9	"	"	8	"	"
1	"		60	"	"	9	"	"	10	"	"
1	"		110	"	"	9	"	"	12	"	"
1	"		65	"	"	7	"	"	6	"	"
1	"		75	"	"	9	"	"	14	"	"
32	"	average	27	"	"	7	"	"	7	"	"
2	"	"	20	"	"	8	"	"	7	"	"
1	"		125	"	"	10	"	"	10	"	"
1	"		40	"	"	10	"	"	6	"	"

Mr. McLellan's report on the above work is herewith submitted:

Victoria, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1877.

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#### To the Honourable the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works: —

"Sir, — According to instructions I proceeded to Lillooet and commenced work on the *Howe Sound Trail* on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, at two mile bluff. While working at this point I found from observation that, on account of the great depth of water and the steep incline of rock, crib work was impracticable. I, therefore, removed to five mile bluff, in order to push forward the heavy work at that point, and give me an opportunity to make soundings and plans for a bridge, the extreme length being 264 feet. At five mile bluff I had many difficulties to encounter. The men had to be taken to different points along the bluff in canoes, as it was impossible to travel along the steep wall of rock. A large quantity of the timber used in crib work was taken from the opposite side of the lake. The crib work is composed of heavy timber, saddled and well fastened together with two-inch trenails [wooden pegs]. Brush was placed in the bottom of the crib work to prevent the action of the water dashing up among the rocks and gravel at high water. In order to fill this large amount of crib work, measuring 1039 feet in length, I constructed cars and laid a track from both sides, hewn of small timber, which saved a large amount of labour and enabled me to push on the work

to completion. The amount of blasting in place of crib work would require more means than were placed at my disposal for the whole section.”

“In addition to the 1039 feet of crib work, I constructed 100 feet of bridging, bolted to the rock, and this, together with the large amount of blasting, and the removing of heavy slides, kept a number of men employed at this point about two months and a half. In the meantime I went over the trail along the lake, in order to ascertain the amount of work required, and on my return I sent a party of men, including a foreman, to erect bridges, clear-out fallen timber, slides and brush, as the trail was in a bad condition.”

“Shortly afterwards I went over the trail the second time to inspect the bridges and work being done, and found the bridges substantially built; laid out more bridges and work, and returned to five mile bluff, where the heavy work was under construction.”

“The third time I went over the trail I found a large amount of work done in bridging, forest clearing, making new trail over rock slides and heavy timber, and that part of the trail nearly completed. I then returned to commence the construction of the large bridge at two mile bluff. I did this at high water, in order to avail myself of the opportunity of raising the stringers by hand from a large float constructed for the purpose. This bridge is substantially built of square timber, framed together, and well trenailed with 2-inch trenails [wooden pegs], size of cap, 12x14, stringers, 12x26, braces, 8x8, covering, 6 inches, securely bolted to the rock with 13-inch 20-inch bolts. This completed the section of the trail from Lillooet to Pemberton Meadows.”

“I then received further instructions to continue my labours from Pemberton Meadows to Burrard Inlet, with a view to opening the trail if possible to the sea coast this fall, and further to improve it next year. The specifications called for the following work to make it passable as far as Cache Creek, the distance being 45 miles; all fallen timber to be removed, and almost the entire trail to be cleared of brush; slides and boulders to be removed; 35 bridges to be built, aggregating 920 feet in length, with 9 loaded piers of stone 20x10, averaging 10 feet in height, also 400 feet of corduroy. In addition to this I had specifications to build 34 miles of new trail, including 47 bridges, aggregating in length 1949 feet, over a mile of corduroy, and 38 culverts, together with a large amount of blasting; all of which was to be accomplished for the small sum of \$4,000, the whole distance being over one hundred miles, including twenty miles already built by a former Government, commencing at Burrard Inlet.”

“I came to the conclusion to push the work through, making a first-class trail to Howe Sound, as the country is level and grade easy, with the exception of a slide of boulders. I overcame this by bridging, in some cases, from rock to rock, removing the large boulders with levers, placing small rocks in their stead, and then packed decayed wood on hand-barrows to protect the stock while passing over it. We overcame this slide in about a week, the distance being about 1,000 feet. From this to Howe Sound is level, and there is an abundance of feed for stock. Let me here remark that, in my opinion, this is the proper terminus for the *Howe Sound Trail*. Stock can recruit here while the owner seeks for a market, and with very little expense a suitable place can be made at the mouth of Squamish River for shipping, from which place, in a very few hours, stock could be transported to Nanaimo and Burrard Inlet markets.”

“The distance from here to Burrard Inlet is 42 miles, without any feed, and heavy grades with soft and miry places, which would require a large amount of labour to make it substantial and keep it in repair, and as there is no accommodation for shipping at Burrard Inlet, the owners of stock would consequently suffer both inconvenience and loss at this point. From personal observation I am of the opinion that nothing but a large outlay of money can make Burrard Inlet a suitable shipping point. In the latter part of September and October I can safely say there is very little or no feed along the whole route, with the exception of Pemberton Meadows, Howe Sound, and a small portion at Big Slide, but through the summer months there are large quantities of weeds and green foliage that stock can live well on.”

“The forty-five miles of old trail previously alluded to were completed on the first day of September. On this portion were several heavy bridges, across wide and rapid rivers, which I overcame by putting in loaded piers and piers in the centre, all substantially built with a view to remaining in their positions for years. The number of bridges constructed on the old trail from Lillooet to Cache Creek is 39, measuring, in total length, 1839 feet, all of which are substantially built, with 4-inch covering and good approaches, in addition to which are 735 feet of corduroy.”

“After leaving Howe Sound I experienced many difficulties from high water. Heavy rains set-in, and the country being very low and sandy to the foot of the mountains, was nearly all overflowed. We camped on the bank of a river, nearly a mile from the foot of the mountain, and the water raised in six hours nearly

seven feet and cut-off all communication with our work for nearly a quarter of a mile. The water on this flat was one to three feet deep, and the men had to fell trees along the trail to get to their work, which was very disagreeable. This state of things lasted for three days, when the water partly subsided. I then loaded the horses and tried to drive them across this flood, but it was a failure; they sank through the sand, and to save the provisions from getting wet unpacked the horses, and the men packed the provisions over on the fallen trees. When the horses were unloaded they made their way across this flood with ease. So once more on high land we moved forward as fast as possible to get over the summit before a heavy fall of snow should occur. In a few days after the flood subsided, a canoe arrived at Howe Sound with beef and provisions from Burrard Inlet. I went back with all the horses and three or four men, and found that the water had disappeared entirely and the quicksands were hard. After putting in brush for 100 feet and covering it with sand, made a good road and drove the horses over it, heavy laden, without any trouble. I went back this time purposely to gain more knowledge of this low land, and found it all sand and hard on top, when the water is off it, but full of water underneath. This half mile was specified to be corduroyed, but with water from one to three feet deep to lay corduroy on the ground would be a waste of public money, and there was no timber available on that part of the flat but small alder. Consequently the most of the timber would have to be taken from the mountains, and in order, to make this part of the trail practicable it would require to lay cross-ties of round timber, 12 feet long, 18 inches through, and stringers 18 inches through, and to be covered with 6-inch covering. To throw-up an embankment across this flat would be of no value, as the force of water is so great that it would carry away the sand and the whole road-bed at one freshet."

"From this point of low land the trail ascends a steep grade for ten miles, some parts being one foot in two, and a large portion of this part of the trail was at an angle of 45°, and required heavy grading. I had many difficulties to overcome before reaching the summit. The Lillooet Indians, whom I had engaged to pack, when about five miles from the summit, went ahead on the plea to look for feed for their stock. They went as far as the summit and found no feed, but reported plenty snow, and informed me they would pack no more, that their horses would die, &c., &c. I told them in a few words that I would not pay them for the work they had already done unless they would fulfill their agreement to pack through to Burrard Inlet. They saddled their horses and left for Howe Sound, where there was plenty of feed for stock, and thence proceeded to New Westminster."

"In the meantime I had to get Indians from the Squamish River to help the men pack up the steep grade to the summit. Subsequently, the Indians who deserted their work returned with their horses, and said they would pack all the way through in order to fulfill their agreement and get their pay. From the summit to that part of the trail made by the former Government, the descent is very steep for the first few miles, with heavy timber and slides, and steep side-hill. This part of the trail is graded wherever required through the level part of the country, and all the side-hill graded from two feet six inches to three feet wide. We had no trouble with our pack animals, heavily laden as they were, nor met with accident of any kind; the horses returned to Pemberton Meadows, and we connected with the old trail on the 19<sup>th</sup> October, having completed the 34 miles in 42 days, building 39 bridges and 231 feet of corduroy. I concluded that with no feed for the animals and the season drawing to a close, I would push my way through to Burrard Inlet, as the amount of money allowed had already been overdrawn, and it would be utterly impossible for me to replace all the bridges and otherwise repair the old trail this fall."

I have, etc.

(Signed)

A. J. MCLELLAN



*Photo courtesy of Mike Mayers, Greater Vancouver Water District.*

**Lillooet–Burrard Inlet Cattle Trail — Seymour River Valley in 1925**

## **Burrard Inlet's Tragic Cattle Trail — Drive Founders in North Shore Mountains**

By John Pearson and John M. Reitz, *British Columbian*, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 1961, page 4.

Of the many pioneer trails that criss-crossed British Columbia a century ago, possibly the least known today is the cattle trail that was built from Lillooet to connect with Lynn Creek on the north shore of Burrard Inlet, yet it was one of the major road building projects of the young province.

When the Cariboo gold rush subsided, many of the sourdoughs settled and became the pioneer ranchers of the Cariboo. As their herds increased on the lush plateau grass lands, they realized that their greatest problem was to get their stock to the markets in Vancouver and Victoria.

This was particularly true for the ones who located around Lillooet and on the rich Pemberton bottom lands. Becoming desperate, they petitioned Governor Douglas to build them a road over which they could drive their cattle from Lillooet to Burrard Inlet. The canny Scot refused to consider their request on the grounds that the route was impractical and the country too rugged for road building.

However, the farmers had a powerful supporter in Prescott Moody, manager of a large sawmill on the North Shore, who envisioned the trail as a means of getting fresh meat for his large crew. It would appear that the management of the other large sawmill on the Inlet, Hastings Mill, was quick to support the proposed trail and it was their combined influence that persuaded the government to begin construction of the 134 mile cattle trail in the spring of 1873. It proved to be an ill-considered decision, for there was nothing but frustration and disappointment in store for government and contractor alike.

The first contractor engaged was William Sampson, who re-opened a portion of the Harrison-Lillooet gold rush trail of '58; from Lillooet to Pemberton. From there to Howe Sound the trail would have to be cut through virgin country, some of it never before traversed by white men.

Old records were sought out in an effort to gain information on the terrain for the purpose of estimating cost of construction. There was not too much available. In 1827, Archibald MacDonald, Hudson's Bay Factor at Fort Kamloops was looking for a route to Fort Langley (then building) that would bypass the treacherous Fraser Canyon. He travelled by way of Pavilion, Lillooet, traversed the two large lakes now known as Seton and Anderson. MacDonald passed through the fertile Pemberton valley thinking the worst of his trip was over, but after reaching the Lillooet River he found the way barred by formidable mountains and impenetrable forests, so he turned back. Had MacDonald only proceeded a few miles down stream he would have found Lillooet Lake and easy travel to Harrison Lake, thence to Fort Langley. This route was to be of major importance some years later.

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1846, Alexander Caulfield Anderson, who had been commissioned by James Douglas, because of his intimate knowledge of the Indians, to find a suitable route to connect the coast with the interior plateau, set-out from Fort Kamloops. Nine days later, he and five men reached Fort Langley by way of Lillooet, Pemberton, Harrison Lake and Fraser River.

Anderson later achieved additional fame in 1858, when his book entitled "Handbook & Map of the Gold Region of the Fraser and Thompson Rivers" was published in San Francisco on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1858. It was destined to become the gold seeker's bible.

At least half a dozen contractors were put to work on the Burrard Cattle Trail over a five-year period and the last one appears to have been the well known pioneer road builder, A.J. McLellan, who in 1875-76 built the McLellan Road through Surrey and Langley.

The most difficult section of the trail was the 42 miles between Squamish and North Vancouver and after surveying the route, McLellan strongly urged that the road be terminated at the head of Howe Sound.

He found that some sections were so steep that there had to be a raise of 50 feet in 100 feet horizontally and that 80 bridges were needed, the longest being 296 feet. After watching a mountain stream rise seven feet in six hours, he felt that many of the bridges would never hold anyway. Another strong deterrent against this section was the total lack of grass or feed of any kind for 34 miles, which in itself should have discourage the building of the road over this route.

However, the settlers persisted in their demands that the trail be extended to Burrard Inlet, so McLellan cut in and graded a road three to five feet wide from Squamish to Moodyville (North Vancouver). From Squamish the trail followed the Mamquam River for eight miles then cut across a steep mountain pass to

the watershed of Indian River, through another pass to the source of Lynn Creek, then downstream to the Inlet.

After five years of heart-breaking labour and \$40,000 expenditure, the trail had its first and only cattle drive. In the fall of 1877, Robert Carson, Richard Hoey and Indian Kostah started out from Lillooet with 200 head along the rugged trail. At this season of the year feed was scarce on the high plateaus, many bridges had been washed out and the cattle could not manage the steep grades and according to record, not a single animal survived to the end of the trail. [Other accounts of the cattle drive suggest that this last statement is erroneous.]

The sketchy records of this great attempt to build a road through one of the most rugged sections of British Columbia leaves many questions unanswered.

Why couldn't the cattle be driven to Squamish over easier grades where there was an abundance of feed and loaded on ships, instead of continuing over the killing route to Burrard Inlet?

The chief reason was likely the complete lack of shipping facilities on Howe Sound. The market fell off soon after the trail was completed; and by 1880 Vancouver Island farms supplied the principal markets in Victoria, Nanaimo and Vancouver.



*Photo courtesy of Mike Mayers, Greater Vancouver Water District.*

## **Lillooet–Burrard Inlet Cattle Trail — Old Corduroy Road in the Seymour River Valley**



*Photo courtesy of Mike Mayers, Greater Vancouver Water District.*

## **Lillooet–Burrard Inlet Cattle Trail — Blasting in the Seymour River Valley**