

# VALLEY HISTORY AND THE WINDERMERE VALLEY MUSEUM

BOX 2315, INVERMERE, V0A 1K0 250-342-9769 May 2015



## Norman and Constance Marples 1914

“John Gilpin was a Citizen of Credit and  
Renown”

So runs the old rhymed tale, and in Invermere there is a resident who was born in John Gilpin's home town, Edmonton, near London; who has been a citizen of credit to the Windermere Valley for many a long year and who has reached renown this week with the achievement of 60 years of married life.

Monday, May 25, is a red letter day for Mr. and Mrs. Norman Marples of Invermere, who were married at Kings Weigh House Chapel in London in 1899.

Mrs. Marples was born Constance Beatrice Le Maire. Originally this French name was spelled Le Maire. An ancestor, a Hugucnot, born in 1693, escaped from France to England as a child of nine, hidden among packages of fish. After mar-

riage her name was Le Maire. About 1735 the family name was changed to Le Mare. Another ancestor had his name on the roll of honour naming knights who fought at the Battle of Abbey in 1066. Mrs. Marples has a copy of the scroll.

It takes a little persuasion to get Mrs. Marples to show the many lovely, historical family things she has ; her mother's wedding shoes, for instance, white satin boots, unbelievably tiny, laced up the side and made from the same satin as her wedding dress. Date 1860. She has the sleeves of her own wedding dress, made of cream satin with tiny satin buttons lining the long cuff. She has the Torchon-lace trimmed fine linen petticoat she wore under her dress, and the heavy embroidered cream flannel petticoat she wore under that.

Mrs. Marples has a crinolette ( back bustle ) which her mother wore tied around an 18" waist; a Victorian parasol with a folding handle carried by her mother about 1860; a sterling silver nutmeg grater, egg shaped, which an ancestor carried in his pocket flavouring his 'grog' , and a miniature London street lamp made from the metal of a gun used in the Crimean War. It is as good as a history lesson to handle the many fine mementoes kept by Mr. and Mrs. Marples through the years.

Mrs. Marples was married from the home of an aunt in London, a house just three doors away from the famous home of "The Barrett's of Wimpole Street." Mr. and Mrs. Marples spent their honeymoon in Paris and Switzerland and then lived in London where Mr. Marples was in business.

Later, when Mr. Marples was so ill he nearly died, doctors said he must move to a dry climate. Lured by propaganda in

English papers describing the Columbia Valley as fine fruit growing land they came to the Windermere. They soon found the fruit farming was not what it had been described but the view was marvelous.

Mr. and Mrs. Marples arrived in October, 1912, coming down the valley from Golden in one of the first automobile stages run by Godfrey Vigne, now of Creston. The trip took them from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm. They stayed at the Invermere Hotel and then moved to their new home on 'The Benches'.

"Our furniture had not arrived," Mrs. Marples said, "so the neighbours searched their attics for odd beds, tables and chairs to lend us. We had a bedspring propped on apple boxes. Then in January came the first furniture shipment. It was the piano.

In 1944, Norman and Constance moved from the Benches to Invermere. Mr. Marples served the Windermere District Farmers' Institute as secretary for more than 14 years. A few years ago he was awarded a certificate of honour for long service.

Mrs. Marples has been an ardent worker for Christ Church at Invermere and has achieved an amazing amount of knitting for the Red Cross through the years.

They have three children, a son, Kenneth and daughters Winnie and Molly (Mrs. J. A. Laird.)

( Winn Weir Files )

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### **Money made by Hope Brewer 1939**

Sorting beer bottles- .25  
Haying for A. Fuller and Hauling one day-  
\$2.00  
Helping W. Jones haul pipe- 2 days-  
\$5.00  
Flunkying for Government- 13 days-  
\$15.96  
Cutting trees- \$35.00  
Sale of Rifle- \$20.00  
Fur- \$8.00  
Cutting wood for Hamiltons- 10 cord-  
\$20.00  
Working for C.V.I.- \$22.40  
Bounty on 2 coyotes- \$4.00

## **50 Years ago - 1913**

( By Tommy King )

I noticed in Miss Effie Turnor's story that she mentioned Mr. Reuben Patton. He was in Golden before my arrival there and I was told that he was on the station platform one day when one of the early day trains stopped. A passenger stepped off for a breath of fresh air and remarked, "This must be a very healthy place." Reuben replied, "Yes, they had to kill a man to start a cemetery." He was referring to a murder that took place in 1886.

Old-timers who lived along the Windermere end of the wagon road from Golden to the Athalmer Crossroads included Danny Campbell, 49 miles from Golden, Harry Atchison, Alfred Mitchell, Ed Watkins, George Mitchell, Dave Marmon on the North Vermillion and below him, nearer the river was the Elk Park Ranching Co.'s holdings called the Lower Ranch.

Dave Larmour's ranch was at the 62 mile and the McKay Ranch was at the 66 mile mark. Eugene Coutre lived on Shuswap Creek and Jim Lambert was further south. The Bernie Ranch was off the road. Baptiste Morigeau ( born 1846 ) owned the land on the corner where the Fair grounds are.

There was no settlement on the west side of the Columbia north of Spillimacheen. But south there was Bert Lowe, George Heffner, Alex Macauley, Jim Montgomery, William Bott, Baptiste Paul and H.E. Forster.

The mail into the district was weekly. Rufus Kimpton had the contract in my time.

A year prior to my arrival with the advent of CPR trains the stage carrying passengers and mail continued through to Fort Steele- a four day trip each way and freight took seven or eight days at the price of \$7.00 a Cwt. The arrival of trains to Cranbrook in 1898 severed connection between Golden and Fort Steele. Settlement in the valley was slow until 1911, then a couple of big land companies had been formed and many families bought land.

Forty years ago I had a road contract in the Windermere country from Stoddart Creek to the Athalmer Crossroads. Later I was sent to finish roads not done to the satisfaction of the engineers at Dutch Creek and Brady Creek.

In the crew of 25 men there were 15 Indians among them. Moses Michel, Alex Paul, Martin Sam, Adrian Tenese and Mike Paul and a finer lot of fellows could not be desired. The whites were equally good workers and for me it was one of my happiest summers. Louie Paul, then Chief of the Shuswaps, was very co-operative. Martin Morigeau, now a Chief, worked for me in 1907 while still in his teens. His services were most satisfactory and he had a good mind. His life has been long and useful. The feeling I have for the Indians must have been mutual because in 1931 they put on a three day celebration in Golden with a stampede, Indian dances and a powwow and did me the honour of making me an honorary chief— Shuswap and Kootenay. But taking it all in all, even with all the rough spots, I don't know of any other place where I would have enjoyed life better than the Columbia Valley. The scenery is unmatched, the people grand, the climate enjoyable and there has always been a fair standard of living for anyone willing to work for it. After all these years, I have no regrets.

( Museum Files )

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### **Earl Grey Cabin**

During the summer of 1908, Earl Grey, Governor General of Canada and a party made the trek from Argenta in the West Kootenays to Wilmer over the Earl Grey Pass. The following are excerpts from a letter to Premier Richard McBride of British Columbia:

“I am already considering whether it may not be possible for me to bring Lady Grey and my daughters to a camp at Toby Creek next year. I sincerely hope that you may be able to make this area into a National Park. I think that perhaps the best way in which I can help you is if I settle now to make a camp there next year and I act accordingly instructing Mr. Oliver to make ready for me, by Sept. 1st next, a camp on a spot I have selected at a cost not to exceed

\$500.00. I will ask you to regard this action as my contribution towards the establishment of a National Park.”

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### **Charles Frederick Law**

( Born Oshawa, Ontario . January 31, 1859)

“ I left Ontario on 1st of February 1886 and came by train as far as Canmore which was then the end of steel. I stayed in Golden City at a construction camp for two or three days and there I joined with a party who were coming through to the Columbia Lakes. We had our baggage drawn on a sleigh which we bought in Golden and drew it ourselves up the ice on the Columbia river to a point known as ‘Whiskey Hill’ near where now practically stands the station of Harrogate. There the Columbia River was open so we had to abandon it. There we caught some stray horses which were on the range. We tied our stuff on them as best we could and rode others through to the Lower Columbia Lake . There were three others in the party beside myself. One was Irving . The others Billy Deane and Matt Curver. Matt Curver had a little house at the foot of the hill just west of what is now Athalmer. I bought out his interest in that for \$300.00. I also took up what was equal to three pre-emptions taking them up in the names of myself and Charles A. Warren , Reuben Hamlin, son of a very rich man, and Alber Colthard. These pre-emptions took in what are now the townsites of Athalmer and Invermere. Next year we all sold out to Hamlin who took Edmund Thomas Johnston into partnership. In 1890 I ran for the Provincial House against Colonel Baker who defeated me by three votes. After 1892 I retired to the Coast . In the years 1892 and 1893 I was commissioner to the World’s Fair at Chicago for the Government of the Province of British Columbia. I have been up and down over the whole of the interior of British Columbia. I am keenly interested in all pertaining to mines and mining. Yes. Law Creek, the tributary of Horse Thief Creek is called after me.

(Interview with B.G.Hamilton. Feb.6,1926.)

**Ottawa, November 30, 1965**

Dear Mr. French:

Re: Dredging-Columbia River, B.C.  
Reported Hazards near Invermere, B.C.

I wish to refer to your letter of April 7, 1965, addressed to the Department of Transport which I acknowledged on April 27, concerning the above subject.

An investigation has been carried out and a review of our old files has revealed that the rock hazard that you referred to is an artificial groyne or partial dam 600 feet long, built by this Department between 1889 and 1890 to improve the navigation channel at the outlet of Lake Windermere and to maintain the low level of the Lake. Prior to the construction of the dam the natural deep channel was along the East bank where it still exists today.

Between this channel and the West bank was a broad shallow bar on which the groyne was built. The top of the groyne is about one foot above the low water level of the Lake and the depth of water along the groyne increases gradually from a half foot at the West bank to about two and a half feet at the end of the groyne. By concentrating the flow of water at the east side the natural channel is maintained by scouring action. At high lake levels there is five feet of water over the groyne and at low lake levels the groyne is exposed by about one foot.

There are three piles marking the end of the groyne; however, I understand that many boaters choose to travel over the groyne rather than use the longer route through the channel.

To relocate the opening to the middle would involve dredging a channel some 1500 feet long through the shallow bar and then blocking off the existing channel. The existing channel area would gradually fill in and there would be no assurance that the new channel would stay open without frequent dredging. The condition may then be worse for property owners along the East shore who now en-

joy deeper water. Also, partial or complete removal of the groyne would lower the low level of the lake to the detriment of the 300 odd lake shore property owners.

In the above circumstances, I regret that no action can be taken at this time to change this 75 year old condition.

Yours sincerely,

Lucien Lalonde

( Editors note: the 'groyne' referred to in this article is located at the north end of Lake Windermere where the mouth of the Columbia River begins. Very close to Lakeside Inn. 2015 )

( Museum Files )

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**May 17, 1929**

“ The first pair of twins on record to be born in the Windermere District Hospital were recorded last month to the honour and glory of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Tegart of Windermere. A son and daughter were presented to the proud father and mother. For all the writer has heard to the contrary, this is the first time that the Windermere District has been honoured with such an event. ”

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**Dates to Remember**

**Thursday, May 21**– Monthly Meeting at the Museum 2 p.m.

Program– Craig and Pat Lien  
“An African Safari”

**Sunday, May 24th** 7 p.m.

Museum Movie  
“The African Queen”

**Saturday, June 20th**–

Museum Summer Opening Tea 2 p.m.  
Theme: 100 years of completed Kootenay Central Railway.

( We are looking for train stories and artifacts)

**Saturday, July 18**– Quilt Show

( compiled by Sandy McKay )