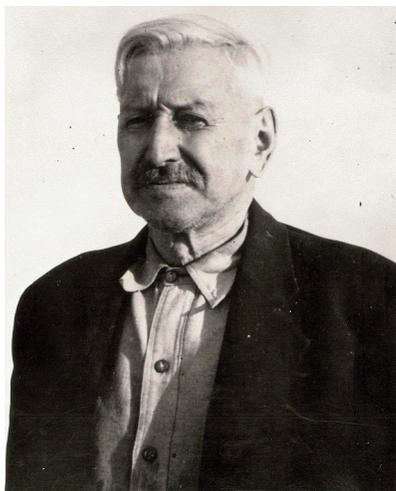


VALLEY HISTORY AND THE WINDERMERE VALLEY MUSEUM

BOX 2315, INVERMERE, V0A 1K0 August 2019 250-342-9769



Frank Stockdale

Francis Clarence Stockdale, known as “Frank” to old and young throughout the Windermere District and far beyond its mountain boundaries. There was no more beloved personality in the valley. During the long months of his illness when he slipped at first gradually from community life, and then completely, his was a name spoken always with respect, appreciation and affection.

Mr. Stockdale was born at Courtright, Ontario in 1868. Lured by the gold rush with his cousin J.S. Johnston, he came west in 1898 and headed for the Klondike. They got as far as Athabaska Landing and found the going too hard so came on to this valley.

They landed at the Salmon Beds (Athalmer) May 7, 1898. They had walked from Golden as they had missed the weekly boat.

Mr. Stockdale prospected and mined for ten or twelve years. Boulder Creek, a tributary of Horsethief Creek was his favorite. In 1915 he was one of the owners of Sitting Bull Mine and he controlled the group. In 1916 he took up the Mary G Claim. Stockdale eventually bought up all 4 claims..... Alice, Colorado, Mary G and Sitting Bull at

a tax sale for the taxes owing.

In 1911 he worked for the Columbia Valley Irrigated Fruit Lands as foreman of construction of ditches, flumes and sawmills.

In February 1913 he started to build the hardware store which was known as “Invermere Construction and Supplies” and in which George Bennett was his partner. Mr. Stockdale later bought out Bennett's interest and changed the name to Invermere Hardware. This he operated until 1946 when the business was sold to Joy and Bill Bond. (Joy Bond is Frank Stockdale's niece.) He was also the first liquor vendor in the district. Holding that position for many years.

Mr. Stockdale had a keen interest in community affairs. For many years he was vice-president of the Windermere District Hospital Association. He was also active in Columbia Lodge No. 38 A.F. and A.M. having been a charter member. He was made a Mason in Ontario in 1895. On two occasions he was the Worshipful Master of Columbia Lodge. He was a member of the Royal Arch, Free Masons of Cranbrook Lodge and also of the Mystic Shrine, Cranbrook. Frank was a keen sportsman being particularly fond of duck hunting and he was a leading curler in the district for many years.

2006

(From Dennis Williamson)

“I was interested in the story about the Invermere Mercantile. I think the second to the last paragraph could be expanded to describe the building which now apparently is the “Village Arts” as the old original hardware owned by Frank Stockdale. As you probably know, he was Uncle Frank to Joy Bond and it seems he may have been a guardian to my mother (May Starke) for a time. I have only the fondest memories of “Hank” as I called him. He was like a grandfather to me and my brother Derrek.

We used to watch the light on in his room at the Invermere Hotel on Christmas day and we couldn't open our presents until he came after going up to the store to tend to the furnace. I spent a lot of time at the store and he would set out chores for me like assembling bicycles and other products that came disassembled. Maybe you folks have chronicled his history before and if you have I sure would like a copy. My middle name is Francis named for him."

(Dennis Williamson is the grandson of George and Delphine Starke)

Francis Clarence Stockdale died July 3, 1947 at the Lady Elizabeth Memorial Hospital at Invermere at the age of 78.

(Museum Files)

1897- "Silver Crown" claim staked at the head of Spring Creek in the Paradise Basin, August 29. Staked by Tom Jones. The peculiarity of this strike was that it was the first in B.C. on what is known as "sand carbonate", a common silver-lead mineral in Mexico and southern U.S.A. but rare so far north.

Tom "Blanket" Jones was one of the earliest prospectors in the East Kootenay. He was a man of powerful physique, was well informed about minerals and there was little of the countryside with which he was not acquainted. He never packed a tent. His only outfit on his trips was a blanket and some grub..... hence his nickname! He became a fast friend and admirer of R.R. Bruce.

1899- John Watson and John Jeffry staked the Paradise and Royal Stag claims. These two and the Comstock which they also staked formed the nucleus of what was to be the Paradise Mine.

George Starke built the Delphine Hotel. It was named for his wife, Delphine, and was operated by them. (May Starke , Dennis Williamson's mother, was raised there.) It is located at the corner of Wills Street and Main Avenue in Peterborough (Wilmer.) It was sold in 1911 to Allen Moore.

1901- Wing Lee arrived in Wilmer and operated a laundry and restaurant which he ran until 1911 when he moved to Inver-

mere and opened a grocery store. He sold his business in 1946 and returned to China.

1903- Telephone service from Wilmer to Athalmer to Windermere was connected . In 1912 the service was extended to Invermere and north to Spillimacheen.

August 11 a meeting was held in the office of R.R. Bruce. It was voted that they begin collecting funds to build a Presbyterian Church. The land was given by RRB as a site for the church and the Church was opened in 1904.

Charles Frederick Law

Charles Law was born in Oshawa, Ontario on January 31, 1859. He left Ontario in February 1886 and came by train as far as Canmore which was the end of steel. He travelled on snow shoes with two dog teams to Golden. He stayed in Golden at a construction camp for two or three days and then joined with a party who were coming through to Columbia Lake. They had their baggage drawn on a sleigh which they bought in Golden and pulled it themselves 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 they had to abandon it. There they caught some stray horses which were on the range. They tied their stuff on them as best they could and rode others through to the Lower Columbia Lake.

There were three others in the party; Irving, Billy Deane and Matt Curver. Matt Curver had a little house at the foot of the hill just west of what is now Athalmer. He bought out his interest in that for \$300.00. He also took up what was equal to three pre-emptions, taking them up in his name and those of Charles A. Warren and Reuben Hamlin, son of a very rich man. These pre-emptions took in what are now the town sites of Athalmer and Invermere. The next year they all sold out to Hamlin who took Edmund T. Johnston into partnership. Law had no further dealings with land locally but went into partnership with Messrs. Osler and Hammond of Toronto.

He remained with them for about five years. In 1890 Charles Law ran against Colonel Baker for the Provincial House of Commons. Colonel Baker won by three votes. After 1892, Law retired to the coast. In 1893 he was Commissioner to the World's Fair at Chicago for the Government of B.C.

Charles Law married Louisa Hyland in 1896 at Oshawa. They had five children, one Frederick C. Law, a journalist, was killed in a fall from a cliff in Italy in 1926 at the age of 26.

Law Creek, the tributary of Horsethief Creek, was named for him.

Information from an interview with
B.G.Hamilton.
February 6,1926.

Hon. Frederick Whitworth Aylmer

Was born in Melbourne, Quebec on February 4, 1850. Aylmer was the first C.P.R. engineer to work through the Kicking Horse Pass. He named Golden, "Golden City" and built the first bridge over the Kicking Horse River.

He was Honorary Chief of the Stony Indians... The first white man given the honor. The Banff National Park was named Aylmer Park.

He volunteered for service in the Canadian Militia when he was 16 to fight in the first Fenian Raid and stood to arms in the second. He went on in the service in Wolseley's Red River Rebellion Expedition leaving Toronto May, 1870 and reaching Fort Garry August 24, 1870. He also served in the second rebellion 1885 with distinction. He was a Civil Engineer by profession and became District Engineer (Interior of B.C.) for the Dominion Government.

On June 28,1899 he married Emma Meredith Lang, daughter of Robert Lang of Golden, B.C.

The Honorable Frederick Whitworth Aylmer died at Chase, B.C. on September 22,1920.

Our Scottish Heritage

To the migrating Scots, leaving by choice or pushed by necessity, hardship was hardly a consideration! It was mental and physical toughness, nurtured in their northern homeland that made them excellent pioneers. Some of our local pioneers are:

Harry and Braidy Williams

Came from Perthshire. Mr. Williams came to Canada in 1901. He returned to Scotland and in 1914 he brought his wife out. They came to a house on the Firlands Ranch which had been built in ten days and still had no windows and doors when they moved in. They spent the first winter under very difficult pioneer conditions. After six years on the ranch, they moved into Wilmer. Mr. Williams was a cook and carpenter. They had one daughter, Bessie.

Alec and Elsie Dobbie

Alec Dobbie was born in Australia to Scottish parents. The family returned to Scotland where Alec grew up. Mr. Dobbie came to Canada with William Weir and Cecil Davidson in 1911. He returned to Scotland when WW1 broke out and he stayed there until 1920. Mr. Dobbie was a carpenter and many of the older homes still standing were built by him. Elsie Tait was from Greenoch. She came to Halifax in 1921. Mr. Dobbie met her there and they were married. The Dobbie's had three children: Sandy, Kay and Avril.

Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Scott

Came from Aberdeenshire. They settled in Invermere in 1912. They had one daughter, Barbara. Mr. Scott was a finishing carpenter and much of his handiwork still exists. He made the communion table in Trinity United Church. Mr. Scott played the bagpipes and was always an enthusiastic participant in Scottish celebrations.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Newton

The Newton family came to the valley in 1914. They came to look after Captain Phillips property when he returned to England. The family moved to Wilmer where their children Jean, Neil and Bunty grew up. Mr. Newton taught Highland dancing to the children of the district. He was foreman of Road Construction for Kootenay Park.

The Laird Family

The Lairds came to the Valley in 1921, settling at Westlake on Lake Lillian, the former home of Capt. and Mrs. Poett. Their son, Alfred, and daughters, Alice and Gladys came with them. Alfred married Mollie Marples and Gladys married George and Alice married Graham, Watt Brothers who had been born in Ceylon to a Scottish family.

Tom and Isabella Frater

The Fraters came from Leith, Edinburgh County. They came to the valley in 1913 with their two daughters Annie and Jessie. They came to the Sinclair Ranch on the Benches. In 1914 they moved to Invermere. Three more children, Mary, Jim and Stanley were born there. Mr. Frater was a carpenter and worked on the K2 Ranch and on Commander Powles Ranch. They were active participants in the local St. Andrews Society.

Museum Update

A big ‘Thankyou’ to ALL that supported our Strawberry Social in June. To partner with Columbia Valley Food and Farm was a real plus.

The summer theme of “Capturing History through the Camera Lens” has been well received. It’s not too late to see the display. It will be up until the end of September.

New acquisitions are arriving almost every day. Drop in to see what is new.

Summer Old Time Movies Continue

August 14- “The War of 1812”

(2011 for 1812 forward 1hr.53 min. widescreen.) This film presents the strange conflict that shaped the destiny of a continent. Most Canadians know so little about this attempt by the US to invade British soil in North America that they can’t figure out why it lasted for 2.5 years, who burned down the White House in Washington DC, or why it was the indigenous people that lost the most.

August 21- “Ella Cinders”

(1926 52min.) a non-talkie comedy about beauty contests sending girls to Hollywood. For those who wish to stay after, we will have some ‘shorts’ about how very few Hollywood bound girls ever landed a job and some interesting things about old-time movie practices, equipment and the changes through the years.

August 28- “America Before Columbus”

(2009 1hr.31 min. widescreen) A National Geographic film regarding the human and environmental changes both in the Americas and back in Europe. Full of tragedies and other stories that we never heard about during our ‘long ago’ school days.

Limited seating, admission by donation. For reservations phone the museum 250-342-9769. If filled early a second showing may be arranged in the evening. Patron’s with reservations should be seated at least five minutes before curtain time or the seat may be given to a potential gate-crasher. The possibility of a 7:00pm overflow show is possible if requests for an evening show are received.

Fall Program 2019

(Sunday evenings 7:00pm)

September 22-“The Cameraman” 1928

Buster Keaton plays a tintype street photographer who tries his hand as a freelance newsreel cameraman in order to win the affection of a girl.

October 20- “I Love Melvin” 1953

Musical comedy about a young chorus girl trying to get ahead and a go-fer for Look Magazine who fakes being a big-time photographer.

November 24- “Casablanca” 1943

French Morocco December 1941 where a man is torn between his love for a woman and the life of a resistance fighter against Nazi Germany.

(Compiled by Sandy McKay)