

(NOTE: Three regular size, tan coloured pages of type.)

Born in Boston, Mass., USA March 27, 1878 (just 100 years ago this month.) Came to B.C. April 1898. Married in June 1911 to Mary Ethel, only daughter of John Granville (Jack) Thynne and had 2 children – Mary G (Mollie), Mrs. G.P.B. and John George (Jack). Moved to Penticton in 1939, died September 1967.

George Batstone became a journeyman plumber January 11, 1897, licenced to work for the City of Boston. He came to British Columbia in April, 1898 with four other “Boston Boys” to set up placer mining machinery in Granite Creek for the Boston-British Columbia Placer Gold Co. working 3 seasons with them before being sent to the “Sweepstake” Mine in Weaverville near Redding, California for the same company. He returned to Boston in 1905, obtained his Master Plumber’s licence in 1906, but soon came back “Out West”.

During his early years in British Columbia as well as his work in placer mining, he drove freight outfits and extra passenger stage runs between Spences Bridge and Granite Creek. Later, when the road was completed, between Spences Bridge and Princeton. He hauled the first load of ore from Princeton to rail head at Spences Bridge. It was shipped in small sacks – about one ton in all.

During railroad construction through Nicola (now Merritt) he worked for A.E. Howse in the Driad Hotel at Nicola tending bar. This was not just serving “refreshments”. He acted as “banker” for his customers, holding their money until they sobered up; and sometimes as “bouncer”, even locking up some of the more unruly in what he referred to as the “snake room”. His own account states, in part, ... they were...

He studied “Horse Doctoring” books and taught himself to be a reliable veterinarian. There are those still living who tell of calling him in time of trouble with valuable animals. He saved the life of many thoroughbred stallions and purebred milk cows when others had given up trying.

He built the first hand baler used in the area. Copy of his plans and instructions on “How to build a Hand Baler” are on files in the Victoria Archives.

He married Mary Ethel Thynne, only daughter of John Granville and Mary Thynne who operated the first roadhouse on the Otter Valley Road near Tulameen and after whom Thynne Mountain, Thynne Creek and Thynne Lake are named. The Batstones began ranching in the One Mile Valley in 1911 near Aspen Grove and had two children; a daughter, Mollie (Mrs. G.P. Broderick) and son Jack. George Batstone was a competent builder and carpenter. He built his own log ranch buildings as well as log buildings for other ranchers. Some of these are still in use. He was hunter and trapper but always a conservationist taking only what he could use.

George Batstone, as indicated by the fact he took up the plumbing trade, was a practically minded man, with a keen sense of workmanship. He, if anything, was a perfectionist, and where

no one else could see anything but complete satisfaction, he would be unhappy because he knew there was something that could have been improved.

Sometimes his ideas appeared far out to a person who didn't visualize what he had in mind, an instance of which occurred on the Thynne Ranch in -----. When the railroad built through from Princeton to Brookmere, following the Coquihalla Pass the right-of-way went through the lower hay meadow, following the Tulameen River. The high grade, acting like a dam caused high water to overflow the meadow, spoiling a good deal of the hay. Jack Thynne had a lawsuit with the railroad for damages, which he lost, but upon listening to an idea of George Batstone, which he was at first disposed to dismiss as impractical, he appealed. George's plan which he carried out, was to build a working model of the meadow, the river, the railroad grade, and the flow of water. This he took to court, and demonstrating its workings to the judge, their argument was won, and damages were awarded.

Always busy at something, and being a true pioneer, George had his little workshop, where many of his tools were of his own making. If something was broken, or a person had a job that was beyond their abilities, he would quietly study it for awhile, then disappear into his workshop. Eventually he would return, with the job completed, utilizing a good deal of ingenuity and whatever tools were at hand.

Page 9

As horsemanship was a prerequisite in those early days, long before modern means of locomotion, George began, as a necessity of any job, to learn to be a teamster. As his interest in horsemanship grew he branched out, and eventually became a freighter, hauling supplies from the railroad at Spences Bridge into the Otter Valley, to Granite Creek and Tulameen. When the road was built through from Granite Creek to Princeton, he took the first load of ore from the mines of Granite Creek to the Railroad at that rail point.