

# When Great Great Grandma Was a Child

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Was A Child.

by  
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Myself and brother Harry.

IN THE LONG LONG AGO

*The days of my happy childhood  
Were passing to and fro  
It seemed but only yesterday  
That long long ago*

*Like a misty dream  
It lingers on, with  
Memories fresh  
Anew.  
Those days have gone and passed away  
Still I know that they were true.*

## When Great Great Grandmother Was A Child

That sounds like a very long time ago, and so it was. My first fond memories were of my parents, Ma and Pa, as we called them. The large dining and sitting room had a huge fireplace stove, which sent out a warm and comforting glow. Ma always sat in her old rocking chair, with its pleasant creak as she rocked to and fro. I was two years old at the time and with the other children, listened to her stories, as she told of many lands and many people, mostly historical, and even ghost stories of her old ancestors. Our favourite, was of Wild Highlanders and their wonderous deeds. Pa sat in his chair reading the newspaper and we could hear the paper crackle as he turned the pages, so I knew he was there too.

We children loved the stories that were a little spooky and would shiver with delight as Ma would say, "MacGregor, MacGregor, remember the foeman as he rolled his red eye to the brow of Ben Lomond." I remember saying, "Ma, Ma, what did he roll it in?" She ignored me majestically, and went on with her tale, but I thought the eye must be removeable, and the wheelbarrow being the only thing I knew of to roll things in, (my older sister rolled me in ours) I'd doze off imagining old MacGregor rolling his eye up Ben Lomond in his family wheel barrow, to wake up a little later and hear Ma intoning how Horatius held the bridge in "Brave days of old", but did not dare question what it was that he used to hold it up with; as by that time, Ma would be into the horrible one of the old man who was hanged in the



Tower of London, or the lady who walked along the drafty corridor with her head tucked underneath her arm. The older children understood these things better than I did, and having heard them before, sought other amusements, although my brother Harry, who was a little older than I, and sister Grace and brother Alfred, would hang onto each word.

Harry, who loved to whittle at the cedar paneling behind the stove, when Ma was not looking, was surprised one night as Ma looked up suddenly, saying, "Harry, do not deface the furniture!" Harry looked up astounded, saying "furniture! —your grandmother's nightcap." Ma jumped up and boxed his ears, very severely, Harry cried, and so did I in sympathy. Ma said he was an impudent little boy, but he said through his tears, "I am not, I am Harold Archibald Allison and how I wish I was a turkey gobbler." He had always admired our turkey gobbler and from there on he had the nickname of "Gobbler", and it stayed with him for years.

I remember one evening being rocked to sleep when Ma decided to brush my hair and do it in pig tails. If there was anything I hated, it was to have my hair braided, because Harry always said, "ha, ha, pigtails," and adding insult to injury, shouted, "just like Ah Pan, the Chinaman." Ma either ignored or did not hear him this time.

The days went on, Spring following winter and soon it was August, and the great fireplace stove was unlit in the evenings. As usual Ma was rocking and telling her stories, when suddenly she jumped up, spilling me from her lap. She started calling "Caroline come and look after the baby", and she disappeared, so too did Pa. Poor Caroline had a time to subdue me and get me to her room as I was determined to stay with Ma.

Caroline's room had formerly been occupied by the older children's governess, a Miss McLean, who had been hired to



teach an undisciplined, tumbling, good humoured lot of young Allison's. It is doubtful if Miss McLean taught the children much, but one thing she learned, was to ride horseback, and just loved it. After giving Caroline a bad night screaming for Ma and Pa, I settled down. One afternoon, sister Beatrice came in and said, "would you like to go and see Ma?" "Yes, yes", I cried, "and can I sleep with her?" She smiled, and then we were in Ma's room, where she lay in bed, but did not seem very anxious for me. Someone lifted the blankets and lo and behold, there lay a little bundle, a baby, with black hair, red of face, eyes closed. I thought she was a little Indian, as they were the only babies I had ever seen. I started screaming again, "take that little Indian out of Ma's bed." However, the baby was no Indian, but my new little sister, Alice. I turned back to my lovely Caroline, who by this time, had had enough of my tantrums and decided to be shut of me. She said, "do you know what might happen if you slept in my bed again?" "You might waken to find me cold and dead." Horror of horrors, I thought of all the things I had seen dead, cows, horses and deer in the spring, but not my Carry! So I crept into the cot, turning my back to Ma and the baby, feeling very sad for Caroline, who was happy now to be free of me and my tantrums.

The next morning I was up early to look for Pa, who was having breakfast and he said I could go riding with him to mend fences. I was thrilled to go with Pa and also very excited as I had never ridden by myself before. He chose for me a gentle mare, Nelly. We were to leave her colt in the barn until we returned, however, Nelly was reluctant to leave the little colt. Putting on a bridle and placing a cirsingle on her plump back, we were ready to leave, Pa riding Lightfoot. We rode out to the field where the fence was broken in places. I

proudly held Pa's horse when he dismounted to mend the broken rail. After half a day's work he was finished and we turned for home. This time Nelly was more anxious to go back to her colt. When she neighed she shook from head to foot and I nearly fell off, but Pa curbed her. We reached home in safety and oh, was I hungry, Pa too, so he said.

I was now ready to ride with the other children, who showed me birds nests, some of which were in tall stumps. Once when I was riding with Grace, we rode up to a stump with a round hole, where the birds flew in and out. Grace stopped, stood on the horses back and reached her hand into the nest, yes the little eggs were there. I would feel them next time. A day or so later, we rode up to the stump, I stood on the horse's back but the bird was not there. I thought she must be out catching grasshoppers as the little ones must be hatched. Putting my hand in to feel, a shock I got, for a horrible little garter snake poked his head out in surprise, sticking out a nasty little red tongue, hissing at me. In fright, I dropped to the ground and Grace said, "he must have eaten the poor little birds." I don't ever remember putting my hands in a hole again!

Then there was the day someone brought home a tiny little bird from a nest at Swan Lake, a little Magpie. We were delighted and spent hours (Harry and I) catching grasshoppers to keep it's appetite satisfied. It grew and thrived and soon had quite a vocabulary. It could say almost anything we could and sometimes picked up some very strange words from the cowboys. Once Grace and I were playing near the big barn when we saw a stranger, a whiteman, coming on horseback. We ran to hide, climbing into the hayloft. Maggie, as we called him, flew into the loft with us and as we peered down at the rider, Maggie displayed his best cowboy vocabulary, which shocked the poor fellow.



All he could see were two small girls peering down from the loft, with a string of profanity pouring from their general direction. Ma tried her best to explain the "talking bird", with not much success, until finally Maggie made a visit to the stranger's campsite nearby and again displayed his most colourful vocabulary from a pine tree. The stranger being neither appreciative of Maggie's talents nor a very good shot, promptly blew his leg off, and after pocket knife surgery, the bird became known as "Maggie, minus a leg."

"Lightfoot" was Pa's favourite saddle horse. He had once been a race horse and was still gay and willing, although very gentle and dependable. He had many strange small brands on his leg, mostly in the hair, and a few in other places according to who was branding him. We, smaller children could just reach his leg with a piece of wire and he would twitch resignedly and move over a little. When Pa came home at night, many of the children would run to meet him and be lifted to Lightfoot's back, covering him literally from head to tail. Pa always said the horse would be mine, when he was done with him, and so it was.

Another gentle old pet was a Durham cow with sawed off horns. After milking was over the cows were turned out to pasture in the bunchgrass. I would be lifted on the old cow's back, with a switch in my hand to guide Durham, the rest following. I thought Nelly's back was sharp, but Durham's was worse, no blanket or cirsingle and no mane to hang onto, something like a saw horse. I was always glad to slide off and walk home. The cows came in at night bursting with milk and bawling for their calves. The older girls milked them and we sat by with tin cups in our hands and would dive down for the lovely foam on the pails of warm milk.

We had a good many pets among the wild creatures, Ma even had a little sparrow hawk called Witzie, who was very

tame and always perched on her shoulder. Unfortunately, a sad thing happened, when one of the children rushed in and slammed the door and Witzie, who was trying to fly in at the same time, alas, was caught and instantly killed. Ma would not have another pet in her place. Then there was the beaver who slept in the nursery. Each night he gathered the children's clothes and made a dam across the room, but to his disappointment he never got any water, however, he still persisted in making the dam.

I remember the time the boys dug out a coyote den and brought home the little ones to tame. They gave the smallest to me and I had a wonderful time taming him whilst running up and down the long passage, he too seemed to enjoy it. A man coming to the house and seeing the coyote, at once asked if he could have it. Ma said "yes" and I cried out, "but it is mine", however, I was made to part with it. To my delight the coyote killed all his chickens. Too bad the old boy did not have sense enough to shut them up in the chicken house. That was the only coyote of the lot that became tame. We also had a tame wolf, who badly frightened one of Uncle's guests, while waiting for dinner to be served. The wolf entered the room and jumping to the table, seized the joint and fled, leaving the guest open mouthed and aghast. Someone exclaimed, "oh, its only Wolfie" which they called the pet. Fortunately, we had plenty of our own beef and were able to substitute steaks for the roast. The wolves were numerous and troublesome at that time. They howled at night and crossed the river to chase the sheep that were enclosed in corrals. They were so bad that Pa bought two wolf hounds 'Dick and Dora', hoping they would protect the sheep. One night there was a terrible noise, sheep bleating and dogs barking, so Pa and one of the boys went out with a gun, finding Dick and Dora helping the wolves kill the



sheep. Needless to say, that was the end of Dick and Dora. Pa did not have any more sheep after that episode, and in time the troublesome wolves disappeared.

Another incident I recall at this time, which was important to we young girls in the family, happened when one afternoon hearing a knock I ran to see who was calling. As Ma answered the door, standing with hat in hand, was a young gentleman, saying hopefully, "My last appeal to Miss Beatrice Allison." Mr. Cook in his desperation, made his last appeal to Beatrice, who at that time was not enthused with his marriage proposal as she was leaving for Victoria to train for a nurse at the Royal Jubilee Hospital.

Alice was growing now and able to toddle about and play. One day we (the younger ones) were all on old Lightfoot, when little Alice came toddling out and wanted a ride too. Someone caught her arm to pull her up. She screamed and all came running out of the house to see what was wrong. Her arm was pulled out of joint, the poor little girl was suffering very much. Pa was away so Dr. Cameron was sent for. A huge abscess formed under her arm and she was ill for a long time. Dr. Cameron was with her every day until she was well again. I must explain that Dr. Cameron cooked for the cowboys in a cabin nearby. I don't know if he was a doctor or if we just called him one, but he was really wonderful and kind. After what seemed like several months, Alice was running about lively as a little cricket.

Captain Scott and his partner Captain Copp, both retired sea captains, were mining near Ground Hog Basin. We did not see much of Captain Copp, but Captain Scott who was very fond of children often came to see us. He told us about his little girl and said she and her mother were coming soon. His young son Fred, who was in his early twenties, had come with his father to help with the mining. The captain built a

large white house for his family, which stood for many years and was known as 'The Whitehouse'. In due time Mrs. Scott arrived but not the little girl, as she had taken violently ill on the train and died suddenly. Of course, Ma went to see Mrs. Scott who was in terrible shock. We children were not told what had happened except that the little girl had not come. On one occasion, Captain Scott arrived with a pack horse loaded with all kinds of wonderful toys, things we had never seen or owned. We were excited and thrilled not knowing they had belonged to the little girl. Captain Scott had on his uniform with pretty buttons which we admired very much. He was not his usual laughing self, but looked very sad, telling Ma they could not bear to see the little girl's toys about. As the days passed, we saw more of Mrs. Scott and became very good friends. She spent much of her time with us and often went riding with the girls. During the high water the river was dangerous and while crossing, Mrs. Scott was almost washed off her horse, but as time went on she became a fine rider and a very pleasant companion. We little ones were busy with our toys, the only thing lacking were dolls. Mrs. Scott no doubt, had put them away.

At that time, someone gave me what seemed like a fortune, the large sum of two dollars. "Ma, Ma" I said, "what can I do with it?" "Why not get some dolls to go with your collection of toys," she replied. "You could send to Eatons for them." After spending a long time looking at the catalogue and finding that I could buy a dozen dolls with my two dollars, I chose six fair and six dark haired ones, with sawdust filled bodies, china heads, hands and feet. The order was sent to Eatons, but it took a long time to receive mail for it had to be sent out and brought in by packtrain. Sometimes, Pa himself, went to Hope if he were expecting important letters. After what seemed ages of waiting, and



while sorting the mail, I once again asked, "are the dolls here yet?" and to my surprise and delight Ma said yes and handed me the parcel. Oh the excitement! After not ever having even one doll, here I was with a dozen. When Ma was finished sorting the mail she came to examine the dolls. Oh they were beautiful! "Now, she said, "what are you going to do with all these dolls?" I thought a moment and said, "I will divide them with little Alice, six for her and six for me." So we divided six apiece, three fair and three dark. Oh what fun! When one was broken we could get another. They lasted a long time, and I suppose like all good things, at last came to an end. These were the first dolls I can remember. We also had our squabbles, when one was broken, Alice would say it was not hers, so to settle the dispute, we would take out another and be happy again.

I remember sitting on the front porch with the family, in the evening, waiting for Haleys Comet to strike the earth. Yes, we could see it with its long tail of fire. We were terrified but finally it disappeared and we were relieved to go to bed in safety, knowing we would still be here in the morning. Ma was always interested in the stars and knowing all the constellations by name, tried to teach us, however I could never remember them, although we never did forget Haleys Comet, that big red ball of fire.

Pa had Chinese mining for him, they were small and wirey and could carry tremendous loads on their pingos, a stick which crossed their shoulders with a basket on each end. A little Chinaman came asking for protection as he said the Boxers were after him and would kill him, so he also was given work in the garden. Pa also hired several big, fierce looking men who came looking for work, and as he had picked up some of their language in California, he heard them talking, they were calling him 'FanKey' or 'Foreign

Devil'. Knowing that their intentions were not good, he asked them to quickly leave, which they did. They went on to Keremeos for a while, leaving one of their group to work for Mr. Coulthard. Finally, Slavey, or the 'little one' in the garden said he too must go, and could not be persuaded to stay. A few days later someone coming from Keremeos found the poor little fellow hanging from a tree with a rope around his neck, quite dead. Everyone suspected the strange Chinese, but nothing could be proven. It was a year later that a man arrived and asked for work, saying he was going back to China and was in need of money. Ma gave him work, but her suspicions were aroused. They say 'little pitchers have long ears'. I suppose I had been listening to the talk, unknown to Ma. I went to the kitchen, where he was eating a meal and quite simply said, "Jim Hung Chung", at which point his face seemed to turn black and he replied, "What you say?" I was frightened of his looks, so I jumbled the words together and said in one breath, "Jimhungchung", pretending to talk Chinese, but I was terrified and ran to Ma. "Keep away from him she said, he might do harm". I could see that she also was frightened, as she immediately went and told him that he would not be needed and he very soon left. Returning, she said, "He might have killed you". It did not pay to be such a naughty impudent little girl.

Before the high water there was a beautiful vegetable, herb and flower garden, guarded jealously by Ah Pan, who was the "bossy man" of the garden. There also grew all kinds of wild raspberries, strawberries, saskatoons and choke cherries, which, in the summer we would pick every day. The poppies were our favourite flowers. We pressed the petals between two pieces of glass and called them a 'poppy show'. They were really quite beautiful, (to our way of thinking) and showing them to Ah Pan, he said, "vely nice, vely nice, vely



pretty, me no sabby." Another day when Ah Pan was not on guard, I climbed to the sluice box for watering the garden. There was a sort of style where one had to step over the swift running water, without falling in. However, with Alice following, she missed her step and in she went, luckily with her head upstream. I tried to lift her out but could not, so I called for help and everyone came running. In minutes she was lifted out, unhurt, but very wet. They tried to say that I pushed her in and that she might have drowned, only Pa said, "I believe you", although no one else did, which seemed to leave me in disgrace for days. Why would I push my little sister into the sluice box? Oh the idiosyncrasies of childhood!

Grace, one of my older sisters, was always wanting to ride her little "Dolly", a little grey pony which had never been broken. One time while standing by the corral fence, and seeing her little Dolly half asleep, she climbed on the fence and slipped down on the horse's back and away they went. Poor little Grace arrived home in a dreadful state, her hair full of dust from the corral, tears streaming down her cheeks. She rushed to the table and shouted, "Ma Ma, Pa Pa, I got on Dolly and she bucked and she jumped and threw me into a cow puddy". They were just sitting down to dinner with Aunt Jane and Uncle Edgar and their guests, so someone took her in a hurry to a far kitchen for repairs, where we small children always ate our meals, when there was company, except at Christmas, then we all dined together.

Pa gave Harry a beautifully marked buckskin pony, with a black stripe running down his back from mane to tail. How proud he was riding about on "Dasher" his first ride alone and on his very own horse. I remember running along beside him looking up and thinking him a veritable hero. As we were so near in age, Harry and I were always into some kind

of mischief and he would do mischievous things to me, especially by teasing me unmercifully. Harry also loved to fish, and caught a great many of them too, even with a bent pin, grasshopper attached for bait and a little rock attached to the line for a sinker. He was really a clever little boy in his own way. I always went along to carry the hoppers, in a small tin can, also the fish strung on a crotched willow stick. I had to dip them into the water every so often to keep them fresh. Ah Pan sometimes watched us saying, "You catchie fish, me no sabby pin, me got good hook, catchum lots of fish", shaking his head and saying, "no sabby pin", ha! ha!

One of our visitors from Granite Creek was Mrs. Jessie Hunter, who often came with her sister Harriet. Mrs. Hunter rose to sing for us (she had a most powerful voice) The Canadian Boat Song:

*Row brother row,  
The stream runs fast  
The rapids are near, and  
Daylight is past,  
As soon as the woods on the shore look dim,  
We will sing at St. Ann's our parting hymn.*

I rose with her thinking I could sing too, imitating her voice, I shouted, "Row brothers" but that was as far as I got, being severely chastized, I was banished from the room, mortified! With that she flumped down, unable to continue. While being typically Victorian, she was a kind and thoughtful friend through her lifetime. Her husband Hugh, though seemingly very obedient, sometimes slipped over the traces, being forbidden to smoke, drink or any of those vile vices and when her back was turned was not the meek mild lamb he seemed, for he dearly loved to smoke. The old fence dividing



our homes was a very convenient hiding place for his makings (hand rolled cigarettes), which we children soon discovered, much to his annoyance. His misdemeanour was not revealed by us, for a bag of candies kept in his pocket persuaded us not to tell his secret. Many, many years later at the graveside service for my mother, in the family cemetery, who should be standing at my side but Mrs. Hunter, who sadly said, "I wish that we could be buried here too."

Aunt Jane and Uncle Edgar often visited us in summer and Uncle Edgar brought guests for hunting, fishing, etcetera. Intrigued by their preparations, we decided to go along by keeping at a safe distance so as not be seen, so we thought, but Uncle looking back, saw us and told us to go home at once. We turned back but found we had forgotten the way. Finally following an old log fence, of which the bark had fallen off and lay on the ground, we started back. Thinking we heard something, we put our ears to the ground to listen, and sure enough, a rider was coming up the trail. Quickly, we crawled under the bark, hoping to be unseen, but the Indian rider came along and suddenly stopped. There was a silence for seconds and then peals of laughter and a voice said, "come out, I can see your feet, stop hiding your head like a bird". We crawled out, he still laughing, stooped, picked up Alice and placed her in front of him in the saddle, then rode off leaving me to run behind like a puppy. Thus we got home with my face stained with tears, while Alice smiled with glee.

One summer, Uncle Dewdney and a partner, Mr. Springett, bought the lower field from Ma to start the townsite of Allison. Rich ore had been found on Copper Mountain, ten or twelve miles above Voights Camp and the Sunset Mines went into operation. Uncle and Mr. Springett thought there would be a real mining boom at Copper Mountain and thinking that Allison would be the main

centre, had a bridge built crossing the river and a road to Copper Mountain. They then built a large hotel and two cottages, hoping their investment would be more than profitable. Copper Mountain was not a successful venture as there was not proper equipment available for that kind of mining. Uncle and his partner gave up their business speculation and returned to Victoria. Since then, the property was sold several times and is now the home of Harold Allison.

Pa, at one time, had given Mr. Sands some property on which he built a cabin calling it 'The rats rest'. (at that time the rats were numerous). We children often waded across the river to visit 'the rat's rest' and were delighted to browse through the many fascinating Ictas (a Chinook word for 'small treasures') on the shelves. There was a bridge built across the Tulameen river for the convenience of the travellers and settlers. The construction of the bridge was rather flimsy as there were two stringers with boards across. Most people on horseback preferred to cross the river below the bridge. This was the beginning of Princeton.

Mr. Charles Thomas became one of the first store keepers and he built a small log cabin which he used as a store. About this time, Mr. Cook moved from Granite Creek and built a store a short distance from Mr. Thomas. His manager, Mr. Webb, was always teasing us children, so to get even with him, we put a dead skunk into a sack, and along with our dog went to the store. Mr. Webb thought the scent came from the dog, who was then quickly put out. While Mr. Webb was absent in the back of the store, I slipped open the oven door of a new stove and deposited the wretched skunk, we then fled. Some days later, an angry Mr. Webb met us at the door of his store, broom in hand, shouting, "Don't dare come in here." Oh the vicissitudes of children! Turning sadly, we



went to Mr. Thomas' store, where we were received with dignity and politeness. We would not dare such tactics there. The great attraction of his store for us, was a large and beautiful doll, which we gazed longingly at, knowing she was too expensive for us to buy, secretly we named her Thomasena. Some time later, the doll was given to my sister Alice, by a friend, much to her awe and great joy. Directly across the street from the Thomas store was a boarding house owned by a Chinese gentleman, Lee Lee, who at one time, had relatives visiting from China, a Mr. and Mrs. Ah Yuen and their two children, Annie and Pattie, and although we were not allowed to play with them, we certainly looked upon them with great curiosity.

The first hotel was built by Mr. Jim Wallace, and for the opening he invited many to Christmas dinner. Ma did not go, but Pa took us children. We thought it was wonderful. In front of me was a large Christmas cake, and at my side was an old gentleman, Sam Pierce, who helped me to a piece of cake, saying, "When you want more just wink at me." Needless to say, I did so several times. Everyone enjoyed the sumptuous supper.

I well remember the day as I lay in the sweet smelling pink and white clover by the river, listening to the drone of the big black and yellow bumble bees as they gathered honey from the flowers, and I never recall having been stung by one. The water was slowly rising, carrying with it bright yellow leaves and other debris and I wondered idly where this was going and how far, not realizing what was happening. Falling asleep, someone came and carried me a safe distance as the water was rising rapidly to where I lay.

Early the next morning we heard Ma calling us to come down, and as we were playing we ignored her call. Finally rushing upstairs she said, "did you not hear me call, the

water is washing under my bedroom." Hurrying downstairs, we found everything in a turmoil. They were removing the household goods and loading them on scows which were made for crossing to safer ground. Looking up, I saw Pa and one of the boys on the roof sawing, hoping to save half of the house, it was useless, as finally the whole house and other farm building were swept away in the rushing water, except for the new barn, which was on higher ground and as yet had not been used. This became our temporary home for some time, and Pa called it the "Temporary". Among the last things to go was the beautiful garden that had been planted for years. Caroline and Rose standing near looking sadly at the garden, had no idea as to what they should do, when suddenly Rose cried, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away". Caroline, seizing a shovel said, "He will not get this one", and digging frantically saved several fruit bushes, but alas, all the rest were lost in the flood. Poor Ah Pan must have wept as he gazed upon the ruins of his effort and work. To me all these happenings were an adventure and my only regret was leaving my pet mice, Mr. Squeak and Mrs. Bigger. That night, we slept as best we could in the new barn, while the river, booming high and filled with trees and debris from the high mountains, swept by in the darkness. Pa and the boys occupied the hayloft, and beds were set up in the main part for Ma and the girls. Later, Pa with hammer and saw took out the stalls and mangers, put up partitions and added a window or two. Before winter he built a temporary sitting room and extra bedrooms. The next spring, he hoped to cut logs for the new house and also start a new garden with the help of a Chinese gardener. When the water receded, Pa had the Chinese resume their work, mining for gold in the river.

In the late 1800's Platinum had no commercial value and as usual we went to pick up the platinum, or useless metals for play gold.



The Chinese miners Pa employed in the diggings, had many strange and fascinating customs, among them, Deadman's Day, which occurred every spring around Chinese New Year. As Pa had given permission for the Chinese to bury their dead in the far field, we enjoyed watching the Chinese go by with their baskets on pingoos, loaded with offerings of food and liquor called Sam Suey. They laid their offerings with the potent stuff on the graves, ultimately, the food was devoured by crows. Where the liquor went we never knew, but the bottles lay on the graves empty. We always looked forward to Chinese New Year, as it was their time of giving. They came with large baskets slung from their pingoos containing such foods as leechie nuts, ginger in jars, Chinese candies and other presents, for us, too numerous to mention.

Sadly enough, Pa never fulfilled his dream of the new home and beautiful garden. The strain, worry and work after the flood had taken its toll and while mending the roof of the 'temporary' in the late fall, Pa sustained chills and fever from the cold and wet, and took to his bed. Two of the elder boys were sent in search of a doctor in the small towns along the Fraser River, but in those days doctors were not readily available and the boys had to return alone. A short time later, a doctor, hearing that the young Allison boys were in search of one, took the long ride over the pass to the Similkameen. He found Pa in the last stages of plural pneumonia, which in those days was fatal and he soon died. Unfortunately, the name of this brave doctor has been lost in the passing of time.

Kind Jessie Hunter, knowing that Pa was so very ill, had taken Alice and I to her home in Granite Creek. We really enjoyed the comforts of her home but were anxious to play with the Cook Children. Mrs. Hunter had a falling out with Mrs. Cook, so would not allow us to go there, and looking



longingly in their direction, said, "Well Ma likes them", but Jessie Hunter was adamant, so we played alone. One day, Carry arrived and said bluntly, "Pa is dead and you will never see him again." I cried saying, "Yes I will, someday I will see Pa again!" The next year Ma hired a Mr. Martin who had lately come to the country to build our new log home, of nine rooms. It seemed quite a large house to us, after living in the "Temporary".

An event which stands out in my memory before leaving home for the first time, was the New Year's ball Ma gave as a house warming and to celebrate the turn of the century.

Harry and I being near of age were dressed as "Two Little Girls in Blue". Our dresses were of pale blue satin. Harry, in his hurry dressing, and forgetting to remove his "hitch boots", as we called them, almost went downstairs before he noticed, but managed to quickly change to a pair of slippers. My favourite partner was a young doctor, Harry Whillans, who was over six feet tall. You can imagine how we looked for I was very small. Our favourite dance being the varsauvenna, the words and tune I still remember, though it is over eighty years ago.

*Put your foot down,  
Put your foot down,  
Put your foot down right there,  
Don't you see my new shoes,  
Don't you see my new shoes,  
Don't you see my new shoes, etcetera.*

Oh what a wonderful time we had!

In the kitchen, two Chinese cooks Ma hired for the occasion were serving. Harry and I slipped in to look at the table which was set with snow white linen, glassware and

The Chinese miners Pa employed in the diggings, had many strange and fascinating customs, among them, Deadman's Day, which occurred every spring around Chinese New Year. As Pa had given permission for the Chinese to bury their dead in the far field, we enjoyed watching the Chinese go by with their baskets on pingoos, loaded with offerings of food and liquor called Sam Suey. They laid their offerings with the potent stuff on the graves, ultimately, the food was devoured by crows. Where the liquor went we never knew, but the bottles lay on the graves empty. We always looked forward to Chinese New Year, as it was their time of giving. They came with large baskets slung from their pingoos containing such foods as leechie nuts, ginger in jars, Chinese candies and other presents, for us, too numerous to mention.

Sadly enough, Pa never fulfilled his dream of the new home and beautiful garden. The strain, worry and work after the flood had taken its toll and while mending the roof of the 'temporary' in the late fall, Pa sustained chills and fever from the cold and wet, and took to his bed. Two of the elder boys were sent in search of a doctor in the small towns along the Fraser River, but in those days doctors were not readily available and the boys had to return alone. A short time later, a doctor, hearing that the young Allison boys were in search of one, took the long ride over the pass to the Similkameen. He found Pa in the last stages of plural pneumonia, which in those days was fatal and he soon died. Unfortunately, the name of this brave doctor has been lost in the passing of time.

Kind Jessie Hunter, knowing that Pa was so very ill, had taken Alice and I to her home in Granite Creek. We really enjoyed the comforts of her home but were anxious to play with the Cook Children. Mrs. Hunter had a falling out with Mrs. Cook, so would not allow us to go there, and looking

longingly in their direction, said, "Well Ma likes them", but Jessie Hunter was adamant, so we played alone. One day, Carry arrived and said bluntly, "Pa is dead and you will never see him again." I cried saying, "Yes I will, someday I will see Pa again!" The next year Ma hired a Mr. Martin who had lately come to the country to build our new log home, of nine rooms. It seemed quite a large house to us, after living in the "Temporary".

An event which stands out in my memory before leaving home for the first time, was the New Year's ball Ma gave as a house warming and to celebrate the turn of the century.

Harry and I being near of age were dressed as "Two Little Girls in Blue". Our dresses were of pale blue satin. Harry, in his hurry dressing, and forgetting to remove his "hitch boots", as we called them, almost went downstairs before he noticed, but managed to quickly change to a pair of slippers. My favourite partner was a young doctor, Harry Whillans, who was over six feet tall. You can imagine how we looked for I was very small. Our favourite dance being the varsauvenna, the words and tune I still remember, though it is over eighty years ago.

*Put your foot down,  
Put your foot down,  
Put your foot down right there,  
Don't you see my new shoes,  
Don't you see my new shoes,  
Don't you see my new shoes, etcetera.*

Oh what a wonderful time we had!

In the kitchen, two Chinese cooks Ma hired for the occasion were serving. Harry and I slipped in to look at the table which was set with snow white linen, glassware and



silver, roasted turkeys and all the trimmings. It was beautiful. There were many strange costumes, Dr. Whillans being dressed as Uncle Sam. An account of this New Year's social event was printed in the Similkameen Star, January 1901, as follows:

### A New Year Masque Ball

A large and most jolly combination of merry makers congregated early on New Year's Eve, at Mrs. S.L. Allison's home, in response to invitations to a ball masque. Great preparations had been made to welcome the visitors in right royal style, and that it was successful, was evident on every hand, by those present. Many were gorgeously and fantastically arrayed, gallants with their equally mysteriously dressed lady companions who vied with each other in their attempt at fun making frolics. After keeping everyone on the qui vive, as to who's who, until the old year and old century was waning, the guests were bid unmask, to welcome in the coming year and new century. A most stimulating meal was served. This was followed by a short conversational spell after which the dance continued until the wee hours of the morning. That the evening was a great success, goes without saying, and will long be remembered by those who attended. Those who were masked were as follows:

Mrs. Richter	<i>Dancing Girl</i>
Mrs. Bell	<i>Old Mother Hubbard</i>
Miss Elsie Haegerman	<i>Night</i>
Miss Emil Haegerman	<i>Queen of Hearts</i>
Miss Minnie Haegerman	<i>Winter</i>
Miss Eva Woodward	<i>Popcorn</i>
Miss Carrie Allison	<i>Grecian Lady</i>

Miss Louisa Allison	<i>An Old Maid</i>
Miss Angela and	<i>Two Little Girls</i>
Master Harry Allison	<i>In Blue</i>
Mrs. Lawrence	<i>School Girl</i>
Mrs. Norman	<i>A Coloured Lady</i>
Mrs. Schlisler	<i>School Girl</i>
Mrs. Ed Allison	<i>A Bride</i>
Miss Alice Allison	<i>Imp</i>
Mrs. Schlisler	<i>Sailor</i>
Mr. E. Thomas	<i>Black &amp; White</i>
Mr. B. Thomas	<i>Poker Hand</i>
Mr. W. Thomas	<i>A Pretty Girl</i>
Mr. B. Irvin	<i>Clown</i>
Mr. Lawrence	<i>Clown</i>
Dr. H.A. Whillans	<i>Uncle Sam</i>
Mr. George Allison	<i>English Squire</i>
Mr. Alfred Allison	<i>Rebecca Brown</i>
Mr. Charles Richter	<i>English Dude</i>
Mr. Arthu D. Hill	<i>Shirt Waist Man</i>
Mr. Victor Ryder	<i>Fairy</i>
Mr. H. Webb	<i>Spanish Cavalier</i>
Mr. Ernest Woodward	<i>Similkameen Star</i>
Mr. W.S. Wilson	<i>Sweet Sixteen</i>

Those who were unmasked were:

Mr. and Mrs. Hunter  
 Mr. and Mrs. Murdock  
 Mr. and Mrs. Haegerman  
 Mr. and Mrs. Harris  
 Mr. and Mrs. Hardwick  
 Mr. and Mrs. A. Aldrich  
 Mr. and Mrs. Johnson

Mrs. Allison  
Miss Dundass  
Messrs. E. and W. Allison  
Jude Murphy  
F. Aldrich  
W. Knight  
E. Price  
D. Ross  
C. Thomas  
Jas. Wallace  
A. Bell  
J. Budd and G. McAlpine.

Due to the fact that there were no schools in the area, it was decided I should go to Vananda to my sister Rose, as a school was available there. It was the first time I was to be away from home or to cross over the blue mountains that separated us from civilization. I often wondered what lay beyond, now I was soon to know. I was going to a married sister, who with her husband, a mining engineer, was living in a new mining district on Texada Island. My brother, Harry who was twelve and Alfred, eighteen, were to take me to Rose, in Hope, a little town on the Fraser River, where she would take me by train and then boat to Vananda. Having been told many times of the wonderous things over the mountains, cities, ships, the ocean and the great Fraser River, where men mined and a railway that crossed the continent, wound along its banks, this all seemed like a fairy tale to me. I watched with excitement, the preparation for the journey. My clothes were folded into a clean, white flour sack in lieu of a suitcase, to be put on top of the pack horses with the equipment, food, tent, blankets, axes and a shovel. Alf carried a gun strapped to his saddle. To my sorrow, I had to



ride side saddle, very uncomfortable for a child as I was accustomed to a Mexican saddle or bare back with a circingle, which would have been preferable.

Leaving home early in the morning, we crossed the ford, over a long flat and up the hills into the timber of tall white pines, the thick timber grass was dotted with flowers, tiger lilies, ragged Robins, etcetera. It was beautiful along the trail and I wanted so much to get off and pick the flowers, but the boys said there would be others where we would camp.

We usually took the time of day from the sun and when it was directly overhead it was noon, time to rest, water the horses and have a bite to eat. At the end of the day we made camp along the trail at "Powder Camp". It had been a never ending day and a long, long ride, as I had never ridden that far before,—and oh that miserable side saddle! Starting out early the next morning, we continued on and once more were climbing up the trail which was steep in places, but better than jogging along the level, bouncing in the saddle. The boys insisted that I be 'Bell Boy' and ride ahead of the pack horses, which followed right behind. All went well until we climbed up on top of the summit. The trail was gone, and only a vast field of snow up to the saddle girths appeared, so I turned back in dismay shouting, "which way", they shouted back "go on right ahead". Floundering in the deep snow we were finally on the trail again; only now it was downhill. What I did not like was the continual jogging as I bounced about in the saddle with a pain in my side. I did not mention this as I would have been called a baby had I complained. At the end of the day we dropped down to a lovely little flat covered with clover and beautiful tall cedars, limbs swaying in the breeze, and beside a crystal clear stream, the boys made camp. As I climbed down from my horse, I was stiff and felt as though I had been thoroughly spanked after bouncing up and down all day.

Harry looked after the horses while Alf cooked supper, presently we were ready to eat, all being famished. I washed my face and hands in the ice cold water of the creek and the boys said I'd just given it a 'lick and a promise' which was more likely true. When we finished supper, it still being daylight the boys took fish poles and a twenty-two, leaving me to wash the dishes and pile wood on the campfire. Coming back at dusk, they had a string of fish and a couple of blue grouse which we had the next day.

They spread the tent with boughs and we took our blankets and rolled up for the night. I heard Harry who was nervous saying, "Alf what is that noise in the bush?", but Alf only replied, "cover up your head and go to sleep." I was a bit nervous myself, what with bear stories we had been told, of Sasquatch or big men of the mountain and the Chinamen's talk of the "debblovs", they had seen on the trail. Of course it was night time and one always thinks of these things at night. However, I don't think any of us were long in falling asleep. Morning came all too soon, I was still tired and stiff. After another 'lick and promise' in the creek, we had breakfast. Now ready to continue the most dangerous part of the journey, I was frightened, for I knew ahead was the Skagit Bluff, one heard so much about, high up above the now modern highway. The trail was so narrow, on one side the packs scraped along the cliff and on the other side a sheer drop off far down to the bottom, where the Skagit River looked like a tiny white ribbon. I kept asking when will we come to the Skagit Bluffs, but they only laughed and said, "not yet, go on!" Alf caught up and passed me riding just ahead and looking back once in awhile, smiling, while Harry rode immediately behind me with the pack horses trailing him. they rode close and hurried me along, and kept going so I did not have time to look around. finally we zigzagged



down off the mountain and I said, "but when do we come to the Skagit Bluffs?" They both laughed and said, "you just crossed over them!"

Camping for the night at Lake House beside an old windowless cabin, which, needless to say, we did not use, after being told of a young man who was left to care for a number of horses, till his partners returned from Hope. He told of hearing something tramping around outside, thinking it was a big bear, as the tramping ceased when daylight came, went outside and found not bear tracks, but huge man like foot prints. In terror he fled; leaving the horses behind. Meeting his partners on the trail, he told of his experience and they decided it must have been a Sasquatch, and said he was lucky there were no windows. Although he was still shaken, together they went back to gather their horses.

Our horses were turned into the lush meadow for the night, and we could hear the tinkling of the bells, which was a comforting sound. Before leaving in the morning, Alf passed me a bannock and a can of salmon, saying, "make sandwiches". Instead of cutting slices, I cut it in two pieces and spread the salmon on. At noon, being hungry, Alf said, "where is the lunch", and opening a sack took out what should have been sandwiches only to find two huge pieces. He said in dismay, "how do you expect us to eat that," and with an impolite exclamation, threw it away. We went without lunch, still having a long ride to Hope.

After the long, tiring, tedious journey we arrived at Aunt Fannie's who met us at the door saying, "just in time to help get supper." Get supper, I thought. Someone said "get off your horse," but I couldn't move as I was stiff and sore. One of the boys then lifted me down. I could hardly stand, let alone peel vegetables, as all I wanted to do was lie down and



die! However, after supper things looked a little brighter. Rose and Aunt Fanny showed me where I was to sleep, which I did, soundly. I had to change my clothes from the flour sack to a suitcase which Rose brought, saying that it would never do to take a flour sack on the train or into Vancouver.

The next morning we were to leave by train and were ferried over the river in a small boat by Mr. Yates. The river seemed so large that the small boat made one feel like a chip on the water. As I had never seen a train, I was excited and quite curious. Hearing the whistle and then seeing the train thundering around the bend, frightened me, as it seemed unbelievable that it would be carrying us to Vancouver. Watching many people laughing and boarding the train gave me courage to follow. After what seemed a very long time, we arrived in Vancouver and were met by Beatrice who went with us to the boat, "The Comox." We had dinner on the boat, and sitting beside me was a lady who kept nudging me saying, "pass the programme". I asked Rose what she meant and was told 'the menu', which I promptly passed. Towards evening we arrived and Mr. Sands, Rose's husband met us and carried Dick their son and a suitcase to the house. I thought, as we trudged along, how much easier to carry a flour sack on my back than lugging the suitcase. After such an exciting and bewildering trip, I slept the sleep of the 'just'.

I was sent to a private school for a short time, but was soon told that the teacher was an undesirable, because of her personal habits, which left much to be desired, so said my sister. She seemed like a nice person and I was sorry to tell her I was leaving. I did not go back to school that year, but stayed in Vananda until the next summer when I went back across the mountains to my home. Oh that tedious journey!

During my stay at Texada with Rose and her husband, one

of the most intriguing sights to me as a child from the mountains, was the vast and mysterious sea with tides coming and going, leaving behind many curious, and to me completely, new and strange creatures. I used to love to walk along the beach at low tide and examine the starfish and jelly-like creatures, and the long strands of seaweed called kelp, left by the retreating waters.

One day while rounding the curve in the rocky shoreline at low tide, I came upon a most interesting and attractive sight. The pounding surf over many, many years, had worn a hole or cave in the solid rock. On entering, I found a floor of smooth seawashed sand, covered with the most interesting and easily, the biggest Starfish I had yet seen! There were so many beautiful shells and interesting stones and driftwood, that childlike, I forgot entirely about the returning tide, until the roar of it and water swirling around my feet told me I had overstayed my time! Too late, I ran to the cave entrance and looking back across the way I had come, knew it was too deep and rough to return, so reentering the cave, crawled as far back as possible. The floor began to slope upwards and as the water poured in I kept clawing my way back and up, saying my prayers all the while and wishing I had been more watchful. As the way seemed so steep and slippery, I was becoming doubtful of ever getting out alive, when a far glimmer of sky showed up the steep way, and I frantically dragged myself up and suddenly, like a miracle, there was the open air at the top of a small hill, and I was out! When I arrived home and told my story, sister Rose would not believe me, until her husband had later gone and confirmed the cave's existence.

One summer Uncle Edgar came for a visit and said that they would like to take one of the little girls to live with them and go to school, and as I was the oldest, he chose me. Aunt



Jane seemed very pleased so wrote Ma saying, "don't worry about her clothes, I have so many good things that can be made over." That solved the clothing problem. I was to cross the mountains with the boys, Uncle and Freda would meet me in Hope. (Freda had been brought up by the Dewdneys as she had lived with them since being a small child). Of course, we would stay with Aunt Fanny who always made us welcome. Aunt Fanny Lawrence was uncle's sister.

As usual, my few requirements were packed in flour sacks for the journey. A young Swedish girl who was going to Seattle to be married came along too, a Miss Ellen Matson, carrying her trousseau in flour sacks. They rode on top of the packs and printed on one sack was Five Roses and on the other Royal Household, in brightly coloured letters (clean bleached flour sacks found many uses in those days, including undergarments and children's clothing). It was a jolly party with some of the girls going along too. Stopping at the end of day, we made camp, pitched tents, laid beds and then had supper, for we were ravenous by this time. After the dishes were washed and wood was gathered for the campfire, we sat around while Ellen sang for us in her sweet voice, one of her ballads, "The Butchers Boy". After these many years I still remember some of the words which went something like this:

*There is a town where he did dwell  
A Butchers boy I loved so well  
He courted me my heart away  
And now with me, he will not stay.  
There is an Inn in that same town  
Where my true love goes and sits him down  
He takes a strange girl on his knee  
And tells to her what he don't tell me*



*Oh mother, mother, you do not know  
Because she has more Gold than I  
Her Gold will melt, her silver fly  
And soon she'll be as poor as I  
But she hanged herself for the Butchers Boy  
He took a knife and cut her down  
And on her breast these words he found,  
'Place on my grave a turtle dove  
To certify I died for love'.*

That evening, Ellen opened her bags and showed us some of her beautiful trousseau which was hand done, trimmed with crocheted lace. We loathed to go to bed, as it was such a beautiful evening, and as the stars shone brightly, we pointed out Orion's belt and many other beautiful constellations. Tomorrow was another day and so off to bed we went, only to sleep soundly. We were up bright and early, cheerful as ever and ready for bacon, bannock and coffee, before the long ride ahead. We had to make Hope in good time so as not to delay Uncle, as he always fumed and figited if he were kept waiting. Arriving late in the afternoon, Aunt Fanny met us at the gate with her usual warm welcome, but this time I did not have to peel vegetables as everything was ready and waiting.

The next morning, we were again, rowed across the Fraser River by Mr. Yates. All our bundles loaded into the boat, it was very crowded with our luggage of flour sacks, etcetera. It must have been a sight to behold! We parted with Ellen in Vancouver, she took a cab to a hotel where she disposed of the flour sacks for suitcases and then caught a boat for Seattle. We did not hear of her again, but often wondered how she was and if she remembered the Butcher Boy.

What a long day it had been after leaving Hope so very

early in the morning. There were many stops and one could see faint coal oil or gas lamps lit in the homes as we passed along. There was no electricity in those days.

Arriving in Vancouver, we went directly to the boat, but did not have dinner aboard because Uncle said Aunt Jane would have supper ready for us. It was getting dusk and as we neared Victoria, Uncle and Freda pointed out the lights to me, which were beautiful for I had never seen anything like them, they seemed to be floating in the air. Nearing the dock, which was a bewildering maze of lights, we passed under the bridge, crossing from Government Street to the Parliament buildings. Rows of horsedrawn cabs were waiting and I shall never forget the proud horses that stood so straight, the sound of shod feet on the pavement as they trotted briskly along. It all seemed like magic. Someone said, "Mr. Dewdney", and we were in the cab.

We were driven to their home 'EdgeHill' on Rockland Avenue, they were no longer living in Government House since Uncle had recently retired as Governor of B.C. Aunt Jane was waiting to receive us and had prepared a light supper, herself, as it was Ging, the cook's day off. "As it is so late, you will meet your Grandmother, Ging and your cousins tomorrow," she said. My cousins, I thought! The next morning I was taken to be introduced to my cousins, and to say the least a little surprised I was, when they turned out to be two parrots, a turtle and two dogs. One of the parrots, Roseabella, was a very gentle little bird (which I liked very much), always wanted her head scratched and would say, "Rosie wants a scratch", by bowing her head down and ruffling her feathers. Peter, however, was a horrible bird, who just screeched at us but left alone with Ging would speak Chinese, sing sweetly and be very gentle for him. Auntie must have loved her pets, but I certainly did not care to have them referred to as my cousins!



Later I met my grandmother, a sweet, stately, dignified lady and we became very good friends. She always wore beautiful Honitan Lace caps, lovely white shawls and queenly black dresses. I was only twelve and for my sister and I it was a home of elderly people, Aunt Jane and Uncle Edgar being in their sixties and seventies and grandmother in her nineties. It was lonely at first for a child taken from a large family of noisy boys and girls.

Happily, school took up a great part of my time and as the days passed, I became less lonely and accustomed to the quiet orderly home, whose routine seldom changed. During my long stay with Auntie and Uncle, I went to Central School on Yates Street, which was a public school for girls only. I moved ahead rapidly, having wonderful teachers who were always willing to give me a hand with my studies, if needed.

Aunt Jane having no children of her own, was very strict, she believed in the old adage, "children should be seen but not heard". One must always be dignified, correct in manners and speech, a perfect lady at all times. Life was filled with do's and dont's (do and do not). I surely had much to learn!

Uncle had invited a gentleman to dinner, and he was a very nice person who had travelled a great deal. He was telling us about experiences in Australia and listening as he told of visiting a friend, Miss Churnsides, I burst out in loud laughter, as I was so amused by her name. I knew at once of my terrible blunder, for there was dead silence, from that moment on I did not exist. Dinner over, I escaped to my room in safety, still terrified of what would face me tomorrow.

Meeting Aunt Jane in the hall, next morning, with freezing dignity she said, "Uncle wishes to see you in his office at once!" Going to his office, I said, "You wanted to



see me Uncle'?" With his back turned, in a gruff tone he replied, "why did you insult my guest?" I replied that I had never heard of such a peculiar name as Miss Churnsides and could not contain my laughter. Uncle soon forgot my misdemeanour, but Aunt Jane who seemed to have forgiven me, never let me forget. In my humiliation, I never felt like laughing again. The motto was, "good manners are the key to good society."

Poor Aunt Jane had much to contend with, we did not know then that she was suffering from a malady which in four years, took her life. She was truly a spartan in her sufferings. Uncle writing to Ma told how ill Aunt Jane and Grannie were and they sent for me to come at once. Quickly packing my suitcases, (no flour sacks this time) for my journey home. I hurried downstairs so as not to keep Uncle and Freda waiting, little Aunt Jane was standing by the clock in the hall, and going to her she said, "Do not keep Uncle waiting, he is already at the gate, but Auntie, I want to kiss you goodbye and tell you how much I appreciate all you have done for me." She bursting into tears, holding me for a moment and giving me a kiss, said, "You will come back Angelina when I am well again, and go to normal school and become a teacher." Giving me a little push I fled down the long hall past Grannies' room where she was too ill to see me, on to the kitchen saying, "Ging, I am going away, I came to say goodbye," he looked very sad and said, "old lady very sick," I said "yes Ging, she is very ill and will go soon. We have been good friends and I will miss you." I was sure there were tears in his eyes as he took both my hands and said, "Goodbye Miss Sangie." On my way, I forgot my cousins, Tiny the dog and turtle upon the rock.

Shortly after arriving home, Uncle sent word that both Aunt Jane and Grannie had passed away, Grannie going first. It was a great sorrow to all of us especially Ma.

After years of living in Victoria, coming back to the Upper country seemed very strange and I was lost without the regular routine, but soon became accustomed to the old ways.

\* \* \* \* \*

*It stood in the hall  
An ancient antique,  
Oh, the tales it could tell  
Could it only but speak.*

*The sound of its chimes,  
Like a far distant bell,  
Peeling softly at midnight  
No secrets would tell!*

More than 80 years ago, my Aunt Jane, while visiting an old antique shop in London, saw the clock, its pendulum swayed rhythmically to and fro. There seemed nothing unusual about it, until turning away, a soft whirring sound drew her attention, and as she gazed at its face, seemed, almost to possess a personality and a faint fragrance of violets emanated from its very heart. Was it something in the mechanism, or perhaps a loose spring? The old gentleman, who was standing near, shook his head sadly, "It has hung there for many long years, keeping perfect time, waiting only for the right one to claim it. Fascinated, she drew away, and as she left the shop, he said with a smile, "You will return." Yes, she would return, if only to learn its history and who had left it there. Now somehow it seemed familiar as if in some far away and distant past, she had looked upon its face.

Many happy days were spent with Uncle Edgar, visiting



friends and relatives, till at last, the time of their departure drew near. the clock was uppermost in her mind. Once more she found herself in the shop, standing before it, more fascinated than ever, as the soft whirring sound died away and the fragrance of violets again filled the air. A voice spoke beside her as the old gentleman said, "You have come for the clock lady". Impulsively, opening her purse, she bought the clock, bought and brought it back to Canada, where it hung in the great hall of her home, among her treasured possessions, transplanted to a new world, still hugging its ancient secrets to its bosom.

Often, on returning home in the afternoon there was no-one there but Grandma, in her room and the cook in the kitchen. Aunt Jane, Uncle Edgar and Freda were out a great deal and it seemed very quiet and still, as I sat with my books in the dining room. The endless ticking of the clock sounded very loud and if I happened to pass by, heard a soft whirring sound. As time went by, I became accustomed to the quietness and gave no heed to the clock other than to tell the time of day.

It was after my fifteenth birthday, Grandma sustained a stroke and was confined to her room for a year. It became necessary for her to have a trained nurse, who lived in the home, but had her days off. At such times, my sister took charge and slept on a cot in grandmother's room. I usually sat with her for an hour after my studies were over, as she seemed very lonely.

One afternoon going to her room, I paused to look at the time. To my astonishment, I felt that someone was standing near and with a rustle of silken garments, moved aside to let me pass, a faint fragrance of violets was in the air. I saw nothing, but the presence of a woman was unmistakable. This occurrence was repeated several times, but always when I



was alone. Fearing ridicule, I never spoke of it. could it possibly be my imagination?—and just when I began to wonder if it was, it would occur again, more convincingly than ever.

One night, grandmother awakened my sister asking for a drink of water. Elfreda, taking a glass, stole down the passage toward the bathroom. Looking up she saw, standing before the clock, a figure in white, hands clasped behind its head, gazing intently at its face. Thinking it was I that came downstairs, said in a loud scolding whisper, "What are you doing there child? Go back to bed at once." Slowly, the figure turned, dropped its arms with a great sigh and as it glided towards her, she saw that it was not I, but a tall lovely lady in white, shimmering and transparent. With a gasp of horror, she dropped the glass and fled to grandmother's room, never did she venture out at night again! Who was the lovely lady? Why did she stand waiting at the clock?

I often wondered, perhaps a poor earth bound spirit, who, in the long ago had waited for a loved one, a lover or husband, who never returned! Or perhaps some dreadful catastrophe was about to happen and she waited the dreaded hour? or did she come as a harbinger of sorrow, for grandmother, taking a second stroke, passed away at the age of 97. My Aunt Jane who had been ill for the past year, followed her within a month. the home was broken up, the household goods sold at auction—who bought the clock?—I cannot say, or if it is still in existence with the lovely lady.

My childhood still lives vividly in my memory and I have written this story for my children, grand children and great, great grandchildren, hoping it will bring them pleasure and an insight into the changing times and way of life.

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*(These works were completed by my mother in her 90th year.*

*—Richard McDiarmid)*

Henry McDiarmid's pack train on forestry patrol.



Tarn Lake, where the body of Alex George was hidden, submerged, by the Similkameen Indians.



The old church built by the fathers below Hedley.

The following pages are a collection of Native Legends and Anecdotes that stand out in my memory, from those early times, which I have put into story form and verse. They were related many times in the family circle of a Winter evening, around the stove, or perhaps on a starry, summer night in the High Country, as we sat around the campfire with the slight sigh of wind in the Pine tops and the occasional muffled jingle of a horse bell from the hobbled stock, watching small sparks ascend and disappear from the fire into the clear night air.

I present them to you, as I heard them, in the hopes that some of the magic of those far off times will come down to you, and perhaps a touch of tragedy softened by humour to attest to our real and human qualities.

—Aurelia Angela Allison McDiarmid



## Meet Mr. Edwards

We have heard much of the notorious train robbers, 'Bill Miner' and 'Shorty Dunn', the desperados who robbed the C.P.R. train in B.C. about 1906 or 7, and prior robberies in the U.S.A.. But who has heard, or knows of Mr. George Edwards, an old Southern gentleman, who came to Princeton the year previous, to visit a Mr. Jack Budd, his boyhood friend from Georgia, whom he had not seen for many years. Planning to spend the winter with him, he became acquainted with, and was well liked by many citizens of Princeton.

We first met Mr. Edwards, one cold and wintery day. Ambling up the snow drifted road, came a large white mule. On his back was the fur clad figure of an old man, or so he seemed, what with the frost clinging to his drooping moustache. Alighting at the door, he came forward, hat in hand, (a stetson) bowing graciously, said with a distinct Southern accent, "my name is Edwards, George Edwards, a friend of Mr. Jack Budd, who asked me to call, as I was passing this way." As it was very cold, my mother asked him in for a cup of tea. Accepting gratefully, he chatted with my mother while my sister and I made tea. He spoke of current events and seemed to be well informed and well read. He said he was not staying long, but was returning in the spring, to Mexico, where he had rich mines. Among other things, his father owned a large plantation in Georgia, but he had left home at sixteen, acquired a partner, and went prospecting, which he followed the greater part of his life, with 'rich rewards'—the mines in Mexico, being his latest. As we were

quite young, he seemed old to us, judging him to be in his 60's, and of a kindly and courteous disposition. That winter he often stopped in for his cup of tea as he passed our home on his way to town, we also met him at dances and parties given in the private homes, where he seemed to be a welcome guest. Few old-timers could say that they had not danced with Mr. Edwards.

On one occasion, he asked my mother if he might give Alice and I dancing lessons. Thinking to discourage him without giving undue offence, we explained that we had no music. He at once overcame that difficulty by saying, "But I can Sing", and he danced with first one, then the other, singing, "lightelty, tightelty, tightelty, tie" to the tune of "Oh where, oh where has my little dog gone", while my mother, a dignified chaperone sat very upright in her chair. It all seemed so ridiculous, it was hard to keep a serious face and the moment Mr. Edwards was gone, we gave way to gales of laughter, but we did learn to waltz! The old gentleman was quite proud of our achievements, and certainly had patience and a kind heart. I can say that the Mr. Edwards we knew, was a perfect gentleman and we really enjoyed his visits.

Mr. Budd, his friend, lived some miles out on the range where he ranched, and raised some very fine horses, some were of Kentucky stock, I believe. He too, retained the kindly manner and accent of the South. When spring came, we had no more visits from Mr. Edwards, in fact we never saw him again. It was rumoured that he was going back to the States, on another prospecting trip.

I was a small girl when Billy Dunn first came to work for my mother, on our farm. He came well recommended by friends as being honest, diligent and industrious, indeed he was all of that, during the 10 years he was there. Mr. Dunn was an orphan, born John Gorelle. He was very young when

his parents died, and was adopted by a Mr. Dunn, who called him Billy,—‘Billy Dunn’. He was a mild mannered, kindly little man, especially to children, and was quite artistic in his way, drawing and painting and composing recitations, and reciting them for our amusement. ‘The Coyote’ was a special favourite. Bringing forth an animal’s skin for the Coyote, he would lay it out on the floor and shaking a stout club above it, would repeat, or rather shout, the following verses:—

You howling, sneaking, mangy wretch  
Prepare yourself, your time has come,  
The bounty that your scalp will fetch  
Won’t pay for half the damage you have done!  
Crouching there, you look so meek,  
That one would think you mercy, seek.  
I’ll show no mercy, you had none for me  
When you were up to Deviltry!  
You stole my sheep, you mischief you  
And I saw you chase my roan calf too.  
My Thanksgiving turkey, where is he  
You howling imp of misery?  
You ate him, but I wouldn’t care  
If I knew you’d said a Thanksgiving prayer,  
And now you sneaking mangy cub  
I’m going to kill you with this club!

Bang! Bang! Bang!, down would come the club. Several hard whacks would dispatch the coyote. After Mr. Dunn left our farm, he spent the rest of his life trapping and prospecting, until he met up with Mr. Edwards, or rather Bill Miner. No one knew at the time that Edwards and Bill Miner were one and the same. They were all staying at the Budd Ranch.

Billy Dunn had come in from his trapline, and calling at



our house, seemed very upset. My mother asked if he were ill, "No", said he, "but Edwards is trying to persuade me to go with him on a prospecting trip. I don't want to go, but the old man has been so good to me." My mother said, "Well, if you don't want to go, why should you?", never dreaming that the prospecting trip really was, and thought no more about it until, that dreadful train robbery at Ducks, B.C.

Hearing that the fugitives were headed for Five Mile, a posse of young men, including my brothers and a young man named Henry McDiarmid, who later became my husband, were sent from Princeton to guard that pass. Then word came, that the mounties had already apprehended the robbers in their first overnight camp. People were greatly shocked when the names of the train robbers were known. It seemed unbelievable. Especially Dunn, whom we had known for years. Dunn was finally paroled, and stayed and worked in Princeton until his parole was up. Then he went north, where he was drowned, shooting one of the Five finger Rapids of the Yukon River, in a Kayak.

The fate of Edwards is well known. Some people called him a Robin Hood, but to me, his character seemed more like a 'Jekyll and Hyde'. Some say he died in a Georgia jail, others that he lived out his life in a small Alberta town, but it seems the facts are well recorded in American Criminal records and that he did pass his last days in a Southern prison.

## The Earthquake

In the year of 1880 an earthquake occurred near "Chuchuwa", an Indian Village in the Similkameen Valley, badly frightening the Indians, especially the old chiefs who had many wives. It was customary for the chiefs to exchange a wife, one with another, if they were so inclined. They had been warned by the Priests that they must dispense with all but one, otherwise the Great Father or 'Ti-ee', would be very angry and punish them severely.

One old chief, very loathe to part with his wives, thought if he could but hide them, who would be the wiser?

'Chuchuwa', so named by the Indians, has since been changed to 'Hedley' by the white man.

*There once was a beautiful valley,  
No fairer could be seen,  
Where red men dwelt beside a river  
They called 'Similkameen'.*

*The winding trail along its banks  
Few white men ever trod.  
But the Gentle Fathers came  
To teach the red men of our God.*

*Many were the hardships  
Borne by those good men.  
The thankless tasks that they performed,  
Again and yet again.*

*As they strove to guide the darkened souls,  
To impart a ray of light,  
Some would heed and some would not  
But they waged a gallant fight.*

*One old Chief with many wives  
Frowned on good advice,  
He would not part with a single one,  
Though the warning had been thrice.*

*Why should he, when a young white chief,  
His very life at stake  
Settled down with fifty wives,  
On the Shores of the Great Salt Lake?*

*Ah no, he would not give them up  
Could not let them go.  
Hidden from sight of the goodly Priest,  
Who would ever know?*

*And yet, he knew, that Sachalley  
High up in the skies,  
The Great 'Ti-ee' was watching him  
With ever seeing eyes.*

*Watching all the things he did,  
Could read him like a book.  
He did not know which way to turn,  
Which way to even look.*

*At last one night, a thunderous sound  
Awoke him from his dreams.  
Fire flashed on the mountain tops,  
His camp was filled with screams.*



*Huge rocks were hurled down to the valley,  
The very earth was quaking,  
As the Great 'Ti-ee' in righteous wrath,  
His just revenge, was taking.*

*The old Chief stood in the dawning,  
His many wives had fled.  
With the sign of the cross and contrite heart,  
He humbly bowed his head.*

*Straight way to the Fathers  
With his trouble and his pain,  
There he swore to keep their law,  
He would not sin again.*

*But fickle is the heart of man,  
And contrary is his way.  
Of all the many wives he'd had  
Could choose, but one to stay.*

*How could he know which one to choose,  
His old age to sustain.  
Full well he knew, could he but dare,  
He'd choose them all again!*

*But two remained now for his choice,  
One old, one young and fair;  
And with such matchless beauty,  
To her, none could compare.*

*The elder, ever kind and gentle,  
Ever thoughtful of his care.  
The mother of his stalwart sons,  
How could he part with her?*

*Then all at once, loud rumbling came  
And a great rock, there they found  
Had struck the beautiful maiden,  
And pinned her to the ground!*

*It was then, he knew the teachings  
Of the Fathers had been right.  
The Great 'Ti-ee' had punished him,  
Till at last he sought the light.*

## The Blue Lake Legend

This story was told to my mother, Susan Allison, of an Indian runner named Pony, employed by the Hudson's Bay Company. A strange legend, the truth of which cannot be vouched for, but perhaps is the portrayal of the great imagination on the part of Pony. The following is the sum and substance of his story.

In the summer of 1878, travelling from the Thompson Valley, to Nicola, accompanied by a white man, I took a less frequented and shorter route through the hills. The trail was faint, overgrown and rough, but we managed to follow the old blazes on the trees. As we rode along, our horse stumbled over roots and loose stones. At dusk, we came out on an open meadow at the base of a high mountain, where the feed was good, so there beside a stream, we made our camp, loosing the horses to feed, and to prepare our evening meal. As darkness gathered, we built up the fire and lay smoking, listening to the tinkle of the horse bells down in the far end of the meadow, while the horses fed leisurely about. As we dozed, the moon rose over the hill, shedding its rays almost as bright as day. Suddenly, there was a crackling in the underbrush at the far side of the stream and a young Indian staggered into camp, completely exhausted, and sank to the ground in what seemed to be a faint. We quickly administered brandy and hot coffee. Breathless and almost inarticulate, he tried to speak, but wrapping him in warm blankets, we told him to wait until morning, when he would be rested and more able to talk.

By breakfast he was quite revived, and related this strange tale of how he had climbed the mountain, and nearing the



summit, came upon a wierd spot, and a lake where strange unearthly cries of anguish seemed to echo round the cliffs, and the brightness of a blue light above the water made it almost impossible for him to look for more than a few seconds, on its shining surface. The shore was littered with lifeless, human-like forms, hideously distorted and horrible. In terror he turned and fled, not stopping 'till that place was far behind and he saw the glimmer of our campfire down the valley. My partner was inclined to think that it was the imagination of an unbalanced mind, but after repeated questioning, we decided to investigate the truth of his story. We accordingly set out to climb the high mountain.

There was no road but a game trail led up through the timber. In the bright morning sunshine, the story seemed preposterous but we plodded on, stopping many times to drink from the clear streams and rest our feet as we had left our horses in the meadow below. Bright flowers and purple heather grew about us and we were loathe to move on, but the thought that darkness might overtake, hurried us along. We had passed the timberline and were nearing the summit when we came upon a deep hollow or valley. Gazing down into its depths we saw a 'lake' nearly surrounded by his fantastic cliffs. A blue mist hung over the lake and a strange blue light seemed to shimmer and envelope the whole scene. As we made our way, slowly down the steep incline and reached the shore, in the eerie light we saw the strange distorted figures of stone. Some appeared to be children, others dogs and still others, grotesque human forms, while above the lake, on the far side, we found what we took to be a boat of stone, imbedded into the soil.

The white man ridiculed our find, saying it was no more than a curiously shaped stone, but the boy and I persisted in digging under and turning it over, to find that it was, indeed, a hollow stone boat, containing the figures of two

stone men. The stone of which the boat and men were made was smooth and polished. The white man immediately offered us \$10.00 for our find, saying it was not worth more, as a road would have to be made to remove it, otherwise it would be impossible to get out. We would not sell, we DARED not, for surely, a dreadful curse would come upon those who disturbed or desecrated this place of the dead. Dusk was now descending, and cries of more than human anguish arose from out of that mist of blue. In horror we quickly turned and fled.

The Indians said that they had long known and dreaded both mountain and Lake, as there is a dim legend of the past, that once a great city stood where the Lake is now and that it was overwhelmed and its people turned to stone by some Superior Power. Who knows, perhaps someday Someone will stumble upon this strange place. What a marvelous discovery for that Someone!

## The Sasquatch

*In those far off days of old  
Before the Whiteman came  
The Indian had a dreaded foe  
Sasquatch was his name.*

*His stature was of giant size  
Or so the legend ran  
And you scarce could tell from his hairy garb  
If he were bear or man.*

*And lo if one were brave enough  
To gaze into his face  
In that dark and fierce visage  
Human features there could trace.*

*For many years 'twas handed down  
And so the tale grows  
Of the big man of the mountain  
Of the valleys or the snows.*

*In still untrodden places  
Or high up in the mists  
I do believe this very day  
The Sasquatch still exists.*

*Good luck to those who hunt for him  
But this advice I give  
Be not in haste to fire your guns  
He is human, let him live.*



*And to the girls who as lure would go  
This sad tale I'd tell  
How an Indian Maiden wandering lone  
Into sasquatch clutches fell.*

*Despite her struggles and her cries  
He stopped beside a tree  
And there he closed her eyes with pitch  
So the way she could not see.*

*Then taking her upon his back  
For many miles did stride  
Plunge into a mighty river,  
And swam to the other side.*

*Climbed a rugged mountain  
High up to the peaks  
Where the wind blew round its pinnacles  
With gusty moans and shrieks.*

*There he carried her to a cave  
His scarcely conscious prize  
Laid her on a bed of furs  
Took the pitch from off her eyes.*

*Great hairy creatures gathered round  
With curious eyes a gleam  
To greet the Indian Maiden  
Who answered with a scream.*

*For many moons she languished there  
Grown weary, wan and weak  
With longing for her loved ones  
And that they for her might seek.*

*But alas, there were no footprints  
They could not know the way  
Though they did bide in the forest wide  
And sought her night and day.*

*It was then her Sasquatch captor  
Knew that they must part  
For gazing on her sad, pale face  
Pity filled his heart.*

*Once more he closed her eyes with pitch  
So the way she could not see  
Took her close beside her home  
And there he set her free.*

*Never more she wandered forth  
Or ever left her home  
For she knew the fate that lay in wait  
For those who chose to roam.*

## The King Of Mount Frostie

High upon Mt. Frostie, making his way along the ridges, dislodging rocks that went hurtling down the steep slide, came a great silvery bear, his head swaying from side to side, his thick fur, powdered with snow as the first feathery flakes were falling from a leaden sky. Ambling along, seeking the cave of his hibernation, little dreaming that this would be his last long sleep, for in the valley below, was lurking his life long enemy, man. He carried the scars of many fierce battles with his own kind and a great scar on his hind leg, where a bullet had torn its way, crippling him for many weeks. Man, he gave a wide berth, even though he had great strength and courage, and was no coward when challenged.

From the time he came forth from the cave with his mother, a fluffy little ball of fur, rolling in the patches of snow, cuffing at her great bulk, she taught him to seek and find in roots, herbs and berries, his food, always warning him of this strange creature that went upon two legs. Once they had come upon it swimming in a lake and hastily with several hard slaps she drove him into the woods, concealing themselves nearby as their long straight claws prevented their climbing trees, unlike the common bear who took refuge in the thick branches.

As dusk fell they skirted the edge of the lake, their reflections mirrored in its clear depths. On the far side bright fires were glowing and a tempting aroma was wafted on the breeze, he sniffed the air and longed to investigate but the stinging blows of his mother hurried him along as a great din arose, guns were fired, shouting stamping, beating of pans



and every conceivable thing that would make a loud noise for it was an Indian encampment, and this they always did to frighten away grizzly or any bear lurking in the vicinity, for they believed among their many other superstitions, that a grizzly was possessed of an 'Evil Spirit,' of a departed one even their own chiefs, who had passed on. (this I was told by an Indian woman). However, the two bear were soon deep in the woods, the little fellow's heart thumping with fear till distance made them safe and they stopped by a slough to wallow in its murky depth.

Daybreak found them far in the hills walking on the deep soft moss, bright flowers springing up around the white patches of melting snow from which little streams went trickling down the ravines. The sun was high in the heavens as they lay basking drowsily in its warmth until again hunger drove them along, seeking for food, stopping often to tear apart hollow stumps and rotting logs, devouring the plump juicy grubs or rooting out an ant hill for the crawling red ants and their eggs, and foraging for a comb of sweet honey, heedless of the buzzing and swarming bees about them. Sometimes they sought fish in the shallow streams, the little one jumping about, ducking his head in and out and slapping at the water in his excitement.

The long days turned into weeks, the weeks into months. How wonderful had been that first dreamy summer, time seemed limitless, trailing after his mother through meadows and green forests, crossing rushing streams, to at last climb the high mountains, their great snowy peaks far above, glistening pink in the sunset. They feasted on the ripe and abundant berries, mingling with others of their own kind that moved in and out of the bushes, or climbed from patch to patch, their sleek skins shining with health and fatness.

The sunny days began to wane. The berries were all over, a

tang of frost was in the air, the leaves had turned a glorious gold and flaming red, making the world seem bright on the dullest day. A cold wind came from out of the North, the bright leaves fell to the ground like a soft carpet of russet hue, leaving the trees bare, their naked limbs swaying in the breeze. The two bear lingered yet awhile, eating the bright red rosehips and lining their stomachs with the needles of Spruce to sustain them through their long winter sleep.

Taking their time they made their way back to the cave on the high rocky slopes of Mt. Frostie, there to sleep once again through the long winter. Now the sky was overcast and slowly, great soft flakes of snow fell like a blanket, covering up the herbage till the opening of the cave too, was covered, leaving its occupants warm and snug. Thus passed his first of many long summers, fending for himself in fearlessness and freedom, till old age and man, his long feared enemy, put an end to all things for him.

Alas, he had now grown old, his sight was dim, his hearing poor and he did not know that light moccasin clad footsteps followed close in his wake as Cosotasket was seeking out his winter refuge.

Half way up the great slide that lay on the side of the mountain, two huge rocks had come down and wedged at the centre of the slide, their tops coming together to form a cave. A few stunted trees had grown at the entrance. Soft debris covered the ground leaving a depression where the great bear had lain through many winter sleeps. Cosotasket, pausing only to let the old one enter, marking well the spot, turned again to the valley and the lake where the encampment had been. All was deserted and silent, the tribe had gone, leaving only a bush teepee and the cold ashes of their fires. Dusk was coming on, the melancholy cry of a lone loon came from the lake, with a screech of a Shneena, deep in the woods. He



stepped in quickly lighting a fire in the centre, to afford a little heat and boil his kettle for tea. Glancing around, he saw that his few possessions were there, with a store of smoked and dried fish and venison that had been left by the tribe, for was he not their Mountain Chief? Their doctor who had vanquished many an evil Spirit clinging to their loved ones? Word had been sent to him across the mountains to the Skagit, where he had set out his traps, his favourite trapping ground, that yield many marten and other fur bearing animals. They had seen in the soft earth at the crossing of a small creek, the huge tracks of a Callowna that he had now followed to its den, and would later occupy through his long days of fasting, meditation and prayer, high above the valley where storms would rage, snow fall deeply, closing all things in the icy grip of winter. None of these things daunted Cosotasket as he sat beside his fire sharpening a long gleaming knife that he carried in a buckskin sheath, hanging from his waist. This done, he filled his soapstone pipe with kinickinic or Indian tobacco, a pleasant aroma floated about with a soothing affect, and soon he moved out into the open, the snow had ceased. The moon was riding high and a slight breeze blew through the trees. Perhaps the Indian Summer would linger yet awhile as this was mid October, a few late ducks still swam in the lake. He could hear the splash of a trout as it rose to catch a fly upon the water. The hoot of Shneena was nearer now, close to the edge of the dark wood. The moon shone on the great horned bird as his fierce eyes scanned the ground for small prey. Cosotasket turned to his warm robes and was soon asleep.

Morning dawned with a hard white frost covering the ground, a skim of ice on the lake, the bare trees seemed to shiver in the slight breeze, and the ducks had taken wing. A thin spiral of smoke came from the opening in the centre of



the teepee as Cosotasket brewed his morning tea. This done, he fell to constructing a platform or shelter in a tree to store his dried and smoked venison and fish and his other ictas, besides an extra pair of snow shoes for later use, tightly covering it all with rawhide and branches to ward off birds and other marauders. Strange to say these caches were seldom disturbed. Making a light pack of food and ammunition which consisted of powder, shot, wadding, caps and flint, and with a small axe strapped to the outside, he hoisted the pack lightly, musket in hand he was on his way through Lightening Pass up to the Skyline, where Mt. Hosomeen loomed above, hence, down to Skagit Creek where his traps were set, a small bush teepee at every day's journey along the line. Doubtless some of the trails bore different names in those days but the Hosomeen was derived from "Oh so mean"—high rugged mountains. Nicomen or Knife, the Skagit, Summalo Coquihalla and others were of Indian origin.

Marten, were his chief asset, but as a fire had raged through that part of the country in late summer and as happens in a fire, marten climb the trees for safety and thus perish in the blazing branches, this year's catch was poor, where they usually netted him several hundred dollars. He would now depend on the catch of beaver and muskrat in March and April. However, the lynx were large, full furred and quite beautiful, with an occasional wolf and panther, some of the fur he traded at a store just below the confluence of the Tulameen and Similkameen Rivers. The remainder hung in a tree until such time as he would sell them at the Hudson Bay Company's post at Keremeos. Now there remained but one thing, to return and slay the Great Callowna on the rock slide of Mt. Frostie and take possession of the den through his long fast and meditations.

The trip back to the lake in December was bitterly cold but being accustomed to all kinds of inclement weather he did not suffer. The hard crusted snow bore him up, making the going fast and easy. On arriving at the lake, he found the teepee buried with snow and digging down with his snow shoes, uncovered the opening. It was dry and sheltered within, and with chips and dry sticks a fire was soon started, melting the snow from the opening in the roof through which the smoke curled.

Roasting strips of fresh venison (or mowish, as the Indians called it), on sharp sticks in front of the fire, and with tea, his simple meal was soon over. The pleasant aroma of Indian tobacco filled the air as he took up his pipe, gazing dreamily into the bright coals of fire. Soon he would begin that long fast and commune with the spirits of the departed that came forth at the hour of midnight, and the Spirit of a kinsmen that lodged in that great Callowna would be set free by his hand. Ah, he seemed to hear a whisper in the breeze, again from deep in the woods came the screech of Shneena, or was it perhaps the evil one mocking him, mocking with his devilish laughter? Starting up he cried, "I fear thee not, thou foul one, see," and his hand sought for the amulet about his neck, a golden cross. He had but to hold it up before him and the evil one, cowering would turn aside, as his hand closed about the golden cross, peace came upon him, he sought his robes and slept.

Daylight found him stirring, making ready for his long climb up over the deep snow to the cave on the slide, carrying his musket, the long sharp knife at his belt. The cave was barely discernable, all was a white blanket of snow and but for the trees, he would have passed on. Scraping the snow away beneath them on the ledge he noticed a small hole through which moisture and warm air seemed to be escaping



as 'indeed' it was, heat and moisture from the old bear's breath. Digging with a snow shoe he soon had a large opening. Inside was warm and close. The huge beast lay sleeping in the hollow depression in the floor. Backing out, he leaned his musket against a tree, taking his long knife in hand, advanced upon the drowsy bear who had awakened somewhat from the cold air and as it rolled over, he made a lunge, and quickly buried the long knife to the hilt in its side. With a savage roar it started up, grasping Cosotasket in its huge arms and staggering to the opening went over and over down the steep slide, carrying him with it till a big rock barred way, and they landed abruptly.

How long he lay unconscious, he did not know. When his senses returned, he was lying clasped in the arms of a dead grizzly, his chest lacerated, the sleeve torn from one arm and a long gash from shoulder, almost to elbow, his knife still buried in the great carcass. Managing to drag himself free, he stumbled to his feet to find that he was whole but badly shaken and sore, the great arms hugged tightly about him had afforded protection during the fall and last abrupt landing. Snow shoes and musket were still at the cave, but Cosotasket managed to drag his bruised body over the crusted snow to his brush teepee on the lake shore, crawl inside his robes unable to do more. Hours had passed and night was falling, he did not stir or light a fire but slept in complete exhaustion.

Again it was morning, he moved stiffly about lighting a fire, melting snow in his kettle and a large pan, the Indians had left hanging in a tree, one of several they had used, beating to frighten bear and animals they feared. Bathing his wounds and applying salve and healing leaves known only to the Indians, binding it in place with strips torn from a flour sack he managed to work on his shirt and buckskin jacket, which fortunately had not been worn in the battle.



As dusk was falling, a quiet stillness pervaded the valley, the fading red glow of the setting sun lingered in the western sky. Suddenly the silence was broken by the long wavering cry of en-che-chim, the wolf calling to his band, answered by the clamorous barking of synkilips (coyotes) from the far end of the lake. Soon they would all gather to feast on the carcass of old Silvertip, leaving only a few scattered bones stripped of all flesh.

Thus his long life ended and Cosotasket would occupy his den for many weeks, till, soft Chinook winds blew again, breaking the icy chain of winter, and heralding the Spring.

Years had passed since the slaying of the great Silver Tip, on the rock slide. Other grizzly had the fearless Cosotasket hunted to their dens, ever following the vague and sometimes unchartered trails, alone, or climbing the high ridges, to gaze upon tier after tier of blue mountain peaks, stretching far to the South west. The Boston man's country, that had once belonged only to the Indians. At times, he travelled south from Castle Creek, over the mountains to the Methow River, thence west, up the Skagit to the Canadian side, where his trapline followed the river for many miles, and through the friendly hills he loved and knew in all their different aspects.

Spring, when warm chinook winds melted the snow, leaving a mantle of green over the land, beautiful wild flowers, springing up from the moist earth, and the call of migratory birds returning from the south. Summer, with its beauty, maturity and long sunny days, and Fall, like a golden dream, a harvest of nature, it's glorious colours of gold and crimson, the blue skies, a tang of frost, and perhaps the lingering beauty of an Indian Summer. Of all these, he seemed to be a part and here he would end his days.

Now, many changes had taken place, the whiteman had

indeed invaded the land, mining, farming seeking adventure, or prowling about the hills in search of gold. Last, but not least, he had but ONE wife. It had become the law and therefore must be obeyed. He had become a Christian, outwardly, at least, but mingling with these beliefs were the old ties of Superstition and Paganism and a bitterness toward the whiteman, who had robbed the Indian of his birthright.

In the early part of May, the trapping over, Cosotasket surveyed his goodly catch of Muskrat and Beaver, many prime skins, glossy and full furred would recompence, somewhat for his loss of marten in the earlier part of trapping season. The sun shone warmly on his back as he stooped to bundle and tie his hides, preparing to return to his 'Illahee,' and tribe again, yet loathe to leave his camp beside the clear stream where the tender green leaves were bursting in the bud, and the twittering and song of birds was a joyous sound.

How the tribe had fared through the long winter, he did not know but an uneasiness assailed him, for had not the spirits that came at midnight in his long vigil at the cave, brought a dark warning that all was not well, and had he not heard from the woods last night, the mocking laughter of the evil one, as the moon glided behind a dark cloud, blotting out the landscape, and again at break of day, Shneena crying—Who, who, who. Blood would be shed, but whose, and why?

This year the Indians would gather at the confluence of the Similkameen and Tulameen rivers on the 24th of May to compete in horse racing, bucking contests etcetera. Tribes arriving from many outlying districts, Kamloops, Quilshanna, Nicola, Lower Similkameen and across the border. The Similkameen and Nicola Indians had never been on the best of terms. There seemed to echo from the past a legendary tale of a long sought vengeance that had never



been requitted. Long before the whiteman came, in a battle with the Similkameens, the Nicolas carried away the chief's son as hostage and as they were of a cannibalistic nature, killed and ate him (but that is another story). However, the feeling of animosity still existed, and Cosotasket's uneasiness urged him on, that in case of trouble, he would be there in time.

Since early morning, groups of Indians had travelled up the river from Chu-chu-e-waa, and other reserves in the lower valley and across the border. Men riding on spirited horses, with fancy bridles, saddles and jingling spurs, brightly coloured shirts, some leading, some driving extra ponies for racing. The women, too, were gaily attired both old and young, with bright coloured kerchiefs, shawls and voluminous calico dresses of many different hues, a splash of colour along the dusty road. Pack horses, children, young mothers, babes in arms, infants in papoose sticks slung from saddle horns or from buckskin bands brought round the mother's foreheads, resting easily on her back. The day had been hot, the trail dusty along the flats. They stopped only to let their horses drink from the clear streams crossing their paths, or to tighten packs or girths. Evening found them making camps on the hill above the river, the women busily putting up tents, bringing wood, carrying water up the hill from the rapidly rising river, cooking the evening meal, tending babies and all such tasks as only Kloochmen could know how to perform. There was a hum of voices, as they sat about the fires, talking of the coming day and horse racing, even the children joined in, for they too, had ponies and were anxious to try them out. The tribes from further north, Kamloops, Nicola, Quilshanna, Canford and other reserves, camped on the flat, across the river where a race track had been cleared. Some crossed on a



bridge of just two long stringers and planks nailed across. Others preferred the river which was still fordable and far safer. The morning dawned fine and clear, promising a hot day. A cloud of dust arose from the track as the race horses were taken out for exercise and to show their merits. Young women were preparing happily for the Kloutch race tying their skirts at the knees, as they billowed out like a tent in the breeze and these were modest young women who took their horse racing seriously, especially as a good prize awaited the winner.

There was much noise and shouting from across the river, perhaps fire water had seeped into the camps and was having its effect, turning good Indians into savages. Out of all this confusion and noise, an argument and quarrel arose, between a Nicola Indian and Similkameen Indian. Many things could have been the cause, but just what, none seemed to know. After unsuccessfully trying to avoid his tormentor, young James the Similkameen Indian, returned to his camp, being of a peaceful disposition, quarrels were not for him, but alas, fate decreed otherwise for just as they were sitting around the fire for a mid-day meal, the sound of galloping horses broke the stillness, and Alex George, the Nicola Indian, shouting and crazed with drink, rode in upon them brandishing his gun and fired into their midst. The Indians scattered, but James and Doots, another young man, stood their ground. When the wavering gun came to rest, pointed directly at them, one reached quickly for his revolver and fired, sending the crazed man backward off his horse, quite dead. After a moment of silence, someone cried out "Take him away, hide him, the whiteman will come; his law will hang you!" They did not understand that the killing had been done in self defence and could think of nothing but to cover the crime and remain silent. Quickly the two boys strapped the dead

man across his horse and mounting their own, led him through the trees, up the hills and over the Swan Lake Flats to a small deep lake, surrounded on one side by a thick growth of trees and bush. There they fastened a long rope to Alex and weighing him down, sunk him out of sight in the Lake, fastening the end of the rope to a tree, and came away leaving no sign. Half a mile down the meadow, on a little rise, they buried the saddle and equipment (which was found many years later by a man building a cabin there). The revolver they hid in the sand on the floor of a cave not far from there (which was also found by boys playing, a generation later). The horse was never found nor ever seen again, no doubt it was killed and buried too.

My father whose home was directly below the encampment, on a flat by the river, was seated at dinner with Ma and family when they heard the shouting and shots—he rose, and climbing the hill, went directly to the camp. The Indians were sitting stoically around the fire. "What was the trouble," he enquired. "There was none," they replied. "But I heard shouting and shooting," he said. "Only a drunken Nicola Indian who came into our camp shooting his gun in the air, but he went back to camp, among his people," they replied and so no further information could be gotten from them. It was all 'Halo Cumtux' (Don't know).

Not knowing who, or how many had been in camp, Pa did not miss the two young men who had ridden away, but went at once to the Indians across the river to make further inquiries. They only knew that Alex George, very much intoxicated had ridden away to look for James, and as yet had not returned. They too, had heard the distant shouting, and shooting and feared for his life. "Where had they got the fire water?" They shook their heads dumbly, Halo Cumtux—they did not know, or so they said. My father sent



to Granite Creek for Constable Hunter and they searched for him with no result, not dreaming of what had actually taken place, that perhaps he had gone back, as was suggested, to his home in Nicola.

The celebration broke up, the northern tribes returned, thinking they might catch up to the man along the way or find him already there. Most of the Similkameen dallied in their camps, supposedly gathering wild potatoes on the range, but actually biding their time until the excitement had blown over. A week passed, constable Hunter returned to Granite Creek, the search was discontinued.

Early one morning, my mother, who was in her garden, saw a pack train of Indians travelling along the ridge, some distance from her home toward the river. She thought they must be going to water their horses, or camp, but they returned shortly, taking the main road down the Valley to Chu-chu-e-waa. It was a relief, after all the trouble, that they had gone.

It was then that Cosotasket returned from the mountains, he found the tribe in a sullen mood, he knew there had been trouble but could learn nothing from the Indians. As usual, they 'knew nothing.' Determined to get to the bottom of it, he said, "I will go back to the mountains and when I return, I will know all." When he returned a short time later, he came directly to my father and told him that he had gone into a trance and the whole thing had been revealed to him. That he had seen the crime enacted, who had killed Alex George, how they had sunk him in the lake, and later retrieved the body, taken it on a pack horse to the river and threw it in. It was never found, or seen again. Constable Hunter returned, searched the lake and surrounding country but found no trace of either man or horse. The two young men, James and Doots, were arrested and sent to jail on suspicion of murder.



Doots, being of delicate health died there. James was finally released, there being no body, and no actual proof, only the word of the old Chief, whom they did not believe.

Many years later, an old Indian woman, on her death bed, confessed that Cosotasket had been right, his story was quite true, for she had been in the camp on that fatal day, had seen the killing, but did not say which one of the boys, who were standing close, had fired the fatal shot that killed Alex George. Had the Indians not panicked, concealed the crime, but told the truth, there would have been no mystery and no arrests, as it was a clear case of self defence.

When Cosotasket was a very old man, he went back to the mountains, never to return. His old friends both White and Indian, loved and revered his memory, some even to this very day.

## “Halo Ictas,” A Tale Of The Old Similkameen

As we used to say in olden days, “once upon a time” there was an old, old man whose name was Shlawhalakin. How old he was no one seemed to know, or guess, or even care. His face was childlike, round and plump and pleasant, his skin fine and soft as a baby’s crowned with snow white hair. About his neck was suspended a tiny cross, symbol of his faith. Straight as an arrow he sat with dignity on his old white horse, monarch of all he surveyed! It was his Illahee (or home). He had been in the valley long before the whiteman came to spoil the peace and beauty of it all. Why should he stop to do their bidding or their will, was he not Schlawhalakin, son of the great Tamtusalist? The most powerful chief in all the valley who had lived twice the allotted span of man, even in his last days when the weight of years had bowed him down, crept like an infant on hands and knees, bending only to the will of the ‘Sarcalee Tyee’ (God) and had these many years gone to join his fathers in the ‘Happy Hunting Grounds.’ He, Schlawhalakin, would bow to no man, and was he not a great actor, who could move the white woman or man to pity, and even much generosity? He need only to imagine his poverty and tears would stream down his face, need only to say, ‘Mica ha-a-lo chickamen, ha-a-lo ictas! Mica hi-ou sick tum tum!’ (I have no money, no goods or things, in fact nothing! I am feeling very sad in my heart!)

Boha, his klootchman (wife) whose age showed only in her wrinkled face, for her form was upright and lithe, and her

beautiful hair, that shone like a raven's wing curled into ringlets unlike the straight locks of her dark skinned sisters., Ah yes, he lived like a monarch! but none had ever enjoyed such freedom as his. Work, he did not know the meaning! Was not Boha there to do his bidding, gather fuel for his camp fires, who else was there to perform all such menial tasks?, and had not the Sarcalee Tyee filled the land with all his needs, meat, game, berries and great hunting and camping grounds? Life was very beautiful and satisfying. Then, too, there was his beautiful daughter Sally, who through four marriages, contributed much to his profit as on each occasion many blankets and skins had been exchanged and even a small of 'Chickamen' to boot, therefore he was 'Hi ash cloche tum tum' (very satisfied and content within).

When winter winds blew cold and snow lay deep upon the ground, Schlawhalakin lived in the lower valley where the climate was mild and the season short. Round about him many tillicums (friends) lived in their log huts, and on a steep little hill stood the old church with their burial ground at the back, in the centre of which stood a great cross surmounted by three carved and gaily painted roosters. On the graves of the great ones or chiefs lay life-sized wooden images carved to represent each, individually. Here it was that the good fathers came to pray with them and teach them of the 'Sarcalee Tyee.' Their faith in, and respect for these great men knew no bounds, who went without, that the needy might have more.

When spring came, soft chinook winds blew down the valley and the warm sun melted the snow from their doors, children shouted and played with the lean dogs. Schlawhalakin would sally forth and bask in the sunshine and listen to their happy chatter while old Boha sitting on the ground, tanned vigorously, some deer hides. Before many



moons had passed they would ride up the valley where the wild Similkameen, fed by many streams overflowed its banks, even to where the white settler in wild and beautiful surroundings had built his home of logs, where his cattle and horses grazed on the rich bunch grass range, where fish were plentiful in the streams, where lakes teemed with ducks and wild fowl, grouse and prairie chicken nested in the long grasses and game abounded in the hills, to him, it was indeed a paradise.

Old Schlawhalakin knew this whiteman for his friend, and knew that from him, tea, sugar, tobacco and other things could be had for the asking, or acting, and there could they camp in luxury for many days till the cold weather in fall drove them back to the warmer climate. There too, he had fashioned a large canoe, for in those far off days there were no bridges to cross the swollen stream and for a certain amount, which varied according to his needs or mood, he ferried men across who came up and down the valley in search of gold or copper, this added to his small store of 'chickamen' (money) which he carried in a buckskin bag with a drawstring in the top, concealed somewhere on his person. Presently Boha, pausing in her work, saw his white head nodding, he had fallen fast asleep.

It was in the month of May, spring had cast a mantle of green over the hills, wild syringa bloomed along the road and roses were bursting in the bud, a soft haze of warmth and sunshine brooded over the valley, but in the Indian village, there was a stir of unrest and fear among its people, whispers and rumours were spread of strange visitants and stranger sounds. Men gathered in little groups to pow-wow (talk) and children shivered and shunned the darkness while trembling dogs shrank from human contact, hair rising on their backs, noses pointed heavenward, uttering little howls and

whimpers. The great medicine man Skuse, had been summoned, and that night a huge fire was kindled, mats laid upon the ground where to the low chanting and moaning of the Indians he wrestled with the 'Evil One.' Horrible sounds issued from his lips as he twirled round and round, spitting on his hands and muttering, "Bow-wow chic-chic-chic. Bow-wow chic-chic" sometimes he was down, only to rise again with ghastly countenance in the flickering firelight, so great was the strength of the Evil One; they wrestled far into the night for restless spirits of the departed ones had come back to reproach their kinsmen, who seemed to have forgotten those who had lain so long mouldering in the earth.

In the early dawn, Skuse, hollow-eyed and exhausted, told his people they must prepare a great feast and potlatch (to give). Quickly preparations commenced, men slaying beasts and fowl; women prepared buckskin for clothing, beaded shirts and mocassins. Many bows, arrows, spears, stone hatchets and other articles were collected that might be of use to them in their Happy Hunting Grounds. Food was cooked and much scented grass was gathered to fill their nostrils, as theirs, was a revolting and gruesome undertaking.

At last, the day of apprehension passed, many prayers were said and all was in readiness, all were assembled at the burying ground. The valley echoed with hideous wails and shrieks of the women crouched upon the ground, their hair streaming down their faces, repeatedly making the sign of the cross, to ward off the Evil One. Nostrils filled with scented grass, which could not erase the dreadful odour, as men dug into the graves and removed the bodies or bones, as might be, to dress them in fresh clean clothes, and lay such treasures as they valued in life, beside them in the grave. When all was finished and those forms clothed and covered from view, the



women arose, the great feast prepared and eaten, the portion for the departed ones placed in the fire to be consumed; at last the spirits of their fathers were replete, clothed and appeased, once more all was peace and serenity, their thoughts turned to other matters.

As summer advanced, the tribe would ride far up the valley, two tall young men clad in fringed and beaded buckskins, rode side by side, the sun glittering on their muskets slung to the saddles. Splashing through a sparkling stream came men, women and children and directly behind his laughing, chattering bevy of wives, came the Chief, upright and dignified in his saddle, an attendant riding closely at his side. The bright blankets and shawls making a splash of colour against the green foliage while high in the sky soared a Golden Eagle.

They would camp beside a stream and gather wild potatoes that grew in abundance on the open ranges, later they would journey to the high mountains for huckleberries, game and fish, some going even further to Fort Hope to bring back salmon from the great Fraser River, which, with the berries they dried for winter.

From the store of the Pale Face they bought or traded for many 'ictas,' such as tea, sugar, tobacco and other necessities. The women bought bright calico and prints for dresses as they gazed curiously at the young woman with the white skin and beautiful hair. She likewise, gazed on them with as much curiosity and greatly admired some of their young women who were endowed with grace and great beauty.

Schlawhalakin and Boha always went in advance of the tribe, camping by themselves, conveniently near their white tillicums (friends) who had many 'ictas' that they sometimes coveted, and often got 'cultus patlatch' (given for nothing or free) for he loved a free gift, it seemed to warm his heart as



nothing else could. His face lit up with a smile as he thought of these things and where he would camp beside the great tree on the river to which his big canoe was moored.

The day was well advanced as they trotted along, the old man sitting straight and upright on his white horse, powder horn over his shoulder, his musket slung to his saddle in readiness for any game they might chance upon. They must hurry to pass the 'Loola Hoola' before darkness, a place where the earth sounded hollow under their horses hooves, for here it was a man had tried to pass, riding late at night. In the bright moonlight he could see the empty road, quite clearly, but as his horse reached a certain spot it stopped suddenly, refusing to go on, trying to bolt back, trembling in every limb. Spurring and lashing the terrified beast on, when, snorting and with a wild plunge it jumped over something in the centre of the road, something unseen and terrible, to go bolting up the trail almost unseating its rider. What was it? Who knows, maybe the 'Evil One' or perhaps, in the long ago some terrible crime had been committed, leaving a poor earth bound spirit to haunt that dreaded spot. At any rate, Schlawhalakin never tarried there. Quickly they trotted by, the laden pack horse bringing up the rear as a cloud of dust enveloped them.

The last rays of the setting sun lingered upon the mountain tops as Schlawhalakin and Boha rode down the steep sumac clad hillside to a flat on the river, their horses stopping instinctively at the old campgrounds. Unsaddling and relieving the pack animal of its burden they led them to the rapidly rising river to drink. The canoe was still moored to its tree. Driving stakes into the ground they picketed the animals for the night, tomorrow they would be loosed to feed on the bunch grass slopes. Boha soon had the tent up with a bright fire glowing in front and Tennasmowich, meaning

small deer, but actually chipmunks, roasted on stakes driven into the ground in front of the fire; this, with tea and bread was ready when the old man returned with boughs for their bed. They had ridden many long miles since daylight and were famished. The meal over, they drowsed by the warm fire, smoking, presently the moon rose slowly over the hill leaving a silvery ribbon on the fast flowing stream.

The fire had burned down to embers, the old brown dog rose and sniffed the air, as if to remind them that it was time for bed. A lone coyote howled in the distance, the sound of night birds with myriads of insects, mingling with the murmuring of the river, seemed to fill them with unutterable content and soon they slept as babes.

The next morning Boha rose with the sun to prepare their morning meal as there were many things to be done this day; first would be a visit to the white settler, a little begging expedition to add to their store of provisions, but of course, Schlawhalakin did not consider it as such, merely a dignified request to friends. Saddling the old white pony, although the distance was but a stones throw, he rode to the door without dismounting called loudly for attention. Presently, the door opened and a lady stepped to the porch to greet him. "Clahowa Tillicum" or 'How do you do, my friend,' asking for his health and how he fared, he answered, "Wy-ah nick-a-n-a-a!" Spoken very slowly an expression of greeting and pleasure, he also asked for the 'papooses,' her two small girls, who soon came to add their shy greetings to hers. After a short cheerful conversation, his expression changed to one of great sadness and he said sorrowfully, "Mica halo muck a muck, h-a-a-lo tea, h-a-a-lo sugar, h-a-a-lo Ictas! Mica hi-ou sick tum tum! (I have no food, no tea, tobacco nor sugar, in fact nothing! I am feeling very badly within my heart). With a murmured word of sympathy she returned to her kitchen to



emerge presently with a flour sack containing the 'Ictas,' he so eloquently pleaded for, enough to gladden his heart instantly, his tears gone, blessing and thanking her profusely, he rode away. Boha had not been idle in his absence, wood was cut, a rack made for drying berries and among other things, a 'keek-welly house' had been repaired, (keekwelly meaning below, 'keek-welly Tyee, The Devil). This was used as a crude Turkish bath and consisted of a hole below the ground large enough for one person, with a round top of bent willows, in this, hot rocks were placed and water poured on them to create a steam, which was prevented from escaping by a blanket thrown over all; but the daily bath, was taken in the river in the early morning, even in the fall when a skim of ice had formed, Schlawhalakin would cut a hole with his axe and jump in: this daily bath he attributed much to his good health and longevity.

Long, idle and pleasant days passed, sometimes they hunted grouse and prairie chicken, or ducks on the lakes and sometimes fished in the stream or picked and dried berries. When the white settler killed a beast, Boha was always there to beg a little meat and strip the entrails of fat which she rendered down over the campfire for cooking and frying. Sometimes the two little girls would be sent to their camp to tell them of the event, their father impressing on them what they must say, "Moose, Moose, Mamaloose," meaning the cow is dead or killed, but they never could remember and by the time they got there one would say, 'moose moose mamaloose!' and the other would say 'mamaloose moose moose!' not knowing quite which was right but actually meaning the same thing, to them it seemed of the greatest importance to say just the right words.

One day as Schlawhalakin was looking for his horses which had strayed from their usual feeding ground, he met some of



his tribe who brought him news of his daughter Sally, who though a widow but a short time, was about to take a fifth husband; and much to his anger and chagrin, one white, reckless and good for nothing, therefore there would be no blankets, skins or even 'chickamen' exchanged; a very unprofitable and useless son-in-law; he was 'hi-ou sallax' (very angry). He returned quickly to impart the news to Boha, her mother, who met him with more news, news that two white men were on the far bank of the river calling to get across. Two white men! Ough! Now he would have his revenge, though the white son-in-law would give him nothing, these two would have to. Slowly and thoughtfully he untied his boat and hauled it upstream so as to have a good landing, giving an answering shout as he entered the water. The settler looking from his porch saw Schlawhalakin cross and engage in a lengthy conversation or argument with the two men and after some delay, saw the three of them enter the boat, the old man carrying a bundle. Once over, the two men came directly to the house, frightened, red of face and very much embarrassed; clad only in their underwear. The old rascal had not only charged them double fare but at first begged, then demanded their clothes, to no avail, finally threatened to leave them on a small island between the two deep and rushing streams to swim or starve as they chose, becoming thoroughly frightened, they soon gave in, however in the store they were recompensed with new shoes, shirts and overalls and were once more on their way. The white settler went to the old Indians camp to rebuke him, but it seemed to fall on deaf ears, looking very sad and crestfallen, he said "Mica ha-l-o chickamen, halo Icatas, Mica hi-ou sick tum tum!"

Sally, daughter of Schlawhalakin, was a very beautiful girl, tall and slim as a willow, with delicate features and great dark

eyes and curling hair like her mothers. Though many had loved her and she had had four husbands, this last one only, she had loved in return, all through the long summer he lingered by her side, greater happiness she had never known, her laughter was like music as she rode beside him on her black pony with his long flowing mane, chomping on his bit, eager to be gone in the race. As she gazed on the face of her young husband, she saw only the beauty and grace of feature, the curling hair yellow as the tassels of corn, she did not, could not, know that a cruel and fickle heart beat within his breast.

One morning, as Autumn turned the valley into a veritable fairy land with gold and crimson on the shimmering leaves of the cotton trees with the dreamy beauty of an Indian Summer, she rose to find her world had tumbled about her, her lover had ridden away to return no more, shock had numbed and crushed her spirit, she saw not its beauty that once she had seemed to be a part. Through long blank days she pined and grew thinner and when winter came a cough racked her slight frame. Again it was springtime but Sally grew weaker, a flush upon her cheek, her large eyes bright with fever. Oh why, she often asked herself, had she not loved one of her own kind, then her father would not be angry with her and they would all be happy as before.

Schlawhalakin and Boha became alarmed and in their anxiety, forgave her, and forgot the worthless husband. Every herb and medicine was tried, to no avail. At last they decided when the weather grew warmer to take her up the valley to try the white man's medicine, but the long journey, even on her favourite black pony, seemed to leave her more tired and listless. The white lady was very kind, doing all she could and giving her such comforts as they had, but she and her husband knew well that it was hopeless, and poor Sally was beyond their, or any other help.



Many of her father's kinsmen and 'tillicums' came to offer comfort and sympathy but in despair, he sent for Skuse, the medicine man, who struggled on a mat, all through the night, before the fire with the evil spirit, that was consuming her life, but alas, the evil one was stronger, and vanquished. When morning came, weary and spent Skuse, told his kinsmen to bridle and saddle her pony and lead it out into the valley, and there, turn it loose. If it went down the valley toward the sunrise, she would live, but if it went toward the sunset, she would die. Just as the sun was setting the pony was led forth and turned loose, his long mane streaming, his head held proudly high, a great dark messenger, he galloped into the sunset, bearing the spirit of Sally, their only child, on to the Happy Hunting Ground, as a fearful wail arose from the camp of those who were left to mourn.

For many long moons Boha and Schlawhalakin mourned their child, they were, in very truth 'Hi-ou-sick tum tum.' It was the beginning of their sorrows. As most Indians, their faith was as simple and trusting as a child's, but buried deeply within their hearts was still a touch of superstition and Paganism that the good fathers had never been able to wholly abolish. It was an old custom to lead out the pony of anyone who was very ill to determine the outcome, so great was their faith in this custom that if the pony went to the sunrise, they did everything in their power to affect a cure, but if the ill-fated pony went into the sunset, it was a duty, nay, more, to see that the omen was carried out. Sometimes the piling on of the robes in the patient's weakened condition hastened the end, but it was inevitable that the patient died; However, no such course was resorted to in the case of Sally, who died naturally from galloping consumption. But in spite of superstition and Paganism, it was to the Fathers they turned for comfort and consolation.



Years passed, and still the two old Indians came to camp each summer at the forks of the river, many changes had taken place. They themselves were not the same, both had grown more feeble and more dependent on others. A bridge spanned the river, taking place of the old canoe, a road wide enough for wagons to pass had taken place of the beautiful winding river trail up the valley. These and other things filled them with a sense of forebodings of evil, for many strangers were settling in the land, and who knows, they might eventually crowd the red man from his rightful home.

He despised and distrusted these new settlers and hoped that he would never live to see the country wholly theirs, for did not they bring ruin to his people, fire water, and bad magic with them? The old white settler who had been his friend for so many years had gone to his rest, leaving only his wife, whose snow white hair showed the passing of time, and the two little girls almost grown to womanhood, but they were ever kind to him and he still called them 'Mica Tillicums,' and rode up to their door on each visit with the oft repeated story of 'Halo Ictas,' his pride and dignity still intact.

One very hard winter a cruel sickness fell on the Indian village, and with many others, Schlawhalakin was a victim, Boha, who had grown feeble and almost blind, did her best to help him. The Indians who should have been his friends seemed indifferent to his plight saying merely, that he was an old man, and doubtless, would die.

The old man's death was the Sarcalee Tyee's final blessing, for his old eyes were not forced to witness the end of the red man's old way of life, of which he was an unchangeable part.

## Bromley-Rock

Twelve miles below Princeton on the Similkameen River, lies a pleasant campsite and picnic grounds with a smooth sandy beach and swimming hole. Directly across the river stands a high rocky projection known as 'Bromley Rock,' so named after John Bromley, an old timer and rancher, whose home was located about a mile above. He is now long deceased and new owners are living on the old homestead.

Not long ago, I had the pleasure of spending an evening there with friends who were camping for the night. It was a lovely mild evening as we sat beside the campfire, chatting and drinking coffee. Suddenly, the call of a night bird across the river drew my attention, and looking at the big rock in the dim light, I seemed to be carried far back into the past, when a terrible tragedy was taking place there, to see a young, stalwart Indian, creeping to the top, to lie among the tall grasses and shrubs, silently awaiting the coming of his victims. With a start, I realized I was not listening to the conversation about me, and hastily swallowed my coffee, thinking, 'but that was long ago.' Yes, Bromley Rock has kept its secret. Who could know that years before the advent of John Bromley, two innocent young Americans had lost their lives, killed by a young Indian seeking revenge for the murder of his Grandfather, at the hands of American soldiers or 'Boston Men' as the Indians called them.

In the early seventies, there was unrest among the Similkameen Indians, for their kinsmen just across the border in Washington and the tribes in Oregon were still on the war path, plundering, burning homes, scalping, torturing and



killing many settlers. The last skirmishes were being fought and gradually the American soldiers seemed to be getting the upper hand, and the Indians were looking for help and more fighting men to add to their diminishing numbers, trying hard to entice the Similkameens, their nearest neighbours, to join them. In the valley the Indians were a contented and peaceful lot, wanting no part in war, but finally consented to join their neighbours in a peace parley, to which the Americans agreed. After choosing an aged Chief of the Ashnolas as their envoy, the white haired old man advanced to meet the soldiers carrying a small white flag in his hand. As he came within range they opened fire and the frail old man fell, riddled with bullets.

Now his grandson, John Ashnola, then a young man, swore to avenge his Grandfather's death. It mattered little to him, if his victim was innocent or one of the perpetrators of that dastardly crime, as long as he was an American or 'Boston Man.' He, himself was a Canadian or 'King George Man' and he undoubtedly believed in 'two eyes for an eye, and two teeth for a tooth!'

One day when the grapevine had relayed the news that two Americans had crossed the border and were proceeding up the valley on horseback, a terrible anger and hatred filled John's heart. He was indeed a savage and this was the day of his revenge. A winding trail led up the valley, passing through a narrow gap made by the high rocky projection and a rock slide on the side of the mountain. Saddling his horse, John, with a companion, rode up the valley to where the trail entered the narrow pass, there dismounting. The other Indian led their horses to a little flat on the river, well hidden from the trail, while John moved slowly into the pass, his Henry rifle loaded in readiness, ignoring the warning buzz of a rattler on the slide, resenting an intrusion into his domain.



Picking his way carefully to the top of the great rock, he lay hidden in the long grass and shrubs, and fixing his gaze on the trail below, awaited the coming of the two Americans.

The waiting hours seemed to pass endlessly. All was quiet, not even a bird chirped. Then suddenly, he heard the ring of shod hooves coming closer by the minute. Two young men came riding into the pass, one ahead of the other on the narrow trail. A snatch of song floated on the air. It was not far now to where they could get a hot meal and rest for their tired mounts, who had come many miles that day. As he looked back to call to his companion, a shot rang out and he fell to the ground and lay still. In horror and astonishment, the remaining young man was about to turn and flee, when a bullet struck him in the heart, and he too fell to the ground, instantly killed. Coming up the trail, the other Indian caught the two frightened horses, their bridles trailing to the ground, and led them back to the scene of the killing, where they lifted and tied the two now lifeless bodies across their saddles, and led them up the valley, through the canyon, to an open flat. There on the bank of the river, they dug a grave and buried the two young and unknown boys, side by side, leaving the ground as though it had never been disturbed, and indeed it never was, until many years later, when men working on a bridge, crossing the river, dug it up accidentally, exposing the grave with its two occupants.

I remember that summer's day as a child, when playing with my brother Alfred, beside the river, we saw the skeletons of the two tall young men lying side by side, on the bank where they had been unearthed by the bridge crew. No one had known till then, where or how the Indians had disposed of the bodies. As we stood looking at those bleached skeletons, what impressed me most, were the beautiful white and even teeth of one. No doubt he had been a handsome

young man, and sad to relate, their loved ones and friends never knew the fate that had befallen them. Why had they journeyed into the wilderness? Were they on a mission, business or simply adventure? What their names were, or where their homes, no one knew, excepting perhaps, the Indians who might have found letters, papers or dispatches on their persons and more than likely destroyed them, blotting out all trace of identity. What became of the horses is but a guess, perhaps they were turned loose to go back the way they had come, or unsaddled, the equipment buried, the horses mingled with that of the tribe. Young John had revenged his Grandsire's death and none but his own people were the wiser and none could say or know how true the rumours of the cruel tragedy were, until some 60 years later, the mute evidence lay there on the bank of the Similkameen River, at what was then known as the Allison Townsite, but now is the farm of Harold Allison.

I remember Ashnola John or Captain John as the Hudson's Bay termed him, long after his revenge, when I was a child and he, an old man who was kindly, courteous and humorous, often coming to our home, riding on a fine sorrel horse, and old Henry rifle, strapped to his saddle, to get my mother to write his letters, which were mostly to the Governor. He gave the Governor good advice, once about the bugs that were destroying the trees and should be killed, and other matters which he read with tolerance and good humour, for well he knew John, and the ways of the Indians.

To the King, he wrote once a year, stating his grievances. 'For was he not the King's equal, and a King George Man?' asking his assistance and intervention in the case of his brother Jim, who went with Buffalo Bill (Bill Cody) in his Wild West show. He was a fine looking and upstanding Indian, a great rider and in every way suitable for that life,

but John, thought that Jim had not gone voluntarily but had been kidnapped and kept against his will by Buffalo Bill, to ride and be exhibited in his Wild West Show. He never saw his brother again and it is said that he died of a decline, and loneliness for his home, while in the employ of Cody. John still wrote once a year to the King, in whom he had the greatest confidence and a vain hope that he might gain his sympathy and assistance in his troubles. It is very unlikely the King ever saw, read or even received the letters for had he the sense of humour and tolerance of Governor Douglas, he surely would have replied.

Once John had been very ill and sent to the hospital in New Westminster. On his return I asked him if he liked being there and he replied, "No, no, they put me to bed in a hiash, long shirt, with only Tennass Klootchmen to care for me!" and he gave a great hearty laugh. He thought the nurses were little girls in long dresses. I can still see his humorous old face wreathed in smiles.



## The Tragedy Of The Clallam

Some sixty or more years ago, whilst living with an Aunt and Uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Dewdney, in Victoria, B.C. well known Victorians who had recently made their home on Rockland Avenue, a then new residential part of the city, overlooking the lovely old oaks of the Pemberton Woods, stretching down to the sea, with a breath-taking view of the Three Sisters and Blue Olympian Range across the straits of Juan de Fuca.

Rockland Avenue, had a quiet charm and dignity all its own, with beautiful homes and lovely flowers, while across the street where the land sloped gently upward, grew a profusion of yellow broom, white lillies and other flowers in their own wild beauty. The summer had been exceptionally warm and we school children were glad when the holidays came. We swam or picnicked at Oak or Foul Bay or sometimes rowed up the Gorge with friends.

Victoria was a gay and happy place in the summer holidays, who would dream that a shadow was soon to pass over her unsuspecting citizens, robbing some, of their loved ones and leaving them broken hearted. Many went on excursions to Port Angeles to escape the heat and enjoy a holiday in the U.S., among them our friends and neighbours, the Galletlys.

With many others from Victoria, Mrs. Galletly and her daughter Jessie, a lovely and clever girl, who had just returned from school in the East, looked forward to a happy holiday with friends and relatives, and so embarked on a boat excursion for Port Angeles to visit with a friend of long standing, Mrs. Shepherd. Mr. Galletly, Jessie's father, was

unable to accompany them as business matters kept him at home.

Scarcely a fortnight had passed when Mrs. Galletly received a telegram that her husband was very ill, curtailing their holiday. Jessie in great distress told her friend that she had a premonition of disaster and a warning not to leave, but a second telegram came, "Father not expected to recover, come at once!" It was decided to leave on the first boat available, which was the Clallam, leaving in the morning. That night Jessie had her second premonition and warning, "Something told me," she said, "If you must go, do not enter the life boats, what ever you do!"

In the early morning, summer seemed over, clouds were scudding across the sky, a stiff breeze was blowing up a storm, seagulls flew screaming round the boats as the three friends alighted from their cab at the dock, the two elder women strove to say a cheerful goodbye, but Jessie did not speak, her face was very pale as she kissed her friend for the last time. As Mrs. Shepherd stood back, the boat seemed alive with laughing and waving men, women and little children, going happily on their way after a wonderful holiday in the States.

As the Clallam backed out from the dock, Jessie and her mother waved, it was the last time their friend saw them and not until the Clallam was lost to view did she return home, her heart filled with forboding as the waves rose higher and the storm broke loose.

They had not been long out of Port, when the engineer sent word back to the Captain that a leak had sprung in the Engine room and they must put back to port at once, for repairs, but Captain Townsend's orders were to continue on their way and repair the damage as they went. The storm grew worse, they drifted about, until nearing Trial Island, the

captain ordered the lifeboats lowered and the helpless passengers, men, women and little children were forced into them. As each boat struck the water, it capsized, throwing its precious cargo of souls into the dangerous waters and rip tides of Trial Island. What terrors, fears and sufferings were theirs, we shall never know, only their mute bodies, washed up and strewn on the sands of Foul Bay were witnesses of where, and how they died.

At home we heard that the Clallam was in distress, and knew our friends were aboard. I can remember as though it were yesterday, the terrible storm, the wind shrieking round the chimneys as we stood muffled up on the porch, looking through binoculars for a glimpse of the missing ship. We saw a tug going out from harbour and return towing the Clallam with Captain Townsend and his crew, in safety.

The First Mate, being called upon to identify the passengers in the morgue, said when he came to Jessie Galletly, "There is the little girl who fought so hard to keep out of the lifeboat."

When an investigation into the tragedy was being held, Captain Townsend was conspicuous for his absence, he had 'skipped the line,' as in those days a criminal wanted in Canada could cross the line to safety, if wanted in the U.S.A., and visa versa, thus the criminal in the tragedy of the Clallam, went unpunished.



## The Dear Little Kitty

Uncle often told us of amusing little incidents that happened during his term of Office in the North West Territories, when Regina was in its infancy and many settlers were moving in, taking up large tracts of land in the vicinity. The first and largest wheat farm was established by a Mr. Henry Fisher, who built a house and brought his family from England.

In due time his two daughters were invited to tea at Government House. The weather was soft and balmy, for it was springtime and the young ladies were looking forward to a lovely drive over the Prairie to Regina. They were driving along when one of the girls cried, "Stop, stop," as a little animal ran along the trail, "Look, look, a dear little kitty has been lost, some wild animal may devour it." Climbing out of the buggy she ran after the kitty capturing it in her shawl, a beautiful cashmere shawl that had been sent from India by a relative. The little thing snuggled down and seemed to sleep and on arrival was carried into the drawing room by his rescuer. The servant who admitted them gave an icy stare turning up his nose. The guests who were assembled drinking tea, all rose in a body and left the room. One of the girls said, "Oh dear, there seems to be a very strange odour here." Mr. Dewdney who was a brave and gallant gentleman, stood his ground, offering them tea, but neither had the desire, as an overpowering nausea now held them in its grip.

Thinking to relieve the strain, the girl who had caught the dear little kitty, opened her shawl displaying her captive. Mr. Dewdney with a burst of laughter, which he could not restrain said, "My dear Miss Fisher, you have trapped a baby skunk!"

Mrs. Dewdney provided tubs of hot water and everything was done to remove the evidence of their encounter with the dear little animal. that night the stable boy, was seen conveying what looked very much like a pile of feminine garments, on the prongs of a pitch fork to a freshly dug hole in the earth, where he hastily dropped them and filled in the soil. I expect that Miss Fisher remembered their Dear Little Kitty for many a day. I know Mr. and Mrs. Dewdney did, and rather enjoyed the recounting of the tale.

God's greatest gift is Love, Love expressed in many ways. In the morning sun, in the laughter of a small child, sensing life's delight for the first time. In flowers and wind, and kindness, and the sincerity of a well loved face. In the beauty of music whether man made or quietly sensed on a summer wind at evening.

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