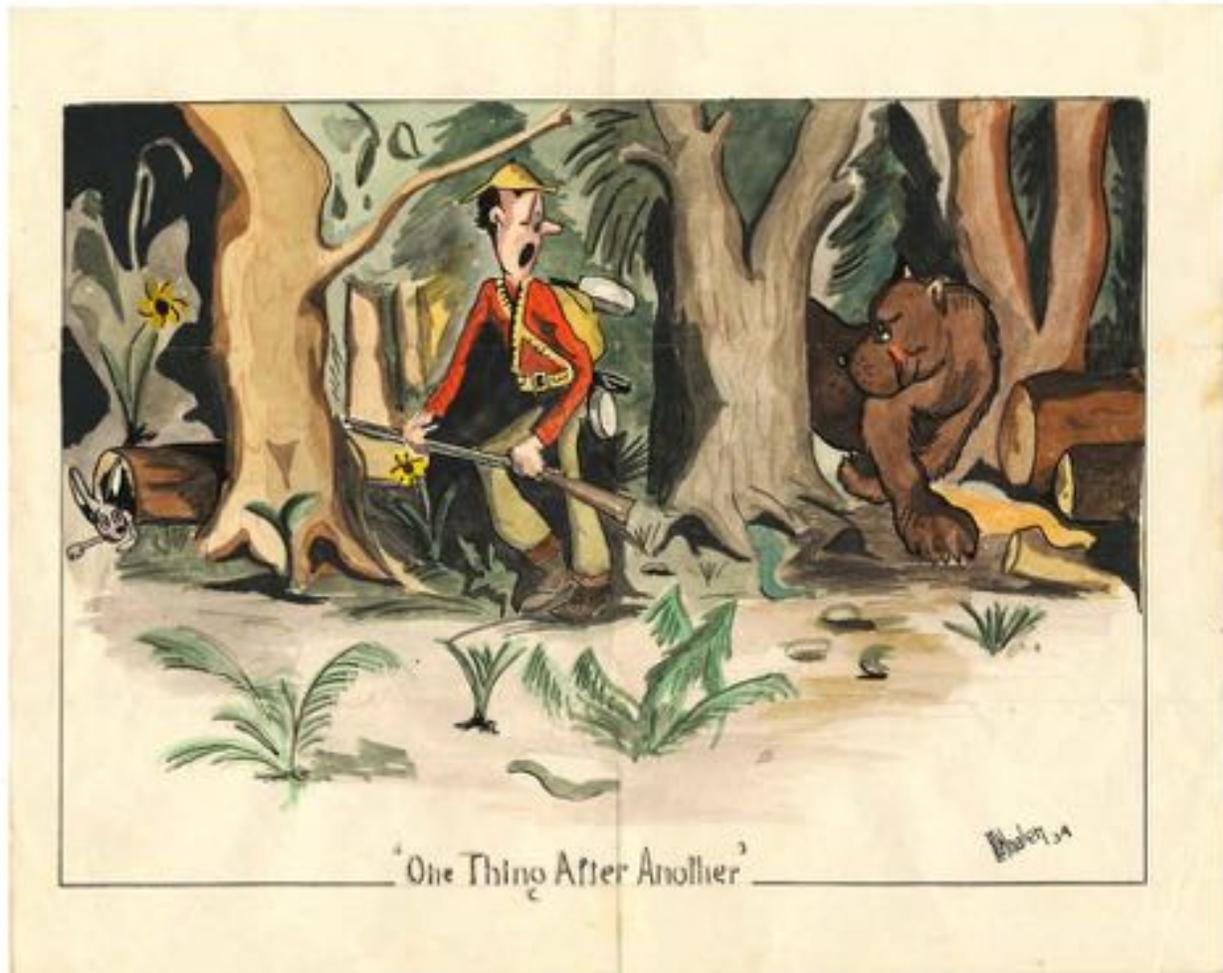


Andy Morod and the Nootka Sound Region



Cartoon of Andy Morod painted in 1934 by Len Whelan.
See pages 19– 20.

Gray Scrimgeour
Victoria, B.C.
December 2018

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Introduction

This is a report of 100 covers with letters written by Andy Morod to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dickinson of Bamfield, British Columbia. Morod mailed most of the covers at post offices in the Nootka Sound area: Nootka, Ceepeecee, and Zeballos. These envelopes and their contents present a good look at not only the postal history but also the social and regional history of the northwest coast of Vancouver Island (see the box in the map below) between 1932 and 1964. Keep in mind that he wrote much of this correspondence during the Great Depression of the 1930s, a time of great unemployment on Vancouver Island.



Andy Morod (1901–1983) was a well-known trapper and prospector^{1,2}. He was born in Switzerland and emigrated to Canada in 1922. In the summer of 1932, he worked on a fishpacker owned by Nelson Brothers Fisheries Limited³. In November of that year, he was planning to winter in Bamfield. However, a trapper offered him a job working on a trapline at Muchalat Lake near Gold River. He and his partner H.W. Cramb travelled there from Bamfield in a 29-foot gillnet boat. The Nootka Sound area then became Morod's home for many years.

The usual destination of this correspondence—Bamfield—is a small community on the south shore of Barkley Sound. Bamfield was the eastern terminus of the undersea trans-Pacific telegraph cable, and it is the northern end of the West Coast Trail. Ed Lewis, who traded this correspondence to me, does not know its provenance. I have found very little about the addressees. Robert Dickinson (1873–1951) lived in Bamfield from about 1911 until he retired⁴. He was an engineer at the cannery at Clo-oose (between Bamfield and Port Renfrew). From the Morod letters, I learned that the Dickinsons befriended and sometimes fed Morod while he lived in Bamfield. I thank them for preserving this correspondence.

I have presented the covers and their letters in chronological order. Eleanor Hancock^{1,2} has written a considerable amount about Andy Morod's life. I have used her more recent biography of him² as a basis for his activities. In quoting Morod's letters, I have selected text that I feel makes important points. Much of his writing is trivial, and I have not quoted most of this relatively unimportant material.

Princess Maquinna and Princess Norah

Two Canadian Pacific Steamship vessels—the *Princess Maquinna* and her relief ship, the *Princess Norah*⁵—carried the mail for the west coast of Vancouver Island. The distribution lists published by the Railway Mail Service of the Post Office Department [*Distribution for Alberta, Northwest Territories, British Columbia and Yukon Territory*] merely list this service as “1st, 11th, 21st 23.00 CPR str” [steamer]. The 1777-ton *Maquinna* (Fig. 1) served the west coast route from 1912 to 1953, and was the primary vessel for this route. The *Princess Norah* (Fig. 2; 2731 tons, built in 1929 to nominally replace the *Maquinna*), spent some time on the west coast route but in the winter often served the Alaska or Prince Rupert routes.

Table 1 presents an abbreviated 1935 schedule for the mail sailings between Nootka and Ceepeecee, and Bamfield. Zeballos did not become a port of call until about 1938. Both the *Maquinna* and the *Norah* followed the same schedule, except for part of the summer of 1939, when both ships were used—alternating 5 days apart. The steamship departed from Victoria at 11pm on the 1st, 11th, and 21st day of each month, reached the northern terminus (Port Alice) on the 5th day of the voyage, and arrived back in Victoria on the 8th day. Note that the mail ship called at Nootka Sound (Nootka or Ceepeecee) southbound on the 6th day of the voyage and reached Bamfield on the 8th day. Table 2 summarizes the assignments of the *Maquinna* and the *Norah* from November 1932 (the date of the first letter from Andy Morod) to October 1939 (when the newspaper removed the name of the ship serving the route).

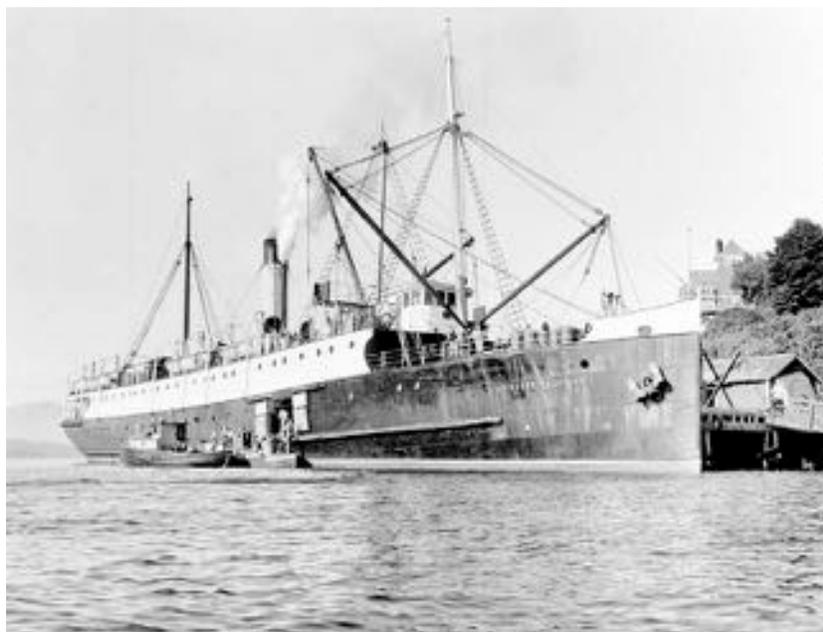


Figure 1. Princess Maquinna at Bamfield. B.C. Archives I-26182.

Table 1
Abbreviated Schedule*
West Coast Vancouver Island
Victoria – Nootka – Port Alice and Way Ports

Leave Victoria, B.C., 11 p.m.

Read Down	Ports of Call	Read Up
1 st 11 th 21 st Lv.	VICTORIA Ar. 1 p.m.	8 th 18 th 28 th
2 12 22 "	Bamfield	Ar. 8 18 28
4 14 24	Nootka Cannery	" 6 16 26
4 14 24	Ceepeecee	" 6 16 26
5 15 25	PORT ALICE	" 5 15 25

* July 27, 1935 schedule condensed from Turner⁵ p. 148.

Table 2 summarizes the assignments of the *Maquinna* and the *Norah* from November 1932 (the date of the first letter sent by Andy Morod) to October 1939 (when the name of the ship serving the route was removed from the newspaper).

Table 2
Ship Assigned to the Vancouver Island West Coast Route*

From	To	Ship
Nov 20, 1932	Oct. 15, 1933	<i>Norah</i>
Oct. 20, 1933	June 30, 1934	<i>Maquinna</i>
July 10, 1934	?	<i>Norah</i>
Oct. 7, 1934	May 8, 1938	<i>Maquinna</i>
Jun 12, 1938	Oct. 9, 1938	<i>Norah</i>
Oct 16, 1938	July 9, 1939	<i>Maquinna</i>
July 11, 1939	Aug. 31, 1939	<i>Maquinna and Norah**</i>

* I obtained the assignments from the Coastwise Movements column of the Marine, Rail and Air pages of the *Daily Colonist*.

** In the summer of 1939 from July 11th, both the *Maquinna* and the *Norah* were used. The *Maquinna* then left Victoria on the 1st, 11th, and 21st day of the month, and the *Norah* left Victoria on the 6th, 16th and 26th day of the month. Starting on September 1, 1939, the announcement became the nonspecific statement: "Ss Princess Maquinna or Ss Princess Norah will leave Victoria for Port Alice and West Coast points of Vancouver Island on the 1st, 11th, and 21st of each month." During World War II, the printed schedules said "Government regulations prohibit sailings dates on this Route being published."



Figure 2. *Princess Norah* at Bamfield. BC Archives 193501-001

The *Princess Maquinna* had a mail room on the freight deck (B Deck) on the starboard (right) side just forward of the Freight Space (Fig. 3). A room for express was next to the mail room.

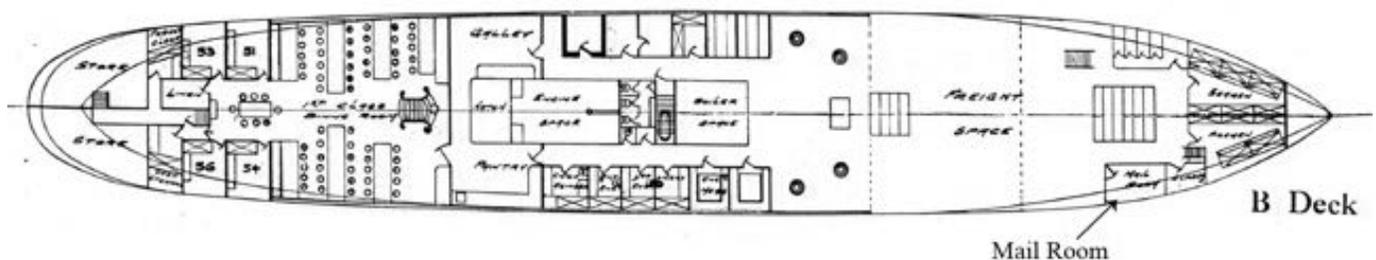


Figure 3. Deck plan of the freight deck of the *Princess Maquinna*. (Courtesy of R.D. Turner).

Mail from Nootka

The community called Nootka is located on the southeast coast of Nootka Island (see the map of the Nootka Sound region on page 7). A post office was established there on April 1, 1909 but it closed temporarily on October 31, 1909. The office reopened on May 1, 1912 and closed permanently on January 6, 1953. The Post Office Department supplied the Nootka post office with two broken-circle postmarks—both 19mm in diameter (Fig. 4). The earlier hammer had 8mm and 6mm arcs, the second 5mm arcs. Their spacing of “B.C.” differed and the shapes of the O’s differed. The first hammer was proofed on March 16, 1909, and the second hammer on May 20, 1912—for use by the second opening of the office. All my Nootka covers bear the second hammer.

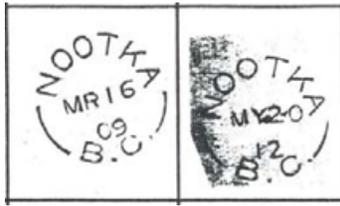


Figure 4. Proof impressions of the two Nootka broken circles⁶.

Andy Morod wrote the first letter on November 23, 1932; its envelope was postmarked at Nootka, B.C. on November 26th (Fig. 5, p. 8). The data in Table 2 show that it proceeded south to Bamfield in the *Princess Norah*.

In haste, telling you that we have arrived safely at Nootka Sound after been delayed three days for strong weather. Our trip has been uneventful but not colorless as we have enjoyed, soaked and disturbed the steaming waters of the Refuge Cove hot springs. This for two days.

The outline map below shows the locations of many of the communities encountered in Andy's letters. Muchalat Lake is located to the right (east) of Ceepeecee and Tahsis, just outside the limits of this map.

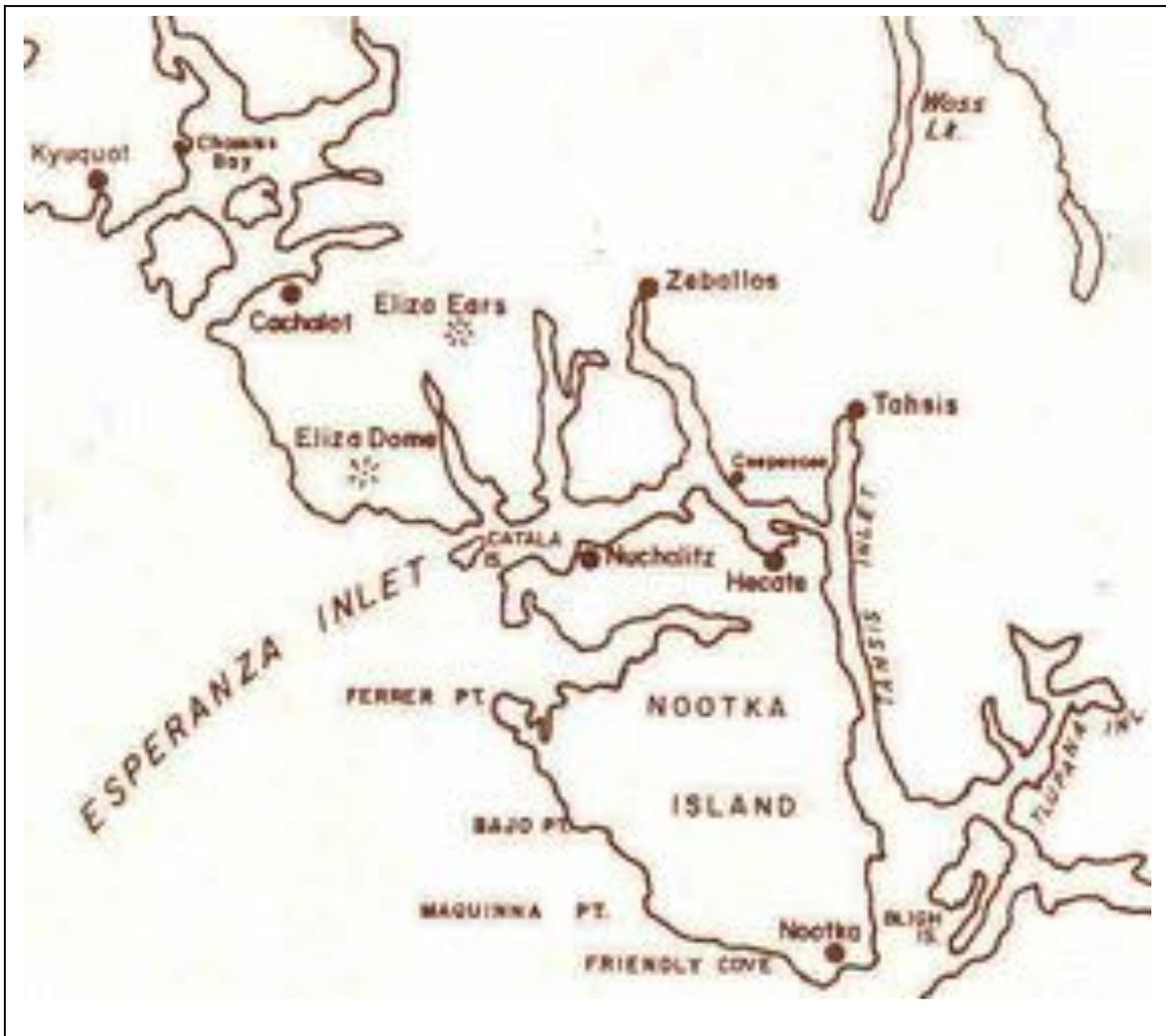




Figure 5. Cover bearing the first letter from Andy Morod.

Fig. 6 shows the heading of the first letter from Andy Morod.

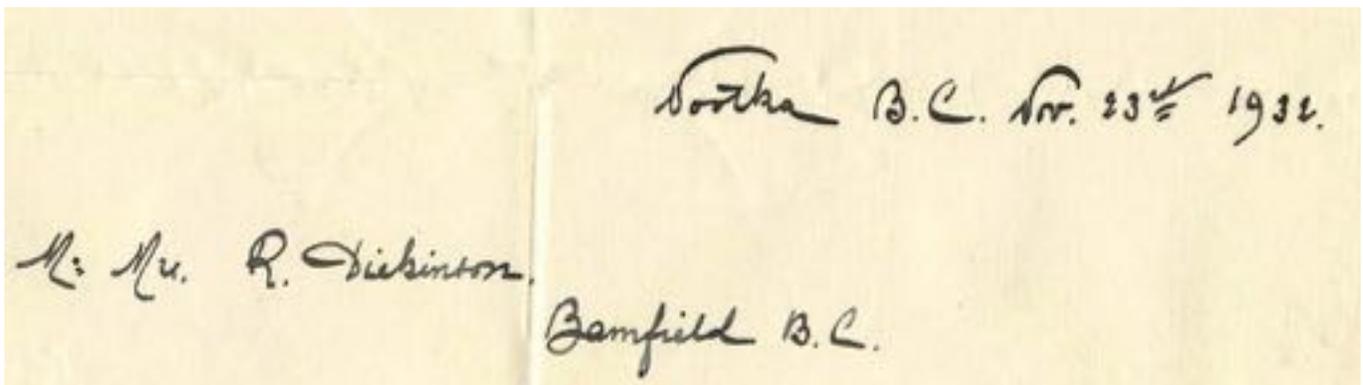


Figure 6. Heading of the first letter.

Accidental Death of Hugh W. Cramb

In rainy weather in late November 1932, Morod and his partner Hugh W. Cramb went up the Gold River to find a cabin they thought was near their trapline. After eight miles, they found a different cabin for overnight, where they dried out, then started back. Heavy, steady rain had changed the conditions and the Gold River was rising about a foot an hour. They found a canoe and got into it, but it capsized in raging waters. Both men went underwater; Cramb soon disappeared. Morod floated downstream. He emptied the canoe at a sandbar, and searched for his partner but “despite all efforts, could not detect any sign of my companion.” Morod told the story of this accident in a three-page document (below the newspaper report).

This report of Cramb's death appeared on page 19 of the November 11, 1932 issue of the *Victoria Daily Colonist*:

Trapper Drowned in Island River

Hugh W. Cramb, a trapper who had engaged in the Gold River, West Coast of Vancouver Island this Fall, was reported drowned, in advices reaching the Provincial Police yesterday from P.M.L.S., provincial police patrol boat. [P.M.L.S. was the name of the Provincial Police launch.]

The fatality occurred when Cramb and Andrew Morod, of Banfield [sic], were in a canoe which capsized on the Gold River. Cramb disappeared in swift water, his companion managing to make his way ashore. The drowned man is believed to have relatives in England and Winnipeg.

Morod sent this account of the accident to the Dickinsons:

Statement

*Concerning the accidental drowning of Hugh W. Cramb
by his companion*

In the Friday 25th November 1932, together with Hugh W. Cramb, followed the Golden River (Nootka Sound, West Coast of Vancouver Is.) starting at the mouth, with objective to locate a cabin, base of H.W. Cramb trapline. Leaving H.W.C. gasboat anchored, took his row boat up stream, this about half a mile, then pulling the row boat aside, and fastening the rope to a rock started hiking up the valley. We were expecting in a four miles walk, had took a light lunch, a hatchet and a rifle. Both of us were here for the first time relying in a map for directions. We found a good trail at first, then rather tough going, crossing many canyons over fallen trees, also plenty of underbrushes. We walked about four miles, and not finding any cabin decided to keep on the trail. About eight miles from our start we came to a log cabin, entered, and made fire to dry our soaken clothes. Later on got the company of two Indians, the residents of the place. After a night rest and a breakfast with the Indians started in our way back, leaving the rifle behind as we were expecting to come back shortly. The return trip was awful, a huge rain was pouring down steadily. It took us about six hours to the trail and as Hugh was weary, and could not walk any faster. In the meantime, the turbulent waters of the Golden River had risen rapidly, since the morning almost a foot rise per hour. Coming nearly to the spot where we had left our row boat, and expecting the later gone adrift, we took a canoe found by the river side, thinking as we had see the river the day before, could quickly make our way back to the gasboat, this without paddles but two little poles I had cut. They were our only means of managing the craft.

We shortly realized our mistake, but the current was strong, so did not have choice any longer, speeding over rapids. Our canoe was gradually filling up, until it went down and capsized. We took hold of it, apparently without fear, knowing we were getting close to the river mouth in slower waters. Only ahead of us was a rough spot to go through. Realizing the danger, it made me tell my partner to hold his grip firmly to the canoe. A few seconds afterwards we were dragged completely under water. In that time Hugh W. Cramb likely is to have lost his grip willingly, in purpose of getting back to the surface for air. For my part held on my breath a long time, then when about ready to choke, braced one

of my legs over one of the canoe seats, then, was able to work my arms freely and to come to the surface.

My partner then was ahead of me about 25 or 30 feet, floating on his back. When regaining my breath, I shouted to him "try to stop!" thinking that heavily dressed and weary, he could not stand afloat much longer, without getting another hold of the canoe. He only turned his face towards me in answer, apparently exhausted to a point that he was unable to speak. Then it was a matter of a few seconds before I seen him disappear under water.

Still floating down stream for a few hundred feet was searching vainly for my companion, almost forgetting my own mischief, until I was going to sea, then decided to climb over the canoe. Letting off my foot hold for that purpose struck a sand bar. The water was over my belt and hardly did manage to stand up in the current. After emptied the craft about half, by a rolling motion got in it and made shore exhausted to a great extent. Two hours later, after regaining my senses went back to the river mouth. It was then about dark with heavy rain, despite all efforts, could not detect any sign of my companion.

Tragedy occurred about 3 P.M. Saturday November 26th 1932.

Nootka, B.C. Dec. 1st 1932.

A Morod

In 1982, Morod related the story of this event to Hancock². The day following the accident, he went to Nootka to report the incident. He accompanied the Provincial Police back to Gold River to search for Cramb's body, unsuccessfully. He then delivered Cramb's gillnetter to Port Alberni, and returned to Bamfield. In the spring, he obtained a ride to Nootka with a fisherman, obtained the license for the Muchalat Lake trapline, and moved to Muchalat Lake (20 miles from the mouth of the Gold River).

Second Letter—from Ceepeecee

Andy Morod spent the summer of 1933 examining the country near Nootka Sound and prospecting². He purchased a dugout canoe with oars and rowed along the inlets. Late in July, he was in Ceepeecee (Fig. 7).

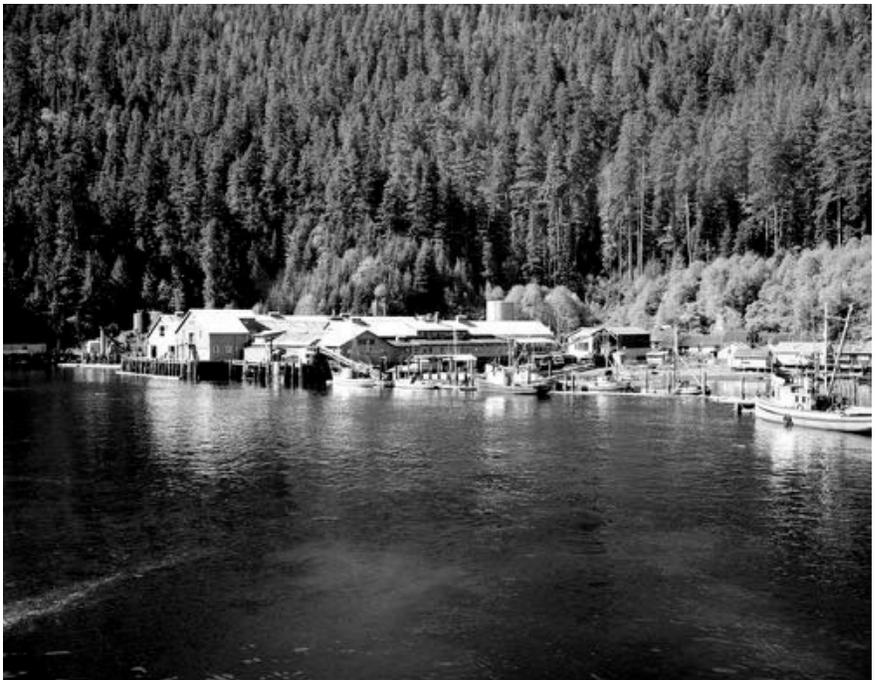


Figure 7. Ceepeecee cannery in 1947. BC Archives I-28367.

Ceepeecee is located north of Nootka Island, south southeast of Zeballos, 18 miles north of Nootka. The town is named for the CPC (Canadian Packing Corporation, a subsidiary of the California Packing Corporation). A pilchard (Pacific sardine) cannery opened there in 1926. Nelson Bros. Fisheries Ltd. bought the cannery in 1934. The pilchard vanished in the 1940s, and the cannery closed in 1951.

The post office at Ceepeecee was established on May 15, 1926. From 1932 to 1949, Delbert T. Lutes (cannery manager) was postmaster. The post office probably was in the cannery office. The office's name was changed to Esperanza on February 16, 1960. A 21mm broken circle dater for Ceepeecee was proofed on April 15, 1926 (Fig. 8).



Figure 8. Proof impression of the Ceepeecee broken circle.

Morod's second letter was written at Ceepeecee on August 5, 1933 and postmarked there the same day (Fig. 9). The cover was backstamped at Bamfield on August 7, 1933. [Most mail to Bamfield has no backstamp.] This mail was carried from Ceepeecee to Bamfield by the *Norah* (which appears to have been ahead of her schedule by one day).



Figure 9. Cover carrying the second letter.

When left Bamfield, I did row to Ucluelet via Village Is From Ucluelet came up aboard "Omlae" one of the Kyuquot pushers [tugboats]. I have been here over a week. As you probably know the plants are idle. The whole West Coast seiner fleet haven't since the start of the season catch enough pilchards to keep one plant running for one day! I have spent my time prospecting, timber cruising, mountains climbing, etc... all by myself. The deers very scarce or none around here, anyhow never carried a gun. It seems to be plenty of cougar signs. One of them killed a dog two nights ago at the Imp. [Imperial = Esso] gas station. Some of the camp big game experts went for a hunt; no bounty, so I

didn't participate. To my eyes, a cougar's life is worth as much as any of those pattern dogs! [??? kgs] Also, had talk to some of the Zeballos Arm prospectors and sighted some beautiful quartz samples. They sure have it struck rich there, but they cannot raise enough money to build a road, this necessary in order to ship the ore.

More Mail from Nootka

From August 26, 1933 until April 1935, Morod's letters all came from Nootka. A letter written August 22, 1933 at Gold River Shores (the cover is postmarked Nootka August 26th) reported:

I had a lot of adventures lately and that's the reason I did not get my mail until Friday 19th inst. So could not answer you before. After been about 4 weeks at Ceepeecee camping in a old shack, got tired and decided to hit the trail for Muchalat Lake via Tlupana Arm and Canuma Peak (Fig. 10) across the mountains instead of the Gold River trail. I started out after rowing to Head Bay from Ceepeecee about 20–25 miles. I took very little, had no gun, no compass, not even a axe. In the way met a party of 4 men from the "Pender" Houseboat going



Figure 10. Canuma Peak, "the Matterhorn of the North". Wikipedia.

to climb the Conuma Peak⁷, then decided to join the party as thinking to benefit of a good bird eye view of the Muchalat trapline. We left the valley around 6 in the morning, got to the very top (4882 feet) about 4 p.m. We all enjoyed the scenery very much. Took some pictures with a \$500 camera. The engineer told me he would send me a couple if they are any good. He said he owed the success of the expedition on me, as they could never reach the top themselves. I have done the climbing, rope fastening and assisted them because near of the top had to take my shoes off as they were entirely unsuitable. I believe I was the first human to set a foot up there. The Indians claim it has been done once before by a prospector accompanied by an Indian, but I doubt it as was no sign left at the very top. Now with the boys we have build a pyramid with stones as they

usually do in the Alps. In the way down stripped both my shoes heels off. We walked until dusk and stopped that night without food or blankets, then got back to the valley in the morning. After a good breakfast, we parted. They made for Head Bay and I went deeper in the Island. Shot through the mountains and got to the lake, without hardly see a blazed tree. Well things were O.K. I thought I'll have a thorough investigation of this trapline only my shoes were falling to pieces, hardly any sole left. Therefore I did not like the idea to come back so far bare footed and prudently made my way back to sea. I think Muchalat Lake is a great trapping country. The beavers are thick, also the martens. Bears very plentiful. Never seen so many signs yet hardly any deer. The wolves and cougars keep them well scattered. The west end of the lake is a bit tough. It is thick of them Devil's club bushes. Once back to sea rowed to Nootka where get my mail, then thought to head to Gold River. So did I get here, have found the camp you were telling about. Had heard before, but, also, that the men weren't getting paid. Anyhow though may get groceries and clothes, budgeting the cash it has no value to me in the wilds. Now! I have found the camp men all idled. They haven't work for long time. They are expecting the boss in the next boat. Some of the fellows having worked here for 2-3 months and can't get any cash or even fare to get back to Vancouver.

They are going to-morrow afternoon to Nootka to meet the boat who does come in the Thursday morning. I will go with them. I have slept in the camp last night, had 3 meals, and to-day took to the woods again. This camping getting to be a routine by now, for beside 2 weeks in the shack at C.P.C. have slept in the woods all time, was lucky the weather has been fine. Since I left Bamfield been only 3 days of rain and no fog except in the open sea. I often think about Bamfield. Have a hunch that you don't see the sunshine as much as I do here! Last night was trolling in the Gold River mouth. The big tye just thick now. It wasn't long before I hooked a 40-50 pounder. Despite careful handling he broke my leader and is still going with my only spoon. If was market here could sure make a few dollars quick. A old Indian yesterday morning got 5 great big ones in no time. The boys in the camp having lost a dozen spoons lately. Seems to be all large fish. They going to spawn in the river.

I have met a man of the wilderness. His name is B. Ferguson. He is in his later forties, prospector and trapper. He says a man is crazy in going up Muchalat Lake alone, and seems to be quite interested in coming with me. Considering my financial standing, I'll have to do the best of it, so guess if he's willing to take chance on me I'll do the same with him. He further said that if I could not get any work, he wanted me to go back to the lake to find out about the cabins and material left there, then I understand he will finance the whole things if necessary. I have also see Monk [Adam Monk, the game warden]. He was very nice. He wanted me to let him know when I go in and when I'll come out. They all seem to fear that place. For my part think it isn't much compared to the arctic wilderness, and not so far either!

...Have went through the very spot of the last year tragedy a while ago. It fill my iron heart with sadness, but doesn't alter my plans...

P.S. My address changed to Nootka, B.C.

Morod's next letter (Fig. 11) was written at Nootka on September 10, 1933 and the envelope is postmarked there on September 16th. It is a short letter but it includes a clipping from the June 29, 1933 issue of *Liberty* magazine with an article entitled "The Dole—a Great Calamity", written by Bernarr Macfadden. [The article stresses that although the depression has brought unemployment, "with the associated sorrow and suffering", "one of the most destructive forces is what is known as the dole." Macfadden suggests that having to fight sustains life. "There is not a community in the land that cannot find labor of some kind which can be performed by those who are now on the dole."] Presumably Morod, with his independent nature, sent this clipping because he agreed with its tenet.



Figure 11. Cover mailed at Nootka on September 16, 1933.

Well! I am still at Gold River's mouth. I did work here [Nootka, gs] 13 days falling timber. Hard work. Trees up to 7 feet diameter in the stump. Now! Will be yarding the timber next week, only about 300 000 feet. It won't take long, though. Getting anxious to hit the trail soon. Don't yet know if Ferguson will be coming. He is hesitating having likely 3 months of work ahead of him. He is the steam engineer. Appear to be a nice fellow. He just told me this morning that if he did not come with me would get me a good man from Zeballos so things arrange themselves somehow...

I do like the physical aspect of the country here much better than Bamfield. The "Pender" is here for about 2 weeks, also the "Stewart" just coming, so having lot of change of company.

P.S. If any mail please address it care of O'Malley Logg Co..

Morod's next letter is headed Port Nootka or Gold River's delta, Sept. 30th, 1933. Its cover is postmarked Nootka, October 6, 1933. Morod wrote:

... I am still working in the lumbering camp. After finishing falling, I have drifted to the rigging, chokerman for about 6 weeks, then boom and finally landed inside the kitchen! I have to take care of the camp and do the cooking for those men when the others are occupied loading the barge below at Bligh Is . [northeast of the mouth of Nootka Sound].

I do not have the characteristic chief [i.e., chef] hat, but I have kept on the caulk boots. I am so afraid to slip when turning the hot cakes! after all prefer a teepee in the woods with a stone age diet and cooking utensils and it beat this for health!

The Survey's gangsters have gone away shortly after I wrote you last. One trip to Canuma has refreshed my memory to a chain of reminiscences, and when drinking ice water up there, it has stirred in me the deep call back to the mountains.

Morod wrote that he had been told that the prospector who had previously climbed Canuma Peak said that he had not reached the very top, so "we were the conquerors."

The next letter is headed "Gold River, October 15th, 1933" and its envelope is postmarked October 16, 1933 at Nootka, B.C. Morod thanks Mr. Dickinson for a parcel, but says there was no letter yet. ... "think the Nootka P.O. Dept. is two century out of date."

I won't write so many drolleries this time, but will announce you that things have unexpectedly turned to a catastrophic state regarding my plans! At first, just came back from the Muchalat Lake area, where hiked clean around the lake and both shores of the river. This for 5 days, almost from dawn to dark, and mind my disgust when not finding the main cabin where the trapping material was to be left. The weather broke up, so had to hurry back in account wasn't prepared to stay in there for weeks. The rivers are swelling too quickly! I found rough going, rather further away than expected, thought in the way up wasn't following the trail. My trip 50 statute miles in the map was really about 80. It takes me at least two long days to pack 50 lbs freight in there and 2 days to trail back. This means 24 days of hard going versus the caprices of the weather to pack 300 lbs freight. Well! I came back all soaken wet except the spirit! I have seen nine bears, some of the biggest specimen I ever met. Some 4-500 lbs, four of them were in my path, and three of the beasts despite the noise I make would not clear the trail. I went as close as 20 feet, but did like to get too fresh! so whirred bullets over their heads. I was needing a shave. Guess they took me for a brother; also did not want to hurt the poor devils. Just imagine their curiosity and such nerve! Without gun would not dare to pass them. Luckily was accompanied by a 45 Colt automatic pistol, one of the Tillicum had insisted for me to take.

Regarding the trapline I have so come to the conclusion that I was fully 2 months late to get in there, and that I've heard of easier way than that to commit suicide!

Now to add conflict to the situation, we have lost at sea our barge of logs. Therefore it means all the fruit of our labor scattered to the Pacific Ocean... Now!

think will have to stick here for another barge, and will try to get a trapline in the vicinity of the sea shore, likely spend another winter in this rugged and rocky coast...

Mail by the *Maquinna*

The previous letters from Nootka to Bamfield were all carried in the *Princess Norah* (see Table 2). The next letter—written Sunday, November 26th at Nootka and its cover postmarked December 6, 1933 also at Nootka—was carried in the *Princess Maquinna*. Morod wrote:

... I shall tell you that I am still working in the lumber camp, where, doing all sorts of jobs. I am the camp barber, also have done some amateur high riggings, the profess. having got hurt we were stuck so done quite a lot of stunting 170 feet above the ground. The tree was 6½ feet diam. It was very hard climbing but has proven to be a great mind stabilizer! Last 3 weeks have been unhooking under the spare tree. Slow yarding: used to make me steam to look at the engineer and donkey both. The latter, do I call a nightmare contraption. He has about the same symptoms as the one Mr. Dickinson was nursing in the B.S. play ground.

We are working in a contract basis, for all, and will have a barge loaded somewhere around the 6–10 December next. The camp will likely shut down for a while, hope they do not leave me alone here.

I haven't tried to get a beach trap line. Too late and didn't want to lose my ground at Muchalat Lake...

Morod wrote the Dickinsons a letter on December 7, 1933 [there is no envelope] thanking them for their letter of December 2nd and wishing them a Happy Xmas. The next letter was written at Nootka on January 28, 1934 and posted on February 6th (Fig. 12). In it, Morod writes that he turned down Ferguson's proposals last fall:

... He was going to finance the trapping, but I didn't know him well enough for this. Later found, he was nothing but a lazy selfish ill-bred Eastern Canadian. Of course a logging camp is not a place to meet cultured people... We are in the present 12 men including the cook. O'Malley went to Vancouver in the 16th December boat. I don't expect him back before spring. I shall describe him as follow: American citizen, 7–8 years my senior, 6'2". Married and devoted Catholic so, of course, a herd of children. Studied the law once, use very strong language and appear to be a notorious scoundrel!

Latest reports: no barge before first of March, insurance setting the date re Ocean conditions. They also propose use David [Davis, kgs] raft, but we only have half a million afloat, need another halve. So things here have been rather slow. We have another spare tree rigged lately. O'Malley had asked me to do further high-rigging. I flatly refused, as, when come to the welfare of the 138 bones of my body I do not hazard them without a good reason, at least, some liquid assets behind it! The tree was done by the same professional. He also run the things here lately. He is an experienced man for rigging, only hasn't got any

system for leadership! His mind seems to ignite only one cylinder! – Hence we will not get any returns before the logs get [to] Victoria. I almost feel under boundage [bondage, kgs]. For 4½ months was only once to Nootka with camp boat (25 miles).



Figure 12. Cover posted at Nootka on FE 6, 1934.

The Indians had a big dance at Xmas, gathering from all over the Coast. Only one man went from camp, think he deal in fire water.

Morod wrote next on March 12th with the letter being posted on March 16, 1934.

... Since my previous letter we had many changes here. O'Malley came back, so, we did build a Davis raft with our logs then kept up yarding. I am chasing chokers still! We have a good show but poor equipment; average large timber (220 per thousand) only handicapped by rotten lines. Our bull block gone, so they're using one small 10 in diam. one. It simply grind the spirit out of the main line when lifting some 3500 ft logs. We had her strain dead twice already so don't think won't be much left by the time we are over with this pole (one and a half million ft). I do not understand this management. Our cook having deserted his post, I have done most of the mollingen slinging [Mulligan slinging? Cooking; kgs] this for 11 men (7 days). This tied up in a kitchen doesn't agree with me. I do not care much for our new chef. He is a North Irishman of imperialistic disposition. The latter was a Cockney. He had a colorful personality and some delicious yarns to tell about his extended travels. We both gun cranks, so, we use to argue often about ballistics and technical side of different makes of fire arms!

We had a lovely weather; over 2 weeks of continuous sunshine in February. Then are having another dry spell now. So warm about like July! Starting to get much of company in the woods namely the big mosquitoes... Had I forecast such winter it is likely I would not have been hibernating in this camp.

The next letter (Fig. 13) is the only registered letter in the correspondence. It was written on Sunday April 8, 1934 and its large envelope was postmarked April 14, 1934, also at Nootka. Backstamps show that the cover reached Victoria on April 18 (timemark 15), was carried north on Train 1 of the E&N Railway (VIC. & COURT R.P.O./B.C./1/AP 19/34) and reached Bamfield via Port Alberni on April 20, 1934. [Perhaps all southbound west coast registered mail was dispatched through Victoria. The only other example I have seen, from Port Alice (August 16, 1944) to Powell River, also was routed through Victoria (August 18, 1944).] Morod registered the letter because he enclosed \$15 "for some of the countless free meals digested."

We are just about ready to start sky lining our next raft. We had returns from the first one; also got \$15 account from the previous sunken barge. I am unsatisfied with our statement. Just too bad for O'Malley that I understand mathematics a bit too well! He is very friendly but I do keep him in a political distance. From our contract we are getting 50¢ per thousand for barge loading, nothing mentioned about Davis rafts so I'll have to get more or will not load again as we averaged only about one dollar a day with board the last raft!



Figure 13. Registered cover mailed at Nootka on April 14, 1934.

I intend to go to Ohlwandh river, where she empty into Muchalat Lake. I have already selected a spot of alluvial soil formation. I will plant some spuds, perhaps some rabbit food too. When next taking the trail I'll feel like a young squirrel.!

I have spoke to two of the sourdoughs from Zeballos Arm. They have told me that the marten skins only average 7-8\$ this winter. David Spencer Store the best all around buyer in Vancouver.

P.S. If you ever need dentist attention, do not go to Cook in Alberni. He is only a blacksmith. Just feel like to go down to twist his neck!!



Figure 14. Cover mailed at Nootka on May 4, 1934.

Morod wrote a letter on May 3, 1934; it was posted on May 4th (Fig. 14)—two days before the usual departure date of the *Maquinna*.

... We are supposed to go under the minimum wage act by now, beside I have to use diplomacy to extricate myself from the O'Malley's chain gang, but he'll have to hypnotize me twice before I ever sign another contract analogue to this one! _ I am getting outfitted for the wilds from the latest development. Will not likely leave here before around the 20th of May.

The *Princess Norah* Returned

The *Princess Norah* carried the mail for the summer of 1934. A cover mailed to Bamfield postmarked Nootka on July 28, 1934 contains two letters (written July 2nd and July 17th), an original painted cartoon (Fig. 15) by Len Whalen, and a pencil-drawn sketch map (Fig. 16). This cartoon is a humorous sketch of Andy Morod. It is entitled "One Thing After Another". Len Whalen (1910–1989)⁸ worked in remote logging camps—including that of O'Malley—and captured camp life in his cartoons. *Macleans* and the *Vancouver Sun* later published his cartoons.

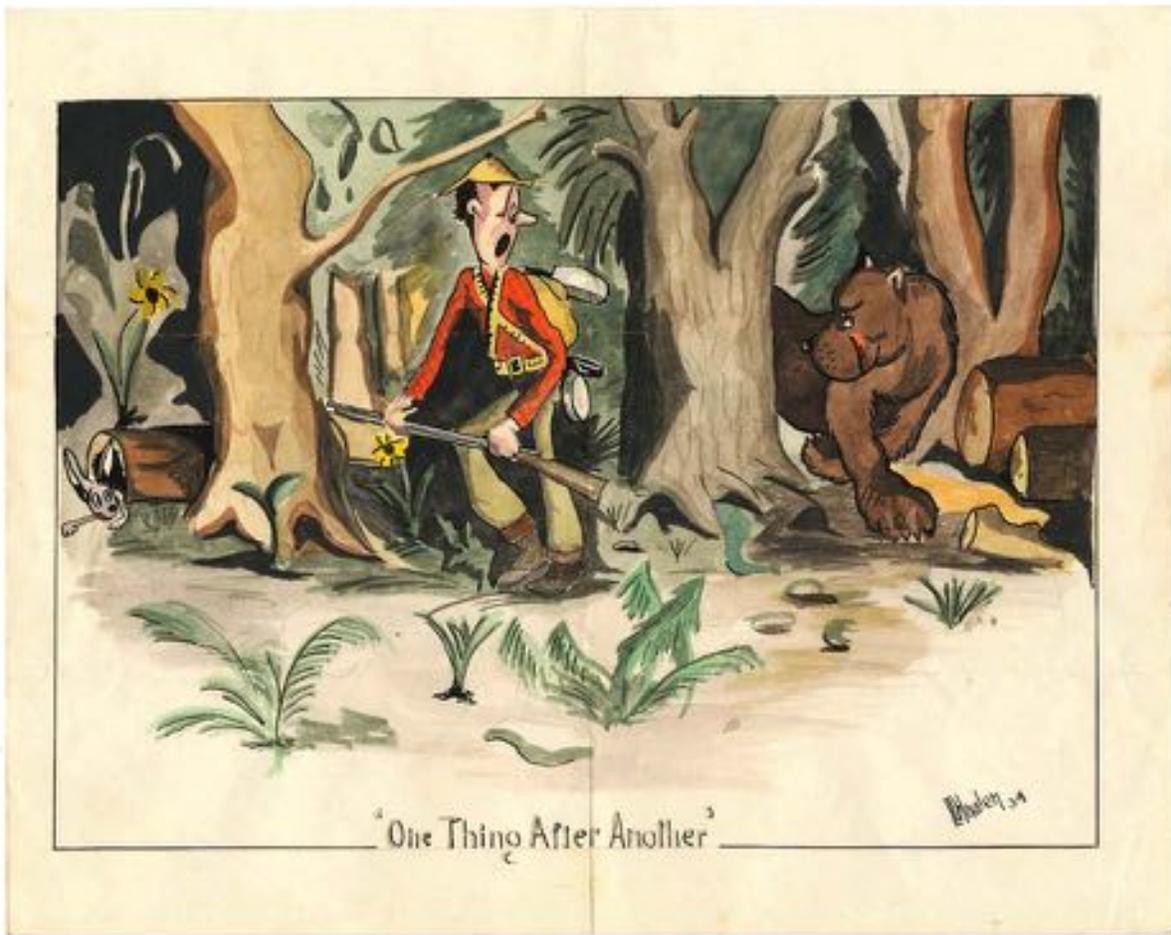


Figure 15. This cartoon is a humorous sketch of Andy Morod in the woods.

The letter written on Monday, July 2, 1934 implies that Morod had just returned from a trip to Bamfield:

Finally back to a more sunny land. In fact it was miserable down there the morning we left, with fog and rain. Came out of it at Long Beach, where the sun was shining. We stopped at Refuge Cove that same day. Got there early 1 P.M. and certainly did not miss the hot that! We made Nootka cannery in the following morning. The Kyuquot packer had already unloaded 250,000 lbs cohos, the fishing from the day before... I have camped at Nootka Saturday eve, then got back to Gold River with an Indian Sunday afternoon... My friend Cook still here, so is my will be partner. He appears to be game in coming with me. He is working so I am going alone in a extended exploring trip... for over a week.

The July 17th letter starts with Morod writing that he “had a successful trip this time, finding most of the stuff around Muchalat Lake. It was rather hard, as took me about two days around the place that I am sending a sketch [Fig. 16] of, in fact, the biggest cache of traps and camouflaged so well that I am considering myself lucky to get hands over it... The stuff was all scattered in a area of 200 square yards I’ve found most of it in good condition.”

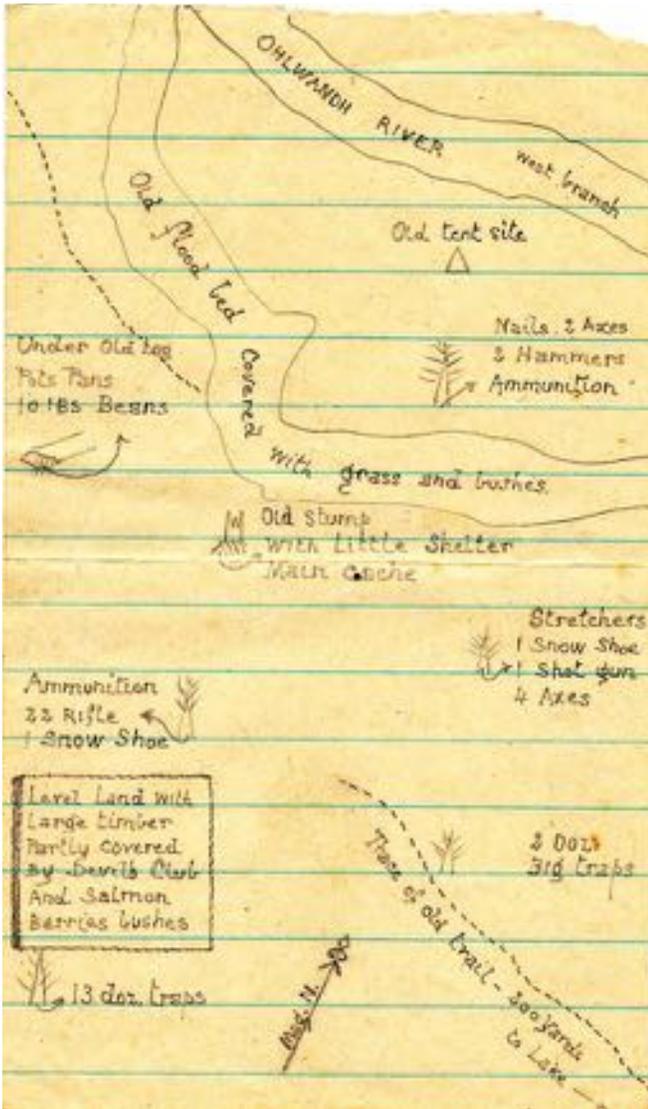


Figure 16. Sketch map showing the location of the traps that were cached near Muchalat Lake. The Ohlwandh River on the map [top] probably is the Oktwanch River, which runs into Muchalat Lake.

An envelope postmarked August 26, 1934 at Nootka contains two letters, written August 8th at Gold River and August 25th at Nootka. This clipping (Fig. 17, next page) from the *Vancouver Province* (June 30, 1934) also was in the envelope, along with two pressed flowers. The clipping describes an encounter that two prospectors had with a cougar near Zeballos.

There is no reference to the article in the clipping in either letter. [Zeballos Inlet is near McBride Bay, not McBride; see the last line of the article.]

After The Battle



RAY PETRIE and Herb Kevis, prospectors, headed out of their camp at Zeballos Inlet, on Vancouver Island, early one morning and began their climb up a trail on which salmon berry bushes and willows were still shedding the last of the night dew. They heard a snarl and around a bend in the trail came a cougar—seven feet and a half long, as they found later—headed resolutely toward them, gaunt with hunger and showing all signs of having got out of bed on the wrong side.

He showed no inclination to retreat so one of the prospectors threw a rock at him. That just made him look nastlier. The other man heaved his pick. It grazed the beast's skull and raised his anger. He started coming right at them. The other prospector swung with his pick, partly stunning the animal, but leaving him with enough fight to swipe at the pick and knock it out of his attacker's hands.

Then the fight was on, the prospectors using bits of wood, stones—anything that came to hand. The cougar was subdued and expired after a gallant fight. They measured him and took him back to camp, proud of their kill and ready to claim \$10 bounty. The photo shows Petrie with the animal.

Zeballos Inlet is close to MacBride, where a few months ago a cannery watchman killed a cougar with scrap iron.

Figure 17. Clipping from the June 30, 1934 issue of the *Vancouver Province*.

In the August 8th letter, Morod writes that when he was breaking trail he got some dry fir bark in his left eye, but he kept on working for two days. On the third day, he made his way to the sea shore. At the logging camp, he got some of the bark out on the fourth day. On the eighth day, he went to the doctor at Ceepeecee. The first doctor he had seen in Canada “used cocaine and dug it out.”

My partner Mike Francis came back and suddenly backed out from coming trapping, having important mining interests to attend to. I do not blame him either. He belongs to the Zeballos group. Their claim is rich, they are wanting 35,000 for it. Think it is worth far more if the conditions are as they have described to me... Transactions or developments are slow concerning my own; facing the whole trapline single-handed. Perfectly conscious that I am going outward the limits of a safe enterprise... What I dislike is the solitary confinement, likely 6 months, perhaps more without hearing a human voice is a bit too much... Mike has left me his new 30-30 Winchester so I can knock off a few of the bears.

In the 10th will trail again. Expect to be back in the 29th then likely will come out only once more. Time is getting precious as I haven't any cabin up yet. Will build one at Ohlwandt river mouth lake shore. About 22½ miles from sea shore. Then will have 2 tents and shelters.

P.S. August 12th. Still at the camp delayed by a slow recovery... I may possibly have another partner. He says he is coming but, I have to see first! He is much used to the woods also knowledge of mining...

In the August 25th letter, Morod writes that his potential partner asked his sister to go to a fortune teller, who asked why did he want to go to such a place? So Morod's venture will be a one-man proposition.

Really takes life as it comes; only all this has delayed me and broken up my plans, I almost feel like the civilized world hasn't any place for me. Therefore will retreat for a time in the remote wilderness

O'Malley's camp moving in 2 – 3 days 12 miles down the canal from Gold's mouth My eye not back to normal yet. It was much more serious than thought. Will be O.K.

Morod wrote a letter at Gore Island [*near the west end of Muchalat Inlet, which extends east from the east side of Nootka Sound; kgs*] on September 22, 1934 and posted it at Nootka on September 26th:

Finally had your letter of the 12th last evening when emerging back from wilderness. Yesterday hiked 8½ miles through the mountains then rowed 12 miles down the Inlet to logg. camp I have built a log cabin by the lake shore 14' x 8' ins. dim. It took me only 7 days, frame and roofing. Now I have to finish it. I will have floor and fire place... This is my last trip to the outside world If you don't hear from me during next March up to the 10th of April next, will you be kind enough to inform my mother: that her rebellious son has ended in the wilderness

True to his word, Morod sent no communication until April 6, 1935, when he sent a telegram from Nootka to say that he was back from his winter quarters—after mushing five days through snow then a two-day canoe trip. He sent a letter from Nootka on April 14th, but its cover has no letter.

Princess Maquinna

According to the marine columns of the *Daily Colonist*, only the *Princess Maquinna* served the west coast route from October 7, 1934 until May 8, 1938. (There was a period in September 1934 when the *Colonist* did not give a ship name for the route, so I do not know when in 1934 the *Maquinna* started back on the route.)

Morod mailed a short letter to Bamfield at Ceepeecee on April 25, 1935. He says he rowed in to Nootka Sound April 21st. "To make a long story short, all well. Rowed over to Nootka then C.P.C. aboard my dugout... I have much to tell only my mind refuses to concentrate... so will write more some other time."

The next mailing from Morod was a letter written at Nootka on May 5, 1935 and posted on May 6th (Fig. 18). The letter says, "Enclosing a few pictures of this district", which are no longer in the envelope. This would explain why the letter was double-rated (5¢ made up of 4¢ postage for up to 2oz plus 1¢ war tax).



Figure 18. Double-weight cover mailed at Nootka on May 6, 1935.

An undated account of Morod's encounter—probably in December 1934—with a cougar is included with the May 5, 1935 letter:

That particular day, I was inspecting a new territory, cruising almost lazily amid the big timbers setting a few traps in my way.

Arrived by the river. My attention was drawn into a large cedar tree sitting aside of the bear's trail where a log jam was crossing the waters. A strategical point for a set I thought scrutinizing the tree bark for marten scratches.

Suddenly I was conscious of an intruder moving swiftly towards me. It was a cougar, and only forty five feet distant. Greatly was I surprised but, had to admire

this superb cat, such gracefulness. His decided pace in a business manner like. In the meantime, my right hand instinctively operating the lever action of my rifle. This sudden move had him aware of my presence. He stopped abruptly, took a cold glance at me, and apparently decided to keep his right, cutting into a straight angle. I barely had time to aim, hitting the beast on his leap throughout the flank. He nearly dropped, then disappeared beyond some large trees, when in sight again. He was speeding in such a manner that his hind legs and tail were going together in a whirl hardly touching the ground. Once more my rifle barked taking part of one of his legs off. However the beast still going, despite bleeding profusely, had still enough strength to disappear among some large wind fallen trees going throughout every hole. The darkness of that December day was fastly approaching moreover I had to proceed cautiously crawling under logs. Finally had to abandon the hunt for darkness, almost hating myself for having hurt this poor feline of the deep timber line also realizing that the same cougar must have had three livers considering the large amount of blood he was losing, This will remain a unsolved puzzle in the annals of my hunting days.

On May 15th, Morod wrote an eight-page letter at Nootka to Mr. Dickinson. Its cover is postmarked May 26, 1935. He provided more details about the last winter at Muchalat Lake. "I was locked in there with barely the necessities in food and clothes." He relied on ducks and trout to pull through, with a few peas and beans, some flour, and a little lard. He found some old caches of supplies (left in 1929 or 1930) in a tent with rotten canvas; some of the food he found was still edible (e.g., olive oil, canned coffee, and butter). He built a 10-foot cedar skiff. In autumn, he caught sockeye, coho, steelhead, and spring salmon in the lake. "I intend to go to C.P.C. soon. Was half promised job from the first of May last but I didn't turn up. If don't strike any thing will get back to wilderness exploring mountains."

The next communication to Dickinson in Bamfield from Morod is a telegram sent on May 31, 1935 from Ceepeecee, sent through the Government Telegraph Service. It says, "Would you consider two months trolling Kyuquot answer address Kyuquot. Andy Morod."

In a brief June 24, 1935 letter from Ceepeecee (mailed June 25th) Morod asks if Dickinson received the previous letter and the wire. "The harness of slavery is getting heavier than ever, and the call of the carefree existence of the wilds is almost becoming irresistible!"

At Ceepeecee, on July 5, 1935, Morod wrote and mailed a letter to Mr. R. Dickinson (Fig. 19). He says he was displeased to learn that a wrong message was given to Dickinson, stating to answer to Kyuquot, not Nootka [see the wording of the wire above.] Morod wrote, "The run down condition of your material could have easily been overcome", which suggests that Dickinson owned a boat that could have been used for fishing.

I am therefore temporarily settled here. I just wanted a change in my diet more than else, feeling dissatisfied and restless when working for someone... The fishermen are in strike so if they don't settle the matter soon, our work will get over in a few days.



Figure 19. Cover mailed at Ceepeecee on July 5, 1935.

The next letter was written at Ceepeecee on August 12, 1935 and mailed at Nootka on August 16th (Fig. 20). This is one of the few 1930s covers with postage paid by a commemorative stamp. Morod wrote the letter "to tell you of my going into the wilderness so, won't get any mail for undetermined time. Do not take winter supplies but will attempt a escape before snowed in."

It doesn't smell pilchards out there, and simply decided that if I had to swim in such a dirt to earn a living I just would refuse to live! Therefore, gave a ultimatum to pilchards minded Lutze [Del Lutes, cannery manager] to get another victim. He is deceived with me...



Figure 20. cover posted at Ceepeecee on August 16, 1935.

Expect the Fisheries plane sometime in September, and may possibly fly you a few words if things materialize.

Morod's next letter was written at "Beaver Lodge", Muchalat Lake on September 23, 1935 and mailed a month and three days later (October 26th) at Nootka. "Up here! things O.K. so far, and no politics among we unregistered voters of this district. The time is just flying by in the wilderness." Morod scribbled the message "October 25th O.K." on the back of the envelope.

There was a two-month delay before the next letter. Morod wrote a five-page letter started at Nootka on December 25, 1935 and mailed at Ceepeecee the same day.

Received your letter of September 21st last only yesterday when ending a five months of solitary existence; therefore you shall understand my prolonged silence. I have done a extensive prospecting almost up to now. Have new discovery though do not ascertain the value yet...

My trapping has been rather poor. Brought only 16 marten. Muchalat Lake apparently depleted. I made a go towards the Nimpkish, nothing there. Then wasted my time in the mountains adjacent to the lake instead should have gone towards Gold Lake over 18 miles from my dwelling

I have built another log cabin in the vicinity of the old one and used the roofing from the latter. I had a very comfortable home so tightly built the mice cannot come in The old cabin flooded to the middle of the door but the old man up and dry this time! [The cabin Morod built in 1934 was below the high-water mark, and he was flooded out several times in the winter of 1934–1935². He dismantled this cabin and used the logs for the new cabin.] I had intended to go down Coast in the 16th December boat but flood and storms had me camping in a old leaky and smoky cabin at Fork of Gold River this over 10 days.

[At the hotel in Nootka] I had an enjoyable time with Professor Tauber of Vienna. He is packing to leave and go to Victoria this boat. His line is the study of trace evolution concerning reincarnation... He came to Nootka to gather Indian architecture for his lantern slide... He loves Swedenborg writing⁹...

Writing now from C.P.C. narrows 25 miles further on. Having accomplished the work I am sailing again to-morrow morning by steamer bee line to Vancouver!

A brief letter from Nootka dated December 26, 1935 (one day after the previous letter) says, "I will be heading to town anytime in one of the seine boats. Don't know of any ports of call therefore may not see you." Included in this envelope is an undated, two-page narrative written on "the shores of Muchalat Lake". It relates the details of a trip to Andy's camp in February in the wind and snow, and tells of his trapping in the winter. "By the time I will return to sea shore I will have hiked approximately 335 miles nearly all over snow... "

There is no letter until May 13, 1936, written at Ceepeecee and mailed there on May 15th:

Presently dwelling over the head of Tahsis Canal, at the Perry's ranch¹⁰. Pete, working for Lutze [Lutes] with boat at Cachalot [a whaling station on the south side of Kyuquot Sound], where, John attend to homing business. The ranch a lovely place with a magnificent scenery.

I have learned a great deal lately re-prospecting with field experience instead of technical knowledge... I will have to resume my touring trip to Zeballos.

O'Malley was asking my help to load a raft. He mentioned 7\$ a day for 10 days. I wouldn't take it, though the boys are under a better treatment now.

In a June 15, 1936 letter from Ceepeecee, Morod tells Dickinson that "I am feeling quite optimistic concerning my coming enterprises into the surrounding mountains." He may stake a claim in Dickinson's name.

Morod wrote the Dickinsons a letter at Ceepeecee on June 30, 1936; it was mailed on July 5th.

I have just returned from the upper Zeballos River East Fork, 15 miles in, after crossing the mountains from Tasis [Tahsis] river. I was accompanied of Peter Perry, the latter having sighted something 4 years ago and was almost certain of success. However it didn't materialize as a wide lime belt seems to cover or stop the rich Zeballos lode.

Now we are soon going to my district. C. Smith will come also. Our main objective will be placer mining. I will also bring some samples from my previous discoveries. Personally intend to spend the summer in that sector, but shall come out again at least once and still getting my mail at C.P.C. until final retreat.

I never went visit at Zeballos as there are too much discord, appearingly they have no business executive among themselves...

From Vancouver – 1937

The first letter from Andy Morod in 1937 was written at 1180 Nelson St., Vancouver. It was written on January 5th and the cover is postmarked January 6th. He wrote to give the Dickinsons his Vancouver address and report that he was still alive. He met a friend he hadn't seen for 13 years.

I have been disappointed with my ore samples assaying only 25¢ per ton

Now I am camping where are lots of trees and lawn atop hill. I have a housekeeping room so may do a little cooking of my own as I do find restaurants tiresome and boarding houses are institutional for me! ... My furs have brought a good return though the deal was closed so easily...

Back to Ceepeecee

February found Morod back from Vancouver and working at Pacific Logging [at O'Malley's camp] in Ceepeecee. He wrote a letter there on February 5, 1937 (posted the same day, Fig. 21). He reports:

I did start working today loading a raft of logs. The harness is weighing heavy but I shall curb the will from the understanding! I have plenty friends here so that I am feeling like at home.

The new mill is going up seriously at the McBride Bay. I believe it will be a large one. [In 1937, Nootka Wood Products started building an export lumber mill at McBride Bay (Port Tahsis). The mill was a failure.¹¹]



Figure 21. Cover mailed at Ceepeecee on February 5, 1937.

The next letter (March 3rd, postmarked March 5th) is headed "Tasis Narrows, Ceepeecee". The 3¢ George V stamp is tied by an unusual 6-bar killer (Fig. 22).



Figure 22. Faint Ceepeecee date stamp and an unusual 6-bar cancel.

Since my return here, I have worked by any weather excepting one day, when it was too stormy. I do belong to the loading crew. We just have finished 2 Davis rafts, one of hemlock pulp going to Port Alice, where the other of fir goes to Victoria...

Presently, there is 50 men here and heard was 70 men working at McBride Bay (across from C.P.C. plant) building the old fabled mill!

I imagine there shall be a important settlement very soon, as the mill alone shall employ over 300 men. It will keep 4-500 loggers going¹¹. There is also the option of much change in the Zeballos district. We may possibly have a doctor here soon. It is badly needed for the logging alone.

On April 23rd (mailed April 25th), Morod wrote from Ceepeecee that he was "still amidst the logging sphere". His friend John Perry was running the gas station this month because Mrs. Davis was on holiday. Andy and John planned to go prospecting at Muchalat Arm. The Nootka Wood Products mill was progressing. He also wrote "I am glad to hear you were liking the book of Swedenborg⁹, such work are unmatched by modern writers..."

A letter that Morod wrote at Tahsis on May 13, 1937 was mailed at Ceepeecee on May 16th. He relates an incident from Coronation Day [May 12th]:

The Coronation morning found me however 5 miles back into mountains. Shortly after day-break I had cooked a little breakfast in a cabin, where I was camping, then was engaged in trout fishing a hundred yards away along the lake shore in the immediate vicinity. The morning was dull and wet with a cold wind blowing. The trout weren't biting. I was projecting to move further on with my skiff, when my attention was suddenly drawn by a intense cracking along the shore line. At first, I was thinking of a bear or elk possibly was making its way along, until a intense smoke awakened a different conception of the facts! The cedar shakes cabin was ablaze. Rushing to the scene I quickly fought the flames who had already burned quite a hole in the roof. The whole thing resulting for a very defective stove pipe. Anyway it did curtail my fishing for after patching the roof came back to Tasis ranch, where I told the Perry Bros. their cabin had mark of the Coronation Day!

I certainly didn't like the idea to loose [lose] my sleeping bag I have just bought

On June 16, 1937 at Ceepeecee, Morod mailed an envelope containing two letters—one dated June 5th (addressed to Ada Dickinson) and the other dated June 15th (addressed to Mr. Dickinson). On June 5th he wrote:

Just got here today having stayed at Nootka... I have left O'Malley's camp a month ago. The weather was so terrible, wet and stormy. I did encamp with the Perry Bros at the head of Tasis Canal. I was supposed to go prospecting with John, only the tide, moon and weather weren't to his liking!! So, I pushed on alone with a sailing canoe and equipment. I have been as far as Burman River, 45 miles from here Nootka way, came back this morning after a two weeks cruise... I have camped at eight different places during the trip and never seen or spoke to anyone... Now to-morrow intend to climb a mountain about 5000 ft. It is deep snow up there but intend to go for pictures. It shall take me two days to get up there. On my return it is likely that John [Perry] and I will pull out again for Muchalat Arm. I intend also to go 8 miles up the Gold River to ascertain of the true value of the ?? found of December last...

The June 15th letter is a reply to Dickinson's letter:

There is one month and a half since I did quit logging. I couldn't get John Perry out yet! There's always something. I am going to abandon our proposed partnership

The Zeballos mines are doing much development this year. Lot of machinery is gradually replacing labor.

The next surviving letter was written at Ceepeecee on December 15, 1937. [It is the last letter before he went to Zeballos.] It entered the mail stream at Bamfield on 18th. After Christmas and New Year greetings, Morod wrote:

... I have build a spacious cabin at Canuma river's forks and a new skiff at Muchalat Lake. There were plenty furs. In 17 days of trapping, caught 13 marten. The largest I have took yet. Then closed the shop to avoid too thick snow atop mountain.

Morod tried a new trapping area, but in a month—with 40 traps—caught only one marten. There were plenty of deer around his Canuma dwelling, but when he went trapping, there were no deer and there were no fish in the Upper Canuma. The days there had only six hours of daylight. Muchalat was different: plenty of fish, game, and birds.

I do imagine you are getting all the news about the mining boom of the place [Zeballos]. It start to look like the characteristic pioneer days of the North and a new era of great excitement to many; with it, the usual concentration of all the evils mankind ever knew! Until today I think the lawyers of Vancouver are raking the greatest part of it. I have heard the country is getting all staked for miles around. The Pioneer Mines have done lot of it; it means they are expecting a real mine.

I do intend to go there soon, perhaps work for 2 or 3 months and to get all lined up. Then, I shall prospect there sometimes. I also will develop the prospect found last summer and stake it first, for I can foresee a invasion of strangers during next season.

Zeballos

Andy Morod went to Zeballos about the end of 1937. The Zeballos region became his home for many years, not just the 2 or 3 months he planned. Gold had been panned near Zeballos in 1924, and in the early 1930s a group of unemployed fishermen staked successful claims (the White Star groups of claims) six miles from tidewater¹². Between 1934 and 1937, they shipped 47 tons of ore to the smelter at Tacoma, Washington. The high-grade mines were on mountain sides up the river valley, inland from the port of Zeballos. Until 1938, when the government sponsored road building, mining properties were accessed by “tractor roads, packhorse trails, and footpaths”¹². A gold rush occurred in 1935 and 1936. Zeballos townsite became a service centre and transshipment point for the mines developing in the Zeballos River valley. The townsite was rough. It was located on a gravel ridge near the delta of the Zeballos River, parallel to a slough. It was on low ground, but fairly dry at very high tides or spring river run off. Streets were muddy, and had wooden sidewalks (see Fig. 23). By 1938, the population of Zeballos was about 1,000. A government wharf was built in 1938, and Zeballos became a port of call for the *Princess Maquinna* (and the *Norah*).

A post office was opened at Zeballos on August 1, 1937. The first postmaster (until 1940 and then again from 1943 to 1948) was George S.W. Nicholson (1887–1980). Nicholson was not only postmaster but he wrote the definitive history of the Nootka region¹³. Figure 24 is a photograph of his home and the Zeballos post office.



Figure 23. Board road at the lower end of the Zeballos townsite (February 1938). BC Archives Item G-02459



Figure 24. Major Nicholson's Home and the Post Office. BC Archives F-01199

A 24mm circle date stamp was proofed on July 20, 1937 for Zeballos (see Fig. 25). This is the only Zeballos datestamp seen on the covers in the Morod correspondence.



Figure 25

Andy Morod's first letter from Zeballos was written on January 13, 1938. Its cover was postmarked on January 15th (Fig. 26) and it was delivered to Bamfield by the *Maquinna*. He wrote:

... I have been here for the last two weeks, touring, visiting and just came back of a five days exploring trip. Alone as usual and travelling light. Nevertheless the fog and winter weather hampers prospecting operations. I did climb about 2700 feet and 8 miles from sea shore. Gave up for now. Found the country nearly all staked, in the blind what they call wild catting. I do not want any of it. I certainly find things changed in these parts, almost beyond recognition. The Zeballos town is only a mud hole in the present but promise large development this coming season. Some of the mines particularly the Privateer promise well. The latter has already produced \$100,000 worth of gold within a hundred foot of tunnel and as certain of a deposit of over one million close to surface, where there is perhaps much more in depth. The original owners and pioneers were the old timers Bird [Alfred Bird], Smith [Charles Smith], Mike Francis and Blum [Albert Bloom], the latter dead. They have sold it to Petrie [Raymond A. Pitre] outfit for \$45,000 with option. Now a man named Hillstad has staked over their claims, pretending the former owners didn't do their assessment works. Therefore a big law suit is on. Bird, Smith are going to town this boat. I am staying with them. They want me to pilot them up the Canuma country next spring. They are sort of old west characters but nice and the best prospectors of this sector so that I may enter partnership with them.



Figure 26. Morod's first mail from Zeballos.

Since my return to this section I have seen enough to write a book. A gold rush always rakes up some of the outstanding characters of a country, where good and bad have to meet often unexpectedly. During my new acquaintances I have met John Cameron ex police chief of Vancouver, quite a sport with a glass eye and false teeth. For fact I have helped to put him to bed the same night. (He only weighs 245 lb!). He has job as chief of police here. [At Zeballos, Cameron was a B.C. Provincial Police constable.] In such settlement there is always a great spirit of cooperation. I have also encounter some of the B.C. amazons, one of them the daughter of a professor. Married only a few months to a young geologist. Has wintered here and goes with her husband to live in tent in this dirty weather in places who would surpass your imagination. It takes someone of character and erudition to abandon the paint pot and stick their feet into these muddy trails! I imagine one never will know what he might find in the remote wilderness this coming summer! I am afraid it will become too civilized to retain the old timers and no cure but move on!

I have not settled down yet. Getting mail at 3 post offices when my belongings are scattered from Muchalat Lake to Zeballos city! In the meantime, I am preparing to play my trump card which shall decide a lot during the coming summer.

P.S. Around one hundred men landed here this boat and about the same number in the 4th boat. I imagine there will be thousands soon!

The second letter (four pages) from Zeballos, headed Sunday afternoon January 30th, 1938 and posted on February 5th, describes Zeballos quite thoroughly.

I am presently living alone, awaiting the arrival of C. [Charles] Smith from town, where A. Bird and Smith brothers have gone this morning to King's Pass vicinity of Danzig mine Nootka. They are going to prepare new camping headquarters. My sole reason to be here is to collect some wages next boat day having worked 8 days for the Consolidated Mining Co. They have took over a few claims at the head of Spud Creek and did build a cabin in the snow. A young kid engineer was running the show. What a layout! Camping in a damp and overcrowded tent with no means to dry up any clothes. This in a continuous rainy or snowy weather. It is ridiculous to go through such hardships when you have a company with millions behind; nothing but ignorance and sub management. Therefore I wouldn't stick with it.

Today the snow has come to the beach (about ½ a inch). Hope it won't increase as I intend to move soon. I might enter in a equal partnership with a few men, only, later on as I intend to stake and retain control of my prospect regardless of the opinion it may create among my future partners...

... Most of the newcomers are taking the same boat back. Most of them meet bitter disappointment for the work isn't really going full blast yet. Beside there is no accommodation to lodge anywhere. The so called town of Zeballos constitutes an agglomeration of about 65 shacks and tents. There is one store, post office,

3 restaurants and one hotel the latter still under construction. I also forget 2 laundry, one owned by a Chinaman. There is only one muddy street with wooden rails for the trucks. The town has been started in the tide flats so, a high tide backs up to the middle of it, when the river in flood time will cover most of it. Sanitary conditions are quite defective when everyone seems to take advantage of his neighbour's lot. I just imagine how nice it shall be when the weather turns warmer. The brave chief of Police hasn't turned up yet. No one seems to check anything. Many of the green horns just disappearing into the woods, many perhaps never to return. I simply hate the sight of the place and seldom go there, living at the opposite side of the valley (west side) about 1 mile away. The Zeballos Valley I have found changed almost beyond recognition since I was here 2 years ago. I found over 4 miles of truck road, where I use to pack stuff along a rough, bushy trail. Presently there is about 10 trucks (2-ton trucks) and a giant caterpillar, the latter working for the extension of the road. Large and modern buildings have sprung up in places where it wasn't hardly an axe mark...

A. Blum death [Albert Bloom] was a clear case of suicide¹⁴. The police took his rifle for finger prints. I have seen the bullet hole in the floor and slept in the same cabin shortly after the removing of the body. The affairs are in the hands of the Administrator, Alberni. He did not have any relatives in this country. Mike Francis affairs are also in the same hands and his share of the sale of the Privateer is going to the Administrator¹⁵. Mike had a sister in the States. I like to find out some day if she really get any of it.

Do not believe all the newspaper reports about this place. For instance there were an article lately about a new strike 1 mile from town made by Heywood of Duncan. From my own investigation of the property found nothing but insanity. and hard work! The poor sap was almost shaking under gold fever, and suppose to be an assayer. He certainly created a excitement to many, but did not fool the old timers. The whole Zeballos Valley has been staked from end to end, and you know the game, these claims (destitute of minerals) are paddled [peddled] to town folks for a few hundred dollars, when the mining outfit would not buy them; only in the case they would be situated between known mining properties. In the meantime there is little remedy to these evils a gold rush always brings along. I foresee a great invasion of gold seekers this spring. Parties will be landed by plane in Muchalat Lake also. This means slaughtering of game, entering my cabins, perhaps using and destroying food and equipment. In a word these rugged mountains I was exploring single handed will be trodden by a barbarous horde of the latest craze of civilization. Therefore, it shall gradually lose all the charm and attraction for me... I had a letter from Mr. Monk [Adam Monk] some time ago. He state that if I apply to the Dept., it is likely they will authorize me to trap some of the beaver of Muchalat Lake... I have also sent Lindberg's letter to Monk, he did answer the same, and tell me to carry on. I thought it was better to

let Monk know this, as, I might meet this Lindberg¹⁶ anytime back in the wilds; he is the kind who is quite able to display a gun show.

Ginger Coote Airways Ltd.

Almost four months elapsed before Andy's next letter to Mr. and Mrs. Dickinson. The next letter is headed Zeballos June 1st 1938. The envelope (Fig. 27) was postmarked at Vancouver on June 3rd. It bears a 3¢ stamp and the five-line handstamp of "Ginger" Coote Airways Ltd. The Coote airplane company carried this mail as courtesy airmail from Zeballos to Vancouver—a free service¹⁷. Ginger Coote's company performed this type of courtesy service from 1938 to 1940.



Figure 27. Cover carried air by courtesy of Ginger Coote.

Russell L. "Ginger" Coote (1898–1970) was a bush pilot who had served with the Royal Flying Corps in World War I. His company operated single-engine, pontoon-equipped aircraft from the Wells Air Harbour, a seaplane base on the Middle Arm of the Fraser River, on Lulu Island¹⁸. The Gibson Brothers financially backed Coote and by the fall of 1939 they took over the company¹⁹. Canadian Pacific Railway purchased Ginger Coote Airways Limited on February 1, 1941²⁰ and its operation was coordinated with its larger competitor, Canadian Airways Limited. By the end of 1941, the C.P.R. had acquired majority control of Canadian Airways and nine other Canadian air transport companies. Canadian Pacific Air Lines Limited was officially formed from these 10 companies in May 1942.

Morod's June 1st letter says:

Hello friends! a long time has vanished since I have wrote. Hope you will understand. I have been roaming the hills. I have just spent a month at Port Eliza [NW side of Esperanza Inlet, which is on the NW side of Nootka Island] with 4 partners. In order to prospect we have staked extensive ground. Presently here a few days but anxious to regain the freer expanse of the wilds...

Zeballos town has grown amazingly. It is a characteristic mining town with the underworld in its apex. Yes! There are all the most up to date traps and contraptions to deprive the fools of there hard earned dollars...

From Zeballos, by Ship

Morod's next letter was written on Saturday, August 27, 1938 at Zeballos. He used stationery with ZEBALLOS, B.C. printed at the upper right in dark blue (Fig. 28). In the summer of 1938, the *Princess Norah* operated on the West Vancouver Island route (cf. Table 2).

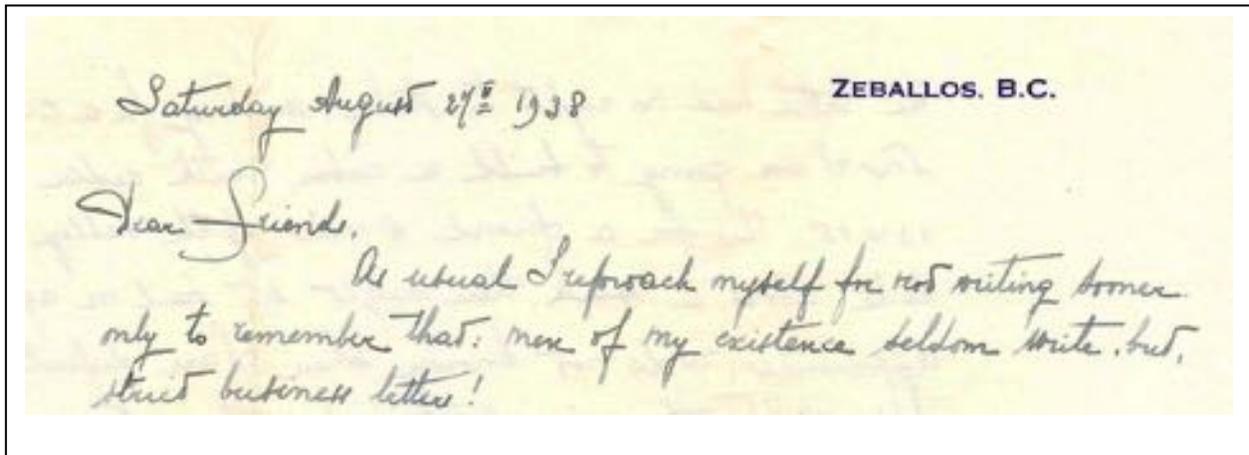


Figure 28. Letter head, August 27, 1938.

From Andy's opening "men of my existence seldom write", it sounds like the Dickinsons were among few friends receiving letters from Morod. His letter continues:

I came back a few days ago from a long range cruise of solitary exploring. I was away a month, braved smoke, fought a fire and trodden many rugged miles of entirely unknown territory. I have found new prospects, where, one of my old ones did surprise me. It assayed half an ounce gold per ton 80 ft in breadth. I went back 9 miles into the woods to get more samples and staked 4 claims for a start. (I had staked you one.) In my hurry to get my samples assayed came to Zeballos, instead of to ship them to Vancouver. Well: the samples did not go at all, so didn't record the claims. However, the certificate from the assayer proved me of carelessness in the assay, where he also (the assayer) want it to know where the ore came from! So, here is the puzzle unsolved, when there is also the possibility of a mistake from the government assayer, which I do not think could be as well as dishonest work from the other part. I am not taking anything for granted and will go back sometime for more sampling. Right now, coming back from a 3500 ft high ride in the Zeballos Valley in a good area, where, just staked 4 claims with 2 showings tipped from a friend. The latter had no rights to stake, working for a company. Now I am going to build a cabin with cedar shakes 13 x 15. This for a friend 6 miles up the valley. It will take about a week, then might set sail on again. Apparently, I do not know when I am defeated when I do not think there is only two possible outcomes for the determined pioneer type of man that is: achievement or death!

Morod wrote the next letter to Bamfield at Zeballos on October 10, 1938. It entered the mail stream at Vancouver two days later. Possibly it was carried by favour to Vancouver, or possibly it was Ginger Coote courtesy air mail lacking their handstamp. Andy says that he has “curtailed all but business operations!” His letter tells of his first paying claim.

... Sorry to say, was back into the Conuma country for more ore sampling and could not get any more good value of the place I had staked: therefore didn't record the claims. I do think an error must have been made by the assayer, giving me the value to the wrong sample, So will investigate further next year. In the meantime the 4000 ft. alt ridge I have staked in the Zeballos Valley has promised well. We have a fisher vein (stringer of high grade ore) [a fissure vein; a mineral deposit in a crack in the rock of the Earth's crust], where a shear zone of great size has also proven trace of free gold. I have acted as executive for the group and signed up an option with the Pioneer Gold Mines. I have been in their pay roll ever since and done lots of cruising to finely blaze a new trail for back packing and eventually horse or trucks. It wasn't no small job either, I climb once about 2500 ft in what would make a horizontal plane of less of a quarter of a mile. That part shall be served by an aerial later if things pan out. We do think of a good possibility of to make a mine of it! I shall not see Muchalat Lake resort this fall and intend to winter here. The best summer weather I have ever seen in the coast has finally broken up to a heavy rain to-day. The old Zeballos River is rapidly swelling up and might teach some of the new settlers that modern engineering and building do not always bridle Nature's elements! and confirm the old timers stories of fierce floods!

Over two months later, on December 14th, Morod wrote a four-page letter at Zeballos to the Dickinsons at Bamfield. Its envelope (Fig. 29) was postmarked December 19, 1938 at Bamfield, indicating that it was carried south from Zeballos in the *Princess Maquinna*—possibly as favour mail as far as Bamfield.



Figure 29. Cover that carried the December 14, 1938 letter.

Morod wrote:

It is about 2 months since I have received your letter! As you see, social writing is getting neglected I am all in the mining and quite absorbed in its various lines of action...

Zeballos already boasts second [third? gs] rank for air traffic in Canada, with Vancouver first and Edmonton second. The citizens are all air minded. No one seems to think twice to board a plane anytime (myself included!).

Resuming the pro and con of the past summer mining activities I do foresee a great future for all the district extending between Barkley Sound and Quatsino Sound. Despite all the contrary theories of the wizards, who are making reports for the government, I firmly believe that a new mining district, perhaps one of the richest in B.C. is slowly taking its place in the map!

The great invasion of prospectors did surprise me, for 35 per cent of them amounted to paper in the fire. They did not trail me far, and will still leave me more virgin ground than I could possibly prospect in 3 life times. I have also been pleased to see that no one has ever discovered anything of importance on my past field of exploration...

The property I have staked last fall is looking promising. At the time of the deal it wasn't so great. Therefore I had signed up an option for 20 000, keeping 10% interest. Owing to the early snow up there (4000 ft. alt.) the Company did suspend the work, and dropped the thing, account of our monthly payments, which were to start in December. We couldn't be more pleased, as we are going to raise our price to at least 100 000. Personally do think the same company do not realize the importance of the showings. We are presently in the making of a new deal, but, considering climaturic conditions, and the ground under snow, we shall be satisfied to obtain some cash down, then grant them 6 months to lease with no further payments.

I have 3 partners in that. Perhaps the finger of fate has coupled us together. One springs from Nova Scotia, one from Missouri, the third from Alberta!

Of late there has been a important discovery of high grade ore at Bear River, Clayquot Sound. It was found by a man from the Prairies with no experience in the mining field. It looks as good as Zeballos, and assays very high in gold²¹.

Another partnership I belong to called the "Jitter Bugs" consists of 7 gentlemen adventurers, all bachelors... The same gang chipping together have sent four men in an expedition to Bear River. The same having proved quite successful struck high grade ore assaying 3½ ounces gold per ton. Two of the gang just flew back there a few days ago...

Of late I have been trapping a few marten in the valley. It is in one of my partner's ground... A small sawmill is just by the wharf. The old Maquinna does her share also. One trip a while ago, she unloaded over one hundred tons of freight.

The December 14th letter included a clipping from an unknown magazine or journal showing an aerial view of the head of Zeballos Arm (Fig. 30). From printing on the back of the clipping, the source appears to be a mining journal.

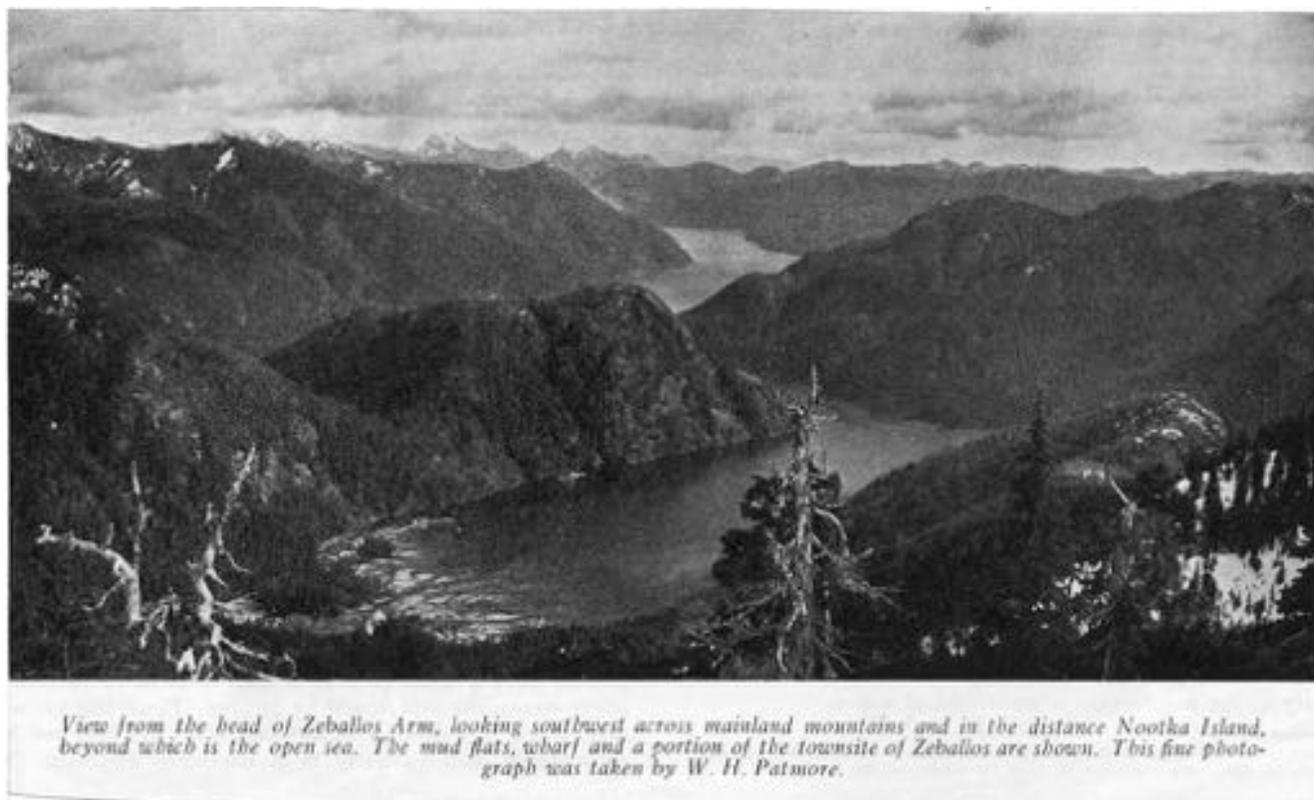


Figure 30. View of the head of Zeballos Arm, looking southwest toward Nootka Island.

Air Mail from Zeballos

Contract air mail service between Zeballos and Vancouver was inaugurated on November 28, 1938²². The postage rate was 6¢ per ounce. Flights took place on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, leaving Vancouver at 10am and arriving at Zeballos at noon. Return flights left Zeballos at 2pm and reached Vancouver at 4pm. The carrier—Canadian Airways Limited—used twin-engine float planes. Fig. 31 (next page) shows a picture post card of Canadian Airways “City of Victoria” (de Havilland D.H.89A Dragon Rapide) at Zeballos.

Andy Morod mailed his first letter to Robert Dickinson by regular air mail on Friday January 20, 1939 (Fig. 32). The air mail postage (6¢ per oz) was paid by a 6¢ air mail stamp. Canadian Airways would have flown the letter to Vancouver on Saturday January 21st. It would then have been taken by a Canadian Pacific Steamship to Nanaimo, by the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway to Port Alberni, and by local steamer to Bamfield. In the letter, Morod comments on a radical transformation of the “mining field and its attributes” on the West Coast. He had trapped four marten and one raccoon and sent the skins to Vancouver. He claimed to have found an important showing of high grade ore while panning the tiny streams up a steep mountain side on ground he had staked the previous year.



Figure 31. Picture post card showing Canadian Airways Ltd. float plane "City of Victoria" at Zeballos.



Figure 32. Air mail cover sent from Zeballos on January 20, 1939.

Andy continued to send his letters to Bamfield by air mail. The air service to Bamfield improved on March 11, 1939, when Port Alberni was added as a stop on the Vancouver–Zeballos run²³. Morod sent his first letter by this shortened route on March 29, 1939. “And believe it or not, it is nearly 3 months since I have been down to Zeballos and only 5 miles away!” He had been prospecting on the west side of the Zeballos River: “but owing to high elevation and snow I do not think we are going to do much before the middle of May.”

The next letter—written on May 23, 1939 at Zeballos—is in an unaddressed, unmailed air mail envelope. He wrote:

The large sawmill at McBride [McBride Bay] is closed and perhaps will be dismantled. It seems that English capital never succeed here I have made three more discoveries of high grade with free gold. It is in the vicinity of the first found. It appears that I was the first one to explore these rugged cliffs and possibly will have done my share of the development of Zeballos Valley...

Zeballos is really getting quite a place and is still growing larger and better. Many prospects in the valley may develop into mines too! The airplane certainly have done great work. It takes nearly all the passengers to Vancouver then it brings Vancouver’s newspaper almost daily.

The next four covers lack contents. Morod wrote “A. Morod, Zeballos B.C.” on each. All four envelopes bear the Zeballos circle date stamp. Two covers were sent by air mail (July 8, 1939 and December 29, 1939). The other two (September 14, 1939 and October 15, 1939) were carried to Bamfield in the *Princess Maquinna*. Both of the ship-borne covers bear the 3¢ 1939 Royal Visit stamp.

Princess Maquinna (2)

The October 15th cover (Fig. 33, next page) bears a strike of the S. S. PRINCESS MAQUINNA one-line handstamp (Topping 19-L1)²⁴. With the Zeballos origin postmark on the envelope, there is no obvious reason for the ship mark. Perhaps this cover was the top cover in a bundle of mail for Bamfield.

The next cover (Fig. 34)—written at Zeballos on February 4, 1940 and mailed there the next day—bears a different *Princess Maquinna* mark: the rare three-line S. S / PRINCESS / MAQUINNA handstamp (Topping 22 L-3)²⁴. Early in the letter, Morod wrote “For my part, I suppose, just get a little worst all the time.” Later he recounts:

Of late I have been working building a new trail to short cut distance to our living quarters. One of my partners from Bear River came up to help me. We are going to drive into our high grade showings. Despite war, the jitters are over and the mining industry is going to renew its activity in greater scale...

There has been fairly good prices on marten this winter. I have sold some up to \$20....

I have bought a tiny radio. General Electric 4 tubes. It uses tiny batteries and works fine. We are getting news and music any time. It surely makes life more enjoyable in the back woods... I was thinking of Muchalat Lake retreat when I bought it. If I ever winter in there again it is going to be flying trip both ways.

Ginger Coote would transport me with load for \$45 a trip which is very cheap. Sometime, if you didn't get my last letter I shall give you a narration about my last trip. It has been tough in the true sense of the word!



Figure 33. October 15, 1939 Zeballos cover with the S. S. PRINCESS MAQUINNA handstamp.

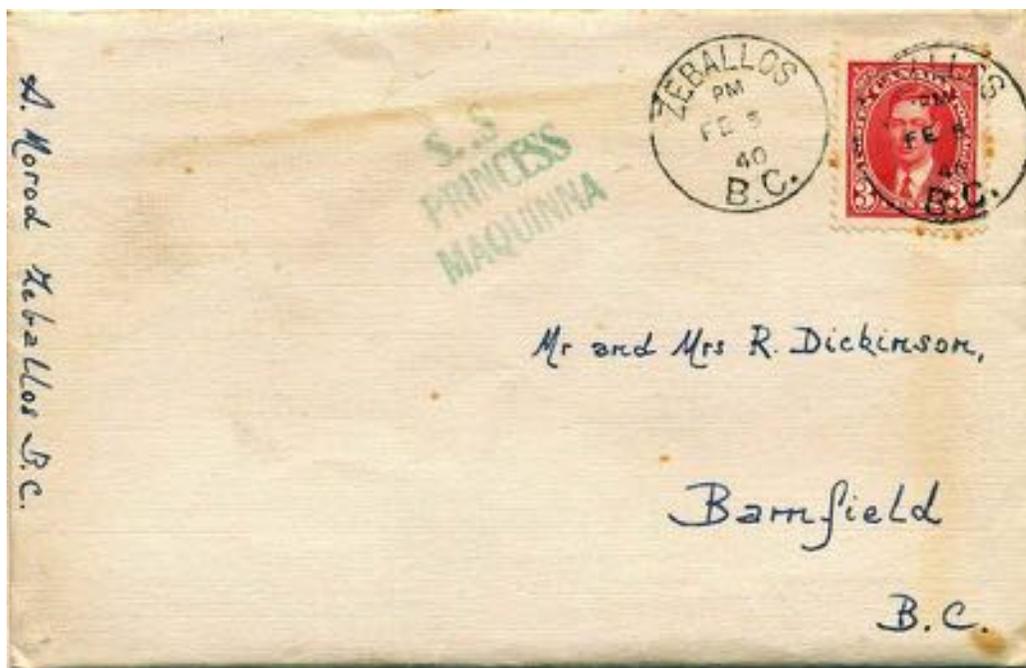


Figure 34. February 5, 1940 Zeballos cover with the S. S. PRINCESS MAQUINNA handstamp.

Morod wrote a three-page letter on March 14, 1940 at Zeballos. It was franked with a 3¢ George VI definitive stamp and posted the following day. The cover bears a Port Alberni backstamp dated AM/MR 19/1940 (a Tuesday). Perhaps the letter was flown from Zeballos to Port Alberni on Monday.

In this envelope, Andy included the clipping shown at the right (Fig. 35). It was from the Zeballos newspaper, and describes the rainfall there during 1939—a total of 223.74 inches for the year. Note the heavy rainfall in January, November and December. He commented that:

... I do imagine you are getting your share of wet weather the last three weeks! Here it did interfere with my work where I have fought snow almost daily and still persist in doing so. I have to climb about 2400 ft. to get to my work which is situated at 2900 ft. It is one mile or so and usually make the climb in little over one hour striking the snow at 1800 ft. Some time ago I did pack a wheelbarrow in there with fresh snow up to my knee for the last 500 ft...

He continues:

It is one mile or so and usually make the climb in little over one hour striking the snow at 1600 ft. Some time ago I did pack a wheelbarrow in there with fresh snow up to my knee for the last 500 ft and over 50° of slope. Then one day was in the tunnel with my partner when a snow slide almost completely covered our portal leaving a 2 foot hole to get out. It didn't worry me as I had a shovel. A few days later I went back and shoveled 12 ft depth of snow at the portal of the tunnel then more came in filling the whole thing over so decided to lay off there and started a new tunnel where snow cannot slide over. However, this new location wasn't easy either. I slid down a cliff with rope about 20 ft to get to my work...

It took me one year of time to convince my partner here that the free gold did originate within the vein itself and not salted from other sources.

Morod then discussed the presence of galena sulphide and other minerals near Zeballos. He was working alone seven feet underground in a new hole.

Morod's next letter was printed in pencil on April 29, 1940 at Zeballos and its cover was postmarked there on May 4th. It bears a Port Alberni transit mark of AM/MY 7/40 (a Tuesday) [cf. the March 14, 1940 letter]. The 3¢ postage indicates that it was sent by the C.P.R. ship. Andy says that leisure was forced on him "by the slight injury of a finger". He had been cut by a sharp rock. He signed the letter "Andy the wild man".

The next two covers—a 3¢ cover with a return address of Ceepeecee that entered the mail at Bamfield on July 27, 1940 and a 6¢ air mail cover postmarked at Zeballos on December 21 1940—have no contents.

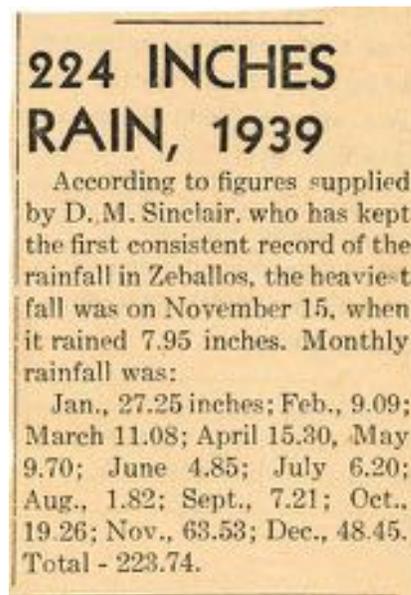


Figure 35.

Morod wrote the next letter at Zeballos on April 9, 1941, to Bamfield; its cover bears a 6¢ air mail stamp and the endorsement “Via Vancouver”. It was posted on April 12, 1941. He starts the letter by thanking Mr. Dickinson for his March 21st letter, received two boats ago. The first page relates to a discussion of the war and its effect on industry. Andy then writes:

To come back to the Pacific slope! I am still well, living amongst cliffs approx. 2700 ft elevation. (By the way I was raised over 4000 ft). I had 8 in. of fresh snow some time ago, much sleet since, but love the heights just the same! I have nearly 2 miles to go to store but even pack lettuces up the hills; also did carry a cat and a radio, the latter works wonderfully up here! I believe to be able to interest some company to work this property soon now. I am getting tired of the tied down, also of my dragging partners.

One thing has brought sadness to me a few days ago, when learning of the departure of my dear Father, in February 21st last. I have felt remorse to not have gone back [to Switzerland] in a visit sooner my eldest brother who is still partially paralyzed from the effects of an accident when in the army is now taking lessons in Christian Science.

As you must know there has been good fur prices these past few months. I did trap a few marten and they did average \$19 at the Hudson’s Bay. I did get the darkest one I’ve ever seen amongst 150 or so I did trap so far. She brought me 30\$... I hope next fall will see me loading a plane and steer for Muchalat.

Morod’s next letter (Fig. 36) was written at Zeballos on July 14, 1941 and mailed the next day. It is addressed to Mr. R. Dickinson at Nootka B.C. rather than at Bamfield. The cover bears a July 15th receiving postmark applied at Nootka, indicating the cover was carried by the C.P.R. ship—probably the *Princess Maquinna*.



Figure 36. Cover addressed to Nootka, B.C.

From Andy's letter, it appears that Mr. Dickinson has taken a job at a fish plant at Nootka:

Many thanks for your letter well received. I was glad to hear you are well and liking it at your new residence. Although all these Coastal fish plants are much alike, I always found there is something unique to Nootka. From the Gov. wharf it is a grand sight of Conuma Pk. and surrounding panorama, in a nice day. Such scenery a Nature's lover can never forget! These rugged mountains, let me say, have been greatly responsible to my prolonged sojourn in these remote parts of the World! I judge you may not partake my opinion so will descend to sea level! I hope you enjoy your stay at Nootka. I have not been there for a lengthy time but there is usually a good bunch of fellows around...

As for myself, still confining my activities in a lonely struggle into the solitude. I have lived alone practically all last winter and this summer too. Often see or speak to no one but 3 or 4 times a month! Although knowing many people around I seem to prefer and live forgotten! I am still perched high up in the mountains. Lately I have been digging quite a lot of gold. I did find a spot in one of my veins which would have assayed well over 100 ounces gold per ton. I have took around 2 and a half ounces of gold out of possibly 50 lb of quartz which I did crush and wash to recover the bullion. Such specimen did contain even coarser gold than has been found any where yet at Zeballos. I got a slug measuring over 2 in. in length. This new discovery has finally able me to convince many mining people that gold also recurs in the West Side of the Zeballos River. All the mines so far being in the East side. I had several engineers up; they praise the property and claim it is the most promising prospect they know in the area! However owing to the World War conditions, it is hard to get anyone at the time to finance some work!

Andy wrote that he had traded some other claims down Bear River to one of his associates for his quarter interest, giving him half interest. He also made deals with two other partners until he had control of the property. He intended to spend the next winter at Muchalat Lake, but would remain digging gold.

January 16, 1942 is the date of the next letter—written at Zeballos and mailed by air to Vancouver on January 17, 1942 (Fig. 37, next page). There is a Vancouver backstamp dated 11PM on January 20, 1942 (a Tuesday). This backstamped date is probably related to the redirection of the envelope.

Early in the letter, Morod writes that fur prices had dropped despite the fact that stocks were depleted. He had sold only part of his skins and was saving the rest for spring. He wrote:

... I have signed about our iron ore. We shall get 10000\$ in 600\$ monthly payments starting July next, and 25¢ per ton of ore removed besides the monthly payments until the 10000 is paid up I will share one half of it. I still own another claim adjacent to the Barnacle [Andy's Barnacle claim near Zeballos] with lot of iron and believe better to wait until the ground gets surveyed and make a better deal.



Figure 37. Air mail cover from Zeballos (January 17, 1942) to Vancouver, redirected there on January 20, 1942.

Commenting on the war, Andy wrote:

You are certainly safer in Vancouver than be at Bamfield. It'll be a certain target for the station if they venture along our coast. [A Japanese submarine shelled the Estevan Point lighthouse and wireless station five months after Andy's letter, on June 20, 1942. There were no casualties and there was no damage. Estevan Point is at the southern mouth of Nootka Sound.]

Andy concluded the letter by saying, "I sincerely hope the Dickinson hands are still improving in their new treatments and that you are enjoying your stay in Vancouver much better than the one you had in Zeballos."

Morod wrote the next letter almost three months later—on April 5th. It was mailed to Vancouver at Zeballos on April 7, 1942. He was delighted to hear of improvement to Mr. Dickinson's hands. Andy had travelled to Muchalat Lake because he said, "My return trip about 50 miles was quite cold. The notorious Muchalat Arm was doing his ever lasting stunt: gale wind down the inlet at night opposite way in day time." "I certainly thought I was going to freeze up, had left most of my clothing at the lake..." He had done some prospecting there and planned to return and stake a claim. He wrote that they are short of labor in Zeballos, and also of fuel. Andy said that he had seven more letters to write.

Andy wrote a letter on May 15, 1942 at Zeballos. There is no envelope matching this letter. It apparently was mailed to Vancouver. Andy foresaw another boom in Zeballos if the Venture Co. got started with his iron.

Andy's July 2, 1942 letter was sent air mail from Zeballos to Bamfield on July 4th. It was received at Bamfield on July 6th. He was pleased that the Dickinsons were returning to Bamfield. He wrote:

I have been moving like a nomad. Lately I was in Muchalat Lake where made some gardening in 6 places 3 miles apart. There is getting all kinds of deers back there. I must seen over 15 in that trip (shot none). In my return I was up to my cabin at Barnacle claim. The surveyors got through and from surface showings of the iron ore Ford gets around 40% of it with less than 2 claims instead 6. The Barnacle group takes another 40% whereas the claim I had restaked the Jerry B owns the balance. I have lost title to the Jerry B. throughout the carelessness of Bird, he told me (wrote me) about the ground been open. I took his word (was running a tow boat at C.P.C. at the time) and had Murphy to stake it. From the records it was staked a few days before it lapsed so the Venture got hold of it free of charge... The company has made us the first payment; my share amounts to one hundred dollar per month!

Now I intend to make another trip to Muchalat L. this time from Upana Arm instead of Muchalat. I have to see my gardens...

Morod's next letter was written August 3, 1942 at Zeballos and posted the next day, surface mail to Bamfield. He wrote:

... I have returned from Muchalat resort over a week ago. Found my gardening doing well, although the deers will clean up some. I shall always have the spuds. The seeds I planted came from Russia 3 years ago. Got them from the Perry's Bros. I have assayed several mineral deposits for tungsten and failed so far. ... we have formed a ranger organisation and I wanted to do some shooting. Capt. David (Ceepeecee Dan's brother) is in charge... Now I am going to go up and to camp in my claims.

Zeballos is practically dead. They all closed except Privateer and Reno, the Reno to close up soon for the duration of war and hardly think Privateer will be able to keep on next winter for lack of labor... Yes this burg is so flat that we haven't got even a bus service any more, and no barber (I had to go to a lady last time!).

In a letter written at Zeballos on October 12, 1942 and sent to Bamfield by air mail the next day, Morod wrote:

Received your welcome letter in my return from Muchalat L. and thank you I was only away three weeks and have not less than fourteen letters in my return to cope with! As I want to take off again to-morrow I just have no choice but high ball my correspondence!

I was sorry to hear about the unjust dealings of the Compensation Board with Mr. Dickinson... I just imagine how bitter life must be to Mr. Dickinson when only able to do so little...

In Zeballos the place is gradually dying out. The Privateer labor shortage is getting more acute and they are lucky if they can hold to Xmas...

Now I am heading for the forest and will not return until some where around Xmas. I have a good crop of spuds and plenty fresh meat and prefer to trap than to go to work.

Morod's next letter was written at Zeballos on January 4, 1943 and sent by surface on January 7th. Andy had been to Muchalat Lake. He had met heavy and consistent snow, but still trapped 24 marten. There was up to 20 inches of snow at the lake. He had no snow shoes there but took some cedar limbs, wrapped them in a rug and steamed them, and bent them. He removed the hair from a deer hide, then cut strips of hide to lash to the cedar and made a good pair of snow shoes. He hiked out to the shore through the snow, taking seven days for the journey and had a surprise. "Someone had stolen my boat, also a dugout I had there", but they hadn't found the food and an outboard motor he also had there. He hiked upstream to where he had another dugout. He took that boat downstream, loaded it and made oars from shakes and oar locks from rope. Eventually he lashed two small cedar logs below the boat and rigged up a place to hold the outboard, and slowly made his way as far as the Perry brothers at Tahsis Canal. He bought their big tow boat and took it to Ceepeecee and on to Zeballos.

Now found Zeballos more and more of a ghost town. Suppose to be only 45 people left at the beach, there the Privateer who is still going. The Airways only come once in blue moon. Just enough to draw their contract money and to blaze with the people of Zeballos.

Andy Morod wrote to the Dickinsons on February 7, 1943. The envelope for this letter is torn and its stamps and postmark date are missing. There was 8 to 10 inches of snow in Zeballos. The water system had been frozen for nearly a month. Andy had just returned from a trip by boat to Tahsis ranch. He had sent furs to both the Hudson's Bay Company and Little Brothers Auction. The Privateer was not operating because of a lack of water for the mill (the water was frozen). He says he will go to Vancouver in March for dental work. Major Nicholson returned to Zeballos that day—discharged from the army—and was taking over the Post Office again. "He has been sick and does not look so well."



Figure 38. Cover mailed in Vancouver on April 3, 1943 with postage paid by a pair of 2¢ stamps.

On April 3, 1943, Morod wrote from Vancouver that “I am in Vancouver and don’t enjoy it very much. I intend to call at Bamfield in my way back.” The cover carrying this letter is franked with a pair of 2¢ stamps (Fig. 38, previous page). The War Tax had gone up from 1¢ to 2¢ on April 1, 1943 so 4¢ was required for basic domestic mail.

His next letter was written at Zeballos on May 27, 1943. Andy had just returned from a three-week trip to Muchalat Lake. There was heavy snow along the way. There were three timber cruisers at the lake when he arrived. In a letter written at Zeballos on July 8, 1943 (posted the same day), Andy wrote that he had made a second trip to Muchalat Lake. He carried with him a six-foot cross cut saw to cut down a large fir tree to try and use it as a bridge over a tributary of the Gold River. [The seventy-foot tree was not quite long enough for the eighty-foot gap.] The timber cruisers left a lot of food, and Andy would make sure that it wasn’t wasted. Morod wrote briefly on August 9, 1943 that he had returned again from the woods. Andy wrote that the Privateer planned to close down at the end of September [the Privateer mine closed in October 1943 but reopened from November 1945 to late in 1948²⁵.]

A cover (bearing a 4¢ stamp) and its letter sent from Zeballos by Morod on August 9, 1943 passed through Port Alberni on August 21st. The eight-page communication reports that Gibson’s crew are taking logs past Andy’s cabin at Zeballos. He was considering a quick trip to Gold River to string a cable bridge. This would give him an easier route from Muchalat Lake. On September 19, 1943 (mailed September 20th), Andy wrote that he had just returned from the Upana [*Tlupana*] River. He had packed in 175 feet of half-inch cable and made the bridge so he had an easier route to and from Muchalat Lake. He hoped to soon head for the Conuma River with winter supplies.

The next letter in the correspondence is dated April 13, 1944—mailed to Bamfield on April 16th at Zeballos. He had returned to Zeballos two days previous. He had expected to be out much earlier but his health was “below normal”. Despite not being able to leave the lake, he had trapped 10 beaver, 1 otter, 1 raccoon, 4 mink and 18 marten. He finally was able to get rid of his mining partner Murphy.

Zeballos isn’t dying by any means. There are a gang of men putting up a horse trail to the new strike... The saw mill is steadily buzzing. The town fathers are just installing their own diesel powered plant for light and refrigeration. The liquor store and drug store seem to make fairly well at times especially for outsiders. The restaurant, laundry and 2 hotels still going. I must tell you this one; last fall one steamer brought 500 cases of beer for the Pioneer Hotel, 10 cases for the liquor store and none for Esperanza. How can they expect people to be patriotic and blindly support the war where such scandal goes on under your nose...

I am intending to hit for a hot spring. It’ll be probably Refuge Cove for a start as I am afraid Harrison will be crowded since the army took it over...

I have been trying with many dopes and drugs with little avail. Now I am eating garlic (I always hated so much). According to a lady at Ceepeecee there is nothing like it to cure rheumatism.

Andy's next letter was written in Vancouver on May 20, 1944 (Fig. 39). He used the stationery of the Hotel Grosvenor, where he was staying in Room 221.

Dear friends,

It is about time to write! Well, I had some unexpected happenings particularly a operation for appendicitis and I didn't want you to worry so, the silence! Well! It is now a page of the past and I am just about ready for the hills again. I had a wonderful doctor and even more wonderful nurses hence, the speedy recovery! Only 7 days at the hospital.

I did promote a cougar hunting trip for June in Muchalat L. area. Went to see the Airways traffic manager to-day and intend to get in by air from Zeballos.

I intend to be in Alberni next Wednesday or Thursday May 24-25 to make final arrangements with the Game Warden and will try and call in to see you probably on Friday 26th mail boat! However do not worry about meeting me as I could find someone around.

Hoping that you are fine and to see you soon,

With kind regards,

Andy Morod

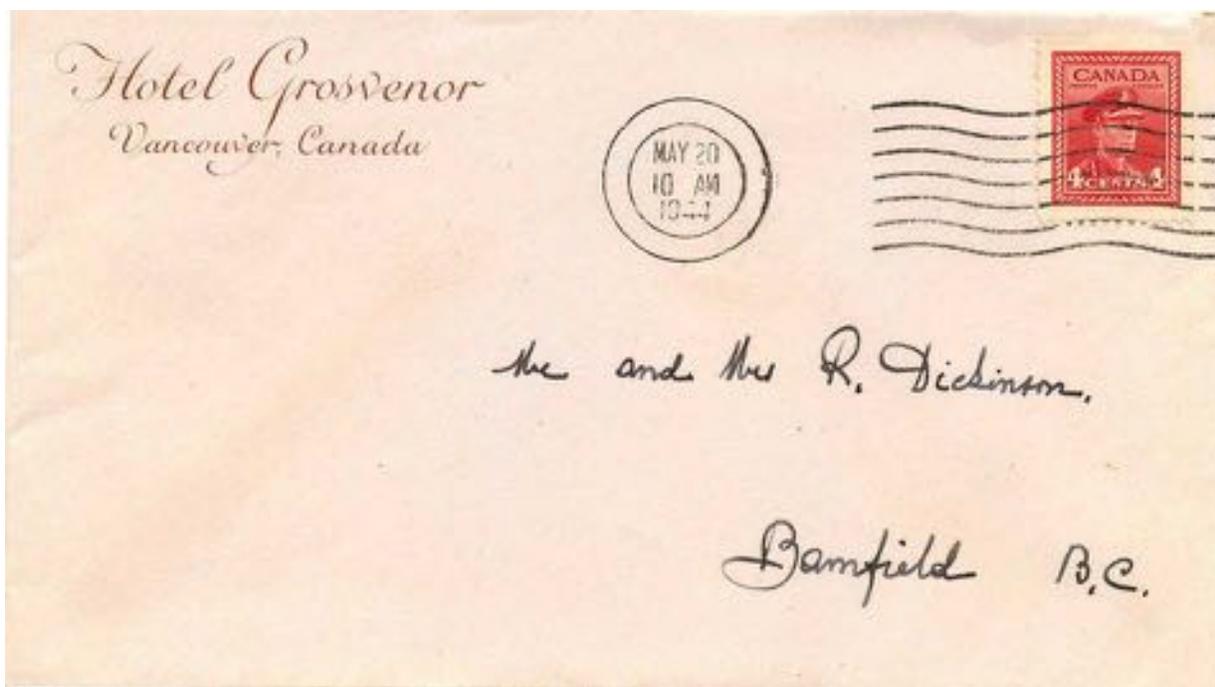


Figure 39. Cover from Vancouver, May 20, 1944.

Note the blackout cancel on Andy's envelope. The cover was postmarked by one of the Vancouver Pitney-Bowes machines²⁶. The undamaged date hub shows this is an impression of Die 1.

1946 and 1947

There is a two-year gap in the existing correspondence. There are empty envelopes that were mailed at Zeballos on September 29, 1945, October 10, 1945 and August 28, 1946. The latter cover (Fig. 40) is a large, double-weight envelope endorsed "Way Mail". [Way mail usually is mail given to a mail carrier en route from one post office to another. Perhaps Andy gave this letter to someone who carried it to the Zeballos post office for him.]

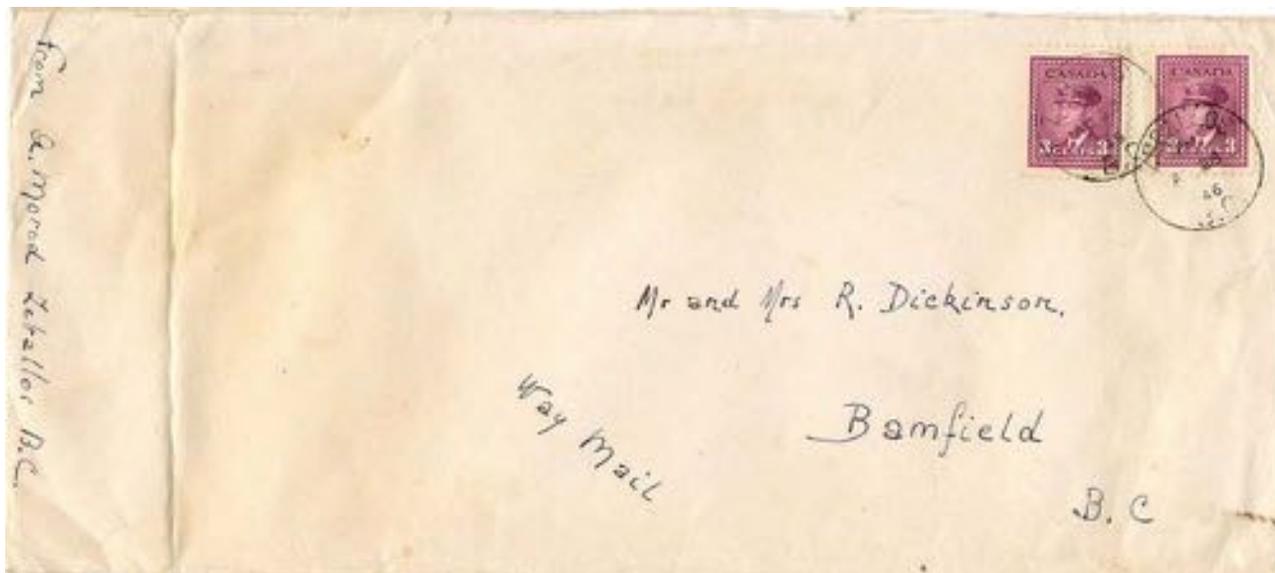


Figure 40. Double-weight cover from Zeballos (PM/AU 28/46).

The lone letter to Bamfield in 1946 was written at Zeballos on October 12, 1946 and its cover is postmarked October 15th. Its cover also bears the endorsement "Way Mail". After summarizing his claim areas, Andy wrote:

I have now left my work at the claims. I had 2 men all summer did a lot of work. Built a new cabin at 2400 ft elevation., trials and drove 75 ft of hard rock tunnel.

Things still improving although I have suffered a set back to reach my ore, owing to 30 ft of faulting and perhaps 25 degrees of dipping. Dr. Stevenson Government geologist came up twice. He seems to be enthusiastic of my ground and very interested in my work. However money goes fast. I did invest over \$2000 in work alone when will pay an extra \$300 for tying these 4 claims. The packing alone is costly. It did cost me \$2.46 per day per man for food up there. So you may get an idea.

I did work and tear regardless of my bones and don't feel any worst for it.

Now, I did charter the plane for Thursday Oct. 17 and shall fly in to Muchalat L. with 1200 lb. including outboard motor and gasoline. I also got a permit to trap off 15 beavers so am quite anxious to get back into the heart of the wilderness. I'll have my radio and certainly won't miss the world...

It has been a raw wet summer. I did tramp over snow patches as late as middle of August...

Zeballos is still quiet. The Reno mine alone operating. The Privateer yet working to rebuild power house. With all the strikes and shortages it is almost hopeless to get anywhere on mining...

P.S. Don't worry about my return date. It'll be O.K. Some where after March 20th next. I have enough to live an extra 4-5 months.

True to his word, Andy didn't surface until the spring of 1947—in Vancouver. He sent a letter from the Alcazar Hotel there on April 9, 1947, posted the next day (Fig. 41).

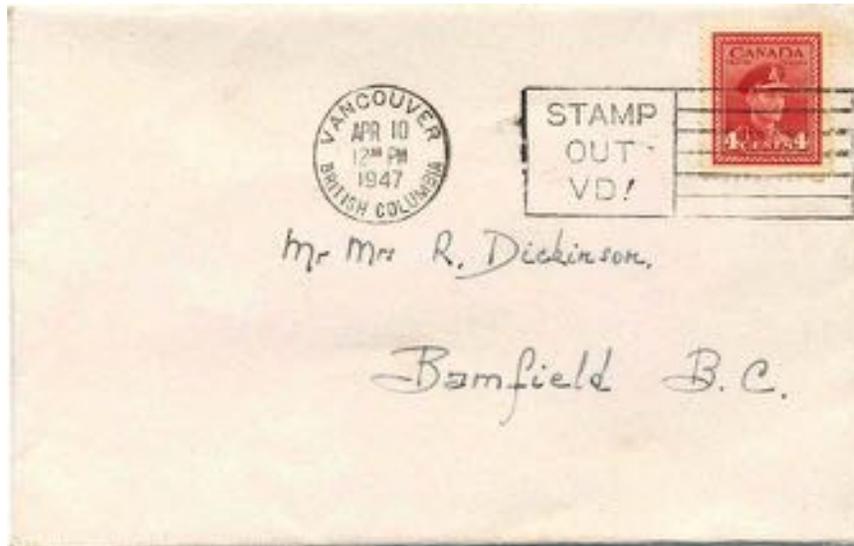


Figure 41. Cover from Vancouver mailed on April 10, 1947.

Andy wrote:

Landed in Vancouver a week ago Wednesday (today) by plane. I have been very busy and out of town again 2 days in a short visit.

I was x-rayed at St. Paul's [Hospital] and taking some electric treatments. Will know to-morrow if my teeth have abscess or not. The Dr. says my whole leg is wasting and is trying to stop it! I probably will go to a Chiropractor as well...

Found Vancouver as bad as ever. Terribly crowded, dirty, the restaurants high on prices and low on food. It seems I will have to stay another week or two for treatment.

Andy sent a three-page follow-up letter from Vancouver a week later. He described his medical condition:

I have been throughout x rays of hips and teeth, whilst a lot of arthritis on left hip and 2 abscesses on front teeth (upper) the gold tooth for one. The dentist wanted to put me a partial plate. I've told him I wouldn't bear it and that the last one laid now in a lake bottom! Hence, I decided to pull out the works and get a full plate. I am having done tomorrow (Thursday). It won't be much fun as I really have solid tusks. My plate is already made and will be set in tight after extraction. I will have to come again in 6 months or more for tightening.

I probably had them abscesses several years. Now I have been taking short wave treatments and massage of my leg. I can feel a daily improvement and

think to be back in fairly good shape too! They are also giving me the hypo needle almost every day with vaccine and vitamins. I also have an appointment with a Chiropractor and will see if anything to be straightened out in my back.

...Ran across George Nicholson this morning just landed with plane. He brought his wife to a Victoria hospital [a Vancouver hospital] for an operation. He must be in a mess now with P. office and gas station and groceries store. [George Nicholson was the postmaster and storekeeper at Zeballos; cf. p. 31.]

Back in Zeballos, Andy wrote this letter on May 3, 1947 (Fig. 42):

Dear Mr. Mrs. Dickinson,

Back here by plane Thurs. April 24th. It was great to beget fresh air again. They can give Vancouver back to the Indians as far as I am concerned!

... I had my teeth out 11 a.m. Went to my room to hold cold compresses and at 5 p.m. was eating a egg omelette. pie crust and all. Missed one meal and been eating everything ever since. I have a all plastic outfit even teeth. It only costed me \$90 for the works! My hip and leg has improved a lot from short wave and massage treatment. I didn't start with chiropractor, as he wanted a 3 month treatment and [I] would prefer suicide some different way.

In Muchalat they are going seriously in building a railroad from the mouth of the Gold R It seems like Andy is going to be cornered this time!²⁷



Figure 42. Cover mailed at Zeballos on May 3, 1947.

Note the Alexander Bell commemorative stamp.

The next cover in the correspondence (Fig. 43) entered the mail at Vancouver A.M.F. (Air Mail Facility) on Tuesday, July 1, 1947 (timemark 21).



Figure 43. Cover mailed to Bamfield at Vancouver A.M.F.

I assume that the contents of this cover were written at Zeballos and that the resulting letter was carried to Vancouver by airplane.

The last letter for 1947 was written at Zeballos on October 5, 1947 and mailed there 10 days later. Andy had been working—despite his rheumatism and arthritis—12 hours per day (including cooking 2 meals a day). Alone, he was building a pack-horse trail up the mountain. He was going to alternate between tunnel digging and road clearing, depending on the weather. He was going to Zeballos every other boat for supplies. He wrote that Zeballos is now a logging town. Queen Charlotte Airlines was operating twice weekly with 20-passenger flying boats. However, this company would not fly into Muchalat Lake. At his cabin, he had a pet blue jay, and he had seen a cougar nearby.

1948 to 1950

The next letter from Andy Morod is dated October 30, 1948 at Zeballos—more than a year later than the previous epistle. Its envelope is postmarked November 1, 1948. Andy wrote to say that he was leaving by plane next Monday (November 1st). He was delayed waiting for a beaver permit that had come on the last boat. He had a permit for 30 beavers (which were selling for over \$30). Marten were averaging \$23.

Zeballos is fairly quiet. The Privateer mine is about to close up, so there is only the logging and the new sawmill which isn't quite completed yet... I am looking forward to the day when I shall migrate to a more sunny land. It would be nice to put on white pants and a straw hat after such a long spell in the wild!

I will order a plane for March 20th next. Hope the ice will be off then.

In a three-page letter, Andy reported from Zeballos on April 4, 1949 (mailed to Bamfield on April 8th) that he had just received letters from the Dickinsons dated Nov. 3rd and March 18th. He explained:

The delay was occasioned by ice. The taxi came on time, circled low over lake and turned back. Nothing but a sheet of ice 4½ miles long. Then several attempts were made until Saturday April 2nd the plane finally arrived. There was only one mile strip of open water then, so none to spare but, the pilot came alone and I didn't have much freight so that I was only half packed up! However in less than one half hour we had left. The ceiling was low and closing on us. So the hurry! He flew down river at 1500[feet] to Muchalat Arm.

I sure hate flying but these planes surely give me much unwanted publicity. The old days were yet the best for that. Found so many people so worried about me, if they only know the wilderness has been my only home for many years and how fine we get along...

... I shall join you a list of food I have left there now²⁸... For a 3 month period Muchalat Lake was solidly frozen with 4 to 8 inches in ice and snow was over 5 ft No thawing whatsoever for a period of 73 days with thermometer twice down to zero... Brought 24 marten, 4 beaver, 1 otter, 1 mink... If it wasn't for an odd 4 motored sky liner of Uncle Sam passing over, I would imagine myself in a world entirely my own!

I will have to go to Vancouver re court trial... [Andy mistakenly had sold his share in the iron deposits of the Barnacle claims without legal advice. He later tried to recover his lost earnings.]

In a postscript, Andy wrote "There is now 2 mails per week by air in addition to the boat. Only 4¢ postage." The Domestic All-Up service started on July 1, 1948; first-class mail then was carried by air at regular domestic postal rates.

Morod wrote from Ceepeecee on May 22, 1949 that:

... Since my return it has been a battle of wits with the Plaintiff bluffs, which, I did call up, and no date set for trial. I do think they haven't sufficient grounds for a Court case, probably have been rejected already by some judge. However, they have by far underestimated my striking potentialities so, that I have kept one step ahead of their skuldugery. My lawyer No. 2 (I have first No. 1) has been pretty well sitting on the fence and lately tried to convince me to agree with the Plaintiff's proposals. I did strongly refuse and did outline them my terms for a lease agreement. The fact remains that I own the title to the tremendous mining wealth where all they have and try to pin on me is a bill of sale which is illegal. They also defaulted on our agreement several times...

I am presently camping at the old C.P.C. gas station. The Perry Bros, have bought the place so John's now here clearing and gardening...

The next two letters are both in a torn, undated envelope. A six-page letter headed "Barnacle Heights" was written on Sunday, July 31, 1949 and a four-page letter was written September 8, 1949. In the earlier letter, he wrote that he had had advice from at least five lawyers on his iron-ore mine claim. The Zeballos wise alecks are "mainly interested in how much they will benefit from the iron ore mining". He often felt it was like an ant fighting an

elephant (a large corporation) but fought on regardless. Two iron men from Duluth, Minnesota had visited and said that this was the highest grade of magnetite iron known in the World.

In the later letter, Andy wrote that he had flown to Muchalat Lake, then to Vancouver to transact a lease with the Chinese Mutual of Seattle Company. He had fired another lawyer, and was pleased to have the backing of the new company.

Andy wrote the next letter at the Hotel Grosvenor in Vancouver on November 10, 1949. This was on his third trip to Vancouver, with the prospect of at least two more visits. He had lost the first round today. "A judge who doesn't understand enough of mining laws" ruled that the plaintiffs were entitled to the iron ore but were not allowed to enter Andy's property. He had flown from Zeballos in a storm. His flight was delayed and he had been met at the Vancouver airport by a car that hustled him to the court house. His next hearing would be before the Court of appeal in Victoria.

A brief note written in Victoria on February 8, 1950 (mailed to Bamfield the next day) says that the hearing before the Appeal Court was on February 1st. "Things have been looking good but the judgement was reserved. It may not be disclosed until March."

A very short letter written on December 13, 1951 sent Christmas greetings. Zeballos was booming the past few months. The iron mine will soon be in production. Andy thought there would soon be a settlement.

Later Letters

Andy addressed the next letter—and all the remainder—to Mrs. Dickinson in Oak Bay, B.C. [Recall that Robert Dickinson had died in 1951.] He wrote this next letter at Zeballos on April 5, 1953 and mailed it on April 7th (Fig. 44). There was a gap of more than a year since the previous letter.

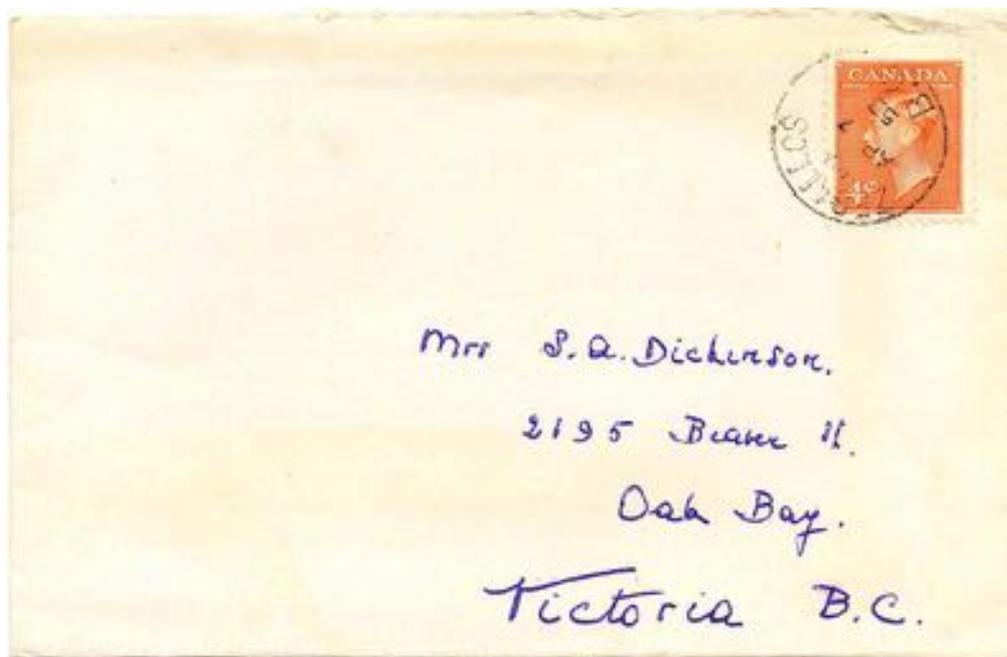


Figure 44. Cover to Oak Bay mailed April 7, 1953.

After a mild winter, Andy returned from Muchalat Lake on March 28th. He brought out plenty of furs but their prices were low (the market was flooded with furs from Russia). Andy

wrote that "The mining horizon is yet quite clouded." Zeballos was a logging town. "They are trucking logs nearly 10 miles of road now."

Morod wrote to Mrs. Dickinson about a year later. On May 11, 1954 at Zeballos, he wrote a letter that was postmarked on May 18th at Ceepeecee. He started the letter by thanking her for her Christmas message, which he received when he returned from Muchalat Lake on May 25th. He had had a hound with him at the lake, which was good company. He also had his radio for company. There had been no moves with the iron mine. There was a lot of logging going on at both Nootka Sound and Zeballos.

Andy wrote again a year later, on April 6, 1955. He had returned to Zeballos from Muchalat Lake on March 20th. It had been a much milder winter than the previous one. The logging road was about 10 miles up Gold River from the beach and should connect to the Campbell River Road in another year. There were over 800 people living in Tahsis village. Logging at Zeballos had cleaned up the easy timber in the valley. There was a rumour of a British group building an iron smelter in B.C.

The next letter to Mrs. Dickinson is dated January 2, 1956. It was mailed at Zeballos on January 6th. Zeballos was very quiet except for the logging operations. There were about 700 or 800 people in Zeballos. A new town had been started at the mouth of the Gold River, where a modern highway was under construction to Campbell River. Another road branches off to close to Muchalat Lake. Bloedel and Stewart are now coming from the Nimpkish and will also join up with the Campbell River road. The road will pass right by Andy's headquarters cabin at the lake. He praises certain political parties, despises others. His views flip in the next letter.

Andy wrote next on December 29, 1957 (mailed December 30th). He was wintering at the beach cabin in Zeballos (which was then an incorporated village). He also had three cabins up the valley. Mining there was still in suspense. He railed at the provincial government's new mining laws. "My verdict is: when we vote we only change the horses, but do not improve the wagon." He had given up the Muchalat Lake trap line. Fur prices were low and the area had been invaded by logging.

There is a gap of over six years before the next letter, written at the Kamlo Motor Hotel, 1150 Denman Street, Vancouver on May 19, 1962. "The lawyer I had been recommended did not know enough about mining but surely knew how to charge, he wanted \$200 per day etc. not including expenses to come to Vancouver [from Victoria]." Andy was having chiropractic treatments. He was tired of restaurants and had taken an apartment where he could cook.

Just over a month later, Andy sent an air-mail letter from Wheeler, Oregon. On June 29th he wrote, "You must think I hop like a flea." After a month in Vancouver wrangling, he and his adversaries finally signed a final agreement "much on the terms I have worked for." He then flew to Seattle, changed airports and flew to Astoria, then hired a taxi to make a bus connection to Wheeler. There were only two prominent features in Wheeler—the Clinic [*the Rinehart Arthritis Clinic*] and Highway 101. X-rays had shown his hips were too damaged for a complete recovery, but he was receiving massages and injections that helped.

The final existing letter was written at Zeballos on August 17, 1962 and mailed the following day. It reached Victoria on August 21st. Andy wrote that he left Wheeler on July 19th. rode the bus to Portland, stayed there overnight, and flew to Vancouver via United Airlines.

The Space Needle in Seattle looked like a farmer's water tank from the air. He concluded his mining deals much as anticipated, and was relaxing "at the old fort across the river". He was considering making a trip to Switzerland.

Although there are no more letters, there are three more empty envelopes. They indicate that Andy travelled to warm climates. The first was mailed at San Juan, Puerto Rico on February 3, 1963. The other two were mailed at La Jolla, California in January and February 1964, from the Park Vista Hotel on Prospect Street. Phyllis and I were living in La Jolla at that time. Weather was wonderful in La Jolla in January and February, sunny, dry and mild—much nicer than the weather then in Zeballos.

Andy's arthritis got worse. Immobilized and having dizzy spells, he ended his life on November 22, 1983 by shooting himself with his rifle². He was the last of the pioneer prospectors in the Nootka Sound area. He enjoyed living there before commercial development appeared, and he found a life style that could avoid it when it did come.

Conclusions

The Morod correspondence covers several topics: (1) postal history of the west coast of Vancouver Island, (2) description of the changes in the Nootka Sound region from the 1930s, and (3) biographic information about Andy Morod.

Covers from the west coast of Vancouver Island—though not rare—usually are not available in large quantities such as this. The Morod letters provide an excellent look at mail routes from the communities around Nootka Sound to Bamfield. They start with southbound steamer mail and are followed by air mail. These routes can be distinguished by the type of stamps used on the envelopes. The start of Domestic All-Up Service in July 1948 took away this distinction; letters carried by air no longer required air mail adhesives.

One striking observation is the regularity and routine of the mail service provided by the C.P.R. steamships. Covers from Nootka and Ceepeecee are postmarked almost exclusively on either Day 5 or Day 6 of the ship's voyage. These mailing days fit with the ships' schedules shown in Table 1. Possibly the postmasters of these offices collected mail for up to 10 days, then postmarked it just before dispatching it on the ships. In addition, writers probably took boat-departure days into consideration when they wrote their letters, taking their completed letters to the post office in time for dispatch. Andy Morod mentions making his visits to town to coincide with ship northbound arrivals. The dates of his letters often are a few days before the postmarked date. He possibly posted them on the days he came to town to pick up his incoming mail and supplies. The C.P.R. steamer would return a few days later on her way southbound and pick up his mail for Bamfield. After air service arrived in Zeballos, with several flights out per week, letter dates were less regular.

Parts of the Nootka Sound region underwent major changes between 1932 and the 1960s. The Morod letters describe many of these changes. The Muchalat Lake region went from being almost totally isolated bush to being fully accessible to logging trucks—and now to campers. Zeballos—first populated in the early 1930s—was a bustling gold mining town from 1938 to 1945. An iron mine established in the early 1960s closed in 1969. Now, logging is the chief industry there. Population has shrunk from about 1,500 at the height of the gold rush to about 200.

The Canadian Pacific Steamship services for the west coast of Vancouver Island lasted only until 1958⁵. The *Princess Maquinna* retired in 1952. Her smaller replacement, the *Princess of Alberni*, carried on until the C.P.R. cancelled the service. After the end of World War II, the *Princess Norah* went to the Alaska service. By the end of 1952, she was the C.P.R. steamer available for the Alaska and north coast route. In 1955, she was renamed *Queen of the North* and operated jointly by C.P.R. and Canadian National Railways. She made weekly calls as far north as Ketchikan, Alaska. The *Queen of the North* was sold to Northland Navigation Co. Ltd. in 1958 and renamed *Canadian Prince*; Northland Navigation operated her until 1964. In the 1960s, Northland Navigation operated passenger, freight and mail sailings to ports on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Today, supplies and mail are taken to most Vancouver Island ports by automobile.

The letters here that Andy Morod wrote provide quite a bit of new autobiographic detail. They span 30 of the middle, active years of his life. Mason Davis²⁹ wrote, "There should be books written about Andy Morod because he was the last of the real prospectors to be active." I agree and would add that they also should be written because Morod had a character and life worth studying. He loved his remote homes—his series of cabins in the bush. Despite being isolated, Andy kept up to date with both Canadian and worldwide events through his radio. When he periodically came to town to get his mail, it included many newspapers²⁹. He suffered financially because of a lack of legal training. He wrote that he understood mining law; he probably had a better knowledge of it than just an introduction. However, with full knowledge or proper advice at the correct time, he would have received much larger payments from his discoveries. His stubborn personality did not fit with the many lawyers he hired and fired.

I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to study these letters. I have learned a lot about the Nootka Sound region, and about Andy Morod.

Acknowledgements

I thank Ed Lewis for acquiring and preserving the Morod correspondence. Its cookie tin contains a lot of interesting covers and letters. Thanks to Bob Turner for discussion of the west coast run of the C.P.R. ships and for the deck plan of the *Princess Maquinna*. Brian Copeland, Larry Margetish and Brian Plain reviewed the text and made many helpful suggestions. John Motherwell filled some of my many gaps in knowledge of Vancouver Island logging. I also wish to thank Andrew Scott [whose book *The Encyclopedia of Raincoat Place Names. A Complete Reference to Coastal British Columbia* was my constant companion while I wrote this article] for proofreading and helpful comments.

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1. E.W. Hancock, "Nootka Sound's Andy Morod", *British Columbia Historical News*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Spring 1996).
2. E.W. Hancock, *Salt Chuck Stories from Vancouver Island's West Coast*, Partners in Publishing, Kamloops (2006) Chapter 5.
3. L. Elms, *Beyond Nootka: A Historical Perspective of Vancouver Island Mountains*, Misthorn Press, Courtenay (1996); online at: http://www.beyondnootka.com/biographies/andy_morod.html .
4. *The Bamfield Beacon*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (March 2009) p. 11.
5. R.D. Turner, *The Pacific Princesses. An Illustrated History of Canadian Pacific Railway's Princess Fleet on the Northwest Coast*, Sono Nis Press, Victoria (1977).
6. J.P. Hughes, *Proof Strikes of Canada*, Volumes I and VIII, Robert A. Lee Philatelist Ltd., Kelowna (1989 and 1990).
7. The survey ship *William J. Stewart* with a surveying expedition in charge of Henry Dalpe Parizeau (father of the late Paul Parizeau of the Vancouver Island Philatelic Society) was charting the waters of Nootka Sound. It was accompanied by the scow *Pender*. The group of four from the survey vessel climbed Canuma Peak to install a survey marker at its peak.
8. *The Rangatangs*, <https://rangitangs.com/>
9. Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772) was a Swedish Lutheran theologian, inventor, and scientist. In later life, he became a mystic. Swedenborg considered that salvation required both faith and charity, not faith alone. Morod started as a Christian Scientist but he changed to a student of Swedenborg's theology², perhaps after meeting Professor Zauber.
10. John and Peter Perry lived in the Nootka Sound area from the early 1920s to 1960.² They fox-farmed and trapped, and Pete was a commercial fisherman. In 1925, Peter purchased a homestead at the head of Tahsis Inlet and he also bought four pairs of blue foxes, but lost money on fox farming. They built a house and grew an orchard, and grew berries for wine. Both brothers had traplines. The Perrys also operated a boat repair and skiff-building company. In the 1940s, the Tahsis lumber mill was built near their home.
11. The mill at McBride Bay was built on pilings of untreated hemlock (susceptible to attack by toredos). There was insufficient storage space. The machinery installed was inferior. Only one ship took lumber from the mill. In 1940, the mill was abandoned¹².
12. B.P. White, *The Settlement of Nootka Sound: Its Distributional Morphology, 1900–1970*, B.A. (Honours) thesis, Department of Geography, Simon Fraser University (1969).
13. G. Nicholson, *Vancouver Island's West Coast, 1792–1962*, Morris Printing, Victoria (1964) pp. 302–309.
14. Nicholson¹³ wrote that the motive behind Bloom's suicide is unknown. Bloom did not trust banks; when Nicholson found his body, Bloom's pockets were stuffed with \$100 dollar bills.
15. Mike Francis was a partner in the White Star group of claims. He drowned when his canoe capsized¹³.
16. Harry A. Linburg or Lindberg, a trapper, had a habit of choosing partners so he could get their money. He abandoned three New Zealand partners in the woods in 1929; the three men managed to reach Nootka. Another partner, a novice trapper, was found dead of starvation and Lindberg was arrested and charged with manslaughter².

17. W. Topping, "Courtesy Air Mail Service – British Columbia", *B.C. Postal History Research Group*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (September 2008) pp. 574–578.
18. "Wells Air Harbour", *Outside the Box, The Richmond Archives Blog*, <https://richmondarchives.ca/tag/ginger-coote/>
19. G. Gibson with C. Renison, *Bull of the Woods: The Gordon Gibson Story*, Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver (2000) p. 138.
20. K.M. Molson, *Pioneering in Canadian Air Transport*, Third Edition, James Richardson & Sons, Ltd., Winnipeg (1978) p. 235.
21. Some gold had been found at Bear River at the head of Bedwell Sound in the 1860s but not in paying quantities. Claims were staked there about 1898. Several discoveries were made in 1938. See H. Sargent, *Preliminary Report on the Bedwell River Area, Vancouver Island British Columbia*, B.C. Department of Mines, Bulletin No. 8, Victoria (1940).
22. *Victoria Colonist*, November 29, 1938; *American Air Mail Catalogue, Fifth edition, Volume 4*, American Air Mail Society, Cinnaminson NJ, p. 1705.
23. *Victoria Colonist*, March 12, 1939; *American Air Mail Catalogue, Fifth edition, Volume 4*, American Air Mail Society, Cinnaminson NJ, p. 1707.
24. W. Topping, *Catalogue of Western Canadian Ship Way Letter Cancellations*, privately published, Vancouver, B.C. (2010).
25. J.S. Stephenson, *British Columbia Department of Mines, Bulletin No. 27, Geology and Mineral Deposits of the Zeballos Mining Camp* (1950).
26. R. Leith, "Canada World War II Blackout Cancels", *The Canadian Philatelist*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (July–August 1995) pp. 262–271.
27. Canadian Forest Products (Canfor) considered building a logging railway to this region. Instead, they performed truck logging. In doing so, the company developed the wild country near Muchalat Lake.
28. Andy included a list of "Food Left at Muchalat Lake, April 2nd 1949". The list included flour, lima beans, rice, desiccated spuds, onions and apples, raisins, evaporated and powdered milk, sugar, lard, coffee, tea, cocoa, salt, baking powder, and cheese.
29. M. Davis in *Mosaic of Mining Memories*, (2006) <http://mining.mosaictraining.ca/index.html> .