



BRITISH COLUMBIA POSTAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Volume 32 Number 4

Whole number 128

December 2023



This issue's favourite cover caught my eye initially with its overall appearance. Simply put, it is eye-catching and then some. My banker will be relieved to learn that I don't feel a need to acquire every attractive cover that I see but this one originated in Nelson, a major town along the southern CPR route and, as such, fit in with my passion for places that were of significance in the development of the CPR southern route. It was registered and mailed Dec 2, 1911, addressed to Belgium with both an oval "R" and a keyhole registration marking. A total postage of 10 cents, made up by two 1 cent plus four 2 cent King Edward stamps to pay for the surface rate plus registry fee. Annoyingly, for an RPO marking collector, it did not receive any RPO marking and so apparently went by closed bag to Montreal, where it received a very faint transit marking on the reverse dated Dec 7, 1911. However, by now the full story behind the cover needed to be explored, as in who sent it, who was the intended recipient and why was it sent? This exploration is pursued in an article dealing with two covers from Nelson, starting on Page 1425.

Morris Beattie

In this issue:

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|
| • Favourite cover | p 1420 | • Nelson covers | p 1425 |
| • Notes | p 1421 | • Williams Head | p 1429 |
| • Arbutus, BC | p 1422 | • Nootka | p 1430 |

BC newsletter wins Siverts

We were pleased to receive notification that the *British Columbia Postal History Newsletter* has won the 2023 John S. Siverts Award for the best Study Group Newsletter during the previous calendar year. The award was announced at BNAPS 2023 in Halifax.

The editor would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the newsletter as well as those who provide support and encouragement. Of particular note are Tracy Cooper and Tim Woodland whose direct help makes the newsletter possible. Making the newsletter varied and of maximum interest depends on input from our membership and the past contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

Other BNAPS awards to BC collectors include: Order of the Beaver Lifetime Achievement Award to Ken Pugh, BNAPS Hall of Fame Award to Gary Dickinson and a Vermeil for a single frame exhibit to Richard Thompson.

Texada Island post office to close

According to the *Powell River Peak* October 17, 2023, the Gillies Bay post office, opened May 23, 1964 will be closing as of December 21, 2023

According to a notification from Canada Post, Gillies Bay General Store on Texada Island no longer wants to continue its partnership with Canada Post. Alternatives for a Gillies Bay location are being explored.

Over the past several years, the newsletter has presented a series of articles regarding the various post offices in the Powell River Region, including those on Texada Island. The March 2024 issue of the newsletter will include a complete history of the Gillies Bay and Blubber Bay offices.

The *British Columbia Postal History Newsletter* is published quarterly by the BC Postal History Study Group, an affiliate of the British North America Philatelic Society (BNAPS).

Annual subscription fee for printed and mailed newsletters (four issues) is \$20, in Cdn or US funds.

Dues are payable to the editor: Morris Beattie 2938 Celtic Ave, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6N 3X7

Free digital newsletters can be downloaded as PDF files at <https://bnaps.org/hhl/n-bcr.htm> (for all issues). Issues 89 to present are in full colour; earlier newsletters are in b&w only. File size is approximately 1.5 to 3 Mb/issue.

In Memorium

Sadly, we lost a study group member recently with the passing of David Piercey.

A Canadian-level exhibitor and accredited judge, Dr. Piercey was a former chair of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (RPSC) Judging and Exhibiting Program. He was elected a Fellow of The RPSC in 2010 and served on its Board of Directors 2008-2016. During this time Dr. Piercey assisted The RPSC in developing guidelines for the accreditation of new National shows. He also developed The RPSC Exhibitor Feedback form for all Canadian National-level shows.

Dr. Piercey is best known to many Canadian philatelists for his column, "Let's Talk Exhibiting," for the RPSC's *The Canadian Philatelist* (TCP) and the book review column "The Philatelic Bookshelf" for *Canadian Stamp News*. In 2022, Dr. Piercey partnered with The RPSC to publish the book, "Let's Talk Exhibiting," which featured many of the columns he had written for the TCP. The book has served as a fund-raiser for The RPSC thanks to sponsorships. Since its initial release in June 2022, the book has also been translated into French.

A member of several British North America (BNA), specialist societies and study groups, David maintained an active involvement in such groups. He also had a strong interest in Western Canadian and Northern Canadian postal history and a thematic interest in the North Atlantic fishery.

He judged regularly at national-level shows throughout Canada and the Pacific Northwest and was also very involved on the organizing committee of CAPEX 22.

David was always ready to help with a project and he will be missed.

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The first Arbutus, B.C. post office: Where was it located?

by Brian Copeland

There were two different post offices named Arbutus on Vancouver Island. The first was open for only 4 months from Sept. 1, 1911 until Dec. 31, 1911. The second opened 16 years later and was in operation for less than 4 years from Jan. 17, 1927 to Dec. 26, 1930. Postal revenue was low (see Table. 1) and surviving covers from both are rare.

	Year	Revenue (\$)
Arbutus (1)	1912	21.50
Arbutus (2)	1928	93.80
	1929	107.97
	1930	75.20
	1931	7.28

Table 1. Postal revenue for year ending March 31.

Source: Annual Report of the Postmaster General

The location of the second Arbutus office is well-established. Library and Archives Canada reports that it was at mile 62 on the CN railroad that ran from Victoria to Lake Cowichan via Kinsol and Deerholme.¹ The return address on the cover in Fig. 1 confirms this.



Figure 1. Registered cover (front) from Arbutus (2) sent on Nov. 28, 1928 to Vancouver. Courtesy of Tim Woodland.

The post offices along the CN railway in this area supported the lumber industry. Nearby post offices on the railway (such as Benallack, Lakeshaw and Kinsol) were also short-lived.

The location of the first Arbutus office, however, has been a bit of a mystery. This article reviews the evidence on its likely location.

Fig. 2 shows an incoming cover to the first Arbutus office. It was sent from Liverpool on Sept. 22, 1911 and was received in Arbutus on Oct. 7, 1911. The cover is addressed to J. H. Bushnell – probably James Henry Bushnell, who was a well-known surveyor in B.C.²

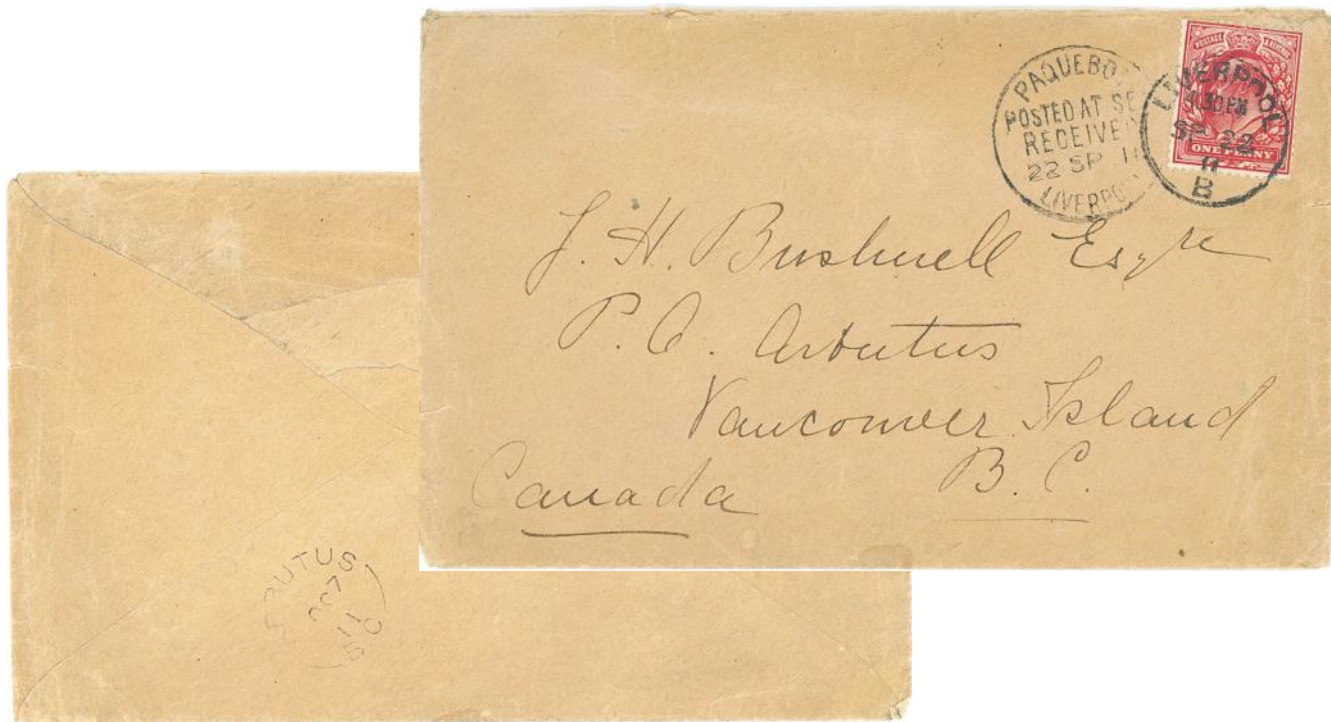


Figure 2. Incoming cover from England to Arbutus (1). Received Oct. 7, 1911.

A comparison of the Arbutus postmarks on the covers in Figs. 1 and 2 indicates that different hammers were used. Both are in the Hughes proof book. The hammer for Arbutus (1) was proofed on Aug. 3, 1911; and that for Arbutus (2) was proofed on Jan. 9, 1927.

Tracy Cooper in his book on B.C. Post Offices says of Arbutus (1): "Exact location is uncertain, but may have been located either in the vicinity of Arbutus Canyon on the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway 12 miles north of Esquimalt, or at Arbutus Station between Craigs Crossing and Nanaimo."³ Wrigley's British Columbia Directory for 1919 says that Arbutus was "a station on the E&N Ry., 2 miles from Craigs, generally known as Craigs Crossing." However there does not appear to have been an E&N Station named Arbutus. Another indication of confusion in the Wrigley's listings is that their entry for Arbutus in 1929 says that Arbutus is "a P.O. in the Alberni Prov. Elect. Dist., Vancouver Is., 2 m. from Craigs Crossing, on the E&N Ry. ... This P.O. also serves Benallack." By this time (1929) the second Arbutus post office was open, and it was indeed near Benallack. But as I have already noted, the second Arbutus office was southeast of Lake Cowichan on the CN railway and nowhere near Craigs Crossing. So where was the first Arbutus post office?

Library and Archives Canada does not give an exact location, but does say that it was in the Comox-Atlin Electoral District. Given the boundaries of this district, this means that the post office was north of Wellington. This would rule out the possibility that it was near Arbutus Canyon or near the location of the second Arbutus post office.

The postmaster at Arbutus (1) was George A. Gordon.¹ The Postmaster General Report for the year ending March 31, 1912 reports that G.A. Gordon had a contract to carry the mail twice a week a distance of 2 miles from the "Station" to the post office for 4 months ending Dec. 31, 1911. The "Station" is mostly likely the E&N railway station and so the post office was 2 miles from the railway. In Sept. 1911, the E&N Railway had service up to Parksville and then west as far as about Cameron Lake – the connection to Port Alberni was still under construction. Given that it was in the electoral district of Comox-Atlin, this suggests that the post office was about 2 miles from a railway station somewhere between Wellington and Cameron Lake.

Based on some evidence discussed below, the likely location of the post office was on Arbutus Point (now Madrona Point), just southeast of Parksville. The map in Figure 3 illustrates the location.

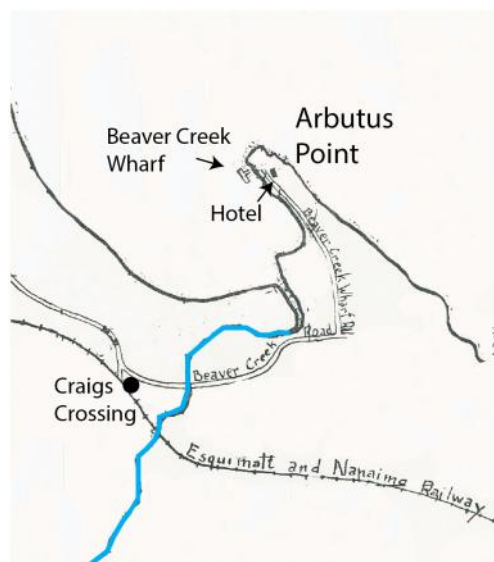


Figure 3. Map showing Arbutus Point⁴

The hotel and wharf at Arbutus point were about 2 miles from Craigs Crossing. This is consistent both with the contract that G.A. Gordon had to carry the mail 2 miles from the station to the post office, and with the Wrigley's Directory entry indicating that the office was 2 miles from Craigs Crossing. At this time, there was not yet a post office at Craigs Crossing; the nearest post office was in Parksville.

A road connected Beaver Creek Wharf with the railway station at Craigs Crossing. Beaver Creek Wharf was constructed in 1893, mostly due to lobbying by James Craig, a prominent settler in the area.⁵ Before the railway came through Craigs Crossing and up to Parksville, mail and cargo were delivered by steamship to Beaver Creek Wharf.⁵ Figure 4 shows the steamer City of Nanaimo at Beaver Creek Wharf.

Figure 4. Steamer City of Nanaimo at Beaver Creek Wharf.

Source: Parksville Archives



During the real estate boom before the first world war, the Realty Securities Corporation of Vancouver purchased Arbutus Point from William Beveridge.⁴ A hotel was built beside the wharf by A.B. Gurney in 1911.^{4,5} The Realty Securities Corporation planned a large development in the area. They produced a brochure (see Fig. 5) extolling the virtues and attractions of the point, noting the wharf, hotel and beautiful scenery on the peninsula.⁶

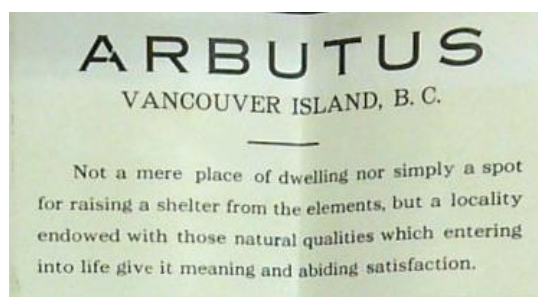
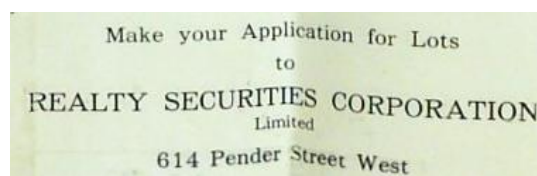


Figure 5. Excerpts from a brochure promoting the real estate development at Arbutus Point. Source: Parksville Archives.



Arbutus has only to be seen to be appreciated. The ground is level and presents a park-like appearance. With a deep water landing, a government wharf on the property, a good hotel within a stone's throw of the wharf, standing in its own grounds of five acres, a pleasant holiday trip can be had while inspecting and choosing the site for a home.

According to Henderson's Greater Vancouver Directory of 1912 (on an addenda page with last minute additions), the president of the Realty Securities Corporation was G.A. Gordon. This was the name of the postmaster at Arbutus.

And finally, in a newsletter that appears to have been published at the hotel, entitled Arbutus Bulletin No. 1 (Aug. 25th, 1911), there is a report that George A. Gordon is expected to arrive on his 33 foot launch, the Marvel^{5,7} This was about a week before the post office opened.

So although I have been unable to find a source that explicitly mentions the post office at Arbutus Point, the real estate development at Arbutus Point by a company headed by the man who was the postmaster at Arbutus, plus the location being in the Comox-Atlin electoral district a couple of miles from the railway station, are highly suggestive that this is where the post office was.

Why was the post office short-lived? Both Leffler and Nichols in their books say that the real estate development was ultimately not successful.^{4,5} A few years later in 1914, a post office opened at Craigs Crossing with James Craig as postmaster.

Notes:

1. Library and Archives Canada, *Post Offices and Postmasters* database (online).
2. Province of B.C., *Sessional Papers: Surveyor General's Report for year ending Dec 31 1894*. p.785. The Bushnell family fonds are in Vancouver Archives.
3. Tracy Cooper, *British Columbia Post Office Revenues 1871 -1921*. I.L. Cooper Binding, 1999.
4. The map has been adapted from one in Margaret Nichols, *A History of NanOOSE Bay*, 1958 (updated in 1980 by Barbara Sivertz).
5. Majorie Leffler, *Parksville and Then Some*, Parksville Museum, 2014.
6. The brochure is available in the Parksville Museum and Archives. The author gratefully acknowledges the help of Valda Stefani of the Archives in locating this and other items relating to the history of Arbutus Point and Craigs Crossing.
7. A copy of the *Arbutus Bulletin* is in the Parksville Museum and Archives.

Nelson: a pair of interesting covers

by Morris Beattie

Nelson, BC is one of those places about which numerous articles dealing with various aspects of its postal history can be written. In fact, several such articles ^(1, 2, 3, 4) previously have appeared in the newsletter and elsewhere. Considering its location on Kootenay lake and on early railway post office routes, notably the Medicine Hat and Nelson RPO and Nelson and Midway RPO, and its prominent role in commercial development of the region, there are numerous aspects to be explored in addition to postal markings and early routes, including what we like to call "social philately".

The present article will discuss two postal history items from Nelson that provide very different opportunities for study as well as highlighting some of the frustrations that are encountered during such studies.

Like many towns in the Kootenays, Nelson had its start as a result of mining discoveries in the area. The story starts in 1886 when a group from Washington, who were in the area searching for gold, instead found a copper-silver deposit, to become known as the Silver King Mine, on Toad Mountain and so, Nelson was born. The population grew quickly and by the following winter several hundred people were living in tents near what is now the centre of Nelson. Gold commissioner and magistrate Gilbert Malcolm Sproat surveyed and laid out the townsite.

Originally, the town was to be known as Stanley after Canada's governor general but when they applied for a post office, it was determined that this name was already in use and so the town was named Nelson after then-lieutenant governor Hugh Nelson. The post office was established on July 24, 1889 and became

an accounting P.O. on April 1, 1892. The Columbia and Kootenay Railway arrived in 1891, connecting Nelson to Robson and from there to the Arrow Lakes routes, followed by the arrival of the Nelson and Fort Sheppard railway in 1893, giving access to American destinations by more than water-based routes. Post office revenues increased rapidly, rising from \$629 in 1890 to over \$30,000 by 1916⁽⁶⁾. A Nelson split-ring dater was proofed August 26, 1889⁽⁶⁾.

While lumbering rapidly overtook mining as the primary industry in the area, mining continued to play a meaningful role as well, including the establishment of the Hall Smelter. The smelter was warranted as transport of the Silver King ores to Bute, Montana was costly. The smelter operated until 1908 by which time the mine was diminished in production and the smelter finally was destroyed by fire in 1911.

Following incorporation of the City of Nelson in 1897, by 1899 Nelson owned its own electrical utility and was making plans to move its electrical generation from Cottonwood Creek to a dam site on the Kootenay River at Bonnington Falls. This project was accomplished in 1907. A street car system begun by the Nelson Electrical Tramway Company in 1899⁽⁵⁾ and a gasworks started in 1900 were also later taken over and operated by the city until the second half of the century, when they were supplanted by bus transit and natural gas.

Figure 1 shows the first postal history item to be discussed, an attractive corner card dated Feb 12, 1900 from H. Byers & Co which had outlets in several interior towns of B.C. that were prominent with respect to mining activity, namely Nelson, Kaslo and Sandon. The cover indicates that H. Byers & Co were agents for Truax Automatic Ore Cars and a drawing of such an ore car is included on the cover. Letterhead for the company that built the Truax ore cars is shown in Figure 2. Two one-cent small queens pay the surface rate for the cover to the USA, appropriate for the destination in Albany, New York. The only marking on the back indicates that it was received in Albany on Feb. 18, 1900.

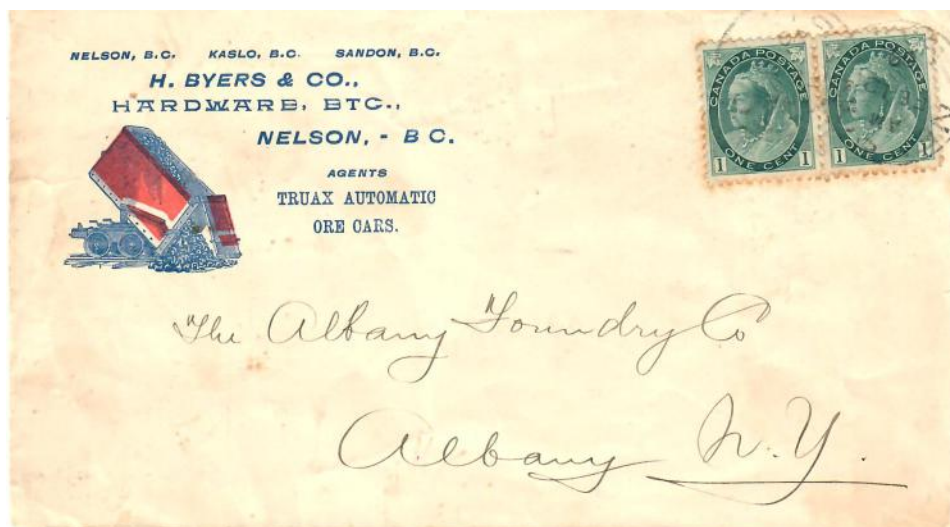


Figure 1. Corner card for H. Byers & Co mailed from Nelson to Albany, New York.

Figure 2. Letterhead for ore car production company in Denver.



Truax Manufacturing Co. of Denver was a well-known supplier of ore cars and other ore handling equipment from the late 1800s into the early 20th century. The Truax ore car solved a major problem experienced with earlier ore cars. Unlike other cars whose door occasionally did not properly open as the car was tipped resulting in a shift in the load that carried the car and load over and down the dump, the Truax car automatically opened the door as the car was tipped and then relocked the door when the car was returned to the horizontal position.

As indicated in the newspaper ad that appeared in the Nelson Tribune for February 22, 1902 shown in Figure 3, H. Byers & Co were a well-known outlet for hardware and iron products in the Nelson region. They had the distinction of being the initial business in Nelson to occupy what was the first brick building in town, built in 1896.

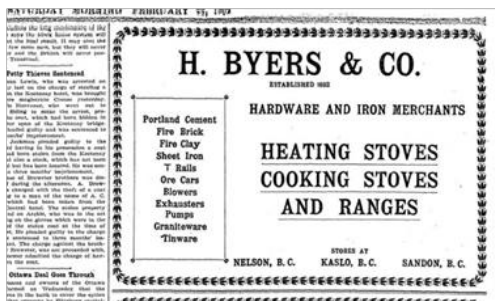


Figure 3. Newspaper advertisement for H. Byers & Co for February 22, 1902



Figure 4. Headquarters for H. Byers in Nelson in the City's first brick building.

In 1904, the assets of H. Byers were taken over by the Wood Vallance Hardware Company Limited that had formed in Hamilton, Ontario in 1849 and which subsequently became a household name in Nelson.

Wood Vallance shut down the Byers Sandon store, sold the Kaslo store, and expanded the premises of the former Byers store on Baker Street in Nelson to be a prominent business in the field of industrial, commercial and household hardware, including sales of mining and forestry supplies for the region. The fortunes of Wood Vallance were greatly enhanced through its relationship with the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Ltd (also known as CM&S, and later as Cominco and then Teck) that was incorporated in 1906. The CPR-owned company would for a time become the largest non-ferrous smelter in the world but in 1910 was short of funds, and about to go under because no one would offer them credit. The one supplier that gave them credit was the Wood Vallance Hardware Company. This help became the basis for an extraordinary, mutually beneficial, unofficial relationship between the two companies that lasted until the 1980s. In addition to using Wood Vallance as a favoured supplier, CM&S contracted Wood Vallance to handle part of its purchasing function for industrial supplies like rails and steel.

Wood Vallance lasted until the 1980s, at which time the corporation was liquidated.

The second postal history item (our favourite cover from page 1420), shown reduced in Figure 5, opens a completely different avenue of investigation, one directed more at people rather than a business in the region.



Figure 5. Reduced image of the "favourite cover" from page 1420.

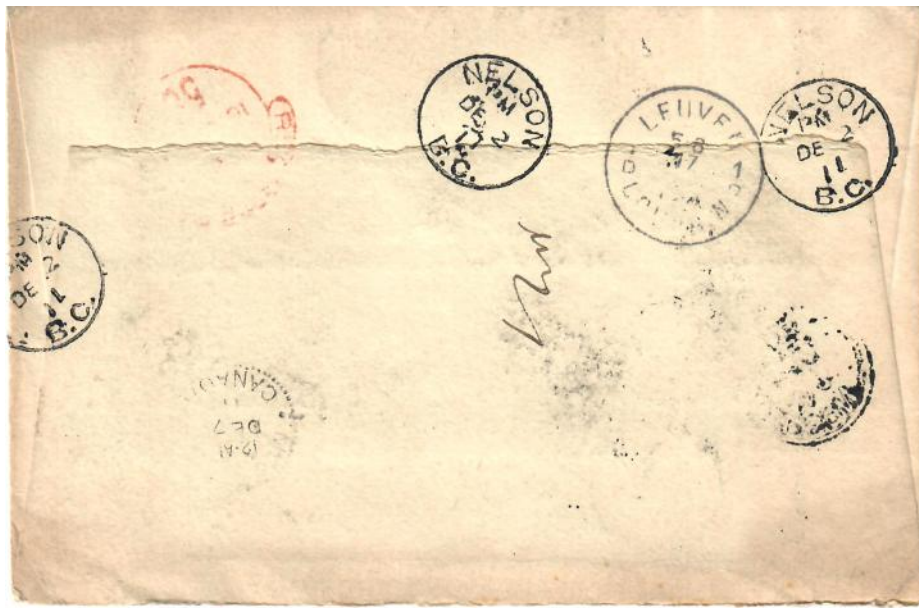


Figure 6. Reverse of cover shown in Figure 5, showing postal markings.

As discussed on page 1420, this cover caught my eye initially with its overall appearance. The paper used for the cover is very coarse and did not take impressions very well so that there is one marking on the reverse side that cannot be read at all. Herein lies the frustration. Part of the story of this great cover is unclear due to poor impressions of the postal markings.

The writing at the left side of the cover indicates that it was sent by Reverend J. Althoff in Nelson and it is addressed to Reverend J. de Becker at the American College of Louvain, Belgium. Why a reverend in Nelson would be writing to an American College in Belgium becomes clearer when the full name and background to the college are considered.

The "American College of the Immaculate Conception in Louvain, Belgium" was a Roman Catholic seminary founded in 1857 to train young Catholic men for missionary service in North America and to provide American seminarians the opportunity to study philosophy and theology at the famed Catholic University of Louvain. It operated under the rectorship of Jules De Becker, to whom the cover in Figure 5 is addressed.

Rev. John Althoff was born in the Netherlands in 1853 and obtained his education at the Louvain University's American College in Belgium, being ordained in June 1878. Following service in Alaska and Victoria, he transferred to Nelson in 1902. His immediate task in Nelson was to clear the debt that had been accumulated by the Nelson parish, which he did using his own, inherited wealth. He died in 1925 and his obituary stated "Although Very Rev. Monsignor Althoff loved his pipe and hated a cheap cigar next to mortal sin, he never hesitated to provide for others and assist those in need. His unassuming demeanor, kindness and generosity, particularly to the sick and poor, are fondly remembered."

The cover is therefore addressed by the reverend in Nelson to his old college instructor.

Like the Naked City, there are many more stories to be told about Nelson through investigation of its postal history record.

References:

1. Scrimgeour, G., *Unusual Mail Routes – III*, PHSC Vol.43, p 29 – 35, 1985
2. Smith, J.M., *Postmarks of Nelson, B.C.*, PHSC Journal 61, pp 20-21.
3. Topping, B, *Nelson Mail – 1893*, BCPHN #13, p 102, 1995.
4. Manning, Ed, *When Nelson was called Stanley: an 1888 cover*, BCPHN #109, pp 1115–1118, 2019.
5. Parker, D. V., *Streetcars in the Kootenays*, Havlock House, Edmonton, 1992.
6. Cooper, T, *British Columbia Post Office Revenues, 1871-1921*, Private Printing, 1999.

Chinese Repatriation Camp – William Head

A real but shameful example of BC Postal History.

by Tracy Cooper

Many postal historians enjoy collecting and researching internment and quarantine camps that were set up across the country in World War 1 and 2. The World War 1 internment camps have long been an interest of mine as witnessed by my recent article in the newsletter on the Mara Lake Internment Camp.

I was aware of the usage of the William Head facility, a small seaport outpost some 25 kilometers southwest of Victoria on the west coast of Vancouver Island, as a quarantine camp for smallpox and other diseases in the 19th century but was totally unaware of its use as a Chinese Repatriation Camp at the end of the first world war. When this example came up on Ebay I jumped on the opportunity to add to my collection.



Figure 1.
Image of William Head camp.

Figure 2 shows a CPR Place Viger Hotel Montreal 2c postal stationary CPR 80 Freight Advice card and mailed from Victoria B.C. with a machine cancel on 11 PM on March 15, 1920 and received by the Camp Commandant, Major Frank Basil Edwards, the next day and stamped with his scalloped oval handstamp CAMP COMMANDANT/MARCH 16 1920/CHINESE REPATRIATION CAMP/WILLIAM HEAD B.C. The card was addressed to the "Officer Commanding Chink Repat Camp, Wm Head" and the freight advice was for 40 bales of blankets weighing 4000 pounds.



Figure 2.
Freight advice card from Montreal to
William Head.

The William Head Quarantine Station was built in the 1880's in response to the fears of smallpox and other infectious diseases potentially brought by new arrivals to British Columbia and was the first port of call for incoming vessels to the west coast. The Quarantine station also served as the receiver point for the D'Arcy Island leper lazaretto which operated on this small island off the coast of Central Saanich from 1891 to 1924.

In 1917 the British Army was fighting a war of attrition in France and was in dire need of labour to support the ongoing trench warfare in France. The solution was to recruit non-combatant workers from China, process them at William Head and then transport them across Canada by rail and then onward to France by ship. The camp was known by the derogatory term 'Coolie' camp and after hostilities ended in Europe, the returnees were for all purposes interned at William Head to keep them separate from the sensibilities of the mostly white population of Victoria, awaiting their repatriation back to China. The facility acted more like a prison camp than a quarantine station and security was tight.

The station role in supporting the war effort ended in 1920 and the 1920 Annual Report for William Head noted that on April 4th "the last of the Chinese Coolies embarked for China on the SS 'Bessie Dollar' and the camp was dismantled and closed on April 17, 1920. Obviously, the order for 40 bales of blankets was to support the internees comfort on the long journey back overseas to China.

I am still looking for correspondence to the Leper Colony on D'Arcy Island, if any of our readers has such an item, it would make a great accompanying story for the newsletter.

Nootka Sound

By James Corbet

This article is about Nootka Sound, located on the west coast of Vancouver Island, and the ripple effects on the region and its inhabitants of the landing of Capt. James Cook, illustrated through philately. The members of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht, Nuchatlaht, and Ehattesaht First Nations are the Nuuchah-nulth-speaking tribes whose traditional territories for thousands of years have included all of the area known today as Nootka Sound. The Nuuchah-Nulth, or "all along the mountains", refers to their traditional lands, one of cedar, salmon and deer.

After a strenuous time at sea, constantly battling storms, Capt. James Cook had two damaged ships, the *Resolution* and the *Discovery*, which had to be repaired ASAP. He was on his way from the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) to try and locate the NW Passage, on this, his third voyage. The first opportunity was Nootka Sound, originally named by Cook as King George Sound but then changed because he [Cook] thought "Nootka" was the Indigenous name for the inlet. So, in April 1778, both ships were moored in Ship Cove (now called Resolution Cove) on Bligh Island. From oral history, one of the greeters was the chief Tsaxawasip of the Moachat tribe and he and the entourage were pointing to the sound and saying "Nootka, Itchme Nootka, Itchme"- meaning "you go around the harbour", or in other words "move the ships more inshore".¹

Yuquot, "Wind comes from all directions", was the main summer village. Friendly Cove, wrongly attributed to Cook, was named by James Strange (a British East India Co. factor in charge of a fur trade expedition) in 1786. In 1789, the Spanish built Fort San Miguel and Santa Cruz de Nuca. They lasted until 1795.

It took a month (April 1-26) to repair the ships, during which time there was much interaction with the Nootka including trading for sea otter pelts. Later, these pelts were sold in China for much profit and thus began the maritime fur trade. Eventually, this trade in otter pelts created the Nootka Crises: Spain and England claimed the area but the Russians were moving south and the Americans were moving west. In the end, Nootka Sound remained in British hands as part of British Columbia, much to the chagrin of the Nootka who still claimed the land as theirs. Eventually, the maritime fur trade ended and Nootka Sound became a back eddy, a blip in the history of British Columbia until 1978. Economically there was some fishing, logging and mining.

As a side note: When Cook took the longitude and latitude of Nootka, he became the first person to have the actual breadth of Canada as he had also taken the measurements of a few places on the east coast of Newfoundland.



Figure 1. Two Spanish covers dated Oct. 12, 1967 celebrating the Discovery and Conquest of America.

The cachets in Figure 1 illustrate Fort San Miguel and Santa Cruz de Nuca (Nootka) with a map of Central America and North America in the background. The 120 PTAS stamp illustrates Fort San Miguel and Santa Cruz de Nuca (Poblado de Nootka, Nootka Town) near Yuquot. The 50 CTS stamp illustrates the Nootka coast. The two portraits are of Francisco Antonio Mourelle and Cayetano Valdes. In 1775, Mourelle was the pilot for Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra travelling from San Blas, Mexico to Bucareli Bay, Alaska passing Nootka Sound. James Cook utilized information from Mourelle's log that had been published in English in London. Maurelle Island in the Discovery Islands is named for him. During the summer of 1792 Valdés and Galiano circumnavigated Vancouver Island, starting and finishing at Nootka Sound, becoming the first Europeans to do so. They did meet Capt. George Vancouver on this trip.

The philatelic connection to Nootka Sound: Cook did reconnoitre a couple of inlets, observing abandoned and active villages. The European communities came decades later, eventually bringing post offices. Nootka (1904 – 1953), was one of the earliest post offices. Some of these offices are Ceepeecee (1926, changed to Esperanza in 1960), Zeballos (1937), Tahsis (1938) and Gold River (1961, originally Muchalat 1952). None of these offices have a direct James Cook connection (other than touching the same waters) except Nootka for the name.

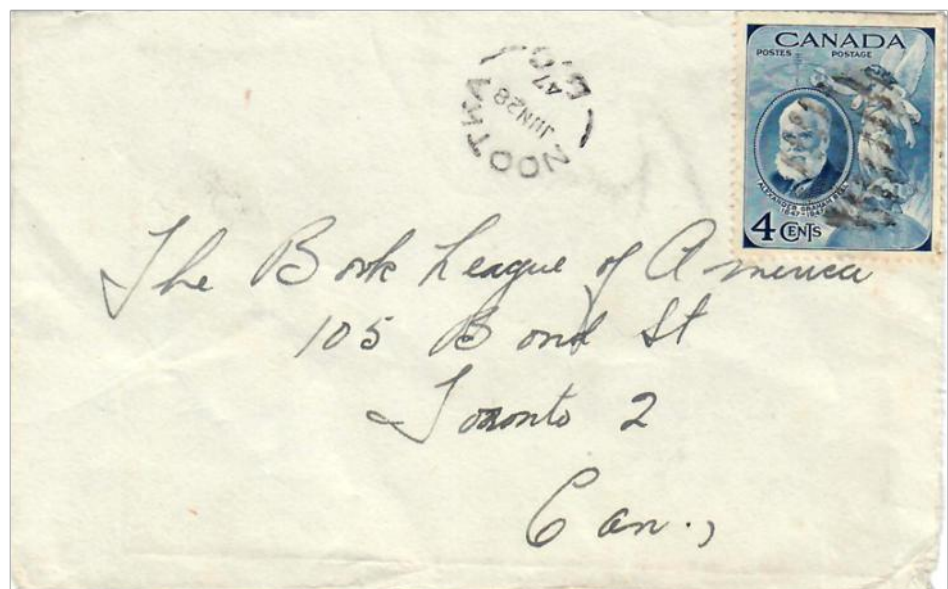


Figure 2. A cover mailed June 28, 1947, receiving a split-ring Nootka cancel.

Like Nootka, referencing the people, Muchalat is named after the Muchalaht people and the original village was where the Gold River joins the sea at Muchalat Inlet. The Muchalat post office was established in 1952. In 1961 the post office was renamed as "Gold River". Gold River, the name of the actual river, appears on maps as early as 1869. Originally the logging village of Gold River, established in 1955, was right at Muchalat Inlet before moving 12 km upriver in 1965.²

WATER RESOURCES BRANCH
DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL RESOURCES
R. 1
OBSERVATIONS OF WATER HEIGHT
GOLD RIVER AT NEAR *MUCHALAT, B.C.*

Month	DAY	WATER HEIGHT ON GAUGE				MEAN	REMARKS ON CHANGES OF RIVER HEIGHT
		MORNING		AFTERNOON			
		Time	Height	Time	Height		
Sunday	24th			2:05	4.04		RAIN, MILD
Monday	25th			1:45	4.88		RAIN, FROST, OVERCAST
Tuesday	26th			1:30	4.68		CLOUDY, COAST
Wednesday	27th			1:35	7.06		CLOUDY, MILD
Thursday	28th			2:40	5.64		CLOUDY, COAST
Friday	29th			1:45	4.85		CLOUDY, COAST
Saturday	30th			7:30	4.25		CLOUDY, COAST

Under the head of remarks, give any facts on rain, snow, change of weather, and affect the height of the river. In floods, note the rate at which the water rises in one or height, and time of day. If river is dry, state this fact, or note whether the water is stationary.

I CERTIFY that the above observations were actually made by me and are correct.

Examined by.....(Sign) *Betty H. M.*



Figure 3a and 3b. Water Resources card mailed from Muchalat.

Symbolically, the addressee in Figure 3 fits right in with this subject of local names: The Water Resources Branch (Nootka Sound, Muchalat Inlet and Gold River) and the Department of Northern Affairs (which at the time looked after all the First Nations).

Daily entries in Cook's journals and Ship's Master often included observations of tides, weather, appearance of coastlines and environmental conditions. Cook's observations, those to do with the tides, included the heights and times of the ocean tide at the places he visited and of the tidal streams he encountered during the voyage.

So, Cook would have interacted with the Mowachaht in the vicinity of Ship Cove and the Muchalaht further up the inlet. To him, they were all Nootka.

1978 was the Bicentennial of the landing of Capt. James Cook at Nootka. The original thought was for a conference at Simon Fraser University, a small celebration with the BC Historical Society, which also instigated Canada Post to release an issue in honour of the event. This all occurred. However, Grace McCarthy and the Dept. of Tourism got wind of the plans and decided to blow this out of proportion for the sake of tourism and tourist dollars. From a "quick" inconvenient pit stop out of necessity (Cook's objective was to find the NW Passage), the anniversary became a year-long event with festivities and celebrations all across BC, even though Cook had nothing to do with places like Williams Lake or Cranbrook. In the middle of all this political brouhaha were the Nootka First Nations protesting. No native people were allowed to land at Yuquot, Friendly Cove or Resolution Cove during this period. As far as the Nuuchah-Nulth were concerned, the British had stolen their land and the Provincial Government supported that.



Figure 4. A cover from Russia, addressed to one of the organizers of the Cook Conference.

The conference was held from April 16-19, 1978 at Simon Fraser University. The cover from Russia (USSR) shown in Figure 4 is appropriate as Cook travelled down the Chukotskiy Peninsula coast and interacted with Russians in Unalaska.



Figure 5. FDC with cachet showing the official logo of the Bicentennial event with a nice slogan cancel from Port Alberni.

Note: Port Alberni was named for Captain Don Pedro de Alberní, a Spanish officer, who commanded Fort San Miguel at Nootka Sound from 1790 to 1792.

The 1978 Bicentennial of Capt. James Cook's landing at Nootka, becoming the first documented European tourist to the shores of British Columbia, spawned many covers and cancellations. Other firsts resulting from the landing include ship repairs, international trade and brewing beer (spruce).

The culmination of the input by the BC Historical Society and the Provincial Government to Canada Post

was a release of a pair of stamps on April 26, 1978 (Cook's departure April 26, 1778). The 14 cent stamps were based on paintings; a portrait of Captain James Cook, by Nathaniel Dance and Nootka Sound by John Webber. Nathaniel Dance was a well-known portrait painter in London. The portrait of Cook (commissioned by Sir Joseph Banks), circa 1775-76, resides in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London. John Webber was one of the artists on Cook's third voyage. "A View of King George's Sound/Nootka Sound", circa 1778, is drawn in ink, pencil and wash and watercolours. It was purchased by the British Museum in 1859.

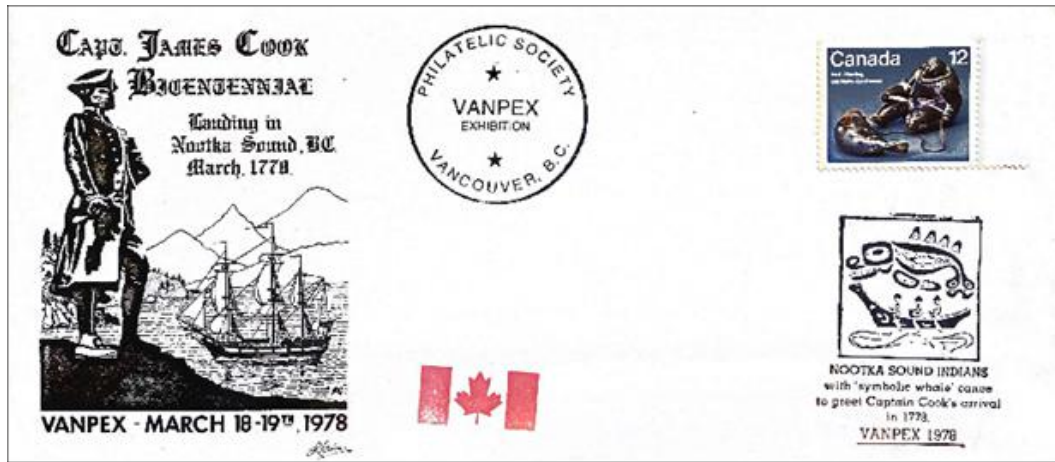


Figure 6. Vanpex 1978 cover with Cook Bicentennial cachet.

The Vancouver Philatelic Exhibition was held a week plus before the bicentennial of Cook arriving in Nootka. Cook was the theme of the exhibition but it was too early to utilize the official stamps. There wasn't an official Canada Post kiosk at the exhibition, hence no date cancel.

Figure 7. The official FDC from Canada Post; Cook's signature is from his will. The map of Nootka Sound and surrounding coast appears to be based on Henry Roberts' sketch of King Georges (Nootka) Sound.



"Sunday 29th(Mar.) At length at 9 oclock in the Morning of the 29th as we were standing to the NE we again saw the land, which at Noon when our Latitude was 49°29'30" N, longit. 232°29' E, extended from NWBN to ESE the nearest part about 6 leagues dist. The Country had a very different appearance to what we before had seen, it was full of high Mountains whose summits were covered with snow; but the Vallies between them and the land on the sea Coast, high as well as low, was clothed with wood."³

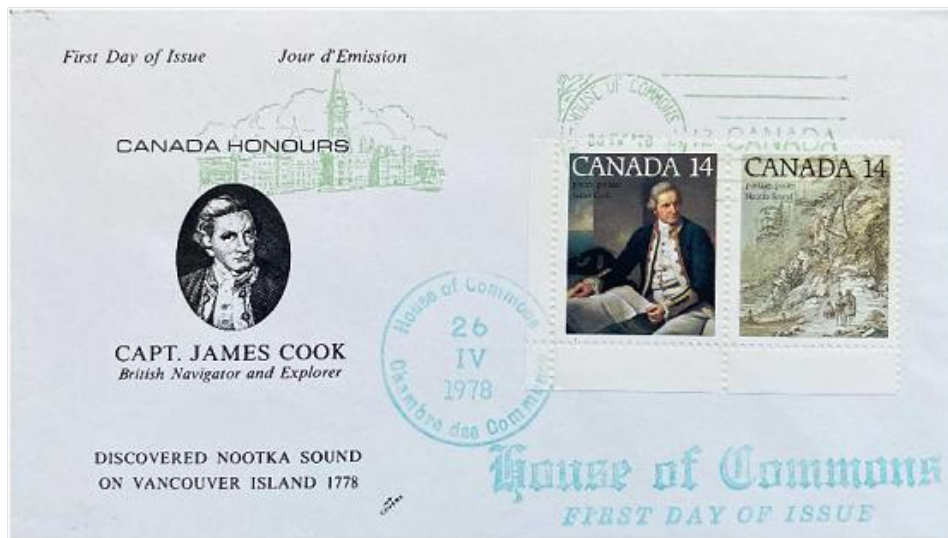


Figure 8. Private FDC with House of Commons cancellation.



Figure 9. A private FDC with Victoria cancellation.



Figure 10. A private FDC, signed, with cachet made of birch wood. Note that on March 28, Cook was still at sea but could see the coast.

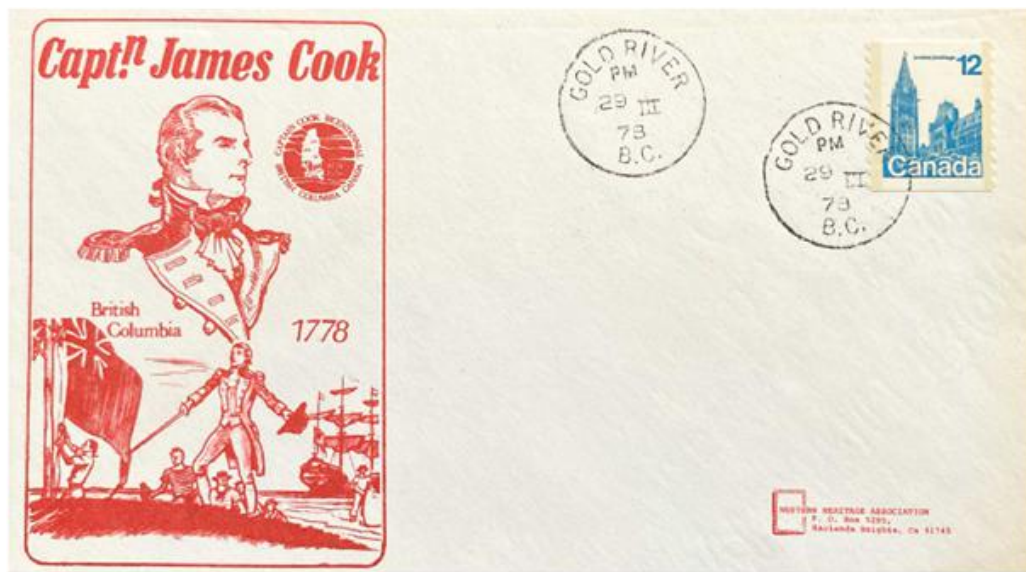


Figure 11. A cover with Capt'n. Cook cachet cancelled at Gold River.

I sent two covers to the post master at Zeballos to be cancelled on April 26, if possible, with a hammer cancel and a current cancel, which they were able to do. As one can see in Figure 12, the hammer cancel is somewhat faint, so Figure 12 includes a nice hammer cancel on the stamp. To my eye, it appears that in Figure 12, the number between Zeballos and 26 IV is 17 which I feel should be 16 if that is supposed to be the year.

It doesn't appear that Cook got up the arm of Nootka Sound that Zeballos is on but the Spanish did, naming it after Ciriaco Cevallos, an officer with Alejandro Malaspina's expedition. Cook got to the points of the Saavedra Islands, Kendrick Inlet, Tahsis Inlet and Canal Island. The Northern Sea Otter subspecies *Enhydra lutris kenyoni*, which is found in the Aleutian Islands, Southern Alaska, British Columbia, and Washington was the global focus after Cook's voyage.

Figure 12. A cover dated March 26, 2017 and a piece dated March 26, 2017, both with Zeballos CDS cancels, although handled by the post office in 2016.



April 18 ... "We also found that many of the principles of those about us carried on a trade with their neighbors with the articles they got from us; as they would be frequently be gone from us four or five days at a time and then return with a fresh cargo of skins curiosities &c..."⁴



Figure 13. A cover with Cook commemorative stamps, cancelled at Zeballos on March 26, 2016.

On Dec 4, 1779 the Resolution and Discovery arrived in Macao at the mouth of the Canton River. Here, the approx. 300 furs that were left were sold to the Chinese at high prices; approx. 1,800%.⁵ Interestingly, the crew felt there was little value to the furs.⁶ The ensuing trade years it fell to approx. 300% but still enough profit that each agency wanted a monopoly on the trade, hence the Nootka Crises.

Over Cook's three voyages, he had to make a number of stops to repair the ships, all part and parcel of wooden ships, the sea and weather. Cook's intent was not Nootka Sound, he didn't even claim it for King and Country. He did make the best of the situation as he always had, hence the interactions and observations of the Nootka. Unfortunately, the Nootka people also got a couple of unexpected gifts from the crew, venereal disease and tuberculosis. Over the years, more diseases were transferred i.e. smallpox and alcohol: tobacco and sugar were also introduced creating maladies for the First Nations. The Nuuchah-nulth groups are currently in negotiation with the Provincial Government for reconciliation of the land ownership; Bligh Island is one area. The cedar tree that Cook commented on has become a point of reference for indicating ongoing land occupation. The Nuuchah-nulth have been taking strips of bark off the cedars for centuries, predating European contact (the scars left from the strips can be dated), proving continuous occupation and bolstering their case against the government.

In conclusion, the ripple effect from Cook's emergency pit stop has been far reaching. Inevitably, Nootka would have been discovered as the Hudson's Bay Co was working its way through British Columbia but Cook accelerated the growth on a global scale while the HBC would have probably kept it on a more corporate aspect. With the publication of Cook's journal, the first-hand observations etc. have become a gold mine for researchers of all types including meteorological, ethnography, language, and naturalists re animal, vegetable and mineral resources of the region. Toponyms include Bligh Island, Resolution Cove and Cook Channel. Nootka Sound is still somewhat pristine, having been there myself, and in essence one is looking at what Cook was looking at, although fish farms now dot the area.

Hopefully, you got some knowledge of Nootka Sound and its people, James Cook and interesting covers.

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