

Whonnock Notes

No. 23 – Fall 2016

LETTERS FROM MAHONIA RANCHE

1888 – 1895

by Fred Braches

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LETTERS FROM MAHONIA RANCHE

1888 – 1895

by Fred Braches

Mahonia Ranche, 1889.

The two women are probably Hannah and Elizabeth Kirby. Murdoch Kirby is sitting in the middle and Louis Claude Hill, hardly visible, in the background.

Murdoch writes to Agnes on July 3rd, 1889:

“Hill expects to have a man called Hazard to stay with him. He is an amateur photographer so we may be able to send home some photos of the house.”



City of Burnaby Archives, Photo ID 477-896

Mahonia Ranche, 1892.



City of Burnaby Archives, Photo ID 477-898

Mahonia Ranche.

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City of Burnaby Archives ID 477-829

Murdoch Kirby writes to Agnes in December 1888: "Hill talks about a tennis ground. He is just the man to have for a neighbour."

1889: Louis Claude Hill, in a white shirt with racket in his hand (hardly visible) is standing on a rudimentary tennis court. The two other men have not been identified.

The building is thought to be Charles F. Sprott's cabin.

THE WHONNOCK KIRBYS

Abbreviated version of a text published in the *Maple Ridge News* of 10 February 2016



Hannah Georgina Mary Kirby, ca. 1890. Langley Centennial Museum, Object ID 0314

Weathered stones at the Whonnock cemetery mark the graves of three siblings: Murdoch, Hannah and Agnes Kirby. Highly respected old-timers they were. The three had settled in Whonnock in 1911, but then Murdoch and Hannah had already been in British Columbia for more than 20 years.

In 1888, at the age of 23, Murdoch immigrated to British Columbia from England with his friend Charles Sprott. They homesteaded on land in south Langley near the U.S. border, each on a quarter section – 160 acres of land. Hannah joined Murdoch as soon as he had finished building a log cabin, and Agnes arrived in 1903.

More than 30 surviving letters to Agnes, written by Hannah and Murdoch between 1888 and 1895, provide a unique window on their settling years. It was not an easy life by any means.

“We have had a very wet week,” Murdoch wrote in October of 1888. “The rain came through the tent. If it had not been for my McIntosh, my bed would have been wet through.” The two friends moved into a fixed-up shanty. The door had to be moved over the door opening until they had a chance to buy hinges.

They first built Murdoch’s house: “a very small one I am afraid as Charlie and I built it by ourselves.” Having problems splitting cedar, they used fir logs to build the log cabin, where early in the summer of 1889 Murdoch welcomed his sister Hannah. Fortunately, a few weeks later Charlie’s house was also finished and he could move out, as they were “rather cramped for room. ... The house is comfortable and the sitting room very pretty,” Murdoch wrote.

Next, he turned his attention to clearing his rough land, converting over time what he cleared into pasture land, hay fields and an orchard. Hannah named the place “Mahonia Ranche,” after the Oregon grape shrub. Ranching – not farming – was the term used in those days for their efforts.

Before the local Glenwood post office opened in 1892, the Kirbys picked up their mail and sent letters at the post office in Blaine, Washington, across the border. They walked and rode endless miles over muddy trails to get there and anywhere else.

The letters reveal a lively community working and playing together. Many names of people coming and going appear in the letters, but there was a core of neighbours and friends. They frequently entertained, sharing meals or teas in the English fashion or they gathered at someone’s home for dances. We often read about card games played in the evenings and on rainy days.

Soon after she arrives, Hannah writes: “Men here very rarely see any ladies at all [and they] would not miss a chance of walking home with a lady.” But that is as far as it went. She never married – neither did Murdoch or Agnes.

Contentedly they lived together, much valued by the communities they chose to call home.

No portraits of Agnes Kirby taken in the years of the correspondence were found.

INTRODUCTION

MURDOCH, Hannah and Elizabeth Kirby were among the first settlers in South Langley in the area where the Campbell Valley Regional Park is today. Glenwood, the name of the new farming settlement first appeared in the official records in 1890 with the establishment of the Glenwood school, which still carries that name today. The opening in 1892 of the Glenwood post office confirmed the name. Thereafter directories started to show Glenwood and continued to do so until the early 1940s.

The Langley Centennial Museum in Fort Langley holds about thirty letters and parts of letters [MSS 021] written between 1888 and 1895 by Murdoch and Hannah Kirby to their sister Agnes who lived with their parents in England. The letters, written at the farm they called Mahonia Ranche, are a unique testimony of the challenges early settlers faced.

Their father, Henry Thomas Murdoch Kirby, was Vicar of St. Dustan's Church in the village of Mayfield, Sussex. The vicar and his wife Hannah Jane Thomson had twelve children. The family's connection with Canada started with the migration in 1882 of son Charles to Ontario, where he became a minister. Before he married in 1889, many of his sisters shared life in Ontario with him. In 1897 Charles and his family returned to England for good.

Murdoch, too, spent time in Ontario before settling with Hannah and Elizabeth in Langley in 1888. After Elizabeth fell ill and returned to England in the summer of 1890, their sister Constance spent two years on the farm in Langley, returning to England in September 1894.

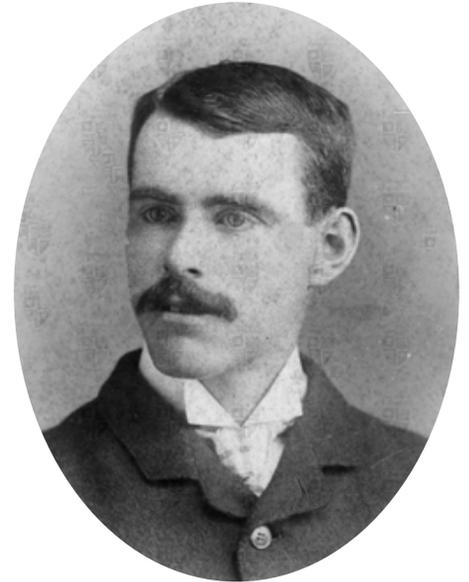
A few years later the children of another brother, Henry Grey, started moving to British Columbia, followed by their parents and other siblings. They stayed in western Canada for the rest of their lives.

In 1903 Agnes joined Hannah and Murdoch.

The surviving letters written at Mahonia Ranche are only a fraction of the correspondence. In 1979 these remaining letters were donated to the Langley Centennial Museum by Charles Shields, a grandson of Henry Grey Kirby. This issue of *Whonnock Notes* contains transcripts of those remaining letters.

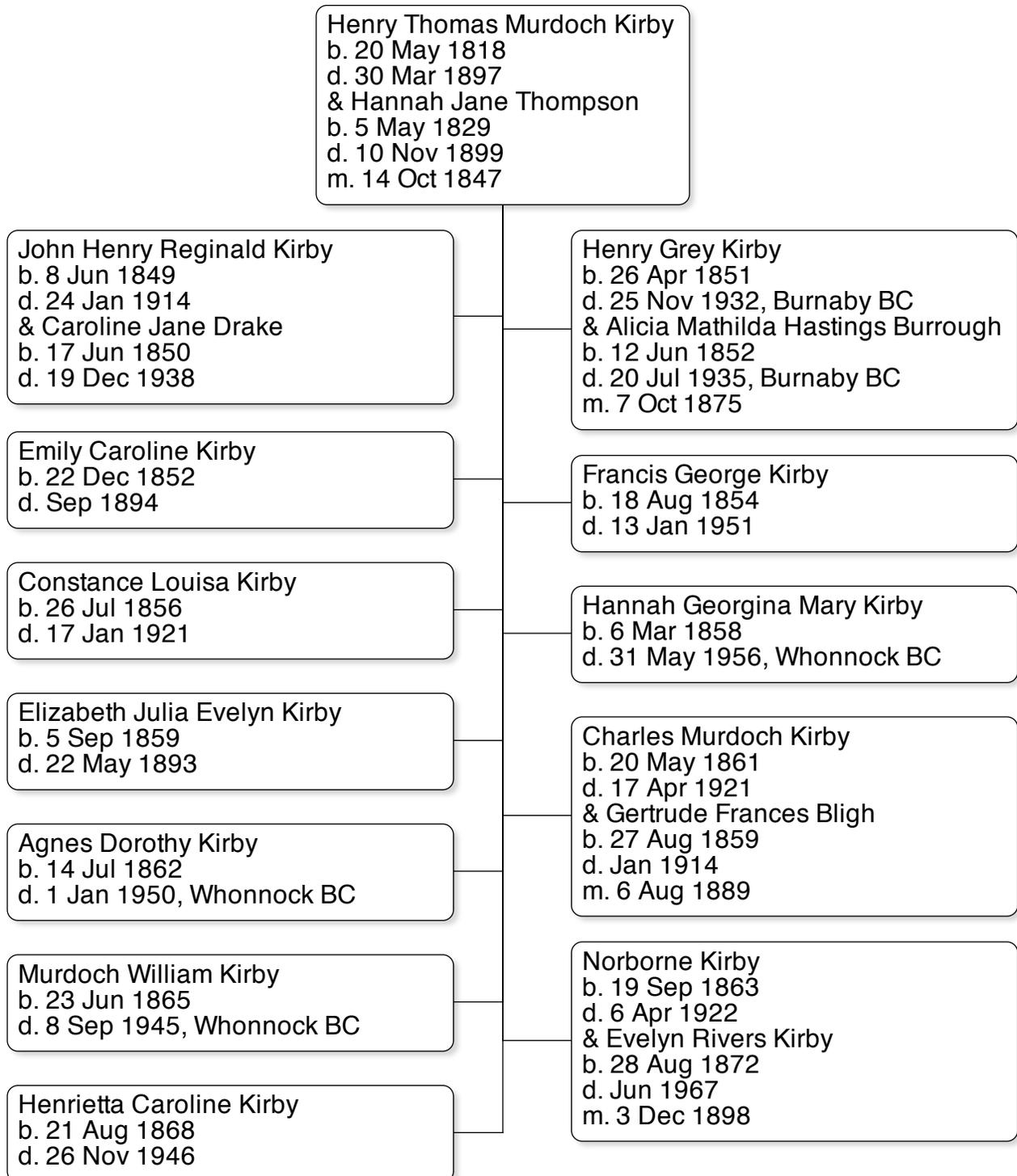
Also included in this issue are entries from a diary by Constance Kirby covering her first year at Mahonia Ranche. The diary is part of a large collection of records of the Kirbys from Mayfield at the East Sussex Record Office [ACC 6420/12/1].

Fred Braches, *Whonnock* 2016



*Murdoch William Kirby, 1894.
Photo by S. J. Thompson, New
Westminster. City of Burnaby
Archives, Photo ID 477-922*

THE KIRBY FAMILY OF MAYFIELD



Descendant reports in this issue of *Whonnock Notes* are based mostly on Julia Grange's family tree "Kirby of Mayfield family history site" on Ancestry. Errors, if any are mine. Julia Grange is a granddaughter of Norborne Kirby.

TRAVELS TO AND FROM CANADA

- 1882 Spring – Charles to Ontario.
- 1883 August – Hannah and Elizabeth join Charles in Muskoka, ON.
- 1885 – Charles at Montreal Diocesan Theological College.
- 1885 – Murdoch to Canada; 1886 Thompson, 1887 Muskoka, ON.
- 1886 May – Hannah to England.
- 1886 September – Hannah returns to Purbrook, ON.
- 1887 June – Elizabeth to England.
- 1887 November – Murdoch to England.
- 1887–1895 – Charles ordained Deacon and Priest: Fort William, ON.
- 1887 – Hannah to Fort William, ON.
- 1888 March – Murdoch and friend Charles Sprott to British Columbia.
- 1888 August – Agnes to Fort William.
- 1889 June – Hannah and Elizabeth to British Columbia (Glenwood).
- 1889 July– Agnes and Charles to England.
- 1889 August – Charles marries.
- 1889 September – Charles and his wife to Fort William.
- 1890 July – Elizabeth to England.
- 1892 September – Constance to British Columbia.
- 1893 February – Hannah to England.
- 1893 May – Elizabeth dies in England.
- 1893 July – Hannah returns to British Columbia.
- 1893 December – Murdoch to England.
- 1894 February – Murdoch returns to BC.
- 1894 September – Emily dies in England.
- 1894 September – Constance returns to England.
- 1897 May – Charles and family return to England.
- 1899 October – Hannah leaves for a trip to the Far East.
- 1900 September – Hannah returns to British Columbia via England.
- 1901 – Murdoch sells his Glenwood property and buys a farm in Milner (Langley).
- 1903 – Agnes joins Hannah and Murdoch.
- 1902 – 1909 Henry Grey and family to British Columbia.
- 1910 – Murdoch, Hannah and Agnes settle in Whonnock.

The source of most of this information are attachments to of autobiographical notes by Hannah Jane (Thompson) Kirby. Gail Johnson, a granddaughter of Henry Grey Kirby, kindly provide me with a copy of a typewritten transcript.

LETTERS TO AGNES 1888 – 1892

From Murdoch
MONDAY APRIL 9 1888

McCALLUM'S, SOUTH WEST QUARTER
OF SECTION 16, TOWNSHIP 8, NEW
WESTMINSTER B.C.

I have made an effort to trace the individuals mentioned in the letters in other contemporary records. Unfortunately many moved on before their names were captured in a census, a directory or by other forms of administration. Also, if only a surname is given, it is often not clear which family or member of a family the letter writer refers to.

I have not tried to identify family members and acquaintances in England mentioned in letters other than immediate family members .



Colonial Hotel in New Westminster

My dear Agnes — I am staying now with a Mr. and Mrs. McCallum [McCullum] and family — 3 children, 2 girls and a boy. I think McCallum is their name. I had thought of taking a place from a man named Russel [Thomas A. Russel] but he wanted \$130 besides the \$160 I have to pay the government. His ranch is in Aldergrove. The McCallums are Americans. Monday April 2 we had a very hard walk from Langley to Aldergrove about 15 miles. Some parts of the road is very much like what the road into Heronary wood is when it is bad. I need not give another description of Kirby's house.

Tuesday Charlie [Charles Sprott] stayed in bed with a bad cold. I went with Kirby [William O. Kirby — not related] over a very rough trail to Peacock's house to see Dingle [William Dingle?]. Dingle came back with us and stayed with Kirby as long as we did, sleeping on the floor with Kirby. I have had some bad experiences of beds and houses but Kirby's beat the record. Rained most of the day. I went over to have tea with Mr. and Mrs. Goldsmith [Arthur and Laura Goldsmith]. They have several children. She is not a lady [she was born in Sri Lanka] — he is very well educated. They have a very nice house and seem to be getting along very well. Rained most of the day.

Wednesday. Hunted for Russel during morning but could not find him anywhere. In the afternoon we looked at his place. It is one of the best ranches about there. Charlie was able to go with us. After tea I walked with K. to the store — about a mile and a half. If I took Russel's ranch he was going to take the one next to it. We left Aldergrove to look for Russel who has another place on Langley Prairie. A little beyond his house which we passed we came upon this one where we stayed the night.

I saw Russel about 6 P.M. — rather a hang-dog looking man. He has no right to sell his place, only his improvements and give up the ranch. His improvements are worth about \$30.

Stopped the night at McCallum's and walked to Fort Langley on Friday morning and took the boat to New Westminster. We had left our bags at Langley. Arrived at New Westminster at 3 P.M. Put up at the Depot Hotel. The first time we stayed in New Westminster we stopped at the Farmers Home, which we did not like. The Depot is much worse so we went to the Colonial Hotel on Saturday. It is \$2 a day, the others \$1. I was charged 50 cents for having my hair cut.

Sunday went to Church in the morning — it was a very nice service. In the afternoon we walked back here about 12 miles; quite tired out. We carried our bags. Monday morning we went with McCallum to see the ranches

northwest and southwest quarters, section 22, township 8. We have decided on taking them. We tossed to decide which we should have. Mine is the southwest quarter. I hope the land will turn out to be good. We will have very hard work in clearing a place for building a house and making a road.

We will go again to New Westminster to take up our ranches. We are better situated here than we would be in Aldergrove. We are about 12 miles from New Westminster on the Yale Road and about 7 from Fort Langley and 3 from the border line. If New Westminster gets too hot for us we won't have far to run. I think I can get plenty of work this summer as people expect the council to make a road. If so I could make \$2 a day.

Please address my letters Langley Prairie P.O., New Westminster, B.C.

With love to all, your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby.

Our ranches are not on the prairie although close to it. The timber is not heavy. One tree was pointed out to me in Aldergrove which I think was eleven feet through. The wood I saw today was cedar, birch, alder, fir. Cedar trees grow to a great height and can be split into boards. Fir is the hardest to clear as the roots never rot. There is one very long pine wood between here and New Westminster which is very grand. One feels very insignificant walking through it. One can see mountains from here. Their tops are always covered with snow. I have seen several ducks and Canadian partridges. There are a few deer and bear. Everything is most awfully expensive here. I saved a great ...

... Hannah offered to come and help me this summer which I wish she could. I expect I will not be able to have her here before eighteen months. In about six or eight weeks we ought to be in some sort of house. All my luggage is at Fort Langley except my chair which is in New Westminster C.P.R. station and my box from Bailieboro [Ontario] which is coming by freight train \$3. I have my diary written up to today. If I get a well I expect to have most of you out here to see the Rockies.

Your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby.

My dear Agnes — Last Sunday 22nd [April 1888] I received your letters with Norborne's letter written by [to?] Mamma, which were forwarded from Fort William. It began to rain heavily about 3 P.M.

Borrow the Sprott's map of New Westminster then you will know exactly where we are. on the northwest quarter of section 21 [sic]. So it is about 3/4 mile from Charlie's ranche. We are working there now and will put his house up and then we will set to work on my ranche. Monday 23. We helped Matthews who lives on southeast quarter, section 28 for half a day. In the afternoon I unpacked my boxes getting out things I wanted and stowing

From Murdoch

UNDATED | FRAGMENT

From Murdoch

UNDATED – APRIL/MAY 1888
SURREY CENTRE P.O., NEW
WESTMINSTER B.C. [UNDATED]

Brother Norborne Kirby, Royal Engineer, was posted in India at that time.

It is Section 22 as per Murdoch's letter of April 9th, 1888, and official records.

others away, tidied the house and put some pictures up. Charlie baked in the evening and very good cakes they were. Matthews came in. Tuesday chopped and cleared and put in a good morning's work. Rained in the afternoon so we came home [and] ground our axes. I baked some rare good cakes. I don't think anyone could beat them. Flour, soda, cream of tartar and water. Wednesday 25. Rained all the morning, worked in the afternoon. Thursday 26. Rained all day.

Friday was a fine day. We made a road to Charles's clearing. Saturday, today, finished the road and began brushing a blaze to my ranche. I expect to do some work on it next week. I am afraid the land we have is rather "ornery."

It has rained nearly every other day since we have been here and I think as much has fallen as fell in Mayfield last winter.

Wages are very good here, just as large as in Baillieboro [Ontario]. An ordinary working man \$2. a day and from \$40 to \$50 a month. Carpenters etc. from \$3 to \$4 per day. The worst of it is I have not time to go ranching as they call it here and work out because if I gain to one place I lose in the other. I think we shall be able to build our house ourselves — perhaps get one or two men to help put them up.

With [love] to you all, your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby

From Murdoch

OCT 14 1888

BLAINE P.O. WHATCOM COUNTY,
WASHINGTON TERRITORY, U.S.A.

My dear Agnes — I am very glad to hear you like the house at Fort William. You never said what you thought of [brother] Charles [Kirby].

Charles [Spratt] brought me your letter from New Westminster last week. I expect your photo has gone on to Langley. Many thanks for it. I will tell you what I think of it. I think the Mother's is splendid.

We have had a very wet week of it. We fixed up a shanty which had been begun last spring but had no roof or floor. So we are now tolerably comfortable to what we were last Thursday night. The rain came through the tent. If it had not been for my Macintosh my bed would have been wet trough. The shanty is 10 ft by 12 ft — we have no windows to put in and cannot have a door on in the daytime as we have no hinges here. We have a shutter and door on at night.

Charles went to New Westminster Wednesday 4 came back Saturday 6. On Friday a party of surveyors came through the bush on the final survey for this line just touching the southwest corner of my lot. Kirby of Aldergrove was of the party. He and another man stayed the night. I hope they liked the tent — it was not a good one as the end won't close. I think they thought they were roughing it.

I wrote and asked Hannah once what sort of house she would like, but I know I shall have to put up whatever I can. A very small one I am afraid if

Murdoch and Charles decided against the land in Township 8. Instead they homesteaded in Township 10 at the US border where Murdoch preempted the NW quarter of Section 6 and Charles the SW quarter of Section 8. See appendix "Application and land grant." p. 56.

This letter was written when had just moved to their new lands at the border.

Charlie and I build it by ourselves. If she comes she will have a pretty rough time. Xmas will be as soon as the house will be ready. I think perhaps not then and I doubt very much if she could get in along the road. If she does not come I shall get along first rate as it will be grand after living in a tent.

In winter a stage runs twice a week from New Westminster to Blaine \$1,50 fare. \$2 house in New Westminster. Colonial unless she would like to try the Farmers Home which I don't advise.

If you want to know anything write a row of questions in your next letter. Thank Bessie for the dog. Love to you all.

I remain your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby.

Blaine P.O. Whatcom County, Washington Territory, U.S.A.

I asked them at home to send one week's mail to you. Tell Hannah not to be scared about telling her to bring all the cash she can. If she invests it on my lot in chickens etc. soon she will not be able to count it. Ha. Ha.

My dear Agnes — If you don't write to me I will think you are disgusted with Canada and the Fort William people and are pining for home. This is glorious country here — no frost and snow but plenty of water. It rains during the night but is usually fine and warm during the day. Just right for working.

We have made a nice road about 200 yds. to where my house will be. It is very dry and level. We have lost a great deal of time by trying to split cedar logs but are now making fir logs. We ought, if fine the next 10 days, to have 60 logs. Then I shall make a small bee and then split some shakes and make a roof, saw boards with whipsaw for a floor. That is all I can do for the present because we have to build Charlie's house. He is going to build a frame house and very likely it will be the best of the two. In case Hannah comes I want mine pretty strong as I don't want to inform her friends that it is not a brick house.

Today we were working away when a man came to ask if he could take timber to make ties for our railroad. I can't sell timber as it belongs to the government but he has to get leave from the settlers to take it. He has the contract so hurrah for the railroad. [Louis Claude] Hill talks about a tennis ground. He is just the man to have for a neighbour.

Have you tried your hand at washing yet? Use Pearline — it is invaluable as neither washboard or soap are required and very little elbow grease. I have a very good wringer so I don't mind washing as much as I did.

Wednesday 12 was very wet so in the afternoon I went out shooting. Saw any amount of deer tracks and shot a partridge. Tell Hannah I will let her those beastly rifles dirt-cheap.

From Murdoch

DEC. 13 1888

BLAINE P.O. WASH. TERR. U.S.A.

Agnes travelled to Fort William in August 1888 with brother Charles.



**Eats
Clothes**

If your washing medium does that, what matters its cheapness or its working power? Is it safe? That's the first thing. Some imitations of PEARLINE are not safe. They eat the clothes, slowly, but surely. Don't experiment. You are sure of PEARLINE; stick to it; it is standard, tested, proved, by years of use and millions of women. 638

I hope you like Canada. Write and tell me what you think of it.

They have not sent your photo to me yet as they think I have nowhere to put it.

Wishing you all a merry Xmas and a Happy New Year.

I remain, your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby

From Murdoch
14 FEBRUARY 1889
BLAINE P.O. WASH TERR. U.S.A.

My dear Agnes — I was very pleased to hear from you. I miss your letters from Mayfield and those from Fort William do not have the same effect. I hardly realize that you are at Fort William. They have not sent me your photo yet. I reminded them about it the last time I wrote. I am very well posted in news just now. The piece I liked most was about the new brougham. I suppose you know that Miss Ryder, the one we saw, is married to a clergyman. The home people did not have a dull Xmas I was rather afraid they would.

We are sawing with a whipsaw: flooring, window and door casings, tables, etc. My cedar will not split well. I want to hear from Hannah—I hope she has written. I hope when she comes she will no blunder and sprain her ankles. Just imagine her among chips, smoke and black mosquitoes with the rancher laughing at her.

Blaine is booming but I think we are safe as to the railroad. Intend to write to you next Sunday. Charlie goes to New Westminster tomorrow.

With love to you all, I remain, your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby

From Murdoch
APRIL 23 '89
BLAINE P.O. W.S. U.S.A.

After Murdoch's house was finished on April 1st, 1889, they started working on Charles Sprott's home.

In June 1889 Hannah and her sister Elizabeth (Bessie) left Fort William for British Columbia. In July 1889 Agnes and Charles Kirby went to England, where Charles married. The newlyweds sailed to Ontario in September 1889. Agnes did not return to Canada until 1903, when she joined Hannah and Murdoch in BC.

My dear Agnes — You will be looking forward to going home. I wish I could give you as good a welcome as you gave me when you woke up that Sunday morning I got home. You have very likely heard from home that George Grey is in this neighbourhood. I enquired at Blaine but could hear nothing of him so there must be some mistake.

We have finished C.S.'s [Charles Sprott's] road and will begin to get out logs for the house tomorrow. We are going to saw the logs which will make a much nicer looking house than round ones like I have. We are overwhelmed with work. I shall not be able to plant much except potatoes this spring and that will have to be hurried over. The railroad seems to be going all right — it may be some time before we get a station and I very much doubt if they get it ready by September. Blaine is going ahead tremendously fast for the size of it and there seems no reason why it should [not?] boom. There is a very nice furniture store for chairs, not much else, which makes me wish I had a long purse.

Hannah and Bessie [sister Elizabeth] will find the house very bare as I have no time to make anything, but I think they would rather have it so than have Charlie in the house on their first arrival. I owe Charlie a great deal of work which will take me a long time to pay off. Hill stayed here a fortnight. Luckily for me he had a good supply of bread which he brought with him. There is plenty to do, working all day and cooking for three hungry men. Last Sunday, besides Hill, there were two others to tea.

You and Charles should look up G. Wilde. Teeswater, Bruce [Bruce County] on your way to Toronto.

You must send me out one of your photos when you get home. I asked for one but have not received it. I am looking forward to receiving your curtains. They will make the house go up 50 percent. Rolling logs, sawing, splitting and carrying planks was the order of last week. We had to build two bridges to cross the marsh. I have about 40 acres on No. 1 land; my lot is decidedly better than Charles's which does not seem fair as in a way we are partners. I spoke to him yesterday about it but have not decided anything.

With best love to you all. I remain, your very affectionate brother Murdoch W. Kirby.

"Hurrah for Hannah and Bessie." They will be a regular show to the natives.

My dear Agnes — I expect this letter will reach you after your birthday, I wish you many happy returns of it. It must feel rather curious to you to be at home with Charles. I am in clover now with Hannah and Bessie here. The house is comfortable and the sitting room very pretty. We are cramped for room so will not be sorry to lose Charley.

We had nearly a week of showery weather which was wanted very much as everything was getting dried up. Today the weather changed and it is warmer. Encouraging accounts of the railroad. The camp here are splitting trees by blasting them. There are about 18 men in the camp but we never see them except when we pass the camp or see them going to work. I thank you very much for the curtains and the handsome present of plate. We shall use the curtains in the winter—they will make the room look nice and cozy.

Charlie's house is very nearly finished by the end of next week. There will be not much more to do to it. We thought of and pitied you when you were crossing the ocean. I wonder who will be the next to cross after Charles [Kirby]. Hannah and Bessie tell me you are going to look after our interests. There is a picture of grandpapa in a frame which was offered to me the last time I was at home. I should very much like to have it. It might come out all right with the newspapers. We made a new acquaintance the other day: a Mr. Clapent, about 24 years old, hair turning grey, English, ranching, but hurt his hand badly so has given it up.

From Murdoch

JULY 3 1889

BLAINE P.O., W.S.. U.S.A.

Cramped indeed -- 384 square feet!

Pierre Bourque seems to have returned to Quebec after receiving his Crown Grant for the NE quarter of Section 6 in 1893

We all intend to go to Blaine tomorrow to keep July 4, the American holiday. With love and best birthday wishes from us all, I remain, your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby

I have introduced Hannah and Bessie to nearly everyone I know. Burke spells his name [Pierre Francis] Bourque. Hill expects to have a man called Hazard to stay with him. He is an amateur photographer so we may be able to send home some photos of the house.

From Hannah
JULY 15TH 1889
(DATE IN PENCIL)

My dearest Agnes — This letter is what you asked for. I think a whole lot of rubbish so that you can guess at our life. You must not go and think any nonsense though for remember that the men here very rarely see any ladies at all. We told you about the 4th of July on Thursday. Well, Friday and Saturday were uneventful. Sunday in the morning we always read lessons, psalms and epistle and gospel and sing three hymns and have some prayer. In the afternoon Charlie went off to Mr. Hill's. We had tea early and were going for a walk to see the marsh afterwards but we had to pass Mr. Shield's house [Albert Gustave Shields] and we saw he was at home and changed our walk as we did not want to have him with us. We went round by Mr. Bourque's place where we came upon Mr. Hill, Mr. Clapent and Charlie. Poor Mr. Hill he felt awfully bad for whenever we have seen him he has been so spic and span and that day he was in old trousers and a coat split down the back for they had intended to pack home some potatoes. Mr. Clapent was tidily dressed. Instead of a coat he had a jumper which was quite new. Mr. Hill said it was no use trying to excuse himself and he thought we should do a great deed of good to the neighbourhood and make them help.

On Sunday we talked of going into Blaine on Tuesday. Murdoch and I as a team was going in the next day, Wednesday. When Charlie came home he said Mr. Hill was going to Blaine as he expected his friend, Mr. Hazard on Tuesday. We had dinner at eleven and started at 1/2 past twelve and met Mr. Hill and Mr. Clapent at the store just going to start out again. They told us they thought we were going in the morning. Murdoch and I had to go across to the Spit, walk three-quarters of a mile down the pier and then take a boat. Murdoch said those fellows will be starting off directly. I did not much think they would miss a chance of walking home with a lady but did not like to say so as that lady happened to be me. Just as Murdoch was pulling up at the end of the pier there they were as they had walked out to meet us as we came back. We did not stay for tea as Mr. Hill had plenty of biscuits and there is a beautiful spring halfway home where we camped for refreshment. Mr. Hill waited in Blaine until the mail was sorted and we walked on to the spring. A very good arrangement as Mr. Clapent was able to walk with me as far as the spring and Mr. Hill the rest of the way.

I was very much amused at discovering that they had done their best to go in with us as they felt certain we should go in the morning so had started in a good time. Then, not seeing anything of us, they camped for an hour and a half at the spring for us to overtake them. They did not say in so many words that they had done all that but we found out that is what they had done. Wednesday Murdoch and Charlie went to help make a tennis court and Bessie and I were asked to take our walk that way and then we were asked to tea. They took 15 minutes rest when we arrived which we spent in shooting. Mr. Hill has a splendid little rifle. Bessie shoots better than I do. After ten we all went to meet the wagon-load of goods. It was a sight worth seeing six men there each one bent on getting his own things out. It was too late to pack much so they left the things in the bush and just packed one load apiece about 80 lbs. The next morning they spent in packing. Bessie went to Walworth for butter. I stayed at home. Mr. Hill to borrow a pickaxe and packed a load for Murdoch of 86 lbs. I thought it was heavy but he said it was nothing to the logs they lift. Bessie thought they packed too heavy loads and did not like seeing them do it. Mr. Clapent does not much like packing but as Bessie was out — there he offered to pack anything Murdoch wanted. Bessie has Mr. Clapent and I have Mr. Hill so we get along all right.

They are both very nice young men. Friday Mr. Clapent brought some letters for Charlie—none for us. he came after tea and stayed till ten. We played euchre. Mr. Hill, Mr. Clapent and Mr. Hazard are all coming to tea on Sunday. We wonder what Mr. Hazard is like. I think he is a widower — lost his wife in the explosion of the terraces in New Zealand but I am not certain. There is some sad story connected with him. We both agree that Mr. Hill is the nicest of the men out here. Mr Clapent is too quiet so now we shall be having free fights for him [Mr. Hill]. Your and Bessie's antimacassars look very well indeed. Bessie and I are going to Westminster tomorrow so we have a big baking on hand to last the boys and Mr. Shields till we come back. I think soon there will be English Church service in Blaine so that we shall have a chance of getting to church again. We should like to stay in Westminster only the stage does not run conveniently.

The *Fort William Journal* never said a word about any of the Miss Kirbys leaving aren't we sold. The mosquitoes are biting my feet deadly. My bother and sister are trying to drive me into speculating. I think it would be pretty safe speculating that I should do. [??]

We all send our very best love and remain, your affectionate sister, Hannah G.M. Kirby.

My dear Agnes — The last two letters from home have given bad accounts of you. I hope you are better. We have settled down to work after our grand outing to Westminster. It was a great treat for us and we are already looking

Clapent and Hasgard [Haszard?] have not been identified in British Columbia records.

The Pink and White terraces in New Zealand were spectacular natural features destroyed by a volcanic eruption in 1886. Seven small villages were obliterated. Many lives were lost.

From Murdoch
OCT 17TH 1889
BLAINE P.O. W.S. USA

forward to going again at Xmas. Charlie and I bought 6 beaver traps, ordinary spring traps with two springs. We are trapping on shares. It is just a week since we set the traps. Last Saturday we caught a muskrat and today, Wednesday, I had the pleasure a taking a beaver out of one. It was close to the house within walking distance.

The beaver is a small one – about 30 lbs. I should think. Forepaws are small with long claws, hind large webbed like duck's feet. The spoil their teeth biting the trap. The best way to trap beaver is to put the trap in their runs in the water so as to catch them as they get out of the water. We cut the dams and put the traps in them. We are going to cook some beaver but I don't know if we can eat it.

I expect that you are tired of hearing about our railroad prospects. Lately they have turned for the better. The surveyors have left Blaine and have come on this route again. It seems as if we were never going to be out of suspense. Last Monday we began to work on our road again making it wide enough of a wagon. It will take three or four more days yet.

We need the railroad more than ever as the stage driver has just raised his charge to \$2.00. So now the return from Blaine to Westminster is \$4.00 Louis Hill spent the evening here. I was sorry to see him as I had this letter to write and several other things.

Bessie and I walk to Blaine tomorrow – we start early as soon after seven as possible. We are going to try and get dinner from some of the Blaine people. The pet of the Sandwich Islands, Miss Johnson, Dr. King's sister in law reminds me of the fair sister of Cinderella that we saw at Leeds. Hannah had intended to write this evening. We have a very pretty kitten but it is not old enough to catch mice yet.

With best love to all, I remain, your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby.

From Hannah
DEC 16 1889
BLAINE P.O. WASH STATE

My dearest Agnes — I hope by this time you are getting stronger again for you have been bad a long time. It is very good of you to take all the expense of the *Family Herald* and thank you very much from us all for your Christmas present. Bessie and I were weighed last week. She was 131 lbs. and I 134 lbs.

"The Family Herald" was a British weekly paper established in 1843.

Murdoch was not able to go to the bazaar in Blaine as his ankle was too bad so we went with Mr. Hill and Charlie. We went to a hotel for dinner for which we paid 25 cents for fried duck (wild) and pork, potatoes, fried onions, apple pie and tea or coffee. We stayed there to rest and read our letters from you from "Winchester" [?], Connie and Mama and Murdoch had one from Rita [Henrietta Kirby] and I from Aunt Lina. She is sending us another parcel, rather a nice one.

After dinner we went for a walk on the wharf. It is just like a long pier, a quarter of a mile long. The tide was in so it would have been pleasant if it had not been so cold. Mr. Hill bought some chocolate cream peppermints and chewing gum. Bessie called us nasty horrid things and would not take any gum but he, Charlie and I each took a stick to race and see who could swallow it down first. Only Charlie got his down for we could not bite it quick enough and if once you chew it, it seems impossible to swallow it.

We then went to the bazaar and spent the rest of the afternoon there. It was on a small scale and there was not much to buy. We did not let our cavaliers buy anything for us except some flowers 5 cents and to pay for guesses for a picture. You had to guess how many beans there were in a pickle jar.

The Kings put Bessie and me up for the night. Mrs. King came to me and said we shall be very pleased to convene you and your sister for the night and are sorry we have not rooms enough to ask the gentlemen. They went to the hotel and called for us after breakfast the next morning and we got home at 1/2 past one and found dinner ready. Charlie went home afterwards and Mr. Hill to see Gages [?] but they both came back to tea and spent the evening playing games.

Sunday 15th Mr. Hill asked us to dinner. As his tract is very bad for travelling in the dark it was his farewell party. Charlie did not go to dinner. We had potted corned beef, potted chicken and ditto veal and ham, blancmange, buns, bread, butter and apples and I hope you will not be very much shocked when I tell you we made custard ice creams in the afternoon. They froze splendidly and were first rate. I made the custard whilst Mr. Hill got the freezer ready – a pail and large coffee tin. Charlie arrived just as we had begun to eat them. I had made ice-cream before and knew how to run the business.

In case you don't know and would like to try you put the cream into the can, stand the can in a pail. I forgot Mr. Hill had a steamer and not a pail which was better as the melted ice could run away which it ought to. A pail with a hole is all right. Or a small wooden tub – anything in fact will do. Break up the ice and pile it in all around the can. Mix a lot of salt with the ice — put a top on the can and then turn it backward and forward rather quickly. Twenty minutes ought to do it. Your hands on the tin won't hinder it. Filling up with ice and salt as it runs away is a good thing. Do stir your mixture occasionally as it freezes outside first. Out here they always thicken their creams with corn starch then that has to be boiled first.

I always help Mr. Hill warm up his dishes and Bessie helps Charlie.

The ragtag lower half have been offering me a sheet to act as handkerchief when I say goodbye to Mr. Hill but I tell them I can get through without as I would be rather cumbersome. We are going to Charlie's tomorrow for

another farewell tea. Mr. Hill has been so good to everyone here that he is getting as grand farewell parties as we can manage for him....

Bessie's gloves have arrived all right and she is very much pleased with them. I think mine were honoured in going to a wedding at which the Princess Louise was at. We have had snow on the ground for a week now. Murdoch has gone to Charlie's to work. They are putting up a kitchen and shed for the carpenter's bench. Charlie's box had not arrived yet in Blaine last Saturday but we are expecting it every week. Charlie is going to Westminster so he will get our Christmas cards and do all our little errands for us. As things turned out you know it is a good thing as we don't want to go to Westminster for Murdoch could not manage it well and our dresses might not be here in time. Did we ever let you direct to Mrs. Julian Peacock it will be all right if not but there are some other Peacocks in New Westminster.

In the Vancouver football team Murdoch saw the name Benwell with the old schoolfellow initials, so he has written to find out if it is the same. The boy that came over to Mayfield on a bicycle. We ranchers talk big now. We are talking of challenging Westminster at lawn tennis next summer. Besides being great fun it would be a great introduction to Westminster society and we should stand a good chance of doing very creditable. We all send our very best love and wish you all a very happy New Year. Murdoch has shot two partridges for our Christmas dinner. He wants to get another.

I remain, your very affectionate sister, Hannah G.M. Kirby.

I am awfully proud of those haystacks [?] I sent for. I painted them.

From Murdoch
17 DEC [1889] |
[FRAGMENT]

My dear Agnes — I put in my last day for Charlie yesterday, which I am heartily glad of. There is still some snow in the bush and in our clearing but in any large open spaces it has disappeared. A week ago there was a lot of it. Last Thursday Charlie and I went as far north as Langley Prairie, 6 miles straight. We wanted the men on our road to begin a petition we had got up to have the road open. The road is between townships 7 and 10 from the boundary to Murray's Hotel on to the Yale Road. We knew most of the people.

They were pleased to see us and are about as eager to have the road as we are. We had as much as we could do to get there and back in a day. It was very hard to walk the logs. The snow was wet and would not stick to the logs so we had a great many falls, slips and flounders. In several places the water was over our boots. 2 1/2 miles was through the bush, the rest a wagon road which was about half thawed. If any notice is taken of the petition I think we will get about \$1000. It was sent to Lieutenant Governor. We are going to keep on asking till we get some money. On the road there are 24 ranches facing it. The people on the north have nearly proved up and have a rough

road for 2 1/2 miles from the Yale Road. Shields' is by far away the best ranch and I would not trade with any except his. There are some very nice houses made of hewn logs.

The people look as if they intended to work and there are several families. It looks a very promising settlement. Blaine is still booming. Some American 3 1/2 miles from here on the Blaine and Lynden road, has divided his ranch into two-acre lots and has cheek enough to try and sell them. He calls his ranch Blaine Suburban Townsite. The snow put an end to all railroad operations. The line is not located yet. There are still a few people who think or try to believe it is coming here. Today I was working for Charlie and will tomorrow too, then he comes here. We will exchange work always I think. He began to slash yesterday.

I intend to put up the roof for my kitchen and shed before I do anything else so if we have wet weather I shall not loose any time as I have any amount of indoor work to do. The shed will be a continuation of the kitchen to the east. Shields is very busy clearing up land to put in fruit trees. I am behind both Shields and Charlie so, after having paid off Charlie the time I owed him, I have to work like a galley slave to try and get even with them. We have not succeeded in getting poor old Bessie fat yet. I am the fattest of the three and I don't think I am 170 lbs. Now I am working on the place again there will be more to say.

Hill has done much better in Westminster than he thought when he was out here.

With love to all, I remain, your affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby.

P.S. Mrs. Humphrey has heard of the photo of my house and says she would like to see it when she goes to Mayfield.

My dear Agnes — This last week has been very wet, showering two days and thoroughly wet one. There is more water now than I have ever seen before. The road to Blaine is knee deep in mud the last 1 1/2 miles. This end is rather better but there are several bad mud holes. The trail to Charlie's from here is finished except some grading which we will do when it is drier. The kitchen roof is finished and I have only 3 or 4 more rows of shakes to lay on the shed roof. The shed seems tolerable firm now the roof is on.

On Friday I bored a fir log in front of the house and Bessie fired up and Hannah in the afternoon. You have to drop hot cinders down the perforated hole and blow with the bellows in the horizontal one. If the tree is dry it catches fire very soon. The holes are bored about 6 feet apart. I bored 17 places. The tree was not very dry so we had some trouble. The work was too hard for Bessie as she is very weak.

Louis Claude Hill started fruit farming in the Deer Lake area where in 1892 Burnaby was born. In 1891, an electric rail system was completed connecting the downtowns of Vancouver and New Westminster providing transportation for the produce of the Deer Lake farms to both major markets. The tram also provided access to Chinese labourers. Charles F. Sprott promptly followed Hill to Burnaby.

See appendix "First Settlers at Deer Lake" page 60.

From Murdoch

FEB 11 90

BLAINE P.O. WASH. USA



Log as it is after being burnt.

“Bessie” (Elizabeth Kirby) went back to Mayfield in June of 1891

You can walk through some large logs when they are burnt. The next thing is to be done is to split the blocks, pile them and then burn them.

Poor Bessie is very much distressed about herself. She can take hardly any exercise without getting overtired. She certainly looks as if she had seen more dinners than she had eaten. If she takes care of herself she may get better, I think, as we are safely through the winter now.

Shields, Charlie and I went to a Presbyterian meeting 3 miles from here on the American side last Sunday. I was pleased to find that the preacher was not a ranter. Hannah thought it would be rather too wet to go so did not attempt it.

As you are the Canadian agent I shall propose a thing which I would be delighted if you could do, but I am afraid it will be rather hard, that is to send me out a pair of knickerbockers (loose fit). Those I have now will last very little longer. If you can, I can either send you the money from here or else for Mamma to take it out of a quarter's [?] money.

Charlie and I rub along very well together, now and then sharp corners turn up. Shields and Charlie go to Blaine tomorrow for some fruit trees they sent for. I shall wait for the fall before I plant any as I am hardly ready yet. The fares to and from America ought to be very cheap next year on account of the Great Chicago Fair. How did you and Rita [Henrietta] come out in your history exam? Hannah is in very good form. BC seems to suit her. She dreads the mosquitoes this spring – they are just beginning to make their appearance.

With best wishes to all, I remain, your affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby.

From Hannah
OCTOBER 6TH 1891
MAHONIA RANCH

My dearest Agnes — Thank you very much for the boots which I hope will fit me all right. I have given Rob McMenemy the card so he will go to the custom house and pay the duty and bring the parcel out. I expect he will leave it here Sunday afternoon. Murdoch and I walked into Blaine on Sunday. Service is at eleven and we got in soon enough for me to call on the Hammonds whilst Murdoch went for the mail. Charlie rode his new horse in. It is three years old but dreadfully slow. We left directly after church and stopped to have our luncheon at the spring but Charlie went straight on and arrived home as 3:30 and we got home at 4:00. When Charlie passed us Murdoch thought he would send him half up the hill in a hurry so gave his horse a hard hit – but it took not the slightest notice. She will be no use on the road and is rather too light for logging. I hardly think he has got quite the right article.

Monday Murdoch went to Langley Prairie store. got my cheque charged and bought some rice and had his dinner at the Beavises [William and Minnie

William Beavis served as the first postmaster of the new post office named Glenwood from August 1892 to February 1894 when he was succeeded by Jas. P. Smith.

Beavis] on the way home. I pulled up a basket of beetroots and boiled them for pickles. When Murdoch came home the kitchen was so hot as I was just finishing boiling the vinegar that he said I had better hurry up and get off to Miss. McMenemy as he had wanted me to go to tea for a cozy time and as his day was broken anyway he would come down after tea. So I went and had tea with her and her two brothers. They are more like grooms than anything else and small and neat. When Murdoch came we played euchre. The youngest brother Rob does not play cards.

Tuesday I baked and cut up my beetroots. They went nicely into a five-gallon barrel. The vinegar is leaking out just a little but not enough to hurt, I think. I have some red cabbage to pickle and then my store room will be complete for this year. I only had 6 lbs. 8 1/2 of tomatoes. Murdoch is busy today boarding up the shed. He is going to close it in entirely and have two doors, three or four windows – I am not sure which – and as the ivy has just begun to grow I have a nice little plant ready for it. They say that ivy cuttings take a long time to get a start but when once they do they grow very fast. I think Bessie's remembrance of the shed is that you could make the porch move. But now that all the braces are in it is as firm as possible.

Murdoch is going to fix up the old cook stove so that he will be able to work there at any time. So far the shed has been no use for wet days as the rain blew right through it. The south side is all boarded in now so that can not happen again. Hattie Hammond [from Blaine WA] says she is coming out to stay a little while with me soon but I am not sure that I can depend on her and Mr. Hill is coming out to stay with Charlie as soon as the winter rains begin. Eric Scholefield has been with him all the summer but if he can get something else to do Mr. Hill will not have him this winter.

October 8th. We are going to a dance at the Annands [Alexander and Sarah, née Sarah Anne Frazer] tomorrow night. Miss McMenemy is coming to tea here and she will go down with me before it gets dark so that we can pick our way easy. We shall have an early tea. I guess I'll get gnawing pangs of hunger before supper. Do you know when Murdoch sees young ladies home from a dance he carries them over the bad places. Aren't things coming to a pretty pass? I did not see it done but they each told me. Well, really there was nothing else for him to do as the lady in question is only 5 ft. and the water like a stream in the road and more than halfway up to my knees and no way of getting round. There was no water there when we went down but everywhere the [?] was flooded. There were heavy thunder showers that evening,

Did the Taylors and Miss William go to the Sprott dance? It is a good thing they have had a good one after the last failure. Charlie told us of Frank's holiday to Scotland. He went to that place because he thought he might meet

new people and have a jolly time with tennis and flirtations. We had heard of little vic's [sp?] and pat [sp?] but not the full particulars.

You must look out or you will be had up by the humane society. You had better print a card for Bessie "Can't Walk" so that she may never be accused of "dastardly" behaviour.

Mr. Shields is going to Blaine tomorrow. I wonder if it has dawned upon him that I don't intend to waltz with him or if he will trip me again tomorrow night. Charlie Sprott got left to thought there was a chance of going to Annands with me and asked Murdoch when I was going. Murdoch said, by day light with Miss McMenemy, you had better go with them. But he will wait for Murdoch. I would have waited till the cow was milked if Hetty had not been coming. Hetty McMenemy is a very neat little thing and we saw her in Westminster and I asked her afterwards what she thought of Charlie. All she did was to laugh and say "his boots!" Then she said she had often seen him look for miles out in the bush at some of the parties. It is about time I stopped as I am getting off into a twaddle but it is thinking about another Sprott dose tomorrow. Mr. Jackson [sp?] is away and Mr. Thomson does not know the Annands nor Mr. Davidson. I am afraid all the others will stand back to give Charlie all the show. We both send and our very best love.

I remain, your affectionate sister Hannah G.M. Kirby

From Murdoch
DECEMBER 27 1891
BLAINE P.O., WASH. STATE
[ON LETTERHEAD: MAHONIA RANCHE]

My dear Agnes — We spent our Xmas in the woods this year. Xmas eve was a splendid day but snow began to fall the first thing on Xmas day and kept it up till night. We had two dinners, the first one at Fleming's which broke us in for our own at 6:30 P.M. Bourque came and thoroughly appreciated it. Chicken and sausage a la "Little," and a splendid plum pudding. The following evening we had Shield to supper but did not succeed in finishing the pudding, and we have another one just as large. I am very glad we didn't attempt to go out. I think it was the pleasantest Xmas I have spent since I came out.

Blaine has been very hard hit and shingle mill and the first Blaine Bank have closed. The shingle mill was the hope of the town and the rascals who were running it own about \$10,000 and have made any amount out of it as they had a bonus and hardly any expenses and a ready sale for all things manufactured. I don't think that Blaine people had much to lose in the bank.

I suppose you divided for Xmas: some at Brighton with Bessie. You could not very well feel lonely with the St Dunstan party. I am quite satisfied with the pony. I will not use it much this winter but Bourque will go to Blaine so much oftener now. He has the use of it which will save me a go. I bought some harness \$4. It will want a good lot of fixing but it is cheap.

Tell Emily that I will soon be a good pork butcher. I shoot and Bourque

sticks. The little rifle is quite the thing for it. Bourque's father was a butcher and he is quick and neat. Very different from old _____. My rifle is a 44 and Hannah's a 22. I got mine the cheapest. I took it out yesterday as there was snow on the ground but did not see anything but one grouse. I tried to take its head off but missed. I must practice a bit as I am not used to pumping it yet. We are having very dismal weather and everyone is grumbling.

We received Mother's splendid long letter last week. Your picture adorns the living room. Many thanks to Mother for the pretty Xmas card and for the diary which I was almost forgotten. The people here enquire very often after Bessie. I hope she will get better now she is at Brighton. Please remember me to little Jones.

With best love to you all, I remain, Your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby.

P.S. We were very pleased to hear of Norbone. I hope he was in civilized parts at Xmas.

My dearest Agnes — I rather think I am very much in your debt as far as letter writing goes for I know there are two if not three long letters I have never answered. Our last letters were very good. Mama was just coming back from a run home and Bessie was talking of dressing a little more when she gets up. Thank you for your birthday present which is on its road. I am likely to get it tomorrow or Saturday. Today it is lovely—cloudless sky—but it was very cold early in the day. I am going after Aunt Lina's [?] parcel if it is a nice day tomorrow.

Bourque is to bring Billie up tonight. I have to make a trip to Hall's Prairie P.O. I guess it will be a case of walking the pony all the way as I think it is quite a new road. If I find it very tedious I shall come back via Blaine and get a canter over the mud flats.

Last Wednesday we went to a very jolly entertainment at Lochiel schoolhouse, our own school. There was a young Irishman who recited splendidly. They got him to come from Sumas about twenty miles away. His best piece was just a very short little bit of different celebrated men. He would go to the corner of the platform and then walk forward taking the part of the character he was acting. Bessie's friend Oliver Cromwell was one of them. [Julius] Otto sang German songs to his guitar. He has a nice rich full voice and he and Bartel played violin and guitar duets. Bartel is a very good violin player but objects to playing the gigs they like to dance to out here. They cleared 25\$ so I think did pretty well. There were readings and songs [by] the Langley Prairie choir. After the entertainment those that liked adjourned to Mr. Gunn's house where we danced until nearly three.

From Hannah

FEBRUARY 23RD 1892

MAHONIA RANCHE

According to the records of Library and Archives Canada the Hall's Prairie post office was established in November, 1893.

On February 23rd, 1892, the name of the former Bigger or Biggar Prairie school (opened in 1889) changed to Lochiel school.

The second school in the area, Glenwood school, opened in June 1890. It may well have closed that winter for lack of students.

Charles Walworth married Elizabeth Skinner on July 2nd, 1891.

The next day I did very little as I was saving up for Friday, when we went to Blaine for a dance given by the Knights of Pythias. They had the Westminster band and a very jolly dance. I went in directly after dinner with Billy and Murdoch walked later and he came back that same night, but I stayed with the Kings and got home about one the next day. We felt very grand with our invitation card which is the first we have ever had and it is quite a smart affair. We are not going out anywhere this lent and thought our gaieties were at amend but there is one on Friday: Mrs. Walworth is going to celebrate a cotton wedding.

Murdoch is still plodding away at the right of way for the fence being his boundary fence he had to go through everything and it takes a long time getting the road clear. He is in a very bad place just now opposite Shields house. He has to burn the big logs. He bores several holes and puts fire in and when they have burnt a little he blasts between the fires which splits the logs so that the fire can run right along. If you were living three miles away from us you would hear the blasting for when the logs are very big the charges are heavy. It looks very pretty at night for the whole log seems to open and the fires shoot up.

I have walked and baked today and now I am feeling rather lazy. You did have a narrow escape of having Dr. Brawford but I don't suppose he would have set you to the rights any quicker than you did yourself. Murdoch is rather thin and hollow-cheeked looking but he seems quite well. It is a very trying winter out on the coast and there is a great deal of the influenza. What is Pat's address now? Didn't she move?

With our very best love, I remain, your very affectionate sister, Hannah G.M. Kirby.

In November 1891, three years after he filed his application for "homestead entry" (5 November 1888) Murdoch Kirby applied for ownership of the quarter section of land land at Glenwood that he called home. His application form includes the following information about the property:

1889: 4 acres chopped
1890: one acre broken and cultivated
1891: 2 1/2 acre broken and cultivated
6 acres partially cleared
1891: cow and calf. 2 pigs

Size of his house: 24 x 16 ft with lean-to 24 x 12 ft. and shed attached.

Chicken house and stable.

80 rods (1320 ft.) of picket and board fence.

30 rods (495 ft.) of ditches.

70 fruit trees

The land was granted to Murdoch Kirby on the 10th of August 1892.

See appendix "Applications and land grant" pages 56-58.

FROM CONNIE'S DIARY

On September 24, 1892, Constance (Connie) Kirby sailed from Liverpool to join Murdoch and Hannah at the "ranche" at Glenwood. She visited her brother Charles in Ontario on the way to British Columbia.

In a diary she kept daily entries giving detailed accounts of the voyage, and of her visit to brother Charles, his wife Gertrude and their daughters Eva (b. 1890), Hannah (b. 1891), and Emma (b. 1892) in Ontario. She did have a chance to go to see the "very grand and picturesque" Niagara Falls. On October 24th she left "on the mail for the West" arriving in New Westminster four days later.

She continued with daily entries for the rest of the year changing to monthly entries in 1893. The last entry is dated 19th October 1893 when, after a visit to Victoria BC, she returned to the company of Murdoch and Hannah. "Very glad to get home. Was getting very homesick for England. Soon passed off when back here." By that time she had filled the 70 pages of her booklet and perhaps did not start another one.

Murdoch left for England a few months later and returned to Glenwood in February 1894. Connie would stay in Canada for two years returning to England for good in September 1894.



Constance Louise Kirby (1856 – 1921)

OCTOBER 1892

Friday, October 28th— ... Westminster I got off. Murdoch and C. Sprott there to meet me. Train soon came up. Not long getting to New Westminster. First thing went and got some dinner. Then back to the baggage room and opened the box in which C.S. things were. Electric car to Mrs. Wolfenden up high hill around sharp corners. Westminster homes ___ better than Fort William. Mrs. Wolfenden greeted us. Changed my dress and after a rest went for a walk around the park and had the principal wooden houses pointed out.

Evening: Charlie, Miss Schou, Mr. Sharp, Mr. Hill came in to spend the evening....

Saturday 29th — Breakfast at 8. Mr. W. did not appear. Had to be at the ferry by 9:30. Arrived at Blaine at 11:30. Had luncheon and then Murdoch and I started to walk the 7 miles through the bush to his ranche. A lovely day: bright and still. Enjoyed the walk. ... Admired the trees, moss, ferns and ... the undergrowth. When within call of the ranch Murdoch gave a loud shout to give Hannah notice it was not very long. Therefore she came to meet us. Soon we came into Murdoch's clearing and stumps, thicker than I expected. Everything was very much what I expected—sitting room more comfortable. Difficult to realize that Hannah has been here since July 1889.

"The train soon came up." Connie left the transcontinental at Westminster Junction (Port Coquitlam) and did not have long to wait for the connection to New Westminster.

William James Wolfenden, Dominion collector inland revenue, and Mary Ann (Kaberry) Wolfenden. Home: 215 3d Avenue.

Evening: Charlie Sprott; Lucy Schou is engaged to Charles, Louis Claude Hill. Mr. Sharp is probably the architect Richard Prior Sharp who, in collaboration with Samuel Maclure, was active in New Westminster. In 1891 they had designed the residence in Burnaby of Bernhard Hill, L.C. Hill's brother.

Sunday 30th — Murdoch read prayers after breakfast ... Hannah washed up.

...

Monday 31st — Busy all morning, washing, doing the rooms. In the afternoon Hannah took me to call on Mrs. Fleming beyond Bourques. Arranged with Murdoch & Hannah to pay \$5 a month towards housekeeping while I am here.

NOVEMBER 1892

Tuesday, November 1st — Luggage arrived in the evening. Kunzell brought out with his ox team. Everything arrived safely with the exception of one tea cup. Cleaned our bedroom.

Wednesday 2nd — Unpacked or rather repacked for most of the things have to remain in the boxes; there is no space to put them.

Thursday 3rd — Gradually getting into the work by watching and helping. Wrote letters.

Friday 4th — Baking day. Also washed. Wrote letters, always posted Friday.

Saturday 5th — Ironing. All day. Looking forward to letters as there is only one mail a week and that comes in Saturday morning. The letters are fetched in the evening. I had one from Mama and Miss Grey. I had found one of Miss E. awaiting me here. Cut each other's hair.

Murdoch and Hannah attended Sunday service at the new St. Alban's Church at Milner built in 1889 to serve the Langley Parish.

Fred Marsh is an "apprentice" that came over to work on Murdoch's property

Sunday 6th — At 10:00 a.m. Hannah and Murdoch started off to Langley for service at 3 p.m. The road or rather trail is very bad. Hannah rode Billy and Murdoch on C. Sprott's horse. The distance is seven miles but it took them nearly 3 hours to get there. Fred Marsh and I were left to our own devices. I managed to cook the potatoes for dinner. He helped me to wash up. I then wrote letters till 3 when we went for a little walk to Charlie's ranch and back to Bourques. I had tea ready by 6 but it was nearly seven before Murdoch and Hannah got back. It was quite dark; Hannah had five falls through Billy falling into mud holes. She described the trip as a terrible one. The next time she goes she will stay the night.

Monday 7th — Nothing particular. Afternoon washed head.

Tuesday 8th — Lesson in baking. Afternoon did strawberry bed. Evening Bourque came in. Played knaves.

Wednesday 9th — Lesson in washing. Murdoch is working at his barn.

Thursday 10th — Thanksgiving Day. Hannah and Murdoch went to the service at Langley, which was H.C. [High Church] at 11 a.m. They got home 2:30.

Friday 11th—... Lesson in baking. Evening Shields came in.

Saturday 12th—Morning ironed. Afternoon went with Hannah to Flemings to tea. Got home a little before 6. No letters from the Old Country. Great disappointment.

Sunday 13th—In the afternoon Murdoch and Fred went to visit neighbours. Evening write letters.

Monday 14th—Churned and washed flannels

Tuesday 15th—Baked. Afternoon sawed logs.

Wednesday 16th—Washing day.

Thursday 17th—Evening wrote letters.

Friday 18th—Rain all day. Murdoch and Fred killed a pig. Charlie Sprott arrived, very wet, about 3 o'clock having walked from Langley Fort. He stayed the night.

Saturday 19th—Rain all night but a lovely day. So much water in the creek that part of the corduroy has floated away and the water is so high that one can't cross the creek anywhere. Charlie left soon after breakfast taking his horse with him. Murdoch bought the colt for £5 i.e. 25\$. In the afternoon Hannah and I went for a walk towards Hill's place. Murdoch went for the letters but there was no mail. Great disappointment; a fortnight and no letters. Murdoch had to go through water nearly up to his waist and there was nothing. All very depressed rest of the day.

Sunday 20th—Impossible for either Murdoch or Hannah to go to Langley. Murdoch went to Blaine but nearly stopped at starting as just in the wood a great log had fallen across the trail, but somehow he and horse got over it. In returning Billie could not get by it so Murdoch had to leave him there all night.

Monday 21st—First thing Murdoch and Fred went and cut a way through the log. Billie was there. Murdoch and Fred and Shields and Harding then put the corduroy straight that had floated to one side. Afternoon had a bath. Evening to our great joy Mr. Beavis brought the mail. I had letters from Mama, Rita, Miss Roper and Mr. Hitchcock. The latter had to preach at Sandringham November 13th.

Tuesday 22nd—Hannah busy salting pork. In the evening Murdoch and Hannah had intended to go to Butchards dance but it came on to rain so heavily that they did not.

Wednesday 23rd—Washed the flannels all alone.

Thursday 24th—Hannah washed the linen. I cooked. Afternoon snow.

Friday 25th—Very cold and snowy. Afternoon ironed. Bought a dollar's worth of stamps.

Saturday 26th—Morning thermometer 22 degrees. Fred rode to Blaine. When he returned he said "I am very sorry but the lamp glass and windows are broken just from the movement of the pony." When the pack was opened, mustard, coffee and glass were all mixed. We found out afterwards that part

Sprott came from present-day Burnaby. He had moved away sometime in 1892 joining Nicolai Schou's fruit growing operation in today's Burnaby. See appendix "First Settlers at Deer Lake [Burnaby]," page 60

of the way he had gone full gallop. He forgot the one thing Murdoch wanted. We thought Shields was going for the mail but he did not. Disappointment.

Sunday 27th—Advent. Thawing a little. Murdoch went for the mail after breakfast. I had two letters. One from Bessie enclosing one from Mama for Murdoch and one from Pollie to her. No 2 was a long one from Katie Grey. In the afternoon Hannah and I went for a little walk to the bridge over the creek.

Monday 28th—No frost. A little rain in the morning, then bright. Murdoch rode to Blaine to get chalk, hinges, rope, etc. Afternoon instructed how to make a Canadian pie [tourtière]. Evening Murdoch went to a dance, came home about 4, having enjoyed himself.

Tuesday 29th—Baking. Very satisfactory.

Wednesday 30th—St. Andrews. Murdoch and Fred killed a pig. Afternoon Hannah and I walked to Hennings ranch. Much less water than when we went last

DECEMBER 1892

Thursday, December 1st—Cooked a meal – Canadian pie. Afternoon took a constitutional up and down outside for 1/2 hour. Had first lesson in starching.

Friday 2nd—Wet. Ironed two shirts each, collars and cuffs. Morning had put them in cold starch. Sent 9 letters to post. Xmas greetings.

Saturday 3rd—Baked – very satisfactory – made a cake. Letter from Johnnie.

Sunday 4th—Lovely day. Hannah rode and Murdoch walked to Langley Church. They started at 12 and got home at 7 determined not to attempt it again during the winter as the road is very bad. I did not go out. Fred sulked.

Monday 5th—Bourque came to help Murdoch kill a cow.

Tuesday 6th—Washed flannels and sheets. Mr Beavis came about 10:30 and stayed till 3.

Wednesday 7th—Hannah salted the beef. I baked bread; rather scorched.

Thursday 8th—7 a.m. thermometer 20. Over the wash tub from 9 till 2. A fortnight's wash. Wrote this week to Pollie, Ladie Wilde [sp?], Lissie, and Bessie.

Friday 9th—Mrs. Henning came to tea.

Saturday 10th—Snowing. Made buns and scones. No English mail.

Sunday 11th—Murdoch, Hannah and I went to see old Mr. and Mrs. Cameron. Got there at 12 and stayed till 2:30. A low, dark, room, bed, stove, and table – principal furniture.

Monday 12th—Trimmed hats. Hannah has my blue and I have Bessie's brown fell as our dresses are blue and brown.

Tuesday 13th —Baked, wrote to Mama, Charles and Lade [sp?]. Afternoon snow.

Wednesday 14th—Murdoch and Fred left at 1 for Pender Island where [Fred] s thinking of taking a ranche. Hannah will look after the livestock: 2 cows, 2 calves, 1 horse and 1 colt, 1 pig.

Thursday 15th—Mild day. Washed.

Friday 16th—Went to the Beavises' for dinner. Distance 1/2 mile. Took us an hour. Road very bad. Clear, bright day.

Saturday 17th—Baked. Murdoch and Fred returned at 4 p.m. Fred has decided not to take the ranche on Pember Island. Very glad to see them both back. Clear and frosty.

Sunday 18th—Went nowhere. Wrote to H. and E. Avis.

Monday 19th—Washed my blue cotton dress. Dry, frosty day. Fred went to Blaine.

Tuesday 20th—Hannah washed. Yesterday Fred lost dog at Blaine so had to go again today to find him, but came home without him.

Wednesday 21st—St. Thomas'. Very cold. Thermometer at 17. Dreadful scare. At breakfast roof of kitchen caught fire. Murdoch lost no time in getting on the roof outside with water and Hannah threw water with a cup on the inside. It was soon put "out" but there was a strong east-wind blowing and our fright was great. The thermometer held at 17 all day.

Thursday 22nd—Very bright. Thermometer 14. Did not rise above 20 all day. Murdoch walked into Blaine to get elbow for stove pipe to make it safer. Also got eggs and citron for plum pudding. Fred shot two ducks.

Saturday 23rd—Prepared Xmas dinner. Moved stove.

Sunday, Xmas Day—Bright and frosty morning. Went for a walk with Murdoch round Shields' ranche. Dinner at 6. Mr. Bourque came. Dinner consisted of Wild Ducks, plum pudding and dessert.

Saturday 30th—At 10 Hannah and I started for New Westminster. Murdoch went with us to Blaine. Hannah rode Billie. Murdoch and I walked. It rained all the way. Road very bad. It took us 2 1/2 hours. Had dinner at the Arlington. Murdoch went straight home after leaving our bags at the station. Had time to get dry as train was not due till 3:30. Arrived in New Westminster 5:30. Mr. Wolfenden at the ferry to meet us. Stayed till Sunday evening with Mr. and Mrs. Wolfenden.

JANUARY 1893

1893 Sunday January 1st—Attended the 8 a.m. Celebration. Matins at 11 and Evensong at Holy Trinity, the Cathedral. At the morning service Archdeacon Woods was made the first-canon and the Bishop was installed in his chair

lately presented to him. The Bishop preached both times. After Evensong we returned to the Wolfendens' and left by the last train which Mr. Hill met with his buggy at Douglas Road. He drove us to the Schous – it was a bumpy drive. We stayed at the Schous till Wednesday. Monday evening the Hills came, Thursday the Wolfendens and Mr. Kirk [sp?] came. We left on the 4th at 8 a.m. Charlie drove us to the ferry. It rained every day. When we got in Blaine the sun was out. We had dinner at the Gillespies. Murdoch met us at the station. We got home at 4:30.

Rest of the week very busy.

Tuesday 10—Several of the neighbours came to say goodbye to Hannah. It was quite a little party in the evening.

Thursday 12—Dance at Beavis' which I enjoyed much more than I expected to do. Murdoch borrowed Mr. Beavis' pony for me to ride as the road was terrific.

Friday 13—Hannah left and arrived home February 2nd. She went via New York in the *Majestic*, White Star Line.

FEBRUARY 1893

The first week was the coldest known in B.C. for some years.

Tuesday, January 31st the thermometer was 11 below zero 7 a.m. and did not rise to above 3 above. Wednesday 1st a heavy fall of snow and strong wind. Murdoch and Fred stayed in all day. We sat round the sitting room stove. All the month of February I did not get out at all as all the trails were so very bad for walking and I did not see a woman or girl; only three men came to the house during the month.

MARCH 1893

Wednesday 1st—Beautiful day. Snow still on the ground. Went to see Mrs. Henning.

Friday 24th—Logging Bee. Miss MacMinnimy [McMenemy] came the day before to help cook the pies. C. Sprott turned up in the afternoon and stayed the night. Bourque came Thursday evening to play card. Before he left he was very rude to Miss Macminnimy.

The day of the Logging Bee was very well. They only worked in the morning: 11 men and 3 ox teams but only two were used. The men said they would come again Monday afternoon the 27th on which day 9 turned up. Unfortunately it came on to rain. They worked all the same. I had a good supper ready for them. Kitzell came with his oxen and stayed the night.

Wednesday 29th—A good many stumps pulled inside the picket fence.

Thursday 30th—I went to New Westminster. Murdoch went with me to Blaine. Mr. Wolfenden met me at the ferry. I was four hours late. The train was delayed by a landslip near Whatcombe. [sic]

Robert and Harrietta McMenemy, brother and sister.

Good Friday—Attended Matins and the 3 hours service. Mr. Gowan gave the addresses. Evensong – Archdeacon Woods preached. Rained all day.

APRIL 1893

Saturday 1st—Snowed all day. In the afternoon I left the Wolfendens and went to the Peacocks for the rest of my time in Westminster.

Sunday 2nd—Easter Sunday. Cold and wet. Attended early celebration, Matins, Choral, Evensong.

Monday 3rd—Matins. Mrs. P. at home. No one called.

Tuesday 4th—Matins and Evensong 7:30. Mr. Irvin gave an address. In the afternoon we walked to Sapperton.

Wednesday 6th—Last day. Matins and Evensong. Mr. Irvin spoke to me after the latter. Mrs. Peacock called on Miss Walker and then we walked round by Lulu Bridge.

Thursday 6th—I came home. Murdoch met me at the station. Lunched at Mr. King's.

Tuesday 18th—Fred Marsh went on to his ranch.

Thursday 20th—Mrs. Henning's baby born. It only lived till Tuesday 25th.

MAY 1893

Thursday 11th—Ascension day. Paid my first visit to Fred. Found him laid up with a cut foot. He and his place looked wretchedly uncomfortable. Not a single chair.

Wednesday 24th—Mr. Henning, the children and three Camerons came to tea – a lovely day.

Saturday 27th—Received telegram from home. Dear Bessie died on the 22nd. Whit-Monday. For several weeks the letters had little hope. The funeral was on the 25th.

JUNE 1893

Wednesday 7th—C. Sprott married Lucy Schou. Murdoch was to have been best man, but declined as it was so soon after our loss. On the whole a wet month. The first or second week the cow Jenny died.

JULY 1893

Tuesday 4th—Mr. Willan (Archie) came. Was disgusted with the country and place from the very first. Would not work. Was very homesick. Left us of August; we were not sorry. We had a nice lot of strawberries – made my first jam. 15th Hannah came back having been away just six months. Haymaking and jam making. Went to Langley Prairie twice, once to A. Thompson and once to B and to a picnic at Brockie's Bridge which finished up with a dance at the Munn's [sp?] house.

AUGUST 1893

Sunday 27th—walked to Langley Church. Seven miles. A very hot day. Miss Culbert came back with us.

SEPTEMBER 1893

Saturday 9th—C. Sprott, Mr. Hill, Mr. Wolfenden came and stayed till Monday 11th. Unfortunately Sunday was a very wet day, nevertheless they all enjoyed their visit. They drove from Westminster round to Blaine and had fine weather coming and going.

Tuesday 12th—Mr. Willan, who for the last fortnight had been with Fred March left for good returning home.

Tuesday 26th—I went to New Westminster for the Agricultural Exhibition and stayed with the Wolfendens. Wednesday evening Mr. Irvin came in. Every afternoon at the exhibition. Thursday evening promenade concert. Friday Michaelmas Day. Early celebration at St Barnabas. Evening choir practice. Saturday tea at Mrs. Peacock's.

OCTOBER 1893

1st Sunday – Early celebration, Matins and Evensong

2nd Monday – Went to Victoria by boat from New Westminster station 3 p.m. Very pretty all down the river especially the last view of New Westminster. Had a curious conversation with a Mr. Bagett of Duncan, evidently a Baptist. Arrived at Victoria 11:30. Miss Daniels her brother Alfred and Mr Lichfield met me. A drive of 4 miles in a buggy. Stayed with Daniels till the 12th. Roads on the island very good. Went for a drive nearly every day to Victoria round by Beacon Hill Park and Oak Bay, Beaver Lake & Saanich, the Gorge and Victoria – Esquimalt – Victoria twice. Very good provincial museum.

8th Sunday Christ Church Cathedral and heard Bishop Perrin preach. Mr. Hewetson read prayers. He married Miss Schofield in November.

10th Went to Esquimalt harbour. A lovely day, There were six ships in the harbour.

11th A very stormy day, left in the evening. Tremendous gale of wind on the wharf. Went on board at 10:00 p.m. Boat left at 2. Arrived at Vancouver 5:30 on the 12th. Spent the day with Mrs. H[enry] Bell-Irving who took me for a drive round the park, which is really a drive through the bush. From the top of the hill a splendid view of the harbour and mountains. Went by electric car to New Westminster and stayed again with the Wolfendens till the 20th so as to be present at the opening of the organ at the Cathedral on the 19th. Kaberry Wolfenden being the organist.

13th Friday Afternoon went to Burnaby. Called on Hills and Sprotts. 15th Sunday Early celebration, Matins and Evensong. Bishop Sillitoe [Rt. Rev.

Joseph Brown Hewetson (32) Clerk in Holy Order, married Helen Mary Sholefield (22) on November 14th, 1893. Her father, Rev. Stuart C. Sholefield, officiated. The couple returned to England a few years later. Ethelbert Sholefield, a son of Rev. Stuart Sholefield, became the province's first archivist and one of BC's earliest historians.

Henry O. Bell-Irving's wife Bella (Isabella).

Acton Sillitoe] preaching. 16th Telegraph to Hannah that I was not coming till Friday. Evening reception of Bishop at St. Leonards Hall. 18th Luke's day. Afternoon Mrs. W. at home, evening, evensong and choir practice. 19th Thursday Dedication of organ at early celebration just before the gospel. Evensong at 7:45. Mr. Clinton [Rev. H.G. Fiennes Clinton] of Vancouver preached a very full church.

Friday 20th—Came home. Hannah at Blaine to meet me. Had dinner at the Westcotts. Very glad to to get home. Was getting very homesick for England. Soon passed off when back here.

Musician Alexander Kaberry Wolfenden is the son of William and Mary Wolfenden née Kaberry. He moved to Seattle.

Murdoch left for England a few moths later and returned to Glenwood in February 1894. Connie would stay in Canada for another year before returning to England in September 1894.



Courtesy Julia Gange.

Mayfield Vicarage, winter 1893/1894 — Henry Thomas M. Kirby and his wife Hannah Jane, their visiting son Murdoch and their daughters Henrietta (sitting), Agnes standing behind Henrietta, and Emily (standing in the door).

Sitting next to to their grandmother are Eleanor and Augusta (centre), daughters of Henry Grey Kirby.

The family is in mourning for Elizabeth (Bessie) Kirby who died in May 1893. Emily Kirby died in September 1894.

In the collection of The Keep Archives in Sussex is another copy of this image. There was some confusion about the identity of some of the people in the photo, which has now been resolved.

LETTERS TO AGNES 1894 – 1895

The original sequence is reconstructed as best as possible.

From Hannah
FEBRUARY IITH [1894]

Murdoch sailed from England in February 1894

My dearest Agnes — I wonder if I shall fill this paper up. I have begun by allowing for a good long letter. We are not writing to Murdoch now for your letter takes almost a month coming just now, so ours might miss him. I am glad he is having such a rag of time at home and do not want him to hurry out for we are all right.

But for all it will be a joyful day when the old bore returns. Sunday Hoyton and Mr. Lambert [sp?] came to tea and stayed till after ten. Do not be shocked when I tell you that we play pencil games and word making and taking on Sundays.

Walter [Lambert?] is getting too ratty—a rather bad pass at Freds—his temper is so very bad if he has another burst of it. Hoyton will leave coming here until he goes back. Mr. Lambert is going to write and do all he can to get his people to let him buy Bourque's place for 1600\$ including furniture and tools.

Hoy still gets along very well. He would play chess all day with me if he could, but he gets cross over it. I annoyed him by touching a piece sometimes without moving it, so he made a rule that a piece once touched had to be moved no matter what the consequences were. I am sharp on him and he got badly beaten by having to move a touched king today. I seem to be always making buns now Hopkins eats so many whenever he comes over. I always think of you when I am at it for we kept you busy at Fort William. Did that pan hold six down and four across?

I have been interrupted by Mr. Shields who came in for a game of cards. We played cribbage with four and then euchre. Mr. Shields left at 9:30, quite happy and he and Connie won a rubber at cribbage and two at euchre. Hoy got a little screwky as he was beaten. He wanted to play whist instead of euchre but I didn't, for Shields always gets beaten.

At the present moment Hoy is trying to read but it is likely to end in a snore. I do wonder what kind of musical box Cousin Cara has given Murdoch. I hope it plays valse tunes. We had a deep snow Saturday night and today it has been snowing heavily and _____ fast as well.

Hoy's dancing was not admired at the Camerons dance. It was after Mr. Noote's style, bending forward and all over the place. They said he required a quarter section to himself. Now that Murdoch has proved up his first homestead papers are no use, but I saved them thinking you might like to

see them at home when I send them. You will know what they are.

14th Valentines Day Hoy saw Connie first, so I guess she is his Valentine. Hoyton, Lambert and Shields all saw me first so guess I have the choice of them. Hoyton and Mr. Sambart went out shooting yesterday and passed here and took Hoy with them. Nothing shot. Hoyton came to supper and spent the evening. Today they passed on their way to the store.

Will Cameron called today for signatures to their papers—one for money on the roads, another for money to clean out the creek and others for subscriptions to pay Alex Cameron's expenses to Victoria to ask the government for the other moneys. I signed him all three and gave a dollar which was what the other neighbours had done. I was the last Will Cameron had to ask. Shields has the papers now. That information is for the boss.

Shields came over to bring a stupid little hen that had gone through the snow to his place and stayed the night in his shed I think. Guess her companions were disagreeable.

With very best love to Papa and Mama and all at home, I remain, Your very affectionate sister, Hannah G. M. Kirby

My dear Agnes — How very sad it must be for you all at home. I am very glad to hear that Norborne thinks he will be able to get home this summer.

Hannah returned last Tuesday [from where?]. She walked from Langley. Miss [Eliza] Culbert gave her a lift part of the way as the Great Northern trains are not running — the man have struck.

Connie [Constance Kirby], MacKenzie and I got along very well. I feel as if I was fairly settled down again, I feel as if I could put in a good summers work. I have increased the stock on the ranch by buying two little pigs and half share in a yoke of cattle. F. Crainy [sp?] is my partner. He understands oxen and is a good driver which is more than I am.

MacKenzie is getting on very well. How I would like to kick that fellow Noote. I feel well able to do it as I am very fit right now. The oxen are almost white, a sort of strawberry tinted white. One has some brown marks on the head. They are very quiet.

I have invested in a pair of glasses for MacKenzie's benefit. This afternoon as it was wet we went over to [Fred] Marsh's. Lambert [?], [Henry George Selby-Hele] Hele and Hardings [James and Martha and probably their young son George] were there. We had a lively afternoon of it. Hele is very strong and hits hard but does not mean to. Mack was champion boxer at the mighty Westwood Hi school but is not very good. I know very little about it and have been 11 years without having gloves on and yet I think I could score as many points as he does.

From Murdoch

APRIL 26 '94

MAHONIA RANCHE

Brother Norborne Kirby, who served in Myanmar (Burma) at that time, was granted a three month and fifteen days "privilege leave" from July to October 1894.

MacKenzie = Willan-Collin Burton McKenzie is an "apprentice" who came over to work on Murdoch's property. He is also referred to as "Mac," "Collin" or "Mr. Collin" in the letters.

Rev. Hubert Noote, Curate since April 1892, left Mayfield in the spring of 1894.

In September 1891 Henry George Selby-Hele married Rosanna Harding. At that time Henry lived in the Whonnock/Ruskin area and "Rose" at the "ranch" of her brother James Harding. Selby Hele and his wife later became members of the co-operative at Ruskin Mills. After its failure they and seven others formed a new co-operative probably at Glenwood, focusing on cattle raising, which equally failed.

Charles Kirby was appointed rural dean of Thunder Bay in 1895. He returned to England in 1897 and became curate of Mayfield.

There are a great many letters I ought to write, but I don't seem to be able to. I wonder how Charles's affairs are getting on. They were very unsettled when I was at Fort William. I don't think there is as much likelihood of his getting work out West—remunerative work.

With best love to all, I remain, your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby

From Hannah
UNDATED

My dearest Agnes — I have never written to you since I got the silk handkerchief. Thank you very much for it. I sported it at Easter—the only new thing I had. No one seemed to be wearing these new things. It is too early in the year. I hope to hear on Saturday that my dress is in New Westminster. I think those French model dresses are always pretty.

Last Friday I took the letter to the post and on Saturday McCarshill went to Blaine for the day and Murdoch took the grass seeder back to Hardings. Shields brought the mail—two Ceylon flannel shirts that we ordered from Eaton Toronto—they are light coloured and have collar. I have not washed one but they are very nice.

Ceylon flannel was a name for a wool and cotton mixture.

I had another letter from Norborne letting us [know] about his change of plans and one from Mr. Filton. Mrs. Filton seems to be very ill. Charlie and Willie were there for Easter Sunday and the clergyman administered the Holy Communion to them. Mr. Filton says she is so very listless but he hoped she might be spared some time to them yet. I thought that sounded as if he thought her very ill—his letter was answering some of mine to Mrs. Filton. It is from her broken leg and a second fall.

Sunday, Murdoch went to church. I and Mac stayed at home. They have been sowing seeds in the garden and Murdoch has planted out the two little holly trees—one in front of the house just beyond a big stump they grubbed and the other did not move far but has taken the place of a large stump that was just behind the rose bushes.

I have so far done well with my garden. Snowdrops, then polyanthus and heartsease, now daffodils or rather double narcissus and little purple iris and primroses and I have ten ornithogalum [Star of Bethlehem] in bud—quite an increase. Our cold spring has rather tried my new acquisitions, killed my lavender and one shrub of everlasting pea, they call it the flowering almond, may pull through and I hope I shall save a Gloire de Dijon [climbing rose] cutting.

I feel disheartened about my chickens. The hawks are terrible this year and if the babies get outside a covered run they go, directly a small brown hawk takes them. We bought some pretty good Plymouth-rock eggs and I had five out of fifteen—the eggs were not good, my hen was all right. They were hatched out Saturday. Today, Wednesday, one has gone and my clothes were

on the line and the coop under. They were so small that I had not fenced them in. Our consolation is that it took the biggest chick and it was definitely not a Plymouth-rock.

Mac has made me a more elaborate coop—quite a little house for a hen. I am going to take her off tomorrow. Unless she has tramped any she ought to have eight Plymouth-rocks. I am getting quite adept at helping chicks out of the eggs. The first chick was out the first thing yesterday morning. Some of the eggs were cracked the night before. Last night they were all out but one. That egg was not cracked but I took it by my ear and heard a faint chirp so cracked it and got the beak into view. I ought to have helped it right out. As all the others were out this morning, the poor little thing was scarcely any further and all the shell was getting dry and sticking to it. But it squeaked lustily so I got it right out after some problem, the little fellow helping himself all he could by kicking and stretching.

I think I told Mama, Mrs. Harding has dyed the old brown dress the last time I was there. [She?] showed me her new dress a sort of pinafore dress—shirt and body made with a round low neck and just a frill over the shoulder so that you can wear different coloured bodies under. It was just as Mrs. Fleming said a gold brown lustre. Ida asked if I had ever seen it before so I knew it was the lining of the brown dress. That dress is having a long and varied life and expect it will have years yet as it will go into a hooked mat later on. I bought a golf [?] jersey for afternoon wear as my serge coat is getting too warm. It is pretty dark blue with white stripes around the body and sleeves.

That reminds me I never intended to have my handkerchief sticking in my coat in the photo but my pocket is too shallow and awkward to get it so I often put it there. Mac has no toning solution yet so we have not been taken again but he has a first-rate negative of Colin, Fred and Mr. Annand that we hope to send some day for it is so interesting as the chief feature in the photo is a large fir stump that they cut for firewood. Also Fleming and the oxen taken in the field the peas are sown in.

I hope Papa will get a nice horse in Bluebell's place.

The peas are making a good show now. I hope there will be a nice crop.

Mr. Molyneux, Mr. Sheppard, and Mr. Many [?], three young Englishmen are getting set up out here, just go to town and blow in all the money they get for ranches and home building. They think these home people are bound to keep them up. If they knew what they were about they would stop sending money. It only ruins the young men instead of helping them. Mac, I was right, was sent out because his people could no longer stand him at home.

He was today here because he cannot get away to Alberni. He had \$30 sent him but had to go in debt and he still owes about ten, taken on unnecessary

things. I do not feel bad about his having to pay for his washing but think it a good thing some of the money is not wasted.

Bertha has sent me of Stanville's [?] photos.

With very best love to Papa and Mama, yourself and all at home, I remain,
your very affectionate, Hannah Kirby

Parcel post is cheaper now then to England than it is for us parcels Canada.
PP [parcel post] is sent away.

From Murdoch
AUGUST 7 [18]94
MAHONIA RANCHE
[FRAGMENT]

The weeks are simply flying by. Bertha [?] is still here. She leaves next Tuesday—she goes via New Westminster. The dry weather has come to an end. It rained heavily last Saturday and Tuesday. Last Sunday Bertha and I rode to Blaine to church—we had a beautiful day. The last few days of the dry weather I fired up and had a very good burn.

If it is not too much trouble I should like to have the Malvern and Dover old boys list. I think they cost 2/6 but don't bother yourself about them as I was too lazy to get them when I was at home. If you do, let me know the cost.

I have been clearing out the creek. It is rather hard work. I have about another day of it. Since Bertha has been here I have not been working very long hours and not early in the morning. With very best love to all, your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby

From Hannah
OCT 25 [1894]
GLENWOOD BC,

My dearest Agnes — I think you did pretty well with your hopping and am glad it has helped to make you feel better it was haling a sort of tonic. I am sorry the price is so low for the samples but your price is good. It must have felt nice having three days to go out shooting. Murdoch is doing very well with the grouse. Last night he made it twenty-three and he only gone out at five o'clock, so does not loose much time [going] after them. Murdoch and Colin went to Blaine yesterday to order the winter stores and rubber boots. Colin is dead broke just now so could not get any boots. I hope mine will be useful at home.

Colin had to pay for his swagger when he went to Westminster for he was run in for five dollars for one night at Westminster. Murdoch and Mr. Blissard [Blizard] were charged usual rates and the neighbours here thought it a good joke. Jennie the colt had got round outside the fence last night and Murdoch thought he might as well bring him home. She seemed to think it all right and trotted to the stable as quickly as possible so she will be no trouble to break. We have thirteen dozen russet apples all but two apples good enough to store away for the winter. I think there are only between two and three of the other keeping kinds.

On 12 September 1893 Eliza Jane Daniels married David Beach. No record of Mrs. Andrew's daughter.

I forgot two items of interest for Connie. Eliza Daniels is married and Mrs. Andrews has a little daughter.

I have discovered how people manage to have such small washes. I always seem to have such a big one. One sheet on the beds and jersey combinations worn without a scrap of linen reduces your personal wash to stockings and one garment every fortnight. I am not yet taken with that plan and a flannelette nightdress.

We have a very pretty tabby kitten but I cannot tame it although it has lived in the shed. His little black sister that Mrs. Schou took was a friendly as possible.

Shields has been away a long time and his cat, a half-grown thing, the only one he has now, has come over here driven by starvation. It purrs so when you give it food but our cat and Topsy are not at all kind to it so it lives on our kitchen roof sitting by the stove pipe for warmth.

We are trying to get rid of Billy and want him to have a good home. Mr. Kitzell on the American side has taken him but is not to pay for him until the Spring for he might probably be seized or if there was any fuzz made be returned to us. He is worth very little so we do not mind if we get nothing but if it is all right we are to have three little pigs in the spring. We are very well satisfied with the trade. I hope it will plan out.

Colin is doing much better since his visit Burnaby and the Blizards, making himself much more agreeable. He is finding out what a comfortable home he has here. Fred March is very much down in the mouth right now and very hard up for money. I think it is a long time since he has had any money from home and he feels very lonely and thinking of finding to get a man to live with him but it is a tough place. Mrs. Schou and I had tea there and the place smelt horrible, dirty. He gave us a nice little tea and the bread was not all all bad for a change. I hope Connie sees Mrs. Peacock and hope she did not miss Norborne. I expect not for she knew he was to leave on the 7th if you told us as soon as you did us. We both send you our very best love to Papa and Mama, yourself and all at home.

I remain your affectionate sister Hannah G.M. Kirby

P.S. I have forgotten if I have a photo of mine at home that I have paid for.

Since I went to Blain I have shot 3 grouse. MacKenzie none. He will have to hurry up to shoot as many as I have. If he would only bring in more, I would give up. David Kitzell has taken Billy if he is not troubled by the customhouse people. I'm to have some pigs from him in the spring, if he is I suppose he will bring Billy back in a hurry, so I hope that is the last of him.

I am getting lazy. I have not been getting up very early lately. It has been very wet, so it has not mattered much. At present I am digging away in the garden. Hannah has been looking after the flowers and garden. I don't think we will have anyone staying here for some time.

Mrs. Nicolai Schou née Ethel Emma Fisher

In Burnaby are the fruitfarms of Schou, Sprott and Hill.

William Blizard, also a fruitfarmer, and his sister Alice Maud Blizard, later Mrs. Ashton Spilsbury, lived near Fort Langley. William Blizard did not stay in Canada.

From Murdoch

GLENWOOD OCTOBER 26 [18]94

[FRAGMENT]

With best love to you all, I remain, your very affectionate brother, Murdoch W. Kirby.

From Murdoch
NOVEMBER 7 [18]94
MAHONIA RANCHE

My dear Agnes — You must thank yourself and Hannah for this mail. You have been awfully good in writing to as you have done. We like having the photo very much, we know now just how it looks. I hope Connie will fall in with you all and help things along.

“Old House Helper” = Hannah

My “Old House Helper” is looking very well now. At one time I thought I should have to look out for another, as I thought she had had enough of B.C. You need not to be afraid of Miss Ventnor though. I am rather ashamed of myself there and try to blame old Nooty.

I have asked Rita [sister Henrietta] for news of South Africa [?] but she keeps mum. I was thinking of you today when you were laid up last Xmas with Xmas cards etc. and the photo you gave me.

So you have had Cousin Cara and after her Evelyn and Dora at Mayfield. I had a very jolly letter from Evelyn a short time ago. Do you feel as if you could do Ventnor, Manchester, and Patriabourne in a week again and cut the Brittain into bargain?

If we could only have done the big Miller dance. It would have been a fine windup to the week.

So the home people think I have exchanged my moustache for a nail brush; my life is rather bristly at present but its coming all right. I have begun to get out some cedar for building, after that I hope to do some logging. I don't like the winters here as I can't feed my stock as I should like to. Every year I look forward to the next.

Caroline Georgina Kirby (1834–1900) is a sister of the Revd. Henry Thomas Murdoch Kirby.

You can tell Aunt Caroline that my man [MacKenzie?] is a failure: she said he might. I have had quite enough of young Englishmen. They remind me of Nootie and the father [?], but fortunately one does not have to live with a curate. They are pleasant enough at times but at others.

How is Bluebell? We are having very depressing sort of weather, rain, rain, rain. But not very heavy.

This time last year I was slaving away before leaving for home.

With love to Aunt Caroline and yourself, I remain, yours very affectionate brother Murdoch W. Kirby

From Hannah
DECEMBER 20TH [1894]

My dearest Agnes — Your letter from Fairview came at the same time as the one from home. I hope you have rewarded Aunt Caroline for all her care by looking more like your old self. It is not at all like Christmas weather with us—today and yesterday have been quite warm.

I think Murdoch told Connie about the dance. It was a great success for the Hardings had a splendid big room. It came on to rain in the afternoon and they felt terribly disheartened about their preparations but still went on. Seven people arrived in the afternoon so they knew that they must anyhow have a small dance. They got an alarm that it was too wet for us and were thinking of coming to tell us that there was enough people there for a dance when the two Shields [Albert and brother Julius] arrived and said they thought we were coming as there was a light upstairs as if we were getting ready and they seemed very pleased to see me arrive in my silk dress although it did rain very hard.

I enjoyed myself. My ankle felt quite strong and for the first time never got tired, and Julius Shield dances very well. I tell Murdoch he must look out in the waltzing line for he is the first dance room rival there has been. Al and Julius Shield have just come in to spend the evening.

My hens are not laying so I went off with old Mrs. Harding and Mrs. Harding to get some eggs from the Crawfords and they had gone to Blaine with all the eggs and butter. Addie managed to find me four and the rest are to come as far as the Hardings on Saturday, so my pudding will get boiled on Monday.

Julius Shield is going home for Christmas. Al has not said what he is going to do. We had quite a nice game last night. Mississippi euchre with the two Shields.

Home for the Shields is Ferndale, WA.

I have just let the cattle out. Tom, the biggest ox is so afraid of me that it is hard to get him undone. A loop goes over one horn and rope is then twisted round the other. Their horns are very large and widespread and Tom generally pulls back to the end of the rope. It is hard and I get my fingers pinched. Jake is much better because he is not frightened.

There is to be a dance at the Henning's New Years Eve. Mrs Henning, Mrs. F. Harding, Rose Hele and myself doing the baking. They have a nice large kitchen and a fir floor so it is likely to be a very nice one. I ought to be cleaning but I think they may want to take the letters with them after dinner as they are working on that road outside. Murdoch, Mac and Fred. Mac and Fred had a chopping race and Mac won. Fred said he could chop three times quicker than Mac but failed to.

The letters all came last week but not the papers and I had a letter from Papa and there was yours, Mama's and Connie's. I see the Beaver line are laid up for the winter for account of not paying. The N.Y. quick boats are running the Canadian lines hard.

With very best love to Papa and Mama and all at home. I remain, your very affectionate sister Hannah Kirby.

Collin is not writing home for three weeks I think although we have told him the letters ought to go for Christmas and the New Year. In case of enquiries he is very well indeed. I know he has not written letters in this house and I do not think he writes on Sunday at Fred's because they generally have visitors there for their letters.

From Hannah
UNDATED: 1895

Beatrice Edith Moggridge was born 9 Feb 1895 at Hall's Prairie. The family went back to England.

My dearest Agnes — I was very glad you had not heard of the fate of the socks before you sent the gloves as I thought you would be nervous about them. Murdoch is going to write to Connie but in case he forgets Mrs. Moggridge has a little girl born 16th.

I think that Murdoch did not see any of the family as they were all in Westminster so Colin does not know his fate yet.

I think I have only dressed by lamp light two or three times this winter as we have not been early up. Only now that the days are getting longer Murdoch intends getting up earlier and today, as Shields was coming to return some work, we got up earlier but broad daylight. Mr. Colin showed his disapproval by coming down after breakfast was finished and washed up. It is no use saying anything for you only get a shower of abuse, so, on these occasions to take him in hand and when he came down he found his breakfast on a tray at the side table — plate of porridge and cup of cocoa, both poured out at our breakfast, two slices of bread and the treacle and as he was in his room when I went upstairs. His is left for him to do.

This is an exact repetition of what occurred at the beginning of the winter when he thought he could come down when he liked. One day of my treatment was enough then, so I hope it will be this time. I know he hates me but if I didn't he would live in the kitchen. His father told Murdoch that Colin had to be led, he could not be driven. Which do I do lead or drive? Anyhow, I manage things so that he does not get a chance of swearing and blustering. I think Shields is putting him into a fearful temper today by humbugging him and not treating him with the respect due to a MacKenzie.

Has Charles told you that Mrs. Carpenter, the mother, is dead? Florence sent me a printed invitation or notice about the funeral in such a black border. I wrote to her; no answer directly. She lives at Medicine Hat now but was with her mother at Rat Portage. She gave me such an invitation the next trip I made home at Medicine Hat that it will make a longer break right in the Prairies. She is Mrs. Adams now and has a little girl.

Mr. Colin came down in time for breakfast. Guess shall have no more trouble. Do not think I hear him swear. I go on the plan "less said, soonest mended" so this little business without a remark except "I think I am late." "Yes you are." Never a word about very sorry.

The handsome Shields was studying Connie's whist book last night. He and

I were badly beaten. I have not won again at whist since last winter and I lost every time there I think. We are still a wait behind.

I don't think there will be a dance about here this lent. Your Mayfield goings amused us. Mr. Noote seems able to run four girls at once. What a blessing he has left Mayfield, for what is amusing now would be annoying in a curate. With very best love I remain, Your very affectionate sister, Hannah G.M.
Kirby

My dearest Agnes — I have spent your birthday present not yet but it is going on a cobbler and tinker outfit. We have always been going to get one. I am enclosing a picture of it. Murdoch's agricultural epistolary [?] let him have it for a premium with the paper and his prescription is 50 cents – your present will just buy the No. 1 – for it is three dollars including the paper. It is to be ordered the next time Murdoch goes to Blaine. Whenever I mend boots I always think of you for you used to sew up yours a good bit years ago. So I thought if you knew we wanted that thing you would be sure to have chosen it.

Murdoch has had little Otto picking up stones for him two days. Poor old Murdoch, one day he was awfully blue about the stone. He said he would have to go on picking them up if he lived here fifty years. I guess they will require picking for the next 100 years or so. He is all right again today and we have been very busy planting potatoes. I churned, ironed and baked this morning and spent the afternoon cutting and dropping the potatoes in the rows. Murdoch was all day at the potatoes.

The flowers I have in bloom in the garden are double yellow narcissus, polyanthus, single white narcissus and dwarf purple irises and red daisies. The polyanthus are in large lots and most gorgeous and rich blaze of colours. Polyanthus here do best left in clumps for mine are the best – then Mrs. Harding who has the next largest lots. We intend to get some good roses, I mean regular garden ones, the ones that have no centre to them. I hope Connie's Solomon Seal sort of plant is coming up. Mrs. Harding has some in her garden. She said it got hoed and chopped about by mistake but comes up quite happily.

Did I tell Mama that the new clock is an eight-day one? Sunday I said, we must wind the clock. Murdoch said you can look after yours, and I after mine, giving me the sitting room one. I did not mind for he likes the new one as much as I do and has been regulating it. You just have to raise or lower the pendulum, a very pretty silver looking one. We think now that we have that clock we shall be able to get something to keep good time. Murdoch's silver watch does it if he does not forget to wind it. We have missed Connie's clock.

From Hannah

UNDATED

Hannah was born on 6 March 1858.

Connie was secretary of the Girls' Friendly Society, Dallington Sunday School. Her associates gave her a travelling clock on her departure to Canada.

Rita gave a nice present to the church. I should like to see the surplice choir coming up the aisle. Mr. Nicolas Schou thinks if possible he may go to England in the autumn lecturing on B.C. and have all the expenses paid. Our cherry trees are a mass of blossom, one especially, and a great show for gooseberries and currants. We have some white ____ so we might possibly get bitters.

Ann Oddy, the wife of Edwin Oddy, blacksmith in New Westminster.

I think I did my hair very nice when I went to Westminster and the Moggridges, only I have no one to tell me if it looks nice or not. A very nicely dressed lady shook hands with me after church in New Westminster and said, how do you do, Miss Kirby. I did not know her until she said Mrs. Oddy. She did look nice. I shall try find her house the next time I am there.

With very best love, I remain yours very affectionate, Hannah G.W. Kirby.

From Hannah
MAY 23RD [1895]

My dearest Agnes — I had better begin a diary and I think as I feel as stuck headed as possible. Last Friday I went to Smith's to post the letter and then Marg Smith and I walked round by the Annands to see them about Fred's dance. They gave us some tea and then we came home together as far as Fred's place.

Miss Blizard wearing men's trousers is the feisty Alice Maud Blizard who married Ashton Spilsbury in 1897. They were to be neighbours of the Kirbys in Whonnock.

Sunday Miss Blizard rode out to dinner in knickerbockers and stayed till five. Fred, McKenzie and McKasill came to tea. Jase [Jason] Walworth also called bringing up the Speazer [?]. He is a slippery individual where money is concerned. I wonder if he thought we should be green enough to pay him on Sunday.

Mr. Hele also called. Monday I washed the clothes. Shields came to work and Miss Blizard rode back with a dress and blouse for Fred's dance. Tuesday Shields came to work. I ironed. Miss Blizard got up at 10:30. As she only wanted milk and bread and butter I did not care. After dinner we rode down to the Moggridges. They had asked to take her down there. I rode Charlie for the first time. Cannot say I enjoyed it but think I shall be all right next time. He is quiet enough really. I think I felt a bit nervous. We saw Mrs. and her sister and W.J. and had afternoon tea. They were very pleasant and Mrs. Moggridge said she like Miss Blizard.

We got home at 6:30, had our supper and then got ready for the dance. It began to rain after all the guests had arrived. The party was a success.

Wednesday Murdoch was up at seven, I at nine and Miss Blizard at two. Murdoch went to work with Shields in the afternoon. Fred and Mr, McCashill [Carshill?] came over in the evening.

Thursday breakfast over before seven. Miss Blizard up at eleven. I baked and sowed some beans (butter beans). Mr. Seymour and Brocken, two countrymen came in. They gave us very little encouragement about the roads.

After dinner we went over and saw Shields bees and then to the Hardings to put them off for the recent birthday for Bertha Fleming has chicken pox very badly and the Smiths are just well so the party is put off. We also went to the Flemings. Miss Blizard in knickerbockers.

She told me about her engagement with her young man from Australia, Mr. Hobson. They write once a week. She told him she had lots of rings and did not want one and she wears two of her own.

Murdoch and Miss Blizard is playing chess. I am half regretting that I have said I will ride back with her tomorrow to see some sports they are having at the Fort but I want to see Miss Spilsbury and Miss Blizard says she is sure to be there. Lucy Annand will ride back as she will be down alone. Murdoch talked of going and now has backed out and I do not wonder. He says he cannot walk about with a new woman.

We like the Pearson's Weekly Mama sent out. The Schous do not know Mrs. Lewis [sp?] themselves but a great friend of hers, Mrs. Sprott was writing out gossip about her young peoples flirtations and mentioned Frank's with Mrs. Lewis's sister. So they wrote back and asked about the Lewises and said if they were the people they thought they were, Frank had better look out for the sister was already bespoken by a cousin—rather a hopeless sort of engagement as they are waiting for him to get into a position of some kind that he can keep a wife. They were the girls they thought they were. In Burnaby people do not care for Ethel's flirtation with Mr. Noote.

I hope Charles will get Oliver all right. I think he is just needed [?] to working up a mission. He has sent me two photos of his children. Mr. Machin is a pleasant man. Does he like Gravenhurst. It is not nearly as nice a house as the one at Port Arthur and a much smaller town, in fact only a village unless it has built up. How is Erine [?] Machin getting on with her hubby hunting and how does she wear her hair. She has a tremendous lot hanging down when I knew her. If it is done up it must have gone to her heart for she thought so much of it. With our very best love to Papa and Mama and all at home and yourself. I remain, your very affectionate sister,
Hannah G.M. Kirby

P.S. This should have been posted last week. I heard the Vancouver Island bishop when I was in Victoria. Mr. Hewetson asked me afterward how I liked him and I said I should not keep my attention on the sermon and he told me no one could. You cannot.

My dear Agnes — Hannah turned up last Saturday like a drowned rat. Sunday morning I took the Fleming's pony back and stayed to dinner. Fred McKaskill and MacKenzie called on them in the afternoon just before I left. MacKenzie is keeping his nose to the grindstone manfully, it is go it or starve.

Miss Spilsbury = Annie Elizabeth Spilsbury.
She would marry August Baker (Boulanger) in
November 1896.

From Murdoch
MAY 30 . [18]95

Monday I split and hauled fence boards with oxen. Tuesday Julius Otto hoed in the garden. I logged for Shields with Fleming and F. Marsh. Wednesday putting up fence. Julius Otto helping; fixed some barways. Thursday sawed a log off the cedar I felled last and split a few boards; afternoon went to Kitzell's for some potatoes. (My own have just run out). Fixed up the lane fences; they are nearly finished now, only the top of the posts to be sawn off. The weather has been very unsettled. I don't like to talk about oat hay this year—the ground is not cleared yet.

I am ordered out on the road next Monday for four days statute labour.

You should have seen the new woman cutting about the place, running after the cows, feeding the calves and shooting with Hannah's rifle.

With best love to you all, Your very affect. Brother, Murdoch W. Kirby

From Hannah
UNDATED

My dearest Agnes — You will be pleased to hear that MacKenzie has recovered and best of all left us for Mr. Spencer, McKoy Lake, Alberni, 17 miles from Alberni itself. We had a terrible time with Mac. He was hurt on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.

Probably McCoy Lake, 5 miles from Port Alberni. George and Jennie Spencer farmed. They were then a young couple with a small child.

He got up Friday but laid down all day covered up with sweat [?]. I told him to get up and walk about or his inside would get all upset from being kept so still. I knew his head was all right. I gave him a big doze of Castor oil on Friday, as per directions said to give it. When the sickness was stopped, well, he would not move and on Saturday he was lying down the same.

Murdoch went to the corner and met Henry Harding on the way and asked him to call here and get his dinner and cheer Mac up. Well, that cheered him up and he ate a good dinner and played cribbage in the after noon. After being perfectly still for three days that was enough, but he walked over to Shields and played card till eleven at night—then woke up Sunday very tired. I noticed on Saturday his forehead was yellow. Sunday it was worse—a serious attack from not moving—his liver was sluggish. The tiresome bag would not move about so could not eat. He went to bed early on Sunday and on Monday was quite well as far as I could tell.

It is curious Mr. Smith was knocked senseless that same day. A log fortunately missed his head but came down on his shoulder and he was insensible some time he thinks. When he came to, his horse had gone off to the stable. I told Mac about it on Friday. That helped him, for I said Smith was trying to get about a little so Mac had to found [?] he was not the worst hurt of the two men.

Well, Monday morning he was going to see if Smith would not take him to Westminster on Wednesday. He asked Murdoch's stick. I don't know why he thought he was lame. I proposed Jesse as she was up here, but he was horrified at the idea he could not stand the shaking. I was sort of brute to

suggest such a thing. Murdoch was away hunting up the little bull. At twelve I heard two horses galloping down the lane as tight as could come and Mac on one of them. Mr. _____? was bringing in the pony for us to try. They came in and Mac ate a big dinner.

When he had finished poor Murdoch came limping home with a badly sprained ankle. He had his dinner but was too bad to eat much, and then Mr. _____ made a crutch for him to hobble out to the barn to see the horse. I slipped my habit on just to try it. Billie had never had a lady on before and Mr. Z called out: "don't start till I am ready," but it was all right and we started. Then Mr. _____ wanted to ride to Blaine. I had no gloves as I only thought of a short distance and wanted to feel free in case of accidents; and away we went full tilt for Blaine. He asked I let him go his own pace for I thought it would test the pony's wind.

We rode right to the seafront in Blaine, turned around and came back. We walked the horses over half of the way home and took three hours doing the trip—14 miles. I am stiff now for we went it at a great pace sort of John Gilpin ride. Mr. Z_____ valued it. But we drew up once to put my foot through the elastic of my habit and walked about a short distance. He told me he only drew up for me. So away we went again. We trotted, cantered, and galloped that seven miles. He said he had my pony out Sunday to tire it a bit to make it quiet.

Tuesday I had to catch it and saddle it to go down to the Annands to ask Suey and Frank up for a farewell tea for Mac. Suey came back on her pony and we went round by the Hardings to ask two of them to come and put up a short piece of fence for Murdoch. I got off and shut eight [portages] of gates and barways. I told Suey I wanted to try the pony. He let me lead him up to anything to get on and one time there was a bad hole and I wanted to get around it without moving him as he was all right at a mounting place. So I pushed his head up and went under it. That was the fifth gate | so I know I could trust him. I did not canter him yesterday.

Today is pouring wet—but I don't think I shall ever be afraid of him. I think he may try, but all these ponies do more or less. We have decided on the \$20—big one on account of the size, for these roads are terrible for a small pony and when Gerry wanted to pass his pony would be jogging into mine. This one is bigger than our old Billie.

With very best love to Papa and Mama, yourself and all at home, I remain,
your very affectionate sister, Hannah Kirby

"The Diverting History of John Gilpin" by
William Cowper.

HANDWRITING SAMPLES

Hannah Georgina Mary Kirby

Mahonia Ranch.
July 28rd

My dearest - Agnes,
I had better begin & show I think
as I feel as that's headed as possible last Friday
I went to Smith's to post the letter & then Mary
Smith's & I walked round by the Annanah do
we then about Fred's dance they gave us some
tea & then we came home together as far as
Fred's place. Sunday Miss Blyard rode out
to dinner in timberbookey & stayed till five
Wed, Melba & Melba's came to tea Grace
Walworth also called bringing up the speaker
his & a dipery individual when money is concerned
I wonder if he thought we should be open enough
to pay him on Sunday. Mr. Kele also called.
Monday I washed the clothes Shields came
to work & Miss Blyard rode back with a
dress & blouse for Fred's dance. Tuesday
Shields came to work I showed Miss Blyard got-

Murdoch William Kirby

pictures up. Charlie baked in the
evening & very good cakes they were
Matthews came in. ~~The~~ Chopped
Lues. Chopped & cleared & put in a
good morning's work. Rained in
the afternoon so we came home
ground our axes. I baked some
rare good cakes I don't think any
one could beat them. I bought soda
cream of tartar & water. Wed 26. Rained
All the morning worked in the afternoon
Thurs 26. Rained all day. Fred was a
fine day we made a road to Charlie
clearing. Sat. Today finished the
road & began brushing out a blaze
to my ranche I expect to do some
work on it next week. I am
afraid the land we have got is
rather 'marry'. I has rained ~~into~~
nearly every other day ~~that~~ since
we have been here. I think
nearly as much has fallen as fell
in my field last winter.
Wages are very good here just

APPENDICES

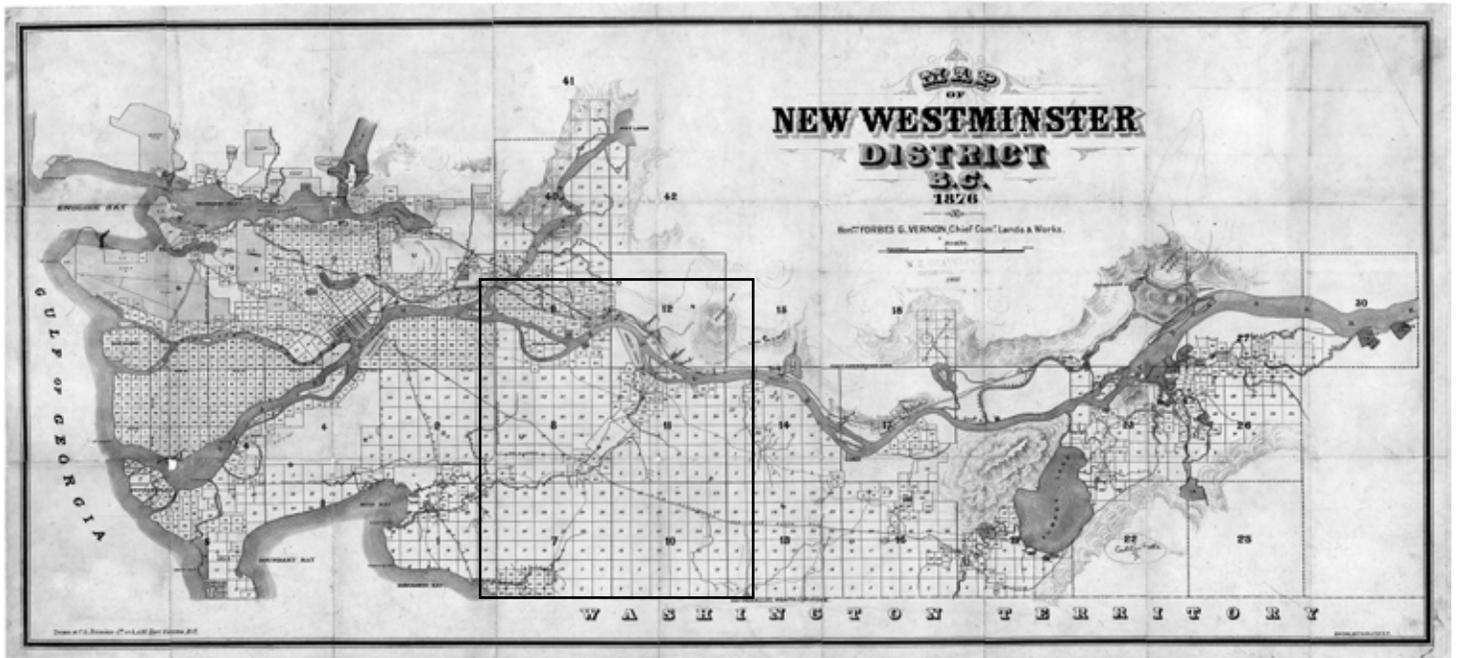
- Kirby's preemptions / 52
- Campbell Valley Regional Park / 53
- The Glenwood neighbourhood / 54
- Applications and land grant / 56
- Glenwood directory 1900 – 1901 / 59
- First Settlers at Deer Lake [Burnaby] / 60
- Louis Edgar Sprott / 62
- Henry Grey and Alicia Kirby / 63
- Albert G. Shields & Emily M. Kirby / 64
- The Kirbys at Whonnock / 66

The man sitting behind the grindstone is Louis Claude Hill. He seems to have lived in this cabin in Glenwood before he left for Burnaby. The three other men have not been identified. Note the cloth in front of the lower window to keep the mosquitoes out.

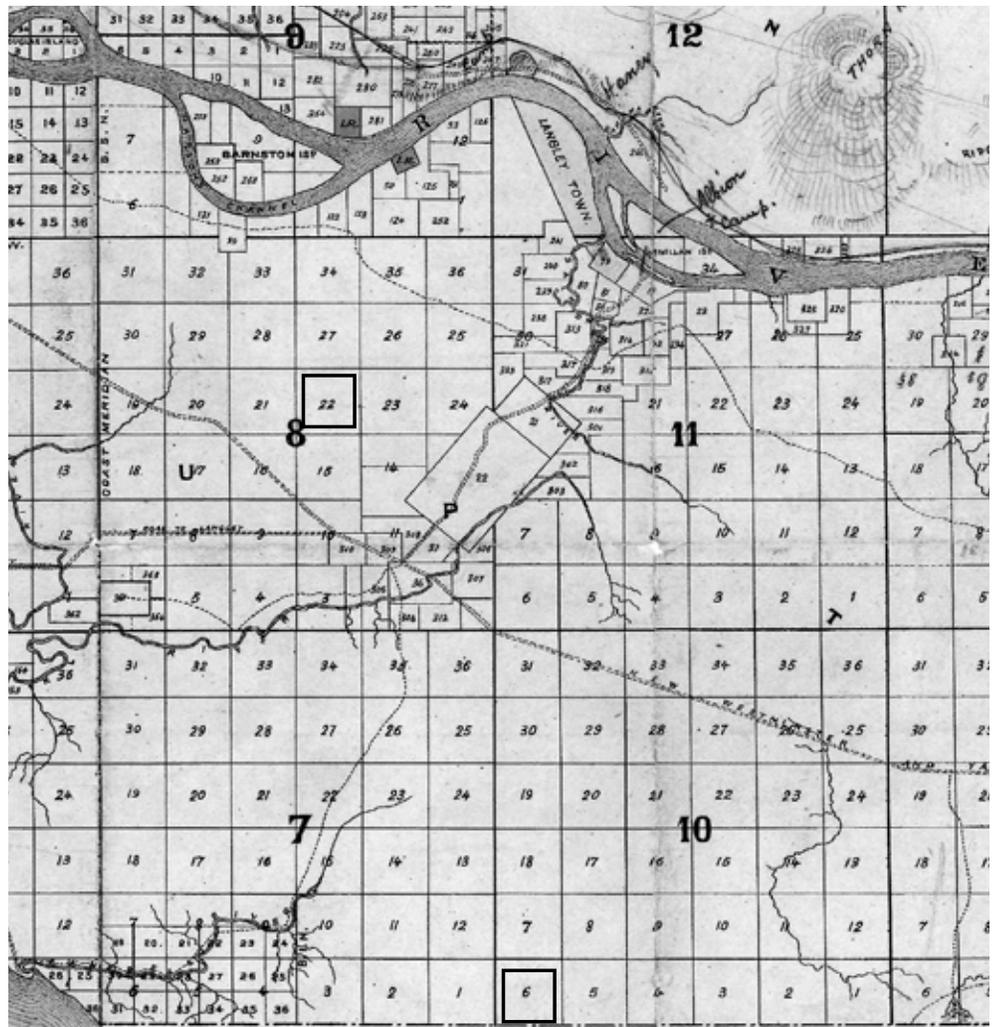


City of Burnaby Archives ID 477-832

KIRBY'S PREEMPTIONS



In the spring of 1888, after arrival in British Columbia, Murdoch Kirby first obtained the SW Quarter of Section 22 Township 8.

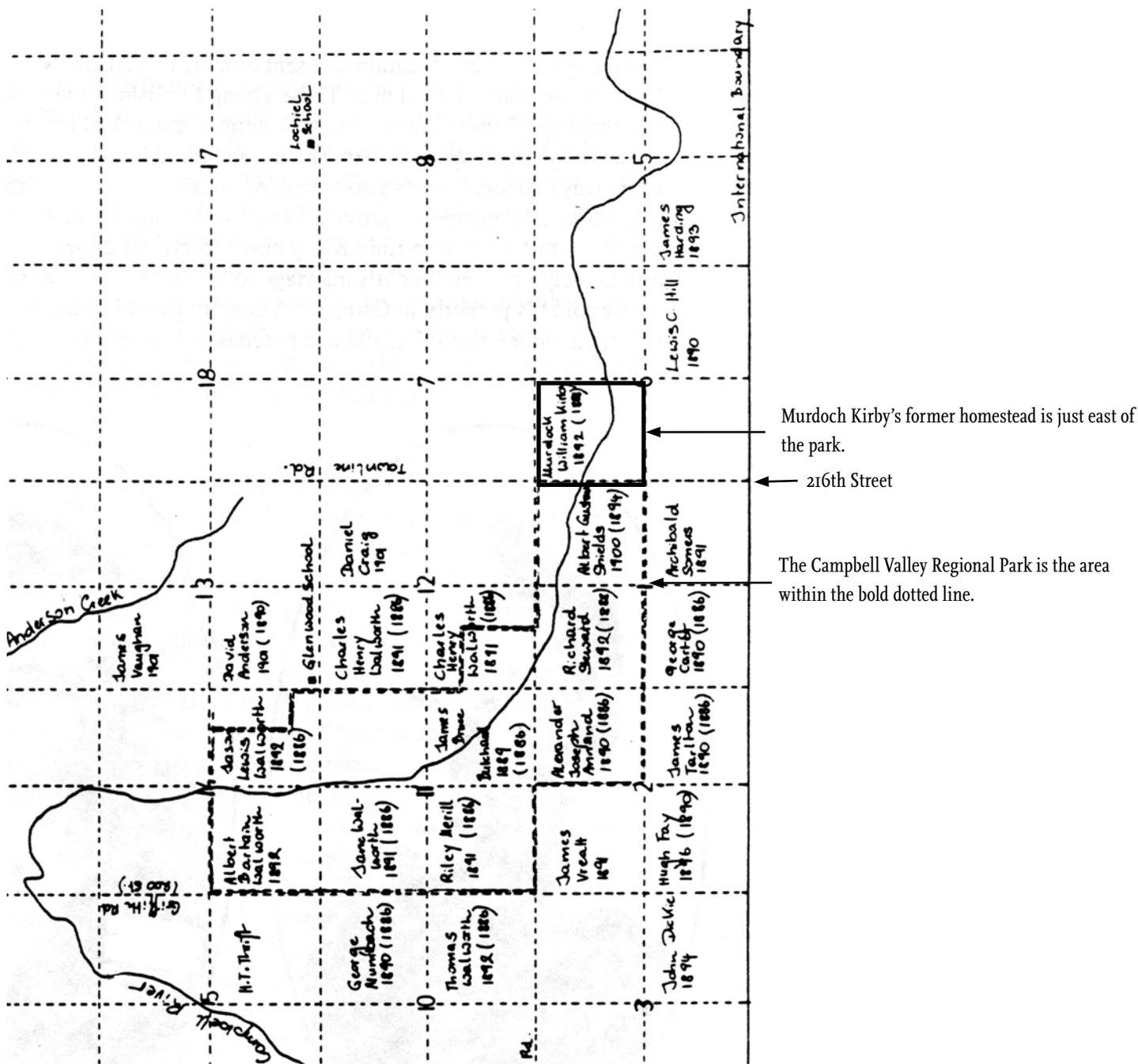


In the fall of 1888, Murdoch abandoned his claim on the quarter section in Township 8 and claimed instead the Northwest Quarter of Section 6 of Township 10.

CAMPBELL VALLEY REGIONAL PARK

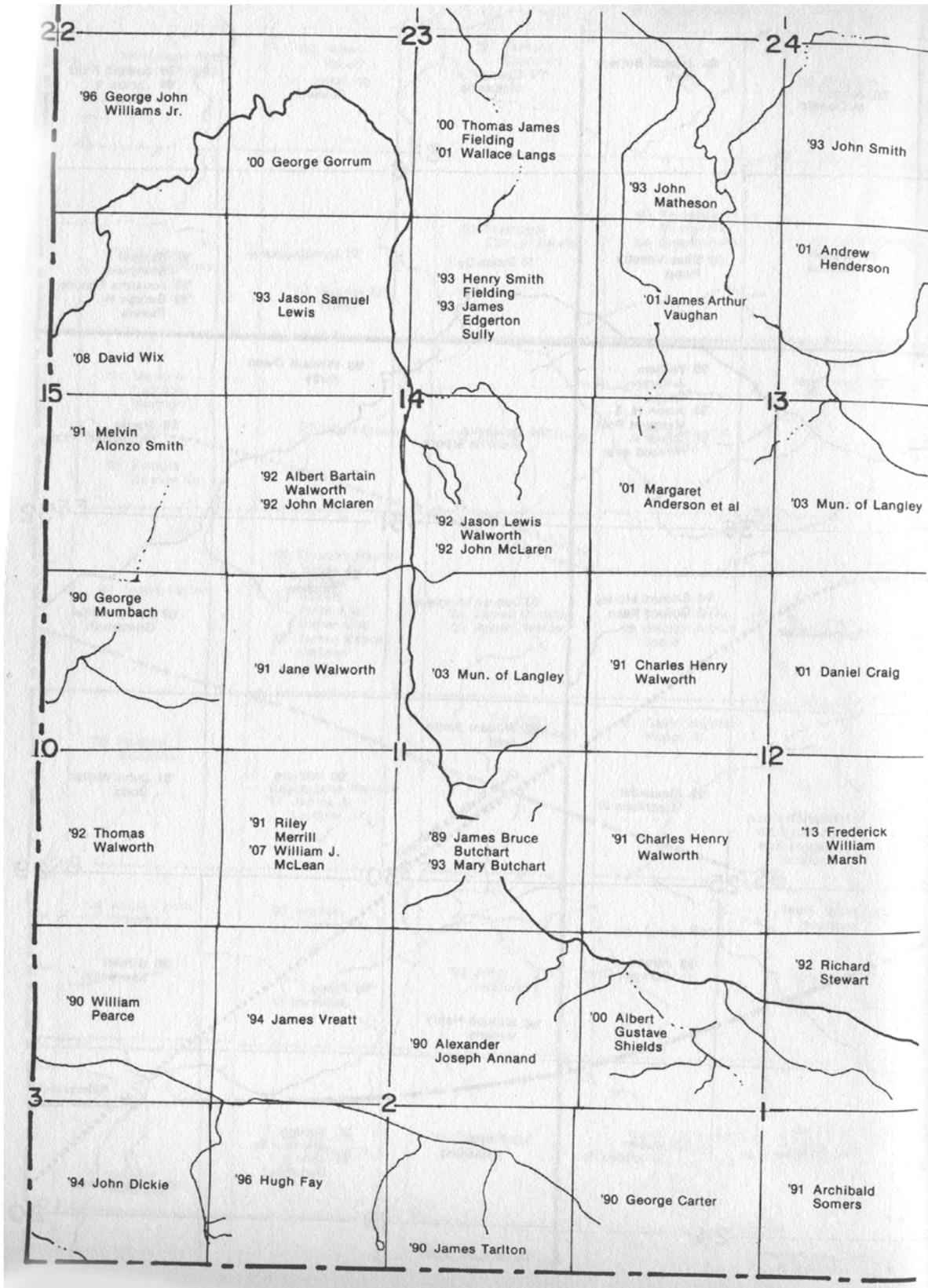
Below is a part of a map of the Glenwood area shown on page 17 of Gabrielle Kahrer's book *Taking a Chance*. The map shows the names of settlers on properties at or near Campbell Valley Regional Park. The name "Campbell Valley" is a modern creation.

As early as the 1870s survey maps show the name Campbell River where it flows into Semiahmoo Bay. Upstream the river, formed by several meandering creeks and small streams, is not well defined. The tributary labelled Campbell River on the map is today called Little Campbell River. The stream crosses Kirby's old homestead and the Campbell Valley Regional Park.

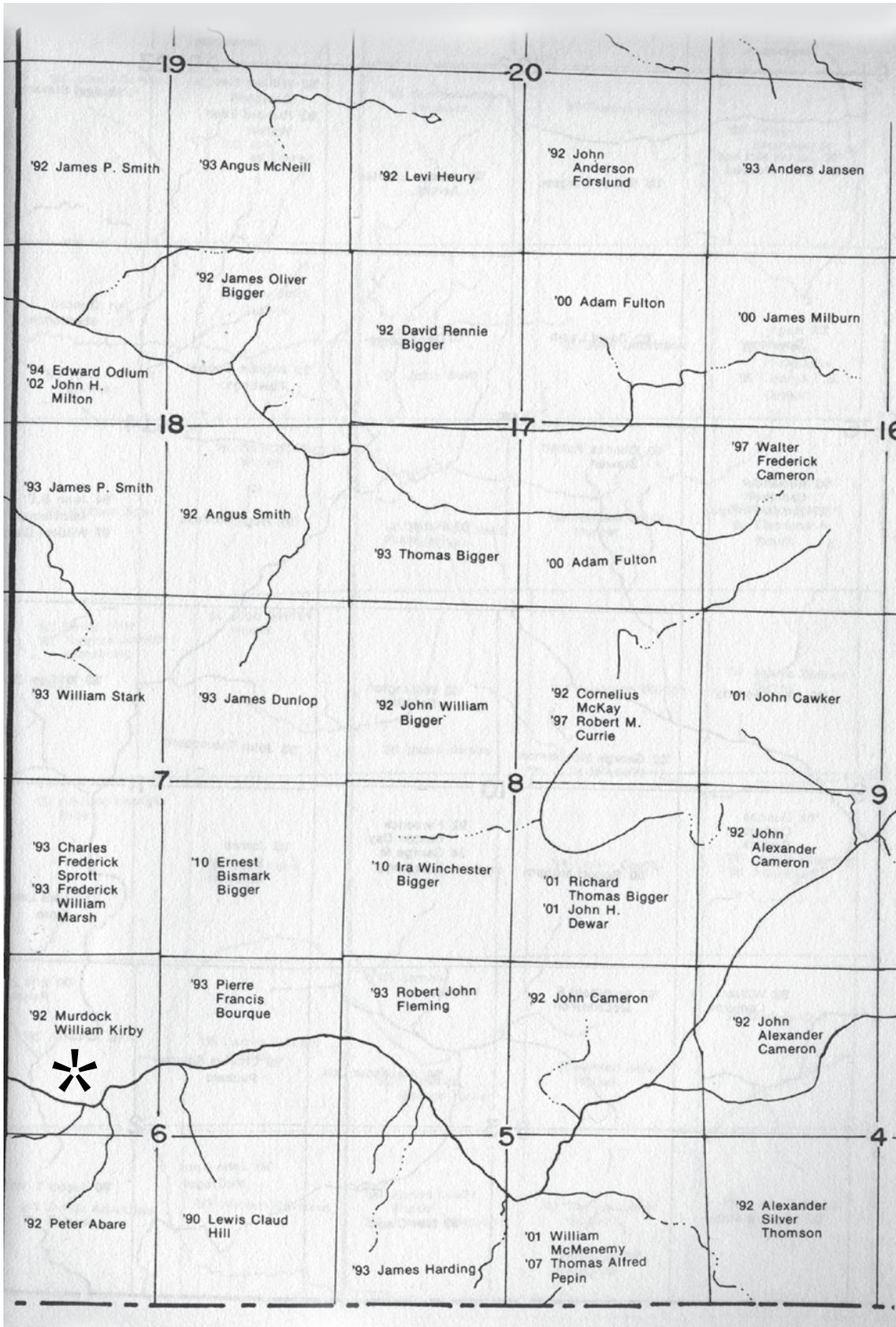


THE GLENWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD

Maps from *The Langley Story*, Illustrated by Donald E. Waite, 1977



<< TOWNSHIP 7



*Kirby's homestead:
Northwest quarter
Section 6
Township 10.*

TOWNSHIP 10 >>

BRITISH C

FORM A.

No. 857

Application for a Homestead Entry.

I, Murdoch Williams Kirby
of Township 10 New Westminster District - Farmer
do hereby apply for a Homestead Entry, under the provisions of the "Regulations for the disposal
of Dominion Lands within the Railway Belt in the Province of British Columbia approved by
"Order in Council of the 17th September, 1887" for the North West quarter section of section
Number Six of the Tenth Township, in the _____ range
East of the Coast Meridian.

Murdoch W. Kirby

New Westminster District
5th November 1888

I declare that I elect to hold the
above described lands under clauses
17 and 18 - known as the 3 years' clauses
and that I will observe all the conditions

Form No. 174.

No. of application 857

New Westminster
DISTRICT.

APPLICATION FOR
HOMESTEAD,
AND AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF
SAME.

BY A PERSON WHO HAS NOT PRE-
VIOUSLY OBTAINED ENTRY.

Name Murdoch William Kirby
Date 5th November 1888

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF
CLAIM FOR HOMESTEAD ENTRY**

By a Person who has not previously obtained Homestead Entry.

I, Murdoch William Kirby, do solemnly swear
that I am over eighteen years of age; that to the best of my knowledge and belief the land in
respect of which my application is made is surveyed agricultural land; it is not chiefly valuable for
its timber, or for hay land, nor is there upon it any stone or marble quarry, or coal or other
mineral having commercial value; there is not upon it any water power which may serve to
drive machinery, nor is it specially valuable by reason of its position, such as being the shore
of an important harbor, bridge site or canal site, or being either an actual or prospective
railway terminus or station; that there is no person residing on the said land, nor are there any
improvements thereon, and that this application is made for my exclusive use and benefit, with
the intention of residing upon and cultivating the said land, and not directly or indirectly for the
use or benefit of any other person or persons whomsoever; and that I have not heretofore obtained
a homestead on Dominion Lands, nor do I own any lands within the tract known as the Railway
Belt in British Columbia.

Subscribed and sworn to this 5th
day of November 1888, before me

Murdoch W. Kirby
J. H. W. Curran
Local Agent.

Murdoch Kirby's application for Homestead Entry for the northwest quarter of Section 6 of Township 10, dated 5 November 1888.

On the "claim" form is a handwritten addition after the printed words: "I have not heretofore obtained a homestead on Dominion Lands...":
"except on SW 1/4 Sec. 22, Tp. 8 E of C M [east of centre meridian] abandoned by permission of the court [?]"

Source: Langley Centennial Museum, MSS 221, Gabrielle Kahrer fonds.

Documents requested by Gabrielle Kahrer from the BC Provincial Archives for the preparation of her book *Taking a Chance, Homesteading in Campbell Valley (South Langley) 1880's to 1940's*, published in 1990.

APPLICATIONS AND LAND GRANT

286239

Statement Made and Sworn to by Murdoch
William Kirby in support
of his application for a Patent of N.W. 1/4 of
Section 6 Twp. 10 Rge. East of Grant Meridian.
Homestead No 857

DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR
RECEIVED
JAN 20 1892
OTTAWA

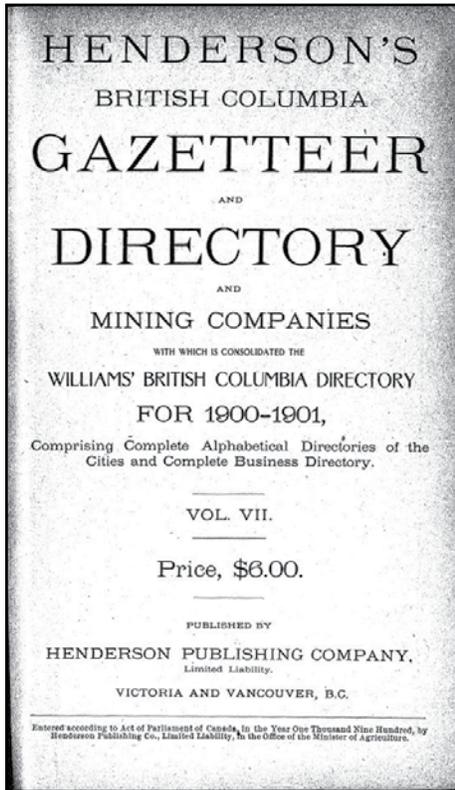
1. What is your name in full, age and Post Office address?
Murdoch William Kirby
26 Langley Avenue N.S.B
Bylaw
2. Are you a British subject by birth or naturalization? If naturalized, when and where?
By birth
3. What is your trade, profession or calling?
Farmer
4. When did you obtain entry for this homestead?
5th Nov 88
5. When did you build your house thereon?
1st house 15th Oct 88. 2nd house
1st April 89
Oct. 1888.
6. When did you perfect your entry to your homestead by taking in your own personal possession of the land and beginning continuous residence thereon and cultivation thereof?
Continuously since the 15th
Oct. 88 to the present time.
7. What portion of each year since that date have you resided thereon? State each month.
8. When absent from your homestead where have you resided, and what has been your occupation?
9. Of whom does your family consist; when did they first commence residence upon this homestead, and for what portion of each year since that date have they resided upon it?
Single.
10. How much breaking have you done upon your homestead in each year since you obtained entry, and how many acres have you cultivated each year?
1888 4 acres chopped.
1890 one acre broken & cultivated
1891 22 " " "
11. How many horned cattle, horses, sheep, and pigs have you had on your homestead each year since date of perfecting entry? Give number in each year.
1891 Cow and calf 2 pigs
12. What is the size of your house, and what is its present cash value?
24 x 16 ft with lean to 24 x 14 ft. 75⁰⁰
and shed attached. value 500⁰⁰
13. What extent of fencing have you made, and what is the present cash value thereof?
80 cords of picket and board fence
chicken house & stable. 30 cords
of ditch. 70 fruit trees. 6 acres
partially cleared. total value 255⁰⁰
14. What other buildings have you erected? What other improvements have you made, and what is the cash value of the same?
15. Are there any indications of minerals or quarries on your homestead? If so, state nature of same, and whether it is more valuable for agricultural than any other purpose.
No minerals that I am aware of
16. Have you had any other homestead entry? If so, when and where, and what became of it?
Yes. S.W. 1/4 sec 22. 30⁰⁰ cancelled by
permission of the Commissioner
No.
17. Have you assigned or transferred or agreed to assign or transfer your homestead or pre-emption right or any part thereof? If so, when and to whom.

Form No. 155. (Continued on next page.)

Three years after he filed his application for homestead entry (5 November 1888) Murdoch Kirby applied for ownership. His application was supported by Charles Sprott and Louis Claude Hill.

Source: GR-0436 - Canada Dept. of the Interior. Dominion Lands Branch. Series I. B.C. Lands Correspondence: Applications for Patent. With thanks to Annette Fulford who called my attention to this resource.

GLENWOOD DIRECTORY 1900 – 1901



This was the last time Murdoch Kirby is listed as a resident of Glenwood. The following year, after he moved to Milner, his name is listed under Langley Prairie.

Glenwood.

Postmaster, J. P. Smith.

Annand, Alexander Joseph.
Beaton, Alex., farmer.
Biggar, James, farmer.
Biggar, John, farmer.
Biggar, Thomas, farmer.
Cameron, Alexander, farmer.
Cameron, John, farmer.
Cameron, William, farmer.
Chambers, John, farmer.
Craig, Daniel, farmer.
Dunlop, James, farmer.
Fleming, Robert John, farmer.
Fulton, Adam, farmer.
Fulton, Harvey, farmer.
Harding, Fred.
Harding, George.
Harding, Henry, farmer.
Harding, James, farmer.
Kennedy, Neil, fisherman.
Kirby, Murdock Wm., farmer.
Lewis, George, farmer.
McInnes, Charles, farmer.
McKay, Angus, butcher.
McMillan, Dougall, laborer.
McMinerny, Wm., farmer.
Marsh, Frederick W., farmer.
Minemy, William, farmer.
Montgomery, Philip, laborer.
Shields, A. G.
Smith, Angus, farmer.
Smith, James F., farmer.
Smith, James P., postmaster.
Stark, Wm. logger.
Thomas, Wm., farmer.
Thornber, Charles L., teacher.
Tupper, J. F., school teacher.
Webster, John, farmer.

FIRST SETTLERS AT DEER LAKE [BURNABY]



City of Burnaby. Photo ID 477-934

Louis Claude Hill, 1890.

Bygones of Burnaby, an Anecdotal History, by Pixie McGeachie, 1976, pp. 1, 2.

DURING THE LAST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY the thoughts of many young Englishmen turned to America where virgin lands beckoned seductively and the promise of adventure quickened the imagination.

Louis Claude Hill was one of the young men who answered the beckoning and sought the promise. He became a pioneer of Burnaby and yet, when he set out from England, a place so named did not even officially exist.

Claude Hill was 19 years of age when he left England to go to America in 1879. [...] Later, young Hill made his way west and eventually arrived in Oregon where he obtained work on the farm of Mr. and Mrs. Steers. About 1886 he acquired land of his own at Eagle Point, near Medford in Oregon, and while there became an American citizen.

The following year Claude Hill travelled north to British Columbia where he visited Vancouver and New Westminster. It was at this point that he decided that he would like to live under the Union Jack again so he went back to Oregon and disposed of his property. He returned to B.C. in August, 1888. After living in the Province for four years he was able to re-establish his British citizenship and he received his Certificate of Naturalization in New Westminster in October, 1892.

The first place where Mr. Hill chose to live in B.C. was the Fraser Valley. There he met two men who became life-long friends of his, Murdoch Kirby and Charles F. Sprott who later served as a Burnaby Councillor from 1895 to 1904 and as Reeve in 1904 and 1905. On his previous visit to B.C. Claude Hill had become greatly impressed by the heavily timbered and little populated area of land that lay between the city of New Westminster and Gastown (Vancouver) so, when he discovered that some of this land nestled between two beautiful lakes was available, he decided to sell his Fraser Valley property and buy it.

His acreage touched both Deer Lake and Burnaby Lake and the stream that joined the two, Deer Creek, meandered through his land. It was a lovely spot filled with natural beauty. Today, Burnaby's 1971 Centennial project, Heritage Village, stands on part of this property.

Claude Hill wrote glowing reports about his property back to his brother, Bernard, in England. Intrigued, Bernard made the trip to British Columbia to see for himself. He was equally as enchanted with what he saw and went back to the Old Country to bring his wife and children to the new land.

The municipality of Burnaby received its charter of incorporation on September 24, 1892.

Reeves

Charles R. Shaw, 1892

Nicolai C. Schou, 1893-1903

Charles F. Sprott, 1904-1905

Peter Byrne, 1906-1910

etc.

[...] In those early days land could be procured by a settler staking out a parcel of ground, registering it and agreeing to pay the government \$1.00 per acre for his holdings. If the settler did not have the required dollars then he could work out the amount on road construction in and around New Westminster. A comparative table lists Deer Lake shore property as being worth \$1.00 per acre in 1870, \$30.00 per acre in 1890 and a whopping \$100.00 per acre by 1900.

It was part of the original Finlaison land that Claude Hill bought about 1890. He later moved in with his brother, Bernard, and his family who had already built on adjoining land, and proceeded to construct his own property, which he called "Brookfield." Two other neighbouring properties belonged to Malcolm Nicholson, on Sperling south of Douglas Road, and to Nicolai C. Schou, editor of the *News Advertiser* (Vancouver) and elected Reeve of Burnaby from 1893-1904, whose 'country place' was situated on Douglas Road about half a mile west of Sperling.

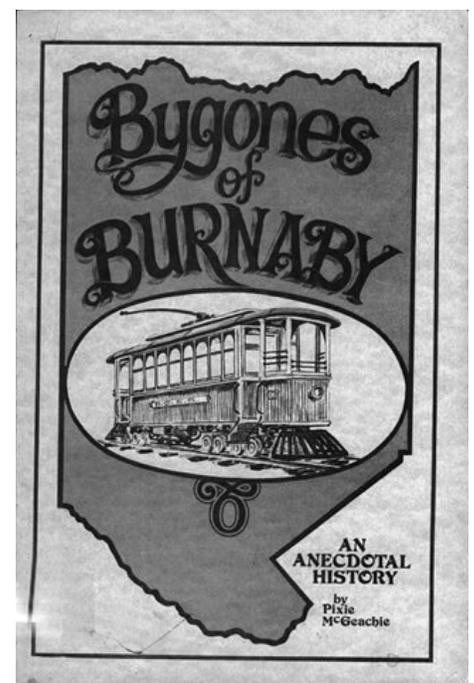
Mr. Schou used to spend his weekends and holidays at his small Burnaby house. Later, his stepmother and his two sisters Miss Kaiah and Miss Lucy came out from England and it was decided then that the country place should be developed as a farm with a substantial home on it. Needing someone with farm experience to help with the project, Mr. Schou was introduced, quite possibly by Claude Hill, to Charles Sprott who not only became a partner in the farm but also a suitor for Miss Lucy. They were married [1893] in Holy Trinity Cathedral in New Westminster.

It was in 1892 that a group of settlers agreed that a charter should be obtained so that a governing body could be set up to administer the growing needs of the area in which they lived. [...] Consequently a meeting was called for 7 p.m. of June 30 for all those interested in forming a new municipality. [...] Claude Hill acted as secretary, pro temp [...] Thoroughly convinced of the sagacity of the proposal the assembled gentlemen unanimously passed Mr. N.C. Schou's motion, "that a municipality to be named Burnaby be formed..." [...] When the ballots were counted in Burnaby's first election N.C. Schou went in as Reeve. Claude Hill was successful in his bid for a seat on Council ...

As Claude Hill cleared the timber and stumps off his land he put in crops of strawberries When it came time every year to harvest the fruit. Mr. Hill would go down to New Westminster's Chinatown to speak to the head man about getting a crew of pickers. He provided small wooden shacks for living quarters for the Chinese who would arrive at the appointed time carrying their own supply of rice.

City of Burnaby Community Heritage Commission, 2014. "Deer Lake Park: Heritage Walking Tour."

The completion of the tram line between New Westminster and Vancouver in 1891 renewed interest in the lands at Deer Lake. Soon a group of gentlemen farmers had established strawberry fields and orchards to serve the New Westminster market. These were the most productive and well-managed "fruit ranches" in the Fraser Valley. Local strawberries were so admired that they commanded 50 cents more per crate at local markets. By 1909 one local newspaper reported that the area appeared as if "an English Village had been taken and planted amidst the grandeur of British Columbia scenery."





LOUIS EDGAR SPROTT

“Identified (left to right), Bernard R. Hill, Louis Claude Hill, Charles Sprott, George E. Clayton, and Edgar Sprott, who are loading up their strawberries on a street car. The farmers are lined up in a row, each sitting in their own horse and cart as they bring their strawberries to the station.”
City of Burnaby Archives. Photo ID 477-938.

LOUIS EDGAR SPROTT was a younger brother of Charles Frederick Sprott who shared the pioneer years at Glenwood with Murdoch Kirby. In 1897 Louis joined Charles in Burnaby. Two years later Louis married Helen Louise Faith Nicholls. Around 1919 Louis Edgar, his wife and three daughters moved to Whonnock. They had three children: Helen Fanny (b. 1902), Mary Stone (b. 1908) and Kathleen Sprott (b. 1910).

Kathleen married Edward Albert Nadin, who from 1936 to 1957 owned the Whonnock General Store. After selling the store they moved to the Cariboo where their two sons still live. Her sister Mary Stone married Frank Daniels. The oldest daughter, Helen, never married.

Louis Edgar Sprott and his son-in-law Frank Daniels were pallbearers at the funeral of Agnes Kirby in 1950.

Louis Edgar Sprott died in Whonnock in September 1951. His wife Helen followed him in January 1952,

Funeral Services Held for Whonock Pioneer

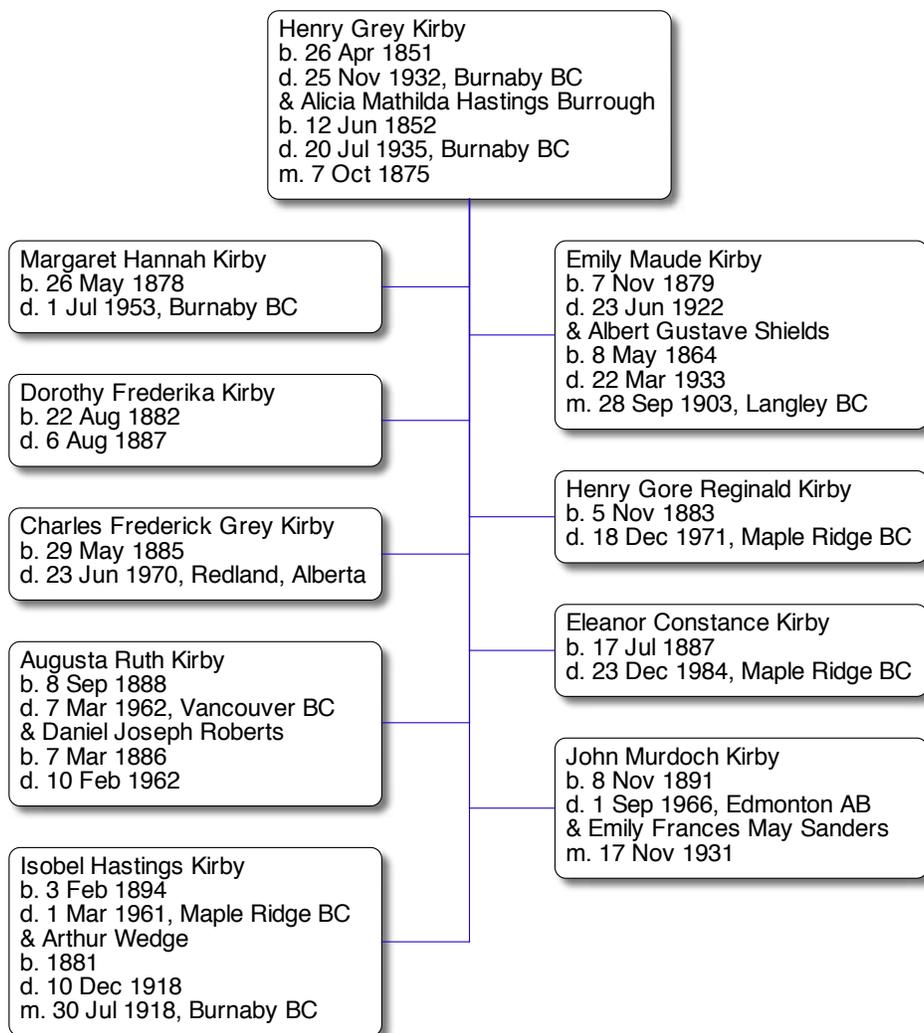
Funeral services for Louis Edgar Sprott, resident of Whonock for 32 years, were held on Friday, August 31, at St. John's Anglican Church, Whonock, with cremation following. Rev. H. Cutler was in charge of the services.

The late Mr. Sprott was in his 75th year. He was born in Sussex, England, and came to Canada 60 years ago. He passed away at his residence at Whonock on August 29th.

Surviving are his wife, Helen; three daughters, Miss Helen Sprott at home, Mrs. Mary Daniels of Whonock, and Mrs. K. Nadin at Canim Lake, B.C., and four grandchildren. Henderson's Funeral Home, Mission, was in charge of the funeral arrangements.

Gazette, September 6, 1950.

HENRY GREY AND ALICE KIRBY



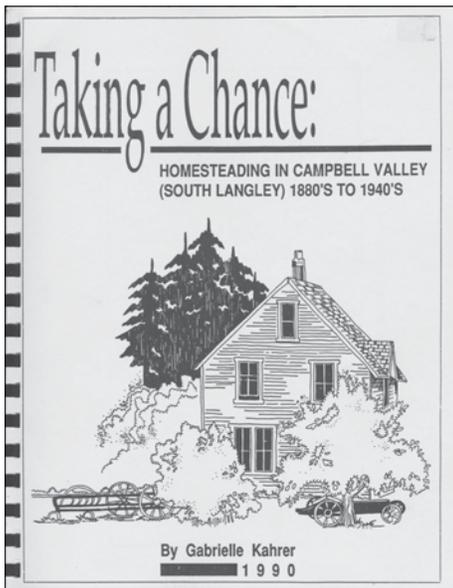
Alicia Mathilda may have been her baptismal names but the Canadian records show her given names as: Alice Maud.

MURDOCH, HANNAH AND AGNES were not the only Kirbys from Mayfield to migrate to British Columbia. In the summer of 1909 their brother Henry Grey and his wife Alice arrived with three of their children: Augusta, John, and Isobel.

Most of their other children were already in British Columbia. Emily travelled to Canada in the fall of 1902 and married Albert Gustave Shields a year later at Glenwood. Emily's brother Charles Grey was a witnesses at the marriage. Margaret arrived in British Columbia some time in 1906 and Henry Gore in the summer of 1908.

Eleanor was a missionary in the Far East and, although frequently visiting her relatives, she did not settle in British Columbia until her retirement after 40 years of missionary work. She took care of Hannah Kirby in Whonnock in her aunt's final years.

ALBERT G. SHIELDS & EMILY M. KIRBY



From: *Taking a Chance: Homesteading in Campbell Valley (South Langley) 1880's to 1940's*, Gabrielle Kahrer, 1990, pp. 17, 18

[Murdoch] Kirby was one of numerous English males who emigrated to British Columbia at that time. Here they could afford to buy land and live of their allowances from England. Kirby was the fifth among twelve children of a middle-class family in Mayfield.

The parents did not consider him bright enough for a higher education and sent him off to Canada, where his sister Hannah eventually joined him.

These young Englishmen were usually ill-equipped for pioneer life in British Columbia and lacked practical skills. Murdoch Kirby depended on Albert Shields and hired him many times. Yet in some ways Albert Shield also depended on his neighbour. Kirby often lent him books and apparently provided some sort of intellectual guidance for him.

Despite their friendship Kirby never forgot their upper-class distinction and fiercely opposed Shields's marriage to his niece from Mayfield, England.

Kirby sold his property in Campbell Valley to Donald Craig in 1903, when he inherited money from England and purchased a more prosperous farm in Milner.

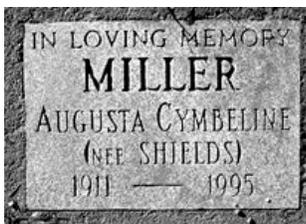
GABRIELLE KAHRER's informant was Augusta Cymbeline Miller, née Shields (1911 – 1995). She was born a decade after the Kirbys left Glenwood.

The letters to Agnes suggest that in his Glenwood years Murdoch Kirby worked for Shields as much as Shields worked for Murdoch. The letters also show frequent social interaction between the Kirbys and Albert Shields.

Murdoch bought his farm in Milner, near Fort Langley, in 1901 and from that year onward, his name is listed under Langley Prairie instead of Glenwood in *Henderson's Directory*. His nephew Charles and niece Emily probably lived at Mahonia Ranche for a short time before the farm was sold in 1903.

Whether they approved of the marriage or not the Kirbys took care of Hanna Evelyn (1906–1931), the second child of Albert and Emily. Evelyn, who was physically and mentally handicapped, grew up and lived all her life in the Kirby household at Whonnock.

Mrs. Miller told Gabrielle Kahrer that after the death in childbirth of her mother in 1922, she, then 10 years old, was left to look after the younger children age 7 and 4. However, it is likely that Emily's older sister Margaret still was with the family at the time of Emily's death, as the Canada Census of 1921 shows that she was part of the Shields household at the time of the census.



Extracts from Canada Census 1911 and 1921

The last column shows the year of immigration when given.

Albert Gustave Shields
 b. 8 May 1864
 d. 22 Mar 1933
 & Emily Maude Kirby
 b. 7 Nov 1879
 d. 23 Jun 1922
 m. 28 Sep 1903, Langley BC

Albert Henry Conrad Shields
 b. ca 1904
 d. 27 Sep 1908

Evelyn Shields
 b. 18 Sep 1906
 d. 12 Apr 1931

Charles Kirby Shields
 b. 4 Sep 1907
 d. 2 Oct 1989
 & Barbara Paris
 b. 19 May 1917
 d. 6 Jan 1995

John Francis Shields
 b. 8 Dec 1908
 d. 22 Dec 1976

Augusta Cymbeline Shields
 b. 1911
 d. 1995
 & Evan Stuart Miller
 b. 3 Mar 1904
 d. 29 Aug 1985
 m. 26 Dec 1930

Albert Hugh Shields
 b. 20 Jun 1912
 d. 14 Aug 1912

Allan Henry Shields
 b. ca 1915

Albert Reginald Shields
 b. 17 Nov 1918
 d. 25 May 1990

BRITISH COLUMBIA | DISTRICT NO. II NEW WESTMINSTER | ENUMERATION DISTRICT 5 |
 DELTA RIDING | LANGLEY MUNICIPALITY | JUNE 17 TO 18, 1911

Shields	Gustave	head	age 49	born USA	1890
	Emily Maud	wife	age 31	b. England	1903
	Hanna Evelyn	daughter	age 4	b. BC	
	Charles Kirby	son	age 4	b. BC	
	John Frances	son	age 3	b. BC	
	Augusta	daughter	2/12	b. BC	
Kirby	Margaret	sister in law	age 33	b. England	1906

BRITISH COLUMBIA | DISTRICT NO. II | NEW WESTMINSTER | ENUMERATION DISTRICT 40 |
 DEWDNEY RIDING | MAPLE RIDGE MUNICIPALITY | JUNE 5 AND 6 1911.

Kirby	M.W	head	age 48	b. England	1885
	Hannah G M	sister	age 53	b. England	1883
	Agnes D.R.	sister	age 48	b. England	1903
	Henrietta C.	sister	age 55	b. England	1911
Shields	H.S.	niece	age 4	b. BC	

BRITISH COLUMBIA | NEW WESTMINSTER | DISTRICT NO. 20 | SUBDISTRICT 54 IN NEW
 WESTMINSTER | JUNE 20 1921 – 1101 EDINBURGH STREET, CITY HOME RENTED

Kirby	Henry	head	age 70	b. England	1903
	Maud	wife	age 68	b. Ireland	1903
Shield	Maud	daughter	age 41	b. England	1902

BRITISH COLUMBIA | NEW WESTMINSTER | DISTRICT NO. 20 | SUBDISTRICT 12 IN LANGLEY
 MUNICIPALITY | JUNE 8 1921 – TOWNLIN ROAD, TWP 10

Shields	Albert	head	age 51	b. USA	1891
	Charles Kirby	son	age 13	b. BC	
	Augusta C.	daughter	age 10	b. BC	
	Henry Allan	son	age 6	b. BC	
	Albert R.	son	age 2	b. BC	
Kirby	Margaret	sister in law	age 43	b. England	

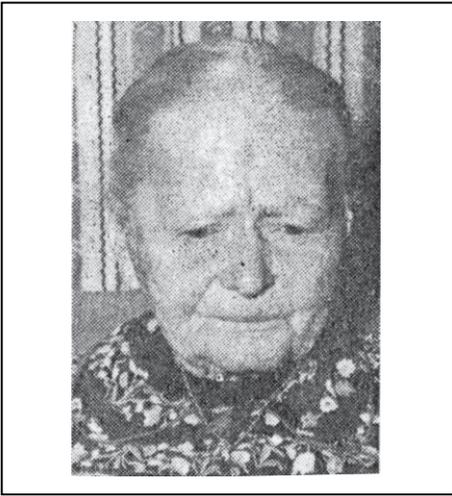
BRITISH COLUMBIA | DISTRICT NO. 16 FRASER VALLEY | SUBDISTRICT 5 IN WHONNOCK
 POLLING DIV. | NO DATE 1921 – WHONNOCK, MAPLE RIDGE

Kirby	Murdoch W.	head	age 55	b. England	1885
	Hannah G.M.	sister	age 63	b. England	1883
	Agnes D.R.	sister	age 58	b. England	1903
Shields	Hannah E.	great-niece	age 14	b. BC	

* At the time of the 1921 Census Emily Maud (Kirby) Shields stayed with her parents in New Westminster.

Allan Henry Shield crossed into the US in 1936.

THE KIRBYS AT WHONNOCK



*Hannah Kirby at ninety-six.
The Gazette, March 11th, 1954.*

Miss Hannah Kirby arrived recently by plane en route to Australia to visit relatives, having visited her aunt Miss Hannah Kirby in Whonock, she left Wednesday for Victoria, to visit her sister Miss Eva Kirby. The visitor comes from Newcastle-on-Tyne England.

Gazette, March 12., 1946

The "relatives" in Australia were Hannah's and Eva's two brothers.

SOON AFTER THEY SETTLED in Whonnock Hannah and Agnes joined their neighbour Alice Spilsbury and other women in the formation of the Ladies Club and the building of the community hall. Hannah was one of the first trustees of the Ladies Club and a signatory to its act of incorporation in October 1911.

For many years Hannah and Agnes remained members of the board managing the affairs of the Ladies Hall and they were presidents of the Ladies Club. After the hall's dedication as Whonnock Memorial Hall and when the Ladies Club relinquished the management of the hall to the men, Murdoch became involved in its operation.

Murdoch also assumed a leading role in the local Anglican Church. The parish was formed in 1910, the year the Kirbys moved to Whonnock, and in 1912 the first resident clergyman took charge.

The Kirbys shared their home with many of their relatives. The Census of 1911 shows the name of their sister Henrietta who had just arrived from England. She did not stay. Eva, the oldest daughter of Charles Kirby, arrived in the fall of 1911 returning to England in 1914. She sailed back to Canada in August 1924 to work as "house help" for a Mrs. Cameron in Kelowna. We know nothing about Eva's life in BC or her work as a practical nurse. She died in Victoria BC, in July of 1983, 93 years of age.

A permanent resident of the Kirby household was Evelyn Shields, a daughter of Albert Shields and Emily Maud Kirby who was 4 years of age in 1911. This handicapped grandniece would be part of the Kirby household until she died in 1931.

Hannah was the last surviving Kirby sibling in Whonnock. After 40 years of missionary work in India Ella (Eleanor) Kirby took care of her aunt in her last years. Ella was a daughter of Henry Grey Kirby.

After Hannah's passing in 1956 Ella and her brother Henry lived in the house in Whonnock. Their sister Isobel Wedge moved in shortly before she died in 1961. In 1962 Ella and Henry sold the Whonnock property (today's 26207 Lougheed Highway) and moved to Haney. There Henry died in 1971 and Ella in 1984. The remains of Ella, Henry and Isobel were cremated. There are no known graves. The two Kirbys buried in the Maple Ridge cemetery are of a different family.

The graves of Hannah, Agnes and Murdoch are in the Whonnock cemetery.

FROM INTERVIEWS BY KAREN SOUSTER AND BRIDGET TRASK FOR THE HISTORICAL PROJECT 1985 OF THE WHONNOCK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION.

EDITH G. DREWRY NÉE PULLEN (1917 – 2012)

[Pullen's] house was on River Road at the corner of 263 Road [Street] and Lougheed Highway.

Our neighbours to the west were the Kirbys—an English family—two sisters: Miss Agnes and Miss Hannah and their brother Murdoch. West of them lived the Boulangers, Sprotts, Waters, and Parkers.

HARRY PULLEN (1888 – 1995)

Sprotts lived on Spilsbury Road — had three girls — had a Model T. Kirbys — English — close friend of Sprotts. Three children of 12 came from England. Very Anglican. Kirby had farmed out in Langley. Moved to Whonnock in 1910 to retire. Bought a prefab house from Prairie company. [Prairie style?] It was built at the top of an open field. Were successful farmers. When they died it came to their niece and nephew [Eleanor C. Kirby and Henry G. R. Kirby]. They sold the property in 1962.

Louis Edgar Sprott was a brother of Charles F. Sprott the man who in 1888 settled in Glenwood with Murdoch Kirby. The Sprotts also came from Mayfield, Sussex. For more see appendix “Louis Edgar Sprott” on page 62.

MARGARET CAMERON NÉE MARTIN (1900 – 1989)

And you had the Kirbys and they lived not far from here. You may have heard from them. The last member of the family Miss Ella, just died around Christmas this year and she was 97. She was a delightful person. I was very fond of her.

But these two Miss Kirbys and their brother were always known as aunt Agnes, aunt Hannah, and uncle Murdoch and true aunts and uncle they were really.

And then there were the Sprotts who were another English family. But none of these people had much money. They lived very carefully. The Kirbys were great church people. Mr. Kirby taught Sunday school and they were real pillars of the Anglican church.

And he was such a nice man. And he was killed by a motorcar just on the highway outside his house. A car came along. Mr. Kirby dodged and the car dodged. If he had stayed where he was, he wouldn't have been hit. They just went the same way. That seemed unfair. That he was one of the best Christians I have ever known and he gets killed in front of his own house.

I think he left his mark around.

Mrs. Cameron in Kelowna, for whom Eva Kirby worked in 1922 is probably not related to Margaret Cameron's husband.

Well-Known Whonock Resident Passes

Miss Agnes Kirby, aged 87, passed away peacefully at her home in Whonock on Sunday, January 29, where she had lived for nearly 40 years.

Funeral services were held on February 1 from St. John's Church, Whonock, when Rev. H. Cutler officiated.

Pallbearers were Messrs. A. Graham, F. Pullen, C. Shields, A. Carr, L. E. Sprott, F. Daniels, J. Bosman, N. M. Mackay. Interment was in Whonock Cemetery.

Miss Kirby was born in Mayfield, Sussex, England, and is survived by her brother, Admiral Francis Kirby, Isle of Wight; her sister, Miss Hannah Kirby, Whonock; also many nieces and nephews in many parts of the world.

Miss Kirby will be remembered by many for her unselfishness and generosity.

Gazette, February, 1950.

Accidental Death In Inquest Verdict

Accidental death, with no blame attached to anyone, was the verdict of the coroner's inquest at Mission, Monday afternoon, September 10th, into the death of Murdock William Kirby, 80, near the corner of 27th and Loughheed highway, Whonock.

The inquest was held in the Henderson Funeral Home, Mission, Dr. G. Morse of Haney was the coroner.

Mr. Kirby came to his death accidentally on the night of September 8, it was learned by the jury, when he was struck by an auto driven by Anton Schmidt, while attempting to cross the Loughheed highway, near Whonock.

Gazette, September 14, 1945.

A memorial service to the late Murdock William Kirby will be held on Sunday afternoon, Sept. 23, in Whonock Anglican Church, at 3 p.m. The Rt. Rev. Sir F. C. C. Heathcote, Bart. D.D., will be in charge of the service.

The late Mr. Kirby was a highly respected resident of Whonock. He resided in the district for 30 years, and met his death under tragic circumstances on September 10. Two sisters live in Whonock.

Gazette, September 21, 1945.

Miss Hannah Kirby Passed Away

Miss Hannah Georgina Mary Kirby, passed away at her residence at River road, Whonock, in her 98th year on May 31.

Born in Mayfield, Sussex, England; she was the daughter of the Rev. H. T. M. Kirby. She has lived in Whonock for 45 years.

Miss Kirby is survived by nieces and nephews at Whonock, Mrs. D. J. Roberts, Haney; and Mrs. J. H. Wedge, Vancouver.

Funeral services were held from St. John Church, Whonock, with interment in Whonock cemetery.

Rev. A. L. Davies officiated. S. Bowell and Sons, New Westminster were in charge of the arrangements.

Gazette, June 7, 1956.

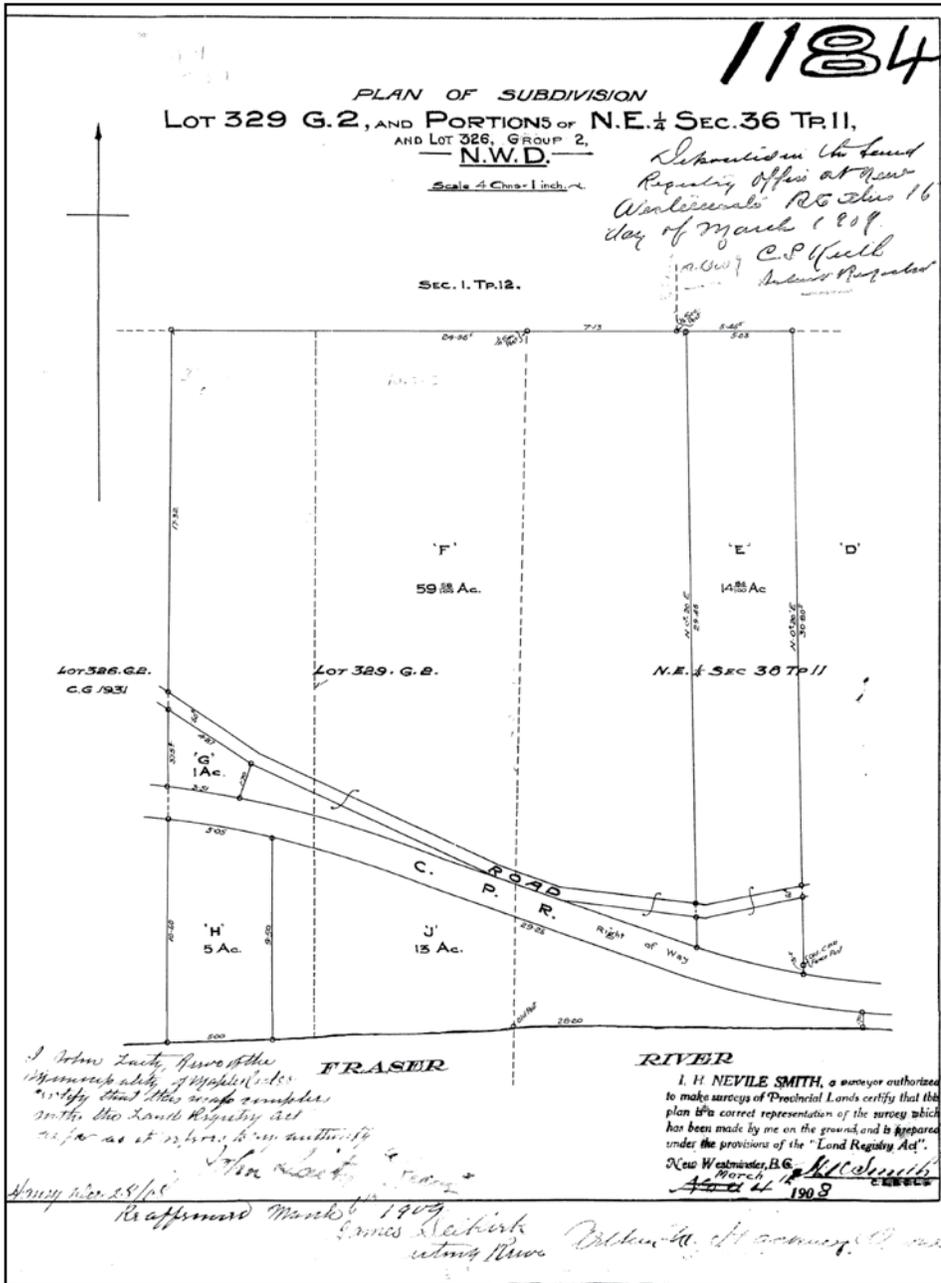


Marker on the grave of Evelyn Shields (1906 - 1931).

(Hanna) Evelyn Shields was the daughter of Albert Shields and Emily Maud Kirby. She was a grandniece of Hannah, Murdoch and Agnes. She grew up and lived in the Kirby household in Whonock.



The grave stones of Agnes and Hannah Kirby. The text on Murdoch's grave marker has weathered away.



Maple Ridge land assessment of 1911:
 Murdoch Kirby: 30 acres.
 Lot 329 and part of NE 1/4 Section 36
 Twp. 11

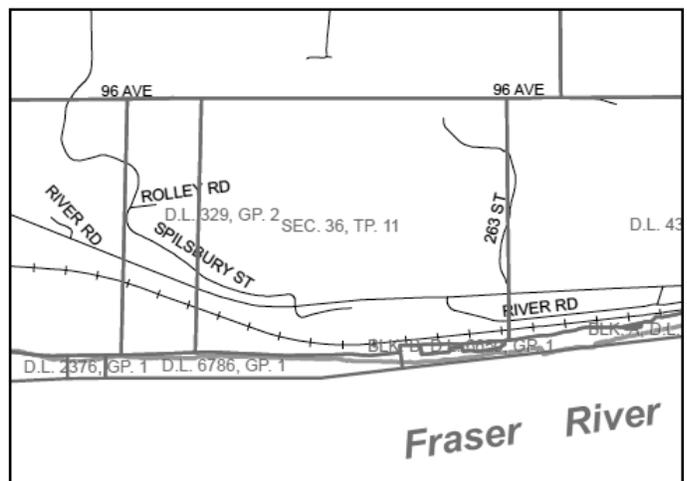
The survey map on the left was made in 1908 when Arthur Hackney sold this part of his property to Francis Bailey alias Col. Edward Shannon Kirkconnell.

Bailey was arrested in 1909 and convicted in New York for stealing a ship and cargo.

Murdoch Kirby had problems securing the title of the property.

Detail map of a modern map on the right showing District Lot 329 and the entire Section 36 TP. 11. Spilsbury Street and Lougheed Highway did not exist yet when the Kirbys moved to Whonnock. Both maps courtesy Planning Department of the City of Maple Ridge

Today's address of the Kirby home is 26207 Lougheed Highway.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THIS ISSUE OF *WHONNOCK NOTES* would not have been possible without the support and cooperation of several institutions and helpful people.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Langley Centennial Museum and Archives for giving me permission to publish transcripts of the Kirby letters in their care, and the City of Burnaby Archives for allowing me to publish images from their Peers Family and Hill Family fonds; in particular the photos of the Kirby house at Glenwood in 1889 and 1892.

I am also grateful to the East Sussex Record Office, The Keep Archives, Brighton, Sussex, where I discovered Connie Kirby's diary.

I would like to thank the people who assisted my quest of the history of the Whonnock Kirbys, including: Keeley Chui (City of Burnaby Archives); Annette Fulford (Canadian geneologist); Jenny Gehring (The Keep); Gabrielle Kahrer (author); Jasmine Moore (Langley Centennial Museum); Val Patenaude (Maple Ridge Museum and Archives); Warren Sommer (Legacy Heritage Consultants); David Tieu (City of Maple Ridge); Donald Waite (author); Christopher Whittick (The Keep); Lisa Zosiak (City of Maple Ridge).

I would like to express my special gratitude to Gail Johnson, granddaughter of Henry Grey Kirby and Julia Grange, granddaughter of Norborne Kirby. Gail and Julia never hesitated to help me find my way through the maze of descendants of the Kirbys of Mayfield.

My correspondence with Gail started in the summer of 2007. Straightaway she shared with me what she had and knew about the Kirbys. Invaluable in particular was a copy of a transcript of autobiographical notes of her great-grandmother Hannah Jane Thompson. Included were biographical time lines of her children, which, for instance, helped in the reconstruction of their travels between England and Canada before 1900.

I contacted Julia for the first time in February of this year with a question about an item on her definitive "Kirby of Mayfield Family History Site" on Ancestry. I have used her great knowledge of the Mayfield Kirbys to create the descendant charts in these *Whonnock Notes*.

Last and not least I want to thank my wife Helmi for her critical reading of the text and her constructive suggestions for change that have improved this issue of *Whonnock Notes*.

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Free copies of these Whonnock Notes are available for reading or download in pdf format at our Web site <www.whonnock.ca>.

Sue Schulze continues to have a stock of all *Whonnock Notes* handy at the Whonnock post office for anyone who would like to buy a copy. We owe her thanks for helping in this way to promote of the history and heritage of Whonnock.

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