

## FROM THE MANAGER

Any recent visitors to Mountain View Cemetery will certainly notice the changes underway. The first of three buildings being constructed is only a couple of weeks away from completion. This first building, our Operations Yard, will house all of the staff, equipment and material we use to maintain and operate our 105 acre cemetery. The Administration building is well underway with all of the walls now in place and the final sections of roofing being installed. Construction on the third and most important building, our Celebration Room, will begin as soon as the field staff vacate the old 'shack' for their new facility.

On the landscape and interment project the progress is also

noticeable. All of the foundations are in place and stone masons have been working for a couple of weeks placing hundreds of granite bases in preparation for the delivery of the new columbaria. Most significantly, the first columbarium in Mountain View Cemetery has now been installed. After years of planning and



design we were finally able to view what we had envisioned. It was an exciting moment for the design team and all of the cemetery staff.

A number of other cemetery projects are underway now as well. Cemetery staff are busy preparing for 94 more new upright monuments in our Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) project area. The floral border treatments for this area are also being expanded this year with the inclusion of the 132 graves that were restored in the previous two years. Cemetery staff have also been busy building and installing newly designed concrete footings throughout the cemetery to re-erect 26 CWGC monuments that were previously laid flush.

The Canada Remembers Program of Veterans Affairs Canada has also funded a new pilot project this year that will result



*The only military marker that remains as originally installed. The Canada Remembers pilot project will result in up to 750 markers being re-installed in this manner*

in cemetery staff installing new footings and granite bases for hundreds of military markers - restoring them to the style they were intended to be placed prior to the removal of the bases in the 1970's and '80's.

There are other projects in the works but I will leave those for our next newsletter!

Glen Hodges

## ALEXANDER ARCHIBALD MCPHAIL: Veteran of the Riel Rebellion

by J.S. (Joe) MacEachern

Born in Nova Scotia on April 12th, 1865, McPhail moved west with his parents before 1885 to homestead in the fertile farmland near Winnipeg, Manitoba. With the advent of the second Riel Rebellion in 1885, McPhail answered the call enlisting with the 91st Rifle Battalion of Winnipeg; one of several militia units raised from the Winnipeg area and its surrounding townships.

During the uprising, and the fighting at Batoche, McPhail's battalion were garrisoned at Fort Qu'Appelle to protect the railway line and to ensure supply lines for General Middleton's columns while engaged with the rebels. *[con't backpage]*

# INTERESTING CORRESPONDENCE

At the cemetery we frequently meet people who have a variety of interesting stories about their friends and family members buried here. Every now and then they bring a copy of an old original document or an old family photo. Here is a letter and photo I received from one of those people.

HENRY WILSON B.1865 or 1866 Gloucester, Gloucestershire, England Died 9th. August 1911 Vancouver, Canada

Like most people researching their family tree I'd grown up with stories about my forebears and had always been intrigued about my great grandfather Henry (Harry) Wilson, who was a seafarer who had lived in my own birthplace, Liverpool, but had died in Vancouver. How or when nobody seemed to know.

I discovered that he had been born in 1865 or 1866 in Gloucester, the son of another Henry, and had married my great grandmother Elizabeth (Lizzie) Caffrey in Liverpool in 1888. At that time he gave his occupation as a Mariner and on the birth certificate of his eldest child, my grandmother Catherine Wilson, he was a seaman in the Merchant Service. By the time of the 1901 census he is described as a Labourer, no doubt reflecting the economic ups and downs of the times. The couple also took in boarders to earn some extra money.

By 1901 Henry and Lizzie had 3 children but we know from my grandmother that at least two other children were born and died young. They went on to have two more children, 3 sons and 2 daughters in all.

I had been trying to find out when exactly Henry Wilson had died - there was no record in the UK Birth, marriage and death indexes - when my sister suggested I tried the Royal Liverpool Seamen's Orphan Institution as we knew that two of Henry Wilson's sons had gone into the orphanage as their mother could not earn enough money to keep them. The following records were discovered.

<b>WILSON, WILLIAM THOMAS</b>	<b>DOB 7.10.1904</b>
<b>WILSON, JOHN CHRISTOPHER</b>	<b>DOB 5.1.1906</b>

Who were in the Orphanage between 1912 - 1920.

Copies of our records are enclosed for your assistance.

Wilson, William Thomas; born October 7, 1904. Father was Mariner on an "Clipper." Died of Heart Disease, August 9, 1911. Widow and five children. Admitted February 2, 1912.

Wilson, John Christopher; born January 5, 1906. Father was Mariner on an "Clipper." Died August 9, 1911. Widow and five children. Admitted March 8, 1914.

This was a big breakthrough! (I have tried to find out if there was an SS Caplanner but no luck so far - it might have been the SS Capilano - so if anyone has any information I would be very grateful for it.) I then started to search for his death record online at the British Columbia Archives, which turned up nothing, until I tried "Wilson, H." instead of "Wilson, Henry" and found this.

## Vital Event Death Registration

Name: H Wilson | Event Date: 1911 8 9 Yr/Mo/Day  
Age: 46 | Gender: male | Event Place: Vancouver

A very helpful Judy Root at the Royal BC Museum in Victoria then tracked down Henry Wilson's medical death certificate, which showed that he had been ill for several months with heart disease and had died in Vancouver at the age of 46 years.

Some months passed before I started to search for his burial place. My cousin who lives in America was hoping to visit and pay the family's respects as no one had done this before, not knowing where he was buried. I Googled "cemeteries Vancouver" and Mountain View Cemetery came up and I thought I would give it a try - amazingly not only had I picked the right cemetery, but there was a catalogue of all the burials online and I was able to find this.

WILSON, H. Aug-09-1911 OLD/5/03/020/0015

I then emailed the cemetery's manager Glen Hodges who promptly found the original entry and emailed me a photocopy of it - he also said he would investigate whether there was a burial stone once the snow had melted! I was able to tell him that far from having no next of kin, Henry Wilson had left a widow and five children. Sadly, Henry Wilson was buried in a pauper's grave and his widow struggled to raise her family. She had various jobs as a cook and as a church caretaker, and my grandmother Catherine who was 14 years old when her father died, was a second mother to the other four children.

One of my cousins remembers our grandmother saying that Henry Wilson was a Clipper Captain who liked to smoke cigars and my father heard that at one point he was a sailmaker using the old fashioned "palm and needle". He had blonde hair and excellent teeth, and when he was on board a ship mending a sail the ship's officer said, "You've got a fine set of teeth there, Wilson!" to which Henry replied, "Aye, but not enough to do with them." (ie. not enough food!). On another occasion when he was in Genoa, the Italian police were investigating a murder, and Henry was able to provide an alibi as he was playing his concertina at the time!

Henry Wilson died alone but he has definitely not been forgotten. His 5 children went on to have 13 children of their own, 30 grandchildren the next generation numbers over 40.

Thanks to Vancouver for giving Henry Wilson a decent burial and for helping his family to find out what happened to him.

Christine Brotherston, UK

# CAPTAIN HOLMES NEWCOMBE AND THE UNION STEAMSHIP'S SS CUTCH

by John Atkin

A couple of years ago I was doing some research into a house that once stood on Harwood Street in Vancouver's West End and though demolished in the 1950s, I was interested in who might have lived there. The directories listed a number of names but the one that stood out was "Holmes Newcombe; master, S.S. Cutch". I didn't know anything about Capt. Newcombe but I did know a little about the Cutch. It was the Union Steamship Company's first vessel.

The Union Steamship Company came into being in 1889 after its manager, Capt. William Webster, with the assistance of John Darling, the former general superintendent of the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, secured financial backing in England for the venture. Soon after this success Webster set off to find a suitable vessel for the new company and after an exhaustive search turned up a promising ship for sale in India.

Built in Hull, England in 1884 the Cutch was a schooner-rigged, iron propeller ship of 324 tons, 180 feet long, and licensed to carry 150 passengers. She was equipped with compound engines and had a nominal speed of twelve miles per hour. The vessel had belonged to the Maharajah of Cutch and was bought from Fazalbhaj Joomabhoy, the administrator of his estate. After the sale Capt. William Webster brought the Cutch by way of the Indian Ocean to Singapore, then across the China Sea to Japan, and from there to Vancouver,

The Cutch arrived on the coast in June, 1890. Her first service was in ferrying passengers from the Canadian Pacific railway terminus in Vancouver to Nanaimo (the CPR had yet to enter the local steamship business). She was a popular ship with a reputation for being on time and apart from her Nanaimo duties she was employed on excursion trips to the Gulf Islands (something the company was well known for).

In 1896 she was sent up to Alaska with supplies and passengers hoping to make it big in the Klondike gold fields. She made a number of successful trips north; during one trip she was caught in a severe storm and ended up covered in ice so thick it had to be hacked off

with pick axes. Unfortunately, her luck ran out on August 24, 1900 when leaving Metlakatla Harbour near Prince Rupert she struck an uncharted rock. The damaged vessel was sold for salvage and the following year after repairs she sailed south to Chile where she served as a gun boat.

Captain Newcombe moved over to British Columbia's Fisheries Department and served with the Fisheries Protection Branch from 1903 until 1923. He captained the fisheries vessel Kingfisher between 1903 and 1912. He died in 1934 and is buried in Mountain View Cemetery. Captain Cove and Newcombe Harbour on Pitt Island on the north coast are named in honour of his service with the department. And the uncharted rock the Cutch struck was officially named after the vessel by the BC Geographical Names Office in 1930.



S.S. Cutch photographed by H.C. Barley at Skagway after a severe winter storm.

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# C.T. WILLIAMS

Old/2/03/007/0005

by Lorraine Irving

**A** monument in memory of C. Talmage Williams is located in the Old Cemetery Section of Mountain View Cemetery. It was originally upright and is now laid flat near the monument for our first mayor, Malcolm Maclean.

On one of my many walks through the cemetery, I was intrigued by the interesting verse on the monument and tried to find more information on Mr. C. Talmage Williams. I had read the verse before in a book on interesting epitaphs:

*"Remember Brothers As You Pass By  
Where You Are Now So Once Was I  
Where I am Now So You Must Be  
Prepare For Death And Follow Me"*

Mr. Williams was born in New Brunswick on April 28, 1860 and died in Vancouver on April 15, 1894. The Daily World Newspaper on April 16 provided a little more

information on Mr. Williams. He died at 6 p.m. on Sunday evening at Alexandra Hospital. About one week earlier, he had come down with a fever and as he had been slightly unwell for some months, it wasn't long in running its fatal course. He was a native of St. John, N.B. where his mother still lived. He had lived in Vancouver for a number of years and had managed the Vancouver Mill until lately. At the time of his death, he was managing the cooperage jute department of the C. Cooperage and Jute Company.

His funeral was to take place at the Masonic Temple at 2 p.m. on Tuesday. He was a member of the Mount Hermon Lodge, the Royal Arch Chapter, and the Granville Lodge of the Knights of Phythias. He had held several positions in these lodges including scribe for the Royal Arch Chapter, past chancellor and keeper of records and seal of the Granville Lodge.

## ALEXANDER ARCHIBALD CONTINUED

After the capture of Riel, and a return to peace, veteran's of the Riel Rebellion were given a service medal for the North West Campaign and offered tracts of land for homesteading as a compensation for service. McPhail's family accepted this offer; but the young Alexander Archibald would not settle back, and when he heard the siren call of the gold rush, he

hit the trail to seek his fortune. He spent his entire life prospecting in the rugged wilderness; only moving to Vancouver in his retirement years, where he died of pneumonia at the age of 81. At the time of his death he was survived by a sister in Winnipeg (Mrs. T.E. Todd) and some nieces and nephews in Winnipeg and Vancouver. He was buried in Mountain View Cemetery, in the Field of Honour; and as a soldier of the Riel Rebellion, his presence here represents a direct link to one of the most critical events in our country's history; the equivalent of our own 'civil war'. The young Alexander Archibald McPhail cared enough to help secure Canada's future; and for that, we remember.



### Our contributors:

#### Lorraine Irving

Lorraine has enjoyed exploring cemeteries since she was a young child when she would ride her bicycle to the cemetery on Mayne Island and record many of the interesting old inscriptions. As a long time member of the B.C. Genealogical Society, Lorraine helped record Mountain View cemetery in the 1980s as well as several other cemeteries in the Lower Mainland. In addition to her genealogical interest, she also has family members buried in the cemetery: her grandparents, Harry and Lillian Huggins, as well as a great aunt, Ivy Gladys Dickson. Her interest in Mountain View was evident in her participation on the Advisory Committee that worked on the Master Plan for the cemetery. She has a wealth of information on many people interred in Mountain View and enjoys guided tours and giving lectures. If you wish to arrange a tour for your group, you can contact her at [loiry1824@aol.com](mailto:loiry1824@aol.com)

#### John Atkin

John Atkin is an author, historian and walking tour guide who organizes and conducts tours for groups and individuals. John has explored Vancouver like few others have and offers an interesting and offbeat insight to the city's architecture, history and neighbourhoods. He has created, and conducts, a number of unique and popular walking tours throughout the City of Vancouver. He is the author of five books, co-founder and past president of Heritage Vancouver, editor of *British Columbia History* for the BC Historical Federation. He is also the webmaster for the Mountain View Cemetery website.

#### J. S. (Joe) MacEachern

Just some 'Joe' who enjoys walks with the dog, prefers the changing light of a twilight sky over TV, would rather make his own music with friends than download i-tunes, and doesn't own shares in anything but enjoys sharing time with others—old or young, living or gone... Joe grew up in Vancouver, played sports, played in bands, played out the usual activities—various jobs, travelling, schooling—and is now a 'pall bearer', of sorts, in the dying industry that was once considered the crown of culture: the book trade.

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##### In Person:

8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday  
(excluding holidays)