

Boyd -> Broadland 1973
from D. S. Hill
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TWEEDSMUIR PARK Y.M.F.T.P.

1937 Project

R.H. Boyd - Foreman

Walter Hughes - Asst. Foreman

In the spring of 1937 I was employed as foreman in the Forest Development Projects and had a crew working in John Dean Park. These crews were usually laid off in the summer months. In the latter part of May 1937, I received instructions from K. C. McCannel, who was Forester in charge of parks, to close John Dean Park and report to him for further instructions. I reported to his office in the Buildings and was informed that the Government of British Columbia had invited the Governor General, Lord Tweedsmuir, to come and have a look over the Park which bore his name. The Forest Service had the responsibility of constructing a suitable trail on the south end of the park. It was decided that this work was to be carried out by the Y.M. F.T. (Young Mens Forestry Training) program. Mr. Walter Hughes would accompany me as my assistant.

Mr. McCannel and I examined all available maps of the area which were very sketchy with many errors but nevertheless did show Indian trails which we thought could be used by joining up and cleaning out and would help in progress as the Dean River was some miles away. We had hoped at this time to get the trail as far as the Dean. It was also agreed that somehow I would get a short weekly progress report to Victoria. I found out some weeks afterwards that this report saved me from much interference and disaster.

DK / KH

Tally and I spent a week in Vancouver getting the truck and equipment together, requisitioning food supplies, talking to shippers and instructing them how and when to ship. This was important as our supply base was a long way from our camp and if one boat trip was missed we went hungry. We interviewed a number of boys at the employment service and selected twenty whom we thought were suitable. We found out later we had selected well. The cook was from Green Timbers.

All of us were on board the S.S. Cardena with our truck loaded and tied down on deck. Tally and I had first class accommodation, the boys steerage. This I examined and found to my horror a stink-hole. I immediately thought of the Black Hole of Calcutta. I made up my mind they were not staying there. I contacted Pat the purser and with a battle of words and threats and the assistance of two commercial travellers, it ended up with Tally and I giving up our first class staterooms for a large lounge. There we all slept on the floor with our sleeping bags and ate in the Hole of Calcutta. The boys during the day had to remain on the upper deck. My main concern of the Hole was vermin.

At last Dean Channel at the end of which was Bella Coola, a crummy little village but to us it looked like a beautiful city.

Everything unloaded, we met a Mr. Tommy Walker, owner of Stue Lodge, afterwards known as Tweedsmuir Lodge, since burned down. We divided the gear on the two trucks and headed

the forty miles to Stuie. Half way there we had to cross the
 Burnt Creek. The old bridge was burned out. Walker's instructions were "Hit the creek fairly fast and keep going but keep to the right of that rock, there is a hole there twenty-five feet deep". With my foot on the gas and a prayer on my lips, we made it at last to Stuie Lodge and camped over-night. Next day we set up camp at a point where the Atnarka^O Trail meets the Bella Coola road which was the end of the road at that time. We called this spot Base Camp.

Near
 Mosher
 (Edwards)
 Creek

From Base Camp our trail started up a heavily timbered mountain side and switch-backed for three miles or more. This was the heaviest grading on the entire trail. Tommy Walker had previously ran and blazed a rough grade. During this time we were visited by the District Forester from Prince Rupert. We entered into an agreement whereby his patrolman, George Drainey, would have the use of my truck and haul my supplies from Bella Coola to the end of the trail and supervise the packing to my camps. One stipulation I made was that whatever happened my pack train would come in once a week. That stipulation and the weekly progress report saved the day on two occasions.

A good trail was completed to the Summit where we entered much more open country. A camp was established and named Summit Camp. At this point Walker and I climbed to a fairly high peak and he pointed out the way to the Rainbows in these words. "See away ahead, that ridge and beyond there another higher ridge,

(where
 we last
 camped)

and if you look carefully you will see a depression which is the pass. From there you will see the Rainbow Range." This I afterwards named Deception Pass. It had an elevation of six thousand feet. ✓

Our trail construction plans were to complete four miles of trail from camp and beyond to rough out four more enough to get the pack horses through to our next camp. Wally looked after construction and I would locate and blaze. The blazing was done by toilet paper on trees or rocks, and if one changed his mind it was easily obliterated. Plastic tape was not in use at that time.

MB? Our next camp was set up at Mosquito Creek as we knew it then. Afterwards I found it to be the headwaters of an unknown Creek. This was a fairly open area, mostly alpine. It was in this camp I first came in contact with the B. C. Police and their guide who was a local trapper who I will refer to as Snifty. I was aware that they were in charge of the safe conduct of the Vice Regal party through the park. When they arrived in camp they were tired and muddy and their horses looked as if they had been through the mill. I gave them dinner and afterwards the chief of the party asked me if I knew where I was going. I told him Deception Pass and in his words "We have just come from there and it would take forty Swedes a month to put a trail into the pass". All this time Snifty was suggesting his trap line route. This I was prepared for as Walker had told me when I first arrived that he would do his damnest to have the trail

↑
Snifty

{ Bear
Camp?
Ck ?

put in on the Burnt Bridge route as this was his trap line and use the inexperience of the police to further his ends. The Burnt Bridge route was the old Indian route which McKenzie came over in the seventeen hundreds. Although it was shorter to the Rainbows, it was in many places straight up and down and impossible for grade as we required. I had examined this spruce swamp previously and found that it was not feasible to go through it with a passable trail with the man power and time at my disposal. Also the grade on leaving the swamp was too steep to go over the pass. The next morning I took the chance of starting construction on the highland trail and went ahead to have a look at a rock bluff four or five miles distance which was forcing travellers down in the swampy ground. To my great delight I found a narrow ledge leading to a depression on the bluff. With some grading and rock work this would answer my purpose.

On returning to camp I found a rider with a message from the police instructing me to remain where I was until they sent in a guide. I sent Wally out with a wire to McCannel stating that I was being hampered in my work by the police and in the interests of the Forest Service the crew should be withdrawn. But before sending it he was to show it to the officer in charge of police. I will not repeat the verbal message he gave Wally. Our wire was not sent and we carried on.

The trail between Mosquito Creek and Deception Pass is mostly alpine meadow and required quite a few stretches of corduroy and grading around the bluff and on a steep side hill. Within a week we were camped at Deception Pass and the forty

Swedes Were not required.

One morning while we were having breakfast at the Pass Camp, we had three visitors who introduced themselves as Don Mundy, Mrs. Mundy and their daughter. I invited them for a cup of coffee which they accepted. I also suggested they have some breakfast. "No thank you" was the reply. After a few minutes Miss Mundy piped up "Mr. Boyd, I would like some breakfast, we have not eaten since yesterday". They all had a good breakfast and enough lunch to take them to Stuie. During the Vice Regal stay at Stuie Lodge. Mrs. Mundy was the hostess and I was repaid for that breakfast in goodies many times.

On returning one afternoon from a location trip, I heard shouting and clapping of hands at the top of the pass. I sneaked up and there was one of the boys in his birthday suit sliding down a snow bank. I found out that he had made a bet with the rest of the crew to do this for ten cents each. I also paid.

When the trail was completed over the pass and down into the open meadows of the Capoose, we moved camp and from here we were in full view of the Rainbow Mountains and especially Mount Brilliant which gleamed in the morning sun. We were now in easy walking distance from the rock rim of the McKenzie meadows although quite a lot of light grading was needed between open meadows. While in the Capoose Camp we were visited by Mr. Harry Force

{ Octopus
Lake
Vicinity

(JSP

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on Octopus Lake?

an assistant to K. C. McCannel and next day ten wranglers and a number of saddle and pack horses arrived from Anahim with only sleeping bags but no food. My pack train was days overdue and I was getting short. I handed the wranglers the rifle and told them to get a moose or don't come back. They came back with a moose which kept the pot boiling.

Next to arrive was our friend Snifty and two men. Still no food but with orders for me from the High Command at Stuié. I was informed that no more supplies would be brought in by horse train from Stuié; all supplies would be flown in to Tanya Lake. This lake was approximately twelve to fifteen miles beyond the McKenzie Meadows and accessible only by the old Indian trail which was in terrible condition, muddy, wet, and windfalls. The instructions went on to say that Snifty would be in charge of locating the trail from Capoose to the Rainbow meadows and repairing the trail to Tanya Lake. At this lake the Governor General and his party would be landed by plane and taken by trail to a camp which would be set up in the McKenzie meadows. My supplies would be packed from Tanya by the wranglers to my camp in the meadows and there I was to await further instructions.

Snifty laid out his trail and proceeded to Tanya to construct a landing for unloading supplies. In the meantime Wally and I had a look at his trail layout. Snifty had told me that there was no need to construct trails as I was doing. "They can walk over, if not jump over, if not roll over or slide over." This is exactly the type of trail he had laid out and

from the rim to the valley down a rocky slope approximately forty percent, he had a notice at the top of the slope which read. "The first two horses will be slid down to make a trail for the rest". (See photo) I am sure the now District Forester at Prince Rupert will remember it well. On returning to camp hungry, disgusted and mad, I saw just over a rise on the trail my pack train coming in.

George Draine, the patrol man, on receiving the new trail instructions, got in touch with the D.F. at Prince Rupert who ordered the train in as promised. I set the packers back to Stuiie to bring in more supplies from my cache. In the meantime I had located a trail on grade to the valley and was working on it. This was the trail used for all the traffic to the meadows and no doubt used today. I was told afterwards that Shifty had sneaked out over the old Burnt Bridge trail and had a pow-wow with the High Command at Stuiie and all the wranglers were ordered to go to Stuiie and pack in supplies for the Tweedsmuir camp. No planes to my knowledge ever landed at Tanya. On the arrival of my packers we moved camp to the valley. (Mackenzie Valley)

This was the Camp of Rumors. Every few days one or two wranglers would pass with a couple of pack horses and this was our line of communication. They brought the mail, supplies and rumors of what was going to happen. I continued to send my weekly wire to Victoria. The crew was kept busy working on the Tanya Lake

trail and roughing in a trail to Paradise Valley. We prepared a new campsite close to the main trail where the Governor General and his party would pass and marked it with fresh cut peeled poles and on a small knoll the lettering in coloured rock Y.M.F.D.F.. We planned to move to this camp just prior to the arrival of the Governor General. Wally, I and some wranglers made a trip to Tanya Lake (see photo) and encountered a band of Alketcha Indians camped at the lake. No doubt awaiting the arrival of the Governor General.

On my return to camp a rider was waiting who informed me that the Vice Regal party had arrived at Stule by air and also a wire from Victoria instructing me to return to my base camp. I was to bring out all equipment, supplies, horses and wranglers. I visited their camp and informed them that we were going to hit the trail tomorrow morning and to pack up and bring all equipment and supplies to my camp. They told me they had only enough food for one meal. They had eaten all the rest including the canned ham, chicken and all the goodies. The next morning after breakfast which consisted of dried eggs, canned beans and coffee, I divided up the remainder of the food and gave each two men their ration, an empty gallon can for coffee, and a tin cup, plate, knife, fork and spoon each. I was allowing two days to get out.

Being aware that the wranglers intended to let the horses wander off and impede my progress and get another day

(all Wranglers and horses were paid by the day). I picked out a good pack horse and loaded on him the two surveyor stoves top pack and headed up the column with his halter rope firmly in my hand, knowing as long as I kept him moving the rest would follow. In this manner I bid good-bye to the Rainbow (Mackenzie) Valley. At Capoose we stopped for lunch and on starting up again I decided to herd my friend down the trail instead of pulling him. He ran off into the meadows and all the rest followed, much to the wranglers' delight. It took about one hour to get the horses back on the trail and off we started. From here on I was in front of that horse, not behind.

We reached the south side of Deception Pass before dark, in time to make camp, eat and pasture our horses. I knew from this point I could make it out in one more day. Next morning I was awakened and informed that half of the horses had got loose and run off. We had breakfast and I told the wranglers they would have to round up the horses and follow on to Stule. They requested more food but as I told them I had none, off we started and on making the old Mosquito Creek camp for lunch, they joined us with the horses. We made our old Summit Campsite which was at the head of the switch-backs ✓ in late afternoon. We unloaded our camp equipment (see photo) and instructed the wranglers to report to Stule. "What are you going to do, you have no food" they asked. "Never mind, I will make out, you keep going", which they did.

I shall never forget the tired, dejected, hungry look on my boys' faces and then I reminded them of what I had promised as they ate the dried prunes. One of the boys had been sent down a side trail to contact George who was waiting with our supplies. When he arrived, up went a shout and I quietened them down by saying "If the wranglers hear you they will be back to clean us out". Camp was set up in short order, stoves ready, everyone pitching in to help the cook. We sat down to steaks, mushrooms, fresh vegetables, fresh milk, and fresh raspberries, all they could eat. I had promised this in the hungry days in the Rainbows when they were eating dried food while the wranglers dined on chicken and ham.

We improved the switchbacks which led to the valley bottom which had sloughed in places and made improvements to this part of the trail. On days off the boys were permitted to visit Stuie and meet their friends the wranglers, or perhaps get a glimpse of the Governor General. From information received from my friends in the Lodge, the Vice Regal party would be leaving the next day and that the High Command, on behalf of the Governor General, had presented to the wranglers a crested knife each and no doubt to Snifty too, and a thank you for the wonderful services they had rendered. The trail crew went unrecognized. Wally and I a cold stare. The Vice Regal party left the next day followed by the High Command. The wranglers departed for Anahim in high spirits.

I received instructions from Victoria to return the boys to Vancouver, equipment to Green Timbers, and definite instructions to make out complete payrolls for the wranglers, invoices for their horses, and charge this to my vote. "Insult to injury" I obeyed. I saw the boys off from Bella Coola on the Cardena and this time they did not travel steerage.

The Forest Ranger from Ocean Falls, met us at Bella Coola and we all returned to Stuie Lodge to clean up the odds and ends left by the "Big Wind". We accompanied the Ranger in the Forestry launch to Ocean Falls and from there boarded the Cardena for Vancouver.

I visited Stuie and Bella Coola thirty years later and enjoyed meeting some of my old friends. I stopped and after some searching, found the start of our trail. Perhaps when roads are improved, consideration may be given to access by car from Anahim to a view of the Rainbows.

(1967

R. H. Boyd.

Bear Camp Ck = Mosquito Ck?
 Bear Camp where trail crosses?



