

# Mid-Winter Mardi Gras: Rossland's Original Winter Carnival

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This paper reports on research in progress. It is subject to revision and so should not be cited without consulting with the author.

I welcome all comments, suggestions and criticisms.

This preliminary version of the paper has not been subjected to careful editing and some references are missing. I apologize for these defects.

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## **Mid-Winter Mardi Gras: Rossland's Original Winter Carnival**

**Ronald A. Shearer**

Rossland was a wide open mining town in 1897, newly incorporated as a city, but only a few years away from being but a cluster of shacks on a bench on an isolated mountain side. As new gold-copper deposits were discovered and proven, men poured in, seeking employment in the mines. Business was expanding, the city was growing and people were exuberant and confident of the future. There were growing pains, of course, but there was also rapid development. Streets were laid out, houses, hotels, commercial buildings and schools were being built (and expanded), and transport facilities from the outside world were being completed and rapidly improved. A small American-owned company, the Rossland Water and Power Company, was supplying fresh water and electricity to parts of the city, but sewerage remained a serious problem. In the near future, the West Kootenay Power and Light Company would be formed and would begin providing electricity to the mines and the city from its hydro-electric works on the Kootenay River and the city would take over and develop the water system and build a comprehensive sewerage system. However, in 1897 Rossland was still a rather primitive frontier town facing another cold, dark, snow covered and, for many, dreary winter. But the city had an ice rink and an outstanding ski champion. Why not have a party to celebrate ice and snow sports and relieve some of the winter gloom -- and have it in February, the gloomiest month of them all.

I don't know the genesis of the idea of a winter carnival. It is possible that the inspiration came from the winter carnivals in Montreal and Quebec City, which were very elaborate, week-long affairs that were widely publicized and attracted throngs of visitors from near and far.<sup>1</sup> These carnivals had many of the same sports as did the Rossland carnivals -- but perhaps that was inevitable given that they were all winter carnivals. A unique feature of the Montreal and Quebec carnivals and part of the reason for their fame was their elaborate ice palaces, designed by architects and constructed for the occasion out of blocks of ice hewn from the frozen St. Lawrence River. One of the highlights of the carnival was the night-time storming of the ice palace. A horde of torch bearing, costumed snowshoers attacked, while another group defended. Shooting off rockets and other fireworks to simulate the weapons of war, they put on a wild, colourful and brilliant pyrotechnic display to the delight of the audience.<sup>2</sup> For a few years, the Rossland carnival featured a small-scale version of the storming of the ice palace (see below, p. 13). However, although this event was undoubtedly inspired by the Quebec events, the first "storm the fort" display did not occur until the carnival was already well established. It was not part of the original plans. Nonetheless, many people in Rossland came from Quebec and nearby locations and would have known of the carnivals and may well have visited them. Perhaps particularly influential in this regard was Charles O Lalonde, a Quebecois shoe merchant, who was born in Quebec but spent several years in business in Ontario before coming to Rossland.<sup>3</sup> Having been involved in municipal government in Port Arthur, Ontario, where he had a retail business, he became very active in Rossland's municipal affairs. In 1897 he was an unsuccessful candidate for mayor at the first civic election (he won the mayoralty in 1901), but was an alderman (1898-99) and a member of the committee for the first carnival. He was also an avid snowshoer, one of those responsible for organizing the snowshoe club and the "storm the fort" spectacle.

There were other possible sources of inspiration for the carnival. Olaus Jeldness' exploits racing down Red Mountain on skis may have attracted attention to the possibilities, or perhaps it was Jeldness

himself, ever the promoter of outdoor winter sports, who came up with the idea. Perhaps it was the existence of an ice rink that turned thoughts to regional hockey, skating and curling competitions. Indeed, at the time Rossland had two ice rinks, the Rossland Skating Rink at the corner of Washington Street and First Avenue, at the edge of what had been Sourdough Alley, the old centre of the mining camp,<sup>4</sup> and the Palace Skating Rink (commonly called the Ice Palace) up the hill at the corner of Washington Street and Second Avenue. Although one was planned, apparently the former had no roof,<sup>a</sup> while the Ice Palace was fully enclosed. It was at the Ice Palace that the indoor festivities of the first Winter Carnival were held. However, the building was poorly constructed for a mountain town that received heavy snow falls. Late on the night of March 29, 1898, following a fall of heavy wet snow, the roof collapsed, minutes after officials of the company that owned it had left the building after cleaning the ice, an hour after the completion of a public skating session, and a month and a half after the first winter carnival.<sup>5</sup>

A calamity had occurred, but an even greater calamity had been avoided. What to do? Without a covered ice rink winter in Rossland would have been much less bearable and the carnival would have been doomed. A company was formed to build a new and larger rink. The company conducted an intense and remarkably successful campaign to raise funds to build the arena, selling shares locally. Construction began in early November, 1898<sup>6</sup> and the rink opened on December 19,<sup>7</sup> in time for the 1899 winter carnival -- a remarkably short construction period for a large, public building that withstood heavy snow falls and was to be used for almost 40 years.<sup>b</sup> At the time, it was the largest such building west of Winnipeg.<sup>8</sup> It had a main ice sheet for skating and hockey and ice sheets on both sides dedicated to curling. Additional curling sheets were added in an extension of the main building in 1904.<sup>9</sup> I don't know how large an investment he made in the company, but Olaus Jeldness was one of the founding directors.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, he was the first managing director, responsible for the operation of the arena, a position that he held over the winter of 1898-99.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, I don't know if he retained his shareholding in the arena company when he left town in the summer of 1899, but he maintained his interest in ice sports. It is reported that he was one of the principal financial supporters of Spokane hockey teams that came to later winter carnival tournaments.<sup>12</sup>

Whether it was the Quebec influence, Jeldness' skiing or the availability of a covered ice rink, or a combination of all three that inspired the first winter carnival, in early January, 1898, plans for a winter carnival in February were announced, and preparations began.<sup>13</sup> It was thought that this was the first time that such an event was attempted in British Columbia.<sup>14</sup> A carnival intended to attract visitors from nearby cities was an ambitious project for the small, busy, relatively isolated, mining community, with so many other personal, industrial, commercial and governmental projects underway.

Rossland's winter carnival was much more than a series of competitions on snow and ice. It was a grand civic celebration of winter, with aspirations in some minds to be the Mardi Gras of the North.<sup>c</sup> Beginning in 1899 the mayor declared the Friday of the carnival a civic holiday, and later extended the holiday to Thursday and Friday.<sup>15</sup> For an event strongly supported by local storekeepers because of the business that it would bring to the city, it is not clear what a "civic holiday" meant. It undoubtedly had symbolic significance, but local hotels and restaurants worked overtime and shops could not be expected to close with the city full of potential customers. A rumor that the carnival committee had attempted to have the mines, the economic life-blood of the community, closed for the festival was hotly denied.<sup>16</sup> The

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<sup>a</sup> The Rossland Skating Rink lasted only one season. The site of the rink was sold for the construction of a new building in the fall of 1898. {Rossland Miner, 1898m #294}

<sup>b</sup> We should not exaggerate the soundness of the original construction of the rink. As was soon revealed, the building was not without its problems. By 1903, both the structure and the roof required extensive repairs and there was a brief threat that the rink would not open that winter without the expenditure of a considerable sum of money. The means were found to effect the repairs and the rink carried on {Rossland Miner, 1903za #616; Rossland Miner, 1903zb #617}. Serious repairs were undertaken at various other times, particularly in 1925 and 1928 {Rossland Miner, 1928b #618; Rossland Miner, 1938b #619}. In 1937 the rink was in critical condition, "leaning south-ward" {Rossland Miner, 1937b #620}. A City crew tried to shore up the building, but in March, 1938 it was condemned and torn down {Rossland Miner, 1938c #621}. Attempts were made to raise funds for a new arena, but it was not until after World War II that Rossland again had a covered skating rink.

<sup>c</sup> In 1903, one citizen proposed that the city literally sponsor a "mid-winter Mardi Gras." "on a plan similar to those that have made New Orleans familiar the world over. ... something as fantastic and weird as any Mardi Gras ..." One of the difficulties noted was "a dearth of costumes in the city, and without costumes it would be a hard matter to arrange such a masked street parade." {Rossland Miner, 1903q #483}. However, there seemed to be no shortage of costumes for the masquerade on ice (see below, p.6) .

mines were not closed for the carnival until a one day closure near the end of the Carnival's existence.<sup>17</sup> The School Board noted that they did not have the authority to close the schools, but the *Rossland Miner* suggested that parents keep their children home from school on both Thursday and Friday so that they might participate in the events.<sup>18</sup> If all the children stayed away, there would be no option but to close the schools, releasing the teachers and staff to participate in the carnival as well. In later years, students were assembled for the morning roll call and then dismissed to partake of the carnival events.<sup>19</sup> In 1906 the Provincial Superintendent of Education made the Friday of the carnival a school holiday for Rossland, at least partially validating the school closures.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps some city employees had a day off to participate in the festivities, but regular civic responsibilities (not to mention other ones connected to the carnival) continued and many city employees would have had to work. Outside visitors were invited -- indeed, actively pursued. A special excursion train from Spokane was arranged as were special train fares from points in the Kootenay and Boundary districts (the one-way fare plus one third, for trains from Fernie and stations west).<sup>d</sup> Everybody was to have fun at a time of year and in circumstances when just surviving in poorly heated houses could be an ordeal.

## The First Carnivals

The first winter carnival was limited in time and scope. Although there was a social event the evening before, the sports were held on two days, Friday and Saturday (never on Sunday!). The competitions were confined to what we might consider the traditional (if there had been a tradition) winter sports: ski racing, ski jumping, snowshoeing, skating, hockey, curling and "coasting" (on toboggans or sleighs). These events remained fixtures of the carnival throughout its history. In subsequent years, additional competitions were added in some of these sports and other sports were included in the carnival. Although the first carnivals were relatively modest, there was never anything modest about the committee's pretensions. Several of the competitions were dubbed "for the championship of" somewhere: the Kootenays (curling), British Columbia (senior, intermediate, junior and women's hockey, snowshoeing), Canada (ski running and ski jumping), North America (junior men's hockey[1910]) the world (women's hockey[1911]). The rest were merely for the championship of the carnival!

Concern was expressed that advertising for the first (1898) carnival was not sufficiently extensive and as a result "there were but few people from the outside."<sup>21</sup> The observation must be treated with considerable skepticism because it involved a complaint by the editor of one newspaper (the *Record*) about favouritism for another paper (the *Miner*) in placing advertisements. Better advertisements, in his paper, it was implied, would have attracted more visitors. In any case, in later years, the committee engaged in much more vigorous promotional campaigns. Surrounding places were papered with posters and to repair whatever weakness there was in the first year, in 1899 an official went on a tour of the major mining camps of the Kootenays.<sup>22</sup> For some later carnivals, delegates were also sent to Spokane<sup>23</sup> to stir up interest in that city. In 1899 the Spokane Chamber of Commerce was persuaded to sponsor an excursion train from Spokane (the round-trip fare was \$6.50, as opposed to the regular fare of \$7.75). When it arrived in Rossland with 160 people on board, the train was met by a large group of Rosslanders in a festive mood. A parade was spontaneously formed, livened by a 12 piece band that had accompanied the excursion party from Spokane. The all-day train ride must have been jovial; at stops along the way to pick up passengers the band got out of the train and entertained the assembled crowd with "There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight".<sup>24</sup> The parade in Rossland was led down the street to the Allen Hotel in the downtown area by the mayors of Rossland and Spokane, each carrying the flag of the other country.<sup>25</sup> It is reported that the procession stretched over "nearly two blocks." It was a festive occasion and a good illustration of the enthusiasm for the carnival as well as the close ties between Rossland and Spokane, on both business and personal levels. I have found no reports of such receptions for later trains, although each year a "reception committee" was appointed.

The 1899 reception helped create a favourable attitude in Spokane toward the carnival and it received significant coverage in the *Spokesman Review*, Spokane's major newspaper. When, in 1900,

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<sup>d</sup> However, Lund exaggerated when he reported that "Special carnival trains brought people from all over western Canada and the United States" {Lund, 1977a #572}

the editor of the *Spokesman Review* was asked to promote the carnival he responded with a very warm, if brief, editorial.<sup>26</sup> That year an excursion was organized by the Eagles Lodge<sup>27</sup> (or was it the Elks?<sup>28</sup>). Apparently, participation from Spokane was noticeably down, but this was attributed not to a lack of enthusiasm in the American city, but to an outbreak of smallpox there which discouraged involvement in any group activities.<sup>29</sup>

The other highly publicized excursion to Rossland from Spokane was in 1916. However, it had a very different context. It was an excursion of mining men who wanted to visit the mines and smelters in the vicinity of Rossland.<sup>30</sup> The carnival occupied one day of their trip -- it was in the nature of a side show to the main event. Olaus Jeldness was one of the group. He did not organize the excursion, but he may well have inspired it. A second expedition of mining men, accompanying the Spokane hockey team, occurred in 1917 with much less fanfare.<sup>31</sup>

No other carnival seems to have been able to recreate the enthusiasm of the 1899 Spokane excursion and it was several years before another excursion train from Spokane was organized. Such trains regularly came from other cities, like Nelson and Trail, organized by hockey clubs to bring supporters to their matches. However, it was more difficult to generate enthusiasm for a long train trip to watch other cities' teams play in a tournament.

### **1903: Revitalization**

When the 1902 carnival was in the early phases of discussion there was a significant possibility that it would not occur. There was enthusiasm, but there was also a funding problem. At a general meeting, the argument was made that

*Citizens generally are not disposed to put up the funds to carry out the carnival programme on the scale of previous years, and that it would be advisable to relinquish the idea for this year .... The difficulty about financing the event is probably the most serious drawback to be encountered.*<sup>32</sup>

At an animated second meeting,<sup>33</sup> it was decided to go ahead with the carnival. The usual public fund raising campaign was undertaken with modest success and the carnival was held. However, the attendance was said to have been "fairly good,"<sup>34</sup> which is to say, it was disappointing. I doubt that Rossland carnival goers were jaded. It is more likely that both the poor attendance at the carnival and the difficulty in soliciting donations were after effects of the long, bitter strike at the mines that began in July, 1901 and ended in January 1902.<sup>35</sup> At carnival time in February, miners were short of funds, many had left the city and local businesses (and their employees) were experiencing financial pressures. In a biting editorial, the *Rossland Miner* decried the lack of "public spirit" and the "very indifferent, not to say narrow and slothful, frame of mind" that many Rosslanders had gotten into.<sup>36</sup> The city was down on its heels; as an annual celebration of winter, the carnival could well have died. However, there was a ginger group whose underlying confidence in the future was undaunted and at a public meeting they decided to reconstitute the carnival committee and press ahead.<sup>37</sup> As they planned for the 1903 carnival, the committee recognized the need to regenerate public enthusiasm. They determined to find "a special feature for the celebration .... some form of attraction which will afford entertainment for citizens that will be novel and yet within the cost limit naturally prescribed by the available funds."<sup>38</sup> The "special feature" that they settled on was a long, steep, exciting toboggan slide on lower Washington Street, from Columbia Avenue to the valley below (see below, p. 26). As an added spectacle, the snowshoe club arranged a mass tramp of torch-bearing snowshoers up the face of Monte Christo Mountain<sup>°</sup> on the first night of the festival, complete with a massive bonfire and fireworks, all easily visible from the city (see below, p. 12). With hockey as the popular attraction the committee also agreed to increase the length of the carnival by one day to accommodate an expanded hockey tournament, involving more teams and more games and, to pique public interest, including at least one team from the Northwest Territories (now Alberta).

Apparently, attendance from nearby cities in the Kootenays and Washington State at recent carnivals had also been disappointing<sup>39</sup> and I have found no evidence that there was a special excursion

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<sup>°</sup> The name of the mountain is variously spelled, Monte Christo or Monte Cristo

train from Spokane in 1902. Perhaps enthusiasm in that city had not revived following the problems of 1901 and, given the under-subscription of the 1901 excursion, perhaps no organization stepped forward to organize and sponsor a train for 1902. In 1903, special attention was to be given to attracting outside visitors to the carnival, and in this effort the committee decided to focus on Spokane. There were many people living in Spokane who had lived and worked in Rossland, some of whom made fortunes, large and small, in the mines of the area. The committee considered them to be ex-Rosslanders and decided to focus their advertising energies on attracting them to the carnival. All ex-Rosslanders known to be living in Spokane were contacted directly, two special delegates were appointed to visit the city to promote the carnival,<sup>40</sup> and, as a special event, the committee scheduled an old timers reunion as part of the carnival (see below, p. 29). There does not seem to have been a special excursion train from Spokane, but the Spokane Falls and Northern Railway Company offered attractive special fares on its regular train and apparently a larger than expected crowd arrived from the south.<sup>41</sup> Canadian towns along railway lines to the city were also targets for advertising posters and the CPR offered special fares to the carnival on those routes (the one-way fare plus one-third). To further encourage visitors, the committee decided to designate special "days" during the carnival, with special (unspecified) programs for visitors: Wednesday, the day of the ice masquerade, was Rossland day, Thursday was Spokane day, Friday was visitors day, and Saturday was Trail day. The winter carnival was reborn, with new energy.

### **1907 Revitalization**

In a thoughtful editorial following the 1906 carnival, the *Rossland Miner* ruminated about the future of the winter carnival.<sup>42</sup> Optimistically predicting that "the Rossland winter carnival ... will endure as long as the town lasts," the *Miner* concluded nonetheless that the carnival could no longer be managed by volunteers in what time they could spare from their busy lives, organizing it "a week or two before it commences." Clearly echoing discussions that had been occurring among those most deeply involved in organizing and managing recent carnivals and reporting on conclusions that they had reached, the *Miner* strongly recommended the creation of a permanent body to organize future carnivals, with a full time manager who would work year-round on planning, developing new events and facilities ("novelties"), and establishing strong relations with important groups in places in the northwestern states and the Canadian prairies. If these places could be induced to send hockey and curling teams and perhaps skiers to the carnival, streams of visitors would follow. The carnival would move up to a new level. In this, the *Miner* was regarding the winter carnival not so much as a civic celebration of winter, but as an economic resource that brought visitors and commerce to the city.

One of the *Miner's* main concerns was the improvement of the facilities. At the ice rink, better and more seating was required so that patrons would not have to stand in a crowd, straining to watch the game over the heads of those in front of them. At the toboggan slide, a second track was desirable so that side-by-side races could be held. This would greatly increase the excitement over that provided by single toboggans racing against time. Interestingly, there was no mention of improved facilities for skiing or ski jumping. These events, so important at the outset of the carnival, had dropped into the background, as arena sports and tobogganing had moved to the foreground.

The central proposals set out in the *Miner* editorial were enacted. The Rossland Carnival Association, a benevolent society, was not incorporated until May, 1907,<sup>43</sup> but the revitalization was by then well underway. It began with the planning for the 1907 carnival. By then, hockey at the carnival had fallen into a minimalist routine. For three years, with little variation (Greenwood was substituted for Vernon one year), the same four teams played each other for the senior men's British Columbia championship. This was not the type of competition that would attract visitors from afar. When, in 1907, entries were received (or successfully solicited) from Coleman, in the new province of Alberta, and Spokane, Washington, a change to the program was required. At first it was called the "Open Challenge" competition, and later the "International Cup" series. As in 1903, a day was added to the carnival. The masquerade on ice was moved from Wednesday night to Tuesday night, Wednesday became another full day of sports and new events were included. Again, the revitalization was a success; new life was pumped into a flagging carnival.

### ***The Denouement***

Beginning about 1910 or 1911, the carnival again began to flag. Revenues appear to have been stagnant while expenses rose. This time, instead of attempting to introduce something new that would bring about another revitalization, the committee began trim the program, dropping events that were expensive and generated little or no revenue. The carnival became much more focused on the ice rink, with a strengthened emphasis on hockey. Hockey was the primary revenue generator, but it was also increasingly expensive to put on as teams were invited from far away and cash prizes were introduced as an incentive to complete. The final flourish, in 1916 and 1917, was an international tournament with teams from Montana and Washington State as well as the usual complement of British Columbia teams.

In 1917, for unexplained reasons, the carnival died. I have found no post mortem. No more winter carnivals were held after the twentieth until the Sno Sho following World War II.

### **The Masquerade-on-Ice.**

In 1898 a grand ball opened the carnival and a masquerade party at the ice rink closed it. The first ball created a minor controversy. The secretary of the committee announced that it was "'strictly' an invitational ball" and when stopped on the street and asked for tickets by a leading business man is reported to have rather aggressively responded "Who are you? I don't know you! Did you get an invitation?"<sup>44</sup> When the man was identified by a bystander, the tickets were delivered, but the incident distilled the essential character of the ball. It was a social occasion for the elite of the city. By contrast, the masquerade on ice was a social event for all of the people. I have not found a description of the 1898 masquerade,<sup>f</sup> but the 1899 one is well documented. The event was hugely popular and from that year on it was moved up front to open the carnival. It was held the evening before the first day of sports (although beginning in 1899 there were so many teams entered in the curling bonspiel that, to provide enough ice time, the curling events began earlier). The "elegant ball," which did not engage most of the people of Rossland, was repeated in subsequent carnivals but it was moved to later in the festivities.

To participate in the masquerade on the ice surface, people had to be masked, in costume and on skates.<sup>g</sup> In the beginning prizes were awarded only for costumes, with first and second place prizes for best costumes by men, women, boys and girls. The prizes were mainly jewelry and other objects of gold and silver worth between \$4 and \$12, a sizable sum for the time.<sup>h</sup> Miss Charlotte Baker won the ladies prize, dressed as a rough rider "with soft felt hat, a fetching blue suit, leggings and a belt." Mr. Thomas Lillie of Nelson won the men's prize with an elegant costume of "a courier in the time of Queen Anne." The winner of the girls competition was dressed as a shepherdess and the boys winner was a jester. Beginning in 1900, they added a prize for the best comic character, won by a man dressed as John Bull.<sup>45</sup> In later years they began to judge skating as well as costumes.

The masquerade on ice proved to be immensely popular. The 1899 report that almost 1000 spectators crowded into the rink ("and the building had never before held so large a crowd"<sup>46</sup>) may have been a bit of an exaggeration, but it is suggestive of the popular enthusiasm. In 1900, when it was reported that there were upwards of 600 spectators there were 300 masqueraders.<sup>47</sup> It must have been a dazzling, swirling mass of masked, costumed skaters. The sheer numbers must have posed a severe challenge for the judges. The city band entertained the crowd all evening. When the masqueraders unmasked, at 9:30 P.M. the ice was opened to all who wanted to skate. It is reported that there was "the largest crowd of skaters ever seen in Rossland."<sup>48</sup>

Spectators were charged double the admission price that was charged for skating masqueraders (e.g., in 1911 50 cents instead of 25 cents). Apparently, people sought admission with minimal costumes

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<sup>f</sup> Copies of the Rossland Miner are not available for January 30 to March 1, 1898. The *Rossland Record*, which is available for that period, had inferior coverage.

<sup>g</sup> It is possible that at the first carnivals people who were not on skates were permitted to enter the costume contest. The first clear statement of the requirement to be on skates to be admitted to the ice surface that I have found was in

<sup>h</sup> Ladies: sterling silver manicure set, \$12; gold chain bracelet, \$10. Men: silver shaving mug, \$9; glass tobacco jar, \$7. Girls: gold chain bracelet, \$10; silver chain bracelet, \$ 4; Boys: gold scarf pin, \$6.50; watch, \$5.

that required little work and little thought. The committee began to stress the importance of originality in costumes and finally, in 1911, came to the stern decision that

*... only acceptable costumes would be admitted to the ice. There would be no donning of a sweater and a mask and going as a skating girl, or dressing in a Rocky Mountain Ranger uniform and going as a soldier. .... Any that wore unsuitable costumes would have to pay the full price of admission.<sup>49</sup>*

The masquerade was popular and maturing. Similar skating masquerades were held in other cities and in Rosslund the event became so popular that the rink started holding them outside carnival time and after the carnival had disappeared from the scene.

## Skiing

Perhaps because of Olaus Jeldness' vigorous role in helping to organize and promote the first winter carnival, skiing was supposed to be the star attraction. Two skiing spectacles were featured, ski running and ski jumping. They were prominent features of the annual winter carnival almost to the end. However, there were few participants and several were usually from out of town -- and they tended to be Norwegian immigrants who won their events. With only a handful of competitors, the Rosslund ski running and ski jumping competitions were always modest affairs. But there was nothing modest about Rosslund: the winners were always declared "Champion of Canada." What made these events Canadian championships is not obvious. I doubt that skiers elsewhere in Canada were consulted, but as one commentator noted "this claim has never been challenged."<sup>50</sup> Jeldness won the trophies for ski running and ski jumping three times in a row and so, under the rules then in place, he was entitled to keep them. However, he graciously donated the ski jumping trophy back to the carnival for future contests and, when another skier duplicated his success, he donated another handsome trophy as a replacement.

Although he had moved to Spokane in 1899 and had ceased to participate as a contestant in 1900, Jeldness' commitment to the Rosslund carnival remained profound. In addition to the generous donation of trophies, he remained active in the management of the carnival until the end (although not every year). He was a member of the general committee that arranged the 1900 carnival.<sup>51</sup> The names of members of the various committees were not always published in the local newspaper so I don't know about the intervening years, but he was a member of the skiing events subcommittee for the 1913,<sup>52</sup> 1916<sup>53</sup> and 1917<sup>54</sup> carnivals. He was a judge for the ski jumping contest in 1901.<sup>55</sup> He was not listed as a judge in 1902 and in 1903, as the *Miner* pointedly noted, he was in Norway on an American project to develop iron and coal mines on Spitsbergen Island.<sup>56</sup> In 1904 he was back as a judge and was full of praise for the young Norwegian immigrant, Torgel Noren, who had replaced him as the hero of Rosslund's ski slopes.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Jeldness suggested that Noren was a better skier than he had been at the same age. I have no information about the next few years, but from 1910 to 1913 Jeldness was again listed as a judge for the jumping events.<sup>57</sup> In 1913 he was named one of the patrons of the carnival, an honorary position, to which were appointed distinguished representatives of the city.<sup>58</sup> Jeldness thus made a major contribution to the success of one of Rosslund's most important social institutions in the years before the end of World War I.

## Ski Running

Ski running as Jeldness practiced it was an uncontrolled race from the top of a mountain to the bottom. For the first winter carnival the mountain was Red Mountain and the race was down the southern face, from the summit to a finish line in the Black Bear district on the far western side of the city. The racers started together in a free for all, chose their own routes down the mountain and the first one across the finish line was the winner. With good skiers, it must have been very exciting -- if the race could be seen clearly. Jeldness knew that no local skiers were capable of challenging him in the race, so to make

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<sup>1</sup> From the researches of Sam Wormington we know that Torgel Noren's life had many echoes of that of Jeldness. He was born in Norway in 1886, where he won many skiing and jumping competitions {Rosslund Miner, 1904p #470}. Like Jeldness, he emigrated to the United States as a teenager, in 1902. He arrived in Rosslund in 1903 and remained in the area until 1909 when he left for Alaska in a quest for gold. How he fared in Alaska is not reported. However, late in life he returned to Norway where he lived for many years. He died in 1975, apparently in the United States. {Wormington, 1980 #457, pp. 43, 50-51}

it a more exciting spectacle, he invited his brother Anders and skilful skiers that he knew in Colorado and Montana to participate. This started a process of inviting (and paying the expenses of) so called "expert skiers," always Norwegians, to compete in the contests. Anders and at least two of the other invited experts came to town.<sup>59</sup> In anticipation, the *Rossland Miner* announced that "the great event of the carnival will be the ski running."<sup>60</sup>

Unfortunately, the first carnival ski race was held under less than favourable conditions. For days before the carnival warm weather softened both snow on the hills and ice in the arena, a dire omen for the carnival. Then, a day before the opening of the carnival, it turned cold and snowed. The result, however, was that parts of the course became icy or crusty, while other parts were soft with drifting snow, treacherous conditions for a race down the mountain that crossed all weather zones. Two of the skiers from the States pulled out of the race, leaving Jeldness, his brother and one local man. The local man broke his ski and did not finish. Jeldness won with his brother close behind. Both were exhausted and collapsed at the finish line, a dramatic ending to launch skiing at the winter carnival.

For Jeldness, Red Mountain had an almost mystical attraction. Perhaps it was the richness of the minerals beneath its surface -- he was at root a mining man. Perhaps it was the challenge of skiing down its exposed southern slope, the scene of his famous skiing exploits. Perhaps it was the magnificence of the view from the mountain top where he entertained his friends at his notorious "tea" parties.<sup>j</sup> But, although the face of Red Mountain offered an inviting challenge for expert skiers like Jeldness, as a location for ski running at the winter carnival it was not attractive. For anyone who was not an "expert," it was daunting. Moreover, access for spectators was difficult and the finish line was a considerable distance from central Rossland, the location of other carnival events. Was there a better location?

In 1899, Jeldness considered Deer Park mountain on the south side of town as a possible venue for ski running. It had the advantage of a northern slope, less exposed to the melting power of the sun. Although he had a trail cut through the trees and was said to favour this location, for unexplained reasons it was rejected.<sup>k</sup> It may be that it was not challenging enough. The right of way for a pole line up the face of Monte Christo Mountain that had been cut by the West Kootenay Power and Light Company to provide electricity for the mines on the mountainside was then announced as the venue for the ski running event. However, again for unexplained reasons, the ski running race was returned to Red Mountain. Two of the expert skiers that Jeldness had brought in for the race -- his brother Anders and A. Hage of Minneapolis -- considered the snow conditions and the mountain and refused to run, so Jeldness was faced with a field of five, three of whom were local men and two who were probably imports (they had Norwegian names and finished second and third). After spending all morning climbing to the top of the mountain, the racers came down in minutes. Jeldness' winning run for the two-mile course was three minutes and five seconds.

By the time of the third carnival, in February, 1900, the much less daunting Monte Christo pole line course won out. Monte Christo is the mountain on which the main part of Rossland was built. The ski running course was from at or near the summit, down the power line to the head of Washington Street in the upper part of the city, then down Washington Street to the downtown area. In some years the race continued through the main commercial area to a finish at the foot of Washington Street, in the valley below. In other years, the finish line was in the downtown area. Thus, the West Kootenay right of way provided an ideal location for ski running, challenging to the skiers, but not overwhelming, and readily accessible for spectators through much of its length and particularly where the racers engaged in an exciting chase through the downtown area to the finish line. In 1906, because poor snow conditions restricted the skiable area on the mountain (a crew of men shovelled snow to fill in bare spots on the course) the mass start was abandoned in favour of timed starts.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>j</sup> In 1904, long after he had retired from competitive skiing and from active involvement in Rossland mining, he planned yet another afternoon tea party on Red "in honor of Rossland snowshoers and ski runners." At the request of the carnival authorities, it was postponed to avoid interfering with the competitions (*Rossland Miner*, 1904zc #767). I have no evidence that it was ever held (Jeldness left Rossland soon after the carnival was over).

<sup>k</sup> The newly organized Norwegian Ski Club built facilities and held a tournament on Deer Park Mountain in 1908, but it was never used for winter carnival ski running races. The Deer Park site was used once, in 1909, as the venue for ski jumping.

## ***Ski Jumping***

The best location for ski jumping always posed a conundrum for the organizers. The attention grabber was the length of the jumps. The objective was jumps in the vicinity of 100 feet, perhaps setting a record (Canadian? North American? World?). Jeldness for a time held the Norwegian championship with a 92 foot jump and boldly asserted that he could do 100 feet under the right conditions. Such a leap however required a steep hill, a long run-in to a suitably constructed jump and a steep, long run-out. These conditions were possible on a mountainside, perhaps Monte Christo Mountain. They were not possible on downtown streets; some were steep, but the steep sections were not long enough. But there was another objective, ready access by spectators. Easy access was not possible for a suitably constructed jump high on the mountainside. The alternative was a jump constructed on one of the steep hills in the downtown area which would be readily accessible without people struggling up a steep, snow covered mountainside. However, the possible locations did not have the required length for the run-in and run-out. Record setting jumps were not feasible.

Which to choose, spectacular jumps or easy access? The committee vacillated, but for the first few carnivals they chose easy access. The jumping events were held on Spokane Street, just off downtown Rossland, and the distances obtained so modest that they were not reported in the newspaper. In the second carnival Jeldness was embarrassed to have won the "Canadian championship" with a jump of only 28 feet!<sup>62</sup> In 1900 he achieved an even shorter 26 feet.<sup>63</sup> These were not the spectacular performances that the committee dreamed of. They certainly set no records that could be boasted about across Canada. To get longer distances, jumping had to move to the mountain.

Although it continued to be one of the star attractions, ski jumping began to be a problem for the Carnival in another way; it started to get expensive. Other places, particularly in Michigan and Minnesota, held ski jumping events, featuring Norwegian jumpers who were achieving record breaking or near record breaking distances. In 1907, note was taken of recent jumps in the close vicinity of 100 feet and more in northern Michigan, not to mention jumps in excess of 134 feet in Norway.<sup>64</sup> The *Miner* chided Rossland jumpers to "wake up" (the Rossland record at that time was just under 83 feet and the previous year's winning jump was 67 feet) and do better, suggesting that some of the "American Norsemen" be brought in to sharpen the competition.<sup>65</sup> That year the committee introduced a new category of ski jumping, the "Professional Championship of Canada," with cash prizes (\$150 for first place and \$50 for second), but also an entry fee (\$10, reduced to \$5 just before the competition).<sup>66</sup> Torgel Noren, the new hero of the mountain and holder of Rossland's jumping record, declined to enter the professional contest and jumped as an amateur, setting a new Rossland record of 90 feet.<sup>67</sup> Five men entered the professional jump. The longest professional jump, by a recent Norwegian immigrant, was a pathetic 49 feet.<sup>68</sup> Thus, although the Rossland prizes were higher than those reported for the Michigan tournament earlier that year, the inducement did not produce the jumping spectacle that the committee hoped for. That was the one and only time that the winter carnival featured professional jumping.

Although professional jumping was dropped from the program in 1908, another incident must have set off alarm bells in the minds of committee members. Torgel Noren showed up at the amateur jumping contest without his skis and demanded either \$75 or a watch and chain worth the equivalent for him to participate.<sup>69</sup> In effect, he was demanding an "appearance fee." The committee refused and Noren did not jump; no records were set that year. However, Noren's demand was a signal. Expert jumpers were much in demand and were feeling their oats. Striving for record jumps on Monte Christo Mountain, even among "amateurs," was going to get more expensive.

A Norwegian Ski club was organized in 1908, with Olaus Jeldness as honorary president. The club built a jumping facility at Knob Hill on Deer Park Mountain, across Trail Creek Valley from the main part of Rossland. This provided an alternative venue for ski jumping during the winter carnival that had an attractive feature not possessed by either Monte Christo Mountain or Spokane Street -- a grandstand. It was not feasible to charge admission to the open areas on the mountain or the streets, but it was possible to charge admission to a grandstand. Perhaps for this reason, carnival jumping was held at Deer Park in 1909, with a 25¢ admission fee to the grandstand, the proceeds to be divided between the ski club and

the carnival. Unfortunately, it rained during the contest; the snow was wet and heavy and the seats in the grandstand wet so that few people occupied them. The revenue generated must have been small.

Apart from the location, the interesting feature of the 1909 ski jumping was that Torgel Noren returned to Rosslund for the event. That this was arranged long in advance is apparent because he was featured in advance publicity. What inducement was offered to Noren was not revealed, but that there was an inducement is suggested by the ski committee's early observation that they would require \$150 for expenses. The reported value of the medals awarded was only \$31 and it is unlikely that a payment to the ski club was planned given the revenue sharing agreement. Perhaps Noren finally got his watch. In any case, he jumped 92 feet to win the contest. One can only wonder what he would have done had conditions been better. I don't know what happened to the Norwegian Ski Club's Deer Park facilities. Winter carnival competitions were never held there again, and I have found no subsequent mention of them in the press which suggests that they may have been torn down.

Noren did not appear at the winter carnival again. His place as the hero of the mountain was taken by another Norwegian immigrant, Engwald Engen who won the jumping contest from 1910-1912 and in 1915 and 1917. The local man, Harvey Lynn, won in 1913 and 1914.

Michigan and Minnesota were far away, but expert jumpers seem to have been mobile chaps (as long as their expenses were paid). In any case, other jumping locations were emerging closer to home. Olaus Jeldness tried to create interest in jumping in Spokane, but although one event was recorded in the local press,<sup>70</sup> it not clear that he succeeded in establishing jumping as an ongoing winter attraction. Much more important was Revelstoke, a transportation hub on the main CPR line, north of Rosslund. It had great snow and a much better jumping hill (indeed, in later years Revelstoke became known as the jumping capital of Western Canada if not of Canada) and with its location on the main railway line it was in a position to attract many visitors. In 1914 or 1915 a permanent jump was built on a specially designed and dedicated hill on the lower part of Revelstoke Mountain -- on what was described as a natural jumping hill.<sup>71</sup> Rosslund had no comparable facility. Although occasionally a jump was retained for a second year, generally a new jump was built each year, and the location moved around, particularly between sites high on the mountain and those closer to town. As a result, Rosslund became something of a backwater for jumpers, not a prime destination.

Identifying jumping as "one of the most spectacular features of the carnival,"<sup>72</sup> and hence worthy of promotion, the committee responsible for the 1913 skiing events became quite aggressive in recruiting. They reported that "Circulars in the Swedish language had been sent out to ski experts in Minneapolis, Ishpheming (Michigan), Seattle and other places inviting them to attend and compete for cash prizes."<sup>73</sup> Both amateur and professional competitions were held, the professionals competing for prizes of \$50 and \$20 for first and second places. Apparently, the prizes were not that attractive. Only one jumper entered the professional jump, Ole Larson of Spokane, who cleared a respectable 90 feet.<sup>74</sup> One jumper did not make much of a competition and certainly not a competitive spectacle.

The reaction to 1913 was strong and decisive. A new skiing sub-committee, headed by Judge Plewman (more noted for his prowess on snowshoes than skis), concluded

*Experience has taught that ski-jumping is a costly business and more unsatisfactory than expensive. Accordingly, all idea of inducing the experts to compete at the Carnival, as in former years, has been abandoned.*<sup>75</sup>

Henceforth the carnival would include "competitions for amateurs only." To underline the decision, that year

*Instead of going up the side of Monte Christo mountain, wading through snow to the armpits, and standing there for several hours with the mercury trying to hide in the little round bulb at the bottom, the citizens will walk over to Spokane Street and there see the ski jumping.*<sup>76</sup>

The jump was built on lower Spokane Street and the contest was won by a local man, Harvey Lynn, with a jump of just under 66 feet.<sup>77</sup> All four entrants were local. The following year Judge Plewman was again in charge. That jumping was to be another modest contest is suggested by the budget for skiing, which was set at \$25 (by contrast, that for hockey was \$1500).<sup>78</sup> All six competitors were from out of town, three

from Revelstoke and three from Phoenix, including the winner, Engwald Engen, who cleared 74 feet.<sup>79</sup> <sup>1</sup> If the committee adhered to its budget, these outsiders must have arrived without expense money. Whether that was the case, I don't know. It is also interesting to note that for the first time, style was adjudicated in the 1915 jumping competition. Points were awarded for "character" in jumping, which included "position at start, at the leap, in the air and landing, according to certain rules laid down."<sup>80</sup>

The pendulum swung the other way again in 1916. Rossland had elected a populist mayor, W. D. Willson who took a strong, direct interest in the carnival. His principal concern was that the carnival offer "more free entertainment, such as skiing and other open air street entertainment."<sup>81</sup> He took personal charge of the skiing committee (Jeldness was a member), noting that arrangements had already been made for outside experts and predicting a record breaking jump of at least 125 feet. He claimed to be "getting into close touch with the fellows who do things along such lines."<sup>82</sup> Unfortunately, Rossland's winter carnival conflicted with a jumping tournament at Revelstoke, a tournament at which Nels Nelson placed first with a jump in excess of 130 feet (he had earlier set a world record on the same hill with a jump of 183 feet.<sup>83</sup> "(T)he fellows who do things along such lines" were not available for Rossland, even if they had been inclined to come. No professional jumping competition was held that year, but the prizes for the amateur jump included "expense money," graded by placement, \$50 for first, \$35 for second and \$25 for third. The next year expense money was also listed in the program but in committee meetings it was referred to as "prize money."<sup>84</sup> Presumably, monetary prizes could not be offered for amateur competitions. The contest was held on Monte Christo Mountain and to enliven the event Willson had engaged the Eagles Band to play throughout. The Miner estimated that 2,000 people attended (surely a gross exaggeration). There were only three entrants (so the third prize was deleted), two from Rossland. Stenbold of Phoenix won with a jump of 62 feet. Rossland's Harvey Lynn made longer jumps (75 and 77 feet) but fell. The crowd was there and the atmosphere was jolly, but the spectacle was missing.

Mayor Willson tried again in 1917, assuming both the role of President of the Carnival and chairman of the skiing sub-committee. This time he took care to schedule the carnival following the Revelstoke tournament with the intention of attracting some of the best performers from Revelstoke to Rossland's carnival.<sup>85</sup> He made a special trip to Revelstoke, met with people there and came away with the sense that "the best talent in the sport will likely come here."<sup>86</sup> As a symbol of his sincerity and enthusiasm the mayor donated \$50 (about \$725 in 2010 dollars) to the cause.<sup>87</sup> Again, there was no professional jump, only the amateur contest for the Jeldness trophy. "Expense money" was again offered, but the amounts reduced; first prize was only \$35, with an unspecified "special prize" for the longest jump.<sup>88</sup> There were hints that Nels Nelson, holder of the Canadian record for jumping and the legitimate Canadian champion, would come and a statement that Ragnar Ompvedt of St. Paul, Minnesota, touted as the current world champion, "was expected."<sup>89</sup> Indeed, a report was published that Ompvedt was on the Thursday night train, arriving for the Friday morning jumping.<sup>90</sup> If Ompvedt was on the train, he took one look at Rossland's make-shift facilities and decided not to participate. The only skier from the Revelstoke tournament to participate was Rossland's old friend, Engwald Engen, who had not placed in the top three at Revelstoke. Engen jumped a respectable 95 feet. It was estimated that there were about 500 spectators, well down from the 2,000 reported for 1916. Had all the hoopla and failure to deliver world class jumping backfired? Or, were the crowd estimates simply wild guesses, the 1916 figure bordering on propaganda?

That was the inglorious end of ski jumping at the Rossland Winter Carnival. They persisted to the end in calling the competition the "Amateur Championship Jump Of Canada,"<sup>91</sup> even though it was patently obvious that longer, more stylish jumps were being made at Revelstoke. Indeed, Revelstoke was also referring to the winner of its tournament as the Canadian champion, but with much more justification. There was as yet no national body to authorize such competitions.

### ***Women and Boys.***

In 1904 they introduced ski racing for women as a carnival event. However, while the men raced from the top of Monte Christo Mountain and the boys from half way up the mountain, the women had the tame course, second avenue to first avenue on Washington Street. When the ski running races for boys

were introduced they began about half way up the mountain. For women, the race (introduced in 1904) was a disdainful run down Washington Street from Second Avenue to First Avenue, a mere city block!<sup>92</sup> Some years later, the women's raced started part way up Monte Christo Mountain.

### ***Cross Country Racing.***

Given the Nordic roots of skiing at Rossland, it is surprising that cross country racing was not a prominent features of the first winter carnivals. After all, Jeldness himself had touted the merits of skis for cross country travel -- extolling "the superiority of the skis over the Indian webshoe in any kind of territory or in any country where snow falls."<sup>93</sup> It is not that cross country skiing for recreation and as a sporting event was unknown in Rossland. Cross country treks were part of the activities of the Rossland Ski Club. Thus, in 1906 the *Miner* reported on a Sunday afternoon outing from downtown Rossland to Deer Park Mountain, and return.<sup>94</sup> However, the only concession to cross country skiing in the early winter carnivals was a race for boys. It was a mile and a half race along Columbia Avenue, up hospital hill and return. The first cross country race for men was in the 1908 winter carnival. Referred to as the "long distance race," its course was

*From the Bank of Montreal, ... along Columbia Avenue to the baseball grounds (then at Black Bear) to the White Bear mine, then around Red Mountain, by way of the Jumbo wagon road, thence across the Centre Star gulch to flag located opposite to Virginia mine, and up Monte Cristo Mountain, keeping on the north side of the flag; then down the mountain and Washington Street to the starting point.*<sup>95</sup>

The distance was estimated to be 7 miles. A trophy was donated for the race and it became a regular feature of the winter carnival.

### ***Skiing As Recreation***

Did the winter carnival stimulate recreational skiing in Rossland? The short answer is that I don't know, but I find no evidence that recreational skiing had a large following. There was a ski club and undoubtedly there was a cadre of recreational skiers in Rossland in those days. However, the main, if not the sole, purpose of the ski club was the preparation for and conducting of the ski running and ski jumping events at the carnival. The club had no cabin to provide shelter and warmth for skiers, in a location suitable for a wide variety of abilities, and I have found no evidence that skiers had yet discovered the more gentle slopes available in the fields north of Rossland or in the vicinity of what was to become the golf course. All of that was to come, in the late 1920s and 1930s, and is another story (see the essay "Yes There Was Skiing In Rossland Before We Built The Chair Lift.").

## **Snowshoeing**

In the early years, snowshoeing was one of the highlights of the festivals. There were two types of activities, a spectacular, night time "tramp" up the face of Monte Christo Mountain by torch bearing snowshoers and a series of races.

Snowshoeing, not only for winter travel, but also for recreation and as a competitive sport, was deeply engrained in nineteenth century Quebec culture, both Francophone and Anglophone. For this reason, it is perhaps not surprising that it was a trio of French Canadians who most vigorously promoted snowshoeing as a popular recreation and a competitive sport in Rossland at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. What was intended to be a "uniformed snow-shoe club" was organized in late 1899,<sup>96</sup> but I have found no reports of its activities until January 1903, in the lead-up to the sixth winter carnival. At that time, led by J. Stephen Deschamps, the snowshoe club was reported to have had about 100 members ("which will be considerably enhanced by the time the carnival takes place").<sup>97</sup> Deschamps was a 35-year-old Francophone, born in Ontario, who was part owner and operator of a sawmill north of the city. The two other Francophones who were prominent in the club were

C. O Lalonde, owner of the major boot and shoe store in Rossland (it also sold snowshoes) and Eugene Croteau, an accountant. Both Lalonde and Croteau were Quebec born and raised. All three served as officers of the club and organizers of tramps. The French Canadian influence showed up both in the "uniform" and in the activities of the club.

### **The Uniform**

In 1903 it was suggested that each member should have a toque and sash "as a distinctive mark for the club." This was a minimalist approach to a uniform, but in 1904

*It was decided to adopt white, red and blue for club colors, with white coat piped in blue, blue knickers and red stockings and sash as the club costume.<sup>98</sup>*

Toward the end of 1904, Eugene Croteau paraded on Rossland streets in the "regulation uniform of the Snowshoe Club":

*On his head was a blue toque with white stripe and a long tassel. The coat is white blanket trimmed in red and blue and having a double row of large white buttons in front. There are epaulets on the shoulders of red and blue, and also a fancy capote. Underneath the coat is worn a white sweater. Around the waist was fastened a long blue sash. On the hands were heavy blue mitts. He wore white blanket knickerbockers with blue stockings. On his feet were a pair of fancy moccasins, and also a pair of snowshoes.<sup>99</sup>*

This uniform was clearly in imitation of the costumes worn by members of snowshoe clubs in Montreal and elsewhere in Quebec (see Appendix 3, p. 50). The program for the 1884 Montreal carnival listed six snowshoe clubs in the Montreal area that were participating in the festival.<sup>100</sup> Basic to each club's uniform was a white, tunic-style, blanket coat that reached to mid-thigh, with a hood (a capote) hanging in back. What distinguished each club's costume was the trimmings -- the facings on the coat, the sash, the toque and the stockings.<sup>m</sup> Thus, for example, for the Montreal Snowshoe Club,

*Uniform -- white, trimmed with scarlet; tuque, blue, with scarlet tassel; stockings scarlet.*

Similarly, for the Canadian Snowshoe Club,

*Uniform -- white, with blue facings; tuque, red, white and blue; sash, red; stockings, blue.*

Rather different was the Argyle Snowshoe Club who wore  
*stockings, sash and tuque of the colour of the Argyle tartan.*

Rossland's costume would have fit right in.

If every member of the Rossland Snowshoe Club had a uniform they would have made quite a sight heading down the main street, tramping out to a remote mountain destination. Unfortunately, I doubt that the uniform was widely adopted. I have reports of club members in varied costumes (for example, one member wore a pirate costume on a tramp up Monte Christo Mountain<sup>101</sup>), but I have no reports of members appearing, *en masse*, in the club's "regulation uniform." Nonetheless, the image makes a delightful fantasy.

### **Storm the Fort**

The first formal tramp as a club reported in the press was a rehearsal for the 1903 carnival.<sup>102</sup> Following three such rehearsals, almost 100 snowshoers took part in the parade on the second night of the carnival.<sup>103</sup> They departed from downtown Rossland, climbed through the upper part of town and up the face of Monte Christo Mountain, each snowshoer carrying a lighted torch.<sup>n</sup> At the top, the organizers had built a wooden structure, nicknamed Fort Deschamps. The plan was that the snowshoers would

*... suddenly extinguish their torches upon arriving within attacking distance of the fort. Then, while in darkness, the snowshoers will form into a long semicircle and in this manner advance*

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<sup>m</sup> The McCord Museum of Montreal has many photographs, prints and drawings showing uniformed snowshoers and ice palaces. Some of these images can be viewed on the museum's website. {McCord, #630}

<sup>n</sup> The nature of the torch was not described in the press. A picture of a Montreal snowshoer show him bearing a torch that was a long stick with a flaming end -- presumably daubed with pitch or tar. The Rossland torches were probably similar. Alternatively, they may have been lanterns that burned oil or kerosene. That the torches were reusable is indicated by a note in the Miner asking members to return torches that belonged to the club.

*upon the fort, firing as they go. After the fort has been taken it will be given up to the flames and the attackers and their prisoners will return to town.*<sup>104</sup>

The attack presumably followed the plan. The combination of torches, fireworks and the giant bonfire created a brilliant display for the spectators lining the streets of the upper part of the city. At the end, the torch-bearing snowshoers descended the mountain as the denouement of the evening's performance.

In 1904 the fort was named Fort Monte Cristo.<sup>105</sup> The nature of the structure is not described except that it was made of logs and soaked in oil. A half hour before the snowshoer attackers reached the fort, the defenders showered the mountainside with rockets and other fireworks, creating a grand spectacle for observers in the city below. When they reached the top, amidst the fireworks, the torch-bearing attackers set fire to the fort and it went up in flames, a blazing tribute to the carnival. The performance was repeated in 1905, when the fort was Fort Arthur. In both 1904 and 1905 there were fewer participants than in the first year. Enthusiasm seems to have been waning.

The storming of the fort was Rossland's adaptation to local circumstances of the "storm the ice palace" performance that was the main attraction of the winter carnivals at Montreal and Quebec City. The ice palace was an elaborate, elegant structure, designed by architects, and constructed out of blocks of ice carved from the frozen St. Lawrence River. Each palace was designed to appear like a medieval European fortress, with high crenulated walls, towers at the corners and a central structure, in one case a tall spire, in others a tall tower. For example, the 1884 ice palace in Montreal was built from 10,000 - 15,000 blocks of ice, each 40x20x15 inches. Its main tower in the centre of the fortress was 76 feet high, the front was 160 feet long, and the building was 65 feet deep. It was a massive structure, with crenulated walls and towers at the four corners, one 40 feet tall and the others 29 feet. In other years the design was different, but the basic concept was the same.

As befits a small, mountain community, Rossland's mountain-top fort was much humbler and more basic. I have found no detailed description of Fort Deschamps or Fort Monte Cristo, but the 1905 Fort Arthur, was described as "an enormous pile of logs, brushwood, tar barrels and much other inflammable matter."<sup>106</sup> It may not have been a work of beauty, but it made a glorious bonfire -- and it was the last fort to be stormed at the Rossland Winter Carnival.

I have found no explanation for abandoning the storm the fort spectacle. Construction of the fort must have involved a lot of work and purchasing the fireworks would have been a considerable expense. Either or both may have been why the event was abandoned. Alternatively, interest in snowshoeing may have been waning; participation in the torchlight parade up the mountain seemed to be declining. Whatever the reason, the storm the fort event at the carnival was over. A couple of years later there was an attempt to replace the storming of the fort by a more modest

*Snowshoe parade and torchlight procession, starting up Washington Street from the corner of Columbia Avenue, circling around a portion of Monte Cristo mountain and finishing up by coming down Spokane Street.*<sup>107</sup>

However, this event also was abandoned in 1911 "as it was not favoured very much."<sup>108</sup> Snowshoeing as a spectacle was over.

### **The Competitions**

From the start, there were several snowshoe competitions at the winter carnivals. Initially, there were two races over a 3-mile course, from the main street, around the lower parts of Rossland, and return, one for novices and one for the championship of British Columbia.<sup>109</sup> The course had been laid out by the legendary parish priest and avid snowshoer, Father Pat. Later, sprints (100-yard<sup>110</sup> and 200-yard<sup>111</sup>), a "prospectors" race, over short course (220 yards), with contestants carrying a 40 pound pack<sup>112</sup> and short races for boys (under 15 and under 10)<sup>113</sup> were added. In 1903, a fat man's race (contestants over 200 pounds) resulted in a large pile-up and considerable hilarity among the spectators.<sup>114</sup> With variations in the program, snowshoeing continued to be a central event in the carnival until 1913. The last snowshoe race at the carnival was in 1912, and then only a sprint. Like other outdoor events, it cost money for prizes but generated no revenue. I imagine that the level of interest did not justify its continuance.

## Hockey

I don't know when they started playing hockey in Rossland, but by one report the first hockey game in the Kootenays was in Kaslo, in January 1896 between Nelson and Kaslo, and the first hockey tournament was in Sandon in February of that year involving teams from Rossland, Kaslo, Nelson and Sandon.<sup>115</sup> In any case, by providing exciting entertainment on cold, often dark, winter days, the occasional hockey games that were played in Rossland, usually between Rossland and Nelson (there was no team in Trail), drew good crowds. As time went on, some of the players on the senior men's team were semi-professionals in the sense that they were recruited and paid to play, although not enough to provide an acceptable annual living. They had to have other employment. An industrial league, involving teams from mines and business establishments, soon flourished and a women's team was organized. Games were played on natural ice and hence dependent on vagaries of the weather. The hockey season was short and games were few; playing time was limited to January and February, with occasional games in late December and early March. Sometimes a period of warm weather would make the ice very soft for a time during the peak of the playing season. Because of the short season, the revenue generated by hockey games would not support a team of expensive players. Nonetheless, although there were repeated calls to have a team of local men, players often came from elsewhere. Indeed, teams in various cities competed for star players.

At that time hockey was played with six skaters and a goal tender.<sup>o</sup> The seventh player was called the "rover," indicating that he did not have a fixed position. The defenders were called "point" and "cover point" and they lined up one in front of the other, in front of the goal tender. The attackers, as now, were called "centre," "right wing" and "left wing." It should also be noted that until 1913 there were no substitutes. A team might carry an extra player or two, but the seven who took to the ice had to play the full game. If a player was injured, the referee might suspend the game temporarily while he received medical attention, but if he could not return to the ice the team had to continue with a player short, or forfeit the game.<sup>p</sup> Hockey, then, must have been a much slower game than that to which we are accustomed today, but it was also a test of endurance, particularly in a tournament when a team might be called upon to play games on successive days with the same players, conceivably including lengthy overtimes. Again until 1913, the game was played for an hour, in two halves. Revised rules in 1913 introduces the format of three twenty-minute periods. The tournament was single knock out -- lose a game and you go home. Match-ups were decided by lot before the tournament began. As today, the goals were four feet high and six feet wide. By rule, the goalie was required to remain standing at all times and was prohibited from wearing any garment that would impede the passage of the puck into the goal. A picture of the Rossland hockey team in the Spokesman Review of February 18, 1906<sup>116</sup> shows the goal tender wearing cricket-style pads. He is not holding a stick but there was no provision in the 1913 rules for a large bladed goal keeper's stick. Did he use a standard hockey stick? Not surprisingly, scores were often very high (see Appendix 1, p.33). A goal judge (the "umpire") stood on the ice behind each goal, with a flag to signal each score. There was no blue line. The offside rule was that of rugby. The players had to be behind the puck at all times; there could be no forward passes, even in their own end.<sup>q</sup> As a result, the forwards tended to attack three abreast, with the rover moving freely behind them,

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<sup>o</sup> I have not discovered a set of rules for the hockey competition at the Rossland Winter carnival. Applicable rules varied from place to place and from time to time. This discussion of the rules is based on the common elements set out in various sources, supplemented by insights from reports on games played at the tournament and, most importantly, on controversies that erupted from some of those games.

<sup>p</sup> In a book history of Ontario Hockey Association Scott Young noted that by rule if a player could not continue the opposing team would sit down a player so that the teams had an even number on the ice {Young, 1989 #571, p. 17}. Judging by newspaper reports on games, that was not the rule in the Kootenays. Thus, for example, in 1908 in a game between Rossland and Nelson one of the Nelson players was injured early in the second half. Although the team had taken extra players to Rossland, they had to finish the game with six men instead of seven {Nelson News, 1908a #577; Nelson News, 1908b #578}. In 1913 the new Boundary-West Kootenay Hockey Association introduced new rules, adapted from those in effect elsewhere, particularly in Ontario. The game was divided into three twenty-minute periods, and substitution of one man was permitted in the first two periods. The Ontario rule on injuries was introduced for the third period {GF Gazette, 1913a #589}.

<sup>q</sup> In principle, a puck bouncing off a goal keeper, retrieved by a member of his own team, could be called off side. In 1909 the Ontario Hockey Association instructed referees not to call off-sides on rebounds {Globe December 29, 1909c #653}. What the practice was in the Rossland tournaments, I don't know.

ready to attack or defend. However, Lester Patrick introduced the tactic of the rushing defenceman leading the attack to Kootenay hockey.

Although skiing may have been the main attraction at the first winter carnival, that central position was short lived. Indeed, as early as 1900 the *Miner* predicted that "The hockey tournament will be the chief feature of the carnival" -- and it was. Hockey became central to the carnival, not just because of its appeal to Rosslanders, but also because it was the event that attracted train loads of fans from other cities to support their team. It was also vital to the skating rink. Senior men's hockey packed the spectators in and so provided much revenue. Other classes of hockey were less of a draw, but nonetheless provided considerable revenue. Like the carnival itself, the hockey tournament began modestly, as a competition among three senior men's teams from the surrounding area. However, it soon expanded into women's and junior hockey and began to attract teams from outside the Kootenays, including in Alberta and across the border in nearby states.

At the carnival, refereeing was always a problem. In the early years, there was no cadre of independent referees who could be drawn upon to officiate, so resort was usually made to players or officials from other teams in the tournament, chosen before each match by agreement between the two contending teams. At times this system could pose problems as a willing referee might have little or no refereeing experience and his team might have some indirect stake in the outcome of the game, but the system spread the refereeing around and gave the contending teams a voice (indeed, a veto) in the selection. Perhaps to create some order in the selection, the carnival committee took charge of refereeing in 1900 or 1901, designating the referee for each match, but noted that still " whenever possible he will be a captain of one of the visiting hockey teams."<sup>117</sup> Beginning in 1906 the committee began designating E.S.H. Winn as the referee to handle most, if not all, of the games at the tournament. Winn was one of Rossland's leading citizens, a preeminent lawyer with practices in both Rossland and Trail who was also deeply committed to hockey.<sup>f</sup> Although he seems to have been a dedicated and (at least in Rossland) respected referee, as a Rosslander and an officer of the Victorias hockey club he was hardly independent. Moreover, on at least two occasions, his performance as a referee became the centre of serious controversies, discussed below. Controversy also arose over the desire of some teams to have a second official on the ice, a "judge of play," This was an assistant to the referee, who could call offences that the referee might not see and so help to contain rough play. Winn staunchly opposed the reduction in the absolute control of the game by the referee inherent in the appointment of a judge of play. He probably regarded the demand as impugning his ability, or his integrity, or both. Probably because of the controversies engendered by Winn, beginning in 1909 the carnival reverted to the earlier system of the teams agreeing before the competitions began on officials for each game and agreed to have a judge of play on the ice. Winn did not referee from 1909 on (he left Rossland in 1917).

As the hockey at the carnival evolved, several competitions were developed. The basic divisions were senior, junior and intermediate men, and women, but in the later years there were subdivisions in the senior men category to accommodate out-of-province teams.

### ***Senior Men***

The only hockey competition at the first carnival was for senior men. Three teams entered, Rossland, Nelson, and Sandon. Nelson, a mining and smelting town that was considerably older, contested Rossland's pretensions of being the leading city of the Kootenays. Perhaps this is why their hockey teams, which played each other regularly, had such an intense rivalry. In most years, the teams were about equally strong. Sandon, located in the mountains across the Columbia River, north east of Rossland, was also mining boom town. However, its boom was rooted in silver-lead ore, not gold-copper -- it was the heart of the "Silvery Slocan" region. Rossland easily swept the championship that year, defeating Nelson 6-1 and, in the final, Sandon, 11-1. The next year, 1899, four teams entered, two teams from Rossland and one each from Revelstoke and Nelson. Revelstoke was then an important railway and mining centre north of Rossland, where the CPR mainline crossed the Columbia River. With many

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<sup>f</sup> In addition to his legal accomplishments he was for many years chairman of the Rossland School Board. When he left Rossland in 1917 it was to become the founding chairman of the Workman's Compensation Board, an institution for which he had lobbied for several years. {Rossland Miner, 1917ze #1143; Rossland Miner, 1961b #1144}

Norwegian settlers, it was also an early skiing and ski jumping centre. Rossland entered two teams that year, Rossland City and Rossland Victorias, reflecting a split in hockey playing community. There must have been many quality hockey players in the city because the final game saw the two Rossland teams facing each other. Victorias won, 2-0, and for a second year the championship trophy stayed in the city.

The next year the senior men's hockey tournament began to show more drawing power, reaching beyond the Kootenays for competitors. In addition to the two Rossland clubs, two teams from Nelson (Nelson City and Nelson Lacrosse Club) and teams from Revelstoke, the Boundary District (a combination of players from Greenwood and Phoenix) and Vernon were entered -- seven teams in all. At the last minute, Spokane tried to enter a team, but the competition was already over-loaded given the demands on a single sheet of ice, and they were deemed "too late."<sup>118</sup> Spokane seems to have had a regular hockey league in the city, with at least three teams, the games played out of doors on a frozen lake in a popular local park.<sup>119</sup> They soon (1906) would have a new ice rink, with artificial ice, but it was short lived (it was taken over in 1908 by a company that made ice for businesses and households).<sup>120</sup>

An incident at the 1900 tournament created some bad feelings that tarnished the tournament slightly. The Boundary and Rossland City teams drew their match, 6-6. The rules of the tournament called for overtime, but the Rossland team refused to play. Rather than enforce the rule, the referee, who played on another team, was content to call the match a draw. The Boundary team appealed to the carnival committee who awarded the game to them as a forfeit.<sup>121</sup> This decision may have created a precedent that returned to haunt the tournament in 1906 and 1908. In 1900, however, Rossland's status as the host of a championship hockey team was preserved as Rossland's other team, the Victorias, went on to defeat Boundary 2-1 to win the tournament and the championship of British Columbia.<sup>122</sup>

The fame of the hockey tournament continued to spread. In 1901 an enquiry was received from Calgary.<sup>123</sup> The Calgary team did not in fact enter the tournament, but the enquiry foreshadowed things to come. Lacking more exotic entrants, that year's tournament was a hum-drum affair, with the usual teams from Rossland and Nelson (one team each, this year), Revelstoke and Phoenix (substantially the Boundary team of 1900). Sandon entered, but did not show up. For the first time the trophy went away. Nelson won, defeating Rossland in the final by a decisive 8-1.

In the following year, 1902, the drawing power of the tournament began to be a problem, given the availability of only a single sheet of ice and the many sporting events to be crammed into two days. Over Friday and Saturday, not only did the rink have to accommodate men's hockey, but also junior hockey, women's hockey and skating events. In senior men's hockey teams were entered from the usual places, Rossland, Nelson, Sandon and Phoenix, but there was also had an application from Lethbridge, Alberta, and several new entries in the junior competition -- and at the last minute, Trail announced their desire to compete. What to do? The committee rejected the Lethbridge entry and several of the junior entries, but desperately wanted to include their close neighbour. To do so, the committee had to make more ice time available. The temporary solution was to hold the Trail-Rossland game on Thursday afternoon, before the masquerade and before the normal start the sporting events of the carnival. However, a permanent solution had to be found for succeeding carnivals when the problem might get worse.

One solution proposed was to organize a Kootenay hockey league, with games to be played before the carnival. Only the champion would play at the carnival. For unstated reasons, this idea was rejected -- probably because of the possibility that the home team would not be the winner. Instead, as an important part of the 1903 regeneration of the winter carnival, it was decided to extend it from two days to three.

For the 1903 tournament, eight teams had indicated intentions to enter, including two from the Northwest Territories (now Alberta), Medicine Hat and Pincher Creek. They were the two best teams in the Crows Nest Pass league. As out of province teams, they posed an obvious problem. The competition was ostensibly for the championship of British Columbia. If one of them won the tournament, could a team from outside the province be the champion of the province? Many people objected to their inclusion in the tournament, but the committee, was anxious to extend the reach and drawing power of the carnival. They decided on a compromise. If Pincher Creek or Medicine Hat won the tournament, the players would be given medals, but not the trophy, which would go to the British Columbia team that

placed the highest in the competition. Four British Columbia teams competed (Rossland, Nelson, Revelstoke and Sandon)<sup>5</sup> with Nelson the winner and again the champion of British Columbia. The Pincher Creek team then played Nelson and easily defeated them, 9-2.<sup>124</sup> However, the game was hardly fair. Pincher Creek played only that one game in the tournament, whereas Nelson had played two games over the previous two days, with no substitutes and the same lineup. The *Miner* described the team as "battered."<sup>125</sup>

The 1903 tournament was a (temporary) high point in the evolution of senior men's hockey at the carnival. The following year, although enquiries were received Medicine Hat and Pincher Creek and Brandon, Manitoba and there was talk of a six team tournament with five games, the senior men's hockey competition contracted to four British Columbia teams (Rossland, Vernon, Fernie and Nelson) and three games. The reasons for rejecting teams from the prairies and contracting the tournament were not reported, but the expense of bringing teams from such a distance was probably a critical factor. When Lethbridge sought to enter the tournament in 1902, it was estimated that the expenses to be covered by the committee would consume almost all of the revenue from the game. Although the company that operated the rink offered to make concessions to the carnival through the sharing of any net revenue and consideration was given to charging a higher entrance fee for the Lethbridge game (\$.75 instead of the usual \$.50, or perhaps \$.50 for regular admission and \$.75 for reserved seats "in the gallery") the Lethbridge proposal was not accepted.

#### ***The 1906 Controversy: Was Winn an Impartial Referee?***

The same restricted format, with one variation (Greenwood was substituted for Vernon in 1906), was followed in the three subsequent years. Although the contraction of senior men's hockey made ice time available for women's and junior's hockey and other ice sports, the format had become a tired, lacking in novelty or spice. Rossland's hockey tournament had become a narrow, regional affair. That is not to say that the tournament lacked intense rivalries, particularly between Rossland and Nelson, to that point, the most consistently dominant teams (see Appendix 1). Indeed, the outcome of the 1906 tournament gave rise to a bitter controversy between Nelson and Rossland. The two teams faced each other in the final game of the competition, for the championship. Two pucks went in the Nelson goal that were disallowed by the goal judge, who was from Nelson. It was loudly argued that at least one of them was a legitimate goal. During the game, play was stopped twice, for extended periods, as a Rossland player had a wound to his head stitched. At the end of regulation time, the score was tied at two goals each. The game went into overtime, but after an extra hour, neither of the exhausted teams could score. At 11:30, P.M., the referee finally stopped the game that the *Miner* called "the best ever seen at the skating rink."<sup>126</sup> What to do? Which team should get the trophy. It was decided that another game would be played, but when and, more importantly, where -- and who would referee? The referee for the original game was E.S.H. Winn. Some of his calls, or non-calls, provoked the ire of the Nelson team. In particular, it was alleged that in the overtime period, whenever the play got dangerously close to the Rossland net, Rossland players would fall to the ice and feign exhaustion or injury. Despite Nelson's protests and evidence that no injury existed, "the referee, E.S.H. Winn, smilingly declined to interfere." "(T)he Rossland players continued feigning injuries, the referee winked and the game could not be finished."<sup>127</sup> It was agreed that a second game should be played to determine the champion, but the Nelson team made it a non-negotiable condition that a neutral referee be appointed. The Rossland committee refused; Winn was designated as the referee for the re-match. Nelson refused to play -- the game and the championship were award to Rossland as a forfeit.<sup>128</sup> It is, of course, impossible to assess the validity of the complaints at this remove in time with only rival newspaper accounts as evidence. However, the controversy was a blemish on the tournament and it had a similar echo with the same two teams two years later. The refusal of Rossland to appoint a neutral referee is puzzling. Were they trying to protect the reputation and goodwill of Winn, upon whom they depended for refereeing at the tournament? Were they seeking a competitive advantage in the playoff game? Or, were they simply unwilling to concede anything to their Nelson rivals? In any case, nasty as it was, the 1906 episode did not impair the ability of Rossland to attract teams to the tournament, including teams from Nelson.

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<sup>5</sup> Medicine Hat Fernie entered teams but neither actually appeared.

The senior men's hockey tournament and the winter carnival underwent another transformation in 1907. Coleman, Alberta, and Spokane sought to enter teams, which again raised the issue of outside teams competing for the British Columbia championship, including this time a team from out of the country. It also again highlighted the question of ice time. Spokane was a city with strong historical links to Rossland, and a city that organizers of the carnival carefully cultivated as a source of visitors with money to spend. There were powerful reasons to include Spokane in the tournament, but could this be done without displacing teams that had loyally supported the tournament over the years? The solution was twofold. First, the carnival was extended by another day, thus creating more ice time and making room for more teams. Second, a new competition, the "open challenge" or "international" series was created. As late as three days before the opening of the carnival, the plan was to have the teams entered in the British Columbia championship series play each other first. The winner would then meet the winner of the game between Spokane and Coleman for the international trophy.<sup>129</sup> Thus, only three teams would be involved in the competition for the open challenge cup. Unfortunately, the Coleman team withdrew, leaving only one out-of-province team. Then, the whole format of the international series was changed at the last minute. The winner of the British Columbia championship would still play for the open challenge cup, but the competition would be a series of games, not just one, involving more British Columbia teams. Rossland won the British Columbia championship, defeating both Phoenix and Nelson, the latter in a very close game.<sup>130</sup> The international series opened with Spokane defeating Revelstoke, a team that apparently filled the Coleman gap. Rossland then defeated Spokane, 6-3, and faced Nelson again in the final. Nelson had its revenge, defeating Rossland, 4-2, for the open challenge cup. The two best teams in the tournament, Nelson and Rossland, shared the trophies. Thus the open challenge series was launched and, although the international -- indeed, the out-of-province -- component was not always present, the competition continued to be part of the carnival until its demise.

#### ***The 1908 Fiasco: The Impartiality of Referee Winn Again***

For the 2008 tournament, Coleman played Spokane in the first game of the international series. Spokane won, 4-3, so Coleman was out of the competition. Rossland then played Nelson in a game that was the signal event of the tournament. Not only was it a superbly exciting match, it had repercussions that resonated beyond the advancement of Rossland to the championship match against Spokane and beyond the 1908 tournament. It was generally accepted that Nelson had the better team; they had defeated Rossland twice before the carnival and had one of Canada's best hockey players at point (trailing defence man).<sup>131</sup> However, in the challenge cup game Rossland came out very strong and by half time were up 4-0. Early in the second half, a Nelson player was injured and had to withdraw. Nelson protested rough play on the part of Rossland players, but referee Winn waved off their complaints and insisted that they carry on with six men, or default. Battered but unbowed, Nelson chose to carry on and, with energy and fury engendered by perceived unfairness and a gratuitous insult, almost succeeded. Although shorthanded, they kept Rossland scoreless in the second half and scored three goals themselves, two of them by their premier defenceman, Lester Patrick.<sup>132</sup> It was an amazing performance by the Nelson team and particularly by Patrick, who must have been a defenceman in the mode of Bobby Orr, defending stoutly and leading rushes down the ice that often resulted in scores (see Appendix 2, p. 33, for more on Lester Patrick). Rossland went on to defeat Spokane, 7-5, and win the Open Challenge Series.

Next up was the one-game British Columbia Championship. Again Rossland faced Nelson and Winn was designated as the referee. Alleging unnecessarily rough play on the part of the Rossland team in the previous game and expressing serious dissatisfaction about the decisions or non-decisions of the referee, Nelson demanded the appointment of a neutral "judge of play" to be on the ice with Winn. Otherwise, they would not play. The judge of play was a fairly recent innovation in some leagues in eastern Canada. He was an on-ice official, described as "assistant to the referee," but at the same time as having "equal powers in enforcing rules and imposing penalties."<sup>133</sup> The idea was to have another pair of eyes to pick up infractions that the referee might not be able to see. It is reported that Winn refused to referee if there was a judge of play.<sup>134</sup> In any case, the Rossland committee initially refused Nelson's ultimatum, but, faced with the financial implications of cancelling the game, eventually proposed A.B. McKenzie, secretary of the carnival, as judge of play. Nelson refused. A court judge who was present,

but without skates, was then proposed, but Nelson refused to have a judge of play who was in the timekeeper's box and not on the ice.<sup>135</sup> Nelson relented to the extent that they agreed to play without a judge of play if there was a different referee. Rossland refused. Stalemate. When the Nelson team did not appear on the ice within an hour and a half after the scheduled start of the game, the referee awarded the game and the championship to Rossland, by default. The Nelson team then appeared at the rink and offered to play an exhibition game with a purse of \$200 for the winner.<sup>136</sup> The Rossland team refused. The match was cancelled and everyone went home, unhappy.

In all preceding games over the history of the tournament and, indeed, in all games in the West Kootenays (including in Nelson), the referee was the only official on the ice. Indeed, the *Rossland Miner* asserted that a single referee "has become part of the unwritten law of the game in the Kootenays."<sup>137</sup> When Nelson was invited to participate in the tournament, they had asked for expense money of \$150 and the appointment of a judge of play. They further suggested that the referee and the judge of play not be appointed by the carnival committee but be selected for each game from among the players on teams not involved in the contest.<sup>138</sup> In a letter, Rossland agreed to the expense money but avoided the issue of the judge of play, stating ambiguously that "The matter of officials of the games will be handled by the carnival committee" and adding that "Mr. E.S.H. Winn's services will be available as referee."<sup>139</sup> The manager of the Nelson team asserted, however, that the secretary of the Rossland carnival had assured him verbally that "everything would be fixed up to our satisfaction"<sup>140</sup> and that had he not had this assurance the Nelson team would not have gone to Rossland.<sup>141</sup> The committee denied that they had agreed to have a judge of play and asserted that the rules of the tournament did not call for one, that none of the games played that year had one, and, indeed, that the Nelson team had played in the Challenge Cup without a judge of play (and with Winn as referee). Nonetheless, the Nelson team refused to play the British Columbia championship game unless a neutral judge of play was appointed. .

The cancellation of the game had serious financial implications for the rink and for the Rossland team. The British Columbia championship game was an important revenue producer. It attracted a capacity crowd that paid a premium price for admission. Those admission fees had to be refunded. Probably for this reason, the carnival committee then added injury to insult. Asserting that Nelson had broken their contract with the carnival, which had called for the team's participation in both competitions, the Rossland committee stopped payment on the \$150 expense cheque. This further infuriated the Nelson officials. McQuarrie had cashed the cheque at Hunter Brothers after banking hours to pay the club's expenses. He later compensated the department store out of his own funds. Thus, the manager of the team was out \$150. Bitter recriminations followed, by telephone, by letter and in the pages of the *Rossland Miner* and the *Nelson Daily News*. Aspersions were cast on the manliness of the Nelson players<sup>†</sup> and there were allegations that the Nelson team was under the control of gamblers who had bet heavily on a Nelson win and who realized after the earlier game that the battered Nelson team could not win.<sup>142</sup> The demand for judge of play was said to be a ploy to avoid playing the game and losing their bets. In Nelson the perfidy of Rosslanders was decried and a campaign was mounted to ensure that those who had purchased tickets for the event obtained refunds from the Rossland rink. A lawyer collected the claims and sent them to Rossland in a batch.<sup>143</sup> \$191 was received.<sup>144</sup> Of this, \$94 was turned over to McQuarrie to partially compensate for the loss that he had incurred.<sup>145</sup>

Nelson then proposed that the 1908 championship be resolved by a game between the two teams on neutral ice and both Grand Forks and Fernie<sup>146</sup> offered to host such a game. Nelson quickly accepted the Grand Forks offer and agreed to Rossland's demand that the game be played without a judge of play. The *Grand Forks Gazette* then reported:

*The dispute between the Nelson and Rossland hockey teams is to be settled some day next week at the Grand Forks rink. All the arrangements for pulling off the event have been made between the executive of the local Athletic Association and the Nelson and Rossland hockey clubs, the only undecided point being the date.*<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>†</sup> "Do the Nelson players want to make hockey as harmless as ping pong or lawn tennis? Are they a combination of milksops or are they athletes who are willing to give and take, without squealing, the accidental injuries that are the natural concomitants of hockey ..." {*Rossland Miner*, 1908c #590}. Was Don Cherry there?

If Rossland had agreed to the game in Grand Forks, they changed their mind, perhaps because of illness of some players,<sup>148</sup> perhaps because inadequate expense money was offered,<sup>149</sup> perhaps on principle. It was Rossland's tournament and the Rossland team insisted that the game be played on Rossland ice, under Rossland's rules. The expense money would then be paid. Indeed, they challenged Nelson to such a game, with a \$500 purse to the winner.<sup>150</sup> Nelson refused. As the stalemate rolled through the end of February and into early March, the ice in all of the arenas softened and the issue became moot. No more hockey would be played that year.

### ***Threats to the Rossland Tournament***

The controversy over officiating and the unpaid expense money at the 1908 carnival hockey tournament was a dark cloud hanging over Nelson-Rossland hockey relations. There was a danger that Nelson would not participate in subsequent carnivals. Indeed, the manager of the Nelson team, M. R. McQuarrie, was quoted as saying that "he must receive the expenses of his team for the last trip before he can consider any new invitation to Rossland."<sup>151</sup> Similarly, the editor of the *Nelson Daily News* suggested that if the matter was not settled amicably "... it will be a long time before Nelson players or Nelson people in a body will tempt fate by journeying to Rossland for pleasure."<sup>152</sup>

McQuarrie soon attempted to shift the focus of hockey in the West Kootenay from Rossland to Nelson. He proposed organizing a hockey league that would include teams from the Crows Nest Pass in the east to the Boundary District on the west, with perhaps a dozen clubs, and "certainly not less than seven or eight."<sup>153</sup> For league play, each team would make a long road trip, playing each other team at its home arena so that each team would play every other team twice, home and away. The league would have two centres, Fernie in the east and Nelson in the west, and

*There can be a general western championship cup, including Alberta and the south and there can be also a Yale-Kootenay cup, or a cup including British Columbia and Washington only. The one would naturally be played out as far as its finals in Fernie and the latter in Nelson... Finals can be played off at any point arranged for in the wisdom of the association, but will probably center in Fernie and Nelson.*<sup>154</sup>

The plan was an innovative, ambitious and far-seeing, but given the distances involved and the cost of travel, unrealistic. Had it been implemented, Nelson would have replaced Rossland as the centre for championship hockey in the West Kootenays. Ah, the politics of hockey!

McQuarrie appears to have been serious. Delegates from several cities were invited to meet in Nelson in December, 1908, to discuss what was then called the British Columbia Hockey League. However, clearly, the delegates could not agree and the grand scheme did not materialize. What emerged from the meeting was a somewhat less ambitious plan involving the creation of two "subsidiary leagues," one in the East Kootenay (Coleman, Fernie and Moyie) and one in the West Kootenay (Nelson, Rossland and Grand Forks or Boundary). The West Kootenay League as proposed was a non-starter. There was no representative at the meeting from Grand Forks or any other Boundary centre (Greenwood or Phoenix), or from Trail, and the Boundary teams had their own, well established, tidy, three team league. They had no reason to join the West Kootenay League with its higher transport costs. They could venture out or invite teams in for exhibition games if they chose and if time and funds permitted. The "league" that was formed consisted only of Rossland and Nelson. Although Trail had a hockey team, it did not have a covered ice rink and so was not included.<sup>155</sup> In its first (and only) season, this West Kootenay League held two games, one in each city (Nelson won both, by large scores (14-1 and 11-4)<sup>156</sup>. Two teams and two games -- some league! There was no mention of a trophy and the competition was no improvement over the *ad hoc* arrangement of previous years. Rossland and Nelson had long played each other at least twice a year. In 1910 the "league" seems to have been forgotten; no games were played between Nelson and Rossland. Rossland-Nelson competition resumed in 1911 and 1912, but in the write-ups of the games there was no mention of a "league." It was not until Trail joined in 1913 that a real West Kootenay league began.

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<sup>u</sup> The inspiration for the league may well have been a plan to build a new ice rink for Nelson, a "rink slightly larger than the Rossland rink, and built in a more substantial manner ... (with) ... a cement floor" (Nelson News, 1908t #687). The new rink was opened in January, 1909 (Nelson News, 1909h #688).

Thus, the 1909 West Kootenay League was a bust. However, it had one important consequence. The issue of the unpaid 1908 expense money arose again as the teams considered setting up the league. Negotiations for the first game of the season between Nelson and Rossland went forward after the manager of the Rossland carnival wrote to the Nelson hockey team assuring them that the \$150 would soon be paid.<sup>157</sup> Rossland's surrender was complete when the plans for the 1909 winter carnival tournament were announced. Rossland needed Nelson more than Nelson needed Rossland. Nelson's participation in the carnival brought a train load of fans and their money. With its tail between its leg, a contrite Rossland accepted all of Nelson's conditions for future tournaments. There would be a judge of play as well as a referee for each game and they would be chosen in advance by the captains of the opposing teams. Only if the opposing teams could not agree would the carnival committee designate the officials, and then they would be from one of the teams in the tournament not involved in that game.<sup>158</sup> Following the announcement of the repayment of the expense money the Nelson News observed that "harmonious relations between the two clubs can ... be taken as resolved."<sup>159</sup> However, the stain to Rossland's hockey reputation was not removed. Sensitivities remained, and they would reappear two years later.

Rossland's claim to be sponsorship of the British Columbia Championship for senior men was soon open to question from other, unrelated, sources. The credibility of Rossland's claim suffered a serious blow in 1912 when the Pacific Coast Hockey Association, organized by the Patrick brothers, began play on artificial ice, with teams in Vancouver, Victoria and New Westminster (See Appendix 2, p. 33). It might be argued that the coast league was unique in that it was thoroughly professional, but, while undoubtedly at a lower level of hockey, the teams in the Rossland tournament were not fully amateur. Some of the players were amateurs, but many were specially recruited and paid to perform at the Rossland tournament. Nonetheless, the carnival persisted with the label, "British Columbia Championship".

In any case, another potential challenge to the legitimacy of Rossland's "championship" was also emerging in the form of new hockey competitions and trophies. With the arrival of artificial ice, amateur senior men's hockey was also thriving in Vancouver and Victoria. In 1913, a Victoria lumber merchant, James M. Savage, donated a trophy, the Savage Cup, "for competition among the champion amateur hockey clubs of British Columbia."<sup>160</sup> At the outset, the competition was between the winners of the Vancouver and Victoria leagues, but the trophy soon became the true representation of the amateur hockey championship of British Columbia. Rossland won the trophy twice, in 1922/23 and 1923/24. Nelson also won the trophy once and Trail was a repeated winner.

Closer to home, in the same year, perhaps at the solicitation of the Boundary League, Premier McBride donated the McBride Cup to be awarded annually for the championship of the interior of British Columbia.<sup>161</sup> The scope of the "interior" was not defined. However, the cup was sent to Grand Forks and although the leagues were not explicitly specified the implication was that "interior" meant the Boundary and Kootenay districts. In the first year the champions of the West Kootenay and Boundary leagues were to compete for the trophy, but in subsequent years "the winner to defend against challenging teams which shall be champions of the league with which each is connected."<sup>162</sup> Fernie, from the East Kootenay league, challenged unsuccessfully one year, but for a number of years the trophy was effectively for the winner of the West Kootenay and Boundary playoff.

The championship trophies were an indirect challenge to Rossland's pretensions to be the host of the British Columbia hockey championship. In 1910, there was another ominous threat, both to the hockey tournament and more broadly to Rossland's winter carnival. It may have had no direct connection to the events of 1908, but I suspect that controversy was a powerful factor in the background. In a front page story, the Nelson Daily News touted a proposal for an annual winter carnival in Nelson, to be held "about the middle of February."<sup>163</sup> The carnival would include "Skating races, ski races, dog races (and) other features," but the centrepiece would be

*... the annual tournament for the senior hockey championship of British Columbia. In previous years this tournament had been held at the Rossland carnival, but this year, it is stated, Rossland is out of senior hockey and the best it will have will be intermediate. Vancouver has set its heart on the championship, and there are other cities with no less keen an interest. As*

*Nelson is the present holder of the championship this is certainly the appropriate place to decide this year's honors.*<sup>164</sup>

Payback time? Noting that the trophy was owned by the Rossland carnival committee, the *Rossland Miner* scoffed at the notion of Nelson hosting the championship tournament.<sup>165</sup> However, the proposal (repeated the following year) sat there as a threat. Fortunately for Rossland, the proposed Nelson carnival did not materialize.

There was as yet no governing body for hockey in British Columbia to authorize a British Columbia championship. The British Columbia Amateur Hockey Association was not organized until 1919 and by then the Rossland tournament was a thing of the past. However, after the events of 1908 Rossland's unilateral claim to host the championship was increasingly suspect. The tournament at the Rossland winter carnival still had a few good years to go, but it was struggling.

### ***Nelson Erupts Again: The 1911 Controversy.***

The 1909 hockey tournament was a disappointment. Only three teams contested for the two cups. The Spokane artificial ice rink had been closed and converted to an ice making factory, so Spokane did not have a hockey facility and could not field a team. Pincher Creek accepted an offer to play, but in the event did not appear. Only Rossland, Nelson and Moyie entered teams and Nelson won both the British Columbia championship and the Open Challenge series. In 1910 things returned more or less to normal as both Phoenix and Greenwood appeared along with Nelson and Moyie, with Nelson winning the BC Championship and Greenwood the Open Challenge. It was the 1911 tournament that again proved to be a challenge to the integrity of the event -- and, again, at issue was a dispute between Nelson and Rossland.

There were strong inter-city tensions prior to the 1911 tournament. Some Nelson merchants had reiterated the earlier suggestion that Nelson hold its own winter carnival<sup>166</sup> and, more directly, the Nelson Hockey Club announced that as British Columbia Champions for four years (they were conveniently ignoring 1908) they were prepared to accept the challenge of any team in British Columbia for the championship. Rossland owned the trophy; the *Rossland Miner* was outraged at Nelson's effrontery of seeming to put it up for competition outside the Rossland tournament.<sup>167</sup> To add injury to insult, what was probably the strongest hockey team ever assembled in Nelson (including both Patricks) destroyed the Rossland team in two pre-tournament games, 9-4 and 10-2.<sup>168</sup> This was hardly a good omen for Rossland hockey fans. They had to have a stronger team.

Sometime early on the committee had introduced a residency rule for players in the Winter Carnival hockey tournament. It was most clearly stated in 1905 "that no player will be allowed in the tournament who has not been for thirty days actually identified with his team."<sup>169</sup> This firm statement was probably a reaction to a 1904 incident. Fernie had a player, Turnbull, who was a resident of the city but had not been for a full 30 days. The tournament committee said that nonetheless he could play in the game against Vernon. The Vernon team objected and refused to play the game. After what were described as "agonizing and exhausting negotiations" it was agreed that Turnbull would not play in the Vernon game but could play in subsequent games if Fernie advanced.<sup>170</sup> It was a rather dirty compromise. In the event, Fernie was defeated by Vernon and so was out of the tournament and other teams were not faced with the dilemma of consenting or objecting to Turnbull. In 1911, in a frantic attempt to assemble a competitive team after the two disastrous games with Nelson, Rossland cynically scrapped the residency rule and went shopping for players.<sup>171</sup> Instead of the thirty days residency, the new rule simply stated that no player could play for more than one team during the carnival.<sup>172</sup> Rossland produced a good team, but it was not good enough. Phoenix won both championships

Clearly less than enthusiastic about the Rossland tournament, Nelson decided to enter a team in only one of the two competitions, that for the Championship of British Columbia. Although it had not been a barrier in the past, the reason given was that some of the men did not want to take four days off work to play hockey in Rossland. In recent years the BC Championship series had been played after the Open Challenge series so the Nelson people expected to be able to go to Rossland on Thursday and play their games on Friday and Saturday. It was asserted that Rossland officials had agreed to this verbally, but the letters that confirmed the entry did not mention such an arrangement. I have not found an

explanation, but the Rossland committee then changed the order of the two competitions, putting the BC Championship first (surely this was not done to spite Nelson!). To compound the problem, Nelson did not have an official at the Tuesday evening pre-tournament meeting when the draws were made to determine the match-ups and officials for the games. A Nelsonite who worked in Rossland agreed to represent the team, but he was not privy to earlier discussions.<sup>173</sup> Nelson was drawn to play in the first game Wednesday night. The Nelson team officials alleged that they were not notified until half an hour before the Wednesday train left for Rossland and at that point it was too late to assemble a team -- Frank Patrick was out of touch, "in the woods," and other key players were at work. Notified that if they did not appear for the Wednesday game they would lose by forfeit, Nelson elected not to send a team.

At this remote time and relying on newspaper reports, it is impossible to determine the validity of the allegations, but the available evidence does not cast the Rossland hockey organization in a good light. The legitimacy of Nelson's reason for not entering both competitions and arriving in Rossland earlier than Thursday of the carnival week is subject to question. Was it really such a burden for the players to make themselves available? However, given Nelson's choice, it seems highly likely that the Rossland team deliberately subverted the plans of their rivals, changing the rules in order to strengthen the home team and rearranging the schedule to the discomfort of Nelson. Assuming that the draw was fair, it was a matter of chance that Nelson drew the Wednesday game. The second game, between Phoenix and Greenwood, was to be on Thursday evening, a time at which the Nelson team would have been available. Had goodwill prevailed all around, the two games could have been switched. That was not done. . Perhaps there was some rough justice in the fact that although Rossland reached the finals of both cup competitions, Phoenix, the other stellar team in the tournament, won both (see Appendix 1, p. 33). I don't know if it was a protest against their treatment in 1911, but despite early indications that they would participate, in 1912 Nelson sent their intermediate and women's teams but did not send a senior team to the tournament.

### ***Coasting to a Climax***

The Open Challenge Championship had long been known, informally, as the International Championship. In 1913 that was the name that appeared in the program, which was paradoxical, because it ushered in three years in which no American teams competed (Missoula, Montana, accepted an invitation to the tournament in 1912, but the committee could not cover the expenses and turned the American team down<sup>174</sup>). There were enquiries, but no teams materialized. In varying combinations, Rossland, Nelson, Trail, Fernie and Grand Forks played each other, Rossland winning a cup only once. Thus the tournament coasted along in a familiar pattern, despite the introduction of cash prizes for the winning teams in 1914. Then, in 1916, there was a sudden break though on the international side, and the tournament belatedly changed focus. Teams from Butte and Anaconda, Montana, entered. Both suffered humiliating defeats (Anaconda lost 8 to 1 against Phoenix and Butte 10 to 3 against Nelson) but both sought to return the following year.<sup>175</sup> Butte, did not in fact enter, but, as American representative, Anaconda was joined by Spokane. Hockey in Spokane had been revitalized. Lester Patrick had built a new arena with artificial ice, installed a professional team, the Canaries of the Pacific Coast Hockey Association, and gave encouragement and support for amateur hockey (see Appendix 2, p. 46). The team that came to Rossland called itself the Canadian All-Star Independent Hockey Team of Spokane.<sup>176</sup> As the name suggests, it was an aggregation of Canadian players, quickly assembled for the occasion, including three men from Rossland.

By 1917 the acrimony between Rossland and Nelson had been resolved. The *Nelson Daily News* published a gracious editorial congratulating Rossland on the twentieth anniversary of its winter carnival, wishing them success and extolling "the generous hospitality which the citizens of Rossland always extend to the strangers within their gates."<sup>177</sup> Such sentiments would not have been expressed a few years earlier. As a further indication of reconciliation, not only was a judge of play included among the on-ice officials, but the official referee for all games was Harry Bishop of Nelson. Bishop was one of Nelson's all-time hockey greats. Along with his brothers, he was a member of the team involved in the 1908 fiasco. The Nelson hockey team was drawn to play in the first game on Wednesday afternoon. When the train arrived from Nelson without the hockey team (it had been decimated by the flu), there was

no explosion of acrimony. Nelson was quietly dropped from the tournament, a new draw was held, and the remaining teams got on with the competitions.

In another respect, the 1917 tournament involved a radical change. The competition that had been for the "Championship of British Columbia" was opened to American teams and the trophy was renamed the "Rossland Carnival Shield."<sup>178</sup> Had the tournament continued, this would have made it more attractive to American teams. Even if they lost, they could be guaranteed two games, not just one -- and both competitions had cash prizes for first and second places. For the Rossland men's hockey team, 1917 was a notable success -- a fitting climax to the two-decade long series of tournaments. The Rossland team won both events, defeating Phoenix in the International event, 7-3 in overtime), and Anaconda, 4-2.<sup>179</sup> Thus, for the first time, one of the American teams went home with prize money for finishing second.

### ***Intermediate, Junior and Juvenile Men***

Junior hockey was introduced to the carnival in 1899, with teams from Rossland, Sandon and Nelson. Players had to be 18 years of age or younger. Later, this seems to have been changed to players under the age of 21.<sup>180</sup> For the 1903 tournament a new classification was introduced. Teams of men between the ages of 16 and 21 were to be in a category called "intermediate" while the term "junior" was to apply to men under 16.<sup>181</sup> Unfortunately, I don't know if these classifications were adhered to throughout the life of the carnival, nor do I know that age bracket later called "juvenile."

As with the senior competition, the juniors were also playing for the "Championship of British Columbia", signified by a handsome trophy donated by Ross Thompson, the founder of the city, as well as individual medals.<sup>182</sup> Sandon won the championship, with a young, inexperienced team of very small players who skated rings around the larger Rossland boys, defeating them 4-2 in the final game.<sup>183</sup>

The important innovation that would change the nature of senior men's hockey competitions, the entry of teams from outside the province, began with junior men's hockey. In 1900, the Spokane High School team was admitted to the junior tournament. Had it been a strong team, this would have created a puzzle: could a team from Washington State be the champions of British Columbia? It proved to be a non-issue. The Spokane team was so weak that the *Miner* made the insulting observation that "The Spokane club were under the misapprehension that hockey and ice polo were identical games."<sup>184</sup> The Sandon juniors beat them, 16-0.

### ***Women***

Women's hockey joined the lineup of games at the 1900 carnival, with a competition modestly touted as "for the ladies hockey championship of the province."<sup>185</sup> In Rossland, women's hockey was by then well established, with enough players to form two teams (the "Crescents," whose colour was scarlet, and the "Stars," wearing "gobelin blue"<sup>186</sup> -- they were also known as the reds and the blues) who would play each other. In 1900 it was reported that "The costumes will consist of bloomers and skirts of the club color and white sweaters trimmed with the club colors."<sup>187</sup> The skirts were ankle length, of heavy wool. Such uniforms are displayed in an 1897 picture of the team on skates, with hockey sticks but without the colourful toques that were said to be a standard part of the teams attire.<sup>188</sup> The players were not wearing gloves and there is no evidence of protective padding. There is also no evidence of a special goalie stick or pads. Women's hockey must have been a more genteel game than that to which we have become accustomed in recent years. Like the men, they played seven aside and although the team might carry at least one extra player on its roster, there were no substitutes during the game. The women players were coached by members of the men's hockey team.<sup>189</sup> In addition to playing each other, the women also sharpened their skills by playing games against teams of men from local businesses that formed an industrial league.

Women's hockey was not well established elsewhere in the Kootenay and Boundary regions. For the 1900 carnival, a team was hastily organized in Nelson to enter the competition. It was formed only a week before the competition, had only two practices and included some players who were completely inexperienced ("one, indeed, would not have recognized a hockey stick if she had met it casually").<sup>190</sup> Nonetheless, it is reported that the Nelson team played "bravely," but when one of Nelson's best players

was injured (there were no substitutes) the team conceded and the game was called. In that one game tournament the Rossland women won the championship of the province, 4-0. In subsequent years there was but a single women's hockey game at the carnival. Almost always it was between Rossland and Nelson, but on one occasion Greenwood sent a team and on another, Phoenix.

## Skating

Two types of skating competitions were part of the carnival, races around the arena (what we would not call short-track speed skating) and fancy skating (i.e., figure skating). They held various competitions for men, women, boys and girls, males and females together and less serious events. Skating was a big event right to the end.

Occasionally the skating events were enlivened by the appearance of and outside skating star. Thus, in 1900, J.K. McCulloch, said to be "the champion skater of the world," came to Rossland. He had won the world speed skating championship at Montreal in 1897 defeating national champions from both Europe and North America.<sup>191</sup> Moreover, it was said that "as a fancy skater he has few equals." In Rossland, he put on an exhibition of both "fancy" (i.e., figure) and speed skating. The ice was said to be in very poor shape ("soft" with "numerous holes"), but nonetheless he put on an amazing demonstration:

*He did the single and double tree, flying and the goosewing excellently well, besides some other feats which were extremely difficult. ... a second act, figure skating on stilts was very hazardous and the carrying out of this part of his program showed great pluck on the part of the skater. ... the evolutions of the champion on both the inside and outside edge were especially deserving of commendation. .... Next followed several jumps over obstacles, the largest of which was about 15 or 16 feet, and afterwards a race against local skaters.*<sup>192</sup>

He was faster than any of the local skaters, whether skating forwards or backwards (in which "his speed, if anything, being slightly superior to his forward movement.").

## Coasting and Tobogganing

Coasting involved sleighs (with runners) rather than toboggans (without runners) and it seems to have been primarily an activity for children, with perhaps one race for teams of adults. In 1898 it was on the steep Davis Street hill but the next year it was moved to Spokane Street between Second and First Avenues, presumably to facilitate viewing the event. In 1899 there were three races, one for boys and one for girls on single sleds and one for "big coasters to carry not more than 6 people".<sup>193</sup> Coasting races for boys and girls were an important part of the first few carnivals, but they seem to have been dropped about 1902. I have found no explanation (perhaps the toboggan run was regarded as a substitute). Later children's sports focused on skating and skiing.

If the original coasting events were designed to include children in the carnival festivities, the toboggan run on Washington Street was intended to be adult-oriented -- but it is clear that that many children took advantage of the available thrills. The toboggan slide on lower Washington Street was banked on both sides and flooded by the fire department to make an icy channel in which the toboggans would run. The slide was said to be 1258 feet long with a drop of 243 feet, an average grade of almost 20%.<sup>194</sup> It was very steep and, under the right conditions, very fast. It was originally intended as a recreational facility and tobogganing was advertised as an activity "In which all will take part, the slide being in charge of an expert."<sup>195</sup> Ordinary sleighs with runners were banned from the slide to protect the surface but to assure access by those who did not own toboggans, the committee purchased fifteen toboggans from Winnipeg and stationed them at the top of the slide for all to use. It was said that the Winnipeg toboggans were the best in the world.

I have already discussed the French Canadian influence on snowshoeing in the early carnivals. I suspect the same influence was present in the introduction and construction of the toboggan slide. A toboggan slide on Mount Royal was always a popular feature of the Montreal winter carnivals. It was illuminated at night and was used both for competitions and for recreation. A picture of the slide,

accompanying a memoir about a visit to the carnival and published in the Winnipeg Free Press in 1906, shows two parallel slides and a starting ramp to give the tobogganers added velocity at the beginning of a run. The Rosslund slide had a similar starting ramp with a 30° angle to give the tobogganers a fast start and it was illuminated at night. There was a proposal to build two parallel slides in Rosslund to increase the excitement at races, which, with but a single slide, were timed events, but I don't know if it was built. Of course, the similarities to Montreal could well have been coincidental. However, two things suggest Montreal roots. First is the matter of timing. The originators of the plan are not identified in the press reports on the carnival. However, it came at a time (1903) when the French Canadian influence was reaching its apex through the snowshoe club and the storming of the fort spectacle. Second, when tobogganing on the slide joined the list of competitive sports in 1905, a trophy for the fastest run in the competition on the toboggan slide was presented to the carnival by J.S. Deschamps, one of the leading French Canadian citizens of Rosslund and a leader of the snowshoers. It was for, the fastest toboggan "carrying a lady and gentleman."<sup>196</sup> The average speed of the first winner of the Deschamps trophy was just over 40 miles per hour; it must have been considerably faster in the steepest sections.<sup>197</sup> Appropriately, they called the toboggan slide the "Zip."

The Zip had a significant liability for its participants. The ride left them deep in the Trail Creek Valley; they had to make their way back to the city, with the toboggan. If there was any form of transport available, it was not mentioned. Perhaps for this reason, perhaps because it became common place, after a few years the novelty and the enthusiasm wore off. It is not clear if there was an admission fee for the Zip; one was not mentioned in the occasional lists of admission fees published by the committee. In any case, construction and supervision of the Zip involved expenses that as revenues sagged the committee could ill afford. In 1910 the Zip was leased to a private operator who "will put put the slide in good order, repair the toboggans and keep the slide in operation during the carnival for what he can make of it."<sup>198</sup> The same arrangement was made in 1911,<sup>199</sup> but I don't know about 1912 but in 1913 the committee seems to have been operating it again. The last mention that I have found of the Zip was in 1913 when the concern was safety. It was asserted that the slide was "too steep and hilly" and the ice-maker for the arena was asked to make the walls "perpendicular instead of sloping" and to level the "humps so that it can be negotiated without danger by amateurs."<sup>200</sup> That riding a toboggan in the slide could have been a daunting experience is suggested by the fact that the committee that year decided to build a second, gentler slide on the hospital hill section of Columbia Avenue "so that ladies and children may enjoy the sport without the danger of a steep slide, like the famous 'Zip'".<sup>201</sup> I don't know if this facility was repeated in subsequent carnivals. In later years apparently the Zip was not installed. Instead, in 1914 a less serious and cheaper-to-build slide was made on Spokane Street where it would be more visible and it was "expected that it will be swift enough for pleasure, and that the easier return (to the start) will greatly popularize the sport."<sup>202</sup> No slide was mentioned in the reports on the 1915 carnival, but one was built on Washington Street in 1916.<sup>203</sup> It was characterized in the same way as the 1914 slide, so I doubt that it was the Zip. In any case, that was the end of special toboggan slides at the carnival. None was evident in 1917.

## Curling

Among the sports at the carnival curling seems to have been the best organized. There were both a Kootenay and a British Columbia Curling Association. Until the Patricks brought artificial ice to Vancouver and Victoria, curling, like other winter sports, was only feasible and popular in the interior where winters were generally cold. The Kootenay and Boundary districts were particularly active and well organized, so that the British Columbia Curling Association was a Kootenay-Boundary organization for many years. A "provincial" bonspiel was held each year and rotated among cities in the two regions. and a developed network of bonspiels involving Kootenay and Boundary centres. There were always a large number of teams entered in the carnival bonspiel from all over the Kootenays (and beyond), which created a problem. To accommodate all of the teams they had to use the main ice sheet at the arena, as well as the dedicated curling sheets. For this reason, curling started before the carnival was officially kicked off by the masquerade on ice. Thus, in 1900 the curling bonspiel began on Tuesday, February 12 and continued the next day. The masquerade took over the main ice sheet on the evening of

Wednesday, February 13, and the rest of the sports began on Thursday. That year teams were entered from Rossland, Sandon, Revelstoke, Nelson

## Something For Everyone

As the carnival developed, the theme seemed to be "something for everyone." It didn't matter if the activity was a traditional winter sport, if it was feasible to put it on in the winter and it would attract a crowd, it could be part of the festivities.

### ***Horse and Dog Races***

Horse and dog racing along Columbia Avenue were added to the program in 1900.<sup>204</sup> At first the horse races were for "horse and cutter," a light sleigh. These were what we would now call harness races, but on snow. In 1900, there were two races, for single and double cutters. It is not clear whether the horses were trotters or pacers, but horses breaking gait were penalized. In the first group of races, there was a near calamity when a horse veered from the course and broke through the crowd of spectators.<sup>205</sup> One man was knocked down but there were no serious injuries.

In 1902 a "well known local horse" named Doctor M was banned from the race.<sup>206</sup> No reason was given, but presumably he was known to be so fast that his participation would have discouraged other potential entrants. After the race, Doctor M gave a special exhibition of his skills. At the same time, the committee was making a special effort to attract expert skiers and jumpers. Imagine the effect if, instead, they had banned the best on the grounds that he would inevitably win!

Later more specialized races were added, for "butcher boys" and "express men." For the butcher boys race, the horses had to be engaged in the delivery business in Rossland, whether meat, groceries, newspapers or other similar items. They had to be ridden by boys, using stock saddled and carrying a basket with 20 pounds of weight.<sup>207</sup> A Roman chariot race on Columbia Avenue (0301.08) 1902 race said to be one that few Rosslanders will forget. There were also ski joring races, with horses pulling skiers on the main street.

For the dog races each dog pulled a small sleigh (a "sulky") bearing a boy. For the dog, strength must have been more important than raw speed. The course was 75 yards along Columbia Avenue. Before the first race it was noted that

*... every canine weighing over 20 pounds, grading from mongrels up to pure bred St. Bernards and mastiffs has been broken to harness by the boys for the purpose of competing in the races.*<sup>208</sup>

St. Bernard racing dogs would have been a sight to behold.

The dog and sleigh races could get particularly exciting. In 1907 three dog and sleigh teams entered the competition. Two of the dogs were large mastiffs, Buller and Watch. The third was a small spaniel, Brownie.

*After jockeying for a start the three canines left the starting point with Buller in the lead. Several loose dogs joined in the race, the barking and the excitement. Watch was second and Brownie apparently hopelessly in the rear, for he was very slow. The unattached canines kept barking, and this so excited Watch that he overtook Buller and caught him by the neck, and there was a free-for-all dog fight in the centre of the street, with dogs, drivers and spectators mixed up in great confusion. Rutherford (the owner of the spaniel) saw his opportunity, and steering Brownie past the excited mass he passed under the wire an easy winner of the race and the money.*<sup>209</sup>

A variant on the tortoise and the hare? In 1908 there were no dog races, but they returned in later carnivals.

### ***Tug of War***

An innovation in 1904 was that well known winter sport, the tug of war. It was introduced because of its popularity at the summer carnival when "Excitement ran high, and money was freely wagered on the outcome, which is a fairly accurate criterion of the interest aroused."<sup>210</sup> However, where would you find a venue for such an event where the men would have good footing and there was ample room for spectators. It would be difficult to hold it on a snow covered street and, of course, the parks were out of the question. They settled on the skating rink, putting boards down over the ice sheet, both to provide footing and to prevent damage to the ice surface. The major mines were invited to provide teams of strong men. The tug of war proved to be an enduring feature of the carnival.

### ***Boxing***

Boxing was not part of the carnival. However, sensing an appreciative audience, private promoters started to hold matches at the same time as the winter carnival, bringing in well know boxers from Spokane and elsewhere. It is perhaps not surprising that in a rough and tumble town boxing matches proved to be immensely popular, although they were not held every year. Recognizing their attraction, the carnival committee occasionally featured them in their advertising although they were not listed in the official program until almost the end. As the carnival wound down, so did boxing. There was a rousing match in 1916, but none in 1917

## **Old Timers Reunion**

The social side of the winter annual celebration was enlivened in 1903 by the addition of an "old timers reunion" to the agenda.<sup>211</sup> A number of "pioneers of the camp," known to be resident in various other places in British Columbia and elsewhere, were invited and asked to invite other old timers in their area to the reunion. I suspect that this was the first such reunion attempted in Rossland. After all, the "old times" were not that old. Although the important mining claims were registered in 1897, the mining boom effectively started in 1894, only 9 years previously.

In 1913 one of the prominent old timers present at the gathering was Olaus Jeldness. He gave a speech, reminiscing about the old days (and undoubtedly about skiing). To climax his remembrances he told a story about a nameless partner (probably Jefferson Lewis) who was skilled at the art of prospecting and claim development but largely innocent of the ways of commerce and finance. They had sold a property (the Velvet?) to an English company and, upon receipt of the proceeds, had to pay a commission to a Mr. Smith and a Mr. Brown, agents who had assisted in the deal, and exchange to the bank for conversion of the sterling funds to dollars. He quoted his partner as saying " he understood about Mr. Smith and Mr. Brown, but declared that he did not understand why Mr. Exchange was paid anything...." The story amused the assembled old timers, but it is had a sad sequel. As is noted in my essay on Olaus Jeldness, Jefferson Lewis (who was not at the reunion) was not as clever in handling money as was Jeldness, squandered his fortune and ended his life alone and in poverty in a Spokane hotel room.<sup>212</sup>

## **The End of the Carnival**

Rossland's annual celebration of winter changed its character in 1915-1917. The ice rink, with hockey and skating, had always been central to the carnival. As the committee shed events that involved significant expenses but generated little or no revenue, the focus on the ice rink became even more intense and the carnival had an ever narrowing program of events. It became almost a hockey and skating carnival. Thus, apart from children's sports (skating and skiing) the masquerade, a dance and amateur ski jumping, the 1917 program was all hockey. Gone were snowshoeing, ski running, street sports, tobogganing, etc.

It is not clear why this transformation occurred, but it may have been for financial reasons. The carnival always walked a financial tight rope. Each year the committee received a grant from the City

(\$150) and often had a small balance left over from the year before. However, the mainstays were donations from local people and businesses and revenues from the ice rink.<sup>v</sup> Although they sometimes published a list of contributors showing amounts donated -- a policy presumably designed to shame leading figures in the city who had not made substantial contributions -- the committee never published comprehensive financial statements so we cannot trace the carnival's financial condition through the years. However, once or twice elements of the budget were revealed; in a normal year, the committee budgeted between \$2,500 and \$3,000. In 1914, presumably feeling flush with funds and hoping to attract a teams from a wider range of places, the committee introduced cash prizes for the two hockey competitions: \$100 for first place and \$50 for second.<sup>213</sup> With increased expenses for bringing teams from the States, falling donations and restricted revenues in a difficult time, economically (see below), this may have forced severe economies on the committee. In any case, the program for the last year was very narrow.

Why did the winter carnival, so successful for so many years, die a quiet death in 1917? Although it was said that the decision to hold the twentieth carnival was "unanimously decided" at a "largely attended" meeting to consider the question,<sup>214</sup> there seems to have been opposition -- some strongly held doubts that "it would be advisable to hold the annual festivities again this year."<sup>215</sup> Unfortunately, the nature of that opposition was not spelled out in newspaper reports (by and large the *Miner* was an unabashed booster of the city, the carnival and anything that favoured increased business for Rossland) and I have not found a contemporary explanation for the cessation or a report of a failed attempt to revive the carnival after the war. I can only speculate about possible reasons.

There may have been a quiet consensus that the carnival could not be held in the last, frantic years of the war. The war made heavy demands on people, resources and transport facilities, and many young men either volunteered for service in the armed forces, or were conscripted depleting the pool of athletes. The carnival attempted to put a patriotic face on the carnival by contributing whatever profits were made to the Patriotic Fund (a fund created by popular subscription to provide support for families of war time casualties). Nonetheless, it must have been difficult to organize support for the carnival in wartime circumstance. In addition, I suspect that the state of the city's economy in 1917-18 and the influenza epidemic of 1918, which infected countless residents and killed 49 or 50, were critical in the decision to suspend the carnival. A prolonged strike in the Crows Nest Pass coal mines stopped the supply of coke to the smelter, forcing it to close and with it the Rossland mines. When mining stopped, the men were unemployed, with no income. Some left the city, seeking work, hoping to return when mining returned to normal. Raising the funds in the face of a prolonged shut down of the mines in 1917 and putting together an organization in the face of the 1918 epidemic were, to say the least, problematic. It is understandable that a short-term suspension occurred, but why was the carnival not renewed subsequently, perhaps in 1920 or 1921.

I suspect that it was primarily the changing economic circumstances of the city that militated against renewal of the carnival. The state of the Rossland economy depended on the state of the mines. Figure 1, based on data from the *Annual Reports* of the Department of Mines, shows estimates of the aggregate output of the mines (measured in tons of ore shipped) and the number of men employed in the mines<sup>w</sup> from 1894 through 1925. The exuberant mining boom from 1894 to 1903 that was the background for the early development of the winter carnival is apparent. Output increased explosively. Estimates of employment are not available for the early years, but the number of men working in the mines must have increased equally explosively from a handful in 1894 to about 1000 in 1900. From 1903 on there was a steady erosion of production and employment, but they remained at a high level, until the

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<sup>v</sup> In 1909 a new agreement was made with the management of the rink giving the carnival a larger share of revenue. Instead of deducting \$25 for rink expenses each day, with the net receipts were divided 50/50 between the rink and the carnival, the carnival was to receive 50% of the gross revenues {Rossland Miner, 1909h #807}. The question of the division of revenues from the rink was revisited in 1911. Recognizing that donations were down and that there was a risk that the carnival could not be held that year, the rink management offered to increase the carnival's share of the receipts at the rink from 50% to 60% ("for the year ... not as a precedent for future years) {Rossland Miner, 1911d #799}. The *Miner* followed up with an editorial urging everyone to follow the rink's gesture and increase their donations {Rossland Miner, 1911e #808}. I don't know which rule for the division of rink revenues applied subsequently.

<sup>w</sup> Employment data were not published for the years before 1900.

soaring demand for copper at the outset of World War 1 induced another boom. The collapse in production during the 1917 coal strike was dramatic. But even more dramatic was the failure of output and employment to recover when the strike ended. The price of copper on world markets had fallen (Figure 2) and the large producing mines of Rossland were digging ever deeper into the mountain. The mines were less productive and extraction of the ore was more costly. Mining of the low grade copper-gold ores that characterized the camp was no longer profitable. The painful process of closures began. By 1928 the major mines, then owned by the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited (Cominco), were shut down and the only remaining mining activity was in small independent mines. Rossland was beginning the great transformation from a gold mining camp to a stable residential suburb for the Trail smelter.

If the establishment of the winter carnival was a celebration of exuberance of the booming mining camp, its termination was a reflection of the gloom of depression and contraction. The census of 1901 reported the population of the city as 6156, thought by many to be an underestimate. By 1921 it had collapsed to under 2100. The city struggling to survive did not have the resources and the confidence to renew the winter carnival with its overtones of more prosperous times apparently gone by. The question was not whether winter in Rossland should be celebrated, but whether Rossland would survive. It was not until the aftermath of World War II, when the city was again prosperous and stable, that the tradition of a winter carnival was renewed.

# Figures

Figure 1

Rossland Mines, Ore Shipped and Men Employed, 1894-1925

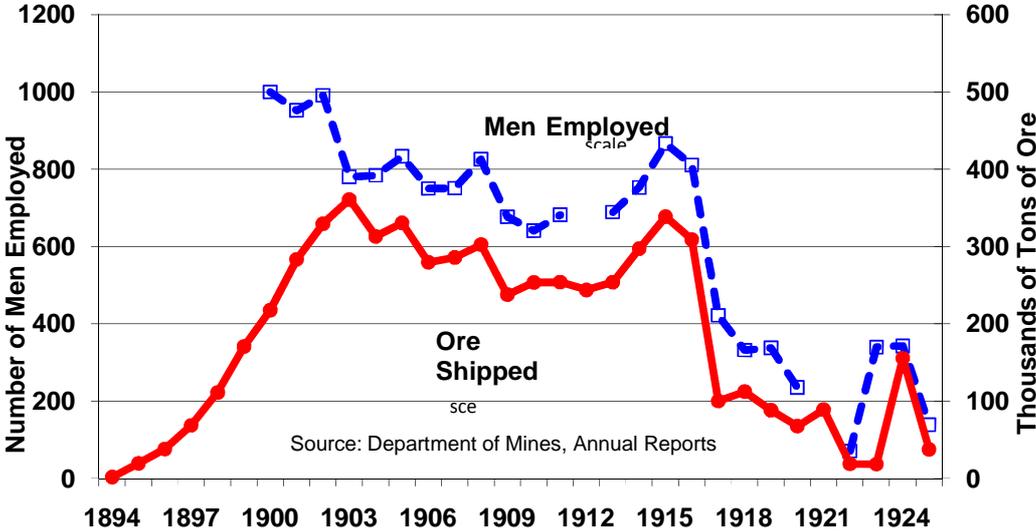
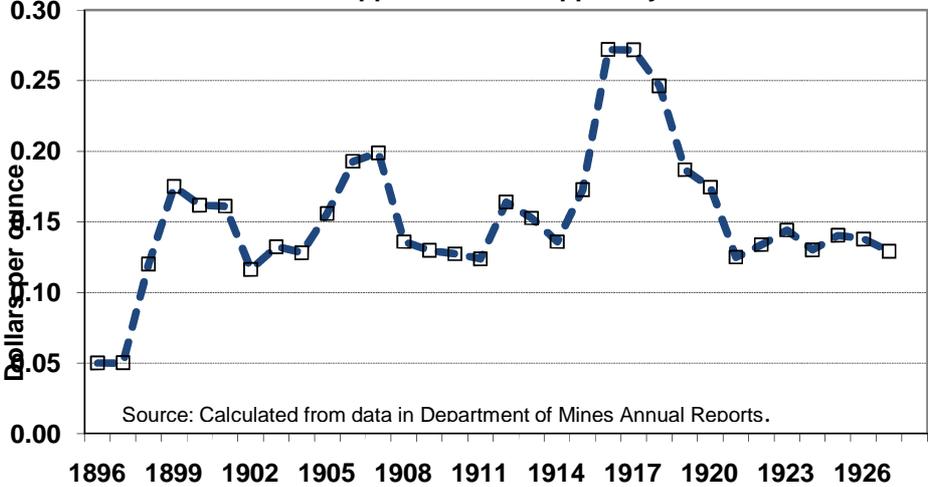


Figure 2

Price of Copper, 1896-1927:  
 Unit Value of Copper in Ores Shipped By Rossland Mines



1896 1899 1902 1905 1908 1911 1914 1917 1920 1923 1926

## Appendix 1 Senior Hockey Matches

1898				
Game 1	Rosland	6	Nelson	1
Game 2	Sandon	3	Nelson	0
Final	Rosland	1	Sandon	1
Rosland champions of British Columbia				
1899				
Game 1	Rosland	7	Revelstoke	2
Game 2	Rosland Victorias	4	Nelson	2
Final	Rosland Victorias	2	Rosland City	0
Rosland Victorias champions of British Columbia				
1900				
Game 1*	Boundary	6	Rosland City	6
* Boundary declared the winner of game 1 when Rosland refused to play overtime				
Game 2	Revelstoke	8	Vernon	0
Game 3	Rosland Victorias	7	Nelson City	1
Game 4	Rosland Victorias	4	Nelson Lacrosse	3
Game 5	Boundary	5	Revelstoke	1
Final	Rosland Victorias	2	Boundary	1
Rosland Victorias champions of British Columbia				
1901				
Game 1	Rosland	6	Revelstoke	1
Game 2	Nelson	4	Phoenix	1
Game 3	Nelson	8	Rosland	1
Nelson champions of British Columbia				
1902				
Game 1	Rosland Victorias	9	Trail	3
Game 2	Nelson	7	Rosland Victorias	1
Game 3	Sandon	8	Phoenix	4
Game 3	Nelson	5	Sandon	2
Nelson champions of British Columbia				
1903				
Game 1	Rosland Victorias	9	Rosland City	5
Game 2	Nelson	5	Grand Forks	4
Game 3	Rosland Victorias	4	Slocan City	3
Game 3	Nelson	4	Sandon	3
Game 4	Nelson	3	Rosland Victorias	1
Game 5	Pincher Creek	9	Nelson	3
Nelson champions of British Columbia; Pincher Creek champions of the carnival.				
1904				

Game 1	Rossland	2	Nelson	1
Game 2	Vernon	7	Fernie	4
Game 3	Vernon	2	Rossland	1
Vernon champions of British Columbia				
1905				
Game 1	Nelson	6	Vernon	1
Game 2	Fernie	5	Rossland	3
Game 3	Nelson	7	Fernie	4
Nelson champions of British Columbia				
1906				
Game 1	Nelson	7	Greenwood	1
Game 2	Rossland	9	Fernie	2
Game 3	Rossland	2	Nelson	2
The game remained tied after overtime. A playoff game was called for but did not occur because of a dispute about refereeing. Rossland declared champions of British Columbia by default.				
1907				
British Columbia Championship Series				
Game 1	Nelson	11	Revelstoke	4
Game 4	Rossland	9	Phoenix	1
Game 3	Rossland	3	Nelson	2
Rossland champions of British Columbia				
Open Challenge Series				
Game 1	Spokane	4	Revelstoke	2
Game 2	Rossland	6	Spokane	3
Game 3	Nelson	4	Rossland	2
Nelson champions of open challenge series				
1908				
British Columbia Championship Series				
Game 1*	Rossland	1	Nelson	0
*The game between Rossland and Nelson for the championship was not played because of a dispute about officiating. Rossland declared champions of British Columbia by forfeit				
Open Challenge Series				
Game 1	Spokane	4	Coleman	3
Game 2	Rossland	4	Nelson	3
Game 3	Rossland	7	Spokane	5
Rossland champions of open challenge series				
1909				
British Columbia Championship Series				
Game 1	Nelson		Rossland	

Game 2	Nelson	15	Moyie	1
Nelson champions of British Columbia				
Open Challenge Series				
Game 1	Rossland	2	Moyie	1
Game 2				
Game 3	Nelson	5	Rossland	3
1910				
British Columbia Championship Series				
Game 1	Phoenix	9	Rossland	5
Game 2	Nelson	9	Moyie	7
Game 3	Phoenix	5	Greenwood	4
Game 4	Nelson	6	Phoenix	1
Nelson champions of British Columbia				
Open Challenge Series				
Game 1	Nelson	9	Phoenix	5
Game 2	Greenwood	4	Moyie	1
Game 3	Greenwood	7	Nelson	6
Greenwood champions of open challenge series				
1911				
British Columbia Championship Series				
Game 1*	Rossland	1	Nelson	0
*The Nelson team did not appear for game one. Rossland declared the winner by forfeit				
Game 2	Phoenix	5	Greenwood	4
Game 3	Phoenix	8	Rossland	2
Phoenix champions of British Columbia				
Open Challenge Series				
Game 1	Phoenix	13	Missoula	5
Game 2	Rossland	5	Greenwood	4
Game 3	Phoenix	8	Rossland	6
Phoenix champions of open challenge series				
1912				
British Columbia Championship Series				
Game 1	Cranbrook	6	Rossland	2
Game 2	Greenwood	4	Phoenix	3
Game 3	Greenwood	2	Cranbrook	1
Greenwood champions of British Columbia				
Open Challenge Series				
Game 1	Phoenix	10	Rossland	5
Game 2	Greenwood	5	Cranbrook	3
Game 3	Greenwood	4	Phoenix	2

Greenwood champions of open challenge series				
1913				
British Columbia Championship Series				
Game 1	Fernie	8	Rossland	2
Game 2	Nelson	6	Trail	3
Game 3	Fernie	6	Nelson	3
Fernie champions of British Columbia				
International Championship Series				
Game 1	Rossland	5	Trail	3
Game 2	Fernie	5	Nelson	3
Game 3	Rossland	3	Fernie	2
Rossland international champions				
1914				
British Columbia Championship Series				
Game 1	Nelson	9	Fernie	7
Game 2	Rossland	4	Trail	3
Game 3	Rossland	5	Nelson	4
Rossland champions of British Columbia				
International Championship Series				
Game 1	Trail	14	Fernie	6
Game 2	Rossland	6	Nelson	4
Game 3	Trail	9	Rossland	2
Trail international champions				
1915				
British Columbia Championship Series				
Game 1	Rossland	7	Nelson	1
Game 2	Trail	6	Grand Forks	0
Game 3	Trail	5	Rossland	2
Trail champions of British Columbia				
International Championship Series				
Game 1	Trail	3	Rossland	1
Game 2	Grand Forks	4	Nelson	3
Game 3	Trail	6	Grand Forks	1
Trail international champions				
1916				
British Columbia Championship Series				
Game 1	Nelson	9	Grand Forks	4
Game 2	Trail	5	Phoenix	4
Game 3	Rossland	3	Trail	1
Game 4	Rossland	3	Nelson	1
Rossland champions of British Columbia				
International Championship Series				
Game 1	Butte	5	Grand Forks	4
Game 2	Phoenix	8	Anaconda	1
Game 3	Rossland	3	Trail	0

Game 4	Rossland	5	Phoenix	2
Game 5	Nelson	10	Butte	3
Game 6	Rossland	3	Nelson	1
Rossland international champions				
1917				
Rossland Carnival Championship Series				
Game 1	Anaconda	5	Spokane	0
Game 2	Rossland	3	Anaconda	1
Game 3	Rossland	6	Phoenix	2
Game 4	Rossland	2	Trail	1
Game 4	Rossland	4	Anaconda	3
Rossland champions of the Winter Carnival				
International Championship Series				
Game 1	Phoenix	7	Spokane	2
Game 2	Anaconda	7	Trail	0
Game 3	Phoenix		Anaconda	
Game 4	Rossland	7	Phoenix	3
Rossland international champions				

## Appendix 2

### The Patricks: Nelson's Hockey Heroes and Rossland's Bêtes Noires -- The Early Days of Professional Hockey in British Columbia<sup>x</sup>

Lester Patrick is a legend in Canadian hockey, one of the fastest, most talented hockey players of his age, one of Canada's all-time greatest hockey players, a pioneering hockey entrepreneur and certainly the most outstanding player ever to take the ice in Rossland's winter carnival tournament. He also had remarkable staying power. At age 42 he was still filling in on defence for the Victoria Cougars, a team that he owned, managed and coached,<sup>216</sup> and a few years later, at age 44, he finished a game for an injured goal tender for the New York Rangers, of which he was then coach.<sup>217</sup> His brother Frank may not have been quite as speedy or as talented as Lester, but he was also a star on the ice in his own right -- a great athlete, an outstanding hockey player, and also a pioneering hockey entrepreneur and administrator. The brothers were innovators, who had a profound impact on the rules of hockey and on how the game was played. They spent a small part of their careers in Nelson, played hockey in Rossland and were deeply involved in a major controversy that stained the reputation of Rossland as a hockey town.

Curtis Lester Patrick was born in Drummondville, Quebec, in December, 1883. His brother, Frank Alexis Patrick, was almost exactly two years younger, born in Ontario in December, 1885.<sup>y</sup> The family moved around, but eventually settled in the Westmount district of Montreal. It was there, as members of the Westmount school team, that the boys learned to play hockey. Lester attended McGill University in 1900-01 where he played basketball and hockey, starring at both.<sup>218</sup> Each year, McGill published a list of students who had successfully completed the sessional examinations for each year of the BA and BSc programs. Lester Patrick's name was not on the list; Apparently, he did not successfully complete the first year at McGill. At the end of the year he left the university and went to work in clerical and then administrative positions in his father's lumber business in Montreal. Needless to say, he played hockey over the winter. In 1902, then 19, he played for the Montreal junior team while Frank played for the Westmount intermediates. A year later Frank attended Stanstead College while Lester played for the Westmount intermediate team.<sup>z</sup>

#### ***Lester: Brandon***

When his father sold the Montreal portion of his businesses in 1903, Lester went west to Calgary for adventure and eventually joined Montreal friends who were playing hockey in Brandon, Manitoba. Brandon was a member of the three team Manitoba and North West Hockey Association, stretching about 400 kilometres along the transcontinental railway from Brandon, in western Manitoba (about 200 kilometres west of Winnipeg), to Portage la Prairie in the centre (about 80 kilometres west of Winnipeg) and on to Rat Portage in western Ontario (almost 200 kilometres east of Winnipeg). Playing for Brandon was the 20-year old Lester's first semi-professional hockey experience; it involved a lot of train travel.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>x</sup> With elaborations, this appendix draws heavily on the late Vancouver sports reporter, Eric Whitehead's, biography of the Patrick family {Whitehead, 1980 #640}. Although the book contains a number of minor factual errors, it is to date the authoritative history of Lester and Frank Patrick. It is also a charming read.

<sup>y</sup> There is some confusion about birthdates. Lester's birth and baptism registrations are available. They show that he was born on December 31, 1883 and baptised in November, 1884. For some reason, in the Census of 1901 his birth date is listed as May 31, 1884. Whitehead has the correct date, December 31, 1883. I have not found Frank's birth registration (he was born in Ontario, not Quebec), but the 1901 census lists his birth date as December 21, 1886, making the boys three years apart. However, this seems to be incorrect. Whitehead reports it as December 21, 1885, making the boys two years apart. The 1891 census does not report birth dates, but gives their ages as 5 and 7, two years apart. I assume that Whitehead's 1885 date is correct.

<sup>z</sup> Frank played one game with the Westmount intermediates that year, while home on a term break at Stanstead College {Montreal Gazette, 1903a #670}. Whitehead claimed that this was the first and last time that the brothers played on the same team. It may have been the first; it was certainly not the last. Not only did they play together in Nelson, they were both members of the Renfrew, Ontario, team in 1910 (see below, p. 36).

Whitehead reports that he was paid "his keep and twenty-five dollars a month expense money"<sup>220</sup> -- not exactly a princely sum. Lester received little attention in the brief reports on games published in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, but the team won the league championship and, in March, 1904, challenged Ottawa for the Stanley Cup.<sup>221</sup> At this time the Stanley Cup was a challenge trophy. Teams who won their league could challenge the Cup holder for the trophy. The legitimacy of any challenge was determined by the small group of trustees of the Stanley Cup, who (in some respects in consultation with the contestants) set the rules for the competition (e.g., number of games, dates for the game, eligibility of players in cases of teams attempting to strengthen themselves on the eve of the contest, etc.). To be eligible, a challenger had to be champion of a league with an appropriate standard of play. Sometimes, more than one challenge would be entertained in a season. The Brandon challenge was the second faced by Ottawa that year. It was accepted and a two-game, total score competition was held in Ottawa on March 9 and 11, 1904. Brandon lost both games, 6-3 and 9-3. Although he seems to have played well ("a splendid defensive game"<sup>222</sup> and "frequently assisted in the rushes."<sup>223</sup>) he was not singled out in press reports as a star. However, Lester's had served his apprenticeship in top flight hockey and experienced his first and obviously frustrating Stanley Cup experience. It would not be his last.

After his western adventure, Lester returned to Montreal where he took clerical positions in businesses in the city. That winter, 1904-05, his former team, Westmount, converted from intermediate to senior hockey and entered the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association, one of two top senior men's leagues in eastern Canada (the other was the Federal Hockey League). Lester joined the team, one of a group of young players.<sup>aa</sup> The team did not do well, but in November, 1905, Lester was recruited for the following season by the Montreal Wanderers, one of the strongest teams in Eastern Canada. This was a major leap upward for Lester Patrick.

#### **Lester: The Wanderers**

In late 1905, hockey in eastern Canada was in turmoil. There were two major leagues, the Federal Hockey League and the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association, that competed with each other for teams and for ice time.<sup>bb</sup> Some teams in the two leagues were unhappy with the existing conformation and began talking about withdrawing from their existing leagues and reorganizing into a yet another league. Various configurations were considered and there was a strong lobby attempting to keep the Wanderers out of any new league (perhaps because they were so actively poaching star players from other teams). In the end, what emerged was the six-team Eastern Amateur Hockey Association, with teams in Ottawa and Quebec and four teams in Montreal, including the Wanderers. The concept of "amateur" seems to have had a rather loose definition. When Lester Patrick left the Westmount team, other important players also went to other teams. Probably because it had been so weakened by the defections, the Westmount team was excluded from the new league and was denied ice time at the arena as a senior team, so it could not join another league. It folded, reverting to intermediate status.

Ottawa was the Stanley Cup incumbent and as such was subject to challenge. It had to meet two challenges during the short season, from Rat Portage, Ontario, and Smith Falls, Ontario. Successful in both, it still had one other obstacle to retaining the Cup -- it had to win its league (only league champions could hold the Stanley Cup). Ottawa and the Wanderers tied for the league championship. Because the winner of the league would also win the Stanley Cup, it was decided to have a two-game, home-and-home playoff as though this was a normal challenge for the Cup, with aggregate score determining the winner. The Wanderers won the first game in Montreal by a large score, 9 to 1, Lester scoring once.<sup>224</sup> Ottawa came back to win the second game in Ottawa, 9 to 3.<sup>225</sup> Lester scored two crucial goals for the

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<sup>aa</sup> Also on the team was another great hockey player who would also become a legend, Art Ross. Ross and Lester Patrick shared defensive duties. The next year they played together on the Montreal Wanderers team that won the Stanley Cup, and against each other in 1908 when Patrick played for Edmonton and Ross played for the Wanderers in another Stanley Cup contest. Ross went on to play with the Wanderers in its brief participation in the National Hockey League. He was the inaugural coach and later the general manager of the Boston Bruins, winning three Stanley Cups.

<sup>bb</sup> For example, in 190\_ the Ottawa team, then a member of the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association, was unhappy about a league ruling that a game against the Montreal Victorias would have to be replayed because it started late and was terminated at midnight, still incomplete. The team refused to play any more league games that season, withdrew from the league and joined the Federal Hockey League, where it was also unhappy. It ended up as one of the founding members of the Eastern Amateur Hockey Association. (REF)

Montreal team late in the game providing the margin by which the Wanderers won the playoff. Lester Patrick, who had played a major role in both league games and the playoff, had finally reached the pinnacle -- the Stanley Cup. After the frustration of the Brandon series, this victory must have been very satisfying, whetting his appetite for more Cups.

Before the opening of league play in the 1906/07 season, Wanderers faced a challenge for the Stanley Cup from New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. Wanderers had little difficulty in disposing of champions of the Maritime League. However, in mid January they faced another challenge from Kenora Thistle, from far western Ontario, and this was a different story. Wanderers lost both games of a two game series in Montreal, losing possession of the Stanley Cup.<sup>226</sup> Lester Patrick played rover and in the second game was in the penalty box when the winning goal was scored (he served twenty minutes in penalties in that game). The loss was unexpected; it must have distressed the team, including Lester Patrick, very badly. The Wanderers went on to win their league quite handily and so could challenge Kenora for the Cup at the end of the season. They travelled west in mid-March, after hockey was normally over, playing exhibition games in Toronto, Guelph and Berlin (now Kitchener) along the way, on ice described in one case as "slushy" and the another as "slow."<sup>227</sup> To Lester, it must have been like going home. Kenora was Rat Portage, renamed in 1905. He had played the team several times during his year at Brandon.

The preliminaries to the playoff games were replete with controversy and as captain of the Wanderers Lester was involved in the inter-team negotiations. Wanderers tried to get the games switched to Winnipeg on grounds that the Kenora ice sheet was too small. The trustee ruled against them.<sup>228</sup> Kenora then protested the eligibility of two players for the Wanderers,<sup>229</sup> but the protest was rejected by the trustee.<sup>230</sup> Through some confusion, Kenora still had to play Brandon to settle the league championship when the Wanderers arrived and the Montreal players waited in Winnipeg until the matter was settled.<sup>231</sup> The teams then could not agree on dates.<sup>232</sup> They finally agreed to play in Winnipeg when Wanderers agreed that Kenora could use two players that the Trustee had earlier declared ineligible.<sup>233</sup> Playing on ice that was described as "soft and covered with water," Wanderers won one game (7-2) and lost the other (6-5), but won the series on total goals.<sup>234</sup> The Stanley Cup returned to Montreal.

#### ***Frank: McGill and the Victorias***

The 19 year old Frank Patrick began the 1904 season playing for the Westmount intermediates. However, in late January, he transferred to a senior team, the Montreal Victorias of the Canadian Amateur Hockey League.<sup>235</sup> I don't know if he was still a student at Stanstead College, but he played for the Victorias regularly and with increasing effectiveness. His studies at Stanstead College must have transferred as the first year of the BA program at McGill University.<sup>cc</sup> In the fall of 1904 Frank enrolled in second year, and in April, 1905, he completed the year near the bottom of his class (requiring one supplemental exam).<sup>236</sup> His third year was more successful, a clear pass but still in the bottom group of successful students.<sup>237</sup> In April, 1908, he received his BA degree, Class III.<sup>238</sup> Frank did not have a strong academic record, but he did successfully complete the degree program at one of Canada's most prestigious universities, while maintaining a full load of sporting activities.<sup>dd</sup>

Frank apparently turned out to practices of the Wanderers before the 1905 season, but in January joined the McGill university team.<sup>239</sup> For two years he played regularly on a team that had only middling success.<sup>ee</sup> As his third and final year at McGill (1907-08) opened, Frank was captain of the team. In preparing for the season, however, he found that that the team was evaporating around him. Critical players were leaving and strong replacements were not appearing. Complaining about the lack of support for hockey from students and discouraged about the problem of recruiting quality players, he

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<sup>cc</sup> Frank Patrick was not one the list of students who successfully completed the first year at McGill in April, 1905 (Montreal Gazette, 1905b #676). He must have transferred his first year from Stanstead College.

<sup>dd</sup> Frank was also had a respected referee. According to Whitehead, it started with a spur-of-the-moment effort at refereeing when he was called down from the stands to fill in for an official who had not shown up (Whitehead, 1980 #640, p \_). He subsequently was regularly engaged to referee senior games. These included a game between Quebec and Wanderers with his brother playing for the Wanderers (Whitehead, 1980 #640, pp. 28-29) and another between Montreal and Cornwall that ended in a brawl that threatened his safety (Whitehead, 1980 #640, p \_). Other games were less unusual.

<sup>ee</sup> Whitehead notes that Frank was "a brilliant all-around athlete" at McGill for four years (Whitehead, 1980 #640, p. 5). He was a student there for three years and played hockey for two years, but he did play other sports.

resigned his captaincy and quit the team (but, as noted above, he did not quit the university). Apparently, he was approached by his brother's former team, the Wanderers, but chose instead to play with the Montreal Victorias in the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association, the team that he had played for as a youngster in 1904.<sup>240</sup> Before the season opened, he was one of seven "All Stars," chosen to play a benefit game against the champion Wanderers. He was not the first choice for the cover point (defence) position, but substituted for a player who was ill and could not play. Nonetheless, although his selection was said to be "a real surprise," the new boy distinguished himself. The reporter for the *Montreal Gazette* identified him as one of the stars of the All Stars, noting that his rushes were "features of the team's play."<sup>241</sup> This performance must have solidified his position with the Victorias.

His first game with the Victorias was on January 23, 1908,<sup>242</sup> after which he played regularly, on right wing, leading the team into a tie for first place in the league. Unfortunately, in a game in late February in which the Victorias were contending for the league championship, Frank fell with his arm extended and tore ligaments in his shoulder. He could not complete the season. Indeed, he could not raise his arm to shoulder height let alone effectively use a hockey stick. The Victorias lost the game and, without Frank, the remaining games in the schedule, tumbling down in the table from first to almost last place. Frank's season with the Victorias, although demonstrating his value as a hockey player at a high level, was not covered in glory the way Lester's previous two years had been.

### **Nelson:1908**

In 1907, Joseph Patrick, head of the Patrick family, moved to Nelson where he established a lumbering business in Crescent Valley, about 40 miles west of the city. The Patrick Lumber Company had extensive timber limits on the mountain sides and a large mill on the banks of the Slocan River.<sup>243</sup> When his second season with the Wanderers was over, Lester followed, while Frank, remained in Montreal to complete his studies at McGill and to play hockey. After his season with the Victorias and a summer playing baseball for McGill, Frank also went to Nelson to join the family lumber business. According to the Nelson City Directory, both worked for the family firm, Frank in the camp as superintendant and Lester in Nelson as bookkeeper.

Lester's introduction to hockey in Nelson began with friendly banter, undoubtedly spurred by his reputation and Nelson's pride in its hockey team. It was reported that "The rivalry lately sprung up between the old time hockey players and the newcomers had resulted in a challenge to a match given by the latter."<sup>244</sup> Lester's supporting cast must have been weak; the Fossils (old timers) drubbed the Tenderfeet (newcomers), 10-4. Of course, the Fossils were the Nelson hockey team, who had played together many times, while the Tenderfeet were strangers to each other.

When the Nelson city team met Rosslund on January 17 for their first game of the season, Lester lined up at point. Nelson downed Rosslund 7-3 in a rough game. Lester did not score, but he "sent the crowd wild with some of his loop-the-loop dashes up the ice."<sup>245</sup> The return game, in Rosslund a week later, was much closer, Nelson winning 4-3.<sup>246</sup> Again, by the *Nelson Daily News* reports, Lester Patrick was the star of the show. This series of games set the stage for the tournament at the Rosslund Winter Carnival and established Nelson as the favourites. *A propos* the controversy that soon erupted at the 1908 Rosslund Winter Carnival, E. Winn did not referee either game and the referee was not assisted by a judge of play (see above, p. 19). Lester Patrick was directly involved in the controversy following the Rosslund Carnival, participating in the preparation of a statement presenting the Nelson perspective.<sup>247</sup> In addition, I suspect that Lester helped foment the Nelson protest. In the leagues in which he played, the judge of play was a standard member of the officiating squad for hockey games. He no doubt expressed his dismay at the refereeing situation in the team's first game against Rosslund at the tournament and suggested the judge of play remedy. However, that is speculation. I have no evidence.

In Nelson, in the meantime, the *Nelson Daily News* offered a trophy for a competition among local teams in order to promote senior men's hockey in the city. A league involving three teams, the Lakes, the Mountains and the Rivers (originally the Bloods, but the name was soon changed), was established.<sup>248</sup> Lester Patrick captained the Lakes, but the team was not successful. It did not do well in what was a very short season (the Lakes played only 3 games). When it was clear that the Mountains would win the

league, the rest of the games were cancelled, as though winning the trophy was the only point in playing.<sup>249</sup> However, it was March and the ice was getting soft.

After the Rossland tournament, the senior hockey season was wound up for Lester Patrick and the Nelson team with a game in Fernie in early March. Nelson lost, 6-5, "on soft ice."<sup>250</sup> All together, the team had played only four games, three against Rossland. Some season for a the former captain and star of a Stanley Cup winning professional hockey team!

### ***Lester: Edmonton***

Although they had moved to relative obscurity in the Kootenays, the Patricks had not been forgotten in wider hockey circles -- and the magnetic attraction of the Stanley Cup had not been erased from the Patrick psyche. In December, 1908, Lester was recruited by the Edmonton hockey team in its quest for the Stanley Cup. He was one of two or three mercenary hockey stars hired to strengthen the team for the occasion. Edmonton was the Alberta champion and apparently the trustees of the Cup were satisfied that the league was of appropriate calibre. In its challenge, Edmonton came close, winning one of two games, but losing on aggregate score.<sup>251</sup> Lester Patrick was the star of the games. In the second match,

*He played a great defence game, and had Ross (the star of the Wanderers) blocked in every rush. His own rushes were very spectacular, and won rounds of cheers from the crowd. One of his end-to-end rushes through the entire Wanderer team, and scoring, was the finest thing seen here in many seasons.*<sup>252</sup>

The report on his performance in the first game was similar.<sup>253</sup>

Lester had announced at the outset that he had no intention of going to Edmonton to play hockey in the regular season and for this reason his inclusion on the team was highly controversial. A typical comment, under the heading "Business Not sport," was

*... the fattening up of a regularly organized team just for the sake of winning some special event is poor sport and shouldn't be countenanced whenever it takes place.*<sup>254</sup>

At the end of the tournament, Lester was offered a contract with at least one professional team in the east, but, in a surprising statement, he said the even a \$2,000 contract would not tempt him -- "I have come to the conclusion that there are more important things in the world than hockey."<sup>255</sup> I doubt that this was his true feeling, but he had promised his father to return to the family business.

### ***Nelson: 1909***

True to his word, as soon as the Stanley Cup series was over at the end of December, 1908, Lester returned to Nelson. By time the hockey season opened, both Frank and Lester were in Nelson, eager to play. A new ice rink was inaugurated by the first game in the competition for the Nelson Daily News Cup. The local league had been reduce from three teams to two, the Thistles and the Victorias. Frank played for the former and Lester for the latter. Although the teams had had several practices, Lester was the only player who had actually played a game that season, and it showed. It was a 10-2 victory for his team, with Lester scoring most of the goals.<sup>256</sup> The next game in the new rink was against Rossland. Both Patrick's played in the 14-1 slaughter of the visitors from the mountains, with Frank scoring three goals and Lester one.<sup>257</sup>

Edmonton went to Nelson for a two-game exhibition series in 1909, probably a result of the Lester Patrick connection. Both Patrick boys played for Nelson, Frank on defence and Patrick at rover. Edmonton won both games (6-5 and 8-4), but it is reported that the Nelson team put on good show.<sup>258</sup> After the game there were suggestions that Nelson should challenge for the Stanley Cup. In any case, other professional hockey teams had taken notice of the Patricks.

### ***Renfrew***

In 1910, both Lester and Frank were recruited by a team from Renfrew, Ontario. Established as a lumbering town, Renfrew was then a relatively small marketing centre for the surrounding agricultural area in eastern Ontario, somewhat north of Ottawa. The Renfrew hockey team was owned by a group of

rich local businessmen who were determined to win the Stanley Cup. In 1909 Renfrew won the Federal League and issued its challenge for the cup. The challenge was not accepted by the trustees. The following year the owners of the team decided that they would create a team whose status was beyond question and joined with three other quality teams to form the National Hockey Association, one of two leagues (the other being the Canadian Hockey Association) generally regarded then as the premium leagues in Canada.<sup>259</sup> The two leagues merged part way through the season.<sup>260</sup> As well as the Patricks, the Renfrew team included at least two other players who became Canadian legends, Fred "Cyclone" Taylor and "Newsy" Lalonde (who was poached from another team part way into the season). The owners of the Renfrew team spent what was regarded at the time as an enormous sum acquiring players. Lester Patrick was paid \$2,700 for the season (about \$57,000 in today's prices) and his brother, \$2,000 (about \$42,000). For the times, these were outstanding salaries for hockey players (or, indeed, for any professional athlete). According to the Toronto *Globe*, Lester's salary was the highest on the team, although the New York Times later reported that Taylor was "the highest paid individual player in the world."<sup>261</sup> In any case, the Renfrew salaries were probably the highest in the league<sup>ff</sup> and the team travelled in luxury in a private railway car.<sup>262</sup> Perhaps the team name, the "Millionaires," set the right tone. The Renfrew arena was small, the season was short, the number of home games were few and the expenses were high. Not surprisingly, the owners lost money -- perhaps \$17,000 (\$357,000) in 1910.<sup>263</sup> Moreover, they did not succeed in their objective of winning the Stanley Cup. To challenge for the cup the team had to win its league. It lost a couple of games by ugly scores, while playing strongly in others, and came in second.

For the closing game of the season, in Ottawa, the team played on ice so soft that it was difficult to skate. Then, after the season ended, they went to New York City for an exhibition game against the Montreal Wanderers, the winners of the Stanley Cup. Renfrew won, 9-4, and picked up the \$1,000 purse that was the prize at stake.<sup>264</sup> Perhaps most importantly, the game was played on artificial ice. The contrast between the crisp conditions at this game and the mushy ice at the previous one in Ottawa must have made a profound impression on the Patrick brothers. Artificial ice would revolutionize the game. It was the technology of the future.

I am sure that the Patricks took away from their eastern adventure two basic lessons:

- if you pay high enough salaries you can stock your team with the best players in the country; and
- artificial ice will change the conditions under which the game is played, providing a good surface almost every night, increasing the chances of fast, exciting games, lengthening the season by permitting earlier starts and later finishes, and, with more games, providing more revenue (even on the relatively balmy west coast). With more money coming in, the team could afford the high salaries.

The Patricks carried these ideas with them when they returned to Nelson.

### ***Nelson: The Final Season.***

The Patrick brothers returned to Nelson and their father's lumber business at the end of the 1910 season. By then, their hockey ambitions greatly exceeded what Nelson had to offer, but they played out the 1911 season in the Queen City of the Kootenays. There is no evidence of a local senior men's league, with teams playing for the Daily News trophy, in which they could sharpen their hockey skills. Their only playing opportunities were with the senior men's city team. As in previous years, the hockey season for the senior men was notably short. The first game was on January 13, when both Patricks played in a 7-4 victory over Grand Forks.<sup>265</sup> Frank did not make the trip to Rossland for the next game, which Nelson won, 9-4,<sup>266</sup> but he played in the following Rossland game that Nelson dominated, 10-2.<sup>267</sup> As a warm up to the Rossland Winter Carnival, Nelson then played Cranbrook, champions of the Crowsnest Pass league and won, 6-4.<sup>268</sup> When the time came for the Rossland tournament, however, there was confusion and another controversy.<sup>269</sup> The Nelson players had jobs. To minimize the time off

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<sup>ff</sup> The salaries on the Renfrew team "beat anything ever paid an American or National League ball player." {Globe December 11, 1909a #609}

work (and the loss of pay) they decided to enter only the British Columbia championship series because, as in the past, they thought it would begin on Thursday. Apparently, they notified the Rossland people of their situation well beforehand. In fact, the first game of the series was on Wednesday evening. At the draw for pairings, held Tuesday evening and at which Nelson was not represented, Nelson was drawn against Rossland in the first game.<sup>270</sup> The Nelson team alleged that they were not notified until half an hour before the Wednesday train to Rossland. Their players were at work -- including Frank Patrick who was in the woods near South Slocan -- so it was impossible for them to get a team to Rossland in time. The carnival committee refused to change the date of the game, switching it with the Thursday game the teams for which were already in the city, so Nelson withdrew from the tournament. Again, Rossland had a black eye in the Queen City. Speaking for the team as captain, Lester Patrick accused the Rossland authorities of making a "change in the arrangements (that) freezes out Nelson and gives the Rossland team a chance to win the championship." He also accused Rossland of suspending a regulation that required hockey players to be resident in the city that their team represented for a minimum period before the tournament and recruiting players from Cranbrook and Grand Forks to strengthen the team that Nelson had so easily beaten in two pre-tournament games.<sup>271</sup> Again, there was bad will all around. Instead of the trip to Rossland for the B.C. Championship contest, the Nelson hockey team made a trip to the east Kootenays in late February. They played two games, beating both Cranbrook (7-4) and Fernie (9-6). Thus, the team won all of the games, most by large scores, in its six game season, the last that the Patrick brothers played in Nelson.

As a footnote to the story of the Patricks in the Kootenays, it is reported that the Phoenix Hockey Club, which won the Boundary League in 1911, issued a challenge for the Stanley Cup. Apparently the challenge was ignored. Phoenix was counting on having the Patrick brothers to bolster their team. When the Patricks left Nelson in March of 1911, Phoenix did not renew their challenge.<sup>272</sup>

The Patricks were also deeply involved in women's hockey. Lester was coach and manager, his mother was honorary vice-president, his sister Dora was captain.<sup>273</sup> Another unnamed sister (Lucinda?) was said to be a team member, but did not play in the games reported in the press. Only two women's games were reported, both with Rossland. Nelson lost both, 3-0<sup>274</sup> and 1-0.<sup>275</sup> Frank Patrick also lent his talents to hockey in Nelson beyond playing for the Senior Men's team. He was manager of the Rovers, an intermediate level development team (his father was honorary president of the team).<sup>276</sup>

In mid-March, 1911, it was revealed that Joseph Patrick had sold his lumbering business to British Canadian Lumber Company for \$1 million (about \$20 million in 2010 dollars).<sup>277</sup> There were other investors in Patrick Lumber so I don't know what portion of the million went to the Patricks, but they left Nelson wealthy people. At the same time it was noted that the Patrick brothers were exploring the possibilities of building artificial ice rinks in Vancouver and Victoria, including a fact finding trip to New York by Lester, and of developing a hockey league involving teams in those cities and in some prairie centres.<sup>278</sup>

What was the impact of the Patrick's on Nelson hockey? Their stay in Nelson was brief, and, given their forays east in search of the Stanley Cup, the number of games played were few. By my count, Lester played for Nelson in 11 inter-city games while Frank, in the city one season fewer and occasionally in the woods when games were scheduled, in 5 (perhaps 7) games. However, as players they converted a good hockey team into an excellent one, particularly when they were both playing. Also, I doubt that it was a coincidence that the judge of play appeared as an on-ice official in Nelson, and later in all of the Kootenays, while the Patricks were there. They were accustomed to playing with a judge of play in the east, and both had been on-ice officials under such a system. The controversy over the judge of play had a serious effect on the Rossland Winter Carnival and stimulated efforts to create a real hockey league in the district. The fruits of that effort were much delayed, however, and can hardly be attributed to the Patricks. They were an adornment to West Kootenay hockey, had some effect on how the game was played and officiated at the time, but their presence did not have profound consequences. It did on the coast.

### ***The Pacific Coast Hockey Association***

In the years before World I, if you had funds to build artificial ice rinks and wanted to establish a new hockey league, in a place where there was probably a receptive audience and the market for hockey was not already overcrowded, where should you go? Answer: the Pacific coast of Canada where there were significant population centres with hockey fans from all over Canada but where the mild climate made natural ice rinks and hence organized hockey, impossible. In 1911, the Patricks moved to the coast, Frank to Vancouver and Lester to Victoria. On March 10, the plans that they had hatched after their New York experience and their sojourn in Nelson, were announced.<sup>279</sup> They would build artificial ice rinks in Vancouver and Victoria and establish a professional hockey league with some of the country's best players,. They had the land and they had the funds. The Patrick family fortune provided the seed money, but a number of worthy citizens of both cities became directors and presumably investors.<sup>99</sup> The Vancouver rink, which saw its first hockey practice on December, 18, 1911 (only half the ice sheet was frozen; the rest was still under construction), was the largest in Canada, with an ice sheet 210 ft. by 85 ft. and seats for 10,000.<sup>280</sup> It was reported to have cost about \$175,000. The Victoria rink had the same size ice sheet, but seated only 4,000.

The hockey league was to have four teams: Vancouver, Victoria, Calgary and Edmonton. The two prairies teams would be playing on natural ice. Although the Patricks offered to invest in up to 25% of the stock of the two teams, after weeks of dithering, in mid-October Edmonton and Calgary withdrew from the proposed league.<sup>281</sup> This left the Patricks scrambling. A two-team league bordered on the impossible; how many times could the same two teams play each other before the fans got bored, particularly if the competition was one-sided. At least one more team was essential. As improbable as it seems, there was a suggestion that Nelson or Rossland could be the home of that team "because both ... have good-sized rinks."<sup>282</sup> In the end, it was decided to have two teams in Vancouver, one of which would be the New Westminster team, although New Westminster did not have a rink. A three team league was minimal, not ideal, but not uncommon. The league was to be called the Pacific Coast Hockey Association, which offers a clue as to the Patrick's grander ambitions. Early on in their planning they seem to have set their sights on an international league, with teams in Seattle, Portland and Tacoma.<sup>283</sup> Indeed, they may already have been thinking about extending the operation to California. Thus, in 1912, sensing an opportunity to spread the gospel, Frank Patrick offered to build an arena at the San Francisco World's Fair of 1915 and have Pacific Coast Association teams perform there after the regular season.<sup>284</sup> The offer was accepted, but apparently the arena was not built.<sup>hn</sup> Needless to say, the expansion of the league to California did not happen. In New Westminster, an arena was improvised in the horse show building in Queen's Park for the 1912-13 season and the team operated there the next year as well. However, attendance was not strong and the owners, who lost heavily, were unwilling to continue. In 1914 the New Westminster franchise was transferred to Portland (the Rosebuds) where an artificial rink was ready and when a rink was opened in Seattle in 1915 a new franchise was established there (the Metropolitans). The league thus had an international cast, a first in professional hockey.

For a time, the league had a local notable as president, and Frank and Lester Patrick represented their respective teams on the executive committee. However, there is no question but that this was the Patrick's league and Frank Patrick was the administrative power, undoubtedly in consultation with, if not in conjunction with, Lester. Some examples: all major announcements came from Frank; before the league executive was even formed, Frank announced that the league would play seven-man hockey, not the six-man game that had been introduced in the east; even before the New Westminster team was officially organized, Frank had recruited the key players<sup>285</sup>; when the Seattle franchise was granted, the building used for an arena was leased by the Patricks, the ice making machine was owned by brother Lester and brought from Victoria and the Patrick brothers were active in recruiting its players (I don't know

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<sup>99</sup> Their father, Joseph Patrick, who controlled the purse strings, was a director of the company formed to build the Vancouver arena.

<sup>hn</sup> The official guide to the Panama Pacific Exposition of 1915 has no reference to an ice rink {Panama Pacific, 1915 #752}. It was reported that Frank Patrick planned to invest \$250,000 in the project. What portion was his own funds, I don't know. The plan also called for the building of an ice palace in the style of those at the Montreal and Quebec winter carnivals (see Appendix 3, p. 57). With a mild climate and no natural source of large quantities of ice, such a project would have been a fool's errand. {Vancouver Sun, 1912c #743}

about their involvement with the Portland arena and team). The pretence of broader public control of the league ended in 1913 when Frank assumed the presidency of the Association.<sup>286</sup> He remained in that office until the league merged with the Western Canadian Hockey League in the mid-1920s. Even then, although the long-time president of the Western League continued in office, Frank was the power behind the throne, as became obvious when the league was being disbanded (see below, p. 49). It is perhaps not surprising that the sports columnist for the Toronto *Globe* referred to the Coast League as the Patrick League -- repeatedly and contemptuously -- and, indeed, continued to refer to the merged league by the same sobriquet.

The Patricks offered high salaries and stocked their teams with some of the best players in the eastern leagues. The first games were played in 1912, with Frank managing in Vancouver (the Millionaires) and Lester in Victoria (the Aristocrats). Frank tried to issue a challenge for the Stanley Cup on behalf of the winner of the league (the New Westminster Royals, as it turned out), but was rebuffed. Because they were playing on artificial ice, the Pacific Coast League could extend the league competition and, although the champion was known earlier, the league series was not completed until mid-March.<sup>287</sup> The victorious team could not arrive in the east until late March, which was too late given that the eastern teams all played on natural ice. The following year Victoria Aristocrats won the league and issued a challenge to the Quebec Bulldogs, champions of the NHA and holders of the Stanley Cup. Quebec had already defeated a challenger from the Maritime provinces and, as was their right as cup holders, would only meet Victoria if the game was played in their arena in Quebec. Given the late date, the bad condition of the ice and the smallness of the Quebec arena, Lester Patrick refused. A proposal to play for the Cup in Toronto was rejected, but the Quebec team agreed to come west in mid-March for a three game series with Victoria. The Stanley Cup was not at stake, but the series was billed as for "the championship of the world," the same phrase used in Stanley Cup competitions. Victoria won the series, two games to one, and so proclaimed themselves "world champions" -- but they did not hold the Stanley Cup. Perhaps we should consider the Victoria team to be unrecorded Stanley Cup champions in 1913.

In February, 1916, as a war measure, the Victoria arena was taken over by the military to house troops.<sup>288</sup> The Aristocrats played their remaining home games of that season in Seattle. Professional hockey in Victoria was then suspended for the duration of the war. Undaunted, Lester Patrick moved to Spokane where he supervised the construction of a new arena, of which he also became the manager.<sup>289</sup> Spokane (or perhaps I should say Lester Patrick) was granted a franchise in the Pacific Coast Hockey Association. The team wore bright yellow uniforms and, appropriately, was named the team the Canaries.<sup>290</sup> Lester Patrick was the manager, the coach and the key player. Although he scoured the country for hockey players, he assembled a relatively weak team. It won some games, but finished dead last.<sup>291</sup> Attendance was not what had been hoped for. As the following season approached Patrick tried to assemble a team but, allegedly because of the war and conscription, could not find players of sufficient quality.<sup>292</sup> The Canaries folded; the franchise had lasted only one year. In a shuffle of coaches, Muldoon, the Seattle coach, went to Portland and Lester Patrick took over the Seattle team. In late 1918, when the Victoria arena was reopened, Lester was able to return to his beloved island city and Muldoon to Seattle.<sup>293</sup>

There was no question but this was the Patrick's league that they intended to run as they saw fit. They did not hesitate to innovate and be different. Thus, they invented different rules from those of the established leagues in the east, including the blue line for off sides (rather than the rugby rule that attacking players always had to be behind the puck), the forward pass in all sections of the ice and unlimited substitution (including substitution on the fly). The style of play adapted, producing a faster, more exciting game. It is interesting that despite the adoption of six man hockey in the east, the Patricks held doggedly to seven man hockey, arguing that the six man game was adopted simply to reduce costs, not to improve the game.<sup>294</sup> With the decision of the trustees that the Stanley Cup was to represent the professional championship of Canada,<sup>295</sup> the competition became an east-west contest between the champions of the National Hockey Association and the Pacific Coast Hockey Association. Although the Cup competition was administered by the National Hockey Association, the playoffs alternated between the east and the west coast. The difference in rules created a problem; which rules applied to Stanley Cup games? An accommodation was reached that involved alternating between eastern and western

rules for the games in each series regardless of where they were played. Pacific Coast teams won the Cup three times (Vancouver in 1915, Seattle in 1917 and Victoria in 1925), but even when they lost, the games were generally close.

Initially, the coast league was very successful, attracting some of the country's best hockey players. As the league developed, although some established professional players continued to be attracted, the natural recruiting grounds for new young players were strong amateur teams. An agreement between the National Hockey League and the Pacific Coast League delineated geographical recruiting areas. For the coast league it was the west. Unfortunately, although it began to develop, the Pacific coast did not then have great depth in amateur hockey; home grown talent was scarce. The coast league teams went hunting on the prairies where there were thriving amateur leagues, but by the early 1920s recruiting there was not going well. As president of the league and manager of one of the teams, Frank Patrick was more than a little distressed to discover that the four teams in the major Alberta hockey league (commonly called the Big Four), while proclaiming their amateur status, were in fact paying some if not all of their hockey players to keep them in the league and away from the coast teams. If not full professionals, they were at least semi-professionals. Indeed, Frank asserted that the prairie teams were attempting to recruit players from the Coast league; that one of his best players had been offered \$1,500 per season to play "amateur" hockey in Alberta.<sup>296</sup> Frank first appealed to the Attorney General of Alberta arguing that the teams were avoiding paying an amusement tax that was levied on professional games but not on amateur ones.<sup>297</sup> The attorney general declined to intervene.<sup>298</sup> Frank then (November, 1920) went to the Alberta branch of the Canadian Amateur Athletic Union and

*Produced so many documents and statements of such a serious nature against the Big Four that the amateur authorities gave the officials of the Big Four time to either declare that they were an out-an-out pro-organization or else immediately "clean up."<sup>299</sup>*

It did not solve his recruitment problem so I doubt that this was the outcome that Frank sought, but in August 1921 the four team prairie league opted for professional status. They soon merged with a corresponding organization in Saskatchewan, creating the four team (Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Medicine Hat (soon replaced by Regina)) Western Canada Hockey League.<sup>300</sup> Thus, the Patrick's were, in a sense, responsible for the creation of two professional hockey leagues in western Canada.

The creation of a new professional league created another new issue in Canadian hockey -- how would a three-league competition for the Stanley Cup be arranged? In the first instance, March, 1922, there was a playoff in the west. The winner of the playoff between the Pacific Coast League and the Western Hockey League met the champion of the NHL (Ottawa). The games were played in Ottawa. The implication of this system was that the three leagues were not of equal status. The next year, 1923, it was the west's turn to host the Stanley Cup games. A different system was adopted. The NHL champion (Ottawa) came west and played the champion of the Pacific Coast League in a best of five series. The winner (Ottawa) then played the prairie champions in a best of three series. Why this peculiar structure? I have found no explanation. In 1924, when the competition was to be held in the east, a serious controversy erupted. The president of the National Hockey League, Calder, who, in principle, set the rules, the trustees of the Stanley Cup having abdicated that responsibility to him, decreed that the original system would be used. That is, two western leagues would playoff and the winner go east to meet the NHL champion. The presidents of the two western leagues (Frank Patrick and E. L. Richardson) objected, arguing that if they were required to have a playoff before meeting the NHL champion for the Cup, the three leagues did not have equal status. They proposed a three team tournament with the champions of each league playing three games against each of the other league champions (nine games in all).<sup>301</sup> Calder rejected this proposal and suggested that if two teams were entered from the west then there should be a tournament involving two teams from the NHL as well. This would have violated the principle of the equality of the leagues. Calder's proposal was rejected by Patrick and Richardson. They asserted that the two western teams would commence the three team tournament with games in Winnipeg, and if their proposal was rejected by the NHL the teams would disband for the season. There would be no east-west Stanley Cup playoff. If the objective was simply to win the Stanley Cup, Calder should have been happy. The Cup would remain in the east by default. However, the true

objective was money -- to have a lucrative east-west series in an eastern rink. The telegraph wires hummed until a compromise was reached.

However, despite the rationalization of the professional hockey situation in western Canada, the foundations of the Patricks' western enterprise were beginning to crumble. Attendance at Seattle was not strong and the owner of the arena had better things to do with the building in downtown Seattle -- convert it to a parking garage. Seattle withdrew from the Pacific Coast Association after the 1923/24 season, leaving only Vancouver and Victoria. Even with an interlocking schedule with the prairie teams, a two team hockey league was implausible. In August, 1924, Vancouver and Victoria joined the Western Canada Hockey League, creating what had been the Patrick's plan at the outset of their coastal adventure.<sup>302</sup> The prairie teams played on natural ice, with its seasonal limitations, and the Patricks continued to dream of an all artificial ice league on the coast. In 1925, when the owner of the Regina team wanted to sell and could find no local buyers, Frank arranged for a group of Portland people to acquire the team, returning the Rosebuds and their artificial ice to the league.<sup>303</sup> Beyond this, exploratory discussion were held with people in California centres (San Francisco, Los Angeles, Oakland) about building arenas and extending the league down the coast, but they came to naught.<sup>304</sup>

For the ills of top flight professional hockey in the west, the merger of the leagues was a palliative, not a cure. If the status quo had continued in the east, the league might have survived -- for a time. But the eastern hockey situation was changing rapidly. Professional hockey was attracting intense interest in the large population centres on both sides of the border, and the actual or impending construction of large capacity ice rinks with artificial ice and the associated establishment of new teams was threatening to attract star players from the west, sooner or later. The very factors (artificial ice, high salaries) that the Patricks had employed to build the Pacific Coast Hockey Association, were now turning against them. It was time to get out of the path of the impending storm.

### ***The National Hockey League***

In early 1924, discussions were held about the admission of teams from Boston and New York and a second Montreal team to the National Hockey League.<sup>305</sup> The Boston and Montreal (the "Maroons") teams were admitted that fall.<sup>306</sup> It was announced that the Boston people had acquired the then defunct Seattle team from the Pacific Coast Hockey Association,<sup>307</sup> but Frank Patrick, as president of the Pacific Coast Association, objected. The sale did not happen.<sup>ii</sup> Boston got a couple of Seattle players, but the main ones went to Victoria. However, the concept of developing a new team by purchasing an existing one was on the agenda. Frank Patrick must have taken careful note. In the meantime, construction had begun on the new Madison Square Gardens ice rink in New York, resulting in an arena that would seat 15,000, said to be the "largest hockey rink in the world"<sup>308</sup> and certainly a far larger rink than anything in the Western Hockey League. It opened in December, 1925. The owners of the New York Franchise (the "Americans") then did what Boston had failed in attempting, purchased a team intact. They bought the troubled Hamilton team of the National Hockey League,<sup>309</sup> augmenting it with other players, some from the Western League. In September, 1925, Pittsburgh was also admitted, making the NHL a seven team league (Montreal Canadiens, Montreal Maroons, Toronto, Ottawa, Boston, New York, Pittsburgh).<sup>310</sup> Most of the players on the Pittsburgh team were promoted from that city's amateur team, which had been the American national champions for two years (the players were Canadians).<sup>311</sup> But this was not the end. Before the year was out, three other teams applied for franchises, Chicago, Detroit and a second group in New York,<sup>312</sup> and there were other potential applicants.<sup>313</sup> Salaries paid by the American teams were high, creating additional pressure on the western teams. Players wanted to jump to the new American teams, but in the short term they were tied to their teams by contracts.<sup>314</sup> However, team owners would be tempted to sell their star players, weakening the league, and if they did not do it immediately, it was only a matter of time before there was a serious exodus. Western team players were not under long term contracts.

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<sup>ii</sup> The scope of Patrick's powers as president of the league is not clear, but it was undoubtedly quite extensive. He was a close friend from childhood of Art Ross, manager of the Boston team. With respect to the purported Seattle transaction Frank was quoted as saying:

Always alert to possibilities, the Patrick brothers sought a way for the league to avoid a catastrophe and perhaps profit from the impending collapse of their empire. Frank Patrick was not the head of the Western League, but always major presence in league affairs, took charge, with an audacious plan to mimic the Hamilton transplant, but on a grander scale.<sup>ji</sup> If others could sell a team, he would sell a league! In 1926, he persuaded the owners of the Western League franchises to designate him as their agent to sell their assets -- their players' contracts -- to National Hockey League teams, with an agreement that the owners would not act independently, selling their star players. When there was a threat that the three applicants would not be admitted to the NHL (the New York Americans voted no, and each team had a veto) Frank Patrick was active behind the scenes with a plan to organize another professional hockey league to accommodate these teams and others and expand the market for his players.<sup>315</sup> There were reports that Frank was to be president of the alternate league, at a salary of \$50,000.<sup>316</sup> The ploy worked. The National Hockey League was expanded to ten teams, absorbing most of the Western League teams and players. The details of the transactions are a bit murky, but apparently brother Lester's league-champion Victoria Cougars team was sold to interests in Detroit for \$100,000 (for a number of years the team was called the Detroit Cougars), the Saskatoon team became the new entry from New York (the "Rangers")<sup>317</sup> and the Portland Rosebuds went to Chicago.<sup>318</sup> Players from the other teams (Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton) were distributed among the expansion teams (some went to newly created minor professional leagues). The sale of the league was said to have been for \$300,000,<sup>319</sup> but sales of some individual players and of the Saskatoon team (arranged separately) raised the total to \$377,000.<sup>320</sup>

Lester Patrick was hired as the founding coach and general manager when the New York Rangers joined the National Hockey League in 1926. He remained with the team for 20 years, finally retiring to Victoria in 1946. However, he was not completely out of hockey. He revived the franchise of his old Victoria team, the Cougars, which he operated until 1955, when the team was taken over by his two sons, Lynn and Murray, and a group of Victoria businessmen.<sup>321</sup> Lester was taken into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1947.<sup>322</sup> Both Lynn and Murray (Muzz) also had long careers in hockey. Both boys played for the New York Rangers in the 1930s when the team was in charge of their father, went into the American armed forces during World War II, and rejoined the team after the war. Both coached the Rangers (and Lynn also coached the Boston Bruins) before retiring.

Frank also had a long and successful career in the National Hockey League as an administrator and coach. For a time in the 1920s he was managing director of the league, second in command to the president, in charge of officiating and discipline. Not long after a particularly difficult discipline case, he resigned to succeed his old friend from school days, Art Ross, as coach of the Boston Bruins. His tenure was brief; it turned out that he could not work well with Ross. He later served as business manager of the Montreal Canadiens.<sup>323</sup> Frank was elected to the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1950.<sup>324</sup> Both Lester and Frank died in 1960, weeks apart the former in Victoria and the latter in Vancouver.

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<sup>ji</sup> Whitehead describes the process in fascinating detail. (Whitehead, 1980 #640, pp. 151-160)

### Appendix 3

## Ice Palaces and Quebec Winter Carnivals

Winter Carnivals in Montreal and Quebec City were special celebrations, fun for the populace and business for the shops. An ice palace was the central attraction that drew visitors (and their money). According to Anderes and Agranoff,<sup>325</sup> the construction of temporary palaces out of blocks of ice originated in Russia, but when is not certain. Their popularization may have been a result of the antics of Empress Anna in the mid-eighteenth century. Apparently, she forced an unwanted marriage to a servant on a wayward young aristocrat, had an ice palace built for the wedding and then forced the unhappy couple to spend their wedding night in the castle. Armed guards prevented them from leaving the building prematurely. This vengeful legend is hardly an auspicious symbol for what was supposed to be a joyous occasion at the carnival! Anderes and Agranoff also suggest that the military-like storming of the ice castle originated in the reign of Empress Anna, but the occasion or the reasons for the sham battle are not reported. Was it a military exercise? Or, was it simply entertainment for the Empress and her court? In any case, the concept of an ice palace that would be stormed and defended in a wild pyrotechnic display intrigued the organizers of the 1883 winter carnival in Montreal as a spectacle that would be a dramatic centrepiece for the festival, would attract international attention and would entice visitors to come to Montreal. The storming of a specially fabricated ice palace by torch-bearing snowshoers at that carnival was the first such event in North America. This established a tradition in Montreal that lasted until 1910 and was copied elsewhere, notably in Quebec City (1894, 1896) and St. Paul, Minnesota (1886-1888, 1896, 1916-17).<sup>326</sup> However, as the *New York Times* noted, the Montreal carnival was "the only genuine and original North American Winter carnival."<sup>327</sup>

For a short time, winter carnivals with ice palaces were almost annual events at Montreal. The first one, in 1883, was widely publicized, including several articles in the *New York Times* and other major American newspapers. It was a roaring success. The *New York Times* estimated that there were between 30,000 and 40,000 visitors to Montreal for the carnival, including participants in events (hockey players, skaters, curlers, snowshoers).<sup>328</sup> The carnival was funded by local retail merchants. They must have thought that they got their money's worth because they were enthusiastic about a second carnival the following year. It was also a roaring success, with train loads of visitors from Boston, New York and many other places (including New Orleans), among them high profile celebrities like Mrs Vanderbilt and her entourage and the presidents of several railways.<sup>329</sup> A third such carnival was held in 1885. It was also regarded as a great success. The ice palaces were grander in each successive carnival and crowds of visitors larger. There was no carnival in 1886 because of an epidemic of small pox (New York authorities placed Quebec under quarantine, preventing visitors from that state),<sup>330</sup> but a fourth one was held in 1887.<sup>331</sup> On that occasion, the attack of the snowshoers on the ice palace was described as "a living mountain of fire."<sup>332</sup> There was another hiatus in 1888, but the a fifth carnival was held in 1889.<sup>333</sup> It was not a notable success. The problem was the weather, emphasizing the risks of heavy investments in an ephemeral tourist attraction. Warm weather early in the carnival caused melting that damaged one of the walls of the ice palace.<sup>kk</sup> This was followed by a blizzard that hampered rail transport and may have led visitors to leave early and driven potential visitors away.<sup>334</sup> Many merchants expressed dismay at the low level of their receipts during the carnival and hotel keepers moaned about empty rooms.<sup>335</sup> The railways reported that although visits from Canadians generally held up, "not as many arrived from the South this year..."<sup>336</sup> The 1889 experience dampened enthusiasm among Montreal merchants. It was twenty years before a winter carnival with an elaborate ice palace was attempted again.

The 1909 carnival was highly controversial, but for a surprising reason. Both the Montreal Board of Trade<sup>337</sup> and the major Canadian Railways, who might be expected to support the carnival because of the passenger traffic that it generated, objected strenuously to the holding of a winter carnival with an ice palace. The Canadian Pacific and the Grand Trunk railways had been asked for a \$5,000 donation to

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<sup>kk</sup> The same spell of warm weather led to the cancellation of the construction of an ice palace for the winter carnival at St. Paul, Minnesota, that year.

support that carnival. This was refused. Indeed, the railways refused to grant the usual excursion fares for people attending the carnival.<sup>338</sup> In a sense, the problem was that the ice palace and the Montreal winter carnival were too successful and attracted too much attention internationally. It was asserted that potential immigrants got the impression from publicity about the carnival that Canada was a land of ice and snow, "a sort of lesser Greenland"<sup>339</sup> where people lived in ice houses during long, dark, bitter winters and that this impression gave Canada a bad reputation in the world. Potential immigrants were deterred from coming to Canada, choosing instead places with more moderate climates. Although benefits accrued to a few merchants in Montreal and to American railways that transported visitors to Montreal, the carnival was a detriment to Canada at large and particularly to the Canadian railways who were in the business of transporting immigrants.<sup>340</sup> While decrying the selfishness of Montreal merchants in promoting the carnival, the railways did not acknowledge their own selfish interest in opposing it. Their opposition was only for the greater good of Canada!

However, despite the strenuous and influential opposition, considered on its own terms, the 1909 winter carnival was another roaring success. It was estimated, for example, that 100,000 people witnessed that storming of the ice castle.<sup>341</sup> The castle was built at the foot of Mount Royal and the spectacle involved thousands of torch bearing snowshoers (from Montreal and elsewhere) swarming down the mountainside to attack the fort, which was defended by a detachment of regular soldiers, with loud explosions, cannon fire and colourful rockets. The 1910 carnival started much like that of 1889. The weather was so warm that the *New York Times* reported "the ice palace is in danger of melting and floating into the St. Lawrence."<sup>342</sup> The storming of the palace had to be postponed, but when it occurred it was again a highly successful event, witnessed, according to the *New York Times*, by between 150,000 and 200,000 spectators (probably a considerable exaggeration).<sup>343</sup> An attempt to have a carnival in 1911 without an ice palace was not successful. It is not clear why there was no repetition of the spectacle in subsequent years. Perhaps the opposition to an ice palace was overwhelming. Perhaps the cost of constructing an elaborate ice palace became excessive. Perhaps potential visitors had become jaded. Whatever the reason, 1910 represented the end of winter carnivals with elaborate ice palaces in Montreal.

The range of sports at the Montreal winter carnivals was similar to that at the Rosslund winter carnivals, with one glaring exception. There were sports on ice (hockey, "fancy" skating and speed skating) and sports on snow (snowshoe races, horse races), but until 1909 no skiing. For the first time, the 1909 carnival included ski jumping on a steep street on Mount Royal. As in Rosslund, the distances obtained now seem trivial. The longest jump was 86 feet and the winning jump (with allowances for style) was 80 feet.<sup>344</sup> One chap jumped 91 feet, but fell. In 1910 the distances were \_ feet and \_ feet. The lack of winter carnivals in other years does not mean that Montreal lacked winter sports and winter sporting competitions. The newspapers were full of reports of snowshoeing, curling and skating activities and competitions and, of course, hockey games at all levels, from children to professional. In 1889 the *New York Times* reported that there were over 5,000 snowshoers in the Montreal area.<sup>345</sup> In later years ski jumping competitions were also reports.

Although the scale was much smaller, the attack was up hill, and the fort was a pile of logs and brush, the Rosslund "storm the fort" spectacle was an indirect descendant of the storming of the palace at early Montreal winter carnivals.

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- <sup>1</sup> {Abbott, 1984 #626; Globe February 2, 1910a #627; Quebec City, 1894 #624; Quebec City, 1896 #625}  
<sup>2</sup> {Abbott, 1984 #626; Globe February 2, 1910a #627}  
<sup>3</sup> {Kingsmill, 1897 #623}  
<sup>4</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1897w #290}  
<sup>5</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1898j #291}  
<sup>6</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1898s #536}  
<sup>7</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1898l #293}  
<sup>8</sup> {Trail Times, 1937a #738}  
<sup>9</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1904za #622}  
<sup>10</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1898k #292}  
<sup>11</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1898l #293}  
<sup>12</sup>  
<sup>13</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1898o #304}  
<sup>14</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1898q #499}  
<sup>15</sup> {Goodeve, 1898a #503}  
<sup>16</sup>  
<sup>17</sup>  
<sup>18</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1898r #504}  
<sup>19</sup> **Program for Today 0502.16**  
<sup>20</sup> **Around the City 0602.09**  
<sup>21</sup> {Rossland Record, 1898j #508}  
<sup>22</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1899d #512}  
<sup>23</sup>  
<sup>24</sup> {Spokesman Review, 1899a #547}  
<sup>25</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1899e #516}  
<sup>26</sup> {Spokesman Review, 1900d #546}  
<sup>27</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1900w #550}  
<sup>28</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1900v #549}  
<sup>29</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1901q #551; Spokesman Review, 1900e #553; Spokesman Review, 1900f #552}  
<sup>30</sup> {Spokesman Review, 1916a #803; Spokesman Review, 1916b #804; Spokesman Review, 1916c #805}  
<sup>31</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1917c #756}  
<sup>32</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1902k #792}  
<sup>33</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1902l #794}  
<sup>34</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1902i #560}  
<sup>35</sup> {Mouat, 1995 #452, pp. 88-108}  
<sup>36</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1903x #562}  
<sup>37</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1903v #558}  
<sup>38</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1903v #558}  
<sup>39</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1903w #561}  
<sup>40</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1903y #563}  
<sup>41</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1903z #564}  
<sup>42</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1906l #569}  
<sup>43</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1907g #570}  
<sup>44</sup> {Rossland Record, 1898j #508}  
<sup>45</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1900s #531}  
<sup>46</sup> {Rossland Record, 1899o #510}  
<sup>47</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1900s #531}  
<sup>48</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1900s #531}  
<sup>49</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1911c #793}  
<sup>50</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1904h #237}  
<sup>51</sup> {Rossland Record, 1899n #462}  
<sup>52</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1913a #466}  
<sup>53</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1916c #533}  
<sup>54</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1917a #534}  
<sup>55</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1901p #472}  
<sup>56</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1903p #473. See also Shearer, 2009 #505}  
<sup>57</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1910c #469; Rossland Miner, 1911a #468; Rossland Miner, 1912a #467; Rossland Miner, 1913a #466}  
<sup>58</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1913b #535}  
<sup>59</sup> {Rossland Record, 1898e #306}  
<sup>60</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1898o #304}  
<sup>61</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1906m #773}  
<sup>62</sup> {Shearer, 2009a #505}  
<sup>63</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1900r #515}  
<sup>64</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1907i #768}  
<sup>65</sup> {Rossland Miner, 1907i #768}

66 {Rossland Miner, 1907j #769;Rossland Miner, 1907l #771}  
67 {Rossland Miner, 1907k #770}  
68 {Rossland Miner, 1907k #770}  
69 {Rossland Miner, 1908g #772}  
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72 {Rossland Miner, 1913d #782}  
73 {Rossland Miner, 1913c #781}  
74 {Rossland Miner, 1913e #783}  
75 {Rossland Miner, 1914a #764}  
76 {Rossland Miner, 1914a #764}  
77 {Rossland Miner, 1914b #777;Rossland Miner, 1914c #778}  
78 {Rossland Miner, 1915c #780}  
79 {Rossland Miner, 1915b #779}  
80 {Rossland Miner, 1915b #779}  
81 {Rossland Miner, 1916d #784}  
82 {Rossland Miner, 1916e #785}  
83 {Wormington, 1980 #457, pp. 138-142}  
84 {Rossland Miner, 1917k #788}  
85 {Rossland Miner, 1917f #766}  
86 {Rossland Miner, 1917i #786}  
87 {Rossland Miner, 1917j #787}  
88 {Rossland Miner, 1917a #534}  
89 {Rossland Miner, 1917l #789}  
90 {Rossland Miner, 1917m #790}  
91 {Rossland Miner, 1917a #534}  
92 {Rossland Miner, 1904z #565}  
93 {Jeldness, 1897a #455}  
94 {Rossland Miner, 1906j #507}  
95 {Rossland Miner, 1908h #774}  
96  
97 {Rossland Miner, 1903m #463}  
98 {Rossland Miner, 1904w #526}  
99 {Rossland Miner, 1904f #235}  
100  
101  
102  
103  
104  
105 {Rossland Miner, 1904zb #758}  
106 **Fort Arthur 0502.18**  
107 **Rossland's Eleventh Annual 0802.05**  
108 **Carnival of 1911 Will Be Best Yet 1102.01**  
109 {Rossland Miner, 1899h #759}  
110 {Rossland Miner, 1901p #472}  
111 {Rossland Miner, 1902j #761}  
112 {Rossland Miner, 1900q #513}  
113 {Rossland Miner, 1903zc #762;Rossland Miner, 1905r #763}  
114 {Rossland Miner, 1903zc #762}  
115 {Nelson News, 1909f #644}  
116 {Spokesman Review, 1906a #642}  
117 {Rossland Miner, 1901p #472}  
118 {Spokesman Review, 1900b #541}  
119 {Spokesman Review, 1900g #554}  
120 {Nelson News, 1908u #791;Spokesman Review, 1906b #645}  
121 {Rossland Miner, 1900t #543}  
122 {Rossland Miner, 1900r #515}  
123 {Rossland Miner, 1901r #555}  
124 {Rossland Miner, 1903p #473}  
125  
126 {Rossland Miner, 1906k #568}  
127 {Nelson News, 1906a #566}  
128 {Nelson News, 1906b #567}  
129 {Rossland Miner, 1907h #575}  
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131 {Rossland Miner, 1908d #596}  
132 {Rossland Miner, 1908d #596}  
133 {GF Gazette, 1913a #589}  
134 {Nelson News, 1908m #607}

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- 135 {Rossland Miner, 1908c #590}  
136 {Nelson News, 1908g #594; Nelson News, 1908h #595}  
137 {Rossland Miner, 1908c #590}  
138 {Nelson News, 1908m #607}  
139 {Rossland Miner, 1908e #597}  
140 {Nelson News, 1908m #607}  
141 {Rossland Miner, 1908e #597}  
142 {Rossland Miner, 1908c #590}  
143 {Nelson News, 1908f #593}  
144 {Nelson News, 1908e #592}  
145 {Nelson News, 1908d #591}  
146 {Nelson News, 1908k #602}  
147 {GF Gazette, 1908a #599}  
148 {Nelson News, 1908j #601}  
149 {Nelson News, 1908h #595}  
150 {Nelson News, 1908j #601}  
151 {Rossland Miner, 1908f #598}  
152 {Nelson News, 1908l #606}  
153 {Nelson News, 1908c #581}  
154 {Nelson News, 1908c #581}  
155 {Grieg, 1999 #582}  
156 {Nelson News, 1909d #588; Nelson News, 1909e #603}  
157 {Nelson News, 1909c #587}  
158 {Nelson News, 1909b #586}  
159 {Nelson News, 1909c #587}  
160 {Vancouver Province, 1913a #608}  
161 {GF Gazette, 1913b #604}  
162 {GF Gazette, 1913b #604}  
163 {Nelson News, 1910a #605}  
164 {Nelson News, 1910a #605}  
165  
166 {Nelson News, 1911o #753}  
167 {Rossland Miner, 1911b #718}  
168 {Nelson News, 1911d #711; Nelson News, 1911e #712}  
169 {Rossland Miner, 1905q #754}  
170 {Rossland Miner, 1904ze #802}  
171 {Nelson News, 1911j #717}  
172 {Rossland Miner, 1912b #800}  
173 {Rossland Miner, 1911b #718}  
174 {Rossland Miner, 1912c #811}  
175 {Rossland Miner, 1917g #775}  
176 {Rossland Miner, 1917c #756}  
177 {Rossland Miner, 1917d #757}  
178 {Rossland Miner, 1917b #755}  
179 {Rossland Miner, 1917h #776}  
180 {Rossland Miner, 1902j #761}  
181 {Rossland Miner, 1902j #761}  
182 {Rossland Miner, 1899f #539}  
183 {Rossland Miner, 1899g #540}  
184 {Rossland Miner, 1900t #543; the Spokane newspaper reprinted the Miner's report, Spokesman Review, 1900c #542}  
185 {Rossland Miner, 1900q #513}  
186 {Rossland Miner, 1900x #573}  
187 {Rossland Miner, 1900x #573}  
188 {Norton, 2009 #574, p. 29; Rossland Historical Museum, 1996 #537, p. 169}  
189 {Rossland Miner, 1900x #573}  
190 {Rossland Miner, 1902f #514}  
191 {Rossland Miner, 1900n #496}  
192 {Rossland Miner, 1900o #497}  
193 {Rossland Miner, 1899f #539}  
194 {Rossland Miner, 1905n #522}  
195 {Rossland Miner, 1904zd #795}  
196 {Rossland Miner, 1905o #523}  
197 {Rossland Miner, 1905m #521}  
198 {Rossland Miner, 1910a #798}  
199 {Rossland Miner, 1911c #799}  
200 {Rossland Miner, 1913d #782}  
201 {Rossland Miner, 1913a #466}  
202 {Rossland Miner, 1914a #764; Rossland Miner, 1914d #796}  
203 {Rossland Miner, 1916e #797}

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204 {Rossland Miner, 1900m #495}  
205 {Rossland Miner, 1900r #515}  
206 {Rossland Miner, 1902g #556}  
207 {Rossland Miner, 1902h #557}  
208 {Rossland Miner, 1900m #495}  
209 {Rossland Miner, 1907f #530}  
210 {Rossland Miner, 1904v #520}  
211 {Rossland Miner, 1903u #532;Rossland Miner, 1912b #800;Rossland Miner, 1913f #801}  
212 {Shearer, 2009a #505}  
213 {Rossland Miner, 1917a #534}  
214 {Rossland Miner, 1917f #766}  
215 {Rossland Miner, 1917e #765}  
216 {Victoria Times, 1926a #724}  
217 {Whitehead, 1980 #640, pp175-177}  
218 {Whitehead, 1980 #640, p. 22}  
219 {Whitehead, 1980 #640, pp. 23-24}  
220 {Whitehead, 1980 #640, p. 24}  
221 {Globe February 27, 1904a #627}  
222 {Globe March 10, 1904b #638; Globe March 12, 1904c #639}  
223 {Montreal Gazette, 1904a #641}  
224 {Montreal Gazette, 1906a #654}  
225 {Montreal Gazette, 1906b #655}  
226 {Montreal Gazette, 1907a #657;Montreal Gazette, 1907b #658}  
227 {Montreal Gazette, 1907c #659;Montreal Gazette, 1907d #660}  
228 {Montreal Gazette, 1907e #661}  
229 {Montreal Gazette, 1907f #662}  
230 {Montreal Gazette, 1907h #665}  
231 {Montreal Gazette, 1907i #666}  
232 {Montreal Gazette, 1907g #664}  
233 {Montreal Gazette, 1907j #667}  
234 {Montreal Gazette, 1907k #668;Montreal Gazette, 1907l #669}  
235 {Montreal Gazette, 1904b #677}  
236 {Montreal Gazette, 1906c #672}  
237 {Montreal Gazette, 1907m #673}  
238 {Montreal Gazette, 1908c #674}  
239 {Whitehead, 1980 #640, pp. 28-29}  
240 {Montreal Gazette, 1908b #671}  
241 {Montreal Gazette, 1908c #675}  
242 {Montreal Gazette, 1904c #678}  
243 {Nelson News, 1911a #708}  
244 {Nelson News, 1908n #681}  
245 {Nelson News, 1908n #682}  
246 {Nelson News, 1908p #683}  
247 {Nelson News, 1908m #607}  
248 {Nelson News, 1908q #684}  
249 {Nelson News, 1908s #686}  
250 {Nelson News, 1908r #685}  
251 {Globe December 29, 1908b #610; Globe December 31, 1908c #611}  
252 {Globe December 31, 1908c #611}  
253 {Globe December 29, 1908b #610}  
254 {Globe December 12, 1908a #613}  
255  
256 {Nelson News, 1909i #689}  
257 {Nelson News, 1909d #588}  
258 {Nelson News, 1909g #679}  
259  
260  
261 {New York Times, 1910a #614}  
262  
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266 {Nelson News, 1911d #711}  
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278 {Nelson News, 1911i #720;Nelson News, 1911m #721;Nelson News, 1911n #722}  
279 {Vancouver Province, 1911a #744}  
280 {Vancouver Province, 1911d #748}  
281 {Vancouver Province, 1911b #745}  
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296 {Globe, 1920b #695}  
297 {Globe, 1920b #695;Globe, 1920c #692}  
298 {Globe, 1920d #693}  
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305 {New York Times, 1924a #637;New York Times, 1924b #697}  
306 {New York Times, 1924c #698}  
307 {New York Times, 1924c #698}  
308 {New York Times, 1925a #699}  
309 {Globe, 1925b #704}  
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311 {Globe, 1925c #726}  
312 {New York Times, 1925e #703}  
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314 {New York Times, 1926a #705}  
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<sup>343</sup> {New York Times, 1910c #637}  
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