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Tenders must be accompanied by cash, certified cheque or postal money order, payable to B.C. Forest Branch, covering total price bid. The highest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

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Two Captains in One Boat

Being an account of a trip to the Eestall River as recounted by Newton Pullen of Victoria under the nom de plume of Marcus Drexell in the Victoria Colonist. The next article of the series appears next week.

UP-RIVER FROM THE FALLS

When we made camp at Falls River we lugged our numerous belongings up from the water to the tent, and it all had to be carried back again, when we decided to embark once more in the Gwen, about noon on the following day. We had three magazines with us, and one of them contained an article by a certain New York humorist by the name of Phillips, who had treated the subject of vacations with a gay irony which dwelt upon the fact that human beings would go on holidays and enjoy themselves by working much harder than they ever cared to in everyday life.

At some psychological moment when, for instance, he was carrying two cushions, the roll of blankets, the typewriter, the eggs and a pair of socks which had been ignored in the packing up, the Other Captain would turn to me and demand, "What was it that fellow Phillips said?" And I would smile weakly and in sympathetic understanding as I clung desperately to a suitcase, a pan of dishes, a camera and a sweater.

River Starts Back

When we had broken camp, loaded everything on to the launch, and gone down Falls River to the Ecstall, we found the current in the latter stream against us, for the tide, which backs up the water of the river even that distance from the sea, had not yet turned. While we ate lunch at a spot where a little stream flowed in after an impetuous rush down the mountainside from a snowfield which could be plainly seen not far above, the Ecstall reversed its direction, for the tide was coming in. With its assistance we proceeded at an increased speed.

The Other Captain had been in these parts before, and while he did not know what particular course should be taken in navigating the river, he did know that there was a constant danger that we would run aground on unseen shallows. I soon learned that his were not vain alarms because it was not long before we ran aground in the middle of the river. Backing off, we found a deeper channel and proceeded, but got into trouble on various occasions after that. The rising tide aided us, however, and there was no danger of sticking for long.

Engine Erratic

The river narrowed down until I could have thrown a stone across it, and we reached the section where the tide has little or no effect and the current travels rapidly. When the engine had stopped unexpectedly lower down the Ecstall, I had gone to sleep and left it to the Other Captain to find out what the trouble was. This plan had worked excellently. As we chugged along through the upper reaches of the river our progress was slow, as we were bucking a strong current. The engine again began to give trouble, and when it finally quit altogether I heaved the anchor overboard to keep us from losing ground and went to sleep again. The plan worked this time also. The Other Captain got the engine going and we continued our journey. We snaked along from side to side, going wide on the curves to avoid shallows and striking bottom at intervals. The water swirled past ugly looking rocks. We made our way carefully.

When the engine stopped again and I dropped the anchor it failed to hold and we lost ground, but before we got into trouble we came to a halt. I have a notion we backed on to a shoal.

Off For Johnson Creek

Our objective was Johnson Creek. The Other Captain had been there before in the Gwen and could wax most enthusiastic about the beauties of Johnson Lake, which was reached from the mouth of Johnson Creek. Nearer and nearer we came to our goal, but navigation was becoming more and more difficult. We were encountering sunken logs and snags, and it was a most uncomfortable feeling when the launch jarred over a shallow or struck some submerged obstruction.

At last we came to within probably three-quarters of a mile of the mouth of Johnson Creek. We could almost see the place. Ahead, the river was divided into three channels by a long sandbar running parallel with the stream and also a small island.

Which Channel?

"I think the last time I was up here we tried to get through over there on the left, and stuck, and finally found a passage over there on the right," vouchsafed the Other Captain. We decided to try the extreme right. Conditions were not good for manoeuvring for the river was narrow, the current swift, and the obstructions numerous. There were lots of places where the depth of water was not sufficient for the boat, as we found out from time to time.

The Gwen forged ahead slowly to the right hand channel, but as we reached there we decided that the way was blocked by obstructions, and so we stopped. The current swept the Gwen quickly down stream, but we managed to get her turned about in the narrow space and started back again. Then we tried the centre channel, and stuck fast. Working the launch loose, we swept down stream again, turned about and came back. There was a hectic moment when the steering gear jammed. We discovered what was caught in the controls and remedied the trouble before we hit anything.

On the third occasion we kept as far over to the left hand bank as we could, passed a wicked looking log sticking out, and made for the left hand channel. There was a small island there, and as the canoe seemed in danger of catching on a stump we had to halt, but hung on to the island for a breather. We got the ship straightened out and started again, but hit shallows. Back we went with the current, found ourselves in a jackpot and drove into the bank. It was decided to again try that left hand channel, and we headed at it, but stuck once more, whereupon we ran into the bank again.

Our Final Effort

The Other Captain set off in his high boots to search for a channel on the left hand side of the river, where we were. He figured out a possible route, and we tried roping the Gwen through, but we could not do the trick. Turning the launch around we made off down stream. In the swift current our pace was rapid and our control none too good, and as we knew that shallows and submerged obstructions were lurking all about us, we had an exciting time of it. We got down stream for a short distance safely, however, and turning about, tried the centre channel again. No results.

Giving up when we were so near Johnson Creek was too much for us, and we resolved as a last resort to seek a passage through the right hand channel at which we had baulked in the first instance. Down stream we went, turned, and came back up, driving at the spot where the water came down between an island and the right hand bank. We could see riffles, denoting shallows, but we thought we might find deep water alongside of them. Creeping up the right hand bank against the swiftly flowing stream we shuddered as the Gwen struck against submerged logs, but we trusted to luck and kept going as hard as possible. We were there. Riffles ahead. Clear water on the right. Helm hard over. The Gwen swung into the chosen spot. A crash. The Gwen whirled sideways in the current and stuck, keeling over at an angle which brought the water to within six inches or less of the top of the gunwale.

Fouled by Logs

Appearances had deceived us. The passage, seemingly clear, was fouled by submerged logs and snags and we had piled up on these. The angle we were perched at did not look any too promising. The current was swift and the water cold. We scrambled ashore by way of an islet, and tried to haul the bow of the Gwen upstream, but little could be done against the force of the water. A reconnaissance showed that the launch was jammed hard on several logs with a snag sticking out of the water amidships. The depth was over our heads, but foothold could be obtained on the obstructions against which we were lodged.

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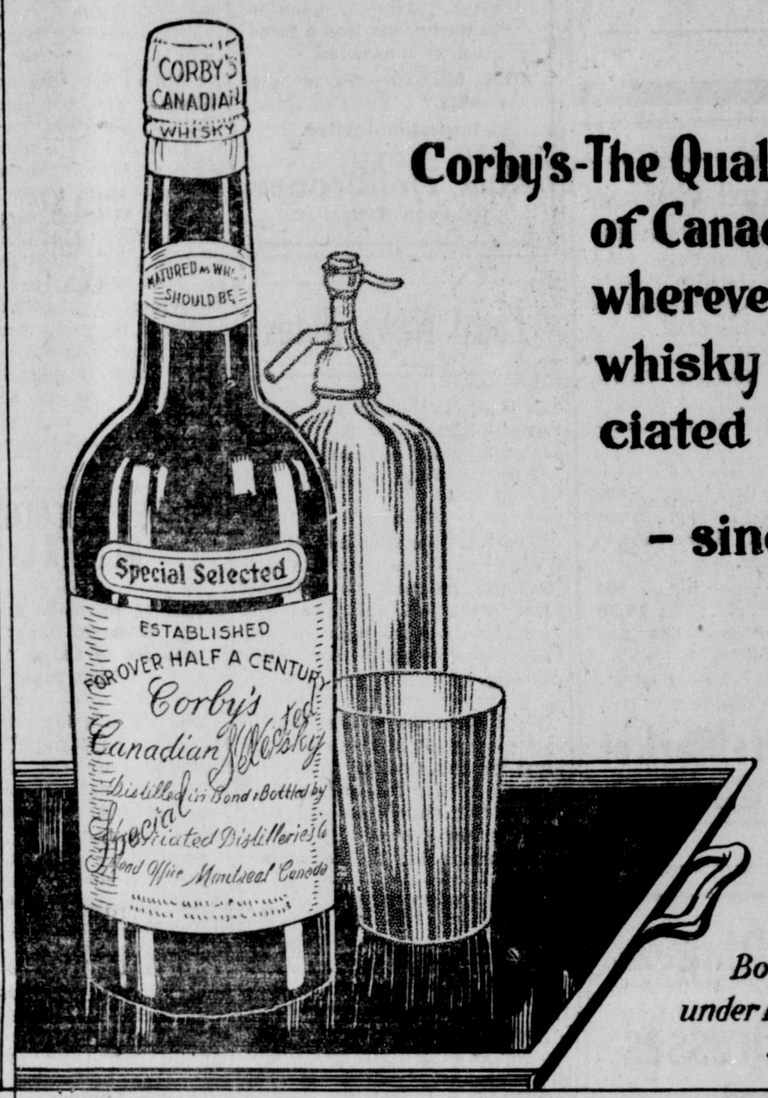

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LAND ACT.

Notice of Intention to Apply to Lease Land.

In Queen Charlotte Island Land District, Recording District of Prince Rupert, B.C., and situate near Tow Hill, Graham Island.

TAKE NOTICE that I, George W. Dowling, of 3682 Cambridge Street, Vancouver, B.C., occupation manufacturer, intends to apply for permission to lease the following described lands: Commencing at a post planted near the foot of Tow Hill, east side, thence northerly to low water mark; thence westerly following low water mark 80 chains; thence southerly three chains; thence easterly 80 chains to point of commencement and containing 15 acres more or less.

GEORGE W. DOWLING, Applicant.
DAVE RUTTEN, Agent.
Date, June 6, 1924.

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