

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – SPECIAL EDITION – BUZZSAW JIMMY
– DEC. 10, 2003 – Prepared by Sherron Jones sherronjones@shaw.ca

(The following story was included in a little book loaned to me by Jeanne Harbottle. It shows no sign of copyright, so I hope it is all right that I share it with you. It looks by the titles that there is also a booklet called Cheechako Railroad, this one was called Dawson or Bust. Several in our group of readers have been kind enough to also add some of their own comments, which are included in this edition.)- Sherron

DAWSON OR BUST

*(Yukon Archives location reference **PAM nd-35**)*

**Before
“CHEECHAKO RAILROAD”
SOUREST STORY EVER TOLD
By “BUZZSAW JIMMY”**

RAMBLINGS OF A SOURDOUGH

By J. D. (*James Domville*) Richards

(An edited version.)



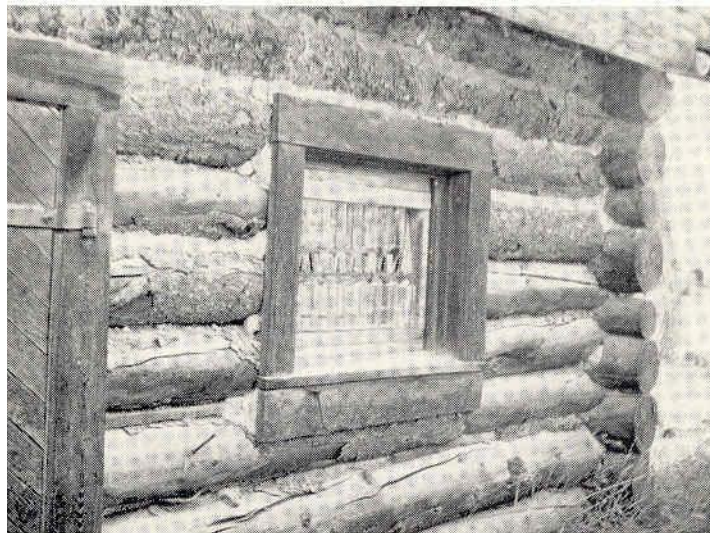
James Domville Richards aka Buzzsaw Jimmy

Graduate St. John, N.B., Business College, I left for the Klondyke on a Colonist Sleeper to Vancouver, B.C., the fare being \$25.00. My godfather, Lt.-Col. James Domville, M.P., for King’s County, N.B., Manager for the Yukon Steamboat and Mining Company; who were operating in the Yukon and was an officer in the Riel Rebellion previously.

We got on very well to a point near Rat Portage when six coaches overturned, including mine, which was the fault of a broken rail. Two persons jumped and were killed under the side of the coach. It was level prairie country and no one else was badly hurt, just bruised. I had some bruises myself but nothing to worry about. The wrecking car came very soon, that is in a few hours and a new train was made up and we were on our way. We plugged along beyond Canmore in the Rockies. My coach left the rails and bumped over the ties until a big-sized coloured lady grabbed the bell cord and pulled it. I said pulled, guess she nearly pulled the engineer off his seat. Glad the coach didn't turn over this time as that gully was a long way down and I would have had a lot of bruises or maybe I would have been just a little grease spot.

I dozed off. Soon the conductor shouts, "All change cars." I guess he meant sleeping quarters. Well, I did not intend to stay there and be pulled back east. Rather liked the surroundings, flowers and everything. In Winnipeg a few days ago the wind blew icicles off the roofs of the buildings. I don't know about farming there, maybe they planted what is called winter wheat.

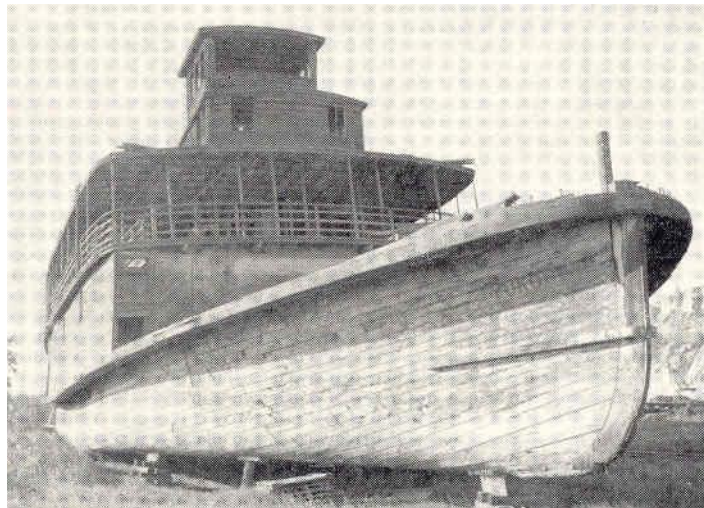
Well, I got away from the car fast and learned about this False Creek in Vancouver, where they build steamers for the Yukon. I reserved room at the Colonial Hotel, near where steamer James Domville was building. I meant "reserved" a room, when they could spare one at five a week. It wasn't a bad rate as father had to pay \$3.00 in St. John when he tried to get me educated. Poor old Daddy, he meant well.



Whisky Bottles for a Window

I went to work right away on the steamer, the Honest Citizen. Shipbuilders were the famous Wallaces, and they were fast workers. On Sundays I rented a bicycle for Stanley Park – the big cedar stump like a house inside. Granville Street near False Creek, just a building here and there. At Hotel lots of salmon, but not like St. John River; salmon that melt in your mouth. Had a trial run on Burrard Inlet when the Steamship Manuense U.K. hooks on. Called at Nanaimo, V.I. took on twenty-five tons of coal. At Cross Sound, out in the open Pacific around the coast of Alaska to Dutch Harbor. Yakutat Bay a big storm

forced us in for shelter along with a number of the Moran Fleet. We put out a sea anchor that kept Manuense straight in the wind. Our crew stood two-hour watches at the wheel, before reaching St. Michael's, the nearest harbour to the mouth of the Yukon River. We encountered a nasty, choppy sea. Had we been under our own steam it would not have mattered because we could have slowed down but we were being towed by a heavy steamship. The waves hit so hard they strained the planking forward and the ship began to leak badly. Our mate, Mr. Coalfleet, Digby, N.S., got the rifle out and pointed it at the steamship ahead. He got action fast, they slowed down at once. A small amount of caulking and it was O.K. At St. Michael's the decks were cleared for cargo, ship stores and 600 cases of whisky and a large number of barrels on lower deck. We tied up alongside the **steamer Yukoner**. An iron barge off the steamship was also filled with barrels of whisky. Steamer James Domville was to push it up the Yukon to Dawson City, maybe. Our Indian pilot for the trip takes us to the mouth of the river and a likely looking channel. Our supply of coal runs us up river to a woodpile of green cottonwood at \$20.00 a cord.



Deteriorating "steamer Yukoner" in Whitehorse

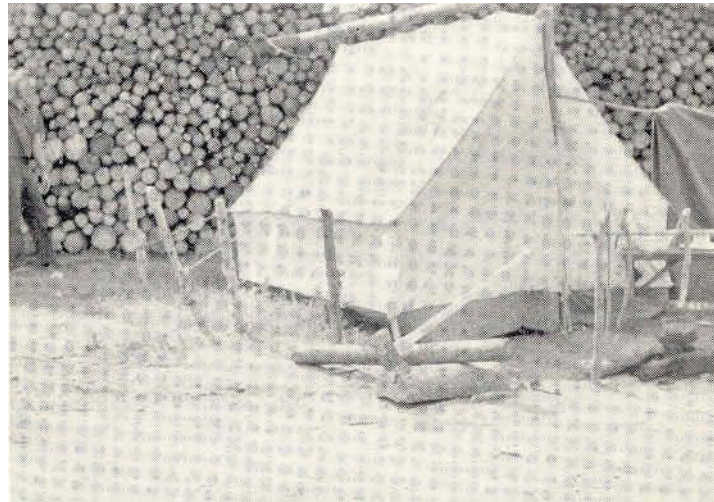
Coming on watch, I woke up to find us high and dry on the river bottom. The river was shallow at its best. The tide did not have to drop much for this to happen.

Captain Ferris decides if we are to reach Dawson in time to get a claim it will not be by pushing a barge all the way. We landed the barge with whisky in a slough by Holycross Mission. In our ship stores there are several barrels of fat pork (sowbelly) and we were compelled to use a considerable portion of this along with the poor wood to keep going. No fuel oil in them days.

We sighted a bear ahead bearing down on us who did not mind the cold water and was in his bare feet with no bathing suit. Our Mate barely had time to present the same rifle he had pointed at the steamship on the way up. The gap was closing fast, our speed had increased and the bear was not handicapped by superficial garments. But Mr. Coalfleet was on hand to entice Mr. Bear on board. Our cook, Mr. Hardacre, an English lime juicer, was going over his stock of flavorings and sharpening the cutlery in anticipation of

the coming feast. Me; no likely bear. Limejuice whisky good enough for the scurvy cure, I'm sure. We found a good channel on the Yukon Flats, called at Fort Yukon and soon at Moose hide; now your dream of pockets bulging with nuggets.

Dawson City, white with tents is in the periscope just ahead. Tied up to the dock we investigated our wardrobe, spruced up and headed for the Canadian Bank of Commerce with Traveller's Cheques to trade them for local currency (gold dust). At Orpheum Theatre where the girls give you a whirl for your roll or rolls you when your head whirls. Beware of the bartender at the gold scale. He is fast on the draw and slow tying the string on the poke. The girls are all fast workers. Have to be; fresh eggs are 60 cents each, apples \$1.00 each. They get along somehow without lipstick. I know they furnish lip service on request, for I noticed they kissed some of the boys at a price, of course for the ladies must eat. The gamblers are not broke if you size up the rows and rows of 20-dollar gold coins. Admired the Yukon spirit as shown in the store window on Front Street where two large pokes – or were they gunny sacks? Never mind they contained \$20,000; an official of the N.C. Co. was paying a poker debt.



Steamboat wood camp on river, 1899 – “carrying wood on my back”.

Not overlooking Big Tom Chilholm's place where liquid joy was furnished at 25 cents per glass. At other places 50 cents per glass. Tom's mixture was not so good but he, like the girls, had to eat and he was a good sport. It had been decided at a banquet at Nigger Jim's Restaurant by the consignees receiving our cargo that Officers and crew of the Steamer James Donville were willing, and by the grace of God if temptation overcomes them again when nearness to the spirits sorely tempted them, would not do as before; break one of the Ten Commandments – Thou Shalt Not Steal. Bon voyage and will say at certain occasion, the gimlet is more powerful than the corkscrew. The Lord did not intend that a man should destroy his internal machine by drinking straight sandy water when a substitute was near at hand. The officers and crew no doubt will govern themselves accordingly.

Well, as far as I can learn, nothing happened in the city to cause much excitement and certainly not on our ship on the trip down to bring up the whisky left on the barge at

Holycross. In fact, it was so uneventful that about all there is to say is that we got there and brought back the bacon. Excuse me, I mean the consignment we went to get. Well, now the city has quieted down as most of them have continued on down river not being able to locate the proverbial trees that grow the nuggets and no trees in sight that would furnish them with food and not too many trees for fuel for the long winter; this, of course, is only a supposition.

We are on our way to Whitehorse with a few passengers for the coast. Got to Five Finger Rapids, part way through and not being familiar with the vessel or uneven keel, the bow raised a lot when getting nearly through. This meant, what I did not realize at the time, that the gauge glass front of the boiler dropped as the bow kept rising. Naturally this was but a circumstance not being familiar with it. Before long so much water had accumulated in the boiler and engines working at full speed, boiler being primed; that it is taking an amount of water to cylinders along with the steam. Every engineer knows the danger of water in the cylinders but this was an exception with the steamer standing on end, almost, and we had to drop back in the eddy. Luckily we had a forge, coal and evidently some band iron. Forge was set out on the beach and the Chief, Mr. Yabsley, made a two-piece band with boltholes and clamped it around the cracked steam chamber after settling back in the eddy on an even keel. We then saw what an awful lot of water was in the boiler but learned something. On the next attempt we used a medium glass and let it go at that until we got through. Credit to the engineer under such conditions. The steamer later got through Five Finger Rapids with heavy wire cable that was tied on shore above the Rapids and reaching below with floats on the end. It is picked up and turns taken to capstan and practically pulled through. You just throw floats overboard while moving on. There were also channels on the opposite shore used by a small steamer before the cable was used.

No trouble experienced on the rest of the trip to Whitehorse, our winter quarters on October 5, 1898. Our Captain, Mr. Ferris, made arrangements with me to get \$5.00 a cord to cut wood for the steamer along with my regular wages before he left for the Outside. I chopped steamboat wood for some time then got gold fever. I built a sleigh, and had Christmas dinner on the steamer. Chris, a deckhand and I were pulling a sled over rivers and lakes by way of the RCMP post at Tagish to Atlin City and up O'Donnell River where we staked placer claims and recorded them at the Atlin office. A five-week trip at 50 below zero, leaving the tent, stove and sleigh behind to use mining, carried only a bit of canvas, frying pan, cup and a small pack of food. We siwashed it on the way back. This means to get some dry logs and build a big fire to warm the ground, dispense the coals and lie down with bit of canvas for a nap. Chopped more wood then went back to the steamboat and whipsawed lumber to build a canoe, which had oak inboard for ribs. When finished we paddled down to near the wood camp, shot a wild goose, brought it up to Cyr's cabin near the Rapids—the only apartment in the residential district. Tony Cyr's brother, Mike performs at the cook stove, his ability was established a long time ago. Bennett Lake and Klondyke Navigation Co. have a cabin across the river with barrels of whiskey. Joe Larmie, dispenser, furnishes a reasonable amount at a price. I purchased a quantity for trimmings to go with the goose and friendships renewed. Mike, the dame as most chefs, likes his little drop. The Cyr's worked on Hepburn's west side tramway.

Went up to Miles Canyon with several ex-Mounties and a horse and cut and hauled cabin logs to the bank of the canyon then slid them down to the basin and built a raft. Along with one of the men, the others took the horse back to town; we drifted down through Squaw and Whitehorse Rapids. The Steamer James Domville is wrecked in Thirty Mile River – 24 hours after sailing for Dawson and was a total loss. The agent came in from Vancouver to pay off the crew and later sell the wood. Salmon are good eating at Dawson but when they get to Whitehorse are played out and found dead on the beach. The Indians trade lots of moose meat for Cheechako supplies such as flour and beans.

Got a horse from upper lakes, traveled down river through the trees where R.R. Depot now stands. Sold my first wood to Philip B. Low for \$8.00 per cord and paid with gold dust -- \$14.00 an ounce. Lost my horse, which fell over a high bank while feeding and broke its neck. Came back to landing at Tramway, now includes Hotel Savoy, Lowe's Grocery and Swift's Restaurant; meals \$2.00, drinks 50 cents. Worked as longshoreman for Canadian Development Stores operating Steamers Canadian, Columbian, Victoria, then off to the hills to stake two copper claims. Had the canoe hauled over the tramway to Canyon City for \$5.00. Paddled up to and over Marsh Lake, passed Steamer Gov. Ogilvie abandoned on lake, to RNWMP. Tagish police kept a lot of dogs on the island at the head of the lake to supply the detachments every 25 miles along the Yukon River. Oh, the hundreds of fat whitefish they got to eat! Recorded copper claims, then back to Steamboat Landing. Sold wood which was cut during the winter to C.D. Co. Left in canoe for Dawson, took a little water going through Five Finger Rapids. Ice is now beginning to form on the river. Boats were frozen in at Selwyn. Some of the boats sank but I got within six miles of Dawson, had to walk over the Hogsback at Lousetown. Stopped at the first hotel which was Green Tree; Billy Somerville, manager, John Moe, barkeep. Freeman porter. Sawed some wood by hand for the Hotel porter and he gets me a chair to sleep in and everything bar affords liquid assets like Bank of Commerce. Mr. Jim Hall, a guest at the Hotel and the owner of a claim on Eldorado, often gave \$10.00 to take a letter to Forks. Earned some money at Allman's Bath House, a scow of waterfront, sold copper claims to Crayton and Wilcox, Broker, King Street. Usually beat Faro game for small change. Nigger Jim's Restaurant meals – breakfast, ham and eggs, \$2.50; dinner \$2.00. Father time keeps moving on but Yukon louse knows good things when he's got it.

Worked a little around Government buildings, helping a friend move a log cabin from Lousetown and setting it up in Dawson. There was Allman's Bath House in a pinch. Liked very much to go and hear Beatrice Lorne, Australian Lark, sing. Weather now getting warm, no wind like Whitehorse. A lot of Dawsonites leave on the Big Mush for Nome. Signs up, wanting men \$1.00 an hour on creeks for clean-up. If that's all the mining I'm going to get, to hell with mining. Go on board **Yukoner** May 1st as fireman. A fire starts in the paint locker and the saloon deck had to be rebuilt but we got to the upper end of Lake LeBarge before the river was high enough to reach Whitehorse. **Steamer Yukoner**, first trip to Whitehorse on the muddy river water shows well in Lake LeBarge. Deceived the pilot into thinking the water was shallow. Lets go anchor, goodbye anchor and bits lying at the bottom of the lake. Vessel beached for cargo from

Whitehorse. The following trip gets new firebox; boiler; old ones injured on run from St. Michael's to Dawson. Gives service for two seasons; replaced "Whitehorse", "Dawson" and "Selkirk" were built at Whitehorse with record performance. She now rests in state at Whitehorse Shipyard. I sold steamer wood left on the bank last summer. A load is lighted aboard at head of lake for Dawson. Returned to Whitehorse from Dawson the end of July with booms at masthead; a new record from Dawson to Whitehorse, three days, 15 hours. Norman McCauley, Tramway magnate, now proprietor of Whitehorse Hotel, puts beer up for the boys. The W.P. and Y.R. is there, McCauley still rolls them over the rail but it is the rail of the bar, not the tramway.

With the coming of the train the "Spell of the Yukon is Broken". The Chief Engineer of the Yukoner, Mr. Hewitt, gets me a pass over the W.P. and Y.R. to Skagway on a trip to St. John, N.B. to see my dear sick mother. Mother leaves me behind during the winter for a better world. Return in May to Yukon, passage from Vancouver to Skagway on the Steamer City of Seattle, first class \$5.00. This did not begin to pay for meals. The Klondyke rush caused rate-war between steamship lines. I remember I was offered a free trip rather than I go on another vessel.



J.D. and the Buzz Saw

The boat was the Yukoner, which was one of the 11 steamboats that headed from Victoria in 1898. It had to be rebuilt in St. Michael for some reason, and caught fire in Dawson as mentioned in Buzz Saw's book. As Jimmy said, the saloon deck was rebuilt where the fire took place. In that Carcross page of boats you will find one of it on fire in Dawson. It took too much water to float it and was pulled out at Whitehorse about 1903. It was used as a lumber warehouse and sat on the right just as you entered the shipyards.

Not sure if it was still there when you came to Whitehorse, but there are many photos of it. – Henry Breaden breaden@shaw.ca

(The following is a story from Donna Clayson passed on to her by her father in 1991.)

BUZZSAW JIMMY

Buzzsaw Jimmy was an accident waiting to happen. In 50 years of cutting wood in the Yukon he collected more than his share of stitches over his entire body. He lost a finger and a leg twice.

Buzzsaw was originally from Saint John, N.B. During the Gold Rush of 1898 25-year-old James Domville Richards boarded a Colonist Sleeper to Vancouver. It derailed near Rat Portage killing two of his fellow passengers.

The replacement train almost derailed around Canmore when the car he was riding in left the rails and bounced along the ties until a quick-thinking passenger pulled the bell cord alerting the engineer.

J.D. Richards as he called himself arrived safely in Vancouver and took a job finishing the construction of the Steamer “The Honest Citizen”. After that he took a job on another steamer, which was pulled by a larger steamer heading for the coast of Alaska. As the water was choppy for the speed they were traveling the ship started to fall apart. Arriving in Dawson City in 1898 J.D. realized all the good claims were taken so he returned to the winter quarters of the Steamer James Domville via the Yukon River.

J.D. arrived in Dawson Oct. 5. There he chopped wood. After a few years J.D. decided to live in Whitehorse. J.D. was good with his hands. He took an old tractor and an engine from a Model T Ford and fused them together with bits of iron, pulleys and circular blades to create a wood cutting machine. The machine worked so good that people would hire him just to see the machine work. He charged \$1.50 per cord if the logs were supplied. This is when J.D. became known as “Buzzsaw Jimmy”.

Buzzsaw lived in a garage on Second Avenue between Elliott and Main Street. He kept his woodcutter in there and parked his truck beneath his hammock. His hammock was strung up in the ceiling rafters and he used his truck to climb up into it. A string was attached to the damper of his Yukon Stove to control the heat while he was in the hammock.

Buzzsaw was not good with budgeting even though he must have made money cutting wood. He created little inventions with no purpose and wrote poems. He would brag about all the injuries he received. In September 1911 he almost cut off his right arm but only stayed in hospital one day.

A few years later Buzzsaw fell and caught his right leg in the gears. George Ryder lived a block away and got him to the hospital using a sleigh. The leg was amputated above the knee and with a wooden peg he went back to work. On December 12, 1919 he crawled under the woodcutter to locate a problem and didn't turn the power off. He cut his upper right leg to the bone. He hobbled to the hospital. Four months later he lost his balance stepping on a log and fell back onto the blade cutting approx. 20 inches diagonally across his back. Two years later he crushed his left leg just above the ankle. One time he swung an axe at a tree and cut his left leg.

In 1950 Buzzsaw was in his seventies. Both Buzzsaw and the woodcutter moved onto some property owned by George Ryder. The woodcutter was eventually towed to the dump. Buzzsaw died at Grandview Nursing Home in Vancouver on August 21, 1967.

(The following story seems to have been written about 50 years after the first story was written.)

THE YUKON WOOD CHOPPER

By "Buzzsaw Jimmy" Richards

(Yukon Archives location reference PAM nd-86)

Steamboats have bars, good smokes and drinks. Sometimes bars have steam boats along with the gold. Wood on River not too big, easy to cut, right on the river bank. Food on boats the freshest and best, right at cabin door, good water – lots of it, fish, ducks, geese, grouse, moose little way back, free fuel. Get material on boat to make wood cart to haul cordwood to bank. Cut 450 cords a year, three-year period, 1350 cords, \$15,000. – not 40-cent dollar, like nowadays. He leaves Yukon full of life and spirit, back to sweetheart, on the farm. Happy ever after. Choppers all like that. Not like the miners, just one in a thousand makes it. Build sawing machine, boiler and engine. On big wide sled, room for two whiskey barrels for water, a whistle on boiler. One long blast for team of horses to move to another job or two short toots for the waterman. Saw 10 cords on one barrel of water, then through for the day. Take water out of boiler, fill one barrel, and cover with a piece of canvas and a hoop. Water keeps warm in the big oak barrel for 24 hours at 50 below zero. Customer supplies wood free. Life goes on as usual. Saw frame lifts up out of the way of the team to hook on to saw; the fall of the year when starting up. The "Whitehorse Star: informs the general public. "The voice of the saw again heard in the land." Just like that for two years, then I got a jolt, woke up one morning and saw is running. What the – civilization has come to the Yukon. A gasoline saw has come to town. I annex that bird pronto – this will never do. Now sawing 3000 cords a year. Wood dealers – R. Lowe, A. Cyr, Langholtz and Nelson. They peddle thousands of cords to tents and cabins. B.Y.N. Co. have large amounts each year, so do the hotels and restaurants.

Fifty years ago I was a fireman on four steamboats, engineer on three boats. Stationary engineer with 100 h.p. license. I tested six boilers for the Yukon Government. Sawed lumber for Government sidewalks and commercial lumber, one big scow. Worked for

electric light company engineering since 1901, and Fire Dept since 1905. I got big truck and hauled wood on Government contracts, 100 electric light poles, Y.E. Co. In 1941 sawed 600 cords for Whitehorse Airport, clearing field for grading. Paid Canadian and American soldiers \$1.50 an hour to saw wood – price for sawing \$3.50 a cord. In St. John, N.B., I learned the trade at Allan’s Foundry and Machine Works across the harbor at West St. John. Left there to go as fireman on tugboat “Lily Glasier” towing rafts of logs from Fredericton to St. John sawmills; later transferred to harbor tug “Storm King” for head of Bay of Fundy get barge loads of coal for Calis. Main, U.S., up the St. Croix River, St. Andrews by the Sea and St. Stephen “Ganong’s Chocolates”, Calis. In 1898 I arrived at False Creek, Vancouver, on Granville Street near the creek. There was a building here and there a steamer. James Domville building here by Wallace of the Yukon. I had a lot of accidents before going to Vancouver General Hospital in 1921 to have my leg taken off after being hurt on wood-sawing machine. Dr. Clark at Whitehorse General Hospital measured 3 feet of stitches, later lost a finger in sawmill, also teeth gone, best girl, nurse at Whitehorse, had gone native too long away from the bright lights, no movies in Whitehorse, no dance, cards, talk, nothing. Just saw wood. She went back to Saskatchewan, wrote a nice letter (nice girl), says be good boy save your money, every little bit helps. The B.Y.N. Co stage drivers used to sing – “Every little bit with what you’ve got makes just a little bit more”.

Well, according to the doctors, every little bit less you’ve got, makes just a little bit less.

Yes, I indeed remember Buzzsaw Jimmy. His last name was Richards, and I remember asking my mother one day if he was my uncle. She was quite appalled. I still remember the expression on her face when she replied, “Certainly not!” (My father’s name was Eric Richards.)

In fact I watched him many times as a child, because my Dad used to hire him to saw our firewood. The logs were delivered into our yard by (I think it was George Ryder) and Jimmy buzzed them up for us. He used a contraption I’m sure he must have invented himself. The seat seemed to be quite high, (possibly because I was so small) and he worked the machinery from up there. I remember him holding the steering wheel and operating the treadle with his foot. When he pushed down, it lowered the big saw blade into the log, and cut it into the correct length for our stove.

Jimmy had a white beard, stained with chewing tobacco, and he always wore the same rather tattered and oil -soaked black coveralls and cap. Some said he slept in them, but I don’t know how true this was. He lived in an old log garage, which later was torn down and replaced, if my memory serves me right, with Nelson’s Hardware store on what is now Second Avenue.

He had a wooden leg; apparently having lost the original in an accident with his saw one day. The story goes that he got right back up on that buzzsaw with the new leg and carried on the same as before. One day, though, bad luck intervened again, and somehow his foot slipped and his nice new wooden leg was chopped off. Old Jimmy possessed a wry sense of humour and this struck him as being funny. “Ha, ha, he roared. Fooled you that time, you old son-of-a bitch.” He had a new one made soon after.

I remember Jimmy going over to the Whitehorse Inn, in the days it was owned by T.C. Richards. Every day at noon he'd show up and walk through the café' to the kitchen, where the cook would fill his 2 quart lard bucket full of the "soup of the day." Then Jimmy traipsed back to his cabin to have his lunch.

Joyce Yardley joyceyardley@shaw.ca <http://members.shaw.ca/joyceyardley/>

* * * * *

We read the information about Jimmy with interest. Most of it, Lloyd already knew, but much of it was new for me. Lloyd does remember his Dad taking Jimmy to the hospital when he caught his leg in the saw. He says Jimmy told his Dad to just take him down to the river and dump him in, because he wasn't much good any more.

Jimmy did most of his work on contract for anyone who needed their wood cut up. I gather he kept in close touch with George Ryder, because he seemed to know exactly who had received a wood delivery and when. Lloyd also remembers the clothing as Joyce Yardley has described it. One would think that the Yukon lacked soap and water in the days of those old timers.

Marny Ryder MarnyRyder@whtvcable.com

* * * * *

Oh, is there a lot of history in this one! It confirms that coal was taken on at Nanaimo where I thought it might have been railroaded to Victoria. Did you notice where the Savoy Hotel was operating at the tramway? That was the one that was hauled across the ice to become the first Masonic Lodge in Whitehorse. The wreck of the James Domville in the thirty-mile at Domville Bar was 1899 so it gives you a date to work from. I went over the document and made any small corrections, then had Alice read it as she has a sharp eye. She found a couple of letters that I had missed. Your photo mail just came in.-- Lastly, near the end I changed McAuly to McCauley, which is correct, but you may want to keep it as it was? Just so you will know.

Cheers, Henry and Alice Breden breden@shaw.ca

My goodness, wouldn't it have been something to get Jimmy chatting on tape? I was with White Pass and worked with Jimmy on that machine to cut some White Pass wood. It was only for half a day, but enough for me. Jimmy sat up on top of the rig and you never knew when that damn saw was going to come out. I considered it too risky for this lad and would not have stuck around. He was stuck for a crew to feed the White Pass wood to the machine, so that is how come I ended up near it at all.

Jim used to have all his meals at the Whitehorse Inn Cafe, and that is where Alice saw him teasing a waitress. She wanted to know who that grisly old fellow was, and I explained to her that it was "Buzz Saw Jimmy!" Cheers, Henry Breden

This is a webpage on the Internet with a story of Buzzsaw Jimmy © 1998 by Darrell Hookey and a couple of photos. One from the Rolf Hougen collection.

<http://www.yukoner.com/buzzsaw.htm> (A brief quote from this © article “And then there was, “The Machine”. He took an old tractor and an engine from a Model T Ford and fused them together with bits of iron, pulleys and circular blades to create an unequalled wood-cutting machine.”)

Another article by Don Sawatsky for the Yukon News at <http://www.yukonweb.com/community/yukon-news/1997/may14.html/#buzz> (A brief quote from Don’s article “Jimmy seemed to live under an evil star but it wasn't anything fatal -- just bothersome enough to interrupt his daily schedule at the wood pile.”)

And on the Hougen Group web page- see extracted paragraph below.
<http://www.hougengroup.com/rolfHougen/articlesPubs/cablePioneer.asp>

“Wybrew's great sense of humour stood him in good stead many times. Being the only operator in the so-called "studio" had its drawbacks and a sense of humour was often needed. He was interviewing old time Yukoner "Buzzsaw" Jimmy Richards when he made the mistake of mentioning Yukon poet Robert W. Service. As usual it was a live broadcast, and Wybrew stiffened in horror as Buzzsaw snorted "That damned liar, damn liar. Imagine telling folks about Sam McGee bein' cremated. Damn liar. I knew Sam McGee well and he wasn't burnt. Imagine teachin' kids lies. Damn liar".”

Jim Robb has an article on Buzz Saw Jimmy on page 13 of his book “The Colourful Five Per Cent”, Volume 1, No.1, 1984.

COPYRIGHT QUESTION ADDRESSED

Copyright..copyright..copyright...if we go by the strictest, by the bones interpretation of Canadian Copyright Law, the Buzzsaw booklets are still held in copyright, even though you don't see any indication of this on the booklets themselves. Legislation tells us that both published and unpublished works are held in copyright by the author for "life of author + 50 years” or "if date of death of author is unknown" then we must adhere to "Creation date + 90 years"...J. D. Richards ("Buzzsaw") died on August 21, 1967; in theory (or in practicality,) his works are still held in copyright.

But where do you go for permission? The copyright board seems a bit extreme in this case, although that would be the proper channel when no heirs can be found....I 'think' you would be safe for MocTel purposes to indicate your awareness of this material still being held in copyright ..(And this is only required if you decide to publish the work in its entirety), and stress who the copyright holder is.....*James Domville Richards, who died in 1967. The material from Buzzsaw Jimmy’s booklet has not been copied in its entirety.*

- - Sherron