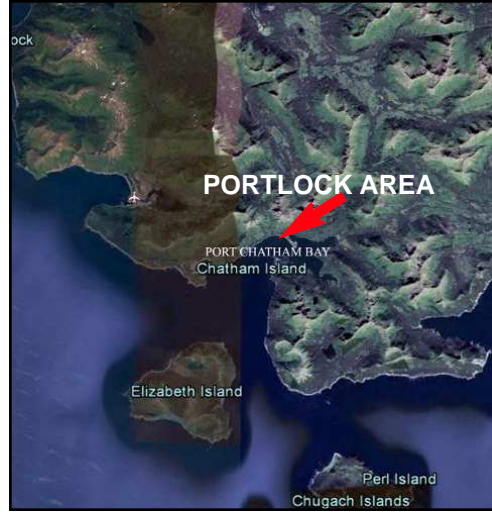




Bits & Pieces – Issue No. 112

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Edited by Gene Baade



Portlock, then and now. It's really just a memory.

John Green reprinted in his book, *Sasquatch: The Apes Among Us*, part of a sasquatch-related article that was featured in the *Anchorage Daily News* on April 15,



Nathaniel Portlock (c.1749–1817)

1973. It involved the now ghost town area of Portlock, Alaska. There has been quite a lot written about this extinct little town, which is not even recognized on Google Earth. Nevertheless, it definitely existed and was named after a famous sea captain in the British Navy. For historical reasons, I decided that this story required a little more profile and TLC. There had to be more to this incident, and it should have been given more professional attention; certainly far too late now, but we can still sort of keep it alive.

Portlock began its existence some time after the turn of the century, as a cannery town. In 1921 a post office was established there, and for a time the residents, mostly Natives of Russian-Aleut extraction, lived in peace with their picturesque mountain-and-sea setting.

Then, sometime in the beginning years of World War II, rumors

began to seep along the Kenai Peninsula that things were not right in Portlock. Men from the cannery town would go up into the hills to hunt the Dall sheep and bear, and never return. Worse yet, the stories ran, sometimes their mutilated bodies would be swept down into the lagoon, torn and dismembered in a way that bears could not, or would not do.

Tales were told of villagers tracking moose over soft ground. They would find giant, man-like tracks over 18 inches in length, closing upon those of the moose, the signs of a short struggle where the grass had been matted down, then only the deeper tracks of the man-like animal departing toward the high, fog-shrouded mountains with their deep valleys and hidden glaciers.

Finally, the villagers could take no more. In 1949 they left their houses and tanks, their wharfs and piling, and bundled their families off to English Bay and Port Graham, where no rumors of giant man-like creatures would trouble their sleep. Even today they refuse to stay overnight at the ruined site of the village, smaller because of 1964 and its waves, and are hesitant to speak of those troubled times.

End of Quoted Material

One little detail seen in the first paragraph is that the cannery workers

were mostly Natives of Russian-Aleut extraction. They would naturally have come over to what is now Alaska via the Bering Strait, bringing with them all their Russian heritage and customs. I will venture to say that some of them would have been aware of the Russian snowman, and likely would have made a connection. It would have been great to know what they thought.

Nevertheless, despite the 1973 newspaper article, some people settled in the area of Portlock, but left sometime after 1980. Wikipedia states

Portlock first appeared on the 1940 U.S. Census as an unincorporated village of 31 residents. It would not report again on the census until 1980, when it was made a census-designated place (CDP), again reporting 31 residents. It was dissolved as a CDP by the 1990 census and has not reported again.

Remarkably, the same sort of thing happened in 1907 at Bishop Cove, BC. In this case, all the Native inhabitants of a little settlement were frightened away by some “monkey-like wildman.” Bishop Cove, which now has the added name “Monkey Beach Conservancy,” is about 950 miles south of Port Chatham on the BC coast (See BP #109, page 4).

This is one of few reports of possible sasquatch violence resulting in the death of people. It does not normally happen, but likely can happen, but no firm proof.



Seen here are photos of the Harrison Hotel at Harrison Hot Springs, BC, in the late 1950s. At that time, this was a small community with just a few hundred residents (its population at this time is about 1,500, but is rapidly growing). To the right of the first photo there was a main road that bordered the lake. On the other side of this road there were a few small motels, restaurants and gift shops. On the main road into the area, close to this lake-front crossroad, there was a gas station. Behind all of this and farther to the right there were generally little houses. The hotel, as it were, was Harrison Hot Springs. It was the heart of the entire community and tourism was its life-force.

Harrison is about 82 miles from Vancouver, but in the 1950s there was no freeway, so you had to use what is now the “old highway” (No. 7), which was just two lanes. It was hardly a straight ride, so it would take about 2 hours (with luck) to get to Harrison.

In 1958 I bought my first car, and certainly drove as much as I could whenever I could. I remember Harrison, but absolutely nothing as to the sasquatch. I suppose had I gone there in 1958 I might have heard about the notorious *planned* BC Centennial Sasquatch Hunt. The story is that the little village of Harrison Hot Springs applied for a grant to organize a sasquatch hunt to celebrate the BC Centennial. It would have been entitled to \$600, a figure based on population.

Up to 1958, there had been considerable sasquatch activity in BC, including the Harrison region, which includes Harrison Mills. René Dahinden spoke out about possible sasquatch reality to the press in March 1957. He said he was going to ask the BC Centennial Commission to help him

organize an expedition to find a sasquatch. This obviously measured in the decision by the Harrison centennial people to have a sasquatch hunt and apply for a grant, and also to invite Dahinden to lead the expedition if the grant was approved.

Unfortunately, the BC Government Centennial Committee rejected the grant for a sasquatch hunt. Nevertheless, it approved a \$5,000 reward to anyone who could “bring in the hairy man alive.” Everything was reported in the press, as is usual with government (any level) news.

Now, I would like to discuss the money business because things have significantly changed over time and there is a point to be made.

The value (purchasing power) for \$600 in 1958 is now (2020) \$5,429. That amount of money would enable you to go on a search for at least one month.

As to the \$5,000 reward, that amount of purchasing power is now (2020) \$45,241. Even today, that is a decent sum.

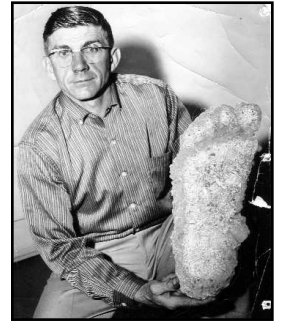
Personal income back in 1958 netted out roughly (average for males) at \$3,900 a year for blue-collar workers, and \$5,600 a year for white collar (salaried) workers).

With this information, it is a bit easier to see how the little village of Harrison Hot Springs and the possibility of sasquatch jumped into the limelight. Newspaper articles went all over the world and I am sure people said, “Wow! Over a year’s salary to find some hairy man.” This was not quite so easy as we now know, but back then it would have made a lot of people think.

Whatever the case, the publicity given to the little village was quite remarkable. John Green reasoned, “The story that a government, even the government of a tiny village, wanted to

search for a monster was news all around the world.” We must also keep in mind that the provincial government had sort of expressed belief in the sasquatch by offering a reward as stated. I will add to this that whenever a sizable amount of money is associated with any cause, it gets attention.

Suffice to say, the reward was never collected, but the sasquatch became firmly entrenched in peoples’ minds. Then in October 1958, large footprints found by Jerry Crew in California made front page news, resulting in one of the most iconic photos in hominology, as seen here.



I think it can be said that British Columbia’s Centennial Year pushed the sasquatch totally into public consciousness. A special silver dollar was produced to mark the year, as shown here, and the celebrations drifted off into history. The sasquatch, however, carried on, specifically with John Green and René Dahinden. A firm foundation evolved for sasquatch research, with Dr. Grover Krantz (1963) the first professional anthropologist to consider sasquatch reality. —00—



This logo was widely used for the centenary. I just noticed that there is the skyline of Vancouver in the lower background.

That skyline now in 2020 is totally different and beyond massive.

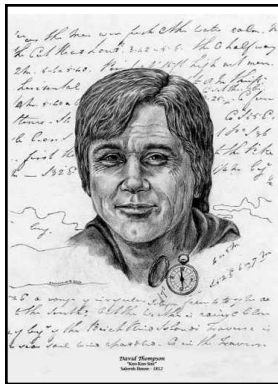




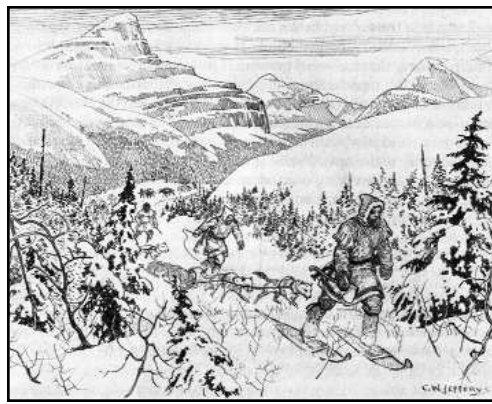
David Thompson
Portrait by Richard Carter

About 9 years ago, I searched for an image of David Thompson (1770–1857), the famous Canadian explorer and geographer. He measured in sasquatch lore by reporting in his journal the finding of large human-like footprints near Jasper, Alberta, in 1811.

References to Thompson stated that there was no known approved portrait of this famous Canadian. I searched further and all I could find was a drawing of him in 1812 as seen here. This was done by someone who observed him at a gathering or party of some sort. The text seems to provide one of Thompson's experiences—I am unable to read it properly. Anyway, he would have been 42 years old at the time, but appears to be somewhat younger.

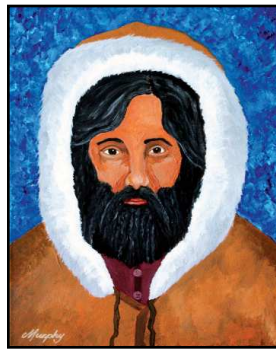


When the Canadian government wanted to honor Thompson on a postage stamp in 1957, stamp designers had to create the artwork seen here. It appears they got their inspiration from a drawing by C. W. Jefferys (1869–1951) showing the explorer trudging through the snow on snow shoes, as seen here.



Please note that in these last two images, Thompson has a beard and is wearing a parka. I reasoned that when he was out in the bush for months at a time, he would have grown a beard (men usually do this). Beards, incidentally, provide a little protection against cold, the sun, and insects.

I was sort of taken aback by the fact that there was no proper portrait of Thompson. Having written extensively about famous people in US history, our American cousins never missed a beat when it came to paintings of their national heroes and patriots. This was kind of a “C’mon Canada” moment for me, so I decided to create my own acrylic painting of Thompson. I gave him a thick beard, suede parka, and long red underwear visible at the neck line. I visualized him wearing that parka night and day, with seldom a change, and he probably smoked a pipe to add to things.



David Thompson
by Murphy

My inspiration was the 1812 drawing. I sort of visualized Thompson on one knee inspecting the prints he and his Native helpers had found near Jasper, and the Natives telling him that the prints were not those of a bear. I am sure some strange thoughts ran through his mind

Of course when he went home he cleaned himself up and became a gentleman. Nevertheless, I suspect his heart was always up in Canada's rugged northern territory. I will mention that the Thompson Society disagreed with me showing him with a beard.

At some point down the line, this

adjacent image also appeared, but there is no information as to who created it and when it was created. The only reference is “US National Parks Service.” Obviously, a drawing of Thompson was conjured up for some reason. Again, note that Thompson was given a beard.



David Thompson

To my surprise, we also now have this images (below), but again no information other than “Winnipeg Free Press, 2012.”



David Thompson

What we see here might be Masonic in nature, but there is no record of Thompson being a Freemason. Masonic lodges and so forth have all sorts of wonderful paintings and artifacts. A portrait of this nature could have been created and given to a lodge.

To my surprise, we now have this image of Thompson when an elderly man. It is shown as a photograph with the information “Toronto Star, May 28, 1927.”



David Thompson

(Continued)

Thompson lived to age 87, so this type of image is highly possible. Photography was being used before he died in 1857.

I have no reason to doubt any of this material, and even more might come out in our “electronic age.”

Whatever the case, I am pleased that a proper portrait of David Thompson was created by Richard Carter. He is originally from England and moved to Ontario, Canada, at an early age. His work is truly amazing and I am sure he did considerable research to provide the likeness we see. I will guess that he had the *Winnipeg Free Press* image, or managed to get the actual painting itself, likely in private hands.

All I have done here is close a very tiny little gap in the annals of hominology, but a gap nonetheless.

What often happens in doing this sort of research is that something extra not previously known comes to light. Some months after Thompson discovered the tracks near Jasper, he found more similar tracks and followed them for about 100 yards. He noted the following in his journal:

Reports from the old times had made the head branches of this river and the mountains in the vicinity the abode of apes or more very large animals.

It is odd that Thompson would say “apes.” Information would have come from Native people and 1811 would have been too early for them to have seen actual apes. Obviously, they explained what they saw to Thompson and he recognized apes in the description they provided

I need to thank Bobbie Short for this and other information I have gathered from her research; also Molly Hart Lebherz who has put together Bobbie’s book, *The de Facto Sasquatch*. There is lots of great material in this work.

As to David Thompson, in my opinion, he goes up another notch in the field of hominology.



Captain William Clark

The Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804 to 1806 is one of the most famous expeditions in world history. President Jefferson wanted to know what lay to the east of the American states. He directed two military officers, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, to form an expedition to explore the land, giving them specific instructions, and report back to him. This was akin to the American moon shot in 1969, and it took a lot longer.

We can imagine the President’s eyebrows when he was informed of the thousands of square miles of forests, mountains, plains, lakes, and rivers, never before seen by Europeans. America rated among the largest countries in the world.

In commenting on the Chinook Indians, who live on the Pacific coast, William Clark wrote in his journal:

The Chinook are friends to hair-covered giants that live in the foothills and higher peaks which we have not seen with our own eyes; occasionally trading goods for goods, mostly fish for fruit from the high country and skins.

If you have ever wondered about the big Lewis and Clark expedition and sasquatch, here is your answer—sasquatch did get honorable mention. I have to wonder if any “men of science” in Clark’s time thought about this and sought to question him further on the subject—probably a silly question.



There is one issue we all sort of shy away from. It is whether or not sasquatch use fire. In other words, make it somehow and control it. Scientists and others who believe the sasquatch is an ape of some sort ignore any references that indicate the hominoid uses fire. Humans are the only animals on the planet who use fire, so sasquatch use would prove that the homin was human-related.

The only indications in my files of sasquatch use of fire are the stories provided by John W. Burns. Other very early indications likely involved wild men (men gone wild), not sasquatch. I have mentioned in the past my concern that sasquatch who captured Albert Outman did not apparently react to his making of a campfire.

There are a few reports that state sasquatch have been seen playing with fire—pulling burning sticks from campfires and waving them around. This indicates that they are very curious as to fire, but that is not use of fire.

If sasquatch do use fire, it would likely make them somewhat easier to find as smoke from campfires can be seen at a considerable distance.

Use of fire naturally involves the process of making it (flint, friction) and it’s difficult for me, at least, to visualize sasquatch doing this.

My opinion is that sasquatch don’t make and use fire. Nevertheless, if a sasquatch has a Native woman in captivity, she could make and use fire; Natives have been doing so for thousands of years.