

Eilif Haxthow's Hollyburn Journal

As translated by Jorgen Dahlie

Vancouver

Mid-October, 1924

Arriving in town I had a look through the place. The air was moist and the weather foggy, the streets wet and shining in the streetlights. Reminded me a lot of a late afternoon in Krittiania [Oslo]. As it was soon bedtime, I looked for a hotel which looked inexpensive enough, then checked the time and who should I meet but an old friend, Johs W. Kahlen, who had crossed the Atlantic with me. Gets one to think that the world is not so small after all.

Hollyburn Ski Camp

Vancouver

Dec. 9, 1924

Vancouver is a good place to live. The city is big enough, is rather attractive in and of itself and has a lot of amenities. Stanley Park with its animal enclosure is the best I have seen of its kind. It is right on the ocean, just outside the main city. But it has its disadvantages, too. The worst this time of year is the fog and the rain. One can hardly see the sun the week through but then one is also spared the bitter cold that one meets in the rest of Canada.

As expected, there are problems finding jobs here in Vancouver. Around the Employment Office men by the hundreds looking for work. I finally met up with a man who offered me a job in the woods near Vancouver but in the meantime I met Verne so I let that opportunity go. About this Verne. From Kahlen I had gotten his address at the Scandinavian Bureau counter and went there to arrange for my mail to be forwarded. Rudolf Jules Verne is Swedish and had been in Canada over 15 years. It is seldom one meets such a nice, friendly man. He said that he had rented an old logging cabin on Hollyburn Ridge just outside of Vancouver and had plans to start a ski camp there for the winter. Fix up a couple of buildings, rent out skis and sell coffee and sandwiches. Would I be interested in that? I thought about it, what could suit me better? A companion who needs some help and friendly to boot. We found a good comrade in Hjalmar Fahlander, another Swede.

For a week we have been busy getting things ready. There has been a sawmill operation here before so there was lot of material to work with. We fixed up a little shack to live in for the winter, with double walls, floor and a roof, insulated with tarpaper so it will be dry and warm. It is almost finished. Then we will fix up a bigger shack to be used as the "restaurant."

From Vancouver one takes the ferry to West Vancouver, about a half hour trip, and from there one has to climb up the mountain. The camp is about four miles from W. Vancouver and at an altitude of some 1800 ft. {2500 ft.} so the climb is rather steep. All stuff must be carried up on your back: food, tools, building paper, cement. Even though the camp is close to Vancouver, it

still borders on wilderness and there are no buildings out there. But there is no shortage of bears in the area. Some weeks ago five of them were shot. Shame on them! But there are none here.

It is costing something to start this new venture. True that we are both putting our last cent in this undertaking, however, I think there is hope that we will get it all back. That we will see in good time. Now it is just a question of pressing on so we can finish by Christmas. Here the snow has come, in Vancouver only rain and mist. Here is the way life should be. I am my own boss!!!

Hollyburn Ski Camp

Dec 22, 1924

Time flies quickly. We have already moved into our little cabin, which is rather nice, tight as thermos flask. The fireplace and chimney have been made from fireproof stone; naturally it takes some time to heat things up. But once it first *becomes* warm, oh boy! We dry stuff in the afternoon and at the moment it's warmer than the devil's kitchen!

There has been no shortage of difficulties, but the "restaurant" is now as good as finished and we hope to have it going just after Christmas. But difficulties for us over inadequate time or snow is not a problem, only that there is absolutely no money. Our capital has not only sunk to zero but below zero! But a glorious Christmas we will have just the same. No doubt Jules Verne, Kaffein, and Hillstrom will show up. We have had great weather for a week now. A few days ago we had minus 15 degrees [C] and this cold they have not had for many years. Otherwise the temperature has been quite comfortable. Between five and ten degrees and sun [C] and blue skies every day!

Hollyburn Ski Camp

Christmas Eve, 1924

Now it is Christmas Eve again. Time has gone quickly, yet it seems like a lifetime has gone by since last Christmas and now. Just as the sun sinking in red and gold beyond the mountains on the other side of the Fraser River. It is growing dark outside and the lamp has been lit so I actually see that Christmas Eve is here. I found a small spruce tree today with some difficulty. It now stands on the table in front of me. All is in order for the feast, just the guests and Christmas food is missing. But that will come. Fahlander went to town to get food and a lot of other things. Have waited all day for him along with his companions. Something must have delayed them, but still, they must come.

Now I hear a mouse in our "mouse safe" food cupboard. I shall try to capture it alive! That would be a fine Christmas present!

Hollyburn Ski Camp

December 29, 1924

Christmas was feted with revelry, Christmas porridge, bacon, coffee, cigars and good stuff, presents and mail, song and a lot of fun. Guests were Jules Verne, editor and skating king, also known as Ivanowitschi, Kaffein or Westeberg Ski King and numero uno, also called Hillstrom. Guests filled our room to overflowing!

Christmas has gone and the new year beckons and that cannot be denied. The two inhabitants of Hollyburn Ski Camp are beat and all of that. Some snow came at Christmas. It is now beginning to melt and we are almost despairing. In the new year we *must* get started! Jules Verne wrote an item for the Vancouver newspapers about this place. How that will turn out, those who do not starve to death will find out!

Hollyburn Ski Camp

Jan. 11, 1925

Now we are going! Now things are moving! For a long time it seemed hopeless. We have had five opening days that were a disaster. But today, Sunday the 11th of January 1925 we were surprised early in the morning as people streamed in more and more. The restaurant was not ready for such an onslaught but the skis-nine pairs got used the whole day. Snow made the difference but the Canadians were the heroes.

They climbed up the hills, slid down with arms and legs flying, sat down on their seats, shouting and laughing!

As we said, we were not ready for this onslaught but we took in probably \$8.00. Next Sunday should be better, given the excitement we had today. But this happened just in time. For a couple of weeks we have subsisted on some flour and oatmeal. We did have a rabbit steak. That was the result of my snare. We have shot some flying squirrels. They have unusually fine skins; they now decorate the walls in our front room. But now to sleep after a good days work. LOTS OF FUN!

Hollyburn Ski Camp

Jan. 28, 1925

But on the Sunday after the rain came, at least it did in Vancouver and thus very few came up here. The \$8.00 had to go a long way and it meant another couple of weeks on crusts and oatmeal porridge. It was too much, or too little for Mr. Fahlander. He has a case of scurvy. In fact, he has not been well lately. From stomach pain to headache, sore throat, and sleeplessness.

But hurrah! Now we see better days again. Last Sunday we had good weather. This time we had 12 pair skis, and the restaurant was ready for a large group - and they came. We had between 100 and 150 guests and we took in over 30 dollars. Last week we had some woodworkers up here. They used our big cabin and for that they left us their food after. Now we live in richness and overflowing opulence. Feasting on ham, pork, butter, and cheese!!

Last Saturday there was big article in the *Province* with sketches of the ski camp and details of winter sports on Hollyburn Ridge. That is by no means poor advertising! Now we just have to have good weather for Sunday!!

Not too much happens during the week. Our days are taken up with some small jobs.

Get wood, wash clothes, repair the used skis and so on. And in the afternoon we study our respective correspondence courses. We are also planning some longer trips in to the mountains. So far, nothing has come of that but it will in time.

Hollyburn Ski Camp

Feb. 12, 1925

Some small changes have occurred. Ahlberg, a Swede, has joined the company. So now we are three. Business has been bad the past two Sundays - poor weather. But now something else has to be tried. The idea is to start with dances in the Rococco room [restaurant] every Saturday. In this way we can entice people to come up here whether it rains or not, and once we get them up they won't get away without paying - you bet you! But then we must also get an orchestra. My two partners are in Vancouver to buy a gramophone without any money. That will be difficult but they might do it. Yesterday afternoon they were at Mary's in West Van. Hope they have taken a cake or something like that. Now it will be exciting to see how this is going to go. I think the idea is a good one.

Since last Sunday the weather has been good. Monday we took a trip over to the lake but we have not gotten any further. Fahlander was lucky with some sharp shooting and got a rabbit. We had that for our dinner yesterday. Today we have the finest weather, bright sunshine. I think I will take a trip.

Hollyburn Ski Camp

March 3, 1925

Time goes by; it can't be otherwise but that's all right. The weather has not been so good but the business is still doing well. The gramophone does its job. The record for a weekend so far has been \$60.00 and never under what we need to live on. I manage to put some aside as well so am satisfied.

The dances go full blast in the Rococco hall every Saturday. By one or two in the morning our guests are in their bunks and on the floors as we stay away. Poor souls - they look a bit bedraggled Sunday morning but they get value for their 40 cents and that is all right. Last Saturday I had a great moonlight boat trip with Ida, Lee, and Flo. Otherwise there have been few trips lately. Got another rabbit in the snare the other morning. Got myself some traps also so now it's become dangerous here on the mountain! Nothing really of importance happens here for the time being.

I can sense that spring is slowly on the way and some summer plans begin to take shape. They are numerous and rather grandiose but will have to see what transpires.

Hollyburn Ski Camp

April 7, 1925

Spring has arrived. The sun is warm and the snow is disappearing. Skiing is pretty well done for the year, at least around the camp here. There have been fewer people here lately and business has slumped. But we are not in need, rather the opposite; we live like knights. Easter comes at the end of this week and that will bring extra doings. Yes, next Sunday Captain Westeberg is off to the States, to San Francisco. We had a farewell party for him in the cabin last Saturday with rum and lot of good things! A huge party!!

My great plans for the summer have come to naught. The Banff job that I had banked so strongly on went to hell. Got a reply from them that they had no use for me. So much for that. It also looks like the job with the oil company in Vancouver has gone so I find that I rather like the place where I am and may as well stay. Selling cold drinks and such; that may get people to come here during the summer as well. Hope only that one of my dear "partners" gets a job so that there will only be two of us here for the summer. Took a trip up to Hollyburn Peak last week under sunny skies. Up there it is still 15-20 of snow and what a view!! I can't really describe it but Vancouver has some exceptional vistas.

Hollyburn Ski Camp

May 14, 1925

The middle of May already. Around the cabin everything is green. Full summer and baking warm during the day. But here above the ocean the snow is still 6-8 feet deep.

Here we have made some changes. The hotel has been made bigger. A short time ago I went to the manager of the company with the result that we are now in complete charge. So we have fixed up the "Upper Cabin" with bunks so that we now have a sleeping room for about 20. There we have [a] place for all the men and the women can stay in the kitchen - place there for 12-15. My gramophone has arrived from Timiskaming and every Saturday there is a bog [big?] dance in the restaurant. Last Saturday we had about 25 guests. But arrivals on Sundays have been fewer than ever. It is too getting too warm for people to come up to the place. As the skiing has come to a stop, our income has gone down to about \$25.00 per weekend. It will no doubt go down even more in the warmest part of the summer. I think it is possible to continue to live up here. However, the lack of money and the wanderlust could induce me to leave this great life at least for a period of time. I say "great life" because it is hard to imagine any better place as far as day-to-day life goes. The weather is clear and warm; the sun is up by five in the mornings. When I poke my nose out the sleeping bag at seven, it is a full daylight - no need to linger any longer. When one comes out on the verandah, stretches oneself and breathes in the fresh morning air, then one feels like a million!!

Perhaps one can hear the thrumming of a grouse in the valley. Then one takes the rifle, and on moccasin-clad feet, moves quietly forward to where the bird is sitting in the treetop. It is often a long shot but not so seldom it happens that the game falls to the ground.

Hollyburn Ski Camp

May 28, 1925

Not much happens here. If one were to write of only great things, then nothing would be written. Have taken a lot of trips lately, mainly to try fishing. Fishing luck has been poor. In fact, I haven't had any luck at all. That is the biggest failure I have had here on my dear Hollyburn. That can't continue, therefore I will see if I can get the government to plant some trout fingerlings in the lake above the plateau - will see how that will go.

Well, the trips were fun just the same. One trip along Cypress Creek was rather hard but another one to the Capilano River was worse. Was on the go from five in the morning 'til dusk. And what awful terrain! It shifted from snow to swamp, and from the steepest cliffs to virtual jungle.

Right in the middle of this rough area I found a little creek that was filled with loose stones. In several of these I saw glistening metal!! It turned out to be small flecks of iron pyrites.

But while I am talking about taxes and metals: Pollough Pogue came to visit today and from him I heard a history of a “lost mine” in among the mountains. It was founded by a Negro who has been long dead. Many have been looking for [this mine.] One time two loggers who worked in the camp here went out to look. In the dusk they came upon a trail which they believed led towards the mine. They followed it but they did not get too far before they were met by the Negro’s gang. The next morning they were back in camp a little pale around the gills, but it was a couple of years later they told about their encounter.

Pogue wondered whether the Negroes’ ghosts were black or white.

It [the mine] might be worth looking into once the snow goes.

Hollyburn Ski Camp

July 27, 1925

Two months have gone by and in that time a lot should have happened. In one month we had work, real work for a logging company, “Lions Shingle Mills” who were cutting cedar on the east side of the ridge here. The shingle bolts were shipped down to a sawmill in West Vancouver through a flume. The flume needs water and that is what provided us with work. First we had to repair the dam up by the first lake. Thereafter the dam had to be opened and closed each evening. The after [After that] we repaired all the dams and dikes further along the plateau in order to move the water down to the first lake. When that was done, most of the snow had melted and the dikes were soon dry. The first lake never did get filled but the company was glad to give us the work so they could keep going 2-3 weeks longer than usual. After that there was repairs to the old flume, which goes along the whole ridge from Cypress Creek to Shield’s camp. Eight men were put to work [including us] and everyone was in our camp. Ahlberg, who was the cook, was run off his feet trying to prepare enough food for all. After three weeks the job was done and Cypress Creek was almost dry! An inch of water moistened the flume a short distance down. And so the company had to quit for the summer because of a water shortage, after having spent 7 to 8 hundred dollars on an old flume!!

Our work was not very interesting; first we worked with a pick and spade, after we had to carry planks along the flume but what won’t a man do for fifty cents an hour?

That’s enough about the work. Lately we have had a number of good trips: the Peak, Mount Strahan, Cypress Lake. When one gets up high enough one finds a real Norwegian high mountain landscape. Short, scrub timber, and heather, and here and there snowflakes, and small ponds. And the view! To the south and west one looks over the ocean, beyond the horizon clad in blue, jagged mountains – that’s Vancouver Island. To the north the “Lions of Vancouver” rise up, two giant lions. And further to the north and east are the snow-capped mountains, one after the other as far as the eyes can see.

The lost mine we have looked for in vain but in the dryer valleys we have found good signs of minerals. It looks mostly like copper or iron but what else might one find? The area around Cypress Lake and the debris from Mount Strahan seems to be the richest, so there we will go the next trip.

Now it is the height of summer, dry and warm. Since the middle of June we have had nice weather, blue skies nearly every day and if there is a rain shower now and then, it doesn't last long. Hope it continues for a couple of months yet. The blueberries are ripe and there are a lot of them in the camp area. The bushes are as high as a man and the berries can get as large as grapes! These blueberries are good for picking. We do that and make blueberry pies by the dozen. The black bears move around here as well. Once in a while we meet one but they are neither fierce nor afraid, just nose about and go on as though nothing is happening.

Because of the dry weather we have had some forest fires in the area. The nearest one was up in the Capilano Valley. We were up in a camp on the plateau so we had an exceptional view of it. Great plumes of smoke rolled up from the valley into the air. There was the noise from trees breaking and the rocks cracking because of the heat. The fire moved up the mountain [on the other side of the valley] and flames shot up to the top of the 200-foot trees which became flaming torches. That was some scene to behold, especially at night.

Business has been dreadful. Very few people are coming up because of the heat, but thanks to our job with the logging company we are fine for the summer. The outlook for the winter is good so why complain? And I am not doing that either.

Craik, Saskatchewan

August 24, 1925

We need at least \$100; therefore I am back on the prairie again. Took the CNR from Vancouver with Kahlen, via Kamloops, Yellowhead, Jasper Park and on to Edmonton. From there to Saskatoon where we had some time to kill so went to the cinema. We came to Craik in the middle of the night; had many hours at the station where we hopped around and froze! The employment office in Vancouver and given us the name of a person to contact, naturally we thought that would mean a job but that was a bluff. We were lucky though and after a day in Craik we got out. In the interval we ate some dry bread!

We now have a job with the biggest farmer here in the district; he has 2800 acres and works everything with motor driven machinery. It just while threshing that he uses some horses. It is stooking that we do, four dollars a day clear. Four binders, pulled by tractors cover the same fields; six to eight men do the stooking. We have only been here two days so far and the work is going well, in any event and I have not been harmed by it. Kahlen got sick the first day but he has improved and should soon be all right.

The landscape is the same as it is in Manitoba, flat as a pancake, but picturesque in its own way. Today it is raining so we are inside. Hope it dries up soon so I can make my stake and get back to my camp by October.

Craik, Saskatchewan

Sept. 12, 1925

After about three weeks work all at Park's [farm], wheat has been stoked. I have hired a man for the winter, a fellow I worked with at Park's farm. His name is Bill. He came from Ontario and as far as I know, he is a good man.

Parks had too many men for the threshing so the last ones on had to move on. Slim and I have gone with another outfit. I am with a farmer called Standfield. He [has] two or three men too few for his machines so he drives us hard, but he is a nice fellow so I don't mind that. We are nine men in this gang. We live and sleep in a so-called "caboose" a little four-wheeled shack that follows the threshing machine on the field. Our eating place is in it as well. Threshing is dirty work, that cannot be denied, but it also pays five dollars a day and what wont a man do for five dollars!

I have a team of two loaders with me; they are both deaf and dumb but otherwise they are alright. It is really something to hear them brag. I have never heard anything more dismal. The low point in this outfit is this damned half-black fellow. We scowl at each other something fierce to behold and it is not going to get any better.

The rain has put a stop to the threshing for a few days. Hope it dries up soon and stays that way because I can't do as last year and stay on the prairie until the snow comes. Had a letter from Erik Saturday where he says business is going well and he has difficulty-handling things by himself. He wants me to come back at once.

Hollyburn Ridge

October 13, 1925

Home again some two or three weeks ago but haven't got started to write 'til now. The weather on the prairie did not improve and I am glad I left because they now have winter.

A lot has happened since I returned. We - Ahlberg and me - have decided to build in the spring, a small hotel of logs up in the clearing. Christensen has drawn up plans along the old Norwegian model. Verne is not too excited about this, though it should not hinder his plans to build up at First Lake, if he *could just get going* and get some capital and have something underway soon. We shall soon see how that is going to turn out.

Last Sunday we had some important guests up here: Vancouver journalists and the Council of West Vancouver. Together nearly 70 had lunch at the camp. I think it was a big success. The kitchen was decorated in colour, heather and plants, a large horseshoe shaped table, with seating for 30, all decked out with new table settings bought for this occasion. There was a speech by the mayor and others with high spirits all round. This was no small affair; stuff had to be packed up and when Erik twisted his foot the beginning of last week, I had the fortune to have to take on the job myself. One day I made two trips up and carried some 120 pounds.

We got ourselves in debt for approximately \$70 and things looked rather bleak when the rain poured down Saturday morning. But, look! It cleared up during the day and Sunday was glorious! We took in about \$100. Record!!

Last week a logger, an old friend of Pogue's, shot a black bear up on the plateau. We got most of the meat and it was not bad! I will have to get a bear and smoke it for the winter.

Hollyburn Ridge

November 30, 1925

Time goes and not much has happened. But three weeks ago when Erik was in town, and while the rain poured and sounded on the roof, I was surprised to hear footsteps on the verandah. It turned out to be Bill who had just arrived from the prairie. I have mentioned Bill earlier. William Beck is his name. I met him at Park's place in Craik and hired him to help us over the winter. He is from Ontario and is a good fellow. Twenty-one years old, tall and stringy but strong and hardworking, really a good marksman with a rifle and revolver.

Another newcomer has also joined our group. It is Pogue. When the rainy season started in earnest, he and his tent just about washed away. When he didn't want to move back to town, Bill and I fixed up a little cabin just above our place and that is where he is set for the winter. It is good to have these men up here. But I haven't mentioned the fifth member of our company! He is Jerry. Erik got him to look after when his family was off to Florida for the winter. Jerry can sit on his haunches and say, "woof!" That's when one holds a piece of chocolate to his nose, but otherwise he is not good for much.

I have got a hold of a rifle now, a 38-55 Winchester. Bill has his own and we have tramped about a lot lately but without any results. It is too late for the bears; there is a foot of snow on the plateau now, and that has driven them in for the winter. Other animal tracks I have seen a lot of so with a little luck we should be able get some game in time.

Business has been terrible lately, mainly because of the steady rain. We have ordered two pair of skis for now! But we have arranged it so we can get credit at Marine Grocery until the season opens, so we can use what we take in with the skis.

Concerning the building of a hotel, I have decided it is difficult to start anything when one has no cents ourselves, so time will tell if anything develops.

Hollyburn Ridge

April 21, 1926

Summer again. Winter was alright despite the lack of snow. Last winter was the mildest in the district for some twenty years. We used the skis for the most part up on the plateau and it now the end of skiing for the year. At Christmas we owed about \$100 to Marine Grocery. That is now cleared up and I have about \$50 to the good so I have no grounds to complain. It has been a rather busy winter. We now have five cabins in use and Bill and I have worked to keep them up, especially with the packing of goods.

After that Bill and I have done some trapping by Cypress Lake. We started a little late in the beginning of January to build a small timber cabin amongst the big tree on the north side of Cypress Lake and have a trap line with about 20 traps. The cabin was needed since the trail there was seven miles through difficult terrain. It took a long time to check the traps, so we had to have a place for overnighiting. It was not a wholly unmixed blessing to take those trips in the rain and the wet snow, just before we had our little cabin finished. The take was two live martens, one marten skin, one raccoon, two ermines [weasels] and one skunk skin. The three martens amounted to \$75. For my part of this deal I bought myself a good Winchester 38-55.

On Grouse Mountain, our competitor has started to build an automobile road and a hotel. It is supposed to be finished by summer. Don Munday who has been up a couple of years, has a \$10,000 interest in the company and a good position. It is a good thing that some one is lucky. The camp here has been sold to Verne and he will take over on May 1st. Hollyburn Ridge has also made some progress. Two years ago almost no one knew about it but last Friday there were about one thousand people here.

In a week's time I will in reality leave my little kingdom here and head out on the road again. Not much more do I know about the future so will just have to see how things develop.

P.S. It is true! I have found some scattered iron pyrites from Black Mt. which appear to have gold! Before I leave I will get a mining engineer to follow me up there and look it over. Who knows - maybe I will be a millionaire before I add to this account?

Vancouver

May 29, 1926

Now I am taking up my pen again but I am a long way from being a millionaire. There are traces of gold in the minerals at Black Mt. but they do not amount to much.

Now I have spent a couple of weeks in Vancouver and looked for suitable work but it is hard to find. A couple of good jobs have slipped through my fingers. I was certain one day I would be hired by an American who was going to hunt grizzly - five dollars a day plus free board !

Had I been out earlier I could have shipped out in the *Baymaud*, which was ready for an 18-month's trip to the Arctic coast. Damn it all!

Now I am so fed up with hanging around town I have decided to take a trip up the coast. The boat leaves at 11:45 today and I have bought a ticket to Powell River – that's all I know about that.

Powell River

June 5, 1926

Came here early in the morning. The place appears to be a paper mill with a staff of workers. The plant is now undergoing expansion and for the summer will have three to four hundred men at work. The town is flooded with people and many are sleeping in tents. I have managed to get a

room in an old shack with three others. There is a “picture show” here and a “liquor store” and since everyone earns money more or less, there is bit of a rowdy life here. So much for the town.

The first days that I was here I went fishing on an “Indian Reservation” about three miles away. Caught a good number of trout. Lately I have had no time to fish as I have worked steadily. Had a job first as “broke-hustler” at the paper machine - it was quite interesting when the paper rolls came out but otherwise rather routine. From there I went on as a millwright’s helper for a half cent more per hour [fifty cents] So eager was I to get a fat pay cheque that I worked last Sunday but that got its revenge. On Monday a plank fell on my foot with the result that my foot looked like a swollen sausage and I had to lay off work for several days.

To be truthful I really do not need to work for others but just the same I will probably stay here for a while, at the same time I will keep my eyes open for something that will suit me better.

Vancouver

August 29, 1926

Here again after three great months in Powell River. It took a week for my foot to get better but after I worked steady until I quit last week. On Sundays I worked from 10 to 24 hours. That became monotonous in the long run, especially when the nice trips and the fishing awaited me, but it was bearable with the half-monthly cheques. I had my fillings done with silver and a gold crown on one.[Now I am soon 100% American!]

When the dentist’s money lust had been satisfied and the dollars started to dwindle in my purse, I got an offer of a job in Christensen’s office and I took that. Quit my millwright job in P.R. just as I began to feel at home in that occupation and had the satisfaction of being offered five cents more an hour to stay. I did not stay and don’t regret that. Down here I have bought myself some new clothes and things, found a good room and started the first “white collar” job I have had in this country. Christensen is an architect and “General Contractor” and my job in the office is some typing and a little drawing. It is going well.

Went up the mountain today to say hello to Pogue and family and some other old friends. These days Verne has sent up some men to tear down the old camp and move it up on the plateau. That was a big surprise, so there is still hope that his plans and dreams can become a reality.

Vancouver

March 17, 1927

Built myself a little cabin on Hollyburn last fall and that has been a Saturday night place to stay during the winter. All of a sudden Leif’s smiling face showed up at the place. He had come back after a doing well with two months harvesting. He came to me on Hornby Street where I was living, and said all was well with the work place. He had managed to find a steady job lately.

Christmas Eve we celebrated in fine style on the mountain, singing well into the morning. In the new year another well known character showed up on the landscape, the dear old paterfamilias, Finn. Well into the spirit but in good humour.

For good financial reasons we found a small three room place to rent on Main Street and began to cook for ourselves. And here we live in fine style and enjoy it. During the winter Leif and Finn worked three days for Christensen but that was all. Leif has now started as typesetter for *Canada Skandinaven* and Finn earns room and board at a fine hotel in town but that was only to last five days so I am waiting to hear from him tomorrow.

During the winter I have taken a course in prospecting and mining, very interesting and well worth the money, you will see, there will be use for this knowledge in the future.

In the meantime, "Hans. C. Christensen, Ltd." has grown and is one of the best of its kind. He had grown too fast for a while but has overcome that and is now doing quite well. It is the case that H.C.C. Ltd. started up a rather grand lumber yard "Lions Gate Lumber Co." but when the finances were insufficient and it began to fail, luck would have it that he got rid of it and all is well again.

Otherwise must say that an office job is not too exciting nor rewarding, but as they say, it is great to be young and able!

Vancouver

June 3, 1927

All is well. Summer has come, a bit late but in fine form. I continue as secretary, Leif the bookkeeper, and Finn is busy doing nothing.

In a burst of optimism and a big man's madness, Leif and Finn went out and bought a used automobile [for zero down and \$15 per week \] and since then we have lived the life of gentlemen in happy and trouble free days.

On Sundays we travel out fishing or to the beaches where while away the day.

Vancouver

January 18th, 1928

This has been a long break and a little bit of everything has happened in the interval. Let me see if I can recall the more important items.

In June of last year I was lucky to get a job with Boyles Bros. Diamond drill contractors. So I quit Christensen. A month later Christensen went broke - had taken on too much. I worked at Big Ledge Mine near Upper Arrow Lake, B.C. We were for a time up at the 7000 ft. level, where the snow was several feet deep. On July 1st we had an extra unsympathetic snowstorm. It was an interesting life, but a lot of work to make things comfortable. 10 to 12 hours shifts, no stops for Sunday or anything else. It was scenic, with the long, narrow Arrow lake a long ways down and the view over the Lardeau area on the other side. The drilling went quickly, despite a lot of moving the camp and machinery, and in August the contract was finished.

After two days in Revelstoke, we were on the way to Vancouver again. There I found Leif and the rest of the boys from Cardero Street. Finn had been hired on a Swedish ship and was now somewhere near Australia.

So there some good days for a while, spent at English Bay and the town's many "beer parlours." I waited for a new job with Boyles Bros. but nothing came of that.

In the meantime I ran into Haddeland, a well-to-do timber owner from Telemark. I tried to get him interested in muskrats and that seemed to be fine. However, he had just arrived and wanted to see a bit of the country. He bought a car and took a trip northward through B.C., up the new Cariboo highway, right up to Prince George, westward from there to Burns Lake, south over Francois Lake to Grassy Plains. There we found some exceptional farmland that can be bought cheaply and some for next to nothing. I would stay here if I was thinking about farming. On the way back we took the old Telegraph Trail between Vanderhoof and Quesnel in order to see some large bogs and marshes. This road was more like an overgrown path and it was not without difficulty that we covered the 125 miles to Quesnel. But it went well enough. We were back in Vancouver after some two weeks. Nothing became of the muskrats. The Cariboo is a huge and interesting region that I would like to learn more about in time. There are now few white men there but the Indians are numerous. Here are some of Canada's largest cattle ranches and the last of the "wild west" with its cowboys and wild horses. The individual mountains and the sand hills have all kinds of colours - gold, red, green, and blue. Here one also finds many tools and reminders of the gold rush period 1860-1870, when this region produced millions of dollars.

Well, I came back to Vancouver. Leif's job had ended and he went back to the harvest. I had lost the chance for a job with Boyles in Anyox. So now it is a matter of finding something else.

I became a painter, simply a dabbler - painted houses both old and new, outside and inside. I got together with Osmund (Ommund?) and Fladmark on Cardero St. where we lived a peaceful working life. On Saturdays we often went back to Hollyburn, where the woods still echoed with the sound of our drinking songs, now an empty ring. Leif and Loberg came home from the harvest. The painting went well

In November Chris Stensbinde (Stenslunde?) came in from Wigwam where he had been drilling all summer. Here there was little work to be found. I brought up my old idea of ski making. That seemed to catch on. So I quit my painting job - it looked to be dying a natural death anyway, as there would be little painting during the winter.

Well, we rented a shop, bought some tools, a stove and some other things and sat about making a place to manufacture skis. None of us had seen anything like this before, Stensbinde (Stenslunde?) had not even seen a ski!

After a couple of weeks we had everything ready and could begin production. It looked promising for the time being. A number of orders and the promise of a larger order from Grouse Mountain.

We worked late and early, Sunday and every day. We made mostly hickory skis and they were better than what could be bought in town and decidedly cheaper-no B.S.!

And the more curses !!

We were four who had to live by selling skis. Kahlen and Leif did not have jobs so many skis had to be sold each week in order to get them to show up. We were too late to sell to the sports stores in town; they had already bought their supply from companies in the east. We got some individual orders but not enough. We could not advertise. Grouse Mtn. held back their large order to see how the season would go. We went broke. We closed up, sold for a spot price the skis we had to an auctioneer and closed the shop. That was then and we now have 3-4 weeks to find something new.

Damn the bad luck but just wait!

Well, Christmas, New Year, and other occasions were celebrated with due concern and many drinks. It has become quite the custom on these festive times to take a swim in English Bay. Therefore we went in both for Christmas and New Year.

Seaman Hanson paid a visit to Vancouver a week ago. On that occasion Leif was hired on the same ship and is now homeward bound via Japan.
Here with the end of this account and the last for 1927.

More to follow.