

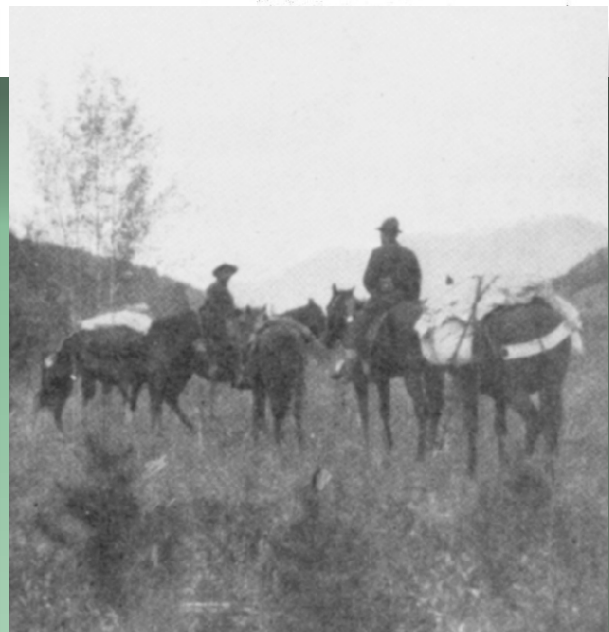
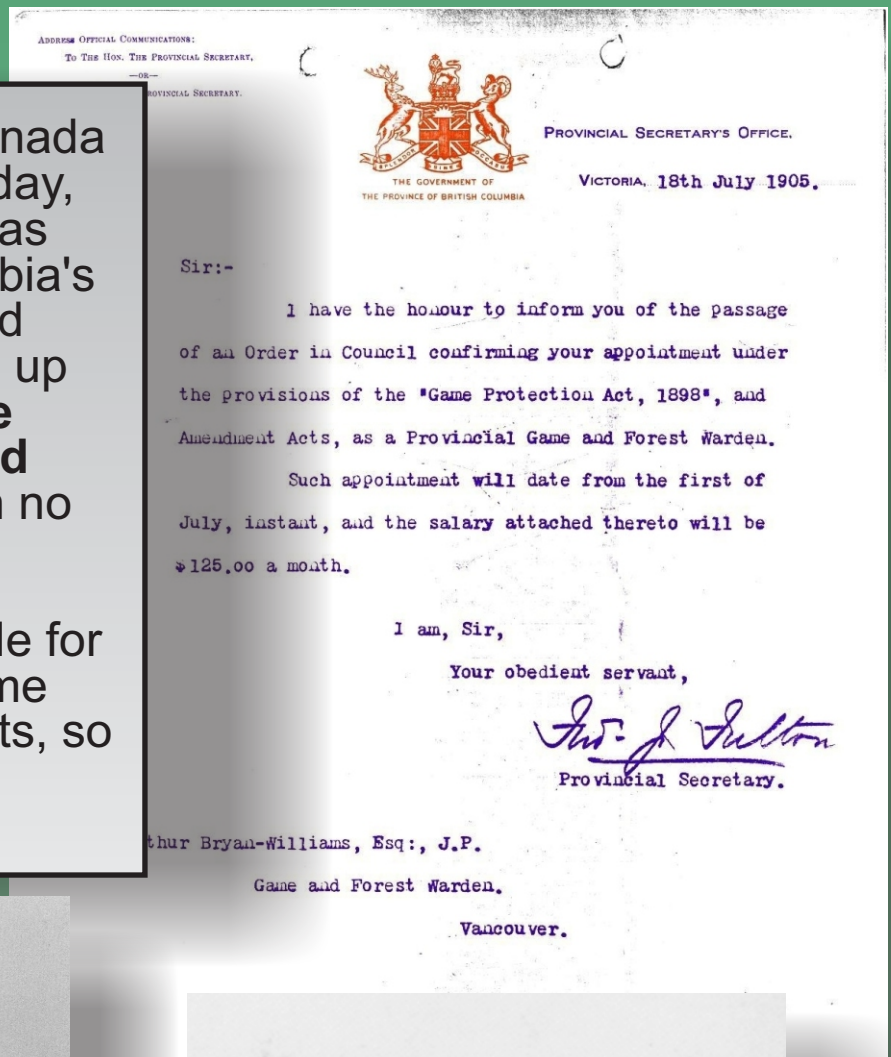
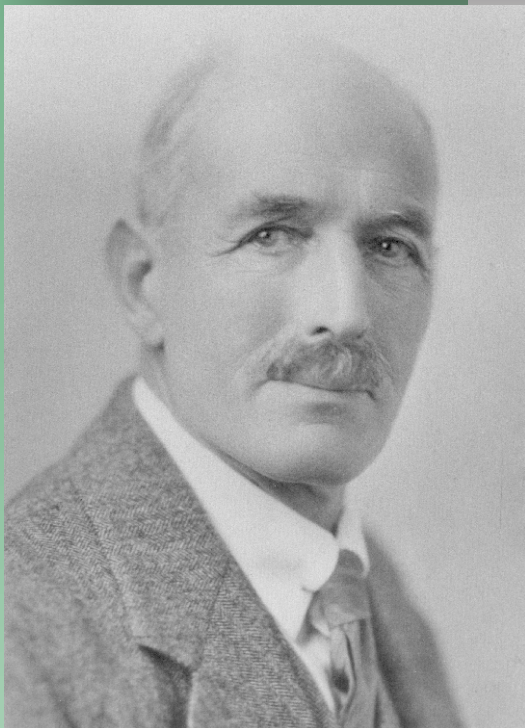
The Beginning 1905-1918

*Pre-1905 badge of the
Chief Game Inspector of
the B.C. Provincial Police*



Game ordinances "providing for the Protection of Game" were first created on the Colony of Vancouver Island in 1859 and other ordinances were later implemented to prevent the "wanton destruction of game." Further ordinances were put in place in the United Colony of British Columbia and they were first consolidated in 1878, and then again in 1898 in the **Game Protection Act**. Enforcement of the game laws was conducted by the BC Provincial Police, with special constables assigned as "gamekeepers" to deal with specific issues; however the laws provided no powers of arrest. By 1904, in order to deal with issues in the East Kootenays, special constables were appointed for the sole purpose of enforcement of the Game Protection Act. As part of the natural evolution of game law enforcement the Act was revised in 1905 to create the office of Provincial Game and Forest Warden and the positions of Deputy Game and Forest Wardens. Three Deputy Game Wardens were appointed in May 1905.

On July 1st, 1905, as Canada celebrated its 38th birthday, Arthur Bryan Williams was appointed British Columbia's first Provincial Game and Forest Warden, heading up the "**Department for the Protection of Game and Forests.**" He was given no budget to conduct his activities, but the Game Protection Act did provide for the issuance of \$50 Game licences for non-residents, so some revenue was generated.



Duties of Wardens.

31. The Provincial Game and Forest Warden shall give his entire time and attention to the game, forestry, and fishing interests of the Province, conduct prosecutions and see that all laws having reference to game, forestry and fish are enforced. 1905, c. 25, s. 17.

For the most part the first game wardens were strictly volunteers. There was no strict direction or policy to be adhered to and most of these men did not conduct regular patrols. They were generally just given a copy of the game laws and a badge and told to advise Mr. Williams before commencing prosecutions. Many never apprehended any violators and several were never heard from again.



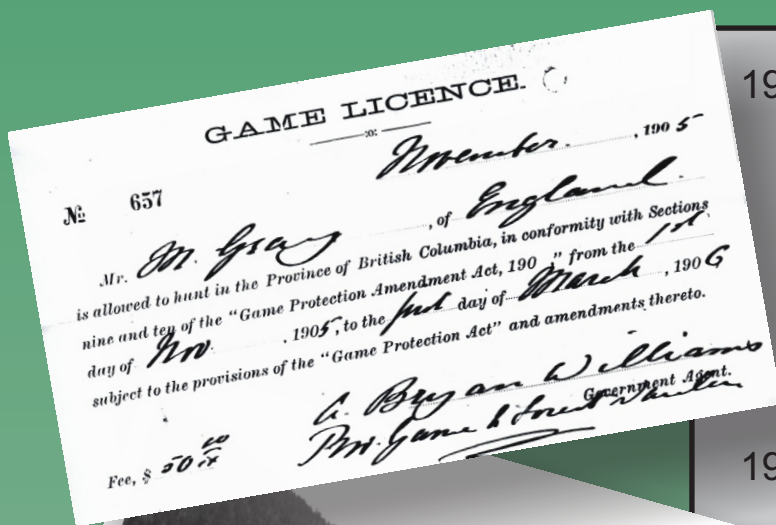
In 1909 a man named William Le Leivre of James Island was appointed as an Honorary Deputy Game Warden and was issued with badge #91. Headquarters did not hear of him again but in 1914 the B.C. Police found a drowned man with this badge pinned to his coat. The man had no other identification. The badge was turned over to Deputy H.B. Dawley in Courtenay who forwarded it to the Provincial Game Warden to determine who it had been issued to. Williams had difficulty deciphering his own hand writing to determine the warden's name and provided an incorrect name and Lelievre was not even contacted.

The drowned man was not William Lelievre, who died in 1947 at age 77. The dead man, carrying the very much alive Deputy's badge, was never identified.

A "Game Warden Fund" was set up and administered by a committee of three men representing various Fish and Game Protective Associations. Members of the associations and the public could donate to this fund. As a result a salaried deputy was appointed in the Vancouver and Victoria areas to provide assistance to Mr. Williams. Other deputies were appointed to deal with specific trouble spots and their wages and expenses were paid out of this fund. A total of \$323 in wages and travel expenses was paid out of this fund in 1905.

Half of fine to informers.

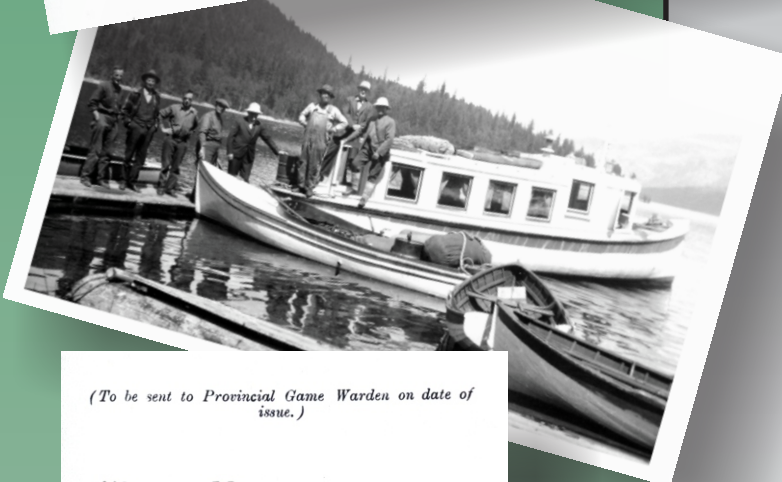
22. Any person giving information leading to the conviction of any person under this Act, or regulations made hereunder, shall be entitled to receive one-half of any pecuniary penalty inflicted under this Act or such regulations. 1898, c. 24, s. 22.



1908 The Department for the Protection of Game and Forests received its first budget - \$10,000. The cost of a non-resident hunting licence was raised to \$100. Williams was now able to pay many of his seasonal deputies for their services.

1909 Williams' position was renamed "Provincial Game Warden" as he had never really undertaken any forestry duties, as fire protection was a Dominion responsibility, and timber cruising and sales were the responsibility of the Chief Commissioner of Lands.

The first Game Department marine patrol vessel was purchased this year - the S.S. Wekesia would be stationed in Campbell River.



(To be sent to Provincial Game Warden on date of issue.)

No 28

ANGLER'S LICENCE.

To *Victoria May 12 1910*

To *A. S. Goss*

Address in full *Mile Building*
San Francisco Cal

Angler's licence to fish in the waters of British Columbia with rod and line between the *25* day of *March* 1910, and the *24* day of *March* 1911.

Signature *Geo. R. Babcock*
Provincial Game Warden
or Government Agent.

Fee, \$5.00.

1910 The Game Department was placed under the authority of the Attorney-General, the government office responsible for overseeing provincial law enforcement activities.

A non-resident Angler's Licence was introduced at a cost of \$5.

1911 With a guaranteed annual budget and revenue from non-resident licence sales, the situation of the Game Department improved and there were several full-time salaried deputies on staff, along with numerous honorary deputies scattered around the Province.



1913 was a banner year for the Game Department.

Resident hunting licences, known as "Firearm Licences" were introduced. They were required for hunting, but also for carrying firearms and traps. The Game Department estimated that 12,000 licences would be sold. As the hunting season approached, there was a rush on licences. Almost 32,000 licences were sold generating **\$99,015** in revenue. Over 7,500 free Farmers, Prospector's and Indian licences were also issued at no charge.



The Game Department had their second marine patrol vessel built for them, and the "**Watla**" was delivered in September of 1913. She was 45 feet long and powered by a 3 cylinder gasoline engine. She was taken to Campbell River and the other patrol boat, "Wekesia" was moved to Prince Rupert, where she eventually sank, was recovered, and then fell into disrepair.

Provincial Game Warden Williams was becoming frustrated with the appointment of Honorary Deputies. One such Deputy who he had appointed in 1908 was not heard from at all until a conviction was made by him in 1913. Williams commented that he frequently found these honorary appointments "*worse than useless.*" Consequently the Game Department staff was increased to 26 salaried deputies.



In 1914 the *Game Protection Act* was repealed and replaced with the *Game Act*, which would remain in force (with many amendments) until 1966 when it was replaced by both the *Wildlife Act* and the *Firearms Act*.

Despite this revamping of the game legislation, Provincial Game Warden Williams felt more could be done with regard to “pit-lamping.” Pit-lamping, or the use of lights to hunt at night, had become a very serious issue with several people nearly being shot. Williams recommended that a minimum penalty of a month in gaol (jail) be legislated in the next amendment of the Act.

In his annual report for 1914, Williams wrote:

“It seems almost incredible that there should be so many men who will carry on this illegal practice in spite of the danger to human life...Men who will continue this practice, in spite of all that has been said and written against it, should be treated as criminals and no mercy shown them.”

It wasn't until 1918, that a mandatory jail sentence for pitlamping, without the option of a fine, was instituted.

PIT-LAMPING

A unique “BCism” was introduced in 1892. “Gamekeeper” William Healy of Sooke (near Victoria), wrote to Superintendent Hussey of the Provincial Police to provide him with the details of his game protection efforts. He wrote of a situation where he had encountered hunters using a miner's head lamp to search for deer after it had become dark. He wrote that when the hunter came within 40 or 50 feet of a deer, even though its body was in darkness, the “*eyes at that distance will shine like two balls of fire...making a splendid target*”.

This is the first known reference to an activity that quickly became known as “**pit-lamping**” in British Columbia, a term still used to this day to describe all types of spotlighting, jack lighting or shining of wildlife for the purpose of hunting. The term “pit-lamping” existed as a legal term in the Game Act for many years.

The Game Department was paying a heavy price for Canada's involvement in the Great War in Europe. Every unmarried deputy warden, and a considerable number of married deputies, had resigned and enlisted for service. As a result, a large number of patrol areas went un-staffed and poaching increased. It was difficult to staff these areas, because recently discharged servicemen were generally unfit for the duties of a game warden, because of injuries suffered while overseas. The budget of the Department also suffered because of a decrease in revenue from firearms licence sales.

Lest We Forget

Four Deputy Game Wardens who enlisted were killed in action during World War I.



Lieutenant Malcolm Eyton LAWRENCE #16735, Deputy Game Warden, Ganges, Age 25, 6th Battalion, attached to 2nd Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps (British) - died January 10, 1915 from wounds suffered in action at Flanders. Buried at Arras Road Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France.

Lance Sergeant Harold Caley STILLINGFLEET #107533, Deputy Game Warden, Vernon, Age 44, 2nd Regiment Canadian Mounted Rifles, British Columbia Regiment - killed at the Battle of Mont Sorrell, June 6, 1916. Buried at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium.



Pte. Gilbert Burrington



Private George Henry PACKER #687536, Deputy Game Warden, Kelowna, Age 39, 172nd (Rocky Mountain Rangers) Battalion, "D" Company, Canadian Infantry, British Columbia Regiment - killed May 28, 1917. Buried at La Chaudiere Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

Private Gilbert BURRINGTON #703727, Deputy Game Warden, Hazelton, Age 28, 102nd Battalion, North British Columbians, British Columbia Regiment - killed on the Somme, November 21, 1916. Posthumously awarded the Military Medal for bravery and gallant conduct. Possibly buried at Albert, France; named on the Vimy Memorial at Pas de Calais, France.

