

Chapter 3 - CLAYTON SUMNER PRICE: RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS IN CANADA

By David John Price, Vernon, British Columbia

With special acknowledgement of input and assistance from my sisters, Eileen Ashley, Barbara Rennie and Mary Anderson, and my cousin, Verna Ganzeveld

The problem was: How to recover the stolen horses from the Indians who had made off with them?

It was Clayton Sumner Price (Clate) who, with some help, restole the horses, wrapped their hooves in burlap bags to muffle the sound and returned them to the remuda at the wagon train. This event occurred as the John Wesley Price family made its way to Alberta from Shell Wyoming, in 1908. [Ernest E. Price, personal communication, ca. 1947]



C. S. Price in his Portland studio with his nephew, D. John Price of Vernon, B. C., September 1949

More En Route Information

Other experiences for the Price family occurred all along the wagon route to Canada. By late summer, the wagon train plus 100 head of horses set up camp in the Red Deer River cut banks to endure the winter which was certain to come. During the fall and winter, homesteads were filed by John Wesley and his sons, William Howard, Clarence Albert, Maurice Arthur and Ernest Edwin. Floyd, the oldest married brother, chose to buy land across the river near Three Hills, Alberta.

The First Year

During the summer of 1909, houses and barns were built and corrals and fences erected. It was the design of the hip-roof rafters of John Wesley's barn that Clayton made an artistic, but practical contribution. His education had not prepared him to calculate the angles for assembling the rafters, but his artistic skills provided him with the means to build a scale model of the barn and from that, to lay out the rafters for the roof.

Clate in Calgary ...

Clate made his way to Calgary in approximately 1910 to market some of his work. He became an illustrator of the Canadian Pacific Railway, producing drawings depicting the western development. This type of illustrating soon became boring and not challenging to Clate, so he returned to the homesteads of his father, John Wesley Price and his brothers Clarence, Ern and Will for a visit. In 1914, John Wesley Price died in Alberta. John Wesley Price's headstone is in the cemetery at Rumsey, Alberta.

Clate's Visit to the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia

In the spring or early summer of 1927, C. S. Price visited his two brothers, Clarence and Ernest, near Vernon, B. C., according to Verna Price Ganzeveld, as she recalled the event in 2007. He stayed most of his time during the next year at

Clarence's ranch just south of Vernon in the area known as Commonage North.

During his stay with his brother Clarence, Clate remodeled a small area of Clarence's workshop where he slept. His meals were eaten in the house with the family. Clarence and Erma (Jenks) had three children, all born in Alberta: Verna, Dick and Fay. Some of the associations the children had with Clate were: Fay had recounted how he as a child, used to play with small model horses which

winter of 1927-28 Clate made a guitar, but it is not known if he ever played a guitar. He also made toys for the children such as a checkerboard with checkers made from a broom handle and coloured appropriately, which Verna clearly remembers. In late summer of 1928, Clate left British Columbia for Portland, Oregon where his brother, Maurice was then living.



(L to R) Ernest (father), John, Barbara, Madge and Eileen Price, Clate (uncle) and Edwin Price, Summer 1928

Clate had carved with his pocketknife. It is believed that these same horse models were the ones Clate used to form parts of his later paintings. Verna possesses a book, "Alice in Wonderland", signed by Clate and dated Christmas 1927 when Verna was 10 years old.

His inventive mind and skilled hands allowed Clate to make a soil packer for Clarence's grain planting. As Verna described the packer, Clate had made it of wooden 2 x 4's so that as the packer was passed over the fields, it pressed the grain seeds into the soil to aid the germination process. During most of his time on Clarence's ranch Clate did limited or no painting, but did have colours on various boards in the workshop. To the best of the knowledge of people connected with the Price family, none of Clate's paintings have been dated during the time when he was in the Okanagan Valley, 1927 to 1928. During the