

# Cronin Family fonds

*Fonds No. PF11*

*Physical Description: 88 cm of textual records; 4 photographs; 18 cartographic materials*

*Date Range: 1907-1934*

## **Administrative History/Biographical Sketch**

James T. Cronin was born in Bantry, Ireland in 1851, and left home before the age of 20 to arrive in New York in 1870. He married Annie and had four children: Mae (Seehorn), Evelyn (Shine), Rose (Andersen) and John.

After arriving in New York, Cronin travelled west to Nevada where he worked various jobs in mines, including machine man, shift boss and foreman. In the late 1870s, he spent time prospecting in British Columbia's Cassiar country, and even went north to the Klondike. However, because of the harsh living conditions and non-existent modes of transportation, Cronin left B.C. and returned to the United States. In 1893, he came back to Canada to work in the Kootenay region. Cronin and Father Cocola (a Roman Catholic missionary), with the help of an Indigenous man named Peter, located St. Eugene Mine in Moyie. This mine and others in the Rossland area were incorporated under the Canadian Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company, of Cronin was the Managing Director. In the early 1900s, he moved further north into the Omineca District and Babine Mountains. He acquired a group of claims known as the "Dibble Group" from J. Dibble and M. J. Brewer in 1907, and formed the Babine Bonanza Mining and Milling Company Ltd. with Charles Theis and several others in 1909. Two of Cronin's children, John and Rose, became involved in this new company as well.

Fifteen years prior to Cronin's death, he moved back to Spokane, Washington, yet continued to be heavily involved in his mining company. In 1923, Cronin was riding his horse when it stumbled and fell, injuring him. It is believed that complications from this fall contributed to Cronin's death at age 72 on March 3, 1925. Both John and Rose continued to be heavily involved with their late father's company and filled positions of Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, on the Board of Directors.

## **Scope and Content**

Fonds primarily illustrates the Cronin Family's involvement in mining and timber endeavours, such as the Babine Bonanza Mining and Milling Company Ltd., Lardo Mine and Pen D'Oreille Timber Lands records. The Babine Bonanza Mining and Milling Company Ltd records span 1907 to 1934, depicting James Cronin's involvement with the company, Rose Cronin Andersen and John T. Cronin's involvement, their merger with Anglo London Mining Corporation (Babine Bonanza Metals Ltd.) and the lawsuit with Omineca Silver King Mines Ltd. The Lardo Mine records reflect James Cronin's time mining in the Kootenay region from 1906-1912, and the time after Cronin's death when Rose Cronin Andersen worked to sell the claims. The Pen D'Oreille Timber Lands [expand] Additionally, there are the personal records of Rose Cronin Andersen and the records of Niels Andersen's (Rose Cronin Andersen's husband) auto-repair shop, Cambridge Garage.

## **Finding Aids**

Alison L. Craig produced a bound item-level listing of all records in the 1985.1 accession, including a history of James Cronin and the Babine Bonanza Mining and Milling Co. In 2017, Manda Haligowski produced a broader finding aid that includes records from accession 2017.4.

## **Babine Bonanza Mining and Milling Company Ltd.**

Series no.: SF1

Part of: Cronin Family fonds

Related accessions: 1985.1

Physical description: 70 cm of textual records; 2 photos; 16 cartographic materials

Date range: 1907-1934

### **Administrative History/Biographical Sketch**

The original holdings of the Babine Bonanza Mining and Milling Co. (BBM&M Co.) consisted of five two post, non-crown-granted claims: Homestake, Bonanza, Lucky Strike, Babine Chief and Bulkley Pioneer (lots 1859, 1861-1864 respectively). They are alternately described as being located on one: the east slope, and two: the north slope of the Babine Mountains at 5000 feet above sea level.

Originally located in July 1906, by J. Dibble and M. J. Brewer, the claims were bought in 1907 by Cronin and Charles Theis. At some point a sixth claim was acquired: Eureka, lot 1860. The original five claims were given crown-granted status on April 8, 1911. Afterwards, the Eureka claim was also crown-granted. Over the years, BBM&M Co. staked several other claims, none of which were ever given crown-granted status.

In 1909, BBM&M Co. was incorporated and on September 27, 1909, both the first stockholders' and directors' meetings were held. At the stockholders' meeting, James Cronin, Charles Theis, M.J. Brewer, A.H. MacNeill and William Huntley were elected as the first directors of the company. While at the directors' meetings the following officers were elected: James Cronin, President; Charles Theis, Vice President; and William Huntley, Secretary. Development work continued sporadically until 1923, the last year that Cronin worked the mine himself. The mine wasn't very prosperous and impeded by reduced access, weather conditions and funds. Following this, the company and the mine underwent a period of uncertainty.

By 1923, work at the mine had reached the stage which necessitated a large capital outlay for the purchase of heavy machinery, including such items as a concentrating mill. This situation, coupled with Cronin's failing health, appears to have prompted the BBM&M Co. into making a concentrated attempt to sell the mine. Cronin had the most mining knowledge of all the investors, and most deferred to Cronin in matters which required such expertise.

The terms set down by the BBM&M Co. were firm and barely negotiable, and asking price ranged from \$360,000 to \$400,000. During this time, James Cronin passed away, thereby increasing the reasons for selling the mine. Thousands upon thousands had been expended on the mine over the years with no return and engineers who surveyed the mine claims felt the land was not worth the risk. This left Annie Cronin with shares in a company that would continue to cost the family money. The burden of continuing the attempt to sell the mine fell to Rose Cronin Andersen, John T. Cronin and Charles Theis. Eventually, they modified their stand to accept reasonable investment deals.

Finally, in 1928, an agreement was made to bring in a new investor, Anglo London Mining Corporation, with Managing Director, Grant Mahood. The deal proposed that the BBM&M Co. capitalization would be raised to 2,000,000 shares with 865,000 shares being retained by those already holding stock in the company. Anglo London would then hold 1,020,000 shares. The finalized negotiation saw that Anglo London would acquire 679,000 shares from the BBM&M Co. treasury at a cost of \$300,000 that was to be spent on developing the property. A block of 86,000 shares were to be put up by the Cronin's and Theis, giving Anglo London control of fifty-one percent of the company.

Almost immediately, the BBM&M Co. began having issues with Mahood and Anglo London. The contract provided a clause whereby a minimum payment was specified, without stating that more than the minimum ever had to be paid at one time. Taking advantage of what the BBM&M Co. came to see as a loophole, only the minimum was ever paid. In the first year of the contract, a confrontational attitude was adopted between companies.

In June of 1929, the Anglo London Corp. attempted to change its name to the Babine (Cronin) Mines, Ltd. The BBM&M Co. refused permission for the Cronin family name to be used. Shortly thereafter, in August 1929, Anglo London adopted the name Babine Bonanza Metals, Ltd. However, the new name did not ease the tension between companies, as BB Metals was now regularly behind in its payments and was often in debt for supplies and the company payroll. When the situation did not improve, the BBM&M Co. began inquiring in the possibility of cancelling the Mahood/BB Metals contract. They also consulted lawyers on the questionable legality of Mahood locating his own claims next to BBM&M Co. holdings. Finally, at a stockholders' meeting in November 1930, they voted to break the contract.

In 1934, the Babine Bonanza Mining and Milling Co. filed a lawsuit against the Omineca Silver King Mines, Ltd. The controversy arose after a claim that had been staked by James Cronin was allowed to lapse due to improper filing of the appropriate papers following the death of Cronin. Although the BBM&M Co. relocated the claim and filed the papers accordingly, they only learned of their error when Omineca Silver King Mines Ltd. also filed a claim that overlapped the BBM&M Co.'s Speculator claim. Accidentally, the claim was re-staked under the name of Windy, which overlapped the Speculator and another claim -- the Contention. The two claims (Rex and Rex No. 1) of Omineca Silver King Mines Ltd. Overlapped all three of the BBM&M Co.'s claims. While the judgement is not found in the Cronin Family fonds, a copy obtained from the Provincial Archives in Victoria shows the Omineca Silver Kings Mine Ltd. won the judgement and BBM&M Co. lost those three claims.

While the records within the Cronin Family fonds only reflect all years before 1934, Babine Bonanza Mining and Milling Co. (then Cronin Babine Mines Ltd., 1948; New Cronin Babine Mines Ltd., 1956; Kindrat Mines Ltd., 1966; Hallmark Resources Ltd., 1972) was still active until January 26, 1977, when it was voluntarily liquidated.

### **Scope and content**

Series includes financial records, correspondence, legal documents, mining reports, newspaper clippings, cartographic materials and photographs. Financial records include payrolls, inventories, supplies lists, receipts, statements, sales of goods and land and tax forms. Legal documents include affidavits, bills of sale, contracts, crown-grants, deeds and licenses. Cartographic materials depict areas in B.C., plans and workings of various mineral claims, and include sketches.

## **Lardo Mine**

Series no.: S1

Part of: Cronin Family fonds

Related accessions: 1985.1

Physical description: 2.5 cm of textual records; 2 cartographic materials

Date range: [1906-1912]; [1926-1930]

### **Administrative History/Biographical Sketch**

In 1906, James Cronin bought claims Pyrite, Perth, Emporium, Democrat, Copper Cliff and Copper King in the Ainsworth Mining District, near Copper Creek, in West Kootenay, B.C. During the following year, 1907, Cronin registered claims located by him and his foreman, John Bakke, called Goat, Extension of Perth, Noon Shadow, Saturday and Silver Grill. These claims made up the Copper Creek mine. After Cronin's death in 1925, Rose Cronin Andersen worked to settle her father's affairs on behalf of her mother, Annie Cronin, to which the claims were left to.

### **Scope and content**

Series includes bills of sale, record of mineral claims, agreements, correspondence, and sketches. Correspondence depicts updates from John Bakke, the foreman, to Cronin and Rose Cronin Andersen's handling of her father's affairs. Sketches include plans of the Copper Cliff group of mineral claims.

## **Pen d'Oreille Timber Lands**

Series no.: S2

Part of: Cronin Family fonds

Related accessions: 2017.4

Physical description: 3 cm of textual records

Date range: [1906-1926]

### **Administrative History/Biographical Sketch**

In partnership with Archibald Birnie Mackenzie and James Sutherland Chisholm Fraser, James Cronin owned timber lands north and south of the Pend d'Oreille River in Rossland, B.C. In 1910, Henry Simons of Minnesota sold additional land in the area to Fraser. By 1917, the group had granted Waneta Development Company Ltd. to cut timber on their land, and in 1918 they extended the same rights to Waneta Power Company Ltd. Fraser passed away in 1923, and Laura Martin Fraser granted two-thirds of the land to Waneta Power Co. Ltd. In the same year, Cronin was granted power of attorney to make decisions and execute on behalf of Laura Martin Fraser and Archibald Birnie Mackenzie in regards to the sale and transfer of land to Waneta Power Co. Ltd. Finally, records from 1924 depict Cronin attempting to sell the last parcels of land in that area.

### **Scope and content**

Series includes correspondence, land assessments, reports, agreements and contracts. Agreements and contracts were made in regards to the sale or transfer of land, power of attorney and granted use of land. Correspondence reflects Cronin's responses to those interested in the land in 1924.

## **Cambridge Garage**

Series no.: S3

Part of: Cronin Family fonds

Related accessions: 2017.4

Physical description: 5 cm of textual records

Date range: [1917-1930]

### **Administrative History/Biographical Sketch**

Niels Andersen, Rose Cronin Andersen, owned and operated an automobile repair shop, Niels Andersen Machine Shop, specializing in cars manufactured by the Franklin Automobile Company (produced from 1902 to 1934). In 1926, Andersen assumed ownership of Cambridge Garage, assumedly ceasing operation of Niels Andersen Machine Shop.

### **Scope and content**

Series includes correspondence and financial records. Correspondence includes letters with customers, soliciting business, and regarding unpaid accounts. Financial records are tax related, spanning 1917 to 1924.

## **Rose Cronin Andersen**

Series no.: S4

Part of: Cronin Family fonds

Related accessions: 2017.4

Physical description: 7.5 cm of textual records; 1 b&w photo; 2 artifacts

Date range: [1911-1932]

### **Administrative History/Biographical Sketch**

Rose Cronin Andersen was born in 1892 in Washington. In 1923, she married Niels Andersen in Spokane, Washington and together they had three children: Cronin Andersen, Rosemarie Andersen (Hoss) and John Andersen. After the passing of her father, James Cronin, Rose took a very active role on the Board of Directors of the Babine Bonanza Mining and Milling Co. as Treasurer, as well as taking care of all her father's assets on behalf of her mother (to whom all assets were left to).

### **Scope and content**

Series consists of correspondence, essays, a home study course in letter writing, one unidentified photograph and two Roman Catholic pendants given to Rose from the Monastery of St Clare in Omaha. Correspondence primarily depicts the sale of land left to Annie Cronin, Rose's mother, after her father's death, as well as personal correspondence.