

## HUGH BOSTOCK: THE REVERED GRANDFATHER OF YUKON GEOLOGY

by Jane Gaffin

(Information for this piece has relied mainly on **Pack Horse Tracks: Recollections of a Geologist's Life in British Columbia and the Yukon, 1924-1954** by H.S. Bostock, Geological Survey of Canada, 1979; *Field Seasons in the Yukon* as written in verse by H.S. Bostock; *Tracks Through the Yukon--the Legacy of Hugh Bostock*, Natural Resources Canada, on-line; Library and Archives Canada biography on-line; and Vernon and District Family History Society, Monte Creek (B.C.) Cemetery Inscriptions, on-line.)

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Dr. Hugh Samuel Bostock (Honour Roll) likely left his boot prints on more square inches of the lower half of the Yukon than any other geologist before or after him.

His 25 field seasons of trappings and traverses gained him a reputation as one of the Geological Survey of Canada's most respected scientists who contributed vastly to the geological mapping and understanding of the Yukon. His many reports and papers are still widely read and his opinions accepted as valid.

"I tried to see everything that was being done as well as what had been done," he said.

The detailed knowledge he gleaned about the geology and physical geography from his investigations of the Yukon was restricted to travels with pack horses, canoes, wagons, trains, riverboats and his feet. Yet his invaluable work set the wheels in motion to further advance knowledge in the field of other sciences such as botany, archaeology and human history.

Some of his interesting sidebar achievements included finding a cow mammoth tusk in 1936. When the specimen was finally radio-carbon dated in 1974 the age was set at 16,000 B.P. (Before Present).

He collected the flowers, leaves and roots of botanical specimens that captured his attention. He was particularly intrigued with the alpine plants. Each was protected with a hand-made field press and taken home to Ottawa to deposit with the National Museum. Some turned out to be very rare. One of the eight previously unknown species he had collected north of the Kalzas River was named *Claytonia Bostockii* in his honour.

"With Dr. A.F. Porsild's encouragement I continued to collect some 30 to 50 plants nearly every year in the Yukon," Dr. Bostock noted.

When the Geological Survey sent the young geologist north, his instructions were to continue Dr. William Egbert Cockfield's work. Mainly, he was to extend the methodical topographical and geological mapping of the territory with four-miles-to-the-inch map sheets, giving priority to the most accessible areas along the main rivers as well as paying close attention to active prospecting sites.

Besides talking to everybody working the creeks and living in the hills, he was to visit all the active mining camps. One of his principal functions was to act as resident government mining engineer for the Yukon Territory.

His winter assignment was to then write an annual report on the state of the Yukon mineral industry that would be published before the next prospecting season began so as to give everybody an equal chance to access the information.

It was a tall order, he conceded. "But with the responsibility I was accorded a great deal of freedom."

Dr. Cockfield also proffered lots of advice before the young stonemason embarked on his new assignment in unknown country. His predecessor even offered suggestions about how to get along with Yukoners, a unique and fiercely independent breed unto their own.

"But I was so ignorant of the territory ,(the advice) did not mean much," confessed Dr. Bostock.

After he experienced the Yukon, he recounted that not only was its climate invigorating and its wilderness enchanting, but its people particularly were the outstanding attraction.

"There were misfits (who) came and went but the honesty and comradeship of the permanent inhabitants were inspiring. Their hand was every ready to help us and this enabled us to work with efficiency and economy not otherwise possible."

Dr. Bostock's seasonal forays began before the convenience of jets and helicopters were commonplace. And the GSC's southern imagination did not loan itself to spending a little extra money to service the men in the field with new fandango bush planes. It would have saved time, shortened the distance, lightened the load and allotted the men a means for covering more ground.

Once, when time was of the essence to deliver some Norman Wells oil reports to a specific point in the Northwest Territories, Dr. Bostock recommended the GSC hire legendary bush pilot Wop May to cover the great distance across the tundra in a few hours rather than suffering a week or more delay while the geologist endured the exhaustive mush method. The GSC's reply was to harness the sled dogs.

Pack animals and foot messengers continued to trump as the accepted means of communication and transportation. However, Livingstone Wernecke, the innovative mining engineer and general manager of Treadwell Yukon, graciously made his personal planes and pilots available for tours whenever Dr. Bostock was in the Mayo area.

A few prospectors installed telephones in their cabins but the handy devices were nevertheless scarce and unreliable. Communication was slow to nearly non-existent in the bush. Early-day Surveyors had little choice but to rely on the telegraph and word of mouth, more generally known as the "moccasin telegraph".

Dr. Bostock would leave Ottawa about May 20th each year and not return until early October. During his prolonged absences, he might go without mail for up to six weeks. Trading posts, such as Fort Selkirk, were alerted to dispatch an Indian messenger with any urgent telegrams.

Until 1943, when the army's network of airports and a twisty Alcan (Alaska Canada) highway were opened to serve the public, any emergency return home would have entailed the tedious ordeal of catching a riverboat to Whitehorse, a narrow-gauge train ride to the Alaskan coast at Skagway, travelling by boat down the Inside Passage to Vancouver, then taking the Canadian Pacific Rail across Canada to Ottawa. It was a long haul and connections didn't always mesh.

When an emergency did occur, it was proven that the most expeditious means of getting a message to Dr. Bostock was to dispatch a White Pass float plane. Mrs. Bostock, who was in transit to visit her husband in the field, had suddenly fallen seriously ill traveling up the coast.

The bush pilot was instructed to pluck Dr. Bostock out of the field and fly him to Skagway posthaste so he could attend to this critical personal matter.

In those days, husbands didn't feel comfortable meddling in female business and Dr. Bostock may not have been an exception. The rock doctor was right to feel a peace of mind going back to the bush and leaving his wife Violet in a medical facility on Vancouver Island under the watchful care of his older sister. Marian Noel Bostock Sherman, a medical doctor, had become a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS) specializing in gynecology. Her professional credentials were so extensive she was deserving of 17 letters behind her name.

Dr. Bostock and his men had to share the bush with all kinds of creatures and critters. They ranged from mentally crazed screwballs to packs of curious and hungry wolves. Sometimes they encountered a nasty-tempered, snorting, pawing bull moose that could be much more dangerous than an unpredictable sow grizzly protecting her furry tots.

Since the crews could not pop into a nearby trading post every day to buy grub, they were obliged to kill and butcher their own meat. They preferred dining on the savory cuisine of moose, caribou and sheep and were not partial to the gamey flavor of bear meat. Therefore, the grizzlies and blacks were spared unless they became overly aggressive in their wishes for a sweet-tasting human carcass for lunch.

The field men faced every imaginable weather condition. Global warming was definitely present in June, 1937. The sky was a cloudless azure as the mercury soared to 101 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade. The searing heat was made worse with clouds of pesky, buzzing, biting mosquitoes that can drive a sane man crazy.

The sun burned little streams dry until it was nearly impossible to find water for camp use much less float their canoes. The old Yukon adage "If you don't like the weather,

wait a minute, it'll change" rang true. By September rain was coming down in buckets every day in the Klondike area. The roads were mud holes and the creeks swollen.

"Real placer miner's weather," lamented Dr. Bostock. "Rain and its water is what every placer miner prays for."

On the heels of the heat and rain were the heavy wet September snowfalls that caved in their canvas tents. It was nature's signal that winter was nigh and time to pack up and head for home.

The luxurious highlight at season's end was boarding a sternwheeler for the pleasant trip up the Yukon River for Whitehorse. The upriver sternwheelers pushed barges and even the horses basked in the comfort of riding in the open air instead of stuffed in the hold while being transported to their winter quarters. Usually they stayed at the Pelly Farm. Dr. Bostock wanted the Survey's horses to have the best possible care to survive the cruel winter months and be in good condition the next May.

The sternwheelers served good food, Dr. Bostock submitted. The passengers were served four full leisurely meals a day, including a late evening supper. No doubt the best part was that Bostock and the boys didn't have to kill and cook it.

The cabins were comfortable but a bit cold, he said. But that little inconvenience was offset with a bonus. Passengers could visit the wheelhouse when boats were going up river at a slow pace. The speed along many reaches was only three miles per hour. There was a stop for an hour or more every 24 hours to load wood that was burned at a rate of one cord per hour.

Going down river, guests were not allowed to visit the wheelhouse. The current flows swiftly over a rate of seven miles per hour. The sternwheeler's faster speeds obligated the pilot to devote his undivided attention to the business of steering to avoid ramming the bow into rocky cliffs or other worse calamities.

Albeit sternwheelers were slow, they were a charming and romantic method of transportation in an era Dr. Bostock was fortunate to experience.

### **Bostock's Youth**

Hugh Samuel Bostock was born into comfortable means. The whole clan appeared to be a loving, close-knit family of achievers, each one fond of the other and the children referring respectfully to their parents as "mother" and "father".

Hugh came into the world in Vancouver, British Columbia (B.C.), in 1901. He had seven siblings: Marian (the medical doctor), Alec, Jean and Nan were older; Norman and Ruth were younger. One child, Jessie Septima, died of unknown reasons in 1906 within a year of her birth.

The Bostock girls were born liberated, obviously due to the influence of their quietly freethinking mother who was well-read and committed to the education of women.

Their father, Hewitt Bostock, was an Englishman born at Walton Heath, Surrey, England, on May 31, 1864. He was 24 years old when he travelled across Canada in 1888 and bought what would become the family ranch at Monte Creek. The land was located 18 miles east of Kamloops, B.C., in the South Thompson Valley on the main line of the Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail.

Two years later, in 1890, the senior Mr. Bostock and his bride, Lizzie, were married in England, where they were said to live a lifestyle of country gentry, which is one notch up in the social order from nobility. Their first child, Marian Noel, was born to them in 1891.

In 1893, they immigrated to Canada. Monte Creek and Victoria became the family homes. One of Mr. Bostock's early jobs was with a newspaper in Victoria. Then he turned politician

In 1896, Mr. Bostock was elected as a Liberal member of the House of Common. He represented Yale-Cariboo. The constituency covered virtually the whole of interior British Columbia, Canada's westernmost province that entered confederation in 1870

He did not run in the subsequent election. But, at the age of 40 in 1904, he was appointed to the Senate and was named the leader of the Liberal senators. In 1922, when the Liberal administration came to power under William Lyon Mackenzie King, Mr. Bostock was appointed speaker of the Senate, a position he held until his death on April 28, 1930. He was a month shy of his 66th birthday.

His wife outlived him 12 years. Lizzie Jean Bostock, who was born in 1867 in London, England, was 75 years old when she died in January, 1942. Her daughters Jean and Nan had gradually taken over the Bostock Ranch and managed the estate quite successfully.

It was on the family's Monte Creek ranch where Hugh unconsciously learned essential information about the outdoors and country living and developed a keen interest in earth sciences.

The children knew early on where the food on their table came from. They experienced the roundups, branding, separating, ploughing, sowing, haying, harvesting and gardening. They grew up watching the blacksmith and carpenter until their steady stream of questions exasperated the poor foreman who had to shoo them away.

Hugh's closest friend was his brother Norman, 30 months younger than Hugh. They tore around the ranch in the summers and got into the usual boyhood mischief. In the fall and winter months, their mother read from a variety of books that helped shape her brood's young minds. Hugh liked the stories about nature and wild animals best.

“We had few toys,” related Dr. Bostock. “Presents we received were mainly tools.” Jack knives at seven; an axe at nine; a .22 rifle at eleven supplanted the bows and arrows.

After breakfast, the kids had specially-assigned chores. Kindling needed splitting, firewood piled, vegetables fetched from the kitchen garden. The tasks were endless and particularly irksome to boys who wanted to be down in the cool, concealed shade of the creek bottom digging in the dirt.

One hot June day, the mosquitoes were particularly annoying. Hugh and Norm moved from the creek bottom up to the big ditch where they were still concealed from adult eyes.

They amused themselves digging with their hands in the soft glacial silt wall of one of the main distribution ditches. They directed water out onto a small flat area where they made a series of tiny parallel ditchlets for the water with their fingers and then turned it through another gap into the ditch from where it had come.

Their playtime idea was to cultivate their own little grain field, a miniature model of the real one that stretched gently down from the big ditch over the wide sloping field where the crops were watered by a pattern of small parallel ditches.

“All went well,” explained Dr. Bostock. “Except that no matter how we tried we could not prevent the water in our ditchlets from eroding the sides and developing winding courses.”

Before the young researchers figured out how to solve the problem, Big Jim, the Chinaman in charge of the ranch irrigation, swooped down on them in an loud outburst of oriental oaths.

The boys wasted no time scampering back to the security of the creek bottom. But they continued to puzzle over why the water kept destroying the straight ditchlets and made them wind and meander. This brainteaser launched Hugh Bostock’s life-long fascination with geomorphology, the study of the physical features of the earth’s surface in relation to its geological structures.

Hugh and Norm were packed off to England to attend school in 1912. Their first schooling was at Hillside, then at Charterhouse near Godalming, Surrey.

Hugh was 16 years old when he returned to Canada. In August, 1918, he entered the Royal Military College at Kingston, Ontario, to prepare for his higher education.

In 1922, he enrolled at the Montreal-based McGill University where he earned his masters degree. In 1925, he entered the University of Wisconsin where he received his PhD degrees in both mining engineering and geology.

“After six years as a student assistant, starting in 1924, I was appointed to the staff of the Geological Survey of Canada in the fall of 1929,” he reminisced.

“I found that I had become one of a band of brothers amongst whom there was an *esprit de corps* unsurpassed by any other group I have known. This proud spirit founded on a comradeship in zeal for excellence enabled the field officers to be granted freedom of action in expenditures and responsibilities that seem amazing in these days where there is so much distrust in all walks of life,” he continued.

This freedom has been a major factor in building and maintaining the high regard in which the Survey is held throughout the world, he added.

### **Bostock’s Introduction to the Survey**

Bostock was 21 years old when he first learned about the Geological Survey of Canada.

He had graduated from the Royal Military College in 1922 without any career plans. Fatefully, he met Randolph Bruce when the future Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia called on the senior Mr. Bostock in Ottawa.

Mr. Bruce had suggested that Hugh take mining engineering at university to afford him a professional discipline that would provide him with a broad foundation. Then he could branch out into civil, electrical and metallurgical engineering or even geology.

Mr. Bruce invited the young Bostock to come see him that summer at Invermere, B.C. When Bostock arrived, he was sent up to the Paradise mine where Bostock fortuitously met John Walker, a geologist in charge of a Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) party starting the study and mapping of the area.

This meeting was his first contact with the Survey and was the key to charting the course of Bostock’s academic and work career. Hugh gratefully accepted the GSC geologist’s invitation to supper in his camp a couple of miles away.

That fall, Bostock began studying mining at McGill. While he was still undecided what to do with his life, he was just as decisive about what he wasn’t going to do. After working one summer at Cominco’s Sullivan Mine at Kimberley, B.C., he knew “this wasn’t my kettle of fish”.

Maybe he would become a trapper. Then he met one. Albert Hall invited young Bostock to spend the weekend with him at his cabin. They didn’t talk much about trapping. The conversation turned naturally to the Geological Survey. The old fellow spoke often about his experiences as a packer with a Survey party under leadership of a Dr. Schofield.

When Bostock returned to his studies at McGill in the winter of 1923, he applied for summer position as a student assistant on the Survey crew. Bostock was thrilled that John Walker had asked to have him on his team, for that meant gaining practical experience in the geological paradise of Western Canada.

The years between 1924 to 1930 were busy. Bostock spent summers working in the field for the Survey in southern British Columbia, graduated from the University of Wisconsin, and in 1930 was married to his 25-year-old sweetheart, Violet Graigie.

### **Dr. Bostock's Assignment to the Yukon**

In April, 1931, the GSC boss asked to see Bostock in his office. The young PhD assumed that Dr. Collins wanted to discuss the forthcoming field work in British Columbia. Since 1926, Bostock had been working in the Similkameen-Okanagan country and was steamed up to carry on his work there.

Surprise! Now that Dr. William Cockfield was in charge of the Vancouver office, it was fitting he should conduct his field work duties in southern British Columbia rather than tearing around up north. Dr. Clive Cairns also had his own undisclosed reasons for declining the invitation to take over the Yukon field work. After canvassing other Surveyors, Hugh Bostock was suggested as the perfect candidate.

Dr. Bostock thought over the offer for one minute before blurting, "I'll go!" The only logical reason he took so long to answer was because he was too startled to speak.

The Yukon is a wonderland of surprises for anybody interested in rocks. This piece of northern real estate is part of the Cordillera, a Spanish word meaning "the mountain chain" that rises at the tip of South America and continues up the whole western coast of the North American continent. The Yukon would be prime hunting ground for the serious geologist. An assignment to his own private domain would enhance his skills and Survey career exponentially.

Dr. Bostock was eager and excited, raring to get going. He hadn't even asked for time to consult with his pregnant wife. But Dr. Collins--always the considerate gentleman--had made arrangements for Dr. Bostock to stay in Ottawa until a month after his wife gave birth to their first child. Hewitt, a namesake to Dr. Bostock's father who had died a year earlier, was born on May 7, 1931.

At the outset of the Yukon assignment, the routine was for Hugh and Violet to close up their Ottawa home on Echo Drive each May. He accompanied Violet and son Hewitt to her parents home in Nelson, B.C., where they stayed until he returned from the North. In later years, they had another son, Charles, perhaps born about 1938, and two daughters, Joan, and the youngest whom Dr. Bostock affectionately referred to as Nibby.

As the family grew, Mrs. Bostock and the children would head for Monte Creek where they lived with Dr. Bostock's parents and sisters during his absence. At summer's end, he would stop overnight with his parents and then be off to his in-laws in Nelson, B.C. After visits with the relatives, he and his family would go home to Ottawa and settle in for a winter of reacquaintance and catching up on the news. Then Dr. Bostock delved into meetings, report writing and organizing the next season's outing.



It wasn't until 1944 that Dr. Bostock was granted his first summer at home since joining the Survey 20 years earlier. In the fall of 1943, the Bostocks had acquired a piece of land at Kingsmere that adjoined the home of Violet's sister. In August of 1944, their new cottage was ready for occupancy.

"The place was a great success," beamed Dr. Bostock. "We became more and more fond of it as years went by. Violet and the children loved it."

### **Hazards of Windfall Funding**

One incredible season of note occurred in 1934-35. The Depression was in full cry and money was tight. Many people were unemployed. Rumours abounded that the Geological Survey's budget was either going to be drastically slashed or the whole government department vapourized completely.

It was a horrible thought and not good for staff morale. Suddenly, in the late spring of 1935, the Conservative government voted to save the day. Without much forethought, \$1 million dollars was poured into the pot.

Where the money came from is anybody's guess unless Prime Minister Bennett decreed the printing presses be cranked up and a few extra bills be run off. His attitude was that as many men as possible should be employed during these tough times. It was a political decision, no doubt taken with a forthcoming election in mind. But the Conservatives were destined to lose at the polls in October, 1935, anyway.

While there had been the fear of drastic cuts one minute, the decision to infuse a tremendous amount of money into expanding field programs overnight brought on monumental problems.

For starters, there was a severe lack of qualified geologists within the Survey to fill the positions as party chiefs to carry out geological and topographical work.

A rule forbade the taking of qualified men from the roster of geologists who might be usefully working in other parts of Canada. Recruits had to be solicited from outside sources. This dictum hampered the number of parties Dr. Bostock could cobble together for an expanded Yukon program.

He had the budget and his instructions were to plan a geological program for the Yukon around as many men as was profitable. Yet he couldn't find the help.

Time was of the essence. Field season was fast approaching. But where to find good men was the big question. He quickly wrote to as many prospective party chiefs as came to mind and offered them jobs.

John Johnston had been Bostock's assistant from 1929 to 1933. He had three years of experience along the rivers of the Yukon and accepted the offer. Perfect. Dr. Bostock thought Johnston was a good choice to be returned as chief of the Pelly River party.

Everett Lees fitted in nicely as chief of the Teslin party.

Cy Smith would take Bill Miller's place in the topographical mapping. Dr. Bostock's party would work together with Cy Smith on the Ogilvie map that had been started the previous year.

They had the budget to double the number of assistants on all parties which gave the luxury of traversing in pairs. If no experienced party chief could be found to take charge of a specific area, too bad. That particular portion of the Yukon would have to suffer neglect for the time being.

Dr. Bostock had his crew rounded up. Now for the gear. Oh, oh. There was a shortage of instruments and equipment, partially due to the stringent demand the Survey had placed on sparse field supplies.

Brunton compasses were at a premium and had to be purchased from wherever they could be found. Dr. Bostock owned a Brunton that had been in his personal possession since his university days in Wisconsin. He sold his to the Survey.

Dr. Bostock placed an order for six Peterborough freighter canoes from the factory in Peterborough, Ontario. Three 19-foot-long canoes were to be packed inside three 20-foot-long ones. This packing configuration would reduce the shipping costs, not that much attention had to be devoted to thrift this season.

The run on Peterboroughs had exhausted the factory's stock. But the manager would make an all-out effort to manufacture the six canoes in time to meet the deadline. The canoes would have to be shipped on the CP rail express freight train that was scheduled to be in Vancouver *about* May 28th. It would be tight squeeze.

Missing the rendezvous with Canadian Pacific's Princess Alice sailing north on May 30th for Skagway, Alaska, would mean a critical 10-day delay of getting into the bush.

When Dr. Bostock ordered six nine-horsepower Johnson Seahorse motors, he heard the same shop-worn story. No motors were to be had but the factory was in the process of assembling them.

Neither did the tent-manufacturing companies in Ottawa and across the river in Hull, Quebec, have sufficient quantity of stock to meet Dr. Bostock's requirements.

Instead of wall tents, the men had to settle for 9 x 9-foot wedge tents that had no side walls nor ropes. This small triangular model, like the so-called pup tent, required less stitching than the standard wall tents. It translated into less time to make them.

Another blessing in disguise was the wedge tents proved more suitable as sleeping tents than the Surveyors had ever used before in the Yukon. They were handy for crews constantly moving camp. All that was needed to raise the shelter was a couple of good

poles. Poles were easy to come by in the northern terrain. One man could easily pitch a wedge tent alone, then peg the four corners. Presto! He had a bedroom.

Dr. Bostock seemed to have every base covered. The crews were prepared to depart Vancouver in two days. When checking on the express freight, they found the motors had arrived.

After a nine-day journey, the canoes squeaked in on sailing day. Everything seemed fine and on schedule until the longshoremen put up a fuss about bringing the canoes on board the crowded ship that was leaving that night. Their decision caused a flap and some arguments.

Somehow Dr. Bostock convinced the freight handlers to hoist the canoes on board where they were lashed down on the top deck. Going ahead without the canoes would have meant waiting on the next boat to bring them. It would have eaten into the precious few months nature allotted the parties to conduct their heavy load of seasonal work.

As often proven, these surprise surges in field programs brought about by politics are more conducive to migraines than merits.

### **A Man of Letters**

Dr. Hugh Bostock, who still holds the distinction as the most revered Surveyor of Yukon geology, became a legend within his own time for leading reconnaissance mapping expeditions into the Yukon during the Thirties, Forties and early Fifties.

Local residents and the crew members who accompanied him into the field remembered this remarkable man for his friendship, kindness, scientific prowess and inspiration to others.

“He possessed an empathy for the Yukon, the people, little animals and the environment,” praised geological engineer Dr. Aaro Aho whose favorite field season was with Dr. Bostock in 1948.

His natural knack for story-telling around the camp fire is also reflected in his writing style in **Pack Horse Tracks**. The publication was such a big hit when released by the GSC in 1979 that the sold-out edition was reproduced by the Yukon Geoscience Forum in 1990.

That year, the-then fragile, 89-year-old Dr. Bostock, confined to a wheel chair, came back one last time to Whitehorse where he was the honoured guest of the annual Geoscience exploration and mining conference.

A young relative from the Bostock family was his personal escort. She diplomatically protected him from the throngs. Well-meaning worshippers knew this was their last

chance to make personal contact with the great man whose autograph they wanted on their copies of **Pack Horse Tracks** and **Bostock's Memoirs #284**.

By 1957, Dr. Bostock was already renowned for his compilation and condensation of selected Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) field reports, written by various esteemed geologists who had worked in the Yukon and northern British Columbia between 1898 to 1933. The treasured volume remains favourite reading material for exploration geologists and prospectors. Libraries secure copies behind locked glass cases like a rare Stradivarius violin.

Dr. Bostock's charming and gossipy **Pack Horse Tracks** is a pilgrimage through early-day Yukon. The book, chock full of pioneer names and scenarios, has plugged many post-Klondike gaps with information generated from the author's 25 years of daily journals.

Dr. Bostock possessed an artistic and poetic flair and always travelled with watercolours, drawing pencils and a camera. Some of his descriptions are illustrated with pen-and-ink sketches and historic photographs. In the appendix, he included the verses he composed to express his observations to his wife through the mail.

The one thing that saddened Dr. Bostock most about his job were the lengthy separations from his wife and young children. Advanced technology and the advent of helicopters, jets, radios, cell phones and computers have relegated such privations to the trash heap of history. Never again will it be necessary for field people to endure the long absences from home.

### **Awards and Recognitions Bestowed on Dr. Bostock**

It is hard to find a disparaging word spoken or written against the venerable Dr. Bostock, as a person or as a geologist, although any human is fallible. He told about making his share of bad decisions while still on the learning curve. But from his mistakes he learned whose word not to trust and where not to winter the horses.

It was definitely to his credit to know how to pick his crews. One exemplary field party worked together in 1948. The crew consisted of Dick Campbell and Aaro Aho (Hall of Fame) who were thoroughly experienced and most capable assistants, Dr. Bostock said.

Besides Campbell and Aho going on to earn their PhDs, so did Bob Blackadar, the cook, and Paul Kavanagh, a packer. Jack Campbell, a post-graduate biological student, was employed by the National Museum and was along only as a well-educated guest who rounded out the field academia.

Dick Campbell and Aaro Aho were very helpful in initiating the others into camp life and guiding the packing and pitching of camps. In many ways they took much pressure off Dr. Bostock that had been burdensome over some of the previous years, he said.

It was during the 1948 season that Dr. Bostock had the chance to show off his crew in the field to Dr. George Hume, the Director of the Geological Survey. A GSC director had not visited the Yukon since R.W. Brock was there in 1909! Amazing. And it was even more amazing that it would be another 10 years before the next director showed up in 1958.

The year before the 65-year-old Dr. Bostock retired from the Survey in 1966, he was awarded the prestigious Massey Medal for his outstanding fieldwork and for his description of the geology, mineral wealth and economic resources that were discovered in the Yukon due to some of his precursory investigations.

The Massey Medal, established by the Massey Foundation in 1959 and awarded annually by the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, was presented to Dr. Bostock by Governor General George Vanier in 1965.

In 1988, Dr. Bostock was recognized in two ways.

First, he received the Astrolabe Award from the Geological Association of Canada in recognition of his lifetime achievements. (The astrolabe is a classical instrument formerly used to make astronomical measurements and as an aid in navigation for calculating latitude before the development of the sextant.)

Secondly, Dr. Bostock was inducted into the Yukon Prospectors' Association's Honour Roll. His name is inscribed on a brass plate attached to the Hall of Fame art piece on display in the foyer of the Yukon government administration building. His name also is engraved in the base of the bronze prospector statue that watches over downtown Whitehorse from Main Street and Third Avenue.

Dr. Bostock died at age 93 in Ottawa on February 1, 1994.

In June, Robert "Bob" Coutts, mining engineer and author, proposed attaching Dr. Bostock's name to the 5,882-foot McQuesten Valley mountain (NTS 105E) that the renowned geologist had spent 15 years studying. Dr. Bostock repeatedly marveled over the amazing view afforded in all directions despite the mountain's inconspicuous top.

On October 24, 1994, the Yukon government carried out the posthumous honour that was perhaps the greatest distinction bestowed on Dr. Bostock "in memory of his persistence and unwavering determination".

Bob Coutts endorsed the government's action "as a fitting obituary to this exceptional gentleman, scientist, bushman and a good friend."

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See related articles: *Early Government Surveyors Left Permanent Mark on Yukon*; *Dr. George Mercer Dawson: The Little Giant*; *William Ogilvie: Dominion Surveyor Made Order Out of Chaos*; *D.D. Cairnes: Notable Pioneer Surveyor into the Yukon*; *Mine Finder Aaro Aho Believed Deeply in the Yukon*; and *Bob Kirk: The Prospector Who Cheerfully Blew His Million*.