

It is recorded that H.M.S. Thetis left Esquimalt in 1854 to go to Prussia as a training ship for seamen. She was exchanged for two small paddle-steamers.

After more than 20 years, the names of W. H. Curran and Robert Foster appear as pre-empting blocks of land in 1874. Beyond leaving his name at Foster's Point there is no further mention of Foster, and the land reverted to the Crown. Curran, an Irishman pre-empted more and more "lots" of 160 ac. until finally he owned a large part of the Island and carried on logging operations with oxen for a number of years, disposing of his logs at the Chemainus Mill. In a Directory of 1887, residents of Thetis Is. (listed with Chemainus) were:- Hoop, Walker, Johnston, Thompson, Curran, Severne and Sitwell. The first four are not mentioned again - they may have been employed by Curran, and moved on, but I can tell you something of the others.

Curran apparently prospered, he was married by the Rev. R. J. Roberts in the early 1880's - this was probably the Island's first wedding - had a numerous family, and built at least three log houses in different parts of the Island.

Henry Severne bought the property at Freedy Harbour, Hervey Sitwell (my uncle) that at Telegraph Bay, on the west and south respectively, and some time later Arthur Nixon bought the one at the "Canal".

In 1924 - then aged 81 - Curran wrote that his hair was "light-coloured as in boyhood"! and that he had come to Esquimalt in 1861.

When Hervey Sitwell came to the Island in 1887 there were just the three houses established by Curran, and some old men living at the North End who were perhaps, Hoop, Walker Johnston or Thompson! My uncle was so attracted to the Island that he persuaded his friend H. E. Donald (later to be my father)