

NAME: EGNELL, Albert

PARISH: Linkoping, (Sweden) **ENTERED SERVICE:** fl. ca.1887

DATES: b.1833 d. 1900

Appointments & Service

Outfit Year*: Position: Post: District: HBCA Reference:

**An Outfit year ran from 1 June to 31 May*

According to information found in our archives Albert Egnell's full name was Peter Gustaf Albert Egnell, and he was born at Linkoping, country of Wiethe-Closter{?}, Sweden, on December 24, 1833,(1)

When George M. Dawson of the Geological Survey of Canada arrived at the "Lower Post" (Liard Post), situated on the left bank of Liard River, about half a mile above the mouth of Dease River, on June 25, 1887, he found "Mr. Egnell in sole charge, and added in his report:(2)

"Mr. Egnell ... received us on our arrival ... with all distinction possible, displaying his Union Jack and firing a salute from his fowling piece ...".

In July 1888 the Hudson's Bay Company began trade in the Cassiar District of British Columbia. The Company had bought from Rufus Sylvester the post at McDame Creek known as Sylvester's Landing, Black River post and the Liard Post.(3)

On the sale of the trading posts by Rufus Sylvester, Egnell joined the Hudson's Bay Company and the officer who inspected Liard Post in the summer of a890 reported (4) as follows about Egnell:

"Albert 'Egnell, 57 years of age; Clerk at \$45.00 per month wages; was formerly a Minor, but has been in charge of this {Liard} Post for about 9 Years, -- for Sylvester up to June 1888, and since for the Company. Was to have retired in June last {1889), when he intended to establish himself about 100 miles above the post and engage in Mining during the Summer months, and trading and trapping in the Winter. There being no suitable man available to succeed him. He was induced to reengage for another year at \$50.00 per month".

(1) H.B.C. Arch. B.282/b/4, fos. 611-12, letter from F. Matheson to R.H. Hall, dated Glenora, August 11, 1900, on the subject of "Estate of Mr. A. Egnell".

(2) George M. Dawson, "Report on an exploration in the Yukon District, N.W.T. and Adjacent Northern Portion of British Columbia", Geological and Natural History Survey of Canada Annual Report 1887-88 . Montreal , 1889), Vol.111, Part 1, p.92B.

(3) H.B.C. Arch. B.226/e/6, fos .51, 55,56.

(4) HGC Arch.B.304/e/5, fo.33.

Egnell agreed to serve the Hudson's Bay Company for a third year and at the end of that period G.S. McTavish, the clerk



at Dease Post, reported as follows:

“10. Albert Egnell is a man of varied experiences. He has been at sea, has driven and owned a stage in Montana, been Justice of Peace in the same Territory and has a shrewd calculating mind, well endowed with common sense and a tact that has earned him the good will of Minors and Indians alike. He reads considerably and his work this year at accounts proves – tho causing him much labour – the pains he has take to write intelligible. This man was in Mr. Sylvesters employ for many years, and ever since Liard Post was established has had charge of it”.

During the summer of 1891 the Hudson’s Bay Company began to cut a trail for pack-horses between Telegraph Creek and Teslin Lake in the Taku Country.² At a point about forty miles from Telegraph Creek on the Teslin Trail, buildings were erected and made ready for trading purposes. But the officer in charge of the Cassiar District was informed by the District Headquarters in Victoria that no supplies would be sent to the new post, then referred to as Tackoo.³

Egnell had left the Company’s service, but an arrangement was made with him whereby he traded at the Tackoo post during season 1891-92 with foods supplied to him by the Hudson’s Bay Company, goods imported on his own account, and supplies obtained on his own account from local merchants.⁴ When enquiries regarding the buildings erected by the Hudson’s Bay Company at this site were being made in 1900, they were referred to as “Egnell Post”. It was here that “after one Winter, {Egnell} fount that there was no trade to be done”.⁵

1 H.B.C. Arch. B.304/4/3/6, fo.15, October 15, 1891.

2 H.B.C. Arch. B.304/3/6,fo.75.

3 Ibid., fos. 30-1; B.282/b/4, fo.489.

4 H.B.C. Arch. B.304/3/6, fos.30-1, 7-8

5 H.B.C. Arch. B/282/c/3, Hall to Matheson, July 3, 1900.

Egnell intended going to Victoria in the summer of 1892 to discuss future plans with the Hudson's Bay Company's officers there, but he apparently did not get any further than Wrangel. He returned to the Cassiar District and spent the next few years trading at Tahltan and Telegraph Creek either on his own account or under an arrangement with a trader named Lamontagne.¹

In 1897 Egnell again joined the Hudson's Bay Company.² He was stationed at the Liard Post and was there on April 12, 1898, when Charles Camsell Passed.³

On June 17, 1900, Egnell was accidentally shot in the leg by his young son, McDonald, and died five days later. He was buried at Liard Post.⁴

1 H.B.C. Arch. B.304/3/6, fo.2;



H.B.C. Arch. B.282/c/3, Simpson to Matheson,
September, 1900; H.B.C. Arch. B.282/d/1, FO. 322.
2 H.B.C. Arch. A.34/23.
3 Charles Camsell, Son of the North (The Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1954), p.78.
4 H.B.C. Arch. B.282/b/4, fos.604, 611-12.

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