

[Larry Kelly]

Folklore Dup.

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

Washington

A. A. Matson

Seattle, Washington

December 20, 1938

"Larry Kelly"

1. H. H. Matteson, Seattle, Washington

2. Taken from field copy.

3. Federal Writers' Project Office

4. None

5. None

6. None Folklore FORM B Personal History of Informant

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1. Not known

2.

(Not obtained)

3.

etc.

I think Larry Kelly, in his day, knew these islands better perhaps than any other skipper before or since his time. You see Larry's freedom and perhaps life depended on his knowledge of the winds and tides, and of the myriad nooks and hidden bays among the San Juans.

Kelly sailed a small sloop. This sloop was both the apple of Kelly's eye and also his bankroll. Under cover of night Kelly would slip his ship out of Vancouver or Victoria, B.C. loaded to the gunwales with contraband Chinese heading for some desolate section of Puget Sound in Washington, U.S.A. Each Chink meant \$500 in gold to Larry and believe-you-me he made certain, if humanly possible, those Chinks were going to be landed on U.S. soil.

Kelly was a hard man, however, and sometimes when pursued too closely by revenue cutters he would land his cargo on the bottom of Puget Sound. One trick he used to throw off pursuit was to land his charges on some island and make them hike across and after purposely mixing it with the government men he would again load his Chinks, only this

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time on the opposite side of the island. His favorite spot to pull this trick was Oreas Island because of its peculiar shape, something like a greyhound in full flight.

Evidences of smuggler Kelly's infamous doings still crops up in a rancher's field once in a while. A quarter of a century after Kelly ceased his nefarions practice evidences of this nocturnal trek of Chinks turned up on William Wright's farm. A Chinese jade knife was turned up by Wright's plow. The owner of the knife never came back to claim it. I've often wondered why he didn't.