**Won Alexander Cumyow**

**Lesson Activity 1:**

**Information Data about Won Alexander Cumyow & the Right to Vote**

Cumyow voted for the first time in 1890 in British Columbia but provincial legislation in 1895-1896 stripped Chinese (and Japanese and First Nations) voting rights in elections in BC. The voters' list in federal elections came from the provincial election's voters' list, and so the federal franchise was also blocked. The federal Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed on May 14, 1947. Cumyow voted again in the next federation election of 1949, making him the only Chinese-Canadian to have voted both before and after the disenfranchisement.

-edited excerpt from *Wikipedia* (Subject: Won Alexander Cumyow)

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**BC Electors-Qualification**

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| Every male of the full age of twenty-one years, ...having resided in this Province for twelve months, and in the Electoral District in which be claims to vote for two months ....and being duly registered as an elector under the provisions of this Act, shall be entitled to vote at any election: Provided that no person …shall have been convicted of any treason, felony, or other infamous offence, .... |  |
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| No Chinaman, Japanese, or Indian shall have his name placed on the Register of Voters for any Electoral District, or be entitled to vote at any election. Any Collector of Voters who shall insert the name of any Chinaman, Japanese, or Indian in any such register, shall, upon summary conviction thereof before any Justice of the Peace, be liable to a penalty not exceeding fifty dollars. |

-edited (and underlined) from the *Revised Statutes of British Columbia, 1897*

**B.C. VOTERS LIST 1898**

**NAME / RESIDENCE / PROFESSION, TRADE, or CALLING / DISTRICT**

Cummins, James, 64 North Park St, Lineman, VicC

Cummins, Robert, Port Moody, Labourer, WDew

Cummiskey, Thomas John, Sicamous, Agent, C.P.R., YN

Cummmgs, James, 150-Mile House, Carpenter, Car

Cumye, Won Stephen, Cornwall St, Butcher, NWC

Cumyow, Won Alexander, 1060 Carnarvon St, Merchant, NWC

Cundill, Christopher, Vesuvius Bay, Farmer, VicN

Cuniff, Thomas, Herald St, Labourer, VicC

Cunliffe, Franklin, Comox, Farmer, Com

Cunliffe, Henry S., Suburbs of Nanaimo, Carpenter, NanC

Cunliffe, John F., Suburbs of Nanaimo, Teamster, NanC

Cunning, Robert, Three Forks, Miner, KWS

Cunningham, Archibald, Suburbs of Nanaimo, Miner, NanC

Cunningham, Arthur, Hall's Landing, Farmer, KWRe

*Excerpt from the Sessional Papers of the British Columbia Government, 1899*

(Note: The two underlined names are Cumyow and his brother, Stephen, whose surname is incorrectly spelled. NWM means “New Westminster”)

-Information excerpts compiled by J. Nicol