

Misc Johnny Harris notes

Sandon Types, Ed Vipond, n.d., ca. 1950s

2 – Old Nick: Lived on goodness knows what in a shack below the power plant. Still, somewhere or somehow he accumulated \$50 which he insisted upon investing in Johnny Harris' stud poker game one night. He went broke in about four hands, Johnny gave him back his fifty and told him to get out and stay out.

3 – J.M. Harris: Silver haired Southern gentleman, always smoking a fat Ovido cigar. One of the founders of Sandon and a large property holder when I knew him. I ate my lunch and dinner in his Reco Hotel for a year and a half but never succeeded in getting a rate. Paid the same as any transient would, 75 cents a meal, which was considered a pretty good price for a meal then. Only break I ever got was when I won over a month's supply of meal checks from the poker machine in the bar one night on an investment of 25 cents. Nevertheless, I liked Johnny, most people did, and after he got the music bug in 1919 and bought his big Brunswick phonograph, I spent a great many evenings in his Virginia Block office listening to his records.

7 – Margaret Phillips: Waitress in the Reco, nice little Scotch girl. Don't remember much about her except that

Johnny Harris accused her in front of the lot of us one day of having taken \$20 from the dining room till. She hotly denied it, made him take the drawer out of the till to examine it, and found the \$20 caught behind it.

8 – George Howson: Clerk in the Slocan Mercantile. Had an idea he could make enough out of Johnny Harris' stud poker game to buy a ticket home to England. Did OK for a while but got into a really big game one night and lost his stake.

9 – Bert Sanderson: Ran Johnny Harris' electric light plant, did all the outside work, wiring, etc. and also took care of the waterworks.

11 – Miss Aitken: Johnny Harris' book-keeper and secretary for some years.

<http://www.worldcat.org/title/john-m-harris-papers-sept-17-1890-dec-1-1892/oclc/42925846>

John M. Harris papers, Sept. 17, 1890-Dec. 1, 1892.

Author: John M Harris; George R Trask; John Northcott; A Lohoefer; University of Idaho. Library. Special Collections Department.

Summary: A manuscript map, Exact copy of old Plat of Wallace, surveyed by G.R. Trask, copied by J.M. Harris, Sept. 17, 1890; two quitclaim deeds for property in Wallace, Idaho, Harris to John Northcott, Oct. 6 and Oct. 24, 1891; and a mortgage on property in Wallace, Dec. 1, 1892, between Harris and A. Lohoefer.

Civic directories
1897 Henderson's directory
HARRIS, JOHN MORGAN
PRES. AND GEN. MAN.
RECO MINING AND MILLING CO.
RECO AVE.
BOARDS GOODENOUGH HOTEL

Goodenough Hotel, Mrs. M.A. Smith
prop., Reco ave.

1897-98 Williams directory
Harris Miss E
Harris J.M., pres and mgr Reco Mining &
Milling Co.

1899 Williams directory
Harris, J.M., Stocks and Real Estate, Reco
ave.
Harris & Kelly, real estate, Reco ave.

1902 directory
Harris (John M) & Kelly (Fred Texas)
props Reco Hotel

Harris does not appear in the 1910 B.C.
directory. But he is listed in the 1918
Wrigley's directory as proprietor of the
Reco Hotel.

Miners Rest and Travellers Ease, Elsie
Turnbull unpublished manuscript in
Selkirk College Regional Archives:
"Donating land for a church [JMH] also
presented a fire whistle which copied the
song of the mockingbird." Don't know
where she found that.

Wilma van Beynum interview of Alma
Harris citation: included with Slocan
Power Co. Ltd. Articles of Association,
vertical file, Minto Room, TK 1427 S3 S5

Northwest Mining Review, 1 May 1893:
After an absence of several months, J.M.
Harris, who is well known in Spokane,
Coeur d'Alenes and Slocan, has returned
to look after his numerous milling
interests in the Slocan and elsewhere.
While absent, Mr. Harris visited Chicago,
St. Louis, and many other eastern cities
and reports business quiet and thinks
Spokane has more animation than any
other city which he visited, except the
World's Fair city, which, of, course, is.
very lively. He says the exhibits will not
all be in place for two months yet, but it
is the greatest aggregation of products,
natural and artificial, ever brought
together. Mr. Harris will go to the Slocan
in a few days and will return to Chicago
in August or September.

The Tribune, 24 Mar 1894:
J.M. Harris to Spokane: "He took along
with him a 250-pound specimen of ore,
one of the finest ever taken from a Slocan
mine."

The Ledge, 19 Apr 1894: Messrs. Wharton,
Harris, and other Slocan mining men in
Spokane.

The Miner, 21 Dec 1895: J.M. Harris of the
Rueceau

Kaslo Claim, 22 Feb 1896: Harris, "one of the greatest hustlers in the country," plans hotel.

The Miner, 14 Mar 1896: Judge Spinks held county court at Kaslo. Kinney and Williamson vs. Harris and Kelly. Defendants staked claims in 1892, partly over legally held claims. Latter rain out and plaintiffs restaked the Omaha and Slocan Sovereign. Judgement for plaintiffs. Notice of appeal. (Also see 27 Nov 1897.)

Rossland Miner, 17 Jul 1896: Dance held in room above J.M. Harris's new stable with 300 people.

Spokesman-Review, 26 Aug 1896: An enjoyable party was given at the handsome new quarters on the Sandon Club on Monday evening, the 17th, in honor of the Misses Bailey and Miss Sampson of Spokane, who are spending a month at the Bailey group of mines near town. The entertainers were Messrs. Harris, Kelly, and Grimmett, and the appointments were a happy combination of metropolitan elegance and mining camp atmosphere of sociability, which was most pleasing. Only one gentleman was obliged to dance with a handkerchief around his arm, and it may now be safely averred that this camp has reached the dignity of a town.

The Kootenaian, 21 Nov 1896: C.J. Smith, ex-of Spokane, at present with JMH at Sandon, came down to Kaslo this week

with family en route from Spokane to Sandon.

Northport News, 3 Dec 1896: E.G. Schmidt of Sandon in Northport

The Paystreak, 30 Jan 1897: Harris on curling team in first curling match ever played in the Slocan.

The Paystreak, 27 Mar 1897: Oil painting completed for J.M. Harris showing mines on Reco Mtn.

The Paystreak, 27 Mar 1897: J.M. Harris having awning placed over windows of his office.

Daily Nor'Wester (Winnipeg), 27 Mar 1897: A young man, a Virginian by birth, Harris, after wrestling for some time with a townsite proposition down in the Coeur d'Alene country and prospecting with but little result in that district started northward ... in fact, nothing was done towards laying out the town until Jan. '96, with the exception of erecting a few buildings ...

The Paystreak, 3 Apr 1897: A church is to be built in Sandon to cost \$2,000. It will be built by subscription. \$600 of the money has already been raised. J.M. Harris has donated the ground. It lies between the Reco trail and the K and S right of way. The dimensions are 34x64 feet. In appearance the building will resemble the modern church building with lofty spire and slanting roof."

The Ledge, 15 Apr 1897: A. David, the tailor, this week commenced the erection of a new 22x38 two story building on his lot adjoining the Reco Hotel ... (This is the mystery Reco Hotel, not the same one that was formerly Black's hotel.)

The Ledge, 15 Apr 1897: J.M. Harris manager of Sandon baseball club, suggested for membership pin the Northwestern International Baseball League

Mining Review, 12 Jun 1897: Robert Cunning's hotel was first building at Sandon. John Sandon, Bruce White, and Charles Chambers staked the Slocan Star. Harris' partners were Kelly and Horton. (Horton was superintendent at the Reco, according to *The Ledge*, 8 Jul 1897).

Mining Review, 12 Jun 1897: Harris and Sproat donated the lots on which the Methodist church is being built.

The Paystreak, 19 Jun 1897: J.M. Harris donates \$25 to Diamond jubilee

The Paystreak, 14 Aug 1897: Methodist church. Site presented by Messrs. Harris and Sproat.

Mining Review, 11 Sept 1897: Harris has men and teams straightening Slocan Star St.

The Paystreak, 16 Oct 1897: JMH putting in cribbing in the creek at the lower end of town, will confine creek the whole way thru town.

Mining Review, 23 Oct 1897: Harris spends an hour with Sir William Van Horne and other CPR officials. Tupper and Bowell not of the party but joined them at Nelson and returned with them.

The Paystreak, 27 Nov 1897: Judge Spinks at Kaslo decides in E.S. Kinney and V.D. Williamson vs. Harris and Kelly, in which title of the Slocan Sovereign is at stake. Court finds that at date of record of the Omega claim the ground was covered by the Toughnut, Apex, and Belle Isle, and that abandonment left ground open to relocation and Slocan Sovereign located. Judgement for plaintiffs. Plaintiffs adversed the Omega.

British Columbia Mining Record, November 1897, p. 31: "The site was originally located in May 1892 by Mr. J.M. Harris, who has in consequence since become a millionaire, or very nearly so. The story is told that when Mr. Harris staked the property he offered a friend a half interest in consideration of the payment of the recording fees, but he was only laughed at for his generous proposal ... Sandon now boasts a population of nearly 2,000, and notwithstanding the peculiarity of the situation, whereby the town is liable at any time to be destroyed by fire ...

Talking of hotels, by the way, there are no fewer than 19 in the town!

British Columbia for Settlers: Its Mines, Trade, and Agriculture, Agnes Fraser, 1898, p. 325: At Sandon, where we stopped two hours, I went to deliver my letter to Mr. J.M. Harris. All the shops and offices were open, and the mules coming down from the mines with ore as usual, although it was Sunday.

Mr. Harris was in his office with several other gentlemen and forthwith we plunged into the silver question. The 'slump' in the value of silver had caused a panic, and Sandon was paralyzed. Only the richest mines were working. The fall had been a heavy one, and the fear was that it might continue indefinitely. The p. 36: price at which the low grade mines had closed 50 cents the ounce; but I had heard Mr. Scott Macdonald declare that the best mines in Sandon and Slocan were so rich, and the methods of production had been so cheapened, that the mines would pay until silver dropped to 25 cents the ounce ...

In the Reco mine (near Sandon) the costs have been reduced to as low a figure as five cents an ounce, from which it will be seen that the mine, which is one of the best, will pay handsomely at even a lower figure than that fixed by Mr. Scott Macdonald. That the returns from the silver mines are considerable may be gathered from the Reco (a comparatively small mine) paying \$50,000 a month [sic] in dividends.

From Euston to Klondike: The Narrative of a Journey Through British Columbia, Julius Mendes Price, 1898, p. 50: The fortunate locator of the enormously valuable town site, a Mr. J.M. Harris, who is also a big shareholder in the Reco Mine close by, told me he was laughed at when he asked a friend to give him half the recording fee, of a few dollars, for the location, and so share it with him. He therefore paid the whole amount himself. It is impossible to estimate at the present moment what this half share would have been worth."

Mining Review, 8 Jan 1898:

MR. HARRIS' EXPENDITURES (in 1897)

Addition to waterworks and electric light: \$50,000

Virginia block, 3 stories, 30 x 90: \$15,000

Goodenough hotel, nearly all done in 1897, three stories: \$15,000

Steam laundry on Slocan Star St., two stories, 30 x 75, \$4,500

Sundry improvements on other buildings: probably \$10,000

Total: \$94,500

Mining Review, 15 Jan 1898: All-candidates forum in Virginia block: "Mr. Harris was loudly called for but he declined to speak."

Mining Review, 22 Jan 1898:

Additional buildings

Addition to livery stable by Mr.

Harris: \$1,800

The Tribune, 26 Mar 1898: JMH at assizes in Nelson.

The Tribune, 2 Apr 1898: JMH states that he will make a shipment of 100 tons of zinc ore to Swansea, Wales.

Mining Review, 14 May 1898: Found \$100 more or less, picked up in front of my office. Owner can get same by proving ownership and pay for the advertisement. – J.M. HARRIS

Mining Review, 2 Jul 1898: Sandon staked as mineral claim in May 1892. Town building didn't start until January 1896.

Mining Review, 16 Jul 1898: Bank of BNA closing as of July 30.

Spokesman-Review, 21 Aug 1898: Much of the building up of Sandon, the beginning of its industry, is to the credit of a Virginian, John M. Harris. Fortune has favored him from the time he acquired an interest in the Reco mine, until now, when his many carefully planned investments are returning a comfortable income as a reward for his enterprise and business sagacity.

Mining Review, 8 Oct 1898: Bylaw for creek improvement, to borrow \$15,000 for fluming and improving Carpenter Creek channel. Payable in 15 years from 1 Dec 1898.

Mining Review, 22 Oct 1898: Creek bylaw passes 35-13.

Mining Review, 22 Oct 1898: Harris gives \$25 to brass band.

Mining Review, 5 Nov 1898: H.J. Robinson, tinsmith, opens shop in one of Mr. Harris' shops.

Mining Review, 12 Nov 1898: On Saturday Mr. Harris received a complete plan which, we believe is registered, of that part of the city north of Reco ave., generally known as Sunnyside. After this people can get their titles fully accurate as to description, which is a matter of much moment to all.

The Ledge, 5 Oct 1899: Duncan City notes: "Joe Howson will likely be the first party to erect a frame building as an hotel, on the corner of Sandon and Loudon streets ..." (I know Harris was mixed up in the Duncan City townsite, but I can't find any notes on it other than this one.)

Mining Review, 7 Oct 1899: Walter Scott of Regina Leader: "John M. Harris is a name to conjure with in Sandon. He is a Virginian, and besides being an extensive mine owner and developer, has done much to improve the town. Mr. Harris owns the fine Reco hotel, and has been the main promoter of the electric lighting works and water works."

Mining Review, 14 Oct 1899: Capt. A.P. Horton, of Reco fame, has gone on a pleasure tour through the coast states.

The Tribune, 16 Nov 1899: *The Miner* is to print a cartoon showing how much-abused capital bears the white-man's burden uncomplainingly. Capital will be typified by Johnnie Harris of Sandon.

San Francisco Call, 6 May 1900: J.M. Harris losses total \$300,000 in fire

The Kootenaiian, 10 May 1900: Below the CPR depot, which was blown up to save others across the track, all that now stands to mark the site of the little city are: the lower story (brick) of E.R. Atherton's warehouse, Crawford and Grimmer's livery stable, Folliott & McMillan's factory and old blacksmith shop adjoining, Hunter's warehouse, the electric power house and some residences, stables, etc. below Galena street, which is the boundary of the Harris town plot. These few buildings were miraculously saved.

Mining Review, 20 Oct 1900: J.M. Harris builds new livery stable.

Mining Review, 5 Jan 1901: Mr. Harris' buildings put up by John Gable are the Virginia, 60 x 60, 2 storeys, cost \$4,000; alterations on the Reco hotel, \$6000, stable and sample house, about \$500 each — total \$11,000.

The Ledge, 17 Oct 1901: The Sandon cases that will be tried at the approaching assizes to be held in Nelson are as

follows: the Royal Bank of Canada vs. Harris. Action to recover on notes.

The Ledge, 17 Apr 1902: The City of Sandon and J.M. Harris have agreed again to disagree, and as a result the snow-capped city cannot have either water or light from the local company.

Victoria Daily Colonist, 1 Sept 1902: The town of Sandon is much improved since the fire and this is a great tribute to the energy and farsightedness of Mr. J.M. Harris, the original owner of the townsite, who has stayed by his creation through good times and bad and has spent his money in the country where he made it.

Mining Review, 7 Feb 1903: Electric lights have been installed in the Catholic church the past week, and the generosity of Mr. Harris has again been exemplified when dealing with the churches and institutions which benefit the city.

Mining Review, 14 Feb 1903: J.M. Harris while returning from his trip to Victoria had an experience he is not likely to soon forget last Wednesday morning. He was a passenger in the Pullman with several others on the east bound express and most of the occupants had retired for the night. Shortly after leaving Clan William, about nine miles west of Revelstoke, a small snow slide struck the train, which at the speed it was going raised the car clear off the trucks, lifted it with two others over 20 feet and landed them close

to the brink of a lake. The accident occurred so suddenly that the passengers hardly knew what happened and how they escaped injury is a miracle. Beyond a shaking up no one was any the worse of their thrilling experience. Mr. Harris escaped with a tattered hat and smashed umbrella, and arrived in town Wednesday evening none the worse of the accident.

Mining Review, 28 Feb 1903: Harris chain (curling award). "There is a curious fact in connection with the Harris chain and Bostock cup. While the former has never stayed in Sandon since it was donated by Mr. J.M. Harris to the local club, the latter has never left the city and has been won by Sandon rinks six years in succession."

Mining Review, 21 Mar 1903: Harris and City of Sandon settle differences over water, light, and taxes.

Sandon Standard, 9 Jan 1904: Sorrow from the Chicago horror has reached Sandon. A niece of J.R. Steel, accountant for J.M. Harris, was among the 600 souls that perished in the flames.

Victoria Colonist, 16 Jan 1907: Fire starts in Filbert Hotel, consuming that building along with Balmoral and barber shop.

Slocan Mining Review, 17 Jan 1907: Filbert and Balmoral Hotels burn.

The Daily News (Nelson), 16 Oct 1912: J.M. Harris of Sandon passed through this morning, en route to Kootenay Flats,

where he will spend a week duck shooting.

The Daily News, 4 Nov 1913: Harris to Kootenay Landing on annual hunting trip.

The Kootenaian, 28 Dec 1916: J.M. Harris splendid exhibition of shooting, winner of four turkeys.

Call of the West, C.F.J. Galloway, 1917, p. 21-22: He comes from Idaho, and is taking a month's holiday, shooting and fishing on Kootenay Lake. He is really a Virginian; that is where his parents came from. His ancestors came over in the 17th century from somewhere back in Essex County, England, and he still feels an affection for that far away Old Country. He likes to come now and then for business or pleasure on to Canadian soil; he doesn't want to see the Union Jack hauled down and Old Glory raised in its place; he wants to see the two floating side by side in an indissoluble alliance.

No name given on the fellow above, but it is in a chapter on the Slocan. Sounds like Johnny Harris, but only sort of.

The Kootenaian, 5 Oct 1922: J.M. Harris has had the Reco Hotel, the Virginia block and other buildings which he owns, painted this season. It has greatly improved the appearance of the town.

The Kootenaian, 19 Jul 1923: Fire destroys two-and-a-half story apartment block in

Sandon that belonged to Mrs. Towgood. Had ten residents.

Slocan Record & Leaser, 7 Aug 1924: J.M. Harris of Sandon put an Indian motorcycle in commission this week. It will take all the grades on the wagon road and possibly jump some of them."

Slocan Record & Leaser, 28 Aug 1924: J.M. Harris of Sandon is making a golf course at Cody. There will be no difficulty in providing hazards in that locality.

Mining & Engineering Record, June 1925: Going into Sandon one sees the founder of the town as active and hustling as ever, for J.M. Harris never sleeps. From a dead and deserted village of a few years ago he has again placed Sandon on the map as one of the liveliest mining towns in the west. He runs a fine hotel, and has converted the former Canadian Bank of Commerce building into palatial offices equipped with radio for the convenience and delectation of the residents. On Saturday night *The Miners* come to town and get the latest news on the radio. J.M. reminds the visitor of the day when, in the heyday of Sandon some prospectors became elated with firewater and set both the landlord and the police at defiance. He was too much of a psychologist to start trouble with men on a rampage like that, so sat quietly at his office window looking out on the havoc they were doing by levelling buildings, destroying sidewalks and generally turning the town upside down. He waited

till they had cooled off, then asserted his authority and meted out justice to the shoots of high grade ore; but he tells the visitor with pride how that mine was one of the leading dividend payers of Slocan, with a distribution of \$300,000 in profits to its shareholders. He picks up a piece of Reco ore, strikes a match on it as if to light his pipe or cigar. Instead, he sets fire to the ore and the visitor is astonished to see it burning like a piece of matchwood, due to the large amount of sulphur associated with the high silver values. He is one of the largest shareholders in the Silversmith, the dividends from which have again placed him on easy street after spending a fortune in litigation and enjoying the fun of such an expensive luxury.

The Daily News (Nelson), 30 Jan 1925: SANDON FOUNDER HAS PRESENTATION

Mr. Harris on 61st birthday is given surprise party
Sandon, Jan. 29 — An enjoyable surprise party was given recently at Sandon in honor of J.M. Harris' 61st birthday. The entertainment consisted of bridge, radio selections, and dancing.
The guests of the evening presented Mr. Harris with a handsome dressing case. He then suitably replied and a delightful lunch was served. Those present included Mr. and Mrs. E.O. White, Mr. and Mrs. J.A. Hanna, Mr. and Mrs. James Sime, Miss Loraine McLeod, Miss Alma Lommatzsch and Messrs. Watson, W.G. Clark, A. McMillan, W.J. Parham, O.

Strathearn, W.R. Rudkin, Fred T. Kelly of Spokane, J.W. Holmes and R.H. Stewart of Vancouver, Dr. H.C. McKenzie of Calgary, and H.A. Johnston of Nelson.

Slocan Enterprise, 28 Jul 1926, and onward: FOR SALE — Several High Class Radio Sets at Bargain Prices. J.M. HARRIS, Sandon, B.C.

Slocan Herald, 12 Nov 1931: Mr. and Mrs. J.M. Harris went to Nelson Wednesday and returned with a splendid Alsatian dog, to replace the one they lost last summer.

Viewed via Google Books:
Geological Survey of Canada, 1935
The Argo group includes the Marie fraction, Belt, Loudoun, and St. Charles claims and is owned by JM Harris, et al ...
The Oro Crown-granted claim is on the lower northern slope of the valley of Carpenter creek about a mile east of Cody. It is owned by J.M. Harris, Sandon, B.C. and when visited in 1927 was under lease to A. Stonier of Sandon.

Arrow Lakes News, 30 Jul 1936: D.F. Morgan and Neil Tattrie were guests at a card part at the home of J.M. Harris, Reco Hotel on Wednesday.

Arrow Lakes News, 27 Aug 1936: J.M. Harris has a crew of men at work on improvements to his power house under foremanship of A.M. Millan.

Lethbridge Herald, 2 Sept 1937:

(by J.V. McDougall)

This town, incorporated in 1898, once had a population of 3,500 people, 23 hotels, several cafes and many gambling houses ... As one walks the main street, an open door is reached which leads into the only hotel in the ghost town that remains open. Entering this door, one meets W.J. [sic] Harris, the owner, who came to Sandon in 1892, six years before the town was incorporated. He keeps open the Reco hotel for the benefit of the occasional tourist and visitor. He owns the town's only electric power plant, several closed hotels besides the Reco, several of the deserted business buildings, and is heavily interested in the Reco Silver Mines.

Mr. Harris is around 75 and has many interesting tales to tell of the history of Sandon in the early '90s.

Living alone in this large hotel, he keeps a little store where once was the hotel office, to sell a little tea, butter, sugar to the few that need it. He looks after his plants and experiments with the large radio he has installed. With great pride he shows visitors the lemon and orange trees that he is growing in the dining room of his hotel. This year two trees are bearing fruit. One has two oranges on it, and the other several small lemons in spite of the fact that neither tree has been in the sunlight.

On a quiet night, as the light of the day fades, Mr. Harris sits in his cosy chair in front of the Reco and lives again the days when the town was a blaze of light, hundreds milling up and down the street,

23 hotels filled with happy-go-lucky men and women, when everybody had money and spent it as they earned it. Harris, quite wealthy, has travelled far and wide over Canada and the United States but always returns to Sandon [and] wouldn't leave it for a palace in New York. Sandon is his home ...

New Canadian, 16 Sept 1942, I. Sugiman writes Sandon has hospital, post office, two grocery stores, butcher shop, clothing store, shoe store, barber shop. [branch of New Denver Meat Market]

Nelson Daily News, 9 Sept 1946: Ross Thompson on tour: Nelson, Kaslo, Sandon, with Lance Whittaker. Meets with Harris: "Mr. Harris was an early partner in some of Ross Thompson's first mining ventures and the two men have not met for nearly 50 years."

Nelson Daily News, 16 Aug 1947: Tells story of Sandon's John Harris in Toronto column (Sidney Norman, probably 19 Jul 1947 *Globe & Mail*)

Vancouver Province, 14 Jul 1958: First settler and one of the last, was J.M. (Johnny) Harris who came in 1892. He planned and built the town. His foresight resulted in a water system with hydrants six feet high, which could be handily reached when the snow lay deep in the valley. He built two of the 23 hotels which were to operate there when Sandon was capital of a silver empire, counting 2,300 subjects. He owned

several mines. One is said to have produced \$200,000 for him in a single week, then dried up.

"Frontier Hotels in Kootenay Country," Elsie Turnbull, *Pioneer Days in British Columbia*, Vol. 3, p. 40-41: The first [Reco] hotel was built by John M. Harris. He was a young Virginian who had left his native state to seek a fortune in the Far West and had ventured into the Slocan country after the first rich strikes were made in the fall of 1891. Pitching a tent beside Carpenter Creek, he located a claim on which he founded the townsite of Sandon. With his partner, Fred T. Kelly, he also purchased a group of claims that became the Reco Mine, a valuable property which in 1897 paid dividends of \$20,000. Unfortunately, in the spring of 1899 [sic] a fate familiar to many mining communities overtook Sandon — it was wiped out by fire. Nothing daunted, Harris rebuilt, using the building which had stabled pack horses but which had escaped the fire.

It was a plain box two stores high, its front door opening to the board sidewalk beneath which flowed Carpenter Creek. When Harris had finished, however, inside were all the comforts and luxuries of the day. It boasted pink and blue floral carpets, heavy oak furniture, an indicator connecting bedrooms to the lobby desk and a 14-foot mahogany bar topped by a series of bevelled mirrors. Some 200 of the elite attended the opening in September 1900 and afterwards the Reco dominated the social life of the town.

Gerda Jukes writing in *Kootenay Lake Chronicles*, Ted Affleck, ed., 1978, p. 159, about being on the campaign trail with her husband Arthur, who ran provincially in Kaslo-Slocan in 1941: "A different sort of reception faced us at Sandon's Reco Hotel, where the proprietor, the diminutive and ancient Johnny Harris, greeted us at the door armed with a shotgun. We never did discover whether this amoral greeting was standard form for Mr. Harris, or whether he had a particular objection to our politics. The warm hospitality afforded by Mrs. Harris somewhat dispelled the initial chill of our reception, but all in all our stay at the Reco Hotel was not a restful one, as the condition of the bedstead gave us the impression that we were teetering on the brink of outer space."

Teaching in Canadian Exile, Frank Moritsugu, 2001, p. 41, quoting Tatsue Nakatsuka: "And there was the hotel. It was still owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. J.M. Harris. One of the surviving pioneers of the Silvery Slocan boom era of the 1890s, Mr. Harris was an octogenarian by then. He was a man of small stature but he certainly commanded attention with his keen, sharp eyes. It was rumoured that he owned Sandon. Quite plausible. His mind still clicked like a well-oiled cash register. And he always wore a wide-brimmed hat reminiscent of the mining days."

Weird British Columbia Places, Michelle Sims, 2006, p. 44: "J.M. Harris died in Sandon, the city that had made him rich, in 1953. He was 89 and still clung to the belief that Sandon would make a comeback. Some say that the old man haunts the town that failed him. He roams the hills with the ghosts of lonely miners, and watches over the remaining buildings in the city. It seems that Harris does a better job as protector from beyond the grave: no other major fires, floods or disasters have hit Sandon since his death." Which is wrong, and was at the time this was written.

Denis St. Denis memoir, p. 24: "Johnny Harris also had mining property named the Reco. It adjoined the Slocan Star property. At that time mining laws would permit me, if I had a vein on my property to follow it into the adjoining property. This is what the Slocan Star people did. Johnny took action against them, claiming that the vein was not continuous, but was broken by a porphyry dyke. It took seven years to establish who was right. It went to the Privy Council in England. I happened to be in Sandon for some purpose or another the evening he got a cable from England announcing that he had won. But he never blinked an eye until he got through telling me something he had started on. Then he showed me the cable, walked into his own bar, and told Tom Trenary his bartender to give all hands champagne."