

THE  
BRITISH  
COLUMBIA  
HISTORICAL  
QUARTERLY



JULY, 1937

The  
BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Published by the Archives of British Columbia  
in co-operation with the  
British Columbia Historical Association.

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The  
BRITISH COLUMBIA  
HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

" Any country worthy of a future  
should be interested in its past."

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VOL. I.

JULY, 1937.

No. 3

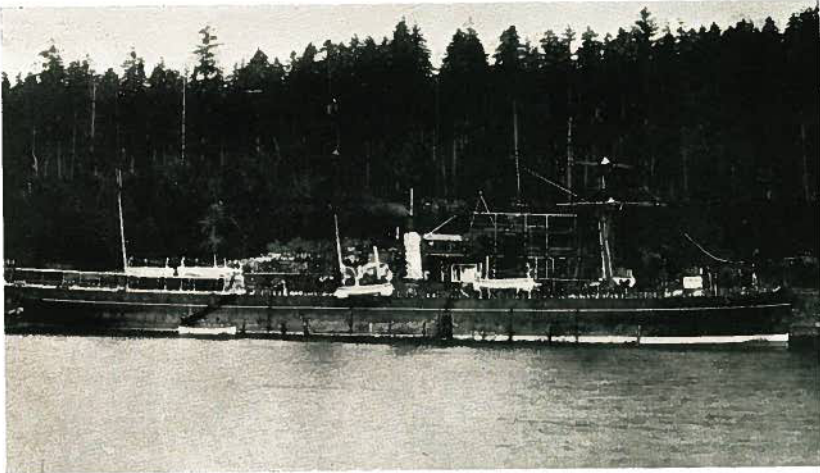
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The *W. B. Flint*, which carried the first cargo from the Orient to be shipped over the Canadian Pacific Railway, 1886.



The *Abyssinia*, pioneer steamer of the Trans-Pacific service, coaling at Departure Bay.

## THE PIONEER DAYS OF THE TRANS-PACIFIC SERVICE.\* 1887-1891.

A steamship line from its Pacific terminus to the Orient was from the first an essential part of the plan for a Canadian trans-continental railway. The attractions of the scheme were partly military; and the lively interest taken by the British Government in the railway was due largely to the fact that, in conjunction with steamers on the Atlantic and the Pacific, it would provide an all-British route to the Orient and Australasia. But commercial considerations entered the picture as well; and it was these that George Stephen, first President of the Canadian Pacific, had in mind when he wrote, in 1885, that the railway would not be complete "until we have an ocean connection with Japan and China." Years before, Stephen's interest in the trade possibilities of the Orient had been roused by James Morrison, a great London merchant who had befriended him in early days; and as early as October, 1884, he journeyed to England with the object of arranging for a steamer service between Port Moody and Japan and China.

Two months later it was reported in the press that he had succeeded in his mission; but the announcement was premature. Nevertheless, the Imperial authorities were genuinely interested; and in October, 1885, a month before the last spike was driven at Craigellachie, the Postmaster-General in Lord Salisbury's administration advertised for tenders for the carriage of mails from Vancouver to Hong Kong. The Canadian Pacific responded with an offer to provide a fortnightly service, maintained by

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\* The author wishes to acknowledge with thanks the help received from many persons in the preparation of this article, and in particular the ready assistance given by the Cunard Steam Ship Company, Limited, Liverpool; Mr. Malcolm K. Scott, Secretary of Lloyd's Register of Shipping; Mr. James R. Meston, of Seattle; Mr. F. W. DeGuire, Executive Assistant to the President, Northern Pacific Railway; Mr. J. Murray Gibbon, General Publicity Agent of the Canadian Pacific Railway, who supplied the half-tones; and Miss Inez Mitchell, for much patient checking of references in the newspaper files.

steamers built under the supervision of the Admiralty and capable of an average speed of 13 to 14 knots, for a subsidy of £100,000 per annum.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the Company undertook to carry the mails from Halifax to Vancouver free of charge. The only other tender submitted asked for a higher subsidy for a slower service, but the Canadian Pacific proposal was not accepted. The reason given officially for its rejection was the fact that the China mail subsidy already paid to the Peninsular & Oriental (P. & O.) line would not be reduced by the proposed service. Actually, a change in government and the crisis over the Irish Home Rule Bill seem to have played an important part. In any event the Directors of the Railway were by no means discouraged, and reported to the shareholders that their plans fitted in so well with Imperial interests that they were confident "that their proposals must soon be accepted by Her Majesty's Government."<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile the Company was not content to let the Oriental trade go by default. Regular transcontinental train service was due to commence between Montreal and Port Moody late in June, 1886, and the Railway was anxious to secure a share of the traffic as soon as its line was in operation. An arrangement was therefore made with Frazar & Company, a well-known importing firm, to act as agents for the Canadian Pacific in Japan and China; and during the last half of 1886 seven sailing-ships were chartered and dispatched to Port Moody with cargoes consisting mostly of Japanese tea. The first of these was the now famous American barque *W. B. Flint*, which arrived in the Royal Roads on July 26 and reached Port Moody in tow of the tug *Alexander* the following day. "Her arrival," according to the *Vancouver News*, "created much talk and interest among the citizens," and as she passed up the Inlet they "inspected her closely by the aid of field glasses."<sup>3</sup> Her cargo consisted of 17,430 half-chests of tea totalling 1,240,753 pounds. It was consigned chiefly to Toronto, Hamilton, Chicago, and New York. A special effort was made to handle

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(1) The exact time specified in the tender was a 460-hour service from Vancouver to Hong Kong and a 420-hour service from Hong Kong to Vancouver—corresponding to an average speed of 13 knots and 14.02 knots respectively. Detention at Yokohama was not included.

(2) *Annual Report*, Canadian Pacific Railway, 1885, p. 16.

(3) *Vancouver News*, July 27, 1886.

this first shipment of Oriental goods as rapidly as possible, and the Railway succeeded in breaking all previous transcontinental freight records. Shipments reached Montreal on August 7, 47 days from Yokohama, and New York two days later.<sup>4</sup>

The second vessel to arrive, the *Flora P. Stafford*, reached Port Moody on August 27. She carried 26,918 packages of tea totalling 1,658,074 pounds. Captain Smith, her commander, reported that she had been pursued for several days by Chinese pirates. The third arrival was the small Australian barque *Zoroya*, which sailed up to within a few miles of Point Atkinson lighthouse without the assistance of either a tug or a pilot. The feat was not unusual, but was regarded as important because the contention that the Inlet was difficult of access was still heard in certain quarters. The *Zoroya* tied up at Port Moody on September 17 with 529,206 pounds of tea from Hiogo, Japan. She was followed by the German barque *Bylgia*, Captain Weiss, which arrived on October 12, after a record passage of only 22½ days from Yokohama to Cape Flattery. She, too, was a small vessel and her tea cargo totalled about 550,000 pounds. The remaining three ships of this pioneer tea fleet were larger craft. The *Carrie Delap*, which reached the Royal Roads on October 26, brought the largest cargo of the season—about 1,800,000 pounds. The *Eudora*, which arrived in the Inlet on November 19, and the *Frieda Gramph*, which followed in January, 1887, each carried about 1,000,000 pounds. In all, the seven vessels brought over 176,000 packages of tea, together with small shipments of curios and rice, totalling about 4,000 tons weight and about 9,000 tons measurement—a most acceptable addition to the transcontinental freight traffic of a young railway system.

Everett Frazar, senior partner of Frazar & Company, visited Vancouver in September, 1886, on behalf of his own firm and a number of insurance agencies. He declared himself well pleased with the facilities of the Inlet and compared conditions favourably with those at Portland, to which Frazar & Company had also

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(4) The *W. B. Flint* was built at Bath, Maine, in 1885 and was owned by Benjamin Flint, of New York. She was a wooden vessel 178.4 feet long, 35.4 feet wide, and of 835 tons gross. Of late years she was owned by Libby, McNeill & Libby; and, after lying idle for some time in Lake Union, was burned for her metal at Seattle as recently as March, 1937.

dispatched a number of tea ships. He stated that no further vessels would be sent to the Columbia, as towage costs there were much higher and the river-bars made navigation hazardous. He was convinced that a regular steamer service to the Orient would be a profitable venture, and thought that it should be able to capture a large share of the trans-Pacific silk trade, almost all of which was routed at the time through San Francisco.<sup>5</sup>

A steamship service was exactly what the Canadian Pacific was determined to secure. The chartering of sailing-ships was never regarded as anything but a stop-gap; and, pending the outcome of its negotiations with the Dominion and Imperial authorities for a mail subsidy, the Company arranged for a temporary service. Early in 1887 it became known that three old Cunard liners—the *Abyssinia*, *Parthia*, and *Batavia*—had been secured to run between Vancouver and the Orient. The circumstances which brought these particular steamers to the Pacific are not without interest, for they arose from the intense rivalry for the Atlantic record which has continued to the present day. In the late sixties the Cunard Company had come to the conclusion that the game was not worth the candle; and during the next ten years no steamers comparable to the best ships possessed by rival lines were added to the Cunard fleet. By the end of that period, however, it had become evident that economy could be an expensive policy and that the famous old line must either build a new express fleet or suffer total eclipse. Two fine new steamers did much to restore the prestige of the Cunard flag; but their margin of superiority over rival liners was a narrow one. It was decided, therefore, to place an order for two additional steamers with the yard which had built the fastest of the competing liners—John Elder & Company, of Govan, Scotland. At this time the Elder Company was controlled by Sir William Pearce, who had started his career as a naval architect, but had later become not only a famous ship-builder, but a noted owner and manager of ships as well. The construction of its new liners taxed the resources of the Cunard Company to the utmost; and it was arranged that three of the older units of the fleet should be handed over to the shipyard as part payment for the new ships

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(5) On Frazar see *Vancouver News*, September 4, September 7, November 7, 1886.



—an arrangement made possible by the diverse interests of Sir William Pearce. Thus it came about that the *Abyssinia*, *Parthia*, and *Batavia* passed into the hands of Pearce and his associates upon the completion of the new *Umbria* and *Etruria*, in 1885.

All three steamers had been built on the Clyde in 1870—the *Batavia* and *Parthia* by the famous firm of Denny, at Dumbarton, and the *Abyssinia* by the Thomson yard at Clydebank. Steel ships were then still in the experimental stage, so their stout old hulls were of iron. Their small size will amaze the ocean traveller of to-day. The *Abyssinia*, largest of the three, was only 363.5 feet long and 42.2 feet wide, with a gross tonnage of 3,651. As fitted for the Cunard service she could carry 200 first-class and 868 steerage passengers. The *Parthia* resembled the *Abyssinia* in general design, but she was not a sister ship, as is often stated. Her length was 360.5 feet, her width 40.4 feet, and her gross tonnage 3,431. The *Batavia* was very different, not only in size but also in appearance, for she had a clipper bow instead of a straight stem. She was not of Cunard design, having been built as a speculation by the shipyard and sold to the Company. Her length was 327.4 feet, her width 39.3 feet, and her gross tonnage only 2,553—less than half that of several of the *Princess* steamers which now sail between Victoria and Vancouver.

The three steamers were overhauled at the Elder yard, where the *Abyssinia* and *Parthia* received new triple-expansion engines, which increased their speed. They were then assigned to the Guion Line, which Sir William Pearce controlled; but he was well aware that they were no longer suitable for the Atlantic trade. From his point of view, the demand for a steamer service from Vancouver to the Orient was thus most opportune. The old Cunarders were capable of meeting immediate needs and an agreement was soon reached between Pearce and the Canadian Pacific. Pearce retained control of the steamers, but undertook to operate them upon a route and schedule which met the needs of the Railway; while the appointment of Adamson, Bell & Company to act both as managers of the ships and as agents for the Canadian Pacific in the Orient ensured the necessary unity of action. It was announced at first that the *Parthia* would inaugurate the new service; but in the end it was the *Abyssinia*

which sailed from Hong Kong on May 17, 1887, and from Yokohama on May 31, as the pioneer steamship bound for British Columbia.

By the latter date preparations for her arrival on the other side of the Pacific had been completed. Port Moody had lost its fight to prevent the transfer of the railway terminus to a point farther down Burrard Inlet, and the first transcontinental train reached Vancouver on May 23. In February the Canadian Pacific had called for tenders for the construction of a 500-foot addition to its Vancouver wharf. Work commenced in March and the new wharf, complete with freight-shed and baggage-room, was ready for use two months later. On May 28 the *News-Advertiser* noted that the previous day the steamship *Willamette* had had "the distinguished honor of discharging the first full cargo at the C.P.R. wharf."

The *Abyssinia* arrived in the Straits on the afternoon of June 13; and the telegram announcing that she had been sighted caused much excitement in Vancouver. "Preparations were now made to give the pioneer vessel a hearty welcome," the *News-Advertiser* reported the next day. "The City Council met and immediately adjourned, the Mayor and most of the aldermen making their way down to the wharf. Presently the strains of music were heard, and the City Band went marching down the street, playing lively airs, towards the wharf. By this time hundreds of people were congregated on the wharf, along Water street and on every point affording a good view of the Inlet." As darkness fell many of the buildings were illuminated; but all these preparations were made in vain. Hour after hour passed and there was no sign of the *Abyssinia*; "and by 11.30 there was no one left on the wharf but the nightwatchman." Five minutes after midnight the lights of the small steamer *Eliza*, which had gone out with Company officials and others to meet the liner, were seen rounding Brockton Point; and when she docked it was learned that the *Abyssinia* had anchored in English Bay at 9.25 p.m.<sup>6</sup> Some time in the early morning of June 14

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(6) *News-Advertiser*, June 14, 1887.

she entered the harbour and tied up at the new Canadian Pacific wharf.<sup>7</sup>

The *Abyssinia* was commanded by Captain Alexander Marshall, who reported an uneventful passage of thirteen days fourteen hours from Yokohama. She brought twenty-two first-class passengers—a capacity list, as her cabin accommodation had been much reduced when she was overhauled—and eighty Chinese steerage. The first trans-Pacific mail consisted of three bags of letters and eleven packages of newspapers. Her cargo totalled 2,830 tons measurement and consisted mostly of tea, the bulk of which was consigned to Chicago and New York. Smaller shipments were consigned to Montreal and a number of other Eastern Canadian and American cities. The *Abyssinia* also carried a pioneer silk shipment made up of sixty-three packages for New York and two for Montreal. She carried curios for Eastern centres, and 1,217 packages of general merchandise for Vancouver and Victoria.<sup>8</sup>

A few days after her arrival, Captain Marshall entertained the Mayor and City Council at dinner on board the *Abyssinia*. Those present included Captain Henry Webber, Vancouver representative of Adamson, Bell & Company; J. A. Fullerton, Canadian Pacific marine superintendent; and D. E. Brown, freight agent for the Railway. At least one of the speeches delivered was to some extent prophetic, for, when called upon to say a few words, Dr. Lefevre responded with the suggestion that the C.P.R. should “work up a new industry in bringing the wheat of the great North West to Vancouver, where mills could be erected to grind it, and from thence distribute to our Eastern Hemisphere, for which suggestion Mr. Brown expressed his thankfulness, and made a note of the same.”<sup>9</sup>

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(7) It is a curious fact that no contemporary record has come to light which indicates just when the *Abyssinia* actually arrived. Mr. C. Simson, of Vancouver, remembers seeing her “coming through the Narrows all lit up and blowing a syren whistle,” but does not recall the hour. Some old-timers contend that she docked at Port Moody; but a careful search has failed to reveal any contemporary evidence that any of the trans-Pacific steamships ever docked there.

(8) *News-Advertiser*, June 14, 1887, which gives full details of the cargo.

(9) *News-Advertiser*, June 18, 1887.

As in the case of the *W. B. Flint*, the tea brought by the *Abyssinia* was hurried across the continent in order to demonstrate the efficiency of the new Canadian route from the Orient. Part of her cargo arrived in Montreal on June 27, only twenty-seven days from Yokohama; and shipments reached New York two days later. Meanwhile a more sensational record had been established by a small trial parcel of tea which reached New York on June 21, caught the liner *City of Rome*, and was delivered in London on June 29, having travelled from Japan in only twenty-nine days.<sup>10</sup>

The *Abyssinia* cleared for the Orient on June 20; and a fortnight later, on July 4, the *Parthia*, second of the trans-Pacific steamers to arrive, tied up at Vancouver. She was commanded by Captain Charles Brough and carried 37 first-class and 110 steerage passengers. Her cargo totalled 2,975 tons measurement and consisted of a very large shipment of tea, over 5,000 sacks of rice, 36 bales of silk, and a quantity of miscellaneous goods.<sup>11</sup> These figures and those relating to the *Abyssinia* have been quoted because they are representative of the cargoes which were brought to Vancouver during the next few years, and thus indicate the general character of the trade which developed. The steamers usually arrived in Vancouver well laden, and capacity cargoes were not infrequent. On the other hand, the volume of trade outward was much smaller, though fairly regular shipments of a few staple articles soon appeared. The most important of these was flour, most of which was brought from Portland in coastal steamers and trans-shipped at Vancouver. The *Abyssinia* carried a small quantity on her first west-bound voyage; but the first large shipment was sent in the *Parthia*. Cotton goods consigned to China from the Eastern United States also became an important item; and 1,500 bales were shipped by the third ship to enter the new service, the *Port Augusta*. The latter was a new 2,833-ton steamer owned by Milburn & Company, of Newcastle, and had been chartered to make one round trip to Vancouver in place of the *Batavia*, which was not yet available. Another Milburn ship, the *Port Victor*, of 2,793 tons, made a similar voyage later in the year.

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(10) *Ibid.*, July 15, 1887.

(11) *Ibid.*, July 7, 1887, which gives further details.

When the *Parthia* reached Vancouver for the second time, on August 20, her passengers included Sir Francis and Lady Plunkett. Sir Francis was then British Minister to Japan and he seems to have been the first distinguished personage to travel by the new Canadian Pacific route. On her return passage the *Parthia* carried the first royal patrons of the line—the brother of the King of Siam and his four small sons, who were homeward bound after attending Queen Victoria's Jubilee in London. The new service was attracting much attention, and this was reflected in a keen local interest in the steamers and their movements. We are told that the second arrival of the *Parthia* "was witnessed by an immense crowd of people, who required all the efforts of the C.P.R. employees to keep them from crowding in the way of the men at the wharf"; and that gates had to be erected to prevent a repetition of this trouble in future.<sup>12</sup> Local pride in the line led to exaggerated conceptions of the size and grandeur of the ships themselves; and Captain Urquhart, who piloted them in and out, became a popular hero. Thus we read that, when the *Parthia* sailed in November, "the way in which he handled the enormous mass was a source of admiration to the crowds of spectators who had assembled to see the vessel sail."<sup>13</sup> One grasps the scale of the picture better when one notes that owing to the fact that the *Parthia* "brought ten sacks of mail matter for different points," Postmaster Miller and his assistants were kept busy sorting all night!<sup>14</sup>

The *Batavia* did not enter service until late in the year; and it was on December 27 that she reached Vancouver, after a phenomenally rough passage from Yokohama lasting almost seventeen days. She was the ninth and last arrival in 1887. According to George B. Dodwell, who was a partner in Adamson, Bell & Company at the time, the service was operated during this first season at a loss;<sup>15</sup> but the Canadian Pacific was satisfied with its progress and prospects. The temporary service, in the words of the report to shareholders, had "fully justified the

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(12) *News-Advertiser*, August 21, August 23, 1887.

(13) *Ibid.*, November 11, 1887.

(14) *Ibid.*, August 21, 1887.

(15) *Ibid.*, October 26, 1888 (report of interview with Dodwell).

expectations of your Directors as to the value and importance of the trade to be developed in that direction."<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile the negotiations for a subsidy, though on the point of success, still hung fire. Lord Salisbury was again Prime Minister and in the autumn the Imperial Government notified the Canadian Pacific that it was prepared to grant an annual subsidy of £60,000 for a monthly service from Vancouver to Japan and China. Details were settled by December, but one difficulty still prevented the signing of a contract. The existing steamer line from Great Britain to Canada was much too slow to form a satisfactory part of the new all-British route to the Orient; and the British Government was unwilling to subsidize a fast Pacific service until an improved Atlantic service to supplement it became assured. The problem did not concern the Canadian Pacific directly, for the Company had no intention of entering the Atlantic trade at the time; but its contract was held up nevertheless.

There were nineteen Canadian Pacific sailings from Vancouver to the Orient in 1888, thirteen of which were taken by the regular liners *Abyssinia*, *Parthia*, and *Batavia*. One night in the autumn the *Batavia* rescued two shipwrecked Japanese in a violent storm in the China Sea, but for the most part their voyages were uneventful. Under the command of Captain George A. Lee, who had succeeded Captain Marshall, the *Abyssinia* crossed the Pacific in May at an average speed of  $13\frac{1}{4}$  knots, which was a record for the line; but the *Parthia* later proved to be the fastest of the trio and upon occasion arrived as much as two days ahead of time.

The six extra sailings were taken by chartered steamers, made necessary by the growth of trans-Pacific trade. The first to arrive was the *Zambesi*, an old P. & O. liner of 2,421 tons. She was followed by the *Port Adelaide* and the *Albany*, the latter of which made two voyages. The remaining two sailings were made by more notable craft—the *Aberdeen* and the *Duke of Westminster*. The former was a ship of some historic interest, as she was the first large steamship fitted with triple-expansion engines. They proved a great success, which led to general adoption of the principle. The *Aberdeen* was of 3,616 tons gross, which made her the largest steamer which had yet entered

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(16) *Annual Report*, Canadian Pacific Railway, 1887, p. 11.

Burrard Inlet; and she bettered this record by bringing the largest cargo yet landed—3,425 tons measurement. It consisted of 2,417 tons of tea, 1,007 tons of general merchandise, and 237 packages of silk. When she sailed outward the *Aberdeen* carried 25,000 sacks of flour, 2,125 bales of cotton goods, and a quantity of paper and machinery, totalling in all about 1,200 tons.<sup>17</sup> It will be noticed that the character of the trade had altered little since the pioneer voyages of the *Abyssinia* and *Parthia*.

The *Duke of Westminster* broke the port records once again, for she was of 3,726 tons gross and her cargo totalled 3,844 tons measurement. She, too, has a place in shipping history, for she ran ashore near the Isle of Wight, pounded on the rocks for a week, and confounded the critics of steel ships by neither cracking a plate nor starting a rivet.

But the great event of 1888 was not the mere coming and going of ships, but the invasion of the San Francisco trade by the Canadian Pacific. At this time neither Portland, Tacoma, nor Seattle had any regular connection with the Orient. American trans-Pacific trade was almost exclusively in the hands of two lines running out of San Francisco—the old-established Pacific Mail Company, which had started the first trans-Pacific steamer service in 1867, and the Oriental & Occidental Line, which operated a number of chartered White Star steamers. Working agreements linked the O. & O. with the Pacific Mail, and control of the latter was divided between the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific Railways.<sup>18</sup> Nothing daunted by this imposing combine, the Canadian Pacific determined to try and secure a share of the San Francisco freight trade, and also of the Chinese passenger trade, which was increasing rapidly. When the *Parthia* reached Vancouver on April 9, she carried freight and Chinese for San Francisco, and proceeded thither on the 12th. A month later the *Abyssinia* arrived with no less than 625 passengers, 590 of them Chinese, most of which she took to San Francisco. All during the summer the steamers averaged more than 600 passengers a voyage, the record list of 708 being brought by the *Batavia* in June. In all, twelve steamers sailed south between

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(17) *News-Advertiser*, July 26, August 17, 1888.

(18) Oddly enough, the wide interests of Sir William Pearce, owner of the Canadian Pacific line, included part ownership of the Pacific Mail.

April and October; but in the latter month the service ceased as abruptly as it had commenced. Its usefulness had ended, for an exclusion order had ruined the Chinese steerage trade, and certain traffic concessions had been secured from the American railroads.

The matter did not end there, for exaggerated reports of the traffic handled by the Canadian Pacific sprang up on every hand. In August, 1888, Senator Cullom, of Illinois, persuaded the United States Senate to appoint a committee to investigate the whole question of competition from Canadian transportation lines.<sup>19</sup> A long inquiry followed, in the course of which officials of most of the companies concerned gave evidence, including W. C. Van Horne, who appeared on behalf of the Canadian Pacific. The voluminous report of the committee was printed in 1890, and many interesting facts regarding the trans-Pacific trade can be found in its pages.<sup>20</sup> Attention was directed to the volume of United States imports from Japan and China which had been routed via Canadian Pacific steamers and rail lines. This had been tabulated by consular representatives, who reported that in 1888 560,591 pounds of raw silk, 216,385 pounds of rice, and no less than 14,687,627 pounds of tea had been shipped in this way.<sup>21</sup> Van Horne's comment upon these figures is interesting. "Our business from China and Japan," he told the committee, "has been taken almost wholly from the Suez Canal. There is more business done between San Francisco and Tacoma and China and Japan than before we opened. But the trade between China and Japan and Canada and the United States, via the Suez Canal, has fallen off 75 per cent. since we opened. The business we do is not done at the expense of the American lines." On the contrary, competition had probably helped them by stirring them to greater activity. "I think the [trans-Pacific] traffic has doubled over any period before we opened."<sup>22</sup>

West-bound, the chief American exports carried by the Canadian steamers were flour and cotton goods. Little was said about

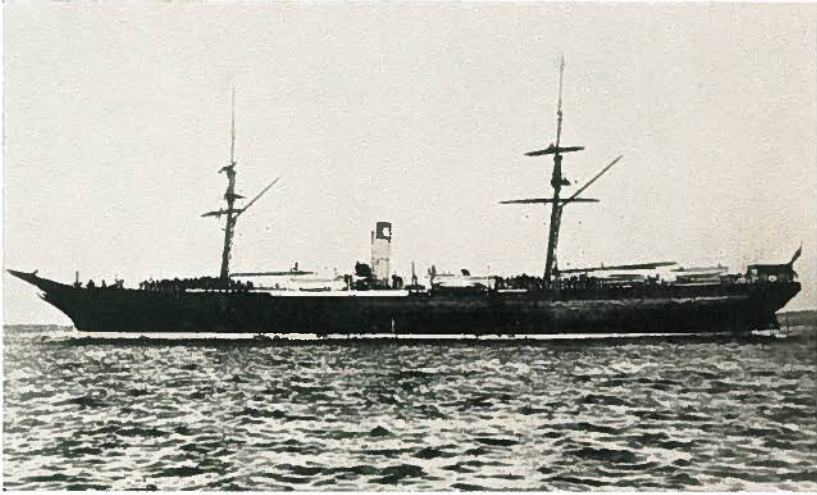
(19) *Congressional Record*, August 3, 1888.

(20) 51st Congress, 1st Session; Senate Report No. 847; May 2, 1890, 671 pp.

(21) *Ibid.*, p. 666. For the 11 months ended November 30, 1889, the figures were: raw silk, 790,791 lbs.; rice, 3,461,382 lbs.; tea, 8,600,500 lbs.

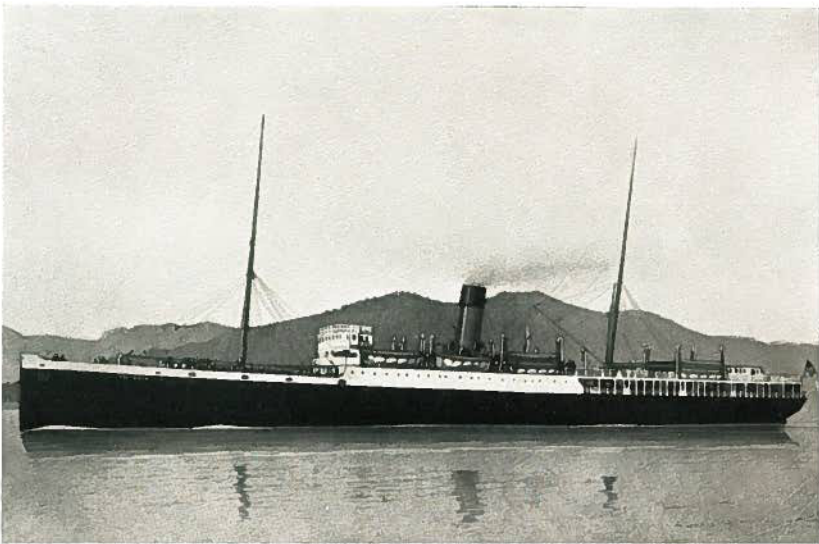
(22) *Ibid.*, p. 242.





(Photo courtesy Cunard Steam Ship Company.)

The *Batavia* as she appeared when in the Cunard service and when first in the Trans-Pacific service.



(Photo courtesy Alaska Steamship Company.)

The Alaska liner *Victoria*, formerly the *Parthia*, as she appears to-day.



(Photo by Notman, Montreal.)

Unloading tea from the *Parthia* at Vancouver.

the former, but careful attention was paid to the cotton trade. During the year ended June 30, 1888, it appeared that 4,660,168 pounds of cotton goods had been carried, and in the succeeding twelve months the total had jumped to 11,756,504 pounds.<sup>23</sup> In addition, heavy shipments of English cotton goods had been landed at Montreal and shipped thence to China. In defence of the Canadian Pacific, even American witnesses admitted that the cotton trade was a new development, and that the through rates and rapid transit the line could offer gave the Canadian route important advantages.

It appeared, in the final analysis, that it was the American railways, rather than the steamer lines, which lost traffic to the Canadian Pacific. It was true that the steamers no longer had a monopoly, but, in spite of competition, the traffic they handled had increased. On the other hand, the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific had been compelled to assign a definite share of the transcontinental freight originating in the Orient to the Canadian Pacific. It was estimated that of the total traffic Tacoma and the Northern Pacific Railway handled about 12 per cent., Vancouver and the Canadian Pacific about 27 per cent., and San Francisco and the southern lines about 60 per cent.<sup>24</sup>

Great interest was taken in Vancouver in the arrival and departure of the trans-Pacific steamers; and fairly complete traffic statistics can be compiled from the newspapers. The cargoes carried on fifteen of nineteen inward voyages in 1888 totalled 32,401 tons measurement; and assuming that the average size of the unrecorded cargoes was the same as those on record,<sup>25</sup> the total for the year was approximately 41,000 tons. Cargo carried outward on thirteen voyages totalled 17,721 tons, or about 24,500 tons in the twelve months. Applying this method to other figures available, it is possible to arrive at the following totals:—

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(23) *Ibid.*, p. 665.

(24) *Ibid.*, p. 361.

(25) This would appear to be a legitimate assumption, as it is clear that failure to note the size of the cargo was quite accidental and bore no relation to the season of the year or the size of individual cargoes.

## INWARD VOYAGES—TONS MEASUREMENT.

1888—15 recorded cargoes, 32,401 tons; 19 voyages (about), 41,000 tons.  
 1889—17 recorded cargoes, 32,350 tons; 18 voyages (about), 34,250 tons.  
 1890—17 recorded cargoes, 34,169 tons; 18 voyages (about), 36,000 tons.

## OUTWARD VOYAGES—TONS MEASUREMENT.

1888—13 recorded cargoes, 17,721 tons; 18 voyages (about), 24,500 tons.  
 1889—12 recorded cargoes, 16,674 tons; 18 voyages (about), 25,000 tons.  
 1890—10 recorded cargoes, 22,131 tons; 17 voyages (about), 37,600 tons.

It will be noted that the outward cargoes are less carefully recorded, and less reliance can therefore be placed upon the annual estimates given. The estimate of 37,600 tons for 1890 is probably high; but a number of heavy shipments were made that year, and on March 18 the *Abyssinia* sailed with a cargo of some 2,100 tons weight and 4,000 tons measurement, which broke the port record by a considerable margin. From the figures available it is evident that over the three-year period 1888–1890 the average inward cargo consisted of about 2,020 tons measurement, while outward cargoes averaged about 1,615 tons.

Passenger lists were usually noted for the inward voyages and the following totals appear to be substantially correct:—

|            | First Class. | Second Class. | Steerage. | Total. |
|------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|--------|
| 1887.....  | 220          | 13            | 361       | 594    |
| 1888*..... | 252          | 51            | 6,087†    | 6,390  |
| 1889.....  | 293          | 34            | 1,156     | 1,483  |
| 1890.....  | 279          | 39            | 1,947     | 2,265  |

\* Includes only seventeen of eighteen sailings, but figures lacking would be small.  
 † Mostly Chinese booked to San Francisco.

Outbound passenger lists were often not reported, and totals corresponding to those above cannot be given with any confidence. Generally speaking, the volume of travel to the Orient seems to have been only slightly lower than that east-bound, except in the exceptional year 1888, when thousands of Chinese were carried to San Francisco.

The Canadian Pacific was satisfied with the freight traffic, but it hoped for greater things from the passenger trade. "The freight traffic to and from China and Japan continues to increase," the Directors reported early in 1889, "but the steamships forming the present temporary line on the Pacific have accom-

modation for very few passengers, and the passenger business in that direction, which should afford to the railway far greater profit than the freight, is consequently limited."<sup>26</sup> The truth was that after the first burst of interest in the new route had subsided, the old Cunarders found it difficult to compete with more modern steamers on other routes. Though their accommodation was enlarged and improved from time to time, and they acquired a reputation for cleanliness and courteous service, their design remained cramped and antiquated. Quite as serious, it proved almost impossible to keep them up to time; and again and again it was necessary to cancel schedules and revise sailings. There is significance as well as humour in an incident recorded by a traveller who sailed in 1888 from Vancouver: "Nobody ever knows to an hour or so, just when a China steamer means to depart, and we had heard the farewell whistle so frequently before, that it did not in the least occur to us, as we lingered in town buying blue veils and pickled olives for the voyage, that she could be blowing it five times for us. It is an original experience to be hunted up by an angry emissary in a cab, [and] to be driven down post haste through the rain to the docks . . ." <sup>27</sup>

What was required to attract and develop the passenger trade was a fast, reliable service performed by comfortable modern steamers; and the long-delayed signing of a mail contract with the Imperial Government in July, 1889, at last made it possible for the Canadian Pacific to build the necessary liners. The contract called for a monthly service from Vancouver to Yokohama, Shanghai and Hong Kong, to be performed by steamers built to specifications approved by the Admiralty and capable of a sustained sea speed of at least 16 knots. In return the Company was to receive an annual subsidy of £60,000, of which £15,000 was provided by the Canadian Government. The Canadian Pacific went ahead with its plans at once, and early in October three steamers were ordered from the Naval Construction and Armaments Company of Barrow, England. It is ironical to note that preliminary arrangements for a fast Atlantic line to Canada, the completion of which had induced the British Government to sign the Canadian Pacific contract, collapsed only a few days later.

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(26) *Annual Report, Canadian Pacific Railway, 1888*, p. 12.

(27) *News-Advertiser*, December 29, 1888.

There were eighteen sailings from Vancouver in 1889, of which fourteen were taken by the regular liners. In addition, the steamers *Port Augusta* and *Port Fairy* each made two voyages. Early in January word arrived that Sir William Pearce, virtual owner of the service, had died on December 18; and a blue streak was painted forthwith on the sides of the *Parthia*, which was in port at the time, as a sign of mourning.<sup>28</sup> Rumour was busy during the year with reports of new trans-Pacific services. In February one of the managers of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha visited Vancouver and inferred that the Company might enter the trade. In June it was announced that the P. & O. Line had completed arrangements for a service to San Diego which would connect with the Santa Fé Railway. The diversion of trade from the Suez Canal to the Canadian Pacific had been accomplished partly at the expense of the P. & O., and such a move would not have been surprising. More was heard of the proposal at various times, but in the end it came to nothing. Late in 1889 the Canadian Pacific was faced with an unexpected crisis, due to the fact that its new steamers were to be built by the Naval Construction Company. The Elder yard, which had by then developed into the Fairfield Shipbuilding & Engineering Company, had expected to receive the contract, and threatened to withdraw the *Abyssinia*, *Parthia*, and *Batavia* at the end of November, when the current running agreement with the railway expired; but tempers cooled rapidly and the service continued without interruption.<sup>29</sup>

The Pacific Mail remained the chief competitor of the Canadian Pacific, and early in 1890 another clash between the two was impending. Though none of its trans-Pacific steamers had called at San Francisco since 1888, the Canadian Pacific had placed the smaller *Danube* in the coastal trade in August of that

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(28) *Vancouver World*, January 18, 1889.

(29) There would appear to be a story behind the scenes in this connection, for as early as November, 1887, Van Horne announced in Vancouver that "three grand new steamers" had been ordered for the trans-Pacific trade from the Fairfield Yard. See *News-Advertiser*, December 1, December 23, 1887. Incidentally, all four of the *Empress* liners at present running to the Orient were built by Fairfield.

year.<sup>30</sup> She was used chiefly to bring flour from Portland, but upon occasion ventured farther south. The Pacific Mail prepared for eventualities by building the new liner *China*, which entered service in November, 1889. She was built by the Fairfield Company, at a cost of \$826,000, and was the finest trans-Pacific steamer of her day. Early in 1890 it became known that the Pacific Mail was negotiating with the Northern Pacific Railway regarding a service from Tacoma to the Orient; and with this scheme in the air it was not surprising that when its traffic agreement with the Canadian Pacific expired, a rate war followed. Upon this occasion it was the Pacific Mail which took the initiative and instructed its steamers to call at Victoria. The first to arrive was the new *China*, which anchored off the outer wharf on August 2, picked up six passengers, and proceeded to the Orient. A few days later the inbound *City of Peking* called and landed 108 passengers; but by the time she reached San Francisco the rival lines had patched up their differences. A belated call by the *City of Rio de Janeiro* in September brought the episode to a close, for little more was heard of the Tacoma project.

Extra steamers were again required in 1890 to handle the growing trade between the Orient and Vancouver. The *Sussex* made one trip and the *Straits of Belle Isle* two. The latter struck the wharf when docking at Vancouver in August, but no great damage was done. This was one of only three minor mishaps suffered by ships of the line in its pioneer days. In November the *Abyssinia* touched bottom in the Narrows, but a diver found her to be unharmed, except for a slightly bent propeller. An amusing controversy followed as to whether or not she had struck a water-main, which had been crushed mysteriously the day she sailed. The third mishap occurred to the *Batavia*. When making a special trip to Portland she grounded in the Willamette River, but was refloated undamaged. In May, 1890, the *Abyssinia* arrived from the Orient with the Duke and Duchess of Connaught on board, and received a royal welcome both at

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(30) In September, 1890, the *Mongkut* arrived from China to replace the *Danube*, which had been purchased by the Canadian Pacific Navigation Co. Early in 1891 the Canadian Pacific Railway withdrew from the coast trade and the Portland flour shipments were handled thereafter by the Union Steamship Company.

Victoria, where she made a special call, and Vancouver. In November of the same year the *Abyssinia* brought the first shipment of raw sugar for the new refinery at Vancouver, which was due to commence operations a month later.

Meanwhile the construction of the new trans-Pacific steamers was proceeding in England; and on August 30, 1890, the first of the trio slid down the ways and was named *Empress of India*. By the end of the year she and her sister ships, the *Empress of Japan* and *Empress of China*, were nearing completion; and early in 1891 the old chartered liners began to drop out of the service. On January 28 the pioneer of the line, the *Abyssinia*, sailed from Vancouver for the seventeenth and last time. Ten days later, on February 8, her successor, the *Empress of India*, sailed from Liverpool on her maiden voyage, carrying a large party of round-the-world excursionists. Late in March the *Batavia* made her last Canadian Pacific sailing, which completed her fifteenth round trip in the service. With her departure the contract with the Fairfield interests expired; but the *Parthia* was retained under special charter pending the arrival of all three *Emperesses*. It is interesting to note that on this final crossing of the original schedule the *Batavia* carried a capacity cargo, and that her passengers included Captain Marshall, who had commanded the *Abyssinia* on her first voyage in 1887, and who had since become manager of the Guion Line, which operated the ships for the Fairfield Company.

The *Empress of India* arrived at Vancouver on April 28, 1891, after a fast maiden voyage which broke the Pacific record. She carried 131 first-class passengers and 355 Chinese—a list which must have gladdened the heart of Van Horne, who was on the wharf when she docked. Her arrival caused great excitement in Vancouver, but some present sensed that the occasion fell short of the arrival of the line's pioneer ship four years before. As the *News-Advertiser* remarked in an editorial, it was "impossible to bring about again an enthusiasm like that which found popular vent on that day in May [*sic*], in 1887, when a brief telegram to the *News-Advertiser* announced that the *Abyssinia* had passed Victoria and would arrive in Vancouver in a few hours. Then men felt that the period of suspense and difficulty which beset



the earlier months of the existence of the city was at an end.”<sup>31</sup> The *Abyssinia* had been a symbol, whereas the *Empress* was only a new and finer trans-Pacific liner.

The *Empress of Japan* reached Vancouver in June and the *Empress of China* followed in September. Chartered steamers were no longer required and on August 20 the *Parthia* sailed on her twentieth and last voyage for the Railway. She had been the most satisfactory of the three pioneers and had won a place in Vancouver's affections; and as she left the dock for the last time “a number of rockets were shot off as a last farewell.”<sup>32</sup>

The story of the *Empresses* is beyond the scope of this article; but the subsequent history of the three pioneer liners is worthy of record.

The *Abyssinia* loaded a cargo of tea at Hong Kong and carried it to London, where she arrived in September. She was then placed in the trans-Atlantic trade by the Guion Line. On December 13, 1891—a date of which the superstitious will take note—she sailed from New York for Liverpool, carrying fifty-six passengers and a crew of eighty. All went well until noon on the 18th, when the vessel took fire; and a few hours later flames broke through the deck and it became clear the ship was doomed. It appears to have been a model shipwreck. The life-boats were carefully provisioned and all aboard were given a substantial meal; and at the critical moment when it became necessary to abandon ship the North German Lloyd express liner *Spree* appeared and picked up the passengers and crew. All were landed safely at Southampton on December 22, having reached England several days before the slower *Abyssinia* was due.

Much longer careers lay ahead of the *Batavia* and *Parthia*. The former was first chartered by the Upton Line, which a Mr. Frank Upton established between Portland, Victoria, and the Orient in 1891. The *Batavia* made four round trips in this service, her last sailing from Victoria being on April 30, 1892. By that time the Upton Line was on the point of collapse, and it ceased operations in the course of the summer. The *Batavia* was only idle for a brief period, however, as a new trans-Pacific service with more substantial backing was organized in May.

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(31) *News-Advertiser*, April 28, 1891.

(32) *Ibid.*, August 21, 1891.

This was the Northern Pacific Steamship Company, which was managed by George B. Dodwell and his associates, who had previously operated the temporary service for the Canadian Pacific. Despite its name, it was neither owned nor controlled by the Northern Pacific Railway, though it connected with the latter at Tacoma and had traffic agreements with it. The *Batavia* was taken over immediately by the new line and called at Victoria on her first inward voyage on July 6. Dodwell also arranged to place the *Parthia* on the run. Like the *Abyssinia*, she had been sent to Great Britain; but instead of being placed in the Atlantic trade she was turned over to the Fairfield yard to be extensively rebuilt and modernized. Finally, when it was arranged that she was to enter the Northern Pacific service, she was renamed *Victoria*, with the result that she received an official welcome when she called at the city of that name for the first time on September 19. Meanwhile the *Batavia* had been taken in hand and refitted at Hong Kong; and in December, 1892, she made her first voyage under the new name of *Tacoma*.

The *Victoria* and *Tacoma* continued in regular service to the Orient for the next six years. Then in October, 1898, they were transferred from British to United States registry; and in 1899 were requisitioned as transports during the Spanish-American War. In September the *Victoria* sailed from Tacoma with horses, bound for Manila by way of Dutch Harbor, Alaska, and Kobe. Late in November she sailed with a second load from Seattle; but over 200 of the 410 horses on board were lost in a storm and she was forced back to port. She made her third and last trip as a transport from San Francisco in December, and was turned back to her owners in March, 1900. A few months later the Nome gold excitement took her off her regular run once again; and on June 7 she sailed from Seattle for Cape Nome with no less than 1,200 passengers. From Nome she proceeded to Yokohama and resumed her place in the trans-Pacific service.<sup>33</sup>

In 1901 the Northern Pacific Railway itself organized a new Northern Pacific Steamship Company, which later in the year purchased the *Victoria*, *Tacoma*, and other vessels. In 1902 ownership of the line was transferred to the Northwestern Im-

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(33) These details are from the log-books of James R. Meston, who was Engineer of the *Victoria* at the time.

provement Company, another Northern Pacific subsidiary. By this time it was clear that the steamers were too small to compete successfully in the trans-Pacific trade; and in February, 1904, they were sold to the Northwestern Commercial Company, of Seattle, of which John Rosene was President. The *Victoria* and *Tacoma* were placed on the Alaska run in June; and in August the *Victoria* sailed on a special excursion to Alaska and Siberia, where Rosene had mining interests.

War had broken out between Russia and Japan just before Rosene purchased the steamers; and even at the time it was said that it was his intention to use them as blockade runners between Alaskan and Russian ports.<sup>34</sup> Whether this was true or not is difficult to say; but the fact remains that the *Tacoma* was used eventually for this purpose. On January 3, 1905, she sailed from Seattle with a cargo of corned beef, under the command of Captain Connaughton. Ostensibly her destination was Shanghai; but January 14 found her coaling at Dutch Harbor, and on February 3 she was caught in the ice in the Sea of Okhotsk. She was soon observed by the Japanese; and on March 14, when she managed to work clear of the ice, was boarded by the cruiser *Takachiho*, which escorted her first to Hakodate for coal and then to Yokohama, where she was formally taken over as a prize and placed under the Japanese flag on March 29.<sup>35</sup> It is said that she was used for a time as a training-ship; but she spent most of her later years in the Japanese and Chinese coasting trade under the name of *Shikotan Maru*. In October, 1924, she ran ashore while carrying coal from Tsingtau to Shanghai; and though she was subsequently refloated, she was broken up soon after.<sup>36</sup> So ended her long and eventful career of some fifty-five years.

Meanwhile the *Victoria* continued in the Alaska trade. In 1908 the Northwestern Steamship Company was merged with the Alaska Steamship Company, under the latter name, and the *Victoria* has flown its house flag ever since. Her regular run is to Nome, and she is usually the first ship to reach that port in spring and the last to leave in the autumn. Her passenger ac-

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(34) See, for example, *Pacific Marine Review*, April, 1904, p. 22.

(35) From the diary of Marshall McGinitie, who was on board.

(36) From the records of Lloyd's Register of Shipping, London.

commodation has been rebuilt, but her staunch old iron hull is as sound as ever, though it has been reinforced to enable her to cope with the ice she occasionally encounters in the far north.

During the maritime strike of 1936-37 the *Victoria* was for several months tied up at a pier in Vancouver Harbour; but few persons recalled that she was the old *Parthia*, or that she had once been known as the Pacific flyer. Once a fortnight the Harbour watched with pride as one of her proud successors sailed for the Orient; yet it is certain that none of the great liners of to-day will attain to her ripe old age, and none will surpass her amazing record of useful service.

W. KAYE LAMB.

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## BILLY BARKER OF BARKERVILLE.

Beyond the fact that he was a Cornishman, had been a pottery-worker in the Old Country, and had spent some years at sea before he became a miner in British Columbia, very little is known about William (Billy) Barker, after whom the town of Barkerville, in Cariboo, is named.

At what port Barker left his ship is not known. He joined in the rush to the Fraser River in 1858 and apparently reached Williams Creek early in 1862. Apparently, too, he staked the first "Barker" claim several weeks prior to the first entry in the Williams Creek record-book, now in the Provincial Archives, Victoria, which gives the date as August 13, 1862. The rush to Williams Creek commenced in 1861, following "Dutch" Bill Dietz's discovery of good "pay" above the canyon.

The lead was struck in the Barker about August 21, according to an entry in the diary of Bishop Hills, who made a trip from Victoria to Cariboo in the summer of 1862. This entry, which is characteristically brief, reads: "When lead struck on Barker's claim, about August 21st, all went on spree for several days, except one Englishman, well brought up."

There were seven Englishmen in the original Barker claim, each holding a full interest of 100 feet. Their names and free miners' certificate numbers, listed in the following order, were: W. Barker, 7751; H. P. Walker, 9164; C. Hankin, 272C; R. Dexter, 207C; H. Gabel, 873D; A. Anderson, 874C; and G. Hankin, 9815.

Bob Dexter was foreman of the Barker Company and Charles Hankin secretary. The seven Englishmen, headed by Billy Barker, erected the first building—a rough, log-walled shaft-house—on Williams Creek below the canyon. All mining, prior to Barker's strike, was confined to the upper part of the creek, above the canyon—a narrow, rock-walled gulch, perhaps 500 yards in length, which separated Upper Williams Creek and the town of Richfield (which has now almost entirely disappeared) and the lower portion of the stream. Jack Buie built the second log structure, to be used as a store, just across the narrow street and a little below the Barker shaft-house. Around these two

buildings grew the town of Barkerville, which, a year later, boasted a floating population of 10,000.

Drinking was the prescribed method employed to give expression to feelings of joy in those early days; and it was to the Richfield saloons, a mile up-stream, that English Bill Barker and his partners hid themselves to celebrate their strike. Barker was a free spender; and there is little doubt that he and his partners (with the possible exception of the one who was well brought up!) put on a celebration which was not confined to the saloons of Richfield. Those of Grouse Creek Town and Antler Town, 5 and 10 miles distant, respectively, would have reaped some of the reward of the Englishmen's new-found wealth.

Barker and his company received little encouragement from contemporary miners up-stream. And there were many times, according to reports which have been handed down, when Barker was sorely tempted to discontinue his shaft-sinking operations. But he was a stubborn man and refused to give in, despite the lack of funds which harassed the company for weeks before the strike was made.

Bill Brown, permanent resident of Barkerville since 1872, who knew Barker well, claims that the company would have been forced to quit sinking had Barker not received financial assistance from Judge Begbie. Bill Brown states that when asked about this afterwards the Judge explained that he let the Barker company have funds to continue sinking their shaft because, in his opinion, financing them would be less expensive than to pay their way out of the country. All seven Englishmen were broke. After they struck it, Barker offered Begbie an interest; but because of his position he refused it. It was pretty generally understood on Williams Creek, however, that the Barker company reimbursed the Colonial Government in gold for the help they had received through Judge Begbie.

Billy Barker's share—unofficial records credit the Barker with a production of \$600,000—did not last him long. He spent the winter of 1862-63 in Victoria, and it was there that he met and on January 13, 1863, married Elizabeth Collyer, a London widow. Along with a number of other women, some of whom later became the wives of lonely Cariboo miners, Mrs. Collyer had reached Victoria aboard the sailing-ship *Rosedale*, which

struck Race Rocks when nearing port on December 12, 1862, and was beached at Ross Bay in a sinking condition.

Barker, who is described as a man of less than average height, stout with heavy body, short, slightly bowed legs, was 42 years of age at the time of his marriage. His face was partially hidden beneath a bushy black beard, plentifully streaked with grey.

He found that he had let himself in for a lot of trouble when he landed back on Williams Creek, in the early spring of 1863, with a woman who, in the evenings, preferred a gay time with the boys to the companionship of a bushy-bearded miner in a log cabin, sitting before a rough stone fireplace in his stockinged feet. With two to three hundred young men to every woman, Billy Barker soon became a freer spender than ever in an effort to hold a place in the London widow's affections.

Barker had a habit, when entering a saloon, particularly after taking a few drinks, of performing a little step dance and singing out at the same time:—

“ I'm English Bill,  
Never worked, an' never will.  
Get away girls,  
Or I'll tousle your curls.”

At other times he would shuffle a few steps and call out some of his favourite sayings, which were: “ Blue clay, an' the bedrock pitchin'; sulphides of iron, cows' tongues, an' black sand in the pan.” Any one of these was a good indication in a prospecting-shaft; but a combination of them was almost a sure thing. Cows' tongues, of course, meant well-washed stones, all lying at a certain angle, like those in the bed of a flowing stream.

Barkerville, Richfield, and Camerontown—which sprang up in 1863–64 around John A. “ Cariboo ” Cameron's claims a half-mile down-stream—were plentifully supplied with saloons, and it was not long before Billy Barker's money was gone. And with it the woman!

But not all of Barker's gold was pushed in pokes across the polished bars of Williams Creek saloons. He was free with his money in other ways; loaned out a lot of it, and grub-staked many prospectors to work claims which he knew at the time were hopeless.

By the time the Barker claim was worked out—late in the fall of 1866, according to James Buie Leighton, who, as a boy of 14, reached Williams Creek in the summer of 1865—Billy Barker was broke. But this did not worry him a great deal. He had been in that condition many times, and there were other “Barker” claims on the creek. Prospect-shafts sunk in various places over a three-year period convinced him, however, that paying claims were not so easily found.

In November, 1869, he was reported to have struck a good prospect in a shaft he was sinking on the hill sloping toward Valley Creek, close to the Prairie Flower's ditch, which he called “Barker No. 2.” It had long been believed that the ancient channel, to which French, Canadian, Grouse, and Antler Creeks were tributaries, took its course along the section bordering on Valley Creek.

Apparently the prospect petered out, for in less than two months Barker had started to sink a shaft on the left side of Williams Creek, near the Cariboo claim. This, too, proved a failure and Barker was now not only flat broke, but heavily in debt as well. In an effort to recover some of the proceeds of the Barker No. 1, which he had loaned, he resorted to the law.

One particular debtor, who had owed him a considerable sum over a long period, was ordered by the Court to pay up or go to gaol. He preferred gaol.

In those days one could be put in gaol for debt; but the plaintiff had to pay for the defendant's board and lodging during the period of his incarceration. Barker paid this man's expenses for several months, until further financial difficulties finally forced him to discontinue the support of his prisoner.

Pursued by ill luck and abandoning hope of a second bonanza, Barker sought a grub-stake on Poorman's Creek, a tributary of Lightning, midway between Beaver Pass and Stanley. This stream was known and recognized as a “grub-stake” creek on which down-and-outers could work ground which, at the moment, remained unoccupied.

There, with George Munroe, Cy Roe, and Frank Orr as partners, he worked for a time. But his bad luck held. Cy Roe



became ill and was sent to the hospital in Barkerville, where he died shortly afterwards. And a few days later, in an abandoned cabin below Barkerville, they found the body of Frank Orr. A partly-filled bottle of cyanide stood on a table near the bed and alongside it a note, which read: "I can't live without Cy." The two had been inseparable companions for half a lifetime.

But the grim reaper remained unsatiated. George Munroe was the next to go. Death claimed him suddenly one day as he stood talking to a friend on the road between Stanley and Van Winkle.

For some little time before Barker left Poorman's Creek (now called Donovan) for the lower country to earn a frugal living by working as cook on the government road, a sore appeared on his lower lip. This refused to heal and later developed into cancer.

Broken physically and financially, Billy Barker died in the Old Men's Home, Victoria, on July 11, 1894.

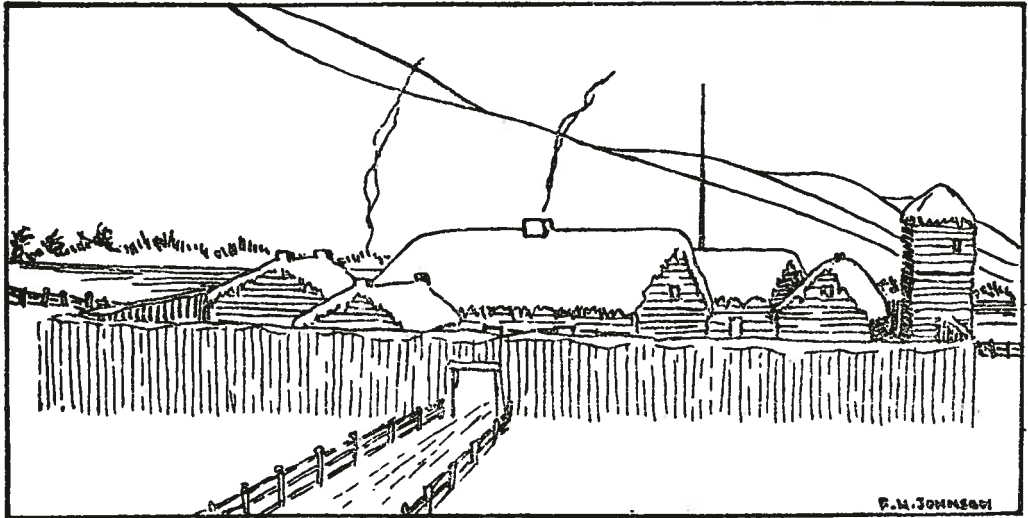
Not more than 200 words were used by Victoria newspapers in an obituary to a man who had brought fortunes to scores of men on Williams Creek in the years which followed Bill Barker's strike. The press of the time made mention of the fact that "in partnership with the late Bob Dexter, Barker's profits, for a few months ran into thousands of dollars a day," and then proceeded to reprove the dead adventurer for being so free with his money that he failed to save anything for his declining years.

No mention was made of the good which was accomplished by the money that Barker and his partners recovered from the bed-rock of Williams Creek and freely spent, or lent to their less fortunate contemporaries. It was gold from the first "Barker" that financed "Cariboo" Cameron's trip from Williams Creek to Victoria when he took out the body of Sophia, his wife, who died at Richfield on October 23, 1862. Fifty pounds of the yellow metal were loaned to Cameron by Charlie Hankin, a member of the original Barker company. It was with part of this gold that Cameron purchased additional interests on Williams Creek in the vicinity of the Cameron claim; interests which helped swell the fortune in gold which was loaded on pack-horses when he left Barkerville in October, 1863.

August of this year will mark the 75th anniversary of Bill Barker's strike which started the town of Barkerville, a log-and-frame-building metropolis which, in 1862-63, drew men and women from every part of the civilized globe.

LOUIS LEBOURDAIS.

QUESNEL, B.C.



Fort Kamloops about 1850.  
(Drawn from an old painting in the Provincial Archives.)

## FUR-TRADING DAYS AT KAMLOOPS.

This summer the City of Kamloops is celebrating its 125th anniversary. In doing so it recalls the days of its infancy as an American fur-trading post. It was in 1811 that the first white man penetrated to the Thompson country in the person of David Stuart, from the Pacific Fur Company's post at Astoria; and in the following spring came his colleague, Alexander Ross. Trading possibilities amongst the Shuswap Indians appeared so promising that Stuart returned in August, 1812, and founded a regular fur post at the point the natives called Cumcloups ("the meeting of the waters"), at the junction of the North and South Thompson Rivers. The exact site of this post is in some doubt, but from the testimony of old Indians it appears to have been located on the south bank of the South Thompson, where Kamloops stands to-day.

Hard on the heels of the American traders came their British rivals, the North West Company. A party of Nor'Westers under Joseph Laroque arrived at Kamloops this same summer of 1812 and erected another post, across the South Thompson from the

Astorians. In November, 1813, the North West Company bought out the Pacific Fur Company and Kamloops became exclusively a North West fort. It so remained until the union of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies in 1821, when it first flew the initialled flag of the Company of Gentlemen Adventurers.

Judging from the account of Alexander Ross, trading in the Thompson country got off to an auspicious start. Stuart had reported that the natives "were numerous and well disposed," and that the area abounded "in beavers and all other kinds of fur."<sup>1</sup> Not less than 2,000 Indians collected when Ross himself first visited Kamloops in 1812. "Not expecting to see so many," he records, "I had taken but a small quantity of goods with me; nevertheless, we loaded all our horses—so anxious were they to trade, and so fond of tobacco, that one morning before breakfast I obtained one hundred and ten beavers for leaf-tobacco, at the rate of five leaves per skin; and at last, when I had but one yard of white cotton remaining, one of the chiefs gave me twenty prime beaver skins for it."<sup>2</sup>

There are few records of the trade at Kamloops under the North West Company. Archibald McDonald, the Chief Trader in charge of Fort Kamloops in 1827, in reporting on the trade of the post, wrote: "Thompson's River has been Established since 1811 [*sic*] and I believe from that time the trade increased annually to the 2d Year of the Hudson's Bay Company [i.e., 1822] . . . From 1817 to 1822 the returns rose from 1600 to 2900 [beaver] . . ."<sup>3</sup> The only other figures available are given in a letter to Governor Simpson from Chief Trader Lewes, from which we gather that in 1820 the returns had totalled 1,800 beaver, and in 1821 had risen to 2,400.<sup>4</sup>

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(1) Alexander Ross: *Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River*, London, 1849, p. 151.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 200.

(3) H.B. Archives, B 97/4/1. Besides the various spellings, Kameloops, Kamaloops, and Cumcloups, the post was also known as Fort Thompson or Thompson's River. In the late fifties Kamloops became the standardized name. Extracts from documents in the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company incorporated in this article are published by kind permission of the Governor and Committee of the Company.

(4) For this letter see Frederick Merk: *Fur Trade and Empire*, Cambridge, Mass., 1931, p. 177.

This was a promising beginning; but owing to its geographical position the future of Kamloops was bound up in a larger issue than its own trade returns. The post served as a link between the two great fur-trading areas west of the Rocky Mountains—New Caledonia, which corresponded roughly to what is now termed the Northern Interior, to the north; and the Columbia District, which centred upon the lower valley of the Columbia River, to the south. The North West Company had never been able to make a profit from the trade of the Columbia region, and after 1821 the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company seriously considered abandoning the whole district, in spite of the fact that to do so would be to concede the lower Columbia basin to the United States. They were naturally unwilling to take so drastic a step without investigating the whole situation thoroughly; and it was for this purpose that Governor Simpson made his celebrated journey across the continent in 1824. He arrived determined to make every effort to retain the Columbia District and rehabilitate the fur trade there; and to achieve this end he was prepared to enforce the strictest economy, to reduce personnel to the utmost, and, if necessary, to abandon certain posts.

It seems clear that Simpson arrived strongly inclined, if not actually determined, to abandon Kamloops. The evidence available seemed to indicate that that would be the wise course. To begin with, the trade returns from Kamloops and its outpost, Fort Okanagan, had declined rapidly from the peak reached in 1822. The number of beaver-skins secured in the next few years was as follows:—

|      | Thompson's<br>River. | Fort Okanagan. | Total.             |
|------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1822 | 2,251                | 695            | 2,946              |
| 1823 | 1,625                | 584            | 2,209              |
| 1824 | 1,584                | 577            | 2,161              |
| 1825 | 882                  | 512            | 1,394 <sup>5</sup> |

In the second place, the number and unreliable character of the natives in the Kamloops area made it necessary to maintain a larger staff there than the extent of the trade warranted; and it seemed to Simpson that to close the post would be an excellent

(5) H.B. Archives, B 97/4/1.

means both of reducing expenses and bringing the Indians to time, always providing that most of their furs could be diverted to other trading centres. While at Jaspers House, on his way westward, he recorded in his journal his desire to draw the Shuswaps, "or natives of the North branch of Thompsons River to the Mountain [i.e., to Rocky Mountain House, in Athabasca Pass] from the Establishment of Kamloops or Thompsons River which they have hitherto frequented as that Post on account of the heavy Establishment of people required for the purpose of defence yields little or no profit so that it is desirable we should abandon it; by this change a few Packs Furs may be lost (the hunts of the Natives occupying the South branch of Thompsons River) but that deficiency in the returns will ultimately indeed immediately prove a gain as the people can be employed to greater advantage in other parts of the Columbia, and the absence of a Post will in the course of a year or two humble the Natives and ensure its safety when re-established at one half of the present expence."<sup>6</sup>

Indian troubles were already a familiar story at Kamloops. As early as 1815 a Nor-Wester named Charette, in temporary charge of the post, had been shot and killed by a young Indian.<sup>7</sup> In 1822 Chief Trader John McLeod, who had just arrived at Kamloops, found himself in a dangerous situation amidst warring tribes following the murder of a noted Indian chief.<sup>8</sup> Inter-tribal clashes caused anxiety and interfered with trade upon many subsequent occasions; and as late as January, 1859, Chief Factor Donald McLean complained of such a problem in a letter to James Douglas. "Furs are not coming in so plentifully as could be wished owing to a feud among the Aboriginies [*sic*] which renders each party fearful of hunting at any distance from their respective Villages," McLean wrote. "I am however in good

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(6) Merk, *op. cit.* pp. 30-31.

(7) Alexander Ross: *The Fur Hunters of the Far West*, London, 1855, Vol. I., p. 61.

(8) See *Journals and Correspondence of John McLeod, Senior . . . from 1812-1844*. Copied from the originals in the Dominion Government Archives by R. E. Gosnell [Typewritten; in Archives of B.C.], pp. 8-9. (Cited hereafter as *McLeod Correspondence*.)

hopes of making them agree to a general peace for the winter at all events."<sup>9</sup>

One other factor had a bearing upon the future of Kamloops. Simpson hoped to transfer the Coast headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company from the mouth of the Columbia to that of the Fraser, and to make the latter river the great trade route to the Interior—a change which would have placed Thompson's River far off the beaten path. Through some combination of circumstances Simpson had neither seen Simon Fraser nor John Stuart, nor had he read Fraser's journal. He was still ignorant of the character of the Fraser Canyon, and was under the impression that the Fraser was, to quote his own words, "a fine large deep navigable River," which had been "formed by nature as the grand communication with all our Establishments on this side the mountain."<sup>10</sup>

When Simpson had crossed the Rockies the news which greeted him only served to confirm his poor opinion of Kamloops. "The returns of Thompsons River," he wrote to John McLeod from Fort Okanagan, "I am concerned and surprised to learn have fallen off while at the same time the expences are considerably increased within the last year or two . . . I however sincerely trust things will assume an improved appearance next spring:— if its affairs do not look better, my opinion as also that of Messrs McLoughlin, McMillan & Ogden is that it should be abandoned as 1700 Beaver will do little more than cover the interest on the capital employed, whereas in many other parts of the Country it can be turned to much greater advantage." He went on to say that he was reducing the personnel of the post from 21 to 18 and that its ultimate fate would be decided in the course of the winter. Meantime McLeod was instructed "to make the necessary arrangements for abandoning it by removing every valuable article in Spring in case it may be deemed expedient to adopt the latter measure."<sup>11</sup>

Simpson's thrifty soul was shocked at the expense of maintaining the posts in the Columbia region. He complained that

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(9) Donald McLean to James Douglas, January 10, 1859 (Archives of B.C.).

(10) Merk, *op. cit.*, pp. 75, 76.

(11) *Ibid.*, pp. 246–247.

everything there was on too grand a scale "except the Trade" and roundly denounced the lavish importation of "Eatables Drinkables & Luxuries" which he uncovered. He was convinced that most of the posts could exist upon the resources of the country itself, Thompson's River included. "In regard to Provisions and Luxuries," he noted in his journal, "not one oz. is required for this place beyond the established allowance as excellent fish can be got in abundance with little cost or trouble, and at merely the expense of a little ammunition the table of the Gentleman in charge can be occasionally supplied with Game."<sup>12</sup>

After spending the winter of 1824-25 at Fort George (Astoria) and becoming thoroughly conversant with trading conditions in the Columbia region generally, Simpson arrived at two conclusions. The first of these was that, properly developed and managed, the Columbia District could be made to pay handsomely. The second was that New Caledonia, which had hitherto received its supplies from and shipped its furs to the East, should be linked instead with the Columbia District. In other words, the whole area west of the Rockies should be dealt with as a unit.

The latter decision had a vital bearing upon the future of Kamloops. Simpson still hoped to use the Fraser as a trade route; but in the meantime its geographical location made the post a natural and necessary half-way house between the Columbia District and New Caledonia. Though its personnel was reduced to a chief trader, one clerk, and twelve men (two of whom were stationed at its outpost, Fort Okanagan), there was no further talk of abandoning it. Simpson had the courage to reverse a decision and he now planned to abandon Rocky Mountain House instead.<sup>13</sup> He even had hopes of rehabilitating the Thompson River trade; and as he had a singularly poor opinion of John McLeod, appointed Chief Trader Archibald McDonald to Fort Kamloops in 1825.

During the next few years the number of beaver traded at Kamloops continued to decline. The returns fell from 1,394 in 1825 to 1,042 in 1826, rose to 1,290 in 1827, but declined again to

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(12) *Ibid.*, p. 52.

(13) *Ibid.*, p. 147.



1,105 in 1828.<sup>14</sup> At the same time the profits of the post increased from approximately £1,000 in 1825 to £1,100 in 1826 and £1,300 in 1827.<sup>15</sup> We may assume from this that the new regime of rigid economy was having its effect. But there was an additional reason for the better financial showing—a great increase in the number of martens traded. Archibald McDonald, reporting on the trade of the Thompson area in 1827, wrote: “For this sudden falling off [in beaver skins], there is no other pheasable way of accounting, than the Beaver run on the verge of extermination, which the natives themselves observe, & not only deprecate this loss, but the rapid disappearance of the wood animals also.—Within these two Years they are [word indecipherable] to hunt Small furs: and from whatever cause the 400 Martens procured this year are more than have been traded in the District collectively since its first Establishment . . .”<sup>16</sup>

In 1828, in the course of his second western tour, Governor Simpson actually visited Kamloops and in his report to the Governor and Committee in London seemed more sympathetic toward the Thompson traders. He was now aware of the difficult nature of the country. “Generally speaking,” he reported, “the country is poor both in large and Fur bearing animals, of the former, we merely saw a few Deer tracks, of small animals none, and many of the Lakes being impregnated with Salt and Sulphur, and the small Streams being frequently dried up in Summer, there are only a few detached spots favorable to the rearing of Beaver.”<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless he again complained that Kamloops was “a very unprofitable Establishment” and that “the people could be employed to more advantage elsewhere,” were the post not an essential divisional point on the brigade route from the Columbia northward to New Caledonia.<sup>18</sup> That it was such a point this same tour made clear; for Simpson travelled by way of the Fraser River and saw for himself the hopelessness of using it as the highway into the Interior. Thenceforth the pack-train route

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(14) *Columbia District and New Caledonia Fur Trade Returns* (MS. in Archives of B.C.).

(15) H.B. Archives, D. 4/93. f. 29–31.

(16) H.B. Archives, B. 97/4/1.

(17) H.B. Archives, D. 4/93. f. 29–31.

(18) *Ibid.*

from Fort Alexandria, on the Fraser, to Kamloops and on to Fort Okanagan, on the Columbia, was regarded as a permanent line of communication; and it so remained until after the boundary settlement of 1846, when the brigades sought a new route, after leaving Kamloops, which would lie entirely within British territory.

Simpson's dismal description of the Thompson country is echoed again and again in the early correspondence of the fur-traders, and is usually accompanied by accounts of starving Indians. Francis Ermatinger, who succeeded Archibald McDonald at Kamloops, wrote thus to John McLeod in 1829: "The charge of Thompsons River devolved upon me aided by Mr. [Thomas] Dears and the misery we have had is unprecedented. The natives all round us, are actually in such a state of starvation, that it is impossible they can survive. Some are already dead, and we were obliged to send 7 of our men to the sea for the winter."<sup>19</sup> The Company had ceased to expect much from Kamloops. "Your old post Thompsons River seems determined to remain in the background," James Douglas informed McLeod in 1832. "I believe its resources are exhausted, or perhaps Langley and Colville have a share of the trade which in your time it exclusively enjoyed."<sup>20</sup> Accounts varied little in later years. "I am Sorry to State that this has been a very hard year at Thompsons River," Chief Trader Paul Fraser, then in charge at Kamloops, wrote in 1852, "the total want of food amongst the Natives has led to dreadful privation & suffering amongst the poor Indians . . ." He considered himself fortunate to be able to report that the returns would equal those of the previous year.<sup>21</sup> "The Indians are suffering from Starvation," Chief Factor Donald McLean wrote to Douglas in 1859, "God only knows what will eventually be the fate of the poor Aborigines if there should be no salmon again this Year. This winter has caused them to eat up nearly all the horses they had and many are reduced to eat any offals chance may throw in their way indeed I am afraid of poisoning bates for the Wolves fearing that the starving

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(19) *McLeod Correspondence*, p. 117.

(20) *Ibid.*, p. 150.

(21) Paul Fraser to Eden Colville, March 26, 1852 (H.B. Archives, B. 235/c/1.).

Indians might be induced by hunger to the eating of them the baits."<sup>22</sup> Numerous entries in the fort journals record the misery and periodical starvation the natives suffered as a result of a severe winter or failure of the salmon fishery.

Kamloops never seems to have been considered either a particularly safe or attractive post. It was permitted to fall into decay repeatedly, and time and again was the centre of more or less serious Indian troubles. It is even said to have been burned by the natives in 1826.<sup>23</sup> Early in 1841 Samuel Black was shot and killed by a savage while in his own quarters in the fort; and the post was at once deserted by the rest of the staff, who feared a general massacre. In March, news of the murder reached the redoubtable John Tod, then in charge of Fort Alexandria.<sup>24</sup> Tod was anxious to leave at once for Kamloops, but it was August before he actually arrived. He found the fort locked up and bearing unmistakable evidence of long neglect. "Men employed in clearing away the bushes and grass which have been allowed to shoot up time out of mind till it was quite impossible to discover the Fort at the distance of more than ten feet," he wrote on August 12. "Never in the whole course of my travels in this country have I beheld a place that exhibited a more complete picture of desolation than the present establishment of Kamloops. The buildings have apparently been long in a state of decay and notwithstanding the props by which they are supported are fast tottering to the ground."<sup>25</sup>

Tod organized a search for Black's murderer, and after the latter had been drowned while attempting to escape from custody he returned to Alexandria. August of 1842 found him back at Kamloops as Chief Trader in charge of the post; and he set to work at once to build a new fort on the west bank of the North Thompson. Work proceeded slowly, and the new post was not occupied until October 11, 1843. The Kamloops journal for that date reads as follows: "The last of the property was crossed

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(22) Donald McLean to James Douglas, February 23, 1859 (Archives of B.C.).

(23) William Kittson to John McLeod, March 8, 1827; *McLeod Correspondence*, p. 93.

(24) John Tod to Edward Ermatinger, March 1-2, 1841; *Ermatinger Papers*.

(25) *Thompsons River Journal*, August 12, 1841.

over at midday and shortly after I left the old Fort I hope for ever—indeed from the shocking catastrophe which once occurred there, it ought to have been abandoned long ago.”

The new fort did not entirely solve the Indian problem. At least two attempts to capture the post were frustrated cleverly by Tod, as recorded in the well-known account by Bancroft.<sup>26</sup> Nor did new buildings improve the trading prospects at Kamloops. “There appears to be no longer any prospect of either profit or pleasure here,” Tod wrote to Ermatinger in 1844, “a general scarcity of furs prevails at present all over the country, so that even a ready Market in China would in the present exhausted State of the Country, be of little or no advantage to us.”<sup>27</sup> The forties were, indeed, a discouraging period for the fur traders at Kamloops, as the following returns indicate:—

|      | Beaver. <sup>28</sup> | Marten. <sup>28</sup> | Profit. <sup>29</sup> |
|------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1843 | 300                   | 784                   | £582                  |
| 1844 | 194                   | 1,182                 | 867                   |
| 1845 | 248                   | 1,610                 | 985                   |
| 1846 | 140                   | 2,446                 | 1,259                 |
| 1847 | 156                   | 1,773                 | 859                   |
| 1848 | 6                     | 637                   | 83                    |

It will be noted that the rise and fall in profits now corresponded roughly with the marten trade and not the beaver trade, so low had the latter fallen. The decline was to a degree general throughout the country; for in 1848 the beaver returns of all New Caledonia fell to the lowest point touched in a generation.

Conditions improved materially during the next few years. Because of the plentiful bunch-grass on the surrounding hills, Kamloops was entrusted with the raising of horses for the large pack-trains the trade required—the first recognition of the district as a fine stock-raising country. “Kamloops,” writes Malcolm McLeod, son of John McLeod, “was always the ‘capital’

(26) See Hubert Howe Bancroft: *History of British Columbia*, San Francisco, 1887, pp. 134–156.

(27) John Tod to Edward Ermatinger, March, 1844; *Ermatinger Papers*.

(28) *Columbia District and New Caledonia Fur Trade Returns* (MS. in Archives of B.C.).

(29) *Synopsis—Columbia Affairs* [by James Douglas] (MS. in Archives of B.C.). Totals given to the nearest pound.

of the Thompson's River District . . . I remember the old compact and well palisaded Fort, and the 'stockades' a little distance off, large enough for three or four hundred horses, for the horse brigades for transport of 'goods in' and 'returns out' for the District, and for New Caledonia, generally numbered about two hundred and fifty horses. A beautiful sight was that horse brigade, with no broken hacks in the train, but every animal in his full beauty of form and color, and all so tractable!—more tractable than anything I know of in civilized life."<sup>30</sup>

It appears that after 1850 it became difficult to procure horses from the Columbia District to supply the transportation needs of the Interior; and from 1852 on Kamloops became the horse-raising centre for the New Caledonia pack-trains. Writing from Kamloops in March, 1852, Paul Fraser was able to inform Eden Colville, Governor of Rupert's Land, "that last year and this, there has been Considerable Encrease of Colts than usual, and I have no doubt should the winters prove mild as the last one has been, but Thompsons River will be able in two years from this, to meet all reasonable demands in Horses."<sup>31</sup> Horse-raising was undertaken on a considerable scale; and a return given in the last pages of the fort journal for 1854-55 indicates that the post then possessed 342 mares, 75 year-old mares, 65 year-old horses, and 184 colts, or a total of 666 animals.

It was during these same years that farming became an important factor at Kamloops. In line with his policy of rigid economy, Simpson had been in favour of each post having a farm attached to it for the production of hay, cereals, vegetables, and such crops as would render them as nearly as possible self-sufficing in foods. In 1835, when Peter Skene Ogden became a Chief Factor and was appointed to the command of New Caledonia, he acted upon Simpson's suggestion; and under his instructions Samuel Black, then in charge of Kamloops, began farming there with a small potato-patch a couple of miles from the fort in the Schiedam Creek Valley. John Tod tells us that

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(30) *Peace River; a canoe voyage from Hudson's Bay to Pacific, by the late Sir George Simpson . . . edited, with notes, by Malcolm McLeod, Ottawa, 1872, p. 114.*

(31) Paul Fraser to Eden Colville, March 26, 1852 (H.B. Archives, B. 235/c/1.).

it produced well.<sup>32</sup> When Tod succeeded Black at Kamloops, he continued and expanded the farming activities. Besides Black's garden, land was cultivated in what is now North Kamloops, on the west side of the North Thompson at its mouth, as well as in several locations nearby. Indian women were employed on the farm.

Farming operations expanded further under the management of Donald McLean and William Manson (1852–1861). The work of the farm is recorded almost daily in the fort journals of the period, but little definite information about the extent of the crops harvested is given, except in the case of potatoes. We know that 34 kegs (or approximately 34 bushels) of potatoes were planted in 1851, and that the crop totalled 400 kegs. In 1852, 50 kegs were planted, and in October, 1854, 600 kegs were harvested—"more than expected." In the spring of 1859, 98 kegs were planted. The amount of grain raised was never great—only 31½ kegs of wheat, 3 kegs of barley and 3 of oats were planted in the spring of 1859.<sup>33</sup> The same year Manson investigated the possibility of establishing another farm at Cherry Creek, about 15 miles from Kamloops, but the prospects were apparently not very tempting.<sup>34</sup> In the late autumn a so-called "experimental farm" was started at Calumet, on Green Lake, but the venture was abandoned at the end of the 1860 season.<sup>35</sup> Despite all this activity, it is clear that to the personnel of the post farm products remained a luxury. The fort journal records with grim regularity the slaughter of worn-out horses as provisions for the men; and it is significant that the serving of beef, flour, and potatoes on Christmas Day, 1859, was considered an event worthy of special mention in the fort journal. Dried and smoked salmon remained the staff of life in the Thompson country; and a poor run caused anxiety to whites and natives alike. Large quantities were traded from the Indians and stored

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(32) *Thompsons River Journal*, April 11, 1843.

(33) *Thompsons River Journal*, April 22, October 30, 1851; April 30, 1852; October 27, 1854. *Kamloops Journal*, May 14, 1859.

(34) *Kamloops Journal*, August 23–24, 1859.

(35) A *Calumet Journal*, covering the period April–July, 1860, has survived and gives many details of the operations there.

for winter use; and it was estimated in 1832 that some 21,000 salmon were required to provision the district.<sup>36</sup>

While farming and horse-raising were developing at Kamloops, the fur trade recovered from the slump it had suffered in 1848. The number of beaver secured jumped from 29 in 1850 to 352 in 1851, 639 in 1852, and 746 in 1853. Though it fell to 592 the next year, the number of marten traded reached the astonishing total of 4,846, with the result that 1854 went down in history as a banner fur year. "Finished with the Packs," the journal records on May 18, 1855. "Say 36, the best return which this place has turned out for the last 20 years." It seems clear that the Company no longer expected a greater return than this, even at the best of times. "We do not look for anything very large in the shape of Returns from Thompsons River," Chief Factor Dugald Mactavish wrote to Chief Trader J. W. McKay, in 1860, "we shall be perfectly satisfied—with something near the same quantity of Furs—we had been in the habit of getting from there during the late Chief Trader [Paul] Frasers time—which probably never exceeded more than forty packs annually."<sup>37</sup> Even when the trade failed to reach this level Mactavish was satisfied. "The Returns are good, at all events as much so, as we can well look for," he wrote in 1862, "the increase in Martens making up for the deficiency in Bears, Beavers &c."<sup>38</sup>

There was little change in the life of the fur-trading community at Kamloops until the discovery of gold at Tranquille Creek and in the bars of the North Thompson in 1858. In 1860 there were 200 Chinese miners working at the mouth of Tranquille Creek. With these the fort did a bustling trade, but by May, 1861, the Tranquille miners had a store of their own and no longer came the 7 or 8 miles to the fort.

By July, 1862, the claims at Tranquille Creek seem to have been altogether worked out and but few miners remained there.

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(36) Unsigned letter, probably from Samuel Black, to Alexander Fisher, dated Kamloops September 16, 1832 (Archives of B.C.).

(37) Dugald Mactavish to J. W. McKay, August 31, 1860 (H.B. Archives, B. 226/b-18, p. 219).

(38) Dugald Mactavish to J. W. McKay, April 21, 1862 (H.B. Archives, B. 226/b/22, p. 273).

But that year a new event awoke interest—the arrival of the Overlanders, who had made their way across the plains from eastern Canada and down the North Thompson to Kamloops. Laconically, their arrival is noted in the Fort Kamloops journal: “Oct. 11, 1862. A party of men have come down North River by Raft. They are from Canada and the States and have come via Red River, Saskatchewan and Jasper House to Tete Jaunes Cache thence to the source of North River and down to this point.” A few hours after their arrival the first white child in the vicinity was born to Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Schubert of the party.

These events usher out the era of the old fur-trading days. Things were no longer the same—particularly since the gold-rush had led to the revocation of the Hudson's Bay Company's exclusive trading rights, late in 1858. Its word was no longer law and its business no longer free from competition. Two entries in the fort journal which briefly chronicle the change deserve quotation. The first, under the date June 19, 1859, records the arrival of W. G. Cox, Assistant Collector of Customs, and on June 24 continues as follows: “Mr. Cox started to inspect the train of Provisions &c that are at Nicholah's Lake and Levy the duties on the same.” The second, which is brief and to the point, is dated February 21, 1860: “Received an intimation from Asst. Commissioner Ball that I am to pay \$10 as due for License to trade.”

The sixties saw the beginnings of a typical frontier village. The first settler's house was erected in 1862; the first steamer built in 1865; the first private store erected in 1867; and the first flour-mill in 1868. In 1863 the Hudson's Bay Company had moved its post from the north side of the Thompson to the south bank, a short distance from the future village. This, the first post at Kamloops without a stockade, marked the transition from fur fort to general store. Ultimately the Company erected in 1885 a store in the modern manner at the village which by then had grown up beside its post. The same year the Canadian Pacific Railway reached Kamloops and the village boomed into a town. As in the days of the fur trade, transportation again proved to be the life-blood of the community.

F. HENRY JOHNSON.

KAMLOOPS, B.C.



## APPENDIX.

## FURS TRADED AT KAMLOOPS, 1826-1856.\*

|      | Beaver. | Marten. |      | Beaver. | Marten. |
|------|---------|---------|------|---------|---------|
| 1826 | 1,042   | 441     | 1842 | 301     | 878     |
| 1827 | 1,290   | 380     | 1843 | 300     | 784     |
| 1828 | 1,105   | 606     | 1844 | 194     | 1,182   |
| 1829 | 739     | 576     | 1845 | 248     | 1,610   |
| 1830 | 691     | 407     | 1846 | 140     | 2,446   |
| 1831 | 1,151   | 711     | 1847 | 156     | 1,773   |
| 1832 | 977     | 610     | 1848 | 6       | 637     |
| 1833 | 1,025   | 1,009   | 1849 | 90      | 1,294   |
| 1834 | 1,197   | 964     | 1850 | 29      | 1,813   |
| 1835 | 971     | 1,456   | 1851 | 352     | 1,398   |
| 1836 | 745     | 969     | 1852 | 639     | 1,533   |
| 1837 | 599     | 2,341   | 1853 | 746     | 2,554   |
| 1838 | 511     | 2,177   | 1854 | 592     | 4,846   |
| 1839 | 688     | 806     | 1855 | 480     | 2,378   |
| 1840 | 426     | 155     | 1856 | 368     | 1,694   |
| 1841 | 419     | 389     |      |         |         |

\* Compiled from *Columbia District and New Caledonia Fur Trade Returns* (MS. in Archives of B.C.).

## FORT LANGLEY CORRESPONDENCE.

The correspondence which follows should be considered as an appendix to the article entitled *Early Days at Old Fort Langley*, by Dr. Robie L. Reid, which appeared in the April issue of this *Quarterly*. The letters are published with the kind permission of the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, in whose Archives either the letters themselves or letter-book copies of the originals have been preserved.

CHIEF TRADER ARCHIBALD McDONALD TO  
GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON.

Fort Langley, 10th February 1831.

In my last Communication I touched at some length on the prospect of curing Salmon at this place, as an additional source of Returns, and I have now the satisfaction to inform you, that the experiment of last Season completely proved the theory: the fish it is true arrived late—indeed after we had almost given up hopes of making any thing at all of it; but from the 25th of August to the 15th of next month we were fortunate enough to procure upwards of 15,000. enough to make up more than 200 Barrels which in that very short space we contrived to do into nearly that number of casks of our own making, with means so imperfect however, that I fear from the sample that remained with ourselves—the first Cargo will not stand the Test of a foreign market, and trust by the next Season, we shall be provided with a good Cooper, that will know something of Fish curing. . . .

. . . last Spring still with the hoe we prepared what might be considered an extensive Crop for the use of the place, but an unusual high rise of the water, did it great damage, and immediately on that subsiding what remained of the potatoes and all sorts of Vegetables was destroyed by a frightful pest of Caterpillars; we however secured near 100 Bushels of grain, which with our other resources make things go on sufficiently well notwithstanding: our Stock of pigs now, although be [sic] no means a rapid increase is up to 20 head, and the horned Cattle received from the Columbia do very well our time at present is principally occupied about cooperage, and the construction of wharves and other conveniences for the Salmon business. . . .

CHIEF FACTOR DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN TO CHIEF TRADER  
FRANCIS HERON.

Fort Vancouver, 18th June 1833.

You will proceed to take charge of the New Establishment\* in Puget Sound the object of which is to relieve us at this place from the necessity of

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\* Later called Nisqually.

keeping a party constantly in that quarter at the same time it will serve for the trade of Fort Langley and if necessary as a Depot.

As soon as Mr. Chief Factor Finlayson can he will send a Vessel to remove the property and people from Fort Langley to the New Establishment, but it will be necessary that you salt as much salmon as you can this summer before leaving Fort Langley. . . .

CHIEF TRADER DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN TO CHIEF TRADER  
FRANCIS HERON.

Fort Vancouver, 2nd July, 1833.

. . . The people now at Fort Langley can carry on the Fishery & the Vessel transport what is necessary to be brought from the last place to the New Establishment; but enough of Trading Articles must be left at Fort Langley to carry on the Indian trade till next spring, as we cannot yet say whether we ought to abandon it or not, and when our harvest is in & the brigade come from the other side, we will have I hope means to keep it up till next spring and carry on all our operations. . . .

CHIEF FACTOR DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN TO  
JAMES MURRAY YALE.

Fort Vancouver, 23rd March 1834.

I received yours of 7th Feby. and your report of the same, and was happy to find every thing at Fort Langley in a prosperous state, . . . I am sorry to find that you are so short of Horses or Cattle, and if you send to Nisqually you can have the four Horses, as every means ought to be taken to sow the greate prairie, and as much at the Fort as you can, only sowing the wheat you require, but as much Barley & Pease as you possibly can. . . .

CHIEF FACTOR DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN TO  
GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON.

Fort Vancouver, 3rd March 1835.

In regard to Fort Langley and Nisqually, there is no place on the coast where Salmon is so abundant and got so cheap as at Fort Langley; and if we find a sale for Salmon, it would alone more than pay the expence of keeping up that place: Nisqually is the best situation for Trade in Puget Sound, and though Whitbys Island is said to be as fine a situation for a Farm as could be desired, yet as it is not conveniently situated for Trade, I beg to suggest that these two places be allowed to remain separate until we see how our opponents will act and how the Salmon sells.

GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON TO CHIEF FACTOR  
DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN.

Norway House, 25th June, 1836.

On the subject of making one of the Posts on the coast the principal Depot or depository of goods and returns for the whole of the trade on the west side

of the Mountains instead of Fort Vancouver which is objectionable on account of the dangers of the Columbia bar, I beg to refer you to the 11th paragh. of the Govr. & Committees Dispatch of 8th December,\* and we have to beg you will take the necessary measures to have the coast and islands inside the straits of De Fuca examined, so as to be prepared to form an establishment in the most eligible situation, as regards farming on a large scale, harbour anchorage, timber &c., for the security and convenience of shipping, likewise for trade, in short to combine as many advantages as possible and save the expense of one or both of the Establishments of Nasqually and Fort Langley, if such can be done without materially affecting the returns. Nasqually you seem to think is not well adapted for an agricultural, although it is for a grazing establishment, I do not know how it is in regard to timber fisheries &c but from all I can learn respecting it, I do not think it is likely to answer the purpose Chief Trader Heron speaks very favorably of Whidby's Island, it might be well to have it examined and I would recommend that Mr. Finlayson Mr. Work or Mr. Douglas should accompany the Cadboro in one of her voyages to the Gulph of Georgia; or perhaps it might be better. . . .

#### CHIEF TRADER JAMES DOUGLAS TO JAMES MURRAY YALE.

Fort Vancouver, 21st November, 1838.

. . . I feel much gratified by the progressive improvement of the Farm & stock, in a few years Fort Langley will supply all the salt provisions required for the coast. The Salmon fishery is an object of much importance and merits the utmost attention. . . . The Farm is also of great service and should be carefully attended. I am sorry that the site selected for the new Fort should be found subject to so many disadvantages, and we must therefore abandon it, and fix upon some other spot, alike convenient for the fur and Salmon trade, combined with facilities for the farm and Shipping. Probably the place you first pointed out to Mr. Finlayson will be found on the whole most suitable, but if a better can be found, let it have the preference; however remember that the Salmon trade must not be sacrificed, as it will always yield, a more valuable return at less trouble risk & expense than the farm.

#### CHIEF TRADER JAMES DOUGLAS TO H.B.C., LONDON.

Fort Vancouver, 14th October 1839.

The Outfit of Fort Langley for 1839, was forwarded by the Cadboro, and landed there in June; the several Branches of business carried on at this post continue in a flourishing state, except the Fur Trade, which all Mr. Yale's efforts have not succeeded in restoring to its former standard of prosperity, there is nevertheless a slight advance, and the prospect of still further improvement, arising however, solely from increased production

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\* In this letter the Governor and Committee requested that the coast should be examined with the idea of finding a better situation than that of Fort Vancouver for the Company's chief post in the Western Department.

on the part of the Fort Indians who have been literally dunned into something like exertion; limited as this source may be found, it is the only one left, whereby we may in some measure, repair the diversion of trade from this Post, produced by extending the Steam Vessel's range into Johnston's Straits; in all such cases particular branches, will be unavoidably, more or less, exposed to sacrifice, although the general result is proportionally increased in value. We have abandoned the old Langley Establishment which was in a dilapidated State, as well as inconvenient in some respect for the business, and removed all the effects, into a new Fort built a few miles higher up on the Banks of Fraser's River, the stockades of which, four block houses, and nearly all the necessary buildings are now erected. It is fully as convenient for the fur and Salmon Trade, as the former site, and moreover possesses the important and desirable advantage of being much nearer the farm.

By our latest dates of 21 July the Salmon Fishery, was yielding abundantly, and the Crops looked remarkably well, the season having been in that quarter rather favourable. I may be permitted to mention here as a matter likely to interest the friends of our native population, and all who desire to trace the first dawn and early progress of civilization, that the Cowegins around Fort Langley, influenced by the Council and example of the Fort, are beginning to cultivate the soil, many of them having with great perseverance and industry cleared patches of forest Land of sufficient extent to plant each 10 bushels of Potatoes, the same spirit of enterprise extends, though less generally to the Gulf of Georgia & De Fuca's Straits, where the very novel sight of flourishing fields of potatoes satisfies our Missionary Visitors, that the Honble. Company neither oppose, nor feel indifferent to the march of improvement.

#### J. M. YALE TO GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON.

Fort Langley, 10th February, 1841.

. . . In the night of the 11th of April Fort Langley was burnt to the ground and every thing in it, excepting the trading Goods, a few Furs, eleven muskets, seven Barrels Salmon, and three or four old impliments for building, Staves and hoops ready prepared for seven hundred Barrels, Tubs for pickling salmon in &c. all went with the rest. This unfortunate calamity, and by which the Company has sustained a real loss of about £340 was brought upon us by the carelessness of one of the Men, a new hand from Fort Vancouver called Brulé, who in the meantime of finishing a House for himself, and the last to complete the Fort, was permitted to take up his lodgings in the Blksmiths Shop but unluckily at this time did not sleep there and so the fire had attained (assisted by the wind) such an advanced state before it was perceived as to render all efforts to check its progress vain. In a few minutes the whole was in flames, and we were soon obliged to retreat outside half naked, scorched, and wounded by Nails &c and immediately prepare for the security of ourselves, the property we had rescued and what remained to be gathered the Ironworks, none of which was lost tho; we were surrounded

by Savages who for the sake of a little property would gladly have made a feast of us if they had dared but we were not at this time destined for their Kettle and the whole total affairs of Fort Langley would hardly seem to have met with a check. Nearly everything that could be done in the way of Farming was accomplished. The Salmon fishery in due time reestablished that is in the necessary buildings. Vessels for pickling the fish in &c and in regard to the business of the Dairy it would appear that we may carry the feather. Have a Fort much more spacious than the old one, and things inside nearly as far advanced towards a completion as Fort Langley was when you first visited it, the second year after it was established. Last winter Chief Factor McLoughlin proposed to send us plenty of aid to get in the crops &c but unluckily the the [sic] had apparently become great none could be spared, he has however tho' rather late consoled me a little by sending Fort Langley an old broken thrashing Mill. When Mr. Douglas touched here on his way to the Coast latter end of april we were in perfect security inside a little Fort 108 x 72 feet and I had only two requests to make, that they would supply me with six good Axes, and be off out of our way as quick as possible, but he would not altogether comply and got part of the timbers for a House 48 x 24 squared for us, while getting the Steamer ready to proceed on the route. . . .

CHIEF FACTORS JAMES DOUGLAS AND JOHN WORK TO  
H.B.C. LONDON.

Fort Victoria, 6th November 1847.

1. Since we had the honour of addressing you from Fort Vancouver on the 20th of September, I have made an excursion to Fort Langley chiefly for the purpose of putting matters in train, for the passage of the Brigade by the Contemplated new route to the interior, mentioned in the 18th paragraph of that letter. Accompanied by Chief Trader Yale, and Mr. William Sinclair, leaving Chief Factor Work during the absence of the former in charge of Fort Langley, we proceeded with an Indian Canoe up Frasers River to the Saumeena Village, where the horse road to Fort Kamloops falls upon the River about 100 miles beyond Fort Langley. We spent Several days in examining the chain of rapids known as "The Falls" which constitute the chief obstacle of that route. With a few intervening spaces of smooth water, these rapids extend from the Saumeena to the upper "Teat Village" a distance of 13 miles, and we are of the opinion that they will be found exceedingly dangerous at every season, and absolutely impassable in the Summer freshets, when the River is full and attains a level of 60 feet above the low water mark in autumn. The Rapids occur at a spot where Frasers River forces a passage through the Cascade Mountains, and stretch from side to side of that stupendous barrier. It is impossible to conceive any thing more formidable or imposing, than is to be found in that dangerous defile which cannot for one moment be thought of as a practicable water Communication for the transport of valuable property. We propose to avoid that part of the River entirely by extending the horse road about 13 miles to

the lower end of the Rapids from whence the navigation is unexceptionable to the sea Coast distant 130 miles. This extension of the horse road must be carried through the Mountain in a narrow winding defile on the North side of Fraser's River which runs nearly parallel with it. Though neither smooth nor level it is practicable, and when the timber is cleared away will make a much better road than we expected to find in so rugged a section of Country. It has moreover the important advantage of being perfectly safe, and is infinitely preferable to the most perilous piece of water communication in the Indian Country.

Among other points of valuable information obtained from the Indians whom we saw in the Course of our journey, they pointed out another route to the Interior considerably to the Southward of those already explored which falls upon Frasers River 25 miles above Fort Langley. This would be of immense advantage in many ways, and relieve us of the expense of maintaining a fleet of boats exclusively for the River transport. A party of men with an Indian Guide have been sent to examine that route, and as soon as we receive their report we will make our final arrangements for opening one of these two roads as soon as possible; it being now made clear that one or the other must become the highway of commerce to the Interior, and we Confidentially expect to have everything in readiness for the passage of the Brigades by the new route in the summer of 1849. We will thereby escape the exactions of the United States Government, and have it in our power to supply the Interior with British goods free of import or transit duties.

. . . . .

17. Every branch of business Carried on at Fort Langley exhibits a decline this year; to a greater or less extent, as compared with the prosperous result of last Outfit, in Consequence of causes which the able and indefatigable exertions of Mr. C[hief] T[rader] Yale, Could not altogether controul. The Salmon Fishery at the Establishment which yielded upwards of 1000 barrels of fish in the Summer of 1846, produced only 365 barrels this year. In anticipation of the failure which occurred. . . . The grain Crops were nearly destroyed in the fields by long continued rains in harvest; a misfortune of frequent occurrence at that Post, where unfortunately the climate is not so well adapted, as the rich and fertile soil for the purpose of Agriculture. The green Crops were on the contrary, unusually abundant and the potatoes perfectly healthy, and of the finest quality. The fur returns are also inferior to those of Outfit 1846, but the decrease is considerable, and may possibly be made up before the close of the Outfit.

CHIEF FACTORS JAMES DOUGLAS AND JOHN WORK TO H.B.C.,  
LONDON.

Fort Victoria, 5th December 1848.

Our accounts from Fort Langley extend up to the 1st of last month,—when Chief Trader Yale and the servants of the establishment were all well, and the Companys affairs in their usual state. The trade in furs was rather dull, but is nevertheless expected to yield as valuable a return as the

business of last year 1847. The fisheries were very closely attended and produced 1703 Barrels of Salmon and 22 Barrels of small Fish. . . . An accident occurred last summer, at the Upper Fishery, 25 miles above the establishment, where the dwelling house, sheds, salting tubs, 200 empty Barrels and about 60 Bushels of salt, were consumed by fire, which some careless Indians had made in the neighbouring woods from whence it spread to the buildings. Mr. Yale at first suspected that the place had been burnt by some evil minded incendiary and felt much uneasiness on the subject not knowing how soon other attempts of the kind might be made on a more extensive scale, but afterwards discovered through the Indians themselves, how the accident had occurred.

The preparations for opening the new road to the interior for the passage of the summer Brigade threw much additional work upon the establishment of Fort Langley, as besides making the road from Kequeloose to the Ferry, and from thence through the Portage to the lower end of the Falls of Frasers River a distance of 18 miles, through a wooded country, levelling and zig-zaging the steep ascents, bridging Rivers, there were stores erected for the accommodation of the Brigades above and below the Falls, boats and skows built for the ferry, and seven large Boats for the navigation from Fort Langley to the Falls, there was the heavy transport of provisions to the latter place, and a vast amount of other work connected with that object which it required no common degree of energy and good management in Chief Trader Yale to accomplish with 20 men in the course of a severe winter.

The grain and other crops at this place suffered extremely from drought, and fell short of the average annual return of the Farm. There is, however an abundant supply of all kinds of food to meet the ordinary demands of the year.

#### CHIEF FACTOR JAMES DOUGLAS TO GOVERNOR EDEN COLVILLE.

Fort Victoria, 10th March 1851.

The affairs of Fort Langley continue in a prosperous state. The fur trade is rather on the decline, owing to the growing scarcity of Martens and the low price of Beaver, which the natives in consequence seldom hunt. The salmon fishery yielded last season 2000 Barrels of fish the most valuable product of this post, now averaging at the Sandwich Islands £2,,10,,0 barrel. We propose this year to extend the farm at this post and hope soon to raise enough Bread Stuffs for the supply of the interior. The Neat Cattle are increasing in number, but the stock of swine is not doing so well for want of careful attendance. Staves have been split for 2100 barrels and a large supply of salt was lately sent there for the coming season which I trust will be a productive one in fish. Coal has been found in thin surface beds a few Miles below Fort Langley and also on the Sea Coast between the north Channel of Frasers River and Burrards Canal, but it is of no immediate value beyond indicating more valuable deposits of the Mineral at a greater depth from the surface.



## CHIEF FACTOR JAMES DOUGLAS TO CHIEF TRADER J. M. YALE.

Fort Victoria, 13th February 1852.

I have been so much oppressed with toil and trouble that I have altogether neglected you of late, having I fear not even acknowledged your letter of the 10th Octr.\* announcing the safe arrival of Mr. Logan at Fort Langley, and containing a statement of the articles omitted in the Fort Langley accounts. . . .

Your letter of the 12th Feby arrived to day with the two "Works" whom I regret to observe were discharged from the service as useless and I perceive from your letter that Atkinson is little better. This is unfortunate in as much as it entirely defeats our plan of improving and extending the Fort Langley farm with the view of rendering it independant of foreign supplies of provisions. There is no man here capable of replacing Atkinson nor any substitute for the "Works" except stubborn Englishmen whom you would find quite unmanageable seeing that you have not the character of being a liberal Master nor disposed to feed them on roast beef and plum pudding. . . .

CHIEF FACTOR JAMES DOUGLAS TO W. G. SMITH, SECRETARY,  
H.B.C. LONDON.

Victoria, V.I., 23rd July, 1858.

. . . Both brigades left Fort Langley in high spirits about 5 days ago, and will I trust get through their journey without any unusual accident.

A considerable cash business is now carried on at Fort Langley. The sales are averaging about \$1500 a day. The articles sold are principally Flour, Bacon and Beans and Mining Tools, which we import from San Francisco, together with Blankets and woolen clothing, from our stock of English goods. The miners were not generally at work in the upper parts of the river, in consequence of the high state of the water which had inundated all the river bars. They were chiefly employed on the dry diggings above the water levels, which yielded about \$6 a day to the man.

They were all in high spirits anticipating the fall of the River, and prepared to submit to all our rules and regulations, which were at first unpalatable to their republican notions. . . .

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\* Missing from the Hudson's Bay Company's archives.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS.

### CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE.

Louis LeBourdais, M.L.A., of Quesnel, is one of the Cariboo's best-known citizens, and has written many articles on the pioneers and early history of the district.

F. Henry Johnson, B.A., is a member of the staff of the Kamloops High School.

W. Kaye Lamb, Ph.D., is Provincial Librarian and Archivist.

G. Neil Perry is Secretary of the Economic Council of British Columbia.

### CELEBRATIONS AT KAMLOOPS.

To those interested in history, the most interesting features of the anniversary celebrations held at Kamloops on July 1 were the parade and the opening of the new historical museum. The parade depicted a series of events in the history of the community since its foundation 125 years ago; and the remarkable quality of the many floats made the occasion a memorable one. The museum, which has been organized by the Thompson Valley Historical and Museum Association, was formally opened by His Honour Judge Howay, at the conclusion of an address on the history of Kamloops. Mr. J. J. Morse, President of the Museum Association, received the big cast-iron key of the fort from Judge Howay. Mr. C. H. French, who represented the Hudson's Bay Company, also took part in the ceremony, dressed in a black frock coat and beaver hat such as were worn by the officers of the Company in the long ago.

The museum is housed in the building from old Fort Kamloops, which, it will be recalled, was discovered and preserved by Mr. David Power, who presented it to the Museum Association. It has been re-erected upon a site in Riverside Park provided by the City of Kamloops. The exact age of the building is not known, but it evidently formed part of the first Hudson's Bay Company fort at Kamloops, and may even date back to the days of the North West Company's post, previous to 1821. In any event, it is almost certainly the oldest building now standing in British Columbia. It is built in sections, and so designed that any individual timber can be handled with fair ease by two men. The interior of the building has been finished in modern style, in order to make it suitable for museum purposes; but the reconstruction of the main structure has been carried out in accordance with the original plan, wooden pegs having been used instead of spikes, and so on. The completed building measures about 19 by 20 feet, and the Museum Association is to be congratulated upon the very interesting display of old relics and photographs which it already houses.

### BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

#### *Victoria Section.*

The meeting held on April 2 was addressed by Mr. A. N. Mouat, former Comptroller-General for British Columbia, who described the North West

Rebellion of 1885, and recalled his own experiences during the campaign. Mr. Mouat paid special tribute to the work done by the Mounted Police, whose share in the operations was recognized so tardily that members of the force waited fifteen years for their medals. Several veterans of 1885 were present, including Bishop Exton Lloyd, who spoke briefly. A number of photographs and relics were on exhibition, and were examined with interest by the large gathering of members and friends who attended.

Sir Charles Piers, Bart., former historian for the Hudson's Bay Company, was the speaker at the meeting held on May 7. He chose as his subject *The Early Days of the Overland Fur Trade*, and described the operations of the North West Company, Hudson's Bay Company, and Astorians in a most entertaining as well as informative manner. At the conclusion of the address, Mr. Charles H. French, for many years a Fur Trade Commissioner of the Hudson's Bay Company, showed a remarkable series of slides, prepared from old photographs and drawings of fur-trading posts. Many of these were associated with his own services in the Company. Mr. George Simpson McTavish, also for many years in the service of the Company, contributed engaging reminiscences of his experiences at some of the posts illustrated.

On May 18 the Historical Committee of the B.C. Conference of the United Church held a joint meeting with the Association in the Provincial Library. The first speaker was Dr. Kaye Lamb, Provincial Librarian and Archivist, who spoke on *A Day in the Life of an Archivist*. He described a visit paid last August to Saltspring Island and to some of the old-timers resident there, and outlined the eventful history of the community in early days. Rev. A. E. Roberts, President of the Conference Historical Committee, next described the first Methodist Conference held in British Columbia, the fiftieth anniversary of which is being observed this year. Rev. J. H. White, of Sardis, who attended this first Conference, was present at the meeting. The third address of the evening was given by Rev. W. Stott, who contributed a most amusing account of early days both in Cariboo and in North Vancouver. At the conclusion of his remarks Mr. Stott presented to the Archives the fortieth and final part of a commentary on the Bible which was published in 1858 on the day the Royal Engineers sailed for British Columbia, and which was thrown aboard the old *Thames City* as she left the dock. Rev. John Goodfellow, Secretary of the Conference Committee, spoke briefly.

#### *Vancouver Section.*

*The Work of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in British Columbia* was the subject chosen by Judge F. W. Howay for his address at the first annual dinner meeting of the Vancouver Section. The meeting was held in the Patricia Room of the Hotel Georgia on Friday, April 30, 1937, with over seventy-five members present.

In his introductory remarks the President, Dr. W. N. Sage, spoke of the work of the Section, and expressed the regret of the executive that it had not been possible to accommodate all who had wished to attend the dinner.

Greetings from the Provincial Executive were brought by the President, Dr. W. Kaye Lamb. Letters from Mrs. M. R. Cree, Honorary Secretary, and Dr. T. A. Rickard, President of the Victoria Section, were read by the Secretary, Miss Helen R. Boutilier.

During the evening musical numbers were provided by Mrs. Burton L. Kurth, accompanied by Mr. Kurth.

Dr. R. L. Reid introduced the speaker of the evening and told of his work among Canadian historians. Judge Howay outlined the methods of research necessary to ascertain the exact location of various historic spots in the Province, and stressed the idea that organizations such as our own could carry out the idea which the Board had in mind—the preservation of the history of our country.

Judge J. A. Forin, in a short speech in which he outlined Judge Howay's career as a member of the British Columbia Bar, the Bench, and various historical associations, expressed the appreciation of those present to the speaker.

The meeting closed with the singing of the National Anthem. [HELEN R. BOUTILIER, Secretary.]

#### LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES.

The *Seventh Report* of the *Okanagan Historical Society* has just been published and is reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

*Similkameen Historical Association.* At the quarterly meeting held in April, Mr. James A. Schubert, of Tulameen, was elected Honorary President in succession to Mrs. S. L. Allison, who passed away in February. Mr. Schubert is one of the few surviving members of the famous Overland Party of 1862, who travelled from Ontario and Quebec to British Columbia via Fort Garry and Fort Edmonton. A large keekwillie hole was reported on the Rowland property, which lies on the ancient boundary-line between the Nicola Indians to the north and the Similkameens to the south. In early days it was the scene of many inter-tribal conflicts, and arrow-heads are still found frequently on the property.

*The Graduate Historical Society* awards a book prize each year to the member of the Graduating Class of the University who stands first in History. This spring the prize was won by Robert T. McKenzie, of Vancouver.

#### LOCAL PUBLICATIONS.

*The Story of St. Andrew's United Church, North Vancouver*, a 36-page pamphlet compiled by the Rev. William Stott, is of wider interest than its title might indicate. It deals with the history of the community as well as that of the church itself; and several of the photographs reproduced are of considerable historic value. The section entitled *Moodyville Days* is of special interest, for in certain respects it supplements the articles on the early history of Burrard Inlet which Judge Howay has contributed to this *Quarterly*. Mr. Stott is able to give the origin of the name Moodyville, which, he tells us, was "suggested by Mrs. Captain Murray Thain, who moved to Moodyville in 1872. Before that it was known simply as Moody's Mills."

The ultimate fate of the mill itself is also indicated. "The mill was shut down and sold in 1901. During the great war the buildings were demolished and the machinery used for scrap. Most of the dwellings disappeared when the low level road was put through in 1927, the slope on which they stood being cut away in the process."

*Kamloops—1812—1937* is the title of an attractive mimeographed pamphlet which has been prepared by the Junior Historical Club of the Kamloops High School, under the direction of Mr. F. H. Johnson. It is a most interesting and worth-while effort, and the history of the community is traced in 26 brief chapters. Careful use has been made of the surviving fort journals and of the source material recently made available through the courtesy of the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, in London. The booklet is complete with illustrations and maps, a bibliography and an index, and consists in all of 107 pages. It is to be regretted that it cannot be made available in a more permanent form.

## THE NORTHWEST BOOKSHELF.

*North Pacific; Japan, Siberia, Alaska, Canada.* By Edward Weber Allen.  
New York: Professional & Technical Press. 1936. Pp. xvi., 282. \$2.50.

The circumnavigation of the whole North Pacific Ocean was the adventurous voyage of Mr. Allen, United States Commissioner and Secretary to the International Fisheries Commission, and in this book he describes his experiences. Boarding the *Santa Ana* at Seattle, a schooner which had suffered the indignity of conversion into a steamer and had never quite recovered poise, the author began the journey which took him northward along the coast of British Columbia and Alaska, across Bering Sea to Siberia, southward to Japan, and ultimately to San Francisco. The book is something more than mere description, however, for the author did not hesitate to interrupt his travel account at intervals to share an interesting anecdote from the romantic history of the area, or perhaps to describe a previous visit. In an easy intimate style he has built a background for his experience, that is both colourful and revealing. One might expect a technically-equipped, statistically-minded Commissioner to produce a factual document of peculiar interest to the historian or to the political scientist, and it is a matter of some interest that Mr. Allen has instead chosen to write a full-length narrative.

Perfectly at ease with his subject, he has allowed a generous fund of humour to influence his writing with delightful effect. His character sketches are particularly refreshing in this regard. Fully appreciating the importance of connotation, he makes frequent use of that aid to the imagination, as, for example, when he writes: "For many people the name Siberia conjures up thoughts of a hungry wolf pack chasing a long-bearded Russian wrapped in furs, madly driving his frantic horses hitched to a troika."

The book is generously supplied with local colour. Something is hinted of the early history, of the peculiar economic and geographic characteristics, about each point visited. With discernment he does not emphasize the oft-repeated stories of Alaskan history, but instead he recalls such fascinating adventures as those of missionary William Duncan, Vitus Bering, the Russian Governor Baranof and his contemporaries. Skilfully he has interwoven these characters from the past with the more immediate problems of the present, and the reader is placed in a general position to form his or her own conclusions.

Mr. Allen holds certain definite personal opinions about the international problems of the North Pacific, and whether or not the reader sympathizes with these views, it would seem difficult to overlook the very grim possibilities that could arise should reason be dethroned. Passion smoulders deep in the heart of Alaskan history, and like Shishaldin—Smoking Moses of the North—it might be aroused from slumber.

G. NEIL PERRY.

*Seventh Report of the Okanagan Historical Society of Vernon, British Columbia.* Vernon [Walker Press, Enderby], 1937. Pp. 52. \$1.

It will be recalled that the Okanagan Historical Society published a *Sixth Report*, of some 300 pages, last year. This was in reality a consolidation and revision of the five previous reports issued by the Society, together with some additional material. The new *Seventh Report* is intended to be the first of a further series of provisional publications, which it is hoped may eventually be consolidated into a second permanent volume, similar to the *Sixth Report* of 1936.

The title of the series is somewhat misleading, for the "Reports" consist of collections of historical notes and articles and are not merely accounts of the activities of the Society, as might be supposed. The *Seventh Report* is fully as interesting and valuable as its predecessors. The article on "Princeton Place Names," by the Rev. J. C. Goodfellow, is a model of its kind, and shows how interesting and enlightening the study of place-names can be. Mr. Goodfellow also contributes a brief account of the discovery in 1935 of the grave of Chief Trader Paul Fraser, of the Hudson's Bay Company, who was killed by a falling tree on Manson Mountain as long ago as 1855. The article entitled "Over the Penticton Trail," by Bernard Lequime, describes the early experiences of one of the Okanagan's best-known pioneer families. Mr. Lequime's parents came to British Columbia in 1858, when he was one year old. In 1861 they moved first to Rock Creek, then the centre of a mining excitement, and later to Okanagan Mission, near the present City of Kelowna. He has much of interest to relate regarding the Mission itself, as well as his own life and that of his family. In "The Welby Stage Coach," Mrs. Jessie Ewart Bird records the eventful history of the old coach run by W. E. Welby between Penticton and Hedley in 1905-1913. The coach itself is now the treasured possession of the Similkameen Historical Association. "The Gold Brick Robbery at Camp McKinney," the story of which is told by Arthur K. W. Cosens, occurred in 1896; and the hiding-place of two of the three bricks stolen still remains undiscovered.

The longest article is that entitled "Has Canada Kept Faith?" by Leonard Norris. It is of much more than regional interest, for it considers the question whether or not the Dominion Government loyally carried out the railway clause of the Act of Union of 1871. Mr. Norris thinks that it did; but whether the array of evidence he presents and his interpretation of it can be regarded as conclusive will remain a matter of opinion. One point new to the reviewer is the contention that there was a direct connection between the San Juan boundary decision, which awarded the island to the United States, and the selection of Esquimalt, in preference to Burrard Inlet, as the terminus for the projected Canadian transcontinental railway. As Mr. Norris points out, fortifications on San Juan Island would have made Burrard Inlet practically useless as a railway and shipping terminus if hostilities had broken out between the United States and Canada.

Shorter articles have been contributed by Max H. Ruhmann, George W. Johnson, Mrs. Angus Wood, and J. W. S. Logie. Notes and Comments and a number of poems make up the balance of the *Report*.

W. KAYE LAMB.

*Under Western Skies.* By Arthur S. Morton. Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd. 1937. Pp. 7+232. \$2.

The author of this book is Professor of History in the University of Saskatchewan at Saskatoon, and is an indefatigable student of the early days of the Fur Trade in the Prairie Provinces. Not only has he obtained much information from the literature of the times referred to, but he has had access to the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, and has made personal investigations on the ground itself. The list of subjects dealt with varies from "The Prairies and the Buffalo" to the conquest of the Barren Grounds, or, as he calls it, "In the Land of Feast and Famine." The style is easy and readable, and the wealth of information given is tremendous.

The book purports to be "A series of pen pictures of the Canadian West in the early fur trade times." This evidently means that it is not to be considered as a book for students of history, but for popular reading. If so, it has one most serious defect, for it is overloaded with detail. The author is too much the historian to recognize the fact that the casual reader will quickly tire of a book which gives so much information packed in so little space. The readers who will be interested will necessarily be those who are interested in the same line of study as the author, and it must therefore be considered from that point of view.

Treating it, then, as a treatise on Western History, its great defect is that it gives no references to authorities, so that it is almost impossible to check the accuracy of the statements made. In great part, the author writes as if he were a contemporary of the persons whose travels, adventures, and difficulties he describes, relying on his own knowledge of the events of the times as authority for the statements made. Books and records are sometimes mentioned in a casual way, but even where language of others is quoted, no indication is given as to the source from which it comes.

This is a book of the prairies, almost entirely, but there are a few references to British Columbia. The most important is the allegation on page 171, which illustrates what has been said above as to the lack of authority for the author's statements. He states definitely and dogmatically that "In 1801, his last year in the interior, [Duncan] McGillivray crossed the Rockies into the valley of the Columbia River." He gives no authority for the statement, and its correctness has been directly challenged by J. B. Tyrrell, one of the most careful historians of Western Canada, who, in the *Canadian Historical Review* for April, 1937, cites authorities to show that during the winter of 1800-01 McGillivray was ill at Rocky Mountain House, that he started in that state for Fort William on Lake Superior, and that he returned to his post in the autumn. David Thompson was also at Rocky Mountain House till June, 1801, and then tried to cross the Rockies but failed in his attempt.



It is only fair to Professor Morton to say that his rejoinder to Tyrrell has not yet been published and no suggestion is made here as to which is correct.\* The point is cited as an illustration of the difficulties which arise when new matter is set out as fact, without any reference being made to the source of the statement.

Professor Morton does not agree with the commonly accepted estimates of many of the great figures of the days of which he writes. Especially he thinks Thompson to be an overrated man; one not as great as Peter Fidler, of whom we know very little, or Philip Turner, of whom we know about as much. Hearne was a greater explorer than Alexander Mackenzie, and so on. Professor Morton's explanation of it all is summed up in this bit of sarcasm: "If you wish to be famous, write a book about yourself and be sure you leave everybody else out of the story." But this does not fit Hearne at any rate, for he *did* write a book about himself.

The book is worth most serious consideration because of the author's great local knowledge and wide research, but until it is rewritten in proper form with full references to sources, it cannot be accepted as definitely authoritative.

The mass of details above referred to renders the absence of an index even more annoying than in ordinary cases.

ROBIE L. REID.

*Arctic Trails.* By William Campbell. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1936. Pp. vi., 335; ill.

*Policing the Arctic.* The story of the conquest of the Arctic by the Royal Canadian (formerly North-West) Mounted Police. By Harwood Steele. Toronto: Ryerson Press [1935]. Pp. 390. Ill. and map.

Just as stories of the struggles of the pioneers on the frontier of any new country have been welcomed by the reading public, so to-day Canadians are enjoying the many books which are being written about Canada's newest frontier, the North, which, in the words of André Siegfried, "abounds in poetry and latent hopes" and has become "a boundless territory of limitless possibilities." What was regarded until recently as a vast inhospitable wasteland is now "a window which opens out . . . on to the potential future." Even the titles of books dealing with the region indicate this change; and Warburton Pike's *Barren Ground of Northern Canada* has become *The Friendly Arctic* of Stefansson. The latter is a firm believer in the possibilities of the Arctic region; and in his *Northward Course of Empire* has stressed the adaptability of northern Canada to permanent settlement.

The Royal North-West Mounted Police have played an important part in subduing Canada's northern regions and making them safer for the coming of prospective settlers. The "Silent Force" in its inimitable way has penetrated to the outposts of civilization, carrying with it law and order, assisting

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\* Mr. Morton's rejoinder to Tyrrell has since come to hand, but it leaves the question at issue in much the same condition as it was before.

lost or missing hunters and trappers, and helping to carry out numerous governmental duties.

The most outstanding amongst recent books dealing with the North-West Mounted Police is Major Harwood Steele's *Policing the Arctic*, which is the only authentic history, as yet, of the northern patrols of the Force. Major Steele has had correspondence with many of the survivors of the numerous adventures which he relates, and, together with his minute perusal of the Annual Reports of the Commissioners, has built up a fascinating and informative story comprising an imposing volume of nearly 400 pages. Of particular interest are the sections dealing with the Yukon gold-rush and the actions of the "Mounties" in subduing the rough element and making the Territory safe for the gold-seeker.

From his lengthy bibliography given at the end of the volume, it is quite evident that the author has read practically everything of note that has been written about the northern regions of Canada and the doings of the North-West Mounted Police since the formation of the Service in 1873. His intense interest in the Force and his intimate knowledge of its history cause no surprise when one learns that he is the son of the late Sir Sam Steele, one of the veterans of the Force. Major Steele has had an adventurous career of his own and amongst his many undertakings has explored the Canadian North as historian to the Dominion Government Arctic Expedition of 1925.

The book is written in well-chosen English in a somewhat staccato tempo which seems to suit the many exciting episodes which are related. If one were to venture any adverse criticism, one might say that the too frequent use of quotations is to be regretted and that the author's attempt to keep the narratives of the different patrols up to the same period, like a juggler with six or eight balls all in the air at the same time, is somewhat confusing. However, a copious index and a good map help considerably towards ameliorating this condition.

In marked contrast to Major Steele's book is William Campbell's *Arctic Patrols*, which is a popular account of the North-West Mounted Police. It contains many exciting stories of murders and man-hunts in the North, fights against the elements, encounters with wolves, etc. It appears to the reviewer that the author draws a very long bow at times. The shift of the frontier from the West to the North has been followed by a corresponding supersession of the old popular literature of the wild west by such books as *Corporal Corey of the Royal Canadian Mounted* and *The Yukon Patrol*, and, along with them, *Arctic Patrols* is no doubt sure of a warm welcome from the general reader.

MADGE WOLFENDEN.

*The Mitchell Library, Sydney. Historical and Descriptive Notes.* Issued by the Trustees of the Public Library of New South Wales in the centenary year of the Founder. 1936. Pp. 122. Ill.

David Scott Mitchell (1836-1907) was born in Sydney, and after a brilliant University career was called to the bar at the age of 22. Later he was offered the portfolio of Attorney-General of New South Wales; but

neither politics nor the practice of his profession appealed to him, and he devoted himself to the management of his father's estates, which he presently inherited, together with a substantial fortune. This inheritance enabled him to devote more and more time to his library, which soon became the chief interest of his life. "At an early age," the volume under review tells us, "he had begun to make a collection of books, chiefly poetry and drama, with special reference to the Elizabethan period, the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. But, realizing that in these fields he was but one collector among many, and far from the centres where such collecting could be most satisfactorily pursued, for the last thirty years of his life he devoted himself to the task of gathering together records of all kinds, books, manuscripts, pictures, prints, maps and charts, concerning the history of Australia, New Zealand, and the islands of the Pacific. Such a project had never been previously attempted on the grand scale. He brought to it wealth, knowledge, and singleness of purpose, and he succeeded, therefore, in acquiring a collection which, in all departments save perhaps the printed book, can never be rivalled." The Mitchell Library, as it is now known the world over, was bequeathed to the Public Library of New South Wales, in Sydney, along with an endowment of £70,000; and the special building constructed to house it was opened in March, 1910.

Even the brief notes given in this volume reveal the astonishing richness of the Mitchell collection. Certain items listed are of the greatest interest to students of the history of British Columbia, notably the series of manuscript journals, logs, and letters relating to the third voyage of Captain Cook. The collection of printed material upon Cook is probably the most complete in existence. The Library also possesses certain papers of La Pérouse and members of his expedition; and it would be interesting to have particulars of the "collection of papers concerning Vancouver's voyage, dated 1791-8," which is included in the Banks Papers.

Incidentally the Mitchell Library and the Provincial Library and Archives have more in common than an interest in Cook and Vancouver; for their fundamental purpose is the same—the collection and preservation of printed and manuscript material relating to the region in which they are situated. There is no Archives Department in New South Wales, and the Government has transferred many early records to the Mitchell Library, which makes the resemblance greater still. The chief point of contrast is the lack of an endowment in British Columbia; and some idea of what such a fund would mean to the Provincial Library may be gained from the record of the Mitchell Library. In the comparatively short time since it was bequeathed to the State, the Trustees have been able not only to increase the library from 61,000 to no less than 170,000 volumes, but also to acquire the major part of all manuscript material relating to the Southern Pacific which has come on the market in recent years.

W. K. L.

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VICTORIA, B. C. :

Printed by CHARLES F. BANFIELD, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty.  
1937.



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Organized October 31st, 1922.

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