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BRITISH  
COLUMBIA  
HISTORICAL  
QUARTERLY



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The

## BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

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*The*  
**BRITISH COLUMBIA  
 HISTORICAL QUARTERLY**

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

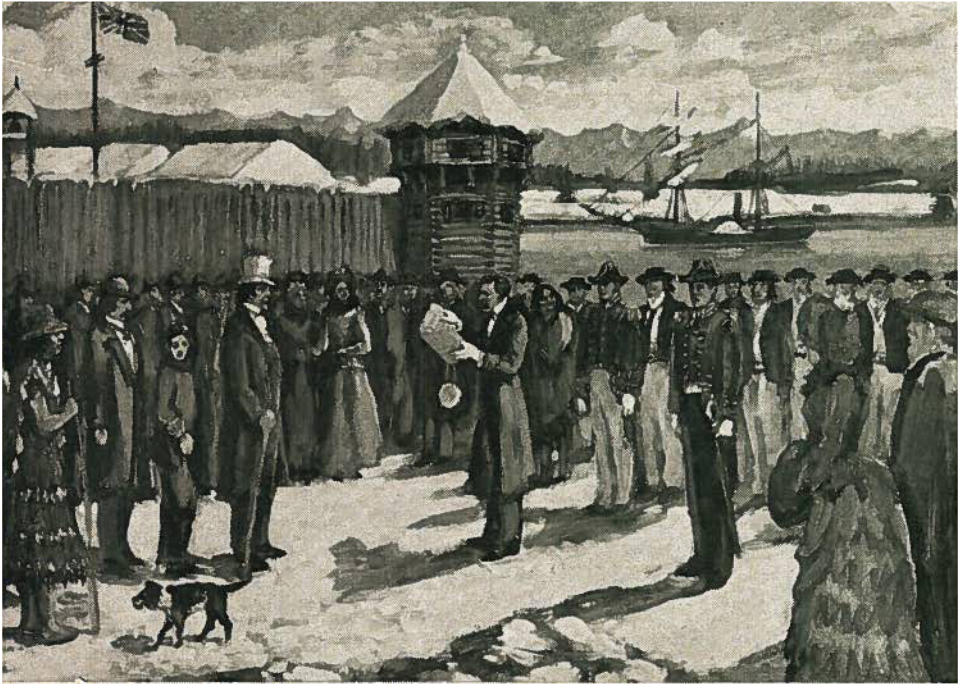
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(After an oil painting by George H. Southwell.)

**Richard Blanshard reading his Commission at Fort Victoria, March 11, 1850.**

# THE GOVERNORSHIP OF RICHARD BLANSHARD

## EDITORIAL NOTE

Richard Blanshard, first Governor of the Colony of Vancouver Island, arrived at Fort Victoria on March 9, 1850, and two days later read his commission to the assembled populace. The centenary of this significant event was officially recognized by the reading of a statement in the Legislative Assembly on March 10, 1950, by the Honourable the Premier, Byron I. Johnson. A special brochure was issued to the school-children of the Province and radio broadcasts arranged.

As long ago as July, 1944, this *Quarterly* published an article by Willard E. Ireland entitled "The Appointment of Richard Blanshard." It was anticipated that shortly thereafter Blanshard's subsequent career would be published. The centenary now affords an appropriate occasion to release this sequel. The first instalment dealt with the circumstances leading up to the selection, commissioning, and arrival at Vancouver Island of Richard Blanshard. Dr. Lamb takes up the story at that point—Blanshard, a young, inexperienced English barrister, has assumed the governorship of a remote British colony, set up under the *ægis* of the Hudson's Bay Company, which was then represented on the spot by one of its older and most experienced officers, James Douglas.

It is probably significant that early in April, 1850, Douglas, writing privately to Pelly, expressed the opinion that he was better off without the governorship—a view with which Pelly agreed.<sup>1</sup> Even at that early date it was becoming evident that Blanshard's position was and would not be a comfortable one. Events were already tending to bring him into conflict with Douglas. For example, there was the matter of the Governor's official residence. Soon after Blanshard's appointment Barclay had written to Douglas, informing him that a house would have to be provided.<sup>2</sup> Inevitably the letter was months on the way, and it would appear that late in February, probably no more than a fortnight before the Governor's arrival, construction had com-

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(1) Pelly to Douglas, October 25, 1850 (private). (Acknowledges a letter from Douglas dated April 3, 1850.) *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(2) Barclay to Douglas, August 3, 1849, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

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menced.<sup>3</sup> As no temporary quarters were in readiness, Blanshard was compelled to remain on board H.M.S. *Driver* during her stay in the colony. He accompanied her both when she visited Nisqually and later when she steamed north to Fort Rupert.<sup>4</sup> When she finally left, Blanshard was given a room in Fort Victoria.<sup>5</sup> All this time progress on his dwelling had been exasperatingly slow. In June he questioned Douglas officially regarding the delay,<sup>6</sup> and early in August sent him a letter which included the following stinging paragraph:—

I find that three of the Kanakas and one of the workmen have been withdrawn from my cottage, leaving one solitary man to carry on work that has already been loitered over for more than five months. I beg to state that you are at liberty to withdraw him also, as the labour of a single man is a mere mockery and I will consider such withdrawal as proof of the inability or unwillingness of the Hudsons bay Company to furnish me with lodging.<sup>7</sup>

Douglas, in his turn, dealt with the matter at some length in his report to Archibald Barclay:—

I herewith transmit copies of a correspondence with Governor Blanshard relative to the dwelling house I was directed to put up for him at this place.

We have done every thing in our power to forward the building; but unfortunately it was impossible, with our limited means to keep pace with his wishes; without altogether neglecting the Company's business and making it a secondary object, or hiring Mechanics in the Columbia at the enormous rates paid there for labour, and I did not feel at liberty to adopt either of these expedients.

The Governors complaints were excessively mortifying and have given me more pain than I can describe.

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(3) An entry in the *Fort Victoria Journal* preserved in the Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, London, England, under date February 27, 1850, reads: ". . . people employed as usual except Thomas from the steamer, who was employed with two Indians building the Governor's house." While this appears to be the first reference to this work in the *Journal*, it should be noted that it does not state that this was the first work done.

(4) Blanshard to Grey, April 8, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C. From the *Fort Victoria Journal* it is clear that the *Driver* returned from Nisqually on March 23 and sailed the next day for Fort Rupert, returning to Fort Victoria on April 3.

(5) Blanshard landed, with his luggage from the *Driver*, to reside ashore on April 7, and on the 9th the ship sailed for San Francisco. *Fort Victoria Journal*.

(6) Blanshard to Douglas, June 26, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(7) *Ibid.*, August 5, 1850.

You will observe by his letter of the 5th August that he speaks of only *one man* being employed at the "Cottage" while my reply of the same date shows that no fewer than ten workmen were then actually employed about it.

I have no wish however to indulge in complaints at the expense of Mr. Blanshard, for that would be unjust as with the exception of his letters, I never heard him, make an unpleasant remark.

The house is now nearly finished and he will soon move into it; so that there will be an end of trouble, from that source. The size of the Governors House is 40×20 ft, with a kitchen 18×12 feet attached and a house 24×18 for his servants. The house is ceiled and painted inside. It has a neat appearance and is on the whole the best finished building in Oregon.

I beg to recommend in the event of any other public buildings being contemplated, that Mechanics may be sent out to erect and finish them, as we have not a single house carpenter or Joiner at this place, our own work being done by the rude self taught carpenters of the country, who are not capable of turning out a neat job.<sup>8</sup>

The cost of the completed residence and premises was \$1,548.55. As it was built on "Fur Trade land" it was not charged to the colony.<sup>9</sup> Later Blanshard himself built an addition to the house, and before he left Vancouver Island, Douglas paid him \$634.90 in settlement for "all improvements" he had made.<sup>10</sup>

The whole episode may seem petty, but it is also revealing. It illustrates Blanshard's understandable impatience and disappointment, and his reluctance to accept the simple and even rude standards of life in the colony. It was all so different from what he had expected! Douglas, on the other hand, looms up as a formidable figure—not unfriendly or unsympathetic, but merely the cautious guardian of the company's interest.

There is no reason to believe that Douglas exaggerated difficulties when he reported to Barclay. In 1852 Dr. Helmcken built a modest dwelling in Victoria, and the account of the problems and delays which arose are set forth in his reminiscences. By that date Douglas had become Governor and Helmcken was about to marry his daughter, but he seems to have been able to do little to hasten the construction of a house, even for his prospective son-in-law. In the end, the wedding took place before the building was completed, and Helmcken and his bride lived for some months in Blanshard's former residence. Writing in 1892

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(8) Douglas to Barclay, September 10, 1850, MS., Archives of B.C.

(9) *Ibid.*, January 29, 1851.

(10) *Ibid.*, August 30, 1851.

Helmcken recalled that it was "at the corner of Yates St. [and Government Street] . . . a four room building on about four lots; faced with plained shingles. It was comfortable but not commodious, in the present sense of the term."<sup>11</sup>

Another matter which caused trouble between Blanshard and Douglas was the promised grant to the Governor of 1,000 acres of land. In 1857 Blanshard stated that he had been given to understand, before he left for Vancouver Island, that this property was intended for him personally. He was positive on the point "because," as he recalled, "Sir John Pelly had told me that I might select such portions of land as I thought would turn out valuable, and that they would sell advantageously."<sup>12</sup> Whatever Pelly may have intended, the instructions sent to Douglas within a month of Blanshard's appointment explicitly ruled out this interpretation:—

The Governor is to have a grant of land to the extent of 1000 Acres, as he may require it. This grant is not made to him as an individual but in his public capacity and will always belong to the Governor for the time being. You and he together will select some eligible spot not included in what may have been set apart for the fur trade or Puget Sound Company.<sup>13</sup>

Blanshard's anger and disappointment when he arrived and was refused title to his 1,000 acres may be imagined. Inevitably Douglas bore the brunt of his displeasure. Moreover, he held to his view-point as long as he remained in the colony, and as he declined to occupy or improve the property, the "Governor's Public Reserve" was not even laid out.<sup>14</sup> Shortly before his departure he "claimed 100 acres of those 1,000 acres," to use his own words, at Metchosin, for the benefit of a servant who wished to remain in the country.

"Mr. Douglas," Blanshard continues, "who was the agent for the land there, nominally evaded giving me any kind of title to it, and said that I should get it more easily settled in England. The Hudson's Bay Company declined to make it over to me, and said that those 1,000 acres of land were merely intended for the Governor for the time being."<sup>15</sup>

(11) John Sebastian Helmcken, *Reminiscences*, vol. iii, p. 40; *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(12) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 288.

(13) Barclay to Douglas, August 3, 1849, *M.S.*, Archives of B.C.

(14) Douglas to Barclay, January 28, 1852, *M.S.*, Archives of B.C.

(15) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 288.



In view of his instructions, and the land regulations by which he was bound, Douglas could only act as he did. He reported to London that no payment had been received for the 100 acres, but that he was reserving the land for Blanshard, pending a decision by the company.<sup>16</sup>

A third matter which caused irritation was much more directly Douglas's responsibility. For practical purposes the Hudson's Bay Company was the only source of supplies in Vancouver Island. The price-scale at which an individual could purchase goods depended upon his relationship to the company. For this purpose Blanshard was considered completely independent, and was therefore charged the highest tariff. In 1850 this tariff was very high indeed, as it was based upon the peak prices prevailing during the gold-rush in California. The consequence was that Blanshard found the cost of living ruinous, and it would seem that Douglas and the company might well have made a generous concession under the circumstances.

The delay in completing his house, the loss of his lands, and the high cost of living were, after all, personal matters. As a public official Blanshard was faced with the more serious consideration that there was scarcely any colony for him to govern. In March, 1850, Captain W. Colquhoun Grant and his eight men were the only genuinely independent settlers on Vancouver Island. Everyone else was connected in some way with the Hudson's Bay Company or its satellite, the Puget Sound Agricultural Company. Nor was there any immediate prospect that this state of affairs would change. True, the *Norman Morison* had eighty immigrants on board when she arrived on March 24, but every man amongst them was either a servant or a settler-servant bound to one or other of the companies.

Faced with this situation, Blanshard judged it best to conduct the government of the Colony single-handed, and so reported early in April to the Colonial Secretary:—

As no settlers have at present arrived, I have considered it is unnecessary as yet to nominate a Council, as my instructions direct; for a Council chosen at present must be composed entirely of the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company . . . and they would moreover be completely under the control of their superior officers . . .<sup>17</sup>

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(16) Douglas to Barclay, August 30, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(17) Blanshard to Grey, April 8, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

Years later, in the course of the Hudson's Bay inquiry, Roebuck addressed to Blanshard a question which at this point naturally comes to mind: "Would any great mischief have happened if there had been no Governor at all?" To which Blanshard replied: "There would have been a great deal of quarrelling; it was necessary that somebody should be at the head; that there should be some kind of law on the island, and to enforce it."<sup>18</sup>

This statement would appear to sum up in a sentence Blanshard's mission, as he understood it, and as he endeavoured to carry it out in 1850-1851. To the best of his ability he would settle disputes and check injustices, even though they might arise within the service of the company.

On July 28, 1849, the British Parliament had passed *An Act to Provide for the Administration of Justice in Vancouver's Island*. Blanshard was informed that this Statute, together with his commission and instructions, gave him "power for the present to make such provisions as you may consider most advisable both for the apprehension of offenders & the trial of prisoners & the conduct of Civil cases. . . ."<sup>19</sup> We know that he was supplied with law books to the value of some £51,<sup>20</sup> and with this simple equipment, plus his legal training, he proceeded to administer justice in the Island. When asked in 1857 how it was done, he answered: "I did it all myself; I had no means of paying a recorder a salary; there were no colonial funds. . . . when I wanted a constable, I swore one in."<sup>21</sup>

The early legal records that have survived are scanty, but one gains the impression that Blanshard was more active than is usually thought. A realization may even have spread abroad that something that stood higher than the company was represented in the land. This is not to deny that at times the stage resembled that of a comic opera, for Blanshard's conduct was sometimes sufficiently out of harmony with his surroundings to be slightly ridiculous. Helmcken recalls one such occasion:—

(18) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 290.

(19) Grey to Blanshard, September 15, 1849. *C.O. 305*, v. 2. *Transcript*, Archives of B.C.

(20) *Return . . . relating to Vancouver's Island*, London, 1852, p. 3.

(21) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 290.

. . . Once the men became riotous—drunk probably—there were no police—but Blanshard I think got some special constables and I saw him walking his verandah with sword at his said [side], vowing that he would have peace and be very severe on those who broke it. I am not aware that any one was brought before him. At this time the Government Street bastion was supposed to be the prison, but it was tenantless—and had no officer.<sup>22</sup>

A few miscellaneous papers relating to Blanshard's activities have been preserved. These include the report of what was probably the first formal inquest held on Vancouver Island. One William Gillespie, a labourer, was found drowned on May 12, 1850. The next day a jury of twelve, of which Roderick Finlayson was foreman, returned the verdict: "Accidental Death, owing to the deceased being in a state of intoxication." Douglas was amongst those who gave evidence.<sup>23</sup>

Soon after this Blanshard received an appeal from Captain Hinderwell of the British ship *Albion*, which had been seized off New Dungeness for felling trees in American territory without authority.<sup>24</sup> Blanshard replied as follows, in June:—

You must be aware that it is beyond my jurisdiction so that I cannot interfere in the matter. Your supercargo Mr. Brotchie is I am informed well acquainted with the North West Coast of America, and consequently could not have been ignorant that you were trespassing on the United States territory nor that the U.S. Customs laws have been extended to Oregon territory.<sup>25</sup>

The objection was well taken, for Captain Brotchie had in fact made several voyages to the coast in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Later in the same month Blanshard was called upon to determine the seaworthiness of the barque *Cowlitz*, which had touched shore several times between Victoria and Fort Rupert. The Governor appointed a committee to investigate, consisting of three ship masters and two shipwrights. It found that the

(22) Helmcken's *Reminiscences*, vol. iii, p. 75, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(23) The original report, dated May 13, 1850, is in the Archives of B.C.

(24) Hinderwell to Blanshard, May 21, 1850, *M.S.*, Archives of B.C.

(25) Blanshard to Hinderwell, June 15, 1850. Letterbook copy in Archives of B.C. (For the full story of the *Albion*, see W. Kaye Lamb, "Early Lumbering on Vancouver Island," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, II (1938), pp. 33-34.)

damage was slight, and that the vessel could travel safely to the Sandwich Islands for repairs.<sup>26</sup>

The Hudson's Bay Company had undertaken to supply coal to the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, and in the spring of 1849 Fort Rupert was constructed on Beaver Harbour, at the north end of Vancouver Island, near which outcroppings of coal had been discovered. At first Indians were employed to gather coal from the surface deposits, but in September a small party of Scottish miners arrived, headed by John Muir, and underground operations commenced.

Even before the miners arrived, the new post had had its share of stress and strain. The Indians in the region were numerous and frequently troublesome. Cases of theft were common, and the men were apprehensive of attack. The district happened to be a cross-roads of native traffic, and the Indians were often in a state of turmoil owing to the arrival of visiting or marauding tribes. The men the company had been able to muster for the new post seem to have been an unhealthy and unsavoury lot; on one occasion the harassed officer who kept Fort Rupert's official journal wrote: "such a miserable set of devils I firmly believe were never before congregated . . ." <sup>27</sup> When the miners arrived, things went from bad to worse. Nominally they were under the control of John Muir, and all the company's dealings were supposed to be with him, and not with the miners individually. But Muir often could not enforce discipline, possibly because the little party included four of his own sons, who do not seem to have stood in any awe of him. Indeed, one of the four, Andrew Muir, soon became the leader of the malcontents. Housing and working conditions, which they did not consider came up to the standards promised in their agreements, were the basic causes of complaint, but the weather, difficulties met with in sinking a shaft, and fear of the Indians were all added reasons for discontent.

In the spring of 1850 matters worked up gradually to a crisis. Entries in the post journal make it so clear that trouble was brewing that it is difficult to see how Chief Factor John Work,

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(26) Blanshard to Douglas (agent for the *Cowlitz*), June 22, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(27) *Fort Rupert Journal*, September 4, 1849, H.B.C. Arch., B185/a.

who spent a few days at Fort Rupert in March, could possibly have gained the impression that "all was going well and the Miners apparently in high spirits. . . ."28 On March 27 Blanshard himself arrived in H.M.S. *Driver*<sup>29</sup> and was greeted by Captain W. H. McNeill, the officer in charge. Both McNeill and Douglas felt afterwards that the Governor increased the discontent amongst the miners, and Douglas so stated in a private letter to Simpson.

The Governor is, I fear, not blameless in the defection of the Miners. McNeill told me he was over familiar with them, last spring at Fort Rupert, and supported all their demands. Calling at Muir's House and remaining two hours there in secret confab with the Miners, was neither decorous, in a person of his rank, nor doing justice to the Company, yet McNeill says he did so.<sup>30</sup>

For his part, Blanshard reported to the Colonial Office that "the miners are unprovided with proper implements, discontented with their employers, and can scarcely be induced to work."<sup>31</sup>

The *Driver* spent three days at Fort Rupert, and took aboard 87 tons of coal, which the Hudson's Bay Company gave to her free of charge in return for the coal she had expended when, at Douglas's request, she had gone to Fort Nisqually and brought cattle and sheep to Fort Victoria. The *Driver* sailed on the 30th, bound for Victoria by way of Nootka, and Blanshard was duly honoured with a seventeen-gun salute from the fort as she left the harbour. Here, as elsewhere, Captain Johnson won the regard of those whom he visited. The *Fort Journal* reads: "Cap. Johnson is a nice man and uncommonly kind and rendered us a great deal of service by coming here, the appearance of a vessel of war has a good effect on the Indians."<sup>32</sup>

On April 9 Captain McNeill left in the *Beaver* for Fort Victoria, leaving a young clerk, George Blenkinsop, in charge, with one Beardmore as his assistant. With McNeill's departure, tension at Fort Rupert increased sharply; Indians, labourers,

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(28) John Work to Donald Ross, November 27, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(29) *Fort Rupert Journal*, March 27, 1850.

(30) Douglas to Simpson, October 15, 1850 (private), H.B.C. Arch., D5/29.

(31) Blanshard to Grey, April 8, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(32) *Fort Rupert Journal*, March 30, 1850.

and miners all alike became more troublesome. The natives demanded payment for land; thievery became bolder and more serious. The miners insisted that a stockade for their protection be built around the workings, which were at some distance from the fort. They first staged what would now be termed a slow-down, and then stopped work entirely. On April 18 things had already reached such a pass that Blenkinsop hustled off dispatches to Victoria in a canoe, in order to secure the advice and support of the company authorities there.<sup>33</sup> In the *Fort Journal*, which unfortunately has been lost except for a single volume that concludes on April 27, 1850, Andrew Muir emerges as the spokesman of the miners and a bold critic of the company. An echo of Chartism is heard when the *Journal* records that young Andrew declared that "Revolution was approaching, the Company's day was gone by and that men were beginning to hold their heads up &c. &c. and a lot of other rebellious language. . . ."<sup>34</sup>

This situation moved Blenkinsop to vigorous but imprudent action. Two of the miners (Andrew Muir being one) were locked up on May 3, and were kept in irons and fed on bread and water for six days. Four others were imprisoned for two days.<sup>35</sup> Thereafter all six were released, but they were kept within pickets. Andrew Muir later brought charges against Blenkinsop and others for illegal imprisonment from May 3 to as late as June 15.<sup>36</sup>

Little or nothing can be said in support of Blenkinsop's conduct. It called forth a stern rebuke from no less a person than Sir John Pelly, who insisted that the special status of the miners should have been respected, no matter what happened. Writing privately to Douglas, Pelly said:—

I can hardly conceive anything these men can have done that should require Such Severe Measures as putting them in Irons except they had been guilty

(33) *Ibid.*, April 18, 1850.

(34) *Ibid.*, April 26, 1850.

(35) Helmcken to Blanshard, July 2, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C. This is one of two lengthy reports in which Helmcken dealt with events at Fort Rupert in detail. They incorporate extracts from Helmcken's diary, copies of his letters, etc.

(36) *Ibid.*; also Andrew Muir to Blanshard, April 29, 1851, enclosed in Blanshard to Grey, June 10, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

of Felony it is such a bad example to the Natives nor can I conceive what Mr. Blenkinsop could have to do with the Men at all. He ought to have considered them as a Gang entirely under Mr. Muir & only through him to have had any communication with them at all.<sup>37</sup>

The miners and others involved in the Fort Rupert troubles appealed to Blanshard, who responded by appointing Dr. Helmcken Magistrate for the district, subject to the Queen's approval, and instructing him to deal with the disputes which had arisen. His reasons for choosing Helmcken, as set forth in a dispatch to London, are revealing:—

. . . This is the only appointment I have yet made in the Colony, for as there are no independent settlers, all cases that can occur, requiring magisterial interference, are disputes, between the representatives of the Hudson's Bay Company and their servants. To appoint the former Magistrates, would be to make them Judges in their own causes, and to arm them with additional power, which few of them would exert discretely. Mr. Helmcken has only recently arrived in the Colony from England, he is therefore a stranger to the petty brawls that have occurred, and the ill feelings they have occasioned between the Hudson's Bay Company and their servants; from this and from my knowledge of his character I have great confidence in his impartiality, his situation too as Surgeon renders him more free from the influence which might be exercised over another servant of that Company.<sup>38</sup>

The letter of appointment was dated June 22, 1850. It was accompanied by a private note expressing the Governor's confidence that Helmcken would not "shrink from the trouble of the office, though . . . the honor is likely for the present to be the only reward." Blanshard then pointed out certain legal aspects of Blenkinsop's alleged actions, for Helmcken's guidance, and advised him to bind over *both* parties in a dispute to keep the peace, a course which "cools the blood and discourages litigation."<sup>39</sup>

The commission reached Helmcken, who was already at Fort Rupert, on June 27, and the same evening he read it publicly in the court-yard of the post. The next morning he asked for volunteers to act as special constables, but none appeared, and he was compelled to conduct the business of his office unassisted.

(37) Pelly to Douglas, October 25, 1850 (private), *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(38) Blanshard to Grey, July 10, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(39) Blanshard to Helmcken, June 22, 1850 (private), *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

The first case heard concerned eight Kanakas, whose contracts were about to expire, and who wished to leave at once for California (where the gold excitement was intense) instead of returning to the Sandwich Islands, as their agreements required. As some essential documents were lacking, Helmcken was unable to deal with the matter. On June 29 he heard the miners' charges, but the absence of McNeill and others prevented him from taking any action. A few days later, not having received any satisfaction, some of the miners deserted the fort.<sup>40</sup>

By this time Helmcken had had enough of office and was anxious to resign, but his troubles were only beginning. Lying near Fort Rupert was the barque *England*, awaiting a cargo of coal. Presently Helmcken heard that there were on board her several deserters from the Hudson's Bay vessel *Norman Morison*. Though the captain admitted their presence, a search of the ship failed to reveal them, and it became evident that they had escaped ashore. On July 8 a report came in that three white men had been murdered by the Indians. This was confirmed the next day. At first Helmcken believed it was the miners that had been attacked, but the victims proved to be three of the *Norman Morison's* deserters. On the 11th Beardmore, Blenkinsop's assistant, volunteered to go and investigate. He learned that one of the bodies had been weighted and thrown into the sea, but found and hid the other two. These Helmcken later brought to Fort Rupert, where they were buried on July 16.<sup>41</sup>

In the course of his travels Beardmore had actually learned all about the murders, but for some reason he chose to give Helmcken a completely false report. Instead of telling him that they had been committed by the Newitty Indians, he concocted a complicated tale that implied that maurauders from the north had been responsible. Why he did this is not clear; presumably he conceived that he was doing his chief and the company a service by befuddling the Magistrate. Be this as it may, his dishonesty was to have unfortunate consequences.

Helmcken found the evidence unconvincing, but naturally blamed the Indians instead of Beardmore. He was greatly per-

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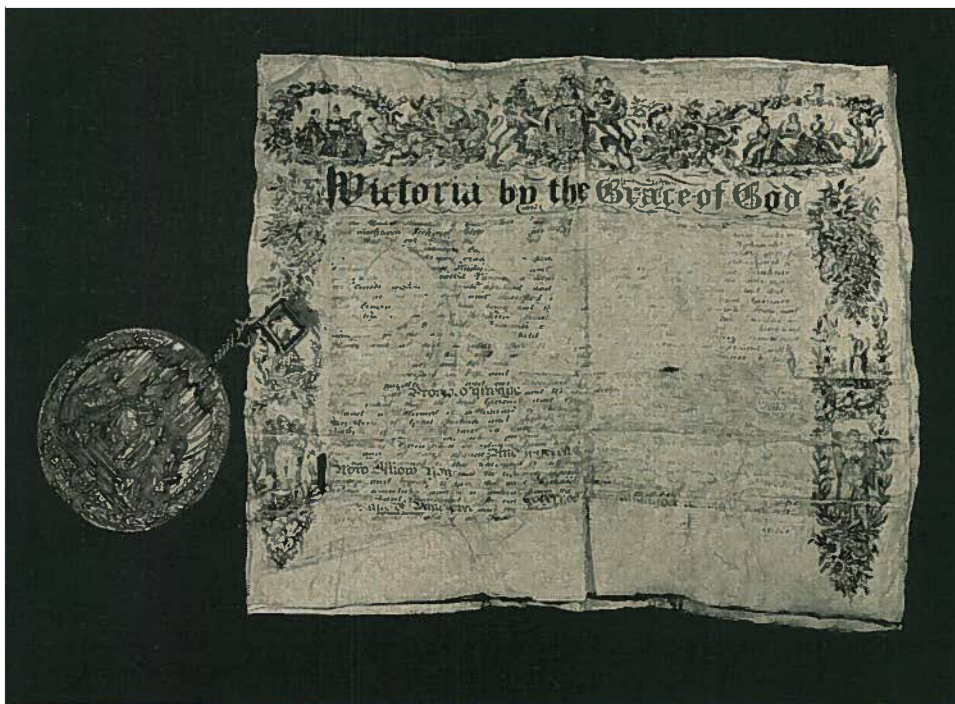
(40) See Helmcken's report to Blanshard, July 2, 1850, and supplement, MS., Archives of B.C.

(41) See Helmcken's second report to Blanshard, dated July 17, 1850, MS., Archives of B.C.





Richard Blanshard.



Royal Commission appointing Richard Blanshard Governor of Vancouver Island, dated July 16, 1849.

turbed by the whole affair, and sent a long report and appeal to Blanshard, in which he summarized his predicament as follows:—

Blankets have been offered for the missing body, and apprehension of the murderer or murderers, and if these be discovered, we cannot go to war, because the distance is great and our men too few to protect the Fort and fight also, even if they were willing so to do. Nevertheless something must be done and I should be glad if Your Excellency would come as soon as possible; because if we make no demonstration the Indians will lose all respect for us and may make an attack upon our fort, particularly as they well know also that the men here are in great disaffection, and whom they despise.<sup>42</sup>

In due course this report, accompanied by a great variety of rumours and accusations emanating from the miners, Kanakas, and others, reached the Governor in Victoria. In reply he wrote Helmcken a long private letter on August 6, in which he discussed the situation with sound common sense. He explained first why he was not leaving at once for Fort Rupert:—

I should have come to your assistance before this had I been able to bring any means of enforcing my authority, but I know that though "the Queens name is a tower of strength" it is only so when backed by the Queens bayonets, and as my visiting Fort Rupert is the only remaining threat that can be held out to the disaffected, I do not think it judicious to weaken its effect by coming alone, which could only end in bringing all authority into contempt. I have been expecting a ship of war on the coast and have sent dispatches to San Francisco and down the coast to hasten her arrival, as soon as she comes I will put matters on a proper footing at Fort Rupert. . . .

Next, Blanshard pointed out how foolish and melodramatic the conduct of Blenkinsop and others had been, and urged Helmcken to calm the atmosphere as much as he could:—

All that is said about *desertion* and *mutiny* is *utter nonsense*, and the people know it, they are offences that can only be committed under the articles of war, and in some instances under ships articles. . . . Above all pray try and impress in the officers the necessity of using calm, temperate language at all times, the silly threats of shooting *mutineers* and hanging and flogging *deserters*, form very plausible grounds for complaint and may lead to serious consequences.<sup>43</sup>

To assist Helmcken, he sent him a proclamation, to be affixed to the fort gate, which provided that "no person or persons shall for the present leave Fort Rupert further than their daily

(42) *Ibid.*

(43) Blanshard to Helmcken, August 6, 1850 (private), MS., Archives of B.C.

avocations shall require without a pass under the hand and seal of the resident magistrate, which will only be granted in cases of urgent necessity . . .”<sup>44</sup>

Regarding the murders, Blanshard’s advice was simple:—

With respect to the Massacre there is no use making any stir till we have sufficient force, if any information comes in your way receive it but keep it quiet . . .

Finally, he regretted that he had placed Helmcken “on such a bed of thorns,” but insisted that he must carry on as Magistrate for the present.<sup>45</sup>

It was at this point that Beardmore’s dishonest report to Helmcken once again exercised an unhappy influence. If Helmcken had been able to report that he knew definitely that the Newitty had committed the murders, all might have been well. Instead, he had been able to send the Governor only a few surmises of his own and the concoction of tales that Beardmore had served up to him. This left the Governor’s mind receptive to suspicions and charges against the Hudson’s Bay Company, and many of these were circulating freely in Victoria. The result can be traced in the dispatch to the Colonial Office dated August 18, 1850, in which Blanshard all but lends credence to the most damaging of the rumours. He reports that many of the white inhabitants in the colony:—

. . . do not scruple to accuse the officers of the Hudson’s Bay Company of having instigated the Indians to the deed by offers of reward for the recovery of the men (sailors who had absconded) dead or alive. I have not yet been able to inquire into the truth of this report, but it is very widely spread, and men say that they ground their belief on what the Hudson’s Bay Company have done before.

The same day Blanshard wrote this dispatch, Chief Factor John Work arrived at Fort Rupert from Victoria with the Governor’s letter and the enclosed proclamation for Helmcken. Two days later Beardmore went to Helmcken and told him the true details of the massacre, including the names of the murderers, who were all members of the Newitty tribe. His only

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(44) The original proclamation, dated August 12, 1850, is in the Archives of B.C.

(45) Blanshard to Helmcken, August 6, 1850.

excuse for his former action was that he had wished to tell the story first personally to Douglas or to Blanshard.<sup>46</sup>

To add to the misfortune, the Governor heard nothing of this for several weeks. On September 18 he reported to London that all communication with Fort Rupert was cut off, and that he was still waiting for a warship to arrive. He urged "the necessity of protecting this Colony by a garrison of regular troops," some of which "would be stationed at Fort Rupert, and the remainder near Victoria . . ." <sup>47</sup>

On the 22nd H.M.S. *Daedalous* finally appeared. She was a corvette of 1,082 tons, commanded by Captain George Greville Wellesley. He agreed to convey Blanshard to Fort Rupert, and the *Daedalous* evidently arrived there in the first days of October. He found that the "civil disturbances" had subsided, and that Helmcken had not found it necessary to publish the proclamation sent to him; but the matter of the three murders was still outstanding. The Governor at once took charge, and on October 9 wrote Dr. Helmcken a formal letter instructing him to hold a parley with the Newitty Indians, and authorizing him "to offer a reward of twenty blankets for the apprehension of each of the murderers payable so soon as he shall be identified by name and committed for trial . . ." <sup>48</sup> Helmcken went to the Newitty camp as directed, but when he arrived, as Blanshard later reported:—

The whole tribe took up arms; they acknowledged the murder, and offered furs in payment, but refused to surrender the guilty parties, declared themselves hostile, and threatened the lives of the Magistrate and his party, pointing their guns at them.<sup>49</sup>

Blanshard thereupon applied to Captain Wellesley for assistance, and on the 12th three armed boats were sent to the Newitty camp to secure the murderers. The camp was found to be deserted, and the lieutenant in charge had to content himself with burning "the houses and all the property he could find." By this time the *Daedalous* was running short of provisions, and on the 14th she was obliged to sail for San Francisco.<sup>50</sup>

(46) Helmcken's Fort Rupert diary, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(47) Blanshard to Grey, September 18, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(48) Blanshard to Helmcken, October 9, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(49) Blanshard to Grey, October 19, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(50) *Ibid.*

Though Blanshard remained behind at Fort Rupert, no further operations against the Indians were undertaken at this time. The last document on the case is the dispatch to the Colonial Office written by Blanshard on October 19. In addition to a narrative of the proceedings, it includes the following statement:—

I found that the officer of the Hudson's Bay Company [Beardmore] who had been dispatched by Dr. Helmcken to make enquiries respecting the murder had on his return given a totally false account of the result of those enquiries, asserting that he owed no obedience except to the Hudson's Bay Company. He shortly afterwards crossed the strait to a post of the Company's, and made a declaration of the real facts to Mr. Douglas, a Chief Factor of the Company. Of this statement I was not furnished with a copy till after my arrival here, a few days ago, and not till the investigation was concluded. Thus two conflicting stories were in circulation at once, which, being traced to the same source, raised suspicions of foul play, and caused the report that I have previously mentioned, viz: that the unfortunate men had been murdered by order of the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>51</sup>

Parts of the story still remain a matter of speculation. Did Beardmore tell the true story to Helmcken because Douglas told him he must, and sent him back forthwith to Fort Rupert? Or—as seems probable—did Blanshard write Douglas's name in error, and was it Chief Factor John Work, then stationed at Fort Simpson, who first heard the truth? Be that as it may, Blanshard was convinced that Beardmore had placed loyalty to the company above loyalty to the Queen, and that fact was of the greatest importance in the psychology of the Governor of a colony as closely knit to the company as was Vancouver Island.

As for the action taken against the Indian murderers, it seems clear to-day that Blanshard, and to a lesser extent Helmcken, were seeking to put into force the white man's law in what still remained a red man's country. Helmcken himself added a last word on the matter forty-two years after the murders occurred. Looking back on the episode in 1892 he wrote:—

It shows too how quarrels were settled Indian fashion by payment of damages. This Indian idea of law—and indeed it is their law—of payment applies even to persons killed, as shown too by their offer to pay for the murdered men at Newittie. This Indian law was often acted on at Fort Rupert and suited very well. None other would or could have been put in

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(51) *Ibid.*

force. Douglas perhaps might have landed and seized the Indian here at Newitte—but I do not believe even he would have tried.<sup>52</sup>

The Fort Rupert affair—of which we shall hear more later—was the most exciting event which occurred during the Blanshard régime. But much more important was the failure of the colony to develop as Blanshard and others had expected.

There was general agreement that the Island was suitable for such a venture. "From all accounts which we heard of it," the Honourable Edward Ellice stated in 1857, "it is a kind of England attached to the continent of America."<sup>53</sup> Blanshard himself considered that the country "was very well adapted for an English settlement."<sup>54</sup> Yet, when Blanshard arrived, Captain Grant was the only independent settler in the colony, and he remained the only one for some time. In June, 1850, Blanshard reported dolefully to the Colonial Office that "no settlers or immigrants have arrived, nor have any land sales been effected."<sup>55</sup> In October he stated that there were then "no settlers at all in the Island: Mr. Grant left for the Sandwich Islands some days ago."<sup>56</sup> As for the servant-settlers brought out by the Hudson's Bay Company itself, we know that a total of 187 men, 35 women, and 33 children, in all 255 persons, had arrived up to the time of Blanshard's departure in September, 1851. Another thirty landed shortly after he had left.<sup>57</sup>

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(52) *Reminiscences*, vol. iii, p. 92, MS., Archives of B.C. Bancroft, in his *History of British Columbia*, pp. 273-275, gives an account of the Fort Rupert troubles in which he repeats and supports the charge that Blenkinsop sent Indians in pursuit of the sailors with orders to bring them back dead or alive. "The sailors," he adds, "had been shot down in the forest by savages set upon them by an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company." We know to-day that Bancroft based his account upon a narrative by Michael Muir, dictated in 1878, now in the Bancroft Library at the University of California (photostat in Archives of B.C.). Helmcken's notes, written day by day when the events actually occurred, show beyond any doubt that the charge was false. Bancroft's *History* was published in 1887, and in 1892 Helmcken wrote bluntly in his *Reminiscences* (vol. iii, p. 14): "Bancroft tells lies."

(53) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 335.

(54) *Ibid.*, p. 286.

(55) Blanshard to Grey, June 15, 1850, MS., Archives of B.C.

(56) Blanshard to Grey, October 19, 1850, MS., Archives of B.C.

(57) *Return made since 1849 by the Hudson's Bay Company . . . relating to Vancouver's Island*, London, 1852, p. 2.

It is usual to lay the entire blame for this state of affairs—as did Blanshard—at the door of the Hudson's Bay Company. The argument is that fur-trading and colonization were incompatible; that anything in the nature of a colony must damage the fur trade; that the company assumed control of the colony in order to stifle it, and to prevent anyone else from making a success of it.

No doubt the question will remain controversial, but the evidence is by no means as one-sided as this statement of the case presupposes. Vancouver Island was not an important source of furs. The company, as a result of its experience in Oregon, was convinced that to establish a colony was the surest way to check American encroachment, and there is nothing to indicate that it considered a mere token settlement would suffice. Finally, it can hardly be a coincidence that the archives of the company, which include many private and personal letters, record no expressions of satisfaction that the enterprise was a failure. The intentions of the governor and committee seem to have been of the best; it was their management which was at fault.

From the first the project was hampered by the pound per acre which was charged for land, and by the conditions which were attached to larger purchases. The price was much too high, especially in view of the free land available in American territory, only a few miles away. For this the Colonial Office was to blame. "Lord Grey insisted that the Company should not sell land under a pound an acre."<sup>58</sup> But for the conditions which required a settler to take out with him one workman for every 20 acres purchased, the company itself was responsible. Above all, the company, remembering Oregon, feared the land squatter, and the land regulations seem to have been drawn up with his exclusion specially in mind. In December, 1849, Barclay wrote to Douglas:—

The Committee believes that some of the worst evils that afflict Colonies have arisen from the admission of persons of all descriptions, no regard being had to the character, means, or views of the immigrants. They have therefore established such conditions for the disposal of lands as they trust will have the effect of introducing a just proportion of labour and capital, and also of preventing the ingress of squatters, paupers, and land specu-

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(58) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 334.



lators. The principle of selection, without the invidiousness of its direct application, is thus indirectly adopted.<sup>59</sup>

As early as December, 1848, Douglas had raised the question of land terms in a letter to Pelly, who had replied as follows:—

You will see that your suggestion of giving each family a grant of 200 to 300 acres has not been adopted, nor can it be entertained. Men sent out in that way would in all probability not bring their lands into cultivation, or they might go away to the mining districts of California. The settlers required for Vancouvers Island are men of small property, who cannot live upon it in this country. If a man, a mechanic or farmer, has saved any given sum, say £300, he will be able to purchase 100 Acres of land,—have enough to pay for his land, and passage out for himself and five labourers (the number of persons required for 100 acres to cultivate it) under contracts for 5 or 7 years, as the Hudson's Bay Company hire their servants,—and to stock his farm: or if he has only enough to purchase 20 acres, (which, if a mechanic, will be sufficient to feed him, and he may employ himself in mechanics in which he is acquainted) he will have nobody to take out but himself and wife. The passage money will be made as easy as possible.<sup>60</sup>

In theory this was all very fine, but in practice it failed. For one thing, Vancouver Island was too remote. Immigrants preferred lands which were better known and nearer at hand, particularly the United States. It is too seldom realized that the American immigration into Oregon was in great part a movement from what are now the middle-western States. It was but the last step in a march across the continent. No similar beaten path led the way to Vancouver Island. Quite as important, even the Hudson's Bay Company itself could not answer many of the questions which prospective settlers naturally asked. In particular it lacked maps, and was quite unable to give an exact account of the location or character of the lands available.<sup>61</sup> The company quickly became aware of this deficiency, but unfortunately it took a year or more to correct. Writing to Douglas as early as February, 1850, before Blanshard had even set foot on Vancouver Island, Barclay confessed that:—

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(59) Barclay to Douglas, December, 1849, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(60) "Notes on Mr. Douglas's letter to Sir J. H. Pelly, Bart. dated 5th December 1848." Apparently written in May or June, 1849. *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(61) Blanshard complained that even at Fort Victoria information about lands, etc., was difficult to secure. See *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 287.

Until a more minute examination, and a map and plan of the country round Fort Victoria is made and sent home, it is not likely that many settlers will be offering who can pay £1 p acre, (and none other will be accepted,) . . .<sup>62</sup>

The following December he remarked in a private letter:—

A regular surveyor or even two should have been despatched in the first instance to ascertain the capabilities of the Island and if these should have proved inviting a number of settlers able to protect themselves would have soon followed.

Thinking of the Fort Rupert trouble, which had received considerable publicity in the British press, he added: "Now the prospect, from here at least, looks gloomier than ever."<sup>63</sup>

One other important factor must be taken into account—the California gold-rush. Blanshard questioned its influence,<sup>64</sup> but contemporary records do not bear out his opinion. Thus in March, 1850, Douglas remarked in a letter to A. C. Anderson:—

The California excitement continues as strong as ever in this quarter, to the great injury of the country. The benefit derived from the gold discovery is confined to the few, the detriment to the million.<sup>65</sup>

In June Blanshard himself was upset by reports of a rich strike nearer at hand, on the Spokane River.

"Should the favorable accounts of these mines prove correct," he reported to Lord Grey, "I fear that it will draw away all the Hudson's Bay Company's servants from Vancouver Island, and at present they form the entire population."<sup>66</sup>

Even as it was, the company's service was much demoralized, and desertions were numerous. Indeed, much of the trouble which arose during Blanshard's governorship can be traced to this cause. The Kanakas at Fort Rupert, who wished to break the terms of their agreements, wished to do so in order to go to California. The deserters from the *Norman Morison* were trying to get away and join the gold-rush. The state of affairs at Fort Simpson is recorded in a personal letter from John Work to Donald Ross, written in November:—

(62) Barclay to Douglas, February 8, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(63) Barclay to Douglas, December 27, 1850 (private), *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(64) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, pp. 288-289.

(65) Douglas to A. C. Anderson, March 18, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(66) Blanshard to Grey, June 15, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

The gold fever still rages unabated. You can scarcely imagine the effect the excitement has upon the Men. We have had a strike here for the first time this summer chiefly caused by three Kent men that were sent on here. These Englishmen are the Worst subjects we have got yet. The rest of the men are all brought round [though] not till I gave one of them a cudgeling. The Kent men are still off duty living on bread and water for near three months, rather than Work. It was in agitation among the men at one time to go off in a body. . . .<sup>67</sup>

Twice during his stay in Vancouver Island Blanshard was able to make the more hopeful report that rich specimens of gold ore had been secured from the Indians of the Queen Charlotte Islands, but the very mild excitement these occasioned in no way benefited the colony.<sup>68</sup>

It is interesting to find that opposition to the colony within the company arose not in London, but amongst its chief traders and chief factors. Many of them retained vivid memories of the trouble and expense which the Red River venture had cost the fur trade, and they had no desire to see the experience repeated. Peter Skene Ogden wrote to Donald Ross:—

There appears to be some grand plans in London the Colony is at present all the range [rage] if the Fur trade escapes we may consider ourselves fortunate if we do not meet with a second edition of Red River you were I believe one of those who agreed to that speculation and the heirs of Lord Selkirk laugh at your expense now so I warn you to look sharp<sup>69</sup>

In a private letter to Simpson, Ogden blamed the existing derangement of affairs in the Columbia upon "that thrice cursed Colony," Vancouver Island.<sup>70</sup>

For his part, Douglas could not see how he could possibly provide any considerable number of settler-servants, let alone independent settlers, with food, accommodation, and profitable employment. Even before the *Norman Morison* arrived, in March, 1850, he was much worried. "The anxiety and suspense of this life, is torturing," he remarked to A. C. Anderson, "wealth is truly no compensation, except it leaves one at liberty to seek a change."<sup>71</sup>

(67) John Work to Donald Ross, November 27, 1850, *M.S.*, Archives of B.C.

(68) Blanshard to Grey, August 18, 1850; March 29, 1851; *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(69) Ogden to Donald Ross, March 18, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(70) Ogden to Simpson, January 27, 1851 (private), H.B.C. Arch., D5/30.

(71) Douglas to Anderson, March 18, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

Douglas wrote his fears to London, and in February, 1850, Barclay replied, assuring him that:—

. . . care will be taken that you are not exposed to inconvenience by any large number [of independent settlers] until there is time for you to accumulate and store up a sufficient store of provisions, which they may buy until their own cultivation may render them independent of your stores.

But to Douglas's anxiety he added:—

In the meantime more people can be sent out as servants . . . if required, who may be employed by the Fur trade and Puget Sound Company in cultivating their lands. . . .<sup>72</sup>

That Douglas's opinion of such requirements was a modest one is shown by a later dispatch from Barclay:—

You seem to think that the number [of servant colonists] to be sent out this year should be limited to ten; but in this opinion they [the Governor and Committee] do not concur. You will have seen by my letter of the 5th ult. that they have resolved to forward by the ship to sail in September eighty persons—of whom perhaps sixty may be men fit for any kind of labour. . . .

And as if to prove beyond any doubt that his London superiors had no comprehension of local conditions and difficulties, Barclay enclosed, by way of suggesting how the housing difficulty might be met, an extract from a letter lately received in England from California:—

Wooden houses here are all the go. You would be astonished to see the immense quantities of wooden houses, and what splendid edifices are turned out in wood. You can have a large wooden house put up in a single day; they can build a city of them in a week, and comfortable strong houses too.<sup>73</sup>

Somewhere on its journey from London to Victoria this letter and extract must have passed the dispatch to Barclay which Douglas wrote on September 10, 1850, in which he dealt with the delay in completing Blanshard's residence, and noted that there was not a single house carpenter or joiner in the colony.

For convenience it may be noted here that the vessel to which Barclay referred was the *Tory*, which sailed from England late in 1850. When she arrived at Victoria in June, 1851, Douglas found that she had on board not 80, but no less than 130 passengers, and his feelings may be imagined. For his part, Blanshard seized the occasion to berate the company and by inference its local chief factor:—

(72) Barclay to Douglas, February 8, 1850, *M.S.*, Archives of B.C.

(73) *Ibid.*, August 16, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

The ship *Tory* has just landed about one hundred and twenty persons, all with two exceptions, servants of the Hudson's Bay Company . . . No preparations had been made here for their reception, beyond erecting a couple of log houses or rather sheds; in these the remainder are huddled together like cattle, as I have seen myself, to the number of thirty or thirty-five in each shed. . . .<sup>74</sup>

At the time of Blanshard's appointment the company had made it clear to Douglas that the Governor's sphere of action would be a restricted one. His duties were to be "confined to the administration of the civil government of the Colony and to military affairs. . . ."<sup>75</sup> So far as civil government was concerned, Blanshard had judged it best not even to appoint a Council, and the Fort Rupert affair had been the only occasion for military activity. By contrast, Douglas, in his capacity as agent for the company, was in complete control of land sales and public works, while his positions as chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company and local manager for the Puget Sound Agricultural Company gave him a firm grip on the whole economic life of the colony.

Blanshard's position was anything but comfortable, and it was perhaps inevitable that he should become an active opponent of the company. Less than a month after the Governor's arrival, Douglas was wondering if he had drawn some of his ideas from the unfriendly publications of James Edward Fitzgerald.<sup>76</sup> But for a time all went reasonably well. As late as July, 1850, Blanshard took pains to report to the Colonial Office that reports of "barbarous treatment of the Indian population by the Hudson's Bay Company" were "entirely without foundation."<sup>77</sup> Immediately thereafter, however, he became entangled in the Fort Rupert affair, and from that time on his hostility to the company never wavered.

It will be recalled that H.M.S. *Daedalous* left the Governor at Fort Rupert in October, 1850. How and when he travelled back to Victoria we do not know, but it is apparent that he returned with his mind made up to leave the colony. Eight months of

(74) Blanshard to Grey, June 10, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(75) Barclay to Douglas, August 3, 1849, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(76) See Pelly to Douglas, October 25, 1850 (private), *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(77) Blanshard to Grey, July 10, 1850, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

disillusionment and unhappiness in Vancouver Island had been enough. On November 18 he wrote two dispatches to Lord Grey. In one he asked for permission to visit England. In the other he tendered his resignation as Governor and requested an immediate recall. The reasons given for both requests were the same: the state of his health and the very great expense the office had occasioned.

Peter Skene Ogden remarked grimly in a letter a few weeks later that Vancouver Island could "now boast of a Gov[ernor] six months in the year in his bed and ten Colonists."<sup>78</sup> His description of the state of Blanshard's health does not seem to have been exaggerated. The Governor himself reported to Grey:—

. . . Since my arrival here I have suffered so severely from continual attacks of ague and subsequent relapses that I am now enfeebled to a degree which renders me incapable of the slightest exertion.<sup>79</sup>

My health has completely given way . . . and shows no signs of amending.<sup>80</sup>

Dr. Benson, formerly surgeon at Fort Victoria, had been transferred to Fort Vancouver, and Blanshard was unable to send a medical certificate. Instead, he sent a detailed description of his condition to his father, who secured the opinion of two London physicians. One declared that he was not only "labouring under the most severe form of intermittent fever," but was "also evidently suffering severely from internal congestion & other effects of ague, [such] as frequent faintings & breathlessness from slight exertion."<sup>81</sup> Blanshard's condition at this time was such that Dr. W. F. Tolmie was brought from Fort Nisqually and remained in consultation at Fort Victoria for several weeks.<sup>82</sup>

(78) Ogden to Simpson, January 27, 1851 (private), H.B.C. Arch., D5/30.

(79) Blanshard to Grey, November 18, 1850 (dispatch no. 8), *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(80) *Ibid.*, dispatch no. 9.

(81) Statement by S. J. Goodfellow, M.D., March 29, 1851. In *C.O. 305*, vol. 2. *Transcript* in Archives of B.C.

(82) The following entries from the Fort Nisqually *Journal* are pertinent: ". . . [November 19, 1850] In the morning Mr. De Shenie & Mr. Ross arrived from Victoria bringing with them news of the sudden illness of Govr. Blanchard [*sic*] as also to request Dr. Tolmie's immediate attendance at Victoria, in accordance to which Dr. Tolmie accompanied by

About Christmas time, 1850, Dr. Helmcken returned to Victoria to replace Benson. In his reminiscences he recalls the wretched state of Blanshard's health, and its effect upon the character of the man:—

. . . He had been in malarious countries—smoked a great deal and had to take morphine for his attacks and so being in bad health was a pessimist and blamed the condition of things, when in fact the drawback was in his own health. Blanshard however was a gentleman—very agreeable to his friends—of rather military carriage and military moustache. . . . Under different conditions he would have been a very different man.<sup>83</sup>

Turning next to financial matters, Blanshard first complained that the Hudson's Bay Company, contrary to his expectations and to the promises of Sir John Pelly, had not met the entire cost of his outward journey to Vancouver Island. He had received only £175, whereas—owing, no doubt, to the long delay in the arrival of H.M.S. *Driver* at Panama—the actual cost had been about £300.<sup>84</sup> Worse still, his private fortune was proving “utterly insufficient for the mere cost of living here, so high have prices been run up by the Hudson's Bay Company. . . .”<sup>85</sup> Later he estimated his expenses at £1,100 per annum.<sup>86</sup> He advised Grey to appoint as his successor “some person . . . whose larger fortune may enable him to defray charges which involve me in certain ruin.”<sup>87</sup>

Blanshard knew that a considerable period must pass before a reply could arrive from London. As it turned out, nine of the seventeen months he spent in Vancouver Island still lay ahead at the time he wrote his letter of resignation.

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Mrs. Tolmie & Mr. Ogilvie left forthwith to proceed to Victoria. . . . [December 12, 1850] . . . arrived this evening Dr. & Mrs. Tolmie from Victoria. Gov? Blanchard [*sic*] is slowly recovering his health.” Victor J. Farrar, “The Nisqually Journal,” *Washington Historical Quarterly*, XII (1921), pp. 146, 220.

(83) Helmcken's *Reminiscences*, vol. iii, pp. 37–38. *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(84) See Blanshard to Grey, November 18, 1850 (dispatch no. 9); *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 288.

(85) Blanshard to Grey, November 18, 1850 (dispatch no. 9), *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(86) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 288.

(87) Blanshard to Grey, November 18, 1850 (dispatch no. 9), *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

They proved to be months of recurring friction between the Governor and the Hudson's Bay Company. A serious difference soon arose over the question of the company's land reserves at and around Fort Victoria. In February, 1851, Blanshard reported to Grey that Douglas was claiming "nearly thirty square miles of the best part of the Island," and that he admitted that the company had "no intention of paying for it."<sup>88</sup> The same month Douglas informed Simpson that Blanshard would "do everything in his power to prevent a free grant being made to use of the Reserve,"<sup>89</sup> and in March he repeated the warning:—

The Governor is keeping a strict eye over the Reserves of Land, for the Hudson's Bay and Puget Sound Companies. He declares he will see they pay for every acre taken. I do not know how far his power may extend; but it is only proper to inform you of his intention as communicated to several parties here, who gave me the information.<sup>90</sup>

As a matter of fact, if Douglas ever claimed the 30 square miles, he greatly exceeded both the rights and intentions of the company. As early as August, 1849, Pelly had informed him quite specifically that "the Fur Trade . . . have no interest in the Island except in that portion of it which they were in possession of before the Oregon Treaty. . . ." Whatever additional land might be required would be purchased at the regular price of £1 per acre.<sup>91</sup> In January, 1851, Barclay wrote Douglas in similar terms, and added that the extent of the reserve to be received free under the treaty "must be accurately marked out and agreed with Governor Blanshard. . . ."<sup>92</sup> Douglas countered by asking for instructions. He explained that the fur-trade reserve, as originally chosen by himself in 1841, consisted of:—

. . . rather over 20 square miles. The extent, however, actually occupied by tillage and inclosures, does not need two square miles, while the Cattle ranged over an additional space of about 4 square miles. . . .

Was he to claim the whole 20 or only the 6 square miles?<sup>93</sup>

(88) *Ibid.*, February 3, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(89) Douglas to Simpson, February 24, 1851 (private), H.B.C. Arch., D5/30.

(90) Douglas to Simpson, March 27, 1851 (private), H.B.C. Arch., D5/30.

(91) Pelly to Douglas, August 4, 1849, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(92) Barclay to Douglas, January 1, 1851. Quoted in Berens to Newcastle, June 20, 1860; see H.B. Co. Colonial Office papers, vol. 729, p. 23; *Transcript* in Archives of B.C.

(93) Douglas to Barclay, April 16, 1851. *Ibid.*, p. 24.



The same month Blanshard complained that the reserves served to "effectually prevent" settlement; that surveys were essential, but that the company had "never even engaged a Surveyor."<sup>94</sup> In this he, in his turn, was being less than fair. The celebrated Captain Grant had represented himself as a qualified surveyor, and had been engaged by the company in that capacity before he left England in 1848.<sup>95</sup> Indeed, he actually drew his salary for one year, to the tune of £162.<sup>96</sup> In May, 1850, he commenced a survey of the company's lands, but it quickly became apparent that he was quite incompetent, and the attempt came to nothing.

Time brought the land-reserve controversy to an end, but unfortunately the principal point in dispute was not settled until shortly after Blanshard's departure. In July, 1851, Barclay informed Douglas that the 6 square miles were to be the "utmost extent of the land" to be given free to the fur trade.<sup>97</sup> Later an actual survey revealed that the area claimed contained only 3,084 acres, or less than 5 square miles, and this was duly deeded to the company.<sup>98</sup>

Blanshard's one brief moment of satisfaction seems to have come when he detected certain errors in the Colonial accounts, which Douglas acknowledged and corrected, and the astute analysis which accompanied his report of the incident probably constituted his most damaging criticism of the company. Expenditures, he pointed out, had consisted mostly of expenses incurred in extinguishing the land titles of the Indian tribes about Victoria and Sooke. These had been paid for in goods, which Blanshard stated had been charged to the colony at three times the price the company would have entered them in its own trading.<sup>99</sup>

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(94) Blanshard to Grey, April 28, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(95) Grant to the Under-Secretary of State for Colonies, November 8, 1848; *Report of the Provincial Archives Department . . . 1913*, p. V 68.

(96) *Return made since 1849 by the Hudson's Bay Company . . . relating to Vancouver's Island*, p. 3.

(97) Barclay to Douglas, July 16, 1851. In Berens to Newcastle, June 26, 1860; *loc. cit.*, p. 24.

(98) *Ibid.*, p. 25.

(99) Blanshard to Grey, February 12, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

These circumstances, no doubt, partly account for the distrust and opposition with which Blanshard in April greeted a letter from Archibald Barclay which might conceivably have marked a turning-point in his fortunes in Vancouver Island. Written on January 1, 1851, it informed Blanshard that the Hudson's Bay Company and the Puget Sound Agricultural Company were both to become *purchasers* of large tracts of land, and continued:—

. . . The Governor and Committee feel that they may to a moderate extent anticipate the funds which will thus come into their hands in trust for the Colonization and improvement of the Island. They have therefore determined to authorize Mr Douglas to make you advances to the extent of Four thousand pounds as it may from time to time be required in erecting some of the buildings most urgently required.

Barclay then proceeded to list the buildings which would probably be needed, which included "a moderate sized but respectable house and premises" for the Governor himself. He continued:—

The site of these buildings should be near the Fort Victoria for convenience and protection, and the materials should be stone as preferable to wood to diminish the risk of fire.<sup>100</sup>

But Blanshard was not to be placated, and rejected the entire project. In a dispatch to the Colonial Office he dealt at length with the land-reserve problem, and contended that the huge tract of land claimed by the company, and its failure to survey its claims, made this or any other development unwise and impracticable.<sup>101</sup> At the same time he wrote a long and critical letter to the Hudson's Bay Company in which he expressed the opinion that the vicinity of Fort Victoria was not at all suitable for a settlement, and recommended that the town should be situated on the eastern side of Esquimalt Harbour.<sup>102</sup>

Both letters show ability and imagination, and it is interesting to speculate as to what might have occurred if Blanshard had had the health and strength to remain in the Island for a longer period.

As it was, his sojourn was drawing to a close. Much of his time was spent with a little group of malcontents, with whom he had little or nothing in common except an antipathy for the

(100) Barclay to Blanshard, January 1, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(101) Blanshard to Grey, April 28, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(102) Blanshard to the Hudson's Bay Company, London, April 20, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

Hudson's Bay Company. It included the Rev. Robert Staines, the interesting but eccentric chaplain at Fort Victoria, and Edward E. Langford, a somewhat ineffectual bailiff for the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, to whom Blanshard was distantly related.<sup>103</sup> In earlier days Dr. Benson, who was later transferred to Fort Vancouver, had also been a member. Of him and the group in general Helmcken wrote later:—

I suppose Mr. Douglas preferred Benson's absence—he was a radical—a grumbler—had become attached to Governor Blanshard, and shared with him mutual grumbles about the H.B. Co. These people were in too much of a hurry, and thought a colony could be formed in a day. . . . Any how Benson was a sterling, honest, kindhearted upright man, always ready to do good, but somehow did not fit in, possibly he could not serve two master[s] Blanshard and the H B Co in the shape of Mr. Douglas—in fact this divided authority led to “parties” and was the source of very much bad feeling and trouble afterwards.<sup>104</sup>

Douglas must have been sorely tried at times, but his references to the Governor continued to be courteous and considerate. A private letter to Simpson, written in May, 1851, gives an interesting glimpse of their relations:—

By a late letter from Mr. Barclay, I observe that the Committee suppose that I am not on good terms with Governor Blanchard [*sic*]. That is a mistake as nothing disagreeable, of a private nature ever occurred to disturb our harmony. True it is we differ in opinion as to public matters—as for example he is anxious to have a military force stationed on the Island—which is unquestionably a proper measure, but as an agent of the Company who would have to maintain that force I have endeavoured to show that there was no positive necessity for it. Again he is opposed to the large reserves of land made for the Companies which he, with justice, opposes as injurious to the country, while I am in duty bound to maintain their rights.

It is not as a private individual but as a servant of the Company that there has ever been a difference of opinion. I have the utmost respect for Mr. Blanshard and shall do everything in my power to make him comfortable.<sup>105</sup>

Late in June, 1851, H.M.S. *Portland*, flagship of the Commander-in-Chief on the Pacific Station, dropped anchor in Esquimalt Harbour. Her arrival was a sequel to the Fort Rupert affair. Captain Wellesley of H.M.S. *Daedalous* had carried to Rear-

(103) Helmcken's *Reminiscences*, vol. iii, p. 37, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(104) *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

(105) Douglas to Simpson, May 21, 1851 (private), H.B.C. Arch., D5/30. See also Douglas to Barclay, March 21, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

Admiral Hornby a dispatch from Blanshard asking for further action against the Indians. Hornby was on the point of handing over his command to Rear-Admiral Fairfax Moresby, but promised Blanshard that the first thing he would "press upon Admiral Moresby" would be to send a vessel to Vancouver Island which would remain there "the greater part of the summer" of 1851.<sup>106</sup> Moresby took a serious view of the matter, and came north himself in the *Portland* to investigate. He asked for a report on events since the departure of the *Daedalous*, and in reply Blanshard wrote:—

I caused a reward to be offered for the apprehension of the murderers, and have since been informed that the tribe have shewn an inclination to surrender them, but this they will not do unless intimidated by the presence of an overwhelming force such as one of the H.M. ships.<sup>107</sup>

Moresby agreed at once to help. On June 29 he informed the Governor that Captain Fanshawe, of H.M.S. *Daphne*, had been ordered to receive him on board, convey him to the "Northern Settlements," and exact satisfaction from the Newitties Indians.<sup>108</sup>

The expedition reached Beaver Harbour about the middle of July. There Blanshard learned that the Newitties were encamped on an island not far distant. He then requested Captain Fanshawe to "dispatch a proper force to seize as many of the tribe as may be found and also to seize and destroy their encampment canoes and other property." He urged that drastic action be taken if necessary, as the "long impunity" of the tribe was "producing a very bad effect upon the neighbouring tribes."<sup>109</sup>

Fanshawe immediately sent off sixty men under a lieutenant, and this force attacked the Indians at dawn. The natives at once abandoned their encampment and fled to the woods, whereupon the attackers burned their houses and canoes, as instructed. Douglas himself described the dispersal of the tribe as complete, and the losses they suffered as very severe.<sup>110</sup>

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(106) Hornby to Blanshard, dated Valparaiso, January 10, 1851. *Transcript* in Archives of B.C.

(107) Blanshard to Moresby, June 27, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(108) Moresby to Blanshard, June 29, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(109) Blanshard to Fanshawe, July 18, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(110) See Lieutenant E. Lacy to Captain Fanshawe, July 21, 1851; Fanshawe to Blanshard, July 21, 1851; Douglas to W. F. Tolmie, August 6, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

The *Daphne* loitered in the vicinity of Fort Rupert until July 30, and then sailed back to Victoria, where she arrived on August 3, after a pleasant voyage. The next day Blanshard reported the action, with obvious satisfaction, to the Colonial Office. His dispatch concluded:—

A most beneficial effect has been produced on the tribes in the neighbourhood, who had previously caused much alarm among the Hudson's Bay Company's servants, and endangered the safety of the post at Fort Rupert. For the future I trust that place will remain in safety, which it did not appear to be before.<sup>111</sup>

In justice to Blanshard it should be noted that Douglas substantially agreed with this opinion, though he was somewhat less certain of the permanence of the cure.<sup>112</sup>

Owing to the slowness of communication with England, the whole Fort Rupert affair, from first to last, had taken place before Blanshard received a reply to the earliest of his dispatches relating to it. But the ink was scarcely dry on his report of the cruise of the *Daphne* when he was handed a package of dispatches which had left the Colonial Office in March and April of 1851. Their contents were upsetting to say the least. In a special military dispatch Grey took him roundly to task for his conduct of the whole affair. The Government, Grey stated, could not undertake to protect citizens who chose to wander off amongst the Indians, far from settlements. Nor was he convinced that the settlements themselves had actually been in any danger. Worse still, he was extremely critical of the employment of the *Daedalous*, in October, 1850. “. . . I by no means feel satisfied,” Grey wrote, “of the prudence of the steps which you took in directing the expedition, which appears to have failed in its main object.”<sup>113</sup>

The unkindest cut of all was reserved for a separate dispatch, in which Grey informs Blanshard that he is enclosing a letter from the Secretary of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty:—

. . . on the subject of a passage afforded to you in Her Majesty's Ship “*Daedalous*” between the 30th of September and 9th of October last, and

(111) Blanshard to Grey, August 4, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(112) Douglas to W. F. Tolmie, August 6, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(113) Grey to Blanshard, March 20, 1851, *M.S.*, Archives of B.C.

I have to request that you will cause the expense thereof amounting to £47-15-0 to be paid to Captain Wellesley of that Vessel.<sup>114</sup>

Blanshard's feelings can be imagined, but he replied promptly and with spirit. So far as the protection of persons outside the settlements was concerned, he begged to point out that it was:—

. . . scarcely applicable to the unfortunate Seamen who were murdered at Fort Rupert, as the murder was committed at a considerably shorter distance from that post than is frequently visited by the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company on their shooting excursions.

Dealing next with the peril of the settlement, he continued:—

That the Settlement was in danger I was fully persuaded, both by what I saw myself, and by the apprehensions expressed by the Hudson's Bay Company's servants who were on the spot: and I still firmly believe that the visit of H.M.S. *Daedalous*, prevented a massacre.<sup>115</sup>

So far as the payment for his passage in the *Daedalous* was concerned, Blanshard turned the shaft neatly by stating that he presumed that Grey's remark that he "did not consider it as an expense that ought to be paid by the public, referred to the terms of the grant of Vancouver Island to the Hudson's Bay Company," and that he had therefore forwarded a copy of the letter to the governor and directors of the company, "requesting them to make the payment, for no funds are at my disposal as Governor."<sup>116</sup> Who actually paid the claim in the end does not appear.

A third dispatch from Grey informed Blanshard that his resignation had been accepted, and that he was at liberty to leave the colony. Fortunately, H.M.S. *Daphne* was still in Island waters, though about to sail for San Francisco, and Blanshard immediately applied to Captain Fanshawe for a passage as far as that port.<sup>117</sup>

We do not know just when it became known in Victoria that Douglas was to be Blanshard's successor. Judging by the dates of various letters and dispatches, it seems probable that the Governor received the news some days at least before Douglas.

(114) *Ibid.*, April 20, 1851.

(115) Blanshard to Grey, August 11, 1851 (dispatch no. 18), *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(116) *Ibid.*, dispatch no. 20.

(117) *Ibid.*, dispatch no. 19.

It is not surprising that Blanshard regarded the appointment as a calamity for the colony. In May he had charged in a dispatch to Grey that the "whole tendency of the system pursued by the Hudson's Bay Company" was "to exclude free settlers, and reserve the Island, either as an enlarged Post of their own or a desert."<sup>118</sup> With Douglas in office, he saw all opposition stifled and this policy sweeping everything before it.

Late in August Blanshard received a petition, the first three paragraphs of which read as follows:—

May it please your Excellency,

We, the undersigned, inhabitants of Vancouver's Island, having learned with regret that your Excellency has resigned the government of this colony, and understanding that the government has been committed to a chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, cannot but express our unfeigned surprise and deep concern at such an appointment.

The Hudson's Bay Company being, as it is, a great trading body, must necessarily have interests clashing with those of independent colonists. Most matters of a political nature will cause a contest between the agents of the Company and the colonists. Many matters of a judicial nature also, will, undoubtedly, arise in which the colonists and the Company (or its servants) will be contending parties, or the upper servants and the lower servants of the Company will be arrayed against each other. We beg to express in the most emphatical and plainest manner, our assurance that impartial decisions cannot be expected from a Governor, who is not only a member of the Company, sharing its profits, his share of such profits rising and falling as they rise and fall, but is also charged as their chief agent with the sole representation of their trading interests in this island and the adjacent coasts.

Furthermore, thus situated, the colony will have no security that its public funds will be duly disposed of solely for the benefit of the colony in general, and not turned aside in any degree to be applied to the private purposes of the Company, by disproportionate sums being devoted to the improvement of the tract of land held by them, or otherwise unduly employed.<sup>119</sup>

The petitioners, who numbered fifteen, claimed that they constituted "the whole body of the independent settlers" in Vancouver Island, and asked Blanshard to appoint a Council before his departure, in order that their interests might be better protected.

Of the fifteen, six were members of the Muir family, who had come out as miners but had since taken up land at Sooke. Three

(118) *Ibid.*, May 12, 1851.

(119) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 293.

others were settlers in the same district. The remaining names were those of James Yates, James Cooper, William McDonald, James Sangster, Thomas Blinkhorn, and, lastly but by no means least, the Rev. Robert John Staines, "Chaplain to the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company." From what is known of the signatories, it is difficult to believe that any one of them was the author of the petition, and the suspicion arises that it was at least revised by Blanshard himself. With this view Helmcken agrees:—

This document comprises more than all of the real or fanciful grievances [felt by the settlers] and in my opinion if not actually penned by Blanshard, was instigated by him—the grievances had been talked about—new ones occasionally arose which could be traced to the Governors coterie and their conversations.<sup>120</sup>

Shortly before the petition was presented, Blanshard had come upon an instance of the way in which the jurisdiction of Governor and chief factor could come into conflict, even in small matters. A new captain took charge of the famous schooner *Cadboro*, owned by the Hudson's Bay Company. As had been usual, Douglas made the necessary entries in the ship's papers. The captain, however, had doubts about the legality of this proceeding and took the register to Blanshard:—

. . . He was not at all satisfied with the alteration which had been made in the register, and he asked whether the Hudson's Bay Company's servants had any right to make these alterations. On referring to the Navigation Act, I concluded that they had not, and I told him so. However, the next day, or the day after that, he went to sea without seeing me on the subject. . . . She [the *Cadboro*] went to sea with the register signed by Mr. Douglas. When she returned to port, Blanshard pursued the matter further:—

I sent for the master and ordered him to produce his register, and on its being produced I pointed out to him that it had been illegally signed, and I summoned both him and Mr. Douglas to account for it.

Both captain and chief factor duly appeared, and Blanshard bound them over to appear when called upon, on their own personal security. He told the Select Committee in 1857 that he did not imagine that any further action was ever taken, as he had left the Island very soon afterwards. But doubtless Blanshard found some satisfaction in having in this way pointed out

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(120) Helmcken's *Reminiscences*, vol. iii, p. 105, MS., Archives of B.C.



to Douglas that a change had really come about in Vancouver Island, and that it was no longer legal for him to make entries in a ship's register which Blanshard himself readily admitted had in the past been quite properly "signed over and over again, on every change of masters, by the resident chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company."<sup>121</sup>

Douglas himself was none too pleased when he learned that it was intended that he should become Governor. His brief and provisional contact with the office in 1849 had not ended very happily from his point of view. He always contended that he had actually been appointed Governor *pro tempore* on May 12, 1849, and that he was entitled to payment at the rate mentioned by Simpson—£300 per annum—from that date until Blanshard's arrival in March, 1850. Douglas raised the question of payment in a letter to Simpson in November, 1850,<sup>122</sup> and the matter was not finally disposed of until as late as 1854. The company then finally ruled out the claim, and Barclay explained that the appointment had been "merely temporary, and arising out of the emergencies at that time."<sup>123</sup>

It will be recalled that Douglas had resented being transferred to Vancouver Island. In Victoria he held three executive positions, and each in turn had produced a crop of troubles. In November, 1850, he remarked privately to Simpson that he was often sick of the whole affair.<sup>124</sup> A few months later we find him grumbling to a fellow officer about the amount of clerical work his duties involved:—

Corresponding with the Governor and Committee, Governor and Council, Proprietors of Vancouvers Island, Pugets Sound Agricultural Company, and Sir George Simpson, once a month in duplicate is rather more than should fall to my share of *extra work*. I am getting tired of it.<sup>125</sup>

He was in no mood to welcome still another appointment, particularly a provisional one; but to his disgust that was precisely

(121) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, pp. 290–291.

(122) Douglas to Simpson, November 22, 1850 (private), H.B.C. Arch., D5/29.

(123) Barclay to Douglas, February 3, 1854, *ibid.*, A6/30.

(124) Douglas to Simpson, November 22, 1850 (private), *ibid.*, D5/29.

(125) Douglas to Tolmie, April 21, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

what he was asked to accept in the dispatches from England. In September he wrote to Simpson:—

Our worthy friend Governor Blanshard lately sailed for England . . . and I am again appointed Governor pro tempe [*sic*], this is too much of a good thing. I am getting tired of Vancouver's Island.<sup>126</sup>

This time, however, no hitch was to occur. Even before he wrote these words, Douglas had been appointed Governor, and his commission arrived in Victoria in November, 1851.

Blanshard would have been interested in a letter written about this time to Simpson by Peter Skene Ogden. Surveying the scene from the detached vantage point of Fort Vancouver, the redoubtable old chief factor wrote:—

We are taught that a man cannot serve two masters but their Honours [the Governor and Committee] are of a different opinion—vide Douglas' new appointment and not only two but three. C.F. in the Fur Trade, Agent for Puget Sound Coy and Gov. of Vancouver's Island, if there be not a clashing of Interests in the management of these different interests—I wonder.<sup>127</sup>

The last London mail which Blanshard received in Vancouver Island included a letter from Archibald Barclay suggesting that the Governor should appoint Douglas a member of Council before he departed.<sup>128</sup> Judging by the petition he received and appears to have inspired, to appoint a Council had also been Blanshard's own intention. He decided that it should consist of three members, and on August 27, 1851, duly nominated the following Councillors: James Douglas (senior member), John Tod, and James Cooper.<sup>129</sup> Tod was a famous old fur-trader who had retired in 1848 from the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. Captain Cooper had commanded several vessels owned by the company, but had arrived in Vancouver Island as an independent settler and trader in the spring of 1851. He had signed the petition submitted to Blanshard.

The Council met first on August 30. The oath of allegiance was administered and the members then took their seats. The brief proceedings are thus recorded in the old minute-book:—

(126) Douglas to Simpson, September 15, 1851 (private), H.B.C. Arch., D5/31.

(127) Ogden to Simpson, August 10, 1851 (private), *ibid.*, D5/31.

(128) Barclay to Blanshard, May 1, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(129) The original proclamation making the appointments, subject to approval, is in the Archives of B.C. See also Blanshard to Grey, August 30, 1851, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

The Governor announced his having resigned the office of Governor of the Colony, and till the arrival of a fresh commission the Senior Member of Council would fill the place according to the instructions of which a printed copy were laid on the table.

The said Members of Council have hereupon resolved that they will meet at such times and in such places as may be hereafter appointed for the consideration of public affairs. This 30th August, 1851.<sup>130</sup>

Having thus provided for the conduct of the government of the colony, Blanshard sailed in H.M.S. *Daphne* for San Francisco, where he arrived on September 10, "seven days from Vancouver's Island."<sup>131</sup> Beyond that point nothing is known of his movements, except that he evidently returned to England by way of Panama. While he was crossing the isthmus some accident must have occurred, as his papers were under water for several hours in the River Chagres.<sup>132</sup> Fortunately, he was able to rescue his commission, and some seventy years later the water-stained parchment returned to Vancouver Island, where it is preserved in the Archives of British Columbia.

The later years of Blanshard's life cannot be traced in any detail. A few months after his return to England, on May 19, 1852, he married Emily, daughter of James Hyde, of Aller, Somerset.<sup>133</sup> In June, 1857, he made two interesting appearances which have been recorded in print. On the 15th he gave evidence before the famous Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company, and the account of the proceedings occupies a dozen pages in the printed *Report*. His questioners included Mr. Roebuck and the Honourable Edward Ellice. It has been pointed out that Blanshard gave the date of his arrival in Vancouver Island incorrectly as "in the beginning of February, or the end of January,"<sup>134</sup> but there is no justification for the inference that

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(130) *Minutes of the Council of Vancouver Island, MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(131) *San Francisco Daily Alta California*, September 11, 1851.

(132) *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 287-288. Blanshard exaggerated when he said in 1857 that *all* his papers were lost, as the original of his instructions, signed by the Queen, is in the Provincial Archives and shows no sign of water damage. The commission and instructions were both presented to the Archives by Sir Leicester Harmsworth in March, 1922.

(133) Joseph Foster, *Men-at-the-Bar*.

(134) *Report of the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 294.

his statements were vague or unconvincing. They vary surprisingly little from the facts recorded and opinions expressed in letters, dispatches, and other documents contemporary with the events he was describing.

A week later, on June 22, Blanshard attended the meeting of the Royal Geographical Society before which Captain W. Colquhoun Grant read his *Description of Vancouver Island*. Grant estimated the Indian population at 17,000, and during the discussion of the paper Blanshard expressed the opinion that the figure was too high.

When he was there he took great pains to make inquiries of the people who, he considered, were best qualified to judge, and they stated the numbers to be, at the outside, 10,000, and that the population was decreasing.<sup>135</sup>

Blanshard had become a fellow of the society in 1857, and retained his membership as long as he lived.<sup>136</sup>

By this time Blanshard seems to have inherited the family fortune, and for the most part he lived as a country gentleman at Fairfield, an estate near Lymington, on the Solent, in Hampshire. He evidently maintained a yacht, as her captain is remembered in his will. Mrs. Blanshard was well known for her charities. She died in February, 1866, at the early age of 49.<sup>137</sup>

Blanshard seldom visited Fairfield after his wife's death, though he kept a staff of servants there. Instead, he resided either in London or on the 1,000-acre estate of Horsey Island, Essex, a few miles south of Harwich. The neighbouring church of St. Michael, in Kirby-le-Soken, was "handsomely restored" about 1880 at Blanshard's expense,<sup>138</sup> and an old resident recalled in 1931 that the Blanshards "used to distribute blankets at Xmas

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(135) *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, I (1855-57), p. 489.

(136) Librarian, Royal Geographical Society, to A. J. Mayes, October 19, 1928, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(137) "The decease of this truly excellent lady has thrown a gloom over the neighbourhood. It is not only a large circle of friends that will deplore her loss, but that loss will be keenly felt by many of the poor of the town." *Lymington and Isle of Wight Chronicle*, February 9, 1866. Mrs. Blanshard died on February 4.

(138) J. Y. Watson, *The Tendring Hundred in the Olden Time*, 3rd edition, Colchester, 1884.

in the old style, and that he was the mainstay of this parish."<sup>139</sup> He appears to have taken an active part in the life of the counties in which his estates were situated and was a Justice of the Peace for both Essex and Hampshire.

Helmcken states that Blanshard was an invalid in his later years.<sup>140</sup> According to Alexander Begg "his eyesight failed, and before his death he became totally blind."<sup>141</sup> He died in Upper Berkeley Street, London, on June 5, 1894, in his seventy-seventh year.<sup>142</sup> He was buried beside his wife in Boldre Churchyard, near Lymington. An account of the funeral reads in part as follows:—

Since the death of his wife in 1866 he seldom spent much time at his Lymington residence, but his interest in the place was always kept up, and appeals to his charity for any local object always met with a generous response, and in his death the poor have lost a generous benefactor. The procession left the Mansion at Fairfield about 11 o'clock, and as it passed through the town there was a very general mark of public mourning.<sup>143</sup>

Blanshard's will disposed of a personal estate amounting to over £130,000.<sup>144</sup> He died childless, and most of his fortune went to a nephew and niece. He left a number of bequests to friends and annuities to several servants, including one Fanny Foss, who had attended his wife during her last illness.<sup>145</sup>

It has become the fashion to belittle Blanshard—an attitude for which Bancroft appears to be largely responsible. Yet it is difficult to suggest any more effective course of action that he might have pursued under the circumstances existing at the time in Vancouver Island. For those conditions the Hudson's Bay Company was largely responsible. It was not experienced in the arts of colonization and attempted to found a settlement with inadequate preparation. Yet matters were mending slowly by the time Blanshard left the Island, and it is to be regretted that the state of his health made him both unable and unwilling

(139) J. Hodgkinson (Vicar, Kirby-le-Soken) to John Hosie, April, 1931, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(140) *Victoria Daily Colonist*, December 13, 1903.

(141) Alexander Begg, C.C., *History of British Columbia*, Toronto, 1904, p. 199.

(142) *Annual Register*, 1894.

(143) *Lymington and South Harts Chronicle*, June 14, 1894.

(144) *Illustrated London News*, July 14, 1894, p. 56.

(145) Photostat copy of Blanshard's will, Archives of B.C.

to remain another year in the colony. Even before he left Victoria, the letter which was to settle the land-reserve difficulty was on its way from London. Two qualified surveyors left England before the end of 1851. Within a matter of months, land purchases made it possible to commence a modest programme of public works. In 1852 mining operations commenced at Nanaimo, where rich coal-deposits had been discovered. If Blanshard had had the strength to remain and fight his battle for the colony under these more favourable and pleasant conditions, the usual impression of him might be a very different one.

As it is, his story remains a study in minutiae—of little events upon a small stage. But so much has sprung in after years from this beginning that the history of his governorship well deserves to be recorded in detail.

W. KAYE LAMB.

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA,  
OTTAWA, ONTARIO.

## THE GOLD-RUSH OF '49\*

The stampede to California in search of gold in 1849 was a major event in modern history because it had consequences that were tremendous and world-wide. The immediate cause of it was the discovery of gold made by James W. Marshall on January 24, 1848, at Coloma, 37 miles north-east of Sacramento.

At that time California belonged to Mexico, for the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which marked the end of the war between the United States and Mexico, was not signed until February 2, 1848, or nine days *after* Marshall's discovery. If that fact had been made known earlier, the destiny of California might have been different. The United States paid a nominal price of \$15,000,000 for California and adjacent territory, yet in the decade 1848 to 1858 California yielded \$555,000,000 in gold.

The Spaniards began to occupy California in 1770; they were succeeded in the control of the country by the Mexicans, in consequence of the revolution of 1821. Why did the Spaniards, who acquired great wealth in gold and silver from Mexico and Peru, fail to detect the occurrence of gold in the streams that flowed from the Sierra Nevada? Because they sought for it with sword and spear, instead of pick and shovel. To them gold was loot to be collected from the peoples they conquered; it was gathered from temples and graves, not from honest mining operations.

Nevertheless, the occurrence of gold in California was known long before the epochal discovery in 1848. The Franciscan friars, who built the mission churches and were the first exponents of European civilization on the Pacific Coast, knew that gold had been found by the Indians because sometimes they brought nuggets to the priests, who discouraged them from seeking the metal by telling them that it was "bad medicine" and would bring evil to them. It is recorded that many years before California became part of the American domain, the padres at the Franciscan missions received gold from the Indians, and when an amount, valued at about \$7,000, had been collected, they sent it in a "fine silk

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\* The text of a paper read before the Victoria Section of the British Columbia Historical Association, September 27, 1949, to commemorate the centenary of the gold-rush to California.

*British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XIV, Nos. 1 and 2.

purse made especially for the purpose, to His Holiness, the Pope."<sup>1</sup> That was many years before placer diggings were started in the San Fernando Valley. In 1842 alluvial gold was discovered in that valley, 40 miles north-west of Los Angeles, and successful mining was begun, yielding 2,000 ounces of gold during the first year as a result of the efforts of 100 men. This little goldfield was of no consequence, however, because it was completely overshadowed by the major discovery that came soon afterward.

That major discovery, as often happens, was accidental. At the beginning of 1848 James Wilson Marshall had nearly completed the building of a sawmill for Johann August Sutter at Coloma, on the south bank of the south fork of the American River. Marshall was a millwright from New Jersey. Sutter was a Swiss soldier of fortune with fictitious military pretensions; he had left his native land in 1834, and after engaging in trade in Alaska, the Hawaiian Islands, and San Francisco (then known as Yerba Buena), he had established himself at New Helvetia, now Sacramento, where he had a large ranch and a *hacienda* enclosed by a stockade, known later as Sutter's Fort.

When the sawmill was nearing completion, Marshall noticed that the tail-race, for the effluent water, was not deep enough; so, during the afternoon of January 23, he opened the water-gate to allow the full stream to run all night and thereby deepen the channel. In effect, though not intended, this operation was equivalent to the miners' practice known as ground-slucing. In the morning, while the mill-hands were at breakfast, Marshall shut off the water and sauntered down the tail-race to see if it had been deepened sufficiently by the scouring action of the current during the night. While doing so, he detected several bright bits of yellow mineral on the flat stones. He gathered some of them to examine them. Although not a miner, he guessed the mineral must be either pyrite or gold; he knew that one of them was brittle, whereas the other was malleable; therefore he placed the largest flake, which was about the size of a melon seed, between his teeth, to bite it. Then he pounded it upon a rock, thereby

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(1) William H. Davis, *Seventy-five Years in California*, San Francisco, 1929, p. 22.



proving that it was soft.<sup>2</sup> Surmising now that it was metallic gold, he gathered more of the flakes, put them into the crown of his old felt hat, and took them to the mess-house, where he exhibited his find to a group of mill-hands, consisting of five white men and three Indians. As he approached them, he exclaimed excitedly, "Boys, by God, I believe I've found a gold mine!" One of the Indians, who had seen the gold obtained in Southern California, murmured "*oro*." A white mill-hand, Azariah Smith, produced a \$5 gold coin and compared it with the flakes, whereupon those present agreed that, although the colour was slightly different—a little copper is added to the gold of coins to harden them—the metal was the same. Later in the day, Marshall went to the cook, Jennie Wimmer, who happened to be making soap, and asked her to boil the largest flake in the strong lye. In the morning, when it was cut out of the soap that lay at the bottom of the kettle, the metal showed no discoloration. Finally, Marshall took the gold flake to the blacksmith and told him to beat it on his anvil, again proving that it was malleable. He called it a *chispa*, that being the Spanish word for a spangle. Meanwhile some of the mill-hands had gone to the tail-race and had gathered many more bits of gold by aid of their knives.

Marshall did not go at once to report the discovery to Sutter; he remained at Coloma three days longer, and during the interval he turned the water into the tail-race every evening and shut it off in the morning, so that he could examine the rocky bed for more gold, some of which he obtained on each occasion. On January 28 he went on foot to New Helvetia. When he arrived, drenched by rain, he was excited and asked to see Sutter alone. After locking the door, he pulled a white cotton rag out of his pocket and unfolded it carefully upon the table, disclosing the flakes of gold, weighing together about an ounce and a half. The two men proceeded to test the metal. Sutter applied the acid test, having found some nitric acid among his apothecary stores. Then he brought forth a volume of the *Encyclopædia Americana* and read the article on gold. Whereupon he said, "I believe that this is the finest kind of gold." Marshall was elated, and so was Sutter. They did not know that it would profit them nothing.

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(2) T. A. Rickard, "The Discovery of Gold in California," *University of California Chronicle*, April, 1928, p. 144.

Some of the men at the sawmill told their friends about the discovery, and a successful search for it was begun forthwith along the river below the mill. At first Indian baskets were used for washing the gravel and soon the handle of a frying-pan was removed so that it could be employed for the same purpose. Eventually the prospector's pan became a circular sheet-iron dish with sloping sides, usually 15 to 16 inches in diameter, 10 to 11 inches across the bottom, and from 3 to 4 inches deep. The gravel was shovelled into it and then washed with a circular shaking motion, the digger squatting at the edge of the stream, so that the light and barren sediment was carried away by the spilled water, leaving the heavy portion behind. This was again washed repeatedly, the big lumps being picked out by hand, until a glittering string, or tail, of gold particles remained. Later the digger devised a simple machine for performing this operation more expeditiously; he made a wooden box, about 3 feet long, sloping gently and mounted on rockers, like a baby's cradle. Above the upper end he placed a smaller box; on the bottom of this was wire screen or sheet iron in which holes had been punched. This device served both as a hopper and a sieve to exclude the stones and coarse gravel, which were discharged by lifting the box. To the side of this cradle or rocker, as it was variously named, a handle was fixed, so that the digger could move it to and fro with one hand while with the other he poured water over the gravel in the hopper by means of some sort of iron dipper or can nailed to a piece of wood. Whatever went through the bottom of the hopper fell to the floor of the cradle, the rocking of which quickened the separation of the barren sediment, which was washed away, leaving the gold and black iron oxide behind. To catch the fine gold, the cradle was lengthened until it became a trough or launder 8 to 10 feet long, and to the bottom the digger nailed transverse cleats, or riffles, to arrest the smaller particles of gold as they slid along with the heavy sediment, while the worthless dirt was washed away by the water that he poured from a dipper into the hopper. This machine was known as a "long tom." Then the trough was extended and became a series of sluice-boxes in which a piece of coarse blanket was laid to catch the fine gold and still later mercury was placed behind the riffles to arrest the gold by amalgamation.<sup>3</sup> The daily winning averaged about an

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(3) T. A. Rickard, *The Romance of Mining*, Toronto, 1944, p. 168.

ounce of gold per man. "It was no uncommon event for a man alone to take out \$500 in a day, or for two or three, if working together, to divide the 'dust' at the end of the week by measuring it with tin cups. But we were never satisfied," says one of the pioneers.<sup>4</sup> In 1848 California yielded \$10,000,000 in gold.

Sutter tried vainly to keep the matter quiet, because he sensed the danger to himself on account of the land on which he had squatted, the title to which was weakened now that California was about to be ceded to the United States. An appeal to Colonel Richard Mason, the representative of the Federal Government, at Monterey, for a title to his land was unsuccessful. He sent Jacob Wittmer with some provisions to the mill. This man drove a wagon, and when he returned he told everybody about the discovery, showing them a sample of the gold. He went also to a store kept by Samuel Brennan and George Smith; there he offered some of his gold for a drink of whisky. Smith demanded cash, but Wittmer insisted, "This is money, it's gold." When Smith hesitated, he was told to ask the Captain, meaning Sutter, who confirmed Wittmer's assertion. The secret was out! Then Smith wrote to his partner, Brennan, who was in San Francisco. He came promptly to Coloma to see for himself. On his return, travel-stained, he rushed through the plaza shouting, "Gold! Gold! Gold from the American River." As he shouted, he waved a flask containing gold-dust, which glistened in the sunlight.<sup>5</sup> He was the first herald of the event. The rush began.

Shortly afterward a messenger with an oyster-can filled with nuggets, sent by Governor Mason, carried official information concerning the gold discoveries to the President of the United States, James K. Polk. He, in his message to Congress on December 5, 1848, said:—

It was known that mines of the precious metals existed to a considerable extent in California at the time of its acquisition. Recent discoveries render it probable that these mines are more extensive and valuable than was anticipated. The accounts of the abundance of gold in that territory are of such an extraordinary character as would scarcely command belief were they not corroborated by the authentic reports of officers in the public service who have visited the mineral district and derived the facts which they detail from personal observation. . . . The explorations already made warrant the

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(4) John S. Hittell in *Journal of the Society of California Pioneers*, 1869, quoted in Rickard, *The Romance of Mining*, p. 167.

(5) *Quarterly of the Society of California Pioneers*, vol. IV (1932), p. 23.

belief that the supply is very large and that gold is found at various places in an extensive district of country.<sup>6</sup>

The publication of this statement in newspapers all over the country was a bugle-call to the adventurous in every land. The great rush of '49 was the immediate result.

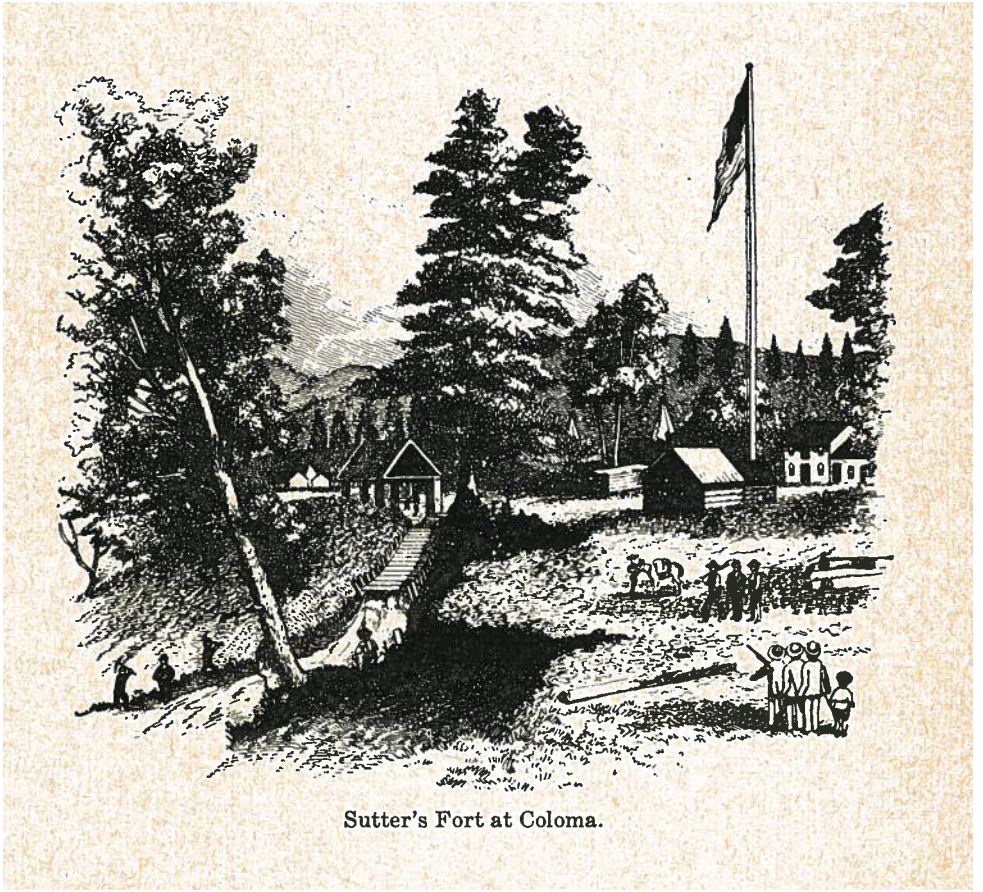
The Mexican mining law was no longer operative in California; no law of the United States was applicable to the new diggings; and no state government had as yet been organized; therefore the diggers were left to their own devices, and they promptly met the need of the moment by drafting their own mining regulations. They did this so sensibly that their local rules became the substance of the mining law of the United States as enacted by Congress in 1866.

The right to locate a mining claim and to hold it against all comers, until abandoned, was admitted. This basic idea of mining law had been brought by some of the adventurers from other lands, from the Hartz, from Devon and Cornwall. Title, it was agreed tacitly, was derived from the first locator, and continuity of work sufficed to maintain ownership. This simple code was established by general agreement of the diggers in meeting assembled, and by their willingness to use force in support of any comrade that might suffer trespass on his claim. The size of a claim, from 30 to 40 feet square, was established in the same manner, modifications being made later in accordance with the nature of the deposit and the amount of preparatory expenditure that might be needed. Each man had his say, any man was as good as another, and the rudimentary community accepted the decision of the group as final. Thus was the organization of the mining camp evolved; it was the nearest approach to a democracy that the world has seen.

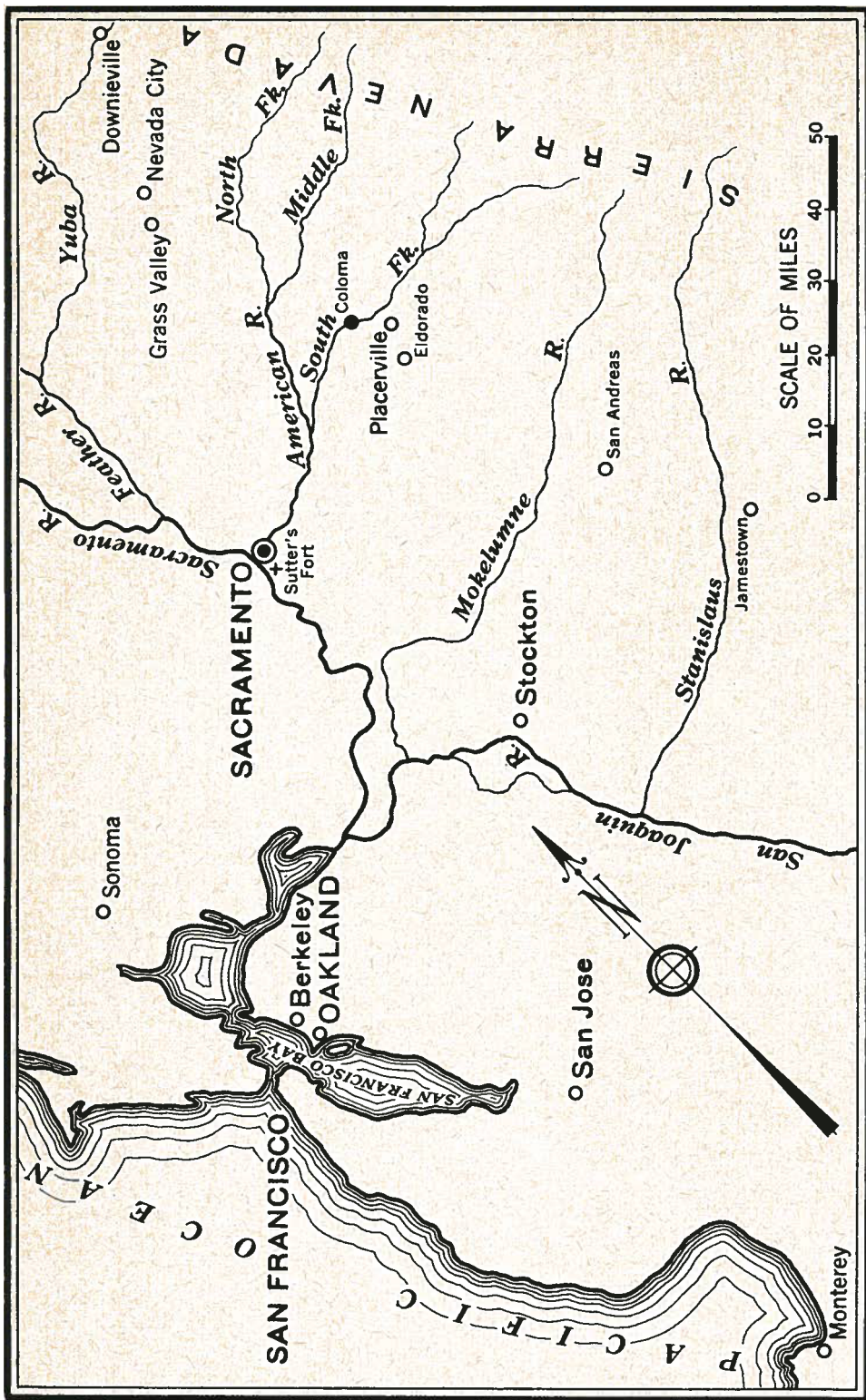
On their long journey to California, whether by land or sea, the adventurers learned many lessons of mutual tolerance and of self-control; while acquiring an indifference to the machinery of government, they became disposed to prefer a direct appeal to the community as the simplest, and, therefore, the best form of popular administration. The tedious voyage as members of an unruly company under an incompetent captain, or a similar experience with the emigrant wagons that threaded their way

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(6) James D. Richardson, *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897*, Washington, 1897, vol. IV, p. 636.



Sutter's Fort at Coloma.



Sketch-map of the gold region in the rush of '49.

across the prairies, caused the young men to learn how to settle disputes and to co-operate in maintaining order. If the wearisome journey did more to discipline than to educate, it served, on the other hand, to develop some measure of skill in self-government, and to induce a tendency toward short cuts as much for the preservation of order as for summary punishment of those that infringed the frontier code. When they arrived at the diggings, the adventurers continued the associations, sometimes the partnerships, formed on board ship or in the covered wagons that became known as "prairie schooners."

The stories of the golden era give contradictory impressions: on the one hand we read of order, generosity, and honour; on the other we see pictures of riot, greed, and fraud. Neither extreme is wholly true, but the facts are given more reliably in the chronicles of the time than in the later reminiscences of garrulous pioneers. The life of the mining camp, as Josiah Royce says, was "the struggle of society to impress the true dignity and majesty of its claims on wayward and blind individuals, and the struggle of the individual man, meanwhile, to escape, like a fool, from his moral obligation to society."<sup>7</sup> In such a frontier community, composed of men who had left their homes, their families, and their old vexations in an attempt to find a golden paradise, the social struggle came to the surface and was to be seen in its true light, for public duties of any sort are a nuisance amid the excitement of digging for gold, and to be a member of a vigilance committee in a roistering camp is better sport than to serve on a legal jury in a quiet town.

For two years, however, from 1848 to 1850, the life of the diggers had many ideal aspects, as regards democratic control, orderly work, and cheery comradeship. During those two years only the most vigorous and resolute came to the gulches, no women perturbed the virile groups in the hills, and the easy winning of gold made the diggers generous to each other. They had no time to quarrel; the world was young and life an epic. The population of the diggings scattered along the foothills of the Sierra had grown to 100,000. In the third year after the discovery there came many undesirable elements: the loose women, the gamblers, and the saloon-keepers. Another factor in pro-

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(7) Josiah Royce, *California from the Conquest in 1846 to the Second Vigilance Committee in San Francisco*, Boston, 1886, p. 273.

moting violence and disorder was a local exaggeration of the American dislike of foreigners, including the native Indians and the Mexicans from whom the land had been but lately wrested. The treatment of the early French prospectors was outrageous; such acts may have "served to weld the Americans in a closer union," as Charles H. Shinn says,<sup>8</sup> but it also bred a spirit of vicious intolerance that was strangely at variance with the miner's habitual generosity. The Chinese were rigidly excluded, and had to wait their turn until much later, when they were permitted to pick up the crumbs that had fallen from the white man's table; in other words, they re-treated the refuse of the old diggings.

The lavish gathering of gold in California, when it became known, led to similar discoveries in other parts of the world because everywhere men became gold-conscious, that is to say, they realized the wealth to be obtained by developing profitable mines, and they learned how to search for natural deposits of metal or mineral. Thus, the gold-rush to Australia two years later was a logical sequel to the Californian excitement because Edward H. Hargraves, the prospector that discovered gold in Australia, obtained his first experience in winning gold when he went to California. He had come to Australia, not by compulsion, at the age of 17. When news reached Sydney that gold had been found in quantity in California, he, then 33 years old, was one of the first to go thither.

Hargraves arrived at San Francisco in October, 1849, and promptly went to the diggings on the Stanislaus River, where he had his first lesson in washing gold from gravel in a pan. Soon he noticed that the rocks and other geologic conditions were like those he remembered seeing in New South Wales. Then he went to the richer diggings on the Yuba, but he did not stay long, for he had decided to return to Australia without delay, so as to put his conviction to the test—namely, that gold was to be found in New South Wales. He left San Francisco in November, 1850, and arrived at Sydney in the following January.

It was the fifth of February when Hargraves set forth on horseback for the interior. He crossed the Blue Mountains and went to Guyong, where he had been eighteen years earlier, and

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(8) Charles H. Shinn, *Mining Camps, a Study in American Frontier Government*, New York, 1885, p. 212.



where he had seen conditions resembling those he had observed in California. On February 12, 1851, he found gold in Lewis Ponds Creek, a small affluent of the Macquarie River. He washed five panfuls of gravel in succession, and obtained gold in all but one. Then he prospected along the Macquarie River and its other tributary streams until, a week later, he felt justified in asserting that there was "at least 70 miles of auriferous land" in the part of the country he had examined.<sup>9</sup>

His one anxiety now was "lest some miner from California should make a similar discovery" and forestall him in his legitimate claim for a reward from the Government. Hargraves, therefore, hastened to Sydney to tell the Colonial Secretary all about his investigations. He exhibited the gold in proof of his story. The Secretary was sceptical and remarked, "If this is a gold country, Mr. Hargraves, it will stop the Home Government from sending any more convicts, and prevent emigration to California, but it comes on us like a clap of thunder and we are scarcely prepared to credit it." The Secretary spoke wisely. It is a noteworthy fact that when the American colonies revolted, and criminals could be sent no longer to Virginia and the Carolinas, the British Government decided to make use of Australia for this purpose. A penal settlement was established on the shore of Botany Bay, near Sydney, in 1787. The finding of gold put an end to the sending of convicts thither, as the Colonial Secretary anticipated. Subsequent events proved also that he was right in his belief that emigration from England to California would be diverted, going to Australia instead. A rush ensued. The land of the Southern Cross, ceasing to be a convict station, became an industrial commonwealth.

Hargraves asked for a bonus of £500, in return for which he promised to disclose to officers of the Government the places where he had found the gold, leaving the matter of further reward to be determined in accordance with the importance of the results that might ensue. These terms were accepted. He then did his best to draw public attention to the discovery, but made no effort to peg any claim for himself. "My only desire," he stated, "was to make the discovery, and rely on the Government and the country for my reward." Fortunately, he was not disappointed; the

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(9) E. H. Hargraves, *Australia and Its Gold Fields* . . . , London, 1855, p. 116.

Governor at once made him Commissioner of Crown Lands "at the usual pay of 20 shillings per diem," and subsequently the Legislative Council of New South Wales awarded him the sum of £10,000, and still later the Government of Victoria, recognizing that his prospecting had contributed to the successful search for gold in that colony, also gave him £2,000 more. These payments were entirely satisfactory, for they sufficed to keep him in comfort during the rest of his life.

Hargraves was far more fortunate than Marshall in California, who profited but little from his happy chance. He won a nominal fame, it is true, from the discovery of the gold, "which he had taken no pains to find, and which somebody must inevitably have found very soon," and when he died a poor and completely frustrated man, his biographers had to confess that after he picked up the first gold he did no more than "prove himself henceforth to be an utterly incapable man."<sup>10</sup> Hargraves, on the contrary, after his successful exertions, enjoyed a dignified life, maintaining a curiously philosophical detachment from the hectic activities he had brought into being by his intelligent prospecting.

The Governments of the Australian colonies, first in New South Wales and then in Victoria, were greatly embarrassed by the rush and by the excitement caused by the gold discoveries. Sir Charles Fitzroy, the Governor of the older colony, was urged to declare martial law and to prohibit the digging for gold, but he decided sensibly that to do so would be as futile "as an attempt to stop the influx of the tide." The Attorney-General, however, promptly asserted the claim of the Crown to the gold. This regalian right to deposits of the precious metals was traditional; it was a kingly prerogative that came down from the days of the Roman emperors. In England the doctrine of *fodinae regales*, or mines royal, was revived by Henry III (1216-1272). In the sixteenth century the Spanish king's share was fixed at a fifth, the *quinto*, of the gold and silver obtained by his subjects, chiefly in Mexico and Peru. It was sustained by Blackstone in his *Commentaries*, under date of 1763.<sup>11</sup> In Australia the assertion of the royal claim, or royalty, was not enforced with any assurance because many thousand miles of ocean rolled between the seat of kingship and the

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(10) Royce, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

(11) T. A. Rickard, "The Later Argonauts," *Transactions of the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy*, vol. XXXVI (1927), p. 27.

resolute men that were digging the gold they themselves had found. The rights of the Crown were reduced later to a trivial exaction, which took the form of a licence fee, or permit to mine, of £1 per month, and this was reduced eventually to a fee of £1 per annum for a "miner's right."

Fitzroy was a wise administrator, and the rush to the diggings in New South Wales was not overwhelming, but in Victoria the excitement was tremendous and the Government was inept, so that much confusion, ending in riot, ensued. Gold had been found at Bunninyong on September 8, 1851, which date marks the birth of the Ballarat Goldfield. The nearness of the discoveries at Ballarat, Bendigo, and Castlemaine to the coast made it easy to get there quickly from Melbourne. Shortly the ships, the shops, and the farms were deserted, and every man started on foot or on horseback for the diggings. Charles Latrobe, the Governor of Victoria, imitated Fitzroy's proclamation and levied the same licence fee. It was collected roughly and aroused angry opposition.<sup>12</sup> The Governor doubled the fee, thinking to check the rush. He was sadly mistaken. Gold to the amount of 2 tons per week was being dug out of the alluvial flats at the foot of Mount Alexander. Only 16,000 licences had been taken out in that district by the 60,000 men actually at work. In 1854, 1,200 rioters assembled within a stockade on Eureka Hill, and military force had to be used to scatter them, after thirty had been killed. A new Governor succeeded in establishing order; the licence fee was changed to the miner's right at £1 per annum, and an export duty of 2s. 6d. per ounce was placed on the gold. Courts of Mines were established for the hearing of local disputes, and other measures were taken whereby the rights of the miners were safeguarded. In 1852 the Australian diggings yielded \$60,000,000 in gold; in the decade 1848 to 1858 the combined outputs of California and Australia added \$1,200,000,000 to the world's total stock of gold, which had been \$1,500,000,000 before these fresh supplies began to come from the new goldfields.

The next region to profit from the Californian excitement was the British colony on Vancouver Island, which, at that time, was administered by the Hudson's Bay Company. It was a fur preserve and nothing else. The fur-traders at Fort Victoria learned

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(12) Thomas Dunbabin, *The Making of Australia*, London, 1922, p. 190.

about Californian gold through an unexpected visit from some of the successful diggers. In the spring of 1849 a strange vessel dropped anchor in front of the fort. It is recorded by Roderick Finlayson, who was then Chief Trader, that the crew of this ship wore red flannel shirts, and when they landed they were mistaken for pirates. "I ordered the men," he says, "to the guns, manned the bastions, and made ready for defence." He himself went to the gate cautiously and challenged the visitors. They explained that they were "peaceable traders, come from San Francisco, with gold to trade for goods, as this [Fort Victoria] was the only station on the northern coast where they could get the goods they wanted. Having satisfied myself that they were what they presented themselves to be, I let them in, and they told me that gold had been discovered in California in large quantities the previous fall, and that they had gold nuggets, which they would gladly exchange for goods. They produced several nuggets, the value of which I at first felt doubtful of, but brought one of the nuggets to the blacksmith's shop, and told him and his assistant to hammer it on the anvil, which they did, and flattened it out satisfactorily."<sup>13</sup> This proved that the metal was thoroughly malleable; it was not brass. Then Finlayson referred to his "book on minerals, and found that the specimen appeared to be genuine." He offered the visitors \$11 per ounce for all the gold they had brought. This price was accepted "without a murmur"; whereupon he feared that he had offered too much. Nevertheless, he continued to trade with the Californians, who took "old pots of iron, sea boots, blankets, baize, etc.," in exchange. Thus Finlayson gathered a pile of nuggets, but, still doubtful as to their monetary value, he hastened to send a canoe with eight men to Puget Sound and thence overland to the company's headquarters at Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia River, for the purpose of ascertaining if he had been right in purchasing the gold. The answer was in the affirmative; his action was commended, and more goods were sent to him for similar trade when the opportunity offered. We learn that later "several other vessels came from California to trade, for which considerable quantities of gold was received." It is not stated whether Finlayson continued to pay \$11; Californian placer gold was worth \$16.50 per ounce.

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(13) *Biography of Roderick Finlayson*, Victoria, 1891, p. 21.

Prospecting for gold soon disclosed the fact that it was to be found in many places northward in the territory adjacent to the Pacific Coast. Successive discoveries linked the American River, where gold was found in California, with the Thompson and Fraser Rivers in British Columbia, where gold diggings were started ten years later.

Early discoveries of gold in British Columbia were made by the Indians, as happened in California. Elsewhere, likewise, primitive man picked up the lump of glistening metal that he saw on the edge of the stream along which he wandered when in search of game. He found out that the pretty pebble was soft and could be shaped by hammering with a stone, so he used it to make an ornament for his woman. When the Europeans came among the Indians on the Pacific Coast, they wore rings and watch-chains of gold; the natives, therefore, saw that the white people set a high value on gold, and they inferred correctly that if they brought it to the trader he would be willing to barter his goods, such as blankets and tobacco, for the yellow metal.<sup>14</sup>

Gold was found by Indians in a quartz vein at Mitchell Harbour, on Moresby Island, one of the Queen Charlotte Islands, in 1850, and some of the gold-bearing quartz was brought to Fort Victoria, where it aroused keen interest. The Hudson's Bay Company sent men to this discovery. Some rich ore was obtained, but the Indians hindered the working party of eleven men under Captain W. H. McNeill so persistently that the operation had to be discontinued. The rock was shattered by blasting; the Indians waited near by, and as soon as the noise of the explosion was heard, they rushed to the spot on the shore to engage in a lively scramble for the gold quartz. In an effort to prevent actual fighting, much time was lost, and McNeill decided it would be wise to stop work because it was the settled policy of the company not to antagonize the Indians, with whom they traded for furs.

This gold discovery, as a matter of fact, was of no particular consequence, except that it awakened the people at Fort Victoria to the probability of other finds. A nugget of gold weighing 5 ounces was found by an Indian woman on the beach of Moresby Island. It was brought to Fort Victoria and excited much curiosity. The matter was reported by Richard Blanshard, the first

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(14) For further details see T. A. Rickard, "Indian Participation in the Gold Discoveries," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, II (1938), pp. 3-18.

Governor of Vancouver Island, to Earl Grey, the Colonial Secretary in London. Meanwhile, the company's factor at Kamloops, on the Thompson River, had received some gold from the Indians as early as 1852, and similar gold in small particles, not big enough to be called nuggets, was coming to other posts of the Hudson's Bay Company in course of trade with the natives on the Mainland. Donald Maclean, the trader in charge at Kamloops, inspected the gold-bearing ground, and then sent to Victoria for some iron spoons to be used by the Indians in extricating the gold from crevices in the rocky beds of the creeks.<sup>15</sup> In this way 800 ounces of gold was collected, and was sent to San Francisco on the little steamship *Otter* in February, 1858. The news of the receipt of this gold caused many Californians to come north. A band of American prospectors reached the Fraser River, where they discovered rich gravel at Hill's Bar, about a mile below Yale. News of their success excited the people of San Francisco and started a rush northward.<sup>16</sup>

In the summer of 1858 the excitement grew daily in the Oregon country and in California. In July thirty-five vessels left San Francisco for the northern diggings. Boats, canoes, and other small craft brought adventurers from Puget Sound to the Fraser River. It is estimated that 30,000 men participated in this stampede. The output of gold during the latter half of 1858 exceeded 100,000 ounces.<sup>17</sup> This was not much compared with the output of California, but it had the same effect—namely, to bring men and capital into the country and to promote its industrial development. The rush to the Fraser was followed, two years later, by the finding of gold on the Quesnel River and Cariboo Lake. Then came the Cariboo rush of 1861. In twenty years \$35,000,000 in gold was taken from this district. Even that was much less than the yield of the Californian diggings, but the industrial and political effects were no less decisive.

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(15) H. H. Bancroft, *History of British Columbia, 1792-1887*, San Francisco, 1887, p. 349.

(16) James Moore, "The Discovery of Hill's Bar in 1858," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, III (1939), pp. 215-220.

(17) James Douglas to Sir E. B. Lytton, November 30, 1858, *Papers Relative to the Affairs of British Columbia*, Part II [Cmd. 2578], London, 1859, p. 40.

The gold-miner *made* British Columbia. He attracted settlers and caused subsidiary industries to be started. He brought capital for the financing of productive business. In short, he did exactly what the fur-trading companies had failed to do. All the peltry companies were alike in their opposition to settlers and to miners because they knew that these would interfere with their Indian trade. The company's agents obtained furs by means of barter. There was a fur preserve and nobody was to poach upon it if they could keep it inviolate. On the other hand, the prospector, once he has pegged his claim, shouts a glad welcome to all who may care to follow in his tracks. Mining opened doors of opportunity that the fur-trader did his best to close. The mines needed many workers; the fur trade employed few. Mining operations required capital to an extent much greater than the peltry business, and with the influx of capital there was given motive power for further exploration and development. Trade follows the flag, but the flag follows the pick.<sup>18</sup>

Another consequence of the Californian rush was the discovery of gold in Colorado. In the summer of 1849 a party of seven men from Georgia crossed the continent on their way to California with a herd of thoroughbred horses. When they reached Camp Lyon, on the Arkansas River, in October, they were told by a Government guide, James Dempsey, that it was too late to cross the mountains, so they established winter quarters at the foot of the Rocky Mountains near the junction of Cherry Creek and the Platte River, close to the present site of Denver. During the closing months of 1849 they did some prospecting and found gold at several places along Cherry Creek. From the feathers of the wild geese that they shot they obtained quills in which they placed their gold-dust. This party of Georgians, headed by Dr. L. J. Russell and his brother, continued on their journey to California early in 1850 and engaged in successful mining at Downieville. In the spring of 1857 they sold their claims and returned to Georgia. Before separating, the members of the party agreed that in the near future they would organize a prospecting expedition to search for gold in western Kansas, of which the present State of Colorado was then a part. In May, 1858, eleven of them met at St. Louis and organized an expedition. In August they

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(18) T. A. Rickard, *Historic Backgrounds of British Columbia*, Vancouver, 1948, p. 313.

reached their former camp on the Platte River. From this point they spread in several directions and found gold at many places in the neighbouring mountains, notably in the gravel of Boulder Creek, Fall River, and Clear Creek. Six of the party went back to obtain provisions, returning in the spring of 1859.

That was the year of golden discovery and of exciting rumours, which caused the Pike's Peak rush, for the snowy summit of that noble mountain was a landmark to those coming westward across the prairies. On the covered wagons was inscribed "Pike's Peak or Bust," and it was not long before the same wagons on the return journey showed that the slogan had been changed to "busted." Companies were organized all along the Missouri for the purpose of going to the diggings. Many inexperienced persons participated in the rush and underwent great hardships, but not in vain. In May, John H. Gregory went up the northern branch of Clear Creek and discovered the lode that was named after him. The date, May 6, 1859, is the birthday of Colorado's mining industry.

Gregory's first panning of the soft material in the outcrop of the vein yielded 4 pennyweights of gold. He employed five men and took out \$972 in one week by aid of a sluice-box. The first arrastra was put to work in July and a stamp-mill of three heads was set up in October. Most of the mining at this time in this district, later known as Gilpin County, was confined to the soft oxidized ore which was treated as gravel would be, by washing it in pans and sluice-boxes.

Other veins were discovered in due course, and by July, 1860, no less than sixty little mills were in operation. Soon the mine-workings penetrated into pyritic ore, from which the gold was more difficult to extract. Many mines were compelled to close down. Then the smelter came to the aid of the baffled millman, the first being that of the Boston & Colorado Smelting Company, organized by N. P. Hill, who was assisted by the metallurgical skill of Richard Pearce.<sup>19</sup> The discoveries in central Colorado were followed by the finding of the great bodies of silver-lead ore at Leadville, of gold and silver veins in the San Juan district, and of the famous gold-telluride lodes of Cripple Creek. Colorado

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(19) T. A. Rickard, *A History of American Mining*, New York, 1932, pp. 115-146.



became one of the richest and most progressive mining regions in the United States.

When the great migration began to California in 1849, the motley crowd of gold-seekers had no time to examine the signs of ore that were to be detected along the trail of adventure, nor were many of them qualified to interpret such signs even if they had lingered to look at them. Some of those that came to California crossed the alkaline wastes and sage-brush prairies that extended between the Great Salt Lake and the ramparts of the snow-clad Sierra Nevada. In coming overland they found it convenient to pitch their camp in the valley of the Carson River, in Nevada, before they began the tedious ascent of the mountains and the final entry into the land of gold. The Carson Valley became a resting-place on the road; it was an oasis in their desert pilgrimage.

Among others, a party of Mormons came westward from Salt Lake; one of them, William Prouse, of Cornish origin, used a milk-pan to wash the gravel in a little creek that entered the Carson River from the west. The date was May 15, 1849. The pannings were poor, so Prouse and his friends proceeded on their way. This creek became known as Gold Canyon; it was the threshold to one of the treasure vaults of the world, the Comstock Lode. Others came to the valley, and in 1851 many of them worked in Gold Canyon, winning about \$5 per day. Some of the gold was combined with silver, but that did not mean anything to the ignorant diggers. They had no idea that they were close to an ore-deposit that would yield both gold and silver profusely.

The epochal discovery was made in 1859 by Patrick McLaughlin and Peter O'Riley. They were prospecting in a ravine above Six Mile Canyon, and on the hill-slope westward they found some specks of gold in the loose dirt. To obtain a supply of water, they started to make a small basin into which the water trickled. When doing this they dug a little deeper than before and broke into sandy quartz, which, when washed in a pan, disclosed not only a pale kind of gold, combined with silver, but particles of a soft black mineral, which was argentite, the sulphide of silver, although they did not know it. It was derived from the Comstock Lode, of which also they were unaware, but they located two 50-foot placer claims and felt happy. Just then a lanky fellow on a small horse came riding toward them. They showed him the

result of their panning, whereupon falsely and impudently, he told them that they were trespassing on his property, a ranch of 160 acres. He talked so confidently and so loudly that they were thoroughly intimidated and as a result gave him a share in their claims and an additional 100 feet for himself and his partner.<sup>20</sup> The date was June 8, 1859, and the impudent interloper was Henry Comstock, after whom the great lode was named. A few days later a piece of the black stuff was assayed at Grass Valley, California, and was found to be rich in silver and gold. The prospect-hole of the two Irishmen became the Ophir mine, which yielded \$17,655,000. Comstock died miserably, by his own hand, in 1870, and both of those he had defrauded ended their lives as unhonoured paupers. The mines on the Comstock Lode produced \$350,000,000, of which 55 per cent was silver and 45 per cent was gold.

Other gold-rushes ensued,<sup>21</sup> for the details of which no space is available: to New Zealand in 1861, to Siberia in 1868, and to the Klondike in 1897. But far the most important was the discovery in 1886 of the gold-bearing conglomerate beds of the Witwatersrand in the Transvaal and the beginning of the South African mining industry, much the most productive in history. The output of gold in the Transvaal increased from £34,710 in 1886 to £42,285,139 in 1926 and £104,000,000 in 1948.

The English economists, at the time of the Californian rush, were strongly imbued with the quantitative theory of money and therefore looked askance at the enormous production of gold. They regarded it exclusively in relation to the existing demand for specie and anticipated, with gloomy assurance, a disastrous fall in the value of money, such as would undermine the structure of commercial credit and cause heavy damage to the creditor class, which, to those sombre prophets, denoted the upper and worthier class. Jevons insisted that the production of gold represented a dead loss of labour to the world; he went even further and stated that it was "a wrong against the human race," comparable with the inflation of its own currency by a government, but he had the wit to add that "to overestimate the indirect

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(20) Eliot Lord, "Comstock Mining and Miners," United States, Department of the Interior, *Monographs of the United States Geological Survey*, vol. IV, 1883, p. 38.

(21) See W. P. Morrell, *The Gold Rushes*, London, 1940, *passim*.

effects of these discoveries in creating new colonies, in spreading the English people and language, and in newly animating commerce is not easy."<sup>22</sup>

One economist, Sir Archibald Alison, was the exponent of a more hopeful outlook. He hailed the new gold discoveries with philanthropic enthusiasm because he had taken note of the ill effects caused by the dwindling output of gold from Mexico and South America consequent upon the political upheavals in those countries.<sup>23</sup> To the diminishing supplies of the precious metals, he attributed, in large measure, the extraordinary depression of trade and the general distress that had prevailed throughout Europe during the first half of the nineteenth century. We know now that the more hopeful view was correct, and that the gloomy vaticinations of other economists were unjustified.

The gold discoveries prompted emigration and a fresh distribution of peoples, thereby starting new communities in remote parts of the world and relieving the congestion of population, some of it unemployed, in the old centres of industrial activity. Within two years after Marshall's discovery, 100,000 men had arrived in California from the eastern parts of the United States. A year after Hargraves found the gold, no less than 360,000 emigrants from Great Britain arrived in Australia. In four years 1,356,000 British emigrants went overseas to various lands.<sup>24</sup>

The wages of unskilled labour, the supply of which was depleted by emigration to the goldfields, rose rapidly in England and the United States. The gains made by the men at the mines were followed by heavy remittances home, helping many that had been in straightened circumstances. One fundamental difference

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(22) W. S. Jevons, *Investigations in Currency and Finance*, London, 1884, p. 54.

(23) Sir Archibald Alison, *History of Europe from the Commencement of the French Revolution to the Restoration of the Bourbons*, London, 1848, vol. XIV, pp. 360-361.

(24) It may be noted that this effect of the gold-rushes in causing migration has impressed Joseph Stalin. We are told by one of the American mining engineers engaged by the Soviet Union that Stalin had read sundry books, including a history of mining by Rickard, and from the reading of these books he had formed the idea of inducing a beneficial movement of Russians to the gold mines in Siberia. J. D. Littlepage and D. Bess, *In Search of Soviet Gold*, New York, 1938, p. 26.

between the winning of gold by the Spaniards under Cortés and Pizarro in the sixteenth century and that of the English-speaking miners in the nineteenth century must be noted: most of the loot of Mexico and Peru fell into the hands of aristocratic adventurers. The gold and silver snatched from the Aztecs and the Incas went as spoil to the Spanish soldiers and as tribute to the Spanish king, whereas in California and Australia the gold that was won by honest digging went to the workers themselves. These later Argonauts were mostly of the labouring class—they were neither courtly freebooters nor the minions of a king. The gold of Grass Valley and of Bendigo in the days of the great rushes went to the young men that dug it out of the ground, and from them it went to the old folk at home.

This effect of the gold production, in giving the industrial classes a larger share of purchasing power, was regarded, even by Cairnes, as the greatest redeeming incident of the economic upheaval.<sup>25</sup> With such a liberal interpretation of the events that we have been considering, most men of generous mind will agree. The influence of the lavish output of gold was felt strongly during the years that followed, for the result was to give to the working classes not only purchasing power, but also political power, and thereby the production of gold became a potent factor in the trend toward democratic ideas. If we accept the ideal of a state of living as one that brings physical comfort and mental culture to all classes in the community, then we shall agree that the gold-diggers contributed to the welfare of humanity and broadened the bounds of modern civilization.

T. A. RICKARD.

VICTORIA, B.C.

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(25) John E. Cairnes, *Essays in Political Economy*, London, 1873, pp. 1-65 *passim*.

## SOME IRISH FIGURES IN COLONIAL DAYS\*

A feeling exists in British Columbia that British traditions and institutions were established and maintained in the Pacific Northwest by Scottish and English administrators. Even in the period of the fur trade there were, however, influential Irishmen who assisted in this work,<sup>1</sup> and after Crown Colonies were established, Irishmen were to be found in official positions ranging from governor to magistrates. They were also active in the church as well as in the professions of law, medicine, and journalism. On the Mainland they were the founders of the large ranches and established a type of agricultural economy that prevailed in the Interior of the Province until 1890. Their political activities continued after a Provincial government was organized and, with the exception of the short administration of Amor de Cosmos, all the ministries until June, 1882, were led by Irishmen—John Foster McCreight,<sup>2</sup> George Anthony Walkem, and Andrew Charles Elliott.

Most of the men who served in official positions in the colonial period were Anglo-Irish, some of them men of the "Dublin Castle" class who had connections with the gentry. The leading figures of the colonial period were veterans of the Crimean War who resorted to patronage as a means of obtaining employment in the new colony of British Columbia. They were loyal subjects of the Crown,<sup>3</sup> professing a desire to help in building British

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\* The presidential address delivered at the annual meeting of the British Columbia Historical Association, held in Victoria, January 20, 1950.

(1) Irishmen in the fur trade include William Connolly, John Work and his nephew John McAdoo Wark. For details on the career of John Work, see H. D. Dee, "An Irishman in the Fur Trade: The Life and Journals of John Work," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, VII (1943), pp. 229-270.

(2) For details on John Foster McCreight, see Patricia M. Johnson, "John Foster McCreight," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, XII (1948), pp. 79-92.

(3) An entry in one of Peter O'Reilly's diaries in the Provincial Archives for May 24, 1866, reveals something of his feeling: ". . . [at French Creek] . . . Lovely day—but not the least attempt at keeping the Queen's birthday. No flag to hoist & not a lb of pow[d]er in camp to fire off an anvil." *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

*British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XIV, Nos. 1 and 2.

power in a new country. Some of their number, particularly in the Island colony, were political reformers, working to restrain the power of the governor and to establish responsible government. Strong individualists, they either formed firm friendships with their compatriots or exerted the Irishman's privilege of "never speaking well of each other." No love was lost, for example, between Governor Arthur Edward Kennedy and Editor Leonard McClure. The Irish group of Civil Servants were Anglican by background.<sup>4</sup> Some of them were indifferent when it came to religious observance—although they were sometimes irritated by what they felt was interference on the part of the Catholic priests in matters concerning the Indians—while others became involved in the dispute concerning the clergy reserve on Vancouver Island.

Most of them dearly loved social life and were punctilious in observing the niceties of the rules that prevailed at home. Peter O'Reilly carefully paid his respects to His Excellency whenever he was at the capital and thoroughly enjoyed the balls and dinners at the Governor's residence. A. C. Elliott, on the other hand, criticized Governor Seymour for spending "all his salary & half as much more which made his rule popular."<sup>5</sup> Away from the capital, riding the long trails to the mining camps and living in their isolated posts, they suffered from loneliness. With the Indians and miners they were unusually successful in establishing friendly relations, and most of them were respected for their sense of fair play, their sensitivity, and their displays of generosity.

The first Irishman to reside permanently in the Colony of Vancouver Island seems to have been Joseph Despard Pemberton,<sup>6</sup> a Trinity College man and a grandson of a Lord Mayor of Dublin, who was employed by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1851 as colonial surveyor and engineer. Early in 1855 he returned

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(4) Peter O'Reilly would appear to be the one exception, for he had renounced his allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church and had become a Protestant before leaving Ireland, according to a letter written by J. G. Portlock to Colonel R. C. Moody, January 29, 1859, MS., Archives of B.C.

(5) A. C. Elliott, *British Columbia Politics*, p. 4. A photostat of this M.S. prepared for H. H. Bancroft is in the Archives of B.C.

(6) Susan H. Sampson, "My Father, Joseph Despard Pemberton," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, VIII (1944), pp. 111-125.



Arthur Edward Kennedy, Governor of Vancouver  
Island, 1864-1866.



Chartres Brew.

John Carmichael Haynes.





home on furlough and was, presumably, instrumental in persuading both his sister, Susan, later to become lady principal of Angela College, and his uncle, Augustus Frederick Pemberton, to come to Vancouver Island. Miss Susan, along with Miss Emmeline Tod, came passenger in the *Princess Royal* and was apparently accompanied by her uncle. She arrived at Esquimalt in mid-December, 1855,<sup>7</sup> at approximately the same time as her brother, who had chosen the Nicaragua route for his return to the colony.<sup>8</sup> Augustus F. Pemberton was chosen by Governor Douglas to organize a police force on Vancouver Island in 1858<sup>9</sup> and J. D. Pemberton became Surveyor-General of Vancouver Island in October, 1861.<sup>10</sup>

When the Mainland colony was being organized, the Colonial Secretary, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, wrote to Douglas:—

I consider it of great importance to the general social welfare and dignity of the Colony that gentlemen should be encouraged to come from this Kingdom, not as mere adventurers seeking employment, but in the hope of obtaining professional occupations for which they are calculated, such for instance, as Stipendiary Magistrates, or Gold Commissioners.<sup>11</sup>

He sent a number of letters of introduction to Douglas, including four for Irishmen—John Boles Gaggin, formerly lieutenant in the Royal Cork Artillery Militia; A. C. Elliott, a member of the English Bar; Peter O'Reilly, retired member of the Revenue

(7) The date of the arrival of the *Princess Royal* is given by Robert Melrose in his *Diary* as December 17, 1855, as reprinted in *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, VII (1943), p. 218. The *Diary* of Augustus F. Pemberton covering the period December 23, 1855, to August 3, 1858, MS., Archives of B.C., also confirms this date. See also N. deB. Lugin, *Pioneer Women of Vancouver Island*, Victoria, 1928, pp. 33–34.

(8) In his *Facts and Figures relating to Vancouver Island and British Columbia*, London, 1860, pp. 84–96, Pemberton outlines the pros and cons of the several routes available at that time. Presumably he sailed from England about October 27. The steamer *Cortes* brought him to San Francisco from Central America on December 4, and as the *Columbia* left four days later for Oregon, no doubt he continued his northward journey in her. See *San Francisco Daily Alta California*, December 5 and 9, 1855.

(9) Douglas to Lytton, December 11, 1858, MS. *Letterbook* copy in Archives of B.C.

(10) Original commission in the Archives of B.C.

(11) Lytton to Douglas, September 16, 1858, *Papers Relative to the Affairs of British Columbia*, Part I (Cmd. 2476), London, 1859, p. 66. Hereafter cited as *B.C. Papers*.

Police in Ireland; and Thomas Elwyn, eldest son of Lieutenant-General Elwyn of the Royal Artillery.<sup>12</sup> They seem to have made up part of the group referred to by Gilbert Malcolm Sproat as recommendees of Chichester Samuel Parkinson-Fortescue, at the time Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, who was to succeed Sir Robert Peel as Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1865. Sproat says that Fortescue's nominations were "over-numerous and followed by expectants" but that those he supported "were generally men of a good class."<sup>13</sup> The four men were to secure official appointments of the type that Lytton had suggested.

Prior to the arrival of the above-mentioned, Chartres Brew, after a number of vicissitudes, reached Victoria on November 8, 1858.<sup>14</sup> He was then almost 33 years of age, having been born on December 31, 1815, at Corsfin, County Clare. He had had fourteen years' experience in the Irish Constabulary, had served with distinction in the Crimean War, and in 1857 held the position of Inspector in the Constabulary in the City of Cork. Lytton wished to give the impression that the Royal Engineers were being sent to British Columbia for such practical purposes as surveying and road-building and that they were not primarily a military force.<sup>15</sup> At the same time he realized the necessity of having a police force to maintain law and order among the miners. With this in mind he wrote Douglas:—

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(12) Original letters of introduction in the Archives of B.C.

(13) G. M. Sproat, *Miscellaneous Memoranda, MS.*, Archives of B.C. Sproat wrote further: "The ornament and head of that regime was an intellectual, picturesque and friendly Irishman, Chichester Samuel Parkinson-Fortescue." Parkinson-Fortescue was Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies under Palmerston in 1857-58 and 1859-65 and Chief Secretary for Ireland, 1865-66. He had an intimate connection with such reforms as the Disestablishment of the Irish Church and Gladstone's Land Act. See *Dictionary of National Biography*, Supplement, London, 1901, Vol. II, pp. 227-229.

(14) After being appointed head of the police department by Lytton, Brew left Southampton for New York in the *Austria* to proceed across the Isthmus of Panama to Victoria. The tenth day out, when four days from New York, the steamer was burned and Brew lost all his money and papers. He was rescued by a French ship, taken to Halifax, where the Executive Council advanced him £100. Brew to Douglas, November 11, 1858, *Brew Letters, MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(15) Lytton to Douglas, July 31, 1858, *B.C. Papers*, Part I, p. 45.

It is by the establishment of this Civil Constabulary, with a sufficient staff of Stipendiary Magistrates, that I would wish the Colonists to co-operate with the Government in the requisite protection to life and property. Hence I have sent to you the most experienced and trustworthy person I could select amongst the Irish Constabulary (a body of men peculiarly distinguished for efficiency), to serve as Inspector of the Police, and to carry out your Instructions for the formation of a civil force of that character.<sup>16</sup>

It was Lytton's intention that Brew should raise his force in the colony, but this proved an impossible project in a country where goldfields acted as a powerful magnet for labour. Brew had ambitious plans for the establishment of a force of 150 men.<sup>17</sup> Douglas, however, had been warned that the new colony must be self-supporting. He therefore asked that 60 properly equipped members of the Irish Constabulary be sent out to serve as the nucleus for a force of 100 men recruited in the country from "a less reliable element."<sup>18</sup> After the Ned McGowan "war" he pressed for a force of 150 men. This plan was not given up by the Governor until July, 1859, after a questionnaire had been sent him by the Inspector-General of the Irish Constabulary which made clear the expense involved in such a project and after he had been told by the Colonial Secretary that the colonists would have to foot the bill. Before the matter was settled, Douglas decided to use Brew to replace Richard Hicks, the Assistant Gold Commissioner at Yale. Brew, who had not been consulted, refused on the ground that the new responsibility would interfere with his duty as Chief Inspector of Police. In January, 1859, however, he agreed to accept the appointment as Chief Gold Commissioner, on the understanding that the appointment was a temporary one, made necessary by the maladministration of P. B. Whannell and George Perrier.<sup>19</sup> In this capacity Brew carried out his duties so ably that eighty miners of Hill's Bar paid the following tribute to him on May 23, 1859:—

(16) Lytton to Douglas, October 16, 1858, *B.C. Papers*, Part I, p. 70.

(17) Brew to Douglas, December 29, 1858, *Brew Letters, MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(18) Douglas to Lytton, December 27, 1858, *B.C. Papers*, Part II (Cmd. 2578), London, 1859, p. 48.

(19) Brew to Moody, January 12, 1859, *Brew Letters, MS.*, Archives of B.C.

Your discriminating judgment and practical sagacity have been evinced in many exciting questions wherein the rights of miners have conflicted. In their settlement, honesty and common sense were the prominent characteristics of your decisions, and for them, sir, we desire to thank you. The habits and customs of immigrants to new countries—particularly gold-bearing countries—are so diversified, that it is indeed one of the most difficult things for those in power to mete out justice to all, and not incur the enmity of some. To do so is the act of no ordinary mind, and evinces an intimate knowledge of human nature. You have done the first, sir, and not only avoided the latter, but have retained the kind feelings and respect of all.<sup>20</sup>

Brew was not too happy in his duties. He objected to the system of miners' licences and would have preferred the levying of an export duty on gold as a means of obtaining revenue—a system which finally went into effect under Governor Seymour—and he had, after all, been appointed Inspector of Police. Moreover, no attention had been paid to his request for an allowance to keep horses, to pay his travelling expenses, or to pay house-rent and the wages of a servant.<sup>21</sup> Not until June did Douglas release him from the post to which he had been commandeered, and then he was told he could only employ the number of constables who were “absolutely & indispensably necessary.”<sup>22</sup> By October, Brew gave up the struggle and suggested that he take over the post of Chief Magistrate at New Westminster in addition to carrying on his duties as head of the police department. While he still retained his original title, he had only a handful of men under him and, by 1864, declared that the management of the police in other parts of the colony was not supervised by him.<sup>23</sup> In actual fact his office was no higher than that of the other Magistrates, who, like him, served as policemen at their stations.

Brew had told Douglas on December 29, 1858, that he had “no doubt but if the men of the Irish Constabulary consider the rate of pay liberal a number of them would come out to the

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(20) *Victoria Weekly Gazette*, June 4, 1859.

(21) Brew later brought out his sister, Augusta, to keep house for him, but she soon married A. F. Pemberton. *Victoria Colonist*, August 16, 1861.

(22) W. A. G. Young to Brew, June 17, 1859, B.C., *Colonial Secretary's Letterbook, MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(23) Brew to Young, November 24, 1864, *Brew Letters, MS.*, Archives of B.C.

Colony at their own expense."<sup>24</sup> The same day he sent the Governor a letter introducing John Carmichael Haynes, who, on his arrival in Victoria on Christmas Day, had applied to Brew for an appointment in the police force. Haynes had testimonials signed by the Mayor and Magistrates of Cork.<sup>25</sup> He was immediately appointed a constable to serve under Brew and accompanied Brew and Captain J. M. Grant of the Royal Engineers to Yale, arriving there on January 17, 1859. In March, Haynes was put to work collecting miners' licences between Yale and Hope, and there he remained until October, 1860, when he was sent to assist William George Cox, Collector of Customs at Rock Creek.

Haynes, like most Irishmen of his class, was a keen horseman. His daughter has this to say of him:—

Judge Haynes was an expert horseman, and to him a good mount was one of the necessities of life. During nearly thirty years of duty in the Similkameen, Okanagan, and Kootenay districts he invariably rode the finest horses he could buy. He judged a horse and loved it, as only one can who has been brought up to follow the hounds, to enter the steeplechase, and later to ride many hundreds of miles over mountain trails to hold Court, to wa-wa with the Indians, to visit mines, and to keep law and order in every part of a vast district.

On horseback he invariably appeared as if "riding in the Row," with his Irish tweed coat, riding breeches, and English riding boots. An army helmet was part of the picture in summer; a felt hat at other seasons—never a Stetson or "cow-boy." His horse was well groomed, its tail docked, and its bridle and bit polished and shining.<sup>26</sup>

William George Cox was another Irishman. He, too, reached Vancouver Island in December, 1858, and was almost immediately employed as constable at Yale until July, 1859. His friend, J. D. Pemberton, had recommended him to Brew, and he also carried what Brew called "very high testimonials."<sup>27</sup> He had left behind

(24) Brew to Douglas, December 29, 1858, *Brew Letters, MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(25) *Ibid.*

(26) Hester E. White, "John Carmichael Haynes," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, IV (1940), pp. 195-196.

(27) "Mr. Cox holds very high testimonials; he is a good clerk and accountant and was of the greatest assistance to me in my examination of Mr. Hicks's accounts and books." Brew to Moody, February 20, 1859, *Brew Letters, MS.*, Archives of B.C. Brew recommended Cox's appointment as Revenue Officer.

him in Ireland a broken-hearted mother, who regretted his unhappy marriage and his unfortunate habit of accumulating debts, and brothers who were torn between envy of the adventurous life he led in British Columbia and their duty to remind him of the need to reform his ways. Cox's generosity—while in Ireland he showered his mother with extravagant gifts although he avoided dining with her—and his affectionate nature were, as his mother and brothers reminded him, likely to bring about his downfall. In this they were wrong, for it was his neglect of his wife in Ireland, combined with his indiscretion in arousing the hostility of Governor Seymour, which forced his retirement from the colony at the height of his popularity.<sup>28</sup>

Cox seems to have retained an affectionate regard for his mother and his brothers, for he treasured such letters as the following, written by one of his brothers:—

It is true dear William that I should thank you for the trouble you took in writing so long and entertaining description of the Indians. It was exceedingly kind [of you] to write so much and as I know all is true that you have said I value very highly the paper. I intend making up a paper by selecting parts out of your other letters, many of which are most interesting as descriptive of the habits, customs & manners of the people of B[ritish] Columbia, which is now becoming a very notable place. Your last is amusing beyond anny [*sic*] thing, and I shall in my paper introduce almost every word of it with regard to the Indians. Your description of the *ascent* and *descent* of the occupants of the sweat houses or bath caused no little amusement to us and to others too, but of course the cream of the thing in the latter instance must be omitted (*Habiliments*). But surely these are not the habits of Indians that the grand name of "St. Paul" is affixed to and that you live with? I could not imagine this or anything but what is nice & delicate and in native simplicity *refined* in that girl you speak so sweetly of. To tell the truth about that affair. I think you could not help loving dearly such softness & tenderness—in fact a girl of such amiability in parts of the globe so rude & rough & savage could not but have an influence on your susceptible and easily affected heart but although I say this and no doubt would myself under the influence that you are unhappily placed in perhaps fail in acting as I ought yet I say that the thing is unfortunate, may God in his answer to our constant messages for you my dearest brother deliver you out of this difficult and trying position, with one you hate at home and with one you love abroad. What can you do? The temptation is tremendous and I can only say again God deliver you . . . faith tells us God loves you too— and will show it to all that He loves

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(28) Correspondence of Susannah and Sophia Cox and others, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

you in his own good time. But do you ever read his book? for it is no matter *how* you are or *what* you are, read his word, believe & your sin shall be blotted out.<sup>29</sup>

In spite of his weaknesses, Douglas considered Cox "peculiarly well adapted for frontier service, where tact and a resolute will are indispensable qualities in managing the rough characters, met with there."<sup>30</sup> He employed him as Deputy Collector of Customs at Rock Creek in July, 1859, and rewarded him with the office of Magistrate when he conducted his duties in that post efficiently.

All the members of this Irish group were given responsible positions by Douglas. Gaggin served as constable at Yale until October, 1859, and was then appointed Magistrate and Assistant Gold Commissioner at Douglas, where he remained until 1863. O'Reilly was appointed Justice of the Peace and Revenue Collector at Hope in 1859; later that same year he became High Sheriff of British Columbia. In 1860 he received his appointment as County Court Judge<sup>31</sup> and three years later became Gold Commissioner for Cariboo District. In 1866, in this same capacity, he was transferred to the District of Columbia and Kootenay, and in 1868 he became Police Magistrate, succeeding Chartres Brew, who had been sent to Cariboo as Gold Commissioner. Elliott was the first to be honoured with the title of "County Court Judge," a position he held at Yale in 1860 shortly after his arrival.<sup>32</sup> As Judge at Yale it was said that he "administered justice with a fearless hand, and soon held the discordant elements well in check."<sup>33</sup> He was the only trained lawyer in the group and he was given additional pay. In June, 1861, he became Gold Commissioner and Stipendiary Magistrate at Yale, in 1863 Magistrate of Cariboo, and in 1867 High Sheriff

(29) Incomplete and unsigned letter to W. G. Cox, September 21, 1860, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(30) James Douglas, *Confidential Reports on Officers, MS.*, Archives of B.C. Cox was not made a County Court Judge until October, 1867. Young to Cox, October 3, 1867, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(31) In his *Confidential Report on Officers, MS.*, Archives of B.C., Douglas wrote of O'Reilly: "He is a gentleman of excellent character, high moral worth, an able, active resolute Magistrate."

(32) The Magistrates at Hope, Lytton, Yale, and Cayoosh (Lillooet) were all appointed County Court Judges by July, 1861.

(33) *Victoria Colonist*, April 11, 1889.

of British Columbia, and eventually, in 1874, succeeded A. F. Pemberton as Police Magistrate at Victoria. Elwyn, appointed Gold Commissioner and Stipendiary Magistrate at Lillooet in June, 1859, and soon after County Court Judge, resigned in December, 1862, rather than give up his interest in his claim at Williams Creek. He was in charge of the gold escorts of 1861 and 1863. In 1864 he was second in command of the company raised by Brew at New Westminster to put down the Chilcotin uprising. He acted as Stipendiary Magistrate in 1869 when the survey party for Western Union Telegraph examined the country from Quesnelmouth to the forks of the Skeena River.

Brew's duties were multifarious.<sup>34</sup> In addition to being Chief Gold Commissioner and Inspector of Police, he was made Stipendiary Magistrate at New Westminster in 1863. Later that year he was appointed by Douglas a member of the first Legislative Council of British Columbia. When the District of Douglas was amalgamated with that of New Westminster in 1866, his magisterial duties were increased. He was transferred from New Westminster to Cariboo and took up residence at Richfield during 1867. The harshness of the climate as well as the arduous duties caused a breakdown in his health and he died on May, 31, 1870, in his fifty-fifth year. At his death the *Cariboo Sentinel* stated:—

As the Magistrate and Gold Commissioner for Cariboo, Mr. Brew secured the esteem and respect of the whole community by his impartiality and manifest intention to do justice in all matters brought before him. As an individual he displayed much interest in the natural productions and resources of the colony, collecting specimens and bringing them into notice, encouraging scientific research, and in so doing showed that he possessed a large stock of useful and general knowledge.<sup>35</sup>

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(34) In August, 1862, he became Acting-Treasurer of British Columbia during Captain William D. Gossett's absence in Europe on sick-leave. He was made Acting Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works in November, 1863, on Colonel R. C. Moody's retirement. He then had the right to place after his name the following initials: C.I.P. (Chief Inspector of Police), C.G.C. (Chief Gold Commissioner), J.S.D.C. (Judge of the Small Debts Court), J.P. (Justice of the Peace), A.C.T. (Acting Colonial Treasurer), and A.C.C.L. & W. (Acting Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works). *Ibid.*, November 19, 1863.

(35) Barkerville *Cariboo Sentinel*, June 4, 1870.



The *Victoria Colonist* echoed these sentiments:—

During eleven years and upwards that he has held an office in this colony the deceased has earned a high reputation for integrity of character and uprightness of purpose, and during that period he has proved a true friend to many a needy fellow-creature.<sup>36</sup>

On his tombstone in the historic little cemetery near Barkerville, in words attributed to Chief Justice Matthew Baillie Begbie, there appears the following tribute to a memorable figure: "A man imperturbable in courage and temper, endowed with a great and varied administrative capacity, most ready wit, most pure integrity, and a most humane heart."<sup>37</sup>

Haynes, as we have seen, had served at Yale as constable in 1859 and as Collector of Revenue between Yale and Hope during part of that year and 1860. He assisted Cox in this capacity at Rock Creek in 1860 and was made Revenue Officer there in 1863, moving in July, 1864, to Wild Horse Creek.<sup>38</sup> In the course of that year he became a Magistrate and member of the Legislative Council, and the following year he was made Assistant Gold Commissioner and Deputy Collector of Customs. He was a member of the Legislative Council again in 1866 and served at Wild Horse Creek from 1870 until 1872.<sup>39</sup> During his service in the Interior of the colony, Cox established the customs house at Similkameen in 1862. In 1863 he was made Magistrate at Kamloops and later in the year became Assistant Gold Commissioner of Cariboo. He was sent to the Big Bend country and Kootenay in 1867 and represented the latter district in the Legislative Council of 1867.

Arthur W. Vowell joined this group of Civil Servants in 1864.<sup>40</sup> A native of Clonmel, County Tipperary, he was the son of a prominent Irish lawyer and had served as lieutenant in the Irish Militia. After he had tried his fortune at mining in Cari-

(36) *Victoria Colonist*, June 12, 1870.

(37) From a photograph of the grave, Archives of B.C.

(38) Haynes was appointed Justice of the Peace in June, 1864. A. N. Birch to Haynes, June 14, 1864, *MS. Letterbook*, Archives of B.C.

(39) For details concerning Haynes' career, see Hester E. White, "John Carmichael Haynes," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, IV (1940), pp. 183-201.

(40) For further information on Vowell see R. E. Gosnell, *A History of British Columbia*, n.p., 1906, pp. 453-455.

boo, he applied for employment in the government service. He was made chief constable at Big Bend in 1866 and held the position until after Confederation, when he became Gold Commissioner and Stipendiary Magistrate in the Kootenay District. Later he served in similar capacities in Omineca and Cassiar, succeeding O'Reilly as Superintendent of Indian Affairs in 1889.

It would be wrong, of course, to give the impression that all the posts of the type mentioned were filled by Irishmen, but one cannot but be struck by the preponderance of men of Irish nationality in the colonial Civil Service, particularly in the colony of British Columbia. When one remembers that there were never more than seven Justices of the Peace in the colony at one time, Irish representation is seen to be large. It is well to remember, too, that at the time they served as Justices of the Peace, they also acted in other capacities. This office was usually combined with that of Gold Commissioner, which involved responsibility for collecting miners' licences, keeping records of claims and water rights, and settling disputes. They were also, on occasion, collectors of customs duties. They acted as Coroners, and they presided over the Small Debts Courts, where cases involving the collection of debts and claims not exceeding £50 were heard. In addition, they served unofficially as Indian Agents and part of their work after the great rush to Cariboo was over was the delimiting of Indian reserves. Over and above all these duties, administrative and judicial, some of them had to undertake executive duties after the Legislative Council was established in the Mainland colony in 1863.

Not a little credit should go to Irish officials for the peace that prevailed in the mining fields. They seem to have had a particular gift for settling disputes which might have become inflammable. Much of their success was due to their understanding of human foibles and to their sense of humour. Cox, for example, was kindly and sympathetic with the unfortunate, and was known to pay a fine himself rather than to commit a miner to prison.<sup>41</sup> He once settled a dispute by having the rival claimants run a race from the Court-house to the claim each felt was his own. He was also able to defend his own honour with his fists, a course he took on one occasion when an American refused

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(41) *Victoria Colonist*, November 13, 1878.

to recognize his position and authority as Revenue Officer. In spite of his unorthodox methods of applying the law, he was extremely popular with the miners.<sup>42</sup> O'Reilly was likewise. He is said to have kept peace in the Kootenay by announcing on his arrival there: "Now, boys, there must be no shooting, for if there is shooting, there will surely be hanging."<sup>43</sup>

These men could also carry out duties with a flourish, as Brew and Cox demonstrated in the case of the Chilcotin uprising of 1864. The grateful Government of British Columbia, although it had incurred a heavy debt—£80,000—in rounding up the murderers, presented both Brew and Cox with silver services. Each consisted of a "tray, urn, coffee pot, tea-pot, sugar-bowl, slop-bowl and cream pitcher," and were of American coin silver. They had been imported from San Francisco and were valued at \$2,000.<sup>44</sup> Brew would have undoubtedly have preferred a good horse or an increase in wages so that he could keep a servant, and Cox's ménage was hardly the place for such elegance, but the incident is of interest since it gives some indication of the impression that had been created of their social background.

It is common knowledge that after the Legislative Council of British Columbia was set up, Governor Seymour dominated the official element of which it was largely composed. It is unlikely that Cox, who had assisted in a drive to keep a library in existence at Richfield, appreciated Seymour's attempt to block the establishment of a public school system on the Mainland. On one question Cox and Seymour definitely split: after the union of the colonies in 1866 Seymour wanted the capital to be at New Westminster. One of the Magistrates, William Hales Franklyn, who had been in danger of losing his post at Nanaimo and who could benefit by official favour, sided with the Governor. The question came before the Legislative Council on April 2,

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(42) "Cox governed more in Cariboo by Suaviter in modo than the fortiter in re and was liked by the Miners, for he did not put on much dignity—but was socially inclined—and of course fell in with a woman. Chinamen he used to swear [in] by ordering them to chop of [f] a Cock[']s head—or break a plate. What did you do with the cock. It became the property of the Court and I sent him home for dinner." John Sebastian Helmcken *Reminiscences, MS.*, Archives of B.C., Part V, p. 51.

(43) Scholefield and Howay, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 670.

(44) *Victoria Colonist*, January 10, 1865, and September 11, 1870.

1868. Fourteen members of the Council, including Elwyn, Walkem (another Irishman), Pemberton, O'Reilly, J. W. Trutch (O'Reilly's brother-in-law), and Cox voted in favour of Victoria and only five for New Westminster. According to Dr. J. S. Helmcken there had been little prospect of such a substantial majority for the Island site. His account of how the victory was won is amusing:—

Cox was with us—the British Lion [Franklyn] against. The debate came on at last. Noah['s] Ark was full of Westminster people and a few strangers. Our arguments were that they had already decided that it was necessary that all the chief departments should be there—Next the difficulty of navigating the Fraser—thirdly, the presence of H M s Navy at Esquimault and last of all the general good. It is unnecessary to go over these or those on the other side, but it soon became evident that all the official members were not tied and indeed each one seemed to have free choice—but everyone knew Seymour's predilections—at least what were or had been his public utterances *before* Union. . . . Of course everyone was earnest and serious, the British Lion among the number, altho opposed to the resolution, he was genial, near sighted and liked a drop of the nectar occasionally. It so happened that Noah['s] Ark was cold—but this ark unlike the original had a smoking addition and a fire attached. Of course during the debate members adjourned for a rest to the attachment. The British Lion had been at Kerr['s] house during the morning to be taken care of! However in the middle of the day, he made his appearance apparently all right—for his side. His turn came—he pulled out of his pocket a number of loose sheets of foolscap, so we knew we were in for a long dissertation. Cox sat on his right—O'Reilly on his left, the Lion a little shaky. Nevertheless on with his specs—the sheets in proper order are on the table. Mr. President. When I went up the Hoogley forty years ago, the navigation was very intricate, the river full of shoals and sandbank[s], a very great deal worse than Fraser River. Look at the Hoogley now—these shoals have been cleared away and ships now without any difficulty can go to Calcutta. The sandheads and shoals in the Fraser can and will be removed as trade increases and necessity demands, and then Westminster will be as easily reached as Calcutta is now. At this point the Lion put aside the sheet he had recited and looked around—Cox in the twinkling of an eye put it back again. So the Lion went on—Mr. President, when I went up the Hoogley, forty years ago—&c to the end. The same turn over and the same replacement by Cox—so again Mr. President when I went up the Hoogley &c—the same look round for admiration—the Lion had laid down his spectacles. Cox in a moment pressed the glasses out! The Lion put them on—but now could not see the Hoogley or anything else, so he wiped them with his handkerchief and put them on again—he looked puzzled that he could not read! Well, we must not laugh—the room was full of people—and we must burst—so I proposed a recess for half an hour—contrary to rule of course.

We all adjourned to the annex—and burst! Kerr was there with hot water and whisky—and at all events the Lion took some more.

The half hour expired—we all returned to the chamber, as grave as Councilmen ought to be—the Lion claims to have the floor—vociferous cries of no no & small uproar during which the Lion subsides—growling! . . .

It will not excite surprise to learn that the good people were exasperated and astonished at the, to them, unexpected turn of events. They had felt certain that the Governor would have directed the decision and even now many believed that the Resolution for removal of the Seat of Government would be of none effect. We got to the Hotel safely, but had more angry looks and scowls than pleasant. After dinner Cox, Pemberton, Southgate, Stamp and I were sitting smoking in the back room—not a little bit satisfied when . . . the landlord came in a little frightened, saying, you had better not go outside! There is a crowd waiting for you and threaten to be revenged on you but particularly Cox.<sup>45</sup>

By the end of the year the Governor had received an inquiry from Cox's estranged wife in Ireland about her husband's activities and urging that pressure be put on him to assist in her support.<sup>46</sup> The following January Seymour had a reply sent stating that Cox was no longer in government employ.<sup>47</sup> However, in April a complimentary dinner was tendered to him in Victoria as "a deserved compliment to the genial gentleman."<sup>48</sup> Cox went to San Francisco, where he attempted to maintain himself as an artist, and although his work was much admired in British Columbia, only his friend, A. C. Elliott, now Premier of the Province, would buy any of it. In September, 1877, he sent one of his paintings to Victoria to be raffled. The following year Cox died in California at the age of 56.<sup>49</sup>

Closely allied in background and interests with the Irish officials were two of the three army officers<sup>50</sup> who qualified under

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(45) J. S. Helmcken *Reminiscences, MS.*, Archives of B.C., Part V, pp. 36, 38–42. In addition, Helmcken recorded: "We knew that Cox would vote with us on the Capital question, provided he had not to give his official vote by direction. He never received any direction and as he found other officials ready to vote with us, he joined them and did so, but no one could foretell the outcome until the final vote." *Ibid.*, Part V, pp. 48–49.

(46) Mrs. W. G. Cox to Governor Seymour, November 5, 1868, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(47) W. A. G. Young to Mrs. W. G. Cox, January 4, 1869, *Colonial Secretary's Miscellaneous Letterbook, MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(48) *Victoria Colonist*, April 21, 1869.

(49) *Ibid.*, November 13, 1878.

(50) The third was Captain Cavendish Venables, probably a Scot, who had served in the 74th Highlanders. He took up land on the trail from

a proclamation of 1861 to hold military grants.<sup>51</sup> Captain Charles Frederick Houghton, who had purchased his discharge from the 20th Regiment of Foot of the Imperial Army in 1863,<sup>52</sup> came to British Columbia in September of that year expecting to take up a grant of 1,440 acres in the Okanagan Valley. Previously Douglas had had difficulty with government officials who bought land for speculative purposes. He had hit upon the stratagem of setting aside government reserves wherever he felt there was a site likely to prove auriferous or strategic. By the time Houghton arrived, the Military Settlers Proclamation had been superseded by the Military and Naval Settlers' Act, 1863, and he found that he was entitled to a mere 300 acres under the new regulations. The land he chose at the head of Okanagan Lake was within a government reserve near the northern arm of the lake, and it was not until 1872 that his title to this land was recognized.<sup>53</sup> In the meantime he had pre-empted and purchased some 600 additional acres, and he also effected an exchange with the Vernon brothers who had accompanied him.<sup>54</sup> His pre-emption on Coldstream Creek formed the nucleus of the Coldstream Ranch, made famous under the ownership of Lord Aberdeen some thirty years later. So well known was he in the district that Trutch's 1871 map of British Columbia marked the location of his holdings as "Houghton's Coldstream." Houghton returned to army life in 1873, when he became Deputy Adjutant-General of British Columbia and later he held similar offices in Manitoba and Quebec. He served with distinction in the Riel Rebellion and eventually returned to Victoria, where he died on August 13, 1898.<sup>55</sup>

Lytton to Bonaparte River, about 12 miles from Cook's Ferry on the Thompson River. Like Houghton and Martley, he had some trouble before his claim was recognized. He was also accompanied by his brother, T. Evelyn Venables.

(51) Proclamation No. 3 of 1861 of the colony of British Columbia. Similar grants were made in Upper Canada in 1815 to British army officers that had served in the War of 1812.

(52) W. F. Foster to James Douglas, July 13, 1863, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(53) F. W. Laing, *Colonial Farm Settlers on the Mainland of British Columbia, 1858-1871*, *Typescript* in Archives of B.C., p. 455.

(54) *Ibid.*, p. 456.

(55) *Victoria Colonist*, August 14, 1898. For further information on Houghton, see Margaret A. Ormsby, "Captain Houghton's Exploratory

Another of these military settlers was Captain John Martley, who sold his commission in the 9th Foot in February, 1861,<sup>56</sup> and applied for a military grant in British Columbia. He also experienced difficulties in obtaining his land grant on Pavilion Mountain, and it was not until February, 1864, that his right was recognized.<sup>57</sup> In the meantime he pre-empted land in the name of his wife, his daughter, and his 2-year-old son. Like Houghton, he was a great landed proprietor who had little ready cash. By May, 1866, he was writing the Governor from "The Grange" asking for an appointment, stating "for the last five years I have been trying to make two blades of grass grow, where one grew before" and claiming that he was sure the Governor would know "that the man who succeeds in doing this deserves well of his country."<sup>58</sup> He was made a Justice of the Peace. In this role he was pompous and self-important. On one occasion, when irritated by the punishment meted out by Father Chirouse to an Indian woman, he threatened the priest with a prison term.<sup>59</sup> Martley was something of a poet and was the author of *Songs of the Cascades*. After his death the following poem was found among his possessions:—

Beloved Earth, now joy and sorrow  
Have ended, and on Thy breast  
I lay me down in peace to rest  
Until the dawning of to-morrow.

Be merciful to me, O Lord!  
To me, a sinner, fellow man  
Whom I have wronged; Now, if you can  
Forgive the wrongful deed or word.

If Thou has wronged me, cease to grieve,  
For here, by all my hopes of Heaven,  
Most freely is the wrong forgiven;  
Farewell, this quiet hand receive.<sup>60</sup>

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Trip, 1864," *Thirteenth Report of the Okanagan Historical Society*, Vernon, 1949, pp. 38-44.

(56) W. F. Foster to James Douglas, July 23, 1861, *Transcript*, Archives of B.C.

(57) F. W. Laing, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

(58) John Martley to Governor Seymour, May 2, 1866, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(59) *Vancouver Province*, May 5, 1924.

(60) *Victoria Colonist*, November 3, 1896.

Houghton had been accompanied by two Irish friends, also ex-army officers, Charles A. and Forbes George Vernon, of Clontarf Castle, Dublin. They, too, pre-empted and purchased large holdings of land, and eventually their Coldstream Ranch, the first section of which had been owned by Houghton, contained more than 13,000 acres. Forbes G. Vernon later became Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works in the Elliott Administration, and the City of Vernon, named after him, perpetuates his association with the Okanagan District.<sup>61</sup>

Near the Vernons lived E. J. Tronson, son of the Inspector of Police of Wellmouth, Kilkenny, who had sailed around the Horn in 1864. He started out for Big Bend in 1868 but in Kamloops met Houghton and was persuaded by him to take up land in Priest's Valley.<sup>62</sup> Like so many of his friends, Tronson was soon made Justice of the Peace. At the southern end of Okanagan Lake was Thomas Ellis, protégé of Peter O'Reilly, who kept an eye on him for his father, "the Major." Ellis and Andrew McFarland took up land in 1867, and, although the partnership was broken in 1870, it was not too long before Ellis had a ranch of 10,000 acres.<sup>63</sup> Farther south, John Carmichael Haynes took out his first pre-emption in August, 1869, near the head of Osoyoos Lake. After his death in 1888 over 20,000 acres comprising his estate were acquired by Ellis.<sup>64</sup>

Peter O'Reilly's long and lonely trips to the Kootenay country in 1867, 1868, and 1869 were made bearable by the fact that coming and going he could drop in at "Tommy's" (Thomas Ellis) and see his friends, Haynes, Houghton, and the Vernons.<sup>65</sup> He would admire the bands of cattle these ranchers were building up. One or other of his friends would nearly always contrive to ride 35 or 40 miles with him—sometimes all the way to Cornwall's, where they would all hunt with the hounds—sometimes to Hope. In spite of the rawness of the country they succeeded pretty well in maintaining their former social standards.

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(61) The story of the Vernon brothers is dealt with by R. E. Gosnell, *op. cit.*, pp. 650, 651, 693-695.

(62) F. W. Laing, *op. cit.*, p. 459.

(63) *Ibid.*, pp. 486-487.

(64) *Ibid.*, p. 488.

(65) See entries in Peter O'Reilly *Diaries* for 1867-1869, *MS.*, Archives of B.C., *passim*.



An Irishman of much the same type as the Irish officials and landholders of the Mainland was Governor Edward Kennedy of Vancouver Island, who came to Victoria in 1864. Sproat refers to him as "an Irish gentleman of a good type." He, too, had served in the army. He had also served with the Irish Board of Works during the famine and had held a number of appointments in the diplomatic service. On his way across the Atlantic to his new appointment in 1864 he gained a good deal of information about the colony from J. D. Pemberton, who travelled with him. "In Captain Kennedy," wrote Sproat, "were suitably combined those tropical and Irish experiences and elements so much valued by the Home Government in administering the commercial and mining colonies on the Pacific seaboard. A handsomer man, or a more courtly, or friendly, seldom could be encountered, yet it was not easy for me, his inoffensive, personal friend, waiting the announcement to dinner, to rid myself entirely from a suspicion that I was in the guardroom, and that I deserved it."<sup>66</sup>

One of Kennedy's major trials was the opposition to his views in connection with the civil list. He also came under criticism for the purchase of Cary Castle as an official residence. Yet he has never been given full credit for an honest administration, in the course of which he exposed corruption and insisted on reform. Sproat wrote of him:—

Governor Kennedy's career rather supports the opinion that many Irish, or, stating it more broadly, Celtic, gentlemen have certain innate personal qualifications for the governing of colonies and dependencies. The Englishmen, of course, as any Englishman will testify, is naturally the best possible man for any official position anywhere, nevertheless, the high sense of honour, quickness of apprehension, and courtesy of the Celt, together with his devotion to duty and general powers of entertainment, make him a formidable competitor. The Lowland Scot—if a Lowland Scot may say so—though with keen intelligence, seeing all round a subject, is as a rule, or at any rate, often, too didactic in presenting his appreciations for the consideration of his intellectual inferiors, or, in another word, the community. Moreover, he has not, native to him, and cannot adopt, without becoming too familiar the calm of the English, or the charm of the Irish manner.<sup>67</sup>

While Kennedy was in the colony, the "largest and most successful public entertainment that has ever taken place in Victoria"

(66) G. M. Sproat *Miscellaneous Memoranda, MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(67) *Ibid.*

was the St. Patrick's Day Ball given under his patronage in March, 1865. According to the *Colonist*:—

The scene presented when the large assemblage was set in motion by the lively strains emanating from the excellent band of ten performers presided over by Professor St. Clair was inspiring to a degree. The votaries of the festive Goddess were probably too closely packed for the full enjoyment of the recreation, but unintentional bumps and thumps were received and apologized for with good grace, and everything went merrily and smoothly until shortly after 12 o'clock when the company headed by the distinguished patron and his family were ushered into supper. . . . Before rising His Excellency in a very neat speech proposed a toast to the memory of St. Patrick. He congratulated his countrymen upon having set the sensible example of inviting the ladies to join in their celebration and spoke feelingly of the additional charm lent by the presence of the fair sex to all festive occasions as compared with the senseless custom of sitting down for several hours to a dinner, talking "nothing," eating too much, and perhaps drinking more.<sup>68</sup>

When the time came for his departure, there were, for the most part, pleasant memories of the Governor, although during his tenure in office many persons had been in disagreement with him. "The Governor's family departed in a shower of tears," wrote E. G. Alston, "'t was most affecting—entre nous, only an Irish family could have got up such a scene. One would have thought they had been beloved & revered all the time."<sup>69</sup>

Although the list of Irishmen could grow, mention will be made of only a few others. Leonard McClure had a peripatetic career in journalism on the Island and Mainland. He was one of the leaders in the movement for representative government. He is, probably, most remembered for the famous filibuster that he carried out in the Legislative Assembly on April 23 and 24, 1866, in an effort to prevent the Government from redeeming property sold for taxes.<sup>70</sup> Dr. James Trimble, a native of Tyrone, who had been a surgeon in the Royal Navy, came to Victoria in 1858, and from 1860 onward was active in the political life of the colony. He was a close friend of A. C. Elliott. The *Colonist* referred to him as "a man of fine presence and courtly manners; charitable

(68) *Victoria Colonist*, March 20, 1865.

(69) E. G. Alston to H. P. P. Crease, undated, *MS.*, Archives of B.C.

(70) *Victoria Colonist*, April 24 and 25, 1866. See also Madge Wolfenden, "The Early Government Gazettes," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, VII (1943), pp. 171-190.

to a fault, he was also capable of the warmest attachments, and a friend once made he never lost."<sup>71</sup>

There were some scamps in the Irish camp. Men like DeCoursey, of San Juan War fame,<sup>72</sup> Felix O'Byrne, and the lawyer O'Brien revealed some of the less desirable Irish characteristics. On the other hand, there were clergymen who made their lives examples for others—Rev. W. B. Crickmer, sent out from England with the first officials appointed for British Columbia in 1858 and who was stationed first at Derby<sup>73</sup> and afterwards at Yale; Rev. A. C. Garrett, Indian missionary in Victoria who also served at Nanaimo and in the Cariboo;<sup>74</sup> Rev. C. T. Woods, who came to Victoria in 1860 and became the first principal of the Collegiate School while his wife was the first principal of Angela College;<sup>75</sup> and Rev. John Hall, who founded the first Presbyterian church on Vancouver Island.<sup>76</sup> There were also Irishmen among the Overlanders of 1862—John Hunniford, Charles T. Cooney, and the two Hancock brothers.<sup>77</sup> In New Westminster there was a merchant colony of Northern Ireland men—Francis Campbell (who resided in Victoria also for many years), Thomas Cunningham, Andrew Haslam, John Reid, William Shannon, and others.<sup>78</sup> Most of them were Presbyterians or Methodists, and many of them were active in political life, supporting the cause of responsible government led by John Robson. There was another group of Irishmen at the mouth of the Fraser River—the McCleery brothers and Hugh McRoberts among others. They, too, acquired

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(71) *Victoria Colonist*, January 3, 1885. After Confederation Dr. Trimble served as Speaker in the Legislature.

(72) For a full account of DeCoursey's adventures see D. W. Higgins, *The Mystic Spring*, Toronto, 1904, pp. 256-270.

(73) *Victoria Gazette*, December 16, 1858.

(74) G. H. Cockburn, *Some Persons and Places in Anglican Church History, Transcript*, Archives of B.C., pp. 24, 25. See also A. C. Garrett *Reminiscences, Transcript*, Archives of B.C., *passim*.

(75) G. H. Cockburn, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

(76) J. C. Goodfellow, "John Hall, Pioneer Presbyterian in British Columbia," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, VII (1943), pp. 31-48.

(77) M. S. Wade, *The Overlanders of '62* [B.C. Archives Memoir No. IX], Victoria, 1931, *passim*.

(78) J. B. Kerr, *Biographical Dictionary of Well-known British Columbians*, Vancouver, 1890, *passim*.

large estates.<sup>79</sup> There were others, such as Walkem and Mc-Creight and Hugh Nelson, whose important work was done after the Provincial Government had been organized.

On the whole, the group of Irishmen who were here during colonial days were colourful and interesting figures. Optimists all, they helped to create faith in the country's future. They were real empire-builders and showed in this instance, as in the case of the Australian colonies, that British interests could be no better served than by the Anglo-Irish.

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(79) F. W. Laing, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

## COAL-SEEKERS ON PEACE RIVER, 1903

In the history of British Columbia much has been recorded concerning the search for gold. Relatively little attention has been paid to the story of the coal industry. The diary which is here reproduced casts light on the story of the search for coal in the Peace River Canyon in 1903. The expedition was not entirely successful, but the incidents of the journey set down in the diary are well worth recording.

The author of the diary is Mr. John Strickland Leitch, of the Leitch Construction Company, Toronto, Ontario. He is a graduate of the Royal Military College, Kingston, Ontario, and is by profession a civil engineer. Born in Cornwall, Ontario, on December 2, 1882, Mr. Leitch is the son of the late Mr. Justice James Leitch of the Supreme Court of the Province of Ontario and of his wife, Elizabeth Strickland Leitch. A few months after graduating from the Royal Military College he joined a survey party that was looking for coal on Peace River. In a letter written in November, 1948, Mr. Leitch gives the following information regarding the venture:—

The party left Edmonton for Peace River Canyon on February 27th, 1903. It had no connection with the G[rand]. T[runk]. P[acific]. Surveys. There was a civil engineer by the name of Davies, (a nephew of the Hon. L. H. Davies in the first Laurier Cabinet),<sup>1</sup> on the staff of the Cornwall Canal, a very nice young chap about 37 or so. This Davies had been on what was probably the first Dominion Government geological survey in that part of B.C. a few years previous.<sup>2</sup> They used pack horses and in the course of their work south of the Peace River and about opposite the Canyon, outcrops of coal were noted. Davies claimed to have personally discovered a large seam in the face of one of the cut-banks of a stream entering the Canyon from the south and about half way through it.

Davies was somewhat of a promoter and as the G.T.P. Railway was just being talked about and would, if built, be confined to either the Yellow Head Pass or the Peace River Pass through the Canyon, he got Col. R. R.

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(1) The Honourable Sir Louis Henry Davies, K.C.M.G., was Minister of Marine and Fisheries in the Laurier Cabinet of 1896.

(2) As a matter of fact Davies' party was not the first in this part of British Columbia. A. R. C. Selwyn was there in 1875 and G. M. Dawson during 1879-80.

MacLennan,<sup>3</sup> M.P. for Glengarry, who lived in great style in Cornwall, interested. A small company, of local men mostly, was formed to finance the prospecting and staking of a new coal field in the Peace River Pass.

At the time I was a lad of 19 just out of R.M.C. in June 1902 and was supposed to be studying law in my father's firm in Cornwall—as a matter of fact I was really working for the Town Engineer. The colonel, having been at one time the world's champion hammer thrower and caber tosser, was a great hero of my boyhood. He was an old bachelor who delighted to get a young audience for his tales and I was a good listener. . . . So the colonel and I were quite pals. He offered me \$75.00 a month and all expenses to go as assistant surveyor (really I imagine as his confidential representative although he never mentioned that!) You know in those days \$75.00 and all expenses to a lad of 20 was a fortune. . . . The colonel really organized and equipped us and as he knew the needs of wilderness journeys, having made a huge fortune building the C[anadian]. P[acific]. Railway, Lake Superior Section, he knew the wilderness so that we were well equipped for hardships. . . .<sup>4</sup>

Davies was the chief of the party, but the so-called "captain" was a mining engineer and geologist named Colin Campbell, who represented the Dominion Coal Company of the Cape Breton Coal Company, Nova Scotia, which was one of the financial interests involved. He was in his late forties or early fifties and seemed quite elderly to his young companion. Mr. Leitch says of him: "He was a grand man and I should now judge a splendid geologist especially on coal." Robert Smith, a British Columbia land surveyor from Rossland, B.C., was entrusted with the actual coal survey. Mr. Leitch was the other member of the party, and is to-day its sole survivor.

Colonel McLennan had arranged letters of credit to the Hudson's Bay Company. As a result, the leader of the party was able to procure the necessary outfit at the company's store in Edmonton, and everywhere along the route the managers of the posts were most hospitable and helpful. At Edmonton, Davies secured staple supplies for five months and also the necessary bush equipment. There was a winter road from Edmonton to Athabaska Landing, up the Athabaska River to Lesser Slave River, up that river to Lesser Slave Lake, and then across a land

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(3) Roderick R. McLennan was born in Glengarry County, January 1, 1842, and after fulfilling his contracts with the Canadian Pacific Railway construction became a private banker in Glengarry and sat for that constituency in the House of Commons from 1891 until 1904. He died at Cornwall, Ontario, March 8, 1907.

(4) J. S. Leitch to Walter N. Sage, dated at Toronto, November 6, 1948.

trail for 100 miles to what is now the town of Peace River Landing (or Peace River). The Hudson's Bay Company officials at Edmonton placed one of their freighters, Bill Harcus by name, at the disposal of the party, and he accompanied them as far as Ali Brick's stopping-house, 15 miles up Peace River from Peace River Crossing.

Actually the diary ends abruptly on Sunday, July 13, 1903. Mr. Leitch has, however, finished the story in the following extract from a letter:—

. . . We got safely across the 100 miles of prairie trail between Peace River Crossing and Lesser Slave Lake. Cornwall and Bredin, fur trading company at Lesser Slave, at what is now the town of Grouard, were sending out their season's take of furs to Edmonton and provided us with passages in their York Boats. We sailed down Lesser Slave Lake with a fair wind, rowed down the Lesser Slave River to its junction with the Athabaska River and down the Athabaska River to Athabaska Landing. We took a stage coach from the Landing to Edmonton and C.P. Railway home to Cornwall.<sup>5</sup>

In one sense the expedition had been successful. Coal had been found in the Peace River Canyon, but transportation difficulties were too great for Colonel McLennan to proceed further with the venture. However, he took up the claims and held them until the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway definitely chose the route through the Yellowhead Pass. To-day local coal mines are still operating in a small way in Peace River Canyon. In addition, while exploring the canyon, Campbell and Leitch were sure that they had identified the spot on the north bank where Sir Alexander Mackenzie and his party had left the canyon and started overland across Rocky Mountain Portage. It is just above the first rapids as one enters the canyon from Hudson Hope.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Leitch has kindly consented to the publication of his diary of this trip to Peace River. In his letter of November 6, 1948, he describes it as "an old haphazard diary kept in a very boyish style." Mr. Justice Leitch preserved the diary and had it typed and placed in his papers. After his death these papers came into his son's possession. The diary is a most human document. It was not written for publication and that, in all probability, constitutes its greatest charm. It is an authentic histori-

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(5) Same to same, February 20, 1949.

(6) Information in this paragraph was provided by Mr. Leitch during a conversation in Toronto in May, 1949.

cal record relating to a locality at a period in its development which has up to the present been rather neglected by writers of Canadian history. The text is published with only a few necessary corrections and occasional elisions of non-significant material.

It is now published not only for the light that it casts upon the Peace River country in the early years of the present century but also because it tells a straightforward and fascinating story. In places, as for example in the description of the shooting of the Peace River Canyon in a roughly built raft, the narrative becomes extraordinarily interesting, if not positively exciting. Mr. Leitch, in private conversation, has reported that the inhabitants of Hudson Hope were absolutely amazed when they learned that the survey party had shot the rapids in a raft. "Not even an Indian would have done it!" they exclaimed. Possibly the publication of this diary will stimulate others to look through their records and to bring out unpublished diaries, journals, or letters that will shed further light on British Columbia in the early years of the twentieth century. We are now at the half-century mark, and the historical spotlight that has for so long been concentrated on the history of the fur trade, the gold-rushes, the colonial period, and the early years of the Province may now be shifted to British Columbia in the first decade of the twentieth century.

VANCOUVER, B.C.

WALTER N. SAGE.



DIARY OF MY JOURNEY TO AND STAY IN THE  
PEACE RIVER DISTRICT IN THE YEAR 1903\*

BY JOHN STRICKLAND LEITCH, C.E.

February, Friday 27th:—Left Edmonton about 8:30 A.M. with Bill Harcus<sup>1</sup> as freighter. He started as usual drunk as a lord. The trail was fairly good but broken and heavy in places. Stopped at Half-Way house<sup>2</sup> for dinner. Shipley<sup>3</sup> Proprietor, knows Colonel R. R. McLennan and D. R. McDonald.<sup>4</sup> Jim Hislop<sup>5</sup> and his Indian Bob<sup>6</sup> arrived. Jim is a wealthy fur-trader and it is the first time that he has been in civilization in three years. He is feeling good and treats at least twenty times. He is pretty full and is first rate. Bob is very cultured, and could put it over the white man in manners. Kept up until 8 P.M. and went into camp. Everything a little confused but managed to get a bite. Started in snow-storm but weather cleared and lovely day. Made twenty-five miles for a start. The land is fairly rolling and great wheat fields with brule here and there. Everybody a little tired but in good spirits. The nights may be cold. Smithy says I am a —— tenderfoot of the worst description. Put in a good night for first time in bags. I curled up and found myself nearly out of the tent. Up at five A.M. and started fire. Smith tangled up in moccasin string and treats us to some frightful language.

Saturday:—Trail very fair but our feet are getting sore as moccasin used for first time. Stopped for dinner at lonely shack. Owner very down hearted over his love troubles, says the girl will not live in such a lonely place. Poor devil. Our teamster is getting lazier but when Smith or myself get a hold of the ribbons there is something doing. Bill will get killed yet if he does not buck up. We scared up a covey of Prairie Chickens and just got gun out when they flew.

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\* Dr. M. Y. Williams, former head of the Department of Geology and Geography at the University of British Columbia, has been of great assistance, and footnotes based on information obtained from him have been marked (M.Y.W.). Similarly (J.S.L.) is used to indicate information provided by Mr. Leitch.

(1) Bill Harcus, an Orkney man whose wife was an Indian, was an expert freighter recommended to the party by the Edmonton manager of the Hudson's Bay Company. (J.S.L.)

(2) This was the first stopping-place north of Edmonton on the trail to Athabaska Landing, probably so called because it was half-way between Edmonton and St. Albert. The name is not to be found on modern maps.

(3) Shipley had formerly been employed in Canadian Pacific Railway construction. (J.S.L.)

(4) D. R. McDonald was also a railway contractor and member in the Ontario Legislative Assembly for Glengarry. (J.S.L.)

(5) A northern fur-trader. (J.S.L.)

(6) An educated Chipewyan Indian, who spoke good English. (J.S.L.)

Many oaths. We are passing through rolling and fairly hilly country thinly wooded but very fertile in places. Crossed the Vermillion River<sup>7</sup> and arrived in camp at five thirty. Weather cloudy and very windy. Had a hard time putting up tent. Ridge pole knocked me head over heels. Managed to make tent very comfortable. Weather fair and windy. Trail good and heavy in some places. Make twenty miles which is very good.

Sunday, March 1:—First Sunday out. We put in a very good night. Bob got obstreperous and started driving the horses (Krurgh and Bryan) in his sleep. We soon shut him up. Got a fine early start before daylight. Smithy and I had great sport along the trail shot three rabbits and a brace of partridge. Did considerable swearing at each other for our good marksmanship. Hares and rabbits very thick. Stopped for lunch at a lonely cottage. Owner's name Hess. Lives a lonely life and quite a card. Regular wandering sort of guy and his highest ambition is to run a gambling hell on the Grand Trunk Pacific. Two other travellers came in and we had some great stories of the Klondike parties and the foolish ways of some of the English expeditions. In the morning a cold wind and snow-storm made travelling unpleasant. Cleared up in the afternoon, but still very cold wind. Made a great journey to-day twenty-eight miles in all. Trail still fair. Passed through a hilly country covered with scrub poplar. Here and there are a few good jack pines. Land very poor. Quit the trail about 5:30 and are putting up for the night in a settler's cabin named Whitely a very decent Englishman. The Boss is going to try his hand on some beans to-night and also partridge. If he spoils them his life will be in danger.

Monday, 2nd:—The cooking turned out well indeed. We spent a fine night sleeping on the floor. I commenced to snore and somebody slugged me with a moccasin which caused a great row. The morning was raw and a cold wind blowing. I managed to drop two wood partridges with one shot. We laid up for lunch at a wayside stopping house and had a great tucker on rabbit stew. This was the best stopping house along the line. The keeper was a well educated fellow who was out with W. A. Fraser of Toronto on a Government party exploring for oil. The country was exceedingly rough and hilly. We appeared to be travelling along the banks of a former large river. The scenery was fine owing to the banks being cut up by ravines &c. We put in a good day's journey 25 miles and arrived at Athabasca Landing on Athabasca River. We are putting up at a sort of lodging house which is very full of Frenchmen and halfbreeds, but we expect to put in a good night's rest. The Landing is composed of a few white washed log houses and a Hudson Bay post. It will be the last village until Peace River is struck. Well the first hundred miles are reeled off and

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(7) A small tributary of the North Saskatchewan River not marked on modern maps, which, however, show a Redwater River in the same locality.

all the party are fairly well. Mr. Davies has sore feet and a very stiff leg. So far I am fine have not even stiffened but have a very sore throat owing to smoking in open air. Will cut it out for a few days.

Tuesday, 3rd:—We put in a very good night on the floor. Mr. Campbell and I evidently had a snoring match. Bob declares me the winner by a lap. A fairly early start was made up the River. The trail on the ice is poor in some places being cut down by the heavy loads. Athabasca River is very picturesque. Its banks are high and in some places very steep and covered with some fine spruce and cotton wood trees. Stopped for tucker at a Frenchman's shanty and had a hot lunch. He is the most progressive of the wayside shanty keepers on the line. He owns a farm and sells hay at a cent a pound to freighters.<sup>8</sup> This afternoon we made a great streak doing our twenty-five miles, but we did not strike camp until dark which made it very confusing—getting tent up and wood. However, after considerable growling, we got things ship shape and had a very comfortable camp on the ice. The night is the most beautiful one imaginable, moon and stars shining—very indescribable. Just now we are all tired out and enjoying our well earned smoke.

Wednesday, 4th:—Had a very good night's rest, and got an early start. Saw the first Cree Indians, a fine looking squaw and two kids. Trail was good and we made our twenty-five miles easily getting into camp at six P.M. Had quite a singing match this P.M. Bob and I are training for a full frog quartette. Put up our Camp on river as usual.

Thursday, 5th:—Last night was very cold and we all nearly froze, but managed to crawl out and get started. Mr. Davies' leg is still very sore. Bob and I had a regular race for twelve miles and got into tucker place one hour ahead of team. Stopped for tucker at a few Indian huts called Moose Portage.<sup>9</sup> The day was exceedingly fine and fairly warm. Afternoon cloudy and raw wind blowing with trail heavy. Ice getting soft in places. Made our twenty-five miles and got to mouth of Lesser Slave River. Arrived in camp very late. Got nicely settled supper over &c when two coyotes encircled our camp. Bob and I fired our revolvers at them and they made off; but we hope that they will come back. Our freighter, Bill, is just telling us some great Hudson Bay stories especially bear stories.

Friday 6th:—Morning very dark cold and windy. We got on very well in the morning and ended up for tucker at a way-side house at the mouth of Moose Creek.<sup>10</sup> Kept by an English cockney. Had a nice

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(8) Hay at \$20 a ton was good money in those days. The average price in Canada for hay in 1903 was \$7.98.

(9) This is not the well-known portage by the same name that connects the Beaver River with Frog Lake and the North Saskatchewan. It is a minor portage that avoids some of the rapids on the Athabaska River and leads to the confluence of Lesser Slave and Athabaska Rivers.

(10) Moose Creek or Moose River runs into Lesser Slave River approximately 10 miles above its confluence with the Athabaska.

warm lunch. Afternoon brighter but still cold. A very large timber wolf crossed about a hundred feet in front of us—great excitement. Went into camp early and tried to get comfortable for cold night and it is very cold. Bob put a tin of preserves in oven to thaw and forgot them. It nearly blew the stove up.

Saturday 7th:—We spent a very cold and uncomfortable night, so cold that we were forced out at 3:30 A.M. The day was cold and wind blowing exceedingly unpleasant for travelling. Stopped for lunch in storm and built an exceedingly big fire but it was awfully cold and chilly. Trail very heavy but we made Slave Lake all O.K. and are camped on ice with plenty of dry wood and expect to be fairly comfortable. Mr. Campbell and Bob nearly got into a scrap with a way house keeper for stealing hay, but they cut him off at the knees; however, he soaked us a dollar for the hay. I am getting to be a corker on the ax. Mr. Davies' leg is coming around alright. I spent a better night for a change.

Sunday 8th:—Struck Lesser Slave Lake with a regular blizzard blowing and the thermometer about twenty degrees below zero. Luckily the wind was in our backs. The wind gets a sweep of 75 miles on the lake and is laden with fine snow. No man could face it. The trail is obliterated and the snow is like sand so it is exceedingly heavy. Made very little progress in the morning. I have frozen my nose and ear about ten times so far. Had a fairly comfortable lunch and rest at noon. Afternoon finer but very cold. Stopped for night at Indian cottage and were too tired to put up tent so took possession. A squaw, buck, four kids, ten dogs and three cats which were always up to questionable tricks were there. While there ten other freighters arrived and as the shanty was only fifteen square there was some old squeezing and snoring but we all put in a good night. Bought some fish and a few potatoes and expect to have a good feed.

Monday 9th:—Day broke fine, but we made a late start and found over a foot of snow on the ice which made hauling very heavy. Made Wampum Point<sup>11</sup> and stopped at the dirtiest Indian hut in the bunch for lunch. The house was about 15 feet square and four families in it. I never saw so many dirty kids and squaws in my life. We will surely have fleas after this. It is now snowing so we don't expect to make much progress this afternoon. There is a buck with palsied legs that creeps around and an old couple who look like Methusalah. The kids are awfully dirty and apparently all have vermin as well as bad colds. A great big clay fire-place on one side of the room is the heating and cooking apparatus. Two windows one foot square are covered with cotton. All the roof is of poles with bark laid on them. The huts are plastered with clay and are very warm. We had a tough time crossing the lake and came very nearly having to spend the night on the lake.

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(11) Situated about half-way along the south shore of Lesser Slave Lake. (J.S.L.)

A blizzard came up and the trail was a foot deep with snow. The horses nearly played out and so did we. However, we struck the other shore at eight o'clock. The first Indian shack would not let us in, but we got in the dirtiest shack I have ever been in yet. It gives me the creeps. Everybody in bad humor to-night and tired out.

Tuesday 10th:—We put in a poor night and made a late start. Trail still very bad and weather keeps up. Only made 18 miles and still a dismal party. Brightened up towards night and party feeling better. The night was exceedingly cold but we had a good rest.

Wednesday 11th:—Weather still bad and stormy. Trail worse than ever. Made 12 miles to head of Lesser Slave Lake about 2 P.M. and as the party was tired decided to lay up and rest for the day. Struck a great old cook, Jack Wright, who is fixing up some beans and bannock. He is a fine fellow on pies and I did not do a thing to them. It was like an oasis to strike this place. Mr. Bredin, brother to Lt. Col. Bredin, has a trading post here. The H.B. Co. also are here.<sup>12</sup> Mr. Davies and myself called on the H.B. Factor, Mr. Harvey. He is a fine fellow and treated us up to the handle, and invited us up to spend the evening but we are too tired. We are having a great feast on dry bread which is grand owing to the fact that we have been on hard tack for a week. Mr. Campbell is very tired, but will no doubt pick up alright. Well we expect to get a good rest and hit the trail like giants tomorrow.

Thursday 12th:—Spent last evening till one A.M. at Mr. Harvey's, H.B. Factor. Had a lovely musical evening—quite a treat—Mrs. Harvey a good musician and daughter of Rev. Dr. McKay. Met a Mr. McLean and Rankin, also Frank Anderson. Made a great day's journey, but had to go into camp by moonlight. A lot of discomfort.<sup>13</sup>

Friday 13th:—Same lovely weather and good trail. We are passing through a densely wooded poplar country. Bob robbed some rabbit snares. Are putting up at a breed's shack which is the best so far, and expect to make the Peace River to-morrow night. Temperature for last two days has been 40 degrees and 44 below zero. Just learned this from an English trader. Nice sleeping out in such a temperature.

Saturday 14th:—Finished 5th division of journey in fine style. Bob and I shot a lot of rabbits along the trail. Arrived at the bank of

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(12) The Hudson's Bay Company's post is shown on the 1902 map as being on a little bay at the north-west end of Lesser Slave Lake. Messrs. Cornwall and Bredin had a trading-post at the head of Lesser Slave Lake at what is now the town of Grouard. They were operating a fur-trading company in opposition to the Hudson's Bay Company. Lieutenant-Colonel Bredin commanded the 59th Regiment of the Canadian Militia, and lived in Cornwall, Ontario. (J.S.L.)

(13) After leaving Lesser Slave Lake the trail led overland in a north-westerly direction approximately 100 miles to Peace River Crossing or Peace River Landing, now the town of Peace River, Alberta.

Peace River after dark and had quite a time descending into the valley. The banks are nearly 1000 feet high so it was quite a ticklish job to get a loaded sleigh down in the dark. Spent the night at a way-side house kept by Cotter who was a graduate of Upper Canada College.<sup>14</sup> Quite a College crowd here. Cotter U.C.C. Hamilton<sup>15</sup> Queens Smith<sup>16</sup> Varsity, Leitch R.M.C. If old McGill had been represented it would have been nearly complete. We had quite a talk over our old college days and many a good story was told of them. The shack was very small and all told fifteen wedged themselves on the floor for the night so we had very little sleep.

Sunday 15th:—Our third Sunday on the trail and it is a most lovely day. After bidding good-bye to our friends of the night we once more hit the trail but only for a short tramp of 15 miles to Mr. Brick's.<sup>17</sup> We arrived there quite early and were given a hearty reception, although we were practically strangers. Put everything at our disposal. He is married to a lazy worthless squaw who nearly ruined him. At one time he was a wealthy trader but his Indian friends went through him. Now he is a successful farmer raising 2000 bushels of wheat at \$1.50 a bushel, oats \$1.00, pork \$20.00 a cwt. and beef \$25.00 so in a short time he will be wealthy.

Monday 16th:—Put in a good night's rest on Mr. Brick's floor. Monday was our first day of rest since starting and we all laid around smoked and enjoyed life.

Tuesday 17th:—The same as Monday. Mr. Davies started to rustle for some body to take us up to Hudson's Hope. Said good-bye to Bill Harcus, our teamster. Bill turned out alright and beat everything on the trail and established a record of fifteen days between Edmonton and Peace River. Bill would have taken us the rest of the way only he was afraid of losing his horses. We could have bought him a team but the powers thought otherwise, and I am afraid that we have burnt our bridges behind us when Bill was let go, for the breeds around here are not worth a continental.

Wednesday 18th:—Mr. Davies has no luck in getting men and horses, and is kicking himself for letting Bill go. This is getting serious to be stranded in such lovely weather and spring rapidly coming on. Everybody is anxious to get started. The Chief made some ban-

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(14) Cotter was working for Revillon Frères of Edmonton, a fur-trading rival of the Hudson's Bay Company. (J.S.L.)

(15) Hamilton was also a fur-trader with Revillon Frères, having come from Peterboro, Ontario. (J.S.L.)

(16) Smith had attended the School of Practical Science, University of Toronto, and had gone to Rossland, B.C., during the mining boom at the turn of the century. It was rather typical of the period that these four graduates of Eastern Canadian colleges should meet at Peace River Crossing.

(17) Ali Brick was the son of an Anglican missionary; his wife was a Cree Indian. (J.S.L.)

nock which was like India rubber. So under instruction from Bob I made the nicest batch of bannock imaginable and no joke. I put in quite a day at the bannock. It is a shame to be here in such lovely weather. Visited the Catholic Mission on the banks of the Peace about five miles below Mr. Brick's and had a talk with the Fathers who took us for good Catholics, but I declined to take confession which rather surprised them. Visited a breed's to make arrangements for him to go up the River, but still no luck.

Thursday 19th:—Enjoying Mr. Brick's hospitality yet, and no sign of getting off. A change in the weather has come, and a regular Chinook has started to blow. You would be surprised to see the effect of a Chinook on the snow.<sup>18</sup> It clears it right off.

Friday 20th:—Bought a cayuse, and split about two cords of wood for Mr. Brick. Still lovely weather.

Saturday 21st:—Still at Brick's but have made all arrangements to get away from here on Monday. Bought three more cayuses and hired a Cree Indian whose only recommendation was that he was a good hunter. He cannot talk English.

Sunday 22nd:—Went to church and heard a three hour sermon, partly in English and partly in Cree. Some of the squaws are great singers. Took snapshots with camera in the afternoon.

Monday 23rd:—Great preparation for start. One team of cayuses not shod which will be bad. Got started at last about 12:30 A.M. and made a great afternoon's journey of 20 miles, but did not stop until dark. Put up a wind break and slept in open before fire. Woke up in the morning to find ourselves covered with about three inches of snow. Very pleasant crawling out under such circumstances.

Tuesday 24th:—Cold and snowing very unpleasant. When we stopped for lunch I tried to carry a log for the fire which was too heavy for me and had just got is nicely on my shoulder and taken about ten steps when I put my foot in a hole and down I went and out. Got up and fell down, tried again and fell down. Thought my ankle was broken, but in about ten minutes I was able to stand. A very bad sprain and awfully painful. My luck. Can't walk and had to lay like a wooden man all afternoon on the load. Nearly froze and worried to death for fear I will have to be left at Dunvegan.<sup>19</sup> Longest and

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(18) The chinook wind penetrates as far east as Peace River. This warm wind that blows across the Rockies from the Pacific is a great boon to the inhabitants of western Alberta, especially in the foothill country. The so-called "chinook arch," a bank of dark clouds, forms above the warm wind and is its symbol.

(19) Dunvegan is situated 57 miles above the junction of the Smoky and Athabaska Rivers. Peace River Crossing is a few miles below the forks. The site for the post was apparently selected in 1805 by Simon Fraser, but the fort was not constructed until 1806. It was named after the castle of the MacLeods on the Isle of Skye. Dunvegan was operated by the

most dreary afternoon ever spent. Had to travel until 8:30 P.M. before we reached the fort, Mr. Bedson very kind and gave us the run of his house. My ankle terribly swollen. Rubbed it well and bandaged it.

Wednesday 25th:—Staying at Dunvegan to cook bannock &c. Can hardly put foot to the ground and can just hobble about. But never say die, it might have been far worse. Stayed all day at fort and rested.

Thursday 26th:—Made a break for St. John<sup>20</sup> and found trail in an awful state. Cayuses up to their bellies in snow. Only made six miles, and had to quit as a cayuse went lame in shoulder. My ankle is doing fine and I can navigate on foot now.

Friday 27th:—Cayuse better but river still heavy. Made about 8 miles in the day, but stopped early on account of the cayuses. They are doing well. Camped on ice. Very damp. Everybody wet to their knees and uncomfortable, but a big fire improved matters wonderfully. Discovered that we had lost a box containing 10 cans of peaches and 2 boxes of cartridges.

Saturday 28th:—I started back with two bags for lost goods and after tramping back to where we had camped found them. Had a hard tramp back. 25 pounds is easy to say, but when you pack it about 35 miles in wet snow up to the knees you feel it. Managed to come up to the party just going into camp, and only ate a whole pan of beans. Looks like a storm to-morrow. Made about six miles to-day and put cayuses out to rustle. A very heavy wind blowing and we expect a dirty night. Again camped on wet snow. Nearly all the party complain a little of rheumatism.

Sunday 29th:—Passed a comfortable night and made an early start. Trail in a terrible state. Party had to break road in snow and crust up to the knees. Everybody wet and tired out. Slept in open before fire. Made 8-10 miles.

Monday 30th:—Trail still in bad state and breaking road as bad. Ankle very sore but still in the game. Made a good camp in open. Nearly a mutiny in camp on account of snoring. Party all out of sorts and considerable bad feeling but Bob is a corker. Made a 11 miles.

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North West Company, but at the union in 1821 with the Hudson's Bay Company it passed over to the reorganized company. See J. N. Wallace, *The Wintering Partners on Peace River*, Ottawa, 1929, pp. 71-82.

(20) The North West Company had at least two posts bearing this name, one of which was established in 1806. [See Wallace, *op. cit.*, pp. 76, 77.] The Fort St. John now in existence is situated above the mouth of the South Pine River, and since the construction of the Alaska Highway has assumed a new importance. From the statement in the text it is obvious that the party had passed both the North and South Pine Rivers before arriving at Fort St. John.



Tuesday 31st:—Snowing and blowing, very unpleasant. Trail better and made a good journey of 12 miles but cayuses tired and had to lay up to let rustle. Chief tried to do some cooking with poor results. Ankle very sore but will get rested. Cleared up towards evening and we have comfortable camp on terra firma for a change. Indian getting lazier.

Wednesday, April 1:—Trail still poor. Made 8–10 miles. Party feeling better and confident of making St. John.

Thursday 2nd:—Trail as bad as ever improved in some places. Struck first Indian encampment. About 20 dogs around and our Blackie had a great time fighting them. We seem to be lost as Clearwater<sup>21</sup> reported to be halfway has not loomed up yet. Had a very poor camp in a wet snow bank. Chief slightly bughouse and very grouchy. He has a bad cold and feels out of sorts. Everybody else all O.K.

Friday 3rd:—We did some backing and only made a short drive of six miles. Trail not so bad now, but we have to wade in wet snow to our knees, and consequently come into camp cold and wet and miserable, but a big camp fire soon puts everybody in good humor. Clearwater has not showed up yet. Trail getting heavier. Party a little discouraged. Made probably 11 miles.

Saturday 4th:—Still hard at it plugging through slush. Cayuses tired and can't shove them. At last we struck Clearwater and camped about two miles past it. This is getting worse, here we have been plugging along 10 days and only made 60 miles. I guess the river will be out before we get to St. Johns. Forgot to mention that one team of cayuses went through the ice last Thursday, but we got them out.

Sunday 5th:—Trail improved. Passed the Dekape,<sup>22</sup> and are now in B.C. Feel much encouraged by trail and expect to make St. John by Tuesday night. Made a good trip probably 12 miles.

Monday 6th:—Up at 5 A.M. and made six bannock before breakfast. Good journey of 18 miles. Passed North and South Pine. Had an excellent camping ground for the night. Wrote some letters. Figure to make St. John at noon to-morrow.

Tuesday 7th:—Up at 4 A.M. and made very early start. Travelled till noon and no St. John. If ice holds out and weather keeps good we may make it next June. Never say die. Struck St. John early in the afternoon. Mr. Beaton, H.B. Factor, made us much at home and treated us very well. Got a great feed of potatoes. First fresh thing in 14 days. Made bannock and Chief bought some much needed supplies.

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(21) This river is shown on modern maps as Clear River; it flows into the Peace from the north, 2 miles east of the Alberta-British Columbia Boundary.

(22) Dekape River or Creek is not identified, but was evidently situated on or near the 120th meridian, which is the boundary between Alberta and British Columbia.

Wednesday 8th:—Made a good start but got into several jack-pots<sup>23</sup> in the morning but wiggled out alright. Came across some great conglomerite rock which was forming chalcedony<sup>24</sup>, and if older would be exceedingly valuable. Saw a big sandstone with hole worn right through it by water and smaller rocks. Camped at Cache Creek<sup>25</sup> in a regular swell place. Trail has been good all day and weather nippy. Banks are getting lower. Timber immense spruce and cotton wood.

Thursday 9th:—Made a good early start and found trail in good shape. Struck the first shack since Dunvegan. Kept by a trapper named Dickinson, an Englishman and wandered nearly all over America. Squatted on a fine point and intends to settle down and farm. As usual a good fellow and handsome. Come up to the Hope<sup>26</sup> with us and then to Moberly Lake<sup>27</sup> to hunt bear. Struck very heavy going in afternoon and cayuses played out but just before we came to camp and feed ground. Night cold.

Friday 10th:—Good Friday and a beautiful day. Hope to make Hudson Hope early this evening. Made the Hope about four o'clock and went into camp around the point on South Bank. In the evening we visited Mr. McDiarmid, the H.B. Factor, and found him exceedingly agreeable and not all company. We decided to explore up the Cañon on foot in the morning.

Saturday 11th:—We started up the Cañon on foot about 9:30 A.M. and found ice very good as far as we went, but did not reach the Creek Mr. Davies speaks of. The scenery is beautiful rough and rugged. A regular paradise for a geologist. The cut banks which are innumerable show the rock formation so beautifully. There are three or four rocky islands at the entrance of the Cañon. Here and there deep dark

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(23) "Jack-pots," a slang term in common use in the North meaning "difficulties." (J.S.L. & M.Y.W.)

(24) Chalcedony is a variety of native silica, often used as an ornamental stone. It occurs as a secondary mineral in volcanic rocks.

(25) Now called Bear Flat Creek, is 17 miles up Peace River from Fort St. John. It flows into the Peace from the north.

(26) "The Hope" is Hudson Hope, the Hudson's Bay Company's post at the foot of Rocky Mountain Portage, then situated on the south bank of Peace River at the east end of the canyon. Rocky Mountain Portage, according to the late Dean R. W. Brock, should be termed the "Portage of the Mountain of the Rocks." It is in the foothill country, 60 miles to the east of the Rocky Mountains. [See W. N. Sage, "Simon Fraser, Explorer and Fur Trader," *Proceedings of the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association*, 1929, p. 178.] Simon Fraser built a post at Rocky Mountain Portage in 1805, at or near the site of Hudson Hope. [See Wallace, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-70.]

(27) This lake is south-east of Hudson Hope. It is drained by Moberly River, running into the Peace from the south-west just west of Fort St. John.

ravines run back from the river while ragged and picturesque peaks and cutting are seen along. The narrows as we call them are not over 350 feet roughly. We called it the Pillar gate on account of several large pillars on each side. One especially on the south side being cut out of the solid rock and the crevice could be easily crawled through. The current rushes through this narrow channel so rapidly that the ice was just heaved in the centre and not broken up. Above this the river widens again and a nice grove of young poplars &c is on the North Bank. We skirted the south bank to a little creek at whose mouth there was a little bar where we lunched and rested. Here there was a peculiar cut bank of mud shale probably 1800 feet high. It was sort of triangular in shape part of the way up and can be seen from the Pillar Gate. After lunch we again struck up river and found the snow much deeper and going very heavy for over a mile. Around the first big point a good sized rocky island appeared. It was also just as nice as the others, but it was very dangerous rounding it as the river is open nearly up to the bank and ice is thin, however, we managed it alright. About a mile and a half further on around a point we came upon the first seam of coal which measured 10 inches and appeared very good quality. We broke several large pieces to take back to the Captain as specimens. As it was now getting late we turned about for camp, and arrived there wet to our hips and hungry, but well satisfied with our day up the Cañon.

Sunday 12th:—Easter Sunday, my first away from home and civilization. We all slept late for once as this is the first holiday we have had since leaving Edmonton. Had breakfast late about 10 A.M. and laid around camp until 12 when Bob and I got energetic and climbed the hill to Prairie above in hopes of shooting some grouse and finding an overland trail to Davies Creek, but were unsuccessful, although we found a trail leading to the Moberly Lakes. Arrived back to camp in the usual state of wetness. Alexis<sup>28</sup> who was out looking for cayuses reported them gone. Much swearing as we counted upon an early start up the Cañon in the morning. Went to bed feeling blue over the cayuses.

Monday 13th:—All hands except Mr. Campbell out looking for cayuses. Bob and I after nearly losing ourselves in snow found their trail leading down the river and followed it three miles but had to give

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(28) This is the Cree Indian mentioned in the entry for March 21. Mr. Leitch describes him as being "a very fine specimen of the native" and adds "He was a grand unspoiled type, a great river man, horseman and a beautiful axeman . . . if it hadn't been for Bob Smith and Alexis we couldn't have made it from the Crossing to Hudson's Hope as there was no trail on the river except for dog teams. They were the only experienced men in the wilds we had. The rest of us including myself were typical *moneases* (a Cree word meaning 'tenderfoot')." J. S. Leitch to W. N. Sage, November 6, 1948. Alexis was in charge of the cayuses.

it up as the — things will not stop until they get home 250 miles down the river. All had dinner with Mr. McD.,<sup>29</sup> and it was grand to get some bread again. In the afternoon, Mr. Davies did some cooking and the rest of us knocked the sleighs to pieces and put a platform on the front bob of each, as we decided the only way to get there is to haul our goods and chattels ourselves. George Dickinson who has agreed to come up river with us at \$40.00 a month arrived early in the evening and cooked us a fine batch of bannock.

Tuesday 14th:—Captain had us up about 4 A.M. We commenced our wearisome haul up river and by making several trips we managed to get them 7 miles up to the beach in front of the first creek where we camped all tired out and very wet. It was an exceedingly hard day on everyone.

Wednesday 15th:—Again up very early and made a good start, but here our troubles commenced in real earnest. On the start the snow was over a foot deep and with eight hundred or so on the bob it was terribly hard work, however by noon we had our outfit two or three more miles up the river and within sight of Creek.<sup>30</sup> After lunching we again struck out and had fairly easy going until within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of Creek when broken ice was struck. Here were difficulties, and jack pots were immense, but by doubling up we managed to get everything to the Creek about 7:30. Went into camp in a sheltered spot a few hundred yards up Creek thoroughly tired but satisfied that our long and wearisome journey is practically ended. We have been over seven weeks on the trail in all sorts of weather, been subjected to a great many hardships and privations, but none of us have been seriously sick or played out on the trail, however, none of the party are sorry it is over.

Thursday 16th:—Up fairly early and the four of us made a short prospecting trip up the Creek. It is the most beautiful mountain stream imaginable with its straight cut banks, its gurgling rapids and wonderful little waterfalls, but no doubt in a few days it will be a rushing roaring mountain torrent. Well we found what we were looking for, namely, coal seams which the Captain pronounced excellent quality but the seams are very small, the largest being two feet ten inches and the smallest about six or eight. There are only three worth mentioning, namely, two ten, two feet, and eight inches, but of excellent quality. We climbed the hills about 2000 feet and I got into a kind of jack pot losing my knife and pipe out of my hip pocket from sliding down the hill-top. It was very steep and slippery owing to the snow,

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(29) Mr. McDiarmid, the Hudson's Bay Company's factor at Hudson Hope.

(30) This creek was probably Johnson Creek, the only large one in the south that Mr. Leitch does not name and was the same creek on which Colin Campbell and Davies expected to find the large coal measures. In this they were disappointed; *cf.* entry for April 16.

but we managed to get down and home all O.K. The main big seam two feet ten inches is exposed for 140 feet or so, and the three seams are in an area thirty feet high. Captain cut my hair in the afternoon, and we started hob nailing our boots. Dickinson is turning out a good cook thank goodness.

Friday 17th:—Captain and Bob made a short trip down river, and found two small seams and small manganese deposit. Bob and I fixed up the grind stone, and in the afternoon cut the logs for our shack which is going to be built about a quarter of a mile up stream just over the cut bank. Weather lovely.

Saturday 18th:—Worked hard all day at shack and got walls up. Dog stole whole side of bacon. Great excitement in camp, the Captain and I washed some gravel and found some gold, but it turned out that someone salted the pan with brass.

Sunday 19th:—Mr. Davies and Captain made trip up Cañon, and found a lot of small seams. Bob and I tried fishing with no luck then mended the tape and cleaned the transit. I nearly cut the top off my thumb. In the afternoon we cached our stuff on three trees 20 feet high—had a great time carrying our stuff up the ladder. Feel satisfied that the grizzlies cannot rob us. We all go up river to-morrow morning on prospecting trip. All well. Alexis made trip to Hudson Hope and came back late.

Monday 20th:—Made early start 7 A.M., packing enough grub to last us through the Cañon over night if necessary. Found ice at start very thick and good. Some of the cracks were fully ten feet, and quite dangerous. Bob got in several times and puffed around like a walrus and the dog had to be pulled out by the scruff of the neck several times. The scenery was very romantic indeed. Here and there castle like pinnacles rose from all points. One in particular looked very much like an old Norman castle with its towers and bastions, also a water course worn in the rocks resembled the causeway leading to it. The first rapids were shallow, but exceedingly swift, and although very pretty could not compare with the St. Lawrence Rapids. Some very pretty little waterfalls from the high banks on either side nestled among the trees, and as they were completely frozen, they appeared to be regular miniature Niagaras. The cut banks in some places were over four hundred feet high, and showed in some places fifteen layers of strata mostly sandstone, slate &c. The cliffs jutting out into the Cañon reminded me of the scenery on the far famed Saguenay River. I took quite a number of snaps along our route which will describe it better than I can. In some places, it was dangerous travelling, and we had to scale a few cliffs clinging on to their faces like a lot of flies. One place was exceedingly dangerous owing to the falling rocks but nobody was hurt. We lunched about eight miles up from camp on a jutting point of rock. So far we have come across eight small seams of coal none of them over two feet ten inches. We were in sight of the stream Mr. Davies said the big seam showed in the face of the cliff.

After lunch, we crossed over, and found it to be one of the most lovely little mountain cañons imaginable. The banks on both sides were perpendicular rock over five hundred feet high, and it was nearly as much as a man's life is worth to go up it, as the frost coming out of the rock caused great pieces of stone to fall which would most certainly put us out of business in short order. A great disappointment was waiting for us. The big seams promised us turned out to be only black shale which resembles coal very much, but the Captain who had quite a time getting to it, soon got his pick into it and proved that the whole thing was worthless. While we were there about a ton of ice which was frozen to the side of the bank fell, and you would think that it was thunder to hear the roar. We soon got out of that Cañon after the slide as Captain saw it was useless to go farther. We proceeded on our way through the Cañon so as to prospect the whole of it. The remainder of the trip was just as nice as the first, and we arrived at the head or within sight of the western end about 4 o'clock. Here there is quite a rapid running between steep banks and we were in a jack pot so decided to quit and get back to camp 10 miles away before dark. We arrived home tired and disappointed about eight o'clock. From all reports we are the only white men who ever went through the Cañon on foot.<sup>31</sup> The Indians gave it a wide berth on account of superstitious fears. Our Indian had a holiday and went to the Hope with letters. Everything considered, I don't think the Peace River Cañon is what it was cracked up to be. In all we found seven or eight small seams, but none of any real value, and I guess this venture will be a big failure for the Company. Talked the matter over and decided to survey in any case as we couldn't possibly get out for a month at least.

Tuesday 21st:—We labored all day at our shacks and got them well up.

Wednesday 22nd:—Bob and I shot a partridge which had kept us awake nearly all night drumming. We practically finished our shack. The weather is lovely for April, and we had our first little shower last night, but it didn't amount to anything. The flies and mosquitoes are already coming out. The latter are something awful, and even run up a tree to bark at you. I see my finish in about two weeks.

Thursday 23rd:—We finished the shack and put in the bunks &c. Bob and I occupy the top ones. The shack is a peach. 16' x 13' so quite roomy. The walls are eight feet high and well chinked with moss. It is well furnished with hewn table and six blocks for chairs. The stove is raised on a platform so it is quite handy. The roof is made of split spruce logs and slabs. The light shines through it all over.

Friday 24th:—Morning wet and party stayed in shack. In afternoon Messrs. Campbell, Davies and myself climbed hill in front and

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(31) This is probably incorrect, as it is comparatively easy to make trail over the ice in the winter time. (M.Y.W.)

examined strata for 1500 feet, but found nothing of any importance. Captain and Mr. Davies had quite a time trying to shoot a grouse with revolver, but they would have required a 100 cartridges to hit it. Bird very accommodating allowed them to fire five shots.

Saturday 25th:—Mr. Davies and Captain started off on a prospecting trip and came to a sudden halt at seeing a bear across the river. Alexis went after him with no results. They returned about nine A.M. Bob and I meanwhile had a fine bath the first on the trip so we quite enjoyed it. In the afternoon, Bob and I went hunting and only got one bird.

Sunday 26th:—Snowing and Captain a little homesick. We all loafed in the morning. In the afternoon, Bob and I went shooting with no results except to find a bear's cave but bruin was out. In our tramp we came upon the old Du Pont trail of 1896<sup>32</sup> and followed it over the hill so we had quite a tramp. Mr. Davies and Captain went up the creek and Davies got in to his waist.

Monday 27th:—All party up river very early 7 A.M. to make survey of Creek but it turned out to be a prospecting trip and we explored the Creek for four miles as far as the Captain wanted to see. About two miles up we came to a grand little fall of 75 feet. We found the biggest seam of coal yet about 4 feet in some places of pure coal with a foot of cannel coal about four feet above it. Arrived home about three P.M. and knocked off for day. Bob, Dickenson and myself made a bear dead fall after dinner.

Tuesday 28th:—All hands up the Creek by 7:30 A. M., and spent the day in surveying Creek. Helped Bob plot the survey in afternoon and shot two partridges.

Wednesday 29th:—Captain, Mr. Davies and self made trip down river to Coal PT. and found the biggest seams. Sent Alexis back for heavy pick and shovel. Meanwhile Blackie and I had a great time after a partridge, but it was too much for us. I tried to pot it with my revolver. Indian came back in great state bear across the river in full sight of party. Indian made a very dangerous trip across river on treacherous ice but the bear had made his debut. Poor Alexis fell on a sharp stone, and cut his knee very badly. Captain and I dressed it, but he will be laid up for some time. We worked all day on our big seam, and sank several holes. Found it to be four feet and the only practicable workable seam so far. Much encouraged in our search. About 4 P. M. Mr. Bear again appeared. I hustled back to camp for rifle, but the bear had disappeared. Dickenson is going after him in the morning. The weather is elegant for April. River has risen 10 feet in the last ten days. It will be all clear of ice to-morrow morning.

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(32) This trail had been followed by the geological expedition of which Davies had been a member some years previously. It was a pack-trail leading south from Peace River. (J.S.L.)

Thursday 30th:—Made another trip to the big seam at pt. and did considerable scrounging around over the hills and valleys but with no results, except to find the mosquitoes very bad.

Friday 31st:—The four of us with Blackie started on a prospecting trip over the mountain to our front. We followed the old Du Pont trail over the mountain and about noon discovered a fairly good sized lake about 800 feet above the river. The shores are very marshy and covered with small stunted evergreens. It does not appear to be very deep. We crossed it and followed its outlet creek to river. This creek turned out to be one about  $2\frac{1}{4}$  miles below our cabin. Just below a fall of 40 feet a 3 foot seam was found. We were just leaving when the Captain discovered another just below it, however we were too tired to further investigate and made tracks for camp.

Saturday May 1:—Made trip to our big seam and spent the whole day opening it and found the seam to have three feet of coal on top then a band of shale and sandstone of 15 inches then three feet more coal all of excellent quality. This is the best seam so far and according to the Captain quite workable, all the coal being obtainable. We ended the day with a survey of creek to River and 4 foot seam to connect with survey of Big Bend Creek. Called the new discovery Campbell Creek.

Sunday 2nd:—We all rested and loafed around camp. Bob did some plotting on Campbell Creek survey. Captain and I felt a little lonesome all day. Big wash day.

Monday 3rd:—Mr. Davies, Captain and myself made another all day prospecting trip, but found no new seams but Captain obtained some information with regard to strike and dip of big seams I took some photographs of them and one of Alexis. Got back to camp quite late.

Tuesday 4th:—At last we started the survey and made fair progress for a starter. I have some narrow escapes from cutting my feet off with an ax.

Wednesday 5th:—Still at survey and ran into some big and difficult ravines. Started to snow so stopped early and made for camp.

Thursday 6th:—Mr. Campbell has rheumatism in his knees and decided to stay in camp. Weather looked stormy and four inches of snow on ground still we start to work. Hardly got there when it started to snow so hard that in a few minutes everybody was wet, cold and miserable. We stuck to it till noon when snow became too thick to see and had to quit.

Friday 7th:—Again made trip to work and found it cold, wet and miserable in snow, ran about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile.

Saturday 8th:—Survey still located post for first claim on Coal Pt. Mr. Campbell better and on the line again.

Sunday 9th:—Great wash and mending day. I washed some clothes and mended two pairs of socks. Great excitement in camp as Bob and I discovered we were supporting a healthy stock of Indian



Grey Backs.<sup>33</sup> Awful washing and scrubbing in party. We likely caught them from the Indian.

Monday 10th:—Whole party started with packs for line and intend staying with it for a week. Had a hard pack to end of line and everybody well tired when night came. Each man has only a single blanket for a bed.

Tuesday 11th:—Put in a comfortable night and started work at 6.30 A.M. It was pretty cold, but we kept on a fire all night. Made a good day's work and struck Lake at head of Campbell Creek.

Wednesday 12th:—Crossed the lake with line and made new camp. Bob and Mr. Davies had a big row as to who is boss of survey. Enough said; this has been coming on for sometime.

Thursday 13th:—Put in a big day's work. Last night very cold and a little rainy. All uncomfortable. Mr. Davies and I disagreed over naming claims. He has to quit and allow me my opinions.

Friday 14th:—Finished Rattenbury claim and made great time. Spent better night.

Saturday 15th:—Made our mile and started over hills for shack. Captain and I were left behind and had a — of a time getting back, finally arrived about 9 P.M. tired out. Captain got in the Creek.

Sunday 16th:—As usual we are following our programme of working six days of the week and on Sunday do thy chores. Chore day is worse than a work day. Mending and washing does not agree with me in the least. We had a great rest however. This Diary of the week may be a little on the bum as it was written ten days later.

Monday 17th:—Started with 50 pound pack for new camp over hills and after hard and tiresome toiling over the hills, we arrived at the line where we had deserted it Saturday. It was still there. Everything went fine in the afternoon. Alexis went after moose with no success. The event of the trip happened this afternoon. Captain made a great discovery of an immense seam. Awful excitement, and we will certainly prospect it before we go. The whole programme of the survey is changed, and we will be here for another month at least. Our grub pile is getting low, only three weeks more on hand and then starvation, but we expect to see it through. It started to rain towards evening, and we had to build a tepee of our canvas back and towels. After we got our tepee made and fire we were fairly comfortable.

Tuesday 18th:—Wet and dreary but we stuck to it through it all and ran our regulation mile. It was the worst yet up and down steep and deep ravines and we were at it from 6 A.M. to 7.15 P.M. Captain went to shack for picks and shovels and also my camera to snap seams. Evening rainy and cold, and we had to improve our tepee. Expect bad day to-morrow.

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(33) A new name for an old well-known pest—hence the delousing operations.

Sequel to last week:—On Thursday a great disaster happened to me. I was burnt completely out. It was a warm day and I left everything in camp. Changes of clothes, socks, coat blanket and canvas, rubbers, pack straps, and in fact everything in a roll. All Camp fires were put out, but a big wind got up and a spark lit on my outfit with the above results. In evening when I arrived in camp I discovered the disaster, Bob shared his single blanket with me and we certainly put in a cold dreary night. Asleep about fifteen minutes then frozen and up to make fire. We had to do this for two nights. Bob raised Cain with me as I stole all the blanket and nearly kicked him into the fire. Now I will have to pack my sleeping bag which will add 8 more pounds to my pack. Well the Indian grey backs are far more reasonable and I expect to be rid of them in a week, but they are a terror to chew you. Talk about mosquitoes these take the cake. They even run up a tree to bark at you, and if a fellow gets tired of climbing a hill all he has to do is grab one by his tail and away you go. I am going to train one to carry my pack. No joking they are the biggest and hungriest this side of Jordan. Captain says that I will make a good Geologist as I can eat rocks and clay nearly as well as himself. A clay lunch is fine. Our grub is running low.

Wednesday 19th:—It started to rain early last night, and turned to sleet and snow by turns. Our tepee was weather proof, but it was cold wet and dreary sitting around a miserable fire in centre of tepee, in afternoon we put on an immense fire of prime coal, and it warmed things up a little.

Thursday 20th:—Still rainy but no so bad as yesterday. Captain and I prospected the big seam and found it to be nine feet good coal. Afternoon cleared up and we again went at it.

Friday 21st:—Survey.

Saturday 22nd:—Survey.

Sunday 23rd:—We decided to make a banner day, and got to work at 5 A.M. We certainly did so making 1½ miles of survey line the biggest day yet.

Monday 24th:—Moved camp and survey.

Tuesday 25th:—Survey.

Wednesday 26th:—Survey.

Thursday 27th:—Moved camp and survey.

Friday 28th:—Survey.

Saturday 29th:—Survey.

Sunday 30th:—Moved camp and worked until 9 P.M.

Monday 31st:—Survey.

Tuesday June 1st:—Survey and moved camp.

Wednesday 2nd:—Survey and cold rain in afternoon everybody got wet to the skin and nearly froze before we struck the camp but a big fire soon put us in shape.

Thursday 3rd:—Still cold wet rain. Bob and I slept all day. Thank goodness it rained so that we got a good rest.

Friday 4th:—Finished survey on back lines and now have only a mile to run on front.

Saturday 5th:—Packed back to shack in morning and Alexis Bob and I worked at the raft sweeps. Finished them after supper. Three sweeps each made out of a spruce tree 8 inches through at butt and 20 feet long and very heavy. Got a little mixed in my days. Saturday we finished the survey neck and crop while Alexis and the Captain cut the logs for the raft and when we came in we got the logs out of the woods and some of them in the little eddy where we will build it. The logs are 30 feet long and fine dry spruce sticks about ten inches in diameter.

Sunday 6th:—We got the remainder of our big logs in Big Bend Creek and drifted them down to the cove in the big river. In afternoon, the three of us made the raft in the water. The Indian superintended the job and Bob and I did the work. He saw that the raft was trennailed and bound very staunch and strong. Well our raft is finished and whether we can run the Cañon on her is the question. Our raft seems big and strong enough and our Indian has worked at it with such confidence that I do not fear any difficulty. He is quiet to-night but I guess that his nerve will not leave him as he has a reputation as a dare devil grizzley hunter and boatman. We had a great time packing our goods in the evening and getting some goods aboard. As usual Bob and I do the work.

Monday 7th:—The day of departure has arrived.<sup>34</sup> We put in a great day's work from 4 A.M. till 9 A.M. when we finished our loading operations, and with a great cheer we turned the bow of our raft homeward. The river is ten feet higher now than at low water and current is running 8 miles an hour in front of our creek. Alexis was put in command and took the steering sweep with Bob to assist him the rest of us manned the oars. We got under way all O.K. and in a few minutes we were tearing along at a great rate. Everybody thought we were going to have a great run until we struck the first rapid. It was a pretty fair one but Alexis handled our unweildy craft in the most approved fashion, and in such a manner as to give the whole bunch confidence in his ability to bring us through in fine style. However we were not out of the woods by any means yet. The first rapid swept our raft with immense swell and ourselves and goods were simply soaked. After the first rapid was safely passed, Alexis gave us the word to go to it and we went as hard as we could. The heavy sweeps bent like whips but we couldn't do it. I saw what the Indian was trying to do make an inside channel to pass a regular green wall of water however it was no use so he put us straight for it and yelled to "Grab a root" which we were not slow to do. The old Captain got

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(34) The start was made from Johnson Creek, which is about half-way through the canyon on the south side. The *D. A. Thomas* is reported to have once managed to get up to Gethring mine opposite Johnson Creek. (M.Y.W.)

greatly excited in the shuffle and managed to get his boots untied and nearly fell overboard in his desperate dives to grab a rope. It was quite laughable however he was just in time to catch one of the sleigh bobs which like the rest of all movable articles was well lashed down. Before we struck I saw Alexis shake his head and I realized the danger. The wall of water turned out to be the result of a fall of at least ten feet but of course to our excited imaginations it seemed at least fifty feet high. I am wandering from the subject, and must come to or the trip through the Cañon will never be finished. We went over the fall like a shot out of a gun and for a few seconds, hours it seemed, we were completely under water, and hanging on like a lot of half drowned wharf rats. It was cold so cold that we were all chilled to the bone. The raft was not buoyant enough to rise after we went over the falls, and consequently when we went over the brink, the nose of the raft was shoved through the wall of water and foam below the falls. Immediately below this the rapids were terrifying, and our craft got in the trough of the mountain like waves for a few seconds and it looked exceedingly blue for us and I imagine fifty cents would have bought the outfit then. Alexis never lost his nerve or head for a minute, and yanked our craft into line in a few seconds. The two dogs who would have been washed off had they not also been lashed on now started to howl and whine. I suppose both with fear and cold. Needless to say the whining of the dogs sounded very dismal, and made the whole bunch feel quite doleful. The next three miles was one long succession of fierce rapids roaring and whirling as if they were trying to tear our raft to pieces. More than half the time, the waves swept over our raft and simply buried us with water and made us cling on for dear life. We passed probably the most dangerous part of the trip where two cross currents met in fine style. The Indian struck the centre of the maelstrom, and we were through in less time than we could think, but he shook his head over it and looked rather serious. The remainder of the second rapid was not quite so bad as the beginning, and our hopes began to rise that we had the worst over. Now the craft was rushing like an express train to the narrowest part of the Cañon which on account of several pillar like columns on each side we had named the Pillar Gates. The whole body of that mighty current was passing through this narrow channel at the rate of probably 30 miles an hour, so it is little wonder that the water seemed to us to be heaped up in the centre fully four feet higher than at the sides. The water was not rough except for a long deep swell which we rode nicely, and practically for the first time since starting our raft was not washed by the waves. The Gates were probably half a mile long, and we simply tore along like a greyhound. We ran into a succession of rapids below the Gates which lasted until we were opposite to Hudson's Hope a H.B. outpost of Fort St. John. The last five miles of the Canon could not be compared to the beginning, but they were just rough and choppy enough to keep us all sticking to a rope like a pot of glue. Altogether it only took

us to run the estimated distance of fifteen miles  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hours, so that speaks pretty good for the current. So far as I could learn from H.B. men and old voyageurs we are the only white men who ever ran such a length of the Cañon. Some Klondikers are reported to have explored part of it, but for only a few miles and that was when the river was at its lowest water. Our Indian is quite a hero amongst his tribe. This little description is being written with a cloud of mosquitoes worrying the life out of me so it is on the bum.

Well after leaving the Hope all was plain sailing or at least drifting, and we had time to repair damages and dry ourselves. Of course everything was drenched so we had no dry clothes, and it was very chilly drying them in a cold east wind, however the sun was shining brightly, and we were all soon as cheerful as possible, and many were the jolly laughs we had over our experiences, but with no exception we are all thankful to be out of it and to have probably the wildest experience in rafting for sometime to come behind us.

Our first stop was at Half Way River 30 miles above St. John. Here George Dickinson relieved so we had no dry clothes, and we lunched. St. John was reached about 9 P.M. and here we put up for the night. I got some mail so did Bob.

Tuesday 8th:—Early start, but drifted quietly and rapidly all day till 10 P.M., when as it was getting dark we halted on the lower end of an island for the night. Mosquitoes awful.

Wednesday 9th:—Up at 3 A.M. and started full power for Dunvegan which we reached early in the morning. Mr. Bredin, as usual very kind, and allowed us to do our baking. Here we remained all day and rested which we needed as we slept only three hours the night before.

Thursday 10th:—Started early as per state, and arrived for lunch at Mr. Bricks. Here Davies did his business, and we told the Indians about our trip, and had quite an admiring and open mouthed audience around in no time. Alexis came in for a great welcome. In the afternoon we dropped down to the landing. 270 miles in about 45 hours actual travel is something fierce in this country. All glad to say good-bye to Peace River, but the mosquitoes are terrible, and Davies as usual is doing so much for our comfort.

Friday 11th:—Looked up everybody at the settlement and loafed around the shacks telling our experiences.

Saturday 12th:—Mosquitoes terrible and no sleep. Bummed all day and slept in Cotter's shack. We hit the trail early to-morrow, Sunday and hurrah for the lake.<sup>35</sup>

Sunday 13th:—Started about 10.30 for lake. Our teamster, Tom Kipling, a half breed, appears to be a hustler, and says he will make the lake Tuesday, 96 miles in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  days is pretty fast going. He has only 600 pounds in his waggon, and two team tandem fashion on it and the

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(35) Lesser Slave Lake.

way he snakes that waggon out of the mud holes is wonderful. Some spots on the trail very bad. Mud like plaster and the axle drags through it in some places. The mosquitoes, black flies and bull dogs are awful, and I cannot write any more on account of them.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The annual meeting of the Association was held in the Provincial Library, Victoria, on Friday, January 20, with the President, Dr. Margaret A. Ormsby, in the chair. The general well-being of the Association was evidenced by the annual reports presented. Membership standing continued to be good, although there was a slight decrease over the previous year—466 as compared with 508 in 1949. Of these, 162 were affiliated with the Victoria Section, 165 with the Vancouver Section, and there were 139 members-at-large. The bank balance at the end of the year stood at \$314.51.

The report of the Editor of the *Quarterly* indicated that the circulation, exclusive of complimentary and exchange issues, still exceeded 500. The delays in publication were a matter of sincere regret, but a number of unanticipated circumstances resulted in delays which it was hoped would soon be eliminated.

The twenty-seventh report of the Marine Committee was presented by its Convener, Major F. V. Longstaff.

During the year the Association suffered the loss by death of two of its most prominent and enthusiastic members in the persons of Mrs. Muriel R. Cree, for many years Honorary Secretary and active in the Victoria Section, and Mr. A. G. Harvey, twice Chairman of the Vancouver Section. Appropriate tributes were paid to both of these persons.

The result of the essay competition sponsored by the Association as part of its programme for the celebration of the centenary of the establishment of colonial government on the Pacific Coast was announced. A large number of essays, embracing all the topics laid down in the terms of the competition, were referred to the committee of judges consisting of Mr. H. C. Gilliland, Vice-Principal of the Provincial Normal School, Victoria, B.C., Mr. F. H. Johnson, of the same institution, and Mr. Willard E. Ireland. The awards were as follows:—

First prize: Ronald M. Sweeney, University of British Columbia.

Second prize: Lester R. Petersen, University of British Columbia.

Third prize: J. B. Richards, University of British Columbia.

Honorable mention: G. R. B. Coultas, Victoria College; M. Elizabeth Cailey, University of British Columbia.

The presidential address, entitled *Some Irish Figures in Colonial Days*, was read by Dr. Margaret A. Ormsby. So frequently English and Scottish influences in the early colonial period are stressed that it was illuminating and interesting to discover the role played by persons of Irish extraction. The text of the address is printed in this *Quarterly*.

The report of the scrutineers was then presented. A total of 157 valid ballots was returned to the Honorary Secretary. The new Council met

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immediately after the adjournment of the annual meeting, when the following officers were elected:—

Honorary President	-	-	-	-	Hon. W. T. Straith, K.C.
President	-	-	-	-	Mr. Burt R. Campbell.
1st Vice-President	-	-	-	-	Mr. James K. Nesbitt.
2nd Vice-President	-	-	-	-	Mr. D. A. McGregor.
Honorary Secretary	-	-	-	-	Miss Helen R. Boutilier.
Honorary Treasurer	-	-	-	-	Mr. B. A. McKelvie.

Members of the Council—

Captain C. H. Cates.	Dr. W. N. Sage.
Rev. John Goodfellow.	Mrs. R. B. White.

Miss Madge Wolfenden.

Councillors *ex officio*—

Dr. Margaret A. Ormsby, Past President.  
 Professor Sydney G. Pettit, Chairman, Victoria Section.  
 Mr. George Green, Chairman, Vancouver Section.  
 Mr. Willard E. Ireland, Editor, *Quarterly*.

Preceding the annual meeting there was a ceremony of great interest to students of history in this Province. An inscribed photographic portrait of R. Edward Gosnell, first Provincial Librarian and later first Provincial Archivist, was unveiled in the corridor of the Provincial Library by his daughter, Mrs. Vera Hoskin, of Vancouver. Mr. Willard E. Ireland, present Provincial Librarian and Archivist, speaking in the absence of the Honourable W. T. Straith, K.C., Minister of Education, presented a brief sketch of the career of Mr. Gosnell, who was born in 1860 at Beauport, Quebec, educated in Ontario, and first came to British Columbia in 1888 as a newspaperman. In November, 1893, he was appointed Provincial Librarian and was instrumental in securing legislation the following year which officially brought into being the Provincial Library. This office he continued to hold until September, 1898, when he was succeeded by E. O. S. Scholefield. Since 1896 Gosnell had also acted as secretary to the Premier, which office he filled until 1901, when he became the first secretary of the Bureau of Provincial Information, charged with the organization of this department. In 1908 the Provincial Archives was established as a separate division, and Gosnell became the first Provincial Archivist, retaining that position until 1910. Subsequently he served the Provincial Government in many special capacities and was for a time in the employ of the Federal Government. He died in Vancouver in August, 1931. There have been few more outstanding public servants than R. E. Gosnell, in whom was ingeniously combined the man of vision and the man of action. Dr. Margaret A. Ormsby, President of the British Columbia Historical Association, spoke of Mr. Gosnell's contribution to British Columbia's historical literature. He is probably best remembered for his *Year Book of British Columbia and Manual of Provincial Information*, first issued in 1897 and subsequently reissued in 1901, 1903, 1911, and 1914; *A History of British Columbia*, 1906; and his joint authorship with R. H. Coats in 1908 of *Sir James Douglas in the Makers of Canada Series*, but many other books, pamphlets, and articles flowed from his prolific pen.



## VICTORIA SECTION

A regular meeting of the Victoria Section was held in the Provincial Library on Monday evening, November 7, with Mr. G. H. Stevens in the chair. The speaker of the evening was Mr. B. A. McKelvie, popular author and speaker on British Columbia's historic lore, who had chosen as his subject *Black Magic on Vancouver Island*. This was the story of Brother Twelve and the Aquarian Community at Cedar, and the speaker held his audience spell-bound as he recounted the unusual and almost unbelievable happenings in the career of Arthur Edward Wilson and his remarkable group during its short existence. The appreciation of the audience was tendered to the speaker by Mr. James Morton and enthusiastically endorsed by all those present.

The annual meeting of the Victoria Section was held in the Provincial Library on Monday evening, December 9, presided over by Mr. G. H. Stevens. The various reports presented indicated that a successful year had been experienced, with several new speakers added to the roster. Membership had declined to 162, but it was anticipated that many delinquent members would rejoin in the new year. The report of the scrutineers of the ballots for the election of the Council was accepted. The inclemency of the weather having seriously interfered with the attendance at the meeting, it was decided to defer the delivery of the address prepared by Mr. H. C. Gilliland to a subsequent meeting. The new Council met immediately following the adjournment of the annual meeting, when the following officers were elected:—

Chairman	- - - - -	Professor Sydney G. Pettit.
Vice-Chairman	- - - - -	Mr. H. C. Gilliland.
Honorary Secretary	- - - - -	Mr. F. H. Johnson.
Honorary Treasurer	- - - - -	Miss Madge Wolfenden.
Members of the Council—		
Miss Kathleen Agnew.		Mrs. J. E. Godman.
Mr. R. P. Bishop.		Dr. Hugh M. Morrison.
Mrs. E. M. Cuppage.		Major H. T. Nation.
Miss Flora Burns		Dr. D. L. McLaurin
( <i>co-opt.</i> ).		( <i>co-opt.</i> ).
Mr. L. W. Westendale		Mr. Willard E. Ireland
( <i>co-opt.</i> ).		( <i>ex officio</i> ).

The first regular meeting of the Victoria Section in the new year was held on Tuesday evening, February 21, in the Provincial Library, with Professor Sydney G. Pettit, newly elected Chairman, presiding. The speaker of the evening was Mr. Harry C. Gilliland, Vice-Principal of the Provincial Normal School in Victoria. The subject selected was *The Wreck of the Forerunner: An Incident in the Life of Governor Arthur Edward Kennedy*. Mr. Gilliland has for several years been engaged in research on the career of Vancouver Island's third and last governor. After a preliminary sketch of the life of Governor Kennedy, Mr. Gilliland turned specifically to an incident that occurred in 1854, when, after two years as Governor of the Gold

Coast, Kennedy was returning to England. He was travelling in the *Fore-runner*, a small 400-ton screw-propelled iron steamer under command of an incompetent captain. Off Madeira the captain ran his vessel on the rocks and in the ensuing confusion did nothing to save the passengers. Governor Kennedy, in effect, took command and attempted to bring order out of chaos. He went down with the ship but was, subsequently, rescued. He emerged from the episode and the resultant naval inquiry as a man possessing sterling qualities as a leader.

To mark the centenary of the establishment of colonial government in British Columbia, the regular meeting of the Section on Thursday, March 16, was thrown open to the general public and held in the auditorium of the Provincial Normal School. The speaker on this occasion was Mr. Willard E. Ireland, Provincial Librarian and Archivist, who chose as his subject *The Governorship of Richard Blanshard*. Mr. Ireland explained the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the Crown Colony of Vancouver Island and of the surprise selection of an unknown young English barrister to be its first governor. In order to appraise fairly the significance of his extremely short incumbency of the governorship, it was necessary to examine the position of the Hudson's Bay Company on Vancouver Island in 1851 and in particular the relationships between the Governor and the company's representative, James Douglas. Blanshard's significance lies more in the fact of his governorship rather than in the extent of his accomplishments.

On Monday evening, April 24, the Victoria Section held its regular meeting in the Provincial Library, when an excellent lecture on *The Fraser River* was given by Mr. Russell E. Potter, Executive Assistant to the Dominion-Provincial Fraser River Basin Board. Mr. Potter was eminently qualified to speak on this subject and in a most interesting manner gave a quick survey of the historical significance of the Fraser River in the history of the Province and then dealt with the modern problems it presents in terms of power development, fishery conservation, and land utilization through increased irrigation. In addition, a fine collection of coloured slides depicting the river was shown.

#### VANCOUVER SECTION

The annual meeting of the Vancouver Section was held on Tuesday evening, November 22, in the Hotel Grosvenor. The reports presented indicated that a successful year had been experienced, the membership standing at 165 and a satisfactory bank balance on hand. In all, five meetings had been held during the year, with good attendance. The continued co-operation of Mr. E. G. Baynes in providing accommodation for the meeting-place was recognized with sincere appreciation.

The speaker of the evening, Mr. D. A. McGregor, had chosen as his subject *Some Aspects of the Law in Early British Columbia*—a scholarly and vastly entertaining study of the almost legendary figure of Sir Matthew Baillie Begbie. So intimately woven was his career with the development of the colony from his arrival in November, 1858, until his death in June, 1894, that for almost four decades his biography and the history of the Province are one. As has been aptly said, if James Douglas was the

"Father of British Columbia" then Begbie was its "Godfather." Wherever the restless miners went in search of gold, Begbie and the law austerely and implacably followed. His firm maintenance of the traditions of British law and justice did much to forestall American annexationist sentiment. Ever concerned with substantial justice and not with legal technicalities, he was impatient of red tape and at times all but contemptuous of statute law. There was a touch of Solomon about his judgments and of Lincoln in his strength and humanity. In concluding, Mr. McGregor retold a number of anecdotes, some doubtless apocryphal, but all characteristic of this versatile, cultured, laconic but, at heart, kindly and charitable man.

The election of officers for the ensuing year resulted as follows:—

Honorary Chairman	- - - -	Mr. E. G. Baynes.
Chairman	- - - -	Mr. George Green.
Vice-Chairman	- - - -	Captain C. W. Cates.
Honorary Secretary	- - - -	Miss Kate McQueen.
Honorary Treasurer	- - - -	Rev. F. G. St. Denis.
Members of the Council—		
Miss Helen Boutilier.		Mr. J. Buchanan.
Mr. Cyril Chave.		Miss Lillian Cope.
Dr. H. B. Hawthorn.		Mr. D. A. McGregor.
Dr. Margaret A. Ormsby.		Mr. Noel Robinson.
Dr. W. N. Sage.		Rev. William Stott.

Mr. K. A. Waites.

Mr. L. S. Grant, Past Chairman (*ex officio*).

A regular meeting of the Section was held on Tuesday evening, January 24, in the Hotel Grosvenor, on which occasion Thomas E. Ladner spoke on *The Birth and Development of the Town of Ladner*. Few people are more competent to speak of the early history of this thriving area in the Fraser delta, for Mr. Ladner is a son of Thomas Ellis Ladner, who, with his brother William H. Ladner, after participating in the California and Cariboo gold-rushes, settled in the late 1860's about 6 miles above the mouth of the Fraser River, the first white inhabitants of that district. The Ladner family was of Cornish origin and first came to Wisconsin, where Edward Ladner died in 1851. Shortly thereafter his two sons, Thomas and William, crossed the plains to California, and, still in search of gold, they arrived in Victoria on May 15, 1858, on board the steamer *Brother Jonathan* en route to the Fraser River goldfields. Their mining brought little success, and for a time they freighted between Hope and Boston Bar, and in their disappointment they recalled the land they had crossed on the way to Fort Langley. Soon they secured pre-emptions. William Ladner maintained his interest in agriculture, while his brother, Thomas, branched out into industrial pursuits, organizing the Delta Canning Company in 1878. This marked the first step in the development of a community, and soon other industries were attracted thither. Mr. Ladner gave a vivid picture of the Delta of eighty years ago—the use of oxen for farm work and land transportation over the trails in the days before horses were introduced; the old river-steamers—the *Otter*, *Enterprise*, and *Olympia*; the heroic role played by the first women in the

district. The chairman, Mr. George Green, expressed the thanks of the Section to the speaker. Earlier in the evening Mr. Green paid a glowing tribute to the late A. G. Harvey, a loyal member and former Chairman, who will long be remembered for his notable book, *Douglas of the Fir*.

Ronald M. Sweeney was guest speaker at a meeting of the Section held on Tuesday, February 21, in the Grosvenor Hotel. Mr. Sweeney, winner of the first prize in the essay competition sponsored by the British Columbia Historical Association to commemorate the centenary of the inauguration of colonial government on the Coast, spoke on *The Governorship of Richard Blanshard*. His address gave a clear picture of Blanshard's short term of office—from his inauguration as governor at Fort Victoria on March 11, 1850, until his departure early in September, 1851. It was a period fraught with discouragement and frustration, yet it was not without its significance in the constitutional development of the Canadian West.

At a regular meeting of the Section held in the Grosvenor Hotel on Tuesday evening, March 21, Dr. Margaret A. Ormsby, Past President of the Provincial Association, repeated, for the benefit of the Vancouver Section, her presidential address, *Some Irish Figures in Colonial Days*, which had been delivered at the annual meeting in Victoria. This address is published in this *Quarterly*.

Bruce A. McKelvie, of the *Daily Province* Bureau, Legislative Press Gallery, Victoria, spoke to the Section on Tuesday evening, April 25, in the Grosvenor Hotel, on *Ways and Wars of Early Colonial Days*. The speaker said that recent research amongst the documentary treasures of the Provincial Archives had thrown new light on conditions in the Colony of Vancouver Island a century ago. He paid particular attention to the "army" raised by Chief Factor James Douglas for Governor Blanshard to command. This organization, primarily intended for the protection of Victoria from Indian attack, developed into the *voltigeurs*, of which but little has been known until late years. Mr. McKelvie described the uniformed body and gave the names of many of them and told of their exploits and of the valuable services rendered by them. They were apparently disbanded about 1859, when three of the outstanding members were rewarded with grants of land. The speaker also described the social and community life of the colony. Dr. W. N. Sage, in moving a vote of thanks, spoke in complimentary terms of the work done by Mr. McKelvie in gathering the material for his paper.

#### KAMLOOPS MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

If increased attendance at an annual meeting is indicative of increased interest and support, this year augurs well for the Kamloops Museum Association, which held its annual meeting in the Masonic Hall on Friday, February 24. The Secretary-Treasurer's report was most encouraging, and its highlight was the announcement that efforts to preserve permanently the old Hudson's Bay fort building had been successful. The city had undertaken to remove it from its present location in Riverside Park to property adjacent to the Museum, on Seymour at Second, where it will be used as an annex to the Museum. This building, one of the oldest in the Interior, has

had a chequered career, and it is satisfying to note that its permanent disposition has been achieved. The various collections of the Museum continue to expand, a notable addition being the donation of over 300 prints from the collection of J. J. Carment, long-time city clerk of Kamloops. The rephotographing of the entire photographic collection by the Provincial Archives is still in progress. In addition, a considerable file of the early newspapers of Kamloops—*Inland Sentinel*, *Standard*, *Standard-Sentinel*, and *Telegram*—were presented by the *Kamloops Sentinel*. The Museum continues to attract large numbers of tourists, and arrangements were made for special showings for groups and organizations. The elections resulted in the following officers for the coming year:—

President	-	-	-	-	-	Burt R. Campbell.
Vice-President	-	-	-	-	-	J. J. Morse.
Secretary-Treasurer	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Mabel E. Norton.
Committee Chairmen—						
T. S. Keyes (Natural History).						
R. B. A. Cragg (House).						
J. J. Morse (Indian Lore).						
Alderman A. M. Affleck (Publicity).						

#### OKANAGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

##### ARMSTRONG BRANCH

The Okanagan Historical Society inaugurated its fifth branch following a meeting held in the United Church Hall, Armstrong, on the afternoon of March 23. Some thirty citizens of the Armstrong and Spallumcheen districts were present and elected Rev. F. E. Runnalls as Chairman *pro tem* and J. E. Jamieson as Secretary *pro tem*. Visitors from Kelowna, Oyama, Westbank, and Vernon were present, including J. B. Knowles, President of the Okanagan Historical Society, who briefly outlined the history and aims of the Society. Mr. Frank Buckland was also present. As a result, it was decided to organize an Armstrong Branch, and the following officers were elected:—

President	-	-	-	-	-	J. H. Wilson.
Vice-President	-	-	-	-	-	A. E. Sage.
Secretary-Treasurer	-	-	-	-	-	Arthur Marshall.
Directors—						
H. A. Fraser.			Charles LeDuc.			
J. E. Jamieson.			Mrs. Myles MacDonald.			
Arthur Young.						

#### CARIBOO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

On March 10 a banquet was held at the Welmore Hotel in Wells to consider the organization of a Cariboo Historical Society. The chairman was Mr. William Morris, and it was decided to work jointly with Quesnel in the operation of such a society.

STATEMENT READ BY THE HONOURABLE THE PREMIER,  
BYRON I. JOHNSON, IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,  
MARCH 10, 1950, TO COMMEMORATE THE CENTENARY OF  
THE ARRIVAL OF GOVERNOR RICHARD BLANSHARD.

"One hundred years ago to-morrow, on March 11th, 1850, Richard Blanshard read the Royal Commission appointing him Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Island of Vancouver and its dependencies. By this act Blanshard became the first Governor of the first British colony to be established in British territory west of the Great Lakes.

"The ceremony of investiture took place outside the stockade of old Fort Victoria before a mere handful of people, but all that could be mustered. Due regard to formality was observed even in the rude surroundings. Were Blanshard to return to-day, doubtless he would be astounded by much that he would see—at least the snow would be reminiscent of the ceremony 100 years ago. Let us hope that he would find much to commend in what he would now see, for it has been upon the foundation that he laid that we have built the institutions of government of our great Province. He was responsible for the institution of a system of judiciary and, as a last gesture before returning to England in September, 1851—a disillusioned young man—he called into being the Legislative Council of Vancouver Island, thus instituting the legislative branch of government.

"Blanshard's career in the colony was short, for he remained here only seventeen months. He has been overshadowed by the gigantic figure of James Douglas. It is easy to belittle the significance of his work. However, the fact remains that with his coming the rule of the fur-trader gave way to the rule of the Crown. He laid the constitutional foundation of our Province. Our pride to-day in accomplishments should be tempered with gratitude to those who pioneered.

"To commemorate this historic event, the Government has felt that it was most important to impress upon the minds of the children in our schools the significance of the ceremony which took place 100 years ago.

"The radio branch of the Department of Education has arranged a broadcast which will dramatize the events of March 11th, 1850, and this radio programme will reach all schools which have radio sets. In addition, a pamphlet has been prepared to be distributed amongst the children of the secondary schools of the Province. A copy of this pamphlet is on each member's desk this afternoon.

"The secondary schools of the Province have also been requested to allocate a reasonable time this afternoon so that the children might participate in a commemorative programme appropriate to the occasion.

"In order that honour might be done to the memory of Richard Blanshard, who was the centre of the ceremonies in 1850, I have personally requested Mr. W. A. McAdam, the Agent-General for British Columbia, to place a wreath upon the grave of the late Richard Blanshard at the churchyard at Lymington, Hampshire. Mr. McAdam will perform this ceremony

to-morrow."—*Journals, Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, Session 1950*, Victoria, 1950, p. 48.

#### CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Dr. W. Kaye Lamb, Dominion Archivist in Ottawa, Canada, is well known to readers of this *Quarterly*, having been its first editor and Provincial Librarian and Archivist, 1934–1939.

T. A. Rickard, author of *Historic Backgrounds of British Columbia*, is an enthusiastic student of the history of British Columbia and an active member of the British Columbia Historical Association.

Dr. Margaret A. Ormsby, immediate Past President of the British Columbia Historical Association, is associate professor of history at the University of British Columbia and editor of the *Annual Report* of the Okanagan Historical Society.

Dr. W. N. Sage is head of the Department of History at the University of British Columbia and author of numerous books dealing with various phases of the history of the Province.

Madge Wolfenden, Associate Editor of this *Quarterly*, is the Assistant Provincial Archivist and a former President of the British Columbia Historical Association.

A. F. Flucke is a research assistant on the staff of the Provincial Archives, Victoria, B.C.

## THE NORTHWEST BOOKSHELF

*Tales of Conflict.* By Bruce A. McKelvie. N.p.: The Vancouver Province, 1949. Pp. vii, 99. Ill. \$2.50.

Those who have been looking forward to another book from Mr. McKelvie's agile pen will not be disappointed, for *Tales of Conflict* maintains the same high standard of material and workmanship which characterized *Maquinna the Magnificent* and *Fort Langley: Outpost of Empire*.

In this his most recent book the author has gathered together no less than eighteen stories, rich in detail, telling of encounters with the native British Columbia Indians which were part and parcel of life in the wilderness for the early fur-traders and colonists.

To-day, when the natives are in a distinct minority, it is somewhat difficult to realize how very different conditions were in colonial days, and how the traders and colonists, particularly in isolated parts, lived in constant dread of attack by warlike redskins. The courage and heroism of such men as James Douglas, John Tod, and Roderick Finlayson, to name but a few, in their dealings with the aborigines, will always command admiration from those who read British Columbia history.

*Tales of Conflict* recreates for to-day's readers some outstanding stories of the white man's difficulties with Indians in a very realistic way, and Mr. McKelvie, with his dramatic touch, has made these narratives, gleaned mostly from impersonal official accounts, into vivid pen-pictures, full of action and movement. The stories cover episodes in British Columbia history which took place on the west coast of Vancouver Island and at Milbanke Sound, amongst the maritime fur-traders to the days of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police at Fort Steele in the Kootenay country—all of them interesting and all of them typical of the red man's strategy, cunning, and vengeance.

New material has been uncovered for the first time, as for instance in the stories of the schooner *Resolution* and the cowardly attack on Guy Hughes at Fort St. John in 1823. Also for the first time the story of James Douglas and Chief Quae, which has always been highly fictionalized, is now given in its true setting. Many readers will recognize in Ot-chee-wun the well-known Ah Chee Wun, tales of whose activities amongst the Gulf Island inhabitants in the early sixties have captivated the imagination of many a journalist. Few, however, will have realized before reading *Tales of Conflict* how very dependent the inhabitants of Vancouver Island and the adjacent Gulf Islands were upon the vigilance and protection of the ships of the Royal Navy. Surprise and astonishment will come to the personnel of the Royal Canadian Navy at the accounts of two or more ships being sent in search of Indian miscreants.

The format and illustrations of *Tales of Conflict* are in keeping with, and of the same high standard as, the two previous-mentioned publications which have come from the Southam presses in Montreal, and Mr. Cyril Connorton's

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beautiful frontispiece and decorations add much to the artistic beauty of the book. From the point of view of research this reviewer regrets that fuller notes embodying details of the source material have not been given to assist in the never-ending search for documentary proof of historical fact. The publication is fairly free from typographical errors, but on pages 36 and 98 *terrized* and *enbarassment* were noticed and on page 40 in the third paragraph the word *spend* or *employ* has obviously been left out of the last sentence. Exception is also taken to Mr. McKelvie's spelling of *McKintosh* on page 22, for which the accepted form is *McIntosh* or *Mackintosh* and also to no less than three split infinitives in the course of the book.

Nevertheless in spite of these criticisms *Tales of Conflict* is an enjoyable and a most readable book and one that will be relished equally by schoolboys as well as by grown folk. A great deal of care and much reading have gone into the preparation of this book, and historians and those who teach in our schools will again express their gratitude to the author for gathering together true stories from the past and retelling them in his inimitable way, making their characters live again in modern surroundings.

MADGE WOLFENDEN.

VICTORIA, B.C.

*The Fraser Mines Vindicated or The History of Four Months.* By Alfred Waddington. Reprinted for the first time with an introduction by W. Kaye Lamb, Dominion Archivist. Vancouver: at the private press of Robert R. Reid, 1949. Pp. xvi, 93. Ill. \$10.

*Sawney's Letters.* By James Anderson. Bibliographical Society of Canada, Reprint Series No. 3, with an introduction by W. Kaye Lamb, Dominion Archivist. Toronto: Bibliographical Society of Canada, 1950. Pp. v, 26.

Book-lovers generally and collectors of British Columbiana particularly are greatly indebted alike to the personal enthusiasm of a young Vancouver amateur printer and the interest of the young but flourishing Bibliographical Society of Canada for making available in reprint form two of the rarest of the early Crown Colony imprints.

That *The Fraser Mines Vindicated* had never previously been reprinted is rather amazing, for, apart from official government publications, it is the first book to have been printed in what is now British Columbia, and, moreover, its content is of great significance, for first-hand accounts of the Fraser River gold-rush of 1858 are most uncommon. Robert R. Reid, an undergraduate at the University of British Columbia, whose hobby is fine printing, is to be commended highly for his efforts. The book is hand-set in 12-point Caslon Old Style and printed two pages at a time on Hurlburt Cortlea antique paper with an 8 by 12 foot-press; marbling was done by the printer, and it was bound by hand at the shop of Mr. M. I. Sochasky. The result is a beautiful example of book-making.

In addition to reprinting the original book as released at Victoria in December, 1858, there is an excellent introduction by Dr. W. Kaye Lamb, which will answer the questions that ardent bibliographers are likely to

pose, for the career of Alfred Waddington, the details concerning the original publication, as well as information about the old press from which it issued are all dealt with. To date only eleven copies of either of the two issues of this rare item of Americana have been located, and a checklist of them is provided. Adding further interest to this reprint is a facsimile reproduction of the original title-cover, a photograph of the hand-press on which the original edition was printed, and a reproduction of a pen-and-ink sketch of the author by Mr. George Swinton. It is sincerely to be hoped that Mr. Reid will undertake still further work of this sort.

*Sawney's Letters* was first printed in the office of the *Cariboo Sentinel* at Barkerville on Williams Creek, B.C., in 1868, and the first edition, here reprinted in mimeograph form by the Bibliographical Society of Canada, is also one of the rarest colonial imprints. A second enlarged edition appeared in 1869 and a third in 1895, but these, too, are rarities, making this reprint all the more appreciated. James Anderson was a young but discerning Scotsman who first reached the Cariboo in 1863. The selection of his verses, collected and printed as *Sawney's Letters*, are significant historically because of their fidelity in recounting the temper of Cariboo at that period, and, moreover, they constitute the only publication of merit that has come down to us from the almost fabulous days of the sixties in the Cariboo. Dr. W. Kaye Lamb has provided an excellent bibliographical introduction. The first edition of this item consisted of a single sheet folded quarto fashion with the title at the head of the first page and was printed at the office of the *Cariboo Sentinel*, using the first press ever brought into British Columbia. It is interesting to recall that *The Fraser Mines Vindicated* also issued from this selfsame press. While the Bibliographical Society of Canada is to be congratulated on selecting this item as the third in its reprint series, it is to be regretted that a more permanent medium of reproduction than mimeographing could not have been utilized.

WILLARD E. IRELAND.

VICTORIA, B.C.

*From Copenhagen to Okanogan.* By U. E. Fries. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1949. Pp. vi, 437. Ill. \$5.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century there were many who made the jump from Europe to the United States with little more than strong backs and stout hearts. Nevertheless for a youth of 18 years, the son of a country minister in Denmark, to set out for a strange land with only a smattering of the language on his tongue and the magnificent sum of \$20 in his pocket required a large amount of self-confidence and courage.

*From Copenhagen to Okanogan* is a captivating story of pioneer life, written by a man who saw in America the opportunity of possessing his own goodly portion of the soil; who found it, stuck with it, and became one of the most respected "old-timers" of Okanogan County, State of Washington. Mr. Fries is one of those sturdy pioneers who, once having left the land of his birth, seldom looked back. He held to the religion and

principles of his youth, but his allegiance was to the country which had given him 640 acres and what seemed to be unlimited opportunities.

From the start, Ulrick Fries' ambition was to find a homestead. His sojourn as a farm labourer in Illinois was only a temporary expedient until he had saved enough money to "go west." After a few odd jobs, a spell of hoboining, and nine months working on a tunnel project through the Cascade Mountains, young Fries decided it was time to look for a place to settle. He found it along the Okanogan River, a little north of its junction with the Columbia, in what was to become the thriving district of Brewster. Here he stayed, bought live stock, built his shack, received his bride from Denmark, and raised a family of seven children. Life was far from being "milk and honey." Few homesteads were immediately supporting, and the owners were forced to take outside work, often far from their homes, in order to make ends meet. Lumbering, freighting, railroad work, and mail-delivery contracts all aided in carrying the Fries family over difficult times.

This book is not an autobiography, for Mr. Fries modestly keeps himself out of the limelight and passes lightly over his own hardships and difficulties. In fact, throughout the book one gains the impression of the author as a rather fortunate observer whose own struggles were neither very arduous nor very important. The reciting of one particular incident—the Indian war scare of 1891—wherein he could not have avoided describing his own major part, he turns over to his son as a more competent authority. In the same self-effacing manner, Mr. Fries makes no attempt to thunder against the many evils of the lusty mining towns, nor against the trickery and criminal designs of the less scrupulous elements that roamed the countryside and settlements. Such things are accepted as part and parcel of the new life and are viewed with calm appraisal and the confident knowledge that as long as one clung to one's own code of decency and straight dealing, evil practices and vicious men would eventually disappear under the weight of a God-fearing and law-abiding population.

Some of the most delightful accounts in the book are those of his friendships and dealings with the Indian population. At an early stage he learned the Chinook language, an indication in itself of the man's desire to fit into and to understand everything about his adopted country. This accomplishment served him in good stead and gave him the trust of the best elements among the native groups.

In his review of the conglomeration of characters that went to make up the pioneer stock of Okanogan County, the author has a sharp eye, but a tolerant tongue for human weaknesses, as well as sincere praise for kindness and strength of character. Throughout the book people of all types—good, bad, and indifferent—are treated with a wise appreciation of the fact that it takes all kinds to make a world. Even the animals do not pass unmentioned, and Mr. Fries devotes a chapter to his experiences with and acquaintances among the wild life and domestic stock of the area.

The book is absorbingly interesting in itself, but the reader who has some knowledge of Washington history will find it a distinct pleasure to meet, as nearly "in the flesh" as the vivid memory and homey words of

Mr. Fries will allow, a few of the men and women whose struggles, ambitions, failures, and triumphs have gone to make up the threads of that story.

*From Copenhagen to Okanogan* is attractively bound and well printed. Interest is added by the many authentic photographs of places and people. These give colour and reality to a way of life which, although well within the memory of present generations, in terms of moral values and material possessions, is already deep in the haze of history.

A. F. FLUCKE.

VICTORIA, B.C.

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