THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS IN COLONIAL BRITISH COLUMBIA
AS AFFECTED BY BRITISH INTEREST

by

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A young Canadian historian, generalizing recently in an attempt to explain the phenomenal growth of Disraeli-Rhodes imperialism, claimed that 1871 marks the death of the Second British Empire and the birth of the Third. Prior to that date lies "the slow sombre decline" of the colonialism which marked the first decades of Victoria's reign.\(^1\) The colonial period of the mainland of British Columbia coincides with the final thirteen years of that "decline" and for the most part illustrates the truth of Mr. Creighton's generalization.

However the development of communications on the mainland of British Columbia furnishes one example at least of a surviving British interest in colonial development. To achieve a proper perspective for a study of this survival and its effects, it is necessary to return to the birth of the Second Empire at the close of the American Revolution.

At that date Britain's claims upon the shores of the Pacific Ocean were those established by Captain James Cook, but they were neither recognized internationally nor highly prized at home. However the British East Indian Company was absent-mindedly laying the foundations of the

\(^1\) Creighton, D.G. "The Victorians and the Empire." *Canadian Historical Review.* June 1938. XIX:138 ff.
British raj in India so that, sooner or later, the circle of British interest would of necessity include the Pacific Ocean. During the period of the Napoleonic wars the obstruction of Britain's European trade stimulated the extension of trade with the colonies. Stimulated by this trade expansion a group of colonial reformers began to advance new imperial theories based on free trade and the need for emigration to relieve population pressure at home. Perhaps the most famous of this group were Buller, Wakefield and Durham whose concerted efforts constitute so important a chapter in Canadian history, while Wakefield's name is one of great significance in the history of Australia. The slow working of the leaven of colonial interest through the lump of public indifference is the tale of British imperialism during the nineteenth century.

This leavening was aided greatly by the necessity of acquiring naval stations and points of call to protect the new trade routes along which British vessels were transporting the wealth of the orient. But trade on the American side of the Pacific was slow in developing; consequently any interest displayed there by Britain was perfunctory in comparison with the efforts to acquire and hold such vantage points as Malta, Capetown, Trinidad and Ceylon.

The first phase of the new imperialism on the Pacific was the withdrawal of Spain. By the terms of the Nootka Convention of 1790 her proud claim to "sovereignty of the Pacific and her right . . . to exclude other peoples from that ocean"(2) was set aside under British pressure.

"The result is that the north-west coast, outside of such scattered occupancy, was left without sovereignty in any civilized state; and thus it could become the territory of any nation that entered and occupied it."(3)

When, in 1819, the northerly limit of Spanish territory was established by treaty at 42 degrees North latitude, the contest for sovereignty over the region northward to 54 40' and eastward to the Rocky Mountains rested with Great Britain and the United States.

Expansionist tendencies in the United States were evident from the Revolution onward. Franklin had gone to the peace conference with dreams of a North American republic and upon those dreams succeeding generations of American patriots established a philosophy of "manifest destiny". Very early the scope of their proposed expansion included the entire Pacific coast.

Although as early as 1818 provision was made by convention between Great Britain and the United States for the solution of the Oregon Boundary problem, fifty-four years were to elapse before the boundary as it now exists could be established. An illustration of the strained Anglo-American relations which persisted throughout this period is provided by the files of the "Economist". In 1853 when President Pierce delivered his inaugural address he said:

"The rights, security, and repose of this confederacy reject the idea of interference or colonisation on this side of the ocean by any foreign Power, beyond present jurisdiction, as utterly inadmissible."(4)

This "dogma" the Economist found not only "inconsistent ....

3. Howay op. cit. p. 33
with his (Pierce's) other principles," but savouring "too much of Papal usurpation, which gave away America, or Spanish grasping, which, on such a giving, claimed countries it could never occupy." The editorial closed with this defiant warning:

"If our voice can reach across the Atlantic, we would suggest to President Pierce that he should confine the restriction on foreign colonisation to the territories claimed and occupied by the United States." (5)

Probably the Oregon was one of the territories which the Economist had in mind. An extensive and profitable fur-trade, both maritime and interior, had been carried on west of the Rockies ever since Alexander Mackenzie's memorable explorations on behalf of the North-West Company in 1792. The Hudson's Bay Company, after amalgamation with the North-West Company in 1821 had a large stake in this trade. By 1846 the Columbia Department which extended from 55 north to 41 30' and from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific (6) was being exploited by the Company's agents working through an extensive system of trading posts. Those included in the fur return of the Department for that year were: New Caledonia, Colville, Thompson's River, Nez Perces, Langley, Nisqually, Snake Country, Simpson, and Stikine. (7)

So extensive a capital investment warranted a considerable alarm when it became apparent that the onrush of agricultural settlers into Oregon foreshadowed the end of the fur era. But though alarmed, the Company evidently did not

expect much support from the British Government and when the compromise settlement was effected in 1846, Douglas could write:

"All things considered, the yielding mood of the British Ministry and the concessions made, we have come off better than I expected. I looked for nothing short of an utter sacrifice of our entire interest." (8)

The British government, having taken the plunge, began, even before the gold era, to give some thought to the future settlement of this colonial wilderness. At least prospects of settlement by immigration were bright enough that the Hudson's Bay Company was unable to gain an objective which might have provided a respite for their fur-trade. Immediately after the boundary settlement in 1846 they had petitioned for a blanket charter covering settlement, government and exclusive trade for most of what is now Western Canada. (9) Shrewdly suspecting that the Company's aim was to discourage colonisation rather than to husband it, the British Government reduced the scope of the charter which was finally given January 13, 1849 to include only Vancouver Island; and this merely because there seemed no other way of inaugurating British rule in the territory.

Until 1849 the proportion of the British public which gave any heed to the prospects of developing the Empire on the

9. "I beg leave to say that if Her Majesty's Ministers would be of the opinion that the territory in question would be more conveniently governed and colonized (as far as may be practicable) through the Hudson's Bay Company, the Company are willing to undertake it, and will be ready to receive a grant of all the territories belonging to the Crown which are situated to the north and west of Rupert's Land." Sir John Pelly-Earl Grey. Parliamentary Paper (1848) No. 619 p. 9. Also cf. Howay and Scholfield British Columbia From the Earliest Times to the Present. Vancouver, 1914. I:498 and Begg, A. History of British Columbia. Toronto, 1894. p. 184

* This opinion does not seem to have been that of the Company nor consistent with other expressions by Douglas.
other side of the world must have been negligible. But when the forty-niners uncovered the treasures of the California camps, and the gold-rush to Australia two years later revealed new sources of wealth, those prospects must have seemed more tangible. When in the early fifties news was received that gold strikes had been made in the Queen Charlotte Islands, estimates of the value of the territory soared far beyond the canny figure set by a Glasgow M.P. in 1846. It had been his opinion that the Queen was fortunate if her new estate was worth £20,000. (10)

By 1853 however, the estate was considered valuable enough to merit the erection of a select committee from the British House of Commons to investigate conditions in the British territory under the rule of the Hudson's Bay Company. The committee reported in 1857 that the time was ripe for taking the administration over from the Company. Gladstone, who had been one of the Company's most vigorous opponents in the negotiations for the blanket charter in the forties now attacked the idea of renewing the exclusive trade license.

"Here is a large portion of the surface of the earth with regard to the character of which we have been systematically kept in darkness, because those who had information to give had interests against imparting it. . . . Now the truth is beyond question that a great part of the country is highly valuable for colonizing purposes, and it is impossible to state in too strong language the proposition that the Hudson's Bay Company is the enemy of colonization." (11)

11. Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates, 3rd Series (hereafter Hansard) CLI:1803 (July 20, 1858)
CHAPTER TWO

NO THOROUGHFARE!

The report of the select committee (1) which was mentioned in the previous chapter ushered in a new era in the history of the colony. The nineteen members forming the committee under the chairmanship of Henry Labouchere included Gladstone, Roebuck, Pakington, and Lords Russell and Stanley. (2) During six months they addressed more than six thousand questions to the twenty-four witnesses who were summoned to appear before them.

An honest attempt was made to include all shades of opinion in the course of the committee's deliberations. Sir George Simpson, though he presented an accurate picture of the coast area, was suspected of being over-gloomy in order to aid the Company's cause. (3) When he pointed out that the west coast of the mainland was less favourable for settlement than Vancouver's Island with the exception of a cultivable area on the Fraser, east of Fort Langley, he was confronted with passages from his "Journey Round the World", a travel book he had published in which he had expressed enthusiasm for the territory in general. There is little doubt that Simpson's evidence was biased in favour of the company and there were others who testified in the same strain. But their efforts to save the country for the fur-trade were offset by those of other witnesses.

2. Begg op. cit. p.220
James Cooper, for example, who had set himself up as a Vancouver Island farmer independent of the Company drew attention to the wealth of agricultural land within the barriers of the coast range. He claimed to have received his information from people who had lived in the Thompson River country from thirty to forty years. According to him it was possible to grow all the crops of England and he considered the land better than in Canada or Vancouver Island.

Another witness, Chief Justice Draper, had been appointed by the Canadian government as their official representative at the hearing. His appointment marks the development of the expansionist sentiment which was later to play an important part in Canadian federation. John Ross, also from Upper Canada, a member of parliament and an official of the Grand Trunk Railway struck a prophetic note in his evidence. He was asked if it were true that

"the idea of a railroad ultimately (was) not so much for the benefit of the interior of the country as for a means of thoroughfare and access to harbours on the western coast of America?"

He replied,

"That is so, and for the through trade from China and India the construction of that railway is a most important subject apart entirely from the opening of the country through which it would pass."

The prejudice which the big men of the committee, Gladstone and Russell, felt against the Company was stimulated

4. Imperial Blue Book op.cit. Ques. 3306 seq.
5. ibid. Ques. 4102, 4173.
7. Imperial Blue Book op.cit. Ques. 72
by the evidence presented. They deemed a change in the form of government essential.

While the committee was puzzling at a distance over the true value of this uncut jewel in Her Majesty's imperial crown, the actual social and economic state of the colony was something of a mystery to them. One of the subjects upon which they were anxious to be informed was the native population of the region. Chief Justice Draper estimated that there were 80,000 Indians between the Rockies and the coast in the Hudson's Bay Company territory. (8) Four years later Governor Douglas estimated "an Indian population exceeding 20,000." (9) The Canada Year Book suggests that there were probably 23,000 Indians at Confederation. (10) Therefore a quarter of Draper's estimate would probably have been more accurate.

The white population was almost negligible. With the exception of the handful of optimists engaged in the beginnings of the naval supply trade and the growing of agricultural produce (some of which went to pay the Hudson's Bay Company's rental of the Russian seal fisheries) the entire white population of six hundred west of the Rockies was engaged directly or indirectly in the fur-trade. (11) With the exception of a small group from the Red River Colony who came in the forties there were no British settlers or overlancers unconnected with the Company.

This settlement inertia may be diagnosed as the result

8. Imperial Blue Book op. cit. Ques. 388
9. J. Douglas-Newcastle, Apr. 22, 1861 (Despatches to Downing St. Victoria Archives)
10. Canada Year Book 1936, p. 1051
of the Hudson's Bay Company's fur-trading monopoly. The Company's great allies were the inaccessibility of the interior and the 'laissez-faire' policy of the Colonial Office. While the secretarial staff of that department and those of the Admiralty and War Department did take some cognizance of the affairs of Vancouver Island, especially after 1849, it seemed unlikely that British interest would extend itself to the fostering of settlement and communications upon the mainland.

An excellent illustration of the inadequacy of the colonial administration and of British indifference lies in the fact that, in theory, the law-courts of Canada had jurisdiction over the mainland area until its erection as a separate colony in 1858. (12)

The inaccessibility of the interior which Cooper had stressed (13) was due partly to the lack of a transportation system adequate for a settlement colony. The main traffic arteries, prior to the gold era, were, like the white population, in the service of the fur-trade. By pack-trail and bateau they led from the northern forts and the Kootenay to Kamloops, thence down the Okanagan to the Columbia and the sea. The route to the interior via the Fraser River was not seriously considered as a freight route before 1847 although it had been explored by Simon Fraser in 1808, Sir George Simpson in 1828 and A. C. Anderson in 1846. (14) By 1846 the Hudson's Bay Company recognized the expediency of finding an alternative to the route

12. 21 & 22 Victoria C 99 Sec 4 (An Act to provide for the Government of British Columbia, August 2, 1858)
13. Imperial Blue Book op. cit. & British Colonist, June 29, 1859.

*changed at the request of the author, Nov. 21, 1974*
which now lay through American territory - even though the
Hudson's Bay Company had rights to navigation on the Columbia
according to the boundary settlement. (15) As a matter of fact,
this privilege soon became a dead letter. (16) By 1857 the
principal route used by the fur brigades was up the Fraser to
Hope, up the defile of the Coquihalla, across the Cascade
Mountains to the Tulameen River, over Blackeye's Portage, and
northward through the plain country to Kamloops, the principal
depot. (17)

An older system of trails connected the territory of
Thompson's River and New Caledonia with the Hudson's Bay
Company posts on the prairie via the Athabasca or Yellowhead
Pass. Until 1824 supplies and furs were transported by that
route exclusively. In that year Governor Simpson reorganized
the transport service, making Fort Vancouver on the Columbia
the supply depot for the area succeeding York Factory. (18)

Thenceforward, the various routes through the Rockies,
based for the most part on Indian trails, (19) were kept open
in the interests of the pemmican and leather trade. In addition
there were Indian trails less well known to the white men which
must be included in an inventory of the transport facilities

15. Treaty Establishing Boundary West of the Rocky Mountains, 1846.
   Article II (Howay & Scholfield op. cit. Vol I App XII p.676)
17. Howay, F.W. "The Raison d'Etre of Forts Yale and Hope" (note 14)
18. Howay loc. cit. p.49
19. cf. Mayne, R.C. Four Years in British Columbia and Vancouver's
    Island. London, 1862 p.360. His list of known passes, omitting
    Mackenzie's used in 1793 includes 1. the Cowdung Lake Portage or
    Leather Pass - 54°0'N, 2. Boat Encampment on original Athabasca
    portage - 53°0'N, 3. Howse's Pass - 51°45'N, 4. Kicking Horse Pass -
    Pass - 50°40'N, 7. Crow's Nest Pass - 49°40'N, 8. Kootenay Pass -
    49°25'N.
of the region. As far back as historians have been able to trace the Indians of the interior had intercourse with the Pacific slope and islands. From the Shuswap country westward and from the country surrounding the Nass and Bella Coola rivers they carried on a trade in fish-oil, furs, game and berries with the Chilcotins, coastal tribes and the islanders. (20) The trails used by these aboriginal traders formed the basis of the Bentinck and Bute Inlet routes in the sixties but on the eve of the gold rush they were of no significance to the white population.

It should be noted here that the area which has been considered in this section extended no farther north than fifty-four degrees. From that extremity southward to the forty-ninth parallel and from the Coast Range on the West to the Rockies on the east is, generally speaking, the locale of the development of inland communications during the colonial period.

By 1857, then, this area had egress by: 1. the old Indian trade route to the sea - followed by Mackenzie in 1792 and later developed into the Bentinck Arm route; 2. the original fur-trade routes through the Rockies; 3. the New Caledonia brigade routes southward to Fort Okanagan on the Columbia; and 4. three routes to the mouth of the Fraser, two of them in disfavour - the Harrison-Lillooet condemned by A. C. Anderson, the Fraser canyons route abandoned in 1849, and finally the current fur-brigade route up the Coquihalla. (21)

21. cf Howay's article cited in note 17 above.
The forces which shaped the direction and character of the rude system of communication were not entirely physical. It is true that the old brigade route had been selected because it lay through a prairie-like country which required little trail building and furnished feed for the pack animals. Furthermore, it followed the natural trough of the region. The routes from the east also followed the lines of least resistance through the mountain passes.

But the later brigade route via the Fraser and the Coquihalla, cutting directly across the geographical grain, owed its origin to the establishment of an east-west international boundary and its direction, in part, to the presence of hostile Indian tribes along the more desirable, if more difficult, Fraser Canyon route. The moment these considerations emerged, the problem became one of road-building rather than road-finding. During the decade preceding the gold rush, therefore, more and more frequent references to roads appear in the Company and official correspondence.

The pertinent letters regarding the successive foundations of Yale and Hope and the earlier road-building difficulties form an appendix to the article by Judge Howay to which much of this discussion is indebted. But much other evidence of a growing interest in road-building is to be found in the inter-department and inter-post correspondence of the period. For example, three letters from the Company's archives in London (23) in conjunction with two from the

22. cf note 17 above.
letter book of James Douglas in the Victoria Archives (24) relate the story of a road-building fiasco, probably more amusing to the modern reader than it was to Douglas.

In 1855, a group of three white men and some Indians, under Gavin Hamilton began a reconnaissance of the country between Langley and Hope for the purpose of finding a new route to the interior which would obviate the water transport from Langley to Hope. (25) The work was prosecuted during the season of 1855, but in 1856 the trail was far from completion and a party was set to work from the Langley end of the route to augment the labours of the party farther along. The new party was commanded by Chief Trader Yale.

The denouement occurred when this party reached the shores of Lake Chilwayhook (Chilliwack) and discovered what had been "overlooked" by the explorers; they could build neither over nor around it. The plan was abandoned.

It should not be supposed, however, that the so-called "roads" with which the Company was concerned were more than very rude pack-trails. When the question was put to James Cooper by the Committee of the House of Commons, "Have you travelled on the mainland in British territory?" he replied, "I have travelled by water: there are no roads." (26) That was an exaggeration; certainly there was no waggon road but the nucleus of what later became the transportation system was already there. The exploitation of the fur-trade would otherwise have been impossible.

25. W. G. Smith- Board of Management, Dec. 10/55. (HBCO Archives)
E226 C/1 p. 472
26. British Colonist, June 29/59. "Testimony of Mr. James Cooper."
The exact extent of that fur-trade cannot, unfortunately, be presented statistically. While records are available in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, they are of such a nature that it is impossible to ascertain the exact profits or losses of operations west of the Rockies. All that can be done is to indicate by reference to the opinions of the Company's executives, the general trend of that trade.

The opinions of Sir George Simpson deserve prior treatment. For more than thirty-five years he was in intimate touch, not only with the fur-trade west of the Rockies, but with the affairs of the Company as a whole. With his opportunities for evaluation and comparison, it is significant that, with respect to the fur-trade of New Caledonia, he was uniformly unenthusiastic during the period 1850 to 1857. At least, so would his entries in the Western Department letter books indicate.

In 1850 he wrote of the "rapidly declining state of trade" and "the prodigiously increasing demands" of New Caledonia. (27) In 1852 he warned the Board of Management of the Columbia District that "unless returns from the west side increase as rapidly as the shipping and other outlay to that quarter," serious loss would be involved. (28) In 1855 he complained that a comparison between the outfits of 1827 and 1852 revealed a decline in value of £6,000. (29) When he confided to a correspondent in 1856 that the days of the trade in Oregon were

27. Sir G. Simpson-Peter Skene Ogden, Norway House, June 25/50. WDLB B226 C/1 p.31
numbered, that there was "but one remedy... - the introduction of a military force," and that he was "doubtful that the British Parliament and people would sanction" such a means - then his opinion of the remnant of trade north of the Columbia must have been low indeed. (30) Counterbalancing all this pessimism of Simpson's is the fact of his biased evidence before the Select Committee which was intended, presumably, to prolong the fur era.

Turning from Simpson to another Hudson's Bay Company servant, James Douglas, the characteristic note in his expressed opinions is not pessimism but optimism. Throughout the period with which we are concerned he maintained his faith in the worth of the territory which he supervised on behalf of the Company. In March 1854, both Simpson and Douglas wrote to the Secretary of the Company in London within two days of each other. Whereas the former pointed out that "the profits of the Western Department would have been over £12,000" had they not been so unfortunate as to lose the vessel "Vancouver"(31) Douglas boasted, "If I could throw off all encumbrances the Western Department should turn out from seventeen to eighteen thousand pounds per year or I would forfeit my entire interest in the trade."(32) On the eve of the gold-rush Douglas could still write home to England that the fur-trade of the Thompson was good. (33)

Some of Douglas' optimism may have been derived from

31. Sir G. Simpson-Secty, March 20/54 WDLB B226b XI: 38
32. James Douglas- Secty, March 22/54 WDLB B226b XI: 39
the fact that the fur-trade was not the only Hudson's Bay Company in the New Caledonia fire by 1857. It is true that the fur-trade was the "raison d'être" of the Company's existence on the Pacific coast. But as R. L. Reid has pointed out,

"Agriculture, the salmon fishery, and the foreign commerce of British Columbia had their origin and early development in the almost forgotten settlement of Fort Langley on the lower Fraser River, during the years 1827 to 1864."(34)

And still no mention has been made of the profits accruing to the Company through the purchase of gold from the Indians. This must be left for the following chapter.

No doubt the Select Committee of 1857 would have been grateful for even so inadequate an economic sketch as has just been given here. But even although no such factual basis was then available, Viscount Bury did not hesitate, during the debate on the Government of New Caledonia bill, to attack the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly in these vigorous terms:

"Surely the Hudson's Bay Company can not expect by their effete and stupid charter to shut up for ever the route to the great west."(35)

But as long as the system of transportation and communication remained in so primitive a state, the Company was not likely to find great difficulty in maintaining their policy of "No Trespassers!"

34. Reid, R.L. Economic Beginnings in British Columbia (Transactions of Royal Society of Canada) 1936 II:89
35. Hansard CLI:1801-2 (Govt. of New Caledonia Bill, July 20/58)
CHAPTER THREE

TRESPASSERS

Gold, as was suggested in the previous chapter, had become a factor in the economy of New Caledonia before the rush of 1858. Then it became the dominant factor. While it remained subordinate it did not materially affect the development of communications, but some account of the role played by gold during the fur era will provide a background for the study of later developments. It will help, also, to account for the abandonment of the "No Trespassers" policy.

Among the miscellaneous unsorted papers of the Hudson's Bay Company in their London archives, there is a statement covering a shipment of gold dust to England on board the "Norman Morrison" for account of the 1850 outfit. The total of the shipment was 4,005 ounces and the value, later ascertained by "the Bank" was £14,018/5/-.(2) Seven-eighths of the amount had been sent to Fort Victoria from Fort Vancouver for re-shipment but according to the statement 310 ounces were to be credited to the Victoria Indian trade. This is the earliest reference I could find to the trade in gold dust and it is probably connected with the discovery reported by Richard Blanshard, first governor of Vancouver Island, to Earl Grey at the Colonial Office. In August, 1850

2.A.Barclay-Ogden & Work, March 1,1851. ibid.
3.Blanshard-Grey, Aug 18, 1850. PRO CO 305 #2b p.77
he wrote of "a very rich specimen of gold ore brought by the Indians of Queen Charlotte's Island." (3)

The Hudson's Bay Company knew of the existence of gold on the mainland as early as 1852 when their agent at Fort Kamloops on the Thompson River obtained gold dust in the course of trade with the natives. (4) By 1857 Douglas was frequently referring to the Thompson valley as the "gold country" and there is evidence of considerable activity on the part of the Company's agents in collecting gold dust. Douglas wrote to Dugald McTavish on December 18, 1857 that a company servant named Todd was "running constantly among the gold diggings with goods and picking up the gold almost as fast as found." (5) Nor was the outside world in ignorance of the potential wealth; for Cooper, in the course of his description of the Thompson River country, told the Select Committee that miners there were earning from £4 to £20 per day. (6)

Naturally the rumours upon which Cooper had based his evidence leaked out to miners across the boundary. Douglas soon became aware of their excitement and although he probably coveted the gold fields for exclusive exploitation by the Company, he foresaw that the inevitable effect of the gold discoveries would be an influx of fortune hunters. On September 20, 1857 he predicted "ere long a rush of people into the district of Thompson's River" and warned that "nothing but

3. Blanshard-Grey, Aug 18, 1850. PRO CO 305 #2b p. 77 #9564.
6. Imperial Blue Book op. cit. Ques. 3606
the most energetic measures will suffice to protect our interest."(7)

The situation was complicated by the fact that, in Douglas' own words, the Indians had "expressed a determination to reserve the gold for their own benefit."(8) By April 6, 1858 eight hundred ounces of gold had been exported from New Caledonia, most of which had been procured from the Indians.(9) Of the white men who extracted the balance of the gold, Douglas wrote that they were "chiefly retired servants of the Hudson's Bay Company," and that "though well acquainted with Indian character" they were "obstructed by the natives in all their attempts to search for gold."(10)

In July 1857 Douglas had written to Simpson that the obstruction arose "partly because they want the gold and because of fish migrations."(11) He went on to say that he could not help "admiring the wisdom and foresight of the Indians" and had "given directions to the officers in charge of the Company's Posts to respect their feelings and to permit them to work the gold for their own benefit and to bring it in as an article of trade."(12)

However, by the following spring Douglas' humane sentiments seem to have been replaced by others. In April,

9. Ibid p.10
10. Ibid p.10
11. Douglas-Simpson, July 17, 1857 (MDLB II:119 over)
12. Ibid.
"such conduct was unwarrantable and exceedingly trying to the temper of spirited men, but the savages were far too numerous for resistance, and they had to submit to their dictation." (13)

It was obvious that some addition to the white population was necessary if control was to be gained over the gold diggings. Thus on November 23, 1857 Donald McLean received a letter from Douglas saying that, since the Company had a monopoly of trade west of the Rockies and stood to profit from an influx of American miners, McLean need not be too alarmed at the prospect. While he might warn the Americans off, he should avoid "collisions which (might) end in serious difficulty and blood-shed." (14) Douglas further instructed McLean to "be careful to encourage the Indians not to resist the influx of Americans to the diggings." (15)

Five years earlier when over-rated gold discoveries in the Queen Charlotte Islands had lured American and Hudson's Bay Company expeditions, Douglas had requested and received instructions from the home government to cope with the threat of an invasion of miners. The Colonial Office had created a unique policy. In September 1852 Douglas was commissioned lieutenant-governor of the new colony of Queen Charlotte's Island "solely to meet the circumstances of the times." (16) He was given "no power to make laws or constitute a regular

15. ibid
government."(17) His powers were limited to

"granting licenses on such terms and for such period as you may think proper to persons intending to search for gold on the Island; and . . . in case of violation of the right which such licenses give, or any unauthorized search taking place, you are to claim the support of Her Majesty's officers who may be within reach to enforce your authority."(18)

It was planned to despatch a naval force to the Islands to maintain and insure the continuance of British sovereignty.(19)

Accordingly Douglas issued a proclamation in March 1853 which established crown ownership of any gold found in the colony and in April he published regulations prescribing a license fee "fixed at 10s. per month, to be paid in advance,"(20) and providing for the appointment of a commissioner to sell licenses and regulate "the extent and position of land to be covered by each license."(21)

All these careful preparations came to naught for it was discovered that the gold of the Islands was not available in paying quantities. Nevertheless the experience did provide Douglas with a precedent for the solution of the problem of administering the new gold-fields on the mainland after 1857.

His interest in the mainland gold-fields was not really an official one. Although he was Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, his commissions as Governor of Vancouver Island and Lieutenant-Governor of Queen Charlotte's Island

17. Correspondence relative to the Discovery of Gold in Queen Charlotte's Island. London, 1853. p.12-13
18. Ibid p.12-13
19. Ibid p.13
20. Howay & Scholefield op.cit. II:7
21. Ibid p.8
gave him no administrative jurisdiction over the mainland. So determined was he however, that the interests of the Crown - and the Company - should not be jeopardized that, acting on his own initiative, he applied the policy which the Colonial Office had sanctioned in 1853. On December 29, 1857 he issued a proclamation followed by regulations identical to those issued in 1853 for Queen Charlotte's Island. (22)

Douglas then looked to the Colonial Office for corroboration although he realized that he had exceeded his authority. He defended himself in these terms:

"My authority ... may, perhaps, be called in question; but I trust that the motives which have influenced me on this occasion and the fact of my being invested with the authority over the premises of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the only authority commissioned by Her Majesty within reach, will plead my excuse." (23)

It is an interesting accident that this appeal, addressed as it was to the Secretary of the Colonies, should have fallen within the jurisdiction of one who held that office very briefly yet left a significant impress upon the history of British Columbia. Bulwer Lytton's political career was but an episode in his life as a man of letters. He was, as a biographer has said, not a normal politician, (24) although he conformed to type in that his political course veered surely from the radical left to the tory right. Entering politics in 1831 as a reformer, he opposed with mounting conviction, ungentlemanly money-mongers in politics, unrestricted free

22. Gold Disc Papers. p. 9
23. ibid p. 9
24. Feiling, Keith. Sketches in Nineteenth Century Biography. London 1930. pp 121-133 (to which this paragraph is indebted.)
trade and a democratic franchise. Disraeli considered him conceited but Gladstone praised his cabinet performance. He often displayed a rightness of judgement and among politicians "he was one of those with whom posterity usually agrees."(25) Although his almost endless novels are concerned with things ending or in declension - The Last of the Barons, Last Days of Pompeii, Harold, the Last of the Saxon Kings - his relationship with British Columbia was the happy reverse.

When Lytton received from Douglas the despatch quoted above, he did call Douglas' authority in question.

"I am compelled, therefore, to disapprove, and to disallow, if still in force, the Proclamation of which your Despatch transmitted a copy."(25)

He went on to explain that the Hudson's Bay Company had no right to prevent the entrance into Fraser's River of non-Company vessels merely on the supposition that those vessels were intended for trade with the Indians. Nor had the Company any right to require a license from persons landing in the territory.

In addition Lytton threw cold water upon another of Douglas' schemes. The latter had planned to enter into a contract with the Pacific Mail Company, a San Francisco shipping line, so that the two companies could between them command a monopoly of transportation and trade. In a day when colonies were regarded with pessimism it is interesting that Lytton's opposition should be expressed in terms recalling his

25. Feiling op.cit. p.126
early intimacy with Durham.(27)

"All claims and interests must be subordinated to that policy which is to be found in the peopling and opening up of the new country with the intention of consolidating it as an integral and important part of the British Empire."(28)

In anticipating this consolidation, Lytton placed little faith in gold as the economic basis of the colony. Speaking in the House, he said:

"Though gold is the attraction, we hope to add a permanent and flourishing race to the great family of nations, not by gold but culture of the soil and in the exchange of commerce."(29)

The principal means which the British government employed to give effect to this dream was the erection of a separate mainland colony by act of parliament, August 2, 1858. The act contained temporary provision for the government of the colony until permanent settlement and the number of colonists increased. The suggested revision date was the end of the first parliamentary session of 1863. The boundary provisions established that the colony was

"bounded to the South by the frontier of the United States of America, to the East by the main chain of the Rocky Mountains, to the North by Simpson's River and the Finlay branch of the Peace River, and to the West by the Pacific Ocean, and shall include Queen Charlotte's Island and all other islands adjacent to the said territories except . . . . no part of the Colony of Vancouver Island, as at present established shall be comprised within British Columbia."(30)

This temporary arrangement was defended by Lytton who said that while "Geography and Circumstance are imperious Dictators

30. 21 & 22 Victoria, C 99.
and control the theories by which, at a distance, we would map out Commonwealths," nevertheless it was "probably better to keep Vancouver and British Columbia under separate governments" for the time being.(31)

The other provisions may be summarized as follows: details of government were left in abeyance and future administration might be by governor and council or by governor, council and assembly with no guidance for an elective system and no mention of responsible government; local courts were to be set up with appeal direct to the Privy Council in London thus removing the anomaly whereby the courts of Upper Canada had jurisdiction; and finally, the future union of the island and mainland colonies received the blessing of the home government.(32)

The rush of American miners which Douglas had anticipated was fully realized. The gold discoveries on the Fraser and Thompson Rivers caused feverish excitement up and down the Pacific coast in the spring of 1858. In England, however, the news of the discoveries caused little excitement. On the contrary, the following extract from "The Economist" provides an interesting contrast to the wild enthusiasm with which news of the gold strikes in California and Australia had been received.

"Gold discoveries have become so common of late years, that we often forget in England what it is that constitutes their real significance. The news received last week that gold had been discovered in considerable quantities

31. Lytton-Moody, Oct 29, 1858. (PRO CO 61)
32. 21 & 22 Victoria C. 99.
in British North American territory opposite Vancouver's Island, has called forth scarcely a word of remark from the English press. Now no doubt the discovery of gold is sufficiently unimportant. The only fear in the present condition of the gold-fields, is that the value of gold may be greatly depreciated . . . and that depreciation is in every way an event to be dreaded."(33)

With this atmosphere in England, Lytton was probably not seriously troubled by meddlers while planning his policy.

The feelings of those on the spot were more agitated. Estimates of the total number who flocked to the diggings during the late spring and early summer of 1858 vary from twenty to thirty thousand.(34) Their number was sufficient to alarm those interested in San Francisco trade. It was reported in "The Economist" that

"many quartz mining and tunnelling Companies had been obliged to suspend operations from want of hands, and the wages had nearly doubled."(35)

The colony’s new inhabitants were a motley crew. Some were the chaff from the California camps borne northward by the winds of curiosity and greed; many were thorough greenhorns.

British subjects, native born Americans, Germans, French, Italians and even a considerable group of negroes (36) jostled each other in their scramble to the gold diggings.(37) Many of the aborigines joined the rush, hiring out under the miners: and the Indians did so, already distrusting the newcomers as exponents of the popular American sentiment, "The only good Indian is a dead Indian."

34.of Sage op.cit. p.204; Coats and Gosnell, Sir Jas. Douglas Toronto 1909 p.224; Howay and Scholfield op.cit. II:18;Rickard op.cit. p.13. However large theoriginal number, by November Douglas estimated the mining population at 10,600. Douglas-Lytton, Nov. 9, 1858. (PRO CO No.651 p.548)
35.The Economist, July 17, 1858.
Nor were the Hudson's Bay Company's white employees immune from the gold-fever. Douglas had foreseen this and had written to Ogden in September 1857:

"the discoveries will give us no end of trouble so far as the Company's servants are concerned, and leave us more than ever dependent upon the natives for getting through with the brigade and other interior works." (38)

At home the directors were disturbed, not only by the loss of these employees but by diminishing returns of efficiency from Douglas himself whom they would have preferred to be more factor and less governor. (39)

The Colonial Office, however, insisted that he be all Governor, and Douglas, albeit reluctantly, withdrew from the Hudson's Bay and Puget Sound Agricultural Companies in the summer of 1858. (40) Divorced from the fur-trade and faced with the exigencies of a new economy based on gold, Douglas entered a phase in his career during which he earned the title of "the Road King". (41) During the six years prior to his retirement the network of Indian and fur trails developed into a system of crude waggon roads eked out by mule trails. In this work Douglas received two aids, both evidences of British interest. The first was the despatch of a company of Royal Engineers; the second was the investment of English capital; and the stimulus was gold.

36. A valuable contribution would be a study of these negroes whom The Economist, June 12, 1858, reported had been driven from California by discriminatory legislation and about whom much appears in the early colonial newspapers.
39. e.g. Berens-Dallas, Dec 10, 1858. HBCo Archives A/7%2 p.196
40. Sage op.cit. p.218
41. Gosnell, R.E. Year Book of 1897. p.34.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE 'COURIERS' PROVE A COSTLY ORNAMENT

"I consider that the discharge of menial services is incompatible with the duties of couriers."(1)

The lady of property who went travelling in Europe during the nineteenth century was likely to have contractual relationships with a class of servants called couriers, upon whom devolved the duty of facilitating the lady's progress through the country. In 1838, one of these couriers sued his employer for breach of agreement and the judgement which was handed down in the Court of Exchequer came from no less a personage than Sir Robert Peel. He said, among other things, what appears at the head of this chapter. Twenty years later a corps of the Royal Engineers was sent by the home government - the lady of property - to perform the duties of 'couriers' in British Columbia. Peel's judgement expresses a sentiment which soon came to be widely held with respect to the engineers.

Behind the idea of bolstering up the civil administration on the Pacific with a military force lay three motives: first, to provide police protection; second, to safe-guard the colony from Indian attacks and foreign aggressors; and thirdly, to supply the colony with a force which

"would immediately become instrumental in the work of civilization by the construction of roads and bridges and the foundation of a future city."(2)

Prior to the gold rush and the erection of the mainland colony the first two motives predominated. In 1848 it

1. The Times, London, Feb 22, 1838. From evidence given in the Court of Exchequer in an action brought by a courier against a 'lady of property' for breach of agreement.
2. Lytton-Douglas, 2nd Minute, 1858. (PRO CO 60)
was suggested by someone in the Foreign Office that while Vancouver Island was far too distant to be colonised by emigration, "it would be the place of all others for a military colony."(3) At the same time the Hudson's Bay Company was beginning to suggest that naval squadrons make periodic visits to the Pacific coast, pointing out that a favourable impression would be made upon British subjects, Indians and Americans alike.(4)

These requests continued until 1850 when Governor Blanshard pointed out that naval visits offered no adequate protection for Vancouver Island although he suspected that the Company pressed for them on behalf of their interests on the Columbia.(5) Blanshard advocated the establishment of a permanent military force since the expense could be charged to the Company under the terms of their license.(6)

But Pelly considered a military force unnecessary. In this he may have been influenced as much by considerations of economy as by a belief that Douglas was not in favour of anything more than the appointment of magistrates.(7) However, in April 1851, at the time of Blanshard's resignation, Douglas alluded to the need for protection.(8)

A stronger advocacy, the discovery of gold in the Queen Charlotte Islands, prompted the home government to arrange for a naval force to safeguard British interests.(9) The collapse of the gold rush, as already mentioned, made the step

3. Wm Miller-H.A. Addington, Oct 23, 1848 (PRO CO 305.3 p.224)
5. Blanshard-Earl Grey, Aug 18, 1850 (PRO CO 305.3 p.77)
7. Enc. in Pelly-?, Jan 14, 1852. (HBCO Archives)
8. Douglas-Downing St. Apr 16, 1851 (PRO CO 305.3)
unnecessary.

Douglas also favoured the allotment of a defence force against Russian aggression during the Crimean War, but no response was elicited from the home government. (10) However, the garrisoning of new colonies was quite in accord with the colonial policy of the day, especially in the proximity of other powers.

"Whenever Her Majesty's Government want a body of skillful, intelligent, and industrious mechanics to perform any task requiring peculiar judgement, energy and accuracy, such as ... the execution of an accurate survey, or even the construction of houses, roads and bridges, in a new colony, they have only to turn to the corps of Royal Engineers, and they find all the material that they want." (11)

A detachment of the Engineers, sixty-five strong, was sent out in 1858 under Colonel J. S. Hawkins to cooperate with a similar United States force in determining the international land boundary. Of these, a group of fifteen were commandeered to assist in restoring law and order during Indian troubles of that year in the Big Canyon beyond Yale.

It is not strange that Lytton turned to the same corps for assistance in establishing the gold colony and "consolidating it as an integral and important part of the British Empire." (12) Nevertheless his policy was criticized at some length by the Duke of Newcastle during the debate on the Government of New Caledonia Bill on July 26, 1858. (13) Newcastle, who was soon to succeed Lytton as Secretary for

11.The Times, London. Sept 2, 1858. (Begg op.cit. pp 229-230)
12.supra p.25
the Colonies, sympathized with Lytton's ambition to increase the population and to develop agriculture within the colony, and he saw that a military force was essential for such a development. At the same time he foresaw difficulties.

"If soldiers were sent out, they must be accommodated in winter, which he believed was not severe, and in summer, which he believed was not unfriendly to the English constitution. Provisions would also have to be procured and all provisions for maintaining the required force must be carried up the country and kept in constant supply. This, owing to the distance of the colony from England would be a matter of considerable difficulty."(14)

He wondered whether organized regiments or some other kind of force would be sent.

"He did not apprehend that they could transport soldiers or relieve garrisons with facility even in times of peace but unquestionably not in times of war, so that, practically as far as the advance of this colony was concerned in time of war, the Government could only reinforce and strengthen any garrison by way of Cape Horn. ... 'Bear in mind that any military force you would be placing in Caledonia would be in a totally different position to that of any military force hitherto in any of our colonies.'"(15)

But difficulties notwithstanding, Lytton proceeded with his plans. In a despatch dated July 31, 1858, he informed Douglas that

"a party of Royal Engineers will be despatched to the colony immediately. It will devolve upon them to survey those parts of the Country which may be considered most suitable for settlement, to mark out allotments of land for public purposes, to suggest a site for the seat of government, to point out where roads should be made, and to render you such assistance as may be in their power, on the distinct understanding, however, that this force is to be maintained at the Imperial cost for only a limited period, and that if required afterwards, the Colony will have to defray the expense thereof. ... I

15. Ibid
shall endeavour to secure, if possible, the services of an Officer in command of the Engineers who will be capable of reporting on the value of the mineral resources. This force is sent for scientific and practical purposes, and not solely for military objects."(16)

Crossing this despatch in the mails was a letter from Douglas in which he made an appeal for "even a single company of infantry"(17) to add prestige to the framework of government which he had erected, and to assist the newly arrived white population to gain control of the gold-diggings, the transfer of which was aggravating the Indians.

Lytton showed his good sense in that he arranged that the personnel of the Detachment selected from volunteers should include representatives of as many trades and professions as possible. "Carpenters, masons, bricklayers, smiths . . . artificers most competent and not so expensive as the trained Engineer."(18)

The month of August and part of September were devoted to assembling the Engineers and their equipment. Even the advance guard required to be supplied with essential field stores. These included

"tents, cooking utensils, tools (a few), clothing, bedding, waterproof materials, the arms of the party, a small quantity of ammunition and sundry miscellaneous articles all packed in cases and bales."(19)

"All," wrote Moody, "are indispensable."(20) The more bulky equipment was shipped with the main body aboard the "Thames

16. Lytton-Douglas, July 31, 1858 (B.C.Papers pt.1,p.58)
18. Moody's report enc. in Douglas-Lytton, Feb 9, 1859 (PRO CO60 #3269)
19. Moody-Carnarvon, Sept 15, 1858 (PRO CO 60)
20. ibid.
City" which sailed on October 10, 1858. This vessel's cargo may have included "immense quantities of clothing and material of every description likely to be required by the expedition," but, the guesses of the Gazette to the contrary, "steam-engines, railway rails and other mechanical appliances" were not sent after the party. (21)

By November 20, 1858, when the article just quoted appeared in the "Gazette", two advance parties of the Engineers had already arrived in the colony. Colonel Moody, travelling alone, and the main body aboard the "Thames City" were on their way. The first detachment of twenty men, chiefly surveyors, under Captain Parsons, left England on September 2 and arrived in Victoria on October 29. The second, consisting of twelve men under Captain Grant embarked on September 17 and arrived November 8. The two detachments were thus on hand to provide a dash of imperial colour to the official celebration of the erection of the gold colony on November 19.

Both groups had reached the colony via the England-Panama-Victoria route and Moody also followed this route, leaving England October 30 and arriving in Victoria on Christmas Day. The "Thames City" however, took the longer route around the Horn, touching at Valparaiso and the Falkland Islands, and did not reach Victoria with its freight of 121 men, 31 women and 34 children until April 12, 1859.

In the meantime, that is, between October 29, 1858 and April 12, 1859, the advance guard of Engineers in the 21 Victoria Gazette, November 20, 1858.
colony busied themselves making preparations for the main group. During the first two months, Moody not having arrived, Parsons and Grant were in charge. Both had received written instructions from their chief before sailing. To Parsons Moody wrote:

"I have no apprehension in my own mind that if you frankly place yourself in unreserved communication with him (Douglas) you will find difficulties quickly mastered. . . . Your main duties are: to house and feed your party, prepare for those to follow, reconnoitre the Fraser banks to Yale or farther, pay special attention to such distance up the River as ordinary merchant vessels can proceed conveniently and get assistance from the Governor and the Naval Office. . . . The site of the chief town should be early settled. Military considerations are of the greatest importance seeing the nearness of the Frontier."(22)

In general, Grant's instructions duplicated Parsons'. Moody required the examination of land around Pitt River at the junction with the Fraser, exploration for the best route from Pitt River to the deep inlet northward (probably Burrard Inlet, although the chart which Moody supplied is not available), and he stressed the importance of barracks. In this connection he advised the temporary use of a ship, partly that the force might act as river police and partly because of facility for storage. "This will be self-evident to His Excellency's well known sagacity." In closing, he emphasized strongly the necessity, as he had in Parsons' letter, of military strength upon the Fraser.(23)

There are two features present in both of the letters discussed above which are particularly important in the light

22.Moody-Parsons, Sept 1, 1858. (Moody Correspondence, B.C. Archives 1149b)
23.Moody-Grant, Sept , 1858. (ibid.)
of the later relationship between Governor Douglas and Colonel Moody. One is the high opinion of Douglas which Moody had formed on hearsay; the other is Moody's strong military bias.

The presence of this bias is noteworthy also because of Lytton's attitude toward the military activities of the corps. This is expressed in a despatch which he wrote on July 16, 1858.

"This force is sent for scientific and practical purposes, and not solely for military objects. As little display as possible should, therefore, be made of it. Its mere appearance, if prominently obtruded, might serve to irritate, rather than appease the mixed population which will be collected in British Columbia. It should be remembered that your real strength lies in the conviction of the emigrants that their interests are identical with those of the Government, which should be carried on in harmony with, and by means of the people of the country." (24)

Nevertheless, Lytton was not blind to the danger of American expansionist tendencies. On October 29, 1858 he included the following in a list of general instructions to Governor Douglas:

"You will not fail to regard with a military eye the best position for such towns and cities as well as for the engineering of roads and passes, or the laying of foundations of any public works." (25)

A few days previously he had written:

"From England we send skill and discipline; the raw material (that is, the mere men) a colony intended for free institutions, and on the border of so powerful a neighbour as the United States of America, should learn betimes of itself to supply." (26)

However skilled and disciplined the men under Grant and Parsons might have been, the preparations they made at old Fort Langley (Derby) were rendered valueless when the

24. Lytton-Douglas, July 16, 1858 (Begg op. cit. p.224)
25. Lytton-Douglas, Oct 29, 1858 (B.C. Papers p.41)
26. Lytton-Douglas, Oct 16, 1858 (Begg op. cit. p.235)
site of the main barracks was transferred by Colonel Moody to what later became New Westminster shortly after his arrival in the colony. The reason for the change was the difficulty of defending the chosen site in the event of attack from the south.

It had been Douglas' intention that Old Fort Langley should be the capital of the mainland colony. Howay suggests that Douglas was influenced to a large extent in his choice by the possibility of gain for the Hudson's Bay Company. (27) At any rate he did not take very seriously the admonitions of Lytton quoted above. Nor were Parsons and Grant careful to consider the defence possibilities of the first site, although Moody's instructions recommending confidence in Douglas might well be quoted in their defence. The incident further reveals that Moody, from the first, did not hesitate to disregard the Governor's decisions.

The date of the Colonel's report containing his condemnation of the Langley site was January 28, 1859 and that of the Governor's proclamation, the official facade of a surrender which was none too graceful in private, was February 14. Probably Moody's action would have been still more prompt had not the affair called "Ned McGowan's War" intervened.

This affair was a farcical quarrel between the local magistrates of Hill's Bar and Yale which occasioned alarm because of the presence at the former place of a group of Californian malcontents headed by Ned McGowan. The latter had

27. Howay and Shohfield op.cit. II:60
entered the colony bearing an unsavoury reputation accumulated from Pennsylvania to California and crowned by a criminal record which had necessitated a hurried retreat before the Vigilance Committee.(28)

The importance of the affair is contained in the valuable impression of the adequacy of British law and order made upon the mining communities by the prompt action of the governor, the marines, bluejackets, and Colonel Moody's Engineers. "British Columbia was not to be a second California in the sense that the miners could conduct themselves as they pleased and defy constituted authority."(29)

It was immediately after his return from "the war" that Moody made the condemnatory report mentioned above and perhaps the decision and ability he displayed made Douglas' capitulation easier. But it must have been hard to abandon the Langley site where the land had been cleared, surveyed, and divided into town lots and where the barracks and other buildings had been raised almost to a point of completion; for one reads that "the roof was laid by William Clarkson from Oshawa, Ontario."(30)

Work on the new headquarters at Sapperton, now part of New Westminster, went on apace; but when the main body arrived on the "Eliza Anderson" from Esquimalt where the "Thames City" had docked on April 12, 1859, preparations were still incomplete. This was partly due to the difficulty of clearing

28. Details of the incident are effectively presented in Sage op.cit. p.253ff and Howay and Scholfield op.cit. II:61ff
29. Sage op.cit. p.255
30. Begg op.cit. p.287
the heavy tangle of willow and alder but probably the change of site contributed most to the delay. Some of the newcomers were billeted upon the Hudson's Bay Company brigantine "Recovery"; others found temporary homes in tents. Then began their task as

"pioneers in the work of civilization, in opening up the resources of the country by the construction of roads and bridges, in laying the foundations of a future city or seaport and in carrying out the numerous engineering works which, in the earlier stages of colonization, are so essential to the progress and welfare of the community."(31)

The work of the first year was much disorganized and pioneer in character. Writing on May 1, 1860 in retrospect, Moody told Douglas:

"The work has been extremely miscellaneous. Now I hope to methodize. I hope the accounts and vouchers sent in but returned for rearrangement will meet with approval because now they show the expenditure in different services. The large military expense is because the military officers are doing civil work. From now on the work will be mostly civil. From now on the economic value of the Royal Engineers in the province will be great if the revenue allows expenditure equal to the amount of colonial pay and cost of subsistence for execution of works offering a return of revenue by tolls on roads, rates on improved navigation and lands sales."(32)

The accomplishments of the year Moody listed as follows:

"1. Barracks, etc. 2. Harrison-Lillooet (Grant) Waggon Line. 3. Hope to Boston Bar (Lempriere) 4. Navigation of the Harrison (Grant) continuing No.2. 5. Survey (Parsons) Towns etc. . . . 8. Clearing Headquarters etc."(33)

On December 31, 1860 Moody presented a formal report of the "Expenditure on Roads, Streets and Bridges and Works and Buildings from the Beginnings of the Colony." The period

31. Lytton-Douglas, Oct 16, 1858 (PRC CO 60.4)
32. Moody-Douglas, May 1, 1860 (Moody Correspondence, B.C. Archives)
33. Ibid.
covered was halved at the close of 1859. For the first half the total civil expenditure was shown as £16,911.12.6 while military expenditure amounted to £70 for a trail from the Royal Engineers camp to Burrard Inlet. Of the civil expenditure, more than nine-tenths was devoted to the Harrison-Lillooet route - or, as government critics claimed, "squandered" on what they felt was the Governor's pet obsession. The only other considerable item shown was £638.7.8 spent on the Boston Bar trail.

During the second half the civil expenditure was £21,076.16.10 but this time the Harrison-Lillooet route received only £5,719.1.3 for the waggon road over the first portage and for repairs. On the alternative route to the gold fields following the Fraser, £9,354.16.9 was expended while an additional £4,574.9.6 went in opening up the Hope-Similkameen route for the Rock Creek gold rush.(34)

Nevertheless the government critics still complained of the favouritism shown the Harrison-Lillooet. But before discussing the route controversy, the general outline of the Engineers' activities during the remainder of their term in the colony will provide the background.

Although Moody had written that he hoped to methodize the Engineers' activities from 1860 on, the scanty evidence available for the three years following suggest that the work continued to be miscellaneous in character. Certainly the Colonel left no graphic account of operations such as one might have expected to find had Douglas or Seymour been in the same

34. Expenditure of Roads, etc. Dec 31, 1860 (B.C. Archives F 1154)
position. It is characteristic of Moody that the Colonial Office should have found it necessary to complain of his failure to supply them with reports. (35)

The information, therefore, which here follows can only indicate, not comprehend the contribution made by the Engineers to the transportation system of the colony. Moody's guiding principal appears to have been to employ his specialists only where the colonists themselves were unequipped or incompetent. It is difficult to apportion the credit for much of the road-building of the period, but clearly many sections were completed by civilian contractors without the assistance of the corps and these will be considered later.

The year 1861 marks the graduation of the Cariboo trail into a wagon road, the famous Cariboo Highway, so dear to romantic historians. An October issue of the British Colonist reported that a party of engineers under McColl were surveying the section from Yale to Lytton. Investigations were made into the feasibility of erecting a bridge at Hell's Gate in Big Canyon above Spuzzum Ferry. Construction of the bridge was deferred until two years later when the contract was awarded to Joseph Trutch.

The Engineers were also active during 1861 along the Hope-Similkameen which Douglas had early envisioned as a transcontinental route though his enthusiasm in this

35. The first report, and from Palmer, not Moody, was received Oct 10, 1859 and prompted Blackwood-Merrivale, Oct 12: "I know not to what it is owing... They have been nine months in the colony." Sept 12, 1859, Gossett-Acting Col. Secty: "No account from Moody has arrived."
respect (37) was curbed by the press of more urgent work. In 1860 Dewdney and Moberly had nibbled seven miles from the long stretch of wilderness and now the Engineers under Grant (38) assumed the task where dearth of finance had blocked the unfortunate contractors. One happy circumstance was the discovery of a pass south of the Punch Bowl (39) which not only lowered the summit a thousand feet but shortened the route by ten miles.

So much for Douglas' "transcontinental route". Turning to another of his enthusiasms, the Harrison-Lillooet, one notes that during 1861 the Engineers shortened the Douglas Portage, (40) graded Gibraltar Hill, (41) and re-dredged the Harrison riffles.

The shreds of evidence of the operations of 1862 suggest that the main activity continued to be on the Cariboo road for no mention is found of the other two routes. On the former the work was furthered by Grant and a mixed party of Engineers and civilians. The work done was creditable although Grant was forced because of inadequate funds to dismiss the civilian labourers. For, offsetting the resentment of the disgruntled colonists was the unaccustomed praise of the "Colonist" for the short stretch of eighteen-foot macadamized road between Yale and Pike's Riffle. (42)

37. e.g. Douglas-Newcastle, Oct 18, 1859. (GO 60.17)
38. Colonist August 5, 1861.
39. Ibid. August 31, 1861.
40. Ibid. October 8, 1861
41. Ibid. April 9, 1861
42. Ibid. December 15, 1861
In addition to this work on the lower Cariboo, an exploratory survey was conducted by Palmer and his party of Engineers.\(^{(43)}\) Toward Fort Alexandria in the north, eastward toward William's Creek, and down the Bella Coola River to Bentinck Arm they forced back the frontier of surveyed territory. With Palmer as with Grant, however, the scarcity of funds proved an embarrassing handicap.

The following May, in the course of a despatch to Downing Street, Douglas referred to Palmer's report on these explorations. "I regret that I cannot employ the Royal Engineers continually on like services," he wrote, and laid the blame upon shortage of funds.\(^{(44)}\) Perhaps it was on this account that Palmer's assignment for 1863 was to proceed with a company of 60 Royal Engineers to work upon Oppenheimer's defaulted section of the Lytton-Alexandria road to connect Cook's Ferry with the section upon which Hood was then working.\(^{(45)}\)

The latter, in the course of his negotiations with Douglas had tendered two prices, £13,917.15.0 and £12,783. The spread was to cover a stretch of two and a half miles which was either to be included in Hood's contract or to be done by the Royal Engineers. It was decided that the Government would 'save' the £1,134.15.0 by employing the 'couriers'.\(^{(46)}\)

With this in view it is interesting to note that the "British Columbian" on August 6 was quoted in the "Colonist" because of an article attacking the policy of Palmer's group:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \(^{(43)}\) Palmer-Fountain, July 10, 1859. (CO 60.2 #18048 p.196)
  \item \(^{(44)}\) Douglas-Colonial Office, May 21, 1863. (B.C. Archives Despatches)
  \item \(^{(45)}\) Colonist, Apr 25, 1863.
  \item \(^{(46)}\) Douglas-Colonial Office, Jan 9, 1864 (B.C. Archives Despatches)
\end{itemize}
"The Royal Engineers from Cook's Ferry to Hood's section have got through except blasting the rocky bluffs and are unable to finish this season with the present force. It would have been wiser to begin at the bluffs and start civilians on parts requiring no such skill. As it is we hope the government sees the propriety of increasing the force and completing the work before winter."(47)

"The discharge of menial services is incompatible with the duties of couriers."

But while Palmer and his party were being thus abused, his colleague Grant was hailed on all sides "for his push and skill."(48) It appears that Grant had won the respect and affection of the colonists in the district where he had been employed. September 14 the following note appeared in the Colonist:

"Grant has just arrived from Cariboo, the scene of his valuable labours in road-making. Quesnelle Mouth to Richfield is done. I need not say more about the qualities except that Grant rode over it sixty-two miles in one day. Therefore a rider can go from Richfield to New Westminster in five days. What a revolution in travel in British Columbia!"(49)

Further details of the public works which occupied the Engineers during 1863 cannot be given. However an event of more historic significance is the change of colonial policy which called Moody back to England and disbanded his men. As the particular tasks upon which they were engaged were finished or abandoned for the season, the sappers and miners were given the alternative of returning with Moody or of remaining in the colony either as settlers on 150 acre

47. Colonist, August 6, 1863.
48. Colonist, August 12, 1863.
49. Colonist, Sept 14, 1863.
grants or as tradesmen and artisans in the public or private
service. (50)

The party of twenty odd who decided to return to
England assembled in Victoria where the colonists paid them
the customary compliments on their "remarkably good conduct,
intelligence and trustworthiness," and bade them God-speed
with light hearts. (51)

Before proceeding to discuss the reasons and circum­
estances of the withdrawal it is only fair to sum up the con­
tribution of the Engineers to the infant colony. They provided
maps and surveys of the main roads of which they themselves
built respectable portions, especially where blasting or
bridge-building were required. Certainly they were more
reliable than Oppenheimer and Dewdney whose left-over tasks
they were required to complete.

Perhaps the principal contribution made by the
Engineers was not in laying foundations and in arousing an
interest in the development of communications. They and
their red coats helped to instil and preserve among an American
population a respect for British institutions and law which it
might be suggested was not without value during the annexation
movement which preceded confederation.

50. Moody-Douglas, Nov 13, 1863 (PRO CO 60.3)
51. Colonist, Nov 13, 1863.
CHAPTER FIVE
THE COURIERS RECALLED

The Colonial Office never placed a high value on the empire building of the Royal Engineers in British Columbia. On the other hand, Colonial Office officials became increasingly anxious about the financial condition of the colony. Even in 1859 and 1860 the drafts of the colonial government on account of the Royal Engineers exceeded parliamentary grants by £22,026 and the accomplishments of the corps seemed scarcely to merit such expenditure. Note the remarks attached by Blackwood to a report made by Palmer and sent in by Douglas on August 18, 1859:

"I know not to what it is owing but this is the first report from an Engineer Officer on the interior of the country which we have received, and this only refers to a section up the Harrison River. The Engineers were sent out to explore, survey, lay out lands, make roads and bridges. They have been for nine months in the Colony and with the exception of laying out some lots of land at Langley and New Westminster (and making only a few rods of road) this is all the produce of their labours."(2)

A few days later Irving added this comment: "I have for some time thought that the labours of the Engineers make very little show."(3)

Time improved the situation not at all. On the 28th of March, 1863 the Duke of Newcastle sent an official note to the Under-Secretary of the War Office:

"The Royal Engineers entail heavier cost than the Colonial Government has shown any disposition to assist materially in providing whilst it is more than appears right to apply to Parliament permanently to bear."(4)

1. Peel-Rogers, Sept 11, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17 #8824)
2. Douglas-Col. Office, Aug 18, 1859. (PRO CO 60.2 #10,048)
3. Ibid.
4. Newcastle-War Office, March 28, 1863 (PRO CO 60.17)
It is possible to connect this opinion with Newcastle's policy of retrenchment forced upon him by a general trade depression, attributed usually to disturbances in the cotton market during the American Civil War.

"These troops," wrote Newcastle,

"have supplied a sense of security in the earlier days of the settlement and have been also available for any public works, but the Colony must now be considered well established and . . . able to provide."(5)

And other members of the Colonial Office were in complete agreement. Irving wrote to Elliot as early as January 1863:

"the opinion has been long entertained at this office that the corps of Royal Engineers in British Columbia is too costly and does not yield commensurate advantages."(6)

In March Irving wrote to Douglas:

"Cannot permit the Colonial Agent General to draw upon the funds of other colonies to provide British Columbia services, or of any other colony which does not provide money for its own wants."(7)

It must have been galling to Douglas to be classed as the poor relation when he himself was only too eager to free the Colony from the encumbering corps. He had predicted before the Engineers arrived:

"I have no doubt that in time and when there is a fixed population having vested rights and interests at stake in the country that a military force may in a great measure become unnecessary."(8)

When that arrival inaugurated his financial troubles he soon made it clear that

"the Colony can and will support all her civil staff . . . but the cost of the military she cannot meet. It alone would absorb the entire revenue."(9)

5. Newcastle-War Office, March 28, 1863 (PRO CO 60.17)
6. Irving-Elliot, Jan 22, 1863 (PRO CO 60.17)
7. Irving-Douglas, March 14, 1863 (PRO CO 60.17 #2390)
8. Douglas-Lytton, Nov 27, 1858 (PRO CO 60.2 #1053)
9. Douglas-Newcastle, July 2, 1859 (B.C. Archives, Despatches)
As time went on and budgets became more and more difficult to balance and as Newcastle attempted to shift more and more responsibility on the Colony, Douglas' conviction that he could dispense with the Engineers' services grew.

The growth was accelerated by the antagonism which early developed between Douglas and Moody. But that is another story which must be postponed for a later chapter.

It is interesting to speculate, however, on any difference in attitude which Douglas might have had if Grant, rather than Moody had been commanding officer. Contrast the following from a despatch to Downing Street with the reference to Moody which follows it:

"... a work of magnitude and of utmost public utility done by Grant and the Royal Engineers with a degree of care and professional ability reflecting the highest credit on that active and indefatigable officer." (10)

"His (Moody's) management as a public administrator in this Colony has not been satisfactory to me. ... I have found it necessary to exercise the utmost vigilance over his public acts." (11)

Douglas' was not the only colonial voice raised in protest against the superfluous and costly ornament. Amor de Cosmos abused the Engineers editorially on March 2, 1863:

"We believe that the establishment of a military-civil force with a military commander and officers to perform civil duties ... was a blunder politically or economically. ... As auxiliaries to assist the civil magistrate in preserving order they strengthened the executive but for all the practical and everyday details of civil affairs they have weakened, lessened the power and influence of the executive and retarded the political progress of British Columbia. The policy of Sir Edward Bulwer-
"Lytton sending out the Engineers to engage in civil duties is a blunder that no practical colonial statesman would ever have committed. . . . A batch of military colonists to British Columbia bound down by the articles of war to the strict rules of military obedience, their mouths gagged, their influence curtailed, human machines fit forces to resist force, but unable to utter a word or influence opinion, or balance parties, at variance alike with civil and military science, a clog to the executive and a drag on the progress of the colony.(12)

The other colonists, not guilty of clogging or dragging at colonial progress were probably indifferent to the change in policy since their interests were more closely bound up with the development of communications rather than with the means toward that end. Ever since 1859, however, the colonial newspapers had received letters from their subscribers complaining of the extravagance and inefficiency of the Engineers.(13) The editors themselves had indulged in a duel over the scandal of the Engineers winter-quartering in New Westminster at full pay - a duel, that is to say, of editorials hurled from capital to capital.(14) Perhaps more significant than the abuse which the colonists furnished during the Engineer era is the lack of any comment in the correspondence columns expressing regret at the disbanding of the corps.

Nor were these expressions forthcoming elsewhere. When Newcastle received a note from the War Office on the tenth of January, 1863, he had his cue.(15) Moody and several of his

13. Ibid. June 6, 1859; August 1, 1859; November 21, 1860.
15. War Office-Newcastle, January 10, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
officers were to complete the usual term of foreign service the October following and the note inquired whether or not steps needed to be taken for their relief. Newcastle decided that even though there might be "some risk in having no military force at all where the San Juan affair was so recent" yet it was "an experiment well worth trying as an encouragement to Volunteers." (16) And at any rate, the Admiralty now had a station at Esquimalt. This weakening of the Colony's defences troubled Carnarvon a little. He suggested that the least safeguard would be to locate the disbanded Engineers along "the frontier or in the neighbourhood of future naval and military posts." (17)

Considerations of this nature disturbed the Colonial Office staff very little but some minor obstacles required attention. What about the fact that the sappers and miners had a six-year term to complete in contrast to the officers' five years? This presented little difficulty; Irving wrote to Elliot that to grant the land at the end of five years instead of six "would be a boon (to the men) whilst to the colony it would give the advantage of being relieved so much the sooner of the heavy cost of their pay." (18)

Would not the sudden withdrawal of these technicians leave a void which the Colony would find difficult to fill? (19) Fortescue suggested that some of the Engineers might be retained for the lands office, say twenty-five of the men. Newcastle agreed to this number plus three officers, in spite

16. Newcastle's note, March 27, 1863 (PRO CO 60.17)
17. Carnarvon-Newcastle, Sept 1, 1858 (PRO CO 60.17)
18. Irving-Elliot, June 20, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
19. Fortescue, May 30, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
of the fact that Lugard was not in favour of separating this particular company of Engineers. (20)

In addition to this provision, Newcastle asked Douglas,

"Would you wish any persons from England to fill the Royal Engineers' services?" (21)

Thus it was planned that no embarrassment should ensue in the colony, but there is no record that either of the proposals was acted upon.

Was Moody to remain in the colony as Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works into which civil appointment he had entered on October 12, 1858? The appointment had not been a permanent one, however, and Newcastle did not consider Moody's continuance in the post necessary. Blackwood felt that

"the Office hasn't sufficiently considered the case of Moody." (22)

Certainly they were not anxious to have him "on their hands again" but achieving the lesser of two evils demanded that they deprive the colony of his services.

"Take care to make the announcement of the termination of Moody's employment as little unpalatable to the Colony as we can," (23)

warned Blackwood, revealing that he considered the appointment of an Englishman, however inefficient, would be held essential by the colonists. And this, even though it was no

20. For they appeared "by all accounts that we receive to have been somewhat over-indulged. Retaining a part of them might only prolong heart-burnings and difficulties." Elliot, July 4, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
21. Newcastle-Douglas, July 20, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
22. Blackwood, April 14, 1863. (PRO CO 50.17)
23. Blackwood, May 29, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
longer necessary that his civil efficiency coincide with military rank and experience.

The Colonial Office was mostly apprehensive of Moody aspiring, Micawber-like, to a position of eminence in the colony. "Be careful," Blackwood cautioned.

"not to employ any terms which will give Colonel Moody the opportunity of offering to stay in British Columbia in the capacity of Chief Commissioner. He is not unlikely to offer to leave the Army if he could be continued in his present office, an arrangement which I judge the Duke would not listen to." (24)

Actually the Duke had already said of Moody:

"I have no doubt he is looking to the Governorship (for which he is not fit) and would be a discontented subordinate to Mr. Douglas' successor." (25)

Elliot too suspected that the bug of ambition had been worrying Moody.

"He has not seemed very contented with his sphere in British Columbia; and to leave him there with nothing but a subordinate Civil Office would be to expose the governor of the colony, either present or future, to the inconvenience of a rival without even the benefit of a very efficient assistant." (26)

No, some sphere with less scope for Moody's inefficiency had to be found.

Notice that both Elliot and Newcastle speak of a successor for Douglas as though his retirement also may have "long been considered in this office." Perhaps Douglas' background as a Hudson's Bay Company employee rather than a Colonial Office servant may have worked to his disadvantage. Perhaps too, Douglas' despatches contained more of his worries.

24. Blackwood, May 29, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
25. Newcastle, April 22, 1863 (PRO CO 60.17)
26. Elliot, April 21, 1863 (PRO CO. 60.17)
and demanded more consideration than was warranted by the relative importance of the colony.

Consider, for example, the Governor's expose of the rations 'racket' as he saw it. He was anxious to place before Newcastle "the numbers of the different persons rationed, especially the wives and families of the Officers." (27) The expenses of the Detachment in 1862 exceeded those of 1861 by £2271. The increase was to be found mainly under the heading, "Provisions and Fuel." In 1862 these rations had exceeded the £6,020 of 1861 by £1,785. Douglas charged this increase to the fact that the number of women and children receiving rations rose from sixty-five to one hundred and fifty and that the number of children had more than trebled during the five year period. "I believe this is out of all proportion to what is authorized by the regulations of the Army." (28) Douglas proposed to discharge all who had large families, giving them the option of remaining in the colony if they so desired.

Elliot's comment on the Governor's expose was:

"The fact that the whole of the numerous wives and families of these Engineers were drawing rations at immense cost to the public whilst the Governor could not obtain so much as even a list of the recipients . . . will not have escaped the attention of Newcastle." (29)

Blackwood too, considered that:

"This report strengthens the propriety of the measure resolved upon by the Duke of Newcastle to withdraw the

27. Douglas-Newcastle, 1863 (PRO CO 60.15 #5956)
28. ibid.
29. Elliot-Fortescue, July 4, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
"Engineers from British Columbia. I understand that shipping has been taken up for the conveyance of the detachment to England." (30)

So Douglas was rid of his "incubus," his "old man of the sea." (31) In accounting for the discontinuance of the relationship between the 'couriers' and the ward of the 'Lady of Property', clearly one cannot adopt the simplification which seemed adequate to Dugald McTavish at the time (and to Judge Howay later). "I dare say," wrote McTavish, "there is some truth in it, as it is shrewdly surmised, that His Excellency has had more to do with the recall of the Engineers home than anyone else." (32) Quite obviously the terminating of Lytton's experiment in empire-building was effected by Newcastle's administration without much deference to colonial opinion.

30. Blackwood-Elliot, June 18, 1863 (PRO CO 50.15 #5956)
31. Douglas-Elliot, April 17, 1863 (P.C. Archives, Douglas Letter Book, p.96)
32. Howay and Scholfield op.cit. p.109
CHAPTER SIX
CIVILIAN ROADS - CARIBOO RUSH - COLONIAL RIVALS

The disbanding and withdrawal of the Royal Engineers from British Columbia marked the end of an era in the development of communications. Before proceeding to a discussion of the period which followed, however, three aspects of the Engineer era, hitherto avoided in the interests of clarity, must be considered. These are: the activities and financing of civilian road-builders, the consequences of the Cariboo rush, and the relationship between Douglas and Moody. Each of these has a bearing upon the condition of the colony on the eve of the new regime.

I

When the onrush of gold-seekers in 1858 necessitated the establishment of communications with the interior, the first important step taken was a civilian effort unique in character. When, on August 19, Douglas applied to Stanley for "even a single company of infantry" for defence purposes in the colony, he referred to this civilian effort as part justification for his request.(1) A beginning, he wrote, was being made toward internal communications; a party of five hundred men were building a road into upper Fraser's River by the valley of the Harrison River. The group to whom Douglas referred were miners who had assembled in Victoria. To them the governor had presented the problem of transporting supplies

1. Douglas-Stanley, Aug 19, 1858. (PRO CO 60 #10,342)
to the gold-fields and directed them to the Harrison-Lillooet route already known to the Hudson's Bay Company for whom Anderson had explored it in the forties.

"The men employed are of many nations - British subjects, Americans, French, Germans, Danes, Africans, and Chinese who volunteered their services immediately on our wish to open a practicable route into the interior of Fraser's River District being made known to the Public. They moreover proffered their services on terms, so peculiar in themselves and so advantageous for the country that it would have been unwise of me to decline them... The cost of the work will, therefore, not be heavy, nor exceed our means of repayment out of the revenues of the Gold District."(2)

Alas for Douglas' expectations. The construction of the trail proved far more expensive than he had anticipated. Howay (3) gives the actual cost as £12,064.17.8 and this evidently did not include the transportation allowance made to the road-builders on the conveyance of their supplies from Victoria to the trail's end, which, after some squabbling, was defined by Douglas at eighteen cents per pound. Probably the rumour reported by the Victoria Gazette was not much out when it suggested seventy-five to a hundred thousand dollars as the total cost.(4)

Unfortunately the quality of the work did not justify the unpremeditated expense. Douglas wrote to Lytton in December:

"Harrison's River road is after an endless deal of trouble and anxiety from the want of honest and able men to carry out the plans of government fairly open to traffic."(5)

2. Douglas-Stanley, Aug 19, 1858 (PRO CO 60 #10,342)
3. Howay and Schofield op. cit. II:89
5. Douglas-Lytton, Dec 24, 1858 (PRO CO 60 #52 B.C. 1527)
A report on the completed project prepared for the Governor suggested that the road might not be "fairly open" very long.

"The bridges constructed by the Road Makers are in general too low. Most of them will be swept away by the freshets."(5)

So inauspiciously was free trade in road-building inaugurated in the infant colony of British Columbia.

The writer of the report just quoted had accounted for the unsatisfactory results on the Harrison-Lillooet by the lack of competent surveyors. That lack was filled shortly by the arrival of the Engineers on whom, according to a special despatch from Lytton to Douglas, the responsibility for all road surveys in the colony was to rest, at least so long as the amount of necessary work remained within their scope.(7) Douglas knew well that private individuals who had been allowed to locate and survey roads had got out of hand in Oregon and he was quite willing to cooperate.(8)

Throughout the Engineer period, however, road-building by civilian contractors, packers and property-holders continued. The two latter groups were drawn into the road-building program usually because government action was too slow to cope with the rapid development of the gold country and because, as Moody himself soon pointed out, the Engineers (9) were incapable of accomplishing the whole of the works contemplated and assigned to them on their departure from

6. McKay's Report to Douglas, Oct 2, 1858 (B.C. Archives)
7. Lytton-Douglas, Oct 16, 1858 (Douglas Letter Book #4 p.8)
9. Douglas-Lytton, Mar 19, 1859 (PRO CO 60.4)
England. Thus short-cuts and makeshift trails early appeared as tributaries to the main routes and on these too, much voluntary assistance was rendered to the Engineers by those who stood to gain most from a speeding-up of operations.

There are many instances to be gleaned from the colonial press of private individuals doing voluntary work and contributing money toward the upkeep or construction of sections of road along the main routes. In 1859 property holders at Douglas contributed amounts varying from $15 to $40 in order that the Harrison-Lillooet wagon road might be completed. (10) And in the same year the citizens of Hope subscribed $2,000 for a trail from Hope to "a point above the Kenyon." (11) In 1861, so it was reported, a party of Frenchmen left Lytton "to cut a new trail from above Lake Le Hache to Beaver Lake cutting off twenty-five miles."

"They cross Fly Creek and have got four bridges to make, doing it for their chances at new houses on the route." (12)

While these men were prompted by hopes of gain, others were spurred on by hopes of averting loss. The packers, for example, who in 1863 repaired the Pemberton Portage which was in a "deplorable state" because of high water, had before them the case of the packer who, waiting for the government to do something, spent $2,000 on feed. (13) Small wonder that the Lytton correspondent wrote to his editor, tongue in cheek:

"Perhaps when the miners get to the Rockies the Government will CONSIDER roads to the Cariboo."(14)

In the same vein he added:

"The system of allowing private individuals to cut trails and make roads for the privilege of charging a toll for a limited period was no good in a British colony; very good for a California, but in British Columbia we must not do things in a hurry, but proceed slowly with due regard to well-established form and precedents."(15)

The privilege referred to, that of turning the public communications system into a network of private enterprises was later granted to the colonists when development seemed possible no other way. It is not surprising however that the innovation should have been resisted, for it was less than a decade since English reformers had waged their battle for the abolition of that very privilege in England.

From the outset the awarding of contracts was a very 'hit and miss' affair. This was due in part to Douglas' lack of experience as a "road-king", in part to his eagerness to have communications opened with the interior, and in part to the spirit of prodigality, the very atmosphere of the gold colony. These had all contributed to the break-down of the road-cutting scheme on the Harrison-Lillooet the season prior to the arrival of the Engineers and that fiasco formed part of the background for the new administration under Moody. Douglas himself had been aware of the weaknesses in his scheme - at least by the end of the season when he wrote to Downing Street the despatch already quoted in which he blamed the

15. ibid.
failure on "the want of honest and able men to carry out the plans of government." (16) He had gone on to say that the miners were very dissatisfied and, if the following from the 'Gazette' is true, this is not to be wondered at.

"A hundred and fifty men are doing nothing because there are as many at work at the further end of the route as can be supplied with provisions." (17)

It might be questioned whether or not even honest and able men could have accomplished much under this arrangement.

At any rate, Gustavus Elin Wright, who later became active as a road contractor, recommended the following spring that the Harrison-Lillooet road be done by contract, suggesting that the road should be divided into sections letting responsible parties bid on each section. (18) He even stipulated the probable total cost, $20,000, and the length of time required for completion, two months.

Whether or not his suggestion carried any weight with Douglas or Moody, it was along the lines he indicated that the development took place. It cannot be said however that the contract arrangements lost their 'hit and miss' character. Yet while it is easy to point to numerous flaws in the organization of the department of lands and works, there is much to exonerate the officials. It is true that the Engineers delayed so long in performing necessary services that even as late as 1860 many of the contracts awarded were

16. cf. p.56 above.
17. "Letter from Port Douglas." Victoria Gazette, Sept 28, 1858
18. Colonist, May 27, 1859
virtually blank cheques. For example, the contract which Dewdney held in the Hope-Similkameen in that year contained no definite provisions as to the details of the route and caused almost endless controversy between Douglas, Moody and the contractor. (19) But the laying out of a capital, the building of barracks, and participation in the Ned McGowan War were unavoidable obstacles; and it was no fault of the Governor's that the Engineers should make blunders because of their lack of familiarity with the country.

Again, the inefficiency of the contracting system can be excused because communications were always slow and often spasmodic and it was no simple task to provide adequate supervision over so vast and so rugged a wilderness. And the situation was further complicated by the fact that an area which one day might clamour for roads might be deserted on the day following. It came to a point where the government simply voted an appropriation to eke out local contributions and left the interested parties to get the most for their money. For example, Douglas requested in 1861 a committee of local citizens to spend an appropriation of $2,000 to the best advantage on a trail from Williams Lake to Quesnelle Forks. (20)

In depending on the self-interest of the colonists as a spur to road development the Governor was not dealing with a non-existent force; he was only mistaken with respect

19. Moody's Ms. #1154, July 6, 17, Aug 23, Oct 9, Nov 9, 13, 21, 27. (Victoria Archives)
to its direction. A casual reading of the colonial press accounts of the activities of the civilian road-builders is likely to leave one with the impression that the men who undertook to build a trail here or a bridge there were public benefactors. In most cases however the illusion is later destroyed by some news item revealing that the benefactor owned a convenient store or hotel, the custom of which certainly did not suffer from its proximity to the trail or bridge.

Typical of many such cases is the dispute which arose between Captain Grant of the Royal Engineers and G. B. Wright as to the course of the road to Williams Lake. Wright advocated abandoning the fur brigade route which proceeded to Alexandria overland for one which followed the river. He claimed early in May, 1863 that his change would save ten miles on the total distance as well as offering the traveller the alternative of three-days-a-week steamship service on the river saving sixty miles land travel. (21) Grant however held out firmly for the old brigade trail. Toward the end of the month when the smoke of battle was beginning to clear it was revealed by the 'Colonist' that Wright had received a half-interest in a ranch at Deep Creek, rumoured to be "the price of taking the road that way." (22) At the same time, Judge Elwyn who owned a third interest in Mission Claim which had cost him $7,000 and which would depreciate if Wright had his

22. Ibid. May 28, 1863.
way, hurried to pour into official ears his advocacy of the old route. But neither his pleas nor that which should have carried more weight, the advice of Grant, were sufficient to defeat Wright. The 'Colonist' had hoped that the Chief Commissioner, to whom the matter was referred, would be guided by the report of Captain Grant who was "probably better qualified than any other officer in the country to determine the matter."(23)

The following spring the Editor was still viewing the situation with alarm and pointing to additional evidence of "trickery, favouritism and maladministration."

"Why did the Government allow the road to be taken that way? Echo still answers why? Why were the contractors allowed to take the road to Soda Creek and start a steamboat on the Fraser? ... Of course the contractors hadn't made any dollars out of the road or steamboat? Oh no! ... During the time the road was being built we heard from reliable sources that the managing contractor expressed to the Williams Lake settlers (on the old trail) his willingness to take the road by way of their ranches in consideration of a small donation of $15,000! How kind! But the next news the strange person labouring so hard for the general weal had become possessed of a half-share in Deep Creek Ranch ... (one of the best stands for business) and not withstanding the many virtues Victoria journals had so frequently found in this gentleman the road eventually took the course by way of Deep Creek. Another thing ... the steamboat returns at such an hour that the miner on his way down can just make the fourteen miles and stay at Deep Creek House."(24)

The editor went on to express a faint hope that the government would

"'keep their weather eye lifting' a little more on the next occasion of giving out contracts for the construction of roads, taking care that the line is fixed by disinterested, competent men and that the clauses in the deed

24. "Jottings on B.C.'s Projected Road." ibid. March 4, 1864
"of contract are stringent enough to prevent the possibility of individuals scheming and tricking to benefit themselves at the expense of the country."(25)

Certainly the country could ill stand the expense. The history of the financing necessary for the construction of the civilian built roads is complex and reflects the mushroom nature of the colony's development and the craze for speculative investment which was strongly prevalent. At the outset Douglas favoured a policy of "pay as you go." His attempts to raise sufficient revenue to pay for the rapidly expanding road system naturally antagonized the colonists. The succession of customs duties, licenses, head tax, mule tax and road tolls both governmental and private, grew from year to year and bore down upon private enterprise like a snow-slide. Or so the tax-payers would have it; but Douglas pointed out that they were not so heavily taxed as their neighbours in Washington territory and by a sleight of hand under cover of total population figures he showed the taxes per head to be reasonable indeed. The success of his device depended upon his including in the calculations of the entire native population whether in contact with civilization or not.(26)

But though he may have deceived his correspondents in England, the colonists were under no illusions as to the reality of their tax burden. On December 10, 1859 Douglas opened fire with a proclamation setting up customs dues on

freight passing through New Westminster. In the preamble it was set forth that it was

"expedient to raise further revenue for the purpose of opening and improving communications, navigation and roads in British Columbia."(27)

At the same time and with the same end in view Douglas conceived a plan of taxation which well-nigh proved his undoing. Writing to the Colonial Office on February 25, 1860 he said:

"Because the Royal Engineers are unable to grapple with the great difficulties or to make any impression on the mountains, therefore I have used civil labour also and failing help from Her Majesty's Government I resorted to assistance by way of a tax of £1 sterling on all pack animals leaving Douglas and Yale. . . . The tax is unpopular but all taxes are and this is urgent."(28)

Urgent or not, it brought as compensation for its lack of popularity only £30 to the colonial revenues (29) and worse still, drew upon the governor a storm of criticism which culminated in a popular agitation for his dismissal.(30)

Amor de Cosmos, one of the committee to choose a spokesman to voice in London the indignation of the taxpayers, devoted considerable space in the 'Colonist' to heated discussion on "the present crisis."(31) On March 10, in an article headed "Mule Tax Tactics" he gloated over the spectacle of the arch-autocrat extricating himself from the "horns of the dilemma." "How to find a pretext for repeal?"

De Cosmos also quoted with some glee the editor of the Port

27. B.C. Papers, part III.
28. Douglas-Downing Street, Feb 25, 1860. (Victoria Archives Desp.)
29. Colonist, March 10, 1860.
Townsend Register whom, he said, "handled our governor without gloves." The diagnosis offered by the American editor was that the levying of the mule tax was "a case of murdering the goose that lays the egg." (32)

But however unwilling to pay a mule-tax, the colonists still clamoured for roads and Douglas turned to other methods of raising the necessary revenue. There is evidence that the Governor applied in March for a loan, presumably intended for public works. (33) And it is probable that permission was refused because the Royal Engineers had been despatched to the Colony for the purpose of developing communications and no additional expenditure was considered necessary. At any rate Douglas applied again for a loan on October 13. (34) Two days later he issued an ordinance establishing tolls at Yale, Douglas, and Hope - that is to say at the point of departure of each of the three routes to the upper country. (35)

In the latter instance it is worth noting that the mule-tax had not applied on the fur-brigade route from Hope and this had drawn criticism upon Douglas for his pro-Company policy. Certainly the proceeds of the £1 mule-tax would have been considerably augmented had the tax been levied on the Hudson's Bay Company brigade of 400 animals which left Hope annually.

33. Douglas-Downing Street, Oct 13, 1860 (Victoria Archives Desp)
34. ibid.
35. Proclamation, October 15, 1860.
The system of private tolls had already been instituted. For example, in the 'Colonist' of September 27, 1860 it was reported that a bridge had been built at Lillooet by private parties and that tolls were being charged. Furthermore, Douglas reported to Downing Street on October 9 that he had given permission while on tour to a private company who proposed throwing "a bridge at their own expense over the Thompson at Lytton to be repaid by tolls." (36) And the Governor considered the scheme "desirous".

During the next three years the policy became more and more "desirous" and a number of bridges, notably Spence's and Trutch's Alexandra bridge, were constructed on this basis. And Wright even collected tolls on the stretch of road from Lillooet to Alexandria. The arrangements seem to have proved profitable for the contractors. It was claimed in 1863 that the returns were as high as 25%. (37)

This section devoted to the activities of civilian road-builders during the Engineer era may be concluded with brief references to the principal contractors and the districts with which their names are connected. Mention has already been made of the activities of G. B. Wright above Lillooet and in Cariboo. Joseph W. Trutch constructed a small sector on the Harrison-Lillooet road as well as the bridge mentioned above. Edgar Dewdney's memorial is the Dewdney Trail from Hope into the Similkameen district. Spence's Bridge commemorates

36. Douglas-Downing Street, Oct 9, 1860. (Victoria Archives Desp)
37. Colonist, Sep 23, 1868.
Thomas Spence who also constructed the wagon-road from Boston Bar to Lytton. Walter Moberly, who later became Trutch's right hand man, had the misfortune in 1862 to go into partnership with Charles Oppenheimer and T. B. Lewis to construct the part of the Cariboo wagon-road from Lytton to Alexandria. Oppenheimer "absquatulated"(38) before the task was finished. William Hood assumed the responsibility and completed all but a small section built by the Royal Engineers.

II

Douglas had written to Lord Stanley in June 1858 that, judging from reports collected from Harrison's River, Hope, Thompson's River and its tributaries, the upper Fraser, and Okanagan Lake, the gold deposits of the mainland were not restricted to the current diggings on the lower Fraser.

"The conviction is gradually forcing itself upon my mind that not only Fraser's River and its tributary streams, but also the Whole country situated to the eastward of the Gulf of Georgia as far north as Johnstone's Straits, is one continued bed of Gold of incalculable value and extent."(39)

Three years proved that the deposits, in extent if not in value, exceeded the Governor's estimate. By 1859 the deposits of the lower Fraser had been "worked out" from the point of view of the get-rich-quick prospectors, although Oriental gleaners remained to extract a modest harvest throughout the gold period. Thirty-five dollar gold and an embarrassing

38. Colonist, Sep 24, 1862.
39. Douglas-Stanley, June 10, 1858. (PRO CO 60)
unemployment problem have, in our own day, recalled into use the despised lower Fraser diggings as provincial government youth training schools.

The gold-seekers of 1859, however, were interested in bigger money and penetrated forty miles beyond Alexandria. Some new finds were made but on the whole 1859 had a sobering effect. Nor did 1860 bring word of the awaited Eldorado. But in 1861 prospectors found their way over the divide from Cariboo Lake to William's Creek where they worked quietly for a season. In spite of their precautions, news leaked out by the end of the season that their deep diggings far surpassed in richness any discoveries made heretofore. The Cariboo rush of 1862 was the consequence.(40)

In its train came new transportation problems and, for the first time, some enthusiasm on the part of the British public. The transportation problems were complicated at the outset by the fact that the winter of 1861-2 was unusually severe. In spite of the fact that the 'Colonist' apologized for the weather on the grounds that it had been "not half as severe as winters in general in Canada and the Northern States,"(41) it was a subject for lamentation that as late as March 6, "communication between New Westminster and the upper country had virtually ceased" and was still impossible.(42) From the middle of January the residents of Yale had been deprived of

40. A colourful account of the William's Creek pioneers is to be found in Lewis Lebourdais' "Billy Barker of Barkerville," B.C. Historical Quarterly, July, 1937. 1:3:165-177.
41. Colonist, March 5, 1862.
42. Ibid.
beef and potatoes while the scarcity of flour had driven the price to 52¢ per barrel. (43) A packer wrote from Lillooet on March 4 that half the pack animals had died and that snow was four feet deep on the portages. (44)

All this helped to bear home to those who were interested in up-country trade that they could not depend entirely upon the Fraser gate-way. The alternative of opening trunk roads from the seaboard to the interior began to receive considerable attention. The enthusiasm of Victoria partisans on behalf of a new route began to outweigh the skepticism of those who placed their faith in New Westminster as the logical trade depot. The embattled editors of the 'Colonist' and the 'Columbian' had found a fine bone of contention; and the public, according to Douglas, began making enthusiastic plans for opening roads "into Cariboo from Bute Inlet and North Bentinck Arm ... entirely at their own expense on condition of the right to levy tolls." (45) The degree of enthusiasm may be measured by the fact that on one occasion three hundred residents of Victoria attended a meeting to hear Alfred Waddington discuss the Bute Inlet route. (46)

Much of the interest was based on a controversy about the respective merits of the Bute Inlet and Bentinck Arm routes. Travelling by the former, one landed at the mouth of the Homathco River on Bute Inlet, followed the river valley

43. Colonist, March 17, 1862.
44. Ibid., March 21, 1862.
45. Douglas-Downing Street, Apr 15, 1862. (Victoria Archives)
46. Colonist, August 27, 1862.
to what is now called Waddington Mountain, whence it was necessary to climb to the Chilcotin plains and so across by the historic Indian route to the Fraser. The only variation in the Bentinck Arm route was that it began at the mouth of the Bella Coola on the North Bentinck Arm of Dean's Channel, whence it proceeded south-east to the Chilcotin plains.

Waddington claimed that his preference for the Bute Inlet route was derived from a systematic study of all the possible coast routes of which he listed a dozen. With less fanfare, numerous packers, presumably not having engaged in any such research, were content to employ the North Bentinck Arm route which had been profitably employed by the Hudson's Bay Company pack trains during the seasons of 1860 and 1861. It was in an effort to solve the problem of finding the most expeditious route that Palmer and his party of Engineers were despatched on an exploratory survey during the summer of 1862.

No engineer, however, could solve the problem of the sharp rivalry which existed between Victoria and New Westminster, based as it was on a struggle for commercial supremacy. When the possibility became apparent that some northern inlet would displace the Fraser as the means of entry to the gold-fields, a correspondent of the 'Colonist' voiced the jubilation of the islanders as he derided "the

47. Colonist, April 13, 1861.
48. Ibid. Feb 8, 1861.
highland home" of Colonel Moody and his staff of "fine old English gentlemen." (50) The correspondent was convinced that the "Forest City" would soon be regarded as a bad investment and a poor pedestal for the dignity of a colonial capital, now that it was so far removed from the gold-fields.

An incident which temporarily solved the route controversy so far as the Fraser and northern inlets were concerned, was the Bute Inlet massacre of April 1864. A party of Waddington's road-builders were attacked and murdered by Indians who sought, according to some, revenge for white contamination of Indian women, or, according to others, the food supplies of the road party. (51) The rivalry, however, between New Westminster and Victoria was by no means quelled as should be evident when the incidents of the years immediately following are passed in review in a later chapter.

Traffic, as it passed up the Fraser from New Westminster, was confronted by a choice of three routes to the interior: the Harrison-Lillooet, Yale-Lytton, and Hope-Similkameen. On behalf of each a terminal 'city' was an advocate and offered inducements. The rivalry between them dates from the first rush of 1858 and had reached, by 1861, a point of "spiteful jealousy" according to the Lillooet correspondent of the 'Colonist'. He viewed with disgust "the pitiful whine of the Hope people" who felt that their interests were being slighted. (52)

50. Colonist, Dec. 27, 1861.
51. Full details in Howay and Schofield op. cit. II:178 ff.
52. Colonist, Aug. 23, 1861.
The Cariboo rush of 1862 with its promise of increased traffic and business added fresh fuel to the fires of rivalry so that the editor of the 'Colonist' was moved to regret the "feeling of rivalry between the different towns in the Colony, . . . not the honest feeling of commercial competition, but one, the object of which is to build up and foster one at the expense and detriment of the others."(53) So eager did the partisans become during 1862 that large advertisements extolling the merits of the Harrison-Lillooet or the Yale-Lytton routes made their appearance in the colonial press. Freight rates, creature comforts, and time-saving features were thrown into the scales in the hopes of tipping it toward either trading depot. Grazing and lardering opportunities were weighed against chances for road-work or even gold-sluicing on route.(54)

The rivalry which has been described was not limited to the lower termini but was shared by the residents of Lillooet and Lytton who seemed to regard any business done in the other town as rightfully their own, filched from them by deceit. After 1862 the venom spread even to the new camps in the Cariboo country; at Lytton the traveller must choose between the brigade trail along the Thompson and the river trail along the Fraser; at Clinton he might turn off toward Davidson's Ranch at William's Lake; having arrived at the lake he might go north-east to Quesnelle Forks or west.

53. Colonist, March 25, 1862.
54. e.g. ibid. April 1, 1862.
to the Fraser river trail and so to Quesnelle Mouth. And in
it all those who stood to gain from his custom were eager
persuaders.

Writing in April 1862, the editor of the 'Colonist'
commented that there were

"four routes to the Northern mines projected and five
companies engaged to construct them. . . . Nearly two
thousand men are engaged on those public works to
complete them in time. . . . In no country on the Pacific
coast can there be such an amount of public enterprise
shown as in British Columbia at the present time. In
proportion to the population it is unequalled the world
over. With a population of five thousand there will
be four lines of road totalling nearly eight hundred
miles in length."(55)

Since the five thousand inhabitants seemed reluctant to
provide for the eight hundred miles of road through taxation,
capital from the outside world was essential. Since 1858,
the primary source of capital had been San Francisco, not
in the form of government borrowings but as capital for
private business enterprises. The only British financial
institution in either colony, the Bank of British North America,
had a single branch at Victoria, which the directors contem­
plated closing because of the paltry profits made, up to and
including 1861. The discoveries of that year altered the
situation considerably.

In London the news of the rich strikes received the
amount of newspaper attention which today would have called
for headlines. Donald Fraser, over-optimistic correspondent
of the London 'Times' and resident in Victoria, wrote glowing

55. Colonist, April 7, 1862.
accounts which were later reprinted in pamphlet form and widely circulated in Canada and Great Britain. (56) Commenting editorially on these accounts the 'Times' said:

"According to our correspondent the gold diggings of British Columbia is a lottery in which there are no blanks; and the prizes are indeed splendid. The law is strong, and public opinion is sound under British rule. British Columbia, thus, we are told, offers a good investment both for labour and capital." (57)

On New Year’s Day, 1862, a letter appeared in the 'Times' which had been offered by a subscriber who had lately received it from Vancouver Island.

"I have told you before of the almost fabulous richness of the mines of British Columbia; recent accounts place this beyond a doubt. Many men are making $100 per day and not a few have picked up one hundred ounces in the same space of time. . . . Want is unknown, provisions are plentiful, and hardships are among things of the past." (58)

The subscriber who supplied the letter guaranteed that his correspondent was "a gentleman possessed of the best means of information, and who is more likely to understates than to exaggerate the case." (59)

The same issue of the 'Times' contained, in the long list of classified advertisements of ocean-going vessels, just two offering passage to British Columbia and those by way of San Francisco. But in mid-January the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company had actually opened an agency in the offices of Macdonald and Company, bankers of Victoria. (60) By March 31,
the 'Times' listed no less than six, several of them sailing to British Columbia direct. (61)

Another company interested in transporting people to the new gold fields had the remarkable project of shipping their clients to Canada and thence overland to the Cariboo. In the face of strong ridicule from those who knew the country, the Overland Transit Company actually entrapped sufficient innocents for one cargo. (62)

The same promoters sponsored the flotation of the first joint-stock bank intended to operate solely in British Columbia and Vancouver Island. On March 3, 1862 an advertisement appeared in the 'Times' offering shares in the

"West-End Joint-Stock Bank (Limited) and Branch Bank for Victoria, Vancouver Island and British Columbia: fully incorporated under the provisions of the Joint-Stock Banking Companies Acts of 1857 and 1858. Capital Half a Million Sterling with power to increase to One Million."

Here the directors of the proposed company were listed and the previous record of the enterprise as a private bank discussed. Then the bait:

"The enormous yield of the gold districts of British Columbia . . . gives full assurance that Victoria and British Columbia are assuming a position in wealth and commercial importance. . . . An opening presents for banking operations of the most profitable nature. . . . 5% per month is readily paid for discount accommodation amply secured. The Government of British Columbia offers 10% on its loans. A very profitable business is to be derived in dealing in bullion. . . . It is estimated that the Bank will fully realize a net minimum profit of 20 to 30 per cent." (63)

62. Colonist, Oct 14, 1862.
Fortunately for British Columbia, the English public did not swallow the bait.

One of the directors of the Hudson's Bay Company, H. H. Berens, wrote a letter to Dallas, son-in-law to Douglas and successor to Sir George Simpson, in which he claimed that the transit scheme was a cruel swindle and the person behind it a one-time bankrupt. (64) Since the same group sponsored the West-End Bank, it is not hard to account for the failure to dispose of the bank shares.

Quite otherwise was the flotation of the Bank of British Columbia which appeared shortly afterwards under more respectable auspices. A group of London merchants and bankers including T. W. L. MacKean, Chairman, and Robert Gillespie, James Anderson, James Bonar, Eden Colville and others, directors, formed a company incorporated under royal charter for the express purpose of supplying banking facilities in Vancouver Island and British Columbia. The first notice of their intention appeared in the 'Times' of April 14, 1862. By September they were able to announce through the same medium that they were

"now prepared to issue letters of credit on the Bank's branch at Victoria, Vancouver's Island, also to purchase and forward bills for collection on the colony where they transact a general banking business." (65)

The relationship of this bank to the development of communications in British Columbia was at once important and

64. Berens-Dallas, May 23, 1862. (HBC Archives, A 7/3 p.104)
continued so throughout the colonial period. At the end of May, 1862, MacKean wrote to Douglas:

"As the bank has been expressly established to develop the resources of British Columbia and Vancouver's Island and an undivided attention and capital will be employed for this purpose I venture to ask your support to render the institution fit for the purposes intended."(66)

Douglas' reaction is noted upon the original letter:

"If the plan be carried out according to the programs in this letter it will prove a great benefit to the colonies on this coast. Both capital and labour are essential toward their development and should this Bank supply the much needed facilities - the Directors will deserve the support of the Government and of a grateful community."(67)

Much evidence may be found in the manuscript files of the Victoria Archives that the Bank of British Columbia acted as banker for the road-builders, especially G. B. Wright. The method employed was: Wright built a piece of road, received an inspector's certificate, presented it at the Bank which advanced him credit thereon (at the rate, usually of 18%). the bank then forwarded the certificate to the Secretary of the Colony for payment. Very often the amount would be added to the already considerable government overdraft.(68) In addition the Bank of British Columbia acted as fiscal agent for the government and disposed of the two £100,000 road loans on the London market.(69)

Thus the chain of British interest was not broken by the departure of the Engineers in the year following the

67. Ibid.
68. In March 1865: $168. $15. 69 (Victoria Archives F110:7)
69. Walker-Col.Secty, August 25, 1862. (F109:1)
advent of the Bank. The conflict between the administration and its creditors replaced that which had existed between Moody and Douglas. But before going on to discuss the developments of the post-Engineer era, this latter relationship may here be discussed and dismissed.

III

In a previous chapter references were made to the relationship between Governor Douglas and Colonel Moody of the Royal Engineers. This is an aspect of the history of the colonies from 1858 to 1863 which has not been discussed hitherto at any length. Enough has been said above in connection with the withdrawal of the Engineers to indicate that the relationship in 1863 was not cordial. (70) To understand the hostility one must consider the backgrounds of the two personalities, alike autocratic, but with divergent theories of governmental administration.

Douglas, who was Moody's senior by ten years, was probably born in Scotland in 1803, the son of a well to do Scottish family with interests in the sugar trade in British Guiana. Moody, the son of a colonel of the Royal Engineers, was born in barracks at St. Anne's in the Barbados and reared for the army.

Douglas entered the service of the North West Company at the age of sixteen, having received a sound elementary education in Scotland. His first winter was spent at

70. Chapter V, p.48.
Fort William but in the summer of 1820 he was transferred to Isle a la Crosse. After the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies in 1821, Douglas rose steadily through the ranks, spending most of his career in New Caledonia and on the Columbia.

Moody, on the other hand, had a wide experience in many lands. Invalided home to England in 1837 after an attack of yellow fever, he toured the United States in the company of Sir Charles Felix Smith. On his return he was for a short time professor of fortifications at the military academy at Woolwich. In 1841 he was appointed governor of the new colony of the Falkland Islands and, according to his biographer, coped with a state of anarchy and displayed "great wisdom and moderation." (71) After an eight year term he returned to England and was employed on special duty by the Colonial Office, until in 1854 he was sent to Malta. After a year of service he had his second bout of fever and was again invalided home. Upon his recovery he was appointed Commandant of the Royal Engineers in North Britain.

Douglas' success in his chosen sphere depended upon his business skill and resource and his capacity for leadership. He was accustomed to the financial code of a corporation devoted to earning profits for its shareholders. This may explain his devotion during the early part of his administration to the principle of 'pay as you go'. Colonel

Moody was steeped in the traditions of the British Army and had already in 1858 spent a decade in the service of the Colonial Office. We are informed that he was "a skilled draughtsman and delighted in architecture."(72) But fundamentally he was a soldier and accustomed to the financial policy of government departments, which means making plans, drawing up budgets and then looking for the money.

Such were the two men brought together in the gold colony. To their widely differing backgrounds add the fact that both were accustomed to and expected to exercise authority, and the hostility which developed between them is understandable.

Douglas was in a measure foisted on the Colonial Office without having served any apprenticeship and was therefore something of an outsider. Further, he was not personally known either to the permanent staff of the Colonial Office or to the two Colonial Secretaries under whom he served. Neither was Moody a 'bona fide' Colonial Office man, although a bond had long existed between the Royal Engineers and the Colonial Office. But he had the benefit of a longer experience and personal acquaintanceship in London.

The relations between Douglas and the Colonial Office did not improve as he became better known to them. In December 1858 Blackwood spoke of Douglas as "not a man to express exaggerated opinions,"(73) and the Colonial Office at first

73. Note, Blackwood-?, re despatch, Douglas-Lytton, Dec 14, 1858 (PRO CO 60 #1067:51)
gave Moody to understand that they placed considerable confidence in the Governor. (74) But even in the spring of 1859 officials at the Colonial Office were beginning to worry about Douglas. "If not checked, he will get himself and us into great scrapes," wrote Lytton. (75)

By 1863, the opinion of Douglas held in London was that he frequently took important steps on his own responsibility, and when required to explain, was guilty of "shuffling". (76) The article on Moody in the Dictionary of National Biography suggests that Moody's record in the Falkland Islands gave him a high rating at the Colonial Office. Whether this is true or not, Moody had not even embarked for British Columbia before Colonial Office notations labelled him one "always in a hurry and frequently wrong," and consequently not to be trusted. (77) After his arrival in the colonies his haphazard returns and correspondence appear to have earned him the contempt of those who were forced to interpret the letters he wrote "more from impulse than from reflection." (78) The opinions of Moody held by Newcastle and his aides at the time of the recall of the Engineers have been discussed above. (79)

75. Lytton's comment, April 1859, to Carnarvon's and Blackwood's notes on a despatch, Douglas-Lytton, Feb 7, 1859. (PRO CO 60.3)
76. Note, Elliot-Newcastle, re despatch, Douglas-Newcastle, Jan 10, 1863. (PRO CO 60.15 #2135)
77. Note, Blackwood-Carnarvon, re letter, Moody-Carnarvon, Oct 23, 1858 (PRO CO 60)
78. Note, Irving-?, re letter, Moody-Douglas, Aug 8, 1859. (PRO CO 60)
79. cf. Chapter V: p.32.
The same haphazard approach to business which had annoyed the men at the Colonial Office was one of the bones of contention between Moody and Douglas. Moody had come to the colony with a good opinion of Douglas and Douglas had been told that he could rely entirely on Moody. (80) It was unfortunate, therefore, that Moody should have found it necessary to countermand Douglas' choice of a capital-site so soon after his arrival in the colony. This matter of the replacement of old Fort Langley by New Westminster has already been discussed. It was not the only occasion on which Douglas' business sense conflicted with Moody's instinct for defence possibilities. A year later the selection of the site for Princetown (81) prompted Douglas to complain to Downing Street that Douglas was undermining his authority and trespassing upon his jurisdiction. Douglas, seeing the necessity for a supply depot across the mountains from Hope, and believing, as he later claimed, that Moody was absent from Hope on road inspection duty, instructed O'Reilly, magistrate at Hope, to choose a site at once, the matter being urgent. At the same time a copy of Douglas' instructions was mailed to Moody at Hope, and the latter not being absent, received it simultaneously with O'Reilly's departure upon a mission which plainly fell within Moody's province.

Evidently he did not forbid O'Reilly to carry out

80. Lytton-Douglas, Oct 18, 1858. (Victoria Archives Despatches)
81. At the end of the Hope-Similkameen trail. Now called Princeton, B. C.
the Governor's instructions, but instead wrote to Downing Street, complaining of Douglas' usurpation and condemning O'Reilly's site on military grounds. The despatch was forwarded through the Governor who does not appear to have commented thereon to the Colonial Office until challenged to explain his actions.

His letter of explanation, composed in January 1861, admits that the matter of choosing a site might properly have been attended to by Colonel Moody, although the only town site chosen by other than "local circumstances of necessity and convenience" had been New Westminster. (82) But Douglas pleaded urgency and misunderstanding as to Moody's whereabouts. He could not resist adding, with respect to Moody's theories of town location:

"People are not generally disposed to perch their houses on bleak mountains and inaccessible cliffs simply because they happen to be good military positions." (83)

One effect of this transatlantic tattling aggravated by slow communications was undoubtedly to reopen wounds in the pride so dominant in the personality of each man, and in the case of Douglas, must have underlined a preference in his mind for a civilian surveyor such as he had had in Pemberton, whose ideas with relation to town sites and town planning would more nearly coincide with his own.

And in many other respects Douglas was out of

82. Douglas-Colonial Office, Jan 28, 1861. (Victoria Archives Despatches #10)
83. ibid.
sympathy with Moody. It must have outraged Douglas' sense of order to have Moody complain to him of not receiving explicit instructions when Moody's own books and returns left a great deal to be desired. (84) Long after Moody had left the colony, little details of the business of his department required to be elucidated and considerable correspondence was maintained as late as 1868. (85)

While Moody frequently excused his clerical shortcomings on the grounds of press of outside work, he yet found time to indulge his enthusiasm for architecture, and salved his pride by decorating the barracks grounds. (86)

One incident of 1850 seems to reveal Moody as deficient in judgment. Evidently he was approached as a prospective member of the New Westminster municipal council. Douglas felt it necessary to write to him that on no account must Moody accept, since it would prevent him from acting as an impartial umpire. (87) It is possible that Moody had had no intention of joining the council; but in any case he must have been wounded by Douglas' prohibition.

A good deal has been said about the poor opinion entertained of both Douglas and Moody by the Colonial Office officials, much of which arose from the failure of both men...
to meet the requirements of the home authorities in the matter of returns and explanations. Something is to be said on the other side. A good deal of confusion arose, and no doubt the relationship between Douglas and Moody suffered from the failure of the Colonial Office to define exactly the individual powers of the Governor and his subordinate. For example, at the time of the San Juan incident, Moody complained vigorously that he had not been granted the confidence commensurate with his position. It is to be noted here that Douglas had before, and did often later, claim to have taken Moody into his complete confidence. (88) But at the time of the San Juan incident Douglas was "unaware that Moody had the authority on Vancouver Island while resident in British Columbia." (89)

Probably this indecision about function contributed to the confusion which arose with respect to the particular departments which were to be charged with expenditures. An item entered one year against military roads would appear later as a civil expenditure. (90) Or again, the two men reporting separately were likely to describe the same transaction in different terms. These are evidences not only of lack of cooperation between Moody and Douglas but perhaps of the haphazard nature of colonial administration at this period. (91)

88. Douglas-Colonial Office, Feb 5, 1859. (Victoria Archives)
89. Douglas-Colonial Office, Jan 28, 1861. (ibid.)
90. Douglas-Colonial Office, Aug 2, 1862. (ibid.)
91. It has been suggested that Colonial Office-British Columbia relationships during this period might well be the subject of a thesis.
The climax of these misunderstandings became almost a 'cause célèbre'. It concerned £10,704.16.7. Part of this amount represented the cost of the barracks at New Westminster. The following notes by Newcastle and Elliot on a despatch are typical of a whole series of correspondence and comments.

"If the £10,700 has been spent by Colonel Moody on 'Barracks' it would be hard to charge that sum to the colony. But why were 'Barracks' last year called 'Roads and Bridges'? Colonel Moody could have had no power to order them without authority from the War Office and the Governor could have had no power to order them if they were to be charged to the vote of Parliament."(92)

"Now Douglas says the work is military."(93)

Recriminations between Douglas and Moody were not restricted to details of administration but extended to the selection of subordinate personnel especially at the time of Moody's withdrawal. The return home of the Colonel necessitated the appointment of a new commissioner of lands and works. Douglas' choice fell upon Captain Luard, one of Moody's subordinates, and he wrote to London recommending the appointment. Not until November 11, however, did he inform Moody of his desire to retain Luard. Moody resented Douglas' neglect of the ordinary courtesy of consulting Luard's commanding officer before making the recommendation to the Duke of Newcastle. He asserted that the position in which he had been placed was "very embarrassing and most repugnant to my position and all my desires. . . . I wish

92. Note, Newcastle-?, re Douglas-Colonial Office, Mar 27, 1863 (PRO CO 60.15 #2155)
93. Note, Elliot-Lords Commissioners, Douglas-Colonial Office, April 2, 1863 (PRO CO 60,15)
you had consulted me." (94) This letter was composed on the
day before Moody and his officers were to sail for home. A
decision was required and Moody's was as follows:

"I do not see how I can take on myself to leave an
officer behind for a redelivery and to assume charge
of my responsibility as Commander in Chief in discrim­
inating duties and recognizing the relative claims
and fitness of officers." (95)

While still at sea Moody prepared copies of the correspondence
relating to Luard's appointment, adding a note explaining his
position and forwarded the documents to the Colonial Office.
"The situation," remarked Irving, "is somewhat embarrassing;
the Duke's despatch appointing Luard is signed and would
have been sent. . . . No use sending, because Luard has
arrived in England." (95) Douglas was blamed for his irregular
procedure and the injustice to Moody. Luard's appointment
was cancelled and the Governor's second choice appointed
instead. Thus on the basis of a misunderstanding, another
Englishman, Joseph William Trutch, began a career which
culminated in his appointment as Lieutenant Governor, July
1, 1871.

When Moody returned to England in 1863 he was
fifty years old. Douglas was sixty years old when he retired
the following year. Neither man entered prominently into
public life again. Moody, after serving briefly with the
Royal Engineers in England, was promoted to the rank of
Major-General and retired on full pay. He died March 31, 1887.

94. Moody-Douglas, Nov 13, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
95. ibid.
96. Note, Irving-Rogers, Dec 31, 1863, on Moody-Colonial Office,
Dec 19, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
The circumstances of Douglas' retirement from the service of the Colonial Office are not clear-cut. Holding as he did two separate commissions, one for Vancouver Island and one for British Columbia, and with a background of service in the fur-trade, Douglas was something of an anomaly in the colonial service. No specific term of office was included in the terms of either commission. But he had been promised by Lytton, in a confidential letter, a six-year term in British Columbia. (97) By November 1863 Douglas had completed two six-year terms as Governor of Vancouver Island; but he had been Governor of British Columbia only five years.

Douglas was least popular in the latter colony and it was from thence that memorials originated demanding a new governor and complaining of "want of surveys, the expensive and inefficient roads, the management of the lands," and so on. (98) Another factor was Newcastle's plan to establish separate administrations for the two colonies based on his belief that the mainland colonists were not yet capable of operating representative institutions efficiently. (99)

It has also been pointed out earlier that a renewal of either commission does not seem to have been contemplated at the Colonial Office. (100) At any rate there is no doubt that by 1863 Douglas was through even had he desired the extension of either commission. The following extract from

97. Lytton-Douglas, July 16, 1858 (British Columbia Papers I:43)
98. Newcastle's Minute, Mar 27, 1863. (PRO CO 60, 17)
99. Newcastle-Douglas, June 15, 1863. (Union Papers II:2)
100. Chapter V, p.52.
a Colonial Office memorandum says much and implies more:

"I wrote privately to Mr. Douglas by the last mail telling him that I should soon deal with the subjects treated of in this Minute, and that I should when my plans were complete relieve him of both Governments. I made this as little unpleasant to him as I could, and told him that when I wrote to him officially I would take every care to prevent his enemies having a triumph over him."(101)

Within the next few months Douglas received a knighthood, complimentary addresses from the citizens of Victoria, and even a banquet in New Westminster. On April 13, 1864, four months before the expiration of the six-year term Lytton had promised him, Douglas made his exit from public life.(102)

101. Newcastle's Minute, Mar 27, 1863. (PRO CO 60.17)
102. A recent acquisition of personal letters to the Victoria Archives now makes possible a study of Douglas' reactions to the political events of the twelve years during which he resided in Victoria as a private citizen.
Governor Douglas opened the first session of the first legislature in the mainland colony of British Columbia on January 21, 1864. The change in the constitution of the colony's government represented by the establishment of this legislature resulted from an order which Douglas received from the Duke of Newcastle on June 11, 1863. It will be remembered that the original act setting up the government of British Columbia (1) had contained a provision for some form of representative government at a later date. (2) In the interim the petitions of the colonists which had sought the removal of Douglas had also aimed at the securing of representative institutions. By 1863 these petitions had increased in number and urgency.

The council which Douglas assembled at Newcastle's behest consisted of nine officials and five elected members representing as many districts roughly mapped out by Douglas. (3) In the course of his opening address, the Governor gave the members the following suggestions concerning public works:

"It is superfluous to urge by any further considerations the vigorous prosecution of public works of such acknowledged merit and utility, but I wish on this occasion to place on record my deliberate opinion of the vital importance of such works to the colony. I wish to impress upon your attention that no measure

1. 21 & 22 Victoria C 90, August 2, 1858. (B.C. Papers 1:1)
2. ibid. Clause III.
3. For details see Sage op. cit. pp 328-9.
"can be more fruitful of prosperous results than that of improving the thoroughfares until the railway and locomotive supersede the existing cumbrous modes of conveyance on all main lines of road from the coast to Alexandria, whence there is a practicable water communication through the valley of the Fraser River to the Rocky Mountains, a route which, moreover, presents so many facilities of ground and general position that there is every probability of its becoming the main line of overland communication with Canada."(4)

On May 20, 1864 Douglas was succeeded by Frederick Seymour. The sentiments with respect to the development of communications which had been expressed by Douglas were enthusiastically echoed by his successor.

Seymour is something of a mystery. It is known that between 1843 and his arrival in British Columbia in 1864 he held offices in Tasmania, Antigua, Nevis and British Honduras, having been most recently lieutenant-governor of the latter colony. Particulars of his family and early training are not available within British Columbia bibliography. Nor is it anywhere suggested that he was chosen for his British Columbia post on grounds of special fitness.(5) Presumably of the unattached Colonial Office servants, he had most claim to the position. There was nothing of the innovator about Seymour. He was not likely to do what Douglas had frequently done - act first and then look for sanction from the Colonial Office. He was more likely to counsel the home government against change. Such was the man into whose care fell Douglas' road plans.

4. Excerpt from Governor's Speech at opening of Legislative Council, New Westminster, Jan 21, 1864. (PRO CO 60.18 Vol I)
5. A legend that a royal bar-sinister looms in his background exists on somewhat flimsy evidence.
At the outset he promised well. Proroguing the legislature in May, Seymour said:

"I look upon the facilitating (of) access to the rich gold fields of the North East as at present the paramount duty of the Governor and council of this colony." (6)

This enthusiasm for road-building in the colony had as its counterpart in London a willingness on the part of capitalists to invest their money in the development of the mainland. The Bank of British Columbia advanced road building funds in the form of overdraft to an extent which seriously embarrassed the bank when the government failed to reduce the debt according to its promises. (7) £100,000 worth of bonds were floated in the London market, the proceeds of which were intended for a road building program. (8) Seymour had even proposed, in the speech already quoted, to anticipate the proceeds of the loan by diverting a part of the current revenue for urgent public works. The Colonist was grateful for Seymour's enthusiasm but advised caution, stressing that all

"should regret exceedingly that money voted for specific purposes should be diverted from these objects and applied to others however important." (9)

The task of carrying on Moody's work was entrusted to two men, Joseph Trutch and Walter Moberly. Both had been employed previously by the government as private contractors, and had built sections of the Cariboo Road. (10)

8. Elliot-Hamilton, May 25, 1863. (PRO CO 50.18)
9. Colonist, May 9, 1864.
10. Trutch as Surveyor-General of B.C. and Moberly his assistant. Whether they were also appointed for V.I. at first is not clear.
Before describing the operations of this new civilian era, it should be made clear to what extent the transportation system of the colony had developed. The main route of travel by 1864 was by steamboat to Yale and thence by the Cariboo Road to the mines. The competing routes via Harrison-Lillooet, Hope-Similkameen, and Bentinck Arm had assumed a subsidiary position and were not to challenge the Cariboo route successfully during the remainder of the colonial period. The Cariboo Road itself extended as a wagon road as far as Quesnelmouth. The main object which presented itself in the spring of 1864 was the extension from Quesnelmouth and the improvement of the existing stretches which had been hurried through during the 'rush' seasons. (11)

Now the burden of maintenance began to assume proportions which inhibited further construction.

The principal achievements of the 1864 season were the improvement of roads in the New Westminster district, (12) extensive repairs to the Hope-Yale, Yale-Lytton-Clinton roads, (13) the extension of the Cariboo wagon road above Alexandria, (14) and the construction of new trails, bridges and sleigh-roads.

11. Birch-Colonial Office, July 9, 1866. (Victoria Archives) At the beginning of 1864 the Cariboo wagon road to Alexandria was still 120 miles from the mines. The rest of the distance was useless for pack animals because of scarce grazing. "In fact the $200,000 already spent on the road might have just as well been thrown away."
12. Chief Comm.-Col Secty. Aug 31, 1864; Sep 9, 1864; Journal of the Legislative Council, Mar 1, 1864 (Hereafter JLC) (Victoria Archives)
13. JLC, Mar 8, 1864; Chief Comm.-Col Secty. May 9, 1864. (ibid)
14. Colonist, Apr 25, 1864; Aug 1, 1864; Nov 9, 1864. Chief Comm.-Col Secty. June 14, 1864; June 22, 1864; Aug 6, 1864; Aug 9, 1864. (Victoria Archives, Lands and Works)
to give access to the mines at Richfield, Camerontown and in the Cottonwood district. (15) The work performed in the New westminister district was only part of the ambitious program (16) which the Council had outlined under the stimulation of a change in governor; but it cost them $100,000. Another $40,000 went to repair the Yale and Hope roads - the latter principally over the Cascade Mountains. (17) But the largest item, $200,000, was spent on the Cariboo road. (18)

Nor did this burst of spending end there. Another $60,000 for miscellaneous roads and route reconnoitring (19) brought the total to $400,000 instead of the projected $340,000. (20) An additional drain upon the budget was the $80,000 necessary in bringing to justice those Indians responsible for the Bute Inlet massacre. (21) The sum which had been set aside for the proposed lightship at the mouth of the Fraser and part of the allocation for steamship service with San Francisco had to be diverted for this emergency. (22) All in all the prodigality of 1864 meant that the $500,000 borrowed through 6% bonds and intended

15. Chief Comm.-Col Secty. June 27; Aug 6,1864. (Victoria Archives)  
16. JLC. Mar 1,1864. (ibid)  
17. ibid. Mar 8,1864.  
18. ibid. Apr 1,1864.  
20. Colonist, May 9,1864.  
21. Seymour-Cardwell, Aug 30; Sep 9; Sep 19; Oct 4,1864. JLC. Dec 12,1864.  
22. (Victoria Archives Envelope D 99)  
23. Birch-Colonial Office, Jul 6,1866. "Of $100,000 partly spent the colony only received the benefit of $60,000". Indian disturbances $19,000 - one fifth of entire revenue - loss of $10,700 for "useless military huts."
for the 1865 program emerged pruned down to $368,500.

The possession of even this depleted balance encouraged a continuation of the ambitious program of 1864. The trend of 1865 construction was toward the Kootenay where a rush was in progress at Wild Horse Creek. This meant the useless extension of the Hope-Similkameen pack trail begun by Dewdney and Moberly, continued by the Royal Engineers in 1860, and now pushed 291 miles through to the Kootenay by Dewdney who was government superintendent in charge of a mixed gang of Chinese and white labourers. (24)

Gold strikes in the Big Bend country encouraged the transformation of the trail from Cache Creek to Savana's Ferry into a wagon road. The contract was given in December and the work rushed to completion by April 1866. (25) The Cariboo wagon road was extended into Cottonwood district on its way into William's Creek. (26) The section further on between Richfield and Camerontown was also widened by Malcolm Munro. His efforts, according to the 'Colonist', proved a great boon, especially to drunkards who had previously risked their necks negotiating between shafts, flumes and ditches. (27) The other road disbursements were directed toward reopening an inexpensive trail into Bridge Creek, working on Douglas'
New Westminster-Yale road, undertaken in conjunction with the Western Union Telegraph Company whose line followed this route, (28) exploring for and building Shuswap Lake-Columbia River trails, and repairing existing roads and building sleigh roads from Alexandria. (29)

Plans at the beginning of the year had called for a road budget of $382,699. (30) During the year road toll revenue dropped $45,000 below the estimate and the gold export revenue was $70,000 less than the amount expected. (31) This sharp decline in revenue was accounted for partly by gold discoveries in Montana which reduced the Kootenay population from 2,000 to 300. (32) Consequently the close of the season found the proceeds of the 1864 loan exhausted and the colony with an overdraft in the Bank of British Columbia for the first time since 1860.

We have seen that Seymour began his administration as a disciple of Douglas, the 'Road King'. By the spring of 1865, however, the financial straits of the colony began to worry him. But he still felt that it was absolutely necessary to proceed with the development of communications, especially in the direction of a British route to the Kootenay goldfields. (33) Accordingly the construction during the first

28. Birch's Speech at opening of Legislative Council, Jan 18, 1866.
29. Colonist, Jan 4; Aug 15; Sep 10; Sep 14; Dec 15; Dec 18, 1865.
30. Palmer, P. Fiscal History of B. C. p. 155
31. JLC. Jan 15; Apr 5, 1866.
32. Birch-Colonial Office, July 9, 1866. (Victoria Archives)
33. Seymour-Colonial Office, May 10, 1865 (ibid)
half of the year had his sanction.

In August Seymour left the colony to visit in England, "on six months leave to consult with the Imperial government on the union act." (34) The six months stretched to fifteen before he again took over the administration of the colony. (35) During his sojourn in England Seymour's characteristic distrust of unions in general was replaced on at least one occasion by a spirit of adventure. On January 27, 1866 at the age of of forty-six he abandoned single blessedness at the side of Miss Stapleton. But even on his honeymoon he was concerned with the affairs of British Columbia. In February he wrote from Paris what was, even for him, a long despatch - about thirty pages - in which he discouraged the proposed union of Vancouver Island and the mainland colony. (36)

Reports of the colony's credit and the deplorable state of finances were making apparent the fact that the road-building program had been over optimistic. Seymour now began to cast about for a defence of his own policy. On July 9, 1866 he wrote to Downing Street:

"It is not within my province now to refer to the road policy of the previous administration or to question the propriety of the construction of two rival roads through wild and thinly populated country. . . . These have received Her Majesty's Government's approval but have entailed on the revenue a heavy and in part unnecessary annual charge amounting to £13,500 for maintenance and interest on the debt contracted for their construction." (37)

34. Colonial Office Memo. (PRO CO 60.5)
35. A.N. Birch who had been Colonial Secretary of B.C. was acting-Governor, during Seymour's absence.
36. Seymour-Cardwell, Feb 1866. (PRO CO 60.5 #1914)
37. Seymour-Colonial Office, Jul 9, 1866 (Victoria Archives)
Returning to the latter half of 1865 after Seymour's departure, it should be realized that while Birch was in charge on the spot, Seymour, well regarded as he was, exercised considerable influence through the Colonial Office. This is evidenced by the large number of his despatches to Downing Street during the period of his leave. His remote control, though checked by his natural caution, was less vacillating than the control he exercised in the colony under the fire of colonial critics.

But Birch was more than Seymour's rubber stamp and had his own ideas about the development of communications. In 1864 he had taken a definite interest and was on several occasions quoted in the 'Colonist' as favouring a British route to the Kootenays. (38) To Birch the progress of the colony was more important than the effort to keep free of debt; for he felt that only through that progress could the wealth of the colony's resources be realized. Consequently the policy of his administration was directed toward encouraging a fixed population and a colonial economy based on agriculture as well as mining.

The further development of communications was a vital part of this policy. Of course the activities of the first few months had already been dictated by Seymour. But in December Birch authorized the construction of the wagon road from Cache Creek to Savana's Ferry on his own initiative:

and this in spite of the fact that in October the colony had been forced to pay the £10,704.16.7 covering the Royal Engineers' buildings. (39) Payment of the account had been postponed continually since Moody's departure. (40)

Mention has already been made of the precarious financial condition of the colony at the close of 1865. It was Birch's task, because of this condition, to reconcile the need for economy with his ambitions for the future of the colony. So at the beginning of 1866 the mainland colony found itself obliged to cut its coat according to its cloth. In his speech to the legislature Birch, after reviewing with pride and satisfaction the work of the previous year had announced:

"The estimates contemplate a large outlay in the construction of roads and trails to facilitate access to the new mining districts of the Columbia. ... An appropriation will also be asked for opening a route to the newly discovered gold diggings on the upper branches of the Bridge River."

(41)

For the first time in the history of the colony the road estimates were slashed during the budget discussions. Of the total estimated expenditure, $723,356, only $125,500 was to be spent on roads, and that moreover, was earmarked for repairs only. This reluctance of the legislature was in harmony with the views expressed by a Colonial Office despatch which reached Birch prior to the opening. (42) One feels that

39. Seymour-Colonial Office, Oct 8, 1864. (Victoria Archives)
40. e.g. marginal notes by Elliot, Apr 2, 1863 on despatch #2135 (PRO CO 60 50.15)
41. Speech of A.N. Birch at opening of Legislative Council, Jan 18, 1866.
42. Secty of State-Birch, Oct 31, 1865. (British Columbian, Feb 10, 1866)
Seymour might have dictated or at least inspired it. Birch was warned that expenditures must be reduced to an amount based on the revenues of the last two years and that new roads and works must be postponed.

Reluctantly Birch set out upon a policy of retrenchment. (43) The works for the year were confined to the maintenance of the routes already established. Bridges were completed on the Shuswap-Columbia trail, a government promise of the previous year; (44) fallen timber was cleared in the wake of forest fire on the Hope-Similkameen trail; (45) ten miles of the road over the divide from Seymour was cleared of snow from four to twenty feet deep in June; (46) and so the slim budget allowance was spread over the colony where it was most serviceable or perhaps where complaints were loudest.

But Birch was not able to turn his back rigidly on progress. If he could not build the new trails he felt to be so necessary, he could plan for the future. He was impressed strongly with the desirability of an all-British route across the continent (47) and during the season he authorized the continuance of the work of the exploratory survey parties (48) which, during the previous year had

43. Birch-Cardwell, July 14, 1866. (Victoria Archives)
44. Moberly-Trutch, Apr 24, 1866. (Victoria Archives E 1145b)
45. see Thrupp, S. A History of the Cranbrook District in East Kootenay. (U.B.C. M.A. Thesis, Apr 1929)
46. Colonist, June 12; June 15, 1866.
47. Birch's speech to Legislative Council, Apr 9, 1866.
48. Jenkins, Turnbull, Cottonwood Smith, Weaver, Moberly, Green, Percy, Allison.
located mountain passes(49) and were now weighing the merits of the possible routes through the ranges to the east.(50) By the end of the year the choice had narrowed down to what was later named Eagle Pass,(51) although alternate routes further south were still under consideration.

This enthusiasm of Birch's for a road connection with British territory to the east was not original. Douglas made a trip early in 1862 into the upper Fraser River district and returned to write a glowing despatch to Downing Street in which he recommended the building of roads to open up the country beyond Alexandria.(52) He based his recommendations partly on a conviction that the cost of mining operations would be lessened and the progress of settlement greatly facilitated; and partly on the belief that such construction would have an

"important bearing on the future condition of the colony as part of an overland communication with Canada by a route possessing the peculiar advantages of being secure from the Indian aggression, being remote from the United States frontier and traversing country exclusively British, and because of the character and resources of the country will be the seat for a large population."(53)

Douglas was optimistic enough to believe that all that was necessary on the part of the government was the taking of the first step and that the public, eager to exploit the new

49. Hoerly-Trutch, Sep 10, 1865. (Victoria Archives)
50. Hoerly-Trutch, Nov 15, 1866. (Ibid)
51. Colonist, July 14; July 31, 1866.
52. Douglas-Colonial Office, Oct 27, 1862. (Victoria Archives)
territory would do the rest. Furthermore that first step should not, in his opinion, cost more than £50,000 and would arouse "surprise that the attempt was not sooner made." His advocacy was of no avail and the "glory of the achievement" which he had hoped would be "remembered as one of the trophies of your Governor's administration" was not for him.

For although the British Government had, in 1857, been interested enough in the project to send a survey party under Palliser to locate passes through the Rocky Mountains from the east, (54) Douglas could now arouse no enthusiasm in England. But he did arouse enthusiasm in the colony. An editorial in the 'Colonist' of May 16, 1863 made an eloquent appeal urging the colony not to be content until at least a good wagon road, if not a railway, and also a line of telegraph connected them overland with the British provinces. Public interest mounted, stimulating Birch's efforts, and on the eve of union had reached a point where connection with the East became the keynote of the period to follow. (55)

54. Quarterly Review, Jan & Apr 1861.
In the 'honeymoon despatch' to which reference has been made in the previous chapter, Seymour briefly deferred to the British conviction held since the erection of the gold colony that imperial as well as colonial interests would best be served by a union of the mainland and island colonies.

"I should . . . see to the strengthening of British authority, British influence and British power in the Pacific and I at once admit that the existing division weakens all three: the dissensions between the two colonies are looked upon in the neighbouring states as rather a scandalous, but novel and amusing feature in English colonization." (1)

The more lengthy arguments which Seymour presented in this and other despatches opposing the union as being detrimental to the best interests of the mainland colony were of no avail. The Colonial Office terminated the "scandalous but novel and amusing" affair in August 1866: and declared the Act of Union to be in effect as soon as the Governor arrived in British Columbia. (2) The Lord Mayor of London cabled on August 4 a message received two days later by the Mayor of Victoria:

"Mother England acknowledges the cordial greeting of her infant son Vancouver. May peace, unanimity and good feeling unite and prosper our happy family." (3)

But, as a contemporary colonial editorial suggested, the union was "un mariage de convenance", "brought about by

1. Seymour-Cardwell, Paris Feb 17, 1866 (in Colonist, Aug 9, 1866)
2. Colonial Office Memo. Sept, 1866 (PRO CO 60.5)
'the old folks' in opposition to the principal party.' (4) This spirit of reluctance displayed by the mainland colony tinged the jubilation of the other partner. A London 'Times' correspondent in Victoria reported home that the mainland colony was "not a very attractive bride." (5) And there were others who felt that the sacrifice of the trade advantages attendant upon the free port of Victoria and the loss of the legislative assembly would not be adequately compensated for by the privilege of trading with the "five or six thousand" customers on the mainland. (6) That New Westminster was selected as the temporary seat of government was another Island grievance.

It is notable that in the course of the "dissensions between the two colonies" there was little bickering upon the subject of roads and road debts. Although the mainland colony brought the lion's share to the debt pool, presumably the islanders did not object since the road system was essential to the development of the trade which optimists hoped would restore prosperity to Victoria.

Of the total funded debt of the two colonies, $1,295,000., no less than $970,000 represented the funded road debt of the mainland colony. This sum was made up of the loans of 1862, £50,000; 1863, £50,000; and 1864, £100,000; all of which were represented after 1865 in dollars at the

5. Victoria, Jan 24, 1866; Times, Apr 25, 1866; Colonist, June 26, 1866
6. Colonist, Sep 26, 1866.

The three dates provide a commentary on mail facilities.
rate of $4.85 per pound sterling.(7) Of the $293,000 debt brought into the union by Vancouver Island the Road and Harbour Loan of 1862 contributed $194,000.(8)

The net debt of the united colony in 1867 was $1,267,160.39 (9) and this amount was slowly reduced each year until in 1871 the amount assumed by the Dominion of Canada was $1,168,000 (10) substantially made up of the original road loans, the maturity dates of which all fell in the post-confederation period.(11) The necessity of providing for the carrying charges of this funded debt under circumstances of a shrinking economy accounts for the almost complete absence of further road building from 1867 to 1871.

Seymour had remarked, rather inelegantly, in 1866 that "our great public works are done."(12) In 1867 only $26,844.32 was expended over the entire mainland system.(13) In no district were the dribbles adequate. The residents along the New Westminster-Burrard Inlet road petitioned urgently for repairs to their trail which would turn into a string of mud-holes in wet weather.(14)

9. Colonial Blue Book, 1867 (B.C. Archives)
12. Seymour-Cardwell, Paris, Feb 17, 1866 (Colonist, Aug 7, 1866)
14. A.C. Anderson-Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, Oct 10, 1866. (B.C. Archives F 15.9a)
It is a commentary on the lackadaisical administration that the subsequent investigation revealed £600 which had been voted previously for this purpose but had never been spent. (15)

Since the expenditure of 1867 had fallen so far short of the requirements for maintaining efficiency of the road system, the insecure state of colonial finance notwithstanding, an increase in road estimates for the following year was held to be essential. Thus $50,000 was allocated to the maintenance of roads, streets and bridges. (16) The actual expenditure exceeded the estimate by only $36 and was again quite inadequate. Complaints about the state of disrepair continued to appear in the press. (17) The five hundred miles of trail and wagon road which was supposed to provide access to the Kootenay was rendered impassable by burnt timber, slides or ice according to the season of the year. Thus the traders of Hope and Victoria were robbed of a market and the Government was deprived of revenue on supplies which might have entered at the Fraser but instead proceeded to the Kootenay via Portland and Walla Walla. (18)

But the straitened circumstances of the administration did not prevent the local politicians from "talking" an ambitious road building program. Waddington and Trutch engaged in a duel over routes using petitions and advice to London as weapons. The former urged the resumption of

15. Colonist, Feb 18, 1867.
construction on the Bute Inlet road where operations had been suspended after the massacre of his road party by Indians in 1864. What appears to have been an attempt to salvage the original investment of his company he camouflaged as part of a grandiose scheme to save Canada and the trade with the Orient for England. (19) He claimed that since the major part of the work had been completed and the worst ground covered, the cost would be trifling. Pending construction of a railroad which must soon follow, British Columbia should have a road of her own. (20)

Joseph Trutch, the Surveyor General who had succeeded Moody, subscribed to the same idea of a connecting link with the east. But he considered the Bute Inlet route undesirable and believed, with Seymour, (21) that Waddington's advocacy was tinged with self-interest. (22)

   Waddington-Editor, London, Sep 2, 1868. (Colonist, Oct 31, 1868)
   Tell of his double scheme for a road to be followed by a railroad and of his addresses to both Houses of Parliament, directors of the Hudson's Bay Company, and conferences with the Governor General and Canadian ministers at Ottawa, etc. Also Waddington-Sec of State for Colonies, Covent Garden, Mar 2, 1868. (PRO CO 60.34 #2277)
20. Colonist, Aug 13, 1868. Citation of Waddington's petition to the Imperial Parliament.
21. Seymour-Colonial Office, Mar 3, 1866 (B.C. Archives, Despatches) re Waddington's claim for reimbursement of his first outlay. "The line proposed is the worst."
22. Trutch sent Tredemann to report on the Bute Inlet road. His conclusion was: "We have already more roads than we can make use of to the gold mines." In Seymour-Colonial Office, July 28, 1868. (B.C. Archives, Despatches) cf. Birch-Colonial Office, Oct 11, 1865 (B.C. Archives, Despatches) "Having another rival route would not cheapen the cost of living in Cariboo." The intent, Birch claimed, was to damage New Westminster.
Trutch's antagonism is understandable, considering his earlier efforts toward establishing a more southerly route. Moreover he and two Americans of Fort Shepherd were enjoying a five year right to tolls on all goods and livestock passing over the thirty miles of road they had constructed from the junction of the Kootenay and Columbia Rivers to the south.

In addition to this theorizing about overland communication with Canada which did little but encourage the growth of sentiment in favour of confederation, another note was introduced in 1868 which reflects a changing economy. Lip-service at least began to be paid to the idea of road development to benefit the agricultural settler. It is interesting to note in this connection that homestead legislation passed through the colonial legislature during the year.

Commenting in December on the affairs of the colony during the year then passing, Seymour pronounced the financial condition of the government satisfactory. Receipts and expenditure had almost equalled the estimates. The Governor's speech which the editor of the Colonist

23. Correspondence of Trutch and Moberly beginning 1865; Columbia River exploration 1866. Reports and Journals relating to the exploration of the country lying between the Shuswap Lakes and the Rocky Mountains. Victoria 1866. Also Moberly MSS (B.C. Archives F 1145)
24. B.C. Archives Envelope G 65.5
25. Seymour-Buckingham and Chandos, July 28, 1868 (B.C. Archives, Despatches IV:46)
described as "the best yet,"(27) referred to the important reductions effected since union and advocated no further retrenchment. In his opinion the proposed estimates for 1869 were not unreasonable. Actually the estimates for roads, streets and bridges amounted to $62,500, an increase of $12,500 from the previous year;(28) but the amount was barely sufficient to keep the main routes open. Indeed since a year, the colonial government, so far as development of communications was concerned, had got into the vicious circle of "no repair, no traffic, no toll revenue." The up-country trade, stimulated in 1868 by the Barkerville fire, had already diminished, so that increased revenue from that source during 1869 was not to be had.(29) Tackling the thirty-five hundred mile gap in the all-British route from Victoria to Montreal was patently impossible, although considerable space in the colonial newspapers was devoted to the project, not without effect.

For instance, in the road-building program for the year 1869, the colonial government levied supplies for improvements on the Lower Fraser-Burrard Inlet and Hope-Similkameen-Kootenay routes. There was no item for the development of the Eagle Pass route which had been the objective of numerous petitions. Perhaps the colonial

27. Colonist, Dec 19, 1868.
28. PRO CO 60.38
29. Colonist, July 31, 1868, and Seymour-Colonial Office, Sep 30, 1868. (B.C. Archives, Despatches)
legislators foresaw a Dominion-built road from the Atlantic to the Pacific coming through this pass. In any case the temporary neglect of the development of the Eagle Pass route could be justified. The lower Fraser was establishing itself as the trade channel for lumber, fish, wheat and other produce passing to the coast and the Island—a traffic which had been reversed during the earlier years. Moreover the three active lumber mills on Burrard Inlet had made possible a stage-coach connection between that place and New Westminster.

Consequently the debates in the colonial Legislature centered on the question of supplies for a new branch road to one of the mills and the survey for a new Burrard Inlet-New Westminster road. In the latter case the debatable point was whether a survey should be made on both sides of the river, or since an expenditure of $100,000 was involved and the interested parties seemed unable to reach an agreement, whether there should be a survey at all. (30) In the end a Pitt River road was decided upon, to be paid for three quarters in land scrip, the rest in cash, (31) and the New Westminster-Burrard Inlet road-trail became a wagon road based partly upon the old Semiahmoo Trail and today used by the B. C. Electric interurban cars. (32)

30. Colonel, Jan 25, 1868.
31. Ibid.
Meanwhile the traffic to the gold mines centred less on the Cariboo. While a few prospectors worked their way toward the Omineca district, hundreds went to Wild Horse and Perry Creeks in the Kootenay and Big Bend region. But although the Hope-Similkameen route was put in better repair than it had been before the last bush fire (33) a detour via Portland was soon necessary "even for government officials."(34) With the aim of ending the humiliation and the inconvenience, miners and traders urged the government to "immediately open trail to Big Bend, Kootenay and Perry Creek via Eagle Pass."(35) It passed the comprehension of these enthusiasts that the government had taken no heed of the enterprise and confidence shown by the Hudson's Bay Company when it established steamboat service on Shuswap Lake in 1866 or the offer of a Victoria firm to build a trail on this route.(36) A resolution in the council calling for expenditure of a thousand dollars in search of a pass through the Selkirks to the Kootenay was negatived in the face of public knowledge of American overtures for north-south trade connections.(37) "British Columbia's mining interests on its southern rim," lamented the editor of the 'Colonist', "might as well be on the banks of the Houghly."(38)

The government had already made two futile attempts to provide trails connecting the coast with the Kootenay and

33. Colonist, Aug 20, 1869.
34. Ibid. Dec 23, 1869.
35. Ibid. Jan 30, 1869.
36. Ibid. Feb 22, 1869.
37. Ibid. Feb 22, 1869. e.g. Oregon Steamboat Navigation Co.
38. Ibid. Aug 7, 1869.
Big Bend regions, one via Similkameen, the other via Shuswap Lake. When finally a third attempt was projected involving still another survey through Eagle Pass, the critics grumbled. "Why ask for a third? We want no more Roman roads just now. . . . The trails which exist are mere apologies and reflect much discredit on the Lands and Works Department."(39)

In the year and a half remaining of the colonial period, the planning or prosecution of large public works within the colony was practically impossible. The colonial administration had to face a certain antagonism in England based on the fear that it was "the tendency in the colony to treat these works as Imperial matters" and that "the burden of the guarantee for such a work, carried out at the persuasion of the Colonial Secretary might sooner or later be thrown on this country."(40) Consequently constructive activity during this period was restricted almost entirely to the Omineca district.

Here re-occurred the now familiar cycle of volunteer trail-breaking, government assistance and private contracting. The miners who voluntarily cut their way to the diggings were followed by the Gold Commissioner who was pressed into service as temporary superintendent of road and bridge-building.(41) While private enterprise carried on with dog or toboggan express, the government called for tenders for the completion of a road although the controversy which had arisen over the

41. Colonist, July 24, 1870 and Aug 1870.
choice of a route had not been settled. While the merits of the Peace River and of Quesnelmouth as points of departure were being weighed, an enterprising trader with an eye for business chose the Skeena route. His tender was accepted and the government granted him a charter giving him the right to collect tolls in return for keeping the trail in shape.(42) Omineca miners used the route as they left their diggings at the end of the season to winter in Victoria. But when Dewdney inspected the trail in the year following he was obliged to report to the Department of Lands and Works that it did not comply with specifications. Consequently the trader's contract was cancelled and he received only two of the five thousand dollars originally agreed upon. The government then assumed the responsibility for the upkeep of the trail.(43)

The balance of the 1870-1871 expenditure on roads, streets and bridges, $52,300, was absorbed almost entirely by urgent repairs. Yet the roads were no better in 1871 than they had been in 1870. Nothing was spent on the Kamloops-Columbia route via Eagle Pass. The pleas of Victoria merchants that trade was being lost to the Americans were in vain. The principal activity was in the Cariboo above Clinton, on the Hope-Similkameen and in the lower Fraser. Expenditures were generally lower in 1871 than in the previous year. This is to be accounted for by a shrinkage in road toll revenue

42. Colonist, Jan 23, 1871
during 1870 of $11,000. (44)

In January 1871 a council resolution calling for additional expenditure for roads and postal service did not influence Governor Musgrave to alter the original estimates. (45) But for the most part, colonial politicians were preoccupied during this period with the negotiations for union with Canada. (46) The confederation plans passed from committee to committee and no doubt had their influence upon the discussions of road tolls, (47) inland telegraph and steamship connection with San Francisco. (48) Complaints of the state of the roads and route controversies were crowded out of the columns of the colonial press. The keynote of this final phase in the development of British Columbia's communications system was connection with the east. In this project the Colonial Office in London began at last to show some interest.

Although the British government had been exposed to the problem of an overland highway from the Atlantic to the Pacific for years, it had not responded either to the propaganda of Canadians in England - like Malcolm Cameron (49) or Sanford Fleming (50) - or to the not unfavourable reports of British explorers. (51) For the home government it was one thing to concur with Baring and Glyn when they wrote to

44. Government Gazette, June 24, 1871
45. Journal of Legislative Council, Jan 16, 1871
46. e.g. B.C. Archives despatches July 28, 1870.
48. Begg op. cit. p. 391
47. Colonist, Feb 23, Mar 13, Mar 26, Apr 10, 1870
49. Colonist, Aug 12, 1862; Feb 10, 1863
50. Ibid. Aug 7, 1863
51. Ibid. Nov 19, 1864
Newcastle in 1862 that the time was "opportune and desirable for some adequate organization" to promote "telegraph and means of travelling with regularity" between east and west. (52)

It was quite another thing when it was a question of providing financial support for "the just and legitimate ambitions of the Canadian Government" to join coast with coast. (53)

Yet even in England, knowledge of the great success of the overland Pacific Railway, making one, as Douglas said, "tremble for the prestige of England," must have carried weight.

"Bound together by this easy line of internal communication, the United States," said Douglas, "may bid defiance to the world and work havoc whenever it pleases them with our commerce in the East." (54)

Enough trouble seemed forthcoming without the worry of annexationists, (55) possible Fenian raids, (56) and reports of defence difficulties due to poor communications within the colony. (57) The logical policy for Britain in western North America seemed to Granville to involve "washing our hands of the whole." (58)

Yet he was not willing that Britain should cede to the United States,

"by sale or otherwise the whole of our possessions on the Pacific, leaving the Rocky Mountains as a boundary between them and us. . . . They have been privately given to understand," said he, "that no such proposal will even be admitted consideration." (59)

52. Baring & Glyn—Newcastle, July 5, 1862 (Imperial Blue Book on affairs relating to Canada, 1819-1870 Vols. 41-2. No 2)
53. Monsell, June 1, 1869. (Hansard, Vol 196)
55. Carnarvon, Feb 14, 1870 (Hansard Vol. 199 p. 193)
56. Telegram, Downing St—Seymour (PRO CO 60.34)
57. Seymour—Col. Office, Jan 14, 1869. (B.C. Archives Despatches)
58. Referred to by Carnarvon in Hansard, Vol. 199 p. 193
59. Thornton—Granville, Mar 21, 1871 (Granville Papers, PRO GD 29/80)
Confederation with its plans for a connecting highway probably seemed to the men at the Colonial Office as well as to Granville at the Foreign Office, the most effective way of "washing our hands".

When Seymour died on June 10, 1869 at Bella Coola in northern British Columbia, the Colonial Office named as his successor the reliable federationist, Anthony Musgrave who, although he failed to add Newfoundland to the Dominion, deserved a second chance because of his sincere efforts. Thenceforward the interest of the home government in the wagon road clause sponsored by the Victoria Citizens' Confederation League, the Surveyor-General's report on the subject of a coach road, and Waddington's personal visit to London, was based on the desire to see British Columbia a part of the Dominion with as little delay as possible. (60)

Prior to the appointment of Governor Musgrave the bait dangled before the colony by federationists had been the promise of an inter-colonial highway. With Musgrave in British Columbia however, union with Canada and a transcontinental road were ensurred. The discussion now turned on the nature and location of the promised highway. And a highway it was to be as far as Musgrave was concerned at the outset. (61) The Government 'Gazette' considered that he was asking for too little, claiming that "the age for Coach Roads

60. Colonel, Jan 29, 1868; Seymour-Col Office, Apr 2, 1868 (B.C. Archives Despatches); PRO CO 60.34 & 60.42, 1868, 1870.
61. Musgrave-Colonial Office, Oct 30, 1869. (B.C. Archives Despatches)
has almost passed away" and an overland railway was "the most vital part of the whole scheme of Confederation." (62)

In determining the route which the transcontinental would follow from the prairie westward, the choice of a pass was fundamental. The popular choice was the Yellowhead. But with the exception of Waddington the explorers favoured a more southerly pass. (63) For them a route via Eagle Pass assumed importance for its proximity to the Big Bend and Kootenay and for the competition it would provide for railroads south of the international boundary. Surveying was begun in the west with the assignment of sections at Canoe River, on the Fraser fifty miles below Yellowhead, Howse Pass and near Eagle Pass. (64) With these slim evidences of constructive activity before them colonial dreamers saw a new day dawning when all transportation problems would be solved.

62. Government Gazette sent to London (PRO CO 60.39 II:1870)
63. Colonist, Aug 7, 1869.
64. Begg op.cit. p 404
Whether or not one agrees with the time divisions of imperial history adopted by Creighton and referred to in the opening sentences of this essay, one cannot deny that the period from 1858 to 1871 was one during which colonial enthusiasm in England was not marked. Any manifestation of British interest in colonial development during those years is therefore of peculiar interest. British interest which was perhaps first aroused by the boundary settlement in 1846 and revived by the activities of the Select Committee whose report appeared in 1857 resulted in 1858 in the despatch to the colonies of the Royal Engineers. This might not have happened had Bulwer-Lytton not been Secretary for the colonies at the crucial time - crucial, that is to say, from a British Columbia point of view.

The experiment which Lytton inaugurated was not on the whole successful and Newcastle, Lytton's successor, took the first opportunity of restoring the development of communications to a basis of local, civilian, and, as it turned out, private enterprise. Actually it was private enterprise which was responsible for the major developments of the period. The network of trails which the gold-seekers inherited owed much of its origin to the requirements of the fur-trade. The first work on the Harrison-Lillooet route was done by volunteers eager to reach the diggings
and it was on the same road that the first experiments in contract construction were carried on. Lengthy stretches of the great Cariboo road were built by contractors - Wright, Trutch, Hood and others. Dewdney built much of the Hope-Similkameen in the capacity of contractor before he entered the service of the government. Waddington wasted his substance in a vain attempt to popularize the Bute Inlet route. This impressive chronicle of achievements of local private enterprise in contrast to those of the Royal Engineers would seem to minimize the importance of British interest in the development of communications. Nevertheless it should be remembered that the million dollar debt which British Columbia carried into the Dominion of Canada represented British capital invested in those local achievements. Might one suggest that the interest of English capitalists was of greater significance than the disinterest of the Colonial Office?

The motives which lay behind the British government's support of the union between British Columbia and Canada are complex. No doubt a fear of American expansionist sentiment played its part as did perhaps a disinclination to administer such a large and sparsely populated territory from so great a distance as London. At any rate the important point is that British interest in the accomplishment of confederation played its part in the motivation and shape of communications development during the closing years of the colonial period.
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