PLACER GOLD MINING IN NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

1860 to 1880

by

Allan Stanley Trueman

---------

A Thesis submitted for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of

HISTORY

---------

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

August, 1935.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>PLACER MINING LAWS AND METHODS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>STIKINE RIVER 1861 - 1863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>PEACE RIVER AND OMINELA 1862 - 1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 1 - Geography</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2 - Peace River Proper</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3 - Vital Creek</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4 - Germansen Creek</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5 - Manson Creek</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>CASSIAR 1872 - 1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 1 - Geography</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2 - Discovery</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3 - Legal Disputes</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4 - Production and Population</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5 - Dease and Thibert Creeks</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 6 - McDame Creek</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 7 - Other Areas</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 8 - Transportation and Prices</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>SOME SOCIAL FACTORS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 1 - Towns</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2 - Winter</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3 - Women</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4 - Justice</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES (Continued)

IV Sailings for Stikine, 1862.............. 176
V Miners returning from Stikine.1862..... 177
VI Comings and Goings (to Stikine)1862..... 178
VII No. of Men at the Mines (Stikine) 1862.. 178
VIII Recorded Sailings from Victoria for
Skeena Mouth, 1871.......................... 183
IX Approximate Movement of Men into
Cassiar 1874.................................. 190
X Movement of Men out of Cassiar 1874..... 191
XI Population of Cassiar Month by Month 1874.192

LIST OF GRAPHS
I Number of Men on Peace and Stikine Rivers
1862 - 1863................................. 31
II Prices at Takla Landing 1870.............. 62
III Prices at Germansen Creek 1870-1871..... 75
IV Prices in Omineca 1872-1873.............. 84
V Population of Omineca and Cassiar
1869 - 1880.................................. 87
VI Gold Production in Omineca and Cassiar
1869 - 1880 .................................. 87A
VII Population of Cassiar Month by Month
1874........................................... 104
VIII Packing Rates Glenora to Dease Lake
1874 - 1877................................. 124
LIST OF GRAPHS (Continued)

IX  Food Prices in Cassiar 1874-75........... 126
X  Some Prices and Wages in Cassiar
    1874 - 1877.................................. 127

LIST OF APPENDICES

A  Stikine
    1. Population............................... 175
    2. Production............................... 179

B  Peace River Proper
    1. Population............................... 180
    2. Production............................... 181

C  Omineca
    1. Population............................... 181
    2. Production............................... 185

D  Cassiar
    1. Production............................... 186
    2. Population............................... 188

E  A Dozen Prominent Men
    1. Fred Black.............................. 194
    2. Peter Cargotitch........................ 195
    3. Alexander Choquette..................... 196
    4. Joseph Clearihue......................... 197
    5. "Twelve-foot" Davis..................... 198
    6. J. A. Gardiner......................... 199
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A Dozen Prominent Men (Continued)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Vital Laforce</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;Dancing Bill&quot; Latham</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Captain William Moore</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;Black Jack&quot; Smith</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rufus Sylvester</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Henry Thibert</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abbreviations.

B. C. Ordinances for Ordinances passed by the Legislative Council of British Columbia.

B. C. Papers for Papers Relative to the Affairs of British Columbia.


Canada, 1886 for Canada Statistical Abstract and Record for the Year 1886.

Censuses 1665 - 1871 for Censuses of Canada 1866 to 1871, Statistics of Canada Volume IV.


Morice: Northern Interior for Morice: History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia formerly New Caledonia 1660 to 1880.
Gold is a metal with peculiar properties which throughout the centuries have made it especially suited for use in the arts and for a medium of exchange. It is widely distributed over the earth's surface and is found in greater or lesser quantities in the waters of the ocean, the sands of the desert, the rocks of the mountain heights and the fertile soil of the plains, in almost every country and clime, but in only a few regions is it found in sufficient quantity to permit commercial exploitation. British Columbia is one of them.

The early gold mining developments in British Columbia were principally in the southern half of the province. Fraser River in 1858 and 1859, Cariboo 1860 to 1865, Kootenay 1864 to 1866, and the "Big Bend" of the Columbia River 1865 and 1866 all attracted hundreds of miners and each has an established place in the history of the province. The early gold mining activities in the northern half of the province are not so well known, however, and this thesis is an attempt to trace, from the limited data available, the development and decline of placer mining in the first period of mining activity in that region, roughly from 1860 to 1880.

Gold rushes to four well-defined areas in northern British Columbia occurred from 1860 to 1880; viz., Stikine 1861-63, Peace River 1862-63, Omineca 1869-73, and Cassiar 1872-1880. There was in addition more or less constant but unremunerative prospecting by small parties on the Skeena, Nass, Taku and other rivers.
Before entering upon the history of these rushes, however, we shall discuss briefly the gold mining laws in force and the mining methods and terms in use in British Columbia during the two decades under review. This is done in Chapter I.

Since contemporary maps of the period are not available, where special maps have not been drawn, the writer has used maps of recent date. On these maps the names of places mentioned in the text have been underlined in yellow. Trails and travel routes have been variously marked as indicated in the legend of each map. Railroads, roads, and places not mentioned in the text may be ignored as probably not in existence during the sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century.
CHAPTER I

PLACER MINING LAWS AND METHODS

Placer mining is the separation of gold or other mineral from alluvial or glacial deposits of gravel or soil by the simple operation of washing the "dirt", as the gravel or soil is called. Mercury may be used to obtain very fine gold dust by amalgamation. Placer mining may be carried on with very little initial outlay, consequently it is the favourite method of the miner without capital. The gold mining laws in the period under consideration were drawn up with this in mind, hence the claims were small and the regulations suited to the individual miner dependent on his own labor.

The classes of placer mining claims were bar, creek, bench, and hill. In general, a bar claim was an area having a certain number of feet frontage on one bank of a large river and extending from high water mark down into the water. In 1858, by Governor Douglas’ mining regulations, frontage was twenty-five feet. A creek claim was one that extended across the bed of a creek or other watercourse either from high water level on one bank to high water level on the other, or from the top of one bank to the top of the opposite bank, not including flats or benches.

1 Douglas' Instructions to Assistant Gold Commissioners, July 1, 1858, see B.C. Papers Part I, p. 30.
In 1858 the creek claim ran twenty-five feet up and down the creek or ravine. Bench claims were located on flats in the river valley or on terraces or benches on the sides of the hills. In 1858 the area of a level claim was to be equivalent to a plot twenty feet square. At first, in 1858, hill claims were classed with bench claims but later they were constituted a separate class with larger dimensions. The classification and dimensions of each claim was subject to the approval of the gold commissioner. His decision was final.

Douglas' mining regulations were revised by the Legislative Council of British Columbia in 1865 by an ordinance that laid down the general regulations which, with few changes, governed mining in the colony and province up to 1880. Its most important clauses were as follows:

6. The power and jurisdiction of a Gold Commissioner shall be as follows:
   a. He shall hear and determine without a jury, all mining disputes arising within his district, and make such order as to damages, costs, or other matter as he shall think fit----- (no appeal).
   b. No prescribed forms shall be necessary----.

12. Every Gold Commissioner, upon payment of the sums hereinafter mentioned, shall deliver to any person (over sixteen years of age) applying for the same, a certificate to be called a Free Miner's Certificate (which made him a free miner, and cost one pound sterling)

Ibid.  
Ibid. "on table land or river flats, constituting dry diggings, twenty feet square to each person licensed."


Five dollars after 1867.
17. No person shall be recognized as having any right or interest in or to any mining claim or ditch or any of the gold therein, unless he shall be or in case of disputed ownership unless he shall have been at the time of the dispute arising, a Free Miner.

18. Every Free Miner locating a claim must record the same at the Office of the Gold Commissioner of the district within three days after the location thereof, if located within ten miles of the said office. One additional day shall be allowed for such record for every additional ten miles or fraction thereof.

19. All claims must be re-registered annually.

20. Every free miner shall be allowed to hold at the same time any number of claims acquired by purchase. He shall also be entitled to hold a pre-emption claim on each (but not on the same) hill, creek, ravine or bench, provided the same be not less than ten miles apart.

29. (Marginal note) One record covers not only the claim, but a fair share of the necessary water to work it.

30. No claim located and recorded within 14 days before or after the claims shall have been laid over till the ensuing season shall be deemed so laid over unless (a certain amount of work is done).

31. A claim shall be deemed abandoned when the same shall have remained unworked by the registered holder thereof for the space of seventy-two hours unless sickness or other reasonable cause be shown (holidays not to count).

1 A fee of ten shillings (after 1867 $2.50) was charged for each registration.

2 When a claim is "laid over" by order of the gold commissioner it is not necessary to work on it to retain title to it.
In this same ordinance a claim on "bar diggings" was defined as a "strip of land 100 feet wide at high water mark and thence extending into the river to its lowest water level". Creek claims were to be measured a hundred feet along the general course of the stream and to extend from "base to base of the hill on each side where the bed of the stream or valley is more than 300 feet". Narrower claims were provided for wider valleys. Bench claims were fixed at a hundred feet square. Provision was made for hill claims one hundred feet wide extending up the face of a hill to the summit.

To encourage prospecting, larger claims were allowed to the discoverers of a new mining field. A single discoverer was allowed two claims; a party of two, four claims; a party of three, five claims; and a party of four or more, one and a half claims each.

Provision was also made for the setting up of mining boards in districts where 101 miners or more petitioned for them, to make district by-laws and to suggest alterations in the mining laws but no such boards were ever constituted in Omineca or Cassiar.

1 B. C. Ordinances, 1865, No. 14, Sec. 36.
2 Ibid. Sec. 38.
3 Ibid. Sec. 37 and 39.
4 B. C. Ordinances 1865, No. 14, Sec. 41.
5 Ibid. Sec. 48.
6 Ibid. Sec. 134.
The mining laws were repealed and re-enacted in 1867, after the union of British Columbia and Vancouver Island. The only notable change was the substitution of dollars and cents for pounds, shillings and pence in the fees and dues.

In 1872 the definition of a creek claim was changed to give it a uniform width of one hundred feet and gold commissioners were recommended to settle disputes on the ground involved. The amendment of 1874 was passed to meet a special case in Cassiar which will be discussed in its proper place. (see p. 95 below)

The methods used by the miners to wash the gold depended upon the aim of the miner and the nature of the ground he was working. When prospecting, the usual method was panning, which requires no preliminary work. The Provincial Mineralogist of British Columbia describes the process as follows:

The simplest and most effective tool is the gold-pan. This is 18 inches in diameter, 3 inches deep, and has sloping sides and is made of sheet iron. This will hold from 15 to 25 lbs. of dirt, according to the character of the ground. A smaller pan 10 inches in diameter will hold from 3 to 5 lb. of dirt and is easier to handle. A good placer-miner by continuous washing may in ten hours pan from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cubic yard, depending on the situation with regard to water and dirt.

1. B. C. Ordinances 1867. 30 Vict. No. 34.
3. Ibid. Sec. 11.
The dirt including the gold is put in the pan, the whole then immersed in water and gently shaken to loosen the material, while the large gravel is washed by hand and thrown out. The clayey material is broken up by hand and caused to leave the pan by a swirling and to-and-fro combined motion given the pan after it is lifted from the water. When by this peculiar motion all the gravels, sands, and clay have been removed from the pan the remainder will be found to consist of black sand and gold nuggets and coarse dust. The particles will consist of gold, platinum, chromite, magnetic iron, and, according to the conditions, rubies, garnets, zircon, tungsten, tin, and many other heavy minerals.

When the heavy particles have been collected and dried in the pan magnetic separation with a magnet will leave practically clean gold-dust. This is put in a small chamois-leather bag and is ready for sale. The separation of platinum from the black sand is more difficult, but by skilful panning and the use of the magnet can be accomplished.

Once the presence of gold in paying quantities is established the miners turn from the inefficient panning to rocking and sluicing. The use of the rocker is described by MacFie, who saw it in operation in the early sixties, as follows:

The rocker is constructed like a child's cradle, with rockers underneath. This box is 3\frac{1}{2} to 4 feet long, about 2 feet wide and 1\frac{5}{8} feet deep. The upper part and one end are open and the sides gradually slope toward the bottom. At the head is a section closely jointed with a sheet-iron bottom, perforated so as to admit of small stones passing through, along the bottom of the rocker riffles or clefts\(^2\) are arranged to arrest the gold. This apparatus is placed on the margin of the river, the upper iron box is fed by one miner with earth and by another is rocked and supplied with water. The gold and pebbles passing down to the bottom, the


\(^2\) These are strips of wood or metal arranged after the manner of a Venetian blind.
water carries away the latter, and the riffles detain the former. In case the gold is very fine, part of a blanket is often laid along under the box, covered with quicksilver to attract the gold dust.

Sluicing is carried on by means of sluice-boxes, which are so constructed that they can be placed end to end to make a trough from ten to a thousand feet long as required. Each section or box is about three feet long and the same in width, constructed of inch boards. On the upper portion of the floor of the sluice-box are riffles similar to those in the rocker, at the lower end is a grating made of strips of board nailed across one another to catch the coarser gold. In the interstices of the grating blanketing with mercury on it is placed so as to catch the fine gold dust. The sluice-boxes are arranged with a slope suitable to the nature of the dirt to be washed, and water is admitted at the upper end, generally from a flume or ditch in order to give a steady flow. The miners work in groups of three, two of whom shovel the dirt into the sluice while the third breaks it up by stirring with a rake and throws out any large stones or pebbles.

Sluicing must not be confused with ground-sluicing. The latter term is applied to a method removing a thick surface layer - say five or ten feet - of non-pay dirt from a layer of auriferous strata or bed rock. A stream of water is diverted by means of a ditch or flume to run over the dirt to be cleared away and as it flows over it the miners loosen the dirt with picks and shovels. The stream carries it away and leaves the pay dirt exposed for mining, by ordinary sluicing.
Hydraulicking is used on a side bank. Sluices are constructed near the base of the bank. Then a head of water is obtained by means of an elevated flume from higher up the stream. The hose from the end of the flume is used to direct a stream of water under pressure at the base of the bank which becomes undermined and falls down. The dirt is then easily shovelled into the sluices.

Water wheels were sometimes used to raise water from the stream into a flume for sluicing or hydraulicking when a head of water was needed.

Shafts and tunnels were used in deep diggings below the surface of the ground. Shafts were more or less vertical, tunnels more or less horizontal but sloping downward. The sides and roof were supported by props as the work proceeded. The great aim of deep diggings was to reach bed-rock in the crevices of which gold was often found in rich "pockets". In frozen ground heated rocks were wheeled into the tunnel to melt the dirt.

Wingdamming was a method used on bar and creek claims to expose the bed of the stream. A diagram to illustrate the wingdamming follows:-
A dam (A) was constructed from the bank of the stream obliquely as far as the flow of water would allow - in creeks generally to the middle. At its end another dam (B) was constructed downstream to the end of the claim. If necessary the end of this second dam was connected to the bank by a third dam (C) and the area enclosed was pumped dry and mined by means of rockers or sluices.

All the above methods of mining were used in turn on the creeks of Omineca and Cassiar; panning during the prospecting period, rockering by those desirous of immediate returns, sluicing by those who considered the field worth the extra time and expense, hydraulicking when the creek bed had been mined out, and shafts or tunnels to reach gold at a depth. Ground-sluicing and wingdamming were used in connection with sluicing when the nature of the ground favoured such a course.

Mining terms in use among the miners in Omineca and Cassiar are collected below and the sense in which they seem to have been used in the period under review defined:

"Diggings" - a district in which placer mining was being carried on; the mining claims of a district taken en masse.

"Shallow diggings" - pay dirt near the surface.

"Deep diggings" - pay dirt at a depth requiring shafts or tunnel for successful working.

"China diggings" - diggings paying an amount less than white man's wages and therefore attractive only to Chinamen.

"Flour gold" - very fine gold dust requiring mercury for
separation from dirt.

"Blown dust" - fine gold dust but not requiring mercury for extraction.

"per day to the hand" - in speaking of the gold washed from a mine the unit was the amount of gold obtained in one day by each man actually at work. The amount of gold was expressed in ounces of gold, in dollars, or in ounces with the fractions of an ounce in dollars. Unrefined gold was generally found to be worth sixteen dollars an ounce, hence ten and a quarter ounces was often expressed as ten ounces four dollars in gold.

"Pay dirt" - any soil, sand, or gravel containing gold in sufficient quantity to pay wages or better.

"Wages" - the daily wage paid to a white labourer. It varied from six to ten dollars a day, according to the supply of men, the number of vacant claims and the cost of living. A mechanic received more.

"China wages" - the daily wage of a Chinese labourer which was generally two-thirds of that of a white man.

Other terms may be found in appendix B of Martin's Mining Cases and Statutes of British Columbia.¹

¹ Hon. Archer Martin; Mining Cases and Statutes of British Columbia, 1853-1902, Carswell, Toronto, 1903.
CHAPTER II

STIKINE RIVER 1861-1863

The first gold rush to the northern section of what is now British Columbia took place to the Stikine River in 1862. It followed along the lines of all comparatively short rushes to diggings of limited richness. The returns from the first strikes were exaggerated and their report was followed by rumours that still further enhanced the wealth of the new field. All classes of men allowed themselves to be carried away by hopes of "getting rich quick" and the rush was on. A year of mining proved the great hopes illusory and after two years the river was restored to the Indian trapper and hunter.

The Stikine is a large river about three hundred and fifty miles long which takes its rise near the centre of the north half of British Columbia (see map I, opposite p. 14). Its sources are in a widespreading and almost unexplored plateau of rolling country between the Coast Mountains and the Rockies and spring up within a few miles of streams that flow into the Finlay, Skeena and Nass Rivers. The Stikine describes an irregular semicircle

The first recorded discovery of gold in the northern half of British Columbia was made by John Work in 1852 while he was chief factor in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Simpson. The spot was on the Skeena River and the gold was not in paying quantities. See Howay and Scholefield; British Columbia, Vol. II pp. 8-9, for a quotation from the Fort Simpson Journal; see also Downie: Hunting for Gold, p. 222 ff; B. C. Papers Part III p. 72 ff; Ermatinger Letters, p. 170. The British Colonist, Oct. 29, 1869 states "The H. B. Co's employees have long been aware of the existence of gold on Peace River, Indians having brought nuggets to the forts as far back as 1846...." but no evidence has been found to support the claim.
north and westward, and reaches the Pacific Ocean at 56°38' north latitude, about ten miles north of Wrangell, Alaska. Half-way in its course the Stikine River enters the Great Canyon which is forty-five miles long and absolutely impassable to boats. Above the canyon the river is comparatively small, in the canyon most of its larger tributaries join it and below the canyon, a length of 125 miles, it is navigable to small steamers. For thirty miles below the Great Canyon - to the mouth of Chutine (or Clearwater) River - the Stikine remains narrow, from one to three hundred yards wide, with very few islands; it was in this stretch the best auriferous sand bars were found. Below the Chutine River, the Stikine varies greatly in width from one hundred yards to two miles and is studded with islands both large and small. The Little Canyon is about thirty miles from the sea where the river passes through the Coast Range. The mouth of the river is a delta about five miles wide.

The distance from Victoria to the mouth of the Stikine is approximately nine hundred miles by water and the voyage was made by sailing vessels in three weeks or longer, depending on the weather; canoes took longer still. The SS. "Labouchere" the only steamer on the run in 1862 made the trip in two weeks on its regular run. The trip up the Stikine River to Shakesville was made by canoes in a week or ten days, and by small steamers in three or four days.

The climate of the Stikine River district is typical of north-
ern regions. It has a short hot summer with daylight up to twenty hours out of the twenty four and a long cold winter during which the temperature sometimes drops to forty below zero at the Great Canyon. Near the coast the snowfall is very heavy, about twenty feet, but it decreases as you ascend the river and above the Great Canyon is seldom more than two or three feet.

The river breaks up in May. The spring flood begins about two weeks after the breakup of ice and lasts through June to the middle of July.

Mining on bar claims can be carried on only during the brief period of low water between the break up and the spring flood and from July to the freeze-up in October. The mining season is therefore quite short.

Alexander Choquette, nicknamed "Buck", a French-Canadian, was the discoverer of gold in the Stikine River district. The rumours of Choquette's find were first printed in the Victoria Daily Colonist on September 12, 1861, together with a statement that gold had been found there in 1858. The rumours were contradicted soon after by a "free trader" who claimed that it was


2 For a brief summary of his other activities in northern British Columbia see appendix E number 3

3 A free-trader meant a man who was engaged in the fur-trade with the Indians but who was not connected with the Hudson's Bay Company. Fur-traders did not want miners spoiling the hunting grounds.
merely an Indian trick to get miners into the country. The following November, however, the captain of the Hudson's Bay Company's steamer, SS "Labouchere", reported on arrival at Victoria that Choquette had bought supplies at Fort Simpson and had returned to Stikine River to mine bar claims during the low water period of the autumn months. Choquette's own story appeared in the British Colonist in January 1862 as follows:

The prospector left here in May last (i.e. 1861) for the Stickeen (sic) river in an Indian canoe and reached there in June. The river has three mouths and is a much larger stream than the Fraser. For 40 miles from the coast, along the river banks, snow clad and precipitous mountains rear their heads and the country presents a very uninviting aspect. The general characteristics are very similar to the Fraser but no rapids. Fine gravel benches covered with tall grass and extensive bars are seen. Light draught boats could ascend a distance of 75 miles after which small boats must be used for 30 or 40 miles, when a canyon 12 miles long occurs (the only one in the river). Here the prairie land commences. Our informant made a rocker with a knife, and started to work on a bar 100 miles from the river's mouth; but finding the results not so favorable as he had hoped, removed to a bar some miles higher up, where he made on the first day $5.50; 2nd. day $10.00; 3rd. day $11.00; 4th day $12.00; and on the last day $13.00. A great deal of gold, being fine, was lost owing to the poor rocker used. At the close of the 4th day Mr. Choquette's wife (a Stickeen woman) was taken violently ill and he accordingly placed her in a canoe and came down. He has mined in California and was a -58 pioneer on the Fraser, and declares he never saw a more favorable looking country for minerals than that bordering on the Stikine.

The reports, with rumours that exaggerated the significance of the find, produced a strong feeling in favour of Stikine River,
in spite of the counter-attractions of Peace River and Cariboo. Editorial appearances in the newspapers extolling the richness of the new district and discussing the rights of transportation across the pan-handle of Alaska - then Russian territory. Choquette embarked with eight other French Canadians on the schooner "Kingfisher", which left Victoria on January 27, 1862, bound for Stikine River. Although the records give few particulars about other parties, by the end of February a small fleet of vessels was plying between Victoria and the mouth of the Stikine, and from February to July, sailing vessels and canoes carrying from six to thirty passengers left Victoria at intervals of four or five days. Advertisements of the passenger vessels filled the columns of the newspapers. The advertisement shown on p. 18, which appeared in the British Colonist on February 28, 1862, is a fair sample.

Choquette's party arrived at the mouth of the Stikine River early in April, 1862. The river was ice-bound, consequently, after buying Indian canoes for fifty dollars each, they paddled southward for five miles along the coast to Highfield Point, where a number of other miners had already assembled. After waiting there a few days they prospected on a small river about twenty miles south (the records do not give it a name) but they found

1 Ibid. January 14 and 15, 1862.
2 Ibid. January 27, 1862.
nothing and returned to Highfield Point in an ill humour. The

FOR STICKEEN RIVER

with quick Dispatch

The A. no. 1. Schooner

EXPLORER

Capt. A. W. Whitford.

With first rate accommodation for passengers and freight, for particulars apply to the captain on board or to Henderson & Burnaby.

Fe 28 (advt) Commercial Row, Wharf Street.

Colonist May 9, 1862. Highfield Point was the site of a Russian trading post prior to 1839; see E.H. Oliver: The Canadian North-West, Vol. II p. 792, the agreement of H. B. C. and the Russian-America Company.

This particular advertisement appeared in the British Colonist for February 28, 1862. The schooner sailed on March 13, with thirty-five gold-hunters. (Colonist March 14, 1862).
weather was cold and one of the waiting party wrote back to Victoria on April 4, as follows:

"We cannot dip a dipper of water but it turns ice almost immediately and when we wash our faces, our whiskers are full of ice before we can dry them." \(^1\)

Newcomers added to the numbers in the camp and by the beginning of May about two hundred men were in the locality.

The idle miners assembled daily at Captain Whitford's tent store and passed the time in talk. Some suggested, with veiled threats of dire results in event of failure, that it was time that "Buck" produced his gold mine. "Buck" became extremely indignant at the reflections on his honesty, perhaps also a trifle frightened, and offered to submit willingly to hanging if he did not show them "$10.00 a day diggings" soon. \(^2\)

The River cleared of ice on May 9. A mixed flotilla of boats and canoes immediately left Highfield Point and ascended the Stikine. The miners scattered along the river in groups ranging from two to twenty, according to the size of the sandbars selected for mining, and began to wash the gravel with rockers or pans. The most important bars were where Choquette had mined the year before, five in number, Buck's Bar, Carpenter's Bar, Rich Bar, Fiddler's Bar, and Shake's Bar. Buck's Bar was five miles

---

\(^1\) Ibid. May 2, 1862.

\(^2\) Colonist May 9, 1862.
below the Great Canyon; the rest were below it at intervals of four or five miles, in the order named, Shake's Bar was a few miles below Shake's Creek. (See Map No. II opposite this page)

The records are not clear as to the results of mining in the spring. On Buck's Bar from $1.50 to nine dollars per day to the hand was washed out; on a number of other bars, not specified by name, from ten to twelve dollars per day was reported.

William Carpenter and his partner, working on Carpenter's Bar, eight miles below the Big Canyon, took out nine ounces and fourteen dollars ($158.00) in one day.

One miner was reported to have cleaned up $140.00 a day for five consecutive days and another nine ounces (about $144.00) in a single day.

These promising beginnings were cut short by the annual spring flood when the river began to rise during the last week in May. The bars were soon covered with water and work on them came to a standstill except for poor diggings higher up the banks which yielded from $1.00 to $1.50 per day to the hand.

A characteristeric experience is described by a miner who returned to Victoria in July:—

He "arrived at the mouth of the river about the last of March and started up on the 12th of May, landing at "Buck's" bar on the

1 Ibid. June 14 and 15, 1862.
2 Ibid. July 11, 1862.
3 Ibid. July 9 and 10, 1862.
22nd. Himself and 4 others commenced to work on a bar, on the South side of the river 70 or 80 rods long and 10 feet wide, but after working 3½ days, the water rose and drove them out. The pay-dirt was 6 to 20 inches thick - prospected 2 to 2½ cents to the pan and they made $3.00 to $4.00 to the hand per day. The party afterwards moved to a bar on the same side of the river but 3 miles further up where they made from $4.00 to $5.00 a day, but subsequently took up claims on a bar at the foot of the Great Canyon which prospected 3¢ to the pan. The water rose and drove them out. Our informant left Buck's Bar to come down on the 1st inst. "

The Indians of the district, when questioned as to the duration of high water, said it usually lasted about six weeks. The prospect of a long wait did not discourage the miners, however, for many of them remembered a similar condition on the Fraser in 1858, and the losses that had resulted from an overhasty desertion of that river. They resolved to await events. The time was utilised by sluicing on the flats above the high water levels, or preparing for future activities and by prospecting. Two parties led by Peter Holmes brought water along a ditch to a flat on the north bank of the river about five miles below Buck's Bar. An overlying layer of soil about 5 feet thick had to be removed in order to

1 Ibid. July 2, 1862.
reach pay-dirt, but the parties took out from six to eight dollars per day to the hand. 1 Other parties planned operations covering periods of two to three years and dug ditches to supply the necessary washing water. 1 A few adventurous spirits moved upstream into the Great Canyon where they found some promising prospects. One party packed provisions past the Great Canyon over an Indian trail and at forty miles above Buck's Bar struck diggings that yielded from four to six dollars a day to the hand. Buck himself, perhaps still impressed with the necessity of saving his reputation and neck, started out on May 23 to explore the Stikine River above the Canyon, "as long as his stores should last." 2

The centre of the mining field was Glenora, at the head of navigation for Captain Moore's "Flying Dutchman". 4 It consisted of half a dozen log huts, standing on a narrow flat on the north bank of the river, three miles above the mouth of Shake's Creek (See map No. II opposite p. 18). There, once a week, the miners assembled to greet the "Flying Dutchman" and a motley crowd they were. James Dean, a Victoria merchant, describes a friend who

1 Ibid. July 21, 1862.
2 Ibid. June 14, 1862.
3 Glenora was also called Glenora Landing, Yalk-heen-tah, Shakesville, and (later) Pondville, Hartville, and perhaps Moore's Landing, although the last probably refers to Telegraph Creek.
4 Captain William Moore or "Dutch Bill", see appendix E number 9.
visited him at Glenora as follows:—

"W. . . . was dressed rather curiously, a cap, a dirty striped shirt with neck and breast all open and shirt buttonless, an old pair of corduroy trowsers (sic) with half a yard of flour sack on the back of them and a pair of Blutchers cut out of an old pair of boots -- too big either to stop on his feet or hide the holes in his stockings."

In Victoria, notwithstanding the counter-attractions of Cariboo and Peace River, interest in Stikine continued. Facilities for transportation and communication developed with the speed characteristic of gold rushes in general.

In June a regular express service was organized, its first advertisement appeared in the British Colonist on June 21, 1862 shown on p. 23.

On the same day the Hudson's Bay Company put the steamer "Labouchere" into the open passenger and freight service up the coast, the rated to Highfield Point being, Cabin passengers $60.00, Steerage $45.00, freight per ton $25.00. Captain William

Colonist August 26, 1862.
Moore's steamer, the "Flying Dutchman" which for some reason not stated was prohibited from carrying passengers, towed a barge

BARNETT'S
STICKEEN RIVER EXPRESS

Letters and Packages left in the office in Victoria will be sent by every opportunity to Stickeen whence they will be forwarded to their destination. The first express will be despatched by the Labouchere on Monday next.

Walton & Barnett
Agents
Cor. of Yates & Commercial Sts.
Je 21.

Ibid. June 21, 1862.
P. 98, note 30 "The Flying Dutchman" was a small stern-wheeler built by William Moore for the Fraser River trade in 1860. . . . She was ninety-three feet long, seventeen feet beam, with 12x36 inch engines and was speedy for that period.
P. 111. "The Flying Dutchman" was withdrawn from the Fraser in 1862 and Captain William Moore found a new field for steamboating on the Stickeen River, where gold had been discovered. . . . Moore cleared $14,000 with his steamer in the first seventy-two days of the excitement.
P. 98, note 30. . . . In 1860 (they) sold an interest in the vessel to Captain "Delaware" Insley.
filled with miners to the mouth of the Stikine. Moore then placed her on the river run, charging three dollars for passengers, ten dollars a ton for freight, four dollars each for canoes. At first he went only half way to Glenora. He had to haul her through the Little Canyon with a windlass.

On July 8, B. Hoffman, a Victoria trader at Highfield Point, on his way to the diggings, wrote to his brother as follows:

"The Dutchman has made several trips and charged $3.00 (sic) passage and $10.00 per ton freight. She goes up 80 miles, but in reality not more than fifty."  

About this time news reached Highfield Point that the level of the river had fallen enough to permit mining to be resumed on the bars. A hundred and fifty miners who had been waiting at Highfield Point, at once proceeded up river. The "Flying Dutchman" was crowded to capacity. Hoffman wrote another letter dated July 10, two days after the one quoted above:

I have to remain on the schr. until this day...I paid the Captain $15.00 for one day demurrage, and it was well that I did so, for those on shore lived in continual terror of being attacked by the savages and their goods taken away......Freight is up to the highest spot, about 180 or 190 miles up the river, is $100.00 per ton; what think you of that? but Captain Moore thinks he is doing us a favour......the passage is $20.00 per man without grub or anything else, and on every pound of their personal effects, 5¢ is charged."  

1 Colonist. July 10, 1862.  
2 Ibid. July 21
The increase in freight resulted in an increase of approximately ten cents a pound in the price of all provisions except flour, for example, the price of bacon increased from thirty cents per pound to forty cents, the price of flour, probably on account of a chance oversupply, fell from thirty cents a pound to sixteen cents. The prices remained at that level until late in the fall.

The resumption of mining on the bars was followed by reports of returns. William Carpenter, it was stated, took out $970.00 in one week, others made from four dollars to nine ounces ($144.00) per day. Carpenter's Bar gave the richest returns. Fourteen claims were staked on it and they paid an average of eight dollars per day to the hand. Claims on other bars paid only one or two dollars. The majority of the miners were soon convinced that their venture was a failure and early in August, about two hundred returned to Victoria.

Many of the miners who remained took to prospecting for new diggings. Three parties followed in the footsteps of "Buck" Choquette above the Great Canyon, in May. The best organized of these parties obtained a gift of three tons of flour from Captain Moore and similar contributions from other traders (three or four) at Glenora. Sixteen men packed the stores past the Big Canyon, a

---

1 Ibid. June 15 and July 13, 1862.
2 Ibid. August 23, 25; October 1, 20 and 31, 1862 various letters and interviews.
distance of fifty miles. The other eight did the exploring. For three months they explored and prospected on the upper river to a distance of 150 miles above Glenora but to no purpose. Gold was found in many locations but nowhere in paying quantities. They returned to Glenora about September 1. The other parties had similar experiences.

Prospecting on the tributaries gave no better returns. The Tanzilla (Third North Fork), the Klastline (Second South Fork), and the Tuya (Second North Fork), all of which join the Stikine in the Great Canyon (see maps I and II opposite pages 14 and 20) gave practically no returns. The Tahltan (First North Fork) gave a fair yield to prospectors for ten or twelve miles from its mouth. Higher up on the river the gold became finer and scarcer and none was found above forty miles from its mouth. Mess Creek (First South Fork), Shakes' Creek, and Chutine River yielded no gold. The Iskoot River, about twenty five miles from the mouth of the Stikine, on the south side, proved auriferous but since the records give few details about its exploration, the return for washing must have been small. Mining on the tributaries did not prove even as remunerative as on the main river.

1 Ibid. August 26, 1862, James Dean's letter dated Yalk-heen-ta, August 12, 1862.
2 Ibid. August 26, 1862, called Heena-heena by the Indians.
Prospecting ceased when winter weather set in during October
and a general exodus to Victoria took place except for eighty
men who had fair claims, and who had decided to winter in the
district in order to be on the ground during the low water before
the spring flood. Their hopes are expressed in a letter from
D. S. Lusk, to his friend, James Duncan, of Victoria:

"The best time for mining is February, March, April, May
and the middle of June and then the water rises....and there is
not much chance to mine during the summer; but if there should
be diggings on the creeks and ravines, or hill diggings, there
will be a chance for a man to work the year round."

The eighty miners built cabins and settled down to face the
unknown dangers of a winter in the north. Used to the temperate
climate of the coast, they did not take the trouble to
buy newer, warmer clothing. The winter was a cold one. In
January the mercury froze in the thermometers. Wornout clothing
was slight protection against such severe temperatures; and as a
result all the miners suffered hardships, many of them had their
hands and feet frozen. Then lack of fresh food caused an attack
of scurvy, that scourge of the northern winter, and eight died
before spring.

1 Ibid. May 30 and June 22, 1863.
2 Ibid. August 25, 1862.
3 Chronicle June 23, 1863; Colonist June 22 and 24,
1863.
The only exploring party of note during the winter, ascended the Tahltan River under Choquette's leadership, and crossed to the headwaters of the Taku, but had no luck.

Mining began again in April of 1863. Fifty miners from Victoria joined the winterers. About sixty got claims on the main river which paid from three to six dollars a day and the rest staked new claims in the Great Canyon or prospected the Upper Stikine above it. At the end of July there were only three men left at Glenora and they were traders.

Buck Choquette led the party that explored the farthest up the Stikine. His party set out in May. Chilcot Indians packed supplies past the Great Canyon. The explorers then made dug-out canoes and paddled up stream exploring tributaries on the way. They had very poor luck indeed, for they reported that only in one location did the return of gold reach six dollars per day to the hand. In July three of the party returned to Glenora so as to eke out the stores for the others. The main party reached a point where the river branched in three forks, which is not named nor definitely located in the records but which was probably at the mouth of the East Fork of the Stikine, named Choquette River.

1 Colonist May 30, 1863.
2 Ibid. August 14, 1863.
on the Pope map. They explored two branches without success and returned to Glenora in October. They were a ragged band on their return, without blankets, clothing, food, or money.

On Choquette's return, the failure of mining on the Stikine throughout its length was apparent. Fifty men returned to Victoria in that month and sixty more followed in November. Only Choquette and a dozen others remained for the winter.

The total number of men that visited the Stikine district during 1862 was about 650; in 1863, about 130. The greatest number of miners and traders in the district at one time was at the beginning of August 1862, when there were about 480 men. During August, 1862, about two hundred men returned to Vancouver Island. Two hundred more left in October. The movements for 1863 have been given above. For a graph of these figures see p. 31. For the basis of the figures see appendix A, 1.

The gold production in the Stikine district during the year 1862 amounted to about $55,000. The average earned per day to the hand can be estimated at two dollars. When the necessary expenses are considered, this was a poor return which would be insufficient to attract men except in times of great depression. The basis of these figures also is given in Appendix A, No. 2.

1 Map in B. C. Archives, made by Major Pope, 1866-67, based on inquiries and explorations in connection with the Collin's Overland Telegraph.

2 Chronicle November 13, 1863. In 1866 Pope "struck the headwaters of the Stickeen river (sic) in 30 days from Bulkley House and.....followed down the valley of the river...to its mouth...450 miles." Columbian May 30, 1866.
Graph I - Number of men on Peace and Stikine Rivers 1862 - 31

1 See Appendices A and B
The Stikine district, at the beginning of the year 1862, when the activities of the miners above described were in progress, was in unorganized territory. In the autumn of the year, however, the regions comprising the present northern British Columbia was organized by the British Government into a colony under the name of Stekin. The Governor of British Columbia was appointed administrator and the jurisdiction of the British Columbian Supreme Court was extended to include the new colony. It is a remarkable fact that for over seven months, a thousand miles from any constituted authority, between three hundred and five hundred men staked out claims, bought and sold them, formed and dissolved partnerships, drank and quarreled, without a single case of violence between white men being reported.

The relations between the white men and the Indians were not so tranquil, but considering the absence of any conciliatory influence such as the Hudson's Bay Company's officials, the record of the Stikine miners is creditable.

Some miners as early as April 9 had begun selling liquor to the Indians and thereafter drunken Indians occasionally caused trouble to the miners at Highfield Point.

1 Howay and Scholefield: British Columbia Vol. II p. 84-85.
2 Colonist, May 13, 1862, Letter from A. Choquette, dated Mouth of Stikine River, April 9, 1862.
3 Ibid. May 2, 1862.
At the beginning of the next month a miners meeting was held which threatened to "string up" any white man found selling liquor to an Indian.

The friendly feeling lasted until a great forest fire destroyed the timber along both sides of the Great Canyon in June. The Indians claimed that the miners were responsible for the fire and demanded compensation for the loss of timber and the destruction of wild life, on which to some degree their livelihood depended. They threatened to attack the miners unless Governor Douglas promised consideration for their claims. Shots were fired on miners descending the river in canoes.

Soon after, Sheks, the Nanyiee Chief who dominated the lower Stikine River, died at Glenora, after receiving medical treatment from a ship's captain. Some of the Indians charged that he had been poisoned, but the majority seem to have remained friendly, for when two drunken Indians stole a canoe shortly afterward and were killed by owners, the entire blame was placed upon liquor. Indian leaders and whites united to confiscate and destroy all the liquor in the hands of traders at Glenora and the ill-feeling subsided.

An attempt at robbery near the mouth of the river was the only other clash reported. Four bucks and a klootch-man rushed

1 Ibid. May 31, 1862.
2 Ibid. July 9, 11, 21, and August 23, 1862.
a camp of three white miners, and in the attack two of the Indians were killed. A hundred or more Indians at once made their way to Highfield Point, bent on revenge. The three white men escaped to the schooner "Alpha" and the affair blew over. No troubles are reported for 1863, probably because the Indians were decimated by small-pox during the winter of 1862.

For the decade following 1863, the mining population of Stikine varied from half a dozen to a dozen. These men eked out a livelihood by washing at scattered locations for a yield of three or four dollars a day during the low water periods. At other times they loafed at Fort Simpson, their source of supply, trapped, explored, and traded with the Indians. Stikine returned to the quiet of the Indian fur-trade until the discovery of Cassiar in 1872 made it the highway to Dease Lake.

1 Ibid, August 30, 1862.
2 Chronicle. April 24, 1863.
3 On the Pacific coast halfway between the mouths of the Nass and Skeena Rivers. This must not be confused with Fort Simpson on Mackenzie River at the mouth of the Liard.
CHAPTER III

PEACE RIVER AND OMINECA 1862-1872

SECTION 1. GEOGRAPHY

The Peace River basin was the scene of gold mining during the decade following the Stikine rush. In two distinct periods of activity miners penetrated two different sections of the Peace River basin, first, the main river with its chief tributaries the Finlay and the Parsnip in 1862 and 1863, and then, five years later, the Omineca and Manson River valleys.

The Peace River (see Map I opposite p. 14) is formed by the junction of Finlay and Parsnip Rivers, which drain a large section of the Rocky Mountain Trench, about 125 miles wide, between 54° 30' and 58° north latitude. The area of their combined river basins is roughly 33,000 square miles. The Finlay River, which drains the northern section of this area, is 250 miles long. The Parsnip which drains the southern section, is 150 miles long. From the junction of these two rivers at Finlay Forks the Peace River flows eastward into Alberta. From Finlay Forks to the Grand Canyon above Hudson Hope, the valley is narrow, east of Hudson Hope

1 Generally pronounced Om-i-ne-ca but properly pronounced O-min-i-ca, from the Indian name Omoene Khah, "omoene" meaning "lake-like" and "khah" meaning "river". See Morice: The Northern Interior pp. 314-15.
it flows through an extensive rolling foothill country.

Both the Finlay and the Parsnip flow close to the Rocky Mountain Range, therefore their large tributaries flow from the west. The most important are the Ingenika, the Omineca, and the Manson which join the Finlay at distances respectively, 105 miles, thirteen miles and three miles above Finlay Forks. Nation River and Pack River are the largest tributaries of Parsnip River.

The Omineca River rises in the mountain range to the east of the Skeena valley near Bear Lake. It flows through a rough broken mountainous region which is cut up by many short ranges varying from five to six thousand feet in altitude to the south of the river and from six to eight thousand feet to the north. The streams which drain into the Omineca, are usually U-shaped; among them are Fall River, Silver Creek, and Germansen Creek. Eight miles below Germansen Creek, Omineca enters Black Canyon, where mountains close in on each side, and the river is a succession of rapids for twenty-six miles. Below the canyon it is a meandering river 150 yards wide, flowing through flats for six miles until it enters Finlay River. (see Map III opposite p. 50)

Peace River and Omineca have a dry interior climate with extreme heat in summer and extreme cold in winter. Mosquitoes are a constant pest in the summer months. Winter sets in about the end of October and in January and February the ground is covered by three or four feet of snow and the temperature falls to thirty below zero for a week at a time. The snow in the valleys melts in April and on the mountains in June, sometimes
causing freshets and spring floods that sweep away any dams or other equipment in the creek beds. The mining year falls into two seasons, spring before the floods and summer until the freeze-up, about 160 days in all.

Access to the Peace River during the first rush, was by water to Fort St. James via the Fraser, Nechako and Stuart Rivers and thence by H. B. C. trail to Fort McLeod, or by the Fraser River to Giscome Portage and from there to Fort McLeod via the Crooked River. Omineca was first approached from Peace River but the rush to Vital Creek, 1869-70 followed the water route from Fort St. James via Lakes Stuart, Trembleur and Takla to Takla Landing and from there by a trail, in part along the Fall River, to Vital Creek. When Germansen and Manson Creeks were opened up, trails were constructed from Takla Landing eastward to Germansen Creek, and from Fort St. James northward to Manson Creek. Canoes were used on the Omineca between Hogem and Germansen Landing. The coast route to Takla Landing followed the Skeena River to Hazelton and the Suskwa to to Fort Babine at the north-west end of Lake Babine, from Fort Babine trail followed Frying Pan Pass through the Bait Range, of which the peaks are 6,000 feet high, to the mouth of Frying Pan Creek, opposite Takla Landing. A water route followed Babine Lake and crossed the Babine Portage at its southern end to join the water route from Fort St. James on Lake Stuart. All routes were, of necessity, long and difficult.
SECTION 2. PEACE RIVER PROPER 1860 - 1863

Gold was first reported in the Peace River district in 1860, when, according to the British Colonist, a small party of miners — names unknown — obtained good prospects on Peace River, "three hundred miles further north" than Alexandra. The next spring 1861, two miners named William Cust and Edward Cary followed the fur-traders route from Alexandra, via the Fraser, Nechako and Stuart Rivers to Port St. James, from there over the ninety-mile pack trail to Fort McLeod. They arrived at Fort McLeod in June when the water was high, but undismayed, they borrowed an old dugout canoe from the French-Canadian in charge of the fort and drifted two hundred miles downstream to the Grand Canyon. When the water receded, they made their way back against the current. There, alone, in the midst of the wilderness, they washed the sands of the riverbars at the same time that John Rose was working the newly-found Creeks of Cariboo to the south, and Choquette and his Indian wife were washing the first gold from Stikine in the far north-west.

1 Colonist June 6, 1861; perhaps this item refers to prospecting up the Stuart River, see New Westminster Times September 29, 1860.

2 Ibid. William Cust, variously referred to as "Big Bill", Bill Cust, Bill Crust, Bill Kriss, and Gilchrist, was a noted character in the early history of Peace River. Miner, packer, merchant, fur-trader,(see Morice p. 305.) farmer, according to fancy and need. He finally left B.C. and settled on a farm in Alberta, near Edmonton.

Edward Cary was referred to as "Kelly" in some reports.
Sometimes the two prospectors struck a small patch of good pay dirt and once, they said, they obtained thirty cents in a single pan, but usually their labour met with no reward or with a mocking "color" in the bottom of the pan, showing the presence of gold in quantities too small to repay washing. In all, they put in thirty-five days actual prospecting, and obtained a thousand dollars worth of gold. They returned to the Fraser River in September.

The next year, 1862, twenty-five men made their way to Peace River. Gust and Cary, with Peter Toy, Joseph Oates, Ezra Evans, adopted the same plan of action as in the previous year. Twenty miles above the Grand Canyon, near Rich Bar, they left Toy, Oates and Evans, to mine while they, (Gust and Cary) prospected downstream to Fort St. John. They had no luck and returned to Rich Bar where the other three had mined $350.00 of gold in two weeks. They left Rich Bar, proceeded upstream to Finlay Forks and then ascended Finlay River, with poor luck except at one bar, a spot about four miles above Finlay Forks.

1 Chronicle November 20, 1862; B. C. Directory, 1863, p. 204-206; Colonist February 16, 1870.
2 After fur trading near Fort St. James for a time (Morice op. cit. p. 304 f), Peter Toy spent from 1862 to 1870 in Peace River, mining on Toy's Bar, four miles above Finlay Forks, in summer, and trapping in the winter. He took part in the mining in Omineca in 1871-1873. (Horetsky; Canada on the Pacific p. 70)
3 Ezra Evans was a member of the party that discovered Silver Creek in 1868, and a member of the Peace River Prospecting Party that discovered Vital Creek in 1869.
There, at Toy's Bar, so named after Peter Toy, they obtained over two thousand dollars in one week, but the season was late and they had to return to Quesnel. During that summer these five men actually worked fifty-two days on various bars and mined six thousand dollars worth of gold - $1,200.00 each.

In August of the same year, 1862, other parties arrived on the scene. An unnamed group of four men took out "$900.00 for the crowd in twelve days" on the Parsnip River. A third party of eight, which had been prospecting on the Bowron River, reached Fort McLeod without provisions or tools. They killed a bear for food. They then constructed a very rough rocker and washed out a thousand dollars in four days. Bridges and Pierce, two of the party, left the rest at work and returned to Quesnel for supplies. They brought their supplies to Fort McLeod in October and the party of eight proceeded to Finlay River, where they passed the winter.

1 Chronicle, November 20, 1862; Colonist, February 16, 1870. B. C. Directory, 1863, p. 205.
2 Ibid. and Morice; op. cit., p. 296, a quotation from the Fort St. James Journal.
3 Colonist, October 17 and 20, 1862. Pierce was sometimes called Perse.
5 Ibid. December 17, 1862; January 15, 1863, Chronicle August 27, 1863.
Alex Porter, a lone hand, prospected on Parsnip River, and Finlay River, worked a week on Toy's Bar, and later descended Peace River, to Rich Bar. He returned in October to Fort St. James. Another party prospected a short distance up Nation River but with little success. The year 1862 had uncovered one place—Toy's Bar—where sixty dollars had been mined in one day and a few places where thirty dollars per day had been obtained. The returns were good enough to encourage miners to try their luck the next year.

Over 150 men visited Peace River in 1863. Seventy went in from Cariboo during April, May and June, including John Breneman and "Twelve-foot" Davis, who navigated the Fraser from its mouth to Fort St. James with two boats of ten tons burden and ten passengers each.

Later, reports of rich returns during winter mining, such as that in the Daily Chronicle of June 4, 1863, "they had wintered there and the lowest dug out by one man was $2,400.00" circulated in the colony, and fifty more men went north in July.

1 Colonist December 23, 1862. Report of George Simpson who had come from the east with Mackenzie's H. B. C. brigade.
2 See Appendix E No. 5.
3 Morice, op. cit., p. 296; Colonist February 20, and July 30, 1863.
The number of men on the Peace then exceeded 150. The reaction began in August and thereafter the number steadily decreased.

The cost of transportation was moderate considering the times and the distance from Victoria. Water transport on the Fraser and Peace river systems was connected by the H. B. C. trail from Fort St. James to Fort McLeod, upon which forty-three pack animals were in use during 1863. Prices, too, were moderate. In July, the month of greatest scarcity, flour sold at $1.10 per pound; bacon and beans at $1.25; sugar at $3.10 and tobacco at $8.00 per pound. In August provisions fell to fifty cents per pound.

Nevertheless, like Stikine, this rush to Peace River was merely a flash in the pan. The experiences of a few parties will suffice to illustrate that of the miners in general.

Peter Goldsmith, Sam Bell and three others left Victoria in January and reached Fort McLeod in May. They mined on Parsnip River, and obtained eight dollars per day to the hand, a comparatively poor return. Then they pushed on to Toy's Bar. There, after stripping from five to six feet of loose sand they struck a streak or stratum of black sand overlying gravel. From the gravel and sand, they washed out from $50.00 to $60.00 per day to the hand, for two weeks. Provisions ran short and they

proceeded to Fort St. John. A quantity of dried bear meat cut in long ribbon-like strips was all the food they could get. Next they made for Fort McLeod and arrived there, destitute of food. Provisions were very scarce at Fort McLeod also; therefore they at once set out for Fort St. James on the basis of "each man for himself, catch what he could and no division." They took five days to cover the ninety mile trail. Arrived at Fort St. James, they enjoyed their first square meal in weeks, a "grand feast of flour mush."

James May and Joe Patterson arrived in Finlay River about June 15. "They proceeded up the North Branch for 100 miles without finding any greater inducement to stay-----" "They returned to the junction of the Middle and North branches, and there met by appointment some other prospectors who had been up the South and Middle Branches, without greater success. Most of them agreed to return." The North Branch mentioned above probably

---

1 Sentinel December 4, 1869. "Flour Mush" is flour boiled in water and served up hot.

2 James May prospected Finlay River for a hundred miles in 1863, mined on Vital Creek in 1870 and then prospected Nation River with Black, Laforce, Sylvester and others. Returning, he sank a shaft on Vital Creek and found nothing. He was one of Germansen's discovery party. The next year, 1871, he mined on Germansen but in the fall and winter of 1872-73 he prospected Osalinka River and the headwaters of the Skeena about Bear Lake on a government aided expedition. He remained in Omineca in 1874.

3 i.e. greater than 4¢ per pan obtained on a bar on Parsnip River sometime before.

4 Colonist August 27, 1863, report of James May (sometimes printed Way).
referred to the main stream of Finlay River; the middle Branch to Omineca River and the South Branch to Manon River, so that in this year of disappointment, the first exploration was made of the rivers that later made a name for Peace River.

Another party, led by John Giscome and Henry McDame reopened the route to Peace River via the Giscome Portage which had been used by Simon Fraser, but later had been abandoned by the Hudson's Bay Company.

They mined for a time on Toy's Bar, making from twenty-five to forty dollars a day with a rocker. They prospected 140 miles up Finlay River and found nothing. Next they tried "upper south branch of Finlay's ...(probably Omineca). On this stream they got some pay dirt yielding 8 cents to the pan, but no quantities" so they returned to Finlay Forks. Undaunted, Giscome and a companion descended Peace River, explored Smoky River for 160 miles from its mouth, and proceeded to Dunvegan where they turned back on the receipt of reports that the diggings

1 John Giscome rediscovered Giscome Portage, in 1862. He prospected Peace River to Dunvegan, Smoky River and Nation River in 1862-63. In Omineca he mined on Vital Creek, prospected the Omineca River to its mouth in company with some colored men (perhaps in the party with Germansen and McDame which passed up Germansen Creek) and then mined on Germansen. In Cassiar he was with McDame in the Discovery claims of McDame Creek.

2 Henry McDame, was a well-known negro miner and '58 pioneer. He was with Giscome in 1862; Giscome Portage was sometimes called "Nigger" Portage after him. He was a member of Germansen's party that passed up Germansen Creek in the summer of 1870. In Cassiar he was noted for the discovery in 1874, of McDame's Creek, the largest gold mining section of that district.

3 Colonist, December 14, 1863.
on Saskatchewan River were a failure and that Nation River was auriferous. They reached Nation River in September 8th, where Alex Porter and a party led by Munro were about forty-five miles from the mouth of the river making from ten to twenty-five dollars per day. They washed gold for a short time on some abandoned bars and then went to Cariboo.

The returns in gold from Peace River in 1863 were very poor and only a few miners, notably Peter Toy, William Cust, "Black Jack" Smith, "Dancing Bill", and "Twelve-foot" Davis, returned in subsequent years. They prospected in the summer, trapped in the winter and engaged in the fur-trade with the Indians when the competition of the Hudson's Bay Company was not too keen. They also made trips to the east of the mountains. A company of such men led by Michael Foy, prospected on Peace River and possibly on Omineca in 1864 or 1865, and returned with four or five thousand dollars in gold-dust. The leader returned to Peace River and passed several years in the district.

1 Colonist, December 14, 1863.
2 See Appendix E number 10.
3 See Appendix E number 8.
4 For a discussion of the relations between the Hudson's Bay Company and the freetraders, see Morice: op. cit. p. 301 ff.
5 Colonist, February 17, 1870. Possibly Peter Toy was the leader of this party. He is the only miner known to have been continuously in the district and also he was referred to as Peter Foy in a letter appearing in the Colonist, May 17, 1870.
The Omineca gold rushes were largely the outcome of the ambiguous reports and activities of the Peace River Prospecting Party which was organized at Quesnel in the Cariboo in 1869, and financed partly by public subscription and partly by Government grant. This party found gold on Vital Creek, a tributary of Silver Creek, and worked claims there in the summer of 1869, returning to Quesnel in the fall. Their reports led to the rush to Vital Creek in 1870. The cream of the gold in this creek and the surrounding district was gathered before the discovery of gold on Germansen Creek in the fall of 1870.

The Peace River Prospecting Party was the result of the discoveries of a party of four Peace River Miners - Ezra Evans, William Humphrey, "Twelve-Foot" Davis, and a man named Gaylord. In the summer of 1868, these men crossed the Arctic-Pacific divide from Lake Takla and found surface indications of gold on Silver Creek with rock formations of favorable appearance in the surrounding country. They returned to Quesnel to acquire a "stake" sufficient for a thorough prospect in the next spring. The records do not indicate what changed their minds but evidently they were unable to carry out this program, for they appealed to the community at Quesnel for help.

1 Sentinel, March 19 and 26, 1870. The discoverers called Silver Creek, Arctic Creek.
Business in B. C. was going through a period of depression, and the Cariboo shared in the general hard times, especially as surface placer diggings in the district were becoming scarcer and the diggings in Kootenay and Big Bend were nearly exhausted. Miners were on the lookout for new fields and the reports of discoveries in the Omineca River country were given earnest consideration. Its remoteness, for it was over three hundred miles north as the crow flies, together with the collapse of a recent rush to Big Bend, caused divided opinion as to the feasibility of exploiting it and dictated caution in embarking on another expensive venture. However, the miners finally decided to organize a party to explore the Omineca district and made a public appeal for funds to finance the undertaking. This party was afterwards known as the Peace River Prospecting Party.

1 Gustavus Blin Wright, one of the chief builders of the Cariboo Road, the Honorable Edgar Dewdney, after whom the Dewdney Trail to Kootenay was named, and who later became Lieutenant-Governor of the province, and P. C. Dunlevy, a farmer and trader in the Upper Fraser Valley, were chosen a committee of three to make the necessary arrangements.

1 G. B. Wright engaged in packing to Omineca in 1870, later in road and trail building. He was in business with Calbreath for a time during the Cassiar rush.
2 Mr. Dewdney was engaged by the colonial and provincial governments in surveying and supervising the clearing of trails in Omineca in 1870 and 1871.
3 Sentinel, May 1, 1869.
The appeal for funds was successful, miners and traders in Cariboo subscribed three hundred dollars, Soda Creek and William's Lake farmers, nine hundred dollars, and the Colonial Government, after offering five hundred dollars, increased its grant to a thousand dollars on learning of the generous response to the public appeal. The total collected was $2,200.00.

The exploration party chosen consisted of Michael Byrnes and Vital Laforce, who formerly had been Overland Telegraph Company scouts, William Humphrey, a member of the party of 1868 which made the first discovery, Patrick Kelly, Allen Grant and James Hawkins. Michael Byrnes was appointed leader. Detailed instructions were given him, from which the following are extracts:

You will try as far as your judgment allows, the various streams forming the Finlay's Branch, and not diverge too near the coast or too far to the east as Peace River has been already prospected. You will consider yourself in the sole and entire command of the expedition, taking as far as you may desire the advice and counsel of your companions, but having the full right to control all their operations and movements.

1. Ibid.
2. Michael Byrnes explored from Quesnel to Lake Stuart, and through the Nass, Skeena, Stikine and Taku valleys as far north as Lake Lelain with the Collins Overland Telegraph parties from 1865-1867. After the discovery of Vital Creek he went off prospecting in 1870 by way of Bear Lake toward the Upper Stikine River.
3. See Appendix E number 7.
4. Colonist, May 18, 1869.
If you find any of the party who declines to obey your directions or who is disagreeable to the rest and inclined to retard the objects of the expedition, you have full liberty to furnish him with sufficient for his return and let him leave the party. If at the expiration of a year, you are not fully satisfied and wish to remain still longer, you can send a portion of your party here (Quesnel) and we will endeavour to furnish them with more supplies.

The party was provisioned for a year's prospecting and supplied with a suitable boat. They set out from Quesnel on May 3, 1869.

The route followed is shown on maps I and III respectively opposite pp. 14 and 50; They travelled by boat via the Fraser, Nechako and Stuart Rivers and Lakes Stuart, Trembleur, and Takla to Bulkley House, and Overland Telegraph station at the north end of Lake Takla, a total distance of about 230 miles as the crow flies and 360 miles actual route. From Bulkley House, they went back ten miles along the north shore of Lake Takla to Takla Landing and leaving the boat at the Landing, set out on foot in a north-easterly direction, across the Pacific-Arctic divide. Five miles from the lake the party reached Fall River and followed its banks to a point about six miles from its mouth; they then proceeded eastward along the foot of the northern slope of the Vital Mountains to Silver Creek, (so-called on account of the presence of acquerite, a silver compound, often mistaken for native silver). On June 21, 1869, gold was discovered by Vital

---

1 Ibid and Sentinel, May 12, 1869.
Laforce on a tributary of Silver Creek, which was named Vital Creek after its discoverer.

A few days after the discovery another party arrived at Vital Creek: William Chapman, the leader; Ezra Evans, leader of the discovery party of 1868, and a man named Gaydon.

The arrival of an independent party which was free to work any claims forced the Byrnes party to decide whether to stake claims and continue prospecting according to their agreement, or to remain at Vital Creek and take out what gold they could before the freeze-up. They determined to remain, and staked and worked claims on Vital Creek about one and a half miles from Silver Creek. The Chapman party located about two miles farther up stream.

Byrnes partly fulfilled his obligations to the committee by going out on two prospecting trips lasting about a week each, one eastward in company with Laforce, and the other westward by himself. Each trip covered a radius of approximately twenty miles.

1 Sentinel, October 23, October 30, and November 6, 1869.
2 A former California and early Cariboo pioneer.
3 Sentinel, October 23, October 30, and November 6, 1869.
4 Ibid and Colonist, November 12, 1869.
5 Byrne's Report, Sentinel, November 6, 1869, and Colonist, November 5, 1869. Letter to Barnard, unsigned, Colonist, November 12, 1869.
The decision to mine the claims at once and to give up any further attempts to carry out the instructions of their financing committee was strongly criticized by the community at Quesnel as described later.

By the end of the season, gold to the value of $6,600 had been mined, the result of thirty-five days actual mining scattered over a period of three and a half months. The Chapman party made a thousand dollars each and the Byrnes party, six hundred each. The average was about twenty-one dollars "to the hand" per day of actual mining, but only about four dollars and thirty cents per day for the whole time they were absent from Quesnel.

All the prospectors seem to have determined to discourage a rush to the creek. The diggings were shallow, limited in extent and nowhere very rich, a few miners might put in another season profitably by covering the whole field, but if a rush followed, few could more than cover expenses, the majority would get practically nothing. The best interests of all concerned would be served by reporting the finds in a manner which would discourage a rush and limit the following season's work to those already on the ground.

The two parties returned to Quesnel, arriving on October 19, with the exception of Kelly and Laforce, who bought supplies at Fort St. James, and returned to the diggings. The returned miners all stated that there was gold in the Omineca district, but not in sufficient quantities to repay the labour of washing and general expenses, but that "the general appearance of the country justifies
Byrnes' report to the committee was in the same vein, in part as follows:

............we worked three and a half months with two strings of sluices and took out 35 ounces to each man in that time. The diggings are shallow. We worked 800 ft. of ground........We prospected each way from where we have located for about twenty miles without finding any other paying prospect.... We intend taking out supplies on the snow. We shall then be better able to prospect next season and ascertain with certainty whether the new district will pay or not. A rush of miners to that section, until the extent and value of it is better known, can only prove disastrous and result in serious injury to the Colony. It is better, perhaps, not to publish this report until something more may be known of the country........

The effect of this practical advice was largely discounted in the Cariboo by disturbing general rumours and the suspicious activity of members of the prospecting parties which appeared to indicate that the actual truth was being concealed, and that the new mines were rich and well worth exploration.

Amongst many other items, the returned prospectors made plans to proceed immediately to Vital Creek without asking for further aid from the Peace River Prospecting Party fund. Fred Black, of Barkerville, received a letter from one of the

1 Sentinel, October 23, 1869.
2 Dated Quesnelmouth, October 24, 1869; See Colonist, November 5, 1869 and Sentinel, November 6, 1869.
3 See Appendix E Number 1
prospectors, urging him to "leave all his interests............"
and join the returning party; he left in haste for Quesnel;
Duncan McMartin, of Keithley Creek, received a similar invitation; Humphrey deposited seventy ounces of gold at the assay office, although the members of his party had obtained only thirty-five ounces each; a prospector while under the influence of liquor boasted that eight thousand dollars had been taken out in thirty-five days; a letter was received from Peter Skene Ogden, stating that the prospectors had spent twenty-five hundred dollars purchasing supplies at Fort St. James; and finally, some of the prospectors requested the gold commissioners to record for them claims larger than the legal size.

1 Sentinel, October 27, 1869. These letters may have come from members of the Chapman Party.

2 Duncan McMartin, was a Cariboo miner. He mined on Vital Creek 1869 to 1870 and then prospected Nation River with Fred Black in the latter year. After sinking a shaft on his return to Vital Creek he prospected Evans Creek. He did fairly well on Germansen Creek. He died in New Westminster in 1873.

3 Colonist, February 17, 1870. He explained that he had won the balance gambling.

4 Colonist, February 18, 1870. Sentinel December 11, 1869.

5 The request was refused. It was probably made by Chapman and his partners, who, because he had staked before Byrnes, thought that he should be granted the extra fifty feet per claim, allowed on discovery claims. Chapman complained about not receiving this concession in a letter dated February 25, 1870. Sentinel, March 26, 1870.

6 Son of Peter Ogden and grandson of Peter Skene Ogden.
These rumors and activities led to suspicion of, and disbelief in, the bona-fides of the prospecting party's conduct, and especially in Byrnes' official report. Many miners prepared to explore the Omineca country.

A race to Vital Creek followed. The Byrnes and Chapman parties set out for the north again on October 9, 1869. Three other parties followed soon after, led by Rufus Sylvester, Duncan McMartin, and "Twelve-foot" Davis. Sylvester was sent by Adair and a dozen other miners to report on prospects in Omineca. His party reached Fort St. James before the others, arriving on November 11, and although delayed by storms, was away for the mines on November 14. One of the party, named Buckley, returned to Quesnel from Fort St. James with some horses used in transportation, arriving on December 7. He reported that Byrnes and his friends became "perfectly wild" when they learned that Sylvester was likely to reach Vital Creek before them, and that quarrels followed with heated exchanges concerning the truthfulness of Byrnes' report. Byrnes, according to Buckley, had said that Vital Creek was richer than he had reported and had stated that he and Laforce had discovered a much richer creek on their short prospecting trips from Vital Creek, but he had refused to

See Appendix E Number 11
disclose its location while Buckley was present. This report caused quite a stir in Cariboo.

Sylvester and Cain reached Vital Creek on November 25, 1869, and found that Kelly and Laforce had suspended work on account of frost. Grant and Hawkins, formerly members of the Byrnes party, arrived four days later, located claims and then returned to Takla Landing where they met Byrnes, McMartin, Davis and fourteen others, who made a hurried journey to Vital Creek, located claims, and returned to the Landing. Dennis Cain, on his return to Cariboo in December to report conditions to Adair, recorded the following claims with the Gold Commissioner:

"Discovery Co., 6 interests; Chapman, 3; Adair Co., 11; New Caledonia, 6; Telegraph Co. 15; Trevor Co. 7; Martin Co., 6; Hazard Co., 1." These were all creek claims, running one

1 Sentinel, November 6, December 11, 18 and 25, 1869. Buckley's report is not reliable. It is not confirmed by other miners and was contradicted by Lamont (Sentence, March 19, 1870) and by Chapman, (Sentence, March 26, 1870) and very emphatically by Byrnes (Sentence, April 3, 1870). Events supported the latter.

2 Dennis Cain later appeared in Cassiar, mined on Thibert Creek in 1874, (Colonist July 5 and 19, 1874) built a sloop for transportation on Dease Lake at 12 per pound; (Colonist February 6, September 21, 1875) and, perhaps, discovered Dennis Creek, a tributary of Spring Creek (Colonist, April 14, 1876)

3 Sentinel, December 25, 1869; and March 19, 1870.

4 Ibid. December 25, 1869.
hundred feet up and down stream and from high water to high water across it. (See page 6 above) All the claims were laid over until June 30, 1870.

Dennis Cain further reported that the Byrnes party had worked only about five hundred feet on Vital Creek, not eight hundred as stated in Byrnes's report, and that even the five hundred feet had not been worked thoroughly, but only in spots. He contended that the claims were more valuable than Byrnes' report indicated. Cain, however, saw Vital Creek in the late fall, three months after Byrnes had left, and also after a fall of snow followed by heavy frost, and may have been mistaken. The newspapers of Cariboo, Victoria, and New Westminster exaggerated both Buckley's and Cain's reports. All these circumstances, rumors, activities led to the rush to the mines in 1870.

About a score of miners passed the winter at the field. They packed supplies to Vital Creek, built cabins and generally prepared for the approaching summer. Sylvester sank a shaft in the Adair ground through three feet of surface gravel, and nine feet of slum into a layer of gravel, which promised well, but which he was compelled by water and cold to abandon before it could be properly tested. He sank two other shafts two miles farther up the creek, but did not strike pay dirt. Noticing that the stream in places

1 m Ibid. December 25, 1869.
2 Ibid. March 19, 1870; letters and Lamont's report.
did not run in its original bed, the miners sank shafts on bench claims in an attempt to find the original course. During the winter and spring, McMartin sank a shaft to a depth of forty-four feet to bed-rock and drifted thirty feet along it without getting into paying ground. Sylvester and Black struck bedrock at a depth of thirty feet with like result. The winter operations did not pay.

Regular communication was maintained with the outside world by a one-man carrying service called the "Omineca Express". R. J. Lamont, the expressman, started on the first trip from Quesnel to Vital Creek, on January 31, with a dog-train and toboggan. He had a hard time getting through, on account of heavy snow and on the return journey, parts of his hands and face were frozen. The venture was successful, however, and on March 19, he announced the inauguration of a regular service. During the spring and summer, he made four trips, arriving back at Quesnel on March 16, May 9, June 21, and August 9. Much of the information about Vital Creek mines in 1870 is taken from periodical reports made by Lamont and the letters sent out with him by miners. In May he arranged to handle the Omineca business of Barnard's Express

---

1 Ibid. May 14 and June 25, 1870.
2 Ibid. June 25; a report made by nine returned miners.
3 Ibid. March 19, 1870.
4 Ibid. March 19, May 14, June 14, and August 13, 1870.
and of Wells Fargo and Company. The express charge to and from the mines on each letter was two dollars and fifty cents. When Vital Creek mines declined in August, 1870, Lamont left to prospect on the Skeena River.

Navigation on the Upper Fraser River opened up toward the end of April in 1870. Then Captain J. W. Moore's barge "Omineca", which had been built during the winter, left Quesnel for Stuart Lake with a crew of twenty-five men, a few passengers and twelve tons of freight. Wadley (or Wadleigh), Patrick Hickey, and other boatmen followed soon after. By the middle of May there were about one hundred and fifty white men and one hundred Chinamen on their way from Quesnel to the mines.

1 Ibid. May 28, 1870, advertising announcement.
2 Ibid. August 13, 1870.
3 Ibid. April 30.
4 Ibid. May 7.
5 Lamont, reported meeting 125 white men and a hundred Chinamen on his trip from Vital Creek to Quesnel, April 20 to May 9, (Sentinel, May 14, 1870.) The Colonist, May 8, 1870, stated, "Over 200 miners have left Quesnelmouth for the Peace River country this spring." On May 15, it added "350 men had passed Quesnelmouth for Peace River." On May 17, it published a letter dated Quesnelmouth, May 7, 1870, from "Peace", a fairly reliable correspondent, which stated, "About 120 white men and 40 to 50 Chinamen have gone up and others are following daily." This last confirms Lamont's estimate.
About fifty others reached the mining area by way of the Skeena River route, which is shown on Map No. I opposite page 14 above. A party of these, consisting of Joseph Devlin, John Wolf, G. Roger, Peter and Stevens, described their trip from the mouth of the Skeena River as follows:

The party were 10½ days (sic) from the Mouth to the Forks of Skeena River; 6 days from the Forks to Babine; remained at Babine 8½ days trying to get Indians to pack provisions across the Divide to Lake Tatlah. Failing this they took canoes and went to Fort Babine, 35 miles. There they got Indians by giving a sack of flour to each and found that the distance from Babine to Lake Tatlah is 24 miles of land travel and 8 miles lake navigation. At Lake Tatlah, they dug out, with a shovel and an axe, a canoe, and went up to Tatlah's Landing in 1½ days.

At the Landing they worked for a time on the trail from Takla Landing to Fall River with a road gang of twelve men in charge of Fitzgerald, the newly arrived acting Gold Commissioner, and received twenty-five dollars each, and board, for this work. Fitzgerald also built a bridge with a fifty-seven foot span across the Fall River, near its mouth, to connect with a trail from Vital

1 Colonist, March 19, 1870, stated, SS.Otter "sailed yesterday with 15 passengers for Skeena River" and on April 21, SS. Otter "carried about 60 passengers, 36 of whom were booked for Skeena."

2 Ibid. July 24, 1870.

3 Later named Takla.

4 They probably meant Babine Portage at the south end of Lake Babine, an old H. B. C. summer post was located there.
Greek, which the miners had just completed.

The trails gave access to the Omineca field and were used by pack and cattle trains with a great saving in time and expense. Captain J. W. Moore's barge, "Omineca" provided transportation between Fort St. James and Takla Landing for passengers, freight and animals.

About 350 men were in the Vital Creek district in the first week of June, when the number of miners was at the highest because late-comers were still coming in and early arrivals had not yet begun to leave. The miners scattered over Vital Creek and the other streams in the vicinity, such as Silver Creek, Dan Creek, Humphrey Creek, and Fall River. They soon found that average earnings amounted to only three dollars a day. Prospecting about the headwaters of Nation River gave not better results. Spring freshets suspended mining in those places that were paying wages. Many of the newly arrived "miners" who had hoped to start work immediately on arrival, and to clean up fortunes in a short time, were disillusioned and during the next three weeks, about two hundred set out on the return journey to Cariboo and Victoria.

Gillis' recently built saloon, and "Twelve-foot" Davis' bakery

1 Ibid. May 30, and July 24, 1870; Sentinel, June 25, 1870.
2 Sentinel, June 25, 1870, and Moore's advertisement in the same paper, April 23, 1870.
3 Sentinel, June 25, and July 9, 1870; Colonist, September 23, 1870; Standard July 4, 1870.
4 Sentinel, June 25 and July 2, 1870.
and coffee-house at Vital Creek, were not opened. The price of flour fell first to thirty-five cents per pound and then to fourteen cents, with other prices in proportion.

McLeod, a packer, had driven a train of pack animals from the Fraser Valley via the Hudson's Bay Company's trail to Fort St. James and from there along the shores of the lakes towards Vital Creek. When he was a few miles from Takla Landing, McLeod received instructions to dump the goods as the price of supplies would not cover the cost of transporting them the rest of the way to the diggings. The cost of packing from Takla Landing to Vital Creek was eighteen cents a pound at the time.

By the end of June, only 150 men remained in the district, about thirty men each at Vital Creek and Silver Creek, twenty men on Quartz Creek, and the rest either out prospecting or waiting at Takla Landing for developments.

During the month of July, supplies became scarcer and prices rose again. Flour sold at 25¢ per pound; bacon 60¢; beans 25¢; sugar 50¢; tea $1.50; tobacco $2.00 and butter $1.50. These

1 Sentinel, June 25, 1870; the report of nine men who left Vital Creek on June 8, 1870 also. Ibid. July 2 and 9, and Colonist, July 14, 1870.
2 This trail followed the Telegraph trail.
3 Sentinel July 30 and August 13, 1870; Colonist, August 11, 1870; Standard, August 2, 1870.
4 Sentinel, August 13, 1870; Letter of J. C. For graph prices at Takla Landing 1870 see next page.
Graph II - Prices at Takla Landing 1870

References are given below the table opposite the date. Prices at Vital Creek were greater than those at Takla Landing by the amount of the packing rate (15¢ per pound) (Sentinel March 26, August 13, 1870) until the miners began to leave Vital Creek; then prices were lower at the creek. At one time, about June 25, flour sold for 14¢ a pound at Vital Creek. (Sentinel, July 9, 1870)
prices held until gold strikes were reported fifty miles down the Omineca, on a creek afterwards called Germansen Creek.

There was a long and bitter controversy at Quesnel concerning the conduct and activities of the original Peace River Prospecting Party. Some subscribers contended that the members of the party should have confined themselves to prospecting, as agreed upon, instead of mining their claims on Vital Creek. Others recognized that the arrival of the Chapman party was a good reason for their change of plan because of the limited extent of the mining area.

The lack of candour of the official report also aroused criticism. In this, however, the party appear to have endeavored to save the losses which they foresaw if there was a rush of miners to Vital Creek, as well as to reserve the mines for themselves. Their counsel of caution was justified.

SECTION 4, GERMANSEN CREEK  1870 - 71

Germansen Creek is a tributary of the Omineca about fifty miles east of Silver Creek. Germansen Creek flows through a formation of blue slate with veins of quartz running through the rock in all directions. It is a shallow swift-running stream about sixty feet in width near its mouth, varying in depth from one to three feet, with occasional holes. Near the mouth the bed is stony with stretches of solid rock and the banks are steep and rocky. Five miles from its mouth, and again about five miles further up, the stream narrows into a series of canyons; between
the canyons there are flat reaches of considerable extent. The layer of surface soil becomes steadily thicker as one ascends the stream, and above the lower canyon it was necessary to sink shafts to reach bedrock.

The gold on Germansen Creek was distributed through the shallow soil and gravel. It was coarse and scaly, and therefore excellent poor-man's diggings when found in sufficient quantity. Small lumps of silver were frequently found in the sluice boxes with the gold, as in the Vital Creek area.

Germansen Creek was discovered after the failure of Vital Creek in June. Prospectors were attracted to Finlay River by the report that Peter Toy and his partner were making good money on a bar below Omineca River. A. Frazer, with three companions prospected Nation River, Parsnip River and Peace River, during June, July, and August. J. Welsh left with a party for Peace River via Omineca about the middle of June. James Germansen and a party of four prospected the Omineca to Finlay River, which they prospected until sickness compelled them to return to Vital Creek. None of these ventures were successful.

1 Sentinel, September 24, 1870 and Colonist December 11, 1870, some scales were over an inch across.
2 Sentinel, July 9, 1870; Standard, September 23, 1870.
3 Sentinel June 25 and 30, 1870; Colonist September 23, 1870; Standard, September 23, 1870.
4 Sentinel, July 9, 1870.
5 Ibid. September 24, 1870, Henry McDame, and, perhaps, John Giscome were in this party.
James Germansen, immediately on his return to Vital Creek, organized another party with Duncan Martin, James May and W. Smith, to prospect more thoroughly a creek, flowing into the Omineca, at the mouth of which Germansen had obtained five cents to a pan of dirt, but which his companions had refused to tarry on their way to Finlay River. Germansen's confidence in this stream caused the 110 miners left at Vital to await his return with interest and impatience.

Germansen and his companions arrived back at Vital Creek late one evening in the third week in August. They reported that they had washed out two dollars and fifty cents in coarse gold from a single pan at the mouth of Germansen Creek. Intense excitement at once filled the camp and some of the miners started out the same night and picked their way over the trail to Hogem with lighted candles in broken bottles. The next evening the old camps were deserted, except for three men each at Vital and Silver Creeks.

1 James Germansen was a native of St. Paul, Minn., who started for British Columbia by way of Port Garry and Saskatchewan River in the spring of 1866 in company with "Dancing Bill", "Black Jack" and Robert Lamont. They wintered on the Saskatchewan and in the spring of 1867, organized a party to come through the mountains by way of Jasper House. They arrived at Quesnelmouth in the autumn of 1868; British Colonist, December 11, 1870. It seems probable that they turned aside into the Peace River in the fall of 1867-68, prospecting on Nation River. Sentinel, March 19, 1870. Germansen remained in Omineca when Cassiar was opened up.

2 According to the Colonist, December 11, 1870, this was "Peace River" Smith, who mined on McDame Creek in 1874 and was drowned when the SS."Pacific" foundered in 1875. (continued on next page)
The first miners on the creek took out from half an ounce to two ounces of gold per day to the hand. J. Giscome and Company, with three claims, panned out fifty-six dollars for a day's work. The first company to begin box-sluicing, the Campbell Company, of which Rufus Sylvester was a partner, took out thirty-four and a half ounces in three days. Over 120 miners were working on the creek by the first week in September, some panning, some making crude rockers, some hewing and whipsawing lumber to construct wingdams to divert the water from the creek bed.

The rivers froze over on October 20. Two weeks later, on November 4, a heavy freshet on Germansen Creek swept away most of the wingdams and ended mining in the bed of the stream for the season. All the miners left, except about twenty who had provisions at Takla Landing and planned to sleigh them over the snow.

2 (continued from p. 65)
Later reports, however, say it was "Black Jack" Smith who accompanied Germansen.

3 Sentinel, September 24, 1870, a letter of J. C. dated Germansen Creek, September 4, 1870, and others letters; Colonist, December 11, 1870.

4 Colonist, December 11, 1870, report of an interview with James Germansen; Sentinel, September 24, 1870, Letters and reports.

1 Sentinel, November 19, 1870.
and down the ice-bound Omineca during the winter months.  

A letter to the Mainland Guardian sums up the results of the season's activities as follows:

The first company have laid over; the second Co... is 15 Chinamen......; the third Co. is Pat Kelly's, who have made from $10.00 to $30.00 per day "to the hand", their ground is from 2 to 3 feet deep; the fourth Co. laid over; the fifth Co., Joe Clarihue, 4 men, have made from 20 to 30 ozs. per week, the depth from 2 to 6 feet; the sixth Co. John Guiscum, 3 men from 18 to 30 ozs. per week; the celebrated 12 foot Davis Co., from 20 to 100 ozs. per week; B. Halladay Co., have made an average of $20 per day to the hand; Chapman Co., from 1 to 2 ozs. per day to the hand; the Discovery Co. have made 20 to 70 ozs. per week; the Black Pine Co. have made from $10 to $20 per day to the hand; the Sylvester Co. 1 to 2 ozs. per day to the hand; the Co.....above made an ounce to $20 per day to the hand, the next Co. 1 oz. per day to the hand; I have now arrived on my claim, from which we have taken as high as 30 ozs. per week; the next Co. above us have made expenses; Moore & Co. have made wages; the Black Bear Co., I have not learned

1 Sentinel, September 24, November 19, and 26 and December 3, 1870; Guardian, November 26 and 30, 1870; British Colonist, November 27, 1870, Rufus Sylvester reported on February 1871 that forty men were wintering at or above Fort St. James; See Cariboo Sentinel, February 4, 1871.

2 Guardian, November 26, 1870.

3 According to Sylvester the Chinamen took out $6,700 and Davis & Co. $5,000; See Cariboo Sentinel November 19, 1870.

4 Giscombe or Giscome, sometimes referred to as Guichon, but not to be confused with the Guichon of Girod and Guichon.

5 At this time and place ten dollars per day.
their success; Lemeur Co. have made to 5 men 70 ozs. last week; the next Co. have made $8 to $10 per day to the hand with rocker; Fenton & Bro. have a very rich claim; Craton & Co. have made $120 to $12 per day to the hand besides a nugget that weighed 27 ozs. which I believe will give from 18 to 20 ozs. of pure gold. In going higher up, there are several cos. whose claims are laid over. Fred Black showed me a nugget which he took from his claim at the top of the creek weighing $59. The creek has been prospected for at least three miles and it promises to be equally good throughout......

W. H. Fitzgerald confirmed the favourable reports for the early part of the season, but gave warning that no extensive diggings had been found. In the later part of the season, results were less promising but prospects on some benches turned out well and gold was found on several creeks in the vicinity and even on the Osalinka River, a large tributary of the Omineca. These finds buoyed up hope for the next season. The price of provisions rose sharply when Germansen's find was made known. Flour sold at $1.00 per lb., bacon $1.75 per lb. and other supplies in proportion, to the profit of Elmore, the only trader at Germansen Creek during the season of 1870. Fresh beef could be had for 50¢ per lb., because a drove of thirty-nine beeves had reached Takla Landing just after the rush to Germansen and had been driven in. Partly on account of the shortage of provisions, and partly to allow miners time to return to Cariboo before the freeze-up, Fitzgerald laid over all claims from October 14, 1870

1 See also Sylvester's Report in Sentinel, November 19, 1870. A piece of quartz and gold had been found weighing 24½ ounces.

2 Ibid. "Fred Black had found another piece weighing $54.00".

3 See graph No. III p. 75.
to June 15, 1871.

When this news reached the merchants and packers on the way in with cargoes, they stored the goods and returned to Quesnel. J. B. Lovell left a boat load at Fort St. James. Calbreath, Dunlevy and Wright cached theirs on the Stuart River.

1 Sentinel, September 24, November 19 and 26, December 3, 1870, February 4, 1871; Guardian, November 26 and 30, 1870; Colonist, November 27, 1870.

2 Lovell was later a merchant and packer at Glenora 1874 to 1879, perhaps longer. He was Justice of the Peace and arranged for letter carriage at 50¢ per letter when the Cassiar mail was suspended in winter.

3 John Calbreath (Callbreath, Calbraith) was a farmer in the Upper Fraser valley, storekeeper in Omineca and both in Cassiar. In 1870 he grew 100,000 pounds of grain on his Fraser River farm (Guardian, Dec. 21, 1870) and took supplies into Omineca in the same year (Sentinel Oct. 29, Nov. 19, 1870). In Cassiar he ran pack trains from 1874 to 1879, and probably later still, in partnership at various times with Uriah Nelson, G. B. Wright, Grant and Cook (Colonist, Aug. 23, 1874; Feb. 4, Nov. 2, 1875; March 30, 1876; Nov. 13, 1877; March 16, 18, 1879). He had a store on Dease Creek (Colonist, March 30, 1876) another at Cla-pan bar on the Upper Stikine in 1878 (Colonist, Sep. 13, 1878) and a third on Defot Creek (Colonist, Oct. 11, 1878). Calbreath, Grant, and Cock were still in business at Glenora in 1887 (B. C. Directory 1887). There is still a Calbreath farming on Stikine River.
The value of the gold taken from Germansen Creek in 1870 was estimated by Germansen to be $70,000; Sylvester placed it at $40,000. Newspaper reports indicate returns of about twenty dollars a day in the earlier part of the season. After allowing for lost time in wingdamming and the poorer returns of the later season, ten dollars per day to the hand seems a reasonable estimate of the average takings during about forty-five days for 120 men. The total amount taken out at the end of 1870 on this basis was $54,000.

During the winter of 1870-71, Rufus Sylvester carried letters, newspapers, parcels, gold, etc., between Germansen Creek and Quesnel at intervals of about six weeks and acted as guide for parties travelling to Germansen Creek. Rufus Sylvester followed the Hudson’s Bay Company’s trail (the Telegraph Trail) to Fort St. James, and then struck northward to Germansen Creek, breaking his own trail along a route later followed by the government trail. (See Map No. I opposite page 14 above).

The question of routes caused considerable discussion in Quesnel and Victoria during the winter of 1870-71. Petitions were circulated in favour of an almost all-water route via Giscome.

1 Colonist, December 11, 1870.
2 Sentinel, November 19, 1870.
3 Sentinel September 24, November 12, 19, 1870 et al; Morice, op. cit. p. 318 f.
Portage, Parsnip and Omineca Rivers, (see p. 37 above) and a cattle trail from Quesnel to Germansen Creek via Fort St. James. The government acted upon these petitions and both routes were opened up but the Giscome Portage Omineca River route proved so long and difficult that few used it after midsummer 1871. The trail from Quesnel to Fort St. James was improved and a trail made from Fort St. James north to Germansen Creek, during the summer of 1871. It was further improved during the next year. Meanwhile SS. "Victoria" navigated the Fraser from Soda Creek to the foot of Cottonwood Canyon, calling at Quesnel and other way points, and G. B. Wright's steamer "Enterprise" ran from above Cottonwood Canyon to Fort George, sometimes to Giscome Portage up the Fraser.

As to the Skeena route, the Provincial Government advertised in January 1871, for tenders on trails from Hazelton to Babine, and from Babine to Lake Takla via Frying Pan Creek. W. H. Woodcock obtained the charter with right to collect tolls in return.

1 Sentinel, December 3, 24, 1870, news item and copy of the petition. See also B. C. Archives, M. F. 102, manuscript letter of H. M. Ball, G. C. to the Colonial Secretary, dated December 28, 1870.
2 Sentinel, February 4, April 29, June 24, 1871.
3 Morice: op.cit. p. 516; Colonist, July 25, September 12, 1871; Sentinel, October 4, 1871.
4 B. C. Sessional Papers 1873, Public Accounts of 1872, p. 32
5 Advertisement in Sentinel May 6, 1871.
for clearing and levelling the trails. Before Woodcock began work, however, Captain William Moore arrived at Hazelton with a train of thirty animals loaded with merchandise which he was under contract to deliver immediately to Messrs. Sterling and Smith at Takla Landing. He pushed on through little known country, making his own trail and delivered his goods. Then he returned to Hazelton, organized a protest meeting of miners and merchants to demand compensation for the work done. Meanwhile, he put the "Minnie" on the Skeena River and another boat on Lake Babine. Woodcock hastened to finish his trails in September but E. Dewdney, inspecting for the Public Works Department, reported that they did not come up to specifications and they were taken over by the Government. Woodcock was later paid $2,000.00 compensation for the work done. The next year $2,441.59 more was spent improving them.

Mining was recommenced on Germansen Creek early in 1871. In February James May, Fred Black, Lewis Halloway, J. Lewis and a few other old hands snowshoed from Cariboo to the Creek to build

2 Morice: op. cit., p. 516; Colonist, June 14, 1871.
3 Standard, March 25, August 30, 1871. He continued the "Omineca" to Takla Landing.
stores, saloons, shacks, for the merchants in preparation for the expected rush.

In the first half of March, 1871, twenty men more left the Cariboo, and farmers became "apprehensive that they will not be able to procure hands to put in their crops"!

In April, six boats and six canoes, bearing ninety men, left Quesnelmouth for Germansen Creek. In May, the exodus increased. In June the number of miners at the mines reached five hundred. Trains of animals also made their way along Telegraph Trail toward the mines, Rufus Sylvester on his return to Quesnel in May, mentions meeting D. Ercole with a drove of 304 sheep, D. C. English with nineteen beeves and Snyder with seventy-six cows and beeves. Four hundred pack animals and another 150 head of cattle followed soon after. In spite of this, provisions became very scarce, for the pack trains, beeves and sheep were slow to arrive. Prices remained high at the following level: "flour, 80¢ per lb.;

---

1 Sentinel, February 4, 1871; Colonist, February 24, 1871.
2 Sentinel, March 11, 1871. There were 125 farmers in Cariboo.
3 Ibid. April 29.
4 Ibid. May 27.
5 Ibid. June 3, and Standard, June 12, 1871.
Beans, $2.93 per cwt.; bacon, $1.50 per cwt. (none in market); sugar, $1.25 and $1.40 (10¢ per lb.); coffee, $1.25; tea, $2.00; yeast powder, $1.00 per box; tobacco, $4.00 per lb. (none in market); candles, $1.50. Many miners were obliged to "subsist" on one meal a day "rather than leave". Others had to leave.

The Mainland Guardian of New Westminster gives the description of the experiences of one who returned without mishap:

I arrived here (Germansen Creek) yesterday, being 44 days continued travel in reaching the mines. I had a very disagreeable trip on the stage to Soda Creek, it was raining most of the time and to make things worse, I had an outside seat and suffered severely from the cold, which the wind made very intense. When I arrived at Quesnelmouth (Quesnel), I found the crowd going up the Fraser in boats; so I concluded to follow the crowd and go by way of Fraser and Steward (Sic) Rivers. We started on the steamer Victoria, which took us up to Cottonwood Canyon connecting with the Enterprise for Fort George Canyon. We were two or three day (sic) going and getting ready to embark in the small boats, three of which started. The one I took passage on was the largest, it being 47 feet long and about 12 feet wide. When the passengers and crew got on board we were very crowded, there being 29 persons all told. We stopped every night to camp, and as we stopped gen-

The brackets contain the prices of these commodities calculated from the returns of imports amount and price in the B. C. Gazette June 17, 1871. The retail prices would be higher.

Ibid. hams and bacon were lumped together in the import returns.

Sentinel, June 24, 1871, for a graph of some prices on Germansen Creek see next page.

Guardian, August 11, 1871.
Graph III - Prices at Germansen Creek 1870 and 1871

The references for the various dates are given below:

Aug. 1(?) 1870 - Sentinel, Aug. 24, 1870.
Nov. 7(?) 1870 - Guardian, Nov. 30, 1870; Colonist, Dec. 1, 1870.
May 30(?) 1871 - Sentinel, June 24, 1871.
June 6 - Colonist, June 30, July 5, 1871.
July 1(?) - Standard, July 25, 1871; Colonist, July 25, 1871.
July 16 - Sentinel, Aug. 5, 1871.
July 30 - Sentinel, Aug. 12, 1871, J.C.; Colonist, Aug. 15, 1871. Peter Cargotitch.
Aug. 6 - Standard, Aug. 30, 1871.
Aug. 15(?) - Sentinel, Sep. 2, 1871, R.S. and Special Correspondent (J.C.)
Sep. 8 - Colonist, Oct. 4, 1871, Germansen's Statement.
Sep. 24 - Standard, Oct. 25, 1871.
Oct. 4(?) - Sentinel, Oct. 28, 1871; Colonist, Nov. 5, 1871; Standard, Nov. 6, 1871.

( ) indicates an approximate date.
erally about 6 o'clock we had plenty of time to fish and cook. We caught some very nice trout on the way up, weighing from half a pound up to ten pounds. I paid $25.00 fare to Tatla (Takla) Landing (sic) and 12½ per cent (sic) on grub and blankets. On reaching Tatlah Landing (sic) I shouldered my "swag" weighing one hundred pounds and started to make a portage of fifty miles to the Omineca river. (sic) It took me four days to make the fifty miles; but I think if all the gold in this Omineca country were offered to me to do it again I would not do it. After reaching the river, I found the boatmen wanted seven dollars for a passage down, and seven cents per lb. on our packs, which we objected to, so we took a half day's rest and then walked eight miles further. We then built a raft on which we embarked with our "iktas" and reached Germansen Creek in thirteen hours.....I am a perfect picture to look at; rough, ragged and dirty. The knees of my pants are in a very delapidated state, and as for the seat, that fell out long ago.

Mining proceeded apace on the Germansen Creek; the creek was staked for many miles. A new Discovery Company located claims about eight miles above the lower canyon and took out 380 ounces in thirteen days; Duncan McMartin and Company made forty dollars per day to the hand on an adjoining claim; Ralph and Company averaged ten dollars a day to the hand using a rocker. Everything was looking rosy when the spring freshet swept the creek in May and high water suspended creek mining for a month.

The benches then claimed attention. Even during April, Fred Black and three others had been digging out frozen dirt, and pack-

1 Sentinel, June 24, 1871. See also the report of P. O'Reilly, G. C. dated Germansen Creek, June 6, "A company of five men............washed up 390 ounces after 15 days washing" in the Colonist, July 5, 1871.

2 Ibid. May 20, and August 5. The creek claims were laid over until June 3.
ing it down to the creek where they washed it, making ten cents a pan. They thought that, after the frost got out of the ground, good pay could be made with a ditch and sluice boxes. On the South Fork of Germansen, Ben Edwards and Company sank a shaft to a depth of thirty feet and began drifting with fair results for a time, but as the claim did not pay as well as his old one in Cariboo, Edwards abandoned it and returned to Barkerville. The company that continued operations sank a deep shaft but failed to reach bed rock by winter, so they, too, abandoned it.

Several companies were encouraged by good prospects on the benches to dig ditches for a water supply. The most successful of these was the Cornish Company of five men who worked on the flat just above the Germansen Creek townsite. They worked for six weeks on a ditch, which enabled them to wash out fifteen ounces in four days for the first clean-up, using sluice boxes and twelve and eleven ounces to two later clean-ups, or about an ounce per day to the hand for the period of washing. Gold at Germansen was worth sixteen dollars an ounce so that the daily earnings of these men, including the six weeks' ditching, was in the neighborhood of

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid. June 24 and August 5.
3 Ibid. October 14.
5 Colonist, August 5 and 30, 1871. Report of Mr. Budlong in the latter.
three dollars a day. The Cornish Company migrated to Black Jack
1 Gulch. A certain Kelly Company was reported doing well on a
bench claim in August but no particulars were given. For the rest,
numerous benches were tried and found to pay only small wages,
which were nevertheless sufficient to attract a large number of
miners in the latter part of the season after they had tried out
the claims on the creek bed.

The water receded in June 1871, and the miners commenced
energetic measures for diverting the creek above the town where
wide flats and a winding channel made such a course feasible.
Elsewhere, wingdams dotted the creek, water wheels, ingeniously
constructed, pumped the dammed areas clear of water, and men be-
gan washing the gravel with sluice boxes of lumber hewn out of
logs or bought from two saw-mills, Christie Bros.,1 and Romanos',
on the upper part of the creek, at 12½¢ per foot. The results
were most disappointing. The only company to pay consistently
while working creek claims was the Payne Company which divided
a dividend of fifty dollars a day to the interest for about two
months. Isaac (Ike) Stevens and Company, Kearney (on a claim

1 Ibid. August 30, and September 2.
2 Small wages meant about eight dollars (half an
ounce) per day while washing.
3 Colonist, August 10, 1871 and Sentinel, September
2, 1871.
4 Sentinel, September 2, 1871. Sylvester's Report.
Standard, July 25, 1871; Colonist July 25, 1871.
5 Ibid. September 2 and 30, Colonist, October 4 and 8, 1871.
bought from "Twelve-foot Davis), Dan McDonald, and the Lewis Company, reported similar yields for brief periods.

As for the rest, during the best week reported for the hundred miners below the townsite, the total return was five hundred ounces of gold, an average of about $11.50 per day to the hand while washing; generally, they obtained less.

Diverting the creek was even more disappointing, and by the end of August, men were leaving Germansen Creek at the rate of seventy per day. Even James Germansen tried to sell his claim.

The general result of activities in 1872, were similar to that of 1871, on a smaller scale. The Payne Company paid twenty-four dollars a day to the hand throughout the season. The Fugon Company took out 110 ounces in two weeks and nothing during the rest of the season. Three companies paid about twenty dollars per day to the hand. A few others paid wages. The rest, about 125 out of 150 men on the creek, earned expenses or less and left early.

1 Colonist, August 15 and September 2, 1871, and Sentinel, September 2, 1871.
2 Sentinel, September 16, 1871.
3 Colonist, August 30, 1871; report of G. P. Budlong.
4 Sentinel, July 6, 27, September 21, and October 26, 1872.
5 Ibid. and Colonist, op. cit.
SECTION 5. MANSON CREEK 1871 - 72

In 1871 the centre of the Omineca mining activities shifted from Germansen Creek to the Manson Creek district. Manson Creek lies about eight miles to the south-east of Germansen. Manson Creek is a small stream with about one-third of the volume of water of Germansen Creek and only fifteen miles long. It flows into Manson Lake through a range of steep hills with numerous small gullies, from which a number of tributaries from one to three miles long feed the creek. Black Jack Gulch, Lost Creek, Myers Creek, Slate Creek, Nugget Gulch and Kildare Creek are all of this nature. These small streams provided a ready supply of water for sluicing. Bed Rock was well below the surface, as in Cariboo. The field was not rich, and the rush there followed along the lines of the rushes discussed above, except that the deep diggings prolonged it for two years, 1871 to 1873.

Gold was discovered on Manson Creek by Robert Howell, a former Royal Engineer, on July 5, 1871. He dug a ditch, hewed a sluice-box out of a tree and on the third day, washed out about two ounces ($36.00) of coarse gold in two hours. He formed

1 Variously referred to as - Ille Jose, Illemore, Elenore, Eleanor, Ellenore, Elnora, Elm, and Elmore Gulch. It obtained its name from its discoverer, "Black Jack" Smith.

2 At first named Skeleton Creek on account of the discovery on it of three skeletons, tools, utensils, and remnants of clothing; See Colonist, October 8, 1871.

3 Sentinel, August 5, 1871.

4 Colonist, August 9, 1871 and report of P.O'Reilly, G. C.
a company and began whipsawing lumber for sluices. His discovery attracted other miners who found gold on the various tributaries of Manson Creek. About two hundred worked claims during August and September.

The returns on most of the creeks were poor. On Manson Creek itself the Discovery Company (Howell and Company) diverted the creek and obtained four dollars for a month's work. On Black Jack Gulch, near Howell's original strike, "Black Jack" Smith, the discoverer, after getting a big initial return, made only two dollars per day for working fifty feet of his claim. Shafts sunk to the bed-rock in various places usually gave discouraging returns. One Company made three dollars in three days on Manson Creek.

Two on Myers Creek dug to depths of thirty-five and seventy-five feet through blue clay without obtaining anything, or even reaching bedrock.

A few claims, however, paid fairly well. The Discovery Company - J. Carson and Company - on Lost Creek, took out an ounce per day, (about $16.00) to the hand during most of the

1 B. C. Archives. M. S. S. 802, a 1. Letter from Howell to O'Reilly dated Manson River, July 12, 1871.
2 Sentinel, September 30, 1871 and Colonist, October 4, 1871.
3 Discovered by "Black Jack" Smith, here called B. Smith, and Shep Young; Sentinel, August 5, 1871 and Colonist, August 15, 1871.
4 Colonist, August 30 and 31, 1871.
season, ground sluicing. The Irving Company, with five men, took out 192 ounces in five days and at the close of the season a share in the Company sold for twenty-five hundred dollars.

A few shafts on Black Jack Gulch struck bedrock at a depth of twenty-five feet and paid ten, twenty-five, and fifty cents to the pan. John White took out eighteen hundred dollars during the season and "Twelve-foot" Davis 140 ounces in one week. Gravel on the benches of Manson Creek paid as much as an ounce a day to the hand. Plans were laid in the fall for the formation of a joint stock company to supply water to the benches.

Among the last reports of the season was one that Peterson, and D. Humphreys had taken five thousand and two thousand dollars in turn from the same claim on Peterson Flat. Everyone took a very hopeful view of Manson River. Once more a favourable report in the autumn gave a new lease of life to Omineca. About 150 men remained for the winter, more than in any other year. A few dug tunnels.

1 Sentinel, August 12, September 30, and October 4, 1871.
2 Colonist, September 2, and October 4, 1871.
3 Sentinel, September 2, and 30, 1871.
4 Colonist, August 30 and 31, 1871. One dollar per pan gives about two ounces ($36.00) per day.
5 Ibid. September 2, October 4, and November 29, 1871.
6 Ibid. November 22, 1871.
The spring of 1872 was late. As the frost came out of the ground the miners dug ditches to supply water to the bench claims on Manson and Slate Creeks, but mining did not become general until July. Then the story of Germansen Creek was repeated. The Peterson claim on Discovery Flat, Manson Creek, paid nearly four thousand dollars to the interest on the season's work. The Guichon Company on Slate Creek divided 180 ounces between two men for the season; and the Discovery Company of five men at Lost Creek, took from seventy to a hundred ounces per week out of a seventy foot shaft during the season. The majority paid only wages or expenses, and many lost money on their venture. Prices declined steadily. (See graph on next page)

The greatest number of miners in the Omineca field in 1872 was six hundred, during August, of which four hundred and fifty were in the Manson Creek area; but by September the number had been reduced to two hundred and fifty, and "few making grub". A general exodus took place when a freshet made a clean sweep of all dams, water wheels, machinery, sluice boxes and rockers on both Germansen and Manson Creeks. Nearly a hundred were destitute when

1 Sentinel, August 17, September 21, October 26, 1872. Colonist, August 21, September 14, October 1 & 24, 1872.
2 Sentinel, August 17, 1872.
3 Colonist, September 14, 1872.
4 Colonist, October 24, 1872. Sentinel, October 26, 1872.
GRAPH IV

PRICES IN OMINECA 1872 - 1873.

The references for the various dates are given below:
March 7, 1872 - Sentinel, March 30, 1872.
April 1, 1872 - Standard, May 15, 1872.
June 23, 1872 - Sentinel, July 6, 1872;
Colonist, July 18, 1872.
July 2, 1872 - Colonist, August 7, 1872.
October 17, 1872 - Sentinel, October 26, 1872.
August 4, 1873 - Standard, September 16, 1873.
they reached the mouth of Skeena River so that the Government paid over a thousand dollars in free passages to Victoria. Seventy-five wintered at the mines tunnelling.

In 1873 no new strikes were reported from Omineca. Parties led by "Black Jack" Smith and Fred Black and several others went out prospecting in the fall of '72 and spring of '73 on Osalinka River and Finlay River. The Government had voted $1,250.00 for exploration in Omineca district and a public meeting of miners decided to send James May to the Bear Lake country. He prospected there in September and October but nothing came of it. In the mines there were never more than two hundred and seventy men at work during 1873. The only claims that paid well were the Discovery claim on Lost Creek and the Peterson claim on Manson Creek, which yielded from ninety to two hundred ounces per week. The rest of the claims, including the Payne Company on Germansen Creek, paid from poor to good wages with occasional pockets of good pay, as for example, the pocket discovered by the Canadian

2 Sentinel, January 4, 1873.
3 Colonist, October 6, and 24, 1872; July 5, October 17, and November 19, 1873. Standard, April 21; July 1, and November 19, 1873; Sentinel, September 28, and October 26, 1872; March 29, April 5, July 26; and August 9, 1873.
4 B. C. Sess. Papers 1874, Omineca Exploration PP. 79 - 80, various letters and a copy of the minutes of the miners' meeting at Dunkeld.
5 Standard, Sept. 16, 1873; Colonist, Sept. 12, and Nov. 19, 1873; Sentinel, Aug. 9, and September 6, 1873.
Company on Black Jack Gulch, which paid forty ounces in a week, and that of Hearn and Johnson on Germansen Creek, which paid about the same, and that of Macdonald and Company on Manson Creek, from which one piece of gold valued at $40.00 was taken. But these were exceptional strikes, and when the reports of good prospects in Cassiar reached Omineca at the beginning of October, 1873, most of the men left to try their luck in the north.

The number of miners in Omineca during the next ten years was between fifty and a hundred but steadily decreasing (See graph no. V on the next page and appendix C no. 1.) The gold production of $400,000 in 1871 declined to about $30,000 (See graph no. VI page 87A and appendix C no. 2.)

1 Standard, September 16, 1873.
2 Colonist, November 19, 1873.
Graph V

SEASONAL VARIATION IN POPULATION OF CASSIAR 1873-1880
AND OMINECA 1869-1880

For the basis of this graph see appendix D No. 2 and Appendix 2.
S for Summer, W for Winter.
GRAPH VI
GOLD PRODUCTION IN OMINECA
AND CASSIAR 1869-1880

For the basis of this graph see Appendix C No. 2
and Appendix D No. 1.
CHAPTER IV
CASSIAR/ 1872 - 1880

SECTION 1. - GEOGRAPHY

Cassiar was the name applied in the early days to the mining region in and about the Liard River basin in the far north of British Columbia. After the discovery of gold on Thibert Creek, the Cassiar Land Recording district was created bounded "on the South by the 55th Parallel of North Latitude, on the East by the 124th Meridian of West Longitude, on the North by the 60th Parallel; and on the west by Alaska." This was Cassiar in the period 1872 to 1880.

The Liard River has its source in the Yukon Territory. It flows in a south-easterly direction for about two hundred miles, enters British Columbia, flows east for another two hundred miles at a distance of from thirty to sixty miles south of the British

1 The name Cassiar is thought to be a corruption of Kasha, an Indian name for the district.
2 Sentinel, November 7, 1874.
3 The Liard River is variously referred to as Deloire, Deloire, Deloir, Delyare, Ure, d'Elior, D'Liard, Del'liard, Deliard, Laird, Riviere des Liards, Riviere aux liards, and Lizard (Lee-zar). Riviere des Liards was probably the original name given to it by the French-Canadian voyageurs of the Hudson's Bay Company. Confusion sometimes arises from the fact that Fort Nelson River (not Nelson River) and Dease River, both tributaries of the Liard, were sometimes called Deloire River and that Delure Creek, a tributary of Dease Creek, was sometimes called Deloire Creek.
Columbia-Yukon boundary, then turning towards the north-east, it
recrosses the provincial boundary and joins the Mackenzie River
at Fort Simpson (See map No. I opposite p. 14). In the British
Columbian section the Liard River is swift, turbulent, and danger­
ous to navigate, especially where it pierces the Rocky Mountains
at Devil's Portage and Hell's Gate. ¹

The principal tributaries of the Liard River in British
Columbia are the Fort Nelson, the Turnagain, and the Dease. Fort
Nelson River (See map no. I opposite p. 14) drains a large section
of the foothill country east of the Rocky Mountains. Its source
is a few miles from the Half-way River, a tributary of the Peace,
and it joins the Liard about thirty miles above the point where
the Liard leaves the province. The Turnagain River joins the
Liard about a hundred miles west of Fort Nelson River. Its largest
tributary, the Kechika or Muddy River, rises a few miles from the
source of the Finlay River, in the Sifton Pass.

Dease River drains Dease Lake and flows into Liard River
just after the latter enters British Columbia. It is about two

¹ So named by H. B. C. voyageurs; see Campbell's
Journal p. 31.

² Also called Middle River, Rivière au Milieu, and
Rivière du Milieu.

³ Also called the Black River, and the Little Muddy
River.

⁴ Dease River is not Cottonwood River. Cottonwood
River is a tributary of Dease River and flows into
it about forty miles below Dease Lake. Cottonwood
Lake and Cottonwood Rapids are both on Dease River,
the former just above, and the latter just below the
mouth of Cottonwood River. This section of Dease
River was - and still is - frequently called Cottonwood
River.
Dease River is not Cottonwood River; see page 87 note 4.  River is a tributary of the Thihert which flows into it about four miles below Dease Lake.  Cottonwood Lake and Cottonwood Creek are both on Dease Lake, the former far north, the latter near the north end of Cottonwood River.  River is - and still is - frequently called Cottonwood River.

2

Also called Nigger Creek. Cf. Giscombe Portage.

3

Sometimes spelt "Dice".

4

Also Laketown and Lake Town.
twenty hours of daylight in June —, the weather was hot, and the insects, especially the mosquitoes, tortured the miners day and night. The two seasons included about 150 working days, about half of which were lost in the earlier years on account of freshets and the construction and repair of dams, sluices, and other equipment. At first the miners neglected the spring season but after the destructive spring freshet of 1875 they reached their claims early in order to take full advantage of the spring low water.

SECTION 2. — DISCOVERY

News of gold in Cassiar was first brought to the outside world by an old prospector named Angus McCulloch, in 1872. It is possible, however, that other men washed gold in this district before him. Robert Cunningham and a certain Manson may have done so in 1869.

Vital Laforce ascended the Einlay on an extended trip in 1871 and may have penetrated the Liard valley. Peter Toy and William Cust intended to go to Liard River when they left Omineca in 1872.

1 Mining Report, 1875, p. 602.
2 Also spelt McCullough and McCullogh.
3 See J. B. Kerr: Biographical Sketches of Wellknown British Columbians, Vancouver, Kerr and Begg, 1890, p. 135.
4 Sentinel, October 28, 1871.
5 Ibid. July 6, 1872.
certain Hughes was reported prospecting on the Deloire River in the same year. A party led by F. W. Harte set out about that time from Omineca and, by way of the Peace, Halfway, Fort Nelson, Liard, Mackenzie, Peel, Bell, Rat, and Yukon Rivers, reached Bering Strait in July 1874. None of these parties reported finding gold in Cassiar at the time and, therefore, the credit of discovery must be given to McCulloch and his partner Henry Thibert.

Angus McCulloch took part in the gold rush to Big Bend in 1865 or 1866. When he left Big Bend he crossed the Rocky Mountains to Athabasca River and possibly prospected in the Mackenzie River district until he met Thibert there in the winter of 1870-71.

Henry Thibert was a native of Montreal who had settled in Minnesota. In 1869 he left St. Paul for Fort Garry where he met Henry Nakingus, who had just arrived from the Peace River mines. The two went to the Mackenzie River and passed the winter of 1869-70 there together. They prospected in this district during 1870 and met McCulloch in the autumn. The next spring (1871) Nakingus returned east and the other two men proceeded to Fort Simpson at the mouth of the Liard River. After buying a good supply of food, fish nets, and ammunition, they ascended the Liard River to Fort

1 Colonist, December 1, 1872.
2 Sentinel, September 28, October 26, 1872; June 7, July 26, 1873; Colonist, December 13, 1872; October 27, 1874; Charles Horetsky; Canada on the Pacific, Montreal, Dawson Brothers, 1874 p. 59.
Halkett probably on Smith River, where they passed the winter of 1871-72.

In the spring of 1872 the two prospectors continued upstream and finally panned gold on what was later called McCulloch's Bar about fifty miles west of their winter quarter's. Later in the

1 Fort Halkett was moved to Smith River in 1834; See Oliver; The Canadian North-West p.760; Journal of Robert Campbell, p. 34, note.


The account in the mining report states that Henry Nakingus was a member of the party on the Liard during the winter of 1871-72 and that he and Thibert were alone on the Stikine in the winter 1872-73. This is contrary to both the interviews noted above and to the statement to the writer by Mr. Robert Simpson, of Victoria, a retired H. B. C. official that Thibert told him (Simpson) personally that McCulloch was his only companion in the journey up the Liard.

I can find no support for the statement in Galloway's "Placer-mining in British Columbia", Victoria, Banfield, King's Printer, 1930, p.22, that Captain Moore and his sons set out for Cassiar independently in 1872. They explored there in 1873.

3 In the footsteps of John McLeod 1832 and Robert Campbell 1838, of the H. B. C. Campbell established a trading post on Dease Lake in 1838.

season they ascended Dease River to Dease Lake and made their way overland to Buck's Bar, on the Stikine, where they received a warm welcome on October 2 from the six resident miners. Thibert remained at Buck's Bar while McCulloch went on to Victoria to seek, unsuccessfully, government assistance for further prospecting.

The unfortunate McCulloch started out to rejoin Thibert in February of the next year but was caught by a snowstorm a few miles up the Stikine River and was frozen to death.

On hearing of McCulloch's death, Thibert formed a partnership with two other French-Canadian miners of Buck's Bar and went up to Dease Lake in April. They panned gold from Thibert Creek (so called after their leader) made rockers and for a time in May took out sixty dollars per day. In June they built a wingdam near the creek mouth and for the next ten weeks washed from five to eleven ounces ($80.00 to $176.00) per day to the hand.

In July "Buck" Choquette, the Stikine River discoverer, visited Thibert Creek. He immediately resigned his position in charge of the H. B. C. post near the mouth of the Stikine and joined the miners.

1 See note 2 p. 193, and Colonist December 1, 1872.
2 Standard, May 15, 1873.
3 For later activities of Henry Thibert see appendix E number 12.
4 Also called Tibbet's, Tibett's, and Thibet's.
5 Colonist, August 29, October 17 and 24, 1873; letters of William Lyons and Captain Moore; Journals and Sessional Papers of B.C. Legislative Assembly 1873-74, Victoria, Wolfenden, 1874, Reports of Exploration, p. 10.
Clerks, miners, and officials at nearby posts did likewise, so that when the S3 "California" reached Fort Wrangel in September the only man there was the United States customs officer and goods consigned to Bromovitch's store had to be taken back to Portland for lack of any one to receive them. A dozen other miners, including Captain Moore and his three sons, arrived at Thibert Creek from Victoria, Omineca, and Cariboo and set to work.

SECTION 3. - LEGAL DISPUTES.

In August two of the Moore boys out prospecting found gold on Dease Creek and some of the miners washed out from ten to a hundred dollars per day each for a short time. They wished to secure locations on both creeks and therefore, since there was no government representative in the district, they held a meeting to formulate regulations convenient to their wishes. Twenty-three miners - these were later called the "pioneers" - assembled at Thibert Creek on September 1 and approved the following resolutions:

(1) That claims be laid over from 20th of September to the 20th of June 1874.

(2) That T. Tailfer's and X. Looyon's claims be laid over on account of illness.

1 Probably Baronovitch's.
(3) That miners have liberty to go prospecting for 20 days and that their claims be respected for that period.

(4) That W. Reth (Rath) be appointed to receive money for licenses and records to be forwarded to the Government as soon as possible.

The miners acted as if the resolutions had the force of law. Under resolution (4) William Rath issued miner's licenses to those present at the meeting, receiving payment in gold at seventeen dollars per ounce, a dollar more than the official sixteen dollars for raw gold and to ten other miners whom he met on his way to Victoria. Relying on resolutions (1) and (3) they left claims on Thibert Creek unworked (contrary to law) while they located and mined claims on Dease Creek.

Meanwhile the Provincial Government appointed J. R. Adams to be mining recorder for Cassiar. Rath met Adams at Buck's Bar and offered to turn over his records of licences and locations with the fees that he had collected - $272.50 at $17.00 per ounce - on condition that the records and the resolutions of the miner's meeting were confirmed as legal. Adams was willing to issue licences a-

1 Ibid. October 17, 1873.
2 Ibid. December 5, 6, and 7, 1873; Standard December 6, 1873; B.C. Sessional Papers 1874, Report of Exploration, Cassiar District pp. 15-16.
3 Colonist, December 5, 1873; Standard, December 6, 1873, Letter of J. R. Adams; also letter of J. R. Adams to Hon. R. Beaven, dated Buck's Bar, October 10, 1873, in the files of the Department of Lands and Works.
gainst the gold at the rate of sixteen dollars per ounce and to
give the pioneers first choice of claims but he refused to allow
the lay-over of claims from September 20 to June 20, because he
had been instructed to lay them over from October 15 to June 1.
He refused also to acknowledge the special lay-over of claims on
Thibert Creek for twenty days while their owners went prospecting.
In this he was acting according to the mining laws, which were
designed to force continuous work on claims. Rath, with the assent
of his companions, decided to appeal to the Chief Commissioner of
Lands and Works in Victoria, in spite of Adams' warning that the
pioneers' claims were liable to be "jumped" because they were not
legally recorded by properly licensed miners. Rath hastened to
Victoria.

On his arrival in Victoria on November 7, Rath explained his
case to the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, paid in his
gold at seventeen dollars to the ounce, and on November 27 received
free miners licences for himself and his colleagues. Everything

At Buck's Bar, however, the newcomers approved Adams' inter­
pretation of the law and set out to "jump" the pioneers claims.
News of this reached Victoria early in December and the British

Colonist, December 5, 1873; Standard, December 6, 1873,
letter of J. R. Adams; also letter of J. R. Adams to
Hon. R. Beaven, dated Buck's Bar, October 10, 1873, in
the files of the Department of Lands and Works.
Colonist of December 4 announced that "a party of Omineca miners, headed by the Government Agent (i.e. Adams), had started from Buck's Bar for Cassiar to 'jump' claims. They started at 12 o'clock at night." That last item put the matter in a sinister light. The next day the editor of the British Colonist followed up with an article on the "Startling Outrage in Cassiar" in which he gave in detail Rath's version of the affair, censured Adams for declaring the claims still open for location, and finished up with a scathing denunciation of governmental "dishonesty and tyranny." On the same day the "Daily Standard" took up the cudgels for the government with a letter from Adams to E. B. Marvin in which he stated that Rath and his friends had "set the law at defiance, laid over claims that were workable in order to take up claims on a new creek (i.e. Dease Creek), left their claims two or three weeks before their claims were laid over legally; never defined a claim by stakes according to law; also called them all creek claims, when one half were bench, if not more."

1 Ibid. and Colonist, December 4, 1873.
2 Ibid. December 5, 1873.
4 Standard, December 6, 1873.
For a few days the dispute became a matter of political note. The "British Colonist" attacked the government for inefficiency, dishonesty, and tyranny; the "Daily Standard" defended it. The usual letters to the editor appeared in both papers, some with very personal references to officials. Delegations waited upon cabinet ministers. Finally Attorney-General Walkem promised to legalize William Bath's record by special act of the legislature where the claims had been staked and described according to the mining regulations. The agitation died down. In due course the act was passed and received the royal assent on March 2, 1874. A clause was inserted in the act to authorize the election of a recorder by the miners themselves when in a remote district without a government agent.

The passing of this act did not put an end to trouble at the diggings. Adams declared that the claims of the pioneers were not properly staked nor of legal size. Consequently, in March 1874, some newcomers "jumped" claims located by the Rath Brothers and the Moores. At first Adams recorded the "jumpers" claims, then he decided to allow each of the pioneers to choose from his previous workings one legal sized claim but to disallow claims staked for friends or partners. This left everything uncertain,

1 Colonist, December 10, 1873.
2 Journal of Legislative Assembly of B.C., 1873-74, p. 55.
3 Colonist, April 16 and 24, May 14, and July 19, 1874.
for Adams decisions were all subject to review by the gold commissioner when he arrived. Meanwhile hundreds of miners poured into Cassiar from Victoria and Omineca. Claims were jumped on the slightest pretext and the legal situation was chaotic. A letter dated from Dease Creek, June 2, 1874, states:

...nearly all the transfers in the record book have been jumped. The jumpers call them bogus bills of sale. How they can prove it is a question, but honestly speaking the transfer of claims by one partner to another has been run to ground in this camp. A man starts in and stakes claim after claim and transfers them to his partner for a merely nominal sum to keep for both of them. Some man, not having the fear of a Government Agent in his heart and of the Cassiar Agent in particular has actually jumped one of his transfers and is waiting for the next agent to settle it.1

Helgeson, a merchant, reported: "The creek is all staked off, claims taken in the name of people in the old country, and for some who never existed."2

Fortunately late frost and spring floods prevented extensive mining, otherwise the miners might have resorted to physical violence to prevent work on disputed claims.

The Gold Commissioner for Cassiar, J. H. Sullivan, reached Laketon towards the end of May. Work ceased and some 1200 miners flocked to the little town to hear the disputes arbitrated. During the next few days forty-five important cases were brought be-

1 Ibid. July 19, 1874.
2 Ibid. June 9, 1874.
fore the commissioner's court. In each case Sullivan moved court to the actual ground in dispute with the crowd in attendance. On the whole his decisions were against the jumpers and were well received. The majority of the other cases were then settled by private agreement and order restored.

SECTION 4. - PRODUCTION AND POPULATION

The total value of gold mined in Cassiar from 1872 to 1880 was a little less than $4,300,000, of which over half was taken from Dease and Thibert Creeks. The figures for the more important areas are given in Table I on the next page and Table II on page 103.

The year 1874, with a total of $1,1000,000, almost all from Dease and Thibert Creeks, was the banner year of production in Cassiar. There were few men "broke" at the end of the season and a number made $1,000 to $1,500 clear profit. The season of 1875 was nearly as good, with McDame providing a large share. Thereafter production declined steadily (see the Table I page 102 below)

1 Ibid. July 8 and 9; Sentinel, July 17, 1874.
The population of Cassiar varied considerably from year to year.

### TABLE NO. I

**ANNUAL GOLD PRODUCTION ON MAIN CREEKS**

**IN CASSIAR 1872 - 1880**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Dease Cr.</th>
<th>Thibert Cr.</th>
<th>McDame Cr.</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>(10,000)</td>
<td>(15,000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>(650,000)</td>
<td>(340,000)</td>
<td>(60,000)</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>1,100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>(350,000)</td>
<td>(250,000)</td>
<td>(245,000)</td>
<td>(55,000)</td>
<td>900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>160,300</td>
<td>139,720</td>
<td>163,700</td>
<td>(92,744)</td>
<td>556,464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>91,353</td>
<td>195,178</td>
<td>162,705</td>
<td>50,564</td>
<td>499,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>92,871</td>
<td>97,012</td>
<td>149,837</td>
<td>(180,000)</td>
<td>519,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>56,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>113,200</td>
<td>149,200</td>
<td>393,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>60,900</td>
<td>57,900</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>(75,000)</td>
<td>298,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: $1,471,424  1,169,810  999,442  653,508  4,294,184

1. For the basis of these figures see Appendix D No. 1.
2. ( ) indicates an estimate based on a comparison of the total for the season, production of other creeks, men working, and reported daily earnings.
year and from season to season, as may be seen in graph No. V p. 87. The rush of 1874 reflects the interest generated by the

TABLE NO. II
ANNUAL GOLD PRODUCTION IN LESS IMPORTANT AREAS IN CASSIAR 1872 - 1880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Defot. C.</th>
<th>French C. Walker</th>
<th>C. Liard R.</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td></td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>(5,000)</td>
<td>(30,000)</td>
<td></td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>(55,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>(25,000)</td>
<td>(30,000)</td>
<td></td>
<td>37,744</td>
<td>(92,744)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>(15,000)</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>(10,000)</td>
<td>15,564</td>
<td>50,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>(10,000)</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>(180,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>95,000</td>
<td>14,700</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>(15,500)</td>
<td>149,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>(15,000)</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>(35,000)</td>
<td>(75,000)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total $185,000 69,700 94,000 141,000 163,808 653,508

1 For the basis of this graph see Appendices C. No.1 and D. No.2.
2 For the basis of these figures see Appendix D No. 1.
3 ( ) indicated that the figures are based on a comparison of the total for the season, the production of other creeks, the number of miners working, and their reported daily earnings.
GRAPH VII

POPULATION OF CASSIAR MONTH BY MONTH 1874

For the basis of this graph see Appendix No. 2.
romance of its discovery by McCulloch and by the legal dispute between Adams and the pioneers. The decrease of 1875 naturally followed the failure to find extensive rich diggings. The very high figure for 1876 can be only partially explained. Probably the development of McDame Creek and the absence of many out-and-out failures in 1875 with depression elsewhere were factors in causing men to go to Cassiar in that year. The low figure for 1877, 1200 men, was the result of the large number of failures in 1876. The figures for the next three years, 1500, 1400, and 800 men, show the steady downward trend of a declining mining district.

The population varied greatly from season to season in the same year. A small number passed the winter at the mines or at Buck's Bar. There was a rush to the diggings from the outside just before and just after the breakup in the spring and a similar exodus just before and after the freeze-up in October. (See graph VII p. 104 After 1876 a larger number passed the winter at the diggings, for the summer returns were smaller, the winter accommodation was better, and some deep diggings could be worked during the winter time.

An additional factor to be observed is the increase in the number and percentage of Chinese miners. At first the white miners tried to scare them out. Notices such as the following were posted

---
along the trail up the Stikine River:

Notice

Too

Jhinermen

Yu are hearbi notiefed that iff you gone

into these diggens you will ketch h-ll.

Sou you hed better luk ought or yull smell

powder and brimstone if not hemp.1

One boss Chinaman disappeared between Little Canyon and

Buck's Bar, whether by accident or violence is not known. After

Sullivan's arrival at the mines, however, the Chinese were pro­
tected and the agitation died down. The number of Chinamen be­
came noticeable after 1876 and by 1880 more than half the claims
were in their hands. (See graph No. V., p. 87.)

SECTION 5. DEASE AND THIBERT CREEKS.

Dease Creek was the largest and most important mining centre
in Cassiar during 1874. It was staked for sixteen miles, almost
its entire length, and supported a population of seven hundred
with a yield of $650,000 in gold.

Some old hands, such as the Moores, mined on a small scale
even before the breakup of the ice. They chopped ice from the
side of the creek bed, thawed the sand and gravel with huge fires,

1 Colonist, May 1, 1874.
2 Standard, April 15, 1874.
3 Colonist, May 6, 1874.
and washed it with rockers. They reported a yield of from ten to seventy-five dollars per day to the hand.

The majority of the miners, however, waited until the breakup to begin work. Then three hundred companies set to work wing-damming and washing with rockers. When washing, which was only for a short time, they averaged about fifteen dollars per day to the hand. Two companies did well: the California with $300.00 for four days, and the Discovery (the Moores) with $2600.00 in three days. High water at the end of May stopped mining for a month.

The main mining season commenced in July with about seven hundred men at work and with so many wingdams that the creek bed was almost blocked for miles. The returns, as far as can be ascertained from the incomplete data available, were as follows:

The Discovery Company (the Moores) took out 147, 362, and 236 ounces in reported weeks in July and August, three or four men working and seem to have maintained production at about two hundred ounces per week. At this rate each partner made about $10,000 for the season. The Burr Company took out 410 ounces ($6,560.00) in their best week and Brady and Clarke 300 ounces ($4,800.00). The Neil McArthur, Three to One, Lyons (and Waldron)

1 Ibid. May 5, 1874.
2 Ibid. June 9, 1874.
3 Colonist, May 6, June 9 and 27, 1874.
4 Mining Report, 1874 pp. 9 - 11.
Forest Rose, Wigg, Canadian, Williscroft, Baronovitch, Mckinnon, Cargotitch, Miller, Perseverance, Giant, Diamond, Water-lily (sic), Rath Brothers, Ike Stevens, Caledonia, Belfast, and Cock of the North companies took out from three to five ounces ($48.00 to $80.00) per day to the hand. Two hundred or so companies paid from ten to twenty dollars per day to the hand and another hundred five or six dollars. The ground was spotty and although one company washed 135 ounces ($2160.00) in one day and Lyons and Waldron uncovered a forty-ounce nugget valued at $700.00, there was little very rich ground. Much of it was mined out in one season.

The spring of 1875 was cold and late; even after the breakup there was so much frozen ground that many miners did not start work during the spring low water. Then a sudden change to hot weather melted the snow on the mountain tops with extraordinary speed and torrential floods swept the creeks. On Dease Creek wingdams, sluices, and other equipment were swept away into the lake, which was littered with floating lumber and debris. Sullivan estimated the damage at $50,000.00. Out of 400 miners on Dease Creek in 1875 only twenty companies did at all well. The

1 Mining Report, 1874, pp. ; Colonist May 6, June 9 and 19, August 22, 23, and 25, September 24 and 26, 1874.
2 Mining Report, 1875, p.602; Colonist June 24 and July 17, 1875.
Andrew Company washed 500 ounces ($8,000.00) in their best week, Murphy's 279 ounces ($4,320.00), Gallagher's $20,000.00 in three weeks, and Booth $10,000.00 for the season. The Discovery, Lyons, Rath, Willisroft, Three to One, Caledonia, Harris, Godfrey, Hasford, Carrigan, Scott, Fontaine, and Wyoming companies washed from one to three ounces ($16.00 to $48.00) per day to the hand while actually washing. The rest made wages ($8.00) or less. 1 White miners began to leave the creek in the middle of the season. The Grant Company sold out to Chinamen in July for $2,000.00 and "Box", a Colonist news correspondent remarked on the number of "rich claims" all wingdammed and ready for washing whose owners "are, strange to say, nearly all ...... down with rheumatism and want to sell out." The total yield for the season was $350,000.00.

At the beginning of the season in the rush of 1876 380 white miners and 130 Chinese located on Dease Creek. By September 1, however, there were only twenty-five white companies at work, of which four were prospecting, four making wages ($7.00 per day) and ten good wages ($10.00 to $16.00 per day). Only one company, the Caledonia, paid well during the season with a yield of about one thousand dollars per week to each partner. 4 The total yield for the season was $160,003.00.

1 Mining Report, 1875, p.604-605; Colonist July 20, October 27 and 28, 1875.
2 Colonist, July 20, 1875.
3 Ibid. September 3, 1875.
4 Mining Report, 1876, p.415-416.
A few miners began tunnelling. Since the ground was frozen in places to a depth of about eighty feet, even in summer, they heated rocks in fires at the mouth of the tunnel, wheeled them in barrows to the end of it, dumped them to thaw out the dirt, dug out the dirt, and wheeled it to the mouth of the tunnel for washing. One company drifted 130 feet in this way. They made good wages ($10.00 to $16.00 per day).

In 1877 there were ninety white miners and 120 Chinese on Dease Creek. The weather was extremely unfavourable. A late spring and heavy summer rains caused a succession of freshets and mudslides which destroyed equipment or buried the strata of pay dirt. Bench and hill claims mining was held up, too, on account of the lack of dumping space for washed-out dirt while the Chinamen were re-working the creek bed. The returns were only $81,300. However, the winter following was exceptionally mild and some men worked hill claims for a large part of it.

In 1878 the Chinese, 113 in number, monopolised the creek claims and the white miners, forty-four in number, worked the benches. The production for the year was $62,800.00. The years

1 Mining Report, 1876, p. 413; Colonist August 30, 1876.
2 Mining Report, 1877, p. 400; Colonist, July 3, September 23, 1877.
3 Colonist, February 28, 1878.
4 Mining Report, 1878, p. 376 and table of statistics.
1879 and 1880 brought marked declines in both population and production. Dease Creek was, for the time being, mined out. Its total production 1872-1880 was $1,471,424.00. (See table I P.102)

The history of Thibert Creek is similar to that of Dease Creek. The first gold found was in a surface layer of gravel that was soon washed out. Then the miners turned to deeper diggings. Some of these paid so well that the white miners remained in control of the creek longer than on Dease Creek. In 1874 200 men located on Thibert Creek. The Discovery Company (Thibert and Duval) reported making $1,500.00 in two weeks; a number of others made from $15.00 to $50.00 per day to the hand; but the majority made wages or less. The returns for 1875 were similar. The next year, 1876, A. W. Vowell, the gold commissioner, listed forty-five companies with 220 men on the creek, including its tributaries Berry and Boulder Creeks. Eleven companies were making good wages ($12.00 per day); nine wages ($6.00); twelve men on Boulder Creek poor wages ($4.00 to $5.00); McDonald's not even wages; a dozen were prospecting or preparing to hydraulick and

1 Mining Reports, 1879 and 1880; Colonist October 31, 1880.
2 Colonist, August 22, 1874; Sentinel August 29, 1874.
3 Colonist, June 19, July 5, August 22, 1874; Mining Report 1874, p.
4 Colonist, August 26, 1874.
5 Mining Report, 1874, p. 11.
and therefore not earning anything; no comment was made on the rest. The newspapers reported that Midbow and Company washed from seventy to ninety ounces ($1,120.00 to $1,420.00) per week steadily, and the Collins made $15,000.00 for the season. In 1877 Thibert Creek, like Dease Creek, suffered from freshets and mud-slides up to the middle of August. Creek claims paid very poorly in 1878 and in 1879 the creek bed was almost entirely in the hands of Chinamen. On the bench and hill claims, however, a few white miners did well from 1877 to 1880, notably Theakstone and Company with a claim on the top of a mountain nearby, and Driscoll and Brady who are reported to have taken out from 2000 to 3000 ounces ($32,000 to $48,000) in two weeks in 1880. The total production on Thibert Creek 1872 to 1880 was $1,169,810.00. (See table No. I p. 102)

1 Mining Report, 1876, pp. 415 - 416.
2 Colonist, June 21, August 30, and October 14, 1876. This yield would be $30.00 per day to five men working or good wages for ten men working.
3 Colonist, June 21, August 30, and October 14, 1876.
4 Mining Report, 1877, p. 400.
5 Mining Reports, 1879 and 1880.
6 Colonist, July 3, and October 23, 1877; July 17 and October 4, 1878.
7 Ibid, October 31, 1880.
SECTION 6. - MCDAME CREEK

McDame Creek was the third and, after 1874, the most important mining area in Cassiar. Its total yield surpassed that of any other creek and the largest nugget unearthed in British Columbia to date was found on it. (See p.116 below.)

McDame Creek flows from the west into Dease River about ninety miles below Dease Lake. It flows down a broad valley with extensive flats on both sides and numerous small tributaries, so that water was easy to get. It is thirty miles long and navigable by loaded boats for twenty miles. Centreville was situated at the Second North Fork of McDame Creek, about fifteen miles from its mouth. (See Map No. V opposite p. 114 below.)

McDame Creek was discovered in the summer of 1874 by a colored miner named Henry McDame who has already been mentioned in connection with the discovery of Giscome Portage and of Germansen Creek in Omineca. He returned to Laketon and formed the Charity Company with C. Charity, J. Giscome, W. H. Smith, and five others. They staked discovery claims on McDame Creek, whipsawed lumber, packed it on their backs over a mile to their claims, constructed 400 feet of wingdam and a series of sluice boxes, and began washing. In thirty days they washed $6,000.00 in gold, about $22.00 per day to the hand. Fifty other miners who followed them did about as well. The outlook for 1875 was very encouraging.

1 It was occasionally called Deloire Creek.
2 See pp. 44 and 64 above.
3 Mining Report 1874, pp. 10 and 12; Colonist October 13, Nov. 3 and 5, 1874.
The year 1875 did not live up to the expectations of the miners, for rich ground was scarce and in scattered spots. The Charity (Discovery) Company - now four men - mined a hundred dollars per day to the hand for the two weeks reported; the "Black Jack," McCrum and Stuart; Caledonia; Walker and Mitchell, and a score of other companies made good wages ($16.00); two tributaries, Quartz and Trout Creeks prospected well; Holloway's Flat at the mouth of the Second North Fork, near Centreville, (See Map No. V opposite this page) gave good returns; but the majority of the five hundred miners were disappointed. The total production for the year was $245,000.00.

In 1876, since the rush of miners and shortage of profitable claims gave a supply of cheap labor - out of 700 miners on McDame Creek only 300 found profitable claims - a number of water supply projects for ground-sluicing and hydraulic mining on the benches and side-hills were got under way. Gold Commissioner Vowell granted thirty-one applications for water rights, some for as much as 2000 inches of water. Gerke (the trader) and Fred Black had the most ambitious schemes. Gerke planned to run a flume and ditch from

1 Mining Report 1875, p. 604.
2 Colonist, July 20, August 29, October 6 and 28, 1875; January 29, 1876.
3 Mining Report 1876, pp. 411, 412, 416 and table of statistics.
the Third North Fork (See Map No. V opposite p. 114) to Patzi's Claim near Centreville, a distance of eight miles; Black planned to conduct water from Quartz Creek to Snow Creek, a distance of ten miles, to supply the Discovery Company on Snow Creek and others on the route of the conduit.

The Discovery Company on Snow Creek consisted of Fred Black, Rufus Sylvester, Christie, and Vital Laforce, all old Caribooites. They struck a stratum of gravel and dirt, later called the Christie lead, which contained coarse gold, sometimes in the form of nuggets up to eight ounces ($135.00) in weight. During most of the season of 1876 they took out from $2,000.00 to $6,000.00 per week. During the next year they were able to obtain bench claims in line with the original location and to follow the lead into the side hill by hydraulicking and tunnelling. Finally they lost it and the company broke up. During the next two years shafts and tunnels were sunk in the vicinity but although they generally paid wages none succeeded in picking up the original Christie lead.

Around Centreville there was considerable activity in 1876, first ground-sluicing and hydraulicking, then sinking shafts and tunnelling. As on Dease and Thibert Creeks work in the deep diggings was continued during the winter of 1876-77.

1 Colonist, July 27, August 30, September 3, and November 2, 1876; Mining Report 1876, p. 412.
2 Colonist, July 3, 1877.
3 Ibid, February 28, 1878.
4 Ibid. March 27, 1877.
Every miner in British Columbia felt a thrill when, early in 1877, the largest nugget found in the province to date was washed out on the Discovery Company's Claim near Centreville. Alfred Freeman uncovered a heavy boulder while sluicing which he cast aside on account of its size. Its weight impressed him, however, and he retrieved it for closer examination. It proved to be a nugget weighing 73 ounces, worth, at $17.00 per ounce the market value of McDame Creek gold at that time, $1,241.00.

After this find a score of companies began to tunnel in the sidehills nearby. A few such as Dawson and Phillips and Duncan Cummings did well enough but the majority made only wages ($6.00 per day.) Nevertheless, since the appearance of the ground was favourable the miners were loth to leave it, and four large companies were formed to give it a thorough test by sinking to bedrock. The United and the Hilton Companies sank shafts to a slanting depth of 300 feet without striking any pay dirt and both abandoned the

1 Ibid. July 24, October 24, 1877; The B. C. Department of Mines Bulletin No. 2, 1930, p. 24, sets the value at $1,300.00.

2 Mining Report 1877, p. 400.

3 Colonist, September 23, 1877.

4 Mining Report 1877, p. 400 f; Colonist, August 19, September 13 and 23, October 15, 1877; February 16, 1878.
The Empire Company worked for over a year through no-pay dirt and finally abandoned the shaft at a depth of 1400 feet without striking bedrock. The White Grouse struck bedrock after digging for 1580 feet. It was barren and the shaft was abandoned. These shafts were a dead loss.

A few white men continued operations for a year or two longer, but from 1877 onward the number and percentage of Chinamen increased rapidly and by 1880 nearly half of 245 miners were Chinese. (See graph No. V. p. 87.)

SECTION 7. - OTHER AREAS.

For other parts of Cassiar, since the diggings were neither extensive or rich, the record of mining operations is fragmentary. On Liard River, for example, out of 150 men reported prospecting in 1874, only half a dozen parties are mentioned specifically. One party, led by Hanna, descended the Liard River 325 miles to McCulloch's Bar (See p. 94 above) and washed out about $2,000.00 in a week. Shep Young’s party took $1,600.00 from a crevice and

1 Colonist, October 15, 1878.

2 Mining Reports 1877 p. 400f; 1878, p. 375; Colonist September 13, October 15, 1878; February 16, 1879.

3 Mining Reports 1877 to 1880, tables of Statistics; Colonist September 23, 1877; June 17, 1880.

found nothing else. A party of twenty-three ascended the Upper Liard River to Francis Lake in Yukon, about 400 miles from Lake-ton. They got no gold and lost several of their party by scurvy. (See p. 140f below). The production for 1874 was not more than $50,000. In 1875 Sayyea and four others washed $10.00 per day to the hand on Sayyea Creek in Yukon. The next year "Big Levy" (perhaps "Levi" Harris) found some coarse gold around Francis Lake but not in quantity. In 1878 seventy miners made poor wages ($4.00) on a bar near old Fort Halkett, probably McCulloch's Bar. That was all.

French Creek (See p. 90) was prospected in 1874 and gave little coarse gold in 1875. Rosella Creek, a tributary of French Creek, and Bear Creek, Bear Gulch, Spring Creek, and Dennis Creek, tributaries of Rosella Creek, gave a dozen miners good wages from 1876 to 1878. In 1878 a shortage of water checked mining and it

1 Mining Report 1874, p. 11-12; Colonist September 24, October 13 and 14, 1874; Geological Survey New Series Vol. III Report by G. M. Dawson p. 193R.

2 Colonist April 18, July 21, 1875.

3 Mining Report 1877, p. 605; Colonist October 17 and 28, 1875.

4 Mining Report 1876, pp. 411 and 413; Colonist January 29 and August 30, 1876. Francis Lake was mined again in the Yukon rush, also Colonist Sep. 15, 1878.

5 Mining Report 1875, p. 604; Colonist January 29, 1876.
fell into the hands of Chinamen. The total production of French Creek including its tributaries was about $75,000.00. (See table No. II p. 103)

Defot Creek flows down a little flat valley two and a half miles long into the West Branch of Canyon Creek (See Map IV p.90). John Defot, Thibert Jr. and a party of French-Canadians discovered it in 1878 when other diggings were beginning to play out. Two hundred miners rushed in and the valley became a hive of activity. Two stores, two saloons, and a blacksmith's shop appeared as if by magic, whipsawing went on day and night, often by candlelight, an intricate network of wingdams, flumes, and sluices blocked the valley from top to bottom. A hundred miners got profitable claims. Thibert Jr. of the Discovery Company sold his share for $500.00 and the purchaser cleaned up that amount on the evening of the sale. A dozen companies washed from $30.00 to $50.00 per day to the hand. Two nuggets, weights fifteen and forty-five ounces ($240.00 and $720.00) were uncovered. The returns continued good for two years; in 1880 there were still forty men on the creek.

1. Colonist, August 19, 1877; March 21, July 17, 1878.

2. The description of "La-Van" Creek referred to in the newspapers tallies with that of Defot Creek; I think that they are the same.

3. A brother of Henry Thibert, probably M. Thibert (See Colonist, October 29, 1876.)
making good wages ($12.00 per day). The production on Defot Creek 1878-1880 was about $175,000.00. (See table No. II p. 103). Vowell, Mosquito, Porcupine, and other creeks near Defot Creek gave poor returns.

Walker Creek, a tributary of Rapid River (See p. 90 above), was prospected by Walker in 1877. His discovery party made about $18.00 per day to the hand during the first year. From 1877 to 1880 forty to fifty men mined the creek during the summers and about ten wintered there. Thereafter it fell into the hands of the Chinese. No good prospects were found by parties on the tributaries of Turnagain River, east of Walker Creek (See p. 89 above).

SECTION 8. - TRANSPORTATION AND PRICES

The regular route for imports to Cassiar was the Stikine River; beef cattle and occasional loaded pack trains came overland from the Fraser Valley via Skeena forks (Hazelton). The cost of

1 Mining Report 1878, table of statistics; Colonist September 13 and 20, October 4, 1878; July 22 and 25, 1879; July 13, August 19, and October 3, 1880.
2 Mining Reports 1878 to 1880; Colonist October 4, November 19, 1878; July 8 and 22, August 17, 1879; July 13, August 19, 1880.
3 Mining Report 1877, p. 401f; Colonist October 9, 14, 23, and 30, November 13, 1877; March 21, June 13 and 23, July 17, 1878; September 13, 1879; August 19, October 31, 1880.
4 Mining Reports 1879, p. 239, and 1880 p. 427; Colonist October 30, 1877.
water transportation from Victoria to Glenora was fairly stable at about six cents per pound; the cost of packing over the trail from Glenora to Dease Lake varied greatly and was the determining factor in price levels at the diggings. Anyone controlling the trail or having a monopoly of the pack animals on it could exploit the miners by means of tolls or high packing rates.

Captain William Moore applied for a grant to construct a road from Glenora to Dease Lake in January, 1873. When this was refused, he applied for a charter to construct a trail. In accordance with the Toll Charter Act, the Government called for tenders. Moore's was the only one received and an agreement was signed, the substance of which was as follows:

1. The trail to be passable throughout its length by August, 1873, and completed to the satisfaction of the Chief Commissioner of Lands and works by August 1, 1874 and to be kept in condition thereafter.

2. Moore to have the right to collect two cents per pound on goods passing over the trail when passable throughout.

3. The Government to have the right to terminate the agreement by public notice in the Government Gazette if Moore does not

1 B. C. Sessional Papers, 1874, p. 67; letter dated Victoria, January 3, 1873.
2 Ibid. letter dated February 10, 1873.
3 Ibid. R. Beaven to W. Moore; Br. Col. March 8, 1873.
live up to the terms of the agreement, no compensation to be given in such case.

4. The Government to have the right to redeem the charter-right at any time on giving Moore three months notice and compensation at 25% more than the actual cost of construction.

Moore explored possible routes through the Great Canyon over the hills and across the Tahltan, Tuya and Tanzilla Rivers in 1873 on his way to and from the mines and built a bridge over the Tuya River, for which he was paid $250.00. There was considerable delay and confusion while Moore and his partner Knott, arranged for a $5,000 bond, then in May 1874, after half the miners had gone to Dease Lake, he started work on the trail with two men. In June, following complaints by the miners he put twenty men to work and finished it. "A good trail" was the comment of the miners, at that time.

Meanwhile several trains of loaded pack animals had been disembarked at the mouth of the Stikine and driven to Dease Lake. John Sevenoaks had 60 oxen, Gerke 15 horses, Malcolm McLeod 22

1 Ibid. p. 70. Memorandum of agreement.
2 B. C. Sessional Papers, 1874, Report of exploration Cassiar District p. 15-16; and Public Accounts, for 1873, p. 28, item, grant of $250.00 to Moore and Jennings for exploration in Cassiar.
3 B. C. Sessional Papers, 1874, pp. 70-78.
4 Colonist May 24, 26, June 19, July 16, 19, 1874; Sentinel October 16, 1874.
oxen, and Charles Millard 22 mules. The oxen were slaughtered for beef; the mules and horses were put to packing on Moore's trail at rates varying from 45 cents to 60 cents per pound. The cost of transportation at this time was estimated by Gold Commissioner Sullivan at $1,030.00 per ton or 51 1/2 cents per pound made up as follows:

- By steamer from Wrangel to Glenora: $80.00
- By canoe from Glenora to Telegraph Creek: $30.00
- By pack train to Dease Lake 45c per pound: $900.00
- By canoe to Laketon: $20.00

Total: $1,030.00

In August Uriah Nelson, a trader and packer, bought all the pack animals on the trail and raised the packing charge from 45 cents per pound to 50 cents, making the total cost of transportation from Wrangel to Laketon 56 1/2 cents per pound, or $1,130.00 per ton, where it stayed until the arrival of cattle and pack trains overland from the Fraser valley (For a graph of the packing rates see p. 124)

1 Colonist, June 9, 19, July 9, 1874; Sentinel September 5, 1874.
2 Mining Report, 1874, p. 10.
3 Colonist, August 23, 1874.
Graph of Packing Rates in 6 cents per pound from Glenora to Dease Lake - 1874-1877.

1 Colonist May, 1874. The letters M.J.J.A.S.O. stand for the months May, June, July, August, September, October.
2 Mining Report 1874, p. 10.
3 Colonist, August 23, 1874.
4 Ibid. September 25, Mining Report 1874, p. 11.
5 Guardian, June 30, 1875.
6 Mining Report 1875, pp. 603-4.
7 Ibid. 1877, p. 400.
8 Colonist, September 21, 1876.
9 Mining Report 1877, p. 400.
Prices at Laketon were at this time as follows; (per pound unless otherwise stated):

- flour 80¢ ($2.93 per cwt.)
- beans 90¢ ($2.60 per cwt.)
- bacon $1.00 (13¢)
- beef 60¢
- sugar $1.00 (10¢)
- tea $2.00 ($1.00)
- fish, local, 33 1/3¢
- butter $2.00
- salt $1.00
- nails $1.00
- gumboots (per pair) $20.00
- brandy (per bottle) $6.00
- candles $1.50
- wages per day - laborer $10.00
- wages per day - mechanic $16.00 (the same as in the Cariboo rush)

Prices at McDame Creek were about twenty percent in excess of those at Laketon. For the graph of food prices at Laketon during 1874 and 1875 and the packing rate on Moore's trail in the same years see page 126 below; for the graph of wages, liquor, and gumboots see page 127 below.

---

1 The brackets contain the prices of these commodities calculated from the returns of the quantity of each imported and the invoiced price as stated in the Government Gazette, British Columbia, June 17, 1871. The retail price at Victoria would be higher, probably double the price given above.

2 Mining Report 1874, p. 9.

3 Mining Report, 1876, p. 417
Food Prices in Cassiar 1874-1875

1. ( ) indicates an approximate date, the references for the various dates are given below:

- bacon 1874
- sugar
- beef
- flour
- beans
- packing

Jan. 10 - Colonist March 13, 1874
March 16 - Ibid. April 4.
April 20 - Ibid. May 15

June 13 - Colonist July 5, 8, 1874. ( ) indicate approximate date

Aug. 4 - Ibid. August 22
Sept. 1 - Ibid. September 26. ( ) indicate approximate date.
Dec. 4 - Ibid. February 3, 1875.

1875
June 7 - Guardian June 30, 1875.
June 22 - Mining Report 1875, pp. 603-4.
July 7 - Colonist July 20, 1875.
Aug. 2 - Ibid. August 29.
Aug. 30 - Ibid. September 21.
(127)

GRAPH X

Some Prices and Wages in Cassiar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1874</th>
<th>1875</th>
<th>1876</th>
<th>1877</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan.</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gumboots per pair
Mechanic's wage per day
Laborer's wage per day
Brandy per quart

1. The references for the various dates are given below

- **1874 Jan. & June**: Mining Report 1874 p. 9, Ibid., and Colonist September 26, 1874.
- **1875**: Mining Report 1875, p. 603-4, Colonist July 20, 1875.
- **1876 Aug.**: Colonist August 30, 1876.
- **1876 Oct.**: Mining Report 1876, p. 417.
- **1877 Oct.**: Ibid. 1877, p. 402 and table of statistics.
The cattle from the Fraser Valley, mentioned above, came overland by way of the Fraser, Bulkley, Skeena, Klappan, and Tanilla rivers to Dease Lake (See Map No. I opposite p. 14). From Quesnel to Hazelton the Collin's Telegraph Trail was still passable and was easily cleared by J. Hamilton in 1874. North from Hazelton a new trail had to be cleared. The exploration and the construction of this trail is described in the diary of William Humphrey, who was in charge of the work. The party explored the Skeena and Nass valleys during March and April and located a trail. They began clearing and levelling it in May along the Kispiox, Cranberry, Nass, and Skeena rivers (See Map No. I opposite p. 14) to a wide valley from which flow tributaries of the three great rivers, the Nass, the Skeena, and the Stikine. From this valley they descended the valley of the Klappan (then the Klapoda) to the Stikine River, crossed the latter above the Great Canyon, and then followed the Tanzilla River northward to Moore's trail. The total


2 The original of this diary is in the B. C. Archives. Humphrey had been a miner in Omineca (Sent July 2, 1870) and he remained in Cassiar mining (Colonist June 24, 1875) B. C. Sessional Papers 1877 Public Accounts of 1876 p. 205

3 Humphrey's Diary, B. C. Archives; Colonist May 24, 1874; Report of Public Works 1874, p. 347-349.
distance was 423 miles from Hazelton. The cost was $6,484.73.

The construction was joined en route by two prospectors, Memsworth and James Orr, who found no gold worth mentioning, and by three parties with cattle and pack trains from the Fraser Valley. Two of the latter, Felcker's and McGregor's, left Humphreys on the Klappan River and went to Buck's Bar. The third, William Welsh's, accompanied him to Dease Lake and was the first overland herd to reach Laketon. The cattle were driven into the town on August 27 through a crowd of cheering miners. Within a week Felcker, McGregor, and two other drovers reached Laketon with a total of 334 head of cattle; the price of beef dropped from 60¢ to 10¢ per pound, packing rates from 50¢ to 20¢ per pound, and all other prices proportionately.

1 Humphreys' Diary; Report of Public Works 1874, pp. 347-9 and 447, reports of Humphreys and Orr.
3 James Orr had been on an extensive community prospecting party north from Barkerville in 1867 and had mined on Manson Creek in 1871 and 1872; Orr was paid $22,00 by the Government for the eleven days’ prospection with Humphreys (B.C. Sessional Papers, 1875, Public Accounts of 1874, p. 107)
4 Colonist, September 25, 1874.
5 Ibid. October 3,
6 Ibid. September 25 and 26.
The drovers were bitterly disappointed, especially Campbell, the last to arrive, who had come 1200 miles from the Thompson valley and had been robbed of his blankets, rope, and other equipment by Skeena Indians - all for 10¢ a pound!

But even Campbell was more fortunate than a party of five drovers - P. Grinder, A. Burnett, T. Hutchison, Cullen, and Glenn - who came after them. Skeena Indians intimidated them with random rifle fire then stole their goods and equipment in wholesale fashion. Further north the drovers turned from the trail in search of better pasture and lost their way. Cullen and Glenn were sent ahead with a horse to find a way to Buck's Bar. After six days' travel these two disagreed about the route and separated, each with a cup of beans and a pound of barley. Cullen took the horse. Six days later, about September 10, Glenn staggered half-starved into Buck's Bar. The miners held a meeting to discuss the drovers' plight but nothing was done, for a man need not starve with a herd

1 Colonist August 22, 1874; August 23, 1874, letter of A. C. Youmans, Skeenaforks, August 8, 1874; Ibid. September 24, 1874; Campbell drove cattle to Cassiar in later years at a profit. See Colonist August 21, 1879.

2 "Red Aleck"

3 Thomas Hutchison had been a drover and packer in Omineca (Sentinel November 11 and 25, 1871.)

4 Richard Glenn was an Omineca miner, who joined the pack train on his way to Cassiar where he mined until 1880 or later. It was he who hauled Kanahan from Centreville to Laketon in the winter of 1879-80. He had a good claim on Spring Creek in 1878.
of cattle no matter how thin. Meanwhile Grinder struggled along through unknown country until snow fell and the weakened animals could no longer carry their loads. Thereupon he dumped the packs and retraced his steps. He reached Quesnel on October 8. It was believed that Cullen was killed by Indians.

In May of the next year, 1875, James A. Gardiner, who had been with Feloker in 1874, and Vital Laforce, who had explored the region while in the service of the Collin's Overland Telegraph, were sent to improve Humphreys' trail. They left it to explore a new route on the Nass River, lost their way, and for two weeks in July, the hottest month of the year when temperatures run up to 95°F., they wandered about with no food but weeds, an occasional fish, and a lynx skin that they found. Finally an Indian met them by chance and guided them to Hazelton. (See Map No. I opposite p.14) In three weeks Gardiner had lost thirty-seven pounds and Laforce 25. They rested and made an uneventful journey back to Telegraph Creek improving the trail and, where necessary, re-locating it.

1 Ibid. August 22, 23, September 25, October 13, 14, 1874; Car. Sent. October 10, 1874.
2 Colonist, November 26, 1874.
3 For further details about J. A. Gardiner See Appendix E Number 6.
4 Diary of J. A. Gardiner, No. 1, B. C. Archives.
5 Colonist August 15, 1875.
In subsequent years the drovers learned to follow the trail and to go early in the season while the pasture was green. No hardships comparable to those of 1875 were experienced and Cassiar was assured a supply of cheap fresh beef so long as the market was large enough to justify the long overland drive from the Fraser valley.

In the spring of 1875 the Moore trail was in a deplorable condition. Spring floods had swept away the bridges and on June 7 there was not "a single bridge or crossing over any of the numerous large streams which must be crossed as best you can". The trail was described as "almost impassable for men and animals. Up to the knees in mud and climbing over fallen timber..........It is not a trail but a swamp". Nevertheless, Captain Moore continued to collect toll at the rate of two cents per pound on all baggage over twenty-five pounds until stopped by the Gold Commissioner in June. The government took the trail over, paying Moore

1 Ibid. September 19, 1875; April 23, 29, September 30, 1876; March 19, July 26, August 18, 1877; September 13, 1879; March 19, 1880. P. Gannon was a regular drover in these years.
2 Guardian June 30, 1875, letter dated Laketon June 7, 1875.
3 Ibid. June 30, 1875; Colonist June 24, 1875.
4 Guardian June 30, 1875.
5 Colonist June 24, 1875.
$12,500 for his work on the trail and built a corduroy road over the swampy section. Thereafter they kept the road in passable condition with a fixed toll of one cent per pound.

On the Stikine River adequate steamer service was maintained. Moore put the "Gertrude" on the run in 1875. He had a monopoly for a short time in the spring of 1876 but then Uriah Nelson put the "Beaver" into the Stikine River service and restored competitive conditions.

Until 1878 transportation on Dease Lake was by canoe and large rowboat. In 1878, however, John McKenzie and G. Hawk built a steamboat called "The Lady of the Lake". It was launched on June 7, in the presence of the local government officials and a crowd of miners and merchants. After a trial trip up and down the lake the projectors returned to the James Hotel for a suitable feast to celebrate the occasion. "The Lady of the Lake" was sixty feet long, with ten feet two inches breadth of beam and five feet

---

1 Sessional Papers 1876, Report of Public Works for 1875, p. 519. $10,000 plus 25% as per agreement.

2 Colonist September 19, 21, 1875; May 3, July 8, 1876; June 22, 1877.

3 Lewis and Dryden: Marine History p. 217; Colonist May 20, 1876.

4 Colonist June 6, 10, 1876. The "Beaver" was wrecked in 1878; see Ibid. July 17, 1878.
depth of hold and had a nominal fifteen horse-power engine. It remained in service on Dease Lake until after 1895.

The better service by steamer and trail with the passage of the years enabled merchants to import a good and varied supply of goods at a reasonable price. You could get almost anything you wanted at the local store. Life at the diggings became semi-civilized.

1 Ibid. July 10, 1878; Mining Report 1878, p. 377.
CHAPTER V

SOME SOCIAL FACTORS

SECTION 1. TOWNS

Scattered as were the diggings in the North, more so were the towns, the tiny centres of social and business life where the miners assembled to eat, drink, gamble and dance together, to quarrel, to fight and to have their disputes settled by the Gold Commissioner. Some of the "towns" consisted of only two or three log buildings at a break on the route of travel, as Takla Landing, Sylvester's Landing and Lake House, others were fair sized villages, as Hazelton Glenora, Centreville and the metropolis of Cassiar, Laketon. Thus Omineca City, on Germansen Creek was described as "a big town with nothing in it. ............ Joe Blum has started his whiskey mill; he deals it out on a board in one corner of an unfinished house; Dunkeld had "3 buildings and a theatre" with real actors; Howelton "two stores and four other buildings; Centreville a dozen buildings of various kinds and Laketon a dozen stores, two or three hotels with saloons, three or four other saloons, the government offices, police court, gaol and seventy-five houses and shacks huddled together on a narrow flat near the lake shore.

1 Also called Arctic City, Germansen, and Germansen Town.
2 Sentinel, August 12, 1871.
3 Colonist, October 4, 1871.
4 Colonist, July 16 and 19, 1874; Guardian June 30, September 21, 1875.
Buck's Bar was "a smart little town with three stores, 2 bakeries, 4 restaurants, one whiskey mill and buildings enough to accommodate 400 or 500 men," ghost buildings, falling into ruin, the heritage of the Stikine rush in the decade previous but still of use, for although "King Lear owns the town," he "lets shelter at 2 hits per man per night."

In the town's summer was the busy season, with men coming and going, laughing and cursing, drinking "at 25¢ a drink" and eating "(if you furnish your own meat),.......a 'square' comprising brown beans, bread and coffee about $2.00" in the early years, and swatting the mosquito which torture mankind day and night. Everything was primitive, as, for example, candies for illumination, and few different kinds of articles and commodities available. As the years progressed orderly provisioning brought lower prices and greater variety. Candles gave way to coal oil lamps, and the local store could supply almost any want. Even the gaol was modernized by the construction of a log edifice sixteen feet square and eight high with three luxurious cells each five feet by seven provided with locks and bars and connected by a small passageway.

1 Colonist, September 21, 1875.
2 Ibid. May 7, 1874.
3 Ibid. August 30, 1870.
4 B. C. Sessional Papers, 1878, Public Accounts for 1877 p. 165, "to J. Clearihue for lamp Glasses $2.00".
"Indian Anderson" had no reason to complain (see p.152f below).

SECTION 2. - WINTER LIFE

A cheap and varied supply of goods did not soften the heart of the God of Winter in these northern regions where the temperature falls to forty below zero for days at a time and silent but dangerous blizzards creep up on the lonely traveller, blinding his eyes and piling great drifts before his weary feet. Each settlement became semi-isolated and even the postal authorities seemed to forget them for they provided at best a monthly service and at worst, neglected the poor winterers so entirely that they were forced to patronize a private Indian carrier service at fifty cents per letter to or from Wrangel. One man in the winter of 1877-78 paid $9.50 for nineteen letters and fourteen of them were circular advertisements.

The experiences of a few winter travellers are described in the following paragraphs.


2 Colonist, March 21, 1878.
George Babington and Byron Brady and five others on their way from Omineca to Hazelton missed the blazed trail on Frying Pan Pass and wandered about the mountains for ten days, during the last four of which they had nothing to eat except nettles and roots. They finally separated into two groups of four and three each. The group of four fell in with Dewdney, who conducted them to Babine Lake. The others were never heard of again; but shortly afterwards the bodies of three men, supposed to have died of starvation, were found near the Skeena Trail.

The next summer "the Road party discovered the body of another man lying within a few feet of the trail under a tree. Portions of his clothing and blankets in shreds were scattered about. The poor man's coffee pot, jack-knife and drinking cup lay near. On the cup was scratched the name "Daniel Campbell," perhaps done while he lay there dying - starving to death. The body had been devoured by wild beasts, the marks of their teeth being visible on the bones."

In October 1871, after a snowfall, the trail from Germansen Creek to Quesnel was plowed up by the pack animals into a veritable quagmire that made travel almost impossible. Cold weather hardened it for travel in November but deep snow covered the pasturage; and weakened by a hard summer's work with poor pasture, horses and

---

1 Sentinel, August 26, 1871.
2 Colonist, October 26, 1872.
mules died in droves. T. Hutchison lost sixty-eight out of eighty-six mules; J. B. Brian lost sixteen out of twenty-one horses and abandoned the remaining five; Catalan lost thirty mules; Mitchell lost six; Terry, Dancing Bill, and Belly (sic) Walsh lost all their horses. The road from Nation River to Stuart Lake was strewn with dead horses, saddles and gear. It was a hard year for packers. The early freeze-up also caught many miners who had intended to come out by water, and forced them to walk. Many were short of provisions for the longer trip. Stories of suffering on the trail reached Quesnel. Thereupon the inhabitants, as was usual in such cases, collected a relief fund, and sent a certain D. Robertson, who had recently arrived at Quesnel over the same trail, back with a party of Indians to supply food to those on the trail who were in need. The records mention one poor fellow, an Italian, who burst into tears on receiving some bread and cheese, and offered Robertson a hundred dollar bill. About sixty miles out, Robertson hung the balance of the provisions in a tree with a notice explaining their use, and returned to Quesnel for a new supply. Many of the travellers suffered severely from frost bite, amongst them Captain Travaillot, who had both feet frozen and lost a toe while in charge of the election proceedings in Omineca, Bob Smith and two colored men missed their way near Stony Creek, and shortly afterwards their

1 Sentinel November 11, 13 and 25, 1871; Colonist, December 9, 1871.

2 Sentinel, November 25, 1871.
frozen bodies were discovered by Indians.

T, reports in a letter dated from Dease Creek, April 14, 1874: "Gold could not hire me to come up the Stickeen River again in the same season. Although I fattened on the trip after hauling 250 lbs. on a sleigh through snow up to my knees. . . . . . . . I was seven weeks coming from Fort Wrangel to here. Some days we would make only one mile. We were seven days in a snowstorm and never moved and nothing saved us but the exertion of drawing the loads, so that the cold could not take any effect."

Winter sometimes trapped prospectors. In the autumn of 1874 Angus McAllister and a party of twenty-two ascended Liard River for two hundred miles in canoes before winter overtook them. Then they made packs and pushed on another two hundred miles to Francis River. There the mercury froze and blizzards swept down from the north. The men turned back but scurvy seized the majority of them so that they could make only a few miles each day. McAllister and two others hastened ahead for help. Two of them became lame with scurvy and one was so seriously ill that only constant prodding prevented him from lying down on the snow-covered ice to die. They

1 Sentinel December 23, 1871; Guardian December 23, 1871.
2 Ibid. May 6, 1874.
3 McAllister discovered Vowell Creek in 1878 and mined on Defot Creek in 1879.
reached Laketon on March 24, nearly exhausted. The Laketon residents generously subscribed $850.00 to send lime-juice, vinegar, whisky, potatoes and vegetables to the sick men, and a relief party hurried back with McAllister. But too late to save all - four died.

In the winter of 1876-77 Daniel Williams was overtaken by a snowstorm while making a trip from Sylvester's Landing, at the mouth of McDame Creek, to Centreville, a distance of fifteen miles. Presumably he sought shelter in a deserted cabin, lit a fire and went to sleep. The search party found his tracks leading to a burnt cabin and his charred remains inside.

William Kanahan, a Kanaka employed to haul freight on Dease River in January 1880, failed to arrive on time. Charles Walker went out to look for him and found him lying almost lifeless upon his sleigh, with his hands and arms frozen. Walker took him to McDame Creek but they could do nothing for him there. Then Dick Glenn volunteered to take him to Laketon. Glenn lashed him to a sleigh and pulled it the ninety miles in four days through intense cold, ranging from forty to fifty below zero, with a strong north wind blowing. At Laketon Clearihue and Carson kept Kanahan at their hotel free of charge, giving him every attention, although he was

1 Colonist April 13, July 21, 1875.
2 Ibid. February 25, 1877.
helpless as a child, incapable even of feeding himself. A public meeting was held on January 18 to consider his case. A subscription was circulated. Vowell, the Gold Commissioner, promised government assistance and two days later he was sent with J. Booker to Glenora, on his way to Victoria and proper medical attention. The Provincial Treasury paid Glenn $100.00 and Booker $200.00 for their services to the suffering man.

Another danger of winter was the ice-rush. It seems that the streams sometimes froze so nearly solid in places that the water under the ice was dammed back until its weight broke through the surface, and water and ice came rushing down like a spring freshet. One of these caught four miners on Dease Creek while they were asleep one night in February, 1876, when the temperature was thirty-seven below zero. Their first intimation of danger was the bursting open of the door by the ice and water. Without dressing they clambered through a small back window and ran, bareheaded, bare-foot and clad only in underclothes, across the snow to Kirkpatrick's cabin a hundred yards away. All four suffered from severely frost-bitten hands and feet.

In winter the towns shrank in size; thus Laketon during the winter of 1875 consisted of "two hotel-keepers, 3 butchers, 3 storekeepers, 3 saloon keepers, 1 tailor, 12 woodchoppers, 18 miners, 4 whipsawers (sic), 1 teamster (Mr. Sullivan) and our en-

2 Colonist, March 30, 1876.
lightened and well-informed recorder, besides 7 petty larceny poker players, wasting their time at 4 bits limit." Dunkeld and Howellton had similar populations in the winter of 1870-71 plus the unusual blessing of a troupe of actors, consisting of Mr. & Mrs. McGinley, two or three daughters and a couple of other members. Every fortnight the combined population of the two towns assembled in the theatre for a performance. Between times McGinley rehearsed and did a little gold washing under the theatre. He got $500.00 by his washing; his professional profits are not reported.

The great event of the winter was the Christmas celebration. Fortunately we have the description of two of them, one at Hazelton in 1872 and the other at Laketon in 1875. Horetsky who arrived at Hazelton on Christmas Eve after a hard trip tired out and short of sleep described the former as follows:

From early morning until far into the evening the miner and every one else at the place were busily occupied in getting up shooting matches and other games with which to usher in the time-honoured holiday; and at midnight of the 24th, the bursting of a bomb consisting of 25 pounds of gunpowder securely tied up in many thicknesses of strong canvas announced the day which Englishmen delight to respect. Simultaneously a dropping fire of muskets and revolvers, accompanied by shouts and yells from the excited crowd, resounded through the air, and forthwith the major part of the population of Hazelton crowded into the saloon where ample justice was done to the occasion in many a flowing bumper, the exciting effects of which were

1 J. L. Crimp.
2 Colonist, March 30, 1876.
3 Standard, May 15, 1872; Colonist October 4, 1871; Sentinel, October 14, 1871.
soon manifested by eager demands for music and dancing. An old accordion and tambourine were the only instruments at the place were called into requisition while the crack dancers took the floor, among whom, and chief of them all, figured "Dancing Bill" of British Columbian renown. The fun grew fast and furious; the legitimate instruments already in use, and soon rendered almost unserviceable, were not found sufficient to satisfy the terpsichorean tastes of the miners; frying pans, pokers, anything, in fact, capable of producing sound, were therefore added to the list, and helped to swell the din become almost demoniacal. To sleep through such an uproar was, of course out of the question;... These demonstrations of mirth and loyalty continued for several days.

The Laketon celebration was more orderly, or perhaps the difference is that the writer of the description was himself one of the celebrants. He writes as follows:

Laketon, Jan. 24, 1876

Editor Colonist:

Christmas

Carson and Clarihue did not forget the poor miner on Christmas day (sic). A general invitation was extended to the inhabitants of Dease and Thibert Creeks to attend dinner. More than sixty persons responded and a more orderly and well-behaved party it would be difficult to find in any country under heaven. At six o'clock dinner was announced and the doors thrown open. Mr. Wm. Kirkpatrick was called upon to preside.

I will not attempt a description of the groaning table, for all who know Carson and Clarihue - and they are well-known - are aware of their kindness and liberality. Uncle Kirk on taking his place at the head of the table replied to the numerous calls in the following manner. (sic)

".................. In conclusion, gentlemen, I propose the health of our absent friend, the Cassiar

1 Horetsky; Canada on the Pacific pp. 106 & 107.
2 Colonist, March 30, 1876.
3 See Appendix E number 4.
miner, wherever he may be". Sixty men grasped their glasses and drank Uncle Kirk's well put toast with three times three.

The health and prosperity of our hosts, proposed by Mr. Gustavus Houck, elicited a neat and happy speech from Mr. Clarihue. I regret that I cannot give you his remarks in full, but about this time the wine passed freely round, and anointing the heads of those abstemious individuals who refused to drink caused so much merriment and uproar that I was unable to hear: beside my own "understandings" could not be relied upon to do justice to his remarks.

Songs and Recitations

Being pronounced in order James Fitzgerald was first called upon. He quickly responded, rendering in effective style the song of the "Cariboo Miner" with all the variations. Mrs. Norton's

Bingen on the Rhine

A recitation by James Rodgers was splendidly given. From the frequent applause it received one would imagine that every man present, like the dying soldier, thought of home, mother, brothers, and sweetheart.

Do They Miss Me at Home

A song by Reuben Albertson, was finely delivered. Albertson called upon Geo. Murdoch for Campbell's poem on

The Downfall of Poland

As he finished

O ! Once again to freedom's cause return
The patriot Tell.—The Bruce of Bannockburn

The whole house came down thundering and Mr. Murdoch received a handshaking that made his elbows ache

The Cottage by the Sea

By Mr. Miller from Thibert Creek..... was well received as were also "The Last Rose of Summer", "Old Arm Chair", and several other favourite ballads
by persons whose names I did not learn. The toast to "The Ladies, God's own Policemen; God bless them" was answered by Wm. Farron who recited in capital style Montgomery's well-known poem "The Love of Country and Home (sic)". Mr. Farron, having well earned the privilege, called upon Mr. Blass who sang "Muldoon, the solid man" (and) "Mulligan Guard".

"The prosperity of the Colonist, the Miner's Best and True Friend"

Was drunk with all the honors and responded to by an old stager and time-honored "Typo" of the New York "Herald" and who desires his name not to be mentioned. ........Your correspondent having never sung a song nor "spoke a speech" in his life was kindly let off with a jig to the tune of "Fatter Jack Walsh" ...............Nine o'clock in the morning found the party principally on the move for their homes and to the song of

"He's a Jolly Good Fellow"

Being participated in by the entire crowd in honor of Carson dispersed one of the most convivial good-natured assemblies I have witnessed.

In the same winter the strange case of the Chinaman, Sam Sing was reported. Sam Sing was in the habit of getting exceedingly drunk and often while in that state was pursued by many devils. Being a law-abiding person, Sam Sing applied to J. L. Crimp, the recorder, for authority to shoot all devils at sight. Crimp demurred at first but finally, on the payment of an appropriate fee, issued a warrant signed by Daniel O'Connell authorizing Sam Sing to shoot at sight all emissaries of the Evil One. Shortly afterwards the whole of Laketon was awakened at midnight by an unearthly tumult in the street. It was Sam Sing.

1 Crimp was recorder from 1875 to 1876 and again from 1878 to 1887. T. Redgraves was recorder in 1877 and part of 1878.
howling in triumph as he shot down the various devils that surrounded him after a drinking bout the evening before.

Shortly afterward Sam Sing died. His countrymen raised a subscription for an impressive funeral feast and burial. The body was wrapped in a winding sheet and placed in an expensive coffin overnight. The following morning they approached the coffin to screw on the lid. To their amazement and horror the corpse sat up and refused to participate further in the funeral proceedings. The Chinamen fled. Sam Sing lived well for three days on the funeral feast. But when he attempted to join his compatriots they spurned him. They insisted that this was not Sam Sing, their friend and companion, but the Evil One, who had taken possession of the body from which the soul had departed. Sam Sing took refuge in a white man's cabin a short distance up Dease Creek. A few nights later the cabin caught fire and the unhappy man ran raving into the snow-covered forest. A search failed to find him.

SECTION 3. WOMEN

The Christmas celebration at Laketon described above might have been labelled "Men Only", and indeed in Cassiar up to 1880 no

1 Colonist March 30, 1876.
2 Ibid. He may have escaped to Victoria for a Sam Sing acted as interpreter in court there in 1880 (See B. C. Sessional Papers 1881, Public Accounts of 1880, p. 103).
white woman was reported at the diggings in the winter time, few
even in summer time and only one, Miss Nellie Cashman for more
than once. Miss Cashman was "young and pretty light blonde" and
a "real energetic Yankee" who left Victoria in April of 1874 to
"open the first hotel at the diggings." She returned in November
after a successful season. The next year she was again in Cassiar
and J. W. C., the Cariboo Sentinel correspondent, reported her as
follows:

Miss Nellie Cashman, more familiarly called "Nellie
Pioche" is quite a character, and deserves more than
passing mention of her name. She kept a saloon and
eating house here [Laketon] last year and is said to
have done very well. She was known to most of the
Nevada miners, and like all good and dutiful children,
she sent her mother last fall on her arrival in Vic­
toria $500.00. She left Victoria with the first
crowd of miners last February [1875] all alone; came
up the Stickeen on the ice with her sled and 200 lbs.
of freight in 18 days with no companion only such as
she met with on the trip, and since the middle of March has had her house open, doing all her own work.

Miss Cashman left Wrangel for Cassiar on January 28, 1875
with a party of two men. About two weeks later Rufus Sylvester
met her below the Little Canyon with five men. She was "on snow-
shoes and as jolly as a sand-boy." The last mention of her is
her return from Cassiar in June of 1876.

1 Colonist February 3, 1875.
2 Ibid. May 1, 1874.
3 Ibid. November 3, 1874.
4 Sentinel, July 17, 1875, letter of J. W. C.
5 Colonist February 3, 1875.
6 Ibid. March 6, 1875.
7 Ibid. March 6, 1875.
Miss Irving, evidently a soloist, "gave one entertainment [in 1875] and realized $80. She announced another but the attendance was so poor she did not sing." Half a dozen other women went to Wrangel and perhaps to Glenora, even to Laketon but it is impossible to say definitely where except that there were a couple of Chinese women at the diggings in 1876 who may have wintered there.

In Omineca, on the other hand, several married couples were at the diggings and some women remained for the winter. The McGinleys have already been mentioned. Mr. And Mrs. Earle, (or Earl) lived on Germansen Creek for a time in a tent and later passed the same winter there. On Manson Creek, at Howellton and Dunkeld were the

1 Colonist, August 29, 1875.
2
Mr. & Mrs. Mandeville and child, "actors from Dease Lake (Colonist September 19, 1875) but no mention of any performance at Laketon; Mrs. Miller died of a cold (Ibid. April 18) but perhaps only at Wrangel; Miss S. Moore on the boat from Wrangel (Ibid. Nov. 1, 1876), perhaps related to Moore, the druggist at Laketon; Master and Miss Duval on the boat from Wrangel (Ibid. October 6, 1877) perhaps son and daughter of Duval, Defot’s partner; Mrs. J. B. Lovell from Wrangel (Ibid. October 30) probably been to her husband at Glenora; Mrs. Baronovitch for Wrangel (Ibid. May 1, 1879) her husband had a store at Wrangel; "For Fort Wrangel, ........Mr. & Mrs. Dibbel". (Ibid. May 19, 1880)
3
Mining Report, 1876, p. 415.
4
Colonist, October 5, 1871.
5
Ibid. November 22; Ibid. February 14, 1872, report of D. Humphreys.
McGinleys, a family keeping a boarding house, and "Josephine and two other women... here, with two more on the way.... also 3 squaws and one Chinese woman. A later report mentioned "one Frenchwoman, one Spanish woman, and one Chinawoman. The women had to face the same hardships as the men, for example "Mr. James Morrison and his wife..... entered the Omineca country..... July last [1871] and started on their return 1st November. They reached Forks of Skeena 29th November and wintered there. On 9th April they started down via Nass trail and reached the coast - Mrs. Morrison walking 155 miles over snow and through slush and rain."

SECTION 4. / JUSTICE

We have already noticed that on the Stikine hundreds of miners lived and worked for several months without any legal authority in the land but without reported crime (see p. 32 above). A record almost as creditable was maintained in Omineca and Cassiar during the seventies. Of course then, as now in mining and logging camps, the police did not attempt to stop discreet poker play-

1 Colonist, November 22, 1871.
2 Ibid. October 5
3 Ibid. February 14, 1872, report of D. Humphreys.
4 Colonist, May 15, 1872.
ing nor mutually agreeable fisticuffs. They confined their activities to the prevention of serious crimes like murder, assault, robbery, in which they had the support of the entire community. In this way one stipendiary magistrate, a dozen justices of the peace and half a dozen scattered constables — one at Omineca; one on Skeena River; one on Stikine River; one at Laketon; and one at Centreville — with occasional specials were able to administer law and order in this vast territory. Without them disorder appeared, as a miner reported about Omineca during 1874: "I am very glad ... ...we have .......... a J. P. amongst us at last - Mr. Allan Graham. We had a pretty rough camp here for a while last year. I was sorry for Mr. Page, who as constable, did all he could but the men knew he had no power to punish them and this made his position very uncomfortable."

Also before the arrival of Magistrate J. N. Sullivan in Cassiar conditions were bad. "Victoria" wrote to the Colonist "Gambling is rampant here at present and the streets are paved with playing cards Saloons are going a 'flourishing business' .....To-day we had several knock-downs...." A pair of destitute miners made an attempt at highway robbery on Moore's trail. Sharpers among the miners paid Indian canoeemen with worthless notes. Smuggling was tried but was nipped in the bud by the energetic action of Hunter, the customs officer on Stikine, who obtained convictions against

1 Colonist, February 13, 1875, from the Guardian
2 Colonist, September 1874; see also August 25
3 Ibid. June 6, July 19, August 4, 1874.
4 Ibid. June 6 and July 19
both Hart and Lear at Glenora.

The sale of liquor to the Indians was the source of constant trouble and much of the trouble with the natives originated in this practice. The Stikine experience has been mentioned above. In Omineca in 1872 an Indian, Tommy, and his squaw killed two klootchmen with a hatchet while "in a drunk en spree." It also involved Indian women as "Chillotta" writes to the Colonist in 1876:

Glenora Landing, March 10, 1876.

The law should allow no man who sells intoxicating liquor to sell flash calicoes and gaudy ribbons; his license should be taken away if he permitted an Indian woman into his whisky shop.

........If a man robs a simple Indian woman of her senses, then of her chastity and then makes a public strumpet of her what does the law do?

Nothing ........

The difficulty was to catch men in the act of selling the liquor.

Two cases of the murder of Indian women by their husbands were reported, one 1878, the other in 1879. The former case involved Joe (or Tom) Anderson who ran amuk at Glenora in January,

1 Ibid. September 24, August 5 and 25, 1874.
2 Ibid. August 31, 1872; Sentinel, September 7, 1872.
3 Colonist, April 14, 1876.
1878. Constable W. Evans arrested him and released him under bond. Thereupon Anderson stabbed his klootchman to death and attempted suicide. Failing in this he besought Chief Sheks to shoot him. Sheks turned him over to Evans. Anderson was not tried in 1878, the next year the papers relating to his case were at Victoria when the case came before the Cassiar assizes and the third, when the suspension of assizes in Cassiar made it necessary to send him to Victoria for trial, the papers remained in Cassiar so that the autumn of 1880 found him living in comparative luxury in Laketon gaol at the public expense, much to the amazement of the natives. Eli Harrison, of the Attorney-General's department suggested to Vowell that "under the peculiar circumstances of the case, it being impossible to try him this Fall (sic) he might be employed......to pay for the Expense (sic) of keeping him." Well he might, for they were paying J. L. Crimp from $45.00 to $46.50 a month for Anderson's board.

1 Colonist, February 28, 1878; September 16, October 16, 1879; August 19, 1880.
2 Eli Harrison to A. W. Vowell, Victoria, September 6, 1880, manuscript letter in the files of the Attorney-General's Department, Victoria.
In contrast to the delay in Anderson's case is the speedy disposition of that of Johnson, another Indian murderer. Johnson killed his wife for going with another Indian. When two white men interfered he killed one of them and wounded another. The next day Lovell, the J. P. arrested him after a desperate fight and two months later he was convicted. He was hanged the next year (1880).

One of the difficult (and expensive) duties of the police was the transportation of insane men to the asylum at Victoria. Since a constable could not be long absent from his district the patient was generally handed along from point to point with trust-worthy wayfarers; for example, in the Public Accounts of 1873 the following items appear:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lunatic</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Cameron</td>
<td>&quot;Dewine&quot; Skeena to Victoria</td>
<td>$218.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Smith</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; Babine to Skeena</td>
<td>150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. S. Otter</td>
<td>fare &quot; &quot; and keeper</td>
<td>32.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Freak</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; clothing</td>
<td>25.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cunningham and Hankin</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Discoll</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>10.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Smith</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>13.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rent and damages to house by lunatic 25.00
Supplies for lunatic 8.00

The total of these items is $550.62.

In spite of the "damage to house" it would appear that lunatics were safer charges than sane prisoners if the experience of Beegan with Peter Martin is any indication. Frank Beegan and H. Richardson

1 Colonist August 17, September 9, 1879; October 19, 1880.
2 B. C. Sessional Papers, 1874, p. 98.
were deputed to conduct Martin, nicknamed "Bricktop" from Cassiar to Victoria where he was to serve a sentence of fifteen months for assault and battery. One day at dinnertime Martin seized their only firearm, a shot gun, which had been leaned against a tree, and backed away towards the woods. Beegan pursued him with a hatchet and in the scuffle that followed Beegan was wounded, his head battered and his collar bone broken. Later Richardson and two others recaptured the fugitive. He arrived at Victoria on SS. "Grappler" under a guard of four armed men. The cost of transportation and guards for Martin was $380.90 and of compensation to Beegan $200.00.

Assize courts were held in Cassiar annually from 1876 to 1879 and then suspended for lack of business. The Grand Jury of 1879 reported "no white men charged" and the gold commissioner in the same year remarked on the "total absence of crime."

The assizes of 1877 are noteworthy on account of the courage displayed by Supreme Court Judge Crease. The Judge received severe internal injuries when his horse stumbled on the McDame Creek trail and was physically helpless for the rest of his stay. Nothing daunted, he held court lying on a stretcher and disposed of the entire docket. He was carried to Buck's Bar strapped to a stretcher which, on the hilly trail, sometimes sloped "almost per-

1 Colonist, October 1, 1876; Rux: Roughing it after Gold, p. 131.
2 B. C. Sessional Papers 1877 Public Accounts of 1876, pp. 190, 222, 226; Ibid. 1878, Public accounts of 1877 p. 133.
3 Colonist, September 16, 1879.
4 Mining Report 1879, p. 240.
pendicularly" occasionally with the Judge's head downward. He never complained. At home in Victoria he recovered some degree of health but remained lame.

SECTION 5. - THE PROFESSIONS.

Judge Creare's accident drew attention to the need for medical service in Cassiar. The next year a subscription was circulated to get money for a hospital and a grant was voted by the legislature. No hospital was erected, however, and in 1879 the grand jury requested an annual grant towards the salary of a resident physician instead but nothing was done. Payments were made from the hospital fund for the treatment of the destitute and the prisoners, to J. Moore, a druggist who set up in business in 1874 and continued as druggist and medical advisor until after 1880. The drug business was not a sufficient livelihood and Moore went into other lines, such as hauling supplies.

The only two doctors mentioned in Cassiar were Theakstone and Foster. Theakstone entered Cassiar with Moore, the druggist but

1 Colonist, September 15, 1877.
2 Colonist, September 15, 1877.
3 Ibid. September 16, 1879.
soon took to mining. N. F. Foster, "Doc," ran a general store at Centreville. He may have been a medical man.

A Roman Catholic missionary visited Cassiar diggings in 1877.

The legal profession was represented by C. J. Leggatt, a certain Davie, and a certain Moss (who was perhaps not qualified).

Leggatt and Davie were both at the diggings in 1874 and 1875.

Leggatt was a resident voter in the Cassiar lists of 1880. Moss was the representative of the defendants in the smuggling cases of 1874. Subsequently he did everything but practice law.

The press was well represented at the diggings by correspondents of the various newspapers on the Pacific coast including the Cariboo Sentinel, of Barkerville, and the "California Alta", of San Francisco. In the winter of 1874-75, and possibly in other years, the residents of Laketon went into journalism on their own account and produced their own "Cassiar Chronicle", a manuscript

1  
Colonist, May 7, 1874; July 3, October 23, 1877; July 17, October 4, 1878.

2  
Ibid. August 30, 1876; July 24, 1877; May 1, 1879; B. C. Sessional Papers 1878 Report of Public Works p. 349.

3  
Colonist, October 6, 1877.

4  
Sentinel, July 4, 1874, Leggatt's advertisement; Colonist August 23, 1874, Davie passed Glenora.

5  
Colonist, September 15, 1877.

6  
B. C. Sessional Papers 1881, voter's lists, p. 86.

7  
Colonist, September 24, 1874.

8  
Colonist, July 16, 1874 and other newspaper references too numerous to mention.
affair that was read aloud in the hotels.

SECTION 6. - AGRICULTURE.

Agriculture, including gardening, was one of the first occupations to appear after mining. Probably garden vegetables were raised in Stikine valley before the Cassiar rush, for W. Moore reported in 1873 that "vegetables and good potatoes are raised to good advantage". In Omineca Fred Black grew turnips, onions, radishes and lettuce on Germansen Creek in 1872. In Cassiar Clearihue at Laketon and Campbell at Lake House (at the south end of Dease Lake) were supplying similar home-grown produce in 1875. Farm produce - hay, oats, barley - was harvested on Knew Camp Ranch near Dease Lake two years later and probably earlier in the Stikine valley. The Stikine farmers, some fifteen in number with about two hundred acres under cultivation in all, held an agricultural exhibition at Telegraph Creek in 1879. Vegetables, grain, eggs and milk were put on show by Messrs. Shearer, Calbreath, Lovell, Colonist, July 16, 1874 Samuel Gothard, of the "Police Gazette", Vancouver, saw an issue of the Cassiar Chronicle in the possession of the late Magistrate Shaw.

2 B. C. Sessional Papers, 1874, Report of Exploration p.15

3 Colonist, October 24, 1872.

4 Ibid. August 15, September 21, 1875.

5 Ibid. September 15, 1877.
Diffoe, Dakin and others. It was voted a success. As the mining population dwindled, however, so did the farming population. In 1887 the British Columbia Directory listed only two farmers to forty miners in Cassiar.

1 Ibid. September 19, October 1, 1879.
2 E. Mallandaine: British Columbia Directory 1887, Cassiar district. Both figures are underestimates.
CHAPTER VI

HISTORICAL AND ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE
OF THE NORTHERN RUSHES 1860 -- 1880

The historical and economic importance of Omineca and Cassiar is to be considered from two view-points; viz., their affect first upon northern British Columbia and, second, upon the populated, southern, half of the province.

There are a number of obvious results in the north-geographical knowledge was increased, trails blazed and cleared, bridges built, the attention of mining men was attracted to it, prospecting for ore bodies was commenced, a hundred or so men remained to mine, prospect, farm, trap, and trade with the Indians, some hydraulic mining companies went over the creeks with machinery for small profits - but it is doubtful that any of these had much permanent importance. Northern British Columbia is still in the prospecting stage of development, except along the Canadian National Railway line to Prince Rupert, in the Peace River area, and the coast regions, which developed independently in the twentieth century. Had the gold extracted by the early placer miners never existed, the geological surveyors and prospectors in search of base metals would have uncovered the mineral wealth of the north soon enough for development. The rushes were like shooting stars on a dark night, flashes of passing radiance.

To estimate the affect upon the southern sections of the province is very difficult especially as it merged in the affect of the
gold mining industry as a whole.

In the fifties what is now the province of British Columbia had a population of well under five thousand, it was isolated, separated from Canada by trackless mountains and prairies, from Britain by the sea and from the United States by tariffs and political factors. It possessed vast natural resources of minerals, forests, fisheries and land suitable for development.

Its climate is temperate. All it needed was some stimulating economic force to attract population and to last long enough for the secondary industries and export trade to be developed.

Such a stimulus was the placer gold mining. The gold production rose from practically nothing in 1857 to $1,615,072 in 1859, and $3,735,850 in 1864, then gradually decreased to $1,799,440 in 1871, $1,786,648 in 1876 and $1,013,827 in 1880 according to official figures. The mining population varied from 25,000 in 1858, to 4,000 in 1860, 2,348 in 1870, 2,024 in 1875 and 1955 in 1880.

For years it was the basic and largest industry in the province. In the early years of the mining prices were high and the range of articles and commodities available very limited. As transportation became cheaper and prices at the diggings lower, secondary industries developed to supply the demand for a greater variety of commodities. Population increased, new industries and services developed.

1 Mining Report, 1880, Table
2 Howay: British Columbia. The Making of a Province, pp. 120, 131 and Mining Reports 1870, 1875 and 1880. Table of Statistics.
In 1870 the non-Indian Population was 10,586 employed as follows:

- Agriculture: 1,827
- Manufacturing: 402
- Trade: 1,303
- Mining: 2,348

From these figures it is plain that British Columbia was in 1870 still very much a "gold colony", for 22.9 per cent of the total non-Indian population were miners.

During the next decade the development of the secondary industries continued and some industries, like logging and lumbering were able to establish themselves on an export basis, and consequently a fairly stable economic organization was built up which tended to run on its own impetus even when the original impetus - the placer gold mining - declined.

Such a condition was very near in 1880. The non-Indian population had increased to 31,446, an increase of about two hundred per cent. Nearly 23,000 people were reported employed employed

1 Censuses 1665 - 1871, p. 102 table I.
2 Ibid., p. 103, table II. In the same year there were 41 marriages and 213 births in the colony. The total 5,881 allows for women and children.
3 Canada 1886, p. 41, total population 56,446, p. 48, Indian population 25,000, hence non-Indian population 31,446.
in part as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>2,871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumbering</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professions</td>
<td>491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>1,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Mining</td>
<td>1,955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not definitely indicated</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some production figures for the same year (1881) are: wheat 173,653 bushels, oats 253,911 bushels, potatoes 473,837 bushels, turnips and other roots 352,774 bushels, lumber 24,017,877 cubic feet (multiply by 12 to get feet board measure) number of logs 3,281,143, and coal 263,300 tons.  

1 The figures are based on those given in Canada 1886 p. 84-86 Occupations of the People 1881, British Columbia; Canada Year Book 1905, p. 76, 2,743 occupiers of more than five acres in 1881; Ibid. 1931, p. 406 number employed in manufacture 1881; Mining Report, 1880, Table; Report of Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration, Ottawa, 1885, p. 395, employees in salmon canneries.

2 But not gold mining, see Mining Report 1880.

3 Canada Year Book 1905, pp. 78, 102, 110. Tables XXII, XXVII, and XL.
mining industry to third or fourth place, not so much on account of decline in the mining as of the growth of agriculture, lumbering and fishing.

The question that arises next concerns the extent to which the non-existence of the northern placer gold fields would have affected the growth of the province from 1870 to 1880.

Table III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Provinicial Total Value</th>
<th>Northern Total Value</th>
<th>Southern Total Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>$1,774,978</td>
<td>$6,600</td>
<td>$1,768,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>1,336,956</td>
<td>54,000</td>
<td>1,282,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>1,799,440</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>1,399,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>1,610,972</td>
<td>241,000</td>
<td>1,369,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>1,305,749</td>
<td>145,000</td>
<td>1,160,749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>1,844,618</td>
<td>1,180,000</td>
<td>664,616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>2,474,904</td>
<td>932,000</td>
<td>1,542,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>1,786,648</td>
<td>576,464</td>
<td>1,210,184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>1,608,182</td>
<td>524,800</td>
<td>1,083,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>1,275,204</td>
<td>543,720</td>
<td>731,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>1,290,059</td>
<td>429,400</td>
<td>660,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>1,013,827</td>
<td>344,600</td>
<td>669,227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 The decline in mining population 1870 to 1880 was 16.7% and in value of gold 24.1%.
2 The figures for 1874 and 1875, in the opinion of the writer, probably on account of the practice of estimating total returns by known exports. In ordinary years the carry-over did not matter much but the sudden increase of production in 1874 and its late arrival and spending in Victoria led to a large carry-over to 1875. The Mining Report of 1874 give Cariboo alone $700,000. The figures $2,244,618 and $2,074,904 for total production in 1874 and 1875 respectively and $1,064,616 and $1,142,904 for the southern total would probably be closer the actual values. The northern value totals are found by adding the totals of Omineca and Cassiar (See Appendices C and D)
Figures showing the gold production of the province exclusive of Omineca and Cassiar are given in Table No. III p. 164. These figures suggest that without Cassiar the decline in gold production would have been steadier and a little greater; there would have been no sudden rise in 1874 and 1875. This might have meant that the rate increase in population after 1874 would have been the same as from 1870 to 1874 - about 41% in four years. Since the non-Indian population of the province in 1874 was 15,000 this would have given by 1880 a population of about 25,000. On the other hand the surveys and other work in connection with the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway provided another artificial stimulus that would account directly and indirectly for at least one thousand additional population. Also the fact the railway was to be built was attracting settlers and others who wished to be on the ground to take advantage of the activities that would follow the construction of the railroad, probably another two thousand by 1880. The total speculative population grows to 28,000, only three thousand below the actual figure. Without the northern rushes, therefore, growth would really have been little retarded, times a little less prosperous and deficits a little greater but in the light of the twentieth century development in mining, fisheries, lumbering, paper-making, to say nothing of agriculture, this retardation would have had little historical significance.

1 The non-Indian population of British Columbia 1874 was 15,000; see Censuses 1665-1871, p. 377, Table II note. The increase was nearly 5,000.
To sum up, the Stikine, Peace River, Omineca and Cassiar rushes were hardly large enough greatly to affect the outside world or to be an essential factor in the development of the province, but they were, nevertheless, characteristic gold rushes with a full measure of movement, toil, luck, disappointment, hardship and death. They take their place beside Kootenay and Big Bend in the romantic story of British Columbia's early years.

Finis.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. MANUSCRIPT MATERIALS

Adams, J. R.: Letter to the Honorable E. Beaven; from Buck's Bar, October 10, 1873 (the files of the Department of Lands) A good statement of Adams case in the legal controversy of 1873 - 74.

Ball, H. M.: Letter to the Colonial Secretary, December 28, 1870 (B. C. Archives M. F. 102.)


Gardiner, J. A.: Diary of J. A. Gardiner No. 1. (B. C. Archives) First hand information on the exploration of the overland cattle trail Hazelton to Telegraph Creek, 1875.

Harrison, Eli: Letter to A. W. Vowell, from Victoria, September 6, 1880, (the files of the Attorney-General's Department). Tom Anderson to work for his keep in gaol.

The materials, manuscript and printed, used in the preparation of this thesis are to be found in the Archives of British Columbia and the Legislative Library at Victoria B. C., the University of British Columbia Library, the Vancouver City Library, and the private library of R. L. Reid, Esq., K. C., at Vancouver, B. C., the City Library New Westminster, B. C., and the files of the Attorney-General's Department and of the Department of Lands at Victoria, B. C.
Howell, Robert: Letter to P. O'Reilly, G. C. in Omineca, from Manson River, July 12, 1871 (B. C. Archives M. S. S. 802 a.b.) Discovery of gold on Manson Creek and the laying out of Howellton townsite.

Humphrey, William: Diary (B. C. Archives) Exploration and construction of overland cattle trail Hazelton to Laketon, 1874.


2. OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Canada, Statistical Abstract and Record for the Year 1886. Ottawa, MacLean Roger & Co. 1887 - population and occupation figures for 1881.

Canada Year Book 1905. Ottawa, S. E. Dawson, 1906. Information on occupiers of farms of five acres or more in British Columbia during 1881.


1870 and 1874, occupations of the people of British Columbia in 1870.

Journals of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia 1871 to 1874, (Volumes I to IV). Victoria, Wolfenden, 1872 to 1874. The appendices contain the sessional papers.

Ordinances passed by the Legislative Council of British Columbia during the Session from January to April 1865. New Westminster Government Printing Office. Laws governing gold mining.

Ordinances passed by the Legislative Council of British Columbia during the Session from January to April, 1867. New Westminster, Government Printing Office. Laws governing gold mining.

Papers Relative to the affairs of British Columbia Parts I to III. London, George Eyre and Wm. Spottiswoode, 1859 and 1860. Laws governing gold mining, and first penetration of the north land.

Public Accounts of British Columbia 1874 to 1880, in the Sessional Papers of the British Columbia Legislature 1875 to 1881. Victoria, Wolfenden, 1875 to 1881. These reveal many interesting details on the administration of justice, the merchants supplying government offices in various districts, and road expenditures.

Reports of the Department of Public Works 1874 to 1880, in the Sessional Papers of the British Columbia Legislature 1875 to 1881. Victoria, Wolfenden, 1875 to 1881. Explorations, trails, and trail charters.
Reports of the Minister of Mines 1874 to 1880, in the Sessional Papers of the British Columbia Legislature 1875 to 1881, Victoria, Wolfenden, 1875 to 1881. Letters of the gold commissioners are very informative.


Statutes of British Columbia 1874, 37 Victoria. Victoria, Wolfenden, 1874. The Mining Amendment of 1874.


3. NEWSPAPERS

British Colonist, Victoria, B. C. 1860-1880 (B.C. Archives and Provincial Library)

Many interviews with prominent miners, letters, and full reports from Peace River, Stikine, the Skeena route to Omineca, and the Cassiar district. The Peace River reports are exaggerated. It consistently supported the miner in his fight for trails, representation and redress of grievances.

British Columbian, New Westminster, B. C. 1863-1866 (B.C. Archives)

Most of its reports are copied from other newspapers, but it
contains a few good letters.

Cariboo Sentinel, Barkerville, B. C. 1864-1875 (B.C. Archives and Vancouver City Library)
The best source of good reports and letters from Peace River and Omineca. It is critical of the Skeena route and of Cassiar.

Daily Chronicle, Victoria, B. C. 1862-1866 (B.C. Archives)
The best source for the Stikine rush; few reports but they are long and detailed. It is fair on Cassiar.

Daily Standard, Victoria, B. C. 1870-1875 (B.C. Archives and Provincial Library)
Few reports and letters.

Gazette, Victoria, B. C. 1858-1859 (B.C. Archives)
Meagre reports.

Government Gazette British Columbia, Victoria, B. C.
Official advertisements, appointments, notices and a few reports.

Mainland Guardian, New Westminster, B.C. 1864-1875 (New Westminster City Library)
Good for Peace River and Omineca.

Times, New Westminster, B. C. 1859-1860 (B.C. Archives)
Meagre reports.

4. OTHER PRINTED SOURCES

British Columbia and Victoria Directory 1863.

British Columbia Directory, 1887.
Victoria, Mallandaine and Williams 1887. Unofficial census
of Cassiar 1886.


5. MAPS

Pope's Map. A map of central and northern British Columbia, made in 1867 by Major James Pope from information collected during the surveys of the Collin's Overland Telegraph Company's Ex-
ploration parties (B. C. Archives)

Trutch's Map. A Map of the Peace River Mines, prepared from the best information at hand at the Lands and Works Office 1870 (Vancouver City Library).
In arriving at an estimate of the number of men on the Stikine River at the end of each month in 1862 I first made a list of sailings for the Stikine (given in table IV below) with the number of passengers as given in the columns of the "British Colonist". Then I made a list of the departures from Stikine, the number of men that died there, and the number that wintered there in 1862-1863. This information is summarized in tables V and VI below. Next from these tables the number of arrivals and departures and so the number of men at the diggings at the end of each month was calculated allowing a week for a steamer and two weeks for other craft to make the trip one way between Victoria and the mouth of the Stikine. The results are shown in table VII on which Graph No. I page 31 of the text is based.
### TABLE IV - SAILINGS FOR STIKINE, 1862.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ship</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Ship</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 27</td>
<td>Kingfisher</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>May 16</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td>Antelope</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Hamley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Lamgley</td>
<td>5X</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3 canoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Fanny</td>
<td>5X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 boats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hamley</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Antelope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Alpha</td>
<td>5X</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>John Thornton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(?</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>June 3</td>
<td>John Dickson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 10</td>
<td>Ino</td>
<td>5X</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Flying Dutchman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Explorer</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Non-Pareil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Alarm</td>
<td>5X</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Labouchere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Eagle</td>
<td>5X</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>a canoe</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>July 7</td>
<td>Victoria Packet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 4</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Grace Darling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 canoes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>North Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>North Star</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>2 canoes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Aug. 6</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Boz</td>
<td>5X</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Otter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>canoe</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sep. 2</td>
<td>Hamley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>canoe Nalin</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sep. 2</td>
<td>Hamley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Commodore</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Packet</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Add Russians</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 246  **Total to mines** 651

*Five men were allowed to a boat when the number was not stated*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ship</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 26</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 16</td>
<td>Louise Morris</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$22</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North Star</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>some gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>a canoe</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>John Dickson</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>20 oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Alpha</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 9</td>
<td>North Star</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>48 oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>SS. Otter</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>small amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Flying Dutchman</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>with barge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emily Harris</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Native</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Alpha</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Perfect Cure</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 9</td>
<td>Surprise</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>John Thornton</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>John Dickson</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 canoes</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>SS. Labouchere</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.(?)</td>
<td>John Dickson</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1</td>
<td>SS. Labouchere</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>459</td>
<td>32,128</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE VI - COMING AND GOINGS COMPARED, 1862

| No. of men entering Stikine (see Table I) | 651 |
| No. of men leaving Stikine (Table II) | 459 |
| No. of men who died there | 20 |
| No. of men wintering | 80 |

Total accounted for | 559 |
Not accounted for | 92 |

TABLE VII - NO. OF MEN AT THE MINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>To mines</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>From mines</th>
<th>Addx 20%</th>
<th>Incr.</th>
<th>Decr.</th>
<th>No. at the of the month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar.</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr.</td>
<td>148</td>
<td></td>
<td>148</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>174</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td>476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>79</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>175</td>
<td></td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals 651 20 459 92 476 396

x The 92 men not accounted for in Table V are distributed among the various months in proportion to the number who left that month by adding 20%.
Gold production in Stikine during 1862 is difficult to calculate. Judging from the reports received in Victoria over the whole season we may say that a miner could take out $1.00 to $1.50 a day almost anywhere at any time during the summer, that at low water there were many bars that paid $3.00 a day to the hand, and that a few bars paid up to $15 a day to the hand. We may say then, that on the average the miners took out $2.00 a day to the hand when they were working. An estimate of the total number of working days follows:

No miners working until June.

June, men actually at the diggings numbered about 367 (417 - 150 = 367) and with high water and moving about we may say they worked an average of fifteen days each, giving a total of 5,505 working days.

July, the men actually at the diggings numbered about four hundred (average) and worked, say, fifteen days giving a total of 6,000 working days.

August, the men at the diggings numbered four hundred and worked, with the water falling, an average of twenty-five days, giving a total of 10,000 working days.

September, the men at the diggings numbered three hundred, and worked an average of twenty days, as there was much prospecting that took time in transportation, and thus we get a total of 6,000 working days.

During the rest of the year men were migrating, getting pro-
visions and building huts for the winter so we may discount the production for the rest of the year.

Thus we get a grand total of 27,505 working days, which at two dollars a day works out to a total production for the year of $55,010.

Another method of calculation is to take the amount of gold reported to have come down on the ships to Victoria, a total of $32,128, which represents principally the gold brought down in the hands of traders, or in the possession of more successful miners who remained till October. Allowing an equal amount for gold in the hands of other miners we get a total of $64,256. The writer would judge that the former total is more nearly correct.

The production for 1863 was miserably poor and can be placed with safety at under seventy-five dollars per miner, a total of $9,600.

APPENDIX B

No. 1. The mining population of Peace River in 1861 was two - William Cust and Edward Cary (Colonist, June 6, 1861). In 1862 Cust and four others ( Chronicle November 20, 1862, Colonist, February 10, 1870), a party of four ( Ibid. and Morice; Northern Interior, p. 296) a party of eight (Colonist, October 17 and 20, 1862), Alex Porter, alone, (Chronicle December 23, 1862) and another group of unstated number (Ibid.) visited Peace River, in all about twenty-five.

The next year the number 150 (Morice; Northern Interior,
From 1864 to 1868 the number varied from two to a dozen. (Colonist, February 17, 1870).

No. 2. The value of the gold mined in Peace River in 1861 was $1,000.00 (Chronicle November 20, 1862; B. C. Directory, 1863, p. 204 - 205; Colonist, February 16, 1870). During the next year the following amounts were reported:

Cust and party, $6,000 (Ibid.) an unnamed group of four men, $900 (Ibid. and Morice: Northern Interior p. 296) a group of eight, $1,000 (Colonist, October 17 and 20, 1862), a total of $7,900. Add another $5,000 for unreported and late returns and the total becomes $12,900.

In 1863 the total was higher on account of the greater number of men. Peter Goldsmith and four others reported about $4,000 (Sentinel, December 4, 1869). Other parties mined for shorter periods of time or in poorer diggings and the general returns were poor, say an average of $300.00 per man during the year. On this basis the total works out to $47,500 ($300 X 145 = 4,000).

From 1864 to 1867 we can place the returns at approximately $4,000 per year.

APPENDIX C

OMINEGA

NO. 1. Population, Summer and Winter 1869 to 1880.

The population in the summer of 1869 was nine, six in the Peace River Prospecting Party and three in the Chapmen Party (Colonist May 16, 1869). In the autumn about twenty-two went in
to join those left at Vital Creek in the summer (Sentinel November 13, 1869) so that the winter population was about twenty-five.

In 1870 ninety-one passengers were reported leaving Victoria for Omineca by way of the Skeena River (SS. Eliza Anderson, 20, Colonist, March 9, 1870, SS. Otter, 15 + 36 + 20, Colonist, March 19, April 19, June 10, 1870) none of whom arrived before May 1 (Sentinel May 14, 1870).

The Colonist on May 8, 1870, reported that 200 had passed Quesnel to that date bound for Omineca. Lamont reported meeting 125 white men and 100 Chinamen on their way to the mines in the first half of May (Sentinel May 14, 1870) and on May 15 the Sentinel estimated that 350 had gone through to Omineca (Sentinel, May 15, 1870). Allowing for overlapping in reports this seems a good estimate. These would all reach Omineca by the middle of June making a total of about 450. It is doubtful if the total number exceeded this at any time later in the year for as many are reported leaving as arriving in June (Sentinel, June 25, 1870) and in July more than 200 left the district (Sentinel July 9, 23, 1870), indeed the Colonist reported that at the end of June there were only 150 men left (Colonist, August 11, 1870). In September when Germansen's discovery became known, there were 105 men assembled at Vital (Sentinel September 24, 1870). Allowing for a few men prospecting, and traders at Hogen and Takla Landing, there would be under 150 men. Forty wintered (Sentinel, February 4, 1871).

For 1871 the recorded sailings from Victoria to the mouth of the Skeena River are given in Table VIII on the next page. It is
probable that the Otter made a trip with another 75, say, in June making a total by this route of approximately 550 up to the end of June, 1871. The number reported for the Fraser River route up to the end of May is about 350 (Colonist February 21, July 9, 1871; Sentinel March 11, 25, April 13, 29, May 6, 1871). The total re-

TABLE VIII - RECORDED SAILINGS FROM VICTORIA
FOR SKEENA MOUTH, 1871.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ship</th>
<th>Newspaper reference</th>
<th>Number of Passengers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SS. Otter</td>
<td>Colonist Feb. 21, 1871</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS. Otter and barge Omineca</td>
<td>Standard Mar. 25, 1871</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS. Grappler</td>
<td>Standard Apr. 6, 1871</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS. Otter</td>
<td>Colonist Apr. 15, 1871</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS. Otter</td>
<td>Standard May 18, 1871</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS. Grappler</td>
<td>Colonist May 18, 1871</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS. Emma</td>
<td>Colonist June 10, 1871</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

478

ported entering Omineca in 1871 is, therefore, about 900. The Sentinel estimated the number at the diggings at 800 by both routes (Sentinel June 17, 1871). P. O'Reilly put the number at 500 for June 12 (Colonist July 5, 1871) but a month later reported 1200. (P. O'Reilly to the Colonial Secretary -- the Colonist August 9,
1871). In his final report (Sessional Papers 1872 #5, p. 86) he says the population was never more than 1500, with 900 actually mining. Since after the middle of July few were reported entering and many were reported leaving (Colonist August 30, 1870) the writer is of the opinion that July was the high point and also that the population was not more than a thousand at anytime in 1871 (See also Sentinel August 5, 1871 and Colonist October 4, 1871, the report of Webster):

About 150 wintered at the diggings (Sentinel January 13, 1872; Colonist February 14, 1872).

In 1872 the number of men that went to Omineca was much less and they began to come earlier in the season. The Colonist in all reported 686 as leaving the mines, and the Sentinel reported 75 wintering at the diggings and the Colonist reported 20 wintering at Hazelton (Colonist March 28, 1873), making a total of 781. The greatest number reported at the mines at any one time was 600 (Sentinel August 17, 1872) and allowing for overlapping of arrivals and departures, this figure may be accepted as the summer peak population. Seventy-five passed the winter in Omineca. (Sentinel January 4, 1873)

In 1873 there were not more than 300 men in Omineca (Colonist June 6, 'Butler's report', August 13, 'Wm. Reed's report' 1873; Standard August 13, 1873; Sentinel June 7, 1873). Few wintered at the diggings, about a hundred prepared to winter at Hazelton, on their way to Cassiar. (Colonist November 19, 1873)

In 1874 there were about 80 men at the mines (Mining Report,
1874, p. 550; Sentinel November 14, 1874) and about 20 wintered
(Sentinel November 28, 1874, February 13, 1875).

It continued about the same until 1877 and in 1878 dropped to
about 45. (Colonist July 26, 1877, November 19, 1878, October 14,
1879)

No. 2. Mining production in Omineca 1869 - 1888.
The production of gold on Vital Creek in 1869 has been estimated
in the text at $6,600 (see p. 164 above) and in 1870 at $54,000
(see p. 140 above). In 1871 the gold commissioner reported
$400,000 (B. C. Sessional Papers, 1872, #5, p. 87). This was the
banner year and the best on both Germansen and Manson Creeks.

There is no return in the B. C. Sessional Papers of the gold pro-
duction for the next two years, but a reasonable estimate would be
to suppose that the annual average per miner was about the same as
in the year preceding, giving a total of $240,000 and $120,000 for
1872 and 1873 respectively. For the remaining years the mining
report figures may be accepted for 1874, $80,000 (Mining Report,
1874, p. 8); for 1875, $32,000 (Mining Report, 1875, p. 612); for
1879, $36,000 (Mining Report, 1879, p. 244); and for 1880. The
only comment on the years 1876, 1877 and 1878 was "Omineca almost
deserted" (Mining Report 1876, p. 410) so the returns for those
years can be put quite low - say $20,000, $25,000 and $25,000
respectively.
APPENDIX D

No. 1. - Gold Production in Cassiar.

The total value of the gold production in each of the years 1874 and 1875 is based on the following estimates:

J. H. Sullivan, G. C. in Cassiar 1874 - 75 in the Mining Report 1874, p. 22 - for 1874 $1,000,000; Mining Report 1875, p. 601 - for 1875 "a little short of a million".

G. B. Wright in the Mining Report 1875, p. 605 - for the two years 1874 and 1875 $2,000,000.

J. L. Crimp, Adam's successor as recorder, in the Colonist November 3, 1874 - for 1874 $1,250,000.

A. W. Vowell, G. C. in Cassiar during 1876, in the Mining Report 1876, p. 410 - for 1875, $800,000.

Total amounts reported on boats arriving at Victoria from the North during 1874, $1,061,294.

G. M. Dawson, in Report R, Geol. Survey 1887, New Series, Volume III p. 44 R,

for 1874 -- $1,000,000.
for 1875 -- $830,000.

A month to month calculation on the basis of men working and reported average earnings, with allowances for layoffs and unreported returns, for 1874 $1,268,000.

The figures $1,100,000 for 1874, and $900,000 for 1875 may be taken as approximately correct.
The gold production figures for the years 1876 to 1880 are those given in the mining reports, with minor adjustments for differences between the main report and the tables and allowances for late returns. The division amongst the various diggings is based on the reports, especially the tables of statistics, and other information.

In the Mining Report 1876, p. 416, the total for that year was given as $556,474 ($463,720 $92,744 for irregular mining). The $92,744 reported for irregular (not illegal) mining is 20% of the total production, hence in tables I and II pp. 102 and 103 in the text 20% has been distributed amongst the lesser mining areas known to have been worked.

In the Mining Report 1877, p. 401, report of October 1, 1877, gives a total of $499,800 ($399,800 $45,000 for irregular mining $55,000 for unreported late returns). The $55,000 allowed for late returns has been distributed pro rata amongst the various creeks being mined.

In the Mining Report 1878, p. 377, report of October 18, 1878, the total was $519,720 ($372,720 $99,000 for "reticence" $45,000 for late returns). Of the total of $144,000 not allocated to the various districts not more than $10,000 can be assigned to either Walker Creek or Defot Creek, nor more than $14,000 to other unnamed regions, leaving $110,000 to be distributed pro rata to the totals of the three main creeks.

In the Mining Report 1879, p. 239 the total given is $405,200, in the table of statistics it is given as $339,200, in the former
(188)

giving a larger, and probably more nearly correct, total for McDame Creek - $113,200 - which is accepted, giving a total of $393,400 for Cassiar. Mosquito Creek is included in Thibert Creek.

For 1880 the figures given in the Mining Report 1880, table of statistics are taken for Dease, Thibert and Defot Creeks. The rest of the figures are from p. 427 of the report. From the $120,000 reported from the McDame Creek office $15,000 is deducted for Walker Creek, leaving $105,000 for McDame Creek.

No. 2. - Cassiar Population Changes.

The figures used in drawing the graph of the month to month variation in the non-Indian population of Cassiar during 1874 are based upon the opinions of various men as to the total at the mines, the total number of miners reported leaving Victoria for Cassiar by steamer and, the number of men reported from time to time on their way to or from Cassiar.

The opinions as to the total number are as follows:

Cariboo Sentinel, June 13, 1874 1,500
J. H. Sullivan, G. C. (Mining Report, 1874, p. 9.) 1,600
and total visited (Ibid. p. 12) 2,000
R. Hunter, Canadian customs officer at the mouth of the Stikine, reported actual count (including those who passed up more than once) (Colonist, December 12, 1874). 1,624
John Feigh, as at July 22, (Colonist, August 23, 1874) 1,500
The total number of miners reported leaving Victoria for Cassiar by steamer is as follows:

On SS. Otter and Anderson (Colonist, March 5, 1874) 200
On SS. California (Ibid. April 23) 120
On SS. Otter (Ibid.) 180
On SS. Hope (Standard, May 1, 1874) - 200 )
(Colonist, May 1, 1874) - 145 ) say 170
On SS. Otter (Colonist, May 12, 1874) full list say 180
On SS. California (Colonist, May 12, 1874; Sentinel, May 16, 1874) - full list, say 300
On SS. Anderson (Sentinel, May 16, 1874) 30
On SS. California (Colonist, June 5, 1874) 40

Total 1,220

This total does not include a probable sailing of the SS. Otter in June nor the number of men who sailed direct from Bellingham, Nanaimo, New Westminster and the mouth of the Skeena (having come from Omineca) nor of those who made the journey in small boats, probably about 150. About 240 were reported at or between Fort Wrangel and Buck's Bar before the leaving of the boats noted above. (Colonist March 13 and February 13, 1874) The grand total on this basis becomes 1,610. Subtract 61 for men who turned back at Fort Wrangel (Colonist, May 14, 1874) and we get 1,549 as the final number. The approximate movements of these are indicated in Table IX below.
## TABLE IX

**APPROXIMATE MOVEMENT OF MEN INTO CASSIAR 1874**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Leaving at Stikine R.</th>
<th>Arrivals in Victoria Wrangel to Dease Lake at Dease L.</th>
<th>Dease Lake</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 10</td>
<td>50 at Buck's Bar</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 15(?)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 28</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 15</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 31</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 11</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 22</td>
<td>180</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 24-26</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 30</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1-14</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 31</td>
<td>650</td>
<td></td>
<td>1140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1-14</td>
<td>40, 50, 300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 30</td>
<td>390</td>
<td></td>
<td>1530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. See preceding page.
3. Ibid. Mar. 5.
4. Ibid. Apr. 4, Standard Apr. 3, 1874.
5. Colonist Apr. 15.
6. Colonist May 5 and 7, 1874.
8. 61 Miners returned from Fort Wrangel without going up the Stikine.
TABLE X
SHOWING MOVEMENT OF MEN OUT OF CASSIAR 1874.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrivals from Cassiar at Victoria and Nanaimo</th>
<th>Probable date of leaving Cassiar</th>
<th>Reported leaving Cassiar</th>
<th>Estimated departures each month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 4 - 2</td>
<td>Apr. 4</td>
<td>Apr. 15 - 2</td>
<td>Apr. -25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 13 - 20</td>
<td>Apr. 20</td>
<td>Apr. 28 - Many</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 23 - 1</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>May 2 - 50</td>
<td>May -50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25 - 15</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>June 2 - 250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 3 - 1</td>
<td>June 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 7 - 50</td>
<td>June 20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 18 - 96</td>
<td>July 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 4 - 85</td>
<td>July 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>July -200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 21 - 110</td>
<td>Aug. 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aug. -350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 24 - 40</td>
<td>Aug. 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 23 - 175</td>
<td>Aug. 21</td>
<td>Sep. 2 - 40</td>
<td>Sep. -305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 24 - 25</td>
<td>Oct. 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 2 - 330</td>
<td>Oct. 17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 8 - 100</td>
<td>Oct. 22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,265</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 The references for the various dates in this column are given below:

May 4 - Colonist May 5, 1874. (Continued on next page)
Table XI below combines the results of tables IX and X to give an estimate of monthly variation in the population of Cassiar during 1874.

TABLE XI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Entering</th>
<th>Leaving</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>2515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1205</td>
<td>1205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1580</td>
<td>1530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. (Continued)

1. (Continued)


2. The references for the various dates in this column are given below:

2. The references for the various dates in this column are given below:

| May 2   | Ibid. | Sep. 12, Ibid. |

3. Probably some reported leaving early merely went out prospecting.
The figures for the years 1875 to 1880 are based primarily upon the Mining Reports as follows:

Population of Cassiar 1875 - 1880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Chinese Population</th>
<th>Winter Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>295</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>185</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>335 including 145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Mining Report, 1875, p. 603. The Guardian, June 30, 1875 reports 900 men at the mines; the Colonist October 17, 1875, 800 men. In the winter population 60 were reported at Laketon, and 15 are included as an estimate of those at Centreville.

2 Mining Report, 1876, p. 410.

3 Colonist, March 30, 1876.

4 Mining Report, 1876, p. 411. In the graph allowance has been made for the fact that many did not stay long enough to bring the population up to 1,800 at any one time.

5 Ibid. p. 417.

6 Ibid. Table of Statistics.

7 Ibid. 1877, p. 400. (continued on next page)
APPENDIX E

A DOZEN PROMINENT MEN

1. Fred Black.

Fred Black was a well-known Cariboo miner. In 1867 he and Isaac Stevens led an exploring and prospecting party north from Barkerville into the Willow River country (Sentinel July 22, 1867). In November of 1869 he went to Vital Creek with Duncan McMartin and James McMillan (Sentinel November 6, 1869). Early in 1870, after testing Vital Creek, he prospected Nation River in company with Duncan McMartin, Vital Laforce, James May, and R. Sylvester (Sentinel April 23, 1870). On his return he sunk some shafts on Vital Creek (Sentinel July 9, 1870). He passed the winter in Cariboo (Sentinel January 28, February 4, 1871), and mined on Germanen Creek during the next year in the course of which he fell on a stump and broke three ribs (Sentinel May 20, October 14, 1871; Colonist).

(continued)

8 Ibid. 1878, p. 376. The Colonist July 17, 1878 reports 1,600 men including 500 Chinese at the mines.
9 Ibid. p. 377.
10 Ibid. Table of Statistics.
11 Ibid. 1879, p. 239.
12 Ibid. 1880, p. 427. The Colonist August 19, 1880 reports 700 men at the mines, half Chinese.
onist October 14, 1871). In 1872 he went into gardening on the side and supplied turnips, onions, radishes and lettuce at 25¢ per lb. (Colonist October 24, 1872). He was one of "Black Jack" Smith's prospecting party on Osalinka in 1873 (Sentinel April 5, 1873).

In Cassiar he got a good claim on Snow Creek with the Discovery Company composed of Christie, Laforce, Sylvester and himself (Colonist July 27, 1876) and obtained a charter to lead a ditch to it from Quartz Creek, a distance of five miles (Colonist November 2, 1876). In 1877 he tunnelled during the winter months (Colonist February 28, 1878).

2. Peter Cargotitch

Peter Cargotitch first comes to our attention in 1863 returning from Stikine River with Barnett's express (Colonist July 23, 1863). In 1871 his saloon on Germansen Creek was running "full blast". He returned to Victoria in August (Colonist August 15, 1871).

Two years later he was in Pioche, Nevada, organizing a company of miners to go to the "North Fork of Stikine River" where (he said) he had discovered "immense deposits of silver, gold, and platinum" in 1861 (Sentinel May 10, 1873; Colonist April 4, 1873). In 1874 he mined on Dease Creek in the spring by thawing the frozen dirt with huge fires and later by hiring seven men at ten dollars a day to build wingdams, open a drain and blast boulders (Colonist May 16, 26, 1874 - he always reported things on a big scale). Just before he returned to Victoria in November he washed a "heavy prospect from a pan of earth" (Colonist November 10, 1874). In the follow-
ing year he was accused of exaggerating gold production in order to secure sales of worthless claims to people in Nevada and California. "A noted character-'Peter the Great' - who is always in trouble, paid $60 for taking out several bags of black sand to Telegraph Creek representing it as gold taken from his claims" (Sentinel July 17, 1875). His claim sold for only $250.00. Later in 1875 he prospected on Taku River and the results on his return to Victoria in October were reported as follows "Peter Cargotitch, the irrepressible, has brought down some specimens of ore from Deloire River and reports that he has a well-defined ledge there" (Colonist July 22, October 17, 1875).

3. Alexander (Buck) Choquette

Alexander (Buck) Choquette was a native of Quebec. He mined in California and took part in the Fraser River rush in 1858. In 1860 he prospected Nass River and northward toward the Stikine. He married a Stikine Indian woman and discovered gold on the Stikine in 1861 (Colonist January 10, 1862). He mined on the Stikine for the next five years. In 1862 and 1863 he explored the Upper Stikine River nearly to its source and in the latter year also ascended the Tahltan and crossed to the headwaters of the Taku River (Colonist May 30, 1863). He usually wintered at Buck's Bar (named after him) but the winter of 1864-65 he passed at Port Stewart (Chronicle November 18, 1864; Colonist February 17, 1865). In 1866 he took charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's newly opened post on Stikine River just east of the Alaskaboundary where he remained until the
discovery of gold in Cassiar. After mining for a season or two he set up as a trader in miners' supplies and later (1876) opened a sort of pleasure resort at some hot springs about forty miles from the mouth of the Stikine River.

4. Joseph Clearihue

Joseph Clearihue was a native of Quebec City. He mined in California and Cariboo before entering Omineca in 1870. He mined the first year with the Payne Company on Germansen Creek which declared a dividend of $700.00 per interest for a week's work (Sentinel November 5, 19, December 3, 1870). He returned to Cariboo in November. During the next three years he seems to have done well mining and trading (Sentinel May 27, 1871; Colonist August 4, 7, 1872; November 19, 1873; B. C. Sessional Papers 1873, Public Accounts of 1872 p. 200). He passed the winters in Victoria going to and from the mines by the Skeena route (Colonist, November 29, 1872; November 19, 1873).

In 1874 he went to Cassiar and opened an "eating house" at Laketon (Colonist, July 16, 1874). Later he was a merchant (Sessional Papers 1878, Public Accounts of 1877 p. 194) post master (Guide to B. C. 1877-8 p. 165), justice of the peace, and partner of J. Carson in the "best hotel" at Laketon and he even raised fresh vegetables in his garden there (Colonist August 15, September 28, 1875; March 30, 1876). He was one of the notables at the launching of "The Lady of the Lake" (Colonist July 10, 1878) and
chairman of the meeting that arranged for aid to Kanahan (see p.141 above) (Colonist March 17, 1800).

Under the initials J. C. he was a constant correspondent of the Cariboo "Sentinel", writing long, newsy, accurate accounts of events at the diggings, especially in Omineca.

Two sons, J. B. and A. M. Clearihue, and one daughter, Miss. E. C. Clearihue now reside in Victoria.

5. "Twelve-foot" Davis

"Twelve-foot" Davis was a California forty-niner and noted Cariboo miner. On the re-survey of some claims twelve feet of land was found to be unstaked between two rich claims. Davis staked this remnant and made good on it - hence his nickname. "Twelve-foot" Davis was a jack of all trades. He navigated the Fraser from its mouth to Fort St. James in two ten-ton boats on the way with supplies for Peace River in 1863. (Chronicle February 18, 1863). From 1863 to 1868 he engaged in mining, trapping and fur-trading in the Peace River country and made several trips to the east of the mountains. In 1868 he was a member of Evans' party that discovered gold on Silver Creek (Arctic Creek). Two years later he built a bakery and coffee-house on Vital Creek but the rush subsided before he opened it (Sentinel June 25, 1870). He mined on Manson Creek in 1871. He eventually crossed to the east side of the mountains and engaged in fur-trading in the Mackenzie Basin. He was buried on Smoky River.
6. James A. Gardiner

James A. Gardiner was the returning officer for Omineca in the election of 1872 (Sentinel July 6, 1872). In that and the succeeding year a mail carrier named Gardiner (Gairdner, Gardner) made regular trips between Quesnel and Omineca (Sentinel January 13, November 16, December 14, 1872; February 1, 22, March 9, April 19, May 10, 1873). It is probably the same man. He accompanied Vital Laforce on the re-location trip over the cattle trail from Telegraph Creek to Hazelton in 1875. The next year he was private mail carrier between Wrangel and Laketon (Colonist March 30, April 26, 1876 and an advertisement in the Colonist April 29, 1876). In 1880 he worked on the Dease Creek trail and then (B. C. Sessional Papers 1881, Public Accounts 1880 p. 120) he planned to leave Telegraph Creek on a prospecting trip to Finlay River. In Cassiar he was often called David Gardiner.

7. Vital Laforce

Vital (Vitel, Vitelle, Vattell) Laforce (La Force, Lafour) was one of the Collin’s Overland Telegraph Company’s explorers. From 1865 to 1867 he explored with parties about the headwaters of the Skeena, Nass, and Stikine Rivers (Geol. Survey, 1887, New Series, Vol. III p. 62B; Columbian April 11, 1866). In 1869, when with the Peace River Prospecting Party under Byrnes, he discovered gold on Vital Creek. During the next two years he mined on Vital Creek, prospected on Nation River with Fred Black, Duncan McMartin, Allen Grant, James May, and Rufus Sylvester, (Sentinel April 23, 1870)
located on Germansen Creek, and went on a six-months' prospecting trip up the Finlay River - he may have penetrated the Liard valley (Sentinel October 28, 1871; Colonist November 5, 1871). In Cassiar he relocated and improved the cattle trail north of Hazelton in 1875 with James A. Gardiner, and mined with the Discovery Company on Snow Creek in 1876. Later he returned to Omineca and mined there for a number of years (Geol. Survey, 1894, New Series, Vol. VII, p. 120).

8. "Dancing Bill" Latham

Thomas "Dancing Bill" Latham was a native of Rhode Island. He accompanied "Black Jack" Smith east to Fort Garry (Winnipeg) in 1866 and back again with Germansen and Lamont 1866 to 1868 (Colonist December 11, 1870; May 2, 1867). During the Omineca rushes he put pack trains on the Skeena River route with fair success (Colonist December 9, 1871; Standard March 28, 1873). Horetsky remarks on his dancing at the Hazelton Christmas celebration in 1873 (Horetsky: Canada on the Pacific p. 107).

In 1874 he moved to Cassiar to open a dance house "with four klootchmen and an organ" (Colonist May 14, 1874) but soon turned to packing and mining with his old friend "Black Jack". He died at the age of sixty-two or three from "sheer exhaustion and a broken down constitution" while ascending the Dease River (Colonist November 16, 17, 1880). His last words were that he "did not mind dying but regretted he could not outlive 'Black Jack'" (Colonist November 16, 1880).
9. Captain William Moore

Captain William Moore was a sailor prominent in shipping circles on the Pacific coast during the second half of the nineteenth century, especially on the Fraser River. He was calculating and enterprising, willing to turn his hand to anything that promised a profit, and a past master at the art of political agitation.

In northern British Columbia his first venture was on the Stikine in 1862. His SS. "Flying Dutchman" towed his barge "W. J. Moore", both loaded with miners, to Wrangel in June (Colonist June 10, 1862) and went on the run between Wrangel and Glenora, then the head of steamboat navigation on the Stikine River. The charges were passenger fare, $3.00, a canoe $4.00, and freight $100.00 per ton (Colonist July 9, 21, 1862). Both steamer and barge returned to Victoria loaded in August (Colonist August 23, 1862). Before leaving Moore gave 6,000 pounds of flour gratis to help the party organized to explore and prospect the Stikine River above the Great Canyon (Colonist August 26, 1862). Moore retired from Stikine in 1863.

In Omineca Moore provided transportation services on both the Lake Takla and Skeena River routes until the opening up of Cassiar. In 1870 his barge the "Omineca" ran regularly between Fort St. James and Takla Landing (Sentinel April 23, 1870). The next year, in addition to this, he put a barge "Minnie" on the Skeena River from the coast to Hazelton (Standard March 25, 1871) and another boat,
on Lake Babine to connect with the Babine trail and the Omineca on Lake Stuart for Lake Takla (Standard August 30, 1871). His pack trains connected with the boats. He probably continued these services in 1872 (Colonist January 31, September 15, 1872).

Moore sometimes undertook to deliver goods at the mines by a certain date. To fulfill some such obligations in 1871 he was forced, at considerable expense, to improve the Indian trail from Hazelton to Babine Lake in order to get his pack animals through on time (Colonist July 6, 9, August 10, 1871). He organized a meeting of packers and miners at Hazelton to protest against the government's dilatoriness in building the trail and to demand compensation for the work he had done. (Colonist June 14, 1871)

Meanwhile Moore had claims on Germansen Creek being worked by his sons. (Colonist October 13, 1870)

In the first year of the Cassiar rush Moore and his three sons were amongst the pioneers (Standard May 15, 1873), and he took a prominent part in the legal controversy that preceded the passage of the Mining Amendment of 1874. They resumed boat service on the Stikine in partnership with Millard with a barge and a steamer the "Gem" in competition with Irving's SS. "Glenora" (Lewis and Dryden: Marine History, p. 217; Colonist May 14, 1874). His sons commissioned the "Grappler" with "young Captain Moore" in command and J. W. Moore as purser (Lewis and Dryden: Marine History p. 216). During the winter of 1874-75 the Moores built the 120-foot steamer "Gertrude" at Wrangel. So well suited was she for the river that she was able to reach Telegraph Creek (Colonist August 23, November 3,
1874; May 7, 1875; Sentinel February 13, 1875; Lewis and Dryden: Marine History p. 217) with fares at $10.00 per passenger and freight at $40.00 per ton. In 1876 Irving sold the "Glenora" to Moore and retired to the Fraser River. Shortly afterwards Nelson put the "Beaver" on the run to restore competitive conditions (Lewis and Dryden: Marine History p. 217; Colonist May 20, June 1, 1876).

On the land section of the Cassiar route Moore obtained a charter to build a trail from Glenora to Dease Lake with the right to charge toll. He completed the trail late in the summer of 1874 but in 1875 it was in such poor condition that the government bought him out and put their own road gang to work on it (See p. 132 above).

Moore also went into the store business in partnership with Hart. Hart was one of the traders convicted of smuggling in 1874 (Colonist September 24, 1874). Moore continued in all these lines of business until the end of the period under consideration. Shortly after he transferred his chief interests to the Fraser River.

10. Nehemiah T. Smith - "Black Jack"

Nehemiah T. Smith, called "Black Jack" was a noted character in early British Columbia's mining history. He was a close friend of "Dancing Bill" Latham (See No. 8 above) with whom he was associated on Peace River, across the prairies, in Omineca, and in Cassiar. While on Peace River "Black Jack", like James May, wore "long hair which falls in thick masses over his shoulders and he has made a vow it shall never be cut till he 'make a raise' or until
some fair Delilah insists on depriving him of the 'charm' which he believes is contained in it" (Colonist August 27, 1863). Perhaps he grew tired of his locks, for, after he had prospected Peace River as far east as Fort St. John and returned to Cariboo in 1862 and 1863 (Colonist November 6, 1862; July 2, 10, 1863; Chronicle November 20, 1862, May 1, 1863) he hastened back to Fort St. John to "get possession of a certain lovely amalgam (anglice half-breed nymph of the forest)" but without success (Colonist September 23, November 5, 1863).

From 1866 to 1868 "Black Jack" was east of the Rockies on a journey to Fort Garry (Winnipeg) with "Dancing Bill" whence they returned with Lamont and Germansen (Colonist May 2, 1867-from the Columbian; Colonist December 11, 1870).

"Black Jack" participated in all the Omineca rushes from 1870 to 1873 and did extensive prospecting besides. In 1870 he was on Vital Creek, Silver Creek, Nation River, and Germansen Creek (with Germansen's discovery party) (Sentinel July 9, 1870; Standard September 23, 1870). In 1871 he and Shep. Young discovered gold on Black Jack Gulch, Manson Creek (Sentinel August 5, 1871). In 1873 he prospected for several months on the Osalinka slope (Standard March 28, 1873; Colonist, March 28, 1873; Sentinel April 5, 1873).

Cassiar called him in 1874. He mined on Thibert and Dease Creeks with "Dancing Bill" in that year (Colonist November 17, 1880) and on McDame Creek the next (Colonist March 6, 1875). We next see him on the morrow of "Dancing Bill's" death (1880), when the Colonist reporter found him in the "day wards" of the hospital at Victor-
Rufus Sylvester was a well-known Cariboo miner and free mason. In 1869 he participated in the early rush to Vital Creek as the representative of the Adair Company and mined there during 1870 (Sentinel July 9, 1870). In addition to his mining, from 1870 to 1874 Sylvester and his associate L. J. Lewis maintained a letter and parcel express between Quesnel and Omineca, including after 1871 the government mail (Sentinel November 12, 19, 1870; February 4, May 27, August 5, 10, September 30, October 21, 1871; January 13, March 30, July 27, 1872; February 22, March 8, June 7, August 9, 1873). One of these trips is described by Major W. F. Butler who travelled with Sylvester from Germansen Creek to Fort St. James in the fall of 1873 (W. F. Butler: The Wild North Land pp. 303 to 329). Much of the information about Omineca was contained in the reports of the expressmen after each trip. When Rufus Sylvester left Omineca for Cassiar Lewis carried on the mail and express service for two years longer (Sentinel June 6, September 5, October 10, November 7, 1874; May 1, 27, July 17, September 11, 1875) for some considerable time under the same name.

In Cassiar Sylvester started out as agent for Barnard's Express carrying letters and parcels between Laketon and Wrangel (sometimes direct to Victoria) (Standard April 3, 1874; Sentinel August 29; 1874; Colonist April 3, May 14, July 8, August 30, Sep-
tember 24, 1874; January 3, March 6, 1875). On one trip early in 1874 he arrived at Wrangel snow-blind (Colonist, April 4, 1874). In 1875 he transferred his express service to the run between Centreville and Laketon with occasional winter trips to Wrangel and established a store at Sylvester's Landing at the mouth of McDame Creek. (Colonist, June 24, 1875; January 28, June 21, 24, 1876; February 28, 1878; March 17, 1880). When Walker Creek was discovered he put an express service on the trail from Sylvester's Landing to Walker Creek. In 1878 he cut the government trail on Dease Creek to McDame Creek. (B. C. Sessional Papers 1879, Public Accounts 1878, p. 132). When the mining activity declined Sylvester maintained his express services on a reduced scale, extended his store business to include fur trading with the Indians and opened branch posts on Turnagain River (into which Walker Creek flows) and at Lower Post on the Liard at the mouth of the Dease River. He remained in this business until the nineties (B. C. Directory 1887; Geol. Survey 1887 New Series Volume III pp. 39B-90B, 1888-89, New Series Volume IV p. 40D)

12. Henry Thibert

Henry Thibert was the co-discoverer with Angus McCulloch of gold in Cassiar in 1872, and the discoverer of gold on Thibert Creek in 1873 (Colonist August 29, 1873). He remained on that creek for several years mining with his brother (Colonist August 26, 1874; October 28, 1875; July 17, September 13, 1878) and operating a general store in partnership with Gerke (Colonist April
25, August 29, 1875). In 1877 he worked on the Thibert Creek trail B. C. Sessional Papers 1878 Report of Public Works p. 350) and went out prospecting with James Porter (later a fur trader and gold commissioner in Cassiar) and the next year opened a store at Clapan Bar near the Klappan River on the Upper Stikine River (Colonist September 13, 1878). He remained in Cassiar until the nineties mining and trading in furs (Warburton Pike: Through the Arctic Forest, p. 52).