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MERRITT, B.C.

# Souvenir Book



Marking the Thirteenth Anniversary of the Opening of the Church

*A Short History of the Church in the Nicola Valley  
and Sketch of the Valley and the City of Merritt*  
By \_\_\_\_\_ *The Rev. W. R. BROWN*

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DECEMBER 1923

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Rev. W. R.  
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The Present  
Minister.

All equal are within the church's gates.—George Herbert.

### This Book

is dedicated to the noble pioneers—pastors and people—who blazed the trail and laid the foundation of Presbyterianism in the Nicola Valley, and to those who have upheld its banner through good and bad times for 56 years.

All praise to him who hoists a sail  
On seas erstwhile unknown;  
To him who dares to mark a trail  
Through forests deep and lone;  
To him who dares to dream and think,  
To speak, and dare, and do,  
While others tremble on the brink,  
Afraid of conquests new.

"God is our refuge and own strength"

## Events in Connection With This Campaign :

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Afternoon Tea and Sale of Home Cooking under auspices of Ladies' Aid at the home of Mrs. H. Roblin, Saturday afternoon, September 15.

Tea and Sale of Work in the Manse, Saturday afternoon. November 10, under auspices of Ladies' Aid,

Grand Concert in Rex Theatre, second Tuesday in November, under auspices of Managing Board.

Christmas Pageant by the Sunday School on a date to be set later.

Anniversary Services, Sunday, December 2, to be conducted by Rev. J. Williams Ogden, of Vancouver. At both morning and evening service a special offering will be taken.

On Monday evening, December 3, Mr. Ogden will give a lecture in Oddfellows' Hall on "Mighty London, the Wonder of the World" Admission, 50c. Mr. Ogden has lectured in the Old Land and is today one of the most entertaining lecturers on the Pacific Coast

'Tis not in mortals to command success, but we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it.—Addison.

## History of Presbyterian Church in the Nicola Valley

[In the following historical sketch of the church in the Nicola Valley the writer makes no pretence at exhaustiveness; but in all respects accuracy and fairness have been sought. To write a complete history of all developments and details would necessitate weeks of research work in the archives of the various church courts—for which the writer had neither time nor space. The greater part of this story was gleaned from conversations with old timers in the valley. I am also indebted to the following for valuable information: Mrs. G. F. Ransom, Mrs. M. Phillips, Mr. T. Gissing, Mr. G. B. Armstrong, Mr. Phillip McLean, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas and A. R. Carrington, Rev. H. Wilson, Rev. James Thompson, Rev. Father J. M. LeJeune, Rev. J. A. Logan, D.D., and Miss J. M. Murray of Vancouver, and others with whom I have had the pleasure of discussing "the good old days." Miss Murray is a daughter of the late Rev. George Murray of Nicola and had it not been for her mother's illness at the time when this story was being written would have contributed some interesting reminiscences of the early days. The following paragraph, however, taken from a letter to the writer, in which was enclosed a donation for the church, gives a vivid picture of the lot of the pioneer missionary in British Columbia: "I regret not having been able to assist you when you required it . . . I sincerely hope that your little

booklet will meet with much success. It cannot fail to be of interest to both the old timers who remain and to those who have come after. But however graphically such a history might be written, no words could begin to depict the heartbreaking struggle that went for the most part to make up life for all the brave workers in the early Western mission fields and their still braver wives."—W. R. Brown.

THE present is bound up with the past whether it be in the case of a church or a nation. And so it has become matter of history that the people of the Nicola Valley have been and are a moral, God-fearing and church loving people. Ever since that bright summer day in 1866, when the first settler camped on the banks of Nicola Lake, there has been a continual influx of settlers to the valley, but never at any period during the half century have the newcomers been lacking in the desire for the cultivation and the emulation of the higher qualities of life. This desire, no doubt, was innate, for the majority of those who settled here were the product of devout Anglo-Saxon stock and hailed either from England, Ireland, Scotland, the four provinces of Canada or the New England States. They were, with few exceptions, all men and women who had been imbued in boyhood and girlhood with the old truth that is ever new and ever true,

He who would gather roses must not fear thorns.



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Delicious bed . . . heaven on earth to the weary head.—Tom Hood.

## History of the Presbyterian Church in the Nicola Valley — (Continued)

viz: that "man does not live by bread alone." So that while they sought a home and, in some cases a fortune, in "the Valley of Sunshine," they did not forget the God of their fathers—He who had been their helper, their fortress and their might. This fact is amply demonstrated in the buildings that have been erected in the valley and dedicated to His glory over a period of fifty years, the silent white and grey sentinels that stand guard in the church yards bearing their mute testimony to the fact that the occupants "died in the Lord," and the noble army of the living who have taken the torch and are carrying on to victory.

In 1866 the Nicola Valley was a vast wilderness, unknown except to a few Indians. In 1867 the first white settlers came. Being attracted by that indefinable and yet irresistible something known as "the call of the West" thousands of people in that year made their way to the Pacific Coast. They were bent on seeing "the farthest West." In their rush they did not take time to view the land as they passed through. But, having gratified their longing many people turned their eyes back to the interior. Arriving at Lytton and Spence's Bridge on the old Cariboo trail they pushed their way into the Nicola Valley and there they came upon what is now known as Nicola Lake. They were so captivated by the pleasing contour of the land, the sunny climate and the apparent potentialities of the soil in the vicinity of the lake that they decided to make their homes there.

These pioneers were Edwin Dalley, now living in Victoria, John and George Clapperton who located at the south end of the lake, and Sam, Ben and Joe Moore who located at the north end of the lake. Dalley was Anglican and the Moore's and Clapperton's were Irish Presbyterians. A few years later Mr. John Moore, father of the boys, came out from the old land and though he was the oldest of the settlers, he was "the life of the company." John was a staunch Presbyterian. His religion meant more to him than his money or anything else he possessed. It is told of him to this day that though he was an old man in his 70's he used to walk nine miles, from the head of the lake to the Agricultural Hall at Quilchena—to preside at meetings of the Board of Managers of the little Mission Presbyterian Church. A fine example this for the church officers in the days that were to come. How true is the old saying "where there is a will there is a way." Few church managers have to walk nowadays; Henry Ford has made that unnecessary; but even so, today a nine mile ride on a winter's night looks to some managers like the end of the world. But John conceived of it as building in a new world!

News of the new valley spread quickly and it was not long before the first pioneers had company. In the fall of 1872 Mr. Thos. Carrington and Mr. Thos. Woodward came in. Mr. Woodward brought his family with him and Mr. Carrington sent for his family the fall following. And so the popul-

A millstone does not become covered with moss.—German Proverb.

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## History of the Presbyterian Church in the Nicola Valley—(Continued)

ation grew. The entrance of British Columbia into the Union in 1871 gave a new impetus to exploration and reclamation and many more families made their home here. By this time the village of Nicola was beginning to take shape and it looked as if the place might be destined to become a great city—but that was not to be, in that century at least, nor in the first decade of the next.

Owing to the scarcity of Ministers religious services were few in those days. Even if preachers had been plentiful the comparatively small population would have found it difficult to support one. But they did not have very long to wait for in the spring of 1875 the church of Scotland sent in the Rev. George Murray, M.A., of Glasgow University. Mr. Murray was for five years the only representative of the Presbyterian Ministry in British Columbia east of the Cascades, and missed by just three weeks the honor of being the first preacher in the Nicola Valley. The Methodists got ahead of him and, consequently, to the Rev. John Turner fell that honor.

It has always been characteristic of these two great churches that they have ever been equally aggressive in their Home Mission Work, always pushing out with the gospel to the farthest bounds of civilization. Sometimes the Presbyterians arrived first and sometimes the Methodists. Mr. Murray, however, was not envious and the two leaders soon became friends. Both rode horseback and enjoyed it—there were no Fords in those

days—and though differing from each other in temperament as much as day differs from night, they worked together in perfect harmony for the advancement of the cause they both had at heart. Murray was a refined, scholarly, cool and calculating Scotchman, and Turner was a big, hearty, impulsive, witty and eloquent Irishman. The Rev. Mr. McGregor of Victoria accompanied Mr. Murray to his new charge in Nicola. On their arrival they halted at the house where most travelers stopped in those days—Clapperton's. A quaint account of how they were received is contained in a story still told by Mr. Thos. Carrington. On discovering who the newcomers were John Clapperton immediately dispatched an Indian boy with a note to Thos. Carrington the content of which read "Come over Tom and help me receive the divines." Carrington went over and together the two made the "divines" welcome. It was not a large reception committee but the welcome it extended must have been a genuine one for the fellowship there commenced was destined to last for 40 years.

Mr. Murray had been ministering to the people of the district extending from Yale to Clinton, touching at Ashcroft and Lillooet, with periodic visits to Quesnel and intervening points—a circuit of approximately 600 miles, covered at that time entirely on horseback; and now the additional territory of Nicola was added to his parish. He accepted the new territory with enthusiasm and soon found his way into the people's affection. In

Better aim at something and hit it than aim at nothing and hit it.

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Negligence in dress is an error that ought to be corrected.—Steele.

## History of the Presbyterian Church in the Nicola Valley—(Continued)

1877 he built the first church in the valley—not very imposing from the outside—but a comfortable “churchy little church” inside. There the people worshipped and there they have worshipped ever since. The visitor to the little church today who is fortunate enough to meet the only remaining resident old timer is sure to be reminded of “the days when sixty people were packed in there for worship.” Six years after the completion of the church a splendidly appointed house was purchased for a manse. Here Mr. Murray and his family later took up their residence upon his return to the Nicola field for the second time. This was the first manse and he was the first resident pastor in the valley. From Nicola he made trips to the various surrounding settlements, holding service every alternate Sunday at one or more of the following points: Stump Lake, “Fraser’s,” “Moor’s,” Douglas Lake and as far down the valley as the old 22-Mile House (the former home of Mrs. Philips and her brother, hereinafter referred to); with occasional services when possible at Aspen Grove and Mamette Lake. Every other Sunday he preached morning and evening in the little village church at Nicola, and in the afternoon either at what was then known as Lower Nicola, in the old schoolhouse, or at Forksdale (commonly called “The Forks,” and now known as Merritt) which was one of his principal points. For over six years he preached in the little log schoolhouse which stood near the spot now occupied by Mr. Barwick’s

house on Nicola Avenue. The names of four families are particularly remembered in connection with these services: James Chapman, William Voght, Gilbert Blair, Mrs. Philips and her brother, Mr. A. J. Gordon. Mrs. Philips is still a worthy and enthusiastic member of St. Andrew’s.

In 1880, finding the strain of his work beginning to tell severely upon his health, Mr. Murray accepted a call to St. Andrew’s Church, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia where he remained for nine years resigning at the end of that time in order that he might resume the missionary work in the West in which his heart had always been. It may be of interest in passing to note that at the hour of his death in Vancouver on Sunday morning, October 10th, 1917, while on his way to church, the Centennial Celebration of St. Andrew’s, his old New Glasgow charge, was taking place and an address from him, sent forward by request, was being read.

Mr. Murray’s place in Nicola during this period was taken by the Rev. John Chisholm, now in the Immigration Department in Montreal, uncle of the late Mrs. (Dr.) Tutill, of Nicola Lake and Merritt, and Mrs. Pooley, of Pictou, Nova Scotia. Upon his return in 1889, Mr. Chisholm went to Kamloops. Finally, in the year 1901, Mr. Murray was appointed government agent, and consequently gave up his duties as pastor of Nicola. He was followed by Rev. W. F. Gould and Gould was succeeded by Rev. Geo. Mason. During these years, from the re-

As you have sown so also shall you reap.—Cicero.

## History of the Presbyterian Church in the Nicola Valley—(Continued)

tiement of Mr. Murray in 1901, to the coming of Mr. Allan in 1904, little of historical interest took place in the life of the church in the valley. They were years similar to those through which most congregations have to pass, when to maintain the ground already won is to serve with honor. In 1904 Mr. Allan came and, without exception, those who remember him characterize his as being "one of the finest fellows. . . ." But Mr. Allan was also a maker of history. He organized the first Sunday School in Merritt; it was held in the old Merritt Herald building and continued to meet there for a number of years. Mrs. G. F. Ransom was the first teacher and Mr. Philip McLean the first superintendent of the school. It was Mr. Allan, too, who held the first services at Middlesboro. It is told of him that many a time he walked the nine miles from Nicola to Middlesboro and back again in the most inclement winter weather in order to keep his preaching appointments.

Mr. W. J. Kidd followed Mr. Allan in 1906, Merritt by this time, owing to the development being carried on by the various coal companies, had grown to considerably larger proportions than Nicola. Consequently, Mr. Kidd made Merritt his headquarters instead of the former place. The village of Nicola, which is one of the beauty spots of the interior of British Columbia, reaches its height with the completion of the railroad from Spence's Bridge in 1908 and began to decline with the opening of the coalfields at Forksdale the

following year. All eyes turned to the mines in the east end of the valley and interest in Nicola subsided. The economic call prevailed over that of the aesthetic and people began to move to the sphere of operations seven miles away. One by one business and professional men moved their belongings to the site of the new city. The exodus continued for two years. Finally, in 1918 the government offices which had operated there for thirty-eight years were moved to Merritt. For many reasons it was unfortunate, even sad, that Merritt should grow at the expense of Nicola. In the first place Nicola is more ideally located than Merritt—the scenery is more pleasing, the altitude is higher and the climate more equable, it is situated closer to Nicola Lake—a wonderful sheet of water twelve miles in length—around which nature has literally piled up her beauty. Nicola also has a rich historical background, one side of which is seen in the army of white and grey tombstones that keep guard in the little Presbyterian church cemetery some dating back to the late '70's, the other in the architectural features of some of the earliest buildings. But such seems to be the law of progress—all the beaten trails of the world are strewn with the remains of those who have ventured out into the unknown. Finally, in 1919, an English capitalist, bought up most of the surrounding country and the greater part of the village itself and, as a consequence, many people moved out, thus leaving the once bustling and prosperous little town to

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Look to thy mouth, diseases enter there.—George Herbert.

## History of the Presbyterian Church in the Nicola Valley—(Continued)

resemble somewhat a deserted village. But Nicola may yet come to its own. There are two rumors afloat, one is that the property is to be used as range land and the other that it is to be turned into a summer or health resort. It could undoubtedly be made one of the best and most beautiful resorts in the Dominion of Canada. If the latter rumor proves to be well founded, then Nicola's old glory may be revived and she may again become an important factor in the religious and business life of the valley.

Mr. Kidd was only a short time in Merritt when he set his heart on building a church and from that time on he planned all his work with this object in view. Mrs. Kidd with the assistance of Mrs. S. R. Jackson, organized the first Ladies' Aid and became its first president. The Aid also worked hard for the new church, establishing a fund at its inauguration for that purpose. When opened, their contribution to the Church furnishings was a splendid new organ. In 1908 the ground for the Church was secured from Mr. William Voght for the sum of \$400.00 and a deed was made out in favor of the following Trustees: Messrs. G. B. Armstrong, Isaac Eastwood, Alexander J. Gordon, Phillip McLean and William Voght. A happy choice was made in the site. The location is ideal in every way, fronting as it does on the main street of the city—Quilchena Avenue—and yet sufficiently far from the centre of the town to be out of range of noise and bustle.

In 1910 the contract for the building of a new church was let to Mr. Phillip McLean. In November of the same year the work was completed and the opening services were held on the first Sunday in December. The following paragraph taken from the Merritt Herald of December 9, 1910, reflects the spirit of the people and their hopes for the future on this momentous occasion: "The new Presbyterian church was formally dedicated to service on Sunday last. Large congregations attended both morning and evening and listened to the inspiring addresses of Rev. George Murray of Nicola, and the resident pastor, Rev. W. J. Kidd. Special music featured the services, a pleasing innovation being the well organized and well conducted choir. The collections during the day showed a generous spirit on the part of the members and adherents of the congregation and if present indications can be accepted as a criterion the new church will participate largely in the prosperity and happiness that is so conspicuous in Merritt." Mr. Kidd who was still the energetic pastor in these history making days was fortunate in being able to secure the assistance of the Rev. George Murray for the opening services. Mr. Murray delivered the special addresses and it was fitting that he should do so, if for no other reason than that he had been the first Presbyterian minister in the valley and connected with its spiritual life for thirty-five years. They were memorable services, the prevailing spirit of pastor and congregation be-

He is happiest that hath power to gather wisdom from a flower.—Wordsworth.



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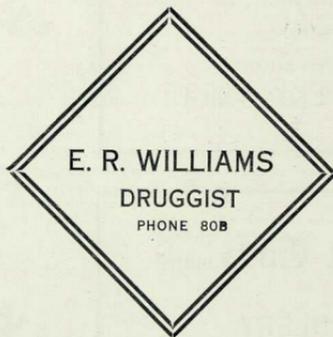
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**MERRITT, B. C.**

Cheerfulness is the rubber tire of life's vehicle.

## History of the Presbyterian Church in the Nicola Valley — (Continued)

ing on: of thankfulness to Almighty God for his blessing upon their efforts to raise a house to His name. Prior to the building of the church Merritt Presbyterians felt very much like wanderers on the face of the earth; services had been held in a multitude of places: Hyland's Hall, old Merritt Herard building, Methodist church, Wm. Voght's residence, etc., but now, they were housed in their own permanent home—they could sit down to worship under their own vine and fig tree. But much, however, remained to be done. It had been necessary to raise money by mortgaging the property and that money would have to be paid. Still, there was no ground for fear. He who had led them thus far would not leave them by the wayside, and time proved that their confidence was well placed for, in the year 1921, the last outstanding payment on the principal of the mortgage was met and the property stood clear of debt.

Mr. Wm. Voght, the father of Presbyterianism in Merritt, in memory of his wife, presented the church with a fine stained glass window which was placed in the south end of the church overlooking Mr. Voght's farm residence standing one block south—the first farm home to be erected in the valley. Mr. Voght took up residence here shortly after the gold rush of '49. He was an ardent Presbyterian and took a keen interest in everything pertaining to the welfare of the Church. His was the first funeral service to be held in the new church. Mr. G. B. Armstrong donated the pulpit

chairs and the bible that is read each Sunday was the gift of Mr. G. F. Ransom, then the esteemed church secretary. Miss Helen Smith and Mr. James Blair had the distinction of being the first couple married in the new church. Miss Smith was the daughter of Mrs. P. Smith of Diamond Vale.

In 1921 under the leadership of Mr. Wallace, a Sunday School room was added to the church and toward the end of the same year a manse was erected on the adjoining lot. The school was practically paid for on completion, but a mortgage of \$1500 had to be secured on the Manse. This debt, together with other outstanding accounts, amounted to about \$1800 at the end of 1922. Since then all the outstanding bills have been paid and the mortgage reduced by \$100. It is the aim of the Management to still further reduce the mortgage by \$750 during the coming year. This will relieve the congregation of a considerable part of its burden of interest and prepare the way for further development in the way of erecting a "gym" for the boys and girls, installing a furnace in the church and painting and decorating both church and Manse. Every organization in the church is doing its bit in the raising of the \$750, (see page 2), and this little Souvenir Book is the Minister's contribution.

The other ministers who served in Merritt since 1912 and who contributed of their best to the Cause of Christ in the valley were: Rev. George Manson, Rev. J. A. Petrie, Rev. J. Stewart. Rev.

These two eggs you ate for breakfast might if hatched, have peopled the world with poultry.—Carlyle.

## History of the Presbyterian Church in the Nicola Valley—(Continued)

J. A. Rowland, Rev. J. R. O'Brien, Rev. John Hyde, Rev. J. Johnston, Rev. Thos. Oswald, Rev. W. J. McFadden, Rev. B. H. Wallace.

Following are the church organizations and their officers for 1923:

Session—S. R. Jackson, Philip McLean.

Managing Board—H. A. Guild, Chairman; John W. North, Treas.; Miss W. New, Secretary; Mrs. W. Lauder, Tom Smith, W. Gaetor, Mrs. H. Roblin.

Organist—Miss G. B. Ransom.

Choir Leader—Miss G. A. Reid.

Ladies Aid—Mrs. H. Roblin, President; Mrs. Chas. McIntosh, Vice-president; Mrs. Thomas Archibald, Sec.-Treas.

Sunday School—W. R. Brown, Superintendent; Miss A. E. North, Sec.-Treas.; Miss G. B. Ransom, Miss W. New, Miss W. Turnbull, Mrs. W. Kerr, Miss Nora Woodburn, Miss E. McCreight, S. R. Jackson and W. R. Brown, Teachers.

Young People's Society—Miss Nora Woodburn, President; Charles Armstrong, Secretary-Treasurer; Miss Blanch Gillis, Group Leader.

C. G. I. T.—Senior Group—Miss W. New, Leader; Bernice Carrington, President; Fay Gay, Vice-President; Sarah 'Kerr, Treas.; Florence Britten, Secretary.

Intermediate Group—Mrs. Fred Gay, Leader; Ellen Clark, President; Annie Pringle, Secretary; Gwendlyn McCluen, Treasurer.

Bible Class—Miss Blanch Gillis, President; Miss Florence Britten, Secretary; W. R. Brown, Teacher.

The Beaver Boys—Miss W. M. New, Leader.

Senior Girls Guild—Miss Gillies, President; Miss Lillian Collett, Vice Pres.; Miss Winnifred Turnbull, Secretary. Miss Elva Koerner, Treasurer.

This Church is a company of free Christian people, banded together to help one another, and the world, to a better life. It extends a fraternal hand to Christians of every name, creed and station in life, taking without reserve the declaration of Jesus. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." It aims to erect no barriers that would keep a single Christian out of its fellowship. Its members enjoy fullest liberty of faith and form, and people of most divergent views meet in loving kindness around its altars. Its bond of union is not organization, but sympathy, and it knows no law but the law of love. We have no dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy.

### ANYBODY, EVERYBODY IS WELCOME

At All The Services of This Church.

The Minister will be glad to talk with, or help in any way he can, anyone in trouble, anywhere at any time.

History, however written, is always a pleasure to us.—Pliny.

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A thing of beauty is a joy forever, its loveliness increases.—Keats.

## History of the Methodist Church in the Nicola Valley

THE first Methodist minister who was appointed to this valley was Rev. James Turner. In the year 1874 he resided in Nicola or really Nicola was his headquarters. He was an Irishman possessed of a strong constitution, no person could help respecting this man, for first of all he was consecrated to his work, and was a powerful preacher. He had a lovely spirit, lots of humor and would go visit the lonely settler often staying the night with such people. Always had the spirit of optimism, always ready to help and sympathize and never left a home without the people feeling that truly a great man had been with them. Sunday School was organized in Lower Nicola in 1880, the superintendent was Harvey H. Woodward. In the year 1883 Rev. J. P. Howell was appointed minister in charge. Mr. Howell was looked upon not only as a minister but also a Doctor, having had special training along the lines leading up to the medical profession. On very many occasions Mr. Howell would be called to help some sick person. His name is held high and revered by many of the old time residents. In the year 1883 the Parsonage was built at Nicola. There has been a continuous supply by the Methodist Church in the

Nicola Valley since 1876. The first Ladies' Aid was formed in 1897, Mrs. (Rev.) R. B. Laidley was elected the first president. Rev. J. W. Hedley was appointed to Nicola in 1909. The town of Merritt was beginning to boom. It was during the Ministry of Mr. Hedley that the first church was built in Merritt. Following Mr. Hedley was Rev. T. C. Conner and the Parsonage at Merritt was built. Rev. G. R. B. Kinney followed Conner; he left to join the colors. W. C. Frank next had charge and was followed by W. R. Welch. Welch was succeeded by the present Pastor, Rev. Henry Wilson.

The official Board for 1923: Mrs. H. Wilson, Mrs. M. McKibben, Mr. John Dodding, Mr. Robert Taylor, Mr. F. J. Hogg, Mr. M. McKibben, Mr. R. Whittaker, Mrs. Howell John, Mrs. Jos. Beveley, Mrs. A. Batten, Mr. W. Berkett Jackson, Mrs. G. Higgs, Mrs. G. A. Morside Mrs. A. Limb, Mr. David Dodding, Mr. R. W. Dodding, Mrs. J. R. Jobling, Mrs. E. Woodward, Mr. A. R. Carrington, Recording Secretary.

The Methodist Church at Lower Nicola was built and dedicated in August, 1896, Rev. Hardwick being the Pastor. Those assisting in the dedications were Rev. J. W. Wood, Chairman of the District, and Rev. James Calvert from Salmon Arm.

This little church has been the Bethel of many a one who have entered her doors, the benefits of which only Eternity will reveal.

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As I am so I see.—Emerson.

## The Merritt Herald

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Except a living man, there is nothing more wonderful than a book.—Charles Kingsley.

## History of the Anglican Church in the Nicola Valley

THE services of the Anglican Church in this valley were conducted in early days by the clergy of the Indian Mission, who ministered to any settlers belonging to the Anglican Communion within the radius of their large sphere of work and travel.

Shortly after the formation of the Diocese of New Westminster in 1879, under the care of Bishop Sillitoe, the headquarters of the Indian Mission were established at Lytton and the Bishop, generally accompanied by Mrs. Sillitoe, made long and arduous journeys through the interior of the Province ministering to Indians and whites. His first visit to the Nicola valley was in October, 1881, but it was not until 1884 that a resident priest in the person of the late Archdeacon Small was permanently settled at Lytton and able to organize regular visits to the outlying parts of the large district. He and his assistants held services for the white settlers and ministered to them in any way possible at the time of their visits to the Indian Reservations. Services were held in such places as were available; sometimes in the Presbyterian Church at Nicola; sometimes in the old express office there; sometimes in an old school house which stood near where the road now crosses the railway track to the Colletville Bridge between Merritt and Coutlee. The latter building has long since disappeared.

In the year 1899 it was decided to build a church

and measures were taken to raise funds for the same by subscription. A piece of ground was given as a site by Mr. Edward Dalley, whose ranch is now part of the "Nicola Stock Farm" and the response to appeals both here and in England must have been very satisfactory for the church was opened free of any debt and consecrated by Bishop Dart, second Bishop of New Westminster, under the dedication of St. John the Baptist. Mr. N. J. Barwick was contractor for the building and Dr. Sutton, who was then practising at Nicola, and Mr. Wm. Pooley, of Tamerton Ranch, were the first wardens of the church.

Services were held in the newly opened church at regular intervals by Archdeacon Small and his colleagues, the Rev. J. S. A. Bastin, now working on Vancouver Island, and the Rev. E. W. W. Pugh, now Archdeacon of Lytton and head of the Indian Mission in succession to Archdeacon Small who departed this life on April 29th, 1909.

In March 1905, the Rev. Wm. Govier, who was then in Deacon's Orders, came to reside and work in the valley under the direction of the Indian Mission and he held services and performed such offices as a Deacon may perform; the priests of the Mission administered Holy Communion at their monthly visits to the district. Mr. Govier resigned in April 1906 to take up duties at Maple Ridge and services were again held monthly by the clergy from Lytton, until the Rev. J. Thompson came out

*Tony Parrottino*

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The Bible is the secret of England's Greatness.—Victoria.

## History of the Anglican Church in the Nicola Valley—(Continued)

from England early in 1907 to take charge of the Missionary District of the Nicola valley and parts adjacent, under the direction of the Bishop, and quite distinct from the Indian Mission. After working in Deacon's orders for five months, he was ordained priest by Bishop Dart in St. John's Church Yale, on Michaelmas Day 1907, and became the first Vicar of the Nicola valley. Nicola then was quite a busy little town and well attended services were held in the church every Sunday. Services were also held at Quilchena every other Sunday, first in the old Agricultural Hall and then in the parlor of the old hotel, with celebrations of Holy Communion at Mrs. Mickle's ranch. At Coutlee, services were held on the other two Sundays in the month in the sitting room of Mr. H. S. Cleasby's old ranch house.

In the meantime population of the "Forks" began to increase and it was felt to be in the interest of the church to have the district of the work of the divided and simplify matters especially with regard to finances. As a result of this feeling a special vestry meeting was held in the church at Nicola on Sunday, Nov. 3rd, 1908, to consider the matter, and it was decided, with the consent of the Diocesan Executive Committee, to form the district into two separate parishes, the dividing line to be the line dividing townships 91 and 93.

Consequently the place of service was changed

from Coutlee to "Willowdale," the white house at the foot of the cemetery hill, which Dr. Tutill had recently purchased from Mr. Green Armitage. It was in the dining room of that house that the first vestry meeting of the new parish was held. At that meeting Dr. Tutill was appointed Vicar's warden and Mr. H. S. Cleasby warden for the people. It was decided to name the parish St. Michaels, which would of course be the dedication of the church whenever built. Since that time services have been held in many places; among them, the Diamond Vale offices, when the only music provided was Mrs. Tutill's auto-harp, to the accompaniment of which hymns and chants were heartily sung; Hyland's Hall, where the first baptism took place and a large soup plate served as a baptismal font; a hall over the former printing office on Nicola Ave., now converted into a dwelling and owned by Mr. Lobsinger.

With a view to future needs, lots were purchased on the Voght townsite where the church now stands. The population of the town was gradually increasing and it was decided that it would be in the interests of the church to have a resident minister for St. Michael's Parish. Mr. T. Walker came out from England and was ordained Deacon on July 31st, 1910, in Holy Trinity Church, New Westminster. His ordination was Bishop dePoncier's first official act and took place on the Sunday after his own consecration.

It is the lifted face that feels the shining of the sun.—McKeown.

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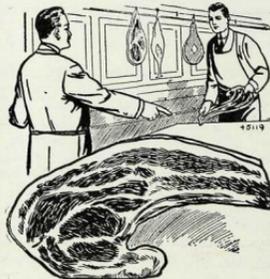
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83

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If little labor, little are our gains, men's fortunes are according to our pains.—Herrick.

## History of the Anglican Church in the Nicola Valley—(Continued)

Bishop de Pencier, the third and present Bishop of New Westminster, paid his first official visit to the valley in February, 1911, and as a result of his visit the present Parish Hall was built. The Bishop promised to contribute \$100 to the building on condition that it was built and ready to open free of debt at a given date in the spring. This was done and the Bishop came up from Vancouver to officially open the building for church use. Here Mr. Walker held services Sunday by Sunday for some months, until he met with a serious accident while cycling home from a visit to the Lower Nicola end of the parish. He was struck and badly injured by a piece of rock from a blast on November 1st, 1911, and after being confined to his bed for some time in Merritt, he was taken to St. Luke's Home, Vancouver. Mr. Thompson came again on alternate Sundays to conduct services until such time as it was possible for Mr. Walker to return and resume his work. This, however, was not to be and he resigned and shortly afterwards died at St. Luke's Home and was laid to rest in Mountain View Cemetery, Vancouver. At the Bishop's request Mr. Thompson again took charge of the Merritt parish along with Nicola.

The congregation at Merritt, while grateful to have a hall of their own in which to worship, were anxious for a real church building, in some measure worthy of Him to whom worship is offered, and after much thought and consideration on the subject, it was decided to raise money by subscription

and obtain plans for a suitable building. About \$4000 was given and promised and plans were adopted drawn up by Messrs. Honeyman & Curtis, of Vancouver, for a building to cost over \$6000. A mortgage was arranged for the \$2000 and this is being gradually reduced, mainly through the efforts of the Woman's Auxilliary. The corner stone of the church which was prepared by Mr. Geo. Irvine, in such a way as to contain within it various documents and coins of the realm, was laid by Bishop de Pencier on July 12th, 1913. The building was completed and formally opened under the dedication of St. Michael on October 19th, 1913, by Archdeacon Heathcote, who also preached at the morning service. The Vicar preached at Evensong altar candlesticks and vases are those formerly used in the Parish Hall and were given by Mrs. Langstaff and Mrs. Tredwin. The organ, which is of exceptionally good tone, was bought and given by the W. A.

Mr. Thompson resigned the charge of Nicola and Merritt and left for work in the Diocese of Algoma in January, 1915. His successor, the Rev. A. H. Plummer, was appointed by the Bishop and assumed his duties on February 28th of that year. Merritt, now being the main centre of population, it was deemed advisable for the Vicar to reside there and the Vicarage at Nicola was rented. Mr. Plummer served the two Parishes until October of that year and then accepted work in the Indian Mission and took up his residence at Shulus. The Parishes

The Road to the Heavenly City is Never Closed for Repairs.—Haynes.

## History of the Anglican Church in the Nicola Valley—(Continued)

were vacant until March 1st, 1916, when the Rev. N. J. Thompson, formerly Vicar of Lynn Valley. B. C., assumed charge.

Rev. N. J. Thompson resigned his charge at the end of June 1918, and left to undertake work at Stayner, Ont., in the Diocese of Toronto, and the Rev. J. Thompson, former Vicar, returned from the Diocese of Algoma and again took charge of the Parishes of Merritt and Nicola in September, 1918, and is the present Vicar. The mortgage on the church at Merritt which then stood at \$2000 has been reduced to \$1200, mainly through the efforts of the W. A. In 1922 a house was purchased for a residence for the clergyman.

The latest addition to the furnishings of the church is a lectern, placed there by members of the W. A., which bears on a small brass plate the following inscription, "In Memoriam Grace Douglas Tutill 1923. Presented by W. A." Mrs Tutill's services in connection with the music and in every other form of church work in connection with both parishes will not soon be forgotten.

St. Michael's has a Sunday School of some forty children with Mr. and Mrs. Frank Thompson as their devoted teachers. The Women's Auxiliary, which developed from the original Ladies' Guild

numbers over thirty members and the church owes much to the efforts of this body of workers. Their capable President, Mrs. J. Crawford, has been re-elected many times. A "Girls' Guild," organized by Mrs. Thompson (the Vicar's wife) meets weekly under her Presidency and the result of their work is no small contribution to the finances of the church.

The present wardens of the parish are Dr. Tutill and Mr. W.C. Parker and Mr. W.R. Langstaff is the capable and untiring Secy-Treas. At Nicola during the late war when men were not available to fill the office of church warden, the Bishop sanctioned the appointment of Mrs. L.A. Mickle (a resident of the valley since 1870) to act in that capacity. She still continues to do so, and has the unique distinction of being the first Lady church warden in B.C., if not in the whole Dominion.

In addition to names already mentioned there are others which might well find a place in any history of the Anglican Church in the Nicola Valley but in the present short sketch they must be omitted. Many have passed beyond our earthly ken, but their memory is still deeply cherished and the work they did in their day has not been without result. The earthly remains of many of them are resting in the cemeteries of the Valley, others lie in near and distant places, but we think of them as united in the life of the church beyond the Veil.

Any fool can serve Satan, but it takes a man to serve Christ.

## Post Office Information

### MAILS

Mails are despatched from Merritt post office as follows:

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for Brookmere, Princeton, Penticton, Nelson and points east at 12.15 p.m.

Wednesday and Fridays for Vancouver and points west at 12.15 p.m.

Tuesdays, Thursday and Saturday for Spence's Bridge and points east and west at 10.35 a.m.

Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays for Princeton, Penticton, Nelson and points east at 5.15 p.m.

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Empire, 4c. for first ounce and 3c. for each additional ounce; other countries 10c. for first ounce and 5c. for each additional ounce.

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Canadian Newspapers—Canada, Great Britain, the Empire, U.S. and Mexico, 1c. per 4 ounces.

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Parcel Post—To points in British Columbia, 10c. for first pound, 5c. for each additional pound other provinces according to zones. United States, 12c. per pound. Limit of weight in all cases, 11 pounds.

Parcels posted in Canada for delivery within Canada may be insured according to value. Charges very reasonable; inquire of postmaster.

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Order is heaven's first law.—Pope.

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Not in pulling down but in building up does man find pure joy.—Goethe.

## The City of Merritt

THE Nicola valley is situate 165 miles due east of Vancouver and comprises the country lying between the Thompson river on the north and the Similkameen on the south and is bounded on the east and west respectively by the Okanagan valleys. The extent of the arable land in the valley is 170,000 acres, the greater part of which is used for range purposes. For this reason the valley has become famous throughout Canada as a stock raising country. As many as 5,000 head of cattle have been shipped to the various markets in the Dominion in a single year. But all kinds of soil, suitable for most crops, can be found on the bench and bottom lands.

The City of Merritt is situate to the north-east end of the valley. It is a comparatively new town and is therefore neither rich in history nor tradition. But over against this it has no old mistakes or prejudices to live down—only a glorious future to build up. The last quarter of the nineteenth century the territory now covered by the City of Merritt and its environs was used as range and farm land and the names of the owners are still fresh in the memory of many people. They were Chapman, Voght, Charters, Gordon, Garcia, Arnatage. Indeed some of them are still hale and hearty citizens of Merritt.

In the early days of the present century coal was discovered in Diamond Vale and Middlesboro and in 1906 when the C. P. R. started to build a line up the valley from Spence's Bridge to Nicola lake

the townsite of Forksdale was subdivided into lots. Two years later when the Nicola Valley Coal & Coke Company and the Diamond Vale Company began to take out coal in large quantities, the town of Merritt sprang into existence. It was not, however, until the years 1910-1911 that the phenomenal growth took place. In the latter quarter of 1911 the slogan was "Merritt grows in sixty days." And so it did. In that length of time the city grew to three-fourths its present size. Since then it has been slowly but permanently growing. Building did not proceed ahead of the demand and, consequently, the town has been spared the sick headaches—caused by disappointed hopes and shattered bank accounts—which have been the lot of so many western towns that have indulged in artificial "booms."

Merritt is the most important town in the Nicola valley. Indeed, it is now a city, and one of the largest cities between the Pacific coast and the Nicola valley, having a population of 2000 odd inhabitants. It is a most up-to-date city, replete with all modern conveniences; linked up with two railroads, government telephone, city water, rolled streets, concrete sidewalks, electric light, park, skating rink, city hall, court house and Armory. The majority of the public utilities are owned and operated by the city.

Cattle, coal and lumber form the backbone of the city's economic life. The Middlesboro Mines have an annual output of approximately 100,000

There is always work and tools to work withal for those who will.—Lowell.

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Some men give trouble, others take trouble.—Avebury.

## The City of Merritt—(Continued)

tons and a payroll of \$280,000.00. The Nicola Pine Mills—a more recent acquisition to the industrial life of the city—turn out 35,000,000 feet of lumber annually and have an annual payroll of half a million dollars. The Douglas Lake, Guichon and Nicola Stock Farm cattle companies and other small producers employ a large number of men and distribute much money in the valley annually.

Another industry that is fast becoming an important factor in the economic life of the valley is that of Fox Farming. Starting on a small scale in 1921 with sixteen pairs of the best variety silver foxes the "Merit For Ranch" operated by Dr. J. J. Gillis has now in the neighborhood of three hundred animals in pens that cover almost two acres of ground. The farm is ideally located in the foothills two miles east of the city at an altitude where the winter temperature is just right for the production of the finest fur. Plant and animals together represent about sixty thousand dollars in value. Messrs. Charles and Edgar Collett are in charge of the farm. The other breeders in the district are A. E. Axton, W. Crompton, J. Guichon, Mrs. Marshall, Isaac Millar, Mrs. Eric Gavelin, all of whom are having good success. Merritt is headquarters of the B. C. Fox Breeders' Association of which the Hon. E. D. Barrow is Honorary President; Mr. D. A. Dunbar, Honorary Vice-President; Mr. A. E. Axton, President; Mr. Ian Gibson, Secretary-Treasurer.

Educationally the City of Merritt, for its size, takes second place to none in the Dominion. If

there is any truth in H. G. Wells' dictum that there is in progress in the world today a race between education and catastrophe then Merritt is doing its bit to avert the evil. The public school has grown in fifteen years from one teacher, one room and ten children to ten teachers, ten rooms and four hundred children. Mrs. Harry Priest was the teacher in those days and the school was conducted in Menzies' Hall. The first school in the district, however dates back to 1876. It was a little log cabin situated near the bank of the river. It catered to the first ranchers. Mr. Archie Irwin was the teacher. He taught in Lower Nicola and at the Forks on alternate days. The city has now two splendid school buildings which cost in the neighborhood of sixty thousand dollars. This year—1923—Merritt led the province in the entrance examinations, Miss Alma Farenhurst capturing the Governor-General's gold medal. Last year Mr. Ralph Fletcher led the province in the second year high school examinations. A Superior School was inaugurated in 1913 and this was raised to the status of High School in 1921. There are now thirty pupils on the Roll. Mr. L. E. Morrissey is the principal, and Miss G. A. Reid the vice-principal. The ten divisions in the public schools are in charge of: Miss P. D. Faulkner, Mr. G. G. Currie, Miss E. I. Horner, Miss G. Allen, Miss J. Foster, Miss A. E. North, Miss J. McIntyre, Miss M. McDonald, Miss B. A. Gillies, Miss W. M. New.

The Nicola Valley General Hospital is one of Merritt's most prized institutions. The building was

Industry is the parent of fortune.

## The City of Merritt—(Continued)

erected in 1911 and in 1920 a splendidly appointed Nurses Home was added, bringing the cost of the plant up to about \$40,000. Last year—1922—a Victor X-Ray machine was installed at a cost of \$4,100 an investment which has proved well warranted. But probably the most praiseworthy feature about the institution is not to be found in the expensiveness or the elaborateness of its equipment but in the fact that last year the hospital held the record in E. C. for the minimum ratio of deaths for the number of patients treated. For this reason great credit is due to the staff. Miss L. P. Stinson is Matron and Misses C. G. Batten, Miss C. Dennis, Miss Gay, Miss Roesch and Miss Zettergreen are the Graduate Nurses. The Probationers are: Miss Ransom, Miss Netherton, Miss McGillivray, Miss Clements. The Hospital Board is made up as follows: Honorary Directors Drs. J. J. and A. F. Gillis and Dr. G. H. Tutill; President, Mr. M. L. Grimmett; Vice-President, Ald. Robert Taylor; Secretary, Mr. A. R.; Carrington; Members, Messrs. Captain Stephenson, L. Clark Sr., E. T. Roblin, R. S. Brown, Robert Whitaker, Government Representatives, Mr. E. G. S. White and Mr. W. H. Boothroyd.

Merritt also stands high in the realm of religion. There are four places of public worship: Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian, each having its own resident pastor. The Brethren are also represented. Weekly divine service and Sabbath School are held in all the churches. The buildings are comparatively new, well equipped and

loyally supported. All the auxiliary societies: Ladies Aids, Girls Guilds, Young People's Societies and C. G. I. T. groups are popular and healthy institutions.

In the realm of sport there is quality, variety and enthusiasm the year round. In the summer-time—Golf, Tennis, Football, Swimming, hunting and fishing draw their devotees. And in the winter time—curling, hockey, basketball, skating, sleighing and dancing are loyally supported. Last winter—1922—representatives of the Merritt Curling Club won the P. Burns Challenge Cup and other trophies in open competition at Kamloops, and this summer—1923—Merritt golfers, after a brief visit to the Okanagan—brought home the Princeton Challenge Cup.

The climate in Merritt is unexcelled—generally mild and dry. Situated at an elevation of 1750 above sea level the atmosphere is always clear and exhilarating. Summer and winter temperatures are never excessively hot or cold. Notwithstanding its elevation Merritt is sheltered by the surrounding mountains from the cold north winds in the winter time and in the summertime the same mountains insure cool evenings and nights. The valley is famous for its sunshine and has been well named "the valley of Sunshine" for there is scarcely a day in the year when that luminary fails to make an appearance. It is the opinion of the writer that there is no more congenial place in Canada for one to live, work, and bring up a family.

Thrill is the fuel of magnificence.—Sir P. Sidney

## The Roman Catholic Church in the Nicola Valley

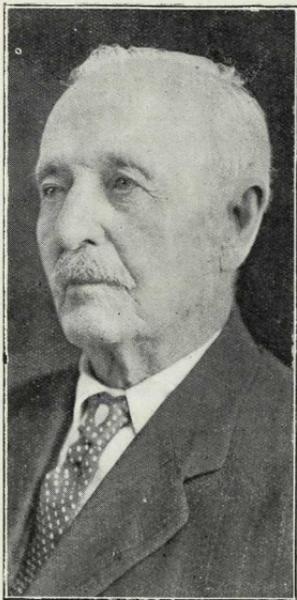
THE Catholic church has had a steady growth in Merritt and district. Starting in a small way in 1906 in the home of Mr. J. Garcia, it has now a commodous building and a strong parish. This church has always taken a keen interest in the Indian people. The following brief sketch contributed by the Rev. Father J. M. LeJaune, O. M. I., of Kamloops, one of the valley's highly respected pioneer religious leaders, will speak for itself:

My first trip to Nicola was in November, 1882. I do not remember having seen any church building then between Kamloops and Spence's Bridge. I had the use of a very primitive one at Coldwater in 1885. Next was the one at Douglas Lake in 1888. The actual one at Coldwater was finished in the fall of 1890. A couple of years later, I had the one near the lake, three miles east of Quilchena, and last of all, the one for Shooolos, in 1902. These

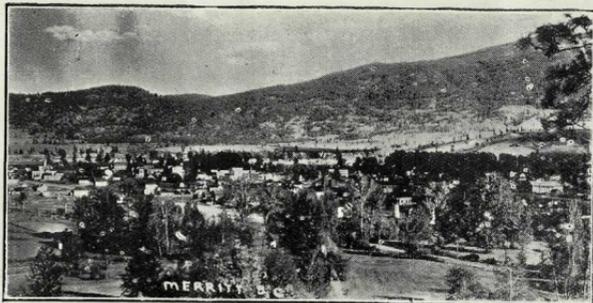
are all for the Indians especially, of whom there were about 500 attendants, but owing to disease and the "flue" there are hardly half that number now. The church at Merritt was built in 1910. Mr. Garcia having donated the acre block where it stands. The Rev. Father Falen is the present pastor.

Mr. Garcia was one of the original settlers in the valley. He owned the estate now in the possession of Mr. William Lauder and was one of the valley's most successful ranchers. A devout Roman Catholic his home was always open to the church to hold Mass in those days when there was no church building and he and his family always made the members of the congregation feel welcome at their home. He is entitled to be called the father of Catholicism in the Nicola Valley.

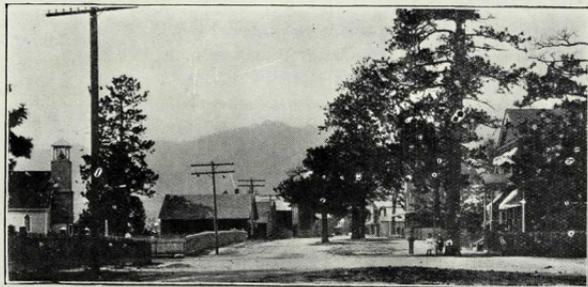
Kindness, like seeds, increase by sowing.



Wm. Voght. Father of Merritt



Bird's Eye View of Merritt.



Nicola, Showing Presbyterian Church

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MERIT FOX RANCH - - - MERRITT, B. C.

# NICOLA PINE MILLS LIMITED

H. C. MEEKER, GEN. MGR.

## "THE PINE PEOPLE"

MERRITT, B. C.

LARGEST MANUFACTURERS OF WESTERN WHITE PINE IN CANADA  
CONTINUOUS ALL YEAR OPERATIONS IN EVERY DEPARTMENT  
LOGGING - TRANSPORTATION - SAWING - PLANING MILL - SHIPPING

### ANNUAL CAPACITY

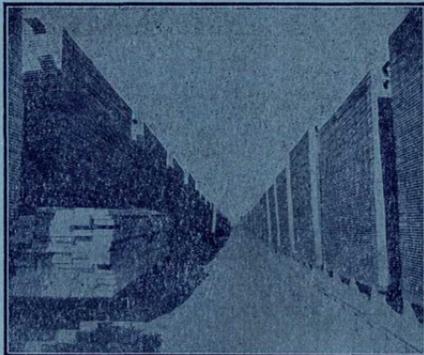
50,000,000 Feet Lumber  
Five Million Pieces Lath

### MARKETS

Prairie Provinces  
Eastern Canada  
United States  
British Isles  
South Africa

### Direct Representation

Toronto, Ont.  
New York, N. Y.  
Chicago, Ill.  
Spokane, Wash.



### GRADES

Established under Western  
Pine Association Rules, the  
standard in all markets.

### DRYING

All lumber thoroughly dried  
under ideal climatic conditions  
supplemented by a modern  
battery of efficient dry kilns.

Our organization can handle  
your order with entire  
satisfaction