

*The* COLONIAL POSTAL  
SYSTEMS *and* POSTAGE  
STAMPS

*Of* VANCOUVER ISLAND  
*and* BRITISH COLUMBIA  
1849-1871

A. S. DEAVILLE



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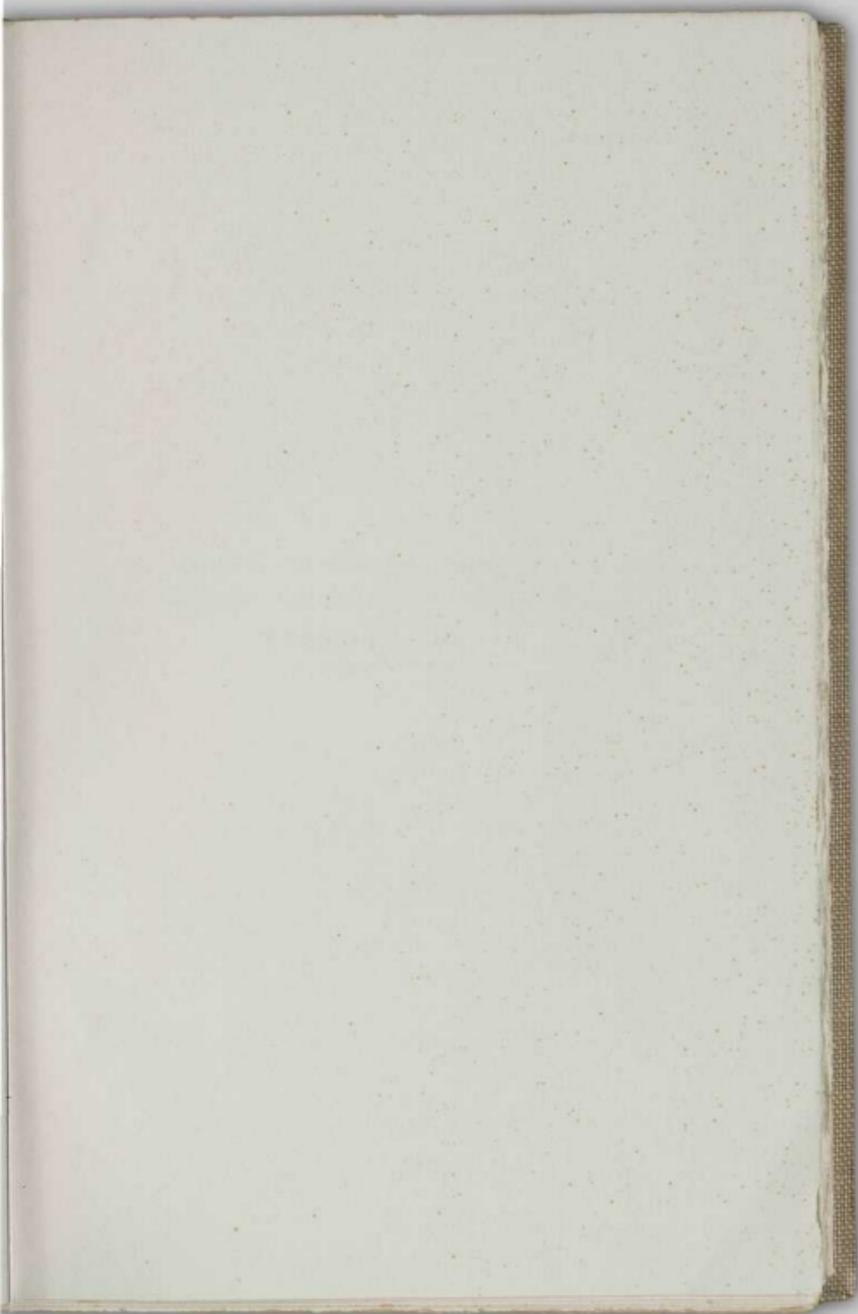
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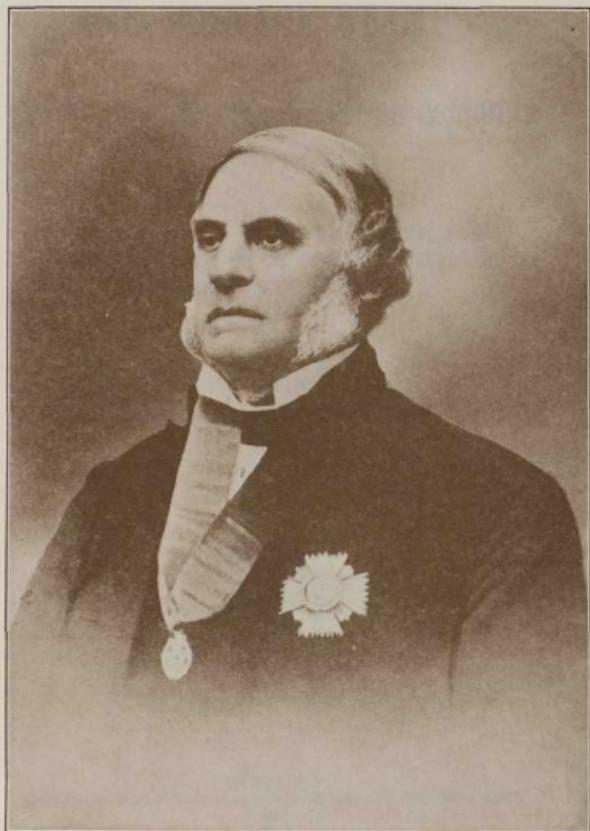
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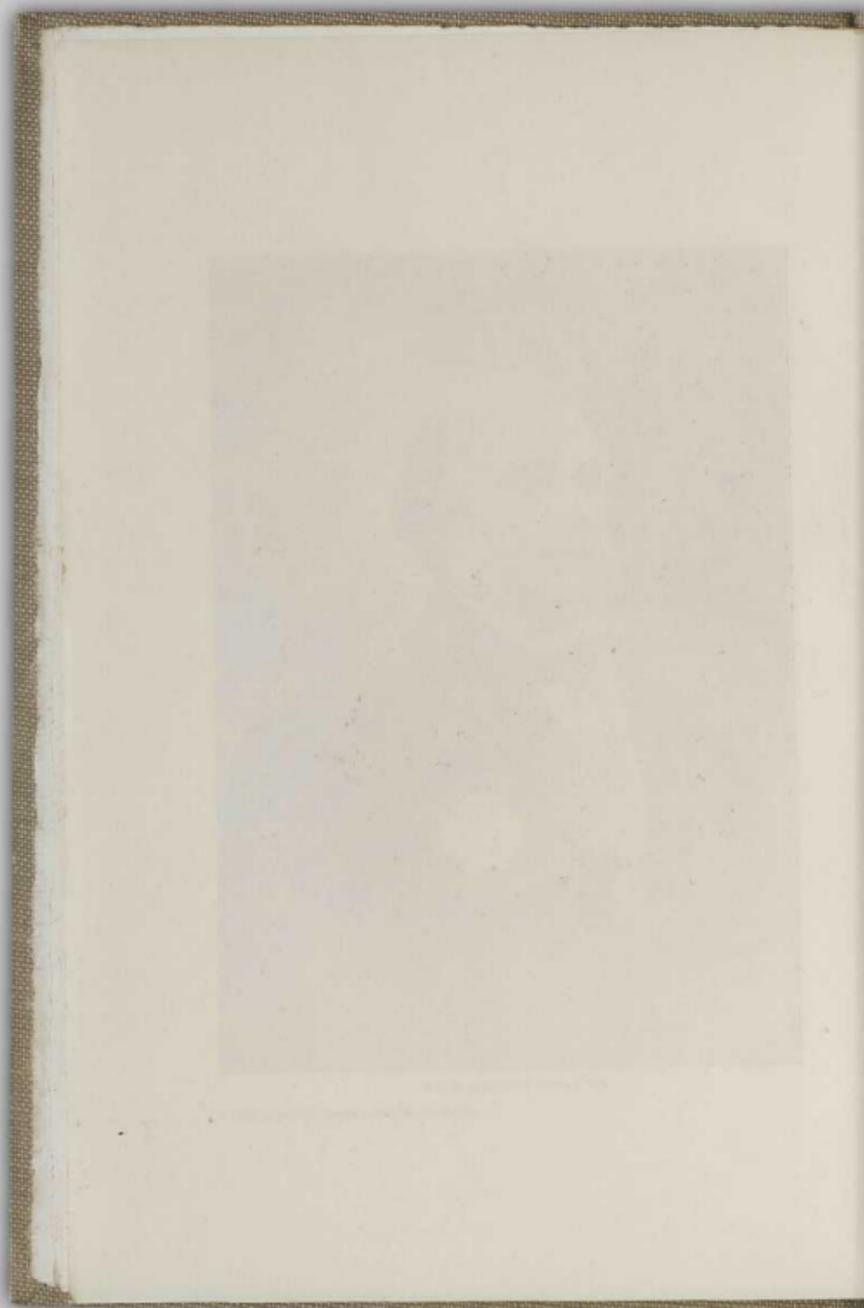
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THE COLONIAL POSTAL SERVICE



SIR JAMES DOUGLAS, K.C.B.

(Portrait by Savannah, Victoria, B.C.)



# THE COLONIAL POSTAL SYSTEMS AND POSTAGE STAMPS

OF

VANCOUVER ISLAND AND BRITISH COLUMBIA

1849-1871

A SKETCH OF THE ORIGIN AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE POSTAL SERVICE ON THE PACIFIC SEABOARD  
OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA

BY

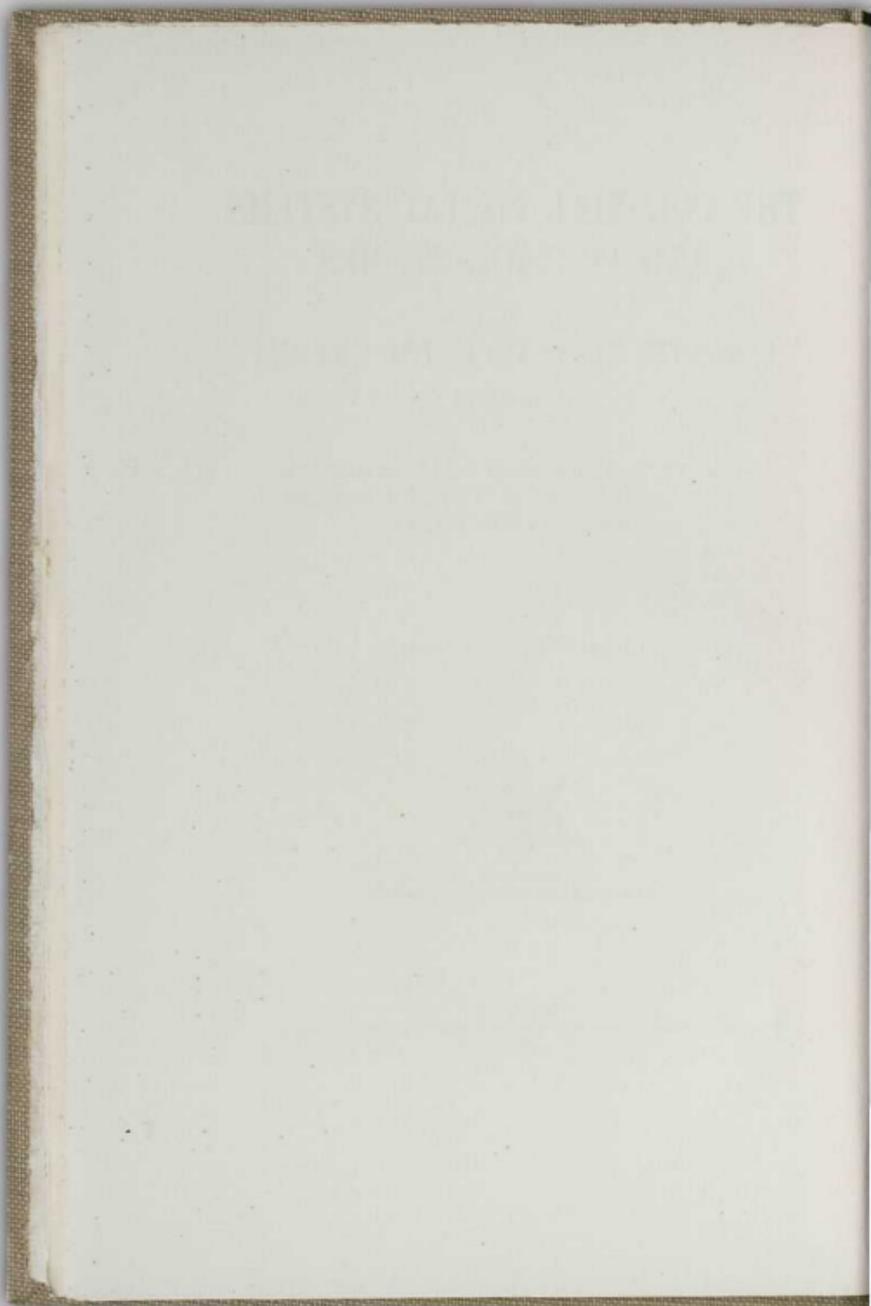
ALFRED STANLEY DEAVILLE



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*To the Hon. S. L. Howe,  
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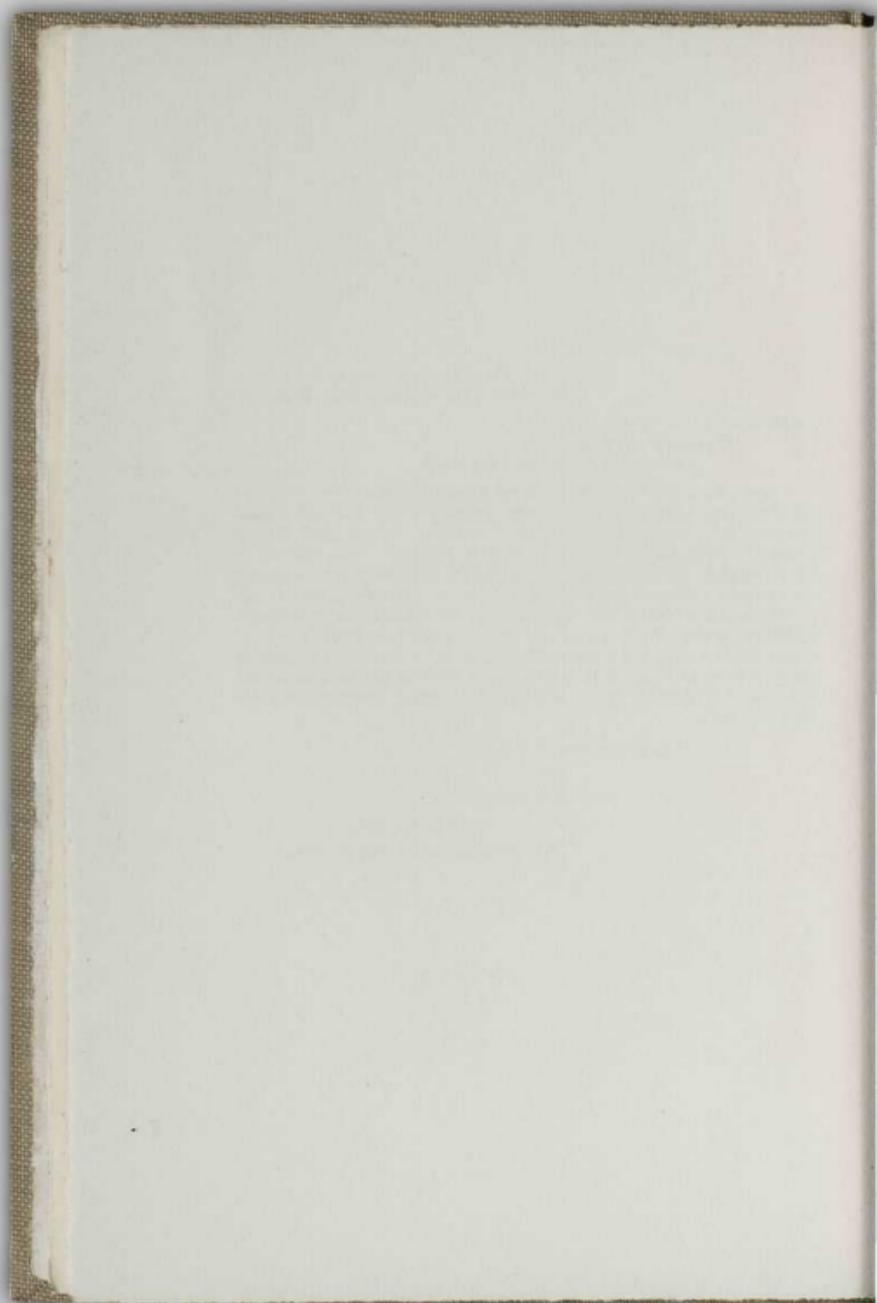
SIR,—I have the honour to transmit herewith Memoir No. VIII. of the Provincial Archives publications, entitled "The Colonial Postal Systems and Postage Stamps of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, 1849-1871," by Alfred Stanley Deaville. The Memoir is the successful result of years of patient labour and research, both among the Colonial Papers in the Provincial Archives and among the records in the Dominion Post Office Department. Mr. Deaville, a well-known authority on the subject, undertook the work at my request, and he is to be complimented on the admirable manner in which he has elucidated the complicated history of the early Postal Systems in operation in the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia between the years 1849 and 1871.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN HOSIE,  
*Provincial Librarian and Archivist.*



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## PREFACE.

THE history of British Columbia's colonial period is of but recent date and comparatively short duration, yet it is worthy of intensive study because it possesses a high degree of human interest and records a fine achievement of the British colonizing genius. Similarly, the story of the origin and development of the Post Office in Canada's Pacific Province deserves attention, for it forms a chapter of unusual and perhaps unique interest in the annals of British postal affairs. The narrative has not been easy to reconstruct, despite a wealth of material at hand; but such difficulties have served only to make the task one of more than ordinary fascination for the researcher. One may reasonably hope to convey something of this glamour to the indulgent fellow-student; and for even the casual reader the high lights of the fur-trading period and the glare of gold-rush days illumine the tale with touches of the picturesque.

The provision of safe and quick official channels of postal communication is a problem that usually faces modern governments in the very first stages of civil administration, for it is inseparably entwined with the most vital aspects of latter-day civilization. Yet it is a strange fact that, although Vancouver Island was thrown open for colonization in 1849, no serious effort was made to provide governmental protection for the transmission of the public correspondence of that colony until nearly sixteen years later. Lack of fiscal revenue and the fact that more or less adequate facilities were provided by private enterprise brought about this curious state of affairs. The Hudson's Bay Company provided suitable accommodation during its period of control, and enterprising express operators catered to the needs of the miners during the gold excitements. In 1865 Governor Kennedy proposed a Postal Bill for Vancouver Island, but the contemplated law did not pass the Legislative Assembly of that colony. In fact, at no time during its chequered history had the Colony of Vancouver Island any postal legislation of any kind upon its statute-books. The sister Colony of British Columbia, which was brought into existence by the sudden influx of gold-seekers to the lower Fraser River in 1858, had for some years merely a perfunctory postal service confined chiefly to the collection of revenue on letters carried by express.

Some explanation should perhaps be offered in regard to the ensuing outline of the general history which I have thought requisite to make the postal history intelligible. This outline has been drawn almost entirely from original sources, and references to the main authorities

are given for the principal statements made. Other marginal documentary references relate to original and hitherto unpublished material in the Provincial Archives and the files of the Post Office Department.

As far as possible philatelic matter has been segregated so that collectors may, if they wish, confine their reading to the particular sections devoted to that subject. Let me warn them, however, that a thorough understanding of the philately of Vancouver Island and British Columbia cannot be had without a knowledge of the general and postal history of those colonies.

It would be indeed ungrateful to put forth this essay without acknowledging the generous co-operation which has helped to make as complete as possible the first official account of British Columbia's early postal service. To the Honourable Mr. Justice Archer Martin, of the British Columbia Court of Appeal, an authority of the first rank on historical matters of the Province, I am under heavy obligations for suggestions and constructive criticism of the greatest value and helpfulness. The very kind assistance of Mr. J. R. Anderson is gratefully acknowledged elsewhere in this volume. The late Mr. E. H. Fletcher, formerly Post Office Inspector at Victoria, also gave me valuable help. I have to thank Mr. Edward E. Wootton for reading certain portions of the manuscript and lending pictures.

Among philatelists who have rendered invaluable assistance and loaned covers and stamps for inspection and reproduction are Mr. Henry C. Hitt, of Bremerton, Washington; Mr. Ronald M. Angus, of Victoria, and Mr. G. P. Bainbridge, of Vancouver. Miss L. M. Forbes and Mr. C. B. Hill-Tout, of Victoria, also co-operated most kindly.

For access to unpublished material in the archives of the Post Office Department I am indebted to Mr. J. F. Murray, District Superintendent of Postal Service at Vancouver, and Mr. E. M. Haynes, Inspector of Postal Service, Victoria.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the tireless help given me by Mr. John Hosie, Provincial Librarian and Archivist, and his able assistants, Mrs. M. R. Cree and Miss A. M. Russell. To Miss Russell I am particularly grateful for opportune encouragement but for which this memoir might not have been written. Mr. John Forsyth also aided me in the search for original material.

And last, but not least, I desire to thank my friend, Mr. James R. Bryant, for compiling the index.

ALFRED STANLEY DEAVILLE.

*Victoria, B.C., Canada, 1928.*

## THE COLONIAL POSTAL SYSTEMS AND POSTAGE STAMPS

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### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTORY: THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD, 1774-1848.

The interesting pre-colonial period ought first to be considered briefly: the days when the fur-trader held undisputed sway over the country to the west of the Rocky Mountains from the mouth of the Columbia River to the borders of Alaska; when Fort St. James was the metropolis of the Northern Interior, before the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia were dreamed of.

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century the immemorial veil of mystery that hid the romantic region of the North West Coast was pierced to some extent by the daring explorations of the Spanish navigators and the Third Voyage of Captain Cook. The great English sailor's men took home an alluring story of the valuable furs which were plentiful at Nootka Sound, and soon the ships of the fur-traders plied back and forth, reaping a rich harvest of sea-otter skins and other pelts from the natives along the coast. This trade was halted for a time by the dispute between Spain and Great Britain as to the sovereignty of the territory involved.

The British store-ship "Daedalus" arrived at Nootka Sound in July, 1792, with supplies and dispatches for the naval expedition under Commander George Vancouver, R.N. Amongst other important letters she carried a communication from Count Florida Blanca, the Spanish Prime Minister, addressed to Commodore Don Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra, Governor and representative of the Spanish monarch at Nootka, instructing him that the forts and lands at that place were to be surrendered forthwith to the British. This was a letter delivery of the first importance, for it marked a turning-point in the history of the North West Coast. A description of the incident in Quadra's own words, taken from his manuscript journal, has almost the force of actuality:—

Bodega y Quadra, M.E. Journal, "Viaje a la Costa de la America Septentrional." San Blas, 2nd Feb., 1780.

"On the 4th July," he wrote, "the English merchant frigate *Dedalo* arrived. It had left Portsmouth on the 18th August with supplies for Commander Vancouver's expedition, and the Captain, Thomas News, handed me a Royal Decree dated 12th May 1791, from the Conde de Florida Blanca, in which was a copy of the Convention, providing that His Britannic Majesty's Officer . . . should immediately be placed in possession of the buildings, districts, and portions of territory which had been occupied by that monarch's subjects in April 1789."

Vancouver and Quadra differed courteously but decidedly in their interpretation of these instructions, and it was necessary to refer to their respective Governments for final orders. Vancouver waited for over two years in the Pacific, completing the circumnavigation of the lordly island that bears his name\* and finishing his invaluable exploration of the North Pacific Coast, but no further dispatches arrived and the delay robbed him of the honour of personally receiving the surrender of the disputed territory. He sailed away, and the region which had been the subject of so much controversy was finally surrendered to the British Crown in 1795. Soon afterwards it was abandoned, for the time being, to the random fur-traders and whaling-vessels penetrating the mysterious upper reaches of the Pacific. But the seeds of Empire had been sown; a stronghold for British institutions had been secured upon the fabled North West Coast; and only time was needed for the development of sturdy colonial growth.

While the navigators revealed the secrets of the coast-line the explorers of the enterprising North West Company pushed their way overland from the plains across the mountains to the sea. Early in the nineteenth century, as a result of the discoveries of Alexander Mackenzie and Simon Fraser in the virgin fastnesses of the hinterland, the attention of the great fur-trading corporations of British North America was drawn to this new and promising mart. In the autumn of 1805 the North West Company built Fort McLeod at McLeod Lake, the first permanent trading-post to be established in the British territories to the west of the Rocky Mountains. In the following year a fort was placed at Stuart Lake; and gradually the North West Company and its rival, the Hudson's Bay Company, planted their

\* But which he himself named "Quadra and Vancouver's Island."

trading-posts at various points of vantage in the vast wilderness of Northern British Columbia, then known as New Caledonia.

During the earliest period the only means of communication with this remote territory were the annual "brigades" and occasional "expresses" from the distant East which the fur-trading companies maintained for the purpose of transporting furs, goods for barter, and letters and papers. Many months might be consumed in crossing the continent, so great were the difficulties encountered; and it was regarded as an achievement when the transcontinental expresses succeeded in maintaining an average schedule time of one hundred days, with extraordinary regularity when the obstacles are considered, in traversing their long route. In the summer months the heavier articles were carried overland by pack-horses and along the rivers and lakes by canoes; in winter the wastes of ice and snow were penetrated by hardy couriers on snow-shoes, with dog-trains. The latter could carry only letters and papers, with sufficient food for their own maintenance en route.

The life at the early frontier posts was a strange episode in the history of our country. Scattered here and there throughout the primeval wilderness were small groups of white men, housed in forts and governed with martial rigour by the officers of the great companies. They were bound together by the powerful ties of common interest and armed resistance to ever-present danger. It is difficult for us to conceive the emotions of relief and happiness which must have blazed up in the hearts of these little garrisons when word was passed around that one of the brigades had been sighted in the distance, bringing letters from loved ones far away, dispatches from headquarters, and newspapers which, though perhaps a year old, contained eagerly awaited news of the stirring times in which they lived—the days of Marengo, and Trafalgar, and Waterloo. Imagine the excitement when they learned, say, that the Little Corporal, whose earth-shaking exploits during the Hundred Days were the last thrilling tidings brought by the London papers, had suffered defeat nearly a year before and was now in dreary exile at St. Helena! In this age of rapid communication we can hardly picture such a situation, and are constrained to look back with a sort of curious pity upon the days when

our forefathers parted from each other to go to the ends of the earth, knowing that months and even years must elapse before they could have news of each other.

The arrival of the brigades was usually timed to occur as nearly as possible on Christmas or New Year's Day, and the festivities which marked their advent formed the chief respite of an existence of almost unparalleled loneliness and monotony. In addition to the other pleasures they afforded the fur-traders, the brigades often brought little luxuries such as tea, coffee, sugar, and the like, which to the exiles were redolent of home.

Letters and papers were carried from Montreal to Fort William by heavy brigade, and thence by light brigade to Fort Chippewyan on Lake Athabaska and along the Peace, Parsnip, and Pack Rivers to McLeod Lake. From Fort McLeod the route followed an old Indian trail for ninety miles south-westerly across rough country to Stuart Lake, where stood Fort St. James, the central depôt of the district, from whence the mail was dispatched to the various outposts as opportunity offered. Later the route followed was via Tête Jaune Cache and the main branch of the Fraser River. Still later the North West Company transported their letters and supplies by ship to Astoria, and thence along the Columbia River to the Okanagan River and via Fort Kamloops to Fort Alexander on the Fraser River, whence they were dispatched by way of Fort George to Fort St. James. This was a sufficiently long and arduous journey, but it was a great improvement upon the overland route.

Occasionally the officers in charge at the outlying forts required to communicate with each other during the intervals between the brigades. In such cases they usually followed the practice of entrusting letters to near-by Indians, who carried them in the direction of their destination to the confines of their tribal territory and sold them to neighbouring Indians of friendly disposition. These in turn took the letters farther on and sold them at a profit to another tribe, and so on, each sale advancing the letters upon their journey until they were sold to the addressees at a price that covered the profits of all the intermediaries. Father A. G. Morice, in his valuable and authoritative "History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia" (London: John Lane, 1906), cites (pp. 90-91) the long-distance transmission of a letter

sent in this way by David Thompson, the explorer, to the manager of the North West Company's establishment at Stuart Lake. The letter was sent from Ilk-kay-ope Falls, Columbia River, on 28th August, 1811, and reached its destination on the 6th of the following April, eight months and eight days later, a striking tribute to the awe inspired in the native breast by the white man's magic writings which moved them more than the hope of gain.

In 1816 the deadly feud between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company became so intense that the shrewd directors of the rival Companies perceived there was no alternative but eventual amalgamation. By a master-stroke of strategy the interests of the two concerns were joined together in 1821, and thereafter, under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company, they enjoyed the sole privilege of trading with the Indians in vast territories of British North America under grants from King George IV. and Queen Victoria until 1858-59.

Fort Vancouver was established in 1825 near the mouth of the Columbia River in the fertile country known as Oregon; and later it became the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company for their Western Department. From that point the swift couriers of "White Eagle," as Dr. John McLoughlin, the Governing Chief Factor, was named by the Indians, conveyed his written behests by canoe and pack-horse to the scattered outposts of his huge domain. It is recorded that on several occasions a young officer of the Company named James Douglas was given charge of expresses conveying important letters, an exacting and indeed in some cases a perilous undertaking, and that in these as in all other tasks entrusted to him he acquitted himself in an efficient, painstaking manner which was favourably noticed by his superior officers.

Several forts were established on the northern coast-line and a number of vessels engaged in conveying letters, papers, and supplies to them. The historic steamer "Beaver," the first to invade the waters of the Pacific, was sent out from England in 1835 for this purpose and proved to be an invaluable adjunct of the Company. Sailing-ships annually brought out supplies and letters direct from England to Fort Vancouver, and gradually replaced the brigades and expresses from Montreal in this respect.

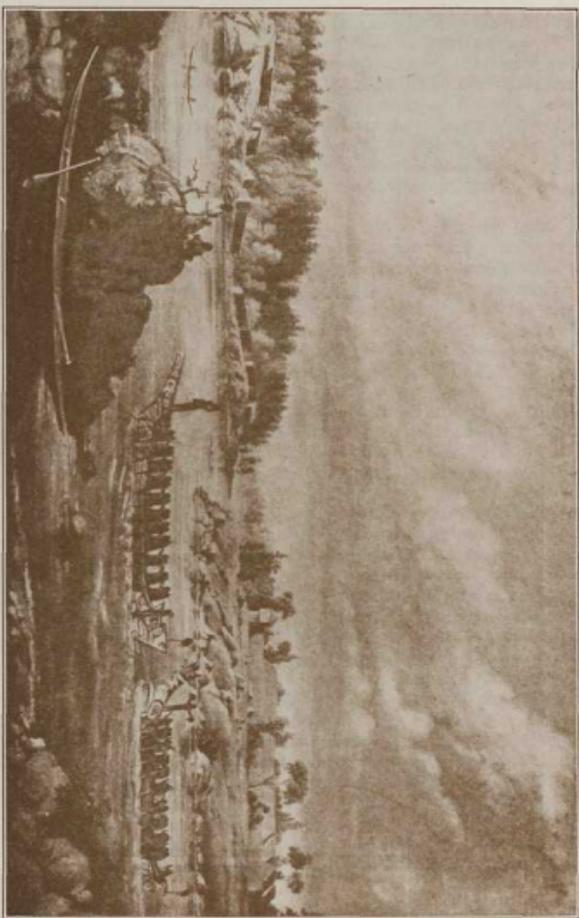
MS., "Life of John McLoughlin," Harvey, p. 3.

But American settlers began to pour into the territory of Oregon, and the Company's hold on that portion of the country grew more and more precarious. Shrewdly anticipating the final outcome of the negotiations anent the Oregon Boundary, whereby the country south of the 49th parallel ultimately was recognized as American territory, they ordered that a new establishment was to be formed at a strategic point well within the limits of British jurisdiction, so that they might remove their western headquarters to the new location if necessary.

For some time the southern end of Vancouver Island had been regarded as a suitable location for such a post, and early in 1842 James Douglas, the young officer whose abilities had already secured him marked advancement in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, was entrusted with the task of selecting the actual site. He proceeded overland from Fort Vancouver to Fort Nisqually on Puget Sound, where he embarked on the Company's schooner "Cadboro" with a party of six men, and proceeded to explore the shore-line of Vancouver Island from Sooke Harbour to Gonzales Point. After careful consideration he chose the "Port or Canal of Camosack" at the southern extremity of the island, in the heart of the beautiful park-like demesne which had previously excited the admiration of the Spaniards and Captain W. H. McNeill, the Boston fur-trader. This locality he recommended as "the most advantageous situation for the proposed Establishment within the Straits of De Fuca." The fine adjacent harbour of "Iswoymalth" (Esquimalt) he regarded as unsuitable because of the lack of arable land in the immediate vicinity. Douglas returned to Fort Vancouver and submitted his report, which was approved; early in March, 1843, he left Fort Nisqually with a force of fifteen men on the Company's steamer "Beaver," and landed at Shoal Point on the 10th of that month with equipment and supplies for the construction of the new fort.

The site finally selected was roughly that now bounded by Government, Bastion, Wharf, and Broughton Streets. Work was commenced forthwith; and in three months' time the initial buildings were completed. The fort consisted of a substantial stockade of cedar timbers with bastions of squared logs at the north-east and south-west corners. Six or eight nine-pounder guns were mounted in each bastion,





Earliest known view of Fort Victoria, circa 1847.

(From a painting by Iwai Kaan, in the possession of E. B. Oaker, Esq., M.P.)

for use if necessary to protect the fort and its inhabitants, and as symbols of authority. Regular watch was kept both day and night, and the fort was regarded as impregnable against native attack. Inside the stockade were ultimately five store buildings, in the chief of which the letters and papers were handled; a chapel; a dining-hall; a cook-house and a blacksmith's shop. The work of construction was carried out without nails or spikes; wooden pegs only were used by order of the Company. Iron was far too valuable a commodity for barter with the Indians to be used for building purposes.

With the fine open glade about the stockade and the glorious oak-trees, the place presented a picturesque and beautiful appearance, in orderly contrast with the Indian village on the opposite shore of the harbour; and the pioneers were well satisfied with the delightful location which their senior officer had chosen.

The Indians came not only from neighbouring points but from long distances to watch the proceedings curiously. They offered no resistance to the white man's invasion; indeed, they furnished pickets for the stockade for a consideration; but on several subsequent occasions they proved to be troublesome and the nine-pounder guns were made to speak with the voice of authority, impressing the savage mind with the white man's power and his determination to rule.

In October James Douglas returned to Fort Vancouver and Chief Trader Charles G. Ross, as senior resident officer of the Company, remained in charge at the new post. Ross died in the spring of the following year and Roderick Finlayson, the second in command, assumed control. Finlayson immediately dispatched an express canoe to Fort Nisqually with the news of Charles Ross's death, and asked for instructions. He was authorized to remain in charge of the new establishment.

Trade flourished from the beginning at Fort Victoria. Farming was carried on in the vicinity on a fairly large scale, and the excess produce was disposed of at a handsome profit at the Russian fur-trading posts in Alaska.

In ordering the construction of the new fort the Hudson's Bay Company's Council of Rupert's Land specified that the "new establishment to be formed on the Straits of De Fuca"

was to be named "Fort Victoria" in honour of the beloved young Queen who had ascended the British throne only six years before.\* From such rulings there could be no departure, and woe to the official of the Company who dared to disregard them! But the student of the subject finds in the chief published authorities a persistent story to the effect that the place was officially known first as "Fort Camosun," then as "Fort Albert," and finally as "Fort Victoria." The statement has been often made, and almost as frequently contradicted. The point is one of more than merely local interest, for the Victoria, B.C., postmark is known to philatelists the world over and it is desirable to ascertain when the name of British Columbia's capital was first used officially.

The basis of this story of the authorized change of names appears to be the statement of Roderick Finlayson in his manuscript, "History of Vancouver Island," as follows (p. 24) :—

In the year 1845 the name of Camosun previously given to the fort was changed to Fort Albert by order from England, and the succeeding year to that of Victoria.

Hubert Howe Bancroft, who had the advantage of personal intercourse and correspondence with Roderick Finlayson when preparing his "History of British Columbia" (San Francisco: The History Company, 1889), deals with this matter in characteristic fashion (pp. 117-8) :—

For the first two years of its existence . . . the post at the south end of Vancouver Island was called by the native name of the place, Camosun. It was now deemed advisable, not to say necessary, to eradicate all traces of nature and the natural man; it was thought in better taste, with the levelling of forests and the tearing up of rocks, to blast from memory the sylvan race that once were masters there. It happened there lived somewhere a man whose name was Albert, whom it were well for the adventurers of England to conciliate; therefore, in the year of Grace 1845, orders came from the London magnates to damn the name Camosun and call the place Fort Albert. But even then they were not satisfied; for behold, upon this planet there was one mightier than Albert, even his wife, the Queen; and so before the year had expired Camosun was called Victoria, each new baptism being celebrated by the usual salutes and ceremonies.

Such is the fine art of constructing much elaborate rhetoric on a brief documentary basis. But Bancroft seems

\* Vide Minute 63 of a Temporary Council held at Red River Settlement, Northern Department of Rupert's Land, which commenced on 16th June, 1843.

to have had some doubts upon the point, for in a foot-note he attempts to reconcile his statements with certain contemporary documents that are directly at variance with them.

The story has been repeated by many careful historians and has come to be generally accepted, but diligent students find it difficult to credit because there is ample proof that the name Fort Victoria was ordered to be used officially from the first.

Roderick Finlayson's reminiscence was written from memory, at the instance of Bancroft, thirty-two years after the events to which it relates. He was, of course, intimately concerned with the very genesis of Fort Victoria and his statements are by no means to be lightly regarded. But the absence of corroboration is puzzling. The orders issued by the Council of Rupert's Land were emphatic and incontestable. Sir George Simpson, in a communication sent on 21st June, 1844, from Red River Settlement to the Governing Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, speaks of the new post as "Fort Victoria." On the other hand, old bills of lading and other shipping documents are in existence, headed "*Port Camosun*," as late as 1847. It will be recalled that in his first reports on the subject Douglas described the place he had selected as being on the "Port or Canal of Camosack" or Camosun; and it is probable that for several years the harbour and Indian village, as distinct from the fort and white settlement, were known to mariners and others by their native name of Camosun.\*

Through the kindness of Governor Charles V. Sale, of the Hudson's Bay Company, careful search has been made in the Company's London archives for further light on this question, and as a result it can now be definitely stated that it was always the intention at headquarters for the new post to be named Fort Victoria. Instructions to this effect were forwarded to Chief Factor John McLoughlin† at Fort Vancouver by Sir George Simpson in a letter sent from Red River Settlement on 21st June, 1843, but before these

H. H. Bancroft:  
"History of  
British  
Columbia,"  
p. 104.

Letter,  
C. V. Sale to  
A. M. Russell,  
Provincial  
Library of  
B.C., 7th April,  
1927.

\* According to Mr. James R. Anderson "*Camosun*" was not the real native name. He affirms that it was "*Quah-lan-ee-eh*," the Indian name of the wild-cherry trees that flourished abundantly in the vicinity, furnishing fibre for binding axe-heads and so forth.

† In a letter to Sir George Simpson, written from Fort Vancouver on 20th March, 1844, McLoughlin reported that the new establishment at the south end of Vancouver Island had been named Fort Victoria in accordance with the instructions received.

orders could be transmitted to the officer in charge at the new post there elapsed, of necessity, an interim of about six months during which the inhabitants bestowed upon their new home two unauthorized names dictated by their fancy. Contemporary documents in the possession of the Company show that until August, 1843, the provisional name so used was "Fort Camosun," and from August to the following December the post was locally called "Fort Albert"; but after December, 1843, by which date Sir George Simpson's instructions had time to be conveyed to Chief Trader Charles Ross at the new establishment, the place is consistently referred to in contemporary documents as "Fort Victoria." It was never known *officially* by any other name so far as the controlling officers of the Hudson's Bay Company were concerned, and they were its supreme masters until 1849. There was no authorized change of names, and the London directors of the Company were innocent of the charge of sycophancy laid against them by Bancroft in this connection.

Apparently the first accommodation for handling letters in Fort Victoria was provided in the office of the accountant in the main store building inside the fort enclosure, approximately on the site now occupied by the south-west corner of Bastion and Langley Streets. The "Post Office" consisted of a corner of the office with a counter where the inhabitants obtained their letters and papers. The correspondence for the Company's interior and northern outposts was also handled there and dispatched to destination by first opportunity after 1849, when Fort Victoria became the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company's Western Department and James Douglas arrived from Fort Vancouver to take charge. From Fort Victoria the letters were taken along the coast by ship, and to the interior they were forwarded by semi-annual brigades via Fort Langley on the lower Fraser River. In 1848 the brigades for the northern interior definitely abandoned the old route to the Columbia River by way of Kamloops and Okanagan, and followed the more direct route of the Fraser Valley. As a result of this change Fort Yale was founded in 1848 and Fort Hope was built a short time later. For the next ten years the main route to the interior was from Fort Langley to Fort

Hope by the river, and thence by trail along the Coquihalla Valley to the Thompson River.

Until 1845 the Company carried all mail, even for strangers, free of charge; but after that year all persons not in the employ of the Company were required to pay postage on letters carried for them in the territory west of the Rocky Mountains. The charges thus levied on outsiders were at the rate of \$1 for a letter weighing half an ounce, and 25 cents for each additional half-ounce. Possibly these rates applied also to the letters brought regularly by ship once a year, commencing with the arrival of the Company's barque "Vancouver" in 1845 direct from England to Fort Victoria.

During the first two years of the new post's existence communication with the outside world was effected almost entirely by means of express canoes operated fortnightly between Fort Victoria and Fort Nisqually on Puget Sound, whither dispatches were brought overland from Fort Vancouver. The large canoes used for this purpose were manned by either Indians or French-Canadian employees of the Hudson's Bay Company under the charge of one of the officers from Fort Victoria. Mr. J. W. McKay or Captain W. H. McNeill usually discharged this duty.

Early in 1849 a great improvement in the communication with outside points was effected, for in February of that year, in consequence of the Californian gold-mining activity and the subsequent influx of people, the United States Government established a regular mail steamship service to San Francisco via Panama. This service was extended a few months later to Portland and Olympia, to serve the growing settlements along the Columbia River and on the shores of Puget Sound; and from Olympia express boats of the Hudson's Bay Company conveyed the mails to Vancouver Island. Occasional warships, H.B. Co. vessels, and whaling-ships still brought letters from England to Fort Victoria, but after 1849 the bulk of the mail travelled via Panama, San Francisco, and Portland to Steilacoom or Olympia on Puget Sound, and thence by boat to Fort Victoria.

In 1849 the placid life of Fort Victoria was disturbed by an invasion that was prophetic of the future. An unknown sailing-vessel landed a party of unkempt, wild-looking men

who came to the fort to purchase supplies, offering in payment little bits of yellow metal which they said were nuggets and flakes of gold. At first the wary chief trader suspected the invaders to be pirates and warned his garrison to be on guard against possible treachery, but the visitors proved to be peaceably disposed California miners whose leathern purses were filled with wealth that they had filched from the bosom of Mother Earth, and their sole object in visiting Fort Victoria was to obtain for a reasonable price the food and supplies which they refused to buy for the ruinous prices demanded in San Francisco. The lure of the Californian gold thus forcibly brought to their notice proved too much for the loyalty of some of the Company's employees at Fort Victoria, and a number deserted their posts for the gold-mines in the South, little dreaming that similar wealth lay much nearer home. For several years a real labour problem existed on Vancouver Island for this reason, but gradually the excitement died down and the life of the busy trading-post resumed its ordinary course.

But the patriarchal rule of the great monopoly was already doomed to radical curtailment. The settlement of the Oregon Boundary dispute in 1846 had been a severe blow to their hopes and aroused them to strenuous action. In an effort, too grasping, to secure for his Company exclusive rights to the whole of the British territory north of the 49th parallel and west of the Rocky Mountains, Sir John Pelly, the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, pressed the Imperial Government for a grant of that country, which he described as little better than a barren waste; but the proposal aroused such a storm of opposition that the Crown, on 13th January, 1849, granted the Company only the Island of Vancouver, to be vested in them for a period of ten years, subject to the right of repurchase and strictly for purposes of colonization. A Governor was to be appointed for the new Colony, and an Imperial Statute was passed on 28th July, 1849 (cap. XLVIII.), providing for the administration of justice in Vancouver Island and abolishing certain of the exclusive rights hitherto enjoyed by the Hudson's Bay Company on the island.

The decision of the Imperial authorities to establish colonial government on Vancouver Island was an epochal advance in the development of British institutions in the

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Western Hemisphere. Thenceforward the interests of Great Britain on the Pacific Coast of North America were upon a sound constitutional basis; and from the day on which the first Governor of Vancouver Island publicly read his commission at Fort Victoria dates the actual beginning of British Columbia as a political entity.

## CHAPTER II.

## POSTAL AFFAIRS IN THE COLONY OF VANCOUVER'S ISLAND, 1849-1858.

The Royal Proclamation which conveyed to the Hudson's Bay Company "Our Island of Vancouver and Its Dependencies" made that Company of Adventurers "true and absolute lords and proprietors" of the island, subject only to the final authority of the British Crown. The sole conditions of the grant were a nominal rent of seven shillings per annum and the stipulation that within five years the Company must settle upon the island a colony of British subjects. The Crown reserved the right to withdraw the grant at the expiration in 1859 of the Company's exclusive licence for trading with the the Indians, if not satisfied with the results obtained under the arrangement, notwithstanding that the Company might fulfil the letter of their contract by forming the required colony.

Upon the retirement of Dr. John McLoughlin from the charge of the Company's western affairs and the decision to remove their western headquarters from Fort Vancouver to Fort Victoria, Chief Factor James Douglas removed to the latter place and assumed control. The Hudson's Bay Company desired his appointment to the Governorship of the new Colony of Vancouver's Island,\* but the Imperial authorities did not accede to their wishes in this respect at first. Richard Blanshard, an English barrister who had held several positions under the Colonial Office, was appointed Governor and embarked for his distant domain with high hopes for the future. He landed at Victoria (the name of which, in common usage, lost its prefix of "Fort" after the creation of the Colony) and read his commission within the fort enclosure before the principal inhabitants on 11th March, 1850. The arrival of this quiet and unassuming English gentleman, and the simple ceremony with which he took on his office, were events of a significance that possibly

Vancouver  
Island  
Papers,  
1849, p. 15.

Ditto, p. 18.

\* For about the first ten years of its existence the Colony is named "Vancouver's Island" in official documents; but after about 1860 it is usually called "Vancouver Island" and the older form is gradually abandoned. No definite authority seems to have been given for the change.

escaped some of the beholders, but the officials of the Hudson's Bay Company were keenly aware of their import.

It is not necessary for our purposes to probe the unhappy experiences of Governor Blanshard in his new office. The interests of fur-traders and settlers are of necessity opposed to each other, and it was perhaps inevitable that the former should prevail so long as the Company retained the proprietorship of the island.

The founding of the Colony brought about the advent of a few settlers, but the Governor quickly perceived that his hopes of a flourishing Colony were doomed to disappointment. Deeply humiliated and bitterly disillusioned with the conditions as he found them, Blanshard resigned the Governorship in November, 1850. His letter of resignation did not reach London until March of the following year, and Earl Grey's letter of acceptance, written on April 3rd, 1851, was not received by Blanshard until August. A period of ten months was thus occupied in the transmission of these important documents; a fact which strikingly illustrates the extreme postal isolation of Vancouver Island at that time.

Blanshard left Victoria in September, 1851, and in November of that year the Home Government appointed James Douglas Governor of the Colony of Vancouver's Island. He thus became the representative of Her Majesty as well as of the Hudson's Bay Company, a dual capacity in which he frequently found it difficult to reconcile the sharply conflicting interests of the Crown and the Company.

The commission held by Governor Blanshard had provided for the appointment of a Legislative Council and the formation of a House of Assembly to make and administer the laws. Before his departure Blanshard appointed a Council of three to govern the island pending the installation of a new Governor, and Governor Douglas continued after his appointment with the aid of a Council, but there was as yet no real need for parliamentary representation and so slow was the growth of the Colony that no House of Assembly was formed until 1856.

The Minutes of the first Legislative Council of Vancouver's Island cover a wide variety of laws dealing with the sale of liquor, the collection of Customs revenue, the establishment of schools, the building of roads, the labour question, and many other matters, but there is no mention

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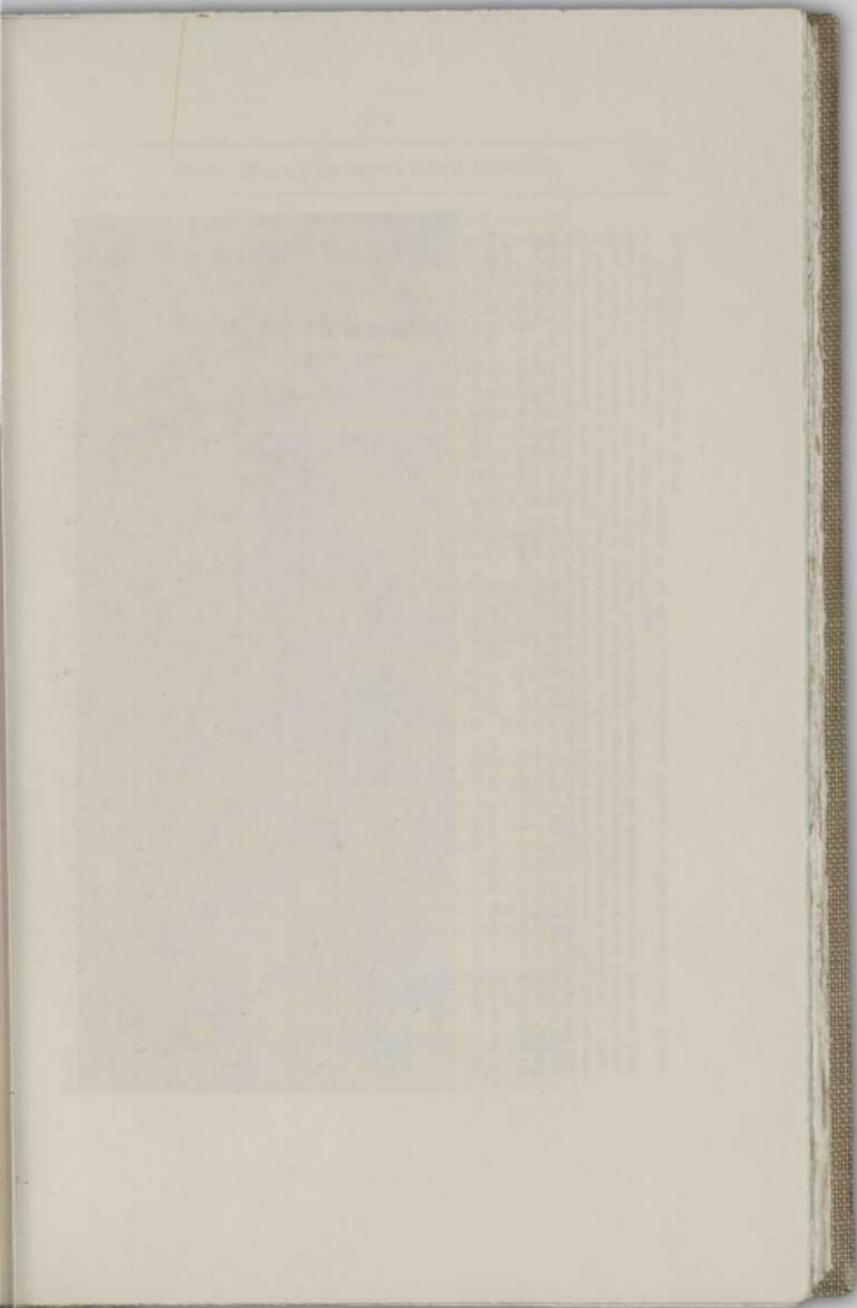
of postal problems. After the creation of the Colony the Hudson's Bay Company assumed responsibility\* for transmitting the mails to and from the neighbouring United States territory without cost to the colonists, and the old charge of \$1 per letter for "strangers," instituted in 1845, did not apply to legitimate settlers in the Colony. Evidently the legislators in this early period considered that the service provided by the Company was sufficient for the requirements of both the colonists and the Company's employees.

In 1852 Roderick Finlayson was appointed a member of the Legislative Council and acted as the first Treasurer of the Colony of Vancouver's Island. As a responsible official of both the Colonial Government and the Hudson's Bay Company he was regarded by Governor Douglas as the most suitable person to supervise the postal arrangements, and he was accordingly entrusted with the custody and distribution of the mails, with the assistance of Mr. J. W. McKay.

Documents relating to the Colonial postal affairs in this period are very few. Only free access to the Hudson's Bay Company's archives in London would enable complete references to be given for the statements hitherto made in this regard, but they are based on contemporary material for the most part and are believed to be accurate. Two of Governor Douglas's dispatches which throw light on the conditions after 1854 may be quoted here. Under date of 25th July, 1855, he wrote to the Colonial Office in London in reply to a circular letter from Earl Grey, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, "intended to ascertain to what extent and with what final results the introduction of Penny Postage in Great Britain in 1840 had been followed by a reduction of inland postage and other improvements in those British Colonies which are under the control of their Local Governments."

"I have the honour," wrote the Governor, "to inform your Lordship . . . that no general postal arrangements have ever existed in this Colony. The inhabitants being few and living near to each other, letters are conveyed within the Colony by messengers employed for the occasion, and letters from Europe and foreign countries are conveyed by the United States Mail Steam Line, by the way of Panama and California, to Oregon, from whence they are brought in Hudson's Bay express boats to this place."

\* In accordance with the terms of their grant, which provided that the Company should defray the cost of civil administration in matters of this kind.





Cover of an old letter showing the manner in which the inhabitants of Vancouver Island had their letters directed to the nearest Post Office in the United States, prior to the gold rush in 1858, when the San Francisco steamer began to call at Victoria.

This letter is addressed to Kenneth MacKenzie, one of the early settlers of Vancouver Island. It was posted in London on 18th September, 1857. The postage from London to New York was paid in advance, as indicated by the red London "Paid" post-mark. From London to New York it was conveyed by British Mail Steam Packet, and from New York to Colon by United States mail steamer. From Colon to Panama it was carried by the Panama Railway Company under arrangement with the United States Government. From Panama to San Francisco it was taken by United States mail steamer. From San Francisco to Portland it was conveyed by another United States mail steamer, and from Portland to Shelkoteam it was carried by stage. From Shelkoteam to Victoria it was conveyed by Hudson's Bay Company's express boat manned by Indians or French-Canadian employees of the Company. The payment of the United States postage (presumably the charge for conveyance from New York to Shelkoteam) is indicated by the small black "Paid" stamp.

The reverse of this cover bears a notation to the effect that the addressee received it on 15th December, 1857. It was therefore about three months in transit.

Commencing about 1854, the United States mail steamers from San Francisco left the mails for Victoria at Portland, for transmission by stage to Steilacoom, whence they were brought to Vancouver Island as stated by the Governor. Apparently by that time the use of the old express canoes had been long discontinued and more substantial boats were in use.

In a dispatch to the Colonial Office dated 31st January, 1856, Governor Douglas drew attention to the "prodigious rate of charge" of the United States Post Office Department on official packets of unusual bulk transmitted by the existing mail route via Panama and Puget Sound, and suggested measures for the future avoidance of such heavy charges.

"I will take the liberty," he wrote, "of remarking for the information of Her Majesty's Government that the enclosures . . . made up a parcel of considerable weight, and the postal charge at the United States Post Office in Puget Sound came to the sum of \$68.88, equal to £14-7-0 Sterling.

"I would in consequence of that prodigious rate of charge take the liberty of suggesting that the despatches of H.M. Government and all printed enclosures not exceeding the weight of sixteen ounces should in all cases, as at present, be forwarded to this Colony by the Panama Mail Route; and that books and printed forms, when exceeding the weight of sixteen ounces, except in cases of great urgency, should be sent to the Hudson's Bay House, to be forwarded by the Hudson's Bay Company's ships to this place; or the parcels might equally well be forwarded by any of Her Majesty's Ships proceeding to the Pacific."\*

The vessels of Her Majesty's Navy played a considerable but apparently little recorded part in the transmission of letters and papers to Vancouver Island in those early days. Sometimes the matter sent in this way was a long time on its journey, but it was always safely delivered and no postage was charged on correspondence so conveyed. The arrival of a man-of-war was always an occasion of rejoicing, for in addition to the ever-popular officers and tars the naval vessels brought news of home and often letters from loved ones far away.

Postal affairs in the Colony of Vancouver's Island appear to have proceeded fairly smoothly until 1856, when the first

\* Representations in this connection were made by the Colonial Office to the Hudson's Bay Company, and the Secretary of the Company signified their willingness to transmit such matter by their vessels; but he pointed out the infrequency of the service, stating that he thought it right to mention that it was doubtful whether the Company would dispatch a vessel to Victoria before the middle of the following year.

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of B.C.,  
Vol. 3, p. 5.

House of Assembly was formed and the colonists seized the opportunity to bring their various grievances, including postal problems, to the attention of the Governor. In February of that year the Imperial Government required Governor Douglas to convene an assembly of freeholders from the inhabitants of the Colony in accordance with British methods of representative government. Douglas obeyed with some misgiving, as such a step seemed hardly justified in view of the very limited progress made by the Colony since its inception. Whether such limitation was or was not due to the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company need not be discussed here. The arrival of a few dozen settlers' families had scarcely ruffled the serene calm of the trading-post, which nestled among the bowers of wild roses and trailing honeysuckle much as it did when first established; and only a clearing here and there in the outlying woods betokened the presence of the settler, as distinct from the fur-trader and adventurer.

*Ditto*, p. 28.

The colonists were not entirely satisfied with the postal facilities provided for them, but they were still very much at the mercy of the Hudson's Bay Company in this as in other matters, and indeed were greatly indebted to them for postal accommodation. By what other means could they obtain their letters from the outside world with any degree of regularity and certainty? The financial resources of the little colony were almost *nil*, for sources of revenue were practically non-existent; but complaint had been made, and the representatives of the people, in true British constitutional fashion, prepared to do battle in the public interest. On December 13th, 1856, Mr. J. D. Pemberton, a member of the House, introduced a motion "that a Special Committee be appointed to inquire into our postal arrangements, from what funds supported, and whether capable of improvement." Is there a touch of satire in that last clause? The committee appointed consisted of Messrs. J. D. Pemberton, T. J. Skinner, and J. Yates. They handed in their report promptly, but the need for reform cannot have been very urgent, for in the leisurely manner of those days the report was not dealt with by the House until the following April. It is here reproduced in full:—

December 22nd, 1856.

To the Speaker and other Members  
of the House of Assembly  
of Vancouver's Island.

We the undersigned appointed as a Special Committee to inquire into the existing state of Postal arrangements here, and make any suggestion for improving the same that might occur to us, have unanimously adopted the following Report:—

That the General Post Office as at present arranged is conducted within a Public Office and letters exposed under circumstances which your Committee do not consider safe. Your Committee are of opinion that the Post Office ought to be removed to an office more private and more secure.

(Sgd) THOS. JAS. SKINNER,  
Chairman of the Committee.  
JAMES YATES,  
JOSEPH D. PEMBERTON.

The report was forwarded to the Governor for his consideration on 21st April, 1857, and he replied promptly, emphasizing his appreciation of the importance of proper postal facilities, and adding:—

I am of the opinion that no time should be lost in providing means for initiating a postal system securing at once the two-fold object of safety and despatch in the transmission of letters.

It will be observed that while the committee reported on only a single aspect of the inquiry they were appointed to make, Douglas, with the direct forcefulness of his nature, struck at the very heart of the problem in a single phrase, and adroitly took the ground from under the honourable members' feet, for he must have been aware that the condition of the Colony's exchequer was such that the financing of proper postal facilities from that source was well-nigh impossible.

The Governor estimated the total annual amount which should be set aside for postal purposes at £500, being £100 for the salary of a Postmaster, £100 for the maintenance of a Post Office, and £300 for transmitting the mails. At the next session of the House Joseph W. McKay, a member of the Assembly and also, be it noted, an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, moved that funds be provided out of the Trust Fund for the postal arrangements. After a good deal of discussion this was declared to be impracticable, and on motion of Dr. J. S. Helmcken the following address was sent to the Governor:—

Archives  
of B.C.,  
Vol. 4, p. 22.

The House of Assembly respectfully acknowledges the receipt of your extremely important communication suggesting that means should be provided for initiating a postal system. . . .

The House, in replying, does so with the best feeling and the greatest respect towards Your Excellency, and wishes to observe that there are not at present any funds at its disposal to meet the suggestion relating to the construction of a postal system, and considers the Colony unable to bear so large an annual expenditure as the one contemplated, (£500), the number of letters passing through the Post Office being too small to pay one-tenth of the estimate, even supposing a heavy tax were placed on each.

The House therefore cannot adopt Your Excellency's suggestion, but at the same time consider and acknowledge that the Colony is under great obligation to the Honourable the Hudson's Bay Company for the kind and liberal manner in which they have carried, gratuitously, the letters from the American shore to this Island.

Gratitude has been described as "a lively sense of favours to come," and the definition may be held to apply in this case. The first effort of the Colony to provide an official postal service was thus balked by want of revenue wherewith to finance the undertaking; but while he was unable to act in the matter as Governor, Douglas gave the inhabitants the benefit of his wide powers as a high officer of the Hudson's Bay Company; he removed the "General Post Office" from the corner of the accountant's office, where it had been cramped for room and conducted merely as a corollary of the manifold activities of the great Company, and installed it in a room of the small cottage inside the front gate of the fort enclosure occupied by Captain James Sangster, who had formerly commanded the Company's schooner "Cadboro." Sangster had been appointed Collector of Customs for Vancouver's Island upon the initiation of a tariff in October, 1852, and also discharged the duties of Harbour Master and pilot. He was now constituted Postmaster and made responsible for handling the mails, but it does not appear that he received any further salary for his additional duties.

The total population of Vancouver Island at this time has been variously estimated at from six to eight hundred white persons. Alfred Waddington, an accurate observer, describes the conditions on his arrival in April, 1858, in his valuable little book, "The Fraser Mines Vindicated, or the History of Four Months" (Victoria, V.I., 1859). He says (p. 2):—

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of B.C.,  
Vol. 2, p. 23.

MS.,  
James Deane's  
"Settlement  
of Vancouver  
Island," 1878.

Archives  
of B.C.,  
Vol. 2, p. 17.

On landing we found a quiet little village of about eight hundred inhabitants; no noise, no bustle, no gamblers, no speculators or interested parties to preach up this or underrate that. . . . A few quiet, gentlemanly behaved inhabitants, chiefly Scotchmen, secluded as it were from the whole world and reminding one forcibly of the line of Virgil "*Et pene toto divisos ex orbe Britannos.*"

So the little Colony of Vancouver's Island existed until the dramatic close of its first period early in 1858.

Suddenly the peaceful settlement around Fort Victoria was rudely startled from its quietude. The discovery of gold in the gravel-beds of the Fraser River caused a terrific sensation amongst the heterogeneous crowds thronging the streets of San Francisco at the beginning of 1858.\* The Californian gold-rush had subsided and the "Forty-niners" were ready for new fields to conquer. An unprecedented exodus commenced; and so insane was the desire to get to the new El Dorado that valuable corner lots in San Francisco were sold for a mere song in order that their owners might realize the capital necessary to take them to the Fraser River goldfields. The first contingent arrived in Victoria on 25th April. Every crazy vessel that could be pressed into commission was packed with human freight and dispatched up the coast. Battered, shabby old hulks long discarded as unseaworthy were patched up into a semblance of shipshape appearance; their rusty engines were made to work somehow and propel the cranky craft; and the passengers they carried, strangely enough without accident, brought news of the eager thousands left behind, wild with desire to follow them.

B.C. Papers,  
I., p. 18.

Scores, pressing on from Victoria and Puget Sound points to the mouth of the Fraser on boats, canoes, and even rafts, met their deaths in the swirling tide-rips of the Gulf of Georgia; others came to grief in the rapids of the Fraser. Comparatively few reached the goal. Once more the frenzied search for gold brought death and destruction in its wake; but out of the chaos emerged British Columbia.

B.C. Papers,  
II., p. 6.

\* As pointed out by the Hon. Mr. Justice Archer Martin in the valuable Preface to his "Mining Cases and Mining Statutes of British Columbia" (Toronto: The Carswell Co., Ltd., 1903) (page v.), "Gold, so far as officially known, was first discovered within what is now British Columbia, by the Indians in Queen Charlotte's Island, in 1850, and the fact was reported to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by Governor Blanshard (of Vancouver Island) in his despatch of August 18th of that year." The discovery of gold on the mainland was reported by Governor Douglas to the Secretary for the Colonies in his despatch of 16th April, 1856, but it did not attract the marked attention of the outside world until early in 1858.

As in California, the miners themselves first set to work to establish law and order at the goldfields, and hewed out a rough and ready system of administration; but Governor Douglas, as the representative of Her Majesty on Vancouver Island and of the Hudson's Bay Company on the mainland, quickly assumed authority over the invaders, although he had no real warrant to do so. At first he rigidly excluded from the waters of the Fraser River all vessels of United States registry, but eventually he allowed American craft to proceed up the river on payment of a substantial royalty. Whether Douglas's motives were concerned primarily with the interests of the Crown or of the Hudson's Bay Company may be open to argument; there is no doubt that his firm policy secured for the British Empire the territory thus invaded by a horde of strangers.

After some keen rivalry on the part of Puget Sound points Victoria became the chief trading centre for the miners, and the quiet Hudson's Bay post and farming settlement grew at a bound from a mere village to a busy town housing several thousands. It is said that over thirty thousand men left San Francisco for the mines in the spring of 1858, and from other parts of the adjacent country thousands flocked to the land of promise. Tents and rough frame shanties sprang up all along the line of the Inner Harbour from Point Ellice to Ogden Point and extended as far afield as Quadra Street. The pastoral prelude of Hudson's Bay days had passed for ever, to be followed for a time by a strident *agitato* movement. The problem facing the Governor and his advisers was acute, and must have caused them much anxiety, for some of the new arrivals were of a very undesirable character—the Californian "bad man" of Forty-nine. There is in existence\* a well-thumbed copy of the "Annals of San Francisco" (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1855) which belonged to Governor Douglas at that time. It is possible that much of his policy was based on what he learned from that curious volume. Fortunately the wild ones were among the first to leave when the initial excitement subsided and the great majority of the fortune-hunters left as hurriedly as they came. Patience was a virtue conspicuous by its absence from most of the

\* In the possession of H. S. Henderson, Esq., Victoria.

invaders, and the heavy freshets of that summer kept the wealth of the lower Fraser for those who waited resignedly for the river to fall. It is not within our province to dwell upon the picturesque phases of the period, but so much is necessary for the background of our picture.

Governor Douglas was in urgent need of help in the formidable task of government to which he had set his hand, and he immediately cast about him for men in whose ability and judgment he had confidence. It was natural and indeed inevitable that in the emergency he should select tried and proven servants of the great Company whose loyal representative he was. Alexander Caulfield Anderson, a former Hudson's Bay Company official who had served with distinction in the northern interior and had retired in 1852 with the rank of Chief Trader, came to Victoria to inquire into the gold discoveries and observe the strange spectacle of the mad fortune-seekers chasing the golden butterfly. Anderson was a man in whom the Governor had a kindred spirit, and Douglas seized the opportunity to secure his aid and counsel in an official capacity at this crucial moment. The time had gone by when the duties of the Colonial Government positions could be adequately discharged by active officials of the Hudson's Bay Company: the whole time and attention of the incumbents were now demanded by the public service. Captain Sangster was relieved of his official duties, and after some valuable road-making on the mainland, for which his extensive knowledge of the interior peculiarly fitted him, Anderson accepted office in the enlarged Colonial Administration which the influx of people had made necessary. On 28th June, 1858, he was appointed Collector of Customs for Vancouver's Island, with the superintendence of the postal arrangements, at an annual salary of £800 per annum for the combined duties. In addition to supervising the Customs and Post Office, he acted as Treasurer of the Island Colony and, with the approval of the Governor, exercised such control as was possible over the tentative Customs, Post Office, and Treasury arrangements for the mainland until other provision could be made.

During the early stages of the inrush of 1858 a one-story wooden building was erected on the west side of Government Street, near the fort enclosure, about midway between Yates and Bastion Streets, to serve as Post Office and Customs

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House in lieu of the former location in Sangster's cottage, which was small and inconveniently situated. The new building contained three rooms; the large front room housed the Customs Department and the Post Office, and there were forty lock-boxes and one delivery-wicket.\* Peter Tuite, an American who came to Victoria with the early gold-seekers, was made Deputy Postmaster for Victoria and performed the actual work of the office, with the assistance, on occasion, of James R. Anderson, whose main duties were in the Customs. The salaries of these officials were £200 and £100 per annum respectively.

As we shall see, the miners brought their own postal facilities with them, and the provision of elaborate mail services was not necessary for several years. Efforts were made to cope with the postal requirements at Victoria and to establish regular communication with the lower Fraser River mines, but for a considerable period these efforts were rendered almost nugatory by the competition of the express agents, who followed the miners at every turn, and by the inherent difficulty of meeting the postal requirements of the gold-seekers who wandered over rivers, lakes, rough trails, and wild country onward, ever northward, in the ceaseless search for richer finds of gold.

\* For these particulars, and other valuable assistance with regard to this period, I am indebted to Mr. James R. Anderson, doyen of our pioneers, whose early association with the Colonial Post Office enables him to speak with authority.

CHAPTER III.

THE CREATION OF THE COLONY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA AND THE FIRST EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH OVERSEAS POSTAL CONNEXION WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

In February, 1857, the British Government appointed a Select Committee to inquire into the condition of the British possessions in British North America which were being administered for the Crown by the Hudson's Bay Company. As a result of their findings it was decided not to renew the Company's grant of Vancouver Island and to create a separate Crown Colony on the adjacent mainland, then known variously as New Caledonia, New Columbia, or New Georgia, which was attracting world-wide attention by its gold. Under the guidance of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton (afterwards Lord Lytton), Secretary of State for the Colonies, the new Colony came into existence under the most favourable conditions, very different from those attending the birth of the older Colony of Vancouver Island. The distinguished statesman and author was engaged, with full consciousness of the importance of his task, in framing an official epic of imperishable mould which will outlast the imaginative products of his pen.

James Douglas accepted appointment to the Governorship of the new Colony in addition to that of Vancouver Island, and relinquished his connexion with the Company of Adventurers whom he had served so faithfully and so long. The Colonial Office arranged to send out trained and specially qualified officials to fill the more important positions in the administration of the mainland Colony. At length, on 19th November, 1858, the establishment of the new outpost of Empire was proclaimed with due form and ceremony at New Fort Langley, the provisional Capital, under the name of "British Columbia," which had been the happy inspiration of the Queen.

On 3rd August, 1858, Sir E. B. Lytton represented to the British Treasury that in consequence of the discovery of gold in the Fraser River and the considerable influx of people to Vancouver Island and the neighbouring mainland it was

B.C. Papers,  
II., p. 1.

B.C. Papers,  
I., p. 66.

*B. C. Papers,*  
*II., p. 22.*

desirable to establish regular means of postal communication between Great Britain and those distant points. At first the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury proposed to establish an "all red" line by extending the existing steam-packet service between Southampton, Halifax, and Nassau, at an estimated cost of £25,000 per annum, to Colon, on the Isthmus of Panama, whence the mails were to be carried across the Isthmus by the Panama Railway Company. From Panama to Victoria it was originally proposed to establish a direct line of British steamers, but the cost, estimated at £100,000 a year, was prohibitive, and the British Government was obliged to contemplate asking the continued good offices of the United States Government for the conveyance of the Colonial mails between Panama and San Francisco by means of their service, then performed by the Pacific Mail Steam Packet Company. The regular mail service between San Francisco and Victoria was at that time being carried out gratuitously by the United States mail steamers operating between San Francisco and Olympia, which now made Victoria a port of call. Communication by steamer between Victoria and San Francisco was now so frequent that the old express-boat service to Puget Sound had been abandoned for the conveyance of the mails; but the San Francisco service was not very satisfactory because the skippers of the United States mail steamers, who received no remuneration for carrying the Colonial mail-bags, naturally regarded those bags as of secondary importance.

The following dispatch from Governor Douglas is of major importance in our study and perhaps no apology is necessary for quoting it in full:—

Executive No. 16.

BRITISH COLUMBIA,  
 VICTORIA, VANCOUVER'S ISLAND,  
 5th November, 1858.

*The Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton,*  
*Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State*  
*for the Colonial Department.*

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch of the 2nd September, and have to thank you for transmitting a copy of a correspondence between the Treasury and the Colonial Office on the subject of the postal arrangements between England and British Columbia, a subject deeply interesting to every person connected with this country.

I observe by that correspondence that it was proposed to extend the present mail service by way of Halifax and Nassau to Colon at a probable expense of £25,000 per annum apparently with a view of facilitating postal communication between Vancouver's Island and Canada;—already accomplished via New York.

From Panama to Victoria, Her Majesty's Government would be inclined to establish a line of British Postal Steamers but for the great expense, say £100,000. For the present, therefore, it is proposed to enter into arrangements with the Postmaster [General] of the United States for the carrying of the mails from Panama to San Francisco, and to invite tenders for their conveyance thence to this place; not being aware probably that the mails are already conveyed to Puget's Sound and this place by the United States Mail Steamers. It is also proposed to request the Postmaster [General] of the United States to reconsider the time of departure of the United States Mail Steamers from Panama so as to suit the Royal Mail Company's steamers.

By existing arrangements we receive our mails once a fortnight and have not much reason to complain. From England to Colon two routes are open, viz., via New York and by the Royal Mail Line. The former is the more certain of the two for letters, and the one generally adopted for business men, as it connects with the line between Panama and San Francisco. The last named could hardly alter their period of departure without confusion on the Atlantic side. If Her Majesty's Government carry out their views and establish a line from Nassau we should then have three lines arriving at Colon. As there will probably be a weekly line soon from Panama northwards there would appear to be little gain by interfering with present arrangements between San Francisco and New York, Canada and England.

A detention of sometimes a week occurs at San Francisco, not necessarily, but from want of arrangements on the part of the American authorities. The steamer conveying the mail northward frequently calls at the Columbia River, where she is liable to detention, and also frequently does not deliver our mails until her return voyage from Olympia at the head of Puget's Sound, occasioning a loss of two days and giving us no time to reply to letters received by the same mail.

The only detention and irregularity therefore which we would wish to see remedied lie between San Francisco and this place, and this could easily be effected by an arrangement with the Pacific Mail Company, or perhaps by the preferable mode of inviting tenders for the service.

It would be advisable to stipulate in any such arrangements that the steamers leave San Francisco for Victoria direct within twelve hours after departure of the Atlantic Mail at San Francisco, and leave Victoria on her return trip to San Francisco in time to overtake the next succeeding mail. The voyage either way ought to be performed in about four days,—thus allowing six days to reply to letters from Europe.

When the resources of the Colony are more fully developed, a line of British Postal Steamers from Panama to Victoria would be the most satisfactory and advantageous to British interests in this part of the world. This line might touch at San Francisco and *Ports in Mexico* from whence treasure is exported and between which there is a large passenger traffic.

I have, &c.,

(Sgd) JAMES DOUGLAS,  
*Governor.*

The Governor was rightly of the opinion that the elaborate and costly measures contemplated by the Imperial authorities were unnecessary in view of the facilities already existing under their own control and the services maintained by the United States Government. He hoped that by co-operation the two Governments could provide a service that should suffice for the needs of British Columbia and Vancouver Island during the early stages of their existence.

The Postmaster-General of Great Britain recommended utilizing the contract vessels of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company plying between Southampton and Colon rather than those operating to New York or Halifax, in order to save the expense of extending either of the latter services to the Isthmus of Panama. Unfortunately the steamers performing the first-named service reached Colon on dates which did not coincide with the departure of the United States mail steamers from Panama; consequently delays of one or two weeks usually occurred at the Isthmus.

Arrangements were made with the Panama Railway Company and the Government of New Granada for the conveyance of the mails across the Isthmus of Panama, and the United States Government consented to carry the mails gratuitously from Panama to San Francisco. Pending definite arrangements for the San Francisco-Victoria portion of the route, the bags were consigned to Mr. W. Lane Booker, the British Consul and Packet Agent at San Francisco, who was instructed to arrange for their dispatch to Victoria by the most advantageous means that offered; but the haphazard and often unremunerated conveyance of the mails between San Francisco and Victoria by any of the nondescript fleet of unsubsidized vessels that had been pressed into the service on that route was hardly likely to prove satisfactory to either the Colonial authorities or the owners of the ships. The facilities provided by the United

Letter,  
Secretary,  
Admiralty,  
to Secretary,  
Treasury,  
3rd Dec., 1858.

States mail steamers operating to Olympia were also far from satisfactory to the colonists, and the desirability of establishing a subsidized line of British mail steamers between San Francisco and Victoria became more and more apparent.

In February, 1859, Captain Edward Stamp, of Victoria, armed with credentials from the Government of British Columbia, made overtures to the Imperial Government for the establishment of a subsidized line of mail steamers to operate between San Francisco, Victoria, and Fort Langley, the provisional Capital of British Columbia. As a beginning he proposed to provide a first-class steamship of not less than 800 tons and 180 horse-power, at a cost to the Government of not less than £20,000 per annum for a term of seven years.

There was no doubt that the least satisfactory portion of the long sea journey from Great Britain was the comparatively short last stage of the route, between San Francisco and Victoria. Recognizing the desirability of providing suitable facilities for that part of the service, but unwilling to depart from the usual principle of competition in such matters, the British Government decided to call for tenders for the performance of a fortnightly service between San Francisco, Victoria, and Fort Langley, the vessels to leave San Francisco within twelve hours of the arrival at that port of the United States mail steamers and to allow a sufficient interval at Victoria and Fort Langley for the preparation of return mails.

Apparently no offer other than Captain Stamp's was received. He agreed to all the conditions laid down by the Government, but maintained that he could not provide a suitable steamer for less than £20,000 per annum, nor did he feel able to enter into an agreement for less than seven years. The Treasury was of the opinion that the Colonial Governments of British Columbia and Vancouver Island should pay half the stipulated sum, but had grave doubts of their ability to do so in view of the small revenue that would result from the very limited number of letters to be carried on the route. Upon further consideration it was felt that the payment of £20,000 per annum and a seven-year contract would be of very questionable expediency, and Sir

Letter,  
Edward Stamp  
to Earl of  
Carnarvon,  
22d Feb., 1859.

Letter,  
Stafford H.  
Northcote to  
H. Merivale,  
23d April,  
1859.

Minute,  
H. Blackwood  
to H. Meri-  
vale, 31st May,  
1859.

Letter,  
Secretary of  
Admiralty to  
Secretary of  
Treasury, 31st  
May, 1859.

E. B. Lytton was definitely opposed to entering into an agreement of more than twelve months' duration.

In May the North West Navigation and Railway Company of Canada, which had for its object the opening of a route via the Red River and Saskatchewan country to the Pacific Coast, strenuously opposed the contemplated subsidy for the San Francisco-Victoria route as inimical to the project of a transcontinental British line and contrary to the known wishes and feelings of the Canadian Government. They offered to "establish a postal service within British Columbia" which was to be connected with the Canadian Provinces overland. The terms of their offer are not known, but their representations were so seriously regarded by the Imperial authorities that immediate communication was had with the Canadian Government on the subject. It would appear, however, that the latter, while favouring the principle of the overland route, regarded the present scheme in that direction as visionary; and, in any case, after mature consideration, Her Majesty's Government held that the benefits to be derived by the two Pacific Coast Colonies would not be commensurate with the large amount of subsidy that required to be guaranteed before an all-British route could be established.

By the time that the inquiries had been completed the first mad rush to the Fraser River mines was over, and for the time being the population of Vancouver Island and British Columbia was decreasing rapidly. The Duke of Newcastle, who had succeeded Sir E. B. Lytton as Secretary for the Colonies, addressed the following dispatch to Governor Douglas:—

No. 13.

DOWNING STREET,  
August 29th, 1859.

SIR,—With reference to my predecessor's despatch, No. 56, of the 28th of April, informing you that Her Majesty's Government were about to call for tenders for the conveyance of the mails between San Francisco and British Columbia, I have to acquaint you that on subsequent consideration it has been decided that the advantages which would be derived by the Colonies of British Columbia and Vancouver's Island would not prove equivalent to the large amount of subsidy that would be demanded for the establishment of this service. The same cause has precluded Her Majesty's Government from entertaining a proposal that had been submitted to them for carrying these mails through Canada and the Hudson's Bay Company's territory. I have therefore to instruct

you to endeavour to secure the improvements in the existing service which you pointed out as desirable . . . [and] which I trust will suffice to meet the requirements of the two Colonies till their progress and increasing importance shall ensure more advantageous proposals.

I have to add that the Postmaster-General has obtained the permission of the United States Post Office to forward the correspondence for Vancouver's Island and British Columbia in closed mails, addressed to Her Majesty's Consul at San Francisco, who will forward them by the first eligible opportunity to their destination.

I have, &c.,  
NEWCASTLE.

Governor Douglas, C.B.,  
&c., &c., &c.

In acknowledging the receipt of this dispatch the Governor expressed regret at the decision of the Home authorities and pointed out that formerly the United States mail steamers had been "under the obligation of conveying the letters for Vancouver's Island and British Columbia, if properly directed" (that is, to the nearest United States Post Office) "to Puget Sound." Since the gold discoveries in British Columbia these steamers had found it to their advantage to make Victoria a regular port of call, and through the courtesy of the Post Office authorities in San Francisco a separate mail-bag for Victoria had been made up and forwarded. Under the arrangement sanctioned by the Secretary for the Colonies the transmission of the mails from San Francisco would become purely a matter of favour. The courtesy and accommodation of the United States Post Office authorities and the officers of the mail steamers were gratefully acknowledged. The dispatch continues:—

B.C. Papers,  
III., p. 60.

But under this system your Grace will at once perceive how entirely dependent we are upon United States resources, and subject to the courtesy of United States officials for the receipt of our mails, and that it is in their power at any moment entirely to stop the communication.

The dispatch concluded with a suggestion that it might be possible to make local arrangements for the service, and the Governor promised that if successful in doing so he would communicate the particulars for the consideration of the Secretary for the Colonies; but suitable terms could not be arranged at that time and the final stage in the long sea journey between Southampton and Victoria remained unprovided for. The Colonial Administrations, which felt unable

to subsidize regular vessels for the mail service from San Francisco, were dependent for the time being on the courtesy of the United States Post Office and the mail steamship owners for the accommodation afforded them in this connection.

Late in 1859 the United States Government, as a measure of reciprocity for similar service accorded them by the Canadian Government, agreed to transmit the British Columbia and Vancouver Island *letter* mails from Canada overland with their own mails by train from New York to St. Louis, then the terminus of the railway, and thence to San Francisco by means of the semi-weekly stage service performed by the American Express Company under contract with the United States Government. The long overland journey of 2,765 miles was performed in twenty-two days by four-horse coaches operating on a remarkably regular schedule. This was a vast improvement in point of speed over the Panama route, but for various reasons the overland service was not satisfactory. The wild Indian still ranged the plains and occasionally made off with the mail-bags of the palefaces. As late as 1862 the British Consul at San Francisco reported the loss of certain bags in this way. Thefts and damage to the mails en route were not uncommon; consequently it was perhaps fortunate that a large proportion of the letter mails, as well as all newspapers and packets sent by post, continued to travel to British Columbia and Vancouver Island by way of Panama until the completion of the railway to San Francisco.

Letter, W. Lane  
Booker to  
Henry Wootton,  
24th May,  
1862.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INITIATION OF COLONIAL POSTAL SERVICES IN VANCOUVER ISLAND AND BRITISH COLUMBIA UNDER ALEXANDER CAULFIELD ANDERSON, POSTMASTER-GENERAL, NOVEMBER, 1858, TO MAY, 1859, AND THE EARLY LETTER-CARRYING ACTIVITIES OF THE EXPRESS OPERATORS.

While lines of communication with the outside world were being established more or less satisfactorily it was imperative that the official postal arrangements within the two Colonies should be placed on a regular and revenue-producing basis. But the Governor and his advisers were confronted by a difficult situation: the throngs which filled the streets of Victoria and the miners who passed on to the goldfields were essentially transitory and fortune-seeking. There was no assurance that the inflated conditions which existed at the moment would prevail for any great length of time, and the Governor wisely felt that he must move with caution in establishing postal services.

Prior to the actual establishment of governmental authority the collection of postage on the mainland was the perquisite of the Hudson's Bay Company. We do not know what arrangement, if any, that Company had with the adventurous letter-carrying express operators who shadowed the miners in their early movements along the Fraser River; but it is evident that the old charge of \$1 per letter for "strangers" was applied to postal correspondence for the miners, whose advent was not welcomed by the fur-traders. Richard Hicks, the first Assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands appointed by Douglas, writing to the Governor from Fort Yale on 9th November, 1858, said:—

There certainly has been a want of regularity in the transmission of letters; sometimes I get two at one time and longer than the time required to forward them to California.

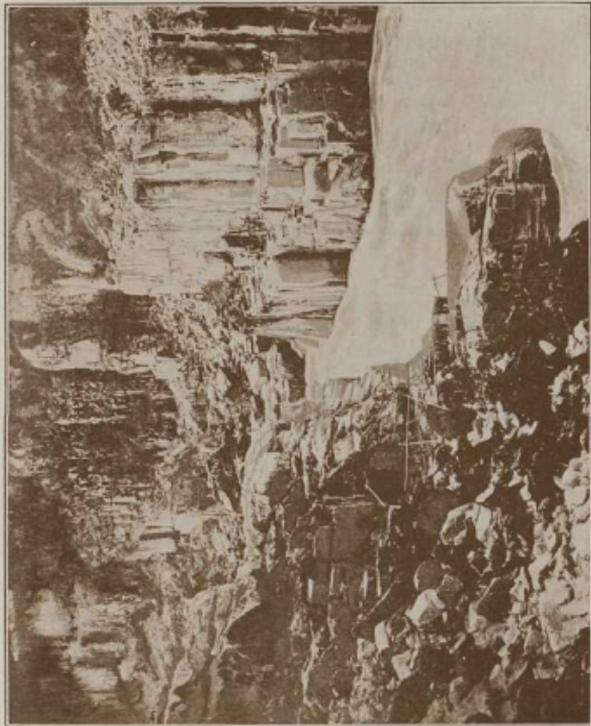
I would advise that a Post Office be established here and at Fort Hope. If Mr. Postmaster Anderson will forward me the necessary instructions I will take care it shall be satisfactorily carried out and all the miners would be delighted. A letter from here costs a Dollar to Victoria; this is enormous; one shilling Sterling would produce

B.C. Papers,  
I., p. 19.

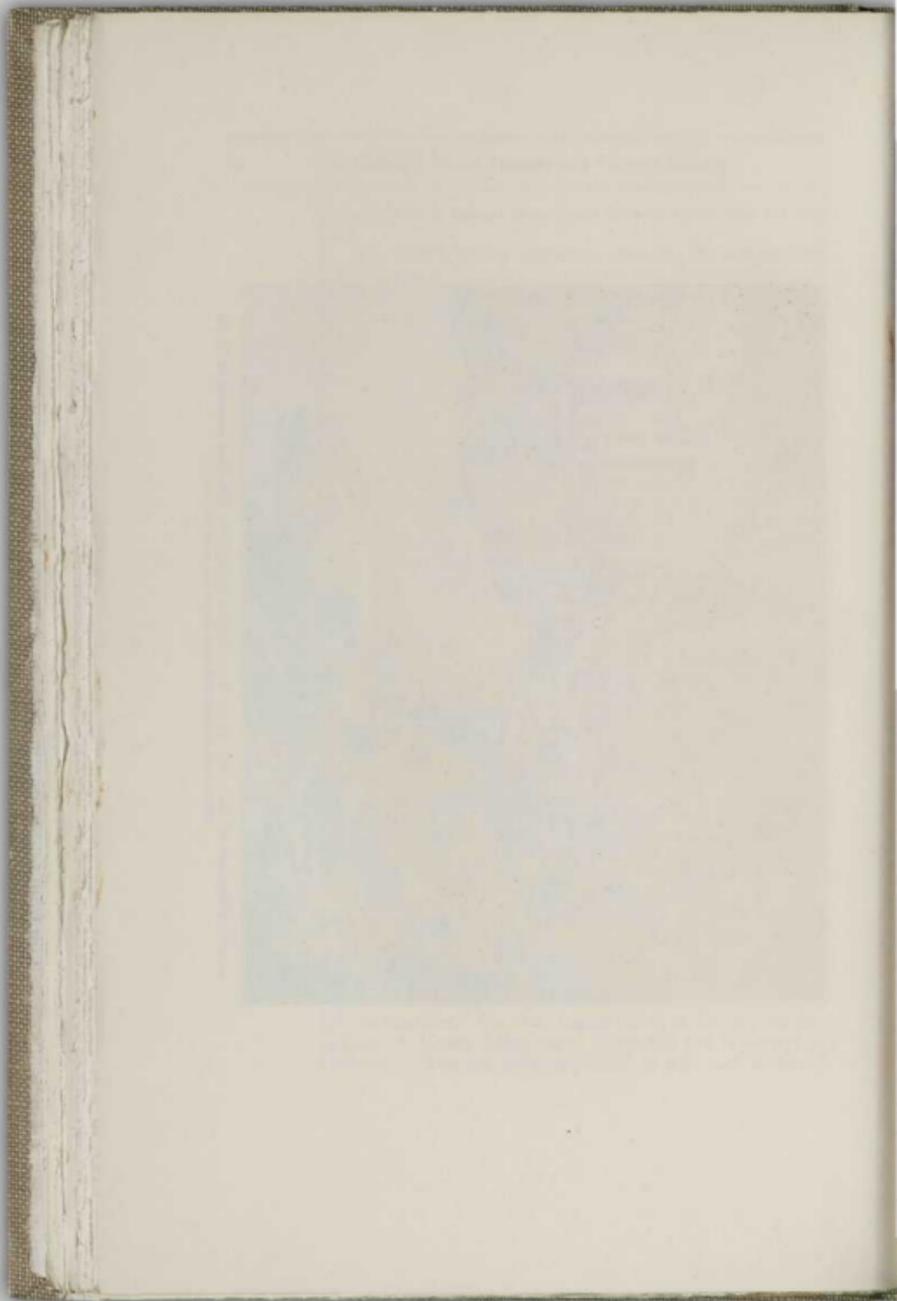
a large revenue because there would be more letters than are now sent.

The unsatisfactory conditions attending the transmission of letters on the mainland during the first phases of the gold-rush stirred up a good deal of complaint amongst the miners. The charge on letters sent by "post" was high, but that of the express agents was a great deal higher. The early express operators charged as much as \$2 each for letters carried by them to the outlying claims, and the fee was little enough for the arduous undertaking. So long as the operations of the miners were confined to the gravel-beds below the head of navigation at Fort Yale there was little difficulty, but when they pushed up through the canyon of the Fraser the obstacles to communication were enormous. The old Hudson's Bay brigade trail over the mountains was negotiable for only about four months of the year, and the only alternative route along the canyon was the extraordinary Indian trail over the dizzy precipices and crags confining that seething torrent. Many lives were lost in ill-judged attempts to navigate this portion of the river; and to reach the gravel-bars between Yale and Lytton there was no feasible choice but to follow the primitive Indian trail, which consisted, in places, of nothing more than logs swung from the side of the cliffs.

The difficulties of the Fraser Canyon route drove the miners to the only other available way of getting to the country beyond Lytton—the water route and portages via Harrison Lake and Cayoosh, the Indian village known later as Lillooet. But before this means of ingress could be made ready the miners, many of whom were poor enough, applied to Douglas for the establishment of a postal service as a relief from the high rates demanded by the express agents. The following exceedingly brief correspondence is all that can be traced as passing between the Colonies and the Home Government on this important subject. On 19th June, 1858, Governor Douglas, in a dispatch addressed to Right Hon. Henry Labouchere, Secretary for the Colonies, said: "The miners have applied to me for the organization of a postal system for the transmission of letters. Will you kindly give me instructions." On 14th August Sir E. B. Lytton, the successor of Henry Labouchere, instructed the Governor as follows: "You are fully authorized to take such measures



An early photograph of Hell's Gate, Fraser River Canyon, showing the difficulties encountered by the miners and express operators before the road was built.



as you can for the transmission of letters and levying postage." By the time these instructions were received the mainland had been erected into a Crown Colony and Douglas was entrusted with almost absolute executive power as its Governor.

Douglas lost no time in devising the best arrangements he could command. His early tours of the mining districts had convinced him of the urgent necessity for a postal system. In a dispatch to the Colonial Office dated 26th November, 1858, he reported that he had arranged "a postal system on a small scale which provides for the present wants of the country, and the receipts of postage pay the whole expense of the Department." The *Victoria Gazette* of 30th November, 1858, contained the following notice summarizing the postal arrangements devised by the Governor and his Postmaster-General:—

## NOTICE.

Hereafter, mails will be forwarded to and from the under-mentioned Stations in British Columbia by every favourable opportunity:—

Fort Langley.....	Postmaster, Wm. H. Bevis
Fort Hope.....	do. Robt. T. Smith
Fort Yale.....	do. Peter B. Whannell

Colonial postage to and from these points, Five Cents, to be prepaid.

Prepayment of postage is required in the following cases, the rates including the Colonial postage:—

To Oregon and Washington Territories &	
California .....	8 cents
To any other part of the United States .....	15 cents
To Australia .....	38 cents

In the following cases, (except as regards the Colonial postage) prepayment is optional:—

Great Britain & Ireland .....	34 cents
Denmark .....	40 cents
France .....	20 cents
German States .....	35 cents
Holland .....	36 cents
Poland .....	42 cents

All of the above rates\* include the Colonial postage of five cents, to which one cent will be added in all cases where stamped envelopes are supplied.

ALEX. C. ANDERSON,  
Postmaster General.

Post Office Department, Victoria, Nov. 24th, 1858.

\* These rates are simply the amounts charged by the United States Post Office Department at that time, plus the Colonial postal charge of 2½d. or 5 cents.

The three persons selected to act as Postmasters at Fort Langley, the provisional Capital, and Forts Hope and Yale were Revenue Officers of the Colonial Government. They were to be granted 10 per cent. of the total receipts of postage at their respective offices as compensation for their services in looking after the mails. Letters of instruction were sent to them, and one of these documents which has survived the vicissitudes of time is quoted hereunder:—

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, VICTORIA,  
VANCOUVER'S ISLAND,  
24th November, 1858.

SIR,—I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to communicate to you for your information that it is the desire of Her Majesty's Government to establish a cheap, safe and rapid conveyance for the transmission of letters to and from all parts of British Columbia and Victoria, and that the public officers in British Columbia should in addition to their other duties and until other arrangements can be made also discharge the duties of Postmaster at their respective stations, for which a salary to be regulated by the receipts will be allowed to you.

I am therefore directed to require and authorize you to act for the time being as Postmaster of your District, to receive all payments for postage of letters and to keep an accurate account of the same, which you will transmit at the close of each month to the Postmaster at Victoria, together with such information as may in your opinion be useful or productive of improvement in the postal arrangements of your district.

Your attention is directed to the accompanying letter of instructions from the Postmaster General.\*

I remain, &c.,

RICHARD GOLLEGE,  
*Secretary.*

*W. H. Bevis, Esq.,  
Revenue Officer at Langley.*

The "Post Office Department" thus authorized by the Governor was not legislated into existence, but was simply arranged, just a week after the birth of the mainland Colony, as a temporary expedient to provide for at least a part of the postal requirements of the two Colonies during this unsettled stage of their existence. The rudimentary scheme contemplated no Governmental mail service above Yale, the head of navigation on the Fraser River. Beyond that point the transmission of letters and papers for the miners was left to

\* The enclosure contained detailed instructions as to the proper method of accounting for the revenue, etc.

private enterprise on the part of the ubiquitous express agents, who were active on the trails and waterways leading to the more distant mines.

The first onset of the miners brought with it the excellent facilities of the express companies that had catered so admirably to their postal requirements in California and had virtually superseded the Government mail service there; and the peculiar postal situation which had developed in California was to a large extent duplicated in British Columbia and Vancouver Island.

On July 17th, 1858, the famous express company of Wells, Fargo & Company published their first advertisement in Victoria. They announced their readiness to transmit letters to and from California and the East by their "California Interior and New York Express" and stated that they were prepared to buy and ship gold-dust and transact a general banking business. Since 1852 this Company had enjoyed a virtual monopoly in the transmission of mail, gold, and express shipments throughout the Californian gold-mining country, and they maintained a regular overland service to New York via St. Louis. For a short period they had an active competitor in Freeman & Company's Express, but for many years their supremacy remained unquestioned. Their methods won the highest encomiums from the miners, who regarded them as absolutely trustworthy. Lieutenant R. C. Mayne, a British Naval Officer, in his "Four Years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island" (London: John Murray, 1864), says (p. 71): "I have never known a letter sent by them miscarry, . . . and so great is my faith in them that I would trust anything, even in that insecure country [California] in an envelope bearing the stamp of Wells, Fargo & Company's Express."

In California Messrs. Wells-Fargo and their associated companies handled nearly all the mails, but in order to comply with the United States postal laws they made use (it is said under special Act of Congress) of Government-stamped envelopes on which they impressed their own franks indicating prepayment of their fees. They charged the public about 25 cents per letter for transmission within California, whereas the postal rate was only 3 cents; but their service was so far superior to that provided by the Government that the miners readily paid the additional fee,

Victoria  
Gazette,  
17th July,  
1858.

while the Federal authorities obtained the statutory revenue just as if they had carried the mail in its entirety.

The very efficient facilities of this Company and its rival, Freeman's Express, were now made available between San Francisco and Victoria, and subsidiary and other companies operated remarkably regular and prompt express services to the mines on the mainland.

The postal facilities provided by the Governor did not extend sufficiently far afield to be hailed with enthusiasm by the miners. The rate of postage was low, but the service was hopelessly slow and unreliable. The following letter from Chartres Brew, Chief Inspector of Police for British Columbia, to "Lieut.-Governor Moody" at Victoria, from Fort Yale on 20th February, 1859, throws light on the conditions during the first winter of the gold-rush:—

There are many complaints here of the irregularity and uncertainty of the mails. Merchants would rather send their letters by Bellor's [Ballou's] Express at the cost of half a Dollar than put it in the post at a cost of 5 cents and remain in uncertainty when it would reach its destination. All persons would gladly pay 10 cents Colonial postage if the mails were despatched and delivered regularly, and if 10 cents were charged on all letters taken by the Express Company a revenue might be created which would enable the mails to be sent by special boats. At present they may remain at any stage on the route for days awaiting an opportunity of sending them on, and then they are entrusted to the first trustworthy person passing the way willing to be troubled with them. I think if a contract be not entered into that the mails might be carried by Indians more cheaply and expeditiously and as safely as by white men. If they are carried by contract the contractor ought to be bound to time, otherwise he will weigh down his boat with freight and move along at the rate of a dredging machine. The Chief of the Indians at Fort Yale, for a trial, offered to convey the mails to Fort Hope once a week for four weeks for twenty dollars for the four trips. I should like to have the authority to employ him.\*

The revenue which accrued under the initial postal scheme was so small that the Governor, who was unwilling to increase the low postal rate that he had fixed in the hope of popularizing the service, was obliged to consider whether the overwhelming preponderance of the public correspondence, which was being transmitted throughout the mining country and between Victoria and San Francisco by the express agents, should not be required to pay revenue into

\* Apparently the Governor was not favourable to this suggestion, for it does not appear to have been adopted.

the Colonial Treasury. At Langley, for a short time the provisional Capital of the mainland, the total receipts of postage for the first five months totalled only \$85, of which 10 per cent. had to be paid to the Postmaster.

Unquestionably the Colonial Government had the right to fix a postal tax upon any public correspondence handled by private enterprise. Under the "Colonial Postage Act" of 1849 (7 & 8 Vict., c. 66, s. 1) the Colonial Legislatures were fully empowered to enact laws or ordinances providing for postal arrangements, the establishment, maintenance, and regulation of posts or post communications, and fixing rates of postage within their own borders. British Crown Colonies also had vested in their respective Postmasters-General the sole privilege of conveying the public correspondence and levying postal charges. But Governor Douglas saw no possibility of enforcing the "exclusive privilege" of any Postmaster-General he might appoint until such time as proper highways had been provided and adequate means of transportation were available. Meanwhile, he felt, the facilities afforded by the express operators must serve in reaching points where the postal service could not well be extended; and in view of their usefulness in this respect he proposed to allow them to carry mail-matter, subject to a small postal tax, both within and between the Colonies and to the United States. Such a tax was a logical means of providing funds that should assist materially in the establishment of a Colonial postal system. It represented clear gain to the Government because the relative letters would be handled by private enterprise without cost to the Colonial Administration.

The simple and effectual arrangement obtaining in California, whereby the United States Government exacted a postal charge on mail-matter handled by the express companies, appealed to the judgment of Governor Douglas as both practical and revenue-producing. He determined to sanction a similar arrangement within the two Colonies under his administration. The actual date of sanction is not known, but the arrangement must have been in force before 5th April, 1859, for on that date Mr. Anderson addressed the following to the Governor:—

. . . It will be necessary for the protection of our postal interests that I should be empowered to exact from the Express

Letter,  
W. H. Bevin  
to Colonial  
Secretary,  
10th May,  
1859.

Offices payment of the Colonial postage of five cents per letter upon all letters entering the Colony through the Expresses. At present all letters leaving Victoria through the Expresses have to be stamped; but so far no impost has been placed upon letters entering the Colony except through the regular mail. A serious loss to the Post Office Department is thus necessarily sustained; but I have refrained from exacting this legitimate impost hitherto, first because no regular postal arrangement has been entered upon, and secondly because I felt in doubt how far I might be justified in insisting upon the payment on my own individual responsibility.

Evidently some of the letters carried by express were not prepaid as regards the Colonial postage, for the *Victoria Gazette* of 5th May, 1859, contained the following:—

NOTICE.

Whereas, by the Postal Laws of Great Britain, the conveyance otherwise than by post of letters not exempted from postage is forbidden under a penalty of Five Pounds for every letter so illegally conveyed;

And Whereas, for the convenience of the public, pending the more perfect organization of the Postal System in these Colonies, the conveyance of letters by private Expresses has been sanctioned and allowed under certain conditions: namely; that every letter so conveyed by such Expresses within the Colonies of Vancouver's Island and British Columbia, or between the said Colonies, or from the said Colonies to other parts, shall be prepaid for Colonial postage, either by stamped envelopes of the Colony, supplied from the Post Office, or by cash for an equal amount, namely, two-pence-halfpenny, or five cents:

Therefore, public notice is hereby given that for any infraction of the law as above declared the offender will be prosecuted with the utmost rigor of the law.

ALEXANDER C. ANDERSON,  
Postmaster General.

Post Office Department,  
Victoria, V.I., May 4, 1859.

No mention is made of any tax on letters arriving by express, and apparently the Governor felt that his Administration would not be justified in levying postage on incoming letters delivered at Victoria by the express agents. On letters conveyed by express from Victoria to the mainland and thence to the mining districts as well as to the United States, the postal tax was evidently imposed from the time of its inauguration, probably in November, 1858.

As no Colonial postage stamps had been issued at this time for Vancouver Island and British Columbia, the allusion to "stamped envelopes of the Colony" must have reference

to the Wells-Fargo and other express envelopes bearing impressions of the Colonial postal hand-stamp franks placed thereon by hand. Several of these franks were used; four different designs for Victoria, one for New Westminster, and one for Nanaimo are known, and to the philatelist they are of the highest interest when used in lieu of postage stamps.\* The impressions, which indicate that the franks may have been made of both wood and metal, were usually placed across the left end of the envelopes, which were stamped by hand in advance for the express companies and for sale to the public as "stamped envelopes," and in smaller numbers or singly, as presented for mailing by individuals. On each envelope thus franked the Colonial postage fee of 5 cents had invariably to be prepaid in cash. If the Post Office supplied the envelope an additional charge of 1 cent was made. On letters destined for the United States postage stamps of that country to the necessary amount were usually affixed, although if no United States stamps were available cash might be forwarded with the letters to San Francisco. Finally, on letters transmitted by express the express company's fee required to be prepaid. Thus a letter forwarded to California by Wells-Fargo's or Freeman's Express cost the sender about 33 cents, made up as follows:—

Colonial postage fee .....	5c.
U.S. postage to California .....	3c.
Express charge, about .....	25c.
	—
	33c.

The express rates to the mines and the postage to more distant foreign countries were much higher.

The first Colonial postal system in British Columbia and Vancouver Island was thus identical in principle with that concurrently obtaining in California; i.e., to provide a more or less satisfactory Government mail service, but to allow express operators to carry mail, exacting payment of a Colonial postal tax or fee upon such express matter that should assist in the establishment and maintenance of Colonial Post Offices and mail routes.

At this point it may be desirable to anticipate a little and give a brief account of the activities of the numerous express companies which operated between Victoria and San Fran-

\* See Appendix A for a description of these franks.

cisco and the gold-mines. William T. ("Billy") Ballou, an American of French extraction who had gained much experience in the express business during the Californian gold-rush period, established what seems to have been the first express service on the mainland in June, 1858, under the name of "Ballou's Pioneer Fraser River Express." He operated as far as Lytton and Kamloops, which points were then about the limits of the mining activity, and connected with the outside world at Victoria with Freeman's Express, the rival of Wells, Fargo & Company. The last-named firm was content to monopolize most of the express business between Victoria and San Francisco, and did not themselves attempt to secure any of the mainland business, but Kent & Smith worked in co-operation with them, maintaining a regular service to Lytton and Kamloops. Later Dietz & Nelson's British Columbia and Victoria Express, which grew to prominence, became a subsidiary of Wells, Fargo & Company and secured a large share of the mainland business. There were numerous smaller concerns, including Jeffray's Express, but for about three years Ballou held the supremacy on the mainland.

Francis J. Barnard,\* a native of Quebec who came to British Columbia in 1859, entered the express business in the autumn of 1860, and as a result of unremitting hard work and enterprise attained the lead in British Columbia. At first Barnard performed his service on foot and alone, travelling the entire distance of 760 miles from Yale to Cariboo and return under circumstances of almost incredible hardship and difficulty. Then he acquired horses and operated a "pony express." Gradually he increased his business and improved his facilities. He bought out Jeffray's Express and eventually effected a revolution in the service to the mines by his promptitude and reliability. Steamboat service to Douglas and Yale, the two interior points whence the long trails to the mines commenced, became more frequent as the gold discoveries farther north increased business confidence and brought fresh groups of miners, and competition between Ballou and Barnard became very keen. In May, 1862, tenders were submitted by W. T. Ballou, J. Robertson Stewart, and F. J. Barnard for the

\* Subsequently, as a member of the Legislative Council of British Columbia, Hon. F. J. Barnard.

conveyance of the mails to the interior, and Barnard's tender was accepted. Thereafter his supremacy was unquestioned, and Ballou retired from the field, a beaten man with broken health and depleted purse. For some years Barnard continued to carry the Colonial mails in addition to conveying letters and other matter by his private express.

Dietz and Nelson amalgamated with Barnard after 1862, the former providing a service between Victoria and Lillooet via Yale, and the latter serving the places beyond Lillooet. As the construction of the Lillooet-Alexandria Road progressed Barnard put on horse-drawn wagons and carried a few passengers. In July, 1862, when he secured the mail contract, Barnard adopted the use of four-horse stage-coaches, carrying as many as fourteen passengers, and the business became very lucrative during the height of the great Cariboo gold excitement. In 1866 he acquired control of the whole undertaking, operating as far as Soda Creek. In later years the business was operated by the British Columbia Express Company under Stephen Tingley.

For many years the express operators continued to carry letters and papers to the upper country, and it does not appear that their activities in this direction were ever seriously interfered with by the Colonial Governors, although the administrators of the Colonial Post Office held that the privilege granted them was stifling that Department. The promiscuous handling of the public correspondence without adequate guarantees of protection was of course undesirable in principle and the Colonial authorities undoubtedly had the right to put a stop to it at any time. However, the Governors wisely concluded that for the times and the people to be served the expresses fulfilled a useful purpose; and it is beyond dispute that they helped to pave the way for the operations of the Post Office. When the gold-fever died down and the permanent settlers declined to pay the high rates demanded by the express agents the business died a natural death so far as the carrying of letters was concerned, and the question largely solved itself. The full story of the express operators of British Columbia has not yet been written, and in itself presents an interesting field for research. The franks and labels used by the various companies to indicate payment of their charges are a fascinating bypath in philately.

## CHAPTER V.

THE COLONIAL POST OFFICES OF VANCOUVER ISLAND AND BRITISH COLUMBIA UNDER CAPTAIN W. DRISCOLL GOSSET, R.E., ACTING POSTMASTER-GENERAL, JUNE, 1859, TO JULY, 1860, AND THE 2½<sup>d</sup>. "BRITISH COLUMBIA AND VANCOUVERS ISLAND" POSTAGE STAMP OF 1860.

In January, 1859, Colonel R. C. Moody,\* of the Royal Engineers, reported upon the selection of a site for the Capital of the Colony of British Columbia. Colonel Moody had been sent out from England in command of a force of Royal Engineers to assist in laying the foundations of the mainland Colony, and he held a dormant commission as Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia. The Royal Engineers camped first at Derby, near New Fort Langley, where it was at first proposed to locate the Capital, but shortly afterwards they cleared a camp-site at Sapperton, and the commanding ground near by, whereon the business district of the present City of New Westminster stands, was finally selected as the most suitable spot. Colonel Moody suggested the name "Queenborough," but some of the good people of Victoria objected to this as too close a paraphrase of the name of their own Queen City, and as a compromise the name "Queensborough" was adopted. The point seems rather a fine one to-day, but feeling ran high, and Governor Douglas acted wisely in referring the question to the Home authorities with a suggestion that the Queen might be graciously pleased to decide it. Her Majesty, after due consideration, finely designated the infant capital "New Westminster," honouring it with the name of the Mother of Parliaments.

Apparently the first postal facilities in New Westminster were provided by the Royal Engineers. In April, 1859, Captain W. R. Spalding, of whom more presently, was appointed Magistrate for New Westminster District and entrusted with the supervision of the tentative Post Office

R.C. Papers,  
II., p. 26.

\* Subsequently Major-General R. C. Moody, R.E.

arrangements for the new Capital. He was instructed to apply to Colonel Moody for assistance in looking after the mail, which was chiefly military. In the following November Mr. Henry Holbrook, a merchant, was appointed Postmaster. Apparently Spalding had found the postal duties inconvenient, and as Holbrook offered to discharge them without salary he was made Postmaster. The Post Office was conducted in Henry Holbrook's general store after his appointment, and prior to that time in Spalding's official residence. Mr. Holbrook, who later became a member of the Legislative Council of British Columbia, continued with commendable public spirit to handle the mails gratuitously for several months during the early stages of settlement at New Westminster, and his services were much appreciated by all concerned.

At this stage of the two Colonies' existence the Post Office arrangements were under the general supervision of A. C. Anderson, whose authority was derived from the fact that he held the appointment of Collector of Customs for Vancouver Island and was acting as Treasurer and Postmaster-General of that Colony. He also acted for a short time as Treasurer of the Colony of British Columbia, and probably it was by virtue of that fact that he had assumed control over the embryo postal system on the mainland.

At Victoria Peter Tuite continued to act as Deputy Postmaster. There was no other regularly constituted Postmaster on Vancouver Island, but Rev. Cornelius Bryant, the public-school teacher, was handling the mails at Nanaimo, where the discovery of coal-measures had brought into existence a small but prosperous community. At Langley, Hope, and Yale the revenue officers of the Crown acted as Postmasters for the small remuneration of 10 per cent. of their postal receipts; at New Westminster Henry Holbrook discharged the duties of Postmaster without salary; and at various outlying points such as Douglas (the town at the head of Harrison Lake through which much of the early traffic passed to the mines), Lytton, Cayoosh (Lillooet), and Alexandria, magistrates, constables, and other trustworthy persons were taking care of the mails without remuneration for their services in this respect.

But the express companies continued to carry by far the greater proportion of the letters; the regular mails consisted

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. H. Spalding,  
23rd April,  
1859.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
Rev. C. Bryant,  
21st Dec.,  
1858.

chiefly of Government correspondence and letters to and from foreign countries. Comparatively few private letters between inhabitants of the Colonies were entrusted to the regular mails.

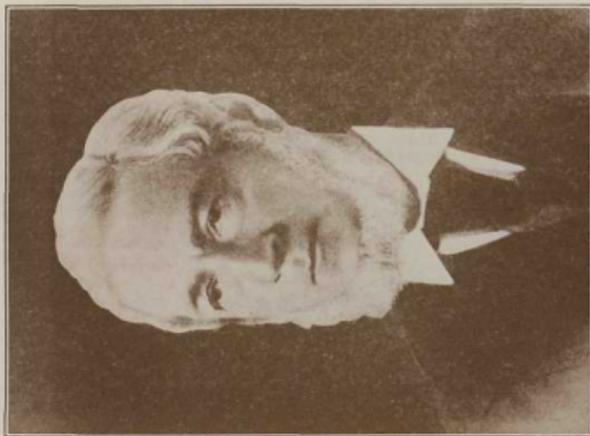
In May, 1859, Mr. Wymond O. Hamley\* arrived from England to take over the duties of Collector of Customs for the Colony of British Columbia, to which he had been appointed by the Secretary for the Colonies. For a few weeks, pending his departure for New Westminster, he remained in Victoria. On 3rd June Mr. Anderson retired from the numerous official duties he had faithfully discharged during a most trying period, and Mr. Hamley, at the request of the Governor, assumed temporary control of the Post Office in both Colonies pending other arrangements.

*Weekly British  
Colonist,  
Victoria, V.I.,  
1st Jan., 1859.*

On Christmas Day, 1858, there arrived in Victoria a vigorous personality that was to make an indelible impression upon the Colonial postal service, as well as upon certain other phases of governmental activity in British Columbia and Vancouver Island. Captain William Driscoll Gosset, † of the Royal Engineers (but not of Colonel Moody's detachment), a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and a public servant with a fine record of service in England and Ceylon, was sent out from England by Sir E. B. Lytton to fill the position of Treasurer of the Colony of British Columbia. For several months he was busily occupied in arranging the affairs of the Department he had been appointed to control. During the winter of 1858-59 mining operations almost ceased and there was time to consider ways and means. The Governor cast about him for a suitable officer to take charge of the postal affairs of both Colonies. Mr. Hamley was admirably suited for the responsibility, but his duties required his presence in New Westminster and the Governor felt that the Post Office, in common with several other departments of the mainland Colony, should be administered, at least for a time, from Victoria, where he himself resided. He selected Captain Gosset to succeed Mr. Anderson in the capacity of Postmaster-General, but refrained from making the appointment a permanent one,

\* Subsequently, as a member of the Legislative Council of British Columbia, Hon. Wymond O. Hamley.

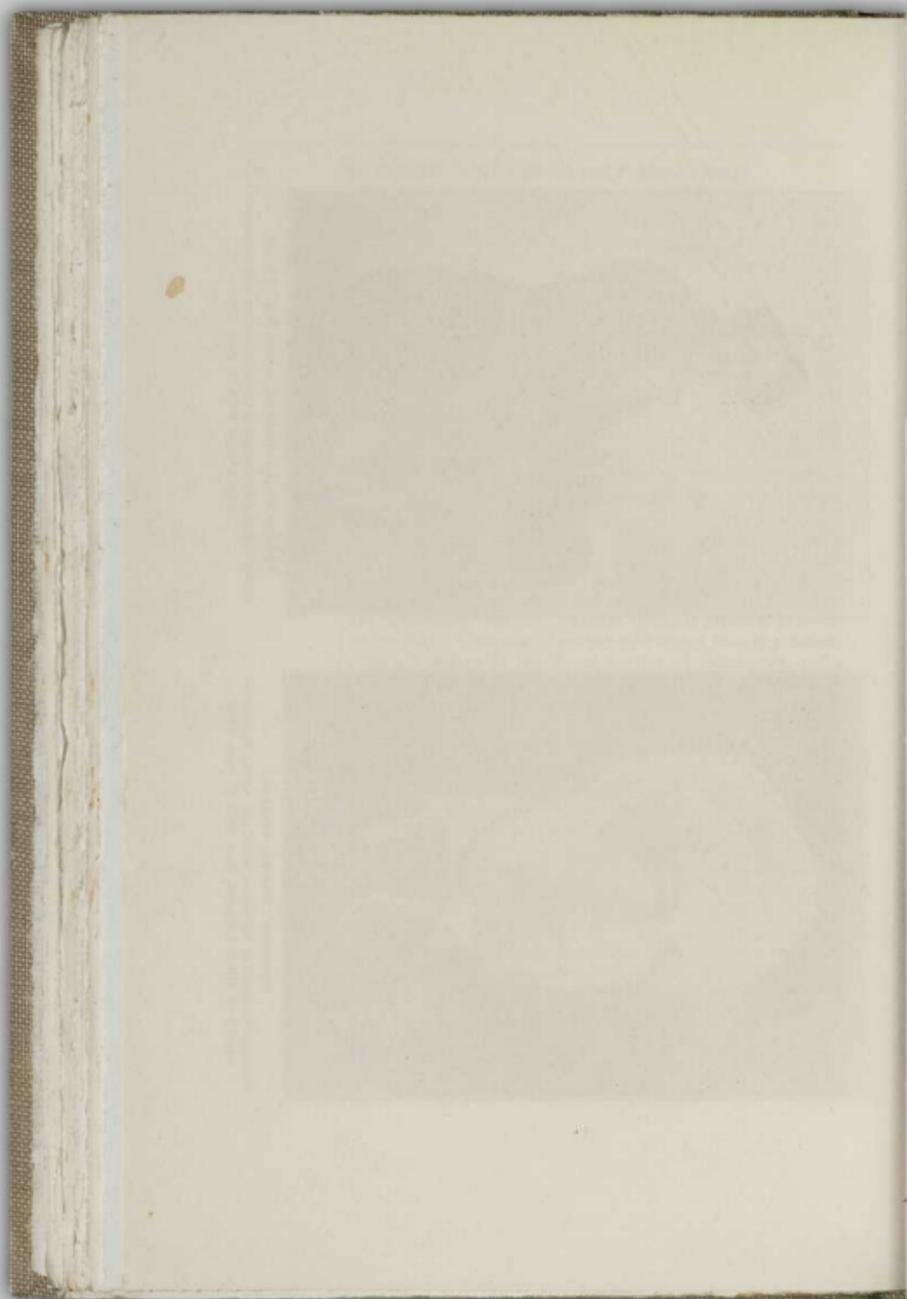
† Subsequently Major-General W. D. Gosset, R.E.



ALEXANDER CALETFIELD ANDERSON,  
Postmaster-General of Vancouver Island and Acting Postmaster-  
General of British Columbia, June, 1868, to June, 1869.



CAPTAIN WILLIAM DUISCOLL GOSSET, R.E., F.R.S.E.,  
Acting Postmaster-General of British Columbia and Vancouver  
Island, June, 1869, to July, 1869.



nor could he see his way to allow any additional salary for the extra duties involved. On 13th June, 1859, Gosset was instructed to assume temporary control of the Post Office in both British Columbia and Vancouver Island. On 25th August his responsibilities were still further augmented by the addition of the temporary charge of the Vancouver Island Treasury, also without salary. For a considerable period many of the official duties pertaining to the Colony of Vancouver Island were discharged gratuitously from Victoria by officers of the British Columbia Government who derived their salaries from the revenues of the latter Colony, and this fact gave rise to much bitter remonstrance from the inhabitants of the mainland, who felt that in many respects their public affairs were being administered largely to suit the convenience of the people of Vancouver Island.

Shortly after he assumed control of postal matters Gosset addressed the following communication to the Colonial Secretary for the consideration of the Governor:—

POST OFFICE, VICTORIA,  
VANCOUVER ISLAND,  
July 8th, 1859.

SIR,—Short as has been my experience in the temporary charge of the Post Office here, and slender as has been the supervision which I have been able to afford that Department, yet my observations have sufficed to convince me of the irregular manner in which the postal arrangements have been conducted during the past year.

No general code of instructions has been issued to the Out Stations, nor perhaps would it have been expedient to attempt regulations which might have been set at defiance by gentlemen in British Columbia who might reasonably have protested against any subordination to Mr. Anderson, himself Postmaster of this, a separate Colony.

The account between British Columbia and Vancouver Island has never been adjusted, nor is it probable that any other than an empiric arrangement can now be made, so long have the postal connections between the two Colonies worked without any suitable system.

To the inefficiency of the postal arrangements in and between these Colonies may be ascribed the loss of revenue which has continued and we still suffer from the carriage by private Expresses of the majority of the letters passing in our territories, the Government postal service being so inferior to the private Expresses that it has been hitherto deemed inexpedient to stop the latter, though manifestly illegal, and, by its depriving the Government of funds, tending to exert an injurious influence on the Government efforts for speeding the mails.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. D. Gosset,  
13th June,  
1859.

Ditto,  
25th Aug.,  
1859.

Nor do I see any hope of more than partially ameliorating this condition of affairs without the appointment of a Deputy Postmaster General for Vancouver Island and one for British Columbia, both of whom should be gentlemen trained in our Home Post Office, for the Post Office service is a *specialité*; and I feel satisfied that that of these Colonies will not be placed on an efficient footing unless there are at the head of the Department in each Colony regularly trained and experienced persons obtained from Home, an opinion I entertain so strongly that I beg His Excellency may be pleased to forward this report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I have, etc.,

W. DRISCOLL GOSSET,  
*Acting Postmaster General.*

*The Honourable*  
*The Colonial Secretary,*  
*&c., &c., &c.*

The officers alluded to would, I think, do well, to bring with them copies of the various Acts, Treaties with other Countries, rules and forms, &c., &c., bearing on Post Office duties, and the following stores which are unprocurable here:—

A proper supply of Date Stamps and Hand Stamps for the following places:

Victoria  
Nanaimo  
New Westminster  
Derby  
Fort Douglas  
Yale  
Hope  
Lytton  
Cayoosch [Lillooet]  
Alexander [Alexandria]

and a few numerical stamps, for use in Post Offices which may be established as the mines, now rapidly advancing, produce the necessity for them, but the names of which cannot be now stated. One dozen sets of Post Office scales. Weights.

W. D. G.

The strictures of Captain Gosset upon the management of postal affairs in the two Colonies were not appreciated by the Governor, who was largely responsible for the existing arrangements. It is improbable that the trained official from "Home" realized the difficulties that had to be contended with in regulating the transmission of the public correspondence along the trails and through the forests of British Columbia. Criticism was easy, but it is not to be supposed that men like Douglas and Anderson, whose experience and knowledge of the interior of British Columbia

was unrivalled at that time, should submit tamely to being baited by a newcomer. In his attitude toward postal matters, as in respect to other Colonial affairs, Captain Gosset gradually found himself seriously at variance with the Governor. The apparently haphazard methods of administrators who had not been trained in the orthodox Civil Service school were irritating to the able but rather pedantic Colonial Treasurer. Had his suggestions been followed no doubt the trend of postal affairs in British Columbia and Vancouver Island would have been very different, but a most interesting chapter in Colonial Post Office history would have been rendered comparatively tame. His ideas with regard to the remodelling of the postal service were held by Governor Douglas to be premature; a shifting population of miners was but a poor foundation on which to build permanent institutions, and Douglas rightly judged the formation of an elaborate postal system to be out of the question for the time being. The express companies continued to be allowed a free hand in the transmission of letters and papers, subject to the small existing postal tax, and the Colonial Post Offices of British Columbia and Vancouver Island never had the advantage of administration by trained postal officials.

On September 7th Captain Gosset, not having succeeded in persuading the Governor to ask for Post Office officials from England, recommended the appointment of "Mr. Medical, a young man who was for five years employed in the Post Office at Yorkville, Canada West, and who is highly recommended by Canadian gentlemen of note," at the "moderate salary" of £180 per year. The proposal was not approved by the Governor, and Peter Tuite continued to function at the Post Office in Victoria.

A few days later Gosset hazarded another suggestion. He urgently recommended that a suitable site for the Victoria Post Office be secured without delay, and suggested that the land at the south-west corner of Government and Yates Streets would be the best location. This land was a part of the northern half of the block bounded by Bastion, Langley, Yates, and Government Streets, which had been originally placed aside as a Government reserve. Gosset's letter is perhaps worth quoting in full, as a study in diction:—

Letter,  
W. D. Gosset  
to Col. Sec.,  
7th Sept.,  
1859.

POST OFFICE, VICTORIA,  
September 10th, 1859.

SIR,—It is generally conceded that of the sites for public buildings in a Town, none should command more special attention than that for a Post Office.

It cannot be said that, tolerably placed as is this office, the situation is such as will be held to satisfy public expectation, when extension of commerce, throng of business and traffic of strangers through this Town gives that prominence to the Department with which prosperity will inevitably imbue it in the public estimation.

It is not at the head of a square; it is not at the corner of streets; it is not on a main thoroughfare from the wharfs. The first it cannot be, there being no square; but the second and third it might be; and as I venture to conceive, if placed where I propose, with fair prospect of being considered for many years to come as relatively well situated there as it would be this day,—namely, in the best position because most commercially central, and at, by choice of the public, the most trafficed avenue junction.

The site to which I allude and which obviously selects itself as possessing in the greatest degree the desiderata for a Post Office building, is that at the corner of Government and Yate Streets.

That land, has, however, unfortunately been alienated; but it seems to me not improbable that a repurchase might be effected, and on moderate terms if taken in hand whilst the space is unbuilt upon; and at no cost to the Colony if the present Post Office lot and the building be sold to meet the outlay.

The design, if worthy of adoption, to be successful deserves the early consideration of His Excellency, to which I have the honour to request you will commend it.

I have, &c.,

W. DRISCOLL GOSSET,  
*Acting Postmaster General.*

*The Acting Colonial Secretary,*  
Victoria, V.I.

The site referred to would make a convenient location for the Victoria Post Office to-day, and in some respects it is to be regretted that Captain Gosset's suggestion was not followed.

Peter Tuite, the Deputy Postmaster for Victoria, made application to the Governor in December of that year for an increase of £100 in his existing salary of £200 per annum. Evidently he had little faith that it would be granted, for with his application he submitted a letter of resignation to take effect if his request was not complied with. The increase was refused and Tuite shook the dust of Victoria from off his feet. As we shall see, the Governor would have been wiser to accede to his modest request.

On 8th December, 1859, John D'Ewes was appointed Acting-Postmaster for the Town of Victoria at an annual salary of £200. D'Ewes was a person of superior address who possessed in a marked degree the art of ingratiating himself with others. He seems to have been something of a favourite with the Governor. Long afterwards, in a communication to the Colonial Office in London relating to D'Ewes, Governor Douglas referred to the credentials which that gentleman had produced from Sir E. B. Lytton, Lord Willoughby De Broke, and other prominent persons who bore high testimony to his abilities, the position which he held in society, and his literary attainments. Of the last-mentioned qualification no particulars were given, but it was sufficiently noteworthy to attract the attention of the author of "Pelham." D'Ewes had held the position of Police Magistrate at Ballarat in Australia, but offered no explanation as to why he had left that place. He claimed to have certain property in Chancery, and his immediate prospects evidently were not bright, for in a letter to the Colonial Secretary acknowledging the intimation of his appointment as Postmaster at £200 per annum he accepted the position "most thankfully" and expressed a determination to study to perform the duties of the office to the best of his ability. No doubt he was capable enough, and his attractive personality made him popular, so that complaints were few during his incumbency; but he lacked industry and method, and, as the sequel shows, he had a still more serious shortcoming.

The operations of the miners during the season of 1859 were chiefly above Lytton. The diggings on the lower Fraser were gradually deserted by white men and abandoned to the Chinese; Yale retained its importance as the head of navigation on the Fraser Canyon route, and Douglas was a serious rival on the alternative route to Lillooet. The Similkameen and Rock Creek finds near the American border caused a flurry of excitement and necessitated the provision of postal communication with those places, but the real sensations of that year were the rich strikes in the Quesnel River and the early discoveries in the vicinity of the marvellous Cariboo country.

In Victoria business was fairly stable, but the population was not large; New Westminster, though nominally the Capital of British Columbia, was not the real seat of Govern-

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
J. D'Ewes,  
8th Dec., 1859.

Dispatch  
No. 24,  
Governor  
Douglas  
to Duke of  
Newcastle,  
13th May,  
1862.

Letter,  
John D'Ewes  
to Col. Sec.,  
9th Dec., 1859.

ment and was actually little more than a village. Langley had been nearly deserted and the Post Office there was closed; Lytton, Lillooet, and Alexandria were busy places in the mining area, and the little settlement at Nanaimo continued to prosper in its small way. As the luck of the miners fluctuated the prosperity of the Colonies alternately drooped and revived. On the whole, the first vivid expectations of boundless wealth, easily acquired, had not been realized.

The migrations of the prospectors and miners were followed promptly by the express operators and rather haltingly by the Post Office. The low rate of postage fixed by the Governor provided a revenue far too small to allow of the establishment of regular mail routes and the opening of Post Offices at outlying points, even had such steps been considered advisable at that time.

The Legislative Assembly of Vancouver Island, in voting supply for their Post Office establishment in 1860, provided so small an amount for assistance that the one clerk who had been helping D'Ewes in the Victoria Post Office resigned rather than accept the reduced salary. This incident provided Gosset with the opportunity for another suggestion. But unfortunately the strained relations between the Governor and Gosset were steadily growing worse, and the mere fact that a suggestion originated with the Colonial Treasurer, however admirable it might be, seems to have prejudiced it in the Governor's estimation. The gallant Captain's well-meant proposals all seemed destined to fall on barren ground. The experience must have been a new and bitter one for him; he had been accustomed to the exercise of authority and found it difficult to brook opposition which he could not understand. His dissatisfaction was accentuated by the fact that in certain matters he had the superior authority of the Home officials on his side; for instance, in the question of the removal to New Westminster of the British Columbia officials who were still residing at Victoria in what the resentful inhabitants of the mainland pictured as slothful ease. To his energetic nature such an imputation was unbearable. On 5th December, 1859, the Governor had been instructed by the Secretary for the Colonies that the British Columbian officials remaining in Victoria must remove forthwith to "the scene of their duties" on pain of dismissal; but Douglas, while agreeing with this as "a general principle,"

held that the presence in Victoria of certain of the officials was essential under the existing arrangement whereby he, as Governor of both Colonies, continued to reside upon the island. It is significant that of the mainland officials then resident in Victoria Gosset was the only one whom the Governor felt he might be able eventually to spare, though even the Treasurer was retained in Victoria for the moment, "and probably for some little time to come."

Captain Gosset missed no opportunity of impressing upon the Governor the desirability of removing his Department to New Westminster, and at length, in July, 1860, succeeded in persuading him to act. It seems not improbable that by that time Douglas may have been quite reconciled to forego close contact with the Treasurer. Early in that month Gosset was relieved of the duties of Treasurer of Vancouver Island, and George Tomline Gordon, member of the local Legislative Assembly for Esquimalt, was appointed to succeed him in that capacity, with what results we shall see. A few days later the Governor desired Gosset to remove the British Columbia Treasury to New Westminster, and the Treasurer was in such haste to comply that he neglected the formality of calling upon His Excellency prior to departing, on 31st July, for the scene of his future labours. For this serious breach of official etiquette he was severely reprimanded.

On the day before his departure Captain Gosset addressed the following letter to the Colonial Secretary:—

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,  
BRITISH COLUMBIA & VANCOUVER ISLAND,  
July 30th, 1860.

SIR.—The vote of the House of Assembly for the Department of the Post Office of Vancouver Island virtually dispensing with a clerk at Victoria, and the resignation of the late clerk, present a coincidence which is favourable for a reorganization both Mr. D'Ewes and I have long desired, but which I have hesitated to attempt until the Vancouver Island supplies were indicated by the House.

The centralization of the Colonial Post Offices in one office, each with separate and cross accounts, has been attended with considerable labour, and without the aid of a clerk even the degree of systematizing progress which I have been able to attain could not have been instituted, nor, without a clerk, could it be continued;—were it even desirable to perpetuate the faulty arrangement of the Post Office of two Colonies under one direction.

The proposal therefore which I have the honour to submit is the relinquishment by me of the office of Acting Postmaster General of

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. D. Gosset,  
18th July,  
1860.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. D. Gosset,  
1st Aug., 1860.

Vancouver Island and the retention of that office for British Columbia alone, the immediate establishment of a Head Post Office in New Westminster with a clerk (acting as the Town Postmaster) proposed salary £200 per annum.

Thus I shall be able to continue my improvements and systematizing processes, and I trust with such good effect upon the Revenue, that, whilst benefiting the public by better arrangements, the outlay contingent on these proposals will be covered by increased receipts.

It will be essential, however, that the clerk at New Westminster, to whose aid I largely look for realization of my views, should be an active, intelligent and not only educated but business-like person; and it occurs to me (from what I have heard of his character and his having passed the proper Examination at Home) that if Mr. Judson Young, now in the Colonial Secretary's Office, could be spared (a substitute as a mere copying clerk in the Colonial Secretary's Office not being perhaps difficult to obtain) he would suit my purposes. I beg therefore to express a hope that His Excellency—if Mr. Young can be spared—will place him at my disposal.

Also that I be empowered to erect a small Post Office at New Westminster, the cost of which shall not on any account exceed £150, the sum inserted in the detailed estimates which I submitted to His Excellency lately.

I have, &c.,

W. DRISCOLL GOSSET,

*Acting Postmaster General.*

*The Honourable  
The Colonial Secretary,  
&c., &c., &c.*

Once more Captain Gosset's suggestions were coldly received. The Colonial Secretary replied promptly and briefly to the effect that His Excellency had been pleased to appoint Captain W. R. Spalding to be Postmaster at New Westminster, and that as there was now a distinct Post Office head at both New Westminster and Victoria he was enabled to relieve Captain Gosset of the extraneous duties devolving upon him during the past twelve months by acting as Postmaster-General for both Colonies. For the "attentive discharge" of those duties the Governor's "best thanks," strained through the medium of the Colonial Secretary, were conveyed in stiffly expressed terms.

And so, *sans cérémonie*, the Colonial Post Offices of British Columbia and Vancouver Island passed from Gosset's control. It is idle to speculate upon the changes that might have taken place in the development of the British Columbian Post Office had that department remained under his charge. The valiant Treasurer continued his stormy

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
Gosset, 31st  
July, 1860.

career at New Westminster and had many a tilt with the Governor, notably that relating to the proposed mint at New Westminster. In September, 1862, Gosset returned to England on sick-leave, and he did not come back to British Columbia. He submitted his resignation as Treasurer of the Colony in 1863. Subsequently he rose to high rank in the Army; in 1872 he was in command of the Royal Engineers in the Woolwich District, and in 1873 he retired on full pay with the rank of Major-General.

It was unfortunate that Douglas and Gosset were incapable of co-operation. Both men were outstanding examples of their different types: the one a Titan, endowed with special strength for his special task, and heedless, perhaps, of lesser men who sought to help him; the other precise in detail, admirably fitted to the functioning of a highly organized community, but ill-adapted to grapple with fundamentals in the backwoods and impatient of the methods of frontier statesmen. Gosset was unable to perceive in Douglas a master of detail superior to himself, who was compelled for the moment to work broadly, leaving the finer shading for a less strenuous day. It was inevitable that their widely differing personalities should conflict in such a theatre as that afforded by British Columbia during the first few years of its existence as a British Colony.

#### THE 2½d. BRITISH COLUMBIA AND VANCOUVERS ISLAND POSTAGE STAMP OF 1860.

Soon after the appointment of John D'Ewes the first supply of Colonial postage stamps arrived in Victoria. They were shipped from London on 29th December, 1859, and must have reached the Colony in the following February or March. The actual date of issue is not known, but it is certain that Gosset issued them before July, 1860, and the first known extant cover is dated 25th August of that year. The stamp bears the Queen's head in profile in the centre, with the legend "British Columbia & Vancouvers Island. Postage Two Pence Half-Penny." It is probably unique in that it bears the names of two separate and distinct Crown Colonies and was available in each for prepayment of the Colonial postage.

Archives  
of B.C., Vol. 7,  
p. 94.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.  
7th Aug., 1864.

A. C. Anderson first drew attention to the desirability of obtaining Colonial postage stamps in a communication to the Governor dated 5th April, 1859, in which he wrote:—

... The deficiency of small change and the inconvenience of stamping by hand envelopes on a large scale for the Express offices, in liquidation of the Colonial postage, render it necessary that some measure for the providing of adhesive Colonial postage stamps should be authorized.

No immediate action seems to have been taken, but early in June, 1859, after the retirement of Mr. Anderson and during the short interim in which Mr. Wymond O. Hamley was in charge of the Post Office, the Governor was in consultation with Captain Gosset as to postal matters. Doubtless it was largely at the instance of the Colonial Treasurer that the following dispatch was addressed to the Secretary for the Colonies:—

No. 20, Executive.

VICTORIA, VANCOUVER'S ISLAND,  
8th June, 1859.

*The Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, Bart.,  
Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of  
State for the Colonial Department.*

SIR,—Great inconvenience is experienced in dealing with the postal arrangements both in this Colony and British Columbia in consequence of our not being provided with postage stamps. Checks cannot be applied to guard against fraud without inconvenience, delay and expensive machinery; and indeed, so long as the prepayment of postage is made in coin no check or supervision is really effectual.

Partly to correct the evil we have hitherto employed the postage stamps of the United States,\* but for obvious reasons the use of them in a British Colony should not be continued longer than really necessary.

I am therefore induced to apply to you with the hope that you will kindly issue the necessary directions that we may be supplied with Stamps from Her Majesty's Stamp Office, designed to serve both for Vancouver's Island and British Columbia. The expenses, which I understand would not be heavy, we would gladly repay, and the plates could remain in England, so that a fresh supply of stamps could be obtained when the first stock was exhausted.

\* On 8th July, 1859, the Colonial Treasurer issued an advance warrant for £75 for the purpose of purchasing a supply of United States postage stamps "wholly more system and greater accuracy and check might be introduced into this Department at the Out Stations in B.C." Previous to that date the sale of United States postage stamps seems to have been confined to the Post Office at Victoria. These stamps were utilized solely for the prepayment of United States postage on letters leaving the two Colonies, and were never used to cover Colonial postage.

To lessen expense we propose to have only one description of stamp, to the value of Two-Pence-halfpenny, and of such design as may be deemed most fit by those competent to judge. A rough sketch is forwarded herewith.

We would ask you for a thousand sheets of stamps as a first supply, presuming there will be about 240 in each sheet, (a small instalment by post would be very acceptable) and if the Post Office authorities in England would kindly permit a supply of about three dozen obliterating dies, with a proportion of Ink and boxes, to accompany the sheets, it would add greatly to the benefit conferred upon the Colonies and would increase the obligations we would feel.

I have, &c.,

JAMES DOUGLAS,  
*Governor.*

The rough sketch mentioned has not survived, unless it is in unknown private hands. It was most probably prepared by Gosset, who was gifted in such matters and subsequently designed the gold coinage of British Columbia which is so highly prized by numismatists. The "three dozen obliterating dies" evidently relates to the thirty-six numerical postmarks\* used later at the various Post Offices in British Columbia and Vancouver Island, the accurate allocation of which is a nice problem for the philatelic enthusiast of to-day.

Douglas's dispatch reached the Colonial Office on July 25th, and the matter was referred to the Treasury, with a request for compliance, on August 6th. On the same day the Agent-General for the Colonies, P. St. Julyan, through whom all Colonial postage stamps were issued, was desired to consult with the Treasury officials on the subject.

On August 16th a reply was sent from Downing Street to the Governor, advising him that instructions had been issued for the preparation of the desired supply of stamps and that they would be forwarded, together with the other postal articles asked for, without delay. On October 22nd Douglas conveyed to the Secretary for the Colonies his best thanks for the ready compliance with his request, and expressed the opinion that the stamps and other supplies would be of the greatest service to the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia.

The celebrated firm of Thomas De La Rue & Company, of Bunhill Row, London, E.C., supplied 981 sheets, or

\* See Appendix B for further particulars of these numeral postmarks.

Letter,  
W. H. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
11th Oct.,  
1864.

235,440, of the stamps at a total cost of £104, which was paid in due course by the Treasury of British Columbia. Gosset subsequently declared that as the Government of Vancouver Island had paid no share of the cost they had no real proprietorship in the 2½d. stamps. The original die was engraved "en epargne" on steel, very probably by Mons. J. Ferdinand Joubert, Messrs. De La Rue's chief engraver. Impressions of the original die were taken in lead blocks and arranged in panes of sixty; electro casts of these impressions were then taken for the plates actually used in printing, and four of the plates, enfac'd with silver to render them more durable, made up the sheet of 240 stamps. Only one complete sheet of 240 is known to be in existence.

With the exception of one surcharged issue of 1869 which will be described later, and the rare "imperforates," all the stamps issued for British Columbia and Vancouver Island were comb-perforated by the Inland Revenue authorities on their steam "triple-cutter" perforating-machines at Somerset House in London. Of these regular perforated stamps one in every six has the wide margin characteristic of the early comb perforates and due to the manner in which they were put through the perforating-machines.

The 2½d. stamps are nearly always perforated fourteen in the usual manner. Unperforated copies are known, though rare, and appear in some cases to have been used, but the cancellation marks on such stamps must be forged or irregular, for it is now known that the imperforate 2½d. stamps were not part of a regular issue, but merely a reprint prepared at the request of the Duke of Newcastle, then Secretary for the Colonies, for the International Exhibition of 1862 in London, although the expense of their preparation (one guinea) was paid out of the British Columbia funds. The reprint was made simply because there was not time to obtain specimens from the Colony before the opening of the Exhibition.

Messrs. De La Rue surface-printed the 2½d. stamps on thin unwatermarked hard-wove paper of a slightly yellowish tint, in rose colour of orange, flesh, and brownish shades. Nice copies of the regular issue can be obtained at a moderate figure, but the imperforate reprint, especially when appear-

Letter,  
Crown Agent to  
Colonial Office,  
24th April,  
1862.

ing to have been used, has hitherto commanded a fairly high price. After many years in postage-stamp albums as "No. 1 British Columbia" its place in the affections of collectors is probably secure.

Apart from the motive of economy, the object in displaying the names of both Colonies on the stamp is difficult to discern, for each Colony had its own separate Treasury and postal system, although these happened for the moment to be under the control of one official; and after the departure of Gosset from the Colony the unravelling of the financial and other difficulties so bewailed by him was rendered almost impossible for his successors in the Colonial Post Office; indeed, so complete was the confusion that the postal and philatelic relations of the two Colonies were never quite properly straightened out during their separate existence. All this disorder has given rise to the constant bracketing of British Columbia and Vancouver Island in philatelic publications and has caused it to be generally assumed that the philately of the sister Colonies had no separate existence prior to the issue of distinct stamps for each Colony in 1865. It has now been clearly established, however, that the 2½d. stamp, which has the distinction of bearing the names of two quite separate British Colonies, was available in each for the prepayment of its own Colonial postage from at least 31st July, 1860, to 26th October, 1864, and there is no doubt that the revenue derived from its sale in each Colony was retained by the Treasury thereof. It is believed that the adhesive is unique amongst British Colonial postage stamps in this respect.

The stamps were issued in each Colony soon after their arrival, but the use of the old hand-franks was still sanctioned for the specific purpose of indicating the prepayment in bulk of the Colonial postage on envelopes used by the express companies. For the general public the use of the stamps was no doubt strictly enjoined, for Gosset would immediately avail himself of the advantages offered in this way for the protection of the revenue; but many extant covers show clearly that the old franked envelopes continued to be posted, and it would seem that numbers which had been sold as "stamped envelopes" prior to the issue of the stamps were subsequently accepted by the Post Office instead of being exchanged for their equivalent in stamps.

It would be impossible at this point to follow through all its details the involved career of the 2½d. stamp without anticipating and complicating our narrative unduly; hence it has been found necessary to defer the remainder of this stamp's life-story until later in this book.\*

\* See page 124 and Appendix C.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE VANCOUVER ISLAND POST OFFICE UNDER  
JOHN D'EWES, AUGUST, 1860, TO SEPTEMBER,  
1861.

Under the arrangement sanctioned by Governor Douglas on 31st July, 1860, the postal establishments of Vancouver Island and British Columbia were placed for the first time under separate administrative heads. The Vancouver Island Post Office was under the charge of John D'Ewes, the popular Postmaster of Victoria; indeed, outside Victoria there was little to administer on the island. Rev. Cornelius Bryant, the public-school teacher at Nanaimo, managed the Post Office at that place in an efficient manner, and there was no other regular Post Office in the Colony. A petition for the establishment of a Post Office at Esquimalt, the village clustering about the Naval Station three miles from Victoria, was submitted to the Governor on 20th August, 1860, but was not granted at that time.

D'Ewes, who was now single-handed in the Victoria Post Office, was evidently held responsible for postal matters in the island Colony, but was not actually appointed head of the establishment. The financial supervision given him by the new Treasurer was very slender indeed, if not quite non-existent; and D'Ewes seems to have operated the service to suit his own convenience. He took it upon himself to employ occasional assistants and was severely rebuked for the unauthorized proceeding. The Governor made it clear that in the existing circumstances he considered one man sufficient for the work to be done, but he allowed a sum of £60 per annum for help, when absolutely necessary, on incoming mail days. Nothing daunted, the irrepressible D'Ewes applied for an increase in salary to offset his more arduous duties now that he had no regular assistance, and the Governor, fair-minded as ever, granted the desired increase. Thereafter D'Ewes's salary was at the rate of £300 per annum, the amount which the worthy Peter Tuite had asked and been denied.

D'Ewes was not without serious difficulties during his incumbency, notwithstanding his personal popularity with

Letter,  
Dist. Rec. to  
J. D'Ewes,  
1st Oct., 1860.

Letter,  
Dist. Rec. to  
J. D'Ewes,  
31st Dec.,  
1860.

the people of Victoria. These troubles had to do with the state in which the transmission of the mails between the two Colonies and the outside world had been left by the unsatisfactory termination of the negotiations described in Chapter III. No proper postal arrangement existed between the Colonies and the United States, and the inhabitants of Vancouver Island and British Columbia were still indebted for the most part to the courtesy of the United States Post Office Department and the mail-steamship owners for the gratuitous conveyance of their correspondence between Victoria and the neighbouring American territory, as their administrators felt unable to offer any regular subsidy for the service. The owners of the vessels were tiring of their continued free services, in return for which they could obtain no concessions that they considered adequate.

The nondescript fleet that plied between Victoria and San Francisco during the frenzied summer of 1858 had abandoned the route one by one and early in 1861 the only regular passenger-steamer connecting Victoria with the city at the Golden Gate was the ill-fated "Pacific." In June the master of that vessel, whose subsidy from the United States Government had been withdrawn in January, suddenly refused to continue carrying the Colonial mails without compensation, and the British Consul at San Francisco was obliged to forward them by a slow sailing-vessel, the barque "Isle of France," whose master offered to convey them to Victoria without charge. For a considerable period the transmission of the mails from San Francisco was effected in this haphazard and uncertain way. As far as possible they were forwarded by occasional ships whose owners were willing to carry them without payment, but in some cases the ship-owners were paid varying amounts, chiefly at regular freight rates averaging about \$250 for a single trip, for their services.

Fortunately the San Francisco steamship service was not now of the first importance from a postal point of view, for in January, 1861, the letters and papers from Canada and the Eastern United States, which formed a considerable proportion of the Colonies' correspondence, began to travel exclusively by the American Government's new Pacific Coast overland route from Sacramento via Portland to Port Townsend, whence they were brought to Victoria by the steamer

Letter,  
J. D'Ewes to  
Col. Sec., 5th  
June, 1861.

"Eliza Anderson." This overland service was not very satisfactory, for letters were frequently lost, stolen, or damaged on the way; but beggars cannot be choosers, and unfortunately the Colonial mails were chiefly of the mendicant class for the moment.

On 27th March, 1871, the purser of the "Eliza Anderson" refused to continue carrying the mails free of charge, saying that "in the absence of all remuneration it was not to be expected that any trouble should be taken with the Colonial mails," and adding that it was "a matter of indifference" to him whether the mail-bags were left behind or not. Argument was in vain: thanks for past favours elicited only demands for payment in the future; and when at length D'Ewes, with some misgivings, asked for a "written proposal of terms" the "exorbitant sum of Five Hundred Dollars per month, payable monthly," was demanded for the weekly service. This, remarked D'Ewes, was an obvious effort to take advantage of the colonists' temporary necessity. Other offers were invited and obtained, and in May the owners of the "Eliza Anderson," who held a virtual monopoly of the communication between Victoria and Port Townsend, proved to be amenable to reason and agreed to perform the service once a week for \$500 per annum—one-twelfth of their original demand.

In the summer of 1861 the first rich finds in the heart of the Cariboo country began to startle the outside world. Business conditions in Victoria, which had drooped sadly, now began to revive; and D'Ewes, who was left almost entirely to himself, took advantage of the opportunity to operate postal affairs in Victoria to his own advantage. There is no doubt that the baffling philatelic inconsistencies of this period are attributable to his manipulations.

In September D'Ewes applied for leave of absence between mail steamers, for, as he frankly declared, there was "very little to do in this interval," and a temporary assistant who had been employed on several occasions was "most assiduous and attentive to his duties." His health, said D'Ewes, required "a little change of air." The desired leave was granted by the Governor, but the cautious Colonial Secretary took care to instruct D'Ewes that as a collector of revenue he was forthwith to pay into the Treasury all collections in his hands and the balance of the public moneys

Letter,  
J. D'Ewes to  
Col. Sec., 18th  
Jan., 1861.

Ditto.

Letter,  
J. D'Ewes to  
Col. Sec., 9th  
Sept., 1861.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
J. D'Ewes,  
10th Sept.,  
1861.

Letter,  
Col. Treas.  
to Col. Sec.,  
1st Nov., 1861.

advanced to him. D'Ewes neglected to obey this important injunction. He went on leave and must have found the "change of air" to his liking, for he did not return; and with him he took £300 which had been advanced to him for the payment of mail services, £279 11s. 6d. in postage collected by him on letters transmitted through San Francisco but not accounted for to that office, and an unknown amount in Colonial postage collected by him but not accounted for to the Treasury. In addition to these defalcations D'Ewes left undischarged debts to a considerable amount. He left little else behind him, for on 20th September, 1861, John L. Buckley, signing as "Officiating Postmaster," informed the Colonial Secretary that "on Mr. D'Ewes' departure the amount of postage money left by him amounted to \$1.15, and no transfer of public funds was made by Mr. D'Ewes to me further than the above amount, which was in the daily postage box."

This conduct dealt an unwelcome blow to the finances of the struggling Colony of Vancouver Island, which had survived the storm and stress of the first gold-rush period, but had hardly begun to recover from the subsequent depression. D'Ewes must have absconded with several thousand dollars, for apparently he accounted for but little of the revenue collected by him after the departure of Captain Gosset to the mainland. Unfortunately George Tomline Gordon, the Treasurer of Vancouver Island appointed to succeed Gosset in that capacity, proved to be no better than D'Ewes. Gordon was arrested in December, 1861, and was subsequently convicted of extensive embezzlement of the Treasury funds. He was sentenced to serve a prison term, but escaped after a short period of confinement. It is possible there may have been collusion between him and D'Ewes; certainly very few of the Colonial postage stamps appear to have been sold in Vancouver Island during their term of office; and there is good reason to assume that D'Ewes made extensive use of the old postal hand-franks, which had not been withdrawn when the 2½d. stamp was issued, and that he sold quantities of franked envelopes to his patrons. These envelopes had the distinct merit, from a fraudulent person's point of view, of affording the Government no possible means of check on the revenue derived from their sale, and the cash consideration involved in their

purchase evidently was irresistible to the Victoria Postmaster. Apparently no books were kept by D'Ewes, and the exact loss cannot be stated, but foreign rates of postage were high in those days and a large proportion of his ill-gotten gains was derived from that source. The following rates of foreign postage were in effect from Vancouver Island and British Columbia in 1860:—

Countries.	Not over	Not over	Payment.
	$\frac{1}{4}$ oz.	$\frac{1}{2}$ oz.	
	Cents.	Cents.	
Aspinwall.....	....	20	Compulsory.
Australia, via England.....	....	48	do.
Austria.....	....	40	Optional.
Belgium, via France.....	26	47	do.
B.N.A. Provinces.....	....	20	do.
Cape of Good Hope.....	....	43	Compulsory.
Chile.....	....	39	do.
Cuba.....	....	25	do.
China, by private ship from San Francisco.....	....	15	do.
Denmark.....	....	45	Optional.
France.....	25	50	do.
German States.....	....	40	do.
Great Britain and Ireland.....	....	34	do.
Greece.....	....	47	do.
Holland, via France.....	31	57	do.
Mexico.....	....	25	Compulsory.
Norway.....	....	52	Optional.
Panama.....	....	25	Compulsory.
Peru.....	....	32	do.
Poland.....	....	47	Optional.
Portugal.....	....	68	Compulsory.
Prussia.....	....	40	Optional.
Russia.....	....	48	do.
Sandwich Islands.....	....	15	Compulsory.
Spain, via France.....	48	....	do.
Sweden.....	....	52	Optional.
Switzerland.....	....	48	do.
West Indies.....	....	30	Compulsory.

These are simply the United States foreign rates charged at that time, plus the 5-cent or  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. Colonial postage fee on each half-ounce or under. The notations "optional" and "compulsory" relate only to the foreign postage; the Colonial charge had invariably to be paid in advance. As

the Colonial postage stamps were not available for the prepayment of foreign postage there was no proper check on the revenue; hence the opportunity for speculation of which D'Ewes took full advantage.

D'Ewes's subsequent career was brief. Shortly after his sudden departure from Victoria Governor Douglas regretfully communicated the facts to the authorities at Downing Street, and four months later the following brief dispatch from the Duke of Newcastle rang down the curtain upon the tragi-comedy of John D'Ewes:—

No. 88.

DOWNING STREET,  
23rd February, 1862.

SIR,—I duly received your despatch No. 67 of the 25th October reporting that Mr. John D'Ewes, Acting Postmaster of Victoria, had absconded, leaving behind him debts to a considerable amount and being a defaulter to the Colony in a sum of between £300 and £400.\* Having taken steps to learn Mr. D'Ewes' address and to enquire whether he had any explanation to offer on the subject, or whether there was any prospect of his refunding the money, I regret to acquaint you that I am informed he lately proceeded to Homburg, the German watering place in the neighbourhood of Frankfort, and that after, as it is supposed, losses at play, he committed suicide by shooting himself. He cannot have left any property, and the unhappy termination of his life puts an end to any further proceedings.

I have, etc.,

NEWCASTLE.

Governor Douglas, C.B.,  
&c., &c., &c.

Subsequent correspondence revealed the fact that in 1854 D'Ewes had been dismissed from his position as Magistrate in Australia after being detected in accepting bribes from the licensed victuallers of Ballarat. It now transpired that Sir E. B. Lytton, shortly after furnishing D'Ewes with a letter of introduction to Governor Douglas, in which he testified to many years of personal acquaintance with the bearer and marked appreciation of his abilities, had been apprised of the facts and had hastened to communicate them to the Governor. But Douglas showed a curious leniency in his treatment of D'Ewes. Sir E. B. Lytton's second letter named a John *Dewes*, and the Governor now advanced the strange explanation that he had not associated it with the John *D'Ewes* whom he appointed to office. On further reflection he had achieved the difficult feat of identifying the culprit, but had

Dispatch  
No. 24,  
Gov. Douglas  
to Duke of  
Newcastle,  
13th May,  
1862.

\* The amount had been underestimated by Douglas in his dispatch.

decided not to dismiss him because he was of the opinion that D'Ewes had "suffered through indiscretion" rather than "moral turpitude." To the student of Sir James Douglas's austere and upright character, which demanded a high standard of integrity from his subordinates, the incidents narrated above bear eloquent testimony to the personality of D'Ewes, which is described by contemporaries as one of singular charm.

John L. Buckley was placed in temporary charge of the Post Office at Victoria for a few weeks while the whole question of the administration of postal affairs in Vancouver Island received the consideration of the Governor. At length Douglas announced his decision in the following terms, in a dispatch to the Secretary for the Colonies:—

With a view to decrease the existing expenditure I have combined the two offices of Postmaster and Harbour Master in one, and I have appointed thereto Mr. Henry Wootton, a gentleman who has been for some time serving as a Clerk of the Writs in the Supreme Court. Mr. Wootton is a certified Master Mariner and has earned for himself a high character for integrity and ability since he has been in the Colony, and I believe he will prove himself a very capable and trustworthy person in the position in which I have placed him.

The story of the Vancouver Island Post Office will be resumed in Chapter VIII.

Dispatch  
No. 68,  
Gov. Douglas  
to Duke of  
Newcastle,  
23rd Oct.,  
1861.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE POST OFFICE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
UNDER WARNER R. SPALDING, JULY, 1860,  
TO MAY, 1864.

Warner Reeve Spalding, who assumed control of the Post Office establishment of British Columbia on 19th July, 1860, had been appointed Resident Magistrate for New Westminster and district in April, 1859. While apparently unversed in postal matters, he was a man of considerable experience and ability and his administration of the postal service of British Columbia was above reproach. He arrived in the Colony late in 1858, bearing high credentials from the Downing Street officials and other prominent persons, in which he was described as "capable of confronting danger with singular courage" and "eminently qualified for the position of second in command of the Colonial Police." He had served with great credit for three years in the Australian Mounted Police, and resigned from that body to serve in the Crimean War as a captain in the Turkish Cavalry Contingent. Governor Douglas was unable to give Spalding the appointment for which he had been specially recommended, but seized the first suitable opportunity to acquire his services. The position of Resident Magistrate for the Capital of the mainland Colony was given to him until his appointment to the control of the Post Office, when the duties of the Magistracy passed into other hands.

There was a difficulty with regard to Spalding's official title as head of the infant Post Office Department of the Colony. He was given to understand that his appointment would be that of "Postmaster-General of British Columbia," and though he urgently requested to be gazetted as such, his wish was not complied with by Governor Douglas for several years, and during nearly all the latter's term of office Spalding's official title was merely that of "Postmaster of British Columbia." But he was undoubtedly in charge of the operations of the Colonial Post Office in British Columbia with an initial salary of £400 per annum, and he immediately set about improving the postal arrangements of the Colony so far as the means at his disposal would permit.

Letter,  
Sir E. B.  
Lytton to  
Gov. Douglas,  
21st Oct.,  
1858.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
12th Oct.,  
1863.

In April, 1859, when Spalding was appointed Magistrate, he was allotted a small house and lot which were Government property. The house was now enlarged and improved at the public expense in order to be adapted for carrying on the business of the Post Office. Henry Holbrook was relieved of his duties as Postmaster for New Westminster, and a clerk whose identity cannot be determined acted as occasional assistant in the menial work of the office.

Spalding's first efforts towards reform in his Department were directed to the improvement of the service at the outlying points. Improvement was certainly needed, but to effect it was a much more difficult matter than at first appeared. No regular mail contracts or mail routes were in operation and the Post Office was largely dependent upon private enterprise for carrying the mails free of charge. In cases where this could not be arranged authority was given for the payment of freight rates for the conveyance of the mail-bags, the "best possible bargain" to be driven as the circumstances required. Under these conditions the transmission of the mails was hardly likely to be expeditiously carried out. The small allowance originally granted the Postmasters at outlying points had been withdrawn and there was no incentive to great effort on their part in improving the rather sketchy postal arrangements in the interior. Spalding complained that the Postmasters throughout the Colony "displayed great inattention" to the performance of their duties "notwithstanding numerous letters of instruction and warning" sent by him from time to time. The various Magistrates were circularized and instructed to adopt "such measures as to prevent this inconvenience in the future." Spalding desired a travelling commission so that he might personally inspect the postal situation in the interior of the Colony, but the Governor felt unable to grant this request on account of the expense involved. So long as the prospects of the miners remained only moderately satisfactory and the possibility of early failure in the gold yields made an almost total exodus of population not unlikely at any moment, it was not expedient to do more than carry on a nominal Government mail service and as far as possible ensure that the express operators should pay the specified toll on the letters they carried for the miners.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
5th April,  
1864.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. R. Spalding,  
4th March,  
1861.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. R. Spalding,  
14th Aug.,  
1860.

At this date the regular postal establishment of the Colony was as follows:—

R.C. Papers,  
IV. p. 57.

Postmaster of British Columbia	W. R. Spalding, J.P.
(Stationed at New Westminster)	(Salary £400 per annum).
Clerk,	do.
Postmaster at Douglas	J. B. Gaggin, paid as J.P.
Postmaster at Hope	J. O'Reilly, do.
Postmaster at Yale	G. Haines, paid as constable.
Postmaster at Langley	— Wynard (no salary).

Letter,  
Jas. N. Thain  
to Gov.  
Douglas,  
5th Nov., 1860.

In November, 1860, the proprietors of the British Columbia and Victoria Steam Navigation Company, who were operating a regular steamboat service between Victoria and the heads of navigation, offered to enter into a regular agreement for the transmission of the mails between Victoria, New Westminster, Douglas, Hope, and Yale, but their offer was not entertained at that time and the service between the points mentioned, as well as beyond Douglas and Yale, remained uncertain and irregular for the time being.

Letter,  
W. T. Ballou to  
Gov. Douglas,  
14th Jan.,  
1861.

In the winter of 1860-61 William T. Ballou, the pioneer express operator, suddenly objected to carrying the Government mails to Fraser River points "without a contract or an equivalent for doing the work." He had been accommodating the Colonial authorities and increasing his own prestige by carrying the official mail-bags free of charge as far as Lillooet and Rock Creek. It is probable that at that time the "mails" consisted chiefly of official communications on Government business and that there were few regular post letters other than those from overseas points. A glance at the map of British Columbia will assist the reader to grasp the geographical situation. The route then followed in transmitting letters and papers to Lillooet and points beyond was chiefly via Harrison, Anderson and Seton Lakes, and the intervening portages. To Yale and intermediate points the mails were transmitted by river-steamer from New Westminster. The miners working in the bars of the Fraser Canyon between Yale and Lytton were reached by express operators under conditions of great difficulty. From Fort Hope to Similkameen and Rock Creek the famous Hope Trail was followed across wild country nearly to the American border. The carriage of letters and papers along the interior trails was attended by much labour and hardship, and the express agents demanded and obtained high rates from the miners for their hard work.

It was apparent that not much longer could the Government expect private enterprise to carry the mails without proper and fixed remuneration, even though the operators were indebted to the authorities for permission to carry the express letters on which most of their profits were made. In December, 1860, Mr. Justice (subsequently Sir) Matthew Baillie Begbie, Judge of the Colony, together with Mr. (subsequently Sir) Henry P. P. Crease, Attorney-General, was commissioned to investigate the working of the postal service in British Columbia. Spalding demurred when the Judge asked him for a report in this connection, but was peremptorily ordered by the Governor to comply with the request. Begbie's findings were communicated to the Governor in due course; they do not appear to have survived in documentary form, but they must have revealed a very unsatisfactory state of affairs.

No immediate action seems to have been taken, however, and in March Spalding submitted a lengthy statement in which he pointed out that the express companies absorbed "what would otherwise be postal revenue" and thus crippled the legitimate right of the Colony to establish safe and efficient means of postal communication.\* He emphasized the fact that the people were highly dissatisfied with the inadequate postal service and incensed by the exorbitant express rates on letters, newspapers, and gold-dust, and declared that they were looking to the Governor to remedy these evils without further delay. In the absence of representative government the inhabitants of the mainland were dependent upon Douglas for protection in such matters. Spalding urged the instant and total suppression of the expresses as an essential step in the formation of a self-supporting postal system, and he submitted a fairly elaborate scheme, with rates of postage ranging from 2d. to 1s., which he believed would meet the situation. The Colonial Secretary, in commenting on these proposals, desired to know how the Postmaster proposed to utilize the 2½d. postage stamps, which were the only ones in the possession of the Colony, for the prepayment of the proposed rates. Spalding confessed that in projecting the suggested schedule he had borne in mind only the postal requirements of the Colony,

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. R. Spalding,  
3rd Dec., 1860.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
22nd March,  
1861.

Memorandum,  
W. A. G. Young  
to Postmaster  
of B.C., 24th  
March, 1861.

\* During 1860 the total postal revenue of British Columbia was only £121 7s. 6d. (B.C. Papers, IV., pp. 5, 7.)

the financial interests of his Department, and the coins then in general circulation—not the particular denomination of the stamps that happened to be the only ones available at the moment.

But the Governor and his advisers, in face of the uncertain outlook, could not see their way to embark upon a postal experiment. Evidently it was felt that the express operators should be willing to continue carrying the mails free of charge or at low rates in return for the concession allowed them in the carriage, subject to the small postal tax of  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., of the bulk of the public correspondence. Throughout the summer, autumn, and winter of 1861–62 the unsatisfactory and almost inoperative Government mail service continued to function as best it could through the medium of the begrudged facilities provided by Ballou and his associates.

In July, 1861, the Governor inaugurated an armed official escort for the safe conveyance of gold from the mines to the coast, and Captain Gosset, the Colonial Treasurer, suggested that this Gold Escort might well be utilized for the carriage of the mails. This particular suggestion of Gosset's was adopted by Douglas, and Spalding was instructed to make such use of the Gold Escort, but it proved to be far too slow for the transmission of letters. Unfortunately the miners consistently refused to take the Gold Escort seriously; and as the Government could not see its way to guarantee delivery of the gold so conveyed the express operators retained their gold-carrying business with little impairment. The experiment was renewed in 1863, but without better results; and the total deficit caused by the failure of the Gold Escort amounted to about \$80,000. It is difficult here to avoid interjecting an expression of regret that at least a portion of the large sum expended in this way was not used in improving the postal facilities of the Colony.

The desirability of entering into a regular contract for the conveyance of the mails through the interior of the Colony was one of the questions which engaged the attention of the Governor during the winter months of 1861–62. By that time the first rich finds in the vicinity of Cariboo Lake had put fresh heart into the Government and a spirit of optimism was again abroad. The prospects for the following season were most promising. In November Ballou gave final warning that he would not continue to carry the mails without

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. H. Spalding,  
5th Aug., 1861.

R.C. Papers,  
IV., p. 64.

Letter,  
W. T. Ballou  
to Col. Sec.,  
4th Nov., 1861.

a contract, and he submitted a tender for the service from Douglas to Lillooet and on to Quesnel at the rate of \$375 per month. His offer was not accepted, and a similar proposal from J. Robertson Stewart was rejected. In December Ballou flatly refused to carry the mails any longer without a regular agreement, and F. J. Barnard, his rival in business, obliged the Administration by continuing the service temporarily without payment. From that moment Ballou's decline was rapid and Barnard's star was in the ascendant.

In April, 1862, Captain W. A. Mouat, master of the side-wheel steamer "Enterprise," refused to continue carrying the mails between Victoria and New Westminster unless paid an amount at least equal to the Customs House charges. On 1st November an agreement was entered into whereby the British Columbia and Victoria Steam Navigation Company, owners of the "Enterprise," were paid the sum of £120 per annum by the Government of British Columbia for a weekly service between Victoria and New Westminster, and the Postmaster of Victoria was requested to forward mails only by that steamer.

Work on the great new road to the interior was under way in 1862, piercing the tortuous canyon of the Fraser in daring fashion and penetrating the heart of the rich country above Lillooet. The route via Harrison Lake was gradually abandoned and in course of time Douglas became a deserted village.

Sir James Douglas was essentially a road-builder, and he knew that highways must be provided before postal services can function satisfactorily. He forged ahead with his ambitious road scheme, regardless of opposition and with indomitable faith in the upper country that he knew so well. Time and the event vindicated him triumphantly. On the completion of that stupendous highway his successor, Frederick Seymour, said that British Columbia was "a Colony only in name . . . a gold mine at one end of a road, and a sea-port town (under a different Government) at the opposite terminus." But what wealth streamed down that artery—the romantic Cariboo Road of fact and fiction—from the placer mines to the sea!

In the early summer of 1862 the second great gold-rush to British Columbia fairly commenced: from creeks and gullies far and wide fresh cries of "Gold!" resounded;

Letter,  
Richard White,  
Postmaster at  
Douglas, to  
W. R. Spalding,  
3rd Dec., 1861.

Letter,  
W. A. Mouat to  
Gov. Douglas,  
4th April,  
1862.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Postmaster,  
Victoria, 17th  
Nov., 1862.

Further Union  
Pages, 1866,  
p. 36.

and, as ever, the adventurer and fortune-seeker quickly responded to the call. The tide of population again set in, and from all the world gold-seekers rushed to the Golden Cariboo. Rock Creek was forgotten in the stampede to the North. The yields from Williams Creek were rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and after the spring of 1862 the activity centred chiefly around that famous depository.

F. J. Barnard submitted a tender in April for the conveyance of the mails throughout the Colony at the rate of £1,500 per annum, and on 23rd June it was accepted upon Spalding's recommendation. At the same time regular Post Offices were authorized at Lytton, Lillooet, Williams Lake, Quesnel Forks, and Antler Creek. Constables and other responsible officials of the Colonial Government stationed at these points were detailed to attend to the postal arrangements in addition to their other duties, but they do not appear to have been granted any additional compensation for their services as Postmasters.

On July 19th, 1862, the mail contract with F. J. Barnard was put into operation and for the first time the official mailbags were carried through the interior of British Columbia with more or less adequate guarantees of safety and dispatch. By that time the new road to the Cariboo mines was completed as far as Alexandria and the tremendous problem of access to the interior was practically solved. The service to Lillooet and way-points was weekly in summer and semi-monthly in winter, and to points beyond Lillooet the mails were dispatched semi-monthly in summer and monthly in winter. The following public notice was issued by the Postmaster in regard to the new service:—

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

Notice is hereby given that a Contract has been entered into with Francis Jones Barnard (Barnard's Express) for the conveyance of the Government mails as undermentioned:—

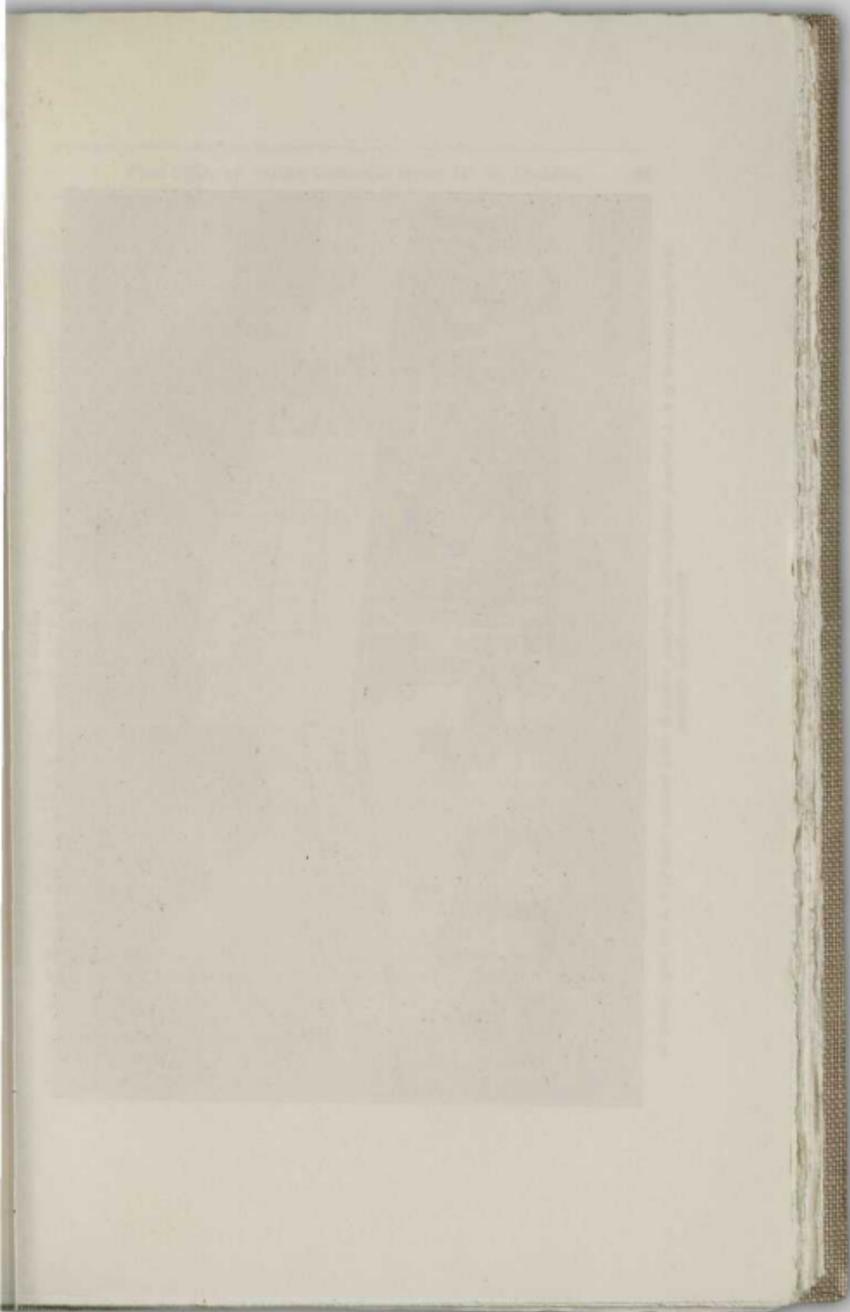
New Westminster to Douglas, Hope, Yale, Lytton, Lillooet and return.....	1st April to 30th Novr.	1st Decr. to 31st March.
Weekly.		Semi-Monthly.
New Westminster to Douglas, Yale, Lytton, Lillooet to Wil- liams Lake and on to Antler Creek and return.....		
Semi-Monthly.		Monthly.

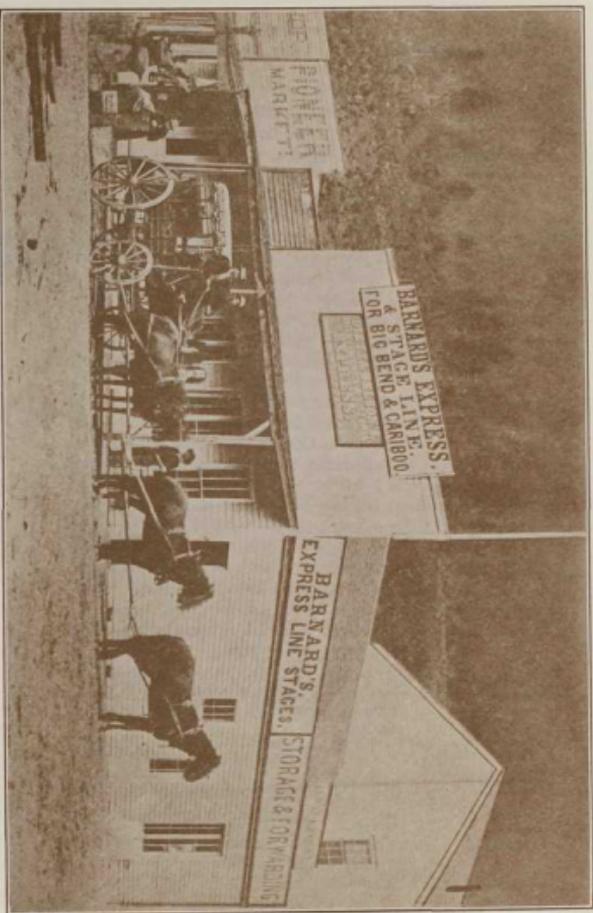
1st July, 1862.

WARNER R. SPALDING, J.P.,  
Postmaster of British Columbia.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
29th May,  
1862.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
21st Oct.,  
1862.





Mail stage operated by E. J. Hammond, George Deltz, and Hugh Nelson in 1866, starting from Yale on the long journey to Williams Creek, Cariboo.

The undermentioned rates of internal postage were adopted in the hope that they would provide a revenue sufficient to pay the cost of the new contract:—

From	To New Westminster.	To Douglas.	To Hope.	To Yale.	To Lytton.
New Westminster	—	5d.	5d.	5d.	1s.
Douglas.....	5d.	—	5d.	5d.	1s.
Hope.....	5d.	5d.	—	5d.	1s.
Yale.....	5d.	5d.	5d.	—	1s.
Lytton.....	1s.	1s.	1s.	1s.	—
Lillooet.....	1s.	1s.	1s.	1s.	1s.
Williams Lake.....	2s.	2s.	2s.	2s.	2s.
Quesnel.....	3s.	3s.	3s.	3s.	3s.
Antler.....	4s.	4s.	4s.	4s.	4s.

	To Lillooet.	To Williams Lake.	To Quesnel.	To Antler.
New Westminster	1s.	2s.	3s.	4s.
Douglas.....	1s.	2s.	3s.	4s.
Hope.....	1s.	2s.	3s.	4s.
Yale.....	1s.	2s.	3s.	4s.
Lytton.....	1s.	2s.	3s.	4s.
Lillooet.....	—	2s.	3s.	4s.
Williams Lake.....	2s.	—	1s.	2s.
Quesnel.....	3s.	1s.	—	1s.
Antler.....	4s.	2s.	1s.	—

British Columbia,  
23rd July,  
1862.

Prepayment in all cases was compulsory, so far as the Colonial postal rates were concerned. Newspapers sent by mail to Lytton and Lillooet were subject to a charge of 5d.; those sent between Douglas, Hope, and Yale passed for 2½d. To points beyond Lillooet the mails were little used for the transmission of newspapers, which were subject to a charge of 2s. each, to be prepaid, as it had been found that the miners often refused to pay postage on newspapers sent collect.

The new rates made the use of the 2½d. Colonial stamps almost impracticable for inland postage, and while the above arrangement was in effect their use on the mainland seems to have been confined chiefly to the prepayment of the inter-colonial postage between New Westminster and Victoria. They were also utilized for the prepayment of the Colonial postal charge of 2½d. on letters leaving the Colony for foreign countries, and the postal rate of 5d. on letters passing between New Westminster, Douglas, Hope, and Yale may

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
22nd Dec.,  
1862.

have been covered by pairs of the 2½d. stamps. The collection of the postal revenue in British Columbia was entirely in the hands of trusted constables and other officials, who were instructed to pay the amounts collected by them regularly to the Resident Magistrates throughout the Colony, and the prepayment of nearly all the postage in cash seems to have worked very well. Occasionally the miners had no currency and were obliged to pay postage in gold-dust. The Postmaster at Williams Lake remitted considerable sums in this way, which Spalding turned over to the Treasury at New Westminster.

At first the main office for the Cariboo district was at Williams Lake, but after the wagon-road was completed the location of that office was inconvenient and the headquarters for the district was stationed at Antler Creek. Subsequently the office was removed to Williams Creek and thence to the present site of Barkerville.

Daily British  
Colonist,  
24th Jan.,  
1863.

Notwithstanding these increased postal facilities, the superior service afforded by the express operators continued to commend itself to the miners, and by the end of the summer the authorities were faced by the disagreeable fact that their new postal service was not at all popular. The Post Offices at which the mail was delivered were not close enough to the mining camps, whereas the express agents delivered letters to the various road-houses and camps. All through that feverish summer the vexatious delays and annoying conditions attending the transmission of letters and papers gradually stirred up public resentment. The slow, infrequent, and quite sufficiently expensive Colonial mail service caused dissatisfaction no less pronounced than that occasioned by the exorbitant charges of the express companies; nevertheless, the greatly superior service afforded by the latter captured by far the greater proportion of the business. The total revenue of the Post Office Department for 1863, the great boom year of the Cariboo gold-rush, was only £749 7s. 4d., notwithstanding the high rates in effect. It would be interesting to know the amount taken in by the various express companies for the carriage of letters during the same period.

Annual Report,  
P. M. of B. C.,  
1863.

The express operators were still supposed to pay the Colonial postal tax of 2½d. on all letters carried by them, but in 1862 the total amount paid for "stamped envelopes"

(the hand-franked envelopes supplied by the express operators themselves and franked by the Post Office in quantities) was only £45 8s. 4d., or 4,360 envelopes at 2½d. each. It was apparent that some of the expresses and many private persons were surreptitiously conveying letters on which no postal tax had been paid. Spalding reported the facts to the Colonial Secretary, and in August the Magistrate at Lillooet announced that this illegal traffic had assumed large proportions. Spalding declared that four-fifths of all the letters and papers carried throughout the Colony paid no postal tax.

The unsatisfactory postal situation in the mainland Colony was now made the subject of serious complaint to Downing Street. To begin with, the mails were frequently detained at Victoria for several days after arrival there on the ocean steamers; and annoying delays occurred at New Westminster in consequence of the agreement between the Government and the British Columbia and Victoria Steam Navigation Company which prevented the mails being forwarded from Victoria by other lines and at the same time as the express. The mails were invariably behind the expresses in reaching the mines, though this was not the fault of the contractor, who was most assiduous in performing his undertaking. The service being weekly to Lillooet and only semi-monthly beyond that point, a detention of one week necessarily occurred there, whereas the express letters were always forwarded immediately after arrival. The excessive rates of postage diminished the number of letters transmitted through the Post Office and encouraged private persons to carry them without payment of the Colony's legitimate revenue.

Spalding was instructed to submit "a comprehensive suggestion for placing the postal system of British Columbia on a proper footing in all its details," and he lost no time in handing in his report. After outlining the unsatisfactory pecuniary condition of his Department and the evils which called for amendment, he strongly recommended the adoption of a uniform and lower schedule of postal rates to be rigidly enforced on all mailable matter transmitted throughout the Colony, whether by private persons, expresses, or the Post Office. He contended that this would enable him to improve the official service and ultimately drive the express operators from the field, and that the revenue which should

New West-  
minster P.O.  
Cash Book,  
1862.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
21st Oct.,  
1862.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
29th Aug.,  
1862.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
21st Oct.,  
1862.

accrue from this arrangement would more than pay the expenses of operation, whereas under the existing conditions there was an annual deficit of several thousand pounds. He recommended the appointment of a Postmaster to be in charge of postal affairs at the Cariboo mines, with headquarters at Williams Creek. Various other minor improvements in the service were suggested.

The Governor gave careful thought to the Postmaster's proposals, and ordered that most of them be carried into effect, but after due consideration he adhered to his opinion that the express companies were serving a useful purpose for the time being and he could perceive no feasible way of enforcing the payment of full Colonial postage on letters and papers transmitted by private enterprise. Efforts were made, however, to enforce payment of the 2½d. postal tax on all letters sent by express, and after December, 1862, the express companies were required to pay this tax annually at the close of the year. The payments made in this connection for the years 1862 and 1863 were:—

31st December, 1862 .....	£27 0 0
do. ....	39 7 7
31st December, 1863 .....	59 8 9
	£125 16 4

representing over twelve thousand letters at 2½d. each. After May, 1864, the postal charges were paid by the express operators by means of Colonial postage stamps affixed to the covers of letters carried by them through British Columbia and out of the Colony. The lower rates of postage suggested by Spalding were not put into effect at this time.

Efforts were made to overcome the delays in the transmission of the mails,\* and Barnard, the contractor, was good enough to convey the mail-bags to the upper country much oftener than the terms of his contract provided, without additional charge; but in spite of Spalding's efforts and the contractor's ready co-operation the official mail service did not gain ground. Governor Douglas was unwilling to involve the Colony in larger expenditures for the mail services, and it remained for his successor on the mainland, who was soon to take office, to promulgate the first postal legislation for British Columbia.

\* After 15th May, 1863, all mails for the upper country were forwarded via Yale and the old route by way of Douglas was not used by the mail contractors.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
9th April,  
1863.

On November 1st, 1863, in response to the popular outcry, lower internal rates of postage were adopted. For letters from New Westminster to points as far as Lillooet and Lytton the rate was fixed at 1s. per half-ounce, and to points beyond those places the rate was 2s. per half-ounce. On newspapers carried by mail the charges for transmission to the same places were 2½d. and 5d. respectively. Newspapers carried by expresses or private persons were not subject to any postal tax. The high rates fixed in 1862 had rendered the postal service unpopular, yet notwithstanding the general clamour about the high postal charges the express agents still had no difficulty in obtaining plenty of patronage at much higher rates, and the concensus of opinion was that there would be no improvement until the whole of the postal service was remodelled.

Almost from the time of the Colony's creation there had been agitation among the people of British Columbia for a separate Governor and a system of representative government. The wide powers entrusted to Douglas in 1858 had been modified to a certain extent by the appointment in March, 1859, of Mr. Justice Begbie and Colonel Moody as joint members with him of an Executive Council, but his rule remained almost an absolute monarchy, and for all practical purposes it may be said that Douglas governed British Columbia single-handed until a short time before his retirement. His far-seeing and paternal sway was not appreciated at its true worth by the inhabitants of the mainland Colony, and numerous representations were made to the Home Government on the undesirability of continuing under a joint Governor and without representative government. Amongst other grievances cited in these memorials was the lack of a proper postal system in the Colony.

On 11th June, 1863, the Imperial Government issued an Order in Council instructing the formation of a Legislative Council of fifteen for British Columbia, to be composed of one-third Government officials, one-third Magistrates, and one-third elected persons. Full parliamentary representation was deemed inadvisable for an "uncertain and shifting" population composed chiefly of wanderers from the four corners of the earth.

The first Legislative Council of British Columbia was convened on 21st January, 1864, in the old barracks of the

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Henry  
Woodin,  
Postmaster,  
Victoria, 20th  
Oct., 1863.

Union Papers,  
1866, p. 3.

B.C. Papers,  
No. 438, p. 9.

Royal Engineers at New Westminster. Sir James Douglas,\* who was not particularly enamoured of representative government and was at his best in the rôle of a benevolent autocrat, addressed the Council at considerable length, but made no mention of postal legislation for the Colony. He promised, however, to lay before them the project of the Atlantic and Pacific Transit and Telegraph Company to construct a wagon-road and telegraph-line across the continent from Lake Superior to British Columbia which should provide postal and telegraphic communication with Canada. He recommended the adoption of this Company's proposals, but unfortunately they came to nothing because the Hudson's Bay Company, which controlled the intervening territory, declined to do more than grant a mere right-of-way for the projected highway. The Red River Settlement was isolated and dependent, like British Columbia, on the United States Government for most of its communication with the outside world, and had nominated Sandford Fleming, afterwards prominent in the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, to present a memorial to the Duke of Newcastle, Secretary for the Colonies, in which they prayed for the establishment of a roadway across British North America. Similar representations were also made by the Canadian Government. These efforts were not productive of immediate results, but had their share in bringing about the ultimate provision of trans-continental communication across Canada.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. R. Spalding,  
9th April,  
1864.

One of the last official acts performed by Sir James Douglas was his appointment of W. R. Spalding to be Postmaster-General of British Columbia. The commission which conferred upon Spalding the title that he desired is dated 9th April, 1864. No change was made in his salary, which remained at £400 per annum.

When Sir James Douglas removed temporarily to New Westminster in March, 1864, he took with him the Great Seal of British Columbia and the officials of that Colony who had remained in Victoria. It is to be feared that the jubilations of the British Columbians on that occasion were due more to the advent of the seal and the officials in their midst, and to the knowledge that they were soon to have a

\* On 11th August, 1863, the untiring, faithful work of the Governor received well-earned recognition from his Sovereign and Douglas was created a Knight-Commander of the Bath. Thereafterward he bore the title by which he is known to posterity as a truly remarkable man.

separate Governor, than to the near presence of the great man who had administered their affairs with so much prudence and sagacity during his term of office. Early in April Sir James relinquished the cares of office, and the prospect of a more enterprising successor was hailed with delight. The inhabitants of both Colonies had yet to learn that separate Governors and Administrations were expensive luxuries, and that the cautious and economical policies of Sir James Douglas had distinct merits of their own.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE VANCOUVER ISLAND POST OFFICE UNDER HENRY WOOTTON, OCTOBER, 1861, TO APRIL, 1867, AND THE VANCOUVER ISLAND 5-CENT AND 10-CENT POSTAGE STAMPS OF 1865.

R.C. Papers,  
IV., p. 61.

The maladministration of John D'Ewes left the postal affairs of Vancouver Island in a condition bordering on chaos. It was necessary for the Governor to reconsider the whole question of postal management in the island Colony, and as the problem arose at a period of acute financial depression after the subsidence of the first gold-fever of 1858-59 and just prior to the revival caused by the first startling Cariboo discoveries late in 1861, economy was the first consideration in the decisions made. The census of Victoria in 1860 showed the population to be 2,020, and in 1861 it was probably little more. Although the island Capital was the most considerable place on the Coast above San Francisco, most of the letters were handled by express and the postal requirements of the town were not such as to justify more than a meagre provision. After due consideration, as we have seen, the Governor decided to abolish the Post Office Department as a separate establishment and to combine the duties of the Postmastership with those of the Harbour Master's office as a convenient and inexpensive arrangement. Mr. Henry Wootton was acting as Harbour Master, a position for which, as a former sea-captain, he was eminently suitable. He also assisted on occasion in the Customs Department. The Colonial Secretary addressed the following communication to Mr. Wootton:—

VANCOUVER ISLAND,  
COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
23rd October, 1861.

SIR,—It having been decided by the Governor that the Post Office in this Colony shall be abolished as a separate Establishment, and that the duties shall be conducted by the Harbour Master in conjunction with those already assigned to him, I have to communicate the same to you for your information and guidance.

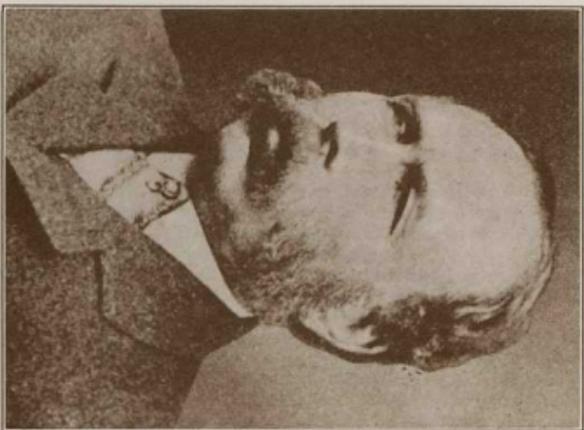
The present Officiating Postmaster, Mr. Buckley, who was placed in mere temporary charge of the Establishment during the absence on leave of the late Postmaster Mr. D'Ewes, has been accordingly



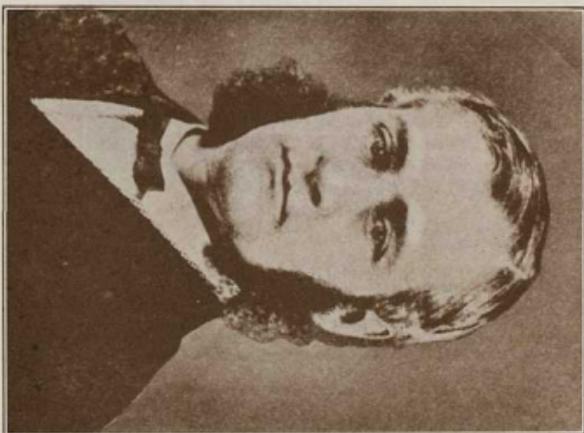
THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA, AS SEEN FROM THE MOUNTAINS OF SHAN-SI, IN THE PROVINCE OF SHAN-SI, CHINA.



THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA, AS SEEN FROM THE MOUNTAINS OF SHAN-SI, IN THE PROVINCE OF SHAN-SI, CHINA.



CAPT. WARREN H. SPALDING,  
 Postmaster of New Westminster, April to November, 1859.  
 Postmaster of the Colony of British Columbia, July,  
 1860, to March, 1864. Postmaster-General of British  
 Columbia, April, 1864, to April, 1866.



HENRY WOODRUFF,  
 Postmaster of Victoria, in charge of postal affairs of the  
 Colony of Vancouver Island, October, 1861, to November,  
 1864. Postmaster of Victoria until his death in Decem-  
 ber, 1873.

directed to transfer to you the charge of the entire Establishment, and you will make such arrangements for carrying on the current business of the Department, until it can be transferred to the Harbour Master's Office and combined therewith, as shall seem to you expedient and proper, seeking instructions from this office in any case of doubt or difficulty.

As you are aware, arrangements are in progress to combine the Harbour Master's Office and Post Office in one, and so soon as the necessary alterations and fittings have been made in the building on Wharf Street you will transfer the Post Office Department to it, taking care that the transfer be made after the departure of the next European mail and on such day as to cause the least amount of inconvenience to the public.

I have, etc.,

(Sgd) WILLIAM A. G. YOUNG,  
Colonial Secretary.

H. Wootton, Esq.,  
Acting Harbour Master,  
Victoria.

About a week later the Victoria Post Office was removed from its old quarters on Government Street to the Harbour Master's Office, a small one-story frame structure which stood on the west side of Wharf Street near the foot of Broughton, approximately on the site now occupied by the Marine Department's brick building. For about a year the office remained at that location, until the fresh influx of people to Victoria in consequence of the Cariboo gold discoveries rendered the building too small and inconvenient to serve the rapidly growing postal requirements of the town.

Mr. Wootton's services were so satisfactory that he retained the Postmastership until Confederation and was confirmed in it by the Dominion Government. He was never known as "Postmaster-General," but was actually in charge of the entire Post Office activities of Vancouver Island until the amalgamation of that Colony with British Columbia, and after the union of the two Colonies he acted as a sort of Deputy Postmaster-General for the island. His initial salary as Postmaster under the Colonial Government was fixed at \$500 per annum in addition to the amount he received for his other official duties. In 1862 Buckley was appointed assistant to the Postmaster, and received \$1,455 a year for his services.

The new Postmaster was strictly enjoined to pay into the Treasury at the close of each week all postal revenues collected by him, submitting his Detail Cash Book for exami-

Blue Sheet,  
Vancouver  
Island  
Expenditures  
for 1861.

Letter,  
Cst. Sec. to  
H. Wootton,  
17th Oct., 1861.

nation by the Colonial Treasurer. There was also to be a monthly audit. The revenue collected at Nanaimo was to be included with that paid in by the Postmaster of Victoria. These precautions came rather late in the day, but D'Ewes's dishonesty had impressed upon the authorities the necessity for proper system and check in handling the postal revenue. The condition of the Colony's exchequer was such that the Treasury could not afford to neglect any legitimate channel, however trifling, for augmenting the public funds. But better times were close at hand, for not long before Wootton's appointment the first rich yields of gold from the "upper country" had arrived in Victoria and electrified the inhabitants, and in 1862 a second period of expansion commenced in earnest.

B.C. Papers,  
IV., p. 58.

Throughout the mining seasons of 1862 and 1863 the Cariboo district poured forth gold at a rate rarely exceeded in modern times. This wealth passed through Victoria on its way to the outer world and had a magical effect in reviving the drooping fortunes of Vancouver Island. The streets of Victoria again assumed a lively and prosperous air; a building boom extended and vastly improved the town; and real-estate values took a decided upward leap. The lodestone of Cariboo drew gold-seekers from far and near: the penniless fortune-hunter on his way to the diggings jostled elbows with the lucky miner returning with hard-won but often quickly dissipated gold. Accurately to depict the conditions would require a palette of vivid colours. Victoria was the only place in the two Colonies which offered much in the way of amenities, and most of the successful miners were quick to avail themselves of the first chance to enjoy themselves with their new and unaccustomed riches. Sensational gambling and fast living were much in evidence, and senseless extravagance brought many of the miners to poverty as sudden as had been their rise to wealth; but some of the more prudent ones laid the foundations of large and enduring personal fortunes. The American Civil War was raging in the South, and Victoria became a rendezvous for Confederate plotters, its insular position recommending it for that purpose. The period was perhaps the most interesting in the history of the sister Colonies, and still awaits a Bret Harte or Rolf Boldrewood to give it literary immortality.

It was necessary to secure additional help to aid in handling the greatly increased volume of mail-matter passing through the Victoria Post Office. John M. Sparrow, who maintained his connection with the Victoria Post Office for several years, was engaged in 1862 to assist Wootton and Buckley in serving the long queues of miners waiting more or less patiently for letters on mail-days.

Towards the end of 1862 the office was removed from its cramped quarters in the Harbour Master's Office to a two-story frame building farther north on the west side of Wharf Street at the foot of Bastion, across the alley to the north of the Hudson's Bay Company's brick store building. Edgar B. Marvin operated a sail-loft in the upper story, and the ground floor was utilized for Post Office and Harbour Master's Office purposes. The building belonged to Henry Nathan, who was paid an annual rent of \$330 for the portion used by the Colonial Government. The new location was conveniently close to the principal wharves and the business section at that time.

The foreign mails increased tremendously in volume and the mail service from San Francisco, by which letters and papers from points other than the Eastern United States and Canada reached the Colony, resumed its old importance. It was essential that proper provision should now be made for the transmission of the Colonial mails on that route. No contract was made, but the owners of suitable vessels, including Messrs. Holliday and Henson, owners of the steamer "Cortez," were allowed the sum of \$250 per single trip for conveying the mails fortnightly from San Francisco to Victoria and return. Steamboat traffic on that route became very lucrative, and the wharves at Esquimalt, where the San Francisco steamers docked, hummed with activity.

The Governor authorized regular mail services between Victoria and Esquimalt and Saanich in March, 1863. At the same time authority was given for the remission of half the clearance dues of unlicensed coasting vessels undertaking to carry the mails to Nanaimo, Comox, Cowichan, and Salt-spring Island. The licensed steamer "Emily Harris" carried most of the mails between Nanaimo and Victoria gratuitously at this time. At all these places the number of settlers now justified the regular exchange of mails; but the revenue from the offices other than Victoria was very small and

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
Henry Wootton,  
12th Feb.,  
1867.

Letter,  
W. Lane  
Booker to  
Henry Wootton,  
30th Dec.,  
1861.

Letter,  
Henry Wootton  
to Col. Sec.,  
9th May, 1862.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
H. Wootton,  
2nd Feb., 1863.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
H. Wootton,  
4th Feb., 1863.

Edgar Fawcett:  
"Some  
Reminiscences  
of Old  
Victoria"  
(Toronto:  
Wm. Briggs,  
1912), p. 167.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
H. Wootton,  
13th Feb.,  
1863.

salariated Postmasters were not appointed. A branch office was opened at Esquimalt and H. E. Wilby acted as Postmaster there without remuneration other than that paid him for performing the mail service between Esquimalt and Victoria Post Office. On arrival of the steamer carrying mails from San Francisco the letter-bags were thrown ashore to the mounted courier, who galloped off in a cloud of dust along the Old Esquimalt Road to the Victoria Post Office, where eager hands assorted the letters and papers as rapidly as possible. But assistants were few and the mails were heavy. Wootton was severely censured by the Governor for attempting to help matters by allowing certain unauthorized persons to assist in the distribution of letters. Sometimes several hours elapsed between the arrival of the mails and the opening of the wicket, and meanwhile the waiting crowd grew impatient. Often a dollar or two would be paid for a place in line near the wicket. At times the queue extended up Wharf Street as far as Yates, where it joined a similar crowd waiting outside Wells-Fargo's express office on lower Yates Street.

Enterprising local firms proposed to abate this nuisance by effecting a house-to-house delivery of letters each day, with special deliveries on the arrival of the mail steamers, at the rate of 5 cents for each letter so delivered. The Governor approved of the idea and even encouraged its adoption, merely specifying that the recipients must pay the delivery fee themselves and give written orders for the delivery of their letters in this manner; but nothing came of the proposal and the citizens of Victoria had to wait many more years for a house-to-house delivery of their letters.

Douglas's term of office as Governor of Vancouver Island expired in September, 1863, and his commission as Governor of British Columbia had only a few more months to run. It was apparent that the long-continued agitation for separate Governors was about to bear fruit. In the following March, as we have seen, Douglas laid down the burden of office so far as the Colony of Vancouver Island was concerned and removed to New Westminster to serve the remainder of his official term there.

The postal policy of Sir James Douglas was marked by direct simplicity and effectiveness despite economy of means. It was eminently characteristic of the man to follow the

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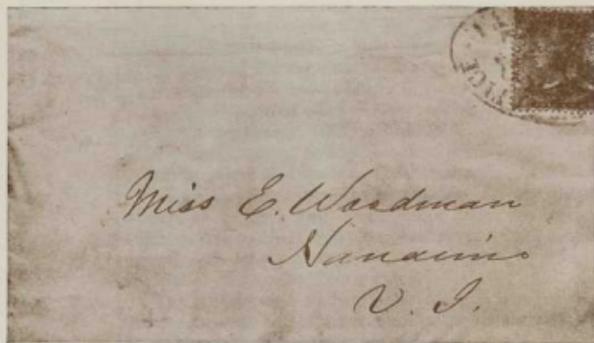
Faint, illegible text block, possibly a footer or note.

PLATE VII.



Typical Wells-Fargo Express cover, circa 1863-4, showing use of United States stamped envelope bearing the Express Company's printed frank. On arrival at New Westminster the 2½d. stamp was affixed to pay the Colonial postal tax, and the stamp was cancelled by the express agent with oval "Collect" stamp, indicating that the charge of Messrs. Delta and Nelson, by whom the letter was conveyed from Victoria to New Westminster, required to be paid before delivery.

It is difficult to see what particular advantage was gained in sending this letter by express; it would no doubt have travelled just as expeditiously by mail and for much less cost. This cover strikingly illustrates the enormous prestige the express companies earned for themselves in the early days.



Cover bearing Victoria Postmark (frank) addressed to Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, indicating the use of the 2½d. B.C. and V.I. stamp of 1860 for the prepayment of Vancouver Island inland postage.

simplest and most effectual way of dealing with the difficult problem by utilizing the facilities offered by private enterprise, at least for the inchoate period in which the two Colonies were dependent upon the uncertain showers of gold scattered by fickle Fortune from her hidden store. He steadily refused to involve the two Colonies in heavy and unnecessary expenditures for the establishment and maintenance of internal and external post communications, and it is impossible to escape the conviction that in the main his policy was right. On the other hand, his failure to bring forward postal legislation involved the colonists in an unfortunate and anomalous predicament: there were no positive guarantees of safety and dispatch in the transmission of the public correspondence. His policy was incomprehensible to his successors in office, whose experience of Post Office affairs had been in more ordered and settled communities; but before all was done they were forced to the conclusion that the postal requirements of British Columbia and Vancouver Island were not to be measured by ordinary standards. The remoteness of those Colonies, the scattered and wandering population of miners, and the fact that contact with the outside world was necessarily almost exclusively through American channels, combined to form a problem unique in British postal history and most difficult to cope with. The larger aspects of this question were among the very first considerations to engage the attention of the new Governors of Vancouver Island and British Columbia.

Captain (subsequently Sir) Arthur Edward Kennedy, Douglas's successor in the Governorship of Vancouver Island, arrived in Victoria on 25th March, 1864, and immediately assumed the duties of his office. Kennedy had served as Governor of Sierra Leone, as Consul-General in West Africa, and as Commander-in-Chief of Western Australia. His handsome presence and distinguished manners won him instant favour, and he commenced his new duties under favourable circumstances.

Three days after the arrival of the new Governor Henry Wootton was instructed to submit a report on the postal affairs of the Colony, estimating the number of letters passing through postal and express channels. Governor Kennedy had taken immediate exception to the practice of

Vancouver  
Island  
Government  
Gazette,  
Vol. III., No. 8,  
20th Jan.,  
1866.

Letter,  
H. Wootton  
to Col. Sec.,  
25th March,  
1864.

allowing private enterprise to handle any portion of the public correspondence. The estimate submitted by Wootton shows that approximately the following quantities of letters were handled by the two systems on Vancouver Island during 1863:—

	By The Post Offices.	By The Expresses.
Outwards.....	18,720	12,000
Inwards.....	14,480	14,440

On each outgoing letter sent by Post to the United States and other foreign countries the charges were 5 cents for the Colonial postage and 3 cents U.S. postage, plus the foreign rates if required. On all letters sent out by express the charges imposed by the express agents had to be paid in addition to the above postal rates. Notwithstanding the greater cost of the express service and the fact that regular mail services were now in operation between Victoria and the outside world, the very efficient facilities afforded by the express operators still captured a considerable proportion of the business. But there was no suggestion that the Colony lost any revenue by the arrangement; Messrs. Wells, Fargo & Co. were strictly observing the requirement of the Colonial Government by paying the postal tax of 5 cents on all letters taken by them out of the Colony. The Colonial Secretary was invited to express his opinion on the subject, and wrote as follows to the Governor:—

Memorandum,  
W. A. G. Young  
to Governor  
Kennedy, 25th  
March, 1864.

In my opinion it would be impolitic and inexpedient to interfere with the working of the express companies. If those Companies pay the regular charge for postage to the Colonial Revenue, it is sufficient. If business men choose to pay an additional sum to have their letters delivered on arrival the Government are no losers. It would be impossible for the Government to afford the same facilities as are given by Wells & Fargo without they entered into competition with them by opening offices throughout the United States and had travelling agents (as Wells & Fargo have) on every mail steamer.

W. A. G. Young.

In view of these representations the existing arrangement was allowed to stand provisionally, although it is evident that the Governor considered the concession very undesirable in principle.\*

\* Wells, Fargo and Company were never required to pay the Vancouver Island colonial postal charge of 2½d. on letters delivered by them in Victoria prior to the union of the Island Colony with British Columbia. Had they suggested in the conveyance of letters within the Colony of Vancouver Island no doubt payment of this tax would have been insisted upon; but evidently both Sir James Douglas and Governor Kennedy felt that the Colonial Government would not be justified in imposing a postal tax on letters conveyed to the Colony by private enterprise and delivered forthwith to the inhabitants without further transmission within the Colony itself.

Unfortunately the happy beginning of Governor Kennedy's term of office was quickly clouded over, for a few months after his advent the surface yields of the Cariboo mines, which had appeared to be inexhaustible, began to fall off in a most disappointing way, and it was clearly seen that the Cariboo district could no longer be regarded as a "poor man's diggings" capable of supporting a large body of miners. This was a disastrous development for the businessmen and others who had invested heavily in Victoria on the strength of the Cariboo gold discoveries. Business confidence suffered a severe blow; a second and most stringent period of financial depression began, and the taxpayers of Vancouver Island naturally sought to reduce the cost of their administration. Governor Kennedy and the island Legislature eventually arrived at a complete deadlock, and a most unpleasant situation developed. The Governor was extremely anxious to place the postal affairs of the Colony on a proper footing, but was prevented from doing so by the refusal of the Legislative Assembly to provide ways and means or even to discuss the matter properly. Already the people of Vancouver Island were tiring of their new Governor and advocating union with British Columbia as the solution of their troubles.

Governor Kennedy determined to reform postal matters so far as lay within his power, and ordered the preparation of proper contracts for the mail services to and from and within the Colony. In September, 1864, he communicated to the Legislative Assembly his views as to the imperative necessity for completing British lines of communication between Vancouver Island and Panama, so that the defective link in the overseas chain might be properly forged at last. The Legislature refused to vote any money in furtherance of this object and complained of the cost of the temporary arrangement then in effect, under which the owners of the vessels carrying the mails from San Francisco were paid \$250 per single trip for their services. The Governor pointed out that any such arrangement could not "be regarded as part of a steady and determined scheme of communication with the Mother Country."

In his dispatches to the Colonial Office the Governor complained that his representations in this respect were "treated with neglect and indifference by the Assembly,"

Union Papers,  
1866, p. 30.

Dispatch,  
Governor  
Kennedy  
to Rt. Hon.  
Edward  
Cardwell,  
5th Sept.,  
1865.

Ditto,  
26th June,  
1866.

Ditto,  
7th July, 1864.

Ditto,  
17th Aug.,  
1865.

and stated that "expensive and defective postal and other communications are the great bars to progress and reflect but little credit on two great nations—England and America." At a later date he expressed the opinion that "the want of regular and safe mail communication between Panama and these Colonies—more especially between San Francisco and this Colony—is a great injury to British interests and a great discredit to England and America alike." The reiteration of these statements in Kennedy's dispatches brought forth various suggestions from the Home Government, but the net result was that nothing could be done so long as the Colonial legislators refused to help themselves in the matter. The existing temporary and unsatisfactory arrangement continued until early in 1866, when the gold discoveries in the Kootenay and Big Bend districts put fresh heart into the people of Vancouver Island and the question of a mail subsidy received more favourable consideration.

The following mail contracts for Vancouver Island were authorized for the year 1865:—

From Victoria to	Contractor.	Frequency.	Cost.
New Westminster.....	Hudson's Bay Co....	Weekly.....	\$1,374.82 per annum.
Comox.....	A. J. Rise.....	Monthly.....	} \$194.00 per month.
Nanaimo, Cowichan & Salt Spring Island.....	do. ....	Twice per month.....	
Saanich.....	Bowman & Halsey	3 times per week.....	\$250.00 per annum.
Esquimalt.....	H. E. Wilby.....	Daily.....	\$3 per round trip (Ocean mails \$6.00).

Letter,  
Actg. Col. Sec.  
to H. Wootton,  
31st March,  
1865.

The British subjects resident on San Juan Island in the Gulf of Georgia, and the force maintained there in consequence of the British claim to that island, received their letters chiefly through the Senior Naval Officer at Esquimalt, who forwarded them by H.M. ships as opportunity offered. No Colonial Post Office was ever established by the British authorities on San Juan Island.

In the summer of 1864 a flurry of excitement was caused by the discovery of gold in promising quantities in the Sooke and Leech Rivers, about twenty-five miles from Victoria.

The discovery was made in the course of certain commendable efforts instigated by Governor Kennedy to explore portions of the interior of the island, so much of which remained a *terra incognita*. In August the Governor reported that the population of Victoria was being rapidly depleted by the rush to Sooke. For several months there was a steady increase in the output of gold; trails were cut from Sooke to the mines, and pack-horses were busily engaged in carrying supplies and letters. The citizens of Victoria were treated to the spectacle of a miniature gold-rush at their very door. The excitement lasted about a year. In August, 1864, a Post Office was opened at Sooke, with Messrs. Elliott Stuart & Co. in charge; and in April, 1865, Mr. John A. Mara consented to act as Postmaster at Leech River. The office at Leech River continued in operation until about the end of 1865, when the almost total abandonment of the diggings rendered it no longer necessary. Alfred Barnett conveyed the mails between Victoria and Kennedy Flat, on Leech River, twice per week each way at the rate of \$10 per round trip. In November, 1865, the service was reduced to once per week, and a few weeks later it was discontinued.

In March, 1865, Rev. Cornelius Bryant, whose efficient services as Postmaster at Nanaimo had been at the disposal of the Colonial Government without cost, desired to be relieved of the office, and James Tarver was appointed Postmaster with a fixed salary of \$485 per annum from 12th May.

The discovery of gold by American prospectors at Wild Horse Creek in the Kootenay country, and the subsequent rush to Big Bend, in Upper Columbia River district, brought a revival of hope to the people of Victoria, whose investments on account of the expected Cariboo trade had turned out so disastrously. The season of 1865 was successful enough to justify high hopes, but the operations in 1866 proved to be an almost total failure.

The revival of confidence and the determined efforts of Victoria merchants to capture the trade of the miners outfitting for the new gold-mines brought about the provision by the island Legislative Assembly of the much-needed subsidy for a regular mail service by British steamer between Victoria and San Francisco. The Hudson's Bay Company's steamer "Labouche," which had arrived on the Coast in

Dispatch,  
Governor  
Kennedy  
to Rt. Hon.  
Edward  
Cardwell,  
4th Aug., 1864.

Letter.  
Actg. Col. Sec.  
to H. Wootton,  
23rd March,  
1865.

Diitto.  
11th May,  
1865.

Dispatch,  
Governor  
Kennedy  
to Rt. Hon.  
Edward  
Cardwell,  
15th April,  
1866.

1859 and had been engaged in the Company's northern coast trade, was reconditioned at a cost of \$30,000 and granted a subsidy of \$1,500 per round trip for the maintenance of a fortnightly service to San Francisco. Captain William A. Mouat, master of the vessel, was appointed mail agent and authorized to open the mail-bags while en route and assort the letters for Victoria to expedite their delivery on arrival. Unfortunately the "Labouchere" was wrecked on her first return voyage when but a few miles out of San Francisco on 15th April, 1866. Kennedy immediately concluded a contract with the California, Oregon and Mexico Steamship Company on virtually the same terms and conditions.

The earnest efforts of Governor Kennedy to reform the Colony's postal service merely had the effect of widening the breach between the colonists and himself. The absence of proper postal legislation was to him intolerable, and he had no intention of allowing this state of affairs to continue.

The following rates of postage from Vancouver Island were in effect in 1865:—

Memorandum,  
Henry Wootton  
to John A.  
Mars, 24th  
March, 1865.

To.	Rate.	
New Westminster.....	5c. per ½ ounce.	
California.....	8c.	(including Colonial postage of 5c.)
Canada & B.N.A.....	15c.	do.
United States.....	15c.	do.
Great Britain & Ireland.....	30c.	do.
Italy.....	30c.	do.
Austria, Germany & Prussia.....	35c.	do.
France.....	40c.	do.
Norway, Sweden & Denmark.....	45c.	do.

Some question was raised as to the validity of these charges, and the Postmaster was requested to state under what authority they had been fixed and levied. His reply was sufficiently startling:—

VANCOUVER ISLAND,  
POST OFFICE,  
7th June, 1865.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform you for the information of the Governor His Excellency that there are no Rules or Regulations under which this Department is conducted, nor have I received any but verbal instructions as Postmaster.

I further beg to state that I know of no authority by which the different rates of postage are fixed and levied.

With the exception of the enclosed extract from the Colonial Secretary's letter\* the only instructions I received with regard to the

\* See page 92.

rates of postage were those charged by the officiating Postmaster when I took charge.

I have, &c.,  
HENRY WOOTTON,  
Postmaster.

Henry Wakeford, Esq.,  
Acting Colonial Secretary,  
Victoria, V.I.

The unsatisfactory state of the Vancouver Island Post Office, due entirely to want of legislation and not to any mismanagement on the part of the officer in charge, had caused the Governor to instruct the Attorney-General of the Colony to report on the legal aspects of the situation. That official, after citing the authority under which the Colonial Legislature had power to enact the necessary laws providing for the establishment, maintenance, and regulation of posts and post communications to and from and within the Colony, offered the following comment:—

VANCOUVER ISLAND,  
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
May 31st, 1865.

Generally as to the Postal Laws of this Colony it is I think clear that until some Postal Law be passed in this Colony the Postmaster General in England has the power to establish posts and the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to fix the rates of postage within the Colony.

As to any authority or laws at present governing the Postal Service in Vancouver Island I can only say that although the authority seems to exist in the Postmaster General at home to regulate the Service and in the Lords of the Treasury to regulate the rates of postage such powers have not to my knowledge ever been exercised, and I am at a loss to know by what lawful authority the existing Postal Service has been established.

THOMAS L. WOOD,  
Acting Attorney General.

A suitable Postal Bill was drafted forthwith and submitted to the Legislative Council, by whom it was passed; but the obstreperous House of Assembly, complained the Governor in a dispatch dated 7th June, 1865, threw it out "without even the *form* of discussion," and he had little hope that they would take any action in the matter "till some financial scandal take place such as that which signalized Mr. D'Ewes' administration of this Department in 1861. Indeed," the dispatch continued, it seemed "unaccountable why steps were not taken at that time by the Legislature to place it on a sound and legal footing." Of his own authority

Dispatch,  
Governor  
Kennedy  
to Hl. Hon.  
Edward  
Curdwell,  
7th June, 1865.

Ditto.

the Governor had no power to regulate the service by issuing rules and regulations and fixing rates of postage; that function rested with the elected representatives of the people.

Profoundly dissatisfied with the existing conditions, Governor Kennedy returned to the charge in November, 1865. In his address to the Legislative Assembly at that time he stated that "the anomalous state of the law regarding the Postal Service of this Colony generally demands your attention. There is no law authorizing the Executive to frame Rules and Regulations or fix the rates of postage." The Postal Bill was again passed by the Council and sent to the Legislative Assembly in February, 1866. That body let it lie until the 23rd of May, when they again threw it out after a debate in which one of the members was unkind enough to suggest that Kennedy desired the passage of the Bill in order "to create an office for a certain party." This insinuation the Governor scornfully repudiated as "wholly devoid of foundation."

The second refusal of the Island Legislature to pass a Postal Bill was reported by Governor Kennedy to the Colonial Office in a dispatch which stated that the House did not now deem it necessary to pass such a Bill on account of the probability of the immediate union of the sister Colonies. This Kennedy considered to be "no adequate ground for refusing to render efficient so important a branch of the public service." He was fully aware of the desirability of the union of Vancouver Island with British Columbia and consistently worked to bring it about, unlike his contemporary on the mainland, but reaped only contumely and dislike for his unselfish efforts.

On receipt of Kennedy's dispatch of 7th June, 1865, the Secretary for the Colonies apprised the Postmaster-General of Great Britain of the facts, but in the circumstances that Minister felt unable to offer any suggestions which could be of service to the Governor in the emergency. The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury also declined to interfere. The following dispatch shows the attitude of the Imperial authorities:—

DOWNING STREET,

December 30, 1865.

SIR,—With reference to . . . the regulation of the Post in Vancouver Island, I have the honour to enclose for your informa-

Ditto,  
4th Sept.,  
1866.

Vancouver  
Island  
Government  
Gazette,  
Vol. III., No. 5,  
30th Jan.,  
1866.

Further  
Union Papers,  
1867, p. 19.

tion the accompanying copy of a further communication from the Treasury.

You will see that the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury feel that there would be great inconvenience in an interference with this subject by the Government at home, and I quite share this feeling.

If the Legislature refuse to pass the laws necessary to establish a postal system it will be your duty to exert such authority as, in the opinion of your law officers, you legally possess to supply the want of legislation. But if you should find that your lawful powers as Governor are not sufficient to prevent public inconvenience, it will be better that you should leave the community to suffer the consequences imposed upon them by the legislation or non-legislation of their representatives than that you should incur the responsibility of any proceedings which are not warranted by law.

I have, etc.,

EDWARD CARDWELL.

Governor Kennedy, C.B.,  
*&c., &c., &c.*

The Home authorities, with their jealous regard for the rights and privileges of British colonists, wisely felt that any interference on their part would be inexpedient and only lead to further strife. Governor Kennedy's legal advisers were of the opinion that he had not the requisite power to regulate the Post Office of Vancouver Island, and he referred the whole matter to a Board of Officers for inquiry and report, but before their findings could be handed in the union of the two Colonies had been authorized and separate postal legislation for Vancouver Island was no longer necessary.

The much-desired union with British Columbia came none too soon. In 1866 the inhabitants of the island, bitterly disappointed in their hopes of continued prosperity, ardently sought to escape from the heavy burden of their separate administration. The Governor fell so completely out of favour with the colonists that nothing he could do or suggest met with any favour in their eyes. Almost from the time of his arrival there had been a growing sentiment in favour of amalgamation—a feeling in which many of the inhabitants of British Columbia participated. Repeated demands for retrenchment in the public expenditures had met with no adequate response and the heavy cost of maintaining separate Governors and corps of officials was crippling both Colonies. In July, 1866, when the Vancouver Island House of Assembly adopted a resolution of "utter want of confidence" in Governor Kennedy, the situation became acute. At the height of much undignified wrangling came the re-

Ditto, p. 16.

Dispatch,  
 Governor  
 Kennedy  
 to Rt. Hon.  
 Edward  
 Cardwell,  
 4th Sept.,  
 1866.

Further  
 Union Papers,  
 1867, p. 4.

assuring announcement that the Home Government proposed to enact the necessary legislation to amalgamate the two Colonies. On the 17th of the following November the union of Vancouver Island with British Columbia was consummated under the Governorship of Frederick Seymour, but so apathetic and nearly discouraged were the inhabitants of both island and mainland that the nuptials aroused little enthusiasm.

Governor Kennedy left Victoria with as little delay as possible after the receipt of official intimation that the two Colonies were to be united. It is hardly to be supposed that he could have any serious regrets at leaving Vancouver Island, where he had found every prospect pleasing at first, only to discover that man was at least difficult to manage. He had formed decided opinions on the merits and demerits of representative government as practised in Vancouver Island, and suggested to the Home authorities that the Legislative Council was quite sufficient to meet the existing requirements without the aid of a House of Assembly.

*Ditto*, p. 26.

It is to be regretted that Sir Arthur Kennedy's undoubted abilities, which were fully known to the authorities at Downing Street, were not more highly appreciated by the people of Vancouver Island, and that he should have left the Colony with so much relief after a most unpleasant tenure of office in a very trying period. His subsequent services to the Empire were more happily cast; he served with distinction at Hong Kong and in Queensland, and received the honour of knighthood before his death in 1883 while returning from Australia to England.

Before his departure Governor Kennedy appointed Mr. (subsequently Sir) William A. G. Young, the Colonial Secretary, to be Administrator of the Government of Vancouver Island in the interim which must elapse before Governor Seymour, then absent on his wedding tour in Europe, could return to the scene of his official labours.

Notwithstanding the union of the two Colonies, the Post Office of Vancouver Island continued to function separately until April, 1867, when a new Postal Ordinance for the United Colony was enacted and the British Columbia Postal Ordinance of 1864 was repealed. Under the new law the postal services of Vancouver Island were assimilated with those of the mainland and made subject to the laws and

regulations governing the Post Office Department of British Columbia. Thus the Post Office Department of Vancouver Island, if such can be said ever to have had a properly constituted existence, came to an end in common with the other separate establishments of that Colony. Its story is curious, and probably cannot be duplicated in the record of British postal affairs. A Post Office without laws or proper regulations, almost without stamps, and whose letters were carried chiefly by express, it has long exhibited the most baffling inconsistencies, which have been a source of puzzlement and almost of exasperation to the student of philately and postal lore.

#### THE VANCOUVER ISLAND 5-CENT AND 10-CENT POSTAGE STAMPS OF 1865.

One of the many undesirable factors in the curious postal situation that had developed on Vancouver Island in 1864 was the use by that Colony of the 2½d. "British Columbia and Vancouver's Island" postage stamp of 1860. A detailed explanation at this point of the extraordinary tangle then existing in the philatelic relations of the two Colonies would impede the progress of our narrative considerably. Those interested are accordingly referred to Appendix C (page 171), where an authentic account of the state of affairs (which was probably unparalleled in British postal history and certainly has been a source of utter bewilderment to philatelists for many years) is given for the first time. It is sufficient here to state that on 26th October, 1864, Governor Kennedy, convinced of the inherent undesirability of further sanctioning the use by his Government of the 2½d. postage stamps, which were an increasing source of annoyance and embarrassment to the British Columbian Government when used in Vancouver Island, ordered the withdrawal from sale in the Colony of those stamps and transferred the remainder of the stock in his possession to the mainland Government. As a temporary expedient in the absence of proper postage stamps the use of the hand-franks was again resorted to.

The following dispatch brought into existence the interesting and in some cases valuable Vancouver Island postage stamps of 1865:—

No. 4. Miscellaneous.

VICTORIA,  
VANCOUVER ISLAND,  
5th January, 1865.

SIR,—I have the honour to request you will cause the necessary steps to be taken for procuring a supply of postage labels for the use of this Colony.

It is proposed that two denominations of stamps only should be prepared at present, and which, in addition to a profile portrait of Her Majesty surmounted by the words "Vancouver Island," should bear at the foot the words "Five Cents" and "Ten Cents" respectively. These stamps might be respectively of a red and blue colour.

The number required of each description is 50,000, and I should feel obliged if a portion of each kind could be sent by post as soon after completion as possible, and the remainder in instalments by subsequent mails.

I have, &amp;c.,

A. E. KENNEDY,  
Governor.

*The Right Honourable  
Edward Cardwell,  
&c., &c., &c.*

No time was lost by the Home authorities in complying with this request. The well-known Vancouver Island 5-cent and 10-cent designs were evolved, and Messrs. De La Rue & Company printed 114,000 of the 5-cent rose and 111,360 of the 10-cent blue on white paper watermarked Crown C C.

The stamps are both perforated 14 and unperforated. The imperforates, though very rare, were postally used, apparently all from Victoria, during 1866. They are exactly similar to the perf. 14 in colour and paper. Their origin is not known, and various theories have been advanced to account for their existence. The records of the Agents-General in London indicate that the entire consignment left there on 10th April, 1865, not in instalments as requested by the Governor. They arrived in the Colony about the 20th of June and were all turned over by the Colonial Secretary to the Treasurer on the 22nd of that month. There is no doubt about the genuineness of the postal use of the imperforates from the Colony in 1866; hence it seems probable that a small portion of the printing, a few sheets perhaps, was purposely or inadvertently left unperforated and was included with those placed on sale in 1866. The perforates and imperforates seem to have been used concurrently.

Arrangements for the issue of the new stamps were completed in September (the delay was partly due to the

Letter,  
Alex. Watson  
to Actg. Col.  
Sec., 22nd  
June, 1865.

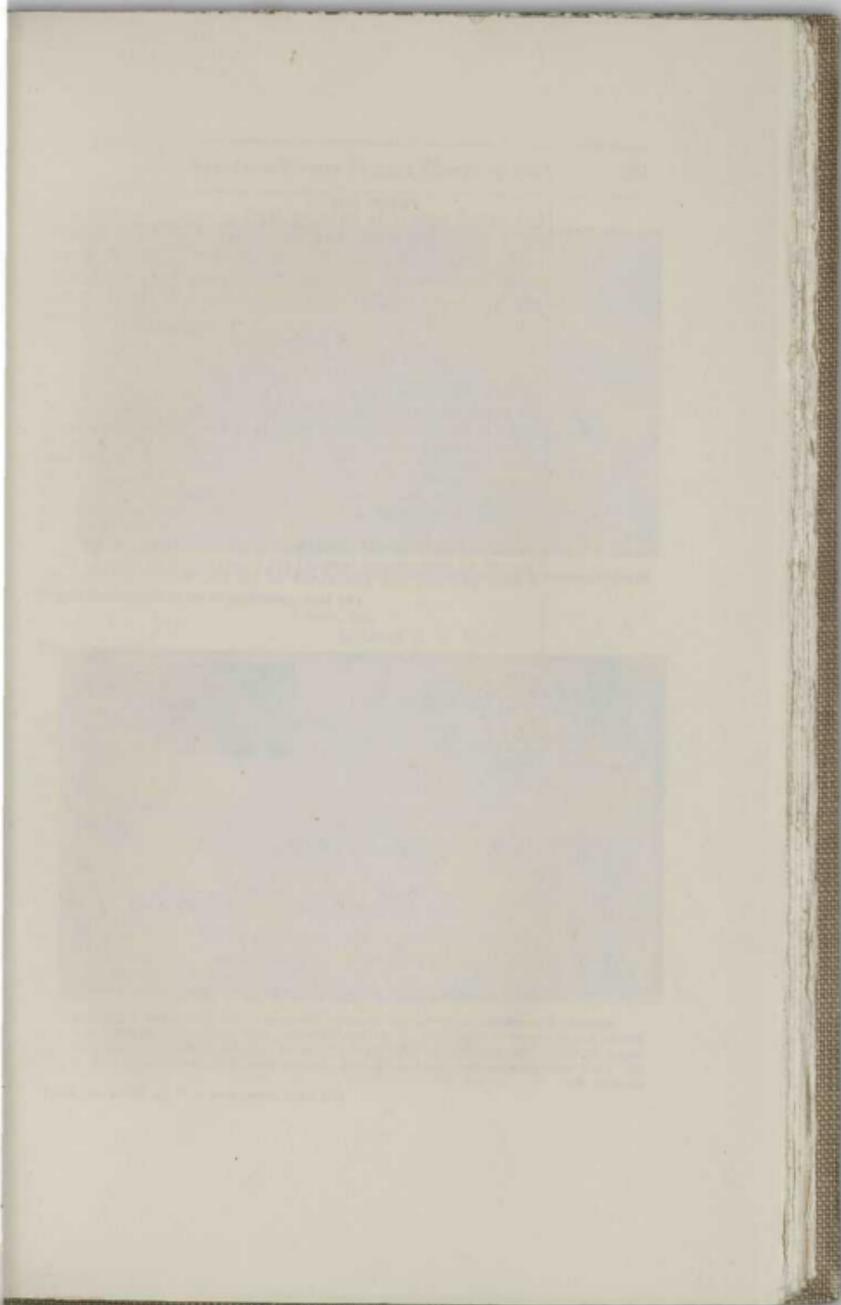
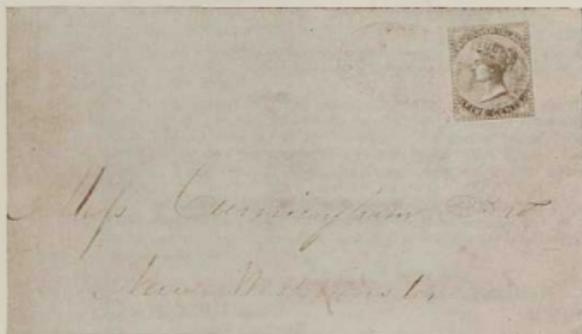


PLATE VIII.



Superb specimen of the rare imperforate Vancouver Island 5-cent postage stamp of 1865.

(By kind permission of G. P. Bainbridge, Esq.)



Express cover showing concurrent use from Victoria of the perforated Vancouver Island 5-cent stamp of 1865 and the British Columbia and Vancouver's Island 2½d. stamp of 1866. The contents of this letter was dated 10th May, 1867, showing that the 2½d. stamps were in use at that date, having been reissued as described in Chapter IX.

(By kind permission of C. B. Hill-Tout, Esq.)

necessity for obtaining fresh supplies of United States and British Columbian stamps, so that the Post Office could revert to the use of stamps wherever possible and avoid unnecessary payments in cash), and the following communication shows that their use was insisted upon by the Governor:—

VANCOUVER ISLAND,  
COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
VICTORIA,

19th September, 1865.\*

SIR,—Colonial postage stamps can now be obtained by you at the Treasury. They will also be sold for resale to Stationers and others in quantities, at a discount upon their face value, so that the public may have every facility for obtaining them. I am therefore directed by the Governor to instruct you to be careful, in future, only to receive *coin* in payment of *postages* of letters when, under existing circumstances, there is really no other *alternative*, such as payment of postages on letters *delivered*.

Wells & Fargo's letters may be stamped [franked] as heretofore.

In all cases of letters posted the Colonial postage must be *prepaid*, otherwise the letters will not be forwarded, and you will issue a notice to the public to this effect.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM A. G. YOUNG.

The Postmaster,  
&c., &c., &c.

Notwithstanding these very explicit instructions the paucity of Vancouver Island stamps known to have been postally used during that Colony's separate existence and the continued use at that time of the old franked envelopes have induced students of philately to suppose that there must have been some inexplicable confusion or delay in connection with the issue of these stamps. In seeking the full explanation of this point it is necessary that the political and fiscal history of the period be closely studied, as indeed is always desirable in probing the details of advanced philately.

During 1866 Vancouver Island, then in the last phase of its existence as a separate Colony, experienced the worst of

\* In the absence of more exact data I have adopted the date of this letter as the date of issue of the Vancouver Island 5-cent and 10-cent stamps. In forwarding a supply of the new stamps to the Postmaster at Nanaimo on 18th October, 1865, Henry Wootton enclosed a copy of the Vancouver Island Government Gazette dated 20th September, 1865, containing a notice relating to the new issue. No doubt this notice fixed the actual date of issue, but unfortunately no copy of that particular number of the Gazette is known to be now in existence, nor do the Victoria newspapers of contemporary dates contain any notices or references relating to the stamps. The absence of postal legislation caused the Governor to entertain grave doubts of the legality of the existing postal rates, but does not seem to have prevented him from issuing the new stamps as soon as possible after their arrival.

Further  
Union Papers,  
1867, p. 8.

its several periods of business depression. The sudden and wholly unexpected failure of the Big Bend goldfields plunged the sister Colonies into the depths of despondency, adding as it did to the general gloom caused by the more gradual but equally deplorable falling-off in the surface output of the Cariboo mines. At Victoria, the centre of trade and population for both Colonies, the luck of the miners was sharply reflected as always: bankruptcy was common; business and credit came nearly to an end. The Colonial Government was to all intents and purposes insolvent; the Bank of British North America refused to make them further advances, and Victoria merchants dunned the harassed Colonial officials for payment of long-overdue Government accounts. Under such circumstances even so small a matter as the redemption of the franked envelopes sold by John D'Ewes in 1860 and 1861 was out of the question. These envelopes, for which of course the island Government had received no revenue, continued to be presented for mailing from time to time and are known to have been used even after the union of the two Colonies. Evidently Henry Wootton had been unable to avoid the sale of a certain surplus of franked envelopes during the interim from 26th October, 1864, to 19th September, 1865, in which the use of postage stamps in Vancouver Island was temporarily abandoned, and these also continued to be posted after stamps were available.

It is apparent that under such conditions there could be no great demand for the new Vancouver Island stamps; hence the scarcity of covers showing their postal use from the Colony during its separate existence. In such desperately hard times citizens would ransack their cupboards for the old franked envelopes; and the unfortunate Governor was so disliked that even his new stamps were bound to be unpopular. However, the numbers so used were not so small as has been supposed.

Shortly after the union of the two Colonies the unsold remainders of the Vancouver Island stamps were transferred to the Postmaster-General of the united Colony. On 8th April, 1867, the former Treasurer of Vancouver Island handed over \$3,705 (74,100) at 5 cents and \$11,016 (110,160) at 10 cents, so that the number used by the Vancouver Island Post Office during its separate existence can be gauged as follows:—

Letter  
Alex. Watson  
to Col. Sec.,  
B.C., 8th  
April, 1867.

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	5c.	10c.
Number Printed .....	114,000	111,360
Number Used by Vancouver Island Post Office during its Separate Existence .....	39,900	1,200
Number Transferred to Government of United Colony .....	74,100	110,160
Totals .....	114,000	111,360

After their transfer to the Postmaster-General of British Columbia these stamps are to be regarded as British Columbian; hence their subsequent history will be traced in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA UNDER WARNER R. SPALDING, POSTMASTER-GENERAL, MAY, 1864, TO APRIL, 1866, AND THE BRITISH COLUMBIA 3d. POSTAGE STAMP OF 1865.

Frederick Seymour, who succeeded Sir James Douglas in the Governorship of British Columbia, arrived in the Colony on 20th April, 1864. He had served as Assistant Colonial Secretary in Tasmania and as Magistrate and Lieutenant-Governor in the West Indies. He was welcomed by the British Columbians with unfeigned delight, for his appointment signaled the end of the dual Governorship which had been so long a source of dissatisfaction to them.

One of Governor Seymour's first official acts was the announcement of his intention to proceed at once with the framing of a Postal Ordinance for British Columbia. No doubt the existence in the third quarter of the nineteenth century of a British Colony without postal legislation of any kind was a distinct novelty to him. The Legislative Council promptly set to work upon a Bill to provide for the postal requirements of the Colony.

Post Office events in British Columbia now developed swiftly. Recognizing the desirability of proper postal representation at the mines, the Governor appointed J. R. Commeline, of Yale, to be Postmaster at Williams Creek at an annual salary of £400. The appointment was largely experimental and was made chiefly with the object of protecting the interests of the Colonial Post Office in connection with the operations of the express companies in the mining districts. Commeline was responsible, under Spalding, for the postal service in the Cariboo district. The fairly large salary granted him was intended to cover the greater cost of living in the upper country, but Commeline constantly complained of its insufficiency. The head office for Cariboo was removed from Williams Lake to Williams Creek, and the former office, which was now off the main wagon-road to the mines, was closed.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. R. Spalding,  
4th May, 1864.

The "General Post Office" at New Westminster, as it was styled after the appointment of Spalding to the position of Postmaster-General, was still housed in the modest cottage built for Spalding in 1859. The accommodation, while not spacious, was sufficient for the requirements of the Department. New Westminster itself had not grown to any considerable extent—indeed, the acres of felled trees surrounding the town offered a spectacle of unfulfilled hopes that had chilled the new Governor on his arrival—but the inhabitants had one advantage over the people of Victoria so far as their postal affairs were concerned. Three weeks after his arrival Governor Seymour had sanctioned the employment of a messenger to deliver letters from door to door after the arrival of the mail steamer from Victoria. At first the work was satisfactorily performed by a Chinaman, who received £1 a week for his services, but after April, 1866, the duties of messenger were entrusted to V. B. Tait, Spalding's assistant, who apparently carried it on during several of the lean years of the Colony's existence. About 1869 this work was performed by an Indian known as "Office Jim," who acted as assistant to Tait and as messenger for several of the Government offices then remaining at New Westminster.

Valentine B. Tait, said to have been a nephew of Archbishop Tait of Canterbury, was employed as assistant to Spalding at the beginning of 1864 at a salary of £200 per annum. After the union of the two Colonies he acted as Postmaster of New Westminster, and his really valuable and efficient services were the subject of frequent comment on the part of his superiors. He was appointed Postmaster of New Westminster when British Columbia entered Confederation with Canada, and held that position until his death in October, 1880.

The first British Columbian Postal Ordinance was passed by the Legislative Council on 2nd May, 1864, and received the assent of the Governor two days later. It was put into effect on the 20th June. Under its provisions the Governor had full power to establish Post Offices in the Colony, and powers were vested in the Postmaster-General, subject to the higher authority of the Governor, for the appointment of Postmasters, the regulation of the service generally, and the completion of contracts for the conveyance of the mails.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Actg.  
Col. Sec., 23rd  
Jan., 1866.

Union Papers,  
1866, p. 23.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Actg.  
Col. Sec., 2nd  
May, 1866.

Offences under the Act were defined and suitable penalties fixed; the private carriage of letters and other mailable matter, without the previous payment of the full rates of postage prescribed by the Ordinance, was made punishable by fine; but the Postmaster-General's sole and exclusive privilege of conveying the public correspondence was not insisted upon. Thus the Colonial Government, while not interfering directly in the transmission of mail-matter by express operators and private individuals, established its undoubted right to levy a tax on all such matter so conveyed, and hoped by the introduction of lower rates of postage and improved service, to encourage extensive patronage and eventually supersede the facilities hitherto provided by private enterprise.

The following public notice was issued by the Postmaster-General:—

GENERAL POST OFFICE.

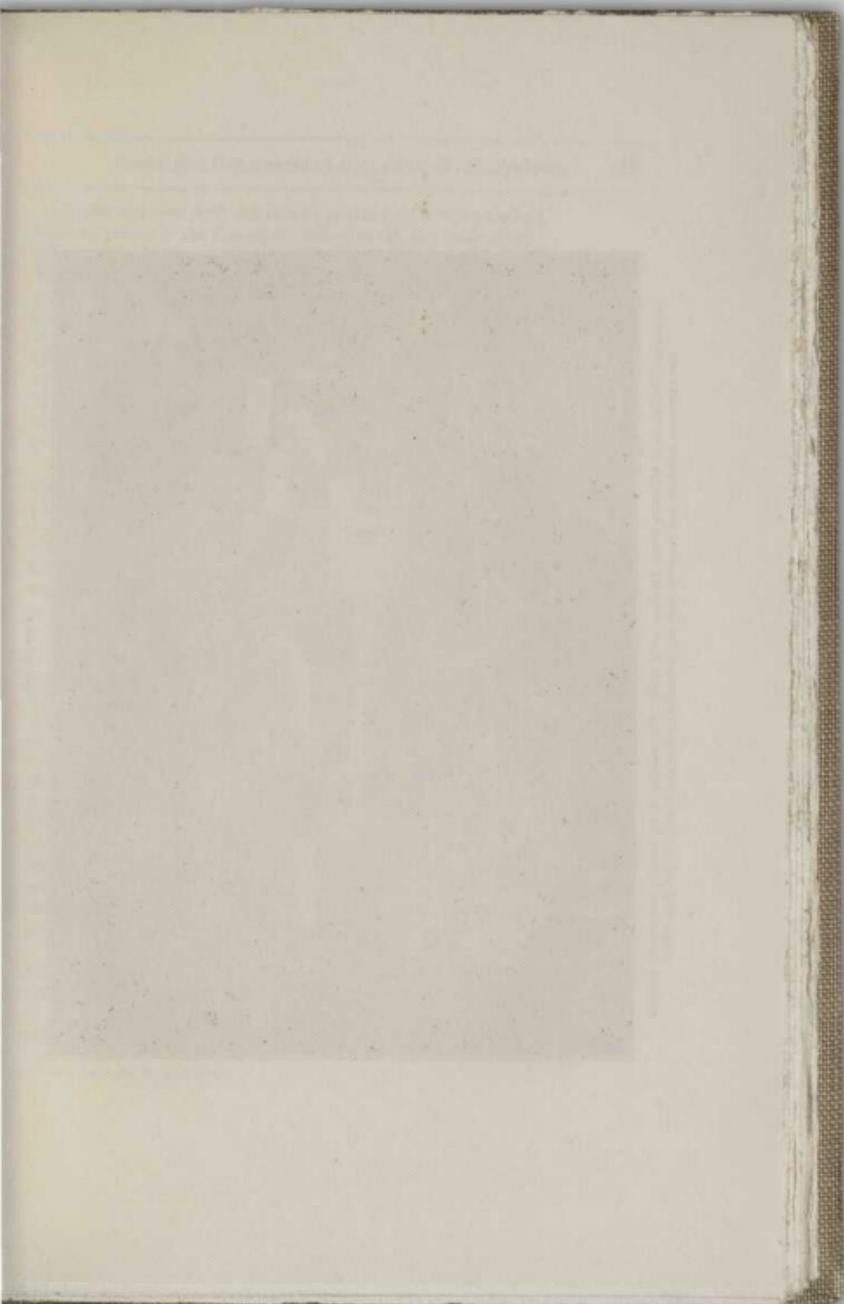
NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

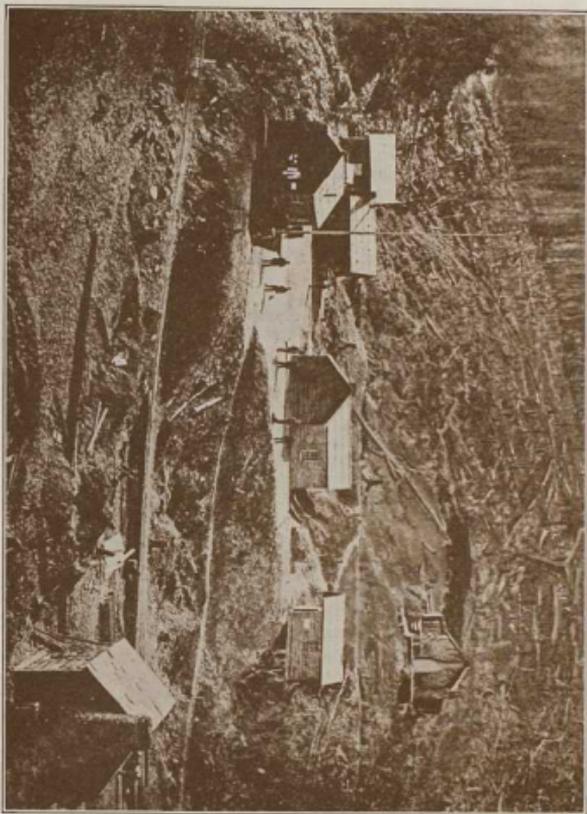
From and after the date of this notice, the conveyance or sending by means of vessels, teams, stages or through the agency of express companies, or by private individuals, or otherwise, of any letter liable to postage under the Postal Ordinance of 1864 for British Columbia, without the previous payment of the postage thereon (see Clauses 14 & 15) is strictly prohibited, and a penalty of not less than £5 nor more than £50 is attached to every such offence. The informer will be paid half the penalty recovered.

*General Post Office,  
New Westminster,  
4th June, 1864.*

WARNER R. SPALDING,  
*Postmaster General.*

Express operators and private persons were thus required to prepay full postage on correspondence carried by them within the Colony. Spalding required the expressmen to affix Colonial postage stamps to the specified amount on all letters carried by them, but allowed them to convey newspapers free of any postal tax; other classes of matter were not transmissible by post under the new Ordinance. A proposal to institute a book post had been negated by the Governor. Private individuals carrying letters and papers were also required to prepay postage on them. The regulation appears to have been fairly well observed, at least by the express agents, but the Colonial Government had occasion to prosecute infringements of it more than once.





Government Buildings at Williams Creek, Carbon, circa 1860. The building in the middle foreground, bearing the numerous holes and pickards, was the constable's office and contained the Post Office.

Under the new Act\* the rate of postage on letters passing between points in the Colony was fixed at 6d. per half-ounce. The rate on letters passing between New Westminster and Victoria, or vice versa, was 3d. per half-ounce. These rates seem to have been generally interpreted as 6d. plus 3d. on letters from the interior to Vancouver Island and foreign countries. All letters arriving in the Colony from points other than Vancouver Island were subject to a charge of 3d. per half-ounce on delivery. Newspapers were transmissible by post between points in the Colony for a flat rate of 6d. each. The prepayment of the Colonial postage on matter posted in the Colony was compulsory in all cases.

To cover the new rates the 2½d. B.C. & V.I. postage stamp of 1860, a small number of which remained in the possession of the British Columbian Treasury, was provisionally increased in value to 3d. by Order in Council, without surcharging. This provisional increase in value held good on the mainland only; on Vancouver Island the stamp was still worth only its face value. Steps were taken to obtain a new supply of stamps of the denomination of 3d., as shall be described more fully farther on.

The mail contract awarded to F. J. Barnard in 1863 expired in May, 1864. New tenders were called for, and Messrs. F. J. Barnard, George Dietz, and Hugh Nelson, who had joined forces and now held a practical monopoly of the express business on the mainland, obtained a new contract of twelve months' duration, at the rate of £5,000 per annum, for the conveyance of the mails through the interior of British Columbia. Under this new and comprehensive agreement, which was effective from 22nd June, the mails were dispatched from New Westminster to Hope, Yale, and Douglas twice a week, to Lytton and Lillooet once a week, and to Williams Creek, via Clinton and Quesnel, three times per month between 31st March and 31st October, and once per month for the rest of the year.

In the summer of 1864 Post Offices were established at Clinton, Lake La Hache (Lac la Hache), Soda Creek, Quesnelmouth (Quesnel), and Van Winkle, in addition to the Cariboo head office at Williams Creek. Constables and other officials of the Government acted as Postmasters, but

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
11th Oct.,  
1864.

Letter,  
Dietz & Nelson  
to W. R.  
Spalding,  
6th June, 1864.

Letter,  
H. P. P. Croase  
(for P. M. G.)  
to Col. Sec.,  
16th Sept.,  
1864.

\* See Appendix E, page 198.

Memorandum,  
Col. Sec. to  
Governor  
Seymour,  
1st July, 1864.

received no remuneration for their Post Office duties. Postal facilities of a limited nature were provided at various other suitable points in the upper country, but Postmasters were appointed only at the above-mentioned places. The Magistrate for the district was virtually the Postmaster; he was responsible for all postal moneys and for the satisfactory performance of the duties, but deputed the actual work to his chief constable or other paid official, with satisfactory results on the whole. It is not surprising that these officials, who were greatly overtaxed during the Cariboo rush, complained of the lack of remuneration for their postal work. Spalding repeatedly expressed marked dissatisfaction with the arrangement, pointing out that the Postmasters were not directly responsible to him and paid little heed to his remonstrances when he had occasion to find fault with them. He strongly recommended that the positions be given to responsible merchants whose postal activities would be directly under his control, and that small annual salaries be paid, but the Governor could not see his way to sanction the payment of any remuneration to the Colonial Postmasters, and the various outlying Post Offices throughout the Colony remained in the charge of officials who received their pay from other departments, or public-spirited persons who undertook to discharge the duties without cost to the Government. The only exceptions on the mainland were the officials stationed at New Westminster and Williams Creek.

The new arrangements were a distinct advance upon the former service. The postal affairs of the Colony were now on a proper footing and the facilities had been considerably augmented; but it remained to be seen whether there would be a sufficient increase in patronage to justify the large additional expenditures involved.

The new postal legislation was welcomed by everybody in the Colony excepting perhaps the express operators. The scheme was an ambitious one which deserved to succeed, but unfortunately it was only fairly launched when persistent and unwelcome reports from the upper country showed beyond doubt that the days of easy placer-mining in Cariboo were over, and a period of sharp decline set in. The surface yields rapidly diminished; it became increasingly apparent that the remaining wealth of Cariboo lay deep beyond the reach of the ordinary miner; and the discouraging proces-

Further  
Union Papers,  
1866, p. 36.

sion of the returning adventurers who had set out so gaily for the realms of Midas in 1862 and 1863 was a constant and unpleasant reminder to the merchants of Victoria and New Westminster that their immediate prospects were decidedly on the wane. In June, 1865, the total population of British Columbia did not exceed eight thousand souls, while that of Vancouver Island was probably less than half that number. By the end of 1865 the great Cariboo gold-rush, upon the continuance of which so many hopes had been founded, was over, and from that time the progress of the sister Colonies was beset by the incubus of ever-increasing debt. Flurries of excitement were caused by gold discoveries in the Kootenay and Big Bend districts and other widely scattered parts of the Colony, but for the most part these proved to be illusory or overestimated. Fortunately the efflux of the miners left in its wake the permanent settlers who were the real pioneers of the Province and who, by dint of hard work and perseverance, gradually built up a sound agricultural and industrial basis of prosperity. The hard times which followed the inflation of 1862-64 taught the inhabitants of both Colonies the fallacy of building only upon ephemeral mining prosperity and inculcated the difficult precept of "back to the land."

The summer of 1865 saw the first establishment of a Post Office in a purely agricultural settlement on the mainland. In July the settlers in the lower Fraser River Valley petitioned the Government for the provision of better postal facilities, pointing out that they were obliged to go to New Westminster for their letters. The attention of the Government was called to the fact that the mail steamer now called regularly at Codville Landing, where freight for the settlers at Chilliwack and Sumas Prairies was put off, and Mr. Codville, proprietor of the general store, offered to act as Postmaster without salary. On July 9th the Governor authorized the establishment of a Post Office at Codville Landing, and Mr. Codville was appointed Postmaster. This was the first rural Post Office in British Columbia.

In spite of the handicap imposed upon the express operators by the higher rates they were now required to pay the Post Office they still maintained a greatly superior service to the mines. In September, 1864, Spalding drew the attention of the Governor to the fact that the existing mail

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. R. Spalding,  
9th July, 1865.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
1st Sept., 1864.

Letter,  
H. P. P.  
Gosse  
to Col. Sec.,  
12th Sept.,  
1865.

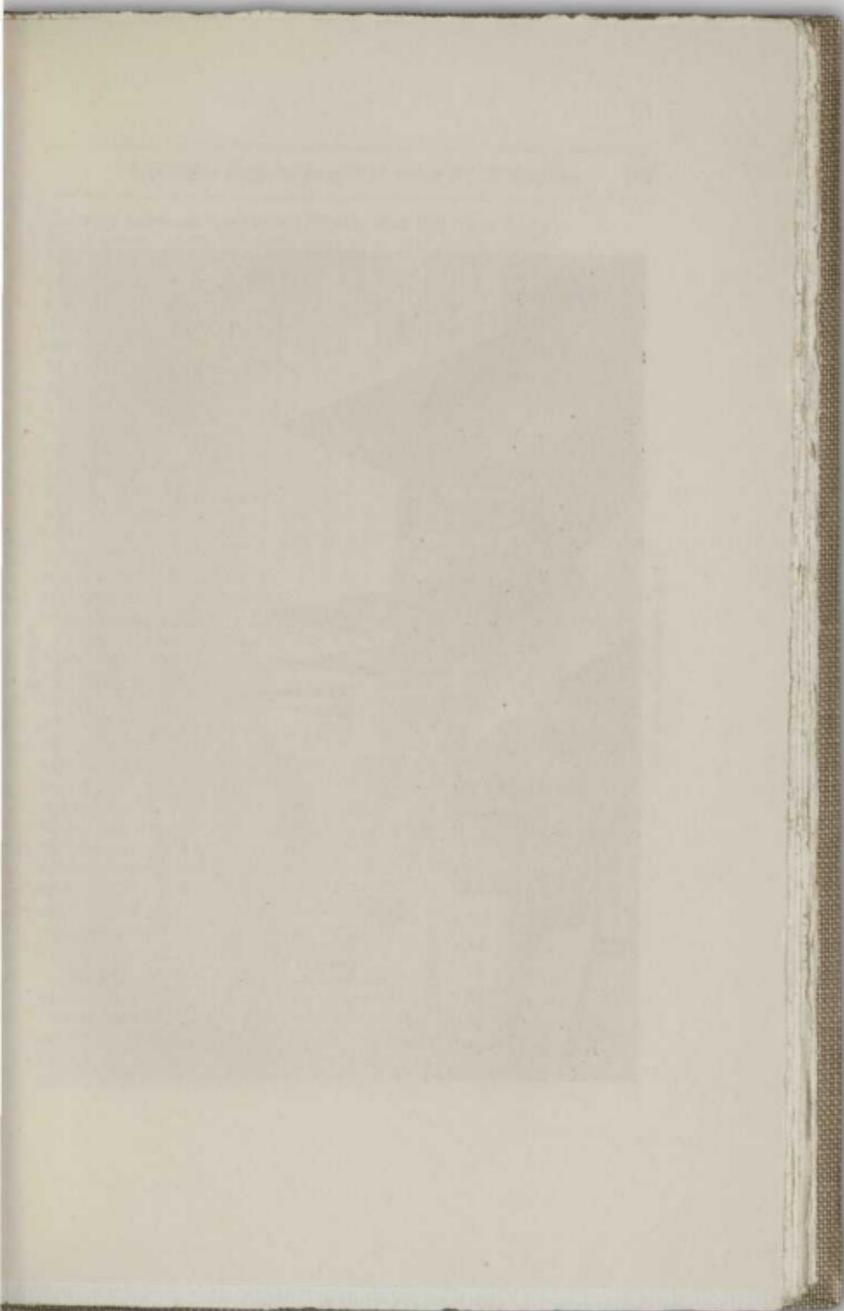
Letter,  
W. E. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
16th Nov.,  
1864.

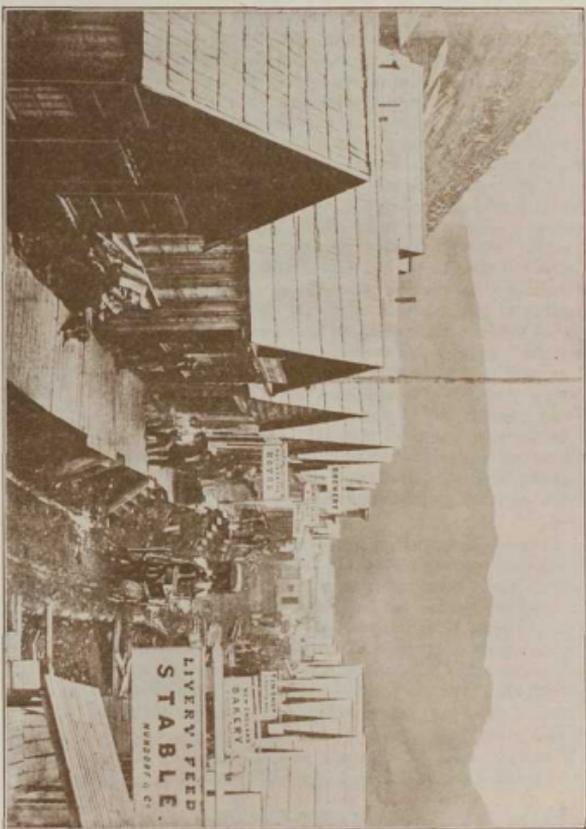
Memorandum,  
Governor  
Seymour  
to Col. Sec.,  
3rd Sept.,  
1864.

contract called for only three mails per month to the upper country, whereas express matter was forwarded to Cariboo twice a week, "thereby anticipating generally the intelligence conveyed by mail." The superiority of the express service was such that even the Government officials availed themselves of it in order to advance the delivery of official letters. The more frequent service and better delivery facilities of the expresses offered such advantages that many of the miners were constrained to pay \$1 per letter in addition to the postage in order to have their correspondence delivered more promptly and to a road-house or mining camp instead of to a distant Post Office. Naturally complaint was widespread and emphatic. In an effort to overcome this disadvantage Commeline opened branch delivery offices at Camerontown and Barkerville and the officials in charge at these offices began to effect the delivery of letters at the miners' camps on the various creeks, charging 1s. extra for each letter so delivered and retaining the special fee for their trouble. The Postmaster-General felt that he "could not recommend the abolition of this practice" so long as the miners were willing and indeed glad to get their letters in this way and raised no objection to the charge; but the Governor took strong exception to it and pronounced the arrangement undesirable and absurd. He could see no sense in carrying a letter all the way from New Westminster to Williams Creek for 6d. and then charging twice as much to convey it a few miles.\*

Seymour's first tour through the mining regions had quickly convinced him of the urgent demand that existed, particularly in the upper country, for better postal facilities, and on his return he expressed the opinion that the mail arrangements at the mines were "most unsatisfactory." He had been shown hundreds of newspapers lying unclaimed at the different Post Offices because the addressees refused to claim them "on account of their oldness." At the same time the express agents were carrying on a brisk business in more recent newspapers at \$1 a copy. At every turn the postal grievances of the miners were placed before him: the men who felt that they were the very life-blood of the

\* Notwithstanding a largely signed petition from the miners, praying for the continuance of the branch office system, the Governor ordered that it be dropped in September, 1865, when a more frequent mail service to Williams Creek was in effect.





View of Burkerville, circa 1880.

Colony's existence complained bitterly that they were being badly treated in the administration of a vital public utility. Newspaper agitation added fuel to the fire; the Government postal service was compared unfavourably with the express service on every hand. F. J. Barnard, whom Seymour described as "the energetic government contractor for the conveyance of the mails," seized the opportunity to suggest, in a private memorandum addressed to the Colonial Secretary, a detailed scheme for an arrangement whereby the Colonial Government should allow all mail to be carried throughout British Columbia by express, with the exception of letters from foreign countries. He contended that the facilities afforded by the expresses were "better adapted to British Columbia than the regular mail systems of older and more settled countries and more suited to the peculiar requirements of a Colony having a small, scattered and migratory population." Such a proposal could not be seriously entertained by the Colonial Government; hence the original document is simply endorsed, by the official to whom it was addressed, "*Too Heavy.*"

The Governor decided to call for new mail tenders, as he wished "to see whether it would not be better to have the whole of the postal services performed by the Government." Messrs. Dietz, Nelson, and Barnard, whose tender seems to have been the only one seriously considered by the Government, offered to provide a semi-weekly service as far as Lilloet, and a weekly service to Williams Creek and waypoints, for £9,500 per annum. The Colonial Secretary remarked that they had evidently discovered there would be no real competition. The Government offered £6,500 for the proposed service; the expressmen held out for several months for £7,000, but in May they consented to carry on the service for the sum offered by the Government, and during the summer of 1865 the Cariboo miners enjoyed a weekly Government mail service. The express service was still of semi-weekly frequency.

In July Commeline was removed to Barkerville, which became the head office for the Cariboo district, and the former head office, a few miles away, was closed. The office continued to be officially known as "Williams Creek," on the bed of which it was still situated, until 1st July, 1872, when the name was changed to "Barkerville."

Memorandum,  
F. J. Barnard  
to Hon. A. N.  
Bibb, 17th  
March, 1866.

Letter,  
Dietz, Nelson,  
and Barnard  
to W. R.  
Spalding, 17th  
Dec., 1864.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
W. R. Spalding,  
1st Sept.,  
1866.

Williams Creek was not Ultima Thule for the gold-miners of Colonial days in British Columbia. Promising finds were made in the Peace River country in 1861, and discoveries in the Stickeen territory in 1862 had the ultimate effect of fixing the northern boundaries of the Province. The spring of 1864 saw a new and notable invasion of a little-known portion of the Colony by miners from Idaho, when the sudden apparition of a full-fledged mining camp at Wild Horse Creek, a tributary of the Kootenay River, brought into existence by aliens who had not troubled with the formalities of Customs clearances and miners' licences, startled the authorities at New Westminster. "It was first through American newspapers," said the Governor in one of his dispatches to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, "that I became aware of a rich and prosperous mining town existing within our own limits about five hundred miles due East of New Westminster." The natural outlet to the Kootenay country was through American territory, and the Colonial authorities were at a disadvantage in attempting to assert authority over this newly invaded area without proper means of communication. The merchants of both Colonies were naturally unwilling to allow the trade of the newcomers to be carried off entirely by Americans, and the British Columbian Government was impelled to undertake the construction of a trail across the country from Princeton to Wild Horse Creek.

Scarcely had this work been completed, under great difficulties and at heavy expense, before the majority of the newcomers decamped northwards to the Big Bend territory, a vast unknown terrain south-east of Cariboo, where fresh discoveries in the bars of the upper Columbia River now drew gold-seekers from other parts of the Colony. The lure of shallow, "poor man's diggings," and false rumours of surface yields exceeding those of Williams Creek, made the Big Bend country the centre of gold-mining hopes for 1865. The yield of that season was sufficient to warrant a high degree of optimism, but utterly inadequate to justify the tales of fabulous surface wealth which began to be whispered in the outside world. The stories lost nothing in repetition: here, it seemed, was the lineal descendant of Cariboo; the auriferous resources of British Columbia were evidently inexhaustible. The optimist

*Union Papers,*  
1866, p. 56.

*British  
Columbian,*  
13th Sept.,  
1865.

envisioned a succession of El Dorados stretching far into the Colony's future; false confidence reigned; credit was extended *ad nauseam*.

The Colonial Government was induced to embark upon further road-making and postal enterprise. The construction of a wagon-road from Cache Creek on the Cariboo Road to Savonas Ferry, at the western end of Kamloops Lake, was authorized. From Savonas Ferry to Seymour, at the head of Shuswap Lake, communication was provided by the mail steamer "Marten," built by Captain William Irving under the guarantee of a Government subsidy of \$400 per month. Shortly before the "Marten" commenced operations she was taken over by the Hudson's Bay Company, which acquired Irving's rights. From Seymour to the Columbia River the Government opened a pack-trail, and along the river, from Downie Creek to Dalles des Morts, canoes, boats, and river-steamers plied industriously. One steamer, the "Forty-nine," operated from the neighbouring Washington Territory and captured a good deal of the business.

In July, 1865, F. J. Barnard sent in the first express 300 miles from Yale to Big Bend, under conditions of difficulty almost rivalling those attending his first activities along the Fraser River. Postal facilities of a sort were provided at the new mines, and Government officials were made responsible for looking after the mails, but nearly all the miners' letters were handled by express and the "mails" seem to have consisted almost entirely of official letters on Government business. At first the Colonial authorities allowed express letters entering the Colony through Fort Shepherd, at the junction of the Columbia and Pend d'Oreille Rivers, to pass free of Colonial postage. The Governor sanctioned the payment of \$50 per trip to any responsible person offering to carry the mails to Big Bend. No attempt seems to have been made to provide at that time for the transmission of mails to Wild Horse Creek.

On 1st April, 1866, a Post Office was opened at Ashcroft, with Clement F. Cornwall, afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of British Columbia, in charge as Postmaster without salary. Ashcroft was the junction whence mail-matter was dispatched to Big Bend. At the same time an office was established at Fort Shepherd, with John Jane as Postmaster without salary. Instructions were issued that

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
Capt. Wm.  
Irving, 22nd  
Dec., 1865.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to P.M., Fort  
Shepherd, 8th  
April, 1866.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to C. F. Corn-  
wall, 2nd  
March, 1866.

letters passing through Fort Shepherd were now to be charged full Colonial postage.

In an effort to bring to New Westminster at least a portion of the traffic which the Government hoped would ensue between San Francisco and the Colony as a result of the new discoveries, a subsidy of \$2,000 per fortnightly round trip was granted the Californian Steam Navigation Company, owners of the steamers "Active," "Del Norte," and "California," which engaged in the service to New Westminster. Considerable trouble was experienced by the steamship-owners in fulfilling the terms of their contract owing to navigation difficulties. The arrangement continued in force during the spring and early summer of 1866, but was not renewed after July, for reasons that will be explained later.

After the diminution of the Cariboo excitement the inhabitants of the mainland cried out for retrenchment in the administration of their affairs. Acting under instructions from the Colonial Office to reduce the civil list as much as possible, Hon. Arthur N. Birch, the Colonial Secretary, who was administering the Government in the absence of Governor Seymour on leave, dispensed with Commeline's services in January, 1866, and reduced Spalding's salary to £350. Mr. Birch, who was an experienced official of the Colonial Office in London, was of the opinion that the postal establishment of the Colony was unnecessarily elaborate and expensive. In April, 1866, he seized an opportunity to further decrease the salaried personnel of the Post Office Department. The Stipendiary Magistrate at Quesnellemouth was transferred to another district and Spalding was nominated to take his place. In his correspondence on the subject Spalding thanked the Colonial Secretary for assuring him that this temporary nomination would not interfere with his existing appointment as the head of a separate department. But this assurance, if indeed there were not some misunderstanding, did not agree with the representations made by Mr. Birch about the same time to the authorities in Downing Street. In a dispatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, relating to his efforts to reduce the civil list of British Columbia, Birch stated: ". . . the chief appointments I propose to abolish are those of the Treasurer, the Postmaster General and the

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to P.M., San  
Francisco, 10th  
Feb., 1866.

Letter,  
W. R. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
12th April,  
1866.

*Ditto.*

Harbour Master. . . . The Postal Service of the Colony in no way justifies the appointment of a Postmaster General. The Registrar General is perfectly capable of undertaking the supervision of the Postal Department without any extra assistance or remuneration."

Notwithstanding the greatly improved postal facilities on the mainland, the additional patronage which had been expected to offset the enlarged expenditure had failed to materialize sufficiently to prevent the piling-up of heavy and increasing deficits in the Post Office Department. Early in 1866 Spalding was obliged to report a deficit of £6,664 for the preceding fiscal year, an increase of £2,400 over the sufficiently heavy deficit for 1864. It was apparent that matters could not be allowed to go on in this way and that strenuous efforts must be made to reduce the postal expenditures to the minimum.

Spalding, despite dignified efforts to assert himself as the appointed head of the Post Office Department, was dispatched to Quesnel on April 20th. He could obtain no definite assurance as to the probable length of his absence. No doubt he had some suspicion that the control of the Post Office in British Columbia, over which he had watched with fatherly care, was slipping from his grasp. If so, his worst fears were realized, for he never resumed his duties as Postmaster-General. Mr. Birch's counsels prevailed; the appointment of Postmaster-General of British Columbia was abolished, and the administration of the postal affairs of the Colony was entrusted to Mr. Arthur T. Bushby, the Registrar-General of Deeds, who acted as Postmaster-General without additional remuneration.

After serving for some months as Acting-Magistrate for the district of Cariboo East Spalding acted as Gold Commissioner for Cariboo West. He was transferred to Nanaimo as Resident Magistrate in June, 1867, and in the following September was appointed County Court Judge for Nanaimo and Comox, holding that office until his retirement in January, 1881.

Both Sir James Douglas and Governor Seymour bore willing testimony to the efficient services and blameless reputation of Spalding in his administration of the Post Office in British Columbia. No financial scandals sullied his regime, such as marked D'Ewes's control of the Post Office

Further  
Union Papers,  
1867, p. 16.

Annual  
Report,  
P. M. C.,  
of B. C., 1865.

Letter,  
A. T. Bushby  
to Governor  
Mansgrave, 12th  
July, 1869.

Dispatch  
No. 142,  
Governor  
Seymour  
to Sec. for  
Colonies, 25th  
Sept., 1867.

in the sister Colony, and the criticisms levelled at the British Columbia postal service during his period of management were due to causes utterly beyond his control. He and his capable assistant, Valentine B. Tait, are entitled to high praise for the thoroughly efficient manner in which they conducted the affairs of the Colonial Post Office Department of British Columbia during the difficult early period of its existence.

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA 3d. POSTAGE STAMP  
OF 1865.

The new internal rates of postage fixed by the British Columbia Postal Ordinance of 1864 threatened to render unavailable the small number of 2½d. B.C. and V.I. stamps, which were the only Colonial postage stamps remaining in the possession of the mainland Government. As a temporary measure an Order in Council was passed to increase the value of the 2½d. stamp to 3d. in British Columbia, and the following notice appeared in the *Government Gazette*:—

PUBLIC NOTICE.

On and after the 20th day of June 1864 all letters and mail matter liable to postage must be prepaid.

Until other stamps shall have been substituted there will be issued for the prepayment of postage the postage stamps at present in use bearing the mark 2½d, for which the sum of three-pence will in future be charged.

WARNER R. SPALDING,  
*Postmaster General.*

*General Post Office,  
May 13th, 1864.*

The quantity of 2½d. stamps remaining in the British Columbian Treasury was no doubt considered sufficient to meet the probable requirements of the Colony for a few months, and the mainland authorities had good reason to believe that the bulk of the considerable stock in the Treasury at Victoria, which had been left with the island officials when the British Columbian Treasury was removed from Victoria to New Westminster, would be ultimately turned over to them.

Under the new regulations all letters carried by express or private persons within the Colony were required to bear postage stamps covering the full Colonial postage, and the

use as such of the hand-stamp frank hitherto sanctioned for impression on express covers was accordingly discontinued. The postage stamps thus used on express covers after May, 1864, bear express agents' cancellations as the covers did not pass through the hands of the Post Office authorities.

The Colonial Secretary, Hon. A. N. Birch, in commenting on certain suggestions submitted by Spalding in connection with the new postal arrangements, added the following for the consideration of the Governor: "Would it not be well to give instructions to the Agents General [for the Colonies] by the next mail to furnish a design for postage stamps for the use of this Colony?" Birch was thoroughly familiar with the procedure usual in such cases; he suggested this as the proper course to follow, and the Governor instructed that it be carried out. No trace can be found of any immediate correspondence with the Agents-General on this head, but it is just possible that the unique design of the 3d. stamp may have originated in London and that the credit for the highly unusual conception does not belong to the Colony as has been hitherto supposed.

There was a tradition among the pioneers of British Columbia to the effect that the 3d. stamp was designed by a member of the detachment of Royal Engineers which played so considerable a part in the early history of the Colony. Perhaps this legend had its origin in the probability that Captain Gosset designed the 2½d. stamp bearing the names of both Colonies. Gosset was an officer of the Royal Engineers and afterwards rose to high rank in that regiment, but he came out to British Columbia in a purely civilian capacity as Treasurer and was not a member of the corps commanded by Colonel Moody. That body was disbanded in November, 1863, whereas the design of the 3d. stamp was not transmitted by Governor Seymour to the Colonial Office until nearly a year later. It may be that one of the draughtsmen of Colonel Moody's contingent, who had remained in the Colony and reverted to civilian status, evolved the design which presents such unusual features. It is also possible, as we have seen, that the Colonial Secretary's suggestion was followed and that the Agents-General in London were requested to submit a design for approval by the Governor before the latter made formal application

Memorandum,  
Hon. A. N.  
Birch to  
Governor  
Seymour, 20th  
May, 1864.

to the Colonial Office for the stamps; but if so no time must have been lost by the Agents-General in preparing the design and transmitting it to the Colony. The latter conjecture seems plausible; otherwise it is difficult to account for the long delay in requesting a much-needed stamp, for it was not until 23rd September that Governor Seymour forwarded the customary dispatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was brief and to the point:—

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NEW WESTMINSTER,  
23rd September, 1864.

SIR,—I have the honour to forward herewith a design of a Postage Stamp required for this Colony, and to request that the Crown Agents may be instructed to procure and send out via Panama as soon as they conveniently can a supply of the stamps in question.

I have, etc.,

FREDERICK SEYMOUR,

Governor.

*Rt. Hon. Edward Cardwell, M.P.,  
Ec., &c., &c.*

This communication reached the Colonial Office on 29th November. Some discussion appears to have ensued, perhaps in connection with the marked departure from precedent in design, for the request was not referred to the Crown Agents until 22nd December. The design was adopted, with slight modifications,\* and one of the most unusual of British Colonial postage stamps came into existence.

The original drawing referred to in the Governor's dispatch cannot be found in the archives of the Colonial Office. Possibly it remained with De La Rue & Company, who engraved the die and printed the stamps, and it may still be in their files.

In October Spalding reported that only about £140 worth of 2½d. stamps remained in the British Columbian Treasury. He added that he had been informed that there were upwards of a thousand pounds' worth in the possession of the Treasurer at Victoria, and asked that inquiries be made as to the circumstances under which these stamps had come into the possession of the island Government. A detailed account of the difficulty regarding the proprietorship of the 2½d. stamps is given elsewhere in this book.†

Letter,  
W. H. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
11th Oct.,  
1864.

\* An essay which appeared in "Le Timbre-Poste" of April and September, 1865, shows what was apparently the original design.

† See Appendix C.

It will suffice here to say that on 24th November, 1864, the Vancouver Island Treasurer transferred to the Treasurer of British Columbia all the 2½d. stamps in his possession, and that after that date the mainland Colony had the sole control of their sale and distribution.

In his dispatch of 23rd September Governor Seymour did not specify any particular number of stamps to be printed. Messrs. De La Rue & Company printed 464 sheets of 240 multiples, or 111,360 stamps, in a deep shade of blue, at a total cost of £160 7s. 9d., on white wove paper water-marked Crown C C, presumably supplied by the Crown Agents. The stamps were perforated 14 on the comb-machines at Somerset House. The shipment, which left Southampton on March 16th, 1865, was inexplicably delayed in transit. On 30th August Governor Seymour left the Colony on leave of absence, carrying with him a letter in which the Colonial Secretary reported the non-arrival of the stamps and expressed the opinion that it might be necessary to prepare a fresh design. In that case, he added, the presence of the Governor in London would be opportune. Evidently the Colonial authorities feared that the consignment had fallen into improper hands.

A few weeks after the Governor's departure the delayed stamps reached New Westminster. On 27th September Spalding was notified of their arrival and instructed to issue a public notice retiring the 2½d. stamp and announcing the forthcoming sale of the new issue. Spalding published the following notice:—

GENERAL POST OFFICE,  
BRITISH COLUMBIA,  
NEW WESTMINSTER,  
30th September, 1865.

NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given that from and after the 1st. day of November next the stamps at present in use will not be received by the Post Office Department.

Persons in possession of the stamps at present in use are therefore requested to present them at any Post Office in British Columbia on or before the above named date, when they will be exchanged.

WARNER R. SPALDING,  
*Postmaster General.*

The remainders of the 2½d. issue, which cannot have been many, were not destroyed. During a subsequent short-

age of 3d. stamps the Colonial Government found it necessary to sanction their reissue and they are known to have been used as late as May, 1867. It is clear that the entire 2½d. issue was used for postal purposes except for small quantities sold to stamp-dealers.

The 3d. stamp had a complicated life-story, but its career was not so involved as that of its predecessor, the 2½d. It was actually used as a 3d. stamp for only two months. After January 1st, 1866, the public accounts of the mainland Colony were computed in dollars and cents instead of sterling currency, to conform with the miners' usage and the practice in the neighbouring Colony of Vancouver Island, where the official change had been made in 1863. The pound sterling was to be calculated as equal to \$4.85 and the shilling as 25 cents. The 3d. stamp was now sold for 6¼ cents, but for more than a year it continued to be used under a Postal Ordinance fixing postage rates of 3d. and 6d., and it cannot be regarded strictly as a provisional until the rates were changed by law.

The initial supply of the 3d. stamps was sufficient to last only about a year; hence a requisition for a second printing of 320,000 was sent to London on 24th March, 1866. For some unknown reason this request failed to reach the Agents-General and it was not until the following January that the authorities in London became aware that a second consignment had been asked for. As a result of the long delay an acute stamp famine occurred in British Columbia. In September A. T. Bushby, the Acting Postmaster-General who succeeded Spalding, reported that he had on hand only about £120 worth of 2½d. stamps (provisionally valued at 3d. but now actually worth 6¼ cents)—sufficient under ordinary circumstances to last but one month. Evidently the first lot of 3d. stamps had been exhausted and it was necessary to revert to the use of the old 2½d. stamps. Bushby wisely held the few remaining stamps for sale to the express operators, deeming it of more importance to keep them furnished with Colonial stamps, and thus ensure their compliance with the law, than to supply the Post Offices where trustworthy constables and other officials of the Colonial Government could be relied upon to render a strict account of the postage in cash.

Letter,  
Crown Agents  
to Col. Sec.,  
14th Jan.,  
1867.

Letter,  
A. T. Bushby  
to Col. Sec.,  
12th Sept.,  
1866.

On November 17th, 1866 the union of the two Colonies was effected, but for several months the two postal systems continued to function separately, using their own stamps (although, as we have seen, on the mainland the use of Colonial stamps was confined for the time being to the express agents) and levying different rates of postage.

In the following March the Legislative Council of the united Colony passed a new Postal Ordinance "to assimilate the law regulating the Postal Service," and the Ordinance of 1864 was repealed. Under the new Act, which became law on 2nd April, the letter rates of postage were fixed at 5, 12½, and 25 cents, according to distance. An entry in the General Post Office Cash Book dated 11th April, 1867, indicates that the remaining 2½d. stamps, valued at \$560.25 (evidently 8,964 carried at 6¼ cents each), were reissued for sale chiefly in pairs to cover the 12½-cent rate. The issue of the 2½d. stamps continued until 16th July, 1867, when the last remaining sheets were taken into stock at the New Westminster Post Office.

To relieve the situation the remaining Vancouver Island 5-cent and 10-cent stamps were obtained from Victoria and transferred to Bushby on April 8th. Thereafter they were issued to the various Post Offices as required, and large numbers of the 5-cent denomination were used by Wells, Fargo & Company, of Victoria, who were required, after the passing of the new Postal Ordinance, to affix a 5-cent Colonial stamp not only to each letter dispatched out of the Colony but to all those *delivered* by them. All the 5-cent Vancouver Island stamps were issued; of the 10-cent denomination 65,431 remained unsold and were presumably destroyed at the time of Confederation.

The makeshifts necessitated by the 12½-cent rate were very confusing to the public and Bushby strongly recommended that the charge be reduced to 10 cents, but his suggestion was not followed.

When the authorities in London finally proceeded to print the second lot of 3d. stamps they ordered over a million. Evidently they had received no intimation of the impending changes in the British Columbian postal rates and considered that a fairly large number of stamps would be required on account of the union of the two Colonies. Messrs. De La Rue printed 4,431 sheets of 240 multiples, or 1,063,440

Letter,  
A. T. Bushby  
to Wells, Fargo  
& Co., Victoria,  
4th April,  
1867.

stamps, at a total cost of £53 12s. 11d., identical with the first lot excepting that the colour is generally a little lighter in shade and the paper is thinner. The second consignment left London on 8th February, 1867, and arrived at New Westminster on 12th June. They were all turned over immediately to the Postmaster-General, but their issue was not commenced until 19th July, when they succeeded the 2½d. for use in pairs to cover the 12½-cent rate. They were also used in strips of four to cover the 25-cent rate. Only one used block of four 3d. is known to exist; apparently it was customary to divide the sheets into strips before they were sold to the public.

Unperforated British Columbia 3d. stamps have been listed by certain dealers for some years. All existing imperforates of this denomination are said to be of the same shade and paper as the second printing. Their origin is a mystery and used copies are not known. Pairs are said to exist but do not appear to have been definitely authenticated.

The 3d. stamp was used for the prepayment of full postage rates on letters for the United Kingdom after January 17th, 1868, until the arrival of the higher value surcharged stamps described in the next chapter. It was also used without proper authority for the prepayment of full postage on letters for the United States, Canada, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island between January 17th and February 21st, 1868. Its use within the Colony was almost entirely to cover the inconvenient 12½-cent rate, to which reference has been made, on both express and post letters, and it continued to be sold chiefly for that purpose until 20th August, 1871, the date on which the first supply of Canadian stamps was placed on sale in British Columbia. The stamp records of the General Post Office at New Westminster indicate that after the first lot was completely sold out 209,635 of the second printing were distributed before the Colonial stamps were finally withdrawn. On 19th August, 1871, the unissued remainders, 853,805 in number, were sent to the authorities at Victoria to be destroyed, together with the other remainders burned by the Dominion Government Post Office Inspector in the presence of Charles Good, the Colonial Secretary, on 26th August, 1871.

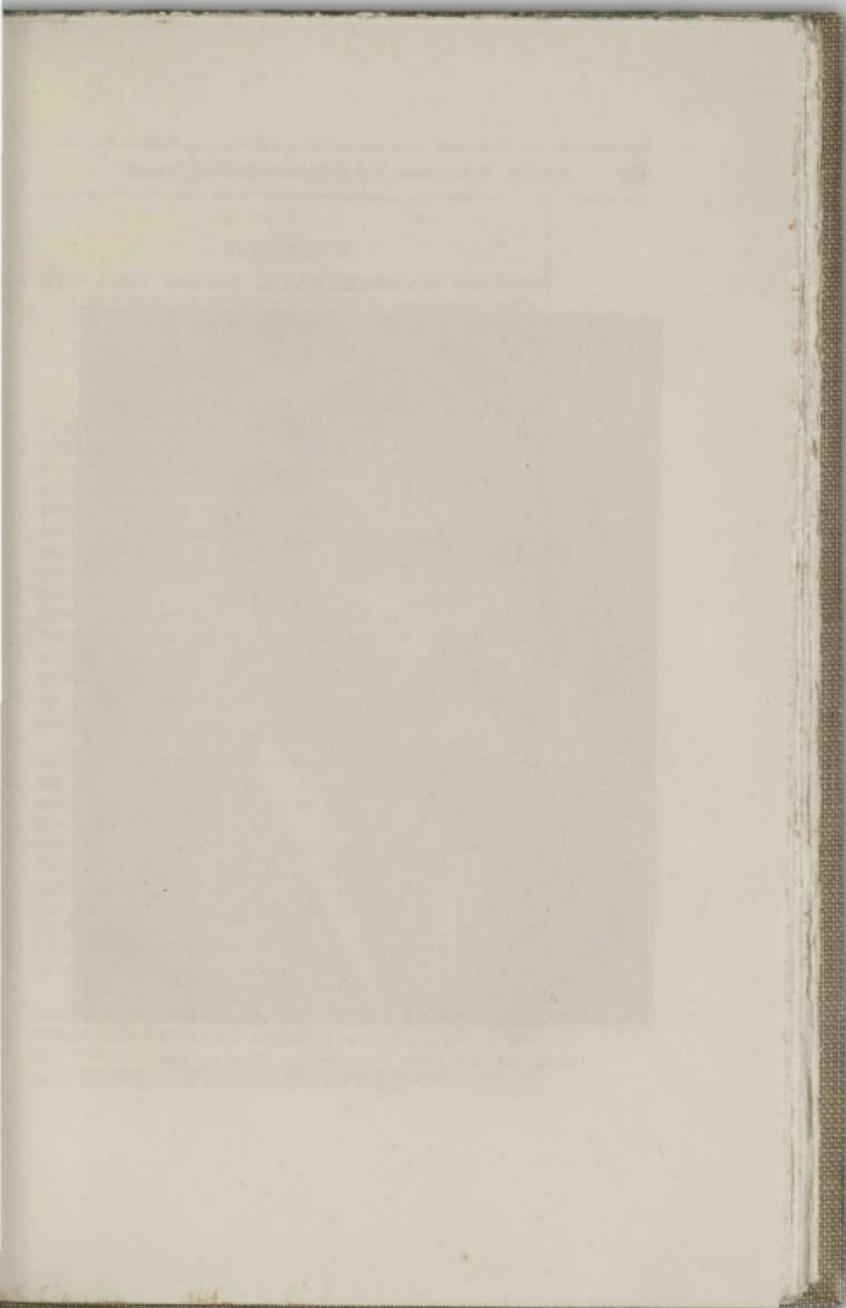


PLATE XI.



HON. ARTHUR T. BUSHY,  
Acting Postmaster-General of the Colony of British Columbia,  
April, 1866, to July, 1871.

CHAPTER X.

THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA UNDER ARTHUR T. BUSHBY, ACTING POSTMASTER-GENERAL, APRIL, 1866, TO JULY, 1871, AND THE BRITISH COLUMBIA SURCHARGED POSTAGE STAMPS OF 1868-71.

Arthur Thomas Bushby,\* who assumed control of the Post Office Department of British Columbia on 25th April, 1866, had been appointed Registrar of the Supreme Court of the Colony in February, 1859, and, in consequence of high testimony borne to his character and services by Mr. Justice Begbie, had been made Registrar of Deeds in November, 1861. His ability and careful application to duty favourably impressed Sir James Douglas, who cordially appreciated his worth. Mr. Bushby gave of his best in administering the postal affairs of British Columbia, notwithstanding that throughout he acted without remuneration for the additional duties thus laid upon him, and by this means the Department was saved the salary of its chief executive. He was enjoined to observe the strictest economy in providing for the Colony's postal requirements, and he faithfully discharged the trust.

Three years later Mr. Bushby drew the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the fact that he had taken charge of the Post Office Department without written warrant or authority after a conversation with Hon. Arthur N. Birch, then the Officer Administering the Government. He asked that formal authority be vested in him, but his request was "put by" for consideration by the Governor at a future date. Apparently it was never complied with. Although for five years Bushby signed the official communications of the Department as "Acting Postmaster General" and "Postmaster General," his sole authority for doing so seems to have been merely verbal.

Shortly after the commencement of Bushby's administration the depression caused by the alarming exodus of miners from Cariboo was lightened to a considerable extent

Letter  
A. T. Bushby  
to Col. Sec.,  
12th July,  
1869.

\* Subsequently, as a member of the Legislative Council of British Columbia and County Court Judge at New Westminster, Hon. A. T. Bushby.

Letter  
A. T. Bushby  
to Col. Sec.,  
23rd April,  
1866.

by the enterprise attending the opening of the season of 1866 in the Big Bend district, which was to prove such a bitter disappointment. Apparently Bushby did not share in the general elation. Despite his recommendation that no regular agreement be made for the transmission of mails to Big Bend, F. J. Barnard was awarded the contract for a fortnightly service from Seymour to the new mines at the rate of \$2,000 per annum. The contract was in effect from 1st June to 30th November. After the termination of this agreement the sum of \$50 per trip was paid to responsible persons undertaking to carry the mails beyond Seymour as the amount of matter warranted.

Ditto,  
27th July,  
1867.

The uncertain operations of the steamer "Marten"\* on the water route between Savonas Ferry and Seymour made it necessary to utilize other small craft from time to time for the conveyance of the mails between those points. After 1867 the subsidy granted the owners of the "Marten" was withdrawn and various temporary arrangements were made as the exigencies of the situation demanded.

Ditto,  
2nd July, 1866.

On 2nd July, 1866, Post Offices were established at Savonas Ferry and Seymour, with Captain W. A. Mouat, of the Hudson's Bay Company, in charge. About the same time an office was opened at French Creek, where the mining operations of the Big Bend district centred. For several years after that disastrous summer a small community of miners lingered at French Creek, and their postal requirements were ministered to chiefly by expressmen. An occasional mail, at intervals of a month or six weeks, sufficed to convey the limited number of letters travelling to French Creek through official channels after 1866.

Ditto.

In July a Post Office was opened at Fisherville, on Wild Horse Creek, and bore the official but rather vague name of "Kootenay." For several years no regular mail service to this office was maintained; nearly all the miners' correspondence went in by express via Fort Shepherd. Responsible persons undertaking to carry the Government mails across country to Kootenay Post Office were paid the sum of \$150 per trip for their services; but the dispatches were few and far between. On one occasion in 1867 six months elapsed between mails to Kootenay.

\* Vide page 121, ante.

Unfortunately the efforts of the Colonial Government to provide ready means of communication with the new gold-mining districts proved to be well-nigh profitless. The Big Bend mines were a veritable *fata Morgana*. Scarcely had the authorities placed the upper Columbia River district in touch with the outside world through their own channels before nearly all the invaders, disgusted with the almost total failure of what they now called the "Big Bilk," stam-peded back to the United States, leaving the Colony to shoulder the heavy responsibilities incurred by the road-making and other activities which their inrush had necessitated. The Kootenay diggings, which deserved better treatment, were also nearly deserted, and the Cariboo surface yields continued to fall off. There is no need to dwell upon the staggering blow that the Big Bend *contretemps* dealt both Colonies. British Columbia was hard hit, but Vancouver Island, many of whose business-men had risked their all in giving credit to miners and merchants outfitting for Big Bend, was almost mortally wounded. It is not too much to say that the collapse of the Big Bend mines left both Colonies on the verge of bankruptcy and made inevitable the entrance of British Columbia into the Canadian Confederation.

Meanwhile, largely as a result of the gloom which had descended after the deflation of the Cariboo excitement, the men of affairs in both Colonies were seeking to retrieve their fortunes by amalgamation under one Government. Strong, insistent representations to this end were submitted to the Home Government; the chief agitation came from the island, where there had been dissatisfaction almost ever since the retirement of Sir James Douglas, but there was a powerful sentiment in favour of union on the part of many of the more prominent inhabitants of the mainland. The miners in the upper country were perhaps indifferent; not so the merchants and owners of property.

In August, 1866, as has been intimated, the Imperial Government passed the Act of Parliament providing for the union of British Columbia and Vancouver Island, and on 17th November, shortly after the return of Governor Seymour from his lengthy stay in Europe, the amalgamation of the two Colonies was effected. The Vancouver Island House of Assembly ceased to exist, and the sole legislative

Further  
Union Papers,  
1867, p. 31.

Further  
Union Papers,  
1867, p. 27.

body of the united Colony was a Legislative Council similar to that which had governed the mainland Colony. Bushby was now nominally in control of the postal affairs of both the island and the mainland, but the island postal system continued to function separately, under the existing conditions, until the following April.

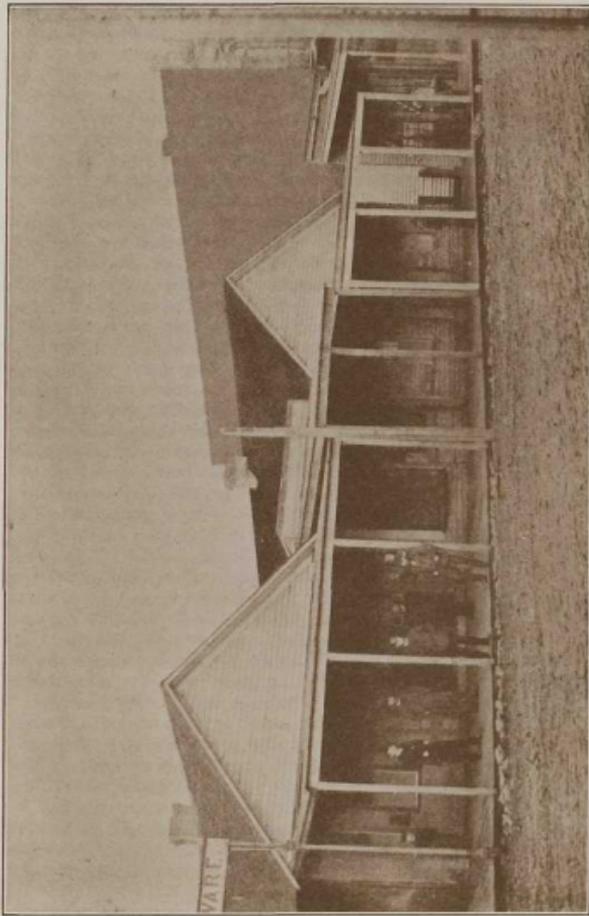
The union of the two Colonies had been wisely effected, but various minor problems remained to vex the inhabitants. One of the most pressing of these, in the popular estimation, was the choice of the Capital. The inhabitants of New Westminster, many of whom had been averse to union, strenuously objected to the removal of the seat of Government from their city. The people of Victoria were equally determined that their city should be chosen as the Capital of the united Colony, but for the time being the administration remained at New Westminster.

Shortly after Seymour's return the Colonial Secretary informed Henry Wootton that the Governor was desirous to retain his services as Postmaster of Victoria at an annual salary of \$1,455, equivalent to £300. The business-men of Victoria had petitioned for the return of the Post Office to Government Street, and as the Victoria members of the Legislative Council expressed a wish that the Postmaster might be enabled to devote his whole time to the postal work he was relieved of the Harbour Master's duties, but continued to assist occasionally in the Customs. In the following August the Victoria Post Office was removed from its quarters on Wharf Street back to the old frame building erected in 1858 on Government Street, where it had been housed during the hectic days of the early Fraser River gold-rush. In the interim the building had been occupied by Franklyn & Company, auctioneers. It was necessary to expend \$200 in refitting the office, but this sum rendered the accommodation sufficient for the postal requirements of Victoria during the remainder of the Colony's existence. The old building was not finally vacated by the Post Office until March, 1873, when it was torn down to make way for a new building.

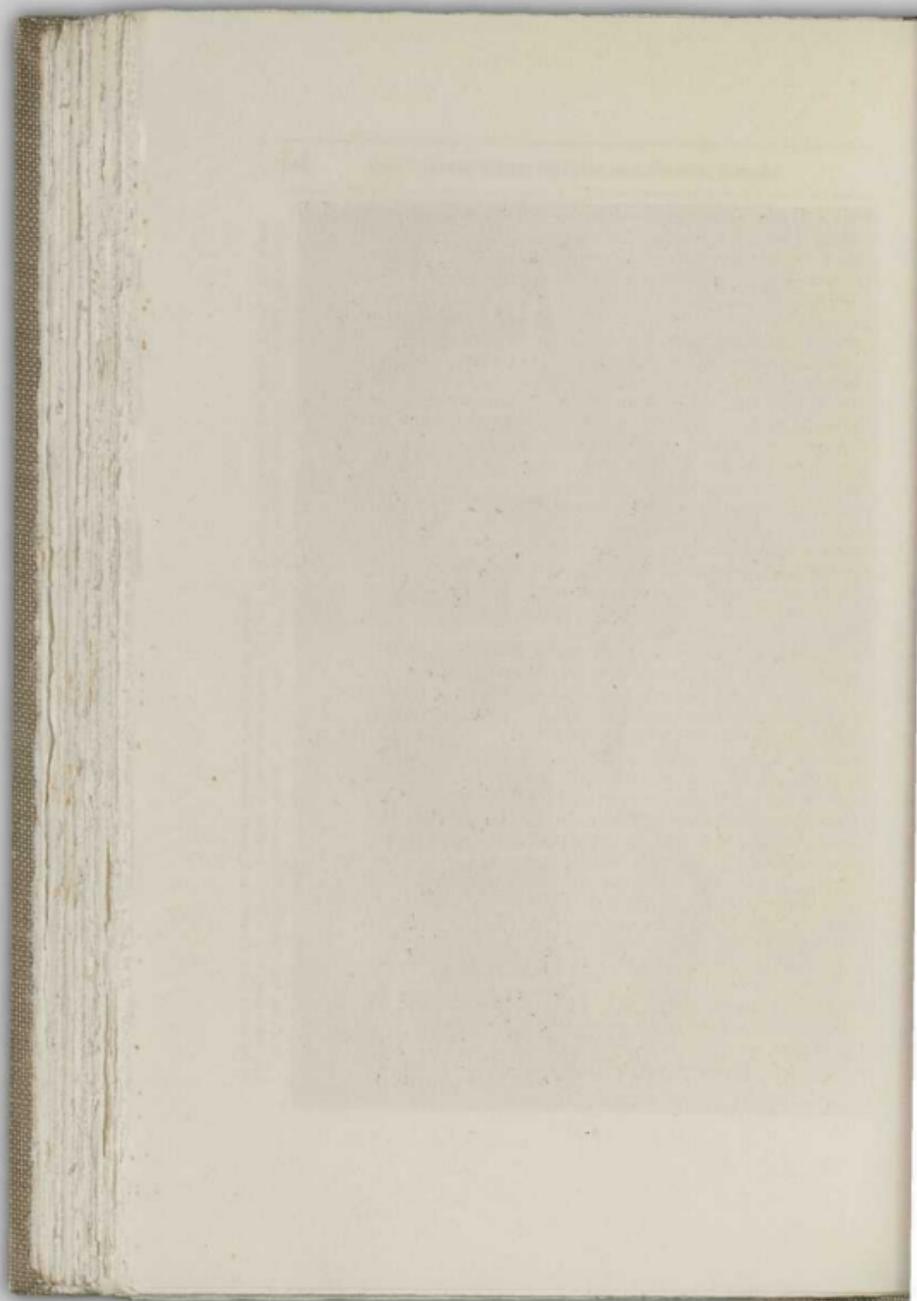
Valentine B. Tait was retained as assistant to Bushby and continued to act as Postmaster of New Westminster at an annual salary of \$750. To him fell the task of distributing the various issues of Colonial postage stamps after

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
H. Wootton,  
5th Jan., 1867.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
H. Wootton,  
16th May,  
1867.



Old Post Office Building, Government Street, Victoria, circa 1871. This small building, erected in 1858, housed the Victoria Post Office until 1873, with the exception of the period between 1861 and 1866, when it was located on Wharf Street. The figure in the centre, with peaked cap, is Henry Wootton, Postmaster of Victoria.



1864, and the philatelist has reason to be grateful for his carefully compiled stamp records, which by a fortunate chance were preserved for posterity.

The union of the two Colonies by no means reconciled the differences of the inhabitants of the island and the mainland. Their dissensions, declared the Governor, were "looked upon in the neighbouring States as rather a scandalous, but novel and amusing, feature of English colonization." The unabated rivalry between Victoria and New Westminster was a constant thorn in the flesh of Seymour, whose accession to the Governorship of the island brought him little satisfaction.

The subsidy for the mail service from San Francisco, which assumed increased importance as railway-construction proceeded across the United States, was a subject of marked contention in the first session of the new Legislative Council. The majority of the members refused to vote a sum sufficient to ensure the ocean mail steamers proceeding from Victoria to New Westminster, and as the steamship-owners refused to perform the additional service gratuitously New Westminster's prospects of becoming a deep-sea port were dimmed for many years. No fixed subsidy was provided, but the Council voted a sum sufficient to pay the owners of suitable vessels \$2,250 per round voyage for conveying the mails fortnightly between San Francisco and Victoria. It was felt that a proportion of this amount ought to have been borne by the United States Government, which now contributed nothing to the cost of transmission of their own mails to the Colony by this route, but apparently no effort was made to induce them to grant any portion of the subsidy.

In February Messrs. Dietz, Nelson, and Barnard offered to renew their contract for the mail service to the Cariboo for a period of three years at \$25,000 per year. This "exorbitant tender" was rejected by the Government, but there were no real rivals to whom the service could be safely entrusted. The expressmen, who were fully aware that they held the situation in their own hands, were offered the contract for \$1,666 per month, the sum at which a Mr. Bowman, of Victoria, was willing to undertake the service, but they refused to consider the proposal, holding that they ought not to be brought into competition with any one tendering after the amount of their offer had become public property.

Further  
Union Papers,  
1867, p. 38.

Dispatch  
No. 60,  
Gov. Seymour  
to Col. Office,  
10th April,  
1867.

Letter,  
Dietz, Nelson,  
and Barnard  
to Col. Sec.,  
15th Feb.,  
1867.

Letter,  
W. H. Spalding  
to Col. Sec.,  
16th Jan.,  
1866.

In the previous November the winter service to Williams Creek had been reduced in frequency to once a month, despite bitter protest from the nearly two thousand miners wintering at the mines, and the contractors had reluctantly consented to take payment at the rate of £5,500 per annum for the months of November, December, and January, notwithstanding that their contract called for payment at the rate of £6,500 for the entire year. A deadlock promised to develop, and the Colonial Secretary remarked: "It will resolve itself into the express service for 1867, I fancy, and I for one should not object." The Government was obliged to accede to the demands of the expressmen for the time being and the service was carried on under a temporary agreement at the rate of \$25,000 per annum.

Ditto,  
31st Dec.,  
1867.

In the following December the Government refused to continue under the existing temporary arrangement and new tenders were invited. On this occasion there was more competition and after a good deal of bargaining Messrs. Dietz, Nelson, and Barnard agreed to undertake the service for three years from 1st January, 1868, at the rate of \$16,000 per annum. They continued to convey the mails throughout the interior of the Colony, with the exception of the separate services to French Creek and Kootenay, until a few months before Confederation.

Letter,  
A. T. Bushby  
to Hudson's  
Bay Co.  
Victoria,  
15th Feb.,  
1867.

In February, 1867, the Hudson's Bay Company, owners of the steamer "Enterprise," were granted the sum of \$500 per year for the conveyance of the mails weekly between Victoria and New Westminster. This arrangement, which replaced the previous separate contracts of the two Colonies for this service, continued in effect for several years.

In March the Legislative Council, now the sole law-making body of the united Colony, passed a new Postal Ordinance "to assimilate the law regulating the Postal Service." This Bill received the assent of Governor Seymour on 2nd April, 1867, when Vancouver Island passed for the first time under proper postal legislation. During the rest of British Columbia's Colonial existence the postal affairs of the island were under the control of the General Post Office at New Westminster, but Bushby acted through Henry Wootton, Postmaster of Victoria, in dealing with the various Postmasters of Vancouver Island.

Under the new Postal Ordinance the rates of Colonial postage were fixed as follows in decimal currency:—

Vancouver Island to New Westminster, Langley and any port of the Colony, or vice versa .....	5c. per half-ounce.
Vancouver Island and New Westminster to Douglas, Hope, Yale, Lytton, Lillooet, Clinton, Ashcroft, and Savonas's Ferry, or vice versa .....	12½c. per half-ounce.
Vancouver Island and New Westminster to points beyond the above-mentioned places, or vice versa .....	25c. per half-ounce.
Between any two Post Offices in the Colony above Hope, Yale, and Douglas .....	12½c. per half-ounce.
Newspapers, to any point in the Colony .....	2c. each.

As the charge on newspapers was a new rate Bushby asked that a supply of 2-cent stamps be obtained from England and his request was complied with. The inconvenience caused by the 12½-cent rate and the expedients necessary to cover the different charges fixed by the new Act are fully described elsewhere in this book.

The dark cloud which settled upon the fortunes of the Colony after the disastrous season of 1866 had a silver lining. Many of the adventurers who had been drawn to British Columbia by the lure of gold were ensnared by the rugged beauty of the country and impelled to test their fortunes in its vast industrial and agricultural possibilities. Every year saw a steady increase in the number of permanent settlers, and numerous small communities developed into towns and villages requiring permanent postal services. A Post Office was established at Ladner's Landing, in the rich Delta district of the Fraser a few miles south-west of New Westminster, in July, 1867. In the following November the settlers at Cache Creek, a farming district about six miles north-west of Ashcroft, petitioned for a Post Office and their request was granted. Two months later a Post Office was opened at Comox, in the lovely Vancouver Island valley of that name. In the following June an office was established at Spence's Bridge, near the mouth of the Nicola River. In these small beginnings were the real seeds of prosperity: the inhabitants of British Columbia were finding her true wealth at last.

The Governments of Great Britain and the United States concluded a new Postal Convention in June, 1867, in con-

Letter,  
A. T. Bushby  
to Col. Sec.,  
7th June,  
1867.

Letter  
A. T. Bushby  
to Col. Sec.,  
20th Nov.,  
1867.

sequence of which it became possible for letters from British Columbia for the United Kingdom to be fully prepaid by means of the Colonial postage stamps, which up to that time had been valid for the Colonial postage only. Certain documents relating to this change were referred to the Acting Postmaster-General for comment and suggestions. Bushby's remarks, which are quoted in part below, form a concise and valuable statement of the Colony's postal relations with the outside world:—

Letters and papers mailed in England for British Columbia, *via the United States*, are prepaid in England at the same rates as if intended for delivery in the United States, which in fact is the case, being delivered at one of the nearest available ports, *viz.*, San Francisco, where they lie and await delivery either to some vessel subsidized by the Colony to bring them on, or to one of Her Majesty's Ships, or to a private vessel which may, purely as a matter of courtesy, take them in charge.

Letters and papers mailed in England for British Columbia, *via Southampton and Panama*, are charged a higher rate of postage (although not so quick and safe a route as *via New York*) and forwarded in closed bags to H.M. Consul at San Francisco, where they lie and await the means of despatch to the Colony as in the case above, the United States Post Office having nothing more to do with them.

Letters *from* British Columbia to Great Britain, in fact all correspondence between this Colony and other countries, is sent to San Francisco in a vessel subsidized by the Colony, and is there treated as American mail matter, not being received (with a few exceptions) unless the full United States postage be prepaid, which causes the Post Office Department here to keep on hand a large supply of United States postage stamps, which are of course paid for in cash in advance, or to send down coin with the mail. The Postal Department of the Colony is thus in the position of a messenger entrusted with the Colony's correspondence to be posted in San Francisco.

Under these circumstances, in order to raise a revenue, there is a charge on all letters and papers either received in, or despatched from, the Colony,—which in Vancouver Island or the lower Fraser is 5c. per half-ounce on letters and 2c. on papers; at the mines, 25c. per half-ounce on letters and 2c. on papers, and in the intervening country, 12½c. per half-ounce on letters and 2c. on papers. The colonists pay these charges, not only upon letters mailed, but on those received also. The whole of the postage, other than the above purely Colonial charge, being divided between Great Britain and the United States.

Although this Colony, for some time past, has subsidized steamers between San Francisco and Vancouver Island, it has had to do so entirely at its own expense, notwithstanding that the accommodation is as necessary to San Francisco as to the Colony,—a large propor-

tion moreover of the colonists being American citizens and almost the entire trade of the Colony (with the exception of a few vessels during the year direct from England) being transacted with San Francisco.

The remedy appears to be this, viz., an arrangement to be entered into between the United States and this Colony, allowing each to collect its own postage on mail matter despatched from either country for delivery in the other, and such letters to be delivered free . . . so that British Columbia may prepay its mail matter . . . with its own stamps, instead of the present very clumsy arrangement of having both Colonial and American stamps on every letter and paper.

After suggesting arrangements whereby closed mails for Canada and the other British North American provinces might be sent through the United States, and matter for other countries might be sent to better advantage by various overseas routes, Bushby concluded:—

Should these arrangements, however, involve any expensive subsidies or share of subsidies to be paid by this Colony it is difficult to see how we can avail ourselves of them, being already at an annual expense of about \$35,000 for the conveyance of mails in the interior of the Colony alone, and with an annual deficit to be made good out of the general revenue of fully \$25,000, and this without reckoning the service between San Francisco and the Colony . . . making altogether a very large sum even in the Colony's most prosperous days and utterly out of the question in its present depressed condition.

After further study of the terms of the new Convention the Colonial authorities inferred that they would be justified in sanctioning the use of their own stamps for the prepayment of full postage on letters for the United States, Canada, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland, in addition to those for the United Kingdom, and commencing on 1st January, 1868, all letters leaving the Colony for the countries named were so prepaid. The United States postal authorities did not agree with this view; hence after 21st February full postage for the United Kingdom only was prepaid by the Colonial stamps. In the absence of any formal postal agreement with the United States the prepayment of United States, Canadian, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland postage by means of American stamps had to be resumed, and this undesirable practice continued until a few months before Confederation, when a tardy agreement covering the United States postage was completed. One redeeming feature attached to the use of United States stamps: by purchasing them with British Treasury Notes at the current

Letter,  
H. Wootton to  
Postmaster,  
San Francisco,  
21st Feb.,  
1868.

rate of exchange in San Francisco a profit of 25 per cent. was realized on their sale in the Colony.

The use of colonial postage stamps for the compulsory prepayment of full postage on letters for Great Britain necessitated higher denominations of stamps than had been previously required in the Colony. An urgent request was sent to London for \$1, 50-cent, and 25-cent stamps, and at the same time 10-cent and 5-cent denominations were asked for. In response the surcharged British Columbia issues of 1869-71 were prepared, as described at the end of this chapter.

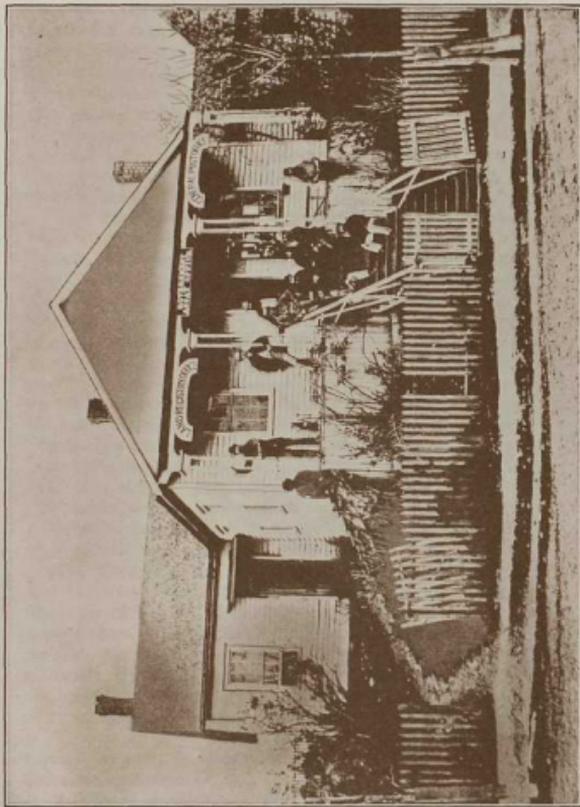
On 2nd April, 1868, the Legislative Council, in session at New Westminster, resolved by a vote of 14 to 5 that the Capital of the united Colony should be located at Victoria. The Governor accepted the decision with considerable reluctance, but issued the necessary proclamation in May. As soon as possible thereafter Governor Seymour and the various officials at New Westminster removed to Victoria, but Bushby remained at New Westminster in his capacity as Registrar of the Supreme Court there\* and thus the Colonial Post Office Department was administered from a point other than the Capital. On 18th June, 1869, authority was given for the removal of the General Post Office at New Westminster from the cottage where it had been housed since Spalding's appointment in 1859 to the wing of the Treasury buildings which contained the Land Registry Office. The office remained at that location until some years after Confederation.

Agitation for union with the Dominion of Canada assumed considerable dimensions in British Columbia in 1868. For some years the more clear-sighted members of the struggling British community on the Pacific Coast had perceived that their ultimate destiny lay with the Canadian Provinces which were separated from them, for the time being, by territory in the chilling grasp of the Hudson's Bay Company. In March, 1867, while the "British North America Act" was passing through the Imperial Parliament, Amor De Cosmos, of Victoria, a member of Council and a staunch advocate of union with Canada, introduced a

\* Curiously enough, by an unaccountable oversight no provision had been made in the Act of Union for the merger of the two independent Courts of Justice in the respective Colonies.

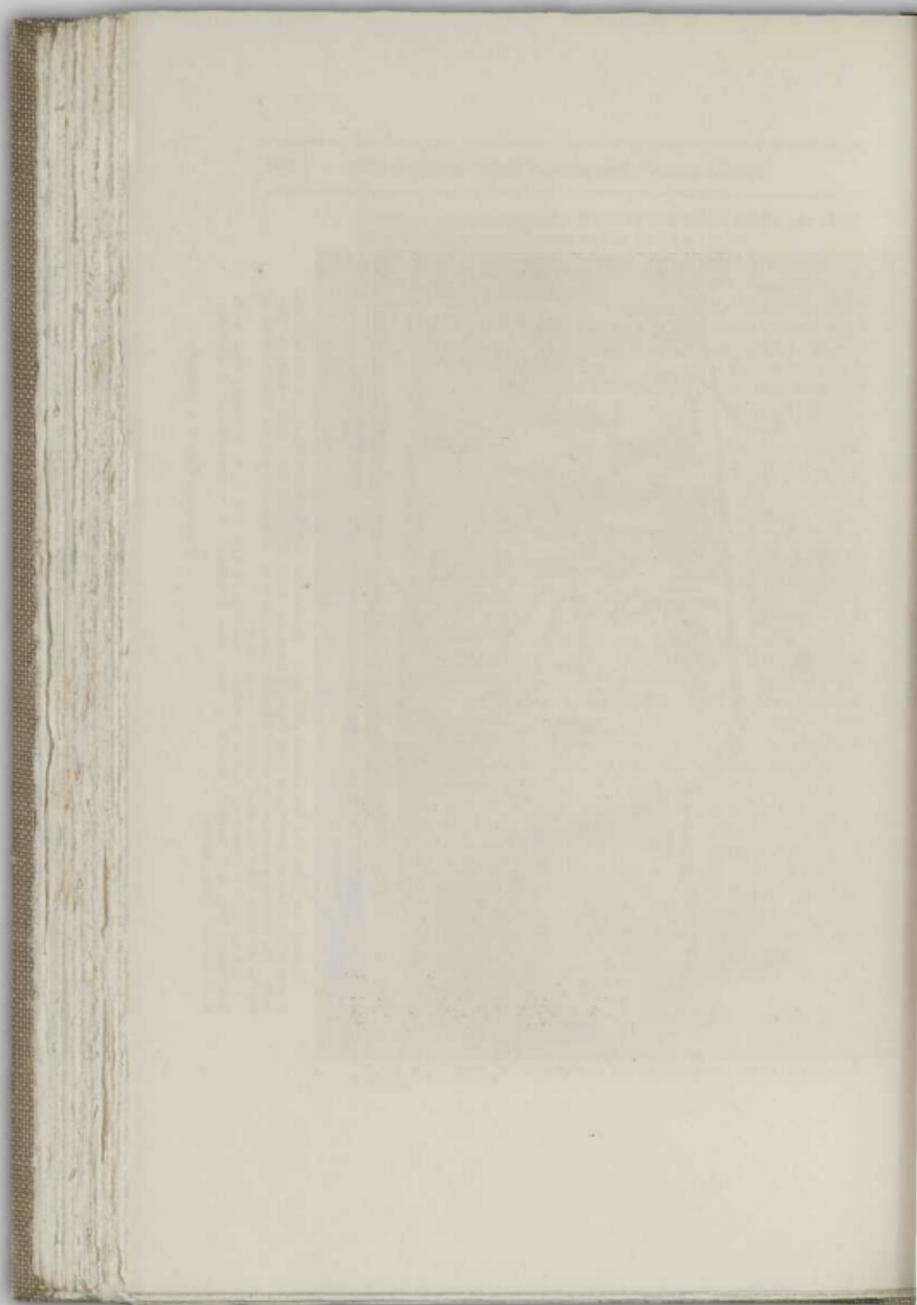
Papers re  
Capital of  
British  
Columbia,  
1868, p. 8.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
A. T. Bushby,  
15th June,  
1869.



General Post Office, New Westminster, circa 1871. The General Post Office was removed to this building, a wing of the structure housing the Land Registry Office, the Assay Office, and other public offices. In June, 1870, the building was originally erected for the accommodation of the Treasury and the proposed Mint, as well as the Assay Office, and the General Post Office. The building was designed by George Armstrong. Left to right: "Office Jim," Indian Messenger; Valentine B. Tait; Dr. A. W. S. Black; Hon. W. J. Armstrong; Hon. A. T. Bushby; Hon. H. M. Hall; Capt. Pritchard; H. V. Edmunds; C. S. Finlayson; F. G. Claudet; Sergt. Morey.

(Photograph from F. J. Claudet.)



resolution in the local House asking that the Colony be admitted into the Canadian Confederation. A few days later the Council unanimously resolved that the Governor be asked to take preliminary steps towards union, but Seymour actively opposed the move as he had previously worked against the amalgamation of the two Colonies. Nevertheless, the sentiment in favour of confederation with Canada grew steadily, and in September, 1868, a representative conference at Yale adopted unanimous resolutions to that end. The Colonial Administration became unpopular with the numerous advocates of Confederation, and the unrest was aggravated by the unsatisfactory financial condition of the Colony.

The tragic death of Governor Seymour on 10th June, 1869, removed an obstacle to the project of union with Canada. Although his attitude in this respect had changed considerably, doubtless because his policy had not been appreciated in Downing Street, Seymour's influence upon the situation could hardly be other than unfavourable in view of his pronounced opposition to union when it was first proposed. The Governor had sailed north on H.M.S. "Sparrowhawk" to investigate certain serious Indian troubles, and on the return journey, after having succeeded in settling the native quarrels, he was taken ill and died at Bella Coola. The anxiety and strain of administration during a period of great difficulty had exhausted an already delicate constitution. His remains were brought to Victoria and buried in the Naval Cemetery at Esquimalt, where they lie in a carefully tended grave—the body of the only Colonial Governor of British Columbia who died at his post.

The Secretary for the Colonies forthwith appointed Mr. (afterwards Sir) Anthony Musgrave, whose term as Governor of Newfoundland had just expired, to take Seymour's place. The Imperial authorities made no secret of the fact that they were desirous of incorporating British Columbia with the Dominion of Canada, and Musgrave was entrusted with the delicate task of piloting the storm-tossed Colony safely into the haven of Confederation. He arrived in Victoria on 23rd August; the Government had been administered in the meantime by Philip J. Hankin, the Colonial Secretary.

A detailed account of the negotiations which ended in the union of British Columbia with the Dominion of Canada

would be out of place here. It is enough to say that the small but by no means negligible minority which opposed the move was gradually constrained to give way before an overwhelming sentiment in favour of the only reasonable solution of the Colony's serious and increasing difficulties. The Hudson's Bay Company's territories between Ontario and British Columbia became part of Canada on 15th July, 1870, and there was no longer any serious obstacle.

With the appointment of Governor Musgrave and the assurance that the Imperial Government strongly advocated most advantageous terms for the Colony in the proposed merger there came a renewal of public confidence and a slow but sure return of prosperity. Optimism increased as it became known that the Canadian Government was so favourable to immediate union that the suggested terms of admission included the guarantee of a transcontinental railway and the assumption by the Dominion of the heavy Colonial debt. Not the least of the considerations that helped to bring about the entry of British Columbia into the Dominion of Canada was the understanding that the Canadian Government proposed to take over the Colonial postal services and defray all expenses in connection therewith, at the same time reducing the rates of postage, improving the communications to and from and within the Colony, and giving British Columbians the advantage of Canada's postal conventions and arrangements with other countries. The Dominion Government also undertook to maintain regular mail steamship service between San Francisco and Victoria. The importance to the ordinary colonist of the postal aspects of Confederation has not been sufficiently indicated by historians. It is writ large in the contemporary badinage of the press, and has first place in the doggerel verse broadcast by the advocates of union:—

You want the mail,  
You want the rail,  
You want the cars to hie on;  
Come join us and we'll thread the land  
With passage-ways of iron.

The activities of British Columbia's Post Office Department during this last and most stable phase of its existence indicate steady growth and development. In January, 1869, the settlers in the vicinity of New Brighton, at the eastern

end of Burrard Inlet, petitioned for the provision of postal facilities in their district. They represented that they were obliged to travel to New Westminster for their letters, and complained of the inconvenience of this arrangement. A good wagon-road had been built between New Westminster and Burrard Inlet in 1865, with the object of connecting the Capital with ocean harbourage on the rare occasions when the river was frozen over. Bushby reported a steadily increasing volume of letters for Burrard Inlet and recommended the establishment of a Post Office in the vicinity. At first it was proposed to place the office under the control of Tompkins Brew, the Customs and Police Officer for the district, as the Governor was of the opinion that all unsalaried Postmasterships should be entrusted to regular employees of the Government; but Bushby held that Brew already had more official duties than he could conveniently discharge, and that the quarters he occupied were not conveniently situated. Maximilian Michaud, the proprietor of the hotel at New Brighton, expressed willingness to act as Postmaster without remuneration, and was appointed the first Postmaster of Burrard Inlet on 1st June, 1869. Tenders were invited for the performance of a weekly mail service between New Westminster and New Brighton and the contract was awarded to W. R. Lewis at the modest sum of \$100 per annum. The Post Office thus established, and known officially as "Burrard Inlet," was quite separate from that subsequently opened on 1st March, 1874, at the lumber camp known as "Granville," near the site of the present Vancouver City Post Office.

The last transaction of major importance in the Colonial postal affairs of British Columbia was the conclusion of a postal convention between the Colony and the United States. Shortly after his arrival in Victoria Governor Musgrave became aware that the Colonial Post Office Department was selling United States postage stamps for use on letters to Canada, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island, as well as to the United States. His sense of decorum was immediately aroused, and in an indignant memorandum to the Colonial Secretary he declared that he had "never heard of anything so undignified in any other place as importing the stamps of another nation for use in a British Colony." In consequence of the Governor's protest some one unearthed

Letter,  
A. T. Bushby  
to Col. Sec.,  
27th Jan.,  
1869.

Memorandum,  
Gov. Musgrave  
to Col. Sec.,  
25th Jan.,  
1870.

Letter,  
Postmaster-  
General of  
United States  
to Postmaster-  
General of  
British  
Columbia, 9th  
June, 1870.

one of the several dispatches in which the United States Post Office Department had proposed a regular postal agreement with the Colony, and steps were immediately taken towards its ratification. On 1st July, 1870, British Columbia entered for the first time into proper postal relations with the neighbouring American Republic, and the Colonial postage stamps were made available for the prepayment of United States postage, but American stamps continued to be used on letters for Canada, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island. Postage accounts between the international exchange offices were no longer necessary as each country retained the postage it collected on all classes of matter, with the exception of that derived from the sale of United States stamps in the Colony. The single international rate on letters exchanged in either direction was fixed at 6 cents per half-ounce if prepaid and 10 cents per half-ounce if not paid in advance. Newspapers and other classes of matter dispatched from either country were subject to the regular domestic rates of postage applicable in the country of origin. Thus newspapers from British Columbia passed for 2 cents each, but in this respect the United States Post Office Department had the advantage, for book and parcel posts were non-existent in the Colony and the number of newspapers from the United States far exceeded those sent from British Columbia. On letters and papers arriving in the Colony the local rates of postage continued to be collected before delivery; presumably the United States Post Office Department made no delivery charge on British Columbia mail delivered by them.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
H. Wootton,  
22nd Nov.,  
1870.

In the following November the Postmaster-General of Great Britain proposed to extend to British Columbia the Post Office Money Order system which was in operation with great success in the United Kingdom, and after some hesitation on the part of the Colonial authorities the scheme was adopted at Victoria. The patronage accorded it was not large, and was confined principally to the men of H.M. ships, who found the arrangement convenient for remitting small sums to their relatives and dependents in England.

Letter,  
F. J. Barnard  
to Col. Sec.,  
1st Oct., 1870.

Messrs. Dietz, Nelson, and Barnard's three-year contract for the interior mail service expired in October, 1870. New tenders were invited, and in submitting his proposal F. J. Barnard, on behalf of his newly organized British Columbia

Express and General Transportation Company, announced his intention to import six of "R. W. Thompson's Patent India Rubber Tire Road Steamers," two of which were to be specially constructed for carrying the mails, express, and passengers. The "Road Steamers" were expected to be in operation by the spring of 1871. Mr. Barnard asked a subsidy of \$32,000 per annum and expressed the opinion that the innovation would revolutionize the communications in the interior, but the Governor was not prepared to recommend to the Legislative Council the granting of so large a sum.

On this occasion the Colonial Government and Messrs. Dietz, Nelson, and Barnard were unable to come to terms respecting the mail contract which the latter had carried on for so long. The expressmen declined to renew the agreement for less than three years at the rate of \$16,000 per year, and the Government obdurately refused to pay that amount. A few weeks later Barnard offered to carry on the contract for the stipulated figure "until Confederation, or longer, if desired," but he was informed that other arrangements had been made. Messrs. Gideon C. Gerow and Aaron Johnson, merchants, of Victoria, had tendered for the service at the rate of \$40,000 for three years, and upon furnishing satisfactory sureties in the persons of John Parker and William P. Sayward, of Victoria, they were awarded the contract. Under a separate agreement they undertook the occasional service to Kootenay Post Office for \$200 per round trip. A further agreement was made with an express operator named P. Reid for the performance of the mail service between Cache Creek and French Creek, as required, for \$150 per round trip.

Messrs. Gerow and Johnson continued the main interior services until March, 1872, when their contract was superseded by a new agreement with F. J. Barnard. Their service was not entirely satisfactory on account of limited equipment and lack of experience. They do not appear to have engaged in the express business prior to securing the mail contract. Barnard imported the "Road Steamers," but those precursors of the automobile were not a success and their career on the Cariboo Road was very brief.

Several new Post Offices were authorized during the last few months of British Columbia's Colonial existence. Prior

Letter,  
F. J. Barnard  
to Col. Sec.,  
8th Nov., 1870.

Letter,  
Gerow &  
Johnson to  
A. T. Bushby,  
2d Oct., 1870.

Letter,  
H. Weston to  
W. H. Griffin,  
Deputy  
P.M.G., 29th  
Feb., 1872.

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
A. T. Busby,  
23rd April,  
1870.

to May, 1870, no regular Post Office existed at Kamloops, the old-established Hudson's Bay post at the western end of Kamloops Lake, from the earliest days an important station on the fur-traders' route to the northern interior. The traffic on the water route between Savonas Ferry and Seymour, on the way to Big Bend, brought an increase of business to Kamloops, and the completion of the road from Savonas added to its importance. On 5th May, 1870, the first Post Office at Kamloops was established, with Mr. W. Charles, of the Hudson's Bay Company, in charge as Postmaster without salary. Before that date the *unofficial* postal arrangements at Kamloops were apparently looked after by the Hudson's Bay Company's officer in charge. On 13th June a Post Office was established at Duck and Pringle's, a convenient stopping-place on the road to French Creek, about thirty miles east of Kamloops, and on 19th September the Post Office at Langley, which had been closed for many years, was re-established under circumstances very different from those attending its inauguration as the postal headquarters of the prospective Capital of British Columbia during the rush to the lower Fraser in 1858. Meanwhile the inhabitants of the Langley district had obtained their letters and papers by the mail steamer from New Westminster, but had not enjoyed the convenience of a regular Post Office. In the following February a weekly mail service from Victoria to Metchosin was granted at an annual cost of \$300. J. Parker was the contractor for the service and looked after the mails at Metchosin, but no Post Office was established there for several years. Four months later the last Colonial Post Office was established at 150-Mile House, a well-known stopping-place on the Cariboo Road.

The closing days of the Colonial regime in British Columbia witnessed a miniature gold-rush in the far northern territory drained by the headwaters of the Omineca River, about 230 miles north-east of Quesnel. Prospecting in 1869 led to promising discoveries in the vicinity of Germansen and Manson Creeks, and in the summer of 1871 about twelve hundred miners were at work in the new goldfields. A Post Office named Skeena River was opened in February, 1871, with Thomas Hankin as Postmaster. The exact location of this office is not known; presumably it was at or near the mouth of the Skeena River. Letters and papers for the

Letter,  
Col. Sec. to  
H. Wootton,  
20th Feb.,  
1871.

miners appear to have been conveyed from Skeena River to Germansen by expressmen, who also carried the official mails free of charge. The mails were conveyed from Victoria to Skeena River Post Office about once in six weeks by the Hudson's Bay Company for the nominal sum of \$10 per trip. After Confederation the Canadian Post Office Department opened an office named Omineca which was evidently nearer to the scene of the miners' operations and was served from Quesnel.

The truly Imperial vision of an united Canada from coast to coast became a reality on 20th July, 1871, when British Columbia ceased to be a Crown Colony and took on the status of a Canadian province. The Federal authorities assumed charge of the entire postal establishment of the Colony under the terms of the "British North America Act" of 1867, which provided (VI. 91. 5) that the postal service of any colony absorbed by the Dominion of Canada should come under the exclusive legislative authority of the Canadian Parliament. Henceforward the local Government had no share in the activities of the Post Office: that important phase of civil administration passed entirely under Federal control.

Mr. Bushby was relieved of the duties of Acting Postmaster-General, which he had discharged so faithfully and efficiently without cost to the Colonial Government. He was subsequently appointed County Court Judge for the District of New Westminster and held that appointment until his retirement in May, 1875. The salaried officers of the Colonial Post Office Department were retained in their positions under the Dominion Government. In Victoria Henry Wootton was confirmed in the Postmastership at an annual salary of \$2,000, and exercised general supervision, under the Post Office Inspector for Western Canada, over the Postmasters of British Columbia. W. G. Reynolds was appointed clerk in the Victoria Post Office and acted as assistant to Wootton; his salary was \$720 per annum. In New Westminster Valentine B. Tait continued as Postmaster at \$1,200 a year. John Bowron was appointed Postmaster at Barkerville, the office formerly known as Williams Creek, at an annual salary of \$600. The other Postmasters in the Province were now allowed compensation for their services in the form of a percentage of the postal receipts at their

Annual Report,  
Postmaster-  
General  
of Canada,  
1872.

Ditto.

respective offices. As far as possible the persons in charge of the Colonial Post Offices were retained under the new regime: in cases where the revenue did not exceed \$800 per annum they now received 40 per cent. of the proceeds of their postage-stamp sales, and where the revenue was over \$800 a year they were paid 25 per cent. of their gross receipts. In consequence of this change there was an immediate and perhaps natural improvement in the service at the outlying points.

Mr. Gilbert E. Griffin, of London, Ontario, Post Office Inspector for the territory west of Hamilton, visited British Columbia in July, 1871, for the purpose of taking over, on behalf of the Post Office Department of Canada, the postal services of the Colony. He was empowered to make tentative arrangements for carrying on the necessary Post Offices and mail services and was entrusted with the task of calling in and destroying all remainders of the Colonial postage stamps, arranging for the redemption of colonial stamps sold to the public, and placing on sale the current postage-stamp issues of the Dominion Government. Further particulars in this connection will be found at the end of this chapter.

The Victoria and San Francisco mail steamship service was put under regular contract after advertisement. The contract for a semi-monthly service was awarded to Messrs. Rosenfeldt and Bermingham, of San Francisco, owners of the iron steamer "Prince Alfred," who submitted the lowest offer received—namely, \$2,250 per round voyage. The "Prince Alfred" commenced her service under the Dominion Government on 15th August, 1871, and continued to perform it for several years. The San Francisco-Victoria service was faithfully maintained by the Dominion Government, in accordance with their undertaking,\* until 31st March, 1925, although all real necessity for it vanished many years earlier; and a small annual subsidy for its maintenance figured until recently in the public accounts of Canada. It was not utilized for the conveyance of the mails after December, 1904.

Twenty-five Post Offices in active operation were turned over to the Post Office Department of Canada by the Colonial Government of British Columbia on 20th July, 1871. The following is a list of the Post Offices established during the

Letter,  
G. E. Griffin  
to H. Wootton,  
25th Oct.,  
1871.

Annual Report,  
Postmaster-  
General  
of Canada,  
1872, p. 3.

Annual Report,  
Auditor-  
General  
of Canada,  
1925,  
Part XX, p. 41.

\* Vide section 4 of the Terms of Union, relating to the entrance of British Columbia into the Dominion of Canada.

Colonial period, with the names of the first Postmasters and the dates of establishment so far as they can be ascertained, and addenda showing whether the offices were operated continuously, withdrawn temporarily, or closed before the union with Canada: —

Date of Establishment.	Name of Office.	Name of First Postmaster.	Addenda.
(?) 1859	Alexander		
13th July, 1865	Antler		Withdrawn before 1861; reopened after Confederation under name of Alexandria.
2nd July, 1869	Ashcroft	C. F. Cornwall	(See Williams Creek.) Continued under same name after Confederation.
4th Jan., 1868	Barkerville	Maximilian Michaud	(See Williams Creek.) Continued under same name after Confederation.
	Barrard Inlet		do. do.
	Cache Creek		do. do.
	Cameron town		(See Williams Creek.)
	Clayoosch		(See Lillooet.)
10th Sept., 1864	Clinton	J. Champness	Continued under same name after Confederation.
9th July, 1865	Codville Landing	J. Codville	Withdrawn before April, 1866; reopened 1st July, 1872, under name of Chilliwack
22nd June, 1868	Comox	Wm. Alexander	Continued under same name after Confederation.
19th Aug., 1859	Douglas	W. H. Franklin	Withdrawn before April, 1867; not reopened.
13th June, 1870	Duck & Pringle's	James Duck	Continued under same name after Confederation.
12th July, 1864	Esquimalt	H. E. Wilby	Withdrawn before Confederation; reopened under same name 1st July, 1872.
	Fort Hope		(See Hope.)
	Fort Langley		(See Langley.)
13th July, 1865	Fort Shepherd	John Jane	Withdrawn before Confederation; not reopened.
	Fort Victoria		(See Victoria.)
	Fort Yale		(See Yale.)
July, 1866	French Creek	John White	Withdrawn before Confederation; not reopened.

Date of Establishment.	Name of Office.	Name of First Postmaster.	Remarks.
Nov. 1858	Hope.....	Robert T. Smith.....	Continued under same name after Confederation.
5th May, 1870	Kamloops.....	W. Charles.....	do. do.
July 1866	Kootenay.....	J. Normansell.....	do. do.
10th Sept., 1864	Lake Le Hache.....	W. Anderson.....	Continued under name of Lac la Hache after Confederation.
9th July, 1867	Ladner.....	W. H. Ladner.....	Withdrawn at time of Confederation; reopened under same name in March, 1875.
Nov., 1858	Langley.....	W. H. Bevis.....	Withdrawn about 1861; reopened under same name 19th September, 1870.
4th April, 1865	Leech River.....	J. A. Mara.....	Withdrawn before 1866; not reopened.
(?) 1859	Lillooet.....	— Flynn.....	Continued under same name after Confederation.
21st Dec., 1858	Lyttont.....	Cornelius Bryant.....	do. do.
23rd April, 1859	Nanaimo.....	W. R. Spalding.....	do. do.
2nd June, 1871	New Westminster.....	Robert H. Young.....	do. do.
16th Nov., 1864	150-Mile House.....	Louis F. Everard.....	Withdrawn before April, 1866; not reopened.
16th July, 1864	174-Mile House.....	J. B. Gaggin.....	Continued after Confederation under name of Quesnel.
(?) 1859	Quesnelmouth.....	.....	(See Williams Creek.)
2nd July, 1866	Richfield.....	.....	Withdrawn before 1863; reopened under same name many years later.
2nd July, 1866	Rock Creek.....	.....	Withdrawn about 1870; subsequently reopened under name of Savonas.
2nd July, 1866	Savonas Ferry.....	W. H. Mout.....	Withdrawn about 1870; not reopened.
2nd July, 1866	Seymour.....	do.....	Withdrawn about 1870; not reopened.

Date of Establishment.	Name of Office.	Name of First Postmaster.	Addenda.
( ? ) 1859	Similkameen	W. H. Mout	Withdrawn before 1863; reopened under same name many years later.
21st Feb., 1871	Skeena River	Thomas Hankin	Continued after Confederation under name of Skeena.
16th Sept., 1864	Soda Creek	— Waldron	Continued under same name after Confederation.
8th Aug., 1864	Sooke	Elliott, Stuart & Co.	Withdrawn before Confederation; reopened under same name 1st August, 1872.
17th June, 1868	Spence's Bridge	.....	Withdrawn before Confederation; reopened under same name 1st July, 1872.
July, 1864	Van Winkle	— McCaffery	Withdrawn before Confederation; reopened under same name 1st July, 1872.
( ? ) 1852	Victoria	R. Finlayson	Continued under same name after Confederation.
July, 1864	Williams Creek	J. R. Commeline	do. do.
Aug., 1861	Williams Lake	S. Gompertz	do. do.
Nov., 1858	Yale	P. B. Whannell	Withdrawn summer of 1864; reopened under same name many years later.
			Continued under same name after Confederation.

In the summer of 1872 John Dewé, Chief Post Office Inspector, of Ottawa, visited British Columbia to complete the arrangements begun by Mr. Griffin. He was instructed "to arrange for submitting the whole mail service, as far as practicable, to public competition, and for thus placing it under regular contracts as in other sections of the Dominion."

At the same time arrangements were made with the United States Post Office Department for the transmission of closed mails between British Columbia and the other Provinces of the Dominion, semi-weekly, by the railway and stage routes between San Francisco and Olympia, Washington, and by steamer between the latter place and Victoria. The weekly service between Victoria and Olympia, which assumed considerable importance as the overland communications with San Francisco were improved, was contracted for by A. E. Starr, owner of the steamer "Enterprise," for the sum of \$5,000 per annum.

Hereunder is a list of the Post Offices in British Columbia established by the Dominion Government authorities at the time of the Chief Post Office Inspector's visit to the Province:—

Annual Report,  
P.M.G.  
of Canada,  
1872, p. 3.

Name of Office.	Date of Establishment.	Name of Postmaster.
Ashcroft.....	1st July, 1872	Henry P. Cornwall.
Barkerville.....	do.	John Bowron.
Burrard Inlet.....	do.	Maximilian Michaud.
Cache Creek.....	do.	James Campbell.
Chemainus.....	do.	Thos. G. Askew.
Chilliwack.....	1st Sept., 1872	J. McCutcheon.
Clinton.....	1st July, 1872	Charles E. Pope.
Comox.....	do.	Alexander Rodell.
Cowichan.....	do.	Samuel Harris.
Duck & Pringle's.....	do.	James Duck.
Dunkeld.....	1st Aug., 1872	Allan Graham.
Esquimalt.....	1st July, 1872	John T. Howard.
Hope.....	do.	John G. Wirth.
Kamloops.....	do.	James McKenzie.
Kootenay.....	do.	James Normansell.
Lac la Hache.....	do.	Patrick Gannon.
Langley.....	do.	W. W. Gibb.
Lillooet.....	do.	E. Tynon.
Lytton.....	do.	John Boyd.
Maple Bay.....	do.	Wm. Beaumont.

Name of Office.	Date of Establishment.	Name of Postmaster.
Nanaimo.....	1st July, 1872	James Harvey.
New Westminster.....	do.	Valentine B. Tait.
Nicola Lake.....	1st Aug., 1872	John Clapperton.
Okanagan.....	14th Aug., 1872	Cornelius O'Keefe.
Okanagan Mission.....	1st Oct., 1872	Eli Lequin.
Omineca.....	1st July, 1872	Francis Page.
150-Mile House.....	do.	Robert H. Young.
Pavilion.....	1st Aug., 1872	J. McCutcheon.
Quesnel.....	1st July, 1872	Alex. Barlow.
Skeena.....	do.	Thomas Hankin.
Soda Creek.....	do.	Robert McLeese.
Sooke.....	1st Aug., 1872	Michael Muir.
Spence's Bridge.....	1st July, 1872	John Murray.
Sumas.....	do.	David W. Miller.
Van Winkle.....	do.	J. L. Lindhard.
Victoria.....	20th July, 1871*	Henry Wootton.
Yale.....	1st July, 1872	D. McQuarrie.

The Post Offices and mail services of British Columbia were maintained by the Federal Government at a heavy loss for many years, until the gradual increase in population and improvement in transportation methods enabled the service to pay its own way in the territory west of the Rocky Mountains. The total receipts of postal revenue in British Columbia during the first year under Federal control amounted to only \$8,809, whereas the expenditure was \$38,371.94. The completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 involved the Department in outlays which far exceeded the revenue derived for several years from the territory served. So far as postal facilities are concerned, there can be no doubt that the people of British Columbia gained inestimably by joining the Dominion of Canada.

Still there are some British Columbians and others to whom the old-time brigades and expresses, the canoes and pack-trains of the first wild gold-rush days, and the camels, mules, stage-coaches, and steam tractors of the romantic Cariboo Road are inexpressibly more fascinating than the most up-to-date methods of transportation. These lovers of the past will welcome an authentic account of the blazing of

\* Established by G. E. Griffin, Post Office Inspector for Western Canada, at the time of his visit to Victoria.

British Columbia's postal trails, and will consider that the detailed story of her Colonial Post Office activities has its place in the fully rounded study of her history.

For them, and for certain other enthusiasts who treasure a few old envelopes and bits of gummed paper conveying a message inaudible to others, these pages have been written.

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA SURCHARGED POSTAGE STAMPS OF 1868-71 AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE COLONIAL POSTAGE-STAMP REMAINDERS.

As we have seen, the new Postal Ordinance of 1867 created a new postage rate of 2 cents for newspapers transmitted within the united Colony. An attempt was made to carry on without stamps of this denomination, but on 7th June Mr. Bushby was obliged to ask that a supply be obtained from England because the lack of 2-cent stamps caused "a certain loss and very considerable inconvenience to the Post Offices." Bushby's letter continued: "As the Postal Act now stands we require some 12½c. stamps as it is quite impossible to regulate the 12½c. postage with the only stamps we have, viz., 10c., 5c., and 2½d., but I do not ask for any of these as I hope that the desirability of altering that rate to ten cents may soon be understood." As has been stated, the 12½-cent rate was not altered, and the 2½d. and 3d. stamps continued to be used to cover it.

On 10th July the following short letter was sent to the Agents-General by the Colonial Secretary:—

BRITISH COLUMBIA,  
COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
10th July, 1867.

GENTLEMEN,—I am directed by the Governor to request that a supply of postage stamps of the same pattern as those already in use in the Colony, but of an enfacé value of Two Cents, and coloured brown, may be forwarded overland as soon as possible, to the amount of about two millions.

I have, &c.,  
ARTHUR N. BIRCH,

The Crown Agents,  
&c., &c., &c.

Letter,  
A. T. Bushby  
to Col. Sec.,  
7th June,  
1867.

Letter,  
Agents-General  
to Col. Sec.,  
E.C., 29th  
Oct., 1867.

Governor Seymour appears to have been willing to go to the expense of preparing a new die for the 2-cent stamp, but the Crown Agents were of the opinion that "a broad over-print, obliterating as much as possible" the monetary inscription on the original 3d. plate, would serve the purpose just as well, at least for a stamp of low face value, and would cost considerably less. Messrs. De La Rue were accordingly instructed to over-print the existing 3d. plate with a duty-plate reading TWO CENTS. The surcharge was imprinted by an offset lithographic process which shows no indentations; 8,815 sheets of 240 multiples or 2,115,600 of these stamps were printed in a light-brown shade with the surcharge in black in sans-serif capitals, all perforated 14, on white wove paper watermarked Crown C.C. Apparently the stamps were all printed at once, but they were forwarded in three separate consignments, no doubt as soon as possible after the sheets could be perforated. The shipments were as follows:—

1,000 sheets or 240,000 stamps left London 19th September, 1867.

1,500 sheets or 360,000 stamps left London 4th October, 1867.

6,315 sheets or 1,515,600 stamps left London 19th October, 1867.

The total cost of preparation was £131 10s. 2d.

Only 84,000 2-cent stamps were issued to the General Post Office, and of these but 73,375 were distributed to the various Post Offices in the Colony, commencing on 22nd January, 1868, before their withdrawal. Remainders totalling well over two million 2-cent stamps must have been in the possession of the Colonial officials when the Dominion Government took charge, and these were presumably destroyed, but so far no documentary proof of their destruction has been found. Imperforate stamps of this issue are not known.

At first the use of the 2-cent stamp was limited to the prepayment of newspapers transmitted by mail between points in the Colony, but after 1st July, 1870, it was available for postage on newspapers to the United States.

It has been shown that the prepayment by means of the Colonial stamps of full rates of postage on letters for the

United Kingdom, which was allowed after 1st January, 1868, under the terms of the new Postal Convention between Great Britain and the United States, necessitated the issue of higher denominations of stamps than had been used in British Columbia. On 6th February Bushby communicated with the Colonial Secretary on the subject. "I find," he wrote, "that it is quite necessary that this Department should be supplied with other denominations of stamps than those now in use. We shall require \$1.00, 75c., 50c., and 25c. stamps, and if you think fit to order these it would be as well to write for an additional supply of both 10c. and 5c. stamps. The 3d. stamp, of which there is a large supply, mystifies the public and as soon as possible should be withdrawn."

But strict economy was the order of the day, and Governor Seymour was in no hurry to embark upon the issue of an expensive new series of stamps. The Assistant Colonial Secretary estimated that the denominations stated to be required would cost the Colony about £300 for dies and plates alone if new ones were prepared. At first the Governor seems to have been averse to surcharging the existing 3d. plate for the higher denominations. For the time being the Vancouver Island 5-cent and 10-cent stamps were utilized to prepay the postage to Great Britain and certain of the inland rates, and the 3d. stamps continued to be issued chiefly for use in pairs to cover the 12½-cent rate within the Colony. A large proportion of the Colony's correspondence was with the United States and Canada, and under the existing conditions the postage to those countries could not be prepaid with the Colonial stamps. Evidently Governor Seymour felt that the rather crude philatelic makeshifts in effect at the time must be made to serve as long as possible.

In the following November the stock of the Vancouver Island 5-cent stamps was exhausted and it was imperative that the supply of this denomination should be replenished. The Governor decided to act on part of Bushby's suggestion of the previous February, and the Colonial Secretary addressed the following communication to the Agents-General for the Colonies:—

Letter  
A. T. Bushby  
to Col. Sec.  
6th Feb., 1868.

BRITISH COLUMBIA,  
COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
12th November, 1868.

GENTLEMEN,—A recent change in the postal system between this Colony and the Mother Country renders it necessary to provide postage stamps of various denominations not now possessed by the Colony.

The Governor hopes, however, that it will not be necessary to provide more than one die of a distinctive pattern which will answer for all the denominations of stamps required, no value being engraved on it but the different values being overprinted as has recently been done in the case of the Two Cents stamps; and the various stamps being distinguished by the different colours.

It may be, however, that even the fresh expense of one new die will be avoided by utilizing the existing die, in removing therefrom the words "Three Pence" and thus leaving a blank space upon which the value of the stamps can be overprinted. If this course is found practicable I am to request that it may be adopted. I attach in the margin a specimen stamp to illustrate more clearly what is proposed.

The quantities of stamps and the different denominations required are as follows:—

Colour.	Number of Sheets Required.	Denomination.
Green	500 sheets of 240 multiples from B.C. postage plate to be overprinted with words.....	One Dollar.
Lt. Yellow	1500 do. do. do.	Fifty Cents.
Blue	2000 do. do. do.	Twenty-five Cents.
Orange	1000 do. do. do.	Ten Cents.
Red	1000 do. do. do.	Five Cents.

As the stamps are pressingly required I have to request that they may be forwarded as soon as completed via Panama and that an invoice be transmitted to the Customs House at San Francisco through the hands of the forwarding agents in London.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM A. G. YOUNG.

The Crown Agents for  
the Colonies.

After some discussion at the Colonial Office it was decided not to alter the 3d. die as suggested, but to use the existing plate as in the case of the 2-cent stamps. The sheets used for the various denominations were printed in different colours and then over-printed in contrasting shades, at a total cost of £185 5s. 9d.

Twenty sheets of 240 multiples, or 4,800 stamps of each denomination, were dispatched from London in the Secretary

Should it be necessary to procure a new die it is requested that the above pattern may be adhered to.

Letter,  
Crown Agents  
to Col. Sec.,  
B.C.,  
16th Jan.,  
1869.

of State's dispatch-bag on 16th January, 1869, in response to the Colonial Secretary's urgent request, as follows:—

SurchARGE.	Colour of SurchARGE.	Colour of Stamp.	Paper.	Watermark.
5 . CENTS . 5	Black	Bright Red	White Wove	Crown C C
10 . CENTS . 10	Blue	Lilac Rose	do.	do
25 . CENTS . 25	Violet	Orange	do.	do
50 . CENTS . 50	Red	Violet	do.	do
1 . DOLLAR . 1	Green	Green	do.	do

This preliminary consignment was roughly perforated  $12\frac{1}{2}$  on a single-line machine in a manner which indicates that the work was not performed by the expensive machines at Somerset House; probably it was done by the printers on the machine acquired by them in 1863. These stamps arrived in the Colony early in March and were all handed over to the General Post Office on the 12th of that month. Half the consignment was immediately issued to the Post Office at Victoria, which evidently was badly in need of them; and certain of the larger offices on the mainland were promptly supplied with the higher denominations. All the 5-cent, 25-cent, and 50-cent perf.  $12\frac{1}{2}$  were distributed before the end of September, 1870; of the 10-cent and \$1 denominations remainders of 1,100 and 1,754 respectively were sent to Victoria on 19th August, 1871, to be destroyed with the other remainders which had not been issued by the Colonial Secretary to the General Post Office.

The main shipment of the surcharged stamps was comb-perforated 14 in the regular manner and left London on 13th February, 1859, arriving in the Colony about the end of May. The paper, watermark, surcharge, and colours are identical with those of the perf.  $12\frac{1}{2}$  of this series. The numbers printed and the dates of issue of the 5-cent, 25-cent, and 50-cent denominations were as follows:—

Denomination.	Number Printed.	Date of Issue.
Five Cents	244,320	29th May, 1869.
Ten Cents	241,920	.....
Twenty-five Cents	497,280	21st July, 1869.
Fifty Cents	371,760	23rd February, 1871.
One Dollar	117,600	.....

The Colonial records indicate that none of the 10-cent and \$1 perf. 14 were issued to the General Post Office, and those denominations are not known in used condition.

With a single exception imperforates of the surcharged series are not known. The puzzling exception is a splendid imperforate 50-cent, with perfectly satisfactory margins, which figured in the Ferrary sale and is now in the possession of a well-known New York collector. Its origin is entirely unknown.

The higher value surcharged stamps were used almost entirely for the prepayment of the rates to Great Britain, and after 1st July, 1870, to a lesser extent, to the United States. Their life-story was simple in comparison with the involved careers of the earlier issues of the sister Colonies. They continued to be used, together with the 3d. stamps, until 20th August, 1871, when the first supply of Canadian postage stamps was distributed by the Postmasters at Victoria and New Westminster. On 20th July all Colonial stamps on hand at the various Post Offices in British Columbia were immediately carried over to Dominion of Canada account and Postmasters were still held responsible for the full value of those in their possession. As soon as Canadian stamps were available the Postmasters were instructed that the Colonial stamps in their possession were to be accounted for or returned to the Head Office at New Westminster or Victoria, as the case might be, taking credit in their accounts for the value of the stamps so returned. The Canadian stamps were to be put in use immediately on receipt, after which the Colonial stamps were to become obsolete. Colonial stamps in the hands of the public were to be exchanged for their equivalent in Canadian stamps when required. In such cases the exchanged stamps were returned to the Head Office and credit was taken for their value. A parcel of redeemed stamps, the particulars of which are unfortunately not available, was forwarded by the Postmaster of Victoria to Gilbert E. Griffin, Post Office Inspector at London, Ontario, on 9th October, 1871, and acknowledged by Griffin on the 23rd *idem*; it was forwarded on the same date to the Post Office Department at Ottawa for disposal. This parcel probably contained Colonial stamps which had been exchanged for Canadian stamps, and the odd remainders collected from the outlying Post Offices.

Circular letter,  
V. B. Tait to  
Postmasters,  
20th Aug.,  
1871.

Letter,  
G. E. Griffin  
to H. Wootton,  
22d Oct.,  
1871.

Any Colonial stamps retained by the Postmasters would have to be paid for by them at their face value. It is probable that very few remained on hand at the smaller offices by the time that the Canadian stamps arrived, and that many of the Postmasters were wise enough to buy them as an investment. No doubt most of these stamps later found their way into the stamp market.

Among the official duties assigned to Mr. Griffin on the occasion of his visit to British Columbia in July and August, 1871, was the task of destroying and accounting for the remainders of the postage stamps issued by the Colonial Government. Although there is no reason whatever to disbelieve that Griffin discharged this duty conscientiously, a good deal of scepticism has prevailed among collectors because the known documentary evidence as to the destruction of the remainders is not complete. Clear and reliable verbal testimony on the point has been repeatedly given by contemporaries. Mr. J. Judson Young,\* formerly of the Colonial Secretary's Office, stated that he distinctly remembered the burning of the stamp remainders at the Victoria Post Office. The late Everard Hyde Fletcher, former Post Office Inspector at Victoria, told me that Henry Wootton had often spoken in his presence of Griffin's punctiliousness in personally destroying all the obsolete stamps with the exception of sixty of each denomination preserved as specimens.† Descendants of Mr. Wootton testify to hearing of a bonfire of Colonial stamps at Beacon Hill Park, a centre of activities of special interest in the early days, which points to a ceremony of more or less public character; but no reference to such a ceremony can be found in the contemporary Victoria newspapers. It seems possible that there were two burnings, one (at the Victoria Post Office) of the stocks turned in by the General Post Office at New Westminster and the Post Office at Victoria, and the other (at Beacon Hill Park) of the remainders in the possession of the Colonial Secretary which had never been issued to the

\* The only known extant certificate of the burning of part of the Colonial stamp remainders, which appears to have been one of several, is in the handwriting of Mr. Young and certified by Charles Good, the Colonial Secretary.

† Search in the Government Archives at Ottawa has unfortunately failed to bring to light the report which would presumably have been submitted to the Post Office Department by Mr. Griffin in connection with his visit to British Columbia. No doubt this report would contain information concerning his destruction of the Colonial postage-stamp remainders.

Certificate of  
Charles Good,  
26th Aug.,  
1871.

Post Office. The task of destroying the remainders was not a trivial one, for nearly four and a half million stamps had to be burned. Unfortunately the documentary proof of their destruction does not appear to have survived in its entirety, but we know that by far the greater portion of the perf. 14 surcharged series was destroyed by fire at Victoria, in the presence of Charles Good, the Colonial Secretary, on 26th August, 1871, by Mr. Griffin, and there is every reason to believe that the other remainders were burned on or about the same date.

The philately of British Columbia and Vancouver Island presents many unsolved problems; if it were not so the subject would lack much of its charm. The following tabulated statement presents the final problem of the remainders—with which this study may fitly close:—

Ref. No.	Denomination.	Number Printed.	Issued to G.P.O.	Distributed by G.P.O.	Returned by G.P.O.	Not issued to G.P.O.	Total Reminders.	Remarks.
1	2½d.	235,440	235,440	235,440	.....	.....	.....	All distributed by 16th July, 1867.
2	3c.	114,000	114,000	114,000	.....	.....	.....	All distributed by 9th Sept., 1868.
3	10c.	111,360	111,360	45,929	65,431	.....	65,431	No documentary evidence of destruction at present available.
4	3d.	111,360	111,360	111,360	.....	.....	.....	All distributed by 11th April, 1867.
5	3d.	1,063,440	1,063,440	209,635	853,805	.....	853,805	No documentary evidence of destruction at present available.
6	2c.	2,115,600	84,000	73,375	10,625	2,031,600	2,042,225	All distributed by 17th April, 1869.
7	5c.	4,800	4,800	4,800	.....	.....	.....	No documentary evidence of destruction at present available.
8	10c.	4,800	4,800	3,700	1,100	.....	1,100	All distributed by 14th June, 1869.
9	23c.	4,800	4,800	4,800	.....	.....	.....	All distributed by 26th Sept., 1870.
10	50c.	4,800	4,800	4,800	.....	.....	.....	No documentary evidence of destruction at present available.
11	\$1	4,800	4,800	3,046	1,754	.....	1,754	All distributed by 26th Sept., 1870.
12	5c.	244,320	31,920	28,887	3,033	212,400	215,433	146,400 destroyed 26th August, 1871.
13	*10c.	241,920	.....	.....	.....	241,920 (?)	120,000	do.
14	25c.	497,280	33,600	33,016	584	463,680	464,264	do.
15	50c.	371,760	9,600	1,557	8,043	362,160	370,203	do.
16	*\$1	117,600	.....	.....	.....	117,600	117,600 (?)	All destroyed 26th August, 1871.
		.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4,373,735	do.

\* Believed to have been on sale to stamp-dealers before withdrawal.

## APPENDICES.

## APPENDIX A.

## THE COLONIAL HAND-STAMP POSTAL FRANKS OF VANCOUVER ISLAND AND BRITISH COLUMBIA.

These hand-stamps, used from 1858 until towards the close of the Colonial period in 1871, both as postal franks and stamp cancellers, form what is probably an unique chapter in philately. No exact counterpart is known to exist, the nearest analogy being some of the Confederate States envelopes, which, however, were purely town provisionals and not used, as were these franks, by the Government in lieu of postage stamps.

Much conjecture necessarily enters into the analysis of these franks, because scarcely a vestige of documentary evidence as to their origin and exact use exists other than that afforded by the envelopes bearing their impressions.

Only two of the franks (Nos. 1 and 7) are known to be now in existence.



No. 1.

*Brass Crown Seal*, supplied from England in 1856 for the use of the Collector of Customs for the Colony of Vancouver's Island, at the request of Governor Douglas, *vide* his dispatch No. 18, dated 14th August, 1856. Now at Ottawa.

*Very rare.* Evidently used as a provisional postal frank by Peter Tuite, Town Postmaster of Victoria, during the early stages of the lower Fraser River gold-rush in 1858, under the authority of A. C. Anderson, Collector of Customs

and Postmaster-General of Vancouver Island from July, 1858, to June, 1859.

Seen only on Wells-Fargo Express U.S. 3-cent. and 10-cent. stamped envelopes of 1853-55. Wells, Fargo & Company commenced operations in Victoria about July, 1858, and it is most probable that this seal was used on the first batches of Colonial mail carried by them after the carriage of letters by express was sanctioned subject to a postal tax of  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. on each letter. There is documentary evidence that letters carried by express from the Colony prior to 5th April, 1859, were subjected to a postal charge of  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. each.

Possibly used also to frank envelopes for sale to the public as "stamped envelopes," *vide* A. C. Anderson's notice of 24th November, 1858, regarding the first postal arrangements for British Columbia. (See page 45.)



No. 2.

*Woodcut* (?), probably obtained from San Francisco in 1858 to replace No. 1.

*Rare.* Most probably used by Peter Tuite and later by John D'Ewes, the latter being appointed Acting-Postmaster of Victoria on 8th December, 1859, and holding office until about the middle of September, 1861.

Seen on U.S. 1853-55 stamped envelopes and on the earlier Ballou Fraser River Express envelopes of 1859-60, also on letters going by mail to Fort Hope on Fraser River in 1859. One of the known covers bears the Victoria postmark of Wells, Fargo & Co., showing that this frank was in use as such after that Company commenced operations in Victoria about July, 1858.

Later used (by D'Ewes?) as a postage-stamp canceller. Contemporary with No. 3, as both are known on one cover.

VICTORIA.  
PAID.  
V. I.

No. 3.

*Woodcut* (?), probably made locally to supplement No. 2.  
*Rare.* Most probably used to frank express and other envelopes in preference to No. 2 because it bore the word "Paid" indicating prepayment of the Colonial postage.

Seen only on Wells-Fargo Express U.S. 3c. stamped envelopes of 1853-55 issue, but probably used also on ordinary envelopes for transmission by mail.

Contemporary with No. 2, as both are known on one cover.



No. 4.

*Metal* (?), probably obtained from San Francisco to supplant No. 3 because more durable.

Most probably obtained by D'Ewes under Captain Gosset, Acting Postmaster-General, who succeeded A. C. Anderson, and used by D'Ewes to frank envelopes for sale to the public as "stamped envelopes," as well as to frank letters presented for mailing singly by individuals. D'Ewes probably pushed the sale of his "stamped envelopes" and pocketed the proceeds, as he decamped in September, 1861, with nearly two years' collections of postal revenue.

Used later as a postage-stamp canceller by Henry Wootton, Postmaster at Victoria, from October, 1861, to Confederation. Evidently used for the latter purpose in preference to No. 5 because it neatly cancelled strips of stamps when the Colonial stamps later became more generally available for the prepayment of foreign postage. Probably antedated, but in use at same time as No. 5.

Impressions are usually found at the upper left-hand corner of plain envelopes bearing U.S. stamps which were leaving the Colony. Also known on plain envelopes from Victoria to New Westminster.

Envelopes bearing impressions of this frank continued to be mailed after Colonial postage stamps were available, and it is thought that this was due to the Colonial Post Office honouring the "stamped envelopes" which had been issued irregularly by D'Ewes and also sold legitimately during the intervals when Colonial stamps were not available.



No. 5.

*Metal* (?), probably obtained from England by Captain W. D. Gosset, Acting Postmaster-General of Vancouver Island and British Columbia from June, 1859, to July, 1860.

Probably used by John D'Ewes and later by Henry Wootton almost exclusively to frank envelopes in advance for the express companies.

The prepayment of the Colonial postage on express covers continued by special authority, after stamps were available, to be indicated by this frank, which may possibly have been obtained at that time as of more intricate design and less easy of imitation.

Also most probably used together with No. 4 to indicate the prepayment of Vancouver Island Colonial postage from 26th October, 1864, to 19th September, 1865, when the use of postage stamps on Vancouver Island was temporarily abandoned.

Found rarely as a canceller on Colonial postage stamps and possibly used inadvertently as such. Known as a canceller on surcharged B.C. 3d. stamps of the 2-cent. denomination which were not issued until 22nd January, 1868.



No. 6.

*Metal* (?), probably obtained from San Francisco at the same time as No. 4.

*Very rare.* Probably used in the same manner as No. 4. It seems probable that fraud entered into the use of this frank about 1865-66; hence its use as such after Colonial postage stamps became available.

Usually impressed in vermilion ink, whereas the other postal franks of Vancouver Island and British Columbia are known only in black and blue.



No. 7.

*Metal*, probably obtained from England in 1859 by Captain Gosset, about the time when the Post Office at New Westminster was established.

The Colonial Post Office at New Westminster was not in operation before about April, 1859, and the use of this frank is known on covers dated early in 1860.

Used until the arrival of Colonial postage stamps as a frank on letters mailed by individuals. Also used until June, 1864, as a frank on letters carried by express in and from the Colony of British Columbia. Also used as a stamp canceller until Confederation of British Columbia with Canada in 1871.

As there is no suspicion of fraud on the part of the Colonial Postmaster at New Westminster, this frank does not appear to have been used as such on letters carried by

the Post Office after Colonial postage stamps were available; therefore its use on letters sent by mail is much less frequent than that of the Vancouver Island franks.

This frank is still in existence at the New Westminster Post Office. It is of brass, with a high egg-shaped handle of walnut. Perhaps it is not necessary to add that the frank has not been used officially since Colonial days.

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#### APPENDIX B.

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##### THE NUMERAL POSTMARKS OF VANCOUVER ISLAND AND BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The numeral postmarks which appear on so many British Columbia and Vancouver Island postage stamps and covers offer a pretty problem for the ingenuity of philatelists to wrestle with. The fact that the puzzle seems nearly impossible of solution simply makes it the more irresistible to the enthusiast. The problem is to allocate the numbers to the Post Offices at which they were used.

In his dispatch to the Colonial Office of June 8th, 1859, Governor Douglas requested of the Home authorities a supply of "about three dozen obliterating dies, with a proportion of ink and boxes," and the thirty-six numeral postmarks known to have been used in British Columbia and Vancouver Island from about 1860 to 1871 were evidently the "obliterating dies" asked for by the Governor.

Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately for the philatelic student, the official records are almost silent on the subject of these numeral postmarks. No list showing their allocation can be found, and the only positive evidence at present available is that afforded by some of the covers on which they appear. The following letter from Captain W. D. Gosset, Acting Postmaster-General of British Columbia and Vancouver Island from June, 1859, to July, 1860, is the only scrap of documentary information about the numerals that is known to exist. Captain Gosset, after his relinquishment of the Post Office, had been asked to explain what disposal he had made of the obliterating stamps in his possession. He replied as follows:—

TREASURY, BRITISH COLUMBIA,  
NEW WESTMINSTER,  
10th July, 1861.

SIR,—In reply to yours No. 61 of the 8th instant I have the honour to inform you that I received from England in reply to my application for stamps bearing the names New Westminster, Hope, Yale, &c., &c., stamps suitable for obliterating but having different numerals, no names, evidence to me that the Postmaster General wished me to follow the English system of numeralizing Sub-Post Offices. Of these I issued one for Victoria and one for Nanaimo, probably Nos. 35 and 36 (with ink and dabbers, &c.) and either sent each Postmaster then in British Columbia a numeral stamp for his office or to Mr. Spalding [Postmaster of New Westminster] a lot (5) with ink, dabbers, &c.

There are in my hands still Nos. 5 to 34 with ink pads, &c., which Mr. Spalding can have at any time he likes.

With regard to his purchase of stamps: one with the name New Westminster, British Columbia is I think proper,\* as being the *chief office*; chief offices in England invariably using a name as well as obliator, but the numeral stamps are sufficient for the sub-offices; name stamps are very costly.

I have, &c.,

W. DRISCOLL GOSSET.

The Honourable  
The Colonial Secretary,  
&c., &c., &c.

W. R. Spalding, who had succeeded Gosset as the head of the Post Office in British Columbia, was instructed to take charge of the numeral stamps Nos. 5 to 34, inclusive, and he issued them from time to time as required; but no record of their distribution seems to have survived.

No effort will be made here to solve the whole problem of the numerals. That must be attempted by the individual from such evidence in the form of covers and stamps as he may be able to command. In this connection the list of Post Offices established by the Colonial authorities, with the dates of opening as far as known, may be of value. (*See* page 150.)

It may be stated, however, that from intrinsic evidence afforded by extant covers the following numerals can be definitely assigned to the offices named:—

1. New Westminster.
10. Williams Creek.
35. Victoria.
36. Nanaimo.

\* Apparently this relates to the large dating-stamp bearing the words "General Post Office, British Columbia," which appears on many covers after 1861. It was manufactured in San Francisco at a cost of £12.

And as further assistance in placing the earlier numbers it should be mentioned that a list of Post Offices on the mainland in existence in March, 1861, was numbered as follows in a letter submitted by W. R. Spalding on the 22nd of that month:—

1. New Westminster.
2. Douglas.
3. Hope.
4. Yale.
5. Lytton.
6. Similkameen.
7. Rock Creek.
8. Cayoosch (Lillooet).
9. Alexander.
10. Cariboo (Williams Creek).

It seems altogether likely, from such covers as are known to be in existence, that the numbers assigned by Spalding to these offices corresponded later to their numeral postmarks.

The rest of the puzzle remains to be worked out. Number 26 has been assigned by some authorities to Langley Post Office, on the evidence of a very old resident of that place. Other numbers have been allotted with more or less probability to various Post Offices in the two Colonies, but the only numbers of which we can be sure at present are 1, 10, 35, and 36.

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APPENDIX C.

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NOTE ON THE PHILATELIC RELATIONS OF THE CROWN COLONIES OF VANCOUVER ISLAND AND BRITISH COLUMBIA, WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE USE IN VANCOUVER ISLAND OF THE "BRITISH COLUMBIA & VANCOUVERS ISLAND" 2½D. POSTAGE STAMP OF 1860.

It has been shown in the foregoing chapters that the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, although originally under one Governor and administered largely by officials holding the same office in both Colonies, were entirely separate Colonial entities until their amalga-

mation, under the name of British Columbia, on 17th November, 1866.

Nevertheless, as we have seen, the first supply of Colonial postage stamps issued in 1860 bore the names of both Colonies, with the result that many stamp collectors have erroneously assumed that Vancouver Island and British Columbia were then one Colony, while even careful students of the subject have been led to conclude that the philately of those Colonies had no separate existence prior to the issue of distinct stamps for each Colony in 1865.

It is quite clear, however, that the Governor, acting most probably on the advice of Captain W. Driscoll Gosset, R.E., then Treasurer of British Columbia and shortly afterwards Acting-Treasurer of Vancouver Island and Acting Postmaster-General of both Colonies, intended that each Colony should retain the postage it collected from the sale of the 2½d. stamps, and his motive in making one stamp serve for both Colonies was simply economy.

This overcareful policy brought about serious difficulties and much acrimony on both sides after the retirement of Sir James Douglas from the dual Governorship and the arrival of separate Governors for each Colony, and it has rendered the disentanglement of the philatelic relations of Vancouver Island and British Columbia a matter of the utmost difficulty. The correct elucidation of those relations really constitutes the solution of a major problem in advanced philatelics which has puzzled specialists for many years. It is here attempted for the first time from the original documents, many of which have not been hitherto available for study.

The official correspondence which contains (one is almost tempted to say "conceals") the details of this interesting chapter in British Colonial postage-stamp history is extremely involved and difficult to interpret, but it indicates clearly enough that the postal relations of the neighbouring Colonies were proving highly unsatisfactory to their new and separate Governors, whose previous experiences in this respect evidently had been of a very different order.

Before dealing with the complicated question of the "British Columbia & Vancouver's Island" 2½d. postage stamp of 1860, it is necessary to recount the philatelic con-

Dispatch,  
Governor  
Douglas to  
Sir E. B.  
Lytton, 8th  
June, 1859.

ditions that prevailed in those Colonies before Colonial postage stamps were procured.

From the time of the grant of Vancouver Island to the Hudson's Bay Company for purposes of colonization in 1849, until the lapse of that Company's grant of the soil in 1858, no Colonial postage appears to have been fixed or levied, and the mail services to and from and within the Colony were performed by the Hudson's Bay Company without cost to the inhabitants.

From the chaotic period incident to the first inrush of gold-seekers to the lower Fraser River in 1858 and 1859, when the lower end of Vancouver Island was suddenly thronged with people and the neighbouring Crown Colony of British Columbia came into existence, until the arrival of the first supply of Colonial postage stamps early in 1860, the two Colonies were without means of indicating the prepayment of their postage charges other than the possibly unique wood and metal hand-stamp franks described in Appendix A, impressions of which are to be found on the interesting "covers" surviving from those picturesque days.

All letters transmitted by post within, from, to, or between the two Colonies were subject to the compulsory prepayment of the postal charge of 5 cents or  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. fixed by the Governor on 24th November, 1858, when the first regular Colonial postal arrangements devised by him were put into effect.

The American express companies and private express agents that invaded the new El Dorado and handled the bulk of the miners' letters followed the practice of prepaying the Colonial postage wholesale on envelopes supplied by themselves after the carriage of letters by express was sanctioned by the Governor under the stipulation that on each and every letter thus transmitted the Colonial postal fee must be paid in advance. All letters carried within and between and from the two Colonies by express were liable to a postal tax after 24th November, 1858, but in some cases the tax was not paid; hence public notice was given on 4th May, 1859, that violators of the law would be rigorously prosecuted.

On incoming letters brought in by express no Colonial postal tax appears to have been imposed in Vancouver Island until after the union of the two Colonies, and in

Letter,  
A. C. Anderson  
to Governor  
Douglas, 6th  
April, 1860.

British Columbia such letters do not seem to have been subject to postal charges until May, 1864; but all letters arriving in the Colonies by post after 24th November, 1858, were liable to collection of the regular Colonial postal charge before delivery.

All letters leaving the two Colonies had to pass through United States territory, and as the prepayment of U.S. postage was compulsory all outgoing letters, whether transmitted by post or express, were necessarily contained in U.S. stamped envelopes or bore postage stamps of that country to the required amount—3 cents. If United States stamps were not available, as frequently happened in the earliest days, cash to the required amount had to be sent with the mail to San Francisco. The express agents always had plenty of United States stamped envelopes on hand, as the use of such envelopes was compulsory under the laws by virtue of which they were allowed to carry letters in California and elsewhere in United States territory.

To other foreign countries, with the exception of Australia, the prepayment in cash of the overseas postage was optional with the sender during this early period. On all such letters, however, the prepayment of the Colonial postage was invariably indicated by means of the hand-franks until the receipt of the Colonial postage stamps and in many cases after their arrival.

Envelopes were stamped with the hand-franks by the Colonial Post Office (*a*) in quantities in advance for the express companies, which supplied their own envelopes and sold them to their customers ready for mailing; (*b*) in quantities in advance for sale to the public as "stamped envelopes," in which case, as the Post Office supplied the envelopes, an additional charge of 1 cent per envelope was made; and (*c*) when presented for mailing either singly or in quantities by individuals. It is possible that envelopes may also have been franked in numbers by the Post Office for resale by Victoria merchants who desired to supply their customers, and if large accumulations of these had been sold before the first Colonial stamps arrived this may partly explain the persistent postal use of franked envelopes in Vancouver Island long after Colonial postage stamps were available.

The supply of 2½d. stamps requested by Governor Douglas in June, 1859, left London on 29th December of that year and must have arrived in Victoria about March, 1860. The date of actual issue is not known, but as the stamps were urgently required it is not probable that there was any avoidable delay in placing them on sale. The earliest known cover is dated 20th August, 1860. The cost of their manufacture (£104) was defrayed solely by the Government of British Columbia, and this fact led several years later to that Government laying claim to their ownership and questioning the validity of their use for the prepayment of Vancouver Island postage. In that contest the mainland Government finally came off victorious.

But notwithstanding the arrival of the stamps the old franked envelopes continued to be used very largely at Victoria, and thereby hangs a tale. John D'Ewes, the Postmaster in charge at Victoria, the island Capital and centre of population for both Colonies, absconded in September, 1861, with a considerable sum of money, which most probably included the greater part of the postal revenue collected by him during his term of office. D'Ewes was appointed in December, 1859. Until July, 1860, he was under the watchful eye of Captain Gosset, but after that time the supervision given him appears to have been very slight indeed. It may be assumed that D'Ewes eyed with disfavour the use of postage stamps, which are designed largely to prevent fraud such as his, and we are justified in supposing that during the period between July, 1860, and September, 1861, before the population of Victoria was temporarily depleted by the first rush to the Cariboo country, D'Ewes pushed the sale of the franked envelopes, on which the Treasury had no proper check and for which he received cash that suited his purposes admirably.\* Probably stamps were supplied only when the public specially demanded them. D'Ewes had winning ways and was very popular; and doubtless he found it easy to substitute something "just as good" as stamps for the prepayment of the Colonial postage.

At other points in the two Colonies, with the exception of New Westminster, the Capital of British Columbia, stamps

\* As D'Ewes was for some months without regular office assistants, fraud on his part was rendered doubly easy. It is possible that there was some collusion between him and Gordon, the fraudulent Treasurer of Vancouver Island who succeeded Gosset in that office.

were not always available and the prepayment of the Colonial postage in cash was frequently unavoidable. The postal "Out Stations" at the mines and the various Post Offices above New Westminster were in the charge of trusted constables and other officials who could be relied upon to render a strict account of all postal revenue collected by them, whether covered by stamps or cash.

The prepayment of Colonial postage on letters sent by mail in British Columbia appears to have been optional with the sender after about May 1st, 1861. The express companies were still supposed to pay the 2½d. postal tax in advance on all letters carried by them. This tax was paid on the mainland by means of the old franked envelopes up to the end of 1862, and thereafter, until May, 1864, by annual cash payments at the General Post Office in New Westminster; but prior to the enforcement of British Columbia's Postal Ordinance of 1864 the expresses carried many letters on which no postal tax was paid.

In August, 1862, in consequence of greatly enlarged postal activities on the mainland, a new and much higher scale of postal rates to interior points in British Columbia went into effect, and the use of the 2½d. stamp for internal postage in that Colony became impracticable. Thereafter its use appears to have been confined almost entirely to the prepayment of the intercolonial postage between Victoria and New Westminster and vice versa, and most probably, as shall be explained presently, it was used also for the Vancouver Island internal postage on letters passing between points in that Colony.\* The revenue derived from its sale appears to have been retained by each Colony and no effort was made to apportion the revenue equally or to determine in what proportions it should have been divided.

Early in July, 1864, shortly after the British Columbia Postal Ordinance of 1864 became law and postal affairs in that Colony were placed on a more or less satisfactory basis, Henry Wootton, the Postmaster at Victoria who succeeded

Letter,  
A. Watson,  
Treas., V.I.,  
to Col. Sec.,  
V.I., 10th  
Aug., 1864.

\* Although the 2½d. stamp was probably not intended to be used for the prepayment of the Colonial postal charge on letters leaving the Colonies (the hand-franks being generally utilized for this purpose), certain extant covers prove that it was sometimes so used, at least from British Columbia, probably when affixed for that purpose by the sender in advance of mailing. It seems probable also that in cases where the full postage on letters from the interior for foreign countries had been paid in advance, the Colonial postage was covered by affixing and cancelling a 2½d. stamp at the New Westminster Post Office.

D'Ewes, made application to the Treasurer of Vancouver Island for a supply of the 2½d. stamps then in use in both Colonies. Evidently some one noticed that this was the first requisition for stamps that had been received at the Island Treasury from Wootton since 1861, and on being requested to explain matters the Victoria Postmaster stated that since 1862 he had made a practice of obtaining his supplies of these stamps through W. R. Spalding, the Postmaster in charge at New Westminster. £140 worth of the 2½d. stamps had been obtained in this way, made up as follows:—

10th May, 1862 .....	£20
11th August, 1862 .....	20
26th December, 1862 .....	20
26th April, 1863 .....	20
5th September, 1863 .....	20
19th March, 1864 .....	20
27th May, 1864 .....	20
<hr/>	
Total .....	£140

(13,440 stamps at 2½d.).

On June 20th, 1864, British Columbia's new Postal Ordinance went into effect, and in consequence of the altered postal rates in that Colony the 2½d. stamp was provisionally increased in value to 3d. and its use again became practicable for the prepayment (now compulsory) of British Columbia internal postage. It was obviously impossible for the mainland Treasury to continue issuing to the sister Colony stamps which were now worth 3d. on the mainland and only 2½d. on the island; hence a requisition from Wootton dated 16th June, 1864, was refused by Spalding on instructions from higher up.

Wootton had not forwarded cash for the stamps thus obtained through Spalding, but merely furnished the latter with his official receipt therefor and duly accounted for their value to the island Treasury. These receipts were accepted in good faith as a sufficient discharge evidently because it was assumed that the Vancouver Island Treasury officials had duly taken the relative amounts into consideration when adjusting their accounts with British Columbia. However, it now appeared that none of the revenue derived from the sale of the stamps thus supplied to Vancouver Island had been diverted to the British Columbian Treasury, although Alexander Watson, Colonial Treasurer of Vancouver Island,

Letter,  
H. Wootton  
to Col. Sec.,  
V.I., 1st  
Aug., 1864.

Letter,  
W. O. Hamley,  
Actg. Treas.,  
to Col. Sec.,  
B.C., 5th  
Aug., 1864.

Letter,  
Spalding to  
Wootton, 17th  
June, 1864.

Letter,  
Wootton  
to Col. Sec.,  
V.I., 1st  
Aug., 1864.

Letter,  
Col. Treas.  
to Col. Sec.,  
V.I., 10th  
Aug., 1864.

Letter,  
Col. Sec., V.I.  
to Col. Sec.,  
B.C., 5th  
Aug., 1864.

Letter,  
Spalding to  
Col. Sec., B.C.,  
8th Aug.,  
1864.

Letter,  
Spalding to  
Col. Sec., B.C.,  
11th Oct.,  
1864.

in commenting on the matter, expressed himself as doubtful whether his Government was entitled to the whole amount.\*

Governor Kennedy of Vancouver Island at once communicated to Governor Seymour of British Columbia the irregular state of affairs thus brought to light, and in the course of the subsequent investigation the following facts were ascertained.

Spalding explained that Captain Gosset, who was acting as Treasurer and Postmaster-General of both Colonies when the stamps first arrived in Victoria in 1860, had held the whole of the original stock in the Treasury at Victoria and sanctioned the issue of supplies as required to the Postmasters at Victoria and New Westminster (who in turn supplied their district Postmasters) merely on presentation of their official receipts for the amounts involved. Doubtless because Gosset happened to be in control of both Treasuries and Post Office Departments he and his subordinates found this arrangement convenient enough and had no difficulty in keeping the postage accounts of Vancouver Island and British Columbia separate from each other.

The stamps thus supplied by Captain Gosset seem to have been issued as "advance" or "credit" supplies, the values of which were made good later by the Postmasters from the proceeds of sale.

In July, 1860, when Gosset was relieved of the duties of the island Treasurership and removed the British Columbia Treasury from Victoria to New Westminster under circumstances of considerable acerbity, he took with him a supply of the 2½d. stamps which Spalding assumed to be the whole of the unused balance of the original stock. However, it is certain that a considerable proportion, probably half, of the stamps on hand at the time was left with the new Treasurer of Vancouver Island, probably against Gosset's wishes, as he later informed Spalding that in his opinion the stamps really belonged to British Columbia because the entire cost of their preparation and manufacture had been paid by that Colony alone.

\* No doubt British Columbia was entitled to a percentage of the amount in question, as since November, 1862, they had paid the cost (£120 per annum) of the mail service by the steamer "Enterprise" between Victoria and New Westminster. But on the other hand Vancouver Island paid the annual contract (£1,547.82 in 1864) for carrying the mails on the same route by the Hudson's Bay Co.'s steamer, and some of the revenue derived from the sale in British Columbia of the 2½d. stamps used to prepay the intercolonial postage from that end appears to have been paid over to the Island Government.

Mr. George Tomline Gordon, the new Treasurer of Vancouver Island appointed by the Governor on 24th July to replace Captain Gosset in that particular capacity, continued to issue supplies of stamps to the Postmaster of Victoria on presentation of his official receipt, while Gosset went on issuing stamps in the same manner to Spalding from the newly established Treasury at New Westminster.

Early in December, 1861, Gordon was arrested and convicted of fraud in connection with his official duties, and after the appointment of Alexander Watson as Treasurer of Vancouver Island on 28th December, 1861, exception was taken, apparently by the Auditor, Mr. Robert Ker, to the practice of issuing stamps to the Postmaster of Victoria without payment in cash; hence a requisition from Wootton, accompanied by the usual receipt, was refused in May, 1862. The Victoria Postmaster, desirous of keeping his postal transactions above suspicion, and evidently having no advance upon which to draw for the purchase of stamps, took it upon himself to apply to Spalding for stamps, merely furnishing a receipt as heretofore, and accounting for their value to his Treasury in due course. Spalding, obviously assuming that the mainland Treasury held the whole available supply; that Wootton, since his appointment, had been using up a large stock of stamps left at the Victoria Post Office by Gosset, as well as honouring the franked envelopes sold by D'Ewes, and that the practice formerly observed by himself in obtaining stamps from Victoria might with propriety be followed by Wootton in obtaining them from New Westminster, procured the desired stamps from the mainland Treasury and forwarded them to the Victoria Postmaster, tendering Wootton's official receipt for their face value, which was accepted as a sufficient warrant. This indicates clearly that the Postmasters and Treasury officials in both Colonies regarded the 2½d. stamp as equally available in each Colony.

In a letter from the Colonial Secretary of Vancouver Island to Postmaster Wootton it was intimated that His Excellency Governor Kennedy was "constrained to express" his "grave disapproval" of the "unauthorized proceeding" of obtaining stamps from the sister Colony, and that "such irregularities, if repeated, would be seriously dealt with." It is apparent, however, that Henry Wootton had acted in

Letter,  
Wootton to  
Col. Sec., V.I.,  
1st Aug., 1864.

Letter,  
Wootton to  
Col. Sec., V.I.,  
28th July,  
1864.

*Ditto.*

Letter,  
Col. Sec., V.I.,  
to Wootton,  
1st Aug., 1864.

Letter,  
Col. Sec., B.C.,  
to Col. Sec.,  
V.I., 9th Aug.,  
1864.

Letter,  
Col. Treas.,  
to Col. Sec.,  
V.I., 10th  
Aug., 1864.

what he believed to be the public interest, and that he considered he had done his duty when he accounted for the value of the stamps to the Vancouver Island Treasury.

After due inquiry on his side Governor Seymour communicated to Governor Kennedy the explanation tendered by Spalding, and in the correspondence that ensued the Treasurer of Vancouver Island expressed the opinion that "the whole internal arrangement of the [Vancouver Island] Postal Department is upon a most unsatisfactory basis, as shown by the circumstances out of which this correspondence has arisen." He added that in 1863 he had proposed a Postal Act for the Colony of Vancouver Island, "one of the provisions of which was intended to apportion the postal revenue equally betwixt the two Colonies," but that no action had been taken. He might also have added that the undesirable state of the postal affairs of Vancouver Island was entirely due to this want of legislation, and not to any lack of honest effort on the part of the Victoria Postmaster, who was conscientiously endeavouring to cope with the extraordinary situation.

Apparently the British Columbian Government made no claim to any portion of the sum of £140 in question, nor did they, for the moment, seriously endeavour to dissuade the island authorities from continuing to use the stamps, although the latter were the property of the mainland Colony.

The issue of the 2½d. stamps from the Vancouver Island Treasury to the Postmaster at Victoria, for the prepayment of the intercolonial postage between Victoria and New Westminster, and probably also for the Vancouver Island internal postage, appears to have been resumed about 1st August, 1864.

But the 2½d. stamp now had increased validity on the mainland, and its use on Vancouver Island became an increasing embarrassment to the British Columbian Post Office. After June 20th, 1864, it was again fully available for the prepayment, now compulsory, of the British Columbian internal postage. As a result the people of Victoria, particularly business-men who desired to please their customers in the upper country, frequently wished to prepay the whole of the postage on letters to interior points; i.e., both the intercolonial and B.C. inland rates.

Matters were further complicated by the fact that persons buying these stamps in British Columbia and subsequently visiting Victoria considered that they ought to be allowed to use them for prepaying the B.C. inland postage on letters sent by them from Vancouver Island to points on the mainland beyond New Westminster. Wootton could not deny the reasonableness of this claim, and he allowed them to do so, although the concession further involved an already puzzling situation.

About October 4th Wootton yielded to the wishes of his regular patrons and commenced to *sell* the 2½d. stamps for the prepayment from Vancouver Island of the British Columbia inland postage. The stamps were probably affixed to the letters in threes to make up the intercolonial rate of 2½d. and 6d. inland rate, although their selling-price in Victoria was only 5 cents, or 2½d.

About fifty letters were thus prepaid and sent forward before this further "unauthorized proceeding" brought forth the following protest from Spalding:—

BRITISH COLUMBIA,  
GENERAL POST OFFICE,  
NEW WESTMINSTER, 11th October, 1864.

SIR,—I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to draw His Excellency the Governor's attention to the manner in which the Post Office of Vancouver Island is issuing British Columbian postage stamps and to the serious loss arising to the Revenue of this Colony by the practice.

I have noticed on several occasions that letters come up from Victoria for Cariboo and other places in the Colony with the full postage paid in stamps, but the Victoria Postmaster does not account to this office for the amount, and as I have been informed that the Treasurer of Vancouver Island has upwards of £1000 worth of British Columbian stamps while there are only about £140 worth in the Treasury here, I would suggest that application be made to the Treasurer of Vancouver Island for these postage stamps which I am led to believe, from a conversation I once had with Captain Gosset, R.E., the late Treasurer, were paid for by this Colony alone.

This I conceive to be the only mode to prevent loss to the Revenue until new stamps for this Colony can be prepared.

I have, &c.,  
W. R. SPALDING.

*The Honourable  
The Colonial Treasurer,  
New Westminster.*

P.S.—I may add that there being no Order-in-Council of the neighbouring Colony authorizing the increased charge of three-

Letter,  
Wootton to  
Col. Sec., V.I.,  
27th Oct.,  
1864.

Letter,  
Wootton to  
Col. Sec. and  
Auditor, V.I.,  
7th Nov., 1864.

pence for each stamp it is quite open for fraudulent persons to purchase any quantity of stamps in Victoria for two-pence-half-penny and use or re-sell them in this Colony for three-pence.

W. R. S.

(Endorsed: "Governor of Vancouver Island written to.")

"F. Seymour1.")

The Governor of Vancouver Island was communicated with to this effect, and apparently the claim of British Columbia to the sole proprietorship of the 2½d. stamps was now pressed, but the letter covering this phase of the proceedings does not seem to have survived.\*

When called upon to explain the circumstances which had given rise to Spalding's complaint, Wootton advanced the reasonable excuse that "formerly" persons buying the stamps in British Columbia had been allowed to use them "for posting letters in Vancouver Island." This evidently means that the 2½d. stamp was used, possibly from the time of its issue, or at least during a portion of Wootton's incumbency, for the prepayment of the Vancouver Island internal postage rate, which was never higher than 5 cents or 2½d. during that Colony's separate existence. Wootton doubtless encouraged their use on Vancouver Island as far as possible, though the previous sale by D'Ewes of large numbers of franked envelopes in 1860 and 1861 seems to have handicapped him considerably, as these envelopes continued to be presented for mailing and the Victoria Postmaster was not authorized to redeem them or to exchange them for their equivalent in postage stamps.

Evidently Wootton felt that the concession hitherto allowed by Vancouver Island should now be reciprocated by the mainland Colony, and it would seem that his superiors were of the same opinion, as we cannot find that he was reprimanded by them. Some time later, in commenting on this matter, Spalding pointed out that reciprocation in this regard was out of the question because Vancouver Island had no expensive inland mail system to maintain such as existed in British Columbia.

An amusing commentary on the extraordinary state of postal affairs on Vancouver Island at this time is afforded by the following brief correspondence:—

\* The letter in question appears to have been a private note from Governor Seymour to Governor Kennedy which was not preserved with the official correspondence.

Letter,  
Wootton to  
Wakeford &  
Ker, 7th  
Nov., 1864.

Letter,  
Spalding to  
Actg. Co. Sec.,  
B.C., 24th  
Nov., 1865.

VANCOUVER ISLAND,  
POST OFFICE,  
VICTORIA, 31st Oct., 1864.

SIR:

\* \* \* \* \*  
(Dealing with registered letter inquiry.)

P.S.—I should be much obliged for any Postal Regulations, there being nothing of the kind to my knowledge in the Colony.

H [ENRY]. W [OOTTON].

F. Hill,\* Esq.,  
Secretary, General Post Office,  
London, England.

GENERAL POST OFFICE,  
LONDON,  
January 3, 1865.

SIR:

\* \* \* \* \*  
(Re registered letter inquiry.)

If you are in want of instructions for your guidance in performing the postal duties, you should apply to the Officer administering the Government of the Colony.

I am, &c.,  
F. HILL.

The Postmaster  
of Victoria,  
Vancouver Island.

The whole question of the use by his Government of the 2½d. stamp now received the consideration of Governor Kennedy and eventually it was decided that they should not continue to be used in Vancouver Island.

On 26th October Wootton requested a further supply of stamps, and the following communication was sent to him by the Colonial Secretary:—

VANCOUVER ISLAND,  
COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
VICTORIA, 26th Oct., 1864.

SIR,—With reference to your application of this date for a supply of postage stamps, I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to inform you that it has been decided to discontinue from this date the issue of postage stamps for the prepayment of postages on letters. This step is taken in consequence of there being no stamps available but such as bear on the face of them the name of the Colony of British Columbia as well as that of Vancouver Island. You will therefore immediately affix to the door of the Post Office the following notice:—

\* Frederic Hill, brother of the famous Sir Rowland Hill.

POST OFFICE, VICTORIA,  
26th October, 1864.

It is hereby notified for public information that on and after this date no postage stamps bearing the names of both British Columbia and Vancouver Island will be issued for the prepayment of postage, but that until arrangements can be made for procuring a supply of suitable postage stamps the postages on all letters must be prepaid in money.

Persons holding postage stamps bearing the names of both Colonies will be repaid their value on application to the Treasury.\*

.....  
*Postmaster.*

You will take the necessary steps to procure a supply of the requisite small coins to enable you to give change to persons posting letters.

You will at once give the necessary instructions on this point to the various District Postmasters.

I will cause a notice similar to that which you will issue to be published in the local newspapers forthwith.

I have, &c.,

HENRY WAKEFORD,  
*Acting Colonial Secretary.*

*Henry Wootton, Esq.,  
Postmaster,  
&c., &c., &c.,  
Victoria.*

Notwithstanding the losses in which the island Government had been involved through the speculations of John D'Ewes both before and after Colonial stamps were available, the Governor had decided to return to the use of the hand-franks and allow the prepayment of the Colonial postage in cash rather than continue the use of stamps in which his Government had no real proprietorship. With full confidence in the honesty of Henry Wootton, he sanctioned an undesirable arrangement in order to put an end to the controversy as to the ownership of the 2½d. stamp.

Here it may be pointed out that in the early days of the Fraser River gold-rush of 1858-59 small coins were almost unobtainable, and there is little doubt that D'Ewes handed out franked envelopes in lieu of change when persons brought a single letter for mailing; hence the instructions requiring Wootton to give change in coin and thus avoid the unnecessary issue of franked envelopes as far as possible.

\* This explains the presence in some collections of 2½d. B.C. and V.I. stamps bearing the endorsement, "Redeemed, [Alexander] Watson]" (Treasurer of Vancouver Island).

The claim of the British Columbian Government to the proprietorship of the 2½d. stamp was now conceded by Governor Kennedy\*—indeed, it was imperative that the mainland Colony should have an adequate supply of stamps in view of the changed conditions and rates following the inauguration of their new Postal Ordinance—and the remainder of the stock on hand in the Treasury at Victoria (102,050 stamps, value £1,063 Os. 5d.) was handed over to the authorities at New Westminster on 24th November, 1864. Thereafter the 2½d. stamp is referred to by the officials of both Colonies as "British Columbian."

As we have seen, the new 3d. stamp for British Columbia, which was the subject of negotiations as early as May, 1864, was not ready for issue until 1st November, 1865; hence for a considerable interim the 2½d., provisionally increased in value to 3d. without surcharging, had to do duty for the prepayment of British Columbian Colonial postage.

Unfortunately, as indicated in Chapter VIII., the efforts of Governor Kennedy to reform the postal affairs of Vancouver Island were not appreciated by the inhabitants of that Colony, with whom he was now thoroughly out of favour. A Postal Bill introduced by him in June, 1865, was thrown out by the island Legislature chiefly because agitation for union with British Columbia was abroad; hence Vancouver Island remained without separate postal legislation.

But the Governor was determined to obtain a proper supply of postage stamps, and took the necessary steps to that end. The new stamps were not ready for issue until September, 1865. Meanwhile there was no way of prepaying the intercolonial postage from Vancouver Island except in cash. The British Columbia inland postage was collected on delivery unless the addressee had gone away or refused to pay it, in either of which cases the mainland Colony lost the revenue involved. Sometimes, if the senders in Victoria particularly wished to prepay the British Columbia inland postage, the money was wrapped in a piece of paper and sent along with the relative letter—this notwithstanding the fact that on letters mailed in British Columbia prepayment of the full Colonial postage was now compulsory in all cases.

Letter,  
Alex. Watson to  
Col. Sec., V.I.,  
24th Nov.,  
1864.

Victoria  
Weekly  
Chronicle,  
4th April,  
1865.

\* A misquote in the handwriting of Hon. A. N. Birch, the Colonial Secretary, indicates that the matter was finally settled verbally at an interview with Governor Kennedy.

P.M.G. of  
B.C. Annual  
Report, May,  
1865.

No record can be found of any financial adjustment of the two Colonies' postal relations prior to January, 1865, but it was definitely agreed that after that date each Colony should retain the Colonial postage it collected. Letters from British Columbia to Vancouver Island were subject to a charge of 5 cents on delivery, while letters from the island to the mainland were not delivered until the B.C. postal charge of 3d. or 6d., according to distance, had been paid by the addressees. These delivery charges were additional to the Colonial postage of the Colony of origin, paid by the sender at the time of mailing.

The following communication from Henry Wootton to the Colonial Secretary and Auditor of Vancouver Island is an illuminating document, for it contains the key to much that has hitherto baffled students of this subject:—

VANCOUVER ISLAND,  
POST OFFICE,  
VICTORIA,  
7th November, 1864.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to inform you that the practice of stamping letters to cover inter-Colonial postage I believe has been from the time of the opening of the office, and the practice of stamping letters with stamps to cover internal postage through British Columbia commenced about the 4th ulto.

The number of letters so stamped to the interior of British Columbia is about fifty.

The practice at present is to collect on letters to any part of British Columbia the Vancouver Island Colonial postage only.

Formerly if stamps were purchased in British Columbia they could be used for posting letters in Vancouver Island.

No Vancouver Island Colonial postage has ever been collected on foreign letters either to or from British Columbia.

I have, &c.,

HENRY WOOTTON.

Messrs. Wakeford and Ker.

A careful study of the above letter in the light of the other known facts shows that the phrase "*the practice of stamping letters to cover inter-Colonial postage*" refers to the use of the 2½d. stamp\* and not to the hand-franks. The statement that these 2½d. stamps had been used from "*the time of the opening of the office*" is an obvious error—a misprision made in good faith but carefully qualified by

\* The supply of £140 worth of the 2½d. stamps by Spalding to Wootton during the period from December, 1861, to July, 1864, shows that at least 13,440 of the stamps had been used in Vancouver Island.

the proviso "*I believe.*" Wootton simply meant that the 2½d. stamps had been used for the prepayment of the intercolonial postage during the whole of his incumbency and for an unknown time prior to his appointment. The fourth paragraph seems to indicate unmistakably that the 2½d. stamp had also been used for the prepayment of Vancouver Island internal postage, probably from the time of its first issue.

The withdrawal of the stamps and the return to the old method of cash prepayment and franked envelopes on Vancouver Island were distinctly retrograde steps. Naturally complaint was rife in both Colonies, but matters went on in this unsatisfactory way until Spalding communicated the following to the Postmaster at Victoria:—

BRITISH COLUMBIA,  
GENERAL POST OFFICE,  
NEW WESTMINSTER,  
15th May, 1865.

SIR,—In consequence of the very considerable loss to the revenue of this Department owing to letters and papers posted at Victoria for the interior of British Columbia, (upon which the inter-Colonial postage has alone been collected by you) remaining unclaimed at the offices to which they are addressed, I have the honour to inform you that from and after the 18th day of the present month all letters and papers posted in Victoria for any place in British Columbia except New Westminster must be prepaid in full, otherwise they cannot be forwarded.

I enclose British Columbia rates of postage for your guidance, by which you will perceive that the letter rate is 6d. per half ounce to any point above New Westminster and 6d. for every newspaper.

To prevent unnecessary trouble with accounts to your Department I herewith forward twenty-eight sheets (panes of sixty) of British Columbian postage stamps, value Twenty-one Pounds, and when a further supply is required it will be only necessary to remit the amount for those sold with a request to this effect.

For value of the Postage Stamps, see notice enclosed.\*

I have, &c.,

WARNER R. SPALDING,  
Postmaster General.

Henry Wootton, Esq.,  
Postmaster,  
Victoria.

Evidently Wootton was still smarting under the undeserved reproof given him by Governor Kennedy for his

\* This relates to the provisional increase in value of the stamps from 2½d. to 3d.

Letter,  
Wootton to  
Col. Sec., V.I.,  
18th May,  
1865.

Letter,  
Col. Sec., V.I.,  
to Wootton,  
22nd May,  
1865.

Letter,  
Spalding to  
Col. Sec., B.C.,  
24th Nov.,  
1865.

Letter,  
Col. Sec., V.I.,  
to Col. Sec.,  
B.C., 29th  
July, 1865.

previous direct dealings with Spalding in the matter of the 2½d. stamps, for instead of complying with the latter's suggestion he reported the receipt of the stamps to his Colonial Secretary and asked for instructions. He was informed that the arrangement proposed by Spalding was to be carried out for the present, that the value of the stamps was to be accounted for to the Vancouver Island Treasury, and that he was to charge 20 cents for half-ounce letters to the interior of British Columbia. This indicates that the full postage on a letter from Vancouver Island to the interior of the mainland Colony was made up as follows:—

- (1) Intercolonial postage of 5 cents between Victoria and New Westminster, prepaid in cash.
- (2) Internal British Columbian postage of 6d., prepaid from Victoria by means of pairs of the 2½d. stamps valued in B.C. at 3d. but sold on Vancouver Island for 15 cents per pair.

Several months later, in recounting this phase of the two Colonies' postal relations, Spalding stated that only after much delay and correspondence had he been able to obtain the value of the stamps thus sent to Wootton. Indeed, so protracted was the adjustment of this small matter by the island Treasury, notwithstanding the slight pecuniary gain they made by the arrangement, that Spalding declined to issue further supplies to Wootton without payment in advance; and as the British Columbian Post Office now refused to accept letters for the interior which were not fully prepaid the island authorities were reduced to the necessity of themselves applying for the stamps and offering to pay for them "as desired." Meanwhile the intercolonial postage from Victoria seems to have been prepaid in cash for a short period.

Thereafter, and until its retirement on 1st November, 1865, the sale of the 2½d. stamp was continued on Vancouver Island\* for the specific purpose of prepaying the British Columbian inland postage on letters from Vancouver Island, the supplies being issued from the Treasury at New Westminster and paid for by the island Government as indicated above.

\* For a short time in 1867, after the union of the two Colonies, the reissued 2½d. was used from Victoria. (Vide page 125, ante.)

The new postage stamps for Vancouver Island arrived in that Colony about 20th June, 1865, and on the 24th of that month the Colonial Secretary arranged for Wootton shortly to resume the use of stamps for the prepayment of the Vancouver Island Colonial postage. A supply of United States stamps was obtained about the same time, and from the conditions under which it was procured there is no doubt that the use of that country's stamps had been temporarily abandoned when Wootton was instructed to discontinue using the 2½d. stamp on 26th October, 1864.

Early in September, 1865, the Vancouver Island 5-cent and 10-cent stamps were ready for issue, and the Colonial Secretary of Vancouver Island endeavoured to have them made available for the prepayment of B.C. internal postage from the island. Spalding objected to the scheme and it was accordingly abandoned. It would be impossible, he argued, to regulate the revenue properly under the proposed arrangement, as under the B.C. Postal Ordinance of 1864 all letters carried by express on the mainland were required to be prepaid with British Columbian postage stamps, and in order to comply with this regulation Wells-Fargo's letters from the outside world were stamped by their agents, Dietz & Nelson, at New Westminster with B.C. postage stamps. Had Vancouver Island stamps been made available for B.C. internal postage Wells, Fargo & Company would have stamped their B.C. mail at Victoria with Vancouver Island stamps, and Spalding evidently had reason to fear that his Department would find the financial adjustment of the matter difficult and protracted. Needless to say, had this suggestion been carried out, Vancouver Island stamps postally used from that Colony during its separate existence would not have been so scarce as they are to-day.

The use of the new Vancouver Island stamps, during the separate life of the Post Office of that Colony, was confined to the prepayment of the Colonial postage on letters to foreign countries, the intercolonial postage from Victoria to New Westminster, and the internal Vancouver Island postage.

The new British Columbian 3d. stamp was issued on 1st November, 1865. The initial printing of these stamps was small, and the mainland authorities were apprehensive that before a further supply could be obtained their stock would

Letter,  
Col. Sec., V.I.,  
to Wootton,  
24th June,  
1865.

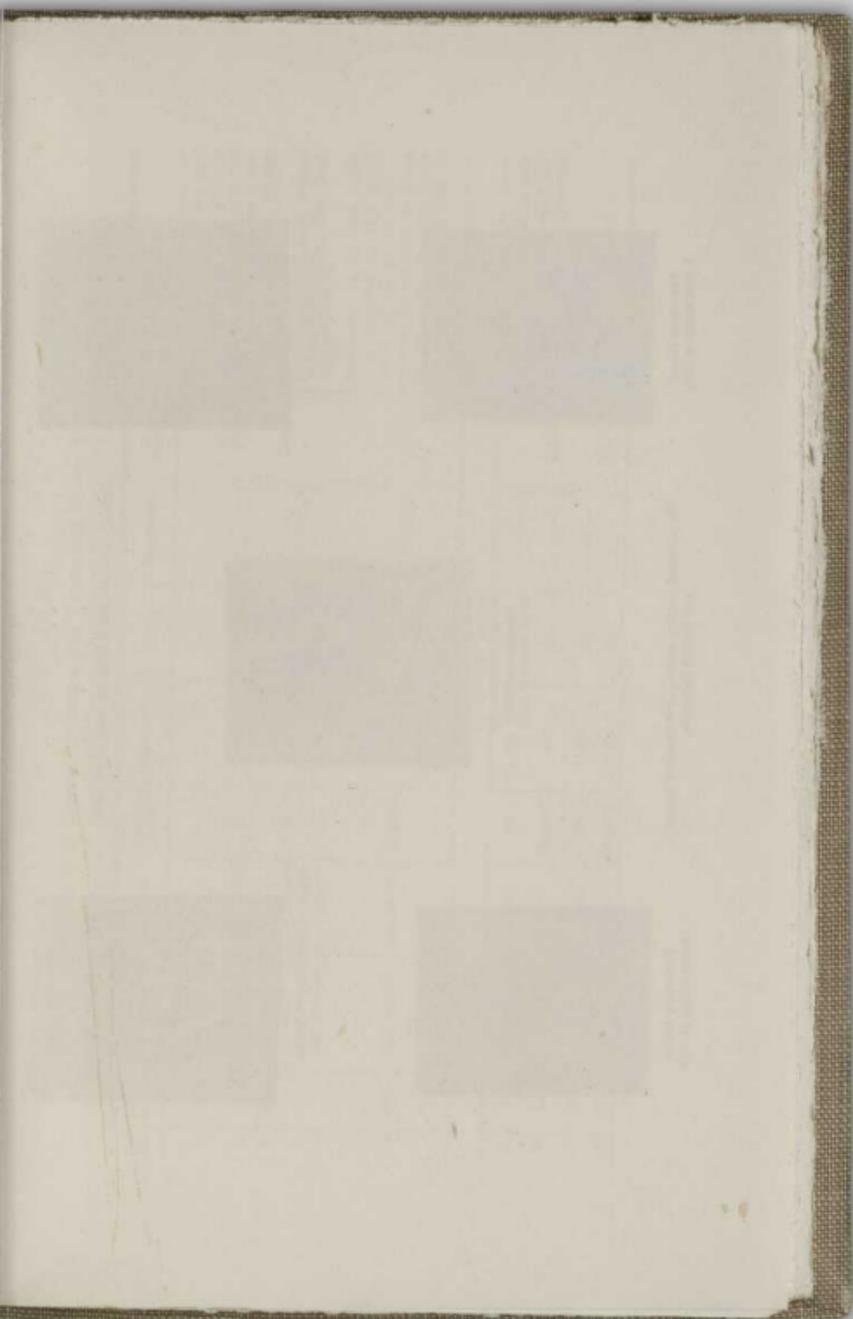
Letter,  
Spalding to  
Col. Sec., B.C.,  
24th Nov.,  
1865.

Letter,  
A. T. Dushky,  
Acting P.M.G.  
of B.C., to  
P.M.,  
Williams  
Creek, 15th  
Nov., 1866.

Weekly  
British  
Colonial,  
Victoria,  
30th Jan.,  
1866.

be exhausted. In 1866 they reserved the stamps for sale to the express companies operating on the mainland, considering it more important to protect the revenue in this way than to issue the stamps to the trusted officials in charge at the outlying Post Offices, who could be relied upon to render a strict account of all postal revenue collected by them. For the same reason the practice of selling British Columbian postage stamps to the Government of Vancouver Island was discontinued, and the old expedient of prepaying the B.C. internal postage from Vancouver Island in cash had to be resumed. Complaints appeared in the Victoria papers, but nothing could be done about it. W. A. G. Young, the Colonial Secretary of Vancouver Island, explained that he had repeatedly endeavoured to obtain a supply of the new British Columbian postage stamps, but had not succeeded in doing so.

But this was the last of the philatelic and postal difficulties between Vancouver Island and British Columbia. After heated agitation and chiefly at the desire of the island people the union of the two Colonies was authorized from London in August, 1866, and as soon as possible thereafter Governor Kennedy left Victoria for England. As we have seen, in November, 1866, the Act of Union was made effective and thereafter the Post Office of Vancouver Island was under the Acting Postmaster-General of British Columbia, but it continued to function separately so far as philatelic matters were concerned until April, 1867, when a new Postal Ordinance was passed to cover the postal services of the united Colony. On April 8th the former Treasurer of Vancouver Island handed over to the Treasurer of British Columbia the Vancouver Island stamps in his custody, and thereafter the postage stamps of the former separate Colonies were equally available on both the island and the mainland.





British Columbia,  
2d. stamp of 1865.



Vancouver Island,  
5-cent stamp of 1866.



British Columbia and  
Vancouver Island,  
2 1/2d. stamp of 1866.

The Colonial postage stamps of Vancouver Island  
and British Columbia.



Standardized British  
Columbia 5d. die.



Vancouver Island,  
10-cent stamp of 1865.

APPENDIX D.

REFERENCE LIST OF BRITISH COLUMBIA AND VANCOUVER ISLAND POSTAGE STAMPS.  
*British Columbia and Vancouver Island.*

Ref. No.	Denom. in fraction.	Date of issue.	Colour.	Perforations.	Watermark.	Paper.	Surcharge.	No. Printed.	Remarks.
1	2½d.	March (?) 1860	(a) Orange rose (b) Brown and flesh rose	14	Unwrktd. do.	Thin, hard, yellowish wove do.	..... .....	235,440	Available in both Colonies until 26th Oct., 1864, after which its use in Vancouver Island was for the specific purpose of pre-paying B.C. inland postage only. Provisionally used as 3d. without surcharging after 20th June, 1864. Withdrawn on 1st Nov., 1865, and reissued on 11th April, 1867, for sale at 6½c each. Reprinted at request of the Duke of Newcastle for the International Exhibition of 1862, at a total cost of £1 ls.
1a	2½d.	Not issued	Brown rose	Imperf.	do.	do.	.....	(?)	

*Vancouver Island.*

2	5c.	19th Sept, 1865	Rose	14	Crown CC	White	.....	114,000	Used in Vancouver Island only until 8th April, 1867; after that date used in the United Colony of British Columbia.
2a	5c.	do.	do.	Imperf.	do.	do.	.....		
3	10c.	do.	Blue	14	do.	do.	.....	111,360	do.
3a	10c.	do.	do.	Imperf.	do.	do.	.....		

*British Columbia.*

Ref. No.	Denomination.	Date of Issue.	Colour.	Perforations.	Watermark.	Paper.	Surcharge.	No. Printed.	Remarks.
4	3d.	1st Nov., 1865	Blue	14	Crown CC	White wove	.....	111,360	Sold for 6¼c. after 1st January, 1866.
5	3d.	19th July, 1867	Light blue	14	do.	do.	.....	1,063,440	Provisionally used as 6¼c. without surcharging. Imperf. not known used. Newspaper stamp.
5c	3d.	(?)	do.	Imperf.	do.	.....			
6	2c.	22nd Jan., 1868	Brown	14	do.	do.	2c. black on 3d. die		
7	5c.	12th Mar., 1869	Bright red	12½	do.	do.	5c. black on 3d. die	4,800	
8	10c.	do.	Lilac rose	12½	do.	do.	10c. blue on 3d. die	4,800	
9	25c.	do.	Orange	12½	do.	do.	25c. violet on 3d. die	4,800	
10	50c.	do.	Violet	12½	do.	do.	50c. red on 3d. die	4,800	One imperforate specimen known.
11	\$1	do.	Green	12½	do.	do.	\$1 green on 3d. die	4,800	
12	5c.	29th May, 1869	Bright red	14	do.	do.	5c. black on 3d. die	244,320	
13	10c.	Not issued	Lilac rose	14	do.	do.	10c. blue on 3d. die	241,920	
14	25c.	21st July, 1869	Orange	14	do.	do.	25c. violet on 3d. die	497,280	
15	50c.	23rd Feb., 1871	Violet	14	do.	do.	50c. red on 3d. die	371,760	
16	\$1	Not issued	Green	14	do.	do.	\$1 green on 3d. die	117,600	

APPENDIX E.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.



No. 14.

An Ordinance for regulating the Postal Service.

[4th May, 1864.]

WHEREAS a General Post Office has been established at New Westminster, for the reception and transmission of Letters and other Mail matter, and as a Post Master General has been appointed for the said Colony;

Preamble.

And whereas it is expedient to make further provision for the conveyance and transmission of Her Majesty's Mails throughout the Colony;

Be it enacted by the Governor of British Columbia, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council thereof, as follows:

1. It shall be lawful for the Governor to establish for the reception and transmission of Letters and other Mail matter, in addition to the General Post Office, at New Westminster, so many Post Offices in other parts of the Colony, as he may from time to time deem necessary.

Establishment of Post Offices.

2. It shall also be lawful for the Postmaster General, subject to the directions of the Governor, from time to time to appoint such Postmasters in the said Colony, to hold office during his pleasure, and to prescribe and vary the mode and amount of their remuneration and securities, the nature and extent of their duties; to regulate the weight and dimensions of letters, to define the various kinds of postal matter, to prohibit the sending of dangerous or improper articles by post; to prepare and distribute such Colonial Stamps for the pre-payment of postage, to order such pre-payments, and

Appointment of Postmasters.

Regulation of Postal details.	generally to make all such other regulations for the more effective management of the Post Office department throughout the Colony, as to such Postmaster General (subject as aforesaid) shall seem expedient for the Public service.
Tenders for Mail Service.	3. It shall be lawful for the Governor to direct the Postmaster General to advertize for tenders for the conveyance of Mails within the said Colony.
Mail Contracts.	4. The Postmaster General may, with the approval of the Governor, enter into contracts for the conveyance of Mail in the Colony.
Postmaster General may sue and be sued.	5. In all proceedings and things whatsoever relating to the Post Office or Postal matters, the Postmaster General may sue and be sued in his own name.
Property in Postal matter.	6. In all proceedings whatsoever relating to Postal matters, in which it shall be necessary or usual to allege or prove property, every letter, paper, and matter being conveyed by, to, or from, or deposited in or with any Post Office, or Postmaster, or other person in the employ of the Post Office in the Colony, shall for the purposes of this Ordinance be deemed and laid as the property of the Postmaster General.
Loose Letters.	7. Every master or person in charge of any vessel arriving from parts beyond the seas, (save from Vancouver Island or its dependencies) shall be entitled to receive one penny for every letter not included in any Mail delivered to the Postmaster at any Port in the Colony, or to any person authorized by him to receive the same.
Rates of Postage.	<p>8. For every letter to and from British Columbia and Vancouver Island, and delivered at Victoria or New Westminster, and not exceeding <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> an ounce, there shall be paid a postage of ..... 3d.</p> <p>Exceeding <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> an ounce, but not exceeding 1 ounce.... 6d.</p> <p>And so on in proportion adding for each rate of <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> an ounce or fractional excess..... 3d.</p> <p>And on every single newspaper..... 1d.</p> <p>On all letters arriving from any other place than Vancouver Island, delivered at New Westminster, the said rate of 3d. per <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> ounce shall be paid in addition to Foreign postage.</p>

On every letter which shall be transmitted from a Post Office at any one place in the Colony, to a Post Office at any other place in the Colony,

For every letter not exceeding  $\frac{1}{2}$  an ounce in weight, 6d.

For every letter exceeding the weight of  $\frac{1}{2}$  an ounce, but not exceeding 1 ounce..... 1s.

And so on after the rate of sixpence for every additional  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce, or any fractional part thereof..... 6d.

And for every single newspaper..... 6d.

9. The Postmaster General, with the approval of the Governor, may enter into contracts with Foreign countries, for the conveyance and transmission of Mails to and from British Columbia, from and to such countries.

Foreign Mail  
Contracts.

10. It shall be lawful for the Postmaster or other officer of the Post Office department, duly authorized, at any place, to open, search and examine the letter bags, or parcels, packages, or persons of any Express Companies or parties suspected of conveying letters or other Mail matter liable to Postage under this Ordinance, without previous pre-payment thereof.

Power to  
search for  
Letters  
unlawfully  
carried.

11. All letters on Public Service, marked over the address "On Her Majesty's Service," and bearing the name of the writer or department on the left hand corner, shall pass free. Letters on public matters to and from Legislative Councillors during session, shall be considered on Her Majesty's Service and pass free.

Franking  
Letters.

12. Every Postmaster shall on the last Monday of every month, cause a list of the then remaining unclaimed or undelivered letters, to be made out in writing and affixed to some conspicuous part of the Post Office, there to remain for the space of ninety days, after which period all such letters then remaining unclaimed or undelivered shall be transmitted by the Postmaster to the General Post Office, at New Westminster. The Postmaster General shall have authority to open such letters, and to return them to the writers thereof, after the expiration of nine calendar months from the publication of such list.

Unclaimed  
Letters.

13. Any person who shall steal, embezzle, secrete, or destroy any Post Letter Bag, or packet, or Post Letter, or

Offences  
declared  
felony.

any chattel, money, security, or thing whatsoever, in such bag, packet, or letter contained, or unlawfully open any Post Letter Bag or packet, or unlawfully take any letter or thing out of such bag or packet, or forge, or be engaged in or accessory to forging or attempting to forge any Postage Stamp or form issued or used, or to be issued or used under the authority of this Act, shall be deemed guilty of a felony, and punishable by imprisonment for life by any Court having jurisdiction in that behalf.

Offences  
punishable  
by fine.

14. Any person or persons, corporation, firm, or partnership whatsoever, that shall knowingly and with intent to defraud the Revenue, convey, or be concerned in the conveyance of any letter or other Mail matter liable to postage, and on which the rates of postage by this Ordinance prescribed, shall not have been pre-paid, shall be liable upon conviction for each such offence, to a fine of not less than Five pounds or exceeding Fifty pounds, every such penalty may be recovered upon conviction before any Justice of the Peace or other Magistrate in the Colony, in a summary manner, and in each such case the informer shall be entitled to receive half the penalty recovered, the remainder shall be paid to the use of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, and be accounted for as part of the Revenue.

Every such penalty or fine, shall be recovered by warrant of distress of the goods and chattels of the offender.

And in case of default in payment of such fine, or of the insufficiency of such distress, the offender shall for every such offence be liable to an imprisonment not exceeding three calendar months, at the discretion of the Justice or Magistrate convicting.

Separate  
offences.

15. The conveyance or attempt to convey any letter, paper or Mail matter liable to postage, without the previous payment to the Post Office Department of the proper postage thereon, shall for every such letter or thing be deemed a separate offence, and be punishable accordingly.

Offences  
punishable  
in any part of  
the Colony.

16. Any offence under this Act, may be dealt with, indicted, tried and punished in any place or district in the Colony, where the offence is committed, or in which the offender is apprehended or in custody, as if actually committed in such place or district.

17. All letters, papers and other Mail matter not hereinbefore made free of postage transmitted within the Colony, shall be pre-paid.

All letters to be pre-paid.

18. This Ordinance may be cited for all purposes as "The Postal Ordinance, 1864."

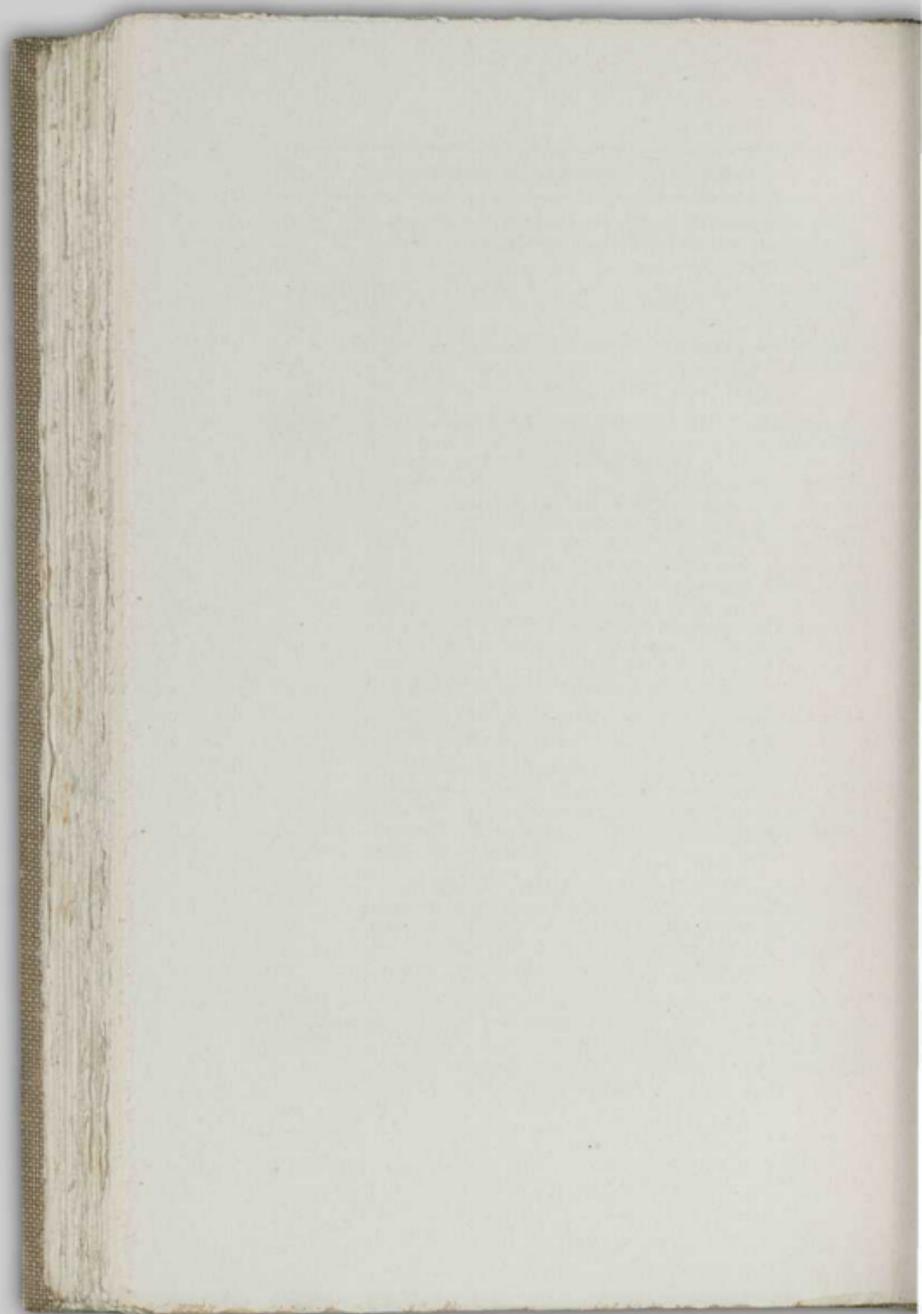
Short Title.

Passed the Legislative Council the 2nd day of May, A.D. 1864.

CHARLES GOOD, Clerk.

Assented to, in Her Majesty's name, this fourth day of May, 1864.

FREDERICK SEYMOUR,  
Governor.



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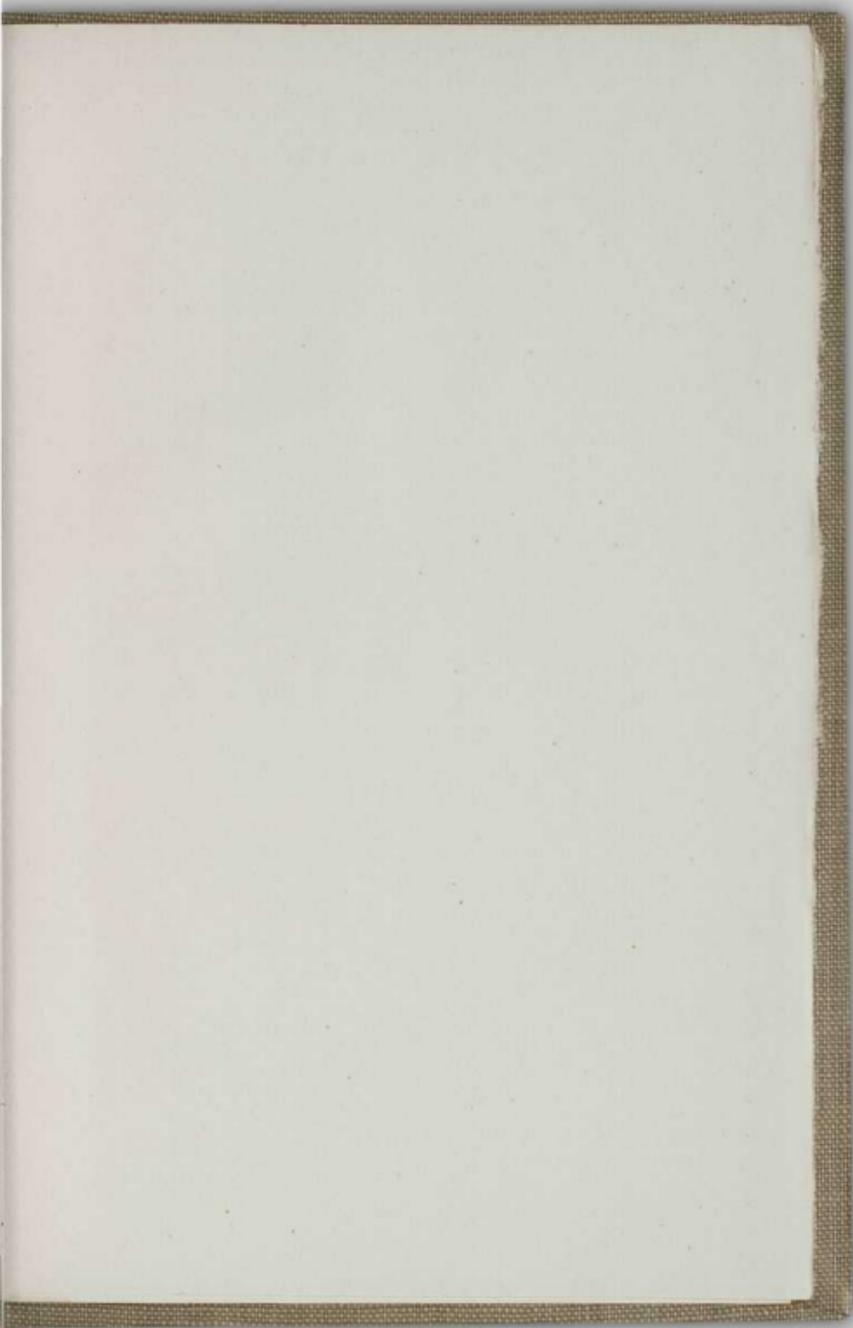
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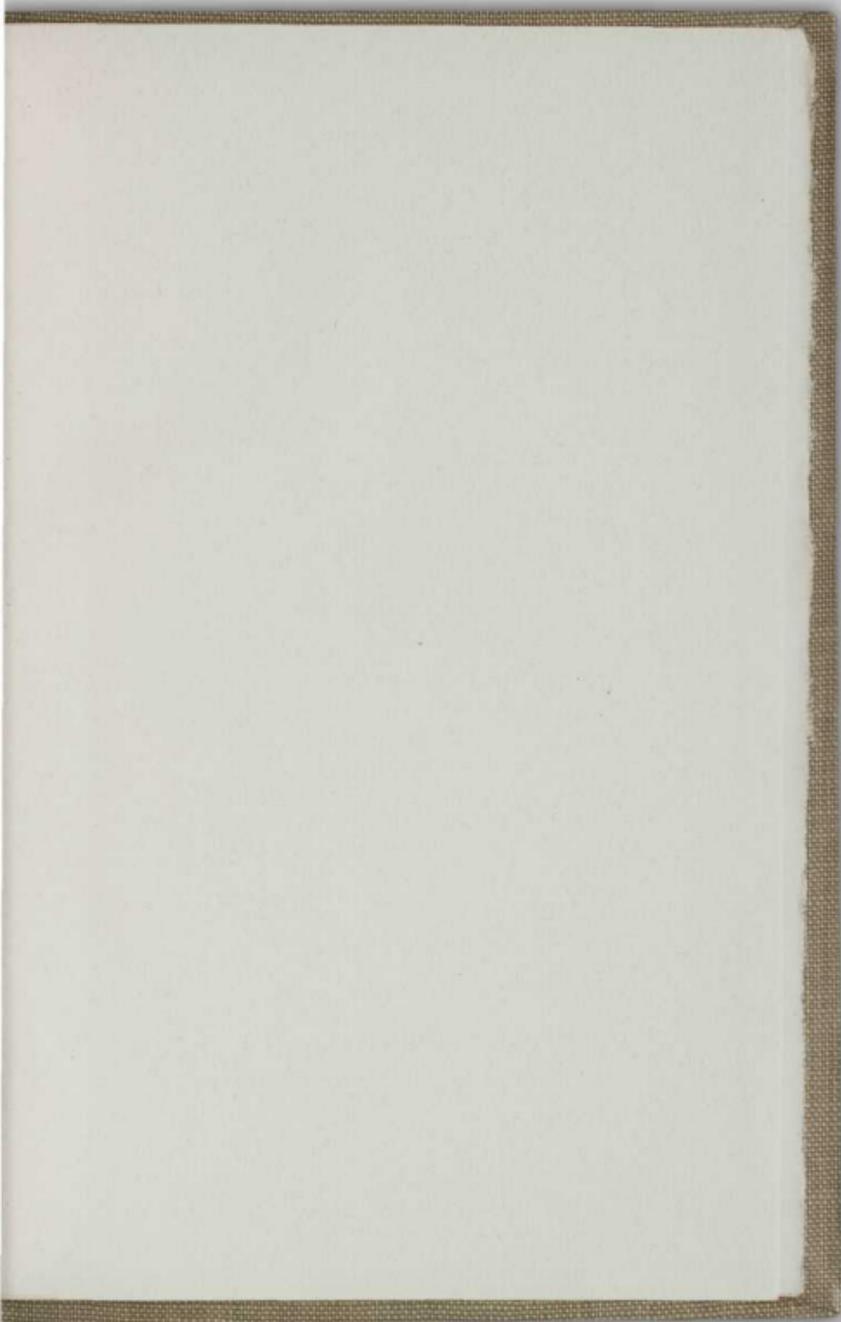
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