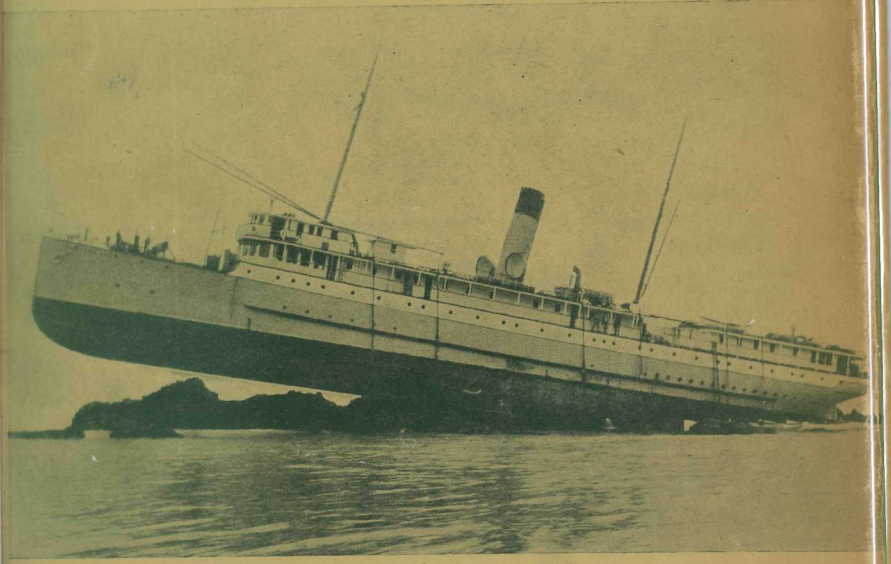
Western Shores

NARRATIVES OF THE PACIFIC COAST



By CAPTAIN KETTLE
(J. H. HAMILTON)

WITH PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS

WESTERN SHORES

NARRATIVES *of the* PACIFIC COAST

By

CAPTAIN KETTLE

(JAS. H. HAMILTON)

This is a book, popular in treatment, authoritative in fact, which preserves in concise form many incidents in the maritime history of the Pacific Coast of Canada and the adjacent Northwest United States which are worth rescuing from the field of memory and placing on permanent record ere it is too late.

While not to be dignified as a marine history of the Pacific Coast, the narratives cover a wide field, from the arrival of the famous steamer "Beaver" in 1834 down to the present activities of our maritime commerce.

The author, Mr. Jas. H. Hamilton, widely known as a columnist under the pen-name "Captain Kettle", has the personal background to write of the incidents he describes, and has spared no pains to secure the historical facts of events of which he had no personal knowledge, and to narrate from first-hand or eye-witness description events of later occurrence.

This book will entertain in the reading, and will be an addition to the bookshelf of every person interested in British Columbia and the West Coast—not merely of passing interest, but as a record of past and current events.

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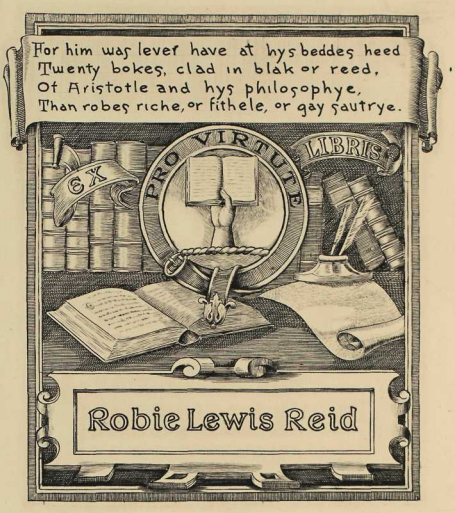

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WESTERN SHORES

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WESTERN SHORES
NARRATIVES OF THE PACIFIC COAST

By

CAPT. KETTLE
(JAMES H. HAMILTON)

Illustrated with Photographic Reproductions

VANCOUVER, CANADA
PROGRESS PUBLISHING COMPANY LIMITED
1932

To my friend

SYDNEY A. SMITH

Barrister and Master Mariner,
at whose suggestion these Recollections
were compiled, this book
is dedicated.

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FOREWORD

THE Romance of the Sea is not confined to the broad waters of the open ocean; the atmosphere clings to the ships even when they come alongside their berth, and seems to permeate even the waterfront itself and all that happens there. It is natural, therefore, to find, among the recollections of any seaport or seacoast, many happenings of strange, romantic or peculiar character, worthy of rescue from the realm of memory ere it be too late.

In the course of many years' close association with things maritime in British Columbia, both in a practical way and as a journalist, many such incidents have impressed me, and their relation together as a group may preserve the memory of at least some of the marine history of the Pacific Coast of Canada.

To many friends whose personal recollection of the happenings herein recorded has so greatly assisted me to secure accuracy as well as local colour, I tender my sincere thanks. In particular my thanks are due to Commr. A. Heurtly Reed, R.N.R., Commr. B. L. Johnson, D.S.O., R.N.R., and Mr. Sydney A. Smith for their assistance in securing technical accuracy.

JAS. H. HAMILTON.

Vancouver, October, 1932.

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CHAPTER I.

A SEA SUPERSTITION; A CURIOUS WRECK; A NARROW ESCAPE

EVERY old salt has his superstitions. Some of these beliefs are not without a romantic background, as instance the old superstition regarding "sister ships." The sailor believes that when two ships are built on the same ways to the same designs, there is something real in the kinship. So close is the association that if one of them comes to grief, the other suffers mishap also, and even if there be three of the sister ships, they are all prone to be allied in misadventure as they were in concept and construction.

Naturally every landsman dubs such an idea as ignorant superstition; but that does not explain the frequency of such happenings during the past hundred years or so. I can recall several very marked instances of this fatalism, and doubtless the reader will remember others.

My note-book reminds me of the case of the two Vancouver-built ships *War Chariot* and *War Charger,* built

by Coughlan's on the same building-slip and launched within a short time of one another. Both were damaged by fire at the builder's yard during construction, and both were subsequently sunk after fire at sea, one on February 10th, 1921, and the other on February 11th, the one at Cape Gata and the other four hundred miles away at Saloniki.

My note-book contains the remark that this coincidence was repeated the following month, March, 1921, in the case of two Isthmian Line ships *Steel Inventor* and *Steel Importer,* both built from the same plans at the same yards and launched within a month of each other. The *Steel Inventor,* while on a voyage from Vancouver to New York, rammed and sank the U. S. destroyer *Woolsey* off Panama on March 14th, with the loss of many lives; and the *Steel Importer* rammed and considerably damaged a steamer in New York harbour the day following, March 15th.

Such instances can be multiplied without end by anyone familiar with marine history and possessed of a fair memory. One of the most curious I can recall was the case of the three 6000-ton steel five-masted barques, built in Germany in 1903 for the South American trade. One of them, the *Preussen,* went ashore at Dover on the south coast of England, early in 1908, and was a total loss, and the other two followed suit within two months on two separate points on the South American coast.*

The *Preussen,* incidentally, was one of the famous Ger-

* This is quoted from a Pacific Coast shipping journal, but not having verified it, I give it with reserve

man steel sailing ships which held the speed record for a voyage from Europe to the West Coast of South America, making the run from Lizard to Iquique in 57 days 0 hours in 1903, beating the previous best run made by the steel barque *Placilla,* also German, of 58 days in 1892.

One reason for my remembering the *Preussen* is the fact that I saw her lying on the rocks at the foot of Dover cliffs three years after she went ashore there, and the wreck was as sound to the eye as if afloat, there being no apparent damage. This was due to the fact that her cargo when she went ashore consisted of paraffin wax in bales and cement in sacks, the wax being stowed on top of the cement. When the ship struck, water got to the cement and set it solid in the bottom of the hold, several thousand tons of it. The wax was salvaged, but the cement remained and anchored the ship firmly to the rocks, making of her a veritable breakwater. It is twenty-four years since I last saw her, but I would not be surprised if part of the wreck is still there. Perhaps some correspondent will write and tell me whether this is so?

Still, this old superstitution regarding sister ships will die, as most of the old sea-lore has died. For one thing, modern conditions have placed too great a strain on the whole idea. Especially during the war and the years succeeding it, it was the practice to construct many ships on the same standard design, and thus as many as twenty, or even forty, "sisters" were launched from the same yard, and it would be too much to expect them all to go ashore or otherwise come to grief at about the same time!

Anyway, the obvious explanation is that these occurrences were merely coincidence; but nevertheless the sailor's idea of "kinship", or bond of union, was rather romantic.

My note-book records one other instance of this curious chain of marine coincidences as relating to Vancouver shipping. Two more Vancouver-built ships, the SS. *Canadian Importer* and *Canadian Exporter,* built on adjoining berths from the same plans, were launched within twenty-eight days of one another in December, 1919.

The *Exporter* went ashore on Willapa Spit, near Astoria, on July 31st, 1921, and became a total loss. The *Importer* left Victoria a few days later with a lumber cargo for Australia and sprang a leak on August 16th, and came near to being abandoned in a sinking condition; was in fact given up for lost by many on shore. She was rescued, however, and towed back to Victoria, and thus did not actually complete the customary story of the "sister ship."

This leads to the reminiscence that both these casualties were productive of unusual incidents which made them the "talk of the Coast" from Alaska to Mexico at the time.

The *Canadian Exporter,* bound from Vancouver for Portland to complete cargo for the Orient, went aground on a sand bank some twenty miles north of the Columbia River during a dense fog. The sea was calm, but the position a very exposed one, open to the Pacific Ocean and its sudden storms. Other vessels which had stranded in the vicinity had been known to have become total losses and therefore anxiety existed regarding the *Canadian Ex-*

porter, despite her apparent easy position on a sand bottom. The American tug *Wallula* went out to assist the ship, but only succeeded in turning her about six points, and she remained hard aground amidships, the fore and aft parts being in deep water; a very dangerous condition.

The Pacific Salvage Company's steamer *Algerine* went to assist, but failed to accomplish anything other than to take off the officers and crew when it became apparent that the ship was doomed. The heavy swells of the Pacific had so badly strained the hull that on August 2nd, three days after she grounded, she showed signs of breaking in two. This she did, shortly after the crew had been taken off, and a weird occurrence startled the salvage men and crew—the ship sounded her own death knell! The experience was uncanny in the extreme, according to the statements of those who heard it, the steamer seeming to send forth last agonised protests against such an unhappy ending. At 7:30 in the morning a long blast from the whistle of the doomed ship startled those on the salvage vessel, lying a short distance from the wreck. Thinking some chance tightening of the whistle cord the reason, and wishing to save all steam possible for further attempts at salving her, Mr. T. W. Allan, superintendent of salvage operations, ordered a boat launched and hastened toward the *Exporter.*

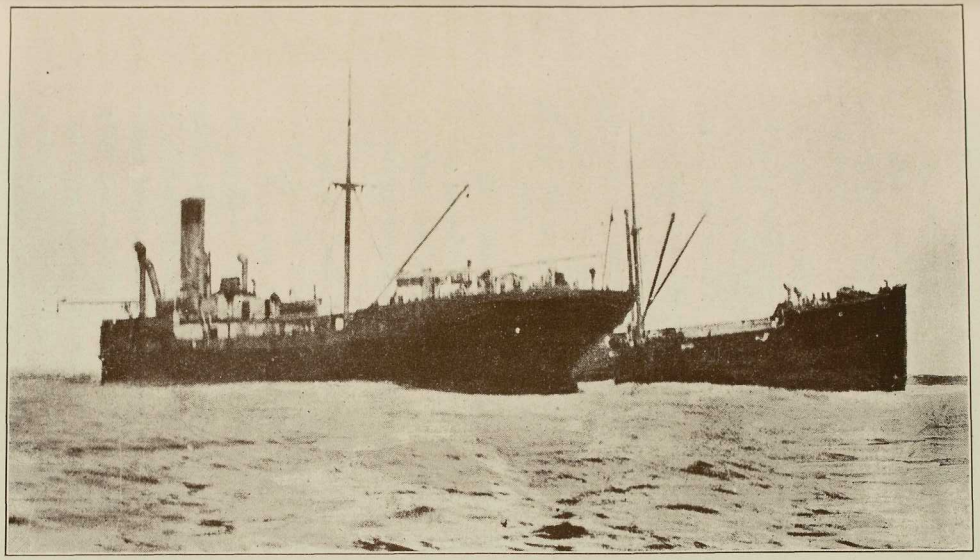
"As we drew near," Mr. Allen relates, "we saw the reason. The ship was breaking before our very eyes. The crack appeared first in her side, just forward of the engine room, then travelled slowly down, widening as it went. The whistle cord, running back from the bridge, would

become taut as the bow sagged with each passing swell, and the whistle would give a blast. She kept that up for an hour and a half. When she stopped, she had parted in two, and a gap of three feet separated the sections. She sounded her own funeral note until there was no steam left in the boilers."

Within a short time the fore part of the vessel slewed round until it was almost parallel with the after part. The accompanying photograph, given me by one of the officers, shows this very plainly, and at first sight looks just like two normal ships passing one another.

Messrs. H. R. MacMillan and Percy Sills, of Vancouver, bought the wreck and her cargo of lumber for the traditional "mere song," hoping to salvage most of the lumber by means of lighters. This was a real gamble. If the weather stayed calm, most of the cargo could probably be salved. If, as was more probable, a storm sprang up, the venture would be a "total loss." Thus the affair was a sporting event of the first magnitude, and was so regarded up and down the coast, from Prince Rupert to Los Angeles, and probably more money was wagered on the outcome than was involved in the actual operation itself. Progress was closely watched by every shipping man on the entire coast.

The full story of this truly remarkable feat of "amateur salvage" has never been related. It is replete with thrills and with the psychological query as to why men should wittingly undergo such risks. I doubt if the participants in this venture would take part in a similar undertaking for any amount of money ; but having embarked on the



Not two ships passing, but the forward and after halves of the SS. *Canadian Exporter*, which broke in two shortly after she grounded on Willapa Spit.

job of salving the cargo of the *Exporter* they stuck to it with unbelievable tenacity until literally prevented from further work by the sinking of the wreck into the quicksands of Willapa Spit.

I obtained the story of this venture from the lips of Mr. Percy Sills himself, and although I know him to be a very truthful man, I could not help doubting his story in some particulars, until he verified it by showing me actual snapshot photographs which he took on the spot at the time. Sills is a lumberman, not a salvage operator; but when the *Exporter* wreck occurred, he and H. R. MacMillan thought there might be good money in getting the lumber off the wreck, and they made a sporting bid of $2000 for the wreck as it lay (the value of the ship and cargo prior to the wreck was $2,000,000), and, to their surprise, it was accepted. Sills undertook to go down to Willapa Harbour and inspect the vessel and make arrangements to get the cargo, and anything else of value, off the wreck.

As soon as he got there, he saw that it would prove a formidable job, for the after part of the vessel was completely parted from the fore part, and it was the after part which contained the better part of the cargo and the more valuable equipment, such as the refrigeration machinery. The after part was found to be embedded fast in the sand bank, which at that spot was soft and shifting, and the wreck was rapidly sinking into it. All they succeeded in salvaging from this part of the wreck was the steering engine, and then had to quit entirely.

Sills consulted Hugh Delanty, the veteran manager of

the Grays Harbour Stevedoring Company, who supplied him with a picked crew of fifteen longshoremen, every one of them an old sailor, under the foremanship of Captain Jensen, a Swede who formerly was a master of schooners. They must have been a tough, hardy lot, as will be seen from the story of their actions. To continue the narration: As it was evident that further work on the after part was impossible, Sills and Delanty decided to make a try to get something out of the fore part of the wreck. There was a considerable quantity of good lumber in the hold; but how to get it out was a problem, as the ship's boilers were in the after part. So they conceived the plan of getting a large donkey boiler on board, which at once presented the problem of how to hoist it up there. They overcame this difficulty, by rigging up a temporary steam pipe from the boilers of a tug to the vessel's own winches and with the ship's tackle the donkey boiler, six feet in diameter and eighteen feet high, was safely hoisted aboard, and soon connected up with the ship's winches.

There was plenty of coal on the ship, but unfortunately it was in the after part of the wreck, and might have been on the other side of the Pacific for all the use it was to the sailors. They had to saw up some of the lumber cargo as fuel for the donkey boiler. Also the fresh water tanks were in the after part, and by this time that part of the wreck had well-nigh disappeared in the quicksands. So they had to get water from South Bend in Willapa Harbour and transported it to the wreck by the expedient of filling the ship's lifeboat with the fresh water, towing it to the wreck and pumping the water to the boiler. They

used five hundred gallons a day and Sills tells me it cost them twenty cents a gallon to deliver it to the boiler.

It was September 2nd when they commenced the work and the job was abandoned near the end of October. The practice at first was for the salvors to go aboard each day by launch and leave in the evening by the same means. After the first week, during which the weather was calm, this method worked well, but at the end of a week a storm sprang up and it was impossible for the launches to go alongside. When the storm had abated, Captain H. Windbeck, of the North Cove Coastguard Station, approached the salvors and advised them not to go aboard the wreck except when told by him that it was safe to do so, and finally agreed to put them aboard himself in his own cutter and take them off when danger threatened. Gladly availing themselves of this offer, Sills and his doughty men decided that the work was progressing too slowly. For one thing, they could only work at high tide, and what with delays owing to bad weather and other circumstances (many days they could not get aboard), it appeared likely the ship would either break up or be washed off the sand bank into deep water.

So Sills finally decided to ask the men to stay on the wreck—sleep and eat and live on it! Consider the situation; half a ship; the other half broken away and sunk in the quicksands; the fore part partly on the sandbank and partly afloat and swinging with the tide; huge breakers throwing clouds of spray right over the wreck when a storm arose, and last, but by no means least, the ever-present danger of the wreck floating off the sandbank and

capsizing. Sills told his men of the plan to stay on the vessel and said he would pay them "time and a half" instead of the regular contract wages. Of the fifteen men, only one refused the job! The foreman, Capt. Jensen, declined to consider extra pay for himself, saying, "No, Mr. Sills, I said I'd do this job for a certain pay and I'm not going to take more. A deal is a deal!" (This seems hard to believe in cold print; but Mr. Sills says that if you knew the man you would find no difficulty in knowing that it is true.)

So they obtained sixteen mattresses and some bedding, a supply of canned goods and other provisions, and duly installed themselves in the crew's quarters in the ship's forecastle. They were high and dry, but Mr. Sills says that at night it required some fortitude to sleep, when the breakers could be heard pounding the sides of the vessel and breaking with thunderous roar on the remains of the after part still showing above high water. One of the longshoremen, a Cockney named Byng, proved to be something of a cook, and at any rate turned out some hot coffee and hot food for the men.

Working thus, they got out of the hold some half-million feet of 12x12 lumber. They bundled twelve of these timbers together, hoisted them out of the hold with the ship's tackle, operated by the donkey boiler, and dumped them into the sea. Fishing boats used to pick them up and tow them into Willapa Harbour. They also got off the anchor windlass, two winches and some other equipment.

They arranged with Capt. Windbeck, of the Coast-guard Station, that if they hoisted a flag he would come out and take them off. One evening, just before nightfall,

the wind rose and heavy cloudbanks indicated a gale. They hoisted their flag but it went unobserved. That night, Mr. Sills tells me, in the forecastle the men spent the time arguing as to whether it would be safer to climb to the masthead or to hang on to the ship's forepeak—the extreme forepart—in the event that the gale, which by this time was in full force—should drive the wreck off the sand bank. Several times Sills told them to shut up, but the argument as to the relative safety (?) of the two locations continued until daybreak. (It transpired two weeks later that the masthead advocates were wrong, as the ship slid off the bank, turned turtle and the masthead was 120 feet or so below water!)

Luckily the ship held her ground, or rather the ground held the ship, but that experience finished the boys and they decided that from then on they would sleep ashore. Capt. Windbeck came out through the surf in the morning with his cutter and managed with great difficulty to manoeuvre near to the wreck. He shouted, "When I get near enough, jump!" The men all lined up on the rail and waited the opportunity of the cutter lifting on the swell and they jumped! They landed, every man jack of them, right into the cutter and got safely ashore.

They continued after that in their salvage work, although one might wonder why men should take such chances for a few dollars a day. They could not go out every day, but relied on Capt. Windbeck to take them out when he considered it safe. On one occasion his engines broke down and they had to row. The wind was rising, but not high, but the tide was contrary to the wind and

the breakers were in consequence furious. Their craft was in imminent danger of being carried on to the partially submerged after part of the vessel, and by the merest chance they avoided it, as the engineer managed to get a kick out of his engines for about two minutes. "That two minutes saved the lives of all of us," says Mr. Sills, and from the photo he has of the water breaking over the wreck it is not hard to believe. Mr. Sills is one of those inveterate snapshot artists. Any unusual situation urges him to secure a snap, and he does. In consequence he has an album full of the most intriguing and thrilling pictures of the operations on the *Canadian Exporter.*

One week after the stormy incident related above, it was decided that weather conditions were getting too bad to continue, and, besides, the ship was getting lighter all the time by removal of the cargo and could not last long. So Sills decided to quit. During the preparations for final departure someone said "What about the donkey boiler?" So they got steam up in the boiler and connected up a flexible steam pipe to the ship's winch and with suitable block and tackle the donkey boiler was duly hoisted over the side of the ship onto a scow alongside *by means of her own steam!* This sounds something like lifting oneself by one's own bootstraps; but a moment's reflection shows that it is quite practicable, just as a man can lift his own weight and more by his muscular effort with the aid of proper tackle. Of course it is practicable; they did it! And Percy Sills has an actual snapshot of the operation, with the big boiler suspended in midair with her flexible steam pipe attached to the winch.

Surely all this effort was worth while? Humanly, yes; but financially, no! Sills and MacMillan paid the underwriters $2,000 for the wreck. Expenses incurred were $20,000; the value of the lumber and equipment salved was $17,500. Result: loss, $4,500; gain: for Mr. Sills "one of the most remarkable experiences in my life!" For a Swedish member of the longshore gang, "One of the best yobs I ban ever had!"

However, although Messrs. MacMillan and Sills made no money, we all got quite a thrill out of it, and a lot of good lumber was saved! The only people who did make money out of the wreck of the *Exporter* were the lawyers, there being protracted litigation over the insurance, on the vexed question of "deviation"; but that, although interesting, is another story.

Then, before the excitement had died down about the *Exporter*, the *Canadian Importer*, her sister ship, got into trouble, and provided an epic story of the sea, which will bear relating. Leaving Victoria, B. C., on or about August 13th, 1921, with a cargo of lumber, and lumber and general below decks, the *Canadian Importer* had a crew of thirty-five men, all of whom, including her officers, were Vancouver or Victoria men. Therefore, when on August 23rd a wireless message sent by Captain Bissett, her master, relayed to shore by another vessel, in which he stated she had sprung a leak, was made public, there was considerable consternation locally. The message advised the owners that number two hold and the engine-

room were flooded, and that while wireless messages could be received, the ship could send no more, as her wireless was out of commission.

The following day the disabled ship was picked up by the steamer *Cordova,* on a voyage from Honolulu to Portland. Captain Bissett boarded the *Cordova* and sent a message to his father in Vancouver that he was safe. He returned at once to his ship and declined a proffered tow from the *Cordova,* which then proceeded on her course. Before leaving the *Cordova* Captain Bissett wirelessed his owners to send assistance to tow him to nearest port as soon as possible.

From that time for a period of nine days nothing was seen or heard of the vessel, or of a lifeboat which had put off from her on August 19th, the day the leak occurred, in an endeavour to pick up some passing vessel and summon assistance.

In response to the wireless message sent from the *Cordova,* the Salvage Vessel *Algerine* was despatched from Victoria, and the Steamer *Canadian Winner* of the same owners, which was approaching Cape Flattery on a voyage from Australia, was ordered to turn back and search for the missing ship. Another company vessel, the *Canadian Observer,* was despatched from San Francisco to assist in the search, and all three converged on the position last given by the *Importer,* the U. S. Revenue Cutter *Snohomish* joining in the hunt.

For several days these four vessels searched a wide area, but failed to locate the distressed ship. The *Snohomish* and *Algerine* abandoned the search, leaving the *Observer* and

the *Winner* on the job, they being determined to continue until they located the vessel or were convinced she had foundered. When the *Observer* came upon a large quantity of lumber floating on the ocean, her master all but gave up hope, but they stayed with it and were rewarded on August 29th by sighting the distressed and, by now, dangerously submerged vessel, and on coming up with her were rejoiced in finding all on board safe and sound, with the exception of the eleven men in the lifeboat, which was still unheard of since she left the ship.

Captain Bissett says it was a somewhat distressing experience being able to read the wireless messages which were exchanged between the rescue vessels, yet being unable to send any message to guide them. When the *Snohomish* wirelessed "Convinced 'Canadian Importer' has foundered—am returning," the mariners on the *Importer* were worried, but lost neither hope nor courage, for their operator had read messages exchanged between the *Canadian Observer* and *Canadian Winner* and the owners at Vancouver, stating they would continue the search until they located the missing ship.

Knowing that the *Importer,* if still afloat, could read their wireless messages, I am inclined to think the kindly officers of the *Observer* and *Winner* sent out messages more optimistic than they truly believed. I have since learned that the owners' representative in Vancouver gave permission by wireless to the master of the *Observer* to continue the search for one more day only, after which, failing to find the *Importer,* he was to return to Vancouver. It really was "touch and go" whether the disabled

vessel was located or not, and had the luck gone against her,—well, neither she nor her crew could have had much chance of survival. However, "all's well that ends well," and in due time the *Canadian Importer* was, after a critical tow of 800 miles, brought safely to Victoria. Had the weather been less moderate, she could never have survived.

There still remains to be told the adventure of the lost lifeboat which left the ship 700 miles from shore and was not seen or heard from for many days. Anxiety for their safety was great and many believed them lost. The story of that long pull is best told in the words of Second Mate Laird, who was in charge of the adventurous voyage:

"We were 684 miles from the nearest land when we left the *Importer* on August 19th. There was a southwest wind and we headed for Columbia River. At the end of the first day we had covered one hundred miles and everything was of the most promising aspect. The following morning adverse winds were met and we were driven back toward the *Importer*. On the third day we were becalmed. The wind then went west and we decided to haul in to the Coast and head for Cape Mendocino. With a fresh wind aft the lifeboat was making good speed and at the rate we were going we would have reached the Coast in four days.

"On the 24th we sighted a steamer at 2 A.M. about four miles distant. We put up red flares and burned waste kerosene, but she failed to see us and disappeared. Until 1 P.M. the wind fell and the weather was oppressive and hot, like a baker's oven. Then at 1 P.M. a squall, laying to the

northeast, broke with hurricane force and blinding rain. We reefed and ran for south.

"For forty-eight hours we were hard put to it to keep the combers from breaking aboard. On the 27th the wind moderated, but the heavy breaking seas made things very uncomfortable. We were now south of San Francisco. Southeast winds then drove us north and away from land. At 11:45 P.M. Friday night, September 2nd, a light was reported and we sent up a flare. The steamer took no notice, but our second flare was seen and the vessel, about three miles away, came in our direction. She turned out to be the Tug *Sea Lion,* despatched from San Francisco to search for our boat and the *Canadian Importer.*

"We were picked up 105 miles from San Francisco, fifteen days after we left the *Importer,* after a course of 960 miles. Despite the hardships of the voyage, we were, after a hot bath and a rest, in good health and spirits. The tug was bound for the last known position of the *Importer,* and we decided to stay with her and help bring in our ship, if lucky enough to come up with her."

And thus, with all hands on the *Canadian Importer* safe and including the eleven in the lifeboat, we will conclude the story with the remark that these two sister ships, the *Exporter* and the *Importer,* provided us with thrills aplenty during that August and September of 1921.

Just a final word: Some marine insurance men made considerable money over the *Importer.* When the first wireless message was received stating the vessel had sprung a leak but was safe, the reinsurance market in London quoted a fairly low figure, "eight guineas" I think (they

still use guineas in the marine risk market). Then came the messages of the finding of lumber floating on the sea and the abandonment of the search by the *Snohomish*. The reinsurance rate rose sharply, to thirty guineas, if I remember rightly. Two days later the *Importer* was picked up and safely towed to port, and the reinsurers pocketed the money.

CHAPTER II.

THE BATTLE OF BURRARD INLET

A Pre-War Incident which might have had grave consequences

"Do you remember the *Komagata Maru?*" is a question equivalent to enquiring whether you were in Vancouver in 1914, for there can be no doubt that every inhabitant of this thriving seaport got some excitement, amusement or indignation—according to individual temperament—out of this affair, which assumed international importance at the time. Regarded after the lapse of years, the incident is seen to have had Gilbertian qualities which make some of its participants appear ridiculous; but let the reader judge for himself.

The S.S. *Komagata Maru* was a Japanese tramp steamer of about 6,000 tons deadweight; just an ordinary tramp, without distinction, with forlorn red patches on her sides and dilapidated paintwork on her funnel and deckhouses, yet she achieved on her arrival at Vancouver an international fame which led to editorials about her in the

London *Times* and other equally famous journals; questions in the British House of Commons; cable communications between His Britannic Majesty's Governments at London, at Ottawa and at Delhi, and between His Japanese Majesty's Government and their consul at Vancouver.

The incident also involved the cancellation of a voyage of the Canadian Warship *Rainbow* to the Behring Sea, and the calling out of two regiments of militia at Vancouver. So you can see there was something about it of a rather unusual nature; not just the ordinary arrival of a Japanese tramp steamer at Vancouver.

Oh, what a time we had; it all comes back to me as I consult my note-book for details. Why, there was a near-panic on Spencer's roof-garden when some ladies who were watching events took fright and rushed for the elevator when H.M.C.S. *Rainbow* anchored in the harbor and trained her guns on the defenceless, but smelly *Komagata.* "One of them shells might come right on this roof!" an old lady exclaimed; and there was a general stampede.

The history of the incident began with the fructification in the brain of one Gurdit Singh, a Sikh, who used to work in Hanbury's lumber mill in Vancouver and saved enough money for a trip back home in 1913, of a scheme whereby he would charter a ship and bring over a shipload of his compatriots to the free and wealthy Canada, whose streets were paved with gold. Gurdit Singh was an intelligent man of some education, as are many of the Vancouver Sikhs, and undoubtedly must have known quite well, both from his own experience and that of his

fellow Sikhs at Vancouver, that the Immigration Regulations of Canada did not permit of the wholesale entry of British Indians. Gurdit Singh chartered a ship, paid cash in advance to the shrewd Japanese owners, for a period of three months, "delivery and redelivery Hong Kong," which means the ship was made available to him at Hong Kong and that he was free to order her anywhere, provided he had her back at Hong Kong at the end of three months.

It never transpired what amount Gurdit Singh paid for the hire of the ship, nor where he got the money from, although there are certain shrewd suspicions which will become apparent as the story unfolds. Remember, the affair happened in May, 1914, just before the War and just at a time when unrest in India was being evidenced by sporadic outbreaks of anti-British, disloyalist character. Just at the time, too, when affairs in Ireland had almost reached the climax of civil war, with guns being smuggled in, volunteer troops drilling in Northern Ireland and the whole situation assuming a grave complex. Just at the time when Germany was, under the tutelage of the Kaiser and his War Lords, preparing for the conquest.

Taken by itself the *Komagata Maru* affair might have been the scheme of an ambitious Sikh, but in all the circumstances there can be but little doubt that it was but part of a general scheme to create troubles for John Bull. Viewed in that light, it was indeed an affair of importance; but since it failed of its purpose, and since the War failed of its purpose, we may well afford to forget that

aspect of the case and confine our attention to the actual incident, which, after the lapse of years, is seen to have had the elements of an opera-bouffe.

Gurdit Singh must have spent some time in preliminary work, for he assembled at Hong Kong a crowd of 375 Hindus, all men with the exception of two women and three children, and herded them on to his chartered ship, the *Komagata,* with the promise that he would land them at Vancouver and secure them legal entry into Canada and find them employment there. According to available information, he exacted from each immigrant a certain small sum as passage money, but only a few dollars per head, far less than would be sufficient to repay his expense for hire of the ship for the round voyage, not to speak of provisions. To satisfy his prospective passengers he obtained from a firm of lawyers in Hong Kong a letter stating that there was no legal bar to their embarking at Hong Kong for a voyage to Canada, which of course was a fact so far as Hong Kong was concerned. This letter may have been used by him to convince the Japanese shipowner that the projected venture was regular and at any rate the vessel duly cleared from Hong Kong and proceeded to Moji, Japan, en route to Vancouver.

She was consigned to C. Gardner Johnson & Company, the well-known Vancouver shipbrokers, and I venture to say she was the strangest, as well as the most troublesome vessel ever consigned to that agency! Early on May 21st, 1914, she arrived at Quarantine, William Head, after a calm and uneventful voyage across the Pacific. Dr. Nelson, then officer in charge of the Quarantine Station, re-

fused her "pratique," *i.e.*, a health clearance, owing to the fact that she had failed to secure a "Bill of Health" at Moji. She was delayed at William Head pending cable advices from Moji, and it was during the delay that the true character of the venture began to appear. Interviewed on board by newspaper reporters, Gurdit Singh announced: "What is done to this shipload of my people will determine whether we are to have peace throughout the British Empire!" This portentous statement was made, mark you, before the immigrants had applied for or been refused admission by the Immigration Authorities at Vancouver, and indicates that Gurdit Singh knew full well what to expect, and was actually and designedly "on trouble bent."

The Canadian Immigration Regulations at that time absolutely precluded the entry of any immigrant of Asiatic race who *(a)* came to Canada otherwise than by continuous journey from his native land, *(b)* not in possession of $200 in cash in his own right or *(c)* an unskilled labourer.

Gurdit Singh knew these regulations quite well, because he was a resident in Canada until early in 1914, and his scheme was a direct challenge to the authority of Canada to thus exclude fellow citizens of the British Empire, even though they be of Asiatic race, and by bringing over a wholesale batch he sought to embroil Canada and England in a discussion of the legality of the regulations and, no doubt, to create further ill-feeling in India. He knew full well that not one of his immigrants could qualify for entry to Canada, they having coming from Hong

Kong, where they had resided for some time, and thus came under the ban as not being on a continuous journey from their native land.

Apart from this fact, enquiry later proved that none possessed the necessary financial qualification, most having but one or two dollars in their possession.

Released from quarantine after a few days' delay, the *Komagata Maru* proceeded to Vancouver and anchored off No. 2 Berth at 11 a.m. of May 22nd. Pilot Barney Johnson brought her in, a fact which he well remembers, as I asked him recently. (But we will not hold that against him, for he is now Commander B. L. Johnson, D.S.O., R.N.R., with a distinguished War record, and is Lloyd's Agent for British Columbia.)

Promptly on arrival, Gurdit Singh made application for a test case to compel the Immigration Department to admit his batch of passengers as "British Subjects." J. Edward Bird, the well-known Vancouver lawyer, was retained as counsel and no doubt had an interesting time with his clients before he was through with the case.

The bad faith of Gurdit Singh is apparent if one considers that to prove a test case it was only necessary to bring over one Hindu, a shipload was entirely unnecessary! One, Munshi Singh, was selected for the test case and it was not until July 6th that the Court of Appeal of British Columbia handed down its decision, upholding the position of the Immigration Board in ordering the deportation of Munshi Singh on the grounds already noted.

Gurdit Singh said if they would let him ashore he could get $10,000 from the banks from India. He also said a

great deal more, most of it of an inflammatory nature, designed to rouse native opinion in India. In this he was partially successful, for the newspapers of the day record that "much excitement is reported in India over the *Komagata Maru* affair."

Long before July 6th, when the Appeal Court decision was handed down, the unfortunate horde on the immigrant ship were suffering untold misery. Not designed to carry passengers, the ship had been provided with temporary passenger quarters of a meagre and insanitary description. The weather was unusually hot and the condition of the ship soon became indescribably filthy. The harbour regulations precluded the throwing of garbage into the harbour and this was as strictly enforced as practicable. Provisions ran out soon after arrival at Vancouver, and the kind-hearted Sikhs of Vancouver, who naturally could not see their compatriots starve, strained every effort to keep the hungry crowd provided with enough food to live on. The local Hindu committee, who had frequently visited Gurdit Singh on board, did their best to persuade Gurdit to return to Hong Kong with his shipload of unfortunates. Gurdit replied that he dared not make the suggestion, as his passengers would kill him if he did not make good his promises.

The day following the decision of the Courts that the immigrants would not be allowed to land, the local Hindus informed Gurdit, being now thoroughly alarmed as to the possible effect on their own status in Canada if the trouble developed further, that they could not afford to provide any further provisions or water, but that they

were willing to put up $15,000 for renewing the charter, which had expired, so that Gurdit might take the ship back.

With their food supply cut off; their charter run out and the Captain demanding immediate release and the landing of the passengers; the Courts deciding that not one of the passengers could be allowed to land; the passengers themselves in a rebellious frame of mind against Gurdit; the weather hot and the ship insanitary and smelly—naturally there was "the devil to pay!"

Inspector Malcolm Reid of the Immigration department, accompanied by two other immigration men, two girl stenographers (I don't know why!) and two lawyers (also I don't know why) went on board on July 10th to try and settle the row. It was related in the newspapers that one of the lady stenographers fainted and was revived by a generous dose of brandy from a hip pocket flask carried (contrary to regulations) by one of the officials. The Captain informed them the owners were willing to carry the crowd back to Hong Kong but in the terms of the Charter-party would not supply provisions, which must be provided by the charterer Gurdit Singh. The Government at Ottawa offered to deport the lot by other vessels if the owners of the *Komagata* gave security. The Japanese Consul at Vancouver, on advice from his Government, suggested a return voyage to Hong Kong and was virtually imprisoned on board for six hours. Many other sad and harrowing details were reported and maybe it was this kind of thing that led to the "declaration of war" which followed!

A police boat went out and its occupants were pelted with rotten vegetables, of which there was a plentiful supply on board, and, sad to relate, they beat a retreat. ("A good time was had by all!" the newspaper report stated.)

They finally allowed Inspector Reid and his party ashore and he bore with him an ultimatum to the Mayor that unless food and water were sent aboard in ample supply by 9 p.m. that day, the whole bunch would go ashore in boats. The City Fathers held a hurried consultation with Inspector Reid, and as a result some provisions and water were sent out to the ship and were received with cheers by the motley crowd aboard.

The position was a deadlock. The Hindus positively refused to allow the ship to sail, indeed it could not be that the ship would sail without adequate stores of food for the voyage. Most of the Hindus said they would not allow the ship to sail even although plenty of food were sent on board.

There was one incident which we must not overlook: The tug *Sea Lion* was engaged by the authorities to forcibly tow the *Komagata* out of port. A more muddle-headed idea I cannot conceive. What did they expect to gain by such a move? However, my job is to narrate, not to criticise. The *Sea Lion* was chartered; a brand new tow-line shipped, and in the dead of night she got under way, first taking on board a number of adventurous spirits in addition to her regular crew. Quite a notable little crowd they were too; including Mr. H. H .Stevens, M.P., Sidney Smith, the barrister, and others. The idea was to board the

Komagata, forcibly pull up her anchor, make fast the towline and "off we go." The only hitch was that we didn't "go off." The bulwarks of the *Komagata* were lined with a motley, yelling crew of savage Hindus, brandishing knives, and every time a line was skilfully thrown on board by the doughty mariners of the *Sea Lion,* a sharp knife in the hands of a tawny son of Indus promptly severed it. Dismayed, vanquished and abashed, the *Sea Lion,* with her accomplished and distinguished complement, returned to shore. To use the military term so frequent during the Great War ,they "retired in good order."

So the authorities declared War!! H.M.C.S. *Rainbow,* which had outfitted at Esquimalt for a cruise to the Behring Sea with a crew of Naval Volunteers, was ordered to cancel her cruise and proceed to Vancouver. She arrived on July 20th and trained her guns on the *Komagata Maru,* and caused the near-panic on the roof-garden at Spencer's to which I alluded earlier. But there was no panic on the *Komagata.* They wanted more food and it was again sent to them, together with requests that they depart thence to the place whence they came. But they departed not, and the Immigration Officer looked fierce and asked the Military Authorities "What about it?"

In reply to this query the Military Authorities issued an order calling out "for active service" (this is a fact!) the Sixth Vancouver Regiment and the Irish Fusiliers. Three wide boarding gangways were constructed on the *Rainbow* and two hundred of our doughty soldiers were embarked on the warship and others placed on the tug *Sea Lion* as a reinforcing boarding party. An emissary was

sent alongside the *Komagata* with a final offer to supply provisions for the return voyage if they would agree to go, or in the alternative,—oh well, there wasn't any alternative, so why make ourselves ridiculous by mentioning it. Gurdit Singh and Company capitulated and said, in effect, "Give us the grub and we will clear out!"

Next day the *Sea Lion* took out a plentiful supply of provisions, paid for by His Majesty's Canadian Government, and on July 23rd, exactly two months after her arrival at Vancouver, the steamship *Komagata Maru* duly set sail and proceeded through the Narrows on her return voyage to Hong Kong.

Eleven days later War was declared, August 4th, and we had other things to engage our attention, and the *Komagata* incident was relegated to the limbo of forgotten things. That is why I want to preserve the memory of the "Battle of Burrard Inlet."

CHAPTER III.

SCARING OFF THE GERMAN CRUISERS

The True Story of Sir Richard McBride's Submarines

IN THE early days of August, 1914, in fact the latter end of July, when it became apparent that war with Germany was inevitable, there was great apprehension at Victoria, and also at Vancouver. It was known that the German Far Eastern Squadron, consisting of several modern fast light cruisers, had put to sea from Kiau Chau, the German base in China, about mid-July for an unknown destination, and information received indicated that the cruisers *Leipzig* and *Nurnberg* were, at the end of July, in the vicinity of the Straits of Juan de Fuca.

Apart from the *Rainbow*, a warship of minor rank, and some guns mounted at Esquimalt Harbour, our Pacific Coasts were entirely without defensive protection. The alarm which existed in Victoria and Vancouver was not an idle fear, nor was it by any means widespread among the public. Those who knew the facts, however, and this included the naval establishment at Esquimalt,

the Provincial Government and the bankers and principal merchants, genuinely anticipated an early attack and the bombardment of Victoria. Bombardment insurances in large sums were effected; the banks removed their specie and securities to inland centres.

Mr. D. R. Clark, Superintendent of the Bank of Montreal at Head Office, giving evidence in 1917 before the Royal Commission, said "There was no doubt left in our minds (August, 1914) that a bombardment might take place of Victoria and Vancouver and we transferred all our surplus cash and securities to Winnipeg, followed by the other banks, and the clearing houses at Vancouver and Victoria were closed. We settled by cheque instead of cash. We allowed many months to elapse before we were sure the fear of a bombardment ceased to exist."

It was disclosed after the war, in official documents, that the Naval Authorities at Esquimalt received official instructions from London to "expect an immediate attack."

There has been so much tendency to ridicule and in every way minimise the value of the courageous and patriotic action of Sir Richard McBride, then premier of British Columbia, in purchasing and "smuggling in" to Canadian waters two Chilean submarines, as an addition to the defensive forces available on our Coast, that it is necessary to present the facts, so that we may ever honour the memory of the man whose decisive and brave act undoubtedly saved our beautiful capital city from bombardment and probable sacking.

Many times in recent years slighting references have

from time to time appeared in the newspapers to these "dummy submarines," alleging the falseness of the suggestion that they were the means of scaring the German cruisers from approaching Victoria. Such slights are unjust and do not tally with the facts—concerning which there is ample evidence of a reliable character, if one looks for it. Apart from reliable statements from the lips of those who took part in the drama, there are such sources as the report of the Royal Commission appointed by the Dominion Government in 1917 to enquire into the purchase of war materials in Canada. That Report contains the facts about the purchase of these submarines and the story is a dramatic one.

The drama opened on the evening of July 29th, 1914, at the Union Club, Victoria. There chanced to be assembled there, discussing the European situation and the chances of war, a little group of men which included Capt. W. H. Logan, representative of the London Salvage Association, Henry B. Thompson, B. F. Barnard and two or three others. There was also present J. V. Paterson, president of the Seattle Construction and Drydock Company.

The possibility of early attack by German cruisers was under discussion. The acquisition of a Chilean warship was suggested and put aside as impossible.

Paterson stated that his company had, at Seattle, two submarines which might be obtained. Of their existence Captain Logan was aware, but this was the first intimation that there was a chance of their acquirement. The Seattle company was the sub-contractor to the Electric

Boat Company of New Jersey, to whom the Chilean Government had, in 1911, given a contract to build two submarines. The Electric Boat Company contracted with the Seattle firm to do part of the work, and construction duly took place at Seattle. For alleged non-fulfilment of the specifications as regards buoyancy under load for a two-months cruise, the Chilean Government suspended payments and the two submarines were lying, completed, at Seattle at the outbreak of war.

As a result of the conversations at the Union Club that evening of July 29th (Russia had already declared war on Austria and Germany on Russia), Paterson, good business man as he was, saw the chance of being rid of the troublesome contract with Chile, and immediately sought permission from the Electric Boat Company to sell. It was given. The Chilean Government had contracted to pay $818,000 for the two submarines and had already paid on account $714,000. No doubt the Electric Boat Company secured their permission to cancel the contract, upon repayment of the moneys already paid, plus interest, but of that we have no record.

Thus we have the situation of two completed modern submarines lying at Seattle, the owners willing to sell; with the defenceless City of Victoria and Navy Yard at Esquimalt with its Admiralty Graving Dock menaced, in the almost sure eventuality of war, with the practical certainty of bombardment!

By this time it was August 2nd. I was in Victoria at the time and can testify that excitement was intense and, in informed circles, fear of shelling very real.

Sir Richard McBride, Premier of British Columbia, a man of considerable courage, as he had exhibited in his political career, took hold of this situation and on his own initiative and accepting the full personal responsibility, sent Captain Logan down to Seattle to inspect the submarines and to telephone him at Victoria his opinion and the best price at which they could be purchased, and whether delivery could be arranged. Logan went to Seattle. In the meantime Sir Richard conferred with the Naval Authorities at Esquimalt, who assured him that the purchase ought to be made and that they would wire Ottawa on the matter at once. In point of fact the Commander at Esquimalt wired headquarters at Ottawa on August 3rd as follows:

"Two submarines actually completed for Chilean Government, Seattle, estimated cost £115,000 each. Could probably purchase. Ready for action; torpedoes on board. Consider it important to acquire immediately." (The statement as to torpedoes was erroneous.)

Hon. Martin Burrell, Minister of Agriculture in the Dominion Government, was in Victoria at the time and told Sir Richard he concurred in the advisability of doing something about the submarines, but had no authority to commit the Government on so important a matter.

Telegrams and long-distance telephone conversations to Seattle were continued throughout the days of August 3rd and 4th. Logan reported the submarines "O.K.," but that the price would be $1,150,000 delivered at the International Boundary Line in the waters of the Straits south of Victoria, "cash on delivery." He also reported that he

and the two naval officers who had accompanied him to Seattle, had arranged with Mr. Patterson to get a scratch crew of eighteen together and that other preparations for the journey had been secretly made. The need for secrecy lay in the fact that at any moment war might be declared, in which case it would be a breach of neutrality for the United States to permit the vessels to proceed to Canadian waters.

There was no time to lose; prompt action was necessary and Sir Richard took it! He had a cheque issued for $1,150,000. He telephoned Logan to go ahead.

At about ten o'clock the night of August 4th (a state of war then existing between the British Empire and Germany) the two submarines cast off. For the sake of silence, battery power was used as far as the harbour light, or entrance to Elliott Bay, then the Diesel engines took up the work. A heavy fog aided the adventure. It might be termed an escape rather than a clearance, for clearance papers were, of course, not obtained. Vice-President Dawson, of the Seattle company, stated in evidence before the commission of enquiry that a delay of only two hours would have blocked the deal: "As it was, when the report got out, the U. S. Government sent out boats from Puget Sound to find the submarines and bring them back, but by that time they had been delivered." (Evidence, Vol. 3, page 2274.)

Early the next morning, August 5th, the Canadian patrol boat "Salvor" was sighted lying off our territorial waters, in wait for the submarines. The actual position was five miles south of Trial Island. On board was Lieut.-

Commander Jones, R.N. (an officer with five years' submarine experience), Engineer Lieut. Wood, R.N., Smallwood, Chief Armourer, several bluejackets and naval artificers *and* the marked cheque for $1,150,000.

The officers boarded the submarines and subjected them to a rigid inspection,—so rigid indeed as to excite the impatience of Paterson, and small wonder, with the "cool million" hanging in the balance.

Satisfied with the result of his inspection, Jones handed the cheque to Paterson; obtained his receipt in writing; took over command; hoisted the British flag; and made for Esquimalt.

In the meantime Sir Robert Borden, Premier of Canada, who had been in communication with the Admiralty in London, wired Sir Richard McBride stating that the British authorities advised purchase of the submarines. As, however, Sir Richard had already accomplished this, his action was warmly appreciated and the hearty thanks of the Government of Canada was tendered. Sir Robert expressed the hope that the vessels would arrive safely.

So Sir Richard McBride's nervy action received the official sanction of the Government of Canada and approbation of the Admiralty. But he took his political life in his hands in taking the unprecedented step of disbursing provincial funds for the purpose of purchasing naval defence vessels. Had the approval of Ottawa not been forthcoming, he would have been "down and out" without doubt. As it was he was the object of attack on the part of his political opponents, and I regret to state that

certain newspapers in Vancouver did not hesitate, not only to attack him politically for his action, but to make scurrilous charges of "graft" and "secret commissions" out of the deal. While they did not openly say who was supposed to have got the commission the implications were fairly obvious.

It was as a result of these low-down rumours that Sir Richard insisted, in 1917, that the Royal Commission appointed by the Government of Canada to enquire into the purchase of War supplies in Canada should include this submarine deal in its investigations. Sir Charles Davidson was the Commissioner, and a most rigorous and thorough investigation disclosed that the entire transaction had been conducted without the slightest trace on the part of any one of the Canadian participants of the slightest "graft" or any financial reward. Mr. Paterson of Seattle got $40,000 commission from the New Jersey people for putting the deal through, and he was doubtless entitled to it.

The report of Sir Charles Davidson concludes with the remark:

"What Sir Richard McBride did in those days of great anxiety, even distress, and what he accomplished, deserves the commendation of his fellow countrymen. For his motives were those of patriotism, and his conduct that of an honorable man."

It has been stated publicly in Vancouver within the past year or two by a prominent German ex-naval man that Germany would never have permitted her vessels to attack Victoria or Vancouver in the early days of the

war, "not wishing to provoke the United States, who would have resented any attack on her near neighbour."

Does our very good friend really believe that? Does he imagine the good people of Victoria and Vancouver placed any more reliance in 1914 on the "Monroe Doctrine" (an American pronouncement), than could have been placed on any other "scrap of paper"? The real protection of the steel walls and guns of our Allies the Japanese, who promptly sent their cruisers *Asama* and *Idzuma* to our coasts, together with the British light cruiser *Newcastle*, of the China Squadron, hastily despatched across the Pacific, was deemed of more value than any theoretical protection of a Doctrine to which Germany had not even admitted her adherence. Sir Richard's two "dud" submarines were probably a stronger deterrent than a dozen Monroe Doctrines.

Now as to the submarines themselves. It has frequently been alleged they were "duds" and should never have been purchased. As to their being duds, it is not true, as I will show; but even if they had been, their purchase would have been justified by the effect that the knowledge of their presence at Esquimalt had on the German cruisers.

Admiral Kingsmill, Chief of Naval Staff of Canada during the War, stated in evidence in 1917: "When I arrived at Victoria, Lieut.-Commander Keyes informed me that the *CC-1* (ex *Iqique*) was in excellent condition and serviceable. The other, *CC-2* (ex *Antofogasta*) had struck some submerged obstacle and had a slight leak, but otherwise was in excellent condition. I may say that from

then on they have continued ordinary work, out for practice, firing torpedoes, submerged and on the surface."

Admiral Story said that when he took charge at Esquimalt in October, 1914, the vessels had been continually at work and that their officers expressed themselves as satisfied with the behaviour of the boats.

Commr. Hose, R.N.R., in command of the *Rainbow*, stated in evidence:

"They were entirely efficient and they were considered so by Lieut.-Commander Keyes and he applied to accompany me to a point 700 miles away from Esquimalt, with his submarines, in order to act offensively against the enemy."

Keyes, by the way, was the brother of Admiral Sir Roger Keyes of Dogger Bank fame. He was an experienced submarine officer and was reputed to be one of the best submarine men in the Navy. Later he was called home for service in the North Sea.

The narrative above set forth represents the true story of Sir Richard McBride's submarines, about which there was so much pother and political slander, the remains of which have so clouded the true facts that it is a pleasure to be able to sit down and write out the clear history and to give due credit to Sir Richard, who has gone to his rest these many years now.

A note in passing, relative to the defenses of our Pacific Coast during the early days of the war. An old and intimate friend of mine, Dr. de Verteuil, whom many will remember as practising in Vancouver as a radium specialist, left Vancouver in May, 1914, for the West Indies for

the purpose of bringing his wife and two children back from there. While in Kingston, Jamaica, he received a cable from the Admiralty to join H.M.S. *Good Hope,* which would shortly arrive at that port from Halifax, N.S. He duly joined the ship. He was an ex-Navy Surgeon. It will be recalled that the Good Hope was one of the unfortunate squadron of Admiral Cradock, which was totally destroyed by von Spee off Coronel in October, 1914. Three weeks after that disastrous engagement, I received a postcard from de Verteuil, which had been mailed at Bahia, with the name of the ship blotted out by the censor, stating, "We will shortly be on the Pacific, northbound. I should not be surprised if we see you all in Vancouver again soon."

It would appear from this that it was the plan of Cradock to proceed to the North Pacific, probably with the intention of engaging the Germans if he came up with them, and finally basing on Esquimalt. I am not sure, but I think de Verteuil was the first Canadian to lose his life in the War.

A friend of mine (now a well-known shipping man on the coast) who held the rank of "Acting Assistant Paymaster Sub-Lieutenant Supernumerary R.C.N.V.R."—the kind of rank on which His Majesty's Imperial Forces bestowed the title of "bloody Volunteer," was on H.M.C.S. *Shearwater,* which was the parent ship for these two submarines on their long and perilous voyage round to Halifax. He tells me that their arrival at the Panama Canal was "quite an event," these being the first British

warships of any kind ever to pass through the Canal; a hitherto unrecorded incident.

I have been fortunate enough to obtain from a Petty Officer who serve d on one of these subs during their voyage from Esquimalt to Halifax, a graphic narrative of the voyage. He tells the story so vividly that I will give it in his own words.

"The *CC-1* and *CC-2* were, I grant you," he writes, "used more for pleasure trips than for fighting, but they actually operated in 'coast and harbour defense' for many long months prior to leaving Esquimalt for Halifax in 1917, and underwent almost daily diving and firing practice.

"They were certainly able to dive and fire torpedoes and these evolutions were daily carried out a few days after their acquisition. In June 1917 the subs were ordered to proceed to Halifax via Panama with their parent ship *Shearwater*. The story of that trip has not been told and it may interest your readers. The tale of that 7,000-mile trip is one of dogged effort to keep alive and keep going.

"Going to the end of the story at the beginning, it may be said that the boats reached their destination and were ordered to cross the Atlantic for service in the war zone. They were so battered and strained that such a thing seemed impossible. Wiser counsels prevailed and the Admiralty decided to keep them at Halifax, where they lay until 1921, when they were finally broken up.

"Leaving Esquimalt, the *CC-1* ran a short distance under her own power and broke down. With the exception of spasmodic efforts to use her engines, she was towed

the rest of the way by *Shearwater,* but the boys of the *CC-1* never slackened their efforts to get their craft going.

"Leaving Esquimalt harbour quietly on the morning of June 21st, the three vessels started on their long voyage. Two days later bad weather set in and the submarines were battened down with the decks just awash. The temperature in the engine rooms of these subs in the tropics reached as high as 120 degrees and considerably added to the discomfort of the crews, as we were unfortunate in having much bad weather, which necessitated the boats steaming battened down.

"In order to keep the engines from racing, it was necessary for the *CC-2* to keep charging the storage batteries. Then the submarine would use her motors until the batteries were run down. The only ventilation obtainable was through the operation of the engines. They would be run for ten minutes drawing fresh air into the craft, and in twenty minutes' time they would be again started and would draw in a fresh supply.

"It was not often possible to keep both engines running at once. While one engine was propelling the submarine, the engine crew would be working feverishly on the other. When the running engine showed signs of weakening and then quit entirely, the idle engine would be started while the disabled one was fixed.

"Then came another horror. During a heavy gale off Cape Blanco on the Oregon coast, and again off Salina Cruz, Mexico, the storage batteries, through some faulty construction, gave out fumes that laid low several of *CC-2's* personnel. For one night the craft was navigated

by the coxswain, while only one or two others were fit for duty. Sardine sandwiches were the only sustaining power given the men for their all-night vigil. That was one of the worst experiences of the whole trip.

"On October 14th, 1917, the *Shearwater* and the submarines made Halifax, and the latter were promptly ordered to refuel and proceed across the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. This was impossible, and the order was later cancelled.

"The *CC-1* and *CC-2* were badly strained and their engines were down and out. A pile of cracked piston heads and other parts discarded, bore testimony to the difficulties of the long trip. The *CC-2* made 7,000 miles with her own engines, a wonderful tribute to the men who coaxed and enticed the machinery to endure the strain which it was never designed to bear. The engine room staff was repeatedly complimented by the *Shearwater's* commander on the fine performance, and on arrival at Halifax the little flotilla received a highly congratulatory message from Sir W. Browning, then Commander-in-Chief of the North America and West Indies station.

"The boats were not designed for such a trip and it was an absurd undertaking. My original engine-room log tells me that we ran 1,500 miles before we 'accepted' a tow from the *Shearwater* and not until we broke down one night in the vicinity of Charleston, S.C., did we ask for a tow line."

Truly these were men of the British bulldog breed. All honour to them!

CHAPTER IV.

THE BEST SEA ADVENTURE

The Voyage of the "Tillicum"

IN these degenerate days the sea means to too many of us —to most of us—nothing real.

Those of us who go afloat take with us the comforts of shore life. Our voyages nowadays are made in the surroundings of a steam-heated, luxuriously-furnished hotel, and, were it not for the discomforts of mal-de-mer to which our unaccustomed stomachs fall prey, we might as well be ashore. Most of us have forgotten that the sea made MEN of our forefathers and founded the might of our race.

If it were suggested that we should embark on an ocean voyage in a tiny craft so frail that one would hesitate to navigate it across English Bay, we would be horrified. Let us, therefore, rouse to the call of the Sea by recounting the deeds of a mariner, a Victoria man, who, in our own times and within the recollection of most us, travelled forty thousand miles in an Indian dugout canoe, most of

the way alone, from Victoria, B.C., to London, England, traversing the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans.

Many old-timers in Victoria well remember Captain J. C. Voss, F.R.G.S. A diminutive man, he stood a bare five feet two inches, his accomplishments have made him famous among sea-faring men and all who love the Sea. His feats were so extraordinary and his narration of them so disregardful that few believed him, until the proofs began to come in, and even then many thought the whole tale was a fabrication.

We know now that Captain Voss did actually accomplish all and more than he set out to do, and the tiny craft in which he made his voyage rests once more in Victoria, a relic and honoured monument of a great feat.

Voss led the usual adventurous seafaring life, always in sailing ships, from deck boy to master, until in 1897, finding himself ashore at Victoria without a ship, he availed himself of an opportunity which, through a peculiar chain of circumstances, presented itself, of a voyage to the famed Cocos Island, in the Pacific Ocean off Ecuador, for the purpose of retrieving the hidden treasure long supposed to have been buried on the island some centuries ago. A certain Mr. Hoffner, an American, had become possessed of the secret of its hiding place through having befriended a sick and dying seaman. This seaman implored him to get in touch with Captain Voss, under whom he had served, and confide in him. Hoffner at first made preparations to secure the treasure for himself, but discovering that secrecy was essential, he concluded that it would be better to go to Cocos Island in a small boat

to let as few as possible into the secret. So he went to Victoria to find Voss, who purchased a small ten-ton sloop called the *Zora* and the voyage from Victoria to Cocos Island was actually made, with Captain Voss and a crew of two. Sad to say the treasure was not discovered and Captain Voss' dream of fortune was dissipated into thin air.

He discovered, however, that the navigation of a small boat on the ocean provided him with a pleasure and thrill that he had never attained on a big ship, and thus when in 1901, four years later, another opportunity presented itself, this time on an even smaller craft, he accepted it with alacrity. Captain Voss was approached by a Canadian journalist, Norman K. Luxton, who used to work on the Vancouver *News Advertiser,* now resident at Banff, Alberta. In the spring of 1901, in Victoria, Luxton made a strange proposition to Captain Voss. Having heard of Voss' voyage to Cocos Island, he enquired whether he could accomplish a voyage round the world in a smaller vessel than the American yawl *Spray* in which Captain Slocum, an American citizen, had successfully circumnavigated the globe.

The *Spray* was a vessel of twelve tons. Captain Voss promptly said "I think we can go one better!".

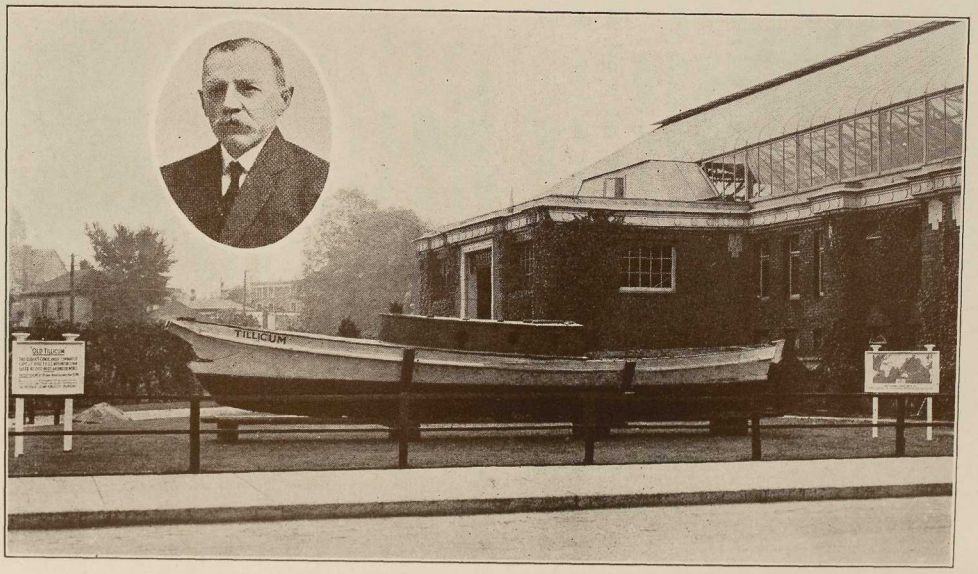
Luxton informed him there was $5000 in it, of which Voss would receive one-half, if they crossed the three oceans. The deal was made and, landsman as he was, Luxton pluckily proposed accompanying Voss on the unprecedented voyage. He actually did go with Voss as far as Fiji, suffering considerably from the unwonted hardships

of the journey, but proceeded from there by steamer. I am unaware whether Voss ultimately got the $2500 from Luxton, but I think the deal was settled by the canoe and its provisions and outfit being turned over to Voss when Luxton declined to proceed.

It was left to Captain Voss to secure a suitable vessel for the voyage and he conceived the idea of using a canoe, thus making a double record for a voyage of circumnavigation, not only the smallest vessel, but the only canoe. On the beach at Cowichan Bay he saw an Indian dug-out cedar canoe which he purchased.

Captain Voss' own description of the vessel and her equipment is clear:

"The canoe, as I bought her, was made out of one solid red log; in other words, she was a proper 'dugout', as used by the Indians for travelling about, propelled by means of paddles, and at times, when the wind and weather was in their favour, a small square sail was used. Red cedar is very durable, but soft and easily split. I was therefore obliged to take great precautions in strengthening her so that she would be able to withstand the rolling and tumbling about in hard sailing or probably in the heavy gales she would most likely encounter during our trip. To put the little vessel in a seaworthy condition I bent, twenty-four inches apart, one-inch square oak frames inside the hull from one end to the other, fastened with galvanized iron nails, and as the canoe was not quite deep enough for my purpose, I built up her sides seven inches. Inside of the



Captain Voss and his canoe *Tillicum*, in which he crossed the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans.

vessel I fastened two-by-four-inch floor timbers over which I placed a kelson of similar measurement, and fastened the same with bolts to a three-by-eight-inch keel. On the bottom of the keel I fastened three hundred pounds of lead. She was then decked over, and I built a five-by-eight-feet cabin in her and a cockpit for steering, after which I rigged her with three small masts and four small fore and aft sails, spreading in all two hundred and thirty square feet of canvas. The masts were stayed with small wire and all running gear led to the cockpit, from where the man at the helm could set or take in all sails.

"When all was ready I broke a bottle of wine over her figurehead and called her *Tilikum*, an Indian name, the meaning of which is *Friend*. The *Tilikum's* dimensions were then as follows:

Length over all, including figurehead	38 ft.
Length on bottom	30 ft.
Main breadth	5 ft. 6 in.
Breadth, water-line	4 ft. 6 in.
Breadth, bottom	3 ft. 6 in.

"I then put on board half a ton of ballast, which was placed between the floor timbers and securely boarded down, and four hundred pounds of sand in four bags was used as shifting ballast to keep the boat in good sailing trim. About one hundred gallons of fresh water in two galvanized iron tanks was placed under the cockpit. Three months' provisions, consisting mostly

of tinned goods; one camera; two rifles; one double-barrelled shotgun; one revolver; ammunition; barometer and navigating instruments completed our equipment. With everything on board, including ourselves, she drew twenty-four inches aft and twenty-two inches forward."

On May 20th, 1901, the tiny craft bobbed up and down on the wavelets of the Inner Harbour at Victoria, ready for sea. She was the object of considerable curiosity, since the hazardous nature, nay, the very absurdity of the proposed voyage, had become generally known and dozens of people inspected her, to the annoyance of Captain Voss, who desired to complete his preparation and get away.

Bets were freely made that the *Tilicum,* as Voss had christened her, would never get beyond Cape Flattery, or, if she did, would never get back to land.

The following morning at six o'clock the *Tilicum* hoisted her 25-lb. anchor and set sail.

The world has been enriched by memoirs of this memorable voyage, written by Captain Voss himself from his log. Within a week from leaving the British Columbia Coast they encountered their first gale. Captain Voss' description of the procedure he adopted in such cases is so clear and understandable, even to the landsman, that I would like to quote it here:

"If a boat or ship in a heavy gale is stopped from going ahead through the water she is free from suction and

consequently will rise even to a breaking sea. It matters very little whether a vessel lays head on, stern on, or sideways, as long as her headway is stopped. There is only one way of stopping a sailing vessel from going ahead in a heavy gale and that is to bring her head to wind and sea, and this is called 'heaving to.' Large sailing vessels hove to under storm sails and properly loaded as a rule lie very dry and comfortable. They may take quite a lot of water on board during a heavy gale, but water in a case of this kind just rolls over the rails and is harmless. If she does ship dangerous seas when hove to it is a sure sign that the vessel is carrying too much sail. Now, in our case, with our small vessel and only a three-quarter-inch cedar deck we cannot allow even one sea to board us, as one sea breaking over this vessel will most likely put us out of business. Therefore, to keep seas from breaking over us we must first of all heave to in time, and heave her to in such a way that she will not ship heavy water even in the worst gale; and that is what we are going to do right now. You understand me now, don't you?'

"My mate looked at me and then at the waves and I know he was wishing himself ashore. I then tied a life-line round his waist and told him to go forward and stand by to drop the sea anchor over the bow when I gave the word. This time he obeyed my orders, as I assured him that I would pull him in again if he should get washed overboard. He managed to get forward on his hands and knees and when forward held on to the foremast to wait for orders. By this time there was

quite a large sea running and some of the waves were breaking heavily. I waited for a fairly smooth sea to come along, and when she got on top I put the helm down, and as she came round inside of a few seconds, and just before swinging head to sea, I pulled the small sail down which I had set for that occasion.

"When the boat got head to sea a breaker came up in front of her which for a few moments looked very much like a brick wall. I shouted at the top of my voice, 'Throw the sea anchor over,' but, instead of doing this, he dropped it on deck and climbed up the foremast and, owing to the smallness of the boat, his weight on top of the mast almost caused her to turn over. I quickly took a pull on the lifeline and told him to come down and, as the sea had passed the boat by that time, he came down just about as quickly as he went up. After throwing the sea anchor over, the *Tilikum* drifted along with the wind and sea and soon tightened the anchor rope; then the boat lay about five points from the wind and, considering the sea which was running at the time, was fairly comfortable and apparently out of danger. I thought that she would be more comfortable and safer if I could manage to get her to lay closer to the wind; I therefore set my leg-of-mutton spanker and hauled the sheet in flat, which made a riding sail instead of a driving sail out of it. No sooner was the sail set than she swung her head to the wind and seas to about two and a half points. The *Tilicum* certainly rode fine that way.

"I then said to my mate, 'The *Tilicum* is all right now

and we are safe as in the Victoria Hotel in Victoria, B.C. Now, tell me, why did you climb the foremast instead of attending to the sea anchor when I asked you?' 'Well,' Luxton replied, 'When I saw that sea combing up in front of us I made sure it was coming clean on top of us!' During the afternoon, while running before the strong wind and large seas, the boat had taken some spray over and both my mate and myself got pretty wet; in fact, we were soaked to the skin; but now that she was hove to, the decks, with the exception of the forward end, were quite dry. We then changed our clothes, had our supper, and then both of us sat down in the cockpit to have a smoke and talk about the poor people on shore, who, at that very moment, may have trees and houses blown about their heads.

"The wind and sea was increasing fast towards evening, but the bow of the *Tilicum* rose finely to every sea.

" 'By Jove, John,' said Luxton, at the same time tapping me on the shoulder, 'I thought sure it was all off with us when we hove to and I saw that big sea in front of us, but to see this little canoe going over the top of those big monsters without rolling or tumbling about is most wonderful. Well, if ever we do get back to land, when I publish our experiences in this gale, not one person in a hundred will believe my story.'

"I may say that my mate, a young man, had never seen salt water until he went out in the *Tilicum*. Nevertheless he proved himself a first-class shipmate in every

way, good sailor, good cook, and quick of action, but he acknowledges himself that the quickest move he ever made was in going up the mast."

The little Indian canoe, with the Canadian flag at her stern, after a perilous voyage of 103 days, sighted her first land since Cape Flattery, Penrhyn Island, in the South Pacific, where they renewed provisions and were fortunate enough to obtain some good charts of the Islands, provided by the captain of a French schooner which happened to be at Penrhyn.

Thence they proceeded via Manahiki, Danger Island and Samoa to Fiji, arriving there on October 17th, one hundred and fifty days from Victoria. It was here that Luxton decided to quit the voyage (and personally I blame him not a bit, I think I would have quit at Victoria myself!). A sailor named Begent, a Tasmanian, joined the "ship" at Suva, Fiji, and then the tragedy of the voyage occurred; he was lost overboard next day through incautiously neglecting to tie himself with a life-line during rough weather. A less intrepid man would at once have returned to Suva, but not so Captain Voss. The thought does not appear to have entered his head and he continued his voyage with Sydney, Australia, his next port of call, 1800 miles distant!

This determination, in face of the disaster and despite the fact that the same sea that had swept his companion overboard had also swept away the compass and binnacle, is typical of the little man who proved his seamanship and

courage by taking his tiny craft across the Pacific, the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.

Adventures crowded on adventures and Captain Voss accumulated enough experience on that voyage to last any ten men a lifetime. Difficulties and dangers were almost his daily lot, but occasionally he sailed calm waters when life, to him, was a song and his soul steeped in contentment.

One may picture Captain Voss, afloat in his canoe, abroad on the wide and placid but gently heaving bosom of the great Southern Indian Ocean, far removed from the greed, avarice, covetousness and cupidity of man, remote from the feverish tide of life. Whether by night, with the blue bowl of the sky all glorious with the blaze of a million worlds and the dim opalescence of the moon, or by day, the brilliance of the sun tempered by the soft south wind, face to face with the eternal verities, he drank of the spirit of the universe.

At Sydney, Captain Voss placed his canoe on exhibition and made enough money out of it to place him in funds to purchase all supplies needed to continue the voyage.

While at Sydney, one of those little incidents occurred which are so typical of "officialdom" the world over; the Sydney Harbour Board demanded payment of Five pounds pilotage fees. Captain Voss indignantly stated that he had been freed of all port charges wherever he had called so far and wanted to know why he should pay pilotage when he had employed no pilot. He was politely but firmly informed that pilotage at Sydney was "compulsory" and had to be paid whether the services of a pilot

were used or not. "But the *Tilikum* is only a little bit of a boat, you could put her right in this office!" he protested. "Can't help that," replied the Secretary of the Harbour Board, "the Regulations," (spelt always with a capital R) "call for a minimum pilotage fee of £2.10/- in and the like amout out, total £5."

Captain Voss thereupon paid him £2.10/- for the inward fee and next day he had the *Tilikum* placed on a truck and took it to the railway station, where he entrained with it for Newcastle, where they charged him no pilotage fee and he got some more money, to boot, by exhibiting his boat.

Thence he sailed to Melbourne. Further trouble overtook him there. His boat was being placed on a truck to be taken to the Exhibition Building, where he was going to show it, when a careless stevedore let it drop from a sling and it was very badly smashed, the cedar of the hull being cracked in many places. Voss says it looked impossible that it could be repaired.

He entered suit against the Stevedoring Company and got judgment for £200. The defendants said they were going to appeal, and as Captain Voss wanted to repair the boat and proceed on his voyage, he accepted a settlement. With the assistance of a carpenter, he patched up the canoe, secured a new suit of sails and a new "mate", and in due course set sail for South Africa (!) via Tasmania, New Zealand, the New Hebrides, Cocos Keeling Islands, and Rodriguez—a journey of thousands of miles across the Indian Ocean, right out of the path of shipping and through an area infested by severe storms.

His adventures there is no room to narrate in detail, but they form a romantic and almost unbelievable story of daring, the whole enlivened by a sense of humor which must no doubt be the saving grace in such a fantastic undertaking.

Arriving at Durban, South Africa, on December 28th, having left Victoria on May 20th, Captain Voss visited Pretoria and Johannesburg, taking the *Tilikum* with him by railway to exhibit at both places. He then sailed to East London, Port Elizabeth, Mossel Bay and finally Cape Town, at which port he was given a great reception.

After a hectic time at the Cape he set sail on the final stretch of the voyage, to London, six thousand miles away, to which he sailed via Pernambuco, Brazil, the Azores, and thence direct to London, which he reached *three years, three months and twelve days* after leaving Victoria, B. C.

Arrived at London he had a wonderful reception. The *Tilikum* was placed on exhibition at the Marine Exhibition at Earl's Court, London, in 1905. Captain Voss lectured on his voyage before the Geographical Society and other audiences and was made a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

The *Tilikum* remained in England for a number of years, having been acquired by the Greenwich Yacht Club as a treasured memento. In 1930, by the generosity of two members of the Club, an offer was made to the British Columbia Government to present the historic canoe for public exhibition in B. C., on the proviso that no charge be made to see it. The Furness Line were kind

enough to transport the *Tilikum* on their motor vessel *Pacific Ranger* from London to Victoria, without charge, where it arrived in June, 1930, and was placed in the Victoria Crystal Gardens. There all may see it who care to view with their own eyes the tiny vessel which carried the small man with the great courage and the splendid knowledge of seamanship, through calm and storm, across the three oceans, twenty-five years ago.

Voss' voyage in the *Tilikum* should have sufficed; but four years later, in 1911, after three seasons sealing in a Victoria sealing schooner on the Siberian Coast, he found himself at Yokohama, with nothing to do, as sealing had been prohibited. Two Yokohama yachtsmen asked him to pilot a trip in a 25-foot yacht, the *Sea Queen,* around the Japanese Coast. Some days later they were caught in a typhoon (in which several larger vessels foundered), the mainmast snapped and lost and the yacht on her beam ends and full of water. Voss brought her through and they succeeded in returning to Japan, much to the surprise of the Yokohama Yacht Club and the marine world in general.

And thus we bring to a close our narration of the venturesome voyages of Captain Voss. British Columbia is proud to have been the starting point of one of the most remarkable sea adventures ever attempted. The *Tilikum* was a British Columbia product, built by natives, of B.C. cedar. Luxton, who planned the voyage, was a local product, too.

If a landsman's blood fails to stir at the thrilling tale of the *Tilikum* he must be deaf to the traditions of his race!

CHAPTER V.

ANOTHER INTREPID VOYAGE

WHILE the voyage of Captain Voss in his little dugout Indian canoe from Victoria to London, via Australia and the Cape, will long stand as a record and a milestone of achievement, still there have been other intrepid voyages undertaken by men from British Columbia. One which will not be forgotten is the remarkable cruise of the late Commander Eustace B. Maude, R.N., who, at the advanced age of 77, sailed in a twenty-five-foot boat for ninety-seven days, covering a distance of over 4,000 miles on the ocean.

It appears almost incredible that an aged man could safely navigate a tiny craft through the stormy waters of the North Pacific, alone and unaided, and return to land to tell the tale; but such was the accomplishment.

Commander Maude was of the old-school British Navy type. Born in Kent, England, in 1848, he served twenty-one years in the Navy, seeing service in various parts of

the world. Retiring from the sea at the end of his service, he migrated to America and later to Canada, coming finally to a ranch on beautiful Mayne Island, situated half way between Vancouver and Victoria. Here he rested, living out his life in the comfort, security and placidity of one of the Gulf Islands' beauty spots, happy in the association with his family.

Age was creeping on, and with the passing of the years there came to Commander Maude, increasingly, year by year, the call of the sea. We are told the aged live again, in recollection, their earlier lives—there must have passed through his mind the varied scenes of his younger days and adventures. The determination grew in his mind, dreaming among the maples and roses of his ranch, that he would once again, ere the chapter was closed, taste the salt breezes and fight again the age-old fight with the forces of the ocean.

He said never a word to his family regarding his recurring thoughts of a final voyage to sea, but the idea matured and one day he announced to his astonished son that he had decided to sail in his 25-foot gas boat, the *Half Moon*, to London via the Panama Canal and thought he would undertake the voyage alone! Undissuaded by all arguments and entreaties, to which his sole answer was "Why not?", the intrepid old man, 77 years of age, set about his preparations. The *Half Moon* was the familiar type of gasoline-engined launch or "cruiser", as may be seen in the accompanying photograph taken at Victoria just prior to the departure of Commander Maude on his venture, and differed not in the least from half a hundred

Capt. Eustace Maude completing preparations for his voyage in his gas-boat *Half Moon*.

similar craft to be seen in local waters. Her dimensions were, length 22 feet, depth 4 feet, beam 7 feet.

Maude was a great reader. He took with him on his voyage a volume of Shakespeare's works, Captain Voss' description of his famous voyage in an Indian canoe and one or two other books he had learned to love. He was under no illusions as to the perils of his intended voyage; he knew that Voss had safely completed his voyage across three oceans; he knew that Captain Joshua Slocum, the American, had won fame by circumnavigating the earth in a small sloop. He knew too that Slocum had sailed on a similar voyage a second time and did not come home!

May 1st, 1925, the *Half Moon,* with her one-man crew, sailed from Victoria. Many in Victoria thought they had seen the last of the little vessel and her intrepid commander; but the memory of Captain Voss and his *Tilikum* had not faded and the hope was expressed that the old man would have his wish and safely arrive at London. "On May 4th," said Commander Maude, in recounting his adventures, "I passed Cape Flattery. I continued to work down the coast at a distance of about 150 miles, when, about opposite Eureka, California, I experienced foul weather and on May 20th, while washing dishes after breakfast, a big roller swang the boom over, catching me on the base of the skull. I dropped unconscious into the cockpit and do not know how long I lay there. When I regained my senses I had a violent pain in my head, which continued many days. For five days I could not distinguish the points of the compass. I had been facing the sun throughout the voyage, and this, combined with the

severe headaches, caused my sight to fail and I was nearly blind. It became so bad that I decided I must return to Victoria."

On June 18th the *Half Moon* was sighted by the Matson liner *Mahukona,* bound from Honolulu for San Francisco, about 600 miles off the coast. Commander Maude signalled "All well" and declined assistance. The *Mahukona* reported the incident, which was the first news received ashore since the departure of the *Half Moon.*

To continue Commander Maude's narrative. "Coming north, when off San Francisco, I stood out to sea in order to meet the north-west winds. Heavy winds forced me on to the Oregon Coast. I beat up the shore by day and at night stood out to sea. On the morning of August 4th I reached Flattery, but what with fog, swell and foul winds I was forced to beat about for five days and finally was glad to accept tow to Neah Bay, where I anchored at 2:00 p.m. on August 9th. Captain Wilby, Department of Marine agent at Victoria, kindly sent over a government boat to take me to Victoria again."

Thus ended the adventurous trip, covering a distance of 4,000 miles during 97 days; and had the accident not occurred which practically disabled the old man, who shall say he would not have accomplished what his heart desired, be that a safe arrival at London, or the attainment of eternal peace in the attempt!

The old gentleman returned to the ranch on Mayne Island and died peacefully in 1929 at the ripe old age of eighty-one.

CHAPTER VI.

"SALVAGE"

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters."—PSALM CVII.

THIS Biblical quotation has been used as a theme for tales of the sea and its perils from time immemorial. "They that do business in great waters,"—no more apt text could be found for the Salvage Men, who go down to the sea to save ships.

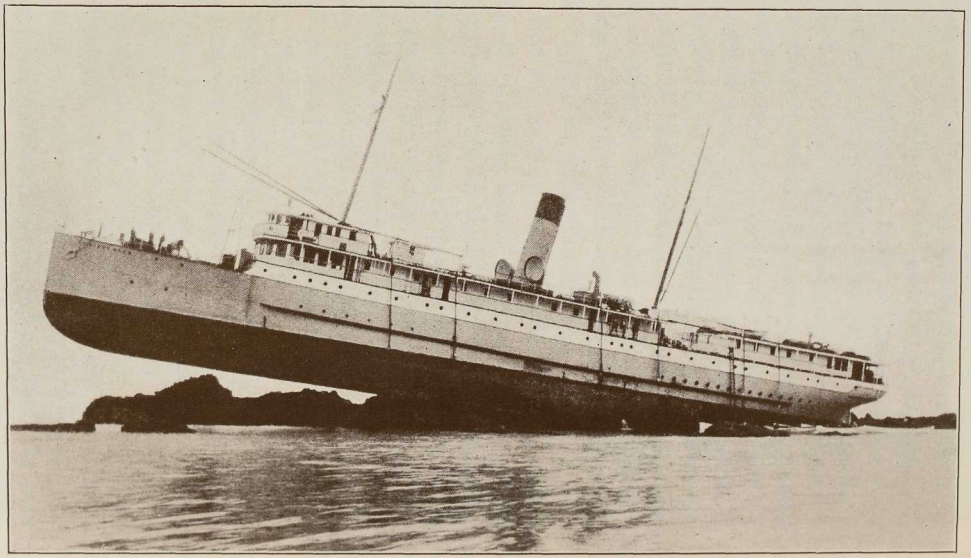
There is no calling connected with the sea that presents greater variety, greater thrills, and in some aspects greater dangers than salvage; and few coasts throughout the world can record the number of spectacular salvage feats that have been performed on the coasts of British Columbia within recent years.

Owing to the nature of the coastline, deeply indented with fjords and fringed with islands, large and small, and the impracticability of constructing either roads or rail-

ways north and south, transportation between the various towns and industrial settlements, logging and lumber camps, fish canneries, pulp and paper mills, and the principal ports from which they draw their supplies and to which they send their products, must perforce be by sea. Thus a great volume of coastwise traffic has developed of recent years and, in view of the narrow and tortuous nature of some of the principal routes of travel and the prevalence of fog in winter, the comparatively small number of serious casualties is a tribute to the practical seamanship of the mariners who navigate these waters under conditions which would deter any but those inured to the peculiar difficulties encountered.

Apart from the coastwise traffic, the large and growing dep-sea shipping trade has, unfortunately, provided every year work for the salvage man. Wrecks and casualties there have been aplenty, but fortunately the need has developed the remedy, and in British Columbia waters we have a salvage organisation whose fleet and personnel are unsurpassed on the Pacific Ocean for resourcefulness, for technical ability, and—as a proof of these qualities—for "results."

This laudatory statement is not intended as a free advertisement for the salvage company,—they do not in fact need it; but any narration of the marine happenings of the British Columbia coast of recent years must of necessity include mention of several very spectacular and remarkable wrecks and rescues, and the moment one speaks of wrecks and rescues, the Pacific Salvage Company Limited comes into the picture. Not only is the com-



SS. *Princess May* ashore on Sentinel Island, 1905.

pany's fleet a practical illustration of the motto "Ready: Aye Ready," but many daring salvage jobs have been carried out in British Columbia waters and up and down the coast as far as Alaska and Mexico and across the Pacific to the Japanese Coast. In Western Canada we have a tradition that the Royal Northwest Mounted Police "get their man." In B. C. the tradition is becoming accepted that the Pacific Salvage Company "get their ship."

Possessing a fleet of salvage craft of all sizes from a 40-foot work boat to one of the most powerful and modern salvage steamers afloat, the "Salvage King," their record of achievement is naturally a lengthy one. It is not my purpose to attempt any such record; that, indeed, would make a volume by itself, and a very interesting one, full of tales of human interest, of daring, of bravery, and dogged tenacity. But a record of the more spectacular of the wrecks which have occurred during the past fifteen years or so will take its proper place in these present recollections.

Out of the many daring and successful "jobs" undertaken by the Pacific Salvage Company Ltd. since they took over the salvage plant of the old B. C. Salvage Co. Ltd., it is not an easy task to select the "best" for our present purpose. It depends what you are looking for: the spectacular wrecks?—the technically difficult salvage jobs?—the thrilling rescues?—the unexpected denouement?—all can be found in the record.

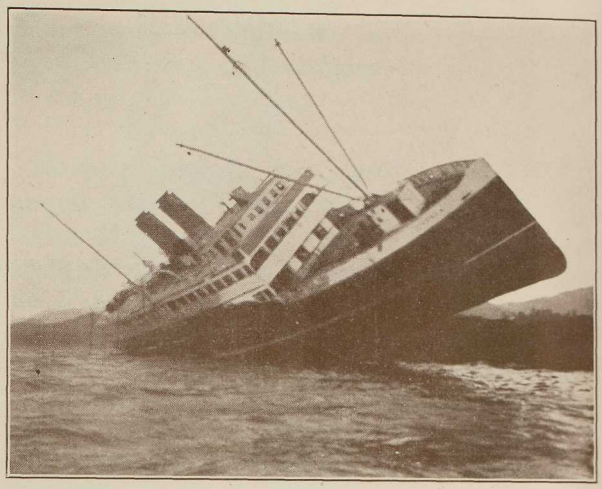
Perhaps a sample or two of each of these descriptions of salvage jobs will illustrate the nature of the salvage man's work and I warrant will prove not the least interesting

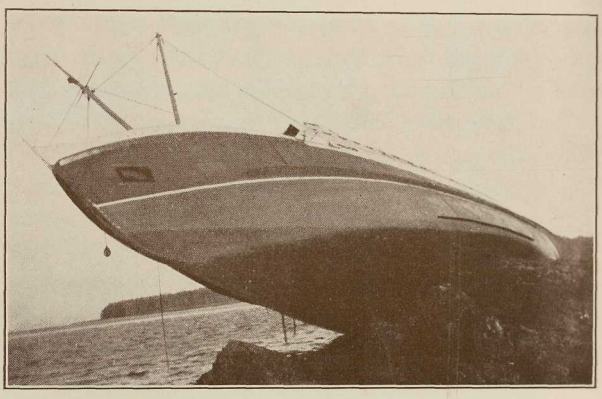
part of this book. I shall endeavour to avoid all technicalities and keep to plain narrative.

. . . . .

For sheer spectacular effect the casualties which stand out among those of the past twenty years include the S.S. *Princess May,* ashore on Sentinel Island, Alaska, in 1910. As the photograph shows, she was not only high and dry, but so high that at low tide her keel forward was thirty feet above the rocks. Despite her apparently terrible position, she did not prove a particularly difficult salvage job, —that is, for the men who handled it—and was successfully refloated and resumed her duty as a coastwise passenger steamer, and ran for several years, until sold to West Indies interests for the fruit trade.

The Union Steamship Company of B. C.'s crack passenger vessel *Catala* affords another of the spectacular type of casualty, and also proved a most difficult salvage job. On November 9th, 1927, the *Catala,* while leaving Port Simpson on the B. C. coast, about twenty miles north of Prince Rupert, ran hard on Sparrowhawk Reef, a sharp-toothed rock at the entrance to Port Simpson Harbour. The impaled ship was in a bad position, taking water fast and listing rapidly. All the passengers were safely got off in boats. Three of the Salvage Company's vessels were quickly on the spot, but found the *Catala* hard and fast and impossible to move. Most of the cargo was, however, removed, pending the arrival of the company's most powerful salvage ship, *Salvage King,* which got there two





SS. *Catala* ashore on Sparrowhawk Reef (1927).
Port and starboard views.

days later. By this time the *Catala* had a 45-degree list to starboard. What this perilous angle means may be judged from the accompanying photo.

All efforts of the combined pulling power of the Salvage fleet, assisted by tugs, failed to move the apparently doomed vessel. It was now obvious that some heroic measures must be adopted if the *Catala* were to be saved, and the decision was reached to blast away the rock pinnacles holding her. Success depended not only on skillful work, but on good luck. If the fair weather held, the work might succeed, but even a moderate sea swell would have shifted the vessel and all the salvage work nullified. Day by day the salvage men toiled, and hoped.

The salvors won the race, but not without several very anxious periods during high tides and northwesterly winds. Blasting away three hundred tons of rock and patching the hull as they went, on December 6th, twenty-nine days after going on the rocks, the *Catala* was successfully refloated. She was beached nearby, to effect temporary repairs, then towed to Vancouver for reconditioning and repairs, and she resumed her regular service and still continues in it, a fine ship and a monument to the skill and daring of the salvors.

They are modest, these men who cheat Davy Jones' locker of his apparently destined prey. Mr. A. C. Burdick, head of the Salvage Company, when complimented on saving the *Catala,* said merely, "Yes, it was a nice job!" And T. W. Allen, Superintendent of the company, was even more laconic, saying, "Yes, we got her off!" The Underwriters, Shipping men, Marine Surveyors, and the

Catala's owners all agreed that the "nice job" was one of the most difficult and daring feats of salvage accomplished on the Coast.

. . . . .

"How the Ex-Gunboat Salved the Ex-Q Boat" would be a good title for the feat of (ex) H.M.S. *Algerine* in rescuing (ex) H.M.S. *Dianthus,* aground on the Mexican Coast. This salvage job will be better remembered as the *Guerrero* salvage.

The *Algerine* was one of the Pacific Salvage Company's salvage vessels, and had a very interesting career as H.M.S. *Algerine* before being acquired by the Salvage Company, in fact her full story forms a colourful page in naval history and would be a narration apart from her salvage feats. The object of the present story is to relate the *Algerine's* salvage of the ex-Q boat *Guerrero.* A British "mystery" ship, H.M.S. *Dianthus* during the war, she was converted into a cargo and passenger vessel and sold to the Mexican States Line for operation on the Pacific coastwise trade and renamed *Guerrero.*

On October 15th, 1922, she was at Mazatlan, Sinaloa, Mexico. A sudden and very severe storm drove her ashore on a sandy and exposed position, where she was battered by heavy seas. The forty-five passengers and most of the crew were saved by the brave action of a Canadian member of the crew, who swam ashore through the boiling surf, taking with him a line with which a rope was hauled ashore. Next day the weather had moderated. Five of the officers and the wireless operator had stayed by the ship, which was resting easily, but exposed to the seas, and a

sand bar was forming beneath her. The Underwriters asked the Pacific Salvage Company if they could undertake the salvage. They accepted the call and within a few hours despatched the salvage vessel *Algerine* on a 2200-mile voyage to Mazatlan, where she arrived October 30th. The holds of the *Guerrero* contained a mess six feet deep of fuel oil mixed with sand and water, the fuel tanks having broached. It was hard work keeping the pumps free, but at last the holds were cleared.

It was decided to use the *Guerrero's* own winches to assist in freeing her from the sandbar. Her oil tanks having burst, recourse was had to any available fuel, and the crew set to work sawing dunnage to suitable lengths for firewood. To get a supply of fresh water for the boilers presented a great difficulty. Water costing $5 a ton was brought from Mazatlan, but the barge bringing it could not get alongside the wreck owing to the breakers. So a scouting party was sent ashore to look for a supply and found a swamp in the jungle 300 yards from the beach. It was not a salubrious spot, and the stagnant water was literally alive with water snakes and other reptiles, but the salvage men managed to instal a gasoline pump and line, and before long the water difficulty was solved. Seven of the salvage men went down with malaria, leaving a depleted crew to carry on the strenuous work.

The four heavy anchors off the *Algerine* were dropped 1600 feet to seaward and another buried off the port quarter 12 feet in the sands of the beach and braced by heavy timbers. Heavy wire hawsers were run to the *Guerrero's* winches and windlass. A wire hawser 2200

feet long was run from the ship to the *Algerine*. All preparations complete, a high spring tide was awaited. Steam was raised in the *Guerrero's* boilers and all purchases gradually tightened until the steel ropes were humming under the strain. At first it appeared that all efforts had been in vain, but late at night on Nov. 6th the ship was observed to move a few feet. A cheer went up from the tired salvage men! Day by day, as the tides served, the purchases were manned and the hauling and towing continued. Seven of the *Algerine's* crew down with malaria did not ease the strain on the remainder who were working. Various mishaps occurred. An anchor broke; two lines parted, causing narrow escapes to nearby members of the crew. (Have you ever stood near a steel hawser under strain just as she parted?) The water-pump broke down; again lines parted; but foot by foot the *Guerrero* was dragged, coaxed and rested for the next tide, then dragged and coaxed again.

On November 16th at 3:30 a.m. the *Guerrero* floated off into deep water, after 17 days' terrific hard work on the part of the salvage crew. To escape a heavy sea running, the disabled vessel was towed to Shelter Bay nearby and was lashed alongside the *Algerine*. She listed 20 degrees. Divers found her bottom badly dented and sprung, but no holes. Her rudder was twisted out of shape and a steel hawser wound around her propeller. Her boilers leaked and put her fires out. A storm sprang up and the salvage ship very nearly had to cut adrift to save herself, but still they hung on!

Several times it appeared likely that all the hard work

would go for nothing and that the *Guerrero* would be lost; but salvage men learn to be dogged and "hang on" when to the ordinary individual the situation would appear hopeless. The fact remains that they got her to Mazatlan, repaired the boilers, fixed up the rudder and made the propeller workable. A supply of oil-fuel was secured and after various troubles and tribulations, both before and during the voyage, which only determination overcame, the salvaged vessel was safely escorted to San Diego and was completely repaired and refitted.

The San Diego newspaper reports relate that Mr. A. C. Burdick, President of the Salvage Company, stated in reply to laudatory remarks of the Underwriters: "Yes, it was a nice job", and Mr. T. W. Allen, the Company's Superintendent said: "Yes, we got her off!" thus anticipating by seven years the identical remarks they made in respect of the *Catala* salvage, previously mentioned. So it seems that to Mr. Burdick even the most difficult and spectacular salvage is merely a "nice job" and to Mr. Allen the laconic statement "We got her off" tells all that is to be told.

. . . . .

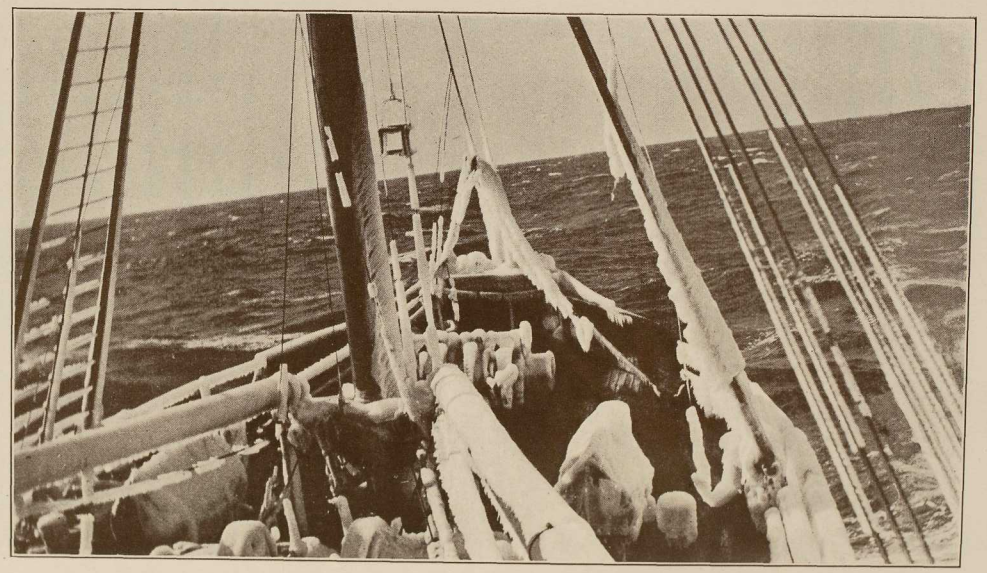
And now, for variety, let us turn to another page in the ever-varying career of the salvor, a record-breaking tow through furious seas right across the Pacific, from Alaska to Japan.

The salvage vessel which accomplished this remarkable feat was the doughty *Salvage King*, under the command of Captain J. M. Hewison, with a picked crew of sailors

and salvage men. The details of that perilous voyage are from the lips of Captain Hewison himself. As the *Salvage King* steamed into the harbour at Victoria on April 18th, 1929, every vessel in port greeted her with blowing whistles and sirens, and factory whistles ashore joined in acclaiming what must, for many a year, be remembered as one of the greatest feats of salvage and towing on this Coast.

The vessel in trouble was the American steamer *Havilah,* one of the many "standard freighters" constructed in the United States during the War. She was sold to Japanese to be broken up and was to proceed to Osaka. The thrifty purchasers thought they might as well earn a profit from her voyage from Seattle to Osaka, and, despite her somewhat delapidated condition, determined to load her with a full cargo. Accordingly a cargo of some 4,000,000 feet of lumber was taken on at Puget Sound ports for Yokohama, Nagoya and Osaka. She got as far as Whidby Island in Puget Sound, where she grounded owing to to rusty rods in the steering gear failing to control the rudder adequately.

Freeing herself from the mud the voyage was resumed, but when off the Aleutian Islands, turbine trouble developed, necessitating her putting in to Dutch Harbour on February 9th. After considerable deliberation by her owners, the services of the *Salvage King* were engaged to tow the disabled vessel to Japan. The *Salvage King* left Victoria on March 1st with 4,500 barrels of fuel oil and a picked crew, arriving at Dutch Harbour on March 10th after a rough trip, during which spray froze on the decks



Salvage King coated with ice while towing SS. *Havilah* across Pacific.

and rigging, but after all, that is a not unusual kind of voyage in those waters in March.

The *Salvage King* and her tow left Dutch Harbour on March 12th, after two days had been spent in making the *Havilah* ready for her long journey at the end of a 2,000 foot towline. Her steam steering gear was overhauled and the crew supplied with extra provisions.

The first day out was propitious and ,according to Captain Hewison, a good voyage to Japan appeared likely.

March 13, however, (unlucky day!) the trouble commenced. She ran into one violent storm after another, wallowing in the trough of great seas and riding combers forty feet high. The first hurricane was terrific, the captain said, and blew eighty miles an hour. Seas washed completely over the salvage vessel and hid the *Havilah* from sight. It was in this first storm that the steering-gear of the freighter became disabled, and after that, the master said, something went wrong with the gear on an average of once every twenty-four hours. This made matters extremely difficult and at times, when the gear was out of commission, it was necessary for both ships to heave to, at the mercy of the heavy seas. The ships were about 120 miles out from Dutch Harbour and wind had abated somewhat, and the hopes of the crew for a quiet voyage were again raised. Not for long, however. The *Havilah*, with her crew of twenty-five aboard, was about 2,000 feet behind the *Salvage King*, held by a tow-line, two and a half inches in diameter. Incidentally the one line was used all the way from Dutch Harbour to Japan, never once breaking or losing its firm grip.

For three days after the first storm the weather was moderate and the vessels were able to make 150 miles a day. The fifth day out the *Salvage King* received a wireless message from the Japanese freighter Taibu Maru, adrift in Bering Sea. She reported she was disabled but the *King* did not think of altering her course until an SOS was received.

'We could not disregard that message," Capt. Hewison says, "and were making plans to go to the ship's assistance when we received a message asking what kind of a ship we were. I told the Japanese skipper and he replied saying that for a time our services would not be required. We proceeded on our way and later heard that another ship was helping her."

The weather was fairly good until the ships left Bering Sea. Then the mighty Pacific in the full fury of its winter mood was felt. The ships rode through storm after storm, only having about twelve hours of moderate weather between each gale. One specially bad day the *Salvage King* was only able to make seven miles in twenty-four hours. This day the oil-bags were hung out over the bow of the salvage steamer so that the terrific seas would be broken somewhat when they battered and crashed into the *Havilah.* The deckload of heavy lumber aboard the freighter was all the time in danger and constituted a danger to the *Havilah* herself of capsizing

One night, the worst of the whole trip, the skipper said, it was thought that there was absolutely no means of saving the freighter. Seas were sweeping over the salvage ship and the *Havilah* was completely hidden from sight

by the rollers. In the height of the storm, with the wind whistling and roaring, it was reported by Morse code that the freighter was sinking. The deckload was shifting, the message said and the ship was in danger of taking a plunge at any moment. All hands had been called and the lifeboats were prepared for the worst. "It seemed incredible," Capt. Hewison said, "that she could be sinking, but when I went out to the after-deck and, in the light of the moon, through the snow and sleet and great waves, I could catch glimpses of the freighter, I knew that the message was about right."

"She was listing badly and the deckload looked as if it might be loosed at any moment. Another SOS came, saying that the situation was urgent; so, taking their advice, I ordered the men to stand by the tow-line with acetylene torches to be ready to cut the cable if the *Havilah* should plunge. That would have been a job, for, if it was not done quickly, the *Salvage King* would have been pulled down with the freighter."

"Conditions were like this for several hours, the crew working all the time as best they could, trying to lash the deckload. They did lash it and made it more secure than it was when we left Dutch Harbour. Conditions became better and again both crews thought there was a chance of reaching Osaka.

"The steering gear gave us the greatest trouble," says Capt. Hewison. "It went out of commission regularly and the unwieldy freighter would swerve and shoot out from our path, taxing the strength of the cable to the utmost and endangering the lives of the men who were

working near the line. Time and again she would swerve and more than once we thought she was gone. But by some strange luck she always came back and never did that tow-line break or even split."

Capt. Hewison's diary shows that in the twenty-six days the *Salvage King* was towing the *Havilah,* sixteen gales were encountered. For nine days there were continuous gales, but through it all the staunch little steamer maintained an average speed of 4.7 knots, a remarkable record. "When we got to Osaka," the captain said, "I asked the skipper of the *Havilah* what we looked like as we fought the gales. He laughed and said that he very seldom saw us. Most of the way only our mast light was above the crest of the waves."

After discharging part of the 4,000,000-foot load of lumber at Osaka it was necessary to get the Havilah to Yokohama, a distance of 500 miles. At first Capt. Hewison refused the job, as his contract only called for delivery of the vessel to Osaka. But the captain of the *Havilah* was so insistent that the *Salvage King* do the towing that a figure was submitted and, although higher than all the others, it was accepted.

The voyage back from Yokohama took about fifteen days. The trip was made at an average speed of eleven knots and the weather was comparatively fine. Not fine enough, however, for deck strolling, and many of the men did not show on deck for the entire fifteen days, preferring to remain below until the ship rounded Cape Flattery, early morning of April 18th, 1929.

Perhaps the three or four "jobs" I have selected at random from the many fine pieces of work carried out by the British Columbia salvors will be sufficient to indicate the efficiency of the equipment and MEN in charge of this important department of marine activities. One day, if my Publisher is kind, and if the fates permit, I may tell a more extended story of the salvage men's fights against the elements; of their courage and endurance; of their ability and technical skill.

To maintain a fleet of salvage boats with equipment and trained personnel must be no easy task, when it is remembered that for long and indefinite stretches no work is required of them. Perhaps for months and months shipping will go about its business; and then, as if by magic, several vessels will have bad luck all at once and the salvage man must be "on the job."

CHAPTER VII.

THE COWBOY AND THE WHALE

This chapter has a grotesque heading; but it is a true one, nevertheless. It came about like this. There was a certain cowboy (or I think it should be Cowboy, with a capital C), born in Nelson, B.C., and engaged during all his early manhood in the occupation of "cowpunching", in British Columbia and Alberta, who decided in his thirties to desert the open ranges and take up a city occupation. He came to Vancouver, and, after various essays at different occupations, found his *metier* in photography, at which he was particularly good.

Many old-timers will remember *Cowboy Kean,* who habitually wore a "ten-gallon hat", the insignia of the plains, which remarkable headgear made him very conspicuous on the streets of the City.

A. D. Kean was a man well worth knowing. Under the somewhat rough and uncultured exterior of the typical cowman, was a cultured mind, with a keen appreciation of the beauties of nature, a strong desire to acquire

knowledge, a love of literature, a wide and deep acquaintance with the flora and fauna of his native land and, last but not least, a lasting love of his fellow man.

About 1915, Cowboy Kean decided to take up motion picture photography and invested what was, for him, a large sum in the latest available equipment. He turned out some positively awful pictures at the start; full of every known error and a good many new ones previously unknown. Local picture houses offered him no encouragement, and no wonder. He persevered, as he always did, and after a year he improved his technique to the point where he got a contract from the C.P.R. to take a series of reels of natural life in Western Canada. I think he also got some work for the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, of the same nature.

He wanted to get some pictures of whaling and came to me to ask if I could arrange for him to go out on a whaler. I told him I would try, provided he would write me his experiences; which he promised to do. My reason for exacting this promise was that I knew he needed only encouragement and experience to make him a good descriptive writer and possibly something more.

I am proud to relate that my estimate of his powers was justified, for he later took up writing seriously and professionally and has had stories on nature subjects, horses particularly, accepted by the *Saturday Evening Post* and other well-known publications.

So far as I know, the description he wrote for me of his experience in photographing the harpooning of a whale was his first literary effort and I include it in this book as

a brilliant, if somewhat early and crude, piece of descriptive writing, depicting whaling as it was practised on the B. C. Coast in 1916.

Kean's narrative was as follows:

"Dear Mr. Hamilton:

As my object in life is primarily to record things through the unimaginative eye of the Motion Picture Camera, the following brief description of experience of the thrilling but little-known industry of whaling is written only in redemption of my promise to you.

"After various communications with the Head Office of the Victoria Whaling Company, word was finally received to *dig in,* with the result that during the height of the whaling season, about September 20th, I embarked upon the SS. *Gray,* for the Kyuquot Station of the company.

"Arrived at the station, after presenting my letter to the manager, Mr. Ruck, I began to meet with a series of surprises. I was first shown to a well-furnished room, in a comfortable bungalow that overlooked the Sound, plant and Indian village. In going through the plant, I noted modern machinery of various kinds, high-class engines, powerful steam winches, electric generator sets, enormous vats, steam heated, and rows of high tanks for containing the various grades of whale oil.

"One of the most interesting of the operations was the drier. This remarkable process handled the meat entirely by a series of conveyors which carried it from

the boiling vats through a press, from thence to a hot-air blast, finally delivering the finely-powdered dried meat or *guano* through a blower to the sackers. I might state that guano is extensively used in fruit-growing countries as a fertilizer.

"At breakfast, Mr. Ruck informed me that the whalers *Green* and *St. Lawrence* had each brought in a whale and that I must excuse him through the preparatory stages, as his duties for about an hour would be most urgent. Being directed to the *slip* or incline where the whales were to be hauled up, I was then left to my own resources for the time being. At the slip it was *everybody hustle.*

"Over near the buoy, some Indians in a dug-out canoe were towing one of the whales, which could be seen floating with stomach inflated and half out of the water. On the slips were Japs, some carrying huge chains with heavy steel wire cables and sextuple blocks. Others were playing a stream of water upon the already slippery planking. Presently, with blocks attached, the signal was given to "go ahead" and the steam winch began to whine and grind as the carcass was drawn up over the creaking skidway.

"To say that I was "interested" is no expression at all. My first sight of the enormous bulk of the Giant Finback Whale gradually being exposed was nothing short of wonderment.

"Could it really be? This inanimate object of seeming endless length. Was it ever alive? What power it must control in its native element.

"As the huge carcase was drawn abreast of me, a Jap "flenser" stepped alongside with a two-foot knife set upon a six-foot handle, and starting at the tail, began to cut, full length into the soft white blubber, walking along the carcase, drawing a gash some 65 feet long and from six inches to twenty inches deep. Walking back, he made another parallel cut about five feet above the former. To this strip of blubber was attached a heavy iron hook connected by three-quarter-inch cable to a steam winch. At the word "go ahead" this enormous piece, weighing several tons, was literally torn from the body of the whale. By now several flensers were at work on top and sides, all cutting and slashing, until it reminded me of some ancient ghoulish festival.

"Having "got the idea" I beat it toward the bungalow for the cameras. When I returned the first whale was just about "out of sight" and the proceedings well on the way on the other.

"Setting up my "movie" I first "shot" the "water scenes", next the scenes on the slip and then got to work with the "still camera." At about this time Mr. Ruck arrived and gave many valuable suggestions and also assisted in the taking of the "stills."

"That night at dinner, during a discussion of my probable luck in securing scenes from the whaler, I was told that the *Black,* the vessel which had been decided upon for my trip, was several days overdue, but expected that night sometime. Sure enough at about midnight she arrived with a "big whale."

"The station hands immediately set to work coaling

the boat for another trip and I was told that we would put out to sea at 4 a.m. that morning. Promptly at 4 o'clock I stepped aboard the trim 90-foot steel whaler. These boats are of the trawler type, but arranged especially for *whaling*. The decks are almost awash, the bows are high and have a platform upon which stands the *Harpoon Gun*. Below, forward, is coiled some 600 fathoms of manila cable; above this is the winch for controlling the cable, when attached to the whale. Amidships the double compound engines, and aft are the sleeping accomodations and a small reading room for a dozen men. Altogether one could not imagine a more perfect habitation for the seagoer than one of these superb and speedy little vessels.

"The crew consists of the *gunner*, who is also the skipper, the gunner's mate, or the pilot, the first and second engineers, two firemen, five deck hands and a Chinese cook.

"While still in the placid waters of the *Sound* I proceeded to lash my two heavy cameras solidly to the bridge, reserving a length of rope for myself. I had just succeeded in making everything fast, when the gunner, Willis Balcom, came up. This quiet man, I might add, is a whaler and sealer of the old school and has a record of killing several thousand whales and numberless seals in the many years that he has been in the game. In sizing up the man, I can think of nothing more characteristic than the concise description given me by one of the company's officials: 'A good hunter and will give you a show, but he's hell-bent on whales.'

"After bidding me good morning and remarking upon my *preparedness* campaign, he began looking at the weather signs. His statement 'Clear outside but windy' did not signify anything to me. I mean not just then! The early morning light was breaking over the rugged mountainous shores of the west coast of Vancouver Island as we rounded the outer buoy that marks the entrance to Kyuquot Sound. In our shadowed wake could be dimly seen the abrupt rock islets peculiar to this district. Farther out, the light got stronger, disclosing the reefs over which rolled the unceasing surf, as it dashed high against the rocks, casting spray and foam into the sparkling sunlight.

"We were the first of the three whalers out that morning. As the *Black* hit the long swell of the mighty Pacific, one could see slightly astern on our port and starboard the smoke from the *Green* and *St. Lawrence* as we steamed along like ships of a *battle-line*.

"At about 2 o'clock word came down that the *St. Lawrence* was 'chasing a whale headed our way and would I like to see it?' I walked unsteadily up to the bridge and sure enough things were coming our way. Suddenly the man-in-the-barrel shouted down: 'Five fin-backs on the port bow.' This was my first sight of whales in their native element, and what a sight!

"Their long shining bodies as they plunged over the seas, spouting little jets of steam-like vapour as they went, presented a picturesqueness that I had never imagined. The skipper said that if I wanted a picture he would get closer, so I made ready the telephoto lens

and stood by the camera. Presently they came up closer and I secured pictures both of the whales and the pursuing *whaler*. Our skipper was near enough to shoot, but it is a courtesy between gunners never to take a whale that is being pursued by another boat. A little later we heard a shot and saw the *St. Lawrence* going through manouvres that she would not have attempted had she been master of her own movements.

"All day long we cruised around sighting several whales, but never one that was feeding or that seemed inclined to stay in our locality. During this time the wind was getting stronger and the seas rougher. Finally the combination put me to bed.

"The next day we were about 90 miles off shore and opposite Cape Cook when we sighted the first whale. After trying about four hours to get a shot we were doomed to disappointment. The last time the whale decided to sound he stayed down and we lost him. In the meantime I was getting hungry. This was the second day out and I wasn't a sailor yet. I began to wonder if the skipper had a heart. He seemed to be a sort of iron man. Rode out by the gun all the time and didn't say much. Later on he came up on the bridge and remarked that if they did not sight a whale soon he would go to some grounds where he might get a sulphur-bottom. This is the biggest whale of them all, so that sort of keyed me up temporarily.

"The next morning I heard the signal to "stand by," so came on deck in a rush. Everybody was "on the hop."

Lookout reporting regular, skipper at the gun, nobody took any notice of the other fellow and nobody talked.

"The sea had gone down a bit. The sun was shining bright overhead and just a little wind blowing.

"Suddenly the lookout shouts 'Sharp!' Dead ahead.' I grabbed the handle of my camera and started turning just as our gunner braced his feet for the shot and then right under our bows they came up,—two of them, both blowing and breaking water. Just an instant; and flash! Bang! I saw the harpoon wriggling through the air jerking out the cable as it went and finally bury itself in the back of the nearest whale.

"I stopped turning, as the gunner stepped down from the platform. By now the winch was screaming away. The cable was going out like a mill-race and the men were throwing water on the smoking bearings. The gunner came down and took the wheel. The mate went forward and reloaded the gun. Presently the gunner, who was now a changed man, said to me, 'That shot was pretty well back, we'll have to give him another.' I asked 'Where is the whale anyway?' Just at that moment I looked ahead and about 2,000 feet away the monster broke water. He blew and plunged along for a little and then sounded. The brakes had been put on the rope and the boat was being towed by the whale.

"With engines reversed, *we were going faster ahead than we could have gone under our own steam.* This kept up for about three hours. Finally the whale began to tire and was gradually brought back to within shooting distance.

"As the big helpless body rolled over on the crest of the wave the gunner saw his opportunity and sent the deadly harpoon into the heart of the mammal.

"The boat rocked and lurched from side to side under the tremendous rushes of the monster Fin-back as he raced us along over the water. Occasionally we would strike a high swell and then the strain on the cable would not allow the bow to rise, and we would be pulled through the wave, the sea breaking over the boat and drenching everything. On we went through the masses of *Red-food,* as the sailors describe the small shrimp upon which the whales feed. The men dipped them up in buckets-full while cooling the overheated winch. In our wake and overhead, sea birds flew screaming excitedly and often we disturbed myriads of *Whale Birds* as they fed upon the surface. This was the whales "feeding ground" and everywhere could be seen many varieties of sea fowl, some too full to fly at our approach.

"A few lurches after the shot and the biggest game the world affords lay helpless upon the water, a victim of the cunning of man.

"Hauling the huge carcase alongside and trimming off the tail-flukes was soon accomplished, when the task of towing the catch 35 miles back to the station began."

Having concluded A. D. Kean's narrative of his experience on a whaler, it seems to me the query will naturally arise in the mind of the reader, unless he is already in

possession of the information, 'How about this whaling business on the Pacific Coast? Is it still being carried on, and are they getting many whales?'

Yes, it is still being carried on, and the same fast, trim little whaling steamers are being employed. Whaling on the North Pacific dates back to the days of the fur traders, but after 1870 attention was turned to the extraction of oil from dog-fish, and whaling, so far as British Columbia is concerned, was abandoned until 1906, when a company was organized, which built whaling stations on the coasts of Vancouver Island and Queen Charlotte Islands and brought out from England steam whaling steamers, fitted with harpoon guns.

The whales were hunted offshore, and the carcases towed to the shore stations and converted into whale oil, meal, fertilizer and whalebone, the principal value being in the oil, which always has found a ready market with soap manufacturers. They do not get so many whales as formerly, 1,000 or more sometimes being taken in the early years, on the British Columbia Coast, whereas, in the last few years, less than half that number are caught; for instance in 1920—493, in 1925—351, in 1928—305.

In addition to the B. C. Coast whaling stations, two are operated on the Alaska Coast, and a floating station, with four steam whaling steamers attached, operates off Lower California.

During the War and the food scarcity they tried canning whale meat. The whale is, of course, not a fish, but a warm-blooded mammal. Its flesh rather resembles coarse beef (something like the *canned horse* you used to

get in the trenches), but it has one peculiarity which distinguishes it from any and every kind of beef, i.e, it has a fishy flavor. They managed to sell off the stock they put up; to the West African market it went, I believe,—but the West African nigger will eat anything!

I remember, quite vividly, that the Whaling Company, in their endeavor to place their canned whale meat on the market, and to get it known, persuaded the Vancouver Board of Trade to allow it to be served (as a "B. C. Product") at a luncheon at the Vancouver Hotel, in 1917, at which I happened to be present.

We were not told it was whale meat, and nothing happened except that several grumbled at the *rotten beef*. After the meat course was over, the chairman announced that the *beef* was whale-meat. Psychology is a peculiar influence; several people hurriedly left the room and I heard afterwards they relieved their stomachs of the whale meat by the same process as is common in mal-de-mer;—in other words they were violently sick!

During the 1926 season seaplanes were tried out to work in co-operation with the whaling fleet, on the theory that aeroplanes could, from a height, locate the whales more readily than the look-out men on the whaling steamers. They could, and did locate the whales; but locating a whale and catching it are two different processes. By the time the whalers got up to the spot indicated by the aeroplane, the whales had removed to other parts. The experiment was discontinued.

Whaling in the North Pacific has passed its prime. The huge mammals have been killed off much quicker than

they can multiply. The cupidity of man, or, to put it more kindly, his need for animal fats, is now directed to killing off the still huge schools of whales in the Antarctic, against whom the latest devices of science are being directed. Soon there will be no whales, except in museums, as specimens of an extinct species.

CHAPTER VIII.

VISITING WITH EUMETROPIAS STELLERI.

The Great Sea Lion of the North Pacific

In the last chapter we dealt with the adventures of *Cowboy Kean* the photographer in taking motion pictures of a whale hunt. The following year, 1917, in pursuit of *movies* of animal life in Canada, he was commissioned by the Provincial Game Department to take some reels of the sea lion herds of Queen Charlotte Sound. On this occasion it was unnecessary for me to ask him to let me have a written story of his experiences; his kind heart never forgot a favour, and when he got back from the sea lion hunt, he remembered that I had requested the story of the whales, and, without request on my part, he sent me his story. As it has never been published, I give it just as Kean wrote it to me. It presents a living picture of the great herds of Great Northern Sea Lion (Eumetropias Stelleri, as the naturalists term them) well worthy of preservation.

It is to be hoped that such a story will be impossible

within a few years; I do not mean such a good, or such a vital story, but since the sea lions are being destroyed by the Government Fisheries Department as rapidly as possible, with the object of their extermination, it is obvious that no one will be able to write first hand stories about them.

The sea lion is a great enemy of the salmon, and as Kean points out in his yarn, each sea lion accounts for nearly four thousand salmon and cod annually, and there are thousands and thousands of sea lion! Each year the Dominion Fisheries sends out a fishery patrol steamer which spends several months on the sea lion rookeries, killing them with rifles, dynamite and other means. As I write this, the trim little government steamer *Givenchy* is lying at a pier just below my office window, taking on stores and arms for the annual raid, and will bring back, in several weeks' time, her annual tale of death-dealing in Queen Charlotte Sound.

We will now let Cowboy Kean tell his yarn about the sea lion hunt in 1917. The following is what he wrote to me:

"Dear Mr. Hamilton:

You were kind enough to say you liked the story I sent you last year concerning my experiences on the whale hunt. Well, I have had further adventures of a somewhat similar nature, and it occurs to me that you would care to have my impressions of His Majesty the Great Northern Sea Lion in his native haunts, from the viewpoint of a motion-picture photographer in search

of scenic adventure. If my story appeals to you, add it to your collection of *recollections.*

"During the former momentous voyage in quest of the world's largest game, I made the acquaintance of men who had spent the best part of their lives upon the seven seas. Adventurous and whole-souled to a degree, these hardy and experienced seamen told many fascinating and daring tales that, midst the elemental atmosphere, found only upon the deck of a whaler, fairly carried one away with enthusiasm. While a guest of Captain Wm. Heater, gunner of the Whaler *W. Grant* at that time scouring the Pacific, bent upon the annhilation of those deep-sea monsters the Fin-back and Humpback whale, I had ample opportunity to perceive at first hand subjects that come within the experience of but few land-lubbers. Among the many stories told by the genial captain, was one that seemed to fill my mind with *picture* possibilities. The subject in question was the pet aversion of Captain Heater, who, when ever mentioning it, used to curse in vigorour fashion and conclude with the lucid statement 'Sea Lion, Huh! Thousands of them! Useless devils!'

"Months afterwards I determined to once more initiate myself into the life that had gained the ascendency over all else, that I was even willing to endure the physical terrors of mal-de-mer. In the month of July this year I embarked upon the steamship *Grey,* whaling tender to the several stations of the Victoria Whaling Company that are situated along the west coast of Vancouver Island and at the north and south extrem-

ities of the Queen Charlotte group. Arriving at the Victoria offices of the Company, myself and friend, Jack Haswell, were given passage and shown to the wharf at which the *Grey* was taking on cargo. Here was a surprise indeed. It seemed that over night deck-hands and firemen had gone on strike, leaving the steamer half loaded. Everybody from the captain down, who had remained on the ship, was busy shifting freight. Then several hours overdue, with no immediate prospect of any assistance, it appeared that possibly several days might elapse before the ship could be got under way. Every endeavor was made to secure longshoremen or other deck-hands, but without avail.

"The day was very hot and I noticed upon the deck several quarters of fresh beef, also mutton and other perishable commodities. So, offering our services as amateur assistants, together with some Chinese laborers found somewhere by the management, all hands made the best of the circumstances.

"Casting-off some time during the night, the ship made out upon *Victoria Roads*. Next day at about noon I awoke to realize again those indescribable sensations that warned my outraged gastronomic nerves that we were now upon the bosom of the rolling deep.

"Headed North by Nor-west, taking the swell on her port bow, the freighter was plowing her way at a 9-knot clip through the effervescent Pacific. Overhead the blazing summer sky beat down upon us as we steamed along into the breeze. While I, — but oh! what's the use?

"Calling at the various stations of the Company; visiting a typical west coast salmon cannery just when, the height of the salmon run being on, everything was rush and hustle, provided many interesting experiences. At one time, owing to a shifted buoy, the ship lay stranded upon a rock-reef for six hours until lifted by the tide. Finally leaving the village of Kyoquot, where Captain Hawes secured the requisite number of deck-hands from among the Indians, we once more proceeded out upon the high seas. This time heading for the most northerly station then operating, at Rose Harbour, near the southern extermity of the Queen Charlotte Islands, distant some two hundred and fifty miles.

"Prudently deciding to remain in my berth during the passage of Queen Charlotte Sound, I painstakingly located a knot in the ceiling above me and patiently watched it throughout the day. At about 8 o'clock in the evening, Haswell, who had never succumbed to sickness, came to inform me that a light was showing high on our port beam. Upon being told by the captain that it was the Cape St. James light I ventured to have a look and the scene that greeted me will long remain in my memory. All about us the sea was smooth as glass and in the moonlight sparkled and glittered. Just off the port-bow lay a long range of dark, timber-clad hills, sombre in the forbidding shadows. On the port bow could be plainly heard the roar of the mighty surf as it beat ceaselessly upon the ragged, rock-walled shores of St. James Island. Our ship glided

smoothly upon the inner waters of the Sound as we watched the twinkling ocean sign-post fade from sight beyond the distant shores.

"Morning found the vessel docked at Rose Harbour. Mr. Rolls, the manager, came down about 7 o'clock and had our baggage sent up to the house, at the same time informing us that Captain Heater was expected in that day, sometime, with a whale. Later when they finally arrived towing a big Humpback, we went on board and had a good yarn with the captain. He told us 'That Sea Lion farm is prosperous as ever; blast'em,' and promised to land us on the rocks the next morning. That evening we moved the two cameras and our rifles onto the whaler and at daybreak were rushing over the seas towards *The Home of the Sea Lion* at the Cape St. James Rookery.

"Mounting quickly to the bridge, Haswell and I were soon interestedly engaged, together with the Captain, in discussing the probabilities of making a successful landing upon the dangerous tide-swept rocks, while all about us lay a scene of incomparable beauty. Dead ahead some nine or ten miles the high grassy top of the Cape which bore the faithful light was visible. Farther out bleak and forbidding rocks stood out in bold relief against the dawn. The sun was just peeping over the placid ocean, enveloping the limpid depths with emblazoned glory.

"As we drew nearer one could feel the swell of the swift tide and the throb of the powerful engines as we tore along at full speed. The Captain remarked that we

had missed the *slack* and would be lucky if in the *flood tide* that was then running, we got near enough to take pictures. At that I put the Telephoto Lens on the *Movie* and tied her down solid.

"A strange noise now came to us across the water. Mixed with the beating roar of the outer surf was another sound. Dull, muffled, steady-like, that swelled louder and louder as we approached.

" 'Sea Lions!' shouted the Captain, and as he spoke I looked ahead. Never shall I forget the sight as I brought the heavy camera into line over the heaving tides that tossed our sturdy vessel, now rolling and pitching in a manner truly alarming. What I saw was countless thousands of Sea Lions upon the rocks ahead. They presented an undreamed-of spectacle as they roared and surged about in great brown and grizzled masses. I heard the captain shout and started turning the crank as the ship swung past. We were now in the grip of an almost irresistible tide-rip. The whistle screamed its shrill alarm as the living horde of mammals made for the sea and diving, falling, rolling, plunged beneath the surface. The mate gave a yell and I saw the captain turn the wheel clear over. Heavy clashes like thunderclaps sounded about us. The rocks appeared to be rushing in our direction, as I ground away at the film. The whaler gave a lurch that threw me full length across the bridge. When I got to my feet the captain wiped the salt spray from his face and said, 'That was close, did you get your picture?'

"Now headed away from the rocks with engines at

full speed we beat steadily against a terrific head sea and gradually gained the somewhat calmer water farther out. As we drew away I stood gazing, fascinated, at the sight behind. The captain gave the wheel to the mate and joined Haswell and me, remarking that he hoped we both got pictures. Jack, looking furtively at the Graflex camera in his hand, suddenly turned to the smiling captain and said, 'I forgot.'

"At this I exclaimed ecstatically that 'I must have a dandy because just when we were close in, one great big sea lion plunged off a point of rock directly ahead of me and the ship rolled just right to keep him centered. The captain, looking thoughtfully away, replied: 'Yes. She's a good little ship, and always rolls just right.'

"We now proceeded directly towards the lighthouse and after a bit hove-to in Safety Cove. Jack and I were put in the whaler's pram and rowed ashore by the mate and another seaman.

"Larry Thompson, the light keeper, greeted all hands and enquired eagerly about the war, while we landed. After a few friendly exchanges the mate pushed off, and as the whaler put to sea, Captain Heater shouted back: 'You're alright now; I'll come for you in time.' The light keeper, a husky, florid-complexioned and sociable Scotsman, invited us to the house and led the way up the steep, roped incline to the top of St. James Rock.

"From here the view was wonderful. We stood about 300 feet above the sea, which roared in thunderous

rhythm below us. To the south and west lay the endless swell of the boundless Pacific, with not a sail or break in sight, while to our left, upon the tranquil waters of Queen Charlotte Sound, could be seen the trail of smoke from the valiant little whaler steaming away into the distance. Larry now took us to a point of vantage in view of the rookeries and through our glasses we saw the horde of mammals again ensconed upon their seabound stronghold. Relating our experiences of the morning Larry gravely replied: 'I saw it all.' 'Thought once you were goners. Nothing but a whaler could have done it.' After a good look at the intricate mechanism of the light, we proceeded to talk things over and arrange further details. Here Thompson's twenty-two years of seafaring experience proved of inestimable value. He thoroughly understood the tides and local weather conditions. Also directed the location and safest route for us to approach the hauling-out places of the sea lions.

"High slack tide came about the middle of the day, so hurriedly eating a lunch, we took the boatman and put off upon our adventure. At Thompson's suggestion, before leaving we had placed several large rocks in the bottom of our boat for ballast, so, hoisting the tiny sail we soon reached the rendezvous of our quarry. This fact was most emphatically borne upon our faculties by the ominous and continued roaring of countless animals, besides the royal effluvia from tons of rotting fish. Letting down the sail as we drew near and, placing Jack at the extra oars, we cautiously rounded a

point of rock and came in full view of the sea lions, now distant less than 100 yards.

"At sight of us pandemonium broke loose upon the rocks. The din and commotion was truly appalling. Many of the larger and more awkward of the herd, in excited endeavor to reach the water and gaze at us at the same time, literally fell crashing into the sea from unbelievable heights. In less time that it takes to pen these lines the water was veritably alive with the struggling and bawling mass. Our little boat seemed frail indeed compared to the enormous strength and energies displayed by the frantic efforts of the panic-stricken mob. Not yet realizing the temper of the beasts and in the excitement of taking pictures, we had ventured within a stone's throw of the rocks and were at times completely surrounded by the sea lions.

"Finally, Haswell, who was standing up at the oars, yelled, 'Look out! To the right; to the right!' And both men began to back away. I turned in time to see an enraged and monstrous male coming directly for us, leaping at times high out of the water. Each succeeding dive brought him nearer and suddenly he emerged within ten feet of the boat, and as the broad bulk of brown body rose full three quarter length out of the water, the old fellow let out a roar that almost froze me stiff. The camera was in my hand, I remember, but the sudden appearance and menacing aspect of the brute drove all thoughts of pictures from my mind. We continued to *get out of there* as fast as possible and finally reached a safe distance.

"The trouble was this particular rock which we had approached was the breeding ground, and from where we were could be seen several hundred of the young ones among the many crevices and other protected spots. So long as we kept aloof from this place, our presence seemed to create nothing other than curiosity and alarm.

"As soon as this became apparent to us, we rowed over to another rock, also covered with sea lions. Making sure they were all *slackers,* I shook out my *lariat* and stood in front of the rowboat watching for an opportunity to "drop the string" on any whose "thirst for knowledge" overcame discretion.

"Suddenly, noticing a darkish streak coming to the surface, I gave the loop a back-hand flip and let drive as the critter broke water. Lucky for me or us, the rope settled fairly around its throat, also the animal was of small size else this tale would have had a different ending. At the first dive I took a turn around the little mast and the boat got a side wallop that nearly capsized us. Mentally I thanked Thompson for the ballast and we held on. At the first rise our sea lion met with a great surprise. He tried vainly to get a little air and believe me I sure kept that rope tight. The struggle was fast and furious, but in a very short while the helpless creature began to hump up cat-like. Soon straightening out, we towed it to a nearby rock and after a time it came to sufficiently to be photographed, finally allowing us to handle it. Desiring the hide for experimental purposes we killed this specimen.

"Next we repaired to another rock and carefully concealing ourselves in a crevice above the sleeping herd, secured some excellent photographs, also shot several which sank immediately and were lost.

"By now the tide had turned, compelling us to again seek the shelter of Safety Cove. It was yet only mid afternoon, so Thompson took us to a spot in the cliffs that rose abruptly above a great bed of kelp. This was a favorite feeding ground for the sea lions and the home of rock cod and other fish.

"A twelve-foot ebb was now running full, (the tides at this latitude in June attain a height of fourteen feet or more) and the sight was a marvel. Over the broad expanse of Queen Charlotte Sound some 250 miles in extent, the waters of the Pacific had steadily been spreading for six hours. Ebb caused the ocean to fall away. This created a sheer drop of a dozen feet between the Sound and the Pacific that was separated only by the rock reefs of the Cape. Through the narrow gaps around and over the shallow rocks, this immense body of water now rushed and roared in a mighty maelstrom and churned the sea into milky froth that extended over the ocean for miles in all directions.

"Against the cliffs the waves pounded in thunderous appeal, sending clouds of vaporous spray high into the atmosphere. Giant whirlpools eddied and sucked about the kelp beds, which swayed this way and that helplessly at the whim of turbulent waters. Into this chaotic mass plunged the sea lions, wantonly chasing each other about or playfully leaping and diving along the

surface. They seemed to delight in rising with a huge roller and from its crest leap onto the slippery rocks. At these antics they showed marvelous speed and dexterity. A poor salmon stood not one chance with such fishermen, and no wonder.

"From our vantage point directly above the clear water, we could see beneath the surface to a depth of thirty feet or more. Scattered here and there through the kelp bed, we made out thin dark objects that periodically showed reflected light and motion. Shortly we located several sea lions moving about. One in particular was working our way, so we watched its movements attentively. After a short submergence it would come to the surface, blowing miniature jets of spray into the air, then swimming gracefully a short distance, again sink out of sight. Just then Thompson remarked: 'There goes a cod; watch the sea lion get under him!' Suddenly, just beneath us, we saw a darkened streak deep down, a lightning-like flash and simultaneously the water parted in a whirling ripple as the glistening body of a sea lion rose to the surface with a forty pound cod. One playful jerk and the fish parted in mid-air, a portion striking the water many yards away, while the mammal ravenously gulped the remainder.

"We brought the glasses into play and endeavored to estimate the number of sea lions in sight from our location. After counting upwards of 1,000 we gave it up as impossible. An official government estimate places the number of Great Northern Sea Lions (Eumetropias Stelleri) along the British Columbia Coast

at 10,000 and this number, after my experiences at Cape St. James and Triangle Island, I consider quite conservative.

"Captain Jack Christian, a whaler and sealer of thirty years' experience, tells me that a fair idea of the depredation of these sea lions upon deep sea fish can be gained from the following figures. 'An average adult sea lion will consume and playfully destroy at least ten fish daily. A reasonable-sized salmon, halibut or cod weighs around ten pounds. Multiply one hundred thousand fish caught daily by ten pounds, then by 365 days in the year, next this amount by 10 cents per pound and you have a considerate estimate of the enormous activities of these *carnivorous pirates.*' On the other hand, if some sort of government protection be provided covering the breeding ground of these mammals, with permission to kill them for their hides at certain seasons along portions of the coast and at the mouths of rivers used by the salmon, what is now without doubt a menace, may be turned into a lucrative industry. The hides we secured I had tanned and the leather is of excellent quality. This fact is bound to become known before long and without adequate laws, complete extermination of this singular species of mammals is sure to follow.

"My contention is that if the sea lion is confined to the neighborhood of the outer reefs now used as breeding grounds, no particular amount of injury will ever be done, but where they congregate in numbers at the mouths of rivers during the fishing season, as they do

at present, the damage is bound to enroach upon the fishing industry.

"The flesh of the sea lion is to say the least, unpalatable and the body contains but little oil. A fair-sized hide will measure ten feet long by six feet wide and a full grown adult weighs easily 1,200 lbs. I have seen specimens that measured over 14 feet in length and at least one and one half tons weight. Considering the vast number of the animals and the present value of hides and leather, some successful mode of capture and use of the by-products is only a matter of a short time.

"Our enjoyable adventure at Cape St. James was cut short by the return of the whaler. For Captain Heater, true to his seaman's instinct, appeared just in time.

"As we steamed away, the fog, one of nature's compensating phenomena, enveloped all alike, enshrouding with impenetratable and darkened chill the ever-faithful beacon of navigation and protecting the piratical horde that howls its dismal note out over the resounding solitudes of their isolated refuge.

CHAPTER IX.

"THE BEAVER"

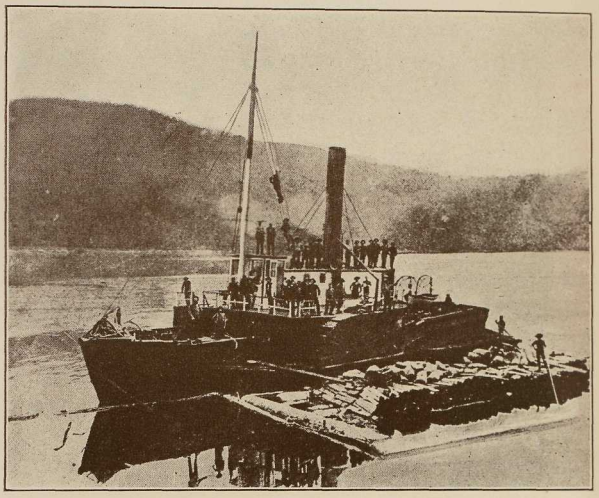
First Steamship on the Pacific Ocean, with References to Other Early Steamships.

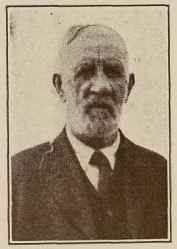
ON the Pacific Coast the fame of the Steamship *Beaver* is established and no one is likely to be unacquainted with the main facts of her history, with which we are all proud to be associated.

But fewer people nowadays are aware that Canada had a great honour in the early days of steam, namely, that of constructing and sending across the Atlantic Ocean to England, in 1831, just one hundred years ago, the *first steamer* which ever crossed the Atlantic, the *Royal William.*

To emphasize this historic fact, it is related in some detail in this narration, together with some recollections of the *Beaver,* and some other facts regarding early steam navigation.

Much has been written at various times concerning the steamer *Beaver,* noteworthy as the first steamship to ply





SS. *Beaver*, first steamer on the Pacific Ocean. Photographed in 1888 when she was trading as a tugboat and logging camp tender. (Left) Captain George Marchant, her last skipper, who supplied much of the information relative to her history.

malt in July, 1867, the year of Canada's Confederation, in which year he had his first service on the *Beaver* as one of the crew. Later on he was her captain and remained so until her end.

In his old age, being no longer able to work at the final vocation of many a seafaring man, night watchman on a dock, Captain Marchant, reluctant to accept public charity, was supported by a fund contributed by a few kind-hearted "old timers," mostly shipping men, who knew of his long and faithful service on the British Columbia Coast. I had the pleasure of administering this fund, which brought me monthly into contact with the old man, whose chief delight was to talk about the *Beaver*. Failing health caused him to accede to the urge of his friends and he resided in the Old Men's Home at Vancouver the last two years of his life and died in 1925, aged 81. A fine, old, upstanding Cornish sailorman, of a fast vanishing type, he contributed in full measure to the pioneer upbuilding of the maritime trade of this coast.

One most remarkable item concerning the old man was that up to the time of his death he corresponded regularly every three months with his sister in Cornwall, England, whom he had not set eyes on since he left there in 1866,—fifty-nine years regular correspondence; surely a unique instance of family loyalty, which should stand as a model to all expatriates!

To return to the *Beaver*, after this digression (for it is impossible for me to think of the *Beaver* without recollecting George Marchant), I will set out concisely the

notes concerning her early history, coupled with data compiled by Marchant, and a very interesting narrative it forms.

It must be emphasized that the S.S. *Beaver* was not only the first steamer on the Pacific Ocean, but was also the first steamer to cross the Atlantic Ocean from Europe, although, be it noted, she did not cross under steam, but under sail.

The honour of being the first steamer to cross the Atlantic falls to a Canadian-built steamer, *Royal William*, built by Campbell & Black at Quebec in 1830-31. The fact that the first trans-Atlantic steamer was built in Canada seems not to be generally remembered! I think the reader will have to pardon another digression, to enable an adequate description of this famous vessel to be given. If excuse is necessary, suffice it to state that this current year 1931 is her centenary.

The idea started in 1825 when the legislature of Lower Canada offered $7,500 to the first person or company who would provide a steamer of not less than 500 tons burthen to run regularly between Quebec and Halifax for four years. Five years later this offer was increased to $15,000 and a syndicate of 144 members, of which Samuel, Henry and Joseph Cunard (names later famous in the trans-Atlantic trade) were among the principal, was formed to build and operate the ship. This syndicate included most of the prominent Quebec shipbuilders, who were then an important body doing a very big trade. The contract was finally given to John S. Campbell and George

Black, who built her in a little yard under the cliff where Wolfe's monument stands on the Plains of Abraham.

James Goudie, a Scotch-Canadian who had made a great reputation as a designer of sailing ships, supervised her construction, which was commenced in September, 1830. He was only 22 years of age at the time, but lacked nothing in enterprise, and, as soon as the scheme began to take definite shape, he had crossed the Atlantic, interviewed Steele's of Greenock, and taken back with him the plans of the steamer *United Kingdom*, which was one of the pioneers of the London-Leith route and which was proving remarkably successful.

As the *Royal William* took shape she emerged as a finely-modelled three-master topsail schooner, carvel-built with square stern and beak bow. Her dimensions were 176 feet overall, 146 feet on the keel, by 28 feet actual beam of hull and 44 feet over the paddle boxes, the depth of hold being 17.9 feet and the draught of water 13 feet. She was 830 tons by current steamboat measurement as laid down by Act of Parliament.

Unfortunately, very little definite information survives concerning her machinery, for in those days it was regarded with awe rather than with interest. It was made by Boulton & Watt and shipped out to be fitted at the St. Mary's Foundry, Montreal. The machinery consisted of two separate side lever engines rated at 200 H.P. the two, but beyond that there is very little on record.

Following a series of trials she was put on service between Quebec and Halifax. She had accommodation in the saloon for 50 passengers and in the steerage for as many

as could be packed in, the inclusive fare for the former being $30. Unfortunately she was given such fine lines and her engines occupied so much space that she could only carry about 400 tons of cargo at her very best.

After a few trips she was taken off service and laid up at Sorel for the winter. Her cost had been $80,000 and her owners were already beginning to wonder whether they would get it back. Next year they had still worse luck, for she did not begin running until the middle of June owing to the outbreak of Asiatic cholera at Quebec, and when she did get under way there were so many delays owing to quarantine that she took 53 days to do the round trip.

She was mortgaged for $25,000 to meet expenses, and when there seemed no chance of her getting on to the regular service the mortgagee foreclosed and bought her at the auction for the exact amount of the loan. He tried to use her as a tug, but without success, and then decided to send her across the Atlantic to see whether she could not find a purchaser in Europe. Cabin passages were advertised at $100, and under Captain MacDougall, with seven passengers and 36 men in her crew, she crossed from Pictou, Nova Scotia, to Gravesend, finally arriving 25 days out after a sad battering.

This was the first trans-Atlantic passage under steam.

Her captain put into Cowes, and had her fully painted inside and out before he went up the Thames, where he hoped to find a purchaser. One quickly came forward and obtained the ship for £10,000, soon afterwards chartering her to the Portuguese Government as a transport. Captain MacDougall still remained in command and subsequently

took her out to the Portuguese coasting trade. On a trip to Cadiz with specie she attracted the attention of the Spanish naval authorities, then engaged in the first Carlist War, and they promptly bought her, renamed her *Isabel Segunda,* and had her fitted out as a man-of-war carrying six 32-pounders. Captain MacDougall stayed as sailing master, the ship doing useful work as a man-of-war until 1837.

Three years later, namely, in 1840, the hull was condemned at Bordeaux and became a hulk, but the engines were removed and put into another hull, which was given her name. At late as the early 'nineties she was still in existence as a coal hulk.

In 1894, the Canadian Historical Society caused to be erected in the corridor leading from the House of Commons to the Library at Ottawa, a brass tablet commemorating the *Royal William,* which was unveiled by the Governor-General, Lord Aberdeen, in the presence of a distinguished gathering.

I sincerely hope that on the centenary of her departure from Quebec for London, which was on August 5th, 1833, some effort will be made to celebrate the event, for it is one in which we as Canadians may take justifiable pride. (Do you remember the Fulton Centenary celebrations at New York in 1907?)

The first steamship ever constructed was built in 1803 by John Symington, on the Clyde, a steam tug called the *Charlotte Dundas,* which he intended for use as a tow-

boat on the Forth and Clyde Canal, but the agitation of the water caused by the large paddle wheels was so injurious to the clay banks that the vessel was tied up and the scheme designated a failure.

Robert Fulton, an American, while on a tour in Great Britain, visited the North and saw the *Charlotte Dundas*, the possibilities of which seem to have attracted his attention, for he obtained drawings of her. He shortly afterwards returned to New York with a 20 horsepower steam engine purchased from Boulton & Watt of London, and at New York constructed a small vessel named the *Clermont*, which in 1807 made a passage up the Hudson from New York to Albany, which is regarded as the first successful voyage by steamer; in consequence of which the name of Robert Fulton has been immortalized, while that of John Symington of Glasgow, whose plans Fulton obtained, is forgotten! Neither must it be overlooked that the English firm of Boulton & Watt supplied the engines of Fulton's steamer and it was this same firm, Boulton & Watt, who constructed the engines for the *Beaver* and the *Royal William*. Watt, the elder, was the first to construct a practical steam engine and Boulton & Watt the first firm to build them on a commercial scale.

The *Beaver* sailed from London in 1835 and to fix the date as being in the very first stages of steam propulsion, one must note that only six years earlier, viz., in 1829, George Stephenson ran his famous "Rocket," the first steam locomotive, over the short line between Stockton and Darlington, England.

So it can be guaged that the construction, launching and departure of so novel a craft as the *Beaver* was quite a noteworthy event of the time, and as chronicles of the period relate, "one of the greatest events which transpired during the reign of His Majesty, William IV."

The *Beaver* was built for the Hudson's Bay Company, specifically for service on the Northwest Coast of America. They evidently intended to secure the best obtainable and that they succeeded is evidenced by the fifty-three years of constant service the staunch little steamer provided.

She was built by Green, Nigrams & Green in 1834-5 at their yard at Blackwall, on the Thames near London. Her dimensions were: length over all, 107½ feet; breadth inside of paddle boxes, 20 feet; outside, 33 feet; depth 11½ feet, register, 109 tons. She was armed with five nine-pounder guns and carried a crew of 26.

Her engines weighed 63½ tons. This included the boiler and also the gearing for the paddles, and cost £4,500. There were two engines of 35 horsepower each, of the side-lever type. The cylinders were 42 inches diameter with a 36-inch stroke.

The launching was a most auspicious event and was attended by King William IV and several members of the Royal Family and a great crowd of citizens. On her trial trip, with engines installed, the *Beaver* made 9¾ knots, which was a gratifying speed both to her builders and owners.

It was on the 29th day of August, 1835, that the *Beaver,* amid the cheers of the onlookers, glided down the

Thames on her long voyage to the Pacific, together with her escort, the barque *Columbia,* 300 tons.

Prior to departure, it had been decided to unship the *Beaver's* paddles and for her to proceed to her destination under sail. This decision was made for "reasons which are unknown" (but surely it is apparent that the fuel difficulty would have been ample reason!).

The sailing log of the *Beaver,* giving details of her voyage from London to Astoria on the Columbia River, was lost for many years, but turned up again some twenty years ago among some old papers. From it is gleaned the story of her journey around Cape Horn. Rigged as a brig, under command of Captain B. Home, she sailed in company wtih the *Columbia,* but the *Beaver* proved too speedy and reached her destination in advance, making the run in 163 days, leaving the Thames August 27th, 1835, and dropping anchor in the Columbia River on March 19th, 1836. The *Columbia* arrived a few days later. The vessels then proceeded to Fort Vancouver, the Hudson's Bay post on the Willammette River. (Please, reader, do not confuse this with Vancouver, British Columbia! The old Fort Vancouver is now Vancouver, Washington, U. S. A.)

On May 16th, the paddle wheels were fitted on and steam raised on the boilers on 23rd, using wood for fuel. Captain Home's log states "the engines worked very well indeed."

An interesting item from the log relates what happened when they ran short of fuel. "June 29th, finding we had

not enough fuel to carry us to Millbank Fort, stopped the steam and made sail to the topsail and unshipped five paddle blades on each side to avoid holding too much water. Afterwards shipped the paddle blades, made steam and entered Millbank Sound, anchoring at 11 in 10 fathoms."

Soon after the little black steamer arrived at Fort Vancouver, Captain W. H. McNeill took command, while Captain Home retired to one of the Company's posts, and subsequently perished in 1837 by the upsetting of a small boat while crossing the Columbia River, some say at "Death Rapids," while others state that the accident happened at Baker's Bay.

In those days Oregon included all the country north of California, all the region drained by the twin rivers of the West, and was, says Bancroft, the historian, "a mystic land, a region of wierd imagery and fable, without, in 1832, a single United States settler in all the territory."

But now that a steamer had arrived, swift-flowing rivers, circuitous inlets, and intricate bays were to be navigated for the first time by a craft other than the native "dugout," and consequently this vast and fertile region of the Pacific Northwest could not long be expected to remain uncivilized.

The principal northern settlement, or fur station, at this time was Fort Simpson, while next in importance came Fort McLoughlin, on Millbank Sound, and later Fort Tako, on the Tako River. Besides these, there were several others of minor importance.

Still, the duties of the *Beaver* were not confined alone to waiting on the Hudson's Bay Company's fur posts, for we have abundant proof that during her early history she made frequent trips to Sitka, Alaska.

Probably one of the most important events in the career of this historic steamer, and one for which she will long be remembered, was the part she bore in the first discovery of the now-famous coalfields of Vancouver Island.

It appears that just previous to the *Beaver's* arrival on the Columbia River, a party of Indians, from the north end of Vancouver Island, strolled into the blacksmith shop inside the stockade at Fort McLoughlin.

In a very short time these savages became curiously interested in the movements of the smith, and finally their curiosity led them to asking questions.

"What is that?" they queried, as the smith shovelled fresh coals on the glowing fire.

"Stuff to make the fire burn," replied the man at the anvil.

"What you call it?"

"Coal," was the answer.

"How made?"

"It is dug out of the ground."

"Where did you get it?"

After the smith had answered this last question by telling them that it was brought in ships many miles across the great water, he left his work and called in W. F. Tolmie, together with several other officers of the Fort. And to these gentlemen the redskins explained that in

many places in their country there was plenty of this same kind of stone.

Word was shortly afterward sent to Fort Vancouver, with the result that about the month of July, 1836, Chief Factor John McLoughlin issued orders for the *Beaver* to proceed to the north end of Vancouver Island and ascertain if coal did actually exist in this western region, as reported by the Indians.

As Mr. John Dunn was one of the party sent thither, I will permit him to make his own report. "Mr. Finlayson, with a part of the crew, went on shore, leaving me in the ship to conduct the trade, and after some inquiries and a small distribution of rewards, found from the natives that the original account given at Fort McLoughlin was true. The coal turned out to be of excellent quality, running in extensive fields, and even in clumpy mounds, and most easily worked all along that part of the country."

In honor of her captain, the small bay where the steamer first cast anchor was called McNeill Harbour, but later Beaver Harbour, after the little craft herself. (See Dunn's "History of the Oregon Territory," published in London, 1844; also Bancroft's "History of British Columbia.")

Thus were the bituminous coalfields of the North Pacific coast made known to the world, and their worth first tested in the *Beaver's* furnace. Indeed, there was no other use for coal in these western confines at this time, except a small quantity which the Hudson's Bay Company required for use in the blacksmith shops at its various forts, and even then it was only partially used for fuel in the little steamer, as will be seen by the following

quoted paragraph from an entry made by Mr. Dunn during the steamer's first voyage to Fort Simpson in 1836. "At Fort McLoughlin we took on board about twenty-six cords of wood for fuel, which was ready cut for us. This generally lasted us when running on between three and four days."

It would appear that the Hudson's Bay Company about this time were anxious to establish a saw and grist mill in some convenient locality on the North Pacific Coast, and in consequence of this, we find the *Beaver* engaged during the following year in the very important work of discovery. Says the Fort Simpson journal, under date August 10th, 1837: "On his way to the southward, Captain McNeill explored the south end of Vancouver Island and found an excellent harbor and a fine open country along the sea-shore, apparently well adapted for both tillage and pasture, but saw no river sufficiently extensive for mills."

This clearly shows that the Harbor of Victoria, then Camosun Bay, was first entered by the *Beaver* ninety-four years ago.

As much of the information contained herein was gathered by Charles McCain of Vancouver from Fort journals, it might be well to state that at each of the Company's forts a journal was kept, after the fashion of a minute-book, and from day to day any happenings worthy of note were recorded. They thus furnish history which can be relied upon as quite correct.

In May, 1840, James Douglas proceeded in the steamer *Beaver* to Sitka, Alaska, where he counselled with Etholin, the Russian governor, with the result that the Hudson's Bay Company acquired the right to occupy certain southern portions of Alaska in exchange for cattle and provisions.

During this same voyage the Tako and Stikeen Rivers were explored and Fort Tako erected on the bank of the former, while Fort Stikeen, started some five years previous, was completed by the assistance of the *Beaver* crew.

It was also during this year that Fort Langley, on the Fraser, was totally destroyed by fire, but at once rebuilt by men landed from the little steamer.

Sir George Simpson, in his "Narrative of a Journey Around the World During the Years 1841-2," speaks of a cruise in the *Beaver* through the labyrinth of still, sparkling waters between Fort Nisqually, on Puget Sound, and Sitka, Alaska, at which latter place he and James Douglas spent a most enjoyable time—toward the end of September, 1841—with Etholin, the governor, who visited the little vessel in full uniform, and was loyally welcomed by a grand salute from the *Beaver's* guns.

The next important event in the career of this renowned craft was the founding of Camosun, or Fort Victoria.

It will be noted, from this entry in the journal of Fort Simpson, quoted above, that the *Beaver* was sent to discover a suitable site for a saw and grist mill and found a location where there was a good harbour and fine open

country for tillage and pasturage, both very necessary as a location for a fort and settlement. They were apparently more important to them than a good harbour, for they could have found a better harbour a few miles further west, viz., Esquimalt Harbour, and it is a pity they did not, for it cannot be gainsaid that Esquimalt Harbour is a much better one than Victoria. It is true that Victoria Harbour has, by the expenditure of several million dollars, been made into a good practicable port for modern steamers, but a far less expenditure would have made Esquimalt a better port than Victoria is, or ever can be.

Thus the action of the old Hudson's Bay Company in selecting Camosun Bay as the site for their fort and settlement, around which the City and Port of Victoria later took root, has proven some disadvantage. I am afraid some of my friends in Victoria will resent the imputation that Victoria Harbour is not so good as Esquimalt, but that does not alter the fact.

Here is an extract from "The Vancouver Island Pilot," published by order of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty in 1864. (They have a copy in the Provincial Archives, Victoria). It contains sailing directions for the whole of Vancouver Island and the shores of British Columbia as far north as 51° north, and is based on surveys of Captain G. H. Richards, R.N., in H.M.S. *Plumper,* and H.M.S. *Hecate,* from 1858 to 1862. This is what the gallant Captain had to say of Victoria Harbour:

"The channel is buoyed, but it is necessary to take a pilot and the space is so confined and tortuous that a long

ship has considerable difficulty in making the necessary turns; a large percentage of the vessels entering the port, small as well as large, constantly run aground from these causes, or from trying to enter at an improper time of tide.

"Doubtless Victoria Harbour is susceptible of improvement by artificial means, although it is improbable that it can ever be made a convenient port of entry for vessels of even moderate tonnage, and it appears not a little remarkable that with the excellent harbour of Esquimalt, within two miles, Victoria should have been continued as the commercial port of a rising colony, whose interest cannot but suffer materially from the risks and delays which shipping must encounter in approaching the commercial capital."

While this stringent criticism proves that at that early date the wonderful improvements which have been effected were not even considered possible, still the fact remains that as a natural harbour Esquimalt would have been a better location than Victoria, and the city and port would have benefitted materially. So that is one thing for which we may lay blame on the *Beaver,* for she it was (or her captain) who located Victoria!

To continue our narrative of the *Beaver,* about the first of March, 1843, an expedition, consisting of some fifteen men, left Fort Vancouver and crossed the Cowlitz country to Fort Nisqually, situated at the head of Puget Sound, near where now stands the city of Olympia.

As Chas. McCain relates, "It was not until the ninth of the month that they succeeded in reaching this place of embarkment, but as they found the *Beaver* here awaiting them, it was not long before all their utensils and provisions were carefully stowed on board. Soon all arrangements for the voyage were completed, and after a prolonged scream, the natives' sea phantom swung off from her mooring and pointed her nose for the north. Away she went, steadily buffeting her way through the merry ripple of Puget Sound and Admiralty Inlet, then across the more turbulent water of Juan de Fuca Strait until about 4 o'clock in the afternoon of March 14th, when, with a splash, an iron claw sank into the sea; this was followed by a rattle of chains, then all was still, for the little steamer was gently riding at cable's length on the calm, peaceful bosom of Camosun Bay."

At the head of this enterprise was James Douglas; still John McLoughlin, Captain McNeill and several others are also entitled to due recognition in the establishment of this most important of all posts.

The expedition had been sent thither for the purpose of erecting, on the south end of Vancouver Island, a substantial fort, suitable for the Company's headquarters, as the abandonment of Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia, had been determined.

At the discharge of a cannon from the deck of the *Beaver*, Indians in large numbers swarmed upon the banks. But as no serious encounter followed, it is quite evident that these barbarous natives made up their minds then and there to give these strange, bleached men and their thun-

dering water machine all the room they required without argument.

Next morning, the little force of fort-builders was landed opposite the Indian village of Camosun, and operators at once commenced on the stockade, bastions and dwelling houses, which continued for several months. Meanwhile the *Beaver* had been despatched to the northern posts, calling at Stikeen, Forts Tako and McLoughlin, from whence she brought a number of men to assist the force at Camosun.

Subsequently, late in the season, Douglas departed with the *Beaver* to Fort Nisqually for a cargo of cattle, to be forwarded to the new establishment, in charge of which, during his absence, he had placed Charles Ross.

It is hardly likely that these fur-traders realized at that time that they were laying the foundation of a new colonial empire.

In the years subsequent to this, the *Beaver* was engaged in trading up and down the coast, buying furs from the Indians and paying for them with beads, trinkets and such other "notions" as pleased the Indians' fancy. Also supplies were kept moving to the Company's various forts and posts, consisting of provisions, muskets, ammunition, blankets, tobacco and so forth. In 1849, three years after the 49th Parallel had been agreed upon as the line of demarkation between the United States and the Hudson's Bay Company's territory, the *Beaver* was engaged in removing all supplies and effects from Fort Vancouver, up the Columbia River, now American territory, to Fort

Victoria, which henceforth became the Company's headquarters on the Pacific, and thus the home port of the *Beaver*.

It was during this period that the "little black steamer," as the *Beaver* was often termed, became widely known to the travelling public; and of the estimated 23,000 miners landed at Victoria, B. C., in 1858 and the two succeeding years, very many secured their passage to the placer gold diggings up the Fraser River on her. During these periods of wild excitement, many a pound of the precious metal found place on the *Beaver's* deck.

In 1859, the San Juan Island difficulty, which threatened several times to involve the United States and Britain in open hostilities, neared a crisis. And in this, the same as in almost every important event in the early history of Pacific Northwest affairs, the little steamer figured quite conspicuously.

According to the narrative of Charles McCain, the facts of the case appear to be these: A United States settler, by the name of L. A. Cutler, took up his abode on the island, which at that time was somewhat in dispute between the American authorities and the Hudson's Bay Company.

On the 15th of June, 1859, this man Cutler shot a pig, which it seems was destroying his garden, and which was the property of the Hudson's Bay Company, then occupying a considerable portion of the island. Mr. Cutler, as atonement for his rash act, then offered the officer in charge of the island post a small sum as payment for the

animal, but when informed that, owing to its superior make-up, $100 was the value placed on the rooter, he concluded to let the bill stand. Word was quickly sent to Fort Victoria, and very soon the *Beaver,* well-armed, was puffing toward the scene of the disturbance.

On board the miniature war-steamer were several officers of the colonial council, including A. G. Dallas, Tolmie and Fraser, which gentlemen, on landing, are stated to have declared the Island of San Juan to be British soil.

It then seems that Cutler was given the choice of paying for the hog, or in default be taken to Fort Victoria, where a trial would be held and the matter thoroughly investigated. But Mr. Cutler couldn't see it in this light, and nervously fingering his rifle, threatened to shoot the first man that should lay forcible hands upon him.

This was the commencement of the famous San Juan hostilities, and during the long, tedious negotiations which followed, the steamer *Beaver,* on many occasions, came prominently before the public.

Since the *Beaver* has brought us into contact with the San Juan Island affair, we may as well relate the particulars of this dispute arising out of the boundary question, which for a time assumed quite threatening proportions. The boundary treaty of 1846, between Great Britain and the United States, was in one or two particulars somewhat loosely drawn up, owing in a measure to the lack of exact knowledge of the hydrography of the country, although, viewed at this date, when all the acrimony has gone, the intention appears to have been unmistakeable. The treaty, in fixing the line of boundary from the mainland to the

Pacific Ocean, provided that the navigation of the channel south of the 49th parallel of latitude shall remain free and open to both parties and that this line as continued west from the mainland shall, when it reaches the "middle of the channel separating Vancouver Island from the continent, pass southerly through the middle of said channel and of Fuca Straits."

Now, there are two channels leading into the Straits of Fuca, one only of which, Rosario, was known to navigators at the time the treaty was made, and there is not much doubt but that it was intended by those who drew up the treaty that this was to be the dividing line between the possessions of the two nations. This interpretation of the treaty was not questioned for nearly ten years subsequent to the settlement of the boundary question and during all that time the Hudson's Bay Company had been utilizing the largest and best of the islands west of this channel as a farm for the raising of stock. About 1850 a second channel, known as Haro, considerably to the west of Rosario channel, and deeper and wider, and in some respects more convenient for ocean vessels, was discovered, and some leapt to the conclusion that this should have been the channel indicated in the treaty. The idea was highly pleasing to the settlers in the Northwestern United States, as it meant, if adopted, that they would come into possession of some very fine islands, one of which, San Juan, was especially valuable, if only on account of its fertility, but it was also the key to the Gulf of Georgia. Their minds were no sooner made up on this point than they began to put the idea into practical effect.

In 1850 accordingly, the legislature of Oregon proceeded to organize these islands into a district, attached to that territory. Of course, after this official proceeding on the part of the Americans, and as the Hudson's Bay Company was in quiet possession of San Juan, and had no intention of yielding it up, trouble was sure to follow, and it came. The difficulty began when, early in 1854, J. N. Ebey, collector of customs for Puget Sound, attempted to levy dues on a quantity of stock placed on the island by the Hudson's Bay Company. The Company's clerk in charge on the island, John Griffin, promptly refused to acknowledge Ebey's right to collect such dues, and acquainted Governor Douglas with the pretentions of the American official. Douglas, accompanied by the Victoria collector of customs, Mr. Sankster, went over to San Juan Island to look into the matter. Sankster ordered Ebey to quit the island. Ebey, however, was not to be frightened and, while he was unable to levy the dues he claimed, he replied that he would leave a deputy collector on the island who would do his duty. A deputy was accordingly sworn in who faithfully assessed the company's property, but who magnanimously refrained from enforcing collections. In March of the following year, however, the Sheriff of Whatcom County seized and sold a number of sheep belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company and, for his temerity, was promptly censured by his Government, which gave orders that those living on the island should not be interfered with till the matter had been considered by the two Governments. After this the United States officials contented themselves with simply valuing the

property on the island. In 1856-7 commissioners were appointed by the two powers to examine thoroughly into the matter for the purpose of coming to some amicable understanding. Captains Provost and Richards, of the Royal Navy, were deputed by Britain, and Archibald Campbell and Lieut. Parke by the Republic. After two years of consideration the commissioners could not agree, and their labor proved barren of results. In 1859 matters were brought to a crisis by the American squatter on the island, Cutler, shooting the historic hog to which we have already referred. Cutler, being threatened with arrest by the British authorities, appealed to General Harney, commander of the Military Department of Oregon. Harney, who was a bellicose "patriot," immediately sent a company of militia to the island to take possession of it for the United States. This action on the part of the American officials created surprise and indignation at Victoria, and Douglas immediately send Major DeCourcy to the island as stipendiary magistrate. The *Beaver* and another boat were also despatched to prevent the landing of more American troops. Notwithstanding this, however, reinforcements were sent by General Harney and were permitted to land. The Americans now threatened that any attempt on the part of the British to land troops would occasion a collision. Captain Provost suggested a joint occupation of the island till the boundary question was settled, but this was rejected. A correspondence then ensued between Douglas and Harney in which the former made an effort to arrange matters until the governments of the respective powers should have come to some under-

standing. All his overtures, however, were rejected by Harney. Affairs began to look so warlike that General Scott was sent by President Buchanan to enquire fully into the conduct of General Harney and examine the reasons for his action. General Scott proposed a joint occupation of the island, but this was rejected by Douglas, who urged the withdrawal of the American troops, promising that the naval force should also be removed, and assuring Scott that there was no intention of dislodging the troops in possession without orders from the Home Government. Scott accepted the proposition on these conditions and withdrew all but one company of infantry. Harney was shortly afterwards censured by his own government and relieved of his command.

In 1860 a proposal was made by the English Government that the question be left to arbitration, and one of three powers was suggested as arbitrator: Denmark, Belgium or the Republic of Switzerland. It is probable that the question might have been settled then, but for the outbreak of the civil war in the United States. From that time till 1868 nothing more was heard of the matter, but during that period Americans were quietly settling on the island and making homes for themselves. During 1860, two efforts were made by England to have this matter adjusted, and agreements were entered into by American officials to submit the question to arbitration, but on each occasion was nullified by the United States Senate. The matter remained in this state till 1871, when England sent five commissioners to Washington, and a treaty negotiated whereby the question was referred to Emperor

William I of Germany for arbitration. In 1872, the matter was decided in favor of the United States.

Prosperous San Juan Island is therefore now United States territory and at that we can leave the subject; and whether we consider the award to have been just or unjust does not affect the case, so we will get along with the history of the *Beaver*.

Subsequent to 1859, the *Beaver* continued her work for the Hudson's Bay Company, trading back and forth along the coast between the Company's posts or stations. During this period the development of British Columbia as a white-man's country was proceeding slowly, but with gathering impetus. The North Pacific was invaded by other and more modern steamers, and the pioneer *Beaver* was relegated to an inferior position in the rear ranks. The might of the Company had declined since its divestment in 1879 of its sovereign power by the Imperial authorities, and the fur trade was less than in the early days.

In 1874, the Company sold the *Beaver* to a company of Victoria men, Messrs. Stafford, Saunders, Morton and Company, who utilized her in general freight and towing business.

Just prior to this, the *Beaver* was chartered by the Imperial Government for use as a Hydrographic Survey vessel, and a great deal of useful work was done in charting the coast, continuing the surveys planned and partially carried out by H.M.S. *Plumper* and *Hecate* in 1868 to 1872.

Captain Marchant, previously referred to, joined the vessel as mate in 1876, becoming her master in 1878, during which time the *Beaver* was engaged in towing ships into Nanaimo and Vancouver. In 1880 she was on fire and had her upperworks considerably damaged. In 1883, says Marchant, business became very dull and the *Beaver* was laid up at Victoria, where she partially filled with water and was beached for some time. It was afterwards decided, on Marchant's recommendation, to repair her, and she was again put into commission in 1888. She was then employed in log towing on the coast and carried passengers and supplies to logging camps.

On July 26th, 1888, while being taken through the Narrows out of Vancouver Harbour in a thick fog, the ship's course was turned at Prospect Point on account of the strong current and she ran on the rocks so slowly and easily that the accident caused little commotion on the ship, the crew remaining on board all night, going ashore the following morning in a rowboat.

An effort was made to raise the *Beaver,* but it was found the expense would be too great and she remained fast on the reef nearly four years. James J. Hill, president of the Great Northern Railroad, offered to buy the historic wreck, with a view to placing it on permanent exhibition at Tacoma. At the same time an effort was made by Mayor Oppenheimer on behalf of the City of Vancouver to purchase and preserve the historic relic.

When the owners discovered that there was a market for the old wreck, they raised their price and none of the bids were accepted. They had been approached by an

American syndicate who proposed to raise the wreck and transport it in sections for re-erection at the World's Fair, Chicago. While these negotiations were proceeding, the passenger steamer *Yosemite*, in passing out of the Narrows in 1892, caused an exceptionally heavy swell, which hit the *Beaver*. Her boiler worked loose and with a heavy crash it fell through the side of the wreck, carrying a large portion of the hull with it.

When the news was spread that the *Beaver* was a hopeless wreck, the anxiety to secure relics became so great that at low tides residents of Vancouver, and also from more distant parts, swarmed over the derelict, hacking away pieces of her timbers, carrying off every movable piece of machinery and furniture, until little remained, and the ship soon broke up completely.

The *Beaver's* boiler was raised from the sunken wreck in 1906 and with other portions of the boat was purchased by the Washington Historical Society. The boiler was received and housed with much honour at Tacoma and still remains a valued historic relic. Captain Marchant told me, however, that the boiler they venerate at Tacoma is not the original boiler, made by Boulton & Watt, but was a replacement made in Victoria by a local ironworks, Laing's, and installed there in 1867!

One of the bells of the *Beaver* hangs in the Vancouver Merchants' Exchange, alongside a bell from the old *Empress of Japan.*

And thus ends the history of the *Beaver*, the old-time, staunch little vessel which for fifty-three years plied the

waters of the Pacific, for the first twenty of which she was the only steamer on the North Pacific coast. What a remarkable tribute to the builders of her hull and her engines. For fifty-three years her old engines faithfully performed their task, and old Captain Marchant used to tell me proudly "and they were as good the day she ran on Prospect Point as the day they were installed!"

During her lifetime the *Beaver* saw much of the intimate history of British Columbia and worthily did her full share in shaping the destinies of this Western Shore.

I am indebted to the following authorities for information relative to the *Beaver* and the *Royal William:*

"History of SS. Beaver," by C. W. McCain, 1894.
"History of the Oregon Territory"—Dunn, 1844.
"History of British Columbia"—Bancroft.
"The Marine Engineer"—London.
"The Vancouver Island Pilot"—London, 1864.
"Narrative of a Journey Around the World," Sir Geo. Simpson, 1842.
Log of SS. "Beaver" on outward voyage from England.
Original Notes by Captain George Marchant.

CHAPTER X.

THE SHIPBUILDING BOOM

UNLESS someone makes it his business to set out the facts regarding what was really a very remarkable chapter in the maritime history of the British Columbia Coast, the achievement of creating in a very short time a great shipbuilding industry and of constructing what was truly a surprising large fleet of steel steamers, wooden schooners and other craft, during the last years of the War and the years immediately following, will soon be relegated to the limbo of the past, and no clear record will be preserved. Even now, after only a comparatively few years, there are very many people right here in Vacouver who have no knowledge of the extraordinary efforts put forth to build ships and the results accomplished.

I will therefore make it a job of work to go through the old records and set forth clearly just what was the contribution of the British Columbia shipyards to the success of the Allies during the War, and how the output of ships continued until the market, under the flood of

new tonnage from every country which could build ships, collapsed, and the shipyards of B. C. ceased what was, after all, only an emergency industry.

Wooden ships had been built in B. C. for many years prior to the shipbuilding boom of 1917-1921, the first recorded instance of a vessel constructed on this coast being the wooden schooner built by Captain Meares at Nootka Sound in 1788, much to the astonishment of the Indians. With the growth of Vancouver and Victoria, shipbuilding and ship repair yards were established and several steamers and sailing vessels of small and medium size were constructed locally. Among the more notable ships built were several for the coastwise fleet of the Canadian Pacific, Terminal Steamship Company and Union Steamship Company, as well as quite a number of schooners, tugs and other craft of that nature.

The genesis of the shipbuilding boom in British Columbia was the dearth of tonnage during the early years of the War, all available ships being pressed into the service of the Allies for war purposes, and those of neutral countries becoming engaged in the profitable business of carrying foodstuffs and war supplies to Europe and other seats of war, with the result that all Pacific Ocean services were gradually starved out of existence, or practically so. The lumber trade of British Columbia was suffering severely from the lack of tonnage to carry the considerable foreign business then offering, and there was a strong agitation for some form of government subsidy or assistance which would enable the industry to secure some sort of vessels to carry their lumber to market. Oregon, Wash-

ington and California were building a large number of wooden schooners of one to two thousand tons capacity, the majority of them having auxiliary power in the form of internal-combustion engines. Probably as a direct result of certain Provincial legislation passed in the early part of 1916, the Aid to Shipping Act, although no subsidies were actually granted, an order was placed by Eastern Canadian interests for twelve auxiliary-powered schooners. These soon became known as the *Mabel Brown* type, (from the name of the first to be launched) and were a useful type of vessel, with a capacity of 1,500,000 feet of lumber, five-masted, 225 feet in length, 44 feet beam and 32 feet depth, equipped with two 160-H.P. Bolinder diesel engines and twin screws. These vessels cost about $150,000 each, and were an improvement on the type of vessel being then built on the Pacific Coast of the United States.

Great credit must be given to Alfred Wallace, the Devon shipbuilder who had several years before established himself at Vancouver as a ship repairer and had built up a well-equipped organization, with machine shops, forges and slipways, at North Vancouver, for the first vessels of the Mabel Brown type were built by him, six being turned out from the Walace Shipyards and six by Cameron Genoa Shipbuilders Limited at Victoria, the latter a firm of lumber manufacturers without previous shipbuilding experience, but possessing ample capital, energy and pluck. The *Mabel Brown,* forerunner of the great fleet of schooners and steamers, both steel and wooden, shortly to be built on the British Columbia coast,

vice-president of the same company; M. J. Haney of Toronto, Sir Trevor Dawson of Vickers Ltd., R. M. Wolvin, prominent in Great Lake Shipping and Jas. Whalen, manager of the B. C. Sulphite Fibre Company of Vancouver.

The high cost of construction in European shipyards, the scarcity of steel, the great demand for tonnage, and last but not by any means least, the depredations of the submarines, very soon created a condition rendering it both necessary and profitable for any country which could build ships which would float and carry cargo to bend their energies in that direction. The United States began to embark on her great programme of ship construction, wooden and steel and even concrete. Every shipyard in Europe was working feverishly to get ships into the water.

The existence of shipyards in British Columbia, albeit they were building only wooden schooners, soon led to enquiries as to the possibility of constructing steel steamers. Late in 1916 an order was placed with Wallace Shipyards, Vancouver, for a 3,000 ton steel steamer of 315 feet length with 1,300 H.P. triple expansion engines. This order was placed by Dingwall Cotts and Company of London, through their Vancouver office. On completion, the vessel was taken over by the Imperial Munitions Board. This steamer, named the *War Dog*, was launched in May, 1917, and was the first of the steel steamers built in B. C. during the war.

John Coughlan and Sons of Vancouver, who had for many years been engaged in the steel girder and bridge

business, secured orders for Norwegian account for several steamers of the standard 8,800 deadweight ton type. These vessels were of a standard type of which very many were constructed in the United States during the war. The first, named *Alaska,* was laid down by Coughlan's in 1917 and launched January, 1918. Wallace Shipyards also constructed similar vessels, as also did the Harbour Marine Company, Victoria and the Prince Rupert Drydock Company at Prince Rupert. A modification of this standard type was adopted by the Canadian Government, who later placed orders with B. C. shipyards for some twelve or fourteen steamers.

The strangest type of vessel constructed during this period was the wooden steamer. Owing to difficulty in obtaining steel, the Imperial Munitions Board decided to construct in Canada a number of wooden steamers, built of Douglas fir and powered with 950 H.P. triple expansion engines. These were 250 feet in length, 1,800 tons gross, 2,800 tons deadweight. They were provided with a steel girder kelson for strength. Twenty-seven of these steamers were built for and under the supervision of the Imperial Munitions Board. On completion, they all went to the United Kingdoms, mostly with lumber cargoes, and were sold to France for operation in short coastal voyages. These 27 were built by Lyall Shipbuilding Co. Ltd. at North Vancouver, 6; Western Canada Shipyards, Vancouver, 6; New Westminster Construction Co. Ltd. at New Westminster, 4; Pacific Construction Co. Ltd. at Coquitlam, 2; Cameron-Genoa Shipbuilders Ltd. at Victoria, 4; Foundation Company Ltd. at Victoria, 5.

The Pacific Construction Co. also built two steamers of the same type at their Coquitlam yards, which were sold to Greek interests.

The French Government also placed large orders for wooden steamers; these being of two types, twenty of the 1,500-ton type with twin 275 H.P. engines, and twenty of the 3,000-ton type with two 500 H.P. engines. These orders for forty steamers were divided among the shipyards mentioned above in connection with the wooden steamers built for the Imperial Munitions Board.

During 1917 the launchings comprised 12 wooden schooners, 1 wooden steamer, 1 steel steamer; total 37,300 tons at a building price of approximately $7,400,000.

During 1918 the launchings were 26 wooden steamers, 4 schooners and 16 steel steamers, having a total tonnage of 145,000 and a value of about $25,000,000.

During 1919 there were launched 42 wooden steamers, 5 schooners and 10 steel steamers, having a total tonnage of 165,000 and a total building value of $28,875,000.

During 1920 the construction was ten steel steamers with a total of 81,000 tons and a value of $16,200,000.

During 1921 there were 8 steel steamers launched of 64,800 tons and $11,800,000 value.

In the five years during which the shipbuilding programme was being carried out there were launched from British Columbia yards 21 wooden auxiliary schooners, 69 wooden steamers, 45 steel steamers, or a grand total of *135 vessels having a tonnage of 492,800 tons and a building cost of $88,400,000.* This is truly a remarkable output when it is considered that prior to 1917 there

were no shipyards which had demonstrated their ability to build an ocean-going vessel.

The wooden schooners served a useful purpose and, apart from several which came to grief in various parts of the world, they served for several years as lumber carriers, but as might be expected, could not withstand the competition of the modern steam cargo carrier, and within a few years all had gone to the boneyard. My notebook reveals that their price depreciated rapidly. For instance, in 1921, four years after she was built, at a cost of $150,000, one of these vessels was sold in London to Norwegian interests for $10,000.

The small wooden steamers were obviously a war-time emergency type, and were never intended for the competitive carrying trade. Hundreds of them were constructed in the United States and Canada. Fortunately those built in Canada were all completed and put into service, but in the United States a very large number were in various stages of completion, from 5 per cent. to 90 per cent. finished, when the war ended, and it was deemed more economical to leave them in that state of incompletion than to expend further money in finishing them.

Of the steel steamers, of which 45 were built, most of them are still, in 1931, afloat, so I believe. Several have been lost from one cause or another. Many are now laid up on account of depression in the shipping trade; but many, on the other hand are still finding a place among the world's commerce carriers. Those constructed for the Canadian Government were operated in the services

from Vancouver and from Montreal at a time when ships were scarce, and they did their part in helping to carry on Canada's foreign trade during that critical period, albeit that it has since been the fashion to decry Canada's government-owned mercantile marine. It may be freely admitted that the principle of government-owned and operated mercantile ships is an unwise and unprofitable one in normal times. The deficits incurred by the government-owned ships of Canada, the United States, France, Australia and other countries sufficiently prove this contention. That question is, however, aside from the matter of building ships, which is what we are dealing with in this chapter.

British Columbia heard the call for ships and responded in a remarkable manner. It was a War-Time effort and had a patriotic aspect as well as a commercial. There can be no gainsaying the fact that the ships built in British Columbia during 1917 and 1918 *helped win the war* by carrying to Europe large quantities of lumber, airplane spruce, grain, flour and other necessities.

The rapid rise and sudden cessation of shipbuilding in British Columbia was a phenomenon due to conditions which were entirely unprecedented and will in all probability never be repeated. The primary cause was the loss of tonnage due to the depredations of the submarine, coupled with the inability of several of the belligerent countries to continue their normal output of ships. When the war ended in December, 1918, there was a shortage of 20,000,000 tons of shipping, as compared with the

world's tonnage just prior to the war. There was also an insistent demand for tonnage consequent on the requirements of the various governments for troop movements, supplies and other national requirements; and immediately after peace was declared there began a world movement of merchandise to make up the deficiencies caused by embargoes, blockades and other inabilities to obtain supplies during the war years.

As a result of the extraordinary demand for tonnage, coupled with the shortage, freight rates rose to unbelievable heights, and shipowners reaped a rich harvest. Those were the halcyon days of shipowning and many were the companies floated, particularly in Norway, England and the United States, to purchase and operate ships.

In 1919 the world output of tonnage was at the rate of 7,000,000 tons per annum, and this continued during the two following years, so that the entire deficiency of tonnage was made up by 1920 or 1921. In consequence, freight rates fell rapidly and, within a very short time, shipbuilding stopped entirely in those countries where the cost of construction was higher than in the old-established shipyards of Europe.

What the disparity in cost of construction was is interesting to note. Let us take Vancouver, for instance, as compared with Great Britain. Steel plate for shipbuilding at that time was worth approximately $55 per ton in Great Britain. In Vancouver we had to bring our plates from Pittsburg, and the laid down cost was $102 per ton. Wages form the most important item in construction costs. A shipwright received in Vancouver, early in 1919,

$36.30 for a week of 44 hours; in England $16.50 for a week of 50 hours. A blacksmith $33 as against $16.05; a machinist $33 as against $14.40, and so on down the line.

What chance, therefore, had the shipbuilding industry to survive in British Columbia when the demand for tonnage had reverted to normal proportions?

The shipbuilding boom of 1917-21 forms by no means the least colorful chapter in British Columbia maritime affairs. Incidentally, it brought to Vancouver many ship surveyors, engineers and others related to the shipbuilding trade and many of these have remained with us, to our permanent benefit as a port.

The tale of the shipbuilding boom could be embellished by many a story of the difficulties, mistakes and troubles of various kinds experienced by the shipbuilders and also by those who placed the orders with them. Many other queer things happened; one could yarn for hours about them, but my purpose is fulfilled in setting down the plain tale of the facts.

The shipyards are dismantled; but the memory of the achievement remains.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TIDE OF GOLDEN GRAIN

THE title of this chapter looks very familiar. Numerous "boost" articles in the Sunday editions of the newspapers and the popular magazines have appeared during the past few years bearing this or similar captions, all telling the story of the growth of the grain export trade through the Port of Vancouver.

That, however, is not the objective of this story. There is so much of interest in the narrative of the grain movement; so much that is overlooked by the staff-writer seeking only to catch the passing attention of the reader; so much is known to the few at the time it occurs and soon forgotten even by them, and yet so much is worth preservation and recording.

I do not suppose that there are many, even in the grain trade itself, who can remember the first grain shipments from Vancouver. The year was 1899; the quantity, three full cargoes, totalling 24,000 tons; the grain, oats; the destination, South Africa; the occasion, the Boer War. A

Vancouver firm of exporters, now defunct, Messrs. Farrell, Tregent & Company, secured a contract for about 25,000 tons of oats to be shipped for the Government to Cape Town. Such was the demand for feed for the cavalry horses that the British Government was scouring every available source of supply and prices ruled high—unbelievably high as compared with the miserable figure the poor farmer has to be content (?) with today. Mr. Tregent tells me that the price paid was $1.25 per bushel, sacked, free on board Vancouver. Similar grade oats can be purchased today for 29c per bushel! But wait! Wars do not last for ever; see what the declaration of peace did to the oats market.

Three steamers were chartered to load the oats, which were sacked at Edmonton, and shipped to the C.P.R. sheds at Vancouver, and the sheds were full to overflowing. So far as I have been able to gather, Alberta was unable to supply the full quantity required (those were early days, remember) and Farrell, Tregent & Company went to the State of Washington for the balance. They arranged with a Tacoma firm to supply the third cargo. Just before the third steamer was due, Farrell, Tregent & Company received a confidential cable from London, instructing them to secure cancellation of the balance of the contract, if that were possible at a not too ruinous figure. Mr. Tregent went at once to Tacoma and induced the shippers to cancel the contract, but had to pay them a consideration which, at the time, he deemed outrageously high. However, his instructions were to cancel and the agreement was made. At that time, no one in Vancouver, nor

Tacoma, had any intimation as to the state of affairs in South Africa. The war seemed interminable, despite recurrent rumours of probable cessation. Next day, with startling suddenness, came the announcement of Cronje's unconditional surrender, with the pick of the Boer troops. The war was over! The price of oats slumped, within a few days, to—30c!

Mr. Tregent and his principals found they had made an excellent bargain. What the Tacoma firm thought of it would probably burn holes in the paper, if I were to write it. As they are still in existence, I will spare them. They have probably long forgotten the transaction, since sudden losses are, alas, a recurrent feature of the grain business.

I cannot state positively that the above described grain shipments were actually the first ever made from the British Columbia coast, although there is no record of any prior to that time; it appears certain that these were the first shipments of any size. Subsequent to 1899 there are records that small shipments of sacked wheat and oats were made to Mexico, Alaska, the Philippines, China and other destinations, as early as the year 1905. Someone has told me that there was a shipment of wheat from New Westminster as early as the late sixties, but I can find no record of it.

I find that the exports of sacked wheat from Vancouver during the years 1910, 1911 and 1912 amounted to 750,000 bushels in all, and of sacked oats 500,000 bushels. Nowadays the Port of Vancouver handles, during the

season, in a couple of days as much as the total quantity handled in the three years mentioned. What brought about this great change? The story is not without romance.

The handling of grain in sacks is expensive; that is why bulk handling has superseded sacked shipments. It was perceived by far-sighted people, when the Panama Canal was in course of construction, that if the Pacific Coast of Canada were to participate in the great export trade of Canadian grain, provision would have to be made for the bulk handling of grain at some port on the Pacific Coast. Accordingly, representations were made to the Government at Ottawa, pleading for the erection of a grain elevator at some port on the coast. The plea was made that a glance at the map should suffice to show that the grain of the Western Prairies should logically be moved to the European markets via the Pacific Coast, rather than be hauled by rail right across the continent to the Atlantic Coast ports. So reasonable did this argument appear that Sir George Foster, then Minister of Trade and Commerce (an unnecessary title, for there is no difference between "trade" and "commerce") instituted inquiries, with a view to the erection of an elevator by the Government. New Westminster thought the elevator ought to be built on the Fraser River. Vancouver thought otherwise, and said so. It is doubtful whether an elevator would have been built at all, had not the Honourable H. H. Stevens, or plain "Mr. Stevens" as he then was, member for Vancouver, taken the matter up in a very

vigorous and thorough manner, and induced the Government to construct the first elevator at Vancouver, which was built and completed in 1914, the same year as the Panama Canal was finished.

There was considerable opposition to the "waste of public funds" in constructing a facility which would never be used. It was christened by Mr. Stevens' opponents "Stevens' Folly" or "Stevens' White Elephant," a name which it apparently deserved for the first few years of its life, for it performed no other function than to adorn the waterfront of Vancouver Harbour; but to those possessed of vision it was a monument to the foresight of the men who arranged for it, and a beacon lighting the way to Vancouver's development as a great grain port.

Less than ten years after its construction, Stevens' "White Elephant" proved that even that much decried animal has its uses, and the Vancouver elevator broke all world records by handling a larger quantity of wheat during the year than any elevator of similar size, throughout the world, has done—either before or since.

However, this result was not attained without much tribulation and the overcoming of many difficulties. The first was the outbreak, in 1914, of the War, the great disrupter of commercial plans. There were no ships to carry grain, or anything else, from Pacific Coast ports, and the elevator stood idle. The second was the doubt thrown upon the feasibility of carrying grain in bulk through the tropics to Europe, via the Panama Canal. I have always held my own opinion of the sincerity of those doubts; I

rather think they were inspired by interests connected with the long-established movement of grain eastward via the Atlantic Coast. At any rate, the doubts were very freely, and very thoroughly, expounded and reiterated, and had a great deal of effect in preventing even trial shipments by way of the new Pacific Coast route.

It could not be supposed, however, that the men who had persuaded the Government to invest money in erecting the elevator at Vancouver would allow the matter to rest, merely on account of doubts concerning which there was very little, if any, concrete evidence of basis. "Grain shipped in bulk from the Pacific Coast via the tropics to Europe will arrive in a heated condition, and a great part of it would be spoilt," said the opponents. The Vancouver people said nothing, but got to work and induced the Government to arrange for a trial shipment. Quietly the arrangements were made, and one day, in 1917, the announcement was made that the Government would ship a total of 800,000 bushels of wheat in the holds of five of the steel steamers then being built in British Columbia for the Imperial Munitions Board. These shipments were duly made in the steamers *War Power, Alaska, War Group, War Storm and War Noble,* during the latter part of 1917 and the early months of 1918.

In order to ascertain whether there was anything in the arguments against the shipment via Panama Canal, the Government arranged to have these shipments under supervision all the time during the voyage. Chemists of the Grain Research Laboratory were stationed on each

ship. Day by day, they watched the grain and made tests of its temperature and moisture. They supervised the unloading at port of discharge. Leaving out the technical side of the matter, the result was a complete vindication of the "Western Route"—the grain arrived in England in first-class condition, and the validity of Vancouver as a port of shipment to Europe established beyond the argument or cavil of its most persistent opponents.

Two-thirds of the fight had now been won. Vancouver had secured her elevator, and had demonstrated that wheat could be safely shipped to Europe. The remaining third of the battle—and the hardest part of it—remained to be fought out: the commercial practicability of the route. Trade is very conservative. There is a strong resistance to the establishment of new methods of doing business—new ways of reaching markets. There was much money invested in grain-handling facilities on the Great Lakes and in Eastern Canada and the United States, which up to that time had handled every bushel of Canadian grain exported. The railways had made provision for handling the great movement of grain from the prairies to the eastern seaboard, and none at all for any westward movement. Their freight rate structures were moulded to fit conditions which had, up to that time, existed, and, truth to tell, they were not very much interested in the western route, for in it they saw a diminution of their revenues by reason of the rail-haul to the Pacific Coast being very much shorter than to the Atlantic Seaboard.

Thus, despite the demonstration of the practicability

of the western route, it remained commercially dormant. Many authorities in the grain trade freely voiced the opinion that grain in bulk would "never" move in any quantity from Vancouver to Europe, and many people in Vancouver believed them, for all the chances seemed against it. I remember one of the members of the Board of Grain Commissioners at that time, Mr. Jones, saying to me, "I will eat my hat if Vancouver ever ships as much as ten million bushels of wheat in any one year." Poor Mr. Jones died next year, or would have been under the necessity of consuming much indigestible headgear.

Despite the undemonstrated and somewhat tenuous commercial advantage of making bulk shipment from Vancouver, there were men who had courage and who had the vision of developing a great export movement from this port. The situation was being watched, very carefully, day by day. In December, 1920, conditions reached a point where it was just possible, with some risk, to make a shipment via Vancouver in commercial competition with the East. The moment it became feasible, men were on the spot to take advantage of it, and I think a great deal of credit is due to them for their courage and determination.

The first commercial shipment of grain, in bulk, was made in the steamer *Effingham,* which sailed January 7th, 1921, for the United Kingdom, loaded with 2048 tons of wheat, sold free on board by the Alberta Pacific Grain Company Ltd. of Calgary and shipped by Charles P. Coles of Vancouver acting as agent for Kerr, Gifford and Company and consigned to Dewar and Webb of London. So,

to divide the honour equally, it may be said that all four of these firms may justly claim to have been the pioneers of the now great export movement of grain in bulk from the Pacific Coast ports of Canada.

But behind their praiseworthy pioneering efforts stands the fact that it would have been impossible to ship bulk wheat had there been no elevator, and I repeat that to H. H. Stevens, M.P., belongs the credit for having induced the government to build the experimental elevator. It may be, in fact it is almost certain, that private capital would have seen the opportunity and would have built grain elevators, as indeed they since have; but had we waited for private capital to take the unknown risk, we would have waited long, and the movement of grain through Vancouver would certainly not have reached the proportions which it has in so short a time, had it not been for the demonstration of the route which was made by the government. A new gateway from the Prairies to the world's market was opened.

It is so easy to sit back and say that the grain movement would have started "anyhow." These commercial reversals of conditions do not occur "anyhow"; someone must fight to secure them, someone must take off his coat and work to overcome the prejudice and the inertia which prevents them. Therefore, I say, to the men who were primarily responsible for creating conditions rendering possible the beginnings of the grain movement, which has in so large measure contributed to the growth of the shipping of Vancouver during the past decade, and has

brought to our shores more steamers in a month than formerly came to us in a year; which has done more than any other commerce to bring Vancouver nearer her destiny as a great port; to these men let us render due recognition.

It is hard to discern romance in commercial affairs; but it does not take the eye of a poet to discover an underlying romance in the story of the birth and development of a commerce which now annually engages the services of 75,000 railroad box cars, five or six hundred steamers, not to speak of many hundreds of men, all within the short span of ten years. It would take an abler pen than mine to describe the untiring effort, the prejudice to overcome, the errors and blunders, the disasters and difficulties, the mountain of work which has been involved, and the number of firms who have commercially fallen by the wayside in the task.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GROWTH OF A GREAT SERVICE

"L'ETAT C'EST MOI!" Napoleon is credited with having said; "The State, it is I."

Were the Canadian Pacific Railway and its subsidiary the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company to declare, "Vancouver, it is I," they would have considerable justification, for no other single factor has contributed to anything like an equal degree as the great railroad and the great steamship service to the development of this seaport.

Like all great corporations, the C. P. R. receives its full meed of criticism and allegations of selfishness; but behind all this there is a very real and very definite sense of affection and pride in the heart of every person in the seaports of Vancouver and Victoria toward the stately vessels of the Canadian Pacific Steamships trans-Pacific line. The C. P. R. *Empresses* have done more to make the populace of the Pacific Coast of Canada "sea-minded" than all the hundreds of other fine vessels which nowadays visit the

port, and they are regarded as almost a personal possession by many a waterfront habitue.

Real "old-timers" will recall the civic holiday and poplar rejoicings which marked the arrival of the first of the *Empress* fleet in 1891. Most of today's residents remember the welcome accorded to the *Empresses of Russia, Asia, Canada* and *Japan*. But despite the great interest in the Canadian Pacific fleet, it is remarkable how few have even a sketchy knowledge of the development of this service, or of the difficulties encountered and the colossal effort that has been necessary to bring the service to its present state of efficiency.

I feel that it would leave an unfilled gap were I to omit from this book of recollections a brief outline of the history and development of the Canadian Pacific ocean service on the Pacific, and it is indeed worth while, for the service and its personnel constitute the very warp and woof of British Columbia shipping history.

Speaking first of the personnel; it is remarkable, when one stops to consider, how many ex-C. P. S. S. men are today identified with our port business, occupying important positions as steamship agents, port officials, or in other callings connected with the commerce of the sea. Considered merely as a training ground for personnel for port development and shipping, the C. P. R. services have been invaluable to Vancouver, and this public recognition will, I know, be endorsed by all who know the facts.

The Canadian Pacific railway was completed through to the coast in 1886, not to Vancouver, but to Port Moody,

then the terminus of the line, at the head of Burrard Inlet, and it was to Port Moody that the first inward cargo for the C. P. railway was brought, by the brig *W. B. Flint*, five weeks out from Yokohama, the cargo being tea for transport by the railway to Eastern Canada. This event, insignificant in itself, was the beginning of the now important and rapidly growing movement of freight into and out of Burrard Inlet, from or to inland points; cargo up to that time having been exclusively of local origin, viz., lumber cut by the local mills.

The idea of working straight through to the Orient had been determined upon by the directors of the C. P. R. even before the railroad had been completed through to the coast, and in the year following its completion the ex-Cunard liners *Abyssinia, Parthia* and *Batavia* were chartered for regular service between Vancouver and Victoria and the Orient. The *Abyssinia* was Clyde-built in 1870, an iron ship of 3,376 tons, which made 15 knots on her trials. The *Parthia* and *Batavia* were both launched in the same year, the former being similar to the *Abyssinia* and the *Batavia* being somewhat larger. There were many "doubting Thomases" at the time, opinion being freely expressed that such vessels were far too big and too expensive to operate for the business which could possibly be secured. The C. P. R. has frequently in its career been subject to such criticism, but has always been noted for its far-sightedness and daring, which in the case of the trans-Pacific service has certainly been justified by events.

True it is that the chartered vessels made several voy-

ages with barely enough freight in their holds to pay the wages of the crew, but the company stuck to their guns and maintained their sailings.

Three years later, in 1890, the company succeeded in inducing the Postmaster General of Great Britain to sign a contract, which was for a period of ten years, but has persisted until this day, with variations, to carry His Majesty's mails between Halifax or Quebec and Hong Kong by way of Vancouver, Yokohama and Shanghai. The original contract stipulated that the company should have three vessels constructed, with a speed of 17½ knots on the measured mile and a sea speed of 16 knots, to give a regular service every four weeks and allowing a specified maximum time of 684 hours from the Atlantic Coast to Hong Kong in the summer and 732 hours in the winter.

The contract provided for payment to the company of $300,000 per annum, of which the Canadian Government paid $75,000; but if the company failed to carry out the provisions as to time, they stood to lose heavy penalties, viz., $2,500 every time a Pacific steamer failed to start promptly on time and $500 for every twelve hours the ship was late at the port of arrival.

The British Government was also interested from the naval point of view, being at that time deplorably short of fast merchantmen which could be converted into auxiliary cruisers in time of war. The stipulation was thus made that the Admiralty should have the option of hiring the ships at any time they chose, at $5 per gross ton per month, and further, that the C. P. R. should employ as officers Royal Naval Reserve men as far as it possibly

could, and also that all troops going to the Orient from England should be transported at cost.

The vessels were duly constructed by the Naval Construction and Armaments Company of Barrow (later well known as Vickers'), and commenced their run in 1891. These were the first of the *Empresses*, the *Japan*, *China* and *India*, and are conceded to have been the most beautiful vessels put into the water in modern times. In appearance they were veritable yachts, having the long clipper stem and overhang counter which is now obsolete but still mourned by ship lovers. With white-painted hulls and buff-yellow funnels, they had more the appearance of a millionaire's yacht than a commercial vessel, and were always much admired by shipping men in every port.

These vessels were built to Admiralty specifications, and had all their vital parts either protected by coal or else below the water line. They were fitted with gun-mountings and could be armed and made ready for sea within 24 hours either at Vancouver or Hong Kong, where 4.7 naval guns were stored in readiness. In those days, compared with other cruisers to be found on the Pacific, these vessels would have made a good showing.

The British postal authorities need have had no fears in regard to the speed of these vessels; as soon as the *Empress of Japan*, the first of the trio to be delivered, got to her station, she made a trans-Pacific record run from Yokohama to Royal Roads (Victoria) in 9 days 19 hours 39 minutes. On her trials before delivery, she did the measured mile at 18.91 knots. In 1897, six years after com-

mencing the run, she broke the record from Vancouver to Hong Kong in 17 days, including stops, or *less by five days* than her scheduled contract time!

These three vessels maintained the trans-Pacific service with regularity, with profit to their owners and without mishap until 1911, when the *Empress of China* was wrecked on a reef some 35 miles from Yokohama, happily without loss of life or mails, in a dense fog; the Court of Enquiry finding that the fog signals on shore had failed to sound, and an unusual set of the current carried the vessel onto the reef.

The *Empress of India* was sold in 1913 to the Maharajah of Gwalior, an Indian Prince. Soon after the war broke out, he, together with several other of the Native Princes, fitted her out as a hospital ship, which they placed at the disposal of the Imperial Government, guaranteeing free maintenance. They named her the *Loyalty*, surely an appropriate name, and she did splendid service in the Mesopotamia and other campaigns where Indian troops were engaged. After the war, she was sold for operation in the Mediterranean service; but was not a success and in 1923 was sold for breaking up.

The first of the trio to be delivered was the last to remain in service, the *Empress of Japan* continuing her regular run until 1924, when she was laid up at Vancouver, and was finally disposed of to the shipbreakers. There was, however, one interesting interval in her regular service, namely, her war service as H. M. Auxiliary Cruiser. Promptly on the outbreak of war, she was taken over by the Admiralty, her guns being all ready at Hong Kong, as

stated earlier, and on August 14th, 1914, she put to sea, attached to Admiral Jerram's squadron, and did useful service on the Pacific until her release by the Admiralty in October, 1915, when she returned to her normal existence as a trans-Pacific liner. Of her war service more anon, as her story can best be told with that of other company ships which accompanied her.

Toward the close of the era of usefulness of the original *Empresses*, trade across the Pacific had grown rapidly and competition for the increasing and lucrative business became intense. The supremacy of the Canadian Pacific was endangered by the competition of 13,000-ton modern, fast vessels built to the order of a Japanese line, the Toyo Kisen Kaisha, and the little *Empresses* appeared likely to be eclipsed in the eyes of the travelling public. It has not been the policy of the C. P. R. to lag behind, and the need was met by placing orders with Fairfield's, of the Clyde, for larger and faster vessels, the *Empresses of Russia* and *Asia*, quadruple-screw vessels of 17,000 tons, 570 feet in length and capable of sustained speed of 19 knots. These vessels so far surpassed in speed, comfort and luxury any other ships on the Pacific that the supremacy of the "Chequered Flag" was unassailable, and was, in fact, not challenged for many years. The transit of the Pacific was cut down to 8 days 19 hours by the *Empress of Asia*, an average speed of 19.19 knots, and the *Empress of Russia* to 8 days 16 hours 31 minutes.

Hardly had these two new vessels got broken in than the advent of war called them to prove their usefulness in

the other capacity for which they had been designed; as auxiliary cruisers.

The *Empress of Russia* was at Vancouver when war was declared and was, on order of the Admiralty, immediately despatched with all speed to Hong Kong, where her Chinese crew was paid off; four 4.7-inch guns mounted, and a somewhat heterogeneous crew placed on board. There were a few naval ratings, several R. N. R. men, collected from a score of ships that happened to be in port, the crews of two French gunboats previously engaged in police duty on Chinese rivers, some British infantrymen, Indian sepoys, and others. Naval men say that never before has the British Naval Pennant been hoisted on a ship with such a miscellaneous crew.

The *Empress of Russia* aided in the chase of the German commerce-raider *Emden,* although she never came up with her. After the *Emden* was captured, the *Russia* took over the prisoners and conveyed them to Colombo. Joined then by her sister, the *Empress of Asia,* they proceeded to the Gulf of Aden and for over a month were the sole protection of that important coaling station, until relieved by regular war-vessels. Subsequently these two *Empresses* patrolled the trade lanes, an anxious business, when the length of the patrol is considered, the sparsity of patrol vessels and the presence in the Pacific of the fast German commerce-raiders *Moewe* and *Wolfe.* Later the *Russia* was sent round to the Atlantic to assist in convoy work and in the movement of U. S. troops.

The *Empress of Japan,* as mentioned earlier, was taken over by the Admiralty at Hong Kong on August 14th,

1914, having similar difficulty in securing a naval crew, joining with the others in patrolling the trade routes, and recaptured a British steamer manned with a prize crew from the *Emden* which was acting as a supply ship.

Another of the C. P. R. Pacific vessels engaged in war service was the *Monteagle*, which had been brought round from the Atlantic in 1906 to strengthen the cargo side of the service. In September, 1914, she was taken over as a troop transport and sent to India to embark Native troops. She was released in 1915 and returned to the Vancouver-Orient service, which at that time was entirely depleted. At the beginning of 1918 she was again requisitioned to convey Serbian troops, and again in 1919 to convey prisoners of war from Vladivostok to Europe. She was not returned to the Pacific service.

In the summer of 1920, the freight service on the Pacific was strengthened by the company steamers *Methven* and *Mattawa*, which were withdrawn when new passenger and mail steamers were added.

Despite high building costs, the company decided, in 1922, owing to the popularity of the Pacific service, to add another and larger ship, the *Empress of Canada*. An order was placed with Fairfield's, who had built the *Russia* and *Asia*, for a 22,000-ton vessel, along similar lines, but considerably larger than the earlier ships, and powered to give a sea speed of 20 knots. She arrived at Vancouver in 1923 and was accorded a royal welcome. She

knocked eight hours off the previous best record for trans-Pacific travel, making the run from Yokohama ot Royal Roads at an average speed of 19.7 knots.

These three splendid vessels are still with us, the pride of our waterfront on their regular, punctual visits, and still are admired for their trimness, their cleanliness and their record.

To round off the Pacific service and to permit the withdrawal of the last of the original small Empresses, the company decided in 1922 to purchase an additional vessel to run opposite to the *Russia, Asia* and *Canada.* A suitable vessel, in design and appearance, was found in the ex-Hamburg America steamer *Tirpitz,* which they purchased from the Reparations Commission. She was intended to have been the most luxurious of all the fine Hamburg America fleet, and had one special suite built into her, said to have been designed for the Kaiser's personal use. Some said the use he intended to make of it was to travel to his overseas dominions after the war, presumably to dominions intended to be acquired by conquest. The Fates decided otherwise, however, and the Kaiser did not occupy his luxurious suite. The *Australia* was a fitting companion to the other *Empresses,* being of 19,300 tons gross and suitable speed. She was powered with a newly-developed type of transmission, known as the Fottinger hydraulic gearing, designed to eliminate vibration entirely; the only large vessel so fitted. She never was a success on the Pacific service, her machinery giving much trouble, so much so that in 1928 the company de-

cided to send her to England and to undergo the great expense of re-engining. She has not been returned to the Pacific service, being now employed on the Atlantic.

It must not be thought that the present degree of comfort and perfection of service afforded by the Canadian Pacific *Empresses* are "matters of course"; they are the products of experience and of watchful, efficient management. It is recorded that on the maiden voyage of the *Empress of Japan* in 1891 the ice-making machine broke down in the tropics and "the grumbling was terrible," according to the Purser's report. Also there were troubles at first in securing first-rate stewards and matrons, and records of these early voyages are full of complaints of this nature. However, they were soon rectified, and a reputation was rapidly established for service to passengers first-class in every way, and from this record there has since been not the slightest deviation, as any of my readers who have crossed the Pacific in a C. P. R. liner will, I am sure, agree.

It should be noted that the first *Empress of Japan* was a notable ship in another respect; she was the first vessel to provide a "world cruise," a form of luxury travel since copied by many but unknown in 1891. Her owners, wishing to inaugurate their new trans-Pacific mail service with good publicity, and not being averse to making some money out of it, advertised that the *Empress of Japan* would take first-class passengers via the Suez Canal, India, China and Japan to Vancouver; the journey being com-

pleted by rail across Canada and Allan Line steamer to Liverpool. The novelty of circumnavigating the globe under such conditions evidently appealed, and the ship had a full passenger list; beside which the new *Empress* line received very wide publicity.

The plans of the company for a Pacific service were somewhat disturbed by the unsuitability of the Empress of Australia to run opposite the other vessels of the fleet, and the decision was made in 1928 to order a new and larger vessel to round out the service. After somewhat lengthy consideration, an order was placed with Fairfield's of Govan, on the Clyde, for a super-*Empress*, of considerably greater tonnage than any of her predecessors on the Pacific, and so far ahead of any vessels employed on the Pacific Ocean, both in speed and luxury, as to place her "*hors concours*," as the French say.

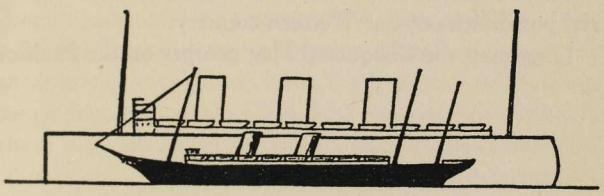
Bearing in mind the relative proportions of the passenger traffic across the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, the new *Empress of Japan* was to be as much a "super-ship" as the Empress of Britain was to be for the company's Atlantic service. The construction of these two magnificent vessels at a time when the shipping industry was in the throes of the post-war disruption, must have required a degree of courage and determination which few companies possess. Once more the Canadian Pacific has been subjected to the oft-repeated criticism that their shipping policy is over-optimistic.

"Over-optimistic" or not, the Pacific service has always been in advance of actual requirements, and in conse-

quence the way of the competitor has been hard. With their present fleet the C. P. S. S. are well ahead of any competitors, and seem likely to remain so for some time to come.

Probably the best way to judge of the great advance registered in the company's Pacific Service, is to make a comparison between the first and last vessel constructed for this service, viz., *Empress of Japan the First*, and *Empress of Japan the Second*. The first *Empress of Japan* was built in 1891 and cost one and three-quarter million dollars; the second in 1929 and cost seven and one-half million dollars. Their respective dimensions were: length 455 feet and 663 feet, breadth 51 feet and 83 feet; tons displacement 11,750 and 39,000; height of funnels above water 56 feet and 115 feet; height of masts above water 124 feet and 187 feet.

It is not easy to guage the comparative size of the two vessels by means of these dry figures, so I have made a sketch of the two *Empresses of Japan*, the one superim-



posed on the other. Even that does not indicate what a difference there was between the two vessels; only those who knew the first *Empresses* are in a position to judge of

the great advance represented by the great new *Empress of Japan;* her completeness, beauty, luxury, and above all, her commodiousness.

And so one brings to a close the narration of the Canadian Pacific Company's Pacific service and its development. Only those who have been in the fight can know the difficulties, the trials—or the satisfaction of their overcoming—which have characterised the establishment of this service and its maintenance in the forefront of public favour as the acme of comfort, safety and convenience on the Pacific Ocean; ahead of all competitors.

The inestimable advantage to Vancouver and Victoria, to Western Canada as a whole, of this venture has been incalculable. It has been said that if one remains long enough in the rotunda of the Vancouver Hotel, one will meet everyone of note in the world! While this may be an exaggeration, it is truly remarkable how many noteworthy personages and commercial magnates have travelled across the Pacific Ocean by the Canadian Pacific vessels, to learn at first-hand of the beauties and commercial possibilities of our Western country.

Long may the Chequered Flag prosper on the Pacific!

CHAPTER XIII.

BEFORE VANCOUVER EXISTED

Early Days of the Lumber Trade

WERE you to enquire of anyone engaged in the lumber trade in British Columbia "When did the export lumber trade commence in B.C.?" you would get vague answers, such as "Wasn't the Hastings Mill the first export mill? No, wait a minute, I think there were shipments from New Westminster before that."

To obtain a full and accurate reply is impossible, even from the oldest of old-timers, whose narrations vary from a candid forgetfulness to a circumstantial, but generally inaccurate, description of the "early days." A few years ago a discussion at the Club fired me with the resolve to delve into this rather important item in the commercial history of this Province. The resultant information, which I obtained from old records in the Provincial Archives at Victoria, seem of sufficient interest to piece together.

I also was fortunate enough to pick up by chance, at a second hand store, a copy of a book published in London in 1869 by one R. W. Stevens, on the "Stowage of Cargo", which happened to contain some rather quaint information about British Columbia and her shipping trade, whch I do not think has been noticed of recent years. In fact, since what he has to say about Vancouver was written long before Vancouver existed, I rather doubt whether any Vancouverite knows about it, although we all will be glad to note that even in those early days we had a good name as a sober and industrious place and an economic port for shipping.

The item to which I refer is a report of one Captain Wm. J. Looe of the ship *Chelsea* in a letter to his owners in London, dated July, 1868. The good captain said: "Having loaded last year at Puget Sound I find that my expenses (on Burrard Inlet) do not amount to one-third of what they were there, and further, the crews here are free from the temptations of the grog shop and no idlers are allowed about the place."

Thank you, Captain Looe, of the good ship *Chelsea*, for those kind words! After the lapse of over sixty years the same is true today. The only grog shops are those run by a paternal and scrupulous Provincial Government and as to idlers . . . . . .

To revert to what R. W. Stevens, in his book, has to say about British Columbia as a shipping centre. One must remember that at the time this old book was written, British Columbia was a Crown Colony, with English currency. Puget Sound was in Oregon, the State of Washing-

ton not yet having been inaugurated. Vancouver was, of course, not even thought of.

I will quote from Stevens' book, as it contains some unique references to the early days of B.C. shipping and the export of lumber:

"The products of British Columbia are coal, timber, gold, fish, fish-oil, etc. Coal is raised from the mines of Nanaimo on Vancouver shore, exactly opposite Burrard's Inlet. It answers well for steaming purposes, can be had for 30s to 35s per ton, is lighter by 10 per cent. than Welsh coal, the consumption being proportionately rapid.

"In June, July, and August, salmon abound, and can be obtained in a lesser degree all through the winter; the price of a 15-lb. salmon in the height of the season at Victoria is 1s. 6d. Cod and herring are also very numerous.

"The chief economical woods are the oak and Douglas pine or yellow fir, which is sometimes 150 feet long and can be squared 45 inches for 90 feet. It makes excellent timber, this is THE tree of the colony and is by some called Oregon red pine. It grows abundantly over the whole colony. There are sawmills on the island and two also at Burrard's Inlet on the main.

"BURRARD'S INLET is about 80 miles north of Victoria; it is a port of entry. The inlet never freezes over; when ice is formed it is not sufficiently thick to impede navigation. To supply the mills (the Hastings Mill, established 1865, and the Moody Mill, established before

that) lumbermen proceed into the forest all the year round and cut down the larger trees, which are then pared and thrown into the water, where they are taken in charge by steam tugs and towed to the mills. The specific gravity of the timber, when dry, is about the same as Memel deals, but if the lumber is cut when the timber is green it weighs heavier.

"Regarding the navigation to Burrard's Inlet, Captain S. MacLean of the barque *Barzillai*, in writing to Messrs. Friedlander and Co., San Francisco, 16th November, 1867, says: 'My passage occupied seven days to Fuca Straits and seven to Burrard's Inlet. I stopped nowhere and did not employ a steam tug or pilot. My cargo consists of 400,000 feet. The harbor is safe and inexpensive.' Captain Albert Morik of the Swedish brig *Sidon*, writing to Mr. Speyer, San Francisco, under date 16th May, 1868, says: 'The navigation up here is not worse than in many other places and it is not necessary to employ a tugboat.'

"The standard thickness of the lumber is one inch, but other thicknesses are supplied to order. T. and G. flooring is prepared, among other descriptions from 1 by 4 inch to 1 by 6 inch, under 36 feet long. Timber is sold at per mille super (i.e. 1000 superficial feet of 1 inch in thickness) equal to 83.4 feet cube. Owing to its softness and the facility of working it, this lumber commands a ready sale. Even at San Francisco, where there was an import duty of 20 per cent. in 1868, it competed successfully with lumber from the Puget Sound mills. Hundreds of vessels are employed between San Fran-

cisco and Puget Sound and Burrard's Inlet in the timber trade.

"Vessels lay alongside the wharf, where they are undisturbed by either the tides or the weather, perfectly safe. Moody has two mills, a steam and water power mill, capable of cutting 80,000 feet per 24 hours; when necessary they work night and day. Stevedores can be employed at the mills for $5 per day. Ship's crew stow the cargo under the stevedore's supervision. Lumber taken from the wharf. Spars from the water or lighter. Crab-winch or a steam engine, when on board, generally used in taking in spars. Tonnage dues 2d. per ton register in, and the same out. Pilotage $7 per foot; pilots can be had either at Victoria or English Bay. Steam-tugs, when desired, can be obtained at Victoria or Burrard's Inlet at from $300 to $400 for towage from Victoria to the mills and back to Victoria. Ballast can be thrown out in the inlet. No wharfage dues to pay.

"In May, 1868, there were in Burrard's Inlet about ten large ships, averaging 800 tons, taking in cargo for California, Peru, and Chili, and for the Sandwich Islands and Australia. Their holds filled from the ceiling to the deck beams; the odd spaces caused by the masts, etc., were occupied with the ends and slabs of the spars, which were also used for dunnage where necessary, and were ultimately sold for firewood. Most of these ships carried lumber on deck, from stem to stern, stowed flat and as high as the bulwarks, against which stanchions were fitted to receive lines so as to form

artificial bulwarks. The deck lumber was on spars opened to preserve a water-way to the scuppers. The deck-laden ships were of course very deep.

"Provisions can be obtained at Burrard's Inlet from Victoria. Fish abounds, particularly salmon, oulachan, and smelt. The water can be easily procured in boats and casks; it is supplied free of toll by iron pipes from a natural lake about half a mile distant from the steam mills. There is postal communication twic e a week between Victoria and New Westminster, and once a month by the mail steamer to San Francisco. The telegraph is extended to Victoria, Vancouver's Island, and to New Westminster, on the mainland. Currency is in the American dollar, $4.84 to the English sovereign.

"Vessels bound for Nanaimo, Sooke, Burrard's Inlet, etc., can obtain pilots or steam tugs at Royal Roads, close to Victoria. If bound to Burrard's Inlet they proceed through the Gulf to English Bay (three miles broad), a very excellent anchorage just outside Burrard's Inlet, which consists of two inlets, one inside the other, the outer one is approached by a narrow passage; the inner communicates also by a narrow passage. It is almost impossible for a stranger to navigate the two straits without a leading wind, and it is usual to employ steam tugs belonging to one of the mills, and which are generally engaged beforehand, at Royal Roads, where they frequently commence this duty.

"Ships reach Victoria and adjacent ports from the Pacific by the Straits of Juan de Fuca, which lie between the parallels of 48° 23′ and 48° 36′ N.: They are

13 miles wide at the entrance, and 40 miles long. The South side of the Straits belongs to the United States and is lighted. There is also a lighthouse on the North side at Race Rocks, 50 miles from the entrance. Ships proceed direct to Royal Roads, at the entrance of Esquimalt Harbour, where, if a vessel is bound beyond Victoria, a pilot should be obtained for navigating the narrow waters and strong currents which prevail in the Haro Canal, and the Rosario Straits, leading into the Gulf of Georgia.

"Orders for coal, lumber, etc., of the colony are executed at Victoria, by Messrs. Sproat & Co., whose correspondents in London are Anderson, Anderson & Co. It is not customary to send orders direct to the coal mines or saw mills.

"The iron ship *Vigil*, Capt. Prince Gilpin, belonging to Messrs. Potter Brothers, of Tower Buildings, Liverpool, took in 361,133 superficial feet of lumber at Burrard's Inlet, in 1869, sailed in April and discharged the same at Callao in July and August. Her port charges at Burrard were about $44 (£9), pilotage in from Victoria to Moody's Mill $7 per foot."

One should note several quite interesting points about this information given by Stevens. He mentions Race Rocks Lighthouse, situated near Victoria. This was one of the first lights constructed on the B. C. coast, and was built by the Royal Engineers, the stones for its construction being sent out from England, ready cut and each

marked with a number ready for erection. It is of Portland stone, solidly built and is as good today as the day it was erected.

The genesis of the lumber export trade on the British Columbia coast is seen in the following extract from a book published in 1865 by one Matthew Macfie "Vancouver Island and British Columbia," from which it is seen that the first export mill in B. C. was started in 1861. This is quite authentic, and seems to settle the vexed question as to the time of commencement of the B. C. Export Lumber business.

Here is the extract from Macfie's book:

"As yet, there is only one firm in the Island (Anderson & Co.) that has been engaged in the export of timber upon a scale commensurate with the importance of this trade and the inexhaustible nature of this department of our resources.. With the neighboring coast of the sister colony, Vancouver Island offers facilities for the establishment of numberless companies of this character. The house referred to had been practically conversant with the lucrative nature of the business for many years before building their own sawmills, having been accustomed to send profitable shipments of timber from Puget Sound to various foreign ports. They only commenced operations at Barclay Sound in 1861, and the extent to which they have supplied vessels with return cargoes, plainly indicates how ripe is the field for the introduction of vigorous competition.

"The shipments of lumber from Albernie, coastwise, amounted in 1863 to 1,000,000 feet, and were conveyed to Victoria in the Steamer *Thames*, and the *Albernie* and *Meg Merrilies*; the first making during the year five trips, the second eight, and the third one.

"Besides supplying the French, Spanish, and Sardinian Government Dockyards with spars, they are doing a large trade in sawn lumber for building purposes. I notice among the destinations to which they have sent this freight, Callao, Honolulu, Sydney, London, Coquimbo, Adelaide, Victoria, Shanghai, Batavia, Lima, Melbourne, Hongkong, Otago, Valparaiso, Manilla, Italy, etc.

"One or two other small firms carry on an increasing trade in lumber, but their exports are chiefly coastwise.

".... Spars from the North-American shores of the Pacific will always command a high price in Spain, France, and England, and building-lumber need not fail of being readily and profitably disposed of in Australia, New Zealand, South America, China, and eventually Japan."

It should be noted that at the time the above was written, 1865, Vancouver did not exist, not even its predecessor or fore-runner the Hastings Mill or Moody Mill, which were apparently constructed about 1867 or '68.

E. G. Alston in his "Handbook to British Columbia" published 1870, says:

"On Burrard's Inlet, near New Westminster, are two

large mills, one belonging to Messrs. Moody & Co., and the other to the B. C. & V. I. Spar, Timber and Saw Mill Co. of London, employing between them over 500 hands. The lumber is of such excellent quality as to find a market even in San Francisco, notwithstanding the heavy duty of 30 per cent. ad valorem . . .

"The majority of the cargoes are despatched to China and South America."

Thus the "British Columbia and Vancouver Island Spar, Timber and Sawmill Company of London" was the founder of the City of Vancouver, since it was around their mill at Hastings that the City grew. In the early days, of which much has been written, there was an hotel kept by an old sailor named Jack Deighton, who was famed for his improbable yarns and his propensity for talking, so much so that he was nicknamed "Gassy Jack." To such an extent did his fame spread that the locality was known as "Gastown."

It is a remarkable fact, which anyone can verify, that Gastown became the recognized and official name of the Vancouver district, and, if you want proof, I have it in my possession, in the shape of an old British Admiralty Chart, dated 1879, on which the site of Vancouver is marked as "Gastown."

In his book *The Passing of a Race,* published in 1895, by D. W. Higgins of Victoria, telling of the early days of Vancouver, relates that John Morton and Sam Brighouse, who had "settled" in what later became the West End of the City of Vancouver, secured, after the land

had been surveyed, a grant of the entire West End district, right down to English Bay, for $500; today assessed at many millions of dollars.

According to Dr. W. W. Walkem, who lived at Moodyville in the 70's, who wrote extensively of the "early days," the first export lumber mill in the province, "Stamps Mill" at Alberni, was established in 1861 (as stated by Macfie) as at result of a visit to the coast by one of the partners of Anderson & Anderson of London, England, a firm having a world-wide connection as import and export merchants. The firm had purchased large quantities of lumber from the Puget Sound Mills, and he induced his partners to enter into the lumber manufacturing business themselves and arrangements were made to erect a large mill on Barclay Sound. They appointed as manager a former shipmaster in their employ, Captain Stamp, hence the local name of the mill "Stamp's Mill." The logging contractor was one Jerry Rogers, a native of New Brunswick, who had the first camp in British Columbia of first-class axemen.

According to Dr. Walkem, Andersons decided to transfer activities to Burrard Inlet and the mill on Barclay Sound was closed down in 1867, Jerry Roger's axemen being transferred to Burrard Inlet, where they cleared the site of the Hastings Mill (B. C. and V. I. Spar, Timber and Sawmill Co.). Having finished this job, Jerry Rogers shifted his camp across to the south of English Bay, the site of which he called *Jericho,* a name it still bears. Ship spars were the principal product of this camp

and went principally to South America and Australia. The regular shipment of spars from Burrard Inlet ceased in 1881, the last being cut in Stanley Park. From 1876 to 1882, says Dr. Walkem, the two mills on Burrard Inlet turned out 190,000 to 210,000 feet of lumber every 24 hours, all of which was for export.

The early history of the lumber trade in British Columbia, particularly the export trade, is inextricably bound up with the name of Hendry, (still an important one in the industry.) John Hendry was born in New Brunswick in 1854 and was engaged in his early years in the lumber-mill business in that province. In 1872 he came to Victoria and, finding the lumber business very dull there, determined to go to Washington State, or Oregon Territory, as it then was, obtaining employment with the Washington Sawmills Company at Seabeck, Puget Sound, and the Puget Sound Sawmill Company at Port Gamble, obtaining thus an insight in lumbering and logging methods on this coast, which are radically different from those of the East.

The Moodyville Mill on Burrard Inlet was burned down in 1874, and Mr. Moody went to Washington to secure a millwright to superintend its reconstruction. John Hendry was engaged, and saw to the rebuilding of the mill and remained with Mr. Moody some time. In 1876 he formed a partnership with David McNair of Nanaimo and they operated a small sash and door factory there, but in 1878 they formed a larger partnership and established a sawmill and box factory at New West-

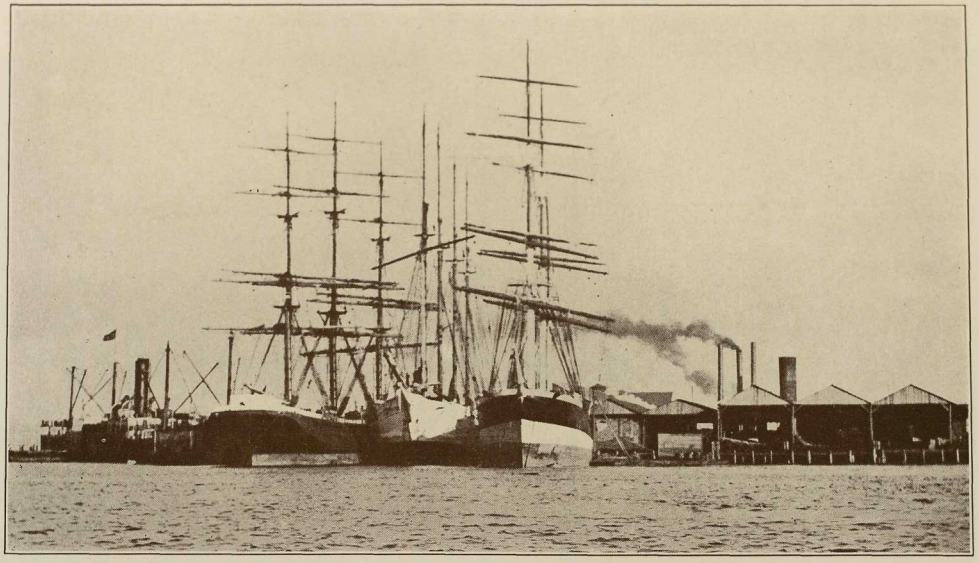
minster under the style Hendry, McNair and Company. The box end of the business prospered, owing to the demands of the fishing industry. In 1880, the business having expanded considerably, the operations were again enlarged under the style Royal City Planing Mills Ltd. They launched out extensively into the export trade, but, owing to the difficulties at the mouth of the Fraser River and the lack of proper charts, lumber ships were chary of going up the river. Mr. Hendry was successful in inducing the government to properly survey and improve the mouth of the river, and he had the satisfaction of seeing foreign ships loading at his mill for all parts of the world; being thus the *Father of the Export Trade* from the Fraser River, which has today reached great proportions.

In 1888, he conceived the idea of purchasing the Hastings Sawmills at Vancouver and negotiations with this object in view were concluded in 1889 when the two concerns were amalgamated under the name *British Columbia Mills, Timber and Trading Company Ltd.*, with John Hendry as president and manager. This mill, although, as stated earlier, not the first export lumber mill in the province, was the largest for many years, although eclipsed in size in later years. It operated until 1929, (long surviving the other *original* mill) when the site upon which it stood, right in the centre of the most valuable part of Vancouver's waterfront, became too valuable for use as a lumber mill, and it passed into the hands of the Vancouver Harbour Board, who intend later to construct a large ocean pier and warehouses on it. The Has-

tings Mill Company are reputed to have purchased the site of the mill in 1867 at a cost of about $25 per acre. The mill and yard site covers about 40 acres, so its value in 1867 was $1000. In 1929 the Harbour Board paid $2,400,000 for it.

The Hastings Mill was a real link with the early history of this province, and was in fact the germ from which Vancouver sprang. Many residents of this city remember the days when eight or ten lumber ships would be tied up at the Hastings Mill wharf, awaiting lumber cargoes; graceful, tall-masted ships, of a type long disappeared from the seas, hailing from every maritime country and carrying cargoes to all parts of the world.

With the closing of the Hastings Mill closed also a chapter in the history of British Columbia and an era in the development of shipping, a chapter and an era both more colorful, albeit less magnificent, than the modern era of industrialism on the grand scale, or the modern ships of great power and size driven by engineers and navigated by the latest contrivances of science; any one of them capable of carrying as much lumber as any ten could in the old days!



Hastings Mill, Vancouver, in 1912, when a large proportion of lumber exports was still carried in sailing vessels.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

Vancouver Harbour's Most Notorious Bridge in the World.

SHAKESPEARE immortalised the Rialto Bridge of Venice. Few civilised eyes are unfamiliar with the picture or the reality of the famous Tower Bridge of London. The great Sydney Harbour bridge has been greeted with admiration and praise all over the world.

Other famous bridges there are and have been; but none in history nor in modern times can boast any such record of achievement as our own Second Narrows Bridge.

Conceived on a false basis—the subject of court proceedings even during its construction; nurtured in acrimony; buffetted by passing ships during all its brief but spectacular career; finally pushed over into the waters which it was built only to span; and still living on as the subject of lengthy litigation, public meetings of protest, newspaper recrimination, delays, excuses and rumours,

Royal Commission of Enquiry . . . and still, two years after it was knocked over, awaiting reconstruction in order to fulfil the destiny for which such a bridge is intended—such is our Second Narrows Bridge.

The subject is a sore point to all residents of the North Shore of Burrard Inlet, so I must tread warily lest I offend ruffled susceptibilities. None the less, I propose to narrate the facts, for the plain reason that they form a real and interesting chapter in the maritime affairs of British Columbia, and their narration may perhaps assist in clarifying what is still, at the time of writing, a subject clouded in doubt and suspicion by many residents of Vancouver and the district.

To begin at the beginning: The City of North Vancouver is a populous and enterprising community on the north shore of Burrard Inlet, which is the geographical name of Vancouver Harbour. To reach the north shore from the Vancouver side of the harbour by land would necessitate a detour of some forty or fifty miles, and there is no road as the country is mountainous. The only means of crossing is thus by means of ferry across the two and one-quarter miles of water. The demand for a bridge had been insistent for many years, twenty at least. The various municipalities surrounding the harbor had combined to form a publicly-owned company for the purpose of constructing a toll-bridge across the Second Narrows, a narrow channel at the eastern end of the main harbour. To the east of the Narrows is a large body of water, on the shores of which are situated several large and important

industries, to and from which deep-sea ships are navigated; but it is not the main harbour, and the volume of ocean-going shipping is comparatively small.

The bridge company was formed in 1913 and a scheme was formulated to bring the venture to a practical conclusion. Plans were drawn and finances arranged; but the war intervened, as it did in so many other plans, and the bridge had to wait.

In 1923 the bridge company decided to make another attempt to proceed. Stock was taken of the financial situation, and it was found that it would be practicable to finance a structure of moderate cost, but that anything of a fancy nature would be too costly. As so often occurs in cases of this kind, a bridge had to be devised which would be within the price available, and the engineers were advised accordingly. The details are of no consequence in this narration; it is the result which claims our attention!

The engineers drew the plans as ordered, showing a lift-span bridge, *i.e.*, one span being provided with a counterweight and swinging on a hinge, like the lid of a box, a quite usual type of construction and perfectly proper and adequate in a bridge so situated.

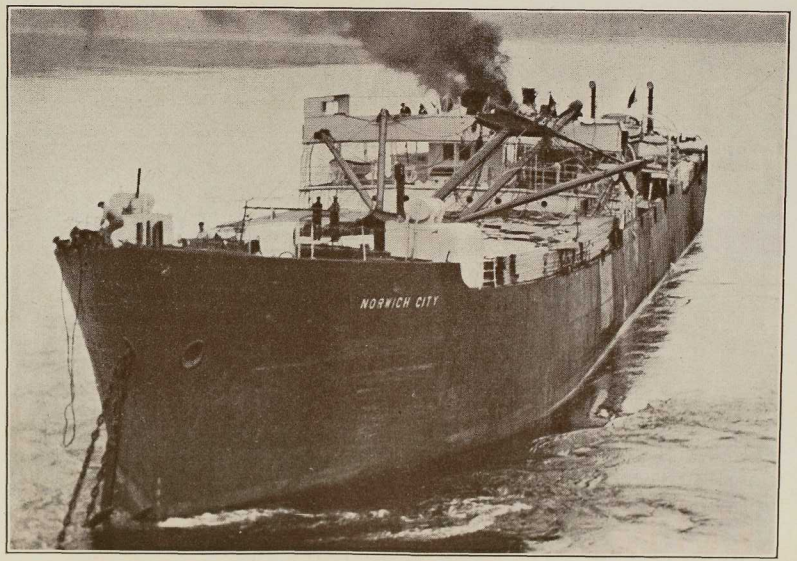
When the cost was taken into account, it was found that if the lift span were placed in the centre of the channel, that is, the channel used by all deep-sea shipping, it would be a costly matter, as the foundations would have to be of a very substantial nature, owing to the great depth of water there. So, in order to keep within the price, the lift span was designed to be at the south end of the

bridge, *i.e.*, in comparatively shallow water. Despite protests on the part of shipping men, the bridge was so built.

The basis of the protests was that navigation through the narrows was safe and practicable if a vessel could maintain a straight course up or down the centre of the channel; but that if it were necessary to make a sharp turn in order to go through a lift span situated to the south of the central channel, the rapid and uncertain currents and eddies often experiencd in the Narrows, even at slack water, *i.e.*, when the tide has ceased to run, would in all probability be productive of accidents. Where the lift span was located the current runs through in a series of circular eddies, caused by the nearness of the bank and shoaling bottom, making it almost impossible to hold a vessel on a steady course, except during slack water at the period of neap tides.

So strong was the urge and call for a bridge that these protests went unheeded and the bridge was duly completed. Then began the chapter of accidents, as predicted by the shipping men. At first the accidents were of the "near-accident" type; vessels just touched the piers, or narrowly escaped disaster by a hair'sbreadth, although three or four times the damage caused to the ship, or the bridge, or both, ran into thousands of dollars.

There was an outcry every time an accident occurred, and accusations were made that careless navigation was the cause. The absurdity of such a contention is obvious if due thought is given to the fact that the pilots were well



SS. *Norwich City*, showing damage sustained in collision with Second Narrows Bridge. Masts, derricks, funnel and chartroom carried away (1928).

aware (painfully aware, one should say) of the dangers of navigating through the bridge, and therefore adopted every precaution. Pilots many times refused point blank to take a ship through the bridge at periods other than at slack water, which was considered the safest time.

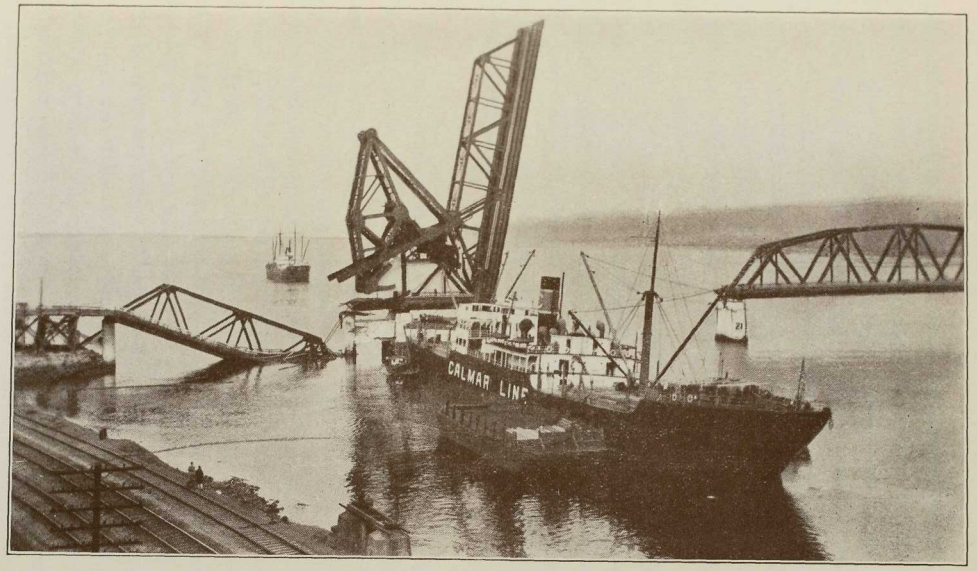
Altogether, between 1925, when the bridge was completed, and 1930, when it was knocked down, sixteen accidents were chronicled by the Harbour Master, varying from slight contacts, causing a hundred or two dollars damage, to the major accidents causing many thousands of dollars in damage to both the ship and the bridge. This does not, of course, take into account the many cases of "near-accident," some of which had within them the elements of tragedy, but luckily were averted. One in particular comes to my mind. During 1929 a tank barge was being towed outward, containing several hundred tons of concentrated sulphuric acid from the chemical works at Barnet. An eddy caused the barge to sheer and she struck a pier of the bridge with sufficient force to badly dent her sides; but with great good fortune—what good fortune will never be known—she did not spring a leak. Had she done so, the contact of the water with hundreds of tons of concentrated sulphuric acid would have resulted in an explosion which would not only have wrecked the barge, but the bridge over it, and all the passengers and automobiles on it. Not a living soul is quite sure what would happen if you suddenly ran cold water into a great bulk of sulphuric acid, or vice versa, for the simple reason that no one has had the temerity to try the experiment; but

the best chemists I have been able to question on the matter say they would hate to be within a mile when it happened.

There were, however, four smashes, in particular, when the luck did not hold so well. They were as follows: On March 10th, 1927, the steamer *Eurana,* a 10,000-ton freighter of the Isthmian Line, when approaching the bridge, took a sudden sheer to starboard, owing to an eddy of the current. Both anchors were let go and the engines put at full astern. The ship's way, combined with the pull of the current, proved too much for the anchors and the vessel collided heavily with the centre fixed span and went completely under it, carrying away her foremast, navigating bridge and house, and doing considerable damage to her funnel. The bridge also suffered much damage; but fortunately the fixed span was not dislodged from its piers. Had it been, the ship might have suffered irreparable damage as well as the bridge being destroyed. The havoc wrought on the *Eurana* was assessed in court at $77,000.

In the following year, 1928, a similar accident occurred with the Reardon Smith liner *Norwich City,* the accompanying photograph showing the damage she sustained. The *Eurana* affair was so similar that the *Norwich City* photo can do duty for both.

In 1930 the American steamer *Losmar,* of the Calmar Line, took a sudden sheer while attempting to pass through under the lift span. It was impossible to stop the ship's way and she crashed into the southernmost fixed



SS. *Losmar*, collided with Second Narrows Bridge, sustaining considerable damage to hull and knocking down the southernmost fixed span (1930). The lift span is seen open.

span and carried it away. The vessel sustained considerable damage to her bows and had to have several plates replaced. The photograph shows the *Losmar* just after she had hit the bridge. We got it by rushing a photographer out to the bridge the moment we received a telephone call that the accident had happened. It is interesting to note that on this occasion the knocked-out span was replaced in position within the short time of seven weeks, which in itself was quite a worthy feat.

The same year, 1930, in September, occurred the final smash, which resulted in the bridge being put out of commission completely, and there it has remained for the past two years. It is rumoured that shortly it is to be reconstructed, and it is to be hoped that something will be done, for the need for a bridge is very pressing.

The final crash was a spectacular one. A log-barge, the *Pacific Gatherer*, an ex-sailing vessel of steel construction and 5,000 tons gross, was being towed up the harbour by a powerful steam tug. Caught by an eddy, the barge sheered and was carried under the centre fixed span of the bridge, sticking fast, her deck being caught tight against the underside of the span. Efforts to dislodge her proved unavailing. The tide was rising, and the danger to both the ship and bridge soon became apparent. She began to lift the span and tip it. The buoyancy of the big, empty log barge was more than sufficient to lift the span bodily, and the press of the current kept her hard against the span. After an anxious hour (during which we were able to get a good photograph) the span finally toppled over

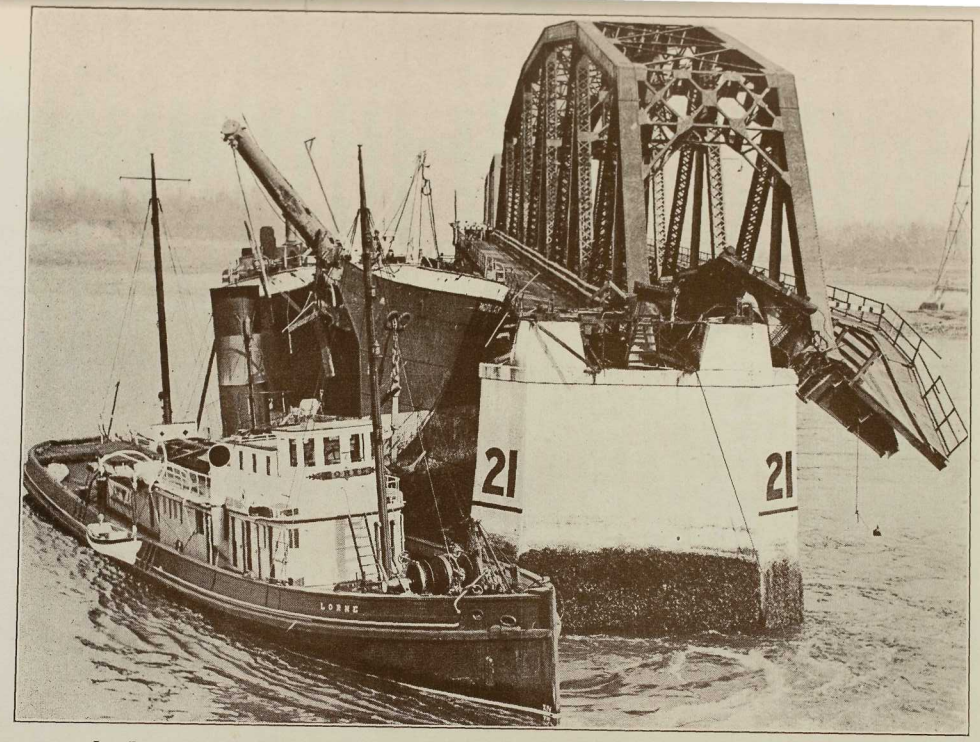
from its supports, and sank in the deep waters of the Inlet, and the bridge was "down and out" literally as well as figuratively.

The photograph (surely a unique one) shows this remarkable accident in a graphic manner; far better than any written description. Marine underwriters tell me that never before had such an accident occurred, and I can quite believe them.

Arising out of the *Eurana* affair, the Bridge Company sued the owners of the vessel for damages to the bridge, and the owners counter-claimed for damages sustained by the ship, the case going finally to the Privy Council in London. There the highest court of appeal in the Empire awarded in favour of the ship and declared the bridge to be a "public nuisance," which indeed it was. On technical grounds they also found that the bridge was there illegally, which effectually prevented any replacement of the lost span in its old position. However, at the urgent request of the people of North Vancouver, a special Act of Parliament was rushed through at Ottawa, declaring the bridge to be legal, which paved the way for replacement of the span.

In the meantime the unfortunate centre span was fished out of the waters by the Pacific Salvage Co. Ltd. under a "no cure, no pay" contract with the Bridge Company, towed to North Vancouver and set up on piles to the west of the ferry landing, for all the world to see! It it still there—it will remain there until torn to pieces, bit by bit, and sold for junk.

It is interesting to note that in the twenty-four months



Log Barge *Pacific Gatherer* in collision with Second Narrows Bridge. Photographed as the span was lifted from its piers and about to topple over (1930).

which have so far elapsed since the bridge was wrecked, *not a single accident has happened,* for the plain reason that vessels now use the centre channel, which is the normal and proper channel for navigation. This single, potent fact seems to me to be adequate proof of the contention of shipping men that the centre channel is the proper location for the lift span.

I do not know if, when, or how the Second Narrows Bridge will be repaired; but I do hope that when the job is undertaken the location of the opening span will be in its proper place, the centre. If it is not so placed we shall, no doubt, be able to secure some more very interesting photographs of vessels running into the bridge, which would be very good in its way, but, after all, the function of a bridge is to give uninterrupted transportation to traffic and not to provide photographs of marine casualties for a book of this kind!

As an example of how *not* to build a bridge across a navigable waterway, the Second Narrows Bridge is likely to stand as a shining example for all time.

No doubt the Bridge Company will take advantage of the experience gained in the stormy past and when the bridge is reconstructed, it will be provided with a lift or swing span properly placed. Then we shall hear no more of accidents to shipping.

This matter of the Second Narrows Bridge brings to mind a question I have often asked: Why is it that engineers, who devote such meticulous care and mathematical accuracy in working out the details of stresses and strains,

and exhibit such ingenuity in overcoming technical difficulties; whose work, in short, is the marvel and admiration of the layman; why is it that these same men, when designing bridges, wharves, piers and such-like structures, appear invariably to neglect completely the valuable expert knowledge of men in a position to advise them on the practical effect of their structure on the matter of navigation? Do we ever hear of the engineers calling in a hydrographer or even a plain pilot or shipmaster to give them advice (or perhaps I should say an opinion) as to the mere matter of currents, tides, eddies, or the "simple" question of handling ships?

I am pretty sure that this could never have been done in the case of the Second Narrows Bridge; or if it were done, then the opinions expressed were overridden by considerations of expediency.

Perhaps this bridge will have served a useful purpose after all, if it stands as a lesson to engineers regarding one of the prime needs in such cases!

CHAPTER XV.

A CHEQUERED CAREER

FEW vessels which have entered Vancouver Harbour have had so varied and chequered a career as the good ship *Belen-Quezada,* ex *Bowler,* ex *Zafiro,* well-known to old timers as a regular "old landmark," laid up in the boneyard home of superannuated vessels awaiting the final indignity of the ship-breaker's hammer and acetylene torch.

This battered old hulk exhibited that tenacity to life commonly attributed to members of the feline species, proving that she possessed the customary "nine lives," by once more cheating the junk-man. But I am beginning my story at the end.

Back in 1884 she was launched from the yards of Messrs. Hull Russell & Company at Aberdeen, Scotland, an iron-hulled steamer of 1600 tons net register. She was operated by her owners, Shewan Tomes & Company of Hong Kong, for several years as a China Coast trader and did good service.

Late in the 90's she passed into other hands and saw varied service tramping and coal-carrying in the East. She reached the apogee of her fame during the Spanish-American War, at Manila. It is related that her Scotch skipper-owner had a full cargo of steam-coal and with the canniness of his race contrived to be at Manila at the precise time when Admiral Dewey was short of coal. The Admiral made a very good offer which the Captain rejected. He expressed his willingness to let go of the coal and the ship as one deal and the gallant Admiral was forced to buy the ship in order to get the coal, which he needed badly.

Thus the SS. *Zafiro* became a member of the United States Navy but, being entirely unsuited for collier or any other naval use, she was sent to Bremerton Navy Yard on Puget Sound, where she lay rusting until 1909, when she was sold to be broken up. Purchased by one Goldberg of Vancouver she was towed to Vancouver Harbour and stripped of her engines, fittings and movable parts and the hulk anchored in the stream at North Vancouver, there to await breaking up at a convenient time.

This, then was the end of her career? Oh no, the old lady was destined for a continuance of her adventurous career. Came the war, and with it the great scarcity of tonnage. Give us ships! cried the Allies (and Neutrals) and everything that could float and carry cargo was pressed into service. The hulk was purchased by a Vancouver group for a mere song and a considerable sum of money was spent on her. Her hull was completely sheathed in three-inch hardwood planking; a 350 horse-

power diesel engine installed and the vessel refitted throughout. She was the subject of considerable curiosity as she lay at the builders' yards at North Vancouver and everyone speculated "What on earth are they doing to the old *Bowler*," which was the name bestowed on her by Admiral Dewey.

In her renovated condition she was sold to Japanese interests, who in turn disposed of her (at a good profit) to French buyers and so far as I can ascertain she changed hands four or five times, always at an advancing figure, such was the speculative market for shipping during those hectic days. There were difficulties, however: some of her buyers discovered that they were unable to obtain a classification, the surveyors refusing to pass her and the underwriters refusing her as a risk. Litigation ensued, to the benefit of the legal profession (as some in Vancouver will recall). Actions for commissions on sale and resale were current, but appear for the most part to have been settled out of Court.

The value of a ship may be a very fluctuating figure. This ship the *Bowler* (the name by which we Vancouver people will always affectionately remember her) cost I do not know what to build in 1884, but after many years of service it is related that Dewey paid $1,000,000 for the old ship and her cargo of coal. Goldberg paid a junk price for her to the Bremerton Navy Yard in 1909 and after stripping her sold the hull for $110 to the Vancouver syndicate who refitted her in 1916. It was reported at the time that her new owners sold her at a handsome profit, after allowing for the cost of new engines and refitting

and she changed hands again at $250,000, but was later sold at $150,000, maybe on account of the difficulties with the surveyors and underwriters. A plug of putty and a daub of paint over it does not always deceive the eagle eye of the marine surveyor!

Be that as it may, her new owners changed her name to *Belen Quezada* and her registry to Colombia and she was duly despatched from Vancouver to load a cargo of lumber at Grays Harbour. This was in September, 1919. She developed engine trouble and put into Port Angeles. Later she resumed her voyage and being leaky put into Astoria "in distress."

I lost sight of her after that and my notebook is silent on the subject until January, 1921, when I find the entry "SS. *Bowler* now MS. *Belen-Quezada* reported sold at Savannah for $26,000. Stated to be in unseaworthy condition."

Alas! she never left Savannah, the cost of putting her in repair probably being the reason, the market for ships having in the meantime slumped owing to the tremendous shipbuilding programme of all the Maritime Nations having overwhelmed the demand for ships.

The last note I have of her was her sale by the U. S. Marshal at Savannah, some time later, to defray charges. She was then junked and broken up, after nearly forty years of as varied and chequered career as any ship could wish for. If ever there was a case of "resurrection" among ships the old *Bowler* typified it.

When she left Vancouver for Grays Harbour, after her resurrection, many bets were made she would never

reach that port. But she did—after a while—and I was "out" a new hat myself. Perhaps that is one of the reasons I recollect so much about her. There are several in Vancouver who could, if they would, tell many interesting details of the hectic finance involved in her sale and resale after her resurrection and the strenuous efforts to obtain a classification. I shall only get into trouble if I delve any deeper, so I will close this story.

CHAPTER XVI.

"THE DOCK THAT FAILED"

(A Tale with a Moral)

IT SEEMS odd to include a report of a lawsuit among these tales of marine happenings of the British Columbia Coast, but as this case concerns itself with the loss of a drydock and, furthermore, is one of the most bizarre cases which has ever come before our Courts (whence it went to the Privy Council) the reason for its inclusion will be plain.

Apart from its interest to the layman and its humourous aspects (which appeal to me strongly) the case has its legal interest, which made it more or less a "cause celebre" among the Vancouver legal fraternity at the time, and it is still talked of when marine lawyers discuss B. C. cases.

It happened in 1918. The Dominion Government were constructing harbour works at Victoria, and a sub-contract had been let to Grant, Smith and Company and McDonnell Limited, a well-known firm of contractors, for work in connection with the breakwater. Their job

necessitated the construction of huge concrete caissons for the foundations. These masses of concrete were to be 30 feet high, 80 feet long and 40 feet wide and weighed 2,300 tons. To place the caissons in position, the contractors decided the most feasible way would be to build them, two at a time, on a floating drydock, the dock being then submerged to allow the caissons to float off, when the drydock would be raised and the operation recommenced.

This was in accordance with sound engineering practice and the contractors looked around for a suitable floating drydock for the purpose. There was one available at Seattle, belonging to the Seattle Construction & Drydock Company, which appeared likely to fill the requirements, and after negotiations a deal was made and the contractors leased or hired the dock for a period of two years at a monthly rental.

We need only concern ourselves with certain terms of the contract of hire which affect the case, which in plain language were as follows:

1. The contractors agreed and admitted that the drydock was fit for the work for which they proposed to use it and that it was seaworthy.

2. They undertook to insure it against marine and fire risks for $75,000.

3. They undertook to redeliver it at Seattle on completion of the lease in good condition, except for ordinary wear and tear.

Nothing very unusual so far; and the drydock was duly towed from Seattle up Puget Sound and across the Straits

to Victoria without mishap. The contractors, however, failed to insure it, (which, observe, they had undertaken to do), for some reason unexplained, but I rather suspect they found the premium a good deal higher than they expected and decided to "take a chance," a course not perhaps entirely unusual in marine matters.

All went well under a blue sky until the auspicious day in January, 1915, when the first pair of caissons was ready for launching. As a precautionary measure the contractors secured the services of the expert operator who had handled the dock for its Seattle owners.

Quite a little crowd of Victoria folk, and a few who went over specially from Vancouver, and, by the way, the Seattle owners, were interested spectators of the somewhat auspicious occasion of launching the first caissons for the great breakwater.

All went well as the drydock slowly submerged in the placid waters of Victoria Harbour. Alas! the party was spoiled. Something went wrong and it was noticed the dock was getting a decided list to port. All of a sudden, Bingo! over she went; out smashed the side and down went the drydock, "lost beyond hope of recovery" as the Court later expressed in their judgment.

It was too bad and everyone was disappointed. The contractors, however, soon completed other arrangements and the breakwater was duly constructed. But, of course, the matter did not end there: the owners of the drydock said "What about it?" and the contractors said "Well, *what* about it?" As is customary in such cases the lawyers were called in to conduct the legal autopsy on the

contractual relationship between the "party of the First Part and the party of the Second Part," and here is where the peculiarities of the transaction and the subsequent events soon became apparent.

You will remember that the contractors had undertaken to insure the dock against marine risk, but had failed to do so for reasons best known to themselves. It therefore seems logical to assume that the owners would be entitled to recover the $75,000, the agreed amount for which it was to be insured, from the contractors, since they failed to insure it.

The Seattle owners, however, decided to try for a better stake than that. They sued for $150,000 damages for loss of the dock, due to its negligent use by the lessees, or alternatively, if they could not succeed on that score, they claimed the $75,000 for breach of the covenant to insure.

Stripping the case of its legal technicalities, and not attempting to follow its tortuous course through the courts right through to the "Foot of the Throne" (*i.e.*, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council), let us see what a peculiar tangle arose.

Said the drydock owner: "You will have to pay me $150,000, for having lost my dock. I not only have lost my dock, but also the use of it and the rental you would have had to pay me for it."

"Oh, no;" replied the contractor, "the reason the accident happened, in which your dock was lost, was its utter unfitness for the work for which you leased it to me."

"I don't admit that for a moment," argued the owner. "But even if it were true, you can't make that plea, be-

cause you agreed and admitted in the contract that *it was* fit for the job, so you can't turn around now and say it wasn't." "And besides," he continued, "what about your undertaking to insure her against marine risks? You did not do so. Therefore you are at least liable to me for the agreed amount for which you should have insured her, viz. $75,000."

"You are wrong again there," argued the contractor. "The accident which caused her loss was not a 'peril of the sea' but was caused by her unfitness. It is true I did not carry out my bargain to insure her, but even if I had done so, you would not have benefitted, for the insurance company would not have paid you, so you've lost nothing on that score."

"Yes, you would seem to have the better of me there," admitted the owner. "Well, anyway, I am entitled to hold you down to your covenant to return the dock to me at the end of the contract period, in the same good order and condition as it was when I let you have it. What about it? You can't give me back my dock, and thus I am entitled to its value, viz. $150,000."

The above views were the ones substantially agreed to by the Court as correct, and in all three Courts, two in British Columbia and the Privy Council in London, the same view prevailed, *i.e.*, that the dock owner was entitled to something, but whether $150,000 or $75,000 was not quite certain. It depended how you looked at it.

Then some Solomon among the judges came to the conclusion that the value of the dock had been determined by the owner himself. It transpired that when the dock

was towed into Canadian waters, it had been necessary to declare her value for Customs purposes. The owner had made the statutory declaration that to "the best of his knowledge and belief the drydock was worth $34,500."

"Ha!" said the Privy Council (if one can imagine so august a body giving vent to such a commonplace expletive), "why argue as to the value of the drydock? You yourself have sworn that its true value was only $34,500."

"Oh yes, I know all about that," argued the owner (or his counsel), "but that of course was a mere formality: a mere declaration for Customs purposes. No one would take any notice of that."

"Oh yes they would," replied the Privy Council. "WE do, for instance."

And so they awarded him $34,500 instead of the $150,000 he asked for.

. . . . .

I said at the outset that this was a tale with a Moral. I am not quite sure what the moral is, but I think it might be:

"*Always tell the truth to the Customs man.*"

But I am very sure such an admonition is entirely unnecessary to my gentle readers.

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