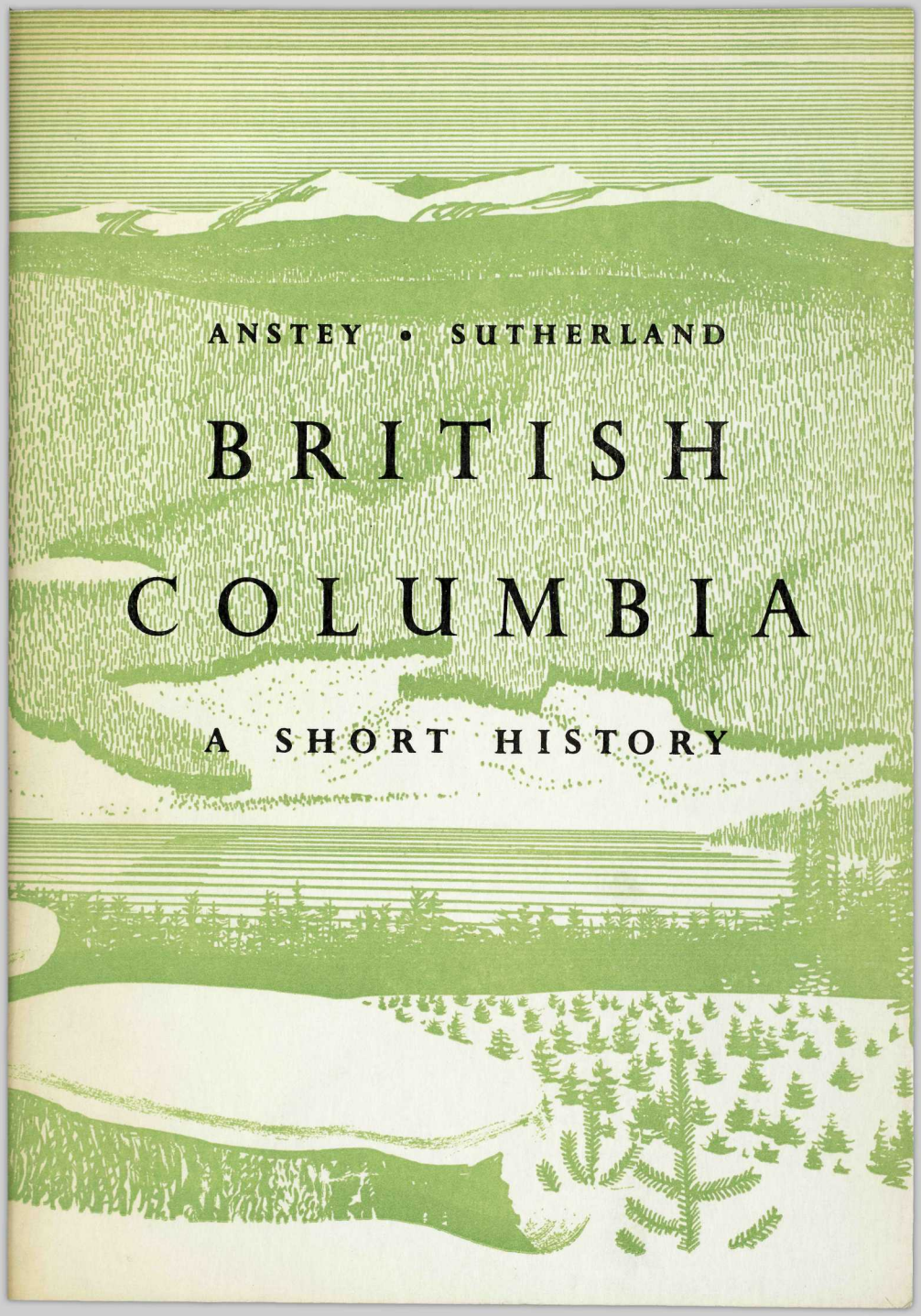

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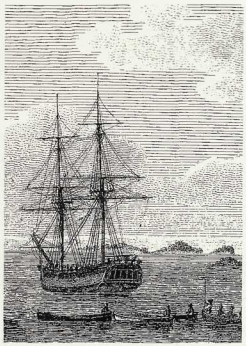

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BRITISH COLUMBIA

A SHORT HISTORY

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A SHORT HISTORY

By

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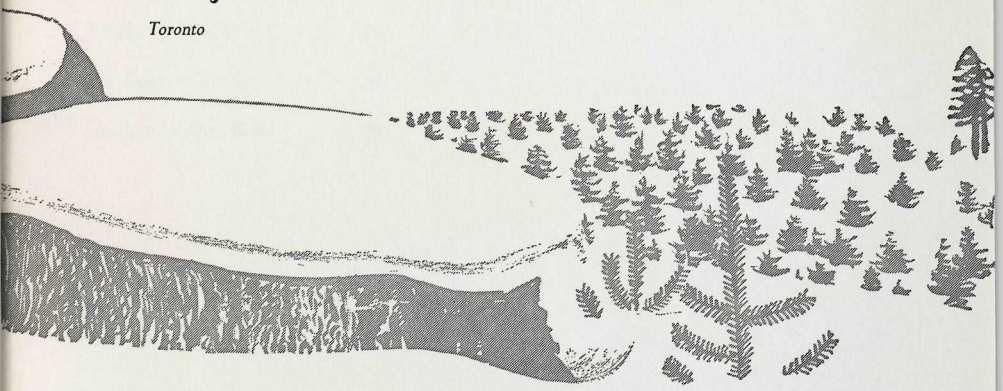

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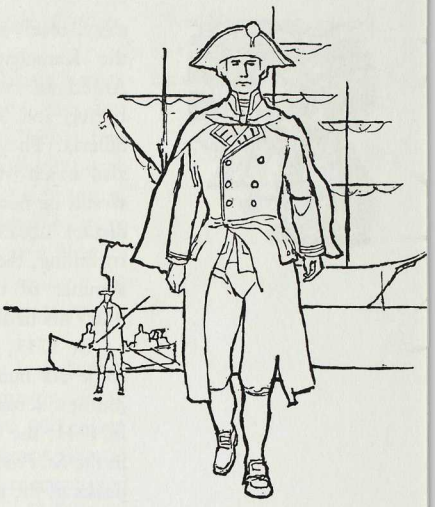


THREE NATIONS ON THE NORTH-WEST COAST

The history of the province of British Columbia is part of the pattern of events and conditions in other parts of Canada, North America, and the world. The history of this continent is largely a record of the migration of people from Europe to the New World in the period following its discovery. As part of this pattern, there came to the Pacific Northwest first the explorers, then the fur traders and miners, and finally the permanent settlers.

One of the most remarkable of world migrations was the eastward advance of the Russians across Siberia during the seventeenth century. It was during the rule of Peter the Great (1682-1725) that a group of wild border tribes, the Cossacks, pushed farther and farther east from European Russia into Siberia. But what lay beyond Siberia? Were the continents of Asia and America united?

It was to answer these questions that Vitus Bering, a bold and experienced Danish navigator in the service of the Russian

navy, received orders to explore the Siberian coastline beyond the Kamchatkan Peninsula and to ascertain "where the American coast began." Leaving St. Petersburg in 1725, Bering and his companions began their long journey across Siberia. They had to take with them not only provisions but also much of the material, metal, ropes, cordage, etc., that would be needed for the construction of a ship to explore the distant ocean. In the spring of 1728, after three years of travelling, the party reached the Kamchatkan coast, and in the summer of that year, Bering sailed through the strait that bears his name.

In 1733, a more ambitious expedition was planned, and some six hundred persons took part in the long and tedious journey across Siberia. At Okhotsk two ships were built, and in 1741, the final stage of the exploration was begun. Bering, in the *St. Peter*, sighted the Alaskan mainland and the snow-clad peaks of the mountains that border the coast. There his success ended. Before the end of the year, while sailing among the Aleutian Islands, the heroic Bering passed away, worn out by privations and disease.

These ill-fated voyages had apparently ended in disaster; and yet more had been accomplished than the mere discovery of Asia's eastern limit. Their visits to the islands had revealed to the eager explorers an almost inexhaustible supply of rich furs, and particularly of sea-otter pelts, the most highly prized of all. Far-reaching results followed, for we may even trace back to these events the fact that nearly half the coast-line bordering our province is not under Canadian control. During the next thirty or forty years, Russian settlements were established along the island chain, and they were extended to the south-east along the Alaskan coast. The fur trade was the lure that attracted these settlers, the same lure that was later to bring to the north-west coast a motley crew of adventurers from nearly every quarter of the globe. Alaska became Russian, and was later purchased by the United States. Thus the

"panhandle," stretching along the coast for hundreds of miles, is today American territory.

News travelled slowly in those days, and the Russians were in no hurry to publish abroad the good fortune that had attended their advance into the New World. When that information did leak out, it was received in some quarters with consternation. For in her occupation of Western America, Russia had to meet a formidable rival, whose pretensions were not to be ignored. That rival was Spain, who ruled over Mexico and part of Southern California. When news came of the Russian advance, Spain at once accepted the challenge to her control of the Pacific.

In the year 1769, Spain's northern advance was begun. From Southern California, San Diego and Monterrey were occupied and the Spanish frontier pushed forward 800 miles. By 1776 the Spaniards had reached the magnificent natural harbor of San Francisco Bay, and had founded there a fortified post. Thus Spain had firmly established herself in California, and she recognized no northern limit to the control she exercised there.

In 1774, to continue this policy of expansion, the Spanish authorities dispatched Juan Perez from the Mexican port of San Blas. His orders were to proceed north and examine the coast as far as the sixty-fifth degree of latitude. On this voyage he sighted the coast-line of the Queen Charlotte Islands, which he thought to be part of the mainland, and even caught glimpses of the mainland itself. In the following year, two more Spanish explorers, Heceta and Quadra, led an expedition that reached Alaska. On their return journey they sighted land near the mouth of the Columbia River, but they did not go ashore at any point in what is now British Columbia. During these voyages the Spaniards do not seem to have seen anything of the Russian intruders; but their main purpose — to show that Spain had not abandoned her claim to the coast — had been duly accomplished.

It was not from Russia, however, that the first definite challenge to Spain's authority came, but from Britain. In 1778, a British explorer, Captain James Cook, made his appearance off the west coast of Vancouver Island, where he put into Friendly Cove, Nootka, for repairs to his ships. Cook's ships were vessels of the Royal Navy, sent by the British government on a scientific expedition. His instructions were to search for a northern passage between the Pacific and Hudson Bay or the Atlantic.

On this his third great voyage of exploration, Captain Cook had sailed from England in 1776, and on his way had called at some of the South Sea Islands, Tasmania, and New Zealand. In March, 1778, he sighted the Oregon coast, and in April he arrived at Nootka. From Nootka, Cook's ships sailed north and west, following the general trend of the coast. They were in Bering Strait by August, but in latitude seventy degrees their progress was barred by the ice fields. After making a further survey of the Alaskan coast-line, Cook finally sailed south for the Sandwich Islands to spend the winter. There he met his death early in 1779.

The most significant result of Cook's visit was that it revealed to an unsuspecting world the possibility of a new and profitable business — the fur trade of the north-west coast. Years before this, the furs had attracted the attention of the Russian navigators; and when Captain Cook's men found the Indians willing to exchange their furs, and especially the sea-otter skins, for trinkets and metals, they were delighted, but not particularly excited. When, however, two years later, the ships on their homeward journey called at Canton, it was found that the Chinese merchants were eager to purchase at high prices the whole available supply.

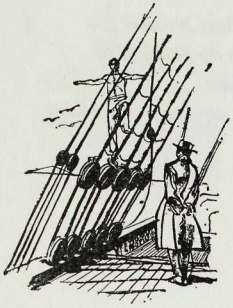
When news of so promising a trading venture became known, ships began to visit the coast with the sole purpose of procuring furs from the Indians and selling them in the Chinese market. It was this development that really brought about

the definite challenge, by Britain, of the Spanish claim to supremacy on the North-West Coast.

In 1784, Captain Cook's account of his great voyage was published, and information regarding the North Pacific became public property. The years 1785 to 1790 witnessed keen commercial rivalry, for the maritime fur trade, which was to last for the next forty years, was in full swing. Some British ships came direct from England, while others, engaged in the trade with India and China, were hurried across the Pacific to share in the profitable venture. Under the British law of that time, trade in the Pacific was a monopoly of the South Sea and East India Companies, by whom licences to trade were issued. To avoid the expense of these licences, some of the British fur traders adopted the device of sailing their ships under a foreign flag. American shipping was not hampered by these trade restrictions, and American vessels made the journey round the Horn. Prominent among the traders were such men as Captains Hanna, Barkley, Meares, Portlock, and Dixon; by their explorations our knowledge of the coast-line was further extended.

By Russian and Spaniard alike these fur-trading activities were viewed with intense annoyance. In 1789, two Spanish ships under the command of Martinez were dispatched from San Blas with instructions to go to Nootka and establish a Spanish colony. A small fort was built, and a Spanish governor was duly installed. The Spaniards then seized some English trading ships, and sent the crews of two of them as prisoners to Mexico. This high-handed action was bound to make trouble; in fact, the "Nootka Affair," as it was termed, brought matters to a crisis and raised the whole question of Spanish sovereignty on the Pacific.

The British government took a strong stand, demanding immediate satisfaction for the outrage, and the restoration of the captured vessels. Negotiations were continued while both nations prepared for war. The British government denied the Spanish claim to sovereign rights of navigation and commerce



in places she had neither controlled nor occupied. Spain's world empire had long been crumbling, and she was in no position to enforce by arms the stand she had taken. Eventually she yielded to the British contention, and a treaty was drawn up and signed —the Nootka Convention of 1790.

The Nootka Convention did not decide the question of sovereignty of the coast. It merely decided that Britain, equally with Spain, possessed rights of navigation and fishing in the Pacific Ocean, and it gave the British the right of landing for trade purposes between the areas effectively occupied by the Russians and the Spaniards respectively. Thus three nations were now assured the rights on the North-West Coast: Russia and Spain, each occupying territory, and Britain, who had successfully challenged Spain's claim to exclusive sovereignty there.

In 1791, the British government sent out Captain George Vancouver in charge of two ships, the *Discovery* and the *Chatham*. Vancouver was to visit Nootka and see that the terms of the convention were duly carried out. He was also instructed to examine the coast between the thirtieth and the sixtieth parallels of latitude for a possible communication with the east, and to ascertain what European settlements had been made there.

Sailing by way of Cape of Good Hope and Australia, Vancouver's ships were off Cape Flattery in April, 1792. There they met the American ship, *Columbia*, commanded by Captain Gray, the ship after which the great Columbia River was named when Gray discovered that river a few days later. Rounding Cape Flattery and entering the Juan de Fuca Strait, Vancouver began his minute and laborious survey of the coastline. Every channel and inlet was visited and carefully plotted on his charts, much of the work being done from the ships' boats. Puget Sound, Burrard Inlet, Howe Sound, and Jervis Inlet were all visited and explored. By threading the maze of channels to the east of Vancouver Island, Vancouver settled

the question as to whether Nootka was on the mainland or on an island. Vancouver's ships then sailed for the Sandwich Islands to spend the winter.

The summer of 1793 was occupied in surveying from Calvert Island northward. In June, Vancouver was in the vicinity of Bella Coola and Cascade Inlet, the point where Alexander Mackenzie reached salt water less than two months later. As we travel up the coast today, names of headland, island, and inlet remind us at every turn of Vancouver's exploration and his naming of these coast features for his friends. By September, the work ended. During the following year the Alaskan coast was the scene of Vancouver's activities. He then returned to England, completing the voyage round the world by the Cape Horn route.

SIXTY YEARS OF FUR TRADING

In 1792, Alexander Mackenzie, a partner in the North West Company of Montreal, was in charge of the district round Fort Chipewyan, on Lake Athabaska. Mackenzie was fired with the ambition to discover that mysterious "River of the West," by which the Pacific coast might be reached. He knew of the rich harvest of furs that was being reaped by the maritime traders, and he probably thought it possible to divert some of the profit into the coffers of his own company. He set out from Chipewyan in the fall of 1792, and spent the winter at Fort Fork, near the junction of the Smoky and the Peace Rivers. The following spring, with nine companions, he began the adventurous journey that was to end on the shores of the Western Sea.

That journey was made in a single canoe, so light that four men could carry it across the portages. They took with them a store of provisions, presents for the Indians, arms, ammunition, and baggage to the weight of more than a ton. The journey was a real adventure. The little party had not only to face the inevitable risks of river travel in an unknown mountainous

country, but they had also to encounter the native Indian tribes, who at times showed themselves anything but friendly. Accidents occurred that threatened the destruction of their canoe and the loss of its cargo. More than once Mackenzie had difficulty in reassuring his disheartened companions and in persuading them to complete the enterprise on which he had set his mind.

Mackenzie followed the Peace River and its tributary, the Parsnip; he then crossed the "carrying place" of 817 paces, and so reached a stream that communicated with the "Great River." This river, afterwards known as the Fraser, was thought by Mackenzie to be the Columbia. After descending the river for some distance, on the advice of friendly Indians he left it and followed the West Road River, sometimes called the Blackwater. Early in July, he was at the head-waters of that stream, and it became necessary to abandon the canoe and proceed on foot. The explorers reached the Bella Coola River and followed it to the head of Bentinck Arm. There they again embarked in canoes, and three days later (July 22) Mackenzie wrote on the rock the famous inscription "Alexander Mackenzie from Canada by land."

Mackenzie's journey had blazed a trail across the mountain barrier; it had opened up a route by which it was possible for the Canadian fur traders to extend their activities west of the Rockies. Reorganization of the fur trading interests, however, delayed for twelve years the exploitation of the area.

Meanwhile, developments were taking place to the south. In 1803, under the terms of the Louisiana Purchase, the United States of America took over a large area in the middle west of the continent. The American government followed up this advance by sending an expedition to the upper part of the Missouri River basin, with instructions to cross the mountains and make its way to the mouth of the Columbia. Two army men, Lewis and Clark, were appointed leaders of the party, and they reached the Columbia in the winter of 1805.

Six months before this, Simon Fraser, one of the youngest of the partners in the North West Company, had been ordered to follow Mackenzie's route into the West and open up fur-trading posts beyond the mountains. During the winter of 1805, he established Fort McLeod, on McLeod Lake, and in the next year, Fort St. James, on Stuart Lake, and Fort Fraser, at the foot of Fraser Lake. With the founding of a fourth post — Fort George, at the junction of the Nechaco and the Fraser — the company was in a position to tap the resources of this western region, now known as New Caledonia. Fraser was therefore free to engage in a project he had long had in mind — the exploration of Mackenzie's "Great River," in order to ascertain whether or not it was the Columbia. In the early summer of 1808, the party of twenty-four set out in four canoes. In July, after many difficulties, Fraser was at Musqueam, at the mouth of the river, a point which he proved by observation to be some 200 miles north of the Columbia. The river which he explored was named after him.

Fort St. James, on Stuart Lake, was now the North West Company's most important outpost; and from New Caledonia furs were being regularly dispatched to Fort William, and thence to Montreal. It remained to establish posts farther to the south, in that district west of the mountains vaguely known as *Oregon*. For this task David Thompson, one of the most capable and energetic of western explorers, was selected. In 1807, he was instructed to proceed across the mountains and open up trade.

Thompson has been called the great geographer of Western Canada. He spent more than four years exploring the Kootenay and the Columbia River country, and he established trading posts both north and south of what is now the international boundary. In 1807, after crossing the mountains by the Howse Pass (just north of the Kicking Horse Pass used by the Canadian Pacific Railway), Thompson traced the Columbia to its source, followed the Kootenay River to Kootenay Lake, and built

"Kootinae House," the first post on the Columbia. In 1811, he explored the lower Columbia to its mouth, reaching Astoria, a newly built American post, in July. On his return journey he completed his exploration of the Columbia, so that he was the first to navigate the whole course of that river.

Fraser and Thompson had now opened up the fur trade in the basins of the Fraser and Columbia Rivers, and it remained for the North West Company to develop that trade from Alaska through to California. In 1811, however, American traders had built a trading post, Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia. These traders were in the employ of the wealthy Pacific Fur Company; and they energetically prepared to extend their trade by building Fort Okanagan, on the Columbia, and Fort Kamloops, on the Thompson. This obstacle was removed when, in 1813, the Pacific Fur Company sold out to the Nor'westers, as they are called, both Fort Astoria and all their interests in that district.

The Nor'westers were now in full control of the overland trade, and an uneventful period followed the disappearance of the American competition. From Fort St. James the furs were taken by pack-train to Fort McLeod, and thence by the Pack, Parsnip, and Peace Rivers to Lake Athabaska. The route continued up the Athabaska River to the Clearwater tributary, across to the Churchill, and so to Cumberland House on the Saskatchewan. From that point, it went to Lake Winnipeg and the Winnipeg River, and thence by Rainy River to Fort William on the shore of Lake Superior. There, or at nearby Grand Portage, the traders were met by the party from Montreal, who had travelled in larger and heavier boats by way of the Ottawa River and the Great Lakes. Leaving Fort McLeod as soon as the ice broke up toward the end of April, the "water brigade" of canoes usually reached Fort William in June and was back again by early October.

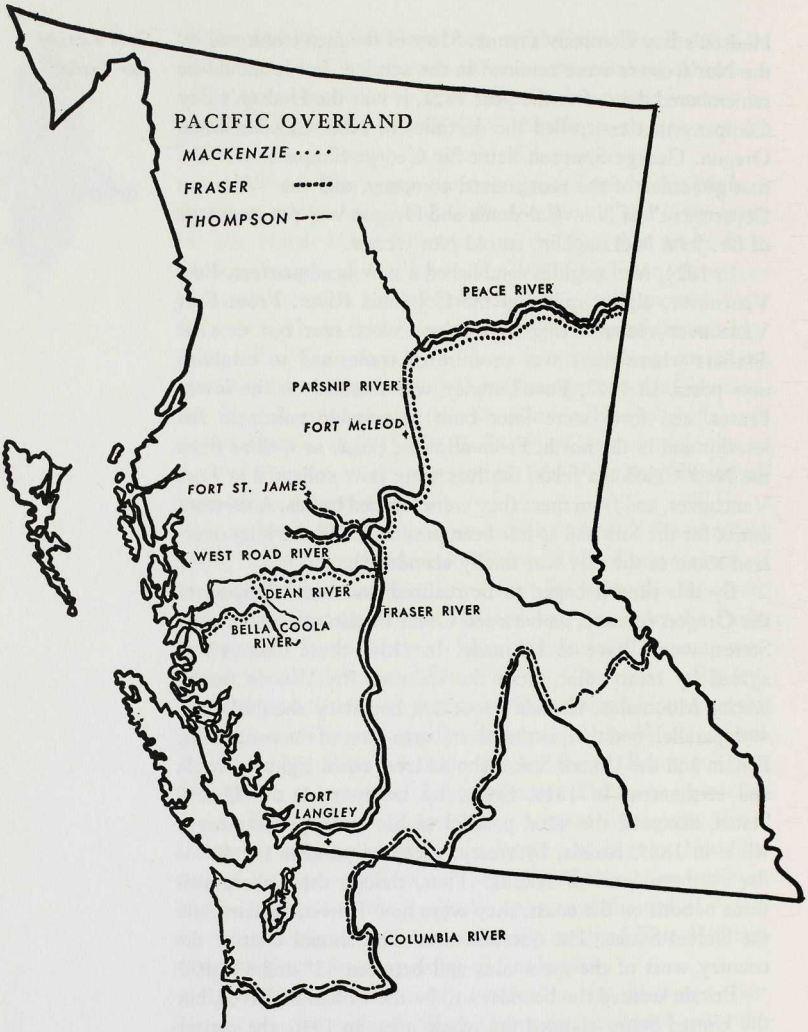
In 1821, the two rival companies, the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company, combined under the

Hudson's Bay Company's name. Most of the men employed by the Nor'westers were retained in the service; but it should be remembered that, after the year 1821, it was the Hudson's Bay Company that controlled the destinies of New Caledonia and Oregon. George Simpson, later Sir George Simpson, was the first governor of the reorganized company, and the "Western Department" of New Caledonia and Oregon was put in charge of Dr. John McLoughlin, an old Nor'wester.

In 1824, McLoughlin established a new headquarters, Fort Vancouver, eighty miles up the Columbia River. From Fort Vancouver reconnoitring expeditions were sent out to visit districts where there was promise of trade, and to establish new posts. In 1827, Fort Langley was founded on the lower Fraser, and forts were later built at suitable points in the interior and in the north. From all these posts, as well as from the New Caledonia forts, the furs were now collected at Fort Vancouver, and from there they were shipped by sea. A western outlet for the furs had at last been provided, and the long overland route to the east was finally abandoned.

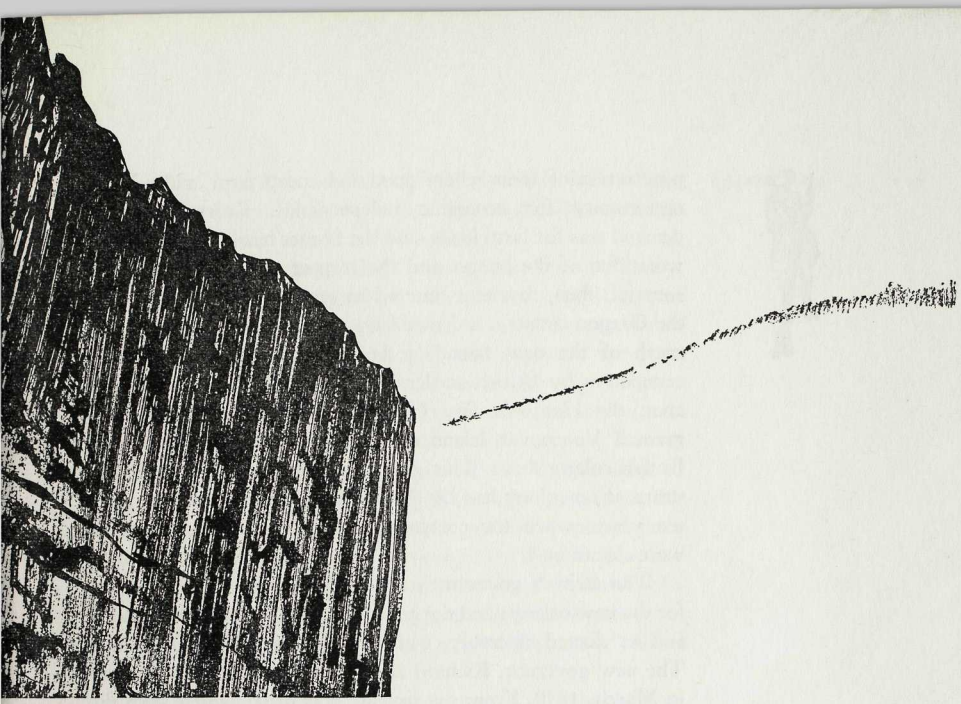
By this time it began to be realized that some division of the Oregon country, as between Great Britain and the United States, would have to be made. In 1818, these nations had agreed by treaty that, from the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains, Canada's southern boundary should be the 49th parallel; and that, in the coastal area west of the mountains, Britain and the United States should have equal rights of trade and settlement. In 1819, Spain, by treaty with the United States, accepted the 42nd parallel as her northern boundary; while in 1825, Russia, by treaty, accepted parallel 54° 40′ as the southern limit of Alaska. Thus, though there were still three nations on the coast, they were now Russia, Britain, and the United States. The question was, who should control the country west of the mountains and between 42° and 54° 40′?

Britain wanted the boundary to be the Columbia River, but the United States claimed the whole area. In 1846, the matter


PACIFIC OVERLAND
MACKENZIE
FRASER
THOMPSON
PEACE RIVER
PARSNIP RIVER
FORT McLEOD
FORT ST. JAMES
WEST ROAD RIVER
DEAN RIVER
BELLA COOLA RIVER
FRASER RIVER
FORT LANGLEY
COLUMBIA RIVER

was settled by the Oregon Treaty, which drew the line of division along the 49th parallel "to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island, and then southerly through the middle of the said channel, and of Fuca's Straits, to the Pacific Ocean."

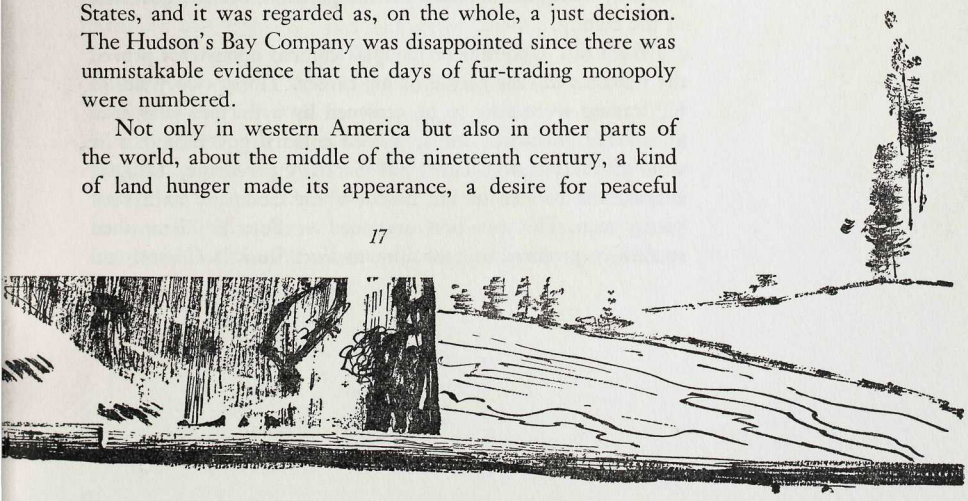
Long before the Oregon Treaty was signed, the Hudson's Bay Company realized that the Columbia River might not be accepted as the international boundary. In 1842, therefore, McLoughlin commissioned James Douglas, his second in command, to select a site for new headquarters well within British territory. After careful search, Douglas chose "Port Camosun" at the south end of Vancouver Island, and Fort Victoria was built there the following year. Later, Fort Vancouver and all the other posts to the south of the 49th parallel were sold to the Americans, and the brigade trail from Fort Vancouver through the Okanagan Valley was abandoned. When the treaty was signed, Dr. McLoughlin retired from the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. A committee headed by James Douglas, took charge of the company's business on the west coast. In 1849, the Hudson's Bay Company's headquarters was removed to Fort Victoria.



COLONIAL DAYS

The Boundary Treaty of 1846 made about equal division of the territory in dispute between Britain and the United States, and it was regarded as, on the whole, a just decision. The Hudson's Bay Company was disappointed since there was unmistakable evidence that the days of fur-trading monopoly were numbered.

Not only in western America but also in other parts of the world, about the middle of the nineteenth century, a kind of land hunger made its appearance, a desire for peaceful



penetration of areas where good and cheap farm land offered opportunity for economic independence. Everywhere the demand was for farm lands, and the farmer has been termed the worst foe of the hunter and the trapper. It is no matter for surprise, then, that at a time when settlers were pouring into the Oregon country, a demand was put forward that the lands north of the new boundary be similarly thrown open for occupation by British settlers. In view of its interest in this area, the Hudson's Bay Company, in January, 1849, was granted Vancouver Island upon condition that it establish a British colony there. This grant might be cancelled after five years, if no colony had by that time been established; or after ten years, when the company's exclusive trading privileges were due to end.

The British government decided to appoint a governor for the new colony; and the governor, with a nominated council and an elected assembly, was to make laws for the country. The new governor, Richard Blanshard, reached Fort Victoria in March, 1850. From the first he was disappointed with the conditions he found there. There was little administrative work to be done; for the whole population consisted of the Hudson's Bay Company's servants and employees, and the real ruler of the country was James Douglas, the company's superintendent. Blanshard therefore returned to England in 1851; and shortly after his departure, James Douglas, the company's original nominee for the position, became governor of the colony.

With this appointment Douglas entered upon what proved the most significant period of his career. Thirty-two years of fur trading were now to be crowned by a thirteen-year span as colonial governor; and it was as colonial governor that he won distinction and fame. Of Scottish parentage, Douglas entered the service of the North West Company as a very young man. He was first stationed at Fort William; then successive promotions took him to Fort Ile à la Crosse, and

afterwards, in 1825, to Fort McLeod under Chief-trader William Connolly. There he began his remarkable experience in New Caledonia and British Columbia.

In 1830, Douglas joined Dr. McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver as accountant, and after five years he received a well-deserved promotion to the rank of chief trader. Douglas established new forts, superintended the trade, and inspected the posts once a year; he also improved the system of keeping accounts. His energy and experience brought further promotion; and in 1840, Douglas became chief factor, a high dignity for one so young. During the anxious years of the Oregon dispute, Douglas proved himself McLoughlin's right-hand man. He was entrusted with the important responsibility of selecting the site for a new company headquarters north of the disputed territory. In view of a record of such varied and successful experience, it is not surprising that James Douglas was honored with the high office of governor of the Vancouver Island colony.

The position that Douglas now occupied was not without its difficulties. He was called upon to serve two masters. As governor, he owed allegiance to the British government, which had appointed him; as head of the Western Department of the Hudson's Bay Company, he was charged with serving the interests of that great commercial concern. This double responsibility must be understood if we are to estimate at its true value the success that attended his efforts. He faced a situation that called for tact and statesmanship.

In making the grant of Vancouver Island to the Hudson's Bay Company, the British government hoped to secure the establishment there of a flourishing British colony. This appeared all the more desirable because California had recently passed under the control of the United States, thereby greatly strengthening American power on the Pacific. When Douglas became governor, the whole population of Vancouver Island numbered less than 200, nearly all connected with the company.

By 1853, the white population numbered about 450 at Nanaimo, and 25 at Fort Rupert.

Governor Douglas set to work to rule the country with the aid of a council of three members. At first there was little public business to transact. The only revenue was that obtained from liquor licences. At the opening meeting, in 1852, a proposal to collect customs duties was objected to, since "there not being above twenty settlers in the whole Island, the sum arising . . . would not much exceed the expense of the officers necessary for its collection." The next year, a motion was carried to erect a schoolhouse at Victoria. The council appointed magistrates; and in 1853, it established a Court of Common Pleas with David Cameron as judge. Timber licences, education, and in 1856, electoral districts and voters' qualifications for the election of an assembly were discussed and provided for.

The population of the Island was slowly increasing, and the settlement around Fort Victoria was growing into a little town. Coal had been discovered in the northern district, near Fort Rupert, as early as 1836, and by 1852 the richer coal seams near Nanaimo were being worked. Year by year, Governor Douglas forwarded to the Colonial Office reports on conditions in the colony and described the progress that was being made. In 1856, he received from the British government specific instructions to arrange without delay for representative government; and in the same year, a representative assembly of seven members was elected.

But Douglas had other duties to attend to at this time. As chief factor, he was in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's mainland trade west of the mountains. When Fort Victoria became the headquarters of the western district, a reorganization of the fur-trade routes had to be made. Fort Langley became the chief depot on the mainland, and to Fort Langley came the ships with trading goods and supplies from Victoria. The supplies were then carried up-stream in *bateaux* to a new

post, Fort Hope, close to the mountains. From Hope "land brigades" of pack-horses travelled up the pass through which the Coquihalla River flows on its way from the Cascades, and from the high land they made their way eastward into the Kootenay country and north to Kamloops. Kamloops was the shipping point for the Thompson country and also for the New Caledonia posts, the latter being reached by pack-train to Fort Alexandria, on the Fraser, and thence by the river route northward. These posts were the only settlements in the territory. In the mainland forests the Indians, undisturbed, continued to hunt and bring their furs to the trading posts.

Great changes, however, were soon to occur. In the spring of 1858, a Hudson's Bay Company ship carried the news to San Francisco that gold had been discovered on the mainland. News of the find was spread abroad, and startling results followed. From every quarter crowds of adventurers hastened to the scene of action. Miners came from California, settlers hurried from Oregon and Vancouver Island, and many travelled from points even more distant. Some followed the overland route by the Columbia and Okanagan Rivers to Kamloops; a few made the voyage direct to the mouth of the Fraser; but the greatest number came from San Francisco by way of Victoria. The summer of 1858 saw 20,000 or more at work on the sand-bars. The Fraser gold rush was at its height, and, as was to be expected, Fort Victoria gained from the invasion. Land values jumped; wharves, stores, and hotels were quickly built; and a prosperous little city appeared.

Douglas saw that the arrival on the mainland of these hosts of gold-seekers called for prompt and decisive action, although it was not certain that his authority extended to the mainland. He therefore took steps to maintain British authority and keep order. He required all miners to take out licences, and he at first forbade the importation of goods except by the company or with its permission. All doubt as to the status of the mainland territory was removed, when a new colony, known as British

Columbia, was established by the British Government in 1858. Douglas now became governor of British Columbia, as well as of Vancouver Island, though the two colonies were to remain entirely separate. He was, however, required to sever all connection with the Hudson's Bay Company. A small military force of Royal Engineers was sent from England to aid in survey work and to help maintain law and order. The strong stand Douglas took in controlling the inrush of population and the equally strong stand taken by Judge Begbie in maintaining law and order in the mining districts resulted in an amazingly law-abiding gold rush. Few mining countries can show a better record.

At Fort Langley on November 19, 1858, Governor Douglas was installed in office, and the colony of British Columbia celebrated its birthday. In the presence of about a hundred persons, Governor Douglas of Vancouver Island read the royal commission appointing Matthew Baillie Begbie judge of British Columbia, and Begbie in turn read the commission appointing James Douglas governor. The new governor of British Columbia then read the official proclamation of the colony, and also a proclamation revoking the Hudson's Bay Company's grant of exclusive trade west of the mountains. On the following day, Douglas and his party left for Victoria.

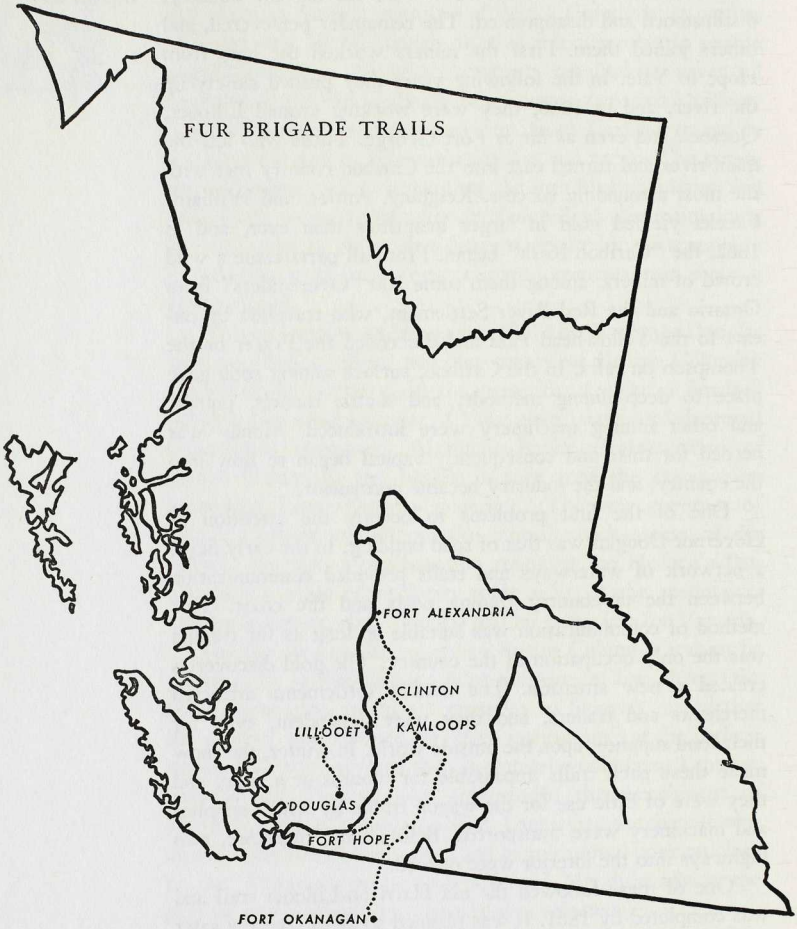
For the present the colony of British Columbia was to be governed by proclamations having the force of law, though the home authorities, in their despatches to Douglas, urged that the country was destined for "free institutions" at the earliest moment. It was expected that the capital would be at Langley, but Colonel Moody, who commanded the detachment of Royal Engineers, considered Fort Langley unsuitable. It was on the south bank of the river, and in an exposed position close to the American border. On Colonel Moody's advice the present site of New Westminster was selected.

The "gold colony" of British Columbia was now safely launched; and yet, before the close of 1858, numbers of those

who had taken part in the rush were leaving the country, disillusioned and disappointed. The remainder persevered, and others joined them. First the miners worked the bars from Hope to Yale. In the following years they pushed slowly up the river, and in 1860, they were working around Lillooet, Quesnel, and even as far as Fort George. Those who left the main river and turned east into the Cariboo country met with the most astounding success. Keighley, Antler, and Williams Creeks yielded gold in larger quantities than ever, and in 1862, the "Cariboo Rush" began. From all parts came a wild crowd of miners, among them some 200 "Overlanders" from Ontario and the Red River Settlement, who travelled by ox-cart to the Yellowhead Pass and descended the Fraser or the Thompson on rafts. In the Cariboo, surface mining soon gave place to deep-mining methods; and shafts, tunnels, pumps, and other mining machinery were introduced. Money was needed for this; and consequently capital began to flow into the country, and the industry became permanent.

One of the first problems to occupy the attention of Governor Douglas was that of road building. In the early days, a network of waterways and trails provided communication between the up-country trading posts and the coast. This method of communication was suitable so long as fur trading was the only occupation of the country. The gold discoveries created a new situation. The mining settlements attracted merchants and traders, and they were dependent, even for their food supplies, upon the outside world. In winter, the snow made these pack trails impassable for months at a time, and they were of little use for the wagon traffic by which supplies and machinery were transported. Before long, therefore, two highways into the interior were opened.

One of these followed the old Harrison-Lillooet trail and was completed by 1861. It was planned so as to secure a safer route to the gold fields above Yale than was provided by the old trail through the Fraser Canyon. The second highway, the

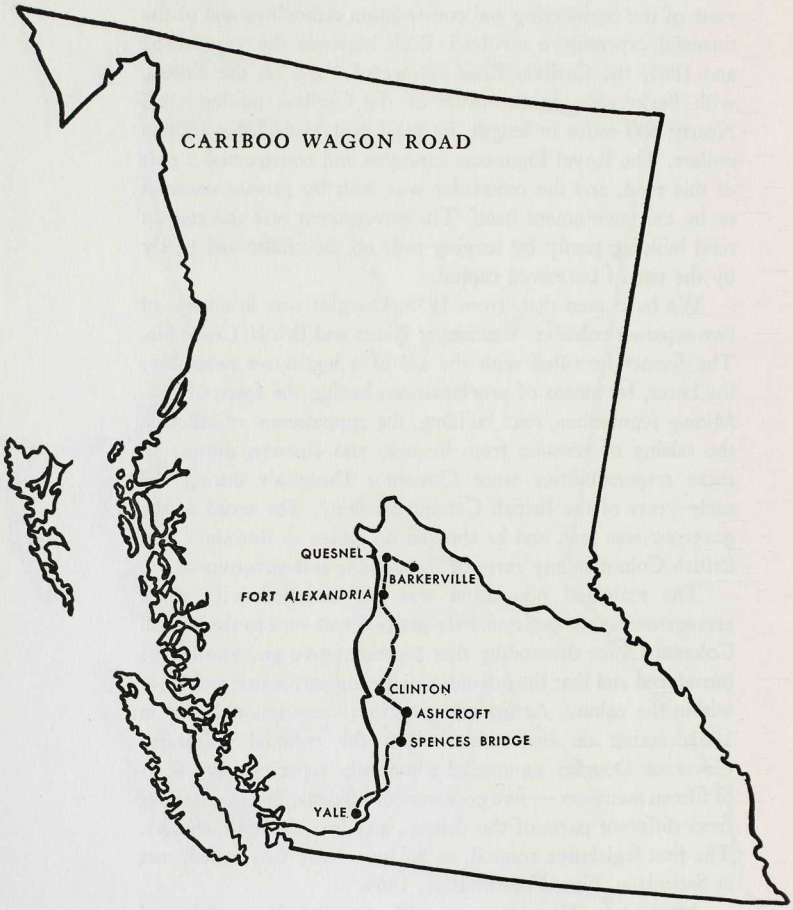

FUR BRIGADE TRAILS
FORT ALEXANDRIA
CLINTON
LILLOOET
KAMLOOPS
DOUGLAS
FORT HOPE
FORT OKANAGAN

famous Cariboo wagon road, was a remarkable achievement in view of the engineering and construction difficulties and of the financial expenditure involved. Built between the years 1862 and 1865, the Cariboo Road connected Yale, on the Fraser, with Barkerville, in the heart of the Cariboo mining area. Nearly 400 miles in length, its total cost exceeded a million dollars. The Royal Engineers surveyed and constructed a part of this road, and the remainder was built by private contract or by the government itself. The government met the cost of road building partly by levying tolls on the traffic and partly by the use of borrowed capital.

We have seen that, from 1858, Douglas was in charge of two separate colonies, Vancouver Island and British Columbia. The former he ruled with the aid of a legislative assembly; the latter, by means of proclamations having the force of law. Mining regulations, road building, the appointment of officials, the raising of revenue from licences and customs duties, all these responsibilities were Governor Douglas's during the early years of the British Columbia colony. The word of the governor was law, and he showed no desire to introduce into British Columbia any form of responsible self-government.

The mainland population was not satisfied with these arrangements, and petition after petition was sent to the British Colonial Office demanding that representative government be introduced and that the governor make his permanent residence within the colony. At first the petitions were ignored; but in 1863, acting on instructions from the colonial secretary, Governor Douglas summoned a partially representative body of fifteen members — five government officials, five magistrates from different parts of the colony, and five elected members. The first legislative council, as the new body was called, met at Sapperton, New Westminster, 1864.

Meanwhile Victoria was still growing in wealth and importance. In 1858, for example, money was voted for streets, water supply, and schools. Douglas built himself a house near


CARIBOO WAGON ROAD
QUESNEL
BARKERVILLE
FORT ALEXANDRIA
CLINTON
ASHCROFT
SPENCES BRIDGE
YALE

James Bay, and parliament buildings were erected on the site where the new ones stand today. In 1862, Victoria was incorporated as a city. There were 1500 buildings there. Many houses were erected to provide for the increasing trade with the mainland; churches, hospitals, banks, and theatres made their appearance in the flourishing little city. The Island, no less than the mainland, had gained from the increase of population resulting from the gold excitement.

The Vancouver Island legislature — council and assembly — met from time to time, but the minutes show that there was little public business to transact. An entry in the council minutes of 1859, however, reports "long and anxious discussion" of the American invasion of the San Juan Islands. Reference is here made to the disputed sea-boundary off the south-east coast of Vancouver Island. At Victoria's front door lay the San Juan group of islands. Under the terms of the Oregon Boundary Treaty, were these islands British or American territory? Excitement rose in Vancouver Island, and a conflict seemed imminent when 500 American troops were encamped on the islands, and five British warships with 2000 fighting men lay at anchor in the offing. Not until 1872 was a final decision reached by an arbitration which gave the islands to the Americans.

In 1863, Governor Douglas decided to retire into private life. His five-year term of office was almost ended, and the British authorities had arranged for separate governors for island and mainland. Douglas was now sixty years old and had well earned a few years of rest and relaxation. From the British government he received the honor of knighthood and became Sir James Douglas, K.C.B., a fitting reward for valuable services to colony and empire. After a year's travel in Europe, Douglas returned to his home in Victoria, where he died in 1877.

The retirement of James Douglas involved the making of two appointments: Arthur Kennedy became governor of

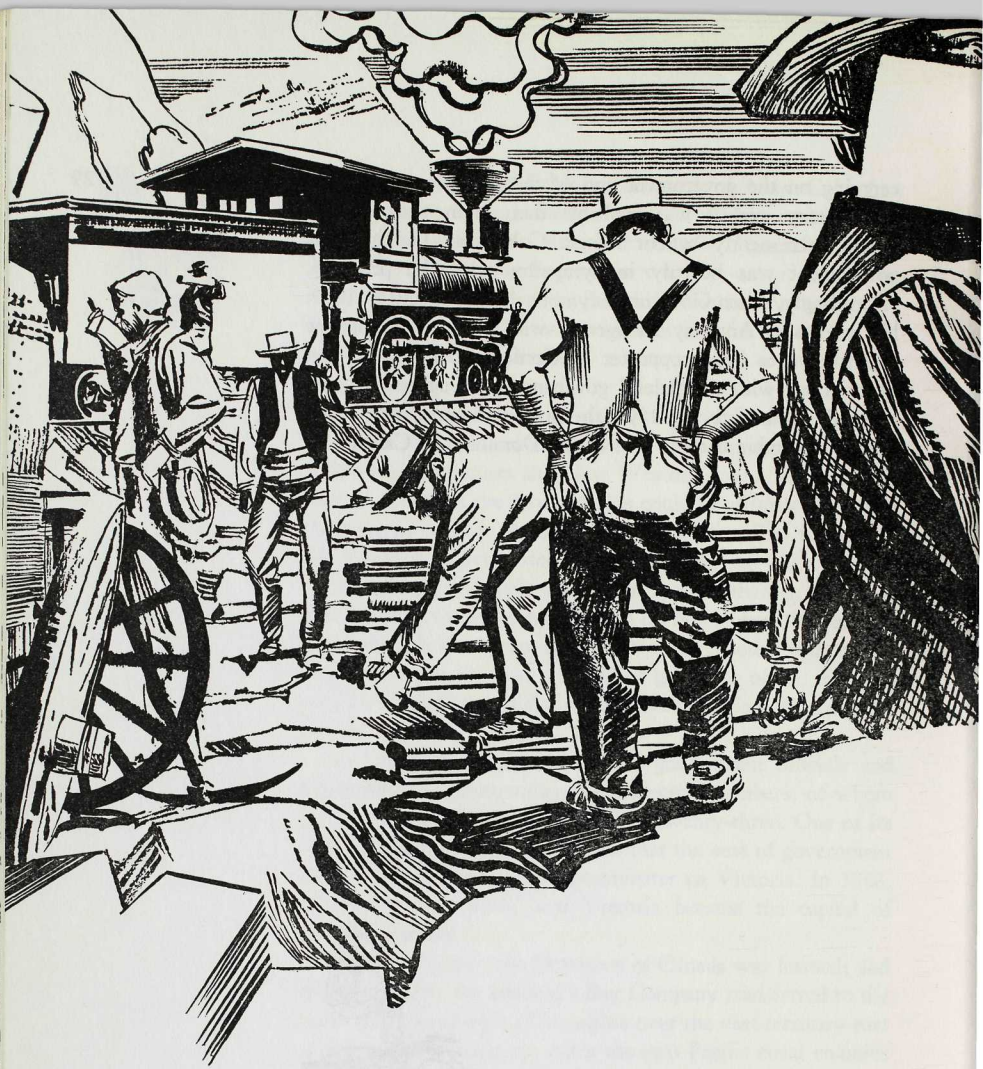
Vancouver Island, and Frederick Seymour of British Columbia. Each of the newly appointed governors was instructed to report on the advisability of uniting the colonies. Kennedy's report was unfavorable, but Seymour's was non-committal, as he could not see any benefit to British Columbia from union. On the other hand, the British authorities had for some time felt convinced that for imperial reasons union was desirable. Moreover, the prosperity of the Island depended on the mainland mining industry, and this prosperity was endangered when the mainland colony prepared to encourage direct trade between foreign ports and New Westminster. A total population of 12,000 in the two colonies could ill afford two sets of government officials. In both colonies business was falling off, and a period of depression was beginning.

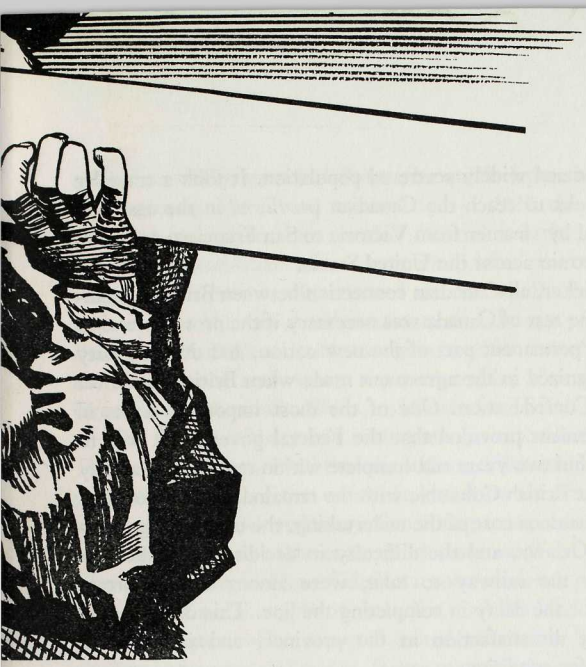
In 1866, the British government passed the act by which the two colonies were united, and on November 19th of that year, the royal proclamation was read enacting the union. Governor Seymour was retained as governor of the enlarged colony, and the first legislative council met in New Westminster in 1867.

In the new legislative council, government officials and magistrates still outnumbered the elected members, of whom there were only nine in a council of twenty-three. One of its earliest acts was to pass a motion that the seat of government be transferred from New Westminster to Victoria. In 1868, the change was made, and Victoria became the capital of British Columbia.

On July 1, 1867, the Dominion of Canada was formed; and two years later, the Hudson's Bay Company transferred to the Dominion government all its rights over the vast territory east of the Rocky Mountains. After the two Pacific coast colonies had joined forces, it was but another step in the same direction for them to enter Confederation. The union of island and mainland only partially solved the difficulties that had made that union advisable. The population was small; expenses of

carrying on the government and of meeting the public debt were heavy, and it was probable that union with Canada would permanently benefit British Columbia. The imperial government was heartily in sympathy with the proposal. Accordingly, when Governor Seymour died suddenly in 1869, his successor, Anthony Musgrave, was selected because he was known to be a supporter of Confederation. After long negotiations with the federal government, an agreement was reached; and on July 20, 1871, the union was proclaimed, and British Columbia became part of the Dominion of Canada.





BRITISH COLUMBIA

1871 - 1918

The British Columbia that became Canada's fifth province in 1871 differed greatly from the province that we know today. Its population was only 36,000, and the majority of these people were dependent on the declining gold rush for their living. Gold mining was still the main occupation, but many unlucky miners were moving into the occupations which were later to be responsible for the province's tremendous growth. Communications were in a primitive state; only the stage coach, the wagon, the pack train, and the steamboat connected

the sparse and widely scattered population. It took a traveller three weeks to reach the Canadian provinces in the east. He journeyed by steamer from Victoria to San Francisco and from there by train across the United States.

A quicker, all-Canadian connection between British Columbia and the rest of Canada was necessary if the province was to remain a permanent part of the new nation, and this necessity was recognized in the agreement made when British Columbia entered Confederation. One of the most important terms in this agreement provided that the Federal government was to begin within two years and complete within ten years a railway to connect British Columbia with the remainder of the country. The tremendous cost of the undertaking, the change of government at Ottawa, and the difficulty in deciding upon the best route for the railway to take, were among the important reasons for the delay in completing the line. This delay caused increasing dissatisfaction in the province, and even led to demands for secession.

While the people of the province waited impatiently for the railroad to be completed, they laid the foundations of what are now British Columbia's basic industries. A start was made in forestry, fishing, and manufacturing; mining grew intermittently, and farming slowly expanded.

British Columbia's forest industry had its origin in 1778, when Captain Cook replaced rotting masts on his ship with Douglas fir cut on Vancouver Island. Later, the early maritime fur traders occasionally took loads of spars with their cargoes of furs to China. Aside from the timber cut and used in the construction of the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies' fur-trading posts, it was not until a mill was constructed at Esquimalt in 1848 that the permanent development of sawmilling began. A mill was built at Fort Yale in 1858, and in 1863 the first of many mills was constructed on Burrard Inlet. Until 1880, poor and irregular transportation and the lack of developed markets kept the industry in a precarious position,

subject to sudden growth followed by quick depression. With the beginning of railroad construction in 1880 the industry expanded, as lumber was needed for railroad ties, bridges, and other necessities of construction. After the railway's completion, a new market existed on the rapidly developing prairies. The industry doubled its output in the ten years from 1884 to 1894, and had doubled it again by 1900. British Columbia lumber was now being exported to the United States, Great Britain, Australia, China, and Central and South America.

The fishing industry had its beginnings in the distant past. The early explorers found that the Indians of British Columbia, particularly those of the coast, depended on salmon as their main source of food, and that a flourishing trade in fish existed between the Indians of the coast and the interior of the province. The fur traders in New Caledonia soon replaced pemmican with salmon as the staple of their diet, and the Hudson's Bay Company occasionally exported salted salmon in barrels to markets as far away as London. It was not until the introduction of the tin can that the fishing industry became more than a side operation of the fur trade. The first cannery in the province was built at Annieville, near New Westminster, in 1870, and in the next few years many others were constructed. The canning industry encountered many difficulties in its early years, and was for a considerable time a hazardous business for those engaged in it. Some smaller concerns failed because their operators knew very little about the techniques of the business, and others because too many canneries tried to operate for the size of the catch. In the period after 1900, many improved techniques were introduced, such as the automatic fish cleaner, soldering machines, and can-making machines, which tended to make the industry more stable, although the expense of installing them resulted in a decline in the number of canneries operating. Markets also expanded in this period as British Columbia salmon were exported to many parts of the world. These fish were caught with the seine net, the gill net, and the

troll, of which all are still in use. Sometimes salmon traps were erected on rivers, and some salmon were "gaffed" or speared. Both of these techniques have been outlawed for a considerable time, as they prevented too many fish from reaching the spawning grounds, and their use would eventually have ended the salmon runs. Steam vessels were used extensively for seining, while most of the trolling and gill-net fishing was done in small vessels mounted with a sail or rowed by the fishermen.

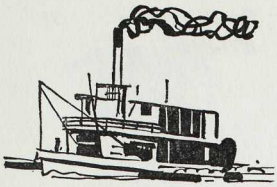
Agriculture had an early beginning in the province as a result of the fur trade. The North West Company and later the Hudson's Bay Company established farms near their posts to supply the needs of the traders. The largest of these establishments was in the area around Victoria, where the Hudson's Bay Company had farms both on the southern tip of Vancouver Island and on the adjacent Gulf Islands. In June, 1859, for example, the company had, on San Juan Island alone, 4500 sheep, 40 head of cattle, 35 horses, and 40 hogs. The gold rush gave impetus to farming because of the sudden and great demand for food, and the high prices prevailing in the digging areas. The beginning of the cattle ranching in the Cariboo dates from 1862, when large ranches were established. Many unsuccessful miners were attracted to the fertile lands of the Fraser Valley. Settlers arrived at Maple Ridge in 1860, Mission in 1861, Chilliwack in 1862, Sardis in 1863, and Cloverdale in 1875. In the province's interior, the Okanagan settlement began in the 1860's with the establishment of large cattle ranches. After the arrival of the railroad, in the 1890's, the opening up of new markets, and improvement in irrigation techniques, the Okanagan Valley began to change from cattle ranching to tree-fruit and vegetable growing. Then the mining boom invaded the Kootenays in the 1880's, agriculture followed, both as a supplier of the needs of the large mining population and as an alternative occupation for the men who had unsuccessfully followed the boom. Settlement in the north central portions of the province followed the completion of the Grand

Trunk Pacific Railway and the building of a large section of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway. The last area opened for agriculture was the Peace River district, which saw the arrival of significant groups of settlers in the period just prior to and during the First World War.

Although mining was the industry that had given the province its earliest rapid expansion, and remained, until just before the First World War, the province's main industry, its relative importance declined during this period. Coal was the mineral first mined in the province. Mining was begun at the northern end of Vancouver Island in 1835, and then, more regularly and on a larger scale, when the Hudson's Bay Company opened the Nanaimo fields in 1851. Gold was the main metal mined in the province in the period before the First World War. All the gold mined during the gold rush and until the arrival of the railroads was placer mined, because this method required little or no machinery. Lode mining of gold became important in the period after 1893, and by 1914 accounted for nine-tenths of the total $5,000,000 worth of gold production.

The discovery of a deposit of silver-lead at Ainsworth on Kootenay Lake in the 1880's opened a new mining area. Kootenay mining was actually begun with the staking of Toad Mountain, near Nelson, which was soon followed by the discovery of deposits on Trail Creek and the opening of Lily May mine. The Trail finds immediately led to discoveries in the Rossland area. In the early 1890's a sudden and large demand for silver in the United States encouraged silver mining in the Slocan district. In 1891, the Boundary area began producing copper at Phoenix and Greenwood.

The coming of the railroads encouraged mining by providing a reasonably cheap method of transporting ore from the mines to the smelters. The building at the smelters in turn resulted in the opening of the coal mines in the Fernie area to provide fuel both for them and for the railroads.



Despite this growth, however, mining in the period before the First World War was relatively less important to the province than agriculture, fishing, forestry, and manufacturing. Out of a total population in 1871 of 36,000 people, 2500, or one person in every fourteen, were miners; but by 1911, when the total population was 392,000, only 10,500 persons, or one in every thirty-seven, were miners.

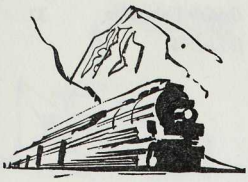
The key to all economic, social, and political development in British Columbia was transportation. The wagon roads, the pack trails, the disconnected steamboat routes which had been constructed in haste during the gold rush period were inadeate in a province which wanted to develop permanent occupations for her people and to decrease the dependence of workers on a single fluctuating industry. The people of the province were anxious for British Columbia to develop and grow as rapidly as possible, and they quickly grasped the fact that regular, permanent, and relatively inexpensive transportation was a necessity if such development were to take place. During the nineteenth century, before the invention of the automobile and the aeroplane, the only form of land transportation that fulfilled this need was the railroad. The people and the government of the province, therefore, became increasingly restive in the years after British Columbia's entry into Confederation, when little was done to implement the federal government's promise to build a railroad from eastern Canada to the Pacific coast. In 1878, Premier Walkem and his supporters were elected and formed a government under the slogans of "Fight Ottawa" and "Secession"; and in the same year, the Legislature passed a resolution which virtually threatened that the province would withdraw from Confederation if immediate action on the railroad was not taken.

A change of feeling took place when Sir John A. Macdonald and the Conservatives returned to power in Ottawa late in 1878. The federal government moved quickly, and, in 1879, completed the surveys for the route of the railroad. In June,

1880, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company was formed to complete the transcontinental connection by 1891. The company took over the sections already built by the government and agreed to complete the railway in exchange for $25,000,000 and 25,000,000 acres of land. The work was rapidly undertaken, and an army of workers rushed to complete the line. In British Columbia, thousands of workmen were employed in the construction, and it was estimated that on the twenty-nine mile section between Emory's Bar and Lytton alone, there were 9000 men at work in 1882 and 1883. The builders encountered so many difficulties that H. J. Cambie, one of the engineers, reported that "no such mountain work had ever been attempted in Canada before, and we were confronted by new problems almost every day. There was heavy loss of life through the canyons, where all of the work was in rock, and a great many men were drowned."

The Canadian Pacific Railway followed a southerly route through the province, proceeding from Port Moody, on Burrard Inlet, through the Fraser Valley on the north side of the river, up the Fraser Canyon, up the Thompson River to Shuswap Lake, through the Monashee Mountains by Eagle Pass, through the Selkirk Mountains by Rogers Pass, and through the Rocky Mountains by Kicking Horse Pass. Construction proceeded much faster than had been originally anticipated, and the parties working east from Winnipeg met those working west from Port Moody at Craigellachie, near Revelstoke, in the autumn of 1885. There Donald A. Smith, later Lord Strathcona, president of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, drove the last spike on November 7, 1885. The first train from Montreal to the Pacific Ocean reached the coast on June 28, 1886. The northwest passage, which so many men had sought by sea, was at last completed by land, and Canada's western province was physically joined with the rest of the nation.

The railroad was soon extended from Port Moody to Vancouver, or Granville, as it was then called, when Port



Moody was found to be unsuitable for a great seaport. The "branch" line from Port Moody to Vancouver was completed quickly, and the first train rolled into Vancouver in May, 1887. The arrival of the railroad resulted in an amazingly quick growth for the city, which soon became the largest in the province. The railroad's arrival also stimulated growth and settlement in many other parts of the province and encouraged rapid expansion of its industries.

After the building of the Canadian Pacific, the vast majority of the people of the province lived in its southern parts. There was a fringe of settlement along the railroad and its southern branches, another fringe along the Cariboo Road, and a fairly dense settlement in the southern end of Vancouver Island. It appeared obvious to both the federal and provincial governments that, if further settlement in the central and northern sections of the west was desired, the rail network would have to be expanded. In 1903, in an effort to bring about further settlement, the Canadian government brought forth the scheme for a second transcontinental railway, the Grand Trunk Pacific, with Prince Rupert as its western terminus. The British Columbia section of the railway was built between 1912 and 1915. The road followed a route which opened up for settlement the fertile lands of the Bulkley and Nechako valleys. In a further effort to expand settlement, Premier McBride of British Columbia entered into an agreement with the Canadian Northern Railway Company to construct another line through British Columbia, although this line closely paralleled the route of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Construction began in the province in 1910, and the first train arrived at the Vancouver terminus in 1915.

Both the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern faced considerable financial difficulties during the First World War, and they were finally taken over by the federal government and made into the Canadian National Railway system in 1918 and 1919.

In the years after 1890, many other railroad companies were chartered by the provincial government, but the only one of real significance was the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, which was originally intended to run from North Vancouver to Prince George to connect with the Grand Trunk Pacific. Construction was completed, however, only on the section between Squamish and Quesnel and on the line from North Vancouver to Horseshoe Bay. Railroad expansion was not always successful and in the case of the Pacific Great Eastern was often expensive to the province. It did, however, fulfil its main purpose in encouraging settlement in many pioneer areas of the province, and later proved to be essential to the development of British Columbia.

British Columbia's political development in the period after 1871 can be divided into two distinct phases. From 1871 to 1903, political parties existed only in the federal field, and the provincial government was composed of groupings of members around certain leaders in the provincial legislature. British Columbia's first premier was John Foster McCreight, who laid the foundations of the provincial government by passing all the fundamental legislation made necessary by the province's entry into Canada. He was succeeded by Amor de Cosmos, one of the province's most colorful premiers, who had distinguished himself in the battle for union with Canada and for responsible government within the province. This initial period was not a very stable one in provincial politics. The province had sixteen changes of premier in the thirty-three-year period from 1871 to 1903. In contrast, during the fifty-three-year period from 1903 to 1957 there have been only ten premiers. The weakness of governments of the period before 1903 can be attributed to the fact that the loyalty from back-bencher and cabinet member to the premier was purely a personal loyalty, subject to personal rivalries and to a great variety of opinions on the issues of the day. Another factor that helped to make government unstable was the existence of great rivalry between

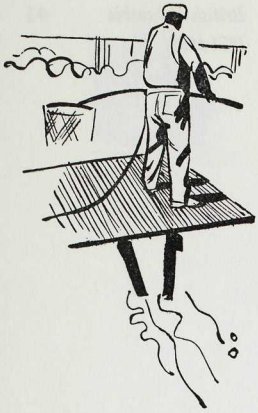
the members from Vancouver Island and those from the mainland. This rivalry was lessened to a great extent in 1894, when the government of Premier Theodore Davie ended the long-standing agreement that there should be only one more seat for the mainland than for Vancouver Island and established new constituencies based on population.

The instability of personal government was amply demonstrated in the five-year period from 1898 to 1903. During these years, British Columbia had five premiers; the longest government, that of Premier James Dunsmuir, lasted just over two years, and the shortest, that of Premier Joseph Martin, only three and a half months. A solution to this problem was proposed by Richard McBride, a young member who had been elected to the Legislature in 1898 and who had soon emerged as one of its leaders. McBride proposed the introduction of party politics into the province, and implemented his aim in June, 1903, when, at the age of thirty-three, he became premier of British Columbia's first Conservative government. This change brought relative stability to the province's politics for the first time in many years, and this is testified by the fact that the government of Sir Richard McBride and his Conservative successor lasted from 1903 to the end of 1916, McBride himself being premier for over twelve years. The introduction of the Conservative party also brought its federal rival, the Liberal party, into the province. The Liberals did not form a government until 1916, when H. C. Brewster defeated the Conservative government of W. J. Bowser, McBride's successor.

British Columbia has always had a diverse and cosmopolitan population, drawn from many parts of the world. The first settlers, the fur traders, were mainly British, with the Scots predominating, although there were a number of French-Canadians and half-breeds in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company. The gold rush attracted adventurers from many countries, but the majority were Americans from California and the eastern United States. With the gold seekers, a small

number of eastern Canadians arrived, as well as the first members of British Columbia's Chinese community. The building of the Canadian Pacific Railway resulted in another wave of immigration, first as labor in the railroad construction, and later as settlers in the newly opened lands. These settlers arrived from eastern Canada, Great Britain, and continental Europe, and the railway building itself attracted additional Chinese labor. In the last decade of the nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth, a number of land settlement projects, financed mainly by private companies, were organized to bring groups of settlers to the province and settle them on large acreages to develop the basic services, such as irrigation and diking, on a co-operative basis. Most of these pre-war schemes failed as a result of a combination of circumstances. Some, like Walhachin, near Ashcroft failed because most of the men enlisted in the army at the beginning of the war. Others, like Seymour Arm, on Shuswap Lake, suffered from inaccessibility and the unsuitable nature of the land for the crops planted. Two of the most successful projects were the small Norwegian settlement begun at Bella Coola in 1894, and the Doukhobor settlements in the Kootenay district begun in 1908, though the latter had financial difficulties in the 1930's. The decade immediately prior to the war also saw the arrival of British Columbia's East Indians and Japanese. Most of the successful immigrants to the province before the war, however, came from eastern Canada, the British Isles, or continental Europe, and came individually to work at jobs to which they felt that they were suited.

Two events outside the province had a very important effect on its growth. The first of these events was the Klondike gold rush in Alaska and the Yukon Territory in 1898. The business of supplying and transporting the miners fell mainly to shippers in Seattle, but a large part of the volume passed through Canadian ports, particularly Vancouver. The Klondike gold rush also provided the stimulant needed for the final



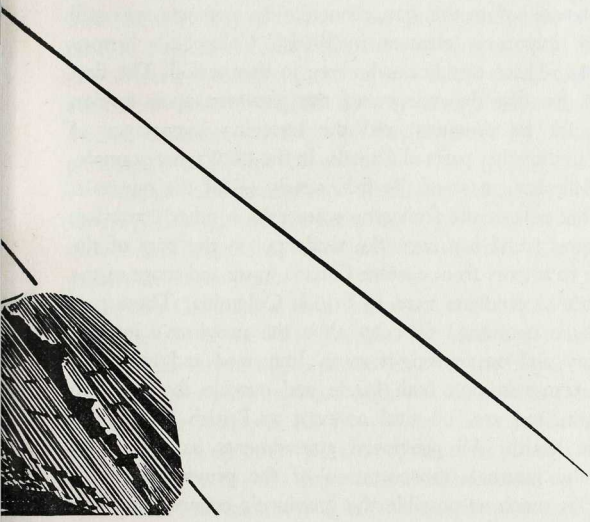
settlement of the boundary of British Columbia and Alaska. The settlement, made by a tribunal of American and British "jurists of repute," awarded the disputed territory to the United States. The second of these outside events was the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914, which provided for the first time a relatively quick and inexpensive sea route to the markets of Europe. While the war prevented the development of normal trade through the canal, its completion gave added stimulus to the seaports of British Columbia, and eventually resulted not only in increasing British Columbia's exports to Britain and Europe, but also in drawing to the Pacific coast ports for shipment overseas some of the exports of the Prairie Provinces.

The public school system of the province was first organized by Premier McCreight's government in 1872. Before this time, all education had been by private schools, which had charged fees for tuition. The first high school in the province was opened in Victoria in 1876; and New Westminster, Nanaimo, and Vancouver all had high schools by 1890. Higher education had its start in 1899 when Vancouver High School affiliated with McGill University; and Victoria High School did the same thing in 1902. The University Act was passed by the Legislature in 1908, and the first Convocation of the University of British Columbia was held in 1912. Since that time all higher education in the province has been under the University's direction.

The many churches in British Columbia have played their part in the history of the province. The first mission in the province was conducted by Spanish Roman Catholics at Nootka in the eighteenth century; and in 1841, there were Roman Catholic missionaries in the Fraser Valley. The Church of England had a chaplain to the Hudson's Bay Company post at Victoria in 1849, and in 1857 established its first Indian mission at Metlakatla. Two Methodist clergymen arrived in Victoria in 1859, and the first Presbyterian minister arrived

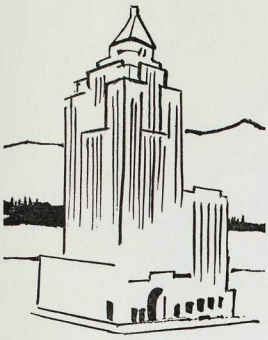
in 1861, with a second going to New Westminster in 1862. From the early 1860's a Jewish synagogue existed in Victoria. The first Baptist church in the province was dedicated in Victoria in 1877. The churches in British Columbia entered two distinct branches of church work — the first, ministering to congregations of settlers, and the second, attempting to convert the Indians to Christianity. Many other denominations followed the pioneer churches into one or both of these fields.

In 1914, when Canada entered the First World War, the people of British Columbia wholeheartedly supported the Canadian war effort. The war stimulated the province's growth, as lumber, fish, farm products, and minerals were needed to support army and civilian workers and the war industries. Thousands of men enlisted in the army and navy, and others made their contribution through war work. British Columbia's men distinguished themselves in many of the battles in which the Canadian services participated, and brought honor to themselves, their regiments, and their province.



BRITISH COLUMBIA AFTER 1918

The period from 1918 to the present has been a time of uneven growth for British Columbia. For the first eleven years, the province, while relatively prosperous, had many difficulties; and agriculture, particularly, was subject to widespread depression. The ten years from 1929 to 1939, a period of severe depression and unemployment in all industries and occupations, were perhaps the most difficult in the province's history. In contrast to these two rather bleak periods, the years after the Second World War have undoubtedly been the



most prosperous in our history, a time of unparalleled growth and development in all phases of the province's activities.

As it was before the war, economic development was still the most important element in British Columbia's history after 1918. Three trends can be seen in this period. The first was the growing dependence of the province upon foreign markets for its products, and the lessening importance of markets in the other parts of Canada. In the 1930's, for example, half the lumber, most of the fish, nearly all of the minerals, and a large part of the fruit crop were sold in other countries. The second trend has been the tendency on the part of the province to import from eastern Canada more and more of the manufactured products used in British Columbia. These two trends have continued to keep alive the province's interest in railway and ocean freight rates. Improved and relatively cheaper transportation both inside and outside the province have been, and are, of vital concern to British Columbia's economic health. All provincial governments have tried to expand the internal transportation of the province, and to improve as much as possible the province's connections with the rest of the world. For example, Premier "Honest John" Oliver sought the reduction of the freight rate on grain from the Prairies to British Columbia in order to encourage grain shipments through the province's ports. He also tried to obtain the removal of the "mountain differential" rates for freight between the province and the rest of Canada. Although Premier Oliver was successful in having the grain rates reduced, it was not until 1949 that the differential was removed. The third economic trend of this period has been the tendency on the part of the province to process more and more of her raw materials in British Columbia rather than to export them for finishing by an importing country; and home manufacturing has resulted in large industrial growth in the province.

Two important limitations to the economic growth of the province have been the currency problems of many countries

and the political problems of the Far East. The currency problem or "dollar shortage" of non-dollar countries has prevented them from buying as many of our products as they want and need to buy. In the Far East, the period since 1931 has been one of wars, revolutions, and other political changes, and these events and their aftermaths have severely restricted the long-desired expansion of the trans-Pacific trade of Canada, and particularly of British Columbia.

Despite hindrances and depression, British Columbia's forestry, fishing, mining, agriculture, and manufacturing have grown and expanded, and have transformed the province greatly in recent years.

British Columbia's most important resource in the period from the end of the First World War until the present time has been the forests of the province, with this industry accounting for an ever-growing share of British Columbia's production. In 1938, for example, the forests and forest products of the province made up thirty per cent of the total production in the province. By 1951, this dependence had increased to forty per cent, and it has risen even higher in succeeding years. The most important part of the timber industry has been sawmilling, which is still the most important single industry in the province, producing over half of the total Canadian production of sawn timber. However, in recent years the tendency has been to utilize the trees more completely than in the past, and out of this trend has grown the pulp and paper industry, and the production of plywoods and veneers. There has also been an increased tendency to finish the product in the province, rather than to export logs or rough timber for finishing in the importing area. Next to the actual logging of the trees and to sawmilling, the most important part of the forest industry is that of the production of pulp and paper. This industry had its beginnings in the period before the First World War, but it was not until during and after the war that any significant production was attempted. By 1945, there were three pulp

mills, three pulp and paper mills, and one paper mill in operation in the province, producing $35,000,000 worth of pulp and paper. This amount had increased to almost $160,000,000 by 1954, when there were twelve mills operating.

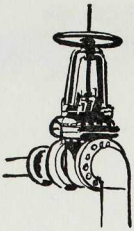
In 1948, British Columbia introduced the forest management licence, a form of long term lease designed to provide for more efficient utilization and management of the forests, and to preserve this resource for the future. The companies that are given these licences are expected to operate the forest lands in their charge as a form of tree "farm." When one area of trees has been "harvested," it must be left so that it will seed itself, or it must be actually replanted by the company. In logging areas not controlled by the licences, the British Columbia Forest Service ensures that forest crops will continue by carefully controlling the cutting, and by the planting of seedlings.

The fishing industry felt the depression of the 1930's severely, but it has grown steadily since then. The main problem has been one of conservation. In early years, fishermen and canners considered the salmon runs inexhaustible. This, sadly, proved not to be the case, and in the decade before the First War, over-fishing resulted in a depletion of the runs. The problem of conservation of the sockeye salmon, the most important fish caught in British Columbia waters, was complicated by the fact that international co-operation between Canada and the United States was necessary if any effective measures were to be adopted. The largest sockeye "runs" spawn in the Fraser River and its tributaries but, on their way to the mouth of the Fraser, pass through American waters, where large numbers are caught by American fishermen. Negotiations between Canada and the United States were begun as early as 1892, and for many years discussions were carried on; but it was not until 1937 that the International Fisheries Commission was established to regulate the sockeye fisheries. The Commission immediately began long term study

projects of the sockeye fisheries to work towards more efficient use of this resource. One of the Commission's projects was the building of fishladders around Hell's Gate in the Fraser Canyon, where, in 1913, a slide caused by the construction of the Canadian Northern Railway had made it extremely difficult for the fish to proceed further up the river. The ladders were completed in 1945, and since that time the runs have improved. Canada has attempted to have other forms of salmon fishing come under the control of the International Commission, and was successful in December, 1956, in persuading the American government to include in the Commission's powers control over pink salmon.

In recent years, too, another problem has developed for the fishing industry. With the rapid growth of the use of hydro-electric power, there have been proposals to dam the Fraser and other salmon rivers in order to produce more electric power. Where this has been done on rivers in the United States, it has resulted in a severe reduction in the number of fish. The problem is an important one, and scientists are working to find some solution that will enable the province to have both its power and its salmon.

Like other industries, mining has undergone many changes during recent years. In the period immediately after the First World War it was depressed, mainly because of a sudden decline in the demand for the minerals that were produced in large quantities for war production. After improving in the years from 1922 to 1929, it was severely affected by the first few years of the depression. The value of mineral production dropped from $68,000,000 in 1929 to $29,000,000 in 1932. Production of gold was encouraged in the late thirties when the price was increased, and with the Second World War the base metal industry expanded. Mining has, however, always been an uneven industry, since production has depended on fluctuating demands for minerals and the finding of new deposits when old ore bodies have run out. Coal production



has declined greatly in recent years, mainly as a result of the increased use of oil for fuel in homes, manufacturing, and shipping, and the conversion of the railroads from steam to diesel locomotives.

The most significant development in the mining industry in recent years has been the discovery of oil and natural gas in the Peace River district of the province. Geologists had thought for many years that both fuels existed in this area of the province, but it was not until 1952 that commercial quantities were found. In 1952, the building of the first oil pipeline through the province was begun, and the first oil flowed from the oil fields of Alberta to the terminus in Vancouver in the autumn of 1953. A natural gas pipeline from the Peace River district was proposed about the same time, but work on it did not begin until early in 1956. It is expected that further oil and gas lines will be constructed, and that these two products will help to expand and diversify the province's industry.

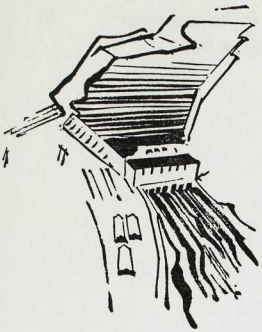
British Columbia's agricultural development has been more uneven and somewhat less successful than the other endeavors of its people. In the period after 1918, a number of new land settlement projects were attempted, with somewhat greater success than those of the pre-war period. The two most successful of these were the Sumas Reclamation Project in the Fraser Valley, which, in the years from 1920 to 1927, provided 30,000 acres of very fertile mixed farming and dairying land, and the Southern Okanagan Lands Project, which developed and irrigated a large area of the South Okanagan, centring in Oliver and Osoyoos. This latter project was begun in 1919, and, by 1954, nearly 5000 acres of land, mostly planted with fruit trees, had been irrigated. Other projects, also sponsored by the provincial government, such as that at Merville near Courtenay on Vancouver Island, were much less successful, and some were abandoned. After the Second World War, the federal government sponsored land settlement projects on land donated by the province for veterans of the armed services.

These projects, of which the ones at Chase, Cawston, Westbank, and Penticton are the largest, have been very carefully supervised, and all are successfully operating today.

The main difficulty faced by the farmers of the province has been that of markets for certain of their products. Prior to 1911, the agricultural production was insufficient to provide for the needs of the province; but since that time, more food of certain types has been produced than can be consumed in the province. The farmers operating mixed farms on Vancouver Island and in the Fraser and the Okanagan Valleys have had less difficulty in this regard than the fruit and dairy farmers, who depend on a single commodity. High freight costs and the competition of American products, which are grown farther south, ripen earlier, and are less susceptible to frost, have made marketing difficult. The farmers have sought a number of solutions to their problems and have received substantial help from both the federal and provincial governments in this regard. Many attempts at co-operative buying and marketing were tried, and today most of the fruit growers and dairy farmers belong to some form of co-operative.

The Peace River district expanded greatly in the period after the First World War as veterans moved into the area, and then, after 1931, when the extension of the Northern Alberta Railway to Dawson Creek attracted settlers. The building of the Alaska Highway during the Second World War also helped settlement, and the population in this area grew from 8500 in 1942 to more than 17,000 by 1955. Further aid to settlement in the Peace River district was given through the completion of the John Hart Highway from Prince George to Dawson Creek on July 1st, 1952; and it is expected that the completion of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway into the area, planned for 1958, will also materially assist the growth of this grain-growing section of the province.

Manufacturing in British Columbia, also, has grown tremendously in recent years. It is now by far the largest



activity of the province, and has increased from 23,000 employees producing $141,000,000 worth of products in 1921, to 101,000 workers, producing $1,660,000,000 worth of products in 1955. This tremendous growth has been dependent on two factors: availability of raw materials, and cheap sources of power. The raw materials of the manufacturing industry have come mainly from the province's natural resources, particularly from the forests, farms, and mines, but in recent years there has been a trend towards the importing of raw materials for processing, chiefly because of the province's abundant supplies of relatively cheap hydro-electric power. One of the largest ventures of this kind is the Aluminum Company of Canada's development of the Kitimat-Kemano area, which began production in July, 1954. Bauxite ore is imported from Jamaica for processing into aluminum at Kitimat, and a large project to provide the power for the aluminum smelters has been developed in Kemano.

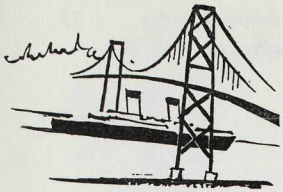
The manufacturing in the province is, to a large extent, located in the lower mainland region and centred in the city of Vancouver. Location of secondary industries depends on available markets, accessibility to various means of transportation, available power, and a reasonably large labor force. Vancouver is ideally situated in nearly all of these respects, but other centres in the province such as Prince Rupert, Prince George, and Port Alberni, to name a few of many, have in recent years begun to expand their industries. The Okanagan and Fraser Valley towns, also, contain the plants which process the fruit, vegetable, and milk products of their respective areas. The development of manufacturing has diversified the job opportunities in British Columbia and lessened the dependence of the people on the four main industries of the early years of the province's history.

The dependence on these is still evident, however. In 1954, out of a total industrial production of $1,470,000,000, over $1,000,000,000, or seventy per cent, was accounted for by wood, paper, and food products. It is likely that the province

will be dependent on these basic industries for the major portion of her wealth for some time to come.

Governments of the province have always had two main concerns, and these have, of course, reflected the concerns of the people. The first of these has been to assist and encourage as much as possible the conomic growth of British Columbia, and the second has been to improve the social welfare of the people. These two concerns are interdependent, as the well-being of the people has been, and is, dependent on the success of the various fields of production. Governments, therefore, have tried to attract new industries to the province as well as to stimulate the growth of those already in existence. They have also done much pioneering in the field of social legislation.

The story of the government of the province since the First World War, like the story of the province itself, can be divided into three periods, and, while the underlying aims of the governments in each of these periods was the same, the emphasis has been placed differently in each. The first of these periods covers the years from 1918 to 1929, when the main concern was still to improve transportation. The development of the automobile and the increasing use of trucks and buses made necessary the development throughout the province of a road network, a project which had almost been abandoned in the period after the arrival of the railroads. Railroad expansion, too, continued to concern the government. The greatest problem was whether to complete, to abandon, or to sell the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, which the government had been forced to take over in 1918, when the private company could no longer afford to operate it. Not until after the Second World War could the province afford to complete the line. No government dared to abandon it because so many people were dependent on it, and no purchaser could be found to buy it. In the 1950's, however, the province was at last economically strong enough to complete the line begun so long ago. British Columbia embarked on its social legislation in this period also,



and the governments of Premiers Brewster and Oliver introduced the first workable workmen's compensation legislation in 1916, set up a system of mothers' allowances in 1920, and, together with the federal government,instituted old age pensions in the province in 1927.

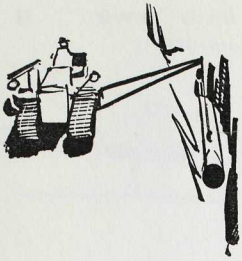
The second of these periods coincides with the great depression that began in 1929 and did not end until the commencement of war in 1939, which stimulated recovery. As production of goods declined greatly, a great many people were unemployed for long periods of time. Provincial government revenues declined, and most of the municipal governments of the province had tremendous financial difficulties, some of them even becoming bankrupt. The maintenance of production was a problem that was beyond the powers of the provincial governments of Premiers Simon Fraser Tolmie and T. D. "Duff" Pattullo to solve, as the markets of the province were outside of its control. To find a way to assist the unemployed workmen was also difficult, as the provincial treasury lacked the necessary funds; and this problem was further hampered by the fact that many unemployed from other provinces were attracted to British Columbia by the milder climate and the hope of jobs. Many men were employed on road construction, and others provided for by work camps, but no really satisfactory solution within the province was found, and British Columbia, together with other provinces, endeavored to shift the responsibility to the federal government.

The third period in the story of the province's government is that of the expansion which has followed the Second World War. This growth was first guided by the coalition governments, made up of Liberals and Conservatives, led by Premiers John Hart and Byron Johnson, which were responsible for the introduction of the forest management licence, for a further expansion of social services, and for the extension of the franchise to Orientals. Since 1952, the province's affairs have been managed by the Social Credit government of Premier

W. A. C. Bennett, which has concentrated on a great expansion of the province's transportation system as a basis for further economic growth, particularly extending greatly the highway network and completing the Pacific Great Eastern from Squamish to Vancouver and from Prince George to the Peace River area. Although it has never formed a government, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation has also been keenly interested in the province's growth and welfare, and has continuously formed the Opposition in the Legislature since 1933.

Canada entered World War II in September, 1939, and as they had during the First World War, the people of the province strongly supported the action. The industry of the province, to a far greater extent than during the First World War, was geared to war production, and included a greatly enlarged ship-building industry and the establishment of an aircraft construction plant. The war also stimulated growth in all of the basic industries, and particularly in metals, forest products, and agriculture. British Columbia felt much closer to the war when Japan entered it on the Axis side, and the people were much concerned when the Japanese occupied some of the Aleutian Islands, and when, on one occasion, they actually shelled a lighthouse on Vancouver Island. Many thousands of young men and women joined the army, navy, and air force, and thousands of others supported the war effort in other voluntary capacities. The record of the province's service men was again a proud one, and they won honors in battles and campaigns around the world.

British Columbia's population has continued to grow rapidly in recent years; its rate of increase has been faster than that of any of the other provinces of Canada. The population, which according to the census of 1921 was 525,000, by 1931 had grown by thirty-two per cent, to 694,000; by 1941, by eighteen per cent, to 818,000; by 1951, by forty-two per cent, to 1,165,000; and was reported in the special census of



1956 to be 1,398,500, or to have shown a further growth in five years of seventeen per cent. The people of British Columbia are still mainly of British origin, coming from eastern Canada, the United States, and the British Isles, though in the post-war period increasing numbers have arrived from western Europe.

This growth, however, has not been general throughout the province, but has been unevenly concentrating the population in the southwest corner of British Columbia. In 1901, the area of Vancouver and the lower Fraser Valley had less than one-third of the population, but by 1951 this had grown to include over half. In fact, all areas of the province have shown declines in their relative shares of the population with the exception of the area around Vancouver, the central interior, and the Peace River district. Where the people live is, of course, dependent on what they do for a living, and with the trend that has been noted towards more and more manufacturing in the province, the greater majority of the people are moving to the cities where this manufacturing takes place. Improved road and rail communication in the central interior of the province and the north, together with the finding of new mineral and other resources, should accelerate the growth in the other areas of the province, but it is expected that the lower mainland and southern Vancouver Island will hold the vast majority of the population for some years to come.

British Columbia's growth, like that of Canada as a whole, was painfully slow in its early years, and the province offered a tremendous challenge to its early settlers. Modern British Columbia owes a debt to its early fur traders, miners, farmers, loggers, and fishermen, for the province's rapid growth in recent years is a measure of how well the pioneers met the challenge. They laid the foundations of British Columbia.

This book,
which has been prepared to mark
the centenary of the Province, is dedicated to

THE TEACHERS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Thanks are due to the provincial Department of Education
for making possible Neil Sutherland's revision
of Arthur Anstey's original work.

British Columbia has had a vivid
and adventurous past. It is our hope
that this brief account may recall to memory
some of the men and women
whose work has laid the foundations
for the strong, prosperous province
of today.

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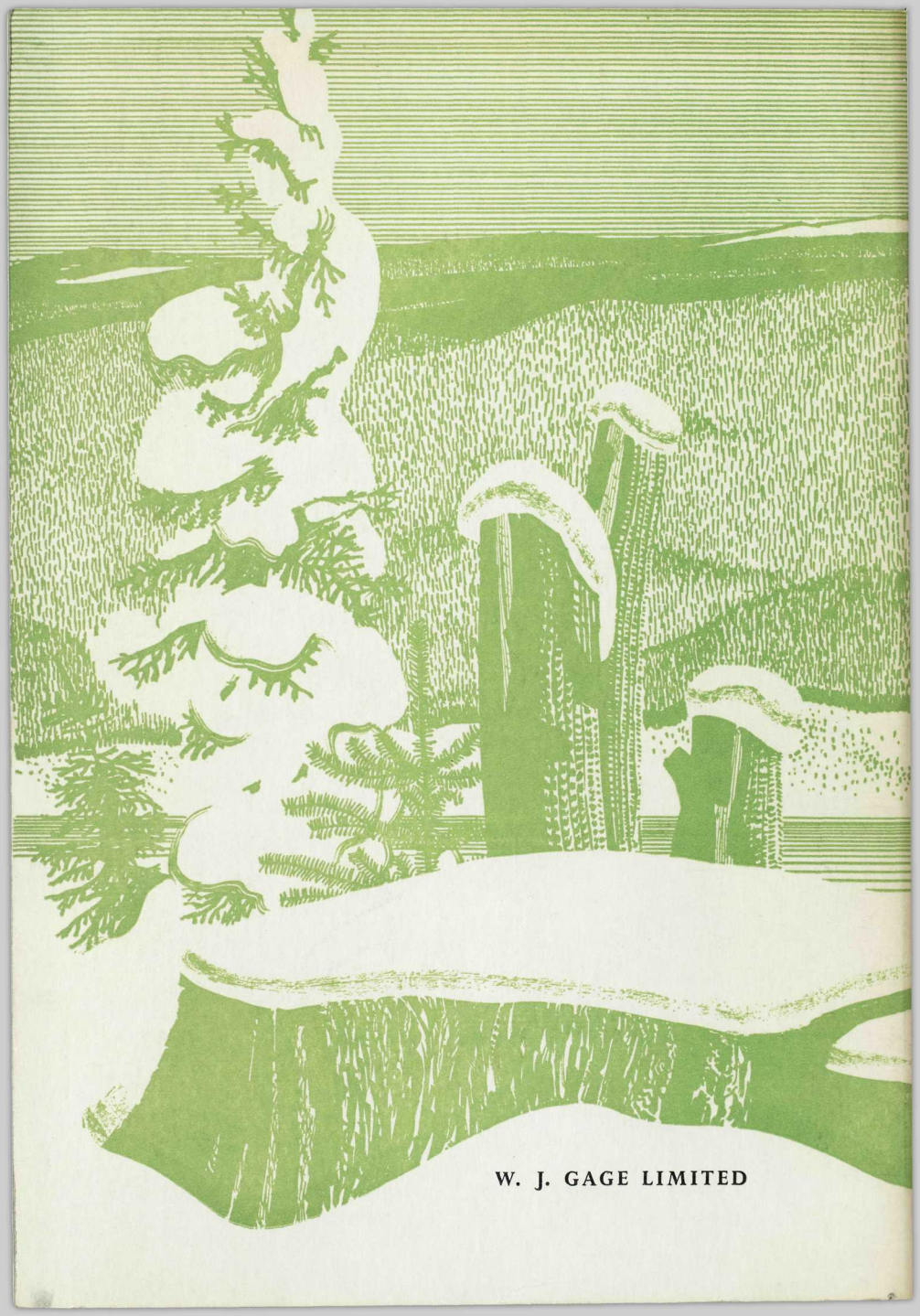

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